CHAPTER 3
EMERGENCE OF INTELLIGENTSIA

While the historical background of Dimasa history provided the basis for autonomy movements, it required a catalytic agent for its fruition, viz. the emergence of a Dimasa intelligentsia. The emergence of the Dimasa intelligentsia was the result of several factors that accompanied the introduction of a colonial government. Some of these major factors are the introduction of modern education, the establishment of the tea industry that led to railway development and other means of communication, the introduction of money economy which in turn led to the growth of market system and townships. Hence these factors are represented in three sections in this chapter. The fourth section discusses the nature and peculiarities of this newly emerging Dimasa intelligentsia.

The British undertook the annexation of Cachar for two reasons; while colonial economic expansion was the guiding force behind the annexation, Cachar proved important from the strategic point of view. The British discovered the traditional trade routes through various Reports where Cachar would play a pivotal role. The Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India of R.B Pemberton has extensively covered the economic prospects of Cachar. Pemberton mentions that besides a beautiful topography of both hills and plains, Cachar with a scanty population has the very fertile soil congenial for the culture of varied produce, not common in the tracts of Bengal. The Report stated that rice which is the principal item of food and is extensively cultivated and experiments made by T.Fisher have proved that more valuable
varieties of grain, wheat, sugarcane and cotton in particular, could be advantageously cultivated in this province.  

Various natural resources mainly timber from the dense forests created another prospect of trade. Pemberton also narrates the trade prospect of timber in his Report:

The forests by which the southern Kachar is bounded on its eastern and southern sides, have always proved a very valuable acquisition to the inhabitants; and the location whence the timber was principally obtained were the densely wooded belt extending from the banks of Jeereee river to the Hoorung rang of hills; on the banks of the upper portion of the Sunaeee, Dullaseeree and Madura rivers; and from the Barak in the immediate vicinity of the Confluence with the Jeere.  

The communication system played an important role in the development of trade and commerce in Cachar. Pemberton pointed out that Southern Kachar formed an important and valuable addition to British possessions on the Eastern Frontier with a facility of communication with the central portion of Assam and the protected portion of Manipur. 

From the strategic point of view, the annexation of Cachar helped in the matter of the preservation of peace on the frontier on the one hand and establishment of political relations with the adjoining states on the other. It also prevented the possibility of any further interference from Burma. Such

\footnote{2}{loc. cit.}
\footnote{3}{Ibid, p.205.}
a situation encouraged the growth of trade relations within the country and also with neighboring countries like Burma and China.

The prospect of trade and commerce had necessitated the establishment of an administrative set-up. Therefore just after the annexation of Cachar, T. Fisher was appointed as the Superintendent of Cachar plain who formerly served in the Survey Department of British army. He undertook the responsibilities of the first administrative officer in real earnest. He introduced a set of economic reforms to increase the revenue in Cachar which was annexed to the British dominion as a revenue district. Fisher exercised full political power of superintendence to achieve his political goal. He measured the total cultivable land and fixed the land revenue based on principles of the old Dimasa state. He did not abolish the Khel system* altogether but reorganized it to suit the needs of the colonial economy. For administrative consequences he worked out a comprehensive census of the district.  

Thus, Fisher introduced various changes in Cachar. About this time however with the Revolt of 1857, the East India Company’s rule was over and through the Queen’s Proclamation; power was transferred to the hands of the British Crown.

In 1854 the British annexed the Kopili-Jamuna valley and hilly portion of Cachar which was under the jurisdiction of Tularam Senapati. The Kopili-

* The Khel was a system of commune land holding in medieval Assam practised by the Ahom, Dimasa Kings. Though the supreme owner of the land was the King, a group of people could acquire the land for a definite purpose, such as elephant catching, fishing, excavation of gold, silver, salt-well etc. A Khel had to deposit the product to the royal treasury and in return acquired land for livelihood.

4 S. Chatterjee, A Socio-Economic History of South Assam, Jaipur, 2000, p.6.
Jamuna valley was placed under a British sub divisional officer in Nagaon district.

However, with a portion of Naga Hills in 1866, the hilly portion of Cachar was made over to Cachar district administration. The sub-division was formed as the North Cachar sub division with Asalu as headquarter. At the close of the Naga revolt 1879-80, on the strong recommendations of the Chief Secretary of Assam, the office of sub-divisional headquarter was transferred from Asalu to Gunjung. However the sub-divisional headquarters of North Cachar Hills was not free from difficulties. Despite the difficulties of road and communication, the head quarters had to face the revolt of Sambhudhan Phonglosa in 1882. He destroyed the sub-division of Gunjung. Thus the sub-divisional headquarter was deserted. This shows the strong impact of Phonglosa’s revolt against the foreign intruders.

Meanwhile, with a view to enhancing the construction of railway tracts through the North Cachar Hills, the administrative headquarter of Railway was fixed at Haflong. The colonial administration also shifted their sub-divisional headquarter from Gunjung to Haflong in 1896. Even from the strategic point of view, Haflong became important. To resist the attack of Angami Nagas, the colonial administrators posted a light infantry at Haflong. This shows that the British were apprehensive of revolts such as that of Sambhudhan Phonglosa in 1882.

In 1874, the Governor General of India constituted the Chief Commissionership in Assam. Then the Scheduled District Act of 1874 was adopted for the Hills Areas of Assam. The Act was enforced in North Cachar Hills. Through this Act the Executive Government was empowered to exclude
the tribal areas from the normal operation of ordinary laws of the country and provide them necessary protection to preserve and protect their way of life and living. In 1880, the Assam Frontier Tracts Regulation was adopted. This Act was enforced in North Cachar Hills on 1911 along with the Garo Hills, the Khasi and Jayantia Hills, the Naga Hills and the Mikir Hills. However, Montague Chelmsford Report of 1918 recommended the extension of the backward tract from the jurisdiction of the Provincial Government. On the basis of this recommendation, the Government of India Act of 1919 provided that the Governor General-in-Council could declare any territory in British India to be a backward tract or excluded area. Accordingly, on January 1921, the Governor General-in-Council declared the North Cachar Hills in Cachar district as a backward tract. As a result this area did not represent in the Assam Legislative Assembly. This area was placed under the direct administration of the Government.

