CHAPTER - II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Assam popularly Known as the ‘land of the Blue Hills and Red Rivers’, occupying a strategic position, is the gateway to the North Eastern states. Assam has been a land of culture and civilization, arts and crafts, beauty and delight and has “retained her cultural, if not territorial integrity, with the rest of the country”. Assam, the sentinel of the northeast India is most strategically situated, close to India’s international borders with as many as four countries i.e China, Burma, Bhutan and Bangladesh. It is surrounded on all other sides by predominantly hilly or mountainous tract. Bhutan and Anunachal Pradesh on the East and Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura on the South.

Assam in Sanskrit means, peerless or unparalleled. It was Known as Pragjyotisha or the place of eastern astronomy during the epic period and later named as Kamrupa, the place where Kamadeva, ‘Lord of love’ in Hindu mythology, was reborn. We find sufficient references to this ancient land of ours in our religious skriptures namely, the Mahabharata, the Puranas, the Tantras, the Bhagavat Gita etc. The famous poet Kalidasa also mentions Kamrupa and Pragjyotishpura in his Raghuvansam- a fine piece of Sanskrit literature of the 6th
century. Today, the almost widely accepted opinion of the scholars is that the term Assam has been culled from the original name of the Ahoms, who ruled the land for about six hundred years prior to its annexation by the British. The famous ruins in architecture of great value and the sculptures of delight spread all over Assam are also a clear testimony of Assam’s rich hoary past.

Assam is the nerve-centre of North –Eastern Region of India. It is a paradisiacal state with tribal population like Karbi, Bodo, Kachari, Chutiya, Dimasa, Mishing, Tiwa, Rabha, Khamiyang, Phake, Turung and castes like Brahmins, Kalita, Kaibarta, Ahom, Kumar, Muslims.

Geographically, Assam is a shadow of its earlier physique. Earlier the whole of North East was called Assam (except former princely states of Manipur and Tripura). Assam has been reduced to almost one-third of its original size. The boundary of Assam has undergone many changes since 1826. When the British annexed Assam in 1826, the map of Assam was, more or less, like the map of present day Assam excluding a chunk in the western part. The newly annexed land was brought under the British Government of Bengal. By 1874, the year in which Assam began to be ruled by a Chief Commissioner directly under the control of the Government of India, Assam became an enlarged province which included present day Assam, Nagaland (then Naga Hills district), Meghalaya (then the two districts of Garo Hills and Khasi and Jaintia Hills) and the Sylhet region of Bangladesh (then referred to as the Surma Vally). Later, the Lushai Hills(now Mizoram) area was also brought under the administration of Assam. Assam was tagged on to the Government of Eastern Bengal during the period of
partition of Bengal (1905-1912), the enlarged map of Assam continued till the time of Independence and simultaneously partition in 1947.

Insurgency and political activities led, more than once, to administrative reorganization of the state of Assam after Independence. The Naga Hills district of the state together with a part of eastern Arunachal (then known as North-East Frontier Agency-N.E.P.A) became a separate state of the Indian Union in 1963. Thereafter, All Party Hills Leaders’ Conference (APHLC) wanted their separate identity after Assam’s Official Language Act, 1960, was introduced. Since 1965, Khasi, Jaintia and Garo Hills districts have been recognized as autonomous districts and on 21st January, 1972 Mizoram was separated from Assam to form a Union Territory and became a state on 20th February, 1987. Arunachal Pradesh, former NEFA, was constitutionally a part of Assam but not technically. For all practical purposes, it was regarded as a part of Assam and was specially administered by the Governor of Assam. In 1967, a traditional council was formed in NEFA with five ministers. On 21st January, 1972, it became a Union Territory and was renamed Arunachal Pradesh. It got its statehood on 20th February, 1987. Tripura and Manipur, former princely states, had entered, as a part of India on 15th October, 1949 and became Part-C States on 26th January, 1950. They were converted to Union Territories in 1956 and 1965, respectively and got their full-fledged status of states on 21st, January, 1972.

Assam, at present, holds a total area of 78,438 sq.km. It extend from the latitude N 22.19° and longitude 89.42° to 96.30°. The capital of the state is officially Known as Dispur which itself constitutes a part of Guwahati, the nerve
centre of Assam, situated on banks of river Brahmaputra. Assam Comprises two river valleys and a hilly tract in between, namely the Brahmaputra Valley (through which the river Brahmaputra flows), the Barak valley (through which the river Barak flows) and the Hills Areas (Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills). On the north of Assam lie the Eastern Himalayas reaching the highest altitude in the north-east at Namchu Burwa. The different parts of the sub-Himalayan region, comparatively lower in elevation, are named after the semi-Mongoloid tribes who inhabit in this hills: the Bhutias, Akas, Duflas, Abors, Miris and Mishmis. This range continues towards the south-east and joins the Patkai hills, the natural boundary between Assam and Burma. The Assam range in the middle is also occupied from the east to the west by the various tribes of the Nagas, Jaintias, Khasis and Garos. On the south lie Chin and Lushai (Mizo) hills, Chittagong Hill Tracts and Hill Tipperah. A land traversed with hills, valleys and plains. The mighty Brahmaputra River, one of the four largest rivers of the world, flows right through the land and nurtures a majestic and complex ecosystem around it. Geographically, the soil of the plains of the two valleys of the state is of alluvial and that of the hills is of local origin. The climate of Assam is humid and the state is rich in flora and fauna.

Assam being an ideal meeting ground for diverse ethnic groups since time immemorial, gave shelter to a stream of various communities with their myriad distinct cultures and social milieu. Austro-Asiatic, Negroids, Dravidians, Alpines, Indo-Mongoloids, Tibeto-Burmans and Aryans ventured into Assam through music, dance, rituals, colourful customs and attractive folklore.
DEMOGRAHIC FEATURES

The distribution of population in Assam is uneven owing to the hilly terrain, the number of rivers, the forest and lack of industrialization. Assam was divided into twelve districts (census of India 1951 and 1961). They were --- Kamrup, Goalpara, Darrang, Nowgoan, Cachar, Sibsagar, Lakhimpur, United Mikir and North Cachar Hills, Garo Hills, United Khasi and Jaintia Hills districts, Meghalaya in 1972 from Garo, Khasi and Jaintia Hills districts, and Lushai Hills was separated from Assam and renamed Mizoram which became a Union Territory on 21 January, 1972 and a state on 20 February, 1987.

United Mikir and North Cachar Hills was bifurcated and constituted into two separate districts in 1970, i.e., Mikir Hills and North Cachar Hills (vide Notification No. AAP 134/68/22 dt. 1.2.1970 and AAP 134/68/10 dt. 30.1.1970 respectively. Later, Mikir Hills was renamed Karbi Anglong district.

All the districts have been grouped into “block” called Mauza and the residents pay revenue dues to Mauzadar / Baishaya / Chaudhuri/ kakoti/ Patgiri. Present day Mauzas of Assam are different from the earlier territorial revenue units. For many reasons, the number of Mauzadars are gradually reducing. The areas assigned to them for each Mauza contains twenty to thirty, or even more villages.

