

Chapter-V

Socio-cultural change in the Ahom society After Independence

The chapter discusses about the socio-cultural change in Assamese society as well as Ahom society from macro sociological points of view. The Ahom society is closely related to broader Assamese society, so change in Assamese society indicates the change of Ahom society. Therefore, Macro level change included change in population structure, economy, religion, education system, impact on urbanization, industrialization and micro level study included family structure, elite structure, religious beliefs and practices.

India got independent on 15 August, 1947. The state of Assam in independent India consisted of the erstwhile province of Assam by abstract the district of Sylhet which transferred to East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The first Chief Minister of Assam was Gopinath Bordoloi. The then capital of Assam was Shillong, later it was shifted to Dispur (Guwahati) in 1974. On 26 February, 1950, the National Government declared India as a federal Republic and the new constitution granted fundamental rights to all Indian citizens. The constitution of India included Ahoms as a backward community of Assam.

After independence, road and communication system, information technology, community development programs, Panchayati Raj institution, establishment of Oil refinery, educational institution, military were developed and all these helped in the growth of the process of modernization in Assam in particular and India in general. At the same time trade and commerce was also developed; which brought the economic prosperity of the people of Assam.

Demographic Profile and change the social structure

The size and growth of population is a very vital factor to determine the feasibility of economic development of a country. Population growth and economy is closely related. Gunnar Myrdal, in his study of the population problems of the South Asian countries, has come to the conclusion that "the rate of population growth in these countries is now largely independent of their rate of economic development." Population growth is also one of the factors of social change. Population growth mainly impacts the socio-economic condition of the state. Assam being a state of Indian Union is also subjected to high rate of population growth as that of the country as a whole. The growth of population in Assam also impact to change the social structure of the Ahom society. The economy, opportunity of social mobility, division of labour, social stratification is based on the population size and social order of a society. Therefore it can be said that the growth of population in Assam directly or indirectly helps to change of the Ahom society in Assam. The relation between population and social structure is a reciprocal i.e. the growth of population influences on the family size.

Sociologists concerned that population changes indicate the fertility and mortality rate of the entire population. According to Durkheim, size of the population is one of the branches of sociology which he called morphology and societies can be classified according to their Volume and density. By volume, Durkheim mention the number of 'social units' (i.e. individuals) in the society and by density. Durkheim meant the 'number of social relationships' in a society. Durkheim divided density into material density and moral density. According to him distinguished between material density influenced by the concentration of population, the growth of towns and the development of means of communication and moral density which is measured by the number of individuals who effectively have relations (not merely economic but cultural relations) with each other. Durkheim thought that increased of volume brought about increased density and that

the two factors together produced the variations in social structure. In *The Division of Labour in Society* (1893), Durkheim mentioned that increased of population produced the division of labour, it change from society based upon 'mechanical solidarity' to one based upon 'organic solidarity'.

The size of population and population change has been related to particular aspects of social structure or to particular social phenomena. Thus, sociologists have been concerned with the demographic change or population movement which developed the economic activity. According to the census 1951, total population of Assam was 8,028,856 against 4,298,773 male and 3,730,083 female. Since 1901, the total population of Assam was 32,89,680 followed by 38,89,680 in 1911, 46,36,980 in 1921, 5,560,371 in 1931 and 1941 total population of Assam was 6,694,790 which was increased 1,334,066 in the decade between 1941-51. In census 1961, the total population of Assam was 10,837,329 lakh, the population growth between 1951-61 was 28,08473 lakh. This census data indicate that after independence population of Assam was increased. According to census 1971, total population of Assam was 14,625,152 lakh, in 1991 it was increased 22,414,322 lakhs and decadal growth of population between 1971-91 was 77,89,170 lakhs. According to census report of India, the percentage of decadal variation in Assam shows an increase of 17 percent during 1901-11 and that of India was only 5.8 per cent. Again the percentage of increase in Assam were 20.5 per cent, 19.9 per cent, 20.4 per cent and 19.9 per cent during the decades 1911-21, 1921-31, 1931-41 and 1941-51 respectively and that of India shows a decline of 0.3 per cent of then increase of 11.0 per cent, 14.2 per cent, 13.3 per cent during the above mentioned decades respectively. Further, the decadal variation in Assam shows an increase at the constant rate of 35.0 percent both during 1951-61, 1961-71 and of 53.2 during 1971-91 whereas decadal variation in India was an increase of 21.6 per cent, 24.8 per cent and 54.2 during the respective decades. Thus the census data indicate that Assam has one of the highest demographic states in North East Region.

