It is clear from our foregoing analysis that migration played a more dominant role as determinant of population growth in Assam than the endogenous factors during 1951-71. This is also shown by high correlation between district-wise rate of growth of population and the corresponding district-wise rate of growth of migration during the same period. The value of correlation coefficient was found to be 0.88, which is significant at 99 per cent level. Our estimate of net migrants into the State based on natural increase amounted to 24.42 lakh during 1951-71, out of which 5.26 lakh can be considered as inter-state migrants \( (M_2) \) as enumerated by 1971 census. Therefore, the rest 19.16 lakh is considered as total number of immigrants \( (M_3) \) as against 9.77 lakh enumerated by the census. Thus it is found that nearly 9.39 lakh immigrants mostly from Bangladesh did not disclose their 'place of birth' accurately to the census enumerators for fear of deportation from India. It is apprehended that many of them might have claimed themselves as inter-district migrants. This is suggested by the fact that a higher number of inter-district migrants is found as we move towards the interior districts of the State. Moreover,
our apprehension is supported by the fact of sudden increase in inter-district migrants during 1961-71 period. It is also to be noted that many of the immigrants even claimed themselves as non-migrants. This was explicitly mentioned in the General Report of 1961 Census. Therefore, our estimate of 19.16 lakh immigrants in Assam during 1951-71 period cannot be wide of the mark.

While analysing the causes of migration, it was found that push factors were very strong in comparison to pull factors. Although the push factors were of varied nature for different streams of migrant, we can sum up the important push factors as the rapid growth of population without further land to cultivate, increasing fragmentation of landholdings, indebtedness, exploitation by landlords, low agricultural productivity and lack of opportunities in the non-agricultural sector at the place of origin. The deteriorating economic condition of migrants at the place of origin was found to be a significant factor in the migration analysis. It is to be noted that statistically we found significant inverse relationships of per capita income, land-man ratio and mean geographical distance with the size of migration streams from different states/countries to Assam.

Among various pull factors, it was found that availability of land and variety of easily obtainable jobs
in Assam attracted the migrants initially. In due course of time pull factors seem to have weakened due to scarcity of land and non-availability of jobs compared to the earlier phase. But in spite of these, the flow of migration continued throughout the period under study because of strong push factors at the place of origin. The link that was already established through the migrants who came to Assam in earlier decades also helped the new migrants to enter and settle in the State. In case of immigration from Bangladesh, which alone constituted nearly 60 per cent of the total migrants into the State, their flow seem to have been encouraged by political factors. This has ultimately created a serious problem in the State and the recent agitation in Assam is the direct outcome of manipulation in the electoral roll. Thus, it is seen that in addition to economic push factors in Bangladesh, political pull factors in India (Assam) also played a vital role for this major stream of migration into Assam. However, as push factors are found to be stronger than the pull factors, the future course of immigration into the State will be largely determined by the process of economic development in Bangladesh and Nepal unless checked effectively by appropriate policy measures in India.

It is also worth-mentioning here that our National Population Policy emphasizes only two components of population
change, viz., fertility and mortality. It totally ignores the third component of population change, viz. migration. But in case of Assam this is a major component of population change. Therefore, National Population Policy is not at all suitable for Assam or the entire North-East India. This suggests that a suitable Regional Population Policy should be evolved by introducing the third component of population change to tackle the population problem in Assam and the North East in a better way. Otherwise our efforts to control native population through massive family planning programme will be adversely effected particularly by large scale immigration from Bangladesh.

While analysing the working force, participation rate of migrants was found to be higher than that of the general population of the State. Inter-state migrants had higher percentage of workers than the immigrants. The migrant (inter-state + international) workers composed nearly 15 per cent of the total working force of the State and thus played a significant role in economic development of the State. It is interesting to note that most of the immigrants (M3) were found to be engaged in the agricultural sector while inter-state migrants (M2) preferred to engage themselves in the tertiary and secondary sectors. Thus, these two streams of migrant were engaged in different economic activities of the State. However, combining both the streams it was found that nearly 50 per cent migrant
workers were engaged in the primary sector as against 77 per cent of the total working force of the State in 1971. Thus, it is seen that there is a shift of occupational distribution of workers towards non-agricultural sector as a consequence of migration.

