CHAPTER: I Introduction:

1.1 Introduction

"Most People are the Other People"
- Oscar Wilde

In a global jargon the term ethnicity denotes heterogeneous sources of obligations commanding all forms of recognition to be unique and identical. It is evident that throughout the discourse of global nation building process, ethnicity has been bona fide to be recognized as a soul for group solidarity, moreover accepted to be one of the persist variety of artifacts of cultural pluralism. Although demands for such recognition derive pluralistic agenda of the groups based on different socio-cultural commonalities, yet this may disrupt the notions of accommodation and the formation of pan-nationalism. The degree of such demands therefore might result in disintegration and disharmony among the communities. Ethnicity as such might result in contestations, which shaped the major thrust of the present work. These contestations become more vulnerable when it occurs out of a plural society and at the end become the reason for segregation and disenchantment.

In such a background one should not contravene what has been shaped by the metaphor of Multiculturalism, as it is known as the process of change by which we learn to recognize, understand and appreciate our own cultural identities vis-a-vis the similarities and dissimilarities of people from other cultural groups. It is a democratic policy responsible for accommodating diversity. The multicultural school of thought owes its origin from a recent time, dated just from 1960 only. The most remarkable conceptualizations on multiculturalism have been made by three
scholars namely, Charles Taylor, Bhikhu Parekh and Will Kymlicka, who believe multiculturalism as political recognition of equality for all majority or minority, a representation of cultural diversity and also it is become a supplement and not substitute for citizenship, respectively. By taking these arguments it is now evident that, multiculturalism stands for a belief which facilitates greater degree of tolerance and respect to all who are in a contact situation and referred as “self & others” (For details see, Kymlicka 2009, Horowitz 2000, Erickson 1984, Taylor 2003). Referring to this point one can also assume the Assamese society as a multicultural and plural society, whereby different socio-religious groups are living together and frame the greater Axomiya identity. But of late, this broad multicultural conscience is facing internal contestations with the emergence of consciousness for little identities, which certainly contested the very notion of belongingness and tolerance and resulted in ethnic conflict. This situation is best articulated by Prof. Sanjib Baruah as the contestation between the growing ‘Regional Patriotism’ versus ‘Pan Indianism’ in Assam. Therefore considering these issues it is hypothetically assumed that the imagination and existence of a multicultural society in a deeply divided nation become a hallucination.

1.2 The Problem and the Research Questions:

The notion of multiculturalism is giving a new shape to the future. Though the term has got wide publicity, yet there would be very few concrete definition of it. Thus it is noticed that people studied it according to their personal choices and define it according to one’s own understanding. But one of such easily comprehensible description could be as such, Multiculturalism as a combination of beliefs and behaviors that recognizes and thereby respects for all those living in an
organization or society, accordingly acknowledges and values their socio-cultural differences, and also encourages their restless contribution within a comprehensive cultural context which empowers all within that organization or society.

Multiculturalism is all about recognizing equal value and worth to all cultures that shapes human lives. Hereby a culture can be understood as the shared beliefs; ways of life, thinking about and understanding of the world around us through whom we reflect others and ourselves as antagonist.

In order to promote social consistency, multiculturalism helps in realizing, celebrating and maintaining different cultures or cultural identities within a society. In this context, multiculturalism advocates a society where no hierarchy can be entertained and where everybody gets equal status, despite of his or her socio-religious and cultural differences. In process it discards the idea of predominance of any one self over the other. However, in the course of time society decides which values have been more pronounce and which are not. But this is not utterly possible in a nation where there is strong and visible cultural hierarchy. Even the world’s most successful multicultural nations too had a history of conflicts which are somehow seem to be ethnic in nature. The persisting conflict between French and English speaking groups in Canada, the division between the Spanish and Indian elements in a number of Latin American countries, the tragic conflict between the Catholic and Protestants in Northern Ireland, the movements for Scottish and Welsh autonomy in Great Britain and the recent racial conflict in London are some of the important events that may question the validity of the existence of multiculturalism in its practical form. Even ideologically, the ongoing restlessness among the communities in different parts of the world have questioned the existence of melting
pot paradigm or assimilation which are once are the major concern in the policies of world’s most popular democracies and nation states. But there are certain questions which strike us at the first instance regarding the validity of multiculturalism are: Wheather assimilationist policies are successful in accommodating a deeply divided society? merely having agendas for assimilation is enough in accommodating deeply divided society? If yes, whether the assimilation discourses have space for all minorities? If yes, do they really allow maintaining their individual cultures or national hegemonies will submerge them within the majority culture? Is there any scope for revisit the substance of multiculturalism in an ethnically exhausted nation? Does multicultural society transmit fear among the quantitatively small communities? Multiculturalism or pluralism have often confront with lots of such questions which have been raised by ethnicity. To answer these questions is the major thrust of this research.

In this backdrop, Assamese society especially the Karbi society can be studied as a multicultural society though not in wider sense but at least as a thin multiculturalism⁶. Karbi Anglong has been a “Salad Bowl” for different ethnic and community cultures. Most of the ethnic groups of Karbi Anglong belong to the Mongoloid stock, such as, Karbi, Dimasa, Garo, Khasi, Jaintia, Kuki and Rengma Naga tribes etc. The district has been known as the miniature of the Assamese society, comprising of the peoples from the communities such as, Adivasi, Assamese, Bengali, Nepali, Bihari etc.⁷ Inspite of this cultural pluralism, the district also experienced bloodsheds and ethnic clashes. There were several instances when
the district had gone through such genocide\textsuperscript{1} and community clashes.\textsuperscript{8} It has been brought into book that the conflicts in the district are outcomes of not of a singular factor rather then if we traced the history of these protected conflicts, we will find that the long history of demands of a separate state and latter of autonomous district is also to be blamed for this. Apparently, the establishment of sixth schedule institution in the district does not bring the pace of peace they are opted for, but also become a major irritant among the communities and constant failure of Indian state in negotiating the demands of the leaders of the insurgent groups in the district made the issue most vulnerable.\textsuperscript{9} Now question arises, why the multiculturalism has failed in accommodating the diversity and composite identity in Karbi Anglong and how far such contestations of the self and other become responsible in hitherto generating debates around the question of ethnicity? By and large we have the following questions to answer throughout the research. These are:

- At what point multicultural coexistence in Assam and Karbi Anglong has faced confrontation?
- What are the factors that led to more inward looking identity among the Karbis in contrast to (vis-à-vis) ethnic others?
- What are the manifestations of the ethnic conflicts and identities in Karbi Anglong?
- How the notions of ‘we’ and ‘they’ are responsible in generating ethnic dilemma in Karbi Anglong?