Table No. 5.1
Population Distribution of Assam Region wise in last three decade

Population and decadal growth rate					
Geographical Regions of Assam	1991	2001	Decadal Growth	2011	Decadal Growth
Brahmaputra Valley	19,109,302 (85.25)	22,654,238 (84.99)	3,544,936 (18.55)	26,377,882 (84.63)	37,23,644 (16.43)
Barak valley	2,491,496 (11.12)	2,999,900 (11.25)	5,08,404 (20.41)	3,612,581 (11.59)	6,12,681 (20.43)
Hilly District	8,13,525 (3.63)	10,01,390 (3.75)	1,87,866 (23.09)	11,78,809 (3.78)	1,77,419 (17.72)
Total Population	22,414,322	26,655,528	4,241,206	31,169,272	4,513,744

(Source: Census Report of India, 1991, 2001 and 2011)

The data shows the population distribution in region wise of Assam, according to census 1991, total population of Brahmaputra valley was 85.25 percent followed by 84.99 percent in 2001 and 84.63 percent in 2011. The decadal growth in census 1991-2001 was 18.55 percent and 16.43 percent in 2001-2011. In Barak valley, according to census 1991 total population was 11.12 percent followed by 11.25 percent in 2001 and 11.59 percent in 2011. The decadal growth rate of Barak valley between 1991-2001 and 2001-2011 was 20.41 percent and 20.43 percent respectively. In the Hill districts of Assam, according to census 1991 total population was 3.63 percent followed by 3.75 percent in 2001 and 3.78 percent in 2011. The decadal growth of population from 1991-2001 was 23.09 percent and 2001-2011 was 17.72 percent. Thus, the size of population change was the economic, political, social structure of Assam.

The Ahom established their kingdom in the upper Brahmaputra valley. Therefore, still most of the Ahom people lives in the upper Assam, mainly Sibvasagar, Jorhat, Golaghat, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Dhemaji and Lakhimpur districts. So, last three decade population distribution district wise of upper Assam is shown in the table no. 5.2.

Table No. 5.2.
Population Distribution District wise of upper Assam

Districts of upper Assam	Population and decadal growth rate				
	1991	2001	Decadal growth	2011	Decadal growth
Sibsagar	9,07,983 (15.54)	10,51,736 (15.48)	1,43,753 (15.83)	1,150,253 (14.98)	98517 (9.36)
Lakhimpur	7,51,517 (12.86)	8,89,010 (13.08)	1,37,493 (18.29)	1,040,644 (13.56)	1,51,634 (17.05)
Golaghat	8,28,096 (14.17)	9,46,279 (13.92)	1,18,183 (14.27)	1,058,674 (13.79)	1,12,395 (11.87)
Jorhat	8,71,206 (14.91)	9,99,221 (14.70)	1,28,015 (14.69)	1,091,295 (14.22)	9,2,074 (9.21)
Dibrugarh	10,42,457 (17.84)	1,185,072 (17.44)	1,42,615 (13.68)	1,327,748 (17.30)	1,42,676 (12.03)
Tinsukia	9,62,298 (16.47)	1,150,062 (16.92)	1,87,764 (19.51)	1,316,948 (17.16)	1,66,886 (14.51)
Dhemaji	4,78,830 (8.19)	5,71,944 (8.41)	9,3,114 (19.44)	6,88,077 (8.96)	1,16,133 (20.30)
Total	5,842,387 (26.06)	6,793,324 (25.49)	9,50,937 (16.27)	7,673,639 (24.62)	8,80,315 (12.95)

(Source: Census Report: 1991, 2001 and 2011)

N.B. total population of Assam was 22414322 in 1991, 26655528 in 2001 and 31,169,272 in 2011

The data show that population distribution in upper Assam district wise, according to census 1991, out of total 26.06 percent of population was live in upper Assam followed by 25.49 percent in 2001 and 24.62 percent in 2011. The decadal growth of population was 16.27 percent in 1991-2001 while 12.95 percent in 2001-2011. The decadal growth is high in Tinsukia district with compared to other six districts of upper Assam.

Thus, the change in population structure impact of socio-cultural life of the Ahom society in Assam. It also impacts their occupational structure, family structure and their social life.

Education Profile and change

Contemporary education system as an agent of modernization in various forms is also western origin. Sociologist Durkheim defines education as “the action exercised by the older generations upon those who are not yet ready for social life. Its objects is to awaken and developed in the child those physical, intellectual and moral states which are required of him both by his society as a whole and by the milieu for which he is specially destined (Durkheim, 1922). Education is an action to socialization the individuals in all societies of the world. The modern age of education in Assam is begun by the British. The British established modern educational institution in the different parts of the state. As a result after independence the state government improved the education system in Assam. The number of modern education institution was established in the different parts of state. The state as well as the central government gives primary focus on developing the state of the education. Assam has developed into a top educational destination in the North Eastern India as well as the country. The Government of Assam has implemented free and compulsory education policy for students up to the age of 14. Under the right to education provision, the government of Assam has decided to have one primary school in a radius of one Kilometer and upper school in a radius three kilometers.

