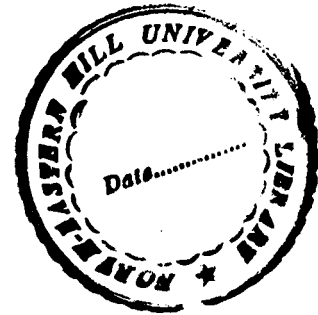


**DEMOGRAPHIC CONSEQUENCES OF ETHNIC  
CONFLICT ON SANTHAL WOMEN IN BODO AREAS  
OF ASSAM: A STUDY OF KOKRAJHAR DISTRICT**

ABSTRACT



**SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF THE  
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN GEOGRAPHY**

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## ABSTRACT

Wars and conflicts, whether internal or international, remain pervasive phenomena affecting mostly low-income countries. Demographic factors, such as differential population dynamics by ethnic or religious group, or the number of young persons in a population, often play a role in the causes of conflict. The demographic consequences of war and violence include forced migration-refugees and internally displaced populations (IDPs), increased mortality and changes in fertility and family structure.

The ethnic violence in Bodo areas of Assam following their demand for a separate state has certainly changed the world for many. The consequences of this clash have been many and varied for different people. Needless to say that the women are the worst victims of the conflict as they have to face a completely new world on the wake of displacement, family breakdown, loss of kith and kin and loss of support base-both economic and social. The present research aims at evaluating the impact of the ethnic violence on the women in this context. However, it may be noted that the impact must have been greater on those women who are on the receiving end of the conflict. It is the Santhal women who have been more displaced than their counterparts among the immigrant Muslims or the Bodos. It was proposed in this research therefore to consider the impact of the conflict only on the Santhal women while recognizing the fact that the impact of the violent conflict on the women belonging to other ethnic groups and similarly affected by the conflict could not have been anything far too different.

It is also a known fact that any ethnic conflict results in a serious imbalance in the demographic profile of the community. The ethnic conflict in the Bodo dominated areas has changed the demographic scene on an unprecedented scale. There has been large-scale

displacement and redistribution of people resulting in changes in the growth rate of population and changes in age and sex-ratio, changes in occupation due to loss of land and due to migration to relief camps and other areas. All these demographic changes have an impact on affected women who may experience a host of problems ranging from increased reproductive burden, loss of family support, widowhood and sexual harassment to increasing proportion of women headed families and employment etc. It was proposed in this research to evaluate these aspects as far as the affected Santhal women are concerned.

For the purpose of the present study the areas where *Santhals* constitute a significant proportion of the population of Assam has been selected as the study area. Since the Santhals living in Kokrajhar district have been the worst hit due to the clash between the Bodos and the Santhals, the study focussed only on this area. Kokrajhar is one of the few districts in Assam that has been experiencing constant rise in the share of scheduled tribe population in its total. The reasons are a mix of high natural growth rate in the scheduled tribe population as well as migration of Bodo tribes into this district in the wake of a demand for separate Bodoland state during the last few decades. Kokrajhar may be described as the gateway to the north-eastern region of India. The district has a total area of 3,169.22 sq. km. and a total population of 9, 30,404 according to the 2001 Census. The district is located on the north bank of the river Brahmaputra that slices the state of Assam into two, identified as north and south banks. The district is bounded on the north by the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan, by Dhubri district on the south, Bongaigaon district on the east and the Indian state of West Bengal on the west.

The Santhals are largely concentrated in Kokrajhar district. Elsewhere they account for an insignificant proportion of their total population. The district Kokrajhar was originally

a part of undivided Goalpara district. The undivided Goalpara district had a highest share of Santhal population in Assam. According to 1971 and 1991 census the total Santhal population in Goalpara was 55703 and 97086 respectively. On July 1, 1983 the Kokrajhar Sub-division was upgraded into Kokrajhar district with its Headquarter at Kokrajhar town. Bulk of the Santhali population is concentrated in the district of Kokrajhar, their number being as high as 81725 persons within in Assam accounting for over 60 per cent of the total Santhal speakers enumerated in Assam in the 1991 Census.

The present study aimed at getting an insight into the consequences such conflicts have on women. Needless to mention, all conflicts have differential impact on different social and economic groups with regard to their capacity to cope with the situation. Ethnic conflicts have serious consequences for women largely due to their position in the family and in the society at large. One important consideration is their reproductive role and responsibility. They are most vulnerable to conflicting situations. The nature of armed conflicts changed dramatically during the latter half of the twentieth century, with casualties among civilians increasingly outnumbering those of military personnel. Women and girls became especially vulnerable in such conflicts. Since the end of the Cold War, women have been the primary victims in ethnic conflicts, constituting the bulk of civilian deaths and displaced refugees. The impact of conflicts on women and girls' reproductive and sexual health can never be underestimated. Their psychological, reproductive and overall well-being is often severely compromised in times of conflict. Conflicts tend to increase the incidence of sexual violence; rape; sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDS; and unwanted pregnancies. In addition, essential social services, such as

medical facilities, on which women heavily depend for their well-being, are greatly disrupted by armed conflicts.

Given this background the broad objectives of this research were to get an insight into the ethnic dimension of the population redistribution in the areas of Bodo concentration; to study related demographic changes which are directly linked to the ethnic conflict and to assess the consequences of the demographic changes brought about by the conflict on the *Santhal* women.

The research questions placed before the research included the following: what are the consequences of conflict for morbidity, and mortality? How does conflict affect fertility, reproductive health or household composition? What are the consequences of conflict in terms of forced migration and other types of internal mobility? What are the demographic repercussions of forced migration?

Much of the data required for this research has been obtained from primary sources particularly through a survey in the Relief camps and in the Rehabilitated villages in the study area. Census publications pertaining to population and language tables have been used to analyse patterns in the distribution and growth of Santhal and Bodo population at district, and village level. The secondary data also has been collected from District Commissioner Office Kokrajhar.

The Study has considered a time span of about 30 years, i.e., 1971 to 2001 while making use of secondary sources of data available in Census to understand the changes in vital demographic indicators. An attempt was made to assess the spatial dimension of the change by a reference to the re-distribution of the Non Schedule Caste, Scheduled caste and, Scheduled Tribes to ascertain the areas where redistribution happened. By identifying the

villages from where the Santhals have migrated to Relief camps, rehabilitated villages and analysing the demographic characteristics of the population living in those villages a general picture of their demographic characteristics before the conflict began has been obtained to be compared with their present demographic characteristics. The comparison has been made on such vital demographic indicators as the household size, sex ratio, literacy and occupational structure using field data from selected relief camp and rehabilitated villages for the year 1996-2004.

The selection of relief camps is based on a fair representation of the Santhals from all over the district. Six relief camps and four rehabilitated village were selected for the collection of data and it was ensured that these relief camps and rehabilitated villages have Santhals coming from most areas of the district. The impact of the conflict on Santhal women and the consequences of the conflict has been analyzed with reference to the following broad demographic indicators as changes in fertility, marital status with special reference to widowhood and remarriage, problems with regard to reproductive burden, reproductive health, mortality and morbidity, changes in occupational structure, changes in house hold composition etc.

This study was organised into six broad chapters. The first chapter outlined the design of the research. The second chapter dealt with spatial distribution of the Santhal and chronology of the Bodo-Santhal conflict including a note on their distribution in India with special reference to Assam and the causes related to their migration. The chapter also studied the distribution and core and periphery of Santhals in India and in Assam too. The third chapter dealt with redistribution and ethnic homogenization with a special reference to Kokrajhar district. The fourth and fifth chapters dealt with the impact of the conflict on

Santhal women living in selected relief camps and selected rehabilitated villages respectively.

Fight for territorial supremacy was one of the triggering factors for the Bodo-Santhal riots in 1996. Both communities had been living in peace in the area for decades. But, with the signing of the Bodo Accord in February 1993 between the All Bodo Students Union and the Centre came the new autonomous structure called the Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC). Only those villages with 50 per cent Bodo population were to be included into the BAC. This provision is generally believed to have encouraged a section of Bodos, including armed militants of different hues, to attempt ethnic cleansing - driving out the non-Bodos and converting vast stretches into Bodo majority areas. The divide today between the two communities is more than complete. The demand for Bodoland and issues like protest against Muslim, Bengalis and Santhals in the region reveals that the Bodos adopted the method of achieving their demand by the means of "ethnic cleansing" and "violence". The ensuing clash between ethnic groups has left many homeless and without the social support base which they enjoyed before the conflict erupted. The Santhals, due largely to their immigrant status and lacking political and economic resources, were naturally the worst hit. There is still a lack of clarity about the total area of Bodoland Territorial Council; the number of villages included and in future the villages might get included within the council, its total population and 'ethnic mix' of that area. The 'ethnic mix' comprises the Hindu Assamese, the Adivasis, the Hindu Bengali and the Muslim communities. All these communities have a reason to be apprehensive on the decision taken in support of Bodos forming Bodoland Territorial Council and extending its area by including the villages with less than 50 percent of Bodo population to form contiguous region. As they view the land

equally as their homeland. The setting up of the Bodoland Territorial Council, without clarifying these issues, and removing these apprehensions, is likely to be one of the most problematic aspects of the functioning of the Bodoland Territorial Council. Given the violence that marked the agitation in all its phases, a resumption of similar sectarian violence for fulfilling further future demands is very much on the cards.

Although the confrontation has taken an 'ethnic' dimension and the Memorandum of Settlement speaks about the Bodos forming Bodoland Territorial Council fulfilling the economic, educational, and linguistic aspirations and the preservation of the land rights, socio-cultural and ethnic identity of the people residing in the region, are likely to be exploited by the Bodos against the minority on all aspects of life.

The minority communities who are at the receiving end over the region now started to retaliate by mushrooming up their own militant groups' like Bengali Hindu formed there group Bengali liberation tigers, Adivasis formed Adivasi Cobra Militants of Assam and Muslim Fundamental organisations formed Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam, Muslim United liberation Front of Assam, all these groups are now better equipped to resist Bodo extremists. The Bodo movement has paved the way for the minorities to follow the same lines drawn by the Bodo extremists and show their retaliation to Bodo autonomy over the region.

Santhals are the most badly affected by conflict among all other minor communities. Presently they are in the most worsen state with lack of social development with poor economic background. Many of them have faced displacement twice within a short period of time and are staying in relief camps for more than a decade. The resettlement and

rehabilitation of the devastated Santhals is still a low priority issue in the political agenda of the state government as well as Bodoland Territorial Council.

The significant issue that is addressed in this research however does not relate to the cause and the solution to the problem. The basic issue is the impact of the conflict on women in a situation of ethnic unrest, displacement, fear and uncertainty of the future. The Santhal women are of particular interest as they are in the receiving end of the ethnic clash in the wake of the formation of Bodoland Territorial Council.

As far as the tribal population is concerned, this segment is highly concentrated in three major pockets in Assam: lower part of northern Brahmaputra valley mostly inhabited by the Bodos, Rabhas and the Tiwa communities; in the south central parts considering of the two hill districts (North Cachar Hills and Karbi Anglong) of Assam where the Karbis and the Kacharis dominate and the third pocket is located in the north-eastern corner (Dhemaji district) of Assam which too contain a sizeable proportion of the Bodos in the total Scheduled Tribe population.

The Scheduled Caste population is highly concentrated in the southern districts of the Barak valley. The two other areas of their concentration are found in Morigaon in the central part and Bongaigaon district in the western part of the state.

On the other hand, the Non-Scheduled population is distributed all over the state though the extent of their dominance is inversely related to the areas of concentration of the Scheduled Tribes. The most interesting aspect of the ethnic composition of Assam relates to the fact that the Scheduled Tribe population is distributed both in hills as well as in the plains. The Bodo Tribes are by and large confined to the northern bank of the Brahmaputra Valley.

At the state level, the share of the Scheduled Tribe population increased rapidly during the period 1971-91, but declined subsequently. The Bodo population too increased its share in the total as well as in the Scheduled Tribe segment in the same period. The increase in the share of the tribal population as also of the Bodos appears to be due to high natural increase in their population. This increase in the proportion of the Scheduled Tribe as well as that of the Bodos has been responsible in a relative decline in the share of the Non-Scheduled population over the period due largely to lower natural increase in its population.

The history of Santhal migration into Assam reveals aspects of their spatial concentration and clustering in the state. Ethnically a tribe and recognised as a Scheduled tribe in Bihar, Jhrkhand, Orissa and West Bengal, the Santhals who were brought to work in the tea gardens of Assam in early 19<sup>th</sup> Century are not recognised as a Scheduled tribe in Assam. To begin with the Santali immigrants were almost exclusively confined to the gardens; but later their descendants formed a sizeable chunk of the population in the districts of Darrang, Sonitpur, Nagaon, Jorhat, Golaghat, Dibrugarh, Cachar, Hailakandi, Karimganj and Tinsukia districts in upper Assam where the tea gardens were located. But later these 'tea tribes' moved to lower Assam too and were found in significant numbers in Kokrajhar and Bongaigon districts too.

The Santhal territory in the mainland remains little disturbed as far as their cores were concerned. Even the periphery remains highly compact revealing little distribution of the Santhal population in the mainland. However, there appears to be significant redistribution of Santhal immigrants in Assam as the initial livelihood available to them in the tea gardens has dwindled in scope forcing them to disperse themselves into a vast territory. Significantly, their core of concentration lies away from the major areas of tea

cultivation and is now located in Kokrajhar district and the adjoining areas. The Santhals now are a largely cultivating group and have diversified their livelihood systems in the wake of demographic increase in their population and limited opportunities in the tea gardens which are less labour intensive than before.

The Bodos who were far more widespread in their territorial distribution have also been subject to tremendous redistribution and are now confined to a much smaller territory in the north bank of the Brahmaputra river. At the district level, the Bodo population shows extreme clustering in just three districts- Goalpara, Kamrup, and Darrang (eight districts in 2001, after reorganisation of these three districts) located in lower Brahmaputra valley. These three (undivided) districts have experienced unprecedented rise in the proportion of the Bodo population during 1971-91 decades, a fact that cannot be simply explained by natural increase alone.

The redistribution of both the communities- the Bodos and the Santhals brought them face to face as the cores and peripheries of the two communities coincided significantly. It is this accident of history in the peopling of Assam that promoted one of the most serious ethnic conflicts for the political control over a territory. The ethnic clash between the two groups left many dead, homeless and without a sustainable livelihood. The impacts of the conflict, long after the settlement, have continued to affect all sections of the people in the territory.

There has been tremendous transfer of population among the three different ethnic groups namely the Bodos, the Scheduled Caste, and others. The Scheduled Caste as well as the Bodo population seems to have dispersed over more villages over the period of thirty years. The real decline in the presence of the Non- Scheduled component is rather alarming

whose presence has been getting highly restricted over the years. The Bodos on the other hand have substantially increased their presence in many more villages. It appears that the Bodos and the Scheduled Caste people filled the vacuum created by the Bengalis, Nepalese, Santhals and Assamese people in this period.

The analysis conclusively proved that the Bodos have been successful in evicting the Non-Bodo population in a large number of villages with whom the Bodos had been living for centuries. The fact that there has been a corresponding decline in exclusively dominated villages by the Non-Scheduled population clearly indicates that it is this segment of the population which has been evicted from their traditional habitations. The Non-Scheduled segment seems to have lost the battle and has redistributed itself in a manner to protect themselves in a fewer villages within the district or have taken shelter in the Relief camps.

The spatial patterning in this process of redistribution of ethnic groups reveals greater homogenization of ethnic areas within the district. The most glaring changes in this process of spatial homogenisation are seen with respect to the Scheduled Tribes (the Bodos) and the Non-Scheduled component. The exclusive Bodo areas became spatially contiguous and far more extensive in the period 1971-91. The pattern in the year 2001 becomes even more clear and extensive with the extension of areas of Bodo concentration further westwards into Kachugaon block and emergence of new area of high Bodo concentration in the southern part in the traditional stronghold of the Non-Scheduled population. On the contrary, the areas of extensive numerical dominance of the Non-Scheduled component in the entire southern belt underwent massive transformation and were confined to only small patches with large discontinuities. The Non-Scheduled population seems to have lost the battle in the process of its hegemony in terms of spatial contiguity. As a whole, the changes

in the pattern of concentration reveal greater ethnic homogenisation on space, reflecting a spatial dichotomy in the presence of the Scheduled Tribes (the Bodos) and the Non-Scheduled population.

Though there is some inter-block variation in this pattern of ethnic homogenisation the redistribution of population along ethnic lines however has been very pervasive in the entire district only varying in intensity.

Analysis of the trends in population growth at the village level too revealed tremendous inter village transfer of people along ethnic lines wherein a large number of villages belonging to the Bodos and the Scheduled Castes increased their dominance in villages increasing proportion of ethnically homogenous villages. On the other hand the Non-Scheduled population left many villages located in areas of the conflict. Only a small proportion of villages saw extraordinary rise in their population indicating some inter village transfer of the Non-Scheduled population. Evidently, these villages belonged to the most affected Santhals people who were organising themselves to counter Bodo onslaught. The period between 1991 and 2001 is characterised by a process of further consolidation as evident from a net decline in population belonging to all segments without a corresponding increase in the proportion of villages that experienced substantive rise in the total population. Evidently such villages are the ones where they had small numerical presence. Villages experiencing extraordinary increase in population were extremely few cutting across ethnic lines contrary to the earlier phase. The growth data is a sufficient clue to the fact that more villages attained ethnic homogeneity during the 1991-2001 decade.

The most significant facts emerged from the analysis is that of desertion of villages by a particular ethnic group. The fact that desertion from villages cut across ethnic

boundaries reveals the unprecedented nature of population redistribution and ethnic homogenisation of village population. Evidently the villages that experienced decline of population by an ethnic group became more ethnically homogenous. This process of desertion of villages has to be seen in terms of the ethnic homogenisation that had set in motion in the context of the ethnic clash between the Bodos and the Non-Bodo segment.

Statistical measure of the extent of redistribution revealed extraordinary inter-village transfer of people cutting across ethnic lines. Thus it is clear that the process of redistribution has been highly localised and is of intra-district in character. The localised nature of redistribution too points to the fact that it was largely an effect of the ethnic conflict within the district and that though there has been extraordinary transfer of people along ethnic lines, it has largely taken place within the district. It must be mentioned here that the dissimilarity index only shows a statistical measure of the extent of re-distribution and does not specify the causes which may be either due to differential natural growth in their population or due to inter village transfer of population. However, it can be easily concluded with reference to widespread ethnic homogenization that this redistribution is more due to the latter than the former.

Ever since the conflict respondents of relief camps and rehabilitated villages reported that they are being displaced several times outside and within the state to hide. After coming back to camps also they kept on moving from one camp to another in search of better place to stay or by official orders. Nearly all the respondents reported conflict, threat in their own villages as the main reasons for the displacement. Relief camps to them are much safer place than their villages, which are located near the Bodo villages.

The analysis of the demographic consequences of the conflict on the Santhals in general and on the Santhal women in particular and those living in the relief camps revealed that the respondents and their family members have suffered long and continuous strife induced displacement. The respondents in the relief camps have experienced displacement since the onset of the conflict. While hiding themselves from the Bodos at the time of the conflict they all moved out and got displaced several times from one place to another.

The respondents along with their household members are staying at the relief camps for nearly a decade. Many of them did not go back to their villages due to renewed attacks on their life and property. While staying out of their villages they faced loss of their property. Since the conflict erupted, the respondents have also faced loss and death of their close kinfolk from their household.

A significant consequence of the conflict and its aftermath has been a change in the pattern of head of the households of many now living in the relief camps. There has been an increase in female headed households- something that puts women in a difficult position with regard to managing the family affairs and earnings for the family without much support received from the male members.

There have been changes in the household type too. There has been an increase in the proportion of extended household types after the conflict. This change is against the norms of the Santhals traditionally living in nuclear households. The reasons for this change may be their forced living in the relief camps and purely economic. This also appears to be a temporary phenomenon.

Pattern of marital status shows increase in the number of widows and incidence of non-marriage increasing over the years. The impact of the conflict is certainly evident in the

changes taking place in the marital composition of the households. There is larger number of cases where the women now live singly or without the support of males who may have died, are missing or have deserted. In any case, greater number of the women now faces the world without the much needed support of their male counterparts. Cases of early marriages are on the rise as an effect of the conflict. This may be a consequence of threat and insecurity developed among parents staying in the relief camps.

The conflict and displacement has had some serious impact on education of Santhal women. The dropout rate among respondents due to conflict is extremely high. The major reasons behind dropout of respondents and the household members have been reported as displacement, and fear of going to education centres.

The conflict has induced changes in occupational structure. Substantive shift in occupation and deterioration in the economic condition of the respondents and respondents' household has been seen. Drastic shift in occupational structure since the conflict has rendered the female segment far more vulnerable and marginalised. Breaking out of the conflict and their shift to the relief camp deprived them of the vital land that provided livelihood to them forcing them to seek wage labour as a major option to earn a living. The Santhal women had to look for other avenues of work including some non-agricultural work like collection and sale of firewood, catching and sell of fish in the local market or petty trade- all of which were combined to generate some income. Agricultural wage earning provides work opportunities only for a few months and with very low wages. It is significant that wage earning by working in other's land as an occupation was conspicuous by its absence among the women before coming to the camps. However, left with no better option, bereft of their traditional livelihood a majority of the Santhal women had to offer their



labour for a wage- a situation that made them highly vulnerable to complexities of agricultural wage market and wage market in general. Given the situation the women have faced marginalisation and poverty in a situation of complete vulnerability.

Age specific death rate of the females is higher in younger age in respondents' household than the males. Morbidity has affected all segments but more so the females. Increase in frequency of diseases among women is much higher after coming to relief camp as compared to earlier. The women too are afflicted by diseases not common to them before.

Age specific fertility rate is high among the respondents' in relief camp as compared to the state. The fertility rate in relief camps is the highest in the prime childbearing age at 20-29. Death of respondents' children is higher after coming to the relief camp. Still births and spontaneous abortions are more frequent after the conflict. Health problems during pregnancy have increased after conflict.

Lack of proper food and care has been reported by the respondents of the camp. Insufficient and improper food has affected the health condition of the Santhal women living in the camps. The conflict and displacement has deprived a majority of Santhal women the much needed family support and care while in relief camps.

Reproductive health of the women has worsened after coming to relief camp. The Psychological trauma which women develop during the conflict period has manifest primarily in physical and gynaecological symptoms related to increase in gynaecological disorders.

Overall, the demographic consequences of the conflict have had a debilitating effect on the economic, social and psychological conditions of the Santhal women. Most serious consequences are seen in the sphere of family change, changes in marital status, school

dropout, changes in occupational structure, heightened morbidity and affliction to new diseases and reproductive health. Though not comparable to situation of war, the consequences are quite significant for the displaced Santhal women and living in relief camps.

The analysis of the demographic consequences of the conflict on the Santhals in general and on the Santhal women in particular and those living in the relief camps leads to the following broad generalisations.

The respondents and their family members have suffered long and continuous strife induced displacement. The respondents in the relief camps have experienced displacement since the onset of the conflict. While hiding themselves from the Bodos at the time of the conflict they all moved out and got displaced several times from one place to another.

The respondents along with their household members are staying at the relief camps for nearly a decade. Many of them did not go back to their villages due to renewed attacks on their life and property. While staying out of their villages they faced loss of their property. Since the conflict erupted, the respondents have also faced loss and death of their close kinfolk from their household.

A significant consequence of the conflict and its aftermath has been a change in the pattern of head of the households of many now living in the relief camps. There has been an increase in female headed households- something that puts women in a difficult position with regard to managing the family affairs and earnings for the family without much support received from the male members.

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trade- all of which were combined to generate some income. Agricultural wage earning provides work opportunities only for a few months and with very low wages. It is significant that wage earning by working in other's land as an occupation was conspicuous by its absence among the women before coming to the camps. However, left with no better option, bereft of their traditional livelihood a majority of the Santhal women had to offer their labour for a wage- a situation that made them highly vulnerable to complexities of agricultural wage market and wage market in general. Given the situation the women have faced marginalisation and poverty in a situation of complete vulnerability.

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Consequences of conflict and displacement are many and varied. However, resettlement and rehabilitation are measures that have been widely accepted as post conflict resolution mechanisms. Fortunately most Santhals who left their homes and villages were rehabilitated in the villages once left by them. Return to the villages after long stay in the relief camps does not mean return to normalcy. However, it is expected that return and resettlement in the very villages has had its positive consequences which is borne out of the foregoing analysis. Nonetheless the impacts of the conflict and displacement can still be felt for a long time, much after the rehabilitation

The respondents, along with their family members have shifted to rehabilitated villages only recently. Some of them did not go back to their villages and got rehabilitated themselves in other villages than their own in fear of a backlash. While staying out of their villages they faced loss of their property. Respondents have also faced loss of household members when many got missing and death of their household members since the conflict changing the stable demographic pattern.

One such impact is seen in the case of rising proportion of female headed households as a direct outcome of the conflict and loss of many male members who either died or got missing. This is a major consequence for a number of rehabilitated women who now have to manage the family affairs singly, without much support from the male members. Return to the village and rehabilitation has also seen a change in the type of households compared to the types in the relief camps. There has been a perceptible increase in the number of nuclear households after coming to rehabilitated villages. Only a few single households remained as an after effect of the conflict.

Understandably the pattern of marital status shows the number of widows and deserted women who are of younger ages at rehabilitated villages. The conflict and displacement has had some serious impact on education of the Santhal women. Rehabilitation of the Santhals in their original villages has not much improved the situation and education has been a great casualty. The dropout cases among the respondents are extremely high. The major reasons by respondents behind dropout for them and their household members has been reported as conflict related displacement, and fear of going to education centers.

The respondents and household members have suffered loss of property, which has resulted in tremendous shift in occupation structure, loss of work, and poor earnings. After conflict a wider shift in occupation and economic condition of respondents' and respondents household has been seen. Growing dependence on wage labour and on other activities in the informal sector of the economy has further impoverished them and made them vulnerable to poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition and hunger. Their self sufficiency and sustained relation with the environment has received a rude shock.

The death rate during conflict at respondents household was extremely high. Age specific death rate of females is higher in respondents' household than males. Number of deaths gradually decreased over the years, though 2004 shows some increase in number (17 percent). Needless to mention, deaths in the initial period are directly related to the conflict, but later the deaths are more an indirect effect of the conflict and displacement that saw a spurt in morbidity incidence.

After shifting to the rehabilitated villages, prevalence of different diseases have indeed declined. After coming to the relief camps most of the respondents suffered from tuberculosis, jaundice, malaria, also faced different stomach problems like indigestion, diarrhoea and gastric. Rehabilitation dramatically changed the situation with regard to tuberculosis, gastric, jaundice and indigestion which showed a drastic decline in their prevalence among the rehabilitated sections. Only cases related to Diarrhoea have increased. But overall, the health situation has improved after resettlement and rehabilitation of the displaced Santhals. However, the trauma of the conflict continues to be felt among the rehabilitated females with a number of them complaining of critical diseases like blood pressure, blood sugar, asthma and arthritis which are an after effect of trauma and psychological stress. There is a however, a distinct improvement in the non-cereal food intake by the respondent women after their return to the rehabilitated villages and compared to their pitiable condition while in the relief camps.

Age specific fertility rate is high among the respondents' in rehabilitated villages as compared to the state. Still births and spontaneous abortions continue to affect the rehabilitated women as an after effect of the conflict induced displacement, fear and trauma.

A major demographic consequence of the conflict, displacement and rehabilitation has been an increase in the reproductive problems faced by the Santhal women. The psychological trauma which women experienced during the conflict period has manifest primarily in physical and gynaecological symptoms related to increase in gynaecological disorders. However, the women in the rehabilitated villages have received better quality of care and family support than before coming to rehabilitated villages.

In general the rehabilitation has brought some relief to the Santhal women though after paying a high cost as the consequence of the conflict which has made them highly vulnerable economically and socially. The world for most has changed beyond any repair.

The study made an attempt to understand demographic consequences on women in conflicting situation by considering two situations, namely the consequences during the displacement and after the rehabilitation. The study conclusively proved the negative impacts on the women on a number of demographic variables. Such impacts are not too different in other situations of conflicts affecting people in various parts of the world. However, the study merely aimed at drawing the attention of scholars working in this area of research to focus on women and their plight.

The limitation of the study flowed largely from non-availability of secondary data for the Santhals at the village level which made comparison rather difficult. Temporal analysis too became another grey area due to lack of census data for the year 1981. Data collected from District Commissioner Office and Bodo Autonomous Council on villages, relief camps and rehabilitated villages was also erroneous when compared with the name given by Santhals during the field study. Most of the name of the villages for particular blocks, which were described in records given by District Commissioner Office and Bodo

Autonomous Council, did not correlate with the name given in the census for the villages in particular blocks.

In spite of the limitations posed by data availability, attempts were made to overcome these difficulties by intensive field investigations conducted at some relief camps and in a few rehabilitated villages. The findings and conclusions arrived in this study may be of interest to academicians and policy makers dealing with conflict related rehabilitation.

**DEMOGRAPHIC CONSEQUENCES OF ETHNIC  
CONFLICT ON SANTHAL WOMEN IN BODO AREAS  
OF ASSAM: A STUDY OF KOKRAJHAR DISTRICT**

**SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF THE  
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN GEOGRAPHY**

**BY  
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I, Ms. Mahasweta Satpati, do hereby declare that the subject matter of the thesis is the record of work done by me, that the content of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/ Institute.

This is being submitted to the North Eastern Hill University for the Degree, **Doctor of Philosophy** in Geography.



(Mahasweta Satpati)

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Racial and ethnic conflicts in the present era have become a global feature. However, the basis of such conflicts need not be viewed as merely ethnic. There are sufficient reasons to believe that these conflicts are deeply rooted in rapid socio-economic changes taking place in the society and unequal access to available resources. Diverse ethnic groups sharing a similar resource base are unequally placed in terms of their control of the resource base, particularly land. The dominant and more enterprising group always has an upper hand in control of the resources thereby marginalizing the socially weaker segments. This unequal power relations between and among the several ethnic groups, if goes out of control, results in conflicts that take the shape of an ethnic conflict. In India, a country of vast size and ethnic diversity, such conflicts are not very uncommon. However, there is always a regional dimension to such conflicts as the elements of social diversity in India are regionally differentiated. Inter regional transfer of people, which is inevitable in the context of social and economic changes and vast regional disparity in the economic development has caused ethnic mixing in the historical past and is more so in the recent times. The problem of ethnic mixing was less intense in the past as long as the resource base was sufficient. But with increasing population growth, the competition for the resources certainly brought these groups face to face in control of the resources resulting in mobilization of people along ethnic lines.

The Northeast region of India that contains a very high proportion of tribal people in its population and where the tribes between themselves and between them and the non-tribes have often maintained knife edged boundaries, such conflicts are more numerous.

It is well known that the whole of the Northeast in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century was a less inhabited land. However, unprecedented demographic, ethnic social and economic changes were brought about in the wake of colonial involvement in the region. Its economic transformation by the British Government caused enormous demographic shift. A Large number of people were brought by the British from different parts of India to work in tea plantations, coal and oilfields as well as for road and building construction. As a consequence immigrants gradually settled down in this less populated region. Large number of immigrants from Bangladesh (erstwhile East Pakistan), Nepal, and other parts of India such as Bengalis, Marwaris and some tribal groups like the Santhal, the Oraons and the Mundas settled down in the fertile plains of the Brahmaputra valley, which gradually became a source of tension in the region. The coming in of the immigrant people from outside the region often forced the original inhabitants to redistribute themselves in areas much smaller in their territorial extent than in the past.

The two major non-Bodo land-owning segments in the region are the Santhals and the immigrant Muslims who came from Bangladesh. The Muslims had initially settled only in the relatively open areas such as the char or riverine areas of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries which were subject to annual floods, and there was no immediate conflict between the Bodos and the Muslims over land rights. Even so, many Muslims were killed in the 1993-94 riots. The Santhals who were brought by the British from the central India and who were ethnic tribes themselves, on the other hand, encroached upon the prime reserve forest lands, clearing them, and set up permanent habitations.

The fact behind the conflicts between immigrant group such as the Santhals in Assam to that of original inhabitants is that these immigrant group with the acquiescence

of government officials, settled in lands where there is some ambivalence about their rights to settle –“tribal” blocks or reserved forests-has made their residency rights suspect in the eyes of some Bodo activists Baruah <sup>1</sup> (1999). Supporting their demand to draw the attention of Indian Government they attacked the Santhals two times in 1996 and 1998. As a result most of the Santhals left their villages and are living in the Relief camps. More than 1, 30, 067 Santhals are living in the Relief camps presently (in the year 2006). Considering the fact that Assam as a whole contain a little over 27, 00,000 Santhal population, this number of Santhals living in the relief camps is very large. The official figure for the Santhals as well as other population living in the relief camps of Kokrajhar district alone is as follows:

Table: 1.1  
Kokrajhar: Santhal Population Living in Relief Camps

Community	No. of Relief Camp		No. of Family		Adult		Minor		Total Population	
	1996	1998	1996	1998	1996	1998	1996	1998	1996	1998
Santhals	22	35	19681	25222	64540	83909	35219	46158	99759	130067
Bodo	6	14	2868	5566	10918	24316	5196	11269	16114	35585
Rabha	1	2	40	64	150	260	65	97	215	357
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>22589</b>	<b>30852</b>	<b>75608</b>	<b>108485</b>	<b>40480</b>	<b>57524</b>	<b>116088</b>	<b>166009</b>

Source: Deputy Commissioner Office, Kokrajhar

It is evident that nearly the entire Santhals in the district has been evicted from their villages and are living in the relief camps after violent clashes with the Bodo militants. The failure to resettle the Santhal refugees from earlier riots is one of the main causes of the renewed ethnic violence in Kokrajhar district, particularly the resettlement of refugees uprooted from the reserved forest areas. They have not been able to go back to these forests as in most cases; their settlements are now occupied by others, (despite court orders restraining people from settling in the reserve forests).

<sup>1</sup> S. Baruah, *India Against itself: Assam and the Politics of Nationality*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Wars and conflicts, whether internal or international, remain pervasive phenomena affecting mostly low-income countries. Demographic factors such as differential population dynamics by ethnic or religious group, or the number of young persons in a population, often play a role in the causes of conflict. The demographic consequences of war and violence include forced migration- refugees and internally displaced populations (IDPs), increased mortality and changes in fertility and family structure.

Modern warfare and ethnic strife have had a devastating effect on the lives and dignity of women and girls, as well as on the health and educational services that are essential to family and community survival. Along with reproductive health complications, the adverse effects of conflict hit women and girls harder than it does their male counterparts, since deliberate gender-based violence and discrimination are rampant in these settings. As such, these gender-specific threats to women and girls compound the challenges of ensuring their protection. This has resulted in gaps in the design and delivery of assistance and protection, short-changing the priority population of women in conflict and post-conflict situations. Essential services such as basic health care, including reproductive healthcare and counselling, are often disrupted or become inaccessible during conflict situations. This compounds health risks for all affected populations, at times when public health needs soar. Women and girls become the individual and systematic targets of sexual violence, specifically when rape and sexual assault are used as weapons of war and ethnic conflict. Gender plays a significant role in determining which people are most likely to become infected with STIs, including

HIV/AIDS. Armed conflict increases the rate of new infections across affected populations, but women and girls are significantly more likely to become infected than men and boys.

Ethnic clash between Bodo tribe—one of the largest tribe in Assam and in North East India and Santhals—descendents of indentured tea labourers erupted in early 1996. Available literature on this ethnic clash says that Bodos are trying to solve the demographic equation in the northern bank of the Brahmaputra to create separate state Bodoland through 'ethnic cleansing'. Santhals or Adivasi (though the literal meaning of the term Adivasi is aboriginal or indigenous people, in Assam Adivasi means the descendents of indentured tea labourers including all the communities within it, like Santhal, Oraon, Munda, Khamer etc.) are the descendents of indentured tea labourers brought by the British during the nineteenth century. Though they were brought only to work in the tea gardens, in later course of life, they started settling in and around the tea garden and slowly moved out to far off places. Today their population is not exactly known, however some of the estimates show their population to be not less than 16 Percent (between 27 - 30lakhs) of Assam's population Narzary<sup>2</sup> (2006). The ethnic clash was only with the Santhals who reside outside the tea garden, and had nothing to do with Adivasis of tea garden who constitute almost the entire labour force of the tea garden till today.

Both communities, the Bodos and the Santhals, had been living in peace in the area for decades. But after the Bodo Accord of 1993, the Government came up with a formula that only those villages with a 50 Percent Bodo population were to be included

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<sup>2</sup> P. K. Narzary, 'Hidden Truth of Ethnic Clash between Boro Tribe and Santhals in Assam, India' in *Studies of Tribes and Tribals*, 2006, Vol. 4 No.1 pp. 57-62.

into the BAC. This provision is generally believed to have encouraged a section of the Bodos, including armed militant groups representing the community, to attempt 'ethnic cleansing'—driving out the non-Bodos to convert vast stretches into Bodo majority areas and thereby get them included into the Bodo Council and widen its territory (Hussain, 1996). The Santhal people living in such areas naturally fell as a victim to the militant's scheme of creation of a Bodo Land.

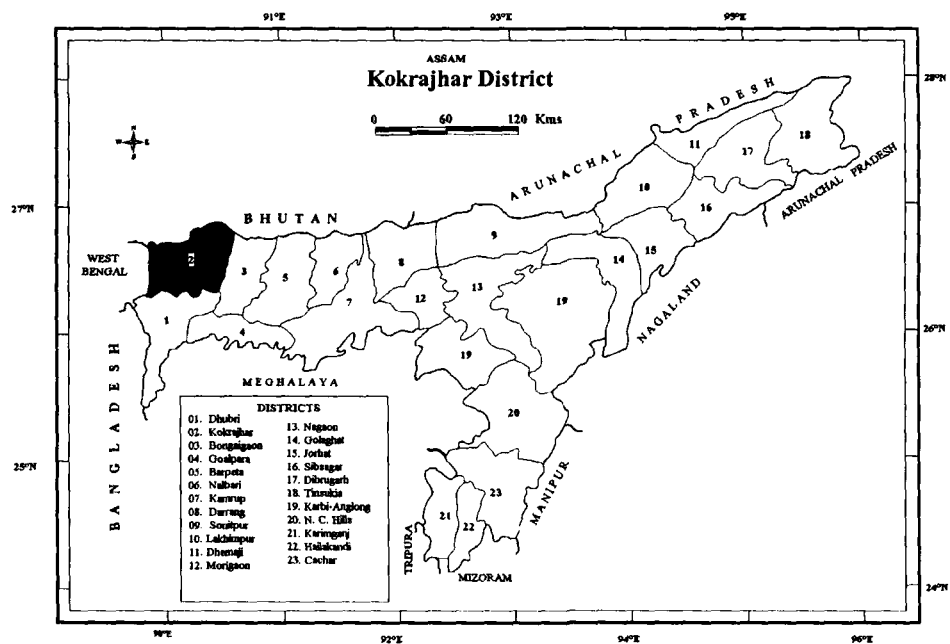
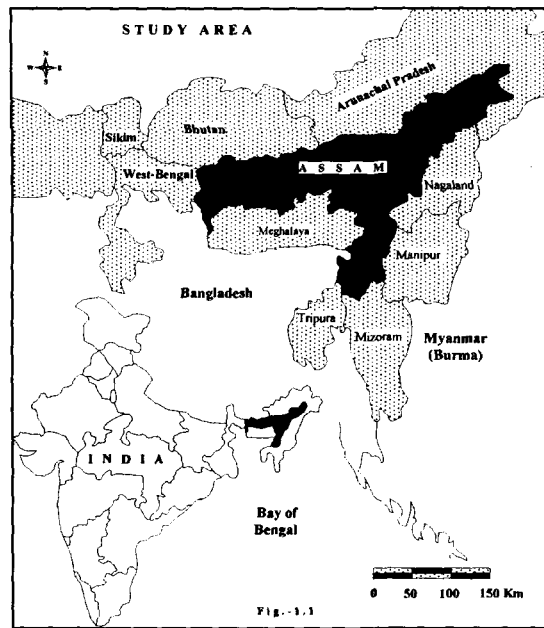
The ethnic violence in Bodo areas of Assam following their demand for a separate state has certainly changed the world for many. The consequences of this clash have been many and varied for different people. While the consequences of any ethnic conflict or clashes are generally well known it requires little effort to imagine the diverse impacts such conflicts may have on socially differentiated people- the poor and the down trodden, the migrants and the landless, the men and the women or the children. Each segment receives the impact in ways not really comparable. Needless to say that the women are the worst victims of the conflict as they have to face a completely new world on the wake of displacement, family breakdown, loss of kith and kin and loss of support base-both economic and social. The present research aims at evaluating these impacts of the ethnic violence on the women in this context. However, it may be noted that the impact must have been greater on those women who are on the receiving end of the conflict. It is the Santhal women who have been more displaced than their counterparts among the immigrant Muslims or the Bodos. It is proposed in this research therefore to consider the impact of the conflict only on the Santhal women while recognizing the fact that the impact of the violent conflict on the women belonging to other ethnic groups and similarly affected by the conflict could not have been anything very different.

It is also a known fact that any ethnic conflict results in serious imbalance in the demographic profile of the community. The ethnic conflict in the Bodo dominated areas has changed the demographic scene on an unprecedented scale. There has been large-scale displacement and redistribution of people resulting in unprecedented changes in the growth rate of population and changes in age and sex-ratio, changes in occupation due to loss of land and due to migration to relief camps and other areas. All these demographic changes would have an impact on affected women who may experience a host of problems ranging from increased reproductive burden, loss of family support, widowhood and sexual harassment to increasing proportion of women headed families and employment etc. It is proposed in this research to evaluate these aspects as far as the affected Santhal women are concerned.

### **1.3 Choice of the Study Area**

For the purpose of the present study the areas where Santhals constitute a significant proportion of the population of Assam has been selected as the study area. This means the entire proposed Bodoland Territorial Council constitutes the universe of the study. However, since the Santhals living in Kokrajhar district have been the worst hit due to the clash between the Bodos and the Santhals, the study focuses more on this area while the Santhals living elsewhere in the Bodoland Autonomous area are considered for reference purposes only.

Kokrajhar is one of the few districts in Assam that has been experiencing constant rise in the share of scheduled tribe population in its total. The reasons are a mix of high natural growth rate in the scheduled tribe population as well as migration of Bodo tribes into this district in the wake of a demand for separate Bodoland state during the last few



decades. Kokrajhar may be described as the gateway to the north-eastern region of India.

The district has a total area of 3,169.22 sq. km. and a total population of 9, 30,404

according to the 2001 Census. The district is located on the north bank of the river Brahmaputra that slices the state of Assam into two, identified as north and south banks. The district is bounded on the north by the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan, by Dhubri district on the south, Bongaigaon district on the east and the Indian state of West Bengal on the west.

The district was originally a part of undivided Goalpara district. Until 1956, the Kokrajhar town was merely a small village with a railway station that connected it to the rest of the world. In 1957, a new Civil Sub-division was created after carving out the northern part of Dhubri Sub-division and some parts of Goalpara Sub-division. This new sub-division was called Kokrajhar Sub-division. Goalpara district thus became divided into three sub-divisions. The area covered by the then Kokrajhar sub-division consisted of five tracts of the Eastern Dooars, viz., Bijni, Sidli, Chirang, Ripu and Guma with a total area of 4066 square kilometres.

On July 1, 1983 the Kokrajhar Sub-division was upgraded into Kokrajhar district with its Headquarter at Kokrajhar town. There were four police stations in the new district. They were Bijni, Sidli, Kokrajhar and Gossaigaon. The area of the district extended from the Manas River in the east to the Sonkosh on the west.

There was further reorganization of the districts in Assam in the year 1989, and some new districts were created. Thus, about 40 Percent of the total geographical area of Kokrajhar district was carved out for inclusion in the new district of Bongaigaon. The area delimited from Kokrajhar district to Bongaigaon covers the entire Bijni Revenue Circle along with 347.50 square kilometres of Sidli Circle. Later on twenty villages of Naikgaon Gram Panchayat with a total area 40.22 square km under Chapar Revenue

Circle of Dhubri district was transferred to Kokrajhar district. The present geographical area of Kokrajhar district is 3,169.2 square km.

The district now has two revenue sub-divisions- Kokrajhar and Gossaigaon sub-divisions. The river Gongia that is known as Tipkai in the southern part is the natural boundary of two civil sub-divisions. Gossaigaon town is the Headquarter of Gossaigaon Sub-division.

#### **1.4 Overview of Literature**

A very rapid survey of literatures available on the subject of the present research reveals a general paucity of published material. While the Bodo problem as such has attracted scholarly attention on such research problems as the ethnic issues of Assam, immigrants into Assam, inter-ethnic relation etc., the problem of women does not constitute an integral part of these studies. Much of the problem of women in the context of the conflict is merely seen as a violation of human rights (UNDP, 2000).

Choucri<sup>3</sup> (1983) while explaining the relationship of the population and the conflict, has described that majority of the conflicts are now concentrated in the developing countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Caribbean, where we also have the population related problems. Khanday<sup>4</sup> (2005) have explained the present conflict situation in Kashmir Valley in relation to continued breakdown of the hospitals and the problem faced by females accessing reproductive health facilities. Dabla<sup>5</sup> (1999) have studied the impact of conflict situation on children and women in Kashmir.

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<sup>3</sup> N. Choucri, 'Population and Conflict: New Dimensions of Population Dynamics', *Policy Development Studies*, Number 8, UNFPA, 1983.

<sup>4</sup> Z. Khanday, *Negotiating Reproductive Health needs in a Conflict Situation in the Kashmir Valley*, Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Trivandrum, Kerala, India, 2005.

<sup>5</sup> B. A. Dabla, *Impact of Conflict Situation on Children and Women in Kashmir*, North-West India Save the Children Fund, P. 79, 1999.

The few exceptions to these are Pandey's<sup>6</sup> (1993) analysis of gender differentials in migrant workers and the effect of displacement on women by Fernandez<sup>7</sup> (1995) though studied in a different context altogether.

Studies on ethnicity and ethnic changes in general have been undertaken by Levin<sup>8</sup> (1993) explaining the causes behind changes in different ethnic aspects and their relationship with different ethnic groups. Wilkinson<sup>9</sup> (1993) has taken six case studies of ethnic politics representing high and low patterns of conflicts.

Weiner's<sup>10</sup> (1978) pioneering work on migration and ethnic conflict in India certainly provided a background to many such works to follow. Myron Weiner in his study has observed that

“The presence of these migrants has shaken the foundation of Assamese social structure and created solidarity among the Assamese....influenced the educational, social and economic aspiration of the countless Assamese...Migration to Assam has also given rise to powerful assimilationist and nationalist sentiments and backlash separatist agitations, to massive conflicts over language, education, and employment policy, and to political cleavage that have not only led to the intervention of India's Central Government, and the use of the Indian army, but also have affected Assam's relationship to neighbouring Bangladesh”.

A large number of researches on the Bodo problem and its consequences pertain to the genesis and resultant social tensions in Assam. Baruah<sup>11</sup> (1994, 1999) placed ethnic problem as “Micro-Nationalism and state society struggle.” Baruah<sup>12</sup> (1991) explored the

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<sup>6</sup> D. Pandey, 'Migrant Labour and Gender Dimension: Micro-analysis of Gender Differentials in Migrant Workers', Research Centre for Women's Studies, Bombay, 1993.

<sup>7</sup> W. Fernandes, 'The Effect of Displacement on Women,' *RSP Conference on Development-Induced Displacement*, Jan 3-7, 1995.

<sup>8</sup> M. D. Levin, (Ed.) *Ethnicity and Aboriginality*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1993.

<sup>9</sup> S. I. Wilkinson, 'High Conflict-Low Conflict: Six Case Studies of Ethnic Politics', *Report of a Workshop*, Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholar, Washington D. C, 1993.

<sup>10</sup> M. Weiner, *Sons of the Soil: Migration and Ethnic Conflict in India*, N. J. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1978.

<sup>11</sup> S. Baruah, 'Ethnic Conflict as State-Society Struggle: The Poetics and Politics of Assamese Micro Nationalism', *Modern Asian Studies*, 28<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> July, 1994.

<sup>12</sup> A. K. Baruah, *Social Tensions in Assam: Middle Class Politics*, Purbanchal Prakash, Guwahati, 1991.

class dimension of ethnic conflicts in Assam. Some authors like Abbi<sup>13</sup> (1984); Goswami and Gogoi<sup>14</sup> (1984), Baruah<sup>15</sup> (1986), Misra<sup>16</sup> (1988), Bhuyan<sup>17</sup> (1991), Barthakur<sup>18</sup> (1995) linked the ethnic problem to unchecked immigration into Assam. Pakem<sup>19</sup> (1990) wrote on nationality, ethnicity and cultural identity in the North-East while Verghese<sup>20</sup> (1996), tried to explain the causes behind ethnicity and insurgency and its relationship with government policy and its effect on development in North-East India. Rose<sup>21</sup> (1994) has analysed the impact of migration of ethnic Nepalese to the North-East India. Kar and Sharma<sup>22</sup> (1990) gave an account of ethnic identity of tea labours in Assam.

### **The Santhals**

According to Sharma<sup>23</sup> (1994) Assam is a melting pot of different races, languages and cultures. Barpujari<sup>24</sup> (1993) wrote out of different social communities, the Santhals were colonized by Britishers in Assam.

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<sup>13</sup> Abbi, (Ed.), *Northeast Region: Problems and Prospects of Development*, Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development, Chandigarh, 1984.

<sup>14</sup> A. Goswami, and J. Gogoi, 'Migration and Demographic Transformation of Assam, 1901-1971', In B. L. Abbi, (Ed.), *Northeast Region: Problems and Prospects of Development*, Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development, Chandigarh, 1984.

<sup>15</sup> S. Baruah, 'Immigration, Ethnic Conflict and Political Turmoil: Assam 1979-1985', *Asian Survey*, University California Press, 1986.

<sup>16</sup> U. Misra, *North-East India: Quest for Identity*, Omsons, Guwahati, 1988.

<sup>17</sup> M. C. Bhuyan, 'Immigration in Assam: An Analytico-Synthetic Study', Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, Gauhati University, Guwahati. 1991.

<sup>18</sup> P. Barthakur, 'The Bodo Tribal in the Changing Socio-Political Landscape of the Brhmaputra Valley: A study in Political Geography', Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Gauhati University, Guwahati, 1995.

<sup>19</sup> B. Pakem, (Ed.), *Nationality, Ethnicity and Cultural Identity in N.E. India*, Omsons, New Delhi, P. 23, 1990.

<sup>20</sup> G. B. Verghese, *India's Northeast Resurgent: Ethnicity, Insurgency, Governance, Development*, Konark, Delhi, 1996.

<sup>21</sup> L. E. Rose, 'The Nepali Ethnic Community in the Northeast of the Subcontinent' *Ethnic Studies Report*, Srilanka 12, 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1994.

<sup>22</sup> R. K. Kar, and J. L. Sharma, 'Ethnic Identity of Tea Labour: A Case Study in Assam', in B. Pakem, (Ed.), *Nationality, Ethnicity and Cultural Identity in North-East India*, Omson's Publication, New Delhi, 1990.

<sup>23</sup> K. Sharma, Paper presented in Seminar NEICSSR, August 1994, Shillong.

<sup>24</sup> H. K. Barpujari (Ed.), *The Comprehensive History of Assam*, Vol. VI and V, Publication Board Assam, Guwahati, 1993.

Skrefsrud<sup>25</sup> (1887) is of the opinion that the Santhals entered India from the North-West and first settled in Punjab and then made their way to their present habitat-Chotanapur Plateau. According to Waddell<sup>26</sup> (1893) the Santhals story of their advance from Hihri Pipri via Champa to their present location in the Santhal Parganas is manifestly a record of actual tribal progress, not as is usually believed, from one part of the Hazaribagh hills to another but from the central alluvial valley of the Ganges South-West wards to the hills, under pressure of the Aryan invasion of the valley from the north. But Chattopadhyay<sup>27</sup> (1944) criticises the views of both the above scholars and having hinged upon the geographical evidence points out that the Santhals probably came from the Kaimur Range through the Champa pass and other neighbouring passes into the Chotanagpur plateau. Dolton<sup>28</sup> (1872) reports that the Santhals came to the present abode from North-East India and found their way to Chotanagpur plateau and adjoining high lands by the side of their sacred stream, the Damodar River. Campbell<sup>29</sup> (1894) indicates that the Santhals occupied the country on both sides of the Ganges but more specially the area to the North of it. The Campbell theory was not supported by Risley<sup>30</sup> (1903).

However the history of Santhal migration does not remain conjectural from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century onwards as there are no authentic records regarding their movements. According to O'malley<sup>31</sup>(1910) this is certain that the Santhal settled within historic times

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<sup>25</sup> L. O. Skrefsrud, *Horkoren Mare Hapramko Reak Katha*. Benageria: Santhal Mission Press, 1887.

<sup>26</sup> L. A. Waddell, *The Traditional Migration of the Santhal Tribe*. The Indian Antiquary, Bombay, Vol. 22, pp. 294-296, 1893.

<sup>27</sup> K. P. Chattopadhyaya, 'Santhal Migration', *Proceedings of the 31<sup>st</sup> Indian Congress*, Delhi, P.101, 1944.

<sup>28</sup> E. T. Dolton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, Government of Bengal, Calcutta, 1872.

<sup>29</sup> A. Campbell, 'The Traditional Migration of the Santhal Tribes', *The Indian Antiquary*, Bombay, Vol. 23, pp. 103-104, 1894.

<sup>30</sup> H. H. Risley, *Census of India 1901*, Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1903.

<sup>31</sup> L. S. S. O'Malley, 'Bengal District Gazetteers Santhal Parganas', Bengal Secretariat Book Dept, Vol. 22, Calcutta, 1910.

in the Chotanagpur plateau and in the adjoining districts of Midnapur and Birbhum. Towards the close of 18<sup>th</sup> Century they occupied their present abode-the Santhal Parganas.

Once upon a time they were leading a semi-nomadic life but gradually they accepted the life of agriculturists and leading a settle life in permanent villages. Their social life, philosophy and rituals are centre around there main occupation agriculture. Hunting, fishing, fruit-gathering, wood-gathering, and leaf picking, are also consider as important sources of subsistence. Santhals have a simple but highly respected social code of morality which helps the tribe to keep its solidarity Roy Choudhary<sup>32</sup> (1961). The Santhals have a self-administrative three tier system, namely, at the village level, at the inter-village level and at the area level Verma<sup>33</sup> (1977).

According to Dalton<sup>34</sup> (1872) the Santhals also Colonized in other parts of the country and it is chiefly by migration from Hazaribagh and Birbhum districts that the modern Santhal Parganas was formed.

Lord William Bentinck, took steps to create a tea industry in Assam. Within a few decades tea became a booming business, with gardens in Lakhimpur, Darrang, Kamrup, and Cachar districts Weiner<sup>35</sup> (1978). A substantial number of the tea garden labourers have settled as cultivators, either as landlords or tenants in land provided by the government. Others have found employment in construction industries. Of the 38,000 construction workers in Assam, 21,000 are migrants Barpuja<sup>36</sup> (1993). The tea plantation

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<sup>32</sup>P.C. Roy Choudhury, 'Bitlaha: A Santhal Ritual', *The Quarterly Journal of Mythic Society*, Gaziabad, Vol 52, 1-5, 1961.

<sup>33</sup>K. K. Verma, *Culture, Ecology and Population*, National Publishing House, New Delhi, 1977.

<sup>34</sup>E. T. Dolton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, Government of Bengal, Calcutta, 1872.

<sup>35</sup>Weiner, Op.cit.

<sup>36</sup>Barpujari, Op. cit.

migrants have never been nor are they now economic, cultural, or political threats to the Assamese. The jobs they hold are not those sought by the Assamese. Their tendency to assimilate linguistically makes them model migrants to the Assamese Weiner<sup>37</sup> (1978).

Their presence in Assam was well known but there was dearth of data to show their numerical strength or geographical spread over the region Ahmad<sup>38</sup> (1984). The “tribal” blocks or reserved forests has made their residency rights suspect in the eyes of some Bodo activists Baruah<sup>39</sup> (1999). After Bodo Accord of 1993, The Government came up with a formula that only those villages with a 50 Percent Bodo population were to be included into the BAC. This provision is generally believed to have encouraged a section of Bodos, including armed militant groups representing the community, to attempt ethnic cleansing-driving out the non-Bodos to convert vast stretches into Bodo majority areas and thereby get them included into the Bodo Council and widen its territory Hussain<sup>40</sup> (2004). The Bodo militants in their attack on non-Bodo settlers indulged in an ethnic carnage against the Santhals Qureshi<sup>41</sup> (2004). Hence ethnic clash took place between Bodo tribe – one of the largest tribe in Assam and in North East India and Santhals–descendents of indentured tea laborers Narjary<sup>42</sup> (2006). The first spell of this ethnic class made about one fourth of the district population an Internally Displaced Person and by the second spell about 40 percent of the district population was Internally Displaced. This figure is much more alarming, as some of the people fled their home Narjary<sup>43</sup> (2006).

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<sup>37</sup> Weiner, Op. cit.

<sup>38</sup> A. Ahmad, ‘Social Geography’ in Manzoor Alam (Ed.s), *A Survey of Research in Geography 1976-82*, Indian Council of Social Science Research, Concept, New Delhi, 1984, pp.67-84.

<sup>39</sup> Baruah, Op.cit.

<sup>40</sup> W. Hussain, ‘India’s North East: The Problem’ *Interaction on the North East*, Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi, 2004.

<sup>41</sup> M. U. Qureshi, *India’s Social Problems in Twenty first Century*, Anmol, New Delhi, 2004 pp.1-404.

<sup>42</sup> Narjary, Op.cit.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, p.3.



The inter-ethnic clashes in the Bodo heartland of Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon has displaced a large number of people. At one stage, the number of IDPs reached more than 3 lakhs. It should also be mentioned here that the Bodo-Muslim ethnic violence that occurred in October 1993 has displaced about 3,568 families consisting of 18,000 persons. Again, a series of major incidents took place throughout the district in May 1996 when a section of Bodos attacked ethnic Santhals. This conflict has resulted in the displacement of a huge population. Almost 42,214 families consisting of about 262,682 persons were displaced by this conflict “at the peak of the Bodo Armed Movement, Assam accounted for nearly more than half of India’s population of Internally Displaced Persons”. These victims were sheltered in 78-relief camps around Kokrajhar and its adjoining areas. After staying as inmates in the camps many of them return to their villages in 1997 with a small amount of returnees grant provided by government of India. However, in 1998 again conflict started between the two groups resulting in the displacement of 48,556 families consisting of 314,342 villagers. Till April 2005, in Kokrajhar 126,263 inmates were living in 38 state sponsored relief camps in the district. Some of these conflict-induced IDPs are living in the relief camps for more than a decade now. The government is providing only rice to the inmates of some of the camps for 10 days a month. Even that supply too was erratic. Sometimes, the IDPs do not get their rations for months together. Assam government records indicates only 33,362 displaced people were left in the camps Kokrajhar district and 74,123 were left in the camps in Gossaigaon district Hussain<sup>44</sup> (2006).

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<sup>44</sup> M. Hussain, ‘Report of the Workshop on the IDPs in India’, organised by Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, Nagaland, 2006.

As far as women are concerned there is no dearth of researches on the demographic aspects but mostly on a general note. The effects of ethnically linked displacement in India are extremely rare to find. Bardhan's<sup>45</sup> (1985) study of women's work, status and welfare provides a general background to forces behind traditional changes in India. Harrison<sup>46</sup> (1990) accounted for maternal mortality and morbidity as a challenge behind third world countries like India. Desai and Others<sup>47</sup> (1994) have worked on the social problems related to the working women in rural South India. Works on reproductive behaviour as well as on the causes behind high female mortality, morbidity are important areas of research.

