CHAPTER I

1.0: THE BRAHMAPUTRA VALLEY: A GEOGRAPHICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE.

1.1: Geographical Condition of the Valley:

Assam is an important state of the North Eastern region of Indian Territory. It is located within the boundaries with Bhutan, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mijoram, Meghalaya, West Bengal and Bangladesh. Before the advent of the Ahoms in 1228 A D, Assam was known as *'Kamrupa'* or 'Kamrup' which was also spelt in the Muslim chronicles, like '*Tabaqat-e-Naisiri*' and '*Riyaz–us–salatin*' as '*Kamrud'* or *'Kamru'*, which had its capital at Pragjyotishpur and Kamrup Nagar, representing the present city of Guwahati and North Guwahati respectively.[1] The state has three natural divisions viz. Brahmaputra Valley, Barak Valley and North Cachar hilly tract of the Barail range.[2]

The Brahmaputra Valley, the present study area is a remarkably significant plain, covering an area of 56,480 sq. km[3], which lies between 89^0 43′ E and 96^0 E Longitudes and 24^0 12′ N and 28^0 N Latitudes. It is surrounded, naturally, by the Arunachal-Himalayan Hills in the north,

---

1 Maulana Minhaj-ud-Din, *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Tr. H G Raverty, New Delhi, 1970, vol. I, PP. 561-194; Dr. M Y Tamizi, *Sufi Movements in Eastern India*, Delhi, 1991, ed. I, PP-83f; and K L Barua, *Early History of Kamrupa*, Gauhati, 1966, ed.II, pp-152f.

2 R. Gopala Krishnan, *Political Geography of India's North East*, New Delhi, 1991, p-12.

3 M. Taher, 'Physiographic Frame Work of North-East India', *North-Eastern Geographer*, Guwahai University, vol.18, 1986, p-15.

'*Patkai Bum*' and Arunachal Hills in the east and the Meghalayan Plateau in the south. This valley is openly joined to the Indo-Gangatic plain in the west.[4] It is narrow and elongated with a length of about 660 k m and average width of about 70 k m.[5] The land of the valley is naturally divided into two long strips from east to west by the river *Brahmaputra*,[6] one of the largest rivers in the world, having a length of 720 k m, within the state of Assam itself.[7] This river is also popularly known as *Luit*[8]. A large number of tributaries feed it from the north bank as well as from the South. Both the banks have been decorated with green offshoots of two hilly regions.[9] The area falls in the Sub-tropical monsoon climatic zone.[10] Heavy shower in the summer and moderately cold in the winter are the main climatic characteristics of the area.

In the beginning of the '*Twentieth Century*' there were only six administrative districts covering the whole area of the Valley. These Districts were: (1) Goalpara, (2) Kamrup, (3) Darrang, (4) Lakhimpur, (5) Nowgong and (6) Sibsagar,[11] which have been divided into more other districts during last quarters of the century totaling the number at eighteen. The divisions of the former districts may be shown in ***Table-1***:

---

4 Dr. M Taher, and P Ahmed, *Geography of North East India*, Guwahati, 1998, p-26.

5 M Taher, *Op. cit.*, p–15,

6 ***The Brahmaputra***:- According to the accounts of the geographical works, its main head stream is Tsangpo, which comes out from a lake near the *Manas Sorwar* in Tibet and crosses the limit of Arunachal Pradesh adopting the name *Dihang*. On entering into Assam it meets with two other streams- the *Dibang* and the *Lohit* at a place near the present town Sadia, in the northern Tinsukia district and takes the name Brahmaputra covering a length of about 720 k.m. in the valley of Assam from east to west and enters into Bangladesh where it ends the course at the Bay of Bengal. (Dr. M. Taher, and P. Ahmed, *Op. cit.*, pp. 36-38.)

7 Dr. M Taher, and P Ahmed, *Ibid*, p–37.

8 Dr. S Sarma, *A few Aspects of Assamese Literature and Culture*, Jorhat, 1991, P-20.

9 M S Barkataki, *British Administration in North East India : 1826-74*, Delhi, 1985, P-1.

10 Taher and Ahmed, *Op. cit.*, p- 52.

11 Taher and Ahmed, *Ibid*, p-6.

Table – 1: The Districts of Brahmaputra Valley: Past and Present.

Districts in 1901	Districts at the end of 20th Century
1. Goalpara*	1. Goalpara, 2. Dhubri, 3. Kokrajhar, 4. Bongaigaon.
2. Kamrup*	5. Kamrup, 6. Barpeta, 7. Nalbari.
3. Darrang*	8. Darrang, 9. Sonitpur
4. Lakhimpur*	10. Lakhimpur, 11. Dhemaji, 12.Tinsukia, 13. Dibrugar
5. Nowgong*	14. Nagaon, 15. Morigaon
6. Sibsagar[12]*	16. Sibsagar, 17. Jorhat and 18.Golaghat.

1.2: Socio-Economic Condition of the Valley:

Assam is a land, inhabited by different sects of people having different socio-cultural significance. The total population of Assam is 2,66,55,528[13] as per Census, 2001. All these people follow different religions and culture. However, most of the people inhabit in the valley follow the Hinduism; where as there are the followers of Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism in addition to the Muslims. All sects of people having migrated long ago at different intervals of time from different directions and settled in different parts of Assam in general and in the Brahmaputra Valley in particular.

The Asto-Asiatic and Tibeto-Burmans were the first groups of people who migrated to Assam.[14] As Khasi of the former group settled in the hills of Meghalaya, the Bodos are the surviving representatives of the Tibeto-Burmans

---

[12]* Taher and Ahmed, *Ibid*, p–6.

[13] *Statistical Hand Book*, Assam, Guwahati, 2006.

[14] M. Hussain, *The Assam Movement: Class, Ideology and Identity*, New Delhi, 1993, p-58.

who are the earliest settlers in the Brahmaputra Valley.[15] This valley is the homeland of some other tribes in the Mongoloid origin, like: Rabha, Kachari, Tiwa (Lalung), Mishing (Miri), Mech, Deori, Hojai, Santhal, etc., who had also migrated, long ago to Assam in different times.[16] All of these tribes have been maintaining their own religious and lingo-cultural identity. Likewise, deriving from the same Mongoloid origin, a few other people such as the Ahoms, Chutiyas, Morans, Koches, etc., are also living in different parts of the Brahmaputra Valley having migrated in different times.[17]

On the other hand, the Indo-Aryans group is the most important, who migrated to Assam and settled mainly in the Brahmaputra Valley. Their flowing still continued up to a much later stage, as a part of historical development.[18] This group of people may be classified into several castes and sub-castes considering their traditional professions. For example, the Brahmins are the priest class, who has achieved the highest position in the society from education to all branches of administration and the Kayasthas are also another higher class. 'Tradition bears testimony to the fact that the Brahmans and the Kayasthas came to Assam from *Videha* (Mithila) and Kanouj'.[19] On the other hand, the Kalitas are generally dealing with cultivation. According to their later occupation, they are, again divided into several sub-castes, like: Bar-Kalita, Saru-Kalita, Kahar, Kumar, Mali, Nat, Bez, etc. Similarly, the Keots are purely cultivators, where as the Jal keot and Kaibartas live on fishing.[20] Another caste of this group is Bania or Baishya, whose traditional profession is trade and commerce.

---

[15] M Hussain, *Ibid*, p-59.

[16] B M Das, *The Peoples of Assam*, Delhi, 1987, PP. 4-10.

[17] B M Das, *Ibid*, PP.4 -11.

[18] M Hussain, *Op. cit.*, p-58.

[19] B K Barua, *A Cultural History of Assam*, Gauhati, 1969, p-9.

[20] B M Das, *Op. cit*, pp-11-13.

It is worth mentioning that some people of the Indo-Aryan group migrated to Assam from Bengal and East Pakistan during the times of the British and Post-British administration respectively. In addition to the Brahmins and Kayasthas, some of the professional trades are: Jewelry (goldsmith), Blacksmith, Carpentry, etc. All the people of these castes, trades and tribes, stated above, believe in the customs and culture of Hinduism except a part of Mongoloid group belong to the Tibeto-Burman stock, who had adopted Christianity, since the advent of the Christian Missionaries in the last part of the 19th century.[21] Of course, two other business classes have also migrated to the valley since the 19th century from Rajasthan and the Punjab, who are adopting the religions of '*Jain*' and '*Sikh*' respectively.[22]

Muslims are also an important community of the Indo-Aryan people,[23] who had started to settle in the valley since the beginning of the 13th century A D, and their settlement continued up to the first half of the 20th century.[24] Most of the Muslims are cultivators except the '*Mariya*' Muslims, who have been dealing with brass metal works, since the 16th century. Likewise, the descendants of the Muslims artisans, imported by the Ahom Kings are somehow carrying out their ancestral professions of the Brazier, Masonry, Jewelry, weavings etc. On the other hand, some of the educated Muslims are working in different posts of teaching and administrative departments and in some Government and private fields. It will be appropriate to furnish the population of different religions in the Valley as in *Table-2*

---

21 M Hussain, *Op. cit*, p– 27.

22 Hussain, *Ibid,* PP-27-28.

23 Hussain, *Ibid,* p – 27.

24 I. Hussain, *Asamor Jateeya Jivon Aru Abhibhasi Asomiya Musalman,* Nalbari, 1998, pp-16-20.

Table- 2: Population by Religion in the Brahmaputra Valley.[25]