Education is the fundamental rights of each and every child. In Assam also Sarba Siksha Abhijan (SSA) is responsible for provide education upto the age of 14. This Abhijan helps to give the elementary education for all and bringing gender gap society. The state Government has improved the elementary education of the state and adopted some schemes to progress the education system. Such schemes are as Case awards to the teachers for dedicated Service, Introduction of Mobile education, Intensive to Girl Children in the age group 6-14 years to encourage girl’s students, financial grant provide school uniform to BPL (Below Poverty Line) families, provide mid day meal at school etc. It can be said that in the case of elementary

education is developed in Assam after independence. Since 1951-52, total primary school of Assam was only 11172 which is increased upto 30068 in 2001-2001 and 35065 in 2010-11. Again we see in the Middle school, in 1951-52 total middle school of Assam was only 1012. It was increased upto 271600 in 2001-02 and 2156110 in 2010-2011.

In the year between 1977-78, there were 3 universities, 136 colleges for general education(including Commerce college), 20 Colleges for professional and other education, 1699 high and higher secondary schools (including Sainik School), 3681 Middle and Senior Basis schools, 21,350 Primary and Junior Basic Schools, 295 Pre-Primary schools, 19 professional education schools (including 7 Polytechnic, 9 I.T.I and 3 Gram Sevak Training, Sericulture, Land survey school), 6 teachers training colleges,33 teachers training Basic and non-Basic colleges and 526 Schools for vocational Professional Special other education (Statistical Handbook of Assam, 1980). It was increased in the year between 1987-88 upto166 colleges (including Arts, science and commerce), 2380 high schools, 365 higher secondary schools, 5181 Middle/senior basic schools, 26,670 Primary Schools in Assam (statistical handbook of Assam, 1988). At present in Assam 35065 Primary Schools, 12985 Middle schools, 5714 High schools, 933 higher secondary schools, 74 Madrassa Schools, 182 Sanskrit and Pali tools, 7 Govt. Colleges, 189 Provincialised colleges, 172 college receiving financial Assistane, 217 Junior Colleges, 5 Arobic Colleges, 38 colleges for Professional Education(including Agriculture & forestry, Engineering, Law, Management institution, Veterinary, Medical college), 12 institutes for professional Education (under graduate), 41 teachers Training Institutions, 24 Schools for Vocational, Professional, Special and other education (Source: Statistical Handbook of Assam, 2011).

According to economic survey of Assam 2011 total govt/ provincialised schools are 30054 primary schools, 944 primaries with upper primary schools, 4919 upper primary schools, 09 primaries with high schools, 1443 upper primary with

high schools. At present Assam has the highest number of schools, colleges and universities in the region. There are a total number of 44,309 primary and middle schools, secondary schools, high schools, colleges for professional as well as general education, universities and other educational institutions in the state. There are five universities Gauhati University, Guwahati(1948), Dibrugarh University, Dibrugarh(1965), Assam University, Silchar(1994), Tezpur University Tezpur(1994), Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat (1965) and one Open University Krishna Kanta Handique Open University (2007) in the state. There are some of the best known technical and professional institutes which have international repute. These are Cotton College, Centre for Plasma Physics, Indian Institute of Technology (Guwahati), National Institute of Technology (Silchar), North Eastern Regional Institute of Water and Land Management, Defence Research Laboratory, North East Institute of Science and Technology (Formerly Regional Research Laboratory) CSIR (Jorhat), Tocklai Experimental Station, Tea Research Association (Jorhat), Centre for Plasma Physics (Guwahati), Assam Engineering College (Guwahati), Jorhat Engineering College (Jorhat) and others. (Source: www.ibef.org).

In case of medical education, Assam is the main centre of entire North-East region. At present four medical colleges in Assam namely, Assam Medical College (1947), Dibrugarh; Silchar medical College (1968), Guwahati Medical College and Jorhat Medical College (2009). These medical colleges help to generating the human resource like doctor, Nurse, Pharmacist, Technicians etc. to meet the different people of North-East India. In 2009, the government of Assam established “Srimanta Sankaradeva University” of Health Sciences is the only Health University in the North Eastern Region with its jurisdiction to the whole of Assam, which suitably strengthens the medical education in the state. New communication technology such as satellites, computer, cable television, internet, computers brought noticeable change in educational institutions in India. These interactive

