CHAPTER - II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction ........................................................................................................... 21
2.2. Chittagong Hill Tracts and the Dwellers Therein ................................................. 24
2.2.1. Genesis of The Chakmas ............................................................................... 27
2.2.2. Language, Literature And Evolution of Chakma Dialect ............................... 31
2.2.3. Cultural Heritage ........................................................................................... 38
2.2.4. Social, Economic and Cultural Life of the Chakmas ..................................... 40
2.2.4.1. Social Stratification and Life of the Chakmas ........................................... 41
2.2.4.2. Rites of Passage ...................................................................................... 42
2.2.4.3. Religion .................................................................................................... 43
2.2.4.4. Major Festivals ....................................................................................... 44
2.2.4.5. Livelihood ................................................................................................ 45
2.2.4.6. Living Conditions .................................................................................... 45
2.2.4.7. Dresses & Ornaments .............................................................................. 46
2.2.4.8 Games, Sports and Recreation .................................................................... 47
2.2.4.9. Food Habits ............................................................................................. 48
2.2.4.10. Crafts and Hobbies ............................................................................... 49
2.3. Colonial History .................................................................................................... 50
2.4. The Displacement ................................................................................................. 51
2.5. Refugees and Its Classifications ......................................................................... 55
2.6. Refugees in India: An Overview ......................................................................... 58
2.7. Refugees and Human Rights: The Case of Chakmas in India ............................ 60
2.8. Formation of Chakma Region in India ................................................................. 70
2.9. Evolution of Chakma Population .......................................................................... 77
2.10. Chakmas in Mizoram ......................................................................................... 81
2.10.1. Interrelationship between the Chakmas and the Mizos ............................... 86
2.11. CADC: The Autonomous Land of the Chakmas .............................................. 87
2.12. References .......................................................................................................... 94
CHAPTER-II

THEORATICAL FRAMEWORK

"NO ONE SHALL BE ARBITRARILY DEPRIVED OF HIS NATIONALITY, NOR DENIED THE RIGHT TO CHANGE HIS NATIONALITY."

-1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Every human being has the right to a nationality. Right to nationality entitles every soul right to basic human needs: need for food, cloth, shelter, health care and education. Unfortunately the post World War II witnessed such events, particularly political, in many countries that forced people to evict, dislocate, displace and disenfranchise from their own ancestral settlements leading to the denial of the right to basic human needs. In 1951, as per the estimate of the UNHCR, the number of such uprooted souls stood at one million and after five decades, it is now estimated at 50 million. More clearly every 15th person in the world is a refugee.1 Much to this credit goes to South Asia which due to its long porous border is reckoned as a refugee prone region. And to this profile of South Asia India contributes the most, nursing about 3,68,500 displaced souls.2 While the most controversial and yet least highlighted among them all, whose presence has caused much discontentment and unrest among the natives of some of the state of Indian Territory are the Chakmas who are debatably considered by many as migrants from Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh.

The investigation undertaken entitled ‘Education of the Chakmas in India: A Critical Study’ is an effort to seek answers to such issues that concerns both the neighbouring countries of India and Bangladesh and of course the Chakmas, both within and outside the Indian Territory. The study implied to answer as to when and why the Chakmas migrated, are they refugees or migrants, are they eligible to be citizen of India, if yes then who are they, what are the possible causes that generate controversy over the Chakma settlements in India, whether elimination of cultural hegemony in India and more particularly in North East is possible, policy of the Government of India towards refugees, more particularly towards
the Chakmas, are the policies consistent towards people of such category and many other such issues. In order to begin an investigation towards this end it is imperative to look back, to begin from where it all started. The researcher thus began this investigation with the anthropological history of the Chakmas, their journey from giants to pigmies, from being owner of land to landless, from settled citizens to nomads.

Unfortunately the community in question does not have any recorded history of their origin, early settlements, etc. which has over the years compounded the problem of their identification and today they are a question to themselves. Mr. S. P. Talukdar, Director (retd.), Relief and Rehabilitation, Govt. of Mizoram, a Chakma himself and author of some well known anthropological literature on Chakmas, identifies himself belonging to a hypothetical race. The first written reference to Chakmas of the Chittagong Hill Tracts dates from about 1550 AD when the Portuguese map maker Lavanha indicated on the earliest surviving map of Bengal that Chakmas lived in a settlement on the Karnafuli River. Two main theories have been put forward about the earlier history of Chakmas. Both assume that they migrated to their present homeland. The most convincing theory links Chakmas with central Myanmar and Arakan, and with groups such as the Sak (Chak, Thek) who live in the Chittagong hills and Arakan. The other theory, for which historical evidence is lacking, assumes that Chakmas migrated to the Chittagong hills from Champaknagar in northern India. In the late eighteenth century, Chakmas were found not only in the Chittagong Hill Tracts but also in other hilly areas of the present-day districts of Chittagong and Cox’s bazar. It was only after the annexation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts by the British (1860) and the promulgation of rules, which forbade hill agriculture (jhum, shifting cultivation) in Chittagong district that these Chakma cultivators (and other hill cultivators such as the Marna and others) moved east to the Chittagong Hill Tracts. This shall, however, be discussed in great length in the subsequent paragraphs.

Although slow, but the candle of hope is burning brighter as efforts across all section, both Chakma and non-Chakma, are being made to reach to an ever accepting conclusion regarding the origin and ancient history of the Chakmas but
as it very often happens, in the absence of any written document everybody presumes to be an expert and as a result a unanimous conclusion regarding the origin and early history of the Chakmas seems to be a distant reality. An effort to trace the same in the absence of any authentic record is as impossible as finding a needle in the desert.

It is but true that the Present often happens to be the reflection of the Past as the later is often traced in the former. Past is the alma mater of the Present, guiding and shaping its own future. The present of the Chakmas must therefore start with their past. The researcher, thus, made an attempt to present an objective and rational anthropological history of the Chakmas on the basis of the most popular hearsay and reading of various literatures, prominent among which are ‘Chittagong Hill Tracts and the Dwellers Therein’ by Captain T. H. Lewin, ‘The North East Frontier of India’ by Alexander Mackenzie, ‘The Departed Melody (Memoirs)’ by Raja Tridiv Roy, ‘Chakma Jati Etibrittya’ (or the History of Chakma Tribes) by Biraj Mohan Dewan and others. Besides the etno history of the Chakmas, this section of the study also discusses the controversy over the citizenship status of Chakmas in India and issues that made them controversial in the places of their settlement. The illustration, thus offered, is presented under the following broad sub-theme as stated in bold letters:

- **Chittagong Hill Tract and the dwellers therein**, the Chakmas, with reference to the unrecorded history of their origin and settlements in Burma (Myanmar) and showcasing their culture, language, communication between each other, social structure, ethnographic divisions, comparisons between the groups etc.

- **Colonial History** of the Chakmas, territorial spread of the Chakma Kingdom and their status and relationship with the British administrator through the pages of the documented past since the days British took over the administration of CHT.

- **Displacement** of the Chakmas and describing the causes and periods of their large scale eviction, conditions of living, post migration settlements, status as migrants.
Human Rights and Refugees, classification of refugees and whether refugees can claim citizenship, the case of Chakmas in India

Chakma Autonomous District Council and the Chakmas, their education, occupation, population and administration etc.

The researcher intends to reveal the existing economic and social and educational status of the Chakmas in India in general and the three north eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Tripura in particular with reference to the following specific criteria:

a. Number of literates
b. Enrolment in the different stages of education
c. Quantity of academically and professionally trained souls
d. Occupational engagement
e. Demographic distribution and its growth
f. Growth of academic institutions in the Chakma inhabited areas
g. Participation in associations and organizations in relation to awareness related activities, etc.

2.2. CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS AND THE DWELLERS THEREIN

Rising from the rice swamps and level land of the Chittagong District of Bangladesh, of which it forms the eastern boundary, CHT is a stretch of vast hills and mountains inhabited by various hill races. The name Chittagong Hill Tracts, initially known as the 'Hill Tracts', was coined by the British colonial rulers who annexed this region in 1860 while even prior to that the Mughal and British revenue records refers to this region as Jum Bungoo or Kapas Mahal. It is located between 21°25' and 23°45' North Latitude and between 91°45' and 92°50' East Longitude and is extended over an area of 17,601.559 square kilometer (6,796 sq. miles). However, some considers that CHT is extended over an area of 14,200 sq. Km. (5482.651 sq. miles). This vast reservoir of natural resources is bounded on the north by Tripura State of India, on the south by Arakan Hills of Burma; on the east by Lushai Hills of Mizoram, India, and Arakan Hills of Burma and on the west by Chittagong District of Bangladesh. (Image of the boundary/map appended in the Annexure, Image No. 1) It has three hill districts of Bangladesh, viz. Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari. The
entire geographical stretch is divided into four valleys formed by the rivers Feni, Karnaphuli, Matamuri, Sangu and other tributaries.

MAP: 2
Map of Bangladesh showing the location of CHT

It is very important to note that the tracts are directly adjacent to the Indian states of Tripura and Mizoram and the Arakan Yoma Hills of Burma that flank it on the eastern side and perhaps that is why disturbances in any part of these neighbouring territories has a bearing on each others development, political, social and economic.
As stated in the previous chapter, CHT, since time immemorial had been
the home to some eleven indigenous ethnic groups. They arc Bawm, Chak,
Chakma, Khumi, Khyang, Lushai, Marna, Murung, Pangkhua, Tongchongya and
Tripura. Captain T.H. Lewin, the first Deputy Commissioner of Hill Tracts, in his
book “The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers Therein” (1869) classified
them into two major groups: (i) the Khyoungtha, or children of the river and (ii)
the Toungtha, or children of the hills. The Chakmas come under the first category
since most of their settlements are established near the bank of rivers.

CHT had the Chakmas as the major tribal group who had more than two
hundred years of history of struggle to establish their right to self determination.
The name Chakma or Chukma, as some says, is given to this tribe in general by
the inhabitants of Chittagong District. However, this is not acceptable to many
Chakmas and nobody knows for sure how and since when they began to be
known by that name. Capt. T. H. Lewin believes that the largest and dominant
section of this tribe recognizes ‘Chukma’ as its rightful appellation. However, the
statement of recognition of the name Chukma by the dominant section of the tribe
does not match with their self identification. They still prefer to be recognized as
Changmha and not Chakma or Chuchna. Due to dissimilarities in pronunciation
and some times identifying with their source of livelihood, people around them
use to address them differently. While the Burmese and Arakanese called them
Thek or Tsek or Chek or Khyoor Chha or Tsakma, the neighbours from
Chittagong calls them Champwa and Jumma. Other prominent names used for
this tribe are Tumhek (pronounced Tuichhek) by the Kukis and Takam by the
Mizos. A smaller section of the same tribe is called ‘Doingnak, now found mostly
in Burma. There is a third division or clan called ‘Tongchongya’ who also
possess no written records of ancient times about their origin. The Chakmas, as
understood, are divided into three sub-tribes viz. Chakma or Cinungmah,
Tangchungya, and the Domak or Doinakyas. Some believes that they appear to be
the same people that formed distinct groups who were cut off from each other.
With the passage of time cultural variations among these group widened and
today the Chak of the south and the Chakma of the centre and north have very
few affinities. According to Bijak (Chakma History), the Doinakyas and the
Tongchongyas were cut off from the parent Chakma tribe in and around 1333 A.D. (695 Burmese Era). The History states that the Burmese King Minthi (or Mengdi) with the support of the Portuguese defeated the Chakma King Arunjuk (Yangjo, according to the Arakanese) and made thousands of Chakmas as captives and arranged their settlement at Engkhong and Yangkhang and named them Thoin-nha (pronounced Doinak), meaning the defeated in Burmese. Besides, it is also believed that since these captives were settled in the south (Daghin in Chakma) of Arakan they were called Southerner or Daghinya to Daghinakya and hence to Doinakya. The Tongchongya, on the other hand, are believed to have derived their name from Toingang (toin meaning vegetable while gang meaning river) in whose bank they settled as they lost track while following the parent stock of Chakma group on their way to Chadigang (may be Chittagong) after their defeat at the hands of the Burmese King at Arakan. Finally, the parent Chakma group with whom the world is familiar as the Chakmas of today settled in Chittagong after obtaining permission from the Subedar of Bengal in 1418 AD. Those Chakmas who had migrated to CHT from Arakan are known as Anokya Chakma, meaning Chakma from the west and those who had remained at Arakan are known as Rowyangya Chakma. Some believes that the Arakanese are not familiar with the name of Chakma. It is rather a new name given to this tribal group by the British who once administered this area. It is worth mention here that there is no dearth of stories and opinions regarding the origin of the Chakmas. A detailed description of the same is presented in the following pages.

2.2.1. Genesis of the Chakmas

As already said, the Chakmas are a question to themselves. Little is known to the subjecls themselves regarding their geography and history and this is primarily so due to the paucity of authentic written documents. In fact, the historians come across some evidence of the existence of the Chakmas mentioned in the Burmese and Arakanese history only since 10th Century AD. The quest for a unanimous conclusion towards the cradle of the Chakmas is still far from reality. Some of the popular stories along with arguments, in favour and against, are discussed below:
One school of thought believes that Chakmas originally belong to a country called Chainpango or Champanaugger and this is because the name of this place is found to have been mentioned in Agartara, an ancient literature of the Chakmas. However, there is no idea regarding the geographic location of Champak Nagar but if Capt. Lewin is believed then it is somewhere near Mallaca and Chakmas might have a Malay origin. While historian Syed Murtaza Ali is of the opinion that Chakmas originally settled in a place called Champa Nagar in the 3rd century AD but it is located in Assam. Later they migrated to Sylhet (Kalabagan) and then to Burma (Myanmar) during 7th century AD.

Another version reveals that Champa Nagar derives its name from Champa near Bhagalpur of India. While F. Lianchhinga in his book Pheichhomo Man Chakma states that the Chakmas settled in a village named Champanagar, about 28 Kms. east of Agartala, the capital of Tripura. This is little impossible since this vast area is being ruled by the Maharaja of Tripura since remote past. P. V. Bapat puts the place in the Indianized kingdom of Campa in Vietnam. Thus, the Chakmas might be attributed either with a Vietnam or a Malay origin.

Another theory unconvincingly put forward by the present generation of the Chakmas states that the Chakmas are the descendants of Lord Buddha and belong to the Sakya Clan and might origin from in and around Bihar, India. But this is not acceptable as practically any signs of Aryan features in their look and morphological appearance is seen in them.