\textsuperscript{1} Op. cit. Mclean and McMillan, 2007, page no – 220, have define genocide as the deliberate killing coordinated by the state and justified by claims of racial distinctiveness of a population selected on cultural criteria.
• How these ethnic contestations have challenged the validity of multiculturalism?
• What is the role of state in policy planning, intervention and comprehending ethnic conflict?
• What are the means and institutional pattern to accommodate diversity in Karbi Anglong?
• Whether state’s policy of accommodation facilitate or confront multiculturalism?

1.3 Origin of the Research Problem

The research problem that we intended to study born out of a critical juncture with the failure of accommodative policy taken up by the state to preserve the indigenous cultures in a plural society and also out of the claims and counter claims to be protected by the dominant group, which suddenly outnumbered the minorities.

The post second world war world experienced the slow but intense emergence of conflicts on ethnic ground which gradually turned out to be a matter of grave concern in the post cold war world. The breakdown of the USSR is the outcome of an ethnic acrimony which demands for a right to self determination. The same type (if not equal in proximity) deserves to be mentioned in the North Eastern part of India in General and the Karbi Anglong in particular faces more contestations on ethnic grounds, where there has been ongoing conflict among almost all the relatively majority versus relatively minority communities. The situation became grimmer since the year 2005 when there was large scale genocide and ethnic cleansing, which tremble the region with bloodshed and violence. Later on, these ethnic tensions among the communities of the region changed its nature
and came out to be a grave insurgency problem and consequently the situation becomes more tensed and military omnipotent. Now the situation is such where there is a complete sense of mistrust and hysteria among the succeeding generations and which also hampers the multicultural composition of the region, where there is no tolerance no equality. In the light of this critical condition the present research has evolved to study the causes and consequences of these contestations specially the conflict between the Karbis and Dimasa and tries to find out where do state failed.

1.4 Conceptual Framework: Ethnicity and Multiculturalism

The present literature derives an inter-linkage of two most academically important rudiments known as – Ethnicity and Multiculturalism. The argument here follows the modernist school of thought which recognizes the individual choices and views the state as a facilitator of those rights. The present work has been an illustration of the critique of multiculturalism with the adoption of an ethnic framework, which will be discussed in details in the following chapters. But as of the now, it is our prime responsibility to highlight some of the conceptual understanding of these two broad terms.

The term like ethnic group, ethnic identity and ethnicity require some conceptual clarification, as ideas pertaining to the word ‘ethnic’ are polymorphous word. The term ‘ethnicity’ has been very much associate with the notions of "association", as understanding ethnicity in a social isolation will be futile. Therefore understanding ethnicity resembles to one understands of a society. Being an institution every society composed of members with similarities of any of the traits such as race, culture, class association etc and also contains seeds of
dissimilarities with the others. This has created the self-other dichotomy more prominent. Hence the best way of explanation for these kinds of relationship can be referred from Max Weber (1978), who speaks of "social closure"\(^2\) leading to construct of a community based on individual traits mostly on ethnic lines and also resistance to others to include into the homogenous cultural periphery.

Ethnicity has different symbols attached to it. Therefore scholars identified it with different attributes. To refer to T.K. Oommen he said that,

\[ "In contemporary social science an ethnic group is characterized in terms of a multiplicity of attributes – religion, sect, caste, region, language, nationality, descent, race, colour and culture. This attributes singly or in different combinations are used to define ethnic groups and ethnicity."\(^{11}\]

It shows multiple attributes such as- religion, sect, region, language, nationality, descent, race, colour and culture etc. given birth to an ethnic group and it also shows that ethnic groups are emerging because of any of these attributes or with the combination of any of them.

Moreover ‘ethnicity’ is not merely understood as race or linguistic group alone. There are writers who define it as, "not only to the subgroups and minorities but to all the groups of a society characterized by a distinct owing to culture and descent."\(^{12}\) It means that ethnicity has a link with a particular culture and descent.

\(^2\) Social closure is a term propagated by Weber, Max (1978) in his *Economy and society. An outline of interpretive sociology.* Edited by G. Roth and C. Wittich. Berkeley: University of California Press, by which he meant a group of people with common traits and whereby the people of that group restrained inclusion of other social composition to their. That’s how according to Weber this monopolistic social closure ultimately leads to construction of ethnic community or ethnicity in more specific terms.
Whereas sociologist Anthony Giddens have identified it with cultural practices, when he said:

"Ethnicity is an idea that is purely social in meaning. Ethnicity refers to the cultural practices and outlooks of a given community of people that set them apart from others."\(^{13}\)

The term 'ethnicity' has been believed to be originated from a Greek word called 'ethnos' (which in turn derived from a word called ethnikos), which originally mean Heathen or pagan. Owing from the English literature, the term gradually identify itself with Race or any forms of racial characteristics. Nevertheless the term is defined to understand a group of people having common descent, history, language, culture and identity.

There could be two specific ways of illustrating ethnicity, both narrow and broad. This generalization have been very beautifully explained by author Ashutosh Varshney, when he said-

"In its narrower sense, 'ethnic' means 'racial,' or 'linguistic'. This is the sense in which the term is widely understood in popular discourse, both in India and in elsewhere."\(^{14}\)

However there is a second sense in which ethnic groups are interpreted in social sciences which is very much broad in perspective. He said,

"Exponent of the broader usages disagrees with such distinction" (at least to the earlier groupings). "They argue that the form ethnic conflict takes religious, linguistic, racial, and tribal – does not seem to alter its intensity, longevity, passion or relative intractability. There emphasis on the ascriptive and cultural core of the conflict, imagined or real and they distinguished it
It is now evident that, the term ethnicity has been contested because of the general understanding of it as a term associated with 'self' (with similar attributes) and 'other' (with dissimilar attributes). This self other demarcation have resulted in ethnic conflict. Ethnic conflicts therefore become inevitable in today’s world, whereby every community tries to secure a politically and socially viable space for themselves devoid of any cost. Though ethnic conflict now becomes a global phenomenon, it is more concerted in the regions of South Asia. With the spread of concern towards ‘self determination’ has instigated further ethnic discords in the region.

