Chapter - 6
CHAPTER VI

6.1 CONCLUSION

Assam is situated in one of the most important and greatest migration routes of mankind since time immorial. The Austro-Asiatics, The Negroids (as suggested by J.H. Hutton), The Great Mongoloids (Kiratas, Kacharis, Karbis, Morans, Borahis, Chutiyas, Khasi-Syntengws, Dimachas, Ravas, Lalung, Garos, etc.) The Later Mongoloids (Tai-Ahoms, Tai-Khamtis, Jingphaws or Singphos, Tai-Phakes, Tai-Khanyangs, Tai-Tarung, Tai-Aitons, Tangchas, Noctes etc.), all came, dominated the area, as rulers, conquerors, professionals, and merged to and form one great culture that is called "The Great Assamese Culture", side by side keeping their own cultural heritage and languages through countries.

Singphos are very hardy, strong and courageous hill tribe. Their record is unmatched: in world war II, more than 400 of them parachuted behind Japanese line. They killed 15000 enemies, captured 75 Japanese and rescued 700 American and Allied airmen who has been downed in Burma's Jungles.

The blue, snow-clad, lush green and rarely strong hills of North-East India. Shelter a colourful and diverse tribal ethnic group have been living together for centuries and some of them were famous for their hostile character. The sociology of many small tribes is little known to us. The physical movement of the people in some areas has been little over the years that even today many ethnic groups can not communicate with their neighbours.

The Singpho tribe is a relatively more exposed ethnic group. Singphos are distributed in different parts of Assam, in Tinsukia district there are about 20 villages-- Bahbari, Bisagaon, Bhitarpawoi, Dibong, Duarmara, Hasak, Lngthong, Inthem, Ketetong, Kotha, Kumsai, Longgon, Mungongpathar, Namdong, Panbari, Panga, Pangsun, Phulbari, Ritupathar, Ulup and most of them are original Singpho.
In Sibsagar district 2 villages Ouguri and Dighali, all are Dowania Singpho. In Jorhat district 3 villages Tipomia, Na-Kathang, Bahukatia and they are mostly Dowania Singpho and in Golaghat District 3 villages--Bheleng, Bacha, Tengmai and they are mostly Turung Singpho, and in Karbi Anglong 1 village and name of the village is Balipathar. They are Turang Singpho.

In the study the investigator took only 10 villages under Margherita civil sub division. The sample villages are Dibong, Ketelong, Ulup, Intham, Basbari, Bisagaon, Bhitor Pawai, Mongong, Duarmara and Kumsaikong. The sample villages are surrounded by many other tribal villages inhabited by Khamti and Fakial factions, however, the presence of non-tribal people, many of whom are of suspicious identity, can be felt more or less in number of tribal villages. Most of the Singpho villages are connected by an all weather Kutcha road to the nearest town Margherita. All the sample villages have got 16 L.P school, 5 M.E. School, and 4 High school. The other noteworthy infrastructure includes one public health centre in Ketetong with bed facilities, weekly market centre and sub-post-office. A beautiful Buddha temple is located in village Dibong.

The Singpho belong to the Tibeto Burman group. Although a large section of the Singpho community including all the sample households practised Buddhism, some differences can be seen in religious practices maintained by the different Singpho people. Till date religion had not been fully effective in so far as eliminating their beliefs in spirit. Nevertheless, the acceptance of Buddhism has brought about some significant changes in the lifestyle of the Singphos fostering peace and social security while reducing the incidence of drinking and using them.

Today the consumption of liquor is prohibited in the Singpho society. Earlier it was permitted during the deu puja where buffaloes, cows, pigs and birds were
sacrificed. It seems that it is mainly because of the British Government's systematic neglect and after independence, the state and central government thoughtless encouragement to the people the strenuous efforts of the Baptist Missionaries and Buddhist messengers to protect the cultural identity through the development of the Singphos literature/scripts one the other; that one-time believes in Animism gradually converted into Buddhism (or christianity).