The land of Assam is upgraded by earlier subdivisions at district level. As per Census of India 1991 the total number of towns in Assam are 93, inhabited villages (census 1971) 21,995, development blocks (1990-91) 135, Gram Panchayats (1991) 714.
Administrative Division of Assam

**Table 1, Administrative Division of Assam.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Districts : 23</th>
<th>Number of Towns : 125</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Sub-Districts : 142</td>
<td>Number of Villages : 26,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area (in square Km) : 78,438</td>
<td>Population Density (Per sq.Km) : 340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of households : 4,914,823</td>
<td>Household Size : 5.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Census of India 2001)

Assam, a state of India, has currently twenty seven (27) administrative districts. The twenty seven districts of Assam state are:

**Table 2, District of Assam.**

|-------------|------------|------------|
Distribution of Rural and Urban Population in Assam from 1951-2001

Table 3, Distribution of Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>8,028,856</td>
<td>7,684,025</td>
<td>344,831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>10,837,329</td>
<td>10,056,041</td>
<td>781,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>14,625,152</td>
<td>13,335,930</td>
<td>1,289,222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>*18,041,248</td>
<td>*16,258,872</td>
<td>*1,782,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>22,414,322</td>
<td>19,926,527</td>
<td>2,487,795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>26,638,407</td>
<td>23,248,994</td>
<td>3,389,413</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India 2001 (Assam)

Sex Ratio in India and Assam from 1901 to 2001

(Sex Ratio/ Female Per 1000 Males)

Table 4, Sex Ratio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Assam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>972</td>
<td>919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>964</td>
<td>915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>946</td>
<td>868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>941</td>
<td>869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>927</td>
<td>923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>933</td>
<td>932</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India 2001 (Assam)
The above statement reveals that sex ratio at the national level has always shown a downward trend since 1901 except during 1951 and 1981 Censuses.

**RACES OF ASSAM**

Assam is a melting pot of different races, languages and cultures. The population of Assam is a broad intermixture of Mongolian Indo- Burmese and Aryan origin speaking different languages and dialects and having distinct culture of their own. According to Kailash Sharma “Assam is a museum of a large number of human species ever found on Earth.”

The Assam hills which cover more than half of the area of the state contain ancient collections of different species of humanity. Tribes that inhabit the beautiful hill and dales are the Bodo, Karbi, Rabha, Tiwa, Hojai, Mishing, Deori, Dimasa, Mech, Hajong, Barman, Kachari, Sonowal Kachari etc. There are some other tribes who have mainly migrated from other states of North-East India to Assam. They are Chakma, Garo, Khasi, Jaintia, Kuki, Mizo, some Naga tribes, Lakher, Hmar, Pawi etc. There are some tribes who have migrated to Assam for employment mainly in tea gardens from North Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Sikkim etc. They are Lepcha, Bhutia, Mundda, Oraon, Santal, Bhil etc. Many others of Mongoloid origin classified as “Other Backward Classes” live in Assam. They are- the Ahom, Chutiya, Moran, Tai Phake, Aiton, Turung, Duonia, Koch, Rajbanshi, Choudang, Moran, Matak etc. There are also caste groups like Mahishya Das, Sudra Das or Dey, Gowala, yogi (Nath), Suri etc.
Some of the important Scheduled Castes of Assam are- Hira, Jalkeot, Kaibarta, Bania, Patni, Namasudra, Sutradhar, Dholi, Dhobi, Muchi, Bhangi, Bhuimali, Jhal/Malo etc. There are Brahmin, Kayastha, Kalita caste groups of the Assamese Hindu along with some other races like Gurkha (Nepali), Bengali, Bihari, Marwari, Sikh, Manipuri, Tripuri, south Indians etc. A large number of Muslims are there in Assam. The various races and tribes with their distinct national costumes, age old social institutions and the ways of life resemble so many lovely flowers of but different colours of the same beautiful garden that is Assam.

BODOS, THE INHABITANTS OF ASSAM

The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Amendement Act, 1976 specify 14 tribes in the two Autonomous Hills Districts Viz. Karbi-Anglong and North Cachar Hills and nine in the plains districts of Assam as Scheduled tribes. The Bodo Kacharies are numerically the largest plains tribes of Assam.

The Bodos are a race of the Mongolian people who are described as the inhabitants of a country lying north of the Himalayas and West of China. This country is known as the Bod, meaning a homeland of a particular racial community. It is said that there were also many parts of the country known as Hor Bod, Kur Bod etc.

The name of the community and their country is named in their own local language as a general practice. The inhabitants of Bod country are known as Bodo-Ficha or Bodocha or Bodosa. Bodo means land and Ficha or Cha means children,
hence children, of the Bod country. In course of time they came to be known as simply Boddo-Bodo-Boro.

R.M. Nath in “The Background of the Assamese Culture” writes – “When Buddhism spread into the Bod countries, especially the southern part, inhabited by the Buddhist Lamas, it was known as Bsti (Lama) Bod and later on, it transformed into Bsti Bod- Tibod- Tibet etc.”

Linguistically, the Bodos or the Boros include a large group of speakers of the Tibeto-Burman speeches of the North and East Bengal, Assam and Burma (Myanmar). This large group of people include Bodos or Boros of the Brahmaputra valley, MechEs of Lower Assam, West Bengal, East Nepal and plains of Bhutan and Doars area in North Bengal, Rabhas in Lower Assam, Garos in West Meghalaya, Dimasas of Dimapur and Maibong area, Kacharis of Kachar district and in all parts of Assam, Tipras in Tripura, Lalungs, Sonowals, Misings, Deuris, Chutiyas in Upper Assam and Lower Arunachal Pradesh, Koches and Hajongs in the Western Assam and all other parts of the plain Assam.

Hence, by the term Bodo in general which is a generic name of the people, it means all the Tibeto- Burman (Bodo) speaking group of Sino-Tibeto Origin.

Specific Connotation

**The Kacharis:** The Eastern Boros of Cachar (or Kachar) District, especially North Cachar, Calls themselves Kacharis. According to Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, “This group of Bodos assumed their name from the districts of Kachar.
The meaning of ‘Kachar’ is lowland or border land and is originated from Sanskrit Kaksavata- Kachada- Kachar.”

They are simply Known as Dimasa. Dima=big water, i.e Brahmaputra, Sa or Cha=Son or children, hence, Dimasa= Sons or children of the big river Brahmaputra. The Kacharis are divided into several groups. They are Sonowal or Thengal Kacharis, Dimasa Kacharis, Lalung Kacharis and even the Rabhas or Rabha Kacharis.

At present, the Boros or Bodos of the Brahmaputra Vally, particularly of some districts like Kamrup, Nalbari, Barpeta, Udalguri, Sonitpur and Jalpaiguri districts of West Bengal are known as Bodo- Kacharis or Boro-Kacharis, although all of them are popularly known as Bodos or Boros.

**The Mech or Meche:** The Bodos of the North Bengal land Jalpaiguri districts of West Bengal and Goalpara District of Assam are known as Mech or Meche, besides they also call themselves as Bodo and popularly known to their non- Bodo neighbours as Bodo. “They call themselves Mech because they settled in the banks of the river Mechi.”

**Structure of Family**

The Bodo - Kacharis follow the patriarchal family structure. The father is the head of the family. Members of the family enjoy equal status within the family. A son can leave the joint family during the life time of his family to live separately.
Unmarried sons living in the family get double share in the family-property compared to the married sons who stay separately. The eldest son assumes the charge of the house after the death of his father and he fulfills his duties after consulting his mother. The eldest son gets a big share of property in view of his family responsibilities.

