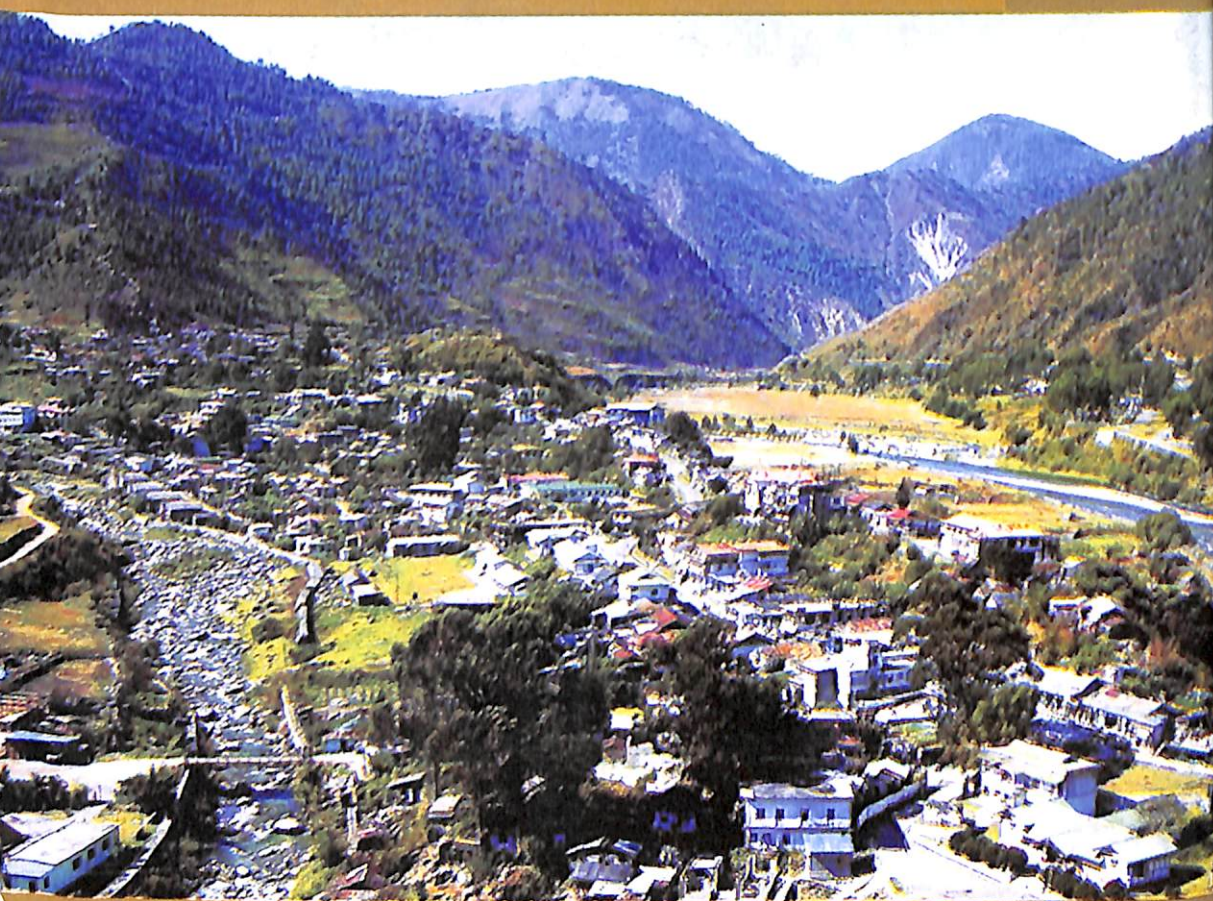


# Documents on the North-East of India

## ARUNACHAL PRADESH

*The Land of the Rising Sun*

1



Chief Editor  
O.P. RALHAN

# DOCUMENTS ON THE NORTH-EAST OF INDIA

Volume – 1

ARUNACHAL PRADESH  
*(The Land of the Rising Sun)*



*Chief Editor*

O.P. Ralhan



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## Preface

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I was inspired by the numerous hidden chapters of Indian mythology related to the history of Assam to undertake this project to apprise the future generations of India and international world about the glory and greatness of Indian society, Indian culture and Indian civilization.

Pragiyotisha has been mentioned in the great Epics of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. According to the Ramayana, the city of Pragiyotisha was built on a gold crested mountain called Varaha which was 64 yojanas in extent and which abated on the sea "Varunalaya". Bhagdatta the king of Pragiyaotish recruited his troops from the Kiratas (Mongolian people).

According to the Kalika Purna, the name of this land was changed from Pragiyotisha to Kamarupa as soon as Naraka of Mithila became king and was placed in charge of the temple Kamakhya. Dr. Kakati opines that the term Kamarupa (Kamakhya) symbolized the new cult and in exaltation of it, the land itself was renamed. According to the Puranic legends the name Kamarupa is associated with Kamadeva.

Narka's name is mentioned in the Yogini Tantra, while his son Bhagdatta's name in the Mahabharata's—as fighting on the side of the Kauravas at the great battle of Kurukshetra... It is said that Narak wanted to marry the Goddess Kamakhya.

Narakasura, who is said to have been the son of the Earth by Lord Vishnu's blessings.

The popular belief is that 99999 Sivlingas were engraved at Goalpara by Vyas Deva in order to build up this place as second Kashi.

Bhim (one of the Pandava brothers); Mahabharat fame, married Hidamba of Assam... and birth of Ghatotkuchch from them.

Ghatotkuchch married with Asur Maur's daughter Moorvi of Pragyotishpur... and birth of Barbarik... later on known as Khatushyam. Moorvi was known as Kamkantakta... They were blessed with a son namely Barbarik. Later on known and famous as Khatushyam by the blessing of Lord Krishna.

Arjuna (one of the Pandav brothers) was also married with Manipur's Raja namely Chitravahan's daughter princess Chitrangda. Chitrangda gave birth to a son namely Veer Babruvahan. After Ashumadhyagna when Arjuna was accompanying the Ashumadhyagna horse he was killed by his son Veer Bahravahan. On his mother Chitrangda's request Alupi helped Arjuna to regain his life.

If God will bless with few days of survival with good health, the readers will definitely read the detailed stories from the Epic Ramayana, Mahabharata etc. regarding Narakasur, Bhagadatta, Bhim, Hadimba, Ghatotkuch, Barbarik (Khatushyam) Arjuna, Chitravahan Chitrangda veer Babruvahan Alupi and Subhadra in my forth coming biographies from the Epic Ramayana, Mahabharata, etc. under the title of Jewels of India or Pride of North-Eastern Region of India to be published very shortly.

The district town of Tezpur (Sonitpur) was the legendary capital of the Asur king Bana. The archaeological ruins which are found lying in and around Tezpur, are associated with Bana and his daughter, 'Usha'. The Agnigarh hill, the

Bamuni hill, the Bhairavi Temple Mahabhairab temple and the twin tanks of Bar Pukhuri and Padum Pukhuri still preserve their memory. The Tezpur rock inscription of Harijjara, Tezpur, Grant of Vanamala Varman, the Parvatiya Plates of Vanamala found near Tezpur, the Bargaon Grant found in Bargaon near Tezpur indicate that the tract of land now known as Sonitpur, also known as Darrang till recent past was a part of ancient Kamrupa which at one time consisted of North-Eastern Bengal and a great part of the present Assam State.

### Romantic Legend of Usha and Anurudha

Tezpur (Sonitpur) the city of eternal romance as ancient Tezpur was known in the olden days is a city steeped in mythology legend and folklore. The city of Blood (Sonit or Tez-Blood Pur city) conjures up images of the romantic legend of Usha and Anuradha and of the fierce battle between 'Hari' and 'Hara'. Through the ages around popular figures gather many a legend which obscure history but what is history after all? Legends agree upon! One such legend fondly cherished by the people is about Banasura, the mighty Asura king his beautiful daughter, Usha and her friend Chitralekha. Legends have it that the ancient Sonitpur was the capital of the kingdom of 'Bana' of the Asura dynasty. The mighty Asura king was also devout worshipper of Lord Shiva. His daughter Usha a princess of rare charm and beauty saw in her dream a handsome prince and fell in love with him. Her friend Chitralekha, a talented artist not only painted the picture of prince from Usha's description but recognized him to be Anirudha—grandson of Lord Krishna, the ruler of 'Dwarka'. Using his magical powers, Chitralekha spirited away Anirudha to Usha's *Boudoir* (Ladies small private room) where Usha secretly married Anuradha under Gandharva rites without her father's knowledge. When Banasur learnt of the secret romance, he threw Anirudha into prison. Lord Krishna then came to Sonitpur to rescue

his grandson, where Banasur challenged him to a battle. A fierce battle ensued and the whole city was drenched in human blood hence the name Sonitpur. In the battle of Hari (Lord Krishna) and 'Hara' (Lord Shiva; in Form of Banasur). Bana was vanquished and Usha and Anirudha were united forever. The ruins and remains of Agnigarh where the immortal romance blossomed, still bear mute testimony of this legend.