In a common parlance ethnic conflict or ethnic war are the results of ethnic nationalism fought mostly among divisive ethnic communities. The term conflict has derived from a word called ‘conflictus’ which means a series of disagreement or a long lasting armed struggle. Ethnic conflicts are the regular features of an ethnically plural democracy. The reasons of such contestations could be many. Such as – conflicts over resources, identity patronage and policies, cultural discontent, fight for political space etc. Donald L. Horowitz has defined these conflicts as the outcome of multiple causes directed towards ‘motive’. Those causes include, Economic, Political, Social & Cultural causes.16

Broadly there are three schools of thought on ethnicity and ethnic conflict. Those are: Primordialism, Instrumentalism and Constructivism.17 The primordial’s believes ethnicity as certain kinds of tie, which the participants tended to, see as exterior, coercive and given. It is important to note that Primordialism is attributed
by the individuals to the ties of religion, blood, race, language, region and customs and thus inhere in their bonds. They therefore believes that ethnic conflicts emerged out of the traditions of believe and actions towards Primordial objects such as biological features and especially territorial location.

The instrumentalist however believes that people can move from one ethnic group to another and change its memberships accordingly, mainly because of the change in the circumstances and also of the manipulation made by the political elites. Thus they believe that most of ethnic conflicts are the result of the instigation of the political leaders.

Constructivist school of thought has a different orientation altogether. For them the sense of ethnic identity emerged because of the knowledge one adopted from the environment and also through incorporation of new experiences into an already existing framework without changing the original framework. For them ethnic conflict occurs, not just because of the active learning an individual gained from the life experiences, but of the range of disadvantages they notice from the counter parts in the life world. Its’ like a reference movement where one demanded of certain advantages according to the relative comparison they found with the majority people.

Another important discourse we intended to discuss in our research is Multiculturalism. Multiculturalism as a new arena of knowledge facilitates provisions for incorporation of multiple cultures and identities, shared belief and attributes within a social interaction. It means celebration of diversity, recognizing pluralism, having tolerance to everybody despite of the culture, color or civilization he or she belongs and most importantly promulgate provisions for equality.
Nevertheless there are people who believe multiculturalism as not just about celebrating differences but also how people perceive others. In this connection we may refer to Bhikhu Parekh who said that,

"Multiculturalism is not about differences and identity per se but about those that are embedded in and sustained by culture; that is a body of belief and practices in terms of which a group of people understand themselves and the world and organize their individual and collective lives."\(^1\)

Hence knowledge of one with comparison to others becomes very much vital to understand. Recognition therefore plays an important part in the discourse of Multiculturalism. The best possible explanation in this direction have put forwarded by Charles Taylor who said that, Multiculturalism means recognizing somebody as an identity which for him composed of different attributes representing different sects of cultural variation. To understand the variation everybody in a society should recognized one as different from that of the other. He said that,

"The thesis is that our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Non recognition or misrecognition can inflict harm; can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being."\(^1\)

Therefore the recognition, misrecognition and the absence are the three important elements in the politics of representation in a multicultural society where the identity of one is the result of one of these three elements. Sometimes it is the recognition
which shapes the identity and sometimes the misrecognition. But the situation becomes contested when there is ‘absence’ of both of these elements and the society become idle towards one particular identity.

Although Multiculturalism speaks of having diverse notions of cultures, but it cannot deny the existence of dominant culture. The minority communities are usually seen in dishonored position, having nothing but smack of marginalization. Understanding this fact some writers come up with some alternative. They try to see multiculturalism as the means to provide necessary conditions for equal rights and privileges. Amartya Sen in his most celebrated work, “Identity and Violence” have discussed such concessions within the framework of multiculturalism. He argued that,

“I would argue, two basically distinct approaches to multiculturalism, one of which concentrates on the promotion of diversity as a value in itself; the other approach focuses on the freedom of reasoning and decisions – making, and celebrates cultural diversity to the extent that it is as freely chosen as possible by the persons involved”.

It is therefore evident that multiculturalism seldom faces criticism for giving too much stress on equality and tolerance, whereas in its policies it lacks options for providing equal arrangement for both the minorities and the dominant communities. There is a general believe that, Multiculturalism is like a coat of many colors, yet the distinction of gap between the majority and minority is very much distinct. It is inevitable that multiculturalism should be evaluated with the debate on “Inclusivity” vs. “Exclusivity”. Inclusivist agenda many a time provides possible scope for the exclusivist tendency to poke up when it fails in its principle of inclusion, which may
result distortion in the social life. Keeping view of this argument it is noticed that, the minority communities such as – gender, race, ethnic and religious minorities etc. have demanded extensions of rights and freedoms for all. This process initiated criticism towards multiculturalism as unequal and centralized in orientation.

This broad conceptualization might help us in criticizing multiculturalism as inadequate from an ethnic point of view, as the soul for ethnicity has demanded recognition of individual cultures and identities which in most of the time not represented in the *majority obsessed nationalistic agenda*. It facilitates large scale demands of cultural pluralism to recognize the traditional identity. This notion of pluralism has challenged the multicultural agenda of equality and tolerance. Sol Encel in her article said that,

"*Cultural pluralism was being promoted in a way which neglected its structural implications, ignoring the tension between cultural diversity, now increasingly regarded as a 'good thing', and structural pluralism, regarded by many people as a bad thing and a potential threat to national unity.*"\(^{21}\)

Thus in the present research we are trying to evaluate how the ethnic identity have challenged the very notions of citizenship vis-à-vis multiculturalism, though not in a constitutionally recognized multicultural society, but in a society with multicultural traits. It also discusses how pluralism in Karbi Anglong is facing challenges by the ethnic contestations along with its instigators. In the last part of our research an argument on prospect of multiculturalism in an ethnically exhausted society is made with illustration on other inter related themes with the support of the findings of our research.
1.5 Review of Literature