In the Government of India Act 1935, the provision of Excluded Area and Partially-Excluded Area was inserted for the hills areas of Assam. Henceforth the North Cachar Hills was declared as an Excluded Area. The Excluded Area was administered by the Governor himself in his discretion where the ministers had no constitutional right to advise him in connection with its administration and no Act of the Federal or Provincial Legislatures could apply to this area without the prior consent of the Governor, who could apply it with some exceptions or modification.

5 T. Bhattacharjee(ed), 100 years of Haflong Centenary Commemorative Souvenir, Haflong, 1996, p.52.
6 loc.cit.
7 Ibid, p. 53.
The provision of Excluded Area was continued till the Independence of India in 1947.

However this provision of Excluded Area kept aloof the North Cachar Hills from the purview of Assam Government. The local administration in Haflong focused its attention on maintaining peace among various tribes, dispensing justice, checking the infiltration of all outsiders, preventing shifting of villages, collecting of land revenue, grazing tax etc.\(^8\)

However, the local people, namely the Dimasas were deprived from exercising the right to send its representative to the Assam Legislative Assembly. As a result several laws passed in Assam Legislative Assembly such as Opium Prohibition Act and the like, could not be extended to these areas\(^9\).

The Colonial Government made all these arrangement suitable for the economic exploitation of resources. The encouragement to wet-paddy cultivation or Panikheti and the construction of a better system of communication through roads and railways were also geared up towards colonial exploitation. Again such exploitation was possible only when revolt was suppressed and peace and tranquility would prevail. Thus it was seen that police officers were appointed as administrators. During the period 1896-1947 most of the administrators were policemen in Haflong. This was so also in consideration of the strategic location of North Cachar Hills, so as to enable cordial and lucrative trade relations not only with the adjoining states but also with countries like China and Burma.

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\(^8\) Ibid, p.31.

\(^9\) Ibid, p.53.
Within this colonial structure a limited development occurred in the field of education. Education is one of the strong vehicles of social change. It can change the behaviour, values of a particular society. Prior to the British the formal education in Assam was confined to the upper strata of society. It was the introduction of western education in Assam that was to bring considerable change in the society. However, the intention of the British rulers for introducing western education was not for the social uplift of the people of Assam; rather they wanted to create a class of people who could serve in the colonial administration and support its colonial interests. To attain its cherished goal, the colonial rulers devoted themselves for the spread of western education. To quote Barpujari:

For the spread of English education, the colonial rulers were motivated by a political cum administrative objective to create a ‘Middle class’ comparable to their own so that it might assist in the administration of the country and help in the development of internal resource.¹⁰

The case of hill areas in Assam was not an isolated one. The colonial rulers also tried to create a class among the hill people for their colonial interests. Moreover the colonial rulers fully estimated that the educational tradition among the hill people was not so strong. Their linguistic development was in a dormant position. Therefore the process of spreading English language in hill areas was much easier than in the plains. Moreover the spread of Christianity among the hill people was another guiding principle of colonial rulers. In 1859, the Foreign Secretary of American Baptist Missionary Union prepared a report on the religious conversion of the hill people. Here it

was concluded that the hill tribes were their last hope in Assam. The stream of Christian religion and civilization would flow to neighboring Bhutan, Tibet, Manipur and perhaps to Bihar through them.\footnote{11}

The efforts of Christian Missionary were successful to some extent. Among the Mizos Christianity became the dominant factor. The Nagas, Khasis and the Garos also embraced Christianity. These experiments encouraged the missionaries to enter Dimasa-dominated areas of North Cachar Hills. The Convent Sisters recollected the account from the chronicles of St. Agnes as:

For a long time it was the desire of the Mother Superior in Chittagong to have a house on the hills which will serve as a Sanatorium for the sisters. Therefore it was not a surprise to receive a cable on October 19\textsuperscript{th} 1911, saying ‘Haflong Yes’ everything looked bright and favorable to a scheme which supplied a long felt want.\footnote{12}

The Presbyterian Church had established a chapel in 1912 at Haflong which played a pivotal role in spreading Christianity. However this effort was strongly objected to by a Dimasa headman, Umaram Longmailai who organised his people not to embrace Christianity in 1901. He even called upon the Dimasa people to follow their traditional faith.\footnote{13}

Education in North Cachar Hills started with the Guru Training School, which was established at Haflong in the last part of nineteenth century to train some natives to act as interpreters.\footnote{14}

\footnotetext{11}{H. K Barpujari, American Missionary Sakol Aru Unabinsha Satikar Asom, Jorhat, 1994, p.17.}
\footnotetext{12}{T. Bhattacharjee(ed), op. cit. p.131.}
\footnotetext{13}{Information provided by Brajen Langthasa, Diphu, also confirmed by U. Bathari, Dy-Director Indian Council of Historical Research, Guwahati.}
\footnotetext{14}{S. K Dev, Development of Education in North Cachar Hills (1889-2000), Haflong, 2000, p. 3.
Naiso Daulagapu, a prominent Dimasa was the student of this School. He was the first Dimasa who took western education and appointed as the school teacher. S K Dev observed:

It is also known from the autobiography of late Naiso Daulagapu that there was such a school at Dirawbra near the village Thaisaling Hawar where he was born and he started his schooling there in 1891. But the school was closed after 1 (one) year 8 (eight) months of his studies there. So he had to go to Gunjung in 1893 where he continued his studies in the Guru Training School for only year. The Gunjung Guru Training School was then shifted to 1896 in Haflong. Late Daulagaphu had to come over to Haflong and completed his course of studies from the Guru Training School Haflong in 1898. He was then appointed English Pundit in the Guru Training School in 1900 AD and worked there for 9 Months.  

This Guru Training School was converted into an upper primary school where Prakash Chandra Barman was appointed as the head teacher. He came to North Cachar Hills from Cachar in 1908 A.D. First he joined his services at Gunjung as a primary school teacher. Then he came to Haflong and joined in the upper primary school.  

Thangalee Langthasa, Dhanshring Haphila, Swarna Kumar Kherasa, Bijoy Haflongbar, Dinanath Naiding, Jogendranath Thaosen, Hamshring Langthasa etc. were the students of Prakash Chandra Barman. Most of them went to Shillong for higher studies. Jogendranath Thaosen was a successful student. He passed matriculation in 1917 from Shillong Government High School and went to Amanullah Engineering School of Dacca for higher studies.  