### Agnigarh

Preserving the sweet memory of young lovers, Agnigarh or the rampart surrounded by fire, is perhaps the most beautiful tourist spot of Tezpur. According to legend princess Usha the only daughter of king Bana, was kept inside the palace which was surrounded by a rampart of fire. The present Agnigarh, now only a hillock facing the Brahmaputra provides the tourist a soul touching panoramic view of both the Brahmaputra river and Tezpur district.

It is recorded in the Tantras that Sibsagar formed a part of the great kingdom of Pragjyotish (Kamrupa).

The world's largest river, island, Majuli, is a place of great religious interest for the Assamese Vaishnavites because of the location and nerve centre of Vaishnavite cultural research.

The Vaishnavite temple 'Barpeta Satra' is the biggest of its kind in Assam. The satra was established by Shri Mathura Das Burha Aata, a disciple of Mahapurush Shri Madhavadeva Patbausi; another important Vaishnavite shrine is at the southern end of Barpeta. It was at Patbausi, where Shri Shankar Deva spent greater part of his life and composed some of his best works including Shri Shri Kirtan Ghosha and a number of Bargeets. Towards the north of the town lies Sundaridia Satra set up by Shri Madhvadeva. Thousands of pilgrims visit Barapeta particularly during Doljatra (Holi) festival and to this of the two gurus.

The mighty Brahmaputra is the only river in the world to have a masculine name meaning the son of Brahma. The name of the river is putra (son) not daughter.

Bhattdeva, a pioneer of prose writing translated the Bhagvad Gita in Assamese in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and thus began the onward journey of prose literature in the language. It is said that forefather of Shri Shankardeva established their capital at ROWTA and Shri Sankardeva, the great saint poet of Assam stayed at Rowta for a few months for propagating Neovaishnavism.

The district of Darrang was a part of the ancient Hindu Kingdom Kamrupa, which at one time consisted of North-Eastern Bengal and a great part of the present Assam state. According to the Yogini Tantra, the kingdom of Kamrupa extended from the Karatiya river of Rangpur in the Dikrai river in the east of Darrang district. The earliest king of Kamrupa was Naraka.

The darkest period of the history of Assam is from 1818 A.D. to 1824 A.D. during which Burmese invaded Assam and let loose a reign of terror. They were guilty of gross atrocities during their occupation of the country. The villages were plundered burnt and the people were compelled to seek shelter in jungles. Even women, children and the old had to suffer immensely. The misery of the people knew no bounds. After conquering Assam the Burmese intruded in British territory that led to the British intervention and a war was declared against the Burmese in 1824 A.D. Army was sent to the Brahmaputra valley which occupied Rangpur in January 1825 and compelled the Burmese to retire to their own territories. In the following year by the treaty of Yandabo February 24, 1826, Assam was annexed in the British colony.

Vasisthashram supposed to be the ancient hermitage of saga Vasistha, houses a temple in very *idyllic* environs. Three rippling streams and a bewildering variety of birds cast a sonorous spell all around and provide the citizens an ideal picnic spot.



Ugratara temple is located in the heart of the city of Kamrup. Atop the Sukleswar hillock, also within the central part of the city, is the Janardana temple. On the north bank is Aswaklanta, where Arjuna and his weary horse, according to legends, had rested during his Aswamedha journey.

### **Haidimba Kingdom**

The Kacharis of Cachar or Dimasa, as they called themselves, are generally believed to be a section of great Bodo horde. This powerful race is said to have its origin somewhere between the upper waters of Yan-Tse-Kiang and the Hoang ho. They came to Assam in successive waves and had even penetrated as far south as Tippera Hills. Gradually their population increased in great numbers and traveled by land and water to Nilachal, the hill near Guwahati on which the temple of Kamakhya stands. The Kachi King Suradarpa Narayan set himself to reorganize the people and improved the capital brick-built palaces and temples were constructed in different parts of Khaspur and the kingdom was named 'HAIDIMBA KINGDOM.'

It is said that the Brahmans were forced to invent legend that the race was descended from Bhim, one of the brothers of the pandavas. The Kachari legend runs that Bhim while wandering on earth met the daughter of a Rakshas (Asura)—demon. He immediately fell in love and married her. They had a son namely Ghatothkachch, the first of the Kachari race from Ghatothkachch descended a line of 103 independent sovereigns.

Near Hallong the district headquarters of North Cachar Hill District (Assam) is an important railway station, the town is fast growing into a prominent centre of commercial and educational activities. At a stone's throw is Jatinga, a small Khasi village, known throughout the world for the unexplained phenomenon of migratory birds committing mass suicide there...

Assam has a glorious role in the freedom struggle and as early as the first revolt against the British in 1857 a number of Assamese patriots like Dewan Maniram and Pyali Barua suffered at the hands of the British. During the struggle for independence the people of the state fought shoulder to shoulder with the rest of India under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Gopinath Bardoloi, who was the first Chief Minister of Assam, was a great patriot and freedom fighter.

Tezpur is another place of glorious struggle of the people during 'Quit India Movement 1942', for the freedom of the country where the martyr Kanaklata Barua was killed by police firing while attempting to hoist the national flag at Gohpur police station on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1942.

The martyrs, especially Kanaklata and Kushal Konwar have become household names in Assam.

List of Martyrs of 1942 Revolution in Assam

1. Kushal Konwar (Hanged at Jorhat Jail)
2. Kamala Miri (Died in Jorhat Jail)
3. Tileswari Barua
4. Kumali Devi
5. Khahuli Nath
6. Manbar Nath
7. Maniram Kachari
8. Ratan Kachari
9. Mahiram Kachari
10. Dayal Das Panika
11. Soruram Chutiya
12. Mangal Kukular
13. One Monk (Unidentified)

14. One beggar (unidentified)
15. Larela Kachari (Serial No. 3-15. These 13 men and women were killed in Dhekiajuli firing (Darrang district))
16. Kanaklata Barua (Barangabari, killed at Gohpur, Darrang)
17. Mukundaram Kakati – Dhopabar village.
18. Kulai Koch of Kumargaon, killed in Babeja firing Nowgong
19. Hemram Bora – Hatigarh
20. Hemram Patar – Barapujia
21. Gunabhiram Bardoloi—Darangiagaon
22. Tilak Deka – Killed at Barapujia firing (Nowgong)
23. Lakshi Kanta Hazarika
24. Thagiram Sut.
25. Boloram Sut
26. Bhogeswari Phukanani  
(Serial No. 23-26, killed at Barhampur (Nowgong))
27. Nidhanu Rajbangshi – killed at Dhupdhora (Goalpara District)
28. Madan Chandra Barman – killed at Rehabari firing (Bajali, Barpeta Sub-division)
29. Rauta Ram Koch

Persons injured by gun-shots—47—mostly from (Nowgong and Darrang District)

(Source: Report of the Enquiry Committee of Freedom Fighters Government of Assam, Guwahati, 1979) Annexure I.

The prominent freedom fighters of Assam also played historical role in the freedom struggle are:—

- U. Kiang Nongbah (—1862); The hero of the Jaintia rebellion
- Padmadhar Chaliha (1895-1969); a revolutionary writer and poet
- Rohini Kanta Hatibarua (1895-1929); member of famous Ahom family
- Kali Ram Medha (1880-1954); a pioneer in the field of the application on modern scientific methods of...
- Maulvi Mehboob Alam (1862-1937); known journalist
- Tikendrajit Singh (1858-1891); the hero of Manipur Revolution.
- U. Tirot Singh (1802-1834); was Raja of Nongkhlaw State
- Nilmoni Phookan (1879-); An educationist
- Tarun Ram Phukan (1877-1939); A scion of the famous Dhekial-Phukan family of Assam
- Holiram Phookan Dhekial (1802-1832); known author
- Anundoram, Borooah (1850-1889); known scholar
- Nicholas Roy, James Roy Mohon (1884-1959); Relative of U. Tirot Singh, the hero of Khasi war of Independence.
- Hiranyan Chandro Bhuyan (1905-1973); promoter of science education
- M. Tayyebulla (1894-1967); a true satygrahi and follower of Mahatma Gandhi.
- Gopinath Bardoloi (1890-1950); one of the makers of modern Assam; was known as Lokpriya Gopinath Bardoloi
- Nabin Chandra Bordoloi (1875-1936); a true nationalist.