Voydanaff<sup>48</sup> (1991) discussed how economic distress can have a negative effect on family members' physical health, psychological well being and behaviour. On gender, peace and conflict Skjelsback and Smith<sup>49</sup> (2001) has discussed how in conflict situation one form of violence specifically targets on women rape. In the UNHCR<sup>50</sup> (1993) report it is discussed about the state of world's refugees, as the challenge of protection which can be supported by the detailed accounts of the 1995 massacre of Bosnaik men in Srebrenica in Danner's<sup>51</sup> (1998) book.

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<sup>45</sup> K. Bardhan, 'Women's Work, Welfare and Status: Forces of Tradition and Change in India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 20, No.51, pp. 2261-7, 1985.

<sup>46</sup> K. A. Harrison, 'The political challenge of maternal mortality in the Third World.' *Maternal Mortality and Morbidity- A Call to Women for Action*, Special Issue, May 28, 1990.

<sup>47</sup> S. Desai, and D. Jain, 'Maternal employment and Changes in Family Dynamics: The Social Context of Women's Work in Rural South India', *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 115-136, 1994.

<sup>48</sup> P. Voydanaff, 'Economic Distress & Family Relations', in A. Booth, (Ed.) *Contemporary Families: Looking Forward, Looking Back*, Journal, Minneapolis: National Council on Family Relations, pp. 429-45, 1991.

<sup>49</sup> Skjelsback, and D. Smith, (Eds.) *Gender Peace and Conflict*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, Sage, London, 2001.

<sup>50</sup> UNHCR, United Nations High Commission for Refugees 1993.

<sup>51</sup> M. Danner, 'The Killing Fields of Bosnia', *The New York Review of Books*, Vol. 45, No. 141, pp.63-77, 1998.

Community segregation especially dealing with minorities has been discussed by Blalock<sup>52</sup>, (1967) he has given a theory of segregation in relation to the minority group. P. White and R. Woods<sup>53</sup> (1980) in their book has explained the geographical impact of migration and social segregation in Birmingham.

Weather Ford<sup>54</sup> (1996) described the foreign and female immigrant women in America have experienced the poor conditions of housing in relation to the spread of epidemics. While discussing about female immigration he has also talked about the relative burden of adjustment on women folk, where are forced to maintain a large family in a very limited space. Dilapidated housing and epidemics were not the only problems the immigrant family faced. In a pioneering study of Polish immigrants Thomas and Znaniecki<sup>55</sup> (1927) of the housing condition of Polish immigrants in America and Europe found that many of the immigrants experienced demoralization, poverty, marital problems, crime and delinquency among their children. Primary group relations broke down in a hostile and strange new environment. Because of the crowded living quarters, relatives put additional pressures to on already strained conjugal ties.

Anderson<sup>56</sup> (1984), Goldberg and Huxley<sup>57</sup> (1992) gave a concise statement of the relationship between brain, mind and social environment in the experience of mental distress. Davar<sup>58</sup>, (1999) explained the mental health condition of Indian women in

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<sup>52</sup> H. M. Blalock, *Toward a Theory of Minority Group Relations*, Wiley, New York, 1967.

<sup>53</sup> R.I. Woods, 'Migration and Social Segregation in Birmingham and the West Midlands Region', in White, P. and Woods, R. (Eds.) *The Geographical Impact of Migration*, N.Y., Longman, 1980.

<sup>54</sup> D.W. Ford, *Foreign and Female: Immigrant Women in America, 1940-1930*, Schocken Books, New York, Pp. 78-79, 1986.

<sup>55</sup> Thomas and Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, Vol. 2, Knopf, New York, 1927 (Originally Published by the University of Chicago Press in 1918).

<sup>56</sup> N.C. Anderson, *The Broken Brain, The Biological Revolution in Psychiatry*, Harper and Row, New York, 1984.

<sup>57</sup> D. Goldberg and P. Huxley, *Common Mental Disorders*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1992.

<sup>58</sup> B. V. Davar, *Mental Health of Indian Women (A Feminist Agenda)*, Sage Publication New Delhi, 1999.

inappropriate living conditions. Feminist and Policy Literature (Dennerstein et al., 1993: Endicott, 1993: Heller, 1993: Russo and Green, 1993: Wurtman, 1993)<sup>59</sup> reviewed information on the basic research connecting female reproductive and other hormones and neurotransmitters with mental distress.

Ramachandran<sup>60</sup> (1985) studied the linkages between the loss of spouse and psychiatric disorders and found that widowhood correlated with living alone, feelings of loneliness and dissatisfaction with life. Elderly women living alone, numbering more than men, were considered as an 'extremely disadvantaged group' in a study by Chakraborty<sup>61</sup> (1990). Chakraborty<sup>62</sup> (1996) while describing the possible protective factors of joint families have led to conclusions that joint families have an inbuilt mechanism for preserving the mental health of individuals. Joint families are perceived as fostering greater emotional bonding between members, as having more care-givers to take care of the vulnerable and the weak, especially women and the elderly, and as being based upon mutuality and cooperation amongst its members. Chakraborty<sup>63</sup> (1990) has explained that joint families also seemed to be fewer burdens due largely to the presence of economically dependent elderly females.

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<sup>59</sup> I. Dennerstein; J. Astbury, and C. Morse, 'Psychosocial and Mental Health Aspects of Women's Health', *WHO Report*, Geneva, 1993.

<sup>60</sup> V. Ramachandran, 'Loss Spouse and Psychiatric Disorders in Aged', *Indian Journal of Social Psychiatry*, Lucknow, Vol. 1, No.1, Pp. 75-83, 1985.

<sup>61</sup> A. Chakraborty, *Social Stress and Mental Health, A Social -Psychiatric Field Study of Calcutta*, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 1990.

<sup>62</sup> A. Chakraborty, 'The Mental Health of Indian Women' *National Seminar on Women and Mental Health*, Organised by Research Centre for Women's Studies, Unpublished Paper, 25-26 February, Hyderabad, 1969.

<sup>63</sup> A. Chakraborty, Op.cit.

Mahadevan<sup>64</sup> (1989) wrote on women and population dynamics perspectives from Asian countries. Dasgupta, Chen, Krishnan<sup>65</sup> (1995) wrote on Women's health in India, risk and vulnerability. He specified the differences in mortality of female, and sex ratio as compared to male children

Gait's<sup>66</sup> (1902) report, which was later reprinted in 'The Census of India 1951, West Bengal', contains a report on the district of Santhal Parganas, and on the migration of the Santhals to various parts of West Bengal and Assam, giving their pattern of distribution since 1872.

Chattopadhyay<sup>67</sup>, (1960) in a study of a number of Santhal villages in West Bengal, conducted during 1945-46, ascertained whether greater spread of literacy had had any effect on their family size. Mukherjee, et.al.<sup>68</sup> (1969) tried to highlight some interesting evidences related to marriage in connection with household composition; clan affiliation and civil condition. Sinha<sup>69</sup>(1963) described fertility and attitude towards family planning among the Santals and Paharias of the Santal Parganas. Skerfsrud<sup>70</sup> (1903) while studying the relationship among the household members of a Santhal family revealed that a Santhal's wife is common property to husband's younger brothers even

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<sup>64</sup> K. Mahadevan, (Ed.) *Women and Population Dynamics Perspectives from Asian Countries*, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 1989.

<sup>65</sup> M. Dasgupta, I.C. Chen, T.N. Krishnan(Eds.), *Women's Health in India Risk and Vulnerability*, Oxford University Press, Bombay, 1995.

<sup>66</sup> E. A. Gait, 'The Lower Provinces of Bengal and their Feudatories', *Part I, The Report*, Calcutta, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1902.

<sup>67</sup> K. P. Chattopadhyay, 'A study of Santhal Family Size', *Proceedings*, The National Institute of Sciences of India, Silver Jubilee Number, Part-B, New Delhi, pp. 64-70, 1960.

<sup>68</sup> K. Pakrasi, and B. Mukherjee, 'Marriage and fertility among the Santhals', *Bulletin of the Cultural Research Institute*, Vol. 8 Nos. 1-2, Calcutta, pp. 26-31, 1969.

<sup>69</sup> U. P. Sinha, 'A Study of Fertility of the Santals and the Paharias of Santal Parganas', *Bulletin of the Bihar, Tribal Research Institute*, Vol. 5 No.1, Ranchi, pp. 82-124, 1963.

<sup>70</sup> L. O. Skerfsrud, 'Traces of Fraternal Polyandry amongst the Santals' *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. 72 No.2, Pt. 3, Calcutta, p. 90, 1903.

after their marriage. Similarly, a Santal woman's younger sisters can legitimately share conjugal privileges with her elder sister's husband without marrying him.

Verma<sup>71</sup> (1970) analysed the socio-cultural dimensions of fertility among the socio-cultural dimensions of fertility among the Santhals. The author showed how the community is high fertility motivated and culturally oriented. Kochar's<sup>72</sup> (1966) study highlighted the high degree of social cohesion, social identity and strong bond within the Santal community by which they maintain their traditional values and norms in spite of their vigorous contact with other communities.

Das and Banerjee<sup>73</sup> (1964) represented the impact of industrialization on Santhals and the reasons and pattern of their migration to other parts of country.

The Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research defines conflict as a "clash of opposing interests or positional differences over national values and issues like independence, self-determination, borders and territory, access to or distribution of domestic or International power."

Conflict studies constitute one of the central subjects in social sciences. There are increasing numbers of literatures available on conflict over the countries in the world. The focus on conflict issues in India too is increasing rapidly with such conflicts increasing in their frequency. The nature of conflict study in India has remained as a part of political sciences. Although initially the conflict study focused on conflict and violation of human rights, increasing emphasis on aftermath of conflict and emerging

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<sup>71</sup> K. K. Verma, 'Socio-Cultural Dimensions of Fertility: A case Study of the Santal', *Journal of Social Research*, Vol. 13, No. 2, Ranchi, pp.70-81, 1970.

<sup>72</sup> V. K. Kochar, 'Village Organisation among the Santals', *Bulletin of the Cultural Research Institute*, Vol. 5, Nos. 1-2, Calcutta, pp.11-19, 1966.

<sup>73</sup> A. K. Das, and H. N. Banerjee, *Impact of Tea Industry on the Life of the Tribals of West Bengal*, Tribal Welfare Department, Government of West Bengal, Calcutta, pp. 88, 1964.

patterns over the conflict affected areas have now attracted serious attention from other social scientists. The north-east region has come to the focus of many conflict related studies largely due to the factor of immigration resulting into ethnic conflict. Extensive researches on the effects of conflict on displaced people have hardly received any attention of researches in India. Some of the issues which are still not adequately addressed in these studies relate to the direct effect of conflict on women as well as other segments of population. Needless to say, the long term effect of ethnic conflict on vulnerable groups like women is an important area of study that seems untouched in the country.

### **1.5 Objectives**

The present study aims at getting an insight into the consequences such conflicts have on women. Needless to mention, all conflicts have differential impact on different social and economic groups with regard to their capacity to cope with the situation. Ethnic conflicts have serious consequences for women largely due to their position in the family and in the society at large. One important consideration is their reproductive role and responsibility. They are most vulnerable to conflicting situations. The nature of armed conflicts changed dramatically during the latter half of the twentieth century, with casualties among civilians increasingly outnumbering those of military personnel. Women and girls became especially vulnerable in such conflicts. Since the end of the Cold War, women have been the primary victims in ethnic conflicts, constituting the bulk of civilian deaths and displaced refugees. The impact of conflicts on women and girls' reproductive and sexual health can never be underestimated. Their psychological, reproductive and overall well-being is often severely compromised in times of conflict.

Conflicts tend to increase the incidence of sexual violence; rape; sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDS; and unwanted pregnancies. In addition, essential social services, such as medical facilities, on which women heavily depend for their well-being, are greatly disrupted by armed conflicts.

Given this background the broad objectives of this research may be stated as follows:

- a) to get an insight into the ethnic dimension of the population redistribution in the areas of Bodo concentration;
- b) to study related demographic changes which are directly linked to the ethnic conflict;
- c) to assess the consequences of the demographic changes brought about by the conflict on the *Santhal* women.

### **1.6 Research Questions**

The following broad research questions are placed before the research:

- i) What are the consequences of the conflict on morbidity, mortality and disability?
- ii) How does conflict affect fertility, reproductive health or household composition?
- iii) What are the consequences of conflict in terms of forced migration and other types of internal mobility?
- iv) What are the demographic repercussions of forced migration?

### **1.7 Database**

Much of the data required for this research is obtained from the primary sources particularly through a survey in the rehabilitated villages and in relief camps in the study area. The secondary data has been collected from successive census enumeration, from the Bodo Autonomous Council, the District Commissioner Office and data available at National Informatics Centre.

Census publications pertaining to population data are used to analyse patterns in the distribution and growth of Santhal and Bodo population at district, block and village level. Data available from the Bodo Autonomous Council has been analyzed to identify villages of Bodo domination.

Besides, data are generated from the villages at primary level and from the relief camps to supplement information not easily available through secondary sources.

Data on redistribution of population in Kokrajhar district is entirely based on information available in primary Census abstracts of Assam, 1971, 1991, 2001. Since segregated data is not available for the Santhal population, help has been sought to estimate this population by a reference to language tables published by the Census that provides rich information on mother tongues. It is assumed that the Santhal mother tongue speakers certainly belong to Santhal ethnic tribe though it is quite likely that many ethnic Santhal might have shifted to other languages including Assamese. Thus the estimated Santhal population based on mother tongue data would necessarily be an underestimation of their actual numbers. However, in the absence of any definite source of information on the number of Santhal population, the mother tongue data available in Census certainly helped the present research as a very rich source of information. National Family Health Survey-II, 1998-99 data on female headed households for Assam was used to consider the information as a base from where deviations could be analysed. This was done as no reliable data on female headed households for Assam could be available. Special tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes available with the Census of India, Assam series were consulted for tribe specific information, so vital for the present study.

In order to obtain information on areas of Bodo domination, number of relief camps, rehabilitated villages, number of villages affected due to conflict, number of people staying in relief camps and number of people rehabilitated etc. data were collected from District Commissioner Office and from the Bodo Autonomous Council.

Primary data has been collected on demographic aspects of Santhal women and their household members living at relief camps and at the rehabilitated villages.

There are however serious data limitations to the study. The first refers to the availability of data at village level in identifying the Santhal village. Census data on Scheduled tribes does not distinguish between different tribes. Though Special tables on Scheduled Castes and scheduled tribes do provide tribe wise data, it does not provide the information at village level, something very necessary for the present study. Another serious anomaly in data refers to Santhals who despite being an ethnic tribe elsewhere in India are not categorised as such in Assam making it extremely difficult to identify their distribution in different parts of Assam. This limitation was partly overcome by referring to mother tongue data, though this estimation itself suffers much on undercounting as many Santhals have shifted to mother tongues other than their own. Being one of the major chunk of the population of the state of Assam in Bodo Autonomous Council, with no particularly enumerated category in the census it became difficult to identify the villages with Santhal population. The identification and relocation of real Santhal villages from the census data hence became an arduous task.

The ancestral identity of Santhals as a tribal community in Assam has been changed because of location specificity of such identities, which prevailed in their state of origin. Data on Santhal distribution in the state of Assam or North East is not available. There is

no possible identification of Santhal population has been given for the State of Assam. At the state they are called as part of communities tea gardeners. There was no specific identification of them till the year 1971. Later in 1990's they enumerated in other backward category.

Village level data as available in Census suffered from another limitation that thwarted our attempt for an in-depth study of the village level reality. Data collected for villages from 1971 -2001 to study the distribution and growth of Santhal and Bodo population at district, block and at the level of villages reflected enormous variation in the names of the villages, distribution of the villages, location, and community inhabiting the villages which made it extremely difficult to trace the real Santhal villages.

Temporal, particularly decadal comparison became difficult as there was no census held for Assam in the year 1981 leading to missing information on villages by the year 1991 as the names and location of the villages in census had changed and the spelling of the name was not identical in the census data from 1971-1991. Likewise the reorganisation of the districts in the intervening period too posed serious data problems. Till the Year 1971 Kokrajhar district was included in the undivided Goalpara district. Hence the use of data for the Santhal population in the year 1971 had to be done as the population distribution in the Goalpara district instead of Kokrajhar specifically.

Data collected from District Commissioner Office and Bodo Autonomous Council on villages, relief camps and rehabilitated villages was also erroneous when compared with the name given by Santhals during the field study. Most of the name of the villages for particular blocks, which were described in records given by District Commissioner Office

and Bodo Autonomous Council, did not correlate with the name given in the census for the villages in particular blocks.

In order to overcome some of these data limitations, the following techniques were employed so that the serious limitation of data does not impair the progress of the research. For example, the Santhal areas were identified on the basis of language data at the district level for 1971, 1991 and 2001. The plan for collecting data on Santhal villages had to be abandoned. In order to represent the existence of Santhals in Kokrajhar district language data has been used to find out the core and periphery of the Santhals for the state of Assam as a whole.

The district Kokrajhar was included in Goalpara district before 1991 and hence the representation of Santhals in the year 1971 was taken from the total Santhal speaking population as a whole under undivided Goalpara district.

Since data on villages were not available to compare the primary data collected from the relief camp and rehabilitated villages, data from National Family Health Survey-2 and census 2001 has been taken for the state of Assam as a whole considered as base line data for the sake of comparison.

In order to overcome the limitation encountered in getting village level data from secondary sources, an attempt was made to include questions pertaining to respondents conditions before moving to relief camp and/or rehabilitated villages to assess the impact of the conflict. Further to study the level of consequences of the conflict the data for relief camp and rehabilitated villages are compared with each other.

## **1.8 Methodology**

The methodology proposed to be adopted for the present research is outlined below:

As has been mentioned earlier, one of the main objectives of the research is to assess the extent of spatial distribution of population and its consequences following the demand for Bodoland during the last couple of decades. Given this scope of the present research, the period of investigation is confined to four decades starting with 1970. The 1970s are chosen as the starting points as the decade is not much known for inter-ethnic strife resulting in redistribution. The following three decades have witnessed ethnic violence in many parts of the Bodo Areas and the redistribution tendencies characterize this period. Thus data pertaining to the period in 1970s has been profitably used to describe the ethnic conflict that followed and the ensuing pattern of population distribution while the data pertaining to the later years would indicate the pattern of redistribution.

An attempt has been made to look into the history of Santhal migration to Assam and to study their distribution with the help of identification of their core and periphery. To study redistribution over the district, the population in areas of Bodo concentration are understood by disaggregating the data into four sets: total population; total schedule tribe population; total schedule caste population; total non schedule population. The redistribution tendencies are examined at district level for all the four categories of population; in rural and in urban areas.

The Study has considered a time span of about 30 years also to understand the changes in vital demographic indicators as an impact of Bodo- Santhal conflict with

special reference to relief camps and rehabilitated villages. This has provided the temporal dimension to the changes in the demographic composition of the population in general and women in particular. A general picture of their demographic characteristics before the conflict began is obtained to be compared with their present demographic characteristics by studying the demographic characteristics of Santhals with special reference to women both before and after coming to relief camp and rehabilitated villages respectively. The selection of relief camps is based on a fair representation of the Santhals from all over the district. Six relief camps and four rehabilitated village have been selected for the collection of data and has been ensured that these relief camps and rehabilitated villages have Santhals coming from most areas of the district. The impact of the conflict on Santhal women and the consequences of the conflict has been analyzed with reference to the following broad demographic indicators as changes in fertility, marital status with special reference to widowhood and remarriage, problems with regard to reproductive burden, reproductive health, mortality and morbidity, changes in occupational structure, changes in house hold composition etc for the year 1996-2004.

In addition 4 rehabilitated Santhal villages in the Bodo dominated area are selected in the district, which has both experienced conflict in the camps and rehabilitated village is represented normal condition for the Santhals for a better comparison with the demographic characteristics of the Santhals affected by the conflict. It has been identified that the concentration of relief camps and share of Santhals in it is the highest in Gossaigaon block; hence Gossaigaon block has been selected to study both relief camps and rehabilitated villages.

It had been decided to assess the spatial dimension of the change by a reference to the changes in the distribution of the Bodos, Santhals and the others at the village level to ascertain the areas from where the Santhals has been forced to leave. An attempt has also been made to trace the same population living in the relief camps and to draw comparison on demographic indicators as pertaining to the household size, sex ratio, literacy and occupational structure using census data for the year 1971 and field based data for the year 2006.

Village level data could not be collected because of the problems related to the data collection on the villages with concentration of the Santhal population. The related limitation of data collection is discussed above in data base.

### **1.9 Organization of the Manuscript**

The manuscript is organised into six broad chapters.

The first chapter outlines the design of the research work. The second chapter deals with spatial distribution of Santhals and the chronology of the events leading to the Bodo-Santhal conflict in Assam. It was felt necessary to provide these details as a background to an understanding of the impact of the conflict more particularly on Santhal women. The chapter has also included their distribution in India with special reference to Assam and the causes related to their migration. The chapter also studies the distribution and core and periphery of Santhals in India and in Assam too.

The Conflict has had its spatial impact too. The ethnic communities experienced redistribution on space on a scale unprecedented in history creating ethnically homogenous areas. It was felt necessary to discuss this process of ethnic homogenisation in the third chapter which deals with this aspect with a special reference to Kokrajhar

district- the area of the conflict. The fourth and the fifth chapters deal with the impact of the conflict on Santhal women living in selected relief camps and selected rehabilitated villages respectively. The final chapter presents a summary of the consequences of the ethnic conflict on Santhal women.

## **CHAPTER 2**

# **SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF SANTHAL AND CHRONOLOGY OF BODO-SANTHAL CONFLICT**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter an attempt has been made to discuss the historical background of Santhals, the pattern of their migration, spatial distribution with special reference to Assam. To understand the distribution tendency of population in Assam the changes in ethnic composition in Assam has been studied. A special attempt has been made to document the facts of Bodo movement behind the demand for the establishment of Bodoland Territorial Council. In this connection a chronological account of the Bodo movement for a separate state that culminated in the formation of Bodoland Territorial Council in the state Assam has been presented in order to get an insight into the nature of the problem that existed before the clash that took place between the Bodos and the Santhals. The chapter aims at providing a background to the conflict for a better understanding of the ethnic situation in the study area. It was felt imperative to add a brief overview of the causes that led to the conflict in a situation of an otherwise peaceful co-existence of diverse ethnic groups living in a shared space for centuries. The chapter reveals the manner in which an essentially political demand beginning with the recognition of Bodo as a medium of instruction transformed into a mass movement for separate statehood and a solution in granting autonomous council transforming almost overnight the cordial relations between ethnic groups in the very shared space into that of animosity, distrust and destitution. Territorial questions were linked to numerical superiority and the displacement of communities from their habitat in order to achieve ethnically homogenous space.

The chapter may not address to the core problematic of this thesis but is vital as a link and as a background to understand the effects of ethnic conflict on the

women of a particular community, namely the Santhals. The data has been collected extensively from various secondary information sources like books, journals and articles from internet.

The approach here is essentially historical. Events have been presented in sequence leading to the emergence of conflicting situation.

Historically, the state of Assam, an alluvial expanse laid down by Brahmaputra and its tributaries, offered suitable environment for the settlement of the *different communities coming to the region from different parts of the country and outside the countries from centuries*. The tribal and non tribal communities of the region have found suitable sites for their settlement in the isolated hill features, forested portions of the valley and its marshy tracts on the basis of the communities' requirements of subsistence and protection.

In a culturally diverse society like Assam, ethnic identity has grown as a crucial force often resulting in violent conflict. Autonomous demands of often different ethnic groups – the Bodos, the Karbis, the Dimasas, the Koch-Rajbanshis, the Rabha-Hajongs, the Tiwas, and the Missings – had caused serious concern to the authorities at the state as well as the centre.<sup>1</sup>

Available records show that the Bodos before partition of the country were extensively distributed on both sides of Brahmaputra River as well as in the *char* area (river islands). They captured vast fertile land on both sides of the river Brahmaputra and the indigenous people and the early migrants (mainly Bodo) retreated back towards the north, inhabiting fallow land, grazing reservoirs, forest and wasteland.

After the partition of India, influx of refugees from the erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) created problems related to shelter and settlement in large parts of

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<sup>1</sup> S. Das, 'IDPs in Assam', *Refugee Watch* - Publication from South Asia Forum for Human Rights & Calcutta Research Group, 2004.

the state of Assam. Gradually the immigrant groups captured the lands inhabited by the tribes. Inter-state migration complicated the issue; flow of migrants for years together added to the already complex socio-economic problems of encroachment and increased the pressure on land.

The migration had a debilitating effect on availability of land for the tribal people as a whole and particularly the Bodos were squeezed rapidly towards the north. The process continued much after the partition and it threatened the Bodo identity owing to continued influx of people of non-Bodo origin into the already shrunk areas of their habitat.<sup>2</sup>

Population pressure gradually increased over the years by both 'indigenous' and 'domiciled' people in the tribal belt and in the Brahmaputra Valley. The migrant colonizers circumvented the land revenue regulation by converting vast tracts of fertile land for commercial purposes, which were lying untouched by Assamese and other tribal communities. The migrant colonizers transformed the land into rich tea plantations and also started using it for other commercial purposes with the help of migrant labourers from other parts of the country. The non-tribal migrants like Santhals, the descendents of the tea garden labourers, already inhabited the forested land from many decades. Other communities like Bengali Muslim and Hindu migrants settled down in the land before or after partition of the country as there was no stronger hold or interest of indigenous people till the mass movement raised by Assamese community against the migrants. So the Line System or the formation of tribal belt after independence of the country could neither prevent encroachment on tribal land nor was the land properly politically demarcated to be protected from migration of other communities.

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<sup>2</sup> A. Patra, 'Redistribution of Population in Areas of Bodo Concentration in Assam' Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Department of Geography, North Eastern Hill University, Shillong, 2004.

## 2.2 Changes in Ethnic Composition of Assam

An interesting fact of the ethnic composition of the population relates to large increase in the share of the Scheduled Caste population between 1971 and 1991, and substantial decrease in their population in the following decade. The share of Scheduled Tribe population also showed a very large increase during 1971-91 decades but decreased marginally in the following decade. Similarly, the share of Bodo population in the total population was 4.23 percent in the census year 1971 which increased to 5.48 percent in 1991. The increase in the proportion of the Scheduled population during 1971-91 decades is followed by a corresponding decrease in the share of the Non-Scheduled population which declined from 82.78 percent in 1971 to 79.77 percent in 1991. The proportion of this group has marginally increased in the year 2001 (Table-2.1 and Fig.-2.1). It may be noted here that the Santhals are enumerated as part of the Non-Scheduled segment of Assam's population.

In the last 30 years, the share of tribal population shows a positive change (+1.40 percent) compared to other ethnic groups in the state as a whole. On the other hand, the share of the Non-Scheduled population shows a negative change (-2.01 percent) in the same period for the state as a whole. It is clear that the tribal segment increased rapidly due to high natural increase in their population while the share of Non-Scheduled population decreased due to relatively low natural increase. The share of Santhal population shows a marginal increase (+ 0.3 percent) in the year 2001.

Table: 2.1  
Assam: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1971-2001 (in percent)

State	Census Year	Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe	Non-Scheduled	Bodo	Santhal
Assam	1971	6.2	11.0	82.8	4.2	0.6
	1991	7.4	12.8	79.8	5.5	0.6
	2001	6.9	12.4	80.7	4.9	0.9

Source: Census of Assam, 1971, 1991 and 2001

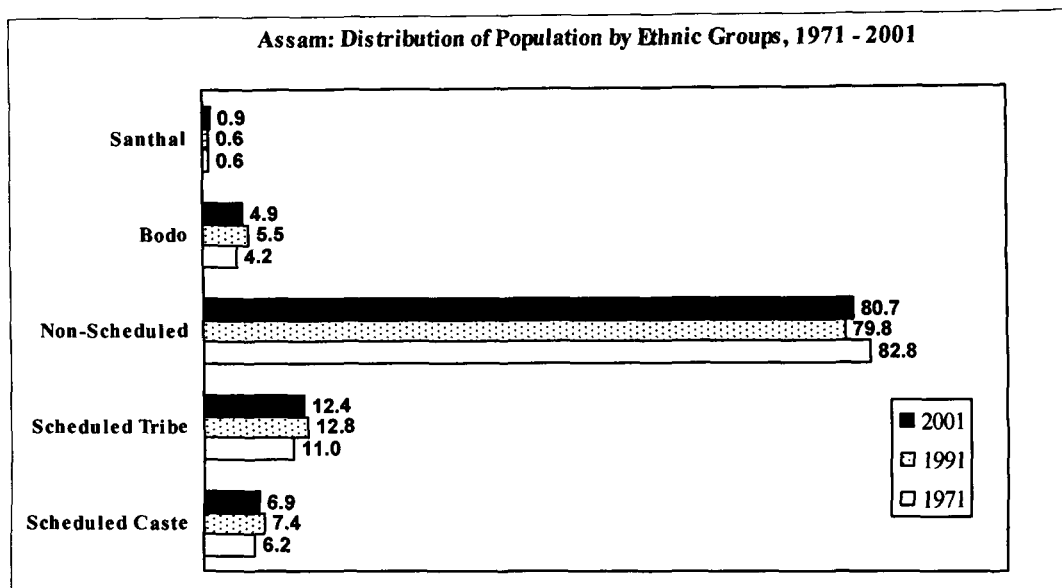


Fig.-2.1

The analysis of the distribution of population in Assam by ethnic groups at the district level reveals striking spatial variation (Table-2.2) except in the Cachar plains. The Scheduled Caste population accounts for a small proportion of the population in all other districts of Assam in the year 1971. The only other district in which the Scheduled Caste population constitutes a significant share of the total population is Nagaon located in the central valley. They account for 4 to 5 percent of the population in Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang and Sibsagar districts dispersed all over the state. They have a negligible presence in the tribal dominated hill districts and in Lakhimpur district. During 1971 and 1991, the share of Scheduled Caste population increased uniformly in all the districts keeping the pattern unchanged (Table-2.3).

The Scheduled Tribe population is largely confined to the hill areas of the state. Lakhimpur, in the eastern part, and Goalpara, in the west are two other areas in the plains that contain a significant (over 13 percent) proportion of the Scheduled Tribes (Table-2.3). They are also numerous in Kamrup and Darrang districts in the plains of Brahmaputra where their share was 11 to 14 percent as per 1971 enumeration. The Scheduled Tribes are by and large absent in the plains of Barak

valley. In the remaining districts, they account for a little over 6 percent of the total population. Data shows that the Scheduled Tribes have some presence all over Assam except in the Barak valley. The pattern remains more or less identical in the year 1991. However, there are some notable changes. While Goalpara and Lakhimpur districts experienced substantive increase in the share of the Scheduled Tribe population, there was a significant decline in the proportion of the Scheduled Tribe population in the tribal dominated districts of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills. Substantial incursion of the non-tribal population into these hill districts is the chief cause in the fall of tribal proportion in these areas.

Table: 2.2  
Assam: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1971-1991 (in percent)

District	Scheduled Caste to Total Population		Scheduled Tribe to Total Population		Non-Scheduled to Total Population		Bodo to Total Population		Santhal to Total Population	
	1971	1991	1971	1991	1971	1991	1971	1991	1971	1991
1. Goalpara	5.4	6.0	13.8	17.1	80.8	76.8	10.7	14.0	2.5	2.7
2. Kamrup	5.8	7.5	10.4	11.5	83.8	81.0	7.3	8.3	0.3	0.3
3. Darrang	4.4	5.3	10.7	13.9	84.9	80.8	7.6	10.6	0.4	0.4
4. Nagaon	10.0	11.0	7.4	6.7	82.6	82.4	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.1
5. Sibsagar	4.7	5.6	6.8	8.6	88.5	85.8	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.1
6. Lakhimpur	3.7	4.9	13.5	16.1	82.9	79.0	1.3	1.5	0.3	0.2
7. K. Anglong	2.6	4.2	55.4	51.6	42.0	44.2	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2
8. N. C. Hills	1.1	2.6	69.2	65.5	29.8	31.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
9. Cachar	13.2	14.2	0.9	0.8	86.9	85.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1
Assam	6.2	7.4	11.0	12.8	82.8	79.8	4.2	5.5	0.6	0.6

Source: Census of India, Assam, 1971 and 1991

The Non-Scheduled population accounted for over 80 percent of the population in most of the districts of Assam except the two hill districts containing a majority of Scheduled Tribe population (Table-2.3). However, their proportion has been declining in nearly all districts except in the hill districts of Karbi Anglong and North-Cachar Hills. The fall in the share of the Non-Scheduled population during 1971 and 1991 is remarkable in Goalpara, Kamrup and Darrang districts, the areas of Bodo concentration.

The distribution of the Bodo population, enumerated as a Scheduled Tribe, shows extreme clustering only in three districts - Goalpara, Kamrup, and Darrang, located in lower Brahmaputra valley (Table-2.3). Both Goalpara and Darrang districts have experienced very large increase in the proportion of Bodo population in the period between 1971 and 1991 while elsewhere their share has remained static. In the three districts of their concentration, the Bodos seem to be the major tribal group as they accounted for over 70 percent of the total Scheduled Tribe population. Interestingly their proportion in these districts has been increasing over the years at the cost of other Scheduled Tribes.

It is evident from table 2.2 that the Santhals are widely dispersed all over Assam. They had some presence in 7 out of 9 (undivided) districts of Assam. They accounted for around 2.5 percent of the district's population only in Goalpara district in the year 1971 which increased to 2.7 percent in 1991.

Table-2.3 depicts the distribution of population by ethnic groups in Assam, during the period between 1991 and 2001. It may be noted that the number of districts have increased in this period due to reorganisation of districts in Assam and this permits to examine the regional distribution of population at much lower scale of spatial aggregation. It is clear from the table that the Scheduled Caste population accounts for less than 7 percent of the total population of the districts in a majority of the districts in the year 1991. They account for a substantial proportion (over 10 percent) of the district's population in the three districts located in the Barak valley, Morigaon and Nagaon in the central plains and Bongaigaon in lower plains of Brahmaputra valley. Their presence is marginal in North-Cachar Hills, Tinsukia, Sibsagar and Kokrajhar. The overall pattern of distribution remains by and large unchanged by the year 2001. However, the proportion of Scheduled Caste population

registered almost a uniform decline in most districts, a fact that defies easy explanation.

Table: 2.3  
Assam: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1991-2001 (in percent)

District	Scheduled Caste to Total Population		Scheduled Tribe to Total Population		Non-Scheduled to Total Population		Bodo to Total Population		Santhal to Total Population		Concentration Index (Santhal)	
	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001
1. Dhubri	4.8	3.9	2.4	2.0	92.8	94.2	1.7	1.4	0.4	0.6	3.6	3.7
2. Kokrajhar	3.8	3.4	41.2	33.7	55.1	62.9	39.8	32.4	10.2	16.7	60.1	62.3
3. Bongaigaon	10.7	10.3	17.5	12.2	71.7	77.5	16.6	11.2	1.3	1.1	7.5	4.1
4. Goalpara	5.5	4.8	17.2	16.0	77.3	79.2	4.7	4.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
5. Barpeta	6.5	5.7	8.0	7.5	85.5	86.8	7.5	7.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
6. Nalbari	8.8	7.5	17.7	17.6	73.6	74.9	14.5	14.3	1.4	1.5	10.5	7.0
7. Kamrup	7.5	6.8	10.7	9.9	81.8	83.3	5.6	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.3
8. Darrang	5.0	4.6	17.3	16.6	77.7	78.8	14.5	13.2	0.3	1.3	2.4	7.9
9. Sonitpur	5.7	5.2	10.7	11.6	83.6	83.2	7.1	7.7	0.5	0.6	5.1	4.5
10. Lakhimpur	8.0	7.9	23.6	23.5	68.3	68.6	1.1	0.7	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.5
11. Dhemaji	6.4	5.3	43.9	47.3	49.7	47.4	8.2	7.3	0.2	0.2	0.7	0.5
12. Morigaon	13.8	12.9	15.4	15.6	70.8	71.5	0.0	1.6	0.1	0.0	0.6	0.1
13. Nagaon	10.0	9.3	3.7	3.9	86.3	86.8	0.5	0.6	0.0	0.1	0.6	0.6
14. Golaghat	5.6	5.4	10.3	9.9	84.2	84.7	0.9	2.1	0.1	0.4	0.8	1.5
15. Jorhat	7.6	7.9	12.1	12.3	80.3	79.8	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2
16. Sibsagar	3.6	3.4	3.8	4.0	92.6	92.7	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.6	1.4
17. Dibrugarh	4.0	4.1	8.0	7.5	88.0	88.5	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.9	1.3
18. Tinsukia	2.6	2.7	5.4	5.9	92.0	91.4	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.3	2.1	1.5
19. K. Anglong	4.2	3.6	51.6	55.7	44.2	40.7	0.0	5.0	0.2	0.3	1.1	0.9
20. N. C. Hills	2.6	1.8	65.5	68.3	31.9	29.9	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
21. Karimganj	14.6	13.0	0.2	0.3	85.3	86.7	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.3
22. Hailakandi	12.1	10.9	0.2	0.2	87.8	88.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
23. Cachar	14.7	14.4	1.4	1.3	83.9	84.3	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2	1.9	1.4
Assam	7.4	6.8	12.8	12.4	79.7	80.7	5.4	4.9	0.6	0.9	100	100

Source: Census of India, Assam 1991 and 2001

The Scheduled Tribe population displays a very uneven distribution across the districts. The hill districts of North Cachar and Karbi Anglong as well as the plain districts of Dhemaji and Kokrajhar supported a very high percentage (over 40 percent) of Scheduled Tribes in the year 1991. The other districts in the plains, that contained a sizeable Scheduled Tribe population include Bongaigaon, Goalpara, Nalbari forming a contiguous zone in the lower Brahmaputra valley; and Darrang, Lakhimpur and Morigaon forming another pocket of tribal concentration in the Upper and Central Brahmaputra valley. The spatial pattern of distribution of the Scheduled Tribe population underwent little change in the year 2001 with minor modifications. The

Scheduled Tribes also experienced a fall in their proportion in the total population in many districts. The only exceptions are found in the hill districts and Dhemaji, where the Scheduled Tribes have actually increased their share in the total population. Nevertheless, the fact that their share has fallen in many districts reveals the weakness of Census data. Either the 1991 Census overestimated the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Population or has under enumerated them in the 2001 Census (Table-2.3).

It is interesting to note that the proportion of the Non-Scheduled population has increased in a majority of the districts with the possible exception of those in which the proportion of the Scheduled Tribe population shows an increase during the period between 1991 and 2001. The spatial pattern in the distribution of Non-Scheduled population however does not show much of a change (Table-2.3).

As regards the Bodo population, they are largely confined to Kokrajhar district and account for a significant proportion of the total population in the adjoining districts of Bongaigaon and Nalbari as well as Darrang district in central Brahmaputra valley separated by Kamrup district that contains relatively lesser proportion of the Bodo tribes in the total population. However, the Bodos constitute a majority of the Scheduled Tribe population in a large number of districts from Dhubri to Sonitpur in a contiguous belt barring the exception of Goalpara which represents a break in the continuum. The index of concentration calculated for the Bodos reveals that they are highly concentrated only in Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Nalbari and Darrang districts accounting for nearly 26 percent, 11 percent, 12 percent and 15 percent of the total Bodo population of the state respectively. Nearly 65 percent of the Bodo population of the state is confined to these four districts only (Table-2.3).

Analysis of the pattern in the distribution and concentration of the Santhal population after the districts were reorganised provides far clearer picture of the tendency of clustering and concentration, not so well demonstrated earlier. Needless to mention, the reorganisation of the districts into smaller spatial units provided much sharper insights into the pattern of distribution. Unfortunately however, this information is available for one decade only, i.e. 1991-2001.

Table 2.3 provides the details for 23 districts. It is evident that bifurcation of Goalpara district proved that the Santhals were actually confined to Kokrajhar subdivision of the undivided district. It is interesting that 7 of the 23 districts did not contain any Santhal population in the year 1991 though such districts were fewer by the year 2001. However, barring Kokrajhar district where the Santhals accounted for a significant 10.2 percent of the district's total, they were an insignificant component of the population in the remaining. The only two districts where their proportion in the total population exceeded 1 percent are Bongaigaon and Nalbari districts. In the year 2001, the overall pattern remained identical, but the proportion of the Santhals increased substantially in Kokrajhar district where it accounted for a significant 16.7 percent of the total population of the district. The only other district where their overall percentage showed some increase was Darrang district where they accounted for over 1 percent unlike in the year 1991 (Table-2.3; Fig. 2.2a and 2.2b).

As far as their concentration is concerned table 3.6 clearly reveals a strong clustering of the Santhal population in Kokrajhar district where more than 60 percent of all Santhals lived. The clustering pattern strengthened by the year 2001 when over 62 percent of all Santhal population was enumerated in this district alone. The three other districts where the Santhals were concentrated in 1991 included Nalbari (10.5 percent) Bongaigaon (7.5 percent) and Sonitpur (5.1 percent). However in all these

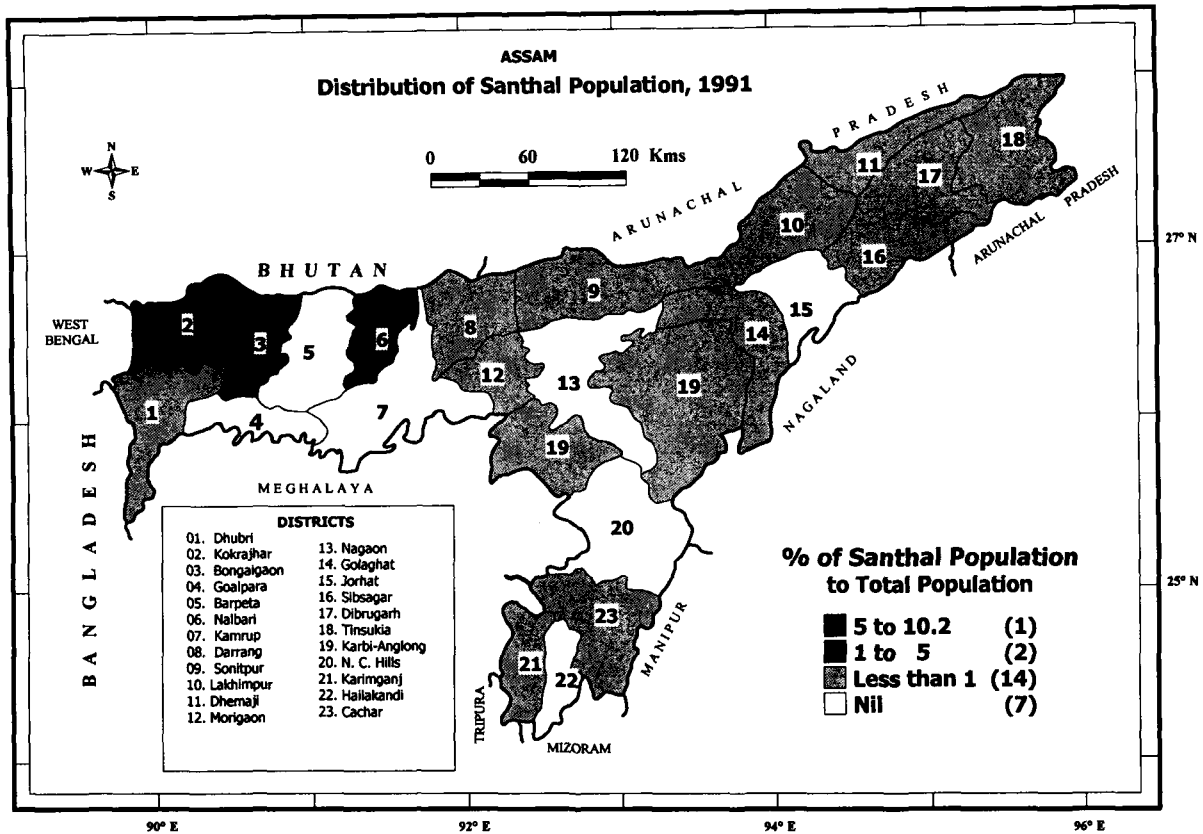


Fig.-2.2a

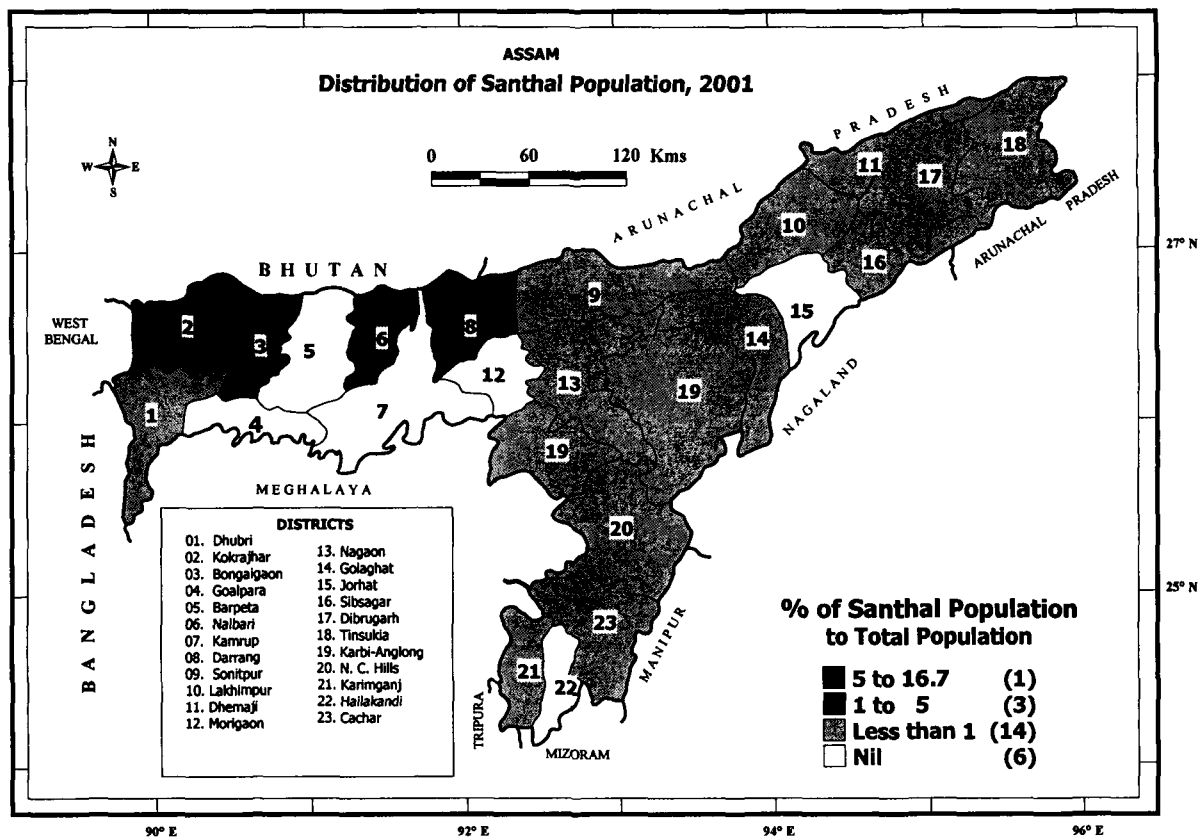


Fig.-2.2b

districts their concentration decreased with a corresponding rise in the concentration index in Kokrajhar district. This is certainly an indication of the redistribution of Santhal population which now migrated from other locations in the state to Kokrajhar- the seat of conflict between them and the Bodos in the post Accord phase (Table-2.3; Fig.-2.3a and 2.3b)

Table: 2.4  
Assam: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1971-1991  
(Location Quotients)

Districts	Scheduled Caste		Scheduled Tribe		Non-Scheduled		Bodo Tribe		Santhal	
	1971	1991	1971	1991	1971	1991	1971	1991	1971	1991
1. Goalpara	0.9	0.8	1.3	1.3	1.0	1.0	2.5	2.6	4.3	4.4
2. Kamrup	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.7	1.5	0.6	0.6
3. Darrang	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.8	1.9	0.6	0.6
4. Nagaon	1.6	1.5	0.7	0.5	1.0	1.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
5. Sibsagar	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.7	1.1	1.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1
6. Lakhimpur	0.6	0.7	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.0	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.3
7. Karbi Anglong	0.4	0.6	5.0	4.0	0.5	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.4
8. North Cachar Hills	0.2	0.4	6.3	5.1	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
9. Cachar	2.0	1.9	0.1	0.1	1.1	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.2

Source: Census of India, Assam, 1971 and 1991

The distribution of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, Non-Scheduled and Bodo population to the total population has been worked out for each district and also for the entire state in table-2.4 for both the census years 1971 and 1991 with the help of location quotient technique.

The values of the location quotients show a higher concentration of Scheduled Caste in Nagaon and Cachar districts in 1971. The pattern remains unchanged in the year 1991, though Kamrup, Nagaon and Cachar districts show an increase in the quotient in 1991 over 1971 (Table-2.4).

A very high concentration of Scheduled Tribe is found in Goalpara, Lakhimpur, Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills districts in 1971. However, one more district, namely, Darrang, has been added to the list of very high concentration of Scheduled Tribes in 1991 (Table-2.4).

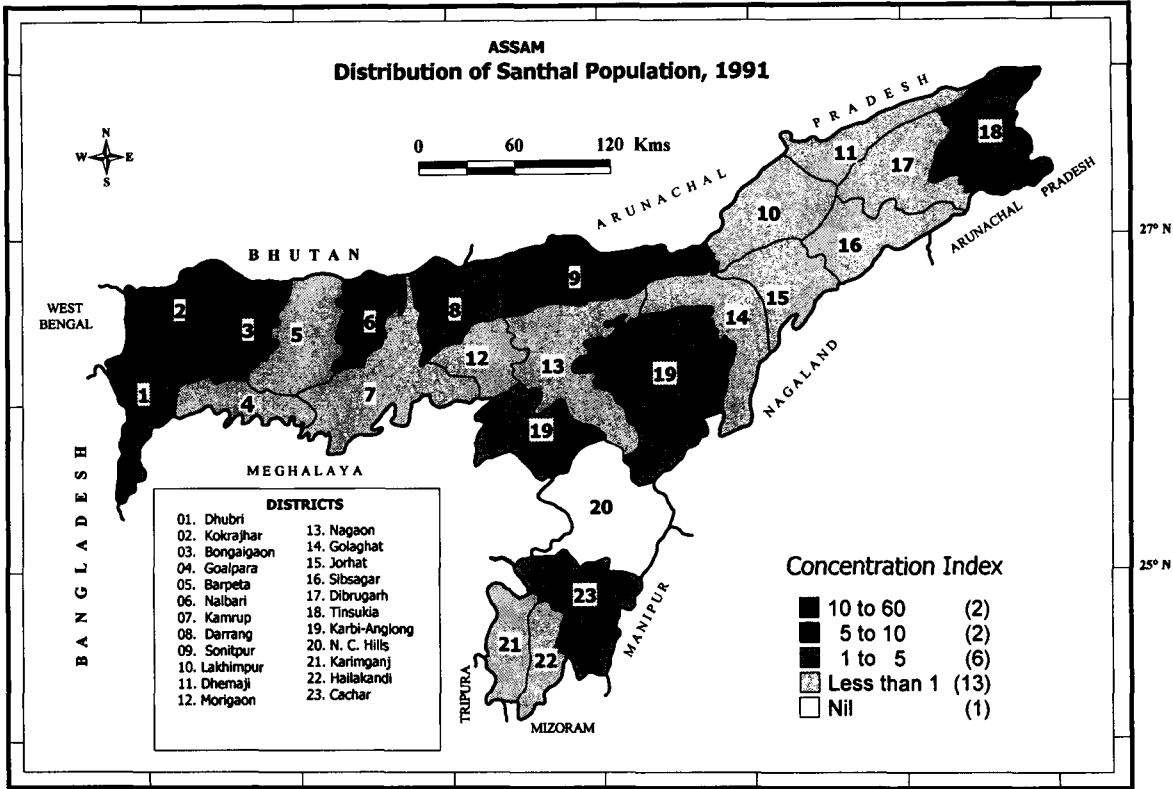


Fig.-2.3a

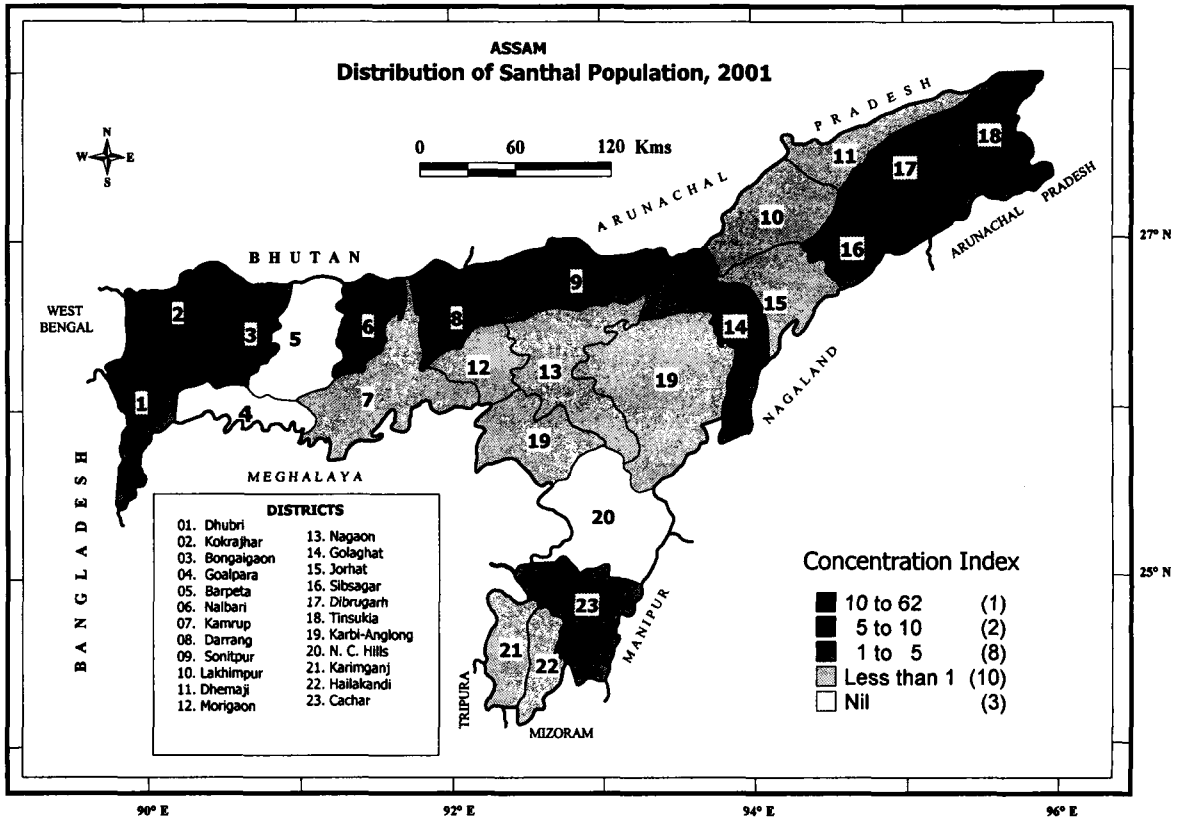


Fig.-2.3b

The Non-Scheduled population was highly concentrated in Kamrup, Darrang, Nagaon, Sibsagar, Lakhimpur and Cachar districts in 1971. By the year 1991, Lakhimpur experienced a decline in the proportion of Non-Scheduled population (Table-2.4).

The Bodos, as has been pointed out earlier, were largely confined to three districts, namely, Goalpara, Kamrup and Darrang in the year 1971 with a little change in the pattern in the year 1991 (Table-2.4).

The Santhals are highly concentrated in the Kokrajhar district over 4.4 percent (Table-2.4)

A high concentration of Scheduled Tribe is found in Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Goalpara, Nalbari, Darrang, Lakhimpur, Dhemaji and Morigaon districts of Brahmaputra valley and the hill districts of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills in 1991. The patterns remain unchanged in the year 2001 except Dhubri, Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Goalpara, Barpata, Kamrup and Darrang districts in the lower Brahmaputra valley. It shows a decrease in the quotient in 2001 over 1991 (Table-2.5).

The location quotients for Non-Scheduled population are higher in Dhubri, Kamrup, Sonitpur, Nagaon Golaghat, Jorhat Sibsagar, Dibrugarh and Tinsukia in the Brahmaputra plain, and in all the districts of the Barak plain in 1991. The pattern remains same in the year 2001 (Table-2.5).

Bodos are largely confined to eight contiguous districts, namely, Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Nalbari, Kamrup, Darrang and Sonitpur on the north bank of the river Brahmaputra (Table-2.5).

Though less widespread than the Bodos, Santhals too are highly concentrated in around Kokrajhar district close to 7 percent in the year 1991 which increased to over 18 percent (Table-2.5 and Fig-2.4a and 2.4b).

Table: 2.5  
Assam: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1991-2001  
(Location Quotients)

District	Scheduled Caste		Scheduled Tribe		Non-Scheduled		Bodo Tribe		Santhal	
	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001
1. Dhubri	0.7	0.6	0.2	0.2	1.2	1.2	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.6
2. Kokrajhar	0.5	0.5	3.2	2.7	0.7	0.8	7.3	6.7	12.0	18.3
3. Bongaigaon	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.0	0.9	1.0	3.0	2.3	0.8	1.2
4. Goalpara	0.7	0.7	1.3	1.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.3	0.0
5. Barpeta	0.9	0.8	0.6	0.6	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.4	0.2	0.0
6. Nalbari	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.4	0.9	0.9	2.7	2.9	0.6	1.6
7. Kamrup	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.1	0.0
8. Darrang	0.7	0.7	1.4	1.3	1.0	1.0	2.6	2.7	0.5	1.4
9. Sonitpur	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.6	0.2	0.7
10. Lakhimpur	1.1	1.2	1.8	1.9	0.9	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1
11. Dhemaji	0.9	0.8	3.4	3.8	0.6	0.6	1.5	1.5	0.7	0.3
12. Morigaon	1.9	1.9	1.2	1.3	0.9	0.9	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0
13. Nagaon	1.4	1.4	0.3	0.3	1.1	1.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
14. Golaghat	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.1	1.1	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.4
15. Jorhat	1.0	1.2	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
16. Sibsagar	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3	1.2	1.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.3
17. Dibrugarh	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.1	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
18. Tinsukia	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	1.2	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
19. Karbi Anglong	0.6	0.5	4.0	4.5	0.6	0.5	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.3
20. North Cachar Hills	0.4	0.3	5.1	5.5	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.1
21. Karimganj	2.0	1.9	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
22. Hailakandi	1.6	1.6	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
23. Cachar	2.0	3.1	0.1	0.1	1.1	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
Assam	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

Source: Census of India, Assam, 1991 and 2001

Table 2.6 shows the concentration pattern of the Santhals in the rural and urban areas of Assam. It is evident that the concentration of the Santhal population in both the rural and the urban areas follows a more or less identical pattern. However, there are some significant variations. It is interesting that the rural Santhals are overwhelmingly concentrated in Kokrajhar alone (over 60 percent) while another pocket lies in Nalbari (over 7 percent). The concentration of the rural Santhals has been on the rise in the former while it is showing a decline in the latter.

