

INTERNAL MIGRATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE HILLS



A. MITRA

ABOUT THE BOOK

The people of India have a deep attachment to their place of birth and homeland. Some conditions force them for migration. With better transport facilities, industrialization, urbanisation people move from their birth place in search of better employment and trade.

The North East Region have one of the highest per capita availability of natural resources but still it is one of the economically backward region of India.

This book is a study of basic causes of migration of the people of North East India mainly Arunachal Pradesh & Meghalya.

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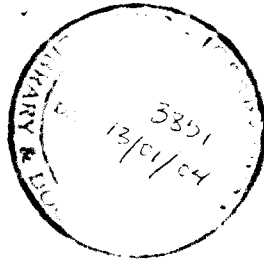
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Introduction

Urbanisation and migration are regarded as one of the most important indicators of economic development and social transformation of a region. Kuznets¹ data indicates that economic growth is accompanied by a gradual reduction in the relative share of agriculture, and an increase in the relative share of industry and services in total output and labour force. This is due to the difference in the spatial distribution requirements of agricultural and non-agricultural activities – a movement away from agriculture to industry will involve a movement of population from the agricultural areas to the industrial centres, – leading to population agglomeration and urbanisation. From this point of view, migration and urbanisation seem to be an integral part of economic development. Moreover, Kuznets² argues that the relationship between migration and economic development can also be seen in terms of the selectivity of people. Migration is a very selective process. According to him, migrants are dynamic, risk-bearing persons who respond favourably to economic stimuli and have high capacity to detach themselves from traditional surroundings and adapt themselves to unfamiliar environments. Thus, the migrant population may be among the most productive from the standpoint of economic development.

In the case of India we find that the Indian people have a deep attachment to their homelands. No doubt, some conditions in the

past forced the people to move from their place of birth, and their movement was stimulated further by the development of better transport facilities, growth of industries, the development of cities, the expansion of irrigation system and so on. The movement of population across the state boundary for permanent settlements and in search of employment, goes beyond the 20th century. The Indian population, concurrently with its growth, showed considerable mobility within and across the state boundary in the 60's only. The increase in population mobility may be due to regional disparity in the levels of economic development in India.

The area of my study is the North Eastern region of India comprising the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Manipur, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh. The region constitutes a formidable economic region for its peculiar nature and level of economic development. It is paradoxical to note that though the North Eastern region has one of the highest per capita availability of natural resources, yet it is one of the most economically backward regions of India. Therefore, we can say that the popular proverbial expression "poverty in the midst of plenty" does not seem to fit so appropriately elsewhere in the country, as it does in the North Eastern region of India.

The whole of North East India can be broadly divided into two divisions of (i) Plains and (ii) Hills. The plain region comprises mainly the states of Assam and Tripura and the rest of the states can be broadly grouped under the hill region³. There is a marked difference between these two divisions in respect of resource endowments, resource use pattern, geographical condition, social set-up and demographic features. Now sufficient attention has been paid and various measures have been taken for the economic development of this hilly region and for the upliftment of the economic condition of the people. The region has been making great efforts to make good the neglect of centuries within a few years.⁴ Hence, the present study will investigate the relationship between levels of economic development and migration in the North Eastern Hill region of India with special reference to Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

(i) One of the main objectives of the present study is to get an insight into the nature and extent of urbanisation and internal migration, both on the basis of 'place of birth' and 'place of last residence' in these two states of North Eastern Hill region of India namely, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya, characterised by different levels of development and the various social and cultural milieu.

(ii) Secondly, it is realised that a macro-analysis of migration, although it provides some understanding of the significance of internal migration and its major dimension, does not give a true picture about the specific dynamics of migration. Therefore, an attempt has been made to examine the extent, distance covered, directions of internal migration and distribution of migrants by duration of residence in lower aggregative units such as districts, urban centres, etc.

(iii) Thirdly, since urbanisation is closely linked with internal migration, my study also intends to examine the degree, rate of urbanisation, growth of urban centres and estimation of migrants in urban centres in different districts of these two states of North East India.

(iv) Finally, the study attempts at examining the relationship between the levels of economic development and total migrants and male migrants in Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya in 1981.

