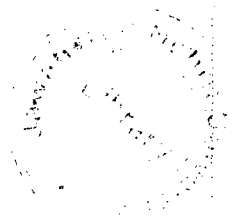


**MIGRATION AND CONFLICT: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF  
BANGLADESHI AND NEPALI MIGRANTS IN ASSAM**

**Thesis Submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University for Award of the  
Degree of**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**ARUP KUMAR DEKA**



**South Asian Studies Division  
Centre for South, Central, South-East Asia & South-West Pacific  
Studies**

**School of International Studies  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY  
New Delhi – 110067**

**2011**



Dated: 21/7/2011

**DECLARATION**

I declared that the thesis entitled “**Migration and Conflict: A Comparative Study of Bangladeshi and Nepali Migrants in Assam,**” submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.

(ARUP KUMAR DEKA)



**CERTIFICATE**

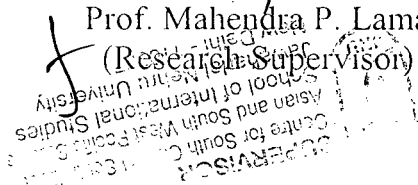
We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for Evaluation.

Prof. Partha S. Ghosh  
 (Chairperson, CSCSEASWPS)



Centre for South, Central, Southeast Asian  
 and South West Pacific Studies  
 School of International Studies  
 Jawaharlal Nehru University  
 New Delhi - 110 067  
 Ph.: (O) 26704350, (R) 26186817

Prof. Mahendra P. Lama  
 (Research Supervisor)



## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

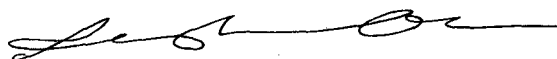
*I feel privileged to complete my Thesis under the able supervision of Prof. Mahendra P Lama. My thesis wouldn't have been completed unless the invaluable guidance, advice and cooperation rendered by him. Despite being very busy, he has spent his valuable time not only for improving but also guided me to have better understanding on this subject. I am indebted and grateful to him for bearing with me and my mistakes. His attitude, hard working nature and guidance remain with me as a beacon and indeed he is "Source of Inspiration" for me forever.*

*The relevant analysis expressed and presented in this thesis resulted from numerous fruitful discussions and interactions with many prominent government officials, experts, important personalities both from Bangladesh and Nepal, I am really thankful for their intellectual contributions. I must express my profound gratitude to a number of Intellectuals-academicians, Diplomats and civil society personalities of Bangladesh. My profound gratitude goes to Ambassador Farooq Shobhan - President of BEI, Ambassador Ahmad Tariq Karim, Rehman Shobhan – Director CPD, Ms. Rabab Fatima - Regional Representative - IOM, Dr. Aminul Islam – Country Director – UNDP, Md. Mojibul Haq – BRAC, Syed Saiful Haq – Warbe Development Foundation, Philip Gain – SEHD, Prof. Q K Ahmed - BUP. I render profound gratitude to many of the academicians of the Dhaka University; Prof. Abul Barkat, Prof. Shafique Zamman, Prof. C. R. Abrar, Prof. Tasneem Siddique, Prof. Imtiaz Ahmed, Prof. Ameena Mohseen, Prof. Akmal Hussein and many more. My profound gratitude goes to Prof. Dalem Ch. Barman for his invaluable guidance, cooperation and support to complete my field trip in Bangladesh. I owe my deepest gratitude to a number of personalities, academicians, government officials and civil society members of Nepal. It is an honour for me to thank Bishnu Khetri, Director - Youth Action Nepal, for facilitating and providing assistance during my entire field trip in Nepal. I am thankful to the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Gyan Ch. Acharyya – Government of Nepal and Shambhu Kumaran – First Secretary – Indian Embassy to Nepal for giving his invaluable time for discussions and support. My profound gratitude goes to a number of academicians of the Tribhuvan University; Prof. V. V. S. Kansakar, Prof. Dhruva Kumar, Prof. Dilli Ram Dahal, Prof. Bhim Subedi, Prof.*

*Bal Kumar K C, Prof. Chaitanya Mishra, Prof. Lok Raj Baral, Lecturer Govind Subedi, Padma Khatiwada, Keshav Adhikari and many more. I am also indebted to Dr. Ganesh Gurung & Dr. Jagannath Adhikary – NIDS, Soru Joshi & Aruna Thapa – UNIFEM, Nini Gurung – UNHCR. I am also indebted to some of the retired Gorkha soldiers and the organisation-Nepal Bhutpurva Sainik Sangh of Pokhara. My profound gratitude also goes to my friend Amresh Kumar Singh, Deepak Bhatt and Bishnu Khatri from Nepal for their help and cooperation to complete my field trip.*

*I would also like to thank the entire faculty and the in house staff of the South Asian Studies Division, SIS/JNU. I am extremely grateful to Prof. Ganga Nath Jha and Dr. Sanjay Bhardwaj, as they from time to time assisted - made available their support with their precious advice. I am also grateful to Mr. M. A. Jawed and Dr. K. N. Jahangir, International Collaboration Division, ICSSR. My due thanks also goes to the staff and other members of the JNU – Central Library, IDSA, Nehru Memorial Library, South Asia Foundation, Parliament House Library, Central Secretariat Library, ICHR - Guwahati University Library, for their cooperation in collection of materials for this study. My deepest gratitude goes to Asha for her help and coordination.*

*I would also like to show my gratitude to Madan Deka – Advocate – Guwahati High Court and also to R N Saikia – Judge of the Mangaldoi Foreigners Tribunal. I am indebted to many of my friends; Arun Kumar Nayak, Bharat Ratnam, Devendra Sahoo, Gatikrishna Mahanta, Sanjay Deka, Dr. Pulin Deka, Ranjit Kakati, Dilip Hazarika, Seema Gogoi, Arup Nath, Hema Gogoi, Rakesh Kr. Meena, Hariprasad C.G., Pritish Sahoo, Dr. Om Gadde, Dr. Vir Narayan, Dr. Prashant Pradhan and many more, who provided me whole hearted support and helped me to collect information through my entire work. And finally, I am grateful and thank my Parents for their moral support. I am also indebted to my wife - Pragati for showing her immense support and patience to finish this work. I am also indebted to Nityananda, brother – Jitu & Cousin - Joonti, sister – Poppy, niece - Garima and others for providing moral support.*



Arup Kumar Deka

New Delhi



## ABBREVIATION

AAGSP	All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad
AAMSU	All Assam Minority Student Union
AASU	All Assam Student Union
A-B	Ashuganj-Bakhrabad
ABSU	All Bodo Students Union
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AGP	Assam Gana Parishad
AHDR	Assam Human Development Report
AJBD	Assam Jatiyatabadi Dal
AJD	Assam Jaliyatabadi Yuva- Chatra Parishad
ALA	Assam Legislative Assembly
ASF	Adivasi Security Force
ASS	Assam Sahitya Sabha
AYS	Assam Yuyak Samaj
BAC	Bodo Autonomous Council
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BRCS	Bangladesh Red Crescent Society
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BTF	Bengali Tiger Force
BLT	Bodo Liberation Tiger
BNP	Bangladesh national Party
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BSF	Border Security Force
CBR	Crude Birth Rate
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CDR	Crude Death Rate
CEC	Chief Election Commissioner
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIS	Commonwealth Independence States
CPD	Centre for Policy Dialogue
CPI	Communist Party of India
CPI (M)	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
CPN-M	Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist
CPP	Cyclone Preparedness Programme
CSPS	Cyclone Shelter Preparatory Study
DCI	Direct Calorie Intake
DHD	Dima Halim Daoga
DNSF	Dimasa National Security Force
EPA	Enemy Property Act
FMOENCN	Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
GCIM	Global Commission on International Migration
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEFONT	General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions
GNP	Gross National Product
HCR	Head Count Ratio
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HMG	His/Her Majesty's Government
HPC	Hhar People's Council
HPI	Human Poverty Index
HRWF	Human Rights Without Frontiers
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IDMC	Internal Displacements Monitoring Centre
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INSEC	Informal Sector Service Centre
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IMDT	Illegal Migration Determination Tribunal Act

JICA	Japan International Co-operation Agency
JJAP	Janata Juba Chatra Parishad
JJCP	Janata Juba Chatra Parishad
JSS	Jana Samhiti Samiti
JMBA	Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority
KLO	Kamtapur Liberation Organization
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MFDM	Ministry of Food and Disaster Management
MMC	Million Meter Cube
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MOLT	Ministry of Labour and Transportation
MOR	Ministry of Rehabilitation
MOELR	Ministry of Employment, Labour and Rehabilitation
MOLR	Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation
MOIA	Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs
MPO	Master Plan Organization
MULTA	Muslim Unites Liberation Tiger of Assam
NDFB	National Democratic Front of Bodoland
NIDS	Nepal Institute for Development Studies
NHDR	Nepal Human Development Report
NLSS	Nepal Living Standard Survey
NR	Nepali Rupees
NRB	Nepal Rastra Bank
NRC	National Register of Citizen
NRCS	Nepal Rural Credit Survey
NRCS	Nepal Red Cross Society
NPC	Nepal Planning Commission
NSCN	National Socialist Council of Nagaland
ODA	Overseas Development Authority
PLP	Purbanchaliya Lok Parishad

PULF	People's United Liberation Front
RNSF	Rabha National Security Force
RSS	Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh
SP	Superintendent of Police
SVRS	Sample Vital Registration System
TNRF	Tiwa National Revolutionary Force
UAE	United Arab Emirates
ULFA	United Liberation Front of Assam
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCRM	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Migrants
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugee
UPDS	United People's Democratic Solidarity
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States of America for International Development
UTNLF	United Tribal Nationalist Liberation Front
VHP	Viswa Hindu Parishad
VPA	Vested Property Act
WB	World Bank
WMR	World Migration Report
WOREC	Women's Rehabilitation Centre

## List of Tables

Table 1.I	International Migrants, 1965–2010	5
Table 1.II	Officially Reported outflow of Migrant Workers	46
Table 1.III	Status of Foreign Employment of Nepalis Working Abroad	47
Table 2.I	Socio-Economic Indicators of Assam	70
Table 2. II	The Districts of Assam	71
Table 2. III	Decadal Percentage Variation in Population 1901-2001	72
Table 2.IV	Assam's Contribution to Indian economy	73
Table 2.V	Economic Indicators of Bangladesh	87
Table 2. VI	Bangladesh - Population Size, *CBR, *CDR, Natural Growth Rate and Annual Growth Rate (1901-2001)	91
Table 2.VII	Population Data as per SVRS Report and Projected Population in Bangladesh (in million)	92
Table 2. VIII	Severe Floods Affecting Bangladesh (1972-2007)	98
Table 2.IX	Severe Cyclone Affecting Bangladesh since 1960-2009	105
Table 2. X	Bangladesh Poverty Incidence by Head Count Ratio	109
Table 2. XI	Bangladesh Poverty Head Count Ratio by DCI method of 1981- 82 to 2005	109
Table 2. XII	Employed Persons 15 Years and Over by Broad Economic Sector and Sex, 2002-2003 in Bangladesh	110
Table 2. XIII	Population Changes during the 90 Years Period, 1911-2001 in Nepal	138
Table 2. XIV	Regional Distribution of Population and Cultivated land 1971-1991 in Nepal	140
Table 2. XV	Nepal Man-Land ratio by Eco-Development Region, 2001	141
Table 2.XVI	Loss of life in Flood in Nepal 1983-2007	145
Table 2.XVII	Disasters in Nepal (1954-2002)	146
Table 2.XVIII	Economic Indicators of Nepal	148
Table 2.XIX	Status of Employment in Nepal 2003-2004 (Population above the age of 15 Years)	150
Table 3. I	District with Excess Cultivable Land in Assam Valley	171

Table 3. II	Increase in the proportion of Muslim Population in Assam 1901-1931	174
Table 3. III	Percentage Increase in Population in Assam	176
Table 3.IV	Refugee Influx in West Bengal and other states, 1946-1963, (number of migrants in lakhs)	183
Table 3. V	Migration from former East Pakistan from 1-1-64 to 25-3-1971	184
Table 3. VI	Migration from Former East Pakistan from 1-1-64 to 31-12- 1969	185
Table 3.VII	Percentage Distribution of Population by Religious Communities in Bangladesh (1901-2001)	186
Table 3.VIII	Numerical Distribution and Percentage and Variation of Population by Major Religious Communities 1901-2001 in Bangladesh	187
Table 3.IX	Percentage of Hindu Population in Each Division of Bangladesh	188
Table 3.X	Fertility (CBR) and Mortality (CDR) in Four Divisions of Bangladesh	189
Table 3. XI	Number of Nepali Labourers Employed during 1897 to 1903 in Assam	210
Table 3.XII	Demography of the Nepalis in Northeast India (1951-2001)	215
Table 3.XIII	Growth of Nepali Population in Assam	217
Table 3.XIV	District-wise Break-up of Nepali Population in Assam (1991 Census)	218
Table 3.XV	Decadal Variations in Population District-wise in Assam, 1901-2001	225
Table 3.XVI	Population of Assam since 1901-2001	227
Table 3.XVII	Decadal Percentage Variation in Population since 1901	228
Table 3.XVIII	Estimated Birth rate, Death rate, Growth rate, Natural Growth rate and Unnatural Growth rate in Assam	229
Table 3.XIX	Proportion of Muslim Population in India and Assam	230
Table 4. I	Figures of Total Electorate as Registered in Assam 1952-1980	250

Table 4.II	Growth of Population in Assam (Millions)	261
Table 4.III	Proportion of Muslim Population in India and Assam	262
Table 4.IV	Number of District wise Martyr's (Assam Movement) in Assam	308
Table 5.I	Assam : District-wise Cases Heard by the IMDT Courts During 1985 to 1.1.2003	387
Table 5.II	Assam : Number of Detected/ Deported Illegal Migrants since 1985 to 2005	388
Table 5.III	Detected and Deported under the Foreigners Act and Foreigners Tribunal Act	390
Table 5.IV	District wise list of people declared as Foreigners under IMDT and Foreigners Tribunal Act in 2001 and 2002	394
Table 5.V	Counter – Affidavits and its Salient Features	402
Table 5.VI	Foreigners Tribunal in Assam under Foreigners (Tribunal for Assam) order 2006 and Jurisdiction	407-408
Table 5.VII	List of the approved 11 border Outpost by the Government	413
Table 5.VIII	Fund approved for Border out Post as 2nd Line of Defence	415

## List of Figures

<b>Figures</b>	<b>Pages</b>
<b>Figure 1.I</b>	10
<b>Figure 1.II</b>	50
<b>Figure 4.I</b>	238

## List of Maps

<b>Maps</b>	
<b>Map 2.I</b>	76
<b>Map 3.I</b>	170
<b>Map 3.II</b>	179
<b>Map 3.III</b>	192



## Preface

International Migration is considered to be defining global phenomenon as millions of people migrate in search of greener pastures and economic advancement. During the year 2000, the number of migrants – living outside their country or place of birth, in the world reached approximately 160 million. By the year 2005, roughly 192 million people are considered as migrants constituting three percent of the world's total population indicating one out of thirty-five people is a migrant. Almost all the 190 sovereign countries are either points of origin, transit or destination for migrants; often all three at once. If these people are united in a single state/country, it would create a 'migrants nation or nation of migrants'. Most of the world's migrants are from the developing countries marching towards the developed for economic enlistment. The existence of wide income gap between the rich and the poor countries, development of transport and communication made migration easier. The economic and human development of many countries, such as Australia, US owe their creation as nation-states to migrants. Moreover, the income remittances that migrants send to their home countries are considered as an important yardstick. According to the estimates made by the ILO (2002), the remittances have increased from less than US \$ 2000 million in 1970 to US \$ 80000 million in 2000. The South Asian region, being a group of developing or Least Developed Countries (LDCs), considers migration as livelihood option and more than 1.5 million South Asian workers are estimated to migrate every year. The World Bank in 2007 estimated that the remittances to the South Asian region have exceeded \$40000 million. Out of this, India accounted for \$ 27000 million, Bangladesh \$6400 million, Pakistan \$6100 billion, Sri Lanka \$2700 billion and Nepal \$1600 billion.

However, the effects of migration are becoming increasingly multifaceted and migration though considered as tool of development, also has disastrous effect in the receiving country. International migration has definite effect on the demography, society and economic structures at the receiving end. If the receiving economy is developing and not developed, it becomes difficult to absorb migrants. Again, if migration occurs in small number, it gets adjusted and does not become a source of tensions, but if the numbers are large enough, there is high risk of conflicts being generated. The chances of generating

native-migrant conflict are high in the host country if the natives are ethnically sensitive. The migrant pouring at large number creates demographic imbalances leading to serious security implications, causing resource scarcity and hence leading to fierce competition/conflict for controlling resources, jobs, land, basic amenities etc. between the natives and migrants. Thus, migration has potential to trigger conflict in the following sequence: Migration → Migration Induced Scarcity → Political and Social Imbalances and Distortion → Conflict.

Assam can be considered to be the mother state within the seven states of the North Eastern region of India. Economically, population wise as well as in the development index, Assam has been in the leading tally in the region and for that reason it has become vulnerable to the home base for major migrant populations. However, the underdeveloped economy of the state has not been able to absorb the rising unemployment and poverty for which the natives have not been welcoming the migrants. Again, the large-scale migration from Bangladesh and a fierce competition for resource control and fear of losing Assamese identity in the hands of migrants have resulted in increasing native-migrant conflicts in Assam. Moreover, the vote bank politics of the political parties have complicated the situation in Assam. India has been the home of the migrants/refugee and historically it has been a migrant/refugee receiving country. Not a single South Asian nation has developed any formal structure or any regional formula to deal with the migrants. The migrants have been subjected to the same laws as illegal aliens. And due to absence of such migration policies, the migrants are dealt with an ad hoc administrative arrangement.

The study aims to analyse how migration leads to conflict in a comparative study of Bangladeshi and Nepali migrants in Assam. The study covers various issues which includes the analytical theory of migration, migration and conflict, history of migration of Bangladeshis and Nepalis into Assam/India, the triggering factors of migration, socio-economic burdens and stresses that occurred in Assam, the native-migrant conflict, consequences, the problem of demographic alteration, displacement occurred due to violence, role of political parties, the mechanisms of conflict resolutions and policies to

deal with managing migration. The hypotheses followed in the analysis are comprised of: higher the stress on resources both public and private triggered by the presence of migrants, the higher is the potential of conflict. Another is the fear psychosis of losing identity and becoming minority in a majority state (Assam) due to migrants spread the feeling of insecurity among the natives leading to violence against the former. Again, the politicization of the problem of migration in Assam by the political parties of vote bank politics complicated repatriation and induced a sense of anger among the Assamese people. The violent campaign during the anti – foreigner movement directed mainly against Bangladeshis leading to large-scale displacements of other communities mainly due to a weak state apparatus.

The study basically follows the historical and analytical approach. The analyses follow both primary and the secondary sources that include the reports of the various Ministries, Parliament Debate, Assam Assembly Debate, Reports of International Organizations, Reports of the NGO's, Census Reports of India, Bangladesh and Nepal. An extensive field work has been completed by visiting Nepal and Bangladesh for understanding and analyzing various issues related to the topic. Apart from analyzing various reports collected during the visit, a number of interviews were conducted with experts, academicians, diplomats, NGO workers and also migrants etc. for better understanding on the issue. The contributions through various discussions with the experts are included through out various chapters. The secondary sources mainly included various books and articles.

The study and analysis has been completed by organizing it in various chapters. The Chapter – 1 starts the discussions by analyzing theoretical background of Migration and Conflict. This chapter analyses the definition of migration including various theories of migration giving an overview of international migration. It also includes and focuses on analyzing how migration leads to conflict and development and tries to find out the factors leading to conflict. A theoretical understanding of Bangladeshi and Nepali migration into Assam has also been included. The Chapter – 2 basically analyses the causal factors of Bangladeshi and Nepali Migration into Assam. It deals with various issues such as political, social, environmental, state repression etc. in both Bangladesh

and Nepal to analyse factors influencing migration. Meanwhile, Chapter – 3 discusses the nature, trend and extent of migration. It also tries to find out the volume of migration that took place in Assam from Bangladesh and Nepal by analyzing the census reports. The issue of trafficking from Nepal has also been analysed.

The Chapter – 4 is an attempt to understand how migration has led to conflict in Assam. It extensively analyses the conflict ridden period – Assam Movement. The chapter also tries to analyse and unveil the causes, how migration led to conflict in Assam. The large scale displacements, killings, economic destruction and the consequences of Assam Movement have been dealt extensively. The chapter also focuses on the rise of insurgency and the population displacements due to various autonomy movements as a result of the Assam Movement. Chapter – V includes the discussion of various migration policies of the state and Union Government to deal with migrants. History of migration policies during the British period has been looked into. The various rehabilitation policies to rehabilitate partition migrants, a detailed analysis of the IMDT Act and Foreigners Tribunal of Assam have been included. Finally, Chapter – VI concludes the comparative analysis of the study. An attempt has also been made as policy recommendations to deal with the migrants in Assam and also at bilateral and multi-lateral level.

# Contents

## **Chapter 1: Theoretical Background of Migration and Conflict**

1-68

1. I	Introduction	1
1. II	Migration and Its Trends	1-5
1. III	Why People Migrate?	5-7
1. IV	Factors Triggering Migration	7-8
1. IV.i	Push Factors	8-9
1. IV.i.a	Economic and Demographic Factors	9
1. IV.i.b	Environmental Factors	9-10
1. IV.i.c	Political Factors	11
1. IV.i.d	Socio-Cultural Factor	11
1. IV.ii	Pull Factors	11-12
1. IV.ii.a	Higher Wages/Employment Opportunities/Better Standard of Living	12
1. IV.ii.b	Labour Demand	12
1. IV.ii.c	Family Migration	13-14
1. V	Impact of Migration	14
1. V.i	Economic Impact	14-15
1. V.ii	Political Impact	15-16
1. V.iii	Security Impact	16
1. V.iv	Demographic Impact	16-17
1. VI	Types of Migration	17-18
1. VI.i	Voluntary Migrants	18-19
1. VI.ii	Illegal/Irregular/Unauthorised/Undocumented Migrants	19-22
1. VI.ii.a	Human Trafficking	22-24
1. VI.iii	Forced Migrants	24-26
1. VI.iv	Refugee	26
1. VII	Theories of International Migration	26-30
1. VII.i	Push and Pull Theory	30-31
1. VII.ii	The Equilibrium Theory	31-32
1. VII.iii	Neo-Classical Theory	32-34
1. VII.iv	The New Economics of Labour Migration	34-36
1. VII.v	Dual Labour Market Theory	36-37
1. VII.vi	World System Theory	37-38
1. VII.vii	System Approach	39-40
1. VIII	Theoretical Dimension of Illegal Migration	40-41
1. IX	International Migration under Bilateral Treaties/Agreement	42-44
1. X	Migration and Development	44-47
1. XI	Migration and Conflict	47-49
1. XI.i	Demographic Imbalance	49-51
1. XI.ii	Environmental Changes	51-55
1. XI.iii	Competition due to Dearth of Resources	55
1. XII	Conflict and Violence	56
1. XII.i	Ethnic Conflict	56-57
1. XII.ii	Economic Conflict	57-58
1. XII.iii	Land related Conflict	58-60

1.XII.iv_Political Instability	60
1.XIII_Migration can Resolve Conflict	61-63
1.XIV_Theoretical Understanding	63-68
<b>Chapter 2: Causal Factors of Bangladeshi and Nepali Migration into Assam</b>	<b>69-161</b>
2. I_Introduction	69
2. II_State of Assam	69-73
2. III_Early History of Assam	73-77
2. IV_Pull Factors of Migration of East Bengalis/Bangladeshis into Assam	78-85
2. V_Causal Factors of Migration of Bangladeshis into Assam	85-90
2. V.i_Population Pressure in Bangladesh	90-93
2. V.ii_Deforestation in Bangladesh	93-94
2. V.iii_Natural Disasters - Flood in Bangladesh	94-100
2. V.iv_Land Degradation and River Bank Erosion	100-103
2. V.v_Cyclone and Migration	103-106
2. V.vi_Natural Disaster and Migration	106-108
2. V.vii_Economic Factors - Poverty	108-110
2. V.viii_Economic Factor - Unemployment	110-111
2. V.ix_Bangladesh Agriculture	111-112
2. V.x_Development and Displacement in Bangladesh	112-114
2. V.xi_Socio-Political Factors	114-121
2. V.xii_State Repression and Migration	121-123
2. V.xiii_Porous Border	123-124
2. VI_State of Nepal	124-128
2. VII_History of Migration from Nepal - Its Causes	128-136
2. VIII_Triggering Factors of Migration from Nepal	137
2. VIII.i_Population Pressure in Nepal	137-141
2. VIII.ii_Environmental Degradation in Nepal	141-143
2. VIII.iii_Deforestation in Nepal	143-144
2. VIII.iv_Land Degradation and Flood Problem in Nepal	144-146
2. VIII.v_Economic Factors	147-148
2. VIII.v.a_Unemployment Problem in Nepal	148-150
2. VIII.v.b_Poverty in Nepal	150-153
2. IX_Political Instability/ Maoist Conflict	153-157
2. X_The Nepal-India Open Border	157-160
2. XI_Comparative Analysis	160-161
<b>Chapter 3: Migration of Bangladeshis and Nepalis into Assam</b>	<b>162-232</b>
3. I_Introduction	162
3. II_Early History of Migration into Assam	162-165
3. III_Migration of East Bengalis/ Bangladeshis into Assam	165-167
3. III.i_Pre-Partition Migration	167-171
3. III.i.a_Migration of East Bengali Muslims into Assam	171-178
3. IV_Post - Partition Migration	178-185
3.IV.i_Decline of Hindus	185-191
3. IV.ii_Post Liberation Migration	191-192

3. V	Migration of Nepalis into Assam	193-194
3. VI	Early History of Migration	194-195
3. VI.i	Recruitment of Gorkhas and Migration	196-206
3. VII	Migration of Nepalis during Colonial Period	206-212
3. VIII	Migration of Nepalis: Post-Colonial Period	212-215
3. IX	Demography of Nepalis in Northeast	215-219
3. X	Trafficking from Nepal	219-223
3. XI	Population Change in Assam	223-232
<b>Chapter 4:</b>	<b>Migration, Conflict and Violence in Assam</b>	<b>233-326</b>
4. I	Introduction	233
4. II	Theoretical Dimensions of Migration and Conflict	234-236
4. II.i	Case of Pakistan	236-237
4. II.ii	Case of Sudan	237-238
4. II.iii	Case of Kenya	238-239
4. II.iv	Case of El Salvador – Honduras	239-240
4. III	Why Conflict in Assam	240-241
4. III.i	Assamese Identity and Sub-Nationalism	241-247
4. III.ii	Political Assertion and Participation	248-254
4. III.iii	Economic Issues	254-259
4. III.iv	Environmental Issues	259-264
4. III.v	Social Issue	264-265
4. III.vi	Security Issues	265-269
4. IV	Assam Movement	269-274
4. IV.i	Phases of the Movement	274-275
4. IV.ii	Strategies of the Movement	275-280
4. IV.iii	Support of the Movement	280-282
4. IV.iv	Orientation of the Movement	282-283
4. IV.v	Scale of Violence	283-293
4. IV.vi	Mode of Conflict	293-294
4. IV.vii	Police Atrocities	294-295
4. IV.viii	Nepalis during Assam Movement	295-297
4. IV.ix	Enquiry of the Massacre	297-298
4. V	Local and National Security Threat	298-302
4. VI	Government Responses	302-308
4. VII	International Dimensions and Responses	308-311
4. VIII	Impact of Conflict in Assam	311
4. VIII.i	Economic Impact	311-313
4. VIII.ii	Social and Political Impact	313
4. VIII.ii.a	The Rise of ULFA	313-316
4. VIII.ii.b	Bodo Movement	316-320
4. IX	Internal Displacements	320-321
4. X	Assam Accord	321-326
<b>Chapter 5:</b>	<b>Managing Migration: Issues and Policy Challenges</b>	<b>327-423</b>
5. I	Introduction	327
5. II	Migration Policy	327-330
5. III	Migration Policies during the British Period (1826-1947)	330-334
5. III.i	Introduction of Line System	334-337
5. III.ii	Sadulla's Policy of Grow More Food	337-339

5. IV_Migration Policies: 1947 to 1955	339-340
5. IV.i_The Foreigners Act, 1946	340-342
5. IV.ii_The Immigrants (Expulsion from Assam) Act, 1950	343-345
5. IV.iii_The Passport Act, 1951	345-346
5. IV.v_The Nehru -Liaquat Ali Pact, 1950	346-348
5. IV.vi_Rehabilitation of Migrants	348-354
5. IV.vii_India-Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty	354-356
5. V_Migration Policies: 1955 to 1965	357-360
5. V.i_Foreigners Tribunal order, 1964	360-361
5. V.ii_Flight of Chakma People to India	361-362
5. V.iii_Communal Disturbances in East Bengal and Influx of People into India: Government Response	362-367
5. V.iv_Rehabilitation of Migrants	367-368
5. V.iv.a_Rehabilitation of New Migrants in Agriculture outside West Bengal and Dandyakarnya	368-369
5. V.iv.b_Rehabilitation of New Migrants in India	369-373
5. VI_Migrants Rehabilitated in Various Projects	373
5. VI.i_Permanent Liability Category	373-374
5. VI.ii_Dandyakarnya Project	374
5. VI.iii_Rehabilitation Industries Corporation LTD, Calcutta	374
5. VII_Bangladesh Liberation of 1971 and Assam Movement	374-378
5. VIII_Regularization of Migrants	378-380
5. IX_IMDT Act: Success and Failure	380-384
5. X_Major Clauses of the IMDT	384-385
5. X.i_Features of the IMDT Act	385-386
5. XI_Functioning of the IMDT Tribunal, Detection and Deportation reality	386-391
5. XII_Cost of the IMDT Management	391-392
5. XIII_Why IMDT failed	392-397
5. XIV_Cases Related to the IMDT	397-402
5. XV_Supreme Court Judgement and Sonowal Affidavit	403-406
5. XVI_Politics of IMDT	406-410
5. XVII_Government Initiatives to Stop Infiltration -Assam Accord Success Stories	410-415
5. XVIII_What Needs to be Done?	415-423
<b>Chapter 6: Conclusion</b>	<b>424-436</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>437-484</b>



# Chapter

# 1

---

**THEORETICAL BACKGROUND  
OF MIGRATION AND  
CONFLICT**

---

## **1. I \_\_ Introduction**

Migrants irrespective of internal or external conditions move either to improve their standard of living, or to escape from poverty, conflict and famine or socio-political persecution or environmental disaster. Several push and pull factors revolve around for migration of 214 million people in the world constituting 3.1 percent of the world's total population. This large scale migration has its various positive and negative impacts in the sending or destination country. The impact of migration felt positive when it contributes for development in terms of remittances in the sending and also population adjustment – stability and economic growth in the receiving country. However, it also has serious negative implications in the host country when migrants involve in conflict with the native population for controlling resources. The large-scale migration can cause demographic changes, environmental degradation, social and political distortions and finally the conflict. This chapter seeks to analyse the conceptual framework of migration and its various components. The recent trend of International migration, reasons for occurrence, the various push and pull factors and its impact are discussed in greater detail. A conceptual section related human trafficking is also been analysed in the discussion as migration may in or other form leads to human trafficking. Several theories related to International migration have been also analysed so as to understand the case study. The theoretical model of illegal migration and also the migration under bilateral agreement is discussed. The role of remittances in the destination country is also analysed as part of the migration-development discussion. An analysis of how migration leads to conflict is dealt in greater details. Theoretical understanding related to the case study is also analysed at the end of the chapter. Both primary and secondary sources have been used to analyse it. The primary sources include several reports of the UN, IOM and reports of the world organisations. The secondary sources include the books and articles related to the topic and the case study.

## **1. II \_\_ Migration and Its Trends**

Migration has been an intrinsic component of human behaviour and a natural process. The migration of population first occurred with the movement of Homo erectus out of Africa across Eurasia about a million years ago. The Homo sapiens appear to have

colonized whole Africa about 150,000 years ago, moved out of it 70,000 years ago, and had spread across Australia, Asia and Europe by 40,000 years ago. Today, migration is a continuing process that occurs within a country's national boundary or across the international borders. Migration whether in response to political or economic, spontaneous or coerced imperatives involves entire nation or groups or selected groups within them (Portes 1978: 1-2; Bodvarsson & Berg 2009: 11-12). Traditionally, migration signifies population movement across places on a temporary or permanent basis in search of better livelihood, greener pasture, to avoid threat to life, sometimes over long or short distance, at large or small number. Migration is commonly defined as the movement of population who crosses jurisdictional boundaries of a particular state or a country for the purpose of establishing a new or semi permanent livelihood (Encyclopaedia 2007 & National Geographic Expeditions 2005).

Migration is complex and multifaceted. Generally, migration means a group of people rather than individuals who involve in a permanent change of residence. It is considered as a concerning global issue in the twenty-first century as millions of people migrating than at any other point in the human history. The UN population division estimated a total number of migrants which stands somewhere between 185 million to 192 million migrants by the year 2005, extrapolating the growth of the known migrant stocks for the period 1990–2000 (IOM 2005: 13). The Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) (2005: 83) views, “the number of international migrants has increased from 75 million to 200 million in the past 30 years and migrants are found in every part of the world.”

The UNDP (2009a: 2), “there are 200 million international migrants in the world in 2008. A large number of people are moving in search of higher incomes, better access to education and health, and improved prospects for their children.” The United Nations Population Division has estimated the presence of 213943812 (214 million) people as international migrants at the mid year (1 July) of 2010 (UNPD 2009). The World Migration Report (IOM 2008: 32) reveals that 49.6 percent of the total migrants are women with only slightly more living in developed than in the developing countries and more women are migrants than men in every region of the world except Africa and Asia.

Thus, it means that during 2005, about 192 million people are living outside their places of origin and one of every thirty-five persons in the world were migrants (Lundias et. al. IFAD 2008: 9). By conjecturing from the above discussion, it can be observed that about 214 million people are living outside their places of origin and one out of every 33 persons in the world today is a migrant (IOM 2010: 115).

All 190 countries or the sovereign states of the world are now either points of origin, transit or destination for migrants; often all three at once. Zlotnik (1998: 426-429) has estimated the growth rate of migration during the period 1965-1990 (from 75 million to 120 million) at 1.9 percent per year, slightly above the rate of 1.8 percent per annum at which the total population of the world grown during the same period. Meanwhile, the annual growth rate of global migration has increased from 1.2 percent in 1965-1975 to 3 percent in early 2000 (Abella 2002: 1-2). However, during the year 2000, the annual migration growth rate was about 2.9 per cent increased to 3.0 percent by 2005. The movement of labour migration is most dominant among all kinds of migration which accounts for almost 80 percent of the total migrant population in the world. The increased employment opportunities in the global market and the growth of transportation and communication system made migration easy (Siddique 2005a: 1-2).

The United Nations Population Division Report on International Migration Stock, Wall Chart (2009), estimated that the international migrant represents 3.1 percent of the total world population by 1 July, 2010. The estimate also shows the total numbers of migrants in Europe at about 69.8 million, Asia - 61.3 million and North America - 50 million. However, the total number of migrants in Europe - 56.1 million, Asia - 49.7 million and North America - 40.8 million were reported in 2000 (IOM 2005: 381). Thus, an increase of 13.7 million in Europe, 11.6 million in Asia, 9.2 million in North America were reported during 2000-2010. Meanwhile, the percentage of migrants of the total world population has remained relatively stable. It increased by only 0.2 per cent (from 2.9 to 3.1 percent) during the same period. An increase of 1.6 percent of total women migrants is also observed in the last decade (from 48 percent in 2000 to 49.6 percent in 2010) (UNPD 2009).

Migration has become an essential and inevitable component of the socio-economic life, and if managed properly, it can be beneficial for the individual, societies and the state. The expansion in scale and scope of migration seems to rise in future due to growing developmental, demographic differences that persist between different parts of the world. The economist Galbraith stated migration as “the oldest action against poverty” (Galbraith 1979: 7). Migration may be the exception rather than the rule, but it is increasing. It is already very important – in terms of economics and politics, domestically and internationally – because of the links it establishes between countries (Massey 1993: 431-432).

The trend of economic liberalization and agents of globalization has changed the world and migration has become all way easier. Migration is also closely related to a number of other globalization processes. The growth of free trade and foreign investment has changed or rather made the international boundary irrelevant and maintain the flow of migrants. The high demands of labourers - skilled, semi-skilled or highly skilled, in the developed economies also encouraged migration. The availability of labourers in the underdeveloped/developing countries has set global labour migration and millions of people are moving from developing to developed countries for greener pastures. Sassen (1988) observes, “The globalization of trade, finance, and production, and the general trend toward greater global economic integration contributed for emergence of new and more mobile pools of labour, while creating stronger ties and networks among advanced industrial and developing economies that provide new avenues and opportunities for migration.” Kritz (1992) views that these economic processes are reinforced by cheaper and more accessible forms of transportation and communication technologies, as well as an emerging global infrastructure of services, that link national economies and under gird the formation of international migration networks (Adamson 2006: 168-169).

The prevalent of demographic imbalances between the developing and the developed countries are also generating migrants. Presently, the annual population growth in the developed countries is less than 0.3 percent, while in the developing countries it is almost six times higher. These demographic changes are affecting international migration in two particular ways. Firstly, one rapid population growth combined with economic

difficulties push people to move out of their place of origin and secondly, the countries with increasing ageing population continue to accept migrants. The presence of migration network in/from specific regions has also been playing a crucial role in enhancing population movement (IOM 2005: 13-15).

**Table 1.1**  
**International Migrants, 1965–2010**

Year	International Migration in Stock (In Million)	Percentage of Total World Population
1965	75	2.3%
1975	84	2.1%
1985	105	2.2%
1990	120	2.3%
2000	175	2.9%
2005	192	3.0 %
2010-till 1 July	214	3.1%

Source: Combined data drawn from IOM (2005) World Migration Report 2005, p. 396 and UN, (2006), World migrant stock: The 2005 revision population database. New York: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, accessed on 12 January, 2008, URL: <http://esa.un.org/migration/index.asp?panel=1>, and also data drawn from United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2009), International Migration Stock 2009, Wallchart (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.XIII.8), (Online Web) accessed on 2 August, 2010, URL: [http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/2009Migration\\_Chart/ittmig\\_wallchart09.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/2009Migration_Chart/ittmig_wallchart09.pdf)

### **1. III \_\_\_ Why People Migrate?**

People generally migrate in search of better opportunities, when their needs are not adequately fulfilled in their place of origin. The migrant may have varying degrees of choice where to move and the decision may be somewhat either voluntary or involuntary. Clearly, individuals migrate for a number of reasons, sometimes the desire to escape oppression or famine, alienation of wealth, family reunification etc. also counts (Castles 2000: 270-71).

Moreover other factors also contribute for migration in different contexts and situations; invasion, conquest, and displacement due to armed conflict, natural disaster, mercantile outreach, colonial settlement, and even slavery etc. The familiar understanding of migration today refers to the movement of individuals/families/groups usually for economic, environmental, socio-political slowness or destructions. In its generic term

migration often refers to permanent relocations of population. The evidences of early mass migrations was found virtually all over the world and it is said that both North and South America received migrants from Asia through several successive waves via a land bridge across the Bering Strait. Early myths and legends of the world discusses the push factors (e.g. natural disasters) that led them to leave their places of origin, or the pull factors (e.g. the lure of adventure) that beckoned them on (Gorter et. al. 1998: 95-96 & 110-112).

The 1998 UN recommendations on Statistics of International Migration defines an international migrant as, 'a person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence' (UN 1998: 18). The nature of the duration measure – whether it is the expected duration of stay, the duration of the permit granted upon entry or the actual duration of stay in the host country – is not specified. The one-year duration threshold recommended by the UN seems to be a pragmatic one (UN 1998: 17-18). Malthus defined migration as an inevitable consequence of over population. Malthus (1963: 4-5) viewed, "migration takes place only when the growth of population occurs in geometrical proportion but the resources increases only in arithmetic proportion." Lee defines migration as a permanent or semi permanent changes of residence without putting any restrictions on distances a migrant moves or the voluntary or involuntary, internal or external nature of the act. He stresses on various factors affecting migration in terms of the positive/negative characteristics in the place of origin and destination. He views that migration triggers from one place to another when migrants sees some added advantages in the destination area. According to him, there have to be some positive factors that hold people within the area or pull others into it and some negative forces that repel or push people from that area (Lee 1966: 47-50). Lee's model of migration is more non-economic and widely popular in migration studies but lack practical policy guidance for decision making in developing nations.

Ravenstein (1889: 241-305) views migration through his well known analysis of Laws of Migration, that is based on the patterns of migration in Great Britain and United States. He views, "people migrate due to economic reasons and migrants travel short distance for

the purpose of accelerating their income. On the other hand, people who travel long distance belongs to the agricultural areas for which they prefer to migrate into the industrial/commercial areas for better earning and livelihood. The volume of migration increases with the development of industry and commerce as well as improvement of transport.” (Corbett 2001 & Ravenstein 1889: 286-288). Ravenstein proposed following explanations or Laws of Migration during the time of 1834 to 1913: -

- i) Most migrants travel short distances, but the number of migrants decreases when the distance of migration destination increases. This law is based upon the assumptions that the higher travel costs and a lack of knowledge of more distant places acts against large volumes of migration.
- ii) Migration occurs in stages and in wave-like motion. According to him, migration occurs in steps with people gradually moving up the settlement hierarchy, e.g. from rural areas to villages, to towns, to cities and finally the capital city.
- iii) Migration increases in volume as industries, development of business, and improvement in the transport system. However, the major direction of movement is from agricultural areas to urban centres of industry and commerce.
- iv) Most Migrants are adults. Families rarely migrate out of their country of birth or place of origin.
- v) Women are more migratory (than men) in nature but they migrate within their country of birth but men more frequently venture beyond it.
- vi) Urban dwellers are less likely to move than their rural counterparts (Corbett 2001 & Ravenstein 1889: 286-288).

#### **1. IV \_\_\_ Factors Triggering Migration**

There are four factors which an individual enter into decision to migrate and the process of migration. These factors are associated with the area of origin, destination, intervening obstacles and personal factors. There are differences between the factors associated with the area of origin and destination. A person living in an area has long-term acquaintance



and hence can make unhurried judgements as migrants having knowledge of that area. However, uncertainty and ignorance prevails regarding the reception of a migrant in the destination. Between every two points there stands a set of intervening obstacles that might be minimal in some instances and insurmountable in others. These obstacles are distance, cost of travelling and strict presence of migration laws that may restrict the movement. Finally, the personal factors play an important role in individual's thresholds or facilitation or retard migration. Personal factors more or less constant throughout life for an individual but it may change with stages of life cycle for another individual (Lee 1966: 50-52). The various and push factors of migration are discussed under the following heading.

#### **1. IV.i \_\_\_ Push Factors**

Several factors can be attributed for triggering migration across places. There are two forces that typically differentiate the push-pull. Firstly, population growth causing a Malthusian pressure on natural resources triggering out migration. Secondly, economic conditions (higher wages) luring people into cities and industrialized countries (Skeldon 1997: 20; Portes & Borocz 1989: 607). Migrants responding to push factors are leaving a place where life is a struggle and insecure. The advantages and disadvantages of staying versus moving, factors such as distance, travel costs, travel time, modes of transportation, terrain, and cultural barriers etc. also influence factors of migration. The various push factors may be the difficulties in the place of residence, such as the food shortage, war, flood, communal, political, environmental etc. The pull factors may be the better economic facilities, income, good opportunities, better standard of livelihood etc. Thus, these factors may influence people in their movements, sometimes within the region or outside of it. Broadly, the push factors includes, environmental factors, (e.g. climate, natural disasters) Political factors (war), Economic factors-work related and the cultural factors (religious freedom, education) (Todaro 1969: 138-143). The most evident grounds of migration specially are the existence of disparities in the level of income, employment and other social well being irrespective of the areas of origin. People also migrate to escape political or religious persecution. Lee explains that push factors generally exist in

the sending countries that comprise existence of perennial unemployment problem, lack of farmland, famine, or war or the state repression at home (Lee 1966: 49-50).

#### **1. IV.i.a \_\_\_ Economic and Demographic Factors**

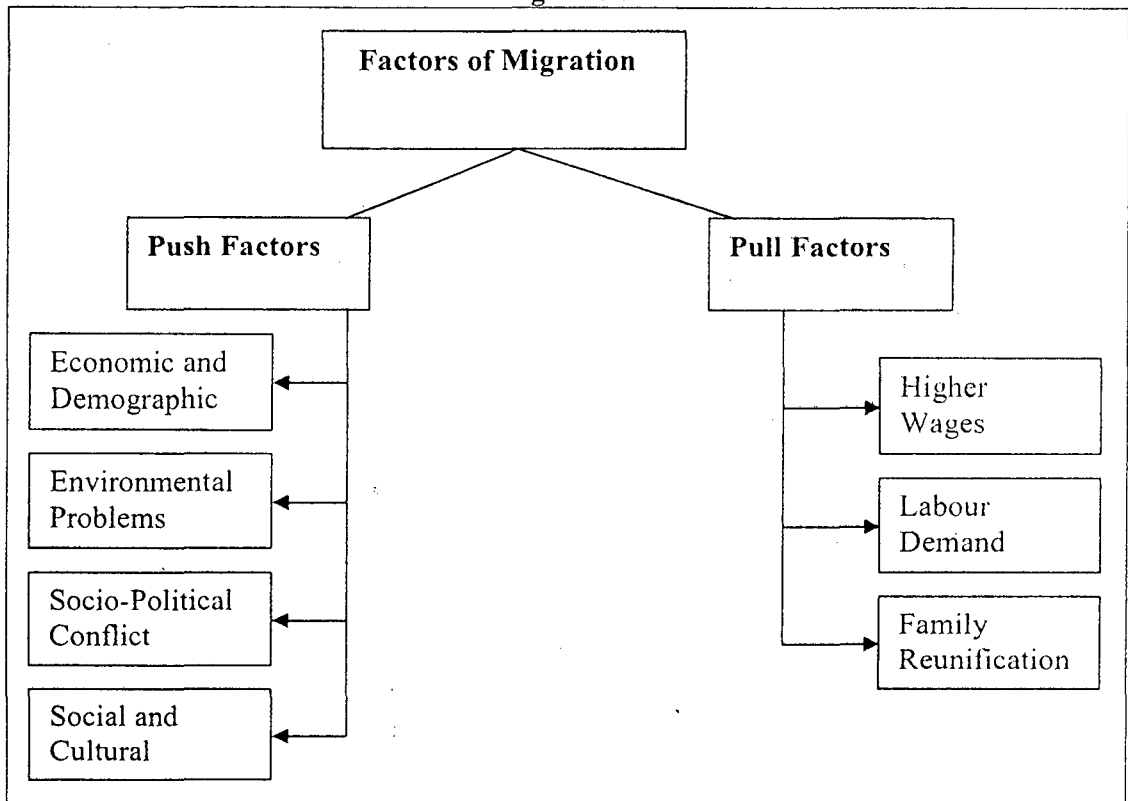
International migration occurs from developing country to developed/rich nations due to inadequate development, lower standard of living, economic instability, low agricultural production and income, lack of opportunities for advancement, lack of basic health and education, low wages, poverty, prevalence of unemployment and underemployment etc. (Kainth 2009: 84). Migration stems from the developing countries due to slow pace of economic development or economic underdevelopment or existence large scale of poverty. The social and economic transformations that occur during the process of development create a highly uncertain and unpredictable economic environment and to avoid such risks individuals/families migrate to foreign labour for better income (Massey 1988: 383-388). The Great Depression (1929–1939) in the United States encouraged most residents to leave (Lee 1966: 53-56). The demographic factors such as high population growth, high fertility rates, high density of population, increased land-man ratio are pushing people to migrate (House of Commons International Development Committee 2004: 2-3). The above factor are very much prevalent in most of the South Asian countries forcing people to migrate. India being the largest and economically strong is the destination of migrants the neighbouring countries. However, India is also a major migrant sending country (IOM 2005: 104).

#### **1. IV.i.b \_\_\_ Environmental Factors**

People may migrate due environmental destruction or degradation which increasingly causes population displacements. Deteriorating environmental conditions such as deforestation, global warming, and resource pollution compel people to move to safer place. Suhrke (1993: 6-8) views, “environmental problems may be a more immediate cause of migration. For example; the factors such as the population pressures and patterns of resource exploitation.” He provides Haiti as an example, where population growth and a political economy characterized by systematic oppression, inequality and gross corruption have led to deforestation and consequent soil erosion. This leads to significant

migration from the country. Richmond & Verma (1978: 25-36) views, “when environmental degradation leads to migration, it is primarily as a proximate cause linked to questions of economic growth, poverty, population pressure, and political conflict.” Mayer estimated that about five million people are environmentally displaced, compared to twenty-three million displaced by civil war and persecution. He further viewed that the number of environmentally displaced persons would be 150 million by 2050 (Mayer 1997: 167-182).

Figure 1.1



Natural disaster along with the other environmental problems displaces millions of people resulting in long-term damage and destruction to their places of origin (Bailey 2008: 15). It has become a major push for distress migrants in Bangladesh to leave their homes and to migrate internally or externally – more to India. Environmental hazards such as flood, river bank erosion, cyclone and storms displace millions of people and livelihood in Bangladesh. Cyclone SIDR in Bangladesh since 1991 took a toll of more than 140,000 people and damaging billions of dollars of properties (MFDM 2008: 1-3).

### **1. IV.i.c \_\_\_ Political Factors**

The political conflict, civil strife, instability, insecurity situation, violence, poor governance, and human rights abuses have been a major push factor of population movement. In the 1980s and 1990s, millions of Africans were pushed out of their homelands to the neighbouring countries because of famine and civil war (Craig 1977: 178-189). A number of African countries have experienced severe civil or political strife and instability in the last 20-25 years. The countries like, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Burundi, Rwanda, Morocco, Algeria, Sierra Leone, Liberia etc. The citizens of these countries have either migrated abroad or to the neighbouring countries to escape such civil/political strife (Dzvimbo 2003: 1-2).

### **1. IV.i.d \_\_\_ Socio-Cultural Factor**

The social and cultural (discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion, gender or caste) factors also plays crucial role in migration. Sometimes family conflicts, the quest for independence also causes migration especially of those in the younger generation. Improved communication facilities, such as transportation, communication, the urban oriented education and resultant change in attitudes and values also promote migration (Kainth 2009: 86).

### **1. IV.ii \_\_\_ Pull Factors**

The push factors refer to the negative aspects of the sending country, while the pull factors are positive aspects of the receiving country indicating these differentiating factors are the two sides of the same coin. In terms of pull factors, perceived economic opportunities, possibility of employment, better standards of living, greater opportunities for personal and professional development and family reunification are considered. The journey of the migrants for such factors may take them to a nearby town/capital/city or to a neighbouring country (FMOENCN 2002: 2-3).

There is generally a city ward migration due to the rapid industrialisation and technological advancements. Under the capitalistic model of development, there is a

tendency for higher investments in the urban areas that trigger people to move for better paid jobs. The increase in migration of people from India and from other developing countries to UK, USA, Canada and Middle East is due to better employment opportunities, higher wages and other opportunities. Thus, pull factors operate in all cases of rural-urban, domestic and international migration (Kainth 2009: 85). The expanding markets, labour shortfalls and ageing population in the more industrialised countries like Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and also the continuing need for workers in the Gulf countries are encouraging people to migrate (IOM 2005: 104).

#### **1. IV.ii.a \_\_\_ Higher Wages/Employment Opportunities/Better Standard of Living**

People leave their places or a country to a more developed one in search of better salary and wages. For e.g. Mexicans migration towards US, Colombians or Venezuelans migration to Netherlands, Antilleans moving to the Netherlands. People migrate when there exists a wage gap between origin country and the country of destination. The wage gap between American and Mexican workers has changed dramatically since the creation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994. U.S. wages are in fact an estimated 13 times higher than that of Mexican wages (TriasWiki 2010).

#### **1. IV.ii.b \_\_\_ Labour Demand**

Most of the developed and developing countries are in need of workers. The developed economies generate jobs and sometimes native people do not prefer to engage in such jobs due to pride which leads to labour crisis. Basically, the people of neighbouring countries may prefer to work or take up these jobs. For, example, Ireland had seen a surge of migration because its economy prospered during the 1990s. The country which usually sends much of its population in the last two centuries has started to receive migrants looking for jobs. This has caused many conflicts between the natives and the migrants who came to Ireland. When the refinery Lago opened in Aruba in 1947, they did not have enough of people to work and also the required knowledge to take up certain tasks. Thus, Lago hired workers from the US, Barbados, Saint Croix, Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (TriasWiki 2010).

### 1. IV.ii.c \_\_\_ Family Migration

Family reunification is the most motivating non-economic factor for migration. When migrants settled down in the destination country they wanted their families and children to join them. Even the family (of the migrants) like, parents, brothers, sisters want to join them. Asian migrants to the traditional migration destinations for employment and family unification has turned Asian countries a major source of migrants in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the US. After the end of the Vietnam in 1975, a million Southeast Asian migrants settled down in Canada and United States created new migration networks that continued to add migrants through family unification (Martin 2009: 4-5).

Though migration is an economic phenomenon, other non-economic factors also have some bearing. It is viewed that migrants leave their area of origin due to dearth of employment opportunities and migrates for finding better opportunities. Migration can no longer be viewed as simply a question of individual choice; though this may still have some bearing on selections in a migrant population. The massive movements taking place today within and across national boundaries are due to major structural transformation in the economies of developed and third world countries (Safa & Tait 1975: 1). Population movement which is conventionally seen as being voluntary occurs in situations which in fact the migrants have little or no choice. The individual choice of migration has little bearing in response to natural calamity or disaster – floods, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, tsunami etc. (Hugo 2008: 11, 15).

Amin (1974: 100) in his discussion of migration in Western Africa viewed, “A comparative costs and benefits analysis, conducted at the individual level of the migrant, has no significance. In fact it only gives the appearance of objective rationality to a ‘choice’ (that of the migrant) which in reality does not exist because, in a given system, he has no alternatives” (Hugo 2008: 19). For Example, the Asian Tsunami of 26 December, 2004 occurred across 12 Asian and African countries surrounding the Indian Ocean killing 298055 people and left 5 million people displaced is the example of natural calamities where people have no choice but to migrate forcefully (UNHCR 2006: 21). In Sri Lanka, 450000 were forced to move in the aftermath of the Tsunami. In the province

of Aceh of Indonesia, there were 533000 IDPs by the end of 2004. Thus, the people were forced to moved to other locations within the region over a shorter or a longer distances (Hugo 2008: 21). The impact of hurricane Katrina on New Orleans is another example of disaster induced migration. New Orleans is a city built on a coast susceptible to hurricanes, and susceptible to flooding from the Mississippi River, defended only by humanly engineered levees and ripe for a major environmental catastrophe. It is a classic case of the increased impact of natural events because of the growth in populations in locations, which are vulnerable to sudden and acute natural events (Clark 2007: 8-9).

Again, there are number of life cycle considerations-such as marriage, divorce, completion of schooling, entry into the labour force, start of career, birth and ageing of children and retirement - are critical in an individuals or a family's decision to migrate. Other personal circumstances include employment status earnings, education, accumulated skills, age, sex and health. Studies of the determinants of migration have commonly been formulated in the context of individual utility maximization, although in recent years increasing emphasis has been placed on the family or the household as the decision making unit. Individual's personal characteristics including accumulated job skills and language learnt also triggers migration (Greenwood 1985: 527-528). Migration therefore could be interpreted as a multi-dimensional phenomenon.

## **1. V \_\_ Impact of Migration**

Migration has both positive and negative impact on the economy, politics, security and demography of a country of destination. It is viewed that the impact of migrants and migration vary significantly depending on factors including the characteristics of migrants, employment conditions, their geographical location etc. in the host country. Migration is also viewed as a strategy of population stability or growth in many Western countries (Meyers 2000: 1245-49).

### **1. V.i \_\_ Economic Impact**

The economic impact in the destination is positive when migrants willing to take low-wage jobs, the high levels of ambition that many migrants demonstrate, and the flexibility

that comes from having a regular supply of labour. It is negative when there exists high levels of unemployment and negative effects of competition. The basic fears expressed in the destination countries are that the migrants will take away jobs from the natives. This concern is especially evident in many European countries, where unemployment levels are relatively high and the proportion of long-term unemployed among the unemployed relatively large. In reality, however, this appears to be rarely the case. That is because in most countries in the world migrants are admitted to fill gaps in the local labour market. These can be skills gaps which the local training and education system has been unable to fill, or low-status jobs that locals are unwilling to do. Migrant workers are rarely encouraged to enter situations to compete directly with local workers in destination (Koser 2007: 90-98).

Several episodes in recent history provide interesting precedents for assessing the economic impacts of migration. In 1962, 0.9 million people of European origin living in Algeria moved to France, increasing the French labour force by 1.6 percent. It was found that at most the impact was to reduce wages in the regions where they settled by 0.8 percent and raise the unemployment rate by 0.2 percentages. In 1980 around 0.12 million Cubans entered Miami, increasing the labour force by 7 per cent. When the impact of their migration on resident unskilled labour from different ethnicities was assessed, only the Cubans appeared to have been negatively affected (UNDESA 2004: Overview: xiii).

### **1. V.ii \_\_\_ Political Impact**

There are at least two ways that migration can impact on politics and political systems in the destination country. First, the migrants and their descendants may demand for political participation and representations in the political system. Secondly, the migrants may form ethnic vote blocs among citizens of migrant origins for a political party. However, if the local people in the destination make objection or show opposition of such political participation of the migrant community may lead to fierce unrest. During 1970s and 1980s, the migrants in France, Belgium and Netherlands, tended to mobilize the normal channels of political representation outside by involving in industrial strikes, protest movements and hunger strikes etc. An increasing number of European countries,



such as, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Norway, Netherlands and Sweden, have granted certain political rights to migrants, including that of voting and standing for office in local (but not national) elections on condition that they have resided there for a minimum period. The formation of ethnic Soviet Jews in Israel, who comprise about 15 percent of the Israeli electorate decisively, affected the outcomes of every general election since 1992 (Koser 2007: 99-100).

### **1. V.iii \_\_\_ Security Impact**

International migrations today pose important challenges and have serious security implications in the receiving country. Perhaps the most talked about is the linkages between migration and security. Especially after 9/11 attack on USA, there has been a perception of a close association between international migration and terrorism. The irregular migration appears to be increasing in the world, which is sometimes regarded as a threat to national sovereignty and public security. The fear among the host communities – that societies have become increasingly apprehensive about the presence of migrants, especially those with unfamiliar cultures that come from parts of the world associated with extremism and violence (Koser 2007: 11). The irregular migration is often described as threat to state sovereignty and in more extreme discourses, illegal migration is perceived as a threat to state security as it may provide channel for potential terrorists to enter the countries (Koser 2007: 60).

### **1. V.iv \_\_\_ Demographic Impact**

Migration can one way reduce the demographic deficit of a receiving country and also can alter the demography of the same. This can also spread the fear of loss of identity or being reduced to minority due to demographic changes occurred by migration in the destination (Weiner 1990: 156-158). As long as migrants are of a working age, able to find work, can work legally and pay taxes, they can augment the contribution of a country. Otherwise the diminishing working age population has to face a negative impact. The demographic deficit is a particular problem in Europe and is shrinking, where an average European woman has just 1.4 children and it is estimated that to replace the current population she would need to give birth to 2.1 children. Over 40 percent of the

world's total population now live in countries where the population is shrinking (Koser 2007: 102-103). Meanwhile, the fear of minoritisation and loss of political control was the major factor of political coup by the Fijian military against a democratically elected government with an Indian – dominated majority. Many Fijians felt that the loss of political power may result in becoming a minority like the Maoris in New Zealand or the Kanaks in New Caledonia, two native peoples overwhelmed demographically, politically and socially by migrant communities (Weiner 1990: 158).

By observing the case study, it is viewed that migration was inevitable and necessary due to scarcity of labour occurred with the development of tea and jute industries in Assam during the British rule. The migration of Nepalis in the pretext of recruitment in the army can be viewed as meeting the population deficiency and adjustment occurred during that period. Thus, migration was indeed an economic need and also population adjustment for the colonial power to sustain their exploitation policies in Assam. However, India having a huge population is not in a position for any demographic adjustment as it occurred during British period. The indigenous population considers Bangladeshis as a threat to their existence as the number of Bangladeshi migrants increased and became a source of vote bank. The Nepali migrants being small in numbers, not considered as threat to either identity or ethnicity. The problem of terrorism in Bangladesh and Maoist in Nepal is a serious security concern of the host Assam.

## **1. VI \_\_\_ Types of Migration**

Migration can be of many types. These includes; firstly, movements of individuals or group of persons across national borders (international migration i.e. a territorial relocation of people between different countries); secondly, movements of persons within the country (internal/domestic migration). If the population moves within a country of birth or place of origin, crossing a boundary between provinces, districts, municipalities or other political or administrative units is called internal migrants (Peter 1969: 1-5). The UNDP, Human Development Report (2009a: 1), “an estimated 740 million people in the world are internal migrants which is almost four times higher than those of International migrants.”

International migration takes place in the form of migration out of country and migration into the country. Large scale population movement worldwide triggered by variety of reasons ranging from economic opportunity, ethnic violence, to social and political persecution. Since 1990 the economic globalization, and the end of the cold war have also led to the steady flow of cross-border movements. According to a report by the IOM, "as of the year 2000, there are an estimated 150 million international migrants...the 21st century is likely to continue to see large scale movements of people, both voluntary and forced" (IOM 2003a: 5-6, 17, 44). The impacts of these movements are seen on transforming and creating cultural and ethnic community, the emergence of diasporas and imagined nations. This actually, necessitates going beyond the focus on the borders and boundaries of nation-states that contain migrants. Migration can also be categorized on the basis of circumstances of migration. There are four ways that International migrants are normally categorised namely voluntary, Illegal or Irregular or undocumented migrants and involuntary or forced migration and also the refugee.

#### **1. VI.i \_\_\_ Voluntary Migrants**

If the people who have the opportunity to exercise his own discretion in deciding whether to migrate or not and also in the matter of selecting the place of migration is considered as voluntary migrants (Greenwood 1985: 527). It may be temporary or permanent migration, return/circular or seasonal migration. Individual who are unwilling to settle down permanently in the host country are temporary migrants and those willing to settle down are permanent migration. For example many migrants to the Middle East have no inclination to settle down there permanently. They would rather prefer to work there for a short period and return home with a good savings (Francis 1987: 4-6). Those people who return to their countries of origin after a period of stay in another country is called return or circular migrants. Return migrants are often looked on favourably as they may bring with them capital, skills and experience useful for economic development (Castles 2000: 271).

The seasonal migration means the process of moving for a period of time in response to labour or climate conditions, for e.g., the farm workers following crop harvests or

working in cities during off-season; "snowbirds" moving to the southern and south-western USA during winter (National Geographic Expeditions 2005). Meanwhile, voluntary migrants may migrate for employment and family reunification purpose. People migrate voluntarily for getting recruited in another country to perform jobs, particularly when there persist low wages or poor working conditions. Family reunification of migrants may occur when women and children of a migrant who are moving to join their husbands working abroad. Governments often permit close family members of the migrants to enter through legal channels (S. Martin 2005: 2-3). The basic features of voluntary migrants can be the following: -

- Voluntary migrants are those people who decide by themselves the time and the place of destination.
- It may be temporary or permanent migration or a semi permanent movement, return or seasonal migration.
- Family reunification is also a feature of voluntary migrants.

#### **1. VI.ii \_\_\_ Illegal/Irregular/unauthorised/Undocumented Migrants**

Undocumented migration is also known as the illegal/irregular/unauthorized migration that occurs circumventing the rules of prevailing migration and also without the knowledge of the concerned authorities. Illegal migration usually occurs in a system where there is no existence of clear migration policies or lack of administrative efficiency, porous borders, imprecise or incompatible laws or complex regulations. In many cases migrants, with or without the collusion of their employers knowingly circumvent or break the laws and regulations of the host country (UN 1984: 17). Illegal migrants refer to those people, who, in search of employment opportunities enter a country without possessing any necessary documents/permits (Castles 2000: 271-72). Illegal migrants according to the GCIM report (2005: 32-33), "A variety of different phenomenon involving people who enter or remain in a country without authorization or by breaching the law of that country".

The concept of irregular/illegal movement of people is relatively a recent phenomenon and it became more relevant when nation states started formulating and implementing

rules of governing the entry and exit of foreigners. A popular perception of illegal migration is that people who migrate with the intention of living in another country temporarily or permanently and working illegally there, often entering clandestinely or with forged documents. According to the 1998 Europol Convention, stated that 'illegal migrant smuggling' comprises "activities intended deliberately to facilitate for financial gains the entry into residence and employment of an alien in the territory of the state, contrary to the rules and conditions applicable in such a state" (Lama 2006: 4).

According to the convention no. 143, adopted by the 1975 ILO conference defines illegal migration as those movement where migrants find themselves "during their journey, on arrival or during their period of residence and employment (in) conditions contravening relevant international multi-lateral or bilateral instruments or agreements or national laws and regulations" (Lama 2006: 4-5). Thus it shows that the figures related to illegal migration could vary right from entry, residence and occupation to finally departing from the host country.

Another category of illegal migrants that is commonly witnessed are those who enter a country legitimately and then over stay the period for which they have permission to remain or enter. On the other hand the forced migrants' flee from their country under difficult circumstances primarily for safety, food and shelter. Tapinos has identified six categories of such migrants:

- i) Migrants who have entered the country legally with a legal residence permit, but who are working illegally either because the job is not declared or because their residence permit doesn't allow them to work.
- ii) Migrants who have entered the country legally, who are living in the country illegally (either because their work permits are invalid or have expired or because they don't have residence permit) and who are working illegally. It is assumed that a migrant without a residence permit cannot work legally under the legislation in force.
- iii) The same category as above, but covering inactive migrants.
- iv) Migrants who have entered the country, clandestinely, who have no residence permit and who are working illegally

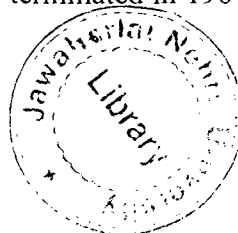
- v) The same as category above, but covering inactive migrants.
- vi) Migrants who have entered the country clandestinely who have residence permit (e.g. following regularization, or by variation in their status through marriage) and are working illegally (Tapinos 2000: 14).

About 10 to 15 percent of the migrants in rich countries are unauthorized and most of them are found in US, a much less in Australia and Canada. These migrants typically enter by illegal means and many of them (about 40 percent in US) enter legally but fail to return when their visas expire. The other category of migrants who enter with proper visas but violate its terms, usually by engaging in gainful employment. In Japan, approximately 400,000 illegal migrant workers tend to be found in jobs characterized by the "three Ks": kiken, kitsui and kitanai, or "dangerous, difficult and dirty" (Papademetriou 1997-1998: 15-31).

Asia is notable for having relatively large numbers of students, trainees, and migrant workers moving to their richer neighbours illegally. There were about 15 million Asians abroad in 2005, including over half from the Philippines. However, fewer than three million of these Filipinos are guest workers with contracts, while most of the 400,000 Vietnamese are legal or irregular migrant workers (Martin 2008: 13). According to the UNDP, Human Development Report (UNDP 2009a: 2-3), "an estimated 50 million people are living and working abroad with irregular status. Some countries, such as Thailand and the USA, tolerate large numbers of unauthorized/illegal migrants."

The hot spot on the global illegal migration, in terms of volume, has been the US-Mexico border. The problem of large-scale illegal migration originated with the beginning of the Bracero program in 1942 that imposed rigid rules under which Mexican workers were employed in US agriculture. The migrants through this program were provided transportation, housing, and wages paid similar to the US workers. The Mexican workers were expected to sign up on their side of the border and wait to be recruited officially which the migrants found excessively rigid rules. As a result, large numbers of Mexicans migrated illegally and when the Bracero program was terminated in 1964, undocumented

TH 19748



Mexican workers continued to cross the border seeking primarily seasonal jobs in the agricultural sector (Djajic 2001: 140).

Approximately 0.5 million persons enter USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand illegally every year. Estimates of persons entering countries of the European Union by irregular means vary from 0.12 million to 0.5 million annually (Khan 2004: 28-29). The illegal migration and employment have long been fairly widespread as indicated by the fact that in 1973 illegal migrants constituted 10 percent of the foreign population of Europe. In 1954, the US repatriated over 1 million Mexican nationals under operation wetback<sup>1</sup> (Castles & Miller 1998: 96). Basically, the increasingly restrictive policies adopted by the countries, greater number of illegal migration, attractive opportunities in the host countries and also the natives showing resentments against migration on their economic and social welfare have further led to irregular migration. At the same time fewer countries have migration controls (Lama 2006: 7-8).

#### **1. VI.ii.a \_\_\_ Human Trafficking**

As a subset of illegal migration, there is a clear category of agent-client relationship who come under migrant smuggler/smuggling syndicates. Here the migrants are not actually a victim but a consensus client or willing migrants. The smugglers work as facilitator primarily for profit or other material benefit (Lama 2006: 5). The UN protocol on smuggling of migrants in relation to the UN convention against trans-national organized crime (2000: 42, 54-55) under Article 3 define

- (a) "Smuggling of Migrants - shall mean the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefits, of the illegal entry of a person into a state party of which the person is not a national or permanent resident.
- (b) "Illegal Entry" is defined in the protocol as 'crossing borders without complying with the necessary requirements for legal entry into the receiving states;

---

<sup>1</sup> Operation Wetback was conducted by the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to remove about one million illegal immigrants from the southwestern United States, focusing on Mexican nationals in 1954.

(c) Under the same convention article 3 of the protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children defines trafficking as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs” (Lama 2006: 5-7).

There are several investigations related to the size of the problem of all kinds of human trafficking. People are trafficked from across 127 countries to be exploited in 137 countries, affecting every continent and their economy (UNODC 2006: 7-9). According to the ILO (2005: 14), “the number of persons in forced labour, including sexual exploitation, as a result of trafficking is 2.45 million during the period of 1995-2005. Out of these, 1.4 million are in Asia and the Pacific, 270000 in the industrialized countries, 250000 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 230000 in the Middle East and Northern Africa, 200000 in countries with economies in transition and 130,000 in sub-Saharan countries (UNODC 2008: 6-7).

The US Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report (2007: 8) views, “the ILO which addresses labour standards, employment, and social protection issues estimated 12.3 million people in all kind of forced labour including bonded labour, child labour and sexual servitude at any given time. Meanwhile, the other estimates range from 4 million to 27 million. Approximately, 0.8 million people are trafficked across national borders. However, it does not include millions people trafficked within their own countries. The report also estimated that 80 percent of translational victims are women and up to 50 percent are minors. The majority of victims are females trafficked into commercial sexual exploitation.”



Trafficking is a lucrative business and billions of dollars are being made at the expense of millions of victims. The trafficking has come under the control of international networks of organized crime as an industry which is estimated to generate as according to the UNODC \$7000 million and by the UNICEF at \$10000 million worldwide annually (Feingold 2005: 26-27). Presently, the total illicit profit made by the human trafficking is estimated at \$32000 million (Human Trafficking Statistics 2009: 1-2). The trafficker maintains a continued exercise of control over migrants by force or fraud even after the transit through the borders. The smuggling itself can degenerate into trafficking that involves serious elements of exploitation and human rights abuse (Lama 2006: 4-8).

### **1.VI.iii\_\_ Forced Migrants**

Again, people are forced to migrate from one place to another by compulsion, coercion, like separation, communal violence, political or social persecution etc. state repression. According to Wood (1994: 607-611), "there are three particular causes of forced migration. Firstly, political instability, war and persecution that creates political refugees. Secondly, economic decline, ecological crisis and natural disasters are usually responsible for generating economic migrants, for e.g. guest workers, illegal migrants and inaptly named environmental refugee. Thirdly, ethnic, religious and tribal conflicts aptly give rise for intense territorial, nationalistic and emotional intolerance of foreigners and ethnic cleansing." Forced displacement is the clearest form of human right violation. The economic, political and social rights of the human beings are often infringed upon due to political, religious, cultural and/or ethnic persecution during conflicts. The large scale forced migration is a growing concern as millions of people are displaced by war, state repression and natural disasters. While some have been forced to take refuge across national borders, many others are displaced within their own countries.

Many of the major migrations throughout history occurred as a result of forced expulsion. Approximately 15 million Africans were transferred to the America prior to 1850 during the transatlantic slave trade; the population exchanges between Greece and Turkey at the end of World War - I; the expulsion of Germans from the Sudetenland following World War II; the expulsion of indigenous Arab populations with the establishment of the state

of Israel in 1948; the ethnic cleansing that characterized the Balkan wars in the 1990s - all are examples of largely involuntary waves of migration.<sup>2</sup> The UNHCR reports that the total stock of forced migrants reached slightly more than 20 million in 2003 (Moore & Shellman 2004: 723-726).

Again, the largest of such forced migration has taken place in Indian sub-continent itself. The independence and the subsequent partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 along religious grounds into India and Pakistan is one of the largest and most rapid migrations in human history. An estimated six to seven million Muslims moved from India to Pakistan and nearly eight million Hindus and Sikhs moved from Pakistan to India. Approximately 35 to 40 million people have moved across national boundaries in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal since 1947, some as economic migrants, but more are forced migrants. The 1971 Bangladesh liberation struggle also generated around 10 million forced migrants who moved largely to the Indian eastern Border States (Weiner 1993: 1737-38).

Forced migrants make up a significant minority in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caucasus, the Balkans, the Middle East, Central America and central south and Southeast Asia (Francis 1987: 4-5 & 36-37). A large number of international migrants have been forced to leave their home countries and seek refuge in other nations. The basic tenets of forced migrants are the following: -

- Forced migrants are compelled to leave a country or a place within or outside due to persecution, human rights violations, state repression, conflict, war etc.
- They depart on their own initiative to escape these life-threatening situations. Although in a growing number of cases, they are driven from their homes by governments and insurgent groups intent on depopulating or shifting the ethnic, religious or other composition of an area.

---

<sup>2</sup> Robin Cohen (1997), *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*, London: UCL Press; Michael R. Marrus (1985), *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century*, New York: Oxford University Press; Benny Morris (1987), *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947-1949*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; as cited in Adamson, Fiona B., (2006) "Crossing Borders: International Migration and National Security", *International Security*, Summer, 31(1): 163-199

- In other cases, migrants are forced to move by environmental degradation and natural and human-made disasters that make their homes inhabitable.
- Some manage to escape their countries and find temporary or permanent refuge abroad, while an alarmly large number remain trapped inside or are forced to repatriate before the home countries conditions change in a significant manner (Martin 2001: 226-228).

#### **1.VI.iv\_\_ Refugee**

A person who is residing outside the country of his or her origin due to fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. The 1951 convention relating to the Status of Refugee, defines refugees as, 'a person residing outside his or her country of nationality, who is unable or unwilling to return because of 'well founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion'. The UNHCR seek to distinguish clearly between refugee and migrants but they do share many common characteristics (Castle 2000: 270-71). Refugees constitute a significant proportion of around 14.1 million in total, including those of concern to UNHCR and UNRWA added together. More significantly, the majority of those people are hosted by African, Asian and Middle Eastern countries that are currently experiencing a variety of important development challenges and constraints (UNHCR 2007: 1-2).

#### **1.VII\_\_ Theories of International Migration**

It is observed that migration takes place for variety of reasons and circumstances ranging from economic, environmental, political causes also affecting the overall migration process. The conditions under which a migrant enters a receiver population can have broad implications for all parties involved in migration. The circumstances in which migrants move may produce different impressions about migration. For instance a person who moves within a national boundary will not have the same migration experience as an international migrant or forced migrants. In most cases, forced migrants need special services from the receiver population such as emergency shelter, food, and legal aid. The psychological trauma of fleeing their homeland and leaving family members behind can

also complicate migrant's adjustment to their new environment. Considering that a migrant can be a slave, refugee, or job-seeker, or have some other reason for moving, no single theory can provide a comprehensive explanation for the migration process.<sup>3</sup>

Migration is one of the most significant of all human behaviour and a wide ranging variable has been spanned in search for possible determinants of the redistribution of population. It has been suggested that demographic, political and psychological factors exert a significant causal influence. However, regardless of what other variables may be operating, migratory streams generally seem to flow from a place of origin where economic opportunities are restricted to destinations where economic opportunities are comparatively greater (Parker 1975: 3). Todaro highlighting the paradox of migration views that people move in search better life or standard of living through a good job as well as an adequate level of income. Thus, people might be enduring short-term difficulties in the process of better prospects for economic growth and improved welfare in the longer term (Todaro 1969: 139-140).

The diverse and multifaceted international migration cannot be explained solely with a model which rests on a particular level of analysis at a particular point of time. In such cases it needs a variety of studies. These theories/studies vary from the disciplinary perspectives and the level of analysis (e.g. micro-macro level). Presently, there is no coherent theory of international migration, only a fragmented set of theories have been developed largely in isolation from one another but not always segmented by disciplinary boundaries, current patterns and trends in migration (Massey et. al. 1993: 432; Borjas 1989: 458).

However, it is important that a full understanding of contemporary migration will not be achieved by relying on the tools of one discipline alone, or by focusing on a single level of analysis their complex and multi-faceted nature and impact actually require a sophisticated theoretical treatment that incorporates a variety of perspectives, levels and assumptions (Massey et. all, 1993: 433). The reigning theories of international migration

---

<sup>3</sup> Migration - Theories Of Migration, see <http://family.jrank.org/pages/1170/Migration-Theories-Migration.html>

that have an economic basis are the neoclassical economic theory of migration, the equilibrium theory, dual labour market theory, economics of labour migration, world system theory and system approach. These theories apply classic supply and demand paradigms to migration at the individual level and the household unit (Massey 1999: 303-306).

The Neo-classical economist focuses on differentials in wages and employment conditions between countries. This theory suggests that international migration is related to the global supply and demand for labour. Nations with scarce labour supply and high demand will have high wages that pull immigrants in from nations with a surplus of labour. The New Economics of migration in contrast considers conditions in a variety of markets, not just labour markets. The theory views migration as a household decision taken to minimize risks to family income or to overcome capital constraints on family production activities (Massey et. al. 1993: 433-436; 1994: 701-705; Borjas 1989: 460-461).

The Dual Labour market theory argues that First World economies are structured and they require a certain level of migration. This theory suggests that developed economies are dualistic: they have a primary market of secure, well-remunerated work and a secondary market of low-wage work. The theory argues that migrants are recruited to fill these jobs that are necessary for the overall economy to function but are avoided by the native-born population because of the poor working conditions associated with the secondary labour market. On the other hand, the world system theory generally ignores such micro-level decision processes. The theory focuses on forces of operations at much higher levels of aggregation and argues that international migration is a by product of global capitalism and market penetration across national boundaries (Massey et. al. 1993: 440-443; 1994: 715-717).

The theories of migration are important in understanding population movements within their wider political and economic contexts. For example, if out migration from Third World nations is shown to be a result of economic problems caused by the global economy, then such migration could be managed with better international economic

agreements instead of restrictive migration acts. Indeed, rather than slowing Mexican immigration to the United States, termination of the Bracero program actually increased the amount of migration because it exacerbated Mexican poverty (Parker 1975: 8-9).

Ravenstein who is widely been regarded as the earliest migration theorist and an english geographer, used census data from England and Wales to develop his "Laws of Migration". He concluded that migration was governed by a "push-pull" process; that is, unfavourable conditions in one place (oppressive laws, heavy taxation, etc.) "push" people out, and favourable conditions in an external location "pull" them out. Ravenstein's laws stated that the primary cause for migration was better external economic opportunities; the volume of migration decreases as distance increases; migration occurs in stages instead of one long move; population movements are bilateral; and migration differentials (e.g., gender, social class, age) influence a person's mobility (Ravenstein 1889: 246-250).

Many theorists followed Ravenstein's footsteps, and the dominant theories in contemporary scholarship are more or less variations of his conclusions. Lee reformulated Ravenstein's theory to give more emphasis to internal (or push) factors and outlined the impact that intervening obstacles have on the migration process. He argued that variables such as distance, physical and political barriers, and having dependents can impede or even prevent migration. Lee (1966) pointed out that the migration process is selective because differentials such as age, gender, and social class affect how persons respond to push-pull factors, and these conditions also shape their ability to overcome intervening obstacles. Furthermore, personal factors such as a person's education, knowledge of a potential receiver population, family ties, and the like can facilitate or retard migration.<sup>4</sup>

Grigg's (1977: 41-54) evaluation of Ravenstein's work points out the role of industrialization in structuring migration in Britain. In so far as similar conditions apply in other regions and times, similar patterns might be expected to occur. Thus young adults are often mobile job hunters and jobs are often in urban centres around the

---

<sup>4</sup> Op. cit. no. 3

developing world. As Grigg notes, however, in Britain itself, migration to towns increased with commerce but by the 1880s was already declining. The key point is that developing and developed commercial societies often depend on a mobile labour force and the volume of economic movement is sufficient to overwhelm other causes of mobility. To conclude that migration is always economically motivated in the narrow sense of the labour market may miss other important attributes of the process. Despite these caveats, Ravenstein's work identified several important aspects of human migration and is the foundation for later theory (Fix 1999: 9).

### **1.VII.i Push and Pull Theory**

Lee advocated the push and pulls factors of migration and labels the weighing of options at home and abroad as "push-pull" factors. According to him, push factors are more likely visible in developing or least developed countries and pull factors are most likely to exist in an advanced economic nation. For instances, people can be pushed out of regions after repeated droughts while others can be pulled towards the city or to a nation because of the development as well as urbanization and industrialization. As regards the "push" factors, migrants may be motivated to leave a place for reasons ranging from the economic and demographic (poverty, unemployment, low wages, lack of basic health and education), to the political (conflict, insecurity, violence, poor governance, corruption and human rights abuses), the social and cultural (discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion, gender or caste), and the environmental (harvest failure, resource depletion, and natural and/or man-made disasters) (Lee 1966: 49-51).

The disintegration of the Soviet Union placed ethnic Russians residing in Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in a precarious position. Much of the repatriation movement of ethnic Russians was a result of their decreased civil and political rights and restrictions on their private activities in the newly independent CIS states. In terms of "pull" factors, perceived economic opportunities are the important that guide the migrants. Migrants are generally attracted by the possibility of employment, better standards of living, and greater opportunities for personal and professional development in comparison to those at home. In the economic sense, it means higher wages and employment and in the social

sense, it means a greater prospect for personal development (Harris & Todaro 1970: 126-128).

### 1.VII.ii \_\_\_ The Equilibrium Theory

The most interesting simplification of the process of labour migration is advanced by the Equilibrium Theory. Migration occurs between two societies that are autonomous and internally integrated but at different levels of economic development. The equilibrium approach primarily focuses on the rational characteristics of the individual's decision to migrate from one place to another. The approach conceptualizes migration as the geographical mobility of workers who are responding to the sensitive changing environment and imbalances in distribution of land, labour, capital and natural resources that exist in an area. It considers migration as an alternative practice of individuals or households or families (Harris & Todaro 1970: 126-132).

The theory evaluates migration as the decisions of an individual or a family based on rational evaluation of the losses or benefits to be gained and the costs entailed in moving across places. It is always seen that migrants move from low to high wages areas/nations (Smith 1776: 32). Being seen as primarily a form of arbitrage in the labour market, migration is considered to raise wages in the sending countries (because migrant withdraw their labour) and lower wages in the receiving countries. This is how a situation of equilibrium is achieved at. The equilibrium approach is considered to be more useful in understanding free internal migration patterns and also international migrations between culturally and economically similar countries (Gorter et. al. 1998: 3-5).

Wood has pointed three major drawbacks of this theory. According to him, in the context of developing countries – it is evident that geographic mobility of labour does not necessarily lead to an equilibrium situation, because migration is often an indicator of regional disparities. For instance, the movement of skilled people are reinforced by migration rather than reduced. Secondly, he mentions that the non-historical characteristics of this approach. Some empirical facts run counter to this approach and against the fact that many backward economies throughout history have not spontaneously exported labour but when needed; they were coerced to do so. And thirdly,



it fails to account for migration resulting from non-economic reasons, such as political developments, persecution, religious beliefs, etc. (Wood 1982: 298-319).

### 1.VII.iii \_\_\_ Neo-Classical Theory

The most influential theory about migration emanates from the neo-classical economics that was propounded by Adam Smith and Ravenstein. The neo-classical economic theory attributes the patterns of international migration to the economic factors such as labour demand and supply, wage differentials, etc. According to it, migration is based on familiar tenets such as rational choice, utility maximization, expected net returns, factor mobility and wage differentials (Todaro 1969: 139-141; Todaro & Maruszko 1987: 101-102). It argues that migration is a process of measuring the opportunities offered to the migrants in their current state, against opportunities offered at other places or nations. The theory views that migration is a 'cost-benefit decision' undertaken to maximize income by an individual migrating to places where income-maximizing opportunities are available. One of the major causes of migration is the large-scale unemployment in developing states. Relative wage differentials in sending and receiving countries are found to have a positive correlation with migration. The theory combines micro perspectives of individual decision making and a macro-counterpart of structural determinants (Massey et. al. 1993: 433-436; 1994: 701 – 702).

According to micro level theory of neo-classical economics, individual migrates because of cost benefit calculations (Sjaastad 1962: 80-85). This induction of their expectation for a positive net return is usually a monetary form of movement. It conceptualizes international migration as a form of investment in human capital and individual's choice to move when they think of improving their productivity and livelihood by investing their skills. However, before moving towards the high wages economy with greater labour productivity they have to undertake certain investments that include the cost of travelling, maintenance while moving and looking for a job. At the macro level, the theory emphasizes a spatial redistribution of the factors of production responding to different relative prices. Traditional neo-classical economics view migration as a simple sum of individual cost-benefit decisions undertaken to maximize income through migrating. It

highlights that migration occurs whenever there are uneven geographical distribution of labour and capital. In some countries or regions labour is relatively scarce than capital but its price and the wage level are comparatively higher than other countries or regions. As a result the labourers from a poor wage countries prefer to go to labour scarce and high wage regions (Massey 1993: 434-436).

The simple and compelling explanation of international migration offered by the Neo-Classical theory has provided the basis for much migration policy and the perspectives contain several implicit propositions and assumptions:

- i) The international migration of workers is caused by differences in wage rates between countries.
- ii) The elimination of wage differentials will end the movement of labour, and migration will not occur in the absence of such differentials.
- iii) International flows of human capital – that is, highly skilled workers – respond to differences in the rate of return to human capital, which may be different from the overall wage rate, yielding a distinct pattern of migration that may be opposite that of unskilled workers.
- iv) Labour markets are the primary mechanisms by which international flows of labour are induced; other kinds of markets do not have important effects on international migration (Massey et. al. 1993: 435-436 ; 1994: 701-702).

Some countries with a large endowment of labour relative to capital have a low equilibrium market wage, while countries with a limited endowment of labour relative to capital have a high wage. Such consequential discrepancy in wages causes movements of workers from the low wages country to the high wage country (Todaro 1976; Harris & Todaro 1970: 135-137). As a result, the supply of labour decreases and the wages rise in the capital scarce country, while the supply of labour increases and wages fall in the capital rich country leading to an equilibrium point. The flow of investment from capital rich country to capital poor country begins due to relative scarcity of capital in the poor countries wherein it yields a rate of return thereby attracting investment. The movement of capital also includes human capital with highly skilled workers moving from capital

rich to capital poor countries in order to reap high returns on their skills. This particularly occurs in a human capital scarce environment leading to a parallel movement of managers, technicians and other skill labourers from both sides (Massey et. al. 1993: 433 & 1994: 701-702).

However, the neo-classical theory fails to explain why some countries have relatively high out migration rates and others structurally similar do not have the same. It also fails to explain why numerically, so few migrants, gains or makes significant positive differences in income, wages and levels of well being in comparison to their standard of living in their homeland. This can be termed as the Achilles heel of neo-classical theory. If migration flows between countries were to conform to the prescription of neo-classical theory, the number of international migrations should be many times higher than the one in reality. These shortcomings can be partly traced to the total exclusion of the political dimension from the picture, which has significant prominence. In essence being a theory of mobility of factors of production in accordance with relation prices, the neo-classical theory is incapable to come to terms, with a world with barrier that surely curtails the movement of labour (Massey et. al., 1994: 708-710).

#### **1.VII.iv\_\_The New Economics of Labour Migration**

The theory of new economics of labour migration came into existence as an inside criticism of the micro level neoclassical theory. It argues that international migration stems from failures in other markets which threaten the well being of the households and create barriers to their economic advancement (Massey 1994: 711). According to this theory, migration is a family strategy to diversify the sources of income in order to minimize risks such as unemployment, loss of income or crop failures etc. in their countries of origin. The theory doesn't cover complete and well functioning markets as the neo-classical model does. Indeed it recognizes many situations particularly in the developing countries such as markets for capital futures, and insurance which may be absent, imperfect or inaccessible. In order to self-insure against risks of unemployment, poor income, low production of crops and poverty, or to gain access to scarce investment capital, households send one or more family members to foreign labour market. Given

the relatively higher wages in developed countries, international migration offers a particularly attractive and effective strategy for minimizing risks and overcoming capital constraints (Piore 1979: 4-8). Thus the migrants aim at maximizing income. However, they do not necessarily send people or the whole family in absolute terms but rather in relative terms (one or two). Thus it can be inferred that more the unequal distribution of income in a given community, the more intensely relative deprivation will be felt and the more incentives will be there for further migration to occur. The theoretical models growing out of the new-economics of migration yield a set of propositions and hypotheses that are quite different from those emanating from the Neo-Classical theory. These are the following: -

1. Individuals are not the only focal point of migration research but other units such as families, households, or other culturally defined units of production and consumption are the appropriate units of analysis for migration research, not the autonomous individuals.
2. A wage differential is not a necessary condition for international migration. However, the households may have strong incentives to diversify risks through trans-national movement even in the absence of wage differentials.
3. International migration and local employment or local productions are not mutually exclusive possibilities. Indeed, there are strong incentives for households to engage in both migration and local activities. An increase in returns to local economic activities may heighten the attractiveness of migration as a means of overcoming capital and risks constraints on investing in those activities. Thus economic developments within sending regions need not reduce the pressures for international migration.
4. International movement doesn't necessarily stop when wage differentials have been eliminated across national boundaries. Incentives for migration may continue to exist if other markets within sending countries are absent or imperfect.
5. The same expected gain in income will not have the same effect on the probability of migration for households located at different points in the income distribution, or among those located in communities with different income distributions.

6. Governments can influence migration rate not only through policies that influence labour markets, but also through those that shape insurance, capital markets and future markets. Government insurance programs particularly unemployment insurances can significantly affect the incentives for international movement.
7. Government policies and economic changes that shape income distributions will change the relative deprivation of some households and thus alter their incentives to migrate.
8. Government policies and economic changes that effect the distribution of income will influence international migration independent of their affects on mean income. In fact, government policies that produce a higher mean income in migrant sending areas may increase migration if relatively poor households do not share income gain. Conversely, policies may reduce migrations if relatively rich households do not share in the income gain (Massey 1993: 439-440).

#### **1.VII.v \_\_\_Dual Labour Market Theory**

Piore developed the dual labour market theory and contributed to a better understanding of contemporary realities of migration studies. The theory focuses the receiving end of migrations only and explains it at the macro-level of structural determinants. It explains international migration as a cause of a permanent demand for foreign labour by certain advanced industrial nations. Dual labour market theory views that natives of a developed country are generally averse to jobs of manual labour or drudgery (Piore 1979: 26-29). This aversion to secondary sector jobs often affect policies in developed countries, assuming a comfortable level of unemployment, that allow or even encourage migration and make it much easier for people from other countries to migrate and find jobs (Bijak 2006: 10).

Moreover, migration out of a particular area occurs due to the excess of labour. A surplus of labour often tends to deliberate wealth in the hands of a few individuals who control what work there is to be had. This economic deprivation too encourages migration. When migration does take place, the result is a decrease in the surplus of labour that may continue well into a deficit. When the surplus decreases, and especially in the existence of a labour deficit, wealth tends to become more evenly distributed and leaves less people

in a state of economic deprivation. Thus, the presence of migrant community and the existence of a dual-labour market in a developed country may have effects on the structural changes on the country of origin that ultimately abate the migratory flow (Massey 1993: 441-443).

Overall, the dual labour market theory of international migration offers a reasonable approximation of migratory practices. However, it is important to consider other factors that may not have direct economic corollaries, such as war, politics, disease, famine and geography (Hugo & Massey, et. al. 1997: 261-262). The unstable job conditions in an advanced economy due to division of the economy into labour and capital intensive primary sectors, low productivity secondary sectors give rise to a segmented labour market. Local workers avoid such jobs due to low status and prestige and promise scant upward mobility because they entail motivation problems. That's why the local workers show their reluctances to occupy such unattractive jobs. But migrants and temporary workers from low income countries, who entertain prospects of returning to their homeland some day, are willing to accept such jobs; because of their relatively poor standard of living back home (Massey, et. al. 1993: 442-443).

#### **1.VII.vi\_\_\_World System Theory**

The historians and sociologists developed the world system theory on the notion of the modern world system as established in the mid 1970s. The theory is influenced by the decade of the 1960s and belongs to the historical – structural tradition. It views that migration is the product of the domination exerted by core countries over peripheral areas in the context of international relationship that are characterized by conflict and tension (Hugo, et. al. 1997: 262-263). The theory views that international migration occurs due to institutional and sectoral imbalances between three geographically distinct zones, i.e core, semi-periphery and periphery and is facilitated by cultural, linguistic, administrative, communication links (Wallerstein 1974: 33-36). According to this theory migration is a natural outgrowth of the dislocations and disruptions caused by the development of capitalism. With the development of capitalism, the influence and control of market also extended over to land, raw materials and labour within the peripheral regions creating a vast mobile population. The material and ideological links along with

the investment capital usher these dispossessed masses from the underdeveloped countries to the global cities in developed countries to take up low-paying jobs (Sassen 2001: 20-23).

The world system theory views the world as developing states and developed or wealthy-states. The developed worlds are always in the centre and the developing states in the periphery. According to this theory, international migration is the extension of the capitalist mode of production from core countries to peripheral ones and to ensure incorporation of new regions into an increasingly unified world economy. As a displacement of capitalism the traditional occupations of the periphery states, sections of the population are pressed to migrate in order to find employment. Globalization has accelerated the process of capitalization, an idea emphasized by the fact that labour market bifurcation is at its most extreme in the most globalized cities of the world. The world systems theory also captures the historical relationship between the formerly colonized and the colonizers, Migration into such former colonial powers such as Spain and Portugal reveal the strength of historical ties, with most of their immigrants coming from former colonies in Africa, Brazil, and Latin America. Colonial regimes in the past assisted this penetration and at present neo-classical regimes and multi-national corporations assume this role (Hugo, Massey et. al. 1997: 262-263).

The world system theory gives importance of past and present linkages between countries at different stages of development. It also made some empirical observation that migration often involves countries that were linked in the past by colonial bounds. This theory is a by-product of univocal, reductionist and sense-loaded interpretation of history in which all countries pass through similar process of evolution. The theory is only applicable at the global level and migrants are little more than positive pawns in the hands of bigger powers (Kritz & Zlotnik 1992: 10-11). The world system theory conveys with full force the fact that labour migration, like related exchanges, doesn't occur as an internal process between independent entities but as a part of the internal dynamics of the same overarching unit. This unit, the international capitalist system, is constantly changing according to forces that allow its components to modify their relative positions without significantly altering the basic order (Wallerstein 1974: 229-233).

### 1.VII.vii System Approach

This approach has gained popularity in recent years advocated by Kritz and Zlotnik recognizes that the study of changing trends and patterns of contemporary international migration requires a dynamic rather than static perspective. According to them, migration occurs within national context, its political, demographic, economic and social dimensions change partly in response to the feedbacks and adjustment that stem from migration itself. The theory reveals that micro as well as macro elements are the part of migration analysis. They also include the time dimension, which allows a historical perspective on migration, an analysis of structural conditions and economic and political linkages (Zlotnik & Kritz 1992: 2-4).

The approach recognizes that the study of changing trends and patterns of contemporary international migration requires a dynamic rather than a static perspective. A further main characteristic of the system approach is that a migration system, i.e. two or more places or more specific countries connected to each other by flows and counter flows of people, is used as the basic unit of analysis. Network plays an important role in the system approach and stresses that network must be looked at dynamic relationships and variable social arrangements that vary across ethnic groups and shape migration and its sequel. They point out that networks of institutions and individuals link the various countries together into a coherent migration system. They also note that network at the origin restrain or encourage an individual to migrate, depending on the extent to which such networks provide economic and social support. Finally, networks between origin and destination countries can play a role in channelling information, migrants, remittances and cultural norms (Zlotnik & Kritz 1992: 5-6).

The system framework compared to other approaches has a better advantage as it tries to take into account a larger variety of factors that play their role in the migration process. The theory does not restrict to any special type of migration and it doesn't only explain the existence of migration but also how the sizes, especially of social networks work. A large scale migration flows may be characterized as family migration. However, the approach has the character of a conceptual framework rather than a specific theory and it



may not provide much guidance in specifying functional relationship or testable hypotheses in empirical research (Gorter 1998: 12-13).

### **1.VIII\_\_ Theoretical Dimension of Illegal Migration**

Though there exist various studies to explain illegal migration and its economic consequences but they have failed to yield out a conceptual framework to build a general theory of it. Todaro and Maruszko provided a model of illegal migration emphasizing on individual decisions to migrate abroad is strongly influenced by economic factors, particularly for employment opportunities and higher wages. However, the expected income from the destinations or employment depends on various grounds. Firstly, the probability and chances of getting employment opportunities in the destination economy; secondly, the probability of being captured while crossing borders and during stay in the receiving country; thirdly, an implicit tax that is imposed by employers who take advantage of the migrant's illegal status by paying less than market wages. By calculating all the above mentioned factors a migrant calculates the cost and benefits of migrating (Todaro & Maruszko 1987: 102-103).

The individual decision to migrate illegally depends on the income that an individual expects to receive in the destination country relative to the income expected in the home country. This illegal migration is defined as some function of the expected relative income differential between the home and destination countries. The effective capture rate means the proportion of all individuals attempting to illegally enter the country in any given period who are actually prevented from doing so. It depends on both the average number of attempts to migrate illegally and the rate of apprehension on each single attempt. In keeping with the observation that a high rate of unemployment in destination countries generates pressure for stopping the flow of illegal migrants, it is assumed that the effective capture rate is change of the unemployment rate in the destination country. The probability of being captured is the same as the effective capture rate in the destination country. The illegality tax on earnings in the destination country is an implicit tax imposed by employers who take advantage of the migrant's illegal status by offering less than market wages. It is assumed that the illegality tax is a positive

function of the unemployment rate in the destination country. In other words, a higher illegality tax is associated with a higher unemployment rate since employers can offer less than competitive wages to illegal migrants who will accept them rather than risk the chance of not finding employment at all. Conversely, one would expect that the tighter the labor market (i.e., the lower the unemployment rate), the less employers are willing and/or able to discriminate against illegal migrants (Todaro & Maruszko 1987: 102-106).

It is argued that illegal migration occurs due to strict migration policies (Maillat 1986: 33). It is sure that there would be no illegal migration if nations do not restrict the movement of people across their borders. The states however, do retain sovereignty over the entry of migrants and therefore national policy has to be taken into account (Kritz 1987: 957). Moulrier-Boutang and Garson (1984: 590-591) views, "the restrictive work and residency permit system used in many European countries produces large numbers of illegal migrants. Permits can limit migrants' occupation and sector of employment, as well as specify their area of residence. Migrants can lapse into irregular status by not renewing their papers within specified periods of time or by shifting occupation or sector of employment. Applications for renewal are unlikely to be filled by the unemployed since employment is required for the renewal to be granted" (Kritz 1987: 958).

The migrants may gain entry through legal channels, for example as family members or as contract labourers, or evade law enforcement either by illegally crossing borders or by overstaying temporary visas. The main assets that this class of migrants brings to their countries of destination are all labour related: skills, willingness to work harder and for lower wages than the local working class, and flexibility to accommodate fluctuations in employers' needs. The massive presence of these manual labour migrants in the advanced countries can only be explained by the match between their goals and aspirations and the interests of their employers. Mexican migration to the United States, Turkish migration to West Germany and most Caribbean migration to Great Britain are examples of this class origin and of the economic contributions such migrants can make (Portes & Borocz 1989: 616-617; Baldwin – Edwards 2008: 1450).

## **1.IX\_\_ International Migration under Bilateral Treaties/Agreement**

There are a number of theories that seeks to explain economic migration but none of them can give very straightforward answers related to migration or do not provide any explanation regarding the free movement of population under bilateral agreement existing in various countries. With the increase of international migration arising from economic disparities among the countries as well as conflict and political instability in others, there has been an urgent need for strengthening dialogues through international cooperation which would help in tackling international migration. This has been pursued in the form of various bilateral, regional and multilateral arrangements. Bilateral agreements have been traditionally used to manage migration flows between countries and these are legally binding treaties for the cooperation of managing labour migration (Go 2007: 1-2).

There are few investigations which postulate free movement of population to manage labour migration. Rodrik (2002: 3-8) viewed, "since wages for similarly qualified workers in developed and developing countries differ sharply – by a factor of 10 or more as against a difference for commodities and financial assets that rarely exceed a ratio of 1:2 - the gains from openness could be enormous, roughly 25 times larger than the gains from liberalisation of movement of goods and capital. In a simplified world with no national borders through a bilateral agreement and no limits to the internationally free movement of labour, migration overcomes country-specific scarcities or surpluses in factor endowments and enhances global welfare. These theoretical models bring out the positive outcome of free movement of people and suggest that it makes economic sense to strive for a policy of migration without borders or agreement" (Ghosh 2005: 3-4).

However, it was criticized for being based on a set of fixed assumptions, such as labour is homogeneous; perfect competition and mobility exist in labour markets; that there are no public goods and no public intervention; and that both economies of scale in production and the out-put mix in the economies remain unchanged. However, the reality is often different as the migrant labour may be skilled - unskilled and even skilled labour may not be fully homogeneous across countries; competition in the labour market may be hindered due to rigidities and segmentation of the labour market. An open border through

a bilateral agreement is likely to lead to massive outflows of skills from poorer to richer countries and the receiving country may benefit from the positive externalities associated with skilled migration. However, it could also be exposed to negative externalities of a non-economic nature. Massive inflows of migrants may place heavy strain on the receiving country's physical infrastructure, public services, including housing facilities, transport system, schools and medical services etc. The costs of integration may exceed the margin of tolerance of foreigners, whereby tension and conflict could follow, which can threaten economic growth and social stability. Thus, the over-all economic for open borders is further weakened by non-economic considerations (Ghosh 2005: 4-5).

There are several examples of bilateral agreements framed to stimulate the desired labour migration. This has gained special importance in the enlargement process of the European Union of strongly controlled borders. The free movement of labour, however, as one of the basic principles of the European Union supposes unified Europe without controlled borders between the member countries. The institutional development of the European Union supports bilateral agreements between countries of the European Union and those outside the Union. The purpose of the agreement is to bring about guest-worker programmes of their own by each member country of the European Union. Bilateral agreements are believed to be the proper technique to channel labour migration (Hars 2003: 1-2).

Next Germany has been the main receiving country of migrants through the frame of bilateral agreements from Central and Eastern-European countries, while the main sending country has been Poland. Nearly 85 percent of the annually employed temporary migrants were seasonal worker, around 13 percent project tied worker, the share of participants in other programmes was negligible in Germany, less than 5 percent all together (Hars 2003: 5). In the Asian region, Philippines have been the most successful among the labour-sending countries through various bilateral agreements. However, the number of bilateral labour and social security agreements that the Philippines has successfully entered into during 1974-2004 with 13 countries (12 labour receiving countries and 1 labor sending country) since the overseas employment program began in 1974. While this is so, it has not been able to enter into such agreements with the largest

labor receiving countries of overseas Filipino workers such as Singapore, Japan and Saudi Arabia (Stella P. Go 2007: 2-5).

## **1.X\_\_ Migration and Development**

Migration and development are closely linked and it has been beneficial economically, socially for both sending and the receiving country. Through that process the migrants and their families also get benefited from it. However, the developmental impact of migration is dependent on effective migration management and governance. The economic and human development of many countries has been associated with the population movement over the various stages of history. Massey (1998: 108-110) views,

“the industrial growth of Europe owes heavily to migration colonialisation. Countries like Australia and the United States owe their creation as nation-states to migrants. Again the massive infrastructural growth and development in the Middle East since the oil price hike of the 1970s were possible only through migration of all categories of workers ranging from highly professional, skilled to unskilled.”

Similarly, the growing economies of South East Asia depend on steady flows of migrant workers for their sustenance (Siddique 2005b: 6-7). A number of developed countries, such as US, Japan and UK highly depend on the skilled professionals from developing and the least developed countries to carry out their development, research and other programmes. Among the world's high income countries i.e. US, Japan, Canada has experienced highest annual inflows of skilled workers. The US (1999: 370000 persons), Japan (2000: 129000 persons) and Canada (2000: 86200 persons) experienced the largest annual inflows. Followed by UK (2000: 39000), Australia (1999-2000: 30000), Germany (2000-2001: 11800) (IOM 2003b: 2). Thus the movement of brain-drain/knowledge workers constitutes as an integral part of the global economic development (Siddique 2005b: 7).

Remittances are considered as an important yardstick of migrant's contribution to their countries of origin. Flow of migrant remittances from sending to receiving countries is continuously growing. The official remittances have increased from less than US \$ 2000 million in 1970 to US \$ 80000 million in 2000 (ILO 2002: 2-3). In 2008, remittance flows to developing countries reached up to \$336000 million which was \$285000 million

in 2007 (Ratha 2009: 1-2). The latest annual, quarterly and monthly data reported by central banks show that officially recorded remittance flows to developing countries reached \$316000 million in 2009, down 6 percent from a revised \$336000 million in 2008 (Ratha 2010: 1-3). The world remittances have increased exponentially; up from & \$132000 million in 2000 to an estimated \$ 414000 million in 2009. More than \$ 316000 million flow of remittances occurred to developing countries representing some 76 percent of the total remittances. Earlier, \$ 83000 million and 63 percent were recorded during 2000 (IOM 2010: 117).

The IMF, World Bank and ADB are increasingly commending migrant's remittance as a tool to promote development. The ILO and IOM have emphasized that countries that initiate pragmatic policies to manage migration will benefit most out it (Siddique 2005b: 9). More than 1.5 million South Asian workers are estimated to migrate every year, many of them destined for the Gulf region to perform construction, maintenance and other service jobs. The ILO reveals that more than 200000 workers are estimated migrating every year from Sri Lanka and Pakistan and many more from Bangladesh and India (The Daily Star, July 8, 2008: 4).

The five major South Asia labour-sending countries sent over 1.5 million migrant workers abroad legally in 2005. In which, India sent 549000, Bangladesh-253000, Sri Lanka-231000, Nepal-184,000, and Pakistan-142,000. The number of migrants deployed rose in each country by 2007, for instance, the number of Indians deployed in 2007 was 800,000 the number of Bangladeshis 833,000, and the number of Pakistanis, 265,000. There were 24 million South Asians abroad in 2000, including nine million Indians (four million in the Gulf countries), almost seven million Bangladeshi's (most in India, but three million in the Gulf countries), and 3.5 million Pakistanis abroad, including 1.5 million in other South Asian countries and almost a million in the Gulf countries (Migration News 2008). An estimated 30 million Indians working abroad, spread across 110 countries during 2009 (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs 2010: 16). A substantial increase of migration for employment from India to abroad is seen constantly rising. During the year 2002, the number of migrant worker living India was 0.368 million – increased up to 0.849 million by 2008. About 0.61 million workers migrated legally from

India to with emigration clearance during 2009. Out of this, about 0.13 million workers went to UAE, about 0.28 million to Saudi Arabia, about 46,000 to Qatar and about 11,000 to Malaysia (MOIA 2010: 33&55).

**Table 1. II**  
**Officially Reported outflow of Migrant Workers**

Year	India	Bangladesh	Sri Lanka
1980	236200	30073	7600
1985	163000	77694	12400
1990	143600	103814	42625
1995	415300	187543	172489
2000	243182	212686	182188
2005	549000	252702	231290
2008	849000	875055	252021
2009	610000	475278	---

Sources: Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (2010), *Annual Reports 2009-2010*, Government of India: 50; Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (2009), *Annual Statistical Report of Foreign Employment 2008*, Government of Sri Lanka: 3, (Online Web), accessed on 8 September 2010, URL: <http://www.slbfe.lk/downloads/annual.pdf>, Wickramasekera, P. (2002), *Asian Labour Migration: Issues and Challenges in an era of Globalisation*, International Migration Papers 57, ILO: Geneva, accessed on 8 September 2010, URL:

<http://www.ilo.int/public/english/protection/migrant/download/imp/imp57e.pdf>,

BMET, *Year Wise Overseas Employment* from 1976 to 2009, URL:

<http://www.bmet.org.bd/BMET/viewStatReport.action?reportnumber=9>

The Nepal Government has opened 108 countries for foreign employment and maximum numbers of Nepalese go to Malaysia, Saudi Arab, Qatar, UAE, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, and so on. In the fiscal year 2008/09, a total of 219,965 Nepalese workers including 211,371 male and 8,954 female workers had gone for foreign employment while this number was 173,239 including 164,711 males and 8,528 females for the first eight months of the current fiscal year 2009/10. The Number of Nepalese workers bound abroad for foreign employment in different fiscal years are shown in Table 1.III.

The five major South Asia labour-sending countries received \$40000 million as remittances in 2007, led by \$27000 million in India; \$6400 million in Bangladesh; \$6100 million in Pakistan; \$2700 million in Sri Lanka; and \$1600 million in Nepal. Bangladesh provides an example of the challenges and opportunities facing South Asian labour senders. Bangladesh's second leading source of foreign exchange after garments is remittances, which totalled \$6600 million in 2007. The number of migrants leaving

Bangladesh averaged about 250,000 a year between 2001 and 2006, rose to almost 400,000 in 2006, and doubled to 832,600 in 2007; the government expects to send 900,000 workers abroad in 2008 (Martin 2008: 17-18). India has received \$ 46900 million as remittances during 2008-09 that increased from \$ 22200 million during the 2003-04 (MOIA 2010: 15 & 54).

**Table 1. III**  
**Status of Foreign Employment of Nepalis Working Abroad**

Fiscal Year	Nepalis for Foreign Employment
1999-2000	35543
2000-2001	55025
2001-2002	104739
2002-2003	105055
2003-2004	106660
2004-2005	135992
2005-2006	177506
2006-2007	204533
2007-2008	249051
2008-2009	219965
2009-2010*	173239

Sources: Ministry of Finance (2010), *Economic Survey of Nepal 2010*, Government of Nepal: 249, \* Until Mid-February 2010

Again due to global trade liberalization and the dismantling of the trade barriers in the world the movement of service providers from developing and least developed countries has increased mainly to high income countries since the early 1990s. The income earned by the migrants increases both the migrants and their families' welfare and strengthens national economy through remittances. However, there are barriers for movement of population, unlike the trade in goods and services. Unlike trade in goods and services barriers to movement of natural persons across borders is still high. This is particularly true for less skilled temporary migrants from poor countries (Khatun 2008: 1-2).

### **1.XI\_\_ Migration and Conflict**

The movement of population has been an intrinsic component of major process of structural and social changes. Whether in response to political or economic imperatives, whether spontaneous or coerced, whether involving entire nation or groups involved or selected groups within them, the displacements of people through spaces have



accompanied every major transformation of the social order. The effect of international migration on the demographic, social and economic structures of sending and receiving countries has received wide attention in recent studies. While international migration has declined in importance as a component of population growth, several countries of diverse levels of economic development continue to receive large numbers of migrants (Kritz 1975: 513-515).

There has been debate about the impact of migrants and refugees on the countries and communities that shelter them. Migration of people from one country/place to another can induce violence and conflict. Migration from a country has serious and several implications on the host/receiving country. The influx of people can create demographic changes, both in size and composition of population environmental degradation and can have serious security implications. Several factors are responsible in which migration of population can trigger conflict in the receiving country (A. Martin 2005: 329-332 & Clark 2007: 2).

Migrations have security implications in the receiving country. If there is a continuous large scale migration from country A to country B for whatever the reason, and if the country A doesn't take any step to prevent the influx and in fact is tempted to encourage it, then country B may regard it as an interference in its domestic affairs. In extreme form, it may be left with no option but to forcibly push back the migrants. This may escalate into inter-state conflict and even war. This is what happened between India and Pakistan in 1971-72 when millions of East Pakistanis crossed the border came to India to escape repressions. This led to a war between India and Pakistan and finally the liberation of Bangladesh. It is well known that Chakma refugees have long been source of tension between India-Bangladesh relations, and Tamil refugees in Indo-Sri Lanka relations (Dubey 1999: 5-6). According to Richmond (1988: 42), "conflict in the host countries may arise out of competition for scarce resources, the differential distribution of power within the society, fundamental opposition of basic value systems and inherent contradictions in the values held and the institutions serving them. Such conflict may co-exist with countervailing forces promoting greater order and stability. These may include economic interdependence and exchange relationships emerging in the market context,

the emergence of an underlying consensus on basic values that encourage tolerance of diversity, together with the translation of coercive social controls into legitimates authority.”

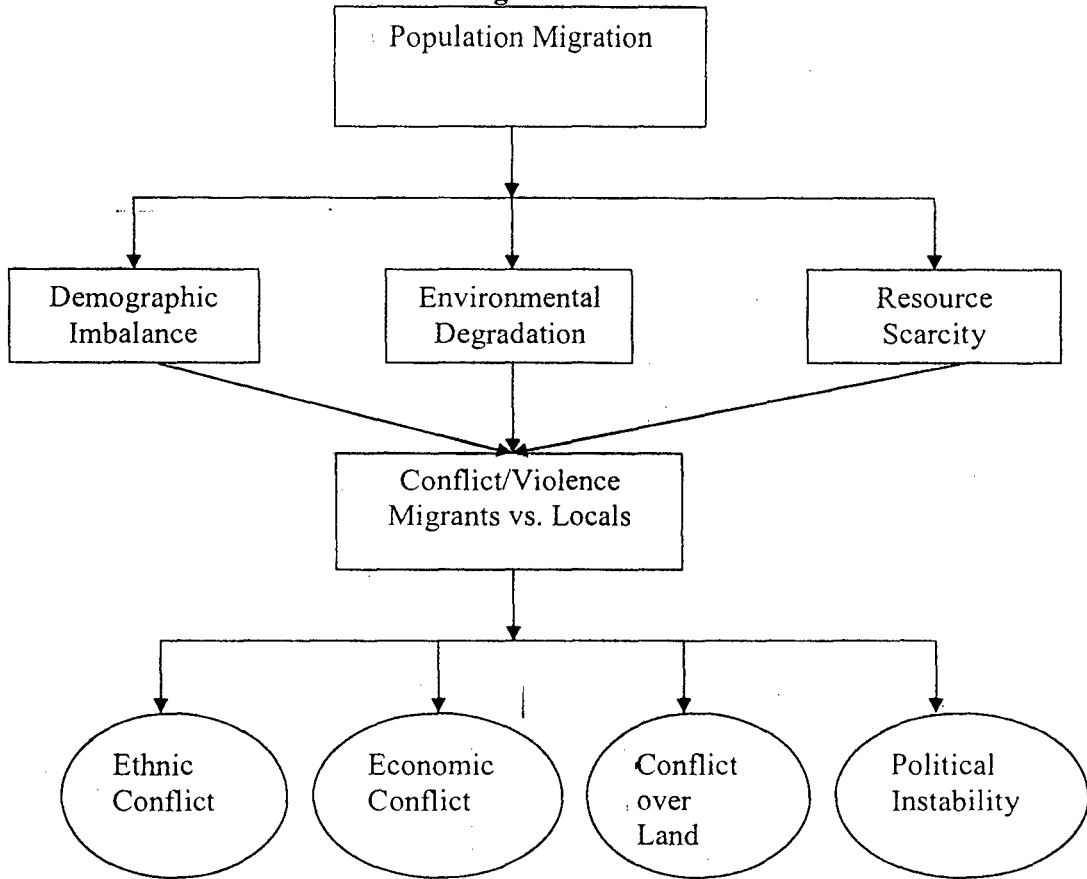
The conflict between the migrants and the inhabitants can be the result of a wide range of factors, including competition for scarce resources, competition over controlling political power and dissatisfaction or desperation on the part of marginalized groups. Many conflicts are directly caused by competition for essential livelihood resources. Even where there are other primary causes of an escalation of tensions livelihood failure can contribute to the emergence of conflict by weakening the social fabric, making people resort to desperate means to obtain resources, and deepening vulnerability to exploitation by those with an interest in promoting conflict for political or economic gain. People whose livelihoods are damaged by conflict may be motivated to continue to fight or join the fighting in order to get back what they have lost (Richmond & Verma 1978: 25-26). Thus, migration can lead to conflict in the following sequence: Population Migration => Migration Induced Scarcity, Political and Social Imbalances and Distortions=> Conflict (Lama 2004: 11-12). Conflict can occur in the receiving country due to population migration can be illustrated through the following points and the flow chart.

### **1.XI.i \_\_\_ Demographic Imbalance**

There is a common belief that high population pressure triggers migration and it can also disturb the demographic balance and generate conflict in the host country when migrants and local inhabitants compete for controlling the resources such as arable lands, jobs, fresh water etc. (Gleditsch 2006: 342; Brunborg & Urdal 2005: 371-74). When there is a rapid rise in population, the demand for resources increases dramatically following the creation of settlements, accelerated conversion of forests to agricultural land, for collection of firewood, extraction of surface and ground water, fishing and hunting etc. (A. Martin 2005: 330- 332). The demographic changes in the host country because of migration may heighten native sentiments among the majority groups who might perceive it as a threat to their dominant social status. If the needs of migrants are similar to the domestic minorities in the host area, the minorities in the host may feel that

migrants may further dilute their strength. The conflicts in the North East Indian states i.e. Assam, Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur, and Nagaland have been fuelled due to migration of Bangladeshis (Gleditsch 2006: 342-43).

**Figure – 1.II**



The introduction of transmigrasi or transmigration programme by the Indonesian government has been designed to relieve population pressure in the densely populated areas of Java, Bali and Madura by encouraging families to resettle in the sparsely populated outer islands, especially Sumatra, Kalimantan and West Papua. This created conflict in the region. The programme was started by the Dutch colonial power in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but continued by both the Sukarno and Suharto regimes. The Indonesia government's five-year plans also incorporated the same to move very large numbers of people: 250000 families during 1974-79, 500000 families during 1979-83 and 750000 families in 1983-88 (Tirtosudarmo 2001: 199-227). Though the targets were not achieved

fully but large numbers of people were settled. Violent conflicts broke out between indigenous groups and settlers from the inner islands; which were particularly intense in Kalimantan, where Dayak tribesman attacked the predominantly Madurese transmigrants. Hundreds were killed and thousands of Madurese families fled their villages and had to be evacuated by the Government (Castles 2002: 7).

#### 1.XI.ii \_\_ Environmental Changes

Population migration can also occur when there persists environmental crisis, such as floods, droughts, deforestation etc. Environmental degradation may generate massive population displacement which in turn can ignite social conflict in the receiving states by depleting the resources in the host country. Resource scarcity has become an omnipresent feature of human existence and this scarcity has become so severe that it may seriously threaten the very survival of human being. It's a common belief that migration not only strains the economic resources and the administrative structure of the host country but also leads to political instability and ethnic polarization which may result in destruction (Goldstone 2002: 5-6 & Gaan 2001: 151-152).

Environmental changes and scarcity in a country can lead to serious conflict between the migrants and the natives in the receiving country (Dixon 1995: 27-28). There are three types of environmental scarcity for which population migration occurs. The three environmental scarcities are - firstly, supply induced scarcity is caused by the degradation and depletion of environmental resources for e.g. the erosion of cropland. Secondly, the demand induced scarcity results from population growth within a region or increased per capita consumption of a resource, either of which heightens the demand for the resource. Thirdly, structural scarcity arises from an unequal social distribution of resources that concentrates it in the hands of relatively few people while the remaining population suffers from shortages. These scarcities force the people to migrate to another location for survival. This may lead to armed conflict and violence in the receiving end in the same way they occur in the sending country (Pericpal & Dixon 1998: 280).

Dixon (1991: 78) views, "poor countries will in general be more vulnerable to environmental change than rich ones and therefore environmentally induced conflicts are

likely to arise first in the developing countries.” Dixon (1994: 20) views, “environmental degradation might generate massive population displacements which in turn can ignite social conflict. Conflict is not obviously a necessary consequence of migration nor is it clear that environmental degradation by itself is a major cause of population movements.” Moreover Dixon (1994: 24-26), “demography and political economy in other words are the most salient causal factors. Population increase appears as a central underlying cause of both environmental degradation and migration. Due to demographic pressures, population concentrations develop in marginal areas where they are vulnerable to even small changes in the environment. Few numbers of poor migrants would hardly be a cause of conflict in the receiving areas. They are too weak to make demands, and too few to be an agent of destabilization, rather they are more likely to become passive victims than a source of conflicts.” Environmental scarcity is one of the major causes of rural-urban migration in South Africa that generated conflict among the migrants and the local people. Conflict over scarce resources, such as minerals, water and particularly territory is a major source of armed struggle in the migrants receiving state. Recently wide ranging claims have been made to the effect that environmental degradation will increase resource scarcity and therefore, contribute to an increase in armed conflict (Pericpal & Dixon 1998: 290-296).