If we look at the occupational structure of migrant workers, it was found that 36.85 per cent of the total migrant workers were engaged in the tertiary sector as against 12.91 per cent migrant workers found in the secondary sector in 1971. Thus, it is seen that migrant workers helped in expanding the tertiary sector of the economy while their contribution towards secondary sector seems to be limited. The limited development of the secondary sector is reflected by the fact that hardly 5.47 per cent of the total workers in the State found to be engaged in the secondary sector as against 17.85 per cent workers in the tertiary sector in 1971.

While analysing the impact of migration on the agricultural sector, it was found that the rapid growth of population in this sector caused by both natural increase and migration has put tremendous pressure on land. It has resulted in declining agricultural productivity per worker during the period 1951-71 and thus indicates the existence of surplus workers in this sector. Therefore, any further increase in working force with the existing structure and level of technology in the agricultural sector in Assam
either by natural increase or by migration will lead to further overcrowding of the sector resulting in more poverty, increased socio-political problems and further stagnation of the State economy. The urgent need of the hour to tackle this problem is to withdraw a section of workers engaged in this sector to non-agricultural sector of the economy.

The percentage distribution of total working force of the State in primary, secondary and tertiary sectors clearly suggests that secondary sector deserves expansion and this seems to be the only alternative to break the stagnation of the State economy. Although a few migrant entrepreneurs took the initiative and played a leading role in expanding this sector, in its early phase, the overall impact of their contribution seems to be marginal as reflected by the fact that only 5.47 per cent of the total working force was engaged in this sector in 1971. Lack of basic infrastructure and geographical location of the State may be considered as discouraging factors for migrants to invest heavily in this sector. So far local capital and entrepreneurship have not overcome their shyness and therefore the secondary sector did not develop as much as could be expected. Thus the future course of economic development in Assam will be largely determined by the expansion of this sector.

It is to be borne in mind that large scale investment in this sector will not automatically imply that migration will
decrease or that employment for the local people will substantially increase. On the contrary, new opportunities for employment in Assam are likely to lead to further induced migration into the State unless appropriate measures are adopted simultaneously by the government to control immigration into the State. It may be further suggested that local young potential entrepreneurs must come out and take up the responsibility of expanding the secondary sector of the economy through setting up of small scale industries in the State. This will help considerably in solving the unemployment problem of the State. However, the basic infrastructural facilities that exist at present are not conducive for the expansion of secondary sector in Assam. Development of infrastructure covers the creation of a wide variety of facilities basic to the economic development of the State, e.g. transport and communication, power, qualified technical personnel, trained and skilled manpower including a class of growing local entrepreneurs. Therefore, a considerable amount of investment on the social overhead cost by the State and Central governments is the first step in this direction. Simultaneously, the existing organizations like the Directorate of Industries, Assam Small Scale Industrial Development Corporation, Small-scale Industries Service Institute, North Eastern Industrial and Technical Consultancy Organization, Assam Financial Corporation and
other banks and financial institutions directly connected with the growth of small-scale industries should make a common effort by providing financially viable and economically feasible schemes to the local entrepreneurs. So far all these organizations failed to work as a team with a common platform and therefore their contribution towards the development of this sector is also found to be limited.

It is heartening to note that the setting up of Petro Chemical Complex at Bongaigaon will provide ample opportunities for the development of a number of small and medium scale chemical units based on its by-products. Similarly, the setting up of paper mills at Jagiroad and Panchgram can also develop certain ancillary units in the State. It is worth-mentioning here that a study team of the Reserve Bank of India, IDBI, ICICI and IFC conducted an industrial potential survey of the State and had recommended the setting up of a number of industries and projects. These cover items like caustic soda, chlorine, synthetic ghee, power tillers, agricultural implements, power looms, steel billets, granulated fertilizers, bus body-building and also modernization of coal industry in the State. Besides, setting up of jute mills, sugar mills and hotels for development of tourist industry were also suggested.

The time is now ripe for the joint efforts of State and Central governments to launch massive development
programme based on its vast unutilized human and natural resources. However, care should be taken to develop the backward districts of the State to reduce regional disparity within the State as the results of exercise undertaken in Chapter V show that the disparity in the level of overall economic development between the districts had increased during the period 1961-71.

Once the proper development climate gets created, private capital which is shy at present will come forward spontaneously. The momentum will build itself and the State as a whole will be able to step forward in the process of economic development together with other parts of the country.