communication technologies are transforming the educational institutions in a significant manner (Singh and Rani, 2005). At Present day, different communication technology in Assam such as print media, audio visual aids radio, television, satellite communication, mobile, internet, teaching mail etc., are used, besides face to face interactive programmes live personal contact and week end programmes for instrumental delivery and effective two-way communication to the distance learner. Recently the advent of computer and internet brought a new form of educational technology and it offers an interactive and user-friendly approach in imparting information to the learner. It increased the user in addition to provide constituency, privacy and reduced learning. It can not only motivate the students and increase their interest in their learning process in formal education set-up but also can be of great use in providing e-services in remote rural and urban setting (Singh, V.P and T.S.Rupa Rani, 2005). It also gives information which helps empowering the people. Thus this new technology helps students of Assam to improve their quality of learning and promote education at various levels such as primary, secondary and higher etc.

Due to the development of education technology and education system, literacy rate is significantly increased in Assam. Literacy is one of key factors of socio-economic progress meter of modern society and important aspect of Indian society. According to census 1951 total literacy rate of Assam was 18.53 percent against 18.33 percent in India followed by 32.95 percent in 1961 against 28.30 percent in India, 33.94 percent in 1971 against 34.45 percent in India, 52.89 percent in 1991 against 52.21 India respectively. As per last Indian Population Census 2011, Assam literacy rate stands at 73.18 percent with compare to 74.14 in India. The male literacy rate was 78.81 percent against 67.27 percent female, in India 82.12 percent male and 65.46 percent female. The decadal growth 2001-2011 was increased of 9.93% from the last decade. According to census 2001, the total literacy rate of

Assam was 63.25 percent where 73.23 percent male, against 51.85 percent female with compare to 65.38 percent in India where 75.85 percent male and 54.16 female.

Thus, the structure of Assamese society is gradually come to change into modern form. Due to the development of modern education system and the increased educational institution of Assam helps to change the social and cultural structure of the Assamese society. In educational institutions numbers of people are appointed on the basis of educational achievement. The Ahom people are also appointed in number of educational institution in different types of jobs.

From the above discussion it is clear that after independence education system in Assam was developed. After the development of education and establishment of educational institution in different parts of the state which impact the Ahom people also. The educated people of Ahom society now migrated in differerent parts of the country for different purpose like- job, business, and educational purposes etc. which impact their social-cultural life. This change is shown in their dress pattern, food habit, family structure, style of living. Although a number of Ahom people are also appointed in different educational institution in different type of jobs.

Change in Religious Profile

Religion is one of the main characteristic of socio-cultural life of a society. Religion is a integral part of Human civilization. Assam represents as a multi-religious state of the country. Durkheim defines, religion is “a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that thing set apart and forbidden- beliefs and practices which unite into one moral community called Church all those who adhere to them” (Durkheim, 1947). Religious aspects emphasis the function of religious rituals is to affirm the moral superiority of the society over its individual member and to maintain the solidarity of the society. All the major religions of the world are practiced by the people of Assam. Besides them, some tribes of Assam

worship animism and nature in its manifestation. The different religious groups of Assam are Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Sikh, Jain and other. Assam is mainly Hindu dominated. Vaishnavism is another form of Hinduism has played an important role in the state. Sankardeva gave a new faith of the cult of Vaishnavism and his Dharma is very popular in the state.

After independence people of different religious groups came to Assam in different purposes. Those groups of people are also influenced by social and cultural life of Assamese people. During the British period Marwari traders came to Assam along with British. The British also brought some Tea-Garden labourers from the different part of the country and settled them in Tea-garden areas. They are originally Hindu lower cast people. But, During the British period, Christian missionaries spread Christian religion in Assam and some of the Tea garden labour embraced Christianity in course of their contact with the European tea-planters religion. After independence, different religious group of people came to Assam for different purposes and some of them were settled in the state. According to census 1951, total Hindu religion population was 5,886,063, Muslim 1,995,936 and Christian 487,331. In 1961 and 1971, total Hindu population of Assam was 7,884,921 and 1,06,25,847, Muslim population 2,765,509 and 6,373,204 while Christian population during the same decade was 7,64,553 and 6,67,151. According to census 1991, the Hindu religious population of Assam was 15,047,293 which was increased in 2001 upto 17,296,455, the decadal growth of population between 1991-2001 was 22,49,162, the Muslim population in 1991 was which increased in 2001 into 8,240,611 and decadal growth of Muslim population between 1991-2001 was 59,91,449. The Christian population in Assam according to 1991 was 7,44,367 and in 2001 was 9,86,589. The decadal growth of Christian population in Assam between 1991-2001 was 2,42,222. Sikh population in 1991 in Assam was 16,492 and 22,519 in 2001 census. Buddhist religion population in 1991 was 64,004 and was 51,029 in 2001 census. Again in Jain religious population in 1991 was 20,645 which

increased in 2001 upto 23,957. Other religious group of population in 1991 was 1,38,230 and 2001 was 22,999.

