Chapter 3

FIELD OF THE STUDY

This chapter deals with the field of the study. It gives historical background, population growth, occupational structure, working population, working categories etc of the Silchar town where this study has been conducted. Silchar is a town in Cachar district in the southern part of Assam in North-East India. North- East India, a mosaic of different races and cultures, is located between 22^0 19' and 28^0 16' N latitudes and 89^0 42' and 97^0 12' E latitudes. It comprises eight states; namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. It is surrounded in the north by China and Bhutan and in the south by Bangladesh and Myanmar and on the west by West Bengal and Bangladesh and in the east by China and Myanmar, covering an area of 2,62,179 sq. km (about 8%) out of the total of 32,87,263 sq. km for India as a whole. About two third area of the region is hilly and one-third is plains. The hills and mountains section primarily consists of (a) Arunachal Pradesh extending from the eastern frontiers of Bhutan in the west of Siang-Diang rivers in the east and (b) the eastern hills comprising Dibang-Lohit-Patkai range, Naga-Manipur-Mizo and Tripura hills. The Brahmaputra and the Barak Valley along with the Imphal Valley and Tripura plains dominate the plains section. Assam is the largest populated state, full of natural resources and the backbone of the north -eastern region. The Brahmaputra is the biggest river in Assam. Guwahati is the capital of Assam. Cachar district is one of the three districts in the Barak Valley in southern Assam. The total area of this district is 3.786 square kilometers. According to Census 2011, Cachar district has a population of 17, 36, and 617. Total population in rural areas is 14, 21,153 (81.83%) and in urban areas is 3, 15, 464 (18.17%). Out of the total population Hindus are 886761(61.58%), Muslims are 522051 (36.25%), and Christians are 31306 (2.17%). The population growth rate of Cachar district for the decade 2001-2011 is 20.17%. The district has the literacy rate of 80.36%.The district provides a general backdrop, for understanding the development and the status of workers in the Silchar town.

Therefore, before a discussion on the Status of development and workers is taken up, a brief account of Cachar district is given from development perspective.

I
THE CACHAR DISTRICT

Population of Cachar district is broadly categorized as workers and non-workers. The following chart shows the total number of rural male and female workers, total number of urban male and female workers and total male workers and total female workers in Cachar district.

Table 3.1
Workers and Non-workers in Cachar District by Gender, 2011
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Status of the Workers	Rural			Urban			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Workers	764516 (68.92)	238694 (29.34)	1003210 (52.18)	174988 (70.93)	37926 (21.64)	212914 (50.46)	939504 (69.28)	276620 (27.98)	1216124 (51.87)
Non-Workers	344825 (31.08)	574723 (70.66)	919548 (47.82)	71707 (29.07)	137300 (78.36)	209007 (49.54)	416532 (30.72)	712023 (72.02)	1128555 (48.13)
Total (%)	1109341 (100)	813417 (100)	1922758 (100)	246695 (100)	175226 (100)	421921 (100)	1356036 (100)	988643 (100)	2344679 (100)

Source: Government of India. 2011. Census of India, Assam: Cachar District.

The above table shows that the total workers of Cachar district are 2344679. Out of the total 51.87% are workers and 48.13% are non –workers. Out of the total workers of rural area 68.92% are male and 29.34% are female workers and of the total workers of urban area 70.93% are male workers and female workers of rural area is 21.64%.

And out of the total 48.13% are non –workers who live in rural and urban areas. Of the total workers of rural area, 31.08% are male non-workers and 70.66% female non-workers.

Of the total workers, male workers are in greater number than the female workers both in rural and urban areas. And from among the Non-workers female

non-workers are greater in number both in rural and urban areas of Cachar district.

Thus, it is evident that in both rural and urban area male workers are greater in number in comparison to their counterparts, i.e., female workers. It indicates that ours is male dominated society and women have weaker bargaining power in every aspect and every respect.

Workers

According to the Census Report 2011, workers (or employed) are those persons who, during the reference period, are engaged in any economic activity or who despite their attachment to economic activity have temporarily abstained from work for reasons of illness, injury or other physical disability, bad weather, festivals, social or religious function or other contingencies constitute workers. Unpaid helpers who assist in the operation of an economic activity in the household farm or non-farm activities are also considered as workers. All the workers assigned one of the detailed activity status under the broad activity category working or being engaged in economic activity.

Workers are further divided into sub-categories, namely; main workers, Marginal workers, Main cultivators, Main Agricultural Labourers, Main household workers, Main other workers, Marginal cultivators, Marginal Agricultural labourers, Marginal Household workers, Marginal other workers.

Main Workers

Those workers who had worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e., 6 months or more) are termed as Main Workers. Main workers in Cachar district are shown in the following table:

Table 3.2
Main Workers in Cachar District by Gender, 2011

(Percentage in Parentheses)

Type of Main Workers	Male	Female	Grand Total
Rural Area	315382 (79.71)	61276 (81.08)	376658 (79.93)
Urban Area	80299 (20.29)	14302 (18.92)	94601 (20.07)
Total (%)	395681 (100)	75578 (100)	471259 (100)

Source: Government of India. 2011. Census of India, Assam: Cachar District.

The above table shows that total main workers in Cachar district are 471259, out of which the main workers in rural areas are 79.93% and main workers in urban areas are 20.07%. The total male main workers are 83.93% and total female main workers are 16.07%.

Thus, it indicates that male main workers are more than female main workers. This difference speaks about the low participation of women in main work and also shows inferior status ascribed to women in the male dominated society.

Marginal Workers

Those workers who had not worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e., less than 6 months) are termed as Marginal Workers. Marginal workers in Cachar district are shown in the following table:

Table 3.3
Marginal Workers in Cachar District by Gender, 2011

(Percentage in Parentheses)

Type of Marginal Workers	Male	Female	Grand Total
Rural Area	66876 (90.29)	58071 (92.57)	124947 (91.33)
Urban Area	7195 (9.31)	4661 (7.43)	11856 (8.67)
Total (%)	74071 (100)	62732 (100)	136803 (100)

Source: Government of India. 2011. Census of India, Assam: Cachar District.

The table represents that the marginal workers in Cachar district are 136803, out of which marginal workers in rural areas are 91.33% and in urban areas are 8.67%. The total male marginal workers are 74071, out of which male marginal workers in rural areas are 90.29% and male marginal workers in urban area are 9.31%. The total female marginal workers are 62732, out of which female marginal workers in rural areas are 92.57% and female marginal workers in urban area are 7.43%.

Thus, it clearly signifies that majority of the male and female marginal workers are in rural areas and fewer in urban area. This indicates that there is difference in the attitude of the rural and urban area, and rural people do not have much access to work as main workers category.

Main Cultivators

For purposes of the census a person is classified as cultivator if he or she is engaged in cultivation of land owned or held from Government or held from private persons or institutions for payment in money, kind or share. Cultivation includes effective supervision or direction in cultivation. Main cultivators in Cachar district are shown in the following table:

Table 3.4
Main Cultivators in Cachar District by Gender, 2011
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Type of Main Cultivators	Male	Female	Grand Total
Rural Area	94735 (99.10)	8578 (98.64)	103313 (99.06)
Urban Area	864 (0.90)	118 (1.36)	982 (0.94)
Total (%)	95599 (100)	8696 (100)	104295 (100)

Source: Government of India. 2011. Census of India, Assam: Cachar District.

The table reveals that the total main cultivators in Cachar district are 104295. The total main cultivators in rural areas are 99.06% and the total main

cultivators in urban areas are 0.94%. The total male main cultivators in rural area of Cachar district are 99.10% and in urban area of Cachar district are 0.90% and the total female main cultivators in rural area are 98.64% and the total female main cultivators in urban area are1.36%

Thus, it vividly shows that almost all of the main cultivators live in rural areas. Both in urban and rural area female participation as main cultivators are less in comparison of male main cultivators in Cachar district.

Main Agricultural Labourers

A person who works on another person's land for wages in money or kind or share is regarded as an agricultural labourer. She or he has no risk in the cultivation, but merely works on another person's land for wages. An agricultural labourer has no right of lease or contract on land on which she/he works. Main agricultural labourers in Cachar district are shown in the following table:

Table 3.5
Main Agricultural Labourers in Cachar District by Gender, 2011
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Type of Main Agricultural Labourers	Male	Female	Grand Total
Rural Area	30539 (98.01)	5933 (98.15)	36472 (98.03)
Urban Area	620 (1.99)	112 (1.85)	732 (1.97)
Total (%)	31159 (100)	6045 (100)	37204 (100)

Source: Government of India. 2011. Census of India, Assam: Cachar District.