Their assimilation with the mainstream an Assamese people has been rapid particularly during the past 20 years. Although many old members cannot speak as well as write Assamese. The young ones undergo formal education in Assamese, since the Singphos scarcely have any books in their own language. However, some senior citizens of the Singpho society are very conscious about their separate cultural identity and have already made provisional arrangements within the village to teach Singpho language (Roman Script) to the minors from time to time. A disquietingly large number of people are illiterate or semi-literate, although village infrastructure for general education is good.

Wrongdoers are found by the Singpho society itself. If the nature of the offence committed by a Singpho is found "local impulse", he will be given a chance for self correction with or without a monetary penalty. In case of serious offences, the wrongdoers are punished with isolation from the society for three years. However, in any case where the village society including the gaonbura fails to meet the situation adequately, the police is contacted. In the village administration, women's presence is honoured and their opinions receive due consideration nowadays.

The Singpho elements of place names show us that the early tribal Singpho dwellers has a systematic and scientific naming process like that of so called modern
cultures like German naming process. German place names are very commonly a compound of a determinant word called Bestimmungswort and a common root Grundwort. So the Singpho place names are with, Generics (German-Grundwort) Specifics (German- Bestimmungswort).

The Generic elements in Singpho place names are normally suffix :

Bum (Hill)
Kha (river)
Nga (fish)
Sai (Sandy)
Sun (fem) etc.

The specific elements are --
Kotha, Phaloto, Pisi etc.

Hybrid Combinations in Singpho place names are :

Singphos - Bisa + Assamese - gaon
Singphos - Lekhakha + Assamese - Pani and so on.

Structurally the Singpho place names are the following formation :-

Noun + Noun : Bisa + Gaon, Kete + Tong, Kua + Tu + ga, Lekha + Kha, Pa + Nga etc.
Noun + Verb : Wagun, Ulup etc.
Adjective + Noun : Kumsai + Kha, Dap + Khu etc.

Coreupctions in Singpho Place names :

Khatangpani < Khathngpani,
Lekhapani < Lekhakha etc.

Following are some of the important place names of Singpho origin with Etymology, Categorization and their location:

Bisa Gaon: Tinsukia district. Bisa, a clan name for royal family, vig. Dapha, Latora etc.

Daphabum: Changlang district, Arunachal Pradesh. Means a hill mean for depha clan people. Category - Physical geography or settlement geography.


Inthem: Tinsukia district. A village with 1000 house. Stands for a clan name also. Category Settlement geography.

Ketetong: Tinsukia district. Kete = Bricks, Tong = in abundance. A place where bricks are in abundance. Category - Economic Geography.

Khathangpani: Tinsukia district. Means a river following east and west, directions from the same point of origin. Kha = river, Thang = opposite direction.

Kotha: Tinsukia district. Means family: Miscellaneous Category. A clan name.

Kumsai: Tinsukia district. Kumsai means a sandy area. Category - Physical geography.


Kunsalkung: Tinsukia district. means Kuwa = Bamboo, Tu = to grow. i.e. a bamboo enclosure. Assamese meaning bahbari. Category - Botanical origin.

Mungong or Rity pathar: Tinsukia district. Ri means 'cane', Tu = to grow, i.e. a place known for cane. Category - Botanical origin.

Nam Dapha: Canglang district of Arunachal Pradesh. Means a lower place of Dapha Clans. Category - physical geography.

Pangna or Panga: Tinsukia district. Pa = garden, nga - fish, a place known for fish garden. Category - Economic geography.


Phaloto: Tinsukia district, a village, Botanical origin.


Ulup: Tinsukia district. U = clock or Fowl. Lup = bury. A place where a clock was buried. Also a clan name. Category - Cultural geography.