It is true that Ahoms adopted Hindu religion during the Ahom period and Ahom patronized Hindu religion in Assam. They are particularly of Vaishnavism. But, Still Ahom priestly classes like Deodhai, Bailung, and Mohon continue to follow the old Tai-Ahom religion (Gogoi, 1976). Those Ahom follower of Sankardeva were called Mahapurusias, those who follow Damodardeva were called Damodarias and those who followed Aniruddhadev Mayamorias. Ahom again divided into two sub-sect called *Kacha* and *Paka* Panthas Ahom. The kacha section is the followers of mainly neo-vaishnava religion and *paka* section Ahom follows Trantric line of worship. Their devotional songs indicate Siva worship. But, today most of the Ahom followers' *kacha* section and some Ahom people are coming to sect. of Sankori Sangha, Nam-Kritoniya, Bhagawati etc sect. P.Gogoi (1976) had mention that the life of rural Tai-Ahom population today is fully controlled by the rule and practices of non-Ahom cults.

The Ahom is now Hindu particularly Vaishnavism and closely related with the Assamese society. But, Still Ahom priestly classes like Deodhai, Bailung, Mohon continue to follow the old Tai-Ahom religion (Gogoi, 1976). Those Ahom follower of Sankardeva were called Mahapurusias, those who follow Damodardeva were called Damodarias and those who followed Aniruddhadev Mayamorias. Ahom again divided into two sub-sect called *Kacha* and *Paka* Panthas Ahom. The kacha section is the followers of mainly neo-vaishnava religion and *paka* section Ahom follows Trantric line of worship. Their devotional songs indicate Siva worship. But, today most of the Ahom followers' *kacha* section and divided into various sect. like *Bhagawati*, *Kritoniya*, *Vaishnave*, *Krishna Guru*, *Bamuniya*, *Sattriya*, *Nam-Kritoniya* and Some Ahom people are coming to sect. of *Sankori Sangha*. P.Gogoi (1976) had mention that the life of rural Tai-Ahom population today is fully controlled by the rule and practices of non-Ahom cults.

Naamghar

At present day Naamghars (Community prayer house) also play an important role in the every Ahom society as well as Assamese society in Assam. In rural areas it also plays an important role in the development of social and cultural activities of the village people. It autonomously takes care of the governance, education, art, and all aspects of well being of the villagers. In every Ahom village people were devoted to their Gurus who lived in Sattras or monasteries and they aligned to Guru of a particular Sattra who gave them *Aadesh* or advice. In every Ahom village, villagers in every *Namghar* recited *Namghosa* and *Gunamala*, perform *Nam-Kriton*, *Bhagawat Path*, organized Bhauna etc. The Ahom community also participates in various religious activities like Sankar Janmutsab (birth anniversary of Sankardeva), Janmastomi, Nam-Kriton, makar-sankranti etc in *Naamghar*.

Role Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha

After independence Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha held annual conference in every year at different places of the State and the reception committees of the Annual Session of Sangha, publishes a voluminous multilingual souvenir with serious articles. The reception committees of Annual conference of Youth and Children and Women wings are also published in Souvenirs every year. Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha held the Silver Jubilee Session in 1956. This year a new thinking was infused into the Sangha and emphasis was given on opening of separate wings for the growth and nourishment of Sankari literature and culture. Bishnu Prasad Rabha inaugurated the cultural function of this session.

The head-quarter of the Sangha was established in Kalongpar, Nagaon on July 27, 1969. The Branch office of Sangha has been set up at Guwahati, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Lakhimpur and Dhuburi. A cultural centre was established at Guwahati in 1985. The cultural wing of the Sangha was started in 1957 followed by the formation of a literary wing. It has, over the years, published many important books

and monographs, chief among which are the complete works of Srimanta Sankaradeva and Madhavadeva, the 12 Cantos of the *Srimad-Bhagavata* and the English translation of the *Kirttana*.

A mouth-piece of Sangha was started in 1933, namely Nam Dh armagiven by Laksmi Nath Bezbarooah. This is one of the oldest journal being published in India. Besides Nam Dharma the Sangha has been publishing a monthly News Magazine named- MANIKANCHAN and another four research journals in Assamese viz. DEKAGIRI for the Youth, MAHIYASHI for the women, SHISHUMANJARI for the children and SANKARI SANSKRITI SUBHAS, published from Sanskriti branch of Sangha.