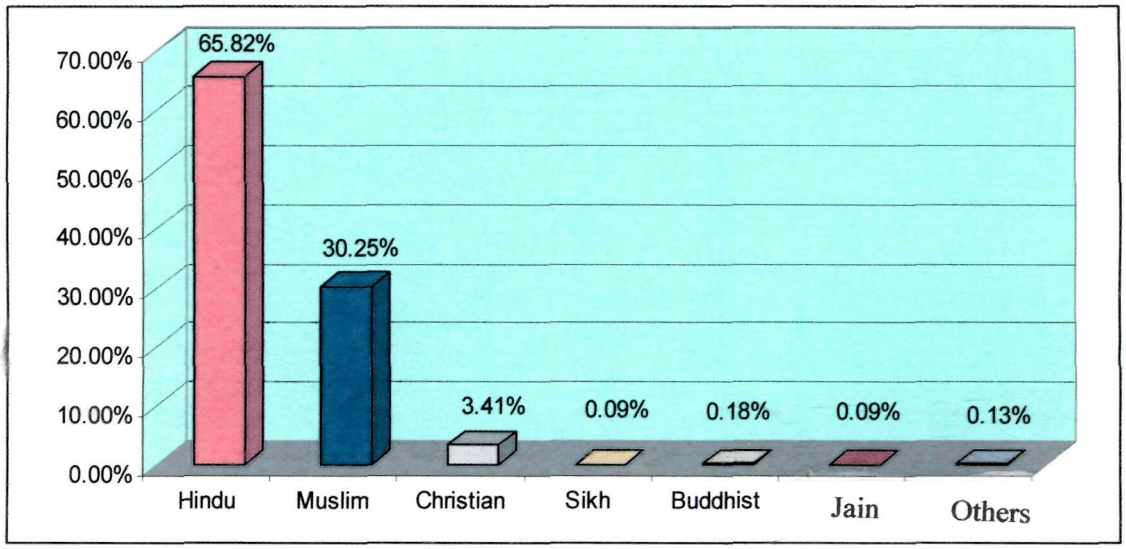
District	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhist	Jain	Others	Total
Dhubri	405065	1216455	12477	159	292	2119	777	1637344
Kokrajhar	594168	184441	124270	133	1574	639	539	905764
Bongaigaon	535464	348573	18728	512	330	882	346	904835
Goalpara	314157	441516	64662	108	178	434	980	822035
Barpeta	662066	977943	5267	258	194	690	783	1647201
Nalbari	873749	253842	18495	117	899	907	815	1148824
Kamrup	1836153	625002	44257	4797	1709	8897	1509	2522324
Darrang	868532	534658	97306	520	1871	888	545	1504320
Sonitpur	1287646	268078	115623	1451	3864	1210	3641	1681513
Lakhimpur	702881	143505	36667	680	1362	148	3767	889010
Dhemaji	548780	10533	6390	142	1199	203	4697	571944
Morigaon	405302	369398	759	69	84	308	336	776256
Nagaon	1106354	1180267	21473	3055	1058	1246	1176	2314629
Golaghat	813263	74808	52277	1063	3230	403	1235	946279
Jorhat	927858	47658	18610	1562	2385	675	473	999221
Sibsagar	927706	85761	28488	1563	4020	267	3931	1051736
Dirugarh	1075878	53306	45040	2638	4152	877	3181	1185072
Tinsukia	1029142	40000	62403	2328	13692	953	1544	1150062
Br. Valley	14914164	6855744	773192	21155	42093	21746	30275	22658369
Percent	65.82%	30.25%	3.41%	0.09%	0.18%	0.09%	0.13%	

The data relating to the population of the Brahmaputra Valley by religion, furnished in the '***Table- 2***' above may be analysed also through the diagram in *Figure -2,* as follows:

---

[25] *Statistical Hand Book*, Assam, Guwahati, 2006, as per Census, 2001.

Fig.-2. The population of the Brahmaputra Valley by religion.



The Brahmaputra valley is full of hills and forests, which are famous for different kinds of natural wealth. There is a number of National parks, Sanctuaries, and reserved forests, such as Kaziranga, Manas, Orang, Pabitora, Dibru-Chaikhowa, etc. These parks and forests are the richest treasury of precious flora and fauna. This valley is also rich in mineral resources like-crude oil, natural gas, coal, lime-stone etc. All these products, coming out from the forests and minerals are the natural resources of Assam as well as India.

The soil of the Brahmaputra valley is fertile and cultivatable, where tea, jute, rice, etc. are produced and exported to other places of the country, especially Assam alone produces more than 50% of total tea production of India.[26] Not only does Assam lead all other Indian states in tea production, but, she is also the largest producer in the whole world.[27]

For all these natural and agricultural products, Assam is a rich state in the country. In spite of this richness, one third of its population still leads their lives

---

[26] P K Dhar, *The Economy of Assam,* Bijni, 1987, P-111.

[27] P C Goswami, *The Economic Development of Assam,* New Delhi, 1988, P-159.

below the poverty line.[28] Specially, the economic condition of the Muslims of the state as well as of the Brahmaputra Valley is more backward than that of the other communities. They are very energetic, laborious and hard-working to earn their daily bread and butter.

Assamese is the representing language of the valley, where as many other languages like: Bengali, Hindi, Bodo, Rabha, Garo, Mishing, Karbi, Tiwa, Dimasa, Manipuri, Santhali, Nepali etc, are also spoken and studied all over the area. The Hindus of the Indo-Aryan family and the Muslims— both earlier and later, are speaking Assamese Language as their own, where as the Indo-Aryan Hindus who migrated from Bengal and East Pakistan are still bearing their ancestral Bengali identity and Bengali language is spoken and studied as their mother tongue.

1.3: Muslims in the Valley: Past and Present:

The Muslims are also an important member of the greater Assamese nation. They had also come to Assam in different times from different parts of India and settled permanently in different places of this state in general and in Brahmaputra Valley in particular like all other groups of Indo-Iranian people. Their immigration commenced from the beginning of 13th century and continued even a few years after the Independence of India. However, a considerable part of the Muslim population of Assam has comprised of the indigenous people, converted to Islam. According to the purpose and manner of settlement, the Muslims of the valley as well as of Assam may be divided into five[29] categories, such as:

(a) The Muslim war prisoners and administrative workers,

(b) The Muslim Missionaries,

(c) The Converted Muslims,

---

[28] A. Mannan, '*Strategy for Development of Rural Economy*', An un published Paper presented in a Seminar, held at Naba Jyoti College, Kalgachia in the District of Barpeta, on 17-11-1999.

[29] Dr. L Gogoi, Asamar *Sanskriti*, Dibrugarh, 1994, p-149.

(d) The Muslim artisans and workers imported by the Ahom rulers, and-

(e) The Immigrant Muslims.

A brief introduction of all these categories of Muslim inhabitants settled in the Valley in different periods of time and historical development has been given below:

1.3.1: The Muslim War Prisoners and Administrators:

The Brahmaputra Valley came to the contact of Muslims as early as eight hundred years ago. Mohammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji, a general of Kutub-ud-Din Ibak was the first to enter the Kamrupa Kingdom in the Brahmaputra Valley in 1205 A D, with a view to conquering Tibet.[30]

In this expedition a local chief of Koch and Mech tribes, who had adopted Islamic faith near Mohammad bin Bakhtiyar and thus known as 'Ali Mech', guided his army along the bank of the river 'Begmati'[31] or Brahmaputra,[32] for ten days till they reached a 'giant stone bridge', which has now been identified as '*Silsako*' over the river Barnadi to the north of Guwahati.[33] As soon as Ibne Bakhtiyar had crossed the bridge, the Kamrupi King *'Bartu'* alias *Prithu* gave a friendly counsel to postpone the expedition for the next year after taking ample preparations, but the former did not comply with the counsel and turned his face towards the mountains of Tibet.[34] After a journey of fifteen days he reached an open place of Tibet where he faced a fierce encounter with the local tribes and a number of Muslim soldiers were killed and wounded.[35] At last Ibne Bahktiyar was compelled to retreat to the stone bridge, but he was surprised to find that one part of the bridge had already been destroyed by the Kamrupi forces, which subsequently attacked the retiring army.

---

[30] Maulana Minhaj-ud-Din, *Op. cit.*, v. I, pp. 560-61 and K. L. Barua, *Op. cit.*p-136.

[31] Minhaj-ud-Din, *Ibid*, PP-560, 561-f.

[32] A. Q. Badawani, *Muntakhabut Tawarikh*, New Delhi, v-I, P-84.

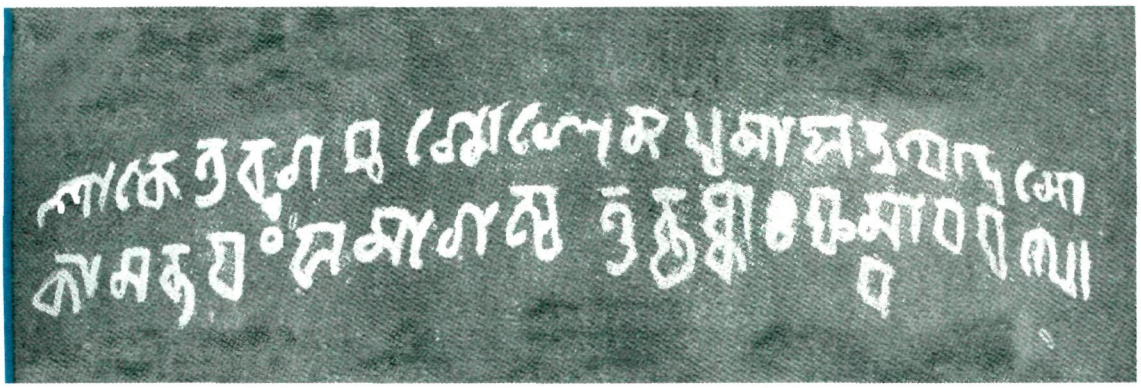
[33] N.N. Acharyya, *The History of Medieval Assam*, Gauhati, 1990, P-138.

[34] Maulana Minhaj-ud-Din, *Op. Cit.*, P-564.

[35] Maulana Minhaj-ud-Din, *Ibid,* pp-565-566.

Ibne Bakhtiyar along with a hundred horsemen could some how cross the river and reached *Deokot*, where as most of the Muslim soldiers were killed and some were captured.[36] There is an epigraphic record on a Rock-inscription about the ill fated invasion of Ibne Bakhtiyar, found in North Gauhati, which reads in the photograph as in *Figure-3*, bellow:

Fig.-3 : A Rock-inscription about the disaster of Ibnu Bakhtiyar.



Sāke turaga jugmesa madhumāsa trayodase.

Kāmarupam samāgatya Turuskāh Khyayamāyayuh.

The inscription was translated by P R T Gordon as: *"On the 13th of Choitra in the year 1127 Saka, the Turks (Musalmans) coming into Kāmrupa were destroyed."*[37]

Including this ill fated expedition of Mohammed bin Bakhtiyar, as many as 20 invasions[38] were undertaken to the valley by the Muslim rulers of Delhi or their agents in Bengal up to the Battle of Itakhuli, near the present Nagaon in 1682 A D. The most remarkable Muslim invasions may be summarized below in this regard, for the far reaching consequences, which encouraged the Muslim settlement in the valley during this period of about five hundred years.

---

[36] K L Barua, *Op. cit.*, p–137.

[37] *The Works of Kamrupa Anusandhan Samity*, Gauhati, 1920, p.34, quoted in *Early History of Kamrupa* by K L Barua, *Ibid*, p-138.

[38] According to Dr. H K Sarma the total Muslim invasions are *sixteen*; (Journal of Asom Sahitya Sabha, 1979); P G Barooah says: '*fourteen*', (*Asam Buranji*, 1976, p-14.) and it is *seventeen* as stated by Satyendra Nath Sarma (*A Socio-Economic and Cultural History of Medieval Assam*, 1989, p-15.)