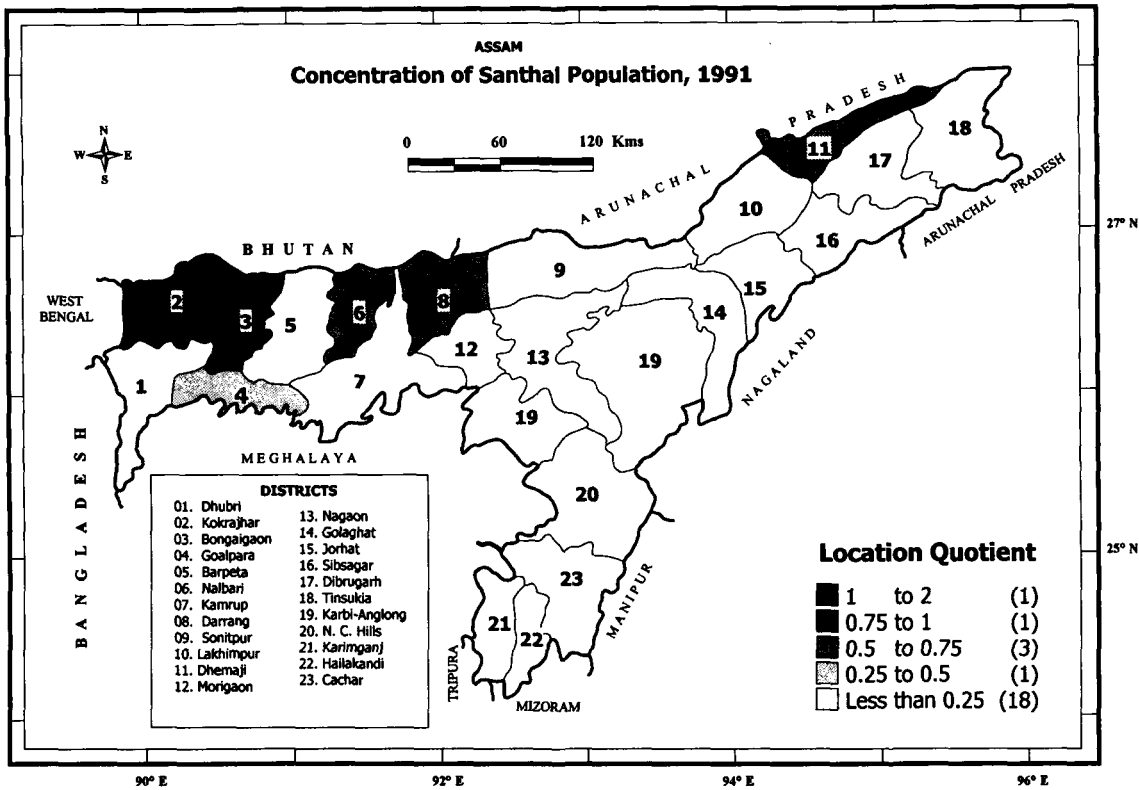


Fig.-2.4a

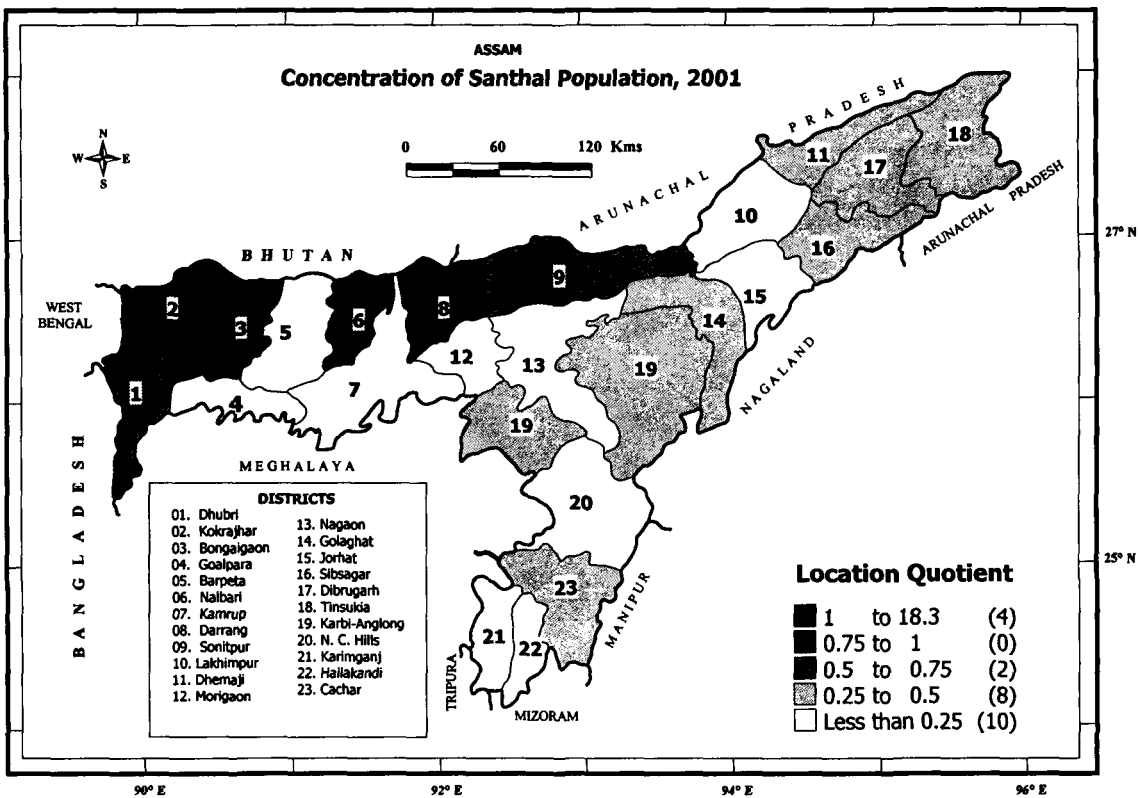


Fig.-2.4b

Table 2.6  
Assam: Distribution of Santhal Population in Percent (1991-2001)

Districts	Proportion of Rural Population			Proportion of Urban Population		
	1991	2001	Change	1991	2001	Change
1. Dhubri	99.3	99.3	0	0.7	0.7	0
2. Kokrajhar	99.6	99.8	0.2	0.4	0.2	-0.2
3. Bongaigaon	99.8	99.6	-0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2
4. Goalpara	98.8	100.0	1.2	1.2	0.0	-1.2
5. Barpeta	72.0	71.7	-0.3	28.0	28.3	0.3
6. Nalbari	100.0	100.0	0	0.0	0.0	0
7. Kamrup	79.3	63.9	-15.4	20.7	36.1	15.4
8. Darrang	94.5	99.0	4.5	5.5	1.0	-4.5
9. Sonitpur	98.9	99.3	0.4	1.1	0.7	-0.4
10. Lakhimpur	100.0	100.0	0	0.0	0.0	0
11. Dhemaji	100.0	99.0	-1.0	0.0	1.0	1
12. Morigaon	100.0	100.0	0	0.0	0.0	0
13. Nagaon	99.9	99.7	-0.2	0.1	0.3	0.2
14. Golaghat	99.9	98.9	-1.0	0.1	1.1	1
15. Jorhat	98.5	98.2	-0.3	1.5	1.8	0.3
16. Sibsagar	100.0	99.4	-0.6	0.0	0.6	0.6
17. Dibrugarh	97.8	98.9	1.1	2.2	1.1	-1.1
18. Tinsukia	98.8	96.9	-1.9	1.2	3.1	1.9
19. K. Anglong	99.7	99.2	-0.5	0.3	0.8	0.5
20. N. C. Hills	29.4	44.2	14.8	70.6	55.8	-14.8
21. Karimganj	100.0	99.5	-0.5	0.0	0.5	0.5
22. Hailakandi	100.0	98.0	-2.0	0.0	2.0	2
23. Cachar	99.4	99.2	-0.2	0.6	0.8	0.2
Assam	99.4	99.5	0.1	0.7	0.5	-0.2

*Source: Census of India, 1991 and 2001 Primary Population Tables, Part-II (B), Series 4, Assam*

On the contrary the urban Santhals show a more dispersed pattern in their pattern of distribution though the largest concentration is still in Kokrajhar district (36.8 percent in 1991). A good proportion of the Santhals (over 22 percent in 1991) living in urban areas are found in Darrang district. Over 5 percent of them were concentrated in Sonitpur district. By the year 2001, the urban Santhals seem to have a greater dispersion as they are found concentrated in more districts than the year 1991. A large increase in the proportion of urban Santhals took place in Kamrup district which contains the Guwahati city. Likewise Tinsukia emerged as another area of concentration of urban Santhals. Interestingly the urban Santhal concentration declined in the traditional areas of their concentration over the decade. In any case the

share of urban Santhal is extremely small and thus inconsequential from the point of view of redistribution.

### 2.3 The History of Santhals in India-Pattern of Migration

The Santhals are regarded as Pre-Dravidian aboriginals who, according to their traditions, are represented as a race wandering from one country to another. Authentic records reflect that during the 18<sup>th</sup> century many Santhals began settling down in Chotanagpur and in the neighbouring district of Midnapur and Birbhum. These people who were endowed with essential skills of clearing the jungles for cultivation began to migrate to the Rajmahal Hills on the North-Eastern side of Chotanagpur plateau. Skrefsrud<sup>3</sup> (1887) is of the opinion that the Santhals entered India from the North-West and first settled in Punjab and then made their way to their present habitat-Chotanapur Plateau. According to Waddell<sup>4</sup> (1893) the Santhals' story of their advance from Hihri Pipri via Champa to their present location in the Santhal Parganas is manifestly a record of actual tribal progress, not as is usually believed, from one part of the Hazaribagh hills to another but from the central alluvial valley of the Ganges South-West wards to the hills, under pressure of the Aryan invasion of the valley from the North. But Chattopadhyay<sup>5</sup> (1944) criticised the views of both the above scholars and having hinged upon the geographical evidence pointed out that the Santhals probably came from the Kaimur Range through the Champa pass and other neighbouring passes into the Chotanagpur plateau. Dolton<sup>6</sup> (1872) reported that the Santhals came to the present abode from North-East India and found their way to Chotanagpur plateau and adjoining high lands by the side of their sacred stream, the

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<sup>3</sup> L. O. Skrefsrud, *Horkoren Mare Hapramko Reak Katha*. Benageria: Santhal Mission Press, 1887.

<sup>4</sup> L. A. Waddell, *The Traditional Migration of the Santhal Tribe*. The Indian Antiquary, Bombay, Vol. 22, pp. 294-296, 1893.

<sup>5</sup> K. P. Chattopadhyaya, 'Santhal Migration', *Proceedings of the 31<sup>st</sup> Indian Congress*, Delhi, P.101, 1944.

<sup>6</sup> E. T. Dolton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, Government of Bengal, Calcutta, 1872.

Damodar River. Campbell<sup>7</sup> (1894) indicates that the Santhals occupied the country on both sides of the Ganges but more specially the area to the North of it. The Campbell theory was not supported by Risley<sup>8</sup> (1903).

However the history of Santhal migration does not remain conjectural from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century onwards as there are no authentic records regarding their movements. According to O'malley<sup>9</sup> (1910) this is certain that the Santhal settled within historic times in the Chotanagpur plateau and in the adjoining districts of Midnapur and Birbhum. Towards the close of 18<sup>th</sup> Century they occupied their present abode-the Santhal Parganas. According to Dalton<sup>10</sup> (1872) the Santhals also Colonized in other parts of the country and it is chiefly by migration from Hazaribagh and Birbhum districts that the modern Santhal Parganas was formed.

#### **2.4 Santhals in Assam**

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, the Assamese social order was stable. There were higher castes and lower castes, and men with power and wealth, and men without, but there are few, if any, who moved from one category to another. Few men sought to change their social status by seeking new occupations, for apart from living in a tradition that discouraged upward mobility, there were few opportunities to move up.

The British created new opportunities. The steamy verdant hills, hitherto ignored by Assamese peasants, were converted by the British into rich tea plantations, whose products were soon to reach out to markets across the seas. In 1821 tea was discovered by an Englishman, and in the 1830's the governor general, Lord William

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<sup>7</sup> A. Campbell, 'The Traditional Migration of the Santhal Tribes', *The Indian Antiquary*, Bombay, Vol. 23, pp. 103-104, 1894.

<sup>8</sup> H. H. Risley, *Census of India 1901*, Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1903.

<sup>9</sup> L. S. S. O'Malley, 'Bengal District Gazetteers Santhal Parganas', Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, Vol. 22, Calcutta, 1910.

<sup>10</sup> E. T. Dalton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, Government of Bengal, Calcutta, 1872.

Bentinck, took steps to create a tea industry in Assam. Within a few decades tea became a booming business, with gardens in Lakhimpur, Darrang, Kamrup, and Cachar districts.<sup>11</sup>

The scarcity of labour in the wake of extension of tea-cultivation made it necessary for the planters to import larger number of labourers from the densely populated areas of Bihar, Orissa, Bengal, Central Provinces, United Provinces and Madras.<sup>12</sup>

In the beginning, the one major obstacle to creating a tea industry in Assam was the lack of an adequate local labour supply. Diseases, civil conflict, and the Burmese invasions had depopulated much of the province. For the local Assamese cultivators there was little incentive to work as low income wage labourers in unhealthy jungle terrain; they were comparatively prosperous, for there was much land.

The British first tried to solve the labour problem by importing Chinese coolies from Singapore. It was assumed by the British that the Chinese, whatever their background, knew how to cultivate and prepare tea. Several hundred Chinese coolies were brought from Singapore to the port at Calcutta, and then sent upland to Assam. En route the Chinese apparently engaged in a brawl with some Indians. Sixty were arrested and jailed by a local magistrate and the remainder refused to go on alone to Assam until their compatriots were released. The entire group, their contracts cancelled, were returned to Calcutta where, in their anger, they proceeded to a nuisance to the local police. The Assam tea Company, reporting to the London office, noted that “these men turned out to be of a very bad character; they were turbulent,

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<sup>11</sup> M. Weiner, *Sons of the Soil: Migration and Ethnic Conflict in India*, N. J. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1978.

<sup>12</sup> H. K. Barpujari (Ed.), *The Comprehensive History of Assam*, Vol. VI and V, Publication Board Assam, Guwahati, 1993.

obstinate and rapacious. Indeed they committed excess which on occasions endangered the lives of the people among whom we had sent them and it was found almost impossible to govern them. So injurious did they seem likely to prove that their contracts were cancelled and the whole gang with the exception of the most expert tea makers dismissed” (see Harold H. Mann, “The early History of the Tea industry in North –East India,” *The Assam Review*, September 1934, p.10.

A system of contract labour was established. The British employers recruited indigent tribesmen from the hill areas of Southern Bihar, a region known as Chota Nagpur, paid their transportation and provided them with housing and medical care in return for a contract that indentured the labourers to their employers. By the turn of the century there were 764 tea gardens in Assam, employing 400,000 persons, and producing 145 million pounds of tea per year. The number of migrants to the plantations soared even higher between 1911 and 1921, when the tea industry imported 769,000 labourers. Another 422,000 came during the following decade.

Migration rose again during the Second World War, when Assam tea garden labourers were employed by the American and British armies to build roads and aerodromes to defend Assam against a possible Japanese invasion from Burma.

A considerable amount of assimilation since then has taken place. The children of migrants attend schools conducted in Assamese. Many of the Tribals now observed Assamese Hindu ritual, especially the *Bihu* festivals that are so central to Assamese cultural life. According to the 1961 census, only 204,000 persons reported that they speak a tribal language of Bihar and Orissa (Santhali, Oraon, Munda, or Sadan/ Sadari) as their mother tongue, though clearly the number of persons who are tribal migrants is considerably larger. The 1921 census estimated that migrants to tea

gardens and their descendants numbered a million and one- sixth of the total population of the providence.

A substantial number of the tea garden labourers have settled as cultivators, either as landlords or tenants in land provided by the government. Others have found employment in construction industries. Of the 38,000 construction workers in Assam, 21,000 are migrants.

The tea plantation migrants have never been nor are they now economic, cultural, or political threats to the Assamese. The jobs they hold are not those sought by the Assamese. Their tendency to assimilate linguistically makes them model migrants to the Assamese. And though there are trade unions among the tea plantation labourers, they play no significant role in the politics of the state. Nor are the tribal migrants in day to day social contact with the Assamese, for those who live on or near the tea plantations are physically removed from contact with the local population. A number of laws and rules- the plantations labour act of 1951, and the Assam plantation labour rules of 1956-require plantation owners to provide housing accommodations, dispensaries and hospitals, crèches for the children of women workers, and schools for children who work on the plantations. Canteens for meals and recreational facilities must also be provided by employers. The effect of these provisions is to limit routine contacts between tea garden workers and the Assamese.<sup>13</sup>

Santhals are one of the laborious tribal communities among the Adivasis of Central India and brought by the British to North-East. They belong to proto-Austroloid group and considered as “Adivasis” or “original inhabitants” by the later settlers in India.

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<sup>13</sup> Weiner, Op.cit.

However they were the original inhabitants from Mid India but encouraged later to migrate to the North- East under orders of Steuart Bayley, chief commissioner of Assam to colonise the district of Goalpara defraying their expenses on travel from home, besides advances free of interest until they could reap a crop of their own. In 1891 the total number of immigrants who were attracted to tea gardens was estimated approximately at 423,199 or nearly eighty three percent of the immigrants and forming 7 percent of the total population of the province. In 1901 the number went up to 645,100 and two decades after to a million and a third, one sixth of the province. Of these, majority came from the Chotanagpur region of Bihar, Gaya, Santhal Parganas on account of their capability to withstand hard work in the jungle and rigours of climate in the tea-districts of Upper Assam. Bengal sent most of the recruits from the Burdwan, and Birbhum Districts. Several enactments as a sequel to the recommendation made by the commissions set-up by the government, from time to time, improved terms and living conditions of the garden labourers. The monthly wage which stood at Rs 2-8 in 1839 rose up to Rs. 4-8 in 1859 and reached Rs. 10-19 in 1911-1912. Besides rice at concessional rate, they were entitled to free housing, grazing ground, fuel, medical aid etc. That their material condition was considerably improved is borne out by the fact that they were reluctant to return back to their original home on the termination of the contract; although during seven years ending in 1883-84, as reported by the Chotanagpur authorities, no less than 50,000 returned home. They are far happier, remarks Gait "whether they continue to work in the gardens or to settle down to cultivate in independent settlements or combine both occupations than they would be if they abandoned this province to return to their own country. In 1860's, the tribal people had migrated under "Penal Contract" to work in the tea gardens for a period of 5 years. But after the contract expired most of the

labourers could not return to their home land because the journey back home was risky, they belonged to landless sections and their livelihood in their homeland was uncertain, they could not escape the grip of the recruiting agents who were operating in that area, the opportunity for re-employment in tea garden by entering into fresh contracts, and opportunities for settlement in the land available near the tea garden held them back. The second reason of migrating to the tea gardens was because job was easily available for both husband and wife and the housing facility, water facility, electricity, ration were available at a very subsidised rate and education was free.

The planters in early stage resented their permanent stay in Assam, but the cost and difficulties involved in importation of new recruits induced them before long to encourage their settlement in the neighbourhood of their gardens. The time-expired labourers too found it convenient to settlement near the garden as ordinary cultivator and supplement their earning by working at times when regular labour was insufficient especially for plucking and hoeing. Normally they remained in their old gardens, but a segment of them took to cultivation on their own account and as a result villages of such immigrants were springing up in the neighbourhood of tea gardens. Assam those days had to depend by and large on Bengal for her requirement of food grains. The Assamese, stigmatised as apathetic and idle, were stationary or declining. The number of those who worked for hire was too small. Taking the valley as a whole, according to 1901 census, excluding the tea gardens, only 3.3 percent of the population belonged to the working class. The urgent need of the province therefore increased labour supply both for the cultivation of tea and ordinary farming.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Barpujari, Op. cit

The descendants of the Santhals, who migrated from mid India going by the ancestral identities, continue to be recognised as schedule tribes in the areas of their ancestral home but have lost this status in Assam because of location specificity of such identities, as the status has been accorded to them in their place of origin. Despite their numerical strength and long history of settlement in Assam stretching more than a century, they remain 'outsiders' without the tribal status, and are deprived of benefits availed by the scheduled castes.

Language reveals a person's origin, identity and culture. It is also a means for a person to interact with others, but in the tea gardens, many of them have lost their own language. Due to migration and the interaction with the outer world, these tribals have forgotten their cultural values, rituals, and festivals like -karma, the festival of the origin of the earth and human beings, in which young women are supposed to take a major part in rituals. These tribals are facing many social problems like indebtedness, alcoholism, mental exploitation etc.

#### **2.4.1 Santhals in Assam- Core and Periphery**

An attempt is now made to identify the cores and peripheries of the Santhal Community living in Assam using the formula below. A better understanding of the tribal pattern of spatial dispersion can be promoted by identifying the core and peripheries of a particular tribe group. An exercise has been done here to delineate the core and peripheries of selected Santal population with the help of a statistical methods discussed below (Table 2.7). It has been noted that the Santhal habitat penetrated by non tribal communities only a limited scale. There are two segments of Santhal core- one line in Santhal Paraghana district of Bihar (presently Jhardkhand) and other in Mayurbhanj district in Orissa.

Table: 2.7  
Tribal Cores and Peripheries: Computation Procedure

District Name	Total Population of the District/Village	Total Tribal Population of the District/Village	Total Population of "X" Tribe (Santhal) in the District/Village	Total Population of "X" Tribe (Santhal) in India
0	1	2	3	4
Statistical Technique	A	B	C	
Percentage	3 as % of 4	3 as % of 1	3 as % of 2	
Normalisation Value of the $i^{\text{th}}$ spatial unit	$A' = A_i / \text{Mean A}$	$B' = B_i / \text{Mean B}$	$C' = C_i / \text{Mean C}$	
Weightage	1	1	1.5	
Composite Index ( $C_i$ )	$A_i = A1' + B1' + C1.5'$			
Core	Mean $C_i + 2$ S.D. and Above			
Periphery	from Mean $C_i$ to Mean $C_i + 2$ S.D.			

Note: Where S.D. is the Standard Deviation of the Composite Index

#### The Formula

Core = Mean  $C_i + 2$  S.D. and Above

Periphery = from Mean  $C_i$  to Mean  $C_i + 2$  S.D.

The Composite Index ( $C_i$ ) may be symbolically expressed as below:

$$C_i = \sum_{j=1}^{i=3} W_j X_{ij}$$

When

$$j = 1$$

$i =$  Number of Variables ( $i_1, i_2, i_3$ )

$j =$  Number of District ( $j_1, j_2, j_3$ )

$X_{ij} =$  Ratio of the percentage of one specific tribe in the  $J_{\text{th}}$  unit to the Total Population of that Tribe to its mean

$X_{2j} =$  Ratio of the percentage of one specific tribe in the  $J_{\text{th}}$  unit to the total population of the  $J_{\text{th}}$  unit to its mean

$X_{3j} =$  Ratio of the percentage of one specific tribe in the  $J_{\text{th}}$  unit to the total tribal population of the  $J_{\text{th}}$  unit to the total population of the  $J_{\text{th}}$  unit to its mean

$W =$  weightages given to the variables

$$W_1 = 1$$

$$W_2 = 1$$

$$W_3 = 1.5$$

The spatial distribution of the cores and peripheries of the Santhals leads to the identification of a number of types:

- i) both core and periphery of the Santhal are compact
- ii) the periphery is compact but the core is fragmented
- iii) the core and the periphery are fragmented; and
- iv) the Santhal has a compact core but there is no periphery

Both the core and periphery of Santhals are compact. The core falls in West Bengal whereas Orissa, Bihar, Jharkhand falls in periphery.

Table: 2.8  
Composite Index: 1991 and 2001 (in percent)

Sl.	Districts	$C_i(1991)$	$C_i(2001)$	Remarks
1	Dhubri	5.1	8.2	1991: Periphery: Mean $C_i$ to Mean $C_i + 2SD$ ( $2.9 + 2 * 5.2$ ) So, Range between 2.9 and 13.5; Core: Mean $C_i + 2SD$ and above ( $2.9 + 2 * 5.2$ and above) So, Value 13.5 and above
2	Kokrajhar	24.2	39.5	
3	Bongaigaon	4.4	4.6	
4	Goalpara	0.1	0.0	
5	Barpeta	0.1	0.0	
6	Nalbari	4.8	5.1	
7	Kamrup	0.0	0.1	
8	Darrang	0.9	4.6	
9	Sonitpur	2.3	2.9	
10	Lakhimpur	0.2	0.4	
11	Dhemaji	0.5	0.5	
12	Marigaon	0.5	0.1	
13	Nagaon	0.5	0.6	
14	Golaghat	0.7	2.0	2001: Periphery: Mean $C_i$ to Mean $C_i + 2SD$ ( $4.1 + 2 * 8.123$ ) So, Range between 4.1 and 20.3; Core: Mean $C_i + 2SD$ and above ( $4.1 + 2 * 8.123$ and above) So, Value 20.3 and above
15	Jorhat	0.1	0.2	
16	Sibsagar	0.9	3.0	
17	Dibrugarh	0.7	1.6	
18	Tinsukia	2.3	2.3	
19	Karbi Anglong	0.5	0.6	
20	North Cachar Hills	0.0	0.1	
21	Karimganj	10.4	7.5	
22	Hailakandi	3.2	5.2	
23	Cachar	4.9	5.6	
	India	2.9	4.1	Mean
		5.3	8.1	SD

1991: Periphery: Mean  $C_i$  to Mean  $C_i + 2SD$  ( $2.9 + 2 * 5.2$ ) So, Range between 2.9 and 13.5; Core: Mean  $C_i + 2SD$  and above ( $2.9 + 2 * 5.2$  and above) So, Value 13.5 and above

2001: Periphery: Mean  $C_i$  to Mean  $C_i + 2SD$  ( $4.1 + 2 * 8.123$ ) So, Range between 4.1 and 20.3; Core: Mean  $C_i + 2SD$  and above ( $4.1 + 2 * 8.123$  and above) So, Value 20.3 and above

The Santhal core (Table 2.8) consists of one district of Kokrajhar. The periphery on the other hand, encompasses a wider region and is comprised by 7 districts spread over Barak valley (Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi) and Bangaigaon, nalbari, Dhubri as for the data in 1991 census whereas Darrang could be added in the year 2001. (Fig-2.5a and 2.5b) Periphery consists of two fragments.

### **2.5 Chronology of the Conflict: Demand for Bodoland**

The Bodos (only Bodo Kachari is mentioned here) as the most numerous of communities cover the widest area. They are found in every district, but occur in greatest numbers in the lower and middle parts of the Brahmaputra Valley, namely in the districts of Goalpara, Kamrup and Darrang. The Bodos' relative strength in the state as a whole compared to the other Scheduled Tribes has been on the rise since the year 1971. This is in spite of an overall increase in the share of the Scheduled Tribe population in the state. According to 1971 census, the Scheduled Tribe population accounted for nearly 11 percent of the state' total population whereas the 1991 census count revealed a substantial rise in the Scheduled Tribe population increasing to 12.83 percent. Even if one goes by the mother tongue data, the Bodo speakers have substantially increased their strength in the state's total population. The Bodo (mother tongue) speaking population accounted for 3.64 percent and 5.75 percent of the total population of the state in 1971 and 1991 census respectively. However, the Bodos continued to be the single most dominant community among all the Scheduled Tribes living in the state constituting 38.49 percent and 40.71 percent of the total Scheduled Tribe population in the respective census years.<sup>15</sup> This reveals that the Bodos have experienced substantial increase in their population in the intervening period of four decades or so.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid. P.2.

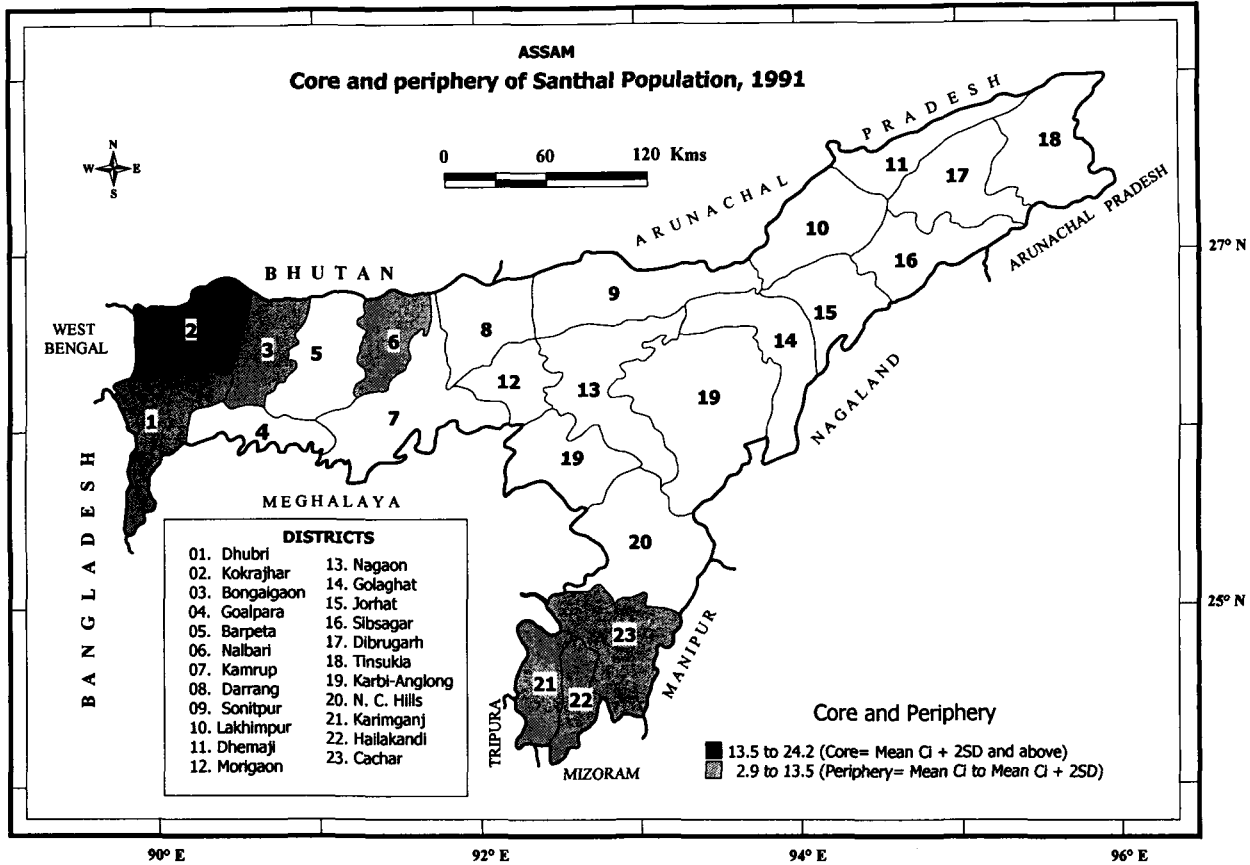


Fig.-2.5a

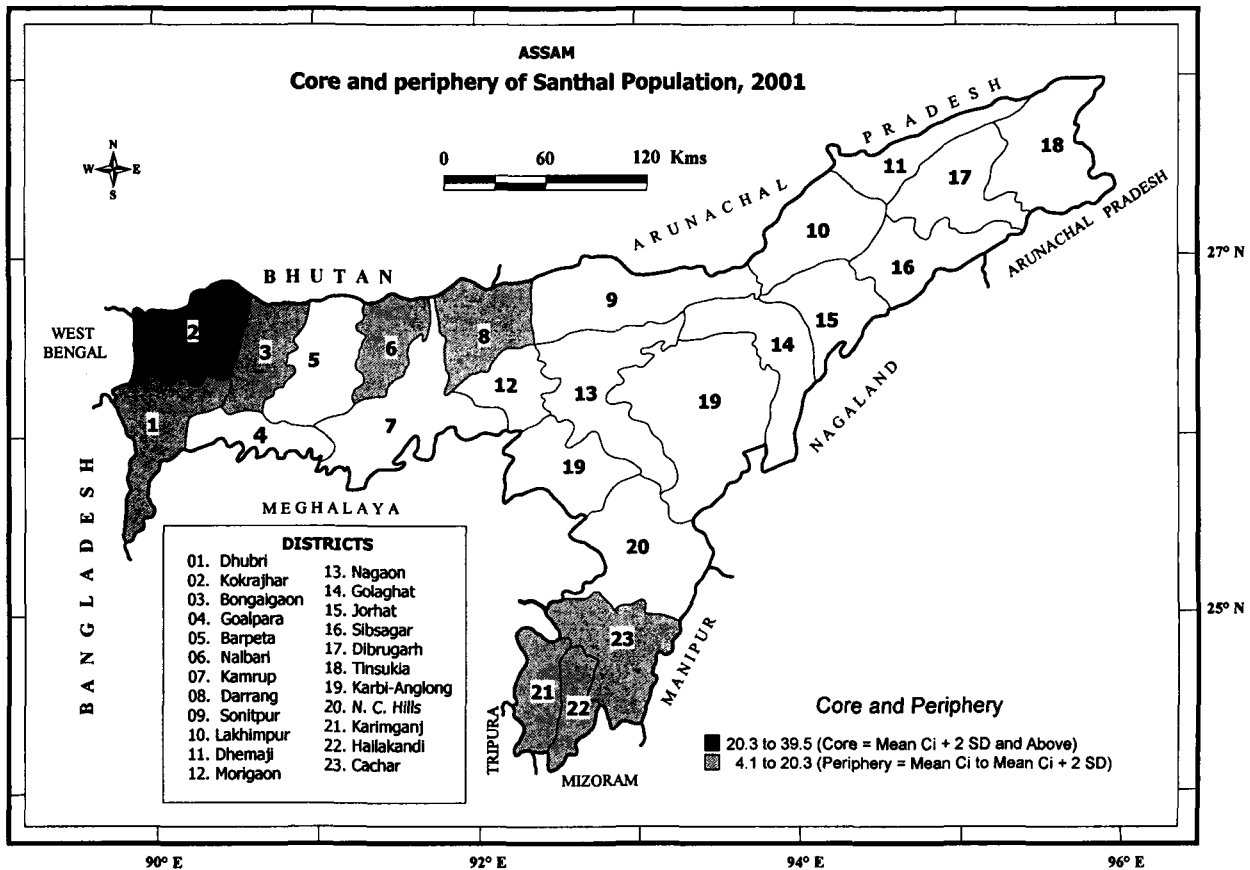


Fig.-2.5b

The movement for a separate Bodo State had its origin in the economic and socio-cultural aspirations of the Bodo people. They to begin with, raised the demand for a separate homeland while still under British rule. However, it was only in the 1930's that they began to politically organise themselves in order to assert their ethnic identity. The process of the reorganisation of the state of Assam in the post independence era began in the year 1963 when the Naga Hills District and the Tuensang area of North East Frontier Agency became the state of Nagaland. Then in 1969, the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi decided to further restructure Assam on a federal basis. After Nagaland became a state and anticipating further changes in the political landscape of Assam, the Bodo leadership in 1967 formed a political party called the Plains Tribal Council of Assam. Since its formation, the Plains tribal Council of Assam has categorically demanded a union territory status for the Bodos and other Plain tribals of the region to be named as Udyanchal. But the demand for Union territory was later changed to the demand for a separate state. The All Bodo Student Union was formed in February 1967 which raised a demand for a separate state for the Bodos.<sup>16</sup>

The political and ethnic situation in Assam changed dramatically towards the end of 1970s. The issue was the continued influx of “foreigners” particularly from Bangladesh that was perceived to be a serious problem that threatened to alter the demographic and ethnic balance of the state. The “indigenous” Assamese people expressed the fear that unless the “foreigners” are evicted and their influx is checked, they would very quickly turn into an ethnic minority. The 1980's witnessed a mass movement in Assam led by the All Assam Students Union and the Asom Gana Parishad for the detection and eviction of foreign nationals from the state and the

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<sup>16</sup> S. J. George, 'The Bodo Movement in Assam: Unrest to Accord' *Asian Survey*, University of California Press, Vol. 34, No.10 (oct., 1994), Pp. 878-892.

granting of greater autonomy. This movement was supported by majority of the Bodo youth who worked along with the All Assam Students Union. The movement came to an end after signing of the historic Assam Accord in the year 1985, and the subsequent elections that enabled the erstwhile All Assam Students Union leaders to form the new Asom Gana Parishad government in Assam in the year 1986. This particular development encouraged raised the hopes of the Bodos for fulfilment of their longstanding demand<sup>17</sup> for achieving separate state for them.

However, as the post-Accord enthusiasm waned, the tribals began to perceive the new government's stance toward them as not much different from that of earlier ones. As disenchantment spread among the youth, the All Bodo Students' Union took over the leadership of the Bodos.<sup>18</sup>

As regards preservation of the Bodo language and culture, it is worthwhile to mention that the Bodo Sahitya Sabha, a literary and cultural organization of the Bodos formed in November 1952 had been demanding since 1953 the introduction of Bodo language as a medium of instruction in the schools in Bodo dominated areas. The government of Assam had acceded to the demand after a decade only by introducing the languages at a primary level in 1963 and secondary level in 1968 (Gauhati University recognized Bodo as a Major/ Honours languages in 1977). As a consequence of the threat to their culture due to extensive continued redistribution leading to their squeezing into a much smaller territory than what used to be before, the Bodos demanded separate statehood in the same line as many other tribal groups in the North-East who were by then got separate states on ethno-lingual basis. The

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<sup>17</sup> 'Problems of Foreigners in Assam,' Memorandum of Settlement, Details in the Assam Accord, A.G.P. CMS-1054/85 (Gauhati), 16, Aug 1985, Pp. 1-5.

<sup>18</sup> George, Op. cit.

demand ostensibly flowed from their real or perceived fear of loss of their land, culture and identity<sup>19</sup>

The Bodos constituted 49 percent of Assam's population in 1947. By the year 1971, only within a span of a little over two decades, their share in the total population dropped phenomenally to 29 percent due to internal and external migration, and the various state restructuring. In addition, the regular entry of migrants from neighbouring Bangladesh adversely affected the Bodo population structure in Assam.

The base of the Bodo economy is land, and while 90 per cent of the Bodos and other tribals depend upon agriculture for their livelihood, almost 70 percent of them are landless today<sup>20</sup> due to indebtedness, poverty, and above all the entry of outsiders into essentially tribal areas.

During the Assam movement both the AASU and ABSU demanded the eviction of all non-tribals from essentially tribal belts. Consequently, Clause 10 of the Assam Accord stipulated that "it will be ensured that relevant laws for prevention of encroachment of government lands and lands in tribal belts and blocks are strictly enforced and unauthorised encroachers as laid down under such laws"<sup>21</sup>.

Several Accords signed by the governments in the North-East, and in particular Assam provided the strengths for the Bodo movement. The accord signed by the government of India with the one time secessionist Mizo National Front of Mizoram(1986), the insurgent Tripura National Volunteers (1988), and above all, the signing of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council Pact with the Gorkha National

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<sup>19</sup> Patra, Op.cit.

<sup>20</sup> This situation has arisen because the so called protective measures of the tribal belts and blocks provided for in Chapter 10 of the Assam Land Revenue Regulation Act have not been enforced. Chapter 10 of the Act authorised the state government to form tribal belts and blocks in areas of the state to prevent non-tribals from encroaching on tribal land. See Economic and Political Weekly (Bombay), 24 June 1989, p. 1377.

<sup>21</sup> Assam Accord, Memorandum of Settlement, p. 3.

Liberation Front of West Bengal (1988) increased the hopes and aspirations of the Bodos for a Bodo land state.<sup>22</sup>

### **2.5.1 The Pre Accord Protest**

During 1987 the main source of the turmoil in Assam was the rebellion of the Bodo tribe. The Bodos started demanding separate statehood, since February 1987 by resorting to both violent and non-violent means of long strikes, attacks on police, bombings, arsons, train derailments, and by looting other people. Long Bodo violent outburst forced the state government to call in the army and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). With the action taken by the Bodo extremists, the Bodo dominated areas of Kokrajhar and Udalguri remained in turmoil for several days, killing many innocent people in the region.

The violent activities to overpower the region increased gradually. Many of the non-tribal people in the Bodo dominated areas were forced to flee to neighbouring towns and other parts of the state. Although the Assam state government expressed willingness to further accommodate all tribals' socio-economic demands to prevent any more division of the state, the operations in Bodo dominated areas were intensified allegedly because of reports about armed Bodo training camps located in the forests bordering Bhutan. The entire state of Assam was declared a "disturbed area". The decision was made in response to the deteriorating state of law and order, mainly caused by the militant activities of the separatists. Two hundred and seventy companies of paramilitary forces from four army divisions were dispatched in Assam to push separatists.

The intensity of the revolt against the state and the central government was shown with the changes in the nature of revolt techniques; from harming innocent

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<sup>22</sup> George, Op. cit.

people to damaging public properties. For example the Bodos started attacking trains by several explosions. Also continued large number of explosions at different areas of the state capital to represent their strong voice against state government and show their existence in front of central government.

The Bodos continued to agitate for a separate territory as Bodoland to be carved out of Assam. The matter aggravated with the state and the central government discord where state government wanted to go for negotiation with the separatists but the central government strongly expressed faith in the Indian constitution and wanted the separatist surrender their arms to stop the violence. Meanwhile the process of violent representation of there voice of revolt by the Bodos continued with bomb explosions over the region.

On 20th February 1993, a Memorandum of Settlement was signed between the state of Assam, the central government of India, representatives of the All Bodo Student Union and the Bodo People's Action Committee. Rather than acceding directly to the demand of the Bodo Tribe for a separate homeland, the Memorandum of Settlement called for the creation of a 40-member Bodoland Autonomous Council and a Bodoland Executive Council with 200 villages and 25 tea gardens under its jurisdiction. An agreement on the immediate implementation of the Memorandum of Settlement was concluded between the state government and the Bodoland People's Party on July 1993.<sup>23</sup>

### **2.5.2 Post Accord Conditions**

Although in the month of February, 1993 the federal government and the Bodos signed an accord to reportedly end the insurgency, the situation did not improve substantially because the Bodoland Autonomous Council was given

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<sup>23</sup> 'Chronology for Bodos' Center for International Development and Conflict Management, University of Maryland

exclusive power over 38 subjects within its jurisdiction such as education, forests, health, land revenue and others. The General Council and Bodo-land Executive council were made responsible for running the administration of Bodoland Autonomous Council area. The strongest reaction against the signing of the Accord was received from none other than the Bodoland Security Force. They opposed the accord as it did not fulfil all the objectives for which movement was geared<sup>24</sup>

Soon after the accord was signed, armed activities of the outlawed Bodo security Force demanded that “Bodoland” be “liberated” and went ahead with brutal plan of attacking non-Bodo communities. Instead the violent clashes between members of the separatists and non-Bodo people continued at Kokrajhar serving an ultimatum to the state government for the demarcation of their "homeland" boundaries. They also kept continuing mass movement in the separatist dominated areas of small towns of would-be Bodoland in Assam by closing schools and universities functioning.<sup>25</sup>

### **2.5.3 The Genesis behind Conflict**

The Bodo were migratory cultivators shifting from one place to another in search of fertile land which was one of the causes that the British Government during the colonial era did not grant permanent land rights to them. Gradually many Bodo people lost their land because of tremendous growth of population<sup>26</sup>

Both the communities, the Bodos and the Santhals, had been living in peace in the area for over a century. The territory earmarked for the Bodo Autonomous Council encompasses the contiguous geographical areas between the Sankosh River and Mazbet/ Pansoi River, which roughly mark the western and eastern boundaries on the northern bank. The more complex southern border of the Bodo Autonomous

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<sup>24</sup> Patra, Op.cit.

<sup>25</sup> K. Chaudhuri, ‘Bloodshed in Assam’, *Frontline*, Vol. 15, September, 1998.

<sup>26</sup> H.Gohain, ‘Bodo Stir in Perperspective’, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 1989.

Council, often impinging on nontribal areas, appears to have been left unspecified. Comprising 2,750 villages and several towns, the Bodo Autonomous Council included 25 tea plantations.<sup>27</sup> A benchmark for the inclusion of areas in the Bodo Autonomous Council was that the Bodos should constitute at least 50 percent or more of a village's population. However, villages with lesser Bodo population have also been included to ensure territorial contiguity.<sup>28</sup> This provision is generally believed to have encouraged a section of the Bodos, including armed militant groups representing the community, to attempt 'ethnic cleansing'-driving out the non-Bodos to convert vast stretches into majority areas and thereby get them included into the Bodo Council and widen its territory.<sup>29</sup>

#### **2.5.4 Bodo-Muslim Conflict**

Given the desire to create ethnically more homogenous areas with Bodos dominating in the entire Bodo Autonomous Council, the first target of the conflicts were directed to the Muslim community living in the area. The continued mass movement by the All Assam Students Union that begun in 1980s to evict the "foreigners" to which the Bodo Students Union was a party, provided the background for an onslaught on the Bengali Muslims. The first major incident of an ethnic conflict between the Bodo and Muslim communities in the region took place in October 1993.

Bodo separatist set fire to the houses of Bengali-speaking Muslim settlers in the countryside in the district of Kokrajhar. Several people were injured, 7,000 were left homeless and four villages were burned to the ground that displaced several people. To restore order and combat the rioting between Bodo separatists and the native Assamese population that followed the event, ten truckloads of army troops

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<sup>27</sup> "Tea Workers Oppose Bodo Accord", *The Hindu*, 7march 1992, p.4.

<sup>28</sup> George, Op. cit.

<sup>29</sup> A. K. Bhutani, Deputy Commissioner, Kokrajhar, interview with W. Husain author of 'India's North East: The Problem' in Interaction on the North East, Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi, Nov. 2004.

and hundreds of paramilitary troops were deployed in the state. The Bodo separatists continued attacking Muslim villages at lower Assam's Kokrajhar and Barpeta districts. The armed Bodo separatists also opened fire at Muslim immigrants at the relief camps.

### **2.5.5 Changing Demands**

Although the accord was signed demarcating the areas, the Bodos however demanded 515 villages to be included in the autonomous Bodoland area and that the influx of the Bangladeshi migrants should be curbed. The government excluded the villages from the original deal due to national security concerns. The massacre at the relief camps continued and prompted more than 54,000 people, mostly Muslims, to flee their villages and head towards cities such as Guwahati or Barpeta. The Indian government had sent 3000 additional troops to Assam and admitted that lapses in the state administration and the lack of adequate police forces led to the massacre of over 70 Bangladeshis at a relief camps.

Indian Government on the other hand had talks with Bhutan government and received the permission to allow Indian army officials to enter Bhutan's territory to destroy bases suspected of harbouring Bodo militants. Subsequently Bodos continued killing non- Bodos, police and security forces and bombing on public properties like trains. As a result Assam government asked Central government to close the Indo-Bhutan border to check the cross-border movements of militants and additional troop deployments.

### **2.6 Bodo-Santhal Conflict**

The move towards getting a larger territory included within the Bodo Autonomous Council triggered a conflict with the Santhals in the next phase after the conflict with the Muslims. The conflict took an ugly turn in the month of May 1996,

in Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon districts. Over 100,000 Santhals were rendered homeless as their houses were burnt and another 100,000 fled to temporary camps. The clashes reportedly started after the killing of 3 Bodo girls by Santhals.

The army launched operation against the Bodo bases in Bhutan in the month of August. However they continued violence under the aegis of All Bodo Student Union, marched near the Parliament building, through explosions in trains and on railway tracks, railway bridge, bombing on courthouse, blowing up of two bridges, setting fire on government buildings in the region connecting main land to the state of Assam. As a result the government had to send 5000 additional troops into Assam to deal with the violence. Meanwhile All Bodo Student Union closed down Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon districts and other Bodo-dominated areas.

A meeting was held between the representatives of the federal and Assam governments and six Bodo groups, including the body that governs the Bodo district, which discussed the implementation of the 1993 Bodo accord where the government rejected the creation of a separate Bodo state and proposes that a working group be established. The violence on innocent villagers, strikes, and explosion of several public properties, continued as the protest against government.

Second Bodo-Santhal conflict started in April 1998. Where Bodos reportedly kill Santhal tribe in Kokrajhar district. Some 10,000 people flee. Four days earlier, two Bodos were killed and around 100 of their houses were burnt by Santhals.

Bodos allegedly killed several members of the Santhal community, planned several bomb blasts in different parts of the region. Members of the Santhal tribe kill 11 Bodos in Kokrajhar district, reportedly in response for a Bodo attack against them last week. Hundreds of Bodos and Santhals fled their villages and take shelter in refugee camps. Bodo-Santhal violence resulted Santhal houses burnt and several

Santhal deaths in Kokrajhar district. Over 100,000 people are homeless and taking shelter in refugee camps reported lack of food and the spread of diseases. As a protest to violence more than 1000 Santhals demonstrate in Guwahati demanding that the government provide them with proper weapons to protect themselves against Bodo attacks.

The Bodos reportedly killed several Santhals at a relief camp in Kokrajhar district. Bodos attacked a Santhal relief camp at Balegaon in Gossaigaon subdivision an Adivasi woman; they also burned 190 Santhal homes, in Koksuguri, Surendrapur and Sapkata villages in the subdivision. In turn the Adivasis burn down 10 Bodo huts.

Bodos extensively started violence all over the region by setting fires in market places, killing non-Bodo people, security guards, military troops. They killed several Muslims and Adivasis staying in relief camps, torching huts of relief camps, and several bomb attacks all over the region.<sup>30</sup>

What started with specific attacks on Muslims of Bengali Descent slowly engulfed other non-Bodo communities like the Bengali Hindus and the Adivasis. Unlike in the case of some of the previous ethnic pogroms in Assam, this time the pattern of violence appeared to be very calculated. The Bodo militants first targeted the Muslims of Bengali descent in 1993-94. Then in 1995-96, they started attacking the Bengali Hindus<sup>31</sup> and finally raised voice against Santhals on 1996 and 1998.

Subsequently the Bodo Autonomous Council was signed which covered nearly 2,300 sq km in Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Nalbari, Darrang, Mangaldai and Sonitpur districts on the northern bank of Brahmaputra in Lower Assam. The Bodo accord had fixed the Sankosh river and the Majbat/ Pansoi river as the western and eastern boundaries of the Bodo Autonomous Council and excluded 10km of the

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<sup>30</sup> Center for International Development and Conflict Management, Op.cit.

<sup>31</sup> P. Banerjee, et. al, *Internal Displacement in South Asia: The Relevance of the UN's Guiding Principles*, Sage, 2005.

India-Bhutan border belt to the north from its jurisdiction. The fresh demarcation has included all villages in the tribal belts, blocks, reserve forests and Scheduled tribe Assembly Constituencies within the Bodo Autonomous Council to form a compact area.<sup>32</sup> The demand of 515 more villages was rejected by State Government. The State Government took the position that the villages could not be given away as Bodo constituted less than 2 percent of total population. Hence the Bodo continued there revolt until the next Accord was signed.

On February 10, 2003, the central government, the Bodo Liberation Tigers and the state government signed a new Bodo Accord for creation of a 'Bodo land Territorial Council' under modified provisions of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution with its extension over The Bodo land Territorial Council was to comprise four new districts, viz., Kokrajhar, Baska, Siring and Udalguri, to be created by reorganising the existing ones. Initially, the Bodo land Territorial Council would comprise 3,082 villages.

The Accord signed between the central and the state governments and the Bodo land Territorial Council includes details of the steps to be taken for the protection of the rights of the non-Bodos. As per the Memorandum of Settlement, the creation of the Bodo land Territorial Council would not take away the rights and privileges enjoyed by any citizen of India with respect to his land at the commencement of Bodo land Territorial Council, nor bar any citizen from acquiring land either by way of inheritance, allotment, settlement or by way of transfer. Such citizens are eligible for bonafide acquisition of land within the Bodo land Territorial Council area. As per Clause 4.4 of the Memorandum of Settlement, the language and medium of instruction in educational institutions will not be changed without the

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<sup>32</sup> Chaudhuri, Op. cit.

approval of the state government. It further stated that Bodo language would be the official language of the Bodo land Territorial Council subject to the condition that Assamese and English would also continue to be used for official purposes. Moreover, the Bodo land Territorial Council would be the only tribal council in the country to have reservations of seats for non-tribals.<sup>33</sup>

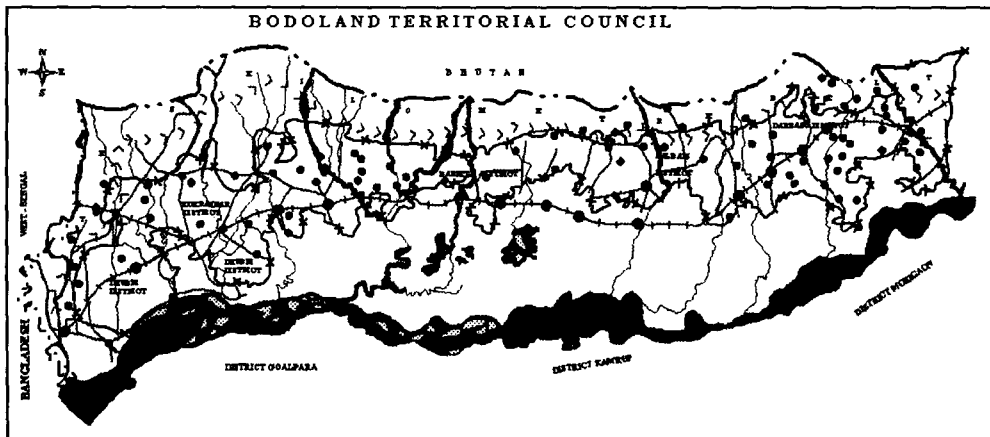


Fig: 2.6a

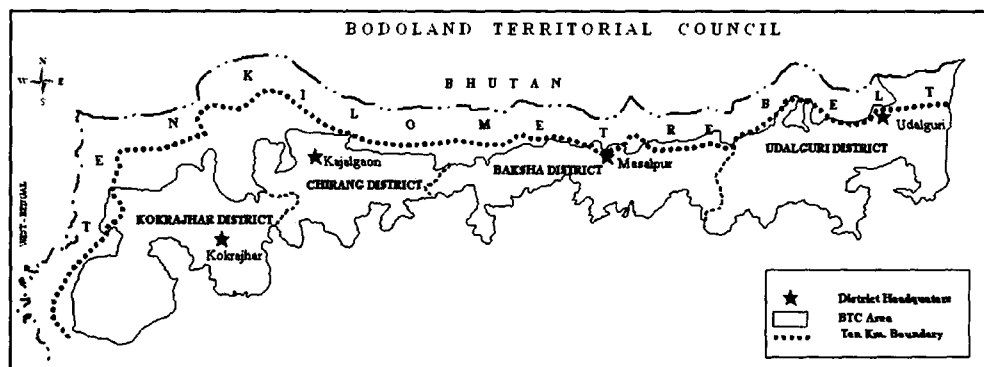


Fig: 2.6b

The Council now comprises an area where the Bodos are clearly in a minority and the non-Bodos are apprehensive about it.<sup>34</sup> The area under the Bodo land Territorial Council jurisdiction is called the Bodo Territorial Autonomous District

<sup>33</sup> *The Telegraph*. February 11, 2003, p. 18 (Northeast)

<sup>34</sup> *The Hindu*. 'Bodoland Teritorial Council to Come into Being Tomorrow' December 6, 2003.

consists of four contiguous districts-Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Nalbari, Kamrup, Darrang, and Sonitpur-an area of 27,000 sq km (35 percent of Assam).<sup>35</sup>

The mushrooming of other community militant groups in Assam as a repercussion to these conflicts is now increasing in number. The Bengali Hindu formed their group, Bengali liberation tigers, Adivasis formed Adivasi Cobra Militants of Assam and Muslim Fundamental organisations formed Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam, Muslim United liberation Front of Assam.

Nonetheless, inter-ethnic clashes in the Bodo heartland of Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon displaced a large number of people belonging to nearly all communities. At one stage, the number of Internally Displaced Persons reached more than 3 lakhs. It should also be mentioned here that the Bodo-Muslim ethnic violence that occurred in October 1993 displaced about 3,568 families consisting of 18,000 Persons. Again, a series of major incidents took place throughout the district in May 1996 when a section of Bodos attacked ethnic Santhals. This conflict resulted in the displacement of a huge population. Almost 42,214 families consisting of about 262,682 persons were displaced by this conflict. At the peak of the Bodo Armed Movement, Assam accounted for nearly more than half of India's population of Internally Displaced Persons.

These victims were sheltered in 78-relief camps around Kokrajhar and its adjoining areas. After staying as inmates in the camps many of them returned to their villages in 1997 with a small amount of returnees grant provided by government of India. However, in 1998 the conflict again started between the two groups resulting in the displacement of 48,556 families consisting of 314,342 villagers. Till April 2005, in Kokrajhar only, around 126,263 inmates were living in 38 state sponsored relief

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<sup>35</sup> *Wikipedia*, on Bodoland.

camps in the district. Significantly, some of these conflict-induced Internally Displaced Persons are living in the relief camps for more than a decade now. The government is providing only rice to the inmates of some of the camps for 10 days a month. Even that supply too was erratic. Sometimes, the Internally Displaced Persons do not get their rations for months together. However, the official position of the Assam Government indicate only 33,362 displaced people who were left in the camps of Kokrajhar district and 74,123 had left the camps in Gossaigaon district.

In the Kokrajhar sub division number of inmates in the relief camps has indeed decreased from 41,999 to 28,961 by August 2006. Little more than one-third are children and two thirds consist of adults. However, we could not verify the number of Internally Displaced Persons as given by the district administration. Still the number of Internally Displaced Persons is quite large despite settlement of the Bodo issue. The leadership of the Bodoland movement now leading the Bodoland Autonomous Council as well as a part of the present Congress led coalition government of Assam. It seems they have given utmost priority to the rehabilitation of the ex-insurgents whereas resettlement and rehabilitation of the Internally Displaced Persons continues to enjoy a low priority as an issue in the political agenda of the state government as well as the Bodoland Autonomous Council. Although the government reports are claiming decrease in the number of the inmates of these camps but it was found during the field work that these displaced people are rather being forced to leave the camps. Many tribal leaders allege that stopping rations by the administration is used as a tactic to force these people out of the camps. The Muslims of Bengali origin chased out by the Bodo rebels in 1994 are living in pathetic conditions in some places of Assam. Near Bijni on the National Highway, nearly 8,000 such Muslims live in huts on both sides of the National Highway no. 37.

The life of the Internally Displaced Persons living in the camps in Assam has been miserable. Most of them do not get adequate food, nutrition and proper medical care. Children of these camps are deprived of formal education and health care services. Though, some receive food aid, but it often arrives sporadically and insufficient in quantity and nutrition. Thus losing their possessions like land, home and livelihood live in a dehumanised condition.<sup>36</sup>

## **2.7 Concluding Statement**

Fight for territorial supremacy was one of the triggering factors for the Bodo-Santhal riots in 1996. Both communities had been living in peace in the area for decades. But, with the signing of the Bodo Accord in February 1993 between the All Bodo Students Union and the Centre came the new autonomous structure called the Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC). Only those villages with 50 per cent Bodo population were to be included into the BAC. This provision is generally believed to have encouraged a section of Bodos, including armed militants of different hues, to attempt ethnic cleansing - driving out the non-Bodos and converting vast stretches into Bodo majority areas. The divide today between the two communities is more than complete. The demand for Bodoland and issues like protest against Muslim, Bengalis and Santhals in the region reveals that the Bodos adopted the method of achieving their demand by the means of "ethnic cleansing" and "violence". The ensuing clash between ethnic groups has left many homeless and without the social support base which they enjoyed before the conflict erupted. The Santhals, due largely to their immigrant status and lacking political and economic resources, were naturally the worst hit. There is still a lack of clarity about the total area of Bodoland Territorial Council; the number of villages included and in future the villages might get included

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<sup>36</sup> M. Hussain, 'The IDPs in India' *Report of the workshop*, organised by Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, Nagaland, 2006.

within the council, its total population and 'ethnic mix' of that area. The 'ethnic mix' comprises the Hindu Assamese, the Adivasis, the Hindu Bengali and the Muslim communities. All these communities have a reason to be apprehensive on the decision taken in support of Bodos forming Bodoland Territorial Council and extending its area by including the villages with less than 50 percent of Bodo population to form contiguous region. As they view the land equally as their homeland. The setting up of the Bodoland Territorial Council, without clarifying these issues, and removing these apprehensions, is likely to be one of the most problematic aspects of the functioning of the Bodoland Territorial Council. Given the violence that marked the agitation in all its phases, a resumption of similar sectarian violence for fulfilling further future demands is very much on the cards.

Although the confrontation has taken an 'ethnic' dimension and the Memorandum of Settlement speaks about the Bodos forming Bodoland Territorial Council fulfilling the economic, educational, and linguistic aspirations and the preservation of the land rights, socio-cultural and ethnic identity of the people residing in the region, are likely to be exploited by the Bodos against the minority on all aspects of life.