In the very onset, it has to be admitted that there is lack of properly academically oriented works on the issue of ethnic conflict in Karbi Anglong as well as on the role of the state and hence it is not possible to have sufficient and comprehensive literature on it. The literature studied and reviewed have divided under four categories-

The first set of literature consists of short books and souvenir / magazines published in diverse issues by different organizations and individuals in Karbi Anglong district. These non- academic writings also comprised of different articles published in News Paper and Magazines (both national and regional) about the facts and figures of the ethnic contestation in the region. These literatures contain limitations of objectivity, yet can be referred for gathering background knowledge over the theme. The first literature reviewed in this category is Karbi Youth Festival Magazine “Lokimo” published in February 1996. In an important article titled “An Outline of the Social History of the Karbi People” by Dr. Dhrubajyoti Bora, have narrated the Social History of the Karbi’s and he also mentioned different phases of development of the Karbi Society from the ancient Food Gatherer to the Emergence of the Middle Class. He has also made an illustration on how colonial apparatus had left an imprint of identity consciousness among them. The Magazine also contains few other important articles related to the Autonomous State Demand Movement in the district.

The magazine also published an Excerpt from the Restless Frontier Army, Assam and Its People a report prepared by the Peoples Union for Democratic Rights under the title “Karbis”, which provides a detail picture of the demand of
Autonomous Council by the Karbi people. The article begins with the history of Karbi Anglong under colonial yoke and continued till the emancipation of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council. The article ended up with a glorification of the Karbi Movement as, *in its secular, democratic content and its progressive vision, Karbi movement has no parallel in the recent history of tribal resurgence.*\(^2^3\)

Another important document reviewed, named as "*Introspection over the Autonomous State Movement*" authored by – **Indra Chambling**, published in a magazine called- “The Blue Hills Vision” (2002), which made a detailed analysis of the Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC) movement in Karbi Anglong and made a detailed discussion on the waves of Demands and the movement itself.\(^2^4\)

"*A Summary on the Migration of the Karbis*" authored by **Mrjeng Kro** published in “Wo’-Jaro” discussed about the different waves of migration made by Karbis in different parts of history. It discussed some of the historical facts regarding the migration of Karbis from the Pre historic period to the post independence period in Assam.\(^2^5\)

**The second set of literature** in this category includes journalistic writings. At this juncture we have reviewed two popular journalist of Karbi Anglong namely **Borsing Rongphar** and **Sanju Bora** who have regularly contributed articles and news items in the daily news papers published in regional medium. Both of them have written two master pieces over the region and both these books are elaborative documentations on the history and social transformation of Karbi society. Rongphar in his work, *A Political History of Karbi Anglong*, makes an illustrative narration of the political history of the Karbi Anglong beginning with the ancient history of Karbi People and provides extensive understanding of their historical lineages with
other tribes or communities of ancient Assam. Furthermore, he has developed a framework of understanding of the historical process of Autonomy for the Karbi people and those of the others in Mikkir Hills. The author also makes an elaborate study of the earlier elections of the region and made a chronology of events of the elections that took place since from 1937 to 2001.26

Sanju Bora in his work, “Raktapluta Dinalipir Keipristhaman”, which is a collection of his published and unpublished articles in the daily news paper has extensively mentioned about the social hysteria and the fears of Karbi – Non Karbi Conflict. Bora, has outlined that the causes and consequences of those ethnic rifts are outcomes not only of identity related issues but there are certain amount of political inputs that lead to this state of affairs.27 Even his work is not in a position to elaborate the roots of those conflicts.

The third sets of literature are the academic write ups which are mostly drawn at some international experiences, and few among them are extended to our field of research. Those write ups though in a rigid manner can be divided into theoretical or atheoretical literature but here we fear to do so because of the intermingling of both of the paradigm. This is mainly because those literatures endowed a theoretical framework initially yet they are supported with certain empirical evidences. The literature in its core have different theoretical position but for the better analysis we placed them together under to support some broad arguments. Argument 1: Ethnicity as Race, Nationality, Language & Culture:

A number of literature are there which studied ethnicity and its different theoretical positions derive fragmented meanings of it as Race, Nationality, Language, Culture and more precisely Identity. The most remarkable work in this
connection done by John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (edited) in their celebrated work- “Ethnicity” published by Oxford University Press on 1996 include different segments of interpretations on ethnicity. The book opened up a new horizon of introspections over ethnicity as a multifaceted term including meaning, theories and different elucidation of ethnicity in different societies. The book has highlight ethnicity as the sense of kinship, group solidarity and common culture to which it refers is as old as the historical record, they further argued that ethnic communities have been present in every period and continent and have played an important role in all societies. The book is a collection of excerpts of different writers on different issues relating to ethnicity especially in the context of modern world and with particular reference to South Asia. The collection also raised comprehensive interpretation on ethnicity from different approach, such as Primordial, Constructivist and Instrumentalist and also provides a future perspective on ethnicity in the changing world order.

A few literature identified Ethnicity with nationalism, although with little exceptions, such as write ups of Thomas Hylland Eriksen, Calhoun Craig, Ana Maria Alonso and Bimal J. Dev. Broadly for them, this nexus is the outcome of the intention to establish a homogenous nation system guided by the nationalistic sentiments.

Eriksen in his work “Ethnicity versus Nationalism” was of the view that initially, the concepts of nationalism and ethnicity have an ideological liaison. It is argued that a successful ideology, such as nationalism or ethnic one, must simultaneously legitimize a social order, i.e. a power structure and provide a
meaningful frame for the realization of important perceived needs and wishes of its adherent. He has mentioned nationalism as,

"frequently regarded by liberal theorists as a universalist kind of ideology emphasizing equality and human rights within its polity, but it can just as plausibly be seen as a kind of particularisms denying non-citizens or culturally deviant citizens full human rights and, in extreme cases, even denying them membership in the community of human."33

The author tries to find out two links of nationalism with ethnicity, one as the source of discontent where there emerged a set of conflicts between nation-states and ethnic groups in one hand and between different ethnic groups within the nation-state in the other and other as the necessary conditions for the peaceful coexistence of culturally diverse groups within the framework of a modern nation-state.