This Sangha had also works a number of welfare activities including health education, self- employment and relief to the distress people which help the needy people of the North East India. The Sangha has two big Libraries in Guwahati and Nagaon. Moreover the Sangha held National Seminars in New Delhi in the year 1998, in Kolkota in the year 1998 and 2007 to illuminate the intelligentsia of the rest of the India about the heritages of Assam and Sankari culture. It has also observed the Birth Anniversary of Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankaradeva in Puri of Orissa state in 1998 and at Seppa of Arunachal Pradesh in 2007.

It has become the leading socio-cultural organization, which has been rendering valuable service in the field of cultural integration and social upliftment in addition to its regular activities in art, culture, literature and education covering all sections of the society.

At present day most of the Ahom people are the member of Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha and participated annual conference in every year. All the Ahom people those who are the member of Srimanta Sankardeva Sangh they totally give up their traditional beliefs and rituals, they do not worshiped different god and goddess. The member of this sangh cannot gives meat and fish in their religious ceremonies.

In sum, it is said that after independence Ahom people greatly influence on the vaishnavatic religion. Thus the Neo-Vaishnavism religion served the Ahom society and harmonized Assamese society with certain common religious and socio-cultural aspects. As a result at present considerable changes have taken place in the Ahoms society in mode of worship animals and birds are replaced by “MahPrasad” (Mangu, banana, gram, coconut, and some fruits) is offered as ‘Naibedya’ before the God. This is the result of influences of ‘Ek-Saran-Nam-Dharma’ among the Ahoms. As a result, the impact of vishnavism and regional culture has changed the food habit pattern of the Ahom. The Vishnavism has taught them the notion of purity and pollution and the Satradhikar or *Gosains* of *Sattra* institution played an important role because they thought the people at the time of initiation above what should be taken and what should be not.

Economic Profile and change

Assam is mainly based on agricultural economy. Agriculture plays a vital role for the development of State. About 63% of the state’s working forces are engaged in Agriculture and allied activities. The main agricultural crop of Assam is rice. It is grown in the plains and hills. All the districts of Brahmaputra and Barak valley’s agriculture is mainly rice. It has been noticed that at present use of new high yielding varieties seeds, the rice production in the state has going to upward trend. The other important food crops of Assam included – wheat, maize, pulses etc. Tea, jute, Sugar cane, oil seeds, cotton, arecanut, coconut, potato, tomato and fruits are the major crops in Assam. Although Tea is one of the most widely marketed cash crops of Assam.

The Tea Industry of Assam plays a major role in the state economy as well as in the national economy. It is the principal based industry of Assam and is also one of the major sources of export income. Assam is the largest producer of tea in India. According to the ‘*Economic survey of Assam*’ 2011-12, “The total area under tea

cultivation is accounting for more than half of the country's total area under tea and the Tea Industry of Assam provides average daily employment to more than six lakh persons in the State which is around 50 percent of the total average daily number of labour employed in the country. The Tea Gardens in the state are covering land of 322000 hectares out of 578000 hectares of land in the country as a whole. The estimated tea production of the state was 4875 lakh kg. against 9808 lakh kg. Total tea produced in the country during the year 2008 as per report of Tea Board of India. The tea production in Assam constitutes more than 50 percent of the total production of the country.

Forest also constitutes an important part of the state economy of Assam. In Assam 22.41% of the total land area is covered by forest. The forests of Assam reserve many useful products like timber, resins, bamboo, granite, cane etc. which yield a good amount of revenue to the state.

The Ahom people are mainly agriculturalist. Most of the Ahom people in village level still depend on agriculture as a main occupation. Due to the development of science and technology, establishment of agricultural department, influence of mass media changes the traditional agriculture in village settings. Now a days, they like to use fertilizers, high yield Variety seeds, use Tractor and power-tiller for Plugging in their agricultural sector. Thus, after independence changes have taken place in the context of agriculture. They were also like to do tea agriculture and most of the Ahom people started plantation as a subsidiary occupation.

Industrialization

Assam is industrially backward in comparison with Indian standard. Some agro-based and mineral industries play an important role in the state economy. Tea industries occupy an important place in Assam. Tea industry is mainly agricultural based industry in the state. Assam produces the largest quality of tea of all the state in India. After independence Tea auction Centre was established in 1970 at

Guwahati for better marketing of the tea produced in Assam and entire North-Eastern states. This is the world largest CTC tea auction centre. Tea industry has contributed substantially to the State economy. In Assam about 17 percent of workers are engaged in tea industry and produces more than half of India's tea production and about 1/6th of the tea produced in the world. Tea industry mainly labour intensive industry, which directly employ about 8 lakh people and supports another 10 lakh people indirectly. In Assam 50% of the total population depends on tea industry. In the year 2005 the state had 49,102 tea gardens spreads over 3,00,502 hectares and produced 4,87,487 tonnes of tea. It was increased in the year 2005 upto 51,605 hectares of tea garden and produced 4,97,781(2009-10) tonnes tea (Assam year book 2012). According to statistical handbook of Assam 2011-12, there are 4561 small tea growers covering 11756.74 hectare of land.

