CHAPTER - II
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

2.1 Introduction

Assam is popularly known as the "Land of The Blue Hills and Red Rivers", Occupying a strategic position and also known as the Gate Way to the North-East States. Assam has been a land of culture and civilization, arts, craft, beauty and has retained her cultural integrity of the country. It is close to international boundaries i.e.China, Burma, Bhutan and Bangladesh.

In ancient period Assam was known as Pragjyotisha and later on Kamrupa. In those days the region was divided into number of principalities, ruled by tribal chiefs. So, in those days, there was no state called Assam. As such it is after the coming of the Ahoms in thirteenth century from Thailand and Mayanmar, the state of Assam gradually emerged. The Ahoms conquered the native tribes of the region and eventually established their kingdom which came to be known as Assam. The Ahoms ruled Assam for about of 600 years till the Yandaboo treaty in 1826 between Myanmar and British administration in India.

During the period, Assam also included Nagaland (Naga Hills),Meghalaya (Khasi, jaintia and Garo Hills) and Mizoram (Lushai Hills) as districts. But in the post independent period Nagaland was made full flaged state in 1963, Meghalaya in 1972, and Mizoramin 1987. As a result, Assam has become smaller than what it

was in the pre-Independence days. At present Assam is an important state of North East India, which may be called gate-way to other states viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur , Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. Now Assam is divided with 27 districts. Assam Comprises different ethnic groups, which can be categories broadly as tribals and non tribals.

In 1228 A.D., the Ahoms came from across the eastern hills and ruled the region for about six centuries. Then, the Burmese entered through the eastern borders and overran the territory by taking advantage of the circumstances created by the various divisive forces at the work in the Ahome court. Thereafter, in 1826 with the advent of the British, the Burmese ceded Assam to them by the Yandaboo Treaty. In the Post-Independence era, with the reorganization of states, some areas of the erstwhile province of Assam were curved out as separate states of the north-eastern region like Meghalaya and Mizoram. In 1972, NEFA, ceased to be a tribal area under the state of Assam; it became a union territory and formally acquired the name Arunachal Pradesh. Finally, in 1987, it attained statehood. Thus, the present state of Assam was formed.

Assam is blended with hills and plains. Its entire area can be broadly divided into three well defined Assam units viz.

1. The Brahamaputra valley covering the mains body of the state in the north,
2. The Barak valley in the South and.
3. The hilly region i.e. the Karbi Anglong and the North Cachar Hills in the middle which separates the two valleys.

The Brahmaputra valley formed by river Brahmaputra, which is one of the greatest river system of the world. It flows down to Assam through the territory of Arunachal Pradesh. The valley covers 56,000sq.km.of alluvial plains interspersed with small hillock and swampy low lands, which are subject to annual floods. It has many important tributaries on the northern Brahmaputra valley is fertile and suitable for variety of crops. Majuli, which is recorded to be the largest river island of the world.

The Barak Valley covering about 7,000sq.km.is an undulating plains area with small hillocks and swamps at intervals. It is also a fertile valley for various crops.

The hilly region i.e the Karbi plateau and the North Cachar hills lies in between the two valleys. The average elevation off the plateau is about 450 meters above sea. The total geographical area covered by the two hills district is 15,222sq.km.

2.2 Climate and Rainfall

Assam has a tropical climate. The summer days are quite hot while the winter days are moderately coll. The humidity is quite high, particularly in the summer time. The average temperature, however, varies from region to depending upon elevation of land and topography. However, the average maximum temperature is 30^0C and the average minimum temperature is 10^0C . the monsoon starts generally from may and continues up to September. The winter season begins from mid-October and it continues upto march with occasional light showers. The average annual rainfall is 300cm.

2.3 Flora and Fauna

In the valleys of the Brahmaputra and the Barak, the soil is mostly alluvial. The climate as well as the soil in the valley are suitable for growing variety of crops vegetables and commercial crops like tea, coffee, rubber.ect. in the hill area soils are red in colour and acidic. The climatic condition in the hill areas are quite suitable for rubber and coffee plantation.

Assam is well known for her forest wealth. Valuable timbers like sal, banssom, titasapa, hallok, sisu, gamari,etc,grow aboundantly in the forest of assam. Among the minor forest produces mention may be made of the bamboo, thatch, cane etc. Medicinal plants and creepers are also found aboundantly in the state. Forest of Assam provides raw materials for various industries like plywood, match factory. Paper and paper pulp industry etc. Sand and stone chips for construction purpose are available in plenty in the stream and rivers of the state.

Assam is also rich in fauna. The forest of Assam is fully of various animals like elephants, tigers, bears, buffalos, deers, monkeys, various reptiles and birds. The Naziranga National Park which is internationally famous for its one horned Rhino is the habitat of various wild animals. At present there are 5 National Parks and 12 wild like Sanctuaries in the State of Assam.

2.4 Minerals

Assam is also rich in mineral resources like oil, national gas, coal, limestone and other minor minerals. Crude oil deposit are found in many places of Brahmaputra and Barak valleys. Now Assam has become one of the main petroleum producing

states of India. Some other mineral resources which include iron ore, fire clay, etc. are also located in Assam, thus, it is found that Assam is quite rich with its deposit of some of the basic mineral resources, which will provide ample scope for industrialization.

2.5 Tribals

Assam is known for her tribal population, which accounts for 12.82 percent of the state's total population according to 1991 census. The tribes are classified into two main categories viz. the plains tribes and the hill tribes, the plains tribes are exclusively found in the Brahmaputra and the Barak Valley. Among the plain tribals Bodos are the majority in number followed by Mishings and others. The hill tribes are mainly concentrated in the two hill district of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar hills, which are commonly referred to as Hill areas of Assam.

2.6 Area and population

Assam has 78,438 sq.km. which is 2.4 percent of the country's total area population of Assam stood at 2,66,38,407(2001 census) and constitution 2.59 percent in respect of population among all states of the India union.

The basic facts of Assam's population as per 1971 and 2001 census stand of follows:

Table-2.1

Basic Facts of Assam's Population as per 1991 and 2001 census

Head	Unit	Census period		2011
		1991	2001	
Total population	Lakh	224.11	266.38	
Density of Population	Per sq.km.	286	340	
Sex-ration	Per 1000 males	923	932	
Literacy	Percent	52.89	64.28	
Female Literacy	Percent	43.03	56.03	
Schedule Tribe Population	Percent	12.83	-	
Schedule Caste Population	Percent	7.40	-	
Village population	Percent	88.9	87.28	
Town population	Percent	11.1	12.72	

2.7 Religion

Since ancient time various religious beliefs and practices have been prevalent in this part of the country. However, neo-Vaisnavism, which is another sect. Hinduism is the major religion of the state. This religion was introduced by Srimanta Sankardev in the fifteen and sixteen century. Sankardev, brought about reformation not only in religious sphere but also gave next dimension of Assam's Social and Cultural life. The next important religion of the state is Islamism followed by Christianity and other religious as Shown in table 2.2

Table-2.2

Distribution of Population by Religion in Assam

Religion	Percentage
Hindu	67.13
Muslim	28.43
Christrian	3.32
Sikhs	0.07
Buddhists	0.29
Jains	0.09

Sources: census of India-1991.

Beside these are many beliefs and practices among the different tribal community of Assam.

2.8 Cultural Life:

Assam is the most colorful State of India in terms of cultural varieties. Assam has always been a melting pot of various cultures merging with their distinct characteristics.

Bihu is the most important cultural celebration of the common Assameses of people. Bihu and Magh Bihu which are held annually in the state are prominent. Besides Bihus, various socio-religious festivals like Durga Puja, Diwali, Idd, Muharam, Bathou puja,Kerai puja and Christmas etc. are also celebrated enthusiastically in the state.

2. 9 Educational Programmes for Backward Groups

Providing education to the population of Assam – a large portion of which comprises scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, people from the hill districts, minority groups and other backward areas as also the other disadvantaged sections of the society – is a major task confronting the state government. Special cells, created at each of the Directorates of Elementary and Secondary Education, look after the programmes for the disadvantaged groups. The Planning Wing of the Directorate of Higher Education is responsible for formulation, implementation and monitoring of schemes, related to higher education, under different plans and sub-plans. There is a separate office of Additional Director for Hills which looks after the Hill Plan.

The Welfare Boards of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes are involved in the formulation of various schemes for their approval. However, their involvement in the implementation and monitoring of schemes leaves much to be desired.

In Assam, there are a number of special plans to help the development of certain disadvantaged communities, population segments or areas. These plans include: (a) Hill Areas Development Plan to provide a special thrust to the development of the Autonomous Hill Districts; (b) Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) for accelerating the progress of the tribals in the plain areas; (c) Scheduled Caste Component Plan (SCCP) for the development of the SCs; (d) Programme for Development of 'Char' Area which are riverine backward areas; and (e) Programme for Border Area Development which focuses on the development of the border areas of Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram and Tripura.

For the period 1990-95, the flow of outlay from the state's General Plan to the Tribal Sub Plan and the Scheduled Castes Component Plan are roughly 15 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively, of the outlay for the identified sectors.

2.10 Hill Districts

The two Hill Districts of Assam – North Cachar Hills and Karbi Anglong, constitute a more or less homogenous region with some variation in altitude, topography and proximity to the adjoining plains. Various tribal communities like Karbi, Dimasa, Kuki, Bodo, HrangKhol, Jaintia, Naga, Lalunga, etc., inhabit these areas. The priorities for the development of these two districts requires a different approach from that of the general areas – that is, a greater emphasis on the

development of certain facilities like infrastructure, social services, diversification of agriculture, conservation of forests; development of communication and transport, etc. The amelioration of poverty and generation of employment are the main objectives of the developmental efforts. To improve the quality of life in these areas, larger investments in the social services, namely, education, health, etc., are imperative. Since the problems and needs of the hill areas are rather distinct from the rest of the regions, and are characterized by low development, primitive agricultural practices and the lack of social services, providing education to the population in this part of the state is a challenging task. It is also necessary to develop the skills and capabilities of the tribal people and for this, a development programmes for human resource, is imperative.

The education of this segment of the state's population cannot be planned, implemented or administered in the same way as is done for the other disadvantaged groups. An understanding of the ethos of these ethnic groups is essential before formulating any plans or programmes for them. Therefore, for all developmental plans and programmes, the Autonomous District Councils play a pivotal role. Some headway has been made in the developmental efforts, as seen from some important indicators of education for the Hill Areas shown in Table 2.3

Table 2.3
Educational Institutions in the Districts of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar (1990)

Institution	Karbi Anglong District	North Cachar District	Total
Pre-primary and primary school	1204	566	1770
Recognised ME school	40	70	57
Provincialised ME school	106	42	158
Government ME school	16	6	22
Recognised high school	43	19	62
Government high school	1	1	2
Provincialised hr. secondary school	9	2	11
Government hr. secondary school	2	2	4
Non-government college	3	2	5
Government college	1	1	2
ITI	1	-	1

Note : ME = middle education
Source :secondary data

Both the hill districts have a literacy rate of 23.28 per cent against the state literacy rate of 28 per cent and the national average of 36.21 per cent. This may be attributed primarily to the general socio-economic backwardness of the hill areas and the lack of motivation on the part of the communities. The low per capita and household earning – a resultant of low productivity, necessitates the children to work, thereby preventing their participation in education, moreover, due to the peculiar topography of the region, the lack of communication facilities in the far-flung habitations of the hinterland, etc., a large percentage of the children do not have easy access to the educational institutions. All these factors plus the practice of 'jhum' or shifting cultivation have contributed to the low percentage of literacy.

The state government's educational programme is oriented towards providing free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14 years. Qualitative and

quantitative improvement of education at the primary, middle and high school stages; plus the provision of better educational facilities and incentives are emphasized. In the secondary and higher secondary schools, the consolidation and qualitative improvement of the schools in the streams of Science, Arts and Commerce are aimed at, simultaneously; attention is being paid to the development of infrastructural facilities like school buildings, laboratories, teaching aids and such other facilities.

The Autonomous District Councils are in charge of primary education in their respective jurisdictions. The state government assists the Councils with finance, teachers' training, technical guidance, etc., to bring about a qualitative improvement in primary education. There is a general shortage of trained teachers. To provide the necessary incentives to the teachers, the construction of teachers' quarters is a priority item as is the construction of hostels for both – boys and girls.

2.11 Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

The total SC population in the state, according to the 1991 census, is around 16.6 lakhs, that is, 7.40 per cent of the state's total population. In 1971, it was about 6.14 per cent. This percentage of the state's population is not concentrated in certain specific pockets like the scheduled tribes. Rather, the scheduled caste population is more or less evenly spread over the state – in both the rural and the urban areas, mostly in the plain districts.

The scheduled tribes, however, constitute largely the population in the hill districts and appear to be concentrated in the rural areas. Their population was, in 1991, estimated to be around 28.7 lakhs, that is, 12.82 per cent of the state's population.

The planning process in the state has been decentralized up to the sub-divisional level with the district as the unit. The state government has a special provision for the scheduled castes with regard to the planning of their education. In each sub-division, there is a Scheduled Castes' Board which approves the sub-divisional plan prepared by the district level officers. The quantified outlay under the SCCP during 1992-93 was approximately 9.35 crores of rupees. For 1994-95, the approved outlay was 14.62 crores of rupees and for 1995-1996, the initially proposed outlay was further enhanced to 20.75 crores of rupees.

For the development of the scheduled tribes at the elementary education level, the state government, with the approval of the ITDP Board, is implementing the TSP through the District Officers.

The scheme for elementary education – both under TSP and SCCP have been dencentralised and 86.6 per cent of the outlay, as agreed for elementary education, has been identified for decentralised schemes. Out of the total proposed amount of 150.81 crore rupees, the break-up for the areas under SCCP and TSP are shown in Table 2.2.

Table 2.4
Proposed Outlay for TSP and SCCP Areas (1995-96)

Outlay	Proposed Amount (in lakhs)
Total	Rs. 15081.00
TSP Area	Rs. 3237.00 (21.5)*
SCCP Area	Rs. 2075.00 (13.8)

** Figures in parentheses denote percentage to total outlay.*
Source : Annual Plan. Volume V, 1995-96. Government of Assam.

The state government provides free education up to the secondary stage to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. For educational development at the secondary and higher secondary education levels, incentive schemes, with special emphasis on girls' education, are provided for the benefit of both – SC and ST students. Each and every student from these two backward sectors of Assam is provided with a scholarship to pursue secondary education. In the institutions of higher learning, including colleges for Medicine and Engineering, seats are reserved for these students. A separate allotment of funds for building hostels, especially for the ST students, has also been made.