The minority communities who are at the receiving end over the region now started to retaliate by mushrooming up their own militant groups' like Bengali Hindu formed there group Bengali liberation tigers, Adivasis formed Adivasi Cobra Militants of Assam and Muslim Fundamental organisations formed Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam, Muslim United liberation Front of Assam, all these groups are now better equipped to resist Bodo extremists. The Bodo movement has paved the way for the minorities to follow the same lines drawn by the Bodo extremists and show their retaliation to Bodo autonomy over the region.

Santhals are the most badly affected by conflict among all other minor communities. Presently they are in the most worsen state with lack of social development with poor economic background. Many of them have faced displacement twice within a short period of time and are staying in relief camps for more than a decade. The resettlement and rehabilitation of the devastated Santhals is still a low priority issue in the political agenda of the state government as well as Bodoland Territorial Council.

The significant issue that is addressed in this research however does not relate to the cause and the solution to the problem. The basic issue is the impact of the conflict on women in a situation of ethnic unrest, displacement, fear and uncertainty of the future. The Santhal women are of particular interest as they are in the receiving end of the ethnic clash in the wake of the formation of Bodoland Territorial Council. As far as the tribal population is concerned, this segment is highly concentrated in three major pockets in Assam: lower part of northern Brahmaputra valley mostly inhabited by the Bodos, Rabhas and the Tiwa communities; in the south central parts considering of the two hill districts (North Cachar Hills and Karbi Anglong) of Assam where the Karbis and the Kacharis dominate and the third pocket is located in the north-eastern corner (Dhemaji district) of Assam which too contain a sizeable proportion of the Bodos in the total Scheduled Tribe population.

The Scheduled Caste population is highly concentrated in the southern districts of the Barak valley. The two other areas of their concentration are found in Morigaon in the central part and Bongaigaon district in the western part of the state.

On the other hand, the Non-Scheduled population is distributed all over the state though the extent of their dominance is inversely related to the areas of concentration of the Scheduled Tribes. The most interesting aspect of the ethnic

composition of Assam relates to the fact that the Scheduled Tribe population is distributed both in hills as well as in the plains. The Bodo Tribes are by and large confined to the northern bank of the Brahmaputra Valley.

At the state level, the share of the Scheduled Tribe population increased rapidly during the period 1971-91, but declined subsequently. The Bodo population too increased its share in the total as well as in the Scheduled Tribe segment in the same period. The increase in the share of the tribal population as also of the Bodos appears to be due to high natural increase in their population. This increase in the proportion of the Scheduled Tribe as well as that of the Bodos has been responsible in a relative decline in the share of the Non-Scheduled population over the period due largely to lower natural increase in its population.

The history of Santhal migration into Assam reveals aspects of their spatial concentration and clustering in the state. Ethnically a tribe and recognised as a Scheduled tribe in Bihar, Jhrkhand, Orissa and West Bengal, the Santhals who were brought to work in the tea gardens of Assam in early 19<sup>th</sup> Century are not recognised as a Scheduled tribe in Assam. To begin with the Santali immigrants were almost exclusively confined to the gardens; but later their descendants formed a sizeable chunk of the population in the districts of Darrang, Sonitpur, Nagaon, Jorhat, Golaghat, Dibrugarh, Cachar, Hailakandi, Karimganj and Tinsuhis districts in upper Assam where the tea gardens were located. But later these 'tea tribes' moved to lower Assam too and were found in significant numbers in Kokrajhar and Bongaigon districts too.

The Santhal territory in the mainland remains little disturbed as far as their cores were concerned. Even the periphery remains highly compact revealing little distribution of the Santhal population in the mainland. However, there appears to be

significant redistribution of Santhal immigrants in Assam as the initial livelihood available to them in the tea gardens has dwindled in scope forcing them to disperse themselves into a vast territory. Significantly, their core of concentration lies away from the major areas of tea cultivation and is now located in Kokrajhar district and the adjoining areas. The Santhals now are a largely cultivating group and have diversified their livelihood systems in the wake of demographic increase in their population and limited opportunities in the tea gardens which are less labour intensive than before.

The Bodos who were far more widespread in their territorial distribution have also been subject to tremendous redistribution and are now confined to a much smaller territory in the north bank of the Brahmaputra river. At the district level, the Bodo population shows extreme clustering in just three districts- Goalpara, Kamrup, and Darrang (eight districts in 2001, after reorganisation of these three districts) located in lower Brahmaputra valley. These three (undivided) districts have experienced unprecedented rise in the proportion of the Bodo population during 1971-91 decades, a fact that cannot be simply explained by natural increase alone.

The redistribution of both the communities- the Bodos and the Santhals brought them face to face as the cores and peripheries of the two communities coincided significantly. It is this accident of history in the peopling of Assam that promoted one of the most serious ethnic conflicts for the political control over a territory. The ethnic clash between the two groups left many dead, homeless and without a sustainable livelihood. The impacts of the conflict, long after the settlement, have continued to affect all sections of the people in the territory.

## CHAPTER 3

# REDISTRIBUTION AND ETHNIC HOMOGENIZATION: A CASE STUDY OF KOKRAJHAR DISTRICT

### 3.1. Introduction

So far, the analysis of population distribution and ethnic composition understood in broad terms and at macro level. The analysis has taken into consideration the whole of or at least very broad regions of Assam while studying the changing patterns in distribution. The areas of Bodo concentration certainly emerged as those areas which experienced substantive population redistribution. It is thus imperative at this stage to extend the analysis to micro level, i.e. village level understanding which perhaps holds the key to the nature of population redistribution taking place in areas of induced redistribution. Kokrajhar district has been selected for the purpose as this district lies at the heart of the Bodo agitation for a separate statehood. The chapter also aims at examining the evolving patterns in ethnic composition at village level to see if ethnic homogenization is taking place.

An attempt is made in this chapter to understand the process of redistribution of population along ethnic lines in the Bodo dominated area of Assam on the wake of the ongoing demand for a separate state for the Bodo people of this state. The Bodo people, a dominant Tribe mostly concentrated in the plains of Assam are waging a relentless battle for separate state on the ground that they are being continuously marginalized at the hands of the dominant Assamese people and the immigrants from outside the state. The demand for a separate state has not remained peaceful and has taken a violent turn resulting in bloody clashes with the immigrant Santhal (British time) as well as the Bengali community community. This ethnic clash has affected the traditional distribution

pattern of these communities in the region as a whole and a process of redistribution of people along ethnic lines has been unleashed on a scale unprecedented in history.

The main objective of the research in this chapter is to assess the extent of spatial distribution of population and its consequences following the demand for Bodoland during the last couple of decades. Given this scope of the present research, the period of investigation is confined to three decades starting with 1970. The 1970s are chosen as the starting point as the decade is not much known for inter-ethnic strife resulting in forced ethnic redistribution. The decades of 1980s and 1990s have witnessed ethnic violence in many parts of the Bodo Areas and the redistribution tendencies characterize this period. Thus data pertaining to the period in 1970s have been profitably used to describe the pattern of population distribution while the data pertaining to the later years indicate the pattern of redistribution.

The distribution of population in areas of Bodo concentration has been understood by disaggregating the data into three sets: Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Non-Scheduled population. Distribution of these categories of population has been examined at district, block and village level.

Village level analysis has been done by identifying villages, which are dominantly inhabited by (a), the Bodos<sup>1</sup> (b) the Scheduled Caste and (c) the Non-Scheduled<sup>2</sup> segment. The redistribution tendencies have been examined for all the three categories of population at village level.

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<sup>1</sup> The Bodos, by and large are enumerated as Scheduled Tribe population in Kokrajhar district.

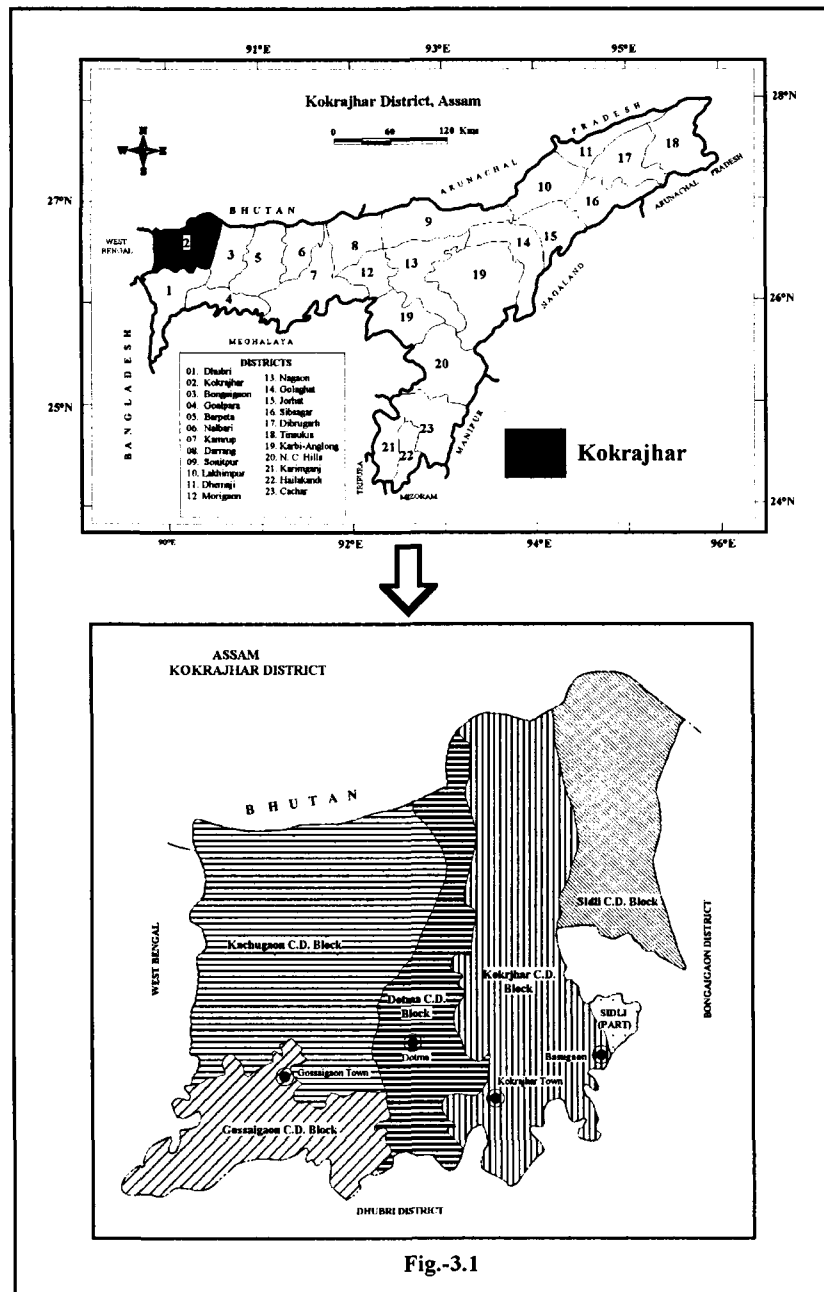
<sup>2</sup> The Santhals, though an ethnic Tribe, are enumerated as Non-Scheduled in Census of Assam.

The three ethnic dominated areas and clusters of villages (i.e. the Bodos, Scheduled Caste and Non-Scheduled) have been compared to examine if a greater homogenization in ethnic composition is taking place in spatial terms.

### **3.2 The Background**

Kokrajhar (Fig.-3.1) is one of the few districts in Assam that has been experiencing constant rise in the share of Scheduled Tribe population in its total. The reasons as has been noted in earlier three chapters are a mix of high natural growth rate in the Scheduled Tribe population as well as migration of Bodo Tribes into this district in the wake of a demand for separate Bodoland state during the last few decades. Kokrajhar may be described as the gateway to the north-eastern region of India. The district has a total population of 930,404 according to the 2001 Census. The district is located on the north bank of the river Brahmaputra that slices the state of Assam into two, identified as north and south banks. The district is bounded on the north by the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan, by Dhubri district on the south, Bongaigaon district on the east and the Indian state of West Bengal on the west.

The district was originally a part of undivided Goalpara district. Until 1956, the Kokrajhar town was merely a small village with a railway station that connected it to the rest of the world. In 1957, a new Civil Sub-division was created after carving out the northern part of Dhubri Sub-division and some parts of Goalpara Sub-division. This new sub-division was called Kokrajhar Sub-division. On July 1, 1983 the Kokrajhar Sub-division was upgraded into Kokrajhar district with its Headquarter at Kokrajhar town. The area of the district extended from the Manas River in the east to the Sonkosh on the west.



There was further reorganization of the districts in 1989, and some new districts were created. Thus, about 40 percent of the total geographical area of Kokrajhar district was carved out for inclusion in the new district of Bongaigaon. The area delimited from Kokrajhar district to Bongaigaon covers the entire Bijni Revenue Circle along with 347.50 square Km of Sidli Chirang Circle. Later on twenty villages of Naikgaon G.P. with a total area 40.2 square km under Chapar Revenue Circle of Dhubri district was transferred to Kokrajhar district. The present geographical area of Kokrajhar district is estimated to be 3,169.2 sq km.

The district now has five revenue circles, i.e., Gossaigaon, Bhowraguri, Dotma, Kokrajhar and Sidli Chirang and five Community Development Blocks, i.e., Kachugaon, Gossaigaon, Dotma, Kokrajhar, Sidli Chirang. The river Gongia that is known as Tipkai in the southern part is the natural boundary of two civil sub-divisions. Gossaigaon town is the Headquarter of Gossaigaon Sub-division.

### **3.3 Ethnic Distribution of Population: District and Block level Patterns**

Kokrajhar is the district headquarters of the Bodo Territorial Council. Most of the population in the district consist of the Bodo tribes; other tribes are very negligible viz. Rabha, *and* Tiwa etc. Among the tea tribes, the Santhals are majority in number. The Non-Scheduled population include the Assamese, Bengali (both Hindu and Muslim), Santhal and Nepalese are the dominant groups present in the district. Assamese is the largest group among the Non-Scheduled population, whereas Bengali are the second largest group in the district.

As has been pointed out earlier, the proportion of tribal population in Kokrajhar district is increasing rapidly over the decades. Kokrajhar had a total tribal population of

nearly 32 percent (31.26percent) as per the 1971 census enumeration. The share registered a substantial increase by the year 1991, increasing to nearly 42 percent but mysteriously decreased to around 38 percent in 2001 (Table-3.1).

The Scheduled Caste population constituted less than 3 percent (2.94 percent) of the total population as per the 1971 census and it only marginally increased to percent 3.76 percent by the year 1991. In 2001 the share declined to 3.41 percent.

The Non-Scheduled population accounted for around 66 percent (65.80 percent) of the total population in the year 1971, and it declined to 55.38 percent in the 1991 census. The 2001 Census however recorded a precipitous increase in the proportion of the Non-Scheduled population to around 70 percent (62.90 percent). This nature of increase in a tribal dominated area and in the given background is unexpected. It indicates the census failed to capture the true picture during the enumeration for the Bodo population.

Distribution of the Scheduled Caste population within the blocks is highly varied. In the year 1971 only the Kokrajhar Community Development Block supported a relatively high proportion of the Scheduled Caste population (4.07percent) whereas the remaining C. D. Blocks contained less than 3 percent of their population as Scheduled Castes. By the year 2001, Gossaigaon and Kokrajhar C. D. Blocks had higher proportion (more than 4 percent) of the Scheduled Castes whereas Kachugaon C. D. Block supported only a small number (2.40 percent).

The tribal population also shows an uneven distribution at the block level in terms of their proportion in the total. Their proportion (Table-3.1) was very high, i.e., over 30 percent in all the Blocks except Gossaigaon Block in the year 1971. All these Blocks increased the proportion of Scheduled Tribe in by the year 1991 and the proportion

ranged between 40-55 percent. There has been some decline in the proportion in the year 2001 in all these Blocks except the Sidli Chirang Block which significantly and consistently added to its Scheduled Tribe proportion over the reference period to attain the status of dominantly tribal in its population composition by the year 1991 and accounting for over 60 percent of the total population in the year 2001. On the other hand Kachugaon, Kokrajhar and Dotma C. D. Blocks showed substantial increases in the share of Scheduled Tribes in 1991 but the share declined in 2001.

Table: 3.1  
Kokrajhar: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1971-2001 (in percent)

CD Block/ District	Scheduled Caste			Scheduled Tribe			Non-Scheduled			Santhal	
	1971	1991	2001	1971	1991	2001	1971	1991	2001	1991	2001
1. Gossaigaon	3.0	4.8	4.2	9.2	9.0	9.1	87.8	86.3	86.8	38.1	33.0
2. Kachugaon	1.5	3.0	2.4	32.3	43.9	30.3	66.2	53.1	67.3	3.3	2.5
3. Kokrajhar	4.1	4.7	4.1	30.5	45.4	37.3	65.5	49.9	58.6	5.2	7.9
4. Dotma	3.0	3.0	3.6	41.4	51.4	42.6	55.5	45.6	53.8	3.3	2.4
5. Sidli Chirang	3.0	2.6	2.8	47.1	53.7	60.0	49.9	43.7	37.2	9.2	12.9
Kokrajhar District	2.9	3.8	3.4	31.3	41.2	33.7	65.8	55.1	62.9	10.3	16.7

Source: Census of India: 1971, 1991 and 2001

The share of Non-Scheduled population shows a decline in its share in the year 1991 in all blocks. The decline was very high in all but Gossaigaon Block shows a marginal fall. The 2001 Census again enumerated a very high proportion of the Non-Scheduled population in all but Sidli Chirang Community Development Block shows a marginal decline. Such fast changes in the proportion of the Non-Scheduled population could only have taken place, if the Census data is to be believed, in case this segment of the population left the district during a period preceding 1991 and returned into the district after 1991.

### 3.4 Ethnic Distribution of Population: Village level Patterns

The village level data may now be profitably used to examine the extent of ethnic redistribution taking place in Kokrajhar district- an area that has been the scene of intense

power struggle for the control of land by the Bodos in their strive towards achieving statehood.

Table 3.2  
Kokrajhar District: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1971-1991

Percent to Total Population	Percentage Villages, 1971			Percentage Villages, 1991			Percent Differential		
	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other
Nil	78.33 (730)	39.06 (364)	11.70 (109)	75.21 (701)	30.36 (283)	15.77 (147)	-3.12	-8.70	4.07
Insignificant < 10 percent	15.02 (140)	7.73 (72)	7.83 (73)	16.20 (151)	9.98 (93)	7.83 (73)	1.18	2.25	0.00
Substantial 10-30 percent	4.94 (46)	10.41 (97)	8.69 (81)	5.58 (52)	9.55 (89)	10.73 (100)	0.64	-0.86	2.04
Significant 30-50 percent	1.07 (10)	9.55 (89)	9.33 (87)	2.04 (19)	8.15 (76)	10.41 (97)	0.97	-1.40	1.08
High 50-80 percent	0.43 (4)	13.30 (124)	17.17 (160)	0.54 (5)	14.38 (134)	14.91 (139)	0.11	1.08	-2.26
Dominant 80-100percent	0.21 (2)	11.05 (103)	17.70 (165)	0.43 (4)	11.59 (118)	19.53 (182)	0.22	0.54	1.83
Exclusively Dominant 100 percent	0 (0)	8.91 (83)	27.58 (257)	0.00 (0)	14.91 (139)	20.82 (194)	0.00	6.00	-6.76
All Villages	100 (932)	100 (932)	100 (932)	100 (932)	100 (932)	100 (932)	0	0	0

Source: Census of India: 1971 and 1991 (Figures in parenthesis indicate number of Villages)

Available data shows that there have been tremendous transfers of population among the three different ethnic groups namely the Scheduled Tribe (Bodos), the Scheduled Caste, and others. Kokrajhar district has a total of 932 villages. Table-3.3 clearly brings out the widespread changes in the distribution of diverse ethnic groups in the period of 1971-91. The Scheduled Caste as well as the Bodo population seems to have dispersed over more villages over the period of twenty years. The real decline in the presence of the Non-Scheduled, Non-Bodo presence is rather alarming. This segment had a much wider presence in the villages of the district in 1971 (they were found in 823 of the 932 villages), but in 1991, their presence was restricted only to 785 villages indicating substantial erosion to their widespread presence in the district. The Bodos substantially increased their presence in an additional 81 villages where they had no presence at all in 1971. Likewise the Scheduled Caste population added 29 villages in the list of their

presence in this period. It appears that the vacuum created by the Santhals, Bengalis, Nepalese and ethnic Assamese people was filled by the Bodos in this period.

Table 3.3  
Kokrajhar District: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1991-2001

Percent to Total Population	Percentage Villages, 1991			Percentage Villages, 2001			Percent Differential		
	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other
Nil	75.21 (701)	30.36 (283)	15.77 (147)	76.72 (715)	35.09 (327)	27.25 (254)	1.51	4.73	11.48
Insignificant < 10 percent	16.20 (151)	9.98 (93)	7.83 (73)	15.24 (142)	7.62 (71)	7.94 (74)	-0.96	-2.36	0.11
Substantial 10-30 percent	5.58 (52)	9.55 (89)	10.73 (100)	5.47 (51)	7.3 (68)	7.3 (68)	-0.11	-2.25	-3.43
Significant 30-50 percent	2.04 (19)	8.15 (76)	10.41 (97)	1.5 (14)	6.65 (62)	6.65 (62)	-0.54	-1.50	-3.76
High 50-80 percent	0.54 (5)	14.38 (134)	14.91 (139)	0.86 (8)	8.8 (82)	12.12 (113)	0.32	-5.58	-2.79
Dominant 80-100percent	0.43 (5)	12.66 (118)	19.53 (182)	0.11 (1)	11.16 (104)	16.74 (156)	-0.32	-1.50	-2.79
Exclusively Dominant 100 percent	0 (0)	14.91 (139)	20.82 (194)	1.11 (1)	23.39 (218)	22.22 (205)	0.11	8.48	1.18
All Villages	100 (932)	100 (932)	100 (932)	100 (932)	100 (932)	100 (932)	0.00	0.00	0.00

Source: Census of India: 1991 and 2001 (Figures in parenthesis indicate number of Villages)

The most glaring fact about Bodo consolidation and control over the area and ethnic homogenization is revealed from the fact that the Bodos by the year 1991 had exclusive presence in 139 villages from only 83 in 1971. This is a clear indication that in 70 villages the Bodos have been successful in evicting the Non-Bodo population with whom the Bodos had been living for centuries. The fact that there has been a corresponding decline in the exclusively dominated villages of the Non-Scheduled population clearly indicates that it is this segment of the population which has been evicted from their traditional habitations. The Bodo segment has been able to proclaim its supremacy in 257 villages which was only 186 in 1971. The Scheduled Caste and the other ethnic groups seem to have lost the battle and have redistributed themselves in a manner to protect themselves in a fewer villages within the district or have taken shelter in the Relief camps.

Table-3.4 shows the recent changes in the pattern of distribution of these ethnic groups in the period 1991-2001. The table clearly brings out further consolidation in the spatial patterns as revealed by the 1991 Census. A remarkable fact that emerges from the table is that there has been a further decline in the number of villages where the Bodo population is absent. This is accompanied by a substantial rise (around 80 villages) in the proportion of villages (8.48 percent) where the Bodo population accounted for the entire population of the villages, thus increasing their numerical supremacy in a very large number of villages. On the other hand the Non-Scheduled population got completely depleted from 107 villages leaving the space to the Bodos. However, there was some increase in the number of villages where they accounted for the entire population. This trend is sufficient clues to further ethnic homogenisation as revealed from the fact that there was a reduction in the number of villages with mixed ethnic composition accompanied by a significant rise in the proportion of exclusive villages where the population either consisted of the Bodos or the Non-Bodos.

The spatial patterning in this process of redistribution of ethnic groups is presented in the series of maps (Figs.-3.2a to Fig.-3.4c) that reveals greater homogenization of ethnic areas within the district. Fig.-3.2a reveals that the Scheduled Caste population is more concentrated in the southern section of the district in the year 1971. In the year 1991 or in the year 2001, the pattern of their distribution undergoes very little changes (Figs.-3.2a, 3.2b and 3.2c). The most glaring changes in the spatial pattern of concentration are seen with respect to the Scheduled Tribes (Figs.-3.3a, 3.3b and 3.3c). It is evident that the Scheduled Tribe population who mostly consist of the Bodos were highly concentrated in small patches in the central part of the district (Fig.-3.3a) in the

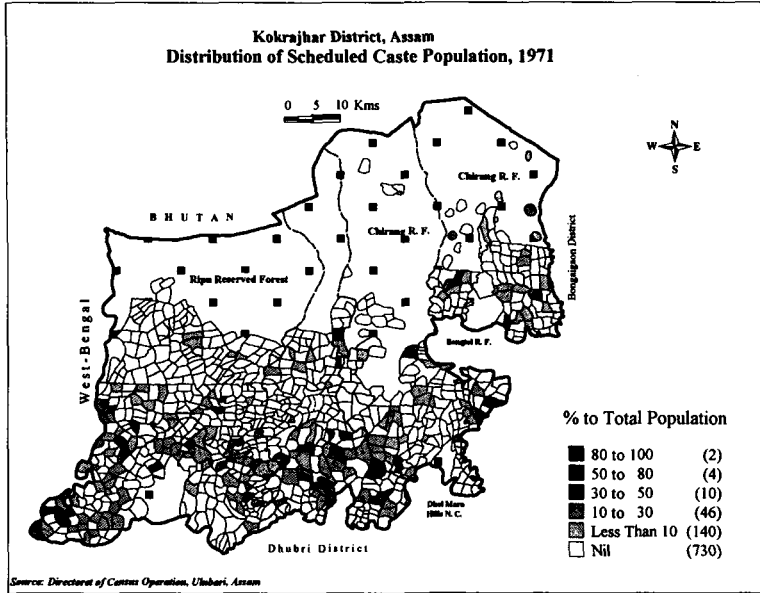


Fig.-3.2a

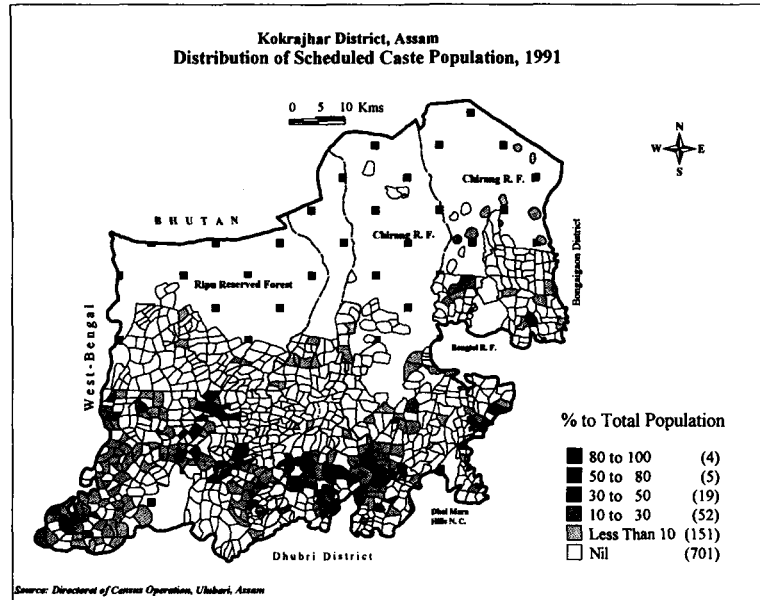


Fig.-3.2b

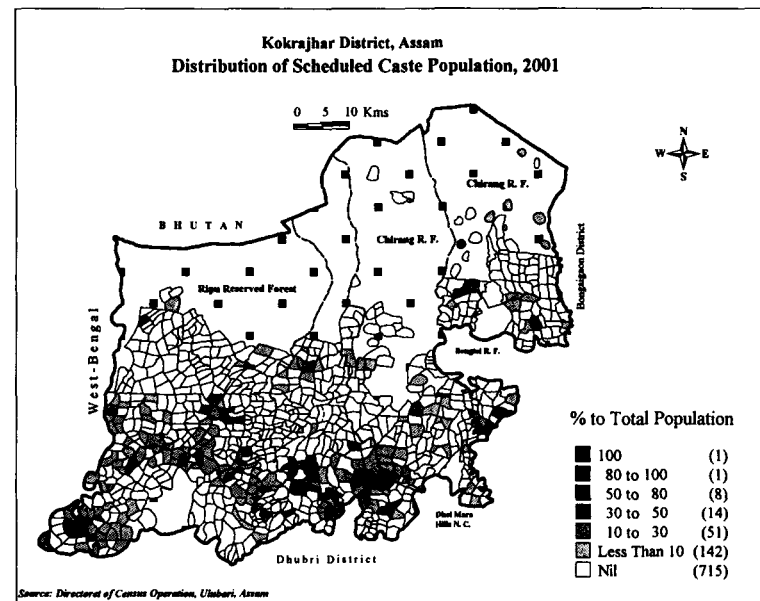


Fig.-3.2c

year 1971. It is clearly visible in the fig.-3.3b that the areas of high concentration by the Bodo population has substantially increased in the central part subsuming within itself the areas of discontinuity which was present earlier making the area extensive and highly homogenous in respect of ethnic composition. The pattern in the year 2001 becomes even more clear and extensive (Fig.-3.3c). The areas of Bodo concentration has spread westwards into Kachugaon block. A new area patch of high Bodo concentration has emerged in the southern part of Gossaigaon block in the traditional stronghold of the Non-Scheduled population.

This change in the concentration pattern of the Bodos has its effect on the distribution of the Non-Scheduled population which withdrew from the areas of Bodo concentration as evident from the figs. 3.4a, 3.4b and 3.4c. The 1971 pattern shows widespread presence of this segment in almost all areas of the district, but by the year 1991, their distribution shows a greater concentration in relatively few areas. The pattern in 2001 becomes even clearer as the areas of their concentration reveal a complete withdrawal from the North leaving the space to the Bodos. As a whole, the changes in the pattern of concentration reveal greater ethnic homogenisation on space, reflecting a spatial dichotomy in the presence of the Scheduled Tribes (the Bodos) and the Non-Scheduled population.

This kind of a changing spatial dichotomy in the presence of the Bodos and the Non-Scheduled population is more easily seen when the areas of exclusive concentration by each of the ethnic group is plotted on maps (Figs.-3.5a to 3.6c). The changes in areas of exclusive concentration underwent little changes as far as the Scheduled Caste component is concerned, but such changes were widespread as far as the other two

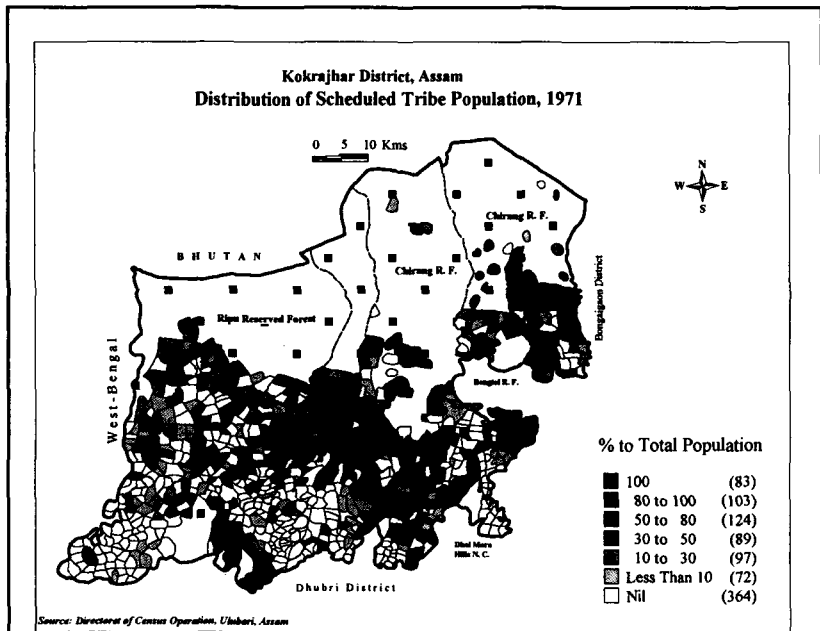


Fig.-3.3a

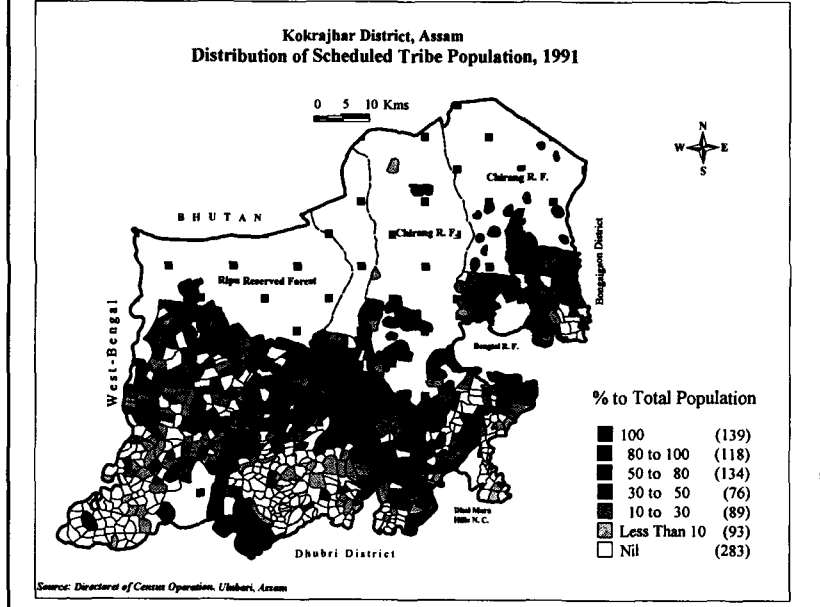


Fig.-3.3b

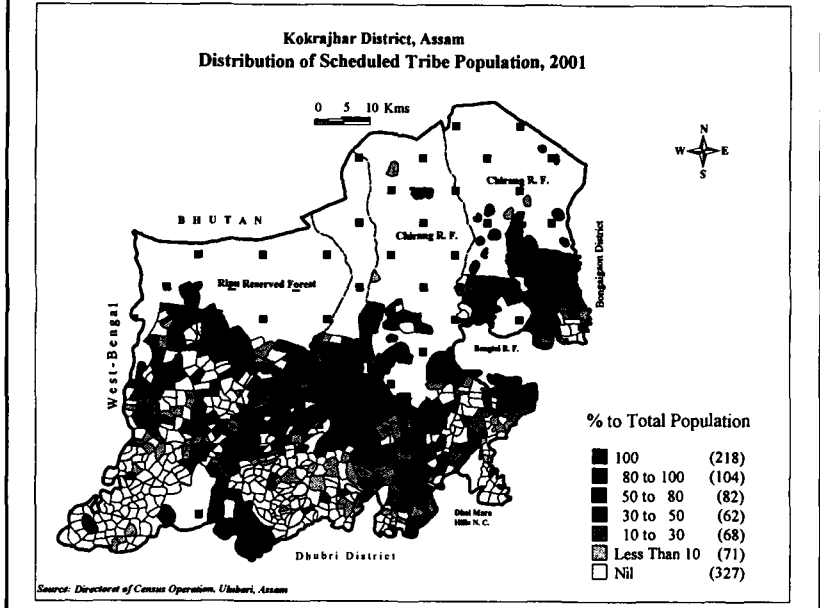


Fig.-3.3c

groups are concerned. Significantly the dominantly Bodo villages increased in their numbers and became a spatially contiguous and extensive area in the central part of the district (Figs.-3.5a to 3.5c). On the contrary, the areas of extensive numerical dominance of the Non-Scheduled component in the entire southern belt underwent massive transformation and were confined to only small patches with large discontinuities. The Non-Scheduled population seems to have lost the battle in the process of its hegemony in terms of spatial contiguity (Figs.-3.6a, 3.6b and 3.6c).

Table-3.4  
Change in the share of Population, 1971-1991

% Change	Scheduled Caste Villages		Bodo Villages		Non-Bodo/ Scheduled Caste Village	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
-100 to -50	3	0.32	15	1.61	45	4.83
-50 to 0	125	13.41	163	17.49	439	47.10
0 to 25	787	84.44	638	68.45	407	43.67
25 to 50	12	1.29	63	6.76	19	2.04
50 to 80	3	0.32	17	1.82	8	0.86
80 to 100	2	0.21	21	2.25	8	0.86
100	0	0.00	15	1.61	6	0.64
Total Villages	932	100.00	932	100.00	932	100.00

*Source: Census of India: 1971 and 1991*

Table-3.4 clearly reveals such a pattern. The change in the share of Bodo population is rarely negative and is confined to only 9 percent villages. Such villages are also not many among the Scheduled Caste though certainly more than that of the Bodos. The worst sufferers are the Non-Scheduled people. Over half of the villages experienced recorded a net decline in the proportion of the Non-Scheduled population and in about 5 percent villages; the decline was as high as 50 to 100 percent.

It is imperative to examine this tendency of greater ethnic homogenization as revealed by village level data for each of the blocks separately in order to see if the process of homogenization is widespread or highly localised.

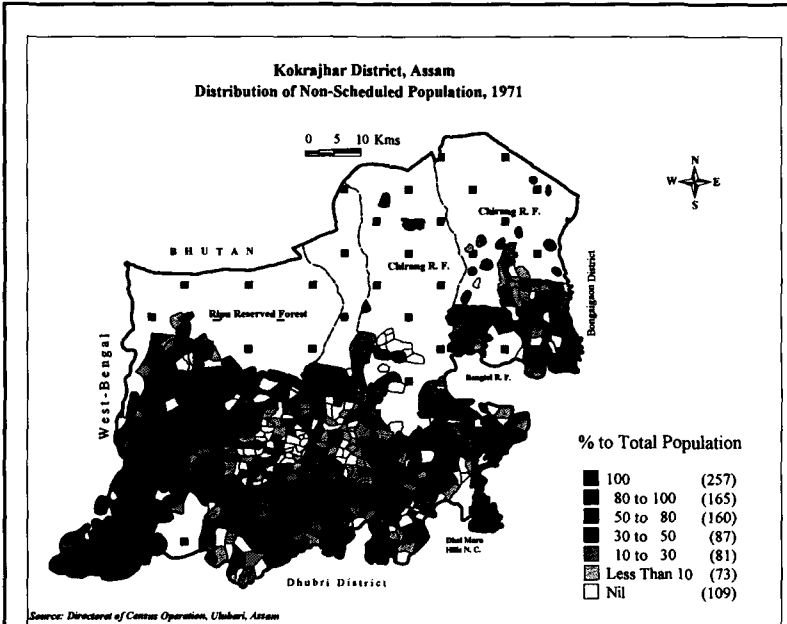


Fig.-3.4a

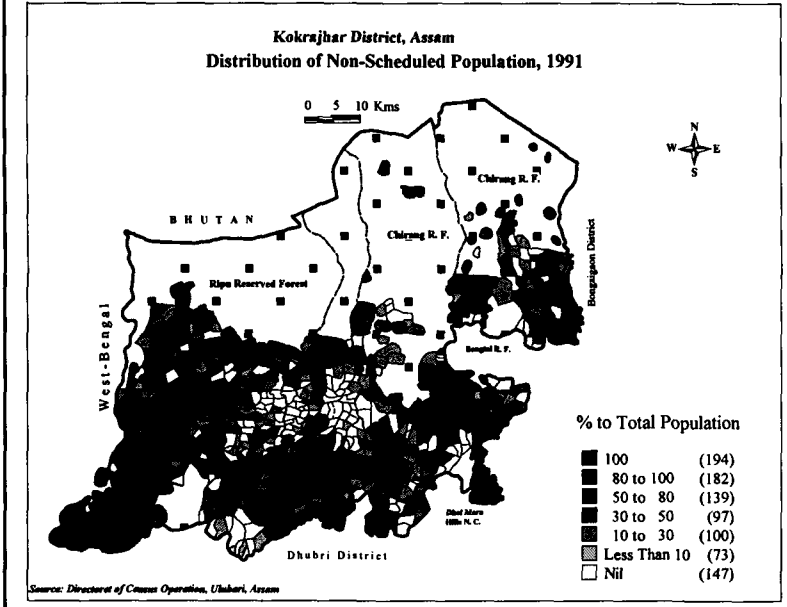


Fig.-3.4b

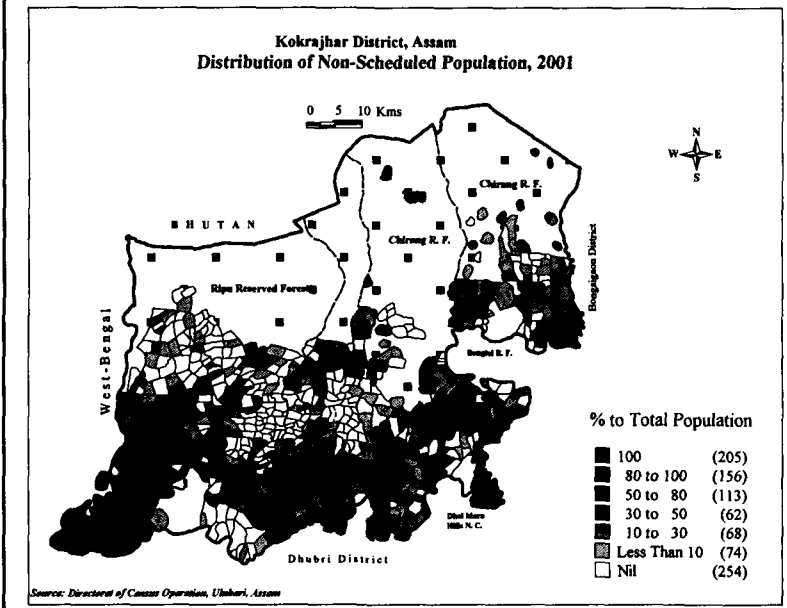


Fig.-3.4c

Table: 3.5  
Gossaigaon C. D. Block: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1971-991

Percent to Total Population	Percentage of Villages 1971			Percentage of Villages 1991			Percent Differential		
	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other
Nil	68.89 (124)	67.78 (122)	4.44 (8)	60.00 (108)	60.56 (109)	8.33 (15)	-8.89	-7.22	3.89
Insignificant < 10 percent	23.33 (42)	8.33 (15)	5.00 (9)	30.00 (54)	14.44 (26)	3.89 (7)	6.67	6.11	-1.11
Substantial 10-30 percent	6.67 (12)	5.56 (10)	4.44 (8)	4.44 (8)	6.67 (12)	2.78 (5)	-2.23	1.11	-1.66
Significant 30-50 percent	0.56 (1)	3.89 (7)	1.67 (3)	3.33 (6)	1.67 (3)	5.00 (9)	2.77	-2.22	3.33
High 50-80 percent	0.56 (1)	4.44 (8)	12.22 (22)	1.11 (2)	4.44 (8)	9.44 (17)	0.55	0.00	-2.78
Dominant 80-100 percent	0 (0)	6.11 (11)	27.78 (50)	1.11 (2)	5.56 (10)	37.22 (67)	1.11	-0.55	9.44
Exclusively Dominant 100 percent	0 (0)	3.89 (7)	44.44 (80)	0.00 (0)	6.67 (12)	33.33 (60)	0.00	2.78	-11.11
All Villages	100 (180)	100 (180)	100 (180)	100 (180)	100 (180)	100 (180)	0	0	0

Source: Census of India: 1971 and 1991 (Figures in parenthesis indicate number of Villages)

Table: 3.6  
Gossaigaon C. D. Block: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1991-2001

Percent to Total Population	Percentage Villages, 1991			Percentage Villages, 2001			Percent Differential		
	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other
Nil	60.00 (108)	60.56 (109)	8.33 (15)	65.00 (117)	70.56 (127)	11.67 (21)	5	10	3.34
Insignificant < 10 percent	30.00 (54)	14.44 (26)	3.89 (7)	24.44 (44)	7.78 (14)	2.22 (4)	-5.56	-6.66	-1.67
Substantial 10-30 percent	4.44 (8)	6.67 (12)	2.78 (5)	7.78 (14)	3.89 (7)	2.78 (5)	3.34	-2.78	0
Significant 30-50 percent	3.33 (6)	1.67 (3)	5.00 (9)	1.11 (2)	2.78 (5)	2.78 (5)	-2.22	1.11	-2.22
High 50-80 percent	1.11 (2)	4.44 (8)	9.44 (17)	1.67 (3)	2.22 (4)	8.33 (15)	0.56	-2.22	-1.11
Dominant 80-100 percent	1.11 (2)	5.56 (10)	37.22 (67)	0 (0)	3.89 (7)	29.44 (53)	-1.11	-1.67	-7.78
Exclusively Dominant 100 percent	0 (0)	6.67 (12)	33.33 (60)	0 (0)	8.89 (16)	42.78 (77)	0	2.22	9.45
All Villages	100 (180)	100 (180)	100 (180)	100 (180)	100 (180)	100 (180)	0	0	0

Source: Census of India: 1991 and 2001 (Figures in parenthesis indicate number of Villages)

It is evident from the table-3.5 that the Gossaigaon development block experienced some redistribution of population along ethnic lines in the period 1971-1991. The most widespread changes did take place among the Non-Scheduled population. There was a decline in their overall presence. Compared to 1971, there was a decline in

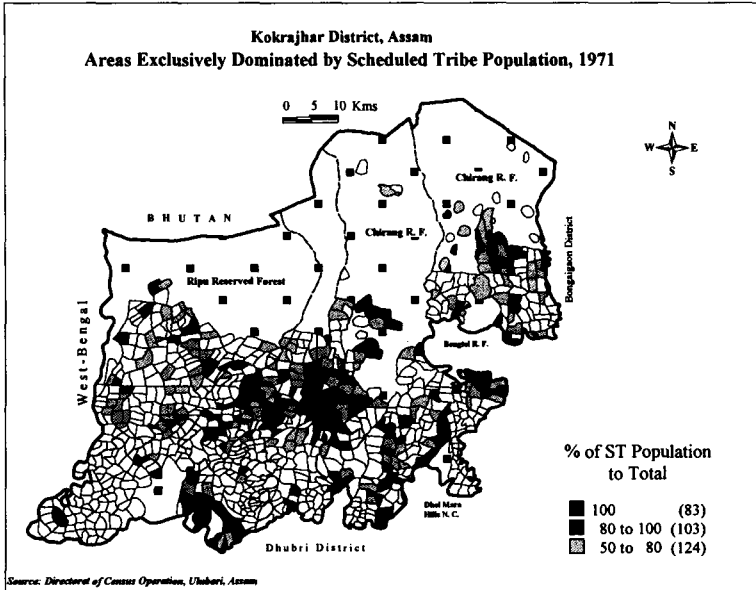


Fig.-3.5a

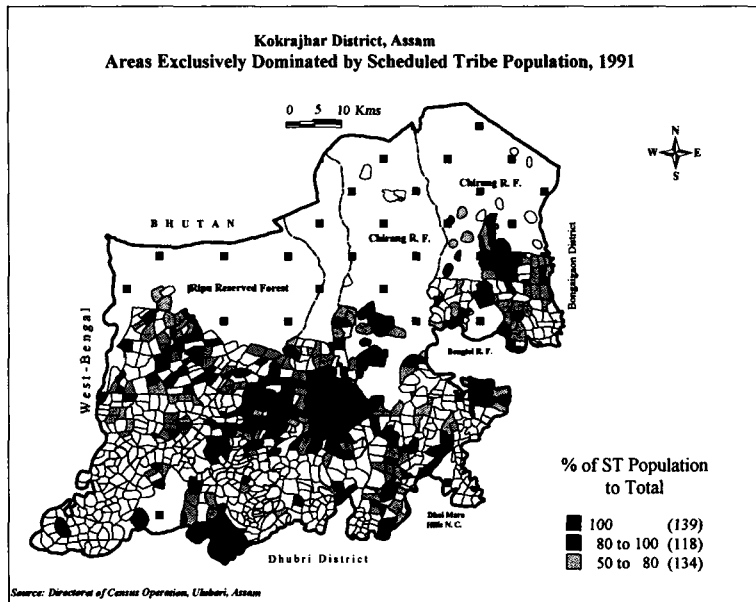


Fig.-3.5b

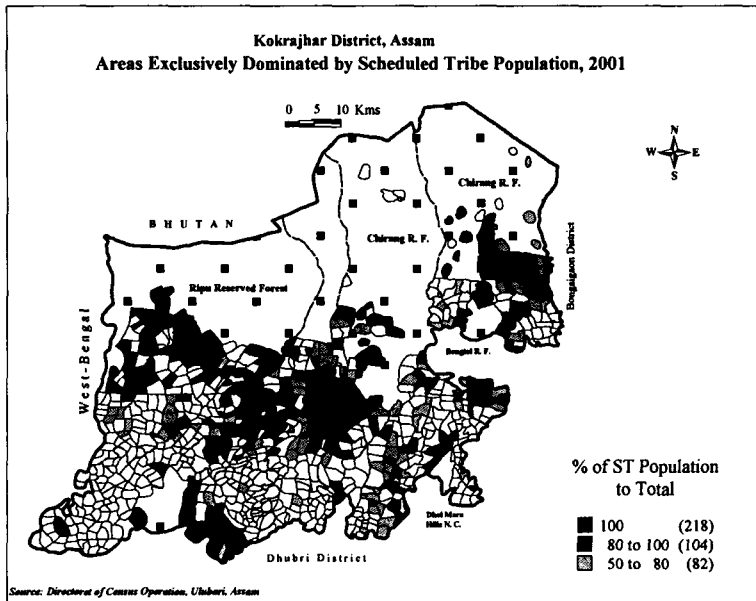


Fig.-3.5c

their presence in about 4 percent villages. Much of the decline took place in categories where their proportion was small, i.e., less than 30 percent. On the other hand the number of villages where they had exclusive dominance registered substantial decrease. On the other hand the Scheduled Tribe segment increased their presence in over 7 percent villages. Their presence increased in villages where they could be numerically small. Number of villages with their numerical supremacy too increased. This is evident of the fact that the Scheduled Tribe lived now in more villages where they accounted for the majority of the population whereas the Non-Scheduled segment moved out of the villages where they were faced with ethnic strife.

Table-3.6 shows the distribution of population along ethnic lines during the period 1991 and 2001. The proportion of Non-Scheduled component increased very high in exclusive category compared to other ethnic groups.

Table: 3.7  
Kachugaon C. D. Block: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1971-1991

Percent of Total Population	Percentage of Villages 1971			Percentage of Villages 1991			Percent Differential		
	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other
Nil	84.68 (210)	35.48 (88)	12.10 (30)	80.24 (199)	21.77 (54)	13.71 (34)	-4.44	-13.71	1.61
Insignificant < 10 percent	10.48 (26)	8.87 (22)	5.65 (14)	10.48 (26)	10.48 (26)	8.06 (20)	0.00	1.61	2.41
Substantial 10-30 percent	4.44 (11)	12.50 (31)	5.65 (14)	6.05 (15)	12.10 (30)	12.90 (32)	1.61	-0.40	7.25
Significant 30-50 percent	0 (0)	12.50 (31)	13.31 (33)	2.42 (6)	11.69 (29)	13.31 (32)	2.42	-0.81	0.00
High 50-80 percent	0 (0)	15.73 (39)	20.16 (50)	0.40 (1)	17.34 (43)	19.35 (48)	0.40	1.61	-0.81
Dominant 80-100percent	0.40 (1)	7.66 (19)	18.15 (45)	0.40 (1)	14.11 (35)	18.55 (46)	0.00	6.45	0.40
Exclusively Dominant 100 percent	0 (0)	7.26 (18)	25.00 (62)	0.00 (0)	12.50 (31)	14.52 (36)	0.00	5.24	-10.48
All Villages	100 (248)	100 (248)	100 (248)	100 (248)	100 (248)	100 (248)	0	0	0

Source: Census of India: 1971 and 1991 (Figures in parenthesis indicate number of Villages)

In Kachugaon Block, the pattern is almost repeated in a similar manner, but more intensely than what was seen in Gossaigaon (Table-3.7). The most notable aspect of

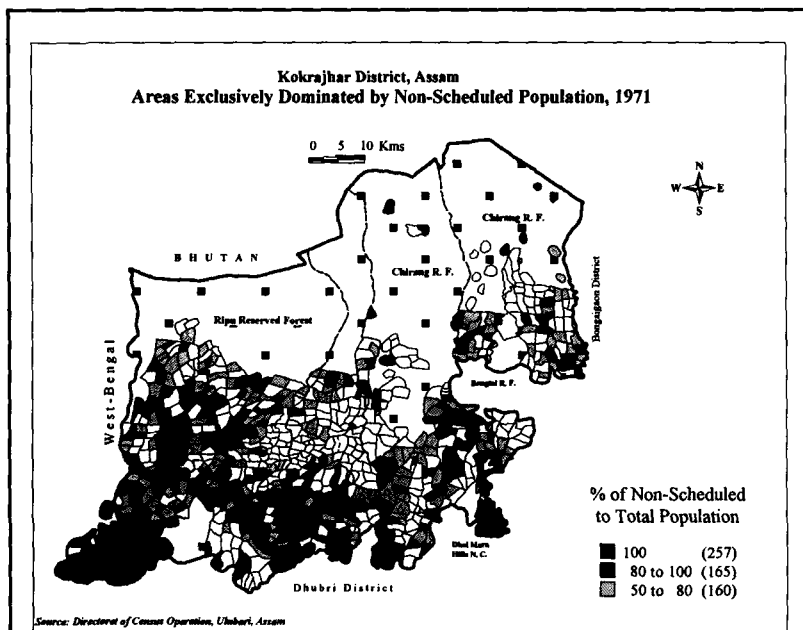


Fig.-3.6a

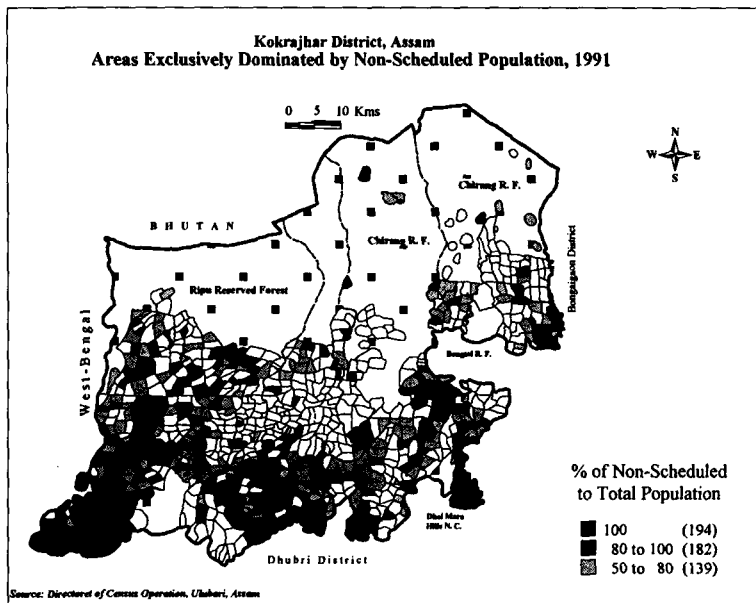


Fig.-3.6b

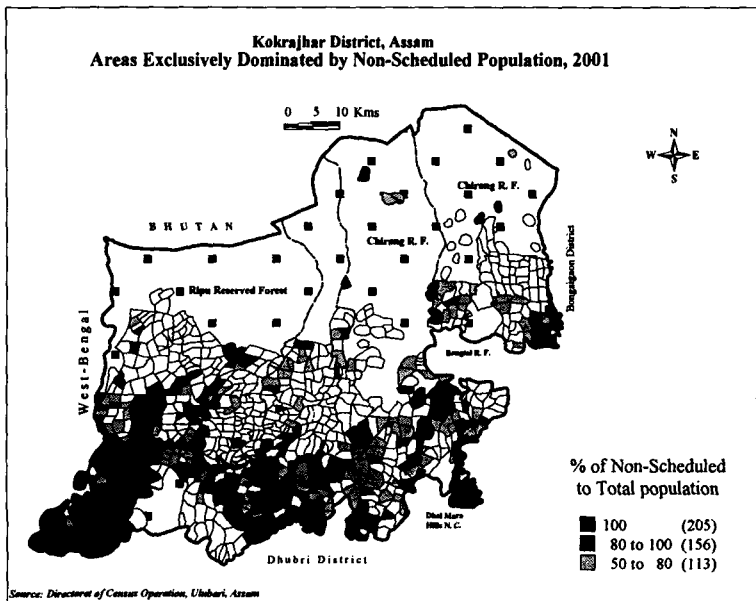


Fig.-3.6c

redistribution in this block relates to the Non-Scheduled component which experienced substantive erosion in the number of villages where they were numerically dominant. The decline in the percentage of villages with an exclusive presence of the Non-Scheduled population is as high as 10 percent or more. On the other hand villages where the Non-Scheduled component was small increased in number. Villages where the Scheduled Tribe segment was numerically dominant or was exclusive in its presence, increased rapidly during the period 1971-91.

Table: 3.8  
Kachugaon C. D. Block: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1991-2001

Percent to Total Population	Percentage of Villages 1991			Percentage of Villages 2001			Percent Differential		
	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other
Nil	80.24 (199)	21.77 (54)	13.71 (34)	80.24 (199)	21.77 (54)	13.71 (34)	0	0	0
Insignificant < 10 percent	10.48 (26)	10.48 (26)	8.06 (20)	10.48 (26)	10.48 (26)	8.06 (20)	0	0	0
Substantial 10-30 percent	6.05 (15)	12.10 (30)	12.90 (32)	6.05 (15)	12.10 (30)	12.90 (32)	0	0	0
Significant 30-50 percent	2.42 (6)	11.69 (29)	13.31 (32)	2.02 (6)	11.69 (29)	13.31 (32)	-0.4	0	0
High 50-80 percent	0.40 (1)	17.34 (43)	19.35 (48)	0.81 (1)	17.34 (43)	18.95 (48)	0.41	0	-0.4
Dominant 80-100percent	0.40 (1)	14.11 (35)	18.55 (46)	0.40 (1)	14.11 (35)	18.55 (46)	0	0	0
Exclusively Dominant 100 percent	0.00 (0)	12.50 (31)	14.52 (36)	0.00 (0)	12.50 (31)	14.52 (36)	0	0	0
All Villages	100 (248)	100 (248)	100 (248)	100 (248)	100 (248)	100 (248)	0	0	0

Source: Census of India: 1991 and 2001 (Figures in parenthesis indicate number of Villages)

Table-3.8 shows distribution of population by ethnic groups during 1991-2001. The data shows no changes took place in their distribution of population during the decades.

Kokrajhar too repeated a similar story but with a less intensive change than what was seen in the earlier two blocks (Table-3.9). The Scheduled Tribe population was found to be more widespread in its distribution over villages, but the distribution of the Non- Scheduled component remained largely unaltered except in villages of their

exclusive dominance which experienced a decline in number. Table-3.10 shows the distribution of population by ethnic groups during the period 1991-2001 and the pattern remain remained unchanged.