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15 loc. cit.
17 Ibid, p. 213.
There were three schools in Arkhap and Relai with an enrolment of 12 (twelve) students in each. However, the results were not satisfactory. J. R. Cunningham, then Director of Public Instruction in Assam had prepared a note regarding the educational status in North Cachar Hills District:

Education has been in progress in the Cachar Hills since the early Eighties when the first school was opened in Gunjung. The results have been discouraging. This has been ascribed to the extraordinary diversity of people in Hills, their unwillingness to undergo education and the fact that there is no common language. Cachari, Nagas, Kukis, Khasis, Mikirs and others all speak their own language and know little or nothing of the language of their neighbors. To begin with, Bengali which is the language of the jurisdiction in which the Hills are placed was taken as the school vernacular. Partly owing to the backwardness and hostility or indifference of the people and partly, I am told, owing to the difficulty of the Bengali alphabet, the advance of education was very slow. A further reason was probably that in their remoteness or insulation from the plains Bengali seemed a useless acquisition to these Hills people. The only developed language with which they came in touch being English and the Hindustani of the labour force employed on the Assam Bengal Railway.18

The question of medium for instruction was the main point of concern in the North Cachar Hills. Therefore the issue was placed in the discussion which was held among J.R. Cunningham-Director of Public Instruction Assam, F. B. Wilkins-Inspector of School Surama valley and hills districts, J. M. Harries Rees in-charge of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Mission in the North

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18 Notes by the Director of Public Instruction regarding the Education in North Cachar Hills including record of discussion on the subject at Haflong on 21st January 1915, also in S.K Dev, Development of Education in North Cachar Hills (1889-2000), Haflong, 2000.
Cachar Hills and F.M. Clifford sub-division officer, Haflong. Cachari, Bengali and English were the primary languages of instruction for the students of class I, II, III, IV, V, VI standard. The dominance of many languages created a problem. Therefore to overcome the difficulties the issue was placed for discussion. The main points of discussion were:

1) Bengali in Roman or Bengali character 2) Roman Urdu 3) English from the beginning 4) Haflong Hindustani to begin with leading up to English later 5) Hindi in the Roman character to class III and thereafter in Nagri character. 19

Cunningham was in favour of Bengali language as the medium of instruction. However, J. M. Harries Rees and F.M Clifford opposed the introduction of Bengali language. F.B Wilkins was doubtful. They put forward the several reasons such as the experience having proved to be a failure, the alphabet was too difficult for a backward people that no one spoke Bengali and that no one wanted Bengali. 20

The issue of Urdu was also objected on the ground that the grammar was too complex and the vocabulary inappropriate as being referred largely to Persian and Arabian sources. 21

Regarding the English language it was argued that:

English was not current in any way in the Hills. It was not spoken by the shopkeepers with whom the people dealt along the Railway line, the difficulty in procuring suitable teachers would throw back education to the

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19 loc. cit. (Notes by the Director of Public Instruction)
20 loc. cit.
21 loc. cit.
Hills and the adoption of English would require the production of special
texts books throughout the school course.²²

So far the issue of Haflong Hindustani was concerned, Clifford supported
the introduction of the Haflong Hindustani, while Wilkins and Rees strongly
opposed. Cunningham himself wrote to Clifford opposing the introduction of
Haflong Hindustani. He argued that:

The boundaries of ‘Haflong Hindustani’, geographical and intellectual,
would set narrow limits to advance wide enough possibility for the present
but what of the future? Again, what actually is to be the language, what the
grammar, what the source and vocabulary for its replenishment, where is
the department to find its text books beyond the most elementary stage and
where are people, having learn to read, to find their literature? Or is it the
intention that Haflong Hindustani might give way after classes II or III to a
language which has already a literary record?, and to which it would lead
up?²³

After a prolonged discussion it was concluded that the following course might
be further considered namely-

1) that for the first three years of the school course, a simplified Hindi or
Hindustani might be taught, an alphabet chart on the lines of those in use in
the plains schools being prepared and special Readers written for the
second and third years, which, while they avoided all complexities of
grammatical construction should yet not be, as in the proposed Haflong
Hindustani, positively ungrammatical. The vocabulary to be used would be
that familiar to the majority of the Hindustani speaking people in the Hills.
The medium of instruction for the present should be such Hindustani as the

²² loc.cit.
²³ loc.cit.
present staff could improve as time went on 2) That in class IV and the upper classes, Hindi should be taught, the Nagri alphabet being used and English also being taught in those schools in which there was a demand for English and a teacher competent to offer instruction in that language.\textsuperscript{24}

In the last part of the year another meeting was held at Silchar to discuss about the educational issues of the North Cachar Hills. J. R. Cunningham, J.M. Harries Rees and F.B. Wilkins were present in that meeting. Two major issues, mainly the medium of instruction and financial grants to the Mission School and other Schools were discussed. To quote Cunningham:

While I was not personally so clearly convinced of the propriety or feasibility of attempting to establish English as the sole School language in the North Cachar Hills, the proposal had warrant in the Chief Commissioner's orders and precedent in successful endeavors made by the American administration to teach in English throughout the school course in their new Asiatic possessions. It was accordingly agreed that as an experimental measure at any rate. English should be introduced from class I in all school for which a teacher could be provided who was capable of giving elementary instruction in English. In schools for which such a teacher could not be provided the alternative stated in the proceedings would of course be followed for the present---- (1) The Cachari syllabus would continue to be taught in Cachari Schools. (2) The Lushai syllabus would be though in Kuki and Naga School and the Khasi syllabus in Mikir Schools.\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{24} loc.cit.
\textsuperscript{25} loc.cit.
Regarding the medium of instruction they were agreed to teach *Cachari, Lushai and Khasi* as a provisional measure. That would pave the way to the introduction of English as well as an English teacher could be found.\(^{26}\)

The issue of financial grants was placed for discussion. The administration was not in a position to help with money grants. The Mission received Rs. 100/- a month for the Central School and Rs. 15/- a month for each of the school at Gunjung, Relai and Arkup, amounting to a total of Rs. 1740/- annually.\(^{27}\)

On the basis of this background it was resolved that the grant of Rs. 1740/- was to be regarded as a lump annual grant and as soon as funds were available, a fixed grant would be settled for the Central School.\(^{28}\)

The issue of infrastructure of the schools was also discussed. It was resolved that in the matter of buildings the out schools were to be built and maintained by the villages for which they were provided. A project had been prepared for the extension of the Central School at a cost of Rs. 2000. The extension would be necessary to accommodate the teachers' class. Rees would provide for the residence of the teachers brought in for training.\(^{29}\)

