PREFACE

The undocumented migration refers to inter-country movement of people in contravention of national laws and regulations. In India the undocumented migration from Bangladesh to the Northeast region is a serious problem for the country. Illegal migrants exert additional strain on the State economy and pose a serious threat to the internal security. These includes economic pressure, law and order problem, engaging in terrorism, political instability and their role in fomenting ethnic conflict. Due to the reason of historical links and geographical and physical proximity, there has been continuous flow of Bangladeshi immigrants to the Northeast India throughout the twentieth century. The pressure on agricultural land in Bangladesh was tremendous due to high growth rate of population. On the other hand, neighboring Assam was sparsely populated. The rich tract of alluvial land in the valleys of Northeast India readily attracted the inhabitants of the relatively densely populated Bangladesh. Therefore, a large number of the Muslim peasants migrated to Northeast India, especially to Assam and started agricultural activity. The other significant wave of migration was that of Bengali Hindu refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan as a result of Partition. In the present study those who have entered Assam and other Northeastern States without valid documents post 1971 period are termed as undocumented migrants.

Because of its serious demographic, socio economic and political consequences, it is very important to study about the estimate number of undocumented migration in Assam and other Northeast states. Though this is a
major issue, no serious and scientific attempt has been made to estimate the number of illegal immigrants and other significant aspects associated with this problem. With this point in view, the present study is an attempt to estimate an approximate figure of illegal migrants of Assam and other Northeastern states by applying population projection technique, which is done by using Leslie Matrix model for the periods 1971-2001.

The present research work has been organized into the following six chapters:

The Chapter-I is General introduction, which provides the background information about the migrants of Northeast India and also discussed about different causes of illegal migration and their impact. Further, a review of existing studies related to migration and population growth are detailed. Finally, the need of the present study and broad objective of the present study are listed.

The Chapter-II describes the study area and data used in the present study. Here, the changes in the politico-administrative boundaries in the Northeastern states and Bangladesh during different census periods are described. This includes formation of new states and districts in different census period, which is of vital importance in the present study for calculation of population changes with respect to the area of past census. After the Indian Independence in 1947, the Northeast region of India consisted of Assam, Manipur and Tripura and in the later periods it is went up to seven states. So far formation of new district there are 14 new districts formed in Assam in between 1971 and 1991. This chapter also offers explanation about the data used and their needs in this study with their source of collection. These are mainly different kind of census data collected from various
publications of census of India and also from census of Bangladesh. Further, the life table data and birth, death and natural growth rates used in this study are from the publications of sample registration system (SRS).

The Chapter-III explains the demographic trend of religion and language in Assam. The population growth rates of various religious groups of Assam in different census period are analyzed and the results are compared with the natural growth rate of the respective period. The population growth of different religious groups in Bangladesh is also highlighted. This chapter also describes the growth of different linguistic groups in Assam. The available languages in Assam are divided into some major groups of languages on the basis of their origin and finally the growths of population with respect to these major language groups during different census period are described.

The Chapter-IV represents the trend of population growth of all Northeastern states during different census periods and its comparison with respective estimated natural growth rates of the states. The population growth rate of India’s Northeastern Region is much higher than the national average. This chapter also considers the in-migration from other states and other countries to Northeast India and also out migration to other states from Northeastern states in different census periods. The population growth of Bangladesh in different census periods is also highlighted.

Chapter-V deals with the estimation of undocumented migration into the Northeastern states. The census population of Assam has been projected by applying Leslie Matrix Population Model for the periods 1971-1991 and 1991-
2001. SRS age specific fertility rates and Life table survival rates are used in the projection model. After population projection being done, the estimated population of 1991 and 2001 are calculated by adding the net migrants of respective durations with this projected population. The net Migrants are calculated from census migration data. Finally the illegal migrants are calculated by subtracting estimated population from actual census population of the respective years. Further, as life table is not available for other Northeastern states, therefore national life table of India are used for projecting the population for these other Northeastern states and accordingly illegal migrants are estimated in a similar way.

The Chapter -VI presents the overall summary and conclusion of the study. A discussion of detail summary and concluding remarks by considering results of the present study and those reported earlier have been presented in this chapter. The possible policy implications related to the findings of the present study are also indicated. However, as and when necessary, the limitations of the present research work are also pointed out and the necessary remedial measures have also been suggested to overcome these problems in ensuring future work in the area.