The other story regarding the origin of the Chakmas says that the Chakmas were born out of the marriage between the Mughals and Arakanese women. It is considered that at some point of time the Mughals were defeated by the Arakanese and were taken as prisoners in Arakan. These slaves Mughals were allowed to settle and marry the local women. The children born out of their wedlock later formed into a race and were known as Tsak or Tsek, the corrupted form of Shaikh or Sheikh of the Muslims of Burma. The same story also accommodates the hypothesis that the Chakmas are born out of the union between the Marma or Magh women and the Mughal soldiers. This story is based on the fact that most of the early Chakma kings had Muslim names, such as Tabbar Khan, Jamul Khan, Shermust Khan, Sher Daulat Khan, Juan Baksh Khan,
Dharam Bakshi Khan and others. However, this argument is not completely acceptable as we know even a few centuries back some Arakanese King adopted Muslim titles. Besides, there are instances of Hindu rulers arrogating to them the title of Khan in central province of India. Some Chakmas believe that one Chakma king of the past married the daughter of a Muslim Nawab and borrowed many Islamic customs from his Begum (wife). This might have influenced the Chakma culture and the kings to borrow such titles.

Col. Phayre, noted British Administrator cum Anthropologist, holds that the Chakmas were once settlers of Burma. This view is also supported by the ancient history of Burma and Arakan. The Burmese history Chuijang Khya Thaung mentions that the Burmese Kingdom was divided into three provinces and one of them was under the rule of Chakma Raja. The Arakanese history Dengawadi Aredfung is also found to have mentioned the history of the Chakmas in 1118 AD. Rajmala, the history of the Tripura Kingdom, records a battle between the Tippera Raja Trilochan and a Chakma King and this infers that Chakma and Tippera history are contemporary.

Tridiv Roy, a former King of the Chakmas, in his ‘The Departed Melody’ gave an indistinct account of the origin of Chakmas. According to him, Chakmas are known and preferred to be called among its own people as Sangma. This surname is quite popular and found to be used by the people belonging to Garo community living in Garo Hills and in the border areas of Sylhet and Mymensingh districts of Bangladesh. Although he didn’t say any further but this may infer that the origin of Chakmas might have some connection with the history of the Garos.

Dr. Dulal Choudhury, folk culture scientist, is of the view that the Chakmas were the original inhabitants of South-East Asia and are of Mongloid origin. They might have lived in the Manchurian region some thousand years back and were living the life of nomads. Later they moved to Chengmai region of Siam (Thailand). Geo-natural changes and search for a permanent settlement brought them in Burma and from there might have spread across the neighbouring territories of Hill Chittagong, Assam, Arakan and Tripura.
Dr. H. Beshat, eminent German Anthropologist, remarked that, “Anthropologically the Chakmas belong to the peoples of South-east Asia. Their dress shows similarities with the dress of Burmese and Shan people. There is also a number of customs which hint at a form of ‘Animism’ very similar to that of the people of Burmese and Shan group before their conversion to Buddhism.”

All these beliefs, and there are many more, rather makes the theory of the origin of the Chakmas more confusing. But somehow physical features, morphology and cultural heritage as described in these studies reveal certain concluding points regarding the Chakmas. It can be concluded that Chakmas are of Mongoloid origin and belonging to Tibeto-Burman group. Like any other Mongolians they are almost hairless, thinly bearded, flat-nosed, thickset build and thick browed with almond-shaped eyes. The ancestors originally came from South-east Asia, migrated to Arakan through Burma. They traversed across upper Burma valley of Brahmaputra, Manipur valley and then to lower Chindwin on their way to settle in Arakan. From Arakan they finally settled in what the world knows as the homeland of the Chakmas, the Chittagong Hill Tract or in short the CHT, the land that brought miseries and forced migration and more migration to the Chakmas. To sum up, the Chakmas might have some Burmese connection in terms of their settlement prior to CHT but it can not be said for certain when,
where and how they settled in Burma and when exactly they moved to CHT. An in depth and exclusively anthropological approach might bring an end to this growing number of hypothetical tales related to the origin of the Chakmas and the same is thus suggested for the future researchers.

2.2.2. Language, Literature & Evolution of Chakma Dialect

A tribe which is divided over the issue of their own origin is certain to stay scattered over all related issues and so are the Chakmas sprinkled on the issue of the origin of their language. Ethnically the Chakmas belong to the Tibeto-Burman or Mon-Khmer group with some features of Indo-Aryan group visible in them. The language they speak is perhaps a dialect related to that of the *Kadu* tribes of Arakan. It also may be of Prakritik origin and having similarities with Assamese and Bengali language. The written characters are probably an offshoot of the Khmer script, which was formerly in use in Cambodia, Laos, Annam and the southern part of Burma. Also, the Khmer alphabets had similarities with the sixth and seventh centuries of south of India.

As described in records and documents Chakmas are found to migrate more than often, perhaps due to the nature of their work and the source of livelihood. Being basically unsettled and searching for a permanent one, the Chakmas always remained a minor partner in every settlement, both in India and outside. This often made their language to come under the influence of the major partner of their settlement and thus non-native words very often forms the basis of expression among the Chakmas. It is not, therefore, incorrect to describe the present Chakma language as an admixture of many words from many clans or caste like Bengali, Assamese Oriya, Burmese, Tai, Sanskrit, Pali etc. In fact, Biraj Mohan Dewan in his book entitled "Chakma Jatir Etibritta" expressed that about eighty percent of the Chakma words are the product of the mixture of Bengali and Sanskrit and due to which the census operations carried out in the beginning refers Chakma language as Chakma-Bengali language.

In the opinion of the language scientists Chakma is considered as a sub-dialect of Bengali. According to S.R. Maitra, “It may be the fact that the Chakmas originally spoke Bengali language but due to its admixture with Magh, Tripuri and other language, it has changed considerably”. In this sense Chakma dialect
may be considered as a member of the Indo-Aryan language family. Language Scientist G. A. Grierson in his book “Linguistic Survey of India” made a little discussion on the features and grammar of Chakma dialect and wherein he described Chakma as a broken form of Bengali. Besides, Suniti Kumar Chatterjee in his unparalleled publication entitled “Origin and Development of Bengali Language” also made some mention of the Chakma dialect. The appearance of Chakma dialect in the writings of these giants of languages, particularly with reference to Bengali, often made others to conclude that Chakma is a sub-dialect of Bengali.

Niranjan Chakma in his book entitled “Chakma Bhasa ‘O’ Sanskritiprosonga” argued that Chakma should not be considered a sub-dialect of Bengali merely on the ground of linguistic similarity of the former with the latter as Assamese too has close similarity with Bengali, yet it is an independent regional language recognized by the Constitution of India.

Shri L. B. Chakma, an officer in the CADC and a well informed person on Chakma matters, believes what Shri Suniti Kr. Chatterjee has said and he confirms that the dialect the Chakma speaks is the Bengali dialect of the middle age, i.e. between 11th to 13th centuries. This logic, however, does not stand strong for everybody’s acceptance as it is quite possible that the Chakma language originated in India like many other languages and hence shares some words similar to other Indian languages.

There are many Chakma words having similarity with Pali and Sanskrit. Besides, according to Sugata Chakma there are some words common to both Chakma and the Magadhi Prakrita. S. R. Maitra in his book, ‘Ethnographic Study of the Chakma in Tripura’ wrote, “....In a wide area from Bhagalpur to foothills of the Himalayas, the Magadhi Prakrita was prevalent. The sub-dialect of Chittagong may be considered as the distorted form of Magadhi Prakrita”. Anthropologist and writer Bankim Chandra Chakma observed that Pali originated from Magadhi Prakrita and its impression is still found in the Chakma language. It appears that both Magadhi Prakrita and Pali have a great influence on the Chakma language.
Further, there are quite a few Chakma words identical with the Burmese/Arakanese words. Capt. T. H. Lewin in his book 'Wild Races of South-Eastern India' explained—"The elder among them (Chakma) are still acquainted with the Arakanese vernacular". H. J. S. Cotton in his book 'Revenue History of Chittagong' remarked that the Chakmas are Buddhist and former Arakanese speaking and it is a remarkable incident that they have changed their language while retaining their old character. Both Lewin and Cotton tried to justify that the Chakmas are originally Arakanese speaking people. However, this is not acceptable as a tribe having its own dialect can never speak a language other than its own. It is, however, equally undeniable that the Chakmas have few words similar to the Arakanese.

R. H. Hutchinson in his book 'An Account of Chittagong Hill Tracts' observed that the Chakmas derived their language from the Bengali's while their script can be seen as a form of the corrupt Burmese character. There are also some who observed with reasons of their own that the Chakmas originally spoke Bengali but gradually due to its admixture with Magh, Tripuri and other language it has changed considerably. However, all these assumptions are not accepted to all since Chakma dialect has words which are totally different not only with the Bengali but also with all other languages.

It is agreed that a language originated from the same stock is treated separate if the grammar is different. Similarly, although Chakma and Bengali dialect are identical but their grammars are quite different and as such, the Chakma dialect cannot be regarded as a sub-dialect of Bengali. It has to be a separate language.

Some sees Chakma as a broken dialect of Bengali, peculiar to the locality and of curious character. It is based on South-Eastern Bengali that has undergone so much transformation that is almost worthy of the dignity of being a classed as a separate language.

S. P. Talukdar in his book 'Chakmas: An Embattled Tribe' remarked that the Chakmas today assimilated much of the Bengali way of life. However, today the Chakmas used many words of non-Sanskrit origin in their daily life. Most
probably these words have come down from their original language carried from the collective memory of the race passed on from generation to generation.\textsuperscript{31}

It might, therefore, be a fact that the Chakmas speak a different language originating from Magadhi Prakrit, but gradually accommodated more words from other tribes with whom they met. Mr. Bankim Chandra Chakma in his book ‘Chakma Samaj O Sanskriti’ observed that the Chakma Prince Bijoy Giri led an expedition against the Rowyangya Kingdom and during his stay in Burma with the Arakanese and Siamese they adopted many words from them. The Chakmas lived in the adjoining areas of Arakan and Bengal since very ancient time and it is due to this very factor that the Chakma language modified itself to adjust and communicate effectively with the local inhabitants and thus, is found as an admixture of many languages including Bengali.

**Scripts:** The Chakmas have their own scripts found in their oldest religious scriptures called ‘Agartara’. Before the introduction of Hinayani Buddhism in Burma and Chittagong, a corrupt form of Buddhism called Tantric Buddhism was practiced. The custodians of this religion in the Chakma society were called Roli or Raulee or Lori who preserved this Agartara during that period. The Chakma scripts have distinctive similarity with the Burmese and ancient Tamil scripts. In his book ‘The Hill Tracts Of Chittagong and the Dwellers Therein’ Capt. T. H. Lewin stated-“…….They (Chakma) have a written character peculiar of the tribe, but the form of the letters show that they are merely a rude adaptation of the Arakanese alphabet”.\textsuperscript{32} Dr. G. A.Grierson in his book Linguistic Survey of India, said “….It is written in an alphabet which allowing for its cursive form, is used in Cambodia, Laos, Annam, Siam and at least Southern parts of Burma.” S. P. Talukdar found similarity of the Chakma scripts with the ancient Tamil scripts engraved in copper plates in Canjevaram. The cursive style of the 13\textsuperscript{th} century scripts of ancient Tamil has a great similarity with the Chakma scripts. Describing Chakma script, the Imperial Gazetteer of India writes “The Bengali of Chittagong is very corrupt and it is quite unintelligible to an unraveled native of Calcutta. Further, inland, in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, there is still more debased dialect called Chakma, which is written in an alphabet akin to that of Burmese”.

34
People concerned are affiliated to different groups regarding the number of alphabets. Some argue there are 33 alphabets while the second group believes there are 36 alphabets in Chakma language and the third group preaches that there are 37 alphabets used in Chakma script. However, another group support that there are forty alphabets in all known as **Ojhaphat**, of which the last four alphabets here are known as **Agju Harag**, the creator of all vowel signs. The letter $\alpha$ (Dwipadala $\text{J}^\alpha$) has been adopted from Arakanese scripts and it is similar to $\sigma$ (Jwilyu $\text{J}^\sigma$). It is very interesting that all the alphabets can make a vowel sound by mixing with them any one of the 12 patterns of vowel signs or symbols called ‘**Bharo Matra**’. The following table presents the various pronunciations of the Chakma alphabets:

**TABLE: 3**

**OJHÄPHÄT**, the Chakma Script and its pronunciation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chuchyângya KÄ</th>
<th>Gujangyâ KHÄ</th>
<th>Chändyâ GÄ</th>
<th>Tindölyâ GHÄ</th>
<th>Chilennu ÑÄ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Didâchyi CA</td>
<td>Majâvâ CHÄ</td>
<td>Dipadalâ JA</td>
<td>Urorih JHÄ</td>
<td>Chelosyä ÑÄ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thutyâ TA</td>
<td>Duobânyâ THÄ</td>
<td>Adhuböngö DÄ</td>
<td>Lejbhoreyä DHÄ</td>
<td>Pettuo ÑÄ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghangdät TA</td>
<td>Jangdät THÄ</td>
<td>Thunomi DÄ</td>
<td>Tahnwö DHÄ</td>
<td>Pârbenyä NÄ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phallyâ PÄ</td>
<td>Lejbhoreyä PHÄ</td>
<td>Ubormwö BÄ</td>
<td>Cherdöhyä BHÄ</td>
<td>Bhogotdöl MÄ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chumujyi YÄ</td>
<td>Didâchyi RA</td>
<td>Tahmwi LÄ</td>
<td>Bhöýöiyä VA</td>
<td>Bhimukyüä / Ubormwö SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ubormwö HA</td>
<td>Peypäi LHÄ</td>
<td>Pejpyuö/ Talmwi Ä</td>
<td>Ëk Pudo</td>
<td>Dr Pudo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chänd Pudo</td>
<td>Lejbha E</td>
<td>Deldi I</td>
<td>Borni U</td>
<td>Jwilyu JA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\alpha$, $\beta$, $\gamma$ and $\delta$ are known as ‘**Gai Mâtyâ Harag**’ (vowels)$^{33}$; $\alpha$, $\omicron$ and $\omega$ are ‘**Ādhâ Gai Mâtyâ Harag**’ (Semi-vowels)$^{34}$ and the remaining 33 alphabets are known as ‘**Bale Mâtyâ Harag**’ (consonant)$^{35}$. The alphabet like $\cdot$, $\cdot\cdot$ and $\cdot\cdot\cdot$ are
known as ‘Parsāllo Harag’ because they are attach or mix with the other alphabets. The vowel ो is known as Ānji Harag, the father of all letters.

However, the entire alphabet can make different sound by adding any one of the 12 patterns of vowel signs or symbols called Bhāro Mātrā.

