Chapter 1
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE NORTH-EAST INDIA

A study of the regional identities warrants a brief discussion on the conceptual framework of the terms 'region' and 'identity'. A region means 'an area of land or division of the earth's surface having definable boundaries or characteristics', and an 'identity' in relation to identity crisis means, 'a phase in which an individual feels a need to establish an identity in relation to society.' A 'region' in social science is defined as a homogeneous area with physical and cultural characteristics distinct from those of the neighbouring areas. As a part of national domain it is sufficiently unified to have consciousness of its customs and ideals and it possesses a sense of identity distinct from the rest of the country. The term 'region' is also 'applied to the scientific task of delimiting and analysing entities lacking formal boundaries.' In complex regional studies of historical nature the functional unity of cultural, economic and social traits also determine regions. The essential point is that a 'region' is

2. ibid., p. 585
4. ibid., p. 380
characterised by a widely shared sentiment of 'togetherness' in people internalised from wide variety of sources and 'separateness' from others.\(^5\) A region, thus, distinguishes itself on the basis of 'homogeneity' within and the maximum 'identity' without. The regions draw sustenance from language, dialect, social composition (communities/jatis), ethnicity, demographic feature, area or geographic contiguity, cultural pattern, economy and economic life, historical antecedent, political background, psychological makeup and the felt consciousness of group identity.\(^6\)

The term 'identity', on the other hand, is defined as the psychological process and referred to as an individual's identification with the nation, an ideological movement, a political party, a social class, a racial or ethnic group, a religious faith and so on. 'Identity' in historical considerations leads back into man's pre-history and evolution. Only gradually emerging as one mankind, conscious of itself and responsible to and for itself, man has been divided into pseudospecies (tribe and nation, castes and classes) each with its own overdefined identity and each reinforced by mortal prejudice against its images of other pseudospecies. The collective identity emerges as a part of man's socio-genetic evolution.\(^7\)


\(^6\) Misra, M.S., Politics of Regionalism in India with Special Reference to Punjab, Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, 1988, p. 10

Identity also refers to members of a homogeneous group of people with common racial, social and religious features, who speak the same language, share similar habits and are governed by identical customs and follow similar written and unwritten laws, beliefs and practices. The term regional identity covers within itself a broad spectrum which may be applied to any part of the world and at the same time a narrow spectrum applicable to any part of a state or states having distinct homogeneity in respect of language, culture, social and economic life. The present study is, thus, based on the latter dimension of the term and is confined to the areas of North Eastern India represented by Assam of the British period. The British Assam till Independence of India retained within its politico-administrative structure the regions represented by the present north-eastern states of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, the district of Sylhet of Bangladesh and an area of sixty square miles of Bhutan.

The Physical Features:

The North East representing British Assam consisted of three natural divisions - the valley of the Brahmaputra,


the valley of the Surma or Barak and the Hill ranges. These natural divisions belonged to three surface features - the plateau, the young fold mountain system and the plains sections or alluvial plains. The Brahmaputra Valley belonged to alluvial plain and was enclosed by the mountain ranges on the north, east and the south. The covering hills at Goalpara shut in the Assam Valley from Bengal. The Surma Valley was another flat plain on the valley of the river Surma-Barak shut in on three sides by the ranges of the hills. It had its natural opening westward to the delta of lower Bengal. The mountain system that separated the two valleys was known as "Assam Range". This mountain range with the plateau in between the two valleys were termed after their major hill habitants like the Naga Hills, the Lushai Hills (Mizo Hills), the North Cachar and the Mikir Hills, the Jaintia Hills, the Khasi Hills and the Garo Hills. The Sub-Himalayan mountain range in the north-east was known after the Akas, the Duflas (Mishis), the Miris (Mishing), the Abors (Adis), the Mishmis, the Khamptes and the Singphos.

I

Political Development: Ancient and Early Medieval Periods:

In the ancient and early medieval period most of the territories of the British Assam and neighbouring areas were unified under the political nomenclature of Pragjyotisa and Kamrupa. The epics and religious legends of Gangetic India mentioned Pragjyotisa and Kamrupa as powerful entities of Pan-
Indian Hindudom which extended in the North-eastern India. Pragjyotisa was a composite entity in regard to its physical and ethnic features. The Mahabharata identified its ruler Bhagadatta, who participated in the great battle of Kurukshetra, as a king of the confederacy of the Bay of Bengal. The king was the head of a vast army of diverse ethnic composition consisting of Kiratas (Mongoloid), Cinas (hills) and the dwellers of the sea coast (plains). King Bhagadatta, it seems, involved the people of the hills and the plains in his well organised political system and administration and united them with the rest of India. The political entity of Pragjyotisa was stretched to the sea in the south, to the river Karatoya in the west and was composed mostly of hilly tracts. Pragjyotisa's identity was extended over "the greater part of Assam along with Koch-Behar, Jalpaiguri, Rangpur, Bogra, Mymensingh, Dacca, Trippers, portions of Pabna and east of Nepal." The ancient literatures though recorded Pragjyotisa as a "Core polity" of the north-east, they also referred to the working of other smaller entities in this part of India. The legends referred to Bana, the ruler of Sonitpur and narrated him as the ally of Naraka, the famed founder of Pragjyotisa near


ancient Gauhati. The kingdoms of Davaka, Kadali, Manirur, Hidimba, Tripura were recorded as minor polities of the land in that period.

In early medieval period Kamrupa included the valley of the Brahmaputra, Bhutan, Rangpur, Koch-Behar, the north-east Mymensingh and probably the Garo Hills. According to the Puranas Kamrupa was extended up to Karatoya in the west and it comprised Manipur, Jaintia, Cachar, parts of Mymensingh, Sylhet, Rangpur, portions of Bhutan and Nepal. The Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta (350 A.D.) mentioned Kamrupa with Samatata, Davaka and Nepal as frontier states outside the Gupta empire. In the middle of the sixth century Kamrupa rulers unified North Bengal, a portion of south-east Bengal, Samatata, Tripura, Noakhali under their hegemony. As an unifying power in the north-east Kamrupa acquired prominent position under its great ruler Kumar Bhaskar Varman and represented a Hinduised Indo-Mongoloid entity that extended over the western and the

13. Saikia (ed.), op.cit., p. 15
16. Chaudhury, op.cit., p. 42
17. Chatterji, op.cit., p. 18
18. Chaudhury, op.cit., pp. 42-43
northern Brahmaputra Valley, the Surma Valley and some parts of western Bengal. The polity of Kamrupa successfully unified at one time or other the separate political entities of Mariner, Kadali, Davaka, Hidimba, Tripura under its suzerainty. The Surma Valley, however, remained outside the direct rule of the Kamrupa kings for most of the time.

