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Since reorganisation of the States of North East Region carving out Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh, Assam now occupies the Brahmaputra Valley, the Barak Valley and the Intervening Hill ranges of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills and covers an area of 78,523 sq. km. For administrative facilities this State has now been divided into 23 districts. North Lakhimpur was a sub-division of formerly Lakhimpur district of the Brahmaputra Valley and given the status of a District as Lakhimpur district in 1971. At the initiation of the study in 1986 of the 'District Flora', Lakhimpur district was with 3 Sub-divisions viz., North Lakhimpur, Dhemaji and Jonai. Again these sub-divisions have been reorganised and the erstwhile Lakhimpur district is being divided into Lakhimpur district with three sub-divisions, North Lakhimpur, Bihpuria and Dhakukhana and Dhemaji district with Dhemaji and Jonai sub-divisions (cf. Assam Status Report, 1991). Floristic survey has been undertaken in its past Political form and included 3 sub-divisions and referred here as Lakhimpur district (undivided) which covers an area of 6646.4 sq. km. (cf. District Census Hand Book 1992).

The North East Region of India is known to be Nature's botanical Laboratory for its extraordinary diverse ecosystem with its bewildering wealth of floristic
elements, estimated the occurrence of more than 50% of Indian Flora. Because of its altitudinal variation, large rivers and their tributaries, the fertility of the soil coupled with humid climatic condition, high intensity of annual rainfall has created conspicuously more dense forested ranges comprising of Evergreen and Semi-evergreen both moist and dry, moist and dry Deciduous, Riparian belt, Swamps, Savannah and Grassland Vegetation. The region has provided protection to the growth and evolution of many plant species through its geological transformation of landmasses, rugged terrain and relatively low means of communication. This is the area where Takhtajan (1969) found his "Cradle of Flowering plants" because of the occurrence of a number of Primitive Land Plants particularly of Angiosperms. But the area is still remained incompletely known floristically Santapau (1958), Rao (1974, 1977), Baruah & Chowdhury (1978, although that has attracted the attention of distinguished Botanists and Plant Geographers since 1820, when Buchanan-Hamilton published his pioneering expedition with some botanical observations of Assam.

Our knowledge on the Flora of Assam has been known through the publication of Flora of British India by Sr: J.D. Hooker in his monumental 7 vol. works published in and between 1872-1897. Carter & Carter (1921) made a general observation of the useful plants of the neighbouring areas of erstwhile Lakhimpur sub-division and found to be the
only botanical account of the area. Through the extensive
collection made by Gustav Mann from 1876 and followed
later, a team of plant collectors headed by Rai Bahadur
Upendra Nath Kanjilal since 1913 recording of invaluable
field data and preservation of Voucher herbarium sheets
gathered at Forest Herbarium of the then State Govt of
Assam and later transferred to B.S.I. eastern circle,
Shillong in 1956. In their 4-volume publication of Flora
of Assam by Kanjilal et al (1934-1940) showed neither
fullness nor completeness as because they concentrated
their interest on woody plants of Dicotyledones and
Gymnosperms which are of importance in forestry but due
importance has not been given for the non woody herbaceous
ones, but connotes a landmark in the history of Botanical
studies in Assam by Indian botanists. Except for the
publication of Gramineae in Vth volume of Flora of Assam
by Bor (1940), other Monocot families remained unrecorded
till to 70's of this century. Available records indicate
Kanjilal et al (1934-1940) made only a few collections
from the area that too before Independence.

After reorganisation of Botanical Survey of India since
1955 and with the establishment of Regional Headquarters
of the eastern circle in Shillong in 1956, staff members
made a few gatherings during 1957 to 1966 and published
their account in a paper "Contribution to the Botany of
North Lakhimpur Sub-division, Assam" by Rao & Verma in

The importance of detailed knowledge of our diversity of plant's wealth by making intensive as well as exhaustive collection of plant materials for a small area and at best in the District level has long been emphasised. The outcome of which has been reflected in publication of a good number of District level Floras of India, worth mentioning of such Flora as The Flora of Nongpoh and its vicinity (Joseph 1982); Flora of Jowai Vol. I & II Balakrishnan (1981, 1983) in Meghalaya of our neighbouring state. And for this type of study Botanical Survey of India has instituted "District Flora Scheme" to study in depth the District flora under the supervision of competent experts in the Universities and Research organisations.

The present Investigation entitled "Systematic studies on the Dicotyledonons plants of Lakhimpur district (undivided) Assam" has been undertaken with generous financial help received from Department of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India through Botanical Survey of India, Howrah under a part of "District Flora Scheme" on
Lakhimpur district of Assam with the objective to bring out an illustrative account based on thorough collection of plant materials from all parts of the district by making intensive field studies covering all the seasons of the year. This work is the outcome of adequate field survey carried out during the period from March 1986 to March 1989. Also taken into account older specimens deposited earlier in the National and University Herbaria of the region along with authentic published papers on erstwhile North Lakhimpur subdivision with the objective of recording all the plant species (but for the Thesis taken up only the Dicotyledonous plants) of the district with their correct taxonomic status and nomenclature, distribution pattern and ecological adaptation; to know of economic plants and their scope utilization by local inhabitants; to find out rare and endangered, both primitive and endemic plants and to focus attention of their conservation.