CHAPTER - II

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The present chapter is aimed to discuss a brief profile of the study area. The study was located in North-East India at Narsingpur, district of Cachar in Barak Valley of Assam.

The North East India

The enchanting North East region of India nestled amidst the snow - clad peaks of the Himalayas is the home as the seven sisters; namely, **Arunachal Pradesh** the land of the rising sun, **Assam** the land of great ralling plains and green valleys of the Brahmaputra and the Barak; **Mehgalaya** the beautiful abode of clouds, precipiceons hill slopes and the highest rainfall in the world; **Nagaland** of the virgin tropical farests **Mizoram** of Blue Hills, **Manipur** of the Hills with nature's marvel lack Logtak, and the fabled the beauty, **Tripura** of the Goddess Tripura Sundari, and recently added one Sikkim, the hill state of Chogyal amd Ramtak. In addition the pictures landscape are rivaled by the wealth of cultural traditions and nature resources of the region (Sharma, Barpujari Bhattacharjee 1985).

The North Eastern States are situated between 22019 and 28^0 16^1 N longitude and 89042^1 and 97^0 12^1 E latitude. It is surrounded in the North by Tibet-China, on the East by China and Miyanmar, on the West by West

Bengal and Bangladesh. It comprises an area of 255,089 square kms. Which is about 7.8% of the total area of India 32,87,089 sq. k.m.The population of the North Eastern is 31.38 million which comprises 3.72% of the total population of India. 71.03% of the total population of the region live in Assam and the remaining states each has a percent share in the population below 10%. Except Assam the other have each a density of population below the national average 267 persons per square km. The region as a whole has the density of 123 persons per km. The situation owes to the fact that 70% of the is hilly (census 1911). On the literacy front, there are 41.22% literates in Arunachal Pradesh, 48.26% in Meghalaya, 53.42% in Assam, 60.30% in Nagaland and 81.23% in Mizoram as compared rank second to the average national literacy of 52.11% (census 1991). The North Eastern region also contains a number of cultural and ethnic communities with different language, religion and beliefs and tradition. In the region the concentration of the tribal population in some of the States is very high. Besides, there are more than 75 major groups and sub groups speaking approximately 400 languages and dialects consisted of about 168 in Arunachal Pradesh, 95 in Nagaland, 87 in Manipur 100 in Tripura and 200 in Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram (R. Gopalakrishnan 1995). Nearly 80% of the people are engaged in agriculture. The hill tribes were gradually brought into the main stream by administrative re-organisation during 1970's snd 80's. The states are regarded as special category states along with Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir in respect of plan financing, budgetary aids and grants by century (Mukerjee, Hussain, Chakraborty and Das 1994).

The social structure of the North East India has emerged out of the process of interaction among the Austro–Asiatic (Khasi, Jointias); Bodo

(Dimasa, Kachari, Rabha, Mech Rajbanshi, Lalung, Sonowal, Moran, Garo, Chutia, and Tripuri) Dravidian (Domar kai Vartas); Indo-Burmese (Angami, Sema, Rengma, Ao, Kanyak, Lhotha, Chingman, Mosang etc) Indo-Tibetan (Miri, Mishmi, Nisi, Hkas, Apatani, Miji, Sherdukpen, Khawas, Adi, Hill Miri Sulung, Tagin, Marpa, Memba, Khemba, Nokte, Wancho, Tangsa) Kuki-Lushai, Meithei (Tangkhul) Halam, Chawl, Laugrong, Meithei, Thado, Sokte, Rolte Paite, Mizo, Lakher Riang, Chakma, Marasing, Aslong, Khalisa etc.) Chinkuki (Komal, Lowang Moira, Moite) Naga-Kuki (Moriang, Phadag Mikirs) Shantai (Aham, Khamti, Phahial, Aitonia, Tunung, Maran, and Indo-Aryan (Brahmans Kayasthas, Gonaks, Kalitas, Lohar, Kumar, Barber etc.) ethnic and linguistic groups (S.M. Dubey 1977).

Socio-ecological Formations

The ecological map of the region reveals that it may be broadly divided into two areas, such as the hills and the plains. The major sections of population of Assam, Tripura and Manipur lives in the Valley and plains, whereas Ngaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh are hilly area. Culturally and economically thses areas are inter-dependent. Even in the plains of Assam, Manipur of Tripura, there is also a considerable tribal population. The majority of the population in the plains of Assam manipur and Tripura profess Hinduism followed Islam, whereas around 85% people in Mizoram, about 60% in Nagaland and around 40% in Meghalaya have embraceed christinity and the majarity in Arunachal Pradesh have the tribal belief systems.