The table demonstrates that the total main agricultural labourers in Cachar district are 37204, out which the total agricultural labourers in rural areas are 98.03% and the total agricultural labourers in urban areas are 1.97%. The total male main agricultural labourers are 31159, out of which 98.01% live in rural area and a very meager (1.99%) of them are in urban area. And the total female

main agricultural labourers are 6045, out of which 98.15% live in rural area and 1.85% lives in urban area.

Thus, it can be concluded by saying that females' participation as agricultural labourers in rural as well as urban area is lesser than male agricultural labouerers both in rural and urban area.

Main Household Workers

A household worker is anyone who is paid to provide domestic services in one's household, such as: Babysitters, nannies, and au pairs, Caretakers, health aides, and private nurses, Housekeepers and maids, Gardeners, landscapers, and yard-keepers, Drivers and chauffeurs, Personal assistants, personal chefs, and cooks. Main household workers in Cachar district are shown in the following table:

Table 3.6
Main Household Workers in Cachar District by Gender, 2011
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Type of Main Household Workers	Male	Female	Grand Total
Rural Area	5572 (83.78)	4011 (88.76)	9583 (85.36)
Urban Area	1135 (16.92)	508 (11.24)	1643 (14.64)
Total (%)	6707 (100)	4519 (100)	11226 (100)

Source: Government of India. 2011. Census of India, Assam: Cachar District.

The table shows that the total main household workers are 11226, out which the total main household workers in rural areas are 85.36% and the total main household workers in urban areas are 14.64%. More than four-fifth of main household works are from rural area. The total male main household workers in Cachar district are 6707, out of the total male household workers 83.78% are in rural areas and 16.92% are in urban areas. And total female main household

workers are 4519 out of the total female household workers 88.76% are in rural area and 11.24% are in urban areas.

Thus, it is proved that differences are made on the basis of sex while employing the household workers in Cachar district.

Main Other Workers

All those workers who have been engaged in some economic activity during the last one year, but are not cultivators or agricultural labourers or in Household Industry, are 'Other Workers (OW)'. The type of workers that come under this category of 'OW' include all government servants, municipal employees, teachers, factory workers, plantation workers, those engaged in trade, commerce, business, transport banking, mining, construction, political or social work, priests, entertainment artists, etc. In effect, all those workers other than cultivators or agricultural labourers or household industry workers are 'Other Workers'. Main other workers in Cachar district are shown in the following table:

Table 3.7
Distribution of Main Other Workers in Cachar District by sex in 2011
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Type of Main Other Workers	Male	Female	Grand Total
Rural Area	184536 (70.38)	42754 (75.92)	227290 (71.36)
Urban Area	77680 (29.62)	13564 (24.08)	91244 (28.64)
Total (%)	262216 (100)	56318 (100)	318534 (100)

Source: Government of India. 2011. Census of India, Assam: Cachar District.

The table demonstrates that the total main other workers in Cachar district are 318534. The total main other workers in rural areas are 71.36% and the total main other workers in urban areas are 28.64%. The total male main other workers are 262216; out of it 70.38% are in rural area and 29.63% in urban area. And the

total female main other workers are 56318 out of it 75.92% is in rural are and 24.08% live in urban area.

Thus, it is understood that the main other workers in Cachar district are in rural areas in comparison to their number in urban area. In rural and urban areas female main other workers are lesser than male main other workers in Cachar district.

Marginal Cultivators

Those workers who had not worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e. less than 6 months) are termed as Marginal Cultivators. Marginal cultivators in Cachar district are shown in the following table:

Table 3.8
Marginal Cultivators of Cachar District by sex, 2011
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Type of Marginal Cultivators	Male	Female	Grand Total
Rural Area	10237 (97.51)	5439 (97.77)	15676 (97.60)
Urban Area	261 (2.49)	124 (2.23)	385 (2.40)
Total (%)	10498 (100)	5563 (100)	16061 (100)

Source: Government of India. 2011. Census of India, Assam: Cachar District.

The table reveals that the total marginal cultivators in Cachar district are 16061, out which total marginal cultivators in rural areas are 97.60% and total marginal cultivators in urban areas are 2.40%. The total male marginal cultivators are 10498, out of it 97.51% are in rural areas and 2.49% are in urban areas. And the total female marginal cultivators are 5563, out of which 97.77% are in rural areas and 2.23% are in urban areas.

Thus, there is difference in participation of male and female marginal cultivator's in rural area. Female marginal cultivators are in a slightly position than male marginal cultivators. And it is obvious that both male and female marginal cultivators' participation is higher in rural area than in urban areas.

Marginal Agricultural Labourers

Those workers who had not worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e., less than 6 months) are termed as Marginal Agricultural Labourers. Marginal agricultural workers in Cachar district are shown in the following table:

Table 3.9
Marginal Agricultural Labourers in Cachar District by Gender, 2011
(Percentage in parentheses)

Type of Marginal Agricultural Labourers	Male	Female	Grand Total
Rural Area	17968 (98.47)	13081 (99.01)	31049 (98.69)
Urban Area	280 (1.53)	131 (0.99)	411 (1.31)
Total (%)	18248 (100)	13212 (100)	31460 (100)

Source: Government of India. 2011. Census of India, Assam: Cachar District.

The table shows that the total marginal agricultural labourers in Cachar district are 31460, out of which in rural areas the total marginal agricultural labourers are 98.69% and in urban areas the total marginal agricultural labourers are 1.31%. The total male marginal agricultural labourers are 18248 of the total 98.47% are from rural areas and 1.53% from urban areas. And the total female marginal agricultural labourers are 13212 of the total 99.01% are in rural areas, and 0.99% from urban areas.

Thus, the highest or almost all the marginal agricultural labourers, both male and female are from rural areas and a just a handful of marginal agricultural labourers are in urban areas.

Marginal Household Workers

Those workers who had not worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e. less than 6 months) are termed as marginal household workers. Marginal household workers in Cachar district are shown in the following table:

Table 3.10
Marginal Household Workers of Cachar District by Gender, 2011
(Percentage in parentheses)

Type of Marginal Household Workers	Male	Female	Grand Total
Rural Area	2707 (91.67)	9684 (94.14)	12391 (93.59)
Urban Area	246 (8.33)	603 (5.86)	849 (6.41)
Total (%)	2953 (100)	10287 (100)	13240 (100)

Source: Government of India. 2011. Census of India, Assam: Cachar District.

The table reveals that the total marginal household workers are 13240, out which the total marginal household workers in rural areas are 93.59% and the total marginal household workers in urban areas are 6.41%. The total male marginal household workers are 2953 of the total 91.67% are from rural area and 8.33% are from urban area, and the total female marginal household workers are 10287, of the total 94.14% are from rural area and 6.41% are from urban area.

Thus, it is clear from the above table that male and female marginal household workers are in great number in rural areas than in urban areas. And women outnumber the male marginal household workers in rural areas and male marginal household works in urban areas.

Marginal Other Workers

Those workers who had not worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e. less than 6 months) are termed as marginal other workers. Marginal other workers in Cachar district are shown in the following table:

Table 3.11
Marginal Other Workers of Cachar District by Gender, 2011
(Percentage in parentheses)

Type of Marginal Other Workers	Male	Female	Grand Total
Rural Area	35964 (84.88)	29867 (88.71)	65831 (86.57)
Urban Area	6408 (15.12)	3803 (11.29)	10211 (13.43)
Total (%)	42372 (100)	33670 (100)	76042 (100)

Source: Government of India. 2011. Census of India, Assam: Cachar District.

The table demonstrates that the total marginal other workers in Cachar district are 76042, out of which the total marginal other workers in rural areas are (86.57%) and the total marginal other workers in urban areas are 13.43%. The total male marginal other workers are 42372, of the total of 84.88% are in rural area and 15.12% are in urban areas, and the total female marginal other workers are 33670, of the total of 88.71% are in rural area and 11.29% are in urban areas.