Table 3.9  
Kokrajhar C. D. Block: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1971-1991

Percent to Total Population	Percentage of Villages 1971			Percentage of Villages 1991			Percent Differential		
	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other
Nil	76.92 (160)	38.94 (81)	13.94 (29)	75.00 (156)	29.81 (62)	14.42 (30)	-1.92	-9.13	0.48
Insignificant < 10 percent	15.87 (33)	10.58 (22)	6.25 (13)	16.35 (34)	11.06 (23)	8.65 (18)	0.48	0.48	2.40
Substantial 10-30 percent	5.77 (12)	8.65 (18)	10.10 (21)	6.25 (13)	9.62 (20)	10.10 (21)	0.48	0.97	0.00
Significant 30-50 percent	0.96 (2)	9.13 (19)	6.25 (13)	2.40 (5)	10.10 (21)	8.17 (17)	1.44	0.97	1.92
High 50-80 percent	0.48 (1)	10.58 (22)	16.35 (34)	0 (0)	13.46 (28)	14.42 (30)	-0.48	2.88	-1.93
Dominant 80-100percent	0 (0)	12.02 (25)	15.38 (32)	0 (0)	12.02 (25)	18.27 (38)	0	0	2.89
Exclusively Dominant 100 percent	0 (0)	10.10 (21)	31.73 (66)	0 (0)	13.94 (29)	25.96 (54)	0	3.84	-5.77
All Villages	100 (208)	100 (208)	100 (208)	100 (208)	100 (208)	100 (208)	0	0	0

Source: Census of India: 1971 and 1991 (Figures in parenthesis indicate number of Villages)

Table 3.10  
Kokrajhar C. D. Block: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1991-2001

Percent to Total Population	Percentage of Villages 1991			Percentage of Villages 2001			Percent Differential		
	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other
Nil	75.00 (156)	29.81 (62)	14.42 (30)	74.52 (156)	31.73 (62)	16.83 (30)	-0.48	1.92	2.41
Insignificant < 10 percent	16.35 (34)	11.06 (23)	8.65 (18)	17.79 (34)	12.98 (23)	8.17 (18)	1.44	1.92	-0.48
Substantial 10-30 percent	6.25 (13)	9.62 (20)	10.10 (21)	5.77 (13)	8.65 (20)	7.69 (21)	-0.48	-0.97	-2.41
Significant 30-50 percent	2.40 (5)	10.10 (21)	8.17 (17)	1.92 (5)	9.62 (21)	8.17 (17)	-0.48	-0.48	0
High 50-80 percent	0 (0)	13.46 (28)	14.42 (30)	0 (0)	12.98 (28)	16.35 (30)	0	-0.48	1.93
Dominant 80-100percent	0 (0)	12.02 (25)	18.27 (38)	0 (0)	9.13 (25)	17.31 (38)	0	-2.89	-0.96
Exclusively Dominant 100 percent	0 (0)	13.94 (29)	25.96 (54)	0 (0)	14.90 (29)	25.48 (54)	0	0.96	-0.48
All Villages	100 (208)	100 (208)	100 (208)	100 (208)	100 (208)	100 (208)	0	0	0

Source: Census of India: 1991 and 2001 (Figures in parenthesis indicate number of Villages)

Table: 3.11  
Dotma C. D. Block: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1971-1991

Percent to Total Population	Percentage of Villages 1971			Percentage of Villages 1991			Percent Differential		
	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other
Nil	80.92 (140)	32.95 (57)	17.92 (31)	79.77 (138)	27.17 (47)	29.48 (51)	-1.15	-5.78	11.56
Insignificant < 10 percent	10.98 (19)	4.05 (7)	12.72 (22)	11.56 (20)	7.51 (13)	8.09 (14)	0.58	3.46	-4.63
Substantial 10-30 percent	4.05 (7)	8.67 (15)	11.56 (20)	6.36 (11)	3.47 (6)	9.83 (17)	2.31	-5.20	-1.73
Significant 30-50 percent	2.31 (4)	7.51 (13)	8.67 (15)	1.16 (2)	6.94 (12)	9.25 (16)	-1.15	-0.57	0.58
High 50-80 percent	1.16 (2)	13.87 (24)	13.29 (23)	0.58 (1)	12.14 (21)	10.40 (18)	-0.58	-1.73	-2.89
Dominant 80-100percent	0.58 (1)	16.18 (28)	13.87 (24)	0.58 (1)	13.29 (23)	13.29 (23)	0.00	-2.89	-0.58
Exclusively Dominant 100 percent	0 (0)	16.76 (29)	21.97 (38)	0.00 (0)	29.48 (51)	19.65 (34)	0.00	12.72	-2.32
All Villages	100 (173)	100 (173)	100 (173)	100 (173)	100 (173)	100 (173)	0	0	0

Source: Census of India: 1971 and 1991 (Figures in parenthesis indicate number of Villages)

Table: 3.12  
Dotma C. D. Block: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1991-2001

Percent to Total Population	Percentage of Villages 1991			Percentage of Villages 2001			Percent Differential		
	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other
Nil	79.77 (138)	27.17 (47)	29.48 (51)	79.19 (138)	27.75 (47)	31.79 (51)	-0.58	0.58	2.31
Insignificant < 10 percent	11.56 (20)	7.51 (13)	8.09 (14)	10.98 (20)	6.36 (13)	6.36 (14)	-0.58	-1.15	-1.73
Substantial 10-30 percent	6.36 (11)	3.47 (6)	9.83 (17)	7.51 (11)	4.62 (6)	10.98 (17)	1.15	1.15	1.15
Significant 30-50 percent	1.16 (2)	6.94 (12)	9.25 (16)	1.16 (2)	8.09 (12)	6.36 (16)	0	1.15	-2.89
High 50-80 percent	0.58 (1)	12.14 (21)	10.40 (18)	0.58 (1)	9.25 (21)	13.29 (18)	0	-2.89	2.89
Dominant 80-100percent	0.58 (1)	13.29 (23)	13.29 (23)	0.58 (1)	12.14 (23)	11.56 (23)	0	-1.15	-1.73
Exclusively Dominant 100 percent	0.00 (0)	29.48 (51)	19.65 (34)	0.00 (0)	31.79 (51)	19.65 (34)	0	2.31	0
All Villages	100 (173)	100 (173)	100 (173)	100 (173)	100 (173)	100 (173)	0	0	0

Source: Census of India: 1991 and 2001 (Figures in parenthesis indicate number of Villages)

In Dotma C. D. Block however, the Non-Scheduled and the Scheduled Tribe population got very highly redistributed in the period between 1971 and 1991 (Table-3.11). While the Scheduled Tribe population increased its presence in about 6 percent more villages, the Non-Scheduled population withdrew from nearly 12 percent villages. The withdrawal of this segment is all pervasive as nearly all the size classes show a

decline in the number of villages with Non-Scheduled population. Maximum decline took place in such villages where the Non-Scheduled component was numerically small. The latest position is shown in the table 3.12.

Table 3.13  
Sidli Chirang C. D. Block: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1971-1991

Percent to Total Population	Percentage of Villages 1971			Percentage of Villages 1991			Percent Differential		
	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other
Nil	78.05 (96)	13.01 (16)	8.94 (11)	84.55 (100)	8.94 (11)	13.82 (17)	6.50	-4.07	4.88
Insignificant < 10 percent	16.26 (20)	4.88 (6)	12.20 (15)	13.82 (17)	4.07 (5)	11.38 (14)	-2.44	-0.81	-0.82
Substantial 10-30 percent	3.25 (4)	18.70 (23)	14.63 (18)	4.07 (5)	17.07 (21)	18.70 (23)	0.82	-1.63	4.07
Significant 30-50 percent	2.44 (3)	15.45 (19)	18.70 (23)	0.00 (0)	8.94 (11)	20.33 (25)	-2.44	-6.51	1.63
High 50-80 percent	0 (0)	25.20 (31)	25.20 (31)	0.81 (1)	27.64 (34)	21.14 (26)	0.81	2.44	-4.06
Dominant 80-100percent	0 (0)	16.26 (20)	11.38 (14)	0.00 (0)	20.33 (25)	6.50 (8)	0.00	4.07	-4.88
Exclusively Dominant 100 percent	0 (0)	6.50 (8)	8.94 (11)	0.00 (0)	13.01 (16)	8.13 (10)	0.00	6.51	-0.81
All Villages	100 (123)	100 (123)	100 (123)	100 (123)	100 (123)	100 (123)	0	0	0

Source: Census of India: 1971 and 1991 (Figures in parenthesis indicate number of Villages)

Table 3.14  
Sidli Chirang C. D. Block: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1991-2001

Percent to Total Population	Percentage of Villages 1991			Percentage of Villages 2001			Percent Differential		
	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other	S.C.	S.T.	Other
Nil	84.55 (100)	8.94 (11)	13.82 (17)	84.55 (104)	8.13 (10)	23.58 (29)	0	-0.81	9.76
Insignificant < 10 percent	13.82 (17)	4.07 (5)	11.38 (14)	10.57 (13)	3.25 (4)	16.26 (20)	-3.25	-0.82	4.88
Substantial 10-30 percent	4.07 (5)	17.07 (21)	18.70 (23)	3.25 (4)	13.82 (17)	14.63 (18)	-0.82	-3.25	-4.07
Significant 30-50 percent	0.00 (0)	8.94 (11)	20.33 (25)	0.81 (1)	10.57 (13)	13.82 (17)	0.81	1.63	-6.51
High 50-80 percent	0.81 (1)	27.64 (34)	21.14 (26)	0.81 (1)	16.26 (20)	15.45 (19)	0	-11.38	-5.69
Dominant 80-100percent	0 (0)	20.33 (25)	6.50 (8)	0 (0)	25.20 (31)	8.13 (10)	0	4.87	1.63
Exclusively Dominant 100 percent	0 (0)	13.01 (16)	8.13 (10)	0 (0)	22.76 (28)	8.13 (10)	0	9.75	0
All Villages	100 (123)	100 (123)	100 (123)	100 (123)	100 (123)	100 (123)	0	0	0

Source: Census of India: 1991 and 2001 (Figures in parenthesis indicate number of Villages)

The pattern is similar in Sidli Chirang C. D Block as evident from the table-3.13. It is thus clear that the redistribution of population along ethnic lines was very pervasive in the entire district, though the intensity of this redistribution was more in Kachugaon and Dotma. Tale-3.14 shows the patter in the Sidli Chirang Block during the decades 1991-2001.

### **3.5 Population Growth: District and Block Level Pattern**

A study of population growth patterns in Kokrajhar is now attempted at aggregate level such as the district, blocks and villages for different ethnic groups during the year 1971-2001. The study of population growth may provide valuable insights in the nature of population redistribution taking place in the district at lower levels of spatial aggregation during the last three decades.

The study of the growth of population at the distinct level Kokrajhar has been discussed in chapter-3 classified by different ethnic groups. The district had experienced extremely high growth (143.40 percent) among the Scheduled Tribe population during the decade 1971-1991. The growth of Scheduled Caste population too registered a high growth rate of around 138.00 percent (137.94 percent) during the same period but the Non-Scheduled component grew a low growth rate (56.73 percent) (Table-3.1). A significantly high growth rate (28.58 percent) also observed among the Non-Scheduled segment during the decade 1991-2001 compared to the Scheduled Caste population experienced a very low (3.59 percent) growth. Surprisingly, the growth rate of Scheduled Tribe population (Bodo) registered negative growth (-6.67 percent) which during the period of 1991-2001 which is baffling.

As far as the variation in overall growth rate is concerned, extremely high growth rate of more than 121 percent was experienced by the Kokrajhar C. D. Block during 1971 and 1991 (Table-3.15). Remaining blocks too experienced a relatively lower growth rate ranging between 70 and 80 percent. It is interesting that the extremely high growth rate in Kokrajhar C. D. Block was primarily due to excessive growth of Scheduled Tribe population as also of the Scheduled Castes. The Non-Scheduled population grew at a slow pace (43.74 percent). The Scheduled Tribe population grew at a rate of nearly 230 percent which is indicative of significant migration of this category into the block during the period 1971-1991. The Scheduled Caste population grew at a faster rate in all the Blocks except Dotma and Sidli Chirang. The Non-Scheduled Population grew at a much slower pace, ranging between 40 and 70 percent while the Scheduled Tribe population grew at a faster pace ranging between 60-230 percent. Gossaigaon was the only block that recorded a lower growth among the Scheduled Tribe population.

Table: 3.15

Kokrajhar: Inter-Block Variation in Population Growth by Ethnic Groups, 1971-2001

CD Blocks/ District	Total		Scheduled Caste		Scheduled Tribe		Non-Scheduled	
	1971-91	1991-01	1971-91	1991-01	1971-91	1991-01	1971-91	1991-01
1. Gossaigaon	70.37	26.46	168.38	9.97	66.42	27.90	67.41	27.11
2. Kachugaon	79.17	30.07	259.32	2.45	143.36	-9.81	43.74	64.71
3. Kokrajhar	121.10	8.44	157.19	-6.87	229.42	-10.87	68.48	27.46
4. Dotma	71.15	-8.00	65.83	13.84	112.46	-23.84	40.62	8.45
5. Sidli Chirang	79.07	7.69	53.16	16.55	103.96	20.29	57.11	-8.31
Kokrajhar	86.21	13.24	137.94	3.59	143.40	-6.67	56.73	28.58

Source: Census of India: 1971, 1991 and 2001

The period between 1991 and 2001 however witnessed a reversal in the trend of population growth as far as the different ethnic groups are concerned (Table-3.15). There was a general decline in the population growth rate in the district as a whole with Dotma C. D. Block registering a net decline in its total population. Significantly this lower rate of growth was contributed by net decline in the Scheduled Tribe Population in three of

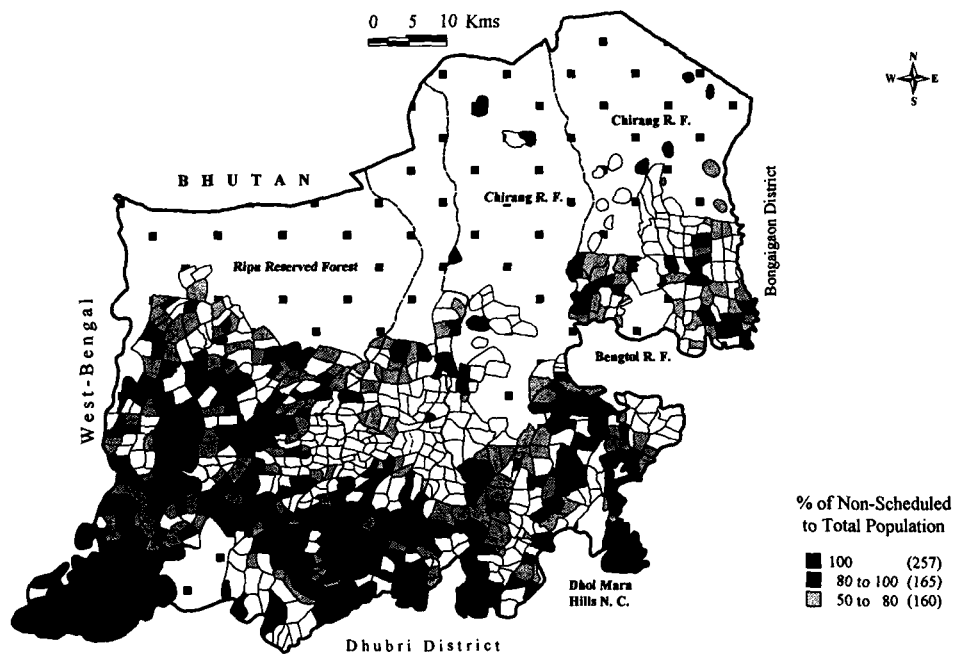
the Blocks, namely Dotma (-23.84 percent), Sidli Chirang (-20.29 percent) and Kokrajhar (-10.87 percent). It seems that the net decline in the Scheduled Tribe population is a factor in the lower rate of population growth in these blocks. Such a net decline is not found among the Non-Scheduled population and also among the Scheduled Castes with the possible exception of Kokrajhar C. D. Block. This kind of a reversal in population growth affecting a particular ethnic group certainly indicates tremendous redistribution of population, particularly return of those who migrated in the earlier decades, if the Census data is to be believed.

### **3.6 Population Growth: Village Level Pattern**

Village level analysis reveals more than what is indicated by the Block level data as far as the tendency of redistribution is concerned. It is fairly clear from the table-3.16 that a very small percentage (a little over 18 percent) of villages experienced a net decline in the Scheduled Tribe (Bodo) population during the period 1971 and 1991 (Figs.-3.7a and 3.7b). The decline in Bodo population was however extraordinary in the following decade when over 62 percent villages experienced net decline in Bodo population. On the other hand, a very great proportion of the villages experienced increase in the Scheduled Tribe (Bodo) population in the year 1971-1991. In this period, nearly 40 percent villages registered a growth rate of over 100 percent in Bodo population. The trend reversed in the following decade (Table-3.17).

Well over a quarter (28.08 percent) of the villages witnessed a net decline in the Non-Scheduled Population during 1971-91. A very high proportion (48 percent) of the villages witnessed a net decline in Scheduled Caste population during 1971-91 decades, but equally high proportion (21 percent) of villages experienced over 250 percent

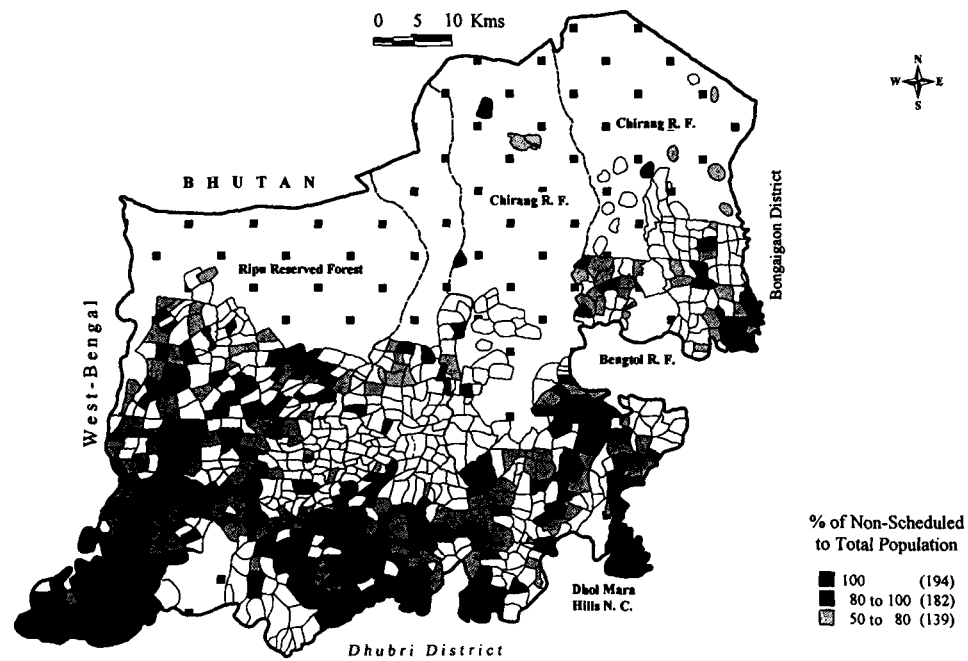
**Kokrajhar District, Assam**  
**Areas Exclusively Dominated by Non-Scheduled Population, 1971**



Source: Director of Census Operation, Ulubari, Assam

Fig.-3.7a

**Kokrajhar District, Assam**  
**Areas Exclusively Dominated by Non-Scheduled Population, 1991**



Source: Director of Census Operation, Ulubari, Assam

Fig.-3.7b

increase in Scheduled Caste population. In the next decade, however, over 58 percent villages experienced net decline in Scheduled Caste population.

Table: 3.16  
Kokrajhar District: Village Level Growth of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1971-1991

Range	Number of Village				Percent of Village			
	Total	Scheduled Caste	Bodo	Non-Scheduled	Total	Scheduled Caste	Bodo	Non-Scheduled
-100 to 0	75	96	102	230	8.31	48.00	18.09	28.08
0 to 50	302	28	126	263	33.44	14.00	22.34	32.11
50 to 100	274	12	116	168	30.34	6.00	20.57	20.51
100to 150	101	14	62	55	11.18	7.00	10.99	6.72
150 to 200	51	6	46	25	5.65	3.00	8.16	3.05
200 to 250	98	2	17	17	10.85	1.00	3.01	2.08
250 and Above	2	42	95	61	0.22	21.00	16.84	7.45

Source: Census of India: 1971 and 1991

Table: 3.17  
Kokrajhar District: Village Level Growth of Population by Ethnic Groups, 1991-2001

Range	Number of Village				Percent of Village			
	Total	Scheduled Caste	Bodo	Non-Scheduled	Total	Scheduled Caste	Bodo	Non-Scheduled
-100 to 0	446	129	400	356	48.90	58.11	62.79	46.11
0 to 50	372	61	151	326	40.79	27.48	23.70	42.23
50 to 100	43	13	26	33	4.71	5.86	4.08	4.27
100to 150	13	6	17	12	1.43	2.70	2.67	1.55
150 to 200	18	6	10	7	1.97	2.70	1.57	0.91
200 to 250	8	0	5	8	0.88	0.00	0.78	1.04
250 and Above	12	7	28	30	1.32	3.15	4.40	3.89

Source: Census of India: 1991 and 2001

It is evident that in the period between 1971 and 1991, very few villages experienced net decline in Bodo population while large numbers of villages witnessed significant decline in Non-Scheduled and Scheduled Caste population. This period also saw extraordinary rise in the Bodo and Scheduled Caste population indicating large scale inter village transfer in all segments of population. The Non-Scheduled population however seems to have left the villages to alternative locations in the relief camps or outside the district as only a small proportion of the villages did register extraordinary growth rate of over 200 percent experienced by this segment.

It may be concluded that in the first phase there was a tremendous inter village transfer of people along ethnic lines wherein a large number of villages belonging to the Bodos and the Scheduled Castes increased their dominance in villages increasing proportion of ethnically homogenous villages. On the other hand the Non-Scheduled Caste population left many villages located in areas of the conflict. Only a small proportion of villages saw extraordinary rise in their population indicating some inter village transfer of the Non-Scheduled population. Evidently, these villages belonged to the most affected Santhal people who were organising themselves to counter Bodo onslaught.

The next phase (1991-2001) is characterised by a period of further consolidation as evident from a net decline in population belonging to all segments without a corresponding increase in the proportion of villages that experienced substantive rise in the total population (Figs.-3.8a and 3.8b). Evidently such villages are the ones where they had small numerical presence. Villages experiencing extraordinary increase in population were extremely few cutting across ethnic lines contrary to the earlier phase. The growth data is a sufficient clue to the fact that more villages attained ethnic homogeneity in the 1991-2001 decade.

It may be interesting now to more specifically examine the villages that experienced complete or near complete desertion by a particular ethnic group. It is evident from the table-3.18 that the Non-Scheduled Population deserted as many as 94 villages out of a total of 823 villages in which they had presence in 1971. Around 77 villages witnessed a complete desertion by the Non-Scheduled population. Likewise, the Bodos too deserted as many as 34 villages completely and nearly so in yet another 4

**Kokrajhar District, Assam  
Growth of Scheduled Tribe Population, 1991-2001**

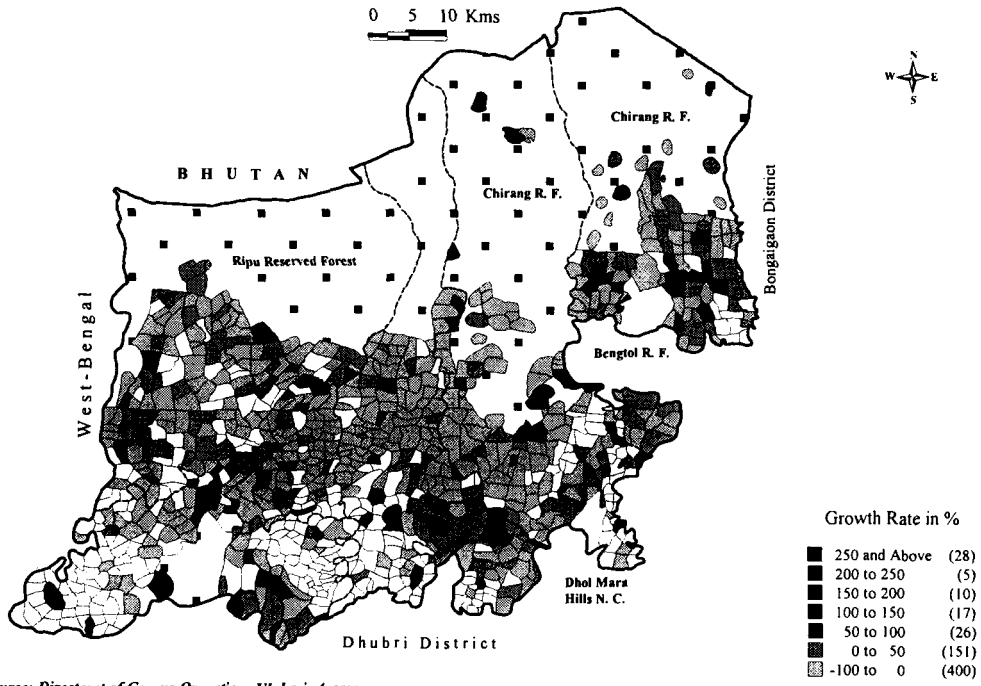


Fig.-3.8a

**Kokrajhar District, Assam  
Growth of Non-Scheduled Population, 1991-2001**

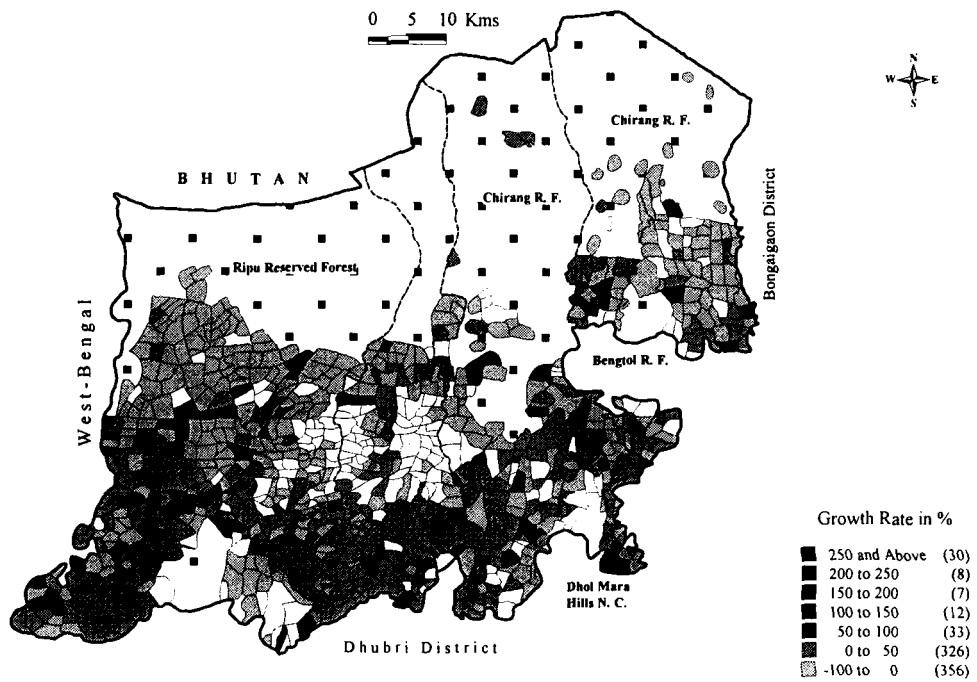


Fig.-3.8b

villages. The Scheduled Tribes too completely deserted 58 villages out of a total of 202 villages in which they had presence in the year 1971. In yet another set of five villages their decline was nearly complete. In terms of percentage however, the complete desertion of villages was extremely high among the Scheduled Castes followed by the Non-Scheduled population and the Bodos deserted the least in the period between 1971 and 1991. In the next decade also the process of completely deserting the villages continued and it picked up momentum for all the ethnic groups, though it was extremely high among the Non-Scheduled component. Over 22 percent villages witnessed complete or near complete absence of the Non-Scheduled population, while such a proportion was about 13 percent among the Bodos and around 30 percent among the Scheduled Castes. The extent of desertion increased substantially among the Non-Scheduled component in the period between 1991 and 2001.

Table: 3.18  
Villages experiencing complete/Near Complete  
Desertion by an Ethnic Group, 1971-1991 and 1991-2001

Range	1971-1991			1991-2001		
	Scheduled Caste	Bodo	Non-Scheduled	Scheduled Caste	Bodo	Scheduled
-100	28.71 (58)	5.99(34)	9.36 (77)	24.68 (57)	11.09 (72)	17.32 (136)
-99.9 to -95	1.49 (3)	.18(1)	.49 (4)	3.03 (7)	.46 (3)	2.04 (16)
-94.9 to -89.9	0 (0)	.35 (2)	.24 (2)	0 (0)	.15 (1)	.76 (6)
-89.9 to -80	.99 (2)	.18 (1)	1.34 (11)	2.16 (5)	1.23 (8)	2.55 (20)
Total	31.19 (63)	6.69 (38)	11.42 (94)	29.87 (69)	12.94 (84)	22.68 (178)
Total Village of Presence	202	568	823	231	649	785

*Source: Census of India: 1971, 1991 and 2001 (Figures in parenthesis indicate number of Villages)*

This process of desertion of villages has to be seen in terms of the ethnic homogenisation that had set in motion in the context of the ethnic clash between the Bodos and the Non-Bodo segment. The fact that desertion from villages cut across ethnic boundaries reveals the unprecedented nature of population redistribution and ethnic

homogenisation of village population. Evidently the villages that experienced decline of population by an ethnic group became more ethnically homogenous.

More interesting facts emerge when the data on desertion of villages by ethnic groups are plotted on the map. Figures (3.9a to 3.10c) reveal the phased manner in which the Non-Scheduled population withdrew from certain areas of conflict that was made more ethnically homogenous consisting of the Bodos. The pattern of desertion with regard to the Scheduled Tribes is not very clear as they have deserted villages from all the areas not confirming to any specific location. However as far as the Non-Scheduled population is concerned, this segment has been completely decimated from the central part of the district, around the Kokrajhar and Dotma C. D. Block in the first phase during 1971 and 1991 and then from a contiguous cluster of villages in Kachugaon C. D. Block in the period between 1991 and 2001. These villages are mostly located in the forest areas. Evidently these areas have been the most sensitive as far as the Bodo and Santhal Clash is concerned. Such large scale desertion by the Non-Scheduled population has been responsible for greater ethnic homogenisation in the district.

The process of redistribution of population is also indicated by the number of villages which did not contain any population belonging to a particular ethnic group in the year 1971 or 1991 but contained some population of that ethnic group in the subsequent years. Table-3.19 reveals that 87 villages had no Scheduled Caste population in the year 1971, but 58 of them had enumerated some Scheduled Caste population by the year 1991. Nearly all of these villages were ethnically mixed, meaning thereby that the Scheduled Caste population in these new villages lived in association with other ethnic groups. Scheduled Tribe Population was not found in 115 villages in the year 1971, but in

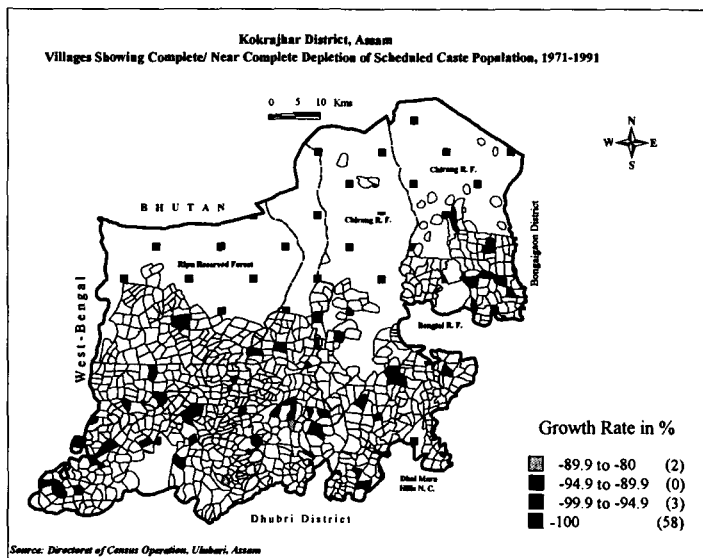


Fig.-3.9a

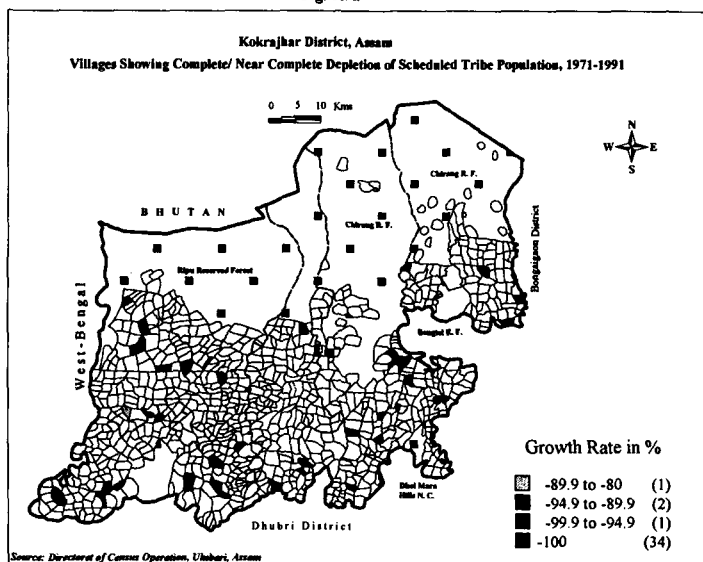


Fig.-3.9b

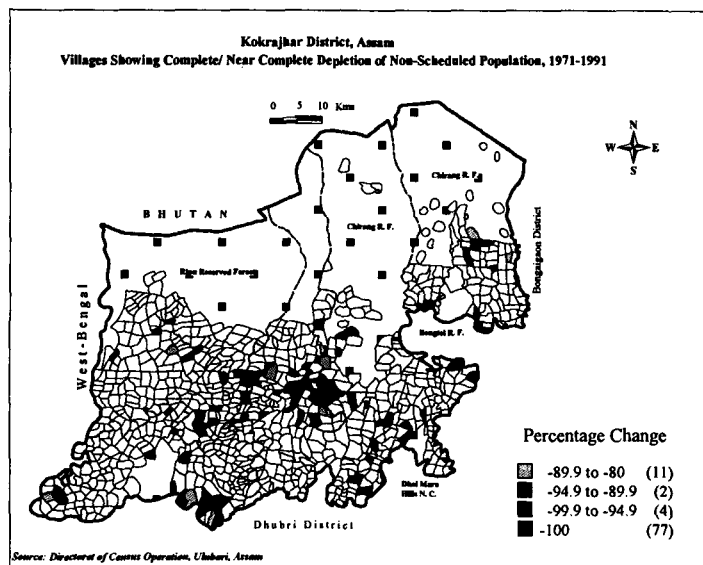


Fig.-3.9c

all these villages they were enumerated in the year 1991 showing their widespread presence. Of these the Scheduled Tribes were found mixed with other ethnic groups in 24 villages. In 15 villages they were exclusively present, while in 15 other villages they were mixed with Scheduled Tribes and in the remaining 61 villages they were enumerated along with Non-Scheduled population. The Non-Scheduled population was not enumerated in 29 villages in 1971 but had presence in 18 villages' in 1991. In 10 villages they were enumerated along with the Scheduled Tribes and in 4 villages they had exclusive presence.

Table: 3.19

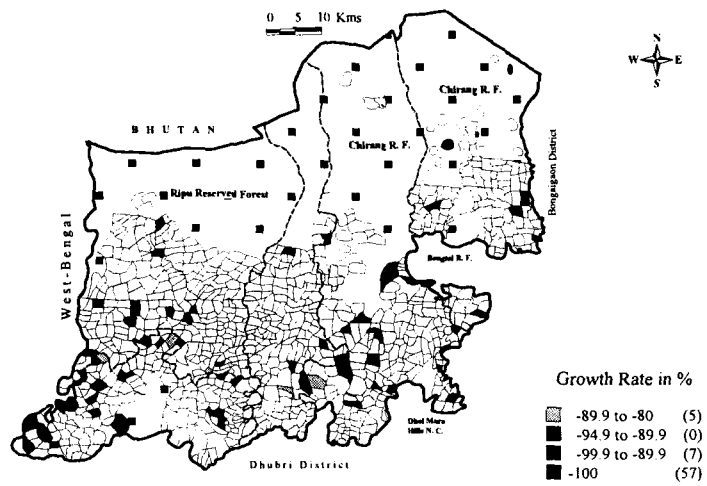
Villages that had no Population in 1971/1991 but recorded some Population in 1991/2001

Scheduled Caste		1971-1991				Scheduled Caste		1991-2001				
No.	Ethnic Groups	Scheduled Tribe	No.	Ethnic Groups	Non-Scheduled	No.	Ethnic Groups	Scheduled Tribe	No.	Ethnic Groups	Non-Scheduled	
87	1=57	115	29	1=24	43	28	1=25	28	1=11	29	1=3	
	5=1			3=15			4=4		5=1		3=2	4=3
	Total 58			5=15			7=10		6=17		7=15	7=23
				7=61			Total 18		Total 58		Total 58	Total 58
				Total 115								

Source: Census of India: 1971, 1991 and 2001 (1=Mixed, 2=Only SC, 3=Only ST, 4=Non-SC and ST, 5=SC and ST, 6=SC and Others, 7= ST and Others).

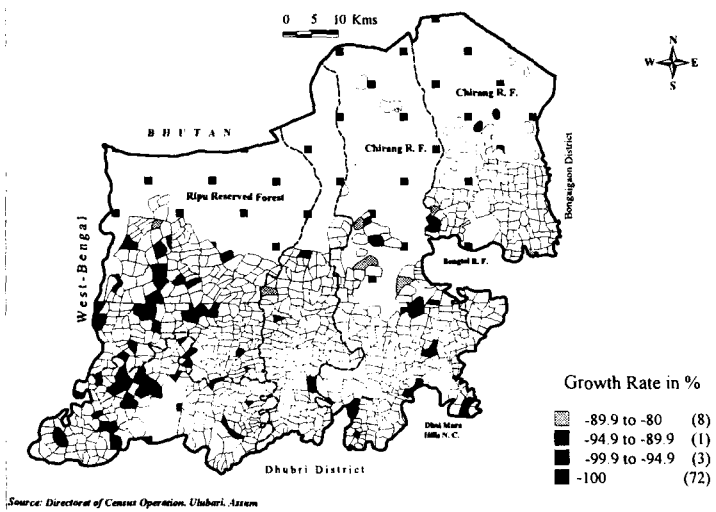
The 2001 Census showed that the Scheduled Caste population had no presence in 43 villages in 1991 but had some presence in all these villages in 2001. In 25 villages they were found mixed with the Scheduled Tribe or Non-Scheduled population. In the remaining villages they were enumerated along with the Non-Scheduled population. The Scheduled Tribe population was enumerated in 28 new villages in the year 2001. Of these they were enumerated in mixed villages in 11 villages. In 2 villages they were found as exclusive category while in 15 villages they were enumerated with Non-Scheduled population. The Non-Scheduled population was not enumerated in 29 villages in 1991; all these villages recorded some presence of them in 2001. In most of these villages they

**Kokrajhar District, Assam**  
**Villages Showing Complete/ Near Complete Depletion of Scheduled Caste Population, 1991-2001**



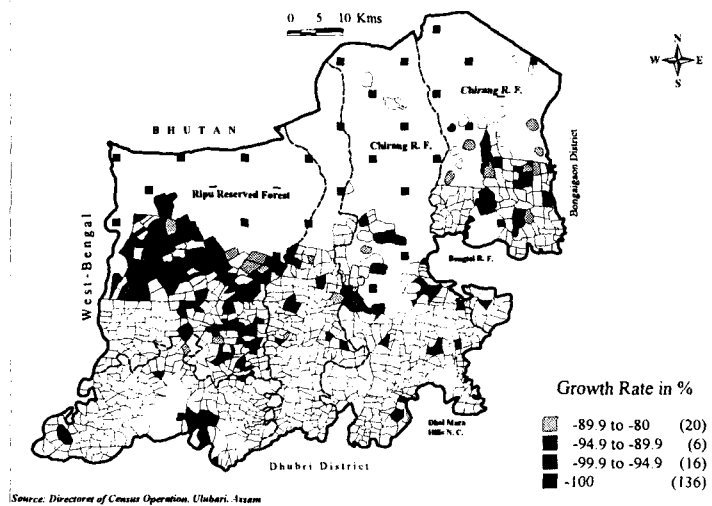
**Fig.-3.10a**

**Kokrajhar District, Assam**  
**Villages Showing Complete/ Near Complete Depletion of Scheduled Tribe Population, 1991-2001**



**Fig.-3.10b**

**Kokrajhar District, Assam**  
**Villages Showing Complete/ Near Complete Depletion of Non-Scheduled Population, 1991-2001**



**Fig.-3.10c**

were enumerated in association with the Scheduled Tribes whereas in 4 of these villages they had an exclusive presence.

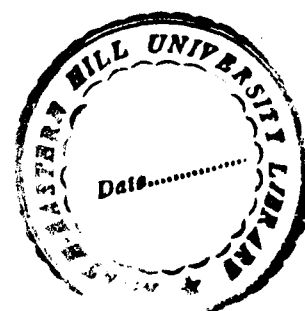
### 3.7 Evidence of Redistribution

If the total population is taken into consideration for the district as a whole, the index of dissimilarity (Table-3.20) shows that the extent of redistribution of overall population is not too large but there has been an increase in the extent of redistribution of population over the years.

Table: 3.20  
Kokrajhar: Dissimilarity Index: Village level Analysis (C. D. Block Level)

District/ CD Block	Ethnic Groups	Year		
		1971-91	1991-01	1971-01
Kokrajhar District	Total	0.181	0.215	0.244
	Scheduled Caste	0.405	0.203	0.424
	Scheduled Tribe	0.302	0.243	0.283
	Non-Scheduled	0.179	0.228	0.313
Gossaigaon	Total	0.353	0.104	0.186
	Scheduled Caste	0.506	0.186	0.476
	Scheduled Tribe	0.274	0.334	0.514
	Non-Scheduled	0.145	0.104	0.195
Kachugaon	Total	0.171	0.381	0.401
	Scheduled Caste	0.518	0.302	0.557
	Scheduled Tribe	0.296	0.217	0.259
	Non-Scheduled	0.169	0.512	0.559
Kokrajhar	Total	0.264	0.213	0.192
	Scheduled Caste	0.323	0.174	0.390
	Scheduled Tribe	0.411	0.321	0.285
	Non-Scheduled	0.197	0.123	0.216
Dotma	Total	0.124	0.148	0.164
	Scheduled Caste	0.383	0.155	0.367
	Scheduled Tribe	0.189	0.190	0.244
	Non-Scheduled	0.200	0.102	0.237
Sidli Chirang	Total	0.208	0.173	0.226
	Scheduled Caste	0.254	0.180	0.309
	Scheduled Tribe	0.284	0.167	0.286
	Non-Scheduled	0.519	0.324	0.336

Source: Census of India: 1971, 1991 and 2001



However, there are important ethnic variations as far as redistribution is considered. The Scheduled Caste population got much more redistributed than the other components of the population in the period 1971-1991, but more stabilized in the following decade with a sudden decrease in the extent of redistribution of this segment. The extent of redistribution experienced by the Scheduled Tribe population is less compared to the Scheduled Castes, but is on the decrease over time. The extent of redistribution of population is the lowest among the Non-Scheduled component in the period 1971-91, but the process of redistribution of this segment is on the increase in the period between 1991 and 2001.

There are significant inter-block variations in the redistribution of population when classified by different ethnic groups. The Scheduled Caste segment got far more redistributed compared to other ethnic groups in Gossaigaon, Kachugaon and Dotma Blocks in the period between 1971 and 1991. However, the Scheduled Tribe population redistributed itself more in Kokrajhar district while the Non-Scheduled population got redistributed on an unprecedented scale in Sidli Chirang district in this period. The next decade, i.e., 1991-2001 witnessed a general decline in the extent of population redistribution, but the Non-Scheduled population as well as the Scheduled Tribe population got themselves more redistributed than the Scheduled Caste Population. For example, the extent of redistribution was far greater among the Scheduled Tribe population in Gossaigaon, Kokrajhar and Dotma, while the Non-Scheduled Population experienced greater redistribution in the remaining blocks. The fact that the values of dissimilarity indices are high (ranging between 0.2-0.5 in most cases) indicates that inter village transfer has been of a very high order. In the third chapter it was observed that

inter district redistribution of population was extremely small and insignificant. But the index for the Kokrajhar shows the impact of the ethnic strife in forcing large-scale intra-district transfer of people. But the redistribution has been extremely local and has little consequence as far as the other districts are concerned. The redistribution of ethnic groups has taken place mostly within the district affecting marginally the other districts except the adjoining ones.

### **3.9 Concluding Statement**

The village level analysis of the changing ethnic composition in Kokrajhar district is summarised below.

There has been tremendous transfer of population among the three different ethnic groups namely the Bodos, the Scheduled Caste, and others. The Scheduled Caste as well as the Bodo population seems to have dispersed over more villages over the period of thirty years. The real decline in the presence of the Non- Scheduled component is rather alarming whose presence has been getting highly restricted over the years. The Bodos on the other hand have substantially increased their presence in many more villages. It appears that the Bodos and the Scheduled Caste people filled the vacuum created by the Bengalis, Nepalese, Santhals and Assamese people in this period.

The analysis conclusively proves that the Bodos have been successful in evicting the Non-Bodo population in a large number of villages with whom the Bodos had been living for centuries. The fact that there has been a corresponding decline in exclusively dominated villages by the Non-Scheduled population clearly indicates that it is this segment of the population which has been evicted from their traditional habitations. The Non-Scheduled segment seems to have lost the battle and has redistributed itself in a

manner to protect themselves in a fewer villages within the district or have taken shelter in the Relief camps.

The spatial patterning in this process of redistribution of ethnic groups reveals greater homogenization of ethnic areas within the district. The most glaring changes in this process of spatial homogenisation is seen with respect to the Scheduled Tribes (the Bodos) and the Non-Scheduled component. The exclusive Bodo areas became spatially contiguous and far more extensive in the period 1971-91. The pattern in the year 2001 becomes even more clear and extensive with the extension of areas of Bodo concentration further westwards into Kachugaon block and emergence of new area of high Bodo concentration in the southern part in the traditional stronghold of the Non-Scheduled population. On the contrary, the areas of extensive numerical dominance of the Non-Scheduled component in the entire southern belt underwent massive transformation and were confined to only small patches with large discontinuities. The Non-Scheduled population seems to have lost the battle in the process of its hegemony in terms of spatial contiguity. As a whole, the changes in the pattern of concentration reveal greater ethnic homogenisation on space, reflecting a spatial dichotomy in the presence of the Scheduled Tribes (the Bodos) and the Non-Scheduled population.

Though there is some inter-block variation in this pattern of ethnic homogenisation the redistribution of population along ethnic lines however has been very pervasive in the entire district only varying in intensity.

Analysis of the trends in population growth at the village level too revealed tremendous inter village transfer of people along ethnic lines wherein a large number of villages belonging to the Bodos and the Scheduled Castes increased their dominance in

villages increasing proportion of ethnically homogenous villages. On the other hand the Non-Scheduled population left many villages located in areas of the conflict. Only a small proportion of villages saw extraordinary rise in their population indicating some inter village transfer of the Non-Scheduled population. Evidently, these villages belonged to the most affected Santhals people who were organising themselves to counter Bodo onslaught. The period between 1991 and 2001 is characterised by a process of further consolidation as evident from a net decline in population belonging to all segments without a corresponding increase in the proportion of villages that experienced substantive rise in the total population. Evidently such villages are the ones where they had small numerical presence. Villages experiencing extraordinary increase in population were extremely few cutting across ethnic lines contrary to the earlier phase. The growth data is a sufficient clue to the fact that more villages attained ethnic homogeneity during the 1991-2001 decade.

The most significant facts emerged from the analysis of desertion of villages by a particular ethnic group. The fact that desertion from villages cut across ethnic boundaries reveals the unprecedented nature of population redistribution and ethnic homogenisation of village population. Evidently the villages that experienced decline of population by an ethnic group became more ethnically homogenous. This process of desertion of villages has to be seen in terms of the ethnic homogenisation that had set in motion in the context of the ethnic clash between the Bodos and the Non-Bodo segment.

Statistical measure of the extent of redistribution revealed extraordinary inter-village transfer of people cutting across ethnic lines. Thus it is clear that the process of redistribution has been highly localised and is of intra-district in character. The localised

nature of redistribution too points to the fact that it was largely an effect of the ethnic conflict within the district and that though there has been extraordinary transfer of people along ethnic lines, it has largely taken place within the district. It must be mentioned here that the dissimilarity index only shows a statistical measure of the extent of redistribution and does not specify the causes which may be either due to differential natural growth in their population or due to inter village transfer of population. However, it can be easily concluded with reference to widespread ethnic homogenization that this redistribution is more due to the latter than the former.

## **CHAPTER 4**

# **IMPACT OF THE CONFLICT ON SANTHAL WOMEN LIVING IN RELIEF CAMPS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The analysis so far depended on data available at secondary source, namely, the Directorate of Census Operation. In spite of the limitations in the census data, the analysis did provide valuable insights into the distribution and growth of Santhal population in Assam especially in Kokrajhar District. The analysis did bring out the fact that there has been tremendous population redistribution in the Bodo dominated areas of Assam. The case study of Kokrajhar district that happens to be the core areas of Bodo concentration and Santhal relief camps is therefore taken up as a special case for understanding the consequences of the conflict on Santhal women. This particular district, much more than the others, has been indicating the pulse for formation of ethnically homogeneous areas for the Bodos. The dominating spatial pattern in the distribution of the Bodos in contrast to the Santhal provides a probable march towards such a tendency. The present chapter is an attempt to go deeper into the socio-economic problems arising out of the process of redistribution by scrutinising field data collected from relief camps located in Kokrajhar district, based on stratified sampling method for household survey using the pre-constructed questionnaire (see appendix-I and III).

### **4.2 Selection of Relief Camps**

It has been mentioned earlier that in order to select the relief camps, in the first place the census data from 1971 to 2001 at the village level in the Kokrajhar district were critically scrutinised to understand an overall spatial change in ethnic distribution in the area due to the conflicting situation. It was observed that the relief

camps with spatially concentrated and exclusively separate characteristics could be marked in a general way. Having observed this pattern on the map, a field-study was conducted in the area with the laboratory findings in mind. This later helped to have a strong conviction in favour of the changing trends observed in the statistical figures as mentioned above.

Obviously, it was now necessary to highlight the level of this supported tendency by taking the ethnic regions so far as the varying characteristics are concerned in the Kokrajhar district. In the next step, a random selection of relief camps in CD block was done taking into consideration a random selection. The basis was non-proximity to the influence of either the district headquarters or the district periphery in the respective regions. On this basis, six relief camps were identified randomly in view of the respective area homogeneity, i.e. on stratified characteristic basis. A list of these relief camps is given below in the table 4.1 that includes a) Telipara b) Madatipar c) Kochugaon, d) Bhodeyaguri e) Banshbari f) Garufela in the south. Their locations have been shown in Fig.-4.1. All these relief camps were inhabited by the Santhals; thus consisting of a near-homogeneous population in them. Conveniently, an overall sample size of 14 percent households has been taken though the sample size varies considerably from one relief camp to the other depending upon the total size of the households in each. Relatively small samples have been drawn from relief camps with large population size while the sample size is larger if the total size of the relief camp is small. For example in two of the relief camps with small size of the total inhabitants, namely Bhodeyaguri and Banshbari, the sample size is as high as 40-45 percent. On the other hand in Kochugaon, a relief camp supporting around 1000 households, a sample size of only 8 percent was considered adequate.

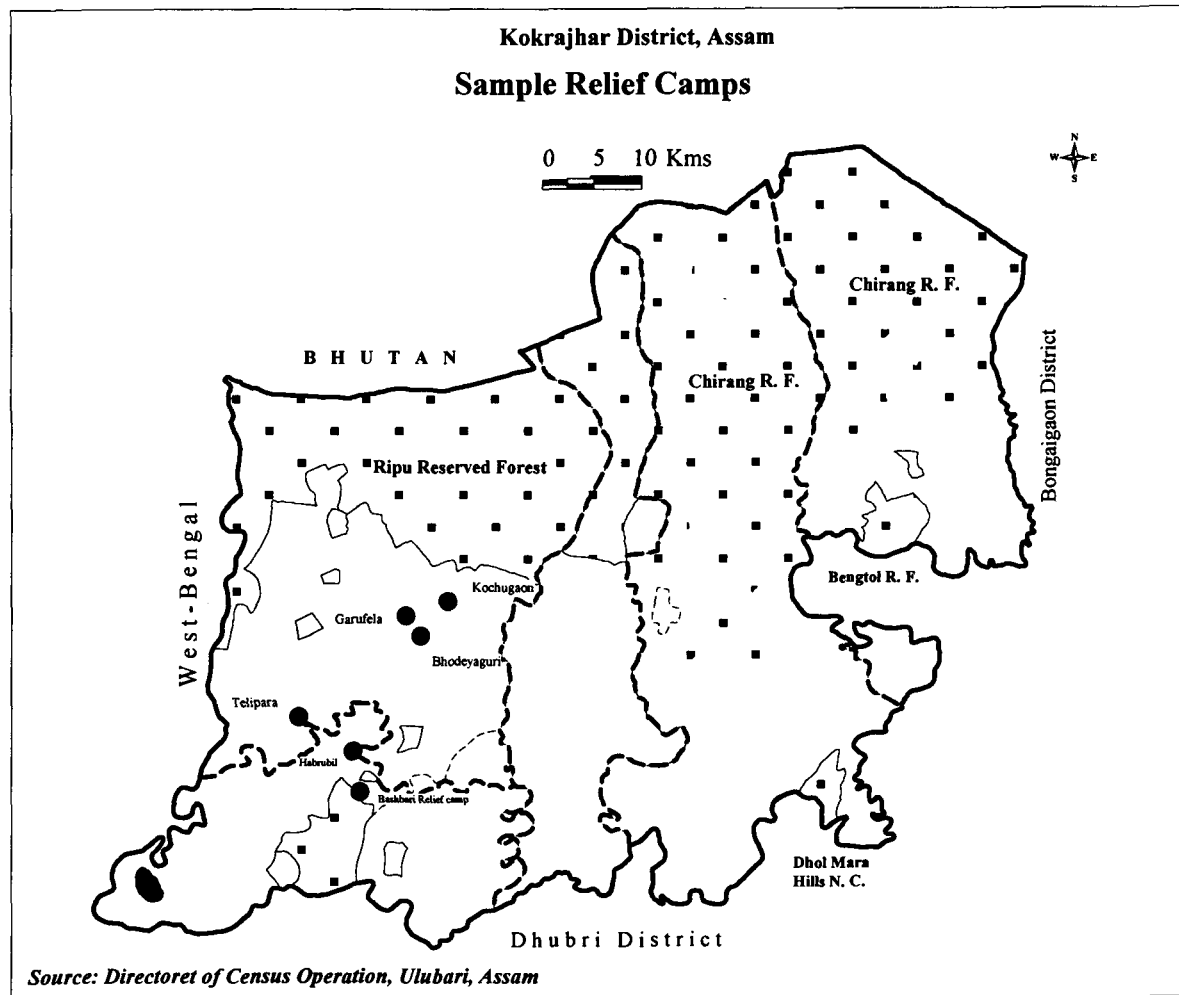


Fig-4.1

### 4.3 General Characteristics of Sampled Relief Camps

Relief camps consist mostly of the Santhals, officially enumerated as non-scheduled component of the population, though elsewhere, particularly in Bihar and West Bengal; they are enumerated as scheduled tribes. Most of relief camps are located in Kokrajhar District under the Gossaigaon sub-division and are situated at a distance range of 2 to 10 km from the Gossaigaon town.

Table 4.1 shows selected characteristics of the sampled relief camps. The size of relief camps varies from a low of 56 households to a high of 1000 households. On random basis, 200 households have been identified living in the selected six relief camps. Most of them (69 percent) profess Hinduism as their religion (Fig.-4.2). Remaining profess Christianity who recently adopted the religion after shifting to the camps. Nuclear household system dominates the household type. Most of the people speak Santhal as their mother tongue although Bengali and Assamese are used as second or third languages.

Table: 4.1  
Sample Relief Camps: Background Characteristics

Name	No. of Respondents	No of Households	Total		Percent	
			Hindu	Christian	Hindu	Christian
Telipara	13	56	0	13	0.0	100
Habrubil	18	100	0	18	0.0	100
Kochugaon	82	1000	67	15	81.7	18.3
Bhodayaguri	34	76	19	15	55.9	44.1
Banshbari	15	35	15	0	100	0.0
Garufela	38	189	37	1	97.4	2.6
Total	200	1456	138	62	69.0	31.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

The roads approaching these camps are half *pucca* and half *kacha* and the mode of transportation is usually by regular but less frequent private bus service and in some cases by auto rickshaws. The nearest railway station on an average is 10 km away from the relief camps. The nearest primary school is 3-10 km away while secondary and higher secondary schools are located within a distance of 5-15 km. A

college is situated at about 10-20 km from these relief camps. The relief camps have also the services of a police station, a post office, a bank and a dispensary located within a distance of 10-20 km. The main source of drinking water is dug-wells and tube-wells. The facility of dug wells and tube wells available to people in the relief camps though is few and inadequate. There are no proper sanitation facilities available. The important issues of hygiene and privacy for the females are highly ignored, as no close proper bathrooms and toilets are available in the camps.

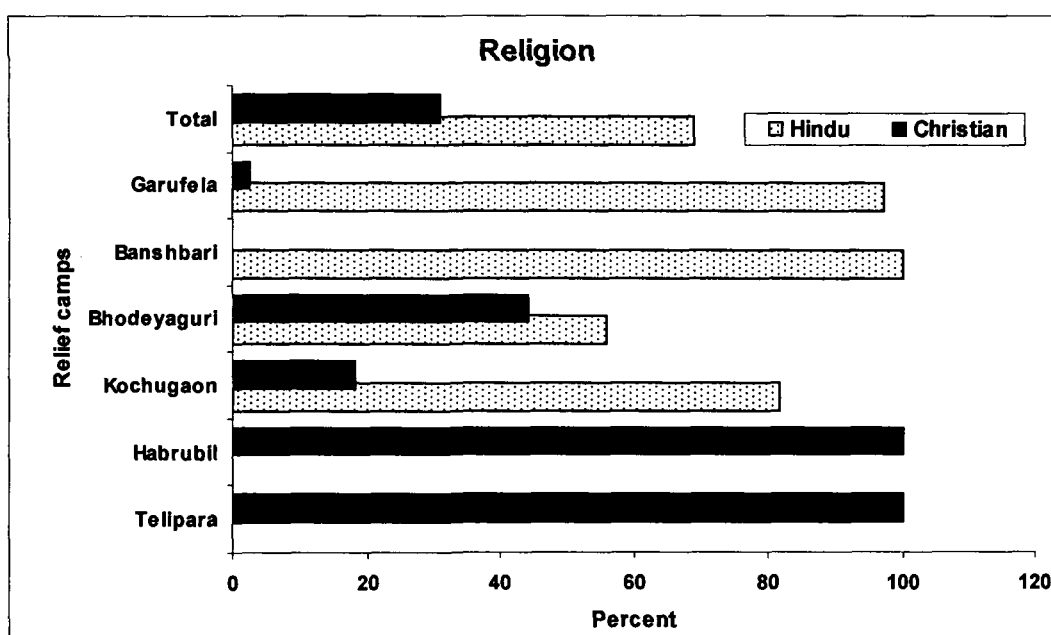


Fig.-4.2

#### 4.4 Demographic Characteristics

A long period of stay of Santhals in relief camps, as aftermath of the conflict has brought a wide range of changes in their demographic characteristics. This part of the chapter presents a profile of the demographic characteristics of the sample households in relief camps and also describes facilities and services that are available to relief camps. The analysis also includes comparison of the demographic situation in

the relief camps results with that from NFHS-2 of Assam<sup>1</sup> and such data available from the census of India for Kokrajhar districts<sup>2</sup>.

#### 4.4.1 Background Characteristic of the Households

A change in characteristics of household population is an important impact of conflict. The breakdown of family and social networks can leave many households headed by women. Conflict has a long term impact on pattern of distribution of household population.