Oil Industry is an important industry of Assam. Assam is the first of the country where oil struck in 1889 at Digboi. After that Oil has also discovered in Naharkatiya-Hugrijan areas, namely Dihing valley in 1938. After independent, in 1961 at Rudrsagar, in 1965 at Moran and Lakuwa, in 1968 at Geleki, in 1970 at Borhola, in 1971 at Amguri, in 1973 at Changpang, in 1974 at Charali and in 1986 at Namti oil was discovered. The Digboi oil refinery is the oldest refinery of Assam situated at Tinsukia district established in 1901. The second refinery was set up at Noonmati of Bongaigoan District and it started production in 1962. The third refinery in the region was established at Dhaligaon (Now Chirang District) near Bongaigaon in 1962. The fourth refinery in the state was established at Numaligarh of Golaghat District in 1999, with a refining capacity of 3 million tonnes of oil and other products. A gas based project being set up in Assam known as gas cracker plant near Tengakhat in Dibrugarh district. The government of Assam also established another crude-based Industry known Assam Petro-chemical Limited and Bhrahmaputra Valley Fertilizer at Namrup. Therefore, it can be said that after independent, in Assam oil industry is improved and all refinery produces naphtha,

aviation turbine fuel, Kerosene, diesel, petrol, liquefied petroleum gas(LPG), fuel oil etc. These help to the growth and development of state economy.

Assam is rich in Natural gas, mainly in upper Brahmaputra valley especially Naharkotia, Moran, Lakuwa and Rudrasagar, contain associated natural gas. In 2009-10, Assam produced 2476 million cubic metre of natural gas and this accounts for 25 percent of the total production in the country as a whole. Assam has also reserved large number of Coal. The production of coal in the state was 12,03,000 Million tone in 2009-10 (Assam year book, 2012).

In Assam Limestone occurs in number of place mainly border region between Meghalaya, North Cachher Hills (Dema Hasao district), Diphu-Bokajan etc. The Kailajan and Dilai area of Bokajan sub-division have high quality limestone. On the basis of limestone, in Assam one large Cement factory was established in Bokajan in Karbi Along district. The factory started production in the 1977.

In 1955, first Sugar Mill was established at Baruabamun Gaon of Golaghat under co-operative sector and it started production from 1958. Another two mills were established near Kampur in Nagaon district and Chargola in Karimganj district. The Plywood industry plays an important role in the state economy. At present in Assam, there are 52 plywood factories and most of the factories located in upper Assam. About 25,000 persons are directly or indirectly involved in plywood factories in the state.

The major portion of areas in Assam is covered by forestry. After independence government of Assam established forest based industry in the state. Therefore the first paper mill of the state was set up at Jogighopa in 1971 by the Ashok Paper Mill Limited. But this mill was closed due to inadequate supply of raw material and high production cost. After that in 1985, Jagirod paper mill was set up in Morigaon district by Hindustan Corporation. The other paper mill of Assam was established again by Hindustan Paper Corporation at Panchgram near Badarpur in Karimganj district in 1981.

Traditional Cottage industry also plays an important role in the state economy. Assam produces *Pat* or *Silk* which is specially for Spinning and Weaving. Assam produce total 10 percent of natural silk of Assam. Weaving is also important Cottage industry of Assam. According to Statistical Handbook Assam, in 1978-79 state had 8 handloom training centre and it was increased in 2010 upto 94 Handloom Training centre (HTC). Assam also produced *Muga*, the Golden Silk and it is the only producer of the world prestigious Golden Coloured Muga Silk in the world. The state has been opened Muga research centre at Boko and Jorhat. Although, Assam is the main producer of ERI or ENI and it conduct sericulture department. For the productive purpose, Sericulture department has established six Endi seed production centre in the state. Among them the largest Edi seed centre in the state is located at Goreswar in Kamrup district and second largest is located at Jamugurihat at Sunitpur district.