The Regional Entities under the Ancient and Early Medieval Political Structure of the North East:

The politically-administrative systems of Pragjyotisa and Kamrupa were basically the extension of the ancient Indian administrations based on a balance between centralisation and decentralisation. The powerful rulers of Pragjyotisa maintained a happy blending of their paramount authority with the autonomy of the smaller entities of the surroundings. The principles of autonomy, though sometimes restricted, were allowed to work both in political and socio-economic spheres. The tribal systems of the hills were left undisturbed in respect of their internal affairs. They were governed by their respective institutions developed in splendid isolation and segregated.


21. Allen, B.C. and others, Gazetteer of Bengal and North East India, Mittal Publications, Delhi (Reprint in India), 1994, p. 28
In the ancient and early medieval administration different ethnic identities of the north-east lived under their own ethos and experienced the unifying influences of Aryanisation or Hinduisation. By the end of early medieval period, that is, by 1200 A.D. 'the plain-lands watered by the Brahmaputra' was a part of Aryan speaking India. The general acceptance of Assamese language and the spiritual affiliation to Aryan India contributed towards the formation of the Hindu group of people among different ethnic elements of the north-east.

The Aryan ethos which the rulers of Pragjyotisa and Kamrupa carried to the remotest parts of north-east India opened the process of extension of agriculture resulting in the rise of the land owning class, increase in trade, import of skilled artisans and craftsmen and, thus, prepared the ground for the restructuring of the societies along feudal lines. The process was started in the west and extended slowly to the east. In the east, however, the new changes faced stiff opposition of the tribal people where a parallel and independent socio-economic structure took strong roots.

On the decline of the unifying factor of Kamrupa's political system in the beginning of the thirteenth century,

22. Chaudhury, op.cit., p. 260
23. Chatterji, op.cit., pp. 35-36
24. Baruah (Mrs), op.cit., p. 199
most of the feudatories of the north-east began to set up independent principalities. Most of the tribes also did similarly under their respective chiefs. Several kings retained the entity of Kamrupa over the western part, while several Mongoloid and Indo-Mongoloid tribes carved out separate polities in the eastern part. This period witnessed the emergence of Koch, Kachari, Chutiya, Moran, Borahi and Baro-Bhuyan rulers in different parts of the valley of the Brahmaputra.

II

Political Developments: 'High' and 'Late' Medieval Periods:

The period between 1200 A.D. and 1800 A.D. was the time when consolidation, reconciliation and unification of different political and ethnic entities took place in the valley of the Brahmaputra and its adjoining areas. The most important event of the period was the advent of the Ahom's in the North East. The Ahoms, an off-shoot of the Tai of the Shan Stock of South East Asia carved out a powerful entity in this part of India and named it 'Assam'. A quarrel as to the right of succession to the throne of Pang in the upper reaches of Irrawaddy Valley caused Sukhapha, a rival claimant to

25. Gait, op.cit., p. 37
emigrate to the new territory 'with a small body of colonists rather than military invaders and establish a principality.\(^{26}\) The Ahoms were the agricultural settlers in search of land\(^ {27}\) and they successfully established a political structure associated with their identity.\(^ {28}\) It may be noted that 'bit by bit, spreading over a period of 450 years the Ahoms conquered the whole of the Brahmaputra Valley and brought under their tutelage not only their powerful Bodo predecessors and other rivals in land like the Chutiyas and the Dimasas (Kacharls) but also the hill people like the Nagas and the Mikirs; and during the days of their greatest glory (as between 1680-1720) they had also brought under their power their erstwhile rivals the Kacharls, the Khasis and the Jaintias (Syntangs)'.\(^ {29}\) The only notable disputants to their rule remained the Bodos of West Assam and North Bengal, who kept the Ahom system confined to the territories of the Central and eastern Assam.

From the thirteenth century to the sixteenth century the Ahoms consolidated their system and adjusted their relations with the neighbouring polities of Kamata, Cacher, Jaintia, Darrang, Chutiyas and Kamrup. Kamrup, contiguous to Mughal India was, however, a theatre of contest between the forces of

\(^{26}\) Allen and others (ed.), op. cit., p. 28; Gait, op. cit., p. 77
\(^{27}\) Barua (Mrs), op. cit., p. 172
\(^{28}\) Chatterji, op. cit., p. 41
\(^{29}\) ibid., p. 37
Mughal and Assam. It was only in July 1682, Gadsadhar Sircar, the Ahom king recovered the Western Assam and fixed the western boundary. Since then western boundary of Ahom rule remained unaltered till its occupation by the British. Assam of the Ahom age, thus, turned equal to the whole of the Brahmaputra Valley excepting the district of Goalpara.  

The period between the 13th and the 16th century saw the emergence and development of a large number of tribal kingdoms in the north-east India. The Chutiyas, the Tai Ahoms, the Koch, the Dimasa (Kachari), the Tripuri, the Meitesi (Manipuri), the Khasis (Khyriem), the Jaintia (Pnar) - all these tribes crystallised into rudimentary state formations by the 15th century. Amidst this ongoing political process the Ahoms representing the superior system established an extensive kingdom in the valley of the Brahmaputra and supplanted the independent rule of the Morans, the Borahis, the Chutiyas and the Kacharis in the eastern part and extended their sphere of influence over those of the Koch who held an extensive kingdom in the western part. The political and territorial unification enforced by the administrative, social, linguistic and religious policies of the Ahom rulers brought into existence a broad


Assamese identity in the valley of Brahmaputra.