1.3.1.1: Mohammad bin Bakhtiyar, after returning from Kamrup, was assassinated by Ali Mardan Khalji who subsequently invaded Kamrupa and collected tributes from the Hindu rulers.[39]

1.3.1.2: Husam-ud-Din Iwaz well known as Ghiyas-ud-Din, son of Ali Mardan Khalji succeeded to the office of the Governor of Bengal and made an expedition to Kamrup in 1227 A D, who ascended up the Brahmaputra and reached up to Sadia, leading strong forces,[40] having defeated some feudatory rulers of Kamrup and earned booty and assured taxes.[41] Due to his temporary disappearance from the region his army was defeated in Assam[42] and a large number of which might have been detained in this land.

1.3.1.3 The next invasion of Kamrup had been made by Sultan Nasir-Ud-Din, son of Iyaltamish and captured the capital of the Prithu, who was defeated and killed in 1228 A D.[43] The sultan appointed Sandhya son of Prithu as a feudatory under his taxation and returned to Bengal.[44] But the King Sandhya gradually stopped payment of the tributes and assumed independence.

1.3.1.4: The violation of this agreement led Malik Yuzbak Tughril Khan of Bengal to lunch a powerful invasion in 1257 A D.[45] and occupied Kamrup Nagar the capital of Kamrup i.e. the present area of North Guwahati.[46] This conquest was followed by erection of a Masjid there, for regular religious practices.[47] From the statement of Minhaj-ud-Din, it is tenable that a few months after conquering Kamrup, Malik Yuzbak fell in a trouble out of sudden flood havoc in the Kamrup

---

[39] J N Sarkar, *History of Bengal*, Dacca University, 1947, vol.II, P-20.

[40] E A Gait, *A History of Assam, Gauhati*, 1962, p-37 and Minhaj-ud-Din, *Op. cit.*, p-594.

[41] P G Barooah, *Asamar Buranji*, Gauhati, 1967, p- 22.

[42] E A Gait, *Op. cit.*, p-37.

[43] N N Acharyya, *Op. cit*, p–140.

[44] N N Acharyya, *Ibid*, p–144 and K. L. Baruah, *Op. cit.*, p-150.

[45] According to *Tabaqat-e-Nasiri*, this invasion was in 655 A H. which corresponds to 1257 A. D. as per Gait, *A History of Assam*, p-37 and W. Haig, *Comparative Tables of Islamic and Christian Dates*, New Delhi, 1992, p–16.

[46] K L Baruah, *Op. cit*, p-150-152.

[47] E A Gait, *Op. cit.*, p–37.

capital and shortage of food items, and set out towards Bengal. At that time, the Malik and his troops were surrounded by the archery forces of the defeated King and the former was severely injured and breathed his last, when all the members of his family, dependents and whole of his forces were made prisoners.[48]

1.3.1.5: According to Riyaz-us-Salatin, Sultan Mughis-ud-Din Tughril Khan, the Viceroy of Bengal conquered Kamrup in 1279 A D,[49] where he ruled during the gap period between Dharma Pala and Durlabha Narayan. This second Tughril Khan was none but the deputy of Ghiyas-ud-Din Balban, posted in Bengal.[50]

1.3.1.6: Another expedition in to Kamrup was undertaken in about 1321–22 A D, by Sultan Ghiyas-ud-Din Bahadur Shah who extended his authority over the portions of the formerly Goalpara and Kamrup; and also over the part of Nowgong District. This is confirmed by some of his coins dated 721 A H, i.e. 1321 A D found in the '*Rupaibari*' Area of the modern district of Nagaon.[51] Moreover, it is stated in a History of Kamrup, edited by Dr. S. K. Bhuyan that Ghiyas-ud-Din Bahadur Shah ruled over the Kamrup region for sometime from his capital on the Garudachal hills at Hajo on the north bank of the Brahmaputra.[52]

1.3.1.7: Ray Bahadur K. L. Baruah has quoted from a famous historical accounts 'Alamgir Nama' that Mohammad Bin Tughlaq invaded Assam and attempted to march into Tibet in 1337-38 A D.[53] But this event has been dated by Dr. Acharyya to be in 1333 A D, when the Muslim host was defeated by the warriors of Assam under the guidance of Durlabha

---

[48] Maulana Minhaj-ud-Din, *Op. cit.*, v.II, P-766.

[49] S N Bhattacharya, A History of Mughal North- East Frontier Policy, Delhi, 1998, PP- 58 f.

[50] V D Mahajan, *Sultanate of Delhi*, New Delhi, 1982, p-93.

[51] Dr. M Saikia, *Assam Muslim Relations and its Cultural Significance*, Golaghat, 1986, p-66 and K. L. Baruah, Op. cit., p-153.

[52] S. K. Bhuyan, *Kamrupar Buranji*, D.H.A.S., 1958, p-4 and Saikia, p-70.

[53] K L Baruah, *Op. Cit.*, p-153.

Narayana.[54] From the statements of these two different chroniclers, it is confirmed that Mohammad bin Tughlaq might have invaded Assam in between the years of 1333 and 1338 A D.

1.3.1.8: Again, Sultan Sikandar Shah, son of Illias Shah of Bengal invaded Kamrup and subjugated up to the Barnadi in 1357 A D, where he issued coins.[55] This conquest is corroborated by the discovery of silver coins bearing the name of Sikandar Shah, minted at *'Chawlistan'* alias Kamrup in 759 A H, corresponding to 1357-58 A D as mentioned in the catalogue of coins in the Indian Museum, vol.II, p-152.[56]

1.3.1.9: After thirty years of Sikandar Shah's invasion another Ghiyas-ud-Din surnamed 'Azam Shah', the successor of the former invaded Kamrupa[57] in 1389 A D. By this invasion he was able to subjugate up to Rani in the South Kamrup in the vicinity of Guwahati, which is confirmed by his stone inscription written in Persian and Arabic, dated 1389 A D found at Boko and some of his coins, dated 802 A H, corresponding to 1399 A D, found in that area near Guwahati, which have been preserved in the Assam State Museum. Moreover this sultan conquered the main land of Kamata on the north of the Brahmaputra and occupied up to the end of his reign in Bengal in 1410 A D when Kamata King Mriganka wrested back the region from the Muslims.[58] It is thereby confirmed that this area of Brahmaputra Valley might have been subdued by this Sultan from 1389 A D to the conquest of Kamata King Mriganka in about 1407 A D.[59]

1.3.1.10: After a long break of about seventy years, Ismail Ghazi, the general of Sultan Rukun-ud-Din Barbak Shah of Bengal invaded Kamata i.e.

---

[54] N N Acharyya, *Op. cit.*, p-158 & *Alomgir Nama,* p-731.

[55] S N Bhattacharya, *Op. cit.*, p -63.

[56] K L Baruah, *Op. cit.*, pp-153f.

[57] S N Bhatacharya, *Op. cit.*, p-64.

[58] Dr. M Saikia, *Op. cit.*, pp-77 and 180.

[59] Dr. M. Saikia, *Ibid,* p-131.

Kamrup which had been ruled over by Kameswar (or Kamteswar) Chakradhwaja[60] in 1473-74 A D.[61] It is found in *Resālat-us-Shuhadā,* an edited Persian manuscript, that the Kamteswar Chakradhwaj was not only defeated but his heart was also conquered by Ismail Ghazi so much that the King Chakradhwaj voluntarily submitted before the Muslim General and accepted Islamic faith[62] when he adopted the title of '*Khan*'. It may also be mentioned that this Chakradhwaj of Khan dynasty ruled over Kamata up to the western region of present Kamrup district along the north bank of Brahmaputra as feudatory of the Gauḍa Sultan Barbak Shah till the former's death in 1485 A D.[63]

1.3.1.11: Nilambar, son of Chakradhwaj Khan succeeded his father in 1485 A D and stopped the payment of tributes to the Sultan and wrested a part of their north-eastern tract.[64] Due to the political instability in Gauḍa started with the death of Sultan Barbak Shah,[65] it was not possible to take any step against Nilambar. However, Ala-ud-Din Hussain Shah, having ascended the throne of Gauḍa in 1493 A D, had led two invasions against Nilambar in the same year and in 1498 A D when he captured the capital of Nilambar and the whole of his territory came to the sway of Hussain Shah up to the river Barnadi and left his son Daniyal[66] at Hajo as a Governor of Kamrup-Kamata. It is found that four local chiefs of the Bhuyans viz. Rup Narayan, Ghosal Khan, Mal Kumar and Lakshmi Narayan tendered their allegiance to Hussain Shah, as a result of his conquest.[67] But

---

[60] N. N. Acharyya, *Op. cit.*, pp-173-74.

[61] K. L.Baruah, *Op. cit*, p-155.

[62] *Journal of Asiatic Society, Bengal* (J A S B), 1874, pp-277-280.

[63] Dr. M. Saikia, *Op. cit.*, pp-83-85

[64] E. A. Gait, *Op. cit.*, p-44.

[65] Dr. M. Saikia, *Op. cit.*, p-86.

[66] K L Baruah, *Op. cit.*, p-174.

[67] K L Baruah, *Ibid,* p-174.

Daniyal was attacked and killed by the Bhuyans in 1505 A D, who regained the throne of Kamata.[68]

1.3.1.12: According to the accounts of Sir Edward Gait, a Muslim army had invaded Assam in April 1532 A.D. under the command of Turbak, and advanced up to Nowgong district.[69] In the first battle, the Ahom Prince Suklen was injured and defeated. After a prolonged encounter of a year, a decisive battle was fought at '*Duimuni Sila*' near the river Bharali where Turbak was killed. A large number of Muslim soldiers were also taken prisoners who were settled in different parts of Assam.[70]

1.3.1.13: After duration of twenty years Nabab Sulaiman Karrani of Bengal deputed his general Kalapahar to invade Assam, in 1553 A D. The vigorous general defeated the Koch army and its general Chilarai was taken prisoner.[71] The Muslim troops then reached the eastern limits of the kingdom[72] up to Tezpur, after the Koch capital had been captured along with the out laying parts of the country.[73]

1.3.1.14: Again, an Afghan chief Isa Khān, a ruler of the eastern part of Bengal had been defeated by one Shahbaz Khān in 1583 A D. After collecting a body of troops, Isa Khān advanced to the Koch kingdom, ruled by Raghudev, the nephew of Nara Narayan.[74] Then Isa Khān wrested the country up to Rangamati[75] in the modern Dhubri district. Subsequently, this subjugated

---

[68] N N Acharyya, Op. cit., p-177.

[69] E A Gait, *Op. cit.*, p-92.

[70] E A Gait, *Ibid*, pp-92-95.