In the traditional social organization was tribal. The caste system introduced by advent of Hinduism, the waves of migration, political changes

and National calamities have been the tribal structure. It is very difficult to point out who are the autochthones and immigrant in the different parts of the religion. According to the common belief the tribes belonging to the Bodo-Kachari group (Kachari, Lalung Chutia, Dimasa, Tripura, Mech, Rabha Maran, Borahi Bodo and Garo) may be regarded as the oldest inhabitants of this area, Gait has discussed the spread of Hinduism and its impact on the tribal social structure (Dubey 1977).

Traditionally, the regional agrarian economy centred around the tribal peasantry. In the latter parts of the 19th century the British administration set up tea, coal and mineral oil industries in Assam which entailed the beginning of modern education, roads and railways in some areas. The British industrial houses were located at Calcutta. In the hills, there had been the practice of shifting (Jhum) cultivation. Even today, the regional economy is agrarian and industrialization remains at the infant stage. Thus, the process of development ecology, ethnic groups, race, caste, tribe religion and language have played significant roles in the region.

Assam

The state of Assam is located in the North Eastern region of India between the latitude $28^0 18^1$ and $24^0 N^1$ the longitudes $89^0 46^1$ and $97^0 4$ E ina North East India covering an area of 78, 523 square kilometers. The who Assam can be classified into two natural regions – (1) Brahmaputra Valley and (2) Barak Valley depending upon the two big rivers; namely, The Brahmaputra and the Barak .

In Assam there are 23 districts out of which 3 districts constitute the **Barak Valley,** except 2 hill district other 18 districts are in the **Brahmaputra**

valley. Numerically the Assamese people are largely settled in the Brahmaputra valley where as Bengali speaking people largely in the Barak Valley.

Agriculture engages directly or indirectly about 74% of the total population of the state on a total land of 35 lakh hectares of which 78% in cultivable and about 17,932 Sq kim, reserved forests.

The period of the months from June to October is the rainy Season, October to February usually dry season and March to june is summer season in the state.

According to 1991 census the total population of Assam is 22,414,322, of them 11657,989 of males and 10,756,333 of females. The density of population per square kilometer 286, sex ratio (No of female per 1000 males) 923, literacy 52.9% ; 61.9% are males and 48.0% are female (Mazuder, Acharjee, and Bhattacharjee 1998).

The Barak Valley

The Barak valley consisted of the **three** districts ; namely, **Cachar, Hailakandi** ; and **Karimganj** in the South Assam is situated between longitudes 92015[1] and 93015[1] East and latitudes 2408[1] and 2508[1] North, covering area 6922 square km. Cachar district comprises 54.7% , Hailakandi 19.2% and Karimganj 26.1% of the total area of the State. Total population in the valley is 24,91496 persons comprising 1286949 males and 1204547 females. Density of population per square kilometers 360 persons, Sex ratio is 936 females per 1000 males, literacy ratio is 56.6% comprising 66.4% for males and 46.7% for females. The three constitute district of Barak Valley

are sub divided into a total of four sub division, 27 Blocks and 321 Goan Pachayats. Among the 2244 inhabited villages in the valley 1024 (i.e., 46% of total) one in Cachar district 327 in Hailakandi and 893 in Karimganj (Mazumder, Acharjee and Bhattacharjee 1998).

The Barak Valley bounded on the north ; the North Cachar Hills district of Assam and the Jaintia Hills district of Meghalaya, on the east by Manipur, on the South by mizoram and on the west by Tripura and the Syllet district of Bangladesh. The three districts, namely Cachar, Hailakandi and Karimganj in its forms Indian part and the larger part of it which was transferred to East Pakistan in 1947 now remains in Bangladesh. The valley was transferred to Assam from Bengal in 1974. In the pre-partition days the valley was known as the **Surma Valley** named after the surma a tributary of the Barak, which is flanked by Sylhet town. Then there was only two districts namely **Sylhet** and **Cachar**. The Karimganj district of Assam and the Maulavi Bazar, Sylhet, Sunamganj and Habiganj districts todays Bangaladesh were than subdivisions of the Sylhet district. Cachar (Silchar), Hailakandi and North Cachar Hills (Halflong) district confines itself to its old Silchar subdivision located centrally in the valley in South Assam (Bhattacharjee 1991).