Table: 4.2  
Percentage Distribution of Head of the Households by Age and Sex

<30	20	3	23	11.8	10.0	11.5
30-44	81	6	87	47.6	20.0	43.5
45-59	62	16	78	36.5	53.3	39.0
>60	7	5	12	4.1	16.7	6.0
Median Age	33	43	38	32.8	42.9	37.9
Total	170	30	200	85.0	15.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

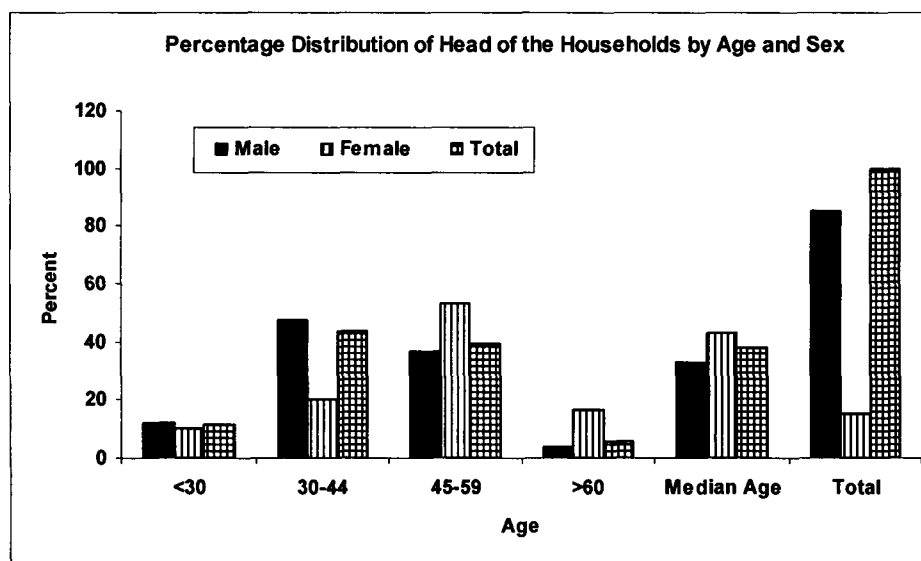


Fig 4.3

Table 4.2 shows the percentage distribution of the head of the households by age and sex. Out of a total of 200 households surveyed, female headed households

1 National Family Health survey India, 1998-1999, Assam

2 Census of India, 2001 Age Tables, C- Series, Kokrajhar District, Assam.

accounted for 15 percent (Fig.-4.3) which is much higher than the state average of 8 percent (NFHS-2). The average age of the head of the household in female headed households is generally higher than that of the heads in male headed households who are generally younger. Around 48 percent male heads are in the age group of 30-44 years whereas over 53 percent female heads are in the age 45-59 years. The median age of male household head is 33 years whereas it is 43 years among female-headed households. The overall median age is 38 years. The fact that a very large proportion of the household heads is women is of considerable significance in the aftermath of the conflict. It is quite possible that the conflict has left many households to be headed by women compared to the previous times.

Table: 4.3  
Household Type and Number of Usual Members

Household Type Before and After Coming to Camp		
Characteristics	Number	Percent
<b>Before</b>		
Nuclear Household	198	99.0
Extended Household	2	1.0
<b>After</b>		
Single Household	2	1.0
Nuclear Household	144	72.0
Extended Household	54	27.0
<b>Number of Usual Members(After)</b>		
0	2	1.0
1	19	9.5
2	20	10.0
3	32	16.0
4	34	17.0
5	42	21.0
6	34	17.0
7	8	4.0
8	5	2.5
9 +	4	2.0
Mean Household Size	4.1	-
Total Percent	-	100.0
Number of Households	200	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

This part of the chapter includes a socio-demographic profile of household characteristics in the context of both before and after coming to the camps.

The table 4.3 shows that around 99 percent household were in nuclear household and only one percent in extended household before they came to live in the camp. The pattern has undergone substantive changes after they arrived in the camp following the conflict. There has been a substantive fall in the proportion of the nuclear households and a corresponding rise in the proportion of joint families. Around 72 percent households lived in nuclear households while 27 percent lived in extended households. Although small as a proportion to the total, at least 1 percent of the women interviewed lived as single household- something that can be attributed to the conflicting situation. A move towards joint family living is discernible as a direct outcome of the conflict perhaps for greater security and social strength at a time of crisis. Staying together proved as better survival mechanism, psychological protection as well as the process of accommodating themselves in smaller areas of relief camps.

Table: 4.4  
Percentage Distribution of Household Population by Age and Sex

Age Group	Relief Camps (2006)			Kokrajhar (2001 Census)		
	Overall	Male	Female	Overall	Male	Female
0-14 (Youth)	46.8	37.4	59.7	39.9	40.0	39.8
15-59 (Working)	50.8	60.1	38.0	54.9	54.9	55.0
60+ (Elderly)	2.3	2.3	2.3	5.1	5.0	5.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

Table 4.4 shows percentage distribution of household population living in the relief camps by age group and has been compared with census information on age distribution for Kokrajhar district. It is clear from the table that aging population (60 and above) in the relief camps for both female and male is much lower (2 percent) than that of Kokrajhar (5 percent). A much higher proportion (60 percent) of the males in the relief camps is in working age group (15-59) compared to women (38 percent). For the overall population, the Census data however reveals a balanced

population distribution in all age groups for both the sexes in Kokrajhar. The age distribution for the sexes in the relief camps is certainly far imbalanced than expected.

#### 4.4.2 Sample Respondents

Table 4.5 shows percentage distribution of the respondents classified by age. Bulk of the respondents is in the age group 25-29 and 30-34. 43 percent respondents belonged to this age group. Only 14 percent respondents were in the age group of 15-24 years. There are very few (6 per cent) respondents in the age group of 35-39. Around 31 percent respondents were aged 40-54 while 6 percent were above 55 years of age (Fig.-4.4).

Table: 4.5  
Percentage Distribution of Women Respondents by Selected Age group (15 and above)

Age	Respondents	Percent
15-19	6	3.0
20-24	22	11.0
25-29	44	22.0
30-34	42	21.0
35-39	12	6.0
40-44	31	15.5
45-49	18	9.0
50-54	13	6.5
55+	12	6.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.



Fig 4.4

#### 4.5 Conflicts and Displacement

Conflict and displacement disrupt the social structures of communities. The breakdown of community and family support in turn exacerbates the psychological impact of the conflict. In the case of extremely violent episodes of conflict, social systems of any community get implicated. All earlier references of a person in a community and the community in the region with a sense of being a wider part of the region get lost during conflict. It is significant that the trauma of the conflict has been quite high for a majority of the Santhals who were displaced not once but many times.

Table: 4.6  
Frequency of Displacement (Respondents with Family)

No of Times	Respondents	Percent
1	1	0.5
2	40	20.0
3	8	4.0
4	137	68.5
6	14	7.0
Total	200	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

Table 4.6 shows number of time the respondents and their family members have been displaced from one relief camp to another. Over 68 percent respondents with their family members have moved at least 4 times from one place to another during the period since the conflict erupted. Around 7 percent respondents were displaced for more than 6 times whereas above 24 percent respondents got displaced along with their family from 1 to 3 times during and after conflict.

Table 4.7  
Duration of Stay at Camps (in Year)

Years	Respondents	Percent
5	2	1
8	156	78
9	4	2
10	38	19
Total	200	100

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

Table 4.7 shows duration of stay at camp by respondent and their household members. Around 99 percent of them have lived in the relief camps for more than 8 years. A significant 19 percent of the respondents reported that they have already spent a decade in the relief camps. Such long duration of stay away from their usual place of residence has shattered their community network on the one hand and has had serious demographic consequences apart from economic and social disruptions. The consequences for the women can easily be understood from the fact of their duration of stay in the relief camps.

Table 4.8  
Stay in the Present Camp

Continues Stay	Respondents	Percent
Yes	84	42
No	116	58
Total	200	100

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

Around 42 percent of the respondents are staying for quite long period in same relief camp and around 58 percent people have said they have been moving from one relief camp to another during this period.

Table 4.9  
Causes of Displacement

Reasons	Respondents	Percent
Conflict	33	16.5
Threat in Own Village	31	15.5
Waiting for Govt Aid	17	8.5
All the above Reasons	119	59.5
Total	200	100

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

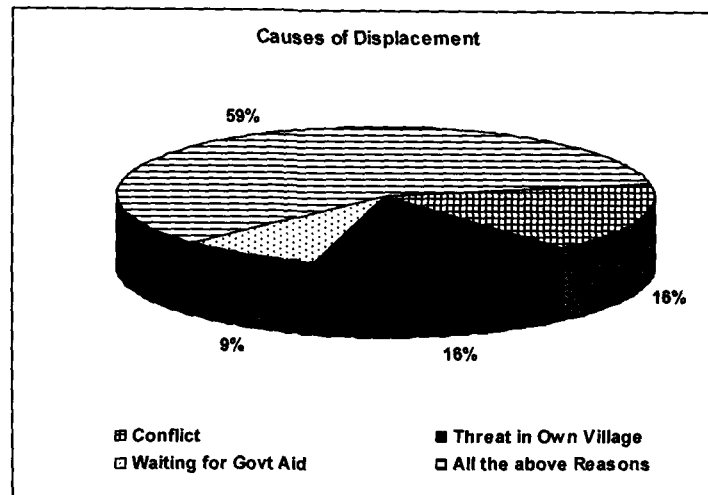


Fig 4.5

The reasons for displacements (table 4.9) as described by the respondents include conflict, threat in their own village and waiting for govt aid to shift back to their respective places. All respondents agreed to the fact that they were victim of conflict as they have faced theft of their daily use household things, cattle, money and stores of their eatables. Along with that they have also faced continuous threat, other pressures and communal frenzy. Around 17 percent respondents agreed that they have experienced murder of their close kin and family members during the conflict (Fig.- 4.5).

One of the important phenomena of conflict and displacement is large number of people get missing. The missing population globally in all conflict induced states or countries have come up as human rights issue.

Table 4.10  
Number of Missing Persons in the Households by Year and Sex (1996-2001)

Year	Number			Percent		
	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female
1996	23	16	7	59.0	57.1	63.6
1997	2	2	0	5.1	7.1	0.0
1998	11	8	3	28.2	28.6	27.3
1999	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2000	2	2	0	5.1	7.1	0.0
2001	1	0	1	2.6	0.0	9.1
Total	39	28	11	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table 4.10 shows the number of missing persons from the households of the respondents since the conflict broke out. The table also reveals that the highest number of missing cases took place during the first conflict. It is clear that the males are more affected with respect to missing persons. However, missing males has its debilitating impact on women who have to shoulder greater responsibility in the absence of men in the households (Fig.-4.6). The proportion of male missing household members (16) during first conflict is more than double of female household members (7).

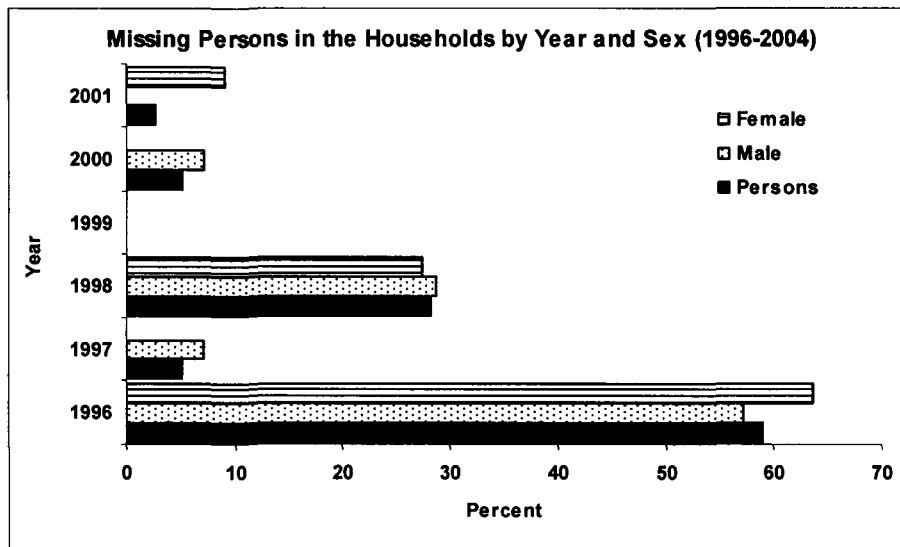


Fig.-4.6

Table 4.11  
Missing Population by Age and Sex

Age	Number			Percent		
	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female
0-14	8	3	5	20.5	10.7	45.5
15-59	14	13	1	35.9	46.4	9.1
60 +	17	12	5	43.6	42.9	45.5
Total	39	28	11	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

It is interesting that the highest proportion of missing males was in the age group of 15 years and above whereas the highest proportion of missing females was in the age range of 0-14<sup>3</sup> and at age 60+.

Table 4.12  
Causes behind Missing Population

Causes	Missing Person	Percent
Old and left	13	33.3
While Rushing Here and There Lost	7	17.9
Didn't Return from Work Place	4	10.3
Killed: Dead Body not Found	11	28.2
Don't Know	1	2.6
While Crossing the River (Current)	2	5.1
Sick and Left	1	2.6
Total	39	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

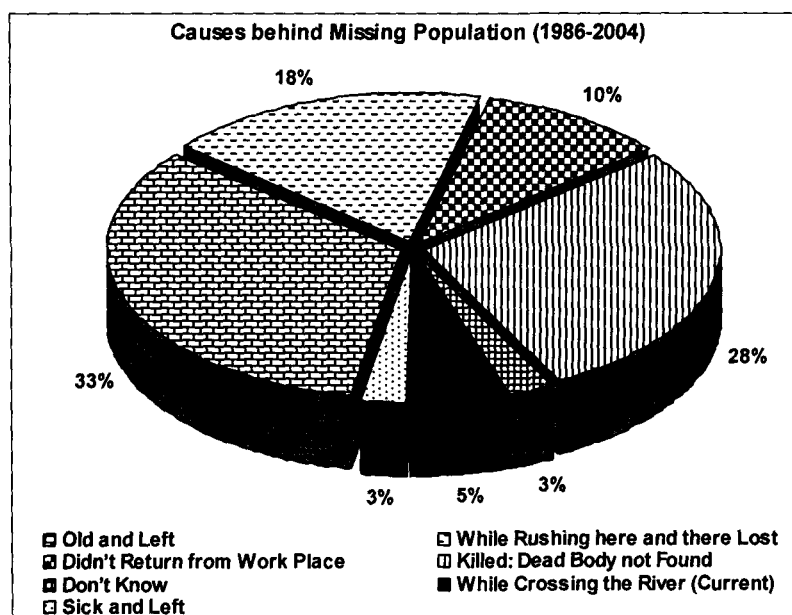


Fig.-4.7

Table 4.12 and Fig.-4.7 depict broad causes as reported by the respondents as far as the missing persons of their family members. Majority of the causes were reported to be the age factor as the old and the sick were left behind. Many got

<sup>3</sup> “The senior police official revealed that some of the target areas for trafficking include refugee camps of internally displaced persons due to the ethnic conflict between Bodos and the Adivasis”. ‘Trafficking of women from Assam on the rise’ by Sushanta Talukdar, THE HINDU, OCT 26, 2006.

missing while running to protect themselves and did not come back.<sup>4</sup> It was reported that the many missing were actually dead or killed for a variety of reasons.

#### **4.6 Educational Level**

The impact of the conflict on education of the people is significant. Conflicts are major obstacles in the pursuance of education. As an outcome of the conflict; fear, poor source of income and displacement forces suffering mass to drop out of education.

Education has been studied in two parts. The first part includes level of education of the respondents themselves and their family members and the second part examines the reasons for dropout if any with a view to understanding the impact of the conflict on education.

##### **4.6.1 Educational Level of the Respondents**

Most of the respondents were illiterate. Only around a fifth of the respondents could read and write. Tables 4.13 and 4.14 reveal that only 37 respondents out of the total are literate. None of the literate is now continuing with their studies. Only a small proportion (18.92 percent) of the literate respondents had dropped out from education before reaching the relief camp; the remaining who could have pursued education were forced to abandon their desire for further studies due to their shift to the relief camp. The already poor literacy status of those Santhal women affected by the conflict got compounded because of the conflict and continuous displacement. Around 77 percent respondent women stated conflict and displacement as the chief cause behind discontinuation of their education.

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<sup>4</sup> It was informed by the respondents that during the time of conflict many of their old and sick household members did not like to leave the houses thinking that they would be untouched because of their age. They also did not want to be a burden on the other members of the family who were forced to leave due to continuing conflicts with the Bodos. The inclement weather conditions were also prohibitive for the old and the rivers were in spate making it difficult for them to cross while attempting to hide. Protecting them from bullets from back and to run for safety was most important.

Table: 4.13  
Education Level of the Respondents

Literacy	Respondents	Percent
Literate	37	18.5
Illiterate	163	81.5
Total Respondents	200	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table: 4.14  
Level of Literacy and Reasons of Drop out among the Literates (in percentage)

Reason behind Dropping Education	Before	After
Poor economic background	57.14	3.33
Marriage	28.57	20
Conflict	0.0	76.67
Other	14.29	0.00
Age of Respondent at the time of Leaving Education		
10-14	57.14	43.33
15-19	28.57	50.00
20+	14.29	6.67
Level of Education at the time of Leaving Education		
Primary	28.57	23.33
Middle	57.14	66.67
H.S.+	14.29	10.00
Overall (Left their Education)	18.92	81.08

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Only a few respondents reported poor economic background and their marriage as causes for the drop out after their shift to the relief camp, while such factors were more frequently reported as causes of their dropping out before the conflict broke out.

#### 4.6.2 Educational Level of the Households

Table 4.15 shows the distribution of literate with their educational level of the households to which the female respondents belonged to. Interestingly incidence of illiteracy is much lower among the females than among the males.

The percentage of literate female population is higher at 53.3 percent in primary level as compared to only 34 percent of male population. The table also shows a remarkable decrease in educational level of both the sexes in middle and

higher secondary level. The presence of female population in higher secondary level is almost negligible.

Table: 4.15  
Percentage Distribution of Household Population Age 6 and Above by Literacy and Level of Education, According to Sex

Education	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Illiterate	194	113	307	40.8	32.8	37.4
Primary	162	184	346	34.0	53.3	42.1
Middle	67	42	109	14.1	12.2	13.3
Higher Secondary +	53	6	59	11.1	1.7	7.2
Total	476	345	821	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table: 4.16  
Number of Household Population Dropouts by Sex and Education

Education	Before			After			Change Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Primary	3	2	5	60	72	132	127
Secondary	3	5	8	48	44	92	84
Higher Secondary	0	1	1	41	5	46	45
Total	6	8	14	149	121	270	256

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table 4.16 shows the number of household population by sex and education both before and after coming to relief camps who dropped out from education. The table depicts that before coming to the camp only 14 household members (6 males and 8 females) dropped out of education at different levels whereas around 270 household members dropped out after coming to camps.

Maximum dropouts for both the males and females occurred to those who were studying at primary or secondary level. The change in drop outs for total population shows the maximum dropout at the time of primary education. Over 1/3 of them have dropped at the time of secondary education and nearly 1/2 of them dropped out at higher secondary level. The female segment suffered the most when it came to pursue their education.

Table 4.17 and Fig. 4.8 reveals that the major reason behind dropout is the conflict and the first conflict in the year 1996 led to very large dropouts among the female segment.

Table: 4.17  
Reasons for Dropout

Year	Number			Percent		
	Conflict	Monetary Problem	Others	Conflict	Monetary Problem	Others
Before 1996	Nil	5	9	Nil	41.7	60.0
1996	241	Nil	Nil	93.4	Nil	Nil
1997	4	1	Nil	1.6	8.3	Nil
1998	12	Nil	Nil	4.7	Nil	Nil
After 1998	1	6	6	0.4	50.0	40.0
Total	258	12	15	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

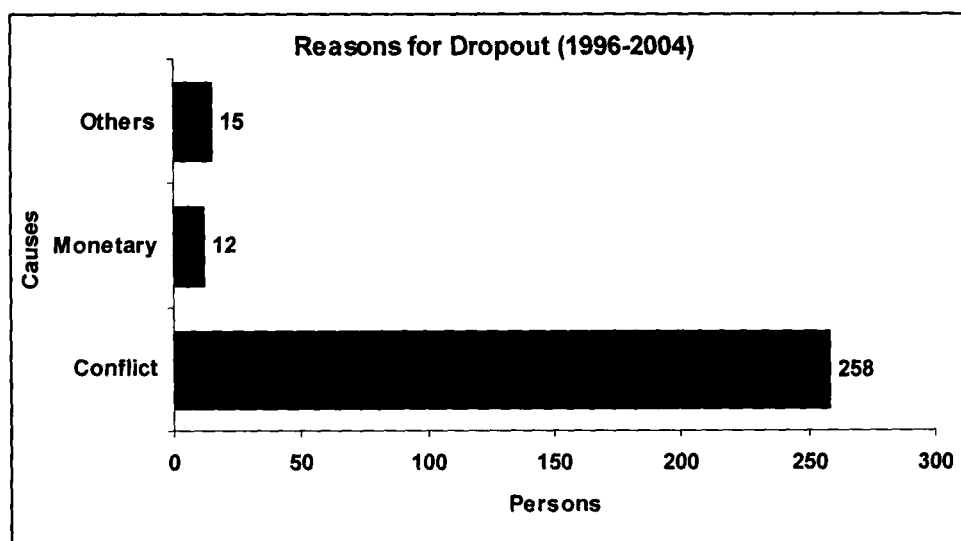


Fig 4.8

#### 4.7 Occupational Structure

The impact of the conflict on economic conditions of the conflict affected people is widespread ranging from losing their occupation, property to not earning adequate for livelihood. Women in conflict situations find it extremely difficult to cope with the economic problems of their family. They also find difficulties in providing care and support for the livelihood of their family.

Table: 4.18  
Occupational Status (Before and After Coming to the Camp)

Occupation Type	Before			After		
	0-4 Months	4-6 Months	6+ Months	0-4 Months	4-6 Months	6+ Months
Agriculture (Own land)	Nil	19	178	Nil	3	1
Agricultural Labourer	Nil	Nil	Nil	72**+108***	Nil	Nil
Non-Agri (Commercial)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	179**	Nil
Fire Wood Collection	Domestic Consumption			Nil	180*	Nil
Catching Fish	Domestic Consumption			12	168*	Nil
Market/Own Shop	Nil	Nil	Nil	116***+49**	8***	10***

\* Wages earned weekly Rs. Less than 20, \*\* Rs. 20-50, and \*\*\* Rs. 50 and above

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table 4.18 shows the changes in occupational pattern of the female respondents and their family before and after coming to relief camps. The table reveals a drastic shift in occupation pattern since the conflict rendering the female segment far more vulnerable and marginalised. Before coming to the relief camp all the respondents were working in the land owned by the household. The breaking out of the conflict and their shift to the relief camp deprived them of this livelihood forcing them to seek wage labour as a major option to earn a living. However, getting wage work in the agricultural sector being not very easy and sustainable, the Santhal women had to look for other avenues of work including some non-agricultural work like collection and sale of firewood, catching and sell of fish in the local market or petty trade- all of which were combined to generate some income. Agricultural wage earning provides work opportunities only for a few months- not exceeding three to four months. The wage rates available to these desperate women very low often below Rupees 20 per day. Only 4 persons are left with their own land in the villages they left as all of them had lost their lands to other communities. After coming to the camps they have started working as wage labourer in the fields of other community people. It is significant that wage earning by working in other's land as an occupation was conspicuous by its absence among the women before coming to the camps. However,

left with no better option, bereft of their traditional livelihood a majority of the Santhal women had to offer their labour for a wage- a situation that made them highly vulnerable to complexities of agricultural wage market and wage market in general.

Before the Santhal women used to catch fish and used to collect woods for their household consumption, but after coming to the camps they started collecting it to sell in weekly markets and earn some income to support themselves and their family members. Some of them have opened small shops within the camps, as well as a few go to market to sell collected products from the jungle.

Table: 4.19  
Land Ownership in Bigha (After Coming to Camp)

Land Holding Size	Number of Households	Percent
1-5	40	20.0
6-10	63	31.5
11-20	78	39.0
21-50	17	8.5
51 and above	2	1.0
Total	200	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table 4.19 shows the land ownership pattern of the respondents' households before they shifted to the camp. It is evident that none of the households was landless. All the households owned land ranging from one bigha to over 50 bighas. A very large proportion (over 70 percent) of the households owned land ranging between 6 and 20 bighas. Around a fifth of all households had less than 5 bighas of land owned while a little less than 10 percent were big land owners.

Table: 4.20  
Households Land Ownership in Bigha (After Coming to Camp)

Land Distribution/ Ownership	Number	Percent
Nil	52	26.0
Gets <i>Adhi</i> (Half)	66	33.0
Few <i>Bighas</i> in Jungle	58	29.0
Few <i>Bighas</i> in village	5	2.5
They go and Cultivate in Village	4	2.0
<i>Bandhak</i> / Mortgage	15	7.5
Total	200	100

Source: Field Survey on January, 2006.

The situation however underwent a sea change due to the conflicts and nearly all of their land was lost to them rendering them to the status of landless wage earners. Table 4.20 shows that 26 percent respondent were left with no land at all and have lost their lands during the conflict. About 33 percent of them go and work on their own land as wage labourer and gets *adhi*<sup>5</sup>. Around 3 percent of the respondents have their land in villages and 29 percent in jungles<sup>6</sup> but are scared to go to their lands as due to threats from the Bodos. Around 8 percent of them have mortgaged their lands to better off Santhals staying in rehabilitated villages.

#### **4.8 Marital Status**

Women, children, and the elderly are most vulnerable groups when it comes to conflicts. Men are often the first to leave the house when an ethnic conflict breaks out. Casualty on men folks of younger age during conflict often changes the marital status of people staying in conflict regions. The impact over the marital status can be seen with the increase in the number of single, widowed or deserted women. The vulnerability of increase in number of female widowers or never married population may increase as they might be forced to work as commercial sex workers in exchange for food, shelter or protection.

Table 4.21 shows, 163 respondents of the total respondents are married and are increasing in number with increase in age groups, except at age 35-39.

Around 29 of the respondents are widow out of which 4 are at age 20-39 and others are at age 40 and above. Around 4 respondents are never married and 4 are deserted.

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<sup>5</sup> “Cultivators sometimes sub-let their fields to landless labourers in return for half of the produce without supplying either seed or cattle. In such tenures generally known as *adhi*, the owner of the land usually paid the revenue and something in kind to the sub-tenant on account of transplantation and other expense”. Barpujari, H. K. (Ed.) (1993): The Comprehensive History of Assam, Vols. IV and V, Publication Board Assam, Guwahati.

<sup>6</sup> They have encroached to forest land after 1996 conflict.

Table-4.21  
Respondents Marital Status by Age (15 and above)

Age Group	Marital Status				Respondents (Total)
	Never Married	Married Once*	Widow	Deserted	
15-19	0	6	0	0	6
20-24	1	19	1	1	22
25-29	1	41	1	1**	44
30-34	2	39 (1)	1	0	42 (1)
35-39	0	11	1	0	12
40-44	0	25 (2)	4	2	31 (2)
45-49	0	14 (2)	4	0	18(2)
50-54	0	3	10	0	13
55+	0	5 (1)	7	0	12(1)
Total	4	163 (6)	29	4	200(12)

\*The figure in the bracket above for remarried women\*\*Twice Deserted  
Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table: 4.22  
Percentage Distribution of the Household Population Age 10 and above by Marital Status According to Age and Sex

Age Group	Never Married	Currently Married	Widowed	Deserted	Total Population
Male					
10-14	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	58
15-19	95.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	40
20-24	81.4	18.6	0.0	0.0	43
25-29	36.8	52.6	2.6	7.9	38
30-49	6.3	91.4	1.6	0.8	128
50+	0.0	93.5	6.5	0.0	46
Total	43.3	53.8	1.7	1.1	353
Female					
10-14	96.6	3.4	0.0	0.0	59
15-19	80.4	19.6	0.0	0.0	56
20-24	46.0	50.0	2.0	2.0	50
25-29	21.7	75.0	1.7	1.7	60
30-49	4.2	84.9	9.2	1.7	119
50+	0.0	32.7	67.3	0.0	52
Total	36.1	50.8	12.1	1.0	396
Total					
10-14	98.3	1.7	0.0	0.0	117
15-19	86.5	13.5	0.0	0.0	96
20-24	62.4	35.5	1.1	1.1	93
25-29	27.6	66.3	2.0	4.1	98
30-49	5.3	88.3	5.3	1.2	247
50+	0.0	61.2	38.8	0.0	98
Total	39.5	52.2	7.2	1.1	749

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

The table 4.22 includes information on the marital status of household members by age and sex. Among females aged 10 and above, around 51 percent

women are married and 36 percent are never married. The proportion of never married is higher in males (43 percent) than females (36 percent). The proportion of deserted population is less in both male (1) and female (1) population. The proportion of widowhood is lesser in males (2 percent) as compared to females (12 percent), widowhood increased in both the sexes with the increase in age. Increase of widowhood among females is higher (67 percent) at age 50 and above.

#### 4.9 Fertility Pattern

Fertility rates during conflict situation may increase to very high level, with women at high obstetrical risk having pregnancy at close intervals. There may be pressure on women to replenish the population. In some cases this may coincide with women's own desire to replace children who have died or disappeared.

The fertility rate may also decrease in some cases as the choice of control by society in the course of socio-economic instability.

Table: 4.23  
Age Specific Fertility Rate (Three Years Period Preceding Survey)

Age Group	No. of Female	No of Children	ASFR
15-19	6	2	333.3
20-24	22	18	818.2
25-29	44	37	840.9
30-34	42	26	619.0
35-39	12	2	166.7
40-44	31	5	161.3
45-49	18	1	55.6
Total	175	91	520.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

The fertility measures presented in this chapter are based on the complete birth history collected from women at age 15-49. The age specific fertility rate of any specific age group is calculated by dividing the numbers of births to women in the age group during the period 1 to 36 months preceding the survey by the number of years lived by women in the age group during the same year time period.

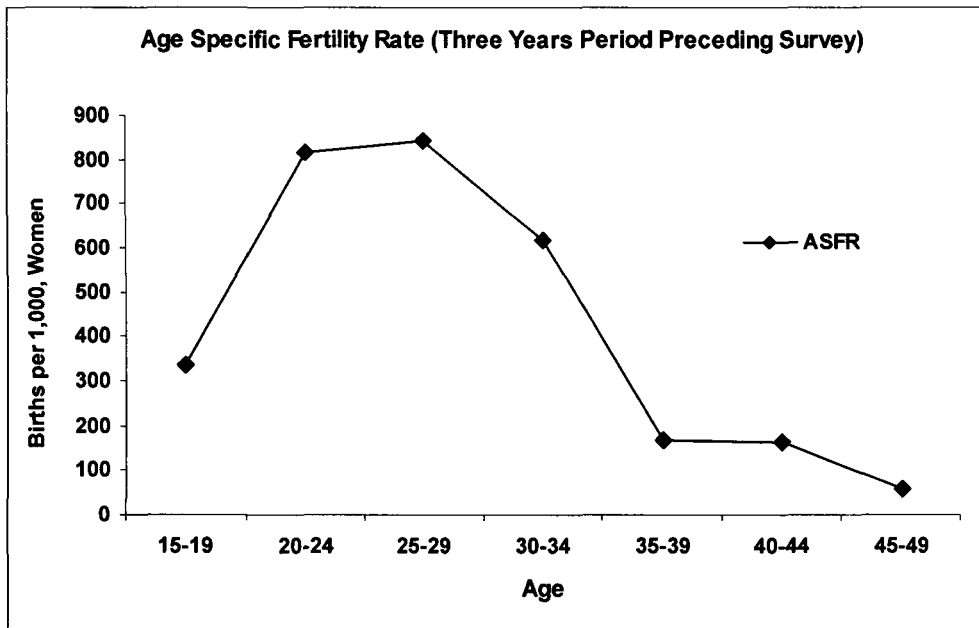


Fig.-4.9

Table 4.23 presents age specific fertility level three years period preceding the survey. It has been recorded that the prime child bearing age i.e. at age 20-29 has over 800 percentage of Fertility rate (Fig 4.9), which is much higher than the state average (133).

#### 4.10 Mortality Pattern

Conflict worked as a major cause of ill health and mortality for most of its history. Armed conflict is a major cause of injury and death worldwide. Conflict related death and injury are major contributors to the global burden of disease. Conflicts causes direct deaths in battle fields but also health consequences from the displacement of populations, the breakdown of health and social services, and the heightened risk of disease transmission. Impact of conflict in mortality can be seen as direct effect of conflict increasing the in mortality pattern in the conflict effected region.

The table 4.24 and 4.25 show the number of households that experienced death during last nine years preceding the survey. About 70 percent respondents have experienced death of household members since the conflict.

Table: 4.24  
Respondents Experienced Death in Their Household (1996-2004)

	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	139	69.5
No	61	30.5
Total	200	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

Table: 4.25  
Respondents Experienced Number of Deaths of Household Members (1996-2004)

No. of Deaths	Respondents	Percent
Nil	61	30.5
1	79	39.5
2	32	16.0
3	19	9.5
4 and Above	9	4.5
Total	N=200	100

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

During the period (1996-2004) around 40 percent of the respondents experienced at least one death and 5 percent respondents experienced death of 4 and above household members.

Table: 4.26  
Deaths in Respondents Household (1996-2004)

Year	Respondents	Percent
1996	44	18.3
1997	30	12.4
1998	37	15.4
1999	19	7.9
2000	18	7.5
2001	13	5.4
2002	22	9.1
2003	18	7.5
2004	40	16.6
Total	241	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

Table 4.26 shows chronological record of deaths, occurred in respondents' household since 1996. The period of 1996-1998 conflicts has recorded highest death

tolls (46 percent). The table shows the numbers of death gradually decreased by year, though 2004 shows a sudden increase in number (17 percent).

Table 4.27 shows number of deaths that occurred in the household by age and sex during 1996-2004. Higher death rates of household members are recorded in younger age, around 29 percent of deaths recorded are at age <5. Number of deaths among female sex is higher at age <5 and at age 5-14; 36 and 22 percent respectively. Overall death of male household population is more (57 percent) than female household population (43 percent).

Table: 4.27  
Deaths Respondent Households by Age and Sex (1996-2004)

Age	Numbers			Percent			Overall Percent	
	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Male	Female
< 5	70	33	37	29.0	24.1	35.6	47.1	52.9
5-14	39	16	23	16.2	11.7	22.1	41.0	59.0
15-49	78	43	35	32.4	31.4	33.7	55.1	44.9
50-59	35	31	4	14.5	22.6	3.8	88.6	11.4
60 +	19	14	5	7.9	10.2	4.8	73.7	26.3
Total Deaths	241	137	104	100	100	100	56.8	43.2

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

It is apparent that the death rates have increased after the conflicts broke out and a majority of deaths have taken place due to diseases afflicting the displaced Santhals. Table 4.28 shows around 92 percent of deaths were due to diseases alone. Table 4.29 further reveals that the highest number of deaths occurred due to Malaria (27percent), Tuberculosis (24 percent), diarrhoea (11 percent) and unknown diseases (11 percent). Such diseases were unknown or extremely rare to the Santhals before they shifted to the Camps and most of these are curable.

Table: 4.28  
Deaths in the Household Classified by Causes

Types	No of Persons	Percent
Natural Death	1	0.4
Disease	221	91.7
Encounter	18	7.5
Accident	1	0.4
Total	241	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

An age-sex analysis of the deaths (table 4.30) clearly reveals that the women and children suffered most from heightened deaths among them mostly due to greater disease affliction. As expected under such conditions, the infant mortality rate was the highest with the female infants dying at a much faster rate than the male infants. Nearly half of the girls who died in the age group of 0-5, died before attaining the age of one. Around 42 percent infant death occurred during 1996-2004.

Table: 4.29  
Deaths in Respondent Households Classified by Diseases (1996-2004)

Disease	No. of Death	Percent
Tuberculosis	53	24.0
Malaria	60	27.1
Jaundice	18	8.1
Diarrhoea	25	11.3
Paralysis	14	6.3
Gastric	2	0.9
Unknown	24	10.9
Anaemia	5	2.3
Epilepsy	1	0.5
Heart Problem	3	1.4
Tumour	1	0.5
Tape Worm	1	0.5
Weak Baby	7	3.2
Leprosy	1	0.5
During/After Delivery	6	2.7
Total	221	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table: 4.30  
Age Specific Death Rate by Sex

Age Group	Female	Male
<5	627.1	569
5-14	156.5	133
15-49	312.5	171
50-59	210.5	885.7
60 +	625	1166.7

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

The probability of children dying in early childhood is high during conflict situations. The indicators of child mortality decline substantially with increases in the standard of living.

Table: 4.31  
 Infant and Child Deaths in Respondent Households Classified by Age and Sex

Age (in Year)	Number			Percent		
	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
<1	35	15	20	42.2	36.6	47.6
1	8	5	3	9.6	12.2	7.1
2	15	7	8	18.1	17.1	19.0
3	11	5	6	13.3	12.2	14.3
4	1	1	0	1.2	2.4	0.0
5	13	8	5	15.7	19.5	11.9
Total	83	41	42	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table: 4.32  
 Dead Before and After Coming to Camp

Response	Before		After	
	Respondent	Percent	Respondent	Percent
Yes	1	0.5	81	49.4
No	199	99.5	83	50.6
Total	200	100	164	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Mortality among the children has increased substantially after moving to the camp. There have been 64 deaths of children born to the respondents while such cases were rare before their coming to the camp. Around 49 percent of the respondents' reported at least one child having died after coming to the relief camps.

#### 4.11 Morbidity Pattern

The potential health risk increases with increase of different diseases in conflict effected regions. Conflict often results in the outbreak of communicable diseases. Preventable diseases such as diarrhoea, may threaten life in conflict situations and chronic illness that can be normally treated, may lead to severe sufferings during the conflict. The impact on health can be measured by comparing disease pattern before and after coming to the camps and by studying increase in incidence of new diseases after coming to camp.

Table 4.33 clearly reveals that after shifting to the relief camps the prevalence of different diseases have increased. After coming to the relief camps most of them

have suffered from tuberculosis, jaundice, malaria, and faced different stomach problems like indigestion, diarrhoea and gastric. Such cases were rare before the women shifted to the camp. Nearly all the respondents complained of malarial attacks after they shifted to the camps. Malarial cases were extremely rare before their displacement. Another disease of serious consequence has been the prevalence of tuberculosis which was non-existent among the sample respondents before. Likewise there has been a spurt in the incidence of water borne diseases like jaundice, gastric and diarrhoea during their stay in the camps. Thus the morbidity pattern among the women has not only become serious, they have also been exposed to newer diseases.

Table: 4.33  
Percentage Distribution of Diseases Suffered (Before and After Conflict)

Type of Diseases	Number		Percent	
	Before	After	Before	After
Cough	200	200	100	100
Cold	200	200	100	100
Indigestion	26	47	13.0	23.5
Diarrhoea	12	47	6.0	23.5
Gastric	2	60	1.0	30.0
Jaundice	4	75	2.0	37.5
Tuberculosis	0	90	0.0	45.0
Malaria	14	197	7.0	98.5

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table: 4.34  
Persistence of Diseases After coming to Relief Camps

Disease	Number	Percent
Blood Pressure	80	40.0
Blood Sugar	35	17.5
Asthma	16	8.0
Arthritis	73	36.5

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Cases of critical illnesses like blood pressure, blood sugar and asthma etc. now afflict a very large number of female respondents (table 4.34). As is well known such diseases are common to people living in stress.

Loss of support base and falling income level has forced most women to get them treated in modern health institutions and have turned to traditional healing systems. Table 4.35 reveals that most women after their displacement have turned to traditional medicines or to quacks at times of illness. It is no wonder therefore that mortality on account of morbidity has increased substantially for the respondents' family members ever since they have shifted to camps.

Table: 4.35  
Treatment Received by Respondents Before and After Coming to Camp

Type of Treatments	Medical Assistance Taken	
	Before	After
Clinic	26	5
Traditional (herbal)	3	126
Don't visit any places	0	1
Traditional (quacks)	171	68

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table 4.36 shows the consumption of non-cereal food by respondents after coming to camps. Most respondents have informed that they can hardly afford any food product on daily basis. The availability of all products is on occasional basis. Very few of them occasionally get a chance to have milk food products and fruits (14 and 22 percent). It was mentioned by all the respondents that there was no food shortage before coming to camps.

Table: 4.36  
Percentage Distribution of Respondents by  
Frequency of Consumption of Non-cereal Foods after Coming to Camp

Type of Food	Daily	Weekly	Occasionally	Never
Milk or Curd	0	0	13.5	86.5
Pulses or Beans	0	1.5	98.5	0
Green, Leafy Vegetables	0	9	91	0
Fruits	0	2	21.5	76.5
Eggs	0	1.5	98.5	0
Chicken	0	6.5	93.5	0
Meat	0	10.5	89.5	0
Fish	0	1.5	98.5	0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

#### 4.12 Reproductive Health

Armed conflicts and displacement have a profound negative impact on the reproductive health of women. Poverty, loss of livelihood, disruption of services, breakdown of social –support systems, and acts of violence combine to destroy health. Even in stable settings, reproductive morbidity and mortality are a major problem.

Indicators like abortion, still births are immensely high in the conflict prone regions of world. The impact of conflict can be seen as poor nutrition, poverty, lack of social support. The Psychological trauma which women develop during the conflict period can manifest primarily in physical and gynaecological symptoms related to birth and death of children.

Table: 4.37  
Still Births after Coming to Camp

No of Women	Year	No of Times
1	1996	1
1	1997	1
1	1999	1
2	2000	1
2	2001	1
1	2002	1
1	2003	1
1	2003-4	2
1	2004	1

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

Table 4.37 shows that around 11 women had still births since the conflict. No information on spontaneous and induced abortion is found in the camps.

The respondents had almost no antenatal checkups during their pregnancy irrespective of their stay in the relief camp or in the villages of their previous stay (table 4.38). However, the number of antenatal check up among the respondents has increased after coming to camps as a few of the relief camps are located nearby army camps. The table also shows the respondents before coming to the camp had hardly

received any antenatal checkups during their pregnancy but they had proper food intake as compared to the camps.

Table: 4.38  
Comparison: Antenatal Problems Care Before and After Coming to Camps During Pregnancy

Went for Antenatal Check-up	Number		Percent	
	Before	After	Before	After
Once	4	5	1.8	1.9
Twice	0	7	0.0	2.6
Thrice	5	52	2.3	19.5
Not at all	210	203	95.9	76.0
<b>Food</b>				
Everything	217	5	99.1	1.9
Not Proper Food	2	262	0.9	98.1
Total	219	267	100	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

#### 4.12.1 Reproductive Health Problems

Women in conflict situations bear by far the greatest burden of reproductive health problems and that of poor social, economic factors during conflict increase their vulnerability to reproductive ill-health.

Table: 4.39  
Reproductive Health Problems during Pregnancy Before and After Coming to Camps

Health Problems	Number		Percent	
	Before	After	Before	After
Anaemia	1	27	0.5	10.1
Vaginal Bleeding	0	6	0	2.2
White Discharge	0	48	0	18.0
Blurred Vision	3	54	1.4	20.2
Anaemia and Vaginal Bleeding	3	24	1.4	9.0
Anaemia and White Discharge	0	37	0	13.9
Anaemia and Blurred Vision	0	42	0	15.7
Vaginal and White Discharge	0	5	0	1.9
White Discharge and Blurred Vision	0	24	0	9.0
None (no complication)	212	0	96.8	0.0
Total*	219	267	100	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

\*Total refers to total pregnancy of respondents.

Table 4.39 clearly brings out the fact that the health problems faced by respondents during pregnancy has compounded after coming to camps. Most of the respondents have reported that they faced no problems during pregnancy before coming to the camps. But after coming to the camps around 20 percent expectant

mothers have faced blurred vision, 18 percent of them have suffered from white discharge.

#### 4.12.2 Quality of Care

The quality of care for women during conflict gets highly degraded due to displacement and increasing poverty. The sources of care like proper food, medicine, and proper rest are extremely important for pregnant women where as during the conflict situations proper food, medicine, and proper rest become highly unfulfilled needs.

Table: 4.40  
Type of Care received by Respondents during Pregnancy

Nutrition Level	Number		Percent	
	Before	After	Before	After
<b>Proper Food</b>				
Yes	200	2	100	1.0
No	0	183	0	91.5
Sometimes	0	15	0	7.5
<b>Medicine</b>				
Yes	200	2	100	1.0
No	0	192	0	96.0
Sometimes	0	5	0	2.5
<b>Rest and care</b>				
Yes	200	3	100	1.5
No	0	174	0	87.0
Sometimes	0	23	0	11.5
<b>Medical Fees</b>				
Selling land and Cattle's	0	6	0	3.0
Selling Cattle and Earnings	0	65	0	32.5
Selling Cattle	0	129	0	64.5
Earnings	200	0	100	0
Total	200	200	Nil	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table 4.40 shows type of care received by respondents during pregnancy both before and after coming to camps. It was mentioned by respondents that before coming to the camps there was adequate food, household support, and medical care facilities. After coming to the camps they hardly get proper food, proper household support and no medical facilities with in the camps. Before coming to the camps the

amount for medical fees used to come from their earnings whereas after coming to the camps to acquire sufficient medical facilities, they had to pay fees after selling cattle's and their earned wages.

#### 4.12.3 Family Support

Family support for women in conflict situation is highly unexpected. With the loss of old family members in conflict and forced to work for an earning, the women are left with little social support which they usually received. Traumatized women may have no practical or emotional support during conflict.

Table: 4.41  
Family Support Received at Home/ Outside Home

Types of Family Support	At Home		Outside Home	
	Before	After	Before	After
In laws	113	1	2	8
Sister/ Daughter in Law	2	1	0	5
Children	4	1	0	13
My Parents/ Grand Parents	27	0	1	5
No one	1	0	0	123
I used to take care	3	27	0	0
Total	150	29	3	154

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

It is quite obvious from table 4.41 that continued stay at the relief camps has deprived a majority of women and expectant mothers the required family support they were so crucially dependent upon. Before coming to the camps around 150 respondents used to work on their own fields located nearby their houses. However around 154 respondents now have to go far off places for work. Before coming to the camps much household works were taken care by in laws and other elder members of the family. Around 123 respondents reported that they have to look after the entire household chores while living in the Camp. Around 13 respondents are forced to share their household chores with their children.

#### 4.12.4 Delivery Care

Stress and malnutrition endanger the health of pregnant women. Their authority to control their own reproductive lives is eroded by the social changes associated with the conflict and displacement. The reproductive health care during delivery also gets neglected.

Table: 4.42  
Extended Support Received (Before and After Coming to Camps)

Responses	Number		Percent	
	Before	After	Before	After
Yes	219	93	100	34.8
No	0	174	0	65.2
Total	219	267	100	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table 4.42 shows erosion in the extended support received by the respondents while giving birth to their children. Before, all the respondents received extended support whereas only 35 respondents could get some support from their family members during their pregnancy.

Table: 4.43 (a)  
Delivery Care Before Coming to Relief Camp

Before conflict	No. of births	Percent
<b>Delivery place</b>		
Home	212	96.8
Parents Home	6	2.7
Hospital	1	0.5
Others Home	0	0.0
<b>Antenatal Check ups</b>		
Abdomen Examined	8	3.7
Blood Pressure	9	4.1
Blood Test	2	0.9
Internal Examined	0	0.0
Urine Test	4	1.8
Weight Measured	6	2.7
<b>Medicine</b>		
All (Iron and Folic Acid)	9	4.1

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table 4.43 (a) and (b) show delivery care received by the respondents, both before and after coming to the camps. Most deliveries take place at homes irrespective of their stay at the relief camps or not, although the deliveries before coming to the camp either happened in respondents' own or natal family. But after coming to the camp around 9 deliveries for respondents have taken place in others' home. Before coming to the camps only one respondent had gone to hospital for delivery whereas after coming to the camps, more deliveries have taken place under institutional support. There is an improvement in the antenatal check up. The public or army hospital facilities available to a few respondents near their camps have helped the respondents to avail medical facilities during and after pregnancy.

Table: 4.43 (b)  
Delivery Care After Coming to Relief Camp

After camp	No. of births	Percent
<b>Delivery place</b>		
Home	224	83.9
Natal Family	22	8.2
Hospital	12	4.5
Others Home	9	3.4
<b>Antenatal Check ups</b>		
Abdomen Examined	57	21.3
Blood Pressure	53	19.9
Blood Test	45	16.9
Internal Examined	1	0.4
Urine Test	30	11.2
Weight Measured	32	12.0
<b>Medicine</b>		
All (Iron and Folic Acid)	64	24

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

#### 4.13 Concluding Statement

The analysis of the demographic consequences of the conflict on the Santhals in general and on the Santhal women in particular and those living in the relief camps leads to the following broad generalisations.

The respondents and their family members have suffered long and continuous strife induced displacement. The respondents in the relief camps have experienced

displacement since the onset of the conflict. While hiding themselves from the Bodos at the time of the conflict they all moved out and got displaced several times from one place to another.

The respondents along with their household members are staying at the relief camps for nearly a decade. Many of them did not go back to their villages due to renewed attacks on their life and property. While staying out of their villages they faced loss of their property. Since the conflict erupted, the respondents have also faced loss and death of their close kinfolk from their household.

A significant consequence of the conflict and its aftermath has been a change in the pattern of head of the households of many now living in the relief camps. There has been an increase in female headed households- something that puts women in a difficult position with regard to managing the family affairs and earning for the family without much support received from the male members.

There have been changes in the household type too. There has been an increase in the proportion of extended household types after the conflict. This change is against the norms of the Santhals traditionally living in nuclear households. The reasons for this change may be their forced living in the relief camps and purely economic. This also appears to be a temporary phenomenon.

Pattern of marital status shows increase in the number of widows and incidence of non-marriage increasing over the years. The impact of the conflict is certainly evident in the changes taking place in the marital composition of the households. There are larger numbers of cases where the women now live singly or without the support of males who may have died, are missing or have deserted. In any case, greater number of the women now faces the world without the much needed support of their male counterparts. Cases of early marriages are on the rise as an effect

of the conflict. This may be a consequence of threat and insecurity developed among parents staying in the relief camps.

The conflict and displacement has had some serious impact on education of Santhal women. The dropout rate among respondents due to conflict is extremely high. The major reasons behind dropout of respondents and the household members have been reported as displacement, and fear of going to education centres.

The conflict has induced changes in occupational structure. Substantive shift in occupation and deterioration in the economic condition of the respondents and respondents' household has been seen. Drastic shift in occupational structure since the conflict has rendered the female segment far more vulnerable and marginalised. Breaking out of the conflict and their shift to the relief camp deprived them of the vital land that provided livelihood to them forcing them to seek wage labour as a major option to earn a living. The Santhal women had to look for other avenues of work including some non-agricultural work like collection and sale of firewood, catching and sell of fish in the local market or petty trade- all of which were combined to generate some income. Agricultural wage earning provides work opportunities only for a few months and with very low wages. It is significant that wage earning by working in other's land as an occupation was conspicuous by its absence among the women before coming to the camps. However, left with no better option, bereft of their traditional livelihood a majority of the Santhal women had to offer their labour for a wage- a situation that made them highly vulnerable to complexities of agricultural wage market and wage market in general. Given the situation the women have faced marginalisation and poverty in a situation of complete vulnerability.

Age specific death rate of the females is higher in younger age in respondents' household than the males. Morbidity has affected all segments but more so the

females. Increase in frequency of diseases among women is much higher after coming to relief camp as compared to earlier. The women too are afflicted by diseases not common to them before.

Age specific fertility rate is high among the respondents' in relief camp as compared to the state. The fertility rate in relief camps is the highest in the prime childbearing age at 20-29. Death of respondents' children is higher after coming to the relief camp. Still births and spontaneous abortions are more frequent after the conflict. Health problems during pregnancy have increased after conflict.

Lack of proper food and care has been reported by the respondents of the camp. Insufficient and improper food has affected the health condition of the Santhal women living in the camps. The conflict and displacement has deprived a majority of Santhal women the much needed family support and care while in relief camps.

Reproductive health of the women has worsened after coming to relief camp. The Psychological trauma which women develop during the conflict period has manifest primarily in physical and gynaecological symptoms related to increase in gynaecological disorders.

Overall, the demographic consequences of the conflict have had a debilitating effect on the economic, social and psychological conditions of the Santhal women. Most serious consequences are seen in the sphere of family change, changes in marital status, school dropout, changes in occupational structure, heightened morbidity and affliction to new diseases and reproductive health. Though not comparable to situation of war, the consequences are quite significant for the displaced Santhal women and living in relief camps.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **IMPACT OF CONFLICT ON SANTHAL WOMEN LIVING IN REHABILITATED VILLAGES**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The earlier chapter was devoted to an understanding of the impact of the conflict on those Santhal women continuing to live in the relief camps. The analysis on primary data available for relief camps has shown the immense effect of the conflict on demographic conditions of Santhal women staying in the relief camps. There have been attempts, although not always successful to rehabilitate the displaced Santhals. However, the resettlement policies did not ensure that they are resettled in the villages of their earlier habitation. Instead most of them were resettled elsewhere forcing the displaced to adjust to new realities. The end of the conflict did not thus mean end of their agonies and did not assist the victims to piece together their life from where they had left. It may be worth investigating the conditions in the rehabilitated villages. The present chapter thus documents the conditions of the Santhal women after they returned from the relief camps and made attempts to begin their life in villages they had left for quite some time. The study is confined to rehabilitated villages in Kokrajhar district, selected on the basis of a stratified sampling method for household survey using the pre-constructed schedules (see appendix-II and IV).

#### **5.2 Selection of the Rehabilitated Villages**

Selection of the rehabilitated villages followed same process as the selection of relief camps. In order to select the villages, village level data from 1971 to 2001 in Kokrajhar district were scrutinised extensively to understand an overall spatial change in ethnic distribution in the area due to conflict. It has been observed that rehabilitated villages with spatially concentrated and exclusively separate clusters could be marked

in a general way. Having observed this pattern on the map, a field-study was conducted in the area with the laboratory findings in mind. This later helped to have a strong conviction in favour of the changing trends observed in the statistical figures as mentioned above.

It was now necessary to highlight the level of this supported tendency by taking ethnic regions so far as the varying characteristics are concerned in Kokrajhar district. In the next step, a random selection of rehabilitated villages in CD block was done taking into consideration a random selection. The purpose was based on non-proximity to the influence of either the district headquarters or the district periphery in the respective regions. On this basis, four rehabilitated villages were identified randomly in view of the respective area homogeneity, i.e. on stratified characteristic basis. These selected rehabilitated villages are: a) Bansbari b) Kanupara-2 c) Panbari, and d) Anthaibari in the south (table 5.1). Location of these villages is shown in Fig.-5.1. It may be mentioned here that in all these rehabilitated villages for the Santhal; one can easily notice a near-homogeneous population in them. Therefore, conveniently, a sample size of 20 percent households has been taken for each of them considered randomly. However, the sample size for respective villages varied depending upon the total number of households.

### **5.3 General Characteristics of Sample Villages**

Rehabilitated villages consist mostly of the Santhals. Most of rehabilitated villages are located in Kokrajhar District under the Gossaigaon sub-division and is situated at a distance of 2 to 15 km from the Gossaigaon town.

Table 5.1 shows selected characteristics of sampled rehabilitated villages. The size of rehabilitated villages varies from 80 to 630 households. As many as 201 households were identified among the four rehabilitated villages. Nearly the entire

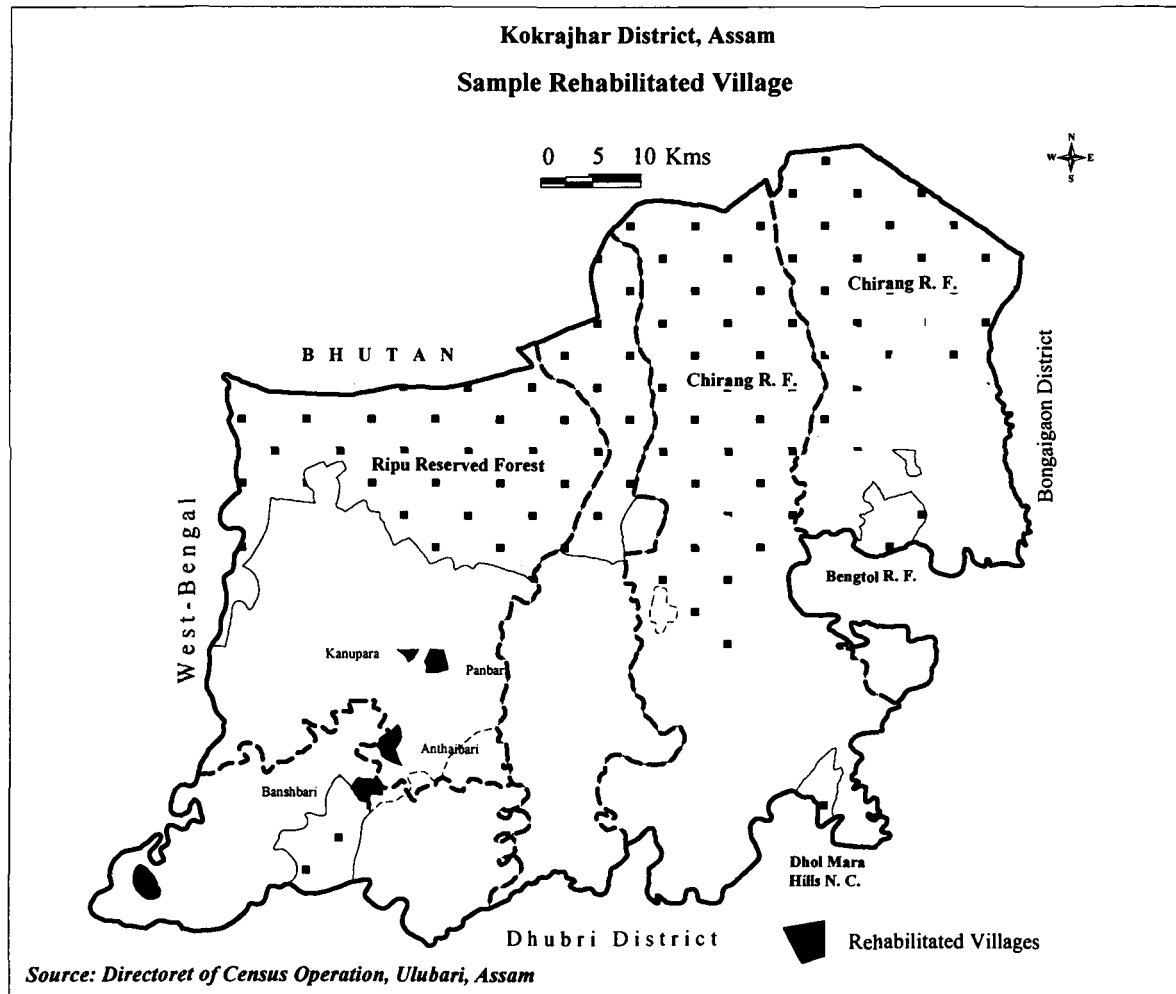


Fig.5.1

population (99.5 percent) profess Hinduism as their religion. Only two households professed Christianity who recently adopted the religion during their stay at the relief camp. Nuclear households dominate the family type. Most of the people speak Santhal as their mother tongue although Bengali and Assamese are used as second or third languages.

Table-5.1  
Rehabilitated Villages: Selected Background Characteristics

Village Name	No. of Respondent	No. of Household	Number		Percentage	
			Hindu	Christian	Hindu	Christian
Banshbari	30	120	30	0	100	0
Kanupara-2	29	80	29	0	100	0
Panbari	91	630	90	1	98.9	1.1
Anthiabari	51	185	51	0	100	0
Total	201	1015	200	1	99.5	0.5

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

The roads approaching these camps are half *pucca* and half *kacha* and the mode of transportation is usually by regular but less frequent private bus services and in some cases by auto rickshaws. The nearest railway station on an average is 5-15 km away from the rehabilitated village. The nearest primary school is 1½ km to 2 km away while secondary and higher secondary schools are located within a distance of 3-10 km. A college is situated at about 5-10 km from these rehabilitated villages. The rehabilitated villages have also the services of a police station, a post office, a bank and a dispensary located within 5-10 km with a qualified doctor. The main source of drinking water is dug-wells and tube-wells. Sanitation facilities are available to the households of rehabilitated villages. Many of households in rehabilitated villages have bathrooms and toilets with concrete sanitation system.