In a letter to the Second Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam, Cunningham wrote that:

> Under the new arrangements, the Mission will be responsible for all Schools in the Hills and arrangement under which the Administration made special grants to a Central School and three out schools will have to be

\(^{26}\) loc.cit.
\(^{27}\) loc.cit.
\(^{28}\) loc.cit.
\(^{29}\) loc.cit.
discontinued. It is unfortunately impossible just at present stage to promise the mission an increase of their grants. There can be no objection however to continuing the present grants and it will be advantageous that those grants should be converted into a lump grant which will be placed at the disposal of the Mission in their discretion in the same way as the similar grants which has been given to the Mission in the Khasi Hills under Government order no: 79 E dated 9th January, 1914. 30

While these policy level discussions were going on, the Missionary started its first venture of St. Agnes Convent School at Haflong in the year 1918. The Assam- Bengal Railway authority provided the infrastructural facilities. Initially the Assam-Bengal Railway authority planned the establishment of a school at Badarpur, but at the insistence of Father Christopher Becker, the Railway authority changed its plan. They agreed to Father Becker's proposal of building a school at Haflong instead of Badarpur. The Governor and D.P.I then offered a building grant of Rs 30,000, for the proposed school in Haflong. 31

When the construction was going on, the entire process of construction was disrupted for the shortage of raw materials and the atmosphere of First World War. Moreover Father Becker was deported to Germany for the war. The St. Agnes Convent School was inaugurated on February 25, 1918. There were only twenty pupils. One of the reasons for the poor admission was the fact that the opening of the school was delayed and the parents sent their children to other schools. Unfortunately the school was plagued by malaria which affected the matron, sisters and also the pupils and so the parents withdrew

30 The Letter of J. R Cunningham to the Second Secretary of Chief Commissioner of Assam Shillong7 February 1916, also in S. K Dev, op. cit.
31 T Bhattacharjee, op. cit. p.71.
their children from the school. When World War I ended on November 11, 1918; the number of pupils reduced to eight.\textsuperscript{32}

The St. Agnes Convent School opened as a Middle English school, and was later was upgraded to High school standard. The school was recognized as a Matriculation examination center under Calcutta University in 1929. It also received departmental recognition in 1934. It was a residential school catering to the needs of the children of the European officials in the Railways, tea gardens and Burma Oil Company. Boys up to 10 years of age only were allowed to reside and study in the school while girls were allowed to reside till the completion of the Matriculation Examination. It was exclusively for Europeans. No local student was allowed to study there. However in 1933 a private candidate Haremay Dev Barman was allowed to appear the Matriculation Examination through this school. He passed the Matriculation examination in $2^{nd}$ division.\textsuperscript{33}

In 1924, the \textbf{Haflong Public M.E. School} was started with 29 students. The school was recognized by the departments in 1927. It was a Bengali-medium school and had both Primary and M.E. stages with a Managing committee consisting of the citizens of Haflong. The establishment of this school was the result of the generosity and perseverance of the eminent citizens of Haflong like Jnaendra Kumar Das, Nityanandra Daulagapu, Rabindra Kumarr Mitra, Raimohan Dev, Maulavi Samsuddin Khan, Shreemanta Bhattacharjee, Sardar B.S Gill and Bipin Chandra Dev. This Public M.E. School was the first vernacular medium school at Haflong and it provided education to common people of North Cachar Hills. The name of founder headmaster of

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid, p.71.

\textsuperscript{33} S. K Dev, \textit{op.cit.} p.7.
the school was not available. The available records revealed the name of few headmasters. Accordingly, Bibhute Bhusen Sengupta (1930 to 1933) and from 1934 Digambar Chandra Barman were the headmasters of M.E. School. Nirode Ch. Bhattacharjee (1930 to 1933) and Fatik Chandra Dutta (1934 to 1943) were the Head pundits of the primary section.\textsuperscript{34}

This school had opened a new vista in the education of North Cachar Hills and provided the foundation for the birth of an intelligentsia at a later period. The strength of the students increased annually. During 1935-36, the student strength was 79. It increased up to 125 in 1939-40. Several factors were conducive in this regard.

One major reason for the increase in students was the new interest of Dimasa boys and girls who strongly felt the need for education. The school also admitted Bengali, Gurkha, Kuki and Naga boys and girls, though their number was negligible. Another reason for a sufficient inflow of tribal students to the Haflong Public M.E. School was that the then Sub-Divisional officer, C.S Booth, President of the Managing Committee of the school was very popular among the tribals. He could successfully persuade the tribal people particularly the Dimasa people to send their wards and children to this school. It was also due to the fact that free education and hostel facilities also attracted the tribals to send their children to this school. The appointment of Digambar Chandra Barman, a Dimasa as headmaster of the School also attracted more tribal boys and girls in general and Dimasa boys and girls in particular.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid, p. 9.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid, p. 11.
The educational development of North Cachar Hills during the colonial period had created a new era. The Dimasa students became interested in western education. **Joy Bhadra Hagjer** (1914-1973) was the product of this environment. J. B. Hagjer was admitted in the Mission school. He passed this Matriculation examination from Shillong Government School and joined M. C. College in Sylhet. He graduated from Calcutta University in 1938. **Desondao Hojai** (1920-1993) was a student of Mission school. He also passed Matriculation from Shillong Government School. He completed his graduation from Haflong Government College in 1964 in the latter part of his life. **Nityalal Daulagapu** (1925-1981) a student of Mission school also completed his Matriculation from Shillong Government School. He went to Calcutta for higher studies. However, due to the incidents of National Movement, he returned to Guwahati. He completed his Intermediate in science from Cotton College in 1947. He took admission in Assam Medical College but due to poor health he gave up studies.

**Jatindralal Thaosen** (1930-2003) started his primary education at Maibang. He passed Intermediate examination from Haflong and studied in St. Edmunds’ College, Shillong. **Sonaram Thaosen** (1922-1996) a social worker and a statesman was the student of Haflong Public M.E School. He secured First division in Middle School Leaving certificate Examination in 1942. Later, He joined in the correspondence course from the Public School of Economics, London and British Institute of Correspondence Course. He received a number of appreciation letters and certificates. **Gajendra Barman** got a medical diploma and served in the Medical Department of the Army. **Rajendra Kemprai** and **Donthang Naiding** were the other noteworthy personalities. The Daulagapu brothers, namely, **Nityalal Daulagapu**,
Ramakanta Daulagapu Surat Chandra Daulagapu and Nishianta Daulagapu were the product of this educational environment. Gobindra Chandra Langthasa and Jatan Kumar Thaosen were the brilliant students of Haflong Public M.E. School.