A clan is called Ari in Boro language. The clan is divided according to traditional work. But now a days such traditional work is not recognized. There are about twenty - three Aris. They are – Swargiari, Basumatari, Narzari, Musari or Musahari, Gayari, Owari, Khangkhli or Khakhli, Daimari, Lahari, Hajoari, Islari, Kherkatari, Sibingari, Bibaiari or Bibariari, Bingiari or Bingbingari, Mahilari, Mao Marari, Ramsiari or Ramsari, Sangphramari, Phadangari or Phadamari, Ganjlerari, Bargawari or Bargabari or Bargayari, Thalirari or Thaletari. All the groups of the Bodos are of equal status. Since there is no stratification the clan plays no role in regulating the marriages. In respect of the inter-group marriage there is no bar. The clan names are now used as surnames by the Bodos. The followers of Brahma Cult use Brahma surname.

Bodos have six types of marriages but marriage through negotiation has become the normal social custome. The different types of marriages are 1) Sangnanoi lainai haba (negotiated marriage), 2) Gorjia lakhinai haba (marriage by service), 3) Kharsonnai haba (bride enters groom’s house before the settlement of marriage), 4) Bonanoi lainai haba (bride is forcefully taken), 5) Donkhar lainai haba (elopement marriage), 6) Dongkha habnai haba (widow marriage). The Bodos who follow Brahma dharma perform the wedding ceremony in
a reformed manner which is a little different from other systems of marriages. They had Phon or Phon thaka (bride-price), but gradually being abolished. Divorce is rare among the Bodos. If a couple wants to divorce, the case is placed before a big gathering (samaj) for solution. It may take place by mutual consent of husband and wife. This is performed by tearing a betel-leaf which is called Pathoi-lai bisinai in Bodo. If the husband divorces his wife for adequate reason, he has to bear the responsibility of her livelihood for a certain period. A divorced wife cannot take any children with her, except a child below one year.

The Bodos are agriculturists. The people are mainly independent regarding their occupation, hence, cultivation of the paddy crops is their primary source of livelihood. Rice is the chief cultivated crop. Rice comes under three heads- Maisali, Bawa and Ashu, which are planted as Ashu in winter or Ahu in spring and Bawa in monsoon. The other cultivated crops are jute (pathw), mustard seed (besar), pulses etc. Areca tree and its fruits and betel leaves are a good source of income for the Bodos. Endi and Muga rearing is also one of the traditional means of livelihood/occupation of the Bodos.

The Boro-Kachari celebrate Bihu festivals. Baisagu (mid-April) Bihu, Bohag Bihu/ Rangali Bihu, Domashi (mid-January) Bihu, Bhogali Bihu/ Magh Bihu, and Katrigacha (mid-October) Bihu, Kangali Bihu/ Kati Bihu are some of the main Bihus. The traditional musical instruments of Bodos are - Kham(madal), Jotha(manjari), Serja(Violin), Khawbang(tal), Gongana, Sifung (flute), Thorkha (drum) etc.
Language of Bodos

The present Bodo Speaking areas of Assam stretches from Dhubri in the West to Sadiya in the East. In Tripura and Nagaland also we have small number of the Boros or Boro Kacharies. In Jalpaiguri and other adjacent districts of Bengal, the Boros are known as Mech. The Bodo language of Assam has at least four clear-cut dialect areas with a sufficient number of variations; these may be called north-eastern, south-eastern, north-central and southern dialect areas with phonological, morphological and semantic differences. Presently, the language is said to have no inherited script in use.

Dr. P.C. Bhattacharya has observed that the Boro (Bodo) language belongs to the branch of Barish section under Baric division of the Sino-Tibetan family, as per the classification given by Robert Shafer. The Linguistic Survey of India describes the Boro or the Boro-Kachari as a member of the Bodo (Boro) sub-section under the Assam-Burma group of the Tibeto-Burman branch of the Sino-Tibeto-Chinese speech family.

According to Late Bishnu Prasad Rabha, there was a kind of Deodhai scripts found used among the Kacharis (Boros and Dimasa) in the capital Dimapur in ancient time. It is not available now.

Since 1963, after the movement launched by the Bodo Sahitya Sabha, the Devanagari script has been adopted on a national basis. The Boro language has been introduced as the medium of instruction in the Boro predominant Primary Schools of Assam. This has been extended upto the secondary stage of education throughout the State of Assam. On December 22, 2003, the 100th Constitutional Amendment
incorporate Bodo language as one of the languages of Eight Scheduled of the constitution.

After independence, the Bodos of Assam took to undertake social, economic and educational measures, which are directed to protect and preserve their racial identity. They worked out and launched plans that would help them in terms of their growth and development. They started to assert for their constitutional rights and entitlements in respect of their language, culture, education, self administration and history. They realized that mother tongue is the best media to provide education to their people. In the process, they considered it absolutely necessary to have a separate territory within the constitution of India which would obviate their purpose of taking care of their own affairs. They submitted their demands for a separate State followed by prolonged agitations and continued movements. The Government of India appreciated their concern. The Parliament was pleased to pass ‘The Bodoland Autonomous Council Act, 1993’ to provide for the establishment of a Bodoland Autonomous Council with maximum autonomy within the framework of the constitution comprising districts from the Sankosh to the Mizhat/ the river Pansoi, for social, economic, educational, ethnic cultural and ethnic identity of the Bodos residing therein. The Act granted executive powers to the General Council constituted/to be constituted under the Act. Barely three years had passed since the accord, when, in 1996 the Bodoland movement started again. In 1996, Bodo Liberation Tiger (BLT) was formed supporting a separate state within the Indian Territory. The All Assam Tribal Women’s Welfare Federation, formed on 14 July 1996, and renamed as All Bodo Women’s Welfare Federation on 6 November. 1993,
has played a vital role in making the Bodo women conscious of their duties and responsibilities towards the Bodo society. At the same time, The All Bodo Employees’ Federation too, played an active role and helped the agitational programmes by participation and donation. The second phase of Bodoland Movement, co-operated by all non Bodo people through their organizations is a note-worthy record of BTAD (Bodoland Territorial Area District) signing. The second phase of the movement ended on 10 February 2003 with the formation of Bodoland Territorial Area Districts with a hope of peace and prosperity for all.

**BODOLAND TERRITORIAL AREA DISTRICT (BTAD)**

Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD) popularly known as Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) was formed in pursuance of the Memorandum of Settlement (MoS), an Autonomous Council constituted under the Sixth Scheduled of the constitution of India. The BTC has Legislative, Administrative, Executive and Financial powers over 40 subjects. A major thrust has been given to the Socio-economic development of Bodoland to take forward the Central Government’s agenda for peace and development in the region. BTC or BTAD is a challenging and long road to the settlement of Bodo problems. Representatives of the Government of India, Government of Assam and Bodo Liberation Tiger (BLT) held not less than 30 rounds of tripartite talks in between march /2000 and February /2003, before finalizing a record. Accordingly a Memorandum of Settlement was signed amongst the Govt. of India, the Govt. of Assam and the
BLT on February 10, 2003, a path breaking event, which seeks to ensure all ethnic groups of development, equality, security and growth with stability. The BTC formally started functioning after oath taking ceremony held on December 7, 2003 by the Executive Members to head and run the BTC Government. All major Bodo Organisations including All Bodo Student Union( ABSU), Bodo Sahitya Sabha, All Bodo Employees’ Federation, All Bodo Women Welfare Federation extended their whole-hearted support to the accord with the Bodo Liberartion Tiger.

The jurisdiction of BTAD extends over 8,970 square Kms. Covering newly re-organized four districts namely Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri. There are over 3082 villages in BTAD. The Bodoland Territorial Area District is marked by colourful Dokhna and Aronai.

**Location of Districts of Bodoland Territorial Area District (B.T.A.D)**

Kokrajhar District :

Kokrajhar is one of the main districts of BTC. The district lies roughly between 89°46'E to 90°38'E longitude and 26°19'N to 26°54'N latitude. The district is bounded on the North by Bhutan, by Dhubri district on the South, Bongaigaon district on the East and West Bengal on the West.