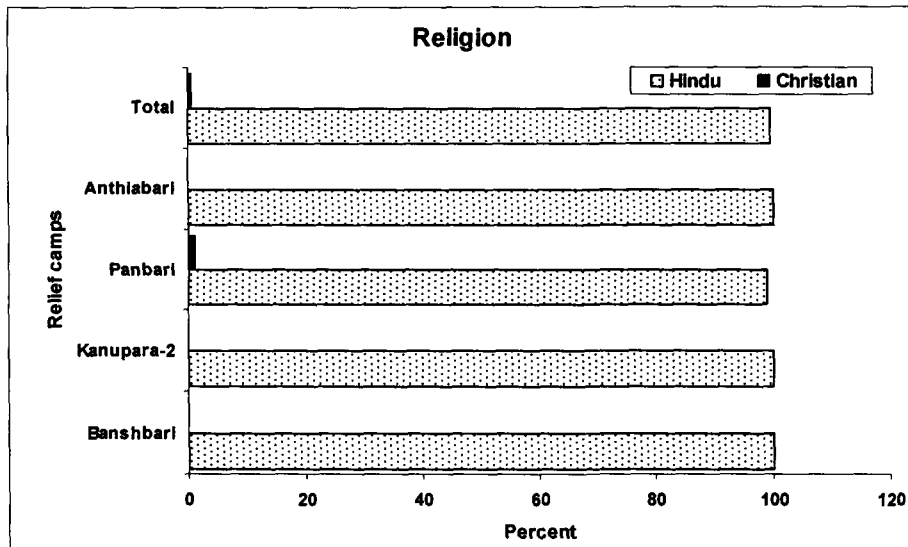


Fig.-5.2

#### 5.4 Demographic Characteristics

Santhals in rehabilitated villages are comparatively better off in terms of their socio-economic condition compared to the people living at relief camps. The effect of the conflict and its impact however can still be seen on demographic aspects of the life of the people living in rehabilitated villages. This part of the chapter presents a profile of the demographic characteristics of households in rehabilitated villages and also describes facilities and services that are available to rehabilitated villages. The analysis also includes some comparison with results from NFHS-2 of Assam<sup>1</sup> and census of India for Kokrajhar districts<sup>2</sup>.

##### 5.4.1 Background Characteristics of the Households

Ethnic conflict has a long term impact. A sudden change in characteristics of household population is an important impact of conflict on the community. The breakdown of family and social networks can leave many households headed by women

1 National Family Health survey India, 1998-1999, Assam

2 Census of India, 2001 Age Data, C- Series, Kokrajhar District, Assam.

Table 5.2 shows that about 15 percent households are female headed which is much higher than the state average 8 percent (NFHS-2).

Table: 5.2  
Percentage Distribution of Households Head by Age and Sex

Age	Number			Percent		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<30	23	4	27	13.5	13.3	13.4
30-44	88	15	103	51.5	50.0	51.2
45-59	57	8	65	33.3	26.7	32.3
60+	3	3	6	1.8	10.0	3.0
Median Age	29	30	29	28.5	30.0	28.7
Total	171	30	201	85.1	14.9	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

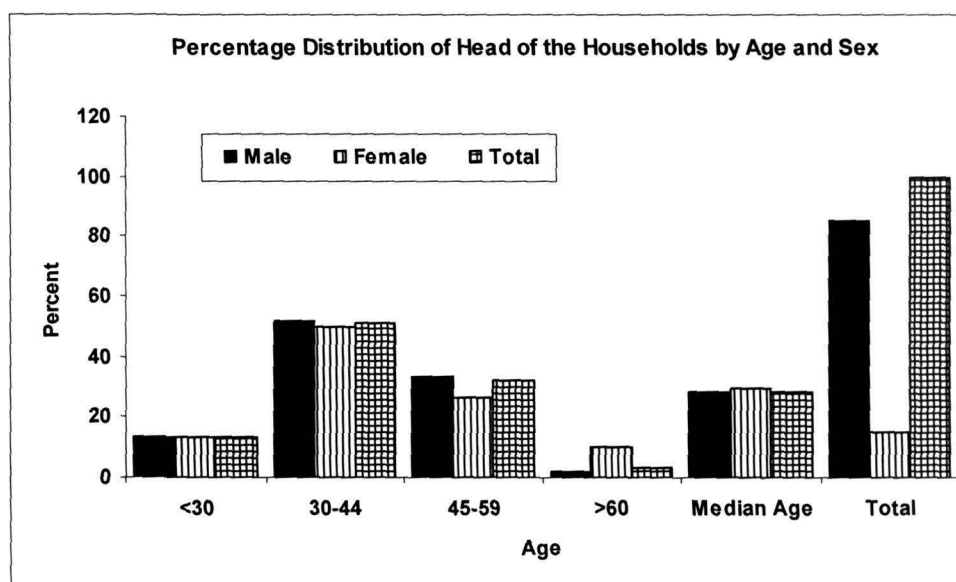


Fig.-5.3

The table shows majority (nearly half) of all heads of households irrespective of gender is relatively young. They are in the age group of 30-44 years (Fig.5.3). The median age of the heads of the households is even less at 28.5 for the males and 30 for the females. Not only a significant number of women now heading the family, the burden of managing a household has fallen on them at a young age largely on account of the loss of many male adults due to deaths.

It is evident from table 5.3 that the return from the relief camp has reaffirmed the social value of maintaining nuclear households. Return to the village from the

relief camp is coterminous with return to nuclear family setting as evident from the fact that over 96 percent households lived in such households. The extended households which characterised their intra-family relations during the conflict gave way to nuclear, small family relations associated with rehabilitation.

Table: 5.3  
Sample Villages: Household Head, Household Type and Household Size

Household Type Before and After Coming to Rehabilitated Village		
Characteristics	Total	Percentage
<b>Before coming to rehabilitated village</b>		
Single Household	2	1
Nuclear Household	159	79.1
Extended Household	40	19.9
<b>After coming to rehabilitated village</b>		
Single Household	2	1
Nuclear Household	194	96.5
Extended Household	5	2.5
<b>Number of Usual Members(After)</b>		
0	2	1.0
1	11	5.5
2	34	16.9
3	52	25.9
4	43	21.4
5	23	11.4
6	19	9.5
7	9	4.5
8	7	3.5
9 +	1	0.5
Mean Household Size	3.8	-
Total Percent	-	100.0
Number of Households	201	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

Age structure in the rehabilitated villages show a greater proportion of the young and extremely few elderly segment when compared with district average (table-5.4). The proportion of elderly women is much lower (0.4 percent) comparing with the elderly female population of Kokrajhar (5 percent). In rehabilitated villages the male population in working group category (15-59) shows higher proportion (63 percent) compared to female population only 33 percent, whereas recent census of 2001 shows a balanced population distribution in all age groups in Kokrajhar. The

impact of the conflict is clear on the age distribution of the population in the rehabilitated villages. The impact appears to be harsher on women revealed by a highly distorted age structure characterised by very low proportion of them in the working age group and in the elderly segment. A lot of depletion of women in the reproductive and old age appears to have taken place as an impact of their continued stay in the relief camps and the hazards associated with it.

Table: 5.4  
Percentage Distribution of Household Population by Age and Sex

Age Group	Rehabilitated Villages (2006)			Kokrajhar (2001 Census)		
	Overall	Male	Female	Overall	Male	Female
0-14 (Youth)	46.9	36.1	66.3	39.9	40.0	39.8
15-59 (Working)	52.2	62.7	33.3	54.9	54.9	55.0
60+ (Elderly)	0.9	1.2	0.4	5.1	5.0	5.2
All Age	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

#### 5.4.2 Sample Respondents

As many as 201 female respondents belonging to different age groups were selected randomly for a personal interview. Table 5.5 provides the details.

Table- 5.5  
Percentage Distribution of Respondents (Women) Age 14 and above by Selected Background Characteristics

Age	Respondents	Percent
Below 15	1	0.5
15-19	3	1.5
20-24	31	15.4
25-29	44	21.9
30-34	42	20.9
35-39	15	7.5
40-44	35	17.4
45-49	18	9.0
50-55	7	3.5
55 +	5	2.5
Total	201	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

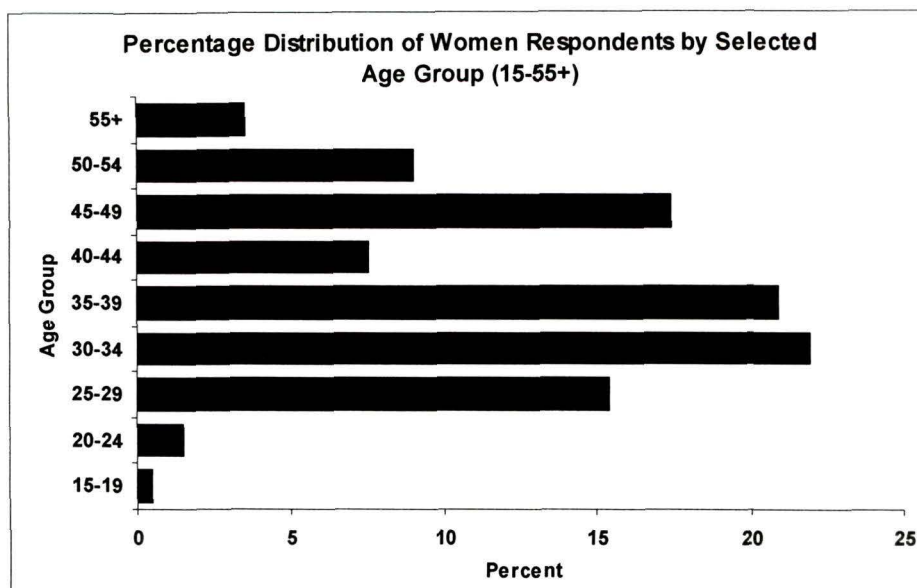


Fig.-5.4

Majority of the respondents were in the age group of 20-34. A little less than half of all respondents belonged to this age group. Around 17 percent of the respondents were from 40-44 age groups. Proportion of the respondents in other age cohorts varied from less than one percent to 9 percent (Fig.-5.4).

### 5.5 Displacement

Conflict and displacement disrupt the social structures of communities. In the case of extremely violent episodes of conflict, social systems of any community get implicated. The breakdown of community and family support in turn exacerbates the psychological impact of conflict. All earlier references of a conflict affected person in a community and the community in the region with a sense of being part of a wider system get lost during conflict. Conflict and displacement becomes the core challenge in community building due to its effect on the people in transition part.

Table: 5.6  
Number of Times Displaced (Respondents with Family)

No of Time	Respondents	Percent
5	51	25.4
6	150	74.6
Total	201	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table 5.7  
Respondent Rehabilitated in Own Village

Rehabilitated in own Village	Respondents	Percent
Yes	198	94.3
No	3	1.4
Total	201	95.7

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006

Table 5.8  
Year and Respondents returned to Village

Year	Respondents	Percent
1999	59	29.4
2004	142	70.6
Total	201	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Tables 5.6, 5.7 and 5.8 shows type and intensity of displacement the households suffered as a result of the conflict. Around 75 percent respondents with their family members were displaced at least 6 times before coming to the rehabilitated villages. Most of those, nearly all the respondents and their family members are rehabilitated in their own villages. Most of the respondents (71 percent) and their family member shifted to rehabilitated villages only in the year 2004. The reasons given by the respondents behind the delay to shift to rehabilitated villages were threats by other community members and long awaited govt support.

Table 5.9  
Number of Missing Persons in the Households by Year and Sex (1996-2004)

Year	Number			Percent		
	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female
1996	23	16	7	88.5	94.1	77.8
1998	2	1	1	7.7	5.9	11.1
2003	1	0	1	3.8	0.0	11.1
Total	26	17	9	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

A major problem with which the respondent households have been confronted with is the extent of missing persons. The rehabilitation and adjustment to the new environment continued as the household members lost hopes of getting back their near and dear ones reported missing during the conflict. Table 5.9 reveals that the highest number of missing of persons took place during first conflict in the year 1996.

Understandably, the missing males were greater in number, but the female missing persons were not small in number. Overall, 9 out of a total of 26 missing persons were females accounting for over 30 percent of all missing persons (Fig.-5.5).

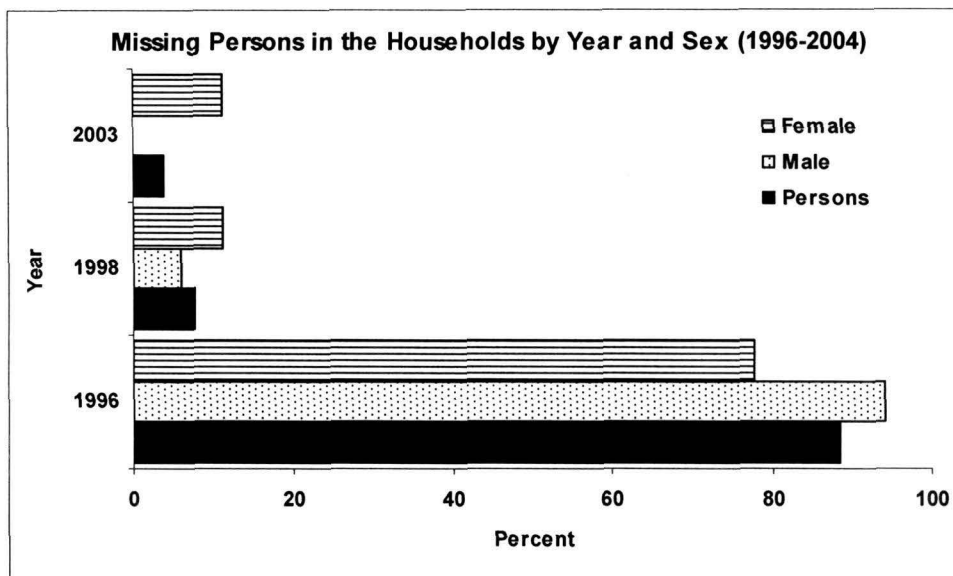


Fig.-5.5

Table: 5.10  
Missing Population by Age and Sex

Age	Number			Percent		
	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female
0-14	7	3	4	26.9	17.6	44.4
15-59	6	6	0	23.1	35.3	0.0
60 +	13	8	5	50.0	47.1	55.6
Total	26	17	9	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

It is interesting that it is only the young and the elderly segment of the females who are reportedly missing whereas the missing males belong to all age groups (table 5.10). The fact that a larger proportion of the elderly women are missing reveals the impact of the conflict more harshly falling on this segment.

The causes for missing persons (table 5.11) as given by the respondents reveals that around 46 percent of their household members were left as they were old, 23 percent of the household members were perhaps killed but no dead body was

found. Around 15 percent of household members were lost while running for life (Fig.-5.6).

Table: 5.11  
Causes behind Missing Population

Reasons	Number of Missing Person	Percentage
Old and Left	12	46.2
While rushing here and there Lost	4	15.4
Didn't Return from Work Place	2	7.7
Killed: Dead Body only Found	6	23.1
Don't Know	2	7.7
Total	26	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

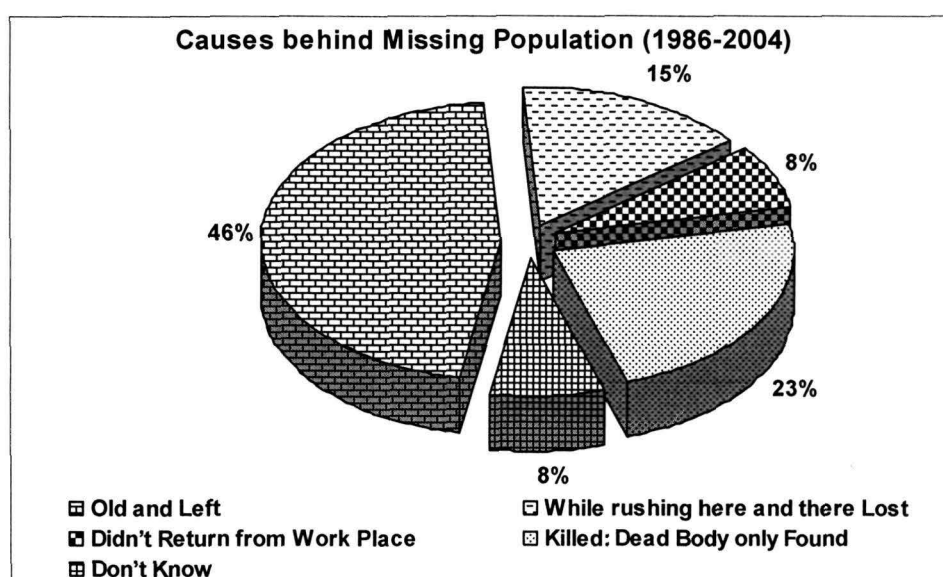


Fig 5.6

### 5.6 Educational Level

Education is a major casualty in any conflicting situation. Dropping out from schools and other higher level of education is a necessary concomitant of conflicts. Table 5.12 and 5.13 reveal that only 28 are literate out of a total of 201 respondents. Out of the total dropouts, a little over a fifth of them dropped out from schools while 79 percent of them had to give up education after their resettlement. Around 50 percent respondents of the 28 respondents' left their education after coming to

rehabilitated villages and have told conflict is the main cause behind dropping their education.

Table: 5.12  
Education Level of the Respondents

Literacy	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Illiterate	173	86.1
Primary	8	4.0
Middle	20	10.0
Total	201	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table: 5.13  
Level of Literacy and Reasons of Dropout among the Literates (in percentage)

Reasons behind Dropping Education	Before	After
Poor economic background	0	10.7
Marriage	7.1	10.7
Conflict	0	50.0
Other	14.3	7.1
Age of Respondent at the time of Leaving Education		
10-14	21.4	46.4
15-19	0.0	32.1
20+	0.0	0.0
Level of Education at the time of Leaving Education		
Primary	10.7	17.9
Middle	10.7	60.7
H.S.+	0.0	0.0
Overall (Left their Education)	21.4	78.5

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Many of the respondents before and few after coming to rehabilitated villages have also stated poor economic background and their marriage as cause for the drop out.

### 5.6.1 Educational Level of the Household Members

Table 5.14 shows the distribution of educational level among the household population for both the sexes. Illiteracy is far higher among the female segment compared to their male counterpart.

However, proportion of the female literate in primary level is more than that of the male population. The table also shows a remarkable decrease in educational level

of both the sexes in middle and higher secondary level. The presence of female population in higher secondary level is very negligible.

Table: 5.14  
Percentage Distribution of Household Population (6 years and above) by Literacy and Level of Education According to Sex

Education	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Illiterate	237	300	364	50.4	61.0	47.8
Primary	112	138	242	23.8	28.0	31.8
Middle	99	53	132	21.1	10.8	17.3
HS+	22	1	23	4.7	0.2	3.0
Total	470	492	761	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

### 5.6.2 School Dropouts

A major casualty of the conflict and even resettlement has been an accentuated dropout from schools, though boys seem to have dropped out more than the girls after resettlement (table 5.15). The situation is reversed when compared with the period before rehabilitation when the dropout among female was more than that by males.

Table: 5.15  
Number of Households Population Dropouts by Sex and Education

Education	Before (1996)			After (1996)			Change
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Primary	0	5	5	38	26	64	63
Secondary	1	5	6	48	19	67	66
Higher Secondary	0	0	0	2	0	2	2
Total	1	10	11	88	45	120	118

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table: 5.16  
Reasons for Dropouts

Year	Absolute			Percentage		
	Conflict	Monetary	Others	Conflict	Monetary	Others
Before 1996	0	1	Nil	0.0	16.7	Nil
1996	147	0	Nil	99.3	0	Nil
1998	1	0	Nil	0.68	0	Nil
After 1998	0	5	1	0.0	83.3	100
Total	148	6	1	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

The dropout rate among the female members increased with increase in education level whereas for male members the dropout rate increased from secondary

to higher secondary level. The change in dropout for the total population shows that maximum dropout took place at the time of secondary and primary level of education.

Major reason behind dropout is reported to be the conflict and the first conflict in the year 1996 has led to largest number of dropouts (Fig.-5.7).

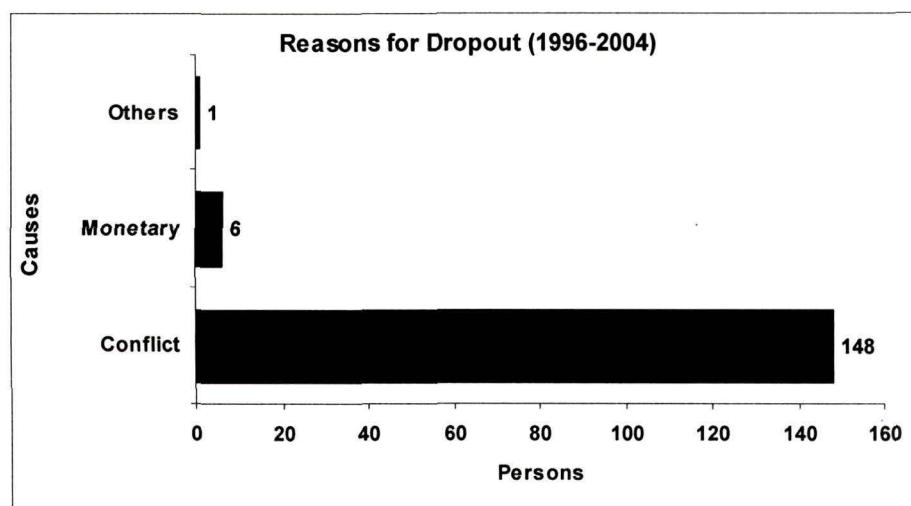


Fig.-5.7

### 5.7 Occupational Structure

Conflict exacerbates poverty and crisis. The impact of conflict on economic condition of conflict affected people is of wider range from losing their occupation, losing property, not earning adequate for livelihood. Women in conflict situations find it extremely difficult to cope with economic problems of their family. They also find difficulties in providing care and support for the livelihood of their family.

Table: 5.17  
Occupational Status (Before and After Rehabilitated Villages), (Own land n = 200)

Occupation Type	Before			After		
	0-4 Months	4-6 Months	6+ Months	0-4 Months	4-6 Months	6+ Months
Agriculture (Own land)	0	19	178	0	0	1
Agricultural Labourer	0	0	0	0	108***	72**
Non-Agri (Commercial)	0	0	0	0	179**	0
Fire Wood Collection	Domestic Consumption			0	180*	0
Catching Fish	Domestic Consumption			0	12**	0
Own Shop	0	0	0	0	0	0

\* Wages earn weekly Rs. Less than 20, \*\* Rs. 20-50, and \*\*\* Rs. 50 and above

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table 5.17 shows that the economic conditions of the households and the women registered little change from that of the relief camp even after resettlement. Most of them were without land and other assets and had to depend on wage earning either in agriculture or in the non-agricultural sector of the economy. The wage rate is too low for their sustenance. Some of them also took sell of firewood or fish as additional occupation for a living. The Santhal in general and the female segment in particular has been highly marginalised as they have been denied the basic resources of land and agriculture. Growing dependence on wage labour and on other activities in the informal sector of the economy has further impoverished them and made them vulnerable to poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition and hunger. Their self sufficiency and sustained relation with the environment has received a rude shock.

Table 5.18  
Land Ownership (in Bigha) (Before coming to Rehabilitated Village)

Land Holding Size	Number of Households	Percentage of Households
1-5	17	8.5
6-10	70	34.8
11-20	89	44.3
21-50	23	11.4
51 and above	2	1.0
Total	201	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

It is evident from table 5.18 that all the respondents' households owned some land. Though there was disparity in the land ownership pattern, incidence of landlessness was rare. A great majority of the households owned land ranging between 6 to 20 bighas. Only a few households had a land ownership that either exceeded 20 bighas or was less than 5 bighas. But the conflict and resettlement deprived nearly all of them whatever land they owned.

After rehabilitation 15 percent respondents reported no property left with them and that they had lost their lands to others. About 4 percent of them have managed to

operate on others' land in exchange for half of the produce (*adhi*). Around 41 percent of respondents reported that they still have their land in the original village but have no access to them. Around 22 percent respondents have some land in jungles but are scared to go to their lands as have received threats from the Bodos. Around 18 percent of them have mortgaged their lands to little better off Santhals staying in their own or other rehabilitated villages. No compensation has been received, nor has allotment of land in the resettled villages been made.

Table: 5.19  
Households Land Ownership in Bigha (After coming to Rehabilitated Village)

Land Ownership	Number	Percent
Nil	31	15.4
Gets <i>Adhi</i> (Half)	8	4.0
Few bighas in jungle	44	21.9
Few <i>bighas</i> in village	82	40.8
They go and Cultivate in Village	0	0.0
<i>Bandhak</i> / Mortgage	36	17.9
Total	201	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

## 5.8 Marital Status

Casualty of men folks of younger age during the conflict often changes the marital status of people staying in conflict prone areas. The impact over the marital status can be seen with the increase in number of single, widowed or deserted people.

Table: 5.20  
Respondents' Marital Status According to Age (14 and above)

Age Group	Never Married	Married Once*	Widow	Deserted	Total Respondent
<14	0	1	0	0	1
15-19	0	3	0	0	3
20-24	0	30	0	1	31
25-29	1	41(1)	1	1	44
30-34	0	32	6	4	42
35-39	0	15(1)	0	0	15
40-44	0	30(1)	5	0	35
45-49	0	13	5	0	18
50-54	0	4(2)	3	0	7
55-59	0	2	3	0	5
Total	1	171 (5)	23	6	201

Source: Field Survey on January, 2006.

\*The figure in the bracket above for remarried women\*\*Twice Deserted

Table 5.20 reveals a large number of widowed women apart from a few who have been deserted. There are cases of remarriage though it does not constitute a very significant proportion of all marriages.

Of particular significance is the fact that 23 of the respondents are widow out of which 7 are at a young age of 25-34 and others are at age 40 and above.

Table: 5.21  
Percentage Distribution of the Household Population Age 10 and above by Marital Status According to Age and Sex

Age	Marital status				
	Never Married	Currently Married	Widowed	Deserted	Total
Male					
10-14	94.5	5.5	0.0	0.0	100.0
15-19	83.7	16.3	0.0	0.0	100.0
20-24	78.8	19.2	1.9	0.0	100.0
25-29	26.7	73.3	0.0	0.0	100.0
30-49	1.6	97.6	0.8	0.0	100.0
50+	5.1	87.2	7.7	0.0	100.0
Total	41.6	57.0	1.4	0.0	100.0
Female					
10-14	77.0	23.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
15-19	81.0	19.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
20-24	18.6	79.1	0.0	2.3	100.0
25-29	10.2	85.7	2.0	2.0	100.0
30-49	0.9	79.1	16.5	3.5	100.0
50+	0.0	46.7	53.3	0.0	100.0
Total	31.7	58.4	8.2	1.8	100.0
Total					
10-14	85.3	14.7	0.0	0.0	100.0
15-19	82.2	17.8	0.0	0.0	100.0
20-24	51.6	46.3	1.1	1.1	100.0
25-29	16.5	81.0	1.3	1.3	100.0
30-49	1.2	88.8	8.3	1.7	100.0
50+	3.7	75.9	20.4	0.0	100.0
Total	36.7	57.7	4.8	0.9	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

The table 5.21 provides information on the marital status of the households aged 10 and above. Among females aged 10 and above, around 58 percent women are married and 32 percent are never married.

The proportion of never married is higher in males (41 percent) than females (32 percent). The proportion of deserted females is more around 2 percent. The proportion of widowhood is small in males (1 percent) as compared to females (8 percent), widowhood increased in both the sexes with the increase in age. Increase of widowhood in females is the highest (53 percent) in higher age group.

### 5.9 Fertility Pattern

The fertility measures presented in this chapter are based on the complete birth history collected from women aged 15 to 49.

Table: 5.22  
Age Specific Fertility Rate (Three Years Period Preceding Survey)

Age Group	Number of Female	No of Children	ASFR
<14	1	1	1000
15-19	3	1	333.33
20-24	31	16	516.12
25-29	44	30	681.81
30-34	42	17	404.76
35-39	15	9	600.00
40-44	42	8	190.47
45-49	18	0	0.00

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

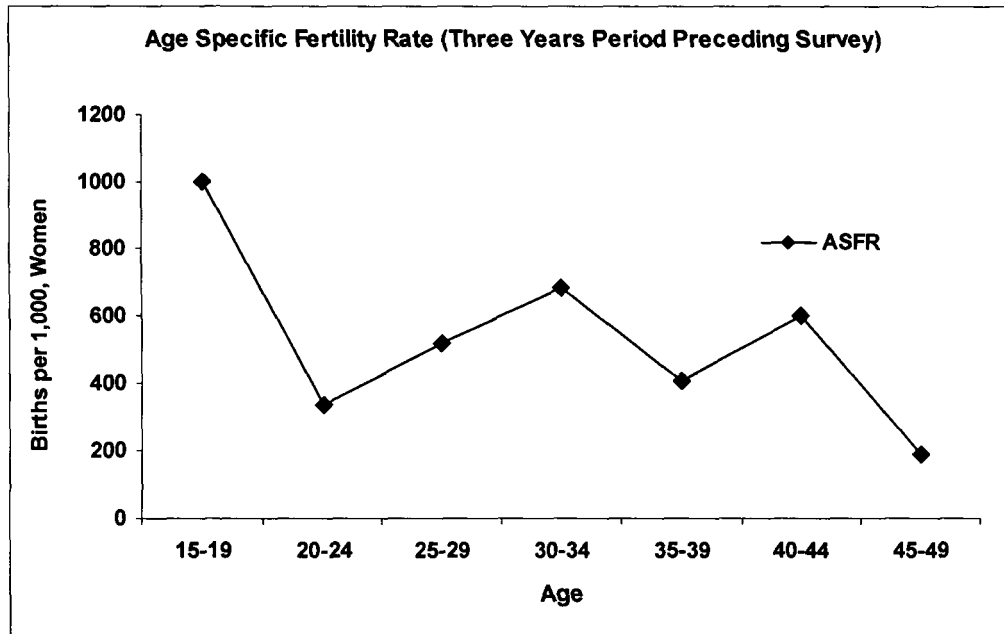


Fig.-5.8

Table 5.22 The age specific fertility rate of any specific age group is calculated by dividing the numbers of births to women in the age group during the period 1 to 36 months preceding the survey by the number of women years lived by women in the age group during the same their year time period. It has been recorded that the prime child bearing age group i.e. at age 20–29 has over 500 percentage of fertility rate, which is much higher than the state average (133) (Fig.-5.8).

### 5.10 Mortality Pattern

Conflict worked as a major cause of ill health and mortality for most of its history. Conflict has its direct impact on rate of mortality in any conflict affected region. Conflict increases the relative risk of mortality on the affected people. Conflict related deaths and injury are major contributors to the global burden of disease. Impact of conflict in mortality can be seen as a direct effect of conflict increasing mortality in the conflict affected region.

Table: 5.23  
Deaths of Household Members

Death (in Number)	No of Respondent	Percent
Nil	87	44.3
1	64	31.8
2	35	17.4
3	11	5.5
4 and Above	2	1.0
Total	N=201	100

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

Table 5.23 reveals that only 44 percent households did not experience any deaths in their households during the last nine years preceding the survey. About 56 percent respondents have experienced death of household members since the conflict. During the period (1996-2004) around 32 percent of the respondents experienced at least one death and 1 percent respondents experienced death of 4 and above household members.

Table: 5.24  
Number and Percent of Death Occurred in Respondent Households (1996-2004)

Year	No. of Deaths	Percent
1996	72	40.0
1997	46	25.6
1998	26	14.4
1999	12	6.7
2000	3	1.7
2001	4	2.2
2002	5	2.8
2003	5	2.8
2004	7	3.9
Total	180	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

Maximum (40 per cent) of these deaths as expected occurred in the year 1996 when the first ethnic conflict broke out between the two communities (table 5.24). Around 25 percent of the deaths took place in the following year. The table shows that the number of deaths gradually decreased over the years, though 2004 shows some increase in number (17 percent). Needless to mention, deaths in the initial period are directly related to the conflict, but later the deaths are more an indirect effect of the conflict and displacement that saw a spurt in morbidity incidence.

Table: 5.25  
Number of Deaths by Age and Sex (1996-2004)

Age	Absolute			Percent			Percent	
	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Male	Female
< 5	67	34	33	34.4	29.6	41.3	50.7	49.3
5-14	39	22	17	20.0	19.1	21.3	56.4	43.6
15-49	52	36	16	26.7	31.3	20.0	69.2	30.8
50-59	26	16	10	13.3	13.9	12.5	61.5	38.5
60 +	11	7	4	5.6	6.1	5.0	63.6	36.4
Total Deaths	195	115	80	100.0	100.0	100.0	59.0	41.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

It is clear from table 5.25 that the young and the old suffered the most in terms of deaths. The females too were a victim. Higher death rates are recorded in younger age; around 34 percent deaths took place at age < 5 or below. Children, particularly female children died at a rate much higher than normally expected. Overall death of males is more (59 percent) than female household population (41 percent).

Table: 5.26  
Causes of Death

Types	No of Persons	Percent
Natural Death	2	1.1
Disease	165	91.7
Encounter	13	7.2
Accident	0	0
Total	180	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table: 5.27  
Death Occurred in the Households due to Various Diseases (1996-2004)

Diseases	No. of Death	Percent
Tuberculosis	54	32.7
Malaria	52	31.5
Diarrhoea	26	15.8
Unknown	12	7.3
Paralysis	8	4.8
Weak	6	3.6
Jaundice	2	1.2
Asthma	1	0.6
Become Mad	1	0.6
Blood Sugar	1	0.6
Cough and Cold	1	0.6
During/After Delivery	1	0.6
Total	165	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

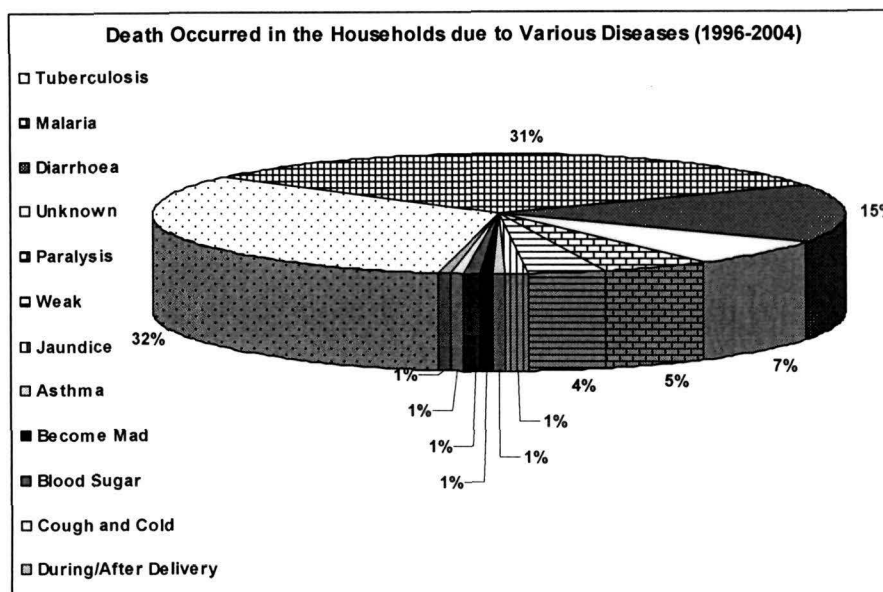


Fig.-5.9

Going by the causes reported for these deaths, it is indicated in the table 5.29 that diseases more than any other, are the most significant cause for pushing up the figures of deaths. This is surely an indirect effect of the conflict. Around 92 percent of the population died in disease during the period of their stay in relief camps and around 13 percent by encounter. Table 5.27 reveals that the largest number of deaths occurred due to Tuberculosis (33 percent) followed by Malaria (32 percent), diarrhoea (26 percent) and unknown diseases (12 percent). As is well known tuberculosis afflicts people of poor nutrition intake and the fact that so many deaths took place due to such diseases also reveals poor medical care received by this hapless segment (Fig.-5.9).

Table: 5.28  
Age Specific Death Rate by Sex

Age Group	Female	Male
<5	733.3	566.7
5-14	161.8	146.6
15-49	428.6	58.4
50-59	2285.7	312.5
60+	7000.0	666.7

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

The age specific death rate (table 5.28) reveals that the child and older age group mortality is higher than other age groups. The female child shows a much higher incidence of deaths.

Table: 5.29  
Number of Infant and Child Death in the Households by Age and Sex

Age (in Year)	Absolute			Percent		
	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female
<1	33	18	15	41.8	47.4	36.6
1	8	3	5	10.1	7.9	12.2
2	15	8	7	19.0	21.1	17.1
3	10	5	5	12.7	13.2	12.2
4	1	0	1	1.3	0.0	2.4
5	12	4	8	15.2	10.5	19.5
Total	79	38	41	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table 5.29 describe infant and child mortality (year wise) within respondents' household by sex. Around 42 percent of infant deaths occurred during 1996-2004. Overall female child death (41 deaths) is higher than male child death (38 deaths).

### 5.10.1 Child Mortality

The probability of children dying in early childhood is high in conflict affected regions. The indicators of child mortality decline substantially with increases in the standard of living.

Questions were asked to the respondents living in the rehabilitated villages on the number of deaths of their children before and after coming to the rehabilitated villages. Question on survival status of the children after taking birth also has been asked to the respondents.

Table: 5.30  
Children Died Before and After Coming to Rehabilitated Villages

	Before (In relief camp)	Percent	After (In rehabilitated village)	Percent
Yes	46	22.9	2	1
No	155	77.1	199	99
Total	201	100.0	201	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table: 5.31  
Survival Status of Children Before and After Coming to Rehabilitated Villages

Survival Status	Relief Camp	Percent	Rehabilitated Villages	Percent
Alive	48	88.9	57	98.3
Dead	6	11.1	1	1.7
Total	54	100.0	58	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table 5.30 shows that around 23 percent of the respondents' children died before coming to rehabilitated villages<sup>3</sup> whereas there are far fewer such cases after coming to rehabilitated villages. Only 1 percent children died after their shift to the rehabilitated villages. There has been a distinct improvement in the survival status of the children as a result. Table 5.31 amply demonstrates that while 89 percent children survived while being in the relief camps, the rate improved to a little over 98 per cent after rehabilitation.

#### 5.10.2 Disease Pattern

Conflict, displacement and problems of rehabilitation have certainly compounded the health problems of the Santhal people in general and Santhal women in particular. Most people in rehabilitated villages now suffer from a variety of diseases that relate to poor sanitation, inadequate nutrition, poverty and lack of medicare. However, it may be noted that the rehabilitation may improve their conditions. It may be worth examining if the rehabilitation did indeed improve their health conditions.

The study on disease pattern was done after asking question to the respondents about the type of diseases they suffered before coming to the rehabilitated villages<sup>4</sup> and after coming to rehabilitated villages. Table 5.32 shows that after shifting to the

<sup>3</sup> Survival Status of children before coming to rehabilitated villages has been studied in connection to conditions in relief camps, to get a picture of changes in relief camp and in rehabilitated villages.

<sup>4</sup> Disease pattern before coming to rehabilitated villages has been studied in connection to conditions in relief camps, to get better picture of changes in spread of diseases in relief camp and in rehabilitated villages.

rehabilitated villages the prevalence of different diseases have indeed declined. After coming to the relief camps most of the respondents suffered from tuberculosis, jaundice, malaria, also faced different stomach problems like indigestion, diarrhoea and gastric. Rehabilitation dramatically changed the situation with regard to like tuberculosis, gastric, jaundice and indigestion which showed a drastic decline in their prevalence among the rehabilitated sections. Only cases related to Diarrhoea have increased. But overall, the health situation has improved after resettlement and rehabilitation of the displaced Santhals.

Table: 5.32  
Percentage Distribution of Diseases Occurred (Before and After)

Types of Diseases	Before	Percent	After	Percent
Cough	201	100	201	100
Cold	201	100	201	100
Indigestion	143	71.1	30	14.9
Diarrhoea	6	3.0	20	10.0
Gastric	21	10.4	1	0.5
Jaundice	68	33.8	1	0.5
Tuberculosis	96	47.8	1	0.5
Malaria	175	87.1	20	10.0

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

Table: 5.33  
Distribution of Critical Diseases among Respondents in Rehabilitated Villages

Disease	Number	Percent
Blood Pressure	48	23.9
Blood Sugar	9	4.5
Asthma	25	12.4
Arthritis	13	6.5

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

However, the trauma of the conflict continues to be felt among the rehabilitated females with a number of them complaining of critical diseases like blood pressure, blood sugar, asthma and arthritis which are an after effect of trauma and psychological stress. Table 5.33 shows that these diseases afflict a large number of women while communicable and contagious diseases have declined in incidence.

For example nearly a quarter of all women interviewed complained of high blood pressure while over 12 percent of them suffer from asthma.

Table: 5.34  
Respondents: Frequency of Consumption of non-cereal Foods in Rehabilitated Villages

Type of Food	Daily	Weekly	Occasionally	Never
Milk or Curd	Nil	Nil	98.5	1.5
Pulses or Beans	Nil	30.3	69.7	Nil
Green, Leafy Vegetables	34.0	55.2	10.8	Nil
Fruits	Nil	7.5	60.0	32.5
Eggs	Nil	34.8	65.2	Nil
Chicken	0.5	90.0	9.5	Nil
Meat	Nil	98.0	2.0	Nil
Fish	Nil	98.0	2.0	Nil

*Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.*

There is a distinct improvement in the non-cereal food intake by the respondent women after their return to the rehabilitated villages and compared to their pitiable condition while in the relief camps (table 5.34). At least 35 percent women now have access to leafy vegetables on a daily basis and for the majority on a weekly basis. Likewise nearly all the respondents have access to some meat products at least once a week. Pulses or beans are consumed once in a week by about 30 percent respondents, though milk consumption is rare. This is understood as they have little resources to keep cattle.

### 5.10.3 Still Birth and Abortion

Indicators like abortion, still births are immensely high in the conflict regions of the world. The impact of the conflict can be seen as poor nutrition, poverty, lack of social support. The Psychological trauma which women develop during the conflict period can manifest primarily in physical and gynaecological symptoms related to birth and death of children.

Table: 5.35  
Still Births after the Conflict

Year	No. of Respondents	No. of Times
1996	3	1
1998	1	1
1999	1	1
2004	1	1
Total	6	

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table: 5.36 (a)  
Spontaneous Abortion During Conflict

Year	No. of Respondents
1996	2
1997	2
1998	1
Total	5

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table: 5.36 (b)  
Spontaneous Abortion After Coming to Village

Year	No of Respondents
1999	1
2003	1
2004	2
Total	4

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

As many as 6 cases of still births were reported during the period 1996-2004 (table 5.35). During the conflict period there were 5 cases of spontaneous abortion too (table 5.36a). Fewer cases of spontaneous abortions have been reported after the respondents' shifting to the rehabilitated villages (table. 5.36b). Only 1 respondent had induced abortion during conflict.

### 5.11 Reproductive Health

It is expected that the reproductive health should improve after the resettlement of the Santhals in their villages or elsewhere after the traumatic existence in the relief camps for years.

Table 5.37 shows that both before and after coming to rehabilitated villages the respondents had almost no antenatal check up during their pregnancy. In fact, as

mentioned in the earlier chapter, number of antenatal check up among the respondents had indeed increased before coming to rehabilitated villages<sup>5</sup>. This was due to the fact that a few of relief camps were located near army camps.

Table: 5.37  
Comparison: Antenatal Problems Care Before and After coming to Rehabilitated Villages

Went for Antenatal Check-up	Number		Percentage	
	Before	After	Before	After
Once	0	0	0	0
Twice	8	5	2.4	1.5
Thrice	5	11	1.5	3.3
Not at all	325	96	96.2	28.4
<b>Food</b>				
Everything	112	71	33.1	63.4
Not Proper Food	226	41	66.9	36.6
Total	338	112	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

## 5.12 Reproductive Health Problems

Reproductive health problems are however shows a confusing pattern as in some cases there have been improvements after the respondents came to rehabilitated villages while in some others, there is no improvement.

Table: 5.38  
Reproductive Health Problems during Pregnancy before and After Coming to Rehabilitated Villages

Problems	Number		Percent	
	Before	After	Before	After
Health Problems				
Anaemia	17	14	5.0	12.5
Vaginal Bleeding	2	0	0.6	0
White Discharge	26	11	7.7	9.8
Blurred Vision	27	8	8.0	7.1
Anaemia and Vaginal Bleeding	11	3	3.3	2.7
Anaemia and White Discharge	17	4	5.0	3.6
Anaemia and Blurred vision	17	7	5.0	6.3
Vaginal and White Discharge	0	0	0	0
White Discharge and Blurred vision	2	0	0.6	0
None (no complicacy)	219	65	64.8	58
Total	338	112	100	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Antenatal problems and care before coming to rehabilitated villages has been studied in connection to conditions in relief camps, to get better picture of changes in relief camp and in rehabilitated villages.

Table 5.38 shows the health problems faced by respondents during pregnancy both before<sup>6</sup> and after coming to rehabilitated villages. Around 35 percent of the respondents have reported that they have faced reproductive health problems before coming to the rehabilitated villages during pregnancy whereas after coming to rehabilitated villages around 42 percent of them have faced reproductive health problems. About 13 percent respondent have suffered from anaemia, 10 percent of them have suffered from white discharge after coming to the camps in comparison to 5 percent suffering from anaemia and 8 percent white discharge before coming to rehabilitated villages.

#### **5.12.1 Quality of Care**

Quality of care is another important area that needs mention. It is expected that the quality of care should be much better in the rehabilitated villages compared to what was before.

Table 5.39 shows type of care received by respondents during pregnancy both before<sup>7</sup> and after coming to rehabilitated villages. It was mentioned by respondents that before coming to rehabilitated villages there was not enough food and medical care facilities.

After coming to the rehabilitated villages they are much better off than what was their position while in the relief camps, Before coming to rehabilitated villages the amount for medical fees used to come after selling cattle and their earned wages from their earnings whereas after coming to camps most of them pay fees for medical facilities from their earnings and few by selling cattle.

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<sup>6</sup> Reproductive health problems before coming to rehabilitated villages has been studied in connection to conditions in relief camps, to get better picture of changes in relief camp and in rehabilitated villages.

<sup>7</sup> Quality of care before coming to rehabilitated villages has been studied in connection to conditions in relief camps, to get better picture of changes in relief camp and in rehabilitated villages.

Table: 5.39

Type of Care Received by Respondents During Pregnancy				
Nutrition Level	Number		Percent	
	Before	After	Before	After
<b>Proper Food</b>				
Yes	0	78	0	38.8
No	199	108	99.0	53.7
Sometimes	2	15	1.0	7.5
<b>Medicine</b>				
Yes	10	7	5.0	3.5
No	190	190	94.5	94.5
Sometimes	1	4	0.5	2.0
<b>Rest and care</b>				
Yes	0	45	0	22.4
No	201	144	100	71.6
Sometimes	0	12	0	6.0
<b>Medical Fees</b>				
Selling land and Cattle's	201	0	100	0
Selling Cattle and Earnings	0	6	0	3
Selling Cattle	0	0	0	0
Earnings	0	195	0	97
Total	201	201	100	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

### 5.12.2 Family Support

Family support for expectant mothers and women in general has certainly improved after resettlement in the relief camps.

Table: 5.40

Family Support Received at Home / Outside Home

Types of Family Support	At Home		Outside Home	
	Before	After	Before	After
In laws	78	0	67	70
Sister/ Daughter in Law	0	0	11	45
Children	3	2	41	15
My Parents/ Grand Parents	13	0	33	51
No one	7	0	48	20
I use to take care	100	199	1	0
Total	201	201	201	201

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table 5.40 shows that before coming to rehabilitated villages<sup>8</sup> most of them used to go far off places for work whereas after coming to the rehabilitated villages they work in nearby fields. The table 5.40 shows that before and after coming to

<sup>8</sup> Types of family support before coming to rehabilitated villages has been studied in connection to conditions in relief camps, to get better picture of changes in relief camp and in rehabilitated villages.

rehabilitated villages all household chores were taken care by in laws and other elder members of the family when respondents went out to work. The share of burden of household work on children was more before coming to the rehabilitated villages as most of the family members used to go out for work.

### 5.12.3 Delivery Care

Extended support during delivery etc. is equally important. There has been reduced extended support in such cases as revealed from the responses obtained from the sample women who were interviewed

Table: 5.41  
Extended Support Received (Before and After Coming to Rehabilitated Villages)

Responses	Number		Percent	
	Before	After	Before	After
Yes	226	13	66.9	11.6
No	112	99	33.1	88.4
Total	338	112	100	100

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Before the conflict all respondents received extended support whereas after the conflict and even after their resettlement only 12 respondents could get support from their family members during their pregnancy (table: 5.41).

Table: 5.42 (a)  
Delivery Care before Coming to Rehabilitated Villages

Before Conflict	No. of Births	Percent
<b>Delivery place</b>		
Home	335	99.1
Parents Home	3	0.9
Hospital	0	0
Others Home	0	0
Total	338	100
<b>Antenatal Check ups</b>		
Abdomen Examined	11	3.3
Blood Pressure	9	2.7
Blood Test	8	2.4
Internal Examined	0	0.0
Urine Test	3	0.9
Weight Measured	2	0.6
<b>Medicine</b>		
All (Iron and Folic Acid)	12	3.6

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

Table 5.42 (a) and (b) show delivery care received by respondents, both before and after coming to the rehabilitated villages. Both before and after coming to rehabilitated villages most of the respondents had their deliveries done at home. Before coming to the rehabilitated villages no respondent had gone to hospital for delivery. Only 1 respondent had gone to hospital for her delivery after coming to the rehabilitated villages. Both before and after coming to the rehabilitated villages, very few respondents have received antenatal checkup and medicine.

Table: 5.42 (b)  
Delivery Care after Coming to Rehabilitated Villages

After Conflict	No. of Births	Percent
<b>Delivery Place</b>		
Home	107	95.5
Parents Home	4	3.6
Hospital	1	0.9
Others Home	0	0
Total	112	100
<b>Antenatal Check ups</b>		
Abdomen Examined	16	14.3
Blood Pressure	16	14.3
Blood Test	12	10.7
Internal Examined	1	0.9
Urine Test	6	5.4
Weight Measured	6	5.4
<b>Medicine</b>		
All (Iron and Folic Acid)	16	14.3

Source: Field Survey, January, 2006.

### 5.13 Concluding Statement

Consequences of conflict and displacement are many and varied. However, resettlement and rehabilitation are measures that have been widely accepted as post conflict resolution mechanisms. Fortunately most Santhals who left their homes and villages were rehabilitated in the villages once left by them. Return to the villages after long stay in the relief camps does not mean return to normalcy. However, it is expected that return and resettlement in the very villages has had its

positive consequences which is borne out of the foregoing analysis. Nonetheless the impacts of the conflict and displacement can still be felt for a long time, much after the rehabilitation

The respondents, along with their family members have shifted to rehabilitated villages only recently. Some of them did not go back to their villages and got rehabilitated themselves in other villages than their own in fear of a backlash. While staying out of their villages they faced loss of their property. Respondents have also faced loss of household members when many got missing and death of their household members since the conflict changing the stable demographic pattern.

One such impact is seen in the case of rising proportion of female headed households as a direct outcome of the conflict and loss of many male members who either died or got missing. This is a major consequence for a number of rehabilitated women who now have to manage the family affairs singly, without much support from the male members. Return to the village and rehabilitation has also seen a change in the type of households compared to the types in the relief camps. There has been a perceptible increase in the number of nuclear households after coming to rehabilitated villages. Only a few single households remained as an after effect of the conflict.

Understandably the pattern of marital status shows the number of widows and deserted women who are of younger ages at rehabilitated villages. The conflict and displacement has had some serious impact on education of the Santhal women. Rehabilitation of the Santhals in their original villages has not much improved the situation and education has been a great casualty. The dropout cases among the respondents are extremely high. The major reasons by respondents behind dropout for

them and their household members has been reported as conflict related displacement, and fear of going to education centres.

The respondents and household members have suffered loss of property, which has resulted in tremendous shift in occupation structure, loss of work, and poor earnings. After conflict a wider shift in occupation and economic condition of respondents' and respondents household has been seen. Growing dependence on wage labour and on other activities in the informal sector of the economy has further impoverished them and made them vulnerable to poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition and hunger. Their self sufficiency and sustained relation with the environment has received a rude shock.

The death rate during conflict at respondents household was extremely high. Age specific death rate of females is higher in respondents' household than males. Number of deaths gradually decreased over the years, though 2004 shows some increase in number (17 percent). Needless to mention, deaths in the initial period are directly related to the conflict, but later the deaths are more an indirect effect of the conflict and displacement that saw a spurt in morbidity incidence.

After shifting to the rehabilitated villages, prevalence of different diseases have indeed declined. After coming to the relief camps most of the respondents suffered from tuberculosis, jaundice, malaria, also faced different stomach problems like indigestion, diarrhoea and gastric. Rehabilitation dramatically changed the situation with regard to tuberculosis, gastric, jaundice and indigestion which showed a drastic decline in their prevalence among the rehabilitated sections. Only cases related to Diarrhoea have increased. But overall, the health situation has improved after resettlement and rehabilitation of the displaced Santhals.

However, the trauma of the conflict continues to be felt among the rehabilitated females with a number of them complaining of critical diseases like blood pressure, blood sugar, asthma and arthritis which are an after effect of trauma and psychological stress. There is a however, a distinct improvement in the non-cereal food intake by the respondent women after their return to the rehabilitated villages and compared to their pitiable condition while in the relief camps.

Age specific fertility rate is high among the respondents' in rehabilitated villages as compared to the state. Still births and spontaneous abortions continue to affect the rehabilitated women as an after effect of the conflict induced displacement, fear and trauma.

A major demographic consequence of the conflict, displacement and rehabilitation has been an increase in the reproductive problems faced by the Santhal women. The psychological trauma which women experienced during the conflict period has manifest primarily in physical and gynaecological symptoms related to increase in gynaecological disorders. However, the women in the rehabilitated villages have received better quality of care and family support than before coming to rehabilitated villages.

In general the rehabilitation has brought some relief to the Santhal women though after paying a high cost as the consequence of the conflict which has made them highly vulnerable economically and socially. The world for most has changed beyond any repair.

## Chapter-6

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

**6.1** Wars and conflicts, whether internal or international, remain pervasive phenomena affecting mostly low-income countries. Demographic factors, such as differential population dynamics by ethnic or religious group, or the number of young persons in a population, often play a role in the causes of conflict. The demographic consequences of war and violence include forced migration-refugees and internally displaced populations (IDPs), increased mortality and changes in fertility and family structure.

The ethnic violence in Bodo areas of Assam following their demand for a separate state has certainly changed the world for many. The consequences of this clash have been many and varied for different people. Needless to say that the women are the worst victims of the conflict as they have to face a completely new world on the wake of displacement, family breakdown, loss of kith and kin and loss of support base-both economic and social. The present research aims at evaluating the impact of the ethnic violence on the women in this context. However, it may be noted that the impact must have been greater on those women who are on the receiving end of the conflict. It is the Santhal women who have been more displaced than their counterparts among the immigrant Muslims or the Bodos. It was proposed in this research therefore to consider the impact of the conflict only on the Santhal women while recognizing the fact that the impact of the violent conflict on the women belonging to other ethnic groups and similarly affected by the conflict could not have been anything far too different.

It is also a known fact that any ethnic conflict results in a serious imbalance in the demographic profile of the community. The ethnic conflict in the Bodo dominated areas has changed the demographic scene on an unprecedented scale. There has been large-scale displacement and redistribution of people resulting in changes in the growth rate of population and changes in age and sex-ratio, changes in occupation due to loss of land and due to migration to relief camps and other areas. All these demographic changes have an impact on affected women who may experience a host of problems ranging from increased reproductive burden, loss of family support, widowhood and sexual harassment to increasing proportion of women headed families and employment etc. It was proposed in this research to evaluate these aspects as far as the affected Santhal women are concerned.

**6.2** For the purpose of the present study the areas where *Santhals* constitute a significant proportion of the population of Assam has been selected as the study area. Since the Santhals living in Kokrajhar district have been the worst hit due to the clash between the Bodos and the Santhals, the study focussed only on this area. Kokrajhar is one of the few districts in Assam that has been experiencing constant rise in the share of scheduled tribe population in its total. The reasons are a mix of high natural growth rate in the scheduled tribe population as well as migration of Bodo tribes into this district in the wake of a demand for separate Bodoland state during the last few decades. Kokrajhar may be described as the gateway to the north-eastern region of India. The district has a total area of 3,169.22 sq. km. and a total population of 9, 30,404 according to the 2001 Census. The district is located on the north bank of the river Brahmaputra that slices the state of Assam into two, identified as north and south banks. The district is bounded on

the north by the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan, by Dhubri district on the south, Bongaigaon district on the east and the Indian state of West Bengal on the west.

The Santhals are largely concentrated in Kokrajhar district. Elsewhere they account for an insignificant proportion of their total population. The district kokrajhar was originally a part of undivided Goalpara district. The undivided Goalpara district had a highest share of Santhal population in Assam According to 1971 and 1991 census the total Santhal population in Goalpara was 55703 and 97086 respectively. On July 1, 1983 the Kokrajhar Sub-division was upgraded into Kokrajhar district with its Headquarter at Kokrajhar town. Bulk of the Santhali population is concentrated in the district of Kokrajhar, their number being as high as 81725 persons within in Assam accounting for over 60 per cent of the total Santhal speakers enumerated in Assam in the 1991 Census.

**6.3** The present study aimed at getting an insight into the consequences such conflicts have on women. Needless to mention, all conflicts have differential impact on different social and economic groups with regard to their capacity to cope with the situation. Ethnic conflicts have serious consequences for women largely due to their position in the family and in the society at large. One important consideration is their reproductive role and responsibility. They are most vulnerable to conflicting situations. The nature of armed conflicts changed dramatically during the latter half of the twentieth century, with casualties among civilians increasingly outnumbering those of military personnel. Women and girls became especially vulnerable in such conflicts. Since the end of the Cold War, women have been the primary victims in ethnic conflicts, constituting the bulk of civilian deaths and displaced refugees. The impact of conflicts on women and girls' reproductive and sexual health can never be underestimated. Their psychological,

reproductive and overall well-being is often severely compromised in times of conflict. Conflicts tend to increase the incidence of sexual violence; rape; sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDS; and unwanted pregnancies. In addition, essential social services, such as medical facilities, on which women heavily depend for their well-being, are greatly disrupted by armed conflicts.

**6.4** Given this background the broad objectives of this research were to get an insight into the ethnic dimension of the population redistribution in the areas of Bodo concentration; to study related demographic changes which are directly linked to the ethnic conflict and to assess the consequences of the demographic changes brought about by the conflict on the *Santhal* women.

The research questions placed before the research included the following: what are the consequences of conflict for morbidity, and mortality? How does conflict affect fertility, reproductive health or household composition? What are the consequences of conflict in terms of forced migration and other types of internal mobility? What are the demographic repercussions of forced migration?

**6.5** Much of the data required for this research has been obtained from primary sources particularly through a survey in the Relief camps and in the Rehabilitated villages in the study area. Census publications pertaining to population and language tables have been used to analyse patterns in the distribution and growth of Santhal and Bodo population at district, and village level. The secondary data also has been collected from District Commissioner Office Kokrajhar.