Various incentives schemes are being implemented in Assam for the benefit of the primary school children. These include: (a) award of Attendance Scholarships to SC/ST students; (b) award of Special Scholarships to SC/ST girl students; and (c) mid-day meal to students belonging to families working in the tea gardens. The scheme of attendance scholarship is also being extended to the students belonging to the tea-garden community and those from the Char areas. Residential Ashram schools which are popular with a sizeable tribal population in other parts of the country, are also being introduced.

In addition to these, there are a number of scholarships for students at different educational stages up to the higher secondary level. These include the following: (a) Lower-income Group Scholarship; (b) National Scholarship for Teachers' Children; (c) Pre-Matric Scholarship; (d) National Scholarship for Talented Students; (e) Special Scholarship for Music, Fine Arts, etc.; (f) Post-Matric Scholarship; and (g) Special Scholarship to Girl Students.

In the Annual Plan of 1994-95, 97.5 per cent and 96.5 per cent SC boys and girls, respectively, of the age group 6-10 years (classes I-IV), were targeted for enrolment. Of the scheduled tribes children belonging to the 6-10 years age group, 97 per cent boys and 86 per cent girls were targetted.

In the 11-13 years age group, 76 per cent SC boys and 66 per cent SC girls were targeted for enrolment while of the ST children in the same age group, 83 per cent boys and 73 per cent girls were targeted for enrolment.

The literacy rates of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, as against the total literacy rate in the state, are shown in Table 2.5

Table 2.5

Literacy Rate of SCs and STs of Assam (1991)

Category	Literacy Rate		
	Total	Male	Female
General	52.89 (52.21)*	61.87 (64.13)	43.03 (39.29)
SC	53.94 (37.41)	63.88 (49.91)	42.99 (23.76)
ST	49.16 (29.60)	58.93 (40.60)	38.98 (18.19)

** Figures in parentheses denote literacy rate at the all India level.*

Source : Annual Report, 1994-95, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education, Government of India.

As is evident from Table 2.5, the literacy rate of scheduled castes is higher than that of the general literacy rate of the state and considerably higher than that of SCs at the national level. The literacy rate for the scheduled tribes is much lower than the general literacy rate of Assam, though it is encouraging to note that the rates are higher than the all-India average literacy rate of STs. Concerted efforts will, nevertheless, have to be made to raise the percentage of literates of the SCs and STs – especially SC and ST females.

The enrolment of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes students in different institutions, during 1993-94, is shown in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6
SC/ST Students in Educational Institutions (1993-94)

Institutions	No. of Students			
	Scheduled Castes		Scheduled Tribes	
Pre-primary school	1936	(37.6)*	2360	(38.6)
Primary school	441522	(47.0)	686912	(45.4)
Middle school	172186	(45.2)	214788	(43.5)
High school	70685	(47.0)	93607	(42.15)
Hr. sec. school	12680	(37.1)	16543	(37.6)
Polytechnics	330	(15.2)	289	(9.7)
Teachers' training schools	9	(44.4)	26	(42.3)
Technical, Industrial, Art & Crafts school	424	(26.7)	722	(40.2)

** Figures in parentheses denote percentage of girls enrolled to total.*
Source: Selected Educational Statistics, 1993-94, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education, Government of India, 1994.

Obviously enrolment of SC and ST girls need to be raised drastically as the recorded figures are much below 50 per cent, more so at the post-school stage. The enrolment percentage of SC and ST girls is only 15.2 and 9.7, respectively, in the

polytechnics and 26.7 and 40.2, respectively, in the Technical, Industrial, Art and Crafts schools. Economic improvement is possible through education and proper training. As these schools provide one with the competence to earn a subsistence, for amelioration of the SC/ST communities, especially the girls, enrolment enhancement in the schools for professionally/vocational training is imperative.

The enrolment growth of scheduled castes students in the different educational stages is shown in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7

Number of SC Students by Stages (1990-91 to 1993-94)

Educational Stage	Enrolment					
	1990-91			1993-94		
	Total	Boys	Girls (%)	Total	Boys	Girls (%)
Hr. secondary	15805	10576	33.08	12680	7980	37.1
High	43987	25779	41.4	70685	37477	46.9
Upper primary	109072	63160	42.09	172186	94425	45.2
Primary	370270	193290	47.79	441522	233928	47.02

Source : Selected Educational Statistics, 1990-91 and 1993-94, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education, Government of India.

Obviously, upto the high school stage there has been an increase in the total enrolment of SC students during the period 1990 to 1993-94. At the higher secondary stage the scenario is not encouraging despite the marginal rise in girls' enrolment at all the stages except the primary stage. In general, girls' enrolment leaves much to be desired – the percentage recorded being around 44 at all stages and below 35 at the higher secondary stage. Taking into consideration the growth in gross enrolment ratio (GER), as shown in Table 2.8, it is evident that the GER has increased considerably at both levels – primary and upper primary. Though the

state – level ratio for boys and girls is much above that at the national level, the marked disparity in GER of boys and girls at both the levels continues.

Table 2.8
GER of SC Students by Stages (1990-91 to 1993-94)

Educational Stage	GER					
	1990-91			1993-94		
	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
Primary (Classes I-V; age group 6-11 years)	191.08 (102.21)*	194.15 (122.68)	187.84 (80.60)	250.79 (107.81	259.34 (123.33)	241.81 (91.15)
Upper primary (Classes VI-VIII; age group 11-14 years)	86.65 (47.71)	108.33 (61.40)	84.16 (33.28)	172.29 (60.13)	185.12 (74.21)	160.81 (45.01)

** Figures in parentheses denote GER of SC students at national level.*
Sources : Selected Educational Statistics, 1990-91 and 1993-94. Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education. Government of India.

The state government is making efforts to improve the condition of SC students. Special cells have been created at each of the Directorates of Elementary and Secondary Education firstly, to look after the opening of primary and upper primary schools in the areas dominated by the SCs and to provide grants-in-aid; secondly, to convert the single teacher schools to double-teacher schools at the elementary level. The other special programmes for SC students at the elementary level include the provision of sanitary facilities and facilities for drinking water.

In the Directorate of Education, there is a separate cell, under the charge of a Deputy Director, to deal with all matters related to the education of the scheduled tribes.

The enrolment of scheduled tribes' students at different stages of education during the period 1990-91 to 1993-94, is shown in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9
Number of ST Students by Stages (1990-91 to 1993-94)

Educational Stage	Number of Students					
	1990-91			1993-94		
	Total	Boys	Girls (%)	Total	Boys	Girls (%)
Hr. secondary	23320	15799	32.25	16543	10325	37.59
High	57275	33546	41.43	93607	54150	42.15
Upper primary	124205	74245	40.22	214788	121270	43.54
Primary	593236	322216	45.69	686912	375211	45.38

Source : Selected Educational Statistics, 1990-91 and 1993-94, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education, Government of India.

As shown in Table 2.9, since 1990-91, the total number of ST students has risen, at all stages of education except at the higher secondary stage. The percentage of girls has increased but at the primary stage, where a marginal decrease is noticed. Moreover, except at the primary stage at which the percentage of ST girl students is about 45, the percentage remains, in 1993-94, around 42 and even below 40 at the post-secondary stage.

These figures in respect of SC and ST students seem to indicate that the number of SC and ST students, in general, and SC and ST girls in particular, need to be drastically raised. Other than the various incentive schemes already introduced by the government, measures need to be adopted firstly, to convince the students of the ultimate benefit of education; secondly, to attract them to the schools; and thirdly, to retain them there by making education not only relevant to their lives but

also a worthwhile experience for them. A comparison of the gross enrolment ratio of ST students over the last two decades is shown in Table 2.10.

Table 2.10
GER of ST Students by Stages (1990-91 to 1993-94)

Educational Stage	GER					
	1990-91			1993-94		
	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
Primary (Classes I-V; age group 6-11 years)	145.90 (103.35)*	154.24 (126.78)	137.08 (78.60)	185.94 (106.97)	198.24 (123.90)	173.03 (88.80)
Upper primary (Classes VI-VIII; age group 11-14 years)	52.45 (39.72)	60.69 (51.33)	43.64 (27.50)	103.02 (47.99)	113.30 (60.17)	92.17 (34.91)

** Figures in parentheses denote GER of ST students at national level.*

Sources : 1. Selected Educational Statistics, 1990-91, Ministry of Human Resource Development. Department of Education, Government of India.
2. Annual Report, 1994-95, Ministry of Human Resource Development. Department of Education, Government of India.

The GER for ST students in Assam has risen perceptibly since 1990-91 and is conspicuously above the national level GER for ST students. The GER at the middle school level needs to be attended to because, as elsewhere in the country, the GER for ST girls continues to lag behind.

Disabled

The Social Welfare Department looks after the education of the disabled. At the Directorate of Elementary Education there is a special cell, under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, to provide educational facilities to the disabled children. Under the Integrated Child Development Scheme, in 1991-92, there were about 60 projects with about three lakhs of beneficiaries. Besides, scholarship are provided to the physically disabled children; in 1991-92, there were about 663 boys

receiving such scholarships. Under the Directorate of Social Welfare, there is a school for the blind at Jorhat. In 1991-92, there were about sixty students and fifteen teachers in this school.

There is a government co-education school for the deaf and the dumb at Guwahati. In 1991-92, the school had an average of ten male teachers, five female teachers, plus male and female craft teachers who taught about 189 boys and 79 girls.

Minorities

The population in the ten revenue circles with the lowest literacy as also the lowest female literacy rates, comprises the minority community. This community also includes families dwelling in the 'char' areas; the tea gardens and the remote, dispersed forest-area habitations. In the Directorate of Elementary Education, a special Minority Education Cell is in charge of the education of this segment of the population. Stipends are provided to motivate minority community students at the secondary level.

2.12 Backward/Hilly/Sparsely Populated/Border Areas

While no specific programmes have, so far, been made for the development of elementary education in the backward areas, hilly and sparsely populated areas and the border areas, special building grants are provided by the Directorate of Secondary Education for schools situated in the border areas. The services of employees of these schools are also provincialized.

A special 'Tea Garden Education Cell', headed by a Joint Director, has been set up in the Directorate of Elementary Education to look after the education of children belonging to the tea garden population.

General Issues

To provide educational facilities to its large population comprising disadvantaged groups is a herculean task which the state has to accomplish. The problems, in this respect, are further compounded by the fact that children from these disadvantaged sections who happen to study in the general schools, are, normally, deprived of the incentives supposed to be provided by the government, to such children from disadvantaged groups. This is due to the fact that schools do not fulfil the minimum conditions laid down by the government, like, the required percentage of SC/ST children; parental income, etc. There is, therefore, a felt need now for the introduction of some kind of flexibility to enable each and every student to benefit from the incentive schemes.

2.13 Socio-Economic Features of Assam

Assam is under-urbanised. Only about 12 per cent of its total population live in towns. The principal towns are Guwahati, Dibrugarh, Silchar, Nagaon, Tinsukhia, Dhubri, Tezpur and Dispur. The Dispur is also its new capital. Guwahati, the previous capital, is well-connected with the rest of the country by road, rail and air.

Assamese is the main language spoken in the state. Bengali is also a common medium of communication. Hindi is used by a small percentage of the population.

The tribal communities, which form a sizeable population of the state, speak their own dialects.

The chief and most popular festival of Assam is Bihu; it is an agricultural festival and is celebrated thrice a year. Rangali Bihu or Bohag Bihu marks the beginning of the cropping season and ushers in the new year; Bhogali Bihu is the harvest festival and Kangali or Kati Bihu marks the beginning of the lean period.

With the improvement in medical facilities and the adoption of certain public health measures, the death rate has been steadily declining. Indicators of human development, such as, birth and death rate over the period 1986 to 1991, as shown in Table 2.11 reveals the improvement in the state's quality of life, over the years.

Table 2.11
Demographic Profile of Districts

State / District	Population (in lakhs) 1991			Sex Ratio (Females per 1000 Males)		Density of Population per square km		Population Growth Rate
	Persons	Males	Females	1971*	1991	1971	1991	1971-1991
Assam	22414322	11657989	10756333 (48) **	896	925	186	284	52.44
Dhubri	1332475	683298	649177	930	951	300	467	55.77
Kokrajhar	800659	412600	388059	913	942	NA	NA	75.94
Bongaigaon	807523	416216	391307	926	940	NA	NA	64.43
Goalpara	668138	343154	324984	939	956	NA	NA	52.66
Barpeta	1385659	714677	670982	912	940	299	426	42.71
Nalbari	1016390	524953	491437	923	937	302	449	48.72
Kamrup	2000071	1064649	935422	855	881	278	457	64.69
Darrang	1298860	670244	628616	907	939	240	370	54.17
Sonitpur	1424287	744778	679509	871	911	170	266	56.49
Lakhimpur	751517	389125	362392	895	932	211	329	55.91
Dhemaji	478830	248457	230373	874	931	71	146	104.48

Contd table –

Contd....

Marigaon	639682	329613	310069	917	941	NA	NA	51.07
Nagaon	1893171	981379	911792	894	934	NA	NA	51.17
Golaghat	828096	431346	396750	883	922	150	229	53.09
Jorhat	871206	455525	415681	886	917	230	305	32.68
Sibsagar	907983	476009	431974	887	914	245	335	36.80
Dibrugarh	1042457	547266	495191	863	908	224	307	37.20
Tinsukia	962298	508948	453350	855	893	173	254	47.16
Karbi Anglong	662723	347607	315116	875	907	26	63	72.79
North Cachar Hills	150801	81196	69605	841	878	16	31	96.39
Karimganj	827063	425018	402045	930	947	332	456	41.82
Hailakandi	449048	232735	216313	923	931	232	338	45.76
Cachar	1215385	629196	586189	918	939	218	321	47.65

Note : Sex ratio, density of population and population growth rate are based on provisional figures.

** Since census in 1981 was not held in Assam, 1971 data have been taken.*

*** Figure in parenthesis denotes percentage of female population to total.*

Sources : 1. Census of India 1991. Series I, India Paper 1 of 1992, Volume I. Final Population Totals.

2. Census of India 1991. Series-I, India Paper 2 of 1992, Final Population Totals.

Table 2.12
Estimated Birth and Death Rates (1986-1991)

Year	Estimated Birth Rate (Per 1000 Population)			Estimated Death Rate (Per 1000 Population)		
1986	34.7	35.5	24.8	12.6	12.9	7.9
1987	34.2	34.9	25.7	11.6	11.9	8.1
1988	32.9	33.6	24.6	11.8	12.1	7.9
1989	29.4	30.0	21.7	10.4	10.6	7.6
1990	29.7	30.3	22.1	10.5	10.8	7.6
1991	30.9	31.7	21.3	11.5	11.8	6.9

Source : Health Information of India 1993. Central Bureau of Health Intelligence. Directorate General of Health Services. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Government of India.