Apart from these personalities, there were other Dimasa students who emerged as products of this educational atmosphere of North Cachar Hills. Thus the efforts of the Mission, initiatives of the Bengali people and their own enthusiasm as well, played a catalytic role in spreading education and helped in forming an educated class of people among the Dimasa. Haflong became the new hub of this educated class.

(III)

Tea cultivation occupies a central point in the society, polity and economy of colonial Assam. It was first discovered in Upper Assam. Within a short period of time it turned into a prime industry of Assam. The Dimasa-dominated Cachar was also a centre of tea cultivation. Tea was discovered in Cachar in 1855. About this discovery R. Stewart the then Superintendent wrote in a letter dated 10th July 1855:

When in Moffasil last February, the first specimens I saw of the Cachar plant were brought to me by an individual who had been employed in a tea plantation in Assam and who recognized the plant and as an inducement to other to bring to my notice any discoveries they may make. I beg to suggest that he be given a present of thirty or forty rupees or any sum which may be considered sufficient.' Immediately, after the discovery, Stewart submitted the specimen of the plant to Dr. Thomas, Superintendent of the Govt.
Botanic Garden Calcutta who stated, 'the tea specimens forwarded by you are beyond any reasonable doubt the true tea plant (Assam variety)'.

The discovery gave wide publicity and Government invited people to undertake the work of tea cultivation. Most of the Europeans had submitted their application for granting land. They demanded for grant of land from 500 acres to 1000 acres. Purbutty Churn Bunnoorjee, a Bengali Banker and Agent of Sylhet had also communicated with Stewart. Among the applicants, three or four parties commenced work. They were well satisfied with the prospects of making large sum of money by the cultivation and manufacture of tea in Cachar. A Tydd of Wise & Co. Dacca, Baokara Gardens, I Davidson of Cachar Tea Company, Adelaide Gardens and M. Haring of Chundupoor; were some of the pioneers in the field of tea cultivation in Cachar.

The first tea garden was established at Jatinga valley of North Cachar Hills Sub-division on 1856. Initially these men had to face difficulties. In 1858, the Government agreed to the exportation of labour to the tea estates, as Stewart had the vision of Cachars plenty and aware of the potentiality of Cachar tea Industry. He encouraged the tea planters but at the same time he made them aware of the hostility of the Lushai and Kukis. For which the planters had to manage their own security. Further the industry had to face the temporary recession of the stock market crunch in Calcutta. However Stewart's attempt to win over the Lushai Chief Sukpilal and fruitful diplomatic relation with the other Lushai Chiefs were helpful for protecting the interest of the tea industry.

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37 loc.cit.
38 loc.cit.
The tea planters' trust on Stewart helped them to overcome the difficulties of infrastructure and defence.\textsuperscript{40}

Despite these early difficulties, the tea industry grew widely in Cachar. Within a short time, the tea industry brought tremendous change in economic, social and educational life of Cachar.\textsuperscript{41}

**The tea industry in Assam necessitated the development of a good communication system.** Railway was one of the important modes of communication through which the planters could send their products. **Railway was given importance for the communication with Chittagong port of Bay of Bengal.** In 1882-83 J.W. Buyers, Engineer- in -Chief stated that:

>a practical route can be found across the North Cachar hills to Assam and there appears little reason to doubt that a railway following this route, and serving, as it would the important district of Sylhet and Cachar had enormous advantage over a railway simply running down the valley of Brahmaputra parallel throughout its length to a navigable river and commanding out a narrow tract of country'. The alignments envisaged: i) Chittaging---Comilla (ii) Comilla---Badarpur (iii) Badarpur--- Lumding (iv) Lumding--- Kamarbandha (v) Kanarbandha Ali--- Makum Junction and (vi) Lumding--- Guwahati.\textsuperscript{42}

The Report of J.W. Buyers was supported by the tea planters of Assam. Supporting Buyers’ Report, Moles Worth, Consulting Engineer of Government of India opined that,

\textsuperscript{40} S. Chatterjee, \textit{op. cit.} p. 168.  
\textsuperscript{41} D Dutta, \textit{op.cit.} p. 101.  
\textsuperscript{42} H K Barpujari, (ed) \textit{The Comprehensive History of Assam}, Vol IV, \textit{op. cit.} p.315.
It is difficult to overrate the importance of this line to Assam in strategic, political, administrative point of view. The whole line between Silchar and Golaghat is however a virgin forest and the population practically nil. But there are rich tracts of land suitable for tea along the line of railway which would be eagerly taken up if a railway were constructed specially in the Dimapur valleys and such a line would undoubtedly revolutionize upper Assam. As a direct route to Calcutta such a line would possess many advantages compared with the route via Dhubri.  

Moreover the potentiality of coal and other mineral resources of Khasi Hills, the vast forest resource of North Cachar hills had influenced the colonial administrator to construct the railway line through the hill section. Theodore Hopes placed the proposal of Railway construction before the Government of India as a representative of English Syndicate. Theodore Hopes sought to construct the entire project of 725 miles. As concession he asked for besides rent- free grants of land and interest on the capital, waste lands 10 square miles monopoly for ten years on coal mines in Khasi-Jayantia and North Cachar Hills, exclusive right within the same period on mineral oil east of Guwahati and the right of felling timber for construction and maintenance from forests in the neighborhood.  