Chirang District:
After the formation of BTAD, the Chirang district has been carved out of Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon and Barpeta districts. There are two Sub-Divisions in Chirang district. They are Kajalgaon and Bijni. Chirang district is bounded by Bhutan on the North, by Kokrajhar district on the West, by Bongaigaon district on the South and by Baksha district on East.

Bagsha District:

Bagsha district has been made after carving out of certain areas of both Barpeta, Kamrup and Nalbari districts. There are 3 Sub-divisions in the district. They are Musalpur, Salbari and Tamulpur.

The Bagsha district is bounded by Bhutan on the North, Chirang and Bongaigaon district on the west, Bongaigaon, Barpeta and Nalbari, Kamrup on the South and Udalguri district on the East.

Udalguri District:

Udalguri district has been made after carving out of the Nalbari, Darrang and Sonitpur districts of Assam. There are two sub-divisions in the district. They are Udalguri and Bhergaon. Udalguri is the headquarters of the district. Udalguri district is bounded by Bhutan on the North, Darrang and Sonitpur districts on the south, Sonitpur district on the East and Baksha district on the West.
Geographical limits

Bodoland Territorial Council is situated on the North-Bank of the river Brahmaputra along the southern Foothills of Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh of India.

Boundary

**North** - Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh i.e. Indo - Bhutan International Boundary and Assam. Arunachal Inter State Boundary in the east.

**East** - Panchnoi River and Sonitpur District of Assam.

**South** - Artificial zig-zag boundary line i.e remaining parts of Dhubri, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Nalbari, Kamrup, Darrang and Sonitpur Districts.

**West** - Mainly river Sankoch, the Assam-West Bengal Inter State Boundary in the northern portions of Kokrajhar and Dhubri districts.

Demography

The Bodoland Area District is a mini India. Number of communities are living in the area with their own language and cultural traditions. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Amendment Act, 1976 specify 14 tribes in the two Autonomous Hill Districts viz. Karbi- Anglong and the
North Cachar Hills and nine in the plains districts of Assam as Scheduled tribes. Numerically, the Bodo- Kacharis are the largest group among the plains tribes. The demography of Bodoland Territorial Council is dominated by Bodos, an aboriginal tribal community of Assam and has distinct culture and heritage. They belong to the Tibeto- Burman family of Mongolian race.

Various ethnic groups with diverse cultural identities inhabit in this part of the country. Majority of them belong to the Bodo community. Some other tribes viz. Garos, Rabhas and Rajbongshis inhabit side by side with Bodos. In addition to that people belonging to the Muslim Community, Tea and Ex Tea tribes, Nepalis, Assamese and Marowaris, Beharis, Bengali speaking also inhabit in some parts of BTAD. Therefore, this region may be called the cauldron or the melting pot of different races having different languages and customs. The total population of Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) area as per 2001 Census record is 29.21 Lakhs which is roughly 11 percent of the state’s total. The male and female ratio is 1000:995. The average density of population in BTC area is 326 per Sq. K.M.
# Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICTS</th>
<th>DATE OF CREATION OF NEW DISTRICT</th>
<th>DISTRICTS HEADQUARTERS/ SUB-DIVISIONS</th>
<th>PART OF OLD DISTRICT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. KOKRAJHAR:</td>
<td>10th February /2003</td>
<td>Kokrajhar (District Headquarters at Kokrajhar)</td>
<td>Dhubri &amp; Kokrajhar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gossaigaon (Sub-Divisional Headquarters at Gossaigaon)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parbatjhora (Sub-Divisional Headquarters at Gossaigaon)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. CHIRANG:</td>
<td>10th February /2003</td>
<td>Kajalgaon (District Headquarters at Kajalgaon)</td>
<td>Bongaigaon, Barpeta &amp; Kokrajhar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bijni (Sub-Divisional Headquarters at Bijni)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. BAGSHA:</td>
<td>10th February /2003</td>
<td>Musalpur (District Headquarters at Musalpur)</td>
<td>Barpeta, Nalbari &amp; Kamrup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tamulpur (Sub-Divisional Headquarters at Tamulpur)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Salbari (Sub-Divisional Headquarters at Salbari)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. UDALGURI:</td>
<td>10th February /2003</td>
<td>Udalguri (District Headquarters at Udalguri)</td>
<td>Darrang &amp; Sonitpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bhergaon (Sub-Divisional Headquarters at Bhergaon)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Geographical Feature of Bodoland Teritorial Area District (BTAD)

Climate :

The BTAD has a Sub-tropical climate with semi-dry hot summer and cold winter. Dust storms are common in the southern part during February to April of the year because of its proximity to the Brahmaputra. Generally December and January are the coldest months of the year. The maximum rainfall generally occurs during a period of four months starting from May/June. The drainage system is inadequate in the BTAD region. Heavy rainfall during summer in the neighbouring states like Arunachal Pradesh (state) and Bhutan (country) causes loss of crops and other properties every year.

The annual rainfall varies from 1500mm. With respect of temperature, the district is divided into belts in East- West direction. The middle belts are the hottest, where temperature goes upto 36 degree and the northern belts is the coolest, the temperature goes below 10 degree here. Other parts experience temperature ranging around 22 degree. The mean humidity is around 82%.

Soil :

The Northern part consists of the vast tracts of Marshy Teria- land of Bhutan hills filled up by alluvial and colluvial deposits forming light texture soils with a loose stratum. Major part of the district, mainly southern part, is younger alluvial entisols. The central portion is covered by older alluvial alfisols.
Agriculture:

Agriculture is the main source of income of the people in this region. The primary sector, inspite of being the fulcrum of the economy, is not very developed. Agricultural infrastructure like irrigation, credit facilities, processing units and storage facilities etc. are lacking which has compelled the farmers to restrict to one crop a year. However, in the last couple of years due to introduction of high yielding varieties of seeds, the agriculture yield of the area has gone up manifold.

Irrigation:

Increase in agriculture production and productivity depends, to large extend, on the availability of water through the irrigation facility. The period of rainfall is restricted to only four months in a year, June to September, when monsoon arrives. The remaining eight months are dry. Even during monsoon, the rainfall is scanty and undependable in many parts of BTAD. Sometimes the monsoons are delayed considerably while sometimes they cease prematurely thus pushing large area into drought like situation.

So, for solving problem created by insufficient, uncertain and irregular rains the Bodoland Territorial Council (B.T.C.) has given great importance on proper development of irrigation facilities by constructing big and small irrigation structures across the rivers and streams running through the B.T.A.D. The Champamati Irrigation Projects and Sukla Irrigation Project taken up is now on the verge of completion. Presently about 15,000 families of B.T.A.D. have been
benefited directly or indirectly by irrigation facility which has played a pivotal role in upliftment of rural economy.

**Railway Service**

The BTAD is connected by Broad Gauge Line. The improvement of this railway service will go long way in the economic upliftment of this district. Broad Gauge Services can be seen via Kokrajhar, the administrative headquarter of Bodoland Territorial Council.

**Education of Bodoland Territorial Area District**

Number of Colleges, Higher Secondary Schools and High Schools are there in the area for taking care of the educational need of the people. Sarba Siksha Abhijan (SSA), programme is also continuing to improve the infrastructure of Primary Education for attracting students to reduce dropouts. Organizations like All Bodo Students Union (ABSU), All Bodo Women Association, All Bodo Women Welfare Federation etc. propagate and encourage the illiterate guardians in order to educate their children. The creation of Bodo medium of education since 1963 created a new wave among the illiterate guardians to educate their children through mother tongue. It is a new scenario of the new wave and trend of present Bodo society so that young learners are playing their pointed heeds towards (1) general education, (2) technical education, (3) games and sports, (4) dance, (5) songs and music
computer education as extra curricular subjects of learning, according to their choice and interest.