[71] S K Bhuyan, *Kamrupar Buranji*, Gauhati, 1958, P-12.

[72] K L Baruah *Op. cit.*, p-198.

[73] E A Gait, *Op. cit.*, p-54.

[74] E A Gait, *Ibid*, p-62.

[75] E A Gait, *Ibid*, p-62.

territory of Isa Khan came under the sway of Akbar the Great, when Raja Man Singh had been In-charge of Bengal.[76]

1.3.1.15: During the reign of Jahangir, Islam Khān, the Subadar of Bengal, made an expedition against Raja Parikshit of Koch Kingdom, having instigated by another Koch King Lakshmi Narayan in 1612 A D. and captured Dhubri,[77] and subsequently Parikshit was imprisoned, when his capital at North Guwahati was captured and the whole territory of the Koches was annexed to the Mughal empire up to the river Barnadi.[78]

1.3.1.16: Around the same time, a Muslim merchant named Ratan Shah was killed by the Ahoms having suspected to be a Mughal's spy.[79] This incident offended Abu Bakar, the Mughal Fauzdar of Koch Hajo, who launched a punitive operation against the Ahoms. As a result, a war had broken out when the Mughal army arrived at Kaliabar in Nagaon in 1614 A D and was defeated with heavy losses.[80] In this war only three thousand Muslim soldiers were able to escape, somehow, to Koch Hajo where as more than three thousand were killed and another nine thousand were taken prisoners.[81] The hostility between the Ahoms and the Mughals did not end even after the latter's defeat at Kaliabar and a tug of war continued between them up to 1620 A D when an armistice was called and the peace continued up to the death of Jahangir.[82]

1.3.1.17: Dr. Saikia asserts that the Ahmos launched a sudden attack, on the Mughals at Hajo in 1635 A D i.e. during the reign of Sahjahan[83] which led to some continual wars for about four years. In 1638-39 A D, another

---

[76] E A Gait, *Ibid,* pp-63f.

[77] E A Gait, *Ibid,* p-65.

[78] E A Gait, *Ibid,* pp-64-65.

[79] S K Bhuyan, *Satsari Asam Buranji,* Gauhati, 1957, p-80 and Gait, *Op. cit.,* p-107.

[80] Dr. M Saikia, *Op. cit.,* p-113.

[81] Mirza Nathan, *Baharistan-i-Ghaybi,* Tr. Dr. M. I. Bora, Guwahati, vol.I, p-399.

[82] Dr. M Saikia, *Op. cit.,* p-113.

[83] Dr. M Saikia, *Ibid,* p-113.

peace treaty was concluded between the Mughals' representative Allayar Khan and the Ahom commander Momai Tamuli Barbarua. By this treaty, the river Barnadi[84] on the north bank of the Brahmaputra and the '*Asur Ali*' near Guwahati on the South became the Ahom-Mughal boundary.[85] Bhattacharya comments that by this treaty 'the Assam King, for the first time, acknowledged formally the supremacy of the Mughals in Kamrup, while the Mughals acknowledged the independence of the Assam King in the upper Assam. Accordingly, they gave up all pretensions to the territories east of the Barnadi on the north and Kalang on the south and the Assam King also agreed not to interfere in Kamrup'.[86] Accordingly Kamrup including the modern city of Guwahati had remained under the undisputed possession of the Mughals for the next twenty-six years, till the end of 1660 A D, when the Ahom king Joyadhwaj Singh violated the peace treaty.[87]

1.3.1.18: On the other hand, Pran Narayan or Prem-Narayan, the king of Koch Behar took an advantage to the confusion caused by the wars of succession among the princes of the ailing emperor Shahjahan during the peace in 1658 A D and defeated the Mughal Fauzdar Lutfullah Siraji who retreated to Guwahati by the order of Prince Suja. In the same source, it is found that Ahom King Joyadhwaj Singh also taking this opportunity advanced forward to the Mughal territory and easily captured Guwahati.[88] A large number of Mughal subjects were also taken to captive and were brought to the Ahom capital.

1.3.1.19: Aurangzeb, just after putting the feet on his father's shoes on the 15th June, 1659 A D, sent his able general Mir Jumla against the Koches and the Ahoms for the violation of the peace treaty of 1638-39 A D and set forth on

---

[84] Dr. M Saikia, *Ibid,* p-114.

[85] E A Gait, *Op. cit.*, p-118

[86] S N Bhattacharya, *A History of Mughal North-east Frontier Policy*, Guwahati: Delhi, 1998, pp. 285-86.

[87] Dr. M Saikia, *Op. cit.*, pp-114-16 and A C. Roy, *History of Bengal*, Calcutta, 1968, p.165.

[88] E A Gait, *Op. cit.*, pp-127-28.

the 4th January 1662 A D to Assam.[89] Mir Jumla recovered Guwahati in February 1662 A D and continued his march towards Garhgaon. The Ahom King Joyadhwaj Singh thought it impossible to confront with Mir Jumla and vacated his capital.[90] Accordingly, he occupied the Ahom Capital at Garhgaon on the 7th March, 1662 A D when he opened a mint there and struck coins in the name of Aurangzeb.[91] The inhabitants of the conquered territory accepted the position and settled down quietly under the Muslim rulers.[92] After about a year of the Muslim occupation, another peace treaty was concluded at Ghilajhari Ghat near Garhgaon, between Mir Jumla and the fugitive King Joyadhwaj Singh in January 1663 A D.[93] It is remarkable that an Ahom princess Ramani Gabharu was to be married to the prince Azmat Ara alias *Azam*, son of Aurangzeb with a dowry of Rs.1,80,000/- in addition to yearly tribute to the Mughals and the country east of the Bharali River on the north bank of the Brahmaputra and the Kalang River on the South was to be returned to the confederate Ahom king, according to this historic treaty of *Ghilajhari Ghat.*[94]

It may also be noted that the Saring Raja succeeded Joydhwaj Singh in Novevember, 1663 A D and gradually withheld the payment of annual tributes to the Mughals showing this and that, rather he set out for Guwahati under the command of Lachit Barphukan who was able to chase the Mughals up to the river Manas or *'Banas'*[95] and occupied Pandu and Guwahati in 1667 A D, when a large number of Mughal soldiers and officials were captured and sent to Garhgaon.[96]

---

89 E A Gait, *Ibid*, p-129.

90 Dr. M. Saikia, *Op. cit.*, p-118.

91 E A Gait, *Op. cit.*, p-134.

92 E A Gait, *Ibid*, p-135.

93 E A Gait, *Ibid*, p-139.

94 S N Bhattacharya, *Op. cit.*, pp-346-47 and *Ibid*, pp-138-39.

95 E A Gait, *Op. cit.*, pp-116f.

96 Gait, *Ibid*, pp-140-54.

In order to regain the lost region, the Mughal general Raja Ram Singh accompanied with Rashid Khan was deputed to Assam. In the early part of 1669 A D, two battles were fought, where the Ahom general Lachit Barphukan was defeated on both the occasions. However, Ram Singh lost a naval attack and retired back to Hajo. After a long tug of war between the two forces, Lachit defeated him finally in the historic battle of *Saraighat* in March 1671 A D[97] and the whole of Koch Hajo up to the river Manas came to the possession of the Ahoms.

1.3.1.20: Lastly, during the region of Ahom King Chudoifa (1675-1679), the General Lalukhola Barphukan who was the In-charge of Guwahati, secretly instigated the Mughals to possess his area, when Mukarram Khan occupied Guwahati without any loss or casualty. Nevertheless, within a few years King Gadadhar Singha took the rein of the Ahom kingdom in 1681 A D who dispatched a large army against the Mughal Governor at Guwahati in 1682 A D. The two forces confronted at last at Itakhuli, at the upstream of Guwahati, where the Mughal troops were badly defeated and retreated again up to the river Manas (*Banas*), putting it as boundary of the Ahom and the Mughal territories forever.[98]

1.3.1.21: From this long history of Muslim invasions, it is clear that the wars between the Muslim powers of India and the rulers of Assam had been continued for about five hundred years since the disaster of Mohammad bin Bakhtiyar to the battle of Itakhuli. The soldiers of Ibne Bakhtiyar who had been captured by Prithu, were settled around the *Kamrup Nagar* i.e. North Guwahati. These were the persons to sow the first seed of Muslims in Assam, who were popularly known as *'Garia'* or *Gauria* as they had come from Gaura or Gauda.[99]

---

[97] Gait, *Ibid,* pp-155-57

[98] Dr. N Sarma, *Asam Deser Buranji*, 1990, pp-37-40.

[99] P G Barooah, *Op. cit.*, p-22.

Secondly, during the expeditions of Husam-ud-Din Iwaz alias Sultan Ghiyas-ud-Din in 1227 A D, the army, led to Assam (Kamrup) was defeated and a large number of them might have been detained in this land.

Thirdly, the Malik Yuzbak Tugril Khan, who conquered the capital of Kamrup and erected a Masjid there in 1257 A D, was assassinated by the forces of the defeated Kamrupi King resulting to capture the whole of the Yuzbak army.[100]

Fourthly, Daniyal Shah ruled over Kamrup-Kamata from Hajo as Viceroy of his father Hussain Shah for a period of 8 years and he was defeated and killed by the Bhuyans in 1505 A D[101] when the *Shahi* forces were captured and some of whom might have been settled in this region.

Fifthly, Turbak was defeated and killed at the battle of Duimuni Sila, near the river Bharali in 1533 A D when a large number of Muslim soldiers was captured and then settled in different parts of the Brahmaputra Valley. These people were dealing with the works of brass metal as occupation for which their descendants have still been well known as '*Maria*'.[102] Similarly, 'the Mohammedan colony settled earlier in Hajo region still survived and it increased the Muslim population there to a considerable extent'.[103]

Sixthly, the Mughal Subadar Islam Khān defeated and imprisoned the Koch king Parikshit in 1612 A D when the whole territory of the Koch kingdom, along with the capital at North Guwahati was annexed to the Mughal Empire. By the order of Mukarram Khān, the Governor of Hajo, several Mohammedan notables were given estates in this region and ten to twelve thousand '*paiks*' (soldiers) were sent up from Bengal and settled there in return for their military services.[104]

---

[100] K L Baruah, *Op cit.*, p-151.

[101] N N Acharya, *Op cit.*, p-177.

[102] E A Gait, *Op cit.*, p-95.

[103] Dr. M Saikia, *Op cit.*, p-100.

[104] E A Gait, *Op cit.*, pp-64-67.

Seventhly, Abu Bakkar, the Mughal Fauzdar of Koch Hajo, launched punitive operations against the Ahom King and arrived at Kaliabar where they were badly defeated in 1614 A.D.[105] In this battle, only three thousand Muslim soldiers were able to reach Hajo where as nine thousand were taken prisoners.