### Table 4

**BHĀRO MĀTRĀ, the pattern of Vowel signs/symbol**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Name of the Sign</th>
<th>Sign</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Example with Diacritic</th>
<th>Position of the Sign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Ojha Pat</td>
<td>unse</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>क</td>
<td>ो</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Ubartulya Pat</td>
<td>ज</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>का</td>
<td>ो above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Machya Pat</td>
<td>द</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>कक</td>
<td>ो above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Banya Pat</td>
<td>घ</td>
<td>i, ì</td>
<td>कि, किं</td>
<td>ो, ो above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Tanya Pat</td>
<td>ङ</td>
<td>u, Û</td>
<td>कु, कुं</td>
<td>ो, ो below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Delbangya Pat</td>
<td>छ</td>
<td>aĩ</td>
<td>कै</td>
<td>ो above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Rei Pat</td>
<td>ं</td>
<td>०, ो</td>
<td>को, कों</td>
<td>ो, ो right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Ekardya Pat</td>
<td>ङ</td>
<td>e, ee</td>
<td>के, के</td>
<td>ो, ो left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Ua Pat</td>
<td>भ</td>
<td>उ, उां</td>
<td>क्वां, क्वांह</td>
<td>ो, ो below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Ya Pat</td>
<td>य</td>
<td>यां</td>
<td>क्यां</td>
<td>ो right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Ra Pat</td>
<td>र</td>
<td>kř</td>
<td>क्र</td>
<td>ो below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Phudodya Pat</td>
<td>ध, ध</td>
<td>h, am, amī</td>
<td>k, kম, kুন</td>
<td>ो, ो, ो above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is found that there was no vowels in the ancient scriptures and the literatures were written only with the help of consonants. The earlier Chakma scripts have only four vowel and other vowels are made with the help of certain vowel signs, which are mixed with the consonants. Therefore, it may be the fact that the Chakma scripts are ancient in its origin and adopted from Brahmi scripts in their own way. Besides, all the Chakma scripts without mixing any sign, pronounce a "A" viz. का, क्ला, गा, घा, etc. like Pali. But all the Burmese scripts pronounce as “A” like Ka, Klia, Ga, Gha, etc. There is difference in pronunciation between Burmese and Chakma and hence the Chakma scripts may not be the offshoot of the Arakanese. Besides, it is to note that the three letters ो, ो and ो are not pronounce like Bengali and other scripts. They have special phonetic
sound like ə and ə is not pronounce as ɵA & KHƏ but as 6A & HHƏ and ə is not 6A but as Ā in low pitch.

**Numerals (Nada):** The Chakmas has adopted the counting system of the Bengalis. However, they have their own way of counting system and numerals in their own scripts. The numerals and counting system are shown below

**TABLE: 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Chakma</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>১</td>
<td>Ek Ta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>২</td>
<td>Di Ta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>৩</td>
<td>Ti Ari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>৪</td>
<td>Ti Ta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>৫</td>
<td>Ghandli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>৬</td>
<td>Gondhā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>৭</td>
<td>Ād</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>৮</td>
<td>Ghād</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>৯</td>
<td>Chelā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>০</td>
<td>Patti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dialect that the Chakmas presently speak is belonging to Indo-Aryan but they are purely mongoloid in origin and hence the present language may not be their original tongue. They must have spoken a language other than Indo-Aryan as the existence of numerous non-Aryan vocabularies present in their language suggest. They have gradually adopted the Indo-Aryan dialect from the Aryan when they have entered India in the very long past.

The scripts of the Chakmas have close similarity with the Burmese, Khmer, ancient Tamil and Brahmi. These scripts handed down from generation to generation since ancient time. The Chakma scripts have hook on the side representing the 'ā' and all these are relics of the old sign.³⁸ Thus, the Chakma scripts must have originated from the Brahmi scripts and adopted in their own way. It is sad to note that a very few Chakmas specially the Vaidyas (physicians), Loris (Mahayani Monks) and some interested persons are literate in Chakma scripts and the bulk of the majority can not read and write their own scripts. This
mainly due to lack of initiatives on the part of the state machineries (king the
gone days and the Government in the present days). The scripts are survived only
due to farsightedness efforts of the Vaidyas and the Loris who teach their Sishyas
(students) the Vadyalis and the Agartara respectively. If such neglect prevails and
if no proper initiative is being taken for its development, these scripts will extinct
in a very near future.

2.2.3. Cultural Heritage

Unlike any other civilizations Chakmas too have their own treasure of
literatures and folklores some of which are preserved in written form while
others due to their ancientness and perhaps due to the absence of a popular
manuscript are preserved and transmitted verbally in the form of songs, rhymes,
fairy tales, poems etc. There are also epic poems like Radhamon and
Dhanapudi. Some popular literatures and folklores are Agartaras, Baromachis,
Gogenolama and the likes.

Agartara: Buddhists books, translated into Chakma and written on palm leaves,
are known as Agartara. It is the oldest religious scripture of the Chakmas written
in distorted form of Pali. Some writers tried to explain the meaning of Agartara –
‘Agar’ stands for house or families and ‘Tara’ stands for religion i.e. family or
household religion. Other viewed that ‘Agar’ stand for old/ancient and ‘Tara’
stand for scriptures i.e. ancient religious scriptures. Therefore, Agartara may
mean ‘Earliest Religious Manuscripts’ or the ‘Family or Household Religious
Book’. There are more than 40 Taras and all these are collectively called
Agartara. Each Taras are used in a particular occasion by the Ralis or Raulees or
Loris (a priest of Tantric Buddhism). Though Agartara is primarily religious in
nature, it throws light on the socio-cultural and economic condition of the
Chakmas of the past.

Palha (Ballads): The Chakmas recount their history in ballads called Genkhuli or
folk songs. These songs are sung by the ballad singer called ‘Genkhulya’. Some
of the ballads are Lokhi Palha, Sargha Palha, Sadeng Giri Palha, Sritti Pathan
Palha, Kuki Dhara Palha, Radhansha Palha; Radhamon-Dhanpudi Palha is
divided into Chadigang Chara Palha, Geelapara Palha, Ranyahera Palha,
Kameshdhan-Narpudi Palha, Phul Para Palha, Lorbho-Midhungi Palha, etc.
These ballads or folk songs are based on the legendary stories and are reflections of the political, social, religious, economic and cultural conditions of the Chakmas of the past. The first line of a ballad or folk song does not necessarily give any meaning to the real theme of the song. It is an allegory or example used to give a rhyme to synchronize with the second line, which is the main theme of the ballad.

**Gojenolama:** The *Gojenolama* is written by Shib Charan, an ascetic poet. It is believed that it is written in 1184 of Bengali Era. It is written in Chakma dialect along with the use of a distorted form of Bengali. *Gojenolama* is a book of prayer to god in a narrative form. There are seven *Lamas* (parts) in all in the *Gojenolama*.

**Baromach:** There are numerous *Baromachi* or folk literature prevalent in the Chakma society. These *Baromach* were composed on the basis of real love stories of different women and hence it throws light on socio-cultural, economic and religious activities and conditions of the Chakmas during that period. There are many *Baromach* of this kind like *Meyabi Baromach*, *Kirbyabi Baromach*, *Chandobi Baromach* written by *Dharmadhan Pandit*, *Banjanbala Baromach*, *Chitrareka Baromach* written by *Pushpa Muni*, *Rati Baromach*, *Ma-bap Baromach*, etc.

**Kobidya (poetry) and Gheet (folk-songs):** There are numerous poetry and folk-songs in the Chakma society composed by various poets. The songs are called *Gheet* by the Chakmas and the tunes of all the songs are almost identical. The *Gheets* are divided into different forms: 1) *Ubho gheet*, 2) *Gyangkulee* and 3) *Tengabanga*. However, the *Ubho Gheets* are not sung in public. There are lustful love songs and it is regarded as indecent if sung in public and the singers are liable for fine if sung in front of elders or *Garbha Kudum* (guest). It is usually sung by the young boys and girls while collecting vegetables in the jungle or abandoned *Jhum* called *Ramya* or while they are with friends only.

**Talik:** The *Talik* is a detailed account of medicinal plants, methods of their preparation, and their use in the treatment of diseases.
2.2.4. Social, Economic and Cultural Life of the Chakmas

As already stated, the Chakmas follow hereditary monarchy system in which the head of the society is known as Raja or King. The King is assisted by Headman who is titled as Dewan or Talukdar. The headmen are assisted by the Khishas and Karbaris in the administration of the villages. Besides, the King is also found to be assisted in matters like religious, customary and social affairs by such honorary members of the Court like Ojha (exorcist priest), Luree (monk) and Vaidya (doctors). The Chakmas traditionally live on the hill slopes near the bank of a river or near a perennial source of water as it suits the type of cultivation they practice. Buddhism and the Chakmas are closely related to each other as almost all, except a very few, are Buddhist by faith and belief.
2.2.4.1 Social Stratification and Life of the Chakmas

Although a minor race in terms of population, Chakmas are divided into a number of clans, called Goza. Each of the Goza has a mythical or historical ancestor. Each Goza is again divided into exogamous Guttiis (lineages/sub-clans) while some Guttiis cut across other Gozas besides the parent Goza. Besides the name of some eminent persons of the community, of a place, or some unforgettable event or incidences, the Guttiis are generally named after some domestic animal (Billei or cat Gutti), name of agricultural crops (Daloa or cereal Gutti) etc. A Gutti is generally identified with the ancestors from the father side while a Goza reflects the identity of the community. It is worth mentioning here that the source and method of such classification is extremely complicated and hence it is difficult to state anything exactly and authoritatively.

It is believed that in ancient days there were only four clans and these in subsequent years gave birth to many other clans. However, there are some like Mr. L. B. Chakna who believes that there were only twelve Gozas at the beginning named after the twelve Sardars or village chiefs (called Anga in Chakma). Among the three groups, the Tongchongya and the Doinakyas are still spread over twelve Gozas while the Chakmas who moved to Chadigang (or Chittagong) settled in twelve villages granted to them by the Subedar of Bengal in 1418 under twelve Sardars of the following name:

1. Angu
2. Bor chege
3. Laksara
4. Borbua
5. Dhaveng
6. Mhuleema
7. Boga
8. Dhariya
9. Phaksa
10. Chege
11. Kuroikkhatiya and
12. Tonya

41
In subsequent years the number of Gozas increased to manifold, in fact it is believed that the number of such Goza is not less than forty today. With the growth of population there was a consequent growth in the number of settlements while the King by virtue of his position continued conferring the leadership of those settlements to someone prominent.

Members of the same sub-clan are forbidden to marry each other. Parents arrange marriages, although the wishes of sons and daughters are taken into account. A bride price (goods given by groom's family to bride's family) is fixed when the two families negotiate the marriage. The marriage ceremony is known as Chumulong and is performed by the priests. If young people elope, the marriage can be formalized on payment of fines. Polygyny (marriage to more than one wife) is acceptable but rare. Divorce is allowed, as is remarriage after the death of a spouse.

### 2.2.4.2. Rites of Passage

After the birth of a child, the father places some earth near the birth bed and lights a fire on it. This is kept burning for five days. Afterward, the earth is thrown away and the mother and child are bathed. A woman is considered unclean for a month after childbirth and is not allowed to cook food during this period. Children are breastfed for several years by their mothers.

Chakmas cremate their dead. The body is bathed, dressed, and laid out on a bamboo platform. Relatives and villagers visit the body. A drum used only at this time is beaten at intervals. Cremation usually occurs in the afternoon. The ritual is presided over by a priest.

Buddhists believe in reincarnation. This means that they believe that the dead person's spirit will return to earth in another living form. The morning after the cremation, relatives visit the cremation ground to search for footprints. They believe that the departed will leave some mark of his or her new incarnation (living form). Some remains of bones are collected, put in an earthen pot, and placed in a nearby river.
The mourning period for the family lasts for seven days. No fish or animal flesh is eaten during this time. On the seventh day, the final ritual (Satdinya) is held. At this time the family offers food to their ancestors, Buddhist monks deliver religious discourses, offerings are made to the monks, and the entire village participates in a communal feast.

2.2.4.3 Religion

Towards the end of the 10th century when Buddhism was discouraged in Bengal and later on in 13th when Buddhism face severe opposition and complete extinction due to the invasion of the Muslim rulers and the spread of Mohamedanism the dwellers of Chittagong and the Chittagong Hill Tract, particularly the Chakmas, remained in faith with Buddhism. No body knows for sure how and since when the Chakmas have been practicing Buddhism. Except a small fraction, majority of the Chakmas are Buddhist by faith since time unknown. They belong to the southern or Theravada sect of Buddhism. While the practice of Animism and worship of some form of deities, like Goddess Lakshmi, worshiped even by the Hindus, is seen among the Chakmas.

*Image of a Buddhist Monastery in Changlang District, Arunachal Pradesh*

Although the central pillar of Buddhism is peace and non-violence, there is a sect, particularly the Tongchongya, who practice Tantric Buddhism and sacrifice animals to appease the God and spirits that are believed to bring fevers and various forms of illness. Some prominent rituals observed by the Chakmas are:
• **Burpara**: This is performed every year to achieve wealth, happiness and prosperity
• **Chmulong**: This is performed every year by the married couple to renew their marriage commitments
• **Gang/Ganga Mana**: This is performed to shield the family against unforeseen evils

Almost every Chakma village has a Buddhist temple called *Kaang* (Monastery). Buddhist priests or monks called *Bhikhus are popularly known as Bhantes* among the Chakmas. They preside at religious festivals as well as in all kinds of ceremonies like marriage, death, birth and the likes. The villagers support their *Bhantes* with food (called *Syom*), gifts, and offerings which are in fact are an offering to Lord Buddha.

### 2.2.4.4 Major Festivals

Capt. Lewin observed that the Chakmas observe as many as eight festivals in a year. These are *Bizu* (also called Bishu), *Tummuntong, Hoia, Nowarno, Magiri, Kheyrey, Tsumulang* and *Shongbasa*. Among them *Bizu* is considered as a harvest festival celebrated for three days. It coincides with the last two days and the first day of the Bengali New Year and is known as *Ful Bizu, Mul Bizu* and *Gochya Pachya Bizu* respectively. Apart from these, *Buddha Purnima, Asari Purnima, Bhadra or Madhu Purnima* and *Maghi Purnima* are major religious festivals celebrated by the Chakmas. These religious festivals are celebrated as a mark of respect to the important events of the life of Lord Buddha, particularly his birth, his attainment of enlightenment and his death. These are observed on the full moon day. (Additional image appended in annexure)
2.2.4.5 Livelihood

Shifting cultivation, also known as *Jhum*, is the major source of livelihood of the Chakmas while majority of them depends on paddy cultivation. Besides, they also cultivate various crops, vegetables and spices like maize, cucumber, pumpkin, melon, arum, brinjal, sweet potatoes, chilly, tobacco etc.