Legacy of the Ahom Political System:

The political system of the Ahom period was a blend of monarchy and aristocracy. Regarding administrative organisation of the period Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji held, "Nothing so practical, elaborate and efficient appears to have existed not only in Assam but also in the whole of Eastern India." The Ahoms treated the land and the subjects as the property of the rulers. The subjects were transformed into 'Paiks' and were attached to the Government. The subject people were, thus, held by the ruling classes as retinues and kept in well guarded citadel, shut-off from all influences of the outside world. The vested interests of the ruling power necessitated the adoption of the process of insulating the masses within a closed system and keep them under rigid control and isolation. The Ahom system kept the market economy of the Brahmaputra Valley almost demonitised by utilising compulsory free services of the subjects for revenue free grant of land.


33. Chatterji, op.cit., p. 41

"The 'Paiks' were assignable properties of the State. They assigned to the Government officials, state favourites, retainers and religious institutions to remunerate along with lands.

34. Masumdar, S.K., A 'Class' War in Assam, Link, June 26, 1983, p. 18
The unifying elements in the Ahom system were, however, the social, religious and linguistic policies. The Ahom rulers were liberal in their social outlook and the practical necessity as well as political expediency made them more liberal. Since as a ruling community their number was few and far between, they had to assimilate their subject people within their fold. They conferred the status and privileges of the members of the ruling class to the assimilated non-Ahom subjects and made them integrated to the systems of the rulers. The rulers themselves turned cosmopolitan in their work and outlook.

The religious policy of the Ahoms was based on toleration and neutrality. The rulers although adopted the customs and manners of the Hindus, a section of them, however, continued to adhere to their own Shan faith. The Hindu institutions of the subject people flourished and received liberal patronage from the non-Hindu rulers. Prior to their conversion to Hinduism the Ahom Monarchy was not attached to any particular faith in the orthodox sense and was not socially cut off from the people who professed the tribal cult. Their rule, thus, united different faiths into a common rule.

The Ahom administration recognised the Aryan language and culture of the people although the rulers themselves were the Sino-Tibetan Tai speakers. The Ahoms adopted Assamese

36. Chatterji, op.cit., p. 37
language as a medium of social intercourse, especially, with the non-Ahom subjects and retained their Tai language for official purposes only. The Ahom Monarchy liberally extended royal patronage to the Assamese poets and writers. By the middle of the sixteenth century bilingualism was adopted in the Ahom Court and the Tai chroniclers began to record history in Tai as well as in Assamese prose. The policy of the rulers facilitated the consolidation of the valley identity on its own linguistic basis.

The Ahom administration was extended over three physical divisions, namely, the Uttarkol or the north bank of the Brahmaputra, Dakhinkol or the south bank of the river and the central river island at Majuli. For administrative purposes, however, the kingdom was divided into two general divisions - the "Upper" and "Lower". With the expansion of the Ahom territory, the political administration became to a large extent decentralised and special officers were appointed to deal with different ethnic entities.

The Ahom rulers of the early and the medieval era who integrated different ethnic groups under their rule followed

38. The former was the usual seat of Ahom rulers and represented Ahom's Assam of the earlier period, the latter was annexed and incorporated at a later period and was distantly administered through Barphukan - the replica of a Viceroy. - Bhuyan, S.K., A History of Assam, op.cit., pp. XXVII-XXVIII
39. Barua, op.cit., p. 263
the policy of keeping religion divorced from politics. They pursued a liberal religious policy which offered the freedom of worship. The neo-Vaishnavite preachers, the Saivites, the Saktas, the Buddhists and the Muslim Pirs found the country congenial for the propagation of their respective creeds and proselytisation of the people. The later rulers, however, could not maintain this policy and became involved in religious sectarianism. The neo-Vaishnava sects based on the teachings of Sri Sankaradava attained a remarkable dimension of influence in the later period of the Ahom rule and came in conflict with the Ahom State system. The religious intolerance of the later Ahom ruling House and deliberate ill treatment to the Mosamaria and other Gossains made their rule no more acceptable and the revolt was unfolded. The Mosamaria Rebellion was the “first socio-political movement” of the people of Assam which shook the foundation of the Ahom rule. This movement brought forth the disgruntled popular forces into action in different parts of Assam against the Ahom rule. With the progress of the rebellion other discontented elements also joined hands with the rebellions forces and the neighbouring hill tribes like Defles, the Singphos and the Khampes also came forward to support the move against the Ahom central power.

40. ibid., pp. 104-05
42. Baruah (Mrs), op.cit., pp. 353-54
The evolution, development and decay of the Ahom empire manifested certain special features of the regional system of Assam as well as that of the north-east India. The Ahom-Mogul confrontation created and subsequently strengthened the traditional base of the Brahmaputra Valley against the outsiders. It also facilitated cohesion of the ethnic groups among themselves. During the Ahom rule the western part of Assam or the lower part of the valley developed as periphery, the Central or middle Assam semi-periphery and the eastern Assam or the Inner Assam as the core of the regional system.

The Hill Entities under the Ahom Rule:

Assam of the Ahom period was surrounded by the hill tracts in the northern, eastern and the southern sides which were inhabited by different hill tribes of separate political existence. The Ahom rulers devised means, innovated methods and rationally adjusted their system with those of the hills. The Ahom system recognised the rationale of the hills' dependence on the plains. They granted to the Hill people the facilities of trade with the people of the plains subject to certain restrictions. The most successful system which was used to regularise the relation with the Hill people was the

grant of the right to 'Fosa'.

The tribal people with whom the Ahoms came into contact for the first time were the Naga of the eastern part. Of all the tribes inhabiting the numerous mountain tracts hemming Assam the 'Nagas' had numerous ethnic units. The Ahoms never subjugated the Naga territories but as the superior central power they interfered in the intra-Naga conflicts. On the south of the Brahmaputra Valley, the Assam range was inhabited by the Joros, the Khasis, the Jaintias, the Mikirs or the Arlengs in eastward succession. In this region the Ahoms had relations with the Jaintias, the Khasis and the Mikirs. The Jaintias were in subordinate alliance with the Ahoms. The Jaintia kingdom consisted of two parts, namely, the Jaintia Hills inhabited by the Syrteangs, and the plains area in the valley of the Surma in Sylhet, known as the Jaintia persona, inhabited by the Bengali speaking Hindus and the Muhammadans. The Ahom rulers found the Jaintias recalcitrant and frequently subdued them but never occupied their territories.