Another vital indicator of the quality of life is the estimated infant mortality rate (IMR) per 1,000 live births; a comparison of the IMR per 1,000 live births at the state and national levels, is shown in Table 2.12

Table 2.13
Estimated Infant Mortality Rates (1991)

State / All India	Infant Mortality Rate		
	Rural	Urban	Total
Assam	83	42	81
All India	87	53	80

Source : Health Information of India 1993. Central Bureau of Health Intelligence. Directorate of Health Services. Ministry of Family Welfare. Government of India.

The IMR is much lower in the urban areas at both levels – state and national. Though the total IMR is almost the same at the state and all-India level, the recorded figures being 81 and 80, respectively, the figures by rural and urban area are significantly lower at the state level. This indicates an improvement in the quality of life. The perceptible disparity in the indicators of human development in the different areas, however, indicates that life in the rural area needs considerable attention for improvement and to bring it at par with that at the urban level, conscious efforts are absolutely necessary.

The per capita expenditure on health and family welfare increased substantially from Rs. 44.93 and Rs. 6.36, respectively, in 1985-86 to Rs. 65.71 and Rs. 6.57, respectively, in 1987-88. In keeping with the thrust on family welfare, the expenditure on it increased substantialy to Rs. 9.13 in 1989-90, thereby making obvious the state's efforts towards improving the quality of life.

2.14 Agriculture

The state has a gross cropped area of about thirty-five lakh hectare and approximately 63 per cent of the state's working force pursue agriculture and its allied activities. On more than 79 per cent of this gross cropped area, food crops are grown. In addition to rice which is the principal crop, wheat and pulses are grown. Jute, tea, cotton, oilseeds, sugarcane, potato, etc., are important cash crops. Citrus fruits like orange, and other fruits like banana, pineapple, arecanut, coconut, guava, mango, jackfruit, etc., are also grown.

2.15 Industry

Tea occupies an important position in the sector of agro-based industries; tea gardens occupy about 2.30 lakh hectare of the state which contributes 15 per cent of the world's total tea production. The state produces a considerable amount of crude oil for the country. With three oil refineries in the state, Petrochemical forms the major heavy industry in Assam. Other industries include manufacturing of paper, nylon, fertilizer, sugar, jute, plywood products, etc.

Sericulture and handloom weaving are important cottage industries; cane and bamboo products, carpentry, brass and metal crafts are also popular cottage industries. An export-oriented handloom project has been established at Sualkuchi to explore the potentials of Muga silk and Eri textiles.

Though rich in natural resources like forest wealth, minerals and hydropower, the economy of Assam still depends mainly on agriculture. The over-dependence on agriculture, an outdated agricultural technology, the pressure of the population on

land, an increase in the weaker sections of the population like the landless labourers and small farmers, etc., have resulted in a slow pace of industrialization, lower rate of capital formation, mounting unemployment and an inadequate economic infrastructure.

The percentage of population below the poverty line at the state level is 36.84 in comparison to the all-India percentage of 39.34. In this respect, there is a significant disparity between the figures in the rural and urban areas of the state – the percentage of persons below the poverty line being 39.4 in the rural areas and 17.3 in the urban areas. This indicates the urgent need for rural reconstruction and development.

The government of Assam has focused on a number of developmental programmes in the agricultural, economic and social sectors during the various five-year plans. The setting up of the Agro-Industries Development Corporation, Agricultural Marketing Corporation and a Regional Research Centre for horticulture, various hydro electric projects in the hill areas and the implementation of diverse rural development schemes like IRDP, NREP, RLEGP, etc., deserve special mention in this context.

Development and education are positively correlated. To develop the socio-economic conditions in the state and bring about a perceptible change in the major economic indicators, an effective education system is necessary.

2.16 Education System

The education system in the state is as follows:

2.16.1 Structure

As in the rest of the country, Assam has introduced the 10+2+3 national pattern of education since 1973. However, there is a major deviation from the national norm of ten-year schooling – the state has retained the system of four years of primary stage. Instead of the 5+3+2 pattern of schooling upto the secondary stage, the 4+3+3 pattern is followed; that is, four years of primary education is followed by three years of upper primary and three years of secondary education. A small percentage of primary schools in the urban areas provide pre-primary education facilities to the children.

The facility for pursuing the +2 stage of education is available to the students either in the higher secondary schools under the control of the Directorate of School Education or in the higher secondary sections attached to the degree colleges under the Directorate of Higher Education. This duality in control has resulted in a number of problems – financial and administrative, which have ultimately affected the quality of education.

In accordance with the national pattern of school education, the students studying in schools affiliated to the Assam Board of Secondary Education, are required to take, after completion of class X, the secondary examination conducted by the board. After successfully clearing the class X public examination, the students are eligible to join the +2 stage. A student, on passing class X, may also join the Polytechnics or the Junior Technical Schools to pursue technical education at the diploma level. At the end of class XII, students have to take the higher secondary

examination conducted by the Assam Higher Secondary Council which is in charge of education at the +2 stage.

There are a few schools in the state which are affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE); the students of these schools are required to take the public examinations conducted by CBSE at the end of classes X and XII.

After qualifying in the higher secondary examination, students are eligible to join the next stage of education; that is, the colleges of general education to pursue the under-graduate courses in Arts, Science or Commerce at the first degree level and acquire the Bachelor's degree in Arts (B.A.), Science (B.Sc.) or Commerce (B.Com.). A student, on successfully completing the higher secondary stage, is also eligible to join the professional courses in Engineering or Medicine, at the state's degree that is B.E. or MBBS. Post-graduate studies in Arts, Science or Commerce may be pursued by a student at any of the universities in the state. There are Teachers' Training Institutes which offer under-graduate and post-graduate courses (B.ED and M.ED) in teaching to prospective teachers as also to those in service.

The government plays a major role in the field of education – bearing the entire cost of education at the school level in government institutions. In Assam, a majority of the schools are provincialized whereby the service of the school teachers and all other school staff, including the grade IV employees, are brought under the state government pay structure. Provincialised schools are also, therefore, termed as government institutions. A small number of institutions are under private management. The district councils in the hill areas and the municipalities in the urban areas are active in the sector of primary education.

2.16.2 Educational Institutions

The number of educational institutions and student enrolment at the different levels of education, are shown in Table 2.14

Table 2.14
Number of Institutions and Students' Enrolment (1993-94)

Institution / Enrolment	Number
Institutions	
Pre-primary	482
Primary	28876
Middle	6729
High	3872
Hr. Secondary	502
Colleges for general education	23
Institutions for professional education	21
University	5
Enrolment	
Primary school	2996132 (47.2)
Middle school	1280255 (41.00)
High school	292862 (49.34)
Hr. secondary school	607336 (36.06)

Note : Figures in parenthesis denote percentage of girls enrolled to total.

Sources : 1. Annual Report, 1994-95, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education, Government of India.

2. Selected Educational Statistics, 1993-94. Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education. Planning, Monitoring and Statistics Division, Government of India, 1994.

Table 2.15
Gross Enrolment Ratio (1993-94)

Gross Enrolment Ratio	Total	Boys	Girls
Classes I-V (Age 6-11 years)	130.0	134.4	125.3
Classes VI-VIII (Age 11-14 years)	77.7	89.3	65.5

Source : Selected Educational Statistics, 1993-94. Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education. Planning, Monitoring and Statistics Division, Government of India, 1994.

An analysis of Table 2.14 and 2.15 reveals that the enrolment of girls is below 50 per cent upto the secondary stage and at the higher secondary stage, it is even below 40 per cent. The gross enrolment ratio (GER) of girls in these classes further corroborates the fact. At the upper primary stage the GER of boys is also low. Intense efforts are, therefore, needed at this stage to raise the GER in general. In order to achieve the target universal elementary education, more concerted efforts are needed for improving the GER of girls as also the total GER.

Simultaneously, it is also equally important to retain the students at the primary and upper primary levels since the dropout rates at these two stages, as shown in Table 2.7, is high. Only about 60 per cent of the students are able to complete the primary stage and about 32 per cent – the elementary stage of education. In the case of girls, the picture is more dismal as not even 30 per cent of them are able to complete the elementary stage of education.

Statistics also show that out of a hundred students enrolled in class I, only 22.74 per cent actually complete class X, the dropout rate, as is evident from Table 2.16, being 77.26 per cent. It is interesting to note that the dropout rate of girls at the

secondary stage is marginally less – 75.80 per cent. In addition to the different incentives already being provided for better retention of students, measures need to be adopted to attract girl students to schools and to make them stay on. Efforts would also have to be made to convince the parents as also the students of the ultimate utility and worth of education. The teachers have a key role to play in this respect.

Table 2.16
Dropout Rates (1993-94)

Educational Stage	Dropout Rate		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Primary (classes I-V)	38.65 (35.05)	39.55 (38.57)	39.05 (36.32)
Elementary (classes I-VIII)	63.81 (49.95)	71.80 (57.78)	67.55 (52.80)
Secondary (classes I-IX)	78.37 (68.41)	75.80 (74.74)	77.26 (70.90)

Note : Figures in parenthesis denote dropout rate at national level.
Source : Annual Report, 1994-95, Ministry of Human Resource Development. Department of Education, Government of India.

The details on teachers at the school level is shown in Table 2.17

Table 2.17
Teachers in Schools (1993-94)

Institution	Number of Teachers	Trained Teachers (%)	Teacher-Pupil Ratio
Primary school	77512 (23)	67	39
Middle school	42765 (18.13)	33	30
High school	31408 (21.8)	33	28
Hr. secondary school	16111 (24.4)	30	36

Note : Figures in parenthesis denote percentage of women teachers.

Source : Selected Educational Statistics, 1993-94. Ministry of Human Resource Development. Department of Education, Government of India, 1994.

The percentage of trained teachers, as revealed by Table 2.8, is low – being even below 35 per cent in the middle schools and at the secondary and higher secondary schools. At the high and higher secondary schools, as is obvious, 70 per cent teachers are not professionally trained. With the focus of the National Policy on Education (1986) and its revised POA (1992) on the qualitative improvement of education, it is imperative now to have professionally trained teachers to transact the curriculum effectively.

2.16.3 Growth of School Education

The growth of education upto the higher secondary level, in terms of the total number of schools, enrolment, gross enrolment ratio and teachers has been perceptible over the last two decades, as is evident from Tables 2.18 to 2.21.

The statistics on the number of schools at various stages during the period 1975-76 to 1993-94, is shown in Table 2.18. In case of primary schools, the annual growth rate during the period is 1.79. The number of upper primary schools has increased three-fold, the recorded annual growth rate being 3.27. The high and higher secondary schools have also shown a significant rise in number, the growth rate during 1980-81 to 1993-94 being 2.6 and 6.8 for high and higher secondary schools, respectively.

The enrolment of students in the different schools from 1975-76 to 1993-94, is shown in Table 2.18.

Table 2.18
Number of Schools (1975-76 to 1993-94)

Year	No. of Schools			
	Pry.	U. Pry	High	Hr. Sec.
1975-76	20248	3533	-	1627
1980-81	21727	4194	1838	155
1985-90	25900	4782	2218	356
1990-93	28876	5703	3084	367
1993-94	28876	6729	3072	582
Annual Growth Rate (In per cent) 1975-1993	1.79	3.27	2.6	6.8

Sources : 1. Education in India, 1975-76, 1980-81 and 1985-86. Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

2. Selected Educational Statistics, 1990-91 and 1993-94, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

Table 2.19
Enrolment in Schools (1975-76 to 1993-94)

Year	No. of Schools			
	Pry.	U. Pry	High	Hr. Sec.
1975-76	1510873 (40.64)	425433 (40)	-	456892 (33)
1980-81	1692083 (43.03)	565603 (41.3)	479086 (38.38)	108537 (24.12)
1985-86	2324916 (43.7)	762556 (41.8)	664299 (41.9)	232983 (27.6)
1990-91	2949928 (47.4)	1201499 (41.5)	863520 (48.68)	29407 (32.09)
1993-94	2996132 (47.23)	1280255 (40.98)	892862 (49.34)	607336 (36.06)
Annual Growth Rate 1975-76 to 1993-94	4.9%	8.0%	4.45%	2.01%

Note : Figures in parenthesis denote percentage of girls enrolled to total.

Sources : 1. Education in India, 1975-76, 1980-71 and 1985-86, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

2. Selected Educational Statistics, 1990-91 and 1993-94, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

During 1975-76 to 1993-94, as shown in Table 2.19, there has been a substantial growth in the enrolment of students, the recorded annual growth rate being 4.9, 8.0, 4.45 and 2.01 per cent at the primary, upper primary, high and higher secondary schools, respectively. As is evident, growth in enrolment has been erratic in the higher secondary schools. Surprisingly, the annual growth rate was maximum in the enrolment figures of upper primary schools while the GER, as shown in Table 2.20, for upper primary schools is lower than that of the primary schools.

Though the enrolment of girls has risen since 1975-76, it is rather disconcerting to note from Table 2.19 that girls' enrolment is much below fifty per cent in schools at all the stages. At the higher secondary stage, the enrolment figure is even below 40 per cent, despite the increase from 32 per cent in 1990-91 to 36.06 per cent in 1993-94. Considerable efforts are required to bring the enrolment figure of girls upto the desired level, particularly at the pre-secondary stage, in order to reach the target to UEE and to eradicate disparity in gender.

The gross enrolment ratio at various stages of school education upto the secondary education level, during the period 1975-76 to 1993-94, is shown in Table 2.20.

Though the GER has risen perceptibly over the twenty-year period, there is need for improvement, especially at the upper primary level. The education of girls has to be focused on more consciously; the factors responsible for the low GER need to be probed and innovative methods, which have proved successful elsewhere in the country, adopted and adapted to raise the ratio. With the various strategies evolved by the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), the possibility of a brighter situation in the near future, is high – at least in the primary education sector.

Professionally trained teachers in adequate numbers is an essential input in the education system of a state if the desired targets are to be achieved. The detailed statistics on teachers, during the last two decades, in schools at various stages of education is shown in Table 2.21.

Though the number of teachers and the percentage of trained teachers in the state has risen over the past two decades, a large percentage still remains untrained. In the primary schools, the percentage of trained teachers was 67 in 199-93, while in the upper primary, high and higher secondary schools, it was around 30. This indicates that about 30 per cent teachers in the primary schools and about 70 per cent teachers in the other schools at the post-primary stages of education, are still to be trained. The state has to provide for the training of this huge backlog of untrained teachers as also to the prospective teachers desirous of taking up teaching as a profession. This is a colossal task and concerted efforts on the part of the state government are necessary to measure upto it.