*Jhum* cultivation has an important bearing on the life and settlement of the Chakmas. The preconditions to this method of cultivation have brought a lot of miseries and bad memories to the Chakmas, while the present plight of the Chakmas stands in testimony to this fact. Profit-friendly *Jhum* cultivation requires the plot of land to remain uncultivated for some years forcing the cultivators to search for a fallow land and create a temporary habitat nearby. The continuous search of fertile land for making a living made the Chakmas unsettled and uncertain with their own land. However, a good number of Chakmas these days are found to practice settled type of cultivation, of course based on the availability of wetland.

2.2.4.6 Living Conditions

Being *Jhum* cultivators Chakma have to migrate more than often in search of unused and fertile land. This has a significant implication on their life and settlements as is apparently evident from their demographic status which is also a concern of this study.

The Chakma villages are generally built on the bank of rivers or on a hill slope not far from a source of water. Perhaps that is why Lewin referred them as *Khyongtha* or children of the river. Generally the inhabitants of a village belong to any particular *Goza* or clan. A few related families may build on the same plot of land, creating a homestead (*bari*). *Baris* cluster together to form hamlets (*para*) and a number of hamlets make up a village (*gram*). The traditional Chakma house is made of bamboo. It is constructed on a bamboo or wooden platform about two meters (six feet) above the ground. The house is built on the rear of the platform. Mat walls divide the house into separate compartments.
Small compartments may be built for storage of grain and other possessions. Household objects ranging from baskets to pipes for smoking tobacco are made out of bamboo. During jhum cultivation the entire family moves to the jhum field and lives in a small hut called Taung made of bamboo and jungle leaves/sun grass.\textsuperscript{43}

Gone are those days and so changed the Chakmas to match the need of today. Scarcity of uncultivated land as well as the concern of the people towards the consequences of jhum cultivation forced the Chakmas to settle with the more widely practiced wetland form of cultivation for their livelihood. Besides, due to greater exposure Chakmas today also have the skills and thus the option to choose other sectors other than the primary sector (agriculture) for their livelihood. In short, Chakmas are much more settled than ever before.

\textbf{A Traditional Chakma House}

\subsection*{2.2.4.7 Dresses & Ornaments}

The Chakma dress for the men is the shirt (known as chillung) and dhoti while the traditional dress of the women consists of two pieces of cloth: one is worn as a skirt (called pinon), wrapped around the lower part of the body and extending from waist to ankle. Its traditional color is black or blue, with a red border at top and bottom. The second piece of cloth is a breast-band (called hadi, a long narrow piece of cloth), woven with colored designs and is tightly
wrapped covering the chest. This is worn with a variety of necklaces, bracelets, anklets, rings, and other ornaments. The Chakma women are self reliant in preparing their own clothing apparels as weaving on loin loom is an established social duty.

Chakma girls wearing traditional dress and ornaments

Chakma women are very much fond of admiring themselves with ornaments made of gold, silver and other precious stones. However, most of the traditional ornaments used by the Chakma women are made of beads and silver. Some division of the Chakmas also wears wooden ornaments on ears and neck. In other words, Chakmas like to make they look pretty and attractive to folks of the counter sex.

2.2.4.8 Games, Sports and Recreation

Chakmas are fond of fun and entertainment. Games and sports is thus an integral part of the Chakma way of life. They are a means to entertain their leisure time and hence occupy an important place in the life of the both young and the adolescents. It is worth to state that the contents of the games sometime vary from one goza to another or between the villages. The most popular traditional game played by the Chakmas is called Gile Hara (gile meaning seed from a large bean shaped fruit of a woody creeper and hara meaning game). Although an all time
favourite game, Chakmas of all age prefers to play or watch the game during their chief festival Bizu. Other popular games are:

1. Nadeng Hara (spinning top)
2. Potti Hara (a game of girls)
3. Gudu Hara (kabaddi)
4. Boli Hara (wrestling)
5. Polla-Polli Hara (hide ‘n’ seek) etc.

Traditional forms of recreation include popular folk songs and music, and jatra, the village opera. Folk music is a major aspect of Chakma tribal culture. It includes romantic love songs known as Ubageet. The Genkhuli ballads relate incidents from the past. Wrestling and other sports held at fairs are popular. In the past, hunting and fishing were favorite pastimes.

![A Chakma man smoking a traditional bamboo hookah](image)

**2.2.4.9 Food Habits**

The Chakmas prefer rice as their major and principal food. Besides rice, a paste made from a mixture of stale fish and various insects, called sidal, is a favourite item of the Chakmas. This dish is so popular among the Chakmas that it forms a part of their cultural dish like the home made beer made out of rice, called Kanji. Chakmas are fond of drinking and this is more so in all major festivals, particularly the Bizu, marriage etc. Kanji is thus prepared in almost all houses and forms a part of the welcome drink to the visiting guest.
Although Buddhist, Chakmas prefer to take fish and meat, including pork. However, they excuses of not taking such meals hunted and killed in their name. This diversion from the principle of Buddhism is perhaps due to the geographical location of their habitations. Chakmas also take a variety of wild leafy vegetables, roots, tubers and bamboo/cane shoots.

2.2.4.10 Crafts and Hobbies

The Chakma are skilled at making a variety of household goods from bamboo, often using nothing more than a simple knife. Women are expert weavers and dyers and make their own cloth called Alam. They are skilled in the art of making baskets from bamboo. (Additional image on craft is appended in annexure)

Traditional Handicraft items made by the Chakmas for household use

Time was never kind to the Chakmas. Destiny defeated them not once or twice but times again. Unwillingly they were made the subjects of Pakistan regime in the territory of East Pakistan and then again in a new country that disaffiliated itself from its former ruler but ruled by the people of same stock. The condition of the Chakmas only worsened with time. The aforesaid illustration could not bring out clearly as to why the Chakmas repeatedly faced such consequences and today virtually a section of them are stateless while those who are having some rights have almost lost their identity due to assimilation with their fellow brethrens in the area of their settlements. Chakmas are scattered today and are facing the threat of extinction. To know
more about them and the cause of such plight, the investigator went little past to bring out an account of the Chakmas during the colonial period. The following paragraph describes the colonial history of the Chakmas.

2.3 COLONIAL HISTORY

CHT is essentially known to the outside world as the native place of the Chakmas. Prior to the rule of the East India Company, the Chakmas believed to have an independent country which consisted of the present CHT, a portion of Chittagong District of Bangladesh and some areas bordering the southern parts of Mizoram. As per record available (Harry Verelst, the first Chief of CHT, of 1768) the boundary of the Chakma Kingdom was extended as under:

- North: Feni River
- East: Kuki Kingdom (present Mizoram)
- West: Nizampur Road of Chittagong
- South: Sangu River

The Chakmas had to pay only business tax annually to the Moghul Ruler as per the Business Treaty signed in 1715. After the taking over of the administration of Bengal in 1757, the East India Company did not interfere much with the Treaty in force until 1777 when they demanded more business tax. At the denial to comply with the demand, the British led two expeditions against the Chakma King but without success. The Company was, however, adamant to get hold over of the vast reservoir of natural resources and succeeded in attaining so in 1787 when the Chakma King Dharam Baksh Khan (to some Juan Baksh Khan) signed an agreement agreeing to pay more taxes. The Company was however silent in the matters of internal administration of the Kingdom until 1861, the year in which they built an administrative office at Chandraghona. And since 1866 when Captain T. H. Lewin took over the administration as Deputy Commissioner of CHT the Chakma Kingdom was transformed into a mere circle, dividing it into three circles- Maung, Bhomang and Chakma while 26 places of the territory of the Chakma Kingdom were exceeded first to the Chittagong Plain District and later in 1891 the present Demagiri area of Mizoram to Assam Province in the name of administrative convenience. During the said period Chakma Kingdom was ruled by the Chakma Queen Kalindi Rani who is believed
to have not so good relation with Captain T.H Lewin. CHT was also taken out of the General Regulation and was brought under Inner Line Regulation by the notification of the Govt. of Bengal on 30th June, 1879. Further, it was declared an ‘Excluded area’ under Regulation of 1900 and later on under the Govt. of India Act of 1935. The partition of India in 1947 first made it a part of Pakistan, more correctly East Pakistan, and since December 1971 it became a part of Bangladesh. The CHT and the dwellers there in considers the outside world very unkind to them as despite being in majority (97.5% of the total population) CHT was awarded to Pakistan much against their will by the Chairman of the Bengal Boundary Commission Sir Cyril Radcliff on the recommendation of Major Billy Short during the Partition of 1947. During the later years following partition, the struggle of Jumma people first against the Pakistani regime and then against the present Bangladesh administration touched a new height when these innocent people were tortured, their women were raped, property either burned or looted and forcibly evicted the people compelling them to leave their age old home and hearth behind and search for new shelter in the adjoining areas.

After years of struggle the Jumma people succeeded to draw the attention of the world community and earn the sympathy towards their cause which forced the administration of Bangladesh to come to certain consolation for the Jumma people in the creation of three district council-Rangamati, Khagrachhiri and Bandarban by a Presidential proclamation passed on 22nd April, 1989. However, the sufferings of the Jumma people continued and so continued the retaliation by the Shanti Bahini, an armed outfit led by M.N. Larma to safeguard the interest of the tribal people living in CHT. It may be recalled that CHT, even to-date, did not receive any functional constitutional recognition or any meaningful autonomy despite the Peace Accord signed in 1997 between the Government of Bangladesh and the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS).

2.4 THE DISPLACEMENT

The history of the Chakmas is a record of constant migration. First such migration from CHT is believed to have taken place when the widow of the Chakma King Sattua (better known as Pagla Raja) fled away to Tripura with her two daughters after the King was killed by his subjects due to his insane rule. One
of the daughters was married into a noble Tripura family and since then the Chakmas in batches immigrated into Tripura in search of cultivable (hill slope) land. A major exodus took place during the reign of Rani Kalindi when (in 1884) about 4,000 Chakmas were reported to have entered the state of Tripura.

But the migration forced by destiny upon the Chakmas after the partition of the sub-continent is something they surely never enjoyed. Following partition in 1947 the dwellers of CHT, more particularly the Chakmas wished to join the Indian Union as they were afraid to face the consequence of being a religious minority group in a nation born out of religious parents. Infat, the first Schedule of India Independence Act, 1947 contains a list of the districts of Bengal Province to be included in the new province of East Bengal which did not list the name of CHT and hence was beyond the recommendation of Radcliffe Commission. But, some say that, to compensate the loss of Gurdaspur of Punjab Province to provide India the only road link to Kashmir Valley, the wish of the Chakmas were undermined and eventually CHT became a constituent district of East Pakistan. It is worth mention here that the Boundary Commission made a special announcement regarding the inclusion of CHT to East Pakistan after four days of the Independence of India and Pakistan. Unaware of the arrangement, the Chakmas hoisted the Indian Tri-Colour at Rangamati on 15th August, 1947 which remained hoisted till 18th August, 1947 when the Beluch Regiment of Pakistan brought it down. Since then the Chakmas were labeled as pro-Indian and hence began the endless tortures, punishments and all kinds of oppressive measures leading to the displacement of the Chakmas in Burma as well as in India in the following years which till date is a burning issue to be settled between the two neighbouring countries of Bangladesh and India.

However, immediate following the partition of 1947 migration from CHT to other places was negligent and no mention is made in particular of the Chakmas having crossed the border in substantial number. But, following eruption of ethnic riots in 1961 in CHT of erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) thousands of tribal people rendered homeless, fled away to India. Yet again in 1964 the religious persecution of the Chakmas compelled them to leave their home and heath to join earlier hordes of their refugee brethren in
Tripiira. As the Pakistan Government showed no sign of taking their people back and as the Government of Tripura had to take a tough stand because of the already existing heavy burden of refugees in the state, the refugees moved further east. Against such circumstances the Pakistan Government stalled the Construction of Kaptai Hydropower Power Project, the first mega-project in South Asia funded by USAID, on the river Kawrnaphuli inundating a vast tract of agricultural land owned by the Chakmas and other marginal tribal group. About 18,000 families of not less than one lakh persons in all, were uprooted from the District’s capital of Rangamati and of 125 adjacent villages and about 60,000 persons out of those displaced souls were left with no choice but to take refuge in the neighboring countries of Burma and India. The problem was actually compounded by the fact that the native Chakmas were Buddhists while the authorities/settlers were Muslims.

Beyond those infrequent developments and despite the emergence of a military regime that controlled the political scenario till 1971, no major unseemly event took place with the Chakmas which could have forced them to migrate in large number. However, during this period, the political conflicts in the adjoining areas of India had its brunt on the CHT. The various insurgent groups demanding outright secession from India used the cavernous jungles of the CHT region (adjacent to India) for sanctuary and recoupment. One such group seeking sanctuary and refuge in the CHT was the Mizo National Front (MNF) headed by Laldenga.

It was soon after the emergence of the Republic of Bangladesh in 1971 that the Chakma problem surfaced and captured the attention of the world community. Continued marginalization by means of torture, eviction, religious conversion, economic blockade etc. made the Chakmas to retaliate. Armed outfit called Shanti Bahini (Peace Force) under the leadership of Manabendra Larma, also a member of East Pakistan Provincial Assembly (1970), wanted the fulfillment of his 16 point demands, one of which was 'Regional Autonomy' with separate legislature for CHT. Besides, he also demanded the expelling of immigrants from CHT arrived after 1972 and compensation for souls displaced due to the construction of Kaptai Hydroelectric Project. M. N. Larma revived the political organization called Chakma Yuvaik Sangha formed way back in 1928 by
Sri Ghyan Shyam Dewan and renamed it as the *Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti* (1972). Thus prepared the stage to stand against the onslaught of the Government supported forces and its policies to marginalize the tribal population in CHT. However, the conflict came to an end with the signing of the Peace Accord in 1997 between the Government of Bangladesh and *Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti*, the political wing of *Shanti Bahini*. But as already stated, CHT till date is waiting to for functional autonomy as promised in the peace accord. Thus, the episode of excursion of the Chakmas towards India in search of a suitable settlement continues.

Today, apart from Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram is the host to the largest number of Chakmas in India. The following table presents a rough account of the Chakmas in the different states of India:

**TABLE: 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of States</th>
<th>2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>65,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>71,283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>64,293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* i) 'Refugees and the State' Ranabir Samaddar, (Ed.) p.258, Census of India- 2001

Besides, they are also found to settle in the hills of Karbi-Anlig, No.:., Cachar Hill and Cachar districts of Assam. A very small and educated section of the community is reported to have settled in West Bengal and Delhi.