Generally people can adapt to adverse environmental changes either by defending against them, or by leaving the affected areas and the choice between these options largely depends on the extent of change and the technical capabilities of the society. A developed society/developed countries are likely to defend against the changes. On the other hand least developed countries (LDCs) or the developing countries are less able to do so since this effort requires high levels of investment and technological expertise, which they lack. People living in LDCs may have no choice but to migrate from the affected areas. Environmental migration, in turn, increases the livelihood conflict at its destination due to several reasons. There are always high possibility of conflict between environmental migrants and the residents at the migrant’s destination. According to Reuveny (2005), the environmental migration can cause conflict in the receiving state through four channels including:

1. The arrival of migrants can be a burden in the destination's economy and natural resources, promoting native-migrant competition for controlling over economic and natural resources. The resource pressures are expected to rise with the rise in population of migrants and residents. When economic and natural resources are scarce at the migration's destination and the population pressures are high, people may attempt to secure or sometimes forcefully snatch resources, particularly when there are underdeveloped property right institutions.
2. When environmental migrants and residents belong to different ethnic groups, the arrival of many newcomers over a relatively short period of time may upset a precarious ethnic balance. If migrants have brethren in the destination, residents may consider the combined bloc as a threat. Host countries may fear separatism, and migrants may attempt to reunify with their home country, thus promoting aggressive nativist responses.
3. Environmental migration provides opportunities to exploit the situation, which generates tension. For example, the migrants' origin country may suspect that the receiving country accepts migrants in order to upset the ethnic balance in the origin country. The receiving government may suspect that migrants wish to destabilize its rule by enabling penetration by the origin country. Also, the origin country may resent (actual or perceived) mistreatment of migrants by the receiving country.
4. The conflict could follow existing fault lines. For example, pastoralists and farmers may compete over land. Migrants and residents may compete over jobs. Environmental migration from rural to urban areas—another fault line—presents competing effects. Political entrepreneurs in urban areas may exploit rural migrants' frustration and poverty and mobilize them to challenge the state. Threatened, the state may respond with force. However, urban settings offer migrants more opportunities, which can alleviate pressures and, therefore, reduce the likelihood of conflict (Reuveny 2005: 4-5).

The deforestation is most fundamentally a result of population growth in a political economy characterised by systematic oppression and gross corruption in Haiti. Yet

deforestation leads to soil erosion which has an independent and accelerating effect on poverty. The total situation has produced large-scale outmigration for several years. Some forms of environmental degradation are a result of poverty (e.g. air and water pollution). Others stem out from economic growth (for e.g. deforestation and industrial pollution). Population increase appears to be the most central, cause of both environmental degradation and migration. Due to demographic pressure, population concentrations develop in marginal areas where they are vulnerable to even small changes in the environment (Suhrke 1993: 3-8).

Historically, migration has certainly been associated with violent conflicts. Ancient migrations and colonial expansion involved conquest of territory and peoples; later, spontaneous or colonially induced migrations in Africa and Asia contributed to ethnic conflict that has persisted in the post-colonial states. Current conflict in the Indian subcontinent alone suggests the severity of migration. Native people and new settlers fight over land (the Northeast hill areas), old and new migrants clash over political power in urban areas (the Mohajir and the Sindhi in Karachi), Native movements turn violent to exclude newcomers (from Assam to Bombay), and industrial workers fight with displaced tribal people over employment (e.g., in Bihar) (Suhrke 1993: 15). International migration has an additional conflict potential because it involves two distinct sovereignties (Weiner 1992-1993: 91-93).

Baechler's extensive study of the relationships between environmental change and violent conflicts found that environmental degradation could be the most *vital catalyst* in ethnic or political conflicts. The countries having relatively low and high population growth rates may encounter population changes having long lasting impacts on demography. It is not the absolute rate of population growth but sometimes the imbalance between growth in specific sectors of the population and growth of the economy is crucial to the creation of conflicts. Demographic factors have also proved highly useful for forecasting political risks. Even revolutions are also frequently marked by shifts in marriages and birth rates (depending on whether the post revolutionary period is one of rampant optimism or pessimism), in urbanization (if the new regime sponsors the new development), in education (as the new regime and the violence associated with it may

either attract migrants from abroad or send them across borders seeking escape from violence or persecution) (Goldstone 2002: 6-7, 17-18).

The recent neo-classical work on the environmental sources of civil wars actually inverts the neo-Malthusian position, arguing that an abundance of natural resources, rather than scarcity, is more likely to produce armed conflict. Environmental stress, including the loss of valuable agricultural land and decrease in crop yields due to soil erosion or pollution, the loss of timber and fuel wood due to unsustainable cultivation practices and the loss of hydroelectric power. Transportation due to the siltation of rivers and reservoirs can also lead to decline in the economy and reduce the flow of revenue to the state (Suhrke 1993: 23-29).

### **1.XI.iii \_\_\_ Competition due to Dearth of Resources**

Resource scarcity leading to conflict may evolve endogenously following an external shock, such as a rapid increase in population due to inward migration (Reuveny & Maxwell 2000: 302). The arrival of migrants can be a burden in the destination's economy and resources and the pressure on resources would increase due to rise in population. Thus, people may attempt or fight to secure or snatch resources, particularly when there are underdeveloped property right institutions (Dixon 1994: 21-23; Reuveny 2005: 4). According to the UNEP report (2009: 8-9), 'resource scarcity can exacerbate conflict thus increasing the likelihood that it might become violent. For example, it has been found that natural resources play role in at 40 percent of all violent intrastate conflicts in the world' (Gendron & Hoffman 2010: 3-4).

Renewable resource scarcity (e.g., land degradation, deforestation, fisheries depletion, food scarcity, and water scarcity) is increasingly a factor that contributes to conflict. The conflict over renewable resources has typically occurred in LDC's during post-1945 era. Land scarcity and deforestation are said to have played a role in the 1994 Rwandan civil war, whereas land pressures and hunger stimulated the Chiapas uprising in Mexico in the early 1990s (Baechler 1998: 24-28). Other examples involve conflict over scarce water. Some observers in fact argue that future wars will be increasingly about water. (Reuveny & Maxwell 2001: 720-721).



## **1.XII\_\_ Conflict and Violence**

Thus, the pressure of population will lead to environmental changes and degeneration of resources which would further lead to competition between the inhabitants and the migrants resulted in conflict in the host country. The violence may be of various natures; i.e ethnic, economic and land related conflict among the migrants and the local inhabitants involving various groups which would finally lead to political instability. The political instability in the host country may give birth to insurgency problem (Dixon 1994: 7-8; Ware 2005: 435-436).

### **1.XII.i\_\_ Ethnic Conflict**

Migration whether it is voluntary/forced/legal or illegal has potential to generate conflict in receiving area by triggering competition for resources and other civic amenities. Migration can arise from conflicting situations like sending countries and has potential to generate dissension in the receiving country when there exists ethnic imbalances. If the inhabitants of the host countries are ethnically sensitive and lack coherence, there are high chances of conflict (Richmond 1988: 41-42). Forced migrants are generated through conflicting situations i.e. civil wars, political repression, and regime change; natural calamities or man-made disaster. These displaced migrants can change the ethnic composition of the host area by initiating economic competition of land and resources. They might lead to impoverishment, and encroachment of ecologically fragile areas or bring with them arms, combatants and ideologies that are conducive to violence and mobilize opposition directed at their country of origin as well as their host country (Castles 2002: 3-4; Gleditsch 2006: 338).

Lee (2001: 73-75) finds complex causes of forced migration from Bangladesh. Bangladesh's extremely dense population and its exposure to cyclones ,floods, ethnic division, economic development projects, political instabilities like - state repression appears as the quintessential example of forced migration generating conflict in the North-Eastern part of India. The CISS report points out that the ethnic strife in the Northeastern states of India is the result of population migration from Bangladesh and Indian states of West Bengal, Bihar and others. The report also views that population

migration from Bangladesh in the near future may be driven by climate change which includes rising sea levels, extreme weather events; floods arising from deforestation in the watersheds upstream on the Ganges and the Brahmaputra rivers. The strong force of migration as a cause of population displacement can be understood in context of tribal, cultural, religious, and economic cleavages that often channel and aggravate intergroup hostility (CISS Report 1990: 16-17).

Migration within and into a multi-ethnic society frequently has destabilizing effects and tends to perpetuate intense conflicts through both integrative and disintegrative potentialities. People from different ethnic group/background from another country, may lead to a sense of awareness among the natives about benefits of the larger national polity and economy; or it can lead to civil strife as it did in Nigeria and Malaysia. Migration may precipitate self-awareness both on part of the migrants and indigenous people. Ethnic self-awareness takes place when individuals are able to contrast their cultural characteristics with that of the migrants (Debabarma 2001: 151-152).

Migration has a cumulative effect on the linguistic heterogeneity with those of others. For example, the migration of people from Bangladesh to India is a peculiar and perennial phenomenon, which over the years caused various problems in Tripura causing the most serious being ethnic conflict between the Boroks (indigenous people) and the migrants. The imposition of Driglam Namzah (cultural code of conduct) in 1980s by the Bhutanese government forcing all Bhutanese to conform to the Drupka culture, language and dress, is nothing but a policy to drive out the Bhutanese Nepalese (also known as Lhotsampas). These led to the exodus of thousands of Bhutanese Nepalese into Nepal. The *raison d'être* of the official policy of citizenship and other cultural measures adopted by Bhutan was made public saying that Bhutan would never compromise on one nation and one people formula that aimed at long term security and integrity of Bhutan and its survival as a nation (Muni & Baral 1996: 5-10).

### **1.XII.ii Economic Conflict**

Migrants may pose actual or perceived negative economic externalities. Migrants compete with locals over employment, housing, land, water, constitutes an economic

threat. Migrants can depress wages when they enter the labour force and lead to an increase in prices as they consume goods, services, housing etc. This may lead to a decline in living standards for politically important segments of the indigenous population, particularly those who are in greatest competition with the migrants. Such a decline may lead to a setting that invites violence against migrants as well as more general dissatisfaction (Gleditsch 2006: 344-345; Borjas 1989: 457-460; A. Martin 2005: 331). The conflict that has arisen between the natives of Telangana and the Andhra's in India is another example. The migration of people from the most prosperous agricultural delta districts of Andhra Pradesh to Telangana was a major factor of conflict. The local people were anxious over the migrants, because they were mostly engaged in the state administrative services, and were acquiring land in the countryside. They had a predominant power in the state government. These made the educated middle classes of Telangana jealous and they felt deprived. They thus turned against the people from Andhra Pradesh. They demanded greater power sharing in the state government and sought preferential rules for employment for the Telangana people (Weiner 1978: 265-272).

The attack on the Bihari community in Assam and Maharashtra displays the economic conflict occurred between indigenous population and the migrants (Crush & Ramachandra 2009: 64). The worst attack on non-Assamese people occurred in November 2003, when a major wave of violence was launched against Hindi-speaking people coming from Bihar to find seasonal work in Assam. The conflict was triggered by row over jobs and reported intimidation of Assamese people in Bihar and violence quickly spread from the capital city of Guwahati to areas in Upper Assam. Mobs and militants killed at least 56 people and torched hundreds of houses. There is no estimate of the number of people who became internally displaced within the state, but at least 18,000 fled to about 40 camps in and outside Assam (Relief Web 2004).

### **1.XII.iii \_\_\_ Land related Conflict**

When people migrate, they first grab land and other resources in the receiving country/state but also involved in conflict with the indigenous population. The control

over renewable natural resources can be the structural causes and sustaining factors in struggles for power among the migrants and the natives. Competition between the local population and the migrants arises when there is a consensus on the value of given objects or goals, both material and symbolic and when these are in short supply. Nevertheless it is demonstrated that changes in land use and land access have been a significant factors of high-intensity conflicts in Africa. Though not being the root causes, they are seen as one of the 'sustaining' causes of conflict. Competition for access over land exacerbated by the enforced or spontaneous migration is more commonly said to be a source of conflict (Huggins, et. al. 2005: 1-4).

The conflict between the indigenous people of CHT and Bengali speaking settlers is an example. Migration of Bengali speaking people from other parts of Bangladesh due to the resettlement policies of the government triggered a sense of anger among the indigenous people. The migration of Bengali speaking people in the CHT region occurred after the construction of Kaptai dam during 1962-67. The construction of dam generated new income and job opportunities in the region, for which the Bengali population from other parts of the country migrated. The government of Bangladesh also facilitated migration by removing the Special Status Area of CHT in 1963-64. This policy also lifted the restrictions on the entry and land settlement rights of non-indigenous people. The continuous influx of Bengalis, land grabbing and their settlement policies of the government drastically altered the demographic set up of CHT by reducing the indigenous people to minority in their ancestral homeland, which finally led to an armed conflict between the migrants and the CHT people. Later the conflict became serious and turned out to be an insurgent movement in the region (Adnan 2003: 51-54).

The migration of the people from Minahasa, Bali, and South Sulawesi to Bolaang Mangondow and the city of Bitung is an example related to land grabbing leading to conflict. In case with Bolaang Mangondow city, migrants have made significant contribution for the development of the district agricultural sector. Moreover, in the district of North Sulawesi Province, migrants attempted to produce considerable amount of agriculture products, mainly rice, which made the district a main source of supply for that region. On the other hand, the negative impact of the existence of migrants in this

area has inevitably sparked conflicts among various ethnic groups. The existence of the migrants has stimulated conflicts between local people and local government, particularly with those related to land acquisition used for transmigration resettlement. As a typical rural society, control over land resources was a significant factor that influenced income. Therefore, it was not surprising to find that competition to control agricultural land became the prominent conflict in Bolaang Mangondow (Noveria 2002: 1-10).

#### 1.XII.iv \_\_\_ Political Instability

Migration may result in conflict if the overall political stability is scarce or instability in the receiving area persists (Whitaker 2003: 245). Whitaker on the basis of case studies of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (the former Zaire) and Tanzania in the 1990s, compared the situation in both countries when migration of people from Rwanda had to be accommodated. In DRC, the collapsing political system facilitated a climate in which opposition groups and rebel movements could easily gain momentum to struggle against dictator Mobutu. By contrast, in Tanzania economic reform and political democratization processes had been initiated which facilitated extensive legitimacy of the government. As a result, Tanzania was more capable of providing a stable political environment for migrants than the DRC (Warnecke A. et. al 2010: 4-5).

Migration can lead to group-identity conflicts for controlling resources in the host country. If the receiving country having economic and other social problems can result in group-identity conflicts, which in turn would cause deprivation conflicts, such as civil strife and insurgency. Strong evidences shows that due to large-scale migration from Bangladesh to Assam has produced group identity conflicts and even the birth of insurgency in the state (Dixon 1994: 21-22). For example, in Tripura, the original Buddhist and Christian inhabitants make up less than 30 percent of the state's population. The rest are Hindu migrants from East Pakistan or Bangladesh. This shift in the ethnic balance precipitated a violent insurgency between 1980 and 1988 that diminished only after the government agreed to return land to dispossessed Tripuris and to stop influx of Bangladeshis (Dixon 1994: 23).

### 1.XIII \_\_\_ Migration can Resolve Conflict

The process of socio-cultural adaptation and assimilation of migrants in the receiving country/state may occur without undue conflict when the receiving society is experiencing economic growth and relative affluence. However it can give rise to problems when unemployment is high or there exist competition for scarce resources, such as affordable housing, access to higher education or the benefits of a welfare state. Migration enables people from different groups to share place of residence. Migrants are also expected to tolerate the social, economic and cultural differences in order to make a harmonious living condition. However, sometimes this could not be achieved easily because in some cases there are resistant groups who will not accept other groups. These groups particularly in the host states demonstrate their nationality, ethnicity in different way and try to alienate the migrants. Inevitably, this attitude sparks conflict among different groups, either between migrants and local people or among migrants itself (Richmond 1988: 49-50).

It is observed that the conditions of underdevelopment and income disparity will raise the risk of conflict. The developed economies can absorb an influx of migrants into various sectors but the underdeveloped economies – reliant on the environment for survival – are more limited in this regard and are therefore, more prone to conflict. The relative importance of these channels can vary across cases, and the likelihood of conflict is likely to rise as more channels operate simultaneously. These forces can also promote conflict from ordinary migration. When migration flows are slow and small, receiving countries can absorb them smoothly (Reuveny 2005: 5-6). The migrants who have been weak and marginal in the sending countries, depending on the context; they may remain weak in the receiving countries which limits their ability to organize and to make demands to trigger conflicts. To trigger conflicts the migrants need support of a state, either of the receiving or an external one without the support of the state, migrants are less likely to produce violence and undergo silent misery and death that hardly can destabilize a state. On the other hand, migration does not always produce bad results. It can act as a safety valve by reducing conflict in the sending area. Depending on the economic context, it can ease labour shortages in the receiving area, as it some-times has; for instance, Malaysia,

Canada and Thailand show the astonishing capacity of some societies to absorb migrants without conflict (Dixon 1994: 20).

The migration-conflict is usually a result of several interrelated causes and can hardly be traced to a single causal explanation. If migration in the receiving area is properly managed, the conflicts arising out of migration could be avoided. In case with large-scale migration, additional exacerbating factors are of utmost importance because they might serve to diffuse or escalate conflicts in receiving areas. It is important to identify the regions which will most likely be the receiving area of migrants that already faced highly volatile situations with respect to disagreements and tensions. These areas may be subject to increased economic scarcity and pressure and also have limited capacities to deal with the flow of large-scale migration. The receiving communities must be supported for devising strategies aiming at control and management of rising migration. The different kinds of response mechanisms (e.g., disaster management vs. long-term adaptation planning) need to be established in the receiving areas. The concerned government and also the international donors need to address the challenges to provide a sustainable management of the natural resource base, to avoid risks of instability and conflict in future, and to control the costs needed for appropriate capacity building. However, these efforts demand political leadership and financial assistance to build up the institutional and bureaucratic capacities (Warnecke A. et. al 2010: 8).

People have been moving around the South Asian region in large numbers for centuries. Since the division of the subcontinent, millions have migrated from East Pakistan or Bangladesh to the Indian states of Assam, Tripura, and West Bengal. This enormous influx has produced pervasive social changes in the receiving regions. It has altered land distribution, economic relations, and the balance of political power between religious and ethnic groups, and it has triggered serious inter group conflict. The United Nation estimated that the population of Bangladesh will be 235 million by the year 2025. The population density is over 900 persons per square kilometre. In comparison population density in the Indian state of Assam are fewer than 300 per square kilometre. Since virtually all of the country's good agricultural land has been exploited, populations

growth will cut in half the amount of cropland available per capita by 2025 in Bangladesh (Dixon 1994: 20-21).

From the above discussions we can observe that migration can lead to development as well as conflict in the host country. If the host country lacks communal or ethnic cohesion, the migration of a different race or community might lead to conflict with the indigenous population. Migration of the Bangladeshis had an adverse impact on the demography because of the large-scale influx. It led to the violent conflict among the indigenous populace in Assam due to presence of large number of ethnic groups. It must be admitted that the feeling of alienation and the fear of being reduced to minority among the Assamese people were a major cause of conflict. However we can't ignore the role of these migrant people in development of the Assam's economy. Though they are engaged in most of the petty economic activities, the development of agriculture and other sectors is important even after being unskilled labourers (Weiner 1992-1993: 104-107).

#### **1.XIV \_\_\_ Theoretical Understanding**

From the above discussion it is evident that it's very difficult to explain the various aspects of migration and its consequences in sending and receiving countries through a single theoretical explanation. This is more so with regard to the Bangladeshi and Nepali migration into Assam. For better understanding the issue of Bangladeshi and Nepali migrants, there is an obvious need of assimilation of various models and theoretical frameworks of migration both in a larger and a local context. While taking some contemporary theories such as the equilibrium and the system theory as the main thrust in explaining certain situations in the context of Bangladeshi and Nepali migrants, we could possibly reinterpret many other theories. The equilibrium approach advocates that migration is the outcome of a choice process for individuals or households. The theory also conceptualizes migration as the geographical mobility of workers who are responding to the imbalance in the spatial distribution of land, labour, capital and national resources. The equilibrium approach is useful in understanding the internal migration patterns or for understanding international migration between culturally and economically similar countries. In case with the Bangladeshi and Nepali migration into



Assam, it is almost true that migration from both the countries has been caused by uneven distribution of land, labour, capital and natural resources. The approach says that international migration takes place in a culturally homogeneous country. In that context, Bangladeshi and Nepali migrants choose Assam as their destination because it has cultural as well as ethnic homogeneity based on the long historical linkages.

Apart from that the theory also views that migration occurs due to different levels of economic development and due to that disparity migrant's move from lower wage to higher wage countries. Thus, the level of economic development and disparity existing between India – Bangladesh and Nepal can be considered as the cause of migration following the view of the Equilibrium theory. The differential level of wages existing between India – Bangladesh and Nepal also causing migration; for e.g. a migrant earning 100 BDT or 100 Nepali Rupee would obviously intend to migrate to India as the level of wage is high. And even if the migrant in India earns INR 100 it will be 135 BDT and 160 NR when converted the amount in Bangladeshi and Nepali Rupees. Thus, this cost benefit analysis of the migrants from both the countries resulted in movement.

More or less similar, the Neo-classical approach views that migration occurs due to the factors such as labour demand and supply, wage differentials etc. It is also argued that migration is a process of measuring the opportunities offered to the migrants in their current state, against opportunities offered at other places or nations. The theory views that migration is a 'cost-benefit decision' undertaken to maximize income by an individual migrating to places where income-maximizing opportunities are available. Apart scarcity of labour in the rich countries also causes migration. The high demand of labour in the capital rich country with higher wages attracts migrants. While, analysing the case study, the demand for labourers to work in available land in Assam during British rule was a major factor of population migration through the policy of hiring labour from outside the region. The migrants were provided land, higher wages to the migrants for further settlement with the motive of exploitation of resources in Assam. Thus, the Neo-classical approach is useful to understand the early migration of Bangladeshi and Nepalis into Assam.

Meanwhile, the dual labour market theory is also useful in understanding migration of both the communities in Assam. It views International migration occurs due to permanent demand for labours in certain advanced industrial nations. The theory also views that the natives are averse to jobs of manual labour or drudgery in a developed advanced countries. This aversions leads to demand of labourers for which migration occurs from low income countries, who entertain prospects of returning to their homeland some day, are willing to accept such jobs; because of their relatively poor standard of living back home. The migrants from Bangladesh and Nepal into Assam occurred due to scarcity of labourers in the secondary sector of the economy and migrants are still engaged in some petty economic activities.

The theory of new economics of labour migration is also important and useful in understanding the causal factors of the case study. The theory views that migration is a family strategy to diversify the sources of income and to minimize the risks of unemployment, loss of income or crop failures, poor income, low production of crops and poverty etc. in the origin and also to gain access to scarce investment capital, households send one or more family members to foreign labour market for further income. The migration of Bangladeshis and Nepalis into Assam can be viewed as the risk minimisation process of the migrants existing in their respective countries. The existence of poverty, unemployment, poor income, state and political repression are the major causes analysed to understand the case study. The maximising the income is also a motive of both the migrants into Assam.

Meanwhile, to understand and to find out the casual factors of migration from Bangladesh and Nepal, we can broadly follow Todaro's and Lee's model of push and pull factors of migration. Both the Bangladeshi and Nepali migration took place not because of the immediate prospect for improving their standard of living but to accelerate their acceptable level of income. Hence the people were ready to face any difficulties in a host state, Assam. The push factors of Bangladeshi migration are mainly the conditions that existing in Bangladesh for e.g. high population growth, environmental degradation, large-scale poverty, poor economic condition, political instability and lack of communal cohesion.

However in case with Nepali migration the same causal factors can be attributed except communal cohesion and a political treaty of 1950 under which the Nepali citizens and Indian citizens could go to each other country without any restriction on a reciprocal basis . Bangladesh has faced population explosion, and remains a country with the highest density of population in South Asia and in case with Nepali migrants are mostly economic and is facilitated through the treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950. On the other hand, the pull factors of migration in Assam include low density of population, availability of plentiful and fertile land on easy terms, employment (small) opportunities and cultural homogeneity.

The issue of Bangladeshi and Nepali migration into Assam can also be analyzed through the system approach which has an advantage because it takes into account a large variety of factors that play their role in migration including networks. The ethnic composition of Assam is a broad racial intermixture of Mongolian, Indo-Burmese, Indo-Iranian and Aryan origin. The tribes of Mongolian origin mostly inhabit the hilly tracks of Assam. Apart from that there are large numbers of concentrated Bengali speaking peoples mostly the Mymensingh settlers (from Bangladesh) and tea-garden labourers. The Assamese culture is a rich conglomeration of other ethnic races and based on practices and assimilated beliefs and Assamese language resembles with many other languages like Bengali, Nepali and Oriya.

To understand the case study and the dimensions of illegal migration Todaro and Maruszko model is useful. It views that individual's decisions to migrate illegally depends on economic factors, particularly for employment opportunity and expectation for higher wages. However, this decision depends on probability and chances of getting employment opportunities, being apprehended during border crossing and while stay and the implicit tax that is imposed by employers who take advantage of the migrant's illegal status by paying less than market wages. By calculating all these cost and benefit takes decision to migrate illegally. To understand the illegal migration from Bangladesh this model is useful to understand cost of migrating illegally into India. However, there is no theory to explain international migration under a bilateral agreement existing in various countries. With the increase of international migration there has been resurgence for

strengthening international cooperation for managing migration. This has come out and pursued in the form of various bilateral, regional and multilateral arrangement. To understand Nepali migration under the treaty of 1950 is useful developing policies to that similar migration pattern between India and Nepal.

It has been observed that the population growth rate in Assam has been exceptionally high due to the migration. Assam's population of 18 million people, according to the 1991 census, is considerably greater than what all-Indian rates of population growth would suggest. The Nativist movements claim about the presence of four million Bangladeshi migrants who mostly arrived in the 1961-68 period. This has caused considerable and acute social conflict. The Bangladeshis became the target of Assamese Nativist movements which feared the migrants were taking both land and middle class positions from the indigenous population nativist agitation primarily focused on the political access of migrants and tried to prevent them from voting. Around 3,000-5,000 Bangladeshi as well as other migrants including Nepalis were massacred in the Brahmaputra valley in 1983.

At the same time the Assamese people did not oppose the migration of Nepali's and perhaps welcome them as they provided the labour requirements. Thus, they gave an opportunity to the Nepali migrants to assimilate with the Assamese language, culture and customs. The anti- Nepali feeling in Assam was first observed during the Assam Movement period only. The slow pace of development and neglect of the region spread the feeling of dissension and alienated indigenous people, who began to see the migrants or the non-indigenous groups as the cause of their predicament and a threat to their identity. The issue was highlighted mainly by the student's organization, AASU and All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP) in 1980, which suggested that the infiltration of illegal foreigners had created a 'monstrous problem'. The indigenous population first targeted Bangladeshi migrants and they also included Nepalis in the anti-foreigner discourse. The Nepalis were mostly displaced from the Char (mid-stream sand bars) and the Chapari (grazing reserve) areas, and from the Kaziranga Reserve Forests in Assam. During the Assam Movement (1979-85) the unprecedented violence, demonstrations and sporadic assaults mainly targeting Bangladesh migrants forced the Nepalis to leave.

Following the violence in Nellie, Chowl Khowa Chapari and other areas a large number of Nepalis were displaced. It must be remembered that Nepalis were not generally targeted in Assam movement period; they were displaced only because of the threat perceived.

The Congress party and the local politicians facilitated the Bangladeshi migrants to enter into Assam because it enabled them to build up "vote-banks". By registering the migrants as voters, a stable supply of votes for the party was built. The structure of political competition in Assam rendered the migrants particularly useful to the nationally dominant but locally weak Congress Party. This also explains why it might have been possible for millions of Bangladeshi migrants to take up residence in a rather short period of time especially during 1961-1985. For illegal migrants, it opened a formal entry to civil society and associated benefit such as ration cards, the right to squat or purchase land and The Bangladeshi migrants altered the economy, land distribution and political power balance in the receiving Assam. Unlike in the state of Assam, in the state of Tripura also the original, primarily Buddhist or Christian people became minority due to the Bangladeshi migration. By 1981, they consisted of only about one third of the total population, down from about 90% in 1947. Resentful and increasingly competitive with Bengali migrants over land and resources, the native people turned to violence during 1980 to 1988. The government tried to calm the local outrage in the 1990s by returning land to Tripuris owners, and by tightening the controls over migration. However, the migration and the violence continued, albeit at a lower intensity.

# Chapter

# 2

---

**CAUSAL FACTORS OF  
BANGLADESHI AND NEPALI  
MIGRATION INTO ASSAM**

---

## 2. I \_\_\_ Introduction

Assam being the confluence of several languages and ethnic groups has been the destination since time immemorial. The Bangladeshis and Nepalis are no exception to such magnitude. Several push and pull factors are responsible for triggering migration from Bangladesh and Nepal to India. Bangladesh is facing high population pressure, frequent environmental-natural disaster, economic hardship, communal conflict, political instability and state repression, triggering migration to India. The migration of Hindus from Bangladesh to India is rooted in the very state policies and due to prevalence of communal conflict in that country. However, the causes of migration of Nepalis are mainly rooted to the economic conditions, political instability and environmental problems. The Maoist conflict in Nepal destroyed the political and economic foundations leading to instability for which many of the Nepalis choose migration as an option for livelihood. This chapter basically seeks to analyse the various causes of migration of Bangladeshis and Nepalis into Assam. A comparative analysis of the causal factors has been analysed at the end. Both primary and secondary sources have been used to analyse the chapter. The primary sources include several reports of the various ministries of Bangladesh and Nepal. It also includes reports of the ADB, UN, World Bank and other NGOs. Meanwhile, the discussions with the experts conducted during the filed trip to Bangladesh and Nepal has also been added to analyse the causal factors. The secondary sources ranges from the books and articles related to the case study.

## 2. II \_\_\_ State of Assam

Assam is located at the south of the eastern Himalayas comprising the Brahmaputra-Barak river valley and with Karbi Anglong and North Cachar district as Hills. The Brahmaputra River originating in Tibet, known as the Tsang-Po, is the most important natural feature and has its passage eastwards for hundreds of kilometres before breaking through the Himalayas. Then it enters Arunachal Pradesh named as 'Siang' and then assembles with the Lohit making the union of the Brahmaputra – the "*Son of God*". It commences its regal passage of almost 800 kilometres in Assam before entering Bangladesh. Assam has a total area of 78,438 square kilometres, constituting 2.4 percent of the country's total geographical area and is almost equivalent to the size of Ireland and

Austria. Assam is connected to rest of India through a narrow corridor of eighteen miles, widely known as 'Chicken Neck'. The state shares international border with Bangladesh, Bhutan and Burma, and also shares its border with other six Northeastern states (Assam Human Development Report 2003: 1-2).

**Table 2.I**  
**Socio-Economic Indicators of Assam**

	Assam	India
Total Area	78438 sq. km	2.4 % of India's total area
Total Population (Census 2001 – in million)	26.66	1028.61 (2.59 percent of India's total population)
Density of Population, per Sq. km (Census 2001)	340	324
Decadal growth (census 2001 in %)	18.92	21.54
Population below Poverty line	19.7 % (2004-05)	27.50 % (2004-05)
Per Capita *GSDP <sup>1</sup> (2004-05)	Rs.15,661	Rs.25,944
Per Capita *NSDP <sup>2</sup> (2007-08)	Rs.21,464	Rs.33,283

Sources: Government of Assam (2008), *Economic Survey of Assam 2007-08*, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Guwahati, Assam, pp.1-7

According to the 2001 census, Assam has 26.64 million population contributing 2.59 percent of the country's total population. The density of population per square kilometre is 340 persons, marginally higher than the average density of country - 324 persons per square kilometre (Statistical Hand Book, Assam 2006: 5-6). The State has twenty seven administrative districts<sup>3</sup> that vary considerably in size and population. The Karbi Anglong district is the largest, having almost 10,500 square kilometres and is eight times larger than the Hailakandi district. The Dhubri district bordering Bangladesh is densely populated - 585 per square kilometre and is almost eighteen times densely populated as that of the least densely populated North Cachar Hills district (see Table 2.II). Over 87 percent of its total population lives in the rural areas. The state has witnessed an uneven growth of population since 1901 to 2001, a little over eight fold growth of population occurred, clearly outpacing the average growth rate of population in India. The decadal

<sup>1</sup> GSDP: Gross State Domestic Product

<sup>2</sup> NSDP: Net State Domestic Product

<sup>3</sup> Four new districts have been added by curving out from four districts of Assam. These districts are Kamrup Metro-Kamrup district, Chirang district- from Bongaigaon district, Baska-from Kokrajhar district, Udalguri – from Darrang district.



population variation of the state has been much larger than that of India as whole; especially in the first half of the century (see Table 2.III) (AHDR 2003: 4-5).

**Table 2.II**  
**The Districts of Assam**

District	Area (sq. km)	Population (in million)	Density (per sq. km)	Rural Population (% of the total)
Dhubri	2838	1.63	584	88.38
Kokrajhar	3129	0.93	294	93.23
Bongaigaon	2510	0.90	361	87.86
Goalpara	1824	0.82	451	91.85
Barpeta	3245	1.64	506	92.39
Nalbari	2257	1.13	504	97.63
Kamrup	4345	2.51	579	64.21
Darrang	3481	1.50	432	95.08
Sonitpur	5324	1.67	315	91.18
Lakhimpur	2277	0.88	391	92.69
Dhemaji	3237	0.57	176	93.15
Morigaon	1704	0.77	455	95.10
Nagaon	3831	2.31	604	87.99
Golaghat	3502	0.94	270	91.65
Jorhat	2851	1.0	354	83.05
Sibasagar	2668	1.05	395	90.79
Dibrugarh	3381	1.17	347	81.23
Tinsukia	3790	1.15	303	80.52
Cachar	3786	1.44	381	86.06
Karimganj	1809	1.0	555	92.73
Hailakandi	1327	0.54	409	91.71
Karbi Anglong	10434	0.81	78	88.55
N C Hills	4888	0.18	38	68.82

Source: Government of Assam (2003), *Assam Human Development Report 2003*, Planning and Development Department, Guwahati: Dispur, p. 5

Assam's economy represents a unique juxtaposition of backwardness and amidst plenty. Assam inspite of being richly endowed with natural resources shows disparity with the rest of India (Sharma 2004: 1). Despite being the richest state in terms of economic raw materials, such as crude oil, tea, timber jute, coal etc. which contributes a large share of revenue to the central exchequer and yet Assam remains economically backward and undeveloped states in India. The Indian Statutory Commission Report (1930: 17) views 'Assam as the least developed province' among the entire Governor's province. The

cause of backwardness in Assam is thought that the Union Government is taking too much revenue away from Assam<sup>4</sup>. But the state government is not getting enough what is thought to its legitimate share of the duties on tea, jute, oil, timber etc. (Phukan 1984: 31-32).

**Table 2.III**  
**Decadal Percentage Variation in Population 1901-2001**

Period	India	Assam
1901-11	5.75	16.99
1911-21	-0.31	20.48
1921-31	11	19.91
1931-41	14.22	20.4
1941-51	13.31	19.93
1951-61	21.64	34.98
1961-71	24.8	34.95
1971-81	24.66	23.36
1981-91	23.86	24.24
1991-2001	21.34	18.85

Source: Government of Assam (2003), *Assam Human Development Report 2003*, Planning & Development Department, Guwahati: Dispur, p. 6.

Agriculture is the basis of Assam's economy – major revenue earner and about 69 percent of the total population's income and employment is based on it. Assam's important and biggest contribution is its tea industry; it also contributes rice, rapeseed, mustard, jute and other vegetables. Forest and forest products are also important, products like timber and bamboo also contributes for the revenue. The State possesses an estimated 320 million tones of coal reserves, oil and natural gas, which are sufficient to sustain current production levels for at least another fifty years and is a significant contribution to the mining sector. The oil is another outstanding contribution. The British started extracting it since 1889 at Digboi. The state also produces significant portion of Indian oil and natural gas, 55% of India's and 15.6% of the world's tea, 60% of India's plywood and about 30% of India's jute production (AHDR 2003: 37-40).

<sup>4</sup> The union government is deriving benefit to the tune of 655 crores of rupees out of the excise and export duties on Assam's products like tea, petroleum, kerosene and jute. As against this Assam's revenues has revealed by the budget figures comes up to only about 5.3 crore. Thus it reveals that the centre gets more from Assam than Assam can manage to get from herself.

**Table 2.IV**  
**Assam's Contribution to Indian economy**

Resources	Contribution to Indian economy
Coal, oil and natural gas	320 million tonnes
Tea	55 % of India's Total production
Plywood	60 % of India's total production
Jute	30 % of India's total production

Sources: Computed from Government of Assam (2003), *Assam Human Development Report 2003*, Planning and Development Department, Guwahati: Dispur, pp. 36-41

Assam has been significant for its geographic, cultural, economic and social uniqueness and an admixture of various ethnic groups. The presences of abundant fertile land, natural resources are major pull factors of attracting people from within the country/outside the region. Assam has substantial number of indigenous tribal populations for which it remains sensitive ethnically and linguistically. However, the economic and social solidarity continue to remain so. The migration of people and communities into Assam in search of abundant lands can be traced back to its long history.

### 2. III \_\_\_ Early History of Assam

According to the ancient epic and early historical literature (i.e. Puran), Assam is known by different names; Pragjyotisha in both the epics of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*; land of Kiratas (who warred against Pandavas in the *Mahabharata*) and kingdom of Pragjyotisha (with present day capital Guwahati), according to Vedic literature (Chatterji 1954: 8-10). In the Allahabad inscription of Samudra Gupta and in the early Puranas, it is known for the first time as Kamrupa. Pusyavarman founded the Kamrup kingdom in the fourth century and reached its zenith of strength and glory during the reign of Bhaskarvarman in the seventh century (Bahadur 1966: 28-30). Pragjyotisha included the whole of Assam, parts of North and East Bengal and also the hill tracts up to China border. In the Kalika Puran, it is mentioned that the Kamakhya temple was the centre of Kamrupa and was extended around the temple in all directions – about 450 miles according to the Vishnu Puran (Gait 1905: 1). The kingdom of Kamrupa is said to have

extended from the Karatoya River on west and eastern side to Dikhu, from the mountain of Kanjagiri on the north to the confluence of the Brahamaputra and Lankhya rivers on the south. Thus, it is observed that roughly it included Brahmputra valley, Bhutan, Rangpur, Koch Bihar, the northeast of Mymensingh and possibly the Garo hills (Gazetteer of India 1990: 63-64).

The history of Assam is the history of a confluence of people from the east, west and north; the confluence of the Indo-Aryan, Austro-Asiatic and Tibeto-Burman cultures. The foundations of present-day Assam are attributable to yet another migration from the east, of the Tai Ahoms<sup>5</sup>, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century led by general Sukapha. The Ahom army crossed the Patkai range marched to the Brahmputra valley, to establish an empire that was eventually extended throughout the valley (Allen et. al. 1979: 73-75). The Ahoms brought new technology, provided a framework of peace and stability, resisted Mughal intrusion and introduced - maintained a uniquely structured, complex and efficient system of administration. The Ahoms also established assimilative systems of governance, reaching out to already established communities of the valley, the tribes of adjacent hills and this process forged the character of the mosaic of modern day Assam (Baruah 1972a: 1-3; Barpujari & Bhuyan 1977: 1-6).

However, the problem and anarchy within the Ahom kingdom started mounting. The kingdom for brief period in the 18<sup>th</sup> century lost its power to the Moamorian<sup>6</sup> rebels but managed to regain its stronghold. Further, the rivalry among the Ahom princes weakened the administration and in despair Gaurinath Singha accepted help of the British in 1786. Though, peace was restored by the British, Badan Chandra Barphukan - the officer in

---

<sup>5</sup>The Ahoms established the Ahom kingdom (1228-1826) in parts of present-day Assam and ruled it for nearly 600 years. The Ahoms, a shan tribe from the ancient kingdom of Mungmau or Pong which was situated in the upper portion of Irrawaddy valley. A quarrel as to the right succession to the throne is said to have been the cause of emigration to Assam by Sukapha. He was the rival claimants, who after wandering about the country between irrawaddy valley and patkai mountain for some years, crossed the range in 1228 with a small following and entered the tract which from the southern part of Lakhimpur district and south-east of sibasagar.

<sup>6</sup> The original Moamoriya's are supposed by some to have been a rude tribe who settled before the Ahom invasion on upper Debroo in the district of Moram. What were known among them as the 'upper nine families' claimed certainly to be descended from such race. 'The lower nine families' of the Moamoriahs settled on the Lasa were proselytised Ahoms. The whole tribe embraced Hinduisim, rejected the popular worship of Shiva and professed themselves sectaries of Vishna-Vishnu caste. Moamoriah's has been constantly in quarrel and rebellion against the Ahoms.

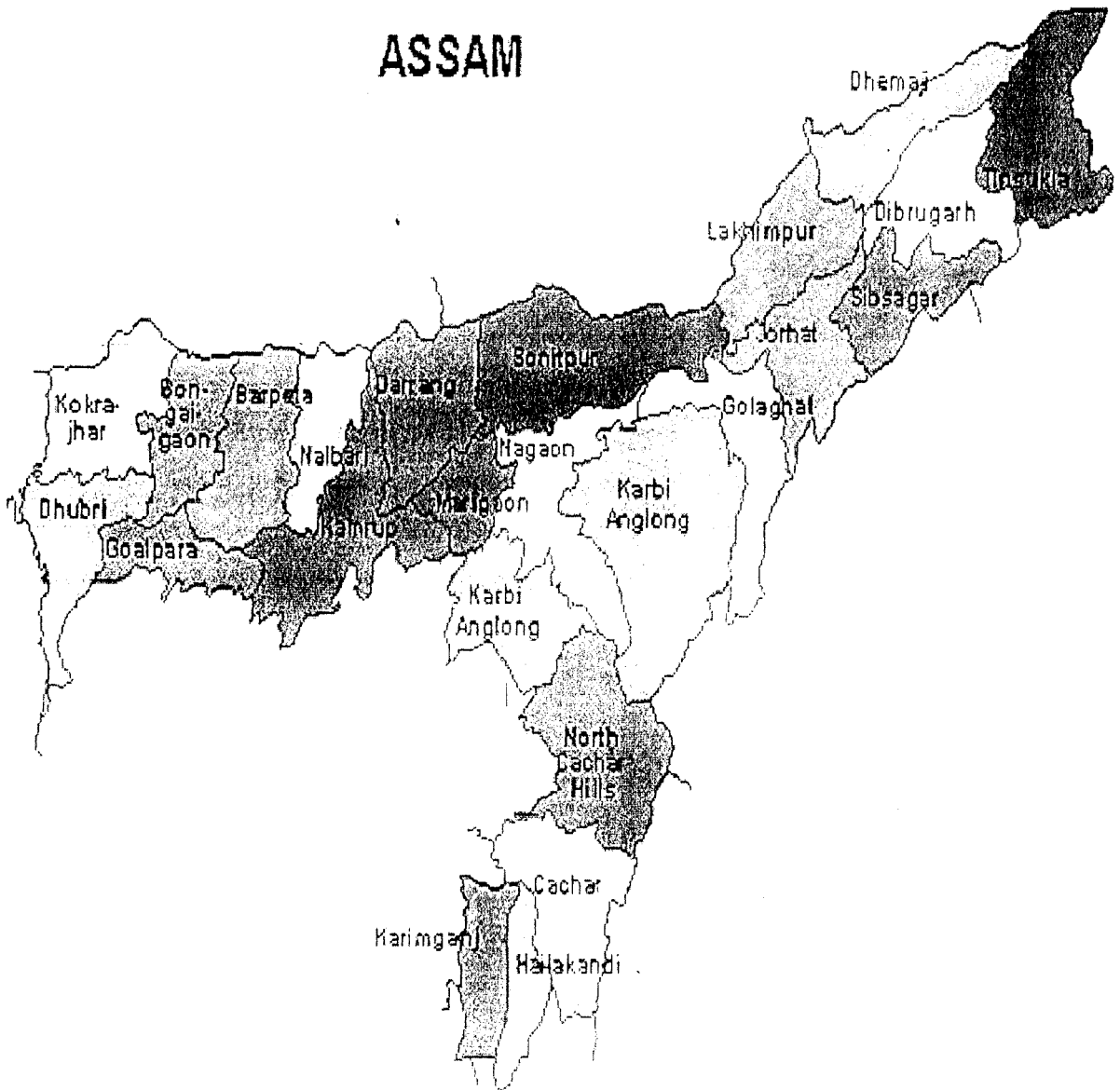
charge of the lower Assam of Ahom kingdom invited Burmese to fight against the king 1817. The Burmese attacked Assam three times bringing miseries and destructions. The Britishers again intervenes with the request of Ahom king Purander Singha and defeats the Burmese in the first Anglo-Burmese war and entered into a treaty with the Burmese known as the Treaty of Yandaboo<sup>7</sup> in 1826. Thus, this development paved the way for Britishers to convert the Ahom kingdom into a principality marking the end of Ahom dynasty (Baruah 1972b: 5-10; G. Baruah 1972a: 126-27).

After annexation, the British then organized administration, transport and communication to expand their rule. Besides these changes, the British constructed railways, introduced tea plantation, discovered coal and oil etc. for colonial economic interest (Phukan 1984: 1-7). In the administrative sphere, the British formed a number of districts and sub divisions in Assam. In 1834, the Brahmaputra valley was divided into four districts, viz. Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang (including Biswanath) and Nagaon. In 1839, Purandar Singha's dominion of upper Assam was constituted into two districts; Sibsagar and Lakhimpur. Guwahati continued to be the headquarters of the district of Kamrup and the commissioner of Assam, Goalpara, including the Garo hills but excluding the eastern Duars was originally administered from Rangpur and was a part of the Bengal province. With the enactment of X of 1822, the eastern Duars was cut off from Rangpur and formed into a separate district with headquarters at Goalpara. However, on the formation of Bengal commissionership of Cooch Behar, the eastern Duars was included into this commissionership in 1867. The Garo hills were constituted into a separate district in 1869. Assam was annexed to Bengal province in 1839 (Gazetteer of India 1999: 10).

---

<sup>7</sup> The Yandaboo Treaty was a peace initiative signed on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1826 to end the first Anglo-Burmese war. The treaty was signed after nearly two years of war that formally broke out on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1824. Through this treaty the Burmese were forced to accept the British terms without discussion. The Burmese agreed to cede to the British Assam, Manipur, Rakhine (Arakan), and Taninthayi (Tenasserim) coast south of Salween River, cease all interference in Cachar and Jaintia. The Burmese were also forced to pay one million pounds sterling as compensation in four installments. The Anglo-Burmese war was most expensive. About fifteen thousand European and Indian soldiers died also with a higher number of Burmese. The war cost the British five million pounds sterling (roughly \$18500 million in 2006) to 13 million pounds sterling leading to severe economic crisis in British India in 1833.

Map 2.1



In 1874, Assam was detached from Bengal and was given the status of chief commissioner's province. The districts of the Brahmaputra valley and adjacent hills together with Cachar and Sylhet were constituted into a separate province of Assam under a Chief Commissioner. In October 1903, Assam was amalgamated with the districts of Dacca, Chittagong, Rajshahi Commissionership of Bengal with the exclusion of Darjeeling district and in addition of Malda to form a new province, known as province of Eastern and Assam with an area of 275937 sq. km. and a population of 31

million. However, the province of Assam and eastern Bengal was again broken up on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1912 when the eastern Bengal districts were united with the Bengal commissionership of Burdwan to form the presidency of Bengal under the governor-in-council. Bihar, Chota Nagpur and Orissa were formed into separate province, while the old province of Assam was reconstituted under a chief commissioner. The revival of chief commissionership came into existence on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1912. This arrangement continued till 1921, when Assam was declared a governor's province. The census report 1921 records that on the break up of eastern Bengal and Assam in 1912, Assam reverted to its former status of a chief commissionership, but on 3 January, 1921 it was constituted a Governor's province, with an executive council and ministers, the latter being responsible to legislative council with an elected majority (Gazetteer of India 1999: 10-11).

Before partition, Assam consisted of two valleys, the Brahmaputra and Surma valley (with two districts of Cachar and Sylhet) and the hill districts including the North East Frontier Agency (Now Arunachal Pradesh). The district of Sylhet with the exception of three police stations of Badarpur, Ratabari, Pathar Kandi and part of Karimganj, went to the then East Pakistan. The portion of Sylhet district that remained in India formed the Karimganj subdivision and was added to Cachar district (Gupta & Gupta 1990: 34). Since independence, Assam was carved and the area has been reduced significantly and separated into various states. In 1951, under the Assam alteration of Boundaries act, a strip of hill territory called Dewangiri in North Kamrup was ceded to Bhutan. In 1960, a new state called Nagaland was formed by separating the Naga Hills district and the former Tuensang division of NEFA from Assam. On April 2 1972, an autonomous state of Meghalaya was formed within the state of Assam comprising the United Khasi and Jaintia hills district, and the Garo hills district. In 1987, the state of Mizoram comprising the territories of Mizo district was formed. The NEFA was also formed into a new union territory in 1972 and as state of Arunachal Pradesh in 1987 (Phukan 1984: 3-4; Gupta & Gupta 1990: 35).

## **2. IV \_\_\_ Pull Factors of Migration of East Bengalis/Bangladeshis into Assam**

Assam due to its geographical location, presence of abundant land and employment opportunities has long been destination of migrants from within or outside the Indian subcontinent. The migration of people into Assam occurred from Indian subcontinent, South and South East Asia nations also. After colonialisation of Assam, continuous flow of non-Assamese started in search of employment opportunities. The British to maintain administrative system in Assam also hired educated skilled labourers from the integrated subcontinent. The British also hired large number of unskilled labourers to work in the newly developed tea industries in Assam. Employment opportunities were also generated through the development of transport, road construction, oil fields, and coal mines and people mostly from East Bengal - other Indian states. A certain number of other people, Nepalis were also added (but not at large numbers) to fill various demands of colonial economic development (Barpujari & Bhuyan 1977: 10-15).

The migration of people from within and outside region started due to the establishment of tea industry aimed at expanding British owned plantation to increase tea export and ancillary product as necessary to sustain colonial economy enhanced the movement of population. Tea was discovered by Robert Bruce in 1821 in Assam. After doing a scientific and systematic exploration, tea cultivation was introduced first at Lakhimpur in 1835 and later gardens were opened at Darrang and Kamrup district in 1854. The British also discovered tea in 1855 at Cachar (Allen et. al. 1979: 70).

Serious crisis of labour occurred in the tea industries as the local Assamese population having land showed reluctance to work and preferred the independence of being as peasants. The Britishers thought of solving their labour problem by importing Chinese coolies from Singapore as the Chinese had expertise of tea cultivation. Several hundreds coolies were brought from Singapore to the port of Calcutta then sent upland to Assam. While en route the Chinese coolies were engaged in a brawl with some Indians. The British government cancels their license and they were sent back. Then the Britishers started importing coolies from the densely populated areas of Bihar – Chota Nagpur,



Orissa, Bengal, Central provinces, united provinces and Madrass (Weiner 1978: 88-89 & Barpujari 2004: 48, 50-52).

From 1853, the Assam Company founded by the British started importing labourers from Bengal. The British government initiated several legislations during 1863-1901 (Allen 1979: 71). According to Gait (1905: 341-42), "The aim of the legislation was to ensure the employers the services of the labour imported by him for a period sufficiently long to enable him to recoup the cost of recruiting and bringing them to the garden, one the one hand, and, on the other, of protecting labourers against fraudulent recruitment, providing them for proper and sanitary system of transport and securing their good treatment and adequate remuneration during the term of labour contracts." During the ten years ending with June 30, 1903, the total number of persons brought up to the tea gardens was 543800 (Gait 1905: 71).

The migration of Muslims from East Bengal into Assam also occurred with the growth of jute production on commercial basis under British finance. The production of jute started in 1880 in Goalpara and Sylhet adjoining area of East Bengal. It expanded rapidly during 1890's in the west of Goalpara district, Kamrup, Nagaon and another three districts. In Nagaon the production jute occurred in small patches of homestead lands. The Britishers encouraged East Bengalis to migrate and cultivate jute in Assam as the local Assamese showed reluctance to work. The British also granted wastelands and distributed seeds for cultivation (Barpujari 2004: 59). Guha (1977: 102) quotes, "Having the superior techniques East Bengalis taught Assam how to grow jute and several other crops. The acreage under jute in the Brahmaputra valley increased as a result of this great population movement from a little less than 30 thousand acres in 1905-06 to more than 106 thousand acres in 1919-20."

The Britishers systematically followed the policy of importing labourers with the help of recruiting agencies inside/outside the province. The colonial power opened the labour importing policies in the Bengal province and other provinces for the purpose of importing labourers (Guha 1977: 254-255). The British administration apart from the legislations provided fees to the recruiting agencies, travel allowances, revenue holidays

for stipulated periods, ownership recording in favour of the land clearing peasants himself etc. and these policies constituted for primary cause of population mix and migration into Assam (Goswami 1961: 5-6). The Britishers facilitated easy settlement rules by opening up wastelands on easy settlement rules. The infrastructural development like the extension of railways from West Bengal to Assam was also a part of easy communication for labourers. During 1826-1873, British administration made a policy to recruit educated Bengali people – *amolas* (from Sylhet, Dacca, Mymensingh, Rangpur and other districts of Bengal) for government services in Assam. Men from Marwar and Sylhet were appointed in preference to the local Assamese gentry. Their migration helped to increase the quantum of colonial revenue and agricultural production. Most of the Bengali migrants were employed in the offices, schools, industries and tea gardens in Assam (Barpujari 1963: 266-67).

Thus, the economic development through the growth of tea industries in Assam and the importation policies poured a large number of migrants across the region. The number of imported labourers - migrants between early sixties and 1872 was estimated at 40000. The total numbers of non-indigenous population including the migrants were estimated at about 80000 in a total population of 1.495 million during the same period. During 1881, the number of migrants was estimated at about 0.3 million in a population of 1.8 million. In 1901, the migrants or non-indigenous population appeared to have increased from less than 0.1 million in 1872 to anything between 0.5 or 0.6 million. The Non-indigenous elements came to constitute at least a quarter of the population of Assam proper in 1901 (Guha 1977: 39-40). The development and growth of small townships, mostly populated by the people from outside region to cater the growing needs of the administration and trade were seen. The expansion of tea and the raw materials for export occurred through various trade centres mainly directed towards Bengal province and later it was exported to England. The most important and permanent trade centres are located in Goalpara, Barpeta, Guwahati, Tezpur, Golaghat, Jorhat, Dibrugarh and Sadiya in Assam valley; Habibganj, Ajmiriganj, Sunamganj, Chhatak, Balaganj, Sylhet and Silchar in the Surma valley. These trade centres particularly in Assam turned out to be mini town where large concentration of migrants occurred (Allen et. al. 1979: 86-87).

Moreover, during 1881-1901 and 1911-1921, decline of population in Assam occurred and natural growth was retarded due to several epidemics and natural disaster that consequently leading to a large valley area vacant and uncultivated (Phukan 1984: 10). Epidemic such as *Kala Azar* during the 1881-1901, reoccurred again in 1917-18, earthquake in 1897, universal influenza epidemic - Cholera during 1911-1921 and disastrous Kapili flood of 1917-18, caused heavy loss of population in Assam (Gazetteer of India 1999: 212-214). The *Kala Azar* first originated in the Garo Hills in 1869. According to Gazetteer of Bengal and North-East India (Allen et. al. 1979: 6 & 45-46), "The *Kala Azar* first spread to the Goalpara district in 1883, spread to Kamrup district in 1888 and thence to Nagaon and to Mangaldoi, then to sylhet inducing terrible mortality. During 1881-1891, the population of Goalpara subdivision decreased by 18 percent; and the population recorded in Kamrup in 1891 were estimated to have been less by 75000 people. During 1891-1901, the population of Kamrup decreased by 7 percent, Mangaldoi subdivision of Darrang by 9 percent, Nagaon district by 25 percent and by the north Sylhet subdivision by 4 percent." The Nagaon district suffered the most and about one fourth of the total population was estimated to be wiped out by that epidemic (Gazetteer of India 1999: 212).

During 1901-1911, Assam saw an overall population increase of 16.99 percent against all India average of 5.76 percent. This increase was lowest during the last five decades (1851-1901) as Assam was still recovering from the epidemics (Gazetteer of India 1999: 212). During the decade 1911-21, natural growth of population of Assam was again retarded by the spread of universal influenza epidemic of 1918-19, where 0.2 million people died. During the same decade, Assam also experienced the disease like small-pox, cholera for which the natural increase of population was checked (Gazetteer of India 1999: 213). Darrang district suffered from Cholera in 1912, 1916 and 1919 and also from Influenza epidemic 1918-19. The natural increase in the district was 10.1 percent during 1911-21. The most affected district was Nagaon which suffered most of the epidemics, earthquakes, *Kala Azar* and Kapili flood of 1917-18, showed a natural growth of 9.6 percent during the decade 1911-21 against 14.3 percent during 1901-11 (Gazetteer of India 1999: 214).

Thus the wholesale depopulation of Assam occurred due to these developments resulted in vast tract of land waste particularly in the districts of Kamrup, Nagaon, Darrang, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur. The authorities were aware of the abundant land lying uncultivated and planning to fill it up for generating revenue (Barpujari 2004: 50-51). The Britishers during 1826-1870, 0.3 million acres of wastelands were settled and by 1901 it increased to 0.64 million acres (Guha 1991: 188). According to Guha (1991: 187), "These settlements were fee-simple or charged at normal rates<sup>8</sup>, while at the same time the burden of land revenue on ordinary farmers was enhanced in order to encourage their transfer from subsistence farming to plantation jobs. The average land revenue burden of Rs. 1.47 per head of population in Assam proper in 1872-73 was much heavier than what was apparent. The actual burden was more than what was apparent. For, the inclusion of the negligible amount of land revenue paid by the planters for their tea lands and of the population thereupon had the effect of largely deflating the average figure in the former case." Most of the wasteland was granted to the tea garden coolies and the East Bengali hard working people to do cultivation.

Many Assamese middle class people favoured and welcomed importation of East Bengalis. Bolinarayan Borah, an engineer and leading member of the Assamese middle class favoured appointment of educated Bengalis as teachers in the schools of Assam. Anandaram Dhekial Phukan (1854) a leading personality, in a memorandum submitted to A.J.M. Mills pleaded that "The people from East Bengal could be invited to migrate as a means of improving population of the province." Gunabhiram Baruah has estimated that no less than a million people could easily be settled on waste land by encouraging migrants from outside the region (Guha 1977: 68). Moreover, the Assamese rich class and the Marwari Mahajans also exploited the migrants. The Mahajans provided financial assistance to exploit them as labourers to cultivate in their land (Phukan 1984: 10). According Assam Banking Enquiry Committee's Report 1929-30 (vol. ii: 507-517) quotes, "Local Assamese and even Marwari money lenders financed the migrants so that

---

<sup>8</sup> During 1839-1901, the planters were settled with 0.642 million acres or more than one-fourth of the total settled area of Assam proper. About 85 percent of the total lands were granted on privileged terms to the migrants. For instance 595842 acres held by them in 1893, fifty five percent were fee simple (perpetually revenue free) and another thirty five percent were at low concessional rates – much lower than what the peasants paid for lands of similar quality.

the latter could reclaim land and expand the cultivation of Jute, rice, pulses and vegetables. Many Assamese sold their lands to the migrants at a good price. The same people would clear new plots of waste land and sold these again to the migrants” (Sharmah 1999: 7 & Phukan 1984: 11).

Due to excessive pressure of population on land along with Zamindari oppression and exploitation over peasants and economic compulsion, East Bengalis peasants started flocking to the Brahmaputra valley in large numbers to settle down on its beckoning waste land (Goswami 1963: 27). Phukan (1984: 10) views, “The Bengal’s oppressed Muslim peasantry gradually became articulate and organised to fight against the exploitation of Zaminders and money-lenders who were mostly Hindus. The British Imperialist and Bengal Zaminders obviously thought it wise to send the landless peasants to the Assam valley in order to check revolutionary situation there.”

Thus, it can be observed that migration from East Bengal and other region into Assam during British administration occurred in two phases; 1826 to 1905 and 1905 to 1947. The first phase of migration constituted with three classes of people – tea plantation labourers, *amol*s, and marwaris. Das (1982: 25) views, “The migrants constituted a floating population in tea gardens and in towns. From the beginning of 1905 the Muslims peasants from East Bengal started settling in rural areas of Assam.” The Bengali Hindus also started pouring in addition to Muslim migrants. Bengali Hindu population was also added to the Assam province in 1912 with the addition of Bengali Muslim district of Sylhet and the Bengali Hindu district of Cachar. This inclusion was prompted by the colonial notion that Assam was a part of Bengal (Phukan 1984: 206-08).

The alteration of new boundaries led to the formation of Muslim League government led by Sir Mohammad Sadulla with brief interlude formed ministries under his leadership three times during 1939-1946 (Phukan 1984: 6). The Sadulla government followed a policy of encouraging East Bengali Muslims for the purpose of generating vote bank and also to make Assam part of the East Pakistan by showing the majority Muslim area (Guha 1977: 206-208). The Sadulla government immediately after coming to power allotted 0.1 million bighas for settling East Bengalis. The main argument of Sadulla in

support of the settlement of East Bengalis was mainly the landlessness (East Bengalis) and favoured granting available waste lands. The fourth Sadulla government formed in 1938 adopted a new resolution on land development under the slogan of *Grow More Food*. The salient features are:

1. Resumed distribution of wastelands in proportion to needs of different communities in Nowgong and de-reservation of select grazing reserves for that purpose, as per resolution of 21 June 1940.
2. De-reservation of professional grazing reserves in Kamrup and Darrang if found surplus to actual requirements and
3. Opening up of surplus reserves in all the submontane areas, and in Sivasagar and Lakhimpur, for settlement of landless indigenous people.

Lord Wavell, the then Viceroy, after observing the policies of Sadulla government, commented, "The chief political problem is the desire of the Muslim Ministers to increase this migration into the uncultivated Government lands under the slogan of Grow more food but what they are really after is Grow more Muslim" (Assam Gazette, 25 August, 1943, cited in Sarmah 1999: 20-21). Again due to the pro-Muslim stand, he was severely criticized by the public and was forced to resign on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1941 (AASU Memorandum to the Prime Minister of India 1980).

In the late 1930s, the political development in the British India unsettled the social fabric on communal harmony and the ideology of one nation. The intensification of the movement by the Muslim League for a separate land shattered the dream of a unified India and the division of the country on communal basis occurred. The communal ideology embedded in 'Two Nation' theory propounded by Jinnah, started flowing from the top to contaminate people's visions and actions. The 'Two Nation' theory based on religious ground led to partition of the Indian subcontinent and Pakistan was created comprising western and eastern wings. Partition was not meant for simply drawing the border on the map but massive restructuring of population occurred under violent communal conflict resulting forced migration of minority communities. The communal violence was more acute in western side but lesser in eastern part (Weiner 1993: 1737 & Ahmed 2004a: 5). The communal violence in the East Pakistan – Bengal side occurred in

Noakhali during 1946 causing forced migration of Hindus from East Pakistan. Communal tensions and communal conflicts broke out in mid 1940s and by March 1948, the number of refugees coming from East Pakistan increased to one million and by the end of June, the number reached 1.1 million. Drawing from the census report the number was estimated to be 3.5 million (Chakravarty 1999: 1-2). The occurrence of communal riots in different parts of East Pakistan in 1950 and 1951 also increased the flow.

By 1952 about 1.93 million refugees arrived in India particularly to West Bengal and Assam. Another round of communal violence that broke out between 1960 and 1965 witnessed huge influx. At least one million refugees migrated to West Bengal and Assam (Dasgupta 2001: 107). This movement of refugees was the result of large-scale attack on the minorities in Rajshahi and Pabna districts in 1962 and in Dhaka and other areas in 1964-65. Around 10 million Bangladeshis came over to India during the war months in 1971. There was a lull in the refugee movement after the birth of Bangladesh (Roy 2002: 84-85). However, the migration of Bangladeshis into India continued to occur due to economic stagnation and environmental degradation. Earlier, the migration was concentrated into Eastern states but it has spread over all the states in India. The presences of migrants are seen in north Indian states also working mostly as labourers and other petty jobs.

## **2. V \_\_\_ Causal Factors of Migration of Bangladeshis into Assam**

The large-scale population migration from East Pakistan/Bangladesh to India has been occurring since British annexation and it continuing unabated. The early movement of population mainly occurred to the neighbouring Indian states of Assam, West Bengal, and Tripura. The factors triggering migration from Bangladesh to India has been multi-dimensional and inter-related; e.g. population pressure, economic reasons, environmental disaster, religious, political, ethnic etc. The exodus of population during British administration occurred due to labour needs for growing tea industries and to generate land revenue through using abundant land for agricultural activities (Alam 2003: 1-2).

However, migration of Bangladeshi nationals continued even after the creation of Bangladesh in 1971. Abrar in a discussion viewed, "In case with Bangladesh – India

migration; border between the two countries has come much later and there has been cultural affiliation across the people in the region. Cross border cultural interaction among these people are the major causes of migration. Families have been divided due to newly created international border but the family ties still exist. Due to the seasonal needs, people migrate to fulfil their requirements across the border and they work - come back. Moreover the labour requirement in India to work in the informal sector encourages people to migrate (for e.g. many Bangladeshi migrants work as waste picker in Delhi). This population movement is further accentuated by the existence of less strict and partial porous India - Bangladesh border.”<sup>9</sup>

The Indo-Bangladesh border passes through West Bengal (2216.7 km.), Assam (263 km.), Meghalaya (443 km.), Tripura (856 km.) and Mizoram (318 km.). The entire stretch consists of plains, riverine belts, hills, jungles with hardly any natural obstacles and for that reason many border areas are porous in nature (MOHA 2007: 36). Though the border between Bangladesh and India remains demarcated (4095 km); for cultural and historical reasons (linguistically - Bengali<sup>10</sup> and religiously - Hindu and Muslims), the movement of population has been continuing due to geographical contiguity and socio-economic interactions in the form of trade and kinship across the border.

The migration of Bangladeshi nationals into Assam and other parts of India occurred largely in search of greener pastures and often to escape from poverty (Ghosh 1998: 131-133). Shobhan, in a discussion viewed, “People from Bangladesh to various Indian states of Assam, West Bengal and Tripura migrating since British period as it was single country/continent. People migrated to Assam to cultivate as there was availability of lands in the region during British period. The subcontinent was integrated and migration was common to all. The trend of migration has changed and people are migrating more towards western direction rather than the eastern as there are more economic opportunities. However, migrants may use the eastern borders as trajectory path. Now migration occurred due to over population in Bangladesh and the Northeastern states are

---

<sup>9</sup>In a discussion with C R Abrar, Director, Refugee and Migratory Movement Research Unit (RMMRU), Dhaka on 24/05/09, during Researcher’s field trip to Dhaka.

<sup>10</sup> About 250 million people live in Bengal, around 68% of them in Bangladesh and rest is in West Bengal.



less densely populated. People are migrating because of the presence of almost porous border situation.”<sup>11</sup>

Bangladesh is one of the largest deltas in the world with a total area of 147570 sq. km and having a population of about 140 million with annual growth rate of 1.7 percent. Bangladesh is one of the densely populated countries in the world crossing more than 1000 people per square kilometre (UNDP 2006: 167-168). The country is covered with a network of rivers and canals forming a maze of interconnecting channels. Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries in the world and a member of the Least Developed Countries (LDC) group (BBS 2007: 1 & UNDP 2006: 169).

**Table 2.V**  
**Economic Indicators of Bangladesh**

Year	Agricultural Land (% of land Area)	Agriculture, value added (% of GDP)	Forest area (% of land area)	Inflation, consumer prices (annual %)	Population density (people per sq. km)	Population growth (annual %)
2009	-	18.63841	-	5.423472	1226.415	1.378352
2005	69.47069	20.14203	6.694323	7.046618	1176.324	1.576997
2001	69.79335	24.0969	6.770377	2.007174	1100.78	1.775523
1991	74.80218	30.3652	6.777291	6.357364	907.5018	2.136748
1981	75.04033	31.70117	-	-	713.2702	2.673327
1971	74.47953	-	-	-	545.62	2.632011
1961	72.82784	-	-	-	425.5844	2.300894

Sources: World Bank (2010), *World Development Indicators – Bangladesh*, see URL: <http://data.worldbank.org/country/bangladesh>

Bangladesh has comparatively low natural resource base, but a high population growth rate. The high dependence on natural resources by the poor people and depletion of resources is occurring as its being exploited or used sub-optimally. The countries land-man ratio is often been threatened by natural hazards (UNEP 2001: 10). The average size of land holding has declined from 1.47 ha in 1961 to only 0.6 ha in 2005, despite rapid rural urban migration of the population (Hossain 2008: 1-9). The high population density, low economic growth, lack of institutional infrastructure, intensive dependence on agriculture and agricultural products, geographical settings, and various other factors, all

<sup>11</sup>In a discussion with Rehman Shobhan, Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue, Dhaka on 4/06/09, during Researchers field trip to Dhaka.

contributes to make the country weak and poor (Rahman 2007: 17-20). The population density per square Kilometre is 980 during 2008 having a population of 144.66 million (BBS 2009: 2-4). The country is predominantly a plain surface; it is criss-crossed by a very high density of river systems. Being a densely populated, there has been serious competition for access to and control over land. Over 58% people are functionally landless in Bangladesh. About 17.8 million acres are cultivated land and average household farm (those who have farm land) size is 1.5 acre. Thus, land is under intense use threatening its carrying capacity (Rahman, et. al. 2002: 9).

Apart from the economic compulsions, the migration of Bangladeshi nationals also occurred due to various other reasons. After and before the birth of Bangladesh, the reasons of migration were mainly due to the partition problem; communal violence and Indo-Pak war of 1964-65 (Ghosh 1998: 131-33). About 35 million people both Hindus and Muslims have migrated from one part to another either permanently or temporarily during partition of India in 1947 (Ghosh 1998: 131). About 1 million Hindus migrated to India immediately after the communal violence occurred due to the Hazrat ball shrine theft of holy relic of Prophet Mohammad in 1964 in Sri Nagar (Indian Commission of Jurists 1965: 309-12). Similarly, about 10 million Bengalis were forced to take refuge in India during 1971 – Bangladesh Liberation War (Ahmed 1996: 124-127).

Hussein in a discussion also agreed that before the creation of Bangladesh, migration occurred due to communal violence and state policies. According to him, “Earlier Hindus migrated to India due to state repression in East Pakistan/Bangladesh. Now the Muslims even started migrating for survival and livelihood. The existence of absolute poverty along with other environmental disasters led to population displacements and migration. These people being poor migrating largely through illegal channels and spread across the north Indian states ending up with the informal sector.”<sup>12</sup> For example, in India there are about 15-18 million<sup>13</sup> illegal Bangladeshi migrants most of them are Muslims; West Bengal-5.4 million, Assam-4 million, 0.8 million in Tripura. These migrants have spread

---

<sup>12</sup>In a discussion with Akmal Hussein, Department of International Relation, Dhaka University, on 27/05/09, during Researchers field trip to Dhaka.

<sup>13</sup> The GoM (2000: 13) reports the presence of 12 million illegal migrants (the post 1971) from Bangladesh into the various Northeastern states.

out to the other parts of India. In Maharashtra and Rajasthan it is estimated at 0.5 million each and in Delhi-0.3 million (Law Commission of India 2000: 5-6).

Mohseen in a discussion also agreed that poor Bangladeshis who cannot afford to migrate outside the region choose India as destination to meet their seasonal needs. The cultural and linguistic similarities through the family network accelerated migration. According to her, "People views present Indo-Bangla border as nonexistent and think of pre independent Indian subcontinent where people could move freely to meet their seasonal needs. For instance, the indigenous population dependent on Jhum cultivation, displaced in the Mymensingh district occurred due to Bangladesh government decision to declare forest as reserved. These people preferred to migrate to India for mere survival and for them border is non-existent. The buildings of mega dams in India are also affecting the agricultural land in Bangladesh virtually displacing millions of people. These people having no options of livelihood are forced to migrate to India."<sup>14</sup>

Apart from economic compulsions, social and political upheavals in Bangladesh also triggered migration, especially to West Bengal, Assam and other Northeastern states (Jamwal 2004: 14-16). Shobhan viewed, "Migration from Bangladesh to India has been occurring especially for two reasons. One is the economic - people are moving in search of livelihood and employment opportunities. Second is the environmental migrant, due to natural disaster people are forced to move to other places."<sup>15</sup> Again Farooq opines, "basically people living in the border areas are on move. Poverty along with high population growth and decreasing land-man ratio has caused migration. The poor, illiterate and unskilled people who are poverty stricken are migrating to India. The availability of plenty of cultivable land in Assam still attracts migrants. Political instability and minority suppression spreading insecurity have also forced people to migrate. Before/after 1947, there were large number of Hindus in Bangladesh; they have migrated to India due to communal violence, mostly to West Bengal, Assam and Tripura

---

<sup>14</sup>In a discussion with Ameena Mohseen, Department of International Relation, Dhaka University, on 27/05/09, during Researchers field trip to Dhaka.

<sup>15</sup>In a discussion with Farooq Shobhan, former Ambassador and President of Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad, on 4/06/09, during Researchers field trip to Dhaka.

and later this was facilitated through family network.”<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, Haq also agreed that migration before partition occurred as this region was a single entity – economy and cultural interaction was present. He views, “Before 1965, the Indo-Bangladesh border was almost porous and the cross border migration was natural. Meanwhile, natural disaster and climate change made millions of Bangladeshis displaced and finally end up with cross-border migration. For instance, people from the Barisal division are prone to disaster having no option migrates internally or externally crossing the border.”<sup>17</sup>

Migration of Bangladeshi nationals not only occurred into India but also to other countries as labourers. This has been of tremendous support to India. On the one hand, migration eases pressure for employment creation on the government, on the other; the remittance of migrant worker provides much needed resources for import and meeting financial obligation (Siddique & Abrar 2002: 2-6). Bangladesh is an exporter of professional, skilled, semiskilled and unskilled workers to more than 22 countries. The number of Bangladeshi workers going abroad per year has increased from only 6087 in 1976 to 875055 in 2008. If the number of dependent families accounted for as the beneficiary of these remittances, it would be even larger around 3.4 million. During 2008, remittances received by Bangladesh constitute 10 percent of its GDP. During 1991 and 2008 wage earners remittance to Bangladesh registered a growth of 13.8 percent per year which is far above its annual GDP growth (around 6 percent). Bangladesh receives US\$ 6.4 annually as remittance (Khatun 2008: 1-3).

## **2. V.i \_\_\_ Population Pressure in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh’s total population has crossed over 140 million and is the ninth most populous country in the world, with a population density of more than 1000 persons per square kilometre. The growth rate has been even more uneven, the population has shot up from 89.9 million in 1981 to 111.45 million in 1991 growing at a rate of 2.17 percent per year (Khatun 2000: 2). However, the annual growth rate of population has diminished to 1.51 percent according to the 2001 census. It is also expected that the current population

---

<sup>16</sup>In a discussion with Lt. Colonel Farooq, Bangladesh, during Researchers field trip to Dhaka on 4/06/09.

<sup>17</sup>In a discussion with Saiful Haq, Director, WARBE Development Foundation, Dhaka, on 28/05/09, during Researchers field trip to Dhaka.

size will reach about 190 million by the year 2025. About 77 percent of this expanding population lives in rural areas (Barkat & Akhter 2001: 27-28). The high population density means the low availability per capita arable land and almost all arable lands are under cultivation (Islam 1999: 1-2).

**Table 2.VI**  
**Bangladesh - Population Size, \*CBR, \*CDR, Natural Growth Rate and Annual Growth Rate (1901-2001)**

Census Year	Population Size (Million)	Crude Birth Rate/per 1000 population	Crude Death Rate/per 1000 population	Annual Growth rate
1901	28.93	.....	44.4	0.7
1911	31.56	53.8	45.6	0.94
1921	33.25	52.9	47.3	0.6
1931	35.6	50.4	41.7	0.74
1941	41.99	52.7	37.8	1.7
1951	44.16	49.4	40.7	0.5
1961	55.22	51.3	29.7	2.26
1974	76.4	47.4	19.4	2.48
1981	88.91	34.6	11.5	2.35
1991	109.88	31.6	11.2	2.17
2001	131.1	18.9	4.8	1.54

Source: Banglapedia – Census, *Census of India, 1931, and 1941; Bangladesh Population Census, 1991, 2001*, accessed 10 July, 2009, (Online Web)

See [http://www.banglapedia.org/httpdocs/HT/C\\_0065.HTM](http://www.banglapedia.org/httpdocs/HT/C_0065.HTM)

\*CBR: Crude Birth Rate (CBR) is defined as the number of births per year 1000 mid-year population. It is called crude method, because it does not make any difference for age as well as sex.

\*CDR: The Crude Death Rate (CDR) is defined as the number of deaths in a population in a year per 1000 populations.

Bongaarts (1996: 499-500) views, “Bangladesh is the fourth most densely populated country, among the 90 developing countries, in the world in terms of persons per hectare of potential arable land (12 persons per ha of potential arable land in 1989).” Table 2.VI clearly shows the rapid growth of Bangladesh population. In 1901, the East Pakistan/present Bangladesh had a total population of less than 30 million and the annual growth rate was less than one percent till 1950. The population of erstwhile Bangladesh started to grow after 1950 with an annual growth rate almost crossing over 2 percent. The annual growth rate of Bangladeshi population was all the time high-about 2.5 percent

during 1960-70. . The growth rate suddenly started declining from 1980's and by 2001 the growth rate had come down to 1.6 percent (BBS 2007: 2-3).

The CBR in Bangladesh was more than 50 per 1,000 populations until the mid-1960s. Later it started declining during Liberation war of 1971 and the famine of 1974-75. Since then, the declining trend of the CBR has been continuing and according to the 2001 census it is about 21 per thousand populations. This growth rate was quite low up to the early 1950s, but started to increase since then mainly as a result of the decline in the CDR (Banglapedia 2009).

**Table 2.VII**  
**Population Data as per SVRS Report and Projected Population in Bangladesh (in million)**

Population	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2006	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2011 (Projected Population)
Total Population	140.6	151.41
Male	72	77.85
Female	68.6	73.56
Urban	34.6	--
Rural	106	--
Annual Growth rate	1.41%	--
Density of Population	953	--
Sex Ratio (males per 100 females)	105.2	106.00

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (2009), *Statistical Pocket Book Bangladesh-2008*, Government of Bangladesh: 6-7

The current trend of population growth with annual growth rate and density of population along with the projected Bangladeshi population is also shown in the Table 2.VII. The projected Bangladeshi population of July 2011 is 151.41 million. The average farm size in 1983-1984 was 0.91 hectares, subdivided into an average of about 10 fragments (BBS 1986). Land ownership is highly skewed: 4.9 percent of households with more than three hectares operated 25.9 per cent of the land, whereas 40.4 percent holding 0.4 hectare or less operated 7.8 per cent. Meanwhile, the growing population pressure has increased the number of landless families simultaneously increasing the rate of rural to urban migration. It has also forced numbers of people to seek living space and subsistence on disaster-prone land within and alongside major rivers and in the Meghna estuary (Brammer 1990a: 13-14).

Increased population leads to resource scarcity and more people means the use of the same land continuously and its continuous depletion. This phenomenon is observed in Bangladesh where an extremely high population is struggling to survive by using natural resources till its exhaustion. This further induces poverty (Khatun 2000: 15-16). The extremely high population density and higher rate of population growth has immensely contributed to depletion of natural resources and to certain extent even soil and water resources also (UNEP 2001: 25-27).

## 2. V.ii \_\_\_ Deforestation in Bangladesh

When there is scarcity of land and natural resources human intervention is bound to occur in the forest resulting into deforestation<sup>18</sup>. Bangladesh is amazingly green but a forest poor country having an approximate 6 percent forests land mainly located in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). Apart from the CHT, forests lands are also available in greater Khulna, Dhaka, Mymensingh, Sunderbans and Tangoil districts. There are three types of forest i.e. tropical evergreen or semi evergreen hill forests in the CHT and Northeast Sylhet areas, deciduous Sal (*Shorea Robusta*) forest in the central Bangladesh and Mangroves forests in southwest Khulna and on the southern coastal belt. The forest in Bangladesh is considered as a sub sector of agriculture though it has small forests cover (Gain 2001: 72).

The CHT covers an area of 5093 square miles (10% of Bangladesh Territory) of which reserved forests cover 796160 acres (about 24% of CHT). The protected forests cover 34688 acres (about 1% of CHT) and the unclassified<sup>19</sup> state forests cover 2463000 acres (about 75% of the CHT) (Gain 2001: 73). A large tract of Mangroves forests known as Sunderbans located in the inter-tidal zone of the south western Bangladesh is the largest productive mangrove in the world (Mastler et. al. 2000: 18).

Bangladesh has 2.56 million ha of forests land including officially classified and unclassified state lands. Natural forest constitutes almost 31 percent but only 5 percent of

---

<sup>18</sup>The process of changing or removal of trees from existing forests is called as deforestation.

<sup>19</sup> An area recorded as forest but not included in reserved or protected forest category. In Bangladesh unclassified state forest is under the control of Ministry of Land.

existing forestlands are designated as protected areas. In terms of per capita forestland, Bangladesh ranks amongst the lowest in the world, with about 0.02 ha per person. The forests of Bangladesh are disappearing at high rate. The good to medium density forest of the Chittagong Forest Division had shrunk from approximately 30,000 ha in 1985 to 20,000 ha in 1992. In Cox's Bazaar, natural forest cover dropped from 31,300 ha in 1985, to about 24,300 ha in 1992 (UNEP 2001: 16). Between 1990 and 2000, Bangladesh gained 200 hectares of forest per annum with an average annual reforestation rate of 0.02%. Between 2000 and 2005 the rate of annual deforestation is 0.3 percent. The rate of forest change decreased by 1397.1% to 0.29% per annum during the same period and in total during 1990-2005, Bangladesh lost 1.3% of its forest cover.<sup>20</sup> In Bangladesh up to 1989, about 76,596 hector of forestlands were encroached in different forest areas. If the current trend continues, forests are likely to disappear altogether in the next 35-40 years or earlier (Banglapedia 2007).

The high increase of population and demand for food is another cause of conversion of forest land into agricultural land. The traditional Jhum cultivation by the forests communities are blamed for massive deforestation in the CHT. The annual rate of deforestation in Bangladesh is estimated at 8000 acres and in the CHT region 75000 acres have been completely deforested. The illegal encroachments of forests land, fire, uncontrolled and wasteful commercial logging, illegal felling etc. are the major factors of deforestation (Gain 1998: 33-35). The development activities such as dikes, construction of highways and roads and other infrastructure development have further intensified deforestation (UNEP 2001: 79). The deforestation has a serious impact on the socio-economic and ecological contexts. Deforestation generates migration, particularly the indigenous forests people as their livelihood is affected intensely (Baraclough & Ghimire 1995: 23-25).

## **2. V.iii \_\_\_ Natural Disasters - Flood in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh is a deltaic country located in the lower part of the basins of the three greatest rivers of the world - the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna. The flood plains of these

---

<sup>20</sup> Bangladesh Forest information data, accessed on 10 October 2010, URL:



rivers and their tributaries cover about 80 percent of Bangladesh. The rainfall run-off from this vast hilly area coupled with snowmelt in the Himalayas brings a huge inflow of water to the country during the wet monsoon season. However, the major rivers and their tributaries (57 rivers) have their headwaters originate outside the country and only 7.5 percent of their total catchments area of about 1.5 million square kilometres lies within Bangladesh (Brammer 1990b: 162-163 & 1990a: 12-13).

Bangladesh has been affected by devastating floods since time immemorial. However, the type, intensity and impact, i.e. losses/damages and suffering caused vary time to time. Ahmed (2004: 7) finds out the following features of floods in Bangladesh:

- Annually, some 1360000 million m<sup>3</sup> of discharge in Bangladesh originates outside the country. Between 80 and 85 percent of this discharge is generated during June-October.
- Bangladesh in fact has to drain the runoff of an area which is 12 times larger than its size. Only 7.5 percent of the combined catchments areas of the Ganges, the Brahmaputra, and the Meghna river systems fall within Bangladesh.
- The amount of water that passes over the country can create a pool having a depth of about 9 meters over the country's entire geographical area.
- Besides water, the rivers also carry high loads of silt from the steep and denuded upstream. Available estimates indicate that 1200 to 2400 million metric tons of sediments are carried annually to the Bay of Bengal. The combined annual sediment load of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra is estimated to be 1850 million metric tons.

Ahmed viewed, "Bangladesh is at the bottom of three river system and at the receiving end of waters. Bangladesh receives almost 92 percent of the water through these river systems. Again Bangladesh faces river bank erosion problem and the intrusion of saline water in the agricultural land eroding the productivity. In Bangladesh the rain cycle is changing and the crops have to be adjusted accordingly. Due to huge population the causalities during natural disaster will be very high in future. The problem of flood is intensive and recurring phenomenon and importantly flooding in wrong time is

destroying the crops and it's happening due to climate change in Bangladesh. The above mentioned factors like water problem, riverbank erosion, high population growth, flooding along with natural disaster and climate change will create more miseries and will finally result in population displacement and cross border migration.”<sup>21</sup>

In Bangladesh, four types of floods are normally encountered; flash floods - in the eastern and northern Rivers, local floods - due to high rainfall, river floods - from the three rivers, and the floods due to tidal storm. The flash floods are characterized by a quick rise followed by a moderately rapid recession and later causing high flow velocities of water that obliterate crops and properties. The floods due to storm surge in the coastal areas of Bangladesh which are generated by tropical cyclones cause extensive damage to life and property. These cyclones are predominant during the post monsoon period (October-November) and during monsoon period (April-June). Flash flood affects the northern and eastern piedmont plains, the CHT coastal plains and northern parts of the old Himalayans. Piedmont plain is caused by heavy rainfall occurring over adjoining hill areas inside and outside Bangladesh (Brammer 1999: 239-240).

The flat surface of land also spreads flood water evenly. In Bangladesh, more than 80 % of the total land comprises a vast flat plain with a very low altitude. The elevation of land ranges from 60 meters at the northern tip to less than 3 meters at the southern coast. Out of this vast alluvial plain 65% area stands below the 7.5 meter contour line. Excessive siltation in the channel beds of Bangladeshi rivers is considered as another important factor responsible for occurrence of floods. Annually about 2400 million tons of sediments is flown to the Bay of Bengal by these river systems of the country (Rob 1990: 365-368). Due to tropical monsoon climate Bangladesh experiences high rainfall. The annual rainfall is about 1880 mm but in some other places within Bangladesh it is even higher - ranging from 4000 mm to 6000 mm or even more.

The excessive rainfall in the catchments of the three river system is also a primary cause of floods in Bangladesh (BBS 2002: 3). The total catchments areas of these rivers stand

---

<sup>21</sup>In a discussion with Q K Ahmed, Director, Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad on 25/05/09, during field trip to Dhaka.

1.72 million sq. km. that includes the areas of China, India, Nepal, and Bhutan, whereas Bangladesh shares only 7 percent and as a result of the exceptionally heavy or prolonged rainfall outside the country also causes floods in Bangladesh. The total annual rainfall in Bangladesh contributes to a flow of 250398 million m<sup>3</sup> but the flow coming from outside Bangladesh border amounts to 999124 million m<sup>3</sup> (Ahmad et. al. 2001: 9-28).

Some man made development activities; construction of buildings, roads, embankments, railways also cause flood. The 4800 km coastal embankments in the southern part of the country along with some other inland river embankments have been found working against the drainage of flood water. The large scale canal digging programmes initiated by late President Rahman in 1980, ignoring the normal and natural hydrological settings of the country also caused floods in Bangladesh. Uncontrolled deforestation in the hilly areas also contributes to the flood problem by intensifying the flow of surface run-off. The construction of the Farakka Barrage by India on the Ganges has changed the regime of Padma in Bangladesh. The total hydrological situation of the lower portion of the Ganges system down the Farakka barrage has started experiencing disturbed hydrological functioning (Rob 1990: 374-376).

The consequences of floods in Bangladesh have both social and spatial dimensions. Socially the floods tend to deteriorate household income distribution in rural areas, since landless marginal and small farmers can hardly recover fully from the losses incurred during floods. Spatially, the floods result in deterioration of interregional disparities, since economic development in flood-prone areas cannot be sustained because of the destruction of crops, properties and infrastructures (Shahjahan 1998: 47-49). The average annual loss of rice from flooding in Bangladesh is approximately 4 percent of the total countryside. In addition to these, flood causes extensive damages to jute, sugarcane and summer vegetables also (Paul & Rashid 1993: 154-155). Displacement of people in Bangladesh is high due to flood. Around 20% of the country is affected by flood annually, and at least 37% of the land is affected once every 10 years. The frequent flood and damages done to the people have no choice but to leave their homes and migrate to a safer place either temporarily or permanently or even crossing international boundary (Gain 1998: 206).

**Table 2.VIII**  
**Severe Floods Affecting Bangladesh (1972-2007)**

Year	Number of people killed	Number of Livestock Dead	Total affected Population	Damage US \$ (million)
*1972	50	--	--	--
*1973	427	--	--	--
*1974	28700		38000000	*0.579
*1976	103	--	4000000	--
*1977	34	--	214150	--
*1978	17	--	400000	--
*1980	655	--	10000000	*0.15
*1982	0	--	308000	--
*1983	245	--	3000000	--
*1984	1200	--	30000000	378
*1985	300	--	--	--
1986	57	42374	6715734	
1987	1470	370129	24823376	1000
1988	1621	398018	44670060	1200
1989	23	51548	1848389	--
1990	41	8716	1383360	--
1991	818	46306	11286204	*.15
*1992	15	--	75200	--
1993	162	29512	11559586	--
1994	10	8666	553467	--
1995	246	58100	26197193	--
1996	76	47946	8106988	--
1997	125	4726	5008868	--
1998	918	26564	30916351	2800
1999	15	137	4338372	--
2000	37	1643	3244576	--
2002	26	25237	7606837	--
2003	104	7197	7874465	--
2004	747	15143	36337944	6600
2007	970	1459	13343802	620

\*From 1972 to 1985 data are related to flood only – data drawn from Bangladesh State of Environment – 2001, pp. 113-117 & the non-star mark data are of flood/erosion drawn from BDMB 2010. Sources: UNEP (2001), *Bangladesh - State of the Environment 2001*, UNEP RRC.AP, Thailand, accessed 6 June, 2009, pp. 113-17, (Online Web) URL :<http://www.rrcap.unep.org/pub/soe/bangladeshsoe.cfm> pp.113-117; Disaster Management Bureau (2010), *Major Natural Disaster in Bangladesh*, Government of Bangladesh, (online web), accessed on 10 October, 2010 URL: <http://www.dmb.gov.bd/pastdisaster.html>

Table 2.VIII shows the data of severe floods in Bangladesh. There were severe floods in 1954, 1955, 1956, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1970, 1971, 1974, 1984, 1987 and 1988 and also in the preceding years. The 1974 flood was followed by a famine in which an estimated 30000 people lost their lives. Again serious droughts occurred in 1972, 1978-79 and 1982; and a developing drought in April 1989 ended catastrophically for several villages north-west of Dhaka with a tornado which killed over a thousand people. Apart from the human miseries and the casualties, such natural disasters have serious long-term, socio-economic consequences (Brammer 1990a) 12 & 1990: 163-164).

The 1987 flood was caused mainly due to the heavy rainfall in July and September over North West Bangladesh. Insufficient drainage and embankments without proper bridges and culverts were identified as the major causes of floods (Nasreen 1999: 31). The most seriously affected regions areas are the western part of the Brahmaputra, the area below the confluence of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, north of Khulna and finally the adjacent areas of Meghalaya hills. The country experienced the most deplorable decimation of lives in barely believable digits in that flood (Hofer 1998: 101). During 1988 flood, caused by flooding of rivers, inundated almost 63% of the total areas. The affected areas are the part of Meghna and Brahmaputra catchments including central Bangladesh (Nasreen 1999: 32-33).

In June 2004, Bangladesh again experienced a flash flood in the north and the west-central districts due to heavy rain. The floods spread, eventually affecting Dhaka and other central districts. Nationwide, 36 million people (about 25 percent of the total population) across 39 districts were affected. Approximately 38 percent of Bangladesh was inundated including 0.8 million hectares of agricultural land. As of mid-September, the death toll due to flood had reached almost 800. It also caused heavy damage to major infrastructure; roads, bridges, railway, embankments, irrigation systems etc. (Bangladesh Water Development Board 2005).

In 2007, heavy monsoon in the upstream basin led to a series of devastating floods in Bangladesh forcing 0.5 million people to evacuate. The flood occurred in two phases; first, in July-August inundating 39 districts, the second flood occurred in September

affecting 7 new districts. A total of 46, of Bangladesh's 64 districts had been affected. Some 70000 houses were destroyed and another million were severely damaged. Thousands of livestock were lost and 5.5 million hectares of crops damaged. Around 3700 km of roads were totally destroyed and a further 27000 km were partially damaged (UNDP 2009b: 21). According to the Disaster Management Bureau under the Ministry of Flood & Disaster Management (Report 2007), 95966 households were totally damaged, 856264 households partially. The government estimated the total loss was little over \$ 1000 million of which loss in crop damages amounted to \$ 6200 million (Saha 2008: 28-29).

## **2. V.iv \_\_\_ Land Degradation and River Bank Erosion**

The land degradation<sup>22</sup> has been a serious problem in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, the topsoil degrades due to natural process and extensive use of land through human activities. The functional capabilities of soil deteriorate from excessive use of agricultural land, forestry and industry. Again, urban sprawling and infrastructure development also cause loss of available land. Natural disaster; cyclones and floods cause land loss, and can also deteriorate functional capabilities of soil. Soil degradation in the coastal area results from unplanned land use, as well as intrusion of saline water (UNEP 2001: 2).

In Bangladesh, more than 50 percent of the land is under crop cultivation, about 20 percent of the total land is used for homestead, cities and settlements, while 14.5 percent of the lands are under forestry, and the rest is used for industry, infrastructure and social needs. The increase demand for food accelerated the intensive exploitation of agricultural land and the inappropriate use of chemical fertilizer and pesticides led to degradation of soil. However, the extent of degradation and its impact on production and income are not known exactly. In the hill areas, such as CHT tracts and Madhupur tracts are acutely affected by soil erosion. An area of about 808 sq kilometres in Moulvi Bazaar and Sylhet district faced the problem. Land degradation has serious implications for the supply of non-degraded land for agriculture and for current and future agricultural expenditure on less fertile land. Hence, agriculture being the most common economic activity, it may

---

<sup>22</sup>Land degradation generally means the loss of potential production capability as a result of decreasing soil quality and overexploitation of land.

face the danger of unsustainability in terms of declining incomes as a direct result of environmental damage (Khatun 2000: 4-5).

The over-exploitation of land is caused by the presence of large scale poverty, improper land use, unplanned agricultural practices and encroachment on forest areas for agriculture and settlements purpose. Unplanned or inadequate rural infrastructure development and the growing demands of increasing urbanization are also devouring productive land. The soils of the hilly areas are the most susceptible and about 75% of the areas have very high susceptibility to erosion. A huge agricultural land is used for urban development which has been causing land erosion problem (UNEP 2001: 25).

The riverbank erosion is another form of land degradation and is a common phenomenon along any alluvial river. The active floodplains of the Ganges, the Brahmaputra-Jamuna, Tista and the Meghna rivers are most susceptible to riverbank erosion. The geographical settings, the behaviour of an alluvial channel, together with characteristics of the tropical monsoon climate are the causes of riverbank erosion. The EGIS report states, "the intensity of bank erosion varies from river to river as it depends on such characteristics as bank materials, water level variations, near bank flow velocities, the supply of water and sediments into the river". The report suggests that 'loosely packed, recently deposited bank materials, consisting of silt and fine sand, are highly susceptible to erosion' and that 'rapid recession of floods accelerates the rates of bank erosion in such materials'<sup>23</sup>. Riverbank erosion affects households, who in most cases, become Internally Displaced Peoples (IDPs) and some are forced to migrate and settle in new areas; others have little option but to settle in more disaster prone areas, such as chars (Abrar & Azad 2004: 1-5 & 13).

The rivers in Bangladesh are changing its width; the rate of widening of the river from 1973 to 2000 is 128m/year and the annual rate of widening has been as high as 184m during the period of 1984-92. In this period, the average width of the river increased from 9.7 to 11.2 km. The victims of the riverbank erosion are the people living in char areas. In

---

<sup>23</sup> *Riverine Chars in Bangladesh: Environmental Dynamics and Management Issues*, Environment and GIS Support Project for Water Sector planning (EGIS) and UPL, 2000: 20

1992, the total char area of Jamuna was estimated to be 100000 hectares, compared to 75000 for all other rivers together. The Jamuna figures the highest percentage of total char areas with 45 percent. The corresponding figures for the Ganges and the Padma are 30 and 20 percent respectively (Abrar & Azad 2004: 14). The awesome power of Bangladesh's rivers erodes around 10000 hectares of embankments each year, demolishing houses, roads and previously productive land, affecting about 1 million people annually (UNDP 2009b: 9). Elahi (1991) views, "during 1982 and 1992, the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Middle Meghna Rivers lost 106300 hectares because of erosion. This amounted to net loss of 8700 hectares annually, most of which is agricultural land. Other estimate shows that the landlessness in riverbank erosion prone areas can be as high as 70 percent" (Abrar & Azad 2004: 2).

The number of families and villages who permanently lose their homes annually is perhaps one of the highest in Bangladesh. Many of the slum dwellers in the metropolitan areas are the victims of riverbank erosion in the decade of 1982-1992 where over 106300 hectares of land has been eroded in the three major rivers of Bangladesh (the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna) against an accretion of 19300 hectares. About 728439 people were displaced due to river bank erosion during 1981-93. A substantial numbers are also being displaced from coastal islands, Chars and along the coastline as their settlements are destroyed due to frequent and intense storms surge and tidal bores (Abrar & Azad 2004: 1-2).

The increased salinity<sup>24</sup> level in the land is also contributing to land degradation in Bangladesh. This is mainly due to the effect of upstream withdrawal of waters from the rivers for irrigation purposes. Diversion of water from the Ganges at Farakka during the dry seasons is the main cause of increasing salinisation in the deltaic region of Bangladesh. Fall of surface water is also partly responsible for depletion of water (UNEP 2001: 97). Land with saline soil occurs in the young Meghna estuary floodplain and in the southern part of the Ganges tidal floodplain. Salinity in the coastal areas developed due to continuous accumulation of salt from tidal flooding and salt removal by leaching

---

<sup>24</sup>Salinity means the total amount of solid material (in grams) that is dissolved in one kilogram of water; generally expressed in parts per thousand.



or washing by rain or inadequate freshwater flushing. Salinity during the dry season mainly develops from the capillary rise of brackish groundwater to the surface (BBS 1997: 12-13).

The salination of water within south-western region of Bangladesh is due to diversion of water through various flood control and irrigation projects for the drought prone areas of Bihar and U.P. and other upper riparian states in India. The saline intrusion would be ousted by strong upland flows but due to upstream withdrawal of water by India in the dry season causes insufficient flow of fresh water to Ganges, Gorai, Madhumati River to check salinity. Only 500 micromhas/cm is the permissible salinity limit but in April 1983, salinity observed at Khulna topped all previous records reaching 17000 micromhas /cm and in 1992 salinity level was 29,000 micromhas/cm (Bangladesh Water Development Board 1994: 9-13).

Land degradation is not merely a matter of physical loss of land or quality, but has interrelated impacts. For the poor, loss of crucial land resources affects them economically, socially, and psychologically. It has been estimated that each year over one million people are affected by riverbank erosion (UNEP 2001: 33-34). Karim in a discussion commented "Due to water related problem, like the natural disaster, inclusion of saline water and cyclone, it will create more environmental refugees in Bangladesh. The Indian government policy of creating dams for hydro-electrical project may lead to more environmental problems/degradation in Bangladesh. The Tipaimukh dam may have such consequences as like that of Farakka. Bangladesh and Indian government should work out policies sitting together. Otherwise, there will be more environmental refugees going to India in future".<sup>25</sup>

## 2. V.v \_\_\_ Cyclone and Migration

Bangladesh is a breeding point of catastrophic cyclones that occur during pre-monsoon (April-May), and post-monsoon (October-November) periods. The Bay of Bengal being the breeding ground causes enormous loss of life in Bangladesh. Cyclones in the Bay of

---

<sup>25</sup>In a discussion with Ambassador Tariq Karim, Vice-President, BEI, Dhaka, on 24/05/09, during field trip to Dhaka.

Bengal usually move north-west in the beginning, and then gradually re-curve to move north-eastwards, though it's not uniformly followed. The cyclones usually decay after crossing land, causing colossal losses to life and damages to property in the coastal region. An average of 1-3 severe to moderate cyclonic storms hit Bangladesh every year (Milliman et al. 1989: 340-345). Tropical cyclones are usually destructive which strikes Bangladesh. The tropical storms which periodically ravage coastal areas of Bangladesh are properly called tropical cyclones (tropical cyclones have hurricane force winds; i.e. exceeding 117km/hr) (Chaudhury 2001: 61). Tropical cyclone occurs during pre-monsoon and post monsoon seasons; i.e., mid sprit to early June and later September to early December which occurs every year. Because of the funnel shaped coast, Bangladesh often becomes the landing ground of cyclones formed in Bay of Bengal. The Bay of Bengal cyclones also move towards the eastern coast of India, towards Burma and occasionally into Sri Lanka. But they cause maximum damage when they reach Bangladesh. This is due to the low flat terrain, high density of population and poorly built houses. Most of the damages occur in the coastal regions of Khulna, Patuakhali, Barisal, Noakhali and CHT and the offshore islands like Bhala, Hatiya, Sandhup, Manpura, Kutuledia, Maheskali, Nizhm Dwip, Urir Char and other newly formed chars (Brammer 1999: 292).

The tropical cyclones are more destructive due to the great instability of atmosphere and the weak vertical winds. They occur frequently and in great magnitude and have been directly responsible in multiplying the problems of poverty in Bangladesh. Bangladesh had experienced severe cyclone in 1854, 1876, 1919, 1942, 1960, 1961, 1963, 1965, 1970, 1985, 1988 and 1991 (Lama 1997: 242). Between 1960 and 1970, thirteen tropical cyclones struck coastal areas in Bangladesh with estimated 0.3 million casualties. Cyclones and storm surges occurred in May 1985 and November 1988 and the preceding years (Brammer 1999: 291-292). Table 2.IX shows, that almost a million people have lost their lives due to cyclone in Bangladesh. The most devastating cyclone occurred in 1970 which took half a million peoples lives. Bangladesh experienced severe cyclone on the night of 29 April 1991 causing extensive damage with casualties of 138882 lives. In May 1997 a similar cyclone with winds of over 230 km an hour and a tidal surge of up to 4.5 meters claimed less than 200 lives, while million people were evacuated into shelters

(Walter 2002: 16). The frequency of cyclone in Bangladesh has also substantially increased. Some of the major cyclones in 1970, 1991 and 1997 claimed lives of more than half a million people (UNDP 2009b: 7-8).

**Table 2.IX**  
**Severe Cyclone Affecting Bangladesh since 1960-2009**

Year	No. of People Killed	No. of Dead Livestock	No. of People Affected
*1960	8149	--	--
*1961	11466	--	--
*1963	11250	--	--
*1964	196	--	--
*1965	20152	--	--
*1966	850	--	--
*1969	75	--	--
1970	470000	--	--
*1974	183	--	--
*1983	2	--	--
*1985	11069	2020	167500
1986	12	1050	238600
1988	9590	386766	1006536
1989	573	2065	346087
1990	132	5326	1015866
1991	138958	1061054	13919504
1994	134	1296	422020
1995	91	1838	305953
1996	545	4933	81162
1997	205	11156	5800585
2007	3363	1778507	8923259
2009	190	150131	3928238

\*Data drawn from Source: *Cyclone Shelter preparatory Study* (CSPS), 1966, as cited in Nehal Karim, "Options for Cyclone Protection: Bangladesh Context, see <http://www.climate.org/PDF/Bangladesh.pdf> & Disaster Management Bureau (2010), *Major Natural Disaster in Bangladesh*, Government of Bangladesh, (online web), accessed on 10 October, 2010 URL: <http://www.dmb.gov.bd/pastdisaster.html>

Devastation of lives and property again occurred when a category 4 cyclone known as SIDR, struck in Bangladesh on 15 November, 2007. The cyclone left trails of devastation in 30 districts and out of these, six districts were categorized as 'worst affected' while six more were 'moderately affected'. The worst affected districts were Barguna, Bagerhat, Patuakhali, Barisal, Jhalokathi and Pirojpur. The moderately affected districts are Bhola, Satkhira, Khulna, Madaripur, Gopalganj, Shariatpur. Altogether 2064026 families were

affected by this cyclone which led to the suffering of 8923259 people. Around 3363 people were killed and over 55282 people were injured. Around 871 people were reportedly missing and damages of the houses were counted for more than 1522077 (UNDP 2009b: 13-14). It was also estimated that more than 564967 houses were completely destroyed and 957110 were partially damaged; 4231 educational institutions were completely destroyed and 12723 partially damaged. Nearly 8.9 million people representing 2 million families were directly affected. The Ministry of Food and Disaster Management has estimated the damages in 12 districts at US \$ 1600 million (Ripa 2008: 20-21 & MFDM 2008: 6). Islam in a discussion viewed, "Bangladesh is the highest densely populated country in the world and people are living in vulnerable zones. River erosion is very critical problem for which every year 20000 people are displaced and they become landless. The natural livelihood resources have been declining in Bangladesh. Most of the agricultural cultivable land becomes salt industry and sand desert. To escape from such situation people are migrating internally and most of the time externally. The unemployment problem is also rampant in Bangladesh."<sup>26</sup>

## 2. V.vi \_\_\_ Natural Disaster and Migration

Natural disaster may lead to sudden population displacement and the situation becomes worst in a poverty stricken country. People may migrate internally on temporary basis and may come back once the disaster havoc is over. However, the permanent migration of disaster affected people may occur internally through rural to urban, low to high land and also internationally particularly to the neighbouring countries (Herrmann & Svarin 2009: 9). According to Dixon (1994: 22), "Environmental disasters in Bangladesh estimated to have triggered 12 to 17 million migrants to India whilst the population of Assam has been boosted by at least seven million."

The people in the coastal region are vulnerable to extreme natural disaster and also face high poverty triggering migration internally and internationally. The coastal areas facing the Bay of Bengal covers an area of 47201 sq.km having 19 districts; Bagerhat, Barguna, Barishal, Bhola, Chandpur, Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Feni, Gopalganj, Jessore, Jhalokati,

---

<sup>26</sup>In a discussion with Aminul Islam, Asst. Country Director, UNDP, Dhaka, on 01/06/09, during Researchers field trip to Dhaka.

Khulna, Lakshimpur, Narail, Noakhali, Potuakhali, Pirojpur, Satkhira and Shariatpur are prone to cyclone and flood (Hössain 2008: 2-3). According to Siddique (2009: 20), “The patterns of migration from these areas are both internal and international. Those people having poor income are forced to migrate to the adjacent districts/upazilas or to Dhaka city. The poor, lower middle and middle class will migrate to neighbouring countries, gulf and even in Europe depending on their social network and ability to bear migration cost. The recent pattern of migration in Bangladesh suggests that the disaster induced migrants are likely to move primarily to urban areas within the country, either temporarily or permanently.”

Internal migration of Bangladesh's population is the only adequate reaction to increasing natural hazards and hence is considered a temporary choice as people usually moves back to the original place. The long term internal migration in Bangladesh consists mainly of rural-urban and also migration from low-high land areas. Some districts; Faridpur, Barisal, Comilla, Noakhali and Mymensingh are generally more out-migration prone. These districts are vulnerable to natural disasters and having easy transportation linkage with the destination cities like Dhaka, Chittagong and Khulna (Islam 1999: 11). According to Afsar (2004: 71), “66 percent of Bangladesh's rural migration is directed towards urban centres, whereas 10 percent account for rural-rural and 24 percent for overseas migration. Rural-urban migration occurs mainly to the country's two biggest cities Dhaka and Chittagong -- accounts for around 2/3 of the total urban growth.” (Herrmann & Svarin 2009: 9).

People also migrates to the adjacent high land districts where they may find livelihood opportunities as rikshaw puller, street worker etc. People from islands like Sandip, Vhola, Hatia and Kutubdia gradually migrate to the high land of Chittagong like Sitakunda, Miresarai etc. As these lands are most vulnerable to cyclone, storms and flooding often maintains a second home in relatively high land areas (Siddique 2009: 20-21). The bordering districts (with India) of Bangladesh - Khulna, Satkhira and Bagerhat – also the coastal areas, susceptible to disaster prone are generating international migration. Siddique (2009: 15) views, “The people from these districts have already a very strong social network in India. A large number of people are working in many Indian cities.

Moreover people of bordering districts of both countries share more or less a common culture that facilitates a regular communication through formal and informal channels. So it can be easily predicted that the flow of migration both in regular and irregular channels to India from Khulna, Satkhira, and Bagerhat are occurring.”

## 2. V.vii Economic Factors - Poverty

Although poverty incidence decreased by 10 percentage points during 1990-2000 in Bangladesh (BBS 2004b: 10) still about 40% of the total population lives below the national poverty line. The rural poverty is estimated at 43.8 percent and urban poverty at 28.4 percent (BBS 2006: 4-7; Ahmed 2003: 4-5). According to the (UNDP) Human Development Report-2009, the Human Development Index (HDI<sup>27</sup>) (estimated in 2007) for Bangladesh is 0.543, which gives the country a rank of 146<sup>th</sup> out of 182 countries. The Human Poverty Index (HPI-1<sup>28</sup>) value is 36.1% for Bangladesh and is ranked 112<sup>th</sup> among 135 countries for which the index has been calculated. Ahmed viewed, “another factor of migration that can be added in Bangladeshi context is the existence of large scale poverty. The magnitude of poverty is high and people are more vulnerable to it.”<sup>29</sup> Haq commented that in Bangladesh, almost 20 percent of the total population is ultra poor<sup>30</sup>.

The BBS and the World Bank estimated Bangladesh’s poverty ratio at 50 per cent and extreme poverty ratio at 34 percent as of the year 2000, which implies that during the previous decade, the reduction in poverty took place at a rate of one percent point per annum. There are different groups facing different levels of deprivation and poverty and the poor includes two kinds. Firstly, there is one set of people who face endemic poverty

<sup>27</sup>Human Development Index (HDI) looks beyond GDP to a broader definition of well-being. It provides a composite measure of three dimensions of human development only: living a long and healthy life (measured by life expectancy), being educated (measured by adult literacy and gross enrolment in education) and having a decent standard of living (measured by purchasing power parity, PPP, income).

<sup>28</sup> The Human Poverty Index (HPI-1) focuses on the proportion of people below certain threshold levels in each of the dimensions of the human development index - living a long and healthy life, having access to education, and a decent standard of living. By looking beyond income deprivation, the HPI-1 represents a multi-dimensional alternative to the \$1.25 a day (PPP US\$) poverty measure.

<sup>29</sup>In a discussion with Q K Ahmed, Director, Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad on 25/05/09, during field trip to Dhaka.

<sup>30</sup>Ultra poor means those people who are in extreme poverty, where they do not get 1800 calories food everyday intake. The normal kilo calorie is 2200 and 20 percent of the people just taking below 1800 calories everyday.

(due to persisting lack of access, for example, to assets, employment, and facilities for capability enhancement). There is another set of people who suddenly become poor as a result of disasters such as flood, river bank erosion, cyclone, etc. (Ahmed 2006a: 8-9). Poverty is widespread and particularly entrenched in coastal areas (Ahmed 2003: 7).

**Table 2.X**  
**Bangladesh Poverty Incidence by Head Count Ratio**

Residence	Incidence of Poverty (head count ratio) %	
	March 2004	May 1999
National	42.1	44.7
Urban	37.9	43.3
Rural	43.3	44.9

Sources: BBS (2004b), *Report of the Poverty Monitoring Survey*, Ministry Of Planning, Government of Bangladesh, p.10

Lack of employment opportunities and existence of limited land make it difficult for the rural people to break the cycle of poverty. The Poverty Head Count Ratio (HCR) by Direct Calorie Intake (DCI) method is presented at the national, urban and rural levels has been presented in Table 2.X and 2.XI. The head count ratio which is a measure of poverty incidence defined as the ratio of population falling below poverty line to the total population was 44.7 percent in 1999 which reduced to 42.1 percent in 2004. For the urban area it reduced from 43.3 percent to 37.9 percent and in rural area it reduced from 44.9 to 43.3 percent (Rahman 1998: 27-33).

**Table 2.XI**  
**Bangladesh Poverty Head Count Ratio by DCI method of 1981- 82 to 2005**

Survey	% of population below poverty line		
	National	Rural	Urban
2005	40.4	39.5	43.2
2004	40.9	40.1	43.6
2000	44.3	42.3	52.5
1995-96	47.5	47.1	49.7
1991-92	47.5	47.6	46.7
1988-89	47.8	47.8	47.6
*1985-86	55.6	54.7	62.6
*1983-84	62.6	61.9	67.7
*1981-82	71.0	73.0	68.0

Sources: BBS (2004a), *Statistics for Monitoring Attainment of MDG's in Bangladesh*, Government of Bangladesh: Dhaka, pp.10-15 & Ministry of Finance (2010), *Bangladesh Economic Review 2009*, Government of Bangladesh, Dhaka, p.189. \*Poverty estimates were based on DCI; 2200 k.cal and for other year's 2122 k.cal

Again migration of course has been the most dominant component of urban population growth. The larger metropolitan centres more particularly Dhaka have been the major attractions. Urban poverty situation in Bangladesh slightly been improved, from 68% in 1981/82 it gone down to little over 43.6% in 2004 (Rahman 1994: 20).

## 2. V.viii Economic Factor - Unemployment

The unemployment problem in Bangladesh is also a major factor of migration. More than half of the population is being unemployed due to lack of development and other economic activities. Employed population above 15 years in various sector from 2002-2003 has been presented in Table 2.XII. It is observed that of the total employed population was only 44.3 million among which 34.5 million were male and 9.8 million were female during 2002-2003 (Hoque 2004: 1-20). The depth of unemployment problem in Bangladesh is often elusive, even if one is to accept 3 percent employment growth as reasonable, one would note that it is still below the current labour force growth rate. The incident of underemployment has risen from 1.8 percent to 4.9 percent during the past years. Even then, open unemployment at less than 5 percent of labour force is a rather spurious reflection of changes in the living standards. Open unemployment, given its definition, fails miserably to capture extensive work sharing and casual work practiced in Bangladesh (Islam 2002: 7-10).

**Table 2.XII**  
**Employed Persons 15 Years and Over by Broad Economic Sector and Sex, 2002-2003 in Bangladesh**

Broad economic sector	Both Sexes		Male		Female	
	No million	%	No. Million	%	No	%
Total	44.3	100.0	34.5	77.9	9.8	22.1
Agriculture	22.9	100.0	17.2	75.0	5.8	25.0
Non-agriculture	21.4	100.0	17.3	80.8	4.1	19.2
Industry	15.3	100.0	13.1	85.6	2.3	14.4
Services	6.1	100.0	4.2	68.9	1.8	31.1

Sources: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (2004), *Statistics for Monitoring Attainment of MDG's in Bangladesh*, Government of Bangladesh: Dhaka, p. 8

According to the Bangladesh Labour Force Survey, 2005-06, a labour force (above 15 years) of 4.74 crore (male 3.61 crore and female 1.13 crore) is engaged in a range of



professions, the highest (48.10 percent) still being in agriculture. Between the two survey periods, the number of agriculture workers decreased by 3.59 percent. According to Labour Force Survey, 2005-06, it is observed that highest 41.98 percent of labour force is engaged in self - employment which was 44.70 percent in 2002-03. It may be noted that during the two survey periods, the number of self-employed labour force decreased by 2.72 percent. According to the Labour Force Survey 2005-06, 18.14 percent of labour force was engaged as daily labourers and 13.92 percent as full time employed workers, which was 20.09 percent and 13.77 percent respectively according to the previous survey. The latest survey also indicated that 21.73 percent of the labour force was engaged as unpaid family labourers indicating an increase by 3.45 percent (MOF 2010a: 32).

## **2. V.ix \_\_\_ Bangladesh Agriculture**

In Bangladesh, during 1999-2000, around 62.93 percent of the total labour force depended directly or indirectly on agriculture. Agricultural wages are also low compared to the average minimum wages in the country. Agriculture is the driving force in Bangladesh economy and it would remain so in near future but yet the productivity and income in agriculture is much lower than non-agricultural sector (Brammer 1990b: 163 & World Bank 2000a: 58). The growth of population has tremendous impact on agriculture for obvious reasons. The agriculture sector of Bangladesh has already reached a point of maximum utilization in terms of potential arable lands and intensity of cropping. The annual use of fertilizer appear to be higher (86 kg per ha), in Bangladesh than in any other South Asian countries. It is also a daunting task to increase production through improved irrigation facilities (Islam 1999: 18-19).

Herrmann and Svarin (2009: 4) views, "Relatively weak agricultural development due frequent occurrence of natural disasters, enforces people in Bangladesh to search for employment opportunities outside agriculture; particularly in the non-agricultural sectors - the textile industries." The high intensity and duration of 1998 flooding caused an overall decrease of 48 percent of agricultural production in rural households in Bangladesh (Ninno et. al 2001: 54). Due to weak agricultural development and adverse impacts of natural hazards have serious implications on food crisis and shortages. During

1998 - 2008 there were 14 reported food shortages in Bangladesh, and 13 of these were caused by flooding and its subsequent effects. This development in the agricultural sector is a principle reason for accelerated rural-urban migration in Bangladesh. Rural-urban migration has also important impacts on Bangladesh's economic structures. Many people give up agriculture as a result of recurrent loss due to disasters (Herrmann & Svarin 2009: 6-10).

## **2. V.x \_\_\_ Development and Displacement in Bangladesh**

Through the 1960s and 1970s, Bangladesh government initiated large number of irrigation, flood control, hydropower and urban/industrial development projects to control natural disasters without making any provisions for any resettlement policy for the displaced people. The major infrastructural development projects are externally funded by multilateral and bilateral agencies, such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Overseas Development Authority (ODA), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), United States for International Development (USAID), Japan International Cooperation agency (JICA) etc. The several development projects like Karnaphuli paper mill project, Kaptai hydro-electrical project, Jamuna Bridge project, Ashuganj-Bakhrabad (A-B) pipe line project, Road rehabilitation project, Dhaka water supply project displaced thousands of people in Bangladesh (Zamman 1996: 671-703).

The Karnaphuli paper mill at Chandraghona was constructed at a cost of approximately US\$ 13 million foreign funds including US\$ 4.2 million from the World Bank. The paper mill set the grounds for chronic deforestation in the hills and since the constructions of the mill; millions of tons of bamboo and softwood have been cut for paper production. This resulted in loss of livelihood that generated population displacements of many families in the CHT (Gain 1998: 35). In the late 1950s Pakistan decided to harness the water resources of the CHT mainly to accelerate the process of industrialization in East Pakistan. A hydroelectric dam was constructed on the Karnaphuli River in Rangamati during 1959-1963 with US financial assistance. The construction of the dam created a huge lake at the north and east of the dam at a place called Kaptai. The dam, in fact, submerged an area of about 400 sq. miles including 54000 acres of cultivable land

making up 40 percent of the total acreage. About 90 miles of government roads and 10 sq. miles of reserve forest also went beneath water. It made 10000 Chakma ploughing families having propriety rights, and 8000 Chakma Jhumia families (practicing Jhum cultivation) comprising more than 100000 Chakma persons landless and homeless. It also affected 8000 Bengali poor settlers and 1000 Marmas (Islam 1978: 3).

Again as part of the rehabilitation plan; some 5633 families were made to settle at the Kassalong reserve forest. These families received three acres of land which on average was also half of their original land holding. The government officials, in contrast to the rehabilitation of the hill people, settled 570 Bengali families in the best available land at the Kassalong tract. Moreover, there remained 4500 Chakma families who could not be allocated land of comparable quality. An acute sense of depression and frustration gripped over the whole region and nearly 40000 Chakma people, direct victims of the Kaptai dam, crossed over to Indian border state of Tripura and finally to Arunachal Pradesh (Ahmed 2002-2003: 24-26 & Gain 1998: 60-62). The rehabilitation and compensation was reported to be inadequate, poorly planned and insufficient. Impacts were not properly calculated and land given was inferior in quantity, size and location. An estimated 8000 families received no compensation at all because the government didn't recognize their customary rights. Only a fraction of the US \$ 59 million allocated reached the rehabilitation office. At this time about 40000 refugees migrated to Arunachal Pradesh where many still remain (Ahmed 2002-2003: 21 & Skinner 2008: 31-34).

The Jamuna Bridge Project, which was built with the US\$ 800 million support of the World Bank, ADB and Japan displaced a large number of people living nearby the embankments area. The five kilometres long bridge over Jamuna River establishes permanent link between eastern and Western halves. The Bangladesh government in 1985 established the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority (JMBA) to plan, design, coordinate and secure funds for constructions of the bridge. And accordingly the JMBA has acquired a total of 5,681 acres of land in which a large numbers of people were affected, mostly the farm workers. Apart from that, Uthulis (free users) constitute the large majority who were indirectly affected by land acquisition. The loss of agricultural

land is very high on both banks of the river. According to the BRAC survey, 5181 households lost partly or wholly the agricultural land, 2167 households lost their homesteads wholly or partly, 612 households were landless already due to land acquisition. These displaced people depriving off the rehabilitation policies have no other options but to migrate within Bangladesh (Zamman 1996: 696-698).