2.16.4 Higher Education

The number of institutions at the higher education level has risen considerably since 1974-75, as is evident from the year-wise comparison shown in Table 2.22.

Table 2.20

Gross Enrolment Ratio by Stages (1975-76 to 1993-94)

Year	GER								
	Primary School			Upper Primary School			Secondary School*		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1975-76	81.4	59.3	70.7	39.1	23.4	31.5	20.7	9.8	15.3
1980-81	78.8	62.6	71.0	48.8	31.0	40.0	16.1	9.7	13.0
1985-86	94.1	77.8	86.2	83.7	38.3	46.3	36.5	22.4	29.6
1990-91	116.79	108.59	112.80	69.44	54.64	62.27	NA		
1993-94	134.4	125.3	130.0	89.3	65.5	77.7	NA		

** For 1985-86, figures include GER for class IX upwards.*

Sources : 1. Education in India, 1975-76, 1980-81 and 1985-86. Ministry of Human Resource Development. Department of Education, Government of India.

2. Education in India, 1990-91 and 1993-94. Ministry of Human Resource Development. Department of Education, Government of India.

Table 2.21
Statistics on Teachers (1975-76 to 1993-94)

Year	Primary School Teachers			Upper Primary School Teachers			Secondary School Teachers			Hr. Secondary School Teachers		
	No.	Wom-en (%)	Train-ed (%)	No.	Wom-en (%)	Trai n-ed (%)	No.	Wom-en (%)	Train-ed (%)	No.	Wom-en (%)	Train-ed (%)
1975-76	43078	19.4	59.6	19155	12.94	31.0	-	-	-	20827*	13.54*	22.0*
1980-81	47142	20.1	68.2	24064	15.0	30.1	19509	15.51	25.9	5557	14.34	26.4
1985-86	55796	22.4	-	27555	14.08	-	23759	19.04	-	9229	16.4	-
1990-91	75287	22.6	66.0	38546	17.0	28.0	30897	21.36	33.0	12419	22.03	26.0
1993-94	77512	23.0	67.0	42765	18.13	33.0	31408	21.75	33.0	16111	24.41	30.0

** Includes secondary schools.*

Sources : 1. Education in India, 1975-76, 1980-81 and 1985-86, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education, Government of India.

2. Education in India, 1990-91 and 1993-94, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education, Government of India.

Table 2.22
Institutions of Higher Education : A Comparison
(1974-75 and 1993-94)

Type of Institution	Number	
	1993-94	1974-75
University *	5	3
College for general education	231	119
Professional education **	21	5

* *Includes only colleges of Engineering, Technology, Medicine, Research and Training.*

** *Includes only institutions deemed to be universities and institutions of national importance.*

Sources : 1. Report of the First Survey of Educational Administration in Assam, 1978. National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi.

2. Annual Report, 1994-95. Ministry of Human Resource Development. Department of Education, Government of India.

The enrolment figures recorded for the higher education stage in 1975-76 and 1993-94 is shown in Table 2.23. Evidently, there has been considerable growth, the recorded growth rate being 3.4 per cent.

Table 2.23
Enrolment in Institutions of Higher Education
(1975-76 to 1993-94)

Year	Enrolment		
	Boys	Girls	Total
1993-94	99016	45217 (45.7)*	144233
1975-76	52390	21674 (41.4)*	74064

* *Figures in parenthesis denote percentage of girls enrolled to total.*

Sources : 1. Education in India, 1975-76. Ministry of Human Resource Development. Government of India.

2. Annual Report, 1994-95. Ministry of Human Resource Development. Department of Education, Government of India.

2.16.5 Indicators of Educational Development

Literacy and the provision of schooling facilities are two vital indicators of educational development. While other selected indicators of educational

development are given in Appendix II, the status of Assam with regard to these two salient indicators is as follows :

Literacy

Assam ranks twentieth in the country in terms of its total literacy rate of 52.89 per cent in 1991, which is marginally higher than the literacy rate of 52.21 per cent in 1991, at the national level. Its female literacy rate of 43.03 per cent is higher than the national figure of 39.29 per cent. However, in respect of the male literacy rate, it is lower than that at the all-India level.

Table 2.24
Literacy Rate by Areas (1991)

Category	Literacy Rate (%)		
	Total	Male	Female
Total	52.89	61.87	43.03
Rural	49.32	58.66	39.19
Urban	79.34	84.37	73.32

Source : Statistical Database for Literacy. Final Population and Literacy, 1991. National Institute of Adult Education. New Delhi. 1993.

A district-wise picture of literacy in the state is shown in Table 2.25. An analysis of the table shows that only three districts – Kamrup, Jorhat and Sibsagar have a total literacy rate above 60 per cent, the literacy percentages recorded in 1991 being 65.04, 65.51 and 64.46, respectively. The hill districts of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar have a total literacy rate of 45.57 and 57.76 per cent, respectively; the female literacy rate is 34.35 and 47.34 per cent, respectively. The rates in the rural areas are significantly lower than the figures recorded in the urban areas. This

reinforces the fact that conscious efforts need to be made for the upliftment of the rural population.

To improve the literacy scenario in the state, two literacy projects, covering six districts under the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC), were

Table 2.25
District-Wise Literacy Rate (1991)

State / District	Total			Male			Female		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Dhubri	38.31	33.55	69.36	47.32	42.74	76.75	28.75	23.82	61.31
Kokrajhar	40.57	37.90	77.14	49.57	46.97	83.96	30.92	28.20	69.36
Bongaigaon	49.06	45.48	81.16	58.67	55.33	87.11	38.72	34.98	74.13
Goalpara	46.81	44.84	68.73	55.47	53.38	76.18	37.58	35.54	60.58
Barpeta	43.24	40.64	74.83	52.61	50.16	82.81	33.20	30.53	60.07
Nalbari	55.99	55.38	80.62	66.95	66.44	86.66	44.19	43.52	73.29
Kamrup	65.04	56.88	80.57	73.67	66.95	85.51	55.01	45.83	74.16
Darrang	42.00	40.12	76.02	50.80	49.01	81.68	32.53	30.62	69.28
Sonitpur	48.14	45.33	81.06	56.70	54.17	84.78	38.60	35.56	76.46
Lakhimpur	58.96	57.74	75.46	68.28	67.29	80.57	48.85	47.51	68.87
Dhemaji	53.84	53.29	80.44	65.43	64.95	85.50	41.12	40.57	72.52
Marigaon	47.99	46.36	76.54	56.17	54.52	83.40	39.19	37.63	68.31
Nagaon	54.74	51.30	80.68	62.49	59.31	85.77	46.30	42.63	74.82
Golaghat	58.54	56.74	85.14	66.50	64.85	88.72	49.75	47.91	80.32
Jorhat	65.51	62.78	79.95	73.21	71.31	83.18	56.88	53.49	75.98
Sibsagar	64.46	62.94	83.27	71.91	70.75	85.25	56.14	54.31	80.71
Dibrugarh	58.32	53.11	81.17	66.72	62.47	84.36	48.89	42.84	77.22
Tinsukhia	50.28	44.16	78.95	59.27	53.82	83.00	39.99	33.41	73.65
Karbi Anglong	45.57	42.12	73.55	55.55	52.30	80.04	34.35	30.85	65.15
Karimganj	54.71	51.85	87.70	64.05	61.66	91.05	44.76	41.40	84.02
Hailakandi	53.07	50.19	85.30	64.08	61.80	89.96	41.04	37.47	80.35
Cachar	59.19	56.37	83.26	68.79	66.53	88.06	48.76	45.35	78.03

Source : Statistical Database for Literacy. Final Population and Literacy, 1991. National Institute of Adult Education, New Delhi. 1993.

taken up for the target population of 2.76 lakh. The districts were Jorhat, Marigaon, Kamrup, Darrang, Dhemaji and Dibrugarh.

Schooling Facilities

The provision of schooling facilities in the rural habitations of the state is shown in Table 2.26.

Table 2.26
Schooling Facilities in Rural Habitations (1993)

School	Habitations with Facilities	
	Number	Percentage
Primary	25049	62.73
Upper primary	6167	15.44
Secondary	2559	6.41
Hr. secondary	423	1.06

** Provisional data.*
Source : Sixth All India Educational Survey – Provisional Statistics, NCERT, 1995.

About 40 per cent of the rural habitations are still to be provided with primary education facilities and 84.56 per cent with upper primary education facilities. This seems to indicate the magnitude of the task ahead of the state in its endeavor to universalize elementary education, leaving aside education at the post-elementary level. About 6 per cent of the habitations have been provided, so far, with secondary education facilities and about 1.6 per cent with education at the higher secondary level. In spite of the growth in the number of secondary and higher secondary schools, about 99 per cent of the rural habitations are still without higher secondary schooling facilities and 95 per cent without secondary schooling facilities. This implies that in Assam, considerable effort is required for the growth of education in terms of both quantity and quality. Side by side with expansion and consolidation, the building up of teachers' capacity would also need to be focused on to bring about the improvement in quality.

2.16.6 Legal Basis of Education

In accordance with the 42nd amendment of the Indian Constitution, education is placed in the concurrent list and it is the joint responsibility of the central and the state governments, with both enjoying powers of legislation, subject to the provision regarding repugnancy. Each state of the Indian Union, therefore, has its own acts, rules and regulations which form the legal basis for educational administration. To facilitate and govern the provision of educational services to its people within the constitutional frame-work, Assam has its own legal basis comprising the following acts and rules.

2.16.7 Assam Secondary Education Act, 1961

This act, published in the Assam Gazette Extraordinary in December, 1961 was enforced for the establishment of a Board of Secondary Education to regulate, supervise and develop the system of secondary education in the state. The act was subsequently amended in 1966 and in 1973.

The board is headed by the state's Director of Public Instruction, and comprises other ex-officio members like the Additional Director; the Directors of Agriculture, Technical Education, Health Services and Industries; the Principal of Assam Agricultural College and the Deputy Director of Public Instruction – in charge of Women's Education. In addition, there are certain members who are either nominated by the government or are co-opted by the board. The members nominated by the board, which is authorized by the government to do so, include the Inspector of Schools; the principal of a higher secondary school; two high

school headmasters and a headmistress; the principal of a teachers' training college; the principal of the polytechnic and representatives – one each from the two universities of the state.

The major functions of the board are : (a) to prescribe courses of instruction for the high and higher secondary schools plus the madrassas which provide secondary education and the under-graduate teachers' training institutions; (b) conduct examinations for candidates who have pursued the prescribed courses of instruction and grant certificates to successful students; (c) collect fees as may be prescribed by it, institute and award scholarships, prizes, etc., to meritorious students; (d) prepare, publish and select texbooks and supplementary books; (e) lay down conditions of recognition in respect of high and higher secondary schools; and (f) prescribe the qualifications necessary for teachers in the recognized schools and teacher-training institutions, etc.

2.16.8 Assam Elementary Education (Provincialisation) Act, 1974

By this act, the services of different categories of employees working in the State Board and Regional Boards for Elementary Education are provincialized and the employees are brought under the direct management and control of the state government.

The act authorizes the state government to frame the curriculum as also the duration, standard and syllabus of the course of instruction to be imparted in the elementary schools. It also delegates the responsibility of administration and supervision of elementary education, inspection of elementary schools and

provision of elementary teachers' training. The school managing committees may, under this act, create school funds for the maintenance of school buildings, supply of furniture, equipment, teaching aids, etc.; and for the provision of other infrastructural facilities.

2.16.9 Assam Secondary Education (Provincialisation) Act, 1977

The act is with regard to the provincialisation of secondary education covered by the state government's Deficit Scheme. Secondary education, in this context, means education imparted upto class XII in the different types of schools including English medium schools, middle madrassas, high schools, high madrassas and higher secondary schools. The rules cover, in detail, the employees and managing committees of the provincialized schools and extends to the entire state except the autonomous district council areas.

2.16.10 Assam Higher Secondary Education Act, 1984

Under this act a council has been established to regulate, supervise and develop higher secondary education in the state. The council is headed by a chairman nominated by the government and comprises, as ex-officio members, the Directors of Public Instruction, Agriculture, Technical Education, Health Services, and Industries; the Deans of Assam Agricultural University and Assam Veterinary College; the Chairman of the Board of Secondary Education and some other members nominated by the government.

The council is empowered to prescribe the curriculum; conduct examinations; collect fees; prescribe and select textbooks and supplementary reading materials;

prepare and publish textbooks through the Assam Textbook Publication Corporation; advise the government on reorganization and development of higher secondary education in the state; administer the council fund, etc.

In addition to these acts, there are various rules with regard to education in the state. These include:

Assam Aided Higher Secondary, High and Middle Schools Management Rules, 1976

According to these rules under Notification ESS 149/76/2 of August 19, 1976, published in the Assam Gazette Extraordinary on August 25, 1976 every higher secondary, high and middle school is governed by a managing committee. This committee is constituted with the approval of the Inspector of Schools and comprises a president, a secretary, two teacher-members, two representatives elected by the guardians, a member elected by the donors, and three members nominated by the concerned Inspector of Schools on behalf of the state government. It is essential for one of these nominated members to be the assistant headmistress or vice-principal of a girls' school.

The responsibilities of the managing committee of any of these schools, generally, include: (a) financial management; (b) maintenance of the school building, furniture and equipment; (c) supplementing inadequate resources by obtaining contributions in terms of cash and kind and by applying for grant-in-aid to the government; (d) granting leave to the teachers as prescribed in the rules as also filling up the teachers' vacancies; and (e) arranging the half-yearly internal audit of

all school funds and stock verification of furniture, etc. The institutional heads are in charge of instruction, administration, discipline and control of the pupils and the staff in the schools.

Assam Secondary (Middle English Schools and High Schools) Provincialisation Rules, 1979

These rules extend to the areas covered by the Assam Secondary Education (Provincialisation) Act, 1977. All the powers conferred on this act, by the state, in respect of the services of the employees not within its purview, are exercised by these rules formed under Notification No. ESS 48/79/42 of February, 1980 and published in the Assam Gazette of October 21, 1981. The rules state in detail the criteria of eligibility for the schools seeking provincialisation; the power of the state government in this respect and other related subjects.

2.16.11 Assam Secondary Education (Provincialisation) Service and Conduct Rules, 1979

These rules extend to the areas covered by the Assam Secondary Education (Provincialisation) Act, 1977. The administration, management and control of all employees of schools covered by these rules is vested in the state government. The managing committees of these schools function as advisory committees and, generally, look after the development of the school buildings, playground, hostel, etc. If necessary, these committees may interact with the government on matters regarding the school staff.