Eightly, Ahom king Joydhawaj Singh captured Guwahati from the Mughal in 1658 A D when a large number of Mughal soldiers were captured[106] and brought to the Ahom capital at Gargaon.

The most remarkable fact is that the different Muslim invaders defeated the Kings and soldiers of Kamrup. The different parts or whole of the Kamrup-Kamata were also occupied by the Muslim from time to time. It may be noted, for instance, that the southern part of the formerly Goalpara and Kamrup district remained under the Sultans of Gauda for about 75 years from the invasion of Ghiyas ud-Din Bahadur Shah in 1320-21 A D. to 1407 A D when the Kamteswar Mriganka conquered this region.[107]

During this long period, a number of rulers come to the contact of Assam. After the invasion of Mohammad bin Tughlaq in 1337-38 A D; another Sultan Sikandar Shah subjugated the land up to the Barnadi to the East in 1357 A D and ruled for several years with the help of local chiefs. For any disagreement, Sultan Ghiyas ud-Din Azam Shah, son of Sikandar Shah captured the southern portion of Goalpara and Kamrup in 1389 A D and subdued this area up to 1399 A D.

After that, no dispute is known until the invasion of Ismail Ghazi, a saintly General of Barbak Shah in 1473-1474 A D when King Chakradhwaj voluntarily surrendered before the former and adopted the Islamic faith[108] and took the title of *'Khān'* (corruptly pronounced as *'Khyan'* or *'Khen'*). Since then 'Chakradhawaj Khan' ruled over Kamrup as a feudatory of Barbak Shah for

---

[105] Dr. M Saikia, *Op cit.*, p-113.

[106] Dr. M Saikia, *Ibid,* p-116.

[107] Dr. M Saikia, *Ibid,* p-131.

[108] *Journal of Asiatic Society, Bengal* (J A S B), 1874, PP-215-21.

twelve years until his death in 1485 A D.[109] But his son Nilambar violated the terms with the Muslims resulting to another two invasions of Hussain Shah in 1493 and 1498 A D, since when the latter ruled over Kamrup from Hajo with his son for more than fifteen years.[110]

After three invasions, launched by Turbak in 1532 A D, Kalapahar in 1568 A D and Isa Khan in 1583 A D, the whole region of Kamrup up to the Barnadi came to the possession of the Mughals who ruled over the area from Hajo and Guwahati for a period of ninety years up to the battle of Itakhuli, faught in 1682. During this long period, the whole country of Ahom came under the Mughals' yoke with the conquest of Garhgaon by Mir Jumula who ruled over this land for another period of ten months from 17 March 1662 to 9 January 1663 A D[111] until the peace treaty of Ghilajari ghat was concluded.

As a result of the Muslim occupation, a number of imperial agents like: Faujdar, Subadar, and Thanadar etc. had been posted in this valley along with their assistants and attendants. In the battles of Saraighat and Itakhuli, the Ahom army regained the area up to the river Manas flowing along with the district boundary of Kamrup and Goalpara in the west. Accordingly, the authority of the Mughals had still been exercised over the remaining part of the Mughal Kamrup from the west bank of Manas (or *Banas*) up to the British occupation of this area.

We have already discussed that the Muslim powers of Delhi or their agents in Bengal and Gauḍa, undertook twenty expeditions to the Brahmaputra Valley from 1205 to 1682 A D. In the most of them, they were defeated and thousands of Muslim soldiers and officials were captured and then settled by the local rulers. On the other hand, the Muslims could also establish their authority and ruled over the valley continually for almost two centuries with

---

[109] Dr. M Saikia, *Op. cit.*, p-85.

[110] Dr. M Saikia, *Ibid*, p-181.

[111] Gait, *Op. cit.*, pp-134-39.

some breaks and intervals. During this long stay, a large number of Muslim subjects, '*paiks*' and 'notables' who had been settled by the Muslim rulers, gradually mixed up with the Assamese people by accepting Assamese Language and Culture,[112] having married local girls.[113]

1.3.2: The Muslim Missionaries:

According to an eminent Assamese scholar Prof. B. K. Baruah, the Muslim missionaries like *Pirs* (Sufi scholars), *Faqirs* (saints), *Ulama* (scholars), and *Dervish* etc. came to Assam in the 11th – 12th Centaury itself.[114] But we are not aware of any detail about them. It is therefore, found that these Sufi activists and monks had come to Assam from different parts of Muslim India and established their *Khanqah* and *Dargah* in the Brahmaputra Valley during the long period of Muslim contact with Assam. Most of them came here with the invading Muslim army, a few of them came with the traders, while some were also specially deputed for preaching of Islam and its doctrines.[115] In this regard, only the most famous Sufi scholars are briefly introduced here:

1.3.2.1: Saikh Jalal-ud-Din Tabrizi:

Saikh Jalal-ud-Din Tabrizi was a disciple of Qutub-ud-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki of Delhi who was deputed to Bengal as the deputy of the latter's.[116] Then he came to Assam in the first quarter of the 13th Centaury, stayed for some times at Gaḍigaon, Hajo, near Guwahati and also, perhaps on the top of '*Uch Parbat*' in the east of Guwahati and passad away at Gaḍigaon in 1244 A D.[117]*

---

[112] S. N. Sarma, *A Socio-Economic and Cultural History of Medieval Assam*, Gauhati, 1989, p-p-36

[113] Gait, *Op. cit.* p-149.

[114] B K Baruah, Asamiya *Bhasha Aru Sanskriti*, Gauhati, 1957, p-156.

[115] Dr. M Y Tamizi, *Sufi movement in Eastern India*, Delhi, 1991, pp-84-85.

[116] Dr. M Y Tamizi, *Ibid*, p.60.

[117] *J A S B*, Calcutta, vol. XLII, 1813, pp-260-81. *Tamizi observes the date is 1225 A D in his work *Sufi movement in Eastern India*, 1991, p-93.

1.3.2.2: Ghiyas-ud-Din Awlia:

The most famous saint of Hajo as well as Kamrupa, whose arrival, death and sepulchre are always the subject of discussion, is Hazrat Ghiyas-ud-Din Awlia. According to the reference of Dr. Saikia he (Ghiyas-ud-Din Awlia) came to the Brahmaputra Valley around the time when Malik Yuzbak Tugril Khān invaded and conquered Kamrup[118] in 1257 A D, stayed in the Gaḍigaon area and made his abode and Masjid on the top of Garuḍachal hill at Hajo, where he breathed his last and was buried near the Masjid.[119] This place is held in high esteem and believed to be a sacred place of pilgrimage and his *Dargah* is also popularly called *'Powa-Makka'* (one fourth of Mecca).[120] It is, further, believed that Hazrat Ghiyas-ud-Din Awlia was the first propagator of Islam in Kamrup.[121]

Fig. 4: The Dargah of Hazrat Ghiyas-ud-Din Awlia of Hajo.

(Left-the front view and right-the interior view)

1.3.2.3: Khawaja Khiḏr:

Another saint of Sufi line, *Khawaja Khiḏr* is believed to have come from Siraj in Persia and stayed on the Kamakhya hills, well known as Nilachal hills, where a Persian

---

[118] Dr. M Saikia, *Op. cit* p-193.

[119] Mirzan Natan, *Baharistan I Ghaibi*, Eng. Tran. M. I. Bora, Gauhati, 2000, vol.II, p-848, and *Op. cit.*, Tamizi, p-92.

[120] Dr. M Y Tamizi, *Ibid*, p-91.

[121] Dr. M Neog, *Sankardeva & His Times*, G.U., p-46.

rock inscription is found near a stream on the foot of its eastern slop in the north of the steps leading to the temple.[122] The inscription is readable as: آب حیات و چشماء خضر: *Ãbe hayat wo chashma-e-Khiḍr* (Tran: The water of life and stream of Khiḍr).

1.3.2.4: Badi-ud-Din Shah Madar:

Pir Badi-ud-Din Shah Madar is believed to have come to knowledge from East Bangal, presently Bangladesh and visited the holy places in Goalpara and Kamrup districts of the Brahmaputra Valley and stayed in a Khanqah in the Bausi Paragana in Kamrup district.[123]

1.3.2.5: Dakaidal and Degdhowa Pirs:

Two other contemporary holy men came to Assam with the Muslim invaders and established their centers at Dakaidal and Degdhowa in the vicinity of present Goalpara town, where their tombs are still respected and visited by the people to be the dargahs of Awliya.[124]

1.3.2.6: Abul Qasim Khorsani:

Abul Qasim Khorasani, a renowned saint of Persia, migrated to Assam in the middle of the 18th Century and settled in Goalpara town where he carried away his mission in the *Naqshabandi* order of Islamic Sufism and passed away in 1896 A D. His tomb lies on a hillock in the heart of that town, is believed to be a sacred shrine by the Muslims and Hindus alike.[125]

1.3.2.7: Panch Pir of Dhubri:

Five other Sufi missionaries, accompanied with the Mughal General Mir Jumula came to Assam during his historical invasion 1662 A D. After

---

[122] M Choudhury, *Luit Borak Aru Islam*, Guwahati, 2002, ed.II, p. 44 and *Op. cit.*, Saikia, pp.186-87.

[123] Dr. M Y Tamizi, *Op cit.*, pp. 89-90

[124] Dr. M Neog, Pabitra *Assam*, pp. 293-94.

[125] Dr. M Neog, *Ibid*, pp. 296-97.

concluding the treaty of Ghilajhari Ghat in 1663 A D, Mir Jumla departed from Assam with his army, leaving this religious team around Dhubri for the propagation of Islam, where they spent lives up to death. Their tombs are still preserved and visited devotedly by all sects of people as *'Panch Peerar Dargah'* i.e. the Dargah of Five Pirs, whose chief was Hazrat Shah Akbar.[126]

1.3.2.8: Hazrat Azan Faqir:

Hazrat Shah Miran or Shah Milan was the most renowned Muslim saint of Assam, who was believed to have hailed from Baghdad and entered the Koch Hajo with the Mughal forces as early as 1612-13 A D and stayed at Hajo till 1626 A D.[127*] In the later part of his life, the saint stayed in Sibsagar area. During the Ahom reign, he used to preach the Islamic faith and called the Muslims for the five time prayers of proclaiming '*Aẓan*' (pronounced as 'Azan'), most probably for the first time in that area. It is, therefore believed that he was popularly known as *'Azan Faqir'* or *'Azan Pir'*. However, in course of time the eyes of the Faqir were extracted by the order of the Ahom king Gadadhar Singha on a false charge brought by a royal official Rupai Dadhara. After realizing the greatness of the faqir and their misunderstanding, he was settled with land and people in 1608 Saka,[128] corresponding to 1686 A D at Saraguri Chapari in Sibsagar district where he continued to preach the message of Islam, being accompanied by his 'Six Scores' of disciples up to 1738 A D.[129] His tomb at Saraguri is respected by all sects of people and yearly *'Urs'* (death anniversary) is celebrated every year.