Village names after the clan names: Dumba, Galangia, Gidding Na, Goju, Inao, Incho, Kherem, Munglong, Nibong, Ninglang Phup, Tingwa, (all in Arunachal Pradesh) etc.*

* Collected from the study of Dr. Sarat Knmar Phukan.
Singphos are living far flang areas of south-east Asia and away from the modern developed society, yet they maintain a very rich culture and heritage, which can be seen from the study. Their naming system is a definite pointer to the rich culture. A systematic study of Singpho toponomy will surely reveal many interesting aspects of hither to unknown treasure of the tribe.

There is no doubt that the spread of Buddhism has transformed the once hostile Singpho people into a peace loving and liberal community. In recent times, however, through their different cultural organization these people have started rising their voice, although in a mild way, for the protection of their cultural, political rights and over all socio-economic development. The Singpho are not shy in airing their dissatisfaction with the Government developmental activities in their areas. Some of them have expressed their concern about the continuous pressure from the illegal and grabbers on their land, transforming community land as-sets into private property with plantation of citronella and tea bushes. It is really important that the intellectuals and policy makers bureaucrats of the state rise to the occasion so that their genuine fears can be allayed. An approach to the under standing of their sentiments is much more important than increased allocation for their overall uplift.

6.2 : SUGGESTIONS :

NEED FOR EXPANSION OF EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

There is a significant evidence to the fact that the numerous programmes of socio-economic development undertaken in the tribal areas in India are not making much head way mainly because of the ignorance and illiteracy of the tribals. Education can provide very good opportunities for the socially disadvantaged groups
provided they have the necessary facilities and life chances to get education. In an unsuitable system of education imparted in a language other than their own by indifferent teachers is the one reason, besides their poverty, which gave rise to an attitude of indifferences towards education.

The earlier stage of low enrolment in schools in tribal areas represented nothing more than a period of understanding and examination of the utility of the new educational system by the tribal people. Since then the situation has completely changed and now the demand for more educational institutions has outstripped the provision of educational facilities in tribal areas.

A reform of our educational system is very necessary in primary and secondary level. Tribal education should have three aspects :-

i) **Academic** : It should be necessary to introduce some academic studies right from the primary to the secondary stage which would include reading, writing of history, geography and elementary arithmetic.

ii) **Vocational** : This aspect of education must have a correlation to the economic life of the people in their natural environmental setting. The tribals live in the forest and pursue agriculture as their main occupation. They have also to depend upon their own arts and crafts such as weaving, carpentry etc. for satisfaction of their needs. A little education, therefore, in the exploitation of the forest resources, viz., the use of bamboo, methods of collection and purification of honey, lac, gums, resins and other such forest produce would be very useful. Their agriculture is extremely backward. Education in the preparation and utilization of manures, bunding of their plots, growing of the fruit trees and sowing of improved seeds would be a great help to them.
iii) **Cultural**: In this respect, the tribals have their own folk songs, myths, traditions and stories. If all these could be collected and included in their curriculum, the tribal children would feel a sense of oneness in their study and would get interested in the school. It is, therefore, necessary to keep these aspects in view in framing the syllabus.

**Primary schools**:

The population of tribal areas is scattered and sparse. About one sixth of the tribal population lives in villages with a population of less than 200. In the matter of opening of primary schools, the number of children available is the sole consideration. Target set for primary education is often expresses in terms of the coverage of villages having a specification of population. Planning of primary education on such a basis appears unobjectionable in as much as scarce resources are sought to be utilised for the education of largest number of children. District wise number of primary schools reveal very little regarding the availability of educational facilities to tribal children. Normally, a teacher is considered to be properly occupational when he has about 40-45 students. A village with a population of about 350 can provides that number of children. The single teacher primary schools are there opened generally in villages having a population of 350 or more. On the basis of one-sixth of the tribal population living in village with less than 200 population each is not eligible for a primary school. A big percentage of tribal population living in small habitations, a number of which combine to form a bigger revenue village are also lift without a school.

While admitting that it is not possible to open schools in isolated hamlets, the scheduled Area and scheduled Tribe commission has recommended that where 30 children of school going are available in one locality, the school should
not be located at a distance of more than one mile and that no children should be required to walk for more than two miles to go to school.

**HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL:**

The number of higher secondary schools in tribal areas are exceedingly low. This low percentage is partly due to a smaller number of tribal students passing out from middle schools. There are several obstacles, for example, lack of funds to make even the smallest investment, reluctance to go to distance places, lack of hostel facilities etc. for the pursuit of education in tribal areas.

**MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION:**

In has been accepted that the mother tongue of the student is the best medium of instruction. There should, therefore, be no exception to this rule in the case of the education of the tribals. The tribals have their own dialect and it should be possible to give instruction to their children in their dialect and for this the non tribal teachers will have to been the tribal district and the books will have to be written in that dialect.

**MID DAY MEAL:**

Since the hours of work of the school would be very long and the students will have to come from longer distances and in order to attract a good number of students, the school should provide a cheap and nutritious mid-day-meal to all the tribal students.

**BUILDINGS, EQUIPMENTS, LIBRARIES AND PLAYGROUND:**

For the school, buildings would be necessary. It would also be necessary to provide houses for the teachers who would be expected to live with their families.
The density of the population in the tribal area is very low and therefore large number of students will have to come from longer distances. Upto one mile or even one and half mile the tribal children can be expected to walk to the school, but if the distance is greater than this, and if there is keenness on the part of the children on will as the parents to benefit from the school, it would be necessary to house them on the school premises. Thus a small hall should be reserved for the residence of such children.

There has been considerable expansion of education in tribal areas in recent years. A large number of schools have been opened. Enrolment of children has also increased. Little attention has, however, been paid to the provision of buildings, laboratories equipments etc. with the result that most of the schools are ill-equipped.

**TRAINING OF TEACHERS:**

Importance of training of a teacher of such multipurpose school can't be over emphasised. The teacher ought to be trained in the purpose and outlook of such school and the training of the teachers. So selection ought to be done in the Tribal areas itself so as to give a realistic and practical outlook to the teachers. As the programme of expansion of education in the tribal areas will have to be an ambitions one, there will be felt a need of large number of trained teacher in the above philosophy of education. It will therefore, be necessary for the Government to start a permanent training institution for teacher in the Tribal areas itself, so that the demand for teachers for the new schools, could easily meet from this institution.

Article 46 of the Indian Constitution lays down a directive principle of the state policy. It provides: "The State shall promote with special care the educational
and economic interests of the people and in particular of the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation". Yet majority of the tribals in India remain illiterate and orthodox.

**THE ALTERNATIVE:**

Open Education acquires a definite role here in developing correct social values, attitudes and habits among the tribals. A person who condemns dowry and also supports education of women, has socially desirable values. Condemning exploitations of children and promoting literacy are also socially desirable virtues. Belief and practice of the small family norm, equality of men and women in education and employment are equally desirable. Therefore education of India's diehard conformist tribes can not be achieved overnight through expansion of rigid formal structures but by developing culturally synchronised new structures and programmes based on :-

1. **Information and knowledge about environment.**

2. **Knowledge about social, economic, scientific and technological changes in the midst of which young people live and work.**

3. **Elementary principles of health, hygiene, childcare and nutrition.**

4. **Introductory occupational and vocational skill programmes to prepare the learners for a job, or for self employment.**

5. **Basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic etc.**

In our country, where despite increase in food production, poverty and malnutrition continue to exist, it is all the more essential to create awareness about nutrition and a wholesome diet. Besides poverty, religious and social taboos also work against healthy living and nutritious foods. The ways and means of reaching
these ignorant people through open education must be explored for it appears to be the only form of education to which they can respond. Poor sanitation, unsafe drinking water and ignorance of even elementary hygiene are the common causes of infectious diseases from which children of weaker sections who live in slums, mostly suffer. Though these diseases have their origin in poverty, lack of health education and absence of civic awareness are the other contributory factors.