44. The institution of 'Fosa' denoted a subscription which the villages of the neighbouring hills were to raise under the state instruction to meet the customary demands of the visitors to the hills. The institution stabilised and regularised the supply of necessaries to hillmen and honoured the customary and Primeval right of the hills. - Devi, L., Ahom-Tribal Relations, Gauhati, 1968, pp. 158, 171

45. Bhuyan, S.K., Studies in the History of Assam, op.cit., p. 52

46. Gait, op.cit., p. 311

47. Barua, op.cit., p. 147
relation with the Khasi states was of commercial nature. Among the numerous Khasi states, the state of Kyriem, with its capital at Nongkrem near Shillong enjoyed market facilities in the plains of the Ahom territory. 48 The Mikirs or Arlenq had cordial relations with the Ahoms since they acknowledged the Ahom overlordship and paid annual tributes. 49

It seems that the Ahom policy towards the hill entities was one of conciliation rather than confrontation. For it complete subjugation of the polities and annexation of their territories were never envisaged. In other words, the policy was to "conciliate these tribes by promising to furnish them their necessaries as far as possible. If they indulge in wanton pillage, pursue and capture the miscreants, but never overstep the limits." 50

The Ahom rule, thus, offered recognition to the hill polities as distinct entities and adopted separate measures towards them. The Ahom system gave birth to an elaborate and specific model of administering the hill areas and facilitated their autonomous growth. The facilities of the friendly intercourse in the form of trade helped in the adoption of Assamese language by the tribes-men of the hills as a free choice. 51

48. Devi, op.cit., p. 139
49. Ibid., p. 139
Regional consideration and the differentiation in administrative policy worked effectively in the north-east during the six hundred years of the Ahom rule and it was on this rudimentary form of regional systems that the well-knit British system came to be established later on.

The Moamaria uprising dashed to pieces the solidarity of the Ahom polity and all the fragmented recalcitrant entities once again asserted their respective independence in different parts of the North East India. The general disorder and the political rivalry of the Ahom Court brought the Burmese to occupy the country (1817-24) who extended their power to the eastern frontier of the British Indian territory. Lord Hastings, though ignored the Burmese threat to Bengal, the heartland of the company's dominion, his successor could not overlook it. A war to defend the eastern frontier, thus, developed into a war of conquest and in 1826 the crippled Burma surrendered two of its own outlying provinces to the British. Moreover, it renounced all its claims on the principalities of the Brahmaputra and the Surma valleys. This marked the beginning of the modern period in the history of the North East. The North-East came under the British occupation long after the consolidation of the British rule in most parts of India. Assam was one of the last

52. Gait, op. cit., see pp. 204-05; Aller and others (ed.), op. cit., p. 35

victims of British imperialism in India. The political developments of the British period in the North-eastern part of India may be examined under the following headings:

(i) The North East under Bengal Presidency (1826-1873),

(ii) The Province of Assam under the Chief Commissioner (1874-1905),

(iii) Assam under the Eastern Bengal and Assam Province (1905-1912),

(iv) Assam as a Chief Commissioner's Province with a Legislative Council (1912-1920),

(v) Assam as a Major British Indian Province (1921-1947).

(i) The North East under the Bengal Presidency (1826-1873):

It was the formative period of the British Assam. For sometime after the conquest of the North-East by the British it remained doubtful whether the Company would retain in their hands the areas they had won. Mr. Scott, the Commissioner of North East Rangpur was entrusted with the administration of the new territories. Captain White was appointed in 1827 to assist him in the administration of Lower Assam and Captain Neuenville was appointed in 1828 for that of Upper Assam. The ghost of

54. Physical and Political Geography of the Province of Assam, Shillong, 1896, p. 71

The terms 'Western Assam' and the 'Eastern Assam' was gradually dropped in the official correspondence and were replaced by 'Lower Assam' and 'Upper Assam'. The term 'Upper Assam' came to be strictly applied to the intervening districts between Lower Assam and Sadiya country. The
Burmese reprisal haunted the British for sometime and influenced the early administrative arrangements in their newly acquired north-eastern territories. Scott wanted to create a hedge of the native Chiefs around the Company in Assam and immediately after the conclusion of the treaty of Yandabo in 1826 Manipur, Cachar and Jaintia territories were restored to their respective rulers. In the south-east the Company entered into agreement with several Chieftains of the Singphos who occupied the tracts extending eastward from the Moamaria border across the Noa-Dihing and Tengapani rivers. The Muttock Chief, Bar Senapati, was also granted a semi-independent status on the south of Sadiya in the area between the Brahmaputra and the Buri-Dihing inhabited by the people of Moamaria sect. The land around Sadiya which had been in the occupation of the Khamptes since the overthrow of the Ahom Viceroy, Sadiya Khowa Gohain, in 1794, was given to the Khampté Chief Salan Sadiya Khowa Gohain and was recognised as the lawful ruler of the tract. The Chief was entrusted with the internal management of the Khamptés as well as the right to collect taxes from the Assamese emigrants who settled within his dominion. 55

The allocation of the territories in the valley of the Brahmaputra, however, appeared difficult as the old administrative

landmarks were destroyed during the Burmese occupation. The people of the valley were also split into conflicting groups under several claimants to rule. The Company Government, thus, decided to administer the valley as a part of Bengal. In connection with the administration of the Brahmaputra valley, David Scott, the political agent to the Governor-General in the North-East Frontier of Bengal and the Civil Commissioner, Rangpur reported that in the citadel of the Ahom power in Upper Assam any administration affecting the rights of the nobility would be unwanted. It would be treated by the men of rank as an intrusion into their traditional rights. Moreover, direct British administration over that part would also be uneconomic. He, therefore, suggested the transfer of Upper Assam to a native prince. Scott, however, assessed Lower Assam amenable to new system as it had experienced foreign domination in the past. It also possessed political-economic systems akin to those of neighbouring Bengal. He recommended the incorporation and assimilation of Lower Assam with the system in vogue in Bengal. 56 On the basis of his report the Company Government at Fort William concurred to the permanent annexation of Lower Assam to the British dominion, on 7 March 1928. The Ahom Monarchy was restored in Upper Assam on 24 April 1833. However, the experiment of the native rule on the basis of customs, traditions and institutions of the predecessors failed as it

could not cope with the changed political and economic conditions of the neighbourhood. In October 1839 Upper Assam was resumed by the Company and in July 1839 a proclamation was issued by the Governor-General-in-Council annexing the territories to Bengal. The area was divided into two districts - Sibsagar and Lakhimpur and they had to be administered in the same manner as the other districts of Lower Assam. In August 1842 by another proclamation the territories of Bar Sandari and that of Khemti Chief were annexed and incorporated with the rest of the province. Thus, by 1842, the whole of Assam proper came under the same system of administration excepting Lakhimpur including Matak and Sadiya. 57