---

[126] Dr. M Neog, *Ibid*, p-296.

[127] Dr. M Saikia, *Op. cit.*, pp.201-02. *According to the information of Mohibul Hussain given in his work '*Hazrat Azan Pir*', p.45, Shah Miran hailed from Baghdad, which has also been supported by other works of A. Sattar, p. 33, Dr. Tamizi, p. 97, etc.

[128] S K Bhuyan, ed. *Satsari Asam Buranji*, Gauhati, 1957, p-149.

[129] H K Barpujari, *The Comprehensive History of Assam*, vol. III, p-244. (Quoted from *Zikir Aru Zari*, ed. S. A. Malik, G.U. 1958.)

Fig. 5 The Dargah of Hazrat Sha Miran Azan Faqir.

1.3.2.9: The Companions of Azan Faqir:

In the mission of Azan Faqir, he had three other companions viz. Syed Abdul Ghani alias Khandakar pir, Sawal pir alias Bandar pir and Nabi pir alias Saleh pir, a brother of Azan pir. They worked with the *Faqir* and stayed in different places at Nazira, Simaluguri and its surrounding places in Sibsagar district[130]

1.3.2.10: Three Pirs of Golaghat:

Three Sufi saints viz.: Laskar Shah, Lal Faqir and Kala Faqir carried on their missionary works in Golaghat where they died and were buried. Their tombs in Golaghat town are still considered to be holy *dargah* where regular '*Urs*' and *Ziyarat* (spritual visit) are being performed.[131]

---

[130] Dr. M Neog, *Op. cit.*, p-55.

[131] Neog, *Ibid*, p-86.

1.3.2.11: Zulaqad Ali Sufi (1796-1891):

Hazrat Zulqad Ali son of Pir Mohammad Sufi was one of the important workers for the Islamic mission. He was born at Sibsagar in 1796 A D. He was educated in Dacca and entered in to the discipleship of Moulana Keramat Ali Jounpuri and obtained the title of *Sufi*.[132]

Then he came to a close contact of the famous saint Hazrat Imdadullah Muhajir Makki who permitted him to initiate people in all the Sufi orders. He started his mission in the districts of Kamrup, Darang and Nagaon.[133] Specially, when the Muslims of Mangaldoi area accustomed to the local ritual and culture forgetting the Islamic principles, Zulqad Ali saheb used to teach them Islamic rituals and fundamentals and they started to perform their prayers having constructed Masjids and a Madrasa at his guidance.[134] The people of 'Ghopa', Nagarbahi, Gohainpara etc. area around Mangaldoi believe to have been the descendants of those Muslims.[135]

1.3.2.12: Syed Nasir-ud-Din Baghdadi (d.1936):

One of the most celebrated Sufi scholars of the lower Assam was Hazrat Syed Nasir-ud- Din Baghdadi Qadiri who came to Aligarh with his father Hazrat Qurban Ali, a jewel trader. Leaving Aligarh he came to Assam via Bengal and settled at Jaleswar near Lakhipur in Goalpara district, where he started missionary works in *Qadriya* order by constructing Khanqah, Masjids, Musafirkhana (guest house) and Madrasa. The Mazharul Uloom Senior Madrasa, established by the Baghdadi Saheb in 1927, which was renamed as Katarihara Senior Madrasa and upgraded to a Title Madrasa, is a famous seat of Arabic Studies. He was a well versed in Arabic, Persian and Urdu and a good orator also. He died in 1935 A D[136] and was buried at Jaleswar itself, where his tomb is regularly visited by a large number of his disciples, especially on the occasion of '*Urs*' of this holy man.[137]

---

[132] Dr. M Y Tamizi, *Ibid*, p-102.

[133] Tamizi, *Ibid*, p-102.

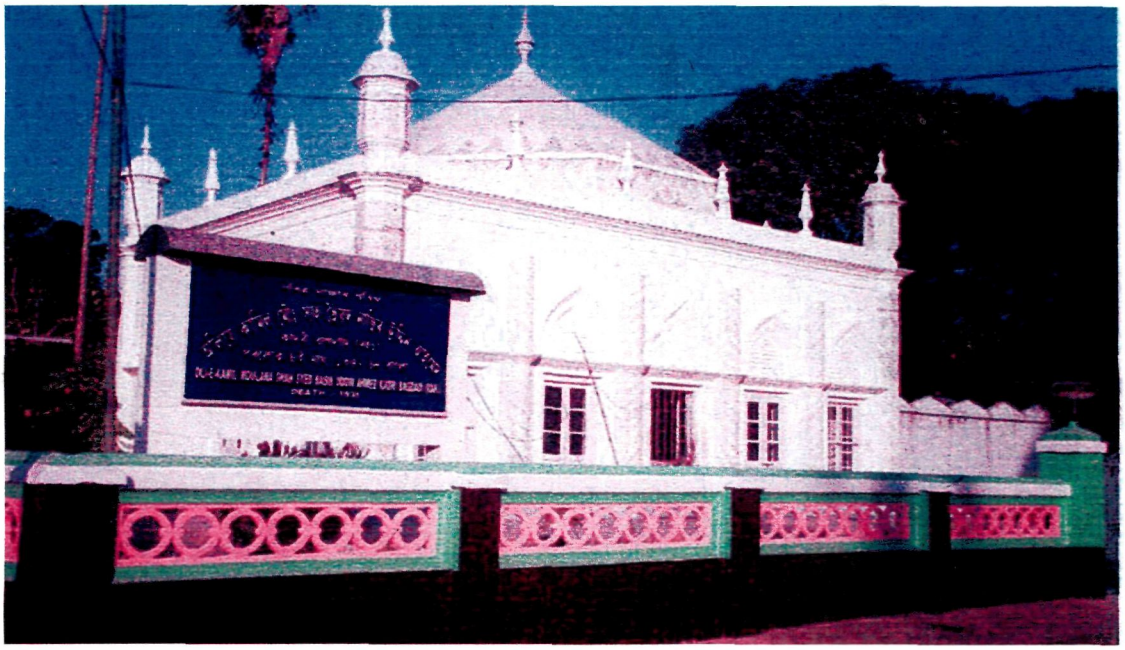
[134] Dr. M Neog, *Op. cit.*, p-195.

[135] Prof. S Sarma, *Asamiyar Itihasa: Sanghat Aru Sanshay*, Gauhati, 1984, pp-349-50.

[136] Dr. M Y Tamizi mentioned the year of his passing away as *'1936 A D'*. But we had a privilege to visit the site on 10-07-2008 and it was found clearly written on a Board displaying in front of the tomb of the holy man that he died in 1935.

[137] Dr. M Y Tamizi, *Op. cit.*, pp-109-10.

Fig. 6: Dargah of Syed Nasir-ud-Din Baghdadi at Jaleswar, Goalpara.



1.3.2.13: Other Pirs of Bhella and Guwahati:

In addition to these Sufi scholars, there were some other saints who used to preach the Islamic doctrine among the people of Kamrup. There was Syed Sahnur Dewan among them, who died and was buried at Bhella near Barpeta town. His tomb is treated to be a sacred *dargah.*[138] Another Sufi saint died at a place near Bhellah, where the tomb is preserved and respected as *dargah*, for which the name of the village has been believed to become '*Dargahpur*'. One more celebrated pir Syed Makhdum Shah worked in Guwahati area where he died and was buried on a hillock at Sijubari, near Dispur. It is also well maintained to be an important *dargah.*[139]

All the Muslim saints and scholars carried out their missionary works in their respective areas and times. Some of them led social lives also. For example, Hazrat Sah Miran alias *Azan Fakir* of Sarguri Chapari, Hazrat Zulqad Ali of Guwahati, Abul Qasim Khurasani of Goalpara, Syed Nasir-ud-Din Baghdadi of

---

[138] Dr. M Neog, *Op. cit.*, p-260.

[139] Dr. M Saikia, *Op. cit.*, p-212.

Jaleswar etc. enjoyed the social lives by marrying local women and giving birth to their children. The descendants of these saints and scholars are still surviving in their respective places comprising of a considerable section of the Muslim population in the Brahmaputra Valley.

1.3.3: The Converted Muslims:

The process of propagation of Islam and the adoption of Islamic faith started in Assam as early as at the down of the 13th Century. We have found in the description of *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* that the Koch and the 'Mech' tribes of the Kamrup region showed their submission to Islam so much that their chief even adopted Islam at the hand of Mohammad bin Bakhtiyar in 1205 A D and guided his army.[140] It is therefore, presumed that the people of these two tribes had also followed the trace of their chief to adopt the Islamic faith, even after the defeat of Ibnu Bakhtiyar.

It is worth mentioning that the invaders of Assam used to bring some religious scholars or holy men with them, for the propagation of Islam. Accordingly, Hazrat Jalal-ud-Din Tabrizi came to Assam with the invading forces of Husam-ud-Din Iwaz[141] in 1226-27 A D. Tabrizi stayed at Hajo for some days, having established his *Khanqah* and spent the rest of his life on the '*Uch Parbat*' to the east of Guwahati and Gaḍigaon to the west, where he might have propagated the religion of Islam and the people also voluntarily accepted his discipleship till his death in 1244 A D.[142] Some people of Gaḍigaon claim to have been the descendants of the disciples of Tabrizi Saheb.

According to the sources of '*Deo dhai Asom Buranji*', the king Ratnadhawaja Pala of Chutiya kingdom established friendly relations with the Sultan Taghral Khān (1244 A D) of Gauḍa, about forty years after the expeditions of Mohammad bin Bakhtiyar. During this time, Islamic faith and

---

[140] Minhaj-ud-Din, *Op. cit.*, M., p.560.

[141] Dr. M Saikia, *Op. cit.*, pp-193-94.