**THE DISTANCE EDUCATION ADVANTAGE:**

Distance mode of education is known for its flexibility. It is less restrictive in terms of prerequisites, namely pre-entry qualifications, duration of study, age, station of study, etc. Other reasons are that it uses methods of teaching based on real life situations, that it accepts students from all walks of life without the rigid formalities of the traditional system, and that it adapts the learning process to the dictates of the learner's own setting, albeit with limitations. Moreover, a variety of teaching media are employed, such as correspondence scripts, radio, T.V. and telephones, and the precise curricula and content is as close as possible to the learner's felt needs. Above all at the subtime, it considers education as a life long process and a stimulus for personal perfection in social advancement.

With these parameters of flexibility established clearly, it is time to assert that a stage has come where the distance mode of education need to shoulder the responsibility of educating the tribals with the following academic objectives:

1. To advance professional and vocational skills among tribals.
2. To prepare individuals for self-employment.
3. To complement formal education in a country of largely uneducated people.
4. To educate the drop-outs from formal education.
5. To retrain adults for the changing requirements of jobs and family life.

6. To provide life-long education.

To underlying logic behind these objectives is that when a person has learnt some new information, skills, or attitudes which can be of use to him or her, it is known as being educated. Education is change in behaviour and improvement in abilities and shaping of attitudes.

Distance education can give the rural folk direction in developing their economy, ways and means of solving their financial problems, skills development, proper utilisation of leisure, professional growth and most important, a scientific temper. The age old methods of shifting cultivation need to be replaced by exposing tribals to the modern methods through the video network of distance education system.

The agencies which can communicate with the open university are as follows:

1. The Department of Adult and continuing Education located near the target population which would act as a nodal agency.

2. The Development departments as departments providing inputs.

3. The Tribal research Institute that acts as the academic coordinating agency.

CURRICULA OF OPEN LEARNING COURSES:

The range of subject matter curricula designed for the rural adults covered by such institutions is wide. Given the diversity of tribal life styles across the Indian hills, this however can be classified into two main areas of concern - (i) Functional education for various occupational groups among the tribals workers and (ii) General awarness education for the tribal population. These may be in the nature of:
❖ Programmes for farmers and other agricultural, livestock and fishery workers.

❖ Programmes for group leaders among tribes on constitutional rights, participation in panchayat raj and community development programmes.

❖ Programmes of social service workers voluntary service organization.

❖ General education for the adult population.

❖ Functional "academic" subjects such as arithmetic, languages, elementary socio-economics, and general knowledge.

❖ Health and nutrition.

❖ Community education.

❖ Home science and family planning.

Times change so also the tads and technologies and more so ideas and needs. The key to success in a rapidly progressing human social order lies in Tackling today's problem with today's tools only instead of yesterdays.

Illiteracy is a major problem of the tribals. Most of them feel no urge to educate their children. Since most of the tribals are poors, education appears to be a luxury for them. In the case of those people who are engaged in agriculture their minor children are also engaged in it. The illiterate parents do not consider it as their primary responsibility to give education to their children.

The tribals constitute a sizeable proportion of the total population of India. Education must assume a key role during the present phase of tribal development and must be conceived in comprehensive terms to cover all aspects of community life, where they come in touch with the new system. Education has served only
as an instrument of employment under the government in urban areas. This has created a wrong model in which education has been equated with jobs outside. When educated youth are not able to move out, they find it difficult to adjust. Even though the number of such persons is very small, they create a bad example. Young boys get alienated from their families and traditional occupations. Thus they become maladjusted in their society.

The most important aspect of education in tribal areas has to be that the community should be enabled to have a clear perspective of their relationship with the modern system. The most important aspect of education in the tribal areas, therefore, is the planning of its content and its presentation. It must be meaningful to the people.

Education seeks to impact knowledge and skill as also sentiments and values for adjusting to the economic and geographic environment in the case of one and to the social environment in the other. Hence its need in the transitional culture-phase is obvious. To achieve this various types of institution are suggested to cover all sections of the people and their interests. Among them are Day-Schools, Residential school, Technical Training schools, Higher Education for the children of the community and adult or social education.