- Rajani Kanta Bordoloi (1867-1940); a known author
- Mahendra Mohan Choudhary (1908-1982); Devoted his entire life in the service of the motherland.
- Jadonang (1905-1931) a pioneer freedom fighter of Manipur
- Monul Haque Choudhary (1923-1976); a known patriot
- Maulvi Abdul Rasul (1872-1917); a foresighted leader.
- Gaidinliu (1915-1993): Rani of the Nagas (1915). Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was so much moved by her bravery that he went to Assam in 1937 and met her in Shillong jail. Later, at a press conference he described her as the Rani of the Nagas. She was only 17 years old, when she was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment in 1932. She died in 1993.
- U. Soso Tham (1873-1940); known as father of khasi poetry and a great master of khasi prose, but also as the greatest exponent of khasi culture.
- ... and so many other greatmen of Assam....

# Acknowledgment

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I am really indebted to all the members of the Editorial Board of these volumes. Without their help this project would have not been completed in a stipulated period.

I will be failing in my duty if I do not express my gratitude to my publisher Shri Prabhat Kumar Sharma who has undertaken this project and completed its publication in a record time.

2008

O.P. Ralhan  
*Editor-in-Chief*  
*New Delhi*

# Introduction

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Assam has long been known to Indian mythology and history and has always been part and parcel of the Indian consciousness. In the early days the region was known as Pragyothisha and its King Bhagadatta fought as an ally of Duryodhana in the historic Mahabharata War. Devi worship in India is as old as the hills and forms part of Assam's culture and tradition for ages. The temple of goddess Kamakhya, near Guwahati, is testimony, to the prevalence of this cult which can be found in all parts of India.

The district of Goalpara had never been a separate political entity of its own. The legendary history of this district has to be considered in connection with that of the various kingdoms which sprang up from time to time in the eastern region of India. It was originally included in the ancient Hindu Kingdom of Kamakhya which is mentioned in the Mahabharata and which at one time comprised North-Eastern Bengal and a great part of what is now known as the State of Assam. According to the 'Jogini Tantra' the kingdom of Kamarupa extended from the Karatoya river on the western boundary of Rangpur district of East Pakistan.

The earliest king of Kamrup of whom anything is particular is recorded is Narakasura, who is said to have been the son of the Earth by Lord Vishnu and who defeated and slew his predecessor Chataka. He established his capital at Pragyothishpur, the modern Guwahati, and seems to had been a powerful and prosperous, though somewhat



headstrong prince. He was succeeded by his son, Bhagadatta, who is mentioned in the Mahabharata as fighting on the side of the Kauravas at the great battle of Kurukshetra, and we thus seem justified in assuming that complete a thousand years before Christ. Goalpara formed a part of a powerful kingdom ruled by a line of non-Aryan kings. The dynasty of Narakasur was displaced by some foreign invaders who left little sign of historical importance.

The present district of Kamrup originally formed part of the kingdom of Kamrup, which at one time is said to have included part of the Northeastern Bengal and the whole of the Brahmaputra valley from available evidences, its chronology can be traced from Narak and Bhagadatta, and Narak's name is mentioned in the Yogini Tantra while his son Bhagadatta is mentioned in the Mahabharata as fighting on the side of the Kauravas at the great battle of Kurukshetra. Narak established his capital at Pragjyotishpur corresponding to the modern Guwahati.

He was powerful prosperous and head-strong. There is an interesting legend associated with this monarch. It is said that he wanted to marry the goddess Kamakhya and the goddess gave him Her consent on the understanding that he would construct a temple, a road and tank in a single night for Her. He took up the challenges and was about to complete his task when the goddess Kamakhya made a cock crow before the usual hour. In his rage, Narak killed the cock at a place about eight miles from Guwahati and since then that place is known as Kukurakata. Narak's name is also remembered as one of the protectors of Kamakhya and the builder of the causeway up the southern face of the hill Nilachal on which the temple of Kamakhya stands. Thus Kamrup which formed a part of a powerful kingdom was ruled by a chain of non-Aryan princes a thousand years before Christ.

It is not clearly known whether the whole of the Nagaon district was a separate kingdom under any ruler. It has no

independent history of its own other than the Assam valley. According to Mahabharata and Ramayana it was originally included in the ancient Hindu Kingdom of Pragjyotishpur and Kamrup. For many centuries, the history of the district remained in obscurity. But the research work on Assam history has thrown some light. The whole of the Nagaon district consisted of kingdoms ruled by different rulers at the same time such as the kings of Kamarupa, the Jaintias, the Kacharis, the Bara Bhuyans, the Koches and the Ahoms. Assam was known in ancient times as Progyjotishpur and in medieval time as Kamarupa. Modern Assam, including the Nagaon district, is a part of the ancient kingdom of Pragjyotishpur.

Pragjyotishpur has been mentioned in the great epic of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. According to the Ramayana, the city of Pragjyotishpur was built on a gold crested mountain called Varaha which was 64 Yojanas in extent and which abatted on the sea "Varunalaya". That the country was close to the mountain is evident from the fact that Bhagadatta, the king of Pragjyotishpur, is called Sailalaya in the Mahabharata. Bhagadatta recruited his troops from the Kiratas, the Cinas and the dwellers of the marshy region near the sea. The Kirata most probably was the genuine name of the Mongolian people and the name Cina was perhaps applied to the Tibetans and the Bhutias. Those who lived in Sayananupa (near the sea) were evidently the people living in the marshy region of Sylhat, Mymensingh and Tripura.

According to the Kalika Purana, the name of this land was changed from Pragjyotish to Kamarupa as soon as Naraka of Mithila became king and was placed incharge of the temple Kamakhya. Dr. Kakati opines that the term Kamarupa (Kamakhya) symbolized the new cult and in exaltation of it, land itself was renamed. According to the Puranic legends the name Kamarupa is associated with Kamadeva.

The family of Pusyavarman constituted the first historical dynasty of the Bhuma Naraka family said to have ruled in the ancient Assam in 325 A. D. In the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samundra Gupta between 330-380 A. D Kamarupa is mentioned as a foreign Kingdom along with Samatra, Nepal, Kartipur and Davaka. According to same historians, Pusyavarman was the contemporary of Samundra Gupta, and Davaka was another frontier kingdom in the Kopili valley. Both the countries might have submitted to Samundra Gupta though their autonomy remained unimpaired.

There is an interesting legend in the Mahabharata that when Bhagdatta and Arjun were fighting at Kurkshetra war, Bhagadatta, was seriously injured. He attacked Arjun with Vaishnavastra. It was forceful weapon which could have been proved fatal. Lord Krishna was fully aware of that mighty weapon, which had been targeted on the chest of Veer Arjun. Lord Krishna pushed aside and took that weapon on himself. Arjun was upset to see this. Arjun asked Lord Krishna, Me Lord! You had pledged not to participate in the Mahabharata war and only to take part as a chariot guide, but I am sorry to say that Me Lord! You are not properly following your pledged?

Hearing this Lord Krishna narrated a most secret incident to Arjuna—Please listen to me O' Kuntinandan! I may tell you one secret thing which had happened centuries ago. I always remain busy in Four forms to serve the human beings. By distributing my spiritual powers in various forms I always work for the suffering mankind. In the shape of 'Narayan' my statue form always remain in deep devotion. My second form in a statue always look after well-being of the mankind. Third form as a human being on earth discharge numerous works...and the Fourth and last-forms always remain beneath the water. This is my fourth role when got up after one thousand years from sound sleep, this is the proper time to bless my devotees, Rishis and Munis, etc. Once on this occasion Mother Earth asked this blessing

from me that my son "Narakasur", should be a person of independent personality. Neither Devatas and Asurs should dictate him anything, and he should always be empowered with 'Vaishnavastra". On her request 'O' Arjun! I blessed her with a "Amodh Vaishnv Astra". And told her that 'O' Earth Mother! This weapon will always remain with him for his defence and protection...and nobody will be entitled or empowered to kill him. Thus Mother Earth's wish was fulfilled and due to that blessing Narakasur became worthy and challenge to his enemies. Listen, Arjun after the demise of Narkasur, his son Bhagadatta had got that weapon (Vaishnavastra). That is so forceful weapon that every Devata including Indra and Rudra can be killed with that. That is why I took that weapon on my chest and spoiled it...As Bhagadattga had lost that weapon, you can easily kill him.