The 58 kms Ashuganj-Bakhrabad (A-B) pipeline that was made to improve gas delivery by integrating the present network with the North-western gas fields (Kailashtila, Habibganj, and Rashidpur) to meet the increase demands in Chittagong and Dhaka also displaced a number of people. Land was often requisitioned for construction activities, and the combined acquisition and requisitions by the A-B project, affected some 4000 households due to both land fragmentation and the traditional joint ownership of land in Bangladesh. The Dhaka urban development Dholai Khal and Dhaka water supply projects together have caused the displacement of 34000 households. The Dholai Khal is a drainage improvement component of the Dhaka Urban Project. It consists of construction of a culvert, road and a pump stations at the mouth of Khal (Canal) at Buriganga River to alleviate flooding during the monsoon seasons (Zamman 1996: 693-94).

## 2. V.xi \_\_\_ Socio-Political Factors

Social and political factors such as state repression, communalism, religious persecution, and political instability also compelled a large number of Bangladeshis to migrate both within and outside the country (Lama 2000: 6-7). The deteriorating socio-political conditions are primarily responsible for migration of the Bangladeshis to India. Most of the minorities in Bangladesh, especially Hindus are the victim of communalism and state repression. The state policies in Bangladesh created a sense of insecurity among the minorities which forced them to cross the international border. The process of Islamisation of Bangladeshi society, communalism and the passing of various acts like the Vested Property Act (VPA) and state repression against the minorities are the major factors responsible for spreading the feeling of insecurity among them (Choudhury 2000: 148-152).

Bangladesh was born as a secular nation but gradually structured it as an Islamic country through a series of constitutional amendments by political leaders. This injected a strong sense of insecurity among the minorities. Soon after the liberation, Bangladesh declared herself as sovereign People's Republic and proclaimed the three principles of state policy; democracy, socialism and secularism. Later, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman added nationalism to this list and the Bangladesh Constitution under Article 12 declares Bangladesh as secular a state (Zaman 1994: 42-43). The principle of secularism is realized by the elimination of communalism in all its forms, and not giving political status in favour of any religion, abuse of religion for political purposes and discrimination against or persecution of practicing a particular religion by the state. However, secularism was understood more in sense of neutrality among the religious practiced or equal treatment of all religious. Article 8, of 1972 constitution states, "The principle of nationalism, socialism, democracy and secularism together with the principles derived from them set out in this part construct the fundamental principles of state policy" (Chittara 1997: 71).

However, the concept of secularism in Bangladesh seems to be short lived and the process of Islamisation started. General Zia Ur Rahman, started the process when he came to power after the brutal assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975. Bangladesh saw a steady rise in the growth of fundamentalism when Zia remained in power and also a systematic steep rise of Islamic political parties was patronized by the government (Ghosh 1990: 21-23). Zia passed an amendment order on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1977 and deleted the Article 12 and replaced secularism by adding in the Article "fatal faith and belief in the Almighty Allah". By this amendment, the word "Bismillahir Rahmanur Rahim" was added at the outset of the constitution, the words 'liberation struggle' in the preamble was replaced by 'war of independence'; Socialism was explained as 'Economic and Social justice'. A new clause was added to article 25 to the effect that the state shall endeavour to strength, consolidate and pressure the fraternal relationship, between the Muslim states on the basis of Islamic solidarity (Zaman 1994: 44). Basically Zia's decisions to drop secularism as a constitutional principle was a political move to get support of the Muslim League and other Islamic based political parties to retain his

position. Some of Muslim League leaders have also suggested Gen Zia to change the national flag (because it has no Islamic symbol) and the national anthem (Franda 1982: 262).

Later General Ershad also followed the policy of Islamisation. In 1988, he declares Bangladesh as an Islamic state by passing the eight amendments to the constitution and assures the peaceful practice of other religions too. The amendment quotes, "The religion of the Republic is Islamic, but other religions may be practiced in peace and harmony in the republic." The provisions made the difference between Islam and other religions so wide that it became obvious to the minority communities that equal rights of the citizens as enshrined in the constitution were no longer exercisable and exist. The eight amendments, which was a product of Ershad's brain storming was approved by the parliament (Zaman 1994: 45-47). His policy of open appeasement of the Islamic forces encouraged the fundamentalist and other such elements in the society (Ziring 1992: 210). Ershad allowed the process of Islamisation of army and its institutions. Most of the policies were formulated to promote Islamic norms among the army personnel and prayers were obligatory. Army personnel were sent to Islamic organizations and foundations (which prompt Islamic values and ideas) to occupy the top positions. Most of the top position of the army as well as civil administration was held by war veterans (Biswas & Sato 1993: 95).

The Islamisation of Bangladesh constitution and the society spread the fears among the minorities about their safety and security in the country. For the minorities, declaration of Islam as the state religions will result in destroying national unity as well as curtail equal rights of other communities. Mohseen in a discussion commented, "Bangladesh being a Muslim majority society dreamt of a republic but they couldn't draw the principle and religion keeps on intruding. The process of Islamisation in Bangladesh through various successive governments spread the feeling of insecurity and automatically Hindus became a second class citizen. The state has created and spread the feeling of insecurity at political, religious and even economic level and it is reiterated through various draconian laws and politicized the minority issue. During the BNP government last year, the Home Ministry of Bangladesh banned for granting loans to Hindus suspecting that

they would take loan and will get settled in India. The mistrust still persists and the state has failed to build that trust.”<sup>31</sup>

The migrations of people from Bangladesh to India occurred due to states policy that spread the feeling of insecurity among the minorities. According to Chakravarty (1995: 130), "Mounting communal tension created a sense of insecurity in the minds of the minority community. Communal tension is the principal cause of post partition migration." During Ershad's regime Islamic parties rapidly grew and by 1986 it rose up to 100 while there were only 65 Islamic parties in 1954 in East Bengal. However, Ershad's policy of appeasement and encouragement of Islam in Bangladesh alienated the largest minority groups, Hindus from national mainstream. The declaration of Islam as the state religion and the move to introduce compulsory Arabic education spread feeling of insecurity among the Hindus in Bangladesh (Biswas & Sato 1993: 104-105).

The passing of some draconian law and repressive state policies also alienated Hindus and other minority communities from the mainstream politics. The passing of Vested Property Act (VPA) in 1974 by the government that allows embezzlement of Hindu property by the state was a major ground of alienation of the Hindus in Bangladesh (Alam 1993: 311-325). The passing of several acts and ordinances by the Pakistani as well as the Bangladeshi governments like the East Bengal Evacuees (Administration of Immoveable Property) Act 1965, the Enemy Property (Custodian and Registration) order 1965 and the vested and non-resident property (Administration) Act of 1974, etc. had a serious impact among the minorities. The implementation of the above acts led to the acquisition of land and properties of the Hindu minorities eventually forcing them to leave Bangladesh. The partition of India spread communal violence in East Bengal forcing minority Hindus to leave the country. And there was serious crisis of administration as well as legal problem arose regarding the management of the properties left behind by the Hindus. The government of Pakistan enacted the East Bengal Evacuees (Administration of immovable properties) Act in 1951 as a response to the situation. The act created an Evacuees Management committee and entrusted the power to take charge

---

<sup>31</sup>In a discussion with Ameena Mohseen, Department of International Relation, Dhaka University, on 27/05/09, during field trip to Dhaka.

of properties of Evacuees, either on the basis of application from evacuees or its own. The committee had such profanities as it deem necessary. Widespread discrimination prevailed as the civil court was restricted to call in question in any order passed or any action taken by the committee (Barkat et. al. 1997: 24-25).

It is generally assumed that most of the Hindu minorities were forced to move to India due to the discriminatory practices against them and secondly, the fear of persecution both by the state and the majority religious community. On a more technical and legal count, two legislations – defence of Pakistan ordinance 1965 (ordinance no 23 of 1965) including defence of Pakistan rules, 1965 framed under the ordinance; and the Bangladesh abandoned property (control, management and disposal) order, 1972 (presidents order no 16 of 1972) can be generously construed as having created situations of fear and insecurity for the Hindu minority community, compelling them to steadily leave Bangladesh. However, the inequitable and often illegal denial of such opportunities in Bangladesh is an important approximate cause. The VPA – a continuation of the EPA, is one of the most inhuman legal instruments having serious impact on the forced out migration of the Hindu community from the East Pakistan and Bangladesh. This serious issue of forced migration and associated human misery, deprivation and alienation did not attract the attention of the successive governments, except during the few days in the process of national parliament election (Barkat et. al. ed. 2000: 1-10 & 113-114).

Bangladesh Parliament in 1974 introduced “The Enemy Property Acts Continuance and Emergency Provisions (Repeal Act) and the Vested and Non-resident Property Act (administration).” Under the Enemy Property Act (continuance of) Emergency provisions (Repeal) Act, all enemy properties and firms which were vested in the custodians of enemy property in the then East Pakistan, remained vested in the government of Bangladesh under the banner of vested property. The vested and non-resident property (administration) Act (Act XLVI) of 1974 was enacted to provide the management of certain properties and assets of persons who are non-residents of Bangladesh or have acquired a foreign nationality. Though the principal aim of the act XLVI of 1974 was to identify and take over the properties of those residents who left Bangladesh during or immediately after liberations war or took foreign citizenship. But in practice this act



XLVI of 1974 was widely used against Hindu minorities who had no connection with Pakistan for quite valid and obvious reasons. In November of 1976, Zia Ur Rahman abrogated the vested and non-resident property acts of 1974 and replaced it by an ordinance XCII of 1976. It empowers the government of Bangladesh to become custodians and to preserve enemy property in contemplation of arrangements to be made in the conclusion of peace with India. But the ordinance XCII of 1976 made the government owner of vested properties instead of protector of the same. Thus the government encroached upon the right of ownership, thereby forcing a large number of minorities to leave Bangladesh (Barkat, et. al, 2000: 17-25).

The intensity of vesting, in terms of both incidence and amount of land dispossessed, varies by historical time periods. About 53 percent of the total incidences of dispossession and 74 percent of the total land lost took place during Pakistan regime, 1961-71. In Bangladesh, after the military takeover in 1975, the intensity of dispossession due to VPA has accelerated. Even about 8 percent of total incidences and 2 percent of dispossessed land took place after the repeal of the VPA during (2001-2006). It implies that, nationally an estimated 200687 Hindu households have been affected by the act even after the repeal of the VPA, and they lost a total of 52000 acres of land. The mean area of land properties vested has also varied by time with 276 decimals per vested households during the 1965-71 periods. 190 decimals per vested household during 1972-75, 142 decimals per vested household during 1976-81, 121 decimals per vested household during 1982-1990, 86 decimals per vested household during 1991-95 periods, 42 decimals per vested household during 1996-2000, and 46 decimals per vested household during 2001-2006 period (Barkat et. al 2008: 67-68).

Although the history of EPA/VPA is already over four decades old, it took only the first six years (1965-71) for more than half of total incidences (53%) and grabbing of about three-fourths (74%) of the total dispossessed property to take place. The fact that about 8 percent of total incidences and 2 percent of total land dispossession took place during 2001-2006 implies that the VPA act has not been repealed and the process of vesting is on going (Barkat et.al. 2008: 67&104). Zamman in a discussion viewed, "The existence of draconian law like the VPA is a mere continuation of the Enemy Property Act, has

spread insecurity among the minorities for which they were forced to leave the country. During 1965 war, Pakistan government enacted Enemy Property Act. The law continued to exist even after the creation of Bangladesh. Basically a group of people with vested interest misused this law and captured the properties of the Hindus. These land grabbers had political affiliation. When the government tried to amend the law they resisted.”<sup>32</sup>

Barkat in a discussion commented, “The migration of Bangladeshis into India is a post-Pakistan phenomenon. The communal riot contributed for such a movement of population. The movement started at 1947 but accelerated during 1964 and 1965 Indo-Pakistan war. The enactment and implementation of enemy property act by General Ayub Khan generated insecurity among the minorities. The migration of Hindus into India was force in nature as the state involved/forcing them to migrate. The provision of the law looks not harmful but in practice the acts means ‘Hindustan is equal to enemy land’. Therefore, ‘all Hindus anywhere in this world are equal to enemies’ and thus Hindus residing in East Pakistan is enemy. According to EPA, the government becomes custodian not the owner, this is another dilemma, so if you are a custodian, there will be time when I will come and tell you that you are a custodian of law, please give my property back, because you are not the owner of the property. This constituted for large scale migration of Hindus to India. The act later came to known as VPA after independence of Bangladesh. And there has been long fight by the civil society to remove this act. Some political party also raised this issue in the parliament. If a Hindu’s brother dies, his property will come under VPA, but if his brother goes to USA or India for a small period, it shouldn’t come under the VPA.”<sup>33</sup>

It is believed by almost all in Bangladesh that Hindus can never be part of ‘real’ Bangladesh or be true Bangladeshis. The majority will never trust them and the minority does not trust them either. It’s not that the minority constantly fears a riot but there is a feeling that if there is a communal riot, there will be no one to protect them (Choudhury 2000: 145-166). In a discussion with Barman viewed, “During the British period the

---

<sup>32</sup>In a discussion with Shafique Uz Zamman, Department of Economics, Dhaka University, on 01/06/09, during field trip to Dhaka.

<sup>33</sup>In a discussion with Abul Barkat, Chairman, Department of Economics, Dhaka University, on 2/06/09, during field trip to Dhaka.

region was integrated and movement of people occurred due to economic reasons. Thus the permanent settlement of people occurred depending on once choice. After the partition of India, the people especially the minorities migrated mostly due to fear of insecurity which was indeed very well grounded by the state apparatus. Migration of Hindus occurred to India sensing the worst future in Bangladesh. The communal riot of 1964 affected the minority population largely. Many of the Hindu families left either to Assam, west Bengal, and Tripura depending on the accessibility of the border. The loss of secularism and the process of Islamisation is another cause. What the people thought that Bangladesh would remain a secular country but it didn't happened; Islam was made as state religion through the 8<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment. The discriminatory act like the EPA/VPA is another contribution for such insecurity. The minorities including other civil society organizations are demanding the implementation of the 1972 constitution, where Bangladesh is recognized as secular state."<sup>34</sup> The decline of Hindu population in Bangladesh since the partition can be well observed. During the partition, the Hindu population constituted 23 percent of the total population of erstwhile East Pakistan. Also during the first census of Bangladesh in 1972, Hindus constituted only 13.5 percent and further reduced to 12.1 percent in 1981. According to the 2001 census, Bangladesh has only 12 million Hindus. Fear of communal violence induced the migration of Hindus from the country (Dutta 2003: 85 & Barkat 2000: 30-31).

## **2. V.xii \_\_\_ State Repression and Migration**

State repression has been one of the major factors of generating forced migrants and Bangladesh is no exception to it. The problem of CHT and flight of Chakma people into Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh is one such example. The problem of CHT is one of the legacies of partition where the non-Muslim Buddhists and Chakmas found themselves in Bangladesh. Besides religion, their ethnic root also distinguishes them from the majority Bengali Muslim population. The ethno-linguistic and religious differences assumed a cultural-economic-religious and ethnic dimension when the landless Bengali Muslim from outside CHT was encouraged to settle in the hill tracts. This undermined the

---

<sup>34</sup>In a discussion with Dalem Ch. Barman, Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Dhaka University, on 4/06/09, during field trip to Dhaka.

demography and cultural life of CHT. A crisis between the indigenous population and the Bengali settlers started. The tendency of the government to resort to military means against genuine Jumma grievances led to their displacement and eventual migration to Indian Border States (Adnan 2003: 52-53).

Bangladesh inherited the problem of CHT since its independence. Historically the hill tribes of CHT had always enjoyed an autonomous or quasi-autonomous status under the Mughals, British and in United Pakistan until 1964. The British Indian government which succeeded the East India Company introduced direct rule in CHT and declared it as an administrative district, naming it the CHT by act XXII of 1860. In 1900, the British enacted the CHT regulation through which the region has been administered until (Kabir 1998: 10-26). During the British days the area used to be governed under the CHT administrative act 1900. This act gave the local tribes autonomy and privileges, e.g., it accorded a special status to the tribesman with the guarantee that non-tribal wouldn't be allowed to purchase any cultivable land in the region and if the presence of any outsider, i.e., the non-tribal people was found to be detrimental to the tribal interest, he could be driven out of the area. The construction of the Karnaphuli hydro-electric project as well as the resettlement policy of Zia-Ur-Rahman defied the autonomy provisions. In 1979 Rahman initiated a policy to encourage large scale transmigration of Bengalis to CHT. The settlers were poor Bengali families who were allotted five acres of hill land or four acres of mixed land or 2.5 acres of wet rice land in addition to free transport to cross to CHTs. They were provided rations and protections by the Bangladeshi armed forces. In 1979 and 1980, around 10000 Bengalis were settled into the CHTs. Further in 1982, another 10000 people entered the area, while additional 200000 went between 1982 and 1983 (Joshi 2003: 110-114).

Ershad continued with Zia's policies and duo attempted to resolve the crisis through militarily means. Thus it helped for the growth of an insurgent group called Shanti Bahini, their armed front of the Chakmas and Hajongs. Forced movement of the tribes from the region to neighbouring areas of India was a direct consequence of the military intervention by the successive governments. There was armed conflict between the Shanti Bahini, army, Bengali settlers and with the indigenous people causing large scale

displacements and migration of the Chakma people. The government of Ershaad initiated dialogue with the Jana Samhiti Samiti (JSS), the political front of the tribal people but failed (Barman 2004: 160-167).

Since 1977, small groups of Chakmas began to cross over into Tripura. This trend took a definite turn in June 1984. By 1987, the number of non-repatriated refugees swelled to 5000 and went up to 7000 in 1991, while some of them were repatriated; a large number of them were housed in various camps in Tripura (Dutta 2003: 99-100). The CHT Accord, signed in 1997 is one of the most important ethnic peace accords in South Asia. The accord led to cessation of a protracted twenty years old hostilities between the tribal guerrilla group, the Shanti Bahinis and the Bangladesh government. The CHT accord signed on 2 December, 1997 by Abdul Hasant Abdullah, chief whips of the government of Bangladesh and the head of the government appointed committee on the CHT and JB Larma, the president of Parbiatya Chaattagram Zamon Samhiti. However, many provisions of the peace accord have not been implemented even after a decade. The land disputes between the indigenous people and the Bengali settlers are yet to be resolved in the CHT; rehabilitation of the Shanti Bahini cadres who had surrendered and also of the tribal refugee returnees from India awaits completion. The highly fragmented and fissured Bangladeshi politics remains the main hindrances towards the implementation of the peace accord. So the accord has not brought peace in the region (Nepram 2003: 159-161).

## **2. V.xiii \_\_\_ Porous Border**

Both India and Bangladesh shares 4096.7 km long international border, covering states of West Bengal being the highest (2216.7km), Tripura (856km), Meghalaya (443 km), Mizoram (318km) and Assam (263km) (MOHA 2007: 36). The border passes through a range of natural and cultural landscapes. The topography along the border is a mix of hilly and jungle tracks, plains, riverside, and low-lying land. Basically the Indo-Bangladesh border, like other boundaries of the Indian subcontinent, is also artificial and superimposed by the British regime over existing cultural landscape. The Indo-Bangladesh border was not marked through a proper field survey but was demarcated on

basis of old district map. And this boundary doesn't follow the natural barriers but goes across the villages, agricultural lands, rivers, rendering the border extremely porous with many disputed pockets. The existence of rugged terrains makes the border extremely porous and consequently it open/available to many illegal border crossings, smuggling, drug and human trafficking and also the free movements of insurgents operating in the Northeastern parts of India (Das 2008: 369).

The Indo-Bangladesh border is highly porous making the movement of people and goods is a major challenge. The topographical and the demographic composition make it conducive for Bangladeshi nationals to sneak into Indian side and get assimilated with the local populace (MOHA 2008: 29-30 & Godbole 2001: 4442-44). Over the years, the magnitude of migration of Bangladeshi nationals had reached an astounding proportion. The Union Government as well as the West Bengal and the Assam government have acknowledged about the migration but there is no proper estimation about the numbers. The estimates largely vary from 4 or 5 million to 10 to 14 million (Das 2008: 369 & 371). However, the Task Force on Border Management (2000), in its report submitted to the government of India, puts the figure at 15 million, with an estimated 300000 Bangladeshis entering India illegally every month. In 2004, the Government of India claimed that as on 2001, an estimated 12 million Bangladeshi migrants are staying in India, including 5 million in the state of Assam and 5.7 million in West Bengal (Das 2008: 386). The reports also claimed that migration from across the border has continued unabated. According to the report, there are 15 million Bangladeshis, 2.2 million Nepalese, 70,000 Sri Lankan Tamils and about 0.1 million Tibetan migrants living in India (GoM 2001: 60-61).

## **2. VI\_\_\_ State of Nepal**

Nepal is landlocked country endowed with rich natural and cultural diversity and is situated in the southern Himalayan flank, with a total area of 147,181 sq. km. The country lies between India in the east, west and south and China in the north at 26° 22' to 30° 27' North latitude and from 80° 04' to 88° 12' East longitudes with an altitudinal range from 60m in the south to 8,848m in the north. The geography of the country is

uncommonly diverse and is roughly trapezoidal in shape. The average North-South width is about 193 km and an East-West length average to 885 km. Nepal is a multi-cultural-linguistic and religious country (Shrestha 2001: 6).

Geographically, Nepal represents a transitional mountain area with over three quarters of land covered by rugged hills and mountains. The Himalaya mountain range runs across the country's northern and western side. The country is the home of eight of the world's ten highest mountains, including Mount Everest. The geological formations correspond to the physiographic zones makes the country geologically weak and fragile. Nepal can be divided into three ecological regions; the Terai (plain area) in the south, the Hills in the middle and the Mountains in the north covering 23, 42 and 35 percent of the total area respectively. Terai is a low-lying plain, highly vulnerable to floods during the monsoon (Shrestha 2001: 7-8).

Similarly the mountain and hills due to its sloppy and fragile landscape is vulnerable to extreme climatic events (HDR, Country Case Study-Nepal 2007: 6). The Hill Region abuts the mountains and varies from 1,000 to 4,000 meters in altitude. Two low mountain ranges, the Mahabharata Lekh and Shiwalik Range dominate the region. The Mountain Region is located in the Great Himalayan Range comprising the northern part of Nepal. It also constitutes the world's highest mountain; Mount Everest (8,850 meters), located on the border with Tibet. Both the Mountain and Hill Region was a food-deficit area during early 1990s. The vast majority of the households living in the hills were land-hungry and owned largely hilly land (CBS 2007: 2).

The Terai region or Madhesh region starts at the Indian border covering the northernmost part of the Gangeatic Plain. The region is flat, intensively farmed plains and a cultural extension of northern India with Hindi, Awadhi, Bhojpuri and Maithili spoken people. Traversing these plains towards north, the outermost range of foothills is called the Siwaliks. There is a forested alluvial belt along the base, marshy with springs fed by groundwater percolating down from higher elevations. Beyond the alluvial belt, the Siwaliks rise upto 1,000 meters, steepest on their southern slopes because of faults. This range made of poorly consolidated, coarse sediments quickly absorbs rainfall and

unsuited for agriculture resulting in very little population. However just north of the Siwaliks there are a number of "dun" valleys or the Inner Terai. Nepal is divided into three major river systems from east to west; the Koshi River basin, the Narayani River basin (India's Gandak River), and the Karnali River basin. All these rivers ultimately become major tributaries of the Ganges River in northern India. After plunging through deep gorges, these rivers deposit their heavy sediments and debris on the plains, thereby nurturing and renewing their alluvial soil fertility. Once they reach Terai, they often overflow their banks onto wide floodplains during the monsoon season, periodically shifting their courses. Besides providing fertile alluvial soil, the backbone of the agrarian economy, these rivers present great possibilities for hydroelectric and irrigation development (Shrestha 2001: 7).

The population size of Nepal is the driving force shaping its environmental resource base. Nepal has a total population of 24.8 million in 2004 overwhelmingly concentrating in the rural areas with only 12 percent living in urban areas. Consequently, rural population density is relatively high at 686 people per square kilometre, a figure that exceeds to the lowest income countries. Nepal has one of the highest population densities in the world with respect to cultivable land (ADB 2004: 3-4).

Nepal's population has grown at a rate of above 2 percent per annum since 1952 creating tremendous pressure on the available natural resources directly or indirectly. During 1991-2001, the annual population growth rate was 2.2 percent whereas the annual growth of the economically active population was only 3 percent (Regmi & Adhikari 2007: 6-7). About 80.62 percent of the total population practices Hindu religion. The country also has strong Buddhist tradition (about 10.70 %), Lumbini, the birthplace of Gautama Buddha is located in the Terai region. The Muslims constitutes 4.20%, Kirat-3.60%, Christian-0.45 % and others 0.40% of the total population. The census of 2001 has listed more than 100 caste/ethnic groups as inhabitants of Nepal having their own culture and languages. Almost half of the population lives in the Terai region, where the land is more suitable for cultivation (CBS 2007: 2-4).



Like many other LDC<sup>35</sup>'s, Nepal's development process has commenced recently and has faced challenges of inadequate infrastructure in a highly rugged terrain, little exploitable natural resources, a shortage of skilled labour, and a landlocked location. Nepal's GDP is \$5500 million; an annual average growth rate of 4.9 percent and per capita income is US\$250, which is among the lowest in the world (Regmi & Adhikari 2007: 6-7). About 42 percent of the total population lives below the poverty line, of which 24.9 percent and 17.1 percent are poor and very poor respectively. Poverty is rampant in rural areas accounting 44 percent of the total population as compared to 23 percent in urban areas. About 80 percent of the total population depends on agriculture as a major source of income (MOF 2009b: xxiv). Agriculture also accounts for 41 percent of the GDP but due to lack of use of modern methods of cultivation the production level is low as compared to the growth of population (CBS 2007: 1-2).

About 7 million (approximately 32%) people belonging to 100 different caste/ethnic groups live below poverty line, which is set at about \$ 77 per capital per annum. The labour force of Nepal is 11.2 million including 3 % in manufacturing industries and 17 % service industries with an increasing rate of 2.4 % per annum. The female labour force covers 47% of the total labour force but accounts for only 4% of the formal sector. The Nepalese industrial sector is in an infantile state as the non-agricultural sector, including services, accounted for around 62 percent of GDP in 2005/06. The largest component of the industrial sector traditionally has been tourism. However, a fall in the industry as indicated in 2005/06 resulted in the finance and real state sector becoming the largest component and trade, restaurants and hotels made up only 9% GDP (Bhattarai 2008: 18-23).

Migration has always played a significant role in the Nepali society and economy. It is estimated that around 560 Nepalis fly out of Nepal every day for foreign employment. In

---

<sup>35</sup>The LDCs represent the poorest and weakest segment of the international community. According to the UN, the LDCs exhibit the lowest indicators of socioeconomic development, with lowest HDI ratings of all countries in the world. There are three basic criteria; low income nations having three-year average GNI per capita of less than US \$ 905, human resource weakness based on nutrition, health, education, adult literacy indicators etc. and economic vulnerability based on instable agriculture production, instability of exports of goods and services, handicap of economic smallness, and the percentage of population displaced by natural disasters. There are 49 LDCs; 33 in Africa, 15 in Asia and the Pacific and one in Latin America.

addition, there are also a large number of Nepalis working in India. In 2007, Nepal was among world's top remittance recipient countries; India (\$ 27000 million), Bangladesh (\$ 6400 million), Pakistan (\$6100 million), Vietnam (\$5000 million) Nepal (\$1600 million). Thus Nepal together with India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka are the top five migrants producing countries (NIDS 2008: 1-2). Migration of Nepali workers for foreign employment continued to register strong growth in the year 2007. According to data available from the Department of Labour and employment promotion, 232628 Nepalis obtained official government permission for foreign employment in 2007 compared to 178072 in the year 2006 and 55025 in 2000. Foreign employment emerged as a strong attraction among Nepalis in the mid 1990s due to continued political instability perpetuated by the rapid expansion of the peoples' war (NIDS 2008: 20-21).

## 2. VII \_\_\_ History of Migration from Nepal - Its Causes

The migration of Nepalis into northeast India and Assam has its history. Social scientists have long attributed the Nepalis settlement in Northeast India since 1820s either in search of economic opportunities or in search of grazing lands for cattle, crucial for their primary business of milk production in the postcolonial years, the extent of such internal migration has increased (Nath 2003b: 53). The presence of Nepalis in the Northeast India is historical and their role in unifications and economic development of the region is very crucial. In the Linguistics Survey of India, Grieson wrote that the Tibeto-Burman speaking mongoloids with yellow complexion came to be known among Vedic Aryans as '*Kiratas*'. In the Mahabharata, there are suggestions that the Sino - Tibetans or *Kiratas* belong to the Brahmaputra valley of Assam (Sinha 2003: 34-35).

The *Kiratas* of Assam, who were known to the Hindu world as a group of people, were originated in the Himalayan slope and in the mountains of the east. Nepalis in the Northeast are divided into three major ethnic groups. The first group known as *Kiratas*, claimed to be the earliest inhabitants of the land and were traditionally hill men, ethnologically closure to the Northeastern tribes of India. According to Subba, "the ancient Kamrupa kingdom is, for instance, known to have its boundaries extended right

up to the eastern Nepal as late as 1520, the two Kamarupa kings Nidhwaj and Narayan had married the princes of Nepal.....” (Subba 2003: 59-61).

Apart from the historical mythological instances, the real migration of Nepalis into Northeast/Assam/India began in early nineteenth century. Their first direct contact with the region occurred in 1817 with the deployment of 1000 Gorkha soldiers in the Sylhet operation, as part of the Cuttack legion which came to be known as the ‘Assam Light Infantry’, after its permanent location in Assam (Sinha 1990: 226-227 & Shakespeare 1977: 6). These Nepali sepoys in Assam continued to constitute a floating population following their respective customs, usages and traditions. The process of migration and settlement of the Nepalis into Northeast India, Darjeeling and Southern Bhutan began about two centuries ago with the British imperial penetration and the recruitment of Gorkha soldiers to the British Indian Army after the treaty of Saugali (1816) (Kansakar 1982: 8-10). The recruitment of Nepalis opened the border between the two countries. The Treaty also facilitated free recruitment of Gorkhas in a big way as the British found them loyal, hardworking, best fitted for hilly terrains and comparatively cheaper than the other Indian soldiers (Shakespeare 1977: 1-16).

Recruitment centres were established in Gorakhpur and Ghoom located on the Indo-Nepal Border of the present states of Bihar and Darjeeling. Nepali villagers eager to enlist started migrating to India and permanent cross border migrations accelerated after 1850s. The first major Nepali migration to India occurred into the virtually unpopulated areas in Darjeeling hill district of West Bengal, and from there into the southwest section of Sikkim in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The British who wanted hard working labourers for their growing tea plantations facilitated migration of Nepalis into Darjeeling. In Sikkim, the Nepalis served as a wedge to contain the Bhutias of Sikkim and Bhutan. The Nepalis fitted admirably and became critical actors in expanding both Darjeeling and Sikkim economies from the mid nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. By 1900 the Nepalis formed more than 50% of the total population in Sikkim and Darjeeling, strong enough in the past century to form a government (Dutt 1981: 1053-1055).

Large number of Nepalis became a part of India as their lands were ceded to British India Govt during various wars. Prior to British domination, India and Nepal were petty kingdoms and principalities. After British consolidation of Indian states through invasion, they were planning to occupy Nepal through their false claim over the control of Butawal immediately after the death of King Prithvinarayan Shah. The 1814 Anglo-Nepal War and subsequent peace treaty signed between Nepal and the East India Company on December 8, 1816 resulted in the delimitation and delineation of Nepal-India border. Through these treaties Nepal had to forsake the areas lying to the west of the Mahakali River and the areas lying to the east of the Mechi River including the return of the territory of the Rajah of Sikkim occupied by Nepal. The East India Company delineated and demarcated the southern boundary on its own. But no demarcation was made for the Terai region lying between the Mahakali River and the Arrah Nala, which was ceded to the British India in 1816 (Kansakar 1990: 2).

The entire western Terai region covered with dense forest was not demarcated during that period but straight line was drawn to demarcate the border in the forest fringes. While the demarcation of the border in cultivated land was made on the basis of village boundaries on mutual understanding. However, major disputes and problems occurred in demarcating the river boundary due to erratic changes in the river courses in Terai region. But recognizing the assistance of Nepali army in suppressing the 1857 mutiny in Lucknow and the western Terai which was ceded to India under the Treaty of 1816 was retrocede to Nepal by the Britishers (Kansakar 1990: 2-3).

The Boundary Commissions of the two Governments met in North Oudh at Bhagura Tal in February 1860 to survey and demarcate the border. The King of Nepal and the British Resident signed a formal treaty on November 1, 1860. The dispute over the river boundary between Mondia Ghat to Bunbasa along the Mahakali (Sharada) river continued to arise and was resolved in December 1864. Nepal made the claim over the Dudhawa Range up to the foot of the hills, while the British insisted on the Range watershed forming the boundary and the area along the Southern slopes of the watershed belonging to India. The Agreement endorsing the claim of Nepal was ratified on June 7, 1875 (Tyagi 1974: 88-98). For the Nepalese territory of 2800 acres ceded to India for the

construction of the Sharada Barrage in the early 1900s, a total of 4000 acres in Taratal area to the south of Bardia district was given to Nepal. Later, the survey and review of the territory ceded to India by Nepal revealed that an excess of 31 acres had gone to India (Kansakar 1990: 2-3).

There are a sizeable number of Nepali-speaking Indian citizens, known as Nepali speaking Indians or Indian Nepalis, or Indian Gorkhas, who are mostly concentrated in the States of West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam and other Northeastern States. In fact, a large number of them actively participated in the freedom struggle of India. Major Durga Malla's (who was hanged to death by the British India Government) statue at the Parliament House complex speaks volumes about the contributions made by the Indian Gorkhas in the freedom struggle. It is on the constant demand and struggle of the Indian Gorkhas only; Nepali was recognized as one of the national languages of India in the 8<sup>th</sup> Schedule of the Constitution of India. These Indian Gorkhas keep a safe distance politically and culturally from the migrant population from Nepal and maintain an Indian identity and also demand the abrogation of the 1950 Treaty with Nepal as they believe that people coming to India from Nepal under this Treaty has tended to dilute their Indian identity among the vast mass of Indian population.

Migration for employment is an old phenomenon in Nepal. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Nepali people travelled to Lahore to join the Sikh ruler, Ranjit Singh and also through the recruitment of Gorkhas. Out migration of labour is fundamental for many Nepali households, as agricultural yields often are not sufficient to nourish all household members. Bohle and Adhikari (1998: 321) views, "half of Nepal's districts have become deficient in food." By the overwhelming importance of agriculture for people's livelihoods, this is a serious concern. Macfarlane & Gurung (1992: 122), "A large proportion of the males population is mobile, spending varying periods abroad for employment." Yet, not all migrant cross the border. Some people migrated to the capital in order to get employed in the construction sector or to work as a vendor, tourist guide or hotel boy. Until recently, international migration from Nepal was mostly to India, a migration which has several special characteristics (Kasper 2005: 28-29).

The existence of open border of 1751 km. between Nepal and India (MOHA 2008: 28) was defined after the end of Anglo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship was signed in 1950, which provides the reciprocal treatment of nationals present in the others territory on the following matters; residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce and free movement without passport and visa requirement. Migration between India and Nepal has not been documented; it is not unauthorized, however, on account of the treaty of 1950 (Bal Kr. K C 2008: 287-307). The 2001 official statistics show that 77% of the total absent population goes to India. Estimates of Nepalis working in India, therefore, range up to 3 million which is six times more than official statistics (Thieme & Wyss 2005: 62).

The most popular strategy of out-migration for labour is the recruitment of soldiers to the Indian or British army. Recruitment to the army is popular because 15 years of service qualifies one for a lifelong pension and free medical treatment for all family members. They get reemployed as low and semi-skilled workers or in the industrial sector in India (Kaspar 2005: 28-29). It is estimated for the years 1996/97 a total of 1.15 million Nepalis had been working in foreign countries (Seddon et. al 2001: xii). Out of the total number of absentees, 89.2 % stayed in India.

About 0.2 million Nepalis work in Delhi alone and most of the migrants are originally from the rural areas of Nepal (Kaspar 2005: 29-30). Mishra commented, 'Nepali migration into India is caused basically due to economic reasons. The rise of capitalism in India started long time back certainly in west Bengal and tea state in Assam. The movement of population also occurred due to existence of porous border. During the British period, a number of Nepali people from the eastern part of Nepal migrated to India for the purpose of trade. Migration to the Northeastern states started as movement of labour to be employed in commercial purpose, especially agricultural activities. Deforestation and clearance of forest that is what the colonial administration did almost 150 years ago to increase agricultural production. People during that time were not poverty stricken but were in need of cash to buy households items, health care and others, which were again created by colonial capitalism. The growth of cash economy is the major reason for migration of Nepalis to India. The British started capitalism and the

trend continued even after India became independent. When there is higher demand of labour, there is higher rate of wage compare to that source point, the labour moves out. Again there is seasonal movement of population both from India and Nepal for economic activities. Some seasonal movement of people occurs from Bihar and UP to Nepal and so to India. Migrants move to eastern Nepal for agricultural activities as the eastern Nepal has early monsoon, they go there and plant food etc. The western Nepal gets monsoon a bit later therefore after doing agricultural activities; they come to Kathmandu and engage in petty economic activities. Then they go to Himachal Pradesh for apple farming, the same person or the same group of person. And finally they go to their original place like Bihar/UP, during the harvesting season only.”<sup>36</sup>

Kumar in a discussion revealed, “From Nepal, out of the total migration, 80 percent migrants prefer to migrate to India and most of them are seasonal migrants. Nepalis migrate to India during off season in search of some work where they can sustain and save the food grains in their back home. Unemployment and poverty are the main causes of migration from Nepal to other countries.”<sup>37</sup> There is also no available authentic data on the number of Nepalis living and working in India. However, the Nepal CBS in 2001 estimated the presence of 589000 Nepali workers in India and some other studies have also put the number to six million (NIDS 2008: 45). Seddon, et. al. (2001) have estimated number of Nepali workers in India to be between 0.5 million – 1 million. Nearly 25 thousand were estimated to have been working in public sector and about 50 thousand Nepalis in Indian Army. The number of Nepalis working in the private sector was believed to be double than those working in the public sector. There are a number of other reports guess-estimating the number of Nepalis working in India as anything around 1.5 million to 2 million, and 3-3.5 million. There are a total of 1.1 million Nepalis (0.25 million in the formal sector and 0.85 million in the informal sector) working in India and an amount of \$548 million enters Nepal every year as remittance. This amount also includes the pension received by the retired soldiers every year (Gurung 2003: 29-31).

---

<sup>36</sup>In a discussion with Chaitanya Mishra, Chairperson, Department of Sociology, Tribhuvan University on 26/04/09, during field trip to Kathmandu

<sup>37</sup>In a discussion with Shiv Kumar, Central Department of Population Studies, Tribhuvan University on 23/04/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

The Nepal Rastra Bank in 2007, carried out a survey in Delhi and five major border points along the Nepal – India border; Kakarbhitta, Birgunj, Sunauli, Nepalgunj and Mahendranagar – on the remittance coming from India. The survey report disclosed that Nepalis working in India sends about INR 1429.24 crores to Nepal as remittance. Thus on an average a Nepali worker in India sends at least INR 25016 annually. In Nepal, the remittance contributes for 16.7 percent to the country's GDP in 2005-06, with contribution of remittance from India standing at 2.1 percent. The report also revealed that about 99 percent of remittance flow from India to Nepal occurs through unofficial channels. The banks and financial institutions both in Nepal and India are unable to exploit the huge scope of inward money transfer business from India to Nepal. Nepal receives an annual average of INR 12000 million as remittance annually from India (NRB 2007: 15-22).

The remittance inflow from India has maintained a growth of an average 23.67 percent over the past fifteen years against 37.78 percent growth in total inflows. However, the share of Indian remittance out of the total remittances dropped to 12.4 percent in 2005-06 from 45.5 percent in 1989 – 90. Nepal had received INR 968.7 million in 1989 – 90, which climbed to INR 12100 million in 2005-06. On the other hand, the share of overseas remittances grew dramatically by 87.6 percent to INR 85430 million in 2005-06 from more than INR 1150 million in 1989-90. The NRB study has found that most Nepali migrant workers in India are unskilled or semi-skilled earning INR 3000-4000 a month. Majority of these Nepali workers hails from hill district of western and mid-western Nepal. The per capita remittance from India is estimated at INR 11510 (NRB 2007: 23-33).

Although the Nepal Government has opened 107 countries around the world for foreign employment, people manage to go to only 60 countries through the recruitment agencies. Status of country wise foreign employment and foreign employment by countries of destination show the fiscal year 2007/08 more than 1.2 million Nepalese migrant workers have gone abroad. According to an estimate people migrating through unofficial channels is nearly equal in numbers of the official status. The major receiving countries are Saudi Arab, Qatar, UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman in the gulf countries. In south East Asia;



Malaysia, Hong Kong South Korea etc. are the destination by the end of fiscal year 2006/07. But trend has changed and Qatar has become highest receiving country in the fiscal year 2007/08 by receiving a total 83888 migrant worker (Aryal 2008: 1-3).

Gurung commented, “Most of the Nepalis migrating to India are due to higher education facilities and economic opportunities and largest number of people go to India. Nepalis basically from the Midwestern and far western Nepal migrate to the cities. The magnitudes of migration from these areas are very high and each and every household sends their members. Nepalis often go to Tibet –India for even trade purpose. There is folk song that means, we eat morning meal in Tibet and dinner in India and snacks in Nepal. It means people move from Tibet-Nepal-India for livelihood everyday. The Nepal government now has foreign employment act 2007 that tries to protect the rights of the Nepalis migrants’ worker. However, the act doesn’t include the Nepal – India migration issue.”<sup>38</sup>

Women are also migrating to other countries especially in the gulf and south East Asian Countries along with the male. Soru Joshi in a discussion revealed, “We have observed that some smart women are also moving towards Hong Kong and other countries to be recruited in the Gorkha army. In Saudi Arabia, there are 70000 Nepali women working as domestic help. According to NLSS, 2004, 11% remittances senders are women that means there will be around 15-20% women migrants among them. More than 200000 people are working in Iraq and among them 15 percent are women. In Nepal, till 2000 there was ban on women migration and it was due to traditional and conservative agendas of the government.”<sup>39</sup>

The problem of unemployment or disguised unemployment created by the closure and failure of domestic industries and internal conflict has contributed to migration of Nepalis for foreign employment. The major motivating factors are attractive salary and thereby, upliftment of the status of family, other fringe benefits and increase in the standard of

---

<sup>38</sup>In a discussion with Ganesh Gurung, Director, Nepal Institute for Development Studies (NIDS) on 22/04/09, during field visit to Kathmandu.

<sup>39</sup>In a discussion with Soru Joshi, Regional Programme Coordinator, UNIFEM, on 2/05/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

living (Aryal 2008: 19-20). Acharya commented, "Migration is an essential component of human history. The economic opportunities during the colonial rule in India attracted people to migrate and settle down. The recruitment of Gorkhas in the British army took place in Nepal and Nepalis were settled in Darjeeling, Assam and other Northeastern states by the colonial power. This was indeed a pull factor of migration, the cultural; linguistics affinities combined with economic opportunities attracted the people. Unlike the earlier trend, the migration of Nepalis is not static but it has changed and people prefer to move to other countries also. The migration of Nepalis into Northeastern states occurred due to historical reasons accompanied by economic opportunities. Not only had the Nepalis, but also the other people within South Asian countries migrated to eastern parts of India."<sup>40</sup>

Women's Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC) carried out a study in five districts of Nepal revealed that poverty and unemployment are the important factors for which people compel to out migrate for economic betterment. The lack of employment, food and land are the major reasons rather than any desire to 'see the world' or visit big cities. A large number of people also migrate internally in Nepal, especially from rural to urban areas for employment opportunities (WOREC 2002: 1-10).

An informal study carried out by GEFONT at the border with India in far western region in August, 2002 found that in half an hour, 261 persons crossed the border in search of employment. It is also estimated that 70 to 80 percent of these persons were victims of the Maoist conflict and were in search of safety and a better life. As the conflict increased its intensity since 2002, it was suggested that even more people are being displaced and forced to migrate (WOREC 2004: 6). Khatiwada in a discussion commented, "The main reason for migration of Nepalis into India before the inception of Maoists was economic. When the conflict started the migration occurred due to political reasons but turned into economic again. The existence of open border between India and Nepal makes the movement easier."<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup>In a discussion with Gyan Chandra Acharya, the present Foreign Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Nepal Government on 05/05/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

<sup>41</sup>In a discussion with Padma Khatiwada, Lecturer, Central Department of Population Studies, Tribhuvan University on 21/04/09, during field trip to Kathmandu

## **2. VIII \_\_\_ Triggering Factors of Migration from Nepal**

Migration of Nepalis into India occurred because of several historical reasons including Gorkha recruitment. However, migration from Nepal to India has been a continuing phenomenon. The deteriorating environmental conditions due to high population increase, land degradation and deforestation in Nepal are other major triggering factors of migration. Poverty is the root cause of environmental degradation in Nepal as people highly dependent on land and other forests resources and over exploitation of resources caused major environmental degradation in Nepal. Apart from the above mentioned causes, socio-political conditions, such as Maoists insurgency played an important crucial role for triggering migration.

### **2. VIII.i \_\_\_ Population Pressure in Nepal**

The population growth in Nepal has been continuously showing upward trend and is likely to continue in near future also. Rapid population growth has become the main constraint to sustainable economic development. About 80 percent of the total migration in Nepal is rural based. The intercensal decade added about 397,000 net lifetime migrants to the Terai population by 1981. Only about 6.4 percent of the country's population lived in 23 designated urban centres during 1981. The country had 33 designated urban areas with an estimated population of 1.57 million in 1987. The urban growth rate of 7.6 percent was about three times higher than the national average. Almost 40 percent of urban growth is attributed to migration. The intercensal growth of the economically active population averaged 3.51 percent annually, with the population 10 years and above growing at 2.55 percent. The labour force increased by 2.3 million during 1971-1981 of which 2 million were economically active. This has led to increased underemployment in the rural sector as there is very little intersectoral mobility. The agriculture sector continues to absorb the vast majority of entrants who join the labour force every year. This phenomenon has created extreme pressure on the natural resource base, especially as productivity remains stagnant and land holdings grow smaller and more fragmented (Shrestha 2001: 8-10).

About 20.1 % of the total population is below 15 years and the median age at 19.9 years signifying the potentiality for rapid growth of population in future. Without control mechanisms, a substantial rise in population will continue as the crude birth rate remains consistently high and it was about 39.7 per thousand in 1981. And according to the 2001 census, the crude birth rate is 33.1 and in 2007 it is 29.2 percent. The death rate continues to decline, it was 13.5 per thousand in 1981 and has come down to 9.6 by 2001; it has reached up to 8.5 by 2007 (CBS 2007: 2-5). Table 2.XIII shows that there has been a steep rise in population in Nepal since 1911. The high population growth rate has tremendous impact on the environment that contributes for degradation of environment further creating more problems for a region or a country. The dominant pattern of highland – lowland migration in Nepal is such an indicator of regional imbalance. The increase in population pressure in highlands and polarization of development in the lowlands has contributed for migration.

**Table 2.XIII**  
**Population Changes during the 90 Years Period, 1911-2001 in Nepal**

Inter Censal Change in population					
Census Years	Population	Number	Percent	Exponential Growth	Persons per square km
1911	5638749	.....	.....	-	38.31
1920	5573788	-64961	-1.15	-0.13	37.87
1930	5532574	-41214	-0.74	-0.07	37.59
1941	6283649	751075	13.58	1.16	42.69
1952/54	8256625	1972976	31.4	2.27	56.1
1961	9412996	1156371	14.01	1.64	63.96
1971	11555983	2142987	22.77	2.05	78.52
1981	15022839	3466856	30	2.62	102.07
1991	18491097	3468258	23.09	2.08	125.64
2001	23151423	4660326	25.2	2.25	157.3

Sources: CBS (2007), *Statistical Year Book 2007*, Government of Nepal: Kathmandu, pp. 17-20

Gurung (1988: 67) views, "Large-scale out migration from highlands aids in relieving the pressure of population in depressed areas by providing alternative areas and avenues for livelihood. Transfer of population through migration to resource-rich regions has various advantageous impacts on the destination area. Migration of economically active population to low density areas in terms of available resources leads to fuller utilization of those resources. Inter-regional migration in Nepal has a positive impact on the total

economy in both in origin and destination regions. Expansion of cultivated land in the lowlands has directly contributed to an increase in overall food production. The consequences of migration are most apparent at the destination whereby the lowlands are undergoing significant changes in demographic character, social composition, land use and levels of development." Since the mid 1950's population growth rates have been consistently higher and the net migration is also high in Nepal. The lowlands share in total population increased from 34.7 % in 1952/54 to 48.7% in 1981. Migration was an important factor in the increase of the Terai population. During 1961-81, the Terai experienced 2.5 times increase in population and 6.4 times increase in net migration. The last decade (1971-81) recorded largest increases in population in regions of high in migration (Gurung 1988: 67-68).

There are two major issues confronting Nepal; first, the rapid growth of population and second, the declining of average per capita land holding. An estimated 20 percent in 1999 (UNEP 2001: 16-17) of Nepal's total land resources are cultivated and nearly two-thirds of the population lives in the densely populated hill and mountain regions. Population pressure on the land, the result of a wide disparity between mortality and fertility rates, has been an important element in out migration in the past, and it is now an important factor in accelerating migration within the country (Weiner 1973: 619-620).

The issue of 'population pressure' on the land holding is in the rise. The Terai region has experienced the largest increase of population during the period 1971 to 1991, to be exact of 4.26 million people, (see Table 2.XIV and 2.XV). This increase represents an annual growth rate of almost 5 percent, roughly one-half of it resulting from Hill-to-Terai (frontier) migration. Thus the Terai's share of the national population jumped from 37.6 percent in 1971 to 46.6 in 1991. The Hills (combining both the Hill and Mountain regions) registered a sharp decline in its share of population, from 62.4 to 53.4 percent during the same 20 year period. In the meantime, the increase in the amount of land under cultivation was in sharp contrast to this population growth, as it rose a modest 330 thousand hectares (ha). As a result, the national per capita holding of cultivated land underwent a significant drop from 0.17 to 0.13 ha between 1971 and 1991. Even more striking is the decrease in the Terai's average per capita holding of cultivated land, from

0.30 to 0.17 ha. That is to say, the Terai's reduction of 0.13 ha per capita is larger than the average per capita land- holding of 0.09 ha for the Hills (Shrestha, et. al. 1999: 247-48). This notable change reveals an interesting development in the agrarian economy of Nepal. On the one hand, it suggests that there has been considerable destruction of forested areas. Since the late 1970s, Nepal has essentially ended its policy of farming-oriented land settlement. That is, wherever Hill migrants or land encroachers have been settled by the state, they have been allocated land parcels merely sufficient for homestead plots (Hrabovszky & Miyan 1987: 268). Though the national level cultivated land constitutes 20 percent is not enough to match the rapid rate of population growth.

**Table 2.XIV**  
**Regional Distribution of Population and**  
**Cultivated land 1971-1991 in Nepal**

Region	Population (000)			Cultivated Area (000 ha)					Total Area
	1971	1991	Change	1971	Per capita	1991	Per capita	Change	
Hills (55 districts including 11 mountain districts)	7210	9856	2646	703	0.10	886	0.09	183	113163
Percentage	62.4	53.4	-9.0	35.2		38.1		2.9	
Terai (20 districts)	4346	8606	4260	1293	0.30	1440	0.17	147	34018
Percentage	37.6	46.6	9.0	64.8		61.9		- 2.9	
Nepal	11556	18462	6906	1996	0.17	2326	0.13	330	147181

Sources: Shrestha, N. R. et. al (1999), "Population Pressure and Land Resources in Nepal: A Revisit, Twenty Years Later", *The Journal of Developing Areas*, Winter, 33(2): 249 &

Population growth and land use show causal linkages in both directions and the effects of population growth on land use which invariably result in internal as well as international migration. In the case of Nepal, history relates that many of the past population explosions have been the result of migration into the mountains from lowland areas. But the movement of population has been reversed and for about the last hundred years there has been an accelerating migration from the hills to the plains. Given the present proportion of 80 percent of total population dependent upon agriculture, even a large

differential in growth rates between the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors of, for instance, 5.0 percent for non-agricultural and 2.2 percent for agricultural, for a total population growth of 2.7 percent, this would raise the share of non-agricultural employment in 20 years from 17.0 to 25.8 percent of the total. This implies that of the total additional population of 12.3 million, 7.7 million would need to be supported by agriculture and there would be an addition of 5.3 million persons to the existing 7.6 million labour forces in agriculture (Hrabovszky & Miyan 1987: 266).

**Table 2.XV**  
**Nepal Man-Land ratio by Eco-Development Region, 2001**

Eco-Development Region	Cultivated Land (ha)	Total Population	Man-Land Ratio
Nepal	4061631	23151423	5.7
Mountain	518377	1687859	3.3
Hill	1666363	10251111	6.2
Terai	1876891	11212453	6.0
Kathmandu Valley	43670	1645091	37.7

Sources: Subedi, B. P (2001), "Population and Environment: A Situational Analysis of Population, Cultivated Land and Basic Crop Production in Nepal in 2001", in CBS, *Population Monograph*, Government of Nepal: Kathmandu, p. 11.

## 2. VIII.ii Environmental Degradation in Nepal

Due to rapid population growth and consequent effect on over exploitation of resources, ecological degradation is taking place everywhere in Nepal. Despite development efforts, national productivity has failed to keep the pace with population growth. If the deteriorating situation of the mountain and hill environment is not reversed and better managed, this population growth may lead to the collapse of the delicately balanced ecological system between the Himalaya and the Ganges plain. The future of valleys and plains is intimately bound to the development on the slopes and platitudes above. The factors behind environmental problems in Nepal Himalaya are natural as well as man made. The natural processes of environmental degradation have been aggravated by mans quest for more food, fuel, fodder, timber, and so forth. In probably, no other mountain countries are the forces of ecological degradation building so rapidly and visibly (Eckholm 1975: 176). Nepal provides the most dramatic example of spreading desertification due to reckless deforestation. In the decade ending 1971, Nepal lost 50% of its forest cover. According to the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, 400000

hectares of forest were destroyed in the Terai and inner Terai region between 1964 and 1979, and additional one 160000 hectares of forest were destroyed between 1979 and 1985. With the destruction of 5.4 million hectares of national forest, the total forest area in Nepal has been reduced to 4 million hectares or about 27 % of the total land area of Nepal. It has been estimated that the desirable area of forest for a mountainous country like Nepal should be about 60% in order to keep the environment balanced. The present rates of deforestation in Nepal are far higher than the natural regenerative capacity, causing severe environmental problems (Shrestha 1994: 139-140).

The environmental degradation in Nepal is closely associated with population growth, overexploitation of natural resources, traditional energy resources. In the mountain and hill region heavy pressure of population on limited, poor and marginal agricultural land, over grazing of animals, shifting cultivation and wood gathering for timber and fuel is leading to degradation of topography and top soil quality resulting in unsuitable agricultural practices and deforestation. Meanwhile, natural vegetation that provides food, fodder, fertilizer, shelter and even raw materials for traditional, rural cottage industries also resulted in environmental degradation. Fuel wood in Nepal alone accounts for 95% of all wood consumption in rural areas and 87% of all energy consumption in the country (Shrestha 1994: 140). The environmental degradation in Nepal is sudden and catastrophic, e.g. landslides or floods. The eroded soil due to deforestation fills up downstream canals (in Chatara canal in east and Chitwan irrigation system in mid-Nepal) and reservoirs and hampers irrigation efforts. Sediment that builds up rapidly in downstream riverbeds during the monsoon season has also contributed to widespread flooding of crop lands and villages in Terai region (Sharma 1991: 120 & Bajracharya 1983: 227-240).

Migration has been an important component of population redistribution in Nepal. Due to environmental degradation and occasional natural calamities people have been forced to leave their birth place to other potential areas for their livelihood. The people belonging to the hills and mountain regions are prone to environmental degradation and disaster i.e. landslides, deforestation etc. The Terai region having relatively hot climate, adequate rainfall during the monsoon season, rich and fertile agricultural land has become the



prime destination of the migrants from the mountain and hill region (Bal Kumar K C 2004: 130 & 133). Massey et al. in a study at Chitwan valley tries to analyse the causal importance of environmental deterioration on human migration. The study hypothesizes that the change in conditions of population density, perceptions of agricultural productivity, access to locally important natural resources and land use patterns significantly affects migratory behaviour within and outside the valley. It is viewed that the perceived agrarian productivity, the share of the neighbourhood covered in flora and the time required to collect firewood did influence the people of Chitwan valley to migrate locally rather than distantly. As agricultural productivity declines and the share of the neighbourhood covered in flora falls, and as the time required gathering firewood correspondingly increases, individuals are more likely to leave their home neighbourhood to look for opportunities elsewhere in the vicinity (Massey 2007: 3-22).

### **2. VIII.iii \_\_\_ Deforestation in Nepal**

Several factors are responsible for forest depletion in Nepal. About 80 % of the total population of Nepal depends on the forests for daily fuel wood supply and 42 % on the fodder for livestock as these are extracted from the forest. Therefore, forest stands as one of the most important natural resources. The land resource map of the country has revealed that forest covers about 29 percent, grassland covers 12 percent, shrub lands 11 percent, and other categories like rocks, snow lands and settlements make up the rest. Out of the total forestland, 35 % is in the hills and one-third in the mountain region (Regmi & Adhikari 2007: 7). The excessive use of wood for fuel has been a major reason for deforestation (ADB 2004: 9-10).

Moreover in Nepal, encroachment of forest areas occurs through the expansion of agricultural and grazing land. The distribution of forests is also uneven in terms with the population and is subject to over exploitation. Forest is being lost due to excess extraction of fuel wood, fodder and timber (UNCED 1992). It has been estimated that an equal area of forest could have been lost due to illegal settlement during 1979-1985. The period of political transition i.e. Referendum, People's Movement and General Election, have been associated with extensive destruction of forests (ADB 2004: 9-10). Deforestation also

contributes to land- slides, soil creep, and debris flow. Severe forest depletion has progressively increased the distance between the forests and habitation and has further increased the reliance upon crop residues and animal dung as sources of domestic cooking fuel (Sharma 1991: 121).

## **2. VIII.iv \_\_\_ Land Degradation and Flood Problem in Nepal**

High population growth on limited productive areas tantamount to deforestation leading to land degradation, finally resulting floods in Nepal. The Siwaliks and Middle Mountain zone are more susceptible to land erosion. The former has erodable soil and poor geological formation while the latter has high population pressure with limited productive areas. A rough estimate of surface soil loss in the Mountains/Hills ranges from 5-10 tons/ha/year in well-managed land to 40-200 tons/ha/year in degraded land. The overgrazing, Jhum cultivation and inappropriate use of chemical fertilizers contributed for declining in soil fertility and soil erosion (Shrestha 2001: 121-147).

In Nepal, the average use of chemical fertilizers is only 19 kg/ha which is the lowest among the South Asian countries. Out of the total consumption, about 72, 7, 19 and 2 percent of the chemical fertilizers are consumed in the Terai, Kathmandu Valley, Middle Mountains and High Mountains respectively. The consumption of pesticides in Nepal is only about 0.25 kg/ha. Despite the use of chemical fertilizers including improved seeds, productivity has improved very slightly. Again 20. % of the cattle populations in Nepal are unproductive exerting heavy pressure on forest, agriculture and grazing lands. These further accelerated deforestation, compaction of soil leading to the suppression of vegetation growth, and also to soil erosion (UNCED 1992). High erosion rate, landslides and river bank cutting have increased sedimentation and flood hazards in the plains, including river beds and agricultural land. Nepal is estimated to lose 240 million m<sup>3</sup> of sediment annually through its river system. The Karnali, Sapt Gandaki and Sapt Kosi rivers respectively carry an estimated 60, 73 and 142 million m<sup>3</sup> of suspended load annually. As the sediment load carried by the major rivers is high, any storage projects in these corridors have a high siltation rate. Most rivers of Nepal are subjected to changing courses in the Terai during the flood season while in the Hills; bank cutting is a serious

threat. The Sapta Kosi river in the last 250 years (1729-1979) has shifted about 125 km westward in India and about 40 km westward in Nepal. Similarly, the rivers lying east of Butwal in West Nepal are shifting eastward.

**Table 2.XVI**  
**Loss of life in Flood in Nepal 1983-2007**

Year	Number of loss of Life
1983	293
1984	363
1985	420
1986	315
1987	391
1988	328
1989	680
1990	307
1991	93
1992	71
1993	1336
1994	49
1995	203
1996	258
1997	83
1998	273
1999	193
2000	173
2001	196
2002	441
2003	232
2004	131
2005	141
2006	114
2007	216
Total No.	7300

**Sources:** Meen B. Poudyal Chhetri (2001), "A Practitioner's View of Disaster Management in Nepal: Organization, System, Problems and Prospects", *Risk Management*, Vol. 3, No. 4, p.65. & CBS (2008), *Environment Statistics of Nepal 2008*, National Planning Commission Secretariat, Government of Nepal, p. 132

It has been estimated that floods incur a loss of about 30 percent of revenue in the Terai and 2 percent in the Hills. The problem of flooding in the Terai is also high due to the high bed load carried by the rivers in addition to the suspended load. In the plains, almost all the rivers are widening and cutting their banks each year. River beds of some Terai rivers are rising at an annual rate of 15-30 cm, due to high sedimentation (UNCED 1992).

The flood of July 1993, were the most devastating natural disaster causing heavy loss of life and property adversely affecting the development process as a whole (Chhetri 2001: 63-72).

Table 2.XVI shows the number of casualties occurred due to flood in Nepal since 1983. The most severe is being the 1993 flood, where 1336 people were killed. Since 1983 to the year of 2007, altogether 7300 persons were killed. Table 2.XVI, shows that that floods in Nepal left 69,350 homeless (45 % from total disasters), and caused damages amounting to US\$990,613 (75% from total disasters). During 2001-02, a total of 156883 land holdings suffered losses due to the occurrence of calamities that led to the non-cultivation of some 30845.2 hectares of agricultural land. The number of holdings affected by either flooding or soil erosion was about 4.7 % of the total holdings in the country and about 1.16 percent of the total area holding in Nepal. Also, more than 130,000 hectares of arable land are reportedly inundated and sand-casted in the Terai (UN-OCHA 2007).

**Table 2. XVII**  
**Disasters in Nepal (1954-2002)**

	Killed	Injured	Homeless	Affected	Damages US \$
All Disasters	20927	7794	153550	7053754	1316413
Floods	5003	725	69350	1531125	990613
Droughts	0	0	0	4400000	1000
Extreme Temperature	60	210		210	
Windstorms	97	19	0	184	3600
Climate related	5160	954	69350	5931519	1004213
Percentage contribution of climate related disasters to total disasters	24.7 %	12.2 %	45.2 %	84.1 %	76.3 %

Sources: Regmi, Bimal R. & Adhikari A., (2007), *Human Development Report 2007/2008, Country Case-Nepal*, p.15

Heavy rainfall followed by severe flash floods from 19-21 September, 2008 again affected more than 200,000 people throughout the Far-West and Mid-West Regions of Nepal. While Kailali and Kanchanpur have been the worst-affected districts, other districts adversely impacted by the heavy rainfall included Bardiya, Dadeldhura, Kalikot, Doti, Bajhang, Mugu and Dang (UN-OCHA 2008).

## 2. VIII.v\_\_\_Economic Factors

Nepal's economy is overwhelmingly dependent on agriculture and approximately contributing 33 percent of the country's GDP during the fiscal year 2009-10 against the previous fiscal year 32.1 (CBS 2010: 106-07). According to the UNDP – Human Development Report 2009 views that during 1980-2007 Nepal's HDI rose by 2.16% annually from 0.309 to 0.553. The HDI for Nepal is 0.553, which gives the country a rank of 144<sup>th</sup> out of 182 countries. The HPI-1 value of 32.1% for Nepal, ranks 99<sup>th</sup> among 135 countries for which the index has been calculated.

Agriculture is primarily a subsistence activity but contributes only 40 % to GDP, compared to industry at 23 %, and services at 39 %. The preliminary estimates of per capita GDP and per capita GNP in terms of US dollar are 315 and 322 at a current price respectively for the year 2005/2006. Almost 31 percent of the population is living below the absolute poverty line but Nepal's economic growth has not improved substantially over time to take over population growth. With a Human Resource Development Index of 0.332, Nepal ranks 151 among 174 countries (Regmi & Adhikari 2007: 7).

Agriculture remains Nepal's principal economic activity and the most important agricultural areas are located in the eastern, mid-western Terai and the central region; especially the Kathmandu valley and most of the Nepal's agricultural exports originate in eastern Terai (Consing 1963: 507-10). The Terai region produces an agricultural surplus part of which supplies the food-deficient hill areas. In the late 1980's, agriculture provided livelihood for almost 90 percent of the total population and on an average 60 percent of the GDP and approximately 75 percent of exports was contributed from the agricultural production (ADB 2004: 8-10). Stagnation of agricultural sector has become the major factor of underdevelopment and poverty (MOF 2008a: 4-5). Unfortunately most agriculture in Nepal is characterized by both low productivity and low commercialization. The distribution of the farmland is highly skewed, with 16.1 percent of the farmers owning 62.8 percent of the cultivated land. About half of the farm holdings are below 0.5 hectare in size and average a mere 0.15 hectare per farmer (ADB 2004: 8-9).

Although much of the Terai region and valley bottoms in the hills have high potential for increased food production, this has not been achieved for a variety of reasons including institutional failure in the past to adopt clear and consistent policies in favour of a rapid transformation of the agricultural sector, and a failure to concentrate limited physical, financial, institutional and trained manpower resources to well-defined priority areas with high a potential for growth. Among the food crops, paddy occupies about 55 percent of the cultivated land. In 1991, the area and production of cash crops were 298,000 ha and 2,137,000 tones respectively. Both area and production increased to 391,000 ha and 3678,000 tones respectively in 2001 (MOF 2007b: 118-140).

**Table 2. XVIII**  
**Economic Indicators of Nepal**

<b>Income and growth</b>	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Agriculture Sector</b>	0.9	2.8	4.9	5.5	2.2	3.4	4.8	3.5	1.8	1.0	5.8	3.0

Source: ADB (2004), *Country Environment Analysis for Nepal*, September, p. 88 & ADB (2009), *Country Partnership Strategy: Nepal 2010-2012*, October, Appendix - 1, p. 35 & MOF (2008b), *Economic Survey – Fiscal Year 2007/08*, Government of Nepal, pp. 13-15

## **2. VIII.v.a \_\_\_ Unemployment Problem in Nepal**

Nepal due to its backward economy is reeling under the problem of unemployment and poverty. As the government fails to provide enough jobs and opportunities, a large number of youth remain outside the mainstream of national development exercise. According to figures, there are 1.5 million youths who are totally unemployed. As per the Census of 2001, out of the total population, the economically active population was 45 % estimated at 10.482 million (MOF 2009b: 87).

In 2003, among the total Nepalese population of 23.1 million, 47 percent (around 11 million) are unemployed and presently the unemployment rate has declined to 42 percent in 2007. In Nepal, every year around 0.3 to 0.35 million Nepalis enter the job market and only 10 percent of them are absorbed in the domestic market. And for that reason millions of Nepalis migrate to other countries in search of better economic opportunities and employment. Despite the growing trend of Nepalis going abroad for employment, there has been no reduction in the number of unemployed. According to the 2001 Census,

5.1 percent of the populations of the age of 10 years and above were unemployed. However, according to NLSS, 2.9 percent of the population aged 15 years and above were unemployed and 74.3 percent were employed, whereas 22.8 percent were inactive. Of the employed population, 3.1 percent were male and 2.7 percent female, whereas the percentage of youth unemployed was 15.0 (MOF 2008b: 111-112).

The Nepal Labour Force Survey (CBS 2008: 102), "0.25 million persons as unemployed aged 15 years and above in the year 2008. Thus an increase of 42 percent occurred over the previous estimation of 1998/99 survey – 0.17 million persons. The current unemployment rate had increased slightly from 1.8 percent in 1998/99 to 2.1 percent in 2008. The 2008 survey also found that the male unemployment rate (2.2 percent) was slightly higher than the female unemployment rate (2.0 percent). The unemployment rate in the urban areas was 7.5 percent and that in the rural areas was just over 1.2 percent."

The decade-long Maoist conflict in Nepal has affected the industries and factories and several have been shut down and thousands of workers were deprived of employment. Furthermore, the carpet and garment sectors, which used to be big employers, have also been laying off their employees and so are other service sectors (MOF 2008b: 112). A recent news report is enough to indicate the gravity of the situation. When Nepal Electricity Authority, a government-owned power corporation, sought for applications from eligible youths (for mid-level jobs) they received 120,000 applications for the 600 vacant seats. The Nepalese job market is able to absorb merely ten percent of the prospective aspirants. The absence of big industrial units in the country has forced Nepalese youths to migrate to other countries en masse (UNESCO 2003: 2).

According to Census of 2001, at the time of formulation of the Tenth Plan, it was estimated that an additional 1,053,000 jobs would be created during the Plan period. It was deemed that employment opportunities would be created associated with the production growth in the various sectors of the economy as well as the contribution of the inter-sectoral linkages accordingly, it was estimated that a total of 11,012,000 jobs would be created by the end of the Plan. The Plan also mentioned that the number of the economically active population at the end of the Plan (FY 2006/07) would number

11,580,000. Out of this, fully unemployed population was estimated at 4.1 percent only. In addition, the semi-employed population was estimated to fall to 22.3 percent by the end of the Plan. As the review of the Tenth Plan is yet to be completed, the status of the said targets could not be determined (MOF 2008b: 111-113).

**Table 2.XIX**  
**Status of Employment in Nepal 2003-2004 (Population above the age of 15 Years)**

Region	Employment %	Unemployed %	Inactive %	Total %
<b>Gender wise</b>				
Male	73.3	3.1	19.6	100
Female	71.7	2.7	25.6	100
<b>Development Region wise</b>				
Eastern	74.9	2.9	22.2	100
Central	72.4	3.3	24.3	100
Western	73.2	2.7	24.1	100
Mid-Western	77.0	2.8	20.2	100
Far Western	80.4	1.4	18.2	100
<b>Ecological Region wise</b>				
Himal	86.7	1.3	12.0	100
Hill	76.0	2.1	21.9	100
Terai	71.1	3.8	25.1	100
Nepal	74.3	2.9	22.8	100

Source: CBS (2004), *Nepal Living Standard Survey, 2003/04*, National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal, p-113.

Due to the dearth of employment opportunities, the number of Nepalese migrating abroad in search employment has been increasing rapidly. Apart from India, the other destination is the Gulf countries. During the financial year of 2005/06, the total number of persons issued permit for going for foreign employment through institutionalized means reached to 773592. A total of 204533 persons in the financial year 2006/07 and 152682 up to mid-March 2008 were added, thus the total number of persons issued permit for foreign employment totalled 1130807 (MOF 2007b: 112-14).

## **2. VIII.v.b \_\_\_Poverty in Nepal**

Nepal is one of the poorest and least development countries in the world. Kumaran in a discussion commented, "Economic development in India works as a push and pull factors of Nepalis, like all human population tends to follow the family links. In South Asian region, the existence of poverty and disintegration of South Asian region works as



kinship relation for which people still migrate. In Nepal, poverty is the major reasons for migration of Nepalis into India. In Nepal the terrain is very harsh and a lot of problems of rain etc. cause decrease in their income or livelihood. In hilly areas, up to some specific heights you will get good vegetation but above that height its very difficult life in the terrain. Again there readymade reservoir of people who are looking for options and they migrate through their kinship relation and settle down finally. The growing urbanization also generates migration, somebody coming from village finds it very difficult to go back if even their conditions remains to be the same as like they lived in village.”<sup>42</sup>

The levels of human development in Nepal are low even by South Asian Standards (UNDP 2004: 17-19). The NLSS survey estimated the head count index of poverty at 42 percent at the national level using household consumption expenditure data. However, the poverty estimates tend to vary when different measures are used to assess poverty. If one adopts the definition of “one US dollar a day”, as poverty threshold, the incidence of poverty in Nepal turns out to be 37.7 percent. However, the estimate fails to convey the depth and severity of poverty in Nepal. Presently, Nepal has close to 9 million people living below the poverty line (CBS 2004: 15-20).

According to the survey carried out by the Nepal Rastra Bank in 1984-85, the incidence of poverty in Nepal was estimated at 41.4 percent with an incidence of rural poverty (43.1 percent) far higher than urban poverty (19.2 percent). According to the 1991, Nepal Rural Credit Survey (NRCS), confined to rural areas and the 1991 population census and agricultural census, which used the same set of households income and consumption data, rural poverty incidence was estimated at 34 percent in the Terai and 64 percent hills and mountains (UNDP 2001: 145-47).

The NLSS survey of 2003 reported a significant decline in poverty incidence from 42 percent in 1995/96 to 31 percent in 2003/04. The report also showed higher poverty in rural areas and the disparities in the rural-urban area is still alarming. The NLSS 2003/04 reported rural poverty at 35 percent compared to 10 percent in urban areas (only 3

---

<sup>42</sup>In a discussion with Shambhu Kumaran, First Secretary, Indian Embassy, Nepal on 28/04/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

percent in the urban areas of Kathmandu valley). By development region, the indicative poverty is lowest in the Central Development Region (27%) and highest in the Mid-Western Development Region (45%). There are smaller proportions of population below the poverty line in the Terai and more in the Hill and Mountain regions (MOF 2007b: 103). However, poverty declined in all the regions except in the rural eastern hills but the decline in poverty in the mid, far western hills and mountains is not enough to bring it at par with the national average. Still, the level of poverty in these regions is far higher than the rest (NPC 2005-2006: 77-78).

Though some progress has been made in tackling poverty, it is still widespread. Poverty in Nepal has persisted for decades, and is recognized as complex phenomenon for which there is no easy solution. During the period of 10<sup>th</sup> plan, the poverty level in Nepal is 38 percent and it was targeted to reduce till 30 percent by the end of tenth plan. Nepal is caught up with a vicious cycle of poverty and economic stagnation at present. Poverty is providing a fertile ground for the disorder, which in turn is pushing the economy into a downward spiral (MOF 2008a: 4-5).

It is difficult to find simple explanations for Nepal's poverty problem. The factors are mainly the limited resource endowment, land locked and rugged terrain, low economic growth, inadequate social - economic infrastructure, high population growth, low access to land and low access to non-agricultural income. These factors have kept the economy at a subsistence level. This factor also explains the low initial economic base of the country (NPC 2003: 30). In addition, the institutional weaknesses such as failure to tackle poverty at both the government and non-governmental level are major reasons for the perpetuation of poverty. Over the last three decades, economic growth in Nepal has averaged about 4 percent, only marginally exceeding the population growth rate of 2.37 percent. Growth rate in the agricultural sector has been even lower – less than 2.5 percent – and very inconsistent. Taking together the growth rate total food grain production and that of population, Nepal has slowly but steadily changed from a net exporter to a net importer of food grain. The overall result – lack of food security – has been the prime factor of increasing rural poverty. The growth in the non-agriculture sector, driven largely by growth in the urban service sector, has not been strong enough to trickle down to the

rural poor. The types of jobs created in the growing urban economies tend to favour skills that rural people are just not able to provide. The government's redistributive capacity is extremely limited by its inability to raise sufficient internal revenues and to allocate resources to the social priority sector (UNDP 2001: 31-33).

Again the lack of non-agriculture employment opportunities is an important factor of poverty in Nepal. According to the NRCS data, 42 percent of households in the landless and marginal land owning groups are better off than other poor households because they earn substantially more from non-agricultural sources, mainly in the form of salary and wages. Unfortunately, the non-agricultural employment is not expanding fast enough to absorb the employment opportunities. Most of the Nepali citizens seek employment outside the country to get rid of poverty. However, those who can not avail themselves of such opportunities, either within the country or abroad, remain trapped in poverty. (UNDP 2001: 33-34).

**Table 2.XX**  
**Poverty Measurement (1995/96 and 2003/04) in Percentage in Nepal**

Area	Population Below the Poverty Line		Poverty Gap		Squared Poverty Gap	
	1995/96	2003/04	1995/96	2003/04	1995/96	2003/04
Urban Area	21.55	9.55	6.54	2.18	2.65	0.71
Rural Area	43.27	34.62	12.14	8.50	4.83	3.05
Nepal	41.76	30.85	11.75	7.55	4.67	2.70

Source: Ministry of Finance (2009), *Economic Survey – Fiscal Year 2008/09*, Government of Nepal, p. 81

## 2. IX \_\_\_ Political Instability/ Maoist Conflict

The Maoist conflict in Nepal started in 1990s when popular movement brought changes to the centuries-old system of autocratic rule and feudal structures of social and political life. The 1990 Constitution of Nepal set the basis for the introduction of a multiparty electoral system, separation of power, and the respect for fundamental human rights. However, this loosely drafted constitution did give increased powers to the king, especially over the military. The political, economic and social context of Nepal is predominantly characterized by a huge democracy deficit, poverty affecting two thirds of

the population, inequalities and discrimination. These factors have rendered Nepal a fertile soil for the upsurge of armed insurgency between government troops and Maoist guerrillas (HRWF 2005: 5).

The Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist launched people's war in 1996 with the leader of Maoist political wing - Baburam Bhattarai, the Maoist political wing. On February 4, 1996, he submitted a 40-point memorandum to the then Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba. The demands can be categorized into three groups pertaining to nationality, questions of governance, and livelihood. The demands included the abolition of special privileges of the king and the royal family, promulgation of a new republican constitution drafted by people's elected representatives, and turning Nepal into a secular state. Greatly underestimated as a security threat concentrated in the remote rural areas in the Far Western and Mid-Western regions of Nepal, the Maoist consolidated their ranks and gradually turned into a real threat to the constitutional order (Baral & Heinen 2005: 2-11).

The Maoist guerrillas once controlled most of the rural areas, while the government claims control of urban areas, including the capital, Kathmandu. The conflict has claimed more than 11,000 lives since it erupted in 1996. Since the last ceasefire in August 2003, there has been an increase in documented human rights abuses, including torture, detention, disappearances, abductions and extra-judicial killings. These deteriorating conditions in Nepal have caused significant population movements which have been widely acknowledged by international organizations and relief agencies. However, there is only very limited information on the exact scope of the displacement problem in Nepal and on the assistance and protection needs of displaced persons. It has also been difficult to distinguish between poverty-induced and conflict-induced population movements, as in many cases the motives can be a combination of interlinked and overlapping factors (HRWF 2005: 5-6). In March 2005, the Global IDP Project of the Norwegian Refugee Council placed Nepal among the countries worst affected by new displacements in 2004, alongside Sudan, Uganda, Colombia, Iraq and Somalia. Nepal is also on the list of countries experiencing the world's displacement situations (UNDP 2004: 82-83).

The nine years conflict between the CPN-Maoist and His Majesty's Government (HMG) has had serious consequences for the economic and social conditions of the country as a whole. Around two-third of Nepalese populations have been directly affected by the conflict and are forced to live under insecurity and fear. Since the outbreak of the conflict, Nepal has been experiencing conflict induced population displacements almost every year (NIDS 2009: 38-39). The problem of internal displacement occurred across the country after 2001. People from rural areas were forced to flee from their original place due intensified violence, threats and extortions. Again, with the breakdown of seven month ceasefire between the state and the Maoists in August 2003, the conflict further escalated resulting in frequent armed clashes and wide spread fear among general public (NIDS 2008: 48-50).

There are several estimates of population displacements due to Maoist conflict are indeed a hazardous guess. There have been several studies attempting to capture the extent of displacements. The IDMC believes that a range 0.1 - 0.2 million IDPs constituted the most realistic estimates as of 2006. This figure doesn't include displacements to India where the majority of the displaced have sought refuge since 1996 and where a 1751 km long Nepal-India open border has made the monitoring of movements extremely difficult (Gnyawali 2005: 3-4). Meanwhile, the Ministry of Home Affairs figures 7343 people registered as IDPs as of February 2003. While a task force on IDPs formed by the government estimated more than 0.1 million in August 2004. The Minister of Finance estimated the number of IDPs somewhere between 0.3 and 0.6 million in May 2005 (Gnyawali 2005: 5).

Khatiwada viewed, 'The Maoist conflict has affected a lot; it has forced people to live their villages. The political activists were the main target of the Maoist, many of them got killed. The Maoists also targeted civilians and threatened them for life. However, there is no authentic data; the IDMC has reported the displacement may be of 50/70 thousands, other estimate shows of around 0.2-0.3 million 0.1 million people. The UNHCR also estimated the number of displaced people around 0.1 million. The displaced people were mostly the adults and demographic changes occurred when old, women and destitute people were left in their villages. Many of the displaced migrated to India giving pretext

of economic opportunities. After the year 2001, migration of displaced people for foreign employment increased in Nepal. People from the hill and mountain region were largely affected and they adopted migration as survival strategy to escape from conflict. People displaced from hill and mountain region also migrated to Kathmandu city and they lived in slum areas (even Anam Nagar turned out almost as slum) and colonies also.<sup>43</sup>

Meanwhile, the committee formed under the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction in its report submitted in December 2007 concluded that the number of IDPs as a result of the armed conflict is estimated at 25000 and the number of IDPs was highest in Kailali, Bardiya and Surkhet district. The committee has prepared the statistics on the basis of reports received from district administration offices across the country based on the number of claims registered. Since the signing of the peace agreement in 2006, the number may have fallen from 200000 to 50000 but the number could rise significantly. Another estimate puts the IDPs figured at between 50000 to 70000 people (NIDS 2008: 56).

In a research conducted by the Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC) in the Eastern part of Nepal about conflict induced IDPs, it is found that about 82 percent of IDPs are from eastern hilly and mountainous districts, while 18 % are from inner Terai and Terai regions. About 57 percent of the displaced population was male while remaining was female. Likewise, the main reason (40%) for displacement was due to fear and threats and 30 % of the displaced population attributed their displacements to seizure of property. Similarly, other reasons for the displacements were acquisition of being spy, refusal to give the donation and physical torture etc. (INSEC, Research Report 2005: 21-25). Gautam commented, "More than 50 percent of the total population in the Midwest and far west region has been displaced due to conflict. This people have moved from the hill to Terai region. The Maoist has captured their homes, land and other belonging forcing them to live. The Maoist forced the adults to join their party; even children's were forcefully recruited. Extortion was also a strategy, those who unable to pay were kicked out from their villages. Such indirect threats to their life were major cause of

---

<sup>43</sup>In a discussion with Padma Khatiwada, Lecturer, Central Department of Population Studies, Tribhuvan University, on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2009 during field trip to Kathmandu.

displacement.”<sup>44</sup> The Maoist conflict cost the lives of more than 13000 people (NPC 2006: 77). Again another source reveals that more than 12000 people were killed and many more left their houses because of direct threat and insecurity. A survey report carried out by Nepal IDP Research Initiative in 2002 depicts mentioning the sources of government and Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) that a total of 7343 and 10500 are registered IDPs respectively. Similarly, it is reported that the destruction where the total loss of property in 12 municipalities was NR. 25504326.26. However, both the reports do not fully cover the areas where the effects of insurgency are paramount (Gautam, INSEC 2005: 41-45).

One research carried out by the Save the Children and Nepal Child Welfare Board, at five major check points along the Nepal- India border in western, Midwestern and far western region has shown that more than 70000 children migrate into India every year from those check points alone. The study was carried out between July to December, in 2004, in Bhairahawa, Nepalgunj, Koilali, Tikapur and Mahendra Nagar. The report reveals that child migration from Nepal to India appears to be on rise, which is caused to some degree by the country's Maoist conflict. About 24 percent of the respondents in the research directly pointed out conflict as the reason for their migration to India.<sup>45</sup> The continued political instability and uncertainties have threatened the fundamentals of the economy, which had remained intact even during the armed Maoists insurgency since 1996.

## **2. X \_\_\_ The Nepal-India Open Border**

India and Nepal share border in three sides: west, south and eastern side of Nepal. The mountain portions of the boundary of Nepal-India boundary lie in the state of Sikkim and Darjeeling district of West Bengal in the east. While the rest of the border runs along the plains in the south and along the Mahakali River in the west. There existed free and unrestricted movement of population between India and Nepal before the signing of the Treaty of Sagauli in 1816. The cultural exchanges, trade constituted major source of

---

<sup>44</sup>In a discussion with Gita Gautam, Programme Coordinator, INSEC on 27/04/09 during field trip to Kathmandu.

<sup>45</sup>Research Report, The Trend of Nepali Children Being Displaced to India Due To the Conflict, jointly Conducted Research by the Central Child Welfare Board, Nepal Government and Save the Children, published in Xinhua, November 15, 2005.

population movement since ancient times. The Nepal-India border is unique in the world in the sense that people of both the countries can cross it from any point, despite the existence of border check posts at several locations (Kansakar 1990: 1). The number of check posts meant for carrying out bilateral trade is 22. However, only at six transit points, the movement was permitted to nationals of third countries, who require entry and exit visa to cross the border. The British Government kept the India-Nepal border open primarily for two reasons; firstly, to maintain unrestricted migration of the Nepalese hill people to India so as to procure them for recruitment in the army. The second important factor to maintain open border by the British was to get easy and free access of British and Indian manufactured goods into Nepal as well as to Tibet wherein Nepal was the only easy and accessible route from India before the discovery of Chumbi Valley route from Sikkim (Kansakar 1990: 7-8).

Further, in 1950 the Government of India and Nepal signed the 'Treaty of Peace and Friendship' which made provisions for free cross-border movement of people and goods. Nepal and India are only countries in South Asia that permit the free circulation of people across national boundaries (Weiner 1993: 1737-1746). The treaty encapsulates a holistic approach of security. The two countries binds through socio-cultural and economic ties and it ensures Nepal's socio- economic progress and stability considering India's security interests in the South Asian region. According to Article 6 of the Treaty, "Each Government undertakes, in token of the neighbourly friendship between India and Nepal, to give to the nationals of the other, in its territory, national treatment with regard to participation in industrial and economic development of such territory and to the grant of concessions and contracts relating to such development." Article 7 quotes, "The Governments of India and Nepal agree to grant, on a reciprocal basis, to the nationals of one country in the territories of the other the same privileges in the matter of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce, movement and other privileges of a similar nature" (Text of Indo-Nepal Peace Treaty 1950). Thus, the provision of the Treaty ensures the participation of the citizens from both the countries in industrial and economic development in either country without any discrimination.



Similarly, the treaty envisages the citizen's right of residence, ownership or property, participation in trade and other commercial activities in each other's country.

The provisions were favourable to Nepal as people could enter India unhindered in search of better opportunities and sustaining livelihood. There was also an exchange of letters along with the treaty which explicitly states that 'it may be necessary for some time to come to offer the Nepalese nationals in India protection from unrestricted competition'. This was done basically to protect the interests of the Nepali people migrating to India. The Nepal government also agreed to grant preferences to Indian nationals in various development projects related to natural resources. There is controversy regarding the provision of unrestricted movement of population is high these days. Several academicians and foreign policy experts from Nepal have raised voice against the treaty. They view that due to presence of huge resources India could absorb so many Indians coming on its soils would swamp Nepal (Kansakar 1990: 25-27).

However, the problem between India and Nepal continued to persist when the Nepali government passed a law restricting the movements of Indian towards Nepal. Mishra commented, "The existence of open border between India and Nepal is major reason for migration. Open border means India-Nepal is one single economy and cultural zone, even after they have two government and two states. Many ways they are one single entity, if Nepal is not like Madhya Pradesh, it is more like Shimla and Assam or the Northeastern states. Though a single entity, problem still persists. For instance, Nepal passes laws restricting Indian migrants in Nepal. Though India has not enacted any laws but it restricts movement of Nepalis in Assam through 'restricted area permit' (RAP). Seasonal movement of migrants occurs along the borders touching Gorakhpur and open border has accelerated the movement of population."<sup>46</sup>

Lok Raj Baral commented, "Both India and Nepal violated 1950 treaties for their interest and Nepalis are not treated as per Indian in some states, especially in Assam. If you want to go to Assam you need RAP. There will be harassment in case you disclose your identity. You know how the Assam government looked at Nepalis. According the spirit

---

<sup>46</sup>Op. cit. no. 36.

of 1950 treaty Nepalis are not in equal footings with the Indian counterpart and it especially in the name of security. Security is the main excuse for depriving Nepali people.”<sup>47</sup> The Treaty has facilitated migration between the two countries. For Nepal, this appeared to be a good arrangement as the flow of people is substantially greater from Nepal than Indians into Nepal (Weiner 1993: 1742).

## 2. XI \_\_\_ Comparative Analysis

It is evident from the above discussion that migration of Bangladeshis and Nepalis into Assam and other parts of India occurred due to various factors. Though most of the time migration occurred due to economic reasons, other factors such as environmental - political are also contributing for migration. Some causal factors do have striking similarities and others do differ in both spirit and reality. Both the communities since the ancient times have been migrating to Assam and other parts of the country. The Bangladeshi migration has been occurring since the annexation of Assam by the Britishers in 1826. These people were encouraged to migrate into Assam and were provided lands to settle mainly to enhance British income and land revenue. The development of tea and jute industries as well as to run British administration, educated-skilled and unskilled labourers were hired (Weiner 1978: 79-82; Alam 2003: 422-25). Meanwhile, in case with the Nepalis, they were mainly encouraged to get recruited in the Gorkha Army. The hard working Nepalis were also encouraged to do cultivation in grazing lands and other activities. Nepalis were in fact provided lands in the foothills areas of Assam to settle, especially the retired Gorkha soldiers for security reasons. Thus, British colonial power encouraged both the communities; whether skilled or unskilled were encouraged to settle. Meanwhile, the Bangladeshis were used for the purpose of running administration and cultivation. On the other hand, Nepalis were encouraged to settle for the purpose of cultivation and for recruiting in the army due to hardworking and courageous nature (Nath 2005a: 63-65).

Bangladesh and Nepal are facing a serious problem of population growth. Bangladesh is worst affected while Nepal is less, but still both the countries face similar trend.

---

<sup>47</sup>In a discussion with Lok Raj Baral, in Kathmandu on 27/04/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

Bangladesh is already overpopulated and currently having more than 140 million with a density of population more 956. On the other hand, Nepal has also been facing serious crisis of over population with limited resources and land. The geography represents a transitional mountain area with over three quarters of the land covered by rugged hills and mountains which is neither favourable for cultivation nor for habitation. The total population of Nepal in 2004 is estimated at 24.8 million with an annual increase over 2 percent. Around 88 percent of Nepal's total population lives in rural areas with a density of 686 people per sq. kilometre.

Both Bangladesh and Nepal's economy is based on agriculture. More than 65 percent of the total population of Bangladesh is dependent on agriculture whereas Nepal employs around 80 of its total labour in agriculture. The pressure of population on land has reduced the production level. Due to large-scale population growth and increasing dependency on land, serious environmental degradation in both Bangladesh and Nepal has occurred. Excessive use of land and clearing of forest for the traditional Jhum cultivation, increased dependency on wood for fuel, is a common phenomenon leading to serious environmental destruction in Bangladesh and Nepal. Floods are common natural hazards in Bangladesh and Nepal – a recurring phenomenon occurring almost every year causing damages to crops. These natural disasters along with various socio-political conditions in Nepal and Bangladesh have been triggered a steady flow of migrants to India. The state repression and other insurgency movements are common in Nepal and Bangladesh, such as Maoist insurgency in Nepal and Chakma problem in Bangladesh. Thousands of people migrate to the Indian side of the border due to existence of porous nature of border.

The political instability is another responsible factor of population migration from both the countries. The state repression and the laws enacted by the Bangladesh (VPA) have also spread the feeling of insecurity among the minority communities. The state repression and the insurgency in the CHT also generated migration. Poverty is rampant in both the countries despite initiatives taken by the government. All the above mentioned factors analyzed altogether contribute for migration and they are interlinked.

# Chapter

# 3

---

**MIGRATION OF  
BANGLADESHIS AND  
NEPALIS INTO ASSAM**

---

### **3. I Introduction**

Assam has been a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural society and a melting pot of a number of ethnic groups. Hence, there exist ethnic and racial cohesiveness and availability of abundant natural resources including land, has attracted millions of people from the neighbouring countries since time immemorial. The state has witnessed 11 stream of migration from south, east, west and across the high Himalayas. After the annexation of Assam by the British in 1826, the colonial power seeing abundant land lying vacant decided to use it for generating revenue. The subsequent labour crisis that occurred due to development of tea and jute forced Britishers to import people from across the region. Seeing the economic opportunities in Assam, a large number of people migrated to Assam as tea garden labourers, amolas, farmers, peasants etc. The partition of India also generated migration and people were forced to flee due to communal violence and state repression. The minority communities especially the Hindus were the victim of such state repressive policies. However, migration from Bangladesh continues due to socio-economic hardship. The migration of Nepalis into Assam and other Northeastern states occurred with the recruitment of Gorkha soldiers for British army. These recruitment processes further led to the settlement of Nepalis in Assam. Settlement of Nepalis also occurred with the migration of Nepali herdsmen and diary farmer. This chapter seeks to analyse the volume, magnitude of migration of both the communities to Assam. Though no proper estimates is found, a census analysis of population increase in Assam also been discussed. Both the primary and secondary sources are used to analyse the same. The primary sources includes the various census reports, ministry of rehabilitation reports, NGOs etc. are used. The secondary sources used here in the chapter are books, articles etc.

### **3. II Early History of Migration into Assam**

Assam with an area of 78,438 sq km and constitutes 2.4 percent of the total geographical area of India. It shares national boundaries with six North-eastern states and international border with Bhutan and Bangladesh. Assam along with four other North-eastern states share 1,879 kilometre long border with Bangladesh, whereas Tripura shares 856 km, Meghalaya 443 km, Mizoram 318 km, and Assam 262 km. West Bengal has a 2216 km

long border with Bangladesh (MOHA 2007: 36). The state is also strategically close to India's international borders with China and Myanmar. According to the 2001 census report, Assam has 26.64 million people and accounts for 2.59% of the country's total population. This state has witnessed uneven population growth mainly due to migration of people from across the border, especially from Bangladesh. There are other migrant communities such as, nationals from Bhutan and Nepal also (Europa 2003: 62-69).

Between 1901 and 2001, Assam's population has increased by a little over eight fold which clearly outpaced the average growth rate of population in India. Density of population of Assam has increased from 41.94 persons per sq km. as against India's 77 persons to 340 persons as against India's 326 persons during this one hundred years. There are 64.89 percent of Hindus, while Muslims constitute 30.92 percent of the total population, which is the second highest concentration of Muslim population in Assam after Kashmir. The Christians constitute 3.70 percent, Sikhs 0.08 percent, Buddhists 0.19 percent and Jains constitute 0.09 percent of the total population (Assam Human Development Report 2003: 4-6).

The state has been a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and the ethnic cohesiveness persisted throughout history. In fact, its ethnic-racial cohesiveness and availability of abundant natural resources including land, Assam has attracted millions of people from the neighbouring areas. Over the years, Assam has become a truly multiethnic society consisting of Bodos, Ahoms, Kacharis, Dimasas, Bengalis, Nepalis, Muslims, Santhals and others. More than a dozen languages are spoken by one lakh people or more than that (Mishra 1999: 1264-1271).

The people of Assam speak languages that belong to three main language groups: Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Burman and Indo-Aryan (Bhagabati et. al. 2001: 12). The presence of large number of ethnic and linguistic groups, the population composition and settlement process of the people in Assam has led to it being called an "India in miniature" (Wikipedia 2011). Geographically, Assam contains two major fertile valleys – the Brahmaputra and Barak open widely to the Gangetic plains. The state is accessible from Tibet in the north (via Bum La, Tse La and Tunga), across the Patkai (via Diphu,

Kumjawng, Hpungan, Chaukam, Pangsau, More-Tamu) and from Myanmar across the Arakan Yoma (via An, Taungup) (Barpujari & Bhuyan 1977: 1-6 & Chatterji 1954: 5-8).

The migration of various folks across the border has its long history. According to Bhagabati et. al. (2001: 11), "Due to Assam's transitional location between south and south-east Asia, Assam has been receiving migrants from the north, east, south and west, across the high Himalayas, over the tangled mass of ridges and valleys of the Patkai Range, Manipur Hills, Lusai Hills and Arakan Yom and over the plains of the Ganga-Brahmaputra doab since time immemorial. The natural environment of Assam with fertile river valleys, abundant rainfall, luxuriant vegetation and rich collection of fauna, had been such that it could attract groups of people to settle."

An estimated of eleven major waves and streams of ethno linguistic migrations occurred across the above mentioned points. The earliest settlers in Assam were the Astro-Asiatic language speaking people represented by Mon-Khmer speakers (Khasi, Synteng) people belonging to the Southeast Asian countries who settled in the foothills bordering the Brahmaputra valley and later moved upto the hills of Meghalaya (Khasi/Garo Hills, Karbi Anglong, and North Cachar Hills) perhaps yielding place to the new migrants of Tibeto-Burman stock. The second wave of migrants was the Tibeto-Burmese speakers migrated to Assam from the north, north-east and east and they are racially Mongoloid. These Tibeto-Burmese speakers who are today identified as Monpas and Sherdukpens of Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh; Mishings and Deuris of Upper Assam; the Bodo-Kachari groups scattered all over Assam and the Nagas of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills (Encyclopedia 2008 & Hussein 1993: 32-36). Assam has a very large number of Tibeto-Burman speaking people comprising both indigenous and recent migrants.

The third major migration into Assam can be attributed to the Hindu Indo-Aryans from Northern part of India into the Brahmaputra valley after 500 BC. And during the same time, migration occurred from the Gangetic Delta of Bengal into the Barak Valley of Assam. This signalled the dawn of the proto-Historic period and the migration continued into the Ancient period. The fourth wave of migration of another group of Indo-Aryans belonging to the Islamic faith. The first Muslims captive soldiers of the defeated Bakhtiar

Khilji (in 1205), settled at Hajo area in the present Kamrup district. This was followed by the Ahoms when Sukaphaa led his group into Assam via the Pangsau pass in the Patkai from South China. The Ahoms were followed by the same ethnic people, who were Buddhists, a stream that continued well into the colonial period. They are today the Khamti, Khamyang, Aiton, Phake and Turung peoples settled in Upper Assam (Guha 1991: 60-64 & Wikipaedia 2008a).

The Ahoms are the only Mongoloid race whose arrival in Assam has historical evidences as they came in 1228 AD and recorded their own activities in the chronicles called 'Buranjis', meaning 'store-house of unknown things'. The Ahom spoke Chinese-Siamese and in the upper Burma and western Yunnan, they had styled themselves as Shans. The Ahom, though scattered all over the valley, are concentrated in the Sivasagar district. In 1826, Assam came under British rule with the signing of the Treaty of Yandaboo. For 600 years, from AD 1228 to the signing of Yandaboo treaty, Assam was ruled by the mighty Ahom kings, came to end (Barpujari 1980: 3-7 & Chatterji 1954: 39-41). These above mentioned six groups of people inhabited in Assam until the advent of British rule.

### **3. III \_\_\_ Migration of East Bengalis/ Bangladeshis into Assam**

Since annexation of Assam by the British, certain natural events have caused death of a large number of indigenous people left large land vacated and lying abundant. By the time, Assam was colonized, the depopulation of Assam occurred due to earlier civil war, i.e. the Moamorian rebellion in the last quarter of 18<sup>th</sup> century and the Burmese intrusion in the first quarter of the nineteenth century (Mackenzie, 1884, reprint 2005: 2-3). A large area of land remained vacant and uncultivated and later covered with deep jungles (A. J. M. Mills 1854: Appendix-D). As the cultivable land was much more in proportion to the inhabitants and the colonial administration did not want to deprive land revenue and the simultaneous scarcity of labourers compelled the Britishers to hire people from outside province. As part of colonial strategy, the colonial rulers taxed the peasants excessively to flush them out into the labour market. Guha views, "Assam had a suitable wasteland but not enough labour. Nor were local public resources were adequate for meeting the budgetary expenditures that were needed to build an infrastructure for the planters. One



facet of the agrarian policy in Assam, therefore, was to tax the peasantry heavily to the point of flushing them out in the labour market and at the same time to augment the public revenue resources. However, the purpose remained unfulfilled, despite repeated tax enhancements” (Guha 1979: 20).

The middle class Assamese also preferred the hiring of labour from outside the province due to depopulated condition. Ananda Ram Dhekial Phukan (1830-1859), a noted civil servant under British colonial administration, argued for implementation of European technology and man power in order to improve the precarious condition of agriculture in Assam and opposed the enhancement of tax on agriculture in Assam initially (Hussein 1993: 41). Phukan argued that, “An enhancement of the rates under the present circumstances of the province, without any marked improvement in agriculture and commerce, would be over-burden the people with taxes, which they could but ill afford to bear”(Phukan 1854: 27-28).

However, Phukan favoured a tax enhancement only if the British administration exerted itself to improve the regions agricultural production. He insisted the British administration to take steps and teach the peasants the better management of their production and suggested for investing Rs. 0.6 to 0.7 million with a view to enabling the government, to procure the requisite supply of implements and seeds etc. and to secure the services of an establishment of agriculturalists from Europe and Upper India for a period two years to work towards that end. He also emphasized techniques of manufacturing and modern husbandry. According to him, “Nothing was done for uplifting agriculture during the last 28 years of British rule was a matter of regret and surprise for him. Unless, therefore, the government provides the people with better and improved means of cultivating their lands, he concluded, an increase of assessment will inevitably lead to an increase of unhappiness of the people” (Guha 1979: 21-22).

The British brought about many changes including the political and population structure of the region after annexation. There was a high degree of fluidity in the socio-cultural arena that inter-mingled various streams of people and the boundaries of these people were rather flexible for which people of different groups stayed together despite their

ethnic differences. After the annexation of Assam, the British brought the people of this region into greater and deeper contact with socio-political conditions (Mishra 1999: 1264-67).

The British after annexation introduces new administrative and economic order and to run that system they needed English educated personnel. They also needed tradesmen with the introduction of full-scale monetised economy in Assam. Further they needed security personnel, technicians, professionals and artisans for safety and security and for public works and various other services. These led to migration of Bengali speaking **government service-holders and professionals, Rajasthani tradesmen and north-Indian labourers and artisans, Nepali security men etc.** (Bhagabati et. al. 2001: 14-15). The channels of contact and the levels of communication were further accentuated in early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. And a systematic influx of population occurred during this time largely engineered by the British regime by giving the economic rationale (Reddi 1984: 260-262).

There were two phases of migration during the period of British rule: 1826 – 1905 and 1905-1947. The first phase of migration into Assam started with British rule and these people were hired due to colonial requirement of labour and mercantile. Until 1905, mainly three classes of people migrated: tea plantation labourers; 'amolans' – office employees from Sylhet, Dacca, Mymensing, Rangpur and other districts of Bengal, and merchants and tradesman from Rajasthan and Bengal. They mostly constituted a floating population in the tea plantations and in the towns (Das 1982: 25). In the second phase, beginning 1905, the Muslim peasants from East Bengal started settling in rural areas of Assam due to the presence of vast wasteland. Some political parties, like the Muslim League in Assam also encourage Muslims from East Pakistan to migrate into Assam to create vote banks and also to populate Assam with Muslims so that can be merged with Pakistan by showing the strength (Das 1982: 26).

### **3. III.i \_\_\_ Pre-Partition Migration:**

The process and sequences of migration of East Bengalis into Assam has its long history. The process started in the 18<sup>th</sup> century; somewhere between 1800 and 1826. After the

annexation, the colonial power brought major changes in administration and the economy of Assam. The beginning of the tea plantations and jute industries in 1835 and the need for cheap labourers triggered migration of East Bengalis into Assam (Gait 1905: 70-71). The British started systematic cultivation of tea since 1835 and developed it to a very substantial prosperity since 1835. This led to massive scale of migration as the labour force was not locally available and the local population also showed reluctance to work as tea gardens (Barua 1962: 83). The British started hiring people from outside the province and were recruited mainly from Chota Nagpur, Orissa and Madras belonging to the tribes speaking Austro-Asiatic language; Munda, Ho, Santhal, Savara, Oraon, Gond, etc. (Census of India 1931, Vol. XII: 31, & Bhagabati et. al. 2001: 15). Many educated people were also encouraged to migrate and settled in various colonial administrative jobs like clerks and officers. The beginning of British administration generated large influx of service holders and professionals from Bengal, Rajasthan, Nepal, etc. (Weiner 1978: 86).

The major concentration of the tea garden labourers concentrated mainly in various upper Assam districts; Dibrugarh, Lakhimpur, Cachar, Sibsagar and Darrang district. Along with the tea garden labourers a large number of people whose sources of livelihood linked directly or indirectly to it, viz. shop-keepers, hucksters, carpenters, clerks, carters, etc. also migrated (Census of India 1911, Vol. III, Assam, Part-I-Report: 27-29). There are several census estimates of the presence of tea garden labourers in Assam. In 1869, there were 22800 imported and 11633 local labourers on tea plantations. In 1884-85, 44.7 percent of the labourers were from Chotanagpur, 27.6 percent from UP, and Bihar, 5.5 percent and 0.9 percent from Bombay and Madras. In 1901, the non-indigenous population of Assam was estimated at 0.5 to 0.6 million in a total population of 2.2 million (Guha 1977: 39-42). According to 1901 Census, the total number of labourers in the state stood at 0.654 million (Bhagabati et. al. 2001: 96 & Gazetteer of India 1983: 25-26). The requirement of labourers went high due to expansion of tea industry and their numbers were high during 1911-1931.

According to Gazetteer of India (1983: 25-26), "There was a great growth of the migrant population observed that increased by more than one half, and in 1901 exceeded three

quarters of a million, or nearly 13 percent, of the total population of the province. The great bulk of the foreigners are the coolies brought up to the tea gardens, though a certain amount of movement takes place across the frontier where Assam marches with Bengal. More than half a million people came from that province, a quarter of a million of whom were born in the division of Chota Nagpur. About 109000 persons came from the United Province and 84000 from the central provinces. The preponderance of the foreign born element in the population was most pronounced in Lakhimpur, where they formed 41 percent of the whole, and Darrang and Sivasagar district of 25 percent. Cachar (plains) was close behind with 24 percent. In sylhet, on the other hand, though the total number of foreigners was considerable they only formed 7 percent of the population" (Gazetteer of India 1983: 25-26).

According to the Gazetteer of India (1999: 231), "In 1921, about two-thirds of the Assam tea-gardens were in the Brahmaputra valley and the rest in the Surma valley. The total population censused in tea gardens as 922245. This included managers, assistants, and other workers, dependants and also the temporary visitors and new comers. The number was about 90000 less than the total given in the government returns of migrant labourers. Lakhimpur (233000) and Sivasagar (229000) had the greatest tea garden population in 1921. Then came Sylhet (169000), Cachar (138000), Darrang (123000) and Nagaon (22000), Kamrup, Goalpara and two frontier tracts and less than 6000 each. All other provinces contributed great increase to the tea gardens, reflecting the boom in the industry in the year previous to 1920. The very large increase from the province of Bihar and Orissa was due mainly to the preference of planters for the men of Chota Nagpur and the appreciation by the tea-labourers themselves of the more steady means of subsistence." As per 1931 Census, there were 1.4 million people worked as tea garden labourers, however, it stopped finally in 1941 (Bhagabati, et. al. 2001: 96).

David Scott, the agent of the East India Company in Assam viewed that the Ahom and the Assamese functionaries were rapidly losing their position of wealth and power and equally found difficult to find local officials competent enough to serve the British administration (Baruah 1970: 137). The incapacity and indolence of nobility, the difficulties making accountable for the revenue they collected without the use of duress,

led Neufville – another British officer posted in upper Assam introduces Tahsildars – the natives of Bengal and removed around 100 Kheldars – in charge revenue collection, and in their place employed various migrants especially Bengalis into the system. Neufville viewed that he did not find any nobleman in Assam capable of handling the position of Tahsilder even entrusted with the task of collecting and regularly accounting for even Rs. 30000 (Baruah 1970: 149).

Map. 3.1



Thus, the migration of Bengalis began and they moved into administrative positions. As these people were educated in British owned missionary and government colleges, they entered in all professions such as doctors, lawyers, journalists, teachers, railway, post offices etc. (Weiner 1978: 93). Meanwhile, the discovery of petroleum and coal industries in the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought economic opportunities. The colonial power needed skilled and educated manpower in various departments and to construct roads and railways. The unavailability of skilled labourers compelled to hire professionals, technicians, tradesmen, security personnel's from outside the province

inducing migration mainly from Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and also from Nepal (Bhagabati, et. al. 2001: 96-97).

### 3. III.i.a Migration of East Bengali Muslims into Assam

The largest influx took place after 1900 when Muslim population of East Bengal moved into the Brahmaputra valley as Assam was most sparsely populated than east Bengal and also due to presence of waste lands (Weiner 1983: 283). According to 1901 census Assam has a total population of 6.12 million increased upto 7.05 million by 1911. There was abundant cultivable land with low density of population in the various districts of Assam opening the gate for people to settle down and start agriculture activities and contribute for colonial revenue (Gazetteer of India 1999: 229).

**Table 3.I**  
**District with Excess Cultivable Land in Assam Valley**

District	Area 1901 sq. mile	Total Population (million)	Population Density per sq. mile	Cultivated Area 1901 sq. mile	Percentage of area under cultivation (percent)
Kamrup	3858	0.589	153 (1901)	798	20.68
Darrang	3418	0.337	99	459	13.42
Goalpara	3961	0.462	117	670	16.91
Nowgong	3843	0.261	68	348	9.06
Sivasagar	4996	0.597	120	804	16.09
Lakhimpur	4529	0.317	82	388	8.57

Sources: Census of India (1911), Vol. III, Assam Part – I, Report pp. 10, 15, 17, 19, 23, 24 and Computed from the figures in Statistical Hand Book 1980, as cited in Alaka Sarmah (1999), *Immigration and Assam Politics*, New Delhi: Ajanta Publication: 16

By seeing the sparse population and vast virgin land lying ahead – the British administration to increase land productivity and revenue encouraged land hungry peasants from East Bengal into the Brahmaputra valley, particularly from Sylhet, Mymansingh and Rangpur district. Sir, Henry Cotton, the then Chief Commissioner of Assam felt that the virgin and fertile cultivable lands be cultivated to step up food production (Bhagabati, et. al. 2001: 98). The British administration since 1901 started encouraging Muslim peasants to settle down in vast tract of virgin land. The hardworking cultivator's migration has become a regular feature in the region. Guha rightly stated, "with their superior techniques of cultivation, these East Bengali peasants taught Assam

how to grow jute and several other crops". He shows that "the acreage under jute in the Brahmaputra valley increased as a result of this great population movement from a little less than 30 thousand acres in 1905-1906 to more than 106 thousand acres in 1919-20" (Guha 1977: 102).

Initially, the migration of peasants from these above mentioned districts was encouraged by the Zamindars of Goalpara with the connivance of British rulers later open the flood gates of the Muslims migration into Assam (Guha 1984: 13-16). The Census report of 1911 first recorded the migration of peasants from above mentioned East Bengal districts. According to Gazetteer of India (1999: 231), "The influx of migrants from Eastern Bengal had formed the subject of questions and an unpleasant situation. Before 1911, the men of Mymensing began to advance to Assam, driven apparently by pressure on the soil at home. They were joined by people of other eastern districts. The migrants got beyond Goalpara. In the decade 1911-21 the movement had extended far up the valley and the colonist formed an appreciable element of the population in all the four lower and central districts. In 1911, no special table was prepared but from the general birth rate take we find that Mymensing, Rangpur and Jalpaiguri provided 51000 migrants to Goalpara and 3000 to the other five brahmaputra valley districts. After adding the children born after arrival in Assam along with their women, the total number of East Bengal settlers in the valley came to at least 300000 in 1921."

According to Weiner (1983), "Bengali Muslims reclaimed thousands of acres of land, cleared vast tracts of dense jungle along the south bank of the Brahmaputra, and occupied flooded lowlands all along the river. The largest single influx came from Mymensing district and by 1911 as many as 118,000 migrants had moved into the district of Goalpara alone, representing 20 percent of the population. In the next two decades the Muslim migrants moved further up the Brahmaputra valley. This new influx rapidly changed the religious as well as linguistic composition of the state."

Due to migration from East Bengal, the population of Goalpara district jumped upto 30 percent during 1901-1911. The largest increase was seen in Goalpara (undivided) district where the growth rate attained 29.27 % against below 16 % in other district excepting

Lakhimpur (undivided) district where it was 26.29 %. E. H. Pakyntein, Superintendent of Census, Operations for Assam, 1961, noted, "From 1901 onwards, the men of Mymensing began to advance to Assam, driven apparently by pressure on the soil at home. They were joined by the people of the other east Bengalis districts in less numbers..... The population of Goalpara which increased only by 1.4 % in 1881-91 and 2 % in 1891-1901 shot up by 30 % in 1901-11" (Census of India 1971: 76-77).

According to the Gazetteer of India (1999: 213), "The undivided Goalpara district had a largest population increase of 161838 persons among all the districts of state and its mean density had gone up from 152 to 193 per sq. mile during the decade 1911-21. Two fifths of the increase in this district was due to natural growth and three fifths due to migration. The migrants were mostly the East Bengal Muslim cultivators who occupied the *Chars* and waste land along the banks of the rivers." According to the Census of India (1951, Vol. xii, Assam, Manipur and Tripura, Part I-A: 31-33) Report, "The population increase of Goalpara district during 1921-31 was 15.8 % as against the increase of 26.9 % during the previous decade. This moderate increase was due to the fact that most of the suitable waste land in the districts had already been occupied by the East Bengali migrants who poured during 1901-21 and that main stream of migrants had found a larger scope for their activities in Kamrup and Nagaon districts" (Gazetteer of India 1999: 216)

Migrants generally prefer a place where there exists cultural, religious and ethnic cohesion mainly to avert insecurity. The East Bengali migrants in the initial period settled mainly in the Goalpara district and were subsequently the first camp/destination as it is close to the East Bengal border. Besides that, the local inhabitants were also Bengalis and were Muslims, where East Bengalis found the language, religion and culture resembling with them. During that period Muslims constituted 85 percent of the migrants and Goalpara district with 28 percent of the Muslims, in the Assam valley, was rightly the best choice to settle without any opposition from other ethnic groups. Linguistically, the migrants easily assimilated with 69 percent local Bengali speaking population in 1901. The second best choice of East Bengali migrants was Nowgong district until 1931. The migrants didn't select the Kamrup district as second best choice though it was close and nearer to the first settlement district of Goalpara. It was because of the high concentration



and density of population. The district during that period was also under cultivation at the highest percentage (Baruah 1985: 100). The migrants preferred to settle in the Goalpara district first and then in Nowgong and slowly in the Darrang district (See Table 3.I). This was due to the presence of abundant cultivable land in comparison to that of the population. We can see a high concentration of migrants in these districts even today (Sarmah 1999:14-17).

**Table 3.II**  
**Increase in the proportion of Muslim population in Assam 1901-1931**

District	1901	1911	1921	1931
Goalpara	27.76	35.19	41.48	43.92
Kamrup	9.10	9.66	14.61	24.61
Nowgong	4.83	5.20	17.73	31.60
Darrang	5.16	5.39	7.61	11.54
Sivasagar	4.16	4.30	4.25	4.70
Lakhimpur	3.22	3.05	2.56	3.58
Cachar	33.06	37.60	37.61	40.06
Assam	13.57	16.23	17.07	22.79

Sources: Census of India, Various reports, as cited in in Alaka Sarmah (1999), *Immigration and Assam Politics*, New Delhi: Ajanta Publication: 16

Besides this, in some particular district there is high concentration of Muslim population since 1901 to 1931. That high increase of Muslim population was due to migration of East Bengalis. The Table 3.II presents the decade wise proportion of Muslim population in the districts of Assam which indicates well, when and how the Muslim migrants changed the ethnic composition of the state. It is observed that high growth rate of Muslim population is seen between 1901-1921 particularly in the Goalpara (28 to 44 percent), Kamrup (9 to 24), Darrang district (5 to 11) and Nowgong (5 to 32). During the colonial rule Cachar along with Sylhet was considered as part of the mostly Bengali-speaking Surma Valley as opposed to the mostly Assamese – speaking Brahmaputra valley. It is a district where Bengalis are in predominant majority. When Sylhet became a part of Pakistan, a number of Hindu-majority areas were amalgamated to Cachar. Given the language divide, it is sometimes suggested that Cachar should be separated from Assam. However, Cachar's position is not as cut and dried as the status of Sylhet in the colonial period. There are competing constructions of Cachar's past and of its cultural ties to Assam and Bengal (Baruah 1999: 101-102).

As noted by Gupta (1984: 132) about the position, best articulated by the chief secretary of the Government of Assam about the Cachar district in 1925 viewed, "The Bengalis now inhabiting the district of Cachar, while forming the majority of the population are mere settlers there and can hardly claim that they have annexed the district and have a right to demand its transfer to Bengal. The argument based on solely on principles of numerical strength and linguistic affinity, it admitted, would at present rate at which migration from Mymensing into several districts of the Assam Valley is going on, entitle the Bengali settlers in these districts, after a few years, to assert that they were in the majority and that, therefore, the districts in which they had settled should go to Bengal" (Baruah 1999: 102).

According to the Census of India (1951: 49-51), "In 1951, the population of Cachar district showed an increase of 220725 over its population figure of 1941. This contained a large influx of refugees. During 1941-51, the percentage of increase in the district was 24.66%. This huge increase in the population had forced up its density from 333 persons per square mile in 1941 to 415 persons per square mile in 1951 and the densely populated part of the district was the central belt consisting of Karimganj police station (1010), Badarpur (1195), Hailakandi (777) and Silchar (744). The lowest density of population was seen in Katlicherra (158). Badarpur was the most densely populated thana in the whole state of Assam as it included the population of the large Badarpur railway colony. Among the three sub-divisions namely Silchar, Karimganj and Hailakandi, Karimganj sub-division showed the highest increase of 29.9 percent against 23.9 percent of Silchar and 17.5 percent of Hailakandi during this decade."

The migration of East Bengalis into Assam especially from the border district has altered the demographic composition of East Bengal as well as Assam that is evident in cases with the rise of population in Goalpara, Darrang, Kamrup and Nowgong district (See Table 3.III). The first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the involvement of two districts, Mymensing in East Bengal and Goalpara in Assam. But later, other districts of East Bengal, like Rangpur, Bogra and Pabna can also be seen contributing population influx. During 1881 and 1891, the migration of East Bengalis into Assam numbered about 2.3 lakh and 4.18 lakh respectively. This was mainly attributed to the large scale

migration of people from the Mymensing district of Bangladesh to Goalpara. The decadal population growth rate in Mymensing district came down from 12.8% in 1891-1901 to 6.9 in 1911-1921 gives an account of migration from these districts to Assam. A decline in population of East Bengalis was also recorded in some other districts such as Rangpur, Bogra and Pabna districts. Meanwhile the population growth particularly in some districts of Assam was growing unevenly. Table 3.III shows the decadal growth rates of the Eastern Bengal districts that went down sharply in each successive decade 1891,1901, 1911, 1921, and 1931 while the population growth rates for Assam valley districts rose sharply starting with 1911 (Sarmah 1999: 16-17).

Table 3.III clearly shows that the population growth rate of Mymensing, Rangpur, Bogra and Pabna in East Bengal decreased while in Goalpara increased to 2% in 1901 and to 15.8% during 1921-31 from a mere 2 percent in 1891-1901. In Kamrup district, it rose from 7% to 28%, in Darrang district from 9% to 22% and in Nowgong from 30% to 91%. Thus it clearly proves that the growth of population in the above mentioned districts are not natural but caused obviously due to migration of East Bengal districts of Mymensing, Pabna, Bogra and Rangpur (Sarmah 1999: 17)

**Table 3. III**  
**Percentage Increase in Population in Assam**

Years Decade	Mymensing	Rangpur	Bogra	Pabna
1891-1901	12.8	4.3	11.8	4.8
1901-1921	6.9	5.1	6.6	2.7
1921-1931	6.1	3.7	3.5	3.7
Years Decade	Goalpara	Kamrup	Darrang	Nowgong
1891-1901	2	7.1	9.7	30
1901-1921	26.9	14.2	27	31.9
1921-1931	15.8	27.9	22.6	91.3

Source: Census of India- Assam Census Reports and Districts Census Handbooks, as cited in Alaka Sarmah (1999), *Immigration and Assam Politics*, Delhi: Ajanta Publication: 17

The Bengal migrants censused for the first time on the *Char* lands of Goalpara in 1911 and the migrants practically conquered the whole Goalpara district by 1921 (Gazetteer of India 1999: 233). The large-scale migration from East Bengal was felt seriously by the

then Census Superintendent, C. S. Mulan and made a profound remarks regarding the future implications of such migration. The Census Report of India (1931) reads,

“Probably the most important event in the province during last twenty-five years – an event, moreover, which seems likely to alter permanently the whole future of Assam and to destroy more surely than did the Burmese invaders of 1820 the whole structure of Assamese culture and civilisation – has been the invasion of vast horde of land hungry Bengali migrants, mostly Muslims from the district of East Bengal and in particular from Mymensing. Wherever there is wasteland thither flock the Mymensingias. In fact, the way in which they have seized upon the vacant area in Assam Valley is almost uncanny. Without fuss, without tumult, without undue trouble to district revenue staff, a population which must amount to over half a million have transplanted itself from Bengal to Assam valley during the last twenty five years. It looks like a marvel of administrative organisation on the part of the government but it is nothing of the sort, the only thing I can compare it to is the mass movement of a large body of ants. By 1921 the first army corps which followed them in the years 1921-31 has consolidated their position in that district and has also completed the conquest of Nowgong. The Barpeta sub-division of Kamrup has also fallen to their attack and Darrang is being invaded. It is sad but by no means improbable that in another thirty years Sibsagar district is the only part of Assam in which an Assamese will find himself at home” (Census of India 1931: 50-53).