Hence, the present study is limited to the following problems :

- (a) Whether Lee's theory regarding distance covered by migrants is true for Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya, (the area selected for the study) during 1971-81.
- (b) Whether urbanisation and migration increases with overall development i.e. does the hypothesis of transition mobility of Zelinsky hold good for the area under study ?
- (c) Whether migration tends to be from areas of low level of economic development to economically more developed areas in the area under study ?

AREA OF STUDY

Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya, the two hilly states have

been selected for testing the hypotheses formulated earlier. It would have been interesting if the work could be done for the whole of North Eastern region. However, it was limited to only two states of this region on the following grounds :

- (i) The census could not be undertaken in Assam in 1981.
- (ii) It is interesting to note that very few studies on urbanisation and migration in these two hilly states have been completed to this date. So, in the present study an attempt will be made to fill this gap.
- (iii) It was not possible to do justice to such a vast topic for the entire North Eastern region. Therefore, we have limited our study to only two states of the North Eastern Hilly region of India, namely, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya for an indepth analysis. It is expected that this will form the basis of future research work on the original topic relating to the entire North East India.

Meghalaya was constitutionally a part of Assam till 1972 and it was created as an autonomous state within the state of Assam on April, 2, 1970. The full fledged state of Meghalaya (the abode of clouds) came into existence on January 21, 1972. Its birth is unique in the sense that never before has a new state been carved out of a larger state with so much cordiality. On the other hand, Arunachal Pradesh (the land of the rising sun), earlier known as North East Frontier Agency (N.E.F.A.) was administered by the Ministry of External Affairs with the Governor of Assam acting as an agent to the President. The administrative head was the adviser to the Governor and his secretariat was situated in Shillong, where he was assisted by a number of advisers and heads of departments⁵. It came into being as an Union Territory on 20th January, 1972, under the provision of the North East Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971 which was a significant step towards the development of economic life of the people. The territory was endowed with legislative status with effect from 15th August, 1975. Ultimately, Arunachal Pradesh attained statehood on 20th February, 1987. In fact, Arunachal Pradesh, the land of the dawnlit mountains is the youngest and the largest of all the states of North East India. The demand for a

separate hill state to cater to the special needs of the people of this region had existed for long. Thus, the birth of Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh saw the successful culmination of the aspirations of the hill people of this region. The following is a detailed account of these two states of North Eastern India, selected for the study.

ARUNACHAL PRADESH

It is the north eastern most part of India and lies geographically between $26^{\circ}42'$ to $29^{\circ}30'$ N.L. and $90^{\circ}36'$ to $97^{\circ}30'$ E.L. The state has an area of 83,743 sq. km. with a population of 6.31 lakhs in 1981 (8.58 lakhs in 1991). It is the home of more than twenty major tribes and 110 sub-tribes and is acknowledged to be one of the most splendid, variegated, and multi-lingual tribal areas of the world. It is comparatively a new state of immense strategic importance to the Government of India, having an international border and Bhutan in the west, China in the north and north-east and Myanmar (Burma) in the east. The total length of international border is about 1,628 km. It has inter-state borders with Nagaland in the south-east and east and with Assam in the south. According to the 1981 census, the state is divided into nine administrative districts namely – (i) West Kameng, (ii) East Kameng, (iii) Lower Subansiri, (iv) Upper Subansiri, (v) West Siang, (vi) East Siang, (vii) Dibang Valley, (viii) Lohit and (ix) Tirap. All the districts of the state have been taken into account in the present study (The administrative map of Arunachal Pradesh is shown in Map No. I). The entire North Eastern region is backward vis-a-vis the rest of the country and Arunachal Pradesh is by far the most underdeveloped in the North Eastern region. However, since the fifth five year plan, the economic structure of the state has acquired a new vibrancy and dynamism and the per capita income of the state which stood at Rs. 456 in 1970-71, had increased to Rs. 726 in 1981-82 at constant prices of 1970-71 against the all India average of Rs. 720.

