A critical policy issue which is rapidly becoming a top priority for Governments all over the world is how to provide adequate social protection for the vast majority of the population engaged in unorganised sector activities. The case for social security arrangement for the unorganised sector workers has gained prominence during the last decade in India. Social security is important for reducing economic inequalities and improving the living conditions of the poor workers. The issue before a developing country like India is to design effective social protective measures for the unorganised sector workers, which would serve as a guarantee against poverty and at the same time provide adequate employment opportunities. But social security aspect of unorganised sector labourers remains to be relatively neglected area in terms of both research and policy in the country. There is a need to document analyse the concepts, problems, policies and effectiveness of the programmes relating to social security of the unorganised workers in the state of Assam, in particular, and the country as a whole. The study is an attempt in that direction.

The Constitution of India obliges the state to ensure effective social security measures for the working people of the country, which is evident from the Directive Principles of State policy. Around 10 per cent of the workers of India, who are in the organised sector are covered by social security legislations. For the rest of 90 per cent of the workers of the unorganised sector, however, there are hardly any such protective social security scheme as propounded by the Government. The workers in the unorganised sector are given social security benefits only through promotional schemes. The schemes are critically evaluated and shortcomings are incorporated in the text papers.
Agricultural labourers and other wage labourers in the rural areas are the most deprived and disadvantaged groups of workers in Assam who have been largely bypassed by the process of socio-economic development in the state. It was my endeavour to study how effectively their economic condition could be improved upon through social security measures.

Assam is situated in the North-Eastern part of India. It comprises of twenty three districts. Kamrup is one of them with an area of 4345.00 sq. kilometres and population of 20 lakhs as per 1991 census.

In this study I have received excellent and unstinted help and co-operation from several individuals. I am extremely grateful to my respectful teacher Prof. Golok Chandra Deka, M.Com., LL.B., Ph.D. who suggested the topic to me for research and had along guided me and took keen interest in the completion of the work. His guidance, encouragement and constant supervision goaded me to complete my work on an otherwise very difficult and burning topic like the social security for the unorganised sector workers.

I have very great pleasure in acknowledging my gratitude to the authorities of Directorate of Panchayat and Rural Development, Directorate of Food and Civil Supply, Directorate of Social Welfare and Probation, Office of the Labour Commissioner, Directorate of Pension, State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Labour and Employment Department (Research Cell), Assam Secretariat, (All are state level organs of Government of Assam, Guwahati), National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD), Indian Institute of Entrepreneurs (IIE), Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development, and Food Corporation of India who were kind enough to supply me most of the required data. They also made useful comments on various issues of the
subject-matter and gave valuable suggestions improving the state of affairs. I was also benefited from my discussions with Project Director, District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Kamrup; District Social Welfare Officer, Kamrup; Sub-Divisional Planning Officer, District Administration, Kamrup; Sub-Divisional Officers, Food and Civil Supply, Guwahati and Rangia; BDOs of the respective block offices and Secretaries of respective GPSSs of Kamrup district, who provided necessary data and valuable ideas. I am thankful to many other institutions, NGOs, agricultural labourers and other unorganised workers whom I approached during field investigation and helped me much. I like to offer my hearty gratitude to my wife Mrs. Suchitra Deka for inspiring me in completing this research work. I extend my thanks also to S. Rabin Sarma, proprietor, PC Global Work, Guwahati, who helped me in typing out the thesis.

I am indebted to Prof. D. Bharali, Prof. N. C. Das and Prof. H. K. Baruah who inspired me very much in the work. I express my deep sense of gratitude to Prof. S. Sikider, Dr. N. Baruah and other members of the Department of Commerce, Gauhati University for their suggestions, criticisms and encouragement.

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GORESWAR COLLEGE, GORESWAR
NOVEMBER 26, 2001