It is an accepted fact that Assam experienced huge volume of net migration in 1911-21 and 1921-31 as revealed by census reports. Mc. Swiney, the Superintendent of Census, 1911 highlighted the large scale migration into Assam in the census report. Swiney viewed that there were 0.88 million migrants in 1911 constituting 12.5 percent of Assam's total population (Gazetteer of India 1999: 230). The Census Superintendent of Assam during 1921, Mr. Llyod, the total number of foreign born population in Assam 1.29 million constituting 16.1 percent of the total population (Gazetteer of India 1999: 230-231). According to 1931 Census, there were 1.4 million persons who were born outside the province, constituting 15.2 percent of the total population (Gazetteer of India 1999: 232).

Migration of Muslims farmers from East Bengal continued under the 'grow more food programme' initiated by Sadulla under the Muslim League for settling Muslims population in the state (Chattopadhyaya 1987: 198-199). In Bengal, migration of Muslims was also encouraged by Suhraward, the Muslim League Chief Minister. This

government sponsored campaign, Muslim cultivators were brought from Mymensing and other districts of erstwhile Bangladesh to Assam in 1930-40 to settle in the government Khas lands in Goalpara, Kamrup, Nowgong, and Darrang districts of Assam (Kumar 1990: 1-3). Gopinath Bordoloi after forming the Congress Ministry in early part of 1946 initiated eviction of the unauthorised settlers from the reserved land. But owing to the country's tragic partition in 1947 the process was halted and the entire migration scenarion in Assam took a new turn (Bhagabati 2001: 100).

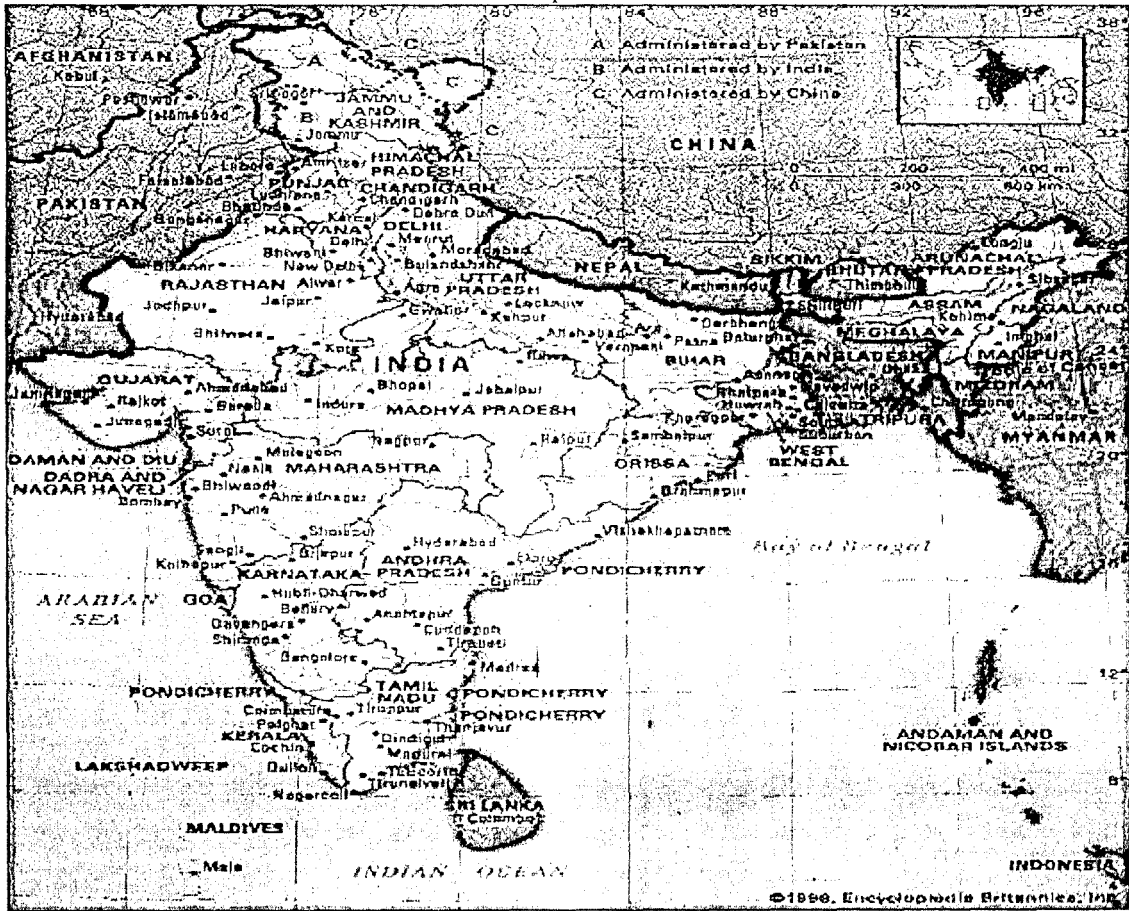
### **3. IV \_\_\_ Post - Partition Migration**

The partition of the country led to massive migration of minority communities from either side – India and Pakistan. The Muslim majority Sylhet was curved out from the province of Assam in accordance with the Sylhet referendum and was added to East Pakistan. However, four Hindu majority police stations – Patharkandi, Ratabari, Badarpur and some portion of Karimganj remained in Assam - India. Thus, Assam was delimited by a newly drawn boundary at the time of independence and hence a new phase of migration started. Repeated communal disturbances in East Pakistan, especially in 1952 and 1964, resulted in unofficial transfer of minority population. Millions of Hindus finding their lives and properties insecure in the newly formed East Pakistan started migrating to Indian Border States; West Bengal, Assam and Tripura clandestinely without the required travel documents through using unauthorised routes and the invitation by the early settled migrants. The process of migration which started as 'forced migration' at the time of partition continued uninterrupted for long (Bhagabati 2001: 100-101 & Mahanta 1986: 93).

The partition of the country and subsequent communal disturbances that was orchestrated in the subcontinent in the pre and post partition period caused huge influx of minority population from either side (Dasgupta 2001: 98-100 & Swain 1996: 84-85). The mass migration of East Bengalis got further consolidated due to outbreak of the communal violence in Noakhali (Roy 2001: 26). The division of the country on religious ground and newly demarcated border on paper affected huge number of population. During the partition in 1947, 15 million people both Hindus and Muslims crossed the newly defined

borders – termed as greatest mass migration ever recorded in the world. In West Bengal alone an estimated 3 million refugees entered by 1960. While the movement of Muslims from India to Pakistan gradually came to a halt, the migration of minority Hindus from East Pakistan to India continued in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s (Bose 2000: 4-5 & Weiner 1993: 1737-38).

Map. 3.II



Communal violence during the period of February-March 1950 also created panic for which a large number of migrants also went back. The Nehru-Liaquat pact which was signed in 1950 provided the resettlement of this displaced people. Most of the Muslims settlers who left Pakistan due to outbreak of communal disturbances in East Bengal and Assam again came back to their ancestral home in the same year. The free movement between the then East Pakistan as provided by the Nehru-Liaquat pact subsequently resulted in fresh influx of a large number of migrants in Assam (Sarin 1980: 21). The

post partition migration of East Bengalis into India was basically caused by the communal conflict. The flames of riots that occurred during partition in Noakhali spread across the other region causing widespread displacement of population. The anti-Hindu riot in December 1949, occurred in Khulna and Barisal, and the peak of the influx came in 1950. Later the unrest in East Pakistan in mid – 1950's over the national language issue and the adoption of Islamic constitution led to the flight of Hindus to India (Rao 1967: 4).

Discriminations against the religious minorities by the rulers of Pakistan after partition also resulted in a mass exodus of minorities especially, Hindus from East Pakistan to Assam. There are forces in Bangladesh which are constantly working to send the non-Muslims out of the country. The religious fanatics, the Islamic fundamentalists are pursuing this mission in an organised way with the help of the unconscious common people. As a tactic they prefer direct communal attack to create a threatening situation for the minorities and as a result people continued to migrate to the Indian Border States. From the 19th century onwards, the dynamics of these population movements changed and became complex. The genesis of migrants from Bangladesh in Assam consists of long settled migrants, refugees and economic migrants that occurred since British invasion. Prior to 1947, the experience of migrants was intra-state rather international. On numerous occasions, geographical contiguity proved to be an impetus for administrative unification of diverse ethnic linguistic and religious communities. This further facilitated the exchange of populations on intra-regional or intra-provincial level. Such movements were essentially motivated by economic reasons (Bose 2000: 50).

Till about the end of 1956 migration from East Pakistan had continued at an unrestricted scale. A little over four million displaced persons, who constituted about one-third of the total population of the Hindus in East Pakistan, had migrated to India (MOR 1958-59: 1). According to the Annual Report, Ministry of Employment, Labour and Rehabilitation, 1974, "During the partition and post-partition periods, about 4.74 million displaced persons have come over to India from Pakistan on the western side and the migration from Pakistan on the western side more or less complete by 1949. Meanwhile, the migration from East Pakistan continued and by 31<sup>st</sup> March 1958, an estimated 4.14

million persons who are known as the old migrants migrated to Indian Border States of West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. Over 3.1 million migrants from East Pakistan stayed on West Bengal” (MOELR 1974: 8).

The Annual Report of the Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation (1958: 1), “Over 97 percent of the displaced population was concentrated in the three eastern states; West Bengal, Assam and Tripura.” The Annual Report of the Department of Rehabilitation (ARDR) of the Central Government (1955: 107-110), “7.29 million displaced people came to India from both West and East Pakistan as obtained from the census reports of India, 1951. And by 1965, 8.1 million displaced persons crossed over to India, in which 4.7 million of them came from West Pakistan and 3.4 million from East Pakistan”. It was also noted in a report that from 1950 onwards there was little migration from West Pakistan but inflow from East Pakistan continued in full swing. According to an official report, between 1946 and 1952, 3.1 million refugees arrived in West Bengal. This could be considered as the first wave (Dasgupta 2001: 101).

During the period between 1953 and 1958 – the second phase of mass migration, nearly 0.58 million displaced people arrived in West Bengal. According to ARDR (1955: 101-102), “A total of 3.1 million migrants came seeking for shelter in the states like Assam, Bihar, Orissa and other Northeastern states” (Dasgupta 2001: 101-102). A total of 0.97 million displaced people were living outside the state of West Bengal. The influx showed down considerably after 1958. All those who came between 1958 and 1963, although small in numbers (about 55000), were declared not eligible for relief and rehabilitation benefit as these people came without valid documents. However, the migrants swelled again in 1964, immediately prior to the Indo-Pak war. Almost 0.73 million displaced or new migrants arrived during 1964 - 1971. The central government decided to offer relief and rehabilitation assistance to new migrants who sought admission into relief campus outside West Bengal and were willing to resettle outside the state (Dasgupta 2001: 101-102). The Hazrat Ball shrine theft incident has led massive communal violence in East Pakistan leading to massacre of thousands of Hindus and subsequently caused migration into Indian Border States, like West Bengal and Assam. According to the Indian Commission of Jurists Report (1965: 309-310),



\_\_\_\_\_ “The government of Pakistan, the press, the radio and the prominent members of the cabinet, religious and lay leaders seized upon the Hazrat ball incident to indulge in propaganda of incitement not only against India but Hindus in general, notwithstanding the fact that there were about 9 million non-Muslims in east Pakistan, overwhelming majority of these being Hindus. False and highly exaggerated statements about the happenings in Kashmir were published in banner, headlines and baseless allegations made against the government of India. Mr. Nehru was called ‘the real thief and the real arsonists. The Pakistan government was well aware that similar incitement in past had resulted in large-scale atrocities on non-Muslims, and had occasioned massive migrations to India. The attack on the non-Muslims were pre planned and mass killing, plunder and arson of non Muslim properties, abduction, raping and molestation of women occurred on a large scale. Atrocities like mutilation of women before killing them were numerous. There were numerous instances of forced conversion largely of women and forced marriages even of women who had their husbands alive. Children and babies in arms were mercilessly butchered. Many cases of breaking or burning of temples, of breaking idols and of sacrilegious acts have occurred. Forcible occupation of land and houses belonging to non-Muslims took place all over East Pakistan but on a very large scale in Mymensing district where, in the northern regions, there was a large population of Christians. The value of the land and other properties left behind by the migrants would run into billions as all the migrants left their homes with little or nothing. Some of them entered India with hardly any clothing. On February 12, 1964, the government of East Pakistan promulgated an ordinance which by section 4 froze the rights in immovable properties and imposed other restrictions on transfer.”

The report also views, “The total numbers of refugees who have arrived in 1964 in India is about 870000 but of these 48000 are Christians and 21000 are Buddhists. This brings the number of refugees from East Pakistan area from 1946 to 1964 to about 5.5 million. The population of non-Muslim in East Pakistan at the time of partition was about 13 million. Only about 8.5 million are left. The reasons for the earlier migrations are similar to those of the 1964 migrations, viz. atrocities and total lack of security induced by reckless propaganda of hatred against minorities” (Indian Commission of Jurists 1965: 312). According to the Annual Report, (MOELR 1973: 8-9), “From 1964 to 1969, 0.85 million persons and thereafter, from 1 January 1970 to 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1971, another 0.25 million persons migrated from East Pakistan, whom the government of India termed as new migrants”.

Meanwhile, the Annual Report of the Ministry of Employment, Labour and Rehabilitation (1969: 2), “By the year 1968, an average of 31 persons had been entering

daily into India from East Pakistan and this rate of influx has been almost steady from May 1968. About 50 percent of the total number of persons, who entered India during that year, migrated to Assam.”

**Table 3.IV**  
**Refugee Influx in West Bengal and other states,**  
**1946-1963, (number of migrants in lakhs)**

Year	In West Bengal	Other States	Total
1946-1952	25.18	5.73	30.91
1953	0.16	0.15	0.31
1954	1.04	0.17	1.21
1955	2.12	0.29	2.41
1956	2.47	3.34	5.81
1957	0.04	0.02	0.06
1958	0.05	0.00	0.05
1959	0.05	0.01	0.06
1960	0.09	0.01	0.10
1961	0.10	0.01	0.11
1962	0.13	0.01	0.14
1963	0.14	0.02	0.16

Source: Abhijit Dasgupta (2001), “The Politics of Agitation and Confession” in S. K. Roy, *Refugees and Human Rights*, New Delhi: Rawat Publication: 101- 103

However, compared to the year of 1967, when about 67 persons were entering India daily, the influx from East Pakistan during 1968 has shown a downward trend in all the three border states, viz., West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. The reasons behind such migration according to the report are mostly the communal disturbances. The reports claimed the following reasons for migration from East Pakistan to India: –

- The member of the minority communities are being driven out from the border areas of Pakistan.
- Feeling of insecurity owing to interference with their religious rites and pattern of education, forcible lifting of crops from fields by members of the majority community in an organised way and attempts to dispossess the Hindu land-owners forcibly.
- Difficult economic situation in East Pakistan and the economic boycott by the majority community.
- Molestation, kidnapping etc. women belonging to minority communities.

- Inability to secure redress of grievances against the members of the majority community from local officers or courts.
- Apprehensions arising from depleted numbers owing to the migration of their relatives and neighbours earlier (MOELR 1969: 2-3).

The Table 3.V shows that new influx of migrants from East Pakistan to India since the 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1964 upto 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1971. The migration of displaced people from the erstwhile East Pakistan continued in waves from time to time up to the 25<sup>th</sup> march, 1971. About 1.11 million persons, who migrated between 1-1-1964 and 25-3-1971, are known as new migrants (MOELR 1981-82: 9). From 1964 to 1969, 0.85 million persons and thereafter, from 1-1-1970 to 25<sup>th</sup> march, 1971, another 0.25 million persons migrated from East Pakistan (MOELR 1974: 8).

**Table 3.V**  
**Migration from former East Pakistan**  
**from 1-1-64 to 25-3-1971**

Year	West Bengal	Assam	Tripura	Total
1964	419321	173782	100039	693142
1965	81491	11062	15353	107906
1966	4057	1854	1654	7565
1967	5067	7161	12299	24527
1968	3673	4821	3120	11614
1969	3713	2765	3290	9768
1970	232675	11905	6580	251160
1971	6622	968	686	8276
Total	756619	214318	143021	1113958

Sources: Government of India, *Annual Report*, Ministry of Employment, Labour and Rehabilitation, 1974: 65

Table 3.VI reveals the number of migrants who migrated with migration certificates etc. and of migrants who migrated without travel documents. During the period of 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1964 and 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1969, a total number of 322234 people migrated into West Bengal, Assam and Tripura with valid migration certificate. On the other hand a total number of 531400 people migrated to the three states without valid documentary evidences, in which West Bengal Shares the highest number of 210228, followed by Assam 185911 and Tripura by 135261. Apart from the above mentioned incidence of migration of East Bengalis into Assam, the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation war created a

huge population movement. The Bangladesh liberation war triggered huge chunk of population into Indian Border States. There was a lull on refugee movement after the birth of Bangladesh. Millions of non-Muslims as well as Muslims came to India to get rid of the brutality of the Pakistani military (Weiner 1993: 1740-41).

**Table 3.VI**  
**Migration from Former East Pakistan**  
**from 1-1-64 to 31-12-1969**

Name of States	With Migration Certificate	With Passports (surrendered)	Without Travel documents	Total
West Bengal	306206	888	210228	517322
Assam	15534	0	185911	201445
Tripura	494	0	135261	135755
Total	322234	888	531400	854522

Sources: Annual Report, Ministry of Employment, Labour and Rehabilitation, 1968-69-70, Government of India: 109 & 120

### 3.IV.i \_\_\_ Decline of Hindus

Ever since partition of India, the minorities living in East Pakistan was in constant fear of their life and security due to communal violence and state repression and it continued even after the creation of Bangladesh. The 1972 constitution based on four pillars Democracy, Nationalism, Secularism and Socialism strengthened the confidence of the minorities, however it was short lived as the communal politics was very much existent even before the assassination of Sheik Mujibur Rehman. This is evident when the Bangladesh government decided to continue with the VPA. According to Mukherji (1996), "The VPA of the early years of Pakistan, which was reinforced in the aftermath of the India-Pakistan war of 1965 through the promulgation of Enemy Property (custody and registration) order of 1965 was not withdrawn after the creation of Bangladesh. It was given a new lease of life through the passage of Bangladesh Vesting of Property and Assets order, 1972 (order 29 of 1972). The provisions of the order and its malafide implementation seriously disadvantaged the minority communities, particularly Hindus and Christians. They increasingly found themselves in an insecure situation. This resulted in clandestine migration of minorities to India" (Ghosh 2004: 21-22).

The actual effect of all the above mentioned factors is difficult to quantify due to lack of relevant and reliable information during 1964-2001 period (Barkat 2008: 66). A large scale migration of both Hindus and the Muslims from East Pakistan was noticed since 1941. During 1941-1961, the percentage of minority communities primarily the Hindus started declining due to fear of communal violence and the partition (Ghosh 1989: 206). Meanwhile, it is estimated that during 1946-1949, an estimated 1100000 Hindu refugee entered West Bengal, Assam, and Tripura (Samaddar 1999a: 93-94). But during 1941-1951 period, the Hindu population decreased by 21.3 percent per the census in 1951 (Analytical Report of Population Census, Bangladesh 1991: 10-12).

**Table 3. VII**  
**Percentage Distribution of Population by Religious communities in Bangladesh (1901-2001)**

Year	Muslims	Hindus	Buddhist	Christians	Others
1901	66.1	33	...	.....	0.9
1911	67.2	31.5	...		1.3
1921	68.1	30.6	...		1.3
1931	69.5	29.4	...	0.2	1.0
1941	70.3	28	...	0.1	1.6
1951	76.9	22	0.7	0.3	0.1
1961	80.4	18.5	0.7	0.3	0.1
1971	85.4	13.5	0.6	0.3	0.2
1981	86.7	12.1	0.6	0.3	0.3
1991	88.3	10.5	0.6	0.3	0.3
2001	89.58	9.34	0.6	0.3	0.15

Sources: Government of Bangladesh, *Analytical Report of Population Census 1991*, Vol. 1, Dhaka, May 1994, p.103 and data collected from the Census of Bangladesh, 2001.

Table 3.VII, gives an empirical evidence of the decline of minorities-especially Hindus in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, in 1941, 28.3% of the total population constituted religious minorities (Hindus, Christians and others) and 70.3% were Muslims. In 1951, 22% of the total population was enumerated as Hindus and another 1.1% as other non-Muslim population. In 1991, the percentage share of the minorities declined to 10.5 and by 2001 it came down to 9.34. More than 94 million were Muslims and little more than 12 million were the Hindus. To put it in another way, in 50 years, between 1941 and 2001, the Muslim population almost increased by 219.5 % as against only 4.5% increase of Hindu population. Had the normal growth rate been maintained the Hindu population would have been about 30 million and not 12.5 million as stood in 1991. Going by this method

of calculation nearly 18 million Hindus have left Bangladesh over this period. Stating this missing population Salam Azad has estimated that between 1974 and 1981, 1.22 million, and between 1981 and 1991 another 1.73 million people have left Bangladesh. He further estimated that on an average 475 Hindus are leaving Bangladesh everyday and this would put the yearly figure 173375, and the post 1971 number to 5.2 million (Roy 2002: 83-101).

**Table 3. VIII**  
**Numerical Distribution and Percentage and Variation**  
**of Population by Major Religious Communities 1901-2001 in Bangladesh**

Census Year	Total Population	Number of Muslims	Percentage variation	Number of Hindus	Percentage variation
1901	28927	19113	NA	9545	NA
1911	31555	21202	10.9	9952	4.3
1921	33254	22646	6.8	10166	2.2
1931	35604	24731	9.2	10453	2.8
1941	41999	29509	19.3	11747	12.4
1951	41933	32227	9.2	9239	-21.3
1961	50840	40890	26.9	9380	1.5
1974	71478	61039	49.3	9673	3.1
1981	87120	75487	23.7	10570	9.3
1991	106315	93881	24.4	11179	5.8
2001	130522	117078	24.7	12008	7.42

Sources: Government of Bangladesh, *Analytical Report of Population Census 1991*, Vol. 1, Dhaka, May 1994: 100-101 and computed from Census of Bangladesh, 2001.

The Table 3.VIII also shows the decennial variations of Hindu population in Bangladesh. It has shown slow trend of increase over the census years 1901 to 1941 and 1961 to 1991. According to the Census of Bangladesh, this may be due to the prevalence of relatively lower fertility among the Hindu population. Between 1961 and 2001, the mortality rates were similar for all religious communities, i.e., the minority rates are secular (religious-neutral). During the same period, the fertility rate among the Hindu population was 13 percent less than the fertility rates among the Muslim population (Barkat, et. al 2008: 67). According to the 2001 census, the total size of the Hindu population in Bangladesh was 11.4 million. The 1961 population share of the Hindu population (18.4%), the absolute size of the Hindu population in 2001 would have been 22.8 million instead of 11.4 million. As reported in the census i.e. the actual current (2001) size is half (50%) of the

expected size. Mass out – migration of Hindu population (mostly India) during the mid 1960’s and onward is a really beyond doubt (Barkat 2008: 66).

**Table 3. IX**  
**Percentage of Hindu Population in Each Division of Bangladesh**

Division	1974	1981	1991
Chittagong	12.14	11.64	10.55
Dhaka	11.81	9.74	8.13
Khulna	18.03	16.46	13.80
Rajshahi	12.93	11.54	10.49
Bangladesh	13.53	12.13	10.51

Source: Census of Bangladesh (1994), *Bangladesh Population Census 1991*, Vol. 1, Analytical Report

Large scale migration from the Khulna and Rajshahi division into India occurred mainly due to the construction of Farakka barrage in India on the Ganga near the India-Bangladesh border. Swain (1996: 82-86) viewed, “The construction of the Farakka barrage led to the impoverishment of the people of Khulna and Rajshahi. Khulna was traditionally a high growth division but during the last two decades it has registered fall which is claimed to be on account of the Farakka dam’s negative impact on agriculture which led to large-scale migration” (Ghosh 2004: 37). Swain (1996: 84-86) views that due to construction of Farakka dam in India also affected the Hindus in Khulna division of Bangladesh. The Hindu population in four divisions of Bangladesh (see Table 3. IX) declined without much regional variation, which also annuls the possibility of massive Hindu migration from Khulna to India as the reason of this descending population growth. According to 1991 Bangladeshi census, the percentage of Hindu population in Chittagong is 10.55, in Khulna 13.80, in Rajshahi 10.49 and only 8.13 in Dhaka division. In fact, Khulna division has a higher share of Hindu population than the national average 10.51 percent.

Swain after analyzing the statistics over the rates of fertility, mortality and life expectancy in the four divisions also fails to explain the relative drop in the population growth in the Khulna division. According to him (1996: 85-86), “According to the BBS, patterns, levels and Trends in fertility in Bangladesh: evidence from demographic sample survey, 1982, the CBR in 1982 per thousand population in Chittagong was 35.08, in Dhaka 34.56, in Khulna 33.72 and in Rajshahi 33. It is true that the Khulna division is

slightly behind other in the CBR rate but at the same time it has lower mortality rate. According to BBS, *Patterns, Levels and Trends in Mortality and Regional life Tables for Bangladesh: Evidence from Sample Vital Registration System 1981-1988*, the CDR in 1987 per thousand populations in Chittagong was 11.9, in Dhaka 11.0, in Khulna 10.0 and in Rajshahi 11.9. The same study also shows high life expectancy in Khulna division in comparison to others in Bangladesh.”

**Table 3. X'**  
**Fertility (CBR) and Mortality (CDR) in Four Divisions of Bangladesh**

Division	Fertility CBR		Mortality CDR	
	1982	1987	1987	1988
Chittagong	35.08	11.9	11.9	12.4
Dhaka	34.56	11.0	11.0	11.0
Khulna	33.72	10.0	10.0	9.7
Rajshahi	33.89	11.9	11.9	11.4

Sources: BBS (1982), *Patterns, Levels and Trends in Fertility in Bangladesh: Evidence from Demographic Sample Survey*, Government of Bangladesh: Dhaka & BBS (1990), *Patterns, Levels and Trends in Mortality and Regional Life Tables for Bangladesh: Evidence from Sample Vital Registration System 1981-1988*, Government of Bangladesh: Dhaka (Swain 1996: 84-88).

Swain establishes migration from Khulna division to India by analysing the fall in the population growth rate of the Khulna region of Bangladesh coinciding with an abnormal population growth in some adjacent areas in India. Migration into India was taking place even prior to the formation of Bangladesh, but almost all the migrants were Hindus who were forced to leave their homes due to perceived religious persecution in Islamic East Pakistan. However, from the late 1970's the magnitude of illegal migration has assumed more serious dimensions. The number of illegal migrants pushed back to Bangladesh by the Indian border police in 1970 was 1140, while in 1978, the figure almost doubled to 2180 and the number increased again to 4170 in 1979 (Swain 1996: 89-90).

According to population census, the average annual growth rates of the Muslim population was 3.13 percent for 1961-1974, 3.08 percent for 1974-1981, 2.20 percent for 1981-1991, and 1.7 percent for 1991-2001 periods. Assuming a 13 percent lower fertility rates for the Hindus compared to the Muslims, the average annual growth rates of Hindu population in 'no out migration' situation would have been 2.72 percent during 1964-



1971, 2.68 percent during 1971-1981, 1.92 percent during 1981-1991, and 1.48 percent during 1991-2001 (Barkat et. al. 2000 & 2008: 66).

By extrapolating the above rates, the Hindu population in 1971 would have been 11.4 million instead of 9.6 million as reported in the official documents. The Hindu population would have been 14.3 million in 1981 instead of 10.6 million, 16.5 million in 1991 instead of 11.2 million, and 19.5 million in 2001 instead of 11.4 million. Therefore, there were some 1.8 million missing Hindu population during 1964-1971, 1.9 million missing Hindu population during 1971-1981, 1.6 million missing Hindu population during 1981-1991, and 2.8 million missing Hindu population during 1991-2001. Thus the estimated total missing Hindu population was 8.1 million during 1964-2001, i.e. 218919 Hindus missing each year (Barkat et. al. 2008: 46&67).

Barkat (2008: 67) viewed, "If out migration of the Hindu population is caused mainly by disharmony resulting from the Enemy/VPA, the approximate size of the missing Hindu population would be 600 persons per day during 1964-2001. The approximate size of the missing Hindu population was as high as 705 persons per day during 1964 -1971, as against 521 persons per day during 1971-1981, decreasing to 438 persons per day during 1981-1991, and rising to 767 persons per day during 1991-2001. If the above estimates are close to reality then the inference emerges that the enemy/vested property acts acted as an effective mechanism for the extermination of the Hindu minority, and thereby inhabited the process of social-capital formation in the country."

Barakat et. al. (1996: 8-10) in another estimate about missing Hindu population viewed, "It was calculated that from 1964 each day on an average 538 Hindus have 'vanished'. The basis of calculation has been the uniformity of death rate for all religious communities in Bangladesh, the birth rate among the Hindus which has been 13 percent less than that of the Muslims, and the difference between the net out-migration figures coupled with total Hindu population and the figures of the census. Thus, had there been no outmigration, the Hindu population in Bangladesh would have been 16500000 instead of the census figure of 11200000 in 1991." The sample survey on the basis of which the report was prepared, showed that out of the 161 dispossessed, 13 percent were near

landless, whereas 40 percent became landless through dispossession; and 15 percent of the surveyed persons were rich before dispossession but the figure came down to 6 percent after them. The report traced four ways of dispossession, and consequent migration: forced occupation, leasing-out by the government of the said property to third party, nominal occupation but legal alienation and the extreme feeling of insecurity regarding loss of property (Barkat et. al. 1996: 8-11). The same report calculated that the vanishing rate has not been uniform over periods; in 1964-1971 it averaged 703 per day, between 1971 and 1981, it was 537, and in 1981-1991 the figure stood at 439 (Samadar 1999a: 93-94).

The out-migration of Hindus from East Bengal and Bangladesh occurred throughout 1961-91 period. If out-migration had not occurred, there would have been 16.5 million Hindus in Bangladesh in 1991. According to calculations, from 1964 to 1991 a total of 5.3 million Hindus that is on average 200000 per year have gone missing. According to the census report of Hindu population has declined from 28.3% in 1941 to 12.6% in 1991 (Ghosh 1989: 81-102). The extent of the missing Hindu population is estimated around 1220000 during 1974-81 and about 1730000 during the inter-census period of 1981-91. On the basis of this it has been calculated that about 475 Hindus disappeared every day from the soil of Bangladesh between 1974 and 1996" (Ghosh 2004: 21-22).

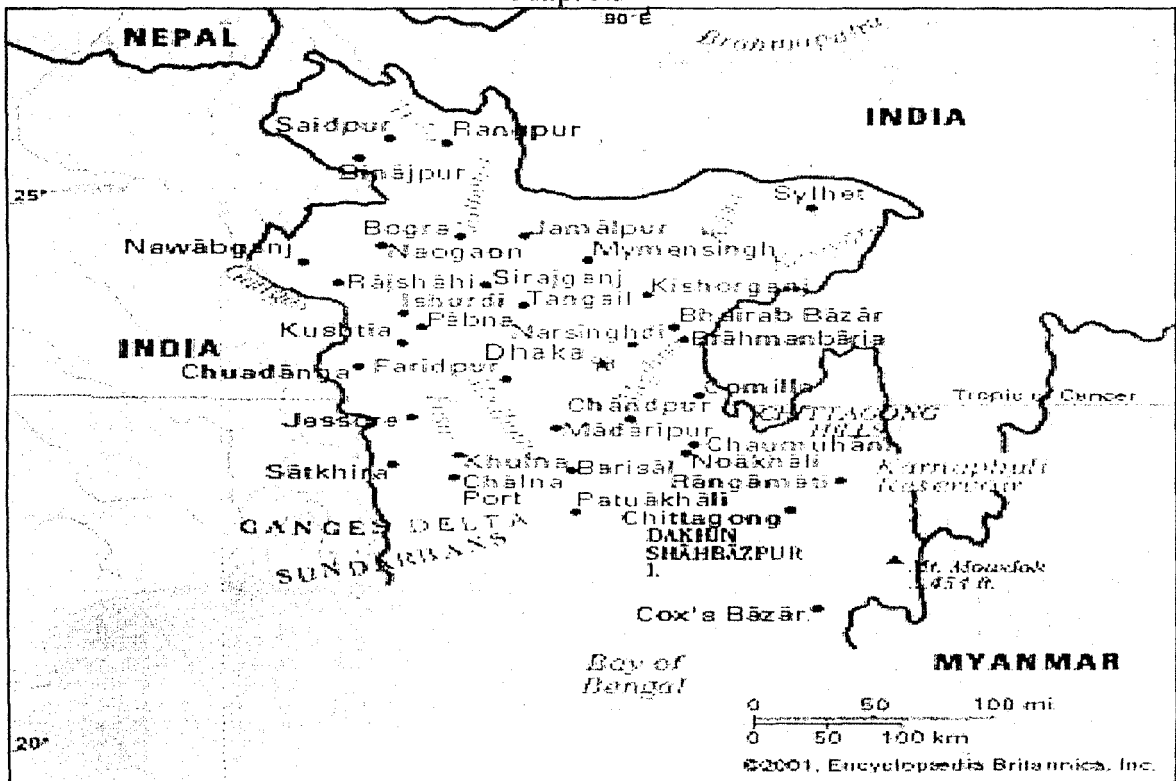
### **3. IV.ii \_\_\_ Post Liberation Migration**

A massive exodus of about 10 million took place at during the Bangladesh liberation war. The influx broke all previous records. Millions of Bengalis had to cross the border within a span of six to ten months. During the war, a total of 1 million forced migrants took shelter in Assam's border district. While thē bulk of them returned to their homes following the liberation of Bangladesh, about 100000 of them are believed to have stayed back in Assam. The Assam police detected a total of 99583 during the period from 1972 to 1978. The number of undetected migrants is feared to be many times more (De 2005: 56-59). Though, a large number of 1971 refugees had gone back to Bangladesh, a considerable section among them took permanent shelter in West Bengal also. It is difficult to get an idea as to how many stayed back. As per 1981 census data, between

1971 and 1981, the refugee population had increased by about 1.44 million (Dasgupta 2001: 103-06). Even after the birth of Bangladesh, migration of Hindu population continued due to the state policies and other communal factors. The process of Islamisation, growing communal tensions etc. generated fear psychosis among the minorities that forced Hindus to migrate. And that is evident clearly from the Bangladesh census, where a decline of minority population continued (Roy 2002: 83-101).

The influx of the Hindus in post-1971 period can be seen in the perspective of the earlier phase. From 1946 to 1949, an estimated 1100000 Hindu migrants entered West Bengal, Assam, and Tripura. It is estimated that about 5,20,0000 Hindus entered India during 1964-1970. Though the majority of the 10 million refugees of 1971, of whom 85% were Hindus, returned in 1972, the process of Islamisation during the Zia and Ershad regimes in Bangladesh renewed the flow of minorities. The violence which gripped Bangladesh in the wake of the demolition of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya in December 1992 and large scale destruction of places of worship and property again forced many Hindus to seek sanctuary in India (Sammadar 1999b: 5-7).

Map. 3.3



### **3. V \_\_\_ Migration of Nepalis into Assam**

The presence of unemployment, existence of large scale poverty, slow economic growth and political instability resulted in migration of Nepali people internally and externally. The popular destination of Nepalis has been India and occurring since the recruitment of Gorkha's in the British army (Thapa 1989: 62-63). The country's landlocked geographical location, backward technological development and long run civil war has totally bankrupted the economy for which people are compelled to migrate in search of better opportunities. The unemployment and under employment rate in Nepal approaches half of the working age population for which Nepali citizens has to move either to neighbouring country or beyond that. The presence of large scale poverty in Nepal also compels people to migrate in search of opportunities (MOF 2007b: 1-5). The migration of Nepalis into Assam and the Northeastern region of India occurred highly due to its historical linkages, British policy of recruitment of Gorkha, marriage linkages, political instability, cultural and kinship, existence of large-scale poverty and unemployment. Apart from that colonial patronage, abundant lands for agriculture activities, shortage of labourers during the time colonial rule also contributed for migration (Nath 2005a: 57-60).

Moreover, migration of Nepalis into India has an authentic record since the East India Company rise to power. The Anglo Nepalis Peace Treaty of 1816 which was modified latter empowered the British Government to raise three regiments of Nepalis in the northern hills of India. The steady recruitment of soldiers from Nepal helped Nepalis to settle down in this region. Moreover construction of Darjeeling Himalayan Railways in the seventies of the last century worked as a pull factor for Nepali migration to India. Apart from the historical ties and colonial policies, the existence of open border between India and Nepal also triggered large scale migration. The presence of better economic opportunities in India, people from Nepal have been migrating to India since nineteenth century. The government of India also recruits Gorkha in Indian army, making the migration of Nepalis easier and still in greater in number (Parmanand 1986: 1005-10). The 1950 Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship also encouraged many more Nepali populations to migrate into India. The Treaty ensures equal rights and privileges for the

Nepali population and the existing open borders further triggered migration. The major concentrations of Nepali population in India are found in the entire Northeastern states and also in Sikkim and West Bengal (Hutt 1997: 103-105 & Sinha 1990: 230-233).

### 3. VI \_\_\_ Early History of Migration

Nepal has been on the cultural frontiers of India and China and the very name of Nepal is debatable. The word Nepal owes its origin to words 'Ne' and 'Pal'. Ne was a saint who lived at the junction of the two rivers Bagmati and Kesut and Pal means to cherish. So, Nepal signifies "cherished Land of Ne" meaning there by the country looked after by the ascetic Ne (Patterson 1963: 126 & Pemble 1971: 1).

The earliest inhabitants of the Nepal are Kiratas; a community belonging to Assam have migrated to Nepal. The ethnic groups such as Bodos, Kacharis, Rabhas and Missings in Assam were belonging to the Kiratas and the extensions of these ethnic groups are found in Nepal. These are Limbu, Tamang, Lepcha, Magar, Gurung and Sherpa etc. Again the Kiratas have had ruling dynasty in Nepal and the ancient epic like Mahabharata, Vajasenaya Samhita and Atharvaveda mentions the existence of Kiratas living along the Himalayan border (Chatterji 1951: 9-10 Subba 2000: 22-25).

The Newars, a literate and cultural race, came to Nepal either from India or Tibet several centuries before the Christian era. Their industry, artistry, sculpture, architecture, language and urbanity were identified as uniquely Nepali. Another wave of migration of Licchavi Hindu Rajputs, who introduced classical Hindu institution or varna said to have migrated from India. Newars tried to assimilate the new role among themselves and for this reason they are known as *Buddhamargis* (worshippers of Buddha) and *Shivamargis* (worshippers of the Hindu deity Shiva). Thus Hinduism and Buddhism co-exist in Nepal. It is believed that the Kiratas were pushed to the Northeastern part of the country, where their descendants such as Rais, Magars, Limbus and other tribes are found even today (Sinha 1990: 220 & Sinha 2003: 35).

There are three major ethnic groups/stocks in Nepal. First, the Kiratas, claimed to be the earliest inhabitants of Nepal are divided into number of endogamous tribes such as Rai,

Magar, Limbu, Lepcha, Tamang etc. Secondly, the Newars, an urban trading and commercial stock mainly in the Kathmandu valley and eastern Nepal are also divided into a number of castes among themselves. And thirdly, the Tagadharis, who are with their concept of purity and pollution, are a Nepali counterpart of the Indian Hindus. Though they are found all over Nepal, they are mainly concentrated in the western and central regions and the Kathmandu valley (Chatterji 1951: 10 & Sinha 2003: 34-35).

Assam has historical connection with Nepal which is century old. Some historians have revealed that Assam had matrimonial alliances with Nepal. The king of Nepal, Jayadeva, married to Rajyamati, the daughter of Harsha Deva of the Salastambha dynasty, who ruled from 730 A.D to about 750 A.D. Historian Baruah Bahadur revealed that in the Nepali inscription it is stated that Jayadeva, "wedded as if she were a fortune. Rajyamati possessed of virtues befitting her race, the noble descendents of Bhagadatta's royal line and daughter of Sri Harsha Deva, lord of Gauda, Odra, Kalinga, Koshala and other lands...." The extent of his empire was spread over nearly half of the northern India. It started from Sadia in the east to Ayodhya in the west, from Himalaya on the north as far as the Bay of Bengal and Ganjam to the south (Bahadur 1966: 111-113).

It has been an established fact that Nepal had strong linkages with Assam from ancient times and the presence of Nepalis in the Northeastern region has a long history and the people have contributed for its unification, development and reconstruction. It is claimed that the ancient Pragjyotish state was extended from Sunkosi (Subansiri) in the east to Kushma (kosi) in the west. Similarly, the ancient kingdom of Kamrup extends up to eastern Nepal. Much later in the second decade of the sixteen century the Coch king, Viswa Singh, married Ratna Kanti Devi, a daughter of the Malla king of Kantipur (Kathmandu). It is claimed that the Coch king brought from Nepal to his kingdom a number of Brahmin priests, woodwork artisans, stone and metal sculptors and the pagoda-style temples. Similarly, Nildhwaj and Narnarain, the two Kamrup kings, were married in Nepal. Apart from their consorts they brought to their kingdom Brahmin priests, Chettri warriors, farmers, herdsman and artisans from Nepal and granted them rent free land (Sinha 2003: 36-37).

### 3. VI.i \_\_\_ Recruitment of Gorkhas and Migration

Apart from the historical linkages with Nepal, the real migration of Nepalis into Assam occurred started in early nineteenth century. The Nepali speaking settled all over the Northeastern states of India and the process of migration of Nepalis into Northeast India, Darjeeling, and Southern Bhutan began about two centuries ago with the recruitment of Gorkha soldiers into the British Indian Army after the treaty of Sagauli (1816). The history of recruitment of the Nepalis hill people as mercenaries in the British army is associated with the Anglo-Nepal War of 1814 when East India Company, for the first time, had to engage in the mountain warfare with the Gorkhalis. However, the British eventually succeeded in defeating the Gorkhalis. After the fall of Malaun fort under Kazi Amar Singh Thapa to British, Major General David Ochterlony compelled Amar Singh Thapa to enter into an agreement on 15 May 1815 where the British secured the right to recruit Nepali people into the British army (Kansakar 1982: 1).

The Sikh King Ranjit Singh also tried to recruit Gorkhalis in the Khalsa (Sikh) army. The large scale recruitment of Nepalis in the Sikh army occurred as a result of a special treaty concluded between Nepal government and Khalsa (Sikh) government in 1839 regarding the recruitment of Nepalis hill people in Sikh army. The Nepali mercenaries went to Lahore to join Ranjit Singh's army and since them the Nepali mercenaries serving in foreign armies are called "*Lahure*" (one who goes to Lahore). Besides the British and the Sikh, Shah Shuja's army also had Gorkha battalions, and curiously enough in a much later period when there was trouble at Khelat in Baluchistan, it was found that the Khan of Khelat's bodyguard consisted of Gorkhas (Kansakar 1982: 2-3).

After the Anglo-Nepal War, the British recognized Gorkhas as the great fighting force/people. However, recruitment of Nepalis in the British army was very difficult, as because the Nepal government was principally against the recruitment of its people in the foreign army as it was never willing to allow its men to serve the British. Kansakar in a discussion revealed that the Nepali government restricted the recruitment of Nepalis in the Gorkha regiment. According to him, 'The first Rana Prime Minister, Jung Bahadur, put restrictions on such recruitment policies and this was done apprehending the British

invasion in Nepal. The Nepal government not only stopped out migration of Nepalis into India but also the in-migration into India. The government even put restrictions on traditional practice of weekly or daily Bazaar system in the border areas which existed during that period. However, the free movement of population between India and Nepal also started during the time of Sepoy Mutiny when Jung Bahadur with the help 3000 Gorkha soldiers assisted the East India Company in Awadh to quell the mutiny. After the assassination of Jung Bahadur, Veer Samsher came to power and then he totally put restrictions on recruitment of Gorkhas into the British army, since the clandestine recruitment of Gorkhas in the British army came to an end. There were two areas for recruitment of the Gorkha soldiers, one was Ghum and other was Gorakhpur. When there were restrictions on movement of people and recruitment of Gorkha soldiers.”<sup>1</sup>

The British also carried out recruitment secretly by sending recruiting agents into Nepal from Gorakhpur, Almora and Darjeeling, often at fairs in the border towns and villages to obtain men. Gorkhas of the Indian army on leave in Nepal were also encouraged to smuggle out recruits from Nepal and were rewarded by the British. The British service was popular with the Gorkhas for its higher pay and other amenities as well as for the scope it offered for active service not available in Nepalis army. The government of Nepal disliked the clandestine operations, some of the serving Gorkha when return home on their leave was even put to death and property was seized (Kansakar 1982: 3-4)

Again sensing such harassment, the British encouraged migration of Gorkhas along with their families and established Gorkha settlements in the hilly areas. The largest of these colonies was in the Kangra valley, where it spread from the early settlements of Dharmashala (Bhagsu) and Bakloh. Others were at Darjeeling, Dehradun and Shillong. There are also considerable colonies scattered over Burma and Assam, those in the former started in the days when Gorkhas were enlisted into the old Burma Military Police, and those in the latter among the pensioners of Assam Rifles. When the above mentioned measures failed to acquire sufficient number of recruits, the British government tried to solve the problem at government level. However, Nepal government

---

<sup>1</sup> In a discussion with Vidya Bir Singh Kansakar, Department of Geography, Tribhuvan University 30/04/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.



refused to grant such permission. However, during the Sepoy Mutiny period in 1857, Prime Minister Jung Bahadur led 12,000 Nepalis troops to help to quell the mutiny. The British government recognizing this assistance conducted a Treaty on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1860 restored to Nepal the tract of territory on the Oudh frontier (Far Western Tarai) which had been ceded to the British government in 1816. The issue of recruitment during the period of Prime Minister Ranodip Singh was also complicated. People were warned against taking British service of severe punishment. It was only during the period of Prime Minister Bir Shamsher that the Nepalis government freely allowed enlistment of Nepalis. Bir Shamsher who came to power after the assassination of Prime Minister Ranodip Singh strongly needed the support of the British government to sustain. During 1885 and 1888, encouraging Nepalis to enlist 'in the British army', established the right of the British to recruit Gorkhas. In 1902 two Gorkha recruiting centers were finally established in Gorakhpur and Ghoom, the former for recruiting the Gurungs - Magars and the latter for the Limbus - Rais (Kansakar 1997).

During the First World War, Nepal helped to raise large numbers of its people for recruitment. The numbers of men taken out of the country had exceeded 200,000 and of these 55,000 were enlisted in the regular Gorkha battalions. Nepal had suffered some 20,000 casualties. Large number of Gorkhas having been to India stayed back to work either as watchman or even police under government or in many other positions available to them. Of the 10932 Gorkhas discharged after the War, only 3838 returned home in 1919. The involvement of the Gorkhas in the Second World War was even at a grander scale. The 20 Battalions were expended to form a total of 51 Battalions comprising 44 Infantry and Parachute Battalions, 6 Training Battalions and one Garrison Battalion. During the Second World War the casualties of the Gorkhas were 24000 men. During the World War - II, recruitment for the army service had to be carried out in extensive areas of Nepal. At the end of the War, the Indian government increased the annual "present" of Rs.1000000 which had been given to Nepal in perpetuity since 1919 was increased to Rs.2000000. With the aim of encouraging Gorkhas leaving the army to return to their home in the hills, final payments were made at the recruiting depots, or close to the border of Nepal. Nevertheless, large number of Gorkhas, released in 1946-

47, made only short visits to their homes before going back to India for civil employment in Indian cities. The recruitment of Nepalis in the Indian Army is not confined to the Gorkha Rifles alone. Their number is said to be higher in the Assam Rifles than in the Gorkha Rifles. There are large numbers of Nepalis recruited in Jammu and Kashmir Rifles, Garhwal Regiment, Kumaon Regiment, Naga Regiment, Border Security Force, Central Reserve Police, Bihar Military Police and so on. (Kansakar 1982: 8)

Kansakar in a discussion also agreed to the view that the migration of Nepalis into Assam and other parts of India through the recruitment of Gorkhas in the British army. He also revealed that the Nepalis when migrated to Assam and other parts of the Northeastern states largely concentrated in the hilly areas and engaged mainly in the agricultural activities. According to him, "The British encouraged the Nepalis to clear the forest for the purpose of doing agriculture activities in Assam and the presence of open border further accentuated the movement. The British settled many Nepalis into the Northeastern states and Assam. The movement started through the recruitment of Gorkhas into the British army which facilitated migration of Nepalis into other countries also; such as Burma, Malaysia etc. There are also some Nepali people staying in Thailand who neither even possess Thailand or Nepal citizenship. The British adopted a policy to invite Nepali people to India and assured them of employment and land for colonial expansion and economic activities. They started giving lands in the hilly areas, so the large concentration of Nepalis is seen in the areas in upper Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Darjeeling, Dehradun, Shimla, Dharmasala, also in Pakistan's hill areas like Abbottabad, Marri etc. Most of the migrants in the Northeastern areas were attracted by land and it extended beyond Assam, even to Burma. Climatically, this migration of Nepalis was distinct towards the east because of the climatic conditions. Because if you move towards east, you would find more rainy areas and the migrants were most eastwards for the agriculture purposes and they were from the eastern part of Nepal."<sup>2</sup>In a discussion Dixit further commented,

\_\_\_\_\_"Migration from Nepal to India started at the time of Maharaj Ranjit Singh of Punjab even before the British starts recruitment policy of Gorkha

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

soldiers in the British army. Since then the Nepali people started migrating to Lahore in Pakistan. People from the populated mountain region started migrating to India. During that period there was exploitation and coupled with other reasons, population was very large and land was scarce and people were forced to migrate. High population with low fertile land and no sustainable economy existed. People migrated to India basically to earn cash and also for own survival and families. So it started with Lahure going to Muglan (land of Mugal). To go to Lahore and Mughal was a tradition. The other historical reasons compulsory taxation, continuous political turbulence, so this led economic underdevelopment leading to increase unemployment, almost forced them to migrate to India in search of greener pastures. When Nepalis migrated, they migrated in several directions, one is straight going to the adjacent plains, they move eastwards along the mid hills and lower hills, and they were encouraged by the British to work on agricultural land and timber logging purposes, tea gardens and also for opening up lands for cultivation. Another aspect of the hill Nepali society migration is perhaps the ethnicity and linguistics fraternity. The movements of Nepalis towards eastwards were started during the Gorkha recruitment and they also went to Burma. When the soldiers were returning from Burma, some of them came to Nepal, many settled down in Northeastern part India. One is for opening up land and another is the war related transfer of soldiers. People going to Assam end up with Guwalas people from hill.”<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile, Subedi in a discussion commented, “Migration of Nepalis into India is a history and century old event who went there and settled permanently. People mostly from the hilly areas of Nepal went to Assam for agricultural activities during the British period as there were available abundant lands. However, the trend of migration has changed and the Nepalis are moving towards more to the urban centres and cities engaging mostly in informal sector jobs. Depending on the economic status, people are migrating into other countries. If someone’s economic conditions is high then they migrate to European countries, upper middle class people migrate to Korea/Japan/ Hong Kong etc. and middle class people migrates to Gulf and poor people migrates to India. Those who can’t afford to pay more money for transportation and travelling they often migrates to India in search of better opportunities.”<sup>4</sup> The Nepalis turned out to be a strong ally and mercenary force was recruited to the British army in a big way after the treaty. To attract Nepalis, British colonial powers established recruitment centres across the Indian border towns such as in Gorakhpur and Ghoom located on the Indo-Nepal Border

---

<sup>3</sup> In a discussion with Kanak Mani Dixit, Editor, Himal South Asia, Kathmandu, on 1/05/09, during field trip visit to Kathmandu.

<sup>4</sup> In a discussion with Govind Subedi, Central Department of Population Studies, Tribhuvan University, on 27/04/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

of the present states of Bihar and Darjeeling. The Nepali villagers eager to enlist in the security forces started migrating to India (Subba 2003: 54-66 & Nath 2003b: 189-212).

The process of recruitment of Nepalis in the British army has become a common occupation for Nepalis. The high, regular pay and the provision of a pension attracted Nepalis hill people to join the ranks of the British Indian Army, and gave them a prominent socio-economic standing among the hill communities. However, the number of recruitment of Gorkha soldiers in the British and Indian army has drastically come down. In a discussion with Captain J B Gurung and others viewed, "there are two types of recruitment of Gorkhas in the Indian army, one is through the local recruitment and the other is dependent recruitment. Local recruitments means a direct recruitment of soldiers by selecting them on physical fitness ground and the other is dependent recruitment. Those people who have already served in the Indian army - their sons are recruited through this process. The son of an Indian army soldier can directly come and show their fathers identity card and get recruited to the army and their numbers are high as because they are given special considerations. The recruitment of Gorkha soldiers in the British army is still continuing and they have their special recruitment centre in Nepal. The recruitment of Gorkhas in the Indian and British army is decreasing. Earlier it use to be very high, now a days it gone down."<sup>5</sup>

Sher Bahadur Gurung (Retired Subedar Major) in a discussion viewed, "earlier the recruitment of Gorkhas were so high that during the time World War – II, there were shortage of man in the villages to do agricultural activities and the women has to start cultivating due shortage of man. An unknown numbers of Gorkha soldiers were killed during the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war and there is hardly any record about the numbers. When India became independent the British kept some Gorkha regiment with them and the recruiting process is still going on but the numbers again gone down. After independence, British took six to seven battalions along with them. However, the number of recruitment of soldiers in the Indian Gorkha Rifles (GR) and British GR has come down drastically. Earlier the numbers of recruitment was use to be very high and the ratio of Indian –

---

<sup>5</sup> In a discussion with retired Gorkha soldiers of Indian army in their organization office (Nepal Bhutpurv Sainik Sangh, in Pokhara on 1/05/06 and 2/05/06, during Researchers field trip to Nepal

Nepali soldiers use to be in fact, 70: 30. There are some castes such as: Gurungs, Limbus, Rais, Chetri etc. whose entire generation worked in the Gorkha army. Once we retire, we come back and it becomes difficult for our children to get adjusted as they don't find any employment opportunities in Nepal. It is due to the problem of less recruitment in the Gorkha army by the Indian government. Otherwise we could have sent our children in army again as our generations profession was that."<sup>6</sup>

Some retired soldiers of the Gorkha army revealed, "we get pension as per the Indian soldiers, but due to constant/fixed rate of currency exchange (INR 100= NR160).between India and Nepal creating loss to our income. If Dollar/pound rate keeps on changing, why not the Indian Rupees, the Indian currency should also fluctuate accordingly, otherwise we get a fix short of salary. This is different in case with the British Gorkha soldiers. Due to changes of the value of pounds, the British Gorkhas gets more. Apart from that government of India must introduce and initiate one rank-one pension<sup>7</sup> it is not followed in case with the Indian army. Those who retires earlier, they get less. Moreover, the Maoist being anti-Indian also extorting money from the retired Indian Gorkha soldiers in Nepal. The Maoist is demanding for the halt of recruitment of Gorkhas in Indian army, which should not take place. If Nepal can't provide employment opportunities within Nepal due to her underdevelopment economy, the political parties/Maoists shouldn't discourage that. India should take some effective measures to resolve this crisis in future. The ex-soldiers do not have the right to vote in Indian politics, as served in defence and provided security of the country, they should be treated as per with the Indians."<sup>8</sup>

The process recruitment of the Gorkhas by the British and the Indian government is still continuing that resulted in migration of Nepalis in search of employment opportunities to the India. Though the Nepal government tried to stop the recruitment but it didn't favoured the Nepali youths and many villagers, who fled to settle in the Indo-Nepal borders. Thus the process of settlement of Nepalis is seen in Shillong and other

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> One rank one pension means, for e.g. if an army captain retires in 1980 and another retires in 2009, his amount of pension should be the same.

<sup>8</sup> Subedar Shyam Gurung, Captain Brish Gurung, Subedar Major Siva Prasad Gurung and Tik Prasad Gurung in a discussion during field visit to Pokhara (Nepal) on 1/05/06 and 2/05/06

Northeastern states. Further the British also encouraged Gorkha families to migrate, which in turn provided incentives to ex-army personnel to smuggle out people for recruitment. But later it changed and after 1886 Gorkhas joined the army at large numbers. In the post-independence period, the Indian government retained the Gorkha regiments in the Indian army. By the 1980's, there were 100000 Nepali soldiers in the Indian army. Thus, it provided a strong incentive to the Nepali folks to migrate across Indian Border States (Sinha 2003: 42).

Nepalis people continued to join the British Indian Army, moving with their families to the settlements established initially for the Gorkhas in the hilly areas of Northern India. Temporary migration of young males also occurred particularly those from the ethnic hill communities who had the opportunity to find secure and prestigious employment overseas. As a reward of generous assistance extended to British Indian government by Nepal, a large number of ethnic Nepali communities from the hill and mountainous zones were recruited into Gorkha regiments of the British Army. Meanwhile, the expansion of the British regime and its initiative for development opened new opportunities for Nepali migrants, particularly those from upper caste communities who were not qualified for the army. This type of migration was also motivated by the permanent nature of employment in service sectors that usually offered high earning potential (Tiwari 2008: 79-104).

Mishra in a discussion agreed that the migration of Nepalis occurred into Assam and other parts of India through the recruitment of Gorkhas in the Indian army. But he also viewed that the trend of migration has changed and the migrants are moving more towards the Industrial cities rather than the rural areas as they use to do earlier. In a discussion Mishra commented, "There are more Nepalis in India rather than Indians in Nepal. If we look at Indian census, the number of Nepalis in India is very small. The meaning of Nepalis means who speak Nepali – they are cultural Nepalis. The first generation Nepalis, from political point of view can be called as real Nepali migrants whose number is quite small and if we count their children's and those Nepali cultural bearers all across India, of course in Delhi and other parts of India, the number will swell. Cultural Nepalis are many more than the demographic Nepalis in India. Earlier, the Nepalis goes to rural areas, especially to the northeast, but this has changed radically after

1970's, 80's, 90's and even today, more Nepalis goes to market places and city areas exclusively for employment opportunities. They do not go to rural areas unless they have tight kinship network. Some skilled labour from Nepal also migrates to industrial establishments.”<sup>9</sup>

Acharaya in a discussion viewed, “It's also very difficult to predict what type and trend of migration from Nepal to India and other countries are occurring. If a person has to migrate to other countries, they have to invest huge amount of money. If some people want to migrate to European and gulf countries the initial cost is very high and those who want to migrate to India the cost is very low. Depending on the cost of travelling people migrates. A person when migrates to India, his cost of migration will be low and people who have less money they would move to India. Sometime people migrate until and unless he gets a job/kinship etc. The poorest people in the villages, who don't find anything back home, tend to migrate to Indian cities/urban areas. India is growing very fast and a number of skilled/unskilled labour migrations are occurring to India from Nepal. As the country is economically growing fast with investment from the MNCs and national companies, the opportunities is very high. When we talk about migration from Nepal to India we talk about migration of middle class and lower middle class people and are highly for greener pasture and higher income. The kinship connection is also work in networking migration, those people who have relatives in India they would obviously encourage other people to migrate for finding opportunities.”<sup>10</sup>

The direct contacts of Nepalis into Assam occurred in 1817 with the deployment of 1000 Hindustani and Gorkha soldiers in the Sylhet operations as part of the Cuttack legion, this later came to be known as the Assam Light Infantry. It is claimed that one Subedar Jaichand Thakur, retired from the Eighth Gorkha Platoon, Sylhet, got settled as early as 1824 at Shillong and he is credited to have built a Radha Krishna temple at the place of his residence. Some four decades after that Thurnton records in his memoirs that an irregular corps of the Sylhet Light Infantry consisting mainly of Gorkhas was stationed at

---

<sup>9</sup> In a discussion with Chaitanya Mishra, Chairperson, Department of Sociology, Tribhuvan University on 26/04/09, during field trip to Kathmandu

<sup>10</sup>In a discussion with Gyan Chandra Acharya, the present Foreign Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Nepal Government on 05/05/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

Jowai in the Jaintia hills during the 1862 rebellion. Later, 1867 also, Thurnton is quoted to have seen the Gorkhas playing cricket and football in Shillong (Shakespeare 1977 & Sinha 1990: 217-235).

The story of Nepali involvement in the consolidation of the region under the British Empire is ably presented through the pages of L. W. Shakespeare, *History of the Assam Rifles* (1977), whether it was Sylhet or the Shillong plateau, Naga hills, or Lushai hills, CHT or the Sadia Frontier Tracts, the Bhutan wars or the Manipur rebellion, the Gorkhas constituted half the Assam Rifles and were always there in operation. Their important role in the Assam Rifles was recognized as early as 1865, when the Nepali *Khukri* replaces the short sword, which had impeded their progress through the jungles (Shakespeare 1977: 1-20).

Sinha (1990: 217-235) viewed, "Besides the Assam Rifles, the Gorkha training centre and various battalions of the armed forces were stationed at and around the district towns and strategic locations on the hills. After their release from services, a number of Gorkhas settled down around these places. Besides the other agencies, the Assam Rifles alone has rehabilitated its Gorkhas ex-soldiers on at least thirty-eight sites such as Sadiya in Assam, Mantripokhari in Manipur, Aizwal in Mizoram and Mokokchung in Nagaland are as old as hundred years. Of such sites, Assam alone has thirteen, Manipur eight, Mizoram and Nagaland seven each, Arunachal Pradesh three and Meghalaya and Tripura one each. These are predominantly Nepalis settlements, though there may be smattering of others."

With their capacities to assimilate with the local language, customs and traditions despite maintaining their own culture, most of these migrants were counted as indigenous people for their assimilative capacity. These Nepali migrants adopt their languages of their neighbourhood, contract marital alliances and turn out to be an inseparable part of the local economy. The soldiers after their retirement were settled in the foothills, forest fringes, as well as other strategic locations on the frontiers that created a compact pocket of Nepali settlement. In some border areas of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland and Manipur emerged. These Nepali settlers with their agriculture background



and the discipline of their strict military training acquired an image of loyal citizens and faithful allies of the British regime (Sinha 1990: 226-228).

There is another aspect of the ex-soldiers' presence in the frontiers. There is considerable movement of armed forces to contain secessionist and extremist activities in the frontier region for which the Nepalis ex-soldiers also worked for providing information on strategy and logistics for the armed forces. Thus British policy of settlement of Nepalis for guarding the borders created a compact settlement as a consequence of British colonial expansion (Subba 2003: 54-66 & Devi 2007: 3005-3007).

### **3. VII \_\_\_ Migration of Nepalis during Colonial Period**

The migration of Nepali population into the Northeastern region has been continuing and major Nepali migration took place only in the colonial context. First it occurred through the recruitment of Gorkha soldiers, then as workers and labourers for job opportunities created by the colonial expanding economy and finally in search of better livelihood. The migration of Nepali people has been continuing over a long time and at different period of history. This movement of population has been variously prompted, aided and supported by the economic and political needs. However, the need for migration of Nepalis on economic reasons that fostered by the colonial power took on a different dimensions in the post colonial period. The political reason for enhancing better bilateral relation was added to the economy and the migration of Nepalis has been occurring through the already settled network-with the earlier migrants and the process has become a self-sustaining (Nath 2005b: 190-191).

Apart from the recruitment of Nepalis in the British army, the British colonial regime was also engaged in developing the eastern Himalayan foothills for tea plantations that attracted thousands of gregarious and thriving Nepalis. The British who wanted a hardy labour force for their tea plantations also facilitated Nepali migration to Darjeeling. Moreover, the Britishers also used Nepalis as a wedge to contain the Bhutias of Sikkim and Bhutan and in a limited way even the tribes of the eastern frontiers. Thus, Nepalis formed 34 percent of the population of Darjeeling out of 94712 in 1872, a proportion

which had increased to more than fifty percent of the total by 1901. Between 1869 and 1907, the population increased by about three times (Sinha 2003: 38-39).

After the British expansion in Assam, the migration of Nepalis increased as a consequence of British colonial expansion. The colonial required a pliant labour force to help open up forest lands for lumbering, clearing of forests for agriculture and plantations, commercial cultivation of tea plantations, construction of railways, dairy farming, establishments of saw mills etc. under colonial patronage required physically strong labour force and the Nepali migrants unlettered and unexposed provided the perfect fit. They were encouraged and given pecuniary assistance for their onward journey to Upper Assam, exclusive of the soldiers in the colonial army. This movement grew stronger when they began to take up cultivation and livestock's in the hill slopes. The main occupation of these migrant Nepalis was cattle rearing and cultivation. Under the regime, the traditional free rights graze cattle in village commons was gradually overturned to enhance additional revenue to the government exchequer. Thus the number which is not much shows a large concentration of Nepali population in the district of Sivasagar, Lakhimpur and Kamrup (Dutt 1981: 1053-55 & Nath 2005a: 63-65 & Guha 1977: 92).

The presence of Nepali dairymen in the region, particularly in the hills, open grasslands, plains and outskirts of the urban areas is also a significant feature of the economy of Assam. The Nepali herdsmen and marginal farmers in search for grasslands to graze their cattle migrated to Assam during the last part of the nineteenth and first quarter of the twentieth century. The Nepalis in search of grazing lands started migrating and the early settlement of early graziers occurred in the middle hills eastwards from Nepal which was just an extension of their natural habitat. The Nepalis settlement in the Brahmaputra occurred in the grazing reserves and Char (river islands) areas. A considerable number of Nepali migrants can be seen in the Burha Chapori of Tezpur which was recognized as professional grazing reserves as early as in 1881 (Bhandari 1996: 87-91).

The chief commissioner of Assam reported in 1886: "To settle the wastelands of Assam with people and increase the revenue collection of the province the government had been

making serious efforts to encourage migration to Assam from the neighbouring districts of Bengal. As far as the Nepalis were concerned, besides grant of waste lands on favourable terms, the Nepali migrants were reported to have given pecuniary assistance for their onward journey to Upper Assam” (Allen 1914, Report of the Land Revenue Administration 1913-14). In fact the 1872 census shows that there were a total of 260 Nepalis only in Assam. By the turn of the century the population increased to 21347 (1901 census). It is indicated that the inflow of Nepalis continued. The presence of a large body of Nepalis in the regiments and frontier police force encouraged the migrants from Siliguri to move to the district of Lakhimpur (Nag 2003: 186).

Apart from Tezpur, reserve forests for grazing of cattle were also left open in the Goalpara district too. According to the Report on the Administration of Assam (1912-13), it provided the incentives for a large number of professional Nepali graziers to migrate to Assam from the adjoining areas of Jalpaiguri owing to the rise of professional graziers to migrate to Assam due to the rise of grazier’s fees in those districts. Most of the Nepali migrants were settled in the char areas and a number of such areas were named bearing the names of Nepali origin, like, Forse Tapu, Rani Tapu, Shorder Tapu etc. Such char areas believed to have been inhabited by the Nepali milkmen by profession or Khuntiwallas are found in the Nagaon and Morigaon districts. These char areas were also being explored by the Muslim Bengali migrants for cultivation for which Nepali Khuntiwallas has to move out in search of green areas for cattle grazing. Such instances also occurred in Bhangamari (Mukalmua Char) in the Nalbari district, where about 100-150 Nepali grazier families moved out and settled in Tamulpur, Chaygaon, Tezpur and Sonitpur for greener pastures. They also started migrating to the outskirts of the urban areas as their trade and business in milk supply started developing (Nath 2005a: 71 & Dasgupta 2002: 273-274).

Due to the encouragement policy of the colonial government to settle Nepali migrants created influx of Nepali people into Assam. The development activities such as establishment of tea industries, oil refineries at Margherita and also in the coal mines and saw mills in the upper Assam encouraged Nepalis to start into these locations for employment opportunities. All this development led to the emergence of certain compact

pockets of Nepali settlements throughout the region and consequently an increase in the number of Nepali speaking people was seen. During 1872, the number of Nepali population in the Brahmaputra valley was 983, in which Goalpara - 34, Kamrup -125, Darrang - 87, Nagaon – 1, Sivasagar – 476 and Lakhimpur - 260 (Nath 2003b: 44-49).

According to Alexander Mackenzie (reprint-1998), during 1881, a total number of 4485 Nepali speaking people were staying in Assam, in which the number of Nepalis speaking persons were 2521, Surma valley, 499, hill tracts 1465. Table 3.XI shows the number of Nepali labourers employed in various industries in Assam. All together 1168 Nepali migrants were employed during 1897-1903 (cited in Nath 2003b: 44-49). According to the Report on the Administration of Eastern Bengal and Assam (1905-06: 4), “an increase of Nepalis settlements occurred in Lakhimpur, Darrang and Barpeta sub-division of the district of Kamrup at large number.” Meanwhile, The Land Revenue Administrative Reports of 1913-14, revealed that the establishments of considerable colonies by the Nepali migrants in the Darrang district where they held nearly 17000 acres of cultivable lands. In 1914-15, 35786 acres of land were settled by Nepalis of which half alone was in Darrang; in 1915-16, the extent of land held by them was 40935 acres which in 1916 -17 had increased to 13725 acres. The acreage increased to 49260 in 1917-18 and 53062 in 1918-19 (Gurung 2003: 179-180).

The Revenue Report of 1919-20, recorded “Darrang which was at one time sparsely populated was increasingly being colonized..... Tea garden colonies now hold 1/9 of the settled areas while, the Nepalis in Darrang have taken up land to an extent unknown elsewhere being now in possession of 28000 acres” (Gurung 2003: 180). Most of lands allocated to the Nepali migrants at large-scale were used to produce and develop sugarcane crop in Assam (Barpujari 1993: 61). According to Playne (1917: 623), “these migrants were granted land in the midst of the jungle and usually on the bank of a river and they cleared it for cultivation of sugarcane and they also moved to a new side in the jungle. In Lakhimpur and the east of Sivasagar and Darrang district, sugarcane cultivation was mainly in the hands of Nepali migrants, who planted cane on virgin soils by clearing forest” (Gurung 2003: 180).

**Table 3.XI**  
**Number of Nepali Labourers Employed during 1897 to 1903 in Assam**

Year	Total No. of Labourers
1897	179
1898	231
1899	188
1901	272*
1902	102
1903	184*

\* These includes figures for Bombay and Nepal

Sources: Report on Labour Immigration into Assam, 1898, 1899. Resolution on Labour Immigration into Assam, 1902-03, 1903-03, 1906, as cited in Lopita Nath (2005b), "Understanding Internal Migration among the Nepalis in Assam: Trends and Issues", in Mahavir Singh (ed.) *Home away from Home: inland movement of people in India*, Anamika publishers, New Delhi, 2005, pp. 189-212

According to the Report of the Land Revenue Administration of the Assam Valley Division (1934-35: 4) viewed, "from being graziers and dairymen, the Nepalis were increasingly beginning to settle as agriculturalists and take up land in several districts. The Nepalis constituted the third largest single migrant group to take up land for settlement and cultivation after the ex-tea garden labourers and migrants from East Bengal. The Nepali migrants also took to jute and paddy cultivation when the prices of their dairy products reduced" (Gurung 2003: 180).

According to the Report on the Land Revenue Administration of the Assam Valley Division (1939-40: Appendix – IV), "during 1939-1940, the total area of land settled direct with the ex-tea garden labourers and other migrants in the Assam valley division was 1070761 acres of which 104773 acres (9.8 percent) were settled by the Nepalis" (Gurung 2003: 180-181). By the 1930's, the migration of Nepalis to the Northeast had an established pattern. By then the number of Nepali speaking population (as per the 1930 census) in the hill district had risen to 3000 in the Naga Hills, 2000 in the Lusai hills and 3000 in Manipur. By far the largest number was found in the Khasi and Jaintia hills. In 1951, there were 122823 Nepali speakers in the northeast or 1.39 percent of the total population. In united east Khasi and Jaintia hills districts, the Nepalis numbered 19721 or 5.42 percent of the total population of the district (Gurung 2003: 181).

A steady influx of Nepali graziers into the Brahmaputra valley led to an increase in cattle population and milk production (Guha 1977: 102). The census of 1911 shows the number of cattle and buffalo breeders, herdsmen at 44000 in a total of 55000 graziers. In an effort to generate more revenue, the government of Assam levied taxes on the buffalos too. The total number of buffalos taxed in the Brahmaputra valley was 15940 in 1895 which increased up to 18735 in 1900. It went up further to 24346 in 1905 to 40000 in 1910 and 42000 in 1915 to jump to 86325 in 1920. An increase in revenue collection occurred due to increase in the number of cattle. It was Rs. 183000 in 1916-17, which shot up to Rs. 342000 in 1917-18 and to Rs. 277000 in 1919-20. In 1920-21 it was recorded as Rs. 341000. In other words, the amounts have doubled during the period 1916-17 to 1920-21. The rate of grazing fees per buffalo was Rs.1/ in 1907, which was increased to Rs. 3 per buffalo and six annas (36 paise) per cow. The rate of taxes per buffalo was Rs. 1/ until 1916 and thereafter Rs. 2 (Guha 1977: 92 & Nag 2003: 188-189).

The chief secretary of the government of Assam informed the foreign secretary of the government of India on 13<sup>th</sup> may 1930 that, "The greater numbers of the numerous Nepali graziers in Assam are Jaisis and Upadhyay Brahmins or Chhetris of non-martial classes. Some of the Gorkhalis of the fighting classes, who have served in the gorkha regiment in the Assam Rifles, settled down in Assam when they leave the service. During the cold weather many Gorkhalis of martial class, Rais and Limbus, come to work as sawyers in the Assam forests. However, very few of them settled down permanently in Assam.....the migration of Nepalis into Assam may be described as an administrative nuisance rather than a political menace." He adds that as the province of Assam develops, the proclivities of the Nepali migrants for illicit distillation, poaching and avoiding payment of the government revenue will be defeated (Sinha 1990: 217-235).

Within a decade or so the situation changed. J. H. Hutton initiated the policy to remove the Nepali settlers from the Naga Hills on economic and not political consideration. In his view, "the Nepalis breed very fast and they would soon be eating up tracts of land in the hills badly needed by the Nagas, already themselves short of land. Further more an intelligence officer cautioned the government: that there has been great infiltration of Nepalis east wards from Nepal is very true and very noticeable. It is impossible for

anybody who has lived in Assam, as I have for the last sixteen years not to have noticed the remarkable number of Nepalis that one ceased all over the province particularly in the Assam valley, the hill districts and the frontier tracts" (Dutt 1979). In this context, the agrarian activities of the Nepalis in the Karbi Anglong and the Khasi hills districts may be referred to as representative's cases. The district gazetteer records that the Nepalis for the most part were graziers who keep large herds of cows and buffaloes. They have penetrated deep into the interior of the district and have established Khuntis (herdsmen temporary sheds). Some of them have taken to cultivation also (Dutt 1979).

### **3. VIII\_\_Migration of Nepalis: Post-Colonial Period**

Nepal has had matrimonial alliances with Assamese folk and presently this linkage has not yet stopped and created network. The free movement that facilitated between the two countries after the 1950 Treaty - matrimonial alliances further accentuated migration process. The growth of Indian middle class during 1950's and 1960's created house-hold jobs like Durban's, maid, kitchen help etc. were effectively filled up by the Nepali migrants. A large concentration of such people is also seen in metropolitan cities in India. The continual trend of migration of Nepalis into Assam and other Northeastern states at large numbers were mainly cause by the economic backwardness. In India these migrants are either engaged in security forces or employed in highly unskilled work- or as labourers. Later on the Nepali community of Assam also started taking other jobs such as dairy farming as their primary occupation with the grazing permits provided by the government (Subba 2002: 130).

Some other employment opportunities in Assam also encouraged migration of Nepalis into Assam. The construction of new roads, particularly, the strategically important border and link roads and the 350 kilometre long new Rangapara-North Lakhimpur-Jonai-Murkokeselek railway line created tremendous scope for the employment of the Nepalis in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. The construction of these border roads was an arduous task and the Nepali labourers were considered the best fit for it. As a result, many of the Nepalis migrated to Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. The government of Arunachal Pradesh didn't share much of the burden due to the operation of inner-line

systems, which doesn't permit non-indigenous people to settle down permanently. Assam thus had to accommodate a large number of the Nepali labourers. They settled down turning into marginal farmers cum small dairy man, while others continued as construction workers in roads and buildings. Still some of them were absorbed as security man, darwans, chaukidars, peons, drivers and carpenters both in government as well as non government sectors. Apart from that lack of educational opportunities also encouraged Nepali nationals to study in India and also in the Northeastern states (Nath 2003a: 211-213).

Before the signing of the Sagauli Treaty between Nepal-India and subsequent demarcation of the Nepal India boundary, there existed free and unrestricted movement of people across the border and people can cross from any point, despite the existence of border checkpoints at several locations. The number of check posts meant for carrying out bilateral trade is 22 but only six transit points out of them the movement of population was permitted to nationals of third countries. As the whole length of the border except checkpoints is not patrolled, illegal movement of goods and people is a common feature on both sides of the India-Nepal border. The British Government kept the Nepal-India border open primarily for two purposes. The first was to maintain unrestricted migration of the Nepalis hill people to India and to procure them for recruitment in the Indian army. The second important factor for maintaining open border by the British was to have easy and free access of British and Indian manufactured goods into Nepal as well as to Tibet (Kansakar 1990).

Apart from the historical and other linkages, the migration of Nepalis continued and further facilitated through various bilateral agreements with Nepal. One such is the Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950 provided both the nationals of both countries with right to own property and do business. The two articles 6 and 7 of the treaty ensure free movement of population between the two countries. The provision of the articles also ensures the participation of citizens from both the countries in industrial and economic development in either country without any discrimination. Similarly, the treaty envisages the citizen's right of residence, ownership or property, participation in trade and other commercial activities in each other's country. The provisions were favourable to Nepal as



people could enter India unhindered in search of better opportunities and sustaining livelihood. There was also an exchange of letters along with the treaty which explicitly states that “it may be necessary for some time to come to offer the Nepali nationals in India protection from unrestricted competition”. This was done basically to protect the interests of the Nepali people migrating to India. The Nepal government also agreed to grant preferences to Indian nationals in various development projects related to natural resources (The Treaty of Peace and Friendship, 1950). The open border has economically benefited the nationals inhabiting both sides of the border. Those engaged in agriculture have economically benefited from the sale and purchase of agriculture and livestock products in *hat* bazaars taking place regularly in different places on either side (Kansakar 1990). However, these agreements only gave official recognition to a situation, which had existed *de facto* during the British period. Nepali ex-servicemen especially of the Assam Rifles were settled in various parts of northeast India. Even the royal court of Manipur granted land to the Nepalis for settlement. In fact, in Manipur, except Nepalis no outsiders were allowed to settle (Nag 2003: 185-186).

The Nepali migration in Northeast India, once it started through the recruitment of Gorkhas in Assam Rifles, followed a dynamics of its own. The Nepali population in Assam increased from 21000 in 1901 to 88000 in 1931. According to the Census of 1941, Nepal provided 45 percent of migrants to India. Besides the above mentioned factors, migration of Nepalis was simultaneously encouraged by the Indo-Nepal Peace Treaty of 1950 that grants equal rights with that of Indian citizens. A champion of the Gorkhas in India, Late Dambar Singh Gurung in 1943 claimed that the total Nepali population of India was 30 lakh. Ananda Singh Thapa, who first demanded the recognition of Nepali language by including it in the eighth schedule to the Indian constitution in 1956, claimed that the Nepali population was 50 lakh (Bhandari 2003: 106-123).

There is perhaps no other tribe or community which is distributed all over the seven states of northeast India's as the Nepalis are. In this regard, the position of the Nepalis here is indeed unique but, as the following table show, there is no proper record of their population concentration. By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, one in every 10 Nepalis had migrated. In India alone, by 1970, there were 1.5 million Nepalis, out of a population of 11.55

million in Nepal. The annual rate of migration in 1961 was 82,00 a year, 20,000 of whom remained in India permanently each year. While the total Nepalis living outside Nepal might reach almost 2.5 million, the majority of these migrants have settled in North India, comprising a working class whose presence is an accepted part of the landscape (Dutt 1981: 1053-1055).

### 3. IX\_\_ Demography of Nepalis in Northeast

Table 3.XII is not entirely dependable, which is mainly due to the unstable political situation in the region for the past three decades or so. However, the demographic size of the Nepalis, whether taken together for the whole of northeast India or state wise, doesn't seem as alarming as it is often made out to be by some politicians. Their total percentage does not exceed even in Assam where their population is believed to be the most numerous of all states in the region. As a matter of fact, their population in this state was considered so large that the All India Gorkha League in 1955 demanded the merging of Darjeeling with Assam and the Nepalis were a major target of the 1979 movement against "foreigners" spearheaded by the AASU (Subba 2003: 60-61).

**Table 3. XII**  
**Demography of the Nepalis in Northeast India (1951-2001)**

States	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Arunachal Pradesh	NA	10610 (25000)	30912 (85000)	45508	81176	94919
Assam	101338*	215213 132925*	349116 353673*	NA	432519	564790
Manipur	(2860)	13571	26381	37046	46498	45998
Meghalaya	NA	32288 (6000)	44445 (10111)	61259	49186	52155
Mizoram	NA	2042 (2000)	NA (4000)	5983	8247	8948
Nagaland	NA	10400	17536	24918	32274	34222
Tripura	NA	1696	2107	2190	3082	3377

Sources: Census of India, Language report, 2001, Timsina, 1992. Figures in brackets from Dutt, 1981 and figures in asterisks from Sinha, 1982, as cited in Lopita Nath (2005a), "Migrants in Flight: Conflict-Induced Internal Displacement of Nepalis in Northeast India", *Peace and Democracy in South Asia*, January, 1(1)

In 1961, the Nepali population in northeast India are the following; Assam 215213, Nagaland 10400, Manipur 13572, Meghalaya 1682, NEFA 10610. During 1971, the Nepali populations in Northeastern states are: Assam 353673, Manipur 26381, Meghalaya 44445, Nagaland 17536, Tripura 2107, and Arunachal Pradesh 30911. In 1980, the Nepali language demand committee estimated the Nepali population of India to be about 50 lakh. In 1985 a former chief minister of Sikkim Nar Bahadur Bhandari, estimated Indian Nepali population to be about 1 crore (Bhandari 2003).

As per the 1991 census language report, there are 2076645 Nepali speakers which cover 0.25 percent of the country's total population excluding Jammu and Kashmir. However, the share of Nepali speaker in west Bengal is 1.26 percent of the states total population. In India, substantial proportion of Nepali speaker is mainly concentrated in the state of West Bengal (41.43 percent), followed by Assam (20.83 percent) and Sikkim (12.35 percent). They totally cover 74.61 percent of the total Nepali population. The other states having Nepalis population are: Arunachal Pradesh (3.91 percent), Meghalaya (2.37 percent), Manipur (2.24%), Nagaland (1.55%), Mizoram (.04 %), and Tripura (.15%). Nepalis speakers outside Sikkim and West Bengal are also found in Dibang valley (27.37%), West Kameng (20.54%), Lohit (15.52%), East Siang (10.68%), Changlang (9.28%), Tawang (7.81 %), East Kameng (5.37 %) and Lower Subansiri (5.30%) in Arunachal Pradesh; Tinsukia (7.91%) NC Hills (7.89%), Sonitpur (6.43%) and Karbi Anglong (5.69 %); Senapati (13.77%) in Manipur; East Khasi Hills (5.98%) in Meghalaya, Kohima (5.49%) in Nagaland (Census of India, Language Report 1991: 45-46).

Before independence, though the migration of Nepalis (specially the retired army personnel) was low but it continued to pour into the state. During the freedom movement, there are impressive records of the Nepali participation in the struggle. Nepali migration continued unabated in the post-colonial period. The growth of Nepali population can be observed from 1901 to 2001 in the Table 3.XIII. Table 3.XIII, shows that the growth of Nepali population in Assam has been constantly rising in the post-colonial period. The growth of the population was very high during the period of 1951 to 1971. Numerically they rose from 101338 in 1951 to 349116 in 1971, indicating a nearly 3.5 times a growth

within a span of 20 years. Their percentage increased from 1.26% in 1951 to 2.38% in 1971. During that period the Nepali population became a demographically significant group in Assam. However, the percentage dropped to 1.93% in 1991 from 2.38% in 1971. This may be due to the Assam Movement period, when there is a perceptible decrease in the population growth. Along with the Bangladeshi migrants, Nepalis also victimized due to the conflict. And the movement simultaneously tuned for expulsion of Nepalis too. The insecurity of lives and property spread and accordingly many of the migrants left for their home. Nowadays Nepali population scattered across the state.

**Table 3.XIII**  
**Growth of Nepali Population in Assam**

Year	No. of Nepali population in Assam	Percentage
1901	21347	0.35
1911	47654	.67
1921	70344	.94
1931	88306	1.02
1951	101338	1.26
1961	215213	1.98
1971	349116	2.38
1991	432519	1.93
2001	564790	2.12

Sources: Census of India, 1901-1971-1991-2001 and Monirul Hussein, 1993: 258, as cited in Lopita Nath (2005a), "Migrants in Flight: Conflict – Induced Internal Displacements of Nepalis in Northeast India", *Peace and Democracy in South Asia*, 1(1): 57-72

Table 3.XIV gives a district wise break up of Nepali population in the state according to the 1991 census, language reports. The Nepali population today in Assam settled and spread all over the state. The Table 3.XIV shows the district wise break-up of Nepali migrants in number and percentage in Assam according to the 1991 Census. The table gives the highest number of Nepali migrants in the Tinsukia district (7.91%), followed by the N. C. Hills (7.90%), Karbi Anglong (5.69) and Sonitpur (6.43%). There is also a sizeable population of Nepalis in Dhemaji (4.74%), with Kokrajhar, Darrang, North Lakhimpur and Golaghat district having only a population of 2.5% on an average and its quite contrast to the earlier settlements in Sivasagar, Darrang Lakhimpur and Kamrup district. The development of business and other economic activities particularly in the Tinsukia district encouraged Nepali settlers in the district. The larger section of the

people in Northeast India did not protest against the migration of the Nepalis to the region and even welcomed them as they provided the labour requirements that the locals would not since their early migration. This allowed them an opportunity to assimilate with the locals adopting the language and the customs of the region where they settled. Even in the other states of Northeast India, the Nepalis have lived and worked among the locals. In Manipur, the Nepalis were also made a domiciled community in 1947, while in Mizoram, the Nepali settlers were awarded power and privileges at par with the Lushai Chiefs, which fostered a sense of belonging (Nath 2003b: 219-221 & 2005b: 198-199).

**Table 3.XIV**  
**District-wise Break-up of Nepali Population in Assam (1991 Census)**

District	No. of Nepali Population	Percentage
Dhubri	2624	0.2
Kokrajhar	19649	2.45
Bongaigaon	6527	0.81
Goalpara	2058	0.31
Barpeta	2654	0.19
Nalbari	23009	2.26
Kamrup	25054	1.25
Darrang	31587	2.43
Sonitpur	91631	6.43
North Lakhimpur	18380	2.45
Dhemaji	22705	4.74
Morigaon	1709	0.27
Nagaon	11100	0.59
Golaghat	19005	2.30
Jorhat	3014	0.35
Sivasagar	5481	0.60
Dibrugarh	16020	1.54
Tinsukia	76083	7.910
Karbi Anglong	37710	5.690
N. C. Hills	11905	7.90
Karimganj	555	.07
Hailakandi	269	.06
Cachar	3792	0.31

Sources: Census report 1991: Language Reports, cited in Lopita Nath (2005b), "Understanding Internal Migration Among the Nepalis in Assam: Trends and Issues", in Mahavir Singh ed., *Home Away from Home: Inland Movement of People in India*, New Delhi: Anamika Publishers: 198

The above discussion clearly highlights that the migration of Bangladeshis and Nepalis communities started long before the annexation of Assam by the Britishers. The cultural

and other factor has largely contributed such migration. Mostly the economic backwardness of both the communities has forced them to migrate to Assam. But the large scale influx of both the communities has created a sense of animosity among the local inhabitants. The fear of losing their identity, and becoming minority in a majority state spread the feeling of fear among the Assamese middle class, in which they subsequently started the movement against the migrants. The Assamese middle class started having the feeling that the state should not be a burden with the migrants of foreign origin. And the demand for detecting and deporting the migrants began and the student's body subsequently launched a mass movement known as *Assam Movement* (Guha 1980: 1699-1719).

### **3. X \_\_\_ Trafficking from Nepal**

The concept of trafficking and migration is complex and challenging as it refers to the movement of population. Migration, however, may lead to trafficking and trafficking may lead to a migration situation. A person may choose to migrate for work but may have been deceived about the kind of work finally ending up with the traffickers. A woman may migrate for employment to a carpet factory at the same time she might be the target of traffickers. A woman who had been trafficked may escape from that situation and might choose to remain as migrant worker from her place of origin (WOREC 2004: 1-2). Once known as a beautiful land of rich natural heritage, Nepal is known as the country of trafficking. The women are trafficked directly to India including the countries in the Middle East for sexual exploitation and financial benefit. Every year, thousands of children and women are trafficked illegally into the gulf/middle east countries through India for sexual exploitation in the pretext of employment (Maiti Nepal 2008: 2-4).

In developing countries or countries with economies in transition, conditions of poverty are aggravated for women due to their traditionally low economic status, which can make women even more vulnerable to traffickers. The occurrence of trafficking from Nepal can be generally attributed to widespread poverty, low status of girls and women and social disparities rooted in ethnic and caste grouping. Many people believe that the push factors are aggravated in the context of national and local level political apathy about the

problem and lack of enforcement mechanism. While some of these proposed causes may increase vulnerability specifically to trafficking, the rest are part of global changes that are leading both to the increased feminization of poverty and to increase female migration. They are factors that lead to the desire or need to migrate. To a women leaving in an environment of restricted rights and freedom with few employment opportunities, a traffickers offering a chance for economic independence may be seen as the only opportunity to improve her situation (Dahal, et. al. 2001).

According to Achyut Nepal in a discussion viewed that around 10-12 thousand Nepali girls are trafficked to India and abroad every year for sexual exploitation. The major destination of trafficking of girls is India and the second destination is gulf/Middle East countries. According to him, "There are number of causes of trafficking; that includes the social, economic, illiteracy, lack of awareness, poverty etc. the existence of open border helps traffickers to sneak easily. There is some culture - traditions along with the Maoists conflict contributed for trafficking. The 'Devki' traditions in Nepal, also contributed for trafficking of women. Under this tradition rich childless parents buy girls from the poor family and they offered the girl to a temple and ultimately she is subjected to sexual exploitation. There is a community in Nepal called 'Bardi', their main occupation is trafficking and forced prostitution and they adopt prostitution as their livelihood. There are three forms of trafficking from Nepal to other countries. One is individual based, family and organized syndicate. The falls marriage is individual based, people lure girls and marry them – finally sell their wives in Indian urban cities, such as Delhi, Mumbai etc. Trafficking can be also family based; some family members may also arrange their daughter for trafficking/prostitution. They do it only because of the presence of extreme poverty in the country. Other is organized syndicate, girls are brought in cities by a group of agents, and another group of people or agents makes arrangement to send these girls to India and gulf countries for sexual exploitation. In Nepal, few years ago it spread in few districts but bow it has spread to number of districts."<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup>In a discussion with Achyut Nepal, Researcher, Maiti Nepal on 4/05/09, during field trip visit to Kathmandu.

Thapa, Programme Coordinator, UNIFEM, in a discussion viewed that the problem of trafficking in Nepal occurs due to the presence of extreme poverty, lack awareness coupled with illiteracy and also due to gender discrimination; a woman in Nepal becomes the victim of trafficking. According to her along with the girls, boys are also subjected to human trafficking. She revealed, "A study commissioned by the UNIFEM, Nepal to understand the status and dynamics of trafficking shows that girls between the age of 12-18 and boys of 6-12 age are vulnerable for trafficking. Women being the victims of family based violence, (could be from her husband, father, brother etc.) try to escape from that situation becomes the victim of trafficking. The trafficker keeps eyes on that woman who tries to find out avenues to avoid such circumstances. The trafficker pretending to be best sympathizer engaged in false marriage that ends up in trafficking. The child marriage indeed also contributes for trafficking. When child marriages take place, the age of the husband could be 60 years and the wife may at 13-14 years of age. She can't adjust with such marriage and tries to get away from it and finally becomes the victim of trafficking. Many people believe that women are mostly trafficked into India but this is not true, it's taking place into the gulf countries also. Even in the process of migration, when there is absence of safe migration, they are trafficked. Internal trafficking of women is also taking place from villages to urban centers"<sup>12</sup>

Pradhan agrees that trafficking of women in Nepal is caused largely because of the presence of illiteracy, poverty and ignorance. According to her, "When women migrate to India or the gulf countries, sometime they ends up with trafficking. There are lots of human right violation cases, those women who migrate to gulf countries they are subjected to more human right violation. They are often subjected to sexual exploitation and trafficking. The Nepal government has made a policy not to send women in the gulf countries; this sort of policies has come up because of such reported incidents in the gulf countries. But still women are migrating to the gulf countries even knowing such exploitation cases. Those women who are not allowed to migrate from Nepal – they first migrate to India and take an easy illegal route to the gulf and become the victim of trafficking. They also make fake passport, documents and they migrate to gulf countries

---

<sup>12</sup> In a discussion with Aruna Thapa, Programme Coordinator, UNIFEM, Nepal on 3/05/09, during a field trip visit to Kathmandu.



and it became undocumented and illegal in a way or other, which is more dangerous. Even if the women migrants are harassed, they don't approach police because as they already an illegal migrants. Most of the illiterate people in villages (women) they are subjected to trafficking, some agents they go and lure women for higher income and they later sell them in the prostitution rackets. However, the trend has changed a little bit because of the awareness programme initiated by many NGOs."<sup>13</sup>

There is lack of reliable and authentic data on the number of trafficked persons, place of origin and destination and the purpose of trafficking. The reasons for such situation are the clandestine operation of the trafficking. Lack of reporting/misreporting on part of the survivors and their families to the concerned authorities and absence of institutionalized system of generating data on trafficking are two major problems. The available data is more or less speculative and made especially in reference to brothel based. Even the recent data on brothel based sex works is not available any more. There is data on neither trafficking of girls and women for non-brothel based sex work neither in India nor on trafficking of children for labour exploitation in India except circus, nor on trafficking of persons for organ transplantation, nor on trafficking to other countries for various purposes (NHRC 2006-2007).

Trafficking of women from Nepal to India is mostly targeted to enter into prostitution. The figure ranges from 20000 Nepali minors every year going to India to 200000 Nepali women in brothels of India. Further estimates are up to 375480 to 417200 Nepali prostitutes in India (Bal Kr. K C 1998: 29). Activists working on trafficking issue in Nepal estimate that thousands of persons are trafficked every year within the country and into neighbouring countries. According to the most widely quoted estimates, every year 5000 to 7000 girls are trafficked from Nepal to India and other neighbouring countries primarily for prostitution and 2 lakh Nepali girls and women are currently working in the sex industry (Dahal, et. al., 2001). However, in accordance with the latest data available it's been revealed that 10000 to 12000 Nepali girls are sold in various cities of India (Maiti Nepal 2008).

---

<sup>13</sup> In a discussion with Roni Pradhan, Programme Coordinator, WOREC, Kathmandu, on 02/05/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

It was found that 82712 women were missing from their homes for various reasons during the 2001 census but no reasons were found in case of 33620 of these women or 40% of these missing from home women. Again 12000 women and girls – half of them under the age of 16 – are trafficked annually from Nepal to India for sexual exploitation. A national NGO claimed that around 7000 Nepali girls and women are annually trafficked from Nepal to India and the gulf countries. The girls ranging from 7-24 years are being trafficked to India and the gulf countries. 40 % of the girls being trafficked are below 18 years of age and most of them are trafficked to force them into flesh trade. Some 20000 sex worker in India is Nepalis, and 20% are under 16 years of age. Altogether 39 districts are reported to be affected but 26 of these districts are most affected in terms of human trafficking (NIDS 2008: 49-51).

According to the Eastern Benjamin trust, some 600 children were trafficked mainly from Makwanpur and Bara district for circus industry in different cities of India. The UNIFEM-PON and TIP annual report (2008), reports that children were also trafficked within the country and to the Middle East for commercial sexual exploitation or forced marriage, as well as for involuntary servitude as child soldiers, domestic servants and circus entertainment or factory workers. The Nepalis youth foundation estimated that there are over 20000 child indentured domestic workers in Nepal. A report by the ministry of women, children and social welfare reported that about 40000 girls were found to be working in 1200 cabin and dance restaurant in the Kathmandu valley. The report also claimed that half of them were the victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation. The women and children service centre reported that 1355 children below 18 years of age were missing between December 2006 and June 2007. The organization also claimed that annually on an average 465 women are missing in the Kathmandu valley alone (NIDS 2008: 50-51).

### **3. XI \_\_\_ Population Change in Assam**

Assam has witnessed the fastest growing population in the India from 1901 to 2001 with an increase of a little over eight fold which clearly outpaces the average growth rate of population in the rest of the country. According to the census report, 2001, Assam has

26.6 million populations with a decadal growth rate of 18.9 percent. Before discussing the trend of population growth in Assam, let's see the district wise population in Assam according to the 2001 census report (AHDR 2003: 8-10).

If we look at the district wise variations in the decadal growth rate of population, it would more clear about the migration. The Table 3.XV, shows the inter district variations in the decadal growth rate of population. During 1901 to 1911, the erstwhile Goalpara which was later divided into the four districts of Kokrajhar, Dhubri, Goalpara and Bongaigaon, registered the highest growth rate, which decelerated between 1921 and 1961 and then again picked up since 1961. In 1991-2001, the growth rate of population in these districts again dampened. North Cachar Hills and Darrang had negative growth rates of population during 1901-11, thereafter it increased in both the districts continuously up to 1941, had somewhat decelerated in 1941-51, then again started moving up. In North Cachar Hills, it moved up so much that the growth rate during 1971-91 was 98.30 percent against the State average of 53.26 percent (AHDR 2003:

In 1991-2001, Kamrup district showed the highest rate of growth at 25.75 per cent, which is also much higher than the all Assam growth rate of 18.85 during the decade. On the contrary, Nalbari, the border district of Kamrup shows the least growth rate of population at 11.98 during the period. Dhemaji district which showed the highest rate of growth in population during the period 1971-1991, at 107.50 descended to the 11th position of the 23 districts, during the decade 1991-2001 with 18.93 per cent. All the districts of the State also show an increasing rate of urban population over the years except in case of Dhubri where urban population has decreased in the last decade, from 12.16 % in 1991 to 11.66 % in 2001. For both the districts of Kamrup and N.C Hills, the rate of growth of urban population is higher than the state average and the all India average. The lowest rate of urbanization may be observed in Nalbari (2.31% and 2.41 %) according to census figures of both 1991 and 2001 respectively (AHDR 2003: 4-8). The above table shows discernible trends of district wise decadal variations in population growth in the various districts of Assam (Statistical Handbook of Assam 2006: 5-8).

**Table 3.XV**  
**Decadal Variations in Population District-wise in Assam, 1901-2001**

District	1901-11	1911-21	1921-31	1931-41	1941-51	1951-61	1961-71	1971-91	1991-2001
Dhubri	29.97	26.92	15.76	14.83	9.25	27.1	40.51	56.57	23.42
Kokrajhar	29.97	26.92	15.76	14.83	9.25	44.18	54.3	76.78	15.05
Bongaigaon	29.94	26.94	15.94	14.97	9.31	60.81	40.29	64.64	12.23
Goalpara	29.97	26.92	15.76	14.83	9.25	37.1	45.88	54.12	23.07
Barpeta	20.02	34.04	69.02	44.04	18.77	32.62	35.81	43.02	18.53
Nalbari	13.33	14.2	27.92	29.43	17.89	49.62	42.02	49.27	11.98
Kamrup	11.1	7.06	9.38	19.21	17.17	37.75	38.8	65.72	25.75
Darrang	-0.25	11.78	26	35.5	24.13	44.75	43.24	55.63	15.79
Sonitpur	24.33	40.69	20.5	19.73	24.26	35.82	27.62	57.14	17.8
Lakhimpur	26.29	34.07	23.91	22.7	17.94	50.46	43.39	16.29	18.34
Dhemaji	26.29	34.07	23.92	22.69	17.94	75.21	103.42	107.5	18.93
Morigaon	15.84	31.84	41.35	15.37	36.63	37.89	37.51	50.9	21.29
Nagaon	15.84	31.84	41.35	15.37	36.65	33.91	38.99	51.2	22.3
Golaghat	16.55	19.83	18.29	1.27	19.76	26.04	30.35	58.12	14.21
Jorhat	16.9	17.26	8.88	15.27	14.87	24.17	17.47	83.1	15.84
Sibsagar	13.41	20.46	14.44	15.64	15.98	23.36	19.47	38.76	15.95
Dibrugarh	26.29	34.07	23.91	32.7	17.94	30.64	22.93	37.78	12.43
Tinsukia	26.29	34.07	23.92	32.7	17.94	35.92	31.03	47.03	19.52
Karbi Anglong	----	----	----	----	30.95	79.21	68.28	74.72	22.57
N C Hills	-33.12	5.92	13.6	13.75	6.16	36.93	40	98.3	23.47
Karimganj	12.94	3.91	8.91	9.52	29.87	22.96	25.13	42.08	21.35
Hailakandi	16.09	7.59	7.08	10.29	17.48	27.23	23.61	45.94	20.92
Cachar	12.33	5.98	7.6	13.08	23.92	22.6	23.96	47.59	18.66

Source: Government of Assam (2006), Statistical Hand Book of Assam, 2006, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Guwahati: 14-15

Most districts have sustained high increases of population in the pre-Independence period particularly the lower Assam districts and the growing tea districts of Upper Assam and the North Bank. In post-Independence period, the Lower Assam districts have sustained high increases; the districts of Lakhimpur and Dhemaji have also seen population increases of a high order, as have the sparsely populated hill districts. However, the post-1991, the rate of increase all over Assam has more or less stabilized (AHDR 2003: 7-8).

According to the 2001 census, Assam has a density 340 persons per square kilometre. The density of population also increases from 42 persons per square kilometre in 1901 to 340 persons in 2001 (Statistical Handbook of Assam 2006: 5-6). This has put increasing pressure on the land and in fact, the two hill districts of Assam were separated due to high density of population (Weiner 1983: 288-292). According to Weiner (1983: 285), "Since the partition and even after the creation of Bangladesh, the movement of population didn't halt. Since migration was no longer legal, Bengali Muslim migrants told census enumerators in 1961 that Assam was their place of birth and Assamese was their mother tongue. Bengali Muslims did, however, report their religion, thereby enabling the census commissioner to conclude on the basis of an examination of the data on the growth rate of Muslims that 221000 Bengali Muslims had entered Assam between 1951 and 1961, almost all illegally from East Pakistan. In 1971 the census reported an increase of 820000 Muslims or approximately 424000 more than could be accounted for by natural population increase."

The growth rate of Assam's population during 1901-1951 was the second highest (137.80%) in the world exceeded only by Brazil. The trend of high rate of population growth continued even after independence (Hussain 2004). Monirul Hussein (1993: 60) observed, "It is a historical fact that the rate of growth of population in Assam has been much higher than that of India's average since the colonial period. Significantly in 1921, when the population growth rate was negative for India, Assam had shown a tremendously higher growth rate that is 20.47 percent. And the gap of growth between India and Assam was as high as 20.77 percent. In 1901, Assam's population constituted only 1.38 percent of India's total population. However, by 1971 Assam's share of population nearly doubled at 2.67 percent."

It is also very difficult to calculate the number of migrants have entered and remained in Assam after the Bangladesh Liberation war of 1971 is unknown. One could only calculate through the census data or observing the growth rate of population in Assam. According to government estimation the population of Assam increased from 14.6 million in 1971 to 19.9 million in 1981 or 5.3 million (36.3 percent) population in a span of 10 years. Had Assam's population increased at the all-India rate of 24.7 percent the population increase would have been 3.6 million. Moreover, the natural population increases of Assam was 0.5 percent less than the all-India figures in 1970-72 and 1.2 percent less in 1976-78. On the basis of these figures we can estimate that the migration into Assam from 1971 to 1981 was on the order of 1.8 million. How much of this was migration from elsewhere in India and how much from Bangladesh is purely conjectural, although it is plausible to assume that most of it was undocumented migration (Weiner 1993: ).

**Table 3. XVI**  
**Population of Assam since 1901-2001**

Year	Population of Assam (lakh)	Percentage Decade variation	Density (persons per sq. km.)
1901	33	-	42
1911	38	+17.0	49
1921	46	+20.5	59
1931	56	+19.9	71
1941	67	+20.4	85
1951	80	+19.9	102
1961	108	+35.0	138
1971	146	+35.0	186
1981	198	+23.4	230
1991	224	+24.2	286
2001	266	+18.9	340

Sources: Census of India 2001 and Various Reports as cited in Assam Human Development report (2003): 6

Assam's population has grown six fold from 1901 to 1981. During 1901, the state had a population of 3.3 million and India's population has grown less than threefold over this period. And had Assam's population increased at the same rate as the rate of India from 1901 to 1981, her population would have been 9.5 million rather than 199.9 million in

1981, a gap of 10.4 million is seen. Since there is no evidence that Assam's rate of increase was significantly different than that in the rest of India (in the 1970s its estimated rate of natural increase was actually slightly below the all-India average), the difference can only be accounted for by net migration. The decadal rates of population increase of Assam (as presently constituted) and India in this century is cited in the Table 3.XVI and 3.XVII (Weiner 1983).

**Table 3.XVII**  
**Decadal Percentage Variation in Population since 1901**

Period	India	Assam
1901-11	5.75	16.99
1911-21	-0.31	20.48
1921-31	11	19.91
1931-41	14.22	20.4
1941-51	13.31	19.93
1951-61	21.64	34.98
1961-71	24.8	34.95
1971-81	24.66	23.36
1981-91	23.86	24.24
1991-2001	21.34	18.85

Source: Census of India, various years as cited in Saikia, Anup (2005), "Refugees, Illegal Migrants and Local Perceptions in India's Far East", Paper presented at the XXVth IUSSP International Population Conference held at Tours, France 18-23 July 2005

Going through the Myron Weiner's above mentioned analysis, had Assam's population increased at the same rate as India from 1901-91 at 254.99 % her population would be 8.33 million rather than 22.4 million in 1991, thus the share of migrants and then descendants amounting to 14.03 million. The Table 3.XVIII shows the growth rate of population since 1951 to 2001. The actual growth rate of population in Assam since 1961 happened to be much higher than the natural growth rate determined by the difference between the birth rate and the death rate. In 1975 alone this difference was 2.18 per cent. The table also shows the natural and unnatural growth of population in the state. This unnatural growth rate has been attributed mainly to the large scale cross border migration from Bangladesh. During the period of 1961 an unnatural 13 percent growth was recorded, during 1971 14.3 percent unnatural growth was also recorded in the state and it

was mainly due to the large scale migration of Bangladeshis during the liberation war. However, some of them went back, most of them stayed in Assam (Sharma 2004: 88-102).

**Table 3. XVIII**  
**Estimated Birth rate, death rate, Growth rate, Natural Growth rate and Unnatural Growth rate**

Year	Birth rate		Death rate		Natural growth rate (actual growth rate)		Unnatural Growth Rate (Annual)	
	Assam	India	Assam	India	Assam	India	Assam	India
1951	49.0	39.9	31.8	27.4	17.2 (19.9)	12.5 (13.31)	+2.7	+0.81
1961	49.0	41.7	26.9	22.8	22.1 (35.1)	18.9 (21.64)	+13.0	+2.74
1971	38.5	36.9	17.8	14.9	20.7 (35.0)	22.0 (24.80)	+14.3	+2.80
1981	33.0	33.9	11.9	12.5	21.1	21.4 (24.66)		+3.26
1991	30.9	29.5	11.5	09.8	19.4 (52.44)	19.7 (23.86)	+11.94	+4.16
2001	26.8	25.4	09.5	08.4	17.3 (18.85)	17.0 (21.34)	+1.55	+4.34

Sources: RGI: Census Reports and Sample Registration System Bulletin, 1987 and 2002.

\*Actual Growth Rate-Natural Growth Rate where Natural Growth Rate=Birth Rate-Death Rate]

\*The figure in the bracket is the growth rate from 1971-91

\*The unnatural growth rate for the period 1991-71 estimated as actual growth rate from 1971-91-Natural growth rate from (1971-81+1981-91) the national, as cited in the report, Archana Sharma, *A situational Analysis of Women and Girls in Assam*, New Delhi:

National Commission for Women, accessed on 15 September, 2008, URL:

<http://ncw.nic.in/pdfreports/Gender%20Profile-Assam.pdf>, p. 90

Based on the 1951 growth rate, Assam should have a population of about 15 million but the state has an extra seven million population. These extra numbers can be accounted for by either migrants or their descendents. The provisional data for the 1991 census puts the overall population of Assam at 22.29 million and the growth rate at 2.23 percent per year, as sharp drop from the 1971 figure of around 3.4 percent. The change in growth patterns indicates, first, a fall in migration from Bangladesh after the beginning of an anti-alien movement in Assam in 1979, and second, a swing in out migration from Bangladesh to West Bengal instead of Assam in the 1960's. Bengali speakers dominate in West Bengal making movements into the area easier for migrants (Hazarika 1993: 44-49).



The growth rate of Population of the State had a continuous increase with marginal fluctuations from 1901 to 1971. The growth rate during this period was much higher than the growth rate of the population of the country. Since 1981, it showed a decelerating trend. In 1981, it was estimated to be lower than the growth rate of population of the country; in 1991 it was marginally higher than the latter. In 2001, it decreased considerably and the population in the State grew at a lower rate than the all India population growth rate. This decadal variation of total population was of 18.85 per cent in the State and the all India growth rate was 21.34 per cent (AHDR 2003).

**Table 3.XIX**  
**Proportion of Muslim Population in India and Assam**

Years	India	Assam
1911	22.39	16.23
1931	23.49	22.78
1951	9.91	24.68
1961	10.71	25.30
1971	11.21	28.43
1991	12.12	28.43
2001	13.42	30.91

Sources: Census of India, various years as cited in Anup Saikia (2005), "Refugees, Illegal Migrants and Local Perceptions in India's Far East", Paper presented at the 25<sup>th</sup> IUSSP International Population Conference held at Tours, France 18-23 July 2005

An estimation of population growth in Assam through decadal analysis would not be enough to observe the migration. There is also a need to analyse the growth of Muslim population in Assam as migration of both the Hindus and Muslims occurred throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For this the rate of growth of Muslim population in Assam proves more useful, though this does not enable us to estimate the Hindu migration from Bangladesh. The Muslim population composition in Assam as compared to the country as a whole is given below in the Table 3.XIX. Assam is the second highest Muslim majority state in India after Jammu and Kashmir. Since 1911, the composition of Muslim population in Assam stated to be lower during the period of 1911-1931. But suddenly the population of Muslims in Assam started growing due to the migration of Muslims from Bangladesh in search of greener pastures. Presently Muslim constituted around 31 percent of the total population according to the 2001 census report (Hazarika 1993: 45-47).

If we look at the various census figures we can observe a steep rise of Muslim population in Assam between the period of 1971 and 1991. During 1951-61 the growth rate of Muslims in Assam was 38.35 per cent, compared to 33.71 per cent for the Hindus and the natural growth rate of Assam during that period was about 22.4 percent. The census figures of 1971 and 1991 shows that there has been a steady to rapid rise in the Muslim population in districts proximate to the border, confirming apprehensions of a continuing influx of people from Bangladesh. This, perhaps, goes a long way to explain the rather high Muslim growth rate in Assam, estimated at 77.42 per cent between 1971 and 1991. In 1971, Muslims, for instance, comprised 64.46 per cent of the population in Dhubri district. This rose to 70.45 per cent in 1991 - a total growth of 77.42 per cent between 1971 and 1991. By 2001 the proportion of Muslims had risen further to 74.29 per cent of the population in Dhubri. By 2001, the Muslim population in Barpeta rose from 56.07 per cent in 1991 to 59.3 per cent; in Goalpara, from 50.18 per cent to 53.71 per cent, and Hailakandi from 54.79 per cent to 57.6 per cent. Significantly, two new districts joined the list of Muslim majority districts in Assam by 2001: Karimganj, where the Muslim population rose from 49.17 per cent in 1991 to 52.3 per cent; and Nagaon, where the community's population grew from 47.19 per cent in 1991 to 50.99 percent (Hussain 2004).

It's very important to make a distinction between the indigenous Assamese-speaking Muslims and Bangladeshi migrants. Aside from the Kamrup district, the heartland of the indigenous Assamese Muslims – whose origin can be traced to the forays of the pre-Mughals in the 13<sup>th</sup> century – is located around the tea growing districts of Jorhat, Golaghat, Sivasagar and Dibrugarh. In Jorhat district the Muslims comprised just 3.89 per cent of the total population in 1971, rising to 4.32 per cent in 1991 and the growth rate was 48.04 per cent during that period. In Sivasagar, Muslims accounted for 6.65 per cent of the population in 1971, climbing to 7.63 per cent in 1991; in Dibrugarh from 3.66 per cent of the total population in 1971 to 4.49 per cent in 1991; and in Golaghat, Muslims comprised 5.17 per cent of the population in 1971, rising to 7.11 per cent in 1991. It is useful to note, in this context, that the growth rate of the Hindu population in Jorhat, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh and Golaghat was between 32 and 49 per cent over the

1971-1991 periods, closely comparable to the rates of growth for the indigenous Muslim populations (Hussein 2004 & Assam Governors Report 1998).

From the above discussion, it can be drawn from the facts that migration from Bangladesh after 1971 was exclusively Muslims. And such growth rate of Muslim during 1971-1991 can only be attributed only to migration from Bangladesh. As mentioned above about the growth rate of indigenous Muslims in Assam, fertility rates of the indigenous Assamese Muslims, who are educated, have high economic and income levels are in no way higher than Muslims across other parts of India. Given their high literacy rates, it is very likely that fertility rates of the indigenous Assamese Muslims are lower than those of Muslims residing in other states of India. Finally, since Muslims from other states of India are not unduly attracted to migrate to Assam, it establishes beyond reasonable doubt that the abnormal growth of Muslim population in Assam lies the Bangladeshi migration factor (Assam Governors Report 1998).

# Chapter

# 4

---

## **MIGRATION, CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE IN ASSAM**

---

#### 4. I Introduction

People while migrating contribute as well as trigger conflict in the host country. Migration can relieve negative or low population pressure, labour shortages and economic growth and relieve poverty in the host. However, the migrants can be a burden in an underdeveloped economy and may trigger conflict. Migration can generate demographic changes, scarcity of resources, environmental degradation and may upset ethnic balances - leading to competition between the natives and migrants for controlling over resources finally ending up in conflict. Assam being rich in resources has been the destination of especially the Bangladeshi and Nepali migrants. But large-scale population increase and the demographic changes led to more impoverishment in an underdeveloped economy like Assam. The presence of large-scale poverty and unemployment led to a fierce competition between the native and the migrant population for controlling jobs and resources. The middle class Assamese also feared of being outnumbered by the presence of migrants.

The feeling of being outnumbered, deprived economic conditions led to resentment among the Assamese people and started demanding the expulsion of migrants from Assam leading to a popular agitation called the Assam Movement. The movement was peaceful later turned out violent leading to the killing of thousands of people. An analysis and discussion of the reasons of the movement are presented in detail in this chapter. A brief discussion of some case studies related to migration and conflict has been presented in the beginning of the chapter. It also presents a detailed discussion of the Assam Movement and other related issues including violence. The State and the Central government responses to meet the grievances of the agitators through Assam Accord are also analysed. Both primary and secondary resources have been used to analyse the chapter. The primary sources comprise of the State Assembly Debate and Parliament Debate especially to discuss and analyse the whole movement. Meanwhile, the interviews with the experts, conducted during the filed trip to Bangladesh and Nepal have also been added to analyse further. The secondary sources include books and various articles that are related to the case study.

#### **4. II \_\_\_ Theoretical Dimensions of Migration and Conflict**

Migration occurs due to environmental, social, economic, some natural or human-made disasters, communal conflict, political instability etc. Individuals, families, group of people migrate to escape stressful situations or make adjustments in changing contexts to seek better opportunities in new locations (Clark 2007: 1). When migrants see ample economic opportunities and higher income including jobs, education and better living conditions in the destination, they migrate (Guibernau & Rex 1997: 2-3).

However, while doing so, they either contribute or trigger conflict in the receiving area. Migrants are considered an asset when their contribution for the development, is beneficial and positive. According to Piore (1979: 1), "Migration is supposed to relieve population pressure, overcome rural unemployment, and generate scarce foreign exchange and to develop the skills requisite for an industrial labour force in the sending country. In the receiving country migrants are supposed to complement native labour and overcome critical labour shortages." Some countries for instance, Malaysia, Canada, Thailand and Malawi show the stunning capacity of some societies to absorb migrants (Dixon 1994: 21). Migration is a source of low cost labour for host countries, while the remittances of migrant workers are an important source of foreign exchange in sending countries. According to the World Bank, remittances worldwide were estimated at \$316000 million in 2009 (IOM 2010: 117).

Migration can be a powerful force for economic growth and innovation in destination countries; and poverty reduction and development in poorer origin countries (UNDP 2009a: 16-17). Migration can have considerable benefits in the host societies, for example, they can help the country to adjust to low or negative population growth, labour shortages, increase the flexibility of labour markets to respond to seasonal and cyclical fluctuations in the economy, fill labour gaps in specific sectors or industries; and strengthen the competitiveness of certain sectors in the global market (IOM 2010: 12-13).

Migration has certainly been source of intense conflict in the host societies. Ancient migrations and colonial expansion involved conquest of territory and peoples; later, spontaneous or colonially induced migrations in Africa and Asia contributed to ethnic

conflict that has persisted in the post-colonial states (Suhrke 1993: 15). Large scale migration can cause demographic imbalances, environmental degradation and has security implications in the host. The receiving country may face scarcity of resources triggering native migrant competition for controlling resources which ultimately lead to conflict in the host causing instability, civil strife and insurgency. Conflict over scarce resources, such as minerals, water and particularly land/territory is a major source of armed struggle between the migrants and native people in the receiving state (Dixon 1994: 6-7; Wenche & Tanja 1998: 303-306; Gleditsch 1998: 381-399; Clark 2007: 16).

For example, the growth of violent insurgency in Tripura (1980-1988) caused due to shift in ethnic balance<sup>1</sup> due to migration of Hindus from East Pakistan/Bangladesh that diminished only after the government agreed to return land to dispossessed Tripuris and to stop influx of Bangladeshis. However, as the migration continued, this agreement is in jeopardy (Hazarika 1993: 60-61). However, a small group of migrants can rarely be the cause of destabilisation in the host. Suhrke views (1993: 15), "If the migrants are destitute and few in numbers, they are too weak to make demands, and too few to be an agent of destabilization, they are more likely to become passive victims than a source of conflict. However, large population flows may cause destabilization by overwhelming the administrative apparatus of the state or the absorptive capacity and in that case, an endemic tension and violence may erupt."

If the receiving country faces perennial problem of poverty, the large-scale migration can impose new demands upon jobs, local waters, sanitation systems, health and education services etc. leading to shortages culminating conflict between migrants vs. natives (Weiner 1992: 319; Reuveny 2007: 657-659). Richmond (1988: 42-43) views that when migrants having different cultural background migrate to a place which is not culturally cohesive, tends to trigger intense conflict. According to him, "Conflict may arise out of competition for scarce resources, differential distribution of power within the society, fundamental opposition of value supplies and inherent contradictions in the values held and the institutions serving them. Competition between migrants and the local population

---

<sup>1</sup> In Tripura, the original Buddhist and Christian inhabitants now make up less than 30 percent of the state's population.

arises when there is a disagreement on the value of given objects or goals, both material and symbolic and when these are in short supply.”

Migration within and into a multi-ethnic society can have a destabilizing effects and tends to perpetuate intense conflicts. The conflict intensifies when different ethnic groups exist in the host and a strong sense of nativism ‘sons of the soil’ persists. The dominance of the settled ethnic groups if challenged due to migration of one distinct ethnic group then conflict is inevitable and it can result in ethnic war and even genocide (Goldstone 2002: 4-5; Safa & Tait 1975: 6; Weiner 1978: 3-8). Such conflict occurred due to movement of the Han Chinese into the Uigher areas of Xinjiang and into Tibet; the Bantu migrations into southern Africa which led to wars throughout the continent; and forced movements of people within the Soviet Union has led to a legacy of ethnic and separatist conflicts (Raleigh, et. al. 2008: 36).

