The present work is a humble attempt to survey the plywood undertakings of Assam, located in the two districts of Sibsagar and Dibrugarh. The plywood industry is a major industry of Assam, but till now, there has not been any attempt to survey the functioning, the needs and the future potentialities of Assam's plywood. I have, therefore, tried to explore the different aspects of this important industry, like the procurement of raw-materials, the process of production, the financial and management prospects, the labour problems and the recent crisis arising out of a stern attitude by the neighbouring states and the possibility of future expansion. No pain has been spared to make the survey comprehensive and indicative of the future growth of the industry. We have concentrated our study mainly on the plywood undertakings of the two districts of Sibsagar and Dibrugarh. The district of Sibsagar has recently been divided (1983) into the two separate districts of Sibsagar and Jorhat; we have however maintained the old division. Thus the Sibsagar district of our survey covers the two modern districts of Sibsagar and Jorhat. These two districts come under the Upper Assam Zone and most of the Assam's plywood mills are located therein. These districts abound in Hollong, Mekai and
other ply-timbers. Moreover, Sibsagar and Dibrugarh have the requisite infrastructural facilities needed for industrial growth.

The study is based upon direct contact with the mills and industrialists, the raw-material suppliers, the Bankers, the Government of Assam, the Forest Department of Assam, the Indian Plywood Industries Research Institute, The Assam Petro-chemicals Ltd. and many other agencies connected with the industry in various ways. Attempts have been made to find facts, evaluate, analyse, compare and make critical judgement of the situations and factors facilitating growth or otherwise of this industry. Critical analyses are made, on the available facts and information, on the face of the growing need of Assam's economy.

Inspite of our best efforts, we could not make a clear survey of some important items; the survey of profitability is one of them. The profitability aspect could not be fully measured, due to lack of data. The mill owners are generally not willing to show the monetary involvements to us and sometimes due to lack of proper maintenance of accounts, they could not afford us the monetary data pertaining to their mills.

As for the terms used in the thesis, we would like to mention that the terms, frequently used in the
ply industry are freely used here. The terms like commercial plywood (plywood products other than decorative plywood and tea-chest plywood) and wood based panel (a plain wood sheet) for example have their own connotation. Some of these terms are explained in the glossary.

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