Forest covers over 51,540 sq. kms. accounting for 61.5% of the total geographical area of the state. Besides, forest is the major source of revenue of Arunachal Pradesh, contributing more than 70% of the total revenue to the state exchequer. Agriculture is the

Map No. 1

ARUNACHAL PRADESH ADMINISTRATIVE MAP (1981)

Km. 20 0 20 40 50 60 Km



■ STATE CAPITAL
● DIST. HQ.

mainstay of the economy of the people. According to 1981 census, around 73.75% of the total workers depend on agriculture for their livelihood. The method of cultivation in this hilly state is 'Jhuming' or shifting cultivation. According to a study by I.C.A.R.,⁶ around 70.77% of total cropped area of the state is under shifting cultivation which affects the forest resources as well as the agricultural productivity of the state. This state has moderate cropping intensity of around 1.15.

In the demographic sphere, the state has the lowest density of population around 6 persons per sq. km. in 1981 (10 persons per sq. km. in 1991) against the all India average of 216 persons per sq. km. (267 persons per sq. km. in 1991). The degree of urbanisation is also lowest around 6.56% in 1981 (12.21% in 1991) against the all India average of 23.34% in 1981 (25.72% in 1991). The share of internal migrants to total population is 35.58% against the all India average of 29.51% in 1981. Of the three categories of internal migrants, the share of intra-district (M_0) migrants is highest (53.82% of total internal migrants) the inter-district migration (M_1) is lowest (6.54% of total internal migrants). The inter-state migration (M_2) which is an important component, constituted 14.45% of total population. The share of male migrants in total migrants is 49.76%, out of which, rural to rural migrant is the highest (around 75%). The level of literacy is also quite low around 20.79% in 1981, (32.87% in 1991) as against the all India average of 36.23% in 1981 census (52.11% in 1991).

The economic development of a region or a state largely depends upon the development of a sound infrastructural base. The infrastructural facilities of Arunachal Pradesh is inadequate, despite concerned efforts by the State Government to improve the situation. For example, road is a basic necessity to the infrastructure and isolation can be broken only through roads. At the time of independence, Arunachal Pradesh had only 168 kms of motorable roads, most of the areas remained inaccessible.⁷ Today, the state has a wide network of roads connecting all the districts headquarters, and many sub-divisional headquarters. However, with a present average of 15.25 kms of road length per 100 sq. kms. of area,

Arunachal Pradesh will continue to trail far behind the all India average of 47.27 kms of road length per 100 sq. kms of areas. The per capita power consumption is also very low. It was only 13.12 K.W/h. in 1983-84. No doubt, efforts are being made by the State Government to improve the per capita consumption by implementing programmes of rural electrification. In spite of this, only around 21.63% of the total villages were electrified in the different districts of the state in 1983-84 against the all India average of 60.3%. In terms of medical and banking facilities, the state lags far behind the other states of the country. For example, the number of hospital beds per 10,000 population is only 20.1 in 1983-84 against the all India average of 50. The number of banks per lakh population is very low i.e. only 9 in Arunachal Pradesh. The credit-deposit ratio is very low i.e. 21.68% only, in 1985-86 against the all India average of 63.02%.

MEGHALAYA

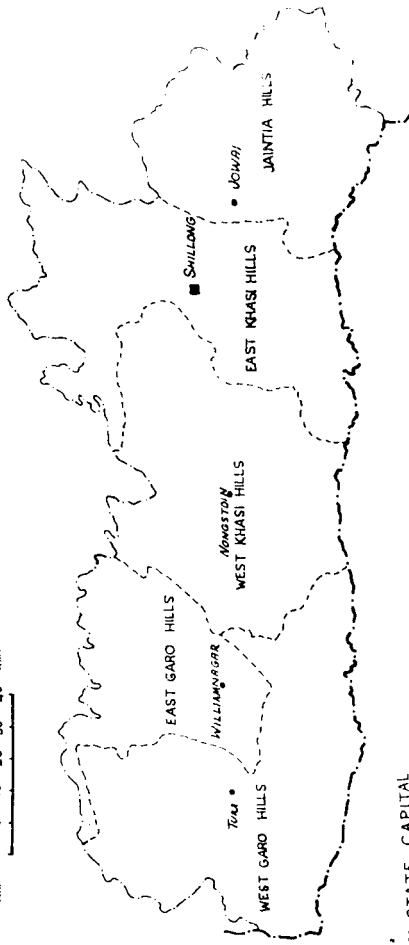
The state of Meghalaya is situated in the North Eastern region of India, between the Brahmaputra Valley in the north and Bangladesh in the south. It has a total geographical area of 22,489 sq. km. with a total population of 13.8 lakhs in 1981 (17.6 lakhs in 1991). The average decennial growth rate of population was 32.04% in 1971-81 and slightly reduced to 31.80% in 1981-91. The state is divided into five administrative districts, namely – (i) Jaintia Hills, (ii) East Khasi Hills, (iii) West Khasi Hills, (iv) East Garo Hills and (v) West Garo Hills. All the districts of Meghalaya have been considered in the present study (The administrative map of Meghalaya is shown in Map No. 2). It is an extremely backward state with per capital income of Rs. 1,103 at 1980-81 prices against all India average of Rs. 1,558. The general economic backwardness of Meghalaya is reflected by economic and socio-demographic indicators which are discussed below.