In Education Department under Bodoland Territorial Council (B.T.C) area, there are four sub-sectors, which has been divided as:

1. Elementary Education
2. Secondary Education
3. Higher Education and
4. Training Institute

The Elementary Education is meant for Lower Primary and Upper Primary Schools. Secondary Education is meant for High and Higher Secondary Schools. Higher Education is meant for College and University and the Training Institute is meant for Basic Training Centre, DIET and B.Ed. College. The Director of Education, BTC is the overall contributing authority under BTC area in Education Department. Bodoland University has been established at Kokrajhar. Another technical higher educational institution, B.B Engineering College, apart from the existing has also been established in Headquarter town of BTC.

The literacy percentage of the Bodoland Territorial Council is much lower than that of rest of the state of Assam and North East Region. Programmes like Adult Education, Total Literacy Programmes and Sarba Siksha Abhijan
Mission have been launched, yet the council area has educationally remained backward.

**KOKRAJHAR – ORIGIN OF THE NAME AND LOCATION**

**Meaning of the name Kokrajhar**

Controversy surrounding the original name Kokrajhar. The Bodo people have the practice of naming a place by looking at its most prominent feature be it a trees, a river, a remarkable incident or whatever. The origin of a name on the basis of the structure of place or the direction or paths or some other abstract factors is common. The elder population of the town described that Kokrajhar was a forest area before the first settlers came to Kokrajhar. Accordingly to Padmasri Madaram Brahma the name Kokrajhar might have been derived from ‘Khengkhrajhar’. Khengkhrajhar is a Bodo word which means a forest with curvature in shape or in the direction of path therein.

A more plausible theory was put forwarded by late Mohini Mohan Brahma. According to him it is Khunkhrajhar or the jungle of Khungkhra plants from which Kokrajhar derived. Brahma opined that the place was bounded in Khungkhra plants in the past. Khungkhra plants is a type of plant which yields fibre like jute plant and fibre is used to make strings of the serja, the Bodo traditional musical instrument.
Location

Kokrajhar described as the gateway to the northern region of India is one of the twenty seven district of Assam. Kokrajhar district is located on the north bank of the river Brahmaputra that slices the state of Assam into two, identified as north and south banks. The district lies roughly between 89°46'E to 90°38'E longitudes and 26°19'N to 26°54'N latitudes. Both road and rail touches this district at Sirampur before they go on to other districts in Assam and the other northeast states.

The district is bounded on the north by Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan, by Dhubri district on the south, Bongaigaon district on the east and the Indian state of West Bengal on the west. According to census 2001, the district has a total area of 3,169.22 square km. and a total population of 9,05,764. The district can be easily reached as both the mainline road and rail passes through this district. Beautiful places to visit in the district, the natural scenery is exquisite especially in the side.

The kingdom of Bhutan is intricately linked with the district of Kokrajhar in many vital aspects of life of the people living both in the Bhutan hills and the plains of Kokrajhar. Hassle - free movement of the people across the international boarder for the purpose of business and towns.

Historical Background of the Present Kokrajhar District

Kokrajhar district originally was a part of undivided Goalpara district. It was merely a small village till 1956 with a railway station that connected the
district to the rest of the world. Bimala Prasad Chaliha was the Chief Minister of Assam in 1957, due to the demand of the Bodo people led by Rubnath Brahma who was also a minister in the Chaliha Ministry a new civil sub-division was created after carving out the northern part of Dhubri sub-division and some parts of Goalpara sub-division. The new sub-division was called Kokrajhar sub-division. The area covered by the then Kokrajhar sub-division consisted of five tracts of the Eastern Doors, viz. Bijni, Sidli, Chirang, Ripu and Guma with a total area of 1569.9 square miles or 4065.88 square kilometers. In 1983, 1st July, the Kokrajhar sub-division was upgraded into Kokrajhar district with headquarter at Kokrajhar town. Four police station were there in the district. They were Bijini, Sidli, Kokrajhar and Gossaigaon. The area of the district extended from the Manas river in the east to the Sankosh on the west.

Further reorganization of the district was made in 1989, and some new districts were created. About 40% of the total geographical area of Kokrajhar district was carved out for inclusion in the new district of Bongaigaon. The district has two revenue sub-divisions at the time- Kokrajhar and Gossaigaon sub-divisions. The river Gongia which is known as Tipkai in the Southern part is the natural boundary of two civil sub-divisions and Gossaigaon town is the headquarter of Gossaigaon sub-division.

After the formation of Bodoland Territorial Area District some new areas are added to the Kokrajhar district. Kokrajhar district now at present is one of the main district of Bodoland Territorial Council. It is the headquarter of Bodoland Territorial Council. Certain areas of Dhubri district has been carved out
and added to the new district. There are three sub-division in the district. They are Kokrajhar, Gossaigaon and Parbotjhora sub-division.

**Geographical features**

Climate :

Characteristic of the lower Brahmaputra valley of Assam, Kokrajhar district is situated in a humid sub-tropical climate with high rainfall and humidity. Origin from the Bhutan hills, river and rivulets flows through the districts and acts as tributaries of the Brahmaputra that flows from east to west far from the southern boundary of Kokrajhar district. The Champamati, the Gaurang and the Tipkai river flows from north to south are the important rivers of the district.

Soil :

Throughout the district, the soil is composed of land and clay in varying proportion ranging from pure sand in the riverbed to soft clay in different parts. The rocks found in the district are all sedimentary. Two small hills i.e. Dholmara N.C Hills and Nadangiri Hills are in the southern most part of district composed of metamorphic rocks.

Forests :

One of the prominent features of Kokrajhar district is forest. The main forest divisions of the district are Haltugaon and Kachugaon forest divisions. Guma division also falls within Kokrajhar district, after the formation of B.T.C.
Chakrasila wild life also falls in the district. The golden langur one of the rarest primates is found in Chakrasila wild life sanctuary.

**Literacy**

According to census 2001, the literacy rate of Kokrajhar district was 52.55%.

The Prominent Institutions in the district Kokrajhar upto 2010 are

- Recognises High/High Madrassa school by SEBA 42 Nos.
- Provincialised College - 3 Nos.
  1. Kokrajhar Govt. College, Kokrajhar
  2. Gossaigaon College, Gossaigaon.
  3. Janata College, Serfanguri
- Deficit System of Grant-In-Aid by the Bodoland Territorial Council
  1. Commerce College, Kokrajhar
  2. Girls College, Kokrajhar
  3. Science College, Kokrajhar
  4. Fakiragram College, Fakiragram
  5. Swami Yoganandagiri College, Shaktiashram
  6. Kokrajhar Music and Fine Arts College, Kokrajhar
Degree College having TDC Part-II Govt. Concurrence (Affiliated by the G.U)

Bodofa U.N.Brahma College, Dotma

Junior College Recognised by the AHSEC, Assam & Affiliation upto 10+2

Stage HSS Level

1. Tipkai Jr. College, Tipkai
2. Bodofa U.N. Brahma Jr. College, Dotma
3. Bagribari Jr. College, Bagribari
4. Zamduar College, Saraibil

List of Degree College/ B.Ed. College (Venture)