The settlement of the Chakmas that spread from CHT to the different parts of India, especially North-East India, can be summed up as follows:

- that the Chakmas of CHT, Bangladesh are the main stock of the present Chakma population living in different parts of the world
- that a section of the Chakmas of Mizoram might have been the natural citizen of India as that part of Lushai Hills in which they reside was sliced out of Burma and Bangladesh in 1891 and added to the territory.
of Assam, India. Others are those who probably have shifted to these areas before and after independence

- that the Chakmas of Tripura are presumed to be the descendants of those Chakmas who settled in Tripura during the reign of King Hiramoni (1770 A.D). Apart from that there are those who migrated from CHT before and after Independence due to atrocities, forcible religious conversion, eviction from land, etc.

- that the Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh are the refugees that were displaced due to the construction of Kaptai Dam at CHT over the river Kawmaphuli in 1964

- that the Chakmas of Assam are the refugees, resulted from the construction of Kaptai Dam, who amidst uncertainty settled in the places of their temporary settlement while they were being escorted for permanent settlement in NEFA. Besides, they also include the inter-state migrants in search of hill slopes which suits to their type of cultivation.

Meanwhile the influx of the Chakmas and other communities like the Tibetans, Nepalese and Tamils etc. in India raised important issues related to their settlement, rights and privileges, granting of citizenship and others. The communities in question are also found to be treated differently under different norms. Based on the reasons of their displacement some were classified as migrants while others were referred to as refugees. A brief explanation on the various classifications of refugees and a detailed account of the status of refugees in India in general and of the Chakmas in particular is, thus, presented in the following paragraphs.

2.5 REFUGEES AND ITS CLASSIFICATIONS

Every race remained nomad until their search for home ended. It is thus, a fact that the history of migration has began and matured with the history of mankind. Equally true is the fact that the history of civilization began and matured with the history of migration. It has occurred throughout history for various reasons; reasons from political rivalry, regional conflicts of a country, ethnic issues and development projects to simple persecution of people of minorities by one country to those of another due to racial differences. In still
some other cases migration may take place due to unequal distribution of natural resources, natural catastrophes, socio-religious insecurity and identity dispute. What ever may be the reasons, internationals agencies and nations of the world are found scattered in developing a single parameter or any standard norm to differentiate between such souls dislocated, displaced and disenfranchised due to the said reasons. In some cases they are identified as Stateless while others consider them as Migrants. In still some other cases they are referred as Internally Displaced Persons or as Refugees.

A majority of displaced persons who crosses international border are often not regarded as "refugees" by the host country. Infact, there are no national laws, which define or distinguish "refugees" from others who cross the borders. Traditionally, any person who has been forced to flee her or his home for fear of life or lack of subsistence is regarded a refugee. However, in international law only those who are denied protection of their home states and as a result have crossed international borders to seek refuge in another country are accepted as refugees. Faced with the problem of a large number of displaced and uprooted persons after the First World War, the western nations created international instruments for the protection, return as well as resettlement of these persons in other countries. The so-called Nansen Passport was created to provide these stateless persons with a temporary identity. Between 1922 and 1926 under the auspices of the League of Nations, several treaties created certain obligations on the contracting states, making it necessary to define the term "refugee". The League of Nations treaties initially defined the "refugees" as a category or group of persons who were, (a) outside their country of origin and (b) without the protection of the government of their home state. Later in 1938 the definition was restricted to only such persons who had left their countries of origin for fear of persecution. Those who had left their homeland for "purely personal reasons" were excluded by the 1938 instrument.45

During the cold war period the emphasis shifted from ‘category’ or ‘group’ to ‘individual’ in defining refugees. In consequence a comparatively narrow definition was adopted by the 1967 UN Protocol. The refugee thus finally came to be defined as "any person, who owing to well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality or political opinion is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fears or for reasons

56
other than personal convenience, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable or, owning to such fear or for reasons other than personal convenience, is unwilling to return to it".

This definition is being questioned today by social scientists and human rights activists. The process of decolonization in the sixties and the seventies encouraged liberation struggles, revolutions, coups and counter-coups, which displaced millions in the countries of Asia, Africa and South America. Readjustment of old colonial boundaries rekindled old rivalries, unleashed ethnic and religious conflicts causing large-scale movements of populations across borders. Entire communities or groups of people were rejected and disenfranchised by these newly formed states. In these countries, during the last three decades, masses of people were also displaced by man-made environmental disasters, natural calamities and by the shortsighted development policies of the governments, which destroyed traditional sources of livelihood of the people of certain regions. And thus began the flow of refugees from the poor to the rich countries. They were classified as "migrants" or "economic refugees" by the governments and international agencies. It has been argued that migrants cross international borders attracted by the "pull" of better economic opportunities and that unlike the political refugees they are not "pushed" out by the state through widespread human rights abuses or by racial and communal riots.

To put it more precisely, there are essentially two types of migrants from a country: one is due to persecution for various reasons, and the other is an economic migrant. Persecution is essentially due to political or religious reasons. The return to their own homeland can take place only when there are circumstances which remove the very cause of the persecution. In such a case the persons are given asylum in the adopted country, since it is inhuman to repatriate them, knowing well that they may not have normal civil liberties and in many cases their lives may be in danger. Political asylum seekers usually tend to be small in number, while those persecuted for religious reasons may well be significant in numbers.

An economic migrant on the other hand does not receive these privileges, since the economic hardship is not specifically directed towards a particular section of the people. It also does not take away the legal and political rights,
including her/his right to vote. The economic migrants are also not welcomed as they put a substantial monetary burden on the host country.

The investigator in his attempt to assess the educational status of the Chakmas confronted with the dilemma of whether to classify the Chakmas in India as migrants or as refugees as both bear similar nuance. It was difficult to define and draw a specific outline for each of them, as evidenced from the writing of various literatures, rather found to be different side of the same coin. There is, therefore, an urgent need to re-conceptualize the definition of refugees and the related concepts which have complicated it. In the existing definition of refugees, the distinction between a displaced person and a migrant is rather narrow and one-dimensional. It also has to consider if the received parameters distinguishing between the forced/willed and the political/economic regarding the refugee/migration definition hold true today. These need to be reviewed and reformulated in order to accommodate the existing reality. New and effective international instruments and national laws need to be created to protect the rights of these hopelessly helpless millions who have no legal existence in most countries of the world today.

Concluding on whether Chakmas are refugees or migrants the investigator from his understanding of what is stated above is of the opinion that the subject of the study fits to both. But somehow Sir John Hope Simpson’s definition of refugee is found more matching to the population of the investigation undertaken. He characterizes a refugee as “…one who “has left his country of regular residence, of which he may or may not be a national, as a result of political events in that country which rendered his continued residence impossible or intolerable, and has taken refuge in another country, or, if already absent from his home, is unwilling or unable to return, without danger to life or liberty, as a direct consequence of the political conditions existing there in the term political in the description is used in a sense wide enough to include religious conditions.” 16

2.6 REFUGEES IN INDIA: AN OVERVIEW

In spite of what is said above, India is one of the most popular and safe destination for the refugees. The partition of the subcontinent at the dawn of India’s independence witnessed one of the largest forced dislocations of people in the history of world politics. India played host to many of these refugee communities fleeing persecution and violence. Among the communities India has
hosted and protected since its creation as a Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic, Republic Nation includes those from Tibet, Myanmar(formerly Burma), Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan). The figures within the box below present an overview of the status of refugees in India.

**TABLE: 7**

**REFUGEES IN INDIA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Refugees and Asylum Seekers</th>
<th>411,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**New Asylum Seekers**

3,300

**1951 Convention:** No  
**1967 Protocol:** No  
**UNHCR Executive Committee:** Yes

**Population:** 1.2 billion  
**GDP:** $1.2 trillion  
**GDP per capita:** $1,050

Source: World Refugee survey 2009- India (www.unhcr.org)

With its open borders, South Asia like Africa-is a refugee prone region. India discovered this when absorbing the Tibetan refugees in 1959 the Bangladeshi refugees in 1971, the Chakma influx in 1964, the Tamil efflux from Sri Lanka in 1983, 1989, and again in 1995, the Afghan refugees from the 1980’s the Myanmar refugees for a similar period and migration and refugee movements from Bangladesh over the years. But since it was not a signatory to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention or the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees and had no refugee law Indian government's response to the various refugee populations was as varied as the refugee groups themselves. The more than 4,10,000 refugees in India included 1,10,000 Tibetans, whom the Indian government continued to welcome; about 1,20,000 Sri Lankan Tamils (62,000 in
government-run camps); 53,000 Bangladeshi Chakma whom the Government considers economic migrants and are pressuring them to return home; some 40,000 ethnic Chin from Burma as well as 200 Burmese pro-democracy student activists registered and mostly assisted by UNHCR; 30,000 ethnic Nepalese from Bhutan whom India largely granted the same rights as Indian citizens; and a number of so-called urban refugees (18,607 Afghans, 243 Somalis, 195 Iranians, and 161 refugees from other countries) living primarily in Delhi whom UNHCR recognized as refugees and in some cases assisted. But the Chakmas will surely like to forget it for ever, for it was a defining moment as they were forced to face the gravest crisis any community shall ever be fond of to face with- the crisis of identity: identity with land, culture, religion, language and of everything for the occurrence of which they may not escape complete accountability. A minor twist with the distribution of geographical territories during the partition of India decisively defined their destiny. After sixty years of India’s independence the Chakma settlements in India, particularly in the north eastern states, is still unsettled and without peace and harmony while the effort to survive and settle by the Chakmas continues.

2.7 REFUGEES AND HUMAN RIGHTS: THE CASE OF CHAKMAS IN INDIA

Human Rights are universal and hence every person on earth, including refugees and internally displaced people deserves complete civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Refugees in particular deserves to enjoy certain human rights specifically linked to their vulnerable status, including the right to seek asylum, to freedom from forcible return, to freedom of movement, to a nationality, and to receive protection and assistance in securing their basic economic, social and cultural rights. Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights reaffirms the right to nationality to every person. Under the said background and with reference to the investigation undertaken, it is a matter of concern and curiosity to investigate as to how much and to what extent these
provisions are being fulfilled with reference to the Chakmas residing in India. The research, thus, proposes to present an account of the rights and privileges conferred upon and enjoyed by the Chakma refugees residing in India, particularly in the north eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram, the states most controversial for their treatment with the refugees, particularly Chakmas.

Partition of India in the midst of communal holocaust in 1947 brought into being two countries out of one, India and Pakistan and in subsequent years another country called Bangladesh. People suddenly found themselves aliens and undesirables in the very place which was their own home the other day, and condemned to a life of political and cultural deprivation only to make others free. The partition proposal was made acceptable to the people with clear and definite commitments and solemn assurances that those who would suffer in the process and from the consequences of partition would be rehabilitated and the doors of India will always remain open for them. Jawaharlal Nehru in his maiden message to the nation as the Prime Minister of India on 15th August 1947 said, “We think of our brothers and sisters who have been cut off from us by political boundaries and who unhappily cannot share at present in the freedom that has come. They are of us and will remain of us whatever may happen, and we shall be sharers in their good and ill fortune alike.”

India’s post partition policy to grant citizenship to all those who originated from areas that were part of undivided India endorses this commitment
of Nehru. It is relevant and worth mention here that the issue of settlement of refugees who had entered India from erstwhile East Pakistan during and post partition period was addressed through Indira-Mujib Pact of 1972, according to which those refugees who had entered India before 25th March 1971 are to be treated as Indian citizens. Unfortunately the same was not reflected in the case of the 14,888 refugees belonging to 2,748 families of both Chakma and Hajong communities who came to India way back in 1964 from CHT after being displaced due to submergence of their age-old habitation following the construction of the Kaptai Dam and owing to religious persecution in Myemensingh District of the then East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).

After initial trials these refugees were rehabilitated in Lohit, Subansiri (now in Papum Pare) and Tirap (now in Changlang) districts of the then North East Frontier Agency, popularly known as NEFA, (now Arunachal Pradesh), which was administered by the Ministry of External Affairs with the Governor of Assam acting as the agent to the president of India. (NEFA renamed Arunachal Pradesh with its up gradation to a Union Territory in 1972 and finally up graded to a full-fledged State in 1987) P. N. Luthra, the then Advisor to the Governor of Assam, on the rehabilitation of the Chakmas in NEFA wrote, “The settlement of people in NEFA will also help in developing the pockets that are lying unused and unoccupied by the local population. Besides, the presence of stretches of vacant land along the border is strategically not desirable and the last emergency had highlighted this problem. Resettlement of people in the vacant border areas will help to strengthen our frontiers and their defense.”

Besides, Vishnu Sahay, the then Governor of Assam, in a letter written to the then Chief Minister of Assam Bimala Prasad Chaliha on the aforesaid issue said, “It occurred to me that we may get trouble between the Mizos and the Chakmas in Mizo district. These Chakmas would be quite suitable people to go into Tirap Division of NEFA where there is easily found vacant land.................” This is quoted in the “White Paper on Chakma and Hajong Refugee Issue”, published by the Government of Arunachal Pradesh in 1996.

With the said intention the Chakma refugees were rehabilitated in the aforesaid territories of Arunachal Pradesh with five acres (0.4 hectare) of land for
each family. Most of this land was allotted either on the bank of river *Noa Dihing* or in dense forest but in subsequent years those rehabilitated near the river bank were displaced further due to the substantial erosion of the river bank. However, the Government of India extended all possible help including financial support, employment opportunities, trade license, book grants etc. for their proper rehabilitation. But the issue of providing citizenship rights to about 65,000 Chakmas and Hajongs generated a sustained controversy and is being opposed by the successive state governments, irrespective of their political affiliations, as well as various organizations including the most vocal and powerful All Arunachal Pradesh Students Union (AAPSU). The Government of Arunachal Pradesh undertook a series of repressive measures since 1980 including ban on public employment, withdraw of ration card facilities offered under the Public Distribution System, withdrawal of all kinds of facilities from the Chakma Settlement area etc.

Even the locals belonging to Singpho and Tangsa Naga tribes have been opposing the settlement of Chakma and Hajong refugees in the locality since the time they were rehabilitated due to two-fold fear factors. The locals fear that the customary laws and traditional rights of the indigenous people living in the surroundings will be violated. They also fear that given the size of population in no time the refugees may outnumber others to become the leading populous community of the State.