Forests cover around 8,514 sq.kms. accounting for 37.9% of the total geographical area of the state. The predominance of agriculture is a basic characteristic of Meghalaya. Nearly 72.54% of the total workers are engaged in the agricultural sector. The traditional

Map No. 2

MEGHALAYA ADMINISTRATIVE MAP (1981)

Km. 10 0 10 20 30 40 Km.



- STATE CAPITAL
- DIST. HQ.

producing pattern of agriculture is 'Jhuming' or shifting cultivation which acts as a hampering factor against the growth of the economy. It is estimated that nearly 42.22% of the total cropped area is under shifting cultivation⁸. In terms of agricultural indicator, this state has a moderate cropping intensity of nearly 1.12.

The demographic pattern of the state reveals the predominance of rural population with a very low percentage of urban population which accounts for only 18.07% in 1981 and 18.69% in 1991.

The levels of literacy in Meghalaya is slightly lower than the Indian average i.e. 34.08% in 1981. It is observed that the lion's share of the growth of urbanisation has mostly been in East Khasi Hills district, and in particular in Shillong and the neighbouring areas. This growth can be accounted for by the migration of people from the rural to the urban areas within the state as well as accommodating people from other states serving in this region either for business purposes or on government duties. Although the share of internal migrants to total population is only 20.66% which is below the all India average of 29.51%. Out of the total migrants, rural to rural migration is the highest which accounts for 61.71%. The inter-state migration (M_2) constituted 5.93% of the total population. Besides, the state has also received immigrants from Nepal and Bangladesh. The share of male migrants in total migrants is quite high i.e. 57.05%. This may be due to the fact that males generally go to live in their wives' houses after marriage, permanently in the case of youngest daughters, and temporarily in the case of other daughters.

The infrastructural base of a region plays a vital role for the economic development of this region. In terms of infrastructural indicators, we find that the state is predominantly hilly and has a poor transportation link. Meghalaya is only connected by road, but the length of road per 100 sq. kms. of area is only 23.32 kms. against the all India average of 42.27 kms. in 1982-83. It is a well accepted fact that availability of electrical energy is one of the basic infrastructures, necessary for the region. The per capita power

consumption, which is regarded as a good indicator of economic development, is not very encouraging in this state. In Meghalaya, it was only around 46 K.Wh against the all India average of 136 K.W/h in 1981-82. As regards rural electrification, only 17.17% of total villages in Meghalaya were electrified upto 1982-83.

In terms of medical and banking facilities, the state remains far behind as compared to other states of the country. For example, 1983-84, the number of hospital beds per 10,000 population is 15.03 only, against the all India average of 50.0. In East Garo Hills, it is as low as 4.2 only. The number of banks per one lakh population is only 10 in Meghalaya in 1983-84. The flow of bank credit of rural areas is very poor and credit deposit ratio of banks is one of the lowest in Meghalaya i.e. 23.12% in 1985-86 as against the all India average of 63.02%.

However, this overall or averaged picture of these two hilly states of North Eastern region conceals within itself the enormous spatial variations in terms of all the indicators discussed below. Therefore, for a better understanding the clearer picture to emerge, district level information have been used for further analysis.