[142] Dr. M Y Tamizi, *Op. cit.*, p-93 and *J A S B*, 1813, vol-XLII, pt.I, pp-260,281.

culture gained the appreciation from the people of Chutiya tribe in the far eastern regions of Kamrupa.[143]

Under the above circumstances the Assamese people turned their eyes to Islam from the conquest of Kamrup Nagar by Malik Yuzbak Tugril Khan in 1257 A D. when he instituted Friday prayers with *'Khudba'* (Khutba) by constructing a Masjid there.[144] Saikia added that Hazrat Ghiyasuddin Awlia had come to this land and made Khanqah on the Garuḍachal hill at Hajo around the time of invasion of Kamrup by Tughril Khan. This Awlia is well known to have introduced a colony of Mohammedans in that area and to have attempted to propagate Islam there.[145]

According to Dr. Saikia– "The southern portion of the Goalpara and Kamrup districts remained under the authority of the Gauḍa Sultans, from the time of Ghiyas-ud-Din Bahadur shah's invasions of the South–western part of the Brahmaputra Valley in 1320–21 A D, till the Kamata King Mriganka conquered the entire region.... during 1397-1407 A D."[146] Secondly, another Ghiyas-ud-Din Azam Shah, the Sultan of Bengal itself, ruled over Kamrup and Kamata from 1389 A D to the time of recovery of the region by Mriganka,[147] not later than 1407 A D. From this information, it is clear that the area of Kamrup and Kamata was directly or indirectly under the sway of Muslim rule from 1321-1407 A D. During this period, people of the area came to the close contact of the Muslim administrators and some people might have accepted Islam.

Relaying upon the source of '*Resalatus-Shuhada*' many other modern chronicles state that King Chakradhawaj of Kamatapur tendered his allegiance to Imail Ghazi, a saintly general of Sultan Barbak Shah and the former adopted

---

[143] S K Bhuyan, ed., *Deo Dhai Asom Buranji*, 1958, pp-179f, and Saikia, *Op. cit.*, p.178.

[144] Minhaj-ud-Din, *Op. cit.*, p- 265.

[145] S N Bhattacharyya, *Op. cit.*, S. N., p -72.

[146] Dr. M Saikia, *Op. cit.*, p-131.

[147] Saikia, *Ibid*, p-180.

Islamic faith from the general in 1474 A D.[148] It leads to presume that some officials and nobles might have also followed the trace of their King Chakradhwaj by accepting Islamic faith.

It is found in the accounts of Dr. Saikia that 'Husain Shah conquered the greater part of Kamata and the present Kamrup and Goalpara region and ruled there for more than fifteen years. This sultan is said to have settled a colony of Afghan warriors in Kamrup. Thus it was during the reign of Husain Shah that the movement for expansion of Islam in the country received a momentum'.[149] As a part of this monument, he built a sophisticated Masjid at Rangamati in present Dhubri district, where the Muslims, both rulers and subjects, used to perform their prayers.

Moreover, 'the authority of Bengal Sultan appears to have been well founded in the region east of the Manas River as well, where Hajo was the main strong hold.'[150] Because there was a fertile ground for the propagation of Islam in that area as there was an existing Muslim population from the 13th Century onwards. After the Mughal conquest of the whole region of western Kamrup or Koch Hajo up to the river Barnadi in the east in 1613 A D, Muslim culture and the faith received some incentive to grow in the surrounding places of that area.[151] From this authority, it is believed that the Muslims of the greater Rangia, Baihata Chariali, Changsari, Kalitakuchi (near Hajo), etc. areas are the descendants of the Conversion out of such Propagation of Islamic faith.

Apart from this, we are not aware of any systematic missionary steps, taken by the Mughal rulers in Assam. Because they were mainly busy with the prolonged wars with the Ahoms and the former had little chance of turning their

---

[148] J A S B, *Op. cit.*, 1874, pp-215-21 and *Op. cit.*, S N Bhatcharyya, p-66.

[149] Dr. M Saikia, *Op. cit.*, p-181.

[150] S N Bhatcharyya, *Op. cit.*, p-71.

[151] Dr. M Saikia, *Op. cit.*, pp-180-82.

attentions towards the propagation of Islam.[152] These efforts were, however, continued by the Sufi saints and scholars from time to time, where and when the situation required doing. The most celebrated Sufi saint and poet Hazrat Shah Miran alias Azan Faqir came to that area, during the Mughal rule in Koch Hajo, in the first quarter of the 17th century[153]and settled in the Ahom territory at the time of King Susengpha alias Pratap Singha in 1635 A D.[154] When he found that the signs of Islam had been decaying among the Assamese Muslims and they were adopting non Islamic rites and cultures, Azan Faqir tried to revive them under the threshold of Islamic *Shariyat*. He preached the teachings of Islam, viz: *Kalima* (Speeches of faith), *Salāt* (Prayer), *Siyām* (fastings), *Zaqat* (wealth tax) and the principles of Islamic Shariyat and Tariqat, through a number of *'Zikirs'* and 22 *'Zaris'* which were composed by him in Assamese rhymes.[155] It can not be denied that many people of the upper Assam have also accepted Islam, having been influenced by the teaching and miraculous power of the Faqir.

In the same way one of the Sufi scholars Hazrat Julqat Ali took an attempt to teach the Islamic fundamentals among the Muslim, settled between the *Barnadi* and the *Bharali* rivers in the north Bank of Brahmaputra. In that area, there were no Masjids except one *'Namghar'* for the Muslims at *'Muslim Ghopa'* in Darrang district, where the Muslims adopted anti Islamic rituals and cultures and used to pray in the Pre Islamic ways, even up to the second half of the 19th century. At that time, this Sufi scholar arrived there and he was able to bring them to the right path of Islam having converted their *'Namghar'* into a Masjid. By this effort, a number of low caste Hindus of that area has also adopted Islamic faith.[156]

---

[152] Saikia, *Ibid*, p-182.

[153] Saikia, *Ibid*, p-202.

[154] Dr. M. Y. Tamizi, *Op. cit.*, pp-97f.

[155] Dr. M. Y. Tamizi, *Ibid*, p-97.

[156] Abdus Sattar, *Sangmisranat Asamia Sanskriti*, Jorhat, 1986, p-26-29.

Likewise, Hazrat Abul Qasim Khorasani of Goalpara and Sayed Nasir-ud-Din Baghdadi of Jaleswar have also done much for the propagation of Islam in the old Goalpara district, as we find in the accounts of Dr. Tamizi. Hazrat Khorasani had a large number of followers. Many miracles are attributed to this *awlia*, which attracted the Muslims and non Muslims alike.[157] Syed Baghdadi had also spread the Islamic teachings, responding to his call, some of the local people embraced Islam and he also married one of such converted women.[158]

Regarding the Muslim population in the area to the east of Bharali river, covering the present districts of Sonitpur and Lakhimpur, we are not aware of any Muslim society growing up from the war prisoners nor did any Ahom Muslim battle take place in that area. It is, therefore presumed that some of the Muslims of that area might have come from other places, while some are undoubtedly from the local converts.

In this way, the Muslim population increased all over the Brahmaputra Valley by the conversion, although the converts may not form the major bulk of Muslim population in the area. In course of time, the descendants of the converted Muslims have no special peculiarity to distinguish them from that of war prisoners or that of the pirs-faqirs etc.; all are mixed up together all over the valley.

1.3.4: The Muslim Artisans and Workers:

During the last quarter of 17th Century, a number of Muslim families were settled around the Ahom capital by the King Gadadhar Singha (1681-1696 A D) and his son and successor Rudra Singha. The King Gadadhar Singha imported some Muslim architects and employed them for the construction of the

---

[157] Dr. M Y Tamizi, *Op. cit.*, pp-105-06.

[158] Dr. M Y Tamizi, *Ibid,* p-110.

concrete gate pillars of the royal palace.[159] Well-experienced Muslim land surveyors were also brought from Kooch Behar and Bengal and they were employed in the capital for survey of land of his kingdom.[160]

It is well known that the Ahom kingdom achieved its highest development during the reign of the King Rudra Singha (1696-1714 A D). He arranged to bring a large number of Muslim artisans and workers of some new professional trades from the northern India, who were posted and settled in the capital having divided into eight professional classes such as: *Farsi Parhiya* (Reader of Persian), *Akhar Katiya* (Engraver), *Shila Katiya* (Rock Cutter), *Guna Katiya* (Spinner of metal thread), *Khanikar* (Sculptor), *Dorji* (Tailor), *Jola* or '*Julha*' (Weaver), and *Negeriya* (one who plays with '*Nagara*', a musical instrument).[161]

The *Farsi Parhiya*s were well conversant in the Persian and Arabic languages,[162] which had played an important diplomatic role in the letter corresponding with the Mughal rulers. They were to read out and interpret the letters in 'Arabic-Persian' language, received by the Ahom rulers, and to write replies there to.[163] Secondly, the *Akhar Katiya*s were to inscribe on the copper plates and stone slates for granting '*La-khiraj*' (Revenue free) and '*Nisf-Khiraj* (Half Revenue) lands.[164] They were also to strike coins in Perso-Arabic scripts[165] and to make the seals and stamps for the Ahom Kings. In addition to these trades of Muslim families, some other Muslim artistes dealing with brass metal works, gun powder, artillery weapons,[166] engraving, wood carving, cannon casting,

---

[159] S K Bhuyan, *Op. cit.*, Satshari, p-112.

[160] A Sattar, *Op. cit.*, p-16.

[161] A Sattar, *Asamiya Sanskriti*, ed. H P Neog and Dr. L Gogoi, Dibrugarh, 1989, p-208 and Dr. L Gogoi, Asamar *Sanskriti*, Dibrugarh, 1994, p-152.

[162] Dr. S Rajguru, *Itihasar Pātmeli*, vol. I, Hoibargaon, 1990, p-146.

[163] Dr. S Rajguru, Rajguru, *Ibid,* p-146 and Amiya Devi, *Rudra Singha*, p-130.

[164] A Sattar, *Op. cit.*, p-208.

[165] Dr. M Saikia, *Op. cit.*, p-149.

[166] Dr. S Rajguru, *Op. cit.*, pp. 149-50.

sword making, masonry, paper manufacturing[167] etc., were also settled in the Ahom capital. From these above professional families settled by the Ahom Kings, a considerable part of the Muslim population has been comprised of in Assam. They are also considered to have an important contribution in formation of greater Assamese nation.

1.3.5: The Immigrant Muslims:

The largest and the latest section of the Muslim population in Assam have been comprised of the immigrant Muslims. It is observed by renowned scholars of Assam that the British rulers had patronized the migration of Muslim peasants of the East Bengal oppressed by the Hindu *Zamindars* (Land Lords), to the wastelands of Assam. They started migrating to Assam in the last part of 19th Century and settled in the thinly populated Brahmaputra Valley, in order to suit the interest of the British rulers in India, whose motive was to 'generate to more land revenue' [168] and to grow more food grains. The process of Muslim migration had been more effective during the last two decades of the British administration and it continued for a few years even after the Independence.