With the said fears in mind every one in the State wanted the immediate deportation of the Chakmas along with the Hajongs and thus, served a "Quit Arunachal Pradesh" notice to the refugees seeking Indian citizenship to leave the State by 30th September 1994. The State Administration became more hostile and started inciting sectarian violence against the Chakmas and Hajongs. Political leaders of Arunachal Pradesh led by the then Chief Minister Mr. Gegong Apang went to the extent of passing an unanimous resolution to resign en masse from the national party membership if the Chakmas and Hajongs are not deported by 31st December 1995. The resolution also prohibited social interactions of the native Arunachalees with the Chakmas and Hajongs.
To resist the onslaught spearheaded by AAPSU with the direct support of the State Govt. and to get their demand for citizenship approved a committee called the Committee for Citizenship Rights of the Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh (CCRCAP) was formed in 1991 out of the Delhi based Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh. The CCRCAP approached the National Human Rights Commission of India (NHRC) about the deadline set by the AAPSU and the threat to the lives and property of the Chakmas and Hajongs. The NHRC, headed by Justice Ranganath Mishra, took it further to the Supreme Court to seek appropriate relief and filed a writ petition (720/1995). The Supreme Court in its interim order on 2nd November 1995 directed the State Government to “ensure that the Chakmas situated in its territory are not ousted by any coercive action, not in accordance with law.” P. V. Narasimha Rao, the then Prime Minister of India, formed a high-level committee headed by then Home Minister S. B. Chavan to look into this matter. On 9th January 1996, the Supreme Court of India gave the following 5-point judgement favouring the refugees in the case of NHRC vs. State of Arunachal Pradesh. The judgements are:

1. the State shall ensure that the life and personal liberty of every Chakma residing within the State shall be protected and any attempt to forcibly evict or drive them out of the State shall be repelled

2. The quit notices and ultimatums issued by the AAPSU and such organizations which tantamount to threats to the life and liberty should be dealt with very strictly by the State

3. Except in accordance with law, the Chakmas shall not be evicted or denied of any rights

4. The application made for citizenship rights shall be recorded in the register and the same shall be forwarded by the Collector or the Deputy Commissioner with or without enquiry to the Central Government for consideration; even returned applications shall be called back or fresh ones shall be obtained, if required

5. While the application of any individual Chakma is pending consideration, the first respondent shall not evict or remove the concerned person from his
occupation on the ground that he is not a citizen of India until the competent authority has taken a decision in that behalf.

(Source: Order, Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi, No. 23/ARUN/2003 Dated: 3rd March, 2004)

Despite this clear and unambiguous order from the Supreme Court, the State Government remained adamant to its anti-Chakma stand and continued to deny them fundamental rights such as right to education, health care, employment opportunities etc. It also stopped all developmental activities in the Chakma inhabitant areas including refusal to provide trade licenses, deploy teachers in the schools, withdrawal of all pre-primary (Anganwadi) centres and finally forcible eviction by claiming the lands of the Chakmas and Hajongs as forest lands.

The uncompromising effort of CCRCAP met with first success when Delhi High Court vide order dated 28-09-2000 held that such of the Chakmas who were born in India after their settlement in the State of Arunachal Pradesh but before 01-07-1987, became citizens of India by birth under section 3(1) (a) of the Citizenship Act even if their parents were not citizens of India at the time of their birth.

Following the aforesaid moral victory, a new chapter in the history of these stateless people was re-scripted when the Election Commission of India in an order dated 3rd March 2004 brought an end to the forty long years of struggle and conflicts of the Chakmas for citizenship by declaring 1,497 out of 4,000 applications as eligible voters, from an unrecognized freedom fighter in undivided India to a stateless person in divided India and subsequently finding the nationality of the very nation.

But as if Chakma misery knows no end. The State Cabinet subsequently passed a resolution dated 14-05-2003, which directed that non Arunachaleese shall not be entitled to be enrolled in the electoral rolls in the State unless they possessed Inner Line Permits under the Bengal East Area and Frontier Regulation, 1873, having a minimum validity period of six months. This was another defense manufactured by the State Government to delay and deny the citizenship rights to the Chakams.
Sensing the trick, the election Commission of India took a tough stand and announced by an order dated 02-01-2004 that it shall not conduct any elections or carry out any election related work, including preparation and revision of electoral rolls in the constituencies where the Chakma inhabits unless the State Cabinet withdrew or amended appropriately its resolution dated 14.05.2003 and created conditions conducive for the preparation and revision of free and fair election.

The Commission however understood that the suspension of election related work in the State would consequently deprive the entire electorate of the State of the opportunity to elect their representatives to the House of the People in the forthcoming general elections to the Lok Sabha along with other States. The Commission, thus, in exercise of its plenary powers conferred on it by Article 324 of the Constitution orders the inclusion of 323, 1164 and 10 Chakmas of 46-Chowkham (ST), 49-Bordumsa Diyum and 50-Miao (ST) Assembly Constituencies respectively eligible for casting votes.

Although granted the right to adult franchise, such is the irony that the eligible Chakma voters found themselves in a bizarre situation of not knowing who to vote for, as each and every political party contestanting election with the promise to their people that if voted to power they will ensure the eviction of the Chakmas from Arunachal Pradesh.

Quite similar is the case of the Chakmas settled in Mizoram. It is the State with perhaps the largest contingent of the Chakmas in India offering a comparatively better political and economic status to the Chakmas than Arunachal Pradesh and in fact it offers the best in India. Perhaps due to their disputed citizenship Chakma population are believed to be undermined by the respective state officials of Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh. Understandably, even Mizoram is not free from allegations of discriminations and deprivations of basic human rights to the Chakmas residing within its territory. A regional human rights watchdog, the Asian Centre for Human Rights in its report “India Human Rights Report 2009,” accused Mizoram Govt. of practicing “systematic discrimination” against minorities. The ACHR stated that minorities were denied employment, basic healthcare, education and right to development. The
Government failed to address ‘systematic discrimination’ against the minorities – ethnic, linguistic and religious,” the report added.

The ACHR alleged that Chakma minorities who live outside the Chakma Autonomous District Council have to face more discrimination and neglect. Majority Chakmas live on the border with Bangladesh and the Central funds for the development of the border areas under the Border Area Development Programme have been misused. The report claimed the Ministry of Home Affairs released rupees 1,556 lakhs during 2004-05, rupees 903.48 lakhs during 2005-06, rupees 2262 lakhs during 2006-07 and rupees 2086 lakhs during 2007-08, to Mizoram under BADP. But the ACHR team during its visit to the border areas found very limited evidence of development activities. The state government failed to provide Chakmas access to basic healthcare facilities. Most villages had no health care facilities. Deaths of children were often not recorded. A few instances of areas in which Chakmas are discriminated are cited below:

- 35,438 persons, representing about 40% of the total Chakma population in Mizoram, were displaced due to the building of the fence along the 318 km-long international border with Bangladesh with very few real beneficiaries rehabilitated
- The Chakmas (8.5%) are the second largest community in Mizoram after the Mizos (77%). The difference in the socio-economic conditions between the two communities is no less than a difference between heaven and hell.
- Although Mizoram’s overall literacy is 88.49%, the rate of illiteracy of the Chakmas is contrastingly high as well. According to Census of India 2001, the Chakmas are the most illiterate community in Mizoram. They have a literacy rate of only 45.3 per cent, way behind their Mizo counterparts at 95.6 per cent. Although the statistics related to literacy in Mizoram is not free from doubt and deserve a comprehensive research/survey.
- The Chakmas face discrimination in state employment due to recruitment rules which require a person to study ‘Mizo’ as a subject up
to Middle School level and possesses working knowledge of the language to be eligible for government jobs. Due to such institutionalised discrimination, the Chakmas' representation in government services in Mizoram is very poor and remained so over the years.

(Source: India Human Rights Report 2008/ Conditions of Minorities in Mizoram: Report from posted on 29/12/08 www.sawlakia.com)

The indigenous inhabitants of Mizoram along with the state administration, irrespective of their party affiliation, puts every effort in their capacity as administrator to marginalize the Chakmas, undermine statistics related to Chakma population, ignore undertaking developmental activities of the Chakma inhabited areas etc. And all these are done to rationalize the Chakma settlements in Mizoram as illegal while the Chakmas being foreigners and illegal infiltrators. The fact that Lawngtlai, which accommodates the most Chakmas, is the most underdeveloped district among the districts of Mizoram reflects the non caring attitude of the State Govt. towards the Chakmas.

Last but not the least, today the Chakmas in Mizoram is facing serious threats in terms of their culture, religion, language and all that represents their identity. The reason for the same is the deprivation and denial of basic opportunities to survive and develop at par with others. Due to contrasting culture, religion and language the Chakmas are ignored in education, government jobs and from all those schemes and grants that may benefit them. This prompted the progressive Chakmas of today to accommodate and imitate the state sponsored culture and way of life to ensure their basic rights for survival.

This is certainly not desirable as the tendency of cultural annihilation may jeopardize the very identity of Indian philosophy, which has welcomed and nourished all those who visited this land and became a part of it. The said instances of Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram should be an eye opener for all concerned and hence necessary steps should immediately be taken to prevent the situation from further escalation. One such necessary step can be the formulation of a long deserving refugee-specific legislation to prevent the
genuine refugees from being subject to harassment and denial of basic rights. Until now the only machinery available to deal with all non-citizens in India is the Foreigners Act of 1946 which can hardly make any difference between economic migrants, tourists, asylum seekers and refugees.

Rajeev Dhavan, eminent legal expert, argues that, "The Indian legal framework provides incomplete and skewed protection to refugees’ inasmuch as there is no clearly defined category of 'refugee' as a sub-classification of the general category of 'foreigners'.” This means, the approach varies for each refugee group with regard to their determination and treatment. Dhavan further writes that although various practices and procedures have been evolved over the years but they are no substitute for a comprehensive law and policy. (Refugee Law and Policy in India: Rajeev Dhavan and the Public Interest and Legal Support and Research Centre, pages 136-137).

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has been increasingly pressuring the government to accede to the international refugee protection regime and to pass domestic legislation ensuring the same. The need for a refugee-specific law is thus likely to get wider attention in the coming days as the problem facing various refugees including the Chakmas is getting more complicated owing to various push and pull factors.

Concluding on the dispute over the issue of Chakma citizenship in India, particularly in Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram, the researcher believes that it is in the interest of the respective state to understand and accept the Chakmas and provide them equal access to the fundamental facilities for improvement. This will not only ensure the improvement in the standard of life of the Chakmas living in the state but will also ensure a rise in the GDP of the state while accountability and commitment towards the state from the Chakmas will be an added benefit. The southern Mizoram is backward in all respect due to underdevelopment of the Chakmas and if necessary facilities are provided the entire state will not only improve its index in various areas but will also indirectly benefit its own people. Similarly, the three districts, Lohit, Papum
Pare and Changlang, of Arunachal Pradesh which accommodates the maximum number of Chakma can not be ignored for its own progress. Accepting them as citizens shall also cease further influx of refugees and hence a demographic control over the entire population of the state. Most importantly, this will also address the biggest threat the indigenous population are anticipating, the threat of being outnumbered by the outsiders.

Finally, the pertinent question that emerges out of the preceding discussion involves the role of various human rights organizations prior to the creation of such situation that compels people to migrate or displace from their own land. Differential refugee treatment on India's part is certainly not justifiable but it seems that the human rights organizations are more concerned of India's human right violations than of other countries. Human rights organizations are more active in India due to India's soft and faultly diplomatic policies, particularly towards its neighbouring countries. An active intervention of any human right organization could have stopped the Chakmas from being displaced from CHT; which occurred not once or twice but several times under different nations. The investigator concludes this section on human rights and the Chakmas in India with the following questions to the future researchers to investigate:

- Whether human right organization's intervention should occur prior or following the displacement or migration of people?
- Whether human right organizations are more active in India than any other nation? If yes, why?

The answer to the aforesaid question might help in the formulation of a refugee-specific legislation on the part of India.

2.8 FORMATION OF CHAKMA REGION IN INDIA

The Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh is extended over an area of 14,200 square kilometer, bounded on the north by Tripura State of India; on the south by Arakan Hills of Burma; on the east by Lushai Hills of Mizoram, Indic, and Arakan Hills of Burma and on the west by Chittagong District of Bangladesh. It is worth mention here that the tracts are directly adjacent to the Indian states of
Tripura and Mizoram and the Arakan Yoma Hills of Burma that flank it on the eastern side. Quite naturally any movement, political, economic or any other, in this part of Bangladesh directly or indirectly influences the demographic formation of the neighbouring India and Burma, of which India shares the maximum. And this is why when the Govt. of Bangladesh, particularly during the regime of President Zia-ur-Rahaman followed by President Abdus Sattar and Lt. General H. M. Ershad, systematically outbreed the Chakmas by settling the Bengali Muslims displaced from Burma, India became the second home of this ill fated community.

Since time unknown and particularly after the partition of the subcontinent in 1947 there has been an occasional large scale dislocation of Chakmas from CHT and other parts of Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan) along with more than occasional infiltrations resulting primarily due to flexible boundary between the two nations, poor economic condition of the source nation and to a great extent due to similarities in languages and religion shared by the people between two sides of the border. The Chakmas contribute significantly to this demographic chaos in India, particularly in north east India, and this may be, besides their religious minority status in the country of their original residence, due to India’s reputation of providing shelter to the displaced.
The Chakmas are found to spread across few pockets of India, Bangladesh and Burma of which the Chakmas of Chin and Arakan Province of Burma are far more integrated and assimilated to the culture of the soil primarily due to their acceptance by the host country. While the remaining Chakmas have their habitations, both original build up, in various places of Bangladesh and India. Of these two nations the significant names are the CHT of Bangladesh, the north eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Mizoram and Tripura along with some scattered population in other parts of India.

Arunachal Pradesh, formerly NEFA, accommodates the Chakmas who had to migrate due to the submergence of their age-old habitation following the construction of the Kaptai Dam in CHT, Bangladesh in 1964 and also owing to religious persecution in Mycensingh District of East Pakistan. Most of these people entered and took shelter in a refugee camp at Demagiri set up by the Government of India in the then Mizo District (present Mizoram) of Assam. From Demagiri they were shifted to the refugee camp at Badarpur of southern Assam and then further at Ledo of upper Assam. Assam, already burdened with refugees, declined to accommodate the Chakma refugees. After hectic discussions at the highest administrative level, it was finally decided to settle them in the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA), which was then administrated by the Ministry of External Affairs with the Governor of Assam acting as agent to the President of India. It is worth mention here that NEFA became a Union Territory and came to be known as Arunachal Pradesh in 1972 and became a full-fledged State in 1987.

Chakmas along with Hajongs, numbering 14,888 souls and belonging to 2,748 families were settled in Lohit, Subansiri (now in Papum Pare) and Tirap (now in Changlang) Districts. However, the people of these settlements resettled several times and at present the Chakma settlements in Arunachal Pradesh are confined in the three districts of Lohit (Chowkham Circle), Subansiri/Papum Pare (Balijan and Kokila Circle) and Changlang (Miao, Bordumsa, Diyun and Kharsang Circle). A list of the villages which accommodates the Chakmas as the primary residents is appended in the Annexure.
Although not as hostile as the case of Arunachal Pradesh, Chakma settlements in Mizoram have generated a lot of controversy over the years on the issue of the legality of citizenship. While the Chakmas argue that they are as much a citizen of India, Mizoram in particular, as the Mizos as during a process of boundary revision in 1895 a strip of an area of 326 sq. miles including Demagiri with a population of about 1,500 was transferred to the Lushai Hills of Assam from the CHT in the name of administrative convenience, Today it is a fact beyond denial that Chakmas are the second largest community after the Lushais in Mizoram.