The rules ensure that the rate of salary for all employees are at par with that of their counterparts employed in similar categories in government schools. The details of the selection mode of principals, vice principals, headmasters and assistant headmasters as also their eligibility criteria, regularization of services, etc., are also stated in the rules.

2.16.12 Assam Education Service Rules, 1980

These rules are in respect of the Assam Education Service and are with regard to the Class I and Class II staff of the service. The class I staff comprise officers like the Director of Public Instruction; the Directors of Elementary Education and Adult Education; the Joint Directors of Public Instruction and Elementary Education; Principals, Vice-Principals and Professors of certain colleges and the Assistant Inspector of Schools. The Class II staff include lecturers of colleges and the State Institute of Education / State Institute of Science Education; the Deputy Inspector of Schools and the District Social Education Officer.

The rules state the strength of service, method of recruitment, qualifications, reservation of posts, confirmation, discharge from duty, scale of pay, etc., of the staff. They also contain other miscellaneous provisions for the officers – such as, the code of conduct, transfer, leave/pension, etc. To meet the changing requirements, certain modification were made subsequently in these rules in 1982.

Over the last few decades, Assam has undergone a metamorphosis. This has been reflected in its education system as well. To cope with the drastic changes and to adequately meet the demands and needs of the present, the legal basis needs to be

further expanded and strengthened. To cite an example, the state government has yet to provide a sound legal base for the educational endeavours of the non-governmental organisations.

2.16.13 Educational Policy and Programmes

The state government has not, as yet, issued any separate policy statement or white paper on education. The policies and major objectives of education, as formulated at the national level from time to time, have been accepted by the state for educational development. Along with the adoption and implementation of the National Policies on Education (NPE) – 1968 and 1986, as also the subsequent modifications and Programme of Action of the 1986 policy, including the Revised Programme of Action, 1992 a number of programmes have been accorded priority by the state.

These include :

(i) Universalisation of elementary education and provision of non-formal education for children belonging to 8-11 years age group;

(ii) Implementation of the Operation Blackboard (OB) Scheme;

(iii) Establishment and proper functioning of the District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs);

(iv) Vocationalization of education;

(v) Infrastructural development for secondary and higher education;

(vi) Award of incentives such as free textbooks, free uniforms, attendance scholarships, etc., to students, especially to those from the weaker and disadvantaged sections of the society; and

(vii) Selective expansion of higher education – particularly in the backward areas, selective admission policy and raising of tuition fees.

Some of the major steps taken by the Assam Government for the implementation of the NPE, 1986 are : (a) the development of the new school curriculum in the light of the National Curricular Framework; (b) the establishment and functioning of six DIETs; (c) the introduction of vocational courses in about fifty higher secondary schools; (d) the orientation of about 55,000 school teachers (both elementary and secondary) and the Programme of Mass Orientation of Teachers (PMOST); and (e) the provision of special educational facilities to the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and women.

In keeping with the major objectives and thrust areas of the state, the principal programmes in the different educational sectors and the progress made, so far, in their implementation are as follows.

2.16.14 Elementary Education

In the sphere of primary education, the state government supported the policy of quantity at the pre-secondary stage and quality at the post-secondary stage. Since 1974-75, the number of primary and middle schools have increased substantially. From 3,293 middle schools and 19,579 primary schools, the number increased on 5,734 and 29,685 in 1988-89 and then to 6,729 and 28,871 in 1993-94. While

considerable efforts have been made towards the total coverage of children at the elementary level of education, the problem of enrolment and retention continues to plague the state. In classes I-V, the total gross enrolment ratio (GER) was 130.0 in 1993; the GER for girls and boys being 134.4 and 125.3, respectively. In classes VI-VIII, the overall enrolment was 77.7; for boys and girls the gigures being 89.3 and 65.5, respectively, as shown in Table 2.5.

In classes I-V, the overall GER was 250.79 for SC students in 1993-94; that for SC girls was 241.81 and for SC boys – 259.34. In classes VI-VIII, the overall GER was 172.29; for girls it was 160.81 and for boys – 185.12, respectively, as shown in Table 7.6.

For ST students, the overall GER in classes I-V, as shown in Table 7,8, was 185.94; for girls and boys the ratio was 17.3.03 and 198.24, respectively. In classes VI-VIII, the figures recorded were 103.02; it was 92.17 for girls and 113.30 for boys.

The GER is, comparatively, much higher in the state than that recorded at the national level. Concerted efforts are, however, required to improve the situation since the dropout rates as shown in Table 2.7 are rather high being 39.05 at the primary stage and 67.55 at the elementary stage, respectively. At the primary stage the dropout rate was 39.55 for girls and 38.65 for boys. At the elementary stage, the dropout rate for girls and boys was 71.80 and 63.81, respectively. This indicates that only 60 per cent of the students are actually able to complete the primary stage of education and only half that figure is able to complete class VIII. This is a matter of serious concern for the state and demands urgent attention.

The state government is in favour of the policy of providing necessary safeguards for the education of children belonging to the linguistic minority groups. In accordance with this, the mother tongue has been prescribed to be the medium of instruction at the primary stage, provided at least forty pupils in the school or ten pupils in a class speak that particular language. A teacher is then provided by the state government to teach through that language. The languages enlisted in the English Schedule of the Indian Constitution are the recognized mother tongues for this purpose. Some exceptions, nevertheless, have been made for the hill districts.

According to the Sixth All India Educational Survey, about 62.72 per cent of the habitations have the provision of primary schooling. At the upper primary education level, only about 15 per cent of the habitations have schooling facility within the habitation. This is indicative of the quantum of work which is still to be completed by the state to achieve the target of UEE.

2.16.15 Secondary Education

In the sphere of secondary education, the focus continues to be on consolidation rather than on expansion. This is perhaps due to the resource constraint of the state. During the first survey, there were 1,514 high and higher secondary institutions in the state. In 1988-89, the number rose to 2,631 high schools and 336 higher secondary schools, respectively, and in 1993-94, after two decades, the number of such schools was 4,374.

Enrolment at the secondary/higher secondary stage, in 1993, was 7,38,709, of which, the enrolment of girls was only about 42 per cent. The high dropout rate

also poses a serious threat at this stage of education. In 1993-94, the dropout rate in classes I-X was 77.26; for girls the figure recorded was 75.80; less than 25 per cent of the enrolled students were able to complete high school.

The thrust is on quality but lack of trained teachers is a major hurdle in achieving this. The provision of quality teachers and the removal of the huge backlog of untrained teachers at the secondary stage, are the two problems demanding immediate solution. For qualitative improvement of secondary education, there is a felt need for the introduction of certain incentives, welfare schemes and better service conditions for teachers which will help to attract competent teaching personnel to the profession. Summer camps on Science / Maths and English, proposed to be organized on a priority basis, would equip the untrained teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills till they are covered under the regular B.Ed. courses. For the improvement of Science Education, under the Science Education Scheme, the state had received from the centre Rs. 783.16 lakhs till March, 1995.

Under the programme of work experience in secondary schools, the participation of students in literacy compaigns has recently been made obligatory by the state's Board of Secondary Education. Vocationalisation at the +2 stage has been focused on and prioritized in the educational plans. As many as 17 need-based, development-oriented vocational subjects have already been identified and have, so far, been introduced in more than 50 higher secondary schools.

A dearth of trained teachers for the vocational stream is a major constraint. The state government's proposal for the establishment of a national institute to train teachers in the various vocational subjects may help to solve this problem.

2.16.16 Teacher Education

The picture of teachers' training in the state is rather disconcerting with the percentage of trained teachers being as low as 63,35,26 and 23 per cent for primary, middle, secondary and higher secondary school teachers, respectively.

The entire responsibility of teacher education in the state has been entrusted to the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT). In 1974-75, there were four teacher training colleges and 31 teacher training schools. At present, the Basic Training Centres, DIETs and B.Ed. colleges provide in-service training facilities to teachers at the elementary and secondary education levels. The state proposes to gradually introduce, in the DIETs, the two-year in-service course according to the national norm as soon as the backlog of untrained teachers is removed.

The percentage of trained teachers is rather low at the secondary level. The state government is, therefore, keen to boost the intake capacity in the existing B.Ed. colleges and establish a few more institutions in the near future.

2.16.17 Technical Education

The number of polytechnics in Assam is inadequate in proportion to the yearly demand for such technical courses. Due to resource constraints, the establishment of new polytechnics to cover each district continues to be a distant dream. Along

with the expansion of facilities, the modernization of all kinds of technical institutions is also being envisaged, but this needs considerable momentary provision. However, a note-worthy achievement is that separate polytechnics have been established for girls to spread technical education among them. They are also being admitted to the existing polytechnic and engineering colleges.

2.16.18 Adult and Non-Formal Education

In 1988-89, as revealed by the field study, there were 12,498 non-formal education (NFE) centres and 6,300 adult education centres. Libraries have been established at Guwahati as also at the district and sub-divisional levels to provide reading materials to the neo-literates. The state government grants subsidies to the rural libraries. Special broadcasts and telecasts are also made to teach language, general knowledge, etc., to the students.

In spite of the various efforts of the state, a lot still remains to be done. There are a number of hurdles impeding the progress of adult and non-formal education in the state. Though a large number of adult education and non-formal education centres exist thoughout the state, their functioning, in the real sense of the term, appears to be far from satisfactory. This is mainly due to the lack of proper administration and concern on the part of the authorities. Moreover, the functioning of these potential systems of education is the responsibility of the respective departments and does not involve the active participation of the community. These departments neither make use of the various available resources nor are the functionaries involved in the working of these centres sufficiently motivated even though they are entitled to some monetary benefits.

The strengthening of the administrative structures of the systems of adult education and non-formal education is necessary; but this alone would not be adequate. The identification of a group of dedicated workers at the grassroot level and a greater involvement of voluntary agencies, is the need of the hour to make the schemes a success. Based on the data of the 1991 census, prioritizing initiation and implementation of programmes in the backward pockets of each district, might be a useful strategy.

2.16.19 Vocationalisation of Education

"Secondary education should be increasingly and largely vocationalised, and in higher education, a greater emphasis should be placed on agricultural and technical education." – Kothari Commission

Democracy demands that education should be useful rather than ornamental. It should prepare the pupil for vocation. It should help us to earn a livelihood Secondary stage is the terminal stage in the life of majority of pupils Every attempt should be made to give a vocational bias to secondary education and to increase the emphasis on agricultural and technological education at the university stage. This will surely bring education into closer relationship with productivity.

2.16.20 Historical Background

The inclusion of technical and vocational subjects under education is the gift of modern period. In ancient and medieval period technical and vocational education was in no way connected with general and liberal education. The following is the brief history of vocationalisation of education in India.

1. Hunter Commission (1882-1883) : The Commission stressed the need for widening the curriculum in primary and secondary schools and introducting practical subjects such as accounts, elements of natural and physical science, and their application to agriculture, wealth and industrial arts. But no effective action was taken to implement the recommendation.

2. Hartog Committee (1929) : The Committee placed an emphasis on industrial and commercial subjects at secondary stage and desired that students instead of being attracted to clerical and sedentary pursuits should take up some practical occupations. The Committee also recommended the provision of professional education at the collegiate level.

3. Sapru Committee (1934) : Sapru Committee recommended the provision for vocational courses in secondary schools side-by-side with general education courses in order to solve the problem of unemployment among the educated.

4. Abbot-Wood Report (1937) : It was recommended that general and vocational education should not be regarded as different branches, but as the earlier and later phases of a continuous process. Vocational education should be on the same plane as literary education.

5. Sargent Report (1945) : It was recommended that vocational courses should be provided in secondary schools side by side with general education courses.

As a result of above recommendations some schools provided vocational courses but the facilities were very inadequate.

The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) and the Kothari Commission (1964-66) suggested a detailed programme of vocational education in schools, which we shall discuss in this chapter.

2.16.21 Meaning of Vocationalisation of Education

Vocationalisation of education at secondary stage implies :

(a) Vocational training in the specific vocation so as to train the practical aptitudes of students in the preparation for definite work in future life; and

(b) General education courses.

Thus vocationalisation means to provide a strong vocational bias to secondary education. Vocational courses should be introduced in secondary schools alongwith general subjects. General and vocational education should not be separated.

Indian Education Commission (1964-66) observed, "We visualize the future trend of school education to be towards a fruitful mingling of general and vocational education – general education containing some elements of pre-vocational and technical education. In the kind of society in which we will be lying in the coming years, a complete separation between the two will not only be undesirable but impossible.

2.16.22 Need or Importance of Vocationalisation of Education

1. Solution of economic problems : India is today facing such grave problems as employment, poverty, famine etc. Our economic problems are our greatest difficulties. Hence vocationalisation of education is of the greatest

importance, since only such education can help to solve the economic problems of our country. Mahatma Gandhi rightly stated, “True education ought to be for children a kind of insurance against unemployment.”

2. Attainment of happiness : The true object of education is the generation of happiness. Happiness is said to be the summum bonum of life and existence. Man is really very happy when he is adjusted to his occupation. A happy and contented individual can render best service to society. Vocationalisation of education will balance the distinctive capacity of the individual with social service.

3. Attainment of social efficiency : Vocationalisation of education will help the education to attain economic independence and social efficiency. Social efficiency is the outcome of the efforts of the individuals who earn their livelihood and who are not a drag on the members of the society.

4. Minimising social misfits : Vocationalisation of education will facilitate fixing the right person at the right place and thus minimises social misfits, entailing wastage of human talent, initiative and resourcefulness. For children of lower intelligence vocational education is the only hope. Such children should have vocational training as early as possible because they are at a great disadvantage when taught academic subjects with more intelligent children.

5. Giving purpose to educational activity : Vocationalised education will be purposeful and conducive to learning. It makes the child an active partner in the learning process. It makes use of the child’s tendencies and habits, pays

attention to their interests and awakens their minds. It excites the intelligence and puts an end to lethargy and inactivity.

6. Moral, intellectual and cultural development : As far as the vocational aspect of education is concerned, it is connected with earning money. For this reason, one expects a high moral, intellectual and cultural level from an educated individual. If the educated individual fails to win economic independence, he tends to be immoral in his behaviour; degenerates in his intellect and indifferent to the arts and cultural tastes.

2.16.23 Progress of Vocational Education at the Secondary Stage

Kothari Commission visualizes the enrolment in vocational education at the secondary stage as given in the following table 2.27.