Geographically, the valley is an extension of the Bengal plains, registering slow and gradual changes in the physical features as one travels from here to anywhere in Bengal or vice versa. Naturally Indo-aryan settlement extended into the valley from Bengal in early times in its Spontaneous east ward march to farthest limits of the ploughable areas, which the flood prone plains region remainded uninviting to the Jhum cultivators (Jhumias) of the neighbouring hills. Resultantly there developed district Bengali dialect groups (Sylheti) in the undivided valley from remote past

(Bhattacharjee 1991). The river Barak which forms the valley divideds itself at Karimganj into two tributories ; namely, Surma and Kushiara which flowing though Sylhet confluence and fall into the mighty Brahmaputra in Bangladesh, All parts of the valley depicts a uniformity of land scapes, natural resources, climate and vegetation while differ significantly from the rest. The hill ranges consisted of the Khasi-Jaintia hills, the North Cachar hills and the Mizo hills pose a sudden barrier but towards Bengal the gradual change disturbed the valley farmation at no stage.

It is a distinct **geographically, cultural** and **hiotorical** region or **Sribhumi** in Rabindranath Tagore's paraphrase (I bid 1991).

Different kings ruled different parts of the valley in different times from ancient times. In the fifth century A.D. the valley was ruled by the Deves of the Bhatera plates. According to Rejendralal Mitra there Rajas were the Sovereign of Kachar (Cachar). In the Sixth Seventh century A.D. The valley must have been included in the territory or the varmans of Kamrupa as Maharaja Bhaskar varman, who rulled the valley is found in Six copper plates recovered from Nidhanpur village in panchakhanda pargana of Sylhet district of undevided Surma valley. The accounts of the Huen-T-Song also suggested that Sylhet and Cachar were parts of Bhaskara's empire. In the Seventh century A.D. varmana empire fell down and the Harikela (ancient name of srihatta or shrihatta deshe) state emerged. The existence of the Harikela state clearly rules out the parsibility of such a state during seventh to tenth century A.D. The fall of Harikela led to the formation of Tripura state which initially covered Cachar, sylhet and Tripura plains. The Tripuri capital in the region was first established of the bank of the Rukni river in Cachar. Even today, *the cave temple of Siva in Bhuban till was established by the Tripur's*

(R.M. Nath 1981) and then it moved to Tripura in the thirteenth century A.D. Sylhet including Karimganj passed into the hands of the muslim ruler of Bengal from the fourteenth century A.D. where as the Cachar remained under the Tripuri Rajas. The Tripuri rule in Cachar did not last long after the Separation of Sylhet. Chila Ray. The brother of Maharaja Naranarayana of cooch beher defeated the Tripura Raja and the Raja of cooch Behar appointed Kamalnarayana the Governar of Cachar who enentually declared his indepence and laid the foundation of the Khaspur state popularly known as Dehan Kindgdom (Bhattacharjee 1991). From the 16th century, the Dimase rulers of maibong had in the mean time started to expand their territory towards the Cachar plains. Jasanarayana the dimasa Raja of maibong (1583-1613) annexed a portion of Cachar valley bordering the north Cachar Hills and pushed the boundary into the mughal district of Sylhet. He claimed himself as Srihatta Vijayina or conquerar of Sylhet. He issued a coin in 1524 sake (1602 A.D.). That the Dimasa Kingdom of maibong was known as Heramba (Hedamba) and a portion of Cachar valley was under the Dimasas of maibong before the Shifting of the capital to Khaspur in 1745. Actually the process of state building in maibong that started with Nirbayanarayana reached its climax during the region of Kirti chandranaraya (1735-45). By the time his son Gopichandra narayana (1745-57) become the Raja the state was fairly large and prosperous and then his son Harischandra was the Juvaraj and the commender in chief of the army. While his nephew Lakshimichandra was the aditya or the head of Dharampur Visaya (central Cachar), menwhile the last king of coch, Bhim Singha, the Raja of the Koch State in Cachar grew old and his only daughter Kanchani was married to Lakshmi Chandra Demasa Raja of Maibong in 1745. After wards Bhim Singha died and the capital of