Whereas, author Calhoun Craig in the article intended to find out nationalism as long standing patterns of ethnicity or as something distinctively new and modern, and argued to establish it essentially as a modern phenomenon, emerged out of different socio political changes in world. The author in the article tries to associate two distinctly different notions called ethnicity and nationalism in a correlation and admit that,

"like all of nationalism and ethnic politics, depended on social constructions of identity, mobilized members of the chosen ethnic group only unevenly, and served the interests of some participants far more than others."34

The authors, through his thorough historical narration revealed that rise of nationalism as well as of ethnic conflicts are rooted on integration and segregation depending on the level of the organized or reorganized condition of the states. For
the better argument he has cited examples of *French, Arab and New Nationalism on ethnic ground in Third world countries.*

Ana Maria Alonso on other hand has argued in a different way, where she derived a nexus between nationalism and ethnicity in the formation of the “State”. For her,

"this identity between the people, heritage, territory and state is also brought about by the use of botanical metaphors that suggest that each nation is a grand genealogical tree, rooted in the soil that nourishes it. Like the map, these metaphors configure the nation as limited in its membership, sovereign and continuous in time. And they are critical for conceptualizing the state as a compulsory organization with a territorial basis as the stable centre of (national) societies and spaces."[36]

The author therefore framed the article in a way where ethnicity and nationalism have been placed in correlation to foster a composed state.

Bimal J. Dev in his work, have been clearly derived the fact that ethnicity emerged not just because of the combinations of different attributes such as race, language, culture etc but also because of the existence of the national consciousness. For him it is *the common denominator of all ethnic communities...which fosters, by all means, a feeling of belongingness and fraternity.*[37] He further believed that ethno nationalism does not necessarily given birth to a homogenous self, rather he has cited instances from both the international history and the north east where it resulted in *political extremism* aiming towards *autonomous state* and obsessive self tendency.
Another set of literature identified ethnicity with race and it is evident that out of the reviewed literature most of the writers from Europe understand race as the synonym to ethnicity. The prominent among them has been Joseph F. Healey and Eileen O’ Brien’s (2004) in their edited work titled, “Race, Ethnicity and Gender: A Selected Readings” where they have discussed ten different aspects of ethnic relations in a society and also highlighted the Dominant - Minority Relationship in American society on a racial ground. They have argued that the gap between the dominant & minority become viable because of the prejudice one constructed out of the racial differences they inherited. Thus the authors have defined ethnicity through an inclusion and exclusion paradigm of differences, mostly on racial ground.

One of the important work that has been published lately by Larry E. Davis and Rafael J. Engel (2008), titled *Measuring Race and Ethnicity* is a work primarily developed by psychologists over the last quarter century, which can be used to understand how individuals from various racial and ethnic groups think about themselves and members of other groups. The book has discussed how the American society has been composed on racial ground and how the so called White reacts to the Afro – American, Asian and Pacific Islanders and to the Hispanics. The vulnerability of such an action is so much evident that they in their preface have argued Race and ethnicity as the key dynamics which play in virtually every major issue America is facing such as educational inequities, crime and imprisonment, employment, health and mental health, inter-group conflict, family dysfunction, problems of youth and the aged all have significant racial and ethnic manifestations.
Argument 2: Multiculturalism: Boon or Bane?

Another important argument that substantiates our research is, to see whether the ethnic variations challenge the establishment of a socially and politically viable multicultural order. To sustain this argument a review of various literature have been made, which stands in favour and against of the multicultural paradigm.

To start with the writings of Rajeev Bhargava, who in his article entitled, "Introducing Multiculturalism", discusses different segments of multiculturalism in a broader framework. He has divided his article into different parts by considering the magnitude of the structural and functional substance of the term. Following with an overview to the term he has brought out a connection between identity and cultural communities. That has been followed by the discussion about different forms of multiculturalism and also pointed about different issues concerning to the term. Further he has offered an analysis of the role of the state in maximizing the legitimacy of it in the areas of prevention of the marginalizing cultures. At last portion the author has referred about the growing distinction among the oppressor and the oppressed and also provides an eye on the bitter cultural conflicts.

Sushila Ramaswamy, in her article titled, "The Incompleteness of the Multiculturalists Agenda: Overlooking the Need for a Shared Identity", has deeply evaluated different aspects of multiculturalism and also forecast a meaning in it. Her article begins with a debate recognizing multiculturalism as the way towards eradicating the incumbencies of liberalism and virtually made a theoretical understanding on the usefulness of the term. In conclusion she has made some criticism on multiculturalism, by taking a non liberal stand point, comparing the term with liberalism and concluded as;
“Liberalism accommodates cultural plurality and stresses on the need for shared identity (can be debated). Multiculturalism by stressing on cultural differences and cultural exclusivity underestimates the safety values that exist within traditional liberal political theory for answering its concern.”

Charles Taylor however in his remarkable work ‘Politics of Recognition‘ has illustrated how Multiculturalism has confronts with the demands for recognition of a particular identity. For him identity is also a result of recognition and sometimes misrecognition of others as who they are. He also visualized the essence of one’s identity mostly formed because of the politics of Multiculturalism. However the author has tried to locate an interface of two important but equally complementary concepts namely; Identity and Recognition. The interface between these two concepts become more interrelated when they are assisted by certain elements of human recognition such as, Honor, Dignity and Self Esteem, coupled with inwardness of our individual personal moralism. This inward moralism he justified with the extensions made by Rousseau stressing upon the moral identification of one Self or the voice of nature within us. To find out the authenticity of such recognition of identity he has argued of a theoretical development of moral recognition. The major thesis the author studies incorporate the idea of recognition or misrecognition as the construction of individual and group identity which for him is the problem associated with culture.

Following him another important writer on multiculturalism is Bhikhu Parekh, who in his work titled, ‘Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political theory’ illustrates different attributes on Multiculturalism. The Author mainly focuses on diverse critical points related to multiple aspects, such as
Politics of recognition, diversity, equality and different modules of Political Structure for accommodating diversity. Hence his major arguments roam around the notions of cultural diversity to understand multiculturalism. He categorizes diversity into three broad categories, such as Subcultural Diversity, Perspectival Diversity and the last but not the least is Communal Diversity. Author in realizing those theoretical positions have identified different types of diversity as the source of Multiculturalism. In his words:

"The Terms Multicultural Society and Multiculturalism are generally used to refer to a society that exhibits all three and other kinds of diversity, one that displays the last two kinds, or to that characterized by only by the third kinds of diversity."