However, migrants absorption capacities, depending on the extent of the problems, developed countries are most successful (in absorbing the migrants) as they likely to mitigate the problems through technological innovation and institutional redesign. But the LDC’s or the underdeveloped economies depending highly on the environment for survival are less likely to alleviate such problems since they lack wealth and expertise (Reuveny 2005; 2007: 658). There are several cases of migration leading to conflict. Reuveny viewed that migration which has been induced by environmental change is likely to be most prevalent in areas that are at the same time affected by severe environmental problems and are highly dependent on the environment for livelihood, such as in developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America (Reuveny 2007: 659-660). Some of the cases related to migration and conflict are the following: -

#### **4. II.i \_\_\_ Case of Pakistan**

Pakistan has experienced a number of social or ethnic-based violent incidents in urban centres such as Karachi during 1980-81. The root causes of such violence are the growing environmental pressures, i.e. population growth, soil erosion, deforestation and water pollution etc. generated shortage of land and water. In rural areas, small farmers were forced off the land by large land-owners heightening tensions between the haves and the



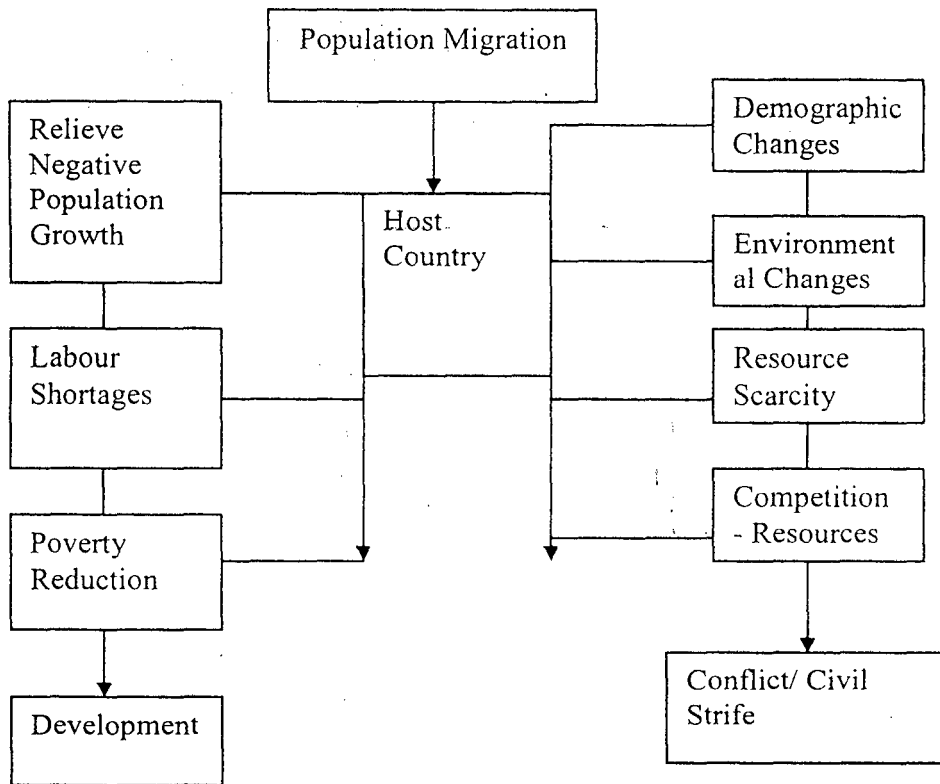
have-nots that led to periodic violence between them. The decreased agricultural output stemming from the scarcity of land and water triggered a massive rural to urban migration in Pakistan (Geweski & Dixon 1996). The urban population swelled due to migration of marginalized farmers has exacerbated urban slums which suffer from a chronic shortage of basic urban resources including tap water. Coupled with the authorities' difficulties to meet these growing demands, the economically strong social groups have successfully appropriated urban amenities which they rent or resell at high costs to poor migrants. Economic inequalities have heightened tensions between long-standing ethnic rivals, and created conditions with a high potential for violence. Thus, urban violence has occurred in the cities of Hyderabad, Islamabad, and Rawalpindi. In Karachi, competition over increasingly scarce urban resources i.e. electrical power, have induced a series of violent incidents between the Punjabis, Pathans, and Sindhi peoples (Dixon & Percival 1996 in Schwartz & Singh 1999: 21-23).

#### **4. II.ii Case of Sudan**

Sudan devastated by civil war between north and south that engulfed the nation from 1966-1972, has witnessed an outbreak of north-south violence in 1983. Sudan impelled by a restructuring of the international economy and constrained by a legacy of colonial rule that conferred only the capability for resource extraction to the exclusion of industrialization, the Jellaba (Arab Sudanese with relative wealth and political power) introduced large-scale mechanized farming in Northern Sudan after independence was achieved in 1956 (Suliman 1997: 99-102). By the 1980's, arable land scarcity, induced in part by the environmental ramification such as soil degradation, deforestation, shortage of rainfall (a precipitation decrease by nearly 50 percent) and periodic drought, forced the Jallaba to move southern Sudan in search of virgin land and resources. Development projects in Southern Sudan incited grass-roots mobilization by southern Sudanese and ecologically marginalized northern Sudanese. With the formation of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA, later the Sudan People's Liberation Movement - SPLM), the marginalized people had a means to pursue action. Violence broke out not long after, when the SPLA organized attacks against the installations of the Jonglei Canal and

several oil-exploration companies (Molvoer 1991: 175-188; Schwartz & Singh 1999: 23-25).

**Flow Chart 4.I**



**4. II.iii Case of Kenya**

In Kenya, ethnic clashes, between various tribes i.e. amongst pastoralists, between pastoralists and farming tribes, has become more evident and has claimed lives of thousands of individuals. In particular, the clashes between the Kalenjin (as well as other pastoralists) and Kikuyus, have become acute since 1991. The over fishing by the people and water pollution in the Lake Victoria (toxic chemicals flowing in from the seven Kenyan rivers that feed Victoria) has experienced significant reduction in fish stock levels.<sup>2</sup> The sustainable yield for Lake Victoria is approximately 100000 metric tons per year but the figure exceeded and in 1991, Kenyans alone caught 186000 metric tons of

<sup>2</sup> The carrying of toxic chemicals has resulted in a massive intrusion of nitrogen, phosphorus, and sulphur, which has boosted the reproduction of oxygen-usurping seaweed in the lake and led to a "death zone" for fish.

fish. Large-scale deforestation (during 1970-1990, Kenya lost 11450 hectares of forests) and inappropriate cultivation practices, use of toxic chemicals and pollution, contributed to Kenya's alarming desertification. Nearly 83 percent of the total areas of Kenya are affected by desertification to varying degrees (Lang 1995 in Schwartz & Singh 1999: 25).

Depleted fish stocks and increasingly scarce fertile land forced the Kikuyu peoples, who received special privileges during colonial rule, to migrate in search of fertile highlands and new land since the 1960's; especially to the Rift Valley, where the Kalenjin peoples and other pastoralists reside. Violent clashes broke out between various ethnic groups in 1991 and the most prominent clashes have occurred between the Kalenjin warriors and members of pastoralist tribes such as the Masaai, and the Kikuyu peoples. Tribe members of the Luo, Luhya, Kisii, Kamba, Meru, and Teso, have also been targets of the Kalenjin warriors and the Masaai. By the end of 1993, some 1500 people were killed, about 1 percent of the population has been displaced, and the area affected covered about 25 percent of Kenya. More recently, in 1994, the clashes spread to areas that formerly were calm, such as parts of the Coast and Western Pokot and around 10000 people were killed in violence (Lang 1995 in Schwartz & Singh 1999: 26).

#### **4. II.iv Case of El Salvador – Honduras**

In 1969, El Salvador had depleted nearly the entire stock of its virgin forests along with the over-irrigation of the small tracts of land that they had been forced onto by large landowners, soil quickly eroded and food production fell rapidly. Similar conditions prevailed in Honduras. Faced with growing resource shortages and declining agricultural activity, small farmers, an estimated of 0.3 million El Salvadoran began to migrate to Honduras - which was perceived as a country with greater resource abundance. A cycle of poverty for small Honduran farmers began which increased environmental degradation and diminished agricultural productivity. The arrival of Salvadoran migrants exacerbated resource competition between the large and small farmers in Honduras and large landowners blamed the Salvadoran for such economic woes of the small Honduran farmers. The Salvadoran migrants were subsequently expelled from Honduras promoting El Salvador to retaliate with refugee restrictions of their own. The political battle quickly

escalated, and climaxed on July 14, 1969, when El Salvador invaded Honduras (Durham 1979; Dixon & Valerie 1996, as cited in Schwartz & Singh 1999: 27-28).

#### **4. III \_\_\_ Why Conflict in Assam**

The state of Assam is a melting pot of tribes and conglomeration of thousands of languages, traditions and also ethnically sensitive (Hazarika 1993: 11-12). Migration has been a major source of violent conflict in India's northeast since the early twentieth century. Large scale migration from Bangladesh and Nepal triggered competition for controlling over resources and the identity complexities of Assamese people. The migrants having different culture and religion, and the chauvinist character of the Assamese nationalism led to a violent campaigning against the migrants in the name of preserving Assamese identity (Gaan 2001: 165-166). Initially, migrants were accepted by the Assamese so long as they were only labourers and peasants. Social tensions began to surface when they occupied their land, administration, government jobs and began to prosper. They were seen as a physical, religious and cultural threat to the lifestyles of the Assamese (Hazarika 1993: 57).

The exploitation of resources including tea and oil has not been beneficial for the Assamese. Assam produces a major share of India's tea, jute, oil and plywood but remains economically-industrially backward. The major investments have been in the tea in the private sector and oil in the public sector, which have not benefited Assam so much as the tea companies in Calcutta and India's foreign-oil import bill (Hazarika 1993: 56; 2001a: 11-15). The economic deprivation for the local population is still there. The presence of high unemployment and poverty has further augmented the tensions. It became acute when the local middle class Assamese inhabitants cultivated their identity and culture feared of being swamped (as in case of Tripura) away by the presence of migrants within their own home land (Gaan 2001: 166-167). Kumar in a discussion viewed, "Ethnic identity of the Assamese people enhanced the level of conflict between the migrants and the local population. Around 32 million people have migrated to USA during 2001-2009 and have contributed towards USA's consolidation as a superpower but on the other hand it created lots of problems in the USA also. Huntington (2004)

views that he is afraid that by the end of this century, there will no white people in USA and they will become minority due to migration of the Mexicans, Spanish, Hispanic, South Asians etc. to USA.”<sup>3</sup>

Dahal and Subedi, in a discussion viewed, “When migrants don’t show their identity, there is hardly any possibility of conflict. When migrants do not disturb the existing economic situation in the receiving country they do not become a problem for the locals. And when a migrant stays in a particular place at the lower level of the society and there may not be any problem as such. Once these migrants become prosperous and increases their numbers, the conflict tends to start. Conflict would occur when the migrants make inroads into the economy and develop some social pressures and when local inhabitants start thinking that they might get outnumbered and jobless. To maintain their stronghold they show their ethnic identity.”<sup>4</sup>

#### **4. III.i \_\_\_ Assamese Identity and Sub-Nationalism**

Due to century old stream of migration, Assam became a home of diverse cultural streams, the indo-Aryan and the Austro-Mongoloid being the central ones. No such groups called Assamese came to Assam carrying Assamese language or culture. The Assamese identity is the synthesis of many languages, culture of various migrated folk (Das 1983: 13-26 & Sharma 2006: 74-77). The Assamese identity has developed with the intermingling of settlers with the original inhabitants of proto-austroloid and mongoloid races, such as Bodos, Kacharis, Chutias, Miris, Mikirs, Dimasas, Karbis and others over centuries (Chhabra 1992: 3). Credit must be given to the liberal outlook of the various groups of people for assimilation within their varying cultural and linguistic hues. The contributions that Aryaṅ Hindus have influenced, the same way Tibeto-Burman, Shan-Tai have altogether contributed for creating Assamese group (Das 1983: 14-16). Bhattacharya while reflecting on the composition of the Assamese identity and nationality observes, “Assamese is a heterogeneous community that includes tribal

---

<sup>3</sup> In a discussion with Dhruva Kumar, CNAS, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu on 25/04/09, during field visit to Kathmandu.

<sup>4</sup> In a discussion with Dilli Ram Dahal, CNAS & Bhim Subedi, Department of Geography, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu on 30/04/09, during field visit to Kathmandu.

groups like the Rabhas, Bodos, the Tiwas, Mishings, Karbis and the Dimasas, compared to these members of this composite nationality, the Bengalis and other are new comers to the land. A large number of Nepalis from Nepal also came here in the last few decades” (Bhattacharya 1980: 83).

The idea of composite Assamese nationality took a shape during the later part of the Ahom rule. According to Chatterji (1954: 54), “The late medieval period in the history of Assam under the Ahom kings was as we have seen, a period partly of travail for Assam, when her various tribal peoples of Mongoloid origin – the original Bodos and others, and the Austric people allied to the Khasis, together with that strong group of Shan newcomers, the Ahoms-were finally welded together as a single Assamese speaking nation – the Aryan Assamese language having already taken shape at the beginning of this period from Magadhi Prakrit and Apabhramsa dialects brought by settlers from Bihar and North Bengal during the greater part of the first millennium A.D.”

Assamese identity is not restricted only to the native speakers of the Assamese language but embrace all those who come within the broader field of Assamese culture (Mishra 2001: 1 & Bhattacharya 1985: 2-14). The word Assamese is anglicized formation built on the same principle of English syntax as Singhalese, Canarese etc. the people call this land *Asom*, and the word that has been built on it to mean the language and the people who speak it, is *Asomiya* (Barua 1991: 94 & Das 1983a: 13-14). Thus, the term “Assamese” refers to the linguistic identity –of the Asamiyas rather than to the territorial identity of the people of Assam. The term “Assamese” refers to the group of people who speaks Assamese language and also those people who are having different languages but adopted and acquired Assamese language either formally or informally.

The Assamese language which was spoken for a long time looked upon by Bengalis and non-Bengalis as an uncouth dialect of Bengali. The use of the same script (with two special letters for Assamese) and a very general agreement in grammar was largely responsible for it terming Assamese as vulgar language (Chatterji 1954: 12). This is not acceptable, Gierson viewed, (Linguistic Survey of India: 102), “Assamese is a sister language and not a daughter of Bengali language.” Gierson also viewed that Assamese

language has no relation with Bengali and it is independent language having only a common origin with the later (Das 1982: 18).

The Assamese nationalism started to take shape in 1850 through the political mobilization of the Assamese middle class on the language issue (Guha 1980: 1700). There was a patriotic feeling among the Assamese for their language started against the use of Bengali language started almost immediately after the establishment of the British rule in Assam. However, Nathan Brown and Miles Bronson – Christian Missionaries, were able to appreciate the racy qualities of pure Assamese with their journal *Arunodoi* (1846) and their bible translations sought to rehabilitate Assamese while it was neglected in the school and the law court. Anandaram Dhekial Phukan (1829-1859), started the new literary movement in Assamese and his hard work restored the proper place to the Assamese language. The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, Sir George Campbell, made Assamese the language of education and administration for its native speakers in 1873 (Chatterji 1954: 13).

Calcutta, later on Gauhati and Jorhat became the centre place to many of the Assamese students for development and modernization of Assamese literature and intellectual development. During 1889 a band of young Assamese trained in Calcutta sought to emulate the Bengalis in their creative zeal in literature by bringing out the well known literary journal the *Jonaki* (Moonlight) which marked an epoch in Assam. Assam in this way received three of her greatest modern writers and thought – leaders: Hem Chandra Goswami (1872-1928), Laxminath Bezbarua (1868-1938) and Chandra Kumar Agarwala (1867-1938)<sup>5</sup>. These three writers established Assamese as a modern Indian language a worthy sister of Bengali and Oriya, Urdu and Hindi and Gujrati and Marathi (Chatterji 1954: 14).

---

<sup>5</sup> Hem Chandra Goswami was a poet and critic, general essayist and student of Assamese literature, whose voluminous *Asomiya Sahityar Chaneki* or 'Typical Selections from Assamese literature' published at the instance of the late Asutosh Mukherjee from the University of Calcutta forms a landmark in the study of early Assamese literature just as his edition of the *Hem-Kosh*, an etymological dictionary of Assamese compiled by Hem Chandra Barua, was until recently, the most authoritative dictionary of Assamese language. Laxminath Bezbarua was one of the most versatile of writers with an all-embracing genius and a wide knowledge of an sympathy for men and their ways. He was a poet, an essayist, novelist, dramatist, critic, a humorous and a satirical writer. Chandra Kumar Agarwala, a romantic poet kept pace with the other two writers in this great trio, by his humanism, his love of nature, his idealism and his intense qualities as writer (Chatterji 1954: 14).

The Assamese nationalism gradually developed as a comprehensive ideology which underwent organized consolidation during 1920s. Tarun Ram Phukan, while presiding over the annual conference of the Assam Sahitya Sabha in 1927, he said, "We Assamese people are a distinct nationality amongst Indian. Though our language is Sanskrit based, it is a distinct language. A rising nationality shows signs of life by way of extending domination over others. Alas! It is otherwise with us; we are incapable of self defence today, we are not only dependent, but even a dependent neighbour is trying to swallow us, taking advantage of our helplessness. Brother Asomiya! Recollect your past glory to have an understanding of the present situation" (Guha 1980: 1702-03).

Until 1947, Assamese nationalism was basically protectionist and defensive but later it took an aggressive turn with the help of middle class people started emerging as more ambitious and shaped as more chauvinistic character. The Assamese people started to look at their mother language as an effective tool of collective self-assertion. The middle class Assamese people found it convenient in identifying the Bengali language as barricade on cultivating a sense of grievances against them (Guha 1980: 1703). Later it became aggressive and even riots took place across the state against non-Assamese in 1948, 1950, 1960, 1968, 1972 and 1980 in the Brahmaputra valley. Large scale genocides, giving expression to anti - Bengali hatred in particular, began to take place from 1960 onwards (Baruah 1986: 1184-1205).

The Nepalis having migrated to Assam found convenient the socio-economic climate, decided to settle finally in different parts of the state where the conditions permitted. The settlement of the Nepalis grew up adjacent to the Assamese villages and other tribal belts and their versatility to perform from dairy farming, agricultural labourers to Darban etc. found him mingled with the Assamese people at every walks of life. These earlier migrants have assimilated and integrated and later adopted Assamese as their language and culture preferred to show their identity as Nepali Asomiya (Nath 2003b: 50-51). The Nepalis accepted Assamese as medium of instructions but many other migrants, especially migrant Bengalis declined to do so. The Nepalis being small in number thought that their interests could well be addressed and protected if mingled with the



Assamese community (Nath 2003b: 54). The assimilation of Nepalis with the Assamese society and culture is evident from various angles. In an article written by former ASS president late Tirtha Nath Sharma, *Asomot Nepali* views, “Ratikanto Upadhaya was a disciple of great Vashnyavite Srimanta Shankardeva was a Nepali. Even the Satras established in Sivasagar and Nagaon district was also known as Nepali Satra.” Even Jitendra Nath Goswami, the former secretary and president of ASS belongs to the Nepali community. Mohanlal Upadhaya, a vashnyavite, and chief of Shankari Sangha, spreading vaishnavism<sup>6</sup> belongs to Nepali community (Sharma & Sharma 1987: 13-14).

The assimilation of the Nepali migrants is evident when some educated Nepalis took initiative to spread Assamese language through establishing Assamese medium schools in different parts of Assam. For e.g. Chhabilal Upadhaya-freedom fighter took an active part in establishing national Schools in the Assamese medium and gave shape to the formation of Behali High School in Sonitpur district in 1943. Again it was due to the initiative of Babudhan Thapa, that the Jawaharlal Uchha Buniyadi Bidyalaya of Naojan in Golaghat district was set up in 1954 (Nath 2003b: 55 & Handique 1998: 14-16). Some writers like Hari Prasad Gorkha Rai, Agni Bahadur Chetri, Man Bahadur Chetri, Tikaram Upadhaya contributed for developing Assamese language by their writing, have enriched the language. Hari Prasad Rai of Kohima and D. B. Sonar of Shillong were associated with the Assam Sahitya Sabha from its early days. Hari Bhakta Kochowal was also a prolific writer and was the assistant editor of *Rodali*, published at the Digboi session of the Assam Sahitya Sabha (Nath 2003b: 52 & 54).

During Indian struggle for independence, the Nepalis spontaneous participation in Assam was impressive and remarkable one. Guha (1977: 125) views, “The Assam Association which has changed its name and had already been virtually turned into a Congress platform at its Tezpur session, had a special and its last meeting at Jorhat with Chhabilal Upadhaya in the chair in April 1921. Besides condemning the recent evictions of Nepali

---

<sup>6</sup> A social reform movement swept across India between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The *Vaishnavite* movement initiated by Srimanta Sankardeva in Assam in the latter period of the 15<sup>th</sup> century ushered in an era of socio-cultural renaissance in Assam, humanist in content and popular in form, in literature as well as in the vocal and visual arts. It was revolutionary in the sense that Neo-*Vaishnavism* in Assam meant not only a religious faith but a way of life.

graziers from the Kaziranga Reserve Forest and police atrocities on them, the meeting also discussed the non-cooperation programme and organizational matters". The British tried to keep him away from the Congress by often making lucrative offers including jobs. However, Upadhaya, a born patriot, refused to accept and committed to the freedom movement. Perhaps being impressed by his patriotic ideals Hem Barua, former president of the Assam Sahitya Sabha had recognised Chhabilal Upadhyaya as a living symbol of Assamese Nationalism (Hazarika 1979 cited in Upadhaya 2003). Chhabilal Upadhyaya also took the leadership of this community in the Non-cooperation Movement in Assam (Bhandari 1996: 47).

Dalbirsingh Lohar and Bhakta Bahadur Pradhan from Dibrugarh and Digboi also actively participated in the freedom struggle. One Deucharan Upadhaya died in Jorhat jail who went for fast unto death in 1922 (Sharma 1972: 78). Around three hundred Nepali community members participated in the Shanti Sena Bahini and Mrityu bahini organized by Jyoti Prasad Agarwala and Puspallata Das during the Quit India Movement of 1942 at Teliagaon, Chatia, Behali etc. (Mahanta 1996 & Bhandari 1996: 104-105). A procession marched from the Shanti Sena camp, Teliagaon to Dhekiajuli on 20 September, 1942 and many volunteers were arrested by the police among whom Kashinath Luitel and Homnath Guragain were from the Nepali community. They were sent to Tezpur jail (Sharma 1986: 542-44; Bhandari 1996: 111 & Jaishi 1990: 129-130).

The Bengali-speaking population which increased by only 20.04 percent in the 1951-60 periods showed an increase of 41 percent during the 1961-70 period. However, the Assamese speaking population during 1961-1971 period increased by only 31 percent, despite the fact that a large section of migrant Bengali Muslims may have returned Assamese as their mother-tongue for political and other considerations. The Bengali speaking population in reconstituted post – independence Assam declined from 30 percent in 1931 to 21 percent in 1951 and 20 percent in 1971 and the chief reason behind this was the separation of Sylhet which alone had a population of approximately 2 million as against the rest of Assam's population of approximately 9 million. According to the census report of 1951, there were 1717381 Bengali speaking people and it increased to

2907100 by 1981 in Assam which shows an increase of almost 1.2 million people within a span of 30 years (Mishra 1981: 290-292; Guha 1980: 1699-1719; Guha 1993: 19).

According to the 2001 Census report, Assam has 7343338 Bengali speaking people and it also reveals the decline of Assamese speaking population in seven districts; Barpeta, Darrang, Sonitpur, Morigaon, Bongaigaon, Lakhimpur and Dhemaji. Out of these, Barpeta, Darrang, Sonitpur and Morigaon have a sizable population of migrant settlers (Singh 2008: 305-316 & Hussain 2004). The table shows the decline of Assamese speaking population in the above mentioned districts. The basic fear among the Assamese people is losing their identity in the hands of overwhelmed number of Bangladeshis migrants (Swain 1996: 198-199 & Guha 1993: 15). Bezbaruah quotes, "The basic fear of the Assamese people was that Assam will be under the control of Bangladeshis and in future there will be scarcities of jobs for the locals and none of the Assamese people would top at the bureaucratic structure" (Bezbarua 1983: 14-15). Singh (1984: 67), views, "The rate of earlier migration was small but it soon increased and what was originally a trickling rill of migrants, so became a torrent and the Assamese developed genuine fear of being swamped by them and eventually reduced to a linguistic minority in their own homeland."

Farooq viewed that the fear of being overwhelmed – outnumbered by the migrants generated conflict along with competition on control of resources. He further commented, "Migration from Bangladesh to Indian border states, especially Assam and West Bengal has been continuing and ongoing process. The people in the receiving area resented against these people as they took/settled in their land – occupied their lands. Since British rule, Assam and East Bengal had cordial relation with distinct cultural and religious affiliation. Migrants may not prefer other North-eastern due to terrain/inaccessible borders but people always had easy route/access with Assam. The conflict occurred in Assam when the local people started thinking that they would be overwhelmed by the migrants."<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> In a discussion with Lt. Colonel Farooq, Bangladesh Army on 4/06/09, during field trip to Dhaka.

#### 4. III.ii Political Assertion and Participation

It is alleged that the Bangladeshi migrants have always been exploited as they constitute a major vote bank for the political parties guided mostly by opportunistic policies. The migrants belonging to the minority community are the vote banks for the Congress party in Assam (Sarmah 1999: 73-75). There are 23 Assembly constituencies in the state in which Muslims constitute 50 to 90 percent of the total population. In seven other assembly constituencies, they are a numerical strength of 40 to 49 percent. In other words, Muslims constitute decisive factor in 30 out of 126 assembly constituencies (Ahmed 2006: 114).

Stating about using migrants as their vote banks and government inaction, Biraj Kumar Sharma commented, "Most of Bangladeshi migrants managed to get support from the government during 1971 and their names got enlisted into the electoral rolls. During the time of Chief Minister, Sarat Chandra Singha, there was an order from the Ministry of Home Affairs, government of India on 10 August. If that order was followed properly during that period there wouldn't have been this situation today. The letter reads, 'as the state and Union Territory administration may be aware, a large number of Bangladeshi nationals have been coming to India unauthorisedly and some of them are reported to be trying to get their names included in the electoral rolls by suppressing information about their Bangladesh nationality and posing as Indian citizens. To prevent this, it is requested that the state CID's may be instructed to take immediate steps to check the electoral rolls, copies of which can be had from the Electoral Registration Officers concerned. If on check, the state CID's discover the names of Bangladeshi nationals or other foreigners in the electoral rolls, they may be brought to the notice of the concerned ERO, together with the relevant information and prima facie evidence on the basis of which the individual is considered to be a Bangladeshi nationals or other foreigner for necessary action'. This order was not implemented by the Singha government – if that work would have been completed on time – there would have no foreigners in Assam". However, in the same discussion, Sarat Chandra Singha replied by saying that the circular was implemented properly (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate, 1986, 2 April, Vol. II, No.15: 102-103).

Subramaniam Swamy in a discussion on the issue of 'Assam' viewed, "There is certainly Assamese sub-culture which has to be protected. We certainly believe that if we have an electoral roll – that should be devoid of the illegal migrants. A government that is elected on the basis of that electoral roll would be in a position to ensure the Assamese sub-culture. It would see that the sub-culture is protected, but this government is unfortunately not in a position to carry through that and because of lack of statesmanship, and because the illegal migrants who happen to be their voters – that may be the consideration – have prevented them from even removing their names from the electoral rolls" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, May 5: 373).

Shambhu Kumaran<sup>8</sup> and Lok Raj Baral<sup>9</sup> in a discussion also agreed about the vote bank politics of the political parties. They commented, "The political parties in Assam exploited the Bangladeshi and Nepali migrants for their vote bank, particularly by the Congress party. The minority vote bank politics of the Congress party led to inclusion of migrants into the voter list. Nepalis do not constitute a large group but the same party too used Nepalis as candidates in the Nepali inhabited areas during election. Bangladesh government also tries to hide the realities of population migration and that's what makes the problem more vulnerable and easier for the political parties to exploit them. It's a very complicated issue and question of national security involves, such population is more vulnerable to subversive activities as they have local links and certain times they create problems."

In Assam, a steady increase of voters is observed in various years occurred with the help of corrupt government official, Bangladeshis managed to get their names enrolled in voter list. The number of voters during 1957-1962 has increased from 4.493 million to 4.943 million with an estimated growth of 10 percent. Again by the next four years, the number of voters increased by 13 percent to 5.585 million and by the year 1970, the number of voters stood at 5.702 million. However, within a year after that the number of voters rose by 10.42 percent to stand at 6.296 million. The political parties manipulated

---

<sup>8</sup> In a discussion with Shambhu Kumaran, First Secretary, Indian Embassy, Nepal on 28/04/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

<sup>9</sup> In a discussion with Lok Raj Baral on 27/04/09, during field trip to Kathmandu

the migrants for their vote banks in return of their protection and also encouraged to ensure their survival that resulted in the increasing number of electors in Assam from 1957 to 1979 (Bezbaruah 2005).

If we observe the data given in the Table 4.I, we can see an increase of more than hundred percent of total electorate since 1952 to 1980. In 1952, Assam had a total electorate of 4141720 but by 1980 Lok Sabha elections, the total electorate counted as 8655056, an increase of total 4513336 number of electorates. Throughout these years Assam had a total increase of 18.15 percent electorate in comparison India's average of 12.63 percent. The Report on the General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Assam (1983), "There had been a steady and abnormal influx of population and corresponding growth of the electorate, more so, after 1962. As against a normal growth of population on a national average of 2 to 3 percent, there had been tremendous increase in Assam, obviously, on account of migration of people from across the borders. Such migration into Assam took place both direct and through other neighbouring states like West Bengal and Meghalaya" (Election Commission of India 1983: 2-3).

**Table 4.I**  
**Figures of Total Electorate as Registered in Assam 1952-1980**

Year	Number of Electors	Increase	Percentage of increasing during the year
1952	4141720		
1957	4495359	353639	
1962	4942816	447457	10 (In 5 years)
1966	5585056	642240	12.99 (In 4 years)
1970	5701805	116749	2.09 (In 4 years)
1971	6296198	594393	10.42 (In 1 year)
1977	7229543	933345	14.82 (In 6 years)
1978(Elections to the Assembly)	7974476	744988	10.30 (in 1 year)
1979	8537497	563024	7.06 (In 1 year)
1980 (Elections to the Lok Sabha)	8655056	117559	

Sources: Election Commission of India (1983), *Report on the General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Assam*, New Delhi, p. 3

The report also blames the state administration for such irregularities in electoral system. The local people drawn from within the state, especially in the border posts were mainly

responsible for freely permitting the migrants to come to India without any check and settled in Assam regularly even during the normal times. The report blames the local official for such increase of voters and if the local officials had the rectitude of observing the strict rule of law would have prevented migration but the same officials allowed, assisted migrants to purchase property, own houses and started enumerating names of a large number of migrants (Election Commission of India 1983: 3-4). The same corrupt Assamese officials, who allowed migrants to enrolled, seen migrants making inroads to Assam's economy, expressed their anxiety and felt that if the waves continue and if succeeded occupying political-administrative positions, they would become minorities and identity would be at stake. These generated fear psychosis loosing their strength (Guha 1980: 1706 & Bhattacharya 2003: 4-6).

The Nepali speaking population staying in Assam has been small in numbers actively participated and got assimilated with the Assamese society later became conscious of their rights and privileges started participating in the political process. The political awareness of the Nepalis in Assam occurred with the formation of All India Gurkha League in Darjeeling by Dambarsingh Gurung on May 15, 1943. The Nepali elite started mobilising their community exerting pressure on the ruling authority for adequate share of power in the administration in Assam and wanted to involve in the electoral politics (Upadhyaya 1984: 20). Nepalis participated in the electoral process even before independence; e.g. Dalbirsingh Lohar was elected to the Assam Legislative Assembly in 1946 as a Congress candidate from Tinsukia constituency and he was also a prominent worker of the Assam Chah Mazdoor Sangha, a labour wing of the Indian National Congress party (Talukdar 1998: 106). Moreover, Chhabilal Upadhyaya was selected as a member of the Tezpur Local Board in 1948 by the Government of Assam whereas Bishnual Upadhyaya was elected to the same office in 1950 (Upadhyaya 1985: 60).

That's the beginning of the participation of Nepalis in electoral politics of Assam. Again the Congress party to get support of the Nepalis in Assam preferred candidature in those constituencies where their population constitutes a sizeable number. To persuade the Congress party to increase the number of Nepali candidates during the first general election to the Assam Legislative Assembly (ALA) held in 1952, the Assam Provincial

Gurkha League (APGL) in an executive committee meeting held at Singri of the undivided Darrang district on 26 July, 1951, adopted a resolution demanding twelve constituencies<sup>10</sup> for the Nepalis. However, the APCC nominates only Dalbirsingh Lohar (won) as its candidate to contest election from Saikhowa constituency totally ignoring the demands of the APGL. The Socialist Party also nominated Prajapati Rijal for South Dhekiajuli constituency (Upadhaya 1984: 20-21). However, Bhakta Bahadur Pradhan – from Digboi, Parashuram Katuwal - North Lakhimpur, Prasad Singh Subba - South Tezpur, Kishan Chandra Thakur - Bihpuria and Dhruvanath Joshi - Shillong, contested as Independent candidates supported by the AIGL (Upadhaya 1984: 21). Since then a number of candidates contesting independently hardly manages to win the election.

In the second general election of 1957, Congress party nominated Bishnual Upadhaya from the Gohpur constituency and he won the election. On the other hand, all the Nepali elite who fought the election either as the nominees of non-Congress parties or as Independent candidates lost the election. The victory of the lone Congress nominee in both the first and the second general elections to the ALA obviously left an indelible impression in the minds of the Nepali elite that their winning prospect would be bright only if they fight the election as the candidate of the ruling Congress Party (Upadhaya 1984: 22). Meanwhile, in the third general election held in 1962, Bishnual Upadhaya – a Congress nominee from the Gohpur constituency manages to win the election for the second time. One more Nepali candidate, Dharmananda Upadhaya, who contested election as candidate of the Socialist Party of India from Saikhoa lost the election (Report of the Third General Election 1962: 40-55).

In 1967 election to the ALA, the Congress party nominates two Nepali candidates; Bishnual Upadhaya and Dalbirsingh Lohar from Gohpur and Tingkhong seat respectively. Lohar lost the election but Bishnual Upadhaya managed to win for third consecutive term. Some other non-Congress Nepali candidates; Ram Chandra Sharmah of Praja Socialist Party, from Gohpur and another candidate of All India Gorkha League, Shivaji Rai from Sarupathar lost the election (Report of the Fourth General Election 1967:

---

<sup>10</sup> North Lakhimpur, Bihpuria, Digboi, Tinsukia, Sivasagar, Nagaon, Dibrugarh, Shillong, Gohpur, South Tezpur, South Dhekiajuli and Paneri



5-55). During 1972 election, one candidate nominated by the Congress party; Chandra Bahadur Chetry from Margherita won the election. However, one more Nepali candidate named Ram Chandra Sharma from Praja Socialist Party (PSP) won the Gohpur Assembly constituency seat. Thus, for the first time, there were two Nepali members from two different political parties won in the ALA election (Upadhaya 1984: 31).

With the formation of Janata Party, immediately after the emergency (June 25, 1975), a number of Nepali candidates shifted their allegiance from the Congress to the Janata party and contested election as a Janata party candidate (Report of the Sixth General Election 1978: 23-24). Ram Chandra Sharma who was elected to the ALA in 1972 as a candidate of the PSP from the Gohpur constituency contested as a nominee of Janata party candidate in 1978 election manages to win. The Nepali candidate managed to win four seats out of which three seats went to Janata party; Kul Bahadur Chetry from Margherita and Padam Bahadur Chauhan from Tamulpur, while one to the Congress party - Bishnulal Upadhaya from Behali (Report of the Sixth General Election 1978: 24-25). Nepali leaders fought the 'controversial' general election of 1983. It is interesting to note that both the winning candidates viz. Padam Bahadur Chauhan from Tamulpur and Kul Bahadur Chetry from Margherita, for the first time could manage berths in the Council of Ministers headed by Hiteswar Saikia in 1983 (Report of the Seventh General Election to the Assam Legislative Assembly, 1983: 55-60).

A sea change has occurred in Assam politics with the coming of AGP to power in 1985 after a long struggle on the issue of foreign nationals. There was a large number of Nepali candidates contested in the election but only two candidates from the Congress party; Kul Bahadur Chetry from Margherita and Swarup Upadhaya from Behali constituency respectively managed to win. Twenty Nepali candidates from different political parties contested the election, two own and the rest lost (Report of the Eighth General Election to the Assam Legislative Assembly and House of the People 1985: 55-179).

In 1991, 18 candidates from different political parties contested election but managed to win three seats who are Congress candidates; Kul Bahadur Chetri from Margherita, Moni Kumar Subba from Naoboicha, Rudra Parajuli from Bodsola. For the first time, Swarup

Upadhyaya, was elected to the Lok Sabha in 1991 (Upadhaya 2003: 257-258). On the eve of the 1996 election to the ALA and Lok Sabha, a number of Nepali candidates contested as nominees of different political parties and as independent candidates. The regional party, AGP and its allies came to power in the ALA. Due to division in Indian Congress party and the consequent formation of Tiwari Congress, Nepali Congressmen in Assam also got divided into two factions. Only Moni Kumar Subba, a Congress candidate from Naoboicha. In 1998, Lok Sabha election, Moni Kumar Subba of the Congress party won from Tezpur constituency of Assam (Upadhaya 2003: 258-259).

During the 2001 election to ALA only one candidate managed to win the election from the Congress party; Tanka Bahadur Rai from Bachala constituency. This time Nepali youths developed an interest in election and the All Assam Nepali Students Union (AANSU) formed a political platform named Special Protected Class Demand Committee (SPCDC)<sup>11</sup> and contested from two constituencies (Margherita and Sootea) and extended issue based support to the independent candidates, viz. Kul Bahadur Chetri and Ganesh Limboo of Rangapara and Dhekiajuli respectively (Upadhaya 2003: 259-260). In 2006 ALA election, Tanka Bahadur Rai, a Congress candidate from Barchala constituency manages to win the seat again, one more Nepali candidate Sanjay Raj Subba from Naoboicha manages to win (ALA website 2011).

#### 4. III.iii Economic Issues

Assam is rich in natural resources but remained poor and economically underdeveloped. The large scale migration of Bangladeshis into Assam is considered as a settler and thereby a competitor for space in every form; land, water, services and jobs etc. The unnatural population growth has contributed towards the growth of unemployment in Assam. The problem of unemployment and poverty continues to be a matter of serious concern. The post-independence Assam witnessed the fast growth in the field of education, but due to lack of proportionate economic development, job opportunities were not generated, a vast number of youth remained unemployed (Singh 1990: 81).

---

<sup>11</sup> The Sentinel (2001), "Nepali Students Form Body to Contest Election", March 5

The incidence of unemployment in Assam is considerably higher than the country as a whole (also high for women). In Assam, the number of unemployed people as a percentage of the labour force has more than doubled during the 1983–2000 period. It has increased from 2.2 percent to 4.6 percent and is twice the figure for India. The unemployment percentage in urban areas was extremely high, 9.8 percent in 1999-2000, and as much as 20.5 percent for women (National Human Development Report 2001: 161). The total number of job-seekers in the Live Register of Assam increased to 1827149 during the year 2006 from 1763430 in 2005-06. A large number of unemployed youths residing in far-flung and less accessible areas do not register their names in the Employment Exchanges and hence the actual figure will be much higher. The percentage of educated job-seekers to total job-seekers was 68 percent (Government of Assam, Finance Department 2008: 39). As per data available from the Employment Exchanges of the State it is revealed that during 2006 the number of educated job-seekers on the Live Register of Employment Exchanges has stood at 1.2 million in 2006 (Economic Survey of Assam 2007-2008: 4).

Assam has been reeling through unemployment since independence and reached an alarming position and it was more acute in pre-Assam Movement period. Citing about the problem of unemployment, Dulal Barua in his statement in the Assembly viewed, “The additional supply of manpower during 1961-71 is determined by three factors; firstly, natural growth of population, secondly, backlog of unemployment and finally the net migration. According to CSO’s estimate the net employable person’s amount to 4.70 million in 1961 and 6.07 million in 1971 adding 1.37 million employable persons during 1961-71. About one percent of the employable persons were unemployed in 1951. By applying the same percentage to the total employable persons as unemployed in 1961 the aggregate backlog during 1961-71 is estimated to be 0.04 million (1 percent of 4.70 million) persons.’ In addition to that nearly 0.2 million people will be added to this figure as migrants coming from outside the state” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1971, April 29, Budget Session, Vol. I, No. 25: 70-80).

According to the Economic Survey of Assam (1975-76: 9-10), “It was estimated that the magnitude of unemployment in Assam during 1975-76 period was of 1.55 million out of

which about 1.15 million - about 74 percent are in the rural areas alone. The total number of applicants according to the live register of employment exchanges increased from 139180 in 1974 to 191118 in March, 1976. The number of educated employment seekers in the live Register increased from 44,371 in 1973 to 85,365 in 1975." Sarat Chandra Singha during his budget speech for the year 1977-78 viewed, "the number of employed persons in June, 1976 stood at 0.809 million as against 0.774 million in 1975. In the private sector, employment increased by 1.14% as against 5.5% in the public sector for the quarter ending March 1976 over the corresponding quarter ending March 1975. The live register of the employment exchanges showed an increase in the number of job seekers being 0.202 million in October 1976" (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1977, 23 March, Vol. I, No. 2: 68-69).

Dulal Chandra Baruah in his statement in the Assembly commented, "There is a circular from Indian Government that at least 75% of the employment should be open for local youths and they should be given preference up to pay of Rs. 500/- i.e. the posts which should carry a salary of Rs. 500/-. But that has not been given effect to by various public sector undertakings; for instances, the Northeast Frontier (NF) railway Assamese local youths having only 22 percent representation till 1971. The Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) Assamese youths representation is 18 percent, in civil aviation it is 2. Because in that organization Assamese youth are working 3 persons in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, 4 persons in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, 2 persons each as drivers and peons. In the public sector undertakings, like the ONGC, though they have shown in the report that representation of the local youths is 40 percent, in close scrutiny it is found to be only 23 percent and most of the employees are 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and 4<sup>th</sup> grade. In respect of the first class and second class posts in ONGC non-Assamese constitutes 79 percent in class II and 82 percent in class I and Assamese represents only 14 percent" (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1971, April 29, Budget Session, Vol. I, No. 25: 81-82).

According to the sixth Report of the Employment, Review Committee (1976: 17), set up by the Assembly reveals, "Till February 21 1976, the NF Railway headquarters at Maligaon had 4474 employees of whom 59 percent had their birthplaces outside Assam, only 1,830 accounting for 41 percent of the total employee had their birth places in

Assam” (Misra 1980: 1360-61). The same report (1976: 23) revealed, “Among the 2,644 employees of the NF Railway Headquarters at Maligaon with birthplaces outside Assam, the bulk (1504) are from erstwhile Dacca accounting for 57 percent, followed by 22 percent from West Bengal. It has been further recorded that employees with Bengali as mother-tongue predominate all classes of jobs, accounting for 60 percent of the total employees and the Assamese constituted only 28 percent” (Misra 1980: 1361-62). The third Employment Review Committee (1979: 50) views, “It was found that in 28 units comprising 7 public sector industries, 16 private sector industries and 5 banks, with a total strength of 29537 employees, only 10473 or 35% had Assamese as their mother tongue. The committee further notes that of 2095 employees in Class I & II only 762 or 36% belongs to Assam” (Barua 1991: 33-34). There are some instances of depriving employment opportunities to the local educated youth in Assam. Dulal Chandra Barua in the Assembly commented, “In Duliajan, Oil India advertised for recruitment of 38 assistant engineers and interviews were called. Some local Assamese youths having good academic records and specialized training also applied for the posts. But the company abruptly changed the place of interview and arranged it in Calcutta where the Bengali people were recruited depriving the local Assamese youths.” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1971, April 29, Budget Session, Vol. I, No. 25: 84).

Dulal Chandra Baruah favoured reservation of local population in the government institutions and introduced a bill called the Assam Employment Reservation Bill in 1967 in the Assembly. However, the Prime Minister of India sent a letter to the Chief Minister of Assam and other responsible offices not to pass the bill. Supporting the bill in the Assembly, he commented, “Here a reference has been made to the letter (No. VI/E2/-30178/69/L&E-3404, dated 10<sup>th</sup> July, 1969) from Shri I. Prasad, secretary to the government of Bihar to the Chief Secretary to the government of Assam. It reads like this subject – preference in employment to local people – I am directed to invite a reference to your wireless message No. Parl/18692, dated the 6<sup>th</sup> June, 1969 that there are no domiciliary restrictions on employment in state government officers/state undertakings. However, Assam government has not initiated any such movement for reservation of jobs for the local people” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1971, April 29, Budget

Session, Vol. I, No. 25: 83). Dulal Chandra Barua added, "For that reason discontentment is prevailing among the Assamese people and they view that the outsiders are taking advantage and exploiting resources" (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1971, April 29, Budget Session, Vol. I, No. 25: 81-82). Kula Bahadur Chetri during discussions on Governor's address argued to take initiative to "Establish industries including the oil refineries to solve the unemployment problem in Assam" (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1979, 28 February, Vol. III, No. 6: 57).

Regarding exploitation of resources of Assam, Kamala Kalita in the Assembly viewed, "There are 3.9 million hectare area of total tea cultivated land in India out of which Assam alone has 2.11 million hectare that indicates the presence of 54% of the total tea cultivated area. The tea production amounts to 560.7 million kg. that indicates Assam produces 53 percent of total tea production. In India, there are 910823 persons working in tea gardens and in Assam it is 468380 persons – contributing 51 percent of the total employment - labour force. But all the offices and tea companies are established outside Assam (Calcutta) for the profit of particular corporate bodies absolutely depriving the local people and the benefits out of it. The West Bengal government levy entry tax and earns an amount of more than Rs. 500 million annually. There is an urgent need by the state government to pressurize the union government to transfer all the headquarters and offices back into Assam." (Assam Legislative Assembly Debates 1988, May 10, Budget Session, Vol. I, No. 2: 136-137). The same is the case with oil, Assam produces 4.5 million Metric ton of crude oil by the year 2006-07 (Government of Assam, Memorandum to the Thirteenth Finance commission 2008: 57) and the annual price of it will be Rs. 7320 million. Assam gets 197.4 million as royalty which is just above 2 %. If Assam gets at least half of the amount of the total annual price, Assam's economy would have been in much better (Barua 1982: 14-21).

Assam has 19.7 percent population living below the poverty line during 2004-05 compared to 36.09 percent in 1999-2000 and 40.86 percent in 1993-94 as against all-India figures for the same are 27.50 percent in 2004-05, 26.10 percent in 1999-2000 and 35.97 percent in 1993-94 respectively on the basis of uniform recall period consumption (Economic Survey of Assam 2007-2008: 2). It can be assumed that people living below

poverty line much have been higher during the period of Assam agitation. Unemployment, combined with large-scale poverty and deprivation of local Assamese in the job sector resulted in frustration among the youths. When youth faces Joblessness it leads to low esteem and self-worth, and may have a serious consequences damaging social and psychological impact. If reviewed, one of the reasons of Assam agitation on the issue of migrants, the real bone of contention is the political expression of the economic deprivation which Assamese have experienced due to heavy migration since 19<sup>th</sup> century (Das 1989: 49).

In a discussion on the issue “Assam”, Indrajit Gupta in a statement viewed, “I regret to say that in the whole of the North Eastern region there is a feeling among the people and particularly among the youth that the aspirations of that region, their development – economic, cultural and linguistic – is not given adequate attention. There is a deep feeling of resentment among the youth of that region” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, February 21: 485). Somnath Chatterjee in a discussion in Lok Sabha on the ‘situation in Assam’ views, “When there is ranging unemployment, to work up an anti-migrant sentiment and then to create complete disruption throughout the country is not a big deal, finally putting an end to our national unity, together with national integrity. The ruling party has not paid due attention for the economic development in Assam. As a result, unemployment is swelling. There is deepening economic crisis, discontentment is naturally there in other part of the country” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, May 5: 384). In the Vijawada conference CPI (M) in their political statement (1982) viewed, “Assam along with other Northeastern states showing secessionist tendencies – reasons are the underdevelopment, inadequate industrialization, economic backwardness, increasing economic miseries caused anger/unhappiness among the people that is exploited by the secessionist people and using influx of migrants as pretext” (PRANTIK Report 1983a: 12).

#### **4. III.iv Environmental Issues**

The major factors that contributed for the rise of native-migrant conflict in Assam are due to the environmental changes that occurred in Assam due to high growth of population

especially for the migration from Bangladesh and Nepal. The undocumented migration from neighbouring countries is considered to be the underlying factors of high population growth. The State of Tripura has experienced 78.71 percent of population growth during 1951-1961 periods which is explained in terms of migration of Hindus from East Pakistan during the division of the subcontinent (Gaan 2001: 165-166 & Bezbaruah 2005).

Considering the growth of population during 1901-2001, Assam's population has doubled in the 40 years during 1901-1941 and again more than doubled in the next 30 years – during 1941-1971. And if we look at the 1981 projected population, it is almost doubled in the 20 years between 1961 and 1981. Due to large scale migration of people across border a steep rise of population occurred. The population of Assam increased from 3.29 million in 1901 to 19.9 million by 1981 showing growth rate of 505.01 percent as compared to only 186.84 percent growth of growth during the corresponding period (Singh 1987: 257-282). Again during 1951-1961, Assam's population increased by 34.98 percent and by the next decade 1961-1971 it increased by 34.95 percent. The projected population based on 36.04 percent in 1981 would be 19.9 million is accurate. However, after the census of 1991, the projected population figure of Assam for 1981 was revised to 18.04 million (down by about 1.85 million). This gave a comfortable decadal increase in population of just 23.35 percent for Assam against the national decadal growth of 23.5 percent for the same period (Bezbaruah 2005).

In Assam, we can see an increase of the total population by 82 percent during the period of 1951 to 1971 and that changed the demographic pattern in 10 out of 23 districts. Since 1951, the rate of increase of Assam's population has been much higher than that of India (Dass 1980: 850-859). Comparing to the population increase rate for all India from 1961-1991, was 72.96% whether it was 87.39% for Assam. If this huge difference did not occurred, Assam's total population would have been of 18 million instead of 22 million in 1991. So at basic level there are estimated 3.55 million migrants in Assam (Gaan 2001: 166). The most disturbing development in the 20<sup>th</sup> century Assam has been of population explosion. It has increased from 3.3 million in 1901 to 22.3 million in 1991 while India, the country as a whole, from 238.4 million in 1901 to 843.9 million in 1991.



Had Assam's population increased at the same rate as that of India from 1901-1991, which is 54 percent, the population of truncated Assam in 1991 would have been 14.9 million, not 22.3 million. The extra 7.4 million are by and large migrants and their descendants (Barpujari 1998: 33).

**Table 4.II**  
**Growth of Population in Assam (Millions)**

Year	Population (millions)
1901	3.29
1911	3.849
1921	4.637
1931	5.561
1941	6.694
1951	8.029
1961	10.837
1971	14.625
1981	19.896
1991	22.295
2001	26.656

Sources: *Census Reports*, various Years, as cited in D. N. Bezbaruah (2005), *Demographic Threats in Assam*, (online web), accessed on 12 January, 2009, URL:[http://www.ivarta.com/columns/OL\\_050102.htm](http://www.ivarta.com/columns/OL_050102.htm)

According to the Census of India 2001, the Muslim constitutes 30.9 percent out of a total of 26.6 million populations. According to the report, 17296455 were recorded as Hindus and 8240611 Muslims which demonstrates that the proportionate growth of Muslim population in Assam is second only to Jammu and Kashmir (67 percent Muslims). The growth of Muslims occurred at 77.42 percent during 1971-1991, attributed to migration of Muslim population from Bangladesh. Some districts bordering Bangladesh experienced high growth rate of Muslim population, particularly after 1971 (Upadhyay 2005: 3002-04).

The 2001 census reports revealed that six of Assam's 27 districts have a majority Muslim population and Barpeta district tops the list with 977943 Muslims. The other five districts are Dhubri, Goalpara, Nagaon, Karimganj and Hailakandi. These districts lie close to the border with Bangladesh or the districts in which early migrants from Bangladesh settled. It is also observed that the rate of growth of Muslim populations are the highest precisely

in these districts giving credence to the widely held belief that migration from Bangladesh was the source of these demographic trends (Hussain 2004).

**Table 4.III**  
**Proportion of Muslim Population in India and Assam**

Years	India	Assam
1911	22.39	16.23
1931	23.49	22.78
1951	9.91	24.68
1961	10.71	25.30
1971	11.21	28.43
1991	12.12	28.43
2001	13.42	30.91

Sources: Census of India, various years as cited in Anup Saikia (2005), "Refugees, Illegal Migrants and Local Perceptions in India's Far East", Paper presented at the 25<sup>th</sup> IUSSP International Population Conference held at Tours, France 18-23 July

If we look at the various census figures we can observe a steep rise of Muslim population in Assam between the period of 1971 and 1991. During 1951-61 the growth rate of Muslims in Assam was 38.35 percent, compared to 33.71 percent for the Hindus and the natural growth rate of Assam during that period was about 22.4 percent. The census figures of 1971 and 1991 shows that there has been a steady to rapid rise in the Muslim population in districts proximate to the border, confirming apprehensions of a continuing influx of people from Bangladesh. This, perhaps, goes a long way to explain the rather high Muslim growth rate in Assam, estimated at 77.42 percent between 1971 and 1991. In 1971, Muslims, for instance, comprised 64.46 percent of the population in Dhubri district, rose to 70.45 percent in 1991 - a total growth of 77.42 percent during 1971-1991. By 2001 the proportion of Muslims had risen further to 74.29 percent of the population in Dhubri. By 2001, the Muslim population in Barpeta rose from 56.07 percent in 1991 to 59.3 percent; in Goalpara, from 50.18 percent to 53.71 percent, and Hailakandi from 54.79 percent 57.6 percent. Significantly, two new districts joined the list of Muslim majority districts in Assam by 2001: Karimganj, where the Muslim population rose from 49.17 percent in 1991 to 52.3 percent; and Nagaon, where the community's population grew from 47.19 percent in 1991 to 50.99 percent (Hussain 2004 & Saikia 2005).

Looking at the growth of Nepali migrants in Assam we can observe that the number of Nepalis increased from 21000 in 1901 to 101335 in 1951; 182925 in 1961; 353673 in 1971; 432519 in 1991; and 564790 by 2001 (Census of India, Language Report 1991: 45-46 & Census of India 2001). Thus, a fast growth of Nepali population is observed in Assam especially during 1951-1971. The number of Nepali population that increased during 1951-1971 period can be attributed for migration from Nepal. The problem of Nepali settlers numbering about 0.35 million in 1971 and about half a million by 1980, was not viewed by the AASU and AAGSP, a very serious problem in the overall prospective. Though not considered serious, but the AASU and AAGSP demanded expulsion of Nepalis. However, the Assam Gorkha Sanmelan in its meeting held on February 10, 1980 decided to request the Assam government, not to evict the Nepali settlers who had come to Assam prior to the introduction of permit system in 1976. The problem was discussed by the AAGSP and AASU classified the Nepali migrants into the following categories: -

- a. Settled in forest land since the period of Ahom rulers. They have been fully assimilated.
- b. Nepalis settled in Assam during the British regime – assimilated fully.
- c. Ex-serviceman rehabilitated by the government of India or those working for absentee landlords – assimilated fully.
- d. Nepalis entering till 1976 and doing manual jobs.
- e. Nepalis who had come without RAP.
- f. Nepalis expelled from Bhutan in 1976 and
- g. Floating population who comes for seasonal work and employment (Murthy 1983: 40)

Demographic changes due to tremendous growth rate of population since 1951 onwards for reasons other than natural has resulted in heavy pressure on land and other available resources (Bhattacharya 1998: 18). According to Nath (1980: 50), "Thousands of Muslim migrants entered Assam through the Brahmaputra river, use the Char land as a spring board to seek and secure a permanent foothold in forest land, tribal belt or lands of indigenous population through encroachment, purchase or otherwise with the connivance

and complicity of the local political authorities” (Das 1982: 48). The birds and aquatic life in Char, beels (a beel is an inland freshwater body) forests and low fertile land have disappeared. Vast char area, marshy land, pasture, fallows and waste land, reserve land and forests are now settled by the migrants. Forest land as a whole increased from 15 percent in 1950 to 22 percent in 1973. But in Assam, it has been reduced from 38.32 percent to 28.07 percent during the same period. Assam lost 41.5 percent of the forest since 1951 (Saikia 2002; Das 1982: 48; Bhattacharya 1998: 26).

#### **4. III.v Social Issue**

Assam has been predominantly a Hindu dominated society and maintains a distinct cultural identity and intermingling of cultures due to migration makes Assamese as a unique society (AHDR 2003: 4). However, the stream of migration from Bangladesh has created social divisions. One group- Bengalis always tried to maintain their distinct identity and kept on showing their superiority over the Assamese in terms of education, language and skills that led to spread of jealousy among the Assamese due to their backwardness. Bengalis being unique never tried to mix up with the Assamese people and their culture and maintained their own identity. This resulted in Assamese apprehensions against the Bengalis of being pursuing cultural imperialism on them (Weiner 1978: 107-110).

The fear accentuated when they can see the case of Tripura where Bengali Hindu migrants outnumbered the local tribal and controlled political power reducing the locals to minority. However, in case with Nepalis it is quite different. Though they maintained their distinct identity and social customs, there are some evidences where their involvement with the Assamese customs and culture and traditional festivals is revealed. Being small in numbers, throughout the centuries they mingled with Assamese society and adopted the Assamese language and their culture as their own (Nath 2005a: 57-59). The Nepalis in Assam actively participates in some of the important Assamese local festivals – the Bihu. There are three Bihus – Bohag, Kati and Magh. The magh Bihu is celebrated in January also Nepali celebrates as Makar Sakranti. The Bohag as Rongali Bihu celebrated in Assam welcoming the new Assamese year – the same way the Nepalis

participate and celebrates. There are number of instances of Nepali girls participating in stage competition. In Behali, Nepali girls excel in the Bihu dance competitions as Bihu Kunwaris (Upadhaya 1994: 19-22).

Large scale migration has materially changed the socio-cultural composition of the Assamese society. These changes have engendered new competitive politico-economic pressures on the Assamese Hindus who were traditionally lacking in competitive skills in comparison with the migrants especially with the Bengalis. However, they managed successfully in resisting the imposition of Bengali language. The jealousy of becoming religiously and culturally dominated by the Bengalis in Assam can be cited as the major cause of launching movement against them. Anti-Bengali sentiment of Assamese has periodically expressed itself in the form of riots from 1950 onward. The period from 1979 onward may in this context be viewed as one of continuous expressions of anti-Bengali feelings (Rastogi 1986: 84-85).

#### **4. III.vi \_\_\_ Security Issues**

Assam shares a 262 km long border with Bangladesh of which 92 km is riverine out of total 4,096-kilometer long Indo-Bangladesh border marked by a high degree of porosity and checking illegal border crossing by the Bangladeshi people has been a major challenge (MOHA 2008: 29 & Goswami|2006). The magnitude of the problem is such that the steady flow of migrants from Bangladesh has significantly altered some Assam's border district questioning the internal and national security (Ramtanu 2005 & Pramanik 2007).

According to the report of the Group of Ministers (2001: 60), "Migration from across our borders has continued unabated for over five decades. We have yet to fully wake up to the implications of the unchecked migration for the national security. Today, we have about 15 million Bangladeshis, 2.2 million Nepalis, 70000 Sri Lankan Tamils and about 0.1 million Tibetan migrants living in India. Demographic changes have been brought about in the border belts of West Bengal, several districts in Bihar, Assam, Tripura and Meghalaya as a result of large-scale migration. Such large-scale migration has obvious social, economic, political and security implications. There is an all-round failure in India

to come to grips with the problem of migration. Unfortunately, action on this subject invariably assumes communal over-tones with political parties taking positions to suit the interest of their vote banks.”

The threat perception due to migration from Bangladesh will not be clear without mentioning the view of Bangladesh regarding the Northeast India. Since partition, the Muslim psyche in Pakistan’s both parts is suffering from an injury of loosing half of Bengal and Assam (Pramanik 2007). The Governor of Assam, Sinha report to the President of India views, “Failure to get Assam included in East Pakistan in 1947 remained a source of abiding resentment in that country. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1969) in his book, *Myths of Independence* wrote, ‘It would be wrong to think that Kashmir is the only dispute that divides India and Pakistan, though undoubtedly the most significant. One at least is nearly as important as the Kashmir dispute, that of Assam and some districts of India adjacent to East Pakistan. To these Pakistan has very good claims’. Even a pro-India leader like Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in his book, *Eastern Pakistan: Its Population and Economics*, observed, ‘Eastern Pakistan must have sufficient land for its expansion and because Assam has abundant forests and mineral resources, coal, petroleum etc., Eastern Pakistan must include Assam to be financially and economically strong” (Assam Governor’s Report 1998).

The Assam Governor’s report (1998) views, “There is a tendency to view migration into Assam as a regional matter, affecting only the people of Assam. Its more dangerous dimension of greatly undermining our national security is ignored. The long cherished design of Greater East Pakistan/Bangladesh, making inroads into the strategic land link of Assam with the rest of the country, can lead to severing the entire land mass of the North East, with all its rich resources, from the rest of the country. This will have disastrous strategic and economic consequences.” The report also views, “This silent and invidious demographic invasion of Assam may result in the loss of the geo strategically vital districts of Lower Assam. The influx of these migrants is turning these districts into a Muslim majority region. It will then only be a matter of time when a demand for their merger with Bangladesh may be made. The rapid growth of international Islamic fundamentalism may provide the driving force for this demand. In this context, it is

pertinent that Bangladesh has long discarded secularism and has chosen to become an Islamic State. Loss of Lower Assam will sever the entire land mass of the North East, from the rest of India and the rich natural resources of that region will be lost to the Nation.”

The magnitude of the problem of Bangladeshi migration into Assam and India's secular polity is also in danger due to increasing distrust between Muslims and non-Muslims threatening communal harmony prevailing in the states. The ceaseless migration assumes a new dimension when it slowly and steadily takes a shape of the demographic expansion and its consequent socio-political disturbances that can possibly destabilize the entire North-Eastern regions. These migrants can finally turn volcanic enough to disrupt and bring disintegration of the country (Pramanik 2008). The issue of migration has an implication for India's national security. It is now an established fact that most Northeast insurgents, i.e. ULFA, KLO, NDFB and others groups have their base in Bangladesh and established strong linkages with Pakistan's external intelligence agency – Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) for its larger design to destabilise India (Singh 2002: 58-59; Singh 2002: 142). These groups are not only getting support from the Bangladesh government but also through the facilitation provided by a network of migrants from within Assam to the ULFA. The October 30, 2009 attacks in Assam which killed 83 civilians and injured 30 was suspected to be the handiwork of ULFA, NDFB and the Harkat-ul-Jihadi-e-Islami (HuJI) from Bangladesh with perhaps certain elements from the migrant population helping them in their devious tasks (Goswami 2010 & Khanna 2010). India's External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha in the BJP led government surmised the growth of anti-India terrorist activities inside Bangladesh and that "Some Al-Qaeda elements have taken shelter in Bangladesh. ... the foreign media has ... reported several such instances, our own sources have also confirmed many of these reports" (Jha 2003 & Saikia 2002: 187-189).

Siddique viewed that the conflict in Assam occurred due to increased tendencies of assertion of the rights of the indigenous people. The conflict in Assam is about the participation of people in the mainstream politics. Sub-national identity is the main problem in Assam for which these conflicts arise. According to her, "The Assamese

people started thinking that the migrants started taking their jobs, lands, and other civic amenities. The mainstream community started having this perception when their demands for more participation didn't get fulfilled within the system. The state deliberately did it; it is the state that couldn't do it. The conflict arises due to securitization of migration problem. The securitization of migrants automatically led to people's thinking or propagation that migration is a security risk. The issue of securitization came through the writings of journalist, academicians etc. and then were exploited by the political parties. A section wants migrants as their vote banks and other to do politics. The BJP made the migration issue as security risk for the country.<sup>12</sup>

The BJP along with other organizations like the Rashtriya Swyam Sevak Sangh (RSS) and Viswa Hindu Parishad (VHP) has been criticizing the government for accommodating Bangladeshi migrants (Gillan 2002: 75-76). The party accuses the Congress for their narrow and selfish reasons for neglecting the issue. The party estimates the total number of migrants about 17 million and advocates that the influx of population poses grave magnitude and even security (BJP, Election Manifesto, Our Nation's Security, 2004). The BJP through Communalisation of the issue successfully extended the insecurity syndrome across the society and gives a dangerously xenophobic stand that all alleged migrants must be summarily expelled from Assam (Bhushan 2005). By creating a spectre of Islamisation the BJP singled out on the Islamic character of such migration for possible electoral gains motivated the BJP to launch a well orchestrated propaganda and termed it as cultural and religious invasion from a neighbouring Islamic state (Pathania: 2003: 47). The party published popular articles and books on the issue and in addition a systematic speech campaign against the threat from migrations largely responsible for exacerbating national security anxieties. The very caption of such writing such as "Demographic Aggression Against India: Muslim Avalanche from Bangladesh" and "Is India Going Islamic" both written by a leading BJP ideologue Baljit Rai sent a

---

<sup>12</sup> In a discussion with Tasneem Siddique, Department of Political Science, Dhaka University, on 1/06/09, during field trip to Dhaka.



chill amongst the readers and played on common people's fear against the Bengali Muslim migrants (Rai 1993: 199-200).<sup>13</sup>

The speech and the ideological writings made a clear distinction between the Hindu refugees and Muslim migrants and circulated speculative figure of more than 15 million Bangladeshi Muslims settled in various parts of India. The party also warned the about the grim consequences of such exodus of Muslims from densely populated Bangladesh. And that "the pushing of millions of Bangladeshi Islamic morons into India is fraught with gravest threats to our very existence" (Baljit Rai-1993: 201).<sup>14</sup> The right wing party also extensively cited from select Bangladeshi media and scholars to caution against their demand of finding lebensraum (living space) for the burgeoning population of Bangladesh as Muslim Bango Bhoomi will comprise large parts of West Bengal, Bihar and Assam and finally merge with Bangladesh. Baljit Rai's hatred for Muslims is too blatant when he quotes, "these millions of hungry Muslims are a shameless lot and resort to every conceivable stratagem to conceal their identity" or ... "the infiltration of Muslims from Bangladesh is cancerous" (Baljit Rai 1993: 218-219, as cited in Upadhaya 2009: 11-12)

#### 4. IV Assam Movement

The long tradition, slow economic development, the threat in the reduction of the size of the state and quest for identity, directed the student to launch an agitation against the migrants/foreigners for the triumph of regionalism and economic development in Assam. According to Deka (1996: 174), "No change or development, whether social, economic or political, could be brought about without resorting to agitation. Agitation seems to have been the only way of bringing change or development in Assam and the student community practically spearheaded all agitations and protests and hence formed their nucleus."

---

<sup>13</sup> Rai Baljit (1993), *Demographic Aggression Against India: Muslim Avalanche from Bangladesh*, Chandigarh: B.S. Publications and Is India Going Islamic in at <http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Bridge/9684/art1.htm>. Also see How Bangladesh will Destroy India? Demographic Challenge! at [www.geocities.com/hsitah9/how\\_bangladesh\\_will\\_indi.htm](http://www.geocities.com/hsitah9/how_bangladesh_will_indi.htm)

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 201

The fear of being swamped by the presence of migrants, discontentment and the failure of both the Union and the State government's disinclination to resolve the problem of migration led to a popular agitation in Assam. The AASU was the traditional torchbearer; All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP), Assam Sahitya Sabha (ASS), Assam Jatiyatabadi Dal (AJD) and Purbanchaliya Lok Parishad (PLP) were the prime organizations launched the movement in support of detecting, deletion and deportation of migrants/foreigners from Assam (Guha 1993: 14 & Baruah 1986: 1189-90). The movement was more or less peaceful but later turned violent as the state and the central government failed to meet their popular demand of deportation of foreigners. However, the consequence of the agitation are still being felt; throwing the region into turbulence and created deep divides among the communities (Hazarika 2001a: 11-20).

The AASU shocked by the whole affairs of migration of Bangladeshis and Nepalis into Assam, started drawing a 21 point charter of demands to the Assam Government on February 21, 1974 and included the demand for detection, deletion and deportation of migrants from Assam. The AASU in support of their demand, expulsion of foreigners, started a stir on August 8, 1978, at every district headquarters; followed by Satyagraha, hunger strike etc. (Guha 1993: 14-15). In the AASU memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister of India (1980) viewed, "A silent invasion by foreign nationals from the neighbouring countries particularly Bangladesh and Nepal is taking place. We cannot remain silent spectators when sovereignty of India is at stake. The problem has been deliberately neglected by the leaders leaving the destiny of Assam at the mercy of foreign nationals. The foreign nationals pose a challenge to the integrity of India". The memorandum again stated, "Foreign nationals try is to enrol their names in the voters' lists with the connivance of antisocial elements, politicians and officials on this side of the border. The motive is crystal clear. The infiltrators vote for the politicians who protect them in all respects. In fact, politicians encourage infiltration to ensure their political survival".

The agitation started with an electoral check in 1979 after a bye election to be held following the death of Hiralal Patowary - Mangaldoi constituency in the Darrang district. While revising the electoral roll, the election official found a total number of 600000

voters in that constituency, drew public attention due to rapid increase in the number of voters. During a routine revision of electoral rolls, published on 20 April 1979, 70000 names of migrants were found in that single constituency. Across the states flood of complaints swept the local electoral offices and in one particular week as many as 320000 complaints were filed. This event followed reports of fresh large-scale migration of Bangladeshi migrants into the state (Hazarika 1996: 7).

The previous electoral revision, done in 1977 at the time of the general election, substantiated the fact that the mass arrival of migrants had taken place in the latter part of 1970s. The Chief Election Commissioner, Shakhder, during the conference of the Electoral officers held at 24-26 September, 1978 commented, "In one state (Assam), the population in 1971 recorded an increase as high as 34.98 percent over the 1961 figures and this increase was attributed to the migration from Bangladesh. The influx has become a regular feature. I think it may not be a wrong assessment to make, on the basis of the increase of 34.98 percent between the two censuses. The increase that is likely to be recorded in the 1991 census would be more than 100 percent over the 1961 census. In other words, a stage would be reached when the state would have to reckon with foreign nationals who may probably constitute a sizeable percentage, if not the majority of the population of the state" (AASU Memorandum 1980). The Chief Election Commissioner also added, "Another disturbing factor in this regard is the demand made by the political parties for the inclusion in the electoral rolls of the names of such migrants who are not Indian citizens without even questioning and properly determining the citizenship status" (Chhabra 1992: 74-78 & Hazarika 1996: 8).

The AASU memorandum (1980) further states, "The political parties who would have benefited by these migrants votes used all the influence and forced the authorities to stop deletion of foreigner's names from the electoral rolls. The experience of burial of Indian democracy in Mangaldoi constituency was too fresh to be forgotten. What was true for Mangaldoi became true for whole of Assam. How could the people of Assam let their fate be determined by lakhs of foreigners in the electoral rolls?" The Chief Election Commissioners verdict arouses questions among the Assamese people about the growing numbers of migrants. After a sincere scrutiny by the Election Commission of the

presence of foreigners in a single constituency, the people feared about what would happen to other constituencies? At least 320000 complaints swept the local electoral office during April, 1979 (De 2005: 75-78).

However, denying the role of political parties of using migrants as their vote bank, Promod Gogoi, on the issue of 'inclusion of names of foreigners in the voter list', in the Assembly commented, "It is alleged by the Chief Minister of Assam - Golap Borbora that some political parties were involved in inclusion of names of foreigners in the voter list for the purpose of vote bank which led to the inclusion of names of foreigners in Mangaldoi constituency. I feel that no political party is interested in inclusion of names. It is also viewed by many political parties that Bangladeshis whosoever came to Assam after 1971, 25 March, their name should not appear in the voter list. But while deporting the foreigners, the Indians should not be harassed. Some of the names included in the voter list of last three elections got deleted this time. In Mangaldoi, 40000 people were given notice – and these lists are prepared by the police force. Now I heard that 5000 police personnel are sent to Barpeta to check the voter list and this kind of incidence are happening across the state" (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1979, 4 September, Vol. IV, No.2: 53-54).

Condemning such acts of harassment of genuine Indian citizens and deletion of their names, Ahmed Hussain in a statement made in the Parliament of India, regarding the issue of 'Reported removal of names from Voter List in Mangaldoi Constituency in Assam' viewed, "I strongly condemn the harassment of genuine Indian citizen and deleting their names from the electoral rolls by the police, is an illegal act. June 4, 1979 was fixed as last date for submitting application for correction of voter lists in Mangaldoi parliamentary constituency. Information revealed that the Home department has asked for 50000 objection forms. The election department could not supply the full quantity and only 10000 forms could be supplied. Another 40000 forms were printed locally at Mangaldoi for the police at the instance of the state government. The forms were taken in bulk in hundreds and thousands to a police station or to inspection bungalows. The village head, secretaries of VDPs or such other persons were called there. They were asked to

sign the blank forms. In some cases who, the person concern objected to sign, they were either allured or threatened to sign such blank forms which were subsequently filled up by the police and submitted to the election office” (Parliament of India Debate 1979, Lok Sabha, July 27: 298-300).

The AASU accused the CEC of negligence to delete the names of migrant's from the voter list spread anger among the people. Contrary to his (S. L. Shakhder, CEC) all previous statement, the CEC directed the authorities to stop deletion of foreigners names and viewed, “A person whose name has been included shall be a presumed to be a citizen of India....the process of establishing citizenship is time consuming ...scrutiny of electoral rolls can be taken after the election is over” (AASU Memorandum 1980). The statement of the CEC acknowledged the inclusion of names of migrants. Again in a report of the North East Regional Students Union (NERSU) estimation indicated the presence of 4.5 to 5 million during 1971, constituting 31 to 34 percent of the total population. The AASU leaders placed the numbers of such migrants at four million and said that they would swamp the predominantly Hindu-Assamese culture and disrupt the fabric of society. These two views about the presence of large scale migrants sanctify the AASU cause for launching an agitation (Hazarika 1993: 49-51). When appeals and request to the state and the central government failed to evoke any response, the leaders of AASU and AAGSP decided to take it to the streets (Swain 1996a: 198).

The main demands of the AASU and AAGSP were mainly to detect, disenfranchise and deportation of the migrants on the basis of 1951 National Register of Citizens (NRC). The AASU's slogan was “a foreigner is a foreigner; a foreigner shall not be judged by the language he speaks or by the religion he believes in” (AASU Memorandum 1980). The AASU forwarded five principle demands. Firstly, foreign nationals must be detected and deported. Secondly, voter list must be totally free from the foreigners name before holding any election in Assam. Thirdly, a ‘no man's land’ should be created all along the Indo-Bangladesh border to stop infiltration effectively. Fourthly, identity cards must be issued to every eligible Indian voter in Assam and fifthly, Assam government should be free to reject any doubtful citizenship certificates issued by the Governments of West Bengal and Tripura (AASU Memorandum 1980).

Widespread protests were organized in support of their demand. The demands were justified by arguing that Assam shouldn't be a burden of migrants and the foreigners, who do not substantively qualify for citizenship in terms of the constitution has to be deported. It was accepted by a large number of political parties and was reiterated again and again by all major Indian Political Parties during 1979. Following the acceptance by the parties and pressure groups, an echo of protest for deporting migrants turned into a massive movement (Baruah 1999: 115-143).

#### **4. IV.i \_\_\_ Phases of the Movement**

The AASU leaders observed the first state wide strike to protest on the foreigners issue and called for 12 hours Bandh on June 8, 1979, remained peaceful and managed to get good response across the state. Two months later, this was followed by the AASU-AAGSP call for mass squatting throughout Assam in front of major administrative offices like, Deputy Commissioner, Sub-Divisions, Sub-Deputy Collectors and Block Development Offices for two days on September 6 and 7, 1979, manages to get warm response from the people. The agitation paralysed the administration and other establishments like Banks, railways etc. In some places the protesters clashed with police. At the ONGC headquarters – Nazira (Sivasagar district), protesters clashed with the employees, most of them Non-Assamese and the cases of intimidation were reported. The ONGC throughout the country went on strike demanding security to its personnel working in Assam (PRANTIK Report 1984: 18-23 & Deka 2004: 212).

Again, the leaders asked for a mass rally at Guwahati on October 6, 1979 and about 0.1 million people participated. The AASU and its allied organizations announced a drive out foreigner campaign on October 9. Around that time clashes broke out between Assamese and Bengali speaking people in the upper Assam, particularly in Tinsukia, Naharkotiya, Doomdooma area. Many of the Bengali speaking people fled to West Bengal and the then Chief Minister, Jyoti Basu objected and took up the issue with the Union Government to stop influx of Bengalis from Assam and the leaders condemned the move. The AASU and AAGSP leaders again announced a week long Programme of offering Satyagraha,

courting arrest in front of the Deputy Commissioners, sub-divisional officers etc. from 12 to 18 November 1979 (Deuri & Pator 1984: 29-30).

During the last three days this Programme, massive participation of people including students, government employees occurred clearly defying the government orders. Mass arrest occurred, the administration and police have to make temporary jails that too failed to accommodate the Satyagrahis, clearly demonstrate the support the movement build up. The AASU sufficiently strengthened the organizational network through the state during the same time and the response was so overwhelming that the people voluntarily opened up branches of AASU&AAGSP to demonstrate their support, that strengthen the movement and mobilisation all way become easier (Husseïn 1993: 108-112).

The then Chief Minister of Assam, Jogen Hazarika, insisted on holding Lok Sabha Election in 1980 on the instructions of the CEC. The AASU opposed the move and determined to stop holding the election unless and until the names of the foreigners are removed. Accordingly they mobilised through press and protest were intensifies when the Election Commission determined to hold election. Earlier, as a result of non-cooperation of enumerators, refusal to print the draft rolls by the press owners in Assam, continuous abnormal situations for months together, forced the election commission to go ahead without substantial revision in 1980 which the movement leaders didn't accepted. The government imposes president rule from June 30, 1981 to January 13, 1982, reimposed again on March 19, 1982 to February 27 1983 (Husseïn 1993: 109-113).

#### **4. IV.ii Strategies of the Movement**

The AASU and AAGSP opted several tactics and agenda's to put pressure on the administration for not listening to their demands. Their demand for detecting, deleting and deporting illegal migrants from Assam was a must and adamant on their agenda not to allow holding election without revising the voter list (Borbora 2001: 99-101). A series of strikes, demonstration, blockades, civil disobedience leads to the boycott of elections. The AASU in collaboration with the local Assamese press successfully managed to mobilize people against the government decision to held election in 1980 (Hazarika 1996: 7-8). The AASU-AAGSP appealed the political parties and the candidates not to file

nominations and accordingly they organised dharnas to prevent filing nominations. The AASU and other allied parties even organized house arrest activities over the candidate and threaten social ostracism and resorted to very techniques to ensure that the intending candidates were vetoed from filling nomination papers. No nominations papers were filed except in the Cachar district. The atmosphere of the state capital, Guwahati was that of the situation like 'wait and watch' and hope for the best (Chhabra 1992: 79).

However, Begum Abida Ali, the wife of the former president of India, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, decided to file her nomination despite AASU's repeated warning. The AASU leaders were determined to stop her for filing nominations and they followed a tactic of keeping day-night vigil in Barpeta. However, she managed to file her nominations through elaborate plans of the state administration. But during this programme, one AASU member, Khargeswar Talukdar was killed, igniting more violence in the district. During that period, violence caused lives of innocent people, Anjan Chakravarti, a Bengali speaking doctor was murdered on December 12, 1979. The leaders condemned the act and viewed that such violence would hurt the image of the agitation and pledge its members and other not indulge in such activities (Chhabra 1992: 80-81 & Baruah 1999: 126-127)

Moreover, P. C. Sethi, the then Home Minister of India in a discussion regarding the tactics of the agitators on the issue of 'Assam' commented, "Immediately after the announcement of elections by the Election Commission in January 1983, a prolonged, intensified and a militant programme of agitation was launched by the AASU and AAGSP. All kinds of intimidatory tactics were adopted and a climate of terror was sought to be created by resorting to violence. The candidate along with their supporters, family members, party office and party workers became the target of attack. One candidate, Satya Narayan Ram for the Assam Legislative Assembly (ALA) and in another incident, the proposer of a candidate was brutally killed; some family members of the candidates were abducted" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, February 21: 347).



Further, in a discussion on the 'situation of Assam', the Home Minister of India, P. C. Sethi commented, "In the initial period of anti-election violent activities in the month of January 1983, the agitators had mainly concentrated on the coercion of prospective candidates in the form of Gherao, kidnapping, assault, arson and disruption of communication links; roads, bridges and sabotage of railway tracks. However, their failing to prevent the filling of nominations by large number of candidates made them desperate and by February 1983 there were both quantitative and qualitative changes in their violent activities" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, March 14: 429).

In a statement 'Assam' Minister of Home Affairs P. C. Sethi comments, "The Assam agitation was started by AASU/AAGSP for ostensible purpose of removing foreigners from Assam but in reality removing all outsiders – citizens or foreigners. I am aware that loud protestation is made by the supporters, but what could have been the intentions in issuing documented instructions which *inter alia* directed its volunteer forces: -

- a. In rural areas shops owned by the non-Assamese persons should be boycotted and cooperative shops should be opened instead.
- b. Number of Assamese employees and non-Assamese employees in all central and state government offices, factories, industries and business establishments in respective areas will be found out. One copy of each of this assessment will be sent to central office of AASU. Besides, data about sources of business transaction, Head of office, daily income etc. of such business establishment.
- c. The local volunteer forces will take steps to ensure that the foreigners/non-Assamese/anti-Assamese employees are removed and in their place local Assamese are appointed in such firms.

All kinds of intimidatory tactics were adopted against those who did not support the agitation. Officials/MLAs and their families were subjected to threats of physical violence and also social ostracisation" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, March 14: 425-426).

During the agitation, people who supported were hassle free but those who opposed or criticized the movement were targeted, either killed or assaulted by the agitationist. The employees of the state government also supported the agitation wholeheartedly and even police and bureaucrats sided with the movement. The workers of Congress and left parties who ideologically opposed the movement were the main target. The local Assamese newspapers also wrote the news in favour of the agitation and condemned highly the arrest of the leaders. In a discussion regarding the Assam Movement, Durgeswar Patir try to take attention of the members in the ALA on a news published in *The Assam Tribune*, September 5, 1983 – ‘Arrest of Agitation Leaders Condemned’, he commented, “If the police atrocities continues on the leaders of the movement or the people involved in the agitation, the leaders would target the people including the government employees, political leaders etc. who stand against the agitations and the news justified the act of the agitators. On September 1, 1983 the agitators killed Lakhi Das and Satish Burhagohain in Nagaon district. On 17 September two youth Congress leader was brutally murdered. Similarly, at Dhakuakhana police station one more person was brutally assaulted and another was injured in an incident of stone pelting. But the Dhakuakhana police have not yet taken any action against the perpetrators. The agitating leaders targeted those people who are against the movement – the government employees, who opposed, were prevented in going office or were threatened for life” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1983, 21 September, Vol. III, No.2: 42-43).

Giving another instance of attack on Congress party worker, Abdul Mutadir Choudhary in the ALA commented, “A question of law and order and security of life, a news item published in *The Sentinel*, dated 13-11-84 under the caption ‘Day light Murder of Retired Headmaster’ on 10/11/84, a written FIR was lodged at Patacharkuchi Police Station by complainant Binoy Ranjan Kalita to the effect that on the same day at 1030 am his father Manoranjan Kalita, retired headmaster of village Dakshin Bang, under the same police station while returning from Pathsala Bazaar was attacked and killed on the No-Ali road leading to Bang village from the National Highway. The deceased Manoranjan Kalita was an active member of Congress (I) and he was opposed to the present agitation launched by the AASU/AAGSP on foreign national issue. There is ample evidence to

suggest that the agitationist elements bore a grudge against him” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1984, 3 December, Vol. IV, No.4: 123-126).

Hiteswar Saikia, the then Chief Minister of Assam in a discussion regarding the Assam Movement viewed, “Some of the agitating leaders and members were arrested under the National Security Act (NSA). Several leaders and members supporting the movement were arrested in various place; Palashbari, Jalukbari, Gauhati University, Doomduma, Digboi. At Digboi College agitating members assaulted a lecturer who was opposing the Assam Movement. However, the newspapers are writing in favour of the agitators. The true stories are not published in the newspapers – in fact when people involved in such activities of torture or violence that news published as police atrocities (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1983, 21 September, Vol. III, No.2: 43-45).

Lekhoh Lahon in a discussion regarding ‘Assam Agitation’ commented, “In Lakhimpur 5 cases of brutal murder were reported. Two youth congress activists were killed on 18 September 1983. On 14 at Chilonibari area two people belonging to the minority community while going for fishing were killed brutally. Those people who were involved in this act also prevented a large number of government employees going to their office. There was Assam Bandh on 29&30 August, 1983, those people who didn’t support – they were targeted. The perpetrators of all these incidents are the AASU and AAGSP members” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1983, 21 September, Vol. III, No.2: 47-48).

Somnath Chatterjee in a discussion ‘Situation in Assam’ also mentions some incidence of attack on the supporters on the left party members, commented, “Our party members were murdered by the agitators. In Kamrup district, Birinchi Patowary and Niranjan Talukdar an important leader and a worker of the SFI were murdered 8 and 11 February, 1983. Samir Pal, a DYFI leader was killed on 20 February while returning from the poll duty. Fatik Kalita, ex-circle secretary, All India Postal Union Class-III leader was killed on 1 February for opposing the burning of bridges and the houses of opponents of the boycott. Chandra Kanta Das, a railway worker was attacked while returning to his place of work after polling in the Dibrugarh district, while Kusheswar Bora, an SFI worker,

was found dead 25 February. In Lakhimpur, Bolan Barua, 26 years of age, was killed on 13 February, with 25 year old Rajen Gohain being killed on 14 February. I can give numerous example of how the young workers who were helping the process of election, who were fighting resolutely against the movement - which is against the unity and integrity of the country were put to death” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, May 5: 389-390). A left party member in the ALA, Mathura Deka, in his speech revealed, “The left parties who supported the election were the target of the agitationist. The agitationist targeted the party workers and their leaders and the police instead giving security to the victim sided with the agitation leaders and in some cases they attacked the people who were not sided with the agitation” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1983, 21 September, Vol. III, No.2: 109-112).

Apart from that the agitationist followed a crucial method that is the blocking and stoppage of pumping of crude oil outside Assam affected the functioning of the Barauni refinery in Bihar which was set up exclusively to process crude from Assam. The blockade raised important questions on the national security. How could such a major step be organized without mobilizing support in advance and alerting the authorities about the design behind it? Could this have been anticipated after the imposition of a blockade on the movement of plywood and jute? Due to the prolonged spells of bandhs and picketing, traffic on the national highways frequently disrupted. This had severe adverse impact on the economies of the Northeastern states and union territories of India. The interdependence nature of the state in India, and the blockade imposed by AASU disrupted the supplies of food and other essential materials to the other states. There was counter blockade from the neighbouring state West Bengal, the government of West Bengal imposed blockade in trains going to Assam. But this was handled by the administration properly (Das 1982: 84).

#### **4. IV.iii \_\_\_Support of the Movement**

Apart from above mentioned strategy used by the AASU and their allied organization. The leaders managed to get support of the masses and also the freedom fighters participated and sided with the agitationist. All the Assamese speaking police and top

level bureaucrats and NRI's supported the agitationist and sided with them. In a query by H. N. Nanje Gowda on the issue of 'Assam agitation' about the announcement of 20 day strike state-wide from March 12, 1982 and also about the involvement of the freedom fighters, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Nihar Ranjan Laskar replied, "the freedom fighters in batches of 4 to 9 restored to 12 hours, day time hunger strike before the offices of deputy commissioners, sub-divisional officers and sub-deputy Collectors on March 12 and 13, 1983, at various places in the Brahmaputra valley" (Parliament of India Debate 1982, Lok Sabha, March 31: 19-20).

While discussing the 'Situation in Assam' about the support of the bureaucrats and police in the Assam agitation, Somnath Chatterjee commented, "The police, bureaucrats and the administration in Assam are acting as adjuncts of the agitationist. We also had reports that even those who were brought before criminal courts on specific charges were being given bail, as though they were brought there on ordinary charges. We have seen this attitude of the magistrates and complaints to this effect" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, May 5: 391). Benoy Kumar Basumotary in a discussion in the ALA about Police inaction commented, "Our honourable Chief Minister is aware of that our party (PTCA) participated in the last general election, the agitationist branded them as dacoits, and during the last holidays on account of Viswakarma Puja some tribal girls were sought to be kidnapped for immoral purposes. To protect them against such act, Rabha, Bodo and Kachari boys of Tangla tried to contain the tribal girls from witnessing cinema shows and the Pujas at night; but one Abul Laige S.I of Tangla police out post had arrested our boys and severely beaten them up – I have got medical reports with me. This officer is trying to create communal tension between the Muslims and the tribal around Tangla" (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1983, 21 September, Vol. III, No.2: 46).

The then Chief Minister of Assam, Hiteswar Saikia, further on Police inaction in the ALA commented, "There are lot many incidents of police inaction. In Lakhimpur, Dulumoni Phukan and Pushendra Phukan were killed and policeman who came to inform the family members of the deceased said, '*Moja Paiso Atia*' (Learnt the Lesson) -

the policeman got suspended and was arrested” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1983, 21 September, Vol. III, No.2: 45). Again, in a query of Joy Nath Sharma regarding the misuse of powers by the police personnel during the Assam agitation, the Home Minister of Assam, Bhriku Kumar Phukan replied, “These kinds of allegations are there and at least 55 cases have been registered in various police stations and there may be some more cases pending in the court. But no cases has been proved so far” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate, 1986, 2 April, Vol. II, No.15: 44).

Apart from that the agitationist also managed to get support from the Non resident Assamese Indian citizen. Many of the Assamese people staying in US also protested in support of the movement. In a letter by D. K. Dutta to *PRANTIK* reported that 80-100 Assamese NRI took a rally in Washington and met the Indian Ambassador and asked to take adequate steps to stop police atrocities and viewed that Assamese people to protect their rights against illegal migrants is a democratic right and steps must be taken in favour of the people to render peace in the state. Even the people gathered there contributed \$ 4000 in support of the movement. The people also reacted strongly against a published interview of Indian Ambassador K. R. Narayan in *The New York Times*, 22 February, 1983, “Immediately after partition, a lot of refugees entered in every state of India, West Bengal received a lot of refugees from East Pakistan. Similarly Punjab also received millions of refugees from Pakistan. Even southern states also received a lot but it becomes a problem on Assam only, only these emotions are deliberately burnt in Assam” (Dutta 1983: 29-30).

#### 4. IV.iv \_\_\_ Orientation of the Movement

The movement started and directed against the foreign nationals living in Assam including the Bangladeshis and Nepalis. However, the movement leaders also tried to sharply raise the question of ‘Bohiragotos’ or the outsiders in Assam. At the initial stage the movement tried to build up opinions for expulsion and restricted entry of Bohiragotos. As the concept of Bohiragotos includes all outsiders including the Indian citizens living in Assam, it became difficult for them to realise that sending back or restricting the entry of outsiders Indians would not be possible within the present constitutional framework.

Therefore the leadership gave up the Bohiragoto issue and took up foreign nationals to mobilise the people (Hussein 1993: 263-64). The Assam Movement launched by the AASU and its allied groups continued for more than six years (1979-1985). The movement started peacefully and it was secular in approach, not directed against the minority communities but always run a risk of turning communal because of the religious slant given to it as most of the migrants were Muslims. Initially, the anti-foreigner movement started by the AASU and AAGSP was peaceful but later it turned out to be violent when the administration neglected to some of their particular demands. The leaders applied peaceful methods of agitation to large extent for fulfilling their grievances and the agitation was organised more or less with the help of local press, organized intimidation and jingoist wall writings. The movement turned into a mass hysteria after September 1979 and a well organized anti-Bengali riots took place across the state taking thousands of lives (Guha 1980: 1705-1707).

#### 4. IV.v \_\_\_ Scale of Violence

According to official estimates, no less than 4,000 men - women and children-mostly of the religious and linguistic minority communities were killed as a result of the organised armed attacks and arson triggered by the agitation. More than 0.3 million people of both majority and minority communities were turned homeless and had to be given temporary shelter in government relief camps (Dasgupta & Guha 1985: 843-844). There are two stages of violence – first, occurred during the period 1979-1983 and second the post February 1983, election related and till the signed of Assam Accord. The post February 1983 violence occurred mainly due to the decision of the government to held election without revising the voter list. In a discussion on the issue “Assam”, Bheravadan K. Gadhavi commented, “What is happening in Assam is not a post-election declaration issue (1983), the violence started much before. Altogether 150 lives of not only the people who are opposed to either the foreigners issue or this issue of election, but of our top technocrats, our top officers, have been lost. They were blown up in their offices with bombs, 150 lives were lost even prior to the declaration of elections when nobody was thinking whether we are going for polls or not” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, February 21: 463-464).

During the first phase the level of violence was low and peaceful agitation methods were applied but a number of cases of violence was reported during this period. The then Home Minister, P. C. Sethi in a statement on 'Assam' issue comments, "Frequent claims have been made about the 'non-violent' nature of the agitation right from 1979 till December 1982, just prior to the calling of elections 272 murders, 1404 assaults, 425 cases of arson, 346 cases of intimidation, 228 cases of mischief and 147 cases of kidnapping, wrongful confinement and restraint besides 330 cases of explosion and 146 cases of recovery of explosives like bombs, grenades etc. can be attributed to this agitation" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, March 14: 425-426).

In a query of Chitta Basu regarding the issue of 'Students Agitation in Assam', about the violence triggered by agitation the then Minister in Charge of State in Home Affairs P Venkatasubbaiah replied, "Between August and December, 1976, 26 persons lost their lives; there were about 120 incidents of arson and about 327 cases of assault. In January 1980, 41 persons lost their lives and over 3200 houses set ablaze rendering over 15000 people homeless in the Kamrup district. In Cachar district, 6 persons lost their lives in communal clashes. On January 18, 1980, 5 persons including a senior technology officer of Oil India was killed at Duliajan" (Parliament of India Debate 1980, Lok Sabha January 30: 76). Again, in a query of Samar Mukherjee about the casualties in Assam during October 1, 1979-January 20 1980, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, P Venkatasubbaiah replied, "201 incidents of violence and arson have taken place in Assam and 69 persons have lost their lives during that period and over 15000 people rendered homeless in the Kamrup district" (Parliament of India Debate 1980, Lok Sabha, January 30: 26).

Meanwhile P. C. Sethi, in the parliament categorically makes references to some important instances of violence occurred during the agitation. He views, "Human memory is short but let me remind the Honourable members of some important incidents in which physical violence were executed by the agitationist: -



1. In April 1980, an attempt was made on the life of Hiteswar Saikia, the then MLA by throwing a hand grenade on his car.
2. A senior technical officer of Oil India was beaten to death in January, 1980.
3. The Commissioner, Upper Assam division was killed in April, 1981, by explosive devices planted on his chair.
4. Explosive devices were planted in the house of T. M. Baruah, MLA at Guwahati in which his brother and wife were injured and maid servant killed.
5. In June, 1982, a Joint Director, Sericulture was fatally assaulted on the eve of 'Janata Curfew' called by agitators.
6. In January, 1980, 70 people lost their life in a communal flare up on north bank of Kamrup district, and Nalbari which also rendered 2400 families homeless.
7. In May, 1980, 22 persons had lost their lives when AASU had vehemently opposed a 'demand day' demonstration of submitting memorandum to district authorities by All Assam Minorities Students Union (AAMSU).
8. Terror tactics were resorted to in March-April 1981 when explosive devices were planted on railway tracts resulting in derailment of some goods trains and 3 UP Assam Mail resulting in death of one person and injuries to 12 other.
9. On June 9, 1982, there was a series of explosions in Fatasil Ambari market in Guwahati resulting in death of 20 persons and injuries to 24 others.
10. A similar explosion occurred in Nagaon on August 4, 1982, resulting in death of six persons and injuries to 18 others.

However, the AASU and AAGSP have denied their association with such activities" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, March 14: 426-427).

During the second phase, the immediate cause of provocation for violence was the government decision to hold election in February 1983 without revising the voter list. After 1979, the Election Commission has not updated the voter list and according to the law an updated voter list is must before holding election otherwise election can not be held (Das 1985: 8-10). Even stressing on updating the voter list, Indrajit Gupta, in a discussion on the issue 'Assam' commented, "The central government should have anticipated much earlier that if the talks do not reach settlement then either the

constitutional amendment has to be done – for which some parties were willing to support – or they had to go in for election. If they have kept both the options open in their mind then as far administrative arrangements for election are concerned it should have begun much earlier. Why could they not revise electoral rolls earlier? They declared holding of election in January and then there was not time to do anything after that. Then, of course, I am glad everybody has corroborated that this large scale violence which is in the form of communal clashes in which a huge number of people are involved did not begin upto 13 January. It was only two days before the election date that this feature appeared on the scene” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, February 21: 478).

The then CEC, K. Ganeshan revealed that the list couldn't be updated due to prolonged disturbances, lawlessness and frequent flood prevailed in Assam since 1979 and decided to held the election on the basis of 1979 voter list. It is already mentioned that the agitationist leaders objected the inclusion of names of foreigners in many of the LAC's, that too in lakhs. So the assumption was that during 1979-83, a large number of foreigners/migrants must have managed to enrol their names in the voter list. It does indicates those foreigners who do not have voting rights will vote in the election and will work as vote bank for a large number of candidates (Bezbarua 1983: 12-14).

Arun Shourie viewed that election was more important for the government rather than defending the lives of the people and for that reason thousands of people were killed. When the local people were unwilling to cooperate in conducting polls the election commission hired 8000 personnel from outside the state (Shourie 1983: 7-8). Despite repeated intelligence warning of possible violence in 1983 election made no sense in changing the decision of holding election in 1983. Some of the intelligence report published in Arun Shourie's article can be mentioned. The Dibrugarh district Superintendent of Police in a report (July 3, 1983) to the Special Branch, Inspector General writes, “After a solution to the foreigner's problem with mutual understanding in Assam, holding election would not be a problem, otherwise it would be a difficult task. The agitationist would definitely prevent this process and may be successful in creating lawlessness situation. Election without support of the people is a myth. So, I suggest not

to hold election unless there is a mutual solution to the foreigner's problem" (Memo. No. DSBXIV/1/82/129 Dibrugarh, 3 July 1982) (Shourie 1983a: 14).

On 20 November, 1982 the special branch gave a report to CEC Subramaniam mentioning the chances of possible violence in various constituencies in Assam. They even suggested for specific strategies; deployment of army - high alert, banning the All Assam Employees Association and security to government employees etc. It was also reported that in 78 LAC 30-60% vote will be caste. In others there are chances of violence and the voting will be around 1-30%. Showing that despite such chances of violence, election can be held ((No.SBXI(A)/SPC/20/82/Pt.IV/94) (Shourie 1983: 15).

Some other reports of the intelligence and high officials of administration suggested not to hold election. Some intelligence report quoted, "it is repeated already that the election is possible only in 79 seats out of 126 seats and in other constituencies there are chances of large scale violence. The same condition still persists. Even after such resistance and violence with proper planning and preparation election can be held" however, the government ignores the report" (PRANTIK Report 1983c: 7-8). According to Intelligence Bureau report of June 7, 1983, 19172 cases of violence were reported and the causes of such violence as cited by the report are as such: -

1. Holding election without updating voter list caused huge violence and killings during 14-18 February, 1983.
2. It spread anger among the people and felt insulted and depressed by not listening to their demand.
3. This decision of the CEC and government to hold that's too without cooperation from local Assamese people paralysed the administration - even local police official decided not to cooperate with the administration. Tactically the administration removed them from their position.
4. The decision of the Election Commission and government to hire 8000 personnel from outside the state to hold election spread tremendous anxiety among the people (Shourie 1983: 16).

In a discussion on the issue of 'Situation in Assam', P. C. Sethi, Home Minister commented, "The prolonged agitation has generated an atmosphere of bitterness and distrust and disturbed harmony amongst different sections. It is unfortunate that ethnic and communal passions have been unleashed in the wake of the controversies which were triggered off since the agitation. One immediate provocation for this holocaust is reported to be the resentment of some sections of the people against those who wish to exercise their democratic right of franchise. It is well known that certain elements have opposed the holding of elections and resorted to all means to disturb the process. I deeply regret that large number of lives have been lost though all of them not directly connected with the elections" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, February 21: 345-346).

The decision to hold the 1983 February election was an unmitigated disaster. The conflict between the migrants and the local inhabitants became intense and ethnic-sectarian tensions added to the bitterness of tribal groups over land-grabs by the migrants, and the scent of violence in the Assamese resistance movement created an explosive brew and violence spread across various parts of Assam. The incidence of violence occurred especially in eight district of Assam (Lok Sabha Debate, March 30, 1983: 415-416). When asked about the 'Places in Assam Declared Disturbed' by Amar Roypradhan, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Nihar Ranjan Laskar replied, "The government of Assam have declared the following areas as disturbed: - Nagaon district police station: Dhing, Hojai, Jagiroad, Jamupamukh, Kaliabor, Kampur – Lahorighat, Lanka, Lumding, Mikirhata, Morigaon, Mursjhar, Nowgaon, Raha, Rupohihat and Samaguri. In the Darrang district Police Stations: Behali, Dalgaon, Dhekiajuli, Gohpur, Kalaigaon, Mangaldoi, Mazbat, Paneri, Rangapara, Sootea, Tezpur and Udalguri. In the Lakhimpur district police stations: Bihpuria, Dhakuakhana, Dhemaji, Jonai and North Lakhimpur. In the Kamrup district police stations: Garpeta, Bharalamukh, Chamaria, Chaygaon, Jalukbari, Hajo, Kamalpur, Khetri, Nalbari, Noonmati, Paltan Bazaar, Pan Bazaar, Patacharkuchi, Rangiya, Sarbhog and Tamulpur. In the Goalpara district police stations: - Abhayapuri, Bijni, Bongaigaon and Lakhipur. In the Sivasagar district police stations: - Amuri, Borhat, Borholla, Borpathar, Demow, Jorhat, Majuli, Mariani, Moranhat, Nazira,, Sarupathar, Sonari, Teok and Titabor. In the Dibrugarh district police

stations: - Chabua, Joypur, Moran, and Namrup. In the Karbi Anglong district police stations: - Baithalangshu, Hamren and Howraghat” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, March 30: 460-461).

The gruesome killing of migrants took place in Nellie, Gohpur, Goreswar, Khoirabari, Silapathar, Chamaria, Chaulkhoa Chapori and Dhula are too well known and thousands of migrants were massacred. The Nellie incident occurred on February 18, 1983; according to the report of the Special Branch, IGP, Sameer Das to the Chief Minister, 1383 people were killed (Shourie 1983a: 16-17 & Deuri and Pator 1984: 29-30). The Nellie massacre is worst organised killing ever occurred since the Independence. The massacre took place in 14 villages—Alisingha, Khulapathar, Basundhari, Bugduba Beel, Bugduba Habi, Borjola, Butuni, Indurmari, Mati Parbat, Muladhari, Mati Parbat no. 8, Silbheta, Borburi and Nellie—of Nagaon district. Around 12000 villagers, belonging to the Lalung tribe gathered and butchered, they came from a number of villages even with a distance of 18-20 k.m. (Shourie 1983: 17-18).

Hazarkia estimated the number of people killed is around 1700 men, women and children – all of them were migrants belonging to the minority group (Hazarika 1993: 50-51). The reasons for the massacre were rooted in land alienation—the settlers had bought and taken over land of the native Lalung/Tiwa community in an area where selling of land to a non-tribal was illegal. Bitterness there and elsewhere continue to simmer (Hazarika 2001b: 191-207). During 7 January – 21 February, 1983, police fired on 202 incidents where 126 people were killed and 162 were injured (Shourie 1983a: 18). A discussion published in the *PRANTIK* reports that the February, 1983 violence, “80% of the total people killed belongs to the migrant community. But at present, since March beginning, 1983, the number of attack on the Assamese speaking people are on rise, especially in Nagaon, Darrang and Kamrup district. These numbers of such incidents are increasing and administration surprisingly not taking adequate steps to control such violence. The police even not ready to take action even after getting adequate information” (PRANTIK Report 1983c: 7-8).

The Nellie massacre was followed by another massacre at Chaulkhowa Chapori in the Darrang district where the victims were Bangladeshi descendents. The Assamese Hindus and Muslims together attacked the Bengali Muslims (Shourie 1983b: 9-10). Benoy Kumar Basumotary in a discussion in the ALA viewed, "In Mangaldoi sub-division, it is estimated that 500 people were murdered in Chowlkhoa Chapori. This could happen because the district authority was not rendered any help by the junior officers, the EAC's or the 1<sup>st</sup> class magistrate who were located at Mangaldoi in SDO's office and they sided with the agitationist" (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1983, 21 September, Vol. III, No.2: 98-99).

At Gohpur (Sonitpur district) and Darrang district several people died and many were displaced in the attacks and counter attacks. Here the victims were the Bodos and Assamese. During 12-14 February, 1983, violence occurred with Bodo and Kachari vs. Assamese people at Gohpur. Around 43 Assamese 30 Bodo-Kachari villages were burnt. An estimated 30 people were killed in which 19 were Assamese, 5 Kacharis, 1 Nepali and 5 people were couldn't be identified. An estimated 30 and 19 people belonging to Bodo and Assamese community went missing. Three people were also killed in police firing incident (Shourie 1983b: 12-13).

In a discussion on the issue "Assam", Samar Mukherjee commented, "If the agitators and their friends insist on this type of agitation going on, there is every danger that Assam may be divided into various autonomous states. Already the Udayachal demand is there where the clashes have taken place. At Gohpur village, the conflict between the Bodos vs. Assamese occurred as the Bodo tribal wanted Udayachal and the Assamese people have bitterly opposed and behind that there is the question of land problem" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, February 21: 386). For a long time Bodo and Assamese people were fighting over land occupied by the Bodos and landless tribal people belonging to Mangaldoi, Kamrup and Kokrajhar area. The PTCA was helping them to grab land in these areas. However, the forest department tried to evacuate them from there time to time. The politics also influenced for aggressiveness with government support PTCA has been demanding for Udayachal – a separate state for the Bodos and demanding land for the Bodo people to have permanent homeland for them so that other

linguistic group does not come under Udayachal. Imposing election was the issue while Bodos were in support of voting – the Assamese refrained for voting and prevented Bodo's to support the election finally leading to clashes (Shourie 1983b: 13-14 & Das 1983: 15-16).

In Kamrup district violence broke out in Boko and Saigaon area during 10-13 February, 1983 migrants reportedly attacked the Assamese people and their villages, set ablaze their houses, vandalizing, killing etc. In Chamaria, attack took place in more than 20 villages, 300 houses were burnt (Khakhlari 1983: 19-20). Violence also occurred at Silapathar in the Lakhimpur district and the victims were the Bengali Hindus, ex refugees/displaced persons from East Pakistan. Similar kind of violence were also reported from Barpeta road and Howli in Barpeta district, Nagarbera and Goreswar in Kamrup district, Gosaigaon in the Kokrajhar, Salmara in the Dhubri, Owguri, Thilamara, Rupahi, Dhing, Tinsukia, etc. A large number of people belonging to the Hindu and Muslim Bengali descent (migrants) were killed and displaced (Hussein 2000: 4519-23).

P. C. Sethi, in a discussion on the 'Situation in Assam' comments, "According to the information available on the night of March 1-2, 1983, a mob of about 1000 people in Hathikuli area of Teok police station in the Sivasagar district set ablaze about 30 houses and killed 24 fisherman and injured 32 others including women and children. The Superintendent of Police including some high officials on the receipt of information rushed to the spot but while returning they were attacked by a mob of 500 people with lethal weapons near Dumia village. Two persons were killed when police resorted to firing and also arrested 13 miscreants. In another incident of mob attack, one Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police was killed at Madhavapura police outpost under the Kamrup police station in Nagaon district on March 2, 1983. Police opened fire where three persons were killed. The same mob went to another village nearby and set ablaze some houses" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, March 3: 314-315).

The number of people killed in Assam agitation during 1983 varies. Some of the estimation can be cited through analyzing the ALA and Lok Sabha debate. For instance, Hiteswar Saikia in a discussion regarding the Assam Movement viewed, "During 1982-

83, more than 3 thousand people were killed; police registered more than 16000 cases in charges of murder, setting ablaze houses, theft, dacoity, vandalizing etc.” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1983, 21 September, Vol. III, No.2: 43-45). During the 1983 there have been 1344 deaths, 611 assaults, 564 arsons, 11 cases of mischief, 12 intimidation and 5 cases of kidnapping through wrongful confinement in January and February reported. Besides this, there have been 111 cases of explosions, 73 cases of recovery of explosives. And even now the state government is registering the names of certain persons who are found missing. The number is round about 1500” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, March 14: 429).

In a query of Chitta Basu and Krishan Pratap Singh, and also by Pramila Dandavate on the issue of ‘losses in Assam during riots’, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Nihar Ranjan Laskar replied, “According to the state government, 1637 people lost their lives during the disturbances in Assam since January 1983 till 21.3.83. There was also extensive damage to public and private property. There are about 40000 houses will require to be reconstructed/repared and 1598 road bridges have been destroyed” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, March 23: 112 & April 6: 189). In another question of Sudhir Kumar Giri, the Minister-in-Charge of Home Affairs Shri Nihar Ranjan Lascar replied, “According to the information furnished by the state of Assam government, 1774 persons lost their lives due to the violence and 207 persons died in police firing. The government had sanctioned Rs. 5000/- as ex-gratia grant to each of the bereaved families for every person killed” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, April 27: 264).

Some groups were directly threatened by the demands of the Assam Movement started opposing the movement accusing the demands as invalid. In May 1980, the All Assam Minority Students Union (AAMSU) attempted to include both Hindus and Muslim of Bengali descent, appeared on the scene to rival AASU. The group didn’t dispute over the issue of Bangladeshi migration but started demanding for providing citizenship to all the pre-1971 migrants and the harassment meted out to the minorities should be stopped. The AASU opposed the demand and a clash of interest further seen. For e.g. in certain strongholds of the migrant communities, strike called by the AAMSU opposed by the



AASU led to the clashes between the supporters of these two organization. Finally the ground for communal feelings spread further with the indigenous Assamese people (Baruah 1986).

#### 4. IV.vi \_\_\_ Mode of Conflict

The violence that occurred during the Assam Movement can be termed sometime as ethnic and communal. The government termed it as communal and accused the Hindu communal forces like the RSS, responsible for spreading communal hatred and violence against Muslims. However, after studying the violence and group involved in it shows that it's not communal rather it's an ethnic violence. Shourie views the conflict in Assam as ethnic rather than communal. For instances, Shourie views that the Nellie massacre is perpetrated by the Lalung community; even intelligence agencies didn't report the involvement of the RSS in it. The massacre in Nellie occurred as a reaction of the kidnapping of 6 child and 4 women belonging to the Lalung community by the migrants. To take revenge and rescue theses kids and women, Lalung community gathered and attacked the villagers. In Kokrajhar the violence occurred between the Bodo-Kachari vs. Hindu and Muslim Bengali speaking people. At Goreswar and Khoirabari, violence occurred between the Sarania, Bodo-Kachari vs. Bengali Hindu. In Dhemaji and Jonai violence occurred between Missing tribe vs. Bengali speaking Hindus and Muslims. At Samuguri, Dhula and Thekerabari violence occurred between the Muslims vs. Hindu Bengalis. At Chawlkhoa Chapori, Assamese Hindu and Muslims jointly attacked the Bengali Muslims proving the massacre as ethnic rather than communal (Shourie 1983b: 15-16).

Most of the victim was the Bengali Muslim migrants added a sense of disillusionment among the Assamese Muslims. There are also some instances where Assamese Muslims joined Assamese Hindu villagers in resisting attacks from the migrant Muslims. Although the stated aim of the movement was to drive out the foreign nationals (both Hindu and Bengali Muslims) from the region, yet the communal flare ups in different parts of the state made the Assamese Muslims feel increasingly insecure (Mishra 1999: 1265-67). Many of the minority organizations suspected that the violence was the handiwork of the

AASU and its affiliated organization. As the Bangladeshi Muslims were targeted in the riot, the national and international newspapers coverage contained as a case of Muslims were being targeted. The attitude of the Assamese Muslims towards the movement also strained. But the AASU and its allied organizations sharply reacted to this accusation (Sarmah 1999: 52-53).

#### 4. IV.vii \_\_\_ Police Atrocities

During the prolonged disturbances and lawlessness, the Government of India deployed military and Para military forces to control law and order. During 1983, 400 companies of central paramilitary forces and 11 brigades of Army were deployed. The government continued to call the movement as violent and the army and Para military to control law and order resorted to severe atrocities occurred throughout the state. Several organisations have sent letters to the President and the Prime Minister writing about the atrocities. The police atrocities was severe in areas like Guwahati, Nalbari, Belsor, Aamguri, North Lakhimpur, Nagaon, Nitaipukhuri, Kakojan, Bhabani, Bajali, Dergaon, Nazira, Titabor, Jazi, Sivasagar, Tiyok. The atrocities of the police and CRPF have broken all previous records (PRANTIK Report 1983c: 6).

There are several documents and reports about the atrocities of security forces in Assam during the period of Assam agitation. The then Governor of Assam, L P Singh, declared North Kamrup as a disturbed area on January 7, 1980. On 8 January, 1980 army and the Para military forces were called to aid the civilian police and restore law and order. But without consulting the civilian police, the forces entered in 29 villages and tortured the villagers on 10th and 11th of January. In a 23 pages Report of the relief team from Guwahati Medical College, reveals that the team treated more than 200 rape victims, fractures, dislocation of joints, sprains and minor cuts caused mostly by boots and rifle butts. More than 25 cases of rape victims were received from this medical team. The AASU leaders wisely declared these rape victims as the martyrs (Das 1982: 106-107).

As per the High Court Bar Association, eight cases of rape were reported and all of them were Assamese - five of them were Hindus, two were Muslims and other was a tribal girl. In the Nalbari district 2000 displaced people took refuge at Gordon High School. S. K.

Saxena, public relation officer, Ministry Of Defence in a report mentions that seventeen girls and thirty women were raped by the army personal. There was also report that Saxena was forced to retire for writing this report. Another massacre occurred by the CRPF in the oil installation at Duliajan. The CRPF personnel opened fire on a gathering of 12000 people, but the government did not admit such kind of deaths in the firing. It is also reported that the CRPF personnel loaded these dead bodies in the trucks and disposed of. The Dibrugarh University Students Union reported that the bodies with picketer's badges were seen floating in the Buridihing River, while two other bodies were seen burning near Tippling Thermal Power Station (Das 1982: 109-114).

#### 4. IV.viii \_\_\_ Nepalis during Assam Movement

The presence of Nepali community throughout the centuries adopted Assamese culture and assimilated with the local Assamese people. However, things worsen during the Assam agitation. Along with Bangladeshi migrants, Nepalis were also targeted. The Assamese nationalism over the Nepali migrants was soon lifted on and that too with a junk for which the later was not prepared. The AASU and the AAGSP through their memorandum suggested that a 'monstrous problem' has been created by the infiltration of migrants from Bangladesh and Nepal' (Hussein 2001: 15 & Dasgupta 2003: 239-240 & Mandal 2009: 38).

It was earlier suggested that those who came after 1951 were 'foreigners' in Assam. The target was Bangladeshis but the Nepalis were too included deliberately ignoring the *Indo-Nepal Friendship Treaty of 1950*. The treaty however ensured the free movement of population without any required Visa and Passport. This treaty also led to massive migration of Nepalis population at large scale and the Nepalis population showed a 2.38% growth in 1971 as against 1.26% in 1951. The migration is still continuing as it is tied up with the Nepali search for sustenance and survival. By the time a large number of Nepalis who had migrated before 1931, had by birth or residence became natural citizens (Nath 2003a: 210-211).

To legitimise the agitation against the migrants, the AASU and the AAGSP started manipulating the masses and argued that it was necessary to include Nepalis within the

definition of foreigners. According to the AASU memorandum (1980), “The number of foreign nationals in Assam has already become explosive. The problem must be tackled with utmost speed. Foreign nationals, whose presence is of grave concern to the people of Assam, are mainly from Bangladesh and Nepal. In addition of Bangladeshis, Nepalis who have entered Assam without Restricted Area Permits either from Nepal or from Bhutan account for a sizeable number of foreigners. The increase of Nepali immigrants in the last two decades cannot be ignored. The percentage of increase of the Nepali population is higher by about 13% than the percentage of increase in the general population during the period 1951-1971.”

Despite their long stay and historical linkages, matrimonial alliances, the Nepalis in Assam are a serious case of conflict-afflicted population. As discussed earlier, large scale migration of Nepalis occurred during colonial and post-colonial period, constituting a good number of migrants in Assam. This made some Assamese middle class apprehensive of their identity in the state. But their numbers didn't constitute a threat to the aspirations of Assamese middle class. The Assamese middle class have no real interest in detecting and deporting Nepali migrants from Assam. The middle class Assamese people perceived the Nepali migrants as a socio-economically depressed community (Dasgupta 2003: 240-242)

Adhikary in a discussion agreed and viewed that the Nepalis were not the direct target of the movement but were displaced due to fear of being attacked. He further commented, “During the Assam conflict, the concentrations of Nepali population where small, were not targeted but some others targeted where their concentration was high. I have also observed the displaced people migrating from Assam to Nepal.”<sup>15</sup> Dixit in a discussion also agreed that the Nepalis are being targeted in the name of foreigners violating the Indo-Nepal Treat of Peace and Friendship 1950, he commented, “The concentration of Nepalis in Assam is very low and secondly, they assimilated with the Assamese society and their political association is little weaker. In comparison with Bengali, Nepalis are small in numbers. The Nepali settlers who are now Indian citizens are excessively

---

<sup>15</sup> In a discussion with Keshab Adhikary, Central Department of Population Studies, Tribhuvan University, on 27/04/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

targeted by the Assamese people branding them as foreigners. They are still regarded as aliens when there is so much assimilation and there is no challenge to the system from this group.”<sup>16</sup>

Throughout Assam the Nepalis were apprehensive of the movement as the demand for deletion of their names from the voter and deportation created furore among the Nepalis in Assam. As a result the existing cordial relations between the two communities affected sharply. The well organized massacres of Bangladeshis across various districts also created a sense of fear among the Nepali population. The Nepalis particularly leaving in the Darrang and the Lakhimpur districts left their home abandoned and took shelter in the border areas like Kakaribhita, Biratnagar, Dholabari, Dhannagar, Suryanagar Tezpur and Sontipur. As a result of the fear to their life and property a sense of traditional Nepali identity started blooming. They started identifying themselves with the Gorkha past, Hindu tradition and pan Nepalese solidarity movement. With the help of other leaders from Sikkim and Darjeeling, the Nepalis started mobilizing themselves in Assam and under the banner of various right wings political parties started opposing the Assam Movement (Nath 2005a: 66).

#### 4. IV.ix \_\_\_ Enquiry of the Massacre

Altogether 688 criminal cases were filed against miscreants in connection with Nellie violence and out of these 310 cases were charge-sheeted. The remaining 378 cases were closed due to the police claim of ‘lack of evidence’. Again when the Assam Gana Parishad came to power in 1985, all the 310 charge-sheeted cases were dropped and not single person prosecuted. B K Gohain, Home Commissioner, Assam said “All the Nellie cases were dropped during Prafulla Kumar Mahanta's time. The chapter is closed” (Rahman 2005). The Central government was not interested in appointing a judicial commission to investigate the violence and hence agreed to appoint a one man commission. Santosh Mohan Dev in a discussion in Lok Sabha on the ‘situation in Assam’ comments, “I personally view that the idea of asking for inquiry in Assam is to create another situation against the government and the police there and to create

---

<sup>16</sup> In a discussion with Kanak Mani Dixit, Editor, Himal South Asia, Kathmandu, on 1/05/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

dislocation there. There is no denial of the fact that there was a time in Assam when the government employees totally supported this movement. But that support was taken away because of the merciless killings. And if you ask for judicial inquiry, this will be chaos in Assam. Let there be a magisterial inquiry and if the inquiry proves that there are certain elements in the force, certain officials, government will not feel shy to take action against them” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, May 5: 381-382).

In a query of Vasant Kumar Pandit on the issue of ‘Inquiry Commission in Assam’, the then Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Nihar Ranjan Laskar replied, “The government of Assam has appointed a one man commission of inquiry under the section 3 or the commissions of Enquiry Act, 1952 with T. P. Tiwari, IAS retired as its chairman and member. The commission has the following terms - firstly, to look into the circumstances leading to the disturbances which took place in Assam during January to April 1983. Secondly, to examine the measures taken by the concerned authorities to anticipate, prevent and deal with these disturbances and to assess the adequacy thereof and indicate whether there were any deficiencies or failures on the part of any authority or individual. Thirdly, to suggest measures to prevent recurrence of such incidents in future and finally, to make such other recommendations as deemed fit. The commission will make enquiry and submit its report within six months. The government of Assam may, on sufficient grounds, extend the time for submission of the report of the commission” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, July 27: 32-33). The Tiwari commission submits its 600 pages report to the Assam Government in May 1984 but the Congress Government, led by Hiteswar Saikia, decided not to make it public. Both the Congress and the AGP have suppressed information about the massacre during the movement period (Rahman 2005).

#### **4. V \_\_\_ Local and National Security Threat**

The continuing large-scale agitation in Assam has serious security implications. The Northeastern region as a whole has been highly unstable due to presence of insurgent groups demanding separate statehood and independent nations, particularly in Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur and Nagaland. The region is also close China, Burma and Bangladesh

and thus persistence of socio-political unrest in this sensitive region endangers the nation's territorial integrity. The region in terms of resources such as oil, gas, tea, timber, hydro-electric etc. is rich and in the event of hostility with China, the political unrest in the region may seriously affect the nation's military effort (Rastogi 1986: 91-92). The threat to local and national security is evident when the movement spread across the Northeastern states completely engaging the ethnic tribal groups against the migrants from Bangladesh and Nepal.