Cachar was Shifted from Maibong to Khaspur (today near uderbond in Cachar district). Cachar thus passed under the Dimasa rule of Khaspur Gopichandra was succeeded by his son Harish Chandra II (1757-72). But he preferred the life of a sanyasin (Baul Raja) and abdicated in faver of his causin Lakshmi chandra narayana (1772-73), but he died after a year. Then his son Krishna Chandra (1773-1873) ascended the throne. After his death his brother, Govinda chandra narayana (1813-30) succeeded him and then came the end of the Dimasa king rule in Cachar. Meanwhile the British annexed South Cachar in 1832. Cachar was placed under a superindent and eventually made a district in Bengal. In 1874 when the chief commissionership of Assam was constituted, consisting of the Assam valley and the hill, the Surma valley districts of Sylhet and Cachar were transferred to the new province (Bhattacharjee 1986).

After independence, Silchar, Hailakandi, Karimganj and Halflong were Sub divisions of the Cachar of the valley, But in 1953 halflong (North Cachar hills) was seperated from Cachar the plains region of (undivided Barak valley) valley was divided into two districts ; viz., Karimganj in 1984 and Hailakandi in 1989. Thus the three districts form the todays Barak valley in Assam.

Cacahr district

Cachar district covering an area of 3786 square k.m. consists of two subdivisions ; viz., **Silchar** and **Lakhipur,** fourteen blocks, five revene circles and 163 Goan panchayats for 1050 village. Total population of the district is 1215385, density of population per sq. k.m. is 321, literacy rate is 59.19% and Sex-ratio 932 females per 1000 males (1991 census report).

Since the remote past the Cachar partion of the valley has been human as 'Kachar' to the people of Sylhet and the Bengalees in it as the Kachari'in same manner their counter parts in Sylhet Known as 'Sylhetis' in mymensing as 'Mymensinghia' as in ehittagong as Chatgaiya, pandit padmanath Vidyavirode abserved of the name of the district as given by the Sylheti Bengaliees for an outlying place Skirting mountains. In Sylhet the wark Kachar Still designaties a plot of land at the foot of a maintains. Derived from Sanskrit ward **'Kachha'** the word denotes the plains near maintains or water. The physiographical features of Cachar support. The contention of the pandit. Similarly lacal tradition and literature of the region mantioned that the upper portion of the valley was known to the Sylheti people as Kachar and its inhabitants as Kacharis since earliest times. In Sylheti dialeet the deepbank of a river or a tract of land between a river and hill is designated as Kachliar. Edward Gait believed that Kachar is derived from a Sanskrit ward morning a **boardering region**. The district of Cachar may have got its name directly from this ward. Differently viswakase informed that Cachar got its name from ancient village called **Kachhal** which has a place in the tradition even today.

The prasent Cachar district is bounded on the North by North Cachar Hills, on the east by Manipur, on the South by Mizoram and on the west by Karimganj and Hailakandi districts.

Sonai Circle

Sonai revenue circle one of the important revenue circle of the Cachar district situated in its North East has an area of 3,26,521 bighaland and populate 202 villages. The total population of the circle is 2,75,237 comprising 51.33% males and 48.67% females with a literacy rate of 69.13%

and 46.24% respectively (1991 census report) mastly Bengali Hindus and Muslims, Manipuri, Bagani (Hindustani) ex-teagarden labours, Bihari, Naga, and other communities are residing in the circle.

The circle is surrounded on the east by Diderkush, Ganganagar and mankhal, on the west, Saidpur, Kazidahar, **Narsingpur**, Ramprasadpur, on the north, Govindapur, Algapur, Banskandi and on the south Kulisara, Aradhanpur and Candighat. It has five blocks namely Sonai, Narsingpur, Palanghat, Banskandi and Binnakandi, on the north the **Barak river** flowing from the Barail range and on the east the **Sonai river** from Bhuban Hill, and on the South the **Rukni river** from Mizohill. The fertile lands in the basins of three rivers formed the Sonai Revenue Circle.