Thus, majority of male and female marginal other workers are found in rural areas as compared to urban areas. In rural areas male marginal other workers are more than female marginal other workers. Male marginal workers are more in rural and urban area.

Non-Workers

A person who did not at all work during the reference period was treated as non-worker. The non-workers broadly constitute Students who did not

participate in any economic activity paid or unpaid, household duties who were attending to daily household chores like cooking, cleaning utensils, looking after children, fetching water etc. and are not even helping in the unpaid work in the family form or cultivation or milching, dependant such as infants or very elderly people not included in the category of worker, pensioners those who are drawing pension after retirement and are not engaged in any economic activity. Beggars, vagrants, prostitutes and persons having unidentified source of income and with unspecified sources of subsistence and not engaged in any economically productive work during the reference period. Others, this category includes all Non-workers who may not come under the above categories such as rentiers, persons living on remittances, agricultural or non-agricultural royalty, convicts in jails or inmates of penal, mental or charitable institutions doing no paid or unpaid work and persons who are seeking/ available for work.

Table 3.12
Non-Workers of Cachar District by Gender, 2011
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Type of Non-Workers	Male	Female	Grand Total
Rural Area	344825 (82.78)	574723 (80.72)	919548 (81.48)
Urban Area	71707 (17.22)	137300 (19.28)	209007 (18.52)
Total (%)	416532 (100)	712023 (100)	1128555 (100)

Source: Government of India. 2011. Census of India, Assam: Cachar District.

The table shows that the total non workers in Cachar district are 1128555, out which the total non workers in rural areas are 81.48% and the total non workers in urban areas are 18.52%. The total male non workers in Cachar district are 416532 of the total 82.78% are in rural areas and 17.22% are in urban areas. And the total female non workers are 712023, of the total 80.72% are in rural areas and 19.28% are in urban areas.

Thus, it illustrates that the non-workers in rural area outnumber the urban area, and male and female non-workers are more in rural area than in urban area. It signifies that the rural areas are not given impotence or not taken into account while making and implementing the developmental policies in Cachar district.

II
THE SILCHAR TOWN

Silchar town is the headquarters of Cachar district and is the economic gateway for the state of Mizoram and some parts of Manipur. Silchar is the second largest urban centre as well as the commercial centre in the state, having a sizeable population of traders from distant parts of India. Silchar which came into prominence after the annexation of Cachar by the British in 1832 was a small place having one street containing one hundred native shops and houses made of bamboo and grass till 1853. During the administration under the successors of Captain Fisher the Superintend, urban growth took place. The township was extended to cover Jhalupara, Tarapur and Malugram areas. The medical centre established by Fisher in 1835 was raised to the status of a civil hospital in 1864. Some schools and markets were established by Captain Stewart the Superintend. His successor, Captain John Edgar the Superintend (1867-72) prepared a blue print for planned development of town, divided the town into several sectors, metalled its roads and a large number of office buildings, residential quarters, circuit house and the Deputy Commissioner's office were constructed. The establishment of the district level Public Works Department facilitated the constructions. The jail was shifted to its present site and the native traders from Sylhet, Dhaka and other places were encouraged to settle down in Fatak Bazar in the Sadarghat area on favourable terms of landholding. The district headquarters was connected by roads with the interiors of the district. The ferry services were introduced in Sadarghat and Annapurnaghat with Rangpur and Dudhpatil respectively. The Head Post Office was established in 1852 and the daily mail services were maintained with Hailakandi, Katigorah and Haflong. A daily mail service was also introduced between Sylhet and Silchar. In 1861, the telegraph facility was added to the head post office at Silchar. The general Steam and

Navigation Company introduced steamer service between Calcutta and Silchar via East Bengal, in 1850s. In 1882, Silchar was constituted into a station under the Bengal Municipal Act (1876). However, the committee had no authority to levy tax for sanitation, carriage, animals or water supply. Naturally, its resources were limited and its performance could not be satisfactory. Therefore, on 1st April 1893, the Silchar Station was upgraded to the status of a second class municipality under the Bengal Act of 1876. The Assam Bengal Railway brought Silchar on the railway map in 1899.Those were the early years of urban development of Silchar. The town has grown manifold both in size and population after India's Independence. Although the municipal area, by and large, still coincides with the old town, the urban settlements have extended beyond the municipal boundary, for several kilometers along the inter-district and inter-state roads (Bhattacharjee, Sengupta and Nayak 1998).

Silchar situated on the left bank of the Barak river between $24^0$49'N and $92^0$48'E commands a charming view down the river, which is dotted with sails of native crafts and grooves of the areca palm, while a little of the north, the purple hills of north Cachar rise sharply from the plain. It is surrounded by the Borail hills on the north, Mizo hills on the south, Manipur on the east and Bangladesh on the west. Silchar is a trade and processing centre for tea, rice and other agricultural products. There is a limited industry, principally paper manufacturing and tea-box manufacturing. The city has an airport .It also lies on both a rail head and national highways connecting Guwahati -the capital of Assam, Agartala -the capital of Tripura, Imphal -the capital of Manipur and Aizawl -the capital of Mozoram. It has an average elevation of 22 meters (72 feet).It rains quite heavily in July and August and generally the outskirts of the town get flooded causing extensive damage to the poor farmers. In summer it is hot and in winters it's cool, but it never reaches extreme levels. The early rains in the summer bring in the most needed relief to the people. Flood, earthquakes, landslides and cyclones everything happens in Silchar. Like the rest of Assam Silchar is a seismic area and experiences earthquakes with Shillong as the epicenter. Silchar and Barak valley have been ravaged by three major floods in 1986, 1991 and 2004.The pH value of soil of Silchar varies between 4.5 and 5.5

having upward trend towards acidity. (www.silchar.com).Silchar is well connected by road, rail and air to the rest of the country. Silchar is connected through meter gauge rail network with Lumding and Agartala and this is currently being upgraded to broad gauge lines. There are regular bus services connecting Silchar with Guwahti, Shillong, Aiwawl, Agartala and Imphal and other places.The airport is located at Kumbhirgram, 22 kms from Silchar town and there are regular flights connecting Silchar with Kolkata, Guwahati, Agartala, Imphal and Aizawl. The airport is being mordernised and is considered the second to Guwahati in terms of passenger foot-fall and cargo.

Silchar has one All India Radio Station, one Doordarshan Kendra, five daily newspaper establishments; namely, Dainik Jugasankha, Samayik Prasanga, Janakantha and Dainik Prantajhyoti and Eastern Chronicle (English daily). Apart from these local newspapers, national dailies like Telegraph, Ananda Bazar Patrika, Times of India, the Statesman, Ajkal etc. are available here.

According to Census 2011, the total population of the town is 172,709, of which males are 86,812 (50.26) and females are 85,897 (49.74), making the sex ratio of 989 females per 1000 males, i.e., way above the national ratio of 940. Silchar has an average rate of literacy of 91.74%, much higher than the national average of 59.5%, male literacy is 93.97% and female literacy is 89.50%. In Silchar 8.96% of the population is less than 6 years of age. Major religions are Hinduism and Islam (www.Census2011.co.in).