On the advice of Lord Krishna, Arjun, first of all killed Bhagdatta's elephant and then killed him.

There is another legend in the Mahabharata that after the successful escape of Pandvas from Virnavarat, Pandavs after crossing river Ganga were hiding themselves in a jungle. As they were deadly tired and feeling hungry and thirsty, Bhim made them to rest under a banyan tree and went in search of water. When he came back with drinking water all of them had slept soundly. He was terribly upset to see the saddened faces of his near and dear ones. He pledged to take revenge from Dhiratrashttra and Duryodhan after killing them.

On a nearby tree an Asur namely Hidimb along with his sister was putting up. After feeling the smell of human beings, he advised his sister to call them to him, so that after killing them he may fulfil his stomach with the human flesh and suck their blood.

When Bhim was in a pensive mood and was thinking deeply and safeguarding his family members Hidimba appeared before him. After seeing Bhim, she in her first

sight she fell in love with him and requested Bhim to marry with her. She also apprised Bhim about the malicious desigus of his brother, who was eager to kill them. I wish to marry with you. You kindly awake them most urgently, so that I may take all of you in a safe place. If my brother comes, he would definitely kill all of you.

In the meantime Hidimb also reached there. Seeing Hindimba a beautiful girl's form he tried to kill her. Bhim came to her rescue. They fought fearlessly. Owing to their quarrel all the Pandavas woke up. They came to help Bhim but Bhim killed Hidimb himself.

Hindimba was much impressed by the bravery of Bhim. She requested Bhim's mother Kunti to allow her to marry with Bhim. The marriage was solemnized. A son namely Ghatotkuchh was born to her. He was a great warrior.

The first of the Kachari race from Ghatothkachh decended a line of a 103 independent soverings, the list of those names, however, is entirely the invention of Brahmins, the last eight are being accepted, as genuin historical personages. The names of these rulers are as follows:

- Suradarpa Chandra,
- Dharmdhuraj Chandra,
- Kartik Chandra,
- Ram Chandra
- Hari Chandra
- Lakshmi Chandra
- Krishna Chandra
- Govind Chandra.

While the Raja and aristocracy embraced Hinduism, the mass of the Kacharis who had stayed in the hills when the court moved from Maibong retaining their old faith.

### Arjun Banbas (Exile)

There is one another mention of Arjun's *Banbas* (going to jungle) in the Mahabharata once Nard Muni visited Indraprastha. He was much impressed to see the ruling pattern within the Hindu religion code by the Pandavas. Addressing all the five Pandava brothers he said. "Dropati is wife of all five brothers. He suggested that it would be in the fitness of thing that you must have framed certain rules to live with her as your wife. Narad's proposal was agreed by them. In this period if any of you will break this rule, he had to go to jungle for 12 years as a punishment. Accordingly they started living with Dropati within the framework set up by Narad Muni.

One day the cows of one Brahmin were stolen by some miscreants. The said Brahmin approached Arjun for help. Arjun's weapons were lying in the room when his eldest-brother Yudhishtir and Dropati were sitting. He was at a loss to know what to do? If he dares to enter Yudhishtir's palace he is bound to go to jungle for 12 years. If fears to help restore Brahmin's stolen cows he would be guilty of not helping the Brahmin? Arjun entered Yudhishtara's palace without his permission and after taking necessary weapons he rushed to chase the miscreants along with the Brahmin and after recovering the cows and handing over to the said Brahmin came back to Indraprastha. Reaching there he straight away went to Yudhishtara for permission to go to jungle for 12 years as a punishment. Yudhishtar told Arjun that younger brothers 'entry in his elder brothers' room is not a crime but Arjun did not acceded to his request...and left Indraprastha for 12 years' *Banbas*.

### Arjun's wedding with Aloopi

After quitting Indraprastha, Arjun reached Haridwar. He stayed there in a Ashram. One day when he went to take a dip in the river Ganga, Aloopi, the daughter of Nagraj, saw him. She was so impressed by Arjun's dynamic

personality that she took him to Naglok. She expressed her desire to Arjun for marriage.

Arjun acceded her request and with the consent of her father married Aloopi and started living with her in the Naglok. Aloopi blessed and assured Arjun that he will be in a position to walk in the under-water like on earth. Water creature will not harm him...and next day Aloopi escorted Arjun to Haridwar.

### Arjun's wedding with Chitrangda

After visiting various places Arjun reached Manipur. The daughter of Chitravahan, the king of Manipur namely Chitrangda, was very handsome. Arjun expressed his desire to marry with her. As Chitravahan had no son, he suggested to Arjun, it will only be possible, if after the marriage, the son of Chitrangda will be declared my decendent after my demise and take over the charge of the kingdom. Arjun acceded his conditions and Arjun's marriage was solemnised with Chitrangda. After marriage Arjun stayed in Manipur for three years. During this period Chitrangda gave birth to a son who was named 'Babhruvahan'.

### Arjuns' wedding with Subhadra

From Manipur Arjun reached at 'Prabhas Tirath' near Dwarka. From there Lord Krishna took Arjun to Dwarka, where he was welcomed with a rousing reception. Arjun met Subhadra there. Subhadra was the sister of Bhagwan Krishna. On Arjun's request Lord Krishna managed his sisters' marriage with him. Along with Subhadra Arjun reached 'Pushkar Tirath', where they stayed till the expiry of his *Banbas*...and then proceeded to Indraprastha. Subhadra gave birth to Veer Abhimanu.

### Early Muslim Invasion

It should be noted, however, that prior to the final invasion of Assam by Mir Jumla in 1162, Assam was

already invaded by Bakhtiyar Khilji after the latter's conquest of Bengal in 1203 A. D. He was followed by Giyasuddin Bahadur Shah who is said to have advanced as far as Saddiya in 1220 A. D.

In the year 1256 Ikhtiyar Uddin Yuzbak Tughril Khan invaded Kamrup. The first was compelled to retire without annexing any part of the Brahmaputra valley as the difficulties of the country proved inseparable. The second though unsuccessful at first, was also defeated and driven back to Gaur. The third one's triumph was of very short duration. The rains and fever took their toll once again and only a few returned to Bengal to tell of the destruction of his army. The general himself and most of his followers were killed by the Assamese. He was followed by Muhammad Shah who, in 1337 A. D. sent one lakh horsemen well equipped to Assam, but the whole army perished in that land of witchcrafts and no trace of it was left (Alamgirnama). In the year 1506, Turbuk marched up the Assam valley gaining a victory over the Ahom troops, he met with less success in his second invasion of Assam and was defeated and killed in a bloody battle in Bhareli in 1532. Twenty-one years later, Kala Pahar, a Hindu apostate made a marauding expedition into the valley and attempted to demolish the temples at Kamakhya and Hajo. A fanatical zeal for the propagation of his new religion seems to have been his guiding motive and no attempt was made to permanently annex new territory to the Mughal empire.

Assam pioneered the writing of history in the Indian subcontinent. The Ahom kings were meticulous in recording history in hand written tomes called burajnis.

The early history of Assam is obscure although there are numerous references in the Mahabharata, the Puranas, the Tantras to a great kingdom known as Kamrup that encompassed the Brahmaputra valley, Bhutan, Cooch Behar, and the Rangpur region in Eastern Bengal. The



legendary king Narakasur, whose son Bhagadatta distinguished himself in the Mahabharata war, ruled Kamrupa from his capital at Progyotishpur, the site of the famous temple dedicated to the Tantric goddess Kamakhya, near modern Guwahati.

Among the early sources of history of Assam is the writings of the Chinese pilgrim Huanzang (Hiuen-tsang) who in 640 A. D attended the court of king Bhaskar Barman an ally of the great Gupta monarch Harsh of Northern India. Stone and copper inscriptions dating from the seventh to the twelfth century indicate a succession of Hindu dynasties, but it is unclear to what extent the indigenous populations of Kamrupa had embraced Hinduism beyond the royal patronages of Brahmans.

On the eve of the movement of the Ahoms to Assam in the early thirteenth century any semblance of a centralized kingship in the region had collapsed into a fragmented system of tribal politics and loose confederacies of petty Hindu Rajas, called Bhuyans. The Ahom, a Shan tribe from which the name Assam is probably derived, crossed the Patkoi mountains from Burman in 1228 A. D and by the sixteenth century had absorbed the Chutiyas and Kacharis kingdoms of the upper Brahmaputra, subdued the neighbouring hill tribes, and integrated the Bhuyans into the administrative apparatus of a feudalistic state.