It is worth noting that these immigrant people developed the whole agricultural system in Assam. They helped to improve the health of the country side by clearing the jungles and marshes, and converted the wild areas into prosperous agricultural regions. 'The introduction of jute, vegetables etc. commercial crops in Assam has largely been produced due to the immigrants'.[169] Apart from this, they have contributed a lot to the Assam economy also by producing all sorts of food grains in the virgin land of the Brahmaputra Valley. It is surprising to mention that these people are often referred to by other people of Assam with some corrupt nomenclatures; such as: *Pamuwā, Charuwā,*

---

[167] B K Baruah, Asamiya *Bhashạ Aru Sanskriti*, Guwahati, 1985, p-58.

[168] M Hussain. *Op. cit.*, p-42.

[169] P C Goswami, *The Economic Development of Assam*, New Delhi, 1988, p-29.

Mymenshingia,[170] *Bhātiya, Miyān, Na-Asamiya* etc., who significantly increased the Muslim population not only in the valley but also in Assam as a whole and merged into the main stream of Assamese nation, out and out. These people have a remarkable contribution to Assamese Language, Literature and Culture and all branches of education in general and to the Arabic Studies in particular.

1.3.6: The Hindusthani Muslims:

In the above discussion, we have noticed five categories of the Muslims, living in the Brahmaputra Valley as well as Assam. However, there are some other Muslim people also residing in the towns and the cities of the valley. As they have come from different parts of India, for employment and business purposes, they are called '*Hidusthani*' Muslims by the local people. Many of these people of other states have also settled for good in the valley and maintained the identity and culture of their own.

From the threadbare discussion made above, it is clear that the immigrations and settlements of the Muslim of the valley commenced in the first quarter of the 13th century, even before the advent of the Ahoms in 1228 A D and continued up to some years after the independence. The Muslims of the first four categories, stated above, have played an important role in the formation of the Assamese society. They speak Assamese Language as their own and adopt Assamese culture. There is no difference at all, between the life style of these Muslims and the Assamese Hindus except their Islamic names and religion.

On the other hand, the immigrant Muslims, like all other categories has also become an important part of the greater Assamese nation. In spite of speaking a dialect at their homes, which is a corrupt form of Assamese and Bengali, they adopted the Assamese language and culture whole heartedly as their own; when it had been going to lose the status of the state language of Assam. It is worth mentioning that the Assamese speaking population was only

---

[170] B. M. Das, *Peoples of Assam*, Delhi, 1987, p-14

36% up to 1931 A D, but the immigrant Muslims lifted it up to 62% in the census of 1951 having declared themselves to be the Assamese.[171]

The Muslims of the Brahmaputra Valley have become Assamese so much that they speak Assamese language; they read it as their vernacular and establish the educational institutions, from primary to bachelor degree level with Assamese as medium of instruction of their wards. More over, they have been contributing a lot to Assamese literature by their valuable literary works. In this way, all categories of Muslims viz. the '*Garias*, the *Marias* and the Immigrants' have strengthened the foundation of the Assamese nation, having been Assamese, out and out.[172]

However, there are two branches of the Muslims all over the worlds: the *Sunni* and the *Shiya*. The Shiyas have three sub-sects like *Aṯhna Ashariya*, *Ismailiya* and *Zaidiya*,[173] while the Sunnis are also divided into four schools of Islamic jurisprudence, which are being followed by the vast majority of Muslims all over the world, viz: *Hanfiyyi, Malikiyyi, Shafiyyi* and *Hanbaliyyi.*[174] The Indian Muslims generally belong to the *Hanafiyyi* School of the Sunni sect, to which the Umayyad and the Abbasid Caliphs belonged.[175] However, there is a small population of the *Shafiyyi* (Sunni) and the *Shiya*, living in some places of India.[176] It may also be noted that a section of the Sunni Muslims having differed from these four schools, denote themselves to be '*Ahle Hadiṯh*'. It is well known that almost all the Muslims, living in the Brahmaputra Valley as well as in Assam belong only to *Hanafiyyi* School of the *Sunni* sect, while the followers of the *Ahle Hadiṯh* are also found in some places in the valley.

---

[171] A Guha, *Asom Nomore Amio Nomoro*, Guwahati, 1993, p- 18.

[172] T Gogoi, *Prantik*, An Assamese fortnightly, ed. B. N. Saikia, 1-15 July, 2000, p-43,

[173] A Ahmed, *Mohammedan Law*, Allahabad, 2000, pp-24-27.

[174] Dr. S A. Tayka, *Arabic, Arwi and Persian in Sarandib and Tamilnadu*, ed. I, 1993, p-57.

[175] F M Koya, *Mappilas of Malabar*, Calicut University, 1983, p -2.

[176] A Ahmed, *Op. cit.*, pp. 24-27.

1.4: Muslim Influence on the Valley:

During the Muslim rule in India, the Muslim population grew up in the Brahmaputra Valley, which has remarkably increased in the first half of the 20th Century. They have a considerable influence on the modern lives of Assamese people, such as food and drink, dress & apparels, architecture and masonry, language and literature, arts and paintings, Handicrafts, etc., which need a brief discussion in this regard.

1.4.1: Food: The Muslim influence on the food and drink of Assamese people has been found every where in the valley. Gait quotes from Sihabuddin Talish, a Muslim chronicler of the 17th Century that the Assamese people had no custom of eating *Ghee.*[177] But in course of time, many delicious food items like: *Pulāo, Briyāni, Kormā, Kaliya, Kabāb, Parathā* etc. which are prepared with *ghee*, have been very popular among them. All these items, along with *Koftā, Barfee, Murabbā, Salād, Halwā, Sarbat* etc. have also been introduced by the Muslims in the valley.

1.4.2: Dress: Many items of fashionable dress like: *Kurta-Payjama, Selwar-Quamiz, Askan, Pāg* or *Paguri* (Turban), Socks, Shoes; *Rumāl* (Handkerchief), *Dalichā* (Carpet), clothing items of *Makhmal* etc. have been introduced in the valley only through the Muslims. It is interesting to note that the system of tailoring dresses of various designs, have also been introduced by the Muslims alone.[178] Ahom King Rudra Singha, brought and employed Muslim tailors for making '*Jamā', Pāg-ijar,* Chauga-chapkan', etc. for himself and for his courtiers.[179] In the next centuries, King Kamleswar Singha (1795-1811 A D) was also very fond of this *Pāg-Jāmā*[180].

1.4.3: Architecture and Masonry: The Assamese architecture and masonry are directly bearing the Muslim influence. It is found in the *Buranji* (Historical book) that the *Hewali Ghar* (Haveli or Hauli) in Rangpur and *Talatal Ghar* in Tengabari, the

---

[177] E A Gait, *Op. cit.*, p-145.

[178] B K Barua, *Op. cit.*, p-58.

[179] S K Bhuyan, *Op. cit.*, Satsari, p-119.

[180] A Sattar, *Op. cit.*, p-24.

royal monuments of the Ahom Kings, were constructed with the Muslim architects and mansions,[181] where as the *Rang Ghar, Kareng Ghar* and so many temples and religious constructions are also bearing the Muslim influence.[182]

1.4.4: Language and Literature: With the advent of Muslims and their social and political contact with the Assamese people, a large number of Perso-Arabic words have come in to the Assamese language. These words have formed many other new relevant words denoting different meanings. A list of Arabic words, which are commonly used in Assamese language, will be furnished in respective chapter. On the other hand, the introduction of *'Zikir'* and *'Zāri'* by Azan Faqir has opened a new phase in Assamese literature. The Sufi poet of Islamic mysticism has composed as more as eight scores i.e. 160 *Zikirs*[183] and *Zāri*s in Assamese language, which is still occupying an honourable position under the shed of the Assamese literature.

1.4.5: Arts and Paintings: On the arts and painting of the valley, there is also a Muslim influence. The Muslim artistes could occupy a good position during the Ahom reign. Many new and interesting features appeared in the secular branch of painting, during the later parts of Ahom rule.[184] It is found that two Muslim Painters— *Dilbar* and *Dosāi* drew the colourful portraits in a famous pictorial book *'Hasti-Vidyarnava'* written by Sukumar Barkaith[185] under the patronage of Ahom King Siva Singha (1714—1744 A D).

1.4.6: Handicrafts: Muslim handicrafts were also popular in the Ahom Ages. The Muslim *Guna Katiya*s were the innovators for making some golden nose and ear ornaments like *Nākful, Nath, Kānful* etc.[186] The embroidery works with golden and silver thread are also introduced by the Muslim craftsmen only. Moreover, the luxury items of brass metals and ivory works are also bearing the Muslim influence since the

---

[181] S K Bhuyan, *Op. cit.*, Satari, pp-119-20.

[182] H K Barpujari, *Op. cit.*, vol. III, p-348.

[183] Dr. M Neog, *Op. cit.*, p-54.

[184] Dr. M Neog, *The Art of Painting in Assam*, G U, 1959, pp. 10-11.

[185] Amiya Devi, *Op. cit.*, p-130.

[186] Dr. S Rajguru, *Op. cit.*, 1990, pp-151-52.

days of Rudra Singha (1696-1714). According to Dr. Wade, musketry has not been made in Assam before the invasion of Turbak in 1532 A. D. when he brought it from Bengal.[187] In the same way, Muslim experts and workers were appointed by the Ahom Kings for the artillery weapons, like- cannon, gun, gunpowder etc., one of whom was *Gerela Gariya.*[188]

Likewise, a number of household items like *Surahi* (Pitcher), *Hookah, Nalicha, Surmadani, Atardani* and luxurious items and perfumes like *A'tar* (scent), rose water and *Surma* (collyrium) are also introduced by the Muslims. Some instruments of classical music like- *Negera, Setār, Sarodh, Tabala* etc. are the direct contribution of the *'Negerial'* family imported by the Ahom Kings. Moreover, they were also influenced by the revenue system and currency policy of the Mughals and the Hussaini dynasty.[189]

In this way, the Muslims have influenced the civil lives in the Brahmaputra Valley. However, the Assamese influence on the Muslims of the valley cannot be denied, as these two communities have been dwelling for several centuries together in this area.

1.5: Conclusion:

The detail statement made above, has given a Geographical introduction and the socio-economic conditions of Brahmaputra Valley. It reveals a significant past of the Muslims in the Valley from the 13th to the first half of the 20th Century. They have contributions to the formation of the greater Assamese nation in terms of language and literature, communal harmony and economic and political perspectives. They also have a remarkable influence on the modern lives of the Valley as well as Assam in different ways, which are considered as the findings here.

□□□□□□

---

[187] Dr. J P Wade, An *Accounts of Assam*, p-37.

[188] Dr. S Rajguru, *Op. cit.*, 1990, pp-149-50.

[189] A Sattar, *Op. cit.*, pp-16-17.