DATA BASE, COVERAGE AND LIMITATION

The present study is based entirely on the secondary sources of data, available in the Census of India Publications, Basic Statistics of North Eastern Region published by North Eastern Council, and other published and unpublished data available with Census Authorities, the Directorate of Economics & Statistics, and the Directorate of Agriculture of Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya respectively, which are mentioned in the appropriate places. The migration tables from where the data have been derived include Census of India, 1971 (D-Series) and Migration Tables Part-V A and B of Arunachal Pradesh (Series-25) and Meghalaya (Series-14) respectively, for the year 1981. Since the study area is large, actual surveys have been ruled out, because even small percentage of samples would have yielded large volumes of data. The data of migration tables are based on both (i) 'Place of Birth' concept and (ii) 'Place of Last Residence' concept. The district has been selected

as the smallest unit of study because migration data is not available below the district level. Further, since the district level migration data of Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya are available only in 1981, our district level migration analysis pertains only to 1981. Therefore, the study is a cross-sectional one, taking 1981 as the point of time. Although, a cross-sectional study can never be a substitute for trend analysis, the objectives of the study could as well be satisfied if the latter is related to the former. Hence, at least an attempt has been made to analyse the trend by taking into account the state level migration data during the 1971-81 period only.

The data on 'birth place' and 'last residence' are easy to collect on census schedule and probably more accurate because most persons know where they have come from and where they were born. However, the migration data on 'place of birth' concept has certain limitations.

Firstly, the migration data on 'place of birth' concept does not include return migration. For example, a migrant who returns to the place of birth between the two census counts is not considered as a migrant at any place. The identification of return migrants is necessary for the purpose of economic analysis and policy.

Secondly, birth place data may be rendered unsatisfactory for purpose of migration analysis by some special conditions prevalent in a country. For example, in India it is customary for a woman to return to her father's home to bear the first child and often the second and subsequent children. This custom gives rise to some spurious migration as measured from the 'place of birth' statistics.

Thirdly, if a person has lived in the place for a longtime, there may be a tendency to report the same as his birth place. Such unintentional mis-statement of birth place can arise from political or prestige factors.

Finally, the timing of migration is unknown in the case of 'birth place' migration. For example, the migrants include those who came to the place of enumeration just a few days before the census data and those who came half a century earlier⁹.

Some of the above limitations have been overcome by taking into account, 'the last residence' concept. However, the accuracy of duration of residence data is affected to some extent by the fact that the information is sometimes given by a respondent who does not know the duration of residence of all the house-hold members. Therefore, there may be a considerable number reported 'period not stated'.

The migration statistics based on 'place of last residence' have given rise to another problem. A person born outside India, if he/she changes residence in India at least once, becomes an internal migrant by place of last residence criterion instead of being an immigrant. In contrast a person born in India becomes an immigrant provided that the person did not change his/her residence after returning to India¹⁰. The same problem may arise in the case of inter-state migrants (M₂) as there is large scale of circular movements of inter-state migrants.

The North Eastern region had been experiencing high percentage of inter-state migrants (M₂) and international migrants (M₃), it is felt that 'place of birth' data will give a better estimate of migration. However, it is hoped that these limitations will not have a serious impact on the study, since the major concern here is in inter-district variation in both the states.

BASIC CONCEPTS IN MIGRATION ANALYSIS

Before analysing the pattern and composition of migration and its relation with economic development in the subsequent chapters, it is better to discuss the basic concepts in migration analysis in the first chapter. Theoretically, the term 'migration' is reserved for those changes of residence that involve a complete change and of the community affiliations of the individual. Thus, migration is a form of geographic or spatial mobility involving a change of usual residence between clearly defined geographic units. Therefore, the term 'migration' has in general usage, been restricted to relatively permanent changes in residence between specifically designated political or statistical areas or between types of residence areas¹¹. In general, the field of migration study is divided into two : (i) internal

migration and (ii) international migration. A migrant who crosses a migration defining boundary in the process of changing residence and enters a given community from some other part of the same nation is an internal migrant and is termed as 'in-migrant'. On the other hand, the term 'immigrant' refers to an international migrant who comes from a sovereign country. Similarly the term 'outmigrant' refers to a migrant who crosses a migration defining boundary while departing from a residence to reside in another area within the same nation. The term 'emigrant' is used in the study of international migration as a counterpart. Thus, the study of migration can be carried out separately for internal and international migration. However, in certain cases, the study of both internal as well as international migration may have to be done simultaneously and in such cases the technologies should be used carefully to distinguish these two types of migrants.