The well known organised campaign led by the AASU known as '*Bongal Kheda*,' (throw out Bengalis) aimed at ethnic cleansing in Assam, not restricted to Assam only, it spread to neighbouring states like Meghalaya and Tripura. A large scale displacement of Bengali speaking people occurred in Tripura and Meghalaya. Tribal local inhabitants attacked Bengali speaking people irrespective of their religion, resenting their growing numbers and dominance in jobs and in business or in both states. In Meghalaya, the mayhem took a serious turn in 1979 and was restricted to Shillong, where the Bengali dominated bureaucracy and a number of professions working in that area. During the 1990s Bengali remained the prime target of tribal violence but other non tribal communities like the Biharis (people from Bihar) and the Marwaris (from Rajasthan) also came under such attack in the state. The riot took a heavy toll over thirty lives compelling the migrants and outsiders to close their establishments (Barbhuyan 1994: 5). Since the early 1980s an estimated 25-30 thousand Bengalis have left Shillong and from some other parts of Meghalaya and settled down in West Bengal and other states in India (Bhaumik 2005: 157-158).

In Tripura, the attack on the Bengalis is widespread and intense and occurred since Bengalis took over land from the tribal reducing them to the ethnic minority. Land alienation and loss of political power and becoming minority, ethnic tribal group started attacking the Bengalis. The fierce ethnic riots took place in June-July 1980 where about 1076 Bengalis and 278 tribal people were killed. Around 327 Bengali speaking people were butchered in the village of Mandai. During the June 1980 riots, a total number of 189919 people, 80 percent Bengalis and 20 percent tribal among the total displaced people took shelter in the 186 camps in Tripura. Bengalis were sheltered in 141 camps

while the tribal people took refuge in 45 camps (Dinesh Singh Committee Report 1980 as cited in Bhaumik 2005: 157).

Most of the displaced went back to their villages but after a while, the Bengalis relocated their villages closer to police outstation, semi-urban areas and roadsides position. Mandai is a classic example – the old Bengali part of the settlement has now been largely taken over by the tribal and the Bengalis have moved away from to 'New Mandai', a new fledgling semi-urban location guarded by the paramilitary forces. In fact, most new Bengali settlements came up near the camps set up by the security forces where they had taken their shelter. The villages they had lived in earlier were abandoned and in most case taken over the tribal people (Bhaumik 2005: 158).

In Meghalaya, sectarian violence again erupted in 1987, this time the prime targets were the Nepalis (150000) living in Shillong, Jowai and other parts of Meghalaya. The tensions in Meghalaya existed since 1931 between the Nepalis and the Khasis because of the damage done by the farmer's buffaloes and the indiscriminate cutting down of forests by them to make room for their increasing herds (Mandal 2009: 39-40). The Nepali labourers in the coal mines in Jowai were the first target later spread to other parts. Dozens of innocent children of Nepalese working in Jowai coal-mines died of hunger because their parents did not return to their home even weeks after the incident. Violence involved killings, burning of Nepali villages and schools and finally their deportation by the state government. The worst affected were the Nepali dairy farmers who gave up their occupation left Meghalaya (Nath 2005a: 57-58, 66-67).

In the agitation against the foreigners, the Khasi students and the Government of Meghalaya were in agreement on the deportation of the Nepalis. About 12,000 Nepalis were detected as foreigners of who 7,000 to 10,000 were expelled in February – March 1987. Thereafter as a result of an understanding between the governments of Meghalaya and Assam, these evicted persons were jointly escorted to the Assam-Bengal Border from where the exodus was guided up to the Indo-Nepal border (Nath 2005a: 72).



Conflict also occurred in Arunachal Pradesh against the presence of the large number of Chakmas, Hajongs, Tibetians, Nepalis and Bangladeshis. The All Arunachal Pradesh Students Union (AAPSU) forwarding the movement viewed that due to presence of migrants and refugees is a deliberate attempt to dilute the native identity and a threat to the demographic balance of the state. The AAPSU was spearheading anti-foreigner campaigning with the support of Gegong Apang – the Chief Minister, issued a quit notice to all the foreigners to leave Arunachal Pradesh by 30 November, 1994 and withdrawn the facilities enjoyed by them one after another. The registration certificate issued by the centre became a mere scrap of paper and the locals occupied the lands developed by refugees. Employment opportunities to the Chakmas were banned and trade licenses stopped and those given earlier were cancelled. Allegations were made that a section of the Chakmas were undergoing arms training and manufacturing weapons (Barpujari 1998: 51-52).

The AAPSU created panic, as the deadline was drawing near forced about 2000 Chakmas from Papumpare district to take shelter in the Gohpur reserve forests in Assam. The Government of Assam clamped night curfew and issued shoot at sight order along the border in Tinsukia district, opposite to Changlang district – home of large number of Chakmas. However, AAPSU put new deadlines following which CRPF was deployed to maintain law and order and according to the intelligence report the situation remained 'fluid and explosive' that might lead to insurgency and counter-insurgency unless effective steps are taken to diffuse tensions in that quarter (Barpujari 1998: 52).

In Manipur, the sentiment took the form of a movement, manifesting itself in direct attacks on the Nepalis in 1980 compelling many of them (who were made the domicile community in 1947) to shift houses and flee to safer areas (Mandal 2009: 40-41). Most of the displaced from Meghalaya and Manipur are settled in Rupandehi, Jhapa, Banke and other parts of Nepal's Terai region, besides Kathmandu and Pokhara. In Mizoram, the migration of Nepalis from Nepal since the 1980s to work as labourers, cow-herds or lumber-jacks created problems for the domiciled Gurkhas. There was no criterion to distinguish permanent settlers from newcomers; the Government of Mizoram categorized all Nepalis as foreigners and withdrawn certain benefits extended to the Gurkhas of pre-

1950, a number of Nepali families left Mizoram. In Nagaland during 1980s, extortion was used as a means to terrorise the Nepalis, who were pre-1940 settlers and treated as indigenous non-Naga local residents. These settlers, who had substantial landed property, were forced to resort to distress sale. In the Marapani region located on the border of Wokha (Nagaland) and Sivasagar (Assam) clashes occurred in which about 200 Nepalis lost their lives (Nath 2005a: 67).

#### **4. VI\_\_ Government Responses**

The government responses have mainly been to reach a political settlement with the agitators and the rehabilitation of the victims of the conflict in Assam and other states. The state and the central government were anxiously trying to find out a proper solution to the problem of foreigners in Assam. Both the state and the central government engaged in complicated task to rehabilitate the displaced people due to large scale violence in the Assam. Many of the IDP's took shelter in the neighbouring states including West Bengal and Arunachal Pradesh and complaints were made by these states that Assam is pushing migrants and asked for proper action to rehabilitate them, as they don't want to take the burden of IDPs. Showing anxiety to find out a proper solution of Assam Movement, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Nihar Ranjan Laskar, in a query of Madhu Dandavate and Madhav Rao Scindia on the issue of 'foreign nationals in Assam', commented, "The government have made its stand clear that its doors are open for further talks on the foreigners issue and the government is anxious to find a just satisfactory solution in consultation with the state government and all other interests concerned. Both the state and the central governments are making efforts to restore normalcy and to create conditions congenial and conducive to a fruitful dialogue" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, August 9: 275-276).

During the six year long anti-foreigners agitation violence caused widespread displacement of both Hindus and Muslims of Bengali Descent. Most of the victim took shelter in the neighbouring states; West Bengal and Arunachal Pradesh (Bhaumik 2005: 144-173). According to the *Annual Report* of the Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation (1983-84: 40-42), "Following the disturbances in Assam in February-March 1983, a large

number of persons were affected. The number of such affected persons during the peak period in March, 1983 was 310732. On April 10, 1983, further disturbances in the Goalpara district caused displacement of 16717 persons bringing the total number of affected persons to 327449. The affected persons numbering 34367 had taken shelter in Arunachal Pradesh.”

The Assam government to rehabilitate the victims of Assam conflict organised camps for their relief and rehabilitation. In a query of Chitta Basu regarding the ‘relief and rehabilitation of the people’ displaced during the Assam Violence, the Minister of Labour and Rehabilitation, Veerendra Patil commented, “250 relief camps were opened in Assam alone to provide relief and rehabilitation assistance and 118 camps were closed and the remaining 132 camps still exist. The number of displaced persons – 34367, who left for Arunachal Pradesh, has also returned to Assam. At least 112170 persons are still left in the relief camps in Assam left to be rehabilitated except those who leave the relief camps and decide to live on their own” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, May 10). The state government along with other NGO’s tried rehabilitate the displaced people through organizing camps etc. In a query by Santosh Mohan Dev, on the issue of ‘rehabilitation of victims in Assam conflict’, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation, Shri Dharamvir replied, “46849 affected families have been given admissible package of rehabilitation assistance and the remaining families are at various stages of grant of such assistance. Special provision for welfare of orphans and destitute women is being made under the existing new schemes. Meanwhile, two SOS villages, in the districts of Nagaon and Darrang (at Mangaldoi) for 300 and 200 children have been completed. The Indian council of child welfare (ICCW) running institute for about 100 children at Tezpur. Some destitute women were also provided jobs as foster mothers in the SOS villages and as Anganwadi workers under the integrated child development services scheme. Apart from the above mentioned two NGO’s; Assam Carbon Products Ltd. Guwahati, Indian Red Cross Society, Assam Sahayak Samiti, Bharat Sewashram Sangha, Sisters of Charity and some other local organizations also helped displaced people for rehabilitation. The Central government also provided a sum

of Rs. 497.1 million for relief and rehabilitation schemes to the government of Assam” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, August 9: 302-304).

Forced displacement of people occurred due to Assam conflict and a number of displaced people took shelter in West Bengal and it was an arduous task for the government to provide rehabilitation facilities to them. The West Bengal government termed the migration of displaced people as burden for them and repeatedly asked the Assam government to take them back. In a discussion regarding the issue ‘situation in Assam’ Satyasadhan Chakraborty in the Lok Sabha commented, “Already 17000 refugees are the victims of 1982 disturbances and 22000 new refugees have crossed over to West Bengal, it is an enormous burden on the state” (Parliament of India Debate, 1983, Lok Sabha, March 3: 316). Amar Roypradhan in a discussion on the issue of ‘migration of persons from Assam to West Bengal after recent Elections’, estimating the number commented, “In West Bengal alone, during 18 February – 28 March, 1983, 27600 are staying in different camps. Since 1980 January alone – 11444 Assam refugees are staying in Dangi, Jasodanga and Jorai camps in West Bengal. Moreover, about 15000 people are staying in their relatives houses. It is heavy burden to borne by the West Bengal government. I would also like to know very clearly and categorically from the Home Minister whether the central government is ready to bear the entire expenditure such as for construction of camps, clothing’s, milk, baby food, medicines and Rs. 5 in cash and 2 and half kg of wheat or rice per week per adult” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, March 30: 14-16).

However the movement leaders denied such migration of displaced people to West Bengal. Amar Roypradhan on the issue of ‘migration of persons from Assam to West Bengal after recent elections’ views, “The displaced people from Assam who are staying in West Bengal, there are Hindus, Muslims SC/ST and not only the Bengali origin but they also of Gorkha and Bihar origin. Among them, there were government employees, school teachers and land-holders who are staying there for last hundred years. But in a statement issue by the conveners of AAGSP Atul Bora and Biraj Sharma ‘while none from Assam had sneaked into West Bengal.....the West Bengal government is making all efforts to push vagabonds and foreign nationals into Assam’. This allegation is not

acceptable and the Assam government must take back them and set up tribunals to detect and determine foreign nationals" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, March 30: 13-14).

In a query by Pius Tirkey on the issue of 'rehabilitation of evacuees from Assam who are camped at Alipurduwar in West Bengal', the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Nihar Ranjan Laskar replied, "Around 23305 evacuees, who had come from Assam since February, 1983 onwards were reportedly in camps in Alipurduwar subdivisions on 11-7-1983. A team of senior officers and ministers of Assam Government have visited the relief camps in West Bengal to persuade the refugees to return to their original places in Assam and held discussion with the west government official. It has been reported by government of west Bengal that 5589 evacuees in west Bengal have returned recently to Assam voluntarily" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, August 3: 281-282)

In a query of B. D. Singh and Jaspal Singh on the issue of 'rehabilitation of persons displaced as a result of Assam riots', the Minister of State in the Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation, Shri Dharamvir replied, "The peak population in relief camps in West Bengal 28460. Out of these 26217 remain in camps as on 20 July, 1983. About 890 persons in camps in Assam and 26217 persons in camps in West Bengal are yet to be rehabilitated as on 20 July, 1983. The affected persons have been given assistance for reconstruction of houses, purchase of lost milch cattle, grant for purchase of books so school going children and maintenance assistance. Agriculturalist families have been given, in addition, assistance for purchase of seeds, fertilizers, tractorisation of land and replacement of lost bullocks. Non-agriculturalist families including petty traders have been given financial assistance for their self-employment. In addition, assistance has been given to the state government for repair of bridges and school buildings, water supply arrangements and health and medical care. A sum of Rs. 445.8 million has been released to the government of Assam for relief and rehabilitation measures. Assistance has also been given to the voluntary organisations for looking after women and children in need of care and protection" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, July 26: 661-662).

The Assam government agreed to take back the displaced people from West Bengal and Arunachal Pradesh and some Assam government officials also requested the people to come back to Assam and assured full rehabilitation for them. In a query of Amar Roypradhan and Chitta Pradhan on the issue of 'migration of persons from Assam to West Bengal after recent Elections', the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Nihar Ranjan Laskar replied, "The government of Assam have been requested to take necessary steps to facilitate their early return to Assam. The central government has agreed to provide financial assistance in respect of expenditure incurred by the WB government for running relief camps for a period of one month to begin with" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, March 30: 13-18). In a query of Indrajit Gupta on the issue 'request from West Bengal for return of Assam refugee', the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Nihar Ranjan Laskar replied, "The central government requested the Assam government to take all possible measures to stop further flow of refugees to West Bengal and to make arrangement for the return of refugees to Assam who have crossed over to West Bengal. The request of the government of West Bengal for sanction of financial assistance of Rs. 2.392 million as expenditure incurred since February, 1983, for establishing and running relief camps is under consideration" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, April 6: 210-211).

In a query by Indrajit Gupta on the issue of 'riot victim of Assam', the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Nihar Ranjan Laskar replied, "According to the West Bengal government, about 25000 persons crossed over to West Bengal from Assam as a result of recent disturbances. Out of them 17130 persons are reported to be staying in the camps set up by the West Bengal government as on 23-3-1983. Another about 4000 persons presently camping at Alipurduwar Railway Station are also being shifted shortly to a new camp. Government of Arunachal Pradesh has reported that 34367 persons arrived in Arunachal Pradesh from Assam. Out of them only 400 persons are still staying in relief camps set up by Arunachal Pradesh government and the rest have returned to Assam. According to government of West Bengal and Arunachal Pradesh expenditure of Rs. 2346195/- and Rs. 79525/-, respectively have been incurred till 23-3-83. The government of Assam have deputed their officers to Arunachal Pradesh and West Bengal

to persuade refugees to return to their original place. Rehabilitation assistance is being extended and 164 police pickets have been set up to provide security to the people” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, March 30: 460-461).

In a query by A.U. Azmi and Laxman Mallick on the issue of ‘Rehabilitation of victims of Assam Violence’, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation, Shri Dharamvir replied, “Assam government has sought 570.8 million as relief assistance to rehabilitate displaced people. A sum of Rs. 200 million has been released by the central government to the government of Assam to meet the expenditure on relief and rehabilitation of affected persons. The affected persons are being given relief assistance in the form of food supplies, cash doles, utensils, blankets and clothing’s. The children and nursing expectant mothers are provided baby food/milk powder and 30 tonnes of baby food//milk powder have been supplied for this purpose. For medical care, medicines worth Rs. 7.617 million have been sent. On return to homes affected persons are being provided assistance for reconstruction of houses, purchase of seeds, replacement of lost bullocks, & milch cattle and maintenance help for a short period” (Parliament of India Debate (1983), Lok Sabha, April 19: 202-203; Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, April 12: 112-113).

The Assam government also paid compensation to the people killed in the agitation and also to the victims of the conflict. In a query by A. F. Golam Osmani on the issue of ‘amount paid to the martyrs of Assam Movement’, about their numbers district wise and the compensation paid to the victims of riot, the then Minister of Relief and Rehabilitation, Thanesar Boro replied, “A sum of Rs. 30000/- each paid to the next kin of the martyr’s who sacrificed, suffered or died for the cause and the principle of the Assam Movement. A sum of Rs. 5000/- each paid as ex-gratia to the next kin of the victims of 1983 disturbances. The budget head of account ‘288-social security and welfare-E other Social Security Programme (d) rehabilitation for disturbances General-Non-Plan’ and the revised head of which is ‘2235-social security and’ welfare 60-other Social Security Programme-200 other schemes (f) relief and rehabilitation for disturbances General Non-Plan’ 1987-88. In accordance with the provision made under para 14(b) of the Assam Accord, the relief & rehabilitation department has drawn up”

(Assam Legislative Assembly Debates 1988, Budget Session, May 10, Vol. I, No. 32: 71-73).

**Table 4. IV**  
**Number of District wise Martyr's (Assam Movement) in Assam**

District	Number	District	Number
Kamrup	47	Jorhat	37
Barpeta	36	Dibrugarh	36
Nalbari	35	Lakhimpur	52
Sivasagar	14	Goalpara	40
Karbi-Anglong	26	Nagaon	251
Darrang	84	Kokrajhar	12
Sonitpur	138	Dhubri	11

Sources: Assam Legislative Assembly Debates (1988), 10 May, Budget Session, Vol-I, No.32: 72.

#### **4. VII International Dimensions and Responses**

The Assam agitation and the subsequent violent conflict attracted world wide attention. Subramaniam Swamy in a discussion in the parliament regarding the 'Situation in Assam' viewed, "some people or countries outside India want to tarnish the reputation of India" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, May 5: 363). The UN Secretary General also reacted sharply on Assam Violence; hence he viewed the conflict as India's internal matter. In a discussion and query by Amar Roypradhan on the issue of 'United Nations Secretary General's Reaction to Assam Situation', the Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs, A. A. Rahim viewed, "In the wake of the reports regarding Assam violence, appearing in the western press in February 1983, the spokesman of the UN Secretary General told the press briefing that the Secretary General is felt sorry at the loss of lives in Assam and he hopes that harmony will prevail soon. The spokesman also viewed that the UN does not intended to give any assistance to alleviate the situation in Assam as it an internal matter of India. The Secretary General also had the occasion to visit India during the Conference of the Non-Aligned heads of Government held in March, 1983 but during his stay, he didn't refer the Assam situation" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, April 28: 189).

Again, in a query of Subhash Yadav and M. Ramgopal on 'Raising Assam issue at U.N Committee', the Minister of state in the Ministry of External Affairs, A. A. Rahim replied,



“The representatives of Pakistan and Egypt, who serve on the 18 member UN Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination in their personal capacity, raised the Assam issue during consideration by the Committee of India’s 7<sup>th</sup> periodic report. The Indian representative refuted the arguments and viewed that India does not see the developments in Assam as a matter of non-implementation of any article of the convention on elimination of all forms of racial discrimination nor its relevance to the work of the committee. The representative informed the committee regarding the constitutional obligations for holding elections in Assam and also added that the government had strained every resource and made elaborate law and other arrangements to ensure free and fair conduct of poll. The representative indicated about the measures undertaken by the government to provide relief and rehabilitation assistance to the affected persons. Provisions in the Indian constitution which guaranteed maintenance of harmony between different groups and made racial discrimination an offence punishable by law were also referred to. It is pertinent to note that India’s report was condemned by most of the members of UN committee who also acknowledged the contribution made by Indian both at national and international level, in the elimination of racial discrimination” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, April 7: 251-252 & PRANTIK Report 1983b: 9).

Many other countries including United Kingdom (UK), the Kuwait National Assembly and the Non-Aligned Movement condemned the violence in Assam and raised the issue. Subramaniam Swamy in a discussion on ‘Situation in Assam’, in Lok Sabha, commented, “Some Member of Parliament (MP) of the House of Commons in UK want to debate a motion about the ‘Government Organised Killing’ in India. Now, this proposed motion was signed by 100 MPs belonging to the left wing of the Labour Party. I got hold of some names and I struck that these MPs are those persons who have signed a memorandum during the state emergency in India supporting the state of emergency. I remember this very government gave support and a great deal of publicity to these MPs of course, now the left wing MPs of the Labour party have tries to bring a motion condemning this government for organised killings. I think in both the cases they were wrong. They were wrong to have supported the emergency and they were wrong to have tries to bring such a motion” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, May 5: 363-364).

Subramaniam Swamy while discussing the Assam Situation in the Parliament viewed that the Nellie massacre has lowered the prestige of India in the world. He further views, "The Kuwait National Assembly has passed a resolution condemning the government of India for what happened in Nellie. Kuwait is a country which this government cultivates with a great deal of concern. In fact, the Arab opinion is something about which the government is very sensitive. Despite the long history of friendship, the Kuwait national Assembly passed a resolution condemning the government" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, May 5: 364).

Subramaniam Swamy also informed that some leaders of the NAM privately raised this issue and even he condemned the Indian Ambassador to the US for his unusual step of informing the violence to the Senators. In the Parliament of India he further commented, "During the Non-Aligned meet, I am informed that many of the leaders privately raised this question with the Prime Minister of India. The Indian Ambassador to the US takes an unusual step of going all the way to the Capitol Hill where the Senate building is and meeting with the Committee, about informally, to answer questions on what happened to Nellie. They were all members of the committee and it was an informal meeting with the committee members. A copy of letter circulated by the Chairman to all members of that committee has already been published in the overseas Indian magazine called *India Abroad*. The question, whether he met some MPs or few MPs is not relevant. What is relevant is that the Ambassador of Indian went all the way to the Capitol Hill to answer questions of some MPs or a few senators of the committee" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, May 5: 364-365).

Some Arab countries also sharply reacted on the killing of people in Nellie and they were very much concern about the international prestige. Subramaniam Swamy is a discussion on the 'Situation in Assam' further commenting on the Arab countries reaction viewed, "The government has decided to send Nurul Islam to some Arab countries to explain what happened in Nellie. This obviously means that they are very much concerned about the loss of International prestige and therefore, they are doing all this. I happened to be abroad when the Non-Aligned meet was on here. The TV in America and Britain was

nothing but full of pictures of Nellie. There was a big propaganda organised on this. If we compare this incident to that of what happened in Shatila and Sabra in Lebanon, they viewed that in Lebanon only 380 people were killed but here thousands of people were killed. We do not accept the comparison. This is what they propagated” (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, May 5: 364-365).

#### **4. VIII\_\_ Impact of Conflict in Assam**

There has been a heavy toll for all the parties involved in the conflict. Both the government incurred heavy expenditure in its large scale induction of armed personnel and administrative staff from other states. Economic development, trade and industry of Assam suffered most. Thousands of people lost their lives and thousands of people became homeless. Faced with such heavy cost, the AASU and AAGSP suspended their agitation by April, 1983 ostensibly to promote relief and rehabilitation (Rastogi 1986: 91).

#### **4. VIII.i \_\_ Economic Impact**

The Assam conflict has adversely affected the socio-economic fabric of the society. Millions of rupees have been spent on rebuilding the destructed bridges and roads of Assam. The year long agitation and conflict has adverse impact on the economy of the state. Shortages of essential commodities occurred through the entire North-eastern states affecting the region as a whole. In a query of P K Kodyan regarding the issue of ‘disturbances in Assam and its adjoining area’, the Minister of State in Home Affairs and in the Department Of Parliamentary affairs P Venkatasubbaiah viewed, “Shortages of essential commodities like petroleum products, food items; salts, sugar, edible oils, etc. has been reported from the entire North-Eastern region. Steps have been taken to move supplies to the affected areas. Government is taking all necessary steps to maintain peace and order and restore peace and security among all sections of the people. Steps are also being taken for creating conducive atmosphere with the students and allied organizations engaged in the agitation to find a proper solution” (Parliament of India Debate 1980, Lok Sabha, 30 January: 34-35).

In a query by G. Y. Krishnan on the issue of 'effect of Assam agitation on industry', the then Minister of Industry, Narayan Datt Tiwari commented, "The Assam agitation has adversely affected the economic and financial well being and is difficult to quantify precisely the overall loss due to conflict. It is however, estimated that in the case of petroleum, fertilizers etc. the loss would come to Rs. 127.2 million. Moreover, due to the disruption of rail movement, the railways suffered a financial loss of Rs. 320 million and several projects have been delayed, thereby resulting in considerable cost escalation" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, April 6: 31). In a query of Chitta Basu and Krishan Pratap Singh on the issue of 'losses in Assam during riots', the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Nihar Ranjan Laskar replied, "There was also extensive damage to public and private property. There are about 40000 houses will require to be reconstructed/repared and 1598 road bridges have been destroyed" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, April 6: 189).

In a query of M.S.K. Sathiyendran on the issue of 'request by Government of Assam for central assistance', the Minister of State in the Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation, Shri Dharamvir replied, "The central team visited Assam towards the end of February 1983 and after detailed discussions with the officials of the state government assessed the requirements of funds for relief and rehabilitation of persons affected by recent disturbances (including repairs of bridges on national highways, state roads and PWD assets) at Rs. 231.6 million. This assessment was based on presumption that about 0.166 million affected people would require relief and rehabilitation assistance. The figure of affected persons as on 11 March, 1983 reported by the Government of Assam is about 0.311 million and the state government have estimated that requirement of funds at Rs. 446.4 million" (Parliament of India Debate 1983, Lok Sabha, March 22: 77-78).

According to the Annual Report of the Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation (1983-84: 40-42), "The government of Assam were provided financial assistance for reconstruction of schools, repairs of bridges, roads and drinking water supply arrangements. The state government had projected total requirement of funds for relief and rehabilitation measures as Rs. 614 million. The total financial ceilings approved by the government of India so far works out Rs. 599.8 million. Against this, a sum of Rs. 497.1 million has so

far been released to the state government. The question of release of additional funds to the Assam Government will be considered on receipt of item-wise details of the expenditure incurred on relief and rehabilitation. Almost all the 1595 bridges damaged have been repaired.”

#### **4. VIII.ii \_\_\_ Social and Political Impact**

The Assam Movement radically transformed the existing cordial relations among the various ethnic groups in Assam. The communal harmony is shattered a mistrust prevailed among all the ethnic groups. The Bodos started their own movement and ignore the Assamese identity and viewed their culture as distinct from the Assamese and other groups. Similarly, the Karbis also demanded the autonomous separate state for the Karbis raised immediately after the end of the Assam Movement. Simultaneously, the Autonomous State Demand Committee was formed and started demanding autonomous state under article 244 (A) of the Indian Constitution and further intensified the movement (Singh 1990: 312-14). The Assam movement by providing national and ethnic identity prepared the ground for the rise of insurgency in Assam. The Assam Movement also spread fear among the tribal community of losing their own identity again. The demand for a separate Bodoland can also be cited as consequence of the Assam Movement. The growth of ULFA, a major terrorist group emerged as a result of the movement (Kotwal 2000: 138-140).

#### **4. VIII.ii.a \_\_\_ The Rise of ULFA**

The ULFA is one of the most powerful militant organizations operating in the Northeast region is essentially an offshoot of the Assam agitation, many of its top ranked members were once belonged to the AASU and AAGSP. The ULFA was formed under the leadership of Paresh Baruah along with other associates on 7 April 1979, at the Rang Ghar pavilion of the Ahom King located in Sivasagar to establish a Sovereign, Socialist Assam through an armed struggle. The front remained dormant till 1986, except recruiting its cadres between late 1983 to early 1984. Since 1986, the extremist outfit indulged in all sorts of terrorist activities viz. bombing, shooting, extortion, robbery etc. (George 1990: 241-243).

The ULFA aims at forming an independent Assam through armed struggle against so called the colonial rulers in Delhi. It aims at the formation of the United Front jointly with other insurgent outfits with the following objectives:

1. To obtain Assam's sovereignty by armed revolution.
2. To save guard the people and interest of Assam and those of its neighbouring land, that is Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura.
3. To have full control over the revenue resources of Assam like oil and natural gas, forest, etc.
4. To gain public support against Indian and non Indian exploitation
5. To stand against any suppression and repression of the Assamese masses (Asthana & Nirmal 2001: 110-111).

The group has established ties with the other militants group operating in the Northeastern region and also with the Kachin Independent Army (KIA) with whose active support and helped it raised small guerrilla army and procured their 'tools' of so called revolution. During the time of AGP government in Assam (1986-90) the ULFA had a virtually free reign to let loose its subversive activities. The ULFA by then fairly well equipped with trained cadres and weapons unleashed a reign of terror in a spate of selective assassination (Dasgupta 2001: 59-65). ULFA maintained close links with the Assam Gana Parishad (AGP), which was in power from 1985-90. Its influence was visible in all the state government departments and even the state police department was full of ULFA sympathizers. In view of the growing nexus between AGP government and ULFA and the latter's increasing militant activities in the state, the Union Government imposed President's Rule on November 7 1990 and the state was declared a "disturbed area". ULFA was banned under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 and Indian army launched Operation Bajrang. The group has total strength of around 3,000, while various other sources put the figure ranging from 4,000 to 6,000. A military wing of the ULFA, the Sanjukta Mukti Fouj (SMF) was formed on 16 March 1996. SMF has three full-fledged battalions: the 7th, 8th and the 709<sup>th</sup> (Sarangthem 2008).

And by the time insurgent groups like ULFA also came into being and apart from the ethnic and communal violence, a growing number of terrorist attacks on the state official took place. One high ranking officer of the Indian civil service, E.S. Parthasarathy, who took tough measures against the movement, was killed in the terrorist bomb attack. Thus the nature of violence during that period was too a kind of terrorist violence due to the birth of insurgents groups (Chabbra 1992: 134). The ULFA movement, which was rooted in ethnic chauvinism, set a pattern for a number of ethnic groups in Assam to demand secession from Assam or from India. Prominent among such insurgent groups include, Bodo Security Force (BSF), National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT), United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS), Dimasa National Security Force (DNSF), Dima Halim Daoga (DHD), Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam (MULTA), Kamtapur Liberation Organization (KLO), United Tribal Nationalist's Liberation Front (UTNLF), Hhar People's Council (HPC) Rabha National Security Force (RNSF), Tiwa National Revolutionary Force (TNRN), Bengali Tiger Force (BLT), Adivasi Security Force (ASF), People's United Liberation Front (PULF), Gorkha Tiger Force etc. (Upadhyay 2005: 3002-04). The ULFA started its movement on an anti immigrant plank but later, it changed its course in midway. The hostility against Bangladeshi migrants vanished once the ULFA sought sanctuary in Bangladesh and put all the money that they exorted into Bangladesh banks. ULFA established initial contact with the Kachin independent army in 1986. It was the Kachins who provided initial training to ULFA cadres (Kotwal 2001: 2224-25).

Contrary to its initial ideological stand, it revised its concept of Assamese identity to accommodate the Bangladeshi migrants that constituted the largest number in Assam. The ULFA, which came to its existence to stop migration from Bangladesh gradually, abdicated this ideology and helped Islamic militancy as collaborator to Bangladesh and Pakistan. "A militant movement that came into existence to protect the rights of an indigenous people has done a complete about-face in order to endanger its original parish - and ULFA members are allying themselves with the same people they want to oust from Assam" (Saikia 2003: 17). Apart from running training camps, ULFA launched several income generating projects in Bangladesh. It has set up a number of firms in

Dhaka, including media consultancies and soft drink manufacturing units. Besides it is reported to own three hotels, a private clinic, and two motor driving schools in Dhaka. Paresh Barua is reported to personally own or has controlling interests in several businesses in Bangladesh, including a tannery, a chain of departmental stores, garment factories, travel agencies, shrimp trawlers and transport and investment companies (Vasudev 2001).

ULFA's camps in Bangladesh have been functioning since 1989, at which time there were 13 to 14 such camps. Commencing initially with using Bangladesh as a safe haven and training location, ULFA gradually expanded its network to include operational control of activities and the receipt and shipment of arms in transit before they finally entered India (Saikia 2003). Several rounds of negotiations with the ULFA's Peoples Consultative Group (PCG) and central government started during 2005 but halted the process due to violence unleashed by the group. Recently, some of the top leaders of ULFA were arrested in Bangladesh brought back to Assam and they are in the process of holding peace talks with the central government. However, the Paresh Barua faction continued their activities from outside the country. The president of ULFA, Arabinda Rajkhowa was arrested and handed over to Indian authority by the Bangladesh government. Some other top leaders are; Raju Barua, Sasa Choudhury, Chitaban Hazarika, Pradip Gogoi etc. (MOHA 2007& Goswami 2010).

#### **4. VIII.ii.b \_\_\_ Bodo Movement**

One of the important falls out of the AASU's agitation on the foreigners issue was the resurgence of ethnic identity in the state. The Assamese ethnic identity has been challenged often within Assam particularly from the tribal groups of the hill or the plain areas. Whenever Assamese leaders equated the territorial identity with the ethno-linguistic identity of Assamese speakers of the Brahmaputra valley, they pushed the other ethnic groups to seek security through their autonomous structures. The Bodos along with other groups joined the Assam Movement to expel all foreigners from Assam. The result: fresh agitations, often sliding into violent insurgencies, spearheaded by smaller ethnicities



demanding separate homelands (Bhaumik 1998: 221). The Bodo<sup>17</sup> movement is positively interested in Indian national cohesion. Though the Bodo movement in Assam started much before the Assam Movement, it has direct impact on the Bodo ethnic groups and the demand for a separate Bodo homeland got momentum after the Assam agitation. The Bodo constituting 6 percent of the total population is the largest plain tribal population. The group has been sharing a common homeland with the Assamese people and other tribal ethnic groups (Chhabra 1992: 148-151).

The Bodo's asserted that the Assamese people are in fact outsiders who have unleashed a deadly anti-tribal policy to arbitrarily cleanse Assam of its genuinely original inhabitants. They accused the Assam government of conducting a deliberate policy of Assamisation through an imposition of the Assamese language and culture upon the tribal undemocratically and violating the constitution of India. The Bodos accused that the Assamese language has similarities with other language like Bengali and Oriya and other northern Hindi language. Given such perception on the part of the Bodos, it is understandable why they want a division of Assam and a separate homeland free from Assamese political influence and domination connected with land, education, culture and job opportunities (Nath 2003: 533-535). Since the early sixties, the Bodos have been trying to revive their distinct ethnic identity and culture on the plank of ethnic ground. Earlier, the Plains Tribal Council of Assam (PTCA) and the Bodo Sahitya Sabha were the premier organization representing the Bodo ethnicity. However, since 1986, the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) under the leadership of Upendra Brahma stole the thunder from these bodies and the group virtually became the ethnic voice of the Bodos. It would be important to state here that the Assam Movement became a reference group/movement for the Bodo identity Movement. The AASU which led the Assam Movement became the reference group for the ABSU (Hussein 2000: 4519-23).

---

<sup>17</sup> The term Bodo refers to a group of closely related tribe including the pure Bodo language speakers who are called the Bodo-Kachari people. The entire group often referred to as the Bodo-Kachari community by others. The Bodo community is claim to be the earliest inhabitants of Assam and also the earliest as well as the longest chains of rulers. They are quick to point out that when Assamese leaders trace their heritage from the Ahom era, they actually glorify invaders from an alien culture.

The All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) Students Union launched their agitation in March, 1987 on the basis of 92-point charter of demands submitted to the Assam government. The original charter of demands can be reduced to three major political demands. These are (a) the creation of a separate state of 'Bodoland' (b) the setting up of district councils in the tribal areas on the south bank of Brahmaputra; and (c) the inclusion of the Bodo-Kacharis of Karbi Anglong in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. But the ABSU (UB)'s claim to represent the entire Bodo population was contested by PTCA and also by the faction of the ABSU led by Gangadhar Ramchiary. The ABSU (UB)'s demand for a separate 'Bodoland' gradually alienated the Bodos from the Assamese mainstream (Nath 2003: 535).

Basically, these demands came from the Bodo as they felt exploited, alienated and discriminated for decades. According to the ABSU, the Bodo-inhabited areas have been neglected by the successive Congress and the AGP Government (Mishra 1989: 1149). They accused the government by arguing that the successive government did not even try to address the problems of the Bodo people and the areas. After the signing of Assam Accord, the Bodos were not happy and the leaders strongly objected Clause 6 of the Assam Accord, which promised safeguards to protect the cultural identity of 'the Assamese people'. The Bodos felt that they are not part of the Assamese people, though the movement leader's meant for conglomeration of all composite indigenous population. They feared that the clause might give legitimacy to the imposition of Assamese language and culture on the Bodo community (Baruah 1999: 124). Though the movement for a separate Bodo homeland began in a democratic manner with the slogan, 'Divide Assam 50-50', later it turned out to be violent. The Bodos started their violent movement with their insurgent activities through the groups like the Bodo Liberation Tiger Force (BLTF). The ABSU opted violent methods started targeting the non-Bodo population and government officials. The Bodo's started their ethnic cleansing campaigning by issuing 'quit notices' to the non-Bodos living in the Bodo dominated areas, extortion, kidnapping was also a part of the tactics. Thousands of civilians from other ethnic groups including the Nepalis were killed by the militants (Nath 2003: 536-37).

The level of violence sharply came down with the signing of the Bodo Accord on 20 February, 1993 between the ABSU and the state-central government. Bodo Autonomous council (BAC) was created comprising the 'contiguous geographical areas between river Sankosh and Mazbat/river Pansoi'. However, due to continuous disagreement over the territorial jurisdiction, elections couldn't be held. The provisions of autonomy according to the accord couldn't be implemented due to lack of finance and the state government unilaterally demarcated and declared the boundary of the BAC in the later part of 1993. The ABSU rejected it and a large scale violence in different parts of Bongaigaon, Kokrajhar and gruesome massacre occurred in Barpeta in 1994 (Sarmah 2002: 87).

In July 1994, ABSU launched an agitation against the non-implementation of the accord and revived its demand for a separate state in 1996. The Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT) came into being for an armed struggle to create a separate state of Bodoland. Again, some Bodo youth formed another groups called National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) to create a sovereign Bodoland through an armed struggle. Killings, extortion of civilians occurred in the Bodo dominated lower Assam districts. These ethnic conflicts further created internal displacement of tribal and Nepali communities in that area. The BLT gradually become a de facto guardian organisation of the Bodos and then declares unilateral ceasefire in July, 1999 in response to Central government's appeal for parleys (Nath 2003: 538).

The Bodoland movement came to an end after the signing of a new Bodo Accord on February 10, 2003 that created 'Bodoland Territorial Council' (BTC) under modified provisions of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. However, the problem continued to persists because of the demand for a separate independent Bodoland by the NDFB. According to the Memorandum of Settlement on BTC (2003) reads, "The basic objectives of the agreement are basically to create an Autonomous self governing body to be known as BTC within Assam and to provide constitutional protection under Sixth Schedule to the BTC; to fulfil economic, educational and linguistic aspirations and the preservation of land-rights, socio-cultural and ethnic identity of the Bodos; and speed up the infrastructure development in BTC area. The area of proposed BTC comprises all the 3082 villages and areas, the areas are divided into four contiguous districts after

reorganization of the existing districts of Assam within a period of 6 months of the signing of the agreement on the lines of the proposal given by BLT subject to clearance of the Delimitation Commission. A committee comprising one representative each from Governments of India & Assam and BLT will decide by consensus on the inclusion of additional villages and areas in the BTC from out of 95 villages and areas on the basis of the criteria of tribal population being not less than 50%, contiguity or any other agreed relevant criteria within a period of three months of signing of this MOU." The area under the BTC jurisdiction is called the Bodo Territorial Autonomous District (BTAD) consists of four contiguous districts; Kokrajhar, Baska, Udalguri and Chirang, carved out respectively from eight existing districts; Dhubri, Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Nalbari, Kamrup, Darrang and Sonitpur with an area of 27,100 km<sup>2</sup> (35% of Assam) (Encyclopaedia 2009 & Memorandum of Settlement on BTC 2003).

#### **4. IX \_\_ Internal Displacements**

The violence created by the Bodo militants through the Bodo Movement generated more displacements of population that included other ethnic groups including Nepali and old settled Bangladeshi migrants too (Hussein 2000: 4520-21). The ethnic cleansing campaign by the Bodo's started in 1985 and the migrants were asked to move out of the BAC area threatened with dire consequences, despite knowing the fact that the area they claim as Bodoland is home to many non-Bodo group. During 1993, violence occurred in the Bodo areas of Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Gossaigaon and followed by the attacks in 1994 and October 1995 on a relief camp at Bansbari in the Barpeta district. Hundreds of migrants were killed and nearly 70000 rendered homeless and during May 1996, attacks continued on the Santhals that displaced 250000 persons, who included ethnic Nepalis and several thousand Bodos. Further, Bodo attacks in May 1998 displaced another 25000 though mostly Santhal, the number also included ethnic Nepalis living in that area. These attacks continued throughout 1998 increasing the number of the displaced persons to 80000 (Nath 2003a: 230-249 & Mandal 2009: 40).

In 1993, the Bodo leaders in a booklet titled, "One Predicament with Foreigners' (A special issue on Nepalis) said, Bodos consider the Nepalis as foreigner's inhabiting in

India. In the same tone, throughout the contents it refers to the Nepalis as outsiders and anti-national. The NJSP and AANSU refuting the above accusations published another booklet titles, 'Indian Nepalis are genuine Citizens of India.' These booklets while drawing attention to the rights and position of the Nepalis in the area has also referred to the attacks and killings of Nepalis in the villages of Maradhansiri, Kukurakata and Amjuli. Some miscreants set ablaze house of an ex-serviceman, staying since 1950, burnt alive 4 people on the ground that he was a citizen of Nepal. The miscreants also targeted the rich Nepali population in Assam. The militant organizations like the BLT and NDFB always try to pressurize them through extortion demands (Nath 2003b: 76-80 & Hussein 2000: 4520-23).

According to the reports of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the HRF (Human Rights Features, 16 March 2001), over 20000 internally displaced persons now live in 78 relief camps in Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon districts. A considerable number of Nepalis were also displaced in the ethnic violence in the BAC areas from the villages of Amteka, Patabari, Malivita, Koila, etc. They came to live in the relief camps in Kokrajhar and Gossaigaon. The patagaon relief camp in Kokrajhar had about 134 Nepali families and a total population of 581 Nepalis. The state government offered a rehabilitation or reintegration grant of 1000 rupees aimed at helping them to re-establish themselves. The Nepalis of Patagaon camp availed the rehabilitation grant and went back to the areas from where they had come, or to areas where they could resettle. Some government sources clarifies that the Nepalis, unlike the Santhals or Bengali-Hindus and Muslims, were not directly attacked, and that they came to the camps only out of fear and the fact that they had been living in the Santhal villages. Directly or indirectly affected, their condition ignored as they had similarly suffered displacement (APHRN 2001; IDMC 2006; Nath 2003b: 77).

#### **4. X \_\_\_ Assam Accord**

After the prolonged agitation by the AASU and allied organization, the government was anxious to find a satisfactory solution to the foreigner's problem. Being fully alive to the genuine apprehensions of the Assam the then Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi initiated a

dialogue with the AASU/AAGSP. Subsequently talks were held at the Prime Minister and Home Minister's levels during the period 1980-83 and several rounds during 1984. On August 11, 1985 another round of negotiation started in New Delhi with the Rajiv Gandhi led government (Das 1986: 14-16). Meanwhile hectic negotiations continued too on an agreeable date for deportation of migrants in which AASU insisted on 1971 as cut off date for deportation of migrants and the government insisted on 1966 as cut off date. However, the leaders relented and a historic accord known as the 'Assam Accord' was signed on August 15, 1985, marking the culmination of the six-year agitation (Das 1985: 8-10).

As stated in the Assam Accord 1985, on the issue of foreigners government incorporated some important clauses. These are "Firstly, for purpose of detection and deletion of foreigners 1.1.1966 shall be the base date and year; secondly, all persons who came to Assam prior to 1.1.1966 including those amongst them whose names appeared on the electoral rolls used in 1967 elections shall be regularized; thirdly, foreigners, who came to Assam after (inclusive) and up to 24<sup>th</sup> March, 1971 shall be detected in accordance with the provisions of the foreigners act, 1946 and foreigners (tribunals) order 1964; fourthly, on the expiry of the period of ten year following the date of detection, the names of all such persons which have been deleted from the electoral rolls shall be restored; fifthly, foreigners who came to Assam on or after March 25, 1971 shall continue to be detected, deleted and expelled in accordance with law" (Assam Accord, Memorandum of Settlement 1985).

In a discussion on the issue of 'Assam Accord', Sarat Chandra Sinha on the clauses of deportation of foreigners viewed, "The basic stand of the Congress party to make the base year for the determination of foreigner, March 24, 1971 – meaning those who came before that will be regularized. However, there are two categories; first category, migrants who came till 31.12.65 are all regularized and second, those who during 1.1.66 - 24.3.71, also will be regularized through certain processes. They will be detected first, and then delete their names from the existing electoral roll and finally their names will be restored after a lapse of 10 years from the date of deletion. These are the processes by which they intend to make them Indian nationals. Now the question arises what about

their rights and liabilities after detection? The government of India has amended the laws suitably to accommodate them. Otherwise, too, we may consider the questions, say, a person is holding land in the village and cultivating and earning his livelihood. Now if he is detected, what will happen to him after detection! Will his land be taken away or will he be prohibited from ploughing his field and earning his livelihood? As he will not be deported, the responsibility will fall on the state to feed him, if his means of livelihood is taken away. What I mean to say is that he will be allowed to carry on his normal ways of life, having all the benefits even if the law was not amended. But there is no denying the fact that these people will have to live in uncertainty for an unlimited period of time. So far as detection is concerned, no time limit has been fixed. He may be detected even after 10 years, or he may be detected even in 21<sup>st</sup> century. And during the period till his detection, he will live as an Indian citizen. And say, if he is detected in 21<sup>st</sup> century, after 10 years, say 2010 A.D. he will be restored in the electoral rolls. Why should we create bitterness and spread uncertainty? Therefore, I suggest, I think let them be a good citizen and let us see if we could amend these clauses, so that they are not to go through all these unnecessary procedure” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate, 1986, 2 April, Vol. II, No.15: 73-83).

Apart from the provisions related to foreigners, a great deal of emphasis was given to protect the cultural and economic development of the state. The Clause 6 and 7 of the Assam Accord (1985) views, “Clause 6 – ‘Constitutional, Legislative and Administrative safeguards, as may be appropriate, shall be provided to protect preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people.’ Clause – 7 ‘The government takes this opportunity to renew their commitment for the speedy all round economic development of Assam, so as to improve the standard of living of the people. Special emphasis will be placed on education and science and technology through establishment of national institutions.”

Most of the members belonging to linguistic minority community, especially the Bodo members of the ALA objected to the provisions incorporated under clause 6 of the Assam Accord. Binay Basumotary objecting about the clause 6 of the Accord views, “The tribal people have their different opinion regarding the clause 6 of the accord which tries to

promote the cultural, social and linguistic identity of the Assamese people. So what is wrong with this Assamese people when the tribal have different opinion for this? Our opinion is based on history and treatment meted or received by us. India became independent, but in the history of Assam, the tribal groups like Rabhas, Kacharis who had got British bullets have rarely been mentioned. We find that the tribal people are not taken into confidence in Assam and our existence today is threatened. We talk of tribal belts and blocks and constitutional provision of job reservation. Constitutional provision is there but inspite of that, we have been repeatedly denied such protections. Even today, why the Assamese speaking people occupy land in tribal areas? We have been absolutely left out. I humbly say, the definition of Assamese people is slightly ambiguous for us, because we have distinct identity, customs, traditions and habits are different to that of the Assamese and Assamese leadership has failed to embrace us totally. The Bodos are very much apprehensive that they will be very swamped by this growing Assamese culture" (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate, 1986, 2 April, Vol. II, No.15: 90-96).

Clause 9 of the Assam Accord views, "The international border shall be made secure against future infiltration by erection of physical barriers like walls, barbed wire fencing and other obstacles at appropriate places. Patrolling by security forces on land and riverine routes all along the international border shall be adequately intensified. In order to further strengthen the security arrangements, to prevent effectively future infiltration, an adequate number of check posts shall be set up. All effective measures would be adopted to prevent infiltrators crossing or attempting to cross the international border." (Assam Accord, Memorandum of settlement 1985). Quoting late implementation of fencing Assam-Bangladesh border, the Assam Governor report (1998) views, "The decision to fence the border was taken in 1985 and reflected in Assam Accord but the work on fencing started seven years later in 1992. 13 years have elapsed since this Accord and fencing has not yet been completed. Whereas in Dhubri sector of Assam it is nearly complete, in the Cachar sector only a little over half has been completed. As against this, fencing in Punjab started in 1988 and was completed in 3 years by 1991. The quality of fencing in Punjab is superior." The accord contains provision against future infiltration by erecting physical barriers like wall and barbed wire fencing, which appears



to be totally unpractical as migration across the border is still continuing (Singh 1990: 292-93).

According to the Annual Report of the Ministry of Home Affairs (2010-11: 39-40), "In order to prevent illegal migration and other anti-national activities from across the Bangladesh border, Indian government has sanctioned construction of border roads and fencing in two phases. The total length of Indo-Bangladesh border to be fenced is 3436.59 km.; out of which 2735.12 km. of fencing has so far been completed. There have been some problems in construction of fencing in certain stretches on this border due to riverine/low lying areas, population within 150 yards of the border, pending land acquisition cases and protests by border population, led to delay in completion of the project. The balance work is under progress and the project is targeted to be completed by March, 2012. In addition 3580.20 km. of border patrol roads have also been constructed out of sanctioned length of about 4426.11 km." Out of total 263 km. Assam – Bangladesh border, 221.56 km. of fencing has so far been completed and another 42 km. is yet to be fenced. Another 256.92 km. of border roads have so far been completed in Assam-Bangladesh border (MOHA 2010-2011: 39-40).

The information provided by the Assam Accord Minister, Bhumidhar Barman, in the state Assembly presents a sorry tale. From 1985 up to May 31, 2010, as many as 49891 foreigners were detected by the tribunals under the Foreigners Act and the erstwhile Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983. However, only 2326 foreigners have been expelled to Bangladesh in the past 25 years. From 1985 and up to December 2009, only 1428 foreigners who had re-entered the State were pushed back (Talukdar 2010). For about six long years, Assam passed through its most critical and troublesome juncture of history – socio-economic conditions has shattered by a variety of clashes. The signing of the Assam Accord between the government and the AASU leaders marked the end of the conflict and heralded a message of peace and tranquillity in Assam. The accord created a situation in which there was neither winner nor a loser and both the parties claimed their own victory (Singh 1990: 333). It can be observed from the above discussion that the main focus of the Assam Accord was on the pivotal question of foreign nationals, and the Accord spelt out a clear policy and elaborates measures to sort it out in the best and

the most realistic manner. Apart from the well-defined steps, the Accord also stipulated wide ranging measures to prevent future infiltrations and to strengthen border security to fully seal all penetration routes.

# Chapter

# 5

---

**MANAGING MIGRATION:  
ISSUES AND POLICY  
CHALLENGES**

---

## **5. I Introduction**

The south Asian region has been a major migrant sending and receiving zone. India being the largest has been receiving migrants and refugees from the neighbouring countries. There are two countries in South Asian region out of the top 10 that produce migrants; Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Before partition the country was integrated and hence the movement was free. But the immediate decolonisation didn't change the mind set of the people and they continued to migrate illegally even the border was demarcated. This is due to the cultural and ethnic affinities existed in the region. India being the largest and economically sound has become the destination of migrants from neighbouring countries. The politics has made the issue of migration complex and the migrants are dealt mostly with the domestic laws of the country. This chapter seeks to analyse the various laws and policies to deal with the migrants and refugees and their rehabilitation in India. A detailed analysis has been made regarding the IMDT act dealing with migrants in Assam. Both the primary and secondary sources are used for analysing the issues related to it. Most of the primary sources are the text of the various acts, Parliament Debates, Assembly Debates etc.

## **5. II Migration Policy**

Migration has always been a significant phenomenon across South Asian countries. It has been a witness of poignant accounts, and raised serious problematic issues. There are two countries in South Asian region out of the top 10 that produce migrants. These include Bangladesh with 4.1 million and Sri Lanka with 1.5 million (IOM 2003a: 6-8). The historic ties and links among the people in the region have accentuated large-scale movement of population. These movements of population have been found to be in various forms and dimensions ranging from voluntary to involuntary, internal to external, long-term to temporary (Haque 2005: 39-42). The South Asian countries feature prominently in the dynamics of migration in Asia and the largest migration occurred during the partition period between India and Pakistan in 1947 where about 30 million people moved from one part to another to either avoid prosecution or meeting basic needs. Since partition, people have crossed the borders of South Asian countries in search

of refuge. Almost every country in this region has produced and/or received migrants of various nature and form (Abrar 2001: 21-23).

India is the home to one of the largest migrant population in the world. Historically it is a refugee receiving country. The country shares long border with several neighbouring countries. The secular character of the state, historical ties, vast economic potential and some liberal aspects of neighbourhood policy in its overall foreign policy are some of the factors that have made India a safer place for migrants (Kumar 2001: 50-52). In the South Asian countries, there are three broad categories of migrants. Firstly, the state has been the main actor or repressive agent in forcing migrants as means of achieving cultural homogeneity or asserting the dominance of one ethnic community over another in socio-economic and political arenas and widely been adopted as politically popular policy. In other words, "they stem from officially instigated or organized state actions". Secondly, governments have forced migrants as a means of dealing with political dissidents particularly hostile to the regime and class enemies. And thirdly, forced migration has been invariably used as part of a strategy to achieve a foreign policy objective (Lama 2000: 6).

The receiving states have become increasingly weary about the growing number of migrants due to the political and security conditions. The receiving states have also become cautious about the adverse impact of such migration in the economic, social and environmental consequences. Although the problems of population movement are grave in the region, the countries have not developed any formal structure to deal with the migrants and refugees and also not initiated any regional formula. The migrants and the refugees are subjected to the same laws as illegal aliens. As there is no refugee-specific law and migration policies, asylum seekers and refugees are dealt with ad hoc administrative arrangements which by their very nature can be arbitrary and discriminatory (Abrar 2001: 21-23).

International migration has now become a worldwide issue and has also emerged as a key foreign policy agenda of many countries. The large scale population movement across international boundaries, whether voluntary or forced, has appeared with increasingly

frequent agendas of foreign policy. The sweep of the issues involved in international migration differs across countries and the causes range from war and peace, economic and financial issues, race, ethnicity, state atrocities, etc. It is also important to know that only 10 percent of the total population moves across places. This phenomenon is spread only to a few countries of the world, where migrants choose their destination in small numbers. The integration of global economy, developed communications and transportation networks, the availability of rights and benefits to migrants, domestic debate about the costs and benefits of migration have made the debate on migration both interesting and far reaching. It has brought forward issues related to migration regulations, rights of migrants, closing down the borders and even the questioning of traditional humanitarian considerations. In other terms, international migration movements have become a larger issue particularly when there has been a steep rise of refugees and displaced people due to existence of conflict across countries (Conference Report 1994: 883-891).

Migration policy can be defined as any state's policy that deals with the transit of persons across its borders. It can range from allowing no migration or allowing all types of migration, including free movement of population between two countries. Basically a migration policy is often closely related with other policies such as tax, tariff and trade rules which determine what goods migrants may bring with them and what services they may perform while temporarily in the country. Sometime a migrant is allowed to remain and work within a region if they have a free population movement agreement. For instance, the European Union (EU) has few restrictions on migrants within the region. A migrant belonging to any signatory nation of the EU can move and work anywhere within the EU (GCIM 2005: 9-11).

How migration policies are designed depends on a range of issues and factors. An important aspect of migration policy is the treatment of migrants, refugees, more or less helpless or stateless people who throw themselves on the mercy of the state they enter, seeking refuge from poor treatment in their country of origin. At the same time, threat perception posed by migrants has also been an important factor in designing a domestic policy. Such threat perceptions, mainly related to the host and its citizens, could be

emanating from many factors of insecurity about underlying economic and social conditions, fear of unemployment; claims for public expenditure; race and ethnicity issues; and influence on cultural values. This is more so when the immigration flows are seen as large, rapid, and uncontrolled and there is heavy concentrations of migrant groups in particular regions, cities, or neighbourhoods. There have been serious concerns on attributes like rapid ethnic and racial change in regions of settlement; views about whether migrants are integrating; anxieties over illegal entry or residence; and whether migrants are identified with violence, crime, terrorism, or drugs (Teitelbaum 1984: 429-433).

### **5. III \_\_\_ Migration Policies during the British Period (1826-1947)**

In the South Asian countries, there has been a lack of comprehensive policies to deal with the migrants and the refugees. They are dealt with the domestic laws and regulations (Khadria 2005: 1-4). During the British period, migration policies were formulated largely to serve the colonial rule and exploitation. The British systematically organized and allowed migration across the subcontinent to serve the colonial needs. For instance, educated Bengalis were encouraged to engage in administrative work and the Nepalis were recruited for defence purpose. It has already been discussed in the preceding chapters that the migration of East Bengalis/Bangladeshis as well as Nepalis has its own history. The large scale population movement in the subcontinent existed even before the British annexation of India. After the annexation of Assam, the colonial rulers systematically organized and hired people from across places. The British started pursuing a policy of importing labourers across the subcontinent to meet the shortage of labourers for their growing industries/agriculture productions (Weiner 1978: 88-90).

There are two particular phases of importing people from East Bengal into Assam; one is from 1826 to 1905 and the other from 1905 to 1947. The policy during the first phase of migration was mainly regulated to serve their basic purpose of exploiting resources. The colonial powers entertained several policies to bring East Bengalis and Nepalis. Both these communities of people were encouraged to migrate and take industrial as well as agricultural activities. The East Bengalis being hard working were encouraged to settle

down in the agricultural lands (Das 1982: 25-26). On the other hand, Nepalis were encouraged by the British to be recruited in British Gorkha Army. These policies were being unique and were carried out to serve the colonial purpose. On the other hand the second phase of migration was initiated by the politicians and the ruling elites with an ambition to create vote bank. The Muslim League highly encouraged East Bengalis to migrate into Assam through several policies (Kansakar 1990: 8-10 & Subba 1990: 220-223).

After the annexation of Assam, the British saw immense fertile cultivable lands lying abundant with a few people to cultivate and contribute for its revenue and colonial expansion. Since 1838, the British started drawing up new wastelands for settlement rules and it continued. These abundant natural resources attracted colonial rulers to developing the tea and jute industry that generated employment opportunities. The Assamese people's trait that would work only during the seasons of cultivation and remain idle during the off seasons, made it very difficult for the British to get permanent labourers for other seasons of cultivation. The local labourers were also largely unskilled to support the administrative and machinery works. Hence they started importing people from other provinces (Barpujari 1963: 234-236). Sir Henry Cotton, the Chief Commissioner of Assam in 1902 said, "The millions of acres of uncultivable lands now lying waste represents millions of rupees which might be dug out of the soil, but are now allowed to lie down useless like the talents wrapped in a napkin" (Barpujari 2004: 50). The above mentioned economic alteration during the British period encouraged thousands of people from the Indian subcontinent to migrate into Assam.

The British regime followed the policy of importing labourers through a systematic way. They sought the help of recruiting agencies inside/outside the province. The recruiting agencies searched skilled as well as unskilled labourers within and outside the provinces but faced difficulties when they were not getting adequate number of skilled/unskilled labourers during the seasons. The agencies, finding it difficult to find out skilled labourers within the region, were compelled to import labourers from outside the provinces. British administrators preferred mostly the East Bengalis as they were being hard working and skilled. The British opened the labour importing policies in Bengal



province and the rulers opened the floodgates of migration to Assam – mainly to the Brahmaputra valley. The East Bengal peasants, from the neighbouring Mymensingh district migrated to Assam and settled down in the wasteland. Three classes of labourers were imported by the British regime; the tea plantation labourers, Amolas (Bureaucrats, clerk from Sylhet, Dacca, Mymansingh, Rampur and other districts of Bengal Presidency) and merchants and tradesmen (Marwaris) from Rajasthan and West Bengal. These people constituted a floating population in tea plantation areas and in small towns (Guha 1977: 254-255).

Thus began the process of importing peasants from East Bengal. The rulers also facilitated easy settlement rules and infrastructural development like the extension of railways from West Bengal to Assam. The East Bengali peasants entered Assam through the western and southern borders. The migrants, mostly Muslims spread all over Assam and also beyond to other Northeast states. The East Bengali peasants being hardy and desperate need of livelihood settled down in all available lands and even in stretches considered uncultivable and produced food grains (Neog 1984: 275-77; Barua 1984: 321-324).

Assam was a part of the Bengal province from 1826 to 1873 and during that period the British administration made a policy, to recruit educated Bengali people for government services in Assam as they did in the case of Orissa and Bihar. In the land revenue settlement work, men from Marwar and Sylhet were appointed in preference to the local Assamese gentry. Their migration helped to increase the quantum of colonial revenue and agricultural production. Most of the Bengali migrants were employed in the offices, schools, industries and tea gardens in Assam. During 1869, 22,800 people were imported by the administration in which 11,633 were employed in tea plantations as labourers. The administrative and economic consolidation in the early British rule in Assam during 1826-1870 followed importing of skilled labourers. Almost three lakh acres of wastelands were settled with planters mainly from the labourers in Assam alone. And the policies of settlements were made fee-simple or charged at normal rates, but at the same time land revenue on farmers were increased so as to encourage their transfer from subsistence farming to plantation (Barpujari 1963: 266-267).

The economic changes and development of tea industries remained most prime factors for the colonial administration to bring East Bengali people into Assam. The process of large scale labour recruitment from outside started in the early 1860s, and by 1872, the number of imported labourers during the said period was estimated at 40000. While during the same period, the total numbers of non-indigenous population including the migrants were estimated at some 80000 or so in a total population of 1.49 million. In 1881, the number of imported migrants appeared to have increased to about three lakhs in a population of 1.8 million. In 1901, the migrants or non-indigenous population appeared to have increased from less than one lakh in 1872 to anything between five and six lakhs. Meanwhile, the indigenous Assamese population which had been growing rapidly during 1872-81, remained almost static for the next twenty years. The large scale migration through the policy of importation by the British has witnessed two major demographic changes during the years of 1874-1905. First, in the ethnic composition of the population and a spatial distribution over the districts in the state changed and secondly, the non-indigenous elements came to constitute at least a quarter of the population of Assam proper in 1901 (Guha 1977: 39-40).

The first phase of migration or importation of people from East Bengal was mainly due to the economic necessities. But later, it was rather a political move and the political parties encouraged people to migrate so as to prepare for vote bank. Some political parties like the Muslim League, under the leadership of Syed Sadullah encouraged the East Bengalis to migrate through his policy of *Grow More Food*. Till independence, the Muslim League provided lands for the migrants for settlements and later by the Congress Party. Though the Congress Party opposed migration, they compromised for the purpose of vote bank (Dev & Lahiri 1985: 71-77).

During 1905, the Muslim peasants from East Bengal were encouraged to settle in the rural areas. In the Brahmaputra valley itself, the number of Muslim peasants increased from 9 percent in 1881 to 19 percent in 1931 and gradually it increased to 23 per cent by 1941 and remained same till 1951. The migrants' first destination was the Goalpara district as it shares land border. The British administration also encouraged East Bengalis

- Immigrants Line: some areas were exclusively meant for the migrants – within this line land could be allotted to migrants only. And also there were areas in which a line drawn either on the map or on the ground, on the one side of which migrants could settle and on the other side of which their settlement was forbidden.
- Mixed Line: Some areas in which both indigenous people and migrants were free to settle (Report of the Line System Enquiry Committee 1938, Chapter – II: 3).

The Line system was introduced to restrict the settlement of East Bengali peasants on the plea that the identity and ethnicity of the Assamese people would remain undisturbed. The British administration first applied the system at Nowgong and later in the Kamrup and Darrang districts, mainly to prevent breach of peace on account of forcible occupation of land and grazing reserve (Dev & Lahiri 1985: 23). According to the colonization scheme, a small family was given 30 bighas of land. As a result of this, altogether 47,636 acres of land were settled with 1,619 Muslim and 441 Hindu families in the district of Nowgong up to March 1933. During the six years ending 1936, 59 grazing reserves were opened up for the settlement of the migrant peasants in the district of Nowgong alone. The number of East Bengali settlers, including children born after their arrival, increased from an estimated three lakhs in 1921 to over half a million in 1931. They were better cultivators and hence could offer higher and lucrative land prices to induce Assamese peasants to sell out portions of their land to them. Although the system succeeded in restricting large-scale migration, it was not fool-proof (Sarmah 1999: 23-24; Das 1982: 27; Dev & Lahiri 1985: 23-25).

The basic purpose of introduction of Line System was to isolate the migrants from local inhabitants by compelling the former to live and toil in particular segregated localities beyond which they were not allowed to settle. Under the Line System, a line was drawn in the districts in order to settle migrants in segregated areas specified for their exclusive settlements. However, this didn't work. The line system in Assam triggered many problems. It altered the demographic pattern. Assamese people pressurised for strict implementation of Line System while the Bengalis asked for its abolition. Thus it led to the formation of Hockenull Committee in 1937 to review the functioning the Line

System. The findings of the committee revealed that the both Hindus and Muslims preferred immediate abolition of the Line System. But the views of the Assamese Muslims, according to the report, were divided on the issue, while Assamese Hindus strongly supported the Line System (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate, 1940, Vol. 1, Feb-March: 251). The Committee also made few startling revelations stating that in Barpeta subdivision the percentage of Muslims shot up from 0.1 percent to 49 percent during 1911-1938. Meanwhile, in Laharighat, Dhing and Juria units of Nowgong district, the average population increase was over 150 percent during the same period. The British decided to retain the line system by making changes and the revised system regularised the large scale encroachments which had taken place before April 1, 1937 (Gupta 1984: 104 & Singh 1990: 67-68).

An all party committee was also formed under the government initiative with A.W. Botham in the chair in 1928 to discuss Line System. The committee had nine members, including N.C Bordoloi and Sadullah. Borodoloi's opinion was for settlement of land with the migrant peasants in definite areas with sufficient reservation of land for further expansion of indigenous population. In 1928, Bordoloi contrived a "compact colonization scheme" outside which migrants would not be allowed to settle in Assam and outlined land that would be left vacant to accommodate the future progeny of the Assamese people (Das 1982: 27; Guha 1977: 256-257; Singh 1990: 66).

The Muslim League was not happy with this proposed system and took the case to national leaders. Between 1930 and 1950, some 150800 acres were settled by the migrants (Annual Land Revenue Administration Report in Assam, as cited in Vaghaiwala 1951: 81). In 1937, Bordoloi, the first chief minister of Assam wrote to Rajendra Prasad, "If Karachi resolutions are literally interpreted, the immigrants have every right to acquire land, property etc... and there cannot be a line system. On the other hand, our people whether congressman or otherwise, all feel that adequate reservation must be there. We also wrote that in the coming years linguistic problems would become a source of constant friction resulting in violence, incendiaries and crimes of all kinds" (Guha 1977: 256-257). However, this resolution was not executed when Sadullah came into power after the resignation of congress coalition government. He considered that the

migrants were mostly landless – the only solution was to provide them with available lands (Singh 1990: 68-69; Dev & Lahiri 1985: 30-32, 39-40).

### 5. III.ii \_\_\_ Sadulla's Policy of Grow More Food

Political parties like the Muslim League also encouraged East Bengalis to migrate and settle and this was entirely for the purpose of vote banks during 1937. The real plan of the Muslim League of undivided India wanted Assam to be included in the framework within Pakistan. So the party encouraged Muslim peasants to migrate so as to imbalance the demographic composition of Assam with the political benefit to bring communal divide in Assam (Singh 1990: 69; Dev & Lahiri 1985: 39-41).

The formation of government by the Muslim League under the leadership of Sadullah after the elections of 1937 pursued a policy of patronizing Muslims migrants. The Sadullah government during that period allotted one lakh bighas of land for settling East Bengali peasants (Das 1982: 28). Sadullah argued in support of their settlement as they were mainly landless and according to him the only solution was to provide them with available waste lands. Exactly a year after its formation, the fourth Sadullah government adopted a new resolution on land development under the slogan of *Grow More Food*. The salient features of this resolution of 24<sup>th</sup> August 1938 were as follows: -

- Resumed distribution of wastelands in proportion to needs of different communities in Nowgong and de-reservation of select grazing reserves for that purpose, as per resolution of 21 June 1940.
- De-reservation of professional grazing reserves in Kamrup and Darrang if found surplus to actual requirements.
- Opening up of surplus reserves in all the submontane areas, and in Sivasagar and Lakhimpur, for settlement of landless indigenous people.

This in a way reflected a blatant pro-Muslim and pro-migrant policies of this government pursued under the slogan *Grow More Food* (Wavel 1943, as cited in Singh 1990: 70).

Lord Wavell, the then Viceroy, after observing the policies of Sadulla government, commented, "The chief political problem is the desire of the Muslim Ministers to increase this immigration into the uncultivated Government lands under the slogan of Grow more food but what they are really after is Grow more Muslims" (Assam Gazette, 1943, 25 August, cited in Alaka Sarmah 1999). Again due to the pro-Muslim stand, Sadulla was severely criticized by the public and was forced to resign on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1941. Robert Reid, the Governor of Assam, who took over the administration after Sadulla's exit brushed aside the decision of the Sadulla ministry on the ground that there were not enough waste lands in the Assam valley to accommodate further migrants (Sharma 1999: 22). This however was a temporary measure when the governor himself was keen on installing of a popular ministry to combat the mass upsurge of the Quit India Movement in 1942. Sadulla again came into power in 1943 and followed the same policy. This resulted in innumerable clashes between the indigenous population and the migrants during that period (AASU Memorandum to the Prime Minister of India 1980).

Some of the national and regional organizations like the Hindu Sabha, Assam Jatiya Mahasabha, Ahom Sabha, etc. have criticized the Sadullah's policy and viewed it as an insidious move to create a Pakistan in Assam. Some Assamese leaders on November 28, 1937, submitted a memorandum to Nehru in Rangia (Kamrup District) on behalf of Asomiya Samrakohni Sabha to look into the matter. Another memorandum was also submitted by the Asomiya Deka Dal, in which they demanded for the separation of Sylhet and Cachar from Assam and a total ban on government patronage of settling East Bengali migrants. Nehru justified the Assamese people's demand as legitimate but he also argued that the East Bengali migrants were also an economic necessity for the former. He stressed more on how to control and organize migration of East Bengalis. But some Congress leaders in Assam didn't support his argument. Nehru in a letter dated December 1, 1937 to Vishnu Ram Medhi, an Assamese leader who later became chief minister of Assam, showed concern about the seriousness of the problem and advocated a policy of restricted migration of East Bengalis in Assam. The government also came forward with a resolution on June 21, 1940 and decided to give lands to indigenous

landless people and also to those East Bengalis who migrated before 1938 (Das 1982: 27-28; Guha 1977: 64-65).

However, the Muslim League opposed the move and demanded unrestricted land settlements. The Bengal Legislative Council on July 16, 1943 passed a resolution asking the Indian Government to initiate immediate steps for removing all existing restrictions. However, the demand was not entertained and in 1946, a congress ministry headed by Gopinath Bordoloi started the policy of eviction of East Bengalis from Assam. The migrant problem during that period had become serious and chronic issue in provincial politics. After the Congress came into power, they started evicting migrants, which the Muslim League opposed and also made it an issue of politics (Das 1982: 28-29).

This generated much tension and made it difficult for Congress government to pursue the eviction policy. The visit of Md. Ali Jinnah to Guwahati and his remarks on the government policy of eviction that if the government didn't immediately revise its policy and abandon this persecution, a situation might be created which would not be conducive to the well being of the people of Assam generated much chaos and tensions (Guha 1977: 65). The migration from East Bengal continued till 1947, even after the partition. The British administration followed a vigorous policy of hiring people for its economic needs and generating revenue out of it. But later, the issue became highly politicized and parties like the Muslim League and Congress started using these people as their vote banks (Phukan 1984: 6-8).

#### **5. IV \_\_\_ Migration Policies: 1947 to 1955**

The partition of the subcontinent in 1947 along religious grounds into India and Pakistan resulted in one of the largest and most rapid migrations of human history. An estimated 14.5 million people crossed borders within a span of four years. During the time of Independence, communal riots broke out in different parts of Pakistan and India. These communal riots had a great impact on the security of the minorities in the two newly created nations. Because of the brutal killings of the minorities by the majority community in both the countries, a huge number of Muslims migrated to Pakistan from

India, and Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan to India. Almost equal numbers of Hindus and Muslims migrated to India and Pakistan respectively in the midst of communal violence. It was thought that India and Pakistan were about to fight their second war in the first three years of their Independence (Bhardwaj 2008: 1-3).

The Indian government was aware of the large scale influx of population from Pakistan, especially the minority Hindus from Pakistan and it was also important to protect them on humanitarian grounds. At this crucial juncture, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan, issued a statement emphasizing the need to sort out the problem of forced migrants in both the countries. He proposed a meeting with his Indian counterpart to determine how to put an end to the communal riots and the fear of war. At this crucial juncture an agreement came into being especially to protect the minorities. This is widely known as Nehru-Liaquat Ali Agreement of 1950 (Bhardwaj 2008: 1-10).

The agreement could be seen as part of migration policies of India as it widely dealt with the issues of forced migrants of both the countries. Apart from signing the agreement, the governments also undertook other measures and policies to deal with migrants during the period of 1947-1955. The Foreigners Act of 1946, though passed before Independence, has its relevance till date as the migrants are checked under this Act. Apart from that Assam Immigration Expulsion Act of 1950, the Passport Act of 1951 were the major Acts passed by the government to check migration. The Indo-Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1950 was also a move by the Government of India and Nepal to expedite the historical relation. Through this agreement both the governments ensured free movement of population between the two countries as there were considerable migration of Nepalis into India too (Ghosh 2004: 21, 27, 31).

#### **5. IV.i \_\_\_ The Foreigners Act, 1946**

Though the Foreigners Act was passed in 1946, this has been widely been applied to detect and determine an illegal migrant or a foreigner. The Foreigners Act confers the Union Government certain powers in respect of foreigners. The Union Government is expedient to provide certain powers in respect of the entry of foreigners into India, their



presence therein and their departure therefrom. According to the Act, "a foreigner is defined as a person who is not a citizen of India". The Union Government, under Section 3(2) of the Foreigners Act, 1946 has been empowered to make provisions for prohibiting, regulating or restricting the entry of foreigners into India or continued presence. The Union Government has been conferred power to make provisions with respect to all foreigners for prohibiting, regulating or restricting their whereabouts in India. Any police officer may take such steps and use force as may be in his opinion, be reasonably necessary for securing compliance with any order made. The power conferred by this section shall be deemed to confer upon any person a right of access to any land or other property whatsoever (The Foreigners Act 1946).

According to subsection (1) of section 8 of the Foreigners Act 1946, 'Determination of Nationality', "When a foreigner is recognised as a national by the law of more than one foreign country or where for any reason it is uncertain what nationality if any is to be ascribed to a foreigner, that foreigner may be treated as the national of the country with which he appears to the prescribed authority to be most closely connected for the time being in interest or sympathy or if he is of uncertain nationality, of the country with which he was last so connected: Provided that where a foreigner acquired a nationality by birth, he shall, except where the Central Government so directs either generally or in a particular case, be deemed to retain that nationality unless he proves to the satisfaction of the said authority that he has subsequently acquired by naturalization or otherwise some other nationality and still recognized as entitled to protection by the Government of the country whose nationality he has so acquired." Subsection (2) states: "A decision as to nationality given under subsection (1) shall be final and shall not be called in question in any Court: Provided that the Central Government, either of its own motion or on an application by the foreigner concerned, may revise any such decision" (The Foreigners Act 1946, Act No. 31 of 1946, 23 November, 1946).

The section 9 of the Act imposes the burden of proof on the person concerned, notwithstanding anything contained in the Indian Evidence Act, 1872. Section 11 of the Act empowers police officers to take necessary actions whatsoever (The Foreigners Act 1946, Act No. 31 of 1946, 23 November, 1946). None of these provisions were then

made use of in the unprecedented migration. It is alleged that there was hardly any machinery to keep track of the Pakistani Muslim migrants, most of who eventually settled in the state posing themselves as Indian nationals with the support of their friends and relations.

This coupled with the influx of Hindu refugee's created and unprecedented problem in Assam. The attempts to regulate the influx of Pakistani migrants included the introduction of the passport-cum-visa system in October 1952. But the provision of Foreigners Act 1946 and the rules made thereunder were not applicable to the citizens of Pakistan and hence they were not required to get registered. Presently, all the Indian states follow the provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946 to detect and deport a foreigner and migrants. In the cities like Delhi, Mumbai, a migrant, especially the Bangladeshi is charged under the relevant provisions of the Passport Act/Rules 1967 and of the Foreigners Act, and produced before a metropolitan magistrate who gives sufficient opportunity to such persons for producing proof of nationality. It is only in cases where no such evidence is produced to the satisfaction of the Court, the Court grants permission to the competent authority for deportation of such migrants. The competent authority then issues the deportation order under Section 3(2) (c) of the Foreigners Act and the migrant or a foreigner is deported according to that order (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, July 28, 1998).

It is alleged that the Foreigners Act, 1946, provides unbridled powers to the police to detect and deport illegal migrant or a foreigner. A migrant once arrested under this Act is hardly left with any scope for him to appeal to the court for protection. There are no such provisions for others under the Foreigners Act, 1946, to appeal against a determination of nationality by the prescribed authority under Section 8. It denies the judicial remedy against a decision taken by the authority. This Act gave virtually unbridled powers to the authorities, mainly the police, to designate any person as a foreigner, and detain and deport him. Anyone disputing his designation as a foreigner had no recourse under the Act to a judicial body (Section 8, The Foreigners Act 1946, Act No. 31 of 1946, 23 November, 1946)

#### 5. IV.ii The Immigrants (Expulsion from Assam) Act, 1950

The influx of East Bengalis into Assam has continued unabated and the Assamese people began to view it as a serious threat to their economic, cultural and political identity. After independence, the impact of Assam's local resistance against the East Bengalis had been felt by the Union Government. As a sequel to this the Indian Parliament officially acknowledged the problem by passing the Immigrants (Expulsion from Assam) Act on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1950, empowering the Union Government to detect and deport the East Bengalis (Bhagaiwala 1951: 77-78; Sharmah 1999: 31). In the statement of objects and reasons of the Bill presented to Parliament it was stated, "During the last few months, a serious situation has arisen in Assam due to migration from East Bengal. Such large migration is disturbing the economy of the state, besides giving rise to a serious law and order problem. The bill seeks to confer necessary powers on the Union Government to deal with the situation" (Assam Gazette 1951: 997-999).

The section 1 of the Act introduces it and views its applicability to all over India. The important provisions of the Act as enacted by the Parliament of India are the following: -

"Section – 2: If the Central Government is of opinion that any person or class of persons, **having been ordinarily resident in any place outside India, has or have, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, come into Assam and that the stay of such person or class of persons in Assam is detrimental to the interests of the general public or any section thereof or of any Scheduled Tribe in Assam, the Central Government may by order -**

"(a) direct such persons or class of persons to remove himself or themselves from India or Assam within such time and by such route as may be specified in the order; and (b) give such further directions in regard to his or their removal from India or Assam as it may consider necessary or expedient: Provided that nothing in this section shall apply to any person who on account of civil disturbances or the fear of such disturbances in any area now forming part of Pakistan has been displaced from or has left his place of residence in such area and who has been subsequently residing in Assam.

“Section – 3: The Central Government may, by notification in the official Gazette, direct that the powers and duties conferred or imposed on it by Section 2 shall, subject to such conditions, if any, as may be specified in the notification, be exercised or discharged also by -

“(a) any officer subordinate to the Central Government; (b) the Government of Assam, Meghalaya or any officer subordinate to that Government.

“Section – 4: Any authority empowered by or in pursuance of the provisions of this Act to exercise any power may, in addition to any other action expressly provided for in this Act, take or cause to be taken such steps, and use or cause to be used such force, as may in its opinion be reasonably necessary for the effective exercise of such power.

“Section – 5: Any person who-

“(a) contravenes or attempts to contravene or abets the contravention of any other made under section 2, or (b) fails to comply with any direction given by any such order, or (c) harbours any person who has contravened any order made under section 2 or has failed to comply with any direction given by any such order shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine.

“Section – 6: No. suit, prosecution or other legal proceedings shall lie against any person for anything which in good faith is done or intended to be done under this Act.

“Section – 7: In this Act, except in section 3, references to Assam shall be construed as including also a reference to the State of Meghalaya and Nagaland and the Union territories of Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram [The Immigrants (Expulsion from Assam) Act 1950, (Act X of 1950).”

The provision of the Act clearly says that those displaced people due to the communal conflict or civil disturbances in the neighbouring country, especially in East Pakistan are excluded and the Act is not applied to them. It means any forced migrants from East

Pakistan are not subjected to any harassment by the authorities in Indian side of the border (Sharmah 1999: 31-32). The Immigrants (Expulsion from Assam) Act has not provided any safeguard to the migrants residing in Assam. Rather it has put their safety, security and existence in the state under constant threat of being tampered. Some of the Assamese leaders criticized the Act by viewing that it makes a distinction between Hindus and Muslims (Das 1982: 55-60). The Act, however, was only on paper, but on the ground the influx of population was actually picking up yet again. By the early 1960s, a new wave of migration took place despite the legislation. And the Act has never been a hindering factor for migrants to cross the border in search of better economic security.

However, the Muslims were subjected to large-scale deportation from Assam to Bangladesh. Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, who was leading the Assam Movement (1979-1985) while commenting on the Act, observes (1986) "It is not at all difficult to read the Act between the lines. It is religion oriented. The Act openly encouraged free entry into Assam of a particular religion or community on the pretext of victims of disturbances in East Pakistan. It can undoubtedly be said that this Act was largely responsible for the alarming population growth during the decades 1951-1961 and 1961-1971. In secular India, the Hindu East Pakistanis were permitted to settle as refugees and Muslim East Pakistanis were thrown out" (Rahman 2005). However, the statement of Mahanta doesn't entirely justify the provisions of the Act. If he was in support of not throwing out the Muslims from East Pakistan, the Assam Agitation would not have occurred. Though the Act was passed empowering the government to expel foreign migrants from Assam, it was not taken seriously and was not implemented. Subsequently on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1957, the Act was amended and certain clauses were repealed. The Chief Minister Bishnuram Medhi had advocated action against the infiltrators of East Pakistan. However, there is hardly any evidence to show that he succeeded in this. After some time Medhi resigned and Bimala Prasad Chaliha became the Chief Minister of Assam (Das 1982: 55-60).

#### 5. IV.iii \_\_\_ The Passport Act, 1951

The Government of India again in 1951, passed *The Passport Act, 1951* and a large number of Muslims from East Pakistan came to India with the help of the Act for a

period of six months. About 2 lakh passports were issued at that time but even after the expiry, these people never returned back and also the Government of India never saw fit to deport the expired passport holders (Das 1982: 56). The Government of India decreed by letter no. F9/7/60-I dated July 21, 1960, ordered that those East Pakistanis who have been staying in Assam without travel documents for a long time shouldn't normally be disturbed except those that were found to be at security risk (Das 1982: 55-60).

However, the Congress Party in Assam continued to be concerned about the impact of migration. The Assam Congress Committee dated June 27, 1962, had drawn pointed attention of the Prime Minister on the issue. Jawaharlal Nehru on June 27, 1962, acknowledged about the infiltration by Pakistanis, which has been continuing since 1949. Nehru stated: "I believe that much of this infiltration took place in the first five years of independence when the border was not adequately guarded. Probably it will be difficult now to deal with illegal migrants who came before 1952; we might therefore fix 1952 as the date of inquiry" (Das 1982: 55-60).

#### **5. IV.v\_\_\_The Nehru -Liaquat Ali Pact, 1950**

Apart from the above-mentioned legal measures initiated by the government to look into the migration issue, India and Pakistan soon after the partition also undertook measures to protect the minorities. Both the governments were worried about the minorities in either side. The issue of displaced minorities in India and Pakistan was a daunting task for the governments. This was more so in their resettlement. The agreement provided "bill of rights" to the minorities of India and Pakistan aiming at addressing three particular issues; firstly, to alleviate the fears of the religious minorities on both the sides, secondly, to promote communal peace and thirdly, to create an atmosphere in which the two countries could resolve their other differences. According to the agreement, both India and Pakistan governments agreed that each shall ensure to the minorities throughout its territories, complete equality of citizenship, irrespective of religion, and a full sense of security in respect of life, culture, property and personal honour. The pact guaranteed the fundamental human rights of the minorities such as freedom of movement, speech, occupation and worship. The pact also provided for the minorities to participate in the

public life of their country, to hold political or other offices and to serve in their country's civil and armed forces.<sup>1</sup>

The following is the main statement of the Agreement:

“(A) The Governments of India and Pakistan solemnly agree that each shall ensure to the minorities throughout its territory complete equality of citizenship irrespective of religion, a full sense of security in respect of life, culture, property and personal honour, freedom of movement within each country and freedom of occupation, speech, and worship subject to law and morality. Members of the minorities shall have equal opportunity with members of the majority community to participate in the public life of their country, to hold political or other office, and to serve in their country's civil and armed forces. Both Governments declare these rights to be fundamental and undertake to enforce them effectively. The Prime Minister of India has drawn attention to the fact that these rights are guaranteed to all minorities in India by its Constitution. The Prime Minister of Pakistan has pointed out that similar provision exists in the objective Resolution adopted by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. It is the policy of both Governments that the enjoyment of these democratic rights shall be assured to all their nationals without distinction.

“Both Governments wish to emphasise that all allegiance and loyalty of the minorities is to the State of which they are citizens, and that, it is to the Government of their own state that they should look for the redress of their grievances.

“(B) In respect of migrants from East Bengal, West Bengal, Assam and Tripura, where communal disturbances have recently occurred, it is agreed between the two Governments:

“(i) That there shall be freedom of movement and protection in transit.

“(ii) That there shall be freedom to remove as much of his movable personal effects and household goods as a migrant may wish to take with him. Movable property shall include

---

<sup>1</sup> Liaquat-Nehru Pact 1950, see URL, <http://www.storyofpakistan.com/articletext.asp?artid=A096>.

personal jewellery. The maximum cash allowed to each adult migrant shall be Rs. 150/- and to each migrant child Rs. 75/-" (Nehru-Liaquat Ali Khan Agreement April 8, 1950).

The division of the country shattered the fabric of the society and communal violence induced large-scale displacements. And it was the responsibility of the government to ensure the safety of the people irrespective of their religion.<sup>2</sup> This agreement provided life to the displaced people (Gupta 1984: 109-111).

#### 5. IV.vi \_\_\_ Rehabilitation of Migrants

Due to the partition, a large number of people from East Pakistan migrated to the Indian Border States, especially in the eastern parts of India, i.e. West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. According to the Annual Report, Ministry of Rehabilitation (1958: 1-2), "the total number of displaced persons from East Pakistan by 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1958, was estimated about 41.17 lakh. The Ministry of Rehabilitation made an assessment of the displaced persons from East Pakistan in early 1957 and revealed that over 97 percent of the displaced persons were concentrated only in the three eastern states i.e., West Bengal, Assam and Tripura." The assessment report revealed that these states had reached the saturation point and could not accommodate any subsequent migrants in their respective states for rehabilitation. The gravity of the problem was discussed by the National Development Council (NDC) at its meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1957. The Council accepted the suggestion of the Union Rehabilitation Minister to set up a committee of Chief Ministers of the states concerned under the chairmanship of the Union Home Minister for allotting quotas of displaced persons for settlement by the states which would be responsible for formulating schemes for their settlement (MOLR 1958: 3-6).

Among the three above-mentioned states, the concentration of migrants was largest in West Bengal and was the largest recipient of East Pakistani migrants due to her physical and cultural proximity. An estimate shows that 73 percent of the total migrants from East Pakistan were concentrated in West Bengal (Dasgupta 2001: 100-102; MOR 1959: 8-9). The concentration of refugees was so high in West Bengal that they constituted at one

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



time nearly one-tenth of the total population. As the migrants kept on pouring into West Bengal, there was crisis of land for resettlement of migrants. The state government has termed it as the level of saturation point and revealed that it is no longer in a position to receive any fresh migrants. The West Bengal Government maintained that the refugees were not its sole responsibility but rather a burden, and demanded for rehabilitation of these migrants in other states too. However, there were not many states in the Indian union willing to host the Bengali speaking refugees. Apart from the above-mentioned three states, other states were also chosen to rehabilitate migrants (Das 2003: 106-151).

For resettling migrants in other states of India and consequent to the decisions of the NDC as mentioned above, a meeting of the Chief Ministers of seven states and the rehabilitation ministers were held under the Chairmanship of Union Home Minister at Calcutta on 21<sup>st</sup> January, 1958. Some of the CMs present offered some areas for utilizing for the purpose of settling the displaced people, and it was agreed that the state concerned would undertake a comprehensive survey to explore the possibility of making available lands for the resettlement. There were problems of rehabilitation of displaced people from East Pakistan in some other states due to the prevailing economic conditions and the consequent unemployment problem. The ministers assembled at the Darjeeling conference also considered the policies that should be adopted with regard to the future migrants from East Pakistan. It was observed that the existing resources of the country would have to be used for providing rehabilitation assistance to them. To achieve this objective, it was considered necessary that the present size of the problem should not be allowed to grow indefinitely, and that a dateline should be fixed after which the migrants should not be entitled to receive relief or rehabilitation assistance (MOLR 1958: 5).

According to the Annual Report, Ministry of Rehabilitation, a scheme for opening of a camp for 5000 persons at Rudrapur in Nainital area in Uttar Pradesh was sanctioned. A total number of 5000 displaced persons were moved from the existing camp population in West Bengal and were rehabilitated in Nainital Terai colonization area. The Government of Orissa was also asked to formulate schemes for opening up camp for rehabilitating another 5000 displaced persons from West Bengal. The Ministry also asked to open up advance camps in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bombay. The Ministry of

Rehabilitation also asked to locate more lands for rehabilitation purpose in other states. The Ministry also sanctioned 25 schemes covering an area of 10771 acres at a cost of Rs. 94.66 lakhs for the rehabilitation of 2,347 families in Bihar, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh. Altogether 64 schemes were sanctioned in states other than Assam, West Bengal and Tripura. They provided for 6,834 families and are estimated to cost Rs. 3.07 crores. During the year under review, 902 displaced families were moved from camps to rehabilitation sites in Bihar, 603 in Madhya Pradesh, 209 in Orissa and 89 in UP. In addition 1,955 families were moved from camps to rehabilitation colonies in Tripura where schemes for 8,305 families covering an area of 23,543 acres have been sanctioned since October, 1956 at a cost of Rs. 1.92 crores. In Assam reclamation of 4,780 acres of land in Cachar district was started by the central tractor organization (MOR 1959: 5-10).

As per the Annual Report, Ministry of Rehabilitation (1958: 2-3), "Manipur had about 2,000 displaced East Bengali migrants. In UP, there were about 6,000 displaced persons from East Pakistan; 4,000 of them had been rehabilitated in the Nainital Terai colonization colony. In Orissa, there were about 12,000 displaced East Pakistani people of whom 5,500 were settled in rehabilitated colonies. Again, there were about 67,000 displaced persons in Bihar, and 48,900 of them received rehabilitation assistance. Of the remaining, about 17,500 were in the Bettiah camp and about 600 in homes and infirmaries in the state."

About 30,000 families of displaced persons from East Pakistan were rehabilitated during the year 1958 raising the total number of displaced families so far settled to 5.76 lakhs. Till about the end of 1956, the population in camps had been continuously going up. However, the admissions on account of new migrants invariably were exceeding the dispersals for rehabilitation. During 1956 there was a net addition of about 1 lakh persons in the population of camps in the eastern zone. Only about 20,000 displaced persons from camps were dispersed to rehabilitation sites during that year. . During 1957, whereas only about 8,300 persons were admitted, about 35,000 were dispersed to the rehabilitation sites. The number of camp inmates was reduced by a gross figure of 63,700 persons of whom over 50,080 were dispersed to the rehabilitation sites in the various states of India. This included over 5,000 persons dispersed from camps in West Bengal to other states for

rehabilitation. Some displaced persons were also discharged from camps as they had been found ineligible as a result of screening (MOR 1959: 5-6).

There has been shift in policy of rehabilitating of East Pakistanis by the Government of India after the year of 1958. This signified a very important step in the process of developmental policy and programmes to meet the challenge. The activities were characterized by a shift in the emphasis from 'relief' to 'rehabilitation'. There has also been also a re-orientation in the policy of planning and implementation of rehabilitation schemes in general and an attempt was made to integrate the rehabilitation schemes with the development plans of the states concerned. The Dandakaranya project and the Rehabilitation Industries Corporation came into being for resettlement of migrants (MOR 1959: 1-2).

The government gave much importance on developing agriculture on scientific lines for the purpose of resettling East Pakistani migrants. Migrants were also rehabilitated in small scale industries. In the field of Industries, special efforts were made by the government to encourage industrialists to expand their existing industries to set up new industrial units solely for the purpose of giving employment to the displaced people. However, the result was not satisfactory. And accordingly the government decided to form Rehabilitation Industries Corporation to set up industries on small as well as medium scale in both private and public sectors to create avenues of employment for the displaced people from East Pakistan in the eastern sector (MOR 1959:3-4).

As mentioned above that there have been attempts to integrate the schemes of rehabilitation for displaced persons with the general plans of development of the country as a whole and particularly with the development plans with the state concerned. For that reason, the government sanctioned land schemes in West Bengal, such as the development of Herobhanga area in the Sundarbans, the char land of the river Teesta in North Bengal and Danga lands in Midnapore district for the promotion of sisal and sabai grass plantation. To this may be added the schemes of setting up poultry and duckery farms at Calcutta and Gobardanga and loan assistance to the state government for development of transport. All these schemes form part of the general developmental

plans of West Bengal. Attention was focused during 1958 on measures to reduce as far as possible and eliminate expenditure which created no tangible assets either in the shape of productive enterprise or human advancement. Requirements of economy also compelled measures for elimination of waste in all fields of activities (MOR 1959: 4).

The state of West Bengal received a largest number of East Pakistani migrants. The state during 1958 had 31.63 lakhs displaced population; 2.10 lakhs were in camps, 54,000 in homes/infirmaries. And the remaining 28.99 lakhs, approximately two-third of the displaced population received rehabilitation assistance in one form or other. The reports of the rehabilitation Ministry stated that about 8 to 9 lakhs displaced persons were scattered in the state and were reported to have received no rehabilitation assistance. (MOLR 1958: 2-3; MOR 1959: 5-7).

The total number of displaced population in Assam was 4.87 lakh persons or 1.28 lakh families. The bulk of the migrants, i.e., 1.08 lakh families or about 84 percent of the total had migrated to the state by December, 1952. About 75,000 displaced families in Assam have received rehabilitation assistance in one form or another by the end of the 1957-58 financial year. During 1958-59, rehabilitation assistance was sanctioned to about another 9,000 persons. Many of the displaced persons from East Pakistan in Assam, who have not received any rehabilitation assistance, have by and large rehabilitated themselves (MOR 1959: 7).

In Tripura, there were 3.74 lakh displaced persons comprising 83,000 families, of whom about 7,500 families or (32,000 persons) were in relief camps and about 3,000 persons in homes and infirmaries at the end of 1957. The rehabilitation of displaced persons in Tripura had presented a very difficult problem as the state has small territory with an area of about 4,200 square miles, most of which suffers from geographical handicaps. The numbers of displaced people in Tripura mentioned above was nearly equal to the non-displaced population in the state. In spite of these factors, substantial progress of rehabilitation was made during the year 1958 and about 16,500 persons were dispersed from camps to rehabilitation sites (MOR 1959: 8).

In Manipur, the problem of rehabilitation of displaced persons, whom counted about 2,000 people were rehabilitated. In Bihar, there were 67,000 displaced people from East Pakistan, i.e., about 14,500 families. Of them 8500 were dispersed to the rehabilitation sites earlier, and about 2,000 were moved to the rehabilitation sites during 1956-57; and 1,200 families were dispersed to the rehabilitation sites from the Bettiah camp during 1958. Of the families present in the Bettiah camp, about 55 percent were agriculturalists and 45 percent non-agriculturalists. The problem of rehabilitating 1,300 non-agriculturalist families remained (MOLR 1958: 2; MOR 1959: 6).

There were 12,000 displaced persons from East Pakistan in Orissa and 11,000 of them were already rehabilitated. The remaining 1,000 persons (i.e., about 250 families) were in the Charbatia camp and they were in process of rehabilitation. In UP, there were about 6,000 displaced persons from East Pakistan and they had already been rehabilitated. The UP government agreed to arrange for the rehabilitation of another 15,000 persons, i.e., about 3,000 families, in the state who would be dispersed from the camps in west Bengal. Schemes for the rehabilitation of about 2,000 families had already been sanctioned and were being implemented. In Madhya Pradesh, 1,534 families had so far been moved to the rehabilitation sites of which about 930 were dispersed during 1958. Another batch of about 475 families was expected to be moved to the state from camps in West Bengal for rehabilitation during 1959. In Rajasthan, 232 families were rehabilitated in 1958. Provision for rehabilitation of 430 more families existed in the schemes already sanctioned (MOLR 1958: 2-3).

The committee's decision of sending the refugees to an area called Dandakaranya consisting of the districts of Koraput and Kalahandi in Orissa and the district of Bastar in Madhya Pradesh was soon accompanied by the institution of the Dandakaranya Development Authority (DDA) that was given the overall responsibility of developing the area by 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1959. A total of 830 families comprising 3,550 persons reached Dandakaranya from different relief camps of West Bengal and Bihar. Within the Dandakaranya area four resettlement zones were earmarked at Umerkote, Malkangiri, Parankote and Bastar. While 40 to 60 households were herded together in each village, each zone in turn was composed of tens of such villages separated from each other by a

few miles on an otherwise inaccessible, infertile, and rocky terrain. The refugees – mostly belonging to lower castes such as Namasudras and Poudra Kshatriyas with an agricultural background – were sent to Raipur by special trains from where they were taken to the Mana transit camp (MOR 1959: 7-8).

#### 5. IV.vii India-Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty

Apart from the above mentioned policies, Government of India and Nepal also signed a Treaty widely known as Indo-Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1950. Apart from the problem of forced migrants and other influx from West and East Pakistan, there also has been continued unabated migration of Nepalis since the days of the British rule. As discussed earlier, the Nepalis were recruited in the British army. The recruiting camps were organized in the Border States which further triggered migration of Nepalis into India and other Northeast states in search of employment (Kansakar 1990: 11-12).

In the midst of such migration and a historical tie up with Nepal and also considering the other security factors, Indo-Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty was signed in 1950. The Treaty provided free movement of population between the two countries through a proper mechanism. The treaty has made some specific provisions through which the people from both the countries can settle and do business. The Treaty of Peace and Friendship encapsulates a holistic approach of security that takes into consideration both internal and external dimensions of threats perceived from the neighbouring countries. The two countries, bound through socio-cultural and economic ties, ensured Nepal's socio-economic progress and stability considering India's security interests in the South Asian region (Nayak 2010: 580-583). The various provisions of the Treaty are the following:

“Article-1: There shall be everlasting peace and friendship between the Government of India and the Government of Nepal. The two Governments agree mutually to acknowledge and respect the complete sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of each other.

“Article-2: The two Governments hereby undertake to inform each other of any serious friction or misunderstanding with any neighbouring State likely to cause any breach in the friendly relations subsisting between the two Governments.

“Article-3: In order to establish and maintain the relations referred to in Article 1 the two Governments agree to continue diplomatic relations with each other by means of representatives with such staff as is necessary for the due performance of their functions. The representatives and such of their staff as may be agreed upon shall enjoy such diplomatic privileges and immunities as are customarily granted by international law on a reciprocal basis: Provided that in no case shall these be less than those granted to persons of a similar status of any other State having diplomatic relations with either Government.

“Article-4: The two Governments agree to appoint Consuls-General, Consuls, Vice-Consuls and other consular agents, who shall reside in towns, ports and other places in each other’s territory as may be agreed to. Consuls-General, Consuls, Vice-Consuls and consular agents shall be provided with executors or other valid authorization of their appointment. Such executor or authorization is liable to be withdrawn by the country which issued it, if considered necessary. The reasons for the withdrawal shall be indicated wherever possible. The persons mentioned above shall enjoy on a reciprocal basis all the rights, privileges, exemptions and immunities that are accorded to persons of corresponding status of any other State.

“Article-5: The Government of Nepal shall be free to import, from or through the territory of India, arms, ammunition or warlike material and equipment necessary for the security of Nepal. The procedure for giving effect to this arrangement shall be worked out by the two Governments acting in consultation.

“Article-6: Each Government undertakes, in token of the neighbourly friendship between India and Nepal, to give to the nationals of the other, in its territory, national treatment with regard to participation in industrial and economic development of such territory and to the grant of concessions and contracts relating to such development.

“Article-7: The Governments of India and Nepal agree to grant, on a reciprocal basis, to the nationals of one country in the territories of the other the same privileges in the matter of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce, movement that privileges of a similar nature.

“Article-8: So far as matters dealt with herein are concerned, this Treaty cancels all previous treaties, agreements, and engagements entered into on behalf of India between the British Government and the Government of Nepal.

“Article-9: This Treaty shall come into force from the date of signature by both Governments.

“Article-10: The Treaty shall remain in force until it is terminated by either party by giving one year’s notice” (Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship 1950).<sup>3</sup>

The treaty envisages the citizen’s right of residence, ownership or property, participation in trade and other commercial activities in each other’s country. The provisions contained under the pact are more favourable to Nepal as people could enter India unhindered in search of better opportunities and sustaining livelihood. There was also an exchange of letters along with the treaty which explicitly states that “it may be necessary for some time to come to offer the Nepalese nationals in India protection from unrestricted competition”. This was done basically to protect the interests of the Nepali people migrating to India. The Nepal government also agreed to grant preferences to Indian nationals in various development projects related to natural resources. There is controversy regarding the provision of unrestricted movement of population. Several academicians and foreign policy experts from Nepal have raised voice against the treaty. They are of the view that due to presence of huge resources in Nepal, so many Indians would swamp Nepal (Deka et al. 2008: .39-42).

---

<sup>3</sup> Wikipedia (2010), “1950 Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship”, (Online Web), accessed on 1 March 2009, URL: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1950\\_Indo-Nepal\\_Treaty\\_of\\_Peace\\_and\\_Friendship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1950_Indo-Nepal_Treaty_of_Peace_and_Friendship).



## 5. V \_\_\_ Migration Policies: 1955 to 1965

In this period the Government of India followed two particular policies to deal with the East Bengali migrants. One is the Prevention of Infiltration from Pakistan to Assam adopted in 1964 and the other is the Foreigners Tribunal Act promulgated in the same year. The minority communities faced communal flagrance as a result of which thousands of migrants fled to Indian Border States, particularly to Assam and West Bengal. The government sheltered the migrants and the also provided migration certificates (Neog 1984: 284; Barooah 1984: 292).

The migration of East Bengalis into Assam created much hue and cry among the political parties. Congress Party was in support of expulsion of migrants from Assam. To prevent influx and initiate deportation Government of India introduced the Prevention of Infiltration from Pakistan to Assam (PIP) in 1964. It aimed at preventing the influx and expulsion of Pakistanis (East Pakistanis also). The National Register of Citizens of 1951 was the basis for identification of the migrants according to the provisions of the PIP plan. This register was available to the political parties and bureaucrats for identifying and deporting migrants. Under the PIP, 200 border posts were built at the cost of Rs. 6,000 each and 1,500 police personnel were deployed to prevent such infiltration. This was vigorously implemented by Bimala Prasad Chaliha, the then Chief Minister of Assam. In the first three years of the implementation of Act, 2,40,000 infiltrators were identified and 1,90,000 were deported. Between 1967 and 1970, only 20,800 infiltrators were detected and a smaller number was deported. The politics of vote bank and appeasement of minorities by the Congress Party seemed to have started at this stage when Chaliha was prevented to implement the PIP in Assam (Barooah 1984: 292; Sanjaya 1980: 11).

A section of the Congress Party treated the minority as their vote bank; so they refused to take any action which affected the interest of the minorities and started putting pressure on Chaliha. Devakanta Baruah, a Congress Party member, in his statement revealed that the party has to depend on Muslims and tea garden labourers for vote. He viewed: "*so long as Alis and Coolies are with the Congress party it did not care for anybody*" (Singh

1984: 91). Chaliha's relentless implementation of the PIP came under attack when 27 Members of the Legislative Assembly (a large number of them were Muslims) of his own Congress Party protested and some of the Muslim League MLAs also put pressure on Chaliha to go slow with PIP. The Congress MLAs who were opposing argued that the minorities in Assam would be alienated if the government implemented this Act and would therefore be difficult to win 1972 elections. The Chief Minister Chaliha had a difficult situation. His party had 71 MLAs and there were 54 MLAs in the opposition. If 17 MLAs of his party would withdraw their support, it would have fallen (Singh 1990: 166; Das 1982: 58).

The PIP Act was criticized due to its non-secular character. The Hindus were considered refugees while Muslims were considered illegal aliens. The 1964 law did not make any such distinction. The 1964 law raised a special border police force of about 2,000 men and 159 towers were built along the Indo-Pakistan border, besides six passport checking centres. This was first among a series of securitization steps initiated by the Union Government. Internal political compulsions forced Assam's Congress government to put in cold storage the 1964 PIP law because the party survived on the support of elected Muslim MLAs. By then the illegal aliens had also managed to enter the voters' list of India using fraudulent documents which were available cheap (Hazarika 2000: 60; Singh 1990: 163-167).

On 1<sup>st</sup> May 1962, the Union Home Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri declared in the informal consultative committee meeting of Parliament for Home Affairs that the Union Government agreed to take measures to check the influx of illegal entrants in Assam. The government proposed some measures to prevent infiltration that included increasing the number of border check posts, strengthening the existing check posts and the delegation of full powers, under the Foreigners Act of 1946, to the Superintendent of Police and Magistrates in the border districts for deportation of Pakistani infiltrators. The members of the committee also suggested for deterrent and exemplary punishment for the illegal migrants (APCC 1962, cited in Sharma 1999: 32-33). However, no effective measures were probably taken, because on 19<sup>th</sup> March 1964, the Assam Congress Parliamentary Party submitted a memorandum to Gulzarilal Nanda, the then Home Minister of India.

The party in the memorandum stated that there has been large scale infiltration of Pakistani nationals who are illegally staying without being detected. The Congress Parliamentary Party suggested, "Indian and Pakistan border must be completely sealed and the area to such a depth as may be necessary from the border should be cleared. All weather road communication should be constructed for speedy movement of troops and for patrolling the border. The border check posts of the B.S.F should also be increased to minimize the distance from one post to another" (APCC 1964).

It is clear that despite the apathy shown by the national leadership, the Congress Party in Assam continued to feel the necessity of checking infiltration. The party seemed to have given considerable importance to the matter. The then Home Minister, Gulzarilal Nanda, was quite aware of large scale infiltrations into the state. He had visited some places of tension and held personal enquiries of some incidents perpetrated by these people in those places and had found these to be true. He had suggested and ordered some remedial measures. Police was given some substantial powers to detect and prosecute foreign infiltrators and some tribunals were constituted for their trial and deportation. The then Chief Minister, Chaliha, set up tribunals for detection and deportation of foreigners. Kidwai had himself admitted "that the way the migrants came to Assam, it will take the government about thirty years to get rid of lakhs of these people who were there in the state" (Sharmah 1999: 33-34). The number of these foreigners will not remain constant and there will also be further infiltration of similar type. Government of India's awareness of the problem was also reflected in a brochure published by the Government of India. The brochure stated:

"Long before the cry of partition was heard in united India, the slow but steady encroachment of Assam and Tripura by migrants from areas now in East Pakistan was already in progress. Partition did not assuage the land hunger in East Pakistan. The new international boundary was not physically marked on the ground, was largely unguarded and virtually unpatrolled. Thus the traditional migration from East Bengal continued even though a new political frontier had come into being, with East Pakistan on one side and the Indian territory of Assam, Tripura and West Bengal on the other" (MEA 1963: 15).

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation, Bhagwat Jha Azad, in the Lok Sabha debate stated, "during 1968, on an average 394 migrants entered Assam from East Pakistan every month. During the six month ending on 29 December 1968, 2,098 migrants came to Assam from East Pakistan. The Government of Assam decided to rehabilitate 12,000 families of the new migrants, i.e. those who came over to Assam from 1 January 1964 onwards. Arrangements were made for the rehabilitation of those who are in excess of the quota 12,000 outside Assam. Regarding those who came recently, it was decided that after necessary screening, these people should be sent to Mana Relief Camp in Madhya Pradesh" (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, 17-21 February 1969: 107). Minister's statement shows that India has been considerate to the migrants who came even after 1964.

#### **5. V.i \_\_\_ Foreigners Tribunal order, 1964**

To check illegal entry and determination of foreigner, the Union Government introduces the Foreigner's Tribunal Order, 1964. The Government in the exercise of the powers conferred by section 3 of the Foreigners Act, 1946, the Union Government introduced the Foreigners Tribunal Order of 1964. By this order the Government could constitute tribunals to check whether a person is a foreigner or not within the meaning of the Foreigners Act 1946 (31 of the 1946). Through this order, tribunals were constituted. The tribunal consisted of number of persons having judicial experience. The tribunal consisted of two or more members, among one of them was appointed as the chairman thereof (Foreigners Tribunal Order 1964). According to the provisions,

\_\_\_\_\_ "The tribunal serve on the person, to whom the question relates, a copy of the main grounds on which he is alleged to be a foreigner and give him a reasonable opportunities of making a representation producing evidence in support of his case and after considering such evidence as may produced and after hearing such persons as may be desire to be heard, the tribunal shall submit its opinion to the officer or authority specified in this behalf in the order of reference. The tribunal shall have the powers of a civil court while trying a suit under the code of civil procedure, 1908 in respects of the following matters, namely: -

summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person and examining his oath, requiring the discovery and production of any document and issuing commissions for the examination of any witness. The Centre on February 10, 2006 amended the Foreigners (Tribunal) Order, 1964 by an order called the 'Foreigners (Tribunal) Amendment Order, 2006'. As per the Order, it was applicable only to Assam and not to the rest of the country” (Foreigners Tribunal Order 1964: 1-3)<sup>4</sup>.

#### 5, V.ii \_\_\_ Flight of Chakma People to India

The Government of Pakistan’s decision to construct hydro-electric dam on the Karnafulli River in Rangamati between 1957 and 1962, for harnessing water resources of the Chittagong, under the financial and technical assistance of USA displaced thousands of Chakma people. The construction of the dam created a huge lake at the north and east of the dam at a place called Kaptai. The total cost of the project was Rs. 2.4 million. The dam, in fact, submerged an area of about 400 square miles including 54,000 acres of cultivable land making up 40 percent of the district’s total acreage. About 90 miles of government’s road and 10 square miles of reserve forests also went beneath the water. And again it displaced more than 100000 Chakma people. The poor rehabilitation policies of the government compelled them to migrate. In 1964, nearly 40,000 Chakma hill people, direct victims of the Kaptai dam and subsequent communal violence, crossed over to Indian border state of Tripura and then to Arunachal Pradesh (Ahmed 2002-2003: 1-20).

In 1964, the Government of India granted migration certificates to approximately 35,000 Chakmas and 1,000 Hajongs. The migrants were settled by the Government of India in the erstwhile North East Frontier Agency, an area that comprises the present-day districts of Lohit, Changlang and Papumpare in Arunachal Pradesh. These certificates indicated legal entry into India and the willingness of the Government of India to accept the migrants as future citizens. Additionally, under the Indira-Mujib Agreement of 1972, it was determined that India and not Bangladesh would be responsible for all migrants who

---

<sup>4</sup>Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964 [India], 23 September 1964, accessed on 15 July, 2009, URL: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6b5308.html>

entered India before 25 March 1971 (APHRN 2001). On 9 January 1996, the Supreme Court of India, ruling in the case of *National Human Rights Commission vs. State of Arunachal Pradesh & Air*, directed the Government of Arunachal Pradesh to ensure protection of the life and personal liberty of Chakmas resident in the state, and to process their applications for citizenship in accordance with law (IDMC 2006: 85).

According to the Supreme Court of India ruling (*National Human Rights Commission vs. State of Arunachal Pradesh & Air* on 9 January 1996: 9-10), “the State of Arunachal Pradesh, shall ensure that the life and personal liberty of each and every Chakma residing within the State shall be protected and any attempt to forcibly evict or drive them out of the State by organised groups, such as the AAPSU, shall be repelled, if necessary by requisitioning the service of para-military or police force, and if additional forces are considered necessary to carry out this direction, the first respondent will request the second respondent, the Union of India, to provide such additional force, and the second respondent shall provide such additional force as is necessary to protect the lives and liberty of the Chakmas; (2) except in accordance with law, the Chakmas shall not be evicted from their homes and shall not be denied domestic life and comfort therein.”

The Supreme Court’s judgement was followed by a positive decision by the Delhi High Court. In the case of *People’s Union for Civil Liberties and Committee for Citizenship Rights of the Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh vs. Election Commission of India and others*, the Delhi High Court ruled in favour of registering Chakmas and Hajongs as voters in Arunachal Pradesh. However, these court directives have been ignored by the government of Arunachal Pradesh (*National Human Rights Commission vs State of Arunachal Pradesh & Air*, 1996; APHRN 2001).

#### **5. V.iii\_\_\_ Communal Disturbances in East Bengal and Influx of People into India: Government Response**

During the wake of communal disturbances in East Bengal, a huge influx of minority communities occurred into Indian Border States. Basically the Hindus and Christians migrated from the Mymensingh district of East Bengal into the Garo Hills district. It is

known that the exodus from East Bengal into Assam began on January 18, 1964 and the total number of refugees including men, women and children who took refuge was estimated at about 52238. Out of this, an estimated 35000 were Christian families who belonged to the Garo tribe. The basic reason for such exodus of the minority community from East Pakistan was due to the large scale looting, arson, kidnapping and forcible occupation of their lands by the members of the majority community with the connivance of the Pakistan police and the village defence corps known as Ansars (Parliament of India Debate, Rajya Sabha, March 2, 1964: 2668-2669).

The Assam government and the Garo Hills district administration were highly aware of such influx. According to an Italian correspondence the figures that he had collected on the basis of identification cards, filled up by the refugees themselves, on their arrival in their camps, twenty thousand of the Garos were Roman Catholics. Two of the American missionaries stated that fifteen thousands of the refugees were Baptists. The refugees revealed that the East Pakistan rifles had opened fire on the batch of the defenceless Garo population and were forced to flee into Assam on February 6, 1964. The others who continued to cross the border and kept migrating into Assam consisted of the Hajong, Banai, Koche, Rajbonshi and Dalu tribes. All the refugees who crossed into the Garo Hills district were from the five thanas of Naltabari, Sribordi, Halvaghata, Durgapur and Kamlakanda in the Mymensingh district of East Pakistan. Meanwhile, the government of India in their note dated February 13, 1964, presented to the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi and protested to the Government of Pakistan about the shooting of the hapless refugees fleeing from persecution in East Pakistan. Though Pakistan did not acknowledge the occurrence of this barbarous Act, the Pakistan Foreign Minister had to contradict the reported statement of Khan A. Sabur Khan, Pakistan Central Minister of communications that, there is "no truth Indian press reports that Christians living in East Pakistan had started fleeing" by admitting in Dacca in February 26, 'that some exodus' of Christians from Mymensingh district of East Pakistan into Assam had taken place regretted on behalf of his government that this "unfortunate exodus" is due to "acts of high handedness" by Muslims. The President of Pakistan also admitted the flight of large

numbers of Christians from Mymensingh district to India (Parliament of India Debate, Rajya Sabha, March 2, 1964: 2669-2672).

In a question by A.D. Mani, "what is the policy of the government in regard to these Christians refugees? If they don't want to go back because they are subjected to harassment, is it the policy of the government of India to welcome them here and to rehabilitate them within the resources available to the Indian government?" Responding to this question, Laxmi Menon, mentioned about the rehabilitation of these migrants and stated that the Government of India takes the issue as a national problem and assured about the efforts that to be made to rehabilitate these persons who migrated into Assam (Parliament of India Debate, Rajya Sabha, March 2, 1964: 2668-2672).

During a discussion on the influx of East Bengalis into India on 11 February 1964, in the Lok Sabha, Gulzarilal Nanda stated, "that the situation arising out of the communal disturbances in East Pakistan resulting in heavy loss of life and property of the members of minority community and their influx to India and consequential disturbances in West Bengal be taken into consideration" (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, February 12, 1964: 303-304). H N Mukherjee in his discussion viewed, "the government should take adequate measures to compel the Pakistan government to respect the rights of the minority community in East Pakistan. He also urged the government to allow the migration of minorities to enable all those to come over from East Pakistan. He proposed to rehabilitate about one and half million refugees who had earlier come over from East Pakistan. He also asked the government to curb reactionary communal forces in India who, by advocating a policy of retaliation against the Muslim minority in India as a reply to Pakistani oppression of the Hindus, strike at the root of India's secular and democratic principles" (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, February 12, 1964: 306)

Mati Renuka Roy also suggested the government to lift all the restrictions on the migration of East Bengali Hindu minority population. Other members like, Brij Raj Singh asked the government to take effective steps to fulfil the solemn assurances given to the minority in the East Pakistan at the time of creation of Pakistan (through Liaquat-Nehru pact). This assurance included that the life, property and honour of Hindus left there will



be protected and they will be ensured equal treatment. Following suggestions were given by him:-

- a. Ensure safe transit to the intending Hindu migrating to India
- b. Remove all restrictions on the entry of Hindus from East Pakistan to West Bengal
- c. Educate and mobilize the world opinion against the persistent genocide of Hindu minority in East Pakistan, whose number has been reduced from 16 million to 9 million (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, February 12, 1964: 307-308).

Nanda, the then Home Minister in his speech said,

\_\_\_\_\_ “the question is what can be done? It was expected that the Hindus in East Pakistan will leave with equal rights, equal status and equal security and safety. If Pakistan fails to discharge its responsibilities, those Hindus in East Pakistan don't cease to be the nationals of Pakistan. That one thing must be very clear. However, much we may grieve over their fate, that fact can not be ignored that they are the responsibility of Pakistan. Pakistan is failing in its responsibility and on human considerations we have to do something about it, because as I said we can't take purely the legal and constitutional view. We can't shut our eyes to the fact that they are the people who were part of ourselves, with whom we have ties of blood and who are our relations and friends, these who live there. We can't turn our face against their sufferings the torture of their bodies and spirit and all that they are undergoing there. We can't do that. Therefore instinctively our hearts turn to them and it is a question of human impulse. We want to do our best. We can't help doing that. But there it is we want to give them whatever succours, we might like to send them. We are faced with the situation that there is compassion. That is a word which separates us from them; they are on the other side of the barrier and we hear their cries for help. But our hands can't reach there. What else we can we do? That is the question. There is the human obligation. Somebody has taken objection to the word compassion. That is a word which has been used in the Nehru Liaquat Ali pact. The human obligation is there. We emphasize the responsibility of Pakistan to look after their protection, relive and rehabilitation

and it is for them take back those people who have been affected and who are in camps to their homes. And give them relief and rehabilitation we welcome that. We will be very happy if they do that. If they don't do that, if they are nor able to give them the new start, if they don't feel secured, if they find it impossible to breath the air of security in their country and they feel that they must live it then we cant bar their way. We have no heart to tell them, 'you go on staying there and be butchered.' We can't just see that they are perishing in the flames of communal fire and let them perished" (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, February 13, 1964: 531-546).

Nanda, on behalf of the government proposed for liberalizing the migration restrictions. The government agreed to grant migration certificates to all the migrants and the relaxation for granting of migration certificates also made. The Government of India for the purpose of granting migration certificates made the provisions little relaxed. To get a migration certificate an income tax clearance certificate and some municipal certificates were required from those coming at the border. As the migrant did not have any certificates to show as the people were fleeing because of insecurity Nanda said,

\_\_\_\_\_ "unattached women and widows with no livelihood in Pakistan" they would also be included for the provision of the migration certificates. Some of the member during the discussion also urged the Home Minister to provide migration certificates to all of the displaced people from East Pakistan and they argued for imposing no restriction on migration of these people to India. The government of India provided migration certificates irrespective of people migrating from East Pakistan. Nanda in his speech said, "this is what we can do on our side; we can make arrangements for their relief, we can receive them and make it easier for them, so far as we are concerned, so that they can have the migration certificates and we simplify whatever the procedure are and make them quicker. All these are being done and then we can take them to wherever they can be resettled. This is a difficult task (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, February 13, 1964: 531-576).

Nanda again in a discussion on the issue on 'Communal Disturbance in East Pakistan' in the Lok Sabha viewed,

\_\_\_\_\_ "The large scale exodus of East Pakistan was the inevitable consequences of Pakistan's irresponsible actions and it's dis-inclination to accept its minimum

responsibility to create conditions to help restore the confidence of the minority community. Nevertheless the policy of the government of India was to treat the rehabilitation of the new migrants from Pakistan as a national problem. Instructions had already been issued to ease the conditions for the grant of migration certificates to intending Hindu migrants from East Pakistan to this country. In addition to the already existing normal categories qualifying for the issue of migration certificates, it was decided to include the following categories also to meet the realities of the present situation:-

- a. Girls of marriageable age, unattached women and orphans who may have no sponsors in India as well as girls approaching marriageable age
- b. Family seriously affected due to arson, looting and killing
- c. Petty traders, who have lost their wherewithal as well as industrial labour, skilled or unskilled, who have been badly affected.
- d. Cases for deputy high commissioner discretion; this should also take care of border line cases.