Silchar has preponderantly Bengali population, contributing to more than 80% of the whole population. Most people speak Sylheti, a dialect of Bengali. The Sylhetis settled here after migrating from Sylhet, a district of undivided India, after partition of India in 1947. The rest of the residents of Silchar are Marwaris, Bishnupriya Manipuris, Meiteis Manipuris and some tribal groups like Nagas. The Silchar's calendar year is full of festivals, the awaited being the Durga Puja celebrated around October. Another occasion is the Eid, celebrated by the Muslims. Gandhi Mela is a local big fair in Silchar town, organised by Silchar Municipality. Local, cultural and sports clubs like Jyoti, Town Club, Cachar Club, Dishari, Bhabikal, Shanto Sena make up the cultural relief of the town. There is a District

Library catering to the needs of the majority of the readers, the A K Chanda Library and some privately managed libraries. Silchar has one National Institutes of Technology (NIT), a Central University, a Medical College & Hospital, a Polytechnic college, two B.Ed Colleges, two Law Colleges and one Industrial Training Institute (ITI). N.R.D.I. (Netaji Reading and Dramatics Institute) Auditorium was established by public money through the municipality for development of Cultural Activities in Silchar. Similarly the educational institutions have come into existence due to the contribution made by the people of Barak Valley; namely, Nehru College – Pailapool, S. S. College – Hailakandi, Janata College – Kabuganj, Rabindra Sadan Girl's College – Karimganj, A. K. Chanda Law College – Silchar and Women's College - Silchar. Two cinema halls; viz., Devdoot and Oriental provide amusement to the people. Silchar DSA Ground is the centre for sports loving people. Natives of this town are mostly rice-eating people. Fatak Bazaar is the main market of the town and other markets are Rangirkhari Bazar, National Highway Bazar, College Road Bazar, Itkhola Bazar, Tarapur Bazar and Birbal Bazar. Beside these, there are many other shops and markets in the town give positive impact in the economy of Silchar. Vishal Mega Mart,and Big Bazar a newly opened malls, have also successfully captured the market of Silchar town. The most of the people living in the outskirts rely on farming and tea cultivation. The Silchar region has 110 tea gardens and many of them producing the best tea in the country. Tea, oil and natural gas, bamboo, cane, rice are the major contributors to Silchar's economy. Silcharites have although been politically different from the rest of Assam. When there is AGP at the state, it is Congress in Silchar, when there is Congress at the state it is BJP at Silchar. Silchar is always affected by national issues more than the state issues. The local associations like ACKSA (All Cachar Karimganj Student Association) have become big forces when it comes to voice the local demands and needs and there are some other local associations in Silchar town, which also control the political conditions of the town (www.silchar.com).

III

THE WORKERS IN SILCHAR TOWN

According to the Census Report, 2001, workers (or employed) are those persons, who during the reference period, are engaged in any economic activity or who, despite their attachment to economic activity, have temporarily abstained from work for reasons of illness, injury or other physical disability, bad weather, festivals, social or religious functions or other contingencies. Unpaid helpers who assist in the operation of an economic activity in the household farm or non-farm activities are also considered as workers. All the workers are assigned one of the detailed activity status under the broad activity category working or being engaged in economic activity.

There are different types of workers in Silchar town such as cultivators, agricultural labourers, household workers, other workers. These workers come under two broad categories of workers; viz, main workers and marginal workers. These categories of workers in Silchar town are being discussed. Since the Census 2011 data for workers in Silchar town are not yet available, the data of Census 2001 are being used to show the workers' Status in the town.

Ward-wise Distribution of Workers

Silchar municipal area is divided into 28 wards. The workers in town are distributed in these wards. The following table shows the main workers by gender:

Table 3.13
Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender, 2001
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Ward No.	Male Workers	Female Workers	Total Workers
I	1302 (3.46)	272 (3.3)	1574 (3.44)
II	2588(6.88)	333(4.12)	2921 (6.39)
III	1629(4.33)	236 (2.91)	1865 (4.08)
IV	1087(2.89)	287(3.55)	1374(3.00)
V	2688(7.14)	476(5.89)	3164(6.91)
VI	557(1.48)	95(1.17)	652(1.43)
VII	1739(4.62)	458(5.67)	2197(4.80)
VIII	439(1.17)	34(0.42)	473(1.03)
IX	1266(3.36)	134(1.66)	1400(3.06)
X	942(2.50)	180(2.22)	1122(2.45)
XI	950(2.52)	200(2.47)	1150(2.52)
XII	1282(3.40)	222(2.74)	1504(3.29)
XIII	1146(3.04)	177(2.18)	1323(2.89)
XIV	1602(4.26)	227(2.80)	1829(4)
XV	808(2.15)	132(1.63)	940(2.06)
XVI	1345(3.57)	299(3.70)	1644(3.60)
XVII	1277(3.39)	212(2.62)	1489(3.26)
XVIII	1457(3.87)	355(4.39)	1812(3.96)
XIX	1340(3.56)	205(2.53)	1545(3.38)
XX	1132(3)	273(3.37)	1405(3.07)
XXI	981(2.60)	263(3.25)	1244(2.72)
XXII	1099(2.92)	401(5)	1500(3.28)
XXIII	611(1.62)	222(2.47)	833(1.82)
XXIV	1452(3.86)	344(4.25)	1796(3.93)
XXV	1600(4.25)	786(9.71)	2386(5.22)
XXVI	1350(3.59)	322(4)	1672(3.66)
XXVII	1724(4.58)	515(6.37)	2239(4.90)
XXVIII	2241(5.95)	430(5.34)	2671(5.84)
TOTAL	37634(100)	8090(100)	45724(100)
Male			37634(82.31)
Female			8090(17.69)

Source: Government of India. 2001. Census of India, Assam, Cachar District.

Total workers in Silchar town is 45,724, out of which 37,634 (82.31%) are male workers and 8,090 (17.69%) are female workers. The above table reveals the work participation of both male and female workers in the 28 wards of Silchar town. It is evident that male participation is higher than the female participation. Despite the fact that there is not much difference between the literacy rates of males and females. Thus, most of the women seem to be engaged in household or unrecognised works.

Of the total male workers, nearly one tenth (7.14%) belong to Ward No.5 the highest figure among all the other wards of Male Workers, and the least is (1.17%) from the Ward No.8

Of the total female workers the highest numbers comes from Ward No.25 (9.71%) while the least number (0.42%) is from Ward No.8

When combined Ward No.5 has the highest (6.91%) of male and female workers in the town, and Ward No.8 has the least number of male and female workers.

Of the total workers in Silchar town male workers are greater (82.31%) than the female (17.69%) workers.

(a) ***Main Workers***

Main workers are those who had work for the major part of the reference period (i.e. more than 6 months or more).The following table shows the Main Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender:

Table 3.14

Main Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender, 2001

(Percentage in Parentheses)

Ward No.	Male Main Workers	Female Main Workers	Total Main Workers
I	1239(3.42)	231(3.57)	1470(3.45)
II	2559(7.08)	287(4.43)	2846(6.68)
III	1591(4.40)	219(3.38)	1810(4.25)
IV	1058(2.93)	260(4.01)	1318(3.09)
V	2575(7.12)	354(5.46)	2929(6.88)
VI	546(1.51)	76(1.73)	622(1.46)
VII	1687(4.67)	364(5.62)	2051(4.82)
VIII	428(1.18)	28(0.43)	456(1.07)
IX	1259(3.48)	127(2)	1386(3.25)
X	938(2.59)	97(1.50)	1035(2.43)
XI	935(2.59)	183(2.83)	1118(2.62)
XII	1241(3.43)	210(3.24)	1451(3.40)
XIII	1116(3.09)	163(2.52)	1279(3)
XIV	1500(4.15)	175(2.70)	1675(3.93)
XV	803(2.22)	129(2)	932(2.19)
XVI	1262(3.49)	270(4.17)	1532(3.59)
XVII	1252(3.46)	176(2.72)	1428(3.35)
XVIII	1426(3.94)	329(5.08)	1755(4.11)
XIX	1287(3.56)	181(2.79)	1468(3.44)
XX	1091(3.02)	228(3.52)	1319(3.09)
XXI	917(2.54)	212(3.27)	1129(2.65)
XXII	1047(2.90)	336(5.19)	1385(3.24)
XXIII	588(1.63)	208(3.21)	796(1.87)
XXIV	1436(3.97)	241 (3.71)	1677(3.93)
XXV	1441(3.99)	349(5.39)	1790(4.20)
XXVI	1200(3.32)	218(3.36)	1418(3.33)
XXVII	1665(4.61)	490(7.56)	2155(5.06)
XXVIII	2061(5.70)	338(5.22)	2399(5.63)
TOTAL	36148(100)	6479(100)	42627(100)
Male			36148(84.80)
Female			6479(15.20)
Total			42627(100)

Source: Government of India. 2001. Census of India, Assam, Cachar District.

The table shows that, the total number of main workers is 42,627, out of which 36,148 (8.80%) are male main workers and female main workers are 6479 (15.20%).

Ward No.5 has the highest (7.12%) figure among all the wards of main male workers while the least is (1.18%) from the Ward No.8

Of the total female main workers the highest number (7.56%) comes from Ward No.27.while the least number (0.43%) is from Ward No.8.

When combined Ward No.5 has the highest (6.68%) of main worker in Silchar town and Ward No.8 has the least (1.07%) number of main workers.

It is clear from the table Ward No.8 has the least number of male and female main workers in Silchar town.