The term 'gross in-migration' denotes the sum of the arrivals and departures of migrants and it is a measure of total volume of population turnover that a community is experiencing. It includes both internal and international migration unless specifically mentioned.

Any particular area may simultaneously be receiving migrants from some areas and countries and losing migrants to other areas and countries. The net balance between arrivals and departures is termed as 'net migration'. Net migration may be positive or negative depending upon the number of arrivals and departures. It will be positive if arrivals exceed departures and vice versa.

The term 'internal' and 'international' are used with the terms 'gross' and 'net' migration to distinguish between internal and international migration. For example, when we consider only the in-migrants and out-migrants (not immigrant and emigrant) to measure 'net' and 'gross' migration, the terms 'net' internal migration and 'gross' internal migration respectively may be used. Similar is the case in international migration analysis where the term 'international' is just inserted in place of 'internal'. If we are analysing a situation by taking both internal as well as international migration into account,

we may simply use the term 'gross migration' or 'net migration' without any specific reference as mentioned above.

The area from which a migrant departs is termed as the area of 'origin' and the area to which he arrives is termed as area of 'destination'. When a large number of migrants depart from a common area of origin and arrive at a common area of destination during a particular period of time, it is known as a 'migration stream'. A particular period of time is necessary to observe migration and it is known as 'migration interval'. Time intervals of one year, five years and ten years have been used in migration analysis. Thus, in analysing migration statistics, it is always necessary to specify the interval of time or migration interval to which they relate.

ANALYTICAL FRAME

The importance of economic development in population migration cannot be over emphasised. Since the levels of development are not directly measurable we have selected suitable indicators. A development indicator should represent some aspect of development such as industrialisation, infrastructural facilities, participation rate etc. because development involves changes in structure, capacity and output. The development indicators which are likely to exert influence on the total migration and male migration rates in particular, in different districts of these two states of the North Eastern region, can be grouped into three categories as given below.

- (i) Economic Indicators,
- (ii) Socio-Demographic Indicators and
- (iii) Indicators of Infrastructural Development.

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Since agriculture is the most important occupation and the majority of the people are engaged in agricultural occupations in these two states of North East India, the levels of development in this case can best be reflected in agricultural efficiency. Hence, out of six economic indicators chosen, there are three indicators of agricultural development. These are as follows :

- (i) Land-man ratio expressed as persons per hectare of gross cropped area (X_1).
- (ii) Cropping intensity (X_2) determined by dividing gross cropped area by net cropped area.
- (iii) Percentage of workers in primary sector to total workers (X_3).
- (iv) Percentage of workers to total population (X_4).
- (v) Percentage of workers in household sector to total workers (X_5).
- (vi) Percentage of workers in other sectors to total workers (X_6).

SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS

- (i) Percentage of urban population to total population (X_7).
- (ii) Percentage of literates to total population (X_8).

INDICATORS OF INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The economic development of a region largely depends on the development of a sound infrastructural base. The indicators of infrastructural development selected are as follows :

- (i) Total length of road per 100 sq. km. (X_9).
- (ii) Percentage of electrified villages to total villages (X_{10}).
- (iii) Number of hospital beds per 10,000 population (X_{11}).
- (iv) Number of banks per 10,000 population (X_{12}).
- (v) Credit-deposit ratio (X_{13}).

The entire study has been organised into seven chapters. A number of tables, diagrams and maps have been used to facilitate easy understanding of the subject under consideration. It is no doubt a descriptive study, but extensive use has been made of quantitative and statistical techniques like ratios, averages, percentages, growth rates, matrices, composite index, co-efficient of correlation, and 't' test of significance etc. (The methodology is discussed in details in Chapter 5).

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