In view of the very large number of applicants, the procedure for the issue of the certificates has also been shortened. As far as possible, it is the government intention to reduce to the minimum the period of uncertainty and hardship for the migrants coming in and for that purpose to draw up suitable plans and schemes for their resettlements. To consider certain practical questions arising out of these and to explore possibilities of obtaining land for the migrants, a meeting of the chief ministers of Andhra Pradesh, MP, Maharashtra, Orissa and west Bengal was called on February 8, 1964. The state governments concerned have assured us that they would take immediate steps to make available nearly two lakhs acres of land for the resettlements of migrant's family, both agriculturalists and non-agriculturalists. Members will appreciate that the various process connected with the development of the land, thus made available are bound to take times; however, efforts will be made to make the land ready for settlements as quickly as possible. Meanwhile, pressure would be maintained on Pakistan government to see reason and to follow internationally recognized canons of behaviour in respected of their duty towards the minorities" (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, February 11, 1964: 166-167).

#### **5. V.iv\_\_Rehabilitation of Migrants**

The Government of India did not change the migration policy and entry into India from East Pakistan continued to be restricted to those holding the travel documents like migration certificates and passports. Those migrants who were having valid documents and who sought admission to relief camps were entitled to necessary relief materials. The government of India authorized the Border States; West Bengal, Assam and Tripura to accept the migrants at their discretion even those who were not having valid travel documents for relief and rehabilitation assistance, in deserving cases (MOLER 1969: 1).

The Ministry of Rehabilitation estimated about 11.14 lakh person who migrated between 1-1-1964 and 25-3-1971, were known as the 'new migrants'. It was considered that the West Bengal couldn't absorb any such migrants as it is already been overpopulated. The government decided to resettle such new migrants in other states as joint camps were set up outside West Bengal. Even after that about 6 lakh displaced migrants from East Pakistan stayed back in West Bengal. Many of the new migrants were rehabilitated in various states including the Dandyakarnya project (MOELR 1973: 8-10).

According to the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation (1969:1),

\_\_\_\_\_ "During the period of communal violence in East Pakistan in 1964, the Government of India issued migration certificates to the minority communities. The inter-departmental committee set up on the recommendations of the Estimates Committee with the representatives of the Ministry of External Affairs, Department of Rehabilitation and the Government of Assam, West Bengal and Tripura reviewed in November 1968, the system of issuing migration certificates to members of the minority communities from East Pakistan. The government considered question of extending relief and rehabilitation assistance to genuine and deserving migrants, who may enter India without obtaining migration certificates because of the difficulty in securing such certificates due to disturbed conditions, distance of the Deputy High commissioner's office from their residence, ignorance etc. The committee feels that the present policy regarding the entry of migrants into India from East Pakistan should continue and that once a migrant family not in possession of migration certificates, has been admitted to a relief camp by virtue of the discretion exercised as mentioned above, no discrimination should be made in granting relief and rehabilitation assistance to it *vis-à-vis* those who came with migration certificates and are admitted to camps. The committee has also recommended some minor procedural changes in regard to filling application form by an intending migrant and the issue of migration to him. In addition, it has recommended that the period of validity of migration certificates should be extended for one year" (MOLER 1969: 1).

#### **5. V.iv.a \_\_\_ Rehabilitation of New Migrants in Agriculture outside West Bengal and Dandyakarnya**

The rehabilitation of migrants from East Pakistan was initiated by the government in various ways. According to the Annual Report of the Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation (1984: 11), "Apart from small schemes in some states, the government of India started nine major rehabilitation projects – two in Maharashtra, one each in

Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh and five in Madhya Pradesh . These were set up for resettlement of new migrants in agricultural land. Apart from that the Dandyakarnya was also initiated by the government of India for the purpose of rehabilitating East Pakistani migrants in 1958. Resettlement on land in the eastern states/union territories viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura, Bihar and Orissa was completed, while it is almost complete in Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka. The projects in the state of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra are normalized with effect from 1-4-1980. The question of normalization of the projects in Madhya Pradesh has also been taken up with the state governments concerned.” Rehabilitation assistance was admissible to the new migrants. As on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1969, there were only 14662 families residing in relief camps awaiting rehabilitation. These included 4330 families belonging to Permanent Liability Category.<sup>5</sup>

#### **5. V.iv.b \_\_\_ Rehabilitation of New Migrants in India**

Among the new migrants, about six lakhs remained in West Bengal but the government declared them ineligible for any relief and rehabilitation benefits as the government decided not to settle any more migrants in the state (MOLR 1984: 10). According to the (MOELR 1969: 4), “In Assam, the number of new migrants from East Pakistan up to the end of December, 1968, was about 1.99 lakhs persons comprising about 44100 families. Around 28750 families sought admission in relief camps and 31 camps were opened in Assam. However, the number of camp families decreased and 18 camps were closed down by 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1969. During that time, 1236 families were considered to be under the PL category in these camps. The government also proposed to set up another two permanent liability home to accommodate those PL families. Up to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1968, 9925 families – 7848 agriculturalists and 2077 non-agriculturalists – have been settled in various rehabilitation sites in Assam. Till the end of March, 1969 about Rs. 1181.65 lakhs have been spent in the state for the purpose of rehabilitation of new migrants.”

---

<sup>5</sup> Permanent Liability Category/Camps are defined as “amongst the refugee families that are admitted to camps, there are those whose members are either infirm or aged or otherwise incapacitated or consist of women who have no able bodied men to look after them. These constitute what is known as “Permanent Liability” of Government.

According to (MOELR 1969: 4-5), "In Tripura, up to the end of December, 1968, about 1.32 lakhs new migrants comprising nearly 29400 families have migrated into Tripura. About 947 families entered in relief camps that the government opened. The state had already reached a saturation point and no resettlement of new migrants was possible. There were 225 families in 2 relief camps in Tripura awaiting rehabilitation. Besides, there were 501 families of Permanent Liability Category in these camps and construction work of new PL home at Amtali, a suburb of Agartala was in progress. Some 5366 families – 5356 agriculturalists and 10 non-agriculturalists, came over to Tripura on exchange of their properties with the properties of Muslims who had migrated to Pakistan."

These families didn't seek admission in relief camps. Up to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1969 about Rs. 7.29 million had been spent in Tripura on relief and rehabilitation of new migrants. Meanwhile, there were about 16700 new migrants comprising 3718 families in Maharashtra. The government opened 4 relief camps to accommodate these migrants. The Maharashtra government also agreed to resettle 6000 new migrant agriculturalist families in the rehabilitation zone at Chanda. The state government also made available a net area of 33000 acres of land and up to the end of 1968, 23064 acres of land had been reclaimed. Till the end of December, 1968, 3304 families – 2951 agriculturalist and 353 non-agriculturalists – had been rehabilitated in Chanda area. About Rs.550.00 lakhs had so far been spent in Maharashtra on relief and rehabilitation of new migrants (MOELR 1969: 5).

In Madhya Pradesh, about 15300 persons, comprising 3411 families from East Pakistan were there and the government opened 19 relief camps to accommodate these migrants. Madhya Pradesh government agreed to rehabilitate about 4000 agriculturalists new migrant families in three rehabilitation zones at Betul, Panna and Sarguja. The state government provided a net area of 23300 acres of land, which were mostly forest land for the resettlement of new migrant's families. Up to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1968, a total area of 18184 acres of land had been reclaimed in these projects. By the end of December 1968, 3094 families – 2600 agriculturalists and 494 non-agriculturalists had been rehabilitated in these projects in Madhya Pradesh. About Rs. 498.57 lakhs had so far been spent in

Madhya Pradesh for relief and rehabilitation of the new migrants. 305 families in 10 relief camps in Madhya Pradesh were awaiting for rehabilitation. Besides, there were 12 families of PL category in the above camps. There were about 11400 new migrants from East Pakistan comprising 2541 families in NEFA. About 3000 new migrants' agriculturalist families including about 500 families from other areas were proposed to be rehabilitated in NEFA. Up to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1968, 2541 new migrants' agriculturalist families had been rehabilitated there. About Rs. 85.48 lakhs had been spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1969, in NEFA on relief and rehabilitation of new migrants (MOELR 1970: 7-8).

There were about 10300 new migrants from East Pakistan comprising 2280 families living in Bihar and for rehabilitation assistance; the government opened 3 relief camps. There were 87 families of PL category in the above camps. Till 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1968, 1216 families – 343 agriculturalists and 873 non-agriculturalists were rehabilitated in Bihar. A sum of Rs. 191.90 lakh had been spent in the state for relief and rehabilitation of the new migrants (MOELR 1970: 7).

In Andhra Pradesh there were about 4400 migrants from East Pakistan comprising 973 families and the state government opened 5 relief camps to accommodate these migrants. All the families in the camps were dispersed to rehabilitation sites at Isagaon and the camps were closed. About 6765 acres of land had been reclaimed and 973 families - 959 agriculturalists and 14 non-agriculturalists – rehabilitated in ten new villages. By 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1969 about Rs. 190.66 lakhs had been spent in Andhra Pradesh on relief and rehabilitation of the new migrants. Meanwhile, the population of new migrants from East Pakistan was about 6100 persons comprising 1350 families. The state government had opened 2 relief camps to accommodate these migrants. There are at present 490 families in one relief camp at Rudrapur in UP awaiting rehabilitation. Up to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1968, 866 families – 762 agriculturalists and 104 non-agriculturalists – had been rehabilitated in UP in various rehabilitation colonies in Pilibhit, Kheri and Bareilly district. A sum of Rs. 249.76 lakhs had been spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1969 in UP on relief and rehabilitation of the migrants. About 768 families had been settled in the districts of Nainatal, Kheri, Pilibhit, Bijnor, Bareilly, etc. another 71 families who were residing in relief camps were expected to be settled by 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1971. In Manipur, about 900 new migrants from East

Pakistan comprising 192 families had been rehabilitated in nine new villages in Manipur (MOLER 1969: 7-9).

The government made available 800 acres of land to the migrant families, of which 670 acres had been reclaimed by then and brought under cultivation. Up to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1969, sums of Rs. 13.94 lakhs had been spent in Manipur on relief and rehabilitation of new migrants. In Orissa, there were about 2300 new migrants from East Pakistan comprising 523 families and the state government had opened 5 relief camps to accommodate these migrants. There were 188 families in 3 camps awaiting rehabilitation. Besides, there were 109 families of PL category in those camps. By the end of December, 1968, 226 non-agriculturalists families had been rehabilitated in Orissa. Till 31<sup>st</sup> march, 1969, a sum of Rs. 123.01 lakhs had been spent in Orissa on relief and rehabilitation of new migrants (MOELR 1970: 8-9).

Apart from the above mentioned resettlement of migrants in various states, as on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1973, there were 27692 families (116110) of new migrants from former East Pakistan in 20 relief camps in various states. These camps were administered by the respective state governments within the framework of instructions issued by the department of rehabilitation from time to time. Out of this, 23086 families were rehabilitated families and 4606 were families of the PL category. Apart from these, there were 756 families in the worksite camps in Dandyakarnya project. The expenditure incurred by the state governments was reimbursed to them by the department of rehabilitation (MOELR 1973: 12-13).

During the period from 1-1-1964 to 31-12-1974, about 51707 families of new migrants from former East Pakistan were resettled in agricultural and non-agricultural occupations in various states, union territories and in Dandyakarnya. During the period from 1-4-1974 to 31-12-1974, 1152 agriculturalist families were moved to rehabilitation sites. Before the end of the current financial year, about 200 more agriculturalist families were expected to be moved to rehabilitation sites. In addition to the 6 agriculturalists projects started at Betul, Panna and Surguja in Madhya Pradesh, Chandrapur in Maharashtra, Isagaon in Andhra Pradesh and Sindhanur in Karnataka, another project in Bhandara had also been



started in 1974. The total number of families in position in these projects was 9953. The government of Maharashtra had in 1964 offered 36608 acres of cultivable land in Chanda district for resettlement of new migrants. The area reclaimed for resettlement of new migrants so far was 33956 acres. During 1974, 31 families were given rehabilitation assistance in this project. In consultation with the Maharashtra government, it had been decided to utilize 3400 acres of land for the resettlement of 600 new migrant families. Proposals for the resettlement of 400 families had been sanctioned in May, 1974, against which 370 families had been given rehabilitation assistance. Another 200 families were expected to be settled during 1975. The government of Madhya Pradesh had in 1964 offered 44208 acres of land in Betul district for the resettlement of new migrants, of which 36700 acres were released by the state forest department. Of the 14053 acres found suitable for agriculture, 13372 acres of land had been reclaimed. During 1974, 424 families were proposed to be resettled in the Betul project during 1975 and 183 families during 1976 (MOELR 1973: 13-15).

#### **5. VI\_\_Migrants Rehabilitated in Various Projects**

The following organizations functioned under the department for implementing various rehabilitation schemes: -

**5. VI.i\_\_Permanent Liability Category:** During the period from 1-1-64 to 31-12-70 about 575 PL families were admitted to the existing homes run by the department of social welfare. In addition, the Department of Rehabilitation had taken up construction of new PL homes for the new migrants. By the end of December, 1973, 1578 families of new migrants had been accommodated in the new PL homes. In the wake of the emergence of the Republic of Bangladesh about 15500 families of migrants who had come to India prior to 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1971, left the camps and rehabilitation sites in India apparently with the intention of returning to their original lands. Many of these families came back to India. After verification to their previous stay in the camps/ rehabilitation sites, 4344 families had been moved to Mana and 392 families to Dolariya camp in Madhya Pradesh. Besides, 507 families who had reached rehabilitation sites directly had

been moved to Mana at Basirhat in West Bengal. They were moved to Dolariya camp (MOELR 1973: 9-10).

**5. VI.ii \_\_Dandyakarnya Project:** it was set up by the Government of India in 1958 for rehabilitation of displaced persons from East Pakistan in Dandyakarnya region. The DDA was responsible for planning and implementation of various resettlement and development programmes. The chief secretaries of West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa and the representatives of the ministries of supply and rehabilitation, finance and home affairs were represented on the authority. The last batch of displaced persons numbering about 1900 families in Karmi Shibir of the Dandyakarnya project had been taken to rehabilitation sites during the year. With this, the total number of families settled and in position in the project as on 31-12-81 were about 25000 families (MOELR 1982: 1-2).

**5. VI.iii \_\_Rehabilitation Industries Corporation LTD, Calcutta:** This public sector undertaking was set up in 1959 for employment of displaced persons from East Pakistan. The corporation had advanced loans to private industrialists and co-operatives in return for employment of displaced persons. It had also set up 5 industrial estates, having 84 private industrial units. The corporation ran 14 industrial units of its own in small sector. Through these activities employment had been provided to about 5500 displaced persons. There was a part time chairman and eight official directors including the managing director on its board of directors. The governments had taken several measures during the year to revitalize this corporation which has been incurring losses for various reasons since inception (MOELR 1982: 3).

## **5. VII \_\_Bangladesh Liberation of 1971 and Assam Movement**

A major development took place in 1971, where Bangladesh came into existence with the help of India in their struggle for liberation. The then President, Mujibur Rahman and the Indian Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi concluded an agreement whereby Bangladesh would take back those who had migrated from East Bengal to India up to March 25, 1971. Nearly 10 million migrants crossed over the neighbouring Indian territories,

including Assam, to avoid the atrocities carried out by the Pakistani military. Nearly a million stayed in India and didn't return back. There was also an implied assurance by Mujibur Rahman that henceforth the Hindu minority would have no occasion to leave their hearth and home to seek refuge in India. There was hope that further migration from East Pakistan, now turned into Bangladesh, would stop. The migration from Bangladesh to Assam and other Indian states didn't cease in spite of Mujibur Rahman's promise. With the birth of Bangladesh in 1971, many thought that there wouldn't be any more movement of people (Ghosh 2004: 21-22 & Weiner 1993: 1740-41).

Bangladesh failed to shape up as a secular country, which would have given full guarantee to the fundamental rights of the Hindus and other minorities. In the initial years after independence of the country, the Indian government welcomed the refugees. But as days passed by, the government gradually stiffened its stand. However, the flow of migration seems unstoppable, by now, there some more than 10 million refugees/migrants from Bangladesh in India (Ghosh 2004: 84-86). During the Liberation war, millions of migrants took asylum in Assam resulting in economic crisis. India's External Affairs Minister, Swaran Singh, told United Nations on December 12, 1972, "the economic implications of the number of refugees, which now stands at 10 million and the generated economic pressure on India, can be discerned from the fact that our Finance Minister has made two additional provisions of nearly 330 cores of rupees, or approximately \$500 million, in our annual budget for the year 1971-72, which ends on 31 March 1972. A smaller State would have collapsed in the face of such an influx" (Hazarika 2000 & Joseph 2006: 11)

Swaran Singh while delivering the same speech said that the Government has to take care the social friction, the fear of epidemics and the possibilities of communal and other tensions. He also revealed that the migrants created incalculable hindrances to India's economic development for years to come. According to him, the continuing exodus was a destructive obstacle to the very socio-political fabric of India. The concern expressed by Congress leader Swaran Singh at the UN was in fact shared by his party colleagues in Assam too. But due to the vote bank realities forced them to change their stand overnight (Joseph 2006: 11-12 & Das 1982: 61-62).

A rough estimate prepared by the AASU and endorsed by the Congress Party of Bangladeshi migrants were estimated to four million as against the Assam's own population of some 16 million. The last big wave of migration occurred in the wake of the Indo-Pak war of 1965 when thousands of Hindus fled their home and took shelter in eastern states, especially West Bengal and Assam. Even before the birth of Bangladesh, some ten million refugees trekked to India seeking shelter and about a million of them didn't return back. The unabated migration altered the demographic composition of Assam. The representatives of AASU and other allied parties met at Jorhat in July 1978 and prepared sixteen point agendas – demands, including the identification, deportation and prevention of further migration of Bangladeshis from Assam (AASU 1983: 5-7).

The government of India assured instructions to the Government of Assam (vide Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs; letter no. 14081-06-75-III dated August 20, 1975 as cited in. Das 1982: 59) to implement a programme to detect the names of foreigners on the voter registration roles. The letter was not implemented by the Assam Government led by Sarat Sinha, because a compact bloc of 25 Muslim MLA threatened to withdraw their support from the ruling government. In Assam, the central as well as the state government have reduced the refugee issue of "citizenship" and "deportation of foreign nationals". The Government of Assam could do nothing in the next few months (Das 1982: 59-60 & AASU 1980: 4-6).

Up to these points the movement was confined mostly to the student community. As a result of these events, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the then Minister of External Affairs and Shyamlal Shakhder, the Chief Election Commissioner of India, made some very important statement. Shakhder in the conference of the Chief Electorate Officer of the states, commented, "I would like to refer to the alarming situation in some states, specially in the Northeastern region, where from disturbing reports are coming regarding large scale inclusion of foreign nationals in the electoral rolls. In one case, (Assam), the population in 1971 recorded an increase as high as 34.98% over the 1961 figures and this increase was attributed to the influx of a very large number of persons from the neighbouring countries." Shakhder proposed to the Home Ministry to introduce

identification cards to the Indian citizens in the Northeast region. The entire population of the region welcomes the proposal but it was not implemented. The foreigners lobby argued that it would create unnecessary harassment to the genuine Indian citizens (AAGSP 1980: 17-18).

Vajpayee, on August 21, 1978, while replying to a call attention motion in the Lok Sabha on the issue of influx of Bangladeshis into Assam commented:- "If infiltration took place in any part of the country, whether it was Kashmir or Assam, the security of the whole nation was jeopardized and government won't allow monetary considerations to stand in the way of safeguarding the security of the country..... this problem of infiltration is a recurring phenomenon and we must sit together and devise ways and means so that the northeastern region could be made secure and the people there should feel that their sorrows and worries are shared by the rest of the country." Again on November 27, 1979, Vajpayee gave the following written reply to a question on the floor of the Parliament:-

- a. "It has come to the notice of the election commission from time to time that large scale inclusion of foreign nationals in the electorate rolls especially in the Northeastern region has been taking place.
- b. In August 1975, the Ministry of Home Affairs instructed all the state governments and the administration of all the union territories that the state criminal investigation might be instructed to take immediate steps to check the electoral rolls and if they discover the names of foreigners in the rolls, that fact might be brought to the notice of the concerned electoral registration officer for getting such names deleted from the electoral rolls. The election commission has also issued instructions to the chief electoral officers of the state/union territories concerned that if it is found that a large number of foreigners have managed to get their names registered in the electoral rolls. Recourse should be to the provisions of section 22 of the representation of the People's Act 1950, for getting the names of such persons deleted from the electoral rolls on the ground that they are not Indian citizens." (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, November 27, 1979: 219-221)

The difficulties of the Assamese people on account of the presence of large number of foreigners became more and more acute. By 1979 they had run out of their patience and AASU launched massive movement to turn out the foreigners. They found that while checking up the electoral rolls that in a Lok Sabha bye election ordered in September 1979, from Mangoldoi, there were more than 45000 names of foreigners in a list of nearly 7 lakhs voters. The massive agitation across the state asked for identifying the huge number of foreigners and urged to deport them (Hazarika 1993: 54-56).

The government of India too, during later negotiations with the AASU-AAGSP representatives pointed out that they had to be accepted by India as refugees in terms of understanding the partition of the country, the subsequent international commitments and for humanitarian considerations. These points were reiterated by the Union Government in course of the prolonged negotiations with the student's representatives. But the Assam Movement leaders, after they launched their agitation for expulsion of foreigners, didn't accept the plea of the government for retention in the state of those of them as were refugees; for too them "a foreigner is a foreigner" and until a foreigner was regularized as a citizen under the law of the land he was still a foreigner who should be detected and deported to Bangladesh, or at least dispersed from Assam to other states, so that other states too took a share of the burden of Assam (Deka 2004: 128-130 & Rajagopalan 2008: 19 & Das 1986: 15). Though the AASU and AAGSP would not discriminate between a Hindu and Muslim migrants, the Union Government wanted to honour its commitments made at the time of the partition and accept East Pakistan refugees, but questions were asked why after the division of India and Pakistan on the basis of the two nation theory, a large number of Muslims, probably larger in number than that of the Hindus, should migrate from East Pakistan into the neighbouring states of Assam, West Bengal and Tripura and especially to Assam (Kumar 1990: 206-208).

#### **5. VIII \_\_\_ Regularization of Migrants**

The Assam Movement ended with an agreement signed between the agitators and the Union Government widely known as Assam Accord in 1985. After the series of negotiations the leadership of the movement set up a cut off date for deportation of

Bangladeshi nationals from Assam. This cut off date and year also paved the way for regularization of migrants and granting of citizenship. The agreement mainly concentrated on the detection on the basis of the constitution and relevant laws, namely, the Citizenship Act of 1955, the Foreigners Act 1946 and the Passport Act 1952. In pursuance of this provision, the Citizenship Act, 1955 was amended by Act No.65 of 1985 and Section 6A was inserted with the heading "Special Provisions as to Citizenship of Persons covered by the Assam Accord." It provides that the term "detected to be a foreigner" shall mean so detected under the Foreigners Act and the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964 framed there under (*Sarbananda Sonowal vs Union Of India & Air* on 12 July, 2005 & Hussain 2000: 109-111)

Under the said provision a person of Indian origin as defined under Section 6-A (3) who entered into Assam prior to 1st January, 1966 and has been resident in Assam since then is deemed to be a citizen of India. (*Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India & Air [2005] INSC 338, 12 July 2005*) Section 3 of the Citizenship Act, 1955 provides that every person born in India on or after the 26<sup>th</sup> day of January, 1950 but before 1st day of July 1987 shall be a citizen of India by birth. A person born on or after 1.7.1987 either of whose parents in a citizen of India at the time of his birth shall be a citizen of India by birth. A person however, shall not be such a citizen by virtue of this Section if at the time of his birth his father possesses such diplomatic immunity and is not a citizen of India, or his father is an enemy alien and the birth occurs in a place then under occupation by the enemy (The Citizenship Act 1955: 5-7).

Again the Assam Accord, on the issue of foreigners agreed to some important points. These included, the government has decided 1.1.1966 as the base data and year for the purpose of detection and deletion of foreigners. Most importantly, those migrants who migrated to Assam prior to 1.1.1966, including those amongst them whose names appeared on the electoral rolls used in 1967 elections shall be regularized, meaning thereby granted citizenship. Again the migrants, who came to Assam after 1.1.1966 (inclusive) and upto 24th March, 1971 shall be detected in accordance with the provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946 and the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order 1964. Again the migrants who came to Assam on or after March 25, 1971 shall continue to be detected;

deleted and practical steps shall be taken to expel such foreigners. Over all those migrants who came before 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1971 are regularized and granted citizenship and they are bonafide citizens of India (Assam Accord 1985: 1-4).

#### **5. IX \_\_\_IMDT Act: Success and Failure**

After the signing of Assam Accord, the granting of citizenship of migrants were implemented under various provisions of the agreement. The migrants, who entered Assam after 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1971 continued to be dealt by the Act of Illegal Migrant Determination by Tribunal Act of 1983 (IMDT). Basically the Act was passed by the Parliament of India in 1983 for the purpose of detecting and deporting Bangladeshi nationals from Assam. During the conflict ridden period, a violent campaign was led against the Bangladeshi migrants where thousands of innocent lives were lost. In 1983, in the Nagaon district alone, 1700 people were massacred by the local population through an organised violence. The chain of violence continued. It took a toll of more than 3000 people-mostly Bengali Hindus and Muslims. Another massacre occurred at Chaulkhowa Chapori under Mangoldoi sub division in the Darrang district with an estimated 500 people killed (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate, September 21, 1983: 98-100).

Forcible deportation of people occurred and there had been reports of harassment of Indian nationalities belonging to the Muslim community. There were reports of pushing thousand of Bangladeshis along with some indigenous Muslims back to Bangladesh. It raised severe apprehension among the genuine citizens. Again it was felt that the Foreigners Act of 1946 was not an adequate option for the purpose of protecting the genuine Indian citizens. There are several cases of harassment of genuine Indian citizens and these is revealed through the Assam Legislative Assembly Debates and in fact, the members of the minority community in the Assembly pleaded for introducing an act like the IMDT. Abdul Latif meanwhile stating the same problem argued for establishing a tribunal for checking Bangladeshi migrants. He views, "the problem of Bangladeshi migrants and subsequent harassment of the Indian citizens must be dealt with through judicial arrangements. The government must think of tribunal or a judicial arrangement immediately. Police should not be given absolute power to tackle Bangladeshi migrants



and all the political parties must think of altogether. I also appeal the government to halt the process deportation as long as the tribunals are not constructed. The process should start only when the process of tribunal and judicial arrangement is completed. Only those migrants who came over to Assam only after 1971 must be deported” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1979, 1 March, Vol. III, No.7: 130-132).

Nurul Huda in a discussion also commented, “Deporting Bangladeshi migrants we do not have any objection and problems and many MLA’s would agree to it unanimously. Foreigners may of Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal-deporting them we do not object. But the Indians should not be touched at all and the government has no right to do so” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1979, 28 February, Vol. III, No. 6: 83-84). Md. Idriss while discussing the Governor’s address commented,

\_\_\_\_\_ “I can give several instances of harassment and deportation of Indian nationals in the name of foreigners questioning their citizenship and constitutional rights. Some of the instances are – Alaudding S/O Abdul Quddus, Habibur Rahman S/O late Rafiquel Haque of village singaria, P.O-Singariabazar, Dist-Cachar. They and their forefathers were born and brought up at the above address and are citizen of India by birth, were arrested by the Golaghat Police on 3.1.1979 and forced them to sign a repaired statement, while working under contractor Abdul Aziz and Syed Abdul Hannan of Golaghat town. They were sent to the Jorhat police station on 4.1.1979 and were deported to Bangladesh via Mahisason Border outpost, Karimganj on 7-1-79 along with some other Indian citizen so arrested. The above mentioned persons returned back to India on 9-1-79 and made are presentation to the chief minister by post with a copy to A.M. Choudhury, MLA, Nishit Das, MLA stating the above facts. Above all there are lot many instances of deportation of Indian citizens. In Barpeta district alone many of them are deported to Bangladesh even after having their proper house, names in the NRC etc. the police personnel does not want to see the documents they have. What I observe some section of religious and linguistic minority communities’ people are targeted branded them as Bangladeshis and then deported completely ignoring their rights/privileges being an Indian citizen” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1979, 28 February, Vol. III, No. 6: 62-66).

Md. Fakhru Islam commented, “The objectives to check influx foreigner can be stated as ineffective, illegal and unconstitutional. No patriotic man in this country will differ that not a single foreign national should be allowed to remain here, at the same time not a single Indians should get harassed in suspicion of being a foreign national. Harassment is being done to Indian nationals and they were arrested at midnight and deported without

any proper judicial procedures and they were not given chances to produce their identity vis-à-vis the certificates. In the border area, policeman search from house to house at midnight. This policy should be withdrawn immediately. When a specific search is found to be true, only in such cases, they can be driven out. During the last 31 years of Congress regime this problem could not be solved, even the Janata government has done nothing in this direction (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate, 1979, 28 February, Vol. III, No. 6: 108-112). Further Fakhrul Islam urges the State Government to set up some machinery immediately by which all these cases can be subjected to judicial scrutiny. He adds, "There is the Indian passport act under which, if a man enters India from foreign country illegally, he can be arrested even by an SI and produced before a magistrate and if that person is found to have entered India illegally, he can also be imprisoned. There is also the foreigners act which has wide powers; under the same the state government is authorized by the centre and the state government in its turn can authorize some officers to deal with the infiltrators. Now to give this very dangerous weapons to an SI to deal with a great deal of caution is necessary because the power may be misused. The government should see that any power given is exercised with much care and caution that it is not misused. I see that the house has expressed great anxiety on this score" (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate, 1979, 28 February, Vol. III, No. 6: 122-123).

According to the Assam Governor's Report (1998), "The proponents of IMDT maintain that unwarranted fears have been aroused about the large influx of population from Bangladesh when in actual fact their number is very small. They want to retain this Act at all costs. They feel that otherwise, the minorities would face great hardship and harassment. But in due practice, it is found that the act is helpful primarily to serve the interests of the Bangladeshi migrants. Thus the IMDT act aims at Detecting, Determining and Deporting an illegal migrant through a proper mechanism – that is through a tribunal."

P. C Sethi, the then Home Minister in his speech in the Parliament, 1983, said, "the influx of foreigners into Assam and other parts of the eastern and Northeastern regions of the country has been a matter of concern. These migrants have remained in India without any lawful authority by exploiting the circumstances of migration and their ethnic similarities

and other connections with the people of India. The continuance of such migrants in India is detrimental to the interest of the public. The governments have been fully alive to the genuine concern of the people in this region, several measures have been initiated to deal with the problem of illegal migrants. Vigilance on the Indo-Bangladesh border has been intensified with a view to prevent illegal entry. A decision has been taken to erect barbed wire fencing along the Indo-Bangladesh border and to construct a broad jeepable road track along side the barbed wire fencing. It has also been decided that three additional battalion of BSF should be raised for strengthening the border outpost and opening the new ones where necessary” (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, December 14, 1983: 419-420).

The Union Government was also aware of the large scale migration of Bangladeshi nationals and was anxious to deal with those migrants. The detection and deportation of migrants has been a continuing process but the process of detection and deportation has been rather slow. The government was aware of such consensus about detection and deportation of entrants who came after 24<sup>th</sup> march 1971. After taking into account the need for speedy detection, protection of genuine citizen of India and public interest, the president promulgated on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 1983, the IMDT ordinance, 1983 to provide for the establishments of tribunals (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, December 14, 1983: 420-423).

P. C Sethi, in his discussion in the Parliament viewed, “the Union Government was thinking much earlier to bring the IMDT Act into force as there was consensus among the political parties and all other people concerned regarding the detection of the Bangladeshi migrants. Though the AASU was opposed to it, there was almost national consensus on the question of starting the work of detection of Bangladeshi migrants. The Union Government had decided to set up number of tribunals in October, for the purpose of detecting foreign nationals in Assam. The Union Government was blamed for delaying in implementing this Act for finding at least a partial solution to the vexed problem of foreign nationals in Assam” (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, December 14, 1983: 419-434).

Sethi in his discussion viewed, "In the context of the prolonged agitation in Assam, the need for vigorously implementing the detection and expulsion of migrants could not be overemphasized. It was expected that the measures, coupled with other steps taken by the government in dealing with the problem of migrants, will allay the fears in the minds of the people of Assam and create congenial atmosphere" (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, December 14, 1983: 419-434).

## **5. X\_\_ Major Clauses of the IMDT**

There are some important clauses of the IMDT Act. The Section 2 of the IMDT act reads, "Application Nothing in this Act shall apply to or in relation to-- (a) any person who was in any State and who had been expelled from that State or India before the commencement of this Act in that State or in relation to whose expulsion from such State or India any order made before such commencement under any other law is in force; (b) any person detected as a foreigner at the time of his entry across any border of India; (c) any foreigner who, having entered into India under a valid passport or travel document, continued to remain therein after the expiry of the period for which he was authorised to remain in India under such passport or travel document." The Section 3 (b) of the IMDT act defines, "the 'foreigner' has the same meaning as in the Foreigners Act, 1946; (31 of 1946.) Section 3(c) "illegal migrant" means a person in respect of whom each of the following conditions is satisfied, namely: -- (i) he has entered into India on or after the 25th day of March, 1971, (ii) he is a foreigner, (iii) he has entered into India without being in possession of a valid passport or other travel document or any other lawful authority in that behalf." The Section 8 (2) of the IMDT act reads, "Any person may make an application to the Tribunal, for its decision, as to whether the person whose name and other particulars are given in the application, is or is not an illegal migrant. Section 8 (3) "Provided that no such application shall be entertained by the Tribunal unless the person in relation to whom the application is made is found, or resides, within the jurisdiction of the same police station wherein the applicant has his place of residence."

The section 10 of the IMDT act reads, "Procedure with respect to references under sub-section (1) of section 8. On receipt of a reference under sub-section (1) of section 8 or sub-section (1) of section 8A the Tribunal shall serve on the person named in such reference, a notice, accompanied by a copy of such reference, calling upon him to make, within a period of thirty days from the date of receipt of such notice, such representation with regard to the averments made in the reference, and to produce such evidence as he may think fit in support of his defence: Provided that if the Tribunal is satisfied that the person aforesaid was prevented by sufficient cause from making his representation and from producing evidence in support of his defence within the said period of thirty days, it may permit him to make his representation and to produce evidence in support of his defence, within such further period, not exceeding thirty days, as it may, by order, specify" [The Illegal Immigration (Determination by Tribunals) Act 1983].

#### **5. X.i \_\_\_ Features of the IMDT Act**

The IMDT Act has some special characteristics and it is important to note. The salient features of the Act are discussed below: -

- It excluded the migrants who entered India before March 25, 1971 from the illegal-migration accusation. And for post-1971 migrants too, the procedure for deporting was tough.
- The Act is lone applicable in Assam, it was not implemented in other states.
- It defines the expression, "illegal migrants" in terms of consensus.
- Under the act, tribunals are established to strengthen the process of detection in fair manner but in reality it is time consuming affair.
- The IMDT Act provides for two individuals living within a radius of 3 kilometers of a suspected illegal migrant to file a complaint accompanied with a deposit sum of Rs. 10. However, the 3 km restriction was modified and now complain can be made from within an area of police station.
- Under the Act, the burden of proving the citizenship or otherwise rested on the accuser and the police, not the accused; whereas under the Foreigners Act prevailing in the rest of the country the onus is on the accused.

- If a suspected illegal migrant is thus successfully accused, he was required by the Act to simply produce a ration card to prove his Indian citizenship.
- The Act also provided that 'if the application is found frivolous or vexatious' the Central Government may not accept it.
- Once the process of determination of illegal migrants over, the question of expulsion of such migrants would arise. Union Government may expel such illegal migrants, detection and expulsion of post 24<sup>th</sup> March, 1971 entrants (Extracted from the IMDT Act 1983)

There are certain ambiguities in the IMDT Act when it addresses the issue only of the illegal entrants from East Pakistan or Bangladesh. It doesn't take into consideration of other nationals, who had settled in Assam. The prominent among them are Nepali migrants staying over in Assam for decades. There were also apprehensions that this people of Nepali origin will also be included in the foreigner's category and there was a demand for treating this Nepali origin people in a different footing. The agitating leaders also demanded for the deportation of Nepalis from Assam too through the provisions of the IMDT Act. And even if they are exempted from this, there was demand for another cut off date to be prescribed for the people of Nepali origin. P. K Kodyan, through his Parliament of India Debate suggested considering either 1975 or 1976 as cut off year for the people of Nepali origin (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, December 14, 1983: 419-434).

### **5. XI \_\_\_ Functioning of the IMDT Tribunal, Detection and Deportation reality**

This Act caters for an Appellant Tribunal of two retired High Court Judges, sixteen district Tribunals with two retired District/Additional District Judges with supporting staff. There were 16 IMDT tribunals across the state with an appellate court based in Guwahati. The tribunals were set up in Dibrugarh, Jorhat, North Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Tezpur, Mangaldoi, Nagaon, Hojai, Nalbari, Barpeta, Dhubri, Goalpara, Kokrajhar,

Silchar, Karimganj and Diphu.<sup>6</sup> However, in question with efficiency, the IMDT court has not been able to actively work.

**Table 5.I**

**Assam: District-wise Cases Heard by the IMDT Courts during 1985 to 1.1.2003**

IMDT Tribunals	District wise	Total Number of cases
Dhubri	Dhubri	1476
Kokrajhar	Kokrajhar	1371
Goalpara	Goalpara and Bongaigaon	1240
Barpeta	Barpeta	897
Nalbari	Nalbari, Kamrup and Guwahati city	550
Mangaldoi	Darrang	1525
Nagaon	Nagaon	1333
Tezpur	Sonitpur	1727
Silchar	Cachar and Hailakandi	834 168
Diphu	Karbi Anglong N.C. Hills	732 42
Karimganj	Karimganj	1042
Jorhat	Jorhat Sibasagar Golaghat	538 113 232
Lakhimpur	Lakhimpur	952
Dibrugarh	Dibrugarh Tinsukia	316 995
Hojai	Hojai sub- division (Nagaon District)	440
Dhemaji	Dhemaji	554
Total		20297

Sources: *Assam Legislative Assembly Debates*, Official Report, No. 10, March 11, 2003, pp. 47-48.

However, the IMDT court was abolished through the Supreme Court judgment in 2005. The government of India re-established the tribunal across the state through amending the Foreigners Tribunal of 1964. All the staff and the judges who were working earlier in the IMDT tribunal are transferred to the Foreigners Tribunal. The number of persons detected and deported remains to be very low. According to the Assam Legislative Debate, the number of cases dealt with by the various 16 IMDT courts remains to be very

<sup>6</sup> Information collected personally from various Foreigner's Tribunal in Assam

low. The district wise cases heard by the IMDT court from 1985 to 1.1.2003 are shown in Table 5.I.

**Table 5.II**  
**Assam: Number of Detected/ Deported Illegal Migrants since 1985 to 2005**

Year	No. of persons declared as Illegal migrants	Number of persons deported
1985	423	21
1986	146	21
1987	186	114
1988	922	122
1989	2837	127
1990	2210	116
1991	1457	523
1992	341	523
1993	349	37
1994	55	67
1995	375	27
1996	75	31
1997	148	106
1998	84	5
1999	354	25
2000	241	12
2001	434	3
2002	669	6
2003	551	20
2004	558	15
2005 (upto 31 <sup>st</sup> January)	9	2
Total	12424	1538

Sources: *Assam Legislative Assembly Debates*, Official Report, Vol. No. 20, April 5, 2005, pp. 53-55

The Assam Accord Minister said that the government has been able to detect 1501 Bangladeshi migrants till 2003. In another question, Pabindra Deka on 11 March, 2003 asked about how many migrants have been deported from the state during the May 2001-January 2003 and where they belonged to. Apart from the above question he asked whether the Assam Government was aware of the intrusion of Bangladeshi migrants in the state, and if known what measures have been taken so far. Pankaj Bora, the Minister for Assam Accord replied, "The government has deported 664 migrants during the aforesaid period. The migrants were from Bangladesh and the government is fully aware



of it. The government has initiated fencing and a proposal for organizing a special reserved police battalion is under way to protect the border river areas to stop infiltration from Bangladesh. Apart from that active border security has been increased through the border” (Assam Legislative Assembly Debates, March 11, 2003: 51).

In a question by Rupan Singh Ranghang on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2005, asked the then Assam Accord Minister to reply his questions about how many illegal migrants were detected and deported since 1885 to 2005 and how many illegal migrants have been detected and deported since 1985-91, 1991-96, 1996-2001, 2001-2005, 28<sup>th</sup> February Bhumidhar Barman, the Assam Accord Minister replied by saying that under the IMDT Act, 12424 (Table 5.II) people were identified as illegal migrants and 1538 people were deported since then (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate, April 5, 2005: 53-55).

Meanwhile, under the Foreigners Act of 1946 and Foreigners Tribunal Act of 1964, during the period of 1986 to 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2005, 29248 foreigners were identified by the Tribunal and 674 foreigners were charged with quit India notice. Table 5.III shows the number of persons declared foreigners under the Foreigners Tribunal Act. However, the success stories of the IMDT and the Foreigners Tribunal shows a big gap. Tables 5.II and 5.III reveal that the number of migrants/foreigners declared under the IMDT Act from 1985 to 2005 were only 12424. But the numbers of foreigners declared under the Foreigners Tribunal Act were 29248 from 1986 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2005,. Thus the success stories of the IMDT in comparison with the Foreigners Tribunal are minimal. Table 5.IV shows the comparative assessment of the number of foreigners declared under the IMDT and the Foreigners Tribunal Act between 2001 and 2002. During the period 2001 and 2002, the numbers of identification of foreigners under the IMDT Act were 1049 only. Meanwhile, the numbers of identified foreigners under the Foreigners Tribunal were 3621 clearly showing the failure of the IMDT Act to detect and deport migrants from Assam (Assam Legislative Assembly Debate, August 5, 2003: 51).

Jaynath Sarmah asked the Assam Accord Minister about the approximate number of migrants in Assam, and what are the reasons behind such migrations, how many people have been declared as illegal migrants district wise and what steps the government has

taken so far to prevent illegal migration across border? Pankaj Bora, the Assam Accord Minister said that it would not be fair to tell the approximate number of illegal migrants as it is done through a judicial procedure. According to the Minister, the reasons behind these migrations are economic backwardness and they migrate only in search of economic opportunities.

**Table 5.III**  
**Detected and Deported under the Foreigners Act**  
**and Foreigners Tribunal Act**

Years	No. of persons declared foreigners	No. of persons deported by issuing quit India notice
1986	509	6
1987	2186	5
1988	5054	13
1989	4600	21
1990	2452	88
1991	1520	101
1992	1183	63
1993	490	46
1994	318	24
1995	494	33
1996	377	35
1997	1092	46
1998	288	32
1999	3179	55
2000	1090	67
2001	1232	9
2002	2387	20
2003	687	3
2004	110	7
2005 (upto 31 <sup>st</sup> January)	0	0
All total	29248	674

Sources: *Assam Legislative Assembly Debates*, Official Report, Vol. No. 20, 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2005, p. 55

The government has approved funds for building 11 border outposts in the border, and among them six are already built in Karimganj and one in Dhubri district. Apart from that, fund has been already approved for building 31 border posts as 2<sup>nd</sup> line of defence to prevent infiltration. Currently, five each in the Dhubri and in Karimganj district are

working as 2<sup>nd</sup> line of defence. The BSF and the BDR are jointly carrying out vigilance across the border and they are also engaged in discussions regularly. Apart from that a section of Assam Police force has been deployed with the BSF to check passport and increase border vigilance. (Assam Legislative Assembly Debates, August 5, 2003: 132-133).

## 5. XII \_\_\_ Cost of the IMDT Management

The Law Commission Report (2000), after studying the status report submitted by the Union Government and the state of West Bengal Government estimated that the number of Illegal migrants in border states are to be 5.4 million in West Bengal, 4 million in Assam, and 0.8 million in Tripura. According to the report, the number of such migrants is highest in the State of West Bengal. These migrants have spread out to other parts of the country. In Maharashtra, their number is estimated at 0.5 million, in Rajasthan, 0.5 million and, In Delhi, 0.3 million. India with Its own unmanageable population is hardly in a possession to take upon this additional burden. Now, if the IMDT has to deal with the 4 million illegal migrants in Assam, what would be the real cost for detecting, determining and deporting the migrants (Law Commission of India 2000: 9-10)

The tribunals set up under the IMDT Act in Assam are high cost ventures and millions of rupees have been spent in detecting, determining and deporting migrants. In our visit (from 15<sup>th</sup> June 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2009) to the Mongoldoi, Udalguri, Tezpur, Nagaon, Nalbari and Barpeta district Foreigners Tribunal and our discussions therein, the members and staff of the tribunal revealed that on an average 5 to 10 employees are appointed including the chief judge. The employees also revealed that they earlier worked in the IMDT court and later transferred to the foreigner's tribunal when the IMDT was scrapped.<sup>7</sup>

In the Mongoldoi Foreigners Tribunal, the chief judge, R N Saikia revealed that on an average there were 6 employees in each tribunal of IMDT earlier. So if we count the total

---

<sup>7</sup> In a discussion with Judges, Staff members of the Foreigners Tribunal in Assam from 15/06/09 to 25/06/09

number of employees of the IMDT court will be 96 to 100 persons based on separate salary structure. Saikia revealed that in Mongoldoi itself, during the IMDT court the total salary of the 6 staff and including the office maintenance expenditure will be around 75000 – 80000 per month. The other staff from the above mentioned tribunals expressed the same view. They also revealed that during the IMDT court time, the office was poorly maintained and there was lack of proper infrastructure. If we count the total expenditure for maintaining the entire IMDT courts including the salaries of all, (average 80000 per court) it will come around  $80000 \times 17 = 1360000$ <sup>8</sup> almost 1.4 million per month with an estimated cost of Rs. 168 million per annum only for the salaries of the employees. Saikia also revealed that the maintenance of the office, vehicles, security for the judges is an extra cost. According to him, “the court hearing and process of determining is expensive, sometimes they have to be postponed as the accused don’t attend the court on due date, so a change of date occurs almost every hearing.”<sup>9</sup>

Again according to the Assam Legislative Assembly Debates (March 11, 2003: 51), “the expenditure of the IMDT court legal procedure during 2001-2002, was Rs. 129 million. So the expenditure might be higher than what it was during 1985s and 1990s. The Assam Governor’s Report of 1998 views, “The Border organization of 4000 Policemen processes the cases of alleged illegal migrants. The efforts of these agencies maintained at a cost of hundreds of crores to the Exchequer, extending over a period of 15 years, has led to the identification of only 9,599 illegal migrants. Out of these only 1,454 could be deported. These statistics amply establish the futility of continuing with the IMDT Act in its present form” (Assam Governor’s Report 1998).

### **5. XIII \_\_\_ Why IMDT failed**

According to the Assam Governor’s Report (1998), “there are certain difficulties in executing various provisions of IMDT Act. Firstly, the tribunals have been starved of funds and resources and only five tribunals are functioning out of the sixteen district

---

<sup>8</sup> 16 IMDT tribunal and an Appellate Court based in Guwahati

<sup>9</sup> In a discussion with the Chief Judge, Foreigner’s Tribunal, Mangaldoi, during Researcher’s field visit to Assam on 17/06/09

tribunals. Meanwhile, the remaining eleven tribunals have only one person each on the bench and as such are non-functional and apart from that the salaries and TA bills of the staff are not paid in time. Some of the essential facilities like the transport and telephone services are non-existent and funds are not available to buy even postage stamp. Apart from the above mentioned problems, the Border Organization, which is responsible for executing these cases, has been encountering many difficulties at every steps. A complaint when received or the Police initiate inquiry against a suspect, the suspected individual shifts to another location and it is not traceable. When the individual is available, he insists he is an Indian national and while the Police try to collect evidence, he often disappears. The process of absconding also occurs at two subsequent stages - before the case is heard by the Tribunal and during the 30 days period allowed to the person to appear to the higher tribunal or face expulsion. Under this Act, the Police do not have the powers of search, seizure or arrest as available under the Foreigners Act. During trial by Tribunals, prosecution witnesses do not appear because there is no provision for paying them their travelling expense”.

There has been a continuous demand for repealing the IMDT Act from some political parties. However this has met with strong opposition from the minority communities. The supporter views that the allegation of discriminatory provisions connected with this Act are not true and they want extending to other states also. These supporters argued that the Foreigners Act of 1946 is a legacy of the British era and were meant to deal with foreign national who were ethnically and culturally different from Indians. On the other hand, there should be separate legislation to deal with Bangladeshi migrants, who have ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious affinities with Indian population. However, this argument doesn't support the other migrants staying in India. Again it is argued that the number of migrants detected under the IMDT Act is not due to any infirmities of this Act or in the procedures being followed, but due to the very small numbers of illegal migrants in the country. However, this argument doesn't support all available statistics and other indicators, establishing the presence of a very large number of Bangladeshi migrants. Meanwhile, the opponent demands its immediate repeal as it is highly discriminatory legislation applying only to Assam and not to any other State and argued that such

legislation should not have been on the statue of any sovereign state. According to them, it gives freedom to a foreigner to enter this country and allows the migrants to prove his nationality – that he is an illegal migrant - so that the concerned authority denies his citizenship (Assam Governor's Report 1998 & Nayyar 2005).

**Table 5.IV**  
**District wise list of people declared as Foreigners under IMDT**  
**and Foreigners Tribunal Act in 2001 and 2002**

District	Identification of Foreigners Under IMDT Act in 2001	Identification of Foreigners under Foreigner tribunal 2001	All total 2001	Identification of Foreigners Under IMDT Act in 2002	Identification of Foreigners under Foreigner tribunal 2002	All total 2002
Dhubri	0	4	4	5	1	6
Goalpara	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kokrajhar	0	16	16	4	3	7
Barpeta	0	0	0	20	4	24
Nalbari	0	0	0	8	0	8
Guwahati City	0	0	0	9	0	9
Kamrup	6	0	6	1	0	1
Darrang	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sonitpur	0	3	3	0	8	8
Lakhimpur	0	1	1	17	0	17
Dibrugarh	1	1	2	42	0	42
Sibasagar	0	0	0	22	0	22
Jorhat	0	0	0	17	0	17
Nagaon	372	589	961	449	1395	1844
Karbi Anglong	34	0	34	9	0	9
N.C. Hills	1	2	3	0	0	0
Cachar	1	1	2	4	0	4
Karimganj	0	0	0	0	0	0
Golaghat	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bongaigaon	0	36	36	15	16	31
Morigaon	0	575	575	0	907	907
Hailakandi	2	0	2	0	0	0
Dhemaji	0	0	0	0	55	55
Tinsukia	6	4	10	4	0	4
Total	423	1232	1655	626	2389	3015

Sources: *Assam Legislative Assembly Debates*, Official Report, No. 2, 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2003, Annexure- III, pp. 9-10

Under the Foreigners Act which applies to the rest of the country and which is in consonance with the practice followed the world over; it is for the foreigner to prove that he is an Indian national to claim Indian citizenship. The IMDT Act shifts the burden of proof on the complainant or the Police, to establish that the person complained against is a foreigner. (Governor's Report, 1998) In a Lok Sabha debate, Santosh Mohan Dev said, "This IMDT Act is an Act which is not only to detect, delist or deport foreigners, but it is also a safety valve to protect the real citizens of India who are subject to harassment by the police. In any part of the country, if there is a foreigner, he is covered by the Foreigners Act, 1946. As per the Foreigners Act, 1946, the onus is on the person on whom the allegation is made to prove that he is not a foreigner, that he is an Indian. But under the IMDT Act, if an allegation is brought by a third party or by the Government, it is also their duty to prove that person is a foreigner, that he has crossed over illegally, after 1971, without a passport, without a visa; or, if he had come in with a passport and a visa that he has been overstaying (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, November 26, 1996).

According to an advocate in the Nalbari Foreigners Tribunal, Prashant Medhi, revealed, "The process of determining a migrant starts after somebody make complaints. Determining a migrant goes through a long process of cross-checks of documents and the process is lengthy. Till the process of determining the status of a migrant is over, the migrant manages to get the necessary documents to prove his citizenship<sup>10</sup>." According to an another advocate of the Guwahati High Court, Madan Deka,

\_\_\_\_\_ "the IMDT act was passed during the time of Abdul Mahim Majumdar, the Law Minister in Assam during 1983, to maintain the vote bank policy of the Congress Party. The IMDT act has provided security for the migrants instead deporting them; they got rights to prove themselves as Indian citizens. The provision of the act was itself a faulty, the provisions of making complaints within three kilometer radius, or even from a police station is not conducive - inapplicable. There are some areas where the presence of migrants are very high and a non-migrants when he makes complaints he has to be within that 'three kilometer radius or the same police station' otherwise he can not make a complaint and also with his own expenses. And also if there is no local

---

<sup>10</sup> In a discussion with advocate Prashant Medhi, Nalbari Foreigners Tribunal, 16/06/09, during a field visit to Assam.

inhabitants in some areas till 5 square kilometer radius, so no complaints can be made. Say for example, if there are large concentration of migrants (majority) in the char area, in some particular district, for e.g, Nagaon, Goalpara, Karimganj, Dhubri etc. those who will make complaints in the IMDT court, he is targeted and his security for life is at risk. Even if some people take initiative to make complaints from other areas, by making arrangements through changing address, his security is also at stake, he might be targeted. And even after that the determining process is lengthy where migrants get a chance to prepare their ration card, other identity card through scrupulous channels to prove their nationality.”<sup>11</sup> He further stated that “one retired Judge Hiranya Bhatta first complaint against such loopholes of the IMDT act through a writ petition in the Guwahati High Court. Some others also followed. Actually the congress Party is still working in favour of migrants just for vote bank so the process of detecting, determining and deporting will be more complicated even in the foreigners Tribunal. The Foreigners Tribunal is nothing but an extension of the IMDT tribunal – the procedure is same and the fault systems of determining still persist and this is all for vote banks. There are also some other problem, once a person is determined and deported, he again comes back to the same place through same illegal means and channels. Some relatives of the migrants welcome new migrants and get married with their daughter with false address which also makes the process complicated. Its a very difficult problem, now a days the migrants determine the fate of 35 Legislative Assembly seats in Assam. There is so much of poverty in Bangladesh that people will move out for economic opportunities. But in case with Assam, we don't have that kind of extreme poverty, so people from Bangladesh prefers to settle down in Assam.”<sup>12</sup>

When the court determines and declares a citizen illegal migrant, it is the duty of the police to deport the migrant. When discussed with a Police Officer, Border Branch, at the Darrang District Superintendent of Police office, he said,

\_\_\_\_\_ “when court determines we serve a notice to an illegal migrant for a month to leave the country. If he doesn't leave, we search him to arrest but the accused remains untraceable. Actually, the people living in that area helps the migrant to abscond or the migrant gets advance information of our presence. He then disappears or escapes but again comes back after the time of notice is over. We are not getting cases of IMDT since 2001 – rarely do we get.”<sup>13</sup> The police officer also revealed that “to deport a person or an illegal migrant is also expensive and time consuming. The deportation of the migrant depends on the address of the deportee (In Bangladesh), whatever may be, the nearest border outpost the police

---

<sup>11</sup> In a discussion with advocate Madan Chandra Deka, Guwahati High Court on 15/06/09, during a field visit to Assam.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> In a discussion with Ratneswar Hazarika, Officer in Charge, Border Branch, Darrang District Superintendent of Police during Researchers field trip to Assam on 22/6/09



has to take them there accompanied by the two police personnel. From Darrang district the expenditure of travelling for the deportee depends, it costs around Rs. 350 for the migrants alone". The Police Officer further said, "Deportation of illegal migrants depends on the number of days; we also have to provide food to migrants depending on the time of arrest and till the days of deporting. If a deportee is arrested on Thursday night it's difficult to deport him on Friday, because we have to arrange everything for deportation. So we can start only on Saturday then again we have to wait/consult the BSF and BDR, then the process start. Thus the total cost of a deportee sometime cross more than Rs.1000-1200. The travelling/dearness allowances for the police are also an extra."<sup>14</sup>

#### 5. XIV \_\_\_ Cases Related to the IMDT

There are some important cases dealing with the migrants under the IMDT that clearly shows the difficulties and other problems in dealing with migrants. As per the *Md. Sahid Ali Fakir and Ors vs Union of India* dated 21/1/1992, views,

\_\_\_\_\_ "the Gauhati High Court declared that based on one single witness a person can not be declared as illegal migrant. The state which initiates the case must have proper evidences against such person so as to declare him/her as illegal migrant. The Sonitpur (District) IMDT Tribunal declared Md. Sahid Ali as illegal Immigrant on the basis of one witness i.e. the police officer, on the basis of whose report the proceeding was initiated. The petitioner (Police Officer) examined three witnesses and filed and proved some documents. The learned tribunal by the judgment and order dated 17-2-86 passed in the I.M.D.T. Case No. 8 of 1985, held that the Md. Sahid Ali migrated to India (Assam) from Bangladesh in the year 1973 and therefore, were foreign nationality. The judgment observed that the Tribunal committed manifest error of law in placing entire burden on the petitioners to establish that they are citizens of India although it was for the State to discharge initial burden by providing cogent evidence that petitioners are not citizens of India and that the petitioners migrated in 1973 from Bangladesh. No evidence is adduced in support of the allegation except the hearsay evidence of the sole witness of the Inquiry Officer who deposed that he came to know from one Lihi Nath and Kinaram Nath of the locality that the petitioners migrated into India (Assam) in 1973. But, neither Lohit nor Kinaram has been examined. The Judgement revealed that the tribunal committed manifest errors of law apparent on the face of the record in placing burden on the petitioners to establish that they are citizens of India. When the State came with the complaint that the petitioners migrated into India in 1973, onus was on the complainant to prove the allegation" (*Md. Sahid Ali Fakir And Ors. vs Union Of India (Uoi) And Air. on 21 January, 1992, AIR 1993 Gau 9*).

---

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

The judgment by the Gauhati High Court in *Md. Sahid Ali Fakir and Ors vs Union of India* dated 21/1/1992 stated,

\_\_\_\_\_ "The burden is on the State to rebut the presumption by adducing cogent evidence and placing materials. Determination of such persons as foreign national and consequent deportation from his permanent residence with the members of his family and throwing them to unknown destination would naturally entail immense suffering. Before adjudging the person permanently residing in India (Assam) as foreign national, the Tribunal should be cautious, slow, retrospect and should make close scrutiny of the materials on records to see as to whether the State has been able to establish the case against such person with cogent, consistent and convincing evidence. Summary enquiry by the Tribunal is fraught with every possibility of adjudging a citizen as foreign national and subjecting him to deprivation of his fundamental right guaranteed under Article 21 and the right under Article 300A of the Constitution, without any authority of law. It is unsafe to adjudge a person residing permanently in India (Assam) as foreigner on the sole testimony of the Enquiry Officer" (*Md. Sahid Ali Fakir And Ors. vs Union Of India (Uoi) And Air. on 21 January, 1992, AIR 1993 Gau 9*)

In a judgment in the cases of *Mahadev Halder vs State Of Assam* And Air on 6/8/2003. Mahadev Halder was declared as illegal migrant by order dated 16.3.2002. Aggrieved by the said order the petitioner/appellant preferred an appeal to the Appellate Tribunal. The Appellate Tribunal dismissed the appeal. Against the order of the Appellate Tribunal a writ petition (WP C No. 6988/2002) was preferred before the Gauhati High Court dismisses the writ petition and the present appeal. In the appeal preferred by the petitioner it is viewed,

\_\_\_\_\_ "the petitioner/appellant was not given appropriate opportunity to defend himself and the proceedings taken up by the Tribunal are contrary to well established norms and legal procedure to be adopted while determining the question raised before it. It appears from the record that the petitioner/appellant was served with a notice issued by the Tribunal and date was fixed for 18.12.2001 for service report. On 18.12.2001 the Chairman was on leave and therefore the matter was adjourned to 28.1.2002. On 28.1.2002 petitioner/appellant submitted his written statement, which was kept on record and the matter was listed for 21.2.2002. On 21.2.2002 both the parties entered appearance before the Tribunal and the case was fixed for 16.3.2002 for State evidence with a direction to the State to take further steps. On 16.3.2002 when the matter was taken up the petitioner remained absent. The Tribunal examined one witness produced by the prosecution and passed order declaring the petitioner/appellant as illegal migrant who came to India after 25th March 1971. It appears from the order that there is no specific discussion on the evidence led by the prosecution and the Tribunal has

only from the evidence of State witness stated – ‘we are of the view that the O.P. Mahadev Haldar is an illegal migrant who came to India after 25th March 1971.’ We find gross procedural irregularity in the proceeding taken up by the Tribunal in as much as the petitioner has not been given any opportunity to produce his evidence in defence. It is clear from the order dated 21.2.2002 that the matter was fixed on 16.3.2002 for evidence of the State only. The case was not fixed for evidence of the defence, thus at best the Tribunal could have proceeded *ex-parte* against the petitioner/ appellant and examine the prosecution witness that what has been done in the present case, the Tribunal should have stopped at that. It could not have proceeded to decide the matter without affording any opportunity to the defence to lead its evidence. It is not a case where the date was fixed for evidence of both parties, nor was the appellant given any notice that he would be required to lead evidence on that date. When the appellant has filed his written statement before the Tribunal raising certain defence he is entitled to lead evidence on his defence. When the matter was not listed for evidence of defence the case could not have been closed, neither the final order could have been passed on that day. For the aforesaid reason we hold that the appellant was not given opportunity to defend himself and thus the order passed by the Tribunal on 16.3.2002 could not stand and is hereby set aside (*Mahadev Haldar vs State Of Assam And Anr.* on 6 August, 2003, 3 GLR 586).

In *Md. Sibar Uddin and Ors. vs Union Of India And Ors* dated 29/3/1993, the Gauhati High Court in its Judgment revealed

“if a person claims that he is a citizen of India by virtue of entering into this country on or before 1<sup>st</sup> day of January, 1966 and on fulfilment of the conditions as laid down in Section 6A of the Citizenship Act he shall be deemed to be a citizen of India. But the section also provides that any person seeking registration under the said Section 6A, the opinion of the Tribunal constituted under Foreigners Order, 1964 shall be deemed to be the sufficient proof regarding registration. On the other hand if a foreigner enters India after 1-1-1966, but before 25-3-1971 his question has to be determined by the Tribunal constituted under the Act.” Basically the suit was laid by 4 plaintiffs praying for a decree for declaration that they are citizens of India and also for a permanent injunction restraining the defendants from deporting them from India. In the plaint it was argued that the plaintiff came to Assam from erstwhile East Pakistan with his father before 1940 and settled in village Uttar Mainabari, Police Station Bagbor, District Barpeta. But they were arrested for deporting on 11-2-1979 but somehow they could not be sent back to Bangladesh and thereafter they returned and filed the suit. By order dated 28-5-88, it was recorded by learned trial court that in the year 1978 plaintiffs were deported from India and they returned from Bangladesh boundary. According to learned trial court, in view of Sections 23 and 24 of the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983 reading with Section 9, C.P.C. this suit is barred. The plaintiffs were directed to lay their suit before the Tribunal constituted under the above Act” (*Md. Sibar Uddin And Ors. vs Union Of India (Uoi) And Ors.* on 29 March, 1993, AIR 1995 Gau 44).

The judgment observed, “as in the case in hand a specific statement has been made in the plaint that the plaintiff No. 1 entered India with his father in the year 1940, the plaintiffs can be deported only after obtaining opinion of the Foreigners Tribunal constituted under the Foreigners Act, 1946 and if such an opinion is against the plaintiffs. Accordingly, if the concerned authority wants to deport the plaintiffs it may be done only after getting such an opinion from the Tribunal constituted under the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order 1964. If any such reference is made to the Tribunal, it shall be decided after issuing notice to the plaintiffs and giving them reasonable opportunity of being heard. Till the legal formalities are complied with the concerned authority shall not deport the plaintiffs from India” (Md. Sibar Uddin And Ors. vs Union Of India (Uoi) And Ors. on 29 March, 1993, AIR 1995 Gau 44).

The IMDT Act does not exclusively apply to any religious community. It is applicable as much to Bengali Hindus as to Bengali Muslims and in Assam no distinction has been made between Hindus and Muslims. Those migrants who came into Assam up to 24 March, 1971 have been given Indian citizenship, irrespective of the religious community to which they belong. According to the Assam Governor’s Report (1998), “even after granting citizenship, 18 percent of the total population comprises Bangladeshi migrants in 1991. However, the scope of harassment gets considerably reduced and the detecting, determining and deporting the post 1971 migrants became easier. But it’s too not happening and the IMDT Act is entirely failing in the state to detect the migrants. The migrants who came before 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1971, have been regularized and granted citizenship but the post 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1971 migrants continued to be treated as stateless citizens” (Assam Governor’s Report 1998 & Nayyar 2005).

There was demand for repeal of the IMDT Act from the AASU since the Act came into being. On 27 January 1990, the Union Home Secretary and the chief secretary of Assam signed a document setting a time frame for the implementation of the Assam Accord explicitly mentioning the decision for repeal of the IMDT Act to be taken by 28 February 1991. The AASU repeatedly called the government to take initiative for repealing and the assurance from the government continued (Assam Governor’s Report 1998) In 1997, the

Union Home Minister admitted that the Act's results were extremely poor and he announced assurance for repealing the same. In another meeting between the representatives of the Union Government, Government of Assam and the AASU, assurance for repeal was given again. These administrative and political intrigues were shortened as the issue of repeal was pushed into the judicial domain in 2000 when Sarbananda Sonowal, a former AASU President, MLA and MP of the AGP, filed a writ petition for the Act's repeal in the Supreme Court (*Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India & Air [2005] INSC 338*).

The petition stated, "IMDT Act is wholly arbitrary, unreasonable and discriminates against a class of citizens of India, making it impossible for citizens who are residents in Assam to secure the detection and deportation of foreigners" (*Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India & Air [2005] INSC 338*). However, the Supreme Court's decision to declare the Act unconstitutional came in July 2005, almost five years after Sonowal filed writ petition. During the five year five counter affidavits were filed, three by the Union Government and two by the State Government. The counter affidavits filed by the state and union government following the changes in regimes and each affidavits rolls back the position articulated by the previous regime (Roy & Singh 2009: 49-50).

The government of Assam filed two affidavits, the first was during the AGP government in August 2000 in response of the Sonowal's petition and the next was filed by the Congress government, who succeeded AGP, reversing the position taken by the first affidavit. From the Union Government's side, the first affidavit was filed by the BJP – NDA government in July 2000 which was an immediate response to Sonowal's petition. The second again filed by the BJP – NDA government was in response of the second affidavit filed by the Congress Government in Assam. The third additional affidavit was filed by the Congress – led UPA that succeeded the NDA in the Centre. The Centre – State politics is on its way, if the second additional affidavit by the NDA was more emphatic than its first counter-affidavit in portraying the aggravated circumstances in Assam, necessitated by the reversal in the now Congress – led State government's position, the UPA government's affidavit totally reversed the Centres position to bring it in consonance with position articulated in the second affidavit by the state government in

Assam (Roy & Singh 2009: 48-49). The differences among the counter – affidavits can be described by the following Table 5.V.

**Table 5.V**  
**Counter – Affidavits and its Salient Features**

Nature of Affidavit	Date	Filed by	Salient features
First (Counter – Affidavit)	18 July 2000	By the Central Government (BJP-led NDA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Filed in immediate response to Sonowal’s Affidavit</li> <li>• Agreed with Sonowal’s petition on the IMDT Act being discriminatory for its application only in Assam</li> <li>• IMDT Act inefficient/inadequate</li> <li>• While Sonowal’s petition focussed on an effective legal resolution of the foreigners issue, the NDA government at the Centre emphasised demographic change in Assam, religious, economic reasons and implications and issue of National Security</li> </ul>
First (Counter – Affidavit)	28 Aug, 2000	By the (AGP) Government in Assam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Filed in immediate response to Sonowal’s Petition</li> <li>• IMDT Act was discriminatory</li> <li>• Focussed on change in demographic profile of Assam in particular the rise of Muslim population.</li> <li>• Drew for legitimacy on Assam Movement, its own role in it, the mass/popular basis of the movement</li> </ul>
Second (Counter – Affidavit)	8 Aug, 2001	By the (Congress) Government in Assam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Filed by the new government in Assam after withdrawing the first affidavit to ‘correct’ the position taken by the previous AGP government</li> <li>• Affidavit reversed the position taken by the AGP government in Assam on IMDT Act declaring that it was constitutional and there was no reason to scrap it.</li> <li>• Asserted claims to peoples support on the basis of its electoral victory and its manifesto pledging to save Indian citizens from unnecessary harassment in the name of detecting foreigners</li> </ul>
Second (Additional – Affidavit)		By the Central Government (BJP-led NDA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Filed in response to the changed affidavit filed by the Congress government in Assam</li> <li>• Reiterated its earlier stand on IMDT Act, demographic change and national security</li> <li>• Emphasised that the IMDT Act was in fact the single factor responsible for the aggravated situation in Assam</li> <li>• The continued application of the Act amounted to preferential protection of the Illegal migrants in Assam</li> <li>• Exposes the ‘duplicity’ in the Congress government’s position in the state by referring to the stand taken by the Congress’s on the issue in other forums and recommendations of the Law Commission</li> </ul>
Third (Counter – Affidavit)	24 Nov, 2004	By the Central Government (Congress - led UPA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Totally reversed the Centres position to bring it in consonance with the position articulated in the second affidavit by the state government in Assam</li> <li>• IMDT Act protective of genuine Indian citizens by enabling judicial scrutiny.</li> </ul>

Source: Roy, Anupama & Singh, Ujjwal Kr. (2009), “The Ambivalence of Citizenship: The IMDT Act (1983) and the Politics of Forclusion in Assam”, *Critical Asian Studies*, 41(1), March: 51

## 5. XV\_\_ Supreme Court Judgement and Sonowal Affidavit

On July 12 2005, the Supreme Court of India, led by the chief justice, Lahoti and two other eminent justices, in a judgment declared the IMDT Act as null and void. In its judgments on the case *Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India & Air [2005] INSC 338 (12 July 2005)* declares, "This writ petition under Article 32 of the Constitution of India has been filed by way of public interest litigation for declaring certain provisions of the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, (Act No.39 of 1983) 1983 as ultra vires the Constitution of India, null and void and consequent declaration that the Foreigners Act, 1946 and the Rules made there under shall apply to the State of Assam. The second prayer made is to declare the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Rules, 1984 as ultra vires the Constitution of India and also under Section 28 of the aforesaid Act and, therefore, null and void. Some more relief's have been claimed which will be referred to at the appropriate stage. The respondents to the writ petition are the Union of India and the State of Assam" (*Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India & Air [2005] INSC 338, 12 July 2005*).

According to the *Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India & Air [2005] INSC 338*, "The issues raised in the writ petition concern all residents in the State of Assam whose rights as citizens of India have been materially and gravely prejudiced by the operation of the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983 (hereinafter referred to as "the IMDT Act"). The principal grievance petitioner, the IMDT Act is wholly arbitrary, unreasonable and discriminates against a class of citizens of India, making it impossible for citizens to secure the detection and deportation of migrants from Indian soil. The Foreigners Act, 1946, which applies all through out the country, but the IMDT Act which was enacted subsequently with the professed aim of making detection and deportation residing in Assam easier has completely failed. And even those provisions of the IMDT Act, which afford some measures of protection to some genuine Indian citizens against migrants, are not being properly enforced due to extraneous political considerations. However, the number of migrants, who surreptitiously entered Assam after 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1971, without possession of valid passport, travel documents continues to reside in Assam".

The main arguments of the petition are that the IMDT Act 1983 virtually gives migrants in the state preferential protection in a matter relating to the citizenship of India. Again the fears losing the identity of the Assamese people were stated in the argument by saying that “the prophecy that except Sivasagar district the Assamese people will not find themselves at home in Assam is becoming true”. Again the petitioner argues, “because of large-scale migrations from Bangladesh, the spectre looms large of the indigenous people of Assam being reduced to a minority in their home state, their cultural survival will be in jeopardy, their political control will be weakened, and their employment opportunities will be undermined.” It also argues that the silent and invidious demographic invasion of Assam may result in the loss of the geo-strategically vital districts of lower Assam. Influx of these illegal migrants is turning these districts into a Muslim majority region. A demand for merger with Bangladesh may be made. International Islamic fundamentalists may provide a driving force for this demand. Loss of lower Assam will sever the entire landmass of the northeast from the rest of India (Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India & Air [2005] INSC 338, 12 July 2005).

However, the process of detection and deportation under the IMDT Act has been extremely dismal. According to the information furnished by the Government of Assam, the progress in respect of detection/expulsion of illegal migrants (those who entered Assam on or after 25.3.1971 upto 30.4.2000) is as follows: (Bhusan 2005)

- Total number of enquiries initiated 3,10,759
- Total number of enquiries completed 3, 07,955
- Total number of enquiries referred to Screening Committee 3, 01,986
- Total number of enquiries made by the Screening Committee 2, 98,465
- Total number of enquiries referred to IM (DT) s 38,631
- Total number of enquiries disposed of by IM (DT) s 16,599
- Total number of persons declared as illegal migrants 10,015
- Total number of illegal migrants physically expelled 1,481
- Total number of illegal migrants to whom expulsion order served 5,733
- Total number of enquiries pending with Screening Committee 3,521



- Total number of enquiries pending with the Tribunal 22,072 (Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India & Air [2005] INSC 338, 12 July 2005).

According to the *Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India & Air [2005] INSC 338, 12 July 2005*, the decision made by the Supreme Court of India declares that the IMDT Act is null and void with the following directions: -

1. The provisions of the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983 and the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Rules, 1984 are declared to be ultra vires the Constitution of India and are struck down.
2. The Tribunals and the Appellate Tribunals constituted under the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983 shall cease to function.
3. All cases pending before the Tribunals under the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983 shall stand transferred to the Tribunals constituted under the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964 and shall be decided in the manner provided in the Foreigners Act, the Rules made there under and the procedure prescribed under the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964.
4. It will be open to the authorities to initiate fresh proceedings under the Foreigners Act against all such persons whose cases were not referred to the Tribunals by the competent authority whether on account of the recommendation of the Screening Committee or any other reason whatsoever.
5. All appeals pending before the Appellate Tribunal shall be deemed to have abated. And finally, the respondents are directed to constitute sufficient number of Tribunals under the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964 to effectively deal with cases of foreigners, who have illegally come from Bangladesh or are illegally residing in Assam (Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India & Air [2005] INSC 338, 12 July 2005).

Following the defeat of its stand in the Supreme Court Judgment, the Union Government UPA-led alliance set up a Group of Minister (GoM) to address the situation arising out of the scrapping of the Act. The ruling party - Home Minister, Shivraj Patil stated, "we will implement whatever the Supreme Court has observed... at the same time the government

will ensure justice to those who speak Bengali or are from a particular religion so that they are not harassed. We will keep both these aspects in mind in formulating policy.” In February 2006, the Congress led – UPA proposed that the Foreigners Act, which would now determine the ‘illegal migrant’, be modified to give a fair chance to prove their credentials (Roy & Singh 2009). On February 10, 2006, the Union Government issued a notification through Foreigners (Tribunal for Assam) order 2006 whereby the onus to prove that a particular person was a foreigner was put back on the complainant, a procedure that figured under the repealed IMDT Act (Rammohan 2007: 146-150). By passing the Foreigners (Tribunal for Assam) order, the central government directed to establish 32 tribunals in Assam for fair hearing of the cases. After the abolition of IMDT tribunals, all cases pending in the court were transferred to the newly created 32 tribunals under the Foreigner’s Tribunal. The newly created 32 tribunals scattered in various districts are shown in the Table 5.VI. This order again deeply imbricate in the state politics and this was a move largely to gain electoral benefits in Assam in the forthcoming State Assembly Election.

## **5. XVI \_\_\_ Politics of IMDT**

The IMDT Act and the Bangladeshi migrant’s problem has become an issue of high level politics for most of the national as well as regional political parties. The political parties have been using the migrants for the purpose of election and vote banks. The Congress Party in Assam is accused of using Bangladeshi migrants as their vote bank and they have been always supporting the IMDT Act in the state. On the other hand, the AGP has been using this issue as their poll plank and they habitually raise this issue only during the election period. And importantly, even after coming to power twice in the state has not been able to abolish it. The BJP has given a communal colour to the issue, whereas they are ready to accept the Hindu Bangladeshi migrants but not the Muslim Bangladeshis (Assam Governor Report 1998 & Victor 2004).

Meanwhile, the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee, in its manifesto, reveals that the party is always determined to deport foreign nationals after detection through judicial process and as per provisions of the Assam Accord of 1985. The Congress Party favours

the continuation of the IMDT Act enacted in 1983 to check undue harassment of genuine Indian citizens in the name of foreigners. The Congress Party is committed to protect genuine Indian citizens from undue harassment. The party blames the AGP and BJP for its campaign against the IMDT for its political benefits and criticized for its demands for repeal of IMDT Act thereby sowing seeds of fear and anxiety among different communities of the State (APCC, Election Manifesto 2004: 15-16; APCC 2006: 18-20).

**Table 5.VI**  
**Foreigners Tribunal in Assam under Foreigners (Tribunal for Assam) order 2006 and Jurisdiction**

Name of the Foreigners Tribunal	Headquarters	Jurisdiction
Dhubri-I	Dhubri District	Areas under Dhubri, Gouripur, South Salmara and Mankachar police station of Dhubri
Dhubri-II	- do-	Areas under Golakganj, Bilasipara, Bagaripuri and Chapar Police Station
Goalpara	Goalpara District	Goalpara District
Kokrajhar	Kokrajhar District	Kokrajhar District
Bongaigaon	Bongaigaon District	Bongaigaon and Chirang district
Barpeta -I	Barpeta district	Areas under Baghbor, Kalgachia police station
Barpeta -II	Barpeta district	Barpeta Road, Sarbhog, tarabari and Hauli police station under the barpeta district
Barpeta -III	Barpeta district	Under Patarkuchi, Sarthebari Police Station, Salbari, Gobardhana, Simla police station of Baska district
Nalbari	Nalbari district	Nalbari district and Goreswar, Tamulpur, Barama, Barbari, baganpara, Nagrijuli, Kumarikata, Masalpur police station under Baska district
Kamrup (Rural)	Kamrup District	Kamrup district
Kamrup (Metro)	Kamrup District	Kamrup district
Mangaldoi -I	Darrang District	Darrang District
Mngaldoi -II	Udalguri District	Udalguri District
Morigaon -I	Morigaon District	Jagiroad, Mayong and Dharamtul police station of Morigaon District
Morigaon -II	Marigaon District	Marigaon, Lahorighat, Nillirbheta, Moirabari police station
Nagaon- I	Nagaon District	Nagaon, Jajori, Dhing, Rupahi ghat, Juria, bardua, Raha, and

		kamrup police station of Nagaon district
Nagaon-II	Nagaon District	Kaliabor, Samaguri, Jakhala Bandha, Uluani, Kachua and Khatuwal Police station
Hojai	Nagaon District	Hojai, Lumding, Lanka, Murajhar, Jamunamukh, Dabaka and Kaki Police station of nagaon district
Tezpur-I	Sonitpur District	Tezpur, Dhekiajuli, Thelamara, Misamari & Rangapara police station of Sonitpur district
Tezpur –II	Sonitpur District	Jamuguri, Sootia, Biswanath Chariali, Behali, Halem & Gohpur police station of Sonitpur district
North Lakhimpur-I	North Lakhimpur District	North Lakhimpur, Bihpuria and Laluk Police station
North Lakhimpur-II	North Lakhimpur District	Dhakuakhana, Ghilamara, Baginadi police station
Dhemaji	Dhemai district	Dhemai district
Dibrugarh	Dibrugarh	Dibrugarh and Tinsukia District
Sivasagar	Sivasagar district	Sivasagar district
Jorhat	Jorhat district	Jorhat district
Golaghat District	Golaghat district	Golaghat district
Diphu	Karbi Anglong	Karbi Anglong & N C Hills district
Silchar –I	Silchar district	Silchar, barkhola, Sonai police station of Cachar district
Silchar-II	Silchar	Katigarh, dholai, Lakhipur, udarband, jirighat, Ghengen police station of cachar district
Karimganj –I	Karimganj District	Badarpur, Palhentodi police station
Karimganj-II	Karimganj District	Rotabari, Ramkrishna nagar of karimganj district of Hailakandi, Lala, katlichera, Algapur PS of Hailakandi district, and areas of Karimganj district & not covered by Karimganj –I Foreigners tribunal and Hailakandi district

Sources: Data collected personally by visiting the Present Foreigners Tribunal, Darrang District in Assam on 16/06/09.

The Congress Party opposes the evil designs of BJP and AGP for repeal of the Act. The Election Manifesto (2004) views, “To effectively control cross border infiltration, the party favoured the distance between two BSF posts in the international border should be reduced to 4-5 Kilometer so that they can see each other and the party proposes to raise this issue properly. The Congress Party argues that in the Punjab sector along the international border permanent wall/fencing has been constructed and damaged portions are being repaired. However, according to the party, in case with Assam, this was not

done. The Congress Party also favours introducing a Multipurpose National Identity Card through- out Assam to detect migrants” (APCC, Election manifesto, 2004: 16-17).

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) accused the regional parties like AGP by saying, “It is extremely interesting to recall that those who had signed the Assam Agreement in August 1985 viz the leadership of AASU and AAGSP did not deem it necessary to protest or raise any objection to the provisions of IMDT Act 1983. On the contrary, they had virtually approved the Act.” The CPI-M accused the AGP by saying that during the first five year tenure of AGP rule in Assam (1985-90), the same leadership who had led the violent Assam agitation during 1979-85, did not exhibit any seriousness to check the influx of Bangladeshis from across the porous border. The same party also didn’t raise the shortcomings and inadequacy of the IMDT Act, which has the legislated for the purpose of identification, detection and deportation of the Bangladeshi migrants. The party didn’t even exert pressure on the Government of India seal the international Assam-Bangladesh borders by erecting suitable fencing and adopting other necessary measures (CPI-M 2005a, 11 September, Peoples Democracy).

When the Assam Gana Parishad (AGP) lost voted out from power in 1991 Assembly Elections, and the Congress (I) catapulted to power in Assam as well as in the centre, the AGP and AASU started raising the slogan against the difficulties and problems of the IMDT Act in the matter of identifying, detecting and deporting the Bangladeshi migrants. And much later, they started claiming that the Foreigners Act 1946 was good enough for the purpose and that since IMDT Act was applicable to the state of Assam alone, it should be scrapped forthwith and further, since the Foreigner’s Act 1946 was an all India Act and was applicable to the entire country, it should be made operative in the state of Assam too for the purpose of tackling the illegal migrants from Bangladesh (CPI-M 2005a, 11 September, Peoples Democracy).

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) views, “there is no authoritative assessment about the exact size of Bangladeshi migrants into states like Assam, West Bengal, Tripura etc. In Assam, the estimated number of such Bangladeshi migrants who have entered the state after March 25, 1971 varies from 6 lakhs to 70 to 80 lakhs. Moreover,

the apprehension expressed so far about the size of Muslim infiltration from Bangladesh to Assam is purely speculative because there is no proof or evidence to suggest that the majority of those who have entered Assam surreptitiously from Bangladesh belong to the Muslim community. In Assam, there are entry points in three border districts, viz Karimganj, Cachar and Dhubri which are utilized by the infiltrators to sneak into Assam. It is also not true, that the illegal migrants have occupied vast tracts of land in the borders or near the border which poses danger to national security because of the simple fact that the three borders between Bangladesh and Assam are being inhabited by genuine Indian citizens, both Hindus and Muslims for long years and the same borders are constantly checked and inspected by the BSF and it is inconceivable that new and fresh illegal migrants can settle down in such border areas” (CPI-M 2005b, 18 September, Peoples Democracy).

The CPI – M through views, “The statement that unabated influx of Bangladesh migrants has perceptibly changed the demographic pattern of Assam adversely affecting its language, scripts and culture and that the local Assamese speaking people are in danger of being reduced to a minority in their own state, are not borne by facts. Because in spite of the fact that the increase of Muslim population in Assam during 1971-1991 has been recorded as 77.42 as against 41.89 for Hindus the overall growth of Muslim population between 1951-1991 has risen from 24.68 to 28.42 i.e. the increase in Muslim population in 40 years is 3.74 which cannot be called phenomenal. It should also be noted that during the period 1951-71, i.e. in 20 years, the increase in Hindu population in Assam was 70.88 as against 69.34 for Muslim i.e. almost identical” (CPI-M 2005b, 18 September, Peoples Democracy).

#### **5. XVII\_\_ Government Initiatives to Stop Infiltration -Assam Accord Success Stories**

Apart from the provisions of the foreigner’s issue, the other provision of the Assam Accord also initiates measures to stop migration. Under the provisions of the Assam Accord (1985) it agrees to safeguard the economic development and other measures to stop further infiltration. The Government also agreed to arrange for the issue of citizenship certificates. To prevent infiltration the international border shall be made

secure against future infiltration by erection of physical barriers like walls, barbed wire fencing and other obstacles at appropriate places. Patrolling by security forces on land and riverine routes all along the international border shall be adequately intensified. In order to further strengthen the security arrangements, to prevent effectively future infiltration, an adequate number of check posts shall be set up. Besides the arrangements mentioned above and keeping in view security considerations, a road all along the international border shall be constructed as to facilitate patrolling by security forces. Land between border and the road would be kept free of human habitation, wherever possible. Riverine patrolling along the international border would be intensified. All effective measures would be adopted to prevent infiltrators crossing or attempting to cross the international border (Assam Accord 1985 & MOHA 2006: 22-24).

The Government of India also held the fourth India - Bangladesh Home Secretary level talks in New Delhi in April 2000. The discussions covered various issues related to border management including, inter-alia, illegal cross border movement, security-related issues, trans-border crimes including smuggling of arms & explosives and trafficking in women and children, boundary matters and visa arrangements, etc. Both sides reiterated their resolve to extend the fullest co-operation to each other to prevent activities prejudicial to mutual interests. The Government of India has been regularly taking up the issue of illegal migrants with the Government of Bangladesh at political and diplomatic levels. Both sides have agreed to adhere to procedures agreed upon earlier in this regard. To prevent illegal border crossing, Government of India has also undertaken a series of steps internally to strengthen security at the border. These include raising of additional battalions of the Border Security Force, reduction of gaps between the border outposts, intensification of patrolling both on land and the riverine border, and construction of border roads and fencing (MOHA 2004).

On May 31, 2000 the Union Government holds tripartite talks on review of the implementation of the Assam Accord with the office bearers of AASU and the representatives of the government of Assam. The tripartite talks inter-alia focused on devising (a) effective border management for containing influx of migrants from Bangladesh; (b) strengthening of Prevention of Infiltration of Foreigners Scheme in

Assam; (c) consolidation of creation of second line of defence to check the migrants (d) expediting the raising of 2 Reserve Battalion in Assam, (e) facilitating the functioning of the Foreigners Tribunals constituted under the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983, and (f) Preservation and updating of the National Register of Citizens (MOHA 2000).

The Govt. of Assam was urged upon to vigorously take follow-up action on the decisions taken in the meeting in a time bound manner. It was also assured that the Union Government will take all necessary measures to accelerate the socio-economic development of Assam. The Government of India have sanctioned the construction of balance 797 kms border roads and 2429 kms border fencing on the Indo-Bangladeshi border at a total cost of Rs. 1334 crores. Under this scheme, in Assam 77.5 km of road and 71.5 kms of fence have been sanctioned at a tentative cost of Rs. 167 crores (MOHA 2000).

The Government of India has taken various measures for fulfilling the implementation of the Assam Accord. On the issue of foreigners, the Indian Government has amended the Citizenship Act, 1955, Citizenship Rules, 1956 and Foreigners (tribunals) Order, 1964. Apart from those eleven Tribunals under the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964 have been created for Identifying foreigners of 1966-71 streams. So far 24,376 persons declared as foreigners by the Tribunals. The Indian government also sanctioned money for the creation of 1280 additional border posts under the prevention of Infiltration of Foreigners Scheme (MOHA 2000 & MOHA 2006: 22). Apart from the above mentioned success stories, a Sub-Committee involving representative of Ministry of Law & Justice, Ministry of Finance, Govt. of Assam, AASU has been constituted to examine the proposal submitted by AASU and Govt. of Assam under clause VI and VII of the Assam Accord. On the economic development front, Numaligarh Refinery was set up at a cost of Rs.2500 crores, in July, 1999 (MOHA 2000).

To prevent illegal migration across border, the Assam government has approved funds for building 11 border outposts (Table 5.VII) in the border, and among them six are already built in Karimganj and one in Dhubri district. Apart from that, required fund has



been already approved for building 31 border posts as 2nd line of defence to prevent infiltration. Currently, five in Dhubri district and five in Karimganj district are working as 2nd line of defence (Table 5.VIII). The Border Security Force (BSF) and the Bangladesh Rifle (BDR) are jointly carrying out vigilance in across the border and they are also engaged in discussions regularly. Apart from that a section of Assam Police force has been deployed with the BSF to check passport and increase border vigilance (Assam Legislative Assembly Debates 2003, Annexure- III: 9-10).

**Table 5.VII**  
**List of the approved 11 Border outpost by the Government**

Dhubri District	Cachar District	Karimganj District
Gourjapsabari	Madhabdevpur	Kuwarighat
Gangadhar River Bridge	Satyanyapur	Jarapata
Hatsingimari		Jagannathi
Ganga Dhar River bridge TAC, Hqrs		Karanamadhu TAC Hqrs
Mancachar TAC, Hqrs		

Source: *Assam Legislative Assembly Debates*, Official Report, Vol. No. 2, 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2003, Annexure IV, p. 134

Sarbananda Sonowal in his speech in the Assam Legislative Assembly asked the Minister of Assam Accord asked questions like - has the government taken any plan measures to pursue the clauses of Assam Accord in certain time of period? If any measures taken- what are these? What are the progress of identification and deportation of Foreigners according to the provisions of Assam Accord? Pankaj Bora, the Minister of Assam Accord replied, by saying that the state government is interested to take measures to work out the clauses of Assam Accord on time, but in some cases they government need to get permission from the centre. Nevertheless in some clauses certain schedules have been taken on time. According to Assam Accord provisions, 28848 foreigners have been identified under the Foreigners Act, 567 were deported as they have no registration and 25854 people who have re-entered Assam has been detected and send back again. (Assam Legislative Assembly Debates, August 5, 2003: 51)

As a policy measures and in order to prevent illegal infiltration and anti-national activities across border, the Government of India started constructing fencing. In the first phase of fencing in Indo-Bangladesh border started in 1989, 854.35 kilometers have been

erected as against the target of 857.37 kilometers. And in the second phase, government has approved additional fencing of 2429.5 kilometers (MOHA 2004: 57). The parliamentary debate sources revealed that the government also took initiative to effectively prevent infiltration from across the border. There has been a considerable reduction in the number of Bangladesh nationals attempting to enter into India clandestinely. According to the Government of Assam during 1980, 2154 infiltrators were detected and 2039 of this were sent back to their country of origin. The process of identification of foreigners is being hampered due to the continuing agitation in Assam (Parliament of India Debate, Lok Sabha, 25 February, 1981: 262-263).

To implement the Accord, the government is emphasizing on the implementation of economic and industrial development of Assam. With a view to prevent infiltration of Bangladeshi nationals into Assam and in pursuance of the Assam Accord, a project for construction of road/fencing along the Indo-Bangladesh border in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura, and West Bengal has been taken up since 1987. According to the Annual Report of the Ministry of Home Affairs (2010-11: 39-40), "in order to prevent illegal migration and other anti-national activities from across the Bangladesh border, Indian government have sanctioned construction of border roads and fencing in two phases. The total length of Indo-Bangladesh border to be fenced is 3436.59 km.; out of which 2735.12 km. of fencing has so far been completed. There have been some problems in construction of fencing in certain stretches on this border due to riverine/low lying areas, population within 150 yards of the border, pending land acquisition cases and protests by border population, led to delay in completion of the project. The balance work is under progress and the project is targeted to be completed by March, 2012. In addition 3580.20 km. of border patrol roads have also been constructed out of sanctioned length of about 4426.11 km." Out of total 263 km Assam – Bangladesh border, 221.56 km. of fencing has so far been completed and another 42 km. is yet to be fenced. Another 256.92 km. of border roads have so far been completed in Assam-Bangladesh border (MOHA 2010-2011: 39-40).

Though the Union and the State government implemented several policies to curb population influx from Bangladesh, it has not been successful. In most of the time the

political parties have always tried to exploit the grave issue only during the election time. Neither the Assam Gana Parishad nor the Congress Party is successful in resolving the problem. The issue only appears during the election days and other times it goes only cold. The AASU aligning with the AGP always raises slogans only during the election time. On the other hand the Congress Party uses Bangladeshis as their vote banks (Hussain 2003: 130-134). Now the Bangladeshis have spread across almost all over India. There are reports of thousands of Bangladeshi migrants staying most of the urban cities working as manual labourers. There are reports Bangladeshi nationals staying in Delhi, Mumbai Rajasthan etc. and we still lack of a proper migration policy so as how to handle these Bangladeshi nationals (CCPD 2005: 3-5).

**Table 5.VIII**  
**Fund approved for Border out Post as 2<sup>nd</sup> Line of Defence**

Dhubri District	Cachar district	Karimganj district	Terutilak circle
Man Cachar	Mahadevpur	Girishganj	Gangadhar River Bridge (Dhubri district)
Gaurjapsabari	Sadaypur	Babri ghat	Mancachar (Dhubri district)
Ramraikuchi	Satyanyapur	Churaibari	Karanasadhu
Bish Khoa		Borapunji	
Gangadhar River Bridge		Latu	
Lakhimari		Jarapata	
Naliya		Jagannathi	
Binnasara		Chandrashrikna	
Gaspara		Mabriquetpur	
Mutha khoa		Chargola	
Sisusura		Bhanga	
Hatsingimari			
Puradisara			
Kakripara			

Source: Assam Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report, Vol. No. 2, 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2003, Annexure IV, pp. 134

#### 5. XVIII \_\_\_ What Needs to be Done?

It's very difficult to suggest or workout policies to address the issue at national and regional level to address this issue. It needs political will among the political parties to address this issue. Since migration is a global phenomenon, it will continue to occur.

People will move in search for better opportunities. In case with the South Asian region, the movement of people will occur as there is cultural and geographical proximity, and in fact the continent was culturally, geographically integrated throughout centuries. During the field visit to Kathmandu and Dhaka, we spoke to several academicians, NGO workers, representatives of International organization and also high ranked retired government officials. They have their different opinions to address the issue of migration in the South Asian region. Many of the personalities whom we met suggested for regional economic integration and opening up the labour market in South Asian region. The lack of trust among the government and lack of political will is the major reasons for not working for a solution of migration issue<sup>15</sup>.

Farooq Shobhan in Bangladesh and IOM country director, Rabab Fatima more or less agreeing to this suggested, "The economic integration in the South Asian region is essential and it should cover the integrated labour market, we should allow free movement of population in the region. To address this issue, we should work out a mutually acceptable system of work permit at regional level. So that people can go, work and come back rather than permanently settling in a particular location. And that is what the reason that created sensitivity in different parts of India and other areas. At the moment there are lots of Indians in Bangladesh without work permit. Our government should sit together and work out a mutually acceptable policy to address this population movement. We should also see the political and security aspects of this problem. I think these are the issue that should be the agenda of discussion with our government. And we had to find ways to deal with the problematic situation. Many of the issues also have to be addressed at a sub regional basis. The regional economic integration in South Asian region, which will promote trade, investment, labourers etc. can be addressed/covered under this. If we are moving at this direction then also we have to look the ways of political fallout of economic integration, this is the biggest challenge that we are facing at

---

<sup>15</sup> The Summary of discussion with experts during field trip to both Nepal (18/04/09-7/5/09) and Bangladesh (19/05/09 – 5/06/09).

this moment<sup>16</sup>. Farooq Shobhan adds, “we know what the issues and problems are and should look at larger picture, if you and I don’t agree to this migration problems, it could be a conflictual issue very soon. We should first look at the problem, address the problem.” Rabab Fatima added, “The politicians in all the South Asian countries agree about the problem of migration, but they don’t want to approach and resolve the problem. They disagree in their opinion and lack of trust among the countries still prevails. Once the economic integration of the South Asian region is achieved, the problem of managing migration would automatically resolve<sup>17</sup>.”

In another discussion Rehman Shobhan commented, “Management of migration through integrating the labour market in South Asia will wipe away the migration as can go to another country for, work there and come back to their places of origin. If Bangladesh’s economy is better, then they won’t migrate. If you want less movement of population then ideally it would be achieved only when the countries are developed. Therefore, India should collaborate with Bangladesh and work out policies on both development and migration. We should also have a policy of guest worker status – work permit. Once you go work then you can also come back. Like people in Bangladesh will work in many seasons here and during off seasons they will cross the border work here and come back back. It is just all about naturally integrating the labour market in the South Asian region. All the countries in South Asian region should move forward with such policies. If you can not stop migration, you can not control them but you can integrate them through opening the economic/labour market. Instead of spending millions of rupees for identifying illegal migrants in Assam, they can invest money for trade and development. India should accelerate its investment in Bangladesh so that employment generation will occur here and then they will not migrate<sup>18</sup>.”

---

<sup>16</sup> In a discussion with Farooq Shobhan, former Ambassador and President of Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad, on 4/06/09 and Rabab Fatima, the IOM country Director on 3/06/09 during Researchers field trip to Dhaka.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> In a discussion with Rehman Shobhan, Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue, Dhaka on 4/06/09, during Researchers field trip to Dhaka.

Aminul Islam also suggested for regional economic integration in the South Asian region through which migration can be managed. People from the border areas, particularly from the Northeastern part of India and the neighbouring Bangladesh and also in India-Nepal border have to move longer even for basic health and educational purpose. They could approach the same in the bordering countries if they have such facilities instead of going to the far off places in their home country. If border is opened then the movement of population would have been much easier. Bangladesh has got a homeland but not much of job opportunities. Both India and Bangladesh can be benefited through economic development through investment and sharing of natural resources. Some united efforts in the South Asian region such as common market can reduce the poverty of people, which can stop migration<sup>19</sup>.

In another discussion Mujaffar Ahmed suggested for equitable economic development in both Bangladesh and India. Also integrated labour market is also an option to manage migration in the South Asian region. Social network plays an important role for migration of Bangladeshis into Assam and other parts of India. Even in Assam the same network exists for migration. So people will continue to migrate for economic reasons<sup>20</sup>. While Ameena Mohseen commented, “the problem of migration could have been addressed as per the political will. Migrants should be given work permit so that they can work and come back. If you open the border at certain points people can do trade and other business activities. They can move around and also have joint ventures at the community level, which can be initiated through track-II diplomacy. We should allow cultural exchanges in this region<sup>21</sup>..” Akmal Hussein, suggested to find out the causes first and address the same at the bilateral and regional level as all the issues are largely inter-

---

<sup>19</sup> In a discussion with Aminul Islam, Assistant Country Director, UNDP, Dhaka, on 01/06/09, during Researchers field trip to Dhaka.

<sup>20</sup> In a discussion with Mujaffar Ahmed, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka, Dhaka, on 02/06/09, during Researchers field trip to Dhaka.

<sup>21</sup> In a discussion with Ameena Mohseen, Department of International Relation, Dhaka University, on 27/05/09, during field trip to Dhaka.

related. Government should try to work out a temporary work permit between India and Bangladesh.<sup>22</sup>

Farooq in a discussion suggested, “Bangladeshi economy didn’t grow at the rate which was expected to grow. Whereas the Indian economic growth has been growing pretty fast leaving a huge margin of difference with the neighbouring countries. This is one major factor of inter-country migration. If economic emancipation and political stability take place in Bangladesh, then migration will not happen. First, India should first pursue a strict border control policy to check movement of population, unless you stop it from there. Second, Bangladesh has to develop its economy and employment opportunities must be created. Thirdly, India has a role to play in developing Bangladesh economy. India should also ensure that her neighbour also grows and become economically strong. It’s like if you are rich and your neighbours are poor, it will be a problem. People in search for opportunities will migrate. Like the ASEAN, all neighbouring countries are rich and there seems to be no political identity problem. The same way India can opt for that policy through developing the neighbouring country. India should also increase trade relation with Bangladesh. It is also true that if India does not play its role to make neighbouring economies strong, people will migrate. Indian economy should open her economy to the neighbours<sup>23</sup>.”

Chaitanya Mishra from Kathmandu commented, “If the Bangladesh’s and Nepal’s economies grow to the level of India, the number of migrants will be less. That something India should promote, look at the profits and benefits also but ensure the equitable growth in the neighbouring countries Bangladesh/Nepal through instruments like foreign aid, investment etc. It will help demographically and also it will benefit India. For instance, there will be more stake holders of Maruti/Tata in Dhaka and Kathmandu. India can also provide Bangladeshi migrants the status of guest workers through agreement at bilateral level. This is indeed helpful; people can come here for two years, work-earn and go back. This has been tried in some countries in Europe especially

---

<sup>22</sup> In a discussion with Akmal Hussein, Department of International Relation, Dhaka University, on 27/05/09, during Researchers field trip to Dhaka.

<sup>23</sup> In a discussion with Lt. Colonel Farooq, Bangladesh, during Researchers field trip to Dhaka on 4/06/09.

in Germany; the entire European Union is like that. But of course there are security reasons. There seems to be tight security yet people are crossing border through all available means<sup>24</sup>.”

Tasneem Siddique and C R Abrar viewed that desecuritisation of migration is indeed important in this region. They mention that migration shouldn't be a security agenda. Abrar added, “It has to be in the realm of economics and market economy in the South Asian region. We should think of integrated economic system and it has been and so it is. You cannot stop migration, if you put restrictions this may not work. Instead of trying to stop it we should rather think the need of the population movement and work out why people move and find a solution to the problem. It has to be delinked from politics. Sometimes political parties for their vested interest provide these migrants with documents for vote bank purpose and secure their services. They therefore might develop a tendency to indulge in some illegal activities to get citizenship and in this process they become vulnerable. So the political parties, people and law enforcing agencies have to be sensitised. Work permit is an important issue that needs to be addressed at the local level. Bureaucratic settings in Delhi may not be able to assess and perceive the sensitivities involved. The understanding should be at cultural level in the country to address the problem and not so official level. More localized administration should work at local level as the movement is more localized now<sup>25</sup>.”

In a discussion with Imtiaz Ahmed viewed, “despite fencing the border, the movement across the border, can not be stopped, so its meaningless. The governments are not willing to sit down and talk on this sensitive issue, they want to keep it may be because it helps them to serve their vested interest. The fencing has worked with the West Pakistan border but not working in case with Bangladesh. Border can only work when people on both the countries take border as meaningful entity. In India-Bangladesh case, the government doesn't take border to be effective. If we look at the informal trade,

---

<sup>24</sup> In a discussion with Chaitanya Mishra, Chairperson, Department of Sociology, Tribhuvan University on 26/04/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

<sup>25</sup> In a discussion with C R Abrar, Director, Refugee and Migratory Movement Research Unit (RMMRU), Dhaka on 24/05/09 & with Tasneem Siddique, Department of Political Science, Dhaka University, on 1/06/09, during field trip to Dhaka.



smuggling and other things, it amounts to \$ 2 billion annually. It means that there are families who are benefitting from it. Though there is fencing in the border the figure has not come down. The smuggling has not come down. If you want to stop migration or manage population movement and if fencing doesn't work then you have to develop the border. Again if there is 10% growth in either side of the border, that's all is required. It has happened in Canada – US border, the borders in these countries are like that. Otherwise it will be like US-Mexico border, even after providing high security, people are still migrating. So the same case with India, more corruption in the border areas from BSF & BDR. What we need to do is just develop the border and have an equitable growth which would generate employment approach and wont move. Instead of spending money in fencing, India could have developed the borders. People would have worked and go back. The misunderstanding and misconception prevailed among the neighbouring countries are the basic problem<sup>26</sup> .”

Nepal's Foreign Secretary, Gyan Chandra Acharya suggested, “Migration is inevitable in the globalized world and it can't be stopped. We should be more concerned about the exploitation of migrants. This has to be reduced at every cost and that should be the state responsibility. If economic development occurs in the countries of origin, the migration will be less in numbers. Migration can't be stopped and it's also not the progressive way to look into the issue of creating barriers. Identify the factors of migration and accordingly work out how to get rid of. They migrate mostly for economic betterment, some are for greener pasture and that's the way it has promoted social welfare in the society. Economic advancement always attracts people to migrate and this will continue. We should create opportunities. Equally serious is our concern about the safety of migrants. How they can be protected from unscrupulous people and middlemen, because of lack of information, knowledge etc need to be examined and addressed. Since Nepal and India have open border all these are not major concerns. Investment, transfer of

---

<sup>26</sup> In a discussion with Imtiaz Ahmed, Department of International Relations, Dhaka University, on 2/06/09, during field trip to Dhaka.

technology to neighbouring countries also may help in managing migration. In fact it should be a part of the foreign policy<sup>27</sup>.”

Ganesh Gurung suggested, “Migration is a global phenomenon and almost 20 million people are moving. It is also very difficult to stop. Even the WTO has come with free flow of capital movement in the world. The problem has to be addressed at the place of origin. The issue has to be addressed in the source rather than in the destination. The issue of migration can also be addressed at the regional level like the SAARC and India should take the leading role. Those people who have already migrated to India from Bangladesh and Nepal should be protected through international tools. A free trade zone and an integrated market economy will help managing migration in the South Asian region<sup>28</sup>.”

Shambhu Kumaran, a diplomat in Indian Embassy in Nepal commented, “The whole subcontinent is really divided up on various issues. There are large concentrations of Nepali population in India. In case with Bangladeshi migrants, it is relatively a newer phenomenon and the migration – volume is very high and rapid. There was almost 100 percent increase of population in Assam during 1951-1971 and it’s a complete state failure. The scale of migration is already immense. There is no clear effort and a serious policy to reverse the trend. The AGP came to power on that plank and they confronted the reality and found it difficult. When the real politics starts and the political parties compromise. Therefore there is no credibility. One of the tenets of the centre-state relations has also been hampering the effort, for instance, law and order is a state subject but international border is a central subject.” Again, “We should essentially look at various short and long term options to resolve the problem. It is very difficult to control or regulate the border. Border regulation is not an option out right now. Immediate action has to be in terms of the state government concern; India is not concerned about Nepali settlement as we have provisions for the same. You can’t treat Nepalis in the same way as

---

<sup>27</sup> In a discussion with Gyan Chandra Acharya, the present Foreign Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Nepal Government on 05/05/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

<sup>28</sup> In a discussion with Ganesh Gurung, Director, Nepal Institute for Development Studies (NIDS) on 22/04/09, during field visit to Kathmandu.

the Bangladeshis. The south Asian regime and cooperation initiatives can be helpful in controlling migration as the whole subcontinent is related. Some of the problem can be addressed at the regional level also. Again, we have very good understanding of the problem of migration but it has been abated by the political parties for vote banks and poorly planned bureaucracy. But obviously the attempts have to be made for changing this situation. Secondly, the entire economic needs of the region is must be addressed in a holistic manner. It should be more proactive and collaborative approach with Bangladesh to tackle the problem. The economic development on both sides is important. In fact, these are the compulsions in south Asia, vulnerable border regimes, most of our neighbours are in very dire economic situations. Some steps through assistance for economic development taken by India towards the neighbouring countries have been helpful. If you develop the origin source it could provide a long term solution. A clear state policy needs to be designed so that no further migration takes place across the border.”<sup>29</sup>

Meanwhile, Govind Subedi viewed, “India should pursue a policy of strengthening economic development with the neighbouring countries. Same level of economic development in Nepal and Bangladesh is the best option topped by good cultural relations. Border management is essential for security purpose. It is essential to regulate border to control illegal trafficking, smuggling and other things.”<sup>30</sup>

Migration is a natural phenomenon, which can not be stopped unless there are economic opportunities at source. Desecuritisation of the migration is also essential to carry forward with other approaches. Labour market integration is another approach to deal with the problem. However the political will have to be a part of this process from all the countries.

---

<sup>29</sup> In a discussion with Shambhu Kumaran, First Secretary, Indian Embassy, Nepal on 28/04/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

<sup>30</sup> In a discussion with Govind Subedi, Lecturer, Central Department of Population Studies, Tribhuvan University, on 27/04/09, during field trip to Kathmandu.

# Chapter

# 6

---

**CONCLUSION**

---

Migration is a natural phenomenon of human history of settlement. Migrants are usually compelled to move from one place to another owing to various pull and push factors. People generally migrate in search for better economic opportunities, or for socio-political and ecological security, and the latter dominates in case of international migration. At present migration became easier especially with the advent of liberalisation, privatization and globalisation as well as with the improvement of transportation and communication facilities. The existing demographic and economic imbalances between the developed and developing countries of the world also contribute for large scale human migration, as the population in the developed countries increase annually at only 0.3 percent which is six times lower than the population growth in developing countries. It is recorded that 192 to 200 million people migrate across places accounting for 3 percent of the world's total population, and out of them 48 percent are women. The growth rate of current annual international migration stands at 2.9 percent.

People migrate for different reasons and it varies in different contexts and situations. Migration usually occurs due to invasion, conquest, displacement, armed conflict, environmental hazard or disaster, etc. The factors that determine the dimension and nature of migration are mainly distance, cost of travelling, mode of transportation, terrain, cultural barriers, etc. People are pushed by some factors such as the food shortage, war, flood and erosion, communal conflict, socio-political instability, environmental hazards and disasters, etc. On the other hand, the pull factors that attract the migrants are mainly the better economic opportunities, better standard of livelihood, extensive fertile land, etc. The types of push and pull factors may influence people in their movements, sometimes internally within a region, externally, voluntarily or involuntarily, and legally or illegally. However, the illegal migration may result in trafficking of human population.

Migration either leads to development or to conflict in the receiving country. The impact of migrants may be positive if their contributions lead to positive development in a region. The economic and human development of countries like Australia and the United States owe their creation as nation-states to migrants. There are five major South Asian labour-sending countries who received remittances of \$40000 million in 2007. Among them, India records the highest - \$27000 million, followed by Bangladesh - \$6400 million,

Pakistan - \$6100 billion, Sri Lanka - \$2700 billion, and Nepal - \$1600 billion. However, migration does not always contribute for development in the host countries. Migration can lead to conflict in various ways in the host country:

- If migrants are few in numbers they cannot trigger conflict in receiving areas as they will be too weak to make demands or destabilize the host nation. Large population influx may trigger conflict by destabilizing and overwhelming the administrative apparatus of the host making it centre of endemic tension.
- Large scale migration can create demographic imbalances and resource scarcity, food insecurity in the host economy by intensifying competition between natives and migrants for control over resources. If the migrants occupy more lands, sometimes forcibly or even mutually, it may ultimately generate land conflicts.
- When the migrants and indigenous people belong to different ethnic groups, there are high chances of ethnic conflict. The arrival of migrants may upset the stable ethnic balance and the natives may consider them as a threat and risk to their existence and identity.
- The conditions of underdevelopment and income disparity may raise the risk of conflict. If the host country is developed it can easily absorb the migrants in various sectors. But if the host country is underdeveloped or developing and the problems of poverty and unemployment persist, it is more prone to native-migrant conflict.

It is observed that people generally do not migrate unless they see the disparities in income in the origin and the host countries. India being a large and growing economy attracts migrants from the neighbouring countries who are comparatively poor and underdeveloped. They come in the hope of better economic and job opportunities and if they get these, they are unlikely to return back. Based on the comparative study of Bangladeshi and Nepali migrations into the state of Assam in India, the major findings can be extracted as follows:

- The state Assam, owing to its geographical location, abundant resources, extensive fertile lands in the river valleys, and emergence of employment

opportunities in the plantations, etc. has been attracting migrants from the neighbouring countries. The migration of people from East Bengal (present Bangladesh) and the Nepal into Assam has been occurring since ancient times as movement of population was free. The migrants of East Bengal origin were encouraged by the British to enhance colonial income and revenue. People were hired as cheap labour. The Nepalis were hired and encouraged to get recruited in the Gorkha Army and engaged in agricultural cultivation and dairy farming. The Nepali herdsmen were provided grazing lands. The retired Gorkha soldiers were too granted lands to settle down permanently for security reasons.

- Apart from the historical ties, migration from both the countries occurred due to other reasons also. Bangladesh and Nepal are facing a serious problem of population growth; both the countries recorded almost 2 percent population growth. Bangladesh is having more than 140 million with a population density of more than 1000 per square kilometre. The land-man ratio is increasing in Bangladesh which induces resource scarcities. In the case of Nepal, total population is estimated at 24.8 million during 2004 with a population density of 686 people per sq. km. Nepal characterised by rugged topography is neither favourable for extensive cultivation nor for human habitation. Nepal is one of the highest population densities in the world with respect to its cultivable land. Thus, both the countries are experiencing alarming population explosions.
- In Bangladesh, deforestation is a major cause of concern as people started encroaching forest cover for earning livelihood. The practice of Jhum cultivation in the Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT), development activities as dikes, construction of highways and other infrastructure caused massive deforestation in Bangladesh. However, in Nepal, deforestation occurred mainly due to the use fuel woods. It is found that 82 percent of forest resources are used for energy and household activities in Nepal. Moreover, the practice of Jhum cultivation is also an important factor of deforestation in Nepal.
- The environmental degradation in both Bangladesh and Nepal has caused serious natural disasters such as flood and erosion, cyclone, etc. In Bangladesh and Nepal, flood is a recurring natural hazard. Bangladesh, being located in the lower part of

the three great river basins, i.e. the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna, is basically a deltaic country. The flood plains of these rivers and their tributaries covering about 80 percent of the territory of Bangladesh are prone to flood which decline agricultural production, and cause large scale population displacements. However, in Nepal, flood creates miseries to the people especially in its low land – Terai zones. In Bangladesh, Cyclone is a severe natural calamity that causes population displacements and enormous death almost every year.

- Both Bangladesh and Nepal are considered as Less Developed Countries (LDCs). Poverty is rampant in both the countries. In Bangladesh 40 percent is living below the poverty line of which 43.8 percent belongs to rural and 28.4 percent is in urban areas. The unemployment in Bangladesh continued to rise due to slow economic growth. In Nepal, for nearly 42 percent of her total population, are living below the poverty line. The problem of unemployment continued to rise due to political instability and low developmental activities in Nepal.
- Socio-political conditions in Nepal and Bangladesh have been the major factors of population migration and displacements. In Bangladesh, the minorities, especially the Hindus become the victims of communalism and state repression. The processes of Islamisation, communalism and Vested Property Act are accelerating the feeling of insecurity which ultimately leads to coerced displacement of minority population in the country. However, in case of Nepal the problem of Maoist violence and political instability, rather than communalism, prevails.
- The government policy of Bangladesh regarding the settling down of Bengali people in the CHT led to the massive uprising of insurgency that caused large scale displacement and out-migration. Meanwhile, in Nepal, it is observed that more than 13,000 lives are lost due to Maoist problem. The political stalemate and escalating conflict since 2000 had negative impact on the country's economy, growing on average by around 2 percent over the past few years.
- India and Bangladesh share 4,096.7 kilometres of land border and the topography along the border is characterised with a mix of hilly and jungle tracks, plains, riverside, and low-lying land. The border doesn't follow the natural barriers but goes across villages, agricultural lands, rivers, rendering the border extremely



porous to immigrants, smuggling and drug and human trafficking, insurgents and terrorists. India and Nepal shares long international border ranging at 1,850 kilometres which is open. India and Nepal are having an open border much before the Treaty of Sagauli of 1816. The Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950 facilitated the free movement of population under the provision of Articles 6 & 7 which favours easy migration. Along with migration, trafficking also occurs. There are 20,000 Nepali minors and 200,000 Nepali women in brothels of India.

- Some pull factors encouraging migration from East Bengal (present Bangladesh) and Nepal into Assam are the availability of fertile agricultural land especially in the *charlands* and river islands, better economic opportunities in the Tea and Jute industries, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and absorbing capacity of people having different races, language cohesion, religion, etc.
- The unusual growth of Assam's population during 1901-1951 was the second highest (137.80%) in the world exceeded only by Brazil. Assam has witnessed the fastest growth rate of population in the India during 1901-2001, with an increase of a little over eight-fold. The unexpected rise of the Muslim population in Assam can be attributed to migration from Bangladesh. Assam is the second highest Muslim-populated state in India next to Jammu & Kashmir. Based on various census figures, a steep rise of Muslim population in Assam can be observed. During 1951-61, the growth rate of Muslims in Assam was 38.35 per cent. However, the rise of Muslim population in Assam during 1971-1991 was 77.42 percent confirming apprehensions of a continuing migration of Muslims from Bangladesh.
- There has been a growing fear psychosis among the indigenous Assamese people about their identity – the fear of being outnumbered by the overwhelming migration. In the year 1951, the Assamese speaking people were reported as 56.7 percent, which increased slightly as 62.4 percent and 61 percent in 1961 and 1971 respectively. Meanwhile, the Bengalis were 16.5 percent, 18 percent, and 19.7 percent respectively during the same period. Between 1961 and 1971 the proportion of Assamese speaking population declined but the proportion of Bengali speakers increased.

- The Assamese people didn't oppose the presence of migrants in Assam at initial stage as they were engaged as cheap labour. Tensions started mounting when the migrants made inroads to the economy by occupying lands, administration, government jobs and began to prosper. This created a sense of alarm and middle class Assamese started thinking of their socio-cultural identity.
- The rise of native-migrant conflict occurred due to the demographic changes. Most of the Northeast states have experienced high population growth after independence. Tripura has experienced 78.71 percent of population growth during 1951-1961, explained in terms of migration of Hindus from East Pakistan. In Assam, a total increase of 82 percent was observed during 1951-1971 changing the demographic pattern in 10 out of 23 districts of Assam.
- The reason for the rise of native – migrant conflict in Assam can be attributed to Assamese sub-national identity, deprived economic condition, presence of large-scale unemployment, under-developed economy. Assam would have the absorb capacity once her economy is developed and peaceful.
- The Assamese people with the help of the AASU and AAGSP spearheaded the Assam Movement. Initially, it was peaceful and secular but later turned violent. A series of protest, strike, demonstration, non-cooperation, etc. paralysed the state administration. Instead of a peaceful negotiation, the government used force to suppress the movement without studying the situation properly. The movement turned violent after 1979 and a well organised massacre took place. The violence occurred in eight districts: Nagaon, Darrang, Lakhimpur, Kamrup, Goalpara, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh and Karbi Anglong. The gruesome killings took place in Nellie, Gohpur, Goreswar, Khairabari, Silapathar, Chamaria and Dhula. According to official estimates, not less than 4,000 men, women and children were killed during the violent campaign in Assam.
- The Assam Movement displaced 327,449 migrants who took shelter in the neighbouring states of Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal and Tripura. The Movement adversely affected the well being of the region. It is estimated that in the case of petroleum, fertilizers etc. the loss would come to Rs. 1,272 crores. Moreover, due to the disruption of rail movement, the railways suffered a

financial loss of Rs. 32 crores. However, the total loss during this movement period is incalculable.

- The Nepali population in Assam was about 0.6 million and were not part of the conflict but passive victims. The movement leaders along with Bangladeshi migrants also targeted Nepali communities. Though no attack was reported, Nepalis were displaced due to fear of being attacked. The leaders started manipulating people to include Nepalis within the definition of foreigners. After signing the Assam Accord, the Nepalis were also included for deportation. However, for the Nepalis the cut-off date was set on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1976 and the Restricted Area Permit (RAP) was introduced for the Nepalis.
- The Assam movement has widespread consequences strengthening more identity and autonomy movement engaging other ethnic groups. The rise of insurgency in Assam is the direct consequence of Assam Movement. ULFA, a major terrorist group, emerged as a result of the movement. The demand for a separate Bodoland generated more displacements of population including Nepalis. The Assam Movement resulted in growth of a number of insurgency groups. These are NDFB, BLT, UPDS, DNSF, DHD, MULTA, KLO, UTNLF, HPC, etc. Today, in Assam almost all ethnic groups have their own army either demanding autonomy or a separate state.
- India is the largest migrant receiving country in the South Asian region. Though the problem of migration is grave in the region, the concerned countries have not yet developed any formal structure to deal with the migrants and also not developed or initiated any regional formula. These people are dealt with ad hoc administrative arrangements.
- During the colonial period, the migration policies initiated by the British were to serve the colonial administration. However, during the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the politics of partition dominated the people's movement as political parties like the Muslim League in Assam encouraged Muslim peasants to settle down in Assam. The purpose of the Muslim League, especially of the 'grow more food' campaign led by Sadullah Government, was to create a Muslim majority area so that Assam can be included in East Pakistan.