Thus, most (84.80%) of the main workers are male members and few (15.20) females fall under the category of main workers in Silchar town.ar town.

(b) Marginal Workers

Those workers who had not worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e., less than 6 months) are termed as marginal workers. The following table shows the Marginal Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender:

Table 3.15
Marginal Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender, 2001
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Ward No.	Male Marginal Workers	Female Marginal Workers	Total Marginal Workers
I	63(6.26)	41(2.55)	104(3.36)
II	29(1.95)	46(3.41)	75(2.42)
III	38(2.56)	17(1.06)	55(1.78)
IV	29(1.95)	27(1.68)	56(1.81)
V	113(7.60)	122(7.57)	235(7.59)
VI	11(0.74)	19(1.18)	30(0.97)
VII	52(3.50)	94(5.83)	146(4.71)
VIII	11(0.74)	6(0.37)	17(0.55)
IX	7(0.47)	7(0.43)	14(0.45)
X	4(0.27)	83(5.15)	87(2.81)
XI	15(1)	17(1.06)	32(1.03)
XII	41(2.76)	129(0.74)	53(1.71)
XIII	30(2.02)	149(0.87)	44(1.42)
XIV	102(6.86)	52(3.23)	154(4.97)
XV	5(0.34)	3(0.19)	8(0.26)
XVI	83(5.59)	29(1.80)	112(3.62)
XVII	25(1.68)	36(2.23)	61(1.97)
XVIII	31(2.09)	26(1.61)	57(1.84)
XIX	53(3.57)	24(1.49)	77(2.49)
XX	41(2.76)	45(2.79)	86(2.78)
XXI	64(4.31)	51(3.17)	115(3.71)
XXII	52(3.50)	65(4.03)	117(3.78)
XXIII	23(1.55)	14(0.87)	37(1.19)
XXIV	16(1.08)	103(6.39)	119(3.84)
XXV	159(10.70)	437(27.13)	596(19.24)
XXVI	150(10.2)	104(6.46)	254(8.20)
XXVII	59(3.97)	25(1.56)	84(2.71)
XXVIII	180(12.11)	192(5.71)	272(8.78)
TOTAL	1486(100)	1611(100)	3097(100)
Male			1486(47.98)
Female			1611(52.02)
Total			3097(100)

Source: Government of India. 2001. Census of India, Assam, Cachar District.

The table reveals that in Silchar town the total marginal workers are 3097, out of which male marginal workers are 1486 (48%) and female marginal works are 1611 (52%). From among the male marginal workers, Ward No. 28 has the highest number (12.11%) and Ward No.10 has the least number (0.27%) of marginal male workers. Thus, is clear that the female participation is higher than male participation as marginal workers.

Of the total female marginal workers, Ward No.25 has the highest (27.13%) figure among all the other wards of female marginal workers while Ward No.15, has the least (0.19%).

When Combined Ward No.25 five has the highest (19.24%) of male and female marginal workers in the vicinity of Silchar town, and Ward No.15 has the least (0.26%) number of male and female marginal workers.

Thus, it can be said that Female marginal workers outnumber ((52.02%) the male marginal (47.98%) workers in Silchar town.

(c) Cultivators

For the purpose of the census, a person is classified as cultivator of land if he or she is engaged in cultivation or held from private persons or institutions for payment in money, kind or share. Cultivation includes affective supervision or directing cultivation. A person who has given out her or his land to another person or persons or institutions for cultivation for money, kind or share of crop and who does not even supervise or direct cultivation of land, is not treated as cultivator. Similarly, a person working on another person's land for wages in cash or kind or a combination of both (agricultural labourer) is not treated as cultivator. Cultivation involves ploughing, sowing , harvesting and production of cereals and millet crops such as wheat, paddy, Jower etc., and other crops such as sugarcane, tobacco, ground nuts, etc., pulses , raw jute, cotton , medical plants, fruit growing vegetable, growing or keeping orchards or groves etc. Cultivation does not include plantation; namely, crops –tea, coffee, rubber, coconut, beetle nuts etc. Cultivators are divided into two categories; (i) main cultivators and (ii) marginal cultivators.

(I) Main Cultivators

For purposes of the census a person is classified as cultivator if he or she is engaged in cultivation of land owned or held from Government or held from private persons or institutions for payment in money, kind or share. Cultivation includes effective supervision or direction in cultivation. The following table shows the Main Cultivators in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender:

Table 3.16

Main Cultivators in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender, 2001
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Ward No.	Male Main Cultivators	Female Main Cultivators	Total Main Cultivators
I	-	1(4.17)	1(1.30)
II	2 (3.77)	-	2(2.60)
IV	-	1(4.17)	1(1.30)
V	8(15.09)	-	8(10.40)
VI	-	1(4.17)	1(1.30)
VII	1(1.89)	-	1(1.30)
VIII	1(1.89)	-	1(1.30)
XI	2(03.77)	1(4.17)	3(3.90)
XIII	3(5.66)	5(20.8)	8(10.4)
XV	-	1(4.17)	1(1.30)
XVI	8(15.09)	-	8(10.40)
XVII	7(13.21)	2(8.33)	9(11.69)
XVIII	1(1.89)	3(12.5)	4(5.19)
XIX	1(1.89)	-	1(1.30)
XX	2(3.77)	2(8.33)	4(5.19)
XXI	5(9.43)	1(4.17)	6(7.79)
XXIV	1(1.89)	-	1(1.30)
XXV	1(1.89)	-	1(1.30)
XXVI	4(7.55)	1(4.17)	5(6.49)
XXVII	3(5.66)	4(16.67)	7(9.09)
XXVIII	3(5.66)	1(4.17)	4(5.19)
Total	53(100)	24(100)	77(100)
Male			53(68.83)
Female			24(31.17)
Total			77(100)

Source: Government of India. 2001. Census of India, Assam, Cachar District.

The Main Cultivators in Silchar town are 77, out of which 53 (68.83) are male main cultivators and 24 (31.17) are female main cultivators.

Of all the male main cultivators Ward No.5 and 16 have the highest (15.09%) number of main male cultivators and 6 Wards (7, 8,18,19,24, and 25) have the least (1.89%) number of main male cultivators. Female main cultivators highest (20.8%) number is in Ward No.13 and the least (4.17) number in 8 Wards of Silchar town.

It is observed that in some of the Wards of Silchar town there are no male and female main cultivators.

When combined Ward No.17 has the highest (5.19%) number of male and female main cultivators, nearly one third of the Wards have minimum (1.30%) number of male and female main cultivators.

Of the total main cultivators in Silchar town more than half (68.83%) male and one third (31.17%) are females.

(ii) Marginal Cultivators

Those workers who had not worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e. less than 6 months) are termed as Marginal Cultivators. The following table shows Marginal Cultivators in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender.

Table 3.17
Marginal Cultivators in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender, 2001
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Ward no.	Male Marginal Cultivators	Female Marginal Cultivators	Total Marginal Cultivators
XII	1 (3.33)	-	1 (20)
XXII	1 (3.33)	-	1 (20)
XXV	-	2 (100)	2 (40)
XXVIII	1 (3.33)	-	1 (20)
TOTAL	3 (100)	2 (100)	5 (100)
Male			3 (60)
Female			2 (40)
Total			5 (100)

Source: Government of India. 2001. Census of India, Assam, Cachar District.

Total marginal cultivators are 5, out of which male marginal cultivators are 3 and female marginal cultivators are 2. The male marginal cultivators are only 3, found in three Wards, namely, Ward No.12, 22 & 28, while female marginal cultivators are only two, found in only one ward, i.e. Ward No.25.

Of the total Marginal Cultivators in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town three fifth (60%) are males and two fifth (40%) are females.

(d) Agricultural Labourers

A person who works on another person's land for wages in money or kind or share is regarded as an agricultural labourer. She or he has no risk in the cultivation, but merely works on another person's land for wages. An agricultural labourer has no right of lease or contract on land or on which she or he works. There are two categories of agricultural labourers namely; (i) main agricultural labourers and (ii) marginal agricultural labourers.