The in habitation and village formation of South Cachar (Sonai circle) from remote past was thinly populated due to its unhealthy climate, ravages of the rivers and the raids of the hill tribes them the neighbourhood. When the population pressure on the adjoining areas of Bengal mounted up the people extended their settelement in the valley mastly the 18th century Kachari Kingdoms encouraged the settlements of fresh immigrants from Bengal for reclaiming fallow lands (Bhattacharjee 1991). While on a survey duty in Cachar in 1832 P.B. Pamberton in a report said that the people in Sylhet and Cachar are indentical in every respect appearance, customs and language. Tomas Fister the first superiendent of Cachar said in 1834 that the entire instruction in this district is to be conveyed in Bengali language. Becker, a German Missionary (1923) wrote that the principle language of the Surma valley is Bengali, in Sylhet district it is spoken by 92 percent of the people and in the Cachar district by more than half of the population. Bengali as spoken in the Surma valley differs to some extent from that of the province of

Bengal and it is called therefore **Sylhet-Bengali**, (Bhattacharjee 1991). During the Burmese occupation of manipur in 1818 a good number of Manipuri came to Cachar and Some of them Settled down permanently and the British government helped them to Settled down in Barak valley latter on. In 1930s and 1940s the British Settled some village of the Hmar and the Kuki who were pushed from the Lushai Hills due to inter-tribal feuds : According to 1851 census of Government, the total population was 85,522 comprising 66,281 Bengali Hindus and Muslims, 10,723 Manipuris 276 Assamese (Dehar and each), 62. Eeoropean, 6320 kukis, 5645 Nagas and 2,215 Dimasas. But in the 1855 the establishment of tea industry led to the settlement of the Hindustani people from Northan India. As per 1901 census of Cachar district of the total population 61% are Bengali 21% Hindustani, 11% Manipuri, and 7% others. All these immigrant communities have adopted the valley as their homeland. They speak the dialect of Bengali and have reinforced the culture and traditions of each other (Choudhury 1996).

An important section of the Bengali population in the valley is the **Nath(Yogi).** Community of considerable number who lived in several groups, each group or village constituted a Samaj under a Murobbi a number of them constituted the 'Panch Samaj', and a number of the letter constituted a 'Baro Samaj'. The Nath community in Cachar was divided into one such Baro Samaj. In cource of time, 16 of the Murabbi's (Possibly one each from a Panch Samaj) emerged as the community leader and heads of prominent families, who also received the titles distributed by Govinda Chandra Narayana among the important people in the state (Bhattacharjee 1991). Thus languages and liteature, status and politics, everything of these area were dependent on each other and mostly, the process of village formation was

extended, during Cachari regime. But the raja's did not interfered in the affairs of the Bengali subject in the Cachar plains where a peculier institution of **Khel system** prevailed as an instrument of local administration in Cachar. The original settlers come in batches and reclaimed fallow lands for collective use by a group came to be known as **'Raj'**. They used to select a head man called **Mukhtar** (revenue collector). In the process ten such Raj came up in the Cachar valley. Immigration continued and the late comers were asked to join in any of the Raj, when the Raj grew in size and population, each of them was divided into smaller units called **Khel** (agricultural guilds). For the payment of land revenue the members of a Khel were Individually and collectively responsible. At the time of Raja Krishana Chandra Narayana (1773-1813) land revenue was at the rate of 12 kahan per kulbah (1 rupee = 5 Kahan). Govinda Chandra Narayana raised it to Rs., 6/- (Bhattacharjee 1991) Each Khel had a Mukhtar and each Raj a Raj-Mukhtar, the Mukhtar of Khel was elected by the members within it and the Raj Mukhtar by the constituent Khel-Mukhtars. In course of time, the institution became hereditry and the Mukhtars came to be known as **'Laskar'** or **'Bhuiya'**. The Laskar and the Bhuiya were later on graded as Barbhuiya, Majarbhuiya, Chota Bhuiya and Barlaskar, Majarlaskar and Chotolaskar according to the size of revenue and importance of the Khel. The title in all cases subsequently, passed on as hereditary for the concerned families in Barak valley. In interesting aspect of these Khels was the Secular attitudes in voluntary association. As **Hunter** (a British officer) observed, *by the development of these system, the Bengali practically obtained a constitution, which in quiet time was sufficient to presence them from all interference from the royal officers. Just as in Hindu communities the village forms the basis of the agricultural common wealth*