- The British perceiving the threat of anxieties developed by the Assamese people introduced the Line System in 1926 to restrict the settlement of East Bengali peasants on the plea that the identity and ethnicity of the Assamese people remains undisturbed. The Line System first introduced in Nowgong and Kamrup districts, isolated migrants from the local inhabitants and failed; it altered the demography and the Assamese people pressurised for strict implementation while the Bengalis opposed it.
- Seeing the continued migration of East Bengalis into Assam, the Indian government introduced the Immigrants (Expulsion from Assam) Act on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1950 to detect and deport the East Bengalis. However, the Act was criticised as it provided safeguards to the migrants staying in Assam. The Indian Government again passed the Passport Act, 1951 and about 0.2 million passports were issued for a period of six months but even after expiry, they never returned.
- The partition of the subcontinent in 1947 generated millions of forced migrants. Both India and Pakistan undertook measures to protect the minorities. As a result the Nehru-Liaquat Ali Pact was signed in 1950 which provided “bill of rights” for the minorities. Any minority who are the victims of communal violence in either country can come and settle down in either of the countries with full rights. Respecting the pact Indian government introduced various schemes for rehabilitating the migrants.
- Around 4 million forced migrants, displaced due to partition came to India and were rehabilitated in three states: West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. Schemes for resettlement were also introduced in other states and areas like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Orissa and Bombay.
- As measures to curb migration, the Union Government introduced the Prevention of Infiltration from Pakistan to Assam (PIP) in 1964. The plan was implemented vigorously by Bimala Prasad Chaliha, the then Chief Minister of Assam. A section of the Congress Party treated the minority as their vote bank; so they refused to take any action affecting the interest of the minorities. Devakanta Baruah, one Congress Party member revealed that the party has to depend on Muslims and tea garden labourers for vote. When 27 MLAs (a large number of

them were Muslims) of his own Congress Party protested and pressurised, Chaliha had to go slow with PIP.

- During 1964, during the wake of communal disturbances in East Bengal, a huge influx of minorities occurred into the Indian Border States. The Government of India also provided migration certificates to the intending Hindu people from East Pakistan. Around 1.11 million migrated between 1-1-1964 and 25-3-1971 and were rehabilitated in various states including the Dandakarnya project. The minority communities who migrated from East Pakistan were more or less rehabilitated respecting the Nehru-Liaquat Ali Pact of 1950.
- The Assam Accord paved the way for regularization of migrants, granting citizenship. In pursuance of Assam Accord, the Citizenship Act of 1955 was amended by Act No.65 of 1985 and Section 6A was inserted with the heading "Special Provisions as to Citizenship of Persons covered by the Assam Accord." It provides that the term "detected to be a foreigner" shall mean so detected under the Foreigners Act and the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964 framed thereunder. Under the said provision a person of Indian origin as defined under Section 6-A (3) who entered into Assam prior to 1st January, 1966 and has been resident in Assam since then is deemed to be a citizen of India. Most importantly, those migrants who migrated to Assam prior to 1.1.1966, including those whose names appeared on the electoral rolls used in 1967 elections shall be regularized, thereby granted Indian citizenship. Again the migrants, who came to Assam after 1.1.1966 (inclusive) and up to 24<sup>th</sup> March 1971, shall be detected in accordance with the provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946 and the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order 1964.
- The passing of the IMDT Act in 1983 was itself a move by the government to continue the policy of vote bank for the Congress Party. The provisions of the Act were faulty and designed to serve the purpose of the migrants and were only implemented in Assam. There were 16 tribunals located all across the state with an appellate court located in Guwahati. The 16 IMDT tribunals during 1985-2005 (31<sup>st</sup> January), declared only 12,424 migrants as illegal and 1,538 migrants were deported officially. However, a judgement on the case *Sarbananda Sonowal v.*

*Union of India & Anr* [2005] INSC 338 (12 July 2005) declared IMDT Act 1983 null and void.

- However, on February 10, 2006, the government introduced 32 tribunals by issuing a notification through Foreigners (Tribunal for Assam) Order 2006 whereby the onus to prove that a particular person was a foreigner was put back on the complainant, a procedure that figured under the IMDT Act. The IMDT Act and the migration problem became an issue of high level politics as most of the national and regional political parties were using the migrants for the purpose of election and vote banks.

### **Recommendations/Policy Suggestions**

After analysing the major findings of the work, some suggestions can be made in order to formulate strategies to mitigate the migration problem among India, Bangladesh and Nepal. The IOM's World Migration Report, 2003 has recommended some suggestions for managing the migration problem. Firstly, a proper research must be done to find out the push factors and subsequently development aid to facilitate sustainable development of source countries and also target international trade and investments. Secondly, the host and the source countries must legitimise migration orderly through mutual understanding and also through effective border management. Following recommendations can be suggested for the effective management of migration in India, Bangladesh and Nepal.

- An effective and strict population control policy must be introduced in all the three countries.
- The flood problem of Bangladesh is to be solved through a comprehensive study of the river basins and geological setting of the region. Bangladesh and Nepal need to strengthen their institutional and technical capabilities in a coordinated manner to forecast as well as the warning system of the flood hazards. The NGOs and the government must act in a synchronized way to handle the flood problem in both the countries. A regional approach to deal with Bangladesh flood is a must due to regional characteristics and implications of the floods.

- Although Bangladesh has been capable to forecast and to give warning of the occurrence of cyclone and also in developing effective cyclone preparedness programmes and structures, thousands of lives and properties are still badly affected by this natural calamity. Bangladesh has also been successful towards providing training to a large number of volunteers to disseminate the cyclone warning and assist in the process of evacuation, rescue, first aid, and emergency relief. But the government is weak in rehabilitation and so should take more initiatives to accommodate displaced people within the country effectively and also permanently.
- Agriculture is the mainstay of economy of both Bangladesh and Nepal. But there is declining trend of agricultural production observed in both the countries. There is ample scope to enhance and implement the scientific methods of cultivation to increase production level in both the countries. Bangladesh, although limited, has already started the double and triple cropping systems by using the modern agricultural inputs and implements such as High Yield Varieties, chemical fertilizers and pesticides, power tillers, sprayers, etc to boost the agricultural production. They should expand it. Nepal's agricultural productivity is also declining due to unscientific cultivation. However, Nepal has to start introducing HYV of seeds and also double-triple cropping practice to increase the agricultural productivity. Both the countries should increase the irrigation facilities such as development of deep and shallow tube wells and surface canals, etc so as make intensive use of their agricultural lands. Extension programmes and agriculture research should be further flourished to encourage farmers towards cultivating HYV cash crops and other genetically modified crops (GMC) which are adaptive to their local ecological settings.
- The various Government Organisations and the NGOs are involved in poverty reduction strategies for the poor. The introduction of the micro-credit system in Bangladesh by various NGOs is also helping poor recover from the poverty. In Nepal, the government targeted the most backward people to free from poverty by introducing as many as 450 programmes/projects. Both the countries should improve their economic situations for alleviation of poverty.

- The problems of unemployment and underemployment in both the countries are rampant. Although both the governments have taken a number of steps to reduce unemployment problem, these are not enough. Investments for the creation of new employment opportunities in Bangladesh are not sufficient. Both the Governments should emphasise on the large scale investments to accelerate economic activities for job opportunities. The new enterprises with labour intensive character should be identified and encouraged. The institutions for different vocational courses and training had to be developed in the nations. In Nepal, the government should pay more attention in investing in the tourism sector.
- The Bangladesh Government must make legislation by implementing the secular ethos to remove the VPA and to ensure safety and security of the minorities. By abolishing the Act at the first, all returnable property and assets must be returned to their legal owners.
- Though the Maoist problem seems to be over by the fall of Monarchy in Nepal, the country could not yet achieve a constitution. There must be consensus among the political parties for a stable socio-political environment in Nepal so that developmental activities can take place.
- The Government of India must seal its entire political border and strict border vigilance along the Indo-Bangladesh border is to be taken (as that of Kashmir) for security reasons. The Indian government is taking such steps in a very flexible manner especially in case of its north-eastern part to seal the border.
- The conflict would not have occurred in Assam, if the state would have been economically sound or there were absence of poverty and unemployment. Still Assam is facing the wrath of unemployment and poverty. Both the Central and State governments should take initiatives to introduce various development schemes and set up industries to boost job opportunities.
- There must be uniform and sincere agendas of the political parties to deal with the migrants. One should not think of using migrants as vote bank as it may always be a security risk due to increased terrorist activities in the neighbouring countries.



The issuing of voter identity cards and also updating the NRC is considered to be a good approach to prevent and detect the further migrants.

- A peaceful and meaningful dialogue with all the insurgent groups, born mainly after the Assam Movement must be worked out for a peaceful social environment to boost up development.
- In India, unfortunately, there is no right policy to address the migration problem, irrespective of different Acts and Tribunals. A uniform pattern should be followed to detect and deport migrants, and that can be done through the Foreigners Act of 1946.
- A political consensus and will between India and Bangladesh is important to work out policies at the regional level. The economic integration of the South Asian region through the platform of SAARC is necessary which should allow free movement of population, trade, investment and business. Apart from that a mutually acceptable system of work permit between India and Bangladesh must be worked out to manage migration, simultaneously working out the political and security aspects of migration.
- It is now realised that if India Government diplomatically invests in the migrants source countries like Bangladesh and Nepal for their economic development (by analysing loss-profits etc.), the migration would have been lesser. The India Government should opt for developing India first and then gradually develop neighbours which would obviously help manage migration.
- India should also work out policies to make her neighbour stable, peaceful and economically sound. Managing migration has to be in the realm of economics and market. Informal trade and smuggling amounting to \$ 2000 million is annually happening between India and Bangladesh. If a formal policies are worked out both the governments will be benefited.

# References

\*All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (1980), *The Foreigners Problem: An Analysis*, Guwahati: AAGSP

Abella M. (2002), Interview published in *Migrant Workers*, Labour Education 2002/4, No.129, Geneva, ILO, in Tasneem Siddique, (2005), *International labour migration from Bangladesh: A Decent Work Perspective*, Working Paper No 66, Geneva: ILO

Abrar C. R & Azad, S. N, ed. (2004), *Coping with Displacement: Riverbank Erosion in Northeast Bangladesh*, Dhaka: RMMRU, RDRS and the North Bengal Institute, Dhaka and Rangpur

Abrar, C. R (2001), "Legal Protection of Refugees in South Asia", *Forced Migration Review*, 10: 21-23

Adamson, Fionna B. (2006), "Crossing Borders: International Migration and National Security", *International Security*, Summer, 31(1): 163-199.

Adhikari J. & Bohle H. G. (1998), "Rural Livelihood at Risk: How Nepalese Farmers Cope with Food Insecurity", *Mountain Research and Development*, 18(4): 321-332

Adnan, Shapan (2003), *Migration, Land Alienation, and Ethnic Conflict: Problem of Poverty in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh*, Dhaka: Research and Advisory Services

Afsar, Rita (2004) "Dynamics of poverty, development and population mobility: the Bangladesh case", *Asia Pacific Population Journal*, June: 69-91

Ahmad, Emaduddin et. al. (2001), "Floods in Bangladesh and their Processes", in K Nizamuddin ed: (2001), *Disaster in Bangladesh: Selected Readings*, Disaster Research Training and Management Centre, Dhaka: University of Dhaka, pp. 9-28.

Ahmed, Imtiaz (1996), "Refugees and Security: The Experience of Bangladesh", in L. K. Baral and S. D. Muni ed. *Refugees and Regional Security in South Asia*, New Delhi: Konark Publication

..... (2002-2003) "State & Statelessness in South Asia, Reaping benefits from a Reconstructed Discourse on State and Nationality", *A Journal of Social sciences and Arts*, 9&10: 1-20

Ahmed A. N. S. et. ed. (2006), *Election Politics in Assam: Issues, Trends and People's Mandate*, New Delhi: Akansha Publishing House

Ahmed, Q. K. (2003), *Rural Water and Poverty Action Programme for Bangladesh*, Concept Paper on Poverty and Water Security in Bangladesh, Dhaka: Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad

..... (2004), "Synthesis of Manuals on Community Flood Management in Bangladesh, India and Nepal", *Asia Pacific Journal on Environment and Development*, 11(1&2), June-December: 1-37

..... (2006a), *Tackling Poverty: The Role of Development Partnerships*, Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad, Dhaka

Ahmed, Salahuddin (2004a), *Bangladesh: Past and Present*, A.P.H Publishing Corporation: New Delhi

Alam, Sarfaraz (2003), "Environmentally Induced Migration from Bangladesh to India", *Strategic Analysis*, July-September, 27(3): 422-438

Alam, Q. A. M (1993), "The Nature of the Bangladesh State in the Post 1975 Period", *Contemporary South Asia*, Oxford: UK, 2(3): 311-325

\*All Assam Students Union (1980), *Memorandum to the Prime Minister of India*, AASU: Guwahati

\*..... (1983), *The Foreigners' Problem: Why a Solution Is Still Elusive?* June, AASU Publicity Secretary: Guwahati

\*..... (1985), *Assam Accord, Memorandum of Settlement, 1985*, presented to the Prime Minister of India, (Online Web) accessed on 23 April, 2008, URL: <http://www.aasu.m2014.net/spip.php?article6>

\*Allen B. C, et. al (1979), *Gazetteer of Bengal and Northeast India*, New Delhi: Mittal Publication

\*..... (1914), *Report on the Land Revenue Administration 1913-14, Extracted from the Proceeding of the Chief Commissioner, Assam*, Shillong, as cited in Nag, Sajal (2003), "Fei-isation of the Nepalis of Northeast India", in A. C. Sinha & T B Subba (ed.), *The Nepalis in Northeast India: A Community in Search of Indian Identity*, New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company

Allen, J. C & Burnes, D. F (1985), "The Causes of Deforestation in Developing Countries", *Annals of Associations of American Geographer*, 75(2): 163-184.

Amin, S (1974), *Modern Migrations in Western Africa*, London: Oxford University Press, as cited in Hugo Graeme (2008), *Migration, Development and Environment*, IOM Migration Research Series, No. 35, IOM: Geneva, (Online Web), accessed on 10 March, 2010, URL: [http://www.populationenvironmentresearch.org/papers/hugo\\_statement.pdf](http://www.populationenvironmentresearch.org/papers/hugo_statement.pdf)

\**Annual Land Revenue Administration Report in Assam*, as cited in R. B. Vaghaiwala (1951), *Census of India 1951: Assam, Manipur and Tripura*, Vol. XII, Part-I-A

Aryal, Prajjwal Sharma (2008), "Nexus of Growth Investment and Decent Work in

Nepal, Labour and Employment”, *The Nepalese Journal of Labour and Employment*, Ministry of Labour and Employment, 1(1): 18-23

\*Asian Development Bank (2004), *Country Environment Analysis for Nepal*, (Online Web), accessed on June 2, 2008, URL: <http://www.adb.org/Documents/Reports/CEA/nep-sept-2004.pdf>

\*..... (2009), *Country Partnership Strategy: Nepal 2010-2012*, October, Appendix - 1, p. 35

Asia-Pacific Human Rights Network (2001), “Chakmas and Hajongs Denied their Rightful Place in Arunachal Pradesh”, *Human Rights Features*, 6 August, (online web), accessed on 4 April, 2009, URL: <http://www.hrdc.net/sahrdc/hrfeatures/HRF42.htm>

..... (2001), “No Refuge: The Plight of Conflict - Induced Internally Displaced Persons in India”, 16 March, 2001, (Online Web), accessed on 4 April, 2008, URL: <http://www.hrdc.net/sahrdc/hrfeatures/HRF33.htm>

\**Assam Banking Enquiry Committee Report (1929-30)*, Vol. II, pp. 507-17, as cited in Sarmah, Alaka (1999), *Immigration and Assam Politics*, New Delhi: Ajanta Publication

\*Assam Gana Parishad (2006), *Election Manifesto, 12<sup>th</sup> Election to the Assembly of Assam*, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2006, Guwahati

\*Assam Gazette, 25 August, 1943, cited in Sarmah, Alaka (1999), *Immigration and Assam Politics*; New Delhi: Ajanta Publication

\*Assam Governor S K Sinha’s Report (1998), *Illegal Migration into Assam*, Submitted to the President of India, 8 November, Raj Bhavan: Guwahati

Assam Legislative Assembly (2011), “Members of the 12<sup>th</sup> Assam Legislative Assembly, (Online Web), accessed on 15 June 2010, URL: <http://assamassembly.gov.in/mla-2006-%2011.html>

\*Assam Legislative Assembly Debate 1983 and Various Years

\*Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (2004), *Election Manifesto- 2004*, Guwahati: APCC

\*..... (2006), *Election Manifesto for the Assam Vidhan Sabha Elections, 2006*, New Delhi

\*..... (1964), *The Study on Pak Infiltrants*, Guwahati: Assam Pradesh Congress Committee

\*..... (1962), MISC, June 27, Guwahati: APCC, as cited in Sarmah, Alaka (1999), *Immigration and Assam Politics*, New Delhi: Ajanta Publication

Asthana, N. C & Nirmal, Anjali (2001), *Terrorism, Insurgency and Counter Insurgency Operations*, Jaipur: Pointer Publishers

Bahadur, R. K. L. Barua (1966), *Early History of Kamrupa*, Lawyers Book Stall: Guwahati

Bailey, Rayna (2008), *Immigration and Migration*, New York: Facts and File Publishing

Bajracharya, Deepak (1983), "Deforestation in the Food/Fuel Context: Historical and Political Perspectives from Nepal", *Mountain Research and Development*, August, 3(3): 227-240

Baldwin-Edwards, Martin (2008), "Towards a Theory of Illegal Migration: historical and structural components", *Third World Quarterly*, 29 (7), 1449-1459.

\*Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (1986), *Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh*, Ministry of Planning, Dhaka

\*..... (1982), *Patterns, Levels and Trends in Fertility in Bangladesh: Evidence from Demographic Sample Survey*, Government of Bangladesh: Dhaka

\*..... (1990), *Patterns, Levels and Trends in Mortality and Regional Life Tables for Bangladesh: Evidence from Sample Vital Registration System 1981-1988*, Government of Bangladesh: Dhaka

\*..... (1997), *Yearbook of Agricultural Statistics of Bangladesh*, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Dhaka

\*..... (2002), *Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh*, Ministry of Planning, Dhaka

\*..... (2004b), *Report of the Poverty Monitoring Survey 2004*, Ministry of Planning, Dhaka

\*..... (2004a), *Statistics for Monitoring Attainment of MDG's in Bangladesh*, Government of Bangladesh: Dhaka

\*..... (2006), *Preliminary Report on Household Income & Expenditure Survey 2000*, Ministry of Planning, Dhaka

\*..... (2007), *Statistical Pocket Book - Bangladesh 2007*, Ministry of Planning, Dhaka

\* ..... (2001), *Bangladesh Census Report 2001*, Government of Bangladesh, Dhaka

\* ..... (2009), *Bangladesh – A Snap Shot - The Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh*, Government of Bangladesh, (Online Web), accessed on 10 April 2009, URL: <http://www.dghs.gov.bd/dmdocuments/Bangladesh%20-%20a%20snap%20shot.pdf>  
Bangladesh Water Development Board (2005), “Flood 2004”, Dhaka, (Online Web) accessed on 16 August 2009, URL: <http://www.bwdb.gov.bd/>

\* ..... (1994), *Master Plan Organization, Second Interim Report*, Dhaka: Government of Bangladesh

Banglapedia (2009), “Population Spatial Distribution”, (Online Web) accessed on 7 August 2009, URL: [http://www.banglapedia.org/httpdocs/HT/P\\_0229.HTM](http://www.banglapedia.org/httpdocs/HT/P_0229.HTM)

..... (2007), “Bangladesh Deforestation”, (Online Web) accessed on 7 August 2008, URL: [http://www.banglapedia.org/httpdocs/HT/D\\_0101.HTM](http://www.banglapedia.org/httpdocs/HT/D_0101.HTM)

Baraclough, S. L & Ghimire, K. B (1995) *Forests and Livelihoods: The Social Dynamics of Deforestation in Developing Countries*, London: Macmillan

Baral, Nabin & Heinen, Joel T. (2005), “The Maoist People's War and Conservation in Nepal”, *Politics and the Life Sciences*, 24(½), Mar– Sep: 2-11

Barbhuyan N. K (1994), ‘Cloud of Tribalism in Meghalaya’, *The Sentinel*, 4 July

Barkat, Abul & Akhter, Shahida (2001), “A Mushrooming Population: The Threat of Slumisation Instead Of Urbanization in Bangladesh”, *The Harvard Asia Pacific Review*, Winter, Harvard: Cambridge: 27-30

Barkat, Abul & Shafique Uz Zamman ed. (2000), ‘Forced Out Migration of Hindu Minority: Human Deprivation due to VPA’, in C. R. Abrar ed. (2000), *On the Margin, Refugees, Migrants and Minorities*, Dhaka: RMMRU, University of Dhaka, pp. 113-144

Barkat, Abul, et. al, ed. (1997) *Political Economy of vested Property Act in Rural Bangladesh*, Dhaka: Association of Land Reforms Development

..... (2000), *An Enquiry into Causes and Consequences of Deprivation of Hindu Minorities in Bangladesh through Vested Property Act: Framework for Realistic Solution*, Dhaka: PRIP Trust

..... eds. (2008), *Deprivation of Hindu Minority in Bangladesh: Living with Vested Property*, Dhaka: Pathak Samabesh

..... (1996), *Bangladesher Grameen Samaje Arpito Sampattite Ainer Prabhab: Ekti Anusandhan*, (In Bangla), Report to the National

Seminar of Association for Land Reform and Development, 13 April: 7, as cited in Ranabir Samaddar (1999), *The Marginal Nation: Transborder Migration from Bangladesh to India*, New Delhi: Sage Publications

Barman, Dalem Ch (2004), "Forced Migration in South Asia. A Study of Bangladesh", in Omprakash Mishra ed., *Forced Migration in the South Asian Region; Displacement Human Rights and Conflict Resolution*, New Delhi: Manak Publication

Barooah, Debo P. (1984), "Silent Civilian Invasion: India's Danger in the Northeast", in B. L. Abbi (ed.), *Northeast Region: Problems and Prospects of Development*, Chandigarh: Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development

Baruah, Apurba (1984), "Elites in a Colonial Hinterland", in B. L. Abbi (ed.), *Northeast Region: Problems and Prospects of Development*, Chandigarh: Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development

..... (1991), *Social Tensions in Assam: Middle Class Politics*, Guwahati: Purbanchal Prakash

Barua, Badan (1982), "A some Ki Dise? Ki Paisae?", (In Assamese) *PRANTIK*, 1-15 May, Vol. 1, No. 11: 14-21

Barua, Hem (1991), *The Red River and the Blue Hills*, Guwahati: Lawyers Book Stall

Baruah, H. N (1972b), *Bharator Mukti Yunjut Asom* (Assamese), Guwahati: Publishers

Baruah, Gunabhiram (1972a), *Asom Buronji* (in Assamese), Guwahati: Assam Prakashan Parishad

Baruah, Manorama S. (1985), "Peasant Unrest in Nineteenth Century Assam: Peasant vs. State", in Atul Goswami (ed.), *Land Reform and Peasant Movement*, New Delhi: Omsons

Baruah, Nirode K. (1970), *David Scott in North-East India: A Study in British Paternalism*, Munshiram Manoharlal: New Delhi

Baruah, Sanjib (1986), "Immigration, Ethnic Conflict and Political Turmoil, 1979-1985", *Asian Survey*, November, 25(11): 1184-1205

..... (1999), *India Against Itself: Assam and the Politics of Nationality*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press

Bezbarua, D. N. (1983), "Ki Hobo? Nirbachan Aru Tar Pasot" (In Assamese), *PRANTIK*, 1-15 February, Vol. II, No. 5: 11-15

..... (2005), "Demographic Threats in Assam", (online web), accessed on 12 January 2009, URL:[http://www.ivarta.com/columns/OL\\_050102.htm](http://www.ivarta.com/columns/OL_050102.htm)



- Bhagabati Abani, et. al. (2001), *Geography of Assam*, New Delhi: Rajesh Publications
- Bhandari, Puroshatam (1996), *Freedom Movement and Role of Indian Nepalese, 1800-1950*, Jagiroad, Assam
- ..... (2003), "Evolution and Growth of Nepali Community in Northeast India", in A. C. Sinha & T B Subba ed. (2003), *The Nepalis in Northeast India: A Community in Search of Indian Identity*, New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company
- Bharadwaj, Prashant et. al (2008), "The Big March: Migratory Flows after the Partition of British India", *Economic and Political Weekly*, August 30, 43(35): 39-49
- \*Bharatiya Janata Party (2004), *Election Mānifesto: Our Nation's Security*, New Delhi
- Bhattacharya H. K (1998), *Economic Development of Assam*, New Delhi: A P H Publishing Corporation
- Bhattacharya, B. K. (1980), "The Assamese Mind", in Nagen Saikia (ed.) *Assam and the Assamese*, Jorhat: Assam Sahitya Sabha.
- Bhattacharya, G. S. (1985), *Bhoomiputrar Mormobedona*, (In Assamese) Guwahati: Lawyers Book Stall
- Bhattacharya, Suparna (2003), "Assam Politics of Migration and Imperilled Frontiers", *ALPJAN*, April-June, 12(4): 3-11
- Bhattacharya, Bhim Prasad (2008), "An Overview of Labour Migration Perspective of South Asia with Reference to Nepal", *Labour and Employment*, The Nepalese Journal of Labour and Employment, 2(1): 18-25
- Bhaumik S. (1998), "Northeast: Evolution of a Post-Colonial Region" in Partha Chatterjee, ed., *Wages of Freedom: Fifty Years of the Indian Nation-State*, Delhi: Oxford University Press
- ..... (2005), "India's Northeast: Nobodys people in No Man's Land", in Banerjee, Paula, et. al. ed., *Internal Displacement in South Asia: The Relevance of the UN's Guiding Principle*, New Delhi: Sage Publication
- Bhushan, Prashant (2005), "An Unconscionable Judgment", *Outlook*, August 3, (Online Web), accessed on 1 March, 2010, URL: <http://www.sacw.net/article656.html>
- Bhutto, Z. A (1969), *The Myths of Independence*, London; Oxford
- Bhuyan, A. C. & De, Sibopada, eds. (1999), *Political History of Assam Vol. 111 1940-47* Guwahati: Publication Board Assam

\**Bideshi Nagarikar Prabajan Samparke Prastab* (in Assamese), Resolution Adopted in the CPI (M) State Committee Meet, 21<sup>st</sup> September, 1978, cited in Alaka Sarmah (1999), *Immigration and Assam Politics*, New Delhi: Ajanta Publication

Bijak, Jakub (2006), *Forecasting International Migration: Selected Theories, Models, and Methods*, CEFMR Working Paper 4/2006, Warsaw, (Online Web), accessed on 10 March 2010, URL: [http://www.cefmr.pan.pl/docs/cefmr\\_wp\\_2006-04.pdf](http://www.cefmr.pan.pl/docs/cefmr_wp_2006-04.pdf)

Biswas, Sukumar & Sato, Hirashi (1993), *Religion and Politics of Bangladesh and West Bengal: A Study of Communal Relations*, Japan: Institute of Developing Economics

Bodvarsson O. B. & Berg, H. V. D. (2009), *The Economics of Immigration: Theory and Policy*, New York: Springer

Bongaarts, J (1996), "Population Pressure and the Food Supply System in the Developing World", *Population and Development Review*, 22(3): 483-503.

Borjas, George (1989), "Economic Theory and International Migration", *International Migration Review*, 23(3): 457-85

Barpujari, H K & Bhuyan, A. C ed., (1977) *Political History of Assam*, Dispur: Guwahati

Barpujari, H. K (1998), *North-East India: Problems, Policies and Prospects: Since Independence*, New Delhi: Spectrum Publications

..... (1963), *Assam in the Days of the Company, 1826-1858: A Critical and Comprehensive History ...* based on original Assamese and English sources, both published and unpublished, Guwahati: Lawyer's Book Stall

..... (2004), *The Comprehensive History of Assam, Vol. V*, Guwahati: Publication Board Assam

Bose, Pradip Kumar, ed. (2000), *Refugees in West Bengal: Institutional Practices and Contested Identities*, Calcutta: Calcutta Research Group

Brammer, Hugh (1990a), "Floods in Bangladesh: Geographical Background to the 1987 and 1988 Floods", *The Geographical Journal*, March, 156 (1): 12-22.

..... (1990b), "Floods in Bangladesh: II. Flood Mitigation and Environmental Aspects", *The Geographical Journal*, 156(2): 158-165

..... (1999), *Agricultural Disaster Management in Bangladesh*, Dhaka: The University Press Limited

Brunborg, Helge & Urdal, Henrik (2005), "The Demography of Conflict and Violence: An Introduction", *Journal of Peace Research*, 42 (4): 371-37

Castles Stephen & Mark J Miller (1998), *The Age of Migration*, New York: Palgrave as cited in Mahendra P Lama (2006), *Irregular Migration from Indian and Nepal: Nature, Dimensions and Policy Issues*, Dhaka: RMMRU

Castles, Stephen (2000), *International Migration at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century: Global Trends and Issues*, UNESCO, Published by Blackwell Publishers, (Online Web), accessed on 11 January 2010, URL: [http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/content/BPL\\_Images/Journal\\_Samples/ISSJ0020-8701~52~165~258/258.pdf](http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/content/BPL_Images/Journal_Samples/ISSJ0020-8701~52~165~258/258.pdf)

..... (2002), *Environmental Change and Forced Migration: Making Sense of the Debate*, UNHCR, Working Paper No. 70, Refugee Study Centre, University of Oxford, (Online Web), accessed on 11 April 2010, URL: [http://www3.hants.gov.uk/forced\\_migration.pdf](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/forced_migration.pdf)

\*Census of Bangladesh, 1991, 2001 and various years

\*Census of India, 1931, 1941, 1951, 1961, 1971, 1991, 2001 and various years

\*Census of India 1911, Vol. III, Assam, Part-I-Report, pp. 27-29

\*Census of India (1931), Vol-XII, Assam, Manipur and Tripura, Part I-A-Report

\* Census of India, 1971, Assam, Part-I-A, General Report Part-II and Part II-A, General Population Tables

\*Central Bureau of Statistics (1996), *Nepal Living Standards Survey 1995/1996*, National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal, Kathmandu

\*..... (2003), *National Sample Census of Agriculture, Nepal 2001-2002*, HMG, Kathmandu, pp. 17-18

\*..... (2004), *Nepal Living Standards Survey (NLSS) 2003/2004*, National Planning Commission Secretariat, Government of Nepal, Kathmandu

\*..... (2006), *Environment Statistics of Nepal*, Nepal Planning Commission, Government of Nepal, Kathmandu

\*..... (2007), *Statistical Year Book 2007*, National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal, Kathmandu

\*..... (2008), *Report on the Nepal Labour Force Survey 2008*, National Planning Commission Secretariat, Government of Nepal, (Online Web), accessed on 10 August 2010, URL: <http://www.cbs.gov.np/Surveys/NLFS-2008%20Report.pdf>

- CCPD (2005), *Democracy, Citizens and Migrants: Nationalism in the Era of Globalisation*, Delhi: Hazard Centre
- Chhabra, K. M. L (1992), *Assam Challenge*, Delhi: Konark Private Publication
- Chakravarthi, P. Kr. (1999), *The Marginal Men*, Calcutta: Naya Udyog
- Chakravarty, S.R (1995), *Bangladesh under Mujib, Zia and Ershad: Dilemma of a New Nation*, New Delhi: Har Anand Publications
- Chatterji, S. K. (1954), *The Place of Assam in the History of Assam and Civilisation of India*, Guwahati: Gauhati University
- Chattopadhyaya, Harprasad (1987), *Internal Migration in India: A Case Study of Bengal*, Calcutta: K P Bagchi & Company
- Chaudhury, A.M (2001), "Cyclones in Bangladesh", in K. Nizamuddin ed. (2001), *Cyclones in Bangladesh: Disaster in Bangladesh*, Selected Readings, Disaster Research, Training and Management Century.
- Chhetri, Meen B. Poudyal (2001), "A Practitioner's View of Disaster Management in Nepal: Organisation, System, Problems and Prospects", *Risk Management*, 3(4): 63-72
- Chittara, M.G (1997), *Bangladesh Majli Toi Bhashina*, New Delhi: APH Publishing Corporation
- Choudhury, Afsan (2000), "State and the Minority Identity: The Case of Hindus in Bangladesh", in C. R. Abrar ed., *On the Margin, Refugees, Migrants and Minorities*, Dhaka: RMMRU, University of Dhaka
- Chowdhury, Z. H., et. al. (2001) *Trafficking of Women and Children in Bangladesh*, Dhaka: ICDDR – Centre for Health and Population Research, ICDDR-B, Special Publication No. 11, accessed on 23 June, 2009, URL : [http://www.usaid.gov/bd/files/trafficking\\_overview.pdf](http://www.usaid.gov/bd/files/trafficking_overview.pdf)
- CISS Report (1990), "Environmental Change and Acute Conflict", *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, November, 44(2): 14-18
- Clark W. A. V (2007), *Environmentally Induced Migration and Conflict*, Berlin: WBGU, (Online Web), accessed on 1 June 2010, URL: [http://www.migration-boell.de/downloads/migration/Environmentally\\_induced\\_Migration\\_and\\_Conflict.pdf](http://www.migration-boell.de/downloads/migration/Environmentally_induced_Migration_and_Conflict.pdf)
- Communist Party of India - Marxist (2005a), *People's Democracy*, Weekly Organ of the CPI - M, Vol. XXIX No. 37, 11 September, (Online Web), accessed on 14 January 2009, URL: [http://pd.cpim.org/2005/0911/09112004\\_assam.htm](http://pd.cpim.org/2005/0911/09112004_assam.htm)

Communist Party of India - Marxist (2005b) *People's Democracy*, Weekly Organ of the CPI - M, Vol. XXIX No. 38, 18 September, (Online Web), accessed on 14 January 2009, URL:[http://pd.cvim.org/2005/0918/09182005\\_assam.htm](http://pd.cvim.org/2005/0918/09182005_assam.htm)

Communist Party of India (1982), *Asomar Bideshi Nagarikar Samasya Aru Bharatar Communist Party*, (In Assamese), Leaflet Published by CPI, Assam, Guwahati

Conference Report (1994), "World Migration and US Policy", *International Migration Review*, Special Issue: The New Second Generation, Winter: 883-891

Consing, Arturo Y. (1963), "The economy of Nepal", *Staff Papers - International Monetary Fund*, 10(3): 504-530

Corbett, John (2001), "Ernest George Ravenstein: The Laws of Migration, 1885", (Online Web), accessed on 12 January 2009, URL: <http://www.csiss.org/classics/content/90>

Craig, Jenkins J. (1977), "Push and Pull in Recent Mexican Migration to the US", *International Migration Review*, 11(2): 178-189.

Crush J. & Ramachandran S. (2009), *Xenophobia, International Migration and Human Development*, Human Development Research Paper 2009/47, September, UNDP, Human Development Reports, Research Paper, (Online Web), 1 September 2010, URL: [http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP\\_2009\\_47.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP_2009_47.pdf)

Dahal, Dilli Ram, et. al. (2001), *Community Perceptions of Trafficking and its Determinants in Nepal*, Kathmandu: The Asia Foundation & Population Council

Das, Amiya Kumar (1982), *Assam's Agony: A Socio Economic and Political Analysis*, New Delhi: Lancers

Das, Bhuvanmohan (1983a), "Asomiya Kon", (In Assamese) *PRANTIK*, 16-31 October, Vol. 2, No. 22: 13-17.

Das, Parag Kumar (1983), "Asomor Jonojatiyo Raijor Samasya, Udayachal Aru Annayna", (In Assamese), *PRANTIK*, 16-31 July, Vol. II, No. 16: 13-26

..... (1985), "Voter Talika Aru Amar Natun Prastuti", (In Assamese) *PRANTIK*, Vol. IV, No. 3: 8-10

..... (1986), "Asom Chuktir Protikria", *PRANTIK*, 16-31 October, Vol. IV, No. 22: 14-16

Das, Pushpita (2008), India-Bangladesh Border Management: A Review of Government's Response", *Strategic Analysis*, May; 32 (3): 367-388

Das, Sameer Kr. (2003), 'State Responses to Refugee Crisis: Relief and Rehabilitation in the East' in Ranabir Samaddar ed., *Refugees and the State: Practices of Asylum and Care in India, 1947 – 2000*, New Delhi: Sage Publication

Das, Sushanta Kumar (1989), *Spotlight in Assam*, Maharashtra & Chandigarh: Premier Book Service

Dass, Susanta Krishna (1980), "Immigration and Demographic Transformation of Assam 1891-1981", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 15(19): 850-859

Dasgupta, Abhijit (2001), "The Politics of Agitation and Confession: Displaced Bengalis in West Bengal", in Sanjay Kr. Roy, ed., *Refuges and the Human Rights*, New Delhi: Rawat Publication

Dasgupta, Anindita (2001), "Small Arms Proliferation in India's Northeast: A Case Study of Assam", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 6 January, 36(1): 59-65.

..... (2002), *Emergence of a Community: Muslims of East Bengal Origin in Assam in the Colonial and Post-Colonial Period*, Unpublished Thesis: Guwahati University

..... (2003), "Othering of the 'Not-So-Other': A Study of the Nepalis of Assam", in Sinha A. C & Subba T. B (ed.), *The Nepalis in the Northeast India: A Community in Search of Indian Identity*, New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company

..... (2005), "Postcolonial Ethnic Management: Assam through the Prism of Malaysian Experience", Sunway University College, Bandar, Sunway, Malaysia, (Online Web), accessed on 22 February, 2009, URL: [www.asianscholarship.org/asf/ejournal/articles/anindita2.doc](http://www.asianscholarship.org/asf/ejournal/articles/anindita2.doc) - Thailand

Dasgupta, Keya & Guha, Amalendu, (1985), "1983 Assembly Poll in Assam: An Analysis of its Background and Implications," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 20(19), May 11: 843

De, Sibopada (2005), *Illegal Migrations and the North-East: A Case Study of Migrants from Bangladesh*, Kolkatta: Anamika Publishers & Distributors (p) Ltd

Debabarma, K (2001), "Migration as Source of Conflict in South Asia," in Sudhir Jacob (ed.), *India and Interstate Conflict in South Asia*, New Delhi: South Asian Publishers

Deka, A. K, et. al (2008), "Indo-Nepal Peace Treaty", in CCPD, *Redefining Citizenship: In the Era of Globalisation*, New Delhi: Hazards Centre

Deka, Hitesh (2004), *All Assam Students Union and its Impact on the Politics of Assam Since 1979*, Ph. D Thesis (Unpublished), Guwahati: Guwahati University

Deka, Mita (1996), *Students Movement in Assam*, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House

Deuri, Bakul & Pator, Dulal (1984), "Nellir Hatyakandor Samparkat", (In Assamese), *PRANTIK*, 16-30 April, Vol. III, No. 10: 29-30

Dev, Bimal J. & Lahiri, Dilip Kr. (1985), *Assam Muslims: Politics and Cohesion*, Delhi: Mittal Publication

Devi, Monimala, (2007), "Economic History of Nepali Migration and Settlement in Assam", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XLII, No. 29, July 21-27; 3005-3007

Dhaka Courier Report (2003), "Migration – People on the Move", *Dhaka Courier*, 13 June, 19(46): 26-27

\*Dinesh Singh Committee Report into the Disturbances of June 1980 in Tripura, as cited Bhaumik, Subir, (2005), "India's Northeast: Nobody's people in No Man's Land", in Paula Banerjee, et. al. ed., *Internal Displacement in South Asia: The Relevance of the UN's Guiding Principle*, New Delhi: Sage Publication.

\*Disaster Management Bureau (2010), *Major Natural Disaster in Bangladesh*, Government of Bangladesh, (online web), accessed on 10 October, 2010 URL: <http://www.dmb.gov.bd/pastdisaster.html>

Dixon, H. Thomas (1991), "On the Threshold: Environmental Changes as Causes of Acute Conflict", *International Security*, Autumn, 16(2): 76-116

..... (1994), "Environmental Scarcities and Conflict: Evidence from Cases", *International Security*, Summer, 19(1): 5-40.

..... (1995), "Environmental Scarcities, State Capacity and Civil Violence", *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, April, 48(7): 26-33

Dixon, H. Thomas & Percival, V. (1996), *Environmental Scarcity and Violent Conflict*, Briefing Book, The Project on Environment, Population, and Security, University of Toronto and the American Association for the Advancement of Science

..... (1998), "Environmental Scarcity and Violent Conflict: The Case of South Africa", *Journal of Peace Research*, 35(3): 279-298.

..... & Geweski, P. (1996), *Environmental Scarcity and Violent Conflict: The Case of Pakistan*, The Project of Environment, Population, and Security, University of Toronto and the American Association for the Advancement of Science

Djajic Slobodan (2001), "Illegal Immigration Trends, Policies and Economic Effects", in Slobodan Djajic ed., *International Migration: Trends, Policies and Economic Impact*, London: Routledge Publication.

- Dubey, Muchkund (1999), "Internal Dynamics in South Asia," in Nancy Jetly (ed.), *Regional Security in South Asia*, New Delhi: Lancer Publication
- Durham, W. H. (1979), *Scarcity and Survival in Central America: Ecological Origins of the Soccer War*, Stanford: Stanford University Press
- Dutt, Srikant (1981), "Migration and Development: The Nepalese in Northeast", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 16(24): 1053-1055
- Dutta, Dilip Kumar (1983), "Bideshot Asom Andolonor Pratidhwani", (In Assamese), *PRANTIK*, 1-15-April, Vol. II, No. 9: 29-30
- Dutta, P.N (1979), *Glimpses into the History of Assam*, Gauhati: Lawyer's Book Stall
- Dutta, Sreeradha (2000), "North East Turmoil: Vital Determinants", *Strategic Analysis*, March, 23(12): 2123-2134
- ..... (2003), *Bangladesh: A Fragile Democracy*, New Delhi: Shipra Publication
- Dzvimbo, K. P (2003), "The International Migration of Skilled Human Capital from Developing Countries", HDEND: World Bank, (Online Web), accessed on 12 June 2010, URL:[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTAFRREGTOPTEIA/Resources/peter\\_dzvimbo.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTAFRREGTOPTEIA/Resources/peter_dzvimbo.pdf)
- Elahi K. M (1991), "Impacts of Riverbank Erosion and Floods in Bangladesh: An Introduction" in K M Elahi, et. al., *Riverbank Erosion, Flood and Population Displacement in Bangladesh*, Dhaka: Jahangir University
- & Election Commission of India, (1983) *Report on the General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Assam, 1983*, New Delhi: Election Commission
- Eckholm Eric P. (1976), *Losing Ground: Environmental Stress and World Food Prospects*, New York: W.W. Norton & Co. as cited in Vinod P. Shrestha (1994), "Environmental Problems in the Nepal Himalaya", *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, 21(2): 137-51
- Encyclopaedia (2008), "Assam", *The Columbia Encyclopaedia*, Sixth Edition, (Online Web), accessed 7 October, 2008, URL: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Assam.aspx>
- ..... (2009), "Bodoland", (Online Web), accessed 7 September, 2009, URL: <http://www.associatepublisher.com/e/b/bo/bodoland.htm>
- ..... (2007), "Human Migration", *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, (Online Web) accessed on September 13, 2009 URL:<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/275738/human-migration>



Europa (2003), *The Territories and States of India*, First Edition, London & New York: Europa Publication

Fernandes, Walter (2008), "The Role of Land in Ethnic Conflicts in India", in Walter Fernandes ed., *Search for Peace with Justice: Issues around Conflicts in Northeast India*, Guwahati: North Eastern Social Research Centre

FMOENCN (2002), "Climate Change and Conflict: Can Climate Change Impacts Increase Conflict Potentials? What is the relevance of this issue for the international process on climate change?" Berlin, (Online Web), accessed on 12 June 2010, URL: [http://www.afes-press.de/pdf/Brauch\\_ClimateChange\\_BMU.pdf](http://www.afes-press.de/pdf/Brauch_ClimateChange_BMU.pdf)

Fix, Alan G. (1999), *Migration and Colonization in Human Microevolution*, Cambridge University Press, (Online Web) accessed on June 18, 2009, URL: <http://catdir.loc.gov/catdir/samples/cam032/98032340.pdf>

Foreigners Tribunal order, 1964, accessed on 6 April, 2008, URL: [http://aasc.nic.in/Acts%20AND%20RULES%20\(goa\)/pASSPORT%20dEPTT/Foreigners%20\(Tribunal\)%20Order,1964.pdf](http://aasc.nic.in/Acts%20AND%20RULES%20(goa)/pASSPORT%20dEPTT/Foreigners%20(Tribunal)%20Order,1964.pdf)

Francis, Cherunilam (1987), *Migration Causes, Correlates, Consequences, Trends & Policies*, New Delhi: Himalayan Publishing House

Feingold, David A. (2005) "Human Trafficking", *Foreign Policy*, 150, September – October: 26-32

Franda, Marcus (1982) *Bangladesh: The First Decade*, New Delhi: South Asian Publication

Gaan, Narottam (2001), "Environmental Scarcity of Land, Migration and Violent Conflict: Bangladesh - India", *India Quarterly*, 57(3), July-Sept: 151-176

Gain, Philip (1998), *Bangladesh Land Forest and Forest People*, Society for Environment and Development, Dhaka: SEHD

..... (2001), *Bangladesh Environment Facing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Society for Environment and Human Development, Dhaka: SEHD

Gait, E. (1905), *A History of Assam*, LBS Publication: Guwahati

Galbraith, J.K (1979), *The Nature of Mass Poverty*, Harvard University: Harvard University Press, as cited in House of Commons International Development Committee Report (2004), "Migration and Development: How to make Migration work for Poverty Reduction", Sixth Report of Session 2003-2004, Vol. 1, (Online Web), accessed on 2 August 2010,

URL: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmselect/cmintdev/79/79.pdf>

Gautam, Bijay Raj (2005), "Impact of Displacement and Possible Outlet", *INFORMAL*, 19(2&3), September-December, INSEC: 41-45

\*Gazetteer of India (1990), *Assam District Gazetteer: Kamrup*, Guwahati: Government of Assam

\*..... (1999), *Assam State Gazetteer: Vol-I*, Government of Assam: Guwahati

\*..... (1983), *Provincial Gazetteer of Assam*, New Delhi: Cultural Publishing House

\*..... (1951), *Assam Gazette, Part VI-A*, Guwahati: Government of Assam

Gendron R. & Hoffman E. (2010), "Resource Scarcity and the Prevention of Violent Conflicts", *Peace and Conflict Review*, 4(1): 1-11

George, Sudhir Jacob (1990), "Insurgency/Terrorism in the Northeast an Overview", in S C Tiwari ed., *Terrorism in India*, New Delhi: South Asian Publisher

Ghosh, Bimal (2005), *Managing Migration: Whither the Missing Regime?*, 15 February, UNESCO, (Online Web), accessed on 1 August 2010, URL: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001391/139149e.pdf>

Ghosh, Partha S (1989), *Cooperation and Conflict in South Asia*, New Delhi: Manohar

..... (1990), "Bangladesh, The Communal Scene", *Mainstream*, Vol. 26, No. 20, March 10, pp.21-23

..... (1998), "Regional Security and Cross Border Population Movements in South Asia", in Justus Richter & Christian Wagner, ed. (1998), *Regional security, ethnicity and Governance*, New Delhi: Manohar

..... (2004), *Unwanted and Uprooted: A Political Study of Migrants, Refugees, Stateless and Displaced in South Asia*, New Delhi: Samskriti

Gillan M (2002), "Refugees or Infiltrators? The Bharatiya Janata Party and Illegal Migration from Bangladesh", *Asian Studies Review*, March, Vol. 26, No. 1: 73-95

Gleditsch N. P (1998), "Armed Conflict and the Environment: A Critique of the Literature", *Journal of Peace Research*, 35(3): 381-399

GCIM (2005), *Migration in an Interconnected World: New Directions for Action*, Geneva, (Online Web), accessed on 15 January, 2008, URL: <http://www.gcim.org/attachements/gcim-complete-report-2005.pdf>

Go, Stella P. (2007), *Asian Labour Migration: The Role of Bilateral Labor and Similar Agreements*, Paper presented at the Regional Informal Workshop on Labor Migration in Southeast Asia: What role for Parliaments, 21-23 September, Manila, Philippines, (Online Web), accessed on 1 September 2010, URL:<http://pstalker.com/ilo/resources/Bilateral%20Agreements%20PHILIPPINES%20by%20Stella%20Go.pdf>

Godbole, Madhav (2001), "Management of India's International Borders: Some Challenges Ahead", *Economic and Political Weekly*, December 1-7, 36(48): 4442-4444.

Borbora, Golap (2001), "Bideshi Bitoron Andolon Barthya Hoisil Kiyo? Atiya Vastav Samadhanor Upai Ki?" in Hiren Gohain & Dilip Bora (ed.) *Asom Andolan: Pratishruti aru Pholoshruti*, (In Assamese), Guwahati: Standard Impression

Goldstone, Jack A. (2002), "Population and Security: How Demographic Change can lead to Violent Conflict", *Journal of International Affairs*, Fall, 56 (1): 3-21

Gorter, Cees. et. al. eds. (1998), *Crossing Borders: Regional and Urban Perspectives on International Migration*, Brookfield: Ashgate

Goswami, Namrata (2006), *Illegal Migration in Assam: A Concern for India's National Security*, accessed on 8 June 2009, (Online Web), URL:[http://www.idsa.in/idsastrategiccomments/IllegalMigrationinAssam\\_NGoswami\\_040506](http://www.idsa.in/idsastrategiccomments/IllegalMigrationinAssam_NGoswami_040506)

..... (2010), "Bangladeshi Illegal Migration into Assam: Issues and Concerns from the Field", IDSA Issue Brief, New Delhi: IDSA, accessed on 20 February, 2010, URL:[http://www.idsa.in/issuebrief/BangladeshiIllegalMigrationintoAssam\\_ngoswami\\_140110](http://www.idsa.in/issuebrief/BangladeshiIllegalMigrationintoAssam_ngoswami_140110)

Goswami, Prafulla Ch. (1961), *The Economic Development of Assam*, Bombay: Asia Publication House

\*Government of Assam (1962), *Report of the Third General Election 1962*, Department of Election, in the Assam Legislative Assembly and House of the People, Shillong, September 29

\*Government of Assam (1967), *Report of the Fourth General Election 1967*, Department of Election, in the Assam Legislative Assembly and House of the People, Shillong, September 29: 40-55

- \*..... (1976), *Report of the Employment Review Committee*, Assembly Secretariat, Dispur
- \*..... (1979), *Report of the Third Employment Review Committee*, Assembly Secretariat, Dispur
- \*..... (1983), *Report of the Seventh General Election to the Assam Legislative Assembly*, Department of Election, Guwahati
- \*..... (1985), *Report of the Eighth General Election to the Assam Legislative Assembly and the House of People*, Department of Election, Guwahati
- \*..... (1978), *Report of the Sixth General Election to the Assam Legislative Assembly*, Department of Election, Guwahati
- \*..... (1968), *Report of the Fourth General Election 1967*, Department of Election, 14 May
- \*..... (1976), *Economic Survey of Assam 1975-1976*, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Guwahati, Assam
- \*..... (1976), *Report of the Employment Review Committee*, Assembly Secretariat, Dispur
- \*..... (1983), *Report of the Seventh General Election to the Assam Legislative Assembly*, Department of Election
- \*..... (2003), *Assam Human Development Report*, Department of Planning and Development, Dispur: Assam
- \*..... (2003), *Economic Survey of Assam 2002-2003*, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Guwahati, Assam
- \*..... (2006), *Statistical Hand Book of Assam*, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Guwahati, Assam
- \*..... (2008), *Economic Survey of Assam 2007-2008*, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Guwahati, Assam
- \*..... (2008), *Memorandum to the Thirteenth Finance Commission*, Finance Department, Guwahati, (Online Web), accessed on 10 July 2010, URL: <http://sfcassam.nic.in/13thFC/13thFCMemorandum.pdf>
- \*Government of Bangladesh, (1994) *Analytical Report of Population Census 1991*, Vol. 1, May, Dhaka

\*Government of India (1983), *The Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act 1983* - Passed by the Houses of Parliament, Bill No.116-F of 1983

\*..... (2001), *National Human Development Report-2001*, Planning Commission, New Delhi

\*..... (2002) *Assam Development Report - 2002*, State Plan Division, Planning Commission

\*....., Census of India, Language Report, (1991), "Distribution of Nepali Speakers 1991", pp. 45-46

\*..... (1955), *Annual Report of the Department of Rehabilitation*, Department of Rehabilitation

Greenwood, M. J (1985), "Human Migration: Theory Models and Empirical Studies", *Journal of Regional Science*, 25(4): 521-544.

Grigg, D. B. (1977) "E. G. Ravenstein and the laws of migration," *Journal of Historical Geography* 3 (1): 41-54

Guibernau, M. & Rex. John ed. (1997), *The Ethnicity Reader: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Migration*, London: Polity Press.

Guha, Amalendu (1977), *Planter Raj to Swaraj: Freedom Struggle and Electoral Politics in Assam 1826- 1947*, New Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research

..... (1980), "Little Nationalism Turned Chauvinist Assam's Anti-Foreigners Upsurge", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 10(9), May: 1699-1719

..... (1993), *Asom Nomore, Amiou Nomoro*, (In Assamese) Guwahati: Smritilekha Print House

..... (1984), *Zamidarkaleen Goalpara Zila'r Artha-Samajik Awastha: Eti Oitihatik Dristipat*, Lecture No.2 of Annual Lecture Series Organised by B. N. College Teachers Association, Dhubri: B. N. College Teachers Association

..... (1979), *Assamese Society in the Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Structure and Trends*, August, Occasional Paper No. 25, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta

..... (1991), *Medieval and Early Colonial Assam: Society, Polity and Economy*, Calcutta: K. P. Bagchi & Co.

Gupta, S. K & Gupta I. B (1990), *Conflict and Communication: Mass Upsurge in Assam*, New Delhi: Har Anand

Gupta, Shekhar (1984), *A Valley Divided*, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House

Gurung, Ganesh (2003), "Nepali Economy Based on Remittance", in Lok Nath Sangrula, ed., *Foreign Employment for Women: Challenges & Opportunities, (A collection of articles published during the media campaign)*, Kathmandu: Sancharika Samuha – UNIFEM

Gurung, Harka (1988), "Nepal: Consequences of Migration and Policy Implications", *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, CNAS, Tribhuvan University, January, 15(1): 67-92

Gurung, Tejimala (2003), "Human Movement and the Colonial State: The Nepalis of Northeast India under the British Empire", in A. C. Sinha & T B Subba ed., *The Nepalis in Northeast India: A Community in Search of Indiān Identity*, New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company: 172-183

\*Guwahati High Court (1992), *Md. Sahid Ali Fakir and Ors vs Union of India* dated 21/1/1992

\*..... (1993), *Md. Sibar Uddin and Ors. vs Union Of India and Ors* dated 29/3/1993

\*..... (2003), *Mahadev Haldar vs State Of Assam And Anr on 6/8/2003* Haldar, Chiranjib, March 2007, The Nepali Influx in Northeast India

Handique, Manik (1998), "Sisyanuragi Samajkarmi Bobudhan Thapa Debar Suwaronot (In Assamese)", in B. Chetri (ed.), *Souvenir*, AANSU, Barpathar

Haque, Shahidul (2005), "Migration, Trends and Patterns in South Asia and Management Approaches and Initiatives", *Asia Pacific Population Journal*, 20(3), December: 39-60

Harris, J.R. & Todaro, M. P (1970), "Migration, Unemployment and Development: A Two Sector Analysis", *American Economic Review*, 60: 126-142

Hars, Agnes (2003), Channeled East-West Labour Migration in the Frame of Bilateral Agreements, Flowenla Discussion Paper/13, Hamburgisches Welt-Wirtschafts-Archiv (HWWA), Hamburg Institute of International Economics (Online Web), accessed on 1 February 2010, URL: <http://www.migration-research.org/EastWest/dokumente/Flowenla13.pdf>

Hauge, W. & Ellingsen, Tanja (1998), "Beyond Environmental Scarcity: Causal Pathways to Conflict", *Journal of Peace Research*, 35(3): 299-317

Hazarika, Lakheswar (1979), *Asamiya Jatiya Chetanar Jagrata Pratik-Chhabilal Upadhyaya, The Nagarik*, (Assamese weekly), December 6

Hazarika, Sanjay (1993), "Bangladesh and Assam: Land Pressures, Migration and Ethnic Conflict", Occasional Paper Series of Environmental Change and Acute Conflict, (Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Toronto, March

..... (1996), *India's Northeast and the Crisis of Migration*, Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies, Delhi: RGICS

..... (2000), *Rites of Passage; Border Crossing Imagined Homelands, India's East and Bengalis*, New Delhi: Penguin

..... (2001a), "India's Northeast & the Problem of Migration: What is to be Done?" *Dialogue*, 1(3): 11-20

..... (2001b), "India and its North East: The Challenges of Regionalism and Migration", in Azam, Kousar J, ed. *Ethnicity, Identity and the State in South Asia*, New Delhi: South Asian Publishers

Helen I. S. & Brian M. T. (1975), *Migration and Development: Implications for Ethnic Identity and Political Conflict*, The Hague: Mouton Publishers.

Herrmann M. & Svarin, David (2009), "Environmental Pressures and Rural-Urban Migration: The Case of Bangladesh, UNCTAD, (Online Web), accessed on 1 February, 2010, URL:[http://mpr.ub.uni-muenchen.de/12879/1/MPRA\\_paper\\_12879.pdf](http://mpr.ub.uni-muenchen.de/12879/1/MPRA_paper_12879.pdf)

Hofer, Thomas (1998), "Floods in Bangladesh: A High Land Low Land Interaction", *Geographica Bernesia*, Institute of Geography, Switzerland: University of Berne

Hoque, AYM Ekramul, et. al. (2004), *Statistics for Monitoring Attainment of MDG's in Bangladesh*, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics: Dhaka

Hossain, Mahabub (2008), "Sea Level Rise, Natural Disasters and Threats to Human Security in Bangladesh", Paper presented in South Asia: Environment and Human Securities Conference, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2008, Visions Theatre, National Museum of Australia, Canberra, (Online Web), accessed on 12 March 2010, URL: [http://www.suezto.org.au/south\\_asia/ehs\\_conference/papers/Hossain.pdf](http://www.suezto.org.au/south_asia/ehs_conference/papers/Hossain.pdf)

House of Commons International Development Committee (2004), "Migration and Development: How to make migration work for poverty reduction" Sixth Report of Session 2003-04, Volume I, London: UK Parliament, (Online Web), accessed on 2 June 2010, URL: [www.parliament.uk/parliamentary\\_committees/international\\_development.cfm](http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/international_development.cfm).

Hrabovszky, Janos P. & Miyan, K. (1987), "Population and Land Use in Nepal: The Great Turnabout", *Mountain Research and Development*, 7(3), Proceedings of the Mohonk Mountain Conference: The Himalaya-Ganges Problem, August: 264-270

Huggins, Chris et. al. (2005), "Conflict in the Great Lakes Region – How is it Linked With Land and Migration?" *Natural Resource Perspectives*, Vol. 96, Overseas Development Institute, accessed on 22 February, 2008, URL: [www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/1602.pdf](http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/1602.pdf)

Hugo, G. & Massey D. S. et. al. (1997), "Migration Theory, Ethnic Mobilisation and Globalisation", in Montserrat Guibernau & John Rex (Ed.), *The Ethnicity Reader: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Migration*, London: Polity Press.

Hugo, G. (1996), "Environmental concerns and international Migration", *International Migration Review*, 30 (1): 181-212

..... (2008), *Migration, Development and Environment*, IOM Migration Research Series, No. 35, IOM: Geneva, (Online Web), accessed on 10 September 2010, URL: [http://www.populationenvironmentresearch.org/papers/hugo\\_statement.pdf](http://www.populationenvironmentresearch.org/papers/hugo_statement.pdf)

\* APHRN (2001), "The Plight of Internally Displaced persons in India", 16 March, Human Right Features, (online web), accessed on 23 July, 2008, URL: <http://www.hrdc.net/sahrdc/hrfeatures/HRF33.htm>

\*Human Rights Without Frontiers International (2005), "Internally Displaced Persons in Nepal: The forgotten Victims of the conflict", Brussels, accessed 7 August, 2009, URL: [http://www.hrwf.net/reports/ext/Nepal\\_IDPs\\_HRWFRreport\\_July2005.pdf](http://www.hrwf.net/reports/ext/Nepal_IDPs_HRWFRreport_July2005.pdf)

\*Human Trafficking Statistics (2009), *Human Trafficking Statistics: Polaris Project*, accessed on 1 June, 2010, URL: <http://nhtrc.polarisproject.org/materials/Human-Trafficking-Statistics.pdf>

Huntington, S. P. (2004), *Who are We: The Challenges to America's National Identity*, Washington: Simon & Schuster

Hussein, Monirul & Phanjoubam, Pradip (2007), *A Status Report on Displacement of Assam and Manipur*, Kolkata: Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group

Hussein, Monirul (1993), *The Assam Movement: Class, Ideology and Identity*, Delhi: Manak Publications

..... (2000), "State, Identity Movements and Internal Displacement in the North-East", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 35(51), December 16: 4519-4523

..... (2001), "The North-East Today", *Refugee Watch*, No. 13, March, pp. 14-16

Hussain, Wasbir (2004), "Assam: Demographic Jitters", South Asia Intelligence Review (weekly assessment and briefings), Vol. 3, No. 10, September 20, (Online Web) accessed on 13 March, 2008, URL: [http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/sair/Archives/3\\_10.htm](http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/sair/Archives/3_10.htm)



..... (2003), “Bangladeshi Migrants in India: Towards a Practical Solution – A View from the North-Eastern Frontier”, in P. R. Chari, et. al (eds.) *Missing Boundaries: Refugees, Migrants, Stateless and Internally Displaced Persons in South Asia*, New Delhi: Manohar

..... (2000), “Cross-Border Human Traffic in South Asia: Demographic Invasion, Anxiety and Anger in India’s Northeast”, *Faultlines: Writings on Conflict & Resolution*, Vol. 7

Hutt, Michael (1997), “Being Nepali without Nepal: Reflections on South Asian Diaspora”, in David N. Gellner, et. al. (eds.), *Nationalism and Ethnicity in a Hindu Kingdom: The Politics of Culture in Contemporary Nepal*, Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publisher

\*Indian Commission of Jurists (1965), *Recurrent Exodus of Minorities from East Pakistan and Disturbances in India: A Report to the Indian Commission of Jurists its Committee of Enquiry*, New Delhi: ICJ

\*IDMC (2006), *INDIA: Tens of Thousands Newly Displaced in North- Eastern and Central States, A Profile of the Internal Displacement Situation*, 9 February, 2006, Norwegian Refugee Council, Switzerland, Geneva, (Online Web) accessed on 2 April, 2009, URL: [www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/44031ac44.pdf](http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/44031ac44.pdf)

\*ILO (2002), “Migrant Workers, Labour Education 2002/4”, No. 129, Geneva as cited in Tasneem Siddique (2004), *Efficiency of Migrant Workers Remittance: The Bangladesh Case*, Manila: ADB

\*..... (2005), *A Global Alliance against Forced Labour*, Geneva: ILO, (Online Web), accessed on 12 June 2010, URL: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc93/pdf/rep-i-b.pdf>

\*Indo-Nepal Peace Treaty (1950), signed between the Government of India and Nepal, (Online Web), accessed on 10 May, 2009, URL: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1950\\_Indo-Nepal\\_Treaty\\_of\\_Peace\\_and\\_Friendship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1950_Indo-Nepal_Treaty_of_Peace_and_Friendship)

INSEC (2005), “Research Report: Eastern Nepal: Plight Of Displacement”, *INFORMAL*, vol. 19, no. 2&3, Sept & Dec, 2005, Research conducted between February 2 to March 16: 21-25

\*Lundias R. V., et. al (2008), “International Migration: Remittances and Rural Development”, IFAD:FAO, (Online Web) accessed on 18 May, 2009, URL: <http://www.ifad.org/pub/remittances/migration.pdf>

\*IOM (2005), *World Migration Report 2005: Cost and Benefits of International Migration*, Geneva: IOM

\* ..... (2008), *World Migration Report 2008: Managing Labour Mobility in the Evolving Global Economy* Geneva: IOM

\* ..... (2003a), *World Migration Report 2003: Managing Migration: Challenges and Responses for People on the Move*, Geneva: IOM

\* ..... (2003b), *Facts and Figures on International Migration*, Migration Policy Issues, No. 2, March

\* ..... (2010), *World Migration Report 2010: The Future of Migration – Building Capacities for Change*, Geneva: IOM

Islam Nazmul, (1978), “The Karnaphuli Project: Its Implications on the Tribal Population”, *Public Administration*, 3(2), University of Dhaka: Daka

Islam, M. Ataharul (1999), *Population, Development and Environment: The Emerging Issues*, Dhaka: CPD: 1-23

Islam, Rizwanul, (2002), “Labour Market Policies, Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction: Lessons and non-lessons from the Comparative Experience of East, South-East and South Asia”, in Centre for Policy Dialogue, *Dynamics of Labour Market in Bangladesh and Its Global Linkage: An Independent Review of Bangladesh's Development (IRBD)* Dhaka: CPD

Jamwal, N. S. (2004) “Border Management: Dilemma of Guarding India-Bangladesh Border”, *Strategic Analysis*, 28(1), January-March: 5-36.

Jaishi, Shyam Raj (1990), *Asamma Nepaliharuko Aitihashik Pristhabhumi*, Digboi: Bodh Kumari Smriti Prakashan Digboi, as cited in Upadhaya, Jagannath (2003), *Political Organisation of the Nepalese in Assam*, (Online Web), accessed on 10 November, 2010, URL: [http://nppa2003.com/articles/political\\_organisations\\_of\\_the\\_n.htm](http://nppa2003.com/articles/political_organisations_of_the_n.htm)

Jha, Sanjay K. (2003), “Time for Dhaka to Come Clean”, *Asia Times*, February 6

Pathania, Jyoti M. (2003), *India & Bangladesh - Migration Matrix- Reactive and not Proactive*, South Asia Analysis Group Paper no. 632, accessed on 12 June, 2009, URL; <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/%5Cpapers7%5Cpaper632.html>

Joshi, Ruchira (2003), “Situations of Minorities in Bangladesh”, *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies*, 7(3-4), July-December: 103-145

Joseph, Josy (2006), *Securitization of Illegal Migration of Bangladeshis to India*, Singapore: IDSS, (Online Web), accessed on 1 March, 2009, URL: <http://www.rsis.edu.sg/publications/WorkingPapers/WP100.pdf>

K. C, Bal Kumar (1998), *International Migration in Nepal: A Situational Analysis*,

..... (2008), "Nepal", *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 17(3-4): 287-307

..... (2004), "Internal Migration in Nepal", Population Monograph of Nepal, Kathmandu: Central Bureau of Statistics

Kabir, Humayun Md (1998), "The Problem of Tribal Separatism and Constitutional Reform in Bangladesh", in Iftikaruzzaman ed. (1998), *Ethnicity and Constitutional Reform in South Asia*, New Delhi: Manahor: 10-26

Kainth, G. S. (2009), "Push and Pull Factors of Migration: A Case of Brick Kiln Industry of Punjab State", *Asia-Pacific Journal of Social Sciences*, January – June, 1(1): 82-116, (Online Web), accessed on 12 July 2010, URL: [www.socialsciences-ejournal.org/6%20Gurusharan%20Sing.pdf](http://www.socialsciences-ejournal.org/6%20Gurusharan%20Sing.pdf)

Kakati, Satish C (1995), "The Assam accord II", *The Statesman*, 25 November, 1995

Kansakar, V V. Singh (1982), *Emigration, Remittances and Rural Development*, Centre for Economic Development and Administration, Kathmandu: Tribhuvan University

..... (1990) Nepal-India Open Border: Prospects, Problems and Challenges, (Online Web) accessed on 20 December, 2008, URL: [http://www.nepaldemocracy.org/documents/treaties\\_agreements/nep\\_india\\_open\\_border.htm](http://www.nepaldemocracy.org/documents/treaties_agreements/nep_india_open_border.htm)

..... (1997), "Nepal - India Relation: Aspects of Environment", in Jayanta Kumar Ray ed. *India- Nepal Co-operation; Broadening Measures*, Calcutta: K P Bagchi Company

Kaplan, Robert (1994), "The Coming Anarchy," *Atlantic Monthly*, Feb. 1994: 43-76

Kaspar, Heidi (2005), *I am the Household Head Now! Gender Aspects of Out-Migration for Labour in Nepal*, Kathmandu: NIDS

Khadria, B (2005), "Migration in South and South-West Asia", A paper prepared for the Policy Analysis and Research Programme of the Global Commission on International Migration, GCIM, accessed on 10 April 2010, URL: <http://www.gcim.org/attachements/RS6.pdf>

Khakhlari, Gyan Shankar (1983), "Kamrup Zillar Brahmaputrar Dakhin Pare Ki Ghotisil", (In Assamese), *PRANTIK*, 1-15 April, Vol. II, No. 9: 18-20

Khan, Mahbub Hassan (2004), "Migration the Changing Attitudes", *Dhaka Courier*, 5 March, 20(32): 28-29

Khanna, Mansi M. (2010), *Security Challenges to India-Bangladesh Relations*, Working Paper 1, New Delhi, Centre for Land Warfare Studies, accessed on November 10, URL: [http://www.claws.in/Working\\_Paper\\_1\\_-\\_MMK.pdf](http://www.claws.in/Working_Paper_1_-_MMK.pdf)

Khatun Fahmida (2000), *Population and Environment in Bangladesh: designing a policy accounting for linkages*, Dhaka: CPD: 1-28

..... (2008), *Migrant Labour and Remittances in Bangladesh*, (Unpublished Paper), Dhaka: CPD

Koser, Khalid (2007), *International Migration: A Very Short Introduction*, New York: Oxford University Press

Kotwal, Dinesh (2000), "Instability Parameters in Northeast India", *Strategic Analysis*, April, Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 137- 149

..... (2001), "The Contours of Assam Insurgency", *Strategic Analysis*, March, Vol. 24, No. 12: 2219-2233

Kritz, M. M (1975), "The Impact of International Migration in Venezuelan Demographic and Social Structure", *International Migration Review*, 12(1-4): 513-543.

..... (1987), "International Migration Policies: Conceptual Problems", *International Migration Review*, Special Issue: Measuring International Migration: Theory and Practice, Winter, 21(4): 947-964

....., et. al eds (1992), *International Migration Systems: A Global Approach*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Kumar, D. P (1990), *Challenges to Indian Unity: Assam's Students Agitation and Government*, Delhi: B R Publishing House

Kumar, Manoj (2001), "Status of Refugees in South Asian States", *Journal of Peace Studies*, 8(2), March-April: 50-60

Kurmi, Sushil (1983), "Chah Bagisar Kotha" (in Assamese), Assam Sahitya Sabha: Jorhat

Lama, Mahendra P (2000), *Managing Refugees in South Asia*, Dhaka: Refugees and Migratory Movement Research Unit, University of Dhaka

..... (1997), "Economic Resources and Environmental Concerns in South Asia: A Changing Interface", in D D Khanna, ed., *Sustainable Development Environmental Security, Disarmament and Development Interface in South Asia*, New Delhi: Macmillan India Limited

..... (2004), "Poverty, Migration and Conflict in South Asia", *World Focus*, 25 (6), June: 11-14.

..... (2006) *Irregular Migration from India and Nepal: Nature, Dimensions and Policy Issues*, Dhaka: RMMRU

..... (2003), "Poverty, Migration and Conflict: Challenges to Human Security in South Asia", in P R Chari and S Gupta ed. *Human Security in South Asia: Gender, Energy, Migration and Globalisation*, New Delhi: Social Science Press

Lang, Christopher I. (1995), *Environmental Degradation as a Cause of Political Conflict, Social Stress, and Ethnic Tensions*, ENCOF Occasional Paper No. 12, Environment and Conflicts Project, Swiss Peace Foundation, Berne, and Centre for Security Studies and Conflict Research, Zurich, Switzerland

\*Law Commission of India (2000), *One Hundred Seventy Fifth Report on the Foreigners Amendment Bill 2000*, Law Commission of India: New Delhi

Lee, Everett S. (1966), "A Theory of Migration", *Demography*, 3: 47-50.

Lee, S-W.(2001), *Environment Matters: Conflict, Refugee and International Relations*, Seoul and Tokyo: World Human Development Institute Press, cited in castles 2002

Lemaitre, Georges (2005), *The Comparability of International Migration Statistics: Problems and Prospects*, Statistics Brief, OECD, No. 9, (Online Web), accessed on 10 June 2010, URL: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/4/41/35082073.pdf>

Mahanta, P. K (1986), *The Tussle Between the Citizens and Foreigners in Assam*, Ghaziabad: Vikas Publishing House

Mahanta, Prafulla Pran (1996), "A Glimpse of Quit India Movement", *The Assam Tribune*, 15 August

Maillat, D. (1986), "The Experience of European Receiving Countries". Presented at OECD Conference on The Future of Migration, Paris, France, as cited M. M. Kritz (1987), "International Migration Policies: Conceptual Problems", *International Migration Review*, Special Issue: Measuring International Migration: Theory and Practice, Winter, 21(4): 947-964

Maiti Nepal, (2008), "Maiti Nepal's Rescue, Repatriation and Rehabilitation, Operation for Summer", *Newsletter, Maiti*, April

Malthus, Thomas R (1963), *An Essay on Population*, 2, New York: Dutton

Mandal, Monika (2009), "Internal Displacement in India: Status, Condition & Prospects of Return", *Refugee Watch*, June 33: 33-47

Martin, Adrian (2005), "Environmental Conflict between Refugee and Host Communities", *Journal of Peace Research*, May, 42(3): 329-346

Martin, Philip (2008), *Another Miracle? Managing Labour Migration in Asia*, paper presented on United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-21 September 2008 (Online Web), accessed on 7 January, 2009, URL:  
[http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings/EGM\\_Ittmig\\_Asia/P01\\_Martin.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings/EGM_Ittmig_Asia/P01_Martin.pdf)

..... (2009), *Migration in the Asia-Pacific Region: Trends, Factors and Impact*, Human Development Research Paper 2009/32, UNDP, (Online Web), accessed on 23 March 2010, URL:  
[http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP\\_2009\\_32.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP_2009_32.pdf)

Martin, Susan F (2001a), "Forced Migration and Professionalism", *International Migration Review*, Spring, 35(1): 226-243

..... (2005), *Migration, Development, and Population*, Georgetown University, Institute for the Study of International Migration, Prepared for the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Population Program Review Task Force, August, (online Web, accessed on 8 July 2010, URL:  
[http://www.population.gov.za/pop\\_dev/index.php/Download-document/473-Migration-Development-and-Population.html](http://www.population.gov.za/pop_dev/index.php/Download-document/473-Migration-Development-and-Population.html)

Massey, D. S (1988), "Economic Development and International Migration in Comparative Perspective", *Population and Development Review*, 14(3): 383-413.

..... (1994), "An Evaluation of International Migration Theory: The North American Case", *Population and Development Review*, 20 (4): 699-751.

..... (1998), *Worlds in Motion: International Migration at the End of the Millennium*, New York: Oxford University Press

....., et. al (1993), "Theories of International Migrations: A Review and Appraisal", *Population and Development Review*, 19(3): 431-466.

....., et. al (1999), "International Migration at the Dawn of the Twenty – First Century: The Role of the State", *Population and Development Review*, June, 25(2): 303-322

..... et. al. (2007), *Environmental Change and Out-Migration: Evidence from Nepal*, Population Studies Center Research Report 07-615, January, (Online Web), accessed on 10 June 2010, URL: <http://www.psc.isr.umich.edu/pubs/pdf/rr07-615.pdf>

Mastler, M. et. al. (2000), *Country Environment Review, Bangladesh Towards an Environment Strategy*, Manila: Asian Development Bank

Mayer, Norman (1997), "Environmental Refugee", *Population and Environment*, 19(2): 167-182

Memorandum of Settlement on Bodo Territorial Council (2003), by the Union Government and the Bodo Liberation Tiger Force, on February, 2003, (online web), accessed on 6 May, 2008,  
URL:[http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/assam/documents/papers/memorandum\\_feb02.htm](http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/assam/documents/papers/memorandum_feb02.htm)

Meyers, Eytan (2000), "Theories of International Immigration Policy-A Comparative Analysis," *International Migration Review*, 34(4), Winter: 1245-1282

MHDC, (1999) *Human Development in South Asia, 1999: The Crisis of Governance*, Published for The Mahbub ul Haq Human Development Centre, Dhaka: Oxford University Press

Milliman, J.D. et. al (1989), "Environment and Economic Implications of Rising Sea Level and Subsiding Deltas: The Nile and Bengal Examples, *Ambio*, 18(6): 340-345.

\*Ministry of Agriculture (2006), *Actionable Policy Brief and Resource Implications: Agriculture Sector Review (Crop Sub-Sector)*, Government of Bangladesh, Dhaka

\*Ministry of External Affairs (1963), *Influx – Infiltration from East Pakistan*, Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for the MEA, August

\*Ministry of Employment, Labour and Rehabilitation (1959), *Annual Report 1958-59*, Government of India, New Delhi

\*..... (1969), *Annual Report 1968-69*, Government of India, New Delhi

\*..... (1970), *Annual Report 1969-70*, Government of India, New Delhi

\*..... (1973), *Annual Report 1973*, Government of India, New Delhi

\*..... (1974), *Annual Report 1974*, Government of India, New Delhi

\*..... (1982), *Annual Report 1981-1982*, Government of India, New Delhi

\* Ministry of Finance (2007b), *Economic Survey, Fiscal year 2006-2007*, Government of Nepal, Kathmandu

\*..... (2008b), *Economic Survey, Fiscal year 2007/2008*, Government of Nepal, Kathmandu

\*..... (2008a), *Budget Speech of Fiscal Year 2008-2009*, Delivered to Legislature – Parliament by the Finance Minister, Babu Ram Bhattacharai on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2008, Government of Nepal, Kathmandu: pp.4-5

\*..... (2009), *Bangladesh Economic Review 2009*, Government of Bangladesh, Dhaka, Online web, accessed on June 15, 2010, URL: [http://www.mof.gov.bd/en/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=71&Itemid=1](http://www.mof.gov.bd/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=71&Itemid=1))

\*..... (2009b), *Economic Survey, Fiscal year 2008-2009*, Government of Nepal, Kathmandu

\*..... (2010), *Bangladesh Economic Review 2009*, Government of Bangladesh, Dhaka

\*Ministry of Finance (2010a), *Bangladesh Economic Review 2010*, Finance Division: Government of Bangladesh

\*Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (2008), *Super Cyclone SIDR 2007: Impacts and Strategies for Interventions*, Dhaka: Government of Bangladesh

\*Ministry of Home Affairs (2001), "Border Management", Report of the Group of Ministers on National Security, Government of India, New Delhi

\*..... (2004), *Annual Report 2003-2004*, Government of India, New Delhi

\*..... (2006), *Annual Report 2005-2006*, Government of India, New Delhi

\*..... (2007), *Annual Report 2006-2007*, Government of India, New Delhi

\*..... (2008), *Annual Report 2007-2008*, Government of India, New Delhi

\*..... (2011), *Annual Report 2010-2011*, Government of India, New Delhi

\*..... (2000), Tripartite Talks to review the Implementation of the Assam Accord, held in New Delhi on 31.05.2000, Government of India, New Delhi, (online web), accessed on 23 January, 2009, URL: [http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/assam/documents/papers/assam\\_accord\\_1985.htm](http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/assam/documents/papers/assam_accord_1985.htm)

\*Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation (1958), *Annual Report 1957-58*, Government of India, New Delhi



\*Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation (1984), *Annual Report 1983-1984*, Government of India, New Delhi

\*Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (2010), *Annual Report 2009-2010*, Government of India

Mishra Udayon (1981), "Little Nationalism Turned Chauvinist: A Comment", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 16(8), February 21: 290-292

..... (1999), "Immigration and Identity Transformation in Assam", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 34(21), May 22: 1264-1271

..... (2000), *The Periphery Strikes Back*, Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study

..... (2001), *The Transformation of Assamese Identity: A Historical Survey*, H. K. Barpujari Endowment Lecture (4), The North East India Historical Association: Shillong Modern Offset

Misra, Tilottoma (1980), "Assam: A Colonial Hinterland", *Economic and Political Weekly*, August 9, Vol. 15, No. 32: 1357-1359+1361-1364

Molvoer, Reidulf K. (1991), "Environmentally Induced Conflicts?", *Bulletin of Peace Proposals*, June, 22 (2): 175-188.

Moore W. H & Shellman S. M (2004), "Fear of Persecution: Forced Migration, 1952-1995", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, October, 48(5): 723-745

Moulier-Boutang, Y. & J.P. Garson (1984), "Major Obstacles to Control of Irregular Migrations: Prerequisites to Policy", *International Migration Review*. 18(3):579-592.

Mukherji, Saradindu (1996), "Migration: Generous or Hapless Hosts?", *The Hindustan Times*, 13

Muni, S. D and Baral, L. R, (eds) (1996), *Refugees and Regional Security in South Asia*, New Delhi: Konark

Murthy T. S (1983), *Assam: The Difficult Years Ahead: A Study of Political Development in 1979-83*, New Delhi: Omsons Publication

Nag, Sajal (2003), "Fei-isation of the Nepalis of Northeast India", in A. C. Sinha & T B Subba (ed.), *The Nepalis in Northeast India: A Community in Search of Indian Identity*, New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company

Nasreen, Mahbuba (1999), "Coping with Floods: Structural Measures and Survival Strategies", in Imtiaz Ahmed (ed.) *Living with Floods: An Exercise in Alternatives*, Dhaka: The University Press Limited

Nath Manoj Kumar (2003), "Bodo Insurgency in Assam: New Accord and New Problems", *Strategic Analysis*, 27(4), October-December: 533-545

Nath, Binay Kumar (1980), "Impact of Immigration on Assam's Agricultural Economy", *The Eastern Voice*, Vol. I, No. 2

Nath, Lopita (2003a), "Conflict Afflicted Nepalis of Assam: The Reality", in Sinha A. C & Subba T. B (ed.), *The Nepalis in the Northeast India: A Community in Search of Indian Identity*, New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company, pp. 230-249

..... (2003b), *The Nepalis in Assam: Ethnicity and Cross Border Movements in the Northeast*, Kolkata: Minerva Associates

..... (2005a), "Migrants in Flight: Conflict – Induced Internal Displacements of Nepalis in Northeast India", *Peace and Democracy in South Asia*, 1(1): 57-72

..... (2005b), "Understanding Internal Migration among the Nepalis in Assam: Trends and Issues", in Mahavir Singh ed., *Home Away from Home: Inland Movement of People in India*, New Delhi: Anamika Publishers, pp. 189-212

National Geographic Expeditions (2005), "Human Migration Guide 6-8: What is Human Migration?", (Online Web), accessed on 2 August 2010, URL: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/09/g68/migrationguidestudent.pdf>

\*National Human Rights Commission (2006-2007), *Trafficking in Persons Especially on Women and Children in Nepal*, Kathmandu: NHRC, (Online Web), accessed on 7 July 2009, URL: [http://www.unodc.org/pdf/india/Nat\\_Rep2006-07.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/pdf/india/Nat_Rep2006-07.pdf)

\*National Planning Commission (2003), *The Tenth Plan (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) 2002-2007*, Government of Nepal, Kathmandu

\*.....(2006), *An Assessment of the Implementation of the Tenth Plan/PRSP, PRSP Review 2005-2006*, Government of Nepal: Kathmandu

Neog, Maheswar (1984), "Assam Agitates Against Foreign Nationals", in B. L. Abbi (ed.), *Northeast Region: Problems and Prospects of Development*, Chandigarh: Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development

Nayak, Nihar (2010), "India–Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty (1950): Does it Require Revision?", *Strategic Analysis*, 34(4): 579-593

Nepal Institute of Development Studies (2006), *Nepali Women and Foreign Labour Migration*, Kathmandu: UNIFEM & NIDS

..... (2008), *Migration Year Book 2007*, Kathmandu: NIDS

Nayyar, Sanjeev (2005), "Supreme Court Repeals IMDT Act, Assam", (Online Web), accessed on 10 January 2010, URL: <http://www.esamskriti.com/essay-chapters/Supreme-Court-repeals-IMDT-Act,-Assam-1.aspx>

\*Nepal Rastra Bank (2007), *Study report on Remittance from India*, Kathmandu: NRB

Nepram, Binalaxmi (2003), "Accord into Discord: Conflict and the 1997 Peace Accord of C.H.T", *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies*, 7(3-4), July-December : 146-168

Ninno, Del, et. al. (2001), "The 1998 floods in Bangladesh: Disaster Impact, Household Coping Strategies and Response". IFPRI Research Report 122. IFPRI, Washington D.C, accessed on 22 February, 2010,  
URL:<http://ageconsearch.umn.edu/bitstream/16542/1/r010122.pdf>

Noveria, Mita (2002), *Internal Migration and Heterogeneous of Ethnic: Conflict Among Ethnic Groups (A Case Study on Migrant Receiving Areas in The North Sulawesi Province)*, Research Centre for Population- Indonesian Institute of Sciences, Jakarta, Paper Presented at the IUSSP Regional Population Conference, Bangkok, accessed on 9 February, 2008, URL: [http://www.mita\\_noveria.com/case\\_study\\_north\\_sulawesi.pdf](http://www.mita_noveria.com/case_study_north_sulawesi.pdf)

\*Parliament of India Debate 1964 – 70, 1971-1980, 1981-1998, various Years

\*..... (1983), Lok Sabha, 3 March, p. 315

\*..... (1996), Lok Sabha, 1996, November 26, accessed on 12 May, 2008, URL:<http://parliamentofindia.nic.in/lsdeb/ls11/ses3/22261196.htm>

Papademetriou, D. G. (1997-1998), "Migration", *Foreign Policy*, No. 109, Winter: 15-31

Parker, Frisbie (1975), "Illegal Migration from Mexico to the United States: A Longitudinal Analysis", *International Migration Review*, 9(1-4): 3-13

Parmanand (1986), "The Indian Community in Nepal and the Nepalese Community in India: The Problem of National Integration", *Asian Survey*, September, 26(9): 1005-1019

Patterson, G. N (1963), *Peking Versus Delhi: Politics on the Roof of the World*, London: The Long Riders Guild Press

Paul, Bimal K, & Rashid, Harun (1993), "Flood Damages to Rice Crop in Bangladesh", *The Geographical Review*, 82(2), April: 150-159.

- Pemble, J (1971), *The Invasion of Nepal: John Company at War*, London: Oxford
- Peter, Berton (1969), "International Subsystems: A Sub Macro Approach to International Studies", *International Studies Quarterly*, (Detroit-Michigan), 13 (4): 1-15
- Petter, Nills Gleditsch (1998), "Armed Conflict and the Environment: A Critique of the Literature", *Journal of Peace Research*, 35(3), May: 381-399
- Phukan, Girin, (1984) *Assam, Attitude to Federalism*, New Delhi: Sterling Publication Private Limited
- Phukan, Anandaram Dhekial (1854), *Observations on the Administration of the Province of Assam*" in A. J. M. Mills, "Report on the Province of Assam", Calcuttā, Appendix J, pp. xxvii-xxxviii.
- Piore, M. J (1979), *Birds of Passage: Migration Labour in Industrial Societies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Playne S (1917), *Bengal and Assam, Bihar and Orissa*, New Delhi: Longman
- Portes A. & Borocz J. (1989), "Contemporary Migration: Theoretical Perspectives on Its Determinants and Modes of Incorporation", Special Silver Anniversary Issue: International Migration an Assessment for the 90's, *International Migration Review*, Autumn, 23(3): 606-630
- Portes, Alejandro (1978), "Migration and Underdevelopment", *Politics and Society*, 8 (1): 1-48
- Prabhakara, M. S (2005), "An Act Undone", *Frontline*, 22(16), July 30- Aug 12, (online web), accessed on 5 June, 2008,  
URL:<http://www.hinduonnet.com/fline/fl2216/stories/20050812001904200.htm>
- PRANTIK Report (1983a), "Nyayik Tadantoloi Iman Bhoi Kio", (In Assamese) *PRANTIK*, 1-15 April, 2(9): 12
- PRANTIK Report (1983b), "Rastra Sanghat Asom", (In Assamese), *PRANTIK*, 1-15 April, Vol. 2, No. 9: 9
- PRANTIK Report (1984), "Tirashi Chonot Asom: Gonotontoror Itihasot Ata Abhinav Adhay" *PRANTIK*, 1-16 January, Vol. III, No. 3: 18-23
- PRANTIK (1983c), *Attachyar Abyahito: Batorikakot Niyontrito*, (In Assamese), *PRANTIK*, 16-31 October, Vol. 2, No. 22: 6-8
- Gnyawali, Prakash (2005), "State and Statelessness: A Critical Observation on Government Responsibility for Conflict Induced IDPs in Nepal", *INFORMAL*, Vol. 19, No. 2&3, September-December, INSEC, pp.3-5

Pramanik, Bimal (2007), "Indo-Bangladesh Border Scenario and our National Security", *Dialogue*, July-September 2007, Vol. 9, No. 1

..... (2008), "Present Bangladesh Scenario and its Impact on India's Internal Security", *Dialogue*, April-June 2008, Vol. 9, No. 4

Rahman, A Atique, (1998), *Environment and Poverty key Linkages for Global Sustainable Development*, Dhaka: The University Press Ltd.

....., et. al. (2007) *UNDP Human Development Report 2007 - 2008*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) and UNDP, (Online Web), accessed on 10 November, 2009: URL: [http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2007-2008/papers/rahman\\_alam\\_alam\\_uzzaman\\_rashid\\_rabbani.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2007-2008/papers/rahman_alam_alam_uzzaman_rashid_rabbani.pdf)

....., et. al. (2002), "Trends in Natural Resource Management in Bangladesh: Looking for Integration and a New Institutional Framework", Natural Resource Workshop Management, organized by BCAS & DFID, Dhaka, (Online Web), accessed on 15 February, 2009  
URL:<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/APCITY/UNPAN015818.pdf>

Rahman S. Ubaidur (2005), "Nellie Massacre Survivors Got Rs. 2000 as Compensation!" *Milli Gazzette*, accessed on 5 March, 2008  
URL:<http://www.milligazette.com/Archives/2005/01-15Feb05-Print-Edition/011502200528.htm>

Rahman, Md. Motiur (1994), *Poverty issues in Rural Bangladesh*, Dhaka: University Press Ltd.

Rai, Baljit (1993), *Demographic Aggression Against India: Muslim Avalanche from Bangladesh*, Chandigarh: B.S. Publications

Rajagopalan S. (2008), *Peace Accords in Northeast India: Journey Over Milestones*, Washington: East-West Center, (Online Web), accessed on 10 July 2010, URL: <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/fileadmin/stored/pdfs/ps046.pdf>

Raleigh, et. al. (2008), "Assessing the Impact of Climate Change on Migration and Conflict", Social Dimensions of Climate Change, The Social Development Department, The World Bank Group, Washington, accessed on 23 December 2010 (Online Web), URL:[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/Resources/SDCCWorkingPaper\\_MigrationandConflict.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/Resources/SDCCWorkingPaper_MigrationandConflict.pdf)

Rammohan, E. N. (2007), "The Foreigners (Tribunals for Assam) Order, 2006", *Dialogue*, March, 8(3): 146-150

Ramtanu Maitra (2005), "India's Ticking Immigrant Time Bomb", January 14, Accessed on 12 November, 2008,  
URL: [http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South\\_Asia/GA14Df05.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/GA14Df05.html)

Rao U. Bhaskar (1967), *The Story of Rehabilitation*, Government of India, New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

Rastogi, P. N (1986), *Ethnic Tensions in India Society: Explanation, Prediction, Monitoring and Control*, Delhi: Mittal Publications

Ratha, Dilip et. al. (2009), *Outlook for Remittance Flows 2009-2011: Remittances Expected to Fall by 7-10 percent in 2009*, Migration and Development Brief 10, July 13, Migration and Remittances Team Development Prospects Group, World Bank, (Online Web), accessed on July 2010, URL:  
<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1110315015165/Migration&DevelopmentBrief10.pdf>

..... (2010), *Outlook for Remittance Flows 2010-11: Remittance Flows to Developing Countries Remained Resilient in 2009, Expected to Recover During 2010-11*, Migration and Development Brief 12, April 23, Migration and Remittances Team Development Prospects Group, World Bank, (Online Web), accessed on 15 July 2010, URL: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1110315015165/MigrationAndDevelopmentBrief12.pdf>

Ravenstein, E (1889), "The Laws of Migration," *Journal of Statistical Society*, 52: 241-305

Reddi, P. S (1984), "Genesis of the Assam Movement", in B. L. Abbi (ed.), *Northeast Region: Problems and Prospects of Development*, Chandigarh: Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development

Regmi, Bimal R. & Adhikari A., (2007) *Human Development Report 2007/2008: Country Case Study-Nepal*, UNDP, Kathmandu

Relief Web (2004), *India: Ceasefire allows for return in Kashmir, while displacements continue in the North-East*, Global IDP Project, 11 June, (Online Web), 1 September 2010, URL: <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/SNAO-5ZUL5J?OpenDocument>

\*Report of the Line System Enquiry Committee 1938, Chapter – II, p. 3, as cited in Bimal J. Dev & Dilip Kr. Lahiri (1985), *Assam Muslims: Politics and Cohesion*, Delhi: Mittal Publication

\**Report on the Administration of Eastern Bengal and Assam 1905-06*, Shillong, 1907, as cited in Tejimala Gurung (2003), "Human Movement and the Colonial State: The Nepalis of Northeast India under the British Empire", in A. C. Sinha & T B Subba ed., *The*

*Nepalis in Northeast India: A Community in Search of Indian Identity*, New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company: 172-183

*\*Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Assam 1913-14 & 1919-20& 1934-35*

Reuveny R. & Maxwell J. W. (2001), "Conflict and Renewable Resources", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, December, 45(6): 719-742

..... (2000), "Resource Scarcity and Conflict in Developing Countries", *Journal of Peace Research*, 37(3): 301-322

Reuveny, R. (2005), *Environmental Change, Migration and Conflict: Theoretical Analysis and Empirical Explorations*, paper presented in an international workshop on Human Security and Climate Change, Oslo, accessed on 14 January, 2008, URL:<http://worldroom.tamu.edu/Workshops/Migration06/EnvironmentalResources/Environmental%20Change,%20Migration%20and%20Conflict.pdf>

..... (2007), "Climate Change – Induced Migration and Violent Conflict", *Political Geography*, 26: 656-673

Richmond, Anthony H. (1988), *Immigration and Ethnic Conflict*, London: Macmillan

..... & Verma, Ravi P. (1978), "Income Inequality in Canada: Ethnic and Generational Aspects", *Canadian Studies in Population*, 5: 25-36

Ripa, Shanjida Khan (2008), "Cyclone 2007: Ravaged Coast, Devastated life", *Earth Touch*, July, 11: 20-23

Rob, Abdur, (1990) "Flood Hazards in Bangladesh, Nature, Causes and Control", *Asian Profile*, 18(4), August: 365-378.

Rodrik, D. (2002), *Feasible Globalizations*, Boston: Kennedy School of Government, Working Paper Series RWPO 2029, (Online Web), accessed on 1 August 2010, URL: <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/drodrik/Research%20papers/Feasglob.pdf>

Routray, Bibhu Prasad (2008), "Violence in Assam; Battle for the Bodo Heartland", IPCS Issue Brief, (Online Web) accessed on 19 November, 2008, URL: [http://www.ipcs.org/pdf\\_file/issue/1418936928IB85-Bibhu-Assam.pdf](http://www.ipcs.org/pdf_file/issue/1418936928IB85-Bibhu-Assam.pdf)

Roy, Anupama & Singh, Ujjwal Kr. (2009), "The Ambivalence of Citizenship: The IMDT Act (1983) and the Politics of Forclusion in Assam", *Critical Asian Studies*, 41(1), March: 37-60

Roy, Sanjay K, (2002) "Bengali Refugees in India and Their Rights", *Journal of Anthropological Survey of India*, March, Vol. 51, No. 2: 82-101.

- ....., ed. (2001) *Refugees and Human Rights*, New Delhi: Rawat Publication
- Safa, H. I & Tait B. M, (eds) (1975), *Migration and Development: Implications for Ethnic Identity and Political Conflict*, Morton: The Hague
- Saha, Partha Shankar (2008), "Floods 2007", *Earth Touch*, July, 11: 28-30
- Saikia, Anup (2002), "Global Processes and Local Concerns: Bangladeshi Migrants in Assam", *Dialogue*, January-March, Vol.3, No. 3
- ..... (2005), "Refugees, Illegal Migrants and Local Perceptions in India's Far East", Paper presented at the 25<sup>th</sup> IUSSP International Population Conference held at Tours, France 18-23, (Online Web), accessed on 20 March 2009, URL: <http://iussp2005.princeton.edu/download.aspx?submissionId=50219>
- Saikia, Jaideep (2002), "The ISI Reaches East: Anatomy of a Conspiracy" *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 25 (2002), 185-197
- ..... (2003), "Terror Sans Frontiers: Islamic Militancy in North East India", July, page 17 accessed on 17 May, 2008 URL: [www.ipcs.database.org](http://www.ipcs.database.org)
- Sajat Ali, A. Md (1988), "Toward an Ecological Explanation of Agricultural
- Samaddar, Ranabir (1999a), *The Marginal Nation, Migration of Bangladeshis to West Bengal*, New Delhi: Sage Publication
- ..... (1999b), Paper Presented in an International Conference on "Cooperation in South Asia: Resolution of Inter-state Conflicts" in SAS/SIS/JNU, New Delhi
- Sanjaya (1980), *Insurgency in Northeast India*, New Delhi: Sterling
- Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India & Anr [2005] INSC 338 (12 July 2005)
- Sarangthem, Bobby (2008), "United Liberation Front of Assam", (online web), accessed on 13 August, 2008, URL: <http://indianarmy.nic.in/Site/FormTemplate/frnTempSimpleWithTenPara.aspx?MnId=nydIObD26hQ=&ParentID=KDe+m3KVGiw=&flag=p>
- Sarin, V. I. K (1980), *India's North-East in Flames*, Ghaziabad: Vikas Publishing House
- Sarmah, Alaka (1999), *Immigration and Assam Politics*, New Delhi: Ajanta Publication
- Sassen, S. (1988), *The Mobility of Labour and Capital: A Study in International Investment and Labour Flow*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press as cited in



Adamson, Fiona B., (2006) "Crossing Borders: International Migration and National Security", *International Security*, Summer, 31(1): 163-199.

..... (2001), *Global City*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, as cited in Hasan Mahmud, et. al. (2009), "International Migration, Remittances and Development", *Journal of Sustainable Development*, March, 2(1): 147-155

Schwartz D. & Singh A (1999), "Environmental Conditions, Resources, and Conflicts: An Introductory Overview and Data Collection" UNEP, Nairobi, (Online Web), accessed on 2 May, 2010,

URL: [www.unepfi.org/fileadmin/documents/conflict/schwartz\\_singh\\_1999.pdf](http://www.unepfi.org/fileadmin/documents/conflict/schwartz_singh_1999.pdf)

Seddon, et. al. (2001), *The New Lahures, Foreign Employment and Remittance Economy of Nepal*, Kathmandu: NIDS

Shahjahan, M (1998) "Flood Disaster Management in Deltaic Plain Integrated with Rural Development", in Mir M. Ali, et. al. (eds.), *Bangladesh Floods: Views from Home and Abroad*, Dhaka: The University Press Limited

Shakespeare L W, (1929- reprinted 1983) *History of the Assam Rifles*, New Delhi: Cultural Publishing House

Sharma, Archana (2004), *A situational Analysis of Women and Girls in Assam*, New Delhi: National Commission for Women, accessed on 15 September, 2008, URL: <http://new.nic.in/pdfreports/Gender%20Profile-Assam.pdf>

Sharma, Chandan Kumar (2006), *Asomiya Kon? Ek Rajnoitik Samajtatwik Avalokan*, Guwahati: SPAN Publishers

Sharma, Chandra Kanta (1991), "Energy and Environment in Nepal", *Ambio*, 20(¼), May: 120-123

Sharma, Debi Prasad & Sharma, Cheban Prasad (1987), "Asomot Nepali Anuprabeshor Samasya, Gorkhaland Aru Annyanya Prasango", *PRANTIK*, 1-15 March, Vol. VI, No. 7: 13-14

Sharma, Krishnanath (1972), *Krishna Sharmar Diary*, Guwahati: Asom Prakashan Parishad

Sharma, Satyendranath (1986), *Jyotiprasad Rachanawali*, (In Assamese), Guwahati: Asam Prakashan Parishad

Sharmah, Bhupen (2002), "The Question of Autonomy for the Plain Tribes of Assam", *Social Change and Development*, October

- Shourie, Arun (1983), "Asomor Hatyakando", (In Assamese), *PRANTIK*, 16-31 May, Vol. II, No. 12: 6-9
- ..... (1983a), "Asom Tragedy", (In Assamese), *PRANTIK*, 16-31 May, Vol. II, No. 12: 14-18
- ..... (1983b), "Sampradayik Nohoi Kintu", (In Assamese), *PRANTIK*, 16-30 June, Vol. II, No. 14: 8-18
- Shrestha Nanda R. (2001), *The Political Economy of Land, Landlessness and Migration in Nepal*, New Delhi : Nirala Publications
- ..... et. al (1999), "Population Pressure and Land Resources in Nepal: A Revisit, Twenty Years Later", *The Journal of Developing Areas*, Winter, 33(2): 245-268
- Shrestha Vinod P (1994), "Environmental Problems in the Nepal Himalaya", *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, 21(2): 137-51**
- Siddique, Tasneem & Abrar C R (2002), *Contribution of Returnees: An Analytical Survey of Post Return Experience*, Dhaka: IOM& UNDP
- Siddique, Tasneem (2005a), *International Labour Migration from Bangladesh: A Decent Work Perspective*, Working Paper No.66, ILO
- ..... (2005b), *Migration and Development, Pro-Poor Policy Choices*, Dhaka: University Press Ltd
- ..... (2009), "Climate change and Population Movement: the Bangladesh case", University of Dhaka, RMMRU, accessed on 11 January 2010, URL:[http://www.rsis.edu.sg/nts/Events/climate\\_change/session4/Concept%20paper-Tasneem.pdf](http://www.rsis.edu.sg/nts/Events/climate_change/session4/Concept%20paper-Tasneem.pdf)
- Singh, Avtar (1991), *Environmental Degradation in Flood Prone Areas*, Jaipur: Pointer Publishers
- Singh, B. P (1987), "Northeast India: Demography, Culture and Identity Crisis", *Modern Asian Studies*, 21(2): 257-282
- Singh, Bhawani (1984), *Politics of Alienation in Assam*, New Delhi: Ajanta Publication
- Singh, Gurinder (2008), "Illegal Migration, Insurgency, and the Political Economy of Assam", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 32, No. 2, March, pp. 305-316
- Singh, Mahavir ed. (2005), *Home away from Home: Inland Movement of People in India*, New Delhi: Anamika Publishers

Singh, Manju (1990), *Assam, Politics of Migration and Quest for Identity*, Jaipur: Anita Publisher

Singh, Prakash (2002), "Management of India's North-Eastern Borders", *Dialogue*, vol. 3, No. 3: 57-70

Singh, R.N.P. (2002), *Bangladesh Decoded*, New Delhi: India First Foundation

Sinha, A. C (1990), "The Indian North-East Frontier and the Nepalese Immigrants", in N. K. Rustomji and Charles A. E. Ramble, eds., *Himalayan Environment and Culture*, Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, pp. 217-235

..... (2003), "The Indian Northeast Frontier and the Nepali Immigrants", in A C Sinha & T B Subba ed. (2003), *The Nepalis in Northeast India: A Community in Search of Indian Identity*, New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company

Sjaastad, Larry A. (1962), "The Costs and Returns of Human Migration," *Journal of Political Economy*, 70: 80-93.

Skeldon R. (1997), *Migration and Development: A global Perspective*, Essex: Longman  
as cited in H. D Haas (2007), "Migration and Development: A Theoretical Perspective", International Migration Institute, James Martin 21<sup>st</sup> Century School, University of Oxford, (Online Web), accessed on 21 June 2010, URL: <http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/pdfs/imi-working-papers/WP9%20Migration%20and%20development%20theory%20HdH.pdf>  
Skinner, Jessica (2008), *Internal Displacement in the CHT and Rights-Based Approaches to Rehabilitation*, Occasional Paper -18, Dhaka: RMMRU

Smith, Adam (1776), *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of Wealth of Nations*, London: Strahan/Cadell, cited in Gorter Ceçs, et. al, (eds) (1998), *Crossing Borders: Regional and Urban Perspectives on International Migration*, Brookfield: Ashgate

Sreeradha Datta (2002), "Indo-Bangladesh Relations: An Overview of Limitations and Constraints", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 26, No.3

Subedi, B. P (2001), "Population and Environment: A Situational Analysis of Population, Cultivated Land and Basic Crop Production in Nepal in 2001", in CBS, *Population Monograph*, Government of Nepal: Kathmandu

Suliman, Mohamed (1993), "Civil War in the Sudan: From Ethnic to Ecological Conflict," *The Ecologist*, May/June, 23 (3): 104-109.

..... (1997), "Civil War in Sudan: The Impact of Ecological Degradation", *Contributions in Black Studies, A Journal of African and Afro-American Studies*, 15(7): 99-121

Swain, Ashok (1996), *The Environmental Trap: The Ganges River Diversion, Bangladeshi Migration and Conflicts in India*, Report No. 41, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, Sweden

..... (1996a), "Displacing the Conflict: Environmental Destruction in Bangladesh and Ethnic Conflict in India," *Journal of Peace Research*, 33(2): 189-204  
Unemployment in Bangladesh", *Professional Geographer*, 50(2), May: 48

Subba T. B (2003), "The Nepalis in Northeast India: Political Aspirations and Ethnicity", in A C Sinha & T B Subba ed., *The Nepalis in Northeast India: A Community in Search of Indian Identity*, New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company

..... (2002), "Nepal and the Indian Nepalis", in K.M. Dixit & Shastri Ramachandaran, ed., *State of Nepal*, Kathmandu: Himal Books

\*Supreme Court of India (1996), *National Human Rights Commission Vs. State of Arunachal Pradesh & Air*, Writ Petition (C) No. 720 of 1995, Decided on Jan 9, 1996 1996(1) SCC 742;AIR 1996 SC 1234

\*..... (2005), *Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India & Anr [2005] INSC 338, 12 July*, (Online Web), accessed on 16 June, 2008, URL: <http://vlex.in/vid/sarbananda-sonowal-union-india-anr-29616395>

Suhrke, Astri (1993), *Pressure Points: Environmental Degradation, Migration and Conflict*, University of Toronto: Peace and Conflict Studies Programme, pp. 1-20

Swain, Ashok (1996), "Displacing the Conflict: Environmental Destruction in Bangladesh and Ethnic Conflict in India," *Journal of Peace Research*, 33(2): 189-204

Talukdar, Dibakar ed. (1998), *The Journal of Assam Legislative Assembly*, April, Vol. 1, No. 1,

Talukdar, Sushanta (2010), "The Assam Accord is 25 Years old but Many of its Provisions are yet to be Impemented", 11 August, (Online Web), accessed on 13 October, 2010 web: <http://www.frontline.in/stories/20100827271704100.htm>

Tyagi, Sushila (1974), *Indo-Nepalese Relations 1858-1914*, D.K. Publishing House: Delhi

Tapinos, George (2000), "Irregular Migration: Economic and Political Issues", in Combating the Illegal Employment of foreign workers, OECD, Paris, as cited in Mahendra P lama (2006), *Irregular Migration from India and Nepal: Nature, Dimensions and Policy Issues*, Dhaka: RMMRU: 4-5

Teitelbaum, Michael S (1984), "Immigration, Refugees and Foreign Policy", *International Organisation*, 38(3), Summer: 429-450

\*The Citizenship Act 1955, Government of India, accessed on 5 June (Online Web), URL: [http://www.mha.nic.in/pdfs/ic\\_act55.pdf](http://www.mha.nic.in/pdfs/ic_act55.pdf)

The Daily Star (2008), "Over 1.5m South Asian Workers Migrate a Year: ILO," 15 July, 2008

The Hindustan Times (1980), "BJP's Formula and Assam", 14 January, 1980

\*The Immigrants-Expulsion from Assam, Act 1950, accessed on 19 April, 2008, URL: <http://www.vakilno1.com/bareacts/Laws/The-Immigrants-Expulsion-From-Assam-Act-1950.htm>

\*The Nehru-Liaquat Ali Pact (1950), (online web), accessed on 5 June, 2008, URL: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liaquat%E2%80%93Nehru\\_Pact](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liaquat%E2%80%93Nehru_Pact)

\*The Political Resolution Adopted by CPI (M) in 1982, Vijayawada, cited in Sarmah, Alaka (1999), *Immigration and Assam Politics*, New Delhi: Ajanta Publication

Tirtosudarmo, R. (2001), "Demography and Security: Transmigration Policy in Indonesia", in Myron Weiner & S. S. Russel ed. *Demography and National Security*, New York and Oxford: Beghahn Books

Tir Jaroslav & Diehl, P. F (1998), "Demographic Pressure and Interstate Conflict: Linking Population Growth and Density to Militarized Disputes and Wars, 1930-89", *Journal of Peace Research*, 35(3): 319-339.

Tiwari, Indra P. (2008), "Urban Migration and Urbanisation in Nepal", *Asia Pacific Population Journal*, 23(1): 79-104

Todaro, M. P (1969), "Models of Labour Migration and Urban Unemployment in Least Developed Countries", *American Economic Review*, 59(1): 138-48.

..... (1976), *Internal Migration in Developing Countries*, Geneva: International Labour Office

..... & Maruszko L. (1987), "Illegal Migration and US Immigration Reform: A Conceptual Framework", *Population and Development Review*, March, 13(1): 101-114

Thieme, Susan and Wyss, Simone (2005), "Migration Patterns and Remittance Transfer in Nepal: A Case Study of Sainik Basti in Western Nepal", *International Migration*, 43(5): 60-98

Thapa, Punam (1989), *Nepal: Socio Economic Change and Rural Migration*, Delhi: Vikas Publishing House

TriasWiki (2010), *Migration Pull Factors*, (Online Web), accessed on 10 January, 2009, URL: [http://wiki.triastelematica.org/index.php/Migration\\_pull\\_factors](http://wiki.triastelematica.org/index.php/Migration_pull_factors)

\*United Nations (1984), *Population Distribution, Migration and Development*, New York: United Nations Publication

\*..... (1998), *Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration – Revision - 1*, *Statistical Paper Series M/No. 58/Rev.1*, Department of Social and Economic Affairs Statistics Division, New York: United Nations Publication

\*..... (2005), *The United Nations Conventions against Transnational Organised Crime and its Protocols*, United Nations office on Drugs and Crime, May 4, 2005, (Online Web), accessed on July 5, 2009, URL: [www.unode.org/unode/en/crime\\_cicp\\_convention.html](http://www.unode.org/unode/en/crime_cicp_convention.html)

\*United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2009), *International Migration, 2009*, Wall Chart (United Nations Publication, Sales No. E.09.XIII.8), (Online Web) accessed on 2 August, 2010, URL: [http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/2009Migration\\_Chart/ittmig\\_wallchart09.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/2009Migration_Chart/ittmig_wallchart09.pdf)

\*UNDESA (2004), *World Economic and Social Survey: International Migration*, New York: United Nations, (Online Web), accessed on 15 June 2010, URL: [www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wess2004files/part2web/part2web.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wess2004files/part2web/part2web.pdf)

\*UNDP (2004), *Nepal Human Development Report 2004: Empowerment and Poverty Reduction*, Kathmandu, Nepal

\*..... (2001), *Nepal Human Development Report 2001: Poverty Reduction and Governance*, Kathmandu: UNDP

\*..... (2005), *Human Development Report 2005*, Oxford University Press, New York

\*..... (2006), *Human Development Report 2006*, accessed 9 April, 2008, URL: <http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/pdfs/report/HDR06-complete.pdf>

\*..... (2009a), *Human Development Report 2009, Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development*, UNDP: New York

\*..... (2009b), *Responding Together When Disaster Strikes*, Dhaka: UNDP

\*UNEP (2001), *Bangladesh - State of the Environment 2001*, UNEP RRC.AP, Thailand, accessed 6 June, 2009, (Online Web) URL: <http://www.rrcap.unep.org/pub/soe/bangladeshsoe.cfm>

\*UNESCO (2003), *The Situation of Youth Employment in Nepal*, prepared by Rajendra Multi for the Youth of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Realities and Perspectives, CIS Forum on Youth held in Ukraine, 24-26 September. URL: <http://southasia.icip.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/YES-Nepal-Country-Report.doc>

\*UNCED (1992), UNCED Report: National Report on United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) Country: Nepal, prepared by New ERA consultants, accessed on 3 March, 2008, URL: <http://www.nepalhomepage.com/development/unced.html>

\*UNHCR (2007), "Forced Migration and Development", Global Forum on Migration and Development, Brussels, 9-11 July, 2007, Geneva: UNHCR, (Online Web), accessed on 2 August 2010, URL: <http://www.unhcr.org/468504762.pdf>

\*..... (2006), *The State of the World's Refugees*, see <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtz/template?page=publ&src=static/sowr2006/toceng.htm>, as cited in Hugo Graeme (2008), *Migration, Development and Environment*, IOM Migration Research Series, No. 35, IOM: Geneva, (Online Web), accessed on 10 September 2010, URL: [http://www.populationenvironmentresearch.org/papers/hugo\\_statement.pdf](http://www.populationenvironmentresearch.org/papers/hugo_statement.pdf)

\*UN-OCHA (2007), *OCHA Nepal Situation Report: Floods and Landslides*, 21 August, Kathmandu

\*..... (2008), *OCHA Mid and Far Western: Floods and Landslides*, OCHA Situation Report No. 5, 22 October, Kathmandu

\*UNODC (2006), *Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns*, Vienna: UNODC, (Online Web), accessed on 2 August 2010, URL: <http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/HT-globalpatterns-en.pdf>

\*..... (2008), *Human Trafficking: An Overview*, New York: United Nations, (Online Web), accessed on 1 July 2010, URL: <http://www.ungift.org/docs/ungift/pdf/knowledge/ebook.pdf>

\*United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2009), *International Migration, 2009*, Wallchart (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.XIII.8), (Online Web) accessed on 2 August, 2010, URL: <http://esa.un.org/migration/index.asp?panel=1>

\*USA, Department of State (2007), "Trafficking in Persons Report 2007", June, (Online Web) accessed on 3 August 2010, URL: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/82902.pdf>

Upadhaya, Gita (1994), "Asamiya Sahitya-Sanskritilo Nepali Sakalar Abadan (in Assamese), *Sreemayi*, 1-15 December

Upadhaya, Jagannath (2003), *Political Organisation of the Nepalese in Assam*, (Online Web), accessed on 10 November, 2010,  
URL: [http://nppa2003.com/articles/political\\_organisations\\_of\\_the\\_n.htm](http://nppa2003.com/articles/political_organisations_of_the_n.htm)

Upadhyaya Bishnual (1984): *Asame Nepaliharu; Behali*, Sonitpur, Assam as cited in Rudraman Thapa, "The Nepalese in the Electoral Politics of Assam", (Online Web), accessed on 10 June 2009,  
URL: [http://assamesenepali.com/article/engarticles\\_assam\\_history31/nepalese\\_in\\_the\\_electoral.htm](http://assamesenepali.com/article/engarticles_assam_history31/nepalese_in_the_electoral.htm)

Upadhyaya Bishnual (1985): *Karmavir Chhabil Upadhyaya*, Margherita: Kul Bahadur Chetri, in Rudraman Thapa, "The Nepalese in the Electoral Politics of Assam", (Online Web), accessed on 10 June 2009,  
URL: [http://assamesenepali.com/article/engarticles\\_assam\\_history31/nepalese\\_in\\_the\\_electoral.htm](http://assamesenepali.com/article/engarticles_assam_history31/nepalese_in_the_electoral.htm)

Upadhyaya, Priyankar (2009), *Securitization Matrix in South Asia: Bangladeshi Migrants as Enemy Alien*, Malaviya Centre for Peace Research, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi (India), accessed on March 10, 2010,  
URL: <http://www.rsisntsasia.org/resources/publications/researchpapers/migration/Priyankar%20Upadhyaya.pdf>

Upadhyay, Archana (2005), "Assam: The Infiltrator Issue", *Economic and Political Weekly*, July 9: 3002-3004

Upadhyay, R (2005), United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) – A Deviated Movement?, Paper No. 1307, (Online web), accessed on 5 July, 2009, URL: <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/%5Cpapers14%5Cpaper1307.html>

Upadhyay, Archana (2005), "Assam: The Infiltrator Issue", *Economic and Political Weekly*, July 9, 40(28): 3002-3004

Upadhyay, R (2005), "United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) – A Deviated Movement?" Paper No. 1307, (Online Web), accessed on 5 July, 2009, URL: <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/%5Cpapers14%5Cpaper1307.html>

Vasudeva, P. K. (2001), "Insurgency in the North-east" *Indian Strategic Review*, April 10, accessed on 12 November, 2009,  
URL: <http://members.tripod.com/israindia/isr/week1/neindia.html>

Victor, H (2004), "The IMDT act in Assam", *Bharat Rakshak Monitor*, Jan-Feb, 6(4), (Online Web), accessed on 10 January, 2009, URL: <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/MONITOR/ISSUE6-4/victor.html>

Wallerstein, I (1974), *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, New York: Academic Press, as cited in Fassmann, H. et. al. (2005), *International Migration and its Regulation: State*



of the Art Report Cluster A1, IURR & RCMIR, Austrian Academy of Sciences, (Online Web), accessed on 12 April 2010, URL: <http://dare.uva.nl/document/39846>

Walter, Jonahan, ed. (2002), *World Disasters Report focus on Reducing Risk*, Geneva: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Ware, Helen (2005), "Demography, Migration and Conflict in the Pacific", *Journal of Peace Research*, 42 (4): 435-454.

Warnecke A. et. al. (2010), *Climate Change, Migration and Conflict: Receiving Communities under Pressure?* Study Team on Climate induced Migration, GMF, June, (Online Web), accessed on 15 August 2010, URL: [http://www.gmfus.org/galleries/default-file/Warnecke\\_MAH\\_EditsV2.pdf](http://www.gmfus.org/galleries/default-file/Warnecke_MAH_EditsV2.pdf)

Wavel, Lord (1943), "The Viceroy's Journal", London: London Publications, as cited in Manju Singh (1990), *Assam, Politics of Migration and Quest for Identity*, Jaipur: Anita Publisher

Weiner, Myron (1993), "Rejected People and Unwanted Migration in South Asia," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 28(34): 1737-1746

..... (1992-1993), "Security, Stability and International Migration," *International Security*, 17(3): 91-126

..... (1990), "Immigration: Perspectives from Receiving Countries", *Third World Quarterly*, January, 12(1): 140-165

..... (1973), "The Political Demography of Nepal", *Asian Survey*, 13(6), June: 617-630

..... (1978), *Sons of the Soil: Migration and Ethnic Conflict in India*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press

..... (1983), "The Political Demography of Assam's Anti-Immigrant Movement", *Population and Development Review*, 9(2), June: 279-292

Whitaker, Beth Elise (2003) "Refugees and the spread of conflict: Contrasting cases in Central Africa," *Journal of African and Asian Studies*, 38: 211-231

Wenche, Hauge & Tanja, Ellingsen (1998), "Beyond Environmental Scarcity: Causal Pathways to Conflict", *Journal of Peace Research*, 35(3): 299-317

Wikipedia (2008a), *History of Assam*, (Online Web), accessed on 6 April, 2008, URL: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Assam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Assam)

..... (2008b), Nepal, (online web) accessed on 1 April, 2009, URL:  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nepal>

Wood, C. H. (1982), "Equilibrium and Historical-Structural Perspectives on Migration",  
*International Migration Review*, 16: 298-319

Wood, W. B (1994), "Forced Migration: Local Conflicts and International Dilemmas",  
*Annals of the Associations of American Geographers*, 84 (4): 607-635.

\*WOREC (2004), *Migration Information Package*, Kathmandu : WOREC Publication

..... (2002), *Perceptions of Grassroots People about Human Trafficking, Migration  
and HIV/AIDS: A Situational Analysis*, Kathmandu: WOREC

\*World Bank (2000), *Bangladesh: Climate Change & Sustainable Development*, Report  
No. 21104, Bangladesh, Dhaka.

..... (2000a), *World Development Indicators-2000*, Washington: The World  
Bank

\*..... (2008), *Poverty Assessment for Bangladesh: Creating Opportunities and  
Bridging the East-West Divide*, Bangladesh Development Series, Paper No. 26, Dhaka,  
Bangladesh, pp. 1-2

Zaman Anis Uz (1994), "Religious and politics in Bangladesh" in S.R. Chakravarthy ed.  
(1994) *Society, polity and Economy of Bangladesh*, New Delhi: Har Anand Publications,  
pp. 42-43

Zamman, M.Q (1996), "Development and Displacements in Bangladesh, Towards a  
Resettlement Policy", *Asian Survey*, 34(7), July: 691-703

Ziring, Lawrence (1992), *Bangladesh from Zia to Ershad: An Interpretive Study*, Karachi:  
Oxford University Press, p. 210

Zlotnik Hania, (1998), "International Migration 1965-1996: An Overview", *Population  
and Development Review*, 24(3), September: 426-429

Zlotnik H & Kritz, M. M (1992), "Global Interactions: Migration Systems, Process and  
Policies", in M. M, Kritz et. al. ed. (1992), *International Migration Systems: A Global  
Approach*, Oxford: Clarendon Press: 10-11

Zolberg, Aristide R. & Surkhe Astri & Aguayo (1989), *Escape from Violence: Conflict  
and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World*, New York: Oxford University Press

TH-19748