In the north-eastern mountain ranges the British authority systematised its relations with the numerous tribes inhabiting the area. Thus in the east of Bhutan, the fertile land of Kuriapara Duar held by the Moppas subordinate to Tawang Raja, a tributary of Lhasa, was annexed to the Darrang district of Assam. Compensation had to be paid to the Chiefs for forgoing their right to collect dues from the Duars. To the east of Kuriapara Duar the extensive tracts of Char Duar occupied by Sherdukpena were resumed from their Chiefs on payment of Rs. 2526-7-0 being the cost of their right to 'Posa'. Hruusos, commonly known as Akas, who inhabited the tracts between Ghabrui and Bhorolli were consolidated gradually by grant of annual

57. Report on the Administration of Assam for the year 1921-22, Shillong, 1923, p. 35
payments to the Chiefs. To the east of Bhoroli river, the Dafla Chiefs of the hills were forced to accept fixed money and a fixed quota of salt in lieu of regular posa. The Dafla Chiefs, large in number, were issued chits to receive their respective payments. The Abors of the hilly tracts between the Dihong and the Dibong rivers had their claims on fish and gold-dust of the Dihong river collected by the Miris of the plains and the lower hills from the time of the Ahom rulers. The British's effort to monopolise the revenue from the Miri gold-washers and fishermen encroached upon the rights of the Abors, which caused the Abor raids on the Miris. The raiding Abors were, however, pacified through allotment of fixed quantity of goods like salt, tobacco, bottles of rum, iron hoes, etc. The Mishmis, residing between the Abors and the Khamptis in the vicinity of the north-eastern corner of the Brahmaputra also came under the British control. They were left with their traditional income from tolls collected from traders. It included forest products, elephants as well as that collected from the pilgrims who visited Parasuramkund. The British authority, thus, won the confidence of the Chiefs of the north-eastern frontier.

In the extreme western border of the valley of the Brahmaputra three thanas, viz., Goalpara, Dhubri and Karaibari, 58

58. Bose, op.cit., for details see pp. 32-35
which had been in the British possession since the acquisition of Dewani of Bengal in 1765, were converted into the district of Goalpara in 1822. The district was made a part of Assam administration in 1826. Goalpara remained a part of Assam till 1866. In 1867 the Eastern Duars, an extensive tract along the base of the Himalayas in the north of Bengal, was acquired from Bhutan. The new acquisition was added to the district of Goalpara and in the same year the re-organised district was made a part of the newly created Bengal Commissionership of Koch-Bihar. 59

The Garos, who occupied the extreme western part of the Assam-range were the first mountain tribe of the North-East to come in contact with the British. The Company brought the Garo hill tribes under their political control by offering them protection from the extortion of the Zamindars of neighbouring Bengal and recognising the powerful local Chiefs as Zamindars. In 1811 David Scott was appointed the first Civil Commissioner of North East Rangpur and was entrusted with the task of regularising the relations with the tribes of the neighbouring hills. In 1826 when Assam was made a circuit of Bengal, the Garo Hills were transferred to Assam as a part of the district of Goalpara. 60 The British penetration into the interior of the Garo Hills commenced in 1822 and was completed in 1872-73

59. Physical and Political Geography, op.cit., p. 76
60. Bose, op.cit., p. 25
when military expeditions were undertaken to bring the independent Garos under control. The subjugated Garo Chiefs were, however, employed as headmen and a new model of administration was introduced through them in the Garo Hills. In 1869 the Garo Hills were organised into a separate district with headquarters at Tura under the charge of a Deputy Commissioner and the same was placed under the jurisdiction of the Bengal Commissioner of Koch-Behar.

After the acquisition of Lower Assam Scott mooted the plan of opening a route through the Khasi Hills to link the Company territories of Assam and Sylhet and establish British control over the petty Khasi states. Scott entered into negotiation with the Chieftains who agreed to rent out some lands of Barduar and permit the road to be constructed through their hills via Cherapunji, Maoflang and Mongkhla to Gauhati. Misunderstanding, however, grew after the establishment of the British residence at Mongkhla and a general confederacy of the Khasi Chiefs came up to resist the British penetration into their Hills. The opposition was thwarted when U. Tirot Singh, the leader of the resistance movement was confined as a prisoner for life in Dacca jail in 1833. The other Khasi Chiefs subsequently submitted themselves to the British. A British officer

61. Gait, op.cit., p. 368
was posted at Shillong in 1866. The greater part of the Khasi Hills, however, remained under the rule of the native chiefs. The chiefs entered into subsidiary alliance with the British Government and retained the status of the native states. Only a few scattered villages remained under the direct British administration. The people of the Khasi Hills predominantly remained to be governed by their traditional institutions. 63

After the conclusion of the treaty with Burma in 1826 the Raja of Jaintia, a Chief of Khasi lineage, the Synteno, was restored by the Company Government in his traditional hill possessions as well as the plains on the bank of the river Surma in Sylhet and that of the river Kalong. The Company authority annexed the Jaintia plains including its dependency of Gobha in the plains of Assam on 15 March 1835. The Raja was left with only the hill portion of his kingdom. The Raja of Jaintia, however, in utter disgust gave up his unproductive hilly tract. The British, thus, annexed the hill portion as well and added it to Assam Division. The Jaintia Hills were divided into 23 petty districts, 19 in charge of the headmen known as Dollois who were chosen by the people and 4 under the hereditary Sardars. Thus the Jaintias were also very much left to themselves in their internal affairs. 64