At last the Assam- Bengal Railway Company which was formed in 1902 took over the work, under the leadership of J.W Buyer as General Manager of the Company. Work began at different sections along the route. It was no easy

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task as the construction of the lines was through wooded hills and deep Nambor forest, costing heavy expenses. Barpujari remarked:

> With 37 tunnels and innumerable bridges, the hill section was the marvel of engineering skill. Cachar which was hitherto a remote and isolated district came within reach of Calcutta. With the opening of the railway the journey map took only thirty hours instead of five days. Even uninhabited North Cachar Hill’s gradually attracted settlers particularly to the valleys of Jatinga, Mahur and Dayang.\(^{45}\)

The Assam-Bengal Railway Construction Company’s ninth construction division established a depot at Haflong; the sub-divisional headquarter of North Cachar hills. It was suitable for communication with the Cachar plains and a large number of construction labours were brought from outside. The Construction Division at Haflong brought engineers, workers, clerks, and contractors to the place. This created the urgency to construct several houses and these were built quickly. The Government also established Civil Headquarters at Haflong for better co-ordination of work.\(^{46}\)

The railway had opened a new chapter in the history of the Dimasa. For the first time in the colonial period they got introduced with a new environment. **Money economy was introduced with a Bajar or market.** The Chief Commissioner took initiative in the establishment of the Bajar. He sanctioned the creation of fund for the support and growth of the Bajar on 31 May 1897. It was then known as Haflong Bajar fund and continued to operate till 1912, when it changed its name to Bajar Fund North Cachar Hills vide Govt. Letter no. 1641 M dated 5 July 1912 so as to include other markets or Bajar areas

\(^{45}\) Ibid, p. 320.

\(^{46}\) T. Bhattarjee, (ed) *op.cit.* p. 25.
outside Haflong. As a result several Bajars grew up at Maibang, Mahur and Harrangajao. These Bajars gradually developed and a township emerged at a later period. Thus the process of urbanization was started through the introduction of the railways and these Bajars of which the Haflong Bajar was the most important one.

The Haflong Bajar expanded gradually as people from the various parts of Indian sub-continent came to Haflong and settled themselves. They were involved in the contract and other business activities with the Railways. Among them Samsuddin Khan was a prominent contractor. He undertook the works of construction of the window tunnel No 3 scrape stone-cutting between Doyang River and lower Haflong railway station, Haflong railway station, Railway colonies, Sub-Divisional Court building, Civil Hospital, Establishment quarters, Police Station. Police barrack, Jail lockup etc. Kaloram Paul Gupta, another businessman from Sealkot came to Haflong and established business relations with Gotisah and Ladharam. After the death of Gotisah, Kaloram and Ladharam had established a business firm called Ladharam and Kaloram. In 1930, Kaloram became the sole partner of the firm. The name of the firm was changed to Kaloram Brothers. It had several branches in Dimasa-dominated areas like Mahur, Maibang and Langting. This had contributed a lot for the development of the Bajar. Apart from this firm several other shops were established in Haflong Bajar. Those were Durlar Singh and Sheer Singh, Birbal Singh Chawla, Basanta Kr. Days, Surja Mohan Days, Basanta Ali, Asharam Amarnath Chowlas etc.

The *Bajar* economy had attracted a group of Dimasa people to engage themselves in business activities. Among them, **Devananda Dibragede** and **Shyam Chand Hojai** deserve special mention. In the words of Shyam Chand Hojai, a Dimasa businessman:

> I continued schooling in Shillong, but I had to return in 1945 due to my father’s illness. Unfortunately, my education came to an abrupt end, but I started honest and sincere work as a contractor. I have no qualms in stating that, contractors were given considerable respect and I enjoyed immense satisfaction even now when I see the numerous roads in the interiors of N.C Hills work which materialized under my supervision.48

**As the *Bajar* gradually expanded the township grew.** A large section of Dimasa people also came to the town and permanently settled there. Nani Chandra Barman, Insadau Kachari, Naiso Daulagapu, Joinath Barman etc were among the first few to settle in the town vicinity.

**The Railway, *Bajar* and the town had played an important role not only in the field of economy but also in the linguistic culture of the people.** Dimasa language was confined among the Dimasa people only. A lingua-franca called *Haflong Hindi* developed. During the construction of railways, people of different places came to North Cachar Hills as labour, contractor, officer, engineers etc. Most of them were Hindi speaking people. After the completion of the work, a section of these people settled themselves in Haflong, Harrangajao, Ditekchari, Maibang etc. These people communicated through the new lingua franca, a mix of Hindi and colloquial dialects, which was known as the *Haflong Hindi*. The British officers tried to learn this language. They also employed Dimasa, Naga, Kuki, Khelma, Hrankhol and

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Karbi youth as interpreters. One such interpreter was Rajani Kanta Kachari (Hakomasa) who joined the Government service at Sub-divisional headquarter. At this time, the administration in the hills was engaged in the war efforts. So the role of Dobashi (interpreter) became important. They played an important role during the war crisis in this hill district. Thus the Haflong Hindi became popular in both administrative and public level. Haflong Hindi became the mother tongue of several families in Haflong, and was also the medium of broadcasting in All India Radio.

(IV)

The administration of Dimasa-dominated hills and plains areas was not different from the other situations of North-East India. Therefore a sketchy idea of North-East India would help as to understand the Dimasa case. In the colonial period, the hill areas of North-East India were administered uniformly. The Naga Hills, Lushai hills, North-East Frontier Agency, North Cachar hills etc were administered as Excluded Areas. These Excluded Areas were guarded by the Inner-line permit system to prevent the entry of the plain people. As a result of this colonial administrative structure a special kind of identity developed in the hill areas. Moreover within this specific administrative boundary, Christianity spread with the activities of the Missionaries. In case of the Naga, Mizo, Khasi and Garo, Christianity, spread of western education and money economy of the market system played a pivotal role in social change. This process of social change also contributed towards the emergence of intelligentsia. Here, the emerging intelligentsia of

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49 Ibid, p. 171.
50 Ibid, p. 212.
hill areas consolidated their position by forming various platforms, organisation etc. The Naga Club was the pioneer in this regard. It had submitted its memorandum before the Simon Commission on 1928. In its memorandum, the Naga Club stated, *you (the British) are the only people who have conquered us and when you go we should be as we were.* The Naga Club also demanded necessary safeguards by that memorandum:

> If the British Government, however want to throw us away, we pray that we should not be thrust to the mercy of the people who could never have conquered us themselves, and to whom we were subjected, but to leave us alone to determine for ourselves as in ancient times.51

Likewise, the Khasi intelligentsia formed the **Khasi National Darbar** in 1923. The **Mizo Union** was formed in 1946.

Nevertheless **the case of Dimasa was different from the Khasi, Mizo and the Naga.** Christianity did not play such a role in forming Dimasa intelligentsia. Rather, the move of Christian Missionary was opposed by the Dimasa people. Their social structure, mainly the ‘*Sengphong*’ and ‘*Julu*’ could check the infiltration of Christianity. Moreover the Dimasas were deeply attached to Hinduism and their traditional faith and hence the influence of Christianity could not penetrate Dimasa society.