During the latter part of the sixteenth and much of the seventeenth centuries the Ahoms repulsed a succession of Mughal invasion of their territory from Bengal as they moved to annex the eastern portion of the powerful Koch kingdom (1682) and to consolidate their rule over the entire Brahmaputra valley. The kingdom of the Ahoms reached its height under Rudra Singha reign (1696-1714), the renowned military strategist and patron of the buranji or Ahom chronicles. Rudra Singha established extensive trade with Tibet and built the great city of Rangpur.

## Consolidation of British Rule (1818-58)

The year 1818 is an important landmark in the history of India for the map of India, as drawn by Lord Hastings, remained substantially unchanged until the time of Lord Dalhousie.

By 1813 the greater part of India, extending from the Sutlej to the Brahmaputra and from the Himalayas to Kanya Kumari, had been brought under British control. There, however, remained the problem of securing effective control over the western and eastern frontiers of India. Control over the western frontier was secured by annexing Sind and Punjab and by making Afghanistan a buffer state between the British and Russian empires. Control over the eastern frontier was to be secured by annexing Lower Burma and by establishing British authority over Assam, Manipur, Cachar and Jaintia. In addition, the process of political unification of the country was to be hastened by annexing some of the problem states. An attempt was also to be made to consolidate British power in India by carrying out far reaching reforms, such as the encouragement of English language, the abolition of sati, the suppression of thuggea etc. on the eastern frontier, war between Burma and British India lay in the logic of history, for it was of vital importance to both the countries to secure control over the frontier by annexing Assam, Manipur and other border states, slowly but almost inevitably events moved to a crisis and led to the first Anglo-Burmese war (1824-26).

## Border Disputes

The Burmese conquest of Arakan in 1785 had brought Burma for the first time into direct contact with Chittagong and led to border disputes. Thousands of Arakanese fled to Chittagong Burmese forces sometimes entered British territory in pursuit of Arakanese rebels. The influx of refugees was great, especially in 1787, 1794 and 1798. The Burmese asked the British authorities to expel them, a

demand which was difficult to concede. Attempts were made to arrive at a peaceful settlement of these border disputes. The British government sent envoys to Burma—Captain Symes in 1795 and again in 1802; Captain Cox in 1797; and Captain Canning in 1803, 1809 and 1811. These missions proved unsuccessful as the envoys were not treated well but there was an easing of the tension. Unfortunately in 1811 the Arakanese refugees from Chittagong invaded Arakan in large numbers. The Burmese now became more aggressive and tried to bring Manipur and Assam under their control.

### **Manipur**

In 1764 Burmese forces invaded Manipur and its ruler Jai Singh (1764-88) fled to Assam. He regained his throne three years later but was driven out again in 1770. The see-saw struggle continued until the Burmese finally pushed into Manipur (1782) and compelled Jai Singh to submit. When Jai Singh abdicated in 1788 there were fierce disputes about the succession to the throne. The victory of Kaurjit led the rival Maijit, to seek Burmese help. He agreed to renounce Manipur's claim over the Kubo Valley and acknowledged Burmas' suzerainty. He occupied Manipur in 1812-13, but he was driven out six years later, and the kingdom was annexed to Burma.

### **Assam**

In 1817 taking advantage of interval dissensions in Assam, Burmese forces invaded the country and placed Chandrakanta on the throne. When he was deposed by some of the chiefs and replaced by Purandar, the Burmese invaded Assam again (1819) and Chandrakanta was reinstated. He soon tried to shake off Burmese control and that led to hostilities (1821). Next year Bandula, the Burmese general, conquered Assam and it became part of Burma.

*First Burmese war (1824-26).* The Government of India under Lord Amherst (1823-28) was alarmed at the Burmese conquest of Assam and Manipur. In September 1823, the Burmese attacked the island of Shahpuri near Chittagong, belonging to the Company and made hostile moves on the Company's territories in Bengal. Lord Amherst declared war on February 24, 1824. Great difficulty was experienced in conducting operations because of the *pestilential* nature of the terrain. One expedition with gunboats proceeded up the Brahmaputra into Assam. Another marched by land through Chittagong into Arakan, as the Bengal sepoys refused to go by sea. A third and the strongest sailed from Madras direct to the mouth of the Irrawaddy. The war dragged on for more than two years. Rangoon fell on May 11, 1824, and Proma (The capital of Lower Burma) on April 25, 1825. Hostilities were ended by the treaty of Yandaboo concluded on February 1826. By this treaty the king of the Ava agreed to cede the provinces of Arakan and Tenasserim to the British give up all claims to Assam, abstain from interference in Cachar and Jaintia, recognize the independence of Manipur, enter into a commercial treaty, agree to the appointment of a British Resident at Ava, and pay an indemnity of a crore of rupees. The king of Ava still retained the whole valley of the Irrawaddy down to the sea at Rangoon.

*Second Burmese war (1852).* Under Lord Dalhousie (1848-56) the Second Burmese war was fought in sharp contrast to the First. While the First had been provoked by military threats and the aggressive policy of the Burmese, the Second Burmese war was the result of ill-treatment of some European merchants at Rangoon and insults heaped on the captain of British frigate who had been sent to remonstrate. Lord Dalhousie's through-going preparations for the campaign yielded good results. The lower valley of the Irrawaddy, from Rangoon to Proma, was occupied in a few months and as the king of Alva refused to enter into negotiations, it was annexed by proclamation on December 20, 1852, under the name of Pegu.

### **Assam After 1826**

1826-Annexation of Assam by British completed. Assam was made a part of the Province of Bengal. Assam was divided into two commission—Upper Assam and Lower Assam.

1832-Division of Assam into the districts of Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang, Nagaon.

1832-Kochari Kingdom consisting of current districts of Kerbi Anglong, Cachar and other annexed to Assam, made part of Nagaon district.

1833-Upper Assam made an independent kingdom and Purandar Singh made the king.

1834-Independent Kochari kingdom re-established.

1835-Tea plantation inaugurated.

1835-Jaintia Hills were annexed to Assam.

1836-Assamese language was replaced by Bengali as the official language of Assam.

1838-Upper Assam again annexed by the British, districts of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur established.

1842-Matak kingdom around Sodiya annexed by British into Assam.

1850-Kochari kingdom re-annexed to Assam.

1866-Angami Naga kingdom annexed to Assam, made a district.

1869-Garo kingdom annexed to Assam, made a district.

1873-Assamese was once again made the official language of Assam after a period of 37 years.

1874-Assam was separated from Bengal and made into a separate province.

1898-Lushal kingdom annexed by British, made a district of Assam.

1905-12-Assam was made a part of the new province of East Bengal and Assam was put under a Lieutenant Governor.

1912-Division of Bengal ends. Assam was made a part of Bengal again. Assam was overseen by a Chief Commissioner.

1917-Kuki Naga kingdom was annexed to the district of Nagaland in Assam.

1919-Assam was made a separate province again. Sylhet was made a district of Assam.

1921-Governorship was created in Assam.

1947-District of Sylhet voted to join East Pakistan.

1951-Dewangiri in Kamrup ceded to Bhutan.

1963-District of Nagaland was separated from Assam and made into a state.

1972-NEFA, Garo and Khaasiyaa Hills became the State of Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura separated from Assam. Garo and Khaasiyaa Hills became the State of Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura also become a state. NEFA became the state of Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram also became a state in 1987.

Nalbari was a part of undivided Kamrup district till recent past. For many centuries the history of Kamrup is shrouded in great obscurity. However, it appears probable that a king of the line of Narak was displaced by a Bodo Chief whose line was subsequently driven eastward to the valley of the Dhansiri. Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang briefly lights up the corridors of history in the seventh century. King Bhaskaravarman enhanced the power and prestige of Kamarupa to an extent never dreamed before. The Naraka line was subsequently snapped by aboriginal onslaughts and a long spell of uncertainties followed. The kingdom at times stretched to the seas and shrank at other times into fragmented principalities.

Lower Assam ceased to matter much following the advent of the Ahoms in early thirteenth century save for a new decades beginning early sixteenth century when the illustrious Koch king, Naranarayana, considerably extended the limits of his western kingdom. The Koch glory was however, shortlived and faded out with the turn of the century. The coming of the Ahoms across the eastern hills in 1228 was the most noteworthy turning point in Assam history. The local tribes mostly yielded to the very first flashes of their swords while two powerful tribes, the Chutias and the Kacharis, gave in after long drawn fighting. The following six centuries were eventful for the land of golden bear as the Ahoms called Assam. The enviable rise of the Ahom power charged the Delhi emperors but all their seventeen incursions were abortive. The climax of the long drawn tug of war was the legendary battle of Saraighat near Guwahati, which gave the Ahoms a prestigious victory and the Ahom general, Lachit, immortal fame.