The Author is himself aware of the fact that any society or political structure in its perception cannot be political alone; it has more concern on diversified notions of culture. The author envisages the effects of liberal discourse in shaping the Multiculturalism. He has mainly adopted the models developed by Rawls, Raz and Kymlicka and also visualized different types of Pluralism. The author also visualized the distinction between what composed of "Multicultural" and "Multiculturalism" in a very theoretical ground.

Will Kymlicka in his work, "Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Introduction" have beautifully argued of different attributes on the Multicultural discourse and extensively illustrated it in one of the chapter. Author has started the article with the debates associated with the doctrine called, "Citizenship as Rights." He argued that, in recent decades with the growing consciousness towards group rights, the earlier notions of citizenship which is linked with the distribution pattern,
containing possibilities towards the state's national integration now been largely debated. He further argued that, this 'differentiated citizenship' as he called it is very much related with the demands of the minorities. He argued that, this politics of recognition have prepared the soil for the multiculturalism. He argued the development of the theory of the Multiculturalism is essentially is the outcome of the debates around the Liberalism versus Communitarianism, more precisely between Individualism versus Collectivism. He has depicted this debate in a very clear way when he said,

"If one is a liberal who cherishes individual autonomy, then one will oppose multiculturalism as an unnecessary and dangerous departure from the proper emphasis on the individual. Communitarianism by contrast, view multiculturalism as an appropriate way of protecting communities from the eroding effects of individual autonomy. And of affirming the value of community."47

Contrasting to the views made by the earlier writers mentioned above there are authors who are bit critical of the validity of multiculturalism arguing from different angles to support their position. Anne Phillips48 in her work "Multiculturalism without a Culture" provides a feminist critique on multiculturalism and ask for a sustained demand for the minority rights in a highly majority obsessed society. The author also highlights the argument made by Will Kymlicka on the self styled assumption that 'the wars on minority rights are over'. The author also assumed to have multiculturalism without a culture having a less hegemonic Monoculturalism. By this the author does not mean to withdraw the use of some discriminatory terms such as – gender, race or other socially
disadvantageous terms for the political design, but mean to restrict the way these terms are employed in it. The book has been very much critical of the notion of 'culture', which she believes as something more politically constructed rather than scientifically evolved. She also presumed the socially verifiable terms like ethnicity as constructed as it means security of the majority whites.

The End of Multiculturalism? Terrorism, integration and human rights, most debated work by Derek McGhee is a critique of Multiculturalism with the changing perception on terrorism, integration and some of the issues concerning to human rights. However, in this book these debates are contextualized within the analysis of the new interrelated discourses of integration and security in contemporary Britain. The emphasis on securitization and integration in this book provides the critical framework for examining the shifting discourses on multiculturalism and human rights in contemporary British public policy.

The Chicago Cultural Studies Group known for it's highly concentration in cultural studies presented a highly propound critique on multiculturalism on its widely debated article titled: Critical Multiculturalism. The article argued a cultural deficiency of multiculturalism. The article argued that multiculturalism essentially a utopian slogan, because it counters the core elements of culture. They further argued the limitations of Multicultural studies as,

“vulnerable at this juncture not only because of the reactionary attack on it in the popular press, but because of weak-nesses in its own rhetoric: an overreliance on the efficacy of theory; a false voluntarism about political engagement; an unrecognized assumption of civil-society
conditions; a tendency to limit grounds of critique to a standard brace of minoritized identities."\textsuperscript{50}

The article has been a comparative analysis of Cultural Studies and Multiculturalism.

\textbf{E San Juan Junior}\textsuperscript{51} has another way to critique multiculturalism. He in his article titled, \textit{Problematising Multiculturalism and the 'Common Culture'}, has beautifully argued about the American conception of Assimilation under rhetoric banner of a common culture which for him smack down the voices of the marginalized communities. He has substituted his argument by illustrating examples from different policy decisions and practice of discrimination among the American citizens as critical and problematic.

\textbf{The fourth set of literature} are the writings wrote on different ethnic issues in North East, but those broad generalizations will not help us in understand the context of the present research. Apart from that broad generalization there are few writings which have been useful in studying the present case comprises of two works done by North Eastern Social Research Centre, and two others done at personal level. Yet those are mere statistical in its perspective, as they lacks any theoretical insights, deals nothing but on some of the figures of the present case study.

\textbf{Tom Mangattuthazhe}\textsuperscript{52}, in his book, "Violence and Search for Peace in Karbi Anglong, Assam", has provides an elaborate picture of conflict dynamics in Karbi Anglong and provides ways to solve that problem. He has started with the background study of the area and made an account to redress the conflict situation and its repercussion. In that book the author incorporated different forms of conflict
in that area, yet his main concern is to evaluate the Karbi – Dimasa conflict. The author also analyzes the reasons responsible for those killings and also focuses on the growing peace processes in the area. But despite of the warmth effort the book lacks to provide any theoretical understanding of the conflict, thus leaves scopes for further research.

**Bulu Terang**'s **53** "Community Response of the Karbi – Kuki Conflict in Karbi Anglong", deals with the role and response of the local people to the perpetual Karbi-Kuki conflict. The article is an outcome of an empirical survey conducted through structured questionnaire over a purposely selected sample. He has summarized the findings through the Do No Harm (DNH) framework as a guide and initially ends up with the hope that, the interest of the natives to understand the conflict in a conscious manner would be the way towards peace. Other than the empirical information's the article leaves nothing more than what instigated those conflicts and where do we can put the state.

**ASIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS** **54** has published an important document on the ongoing ethnic problem in Karbi Anglong as, "Lessons Not Learnt by Assam: Ethnic cleansing and internal displacement in Karbi Anglong and NC Hills", which has depicted a realistic picture of the conflict prone Karbi Anglong district. The book talks about various ethnic contestations, its impact on the field of Human Rights and how consequently it leads to another serious problem-the problem of internally displaced persons in the district. The book has also propounded the deplorable conditions in the relief camps and offered an outlook that this kind of ethnic cleansings are responsible in generating basic human rights violations. The major thrust of this work is to study the human rights perceptions of
the ethnic conflicts occurs out of some overt and covert reasons but does not intended to see how this may derail the process of accommodation and what role state play in curtailing the intensity of those conflict ridden memories.