(i) Main Agricultural Labourers

A person who works on another person's land for wages in money or kind or share is regarded as an agricultural labourer. She or he has no risk in the cultivation, but merely works on another person's land for wages. An agricultural labourer has no right of lease or contract on land on which she/he works. The following table shows the Main Agricultural Labourers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender:

Table 3.18

Main Agricultural Labourers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender, 2001

(Percentage in Parentheses)

Ward No.	Main Male Agricultural Labourers	Main Female Agricultural Labourers	Total Main Agricultural Labourers
I	1 (2.38)	-	1(1.87)
II	1 (2.38)	-	1(1.87)
III	-	1 (9.09)	1(1.87)
V	3 (7.14)	-	3(5.66)
VI	2 (4.76)	-	2(3.77)
VII	1 (2.38)	1 (9.09)	2(3.77)
XIII	-	1 (9.09)	1(1.87)
XIV	23 (54.76)	-	23(43.40)
XV	-	1 (9.09)	1(1.87)
XVI	2 (4.76)	3 (27.27)	5(9.43)
XVII	1 (2.38)	-	1(1.87)
XVIII	2 (4.76)	2 (18.18)	4(7.55)
XXI	-	1 (9.09)	1(1.87)
XXIV	2 (4.76)	-	2(3.77)
XXV	2 (4.76)	1 (9.09)	3(5.66)
XXVI	1 (2.38)	-	1(1.87)
XXVII	1 (2.38)	-	1(1.87)
Total	42 (100)	11 (100)	53 (100)
Male			42(79.25)
Female			11(20.75)
Total			53(100)

Source: Government of India. 2001. Census of India, Assam, Cachar District.

The above table gives ward wise picture of agricultural labourers in Silchar town. The total main agricultural labourers are 53, out of which main male agricultural labourers are 42 (79.25%) and female main agricultural laboureres are 11 (20.75%).

Of the total male agricultural labouerers more than half (54.76%) belong to Ward No 15.the highest among all the other wards of male agricultural labourers, and the least (2.38%) number is in 6 Wards of Silchar town.

Of the 11 female main agricultural laboureres, 27.27% are found in Ward No.16, and 9.09% are found in 6 Wards of Silchar town.

There are no female main agricultural labouers in Ward No.15 which has the more than half the number of male main agricultural labourers.

When combined Ward 16 has highest (9.43%) of male and female main agricultural labourers and in 9 Wards, the least number (11.87%) of male and female main agricultural labouerers.

Of the 28 Wards in Silchar municipality, 18 Wards do not have a single main agricultural labourer.

Majority of (79.25%) of the main agricultural labourers are males and one fifth (20.75%) females.

(ii) Marginal Agricultural Labourers

Those workers who had not worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e. less than 6 months) are termed as Marginal Agricultural Labourers. The following table shows the Marginal Agricultural Labourers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender:

Table 3.19
Marginal Agricultural Labourers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender, 2001

(Percentage in Parentheses)

Ward No.	Marginal Male Agricultural Labourers	Marginal Female Agricultural Labourers	Total Marginal Agricultural Labourers
II	1 (10)	-	1 (5.56)
V	-	5 (62.5)	5 (27.78)
XVI	1 (10)	1 (12.5)	2 (11.11)
XIX	3 (30)	1 (12.5)	4 (2.22)
XXV	1 (10)	-	1 (5.56)
XXVI	3 (30)	-	3 (16.67)
XXVII	-	1 (12.5)	1 (5.56)
XXVIII	1 (10)	-	1 (5.56)
Total	10 (100)	8 (100)	18 (100)
Male			10 (55.55)
Female			8 (44.45)

Source: Government of India. 2001. Census of India, Assam, Cachar District.

The table shows the marginal agricultural labourers in Silchar town. There are only 18 marginal agricultural labourers, out of the total male marginal agricultural labourers, over halves, i.e., 10 are male marginal agricultural labourers and female marginal agricultural labourers are 8 in number. Of the 10 male marginal agricultural labourers three each (30%) male marginal agricultural

labourers are found in 2 wards, i.e. Ward No.19& 26. And of the 8 female marginal agricultural labourers, 62.5% female marginal agricultural labourers are in Ward No.5.

When combined Ward No.5 has highest (27.78%) of marginal agricultural labourers and the least (5.56%) 4 Wards of Silchar town. And in 20 Wards there are no male and female marginal agricultural labourers.

More than half (55.55%) of the Marginal Agricultural Labourers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town are males, while more than two –fifth (44.45%) female marginal agricultural labourers.

(e) Household Workers

Household workers (own account workers) are the self-employed who operate their enterprise on their own account or with one or a few partners and who during the reference period, by and large, run their enterprise without hiring any labour. They may, however, have unpaid helpers to assist them in the activity of the enterprise. Household workers (employers) are the self-employed persons who work on their own account or with one or a few partners and by and large, run their enterprise by hiring labour are the employers. Household workers (helpers in household enterprise) are a category of self-employed persons, mostly family members, who keep themselves engaged in their household enterprise, working full or part time and, so, do not receive any regular salary or wages in return for the work performed. They do not run the household enterprise on their own but assist the related persons living in the same household in the running of the household enterprise. There are two categories of Household workers, namely; (i) main household workers and (ii) marginal household workers.

(i) Main Household Workers

A household worker is anyone who is paid to provide domestic services in one's household, such as: Babysitters, nannies, and au pairs, Caretakers, health aides, and private nurses, Housekeepers and maids, Gardeners, landscapers, and yard-keepers, Drivers and chauffeurs, Personal assistants, personal chefs, and cooks. The following table shows the Main Household Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar town by Gender:

Table 3.20
Main Household Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender, 2001
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Ward No.	Main Male Household Workers	Main Female Household Workers	Total Main Household Workers
I	16(6.27)	3(2.75)	19(5.23)
II	5(1.96)	18(16.51)	23(6.32)
III	15(5.88)	1(0.27)	16(4.40)
V	9(3.53)	9(8.26)	18(4.95)
VII	7(2.75)	4(3.67)	11(3.02)
IX	5(1.96)	6(5.50)	11(3.0)
X	1(0.39)	4(3.67)	5(1.37)
XI	4(1.57)	1(0.27)	5(1.37)
XII	18(7.05)	8(7.34)	26(7.14)
XIII	3(1.18)	-	3(0.82)
XIV	61(23.92)	6(5.50)	67(18.41)
XV	19(7.45)	-	19(5.23)
XVI	7(2.75)	5(4.59)	12(3.30)
XVII	-	2(1.83)	2(0.55)
XVIII	8(3.14)	13(11.93)	21(5.77)
XIX	33(12.94)	9(8.26)	42(11.54)
XX	3(1.18)	2(1.83)	5(1.37)
XXI	1(0.39)	1(0.27)	2(0.55)
XXII	5(1.96)	-	5(1.37)
XXIII	4(1.57)	-	4(1.1)
XXIV	6(2.35)	4(3.67)	10(2.75)
XXV	4(1.57)	1(0.27)	5(1.37)
XXVI	7(2.75)	2(1.83)	9(2.48)
XXVII	1(0.39)	8(4.34)	9(2.48)
XXVIII	13(5.10)	2(3.83)	15(4.12)
Total	255 (100)	109 (100)	364 (100)
Male			255(70.05)
Female			109(29.95)
Total			364(100)

Source: Government of India. 2001. Census of India, Assam, Cachar District.

The above data give us the clear picture of status of main household workers of Silchar town. There are only 364 main household workers. Male main household workers are 255 and female main household workers 109.

Of the 255 male main household workers 61(23.92%) are in Ward No.14 and the least number (0.39%) are found in 3 Wards.

Of the109 female main household workers, Ward No. 2 has the highest (16.51%) and the least (0.27%) number is found in 4 Wards of Silchar town.

When combined the highest (18.41%) of main house hold workers found in Ward No.14 and the least (0.55%) in 2 Wards of Silchar town.

Nearly three fourths (70.05%) of main household workers in municipal wards of the Silchar town are males and 29.95% are females.