It was followed by spell of treacherous court intrigues until Rudra Singh, the Shivaji of the East, once again took Ahom glory to its zenith. The Ahom decline started with the uprising of the Moamaria Mahants in the 1780's.

The Ahoms were a Shan tribe from the kingdom of Pong in the upper Valley of the Irrawaddy, who, at the beginning of the 13th century A. D crossed the Patkai and settled in the south of the territory which now forms the districts of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur. They first overthrew the Chutia kingdom at Sadiya and afterwards the Kachari kingdom at Dimapur. At the beginning of the 17th century the Ahom kings began to intervene in the affairs of lower Assam. Godadhar Singh was the first king to definitely annex Kamrup to the Ahom territories but the zenith of their power was reached in the reign of his successor Rudra Singh (1695-1714). When he died at Guwahati in 1714 A. D. his son erected Rudreswar temple in memory of the sad event, which still

stands on the north bank of the river opposite to Guwahati. From the middle of the 18th century the Ahom power began to decline. Lakshmi Singh reign (1769-80) was signalized by the outbreak of the Moamaria insurrection. After initial successes, the Moamarias were defected and very cruelly dealt with. He was succeeded by his son Gauri Nath (1780-95) in whose reign the Moamaria insurrection broke out a new war with increased violence. At first the kings' troops met with some measures of success and orders were issued outlawing the rebellions and authorising any person to kill any Moamaria he might meet. According to the Ahom chronicler, "the villagers thereupon massacred the Moamarias with their wives and children without mercy." The rebels to their turn were not slow to make reprisals. They plundered the country on every side and the burning villages appear like a ball of fire. The ordinary operations of agriculture were suspended. No harvest could be raised and famine killed those whom the sword had spared.

In the year 1786, the Moamaria rebels under Bharat Singh inflicted a decisive defeat upon royal troops and took the capital Rangpur by storm. Soon after, Gauri Nath died and was succeeded by his son Kameleswar Singh, in whose region the country remained in a state of great disorder, that was chiefly due to the attacks of the Daflas. He was succeeded by his son Chandra Kanta Singh in 1809. The Bor Phukan or Viceroy of Guwahati incurred the suspicion of the Bor Gohain or Prime Minister and fled to Burma via Calcutta. At the beginning of 1816, the Burmese army crossed the Patkoi, re-instated the Bor Phukan, but shortly after their withdrawal, Chandra Kanta was deposed and Purandar Singh appointed in his stead. The banished monarch appealed to the Burmese, who in 1818, returned with a large force and replaced him on the throne. They soon, however, made it clear that they intended to retain hold in Assam.



The Burmese were guilty of gross atrocities during the occupation of the country, burning and plundering villages. Assam groaned under the oppressions and lawless tyranny of the Burmese whose barbarous and inhuman policy depopulated the country by more than one half of its population, which had already been thinned by successive civil wars and the Moamaria insurrections. Chandra Kanta fled to Goalpara, and from British territory began a series of abortive attempts to recover his lost kingdom. In the meantime, however, causes of quarrel arose between the British and the Burmese and in 1824 war was declared by the British Government and a force was sent to the valley of Brahmaputra. The Burmese evacuated Guwahati without striking a blow, such fighting as there was, taking place in the districts of Sibsagar and Nowgong, Rongpur was occupied in 1825 and in the following year by the treaty of Yandbahoo, Assam was ceded to the East India Company.

Most of the Kamrup district hills and people are associated with mythology and they are treated as objects of pilgrimage by many generations of Hindus. The most well known is Kamakhya or Nilachal Hill on the top of which stands the Kamakhya temple. Towards the southern and the western side of the peak is situated the town of Kamakhya which also has many temples. Most of these temples have a long history behind them. Other hills which have an important place in mythology or the respect of the local people are Buragohain Parbat, Gumi Hill, Gobardhan, The Kurpara, Tiniboini, Buragohain, Chilali, Burna, Chamua, Dakhotia Hill Maliata Dhomora, Kameswar, Sidheshwar, Soupara, Poa Mecca, Hathimura, Madan Kamadeva and Gopeswar. The hills in Western Kamrup are covered with sal trees and in the outer ridges of the Khasi Hills, the Khasis and Garos sometimes raise lac, chillis betelnuts and vegetables.

Located on the south bank of the Brahmaputra, the town is known as the 'Pancha Tirtha' or seat of the pilgrimages. The shrine of Kamakhya, a top the Nilachal

sill is considered one of the famous pithasthans and during the Ambubachi festival it draws devotees from all over the country. Umananda fondly referred to as the Peacock island is the seat of Siva temple. During the Sivaratri festival, hundreds of devotees ferry a cross to the mid-stream temple 'Navagraha' atop the Chitrasala hill, is a temple of the nine planets and was in the remote past a renowned centre of astrological and astronomical studies. That is also one reason why Guwahati was called Pragjyotishpura or the city of eastern lights in the past. Vasisthashram supposed to be the ancient hermitage of sage Vasistha, houses a temple in very idyllic environs. Ugratara temple is located in the heart of the city. Atop the Sukleswar hillock also within the central part of the city, is the Janardana temple. On the north bank is *Aswaklanta* where Arjuna and his weary horse, according to legends, had rested during his Aswamedha journey.

Guwahati is linked with the north bank by the magnificent Saraighat bridge connecting Pandu a busy river port of south bank with Amingaon, an industrially developing township of North Guwahati.

Hajo, 20 kilometres off Guwahati is a place of pilgrimage of equal importance for Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists. The Hindus visit its Hayagraba Madhava temple of Kedar. The mosque at Hajo is believed to have one fourth sanctity of Mecca and is hence called Poa-Mecca. The Buddhists cherish the belief that Lord Buddha had his nirvana in this town.

The north-eastern region of India is the most varied, but also the least visited by the foreign travellers. Before independence, the entire north-east was known as Assam Province. Various factors including ethnic and linguistic divide led to the formation of seven separate states, now popularly called the seven sisters. The following is the new set-up of the former Assam Province after re-organisation:

<i>Name of State</i>	<i>Capital</i>	<i>Area (Km)</i>	<i>Population</i>
Assam	Dispur	78,438	22,294,562
Manipur	Imphal	22,300	1,826,714
Meghalaya	Shillong	22,400	1,760,626
Nagaland	Kohima	16,500	1,215,573
Tripura	Agartala	10,400	2,744,827
Arunachal	Itanagar	83,600	852,392
Mizoram	Aizawl	21,000	686,217

*Source:* 1991 census

In many ways, north-east is very much unlike the rest of India. It is an area inhabited by a great number of tribes who speak a hundred different dialects and languages. In Arunachal Pradesh alone over 50 distinct languages are spoken. In some ways, these hill tribes are similar to tribes found in other parts of the Himalayas. The tribal people here have more similarity with those found in Burma, Thailand and Laos. During the British period, the Christian missionaries found the tribesmen an easy prey for conversion under the state patronage. The missionaries were the only people to get Inner Line Permits to enter the tribal areas.

Chief-Editor 'Yojana' Shri Anurag Mishra in his introductory note to December 2005 issue has recorded that the north-eastern region with a landmass of 2, 62,500 square kilometres comprising eight states, namely *Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura* and *Sikkim* is a land-locked region with 19 per cent of its border being international. Despite being rich in natural resources with fertile land, rich forests and mineral deposits, development of the region has lagged behind the rest of the country due to historical reasons. The per capita income in North-Eastern Region on an average is Rs. 12, 918 only, as compared with the national average of Rs. 17,823 at the current prices of 2001-02. The

traditional economy is simple. Shifting cultivation is still being practiced. Economic growth has taken place in recent years following government's efforts.

Removal of infrastructure bottlenecks, healthcare, provisions, basic minimum services, creating conducive environment for private investment are the important priority issues. The lack of expertise/professionals in the government bodies in the region also creates problems. In the North-Eastern Council meeting, the prime minister had suggested to involve people to outsourcing of talent. Investments of academics, civil society, Panchayats, etc. will improve accountability upgrading of employment skills of the work force, students especially the youth is another important area.

North-Eastern region has been attracting illegal immigrants. The problems created by the cross-border movement of people between two countries say Bangladesh and India can be addressed only with more trust and co-operation between the two countries. In the long run, only an agreement and a bilateral institution responsible for managing the cross-border movement of people can address the problem.

It is a fact that peace and development go hand in hand. There is an urgent need to bring back insurgent groups to the national mainstream and involve them in developmental activities through rehabilitation plans. The problem should be studied in co-ordination with social scientists, healthcare and employment opportunities can surely enhance their participation in development activities.