bound together, theoretically or practically, by ties of kindred and caste, so is formed the Khel as the unit of the agricultural community of Cachar, but its members were not connected by any ties of kindred, caste nationality or creed (Guha-1921). Besides, the Cachari Raja Krishna Chandra (1773-1813) during his pilgrimgs in different parts of Bengal found the important people there having the titles of **Choudhury, Majumder** etc. On his return he decided to confer such titles up on the important persons in his own state with a view to enhance the prestige of his regime. But as he could not complete the task, his younger brother Govindra Chandra (1813-1830) conferred the title of **Choudhury, Majumder, Laskar** and **Bhuiya** in return of payment of Rs., 100/-, 50/- 25/- and 15/- respectable by recording the names of the title holders on a **Forman** (the later of authority) on a 15" X 25" sized of Bhutia paper. The forman extended the right for using blanket (Khesh) gold or silver bangles, while umbrella hourse, palanguin (duli) etc., to the titles holders, as the official of the state. **Laskar** meant soldiers helped the army of the raja, **Bhuiya** meant the owner of the small land holding or the self sufficient peasant ; **Majumder** referred revenue collector of the Mouja or Pargana by keeping records and accounts of a number of Khels under them and **Choudhury** was the Raj Mukhtar (big land owner). They were used to be clever and intelligent who became Mirashdars with ryots (peasant cultivators) under them in the British period.

After annexing the Cachar in 1832 the Britishers who were interested to change the land system gradually experimented changes at the intervals of five, ten and fifteen years. The mirashadari system was an extension of the **permanent settlement** implemented by Lord carwalis in the East Bengal in 1793. In the Barak valley it was known as the ***mirashdari system*** i.e., the

system constituted by the mirash (land) of whatever small or large, size which was the modified of zamideri system. During the British period the early Mirashdars had the Ismaili patta (joint written authority) alongwith some privileges bestowed upon them while the ryots got the individual patta (written authority) of their land holdings. Besides, the landholding extension continued by clearing Jungles. The British measured the landholding with a jarib and distributed individual patta. As a result ryots (peasant cultivator) also become landowner.

Narsingpur Village : Social Formation

Socio economic Structure of Narsingpur has all the imprints of the regional land system. The eldest villagers recall that Rashamay Nath Choudhury. Sidhan Nath Barbhuiya and their descents were the earliest settlers in the village (locality). They got Choudhury and Barbhuiya titles from cachari Raja Govinda Chandra (1813-1830). They were the members of Rajshaba and Rajshachib (secretary). Later on Golak Nath Barbhuiya successor of sidhan Nath Barbhuya was the prominent Mirashdar and most renounced person in the village and region. At a time he was the president of Cachar Nath (Yogi) Samilanee. Some others Mirashdar were Madhav Nath Choudhury Yadav Nath Choudhury (Meherpur), Lakshmi Chandra Nath Barbhuiya (Narshingpur), Lakshyamani Nath Majumder (Salgangerper), Saitandra Shrma Choudhury, some of them got titles also from the Cachari Raja by issuing a 'Forman'. In the process of migration to the area continued and the late comers joined the ryots under the Mirashders. Gradually, the Mirasdari land system were fragmented due to the increasing ryots or peasant cultivators.

The aged villagers consider the Sunabarighat, **Narsingpur**, Satkara Khandi Selepur, Meherpur, Kazidahar as the oldest village in the area. During the cachari Raja and their Kingdom at Kashpur the area was full of Jungles and the land was uncultivable. The king wanted the new subjects to settle there by clearing the Jungles and to fill his treasury by collecting revenues. The act of clearing jungles was popularly known as **'Banfara'** and is heard even to day among the aged persons. 'The land outside the Khels called *Khas* belong to the Raja. The Raja also encouraged immigration of groups from Bengal to settle and bring fallow lands under tillage' (Bhattacharjee 1991). Mastly, the Bengali Hindus and muslims migrated from Sylhet, Dhaka and East Bengal in Search of livelihood and captured the bigland and patranage of the king. Some rivers surrounded the area such as these originates in the East Sonai river from the Bhuban hill ; in the South and West Rukni river from Mizo hill and in the north Barak river from the Barail range, water ways were the important Source of transportation at the earlier times in the area. The lands were fertile and yielded enough paddy and vegetables but the area lacked roads and market. All kinds of transpartation including that of tea products from gardens were done by boats to the district head quarters and other places. But the situation has been changing in view of the changes in political regimes, dynamics of population, communication, education and emergence of new strate basically consequent upon the landed property and later for proximity with power in addition to it.

Narsingpur village – (Phisical structure)

Narsingpur is a village in Sonai circle. It is situated on the National Highway No. 54 (Silchar-Aizawl) 17. K.m. away in the South east of Silchar

form (the district head quarter). The village Situated on the bank of the Rukni river flowing from the Mizoram Hill is surrounded immediately, on the East by Hathikhal, Bakrarper, Nagdirgram; on the North; by Kazidar, Sunabarighat, Nutan Bazar; and Salgangerper, Konokpur, Meherpur, Attaratilla, Jagiabasti, Putikhal, Pailanamber, Kabuganj on the South and west side of the village.