1. Gossaigaon B.Ed. College, Gossaigaon
2. Zamduar College, Saraibil
3. Kokrajhar Law College

Sanskrit Tol

1. Biseswar Sanskrit Pathsala, Jharbari

Number of L.P. Schools : 1256
Number of ME/MV/MEM Schools : 157

Kendriya Vidyalaya, Kokrajhar : 1 B.Ed. College

: 1 Basic Training Centre
: 1 District Institute of Education and Training (D.I.E.T)

1 Central Institute of Technology : 1 B.B
Engineering College : 1 Bodoland
University, kokrajhar : 1

(Source : Director of Education Bodoland Territorial Council Kokrajhar)

**Population of the District**

Female – 4,39,573
Total – 9,05,764
Male – 4,66,191

**Table 6, Population of the District.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>8,41,823</td>
<td>4,32,465</td>
<td>4,09,358</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>63,941</td>
<td>33,726</td>
<td>30,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Caste</td>
<td>31,167</td>
<td>16,300</td>
<td>14,867</td>
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<td>Scheduled Caste (Rural)</td>
<td>24,190</td>
<td>12,673</td>
<td>11,517</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scheduled Caste (Urban)</td>
<td>6,977</td>
<td>3,627</td>
<td>3,350</td>
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<td>Scheduled Tribe</td>
<td>3,04,985</td>
<td>1,54,143</td>
<td>1,50,842</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribe (Rural)</td>
<td>2,93,102</td>
<td>1,48,151</td>
<td>1,44,951</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribe (Urban)</td>
<td>11,883</td>
<td>5,992</td>
<td>5,891</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Caste</td>
<td>5,69,612</td>
<td>2,95,748</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Caste (Rural)</td>
<td>5,24,531</td>
<td>2,71,641</td>
<td>2,52,890</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Changes in the Sex Ratio (females per 1000 males) 1901-2001

Table 7, Changes in the Sex Ratio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ASSAM Total</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>KOKRAJHAR Total</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>919</td>
<td>929</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>915</td>
<td>923</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>886</td>
<td>886</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>895</td>
<td>906</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>885</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>877</td>
<td>877</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>886</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>868</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>870</td>
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<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>869</td>
<td>887</td>
<td>661</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>901</td>
<td>664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>896</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>921</td>
<td>747</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Caste (Urban) 45,081 24,107 20,974

Census 2001

67
Primary education constitutes a very important stage of the entire structure of education. It is the foundation of the entire educational ladder.

In 1928, the Ahoms came to Assam and ruled Assam for about six hundred years. There was no organized system of primary education during the Ahom days. Domestic instruction and professional education was prevalent due to caste system. A son of Khanikar (carpenter) automatically becomes a Khanikar and the family tradition and skill continued generation after generation. The priestly classes also contributed to the cause of learning through their study of Astrology and religious books.

According to the treaty of Yandabo, Assam came under the East India Company in 1826. Assam educational institutions consisted at that time were pathsalas for Hindus, tols for Brahmans and Upper class Hindu, Maktabs and Madrassas for the Muslims and Satras for the Vaishnavas. Satras greatly influenced the cultural and religious life of the Assamese people.
The agent of East India Company David Scott arrived in 1826. Soon after his arrival he tried to improve the indigenous schools of Assam and wanted to increase the number of such schools. It was his belief that undue emphasis on English would not only wound local sentiments and exacerbate feelings but also generate misapprehension in the popular mind to the disadvantage of the rulers. Scott’s ideas were largely accepted by the government of the East India Company with the result that the orientalist view prevailed at the official level as a general policy.

Scott proposed to encourage the indigenous schools by land grants. This proposal was accepted by the government of India in October 1826 and eleven schools were established mostly in lower Assam. David Scott was mainly responsible for developing the principles of administration in both upper and lower Assam.

In 1838, the Collectors of Gauhati prepared a scheme of village education by remodeling and increasing the indigenous schools started by David Scott and by establishing an anglo-vernacular schools at Kamrup. He wanted to entrust the administration of these school to a local committee consisting of the Choudhury and two respectable inhabitants of the locality concerned. This scheme however was not accepted by the General Committee of Public Instruction at Calcutta on the plea that they were following the Filtration theory, according to which education always filters down from the upper classes of the society to the lower classes.
The Educational Despatch of 1854 made the government responsible for conferring upon the natives of India those vast moral and material blessings which flow from general diffusion of useful knowledge and which India may under providence, derive from her connexion with England. Despatch laid down that higher education should grow under private enterprise and that lower or primary education should be developed through the direct instrumentality of the government. It also made provision for grant-in-aid to be given to private or indigenous schools capable of imparting good and secular education. This policy was implemented in all provinces with the result that the provincial governments took the initiative in establishing and aiding primary schools. This system greatly helped the development of primary education in Assam. In 1857-58, the number of pupils receiving instruction in such schools was 750 in Sibsagar and 600 in Kamrup.

The Christian Missionaries also started primary schools side by side. Since Bengal came under the company earlier and Assam was amalgamated with the Presidency of Bengal, all jobs of the company in Assam went to the Bengalees. Bengali was the medium of instruction in the schools and also the language of the court, which continued till March, 1873. From April 19, 1873, the Assamese language was used in the primary schools and in the court. In kokrajhar district under Dotma Block one primary school (11 No. Chandra Para J.B School) was established in 1878. During 1880-1889 no primary school was established in kokrajhar district. In the period between 1890-1899 three primary schools was established i.e 17 No.Chautaki J.B School in 1891 under kokrajhar Block, 20 No.
Baraguri J.B School in 1897 under Dotma Block and 426 No. Silbari L.P School in 1892 under Parbotjhora Block.

The Indian Education Commission of 1882 favoured the transfer of control of the primary schools from the government to the local bodies and introduced the system of ‘payment by result’ in giving grants to schools. This has adversely affected the growth of primary education in the state. The policy followed by Lord Curzon in the field of primary education gave an impetus to the cause of primary education in Assam also and as a result the number of primary schools increased considerably. The growth of primary schools in kokrajhar district increased to nine in between the period from 1900-1909, which was seven during the period from 1910-1919.

As a result of the pioneering efforts of Gopal Krishna Gokhale different Acts were passed during 1919-1930 in different provinces in the country providing thereby for free, compulsory and Universal Primary Education, Assam being no exception in this regard. The provincial government of Assam had made an attempt to make primary education free and compulsory by passing the Primary Education Act, 1926 as a followup of the Central Government resolution of 1913 for such measures. Incidentally, this was the first of a series of similar Acts passed by the government of Assam after Independence. It made ‘local authorities’ i.e. Local Boards and Municipal Boards responsible for the implementation of the policy of compulsory primary education, with the provincial authorities undertaking to provide two thirds of the fund required for the purpose. The number of primary schools in kokrajhar district was nineteen
during the period from 1920-1929 and which was rise to fifty-three in between 1930-1939. The local authorities however, failed to implement the Act, primarily because of the educational tax needed to be levied on the people of the area of compulsion, which was viewed as an unpopular measure. Moreover, it was not easy to compel farmers to send all their children to school. As a result illiteracy in the society continued to be very widespread.