Shri Bhanu Pratap Shukla in his book entitled 'What Ails India's North-East? (Surchi Sahitya-Jhandewalan, New Delhi-1980) under the 'title conspiracy' has recorded that the problem of migration from East Bengal, later on East Pakistan and now Bangladesh, to Assam has a history of about 75 years. The idea was first mooted in 1906 when at

the invitation of Nawab Salim Ullah Khan of Dacca, prominent Muslims of India had gathered at Dacca to deliberate over the formation of the Muslim League as suggested by the then Viceroy Lord Curzon to a Muslim delegation which had met him earlier in Simla. At a public meeting held at that time, Nawab Salim Ullah Khan exhorted the Muslims to migrate to Assam and settle there. Just a year back in 1905, Bengal had been partitioned and the Muslim Majority East Bengal was joined with Assam to form a new Province of East Bengal and Assam. At that time Assam was very sparsely populated and was covered mostly with jungles. But hundred years ago it was not so. Powerful Ahom kings had not only ruled Assam successfully for about 500 years but had also repelled the Mughals, invasions decisively. But when internal feuds cropped up in the Royal family, they fell a prey to Burmese invasions which not only destroyed the throne but also exterminated practically the whole population there. So when in 1826, after the Indo-Burmese war, Assam came under the British rule, much of the country had reverted to jungles. Sir William Hunter, commenting over the first ever census of 1881, remarked that the valley of the Brahmaputra covered an area three times that of the Surma valley but it had less population. Nature abhors Vacuum and it was natural that people from outside should come and fill it. And it was to this end that the Muslims of East Bengal were being exhorted to by the Nawab of Dacca.

When during partition of the country when Assam except Sylhet district and West Bengal did not become part of Pakistan, the plan of Adivasistan went awry. On that occasion Juel Lakra, Inchange of Lutheron Mission, Ranchi, had visited Germany, without any passport. First time he went to Germany on 12th July 1947, just one month before the partition of the country. Second time when Germany was under military command of allied powers headed by Mr. Eisenhower. Thirdly he entered Germany when it was

next to impossible. He was taken to the highest military office in Hamburg and was permitted to go to Berlin without a passport. He was taken through a British zone to the American Zone and there he was treated as a government guest. This indicates clearly that both the British and American military commands were interested in his visit. The German Lutheran Church was already active in Chhota Nagpur Area of the proposed Adivasistan. During the Second World War the administration of the German Lutheran Church was handed over to the American Lutheran Church. Thus in Nagaland the American Baptist Mission and in Chhota Nagpur the American Lutheran Church were active.

The interest of the Western Powers in this region is further reinforced by a news despatch released from Berlin captioned "Independent Bengal" with the dateline of Dacca 7-12-66 and released by Agencia International De Frensa. It read—

"The separatist readers are said to have agreed that a united and independent Bengal with its capital at Calcutta, should include east Pakistan, the Indian States of West Bengal, Assam, Nagaland, neighbouring territories of Tripura and Manipur, Indian protectorate of Sikkim and Bhutan. These territories have a total area of 1,70,000 square miles and a population of more than 100 million persons, 90% of whom speak Bengali. The separatists are counting upon United States and other Western Powers to give them the necessary assistance. They are confident that they would be interested in establishing an independent state in South-East Asia, which would help normalize conditions there and which would provide a shield against Chinese aggression.

As a result of all these moves we find today that not only have Mizoram, Nagaland and Meghalaya been converted into Christian states but demands for independence are also being raised from these states. At the time of Independence of India, the demand for an independent Nagaland was made by only a handful of hardcore Christian Nagas. According to the evidence which

came up before the Bardoloi Committee, the number of Nagas demanding independence was only five thousand. But later on due to the terroristic activities, other Nagas also became their supporters. In the year 1947 the percentage of Christians in Nagaland was only 20%, most of them being concentrated only in the district of Mokokchung. In the story of Longri Ao written by Richard G. Beers and published from America, the following excerpts will be revealing:

“In the midst of highly charged excitement over their own future it was learnt that the Indian Congress party was opposed to Naga Independence”. We must have our freedom. These are our hills. Longri participated actively in the intense debate. He had long since become convinced that Christ's gospel taught men to join in the struggle for human dignity, uplift and freedom. Christ, living in and through his followers, would transform the life of the people; a Christian nation would provide the stage on which this great action might take place.” A great opportunity lies before us. We shall not only be a free nation, we shall also be a Christian one...“The Naga National Council became the rallying point in the struggle for independence. They were those who believed that violent action was not only necessary but justified. This faction soon centered around a fiery revolutionary, A. Z. Phizo, a member of the Angami tribe. How the missionaries were interested in this movement is amply demonstrated from what they themselves have written in the book regarding the “Growth of Baptist Church in Nagaland”. They say – ‘An Independent Sovereign Nagaland’ was the ultimate aim of the Naga nationalists. The Naga National Council was able to bring about an unusual unity of Naga people. They considered that India had a ‘Hindu Government’ and they had to fight against it to preserve their Naga Christianity.

Writing about the growth of Christianity in Meghalaya K. I. Aier writes that – ‘The establishment of the Meghalaya State without bloodshed and ill will was possible because of the political genius so successfully demonstrated by the Garos and the Khasis. While the Nagas and Mizos, the fellow travellers in politics, resorted to violence with a view to achieving their political aspirations, the Garos and Khasis patiently and tactfully worked their way through

without shedding a drop of blood and without creating ill feelings with their neighbours. Capitan Williamson Sangma, who belongs to the Atong Sub-tribe of the Garos is a member of the Baghmara Baptist Church.

It is clear how the Christian missionaries attempt an all out attack to achieve their immediate and long-term objectives. On the one hand they encourage the underground terrorist movements by giving them ideological and monetary support. A statement from the 5th Assembly of world Christian Conference held at Nairobi in the year 1975 says, – “In this connection it should be noted that Churches and their foreign missions agencies in the west ought to re-examine their use of human and material resources so that they can effectively support the liberation efforts and contribute to human dignity, in developing countries in ways that are beyond the scope of traditional patterns of giving and receiving.

The Mizo National Front, the Naga National Council and Tripura National Volunteers are already engaged in insurgent activities in the respective states. An underground militant organization has been formed in Meghalaya under the name – ‘The Khasi Pnar National Council which distributed a notice-cum-appeal in the Hills on 4th July 1980 urging the people to liberate the Hills from foreign rule. It says all the enemies of the Hill people must get out immediately, otherwise their lenders would be liquidated in the peoples cause. The lender like Captain Manik Das, M. E. A had been executed for that purpose. The council urged all the Khasi Pnar to join the liberation movement for total independence.

It appealed to the United Nations, the U. S. A, U. K., West Germany, China, Japan and Russia to help the liberation movement – Please help us to be free from slavery by Indian leaders trying to crush our simple tribal masses. (Assam Tribune dated 21st July 1980).



In the year 1978, when Shri Morarji Desai, the then Prime Minister of India visited Nagaland, a delegation of Nagas went to meet him. When Shri Desai asked them as to who they were, they ensured that they were Christians. When he pointedly asked them whether they were Indians, an emphatic 'No' was their answer with a further remark that " We are Nagas". Shri Desai refused to talk to them. Even after the granting of statehood to Nagaland and Mizoram there is no let in the terrorist activities of the Naga National Council in Nagaland and Mizo National Front in Mizoram. The activities of the underground Nagas in adjoining Assam territory in the month of January 1979 when villages after villages were burnt down and people killed, sparing, however, the Muslims and the Christians; conspiracy of the M. N. F to kidnap and kill the Lieutenant Governor Shri N. P. Mathur of Mizoram in March 1979 which was, however, foiled by the alertness of the central government; stoppage of water supply for full 25 days to the Ramakrishna Mission Educational Institution at Cherrapunji having 700 inmates; serving of 'Quit Order' on the 'Vais' or non Mizos on 2nd June the same year by the M. N. F followed by the brutal murder in broad day light of a young Hindu S. D. O; the killing of Hindus especially Bengalis and burning the houses in Shillong during October, November and December 1978 and turning out the non-tribal tenants from Christian owned houses thereby forcing them to take shelter in refugee camps under the plan to drive them out the nationalistic elements from these states. Demand has also been made for the removal of all the central government offices from Shillong and the setting up of army cantonment near Shillong is also being opposed on the plea that the influx of a large number of outsiders will endanger the tribal identity of the Khasis and the Jaintias. Even Christian fathers have been arrested and their vehicles taken into police custody in connection with the brutal murders of Mr. Manik Das, M. L. A., and Mr. Marak, an Ex M. L. A of Meghalaya who were shot down on 15th December, 1979. The chief minister and other ministers of Nagaland,

Meghalaya, and Mizoram who were so vocal in denouncing Shri Omprakash Tyagi's Freedom of Religion Bill were mysteriously silent when a Shiv Temple at Rangapahar near Dimapur in Nagaland was desecrated and defiled and idols destroyed by Christian miscreants who read from the Bible before committing their heinous act. Mr. Martin Narayan Majaw, a Christian M. L. A. belonging to the Public Demands Implementation Connection Party (PDIC) said openly on the floor of the Assembly that even the Bible has proclaimed that the right of self preservation would sanction even killings (p. 62: What Ails Indians' North-East by B. P. Shukla-Sarnchi Sahitya. Jhandewala. New Delhi-110055). He is credited with the remark that it would take one month to drive out the *Bengalis, Nepalis* and a *single day* to drive out the rest of the Indians from Meghalaya.

