BOOKS TO BE RELEASED ON THE OCCASION OF IASFM 14

- **Branding the Migrant,** ed. Atig Ghosh (CRG and Frontpage, Kolkata 2013)

The Unique Identification (UID)/ Aadhaar project has burst upon the nation with surprising ferocity. The government has started implementing Aadhaar-enabled direct cash transfers for 29 schemes in 51 districts, spread over 16 states and also plans to cover the entire nation by the end of December 2013. Yet, it is far from clear if Aadhaar is an undisruptive benevolent initiative of the government, seeking to empower the needy and maximize the outreach of social-security schemes. Legal experts, scholars and activists have discussed and deliberated on the Aadhaar scheme and the governmental logic underlying it. However, the torrential commentary against the UID scheme notwithstanding, the Aadhaar juggernaut is forging ahead.

Against this backdrop, this volume endeavours to engage with the politics and the history of State's population identification exercises. In doing so, it goes beyond the specifics of the UID project to situate the issue in the broader context of identification technologies sponsored by the state and the market over time. Given the fact that while there are writings on the UID project and its impact on resident population and nothing on its impact on migrant population groups, this volume chooses to focus on the impact of the UID and similar identification technologies on migrants. The migrants may be a minority compared to the residents but, as individuals who remain mostly beyond the embrace of the State, they represent a limit on its penetration; they also remain at the metaphorical margins of the state's will to encompass all. This volume therefore aspires to test the idea and impact of the UID at its limits — focussing on its impact on migrants — and interrogate if the *reach* of the state can after all exceed its grasp.

The significance of the volume is in the diverse range of reports and opinions it presents. Bringing together case studies across the length and breadth of India as well as theoretical engagements with the theme, the book urges the reader to think if the implementation of the UID project would after all only faithfully serve age-old statist imperatives of identifying, de-legitimizing and expelling migrants from 'national' territory; whether the language of welfare of the UID project masks an anxiety for security, in this case the securitization of an entire nation.

- **Unstable Population, Anxious States**, ed. Paula Banerjee (CRG and Stree Samya, Kolkata, 2013)

"From its inception, South Asia has been confronted by massive displacements", so states the editor, Paula Banerjee, who adds that partition was intrinsically attached to the independence of states, leading to huge human flows interspersed with some of the worst cases of violence perpetrated against the fleeing population. Side by side with the refugees today are the internally displaced people (IDPs), largely belonging to the vulnerable sections of the population such as religious and ethnic minorities, indigenous people, dalits and the urban poor. Often those who are displaced once can face multiple displacements; therefore, it becomes impossible to know whether displacement was due to conflict, development or ecological reasons.

Today, the complexities of displacement have created massive, mixed flows: refugees, asylum seekers, illegal immigrants, IDPs, and other victims of violence, want, deprivation, hunger, homelessness, displacement, and other forms of persecution and discrimination occur together – a condition in which old forms of protection are often inadequate. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has responded by a Ten Point Plan of Action for Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration. This was the focus of a two-day dialogue on 'Protection Strategies in South Asia' organized by Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group (MCRG), which led to this book, a comprehensive collection, compiled by social scientists, media analysts and civil society activists.

Divided into three parts, Part I, 'Conflict-Induced Situations', Part II 'Issues', and Part III 'Institutions' this thought-provoking collection offers the reader an overview of the South Asian experiences, an analysis of the principles of protection, their inadequate implementation. It considers the growing disparity between economic growth and human development indices that lead to

continuous massive human flows, referred to variously as refugees, IDPs or economic migrants, but ultimately fellow human beings in great distress.

- ***Refugee Watch: A South Asian Journal on Forced Migration (Special Issue on the occasion of IASFM 14, Nos. 39-40)***

This special issue of the journal *Refugee Watch* (39-40) is published on the occasion of the 14th Conference of the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM 14). It presents for discussion articles, reports, and reviews on four critical themes with which IASFM 14 will be engaged: (a) the theme of partition and migration of population groups in the wake of partitions; (b) immigration debates; (c) critical legal analysis of protection provisions for the victims of forced migration, and finally (d) displacement induced by environmental disaster and resource crisis.

The first section of the journal, entitled "Consequences of Partition" consists of essays by *Anwesha Sengupta* on the administrative consequences of the Partition of British India, *Anindita Ghoshal* on the changing mentality of Bengali refugees in Tripura between 1946 and 1971 when the Indo-Pak War broke out, *Drago Zuparic* on the return, resettlement and reintegration policies for displaced persons in Croatia in the wake of the Balkan partition. This section ends with a report on the ramification of conflicts in Tripura and Mizoram and *Himadri Chatterjee's* review of the book *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* by Vazira Fazila Yacoobali Zamindar**.**

The second section of the journal, entitled 'The Immigration Debate', delves into questions of how immigration and re-settlement issues are being thought through by policymakers and relief workers on the ground. The essays by *Juha Rudanko* on the Finnish Immigration debate, *Sreeja Balarajan* on Bhutanese refugee re-settlement in the United States and *Iker Barbero* on the fundamental question whether the immigrants' struggles can after all be emancipative engage with the above-mentioned *thematic*. The section concludes with a report on certain relevant issues linked with the refugee status of the Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in India and *Paula Banerjee's* review of the book *Forced Migration and Global Politics* by Alexander Betts.

The third section, entitled 'Law', stresses the need for a broad legal framework with regard to refugee protection and protection of other victims of forced displacement. Here, *Christophe Tometten* elaborates on the theme juridical response to mixed and massive population flows, *Nour Mohammad* discusses refugee protection under the constitution of Bangladesh and *Sanjoy Biswas & Md. Akterul Alam Chowdhury* writes on climate-change-induced displacement and migration in Bangladesh. This section also has a commentary on a court judgement. The section ends with the publication of the Brasilia Declaration on the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons in the Americas.

The fourth and the final section consists of two reports on resources, environment, and displacement (the first on the 2008 Kosi flood in Nepal and the second on land acquisition and internal displacement in West Bengal) – the section and theme appearing as denouement to a thought-provoking volume.