

**ASSAM  
MUSLIMS  
POLITICS  
&  
COHESION**

**B. J. DEV  
D. K. LAHIRI**

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The book represents a pioneering analysis of the dimensions and potentialities of Muslim politics in Assam. The relevance of the issue has become all the more lively in view of the prolonged agitation on foreigners in Assam. The majority of the Muslims are attached to land a sizeable number having developed into landed aristocracy through their entrepreneurial ability. However, the Muslims of Assam belong to two different streams inheriting divergent cultural inputs and religion, as a factor of social consciousness, has not become pronounced as yet.

Assam is singularly free from religious fanaticism and social climate is traditionally permeable by secularisation and a feeling of tolerance among the two major religious groups. And still the recent developments have focussed the imperative need of protecting and safeguarding the legitimate interests of the Muslims who too had eagerly displayed their commitment to be partners in the economic prosperity of Assam.

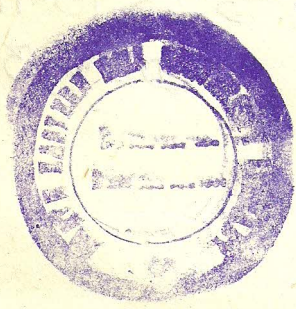
Muslims of Assam have produced great leaders in the persons of Sir Saadulla, Maulana Bhasani, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, Mainul Haque Chaudhury, Mrs. Anwara Taimur and Golam Osmani and as a community they have promises to keep for the betterment of Assam.

This penetrating analysis is an invaluable contribution in understanding the political consciousness and involvement of the Muslims of Assam who today find themselves at crossroads and among the vicissitude of political upheaval. They have become the focus of the political turmoil in the North East part of the country and the country is watching with baited breath the ultimate outcome of the burning issues related to the problems of Assam which pose a serious challenge to the ability and acumen of the leaders at the Centre and the State.

Bimal J Dev, M.A. (Double), LL.B., Ph. D. and Dilip K. Lahiri M.A., B.Ed., Dip-in-French and German languages, Ph.D., have outstanding research papers to their credit concerning the North Eastern Region of India published in various reputed Journals. Their earlier works "*Lushai Customs and Ceremonies*" and "*Cosmogony of Caste and Social Mobility in Assam*" published by Mittal Publications, Delhi have been acclaimed and greatly appreciated by the academic community.

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# ASSAM MUSLIMS Politics & Cohesion



DR. BIMAL J. DEV  
&  
DR. DILIP K. LAHIRI

1982

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Bimal J. Dev (1947- )  
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*Dedicated*  
to  
*the memory of those killed*  
*in communal frenzy at Nellie.*

## Preface

Muslim politics in Assam has always been deeply entrenched in the arena of controversy largely because of the politicization of apprehensions by the caste Hindus. The roots of such apprehension can be traced partly to prejudice and partly to economic struggle for land and power. Though Assam has traditionally been free from Hindu-Muslim animosity yet the proliferation of the Muslim population in the past eight decades has created a feeling that 'politics of number' could eventually have its way. The authors however have identified that in Assam the bond of religion is generally superseded by cultural identity and to that extent Assamese Muslims are found to be culturally closer to Assamese Hindus rather than their Bengali compatriots. The book seeks to analyse the cross-currents of Muslim politics in Assam which no doubt generated dynamism in State politics, the Congress Party having provided the Muslims minority protection, appear to be guided more by political rather than ideological considerations. This original study is intended to unfold the dimensions of political developments led by Muslims and those concerning their fate. Significantly, caste Hindus generally undermine the commitment of the Muslims of Assam towards the betterment of Assamese culture and language.

The various chapters of this book have been written after an in-depth analysis of original source materials which had hitherto remained entirely unexplored. The politics of immigration in Assam has brought to the forefront the imperative necessity of a dispassionate analysis of the potentialities of Muslim politics against the background of a social setting characterised by secularization and a spirit of tolerance. The authors express their thanks to the Editor, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh* for publishing two of their papers included in this book. The authors express their gratitude to Mr. B.N. Bahuguna, Editor of the Mittal Publications for his valuable help in the early publication of this work.

B.J. D

D.K. L

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