63. Report on the Administration of Assam 1921-22, op.cit., p. 41
64. Bhattacharjee, op.cit., pp. 37-38
The British intervention in the territories of Cachar commenced before the formal declaration of the first Anglo-Burmese War. In the beginning of the present century the valley of Cachar faced the threat of annexation from the Manipuri-princes of Manipur. When the Burmese advanced from Manipur to Cachar, the Company authority at Sylhet felt it necessary to take Cachar under their protection. The Burmese Armies, which advanced both from Assam and Manipur were driven out by the British and the Kachari Raja of Cachar, Govinda Chandra was replaced on the throne. A treaty was executed on 6 March 1824, by which the Raja placed himself under the British protection and agreed to pay a tribute of Rs. 10,000. But Govinda Chandra's reign after his restoration was very short. He was assassinated in 1830 and Cachar was annexed to the Company territory on 14 August 1832. In 1833 the administration of the district was transferred from the supervision of the Commissioner of Assam to that of Dacca.\footnote{Report on the Administration of Assam 1921-22, op.cit., p. 38}

In the hilly tracts of the North Cachar and Mikir Hills a separate principality emerged in the later years of the reign of the Kachari Raja of the plains of Cachar. In 1829 Scott induced Govinda Chandra, the Kachari Raja of the plains to recognise Tularam Senapati as the lawful ruler of the hilly tracts of the kingdom. After the assassination of Govinda Chandra, Tularam entered into an agreement in 1835 with the
Company Government and surrendered the western portion of his
territory to British, retaining only the tract bounded by Mahur
river and the Naga Hills on the south, the Dayang on the west,
the Dhansiri on the east and the Jamuna and the Dayang on the
north. In 1853, following the Naga atrocities, this thirty-
peopled tract was resumed by the Government and added to Assam
Division. 66

At the beginning of the Company rule in the North-East
its policy towards the Naga territories faced a dilemma as the
tracts inhabited by numerous Naga tribes were unattractive from
commercial point of view. However, continuous Naga raids on
the British territories causing death to British subjects forced
the authorities to undertake pragmatic policy towards the Naga
areas. The Commissioner of Assam recommended gradual occupation
of the Naga territories but the Supreme Government sanctioned
a scheme of establishing strong control stations on the Naga
Hills so that political control could be extended over the inde­
pendent Nagas. In 1866 the nucleus of the Naga Hills district
was formed with its headquarters at Samaguting and the adminis­
tration was attached to Assam. 67

From 1826 to 1873 the British authorities to the
Presidency of Bengal remained occupied with the consolidation

66. ibid., p. 42

67. Rao, V.V., A Century of Government and Politics in Forth
Ltd., New Delhi, 1983, pp. 13-14
of their rule over Assam as well in the strategically important north-eastern frontier. The British policy attributed new features to the nomenclature of Assam as it no longer remained confined to the territories of Assam of the Ahom period. The new political Assam became extended over several polyarchic entities annexed or acquired from different Rajas and the Chieftains of the north-eastern India. The territories placed under the common administration had diverse races professing different faiths, speaking innumerable tongues, possessing varied socio-political and economic institutions. They also had different levels of development and developmental aspirations.

Legacy of the period:

The variegated entities of Assam were administered from 1826 to 1853 by the Governor-General acting through the Agent of North-East Frontier and from 1853 to 1873 as a part of the 'Lower provinces of Bengal'. It consisted of Bengal proper, Bihar, Orissa and Chota-Nagpur and was presided over by the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. As an appendix of unwieldy Bengal* the people of traditional Assam faced significant


*Prior to the creation of the Chief Commissionership of Assam the total area of Bengal was 2,48,231 Sq. Miles with a population of 6,68,56,859. - Bhattacharjee, K.K., op.cit., p. 49
politic-economic changes, which went against their traditional systems and rights. The economy of Assam was monetised and the close territory was, for the first time, exposed to the large-scale immigration of labour, new skill, new vices and new systems. Due to inherent limitations, the people of Assam suffered setbacks in the hands of the newcomers of other provinces. For instance, the Marwari traders and the money-lenders as the agent of the British trading houses of Calcutta entered and monopolised the internal trades of the province. The Bengali clerks, doctors, lawyers, with the advantage of their early initiation to English education as well as the British Indian system of administration, monopolised the government services and other professions. Assam's linguistic identity suffered severely when in 1837 Bengali was introduced as the official language as well as medium of instruction in the schools of Assam. Bengali remained the official language of Assam up to 1873. During the period several moves for due recognition of Assamese language were carried out in Assam. The battle for the recognition of Assamese as a distinct and separate language of Assam contributed to the consolidation of Assam's identity on the linguistic and provincial basis. The Brahmaputra Valley as an advanced region of the then North-East raised the


70. Baruah (Mrs.), op. cit., p. 508
voice of protest against the neglect of the Government of Bengal towards Assam. It also began to look to the Bengalees, who acted under the colonial masters, as their rivals. 71

(ii) The Province of Assam under the Chief Commissioner (1874-1905):

The inconvenience to administer such vast diversified territory as an appendage of Bengal Presidency was encountered in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Accordingly on 6 February 1874 a proclamation was issued separating the districts of Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang, Nowgong, Sibsagar, Lakhimpur, the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, the Naga Hills, the Garo Hills and the district of Cachar from the administration of Bengal. On the same date these districts were constituted into a Chief Commissionership. On 12 September of the same year by another proclamation and notification Sylhet was separated from Bengal and incorporated with the province of Assam. 72 After the creation of the Province of Assam some more territories of the Naga Hills and the Lushai (Mizo) Hills were incorporated. The Mokokchung sub-division in the Naga Hills was annexed and added to the Naga Hills district in 1889. 73

71. Eastern Bengal and Assam Legislative Council Proceedings, 1909, p. 15


73. ibid.
The Lushai Hills district was a new addition to Assam. The Hills to the south of the Surma Valley inhabited by various tribes like Kuki and later acquired by the Lushais (Mizos) came under the Assam administration after the constitution of the new province. The Lushai raids compelled the British authority to establish military outposts at Aijal and Chengsil in the northern side and at Lungleh in the southern part in 1899. The southern Lushai Hills were administered by the Bengal Government and the northern hills by Assam. On 1 April 1898 the two parts were amalgamated and constituted into the Lushai Hills district and made a part of the province of Assam. The British, however, left the internal management of the Lushai villages in the hands of their respective hill chiefs subject to general control of the British Superintendent and his Assistant.