**Conclusion:** Although the gap areas of the reviewed literature have already illustrated in the preceding parts, yet we would like to highlight some of the general disagreement and gap of those literature. The literature reviewed have provided the conceptual framework, theoretical orientation and background knowledge for the present study, yet none of these books dealt extensively with present universe of study. Moreover, there have not been any pedagogy in critiquing multiculturalism from an ethnic point of view and the others who have dealt with some important theoretical positions to study the interface between the traditional believe on multiculturalism and ethnicity does not give us a framework of analysis to study the present area of research. However those literature which are found and reviewed are more often illustrated experiences from the European countries which certainly does not fulfill the intention of the present research. The literature over the present research also does not give us any theoretical understanding of ethnic relations among the relatively minority and relatively majority communities in the region. Recognizing the knowledge gap, the scarcity of literatures and paucity of research works on the intended research, the present study proposes to make a modest attempt to bridge these gaps.

### 1.6 Objectives of the Study

Keeping in mind the above mentioned statement of the problem, the present study would focus on the following objectives.
1. To find out from when the process of accommodation and coexistence in Karbi Anglong has transformed to confrontation.

2. To explore the reasons behind such communalization and inward looking identity in Karbi Anglong.

3. To trace the vulnerability of those ethnic conflicts and identities.

4. To study how these conflicts have challenged the multicultural discourse of accommodation, tolerance and recognition of diversity.

5. To analyses the role of state in policy framing, intervention and responses towards the conflict.

1.7 Hypotheses

1. The sense of ethnic differences became more intense in a plural society when there is less tolerance and recognition.

2. Irresistible emphasis on primordial loyalty challenges Multicultural Accommodation.

3. More severe the ethnic enclave more chances for conflict.

4. Ethnic conflicts in Karbi Anglong are the results of state’s overwhelming emphasis on conflict management and not on structural solution.

5. Piece meal role of the state precipitate ethnic isolation.

1.8 Methodology

The present research has adopted a methodology which is primarily empirical and analytical in nature. The study generated data mainly from the primary and secondary sources. The collection of primary data involved a qualitative method known as Case Study Method by which the researcher observed and studied the people in their given universe. This method involves different sets of tools
comprising different interview technique such as, Narration and Oral History Tradition. Besides the Case Study method, information has collected from the quantitative records as well. The Content analysis method has been used for collection of the quantitative information. The content analysis was made on the four important news daily, two of them are the national daily and two are regional daily. The national daily are, Hindustan Times and the Sentinel and the regional news daily are, the Assam Tribune and the Hills Time. There is a rational of choosing these dailies. The Assam Tribune has been choose as it is largely circulated news daily in Assam and the Hills Time is chose as is supposed to get an amice perspective from the local daily. Whereas the rational behind the choosing these national dailies is the availability of the resources and the coverage made by them. The time frame which the content analysis has carried out comprises from September, 2005 to December, 2005.

Sampling becomes an important part of any research. The study followed the purposive sampling method covering cross-section of people in the study area. As against the numerical strength of the samples in a quantitative research the present research which is a qualitative research focused on the theoretical importance of the samples.

"In a quantitative research another requirement of statistical analysis is that the sample be large and representative, the rationale being that small sample sizes increase the probability of biased results or error. In qualitative research, by contrast, who is included in the study is less about technical requirements and more about theoretical considerations. Sampling procedures in qualitative research are sometimes referred to as purposive,
meaning that the theoretical purpose of the project, rather than a strict methodological mandate, determines the selection process. Furthermore, in some cases, such as when researching drug dealers, random sampling is simply impractical and a purposive sample may be the only option."

Moreover it is also mentioned in the Bryman Alan and Burgess, Robert, G., book, that,

"Our sampling strategy for the qualitative study was guided by theoretical principles, and our express intention was to use it to help to develop a sound theoretical analysis of our data, rather than to produce a representative sample of the population."

Logic of selecting a small sampling in the research roams around five variables: Study Objectives, Study Design, End Point, Type of Sampling and Analysis of the Samples. In a qualitative research the ambition of the research is to collect information from a respective universe of which a big number of sampling is not desirable. The study was mainly carried out on qualitative approach based on the autobiographical memories of the respondents and assisted by the historical memories. The end desire of the research is to analyze the narratives of the issues and to find out theoretical findings from the research. Thus it is not the techniques which are important in qualitative research but the theories. The purposive sampling method over the cross section of people has conducted to find out the variability of answers and also the truthful direct personal experiences of the universe. The analysis of the samples also encouraged the researcher to adopt a smaller sample because of the problem of management and codification of narration. As mentioned above in a quantitative research data has been generated mainly from the sample's
responses in both structured and un-structured interview schedule and which are drawn by the means of codification. Therefore a large sample size is desirable in such research. But in qualitative research the researcher could not adopt such approach as it is not possible to codify each and every research findings which are mostly in narrative forms. Therefore it is believed that,

"Qualitative' can refer to research using only a small sample of interviews, whether structured or unstructured. In either case the qualitative material is bounded by the cultural conventions of the interview....(because) There are theories, themes, ideas and ethnographic details to discover, examine or dismiss"\textsuperscript{57}

For the collection of information audio-visual aids were also imparted in this research. Besides these, the collated data was supplemented primarily by sources especially from the Government Records and other official publications along with the related secondary sources such as books, articles published in journals, magazines, newspaper and other relevant internet sources. After the collection of data, the data analysis has carried out manually and some portions are handled with computer.