However, **the colonial administration, western education, the tea industry, and the consequent construction of railways, money economy, the growth of market system, and the growth of townships had a vast impact on Dimasa society.** A section of newly educated Dimasa youth had attached

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themselves with colonial administration. The village chief Khunang was also included in the administrative system. In the plain areas of Jamuna valley of Nagaon district, a section of Dimasa headmen were entrusted with the duty of Mouzadar. These Mouzadars had played a major role in the revenue collection system.

Moreover, World War II had a deep impact on the Dimasa people. The Japanese invasion turned Kohima into a war theatre. The Dimasa-dominated Jamuna valley was another war zone. The Allied Army had their camps in that area. As a result, the Dimasa people came closer to the war activities of Allied forces. The British Government wanted to raise a labour force from Dimasa people. Nevertheless, J. B. Hagjer, the first Dimasa graduate had raised a voice of protest. He was arrested and detained under Defense of India Rule.

All of these factors had contributed towards the emergence of intelligentsia in Dimasa society. In the initial stage, the intelligentsia did not take active part against the colonial forces. It had not showed any solidarity with the Indian Freedom Movement; rather it extended its cooperation towards the colonial administrators. J. B. Hagjer formed an association of Dimasa youth of North Cachar Hills called Dimasa Progressive Youth organisation to give the beleaguered tribe a direction. J. L Thaosen stated:

At that time the condition of the Dimasa people was deplorable. Having been subject to the British policy of divide and rule, Laissez Faire in economic growth, coupled with Political Area Administration (policy of speculation), the life of the people of the areas was miserable. These poor,
illiterate, ill in health, ill clad people and most of them opium addicts were treated as sub-human beings by foreign rulers.\textsuperscript{52}

This reveals the facts that by extending help to the colonizers, the Dimasa were not really attempting to support the colonial government but tried to capitalize the situation for the growth of their society and culture. Their collaboration was based on the belief that their resistance would become a threat to their own position. However, it must be noted that it was not just a case of total cooperation: there was resistance too at some levels. This is also proved by the fact that Hagjer refused to allow the British Government to form a labour Force during war times from the Dimasa community.

J.B. Hagjer who was the Mouzadar at that time involved himself and his organisation in the welfare activities. Hagjer went from village to village on foot and worked hard for the unity and reorganisation of the society. Hagjer loved his people and they accepted his leadership. Through spread of education he tried to educate them and brought about social change.\textsuperscript{53}

\textbf{J.B. Hagjer’s attitude towards social revolution reflected the vision of the contemporary Dimasa intelligentsia.} The new emerging Dimasa intelligentsia was sympathetic towards the misery of the people and advocated social revolution. However, they never declared that the colonial rulers were solely responsible for the people’s misery. This was a peculiar characteristic of the intelligentsia. The intelligentsia always followed a non-antagonistic policy. J.B. Hagjer raised the voice against the forceful recruitment of labour force from the Dimasa community for the war. He was arrested and latter released on bail. However, he did not organize his people against the

\textsuperscript{52} J. L Thaosen, \textit{Joy Bhadra Hagjer, Hudang}, vol-1, no 4, p. 17.

\textsuperscript{53} loc.cit.
colonial rulers. In fact, he joined the Royal Air force in 1944 as Sergeant, resigned the post after Independence, came back in November 1947, and dedicated his life to the service of the people until his death on 18th July 1973, at the Assam Assembly Hall.  

Meanwhile, the toiling masses were raising their voices against the colonial forces. Even the process of liberating the motherland was also started under the leadership of Dimasa woman Joya Thaosen; Born in 1925 at Jorai Bathari village of North Cachar Hills, Joya Thaosen dedicated herself for the cause of her people. Thaosen, a nineteen-year old girl, was neither highly educated nor wealthy in resources, had organised, Revolutionary Dimasa Army with Arjun Langthasa and Jowte-Dao Kemprai. While, the Subdivisional officer forced the people to donate food grains for the war granary, they raised their voice of protest. Thaosen herself organised the people of Pidik, Lagrang Samfhridisa, Gabyari, Aprudisa, Khepera, Kouldisa and Doyung against the colonial rulers. Thaosen offered solidarity to the Azad Hind Fouz and marched with her army to Kohima. On 7th April 1944, they were attacked by the forces at Khirem-Khowai Range near Dimapur, Naga Hills. In that encounter she lost her life while Arjun Langthasa was injured. Though, her attempt was not successful, but she demonstrated her nationalist spirit through the formation of the Revolutionary Dimasa Army.

During this time, the activities of Dimasa intelligentsia were also reflected through Sonaram Thaosen, Desondao Hojai etc. Paying more interest in social activities, Sonaram Thaosen, formed a Social welfare Forum in the wake of

54 Ibid, p. 17.
the freedom struggle and also had established one educational institution at Mupa Railway Station. Instead of joining the freedom struggle, it came apparent that such men as Sonaram Thaosen became involved in his personal agenda by organising social welfare activities to gain popularity among the rural masses. He had visited most of the villages of the area to uplift the socio-economic status of rural people. He had introduced voluntary services in road construction of the villages.\textsuperscript{56}

After the Independence of India in 1947, \textbf{Sonaram Thaosen} actively participated in political activities. He was elected to the District Council several times. He undertook the charge of the Chief Executive Member and Chairman of the Council. He was also elected to the Assam Legislative Assembly in 1977. He became the Cabinet Minister of Hill Areas Departments. Despite his political career, his involvement as social activist also reflected through the \textbf{Dimasa-Dara-Disani-Dal}:

As a social activist and social reformer Sonaram had to play a pivotal role in reforming the social taboo, usages and superstitions of the Dimasa Society. Under his able guidance and leadership a number of social evil actions have been reformed daringly. Out of necessity of having social reformation organization, an open body of social reforms under the name and style of ‘Dimasa-Dara-Disari-Dal’ was born, where Sonaram took a leading role in this committee as the Chairman of it.\textsuperscript{57}

Another important personality \textbf{Desendao Hojai} was also actively involved in social work. Unlike the others, he had never sought a government job. He started his career in the social field as the Secretary of the \textit{Bajar} committee in

\textsuperscript{56} R. Thaosen, \textit{Sonaram Thaosen, (A Great Son of Dimasa)} in Khorongma Rmoalai, Umringso, 2004, p.34.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid, p. 35.
the township of Maibang for ten years. In the establishment of the Middle English School at Maibang, Desendao Hojai made important contributions. It was through his efforts that the post of four teachers for this school was sanctioned by the Government in 1948. 58 Desendao Hojai became the General Secretary of the North Cachar Hills Tribal Council and represented before the Gopinath Bordoloi Committee the demands of the Council. It was the first organized efforts of the Dimasa intelligentsia for the constitutional benefits of the Dimasa. Desondao was largely instrumental in this process. Later he became the member of the North Cachar District Advisory Committee and also Judge of the District Council.