Table.2.27
Table showing Vocational Education at the Secondary Stage :

Stage / Years	Enrolment in Vocational Education (In 000's)			Percentage of Enrolment in Vocational Education to Total Enrolment		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Classes VIII-X						
1950-51	29	18	47	2.2	8.8	3.1
1955-56	39	32	71	2.0	7.9	3.0
1960-61	65	35	100	2.2	4.7	2.7
1965-66	90	47	137	1.9	3.3	2.2
1970-71	222	113	335	3.4	5.0	3.8
1975-76	546	272	818	6.0	7.0	6.4
1980-81	1344	655	1999	11.0	12.4	11.4
1985-86	3305	1568	4873	20.0	20.0	20.0
Classes XI-XII						
1950-51	105	20	125	42.7	53.6	44.2
1955-56	179	35	214	41.6	49.4	42.7
1960-61	299	59	358	41.7	44.9	42.2
1965-66	477	87	564	40.7	38.5	40.3
1970-71	721	157	878	42.5	40.2	42.1
1975-76	1089	284	1373	46.3	4.5	45.9
1980-81	1645	514	2159	48.1	47.2	47.9
1985-86	2502	934	3436	50.0	50.0	50.0

Source : Indian Education Commission (Report 1964-66), Vol. 2; Page 297.

The above table shows that at the lower secondary stage the enrolment in vocational education was about 3 percent in 1950-51. In 1965-66, it declined to 2.2 percent because of a very rapid increase in general education. It is assumed that a systematic attempt will be made to introduce vocational courses at this stage, either part-time or full-time, and to increase the enrolment in these courses, by 1986, to about 20% of the total enrolment. This is the most challenging part of the work to be done at this stage.

At the Higher Secondary stage, the enrolment in vocational courses in 1965-66 was about 40% of the total enrolment, when the general education course was of one year's duration. If it were lengthened to two years, this proportion of enrolment in vocational courses would fall to about 20 percent.

One of the major reforms the Commission envisages is to vocationalise Higher Secondary education and to raise the enrolment in vocational courses at this stage to 5% of the total enrolment. J.P. Naik observes that even today (1974-75), the enrolment in vocational courses is about 9 percent of the total enrolment at the secondary stage (as it was in 1947) and the proportion of the age group being trained for vocations (about 2 percent) is still the lowest in the world).

Causes of Slow Progress of Vocational (Technical) Education according to Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) :

1. Lack of seriousness : The position of vocational education has not been seriously tackled comprehensively by the Central and State Governments.

2. Lack of training facilities : There has been a lack of training facilities for teachers for vocational courses. The teachers were not available who combined in themselves general knowledge of a sufficiently high standard and the technical and applied scientific knowledge in the branch of vocational (technical) studies.

3. Lack of expert guidance : The Department of Public Instruction in almost all States had no advantage of expert guidance to plan vocational courses on an intelligent and comprehensive basis.

4. Lack of Co-ordination : There has not been sufficient co-ordination and co-operation between the different departments of government. Some institutions were under the Director of Industries, others were under the Director of Labour and the rest under the Director of Education.

5. Lack of finances : There has been lack of finances to equip schools adequately and get properly trained teachers. Absence of well trained teachers and proper material facilities hindered the progress of vocational education.

2.16.24 Recommendations of Secondary Education on Vocationalisation of Education

1. Diversification of courses : Our Secondary School should offer a diversity of educational programmes to meet varying interests, aptitudes and talents. They should provide more comprehensive courses including general and vocational subjects and pupils should have an opportunity to choose from

them according to their needs. It should be realized that if special practical subjects are taught side-by-side with certain common core subjects of general value and utility they can contribute to the all-round education of students, making them productive, co-operative, well balanced and useful members of the society.

2. Multipurpose schools: Multipurpose or Multilateral schools should be started to provide diversified courses. The main advantages of Multipurpose schools are :

   (i) To remove individuals distinctions : It removes all individious distinctions between students preparing for different courses of studies, breaking down the same the sense of inferiority that is associated with vocational subject and makes it possible to plan the educational system on a truly democratic basis.

   (ii) To facilitate educational guidance : it provides a greater variety of educational media and thereby facilities proper educational guidance in the choice of studies.

   (iii) To solve the problem of wrongly classified pupil : It helps to solve the problem of wrongly classified pupil, because transfer within the same school is easier to arrange than transfer from one school to another.

The Commission suggests that there should be room for unilateral schools also were intensive training will be provided in particular type of vocational courses according to the occupational needs of the community and the locality.

3. Agricultural education in Secondary schools : Agriculture plays an important role in the national economy. In view of its basic importance, the Commission recommends that all states should provide greater opportunities for agricultural education in rural areas. Instructions in agriculture should not be theoretical only but students should be given an opportunity to work in realistic conditions.

With agriculture, two other allied subjects – Horticulture and Animal Husbandry should be closely integrated. There should be adequate plots for cultivation and agriculture should be taught scientifically. Suitable types of cottage industries should also be taught in agricultural schools. The particular type of industry chosen for a school should depend upon its location, the facilities available and the requirements of the region. It may be spinning and weaving, or leather work or pottery or basketary or carpentry or some other useful craft. It is further recommended that agricultural schools should form a part of rural multipurpose schools.

4. Technical education: Technical education should be imparted. Secondary Commission made following recommendations concerning technical education:

   (i) Technical schools: Technical schools should be started in large numbers either separately or as part of Multipurpose schools. They should provide technical as well as general education.

(ii) Central Technical Institutes : Central Technical Institutes should be established in large cities which may cater to the needs of several local schools.

(iii) Location of Technical Schools : Wherever possible, Technical schools should be located in close proximity to appropriate industries and they should function in close co-operation with the industry concerned.

(iv) Legislation for practical training : Suitable legislation should be passed making it obligator for the industry to afford facilities to students for practical training.

(v) Close association : In the planning of the technical and technological education at all levels, representation of Commerce and industry should be closely associated with the educationists so that in the planning and direction of such education and in the maintenance of standards their views may be given effective weight.

(vi) Industrial Education Cess : A small cess to be called "Industrial Education Cess" should be levied on industries and the proceeds of the cess should be used for the furtherance of technical education.

(vii) All-India Council for Technical Education : In the interests of evolving a suitable pattern of technical courses at the Secondary stage the All-India Council for Technical Education and the bodies functioning under it should be utilised for working out details of the courses.

Multipurpose schools were started at many places but they failed to divert the students into different walks of life.

2.16.25 Recommendations of Kothari Commission

Kothari Commission made the following recommendations for implementing vocationalisation of education :

(i) Lower Secondary Stage :

The following courses can be organised for students who leave school at the end of class VII or VIII :

1. Reducing the age of admission : In the Industrial Training Institutes, there are courses which are open to those who have completed the primary school. If the age of admission to these courses is reduced to 14 (this was originally 16 and now reduced to 15), a large number of students who have completed the primary school will be able to enter these courses of industrial training.

2. Terminal courses in technical schools : Technical high schools and junior technical schools should prepare students for jobs in industry. The courses offered should be clearly terminal and adjusted through the greater use of available time to meet the requirements of the Apprenticeship Act and should lead to trade certificates. The length of courses may vary from course to course with a strong emphasis on experimental work and applied science in all the schools. A number of these schools should be selected for development as quality institutions.

3. Wide range part-time courses : A wide range of courses should be available on a part-time basis for a large number of students who drop out after class VII or VIII to enter employment in family business, some with the idea of setting up their own small-scale industry or trade. The Education Department should set up special section to help such persons to obtain suitable opportunities for training either on a full-time or on a part-time basis and also provide them, side by side, with some general education.

4. To improve professional efficiency and general education : A large proportion of rural boys will join the family farm. They will have to be provided with further education which will enable them to improve their professional efficiency and general education.

5. Home-science for girls : A large proportion of girls will leave school and get married either immediately or little later. They should be given further education in home science combined with general education.

(ii) Higher Secondary Stage :

At this stage, Kothari Commission has recommended the following types of vocational courses :

1. Full-time and part-time vocational courses in industry : Facilities for full-time studies in agricultural and engineering polytechnics should be expanded and part-time vocational courses in industry be arranged on either a day-release, sandwich or correspondence course basis.

2. Short condensed courses : Agricultural and engineering polytechnics should organize short condensed courses for the upgrading of skills of those who have entered into employment or the re-training and re-education of those already qualified.

3. Expansion of courses in Industrial Training Institutes : A large number of courses offered in Industrial Training Institutes require the completion of class X as a qualification for entry. These should be expanded rapidly.

4. Developing a wide range of other courses : In addition to the courses so far described, a wide range of other courses in health, commerce, administration, small-scale industries and the services should be developed ranging in duration from six months to three years for a certificate or a diploma qualification. These can be offered on a part time basis or through correspondence for those already in employment.

5. Special section for organisation of courses : The State Departments of Education should create special section for the overall organisation of courses of this nature whether full-time or part-time. In organizing such programmes the manpower needs should be taken into consideration and there should be close collaboration with the machinery for vocational guidance and with industry and employers generally.

6. Central grants : The Commission attaches great importance to the vocationalisation of secondary education. For this purpose the Commission recommends that the Central Government should provide special grants to

State government in the centrally sponsored sector for programmes of vocationalisation for secondary education.

(3) Part-time Vocational Education :

1. Lower Secondary Stage : The Commission recommends that part-time courses should be organised for those students who have completed the primary school and are unable to continue their studies on a full-time basis they wish to prepare themselves for high school examination at the end of class X. Part-time education should largely be of vocational character. It is required by those who have actually adopted some career and desire to improve their professional efficiency. The following two types of courses will be most important :

(i) Courses in Agriculture : Part-time courses in agriculture should be organised for those students who have left the primary school and taken to farming as a vocation. The main aim of these courses should be to introduce the young persons to improve farming methods, but they should also contain an element of general education.

The courses may be arranged to suit the convenience of the students. For example, they may be run one or two days a week or on a full-time basis for two to six weeks in a year. Such courses can be conducted in the agricultural polytechnics proposed to be set up, the agricultural high schools and especially at the primary extension centres. The Commission believes that if vigorous steps are taken in this direction,

then about 33.3% to 50% of the total enrolment in vocational education would be in courses of this type.

(ii) Special courses for girls : For girls leaving the primary schools at about the age of fourteen, the Commission proposes the organization of part-time courses in home science or the household industries like tailoring, arts and crafts, poultry, dairying, etc., to prepare them better for their future life as housewives and mothers. There may be short full-time courses or part-time courses over a long duration and can both useful and popular.

2. Higher Secondary Stage : Programmes of part-time education at this stage are very important and will include the following :

(i) Part-time course organised on the pattern of full-time ones meant for those who would like to pass the Higher Secondary examination.

(ii) Part-time course in agriculture for those who have taken to agriculture as a career.

(iii) Part-time courses in industry for those who have joined it.

(iv) Special courses for girls on the lines of those recommended at the lower secondary stage, but conducted at a higher level in view of the better general education which the students would have received.

(v) Part-time courses for those who want to be self-employed.

The Commission observes that part-time education is more needed for girls than for boys, as girls are more useful at home and they tend to be withdrawn from

schools earlier than boys. The same is true of vocational education also. A vast majority of girls that leave school at fourteen would be benefitted by short vocational courses or by courses in home science which would help them in their future life. These courses need greater emphasis than a mere continuation of general education.

Secondary education should be vocationalised on a large-measure and at the university stage emphasis should be placed on agricultural and technical education. A variety of part-time and full-time facilties in vocational education should be available at lower secondary and higher secondary stage to meet the needs of boys and girls, in urban and rural areas. Special sections should be set up in all the Education Departments for the organization of these courses. The Central Government should provide sufficient grants to State Governments in the Centrally sponsored sector for the vocationalisation of secondary education.

2.17 The Dimasa : A Brief History

The Dimasa Kacharis is a Scheduled tribe of Assam as given in President's Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes list modification order 1956. They are mainly concentrated in Karbi Anglong,Dima Hasao and Cachar districts. Like other tribes their livelihood is also agriculture and they mainly depend on cultivation. The Dimasa Kacharis are also still implementing the traditional methods in producing crops as a result this economic factor is also one of the major determinants of educational growth amongst the Dimasa people.

The Dimasa Kacharis is linguistically a branch of the Tibeto-Barman family. According to Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, the Dimasa Kacharis belong to the great Bodo race who is the earliest inhabitant of Assam. Opinions differ from author to author with regard to their ancestry. From anthropological point of view they are believed to be of Mongoloid origin and who were ruling between the rivers Yang-tse- kiang and Ho-ang-ho of the western China. Epigraphic evidence (N.G. Rhodes & S.K. Bose, A history of Dimasa-Kacharis as Seen Through Coinage) shows that Dimasa Kingdom was known as Hedemba Rajya and the ruling tribe was known as Dimasas. The oral traditions also show that the Dimasa ruled the whole Kamruli (Kamrupa), but the political and external pressures made them to immigrate to Sodiya and the northern bank of the Brahmaputra River where they founded their kingdom. It has been stated in the "Rajmala" the Chronicle of the Tripura Kings compiled by Durlabhendra,Baneswar and Sukreswar that Drikpati and Dakshin, the two sons of Trilochon,the King of Trivega (Davaka) fought each other for their kingdom. In the war Dakshin was defeated and retreated to the south where he founded another capital Kolongma on the bank of the River Barak. Since then several kings had been ruling in the Cachar till the annexation by the British rule in 1832 by the law of Doctrine of Lapse. As the Dimasa polity was based on agrarian system and thus the state had created on elaborate administrative structure to extract land revenue which had caused the emergence of a large number of intermediaries. During the time of Queen Chandraprabha entire territory was divided into six parts which continued up to 1813 and it was called Khel in the plains of Barak Valley. Though Khel was the smallest unit recognized by the state it was actually a collection of people often bound together by ties of race, caste or

religion. These khels were grouped in large bodies which were styled raj. Each individual was justly and severely responsible for the revenue assessed on the khel and similarly each khel was responsible for the payment of the raj. Each khel was elected by their headman Mukhtar. It was an official status. Mukhtar with the help of his subordinate officer performed the duties. These territories were placed under an official , designated as Khelder. Khel was the fiscal unit of the state and contrary to Assamese version, here it denotes land than a group of men. This enabled the state to have its citizen as cultivator as well as soldier during the wars. Subsequently the Khel was reorganized by the King Gobinda Chandra who had divided the area into seven revenue circles. And the revenue official incharge of the Khel was known as Ujirs. The Raja Kirti Chandra, during his reign had appointed a Ujir for the generaladministration of Cachar. Gobinda Chandra divided it into seven divisions, Bikrampur, Garer-Vitar, Dudpatil, Joipur, Kalain,Sonai, Hailakandi and also appointed one ujir each for all the divisions. However, Khel was rechristained as Raj by Raja Krishna Chandra. When the Khel was small the khelder was assisted by chotta peadah in revenue collection.