The district of Sylhet was another distinct addition to the Province of Assam effected in 1874. The populous district of Sylhet, which was a part of Bengal proper and contiguous to Cachar had never been under Assam administration except for a short period during the days of early Kamrupa. The district was incorporated in Assam ignoring the protests of its inhabitants. The people of the district were opposed to their transfer to Assam on cultural and historical grounds.

74. Gait, op.cit., pp. 369-70
75. Saikia (ed.), op.cit., p. 27
Bengali speaking district of Sylhet was included in Assam at a time when Assamese language was just introduced as the language of the Courts and the schools of Assam proper.

The British province of Assam that emerged in 1874 was an amalgam of four disparate regions: (i) the hill districts with an insignificant population speaking several languages, (ii) the five Assamese speaking districts of the valley of the Brahmaputra representing Assam proper, (iii) Goalpara of the same valley where the histories of Bengal and Assam overlapped, (iv) two Bengali speaking districts of the valley of the Surma and Barak. The population of the two valleys were more or less balanced with Sylhet alone containing a population that matched that of Assam proper. In the Surma Valley there had been practically no Assamese speaking population. In the district of Goalpara majority of the inhabitants returned Bengali as their mother tongue. From the point of view of religion, nearly 55 per cent professed Hinduism, 27.09 were Muhammadans and about 17.70 per cent were Animists.

**Legacy of the period:**

During 1874-1905 as no legislative council was constituted in Assam, the Chief Commissioner represented the local Government. He was, however, under the constant pressure from

76. Guha, op.cit., p. 28
77. Physical and Political Geography, op.cit., p. 196
the influential European tea planters' lobby.78 The Chief Commissioner, Sir Bampfylde Fuller, however, espoused the cause of the Assamese people and emphasised the principle of "Assar for Assamese" for improving their lot. He also declared in unambiguous terms the exclusive rights of the children of the soil to the public services of the province.79 Though the officials pretended to champion the cause of the Assamese, in reality they recognised the divisions among the distinct components of the province. Thus in 1874 when the people of Sylhet protested against their transfer to Assam from Bengal the inhabitants were assured that they would not be subjected to any change in respect of their system of law and judicial procedure.80 The district of Goalpara was also treated separately in the formulation of the administrative policy. The district, though belonged to the Brahmaputra Valley, it was kept outside the operation of the restrictions regarding employment which were enforced in other districts of the same valley. Bengali was also retained as the official language of the Courts of Goalpara on the ground that it had been a part of Bengal proper.81 Over and above, while the whole of Assam including Sylhet was classed as "Scheduled Districts" under the

78 Guha, op.cit., p. 29
79 EBALCP, 1909, ibid., p. 16
80 Simon Commission Report on India (Indian Statutory Commission), vol. XIV, Swati Publications, Delhi, Reprint, p. 75
81 ibid., pp. 77-78
Scheduled Districts Act, 1874, the plains districts were gradually brought under a uniform legal framework like other parts of India leaving the hill districts and the frontier tracts to be regulated by the separate set of laws under the Assam Frontier Tracts Regulation, 1880. In order to restrict the interactions between the British subjects of the plains and those of the tribes living across the frontier, the provisions of the Inner Line Regulation 1873 were enforced. The separating lines were drawn along the northern, eastern and southern borders of Assam. The North-East Frontier Tract began to emerge as distinct from Assam in 1875-76 when the 'Inner Line' in Lakhimpur and Darrang Districts was specified.

(iii) Assam under the Eastern Bengal and Assam Province (1905-1912):

On October 1905 the Province of Assam was reconstituted as the Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam and Dacca, Rajshahi, Chittagong divisions were added to it. The Chief Commissioner of Assam, Sir Rampfylde Fuller was appointed the

82. Inner Line was drawn in the following districts:

In Darrang the line was enforced towards the Bhutiyas, Akas and Daflas; in Lakhimpur it was towards Daflas, Miris, Abors, Mishmis, Khampes, Singphos and the Nagas; in Sibsagar the line was towards the southern Nagas; and in Cachar it was towards Lushais. - Physical and Political Geography, op.cit., p. 232

83. Bose, op.cit., p. 157
first Lieutenant Governor of the new Province. The Eastern Bengal and Assam was a political creation and was deliberately made a Muslim majority unit on the flank of Bengal to counter the solidarity of Bengal. There was nothing new in the new structure for the people of Assam proper to be happy with, and the people of Assam Valley regarded it as a retrograde step. The reorganisation rather created the fear of obliteration of the name 'Assam' from the political history of India. In the new polity it was made clear that with few exceptions the Assamese would be deprived of their fair share of posts in the new government establishments as the people of the Eastern Bengal had been assured priority under the Government policy.

It was under this nomenclature Assam was granted the right of representation in the provincial legislative council formed under the Government of India Act 1892. In the fifteen members' Council of the province, Assam was allotted two quasi-elective seats. In the Legislative Council of Eastern Bengal and Assam the interests of the Assam Valley always went in default. The non-Assamese members of the Council took little interests in the issues of Assam since majority of them appeared to be allergic to the name of "Assam". They even

84. Report on Administration of Assam 1921-22, op.cit., r. 40
85. Guha, op.cit., pp. 70-71
86. ibid., p. 73
87. Barpujari (ed.), Political History of Assam, op.cit., r. 183
88. Assamese Community went unrepresented in the council till February 1909.
could not tolerate the retention of this name in the provisions of certain Acts. In such an alien environment the first Assamese Councillor to the Legislative Council found it safe to appeal to the Government to provide the minority status as well as protection for the Assamese people of the province.