(ii) Marginal Household Workers

Those workers who had not worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e., less than 6 months) are termed as marginal household workers. The following table shows the Marginal Household Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender:

Table 3.21
Marginal Household Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender, 2001

(Percentage in Parentheses)

Ward No.	Marginal Male Household Workers	Marginal Female Household Workers	Total Marginal Household Workers
I	1(1.89)	1(0.88)	2(1.20)
II	1(1.89)	6(5.30)	7(4.22)
III	2(3.78)	2(1.77)	4(2.41)
IV	-	3(2.65)	3(1.81)
V	-	2(1.77)	2(1.20)
VII	1(1.8)	2(1.77)	3(1.81)
IX	1(1.89)	-	1(0.6)
XI	6(11.32)	11(9.73)	17(10.24)
XII	-	3(2.65)	3(1.81)
XIII	-	1(0.88)	1(0.60)
XIV	14(26)	32(28.32)	46 (27.71)
XV	1(1.89)	1(0.88)	2(1.20)
XVII	1(1.89)	6(5.31)	7(4.22)
XIX	5(9.43)	-	5(3.01)
XX	-	8(7.08)	8(4.82)
XXII	-	1(0.88)	1(0.60)
XXIV	3(5.67)	10(8.8)	13(7.8)
XXV	3(5.67)	2(1.77)	5(3.01)
XXVI	5(9.43)	14(12.39)	19(11.45)
XXVII	-	1(0.88)	1(0.60)
XXVIII	9(16.98)	7(6.19)	16(9.64)
TOTAL	53 (100)	113 (100)	166 (100)
Male			53(31.93)
Female			113(68.07)

Source: Government of India. 2001. Census of India, Assam, Cachar District.

The table shows the ward wise marginal household workers in Silchar town. Total marginal household workers are 166. Out of the total, 53(31.93%) are male marginal household workers and 113 (68.07%) are female marginal household workers.

Of the total of 53, the highest (16.98%) number is found in Ward No.28 and the least (1.89%) number is found in 7 Wards of Silchar town.

Of the 113 female marginal household workers, the highest number (28.32%) in Ward No.14, and the least number (0.88%) found in 5 Wards of Silchar town.

When combined Ward No.14 has the highest number (27.71%) of marginal household workers and the least number (0.60%) found in Ward No.9, 13&22.

Majority (68.07%) of the marginal household workers in municipal wards of the Silchar town are females while 31.93% are males.

(f) Other Workers

All workers, who have been engaged in some economic activities, during the last one year, but are not cultivators or agricultural labourers or in household industry, are other workers, The type of workers that come under the category of other workers include all Government employees, municipal employees, teachers, factory workers, plantation workers, those engaged in trade, commerce, business, transport, banking, mining, construction, political or social work, priests entertainment artist, etc. In effect, all those workers, other than cultivators or agricultural labourers or house industry workers are other workers.

(i) Main Other Workers

The following table shows the Main Other Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender:

Table 3.22

Main Other Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender, 2001
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Ward No.	Main Male Other Workers	Main Female Other Workers	Total Main Other Workers
I	1222(3.41)	227(3.58)	1449(3.44)
II	2551(7.13)	269(4.25)	2820(6.7)
III	1576(4.40)	217(3.43)	1793(4.26)
IV	1058(2.96)	259(4.1)	1317(3.13)
V	2555(7.14)	345(5.45)	2900(6.89)
VI	544(1.51)	75(1.18)	619(1.47)
VII	1678(4.69)	359(5.67)	2037(4.83)
VIII	427(1.19)	28(0.44)	455(1.08)
IX	1254(3.50)	121(1.91)	1375(3.26)
X	937(2.61)	93(1.47)	1030(2.44)
XI	929(2.60)	181(2.86)	1110(2.63)
XII	1223(3.4)	202(3.19)	1425(3.38)
XIII	1110(3.1)	157(2.48)	1267(3)
XIV	1416(3.96)	169(2.67)	1585(3.76)
XV	784(2.19)	127(2)	911(2.16)
XVI	1245(3.48)	262(4.14)	1507(3.58)
XVII	1244(3.47)	172(2.72)	1416(3.36)
XVIII	1415(3.95)	311(4.91)	1726(4.1)
XIX	1253(3.5)	172(2.72)	1425(3.38)
XX	1086(3.03)	224(3.54)	1310(3.11)
XXI	911(2.54)	209(3.30)	1120(2.66)
XXII	1042(2.91)	336(5.31)	1378(3.27)
XXIII	584(1.63)	208(3.28)	792(1.88)
XXIV	1428(4)	236(3.73)	1664(3.95)
XXV	1434(4)	347(5.48)	1781(4.22)
XXVI	1188(3.31)	215(3.40)	1403(3.33)
XXVII	1661(4.64)	477(7.53)	2138(5.07)
XXVIII	2045(5.71)	335(5.29)	2380(5.65)
Total	35800 (100)	6333 (100)	42133 (100)
Male			35800(84.97)
Female			6333(15.03)

Source: Government of India. 2001. Census of India, Assam, Cachar District.

The above table reveals that the total main other workers are 42133, out of which 35800 (84.97%) are main male other workers and 6333 (15.03%) are main female other workers.

Of the total male main other workers, Ward No. 5 has the highest (7.14%) number of male main other workers and the least (1.19%) in Ward No. 8.

Of the total female main other workers Ward No. 27 has the highest (7.53%) number and Ward No. 8 has the least (1.19%) number of female main other workers.

When combined ward number 5 has the highest (6.89%) of the main other workers and ward number 8 has least (1.08%) of main other workers.

Ward No.8 has the least number of male and female main other workers.

Most of the (84.97%) main other workers in municipal wards of the Silchar town are males and only 15.03% are females.

(ii) Marginal Other Workers

Those workers who had not worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e. less than 6 months) are termed as marginal other workers. The following table shows the Marginal Other Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender.

Table 3.23

Marginal Other Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender, 2001

(Percentage in Parentheses)

Ward No.	Marginal Male Other Workers	Marginal Female Other Workers	Total Marginal Other Workers
I	62(4.36)	40(2.69)	102(3.51)
II	27(1.90)	40(2.69)	67(2.30)
III	36(2.53)	15(1)	51(1.75)
IV	29(2.04)	24(1.62)	53(1.82)
V	113(7.95)	115(7.74)	228(7.84)
VI	11(0.77)	19(1.28)	30(1.03)
VII	51(3.59)	92(6.19)	143(4.92)
VIII	11(0.77)	6(0.40)	17(0.06)
IX	6(0.42)	7(0.47)	13(0.45)
X	4(0.28)	83(5.59)	87(2.99)
XI	8(0.56)	6(0.40)	14(0.48)
XII	41(2.89)	9(0.61)	50(1.72)
XIII	30(2.11)	13(0.87)	43(1.48)
XIV	88(6.19)	20(1.35)	108(3.72)
XV	4(0.28)	2(0.13)	6(0.02)
XVI	82(0.58)	28(1.88)	110(3.78)
XVII	24(1.69)	30(2.02)	54(1.86)
XVIII	31(2.18)	25(1.68)	56(1.93)
XIX	45(3.17)	23(1.55)	68(2.34)
XX	41(2.89)	37(2.49)	78(2.68)
XXI	64(4.50)	51(3.43)	115(3.96)
XXII	52(3.66)	63(4.24)	115(3.96)
XXIII	23(1.62)	14(0.94)	37(1.27)
XXIV	13(0.91)	93(6.26)	106(3.65)
XXV	155(10.91)	433(29.14)	588(20.23)
XXVI	142(9.99)	90(6.06)	232(7.98)
XXVII	59(4.15)	23(1.55)	82(2.82)
XXVIII	169(11.89)	85(5.72)	254(8.74)
Total	1421 (100)	1486 (100)	2907 (100)
Male			1421(48.88)
Female			1486(51.12)

Source: Government of India. 2001. Census of India, Assam, Cachar District.

The ward-wise marginal other workers in Silchar town are 2907, out of which 1421 (48.88%) are male marginal other workers and 1486 (51.18%) marginal female other workers.

Ward No.28 has the highest (11.89%) number of male marginal other workers and Ward Nos.10 & 15 have the least (0.28%) of the male other workers.

Ward No.25 has the highest (29.14%) of female other workers and is the highest number when compared with other wards, and the least (0.13%) is found in Ward No.15.

Of the total of 2907 other workers of Silchar town, Ward No.25 has highest (20.23%) number of male and female other workers and the least (0.02%) in Ward No.15.

It is evident from the above table that of the 28 Wards, Ward No.15 has the least number of male and the female other workers.

More than half of the females are (51.12%) marginal other workers in municipal wards of the Silchar town and less than half the no's (48.88%) are male.