If records are to be believed, Chakmas are initially brought as captives by the Mizo Chiefs and are kept as their slaves. Following this in 1872 the Chakma Queen Kalindi Rani sent a group of Chakmas towards a Lushai Expedition Force who entered the Lushai Hill through Tlabung (Demagiri). Recurrence of outrages and raids by the Lushais called for an all-out British military action but division of administrative control of Lushai Hill among Assam, Bengal and Burma caused much difficulty in the operation. Thus for administrative convenience, a part of CHT including Demagiri was added to the territory of southern Lushai Hill of Assam. Subjugation of the Lushais by the British and annexation of a part of CHT allowed inflow of Chakmas in the territory of Lushai Hills without fear of life and for making a life. With the permission of the Lushai Chiefs the Chakmas settled in the villages of Puankhai, Phuldungsei, Tinate, Pharva, Serhmun and Muallianpui.

The first Chakma immigration in Lushai Hills is believed to have taken place between 1895 and 1905 in the places of Diblibagh, Tablabagh, Tipperaghat, Borpansury etc.; all in and around Tlabung (now Demagiri). Infact, the first batch of Chakmas were hired by Zakhupa, son of a Mizo Chief, to lay the foundation of a new village at Sakliai (now Borapansury). Subsequently Chakmas migrated in Mizoram in search of fertile land for jhum cultivation and as laborer hired by the Mizo Chiefs.

A secretary designated officer entrusted with the affairs of the district council of Mizoram remarked that, “In what ever number they (Chakmas) had been, the Chakma inhabitants of the transferred portion of the CHT become the
inhabitants of the South Lushai Hills which became the second home of the Chakmas.” 53

Records are mysteriously absent on the estimates of Chakmas and their habitations in Lushai Hills for the following few years. However, since 1930 some kind of official correspondences on the estimates of the Chakmas and their habitations can be seen to take place between Mc Call, the then Superintendent of Lushai Hills and other govt. officials. One such correspondence mentions that there has been a tendency to facilitate the import of Chakmas and other tribes who live in the lower foothills to the Lushai Hills to accelerate and maximize forest extractions. A correspondence further mentions that the Chakmas are imported to use as boatmen to identify and trace the origin of timbers along the forest of Kamaphuli River.

It is worth mention here that the Commissioner of Hill District, Govt. of Assam exempted Chakmas from the payment of stamp duty, which the non-natives of the District are required to pay, only to conclude that the Chakmas particularly inhabiting in the south of the Lushai Hills could access rights at per with the other native hill tribes of the District.

Chakma habitations in Mizoram can be located in almost all the districts of Mizoram. However, between 1968 and 1969 the Chakmas, including the Mizos were settled by the Govt. in concentration camps, called grouping centers. Following are the grouping centers which accommodated significant Chakma habitations:

**District-wise Chakma Inhabited Villages in Mizoram (1968-69)**

**Langtli District:**
1. Tuikhurlui
2. Damlui
3. Pandawnglui
4. Fangfarlui
5. Bilosora
6. Sumsilui
7. Sakeilui
8. Jognasury
Lunglei District:
1. Sachan
2. Mauzam
3. Batnaisora
4. Devasora
5. Malsury
6. Puankai
7. Lokisury
8. Kalapani
9. Sumasumi
10. Zawlpu
11. Matrisora
12. Samuksuri
13. Ugdasury
14. Tanzamasora
15. Bindiasora
16. Khanurasury
17. Thekaduar
18. Bulungasury
19. Champanasury
20. Siligur
21. Tipperaghat
22. Khojoisury
23. Gurusora
24. Barahorina
25. Balukyasury
26. Kamalabagan
27. Nunsury
28. Diblibagh
29. Tuichawng
30. Tablakbagh
31. Baranasury
32. Letisuy
33. Kukisora
34. Haulongsora
35. Ugodosury

**Mamit District:**
1. Marpara
2. Lokhisury
3. Silsury
4. Belkai
5. Tuipuiibari (Amsuri)
6. Lampachorra
7. Andermanik
8. Moraicherra
9. Lokhicheera
10. Hruiduk

It is for information that these grouping centers were constituted with two or more than two villages. A detailed list of the villages with Chakma habitations in the State of Mizoram is appended in the Annexure for the knowledge of all.

Besides Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura contributes significantly towards the inflation of Chakma population in India. The Chakmas are one of the nineteenth scheduled tribes enjoying rights and privileges at par with other citizens of the country. They form a sizeable proportion among the other listed tribal population and occupy a large portion of land mainly in the eastern part of the State.

Although it is difficult to ascertain when and how the Chakmas have extended their habitation into Tripura but is believed that the process of extending habitation in Tripura started during the early Muslim period of Bengal. The Chakmas migrated to Tripura, both willfully as well as forcefully, and for reasons like political, economic, religious, security etc. Although it is understood that cross border migration from CHT to the Indian state of Tripura does exist since long past but major influxes upsetting existing demographic set up of the state.
took place during 1947, 1964, March 1977, December 1978 and 1979, September-December 1981, June 1983 and by far the largest in April-May 1986 and May 1989. Due to administrative pressure at the Govt. level some of these refugees were partially repatriated but a significant number from amongst these migrants escaped repatriation and today they are found in large number settled in the following districts:

- Dholai
- North Tripura and
- South Tripura.

A detailed list of the places with greater concentration of Chakma population is appended in the annexeure. It is worth mention here that the Chakmas are the 4th largest community of Tripura, constituting about 7% of the total population of the State.

Besides the aforesaid states of India, Chakmas have built up their habitations in Hailakandi, Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hill district of Assam, Meghalaya, West Bengal and in some places of Delhi, Chennai and others. Chakma settlements in these places are quite thin, particularly in Chennai, Delhi and West Bengal where most of these population are settled as service holders and as students arriving from the three major sources; Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Tripura. It is worth mention here that besides India, Bangladesh and Burma, a very small elite class is learnt to have settled in Canada and France.

However unacceptable, Chakmas habitations should no more be excluded from developmental measures in any of the state as it is in their integration and welfare that the nation prospers. Such is the irony of the people of this country and of the Chakmas that a community is required to be accommodated today who wished to geographically join the Indian Territory with their own land mass but was ignored due to the absence of vision among the national leaders responsible for effecting partition. Quite naturally the Chakmas deserves rights and privileges at par with any citizen of this country.

2.9. EVOLUTION OF CHAKMA POPULATION

Over the years the Chakmas have migrated for various reasons, in various quantities and in various places. But in India, particularly in the north-eastern
states of Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Tripura, their presence in terms of the size of population is distinctly felt and felt to the extent that the children of the soil fears that the Chakmas may outnumber them in near future. At present the Chakma habitations can be located in the north eastern states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Tripura. Besides, some among them, educated and rich, have build up habitations in small size outside the north eastern part of India, particularly in West Bengal and Delhi. But they are significantly a large force, feared to upset the demographic embroidery, in Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Tripura.

The investigator enquired into the relevancy of this fear among the native indigenous populations and found the following statics on demographic evolution worth of serious concern. An estimate of the evolution of Chakma population in the places of their major habitations since 1961 is, thus, presented below to make a comparative statement on the demographic status of the Chakmas both within the states of Indian Union as well as between India and CHT, the major homeland of the Chakmas.

**TABLE: 8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Arunachal Pradesh</th>
<th>Assam</th>
<th>Mizoram</th>
<th>Tripura</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>CHT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>19,338!</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>22,386</td>
<td>41,722</td>
<td>2,20,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>22,293!</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>28,662</td>
<td>50,955</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>24,083@</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>39,900</td>
<td>34,802</td>
<td>74,702</td>
<td>2,30,000#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>30,062@</td>
<td>4,187</td>
<td>54,217</td>
<td>96,096</td>
<td>1,50,000</td>
<td>2,53,060#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>71,283</td>
<td>64,293$</td>
<td>2,00,000</td>
<td>3,00,000*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#: www.banglavasha.com
$: State Primary Census Abstract for Individual Scheduled Tribe – 2001
One important observation in connection with the Chakmas, irrespective of their habitation, reveals that the Chakmas are not record friendly, particularly demographic. The researcher in course of his review of various literatures on Chakmas formed this belief that an accurate estimate of the Chakma population was never made and perhaps shall never be made. However, the most reliable estimate available put their population in CHT at approximately 140,000 in 1956 and 220,000 in 1961, an increase of about 80,000 souls in a span of five years. According to the 1991 population census, there were about 253,000 Chakmas and more than 90 percent of them are concentrated in the districts of Rangamati and Khagrachhari. And the more recent 2001 population census estimates about 300,000 Chakma souls in CHT, Bangladesh.

About 200,000 Chakmas also live in India, particularly in the states of Arunachal, Mizoram and Tripura. But what is more interesting to note is that Chakma population in India has recorded a huge increase from about 40,000 in 1961 to about 200,000 in 2001. This is worth attention and requiring immediate precaution more because today STs as a proportion of the total population are on the decline in the north eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland as well as in Assam’s two autonomous districts (Kameng and North Cachar hills). Again, India’s contribution towards the total Chakma population is on the rise and is increasing at a much faster rate compared to CHT, Bangladesh.

Since no official record recognizes the Chakmas as a scheduled tribe representing the State, an exact and authentic account of the total Chakma souls dwelling in Arunachal Pradesh was not available. However, the investigator
from his study of other literatures presented an account of the growth of Chakma population, not based on uniform time gap but on abstract and random time.

**TABLE: 9**

**Chakma Souls Displaced in Arunachal Pradesh**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1964-1969</td>
<td>2,748</td>
<td>14,888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>3,919</td>
<td>21,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>20,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>30,064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-2001</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>(approx.) 65,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Refugee & the State, P.258 and NEHA, 16th Session 1995, Pg. 335

It is a fact without doubt with the Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh that statistics are tentative and not an exact reflection of the reality as the State authority undermines the scores of the Chakmas with the objective to dispel them from the State. At present the Chakmas settlements in Arunachal Pradesh are confined in the three districts of Lohit (Chowkham Circle), Subansiri/Papum Pare (Balijan and Kokila Circle) and Changlang (Miao, Bordumsa and Diyun Circle) as indicated in the map over leaf.

It is learnt that as per AAPSU’s unofficial estimate the Chakma and Hajong population in the State has gone up to 70,000 in the 90’s. On the other hand it appears from a white paper issued in 1996 by the Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh that Chakmas and Hajongs themselves claimed to have a population of 65,000. But if the veteran Chakmas who were members of the first batch of migrants to Arunachal Pradesh are to be believed then initially about 57 families were given shelter on temporary and humanitarian grounds by the then NEFA administration. Records indicate that the 57 families grew to a total of 2,748 families comprising 14,888 souls between 1964 and 1969. The number increased to 21,494 in 1979, fell down to 20,899 in 1986 and increased again to
30,064 in 1991. As per unconfirmed reports the number of evacuees from the CHT today has gone up to 65,000(approx) against 8,58,392 of the State.

The White Paper published by the Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh remarks with caution on the phenomenal growth of refugees by over 400 per cent in three decades. What normally happens in such situation can not be different for Arunachal Pradesh either. All Arunachal Pradesh Student Union with the active aid from the state administration exploring all means to evict the Chakmas from the state while the Chakmas continues to suffer amidst the presence of humanitarian organizations of all level committed to reinforce equality, peace and justice for all.

2.10. CHAKMAS IN MIZORAM

Mass displacement with a distinct religious identity and a socio-cultural set up made the settlement of the Chakmas an unmatched and uncomfortable knot with their fellow neighbors in India, particularly in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Tripura. While the aboriginals of Arunachal Pradesh question the legitimacy of the Chakma settlements in its land, the administration of Tripura is indifferent to the basic necessities due to a citizen of a republic (although it is debatable as to how many of them satisfy such conditions of citizenship). Mizoram, the third and the most significant state in which the Chakma resides and in which they are the Census recognized second largest community after the Lushai, considers the Chakmas as migrants and are unhappy about the political autonomy granted to them with the grant of an autonomous district council without their knowledge. However, Mizoram stands, unwillingly of course, little different from its other two sister state as Chakmas enjoy, not all of course, greater political autonomy and hence opportunity to earn recognition for their cause. Under this background the study attempted to explore the possibilities of the Chakmas particularly in Mizoram and more particularly in CADC, the territory which the Chakma rules.
Mizoram, an isolated pocket of southern most part of North East India, with an area of 21,081sq.km, is bounded by Cachar District of Assam in the North, Churachandpur district of Manipur in the North East and by North Tripura district of Tripura in the North West (see Fig.2.3). It also shares 273.52 km. South Eastern and 214.13 km. South Western borders with Burma and Bangladesh respectively. Formerly an Autonomous Hill District of Assam, Lushai Hills District became Mizo Hills District in April, 1954 and with its upgradation to Union Territory on 21st January, 1972 it became Mizoram. As 23rd State of India, Mizoram got statehood on 20th February, 1987. The demography of the state is designed with 93.54% of tribal population with different cultural traditions as well as custom of Lushai-Kuki-Chin and Chakma tribes.

The settlement of the Chakmas in Mizoram has been an issue that has generated a lot of controversy over the years for various reasons. However, the most significant reason for the unacceptability of the Chakma settlements in Mizoram may be due to the independent identity of the Chakmas indifferent to the Mizo (Christian) influence. While, the leaders among the Chakmas on the issue of the establishment in Mizoram is ever ready to establish their originality and ancieness in Mizoram, the State Administration, as the Chakmas complain, in order to appease the majority of the population leaves no opportunity to marginalize them mostly by reducing their number and restricting every opportunity before them to grow academically, politically and economically.

While claiming the natural citizen of Mizoram, the Chakmas of the locality, especially the leaders of the Chakma Autonomous District Council puts forward the Provincial Gazetteers of India, Vol-IV, page-413, which states that, "...........the boundaries were revised and a strip of an area of 326 sq. miles including Demagiri with a population of about 1500 was transferred to the Lushai Hills from the CHT under proclamation No. 1697-E dt. 6th September, 1895, issued u/s 4 of Govt. of India Act 1865." Now, no body knows for sure the Chakma population present among those 1500 displaced souls from CHT to the Lushai Hills District (south) of Assam Province. Again, M.C.Call, the then
Superintendent of Lushai Hills District and the Governor of Assam, in an official memorandum (No. 4720 G.S., dated 7/11/1938) was found to state that ".........There has been a tendency to facilitate the import of Chakmas and other tribes living in the lower foot hills into the Lushai Hills to broaden the chances of forest extract.........Chakmas across the rivers were imported as boatman and forest labourers who were given settlements along the riverside or on the low foot hills......" Considering the documents to be true, it is evident that the Chakmas are as much the natural citizen of Mizoram as are their fellow tribes of the State but the documents seems to be silent on the issue of the time of their arrival, location of early settlement and most importantly their population in the State and it seems it is too late now to revise the official gazetteers and earn grounds to diffuse the catastrophe.