(iv) Assam the Chief Commissioner's Province with a Legislative Council (1912-1920):

Fortunately the nomenclature of Eastern Bengal and Assam lasted only for a short duration and Assam was reverted to the Chief Commissioner's Province. This time Assam was granted a Legislative Council of her own. The restoration of the separate province was a welcome phenomenon to the people of Assam Valley, but it was "a deep injury and a deep wound" to the people of the Surma Valley particularly to the district of Sylhet. The permanent settlement holders, that is, the Zamindars of Goalpara were also opposed to their inclusion in the reconstituted Assam in 1912 as Assam was predominantly a temporarily-settled province. However, Assam continued to be a Chief Commissioner's province and awaited to receive further constitutional reforms at par with other provinces of India.

90. EBALCP, 1909, p. 16
91. Barpujari (ed.), op.cit., pp. 204-05
92. Simon Commission Report, op.cit., p. 77
The Chief Commissioner of Assam opposed the inclusion of Assam in the constitutional reforms proposal of 1919 due to the existence of 50,000 square miles of hill tracts inhabited by tribal people. He reported, "To frame electorate for this area and include it in the general scheme is out of question. It is true that the standard of education in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills is comparatively high, but the people have as yet shown no desire for political union either with Assam Valley or with Surma Valley and moreover a very large section of them are subjects of the Indian Chiefs (Siems). The inhabitants of the other Hill tracts are obviously unsuited for full inclusion in the scheme." The European community, particularly the planters of the province were also opposed to the constitutional reforms. During the pendency of the reforms proposals the Zamindars' Association, Goalpara, led by Prabhat Chandra Sarua came forward to demand Goalpara's amalgamation with Bengal. The Assam Association, an organisation of the Brahmaputra Valley, however, pleaded for the inclusion of Assam in the reforms and undertook strenuous efforts for the realisation of the same. It was the Association's persistent efforts that enabled Assam to occupy the rightful place as a major province under the Constitutional reforms of 1919. On 3rd January 1921 Assam was

93. K.D. Beatson Bell's note on Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms with Special Reference to the Province of Assam, 24th October, 1918, para 5.
constituted into a Governor's Province. A notification of the same date, however, declared the hill districts and the frontier tracts in the province of Assam to be "backward tracts" for the purpose of the reforms.

In the subsequent chapters the geopolitical features of the different regions, their clashes, conflicts and correlations of interests will be examined so as to appreciate the process of the consolidation of the regional identities in the North East in the political developments of the period under review. The following Table No. 1 presents a bird's eye view of the British Assam, its territory and population in 1921.

**Table No. 1**

Civil Divisions of British Assam in 1921

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of District</th>
<th>Head-quarters</th>
<th>Subdivision</th>
<th>Area in Square miles</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surma Valley:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cachar (Plain)</td>
<td>Silchar</td>
<td>Silchar</td>
<td>1661</td>
<td>3,50,472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mailakandi</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>1,41,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1948</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,00,484</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylhet</td>
<td>Sylhet</td>
<td>North Sylhet</td>
<td>1035</td>
<td>5,38,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Karimganj</td>
<td>1069</td>
<td>4,90,285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>South Sylhet</td>
<td>1064</td>
<td>4,10,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Habiganj</td>
<td>1089</td>
<td>5,97,939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sunamganj</td>
<td>1423</td>
<td>5,11,193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5680</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,541,341</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total of Surma Valley</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>7628</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,041,825</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cort.: A
Table No. 1 (Contd.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmaputra Valley:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goalpara</td>
<td>Dhubri</td>
<td>Dhubri</td>
<td>2865</td>
<td>551,351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goalpara</td>
<td></td>
<td>Goalpara</td>
<td>1069</td>
<td>211,172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3954</td>
<td>762,523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamrup</td>
<td>Guahati</td>
<td>Guahati</td>
<td>2589</td>
<td>576,156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barpeta</td>
<td></td>
<td>1274</td>
<td>186,515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3863</td>
<td>762,671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darrang</td>
<td>Tezpur</td>
<td>Tezpur</td>
<td>1828</td>
<td>266,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mangaldoi</td>
<td></td>
<td>1369</td>
<td>191,473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3197</td>
<td>477,935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nowgong</td>
<td>Nowgong</td>
<td>No Sub-division</td>
<td>3699</td>
<td>397,921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibsagar</td>
<td>Jorhat</td>
<td>Jorhat</td>
<td>1060</td>
<td>301,752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sibsagar</td>
<td></td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>289,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Golaghat</td>
<td></td>
<td>3114</td>
<td>232,154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5202</td>
<td>823,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakhimpur</td>
<td>Dibrugarh</td>
<td>Dibrugarh</td>
<td>2591</td>
<td>466,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>North Lakhimpur</td>
<td></td>
<td>1166</td>
<td>122,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3757</td>
<td>588,295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of Brahmaputra Valley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23,672</td>
<td>3,012,542</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hill Districts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garo Hills</td>
<td>Tura</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3140</td>
<td>179,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khasi &amp; Jaintia Hills</td>
<td>Shillong</td>
<td>Shillong</td>
<td>3936</td>
<td>170,623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jowai</td>
<td></td>
<td>2086</td>
<td>72,640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6022</td>
<td>242,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naga Hills</td>
<td>Kohima</td>
<td>Kohima</td>
<td>Separate area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contd.
### Table No. 1 (Contd.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Cachar Haflong</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1706</td>
<td>26,744</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lushai Hills Aijal</td>
<td>Aijal</td>
<td>4701</td>
<td>70,328</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lungleh</td>
<td>2526</td>
<td>28,078</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>7227</td>
<td>98,404</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total of Hill districts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21,210</td>
<td>708,513</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Frontier Tracts:**

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sadiya</td>
<td>Sadiya</td>
<td>Sadiya</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>25,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>39,531</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balipara</td>
<td>Likra</td>
<td></td>
<td>522*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total of Frontier Tracts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>43,350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GRAND TOTAL**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53,421</td>
<td>7,606,230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The figures represented the areas transferred from other districts on formation of the tract.

**Source:** Report on the Administration of Assam for the year 1921-22, Shillong, 1923, p. 71