



Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Ms Susmita Paul, Registration Number: 2170116, PhD Scholar at the Department of International Studies, Political Science and History, School of Social Sciences, CHRIST (Deemed to be University) will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Monday, 23 February 2026 at 09.00 am in Room No. 044, Ground Floor, R&D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560029, Karnataka, India.

- Title of the Thesis** : **Securitization of Human Trafficking along the India-Bangladesh Border: The Need for Multilateral Cooperation**
- Discipline** : **Political Science**
- External Examiner - I** : **Dr Subramanyam Raju**
Professor
School of Social Sciences and International Studies
Pondicherry University
R Venkat Raman Nagar, Kalapet
Pondicherry - 605014
Tamilnadu
- External Examiner - II** : **Dr Manish**
Professor and Dean
School of International Studies
Central University of Gujarat, Vadodara
Kundhela - 391107
Gujarat
- Supervisor** : **Dr Anurag Tripathi**
Associate Professor
Department of International Studies, Political Science and History
School of Social Sciences
CHRIST (Deemed to be University)
Bengaluru - 560029
Karnataka

The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva-voce examination.

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 13 February 2026



Registrar

ABSTRACT

Human trafficking remains a socio-political and human rights crisis in India, with West Bengal emerging as a significant corridor of this illegal trade. Trafficking networks enable individuals to migrate across national borders by taking advantage of systemic structural weaknesses such as poverty, socio-political instability, and poor law enforcement. Bangladesh has been identified as a major origin country for women trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation, and India, especially West Bengal, is both a source and a destination for such trafficked people. The border districts of West Bengal are particularly vulnerable to the encroachment of such trafficking networks due to their geographical proximity to the porous border of Bangladesh. Limited border control, accentuated with corruption and inadequate inter-agency coordination, further exacerbates this situation. Traffickers attempt to lure socially and economically vulnerable individuals under the promise of voluntary migration or labor, making detection of exploitation and intervention complicated for law enforcement officials. Moreover, the socio-economic distress, gender biases, and lack of any viable employment opportunities make such vulnerable individuals susceptible to trafficking under false pretenses of better work prospects. Although there exists a plethora of regional and international laws to prevent human trafficking, enforcement gaps continue to impede any anti-trafficking efforts. Although India has enacted stringent legislation such as The Immoral Traffic (Prevention, Care, and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2021, its implementation remains fragmented. Despite bilateral efforts, the persistence of human trafficking along the India-Bangladesh border highlights the limitations of a strictly state-centric approach. This research applies the securitization theory to analyze how human trafficking is framed as a security threat and how such framing influences policy responses. It analyses the effectiveness of existing securitization measures and examines the need for a shift towards a multilateral cooperative framework involving regional organizations, international agencies, and civil society actors. By assessing gaps in the current securitization approach, the study highlights the need for a more comprehensive and human rights-centric strategy that balances security imperatives with victim protection. Addressing the challenge of human trafficking requires a multi-pronged approach that integrates community-driven initiatives, governmental, and legal measures to dismantle trafficking networks.

Keywords: *human trafficking, border migration, India, Bangladesh, intergovernmental organization*

Publications:

1. **Paul, Susmita, & Rai, Pratiksha.** (2025). Fair skin, unfair trade and invisible victims. *The Round Table*, 114(3), 335–337. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00358533.2025.2473479>
2. **Paul, Susmita, & V Joseph, Stefy.** (2025). Identity politics and elections: the plight of Matuas in West Bengal. *The Round Table*, 114(2), 194–196. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00358533.2025.2475317>