2.18 Social System and Clans of the Dimasa

In Dimasa , the village system is called Nohlai meaning a cluster of houses and the whole village headman is known as Khunang. Khunang is the head of the administration in the village. Khunang has both executive and judiciary powers. He is assisted by other official called the Dillik and Daulathu who occupies the third place. Next to the Daulathu is the Haphaisgao, who holds office for two years. Other village officials include Phrai, Montri, Hangsbukhu and Jalairao. The unique

feature of the Dimasa community social life is the existence of both male and female clans.There are 40 male clans and known as Sengphongs and 42 female clans known as Julus. Both the clans are exogamous and marriage is not possible within the same clan. In Dimasa society, sons belong to the father's clan and daughter belongs to the mother's clan. In the early stages Dimasa did not have such clans. The clan system emerged among the Dimasa when they started to follow the Hindu system of Gotras. Regarding the number of clans, most of the scholars and historians believe that initially there were only seven clans when the Kacharis had established their first capital at Dimapur and the number continued to increase with the transfer of capital from one place to another and at last the number reached to 40 male clans and 42 female clans during the reign of the Raja Krishna Chandra. During the rule of Dimasa in Kashpur, they started to increase the number of male and female clans to replenish the royal treasury. The people who were interested to enlist their names in Sengphong or Julu could do it by paying in cash or a kind. But such process of creation of new Sengphong or Julu came to end with the demise of the Raja Gobinda Chandra.

2.19 Caste System of Dimasa

In the appointment letter of Sonaram Sharma who was appointed as Deshamukhya, during the reign of Raja Gobinda Chandra, caste system was prevalent. Castes like Brahman, Shudra, Chandal etc are available in the letter. It is also on the record that those who were considered as outcaste for committing social crimes, could regain their position through religious atonement. In the Rinadanbidhi which Gobinda Chandra Introduced in 1816 A.D., reference is available about the division of the

then society into four varnas, such as Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra. The said document clearly defines the social status of each varna in the Kachari kingdom. The Brahmans were given the highest social status in the Kachari kingdom after shifting of the capital to Kashpur. They were treated with great respect in the community. The penal code of the Raja Gobinda Chandra provided some special privileges for the Brahmans. While there was provision in the said penal code for severe punishment for non-Brahmans, only nominal punishment was recommended for the Brahmans. Despite the introduction of social division on the basis of ancient Smriti Shastra, the Kachari Society still retained some of its traditional rites and customs .

2.20 Marriage System of Dimasa

In Dimasa community monogamy is strictly followed. Their marriage system is scientific. There is no child marriage system In the community, marriage is performed through negotiation. Marriage negotiation started with the visit of boy's relatives to the girl's house. At the time negotiating the marriage proposal, the boy's party uses to offer to the girl's parents a bundle of salt wrapped up by a plantain leaf and tied up with seven threads. Whether the proposal is considered or not, could be understood from the acceptance or rejection of the bundle. The date of marriage is fixed after two or more visits to the girl's house. In course of final negotiation a bride price called Kalti is settled. It is an offer to the bride's parents as honour and recognition to the bride's clan. Such a system is considered a unique feature of the Dimasa society because while dowry system has been engulfing the broader Indian society, here in Dimasa society the bride is paid a price which she is

entitled to. In the community provision for second marriage is also there under certain conditions. A man can marry for second time only when he is issueless. Like that, a widow can marry the younger brother of her deceased husband. But probably, this type of marriage was not allowed in the royal family. That is why when Gabinda Chandra married the widow Indu Prabha, the wife of his elder brother Krishna Chandra, the then society of Cachar did not take it very kindly. It can be gathered from the royal proclamation of Raja Gobinda Chandra that at time special permission from the royal court was necessary to solemnize a marriage ceremony with the show of aristocracy. The study also reveals that there were some restrictions in the marriage ceremony of that time over the use of gold ornaments, musical band, palanquin, fire arms, etc. Prior permission was necessary for the use of those facilities and it was assumed that those fortunate few, who were able to obtain the special permission for using those facilities during a marriage ceremony in their family were the persons of high status. In fact, the recipients of the titles of Choudhury, Mazumder, etc. from the king were found to show aristocracy and maintain high status by using gold ornaments, musical band, palanquin etc. in a marriage ceremony in their family. It is, thus, evident that an artificial class designated as privileged section of the society.

Divorce is also very rare in Dimasa community. During the reign of the King Gobinda Chandra married women were generally loyal to the in-laws and of course to the husband. Usually, in all the important family matters, both the husband and the wife are found to take decisions jointly. But in case of any critical situation concerning conjugal rights, members of the family along with the members of the society at large tried to remove the misunderstanding between the husband and the

wife. In case, all these efforts fail to remove the misunderstanding either or both the concerned couple are free to appeal for divorce to the traditional village headman called Khunang who generally permitted divorce on the basis of the merit of the case. In Dimasa, if the divorce takes place because of the husband's fault, he doesn't get back Kalti, but if the wife is in fault, the Kalti is to be returned to the husband. As per the custom, after the divorce, the male children are taken by their father and female children are taken by their mother. In the community, the divorced husband and wife can also remarry after performing some rituals.

2.21 Birth and Death

The birth of a baby is regarded as a joyful occasion in the community. If the baby is male it blongs to father's clan and if the baby is female it belongs to mother's clan. When a person dies, the family and the relatives observe mourning for twelve days. In Dimasa community creamation is generally done on the bank of the rivers or streams. Before taking the body to the creamation ground the body is washed and dressed in new clothes. In burning the body, generally, sons set fire to the pyres. Marriage and funerals rites are performed in conformity with the Brahmanical ways of the Hindu creeds.

2.22 Food Habits and Dress

Food habits of the Kacharis underwent major chang after the transfer of their capital to the plains of Cachar. Dimasa-Kacharies who preferred to lived in North Cachar Hills, did not change their food habits including meat eating. But the Kacharies who came down to the plains of Cachar, gave up eating of pork and

chiken considering them dietary taboos. Rice remained the staple food of the Kachari people during the time Raja Govinda Chandra.[47] Dried fish was one of their favorite dishes.[47] The drink that was very popular among the Dimasa was rice beer, known as Zu\Zoo. Offering of Zu/Zoo to the guests was a very prestigious matter in all social and religious functions.[49]

Regarding dress materials used by the Dimasas it is observed that they used to wear their traditional dress sinces time immemorial. Such tradition continued during the time of Raja Govinda Chandra and even later. The male people used a waist cloth, shawle and a turben on the head. Ornaments, viz, yaocher and kharik were favourite to them. The Dimass women used to wear pieces of loin cloths, one part to cover lower portion of the body and the other designed artistically, for the upper portion. Women were also found to be very fond of wearing various kinds of jewellerries like necklace, bracelets, nose-ring made of silver.[50]

2.23 Adoption of Child

Adoption of child was permissible according to Dimasa custom and traditions. A childless person could adopt a baby of his patriclan and this adopted son could perform all obsequies of his adopted father. A girl was rarely found to be adopted.

2.24 Status of Women

It us hearting to note that unlike in the non-tribal society as also in the other tribal societies, women have a very distinct position in the Dimasa society -17 Dimasa society is divided into two distinct clans- male (Semphong) and female (Julu) and the number of female clans are found to be greater than male clans. In the matter of

inheritance of poperty, daughters used to get mother's property while sons could inherit father's poperty 18 not only that both the husband the wife used to take important decisions in the family matters jointly. 19 According to Endle, husband usually treated his wife distinct respect; and regarding her as an equal partner and a companion to the extend which is uncommon very enthic society of India.20 That a Dimasa women held a very distinct position in the Dimasa society can also be substantiated from the facts as outlined below.

i. During marriage it was customary to obtain the consent of would-be bride.[21]

ii. While dowry is generally payable to the grooms in their societies in a Dimasa Society during the Dimasa rule kalti i.e, bride price used to be paid to the world –be bride.[22]

iii. Window remarriage was permissible in the aDimasa society something unthinkable at that time in a non tribal society.[23]

iv. Birth of a girl or a boy child was found to be equally an occasion for joy.

2.25 Nodrang

Nodrange means bachelor's dormitory. In the traditional Dimasa society nodrang used to play an important part. However, the village inhabitant by the Brahmins were conspicuous by the absence of such bachelor's dormitory. Nodrang was generally constructed in an accessible place of the village and was almost like a big hall having no compartment, but there was a hearth in the center of the hall and during the winter the inmates of the Nodrange could sit around it. There also

change or raised platforms made of bamboos to sleep at night. The ball was artistically decorated and musical instrument like the Kharam (drum), Murli Suphin, ect. are kept within it. The imates of such a nodrag served the village against outside attacks and from wild animals. That is way a ndrang was built at the center of each village. The umarried youngmen of a nodrang acted as guard of the village during night. Any young boy above twelve years of age could stay in the nodrang.[45] No girl was allowed to enter the nodrang. These youngmen could learn many things during their stay at nodrang. They used to learn dancing, singing fighting , hunting, making of bamboo and cane products and so on. If any stranger happened to visit any Dimasa village, nodrang used to average for their accommodations also. In other words, it can be said that it served as a social institution for giving preparatory training to young men towards all aspects of life.

2.26 Dima Hasao District

Dima Hasao formerly **North Cachar Hills district** is an administrative district in the state of Assam in north-eastern India. As of 2011 it is the least populous district of Assam . "Dima Hasao" means "Dimasa Hills" in the Dimasa language. Dima Hasao district was a part of the Dimasa Kachari kingdom before 1832. The kingdom was extended from Jamuna in the North to the foot-hills of Lushai Hills in the south & from the Kopili in the west to the Angami & Katcha Naga hills beyond the Dhansiri in the east. The Dimasa Kachari kings had their Capitals successively at Kachomari, Dimapur, Maibang, Kashpur & lastly at haridikhor>Horitikor (Karimganj district near Badarpur). In 1830, the Dimasa king Gobinda Chandra Hasnusa was assassinated by his own general Gambhir Singh, after that the British

annexed the southern part of the kingdom on 14 August 1832 under the doctrine of Laps. The rest was ruled by last Dimasa General Tularam Hasnusa. In 1837 a portion of Tularam's kingdom was further annexed to the British Empire & constituted into a sub-division of Nagaon district in 1837 with Head quarter at Asalu. In 1854, on the death of Senapati Tularam Hasnusa, the remaining portion of his kingdom was finally annexed to the British Empire & added to the Asalu sub-division. In 1867 this sub-division was abolished & apportioned into three parts among the districts Cachar, Khasi & Jaintia Hills & Nagaon. The present North Cachar Hills district was included in the old Cachar district with Asalu being only police outpost. In 1880, this portion was constituted into a sub-division with Head quarters at Gunjung under Cachar district. This head quarter was shifted to Haflong in 1895. Since then Haflong continues to be the Head quarter. In 1951, after commencement of the constitution of India, North Cachar Hills as specified under paragraph 20 of the sixth schedule to the constitution,ceased to be a part of Cachar district. This part along with Mikir Hills constituted a new civil district namely " United district of North Cachar & Mikir Hills" with effect from 17 November 1951. According to the provision of sixth schedule, two different councils were constituted later on, viz., North Cachar Hills District Council & Mikir Hills District Council within the geographical boundary of that district. Dima Hasao District Council was inaugurated on 19 April 1952. In 2 February 1970, Government declared an independent administrative district, viz., North Cachar Hills District with the geographical boundary of autonomous North Cachar Hills district council. It may be mentioned here that at present this autonomous council

possesses administrative control over almost all departments of the district except Law & order, Administration & Treasury Deptt.

2.26.1 Demographic Features

According to the 2011 census Dima Hasao district has a population of 213,529. The district has a population density of 44 inhabitants per square kilometre (110 /sq mi). Its population growth rate over the decade 2001-2011 was 13.53%.Dima Hasao has a sex ratio of 931 females for every 1000 males, and a literacy rate of 78.99%.The major tribes inhabiting the district are Dimasas,Kukis, Zeme Nagas. Other significant ethnic groups include the Biates, Hrangkhawls, Vaipheis who are also Kuki, Karbis, Khasi-pnars and Khelmas.[6] Dimasa are the most highly Populated Tribe in Dima Hasao, The Dimasas Constitute 43% of total population. whereas Non-Dimasa tribes and Non Tribals like- Bengali, Jeme naga, Nepalese, Hmar, Kuki all together constitute 53% of total population.

2.26.2 Geography :

The district headquarters are located at Haflong. Dima Hasao district occupies an area of 4,888 square kilometres . It is the third largest district of Assam with 4888 Sq Km after Karbi Anglong and Sonitpur district. Dima Hasao District is surrounded by Karbi Anglong dist East and Nagaland on North east, Manipur on East, Nagaon Dist. on North, Karbi Anglong Dist (W) on North-west, Meghalaya on West and Cachar district on South.

2.26.3 Politics:

Dima Hasao district is an Autonomous District. (Lok Sabha constituency) enjoying the Sixth Schedule status granted by the Constitution of India. The *Dima Hasao District*. is administered by *Dima Hasao Autonomous Council (DHAC)*. Members of the Autonomous Council (MAC) are elected by people of Dima Hasao. The Political party who has majority MACs form the rulling party. The Autonomous Council is a powerful body and almost all the department of government are under its control except the police and Law & Order is under Assam Government.

2.26.4 Festival (Bushu/Bishu)

The Dimasa of Dima Hasao District, being agrarian people, celebrate various agricultural festivals in different ways and at different times. Mostly Dimasa inhabiting North Cachar Hills and Karbi Anglong districts are successful in preserving their age old traditional religious beliefs and practices in and through the celebration of several festivals, with some exceptions, due to being Hinduised. The Dimasa festival can be categorized into community festivals and local festivals. The local festivals are performed by each village separately, and participation is restricted to the people of the village concerned. The community festivals are Misengba and Bishu, while local festivals are Khorongfang Gerba, Maisalai Gerba, Rajini Gerba, Hor-ni Gerba etc.

2.26.5 Economy:

In 2006 the Indian government named Dima Hasao one of the country's 250 most backward districts (out of a total of 640). It is one of the eleven districts in Assam currently receiving funds from the Backward Regions Grant Fund Programme (BRGF).

2.26.6 Languages.

Major languages spoken in the district are the Dimasa, Zeme, Hrangkhol, Kuki, Biate, Khelma, and few languages of Indo-Aryan like Haflong Hindi (a speech form of Hindi) and Bengali. Dimasa and Haflong Hindi are the lingua franca in the Dima Hasao.