1.9 Inter Disciplinary Relevance:

The theme of research has a wide inter disciplinary relevance. It is mainly because of the wide meaning and interpretation involved in the major key terminology used in the research. Moreover, the problem that is studied in this present research has involved inter disciplinary outlook, including Sociology, Anthropology, History, International Politics, Political Theory, Public Policy and offcourse Political Science. The term ethnicity and multiculturalism and the
development of their correlation has both socio-anthropological and historical importance. To define and locate the status of ethnicity in relation to multiculturalism have an important part in sociology and anthropology. The relationship of ethnicity with race and any kind of race relation made it essentially a subject of study in sociology and anthropology. The development of ethnic conflict in the history and the emergence of subjects like ethno-nationalism, ethno-symbolism, ethic revive are some of the important events which have a historical relevance. It is also noticed that emergence of ethnic-nationalism in different countries is an outcome of certain international events and the change in the world politics has shaped the ethno-nationalism process. This has made the present issue a subject of study within international politics. Moreover, the research tries to study certain theoretical concerns of the terms like toleration, equality, recognition to estimate the inter-ethnic solidarity within a multiethnic society, which made it relevant in Philosophy. The present research also provides certain alternatives to resolve ethnic contestation and simultaneously provides remedies to make multiculturalism a successful policy in an ethnically contested region. Thus it's a relevant issue even in public policy and decision making. Therefore it is believed that the present research has an important interdisciplinary relevance.

1.10 Limitation of the Research

It is not possible to write each and every thing in one thesis, as the subject chosen has wide and broad theoretical and empirical explanations attached with it. The present research is also not exception to this limitation. The area of research which move around three important variables i.e. ethnicity, multiculturalism and ethnic contestation in Karbi Anglong have large issues pertaining to the subject. In
the present research the researcher tried to locate ethnic contestation in the light of the cultural conflict in Karbi Anglong, to justify the inter-connection of these two seemingly connected ideas namely, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism, which the researcher feel can be study from a more broad northeastern perspective. Although study of such big universe in a thesis not financially and technically affordable. Moreover the area of research has faced similar (but in different intensity) ethnic conflict in past among the other communities such as- Karbi- Kuki, Karbi – Pnar and Adivashi – Hindi speaking communities, which also need a detailed study. But the present study has limited itself only to study the Karbi-Dimasa conflict which also becomes a limitation of the research. There are several other inter related issues that can be studied otherwise to understand the co-relation between the ethnicity and multiculturalism as it has been done internationally, such as- Race, Language, Religion, Culture and so on. But the present research has confined itself only to study the cultural aspect of this co-relation which the researcher thought as limitation of the present research. There are several limitations in conducting a qualitative research in highly ethnically diverse conclaves and also within the limitation of resource on the theme. Therefore it is noticed that to discuss topic like ethnicity and multiculturalism which has such wide variety of explanations and which are also inter-disciplinary in nature is not possible to discuss in one thesis. Thus the present research has undergoes such theoretical and technical limitations.

1.11 Chapterization:

In order to have a systematic understanding of research topic, the following organization of chapters has made.
Chapter One: Introduction: The chapter one is the introductory chapter which includes the problematisation of the proposed research topic. It also includes the conceptual or theoretical framework, which seeks to relate the various conceptual tools with the ground reality of the present research field. The research methodology and review of relevant literature and the origin and inter-disciplinary relevance is also included in this chapter. The chapter also includes the brief outline of the Thesis and the limitation of the present research.

Chapter Two: Contested Ethnicity: Born or Built?: The second chapter discusses different relevant areas of interpretations associated with the term ethnicity and tries to find out the possible link of ethnicity with nationalism, race and culture. The chapter also highlights the definitional contestation of the term. At the latter part the chapter highlights the major theoretical estimate on ethnicity and tries to find out the best explanation of approach to the present field of understanding.

Chapter Three: Multiculturalism: Politics of Culture: This chapter analyses the theoretical estimate of the term multiculturalism and debates associated with it. It also try to discuss the limitations of the term and try to observe it beyond the definitional precincts. At the latter part of the chapter discussions are made to highlight the possibility of Multicultural state in India and vis-à-vis the problems associated with it.

Chapter Four: Emergence of Ethnic Identity in Karbi Anglong: Issues in Perspectives: The fourth chapter highlights the presence of ethnicity in the state of Northeast and also discusses the present context of ethnic assertion among the communities and the state. This chapter highlights the ethno political estimate on ethnicity in the region of Northeast and tries to bridge these contexts to understand
the present research. The chapter also tries to initiate the problem of ethnicity in the state of Assam and also discuss the debates around it. The chapter highlights the functioning of sixth schedule institutions in Assam and tries to locate the shortcomings of its operation.

Chapter Five: No State No Rest: Ethnicity in Karbi Anglong: The fifth chapter highlight the geographical and demographical understandings of the present case study i.e. Karbi Anglong following the study of ethno-social characteristics of the state of Assam. The chapter made a detailed analysis of the history of ethnicity in the region and the development of ethnic exclusive identity consciousness in the region.

Chapter Six: The Clash and the Ramification of the Karbi – Dimasa Conflict: This chapter emphasis on the case study and also discuss the causes and repercussions of the present conflict. This chapter analyses the role of State and non-state actors in the conflict. It critically discussed the other important issues relating to the conflict.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion: When Will They Know They Are Reconciled?: This chapter summarizes the major findings of the study, and try to formulate certain theoretical findings to relate the present study to the global discourse of understanding the term ethnicity and multiculturalism. At the end the chapter proposes certain alternatives and suggestions to improve the conditions of the contestations and also aims to forecast provisions for future research on the field.

1.12 Conclusion:

The changing roots of the ethnic relationship under a changing parameter of conflict are important to be addressed. The area studied has an important academic importance because of the theory associated with it and also because of the study of
the "Ethnic Dilemma" in the research area. The multicultural societies though in one hand helps in minimizing the lacuna between the majority and minority communities but in other promulgated measures for arousing claims which infact is contested in character. Thus the theory has been suffered of insufficiency in regulating identity and also in accommodating diversity. Even there is a gap of theoretical writings on critical multiculturalism from an ethnic framework. The depicted picture is quite same as in the case of Karbi Anglong, where the multicultural (?) society has been challenged from both within and outside, as a result of internal displacement and construction of rigid cultural enclaves to the study area. Apart from this very brief theoretical gap there is very few academic work that took place over the area of research, which the present research might help in filling up the gap.

References:

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7 Stack, E. and Lyall, C., "The Mikirs" (Reprint), Guwahati, Page-3.
9 For details see, Frontline (Nov. 05 - 18, 2005), Volume 22 - Issue 23.