Internal division

The village has in all six parts (I to VI) each part is a separate revenue village consisted of multi ethnic population of Bengali Hindus and Muslims, Manipuri, Hindustani (ex-teagarden labourers) and tribe. The total population and literacy rate by sex are shown in the table -2.1.

2.1 : Distribution of population and Literacy Rate by Sex in the Six Parts Of Narsingpur

Part	Total	Male	Female	Children			Literacy		
				Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
I	1941	978	963	125	114	239	823	747	1570
II	1074	513	561	63	70	133	434	423	857
III	1394	694	700	125	107	232	505	418	923
IV	364	188	176	21	18	39	165	142	307
V	1984	965	1019	153	120	273	653	671	1324
VI	1183	598	585	83	65	148	481	387	868
Total	**7940**	**3936**	**4004**	**570**	**494**	**1064**	**3061**	**2788**	**5849**

Source : Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Assam (1991 Cencus).

In Narsingpur all parts except the part I there live Hindu and Muslim Bengali alongwith Manipuris (Meitei and Bisnupria), and Hindustanis. The local aged informants Harendra Nath (89), Rajani Mohan Nath (86) and Naboyopal Sharma (83) narrated that at the time of Banfara as unknown saint/very strong and powerful man named **'Narsingha Nath'** first cleared the jungle himself and captured mast of the land. The village received the name **Narsingpur** from him. Later during the Kachari regime the people from Sylhet, Maimayshing east Bengal and different part of Barak valley Settled in this village.

The National Highway No. 54 (Silchar-Aizawal) passes through the village from the High way a number of roads originate and link the village to other villages such as one kutcha roads on leads to Baromoni Bhakrarper village and other two kutcha roads one each, lead to Salgangaper and Meherpur and again at the Kabuganj market a road on the left side which is pacca upto Palonghat leads back to the Highway at Sonabarighat passing through Palonghat, Amraghat and Sonai.

Narsingpur part - I

Narsingpur part I which is the field of the study is separate revenue village forming the North part of Narsingpur, on the South East of it there flows down the Rukni river from Mizo hill, on the South there are part II and III and on the South West IV, V & VI. The following table -2.2. shows the distribution of population of Narsingpur part -I by sex and literacy.

2.2 : Distribution of population and literacy rate by Sex in the part-I of Narsingpur

Pt. – I	Male	Female	Total
Literates	823 (84.16)	747 (77.58)	1570 (80.89)
Illiterates	155 (15.84)	216 (22.42)	371 (19.11)
Total	978 (100)	963 (100)	1941 (100)

Source : Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Assam (1991 Census).

The table shows that the total population is 1941 persons comprising of 978 males (50.39%) and 963 females (49.61%). The literates are 80.89% of the total population 84.16% of the males and 77.58% of the females. The figures including children of up to 6 years (125 males and 114 females).

The Highway passes through this part of the village. Three link roads originate from the highway at while passing through the part. The Narsingpur Baromoni link road originate in the middle of the part (rightside), the Narsingpur Bhakrarper passing through selepur originates from the north east of the part, and Narsingpur Salganger per originate from the middle part (left-side) of the village. The whole village (part 1) has electricity and water supply facility.

The residential pattern of Narsingpur village is changing in continous process. The old village situated on the bank of river 'Rukni' and the new extension area settled in front of the main road (54 No. National Highway). The new area has come up during the last few deeades and are continuously. Now the village may be divided into three major part ; viz., Noth, Middle and South part. On the North side the market area namely Nutan Bazar were

South part. On the North side the market area namely Nutan Bazar were extending with residential house's, State Bank, Telephone Exchange, Kalimandir. On the middle part both side of the main road ; viz., on the left side more official such as, Narsingpur block development office, veterinary hospital, primary health center, I.C.D.P office, Block Elementary Education office, sub post office, Swarna Lakshmi Higher Secondary School, Boys M.V. School, Golok nath L.P. School and with some residential houses. On the rightside Residential houses, official quarter, Girls M.V. School, Temple (Shiv and Durga Mandir), one girls High School, and one of each High School, Middle School and L.P. School in Manipuri Medium. On the South part Kerosene agency and some Karmakar (Blacksmithery) were residing which is well known as kumar patty.

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