2.26.7 Religion:

From the 2001 Census data, it can be seen that 62.18% of all the tribals and 86.57% of the non-tribals living in DHD are Hindus. Of all the Hindus, 48.71% are Dimasa, 39.27% are non-tribals, 5.68% are Rongmei Naga, and 3.83% are Karbi. 98.73% of the Dimasa, 86.57% of the non-tribals, 85.71% of the Hajong, 47.39% of the minor tribes, 46.65% of the Garo and 43.72% of the Naga are Hindu.

Table 2.28
Distribution of Tribes, Population and Religion in Dima Hasao District

Tribe	Pop	Hindu	Hindu%	Animist
All Tribes	**128,428**	**79,853**	**62.18%**	**630**
Dimasa	64,881	64,055	98.73%	13
Naga	17,078	7,467	43.72%	586
Kuki	16,757	1,266	7.56%	22
Hmar	13,863	114	0.82%	0
Mikir	7,973	5,037	63.18%	0
Khasi	3,157	115	3.64%	3
Minor Tribes	2,391	1,133	47.39%	0
Mizo (Lushai) people	1,676	354	21.12%	6
Garo	508	237	46.65%	0
Hajong	84	72	85.71%	0
Chakma	56	3	5.36%	0
Non-Tribals	**59,651**	**51,639**	**86.57%**	**3**
All Pop	**188,079**	**131,492**	**69.91%**	**633**

Source: 2001 and 2011 Census

2.26.8 Culture:

The district is globally known for a place named *Jatinga*, a village, which is famous for the phenomenon of birds "committing suicide". Although the birds do not commit suicide and are actually killed, the phenomenon of suicide has spread far and wide among common people. The village is inhabited by about 2,500 [Khasi-pnar] tribal people.

At the end of monsoon months especially on moonless and foggy dark nights between 6 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., birds are disturbed by the locals and they are attracted to lights. These dazed birds are captured using bamboo poles by the locals.Famous naturalist late E.P. Gee brought this phenomenon at a global level 1960s. He drove to Jatinga with famed ornithologist late Salim Ali. The cause of it is likely to be disorientation at high altitudes and high speed winds due to the widespread fog characteristic at the time. The zoological survey of India sent Dr Sudhir Sengupta to unravel this mystery. Dr Sengupta is of the opinion that weather conditions make changes in the magnetic qualities of the underground water in this area. However, Dr Sengupta could not justify his opinions. The most recent description of the phenomenon and its comparison with similar incidents elsewhere in Malaysia, Philippines and Mizoram is found in the book *The Birds of Assam* by Assam's best known ornithologist Dr Anwaruddin Choudhury. He concluded that the birds, mostly juveniles and local migrants, are disturbed by high velocity winds at their roost. When the disturbed birds fly towards lights as refuge they are hit with bamboo poles and killed or injured.

2.26.9 Dima Hasao District Population 2011

In 2011, Dima Hasao had population of 214,102 of which male and female were 110,802 and 103,300 respectively. In 2001 census, Dima Hasao had a population of 188,079 of which males were 99,822 and remaining 88,257 were females. Dima Hasao District population constituted 0.69 percent of total Maharashtra population. In 2001 census, this figure for Dima Hasao District was at 0.71 percent of Maharashtra population.

2.26.10 Dima Hasao District Population Growth Rate

There was change of 13.84 percent in the population compared to population as per 2001. In the previous census of India 2001, Dima Hasao District recorded increase of 24.72 percent to its population compared to 1991.

2.26.11 Dima Hasao District Density 2011

The initial provisional data released by census India 2011, shows that density of Dima Hasao district for 2011 is 44 people per sq. km. In 2001, Dima Hasao district density was at 38 people per sq. km. Dima Hasao district administers 4,888 square kilometers of areas.

2.26.12 Dima Hasao Literacy Rate 2011

Average literacy rate of Dima Hasao in 2011 were 77.54 compared to 67.62 of 2001. If things are looked out at gender wise, male and female literacy were 83.29 and 71.33 respectively. For 2001 census, same figures stood at 75.67 and 58.39 in Dima Hasao District. Total literate in Dima Hasao District were 140,873 of which

male and female were 78,559 and 62,314 respectively. In 2001, Dima Hasao District had 1,371,897 in its district.

2.26.13 Dima Hasao Sex Ratio 2011

With regards to Sex Ratio in Dima Hasao, it stood at 932 per 1000 male compared to 2001 census figure of 884. The average national sex ratio in India is 940 as per latest reports of Census 2011 Directorate. In 2011 census, child sex ratio is 967 girls per 1000 boys compared to figure of 955 girls per 1000 boys of 2001 census data.

2.26.14 Dima Hasao Child Population 2011

In census enumeration, data regarding child under 0-6 age were also collected for all districts including Dima Hasao. There were total 32,414 children under age of 0-6 against 30,800 of 2001 census. Of total 32,414 male and female were 16,480 and 15,934 respectively. Child Sex Ratio as per census 2011 was 967 compared to 955 of census 2001. In 2011, Children under 0-6 formed 15.14 percent of Dima Hasao District compared to 16.38 percent of 2001. There was net change of -1.24 percent in this compared to previous census of India.

2.26.15 Dima Hasao Religion-wise Data 2011

Table2.29
Distribution of Demographic feature of Dimahasao District

Actual Population	214,102	188,079
Male	110,802	99,822
Female	103,300	88,257
Population Growth	13.84%	24.72%
Area Sq. Km	4,888	4,888
Density/km2	44	38
Proportion to Assam Population	0.69%	0.71%
Sex Ratio (Per 1000)	932	884
Child Sex Ratio (0-6 Age)	967	955
Average Literacy	77.54	67.62
Male Literacy	83.29	75.67
Female Literacy	71.33	58.39
Total Child Population (0-6 Age)	32,414	30,800
Male Population (0-6 Age)	16,480	15,752
Female Population (0-6 Age)	15,934	15,048
Literates	140,873	1,371,897
Male Literates	78,559	768,998
Female Literates	62,314	602,899
Child Proportion (0-6 Age)	15.14%	16.38%
Boys Proportion (0-6 Age)	14.87%	15.78%
Girls Proportion (0-6 Age)	15.42%	17.05%

What is the population of Muslim in Dima Hasao ? What is Hindu's Population in Dima Hasao district are questions that are being asked to us. As of now, Government of India has not declared population of Hindu, Muslim, Sikhs, Christian, Buddhists and Jains in district of Dima Hasao, Assam. As soon as Govt.

of India release full religions data of Dima Hasao district, we will update and release it for our viewers.

2.27 Karbi-Anglong District

2.27.1 Demographic Features

TheUnited Mikir and North Cachar Hills District was formally created on the 17th November,1951 vide Govt. notification No. TAD/R.31/50/201 Dtd. the 3rd November'1951 with some parts of the districts of Sivasagar (now Golaghat), Nagaon,Cachar and United Khasi and Jayantia Hills district of present Meghalaya for all round development of the tribal folk of the Central Assam. This was followed by bifurcation of the erstwhile district of United Mikir and North Cachar Hills district into two separate districts under banner as "Mikir Hills" and North Cachar Hills district in the year 1970. The Mikir Hill district was again renamed as "Karbi Anglong District" w.e.f the 14th October'1976 vide Govt. Notification No. TAD/R/115/74/47 Dtd. 14-10-1976. Thus Karbi Anglong came into being as a full fledged separate district in the map of Assam with its Head quarter at diphu. The district enjoys autonomy under the provision of Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. It is the Largest district of Assam.

The Karbi Anglong Distrcit is situated in the central part of Assam. It is bounded by Golaghat district in the east, Meghalaya and Morigaon district in the west, Nagaon and Golaghat district in the north and N.C. Hills district and Nagaland in the south. The district with dense tropical forest covered hills and flat plains is situated between 25^0 33' N to $26^0$35' N Latitude and $92^0$10' to $93^0$50' E Longitude.

2.27.2 Climate

Due to variation in the topography, this hill zone experiences different climates in different parts. The winter commences from October and continues till February. During Summer, the atmosphere becomes sultry. The temperature ranges from 6 degree to 12 degree and 23 degree to 32 degree Celsius in summer. The average rainfall is about 2416 mm.

2.27.3 Population Pattern

The population of the district is predominantly tribal. The major tribal ethnic groups of this district are Karbis, Bodos, Kukis, Dimasas, Hmars, Garos, Rengma Nagas, Tiwas, Man (Tai Speaking's). Besides, a large number of non-tribals also live together in this hill region.

2.27.4 Area

TABLE 2.30
Areas of Rural and Urban

Total	Rural	Urban
10,434 Sq.Km.	10,397 Sq.Km.	37 Sq. km.

Source-2011 Census

The Table 2.2 shows that in Karbi-Anglong District

2.27.5 Population

Table 2.31

Distribution of Population in Karbi-Anglong District in terms of Male, Female and SC and ST

Parameters	As per 2001 census			As per 2011 census		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Population	8,13,311	7,21,381	91,930	965280	8,51,158	1,14,122
SC Population	29,520	26,977	2,543	NA	NA	NA
ST Population	4,52,963	4,17,150	35,813	NA	NA	NA
Male	4,22,250	3,73,300	48,950	493482	4,33,903	59,579
Female	3,91,061	3,48,081	42,980	471798	4,17,255	54,543
Literate	3,82,574	3,18,427	64,147	574509	4,84,646	89,863

Source: 2001 and 2011 Census

2.27.6 Density of Population : 93 per Sq. Km. (As per 2011 census)

2.27.7 Sex Ratio :- 956 females/1000 males (As per 2011 census)

2.27.8 Total No. of villages: 2928 (As per 2011)

2.27.8 Literacy rate as per census

Table 2.32
Literacy Rate in Decade-wise in the District

As per 1991 census			As per 2001 census			As per2011		
Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
35.89%	23.17%	12.72%	47.04%	60.81%	39.19%	73.52%	82.12%	64.62%

Source : Census Reports of Assam

Table 2.33
Development Blocks and its headquarters (Sub-Division-wise)

Sl.No.	Name of Sub-Divn.		Name of Blocks	Headquarters
1.	Diphu Sadar Sub-Division.	1.	Lumbajong Dev. Block	Manja.
		2.	**Howraghat Dev. Block**	Howraghat.
		3.	Samelangso Dev. Block	Dokmoka
		4.	**Langsomepi Dev. Block**	Bakulia
2.	Bokajan Civil Sub-Division.	1.	Bokajan Dev. Block	Bokajan
		2.	Nilip Dev. Block	Chowkihola.
		3.	Rongmongwe Dev. Block.	Kat Teron.
3.	Hamren Civil Sub-Division.	1.	Rongkhang Dev. Block.	Donkamokam.
		2.	Socheng Dev. Block.	Zirikinding.
		3.	Chinthong Dev. Block.	Hamren.
		4.	Amri Dev. Block.	Ulukunchi.

Source:www.karbi-anglong.com

2.27.9 NATURAL RESOURCES :

There are different kinds of minerals found in this hill district which are as below :

1. Lime stone :- Found in the Dillai and Sainilangso.

2. China-clay :- Found in Upper Deopani and Silonijan area.

3. Feldspar :- Found in Koilajan area.

4. Coal :- Found in Koilajan and Silbheta.

2.27.10 AGRICULTURE :

The district is basically an agricultural district. Different types of agricultural crops are cultivated among which paddy is the main crop. Except for the valleys, the people follow the jhum system of cultivation.

2.27.11 INDUSTRIES:

Although the district is abundant in raw materials only a few industries have come up. They are as shown below :-

A. 1.Bokajan Cement Plant ;

2. Karbi Chemical Mini Cement Plant

B. AGRO-BASE :

1. Rubber Plantation Industry ;

2. Citronella Plantation Industry ;

C. TEA GARDEN :

There are a total of 12 (Twelve) numbers of Tea Gardens in the district which are :

Sl. No	Name of the Garden
1	Nambor Nadi T.E
2	Deopani T.E.
3	Borpathar T.E
4	Dhansiri T.E
5	Banaspati T.E
6	Methunguri T.E
7	Sobhoneswari T.E
8	Ramanagar T.E
9	Lahorijan T.E.
10	Lengri T.E
11	Nirmal T.E
12	Methoni T.E

2.28 Cachar District

2.28.1 Introduction

Epigraphic evidence (N.G. Rhodes & S.K. Bose, A history of Dimasa-Kacharis as Seen through Coinage) shows that Dimasa Kingdom was known as Hedemba Rajya and the ruling tribe was known as Dimasas. The oral traditions also show that the Dimasa ruled the whole Kamruli (Kamrupa), but the political and external pressures made them to immigrate to Sodiya and the northern bank of the Brahmaputra River where they founded their kingdom. It has been stated in the "Rajmala" the Chronicle of the Tripura Kings compiled by Durlabhendra,Baneswar and Sukreswar that Drikpati and Dakshin, the two sons of Trilochon, the King of Trivega (Davaka) fought each other for their kingdom. In the war Dakshin was defeated and retreated to the south where he founded another capital Kolongma on the bank of the River Barak.

The scholars have opined that the land on the bank of Barak or the valley of Barak got its nomenclature "CACHAR" long before the tribes- an off-shoot of Bodo ethnic group-known as Kacharies. Because the word Cachar is originated from the Sanskrit word Kachcha which means a plain land near the sea shore. We may recount the observation of Sir Edward Gait in his 'History of Assam' (1905) who said Cachar derived its name long before the Kacharies came here.

2.28.2 Physical Feature

The district Cachar is bounded in the north by Dimahasao district and the state of Meghalaya, in the east by Manipur state in the south by Mizoram state in the west

Hilakandi and Karimganj districts. The district covers the area of 3786 sq.km. The climate of the district is marked by humidity. The mean daily minimum temperature and the mean daily maximum temperatures do not fall below and rise above 11.60c and 32.5c respectively.

2.28.3 Demography

According to the 2011 census Cachar district has a population of 1,736,319. This gives it a ranking of 278th in India out of a total of 640. The district has a population density of 459 inhabitants per square kilometre (1,190/sq mi). Its population growth rate over the decade 2001-2011 was 20.17%. Cachar has a sex ratio of 958 females for every 1000 males, and a literacy rate of 80.36%.Religious break-up of the population are, Hindus 886,761, Muslims 522,051 and Christians 31,306. Bengali is the status of Official Language in this district with majority of the people primarily speaking Bengali and Sylheti, a Bengali-dialect. Apart from Bengali, other minority languages spoken in the district include Meitei Manipuri, Bishnupuriya Manipuri, Dimasa and Rongmei-Naga. There are also few Mizo, Kuki and Khasi people who form microscopic minority.