The second legislative action was taken shortly after Independence in 1947 for making Primary Education Universal, free and compulsory. The provincial legislative of Assam passed the Assam Primary Education Act, 1947 which shifted the responsibility for introducing free and compulsory primary education from local and Municipal Boards to sub-divisional School Boards created under the provisions of the Act, their being a provincial Advisory Board for Primary Education headed by DPI to school teachers and Attendance Officers, teacher training, curriculum of primary education, text books etc. The growth of primary school in kokrajhar district during the substantial year 1940-1949 was one hundred twenty six. Although the 1947 Act too failed to achieve the objective of Compulsory Primary Education, it paved the way for increased opportunities for primary education. The Educational Survey in the state of Assam, 1957 reports that during the period from 1949-50 to 1956-57, enrolments ranging from 80% to 88% of the estimated number of children of school-going age took place in many areas of compulsion. For instance, in 1956-57, 82.14% of the estimated number of 3,50,323 children of school going age in 13 towns and 4405 villages, which were decreased as areas of compulsion, were enrolled in the primary schools of the areas concerned.
The Assam Primary Education Act, 1947 was followed by four other Act passed by the Legislative Assembly of Assam during the next three decades, viz.

(i) The Assam Basic Education Act, 1954

(ii) The Assam Elementary Education Act, 1962

(iii) The Assam Elementary Education Act, 1968

(iv) The Assam Elementary Education (provincialisation) Act, 1974

The Assam Basic Education Act, 1954 was passed in September, 1954. The Government of Assam had accepted the concept and policy of Basic Education aiming at a better provision for Universal, free and compulsory education. Accordingly a process of conversion of existing primary schools and Middle Vernacular Schools to Junior Basic and Senior Basic Schools respectively was started. But the process of conversion was rather slow. The goal of Compulsory Primary Education could not fully achieved through the 1954 Act also. The focus of the 1954 Act, however, was the introduction of Basic Education, but there was fundamental pedagogic problems of teaching the different subjects through a particular craft or crafts, compounded by the lack of adequate number of trained teachers. Some confusion also arose with the concept of basic education vis-a-vis the Wardha Scheme, the Zakir Hussain scheme and the one contained in the Sargent report. Therefore, although existing primary schools and middle vernacular schools were systematically converted to Junior Basic and Senior Basic schools in a phased manner during 1954-1962, the pursuit of Gandhijis ideas of basic education was abandoned in 1962.
The abandonment of basic education necessitated the adoption of a new Act. Accordingly, the Assam Elementary Education Act, 1962 was passed, once more to make provision for the management and control of Elementary Education and to provide free and compulsory Elementary Education in Assam in gradual stage. Meanwhile, the Assam Panchayat Act was passed in 1959 and local authorities involved in the process of implementation of the Act included Gaon Panchayats also, the Block Development Officers with the help of the officers of the education department acting as the coordinating agency between the Gaon Panchayat and the State Board for Elementary Education headed by the Minister of Education. The Act entrusted the State Government with the responsibility of administration, supervision, inspection, curriculum and syllabus and training of teachers for Elementary Education. The State government was also vested with powers to rescind in part or a whole any decisions of a local authority. Although the Assam Elementary Education Act, 1962, extended the scope of free and compulsory education upto the Middle stage of education covering children of the age group of 6 to 14 years it appeared to be slightly over-ambitious in as much as the state was no where near achieving the goal of even compulsory primary education.

The 1962 Act, was also replaced by another Act within six years. Drastic changes were made in the composition of the State Board of Elementary Education through the Assam Elementary Education Act, 1968. The Secretary of Education, the D.P.I, the Additional D.P.I. (Hills) the principal of the State Institute of Education etc. were included as members in the enlarged. State Board
chaired by the Minister of Education. In addition to 26 members, the State Board included all the Inspectors of Schools as Joint Secretaries of the Board.

The enlargement of the State Board also necessitated the constitution of a smaller body for executing the decisions of the Board for meeting more frequently, if necessary, and so a 7 member Executive Committee of the State Board under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Education and with the Secretary of the State Board as ex-officio secretary, was constituted as per the provisions of the new Act.

The 1962 Act had made the Deputy Inspectors of Schools Assistant Secretaries of the State Board functioning as Chief Executives of the Regional Boards in their respective headquarters. Under the new Act, Deputy Inspectors were not included as members of the State Board, instead, they were designated as Secretaries of the Regional (school) Boards. Chairman of the Regional Boards were nominated by the Government.

Although Regional Boards continued to exercise the same powers and duties as before, including their direct responsibility for enforcing compulsory Elementary Education they came under the strict control of the State Board through its joint Secretaries. Instead of acting as a coordinating agency between the Gaon Panchayat and the State Board, Block Development Officers Coordinate the activities of the Regional Board and the Gaon Panchayat under the new Act. Other provisions including the clauses of compulsion in respect of Elementary Education remained the same on the whole.
The Assam Elementary Education (provincialisation) Act, 1974, was passed by the Assam Legislature to provincialise the services of the teachers of Elementary schools including pre-primary schools as well as employees of the State Board and the Regional Boards of Elementary Education. The management and control of Elementary Education vested in the authorities under the provisions of the Assam Elementary Education Act 1968 was also taken over by the State Government under this Act. Retaining the goal of free and compulsory Elementary Education, the Act 1974 aimed chiefly at making the teachers of Elementary Schools as well as the employees of different categories of the State Boards of Elementary Education eligible for full salaries and retirement benefits by bringing them under the direct management and control of the State Government. All the assets and liabilities of the State Board and the Regional Boards were vested in the State Government under this Act. The administration, inspection and supervision of Elementary Education and the recruitment and training of teachers became the responsibility of the State Government. The government determines the curriculum, syllabus, textbooks, duration, standard of the course etc.

Starting with 7,347 primary schools in 1947, the system of primary education in the state witnessed considerable expansion during the decades of Independence, although the quality of primary education in general and the problem of untrained teachers in particular have always remained a week point in the system. The objective of universalisation of primary education still remains unfulfilled, and inspite of very positive contributions of the operation blackboard
scheme and the District Primary Education Programme after NPE, 1986, infrastructural weakness remain still visible in many primary schools.

Growth of Institutions in Assam and Kokrajhar District

The following table gives a year wise picture of growth in the number of Elementary level (lower primary) institutions in Assam and kokrajhar District since 1951 to 1999.

**Table 8, Number of Institution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Institutions (lower primary)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ASSAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951-1959</td>
<td>15015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The number of lower primary schools during the period 1951-1959 in Assam was 15015 and in kokrajhar district it was 408. In between 1960-1969, the number of institution in Assam and kokrajhar district was 19889 and 618, which was 21723 and 944 during 1970-1979. During the period from 1980-1989, the number of institution rise to 27693 in Assam and 1102 in district kokrajhar. Total lower primary schools in Assam between the period 1990-1999 was 33236 and 1110 in kokrajhar district.

Population in the age-group 0-6, number of literates and literacy rate for the state of Assam, for the district of kokrajhar, 2001.

Table 9, Total Population, for the State of Assam and Kokrajhar District.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Assam</th>
<th>Kokrajhar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960-1969</td>
<td>19889</td>
<td>618</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1979</td>
<td>21723</td>
<td>944</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1989</td>
<td>27693</td>
<td>944</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1999</td>
<td>33236</td>
<td>1110</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source
Statistics Branch, Directorate of Secondary Education, Assam.
District Elementary Education Office, Kokrajhar.
Table 10, Population in Age-Group 0-6, for the state of Assam and Kokrajhar District.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Assam</th>
<th>Kokrajhar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>4350248</td>
<td>169032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>2215104</td>
<td>86482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>2135144</td>
<td>82550</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11, Number of Literates for the State of Assam and Kokrajhar District.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of literates</th>
<th>Assam</th>
<th>Kokrajhar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>14327540</td>
<td>400123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>8324077</td>
<td>242482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>6003463</td>
<td>157641</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 12, Literacy Rate for the State of Assam and Kokrajhar District.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literacy rate</th>
<th>Assam</th>
<th>Kokrajhar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>64.28</td>
<td>52.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>71.93</td>
<td>61.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>56.03</td>
<td>42.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ranking of kokrajhar district in the state of Assam by population size in 1991 and 2001.