In order to estimate the demographic strength of the Chakmas in comparison to the rest of the population of Mizoram, an account of their demographic growth is presented in the following table (Table-2.10.1). The table presents an account of the Chakma souls residing in the state since 1901, percentage of its contribution to the total population and the decadal growth rate of the Chakmas in the State:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Chakma Population</th>
<th>% age to Total Population</th>
<th>Decadal Growth Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>82,434</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>91,204</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>98,406</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>98.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>1,24,404</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>53.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>1,52,796</td>
<td>5,088</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>443.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>1,96,202</td>
<td>11,435</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>124.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>2,66,063</td>
<td>19,377</td>
<td>7.27</td>
<td>69.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>3,32,390</td>
<td>22,393</td>
<td>6.99</td>
<td>15.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>4,93,757</td>
<td>39,905</td>
<td>8.03</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>6,89,756</td>
<td>54,217</td>
<td>8.05</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>8,91,058</td>
<td>71,283</td>
<td>8.05</td>
<td>49.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table reveals a continuous growth of Chakma population in the state but the striking feature of this growth is its abnormality. From 936 the Chakma population suddenly sprang up to 5,088 in 1941 i.e. a growth of more than 400 percent. By the year 1971 when East Pakistan was obliterated from the map of Pakistan the population shoots up to 22,393. Within two decades of the emergence of Bangladesh it is found to be 39,905 in 1981 and 54,217 in 1991. And according to State Census Document, 2001 the Chakmas number about 71,283 in Mizoram. This increase in population is not only abnormal but also unbelievable to large extent and if the statistics are true all it may not be without any kind of infiltration, both from within and from without the Country. This, thus require an in depth investigation in the interest of all concerned. The following figure is an attempt to visualize the abnormality in the growth of population.

Illustration 1: Percentage Growths of Chakmas in Mizoram

The Chakmas are the second largest community in Mizoram, next to the Lushai; a position which they are holding since July 1951. They have established their settlements in almost all the districts of Mizoram with Lawngtlai, Lunglei, Aizawl and Mamit contributing the maximum. While in among the remaining districts the Chakmas are found to live in connection with their service. The
following statement (Statement-11) presents an account of the number of Chakmas souls and their percentage in relation to the total population of the State, as per Census-2001, living in the different districts of Mizoram:

**TABLE: 11**

Distributed Chakmas in Mizoram

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of District</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>% age to Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aizawl</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunglei</td>
<td>24,369</td>
<td>34.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawngtlai</td>
<td>38,054</td>
<td>53.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serchip</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saiha</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolasib</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Champhai</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mammit</td>
<td>8,701</td>
<td>12.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>71,283</strong></td>
<td><strong>8(approx.)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The table above reveals that more than 50% of the total Chakma population is settled in the Lawngtlai District, which incidentally is the head quarter of two autonomous district council- LADC & CADC. It is also surprising that almost half of the total population of the Chakmas resides outside CADC. It is thus evident from the above that the presence of Chakmas in Lushai Hills is not younger than A.D. 1901. Besides, they are also growing consistently to add to their share of contribution to the total population of the state. Although Chakmas who are concerned with the legitimacy of their presence in the state does not accept the official statistics representing their population, they can neither offer one which they are sure about.
2.10.1. Interrelationship Between the Chakmas and the Mizos

The Chakmas have a mixed experience, of sweet and sour and high and low, in their relationship with the Mizos but in general the relationship have always been poor and it seems it is never going to change. This is but natural as this two community have nothing in common and in fact in some cases like religion, place of dwelling, custom, food habit etc. they stand opposite to each other. However, if Mr. L. B. Chakma is to be believed, the hostility of the Mizos towards the Chakmas began particularly during the Mizo uprising in 1965 when the Chakmas instead of standing for the Mizos in their fight for an independent Mizoram helped the security forces as porters and guides to trace the underground Mizo insurgents. The Mizos still blame the Chakmas for their alleged role in the agitation for an independent Mizoram lead by Laldenga.

Besides this, the Mizos still can not accept the political autonomy granted to the Chakmas in the form of Chakma Autonomous District Council. The Mizos consider this as a breach of trust and betrayal by the Central Govt. as the same was granted in favour of the Chakmas without their knowledge. Further more, in subsequent years the Chakmas went ahead with their demand for a union territory and extend the existing territory to cover the Chakmas excluded from the state of greater political autonomy.

But of all the dissimilarity in religious sentiment is the main cause of difference between the Chakmas and the Mizos. The Chakmas are traditional followers of Buddhism while the Mizos profess Christianity. The acceptance of Bengali by the Chakmas as the medium of instruction in the schools might have added to this difference. However, this is only due to their comfort with the Bengali script and not due to any preconceived intention towards the Mizo language. This logic is valid no more as Bengali has ceased to be the medium of instruction in the schools attended by the Chakmas.

The difference can also be due to mismatch of political ideology. While the Chakmas are traditional followers of Indian National Congress, the Mizos are divided between the INC and the local sentiment Mizo National Front. The MNF
activists plays the illegal migrants issue to earn political mileage against the Chakmas. This sometimes results into clash between the underground outfits operating in two different geographical territory representing this two community. This logic also holds no more true as there is a considerable representation of the Chakmas in MNF party today.

Amidst all the existing differences, the Chakmas are more comfortable then ever before. But the denial of rights proportionate to their merit is still a feature and unless this is not arrested the State is certain to suffer from integration dyslexia, thus limiting its own progress and achievement.

2.11. CADC: THE AUONOMOUS LAND OF THE CHAKMAS?

Although the study is intended to investigate into the educational status of the Chakmas in India, it is however primarily intended to investigate into the educational status of the Chakmas in CADC which is also mentioned in the delimitation of the study (Chapter-I). Thus for the ease of analysis and interpretation to be made in Chapter V on the data collected from the said territory a detailed analysis of the educational background as well as background of other relevant indexes related to educational growth and development is made in the following paragraphs.

The creation of Chakma Autonomous District Council in Mizoram on the 29th day of April 1972 is a landmark event in the history of the displaced Chakmas in India. It symbolizes hope and freedom for this struggling tribe. Political autonomy, although limited and allowing few to exercise, but is definitely a recognition and a hope for many settled in other parts of India, particularly in Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura. The CADC, created under the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India vide Govt. Notification No. CCMP.3/72/70-77, dated 4th January, 1972, is situated in the South Western part of Mizoram having international boundaries with Myanmar (Burma:) in the South and Bangladesh in the West. A brief summary of statistics of CADC is presented in the following table:
TABLE: 12

CADC (AS ON 2006) AT A GLANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>District Council H.Q.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kamalanagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Sq. Km.</td>
<td>686.35 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Total villages(2006)</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>69(sixty nine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>No. of Family</td>
<td>Nos.</td>
<td>8,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii)</td>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>Nos.</td>
<td>42,182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii)</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Nos.</td>
<td>21,525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Nos.</td>
<td>20,657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Sex-ratio</td>
<td>Per 100 male</td>
<td>95.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>29.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Nos.</td>
<td>8,623(38.63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Nos.</td>
<td>4,553(20.30)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Village Population Register, 2006. LAD, CDC

* Mizoram Boundary Cell, Directorate of Land, Revenue and Settlement, Govt. of Mizoram

Kamalanagar, meaning city of oranges (kamala meaning orange and nagar meaning city), is the Headquarter of CADC which holds constitutionally acknowledged safeguards under sixth schedule allowing only the Chakins to be its rightful citizens. However, besides the Chakmas there are some minor ethnic groups like Hmar, Bawm etc. inhabiting in CADC since long past. The following table presents the various dimension of demographic composition of CADC:

TABLE: 13

Demographic Composition of CADC as on 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Minor</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Sex Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chakma*</td>
<td>39,693</td>
<td>21,525</td>
<td>20,657</td>
<td>23,933</td>
<td>42,182</td>
<td>95.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others**</td>
<td>2,489</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Village Population Register, 2006. LAD, CDC

CADC, situated in the southern part of Mizoram is perhaps one of the most backward regions in Mizoram. This may be due to its geographical location (bordering Bangladesh and Burma) and as the Chakmas claim due to the stepmotherly attitude of the state administration towards the Chakma community. Poor infrastructure including bad roads, poor electric supply, poor network of
wireless and telegraph and dependence on agriculture are some important features of this place. The following table presents the distribution of human network occupied in various occupations/non-occupation:

**TABLE: 14**

**Occupational Distribution (in %) among the Chakmas in CADC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Human Resource</th>
<th>CADC</th>
<th>% to Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>42,182</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Total Working Population</td>
<td>16,811</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Working Participation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>39.85 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Main Work</td>
<td>7,590</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Marginal Work</td>
<td>9,221</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Agriculture &amp; Related Work</td>
<td>6,430</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Services</td>
<td>1,160</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Household Industry</td>
<td>9,221</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Non-Workers</td>
<td>25,371</td>
<td>60.15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Village Population Register, 2006. LAD, CDC

Information on major source of income of households indicates that more than sixty percent of the populations are non-contributors towards District Council’s economic growth and development. And among the working population about fifty five percent are engaged in works related to household industry, thirty eight percent engaged in agriculture and related work while the remaining about seven percent are service holders. It requires no intelligence to understand that majority of the Chakmas of CADC are very poor and hence an important index to quality education is defeated at inception.

**Illustration: 2. Occupational engagements of the Chakmas in CADC**
As per provision of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India the district councils in Mizoram can exercise limited autonomy in matters of administration and as such is granted limited control over certain departments like education where CADC including other district councils is empowered to exercise its mandate for primary education (Class I-VII) only. It is worth make a reference here that the administration of primary education as a whole was not entrusted to the Council Govt. immediately after its creation. It was only in 1975 and that too the only the lower primary section vide Govt. notification no. EPS-4/74/53 dated 9th Sep.1975 with a total of 9 lower primary schools and 13 teachers was handed over to CADC for its administration. Subsequently, the upper primary or middle schools were also handed over to CADC on 1st Aug.1994 vides Govt. notification no. B. 20013/3/94 - EDN with a total of 5 upper primary schools and 22 teachers. These schools were not only ill staffed but also lacked infrastructures like school buildings, furniture, teaching aids, etc. resulting into a poor literacy rate (25% approx.). It is worth mention here that the transfer of responsibility of upper primary section was not supported by adequate financial grant and hence it became a burden to the Govt. crippling further the education system of the Chakma District Council. The present strength of the District Council in terms of educational institutions of all level is as follows:

**Statement of Educational Institutions in CADC (as on 2006)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I) Primary School</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II) Middle/ Comprehensive School</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III) High Schools</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV) Higher Secondary School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V) College</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chakma District Council has a four tier set up for the administration of school education. The administrative hierarchy of school education under the jurisdiction of CADC is as follows:
Illustration: 4 Administrative Hierarchies of School Education in CADC

As shown above, the EM is the Political Executive Head of the Department of Education while the Education Officer (EO) is its Bureaucratic Head. The EO is assisted by one Assistant Education Officer, who is entrusted with the responsibility of SSA, and three Circle Education Officers (CEOs) below AEO in hierarchy. Besides, an Adult Education wing also exists under the care of District Adult Education Officer. The Adult Education Cell also functions under the administrative control of the same EM.

Elementary Education under CADC is imparted through institutions of three different categories – Primary Schools, Middle Schools and Comprehensive Schools. Of these, Comprehensive Schools are an extension of the Primary section up to the Upper Primary level i.e. from class I to class VII. These institutions are broadly administered under two categories:

(i) Deficit (considered equal to Govt. status institutions) and
(ii) Private.

The teachers working in the deficit schools are managed under the Plan and Non-Plan category. While the teachers under Plan category are paid from the fund meant for developmental purpose and hence are little irregular in the disbursement of salary, the Non-Plan employees are the privileged employees receiving salary more regularly due to direct sanction of fund under salary account by the State Govt. Besides the regular employees, the District Council with the sponsorship of SSA appoints a number of teachers in schools which are short of regular teachers. These teachers are appointed under different category
officially bearing different responsibility and under fixed but different salary slab. The total number of such teachers is almost half of the strength of regular employees. A list of such category, number of teachers working under those categories and their salary is stated below:

**TABLE: 15**

**Classification of SSA sponsored Teachers in CADC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Category Name</th>
<th>No. of Teachers</th>
<th>Remuneration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01.</td>
<td>Aided / Para Teachers or NFT</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2,800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02.</td>
<td>UPS (Upper Primary School) Teacher</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9,185.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.</td>
<td>UPST under EGS</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04.</td>
<td>OBB</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>7,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05.</td>
<td>CRP</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>7,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06.</td>
<td>UMST under EGS</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>8,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Annual Work Plan, SSA, CADC, Mizoram 2005

Curriculum formulation, implementation and evaluation happens to be an important area in the field of education and the agency which administers the same for the elementary education under CADC is known as District School Education Board, in short DSEB. DSEB before being known by the said name was known as District Primary Education Board as it dealt with lower primary classes alone. It came into existence with effect from 18th Jan., 1994. After the inclusion of the upper primary classes within the jurisdiction of CADC it has been renamed as DSEB. The executive committee of CADC together with the Mizoram Board of School Education empowered the DSEB to conduct examinations of both primary and upper primary level. While the former examination is known as Primary School Leaving Certificate, also called PSLC, the later is known as Middle School Leaving Certificate, also called MSLC. It is worth mentioning here that DSEB is an autonomous body functioning under the guidance of the Chairman of the Board, CEM being the Chairman by virtue of his position. The DPEB in its meeting held on 22nd March, 1994 introduced Chakma as an optional subject at the primary level and with the power to administer upper
primary classes DSEB proposed to introduce Chakma as a compulsory subject from class I to class VII. It is worth mention here that the decision to introduce Chakma as a compulsory subject in each class up to class VII in a phased manner could not be implemented till date (2006 Academic Session)..

As on now, with a population of 42 thousand and above the educational status in terms of the number of degree holders of various examination in CADC (as on 2007) is as follows:

- Graduates and above: 523
- HSSLC/10+2: 1026
- HSLC/ Matriculate: 1951
- Number of Illiterate: 29,006
- Rate of Illiteracy: 68.76

The figure above is what the District Council has achieved so far in the front of education. Illiterates are still over the literates. Only 1.2 percent of the total population is having a bachelor degree or equivalent and a degree more than that. With this basic statistics the researcher begin his investigation towards a detailed study on the education of the Chakmas, both completely within CADC, Mizoram as well as partially outside CADC.
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