Surath Chandra Daulagapu was another prominent personality of the Dimasa Intelligentsia. He was a civil servant. He also participated in active politics and became the Cabinet Minister of Assam Government. Apart from these personalities, Nityananda Daulagapu, Nityalal Daulagapu, Gajendra Barman, Jogendra Thaosen, Donthang Naising, P.K Garlosa, G.C Langthasa etc rendered services to the Dimasa society in their own ways.

The emerging Dimasa Intelligentsia was also involved in the field of literature. Though no such organisational attempts were made to develop the Dimasa language till 1947, yet a section of the people tried to contribute at the personal level. Naiso Daulagapu was the pioneer in this field. His autobiography detailed the educational development in North Cachar Hills. Sonaram Thaosen contributed a lot in the field of literature. Sonaram launched the first ever Dimasa newspaper, Gaddan Khurang from his printing press. He also wrote a number of books in Dimasa out of which

58 T. Bhattacharjee, (ed) op. cit. p. 80.
Pratham Bhag, Bhasa Parichay, Dima Khurang are worth mentioning. Besides this, he contributed a number of articles like G.N. Bordoloi, Evolution of the Hills people, An Introduction to Dimasa History etc. He also compiled the stories of Siva, Parvati, Ganesh and other mythological figure for the Twinkle Comics in Dimasa. He had led a number of delegates of the Tibeto-Burman linguistic group to places like Tripura, West Bengal etc. to study the language pattern and phonetic sounds of the Bodo ethnic group. As a result, of this study a book on terminology of the Dimasa, Boro and Kokborok (Tripuri) was published.  

Nirupama Hagjer (1929) also contributed a lot of articles and books. Her work Dimasa in Assamese language was published by Asom Sahitya Sabha and was well received. The Assamese-Dimasa dictionary is another important work. Jotindralal Thaosen (1930-2003) was a prominent litterateur. He is credited with 13 books, including his poetry collection, research and translated works etc.

The issue of the script occupies the central point of attention among the Dimasa intelligentsia. Despite the richness of the Dimasa dialect it lacked a proper script. The entire literary exercise of the Dimasa authors are divided in several scripts. Such as the Assamese Script, Bengali Script, Devanagri Script, and the Roman Script. To quote Thaosen:

The Script issue has its genesis as far back as 1954. Early that year, Late Nityalal Daulagapu, then the secretary N.C. Hills District Council and the leading light of the society in his life time, convened a meeting in his residence at Haflong to discuss the issue. Sri S.C. Hojai and myself attended the meeting representing the Maibang area. Persons like J.B.

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59 R. Thaosen, op cit. p. 35.
Hagjer, S.K. Thaosen D.B. Thaosen etc were present in the meeting. In that meeting, there was tussle for Devanagri on the one side and Bengali on the other. However, no decision could be taken. Even since that time, the issue would crop up off and on without yielding any solution. However, in 1986, the them Dimasa Bodo Sahitya Sabha took up the issue and after having a prolonged deliberation unanimously decided to adopt Devanagri Script for Dimasa language and in the same year get the Dimasa First and Second Primers prepared in that script by the book committee which included a good number of Bodo scholars and Text book writing experts. Sadly the whole exercise was however set to naught by the then Executive Member i/c Education of the N.C. Hills District Council who refused to approve the Primers written in Devanagri Script.60

While the Devanagri Script issue received a setback, a section of the Dimasa intelligentsia paid their attention in favour of the Roman Script. The Dimasa Lairidem Mel (Dimasa Literary Society) was formed in 1999. The Mel constituted a Script Committee to settle the issue. The Script Committee recommended the Roman Script. The resolution in favour of Roman Script was passed in the 3rd convention of Dimasa Lairidem Mel in 2003. But still a section showed its reservation towards the issue. This section favored the Assamese Script on the basis of the inscriptions of Dimasa Kings at Maibang.61

Therefore a consensus regarding the Script issue is yet to be confirmed. Moreover the Dimasa dialect itself waits for standardization.

60 J. K Thaosen, (ed) Rmaolai, Haflong, 2003, p. XII.
For obvious reason the standardization of spellings must come first in the list which may be followed by preparation of primary text books, dictionary, collection and compilation of folklores, folk tales, dirges, prayers mantras or the like materials that contain oral literature of the Dimasa. An anthology of the Dimasa oral literature will serve as a rich fountainhead of all aspects of our traditional culture and language.62

The literary pursuit of the intelligentsia created a consciousness among the Dimasa people. They became aware of their culture and literature. This awareness led to several questions like historical tradition of Dimasa people, introduction of Dimasa language as the medium of education, solidarity among the various sections of Dimasa people etc. People like U.C. Barman, K.C. Bodo, N.K. Barman, B. Bodo, etc paid their interest in these questions though their literary works.

However there were some fundamental weaknesses of the Dimasa intelligentsia. The socio-economic foundation of the intelligentsia was so weak that it could not compete with the market forces. Therefore they nourished a sense of deprivation instead of a bold competition. While asserting their identity, they exercise hegemony on other numerically weak people. Moreover their cultural approach towards the identity question could not fulfill the economic aspiration of the people. As a result of such weak foundation their attempt at mass mobilization could not reach its declared goal.

Thus the colonial administration, spread of western education, the growth of a market or Bajar economy the establishment of railways, the growth of the tea

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62 J. K Thaosen, op. cit. p. XIII.
industry and the subsequent development of a township had an important bearing on the formation of the Dimasa intelligentsia. The independence of India (1947) opened a new dimension before the Dimasa intelligentsia. The emerging intelligentsia became conscious about their position in the constitutional framework of Indian Constitution. The issue of protecting the Dimasa identity, a share in the democratic institution etc. led them to form an organisation of a political character. This orientation became the guiding force, through which the intelligentsia promoted their cause for the autonomy for the Dimasa people.