The Study has considered a time span of about 30 years, i.e., 1971 to 2001 while making use of secondary sources of data available in Census to understand the changes in

vital demographic indicators. An attempt was made to assess the spatial dimension of the change by a reference to the re-distribution of the Non Schedule Caste, Scheduled caste and, Scheduled Tribes to ascertain the areas where redistribution happened. By identifying the villages from where the Santhals have migrated to Relief camps, rehabilitated villages and analysing the demographic characteristics of the population living in those villages a general picture of their demographic characteristics before the conflict began has been obtained to be compared with their present demographic characteristics. The comparison has been made on such vital demographic indicators as the household size, sex ratio, literacy and occupational structure using field data from selected relief camp and rehabilitated villages for the year 1996-2004.

The selection of relief camps is based on a fair representation of the Santhals from all over the district. Six relief camps and four rehabilitated village were selected for the collection of data and it was ensured that these relief camps and rehabilitated villages have Santhals coming from most areas of the district. The impact of the conflict on Santhal women and the consequences of the conflict has been analyzed with reference to the following broad demographic indicators as changes in fertility, marital status with special reference to widowhood and remarriage, problems with regard to reproductive burden, reproductive health, mortality and morbidity, changes in occupational structure, changes in house hold composition etc.

**6.6** This study was organised into six broad chapters. The first chapter outlined the design of the research. The second chapter dealt with spatial distribution of the Santhal and chronology of the Bodo-Santhal conflict including a note on their distribution in India with special reference to Assam and the causes related to their migration. The

chapter also studied the distribution and core and periphery of Santhals in India and in Assam too. The third chapter dealt with redistribution and ethnic homogenization with a special reference to Kokrajhar district. The fourth and fifth chapters dealt with the impact of the conflict on Santhal women living in selected relief camps and selected rehabilitated villages respectively.

**6.7** Fight for territorial supremacy was one of the triggering factors for the Bodo-Santhal riots in 1996. Both communities had been living in peace in the area for decades. But, with the signing of the Bodo Accord in February 1993 between the All Bodo Students Union and the Centre came the new autonomous structure called the Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC). Only those villages with 50 per cent Bodo population were to be included into the BAC. This provision is generally believed to have encouraged a section of Bodos, including armed militants of different hues, to attempt ethnic cleansing - driving out the non-Bodos and converting vast stretches into Bodo majority areas. The divide today between the two communities is more than complete. The demand for Bodoland and issues like protest against Muslim, Bengalis and Santhals in the region reveals that the Bodos adopted the method of achieving their demand by the means of "ethnic cleansing" and "violence". The ensuing clash between ethnic groups has left many homeless and without the social support base which they enjoyed before the conflict erupted. The Santhals, due largely to their immigrant status and lacking political and economic resources, were naturally the worst hit. There is still a lack of clarity about the total area of Bodoland Territorial Council; the number of villages included and in future the villages might get included within the council, its total population and 'ethnic mix' of that area. The 'ethnic mix' comprises the Hindu Assamese, the Adivasis,

the Hindu Bengali and the Muslim communities. All these communities have a reason to be apprehensive on the decision taken in support of Bodos forming Bodoland Territorial Council and extending its area by including the villages with less than 50 percent of Bodo population to form contiguous region. As they view the land equally as their homeland. The setting up of the Bodoland Territorial Council, without clarifying these issues, and removing these apprehensions, is likely to be one of the most problematic aspects of the functioning of the Bodoland Territorial Council. Given the violence that marked the agitation in all its phases, a resumption of similar sectarian violence for fulfilling further future demands is very much on the cards.

Although the confrontation has taken an 'ethnic' dimension and the Memorandum of Settlement speaks about the Bodos forming Bodoland Territorial Council fulfilling the economic, educational, and linguistic aspirations and the preservation of the land rights, socio-cultural and ethnic identity of the people residing in the region, are likely to be exploited by the Bodos against the minority on all aspects of life.

The minority communities who are at the receiving end over the region now started to retaliate by mushrooming up their own militant groups' like Bengali Hindu formed there group Bengali liberation tigers, Adivasis formed Adivasi Cobra Militants of Assam and Muslim Fundamental organisations formed Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam, Muslim United liberation Front of Assam, all these groups are now better equipped to resist Bodo extremists. The Bodo movement has paved the way for the minorities to follow the same lines drawn by the Bodo extremists and show their retaliation to Bodo autonomy over the region.

Santhals are the most badly affected by conflict among all other minor communities. Presently they are in the most worsen state with lack of social development with poor economic background. Many of them have faced displacement twice within a short period of time and are staying in relief camps for more than a decade. The resettlement and rehabilitation of the devastated Santhals is still a low priority issue in the political agenda of the state government as well as Bodoland Territorial Council.

The significant issue that is addressed in this research however does not relate to the cause and the solution to the problem. The basic issue is the impact of the conflict on women in a situation of ethnic unrest, displacement, fear and uncertainty of the future. The Santhal women are of particular interest as they are in the receiving end of the ethnic clash in the wake of the formation of Bodoland Territorial Council.

As far as the tribal population is concerned, this segment is highly concentrated in three major pockets in Assam: lower part of northern Brahmaputra valley mostly inhabited by the Bodos, Rabhas and the Tiwa communities; in the south central parts considering of the two hill districts (North Cachar Hills and Karbi Anglong) of Assam where the Karbis and the Kacharis dominate and the third pocket is located in the north-eastern corner (Dhemaji district) of Assam which too contain a sizeable proportion of the Bodos in the total Scheduled Tribe population.

The Scheduled Caste population is highly concentrated in the southern districts of the Barak valley. The two other areas of their concentration are found in Morigaon in the central part and Bongaigaon district in the western part of the state.

On the other hand, the Non-Scheduled population is distributed all over the state though the extent of their dominance is inversely related to the areas of concentration of

the Scheduled Tribes. The most interesting aspect of the ethnic composition of Assam relates to the fact that the Scheduled Tribe population is distributed both in hills as well as in the plains. The Bodo Tribes are by and large confined to the northern bank of the Brahmaputra Valley.

At the state level, the share of the Scheduled Tribe population increased rapidly during the period 1971-91, but declined subsequently. The Bodo population too increased its share in the total as well as in the Scheduled Tribe segment in the same period. The increase in the share of the tribal population as also of the Bodos appears to be due to high natural increase in their population. This increase in the proportion of the Scheduled Tribe as well as that of the Bodos has been responsible in a relative decline in the share of the Non-Scheduled population over the period due largely to lower natural increase in its population.

**6.8** The history of Santhal migration into Assam reveals aspects of their spatial concentration and clustering in the state. Ethnically a tribe and recognised as a Scheduled tribe in Bihar, Jhrkhand, Orissa and West Bengal, the Santhals who were brought to work in the tea gardens of Assam in early 19<sup>th</sup> Century are not recognised as a Scheduled tribe in Assam. To begin with the Santali immigrants were almost exclusively confined to the gardens; but later their descendants formed a sizeable chunk of the population in the districts of Darrang, Sonitpur, Nagaon, Jorhat, Golaghat, Dibrugarh, Cachar, Hailakandi, Karimganj and Tinsuhis districts in upper Assam where the tea gardens were located. But later these 'tea tribes' moved to lower Assam too and were found in significant numbers in Kokrajhar and Bongaigon districts too.

The Santhal territory in the mainland remains little disturbed as far as their cores were concerned. Even the periphery remains highly compact revealing little distribution of the Santhal population in the mainland. However, there appears to be significant redistribution of Santhal immigrants in Assam as the initial livelihood available to them in the tea gardens has dwindled in scope forcing them to disperse themselves into a vast territory. Significantly, their core of concentration lies away from the major areas of tea cultivation and is now located in Kokrajhar district and the adjoining areas. The Santhals now are a largely cultivating group and have diversified their livelihood systems in the wake of demographic increase in their population and limited opportunities in the tea gardens which are less labour intensive than before.

The Bodos who were far more widespread in their territorial distribution have also been subject to tremendous redistribution and are now confined to a much smaller territory in the north bank of the Brahmaputra river. At the district level, the Bodo population shows extreme clustering in just three districts- Goalpara, Kamrup, and Darrang (eight districts in 2001, after reorganisation of these three districts) located in lower Brahmaputra valley. These three (undivided) districts have experienced unprecedented rise in the proportion of the Bodo population during 1971-91 decades, a fact that cannot be simply explained by natural increase alone.

The redistribution of both the communities- the Bodos and the Santhals brought them face to face as the cores and peripheries of the two communities coincided significantly. It is this accident of history in the peopling of Assam that promoted one of the most serious ethnic conflicts for the political control over a territory. The ethnic clash between the two groups left many dead, homeless and without a sustainable livelihood.

The impacts of the conflict, long after the settlement, have continued to affect all sections of the people in the territory.

There has been tremendous transfer of population among the three different ethnic groups namely the Bodos, the Scheduled Caste, and others. The Scheduled Caste as well as the Bodo population seems to have dispersed over more villages over the period of thirty years. The real decline in the presence of the Non- Scheduled component is rather alarming whose presence has been getting highly restricted over the years. The Bodos on the other hand have substantially increased their presence in many more villages. It appears that the Bodos and the Scheduled Caste people filled the vacuum created by the Bengalis, Nepalese, Santhals and Assamese people in this period.

The analysis conclusively proved that the Bodos have been successful in evicting the Non-Bodo population in a large number of villages with whom the Bodos had been living for centuries. The fact that there has been a corresponding decline in exclusively dominated villages by the Non-Scheduled population clearly indicates that it is this segment of the population which has been evicted from their traditional habitations. The Non-Scheduled segment seems to have lost the battle and has redistributed itself in a manner to protect themselves in a fewer villages within the district or have taken shelter in the Relief camps.

The spatial patterning in this process of redistribution of ethnic groups reveals greater homogenization of ethnic areas within the district. The most glaring changes in this process of spatial homogenisation are seen with respect to the Scheduled Tribes (the Bodos) and the Non-Scheduled component. The exclusive Bodo areas became spatially contiguous and far more extensive in the period 1971-91. The pattern in the year 2001

becomes even more clear and extensive with the extension of areas of Bodo concentration further westwards into Kachugaon block and emergence of new area of high Bodo concentration in the southern part in the traditional stronghold of the Non-Scheduled population. On the contrary, the areas of extensive numerical dominance of the Non-Scheduled component in the entire southern belt underwent massive transformation and were confined to only small patches with large discontinuities. The Non-Scheduled population seems to have lost the battle in the process of its hegemony in terms of spatial contiguity. As a whole, the changes in the pattern of concentration reveal greater ethnic homogenisation on space, reflecting a spatial dichotomy in the presence of the Scheduled Tribes (the Bodos) and the Non-Scheduled population.

Though there is some inter-block variation in this pattern of ethnic homogenisation the redistribution of population along ethnic lines however has been very pervasive in the entire district only varying in intensity.

Analysis of the trends in population growth at the village level too revealed tremendous inter village transfer of people along ethnic lines wherein a large number of villages belonging to the Bodos and the Scheduled Castes increased their dominance in villages increasing proportion of ethnically homogenous villages. On the other hand the Non-Scheduled population left many villages located in areas of the conflict. Only a small proportion of villages saw extraordinary rise in their population indicating some inter village transfer of the Non-Scheduled population. Evidently, these villages belonged to the most affected Santhals people who were organising themselves to counter Bodo onslaught. The period between 1991 and 2001 is characterised by a process of further consolidation as evident from a net decline in population belonging to all segments

without a corresponding increase in the proportion of villages that experienced substantive rise in the total population. Evidently such villages are the ones where they had small numerical presence. Villages experiencing extraordinary increase in population were extremely few cutting across ethnic lines contrary to the earlier phase. The growth data is a sufficient clue to the fact that more villages attained ethnic homogeneity during the 1991-2001 decade.

The most significant facts emerged from the analysis is that of desertion of villages by a particular ethnic group. The fact that desertion from villages cut across ethnic boundaries reveals the unprecedented nature of population redistribution and ethnic homogenisation of village population. Evidently the villages that experienced decline of population by an ethnic group became more ethnically homogenous. This process of desertion of villages has to be seen in terms of the ethnic homogenisation that had set in motion in the context of the ethnic clash between the Bodos and the Non-Bodo segment.

Statistical measure of the extent of redistribution revealed extraordinary inter-village transfer of people cutting across ethnic lines. Thus it is clear that the process of redistribution has been highly localised and is of intra-district in character. The localised nature of redistribution too points to the fact that it was largely an effect of the ethnic conflict within the district and that though there has been extraordinary transfer of people along ethnic lines, it has largely taken place within the district. It must be mentioned here that the dissimilarity index only shows a statistical measure of the extent of redistribution and does not specify the causes which may be either due to differential natural growth in their population or due to inter village transfer of population. However,

it can be easily concluded with reference to widespread ethnic homogenization that this redistribution is more due to the latter than the former.

Ever since the conflict respondents of relief camps and rehabilitated villages reported that they are being displaced several times outside and within the state to hide. After coming back to camps also they kept on moving from one camp to another in search of better place to stay or by official orders. Nearly all the respondents reported conflict, threat in their own villages as the main reasons for the displacement. Relief camps to them are much safer place than their villages, which are located near the Bodo villages.

**6.9** The analysis of the demographic consequences of the conflict on the Santhals in general and on the Santhal women in particular and those living in the relief camps revealed that the respondents and their family members have suffered long and continuous strife induced displacement. The respondents in the relief camps have experienced displacement since the onset of the conflict. While hiding themselves from the Bodos at the time of the conflict they all moved out and got displaced several times from one place to another.

The respondents along with their household members are staying at the relief camps for nearly a decade. Many of them did not go back to their villages due to renewed attacks on their life and property. While staying out of their villages they faced loss of their property. Since the conflict erupted, the respondents have also faced loss and death of their close kinfolk from their household.

A significant consequence of the conflict and its aftermath has been a change in the pattern of head of the households of many now living in the relief camps. There has

been an increase in female headed households- something that puts women in a difficult position with regard to managing the family affairs and earnings for the family without much support received from the male members.

There have been changes in the household type too. There has been an increase in the proportion of extended household types after the conflict. This change is against the norms of the Santhals traditionally living in nuclear households. The reasons for this change may be their forced living in the relief camps and purely economic. This also appears to be a temporary phenomenon.

Pattern of marital status shows increase in the number of widows and incidence of non-marriage increasing over the years. The impact of the conflict is certainly evident in the changes taking place in the marital composition of the households. There is larger number of cases where the women now live singly or without the support of males who may have died, are missing or have deserted. In any case, greater number of the women now faces the world without the much needed support of their male counterparts. Cases of early marriages are on the rise as an effect of the conflict. This may be a consequence of threat and insecurity developed among parents staying in the relief camps.

The conflict and displacement has had some serious impact on education of Santhal women. The dropout rate among respondents due to conflict is extremely high. The major reasons behind dropout of respondents and the household members have been reported as displacement, and fear of going to education centres.

The conflict has induced changes in occupational structure. Substantive shift in occupation and deterioration in the economic condition of the respondents and respondents' household has been seen. Drastic shift in occupational structure since the

conflict has rendered the female segment far more vulnerable and marginalised. Breaking out of the conflict and their shift to the relief camp deprived them of the vital land that provided livelihood to them forcing them to seek wage labour as a major option to earn a living. The Santhal women had to look for other avenues of work including some non-agricultural work like collection and sale of firewood, catching and sell of fish in the local market or petty trade- all of which were combined to generate some income. Agricultural wage earning provides work opportunities only for a few months and with very low wages. It is significant that wage earning by working in other's land as an occupation was conspicuous by its absence among the women before coming to the camps. However, left with no better option, bereft of their traditional livelihood a majority of the Santhal women had to offer their labour for a wage- a situation that made them highly vulnerable to complexities of agricultural wage market and wage market in general. Given the situation the women have faced marginalisation and poverty in a situation of complete vulnerability.

Age specific death rate of the females is higher in younger age in respondents' household than the males. Morbidity has affected all segments but more so the females. Increase in frequency of diseases among women is much higher after coming to relief camp as compared to earlier. The women too are afflicted by diseases not common to them before.

Age specific fertility rate is high among the respondents' in relief camp as compared to the state. The fertility rate in relief camps is the highest in the prime childbearing age at 20-29. Death of respondents' children is higher after coming to the

relief camp. Still births and spontaneous abortions are more frequent after the conflict. Health problems during pregnancy have increased after conflict.

Lack of proper food and care has been reported by the respondents of the camp. Insufficient and improper food has affected the health condition of the Santhal women living in the camps. The conflict and displacement has deprived a majority of Santhal women the much needed family support and care while in relief camps.

Reproductive health of the women has worsened after coming to relief camp. The Psychological trauma which women develop during the conflict period has manifest primarily in physical and gynaecological symptoms related to increase in gynaecological disorders.

Overall, the demographic consequences of the conflict have had a debilitating effect on the economic, social and psychological conditions of the Santhal women. Most serious consequences are seen in the sphere of family change, changes in marital status, school dropout, changes in occupational structure, heightened morbidity and affliction to new diseases and reproductive health. Though not comparable to situation of war, the consequences are quite significant for the displaced Santhal women and living in relief camps.

**6.10** The analysis of the demographic consequences of the conflict on the Santhals in general and on the Santhal women in particular and those living in the relief camps leads to the following broad generalisations.

The respondents and their family members have suffered long and continuous strife induced displacement. The respondents in the relief camps have experienced displacement since the onset of the conflict. While hiding themselves from the Bodos at

the time of the conflict they all moved out and got displaced several times from one place to another.

The respondents along with their household members are staying at the relief camps for nearly a decade. Many of them did not go back to their villages due to renewed attacks on their life and property. While staying out of their villages they faced loss of their property. Since the conflict erupted, the respondents have also faced loss and death of their close kinfolk from their household.

A significant consequence of the conflict and its aftermath has been a change in the pattern of head of the households of many now living in the relief camps. There has been an increase in female headed households- something that puts women in a difficult position with regard to managing the family affairs and earnings for the family without much support received from the male members.

There have been changes in the household type too. There has been an increase in the proportion of extended household types after the conflict. This change is against the norms of the Santhals traditionally living in nuclear households. The reasons for this change may be their forced living in the relief camps and purely economic. This also appears to be a temporary phenomenon.

Pattern of marital status shows increase in the number of widows and incidence of non-marriage increasing over the years. The impact of the conflict is certainly evident in the changes taking place in the marital composition of the households. There is larger number of cases where the women now live singly or without the support of males who may have died, are missing or have deserted. In any case, greater number of the women now faces the world without the much needed support of their male counterparts. Cases

of early marriages are on the rise as an effect of the conflict. This may be a consequence of threat and insecurity developed among parents staying in the relief camps.

The conflict and displacement has had some serious impact on education of Santhal women. The dropout rate among respondents due to conflict is extremely high. The major reasons behind dropout of respondents and the household members have been reported as displacement, and fear of going to education centres.

The conflict has induced changes in occupational structure. Substantive shift in occupation and deterioration in the economic condition of the respondents and respondents' household has been seen. Drastic shift in occupational structure since the conflict has rendered the female segment far more vulnerable and marginalised. Breaking out of the conflict and their shift to the relief camp deprived them of the vital land that provided livelihood to them forcing them to seek wage labour as a major option to earn a living. The Santhal women had to look for other avenues of work including some non-agricultural work like collection and sale of firewood, catching and sell of fish in the local market or petty trade- all of which were combined to generate some income. Agricultural wage earning provides work opportunities only for a few months and with very low wages. It is significant that wage earning by working in other's land as an occupation was conspicuous by its absence among the women before coming to the camps. However, left with no better option, bereft of their traditional livelihood a majority of the Santhal women had to offer their labour for a wage- a situation that made them highly vulnerable to complexities of agricultural wage market and wage market in general. Given the situation the women have faced marginalisation and poverty in a situation of complete vulnerability.

Age specific death rate of the females is higher in younger age in respondents' household than the males. Morbidity has affected all segments but more so the females. Increase in frequency of diseases among women is much higher after coming to relief camp as compared to earlier. The women too are afflicted by diseases not common to them before.

Age specific fertility rate is high among the respondents' in relief camp as compared to the state. The fertility rate in relief camps is the highest in the prime childbearing age at 20-29. Death of respondents' children is higher after coming to the relief camp. Still births and spontaneous abortions are more frequent after the conflict. Health problems during pregnancy have increased after conflict.

Lack of proper food and care has been reported by the respondents of the camp. Insufficient and improper food has affected the health condition of the Santhal women living in the camps. The conflict and displacement has deprived a majority of Santhal women the much needed family support and care while in relief camps.

Reproductive health of the women has worsened after coming to relief camp. The Psychological trauma which women develop during the conflict period has manifest primarily in physical and gynaecological symptoms related to increase in gynaecological disorders.

Overall, the demographic consequences of the conflict have had a debilitating effect on the economic, social and psychological conditions of the Santhal women. Most serious consequences are seen in the sphere of family change, changes in marital status, school dropout, changes in occupational structure, heightened morbidity and affliction to new diseases and reproductive health. Though not comparable to situation of war, the

consequences are quite significant for the displaced Santhal women and living in relief camps.

Consequences of conflict and displacement are many and varied. However, resettlement and rehabilitation are measures that have been widely accepted as post conflict resolution mechanisms. Fortunately most Santhals who left their homes and villages were rehabilitated in the villages once left by them. Return to the villages after long stay in the relief camps does not mean return to normalcy. However, it is expected that return and resettlement in the very villages has had its positive consequences which is borne out of the foregoing analysis. Nonetheless the impacts of the conflict and displacement can still be felt for a long time, much after the rehabilitation

The respondents, along with their family members have shifted to rehabilitated villages only recently. Some of them did not go back to their villages and got rehabilitated themselves in other villages than their own in fear of a backlash. While staying out of their villages they faced loss of their property. Respondents have also faced loss of household members when many got missing and death of their household members since the conflict changing the stable demographic pattern.

One such impact is seen in the case of rising proportion of female headed households as a direct outcome of the conflict and loss of many male members who either died or got missing. This is a major consequence for a number of rehabilitated women who now have to manage the family affairs singly, without much support from the male members. Return to the village and rehabilitation has also seen a change in the type of households compared to the types in the relief camps. There has been a

perceptible increase in the number of nuclear households after coming to rehabilitated villages. Only a few single households remained as an after effect of the conflict.

Understandably the pattern of marital status shows the number of widows and deserted women who are of younger ages at rehabilitated villages. The conflict and displacement has had some serious impact on education of the Santhal women. Rehabilitation of the Santhals in their original villages has not much improved the situation and education has been a great casualty. The dropout cases among the respondents are extremely high. The major reasons by respondents behind dropout for them and their household members has been reported as conflict related displacement, and fear of going to education centres.

The respondents and household members have suffered loss of property, which has resulted in tremendous shift in occupation structure, loss of work, and poor earnings. After conflict a wider shift in occupation and economic condition of respondents' and respondents household has been seen. Growing dependence on wage labour and on other activities in the informal sector of the economy has further impoverished them and made them vulnerable to poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition and hunger. Their self sufficiency and sustained relation with the environment has received a rude shock.

The death rate during conflict at respondents household was extremely high. Age specific death rate of females is higher in respondents' household than males. Number of deaths gradually decreased over the years, though 2004 shows some increase in number (17 percent). Needless to mention, deaths in the initial period are directly related to the conflict, but later the deaths are more an indirect effect of the conflict and displacement that saw a spurt in morbidity incidence.

After shifting to the rehabilitated villages, prevalence of different diseases have indeed declined. After coming to the relief camps most of the respondents suffered from tuberculosis, jaundice, malaria, also faced different stomach problems like indigestion, diarrhoea and gastric. Rehabilitation dramatically changed the situation with regard to tuberculosis, gastric, jaundice and indigestion which showed a drastic decline in their prevalence among the rehabilitated sections. Only cases related to Diarrhoea have increased. But overall, the health situation has improved after resettlement and rehabilitation of the displaced Santhals. However, the trauma of the conflict continues to be felt among the rehabilitated females with a number of them complaining of critical diseases like blood pressure, blood sugar, asthma and arthritis which are an after effect of trauma and psychological stress. There is a however, a distinct improvement in the non-cereal food intake by the respondent women after their return to the rehabilitated villages and compared to their pitiable condition while in the relief camps.

Age specific fertility rate is high among the respondents' in rehabilitated villages as compared to the state. Still births and spontaneous abortions continue to affect the rehabilitated women as an after effect of the conflict induced displacement, fear and trauma.

A major demographic consequence of the conflict, displacement and rehabilitation has been an increase in the reproductive problems faced by the Santhal women. The psychological trauma which women experienced during the conflict period has manifest primarily in physical and gynaecological symptoms related to increase in gynaecological disorders. However, the women in the rehabilitated villages have received better quality of care and family support than before coming to rehabilitated villages.

In general the rehabilitation has brought some relief to the Santhal women though after paying a high cost as the consequence of the conflict which has made them highly vulnerable economically and socially. The world for most has changed beyond any repair.

**6.11** The study made an attempt to understand demographic consequences on women in conflicting situation by considering two situations, namely the consequences during the displacement and after the rehabilitation. The study conclusively proved the negative impacts on the women on a number of demographic variables. Such impacts are not too different in other situations of conflicts affecting people in various parts of the world. However, the study merely aimed at drawing the attention of scholars working in this area of research to focus on women and their plight.

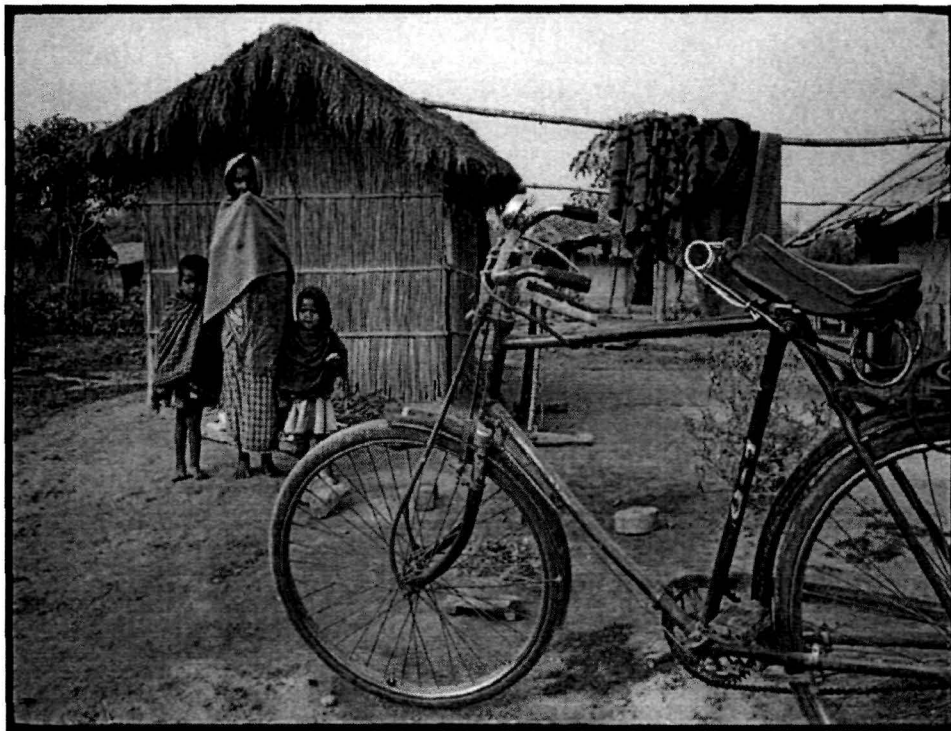
The limitation of the study flowed largely from non-availability of secondary data for the Santhals at the village level which made comparison rather difficult. Temporal analysis too became another grey area due to lack of census data for the year 1981. Data collected from District Commissioner Office and Bodo Autonomous Council on villages, relief camps and rehabilitated villages was also erroneous when compared with the name given by Santhals during the field study. Most of the name of the villages for particular blocks, which were described in records given by District Commissioner Office and Bodo Autonomous Council, did not correlate with the name given in the census for the villages in particular blocks.

In spite of the limitations posed by data availability, attempts were made to overcome these difficulties by intensive field investigations conducted at some relief camps and in a

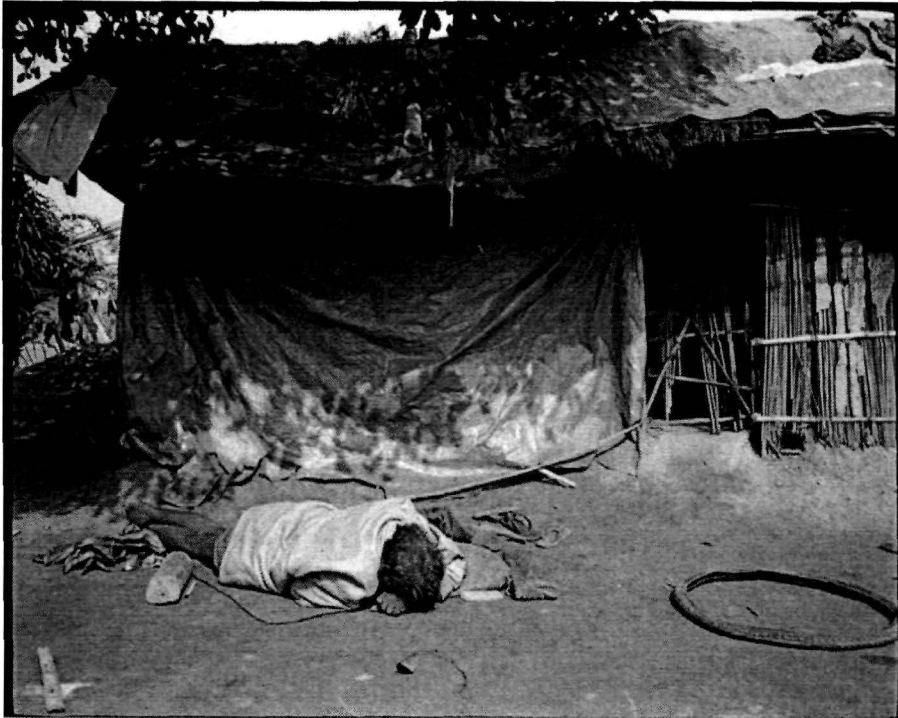
few rehabilitated villages. The findings and conclusions arrived in this study may be of interest to academicians and policy makers dealing with conflict related rehabilitation.



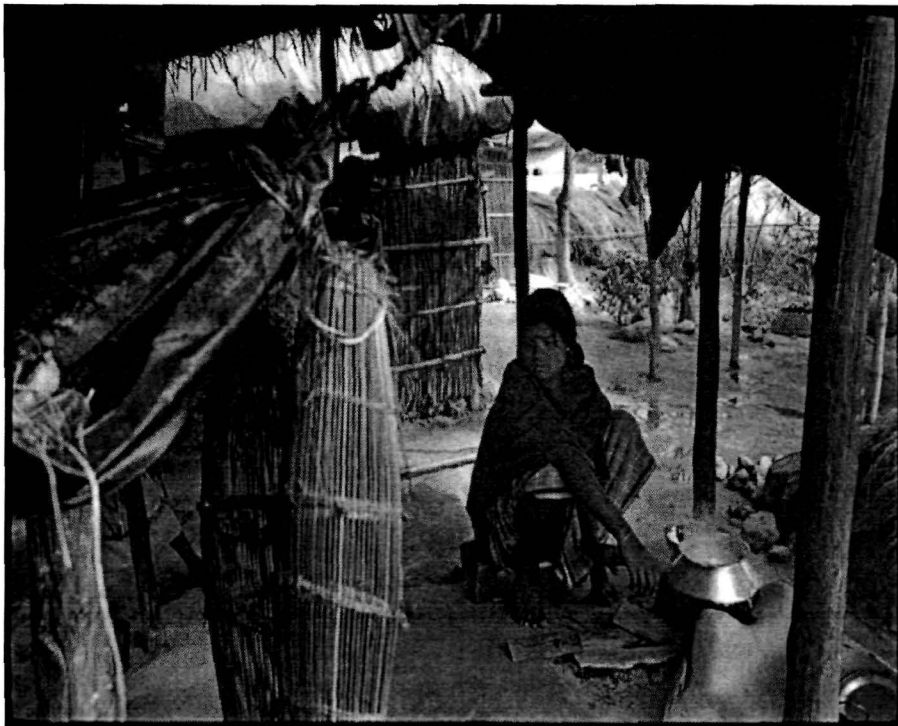
**Plate-1: Santhal Woman Carrying Wood from Jungle and Going Back to Camp**



**Plate-2: Santhal Family**



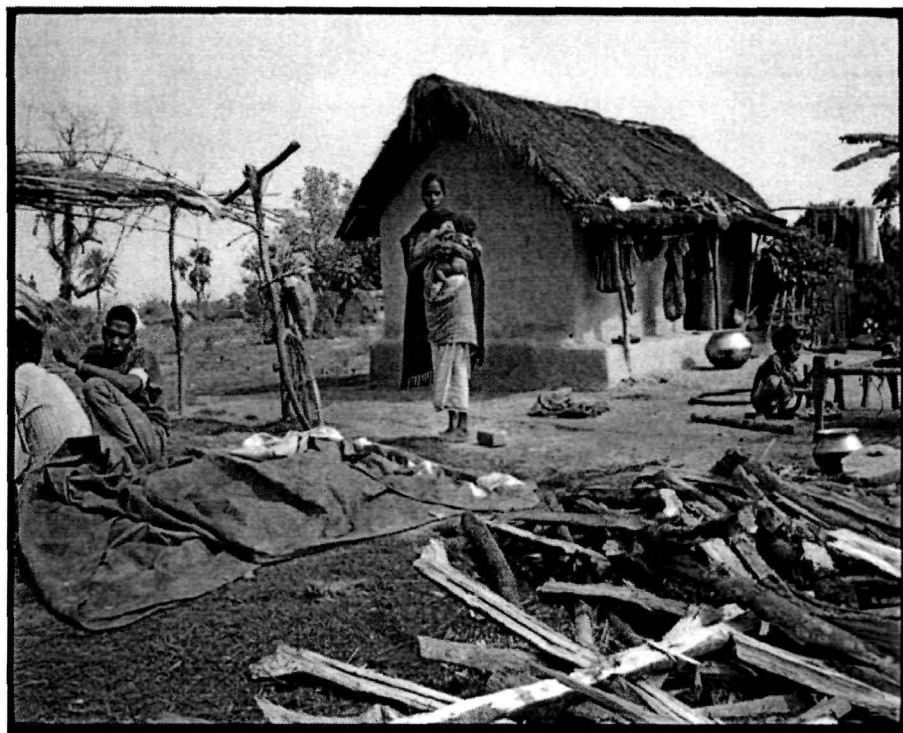
**Plate-3: A Santhal Man Sleeping Near his Hut**



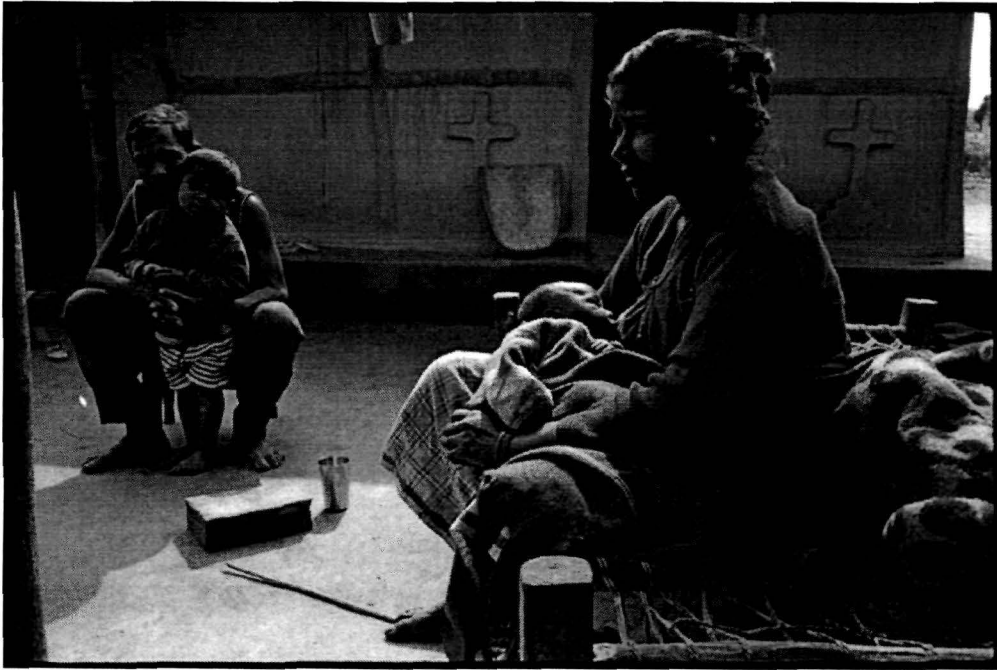
**Plate-4: Women Cooking Food**



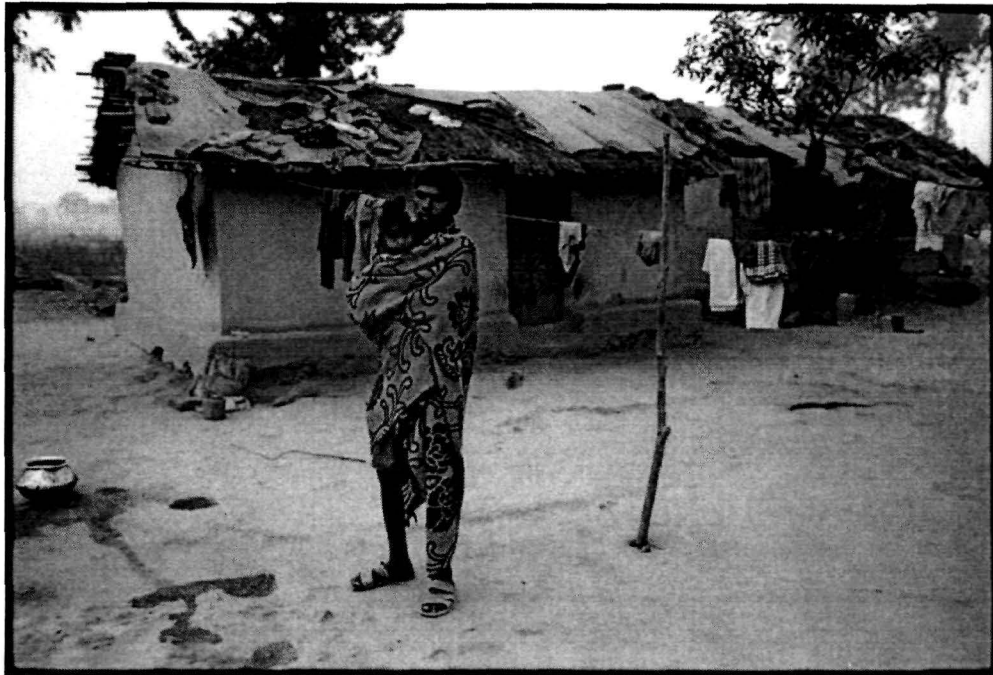
**Plate-5: Old Man with Little Girl**



**Plate-6: Woman with her Children**



**Plate-7: Woman Feeding her Child**



**Plate-8: Father and Son by his Hut**

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## Appendix-1

Name of the relief camp:

Name of the C.D block:

Number of House Holds:

Communities:

Total Population:

Total Population		Adult		Minor	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female

Main Occupation

**Location of the village:**

Distance from the main road

Distance from the railhead

Type of road

Type of communication facility available

**Basic Amenities:**

Distance from the nearest Primary School:

Distance from the nearest secondary school:

Distance from nearest Higher Secondary School:

Distance from the nearest college:

Is the village electrified: Y/N

Sources of drinking water and distance:

Police Station and distance:

Post Office and distance:

Any Bank; distance

Dispensary and Distance:

Hospital and Distance:

Any qualified doctor in the village: Y/N

Any communal riots in the village in the past 10 years Y/N

**Questions related to women group in general**

Does the women group like to return in there original place? Why?

What type of problems does the women group facing here? Specify

What are the women specific diseases commonly found here?

1=UTI, 2=AIDS, 3=Anaemia, 4=Diseases related to reproductive health

Are there any cases of child abuse, Rape, Drug addiction, Drinking Habits, Beating Habits, Trafficking, Genocide, Psychiatric and Run Away cases? If yes give the number of cases and specify the age of the victim and the year.

## Appendix-11

### Rehabilitated Village Schedule

Name of the relief camp: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of the C.D block: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of House Holds: \_\_\_\_\_ Communities: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Population:

Total Population		Adult		Minor	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female

Main Occupation

#### Location of the village:

Distance from the main road

Distance from the railhead

Type of road

Type of communication facility available

#### Basic Amenities:

Distance from the nearest Primary School:

Distance from the nearest Secondary School:

Distance from the nearest Higher Secondary School:

Distance from the nearest college:

Is the village electrified: Y/N

Sources of drinking water and distance:

Post Office and distance:

Police Station and distance:

Any Bank; distance

Dispensary and Distance:

Hospital and Distance:

Any qualified doctor in the village: Y/N

Any communal riots in the village in the past 10 years Y/N

#### Questions related to women group in general

Does the women group like to return in there original place? Why?

What type of problems does the women group facing here? Specify

What are the women specific diseases commonly found here?

1=UTI, 2=AIDS, 3=Anaemia, 4=Diseases related to reproductive health

Are there any cases of child abuse, Rape, Drug addiction, Drinking Habits, Beating Habits, Trafficking, Genocide, psychiatric and Run Away cases? If yes give the number of cases and specify the age of the victim and the year.

**Appendix-111**  
**Household Schedule**  
**RELIFE CAMP**

**RESPONDENT'S BACKGROUND**

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Religion: \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. Name of the current Relief Camp \_\_\_\_\_ C.D block: \_\_\_\_\_

**MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS**

3. When did you come to RC? Give month and year  
 4. What were the reasons for Migration to new place?  
 6. Name of the original place of usual habitation (village /C.D.B)  
 7. Have you been continuously staying in the relief camp? Yes  No   
 If yes: how long you have been staying here.

Year	Month	Reason

If no; give details

period	Reason for discontinuity
1	
2	
3	

8. How many times did you get displaced?

No of times	Year/month	Age at the time of migration	Give reason

Is there any missing person in your family? If yes give details regarding number of missing persons, their sex and age.

Is there any death in your family during 1996-2004? if yes then please state if the death was natural or due to Accident, Disease, Encounter Killed, Any other(specify)

Is your family a victim of any of the following before leaving for the camp? If yes give details

1= Theft 2= Rape 3= Murder 4= Threatening 5= communal frenzy 6= Any kind of pressure



## EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

18. Ever attended school Yes

No

19. If yes what is your qualification?

20. When and why did you stop your education? 1=Before coming to R.C, 2= After coming to R.C

	Age	Year	Give reason
1			
2			

21. What is the educational level of your family members?

Sl.	Family members (Relation to Respondent)	Education level
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

22. In last 10 years if any one of them dropped from school or college give the following  
1=, before coming to R.C, 2= after coming to R.C

No. of drop outs	Grade	1. Year	2. Year	Age	Reason

## SUPPORT BASE

Before Coming to R.C

After coming to R.C

23. What was your past occupation?	What is your present occupation?
24. As regards occupation how were you engaged? Whole year/six-ten months/ four to six months/ less than four months.	After coming to R.C how long do you get work? Whole year/six-ten months/ four to six months/ less than four months
25. Before coming to R.C did you usually work 1= at home 2= away from home. If	After coming to R.C do you usually work 1= in the camp 2= away from camp. If you

you worked away from home who took care of other works at home? Where you used to leave your children during work hours? 1=parents2=other siblings3=other (specify)	work away from camp who takes care of children during work hours? 1=parents2=other siblings3=other (specify)
26. What was the daily/weekly/monthly wage you used to receive before coming to R.C?	How much you get now?(mention period)

27. How much land you owned/operated before shifting? Owned Operated

28. After the shift how did you manage your property left at the original village/town? a) Sold b) Left c) Compensated properly d) not compensated

29. How much land you still have after shifting to R.C?

30. Do your family members have taken any loan 1=before coming to R.C 2= after coming to R.C?

year	source	amount	Reason

31. Since Last 10 years, have you been beaten, mistreated physically or sexually harassed a) By your family or community People b) by other community people? Yes=1, No=2

32. How often have you been beaten, mistreated physically or sexually harassed in the last 12 months

A) By your family or community members B) by other community members: (Once/A few times /Many Times/Not beaten)

### REPRODUCTION

33. Have you ever given birth? Yes  No

34. If yes then how many children you have?

35. Have you ever given birth to a boy or a girl before coming to R.C and after coming to R.C who was born alive but later died? If yes, mention no. and year of the dead.

36. If dead how old was he when he/she died? If 2 year or less, probe: How many months old he was? If 1 month or less then a month, record days?

37. While giving births after coming to R.C and before coming to R.C did you have any stillbirth, spontaneous abortion, or induced abortion?

38. How many stillbirths, abortions, Spontaneous abortions, Induced Abortions, you had after coming to R.C And before coming to R.C and in which year?

39. Are you pregnant now? If yes how many months pregnant are you?

40. When you were pregnant, did you go for an antenatal check-up?

## HEALTH

41. Before coming to the place what was the usual illness you use to suffer from and what are the general complaints after being shifted to R.C?

42. Did you have any persistence and contagious origin diseases? If yes, the mentioned diseases are treated or not treated?

43. What kind of treatments, medical assistance and care do you use to take before coming to R.C and after coming to R.C for the above said diseases respectively?

44. How do you use to pay for medical fees before coming to R.C and after coming to R.C?

45. What type of health services do you received earlier before coming to R.C and what do you receive after coming to R.C?

46. How often do you yourself consume the following items?

Milk or curd, Pulse or beans, Green leafy vegetables, Fruits, Eggs, Chicken, meat, or fish (1=Daily, 2=weekly, 3=occasionally, 4=never)

## ANTENATAL, NATAL, AND POSTNATAL CARE

47. Enter the line no, name, and survival status of births taken place since January 1996 in the table.

Line no.	Age	Survival status	Place where birth taken place	Year

Before coming to R.C	After coming to R.C
48. When you were pregnant, did you go for an antenatal check-up?	When you were pregnant, did you go for an antenatal check-up?
49. How many times did you receive antenatal check-ups during your pregnancy?	How many times did you receive antenatal check-ups during your pregnancy here in R.C?
50. When you were pregnant what kind of food you used to have?	When you were pregnant what kind of food you used to have?
51. Did you get extended network of family support during your pregnancy	Did you get extended network of family support during your pregnancy

52. What kind of health problems you were facing during pregnancy? 1. Anaemia, 2.Vaginal Bleeding, 3.White Discharge, 4.Blurred Vision, 5.Any Other Specify	What kind of health problems you were facing during pregnancy? 1. Anaemia, 2.Vaginal Bleeding, 3.White Discharge, 4.Blurred Vision, 5.Any Other Specify
53. Did you have the following performed at least once during any of your antenatal check-ups for these pregnancies? If not receive any antenatal check-ups specify why? Weight measured, Height measured, Blood pressure checked, Blood Test, Urine test, Abdomen Examined, Internal Examined, X-Ray, Sonogram/Ultrasound, Amniocentesis	Did you have the following performed at least once during any of your antenatal check-ups for these pregnancies? If not receive any antenatal check-ups specify why? Weight measured, Height measured, Blood pressure checked, Blood Test, Urine test, Abdomen Examined, Internal Examined, X-Ray, Sonogram/Ultrasound, Amniocentesis
54. What kind of medicines did you get during pregnancy?	What kind of medicines did you get during pregnancy?
55. Where did you give birth to your child? And if you did not go to a health facility for delivery specify why? Home, Your home, Parents home, other home, _public medical sector	Where did you give birth to your child? And if you did not go to a health facility for delivery specify why? Home, Your home, Parents home, other home, _public medical sector

56. Who assisted you in your deliveries? If no one then what is the main reason you did not take the help of a health professional?

Doctor, ANM/Nurse, Midwife/LHV/Other Health Professional, Dai (TBA), Friend, Relative, Other, No one

57. Did you have breastfed to all the children? If no, why did you not breastfeed? Mother ill/weak, Child ill/weak, Child died, Nipple/breast problem, insufficient milk, Mother working, Child Refused, Other

58. How soon after the birth of, did you first get a check-up? If yes, Where? (Days/ Weeks)



18. How often have you been beaten ,mistreated physically or sexually harassed in the last 12 months A) by your family or community members B)by other community members : Once/A few times /Many Times/Not beaten

**FAMILY BACKGRAGOUND**

Number of family members you have	Relation	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Q. 22 Education level

(Specify current marital status?) 1=Separated, 2=Deserted, 3=Divorced, 4= Widowed, 5= Never Married, 6=Remarried, 7= currently married

19. If separated, deserted, divorced, widowed then please mention

- a) Year of marriage
- b) Age at marriage
- c) Age at which divorced/separated/deserted/widowed

20. If you are single state the reasons: Spouse Left/ Dead/ Missing/ Any other (specify)

21. If the spouse stays elsewhere, then since how long:

22. Have you been married once or more than once? Once  More than once

23. If married once or more than once then please inform the age of marriages, duration, and to whom married specify community

	Year of marriage	Age at which married	whom	Remarks (if any)
1 <sup>st</sup> marriage				
2 <sup>nd</sup> marriage				
3 <sup>rd</sup> Marriage				



33. What was the daily/weekly/monthly wage you used to receive before coming to R.V?	How much you get now?(mention period)

34. How much land you owned/operated before shifting? Owned Operated

35. After the shift how did you manage your property left at the original village/town? a) Sold b) Left c) Compensated properly d) not compensated

36. What are present land and cattle support you have? How are you benefited to them?

37. Do your family members have taken any loan 1=before coming to R.V 2= after coming to R.V?

(Mention the source, year and amount)

38. Since Last 10 years, have you been beaten, mistreated physically or sexually harassed A) by your family or community People B) by other community people? Yes=1, No=2

39. How often have you been beaten ,mistreated physically or sexually harassed in the last 12 months A) by your family or community members B)by other community members: Once/A few times /Many Times/Not beaten

## REPRODUCTION

40. Have you ever given birth? Yes  No

41. If yes then how many children you have?

42. Have you ever given birth to a boy or a girl before coming to R.V and after coming to R.V who was born alive but later died? If yes, mention no. and year of the dead.

43. If dead how old was he when he/she died? If 2 year or less, probe: How many months old he was? If 1 month or less then a month, record days?

44. While giving births after coming to R.V and before coming to R.V did you have any stillbirth, spontaneous abortion, or induced abortion?

45. How many stillbirths, abortions, Spontaneous abortions, Induced Abortions, you had after coming to R.V And before coming to R.V and in which year?

46. Are you pregnant now? If yes how many months pregnant are you?

When you were pregnant, did you go for an antenatal check-up?

## HEALTH

47. Before coming to the place what was the usual illness you use to suffer from and what are the general complaints after being shifted to R.V?

48. Did you have any persistence and contagious origin diseases? If yes, the mentioned diseases are treated or not treated?

49. What kind of treatments, medical assistance and care do you use to take before coming to R.V and after coming to R.V for the above said diseases respectively?

50. How do you use to pay for medical fees before coming to R.V and after coming to R.V?

51. What type of health services do you received earlier before coming to R.V and what do you receive after coming to R.V?

52. How often do you yourself consume the following items?

Milk or curd, Pulse or beans, Green leafy vegetables, Fruits, Eggs, Chicken, meat, or fish  
A). 1=Daily, 2=weekly, 3=occasionally, 4=never

### ANTENATAL, NATAL, AND POSTNATAL CARE

54. Enter the line no, name, and survival status of births taken place since January 1996 in the table.

Line no.	Age	Survival status	Place where birth taken place	Year
1				
2				
3				
4				

Before coming to R.V

After coming to R.V

55. When you were pregnant, did you go for an antenatal check-up?	When you were pregnant, did you go for an antenatal check-up?
56. How many times did you receive antenatal check-ups during your pregnancy?	How many times did you receive antenatal check-ups during your pregnancy here in R.V?
57. When you were pregnant what kind of food you used to have?	When you were pregnant what kind of food you used to have?
58. Did you get extended network of family support during your pregnancy	Did you get extended network of family support during your pregnancy
59. What kind of health problems you were facing during pregnancy? 1. Anaemia, 2.Vaginal Bleeding, 3.White Discharge,	What kind of health problems you were facing during pregnancy? 1. Anaemia, 2.Vaginal Bleeding, 3.White Discharge,

4.Blurred Vision, 5.Any Other Specify	4.Blurred Vision, 5.Any Other Specify
60. Did you have the following performed at least once during any of your antenatal check-ups for these pregnancies? If not receive any antenatal check-ups specify why? Weight measured, Height measured, Blood pressure checked, Blood Test, Urine test, Abdomen Examined, Internal Examined, X-Ray, Sonogram/Ultrasound, Amniocentesis	Did you have the following performed at least once during any of your antenatal check-ups for these pregnancies? If not receive any antenatal check-ups specify why? Weight measured, Height measured, Blood pressure checked, Blood Test, Urine test, Abdomen Examined, Internal Examined, X-Ray, Sonogram/Ultrasound, Amniocentesis
61. What kind of medicines did you get during pregnancy?	What kind of medicines did you get during pregnancy?
62. Where did you give birth to your child? And if you did not go to a health facility for delivery specify why? Home, Your home, Parents home, other home,_public medical sector	Where did you give birth to your child? And if you did not go to a health facility for delivery specify why? Home, Your home, Parents home, other home,_public medical sector

63. Who assisted you in your deliveries? If no one then what is the main reason you did not take the help of a health professional?

Doctor, ANM/Nurse, Midwife/LHV/Other Health Professional, Dai (TBA), Friend, Relative, Other, No one.

64. Did you have breastfed to all the children? If no, why did you not breastfeed? Mother ill/weak, Child ill/weak, Child died, Nipple/breast problem, insufficient milk, Mother working, Child Refused, Other

65. How soon after the birth of, did you first get a check-up? Where? Days Weeks

## **Appendix-V Curriculum Vitae**

**Résumé of  
Ms. Mahasweta Satpati**

### **A. ACADEMIC ABSTRACT:**

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2003	M. Phil (Course Work); obtained Grade 'O', North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong, India
2001	Masters in Geography (Specialization in Regional Planning); obtained First Class, North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong, India
1999	Bachelor of Arts in Geography; obtained Second Class, North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong, India
1996	Higher Secondary School Certificate; Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Jammu & Kashmir, India
1994	Secondary School Certificate; Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Jammu & Kashmir, India

### **B. RESEARCH WORKS:**

#### **Ph. D. Topic on Going**

- 1) "Demographic Consequences of Ethnic Conflict on Santhal Women in Bodo Areas of Assam: A Study of Kokrajhar District"

#### **Supervisor:**

Dr. Debendra Kumar Nayak, Ph. D. in Geography  
Head, Department of Geography,  
North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong-7930 22 (Meghalaya) India  
Telephone: 0364-2723201/2723207 (O)  
E-mail: debendranayak@hotmail.com, dknak@rediffmail.com

### **C. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

#### **Current Position:**

1. Research Officer, PEHEL, Center for Enquiry into Health and Allied Themes (CEHAT), Research Centre of Anusandhan Trust Sai Ashray, Aram Society Road, Vakola Pipe Line, Santacruz (E), Mumbai-400 055

### **D. TRAINING & EXPERIENCE:**

- a. Computer knowledge with Statistical Programmed (MS Excel, SPSS, Origin 40, Statistica, Math card, Mathematica, Lotus 123)
- b. Arc GIS Training by NIIT, Kolkata 9<sup>th</sup> June to 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2003.
- c. Erdas Imagine (Remote Sensing Software) and GPS Training in Department of Geography, NEHU, Shillong 7th to 9th July, 2003.
- d. Training Programme on Application of Statistical Methods in Social Science Research. (Sponsored by Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi) Department of Statistics, Guwahati University, Guwahati. 22-26 June, 2004.
- e. "Remote Sensing and Geographical Information System for Application of Natural Resource Management" Sponsored by Regional Remote Sensing Service Centre (RRSSC), IIT Campus, Kharagpur and National Natural Resource Management System (NNRMS) 28<sup>th</sup> February to 12<sup>th</sup> March 2005.

### **E. Participation in Seminars/Conferences/Workshops**

#### **i) National:**

- a. National Seminar 'Population & Development in North-East India, Organized by International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai and North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong (February 25-27, 2004 Paper Presented Joint) "Ethnic Conflict and its Impacts on Santhal Women in Bodo Areas of Assam."

- b. Workshop on “Recent Techniques in Geography with Special Reference to use of Remote Sensing, Geographical Information System & Global Positioning System NDC-NRSA user Meet, Organized by NRSA & NEHU, in Shillong (March17-19, 2004 as a Trainer).
- c. 23rd General Conference, North-East India Geographical Society, Tezpur College, Tezpur, Assam, (6th – 8th December, 2004 Paper presented 1) “Demographic consequences of conflict on Santhal Women in the Bodo Dominated Areas of Assam”.
- d. A National Seminar on “Culture, Globalization and Gender” organised by Department of English, Gauhati University, Kokrajhar Capus, Korajhar, Assam (29-30th January, 2005 Paper Presented 1) “Demographic Displacement in Bodo Dominated Areas of Assam”

**ii) International:**

- a. International Conference on Environment, Locational Decisions and Regional planning North Eastern Hill University, Meghalaya, India (March 5-9,2002 Paper presented Joint) “Impact of New Computer Technology on Regional Planning: A case Study of Lower Brahmaputra Valley”
- b. XXIV Indian Geographers’ Meet (Institute of Indian Geographers) and International Conference on “Mountain Environment and Natural Hazards Management” North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong, India (27-29 March, 2003 Paper Presented 1) “Redistribution and Rehabilitation of Santhal population in Lower Brahmaputra Valley, Assam”
- c. Fourth International Convention of Asia Scholar (ICAS4), Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, Shanghai, China (20-24 August 2005 Paper Presented 1) “Demographic Consequences and Impact of Ethnic Conflict on Santhal Women in Bodo areas of India”.
- d. International conference on “Emerging Population Issues in the Asia-Pacific Region; Challenges for the 21<sup>st</sup> century” IIPS, Mumbai, India (Dec10-13, 2006 Paper Presented 1) “ Ethnic Conflict and Morbidity in Santhal Relief Camps of Kokrajhar District, Assam.”

**F. COMPUTER Skill**

Software	Application	Experience
MS Office	Application for Social Science	5 Years
SPSS, Statistica, Map Info 7.8 (GIS Software)	Data Reproduction and Statistical Analysis Application for Mapping things are , Mapping where the things most and least, Mapping Density, Findings what inside, Finding what nearly, mapping change in various field	3 Years 4 Years
Arc GIS 8.3 (GIS Software)	Application for Mapping things are , Mapping where the things most and least, Mapping Density, Findings what inside, Finding what nearly, mapping change in various field	3 Years
Erdas Imagine 8.7 (Image Processing Software)	Application for Geomorphological, Human Settlement, Forest, Agricultural Analysis and Watershed Management	1 Year

**G. PERSONAL PRECISE**

Mother’s Name: Mrs. Meera Satpati  
 Father’s Name: Mr. Dipak satpati.  
 Date of Birth: 28<sup>th</sup> October, 1978  
 Nationality: Indian  
 Sex: Female  
 Religion: Hinduism.  
 Caste: General (Brahmin)  
 Marital Status: Married  
 Passport No: F1808303  
 Issued in Guwahati, India, Dated 12.7.2005, Exp. Date 11.7.2010



#### H. ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE

<b>Present</b>	<b>Permanent</b>
<b>Ms. Mahasweta Satpati</b> B-203, Sai Chandrodaya CHS <b>Plot-56, Sector-17,</b> Koporkhairne, Navi Mumbai-400 709 Mob: 91+0996 7543 834 Fax: 91+364+2550076 Email: <a href="mailto:mahasweta@email.com">mahasweta@email.com</a>	<b>Miss. Mahasweta Satpati</b> At.:- Borai Dist: - West Midnapur Pin Code: - 721 457 West Bengal, India Tel. 91+3229 2512 96 (R) Email: <a href="mailto:mahasweta@email.com">mahasweta@email.com</a>

I certify that all the information stated in this CV is true and complete to the beat of my knowledge. I authorize you to verify the information provided in this Resume.

Place: Mumbai  
Date: 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2008

Ms. Mahasweta Satpati

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