Population :

(i) 1991--------808730
(ii) 2001--------905764

Percent of total population of the state:

(i) 1991--------3.61
(ii) 2001--------3.49

Rank in :

(i) 1991--------15
(ii) 2001--------15

Sex-ratio (Number of females per 1000 males)

(i) 1991--------940
(ii) 2001--------945

Rank in :

(i) 1991--------5
(ii) 2001--------3

**Literacy rates by sex in Assam and Kokrajhar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literacy rate +</th>
<th>Assam</th>
<th>Kokrajhar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons :</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>52.89</td>
<td>40.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>64.28</td>
<td>52.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Males :        |       |           |
| 1991           | 61.87 | 49.46     |
| 2001           | 71.93 | 61.9      |

| Females :      |       |           |

81
The literacy rate for the state of Assam and Kokrajhar district was 52.89% and 40.47% during 1991 of which male literacy rate was 61.87% and 49.46% and female literacy rate was 43.03% and 30.83%. According to the census report 2001, the literacy rate for the state of Assam and Kokrajhar district was 64.28% and 52.55% of which male literacy rate was 71.93% and 61.9% and female literacy rate was 56.03 and 42.65%.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CURRICULUM OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN ASSAM (KOKRAJHAR)

After Independence, Primary Education Act was passed in 1947 to introduce free, compulsory and universal primary education in graded stages for the children of the age group 6 to 11 years. Subsequently, the said Act was replaced by the Assam Basic Education Act, 1954 following which the government of Assam accepted basic education as the pattern of Elementary Education. After the passage of this Act in September, 1954, a process of conversion of existing primary schools into Junior Basic Schools was started. In 1955, the State Board of
Basic Education was constituted to advice the government on matters relating to basic education including preparation of curriculum and selection of textbooks. For the preparation of curriculum and syllabus, the Board had a Committee with the DPI as Chairman. The curriculum included the following subjects (for class I to III) –

1. Vernacular
2. Arithmetic, mental arithmetic, accounts, jama kharach, reading of clock.
3. General knowledge and elementary science, hygiene.
4. Geography
5. Handwork like clay modeling, bamboo work, paperwork etc.
6. Drawing
7. Physical exercise.

The Assam Basic Education Act, 1954 failed to achieve the desired results and as a result the ideal of imparting basic education through crafts as well as the process of conversion of primary and Middle schools into Junior basic and Senior basic schools was discontinued.

In 1968, the curriculum renewal programme was taken up in Assam by the Directorate of Public Instruction in the light of the National Policy of Education (1968) and instructions from the centres to states for development of curriculum in respective states. The State Board of Elementary Education instructed State Institute of Education (SIE) Jorhat, Assam to take the responsibility of preparation of a new curriculum for primary education. Accordingly, the SIE undertook the task of developing the new curriculum for
primary level. The four year new curriculum so prepared was implemented from the year 1972 after its approval by the state government. The subjects included in the curriculum were –

1. Mother tongue (reading, writing, dictation, grammar)
2. Arithmetic
3. General knowledge and science
4. Geography (for Class I to Class IV)
5. Arts and Handwork
6. Sewage
7. Physical Education

The curriculum was prepared classwise in detail for each subject along with instructions on teaching methods, materials to be used and textbooks to be followed. The curriculum was printed by the Assam State Textbook Production and Publication Cooperation Limited. Though it was developed in 1969, it was implemented in the year 1973 only. The curriculum and syllabus implemented at the time remained unchanged upto 1986.

The National Policy of Education 1986 was adopted in May 1986 and in the light of NPE, the ‘National Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary Education : A framework 1988’ was prepared by the NCERT through a series of meetings and seminars.

SCERT, Assam developed the new curriculum for primary schools of the State in the light of the guidelines provided in the National Curriculum framework.
The curriculum subjects were –

(1) One language (mother tongue/ regional language)

(2) Mathematics

(3) Environmental studies (in class III and IV, it is social studies and science)

(4) Health and physical education

(5) Art

The duration of school activities is 5 hours per day, out of which 4 hours are for teaching learning and 1 hour for prayer, leisure etc. The total number of school days is considered as 200 out of which some hours are to be spent for remedial teaching for slow learners.

The new curriculum was introduced in a phased manner from the year 1988 as follows:

1988 - I and II
1989 – II and IV

This curriculum remained unchanged till 1998.

SCERT Assam developed a new curriculum in 1998 for primary schools of the state to incorporate new trends in Primary Education. The new curriculum was approved by the state government and printed by UNICEF for all the schools in the state in December, 1998. The new curriculum is fully competently based and child centric and aims at improving the quality as well as reducing the curriculum load in keeping with the concerns expressed by the Yashpal Committee report, 1993. The present curriculum for primary education in Assam comprised –
(1) Mother tongue
(2) Mathematics
(3) Environmental Studies (EVS) (In classes III and IV : Social Studies as EVS I and Science as EVS II)
(4) Art education
(5) Physical education

The new curriculum is child centric, activity and competency based related to the child's day to day environment and oriented towards the principle of joyful learning. Emphasis has been given on the development of skill and understanding as well as application rather than on mere gathering of knowledge and information as in traditional curricula. The curriculum is developed for all types of learners. Special importance is given to rural, first generation learners, learners of different communities like tea workers, SC, ST etc. Accordingly, text books have also been prepared, without any bias in respect of religion, caste or creed.

The State government has introduced a one-year pre-primary course in all primary schools of Assam from 1999, following which SCERT has developed a curriculum cum-activity book for teachers for handling the pre-primary class 'ka shrenee'. Another recent development in primary education is the introduction learning of English in Class III and IV as an additional subject from the year 1999. After that SCERT, Assam made revision of curriculum in 2003 and the recent development of curriculum was made in 2010. The new revision made the following changes in the curriculum meant for lower primary stages:
Class I and II

(A) Scholastic Area
  Language + Environmental Studies
  English
  Mathematics + Environmental Studies

(B) Co-Scholastic Area
  Art Education
  Physical Education
  Cleaning
  Annual Sports
  Cub- Bulbul
  Picnic
  Summer/ Winter Camp

Classes III, IV and V

(A) Scholastic Area
  Language
  English
  Mathematics
  Environmental Studies

(B) Co-Scholastic Area
  Art Education
  Physical Education
  Cleaning
Annual Sports
Cub- Bulbul Picnic
Summer/Winter Camp
Gardening and Plantation
Observation of Days
Inter School/ Value Education Camp

Class I and II

Subject - Wise Weightage

Table 13, Subject- Wise Weightage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Weightage</th>
<th>Total Time (Hours)</th>
<th>Total Periods</th>
<th>Period/ Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language + Environmental Studies</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths + Environmental Studies</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Co- Scholastic Area (Weightage)

Table 14, Co- Scholastic Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Weightage</th>
<th>Total Time (Hours)</th>
<th>Total Periods</th>
<th>Period/ Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art Education</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Classes III, IV and V**

**Subject Wise Weightage**

**Table 15, Subject Wise Weightage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Weightage</th>
<th>Total Time</th>
<th>Total Periods</th>
<th>Periods / Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVS</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Co-Scholastic Area (Weightage)**

**Table 16, Co-Scholastic Area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Weightage</th>
<th>Total Time</th>
<th>Total Periods</th>
<th>Periods / Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art Education</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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