After having their hold on Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland, they have now turned their guns towards Manipur and Tripura. In this area about 70% population consists of Vaishnavites. This Hindu pocket in an otherwise Christian dominated area is an eyesore to the Christian missionaries who are dreaming of carving out a contiguous Christian majority area, as formerly conceived of by Robert Reid, with the ultimate objections of forming a U. S. A. i.e., United States of Assam, to be used by the western power in their global strategy. As an eminent journalist of Kerala, Shri Joseph Idamaruku, has stated in an article published in Kerala Shabdham a Malayalam weekly from Quilon (Issue 8th July, 1979).

It cannot be denied that the vulture eyes of worlds Christianity are cast on this country.

The North-East Region Students Unity (NERSU), a Christian sponsored organization had said in the year 1979 that we must take our destiny into our own hands and our only chance of survival lies in complete separation from India which was in fact conveyed some decades ago by Phizo, the leader of the Nagas. They also said that we need

a leader, a great leader, and we can hopefully look forward to our friend the great Phizo to come and take the land. Let the New Year bells from Kohima and Aizwal, from Guwahati and Imphal, from Shillong and Itanagar herald the beginning of this new era. Let us from that day cease to call ourselves Indians.... Earlier plan which was circulated in the year 1966 from Berlin is presented here in a modified form. It says—No wonder the various peoples of the region – The Nagas, the Mizos, and the Manipuris—are demanding complete Independence. Politically not to speak of hills, even the Brahmaputra valley never formed a subservient part of India except in times of British. Even the British annexation of 1826 was not legally binding on the government of the Kingdom of Assam. Assam was never a party in the treaty of Yandabo.

Shri P. K. Bandyopadhyay, the author of 'The North east Saga, Publications Division (2005) has recorded that the Sanskritization Process with the priests and warriors spread from the Gangetic plain to the Brahmaputra valley. References in the Adi Kand of the Ramayana, the Puranas and Tantras bear testimony to the eastward travel of the influence of the Aryavarta. Bhagadatta, the king of Pragyotisha is said to have taken part in the battle of Kurukshetra with a large army of Kiratas as an ally of the Kauravas. The Puranic legends say that the ruling dynasties of Pragyotisha and Kamrupa have come down from Vishnu. The son of Vishnu and the Earth was Naraka and Bhagadatta was Narak's son. The role of Ghatotkachh, the son of Bhima by Hidimba, the queen of Kachari Kingdom on the side of the Pandavas is part of the mythological tradition. Sonitpur near Tezpur, the mythical king Banasura, friend of Narak and Father of Usha, consort of Anirudha and their references in the folkfore, Mairanka or Mahiranga near Guwahati, all show the remnants of the cultural extension of the Gangetic belt. Kalidasa's 'Raghuvarsam' says that king Raghu conquered Pragyotisha kingdom crossing the Lohit river. The Dah Prabatiya gate and rock cut of images of Agni,

Siva and Durga near Tezpur, the Kamakhya temple on the Nilachal hill, the temple at Hajo and Mahabhairab temple near Tezpur are examples of the same tradition. One can see the early Buddhist influence in the construction of the domes of temples in the shape of Shikharas, stupas and chaityas.

Another historic travel in the seventh century was to unravel the mystery of the kingdom—Kamrupa. This time by a famous Chinese traveler, Yuan Chuang. He visited the land during the reign of Bhaskaravarman (594-650 A. D) and described different events and aspects of life and society in his travelogues. He wrote that the kingdom of Kamrupa was on the north-east of Pundravardhan and he entered Kamrupa crossing the river Karotoya. Kamrupa was then enjoying its heydays. King Harsavardhan and Bhaskaravarman were very good friends. Banbhata's Harsacharita corroborates the glorious days of Kamrupa and the participation of Bhaskaravarman in the great Buddhist congeration at Kanonj.

Shri P. K. Bandyopadhyay in his book 'The North East say's has recorded on page 105 that the percentages of people below parerty line is 36.9 in Assam, 34.44 in Tripura, 33.87 in Meghalaya, 33.47 in Arunachal Pradesh, 32.67 in Nagaland, 28.54 in Manipur and 19.47 in Mizoram as in the year 1999-2000.

The north-east has still some vestiges of disenchantment and elements of extremism. The organizations like United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) and some such organizations in Tripura and Manipur continue to remain problem areas. Efforts are continuing to curb the extremist movements and bring them into the mainstream of society, within the framework of the Indian Constitution. In *December 2003 an interim Bodoland Territorial Council* was set up to fulfil the aspirations of the Bodos. Over 2600 Bodo Liberation

Tiger activists surrendered their weapons. This happened after many rounds of intensive talks between the central government and Assam government and the Bodo Liberation Tiger leaders.

The Bodoland Territorial Council with forty-six Executive Members would have administrative and financial powers. A new chapter of peace and development is expected to unfold soon.

The Naga outfit NSCN (Isaak Swu and Ti Muivah group) is having talks with the Government of India emissaries for a peaceful solution.

### Voices of Various Insurgent Groups

A number of organizations were formed to give expression to the separatist urges of the elite classes. These included the Assam Association (1903); Asam Sahitya Sabha (1917); Asom Chhatra Sammelan (1919); Assam Samgrakshini Sabha (1926). The last one was later transformed into the Asom Jatiya Mahasabha. A notable writer and poet like Ambikagiri Roychaudhary spoke of 'Asomiya Swaraj' and stated that Swaraj for India might not bring Swaraj for Assam. The Samgrakshini Sabha demanded 'Assam for the Assamese. The Jatiya Sabha submitted a memorandum to the British *inter alia*, it was stated that 'Assam for the Assamese is the battle cry of all the true sons of Assam'.

After independence also, it was asserted in a meeting of the Jatiya Mahasabha, Kamrup Branch, that Assam should come out of the Indian union and become an independent century. Such sentiments which were supported before independence by members of the Assamese intelligentsia like Jnannath Bora and Nilmoni Phukan, continued to get the support of others of their ilk after independence also. S. K. Baruah stated. 'Culturally, racially and linguistically, every non-Assamese is a foreigner in Assam. In this connection we must bear in mind that Assam from the very ancient times, never formed a part of India'.

A terrorist organization by the name of Assam Peoples Liberation Army (APLA) was also formed about the same time by one Arpan Bezbaruah at Tezpur. They did commit a number of terrorist acts including the killing of police officers before the Assam State Assembly Election in 1983. However, gradually, they faded out of existence because of their own weaknesses and many of their members joined the ULFA.

The ULFA has also established contact with the Kachin Independent Army (KIA) of Myanmar and through them they have been able to procure arms and other assistance from China also. The ULFA is also in touch with the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) and Peoples Revolutionary Army of Langleipak in Manipur. It is suspected that they have plans to establish their bases in Bangladesh also with the help of the Meitei insurgents located in Bangladesh.

The motives of the ULFA are as under:

- (a) To obtain Assams' sovereignty by armed revolution.
- (b) To safeguard the people and interests of Assam and those of its neighbouring land, that is, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Auranchal Pradesh and Tripura.
- (c) To have full control over the revenue resources of Assam like oil and natural gas, forests, etc.
- (d) To gain public support against Indian and non-Indian exploitation.
- (e) To stand against any suppression and repression of the Assamese masses.

Since October 2000 the ULFA has suddenly raised the level of violence. In a series of some exceedingly brutal massacres, they killed about 60 non-Assamese (mostly Marwaris and Biharis) people including young children in the districts of Sibsagar, Tinsukhia, Dibrugarh and Nalbari.



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