Non- Workers

Non-workers as defined in Census of India are persons who did not at all work during the reference period. They constitute Students who did not participate in any economic activity, paid or unpaid, those who were attending to daily household chores like cooking, cleaning utensils, looking after children, fetching water etc. and are not even helping in the unpaid work in the family farm or cultivation or milching, dependants such as infants or very elderly people not included in the category of worker, those who are drawing pension after retirement and are not engaged in any economic activity. Beggars, vagrants, prostitutes and persons having unidentified source of income and with unspecified sources of subsistence and not engaged in any economically productive work during the reference period. It also includes all Non-workers who may not come under the above categories such as rentiers, persons living on remittances, agricultural or non-agricultural royalty, convicts in jails or inmates of penal, mental or charitable institutions doing no paid or unpaid work and persons who are seeking/ available for work. The following table shows the Non-Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender.

Table 3.24
Non-Workers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town by Gender, 2001
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Ward No.	Male Non- Workers	Female Non- Workers	Total Non- Workers
I	1335(3.81)	2362(3.85)	3697(3.83)
II	1984(5.67)	3493(5.68)	5477(5.68)
III	1648(4.70)	2916(4.75)	4564(4.73)
IV	974(2.78)	1666(2.71)	2640(2.74)
V	2627(7.50)	4507(7.34)	7134(7.40)
VI	399(1.14)	780(1.27)	1179(1.22)
VII	1592(4.54)	2618(4.26)	4210(4.36)
VIII	421(1.20)	702(1.14)	1123(1.16)
IX	1212(3.46)	2116(3.45)	3328(3.45)
X	596(1.70)	1320(2.15)	1916(1.99)
XI	776(2.21)	1490(2.43)	2266(2.35)
XII	1068(3.05)	1985(3.23)	3053(3.17)
XIII	1090(3.11)	2007(3.28)	3097(3.21)
XIV	1458(4.16)	2751(4.48)	4209(4.36)
XV	782(2.23)	1602(2.61)	2384(2.47)
XVI	1053(3)	2058(3.35)	3111(3.22)
XVII	1275(3.64)	2164(3.52)	3439(3.67)
XVIII	1551(4.43)	2668(4.34)	4219(4.37)
XIX	1398(3.99)	2463(4.01)	3861(4)
XX	980(2.80)	1851(3.01)	2831(2.93)
XXI	952(2.80)	1671(2.72)	2623(2.72)
XXII	1009(2.88)	1793(2.92)	2802(2.90)
XXIII	884(2.52)	921(1.5)	1805(1.87)
XXIV	1515(4.23)	2434(3.96)	3949(4.1)
XXV	1453(4.15)	2278(3.8)	3731(3.87)
XXVI	1237(3.53)	2274(3.7)	3511(3.64)
XXVII	1685(4.80)	2816(4.58)	4501(4.67)
XXVIII	2091(5.97)	3724(6.06)	5815(6.03)
Total	35045 (100)	61430 (100)	96475 (100)
Male			35045(36.33)
Female			61430(63.67)

Source: Government of India. 2001. Census of India, Assam, Cachar District.

The above table shows that the total numbers of non-workers in Silchar town are 96475, out of which 35045 (36.33%) are male non-workers and 61430 (63.67%) are female non-workers.

Of the total male non-workers, the highest numbers (7.50%) of the non-workers found in Ward No.5, and the least number (1.14%) of them is in Ward No.6.

Of the total female non-workers the highest (7.34%) of non- workers are from Ward No.5 and the least number (1.14%) of non- workers found in Ward No.8.

When added, Ward No.5 has the highest (7.40%) number of non workers and the Ward No.8 has the least (1.16%) of non-workers.

Most of the females are (63.67%) non-workers in municipal wards of the Silchar town area and 36.33% of are male non-workers in Silchar town.

IV

SLUM POCKETS IN THE WARDS OF SILCHAR TOWN

Slums have come to form an integral part of the phenomena of urbanization in India. Comprehensive information on the slums is essential for formulation of effective and coordinated policy for their improvement. As per the Municipality Record there are 43 slum pockets in Silchar town. They are situated within the 28 Wards of Municipality. Certain general conditions prevail in slums. Crowded, neglected, deteriorated and often obsolete housing are some of the common features which prevail in slums. Poorly arranged structure, inadequate light and circulation of fresh air, poor design and lack of sanitary facilities are also common to find in slums. Limited availability of running water, flesh toilets, electricity and cooking facilities are some other prevalent conditions.

The existence of slums in Silchar urban area is evident from the fact that the municipality has registered forty three slum pockets within its periphery. Slums mostly supply domestic workers. Women domestic workers of Silchar do not have good living condition and work condition too. With the meager incomes, the people are to maintain their food, clothing, housing, fuel, medicine and other expenditures. At the present level of cost of living the low income groups will naturally be facing the problems in every sphere of life. They are living without the living amenities, which a modern urban citizen demands. On the other hand with the meager income, they live hard life in extremely crowded, congested, polluted and unhygienic condition and on the other they are polluting the entire urban environment. Like any slum dwellers of the urban area, Silchar slum too has certain common characteristic feature. Women domestic workers of Silchar are in a state of dependency for work, food, and other basic amenities.

Now, major types of workers in Silchar town are recapitulated as follows:

1. Of the total workers in Silchar town male workers are greater (82.31%) than the female (17.69%) workers.

2. Of the total majority (84.80%) of main workers are male members and few (15.20) females fall under the category of main workers in Silchar town.ar town
3. Female marginal workers outnumber ((52.02%) the male marginal (47.98%) workers in Silchar town.
4. Of the total main cultivators in Silchar town more than half (68.83%) male and one third (31.17%) are females.
5. Of the total Marginal Cultivators in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town three fifth (60%) are males and two fifth (40%) are females.
6. Most of (79.25%) of the main agricultural labourers are males and one fifth (20.75%) are females.
7. More than half (55.55%) of the Marginal Agricultural Labourers in Municipal Wards of the Silchar Town are males, while more than two –fifth (44.45%) female marginal agricultural labourers.
8. Nearly three forth (70.05%) main household workers in municipal wards of the Silchar town are males and 29.95% are females.
9. Majority (68.07%) of the marginal household workers in municipal wards of the Silchar town are females while 31.93% are males.
10. Most of the (84.97%) main other workers in municipal wards of the Silchar town are males and only 15.03% are females.
11. More than half of the females are (51.12%) marginal other workers in municipal wards of the Silchar town and less than half the no's (48.88%) are males.
12. Most of the females are (63.67%) non-workers in municipal wards of the Silchar town area and 36.33% of are male non-workers in Silchar town.

Briefly, of the different types of workers in Silchar town, male workers are more in the categories of main workers, main cultivators, marginal cultivators, main agricultural labourers, marginal Agricultural Labourers, main household workers and main other workers while female workers are more among the marginal workers, marginal household workers, marginal other workers, and among non-workers of Silchar town. Thus, the male workers outnumber the female workers in different types of work.

In sum, the urban economy has demand for a huge number of informal workers, but the incomes of these informal workers are not sufficient to afford them a decent standard of living. The vicious circle of poverty is in operation and there is no sign that in near future any positive change can be found. Domestic service is a

major and growing informal sector activity, largely occupied by women. Women from certain areas or regions with specific socio-economic backgrounds are found to be concentrated in this occupation. This has been seen as an outcome of the transformations in the agrarian economy, which has resulted in an unprecedented mobility of labour to urban areas. This, together with changes in class relations, increasing inequality and development of new lifestyles and patterns of living among the urban middle class, has resulted in the growth of the service. Illiteracy, low caste and migrant status, lack of alternative employment opportunities, dependence on placement agencies. The existing ambiguities in defining 'domestic work' and 'domestic workers' need an immediate attention of policy makers. This will not only help in the proper recording of the sector and changes within it but also in designing relevant policies and programmes for the sector. However, such efforts should aim at capturing them as an identifiable category, and that which is why there is a need to acknowledge the diversity in domestic service as well. The recognition of 'household' as a workplace seems to be the only answer in regulating the sector. This would enable domestic workers to demand basic rights at work such as minimum wages and regulation of working hours. This would also help in regulating the growth and functioning of placement agencies. Legal interventions that recognise domestic workers as 'workers' and the home as a 'workplace' are thus fundamental in improving the conditions of domestic workers.

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