Recently in Assam Tourism industry is improved and seriously developed. Assam has various tourist spot including natural beauties, largest river Brahmaputra, Ahom historical monuments at Sibsagar, world's largest river island Majuli at Jorhat, Kamakhya Temple and Umananda Temple at Guwahati, Mahabhairav Temple at Tezpur, Hayagriva-Madhab Temple at Haju, Satra institution at Majuli and Barpeta, Zoo, State Musium, Sankardeva Kalakhetra, Science Musium etc. Although, state has many spots of scenic beauty, rare and exotic birds and animal, Kaziranga National Park which is world famous for one horned Rhino. The state also has very ancient place of pilgrimage and archeological and historical monuments. According to statistical handbook of Assam 2010-11, in the year 2002-03 state government collect 41.03 lakh revenue from tourist industry and it was increased upto 131.63 in 2009-10 and 143.60 lakh in 2010-11.

Presently a good number of medium scale projects too have come up particularly with the support of State level financial Institutions. The Government of Assam formulated the Industrial Policy resolution of 1997 with the experience of

implementation of Industrial Policies declared by them in 1982, 1986 and 1991. The Industrial Policy was to provide an effective thrust to expeditious promotion and growth of all industries with a view to create a strong industrial base and employment opportunities in various directions. According to census of India 1971, total working population of Assam was 40,88,493 and non-working population was 105,36,659. Among the working population 37,66,685 male and 3,21,808 female while among the non-working population 39,47,555 male and 65,89,104 female. It was increased in 2011 upto 95,38,591 where 6870960 male and 2667631 female. The main workers are 7114097 against 5849032 male and 1265056 female (census India 1971 and 2011).

From the above discussion, it is said that after independence the process of industrialization is developed which impact on socio-economic life of the Ahoms in Assam and also influenced on agricultural based Ahom society. Now, a number of Ahom people are migrated from rural to industrial areas and engaged in different work in those industries. A section of Ahom people also engaged in high ranking official post in those industries. Due to the impact of industrialization many change have been taken place in family structures, marriage, food habit, beliefs and practices, housing pattern, furniture etc. in Ahom Society.

Health Profile

The constitution of India is uncompromising on the issue of health of the people. It states that 'the enjoyment of the highest achievable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of the every human being of race, religion, political, economic or social condition'. In a declaration adopted by the world community in 1978, and reflected in Alma Ata declaration of the World health Organisation (WHO), health is classified as a human right. The 'health' of a person or of a group of people is a comprehensive concept that many dimensions, not just the absence of illness. The

World Health Organisation (WHO) defines 'health' as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity'.

The National health policy of 1983 and the approach of the Government of Assam reflect a multi-faceted approach to health care. The Government of Assam was initially advocated the Alma Ata declaration and is focused on its principle of Primary health care.

After independence government of Assam has been improving the health care facilities of the state. The government of Assam not only emphasizes on the primary health care of the people but also gives the attention to some important issues related to health care. These includes education and awareness among the people of health issues, dissemination of information on prevention, hygiene and healthy practices, food security and nutrition, safe drinking water and good sanitation, maternal and child health welfare, family welfare etc.

The government of Assam gradually improves and develops health care facilities in the state. Therefore, government of Assam has been constructed hospitals, primary Health Centre, community health centre, sub-centre both in districts and sub-divisional level. In the year between 1978-79 total hospitals in Assam were 55, Primary Health 146, Dispensaries 425, sub-centers 663. But, at present in Assam 22 government hospitals, 13 sub-divisional civil hospitals, 844 Public Health centre, 38 First Referral Units, 106 Community Health centre and 4592 sub. There are four medical colleges in Assam namely Guwahati Medical College, Guwahati, Assam Medical College, Silchar Medical College and Jorhat Medical College. one mental hospital, one Dental Hospital, one Ayurvedic College, Three Homeopathy Hospital and one Cancer Hospital in Assam centre (source: statistical handbook of Assam 2011). Although Tezpur and Barpeta Medical College being set up and another two medical college's viz., Diphu and Nagon are also be going to be established. Apart from these, 205 Private Nursing Home, 26 Private

Clinic/Poly clinic and 212 Diagnostic Centre in Assam (Economic Survey, Assam 2011-12).

The government of Assam has taken health education and school health services for development of health care for students in the state. School health service care scheme are functioning in the all districts of Assam during the eleventh five year Plane (2007-12). This service carried out 23 schools Health service units in the state. The main objective of the scheme is to carry out health examination of school students from Lower Primary to High Schools run by govt. Private schools (Economic Survey, Assam 2011-12).

Since 1956, the government of Assam implemented family welfare programme to reduce the birth rate to stabilize the population and to improve the mother and child health care facility. At present in Assam family welfare programme is implemented under Nation Rural Health Mission, a central sponsor project. The main objective of the programme is female literacy, age at marriage of girl, status of women and discouragement. According to census report of Assam the birth and death rate is decreased from the period of 1971-2010. In 1971, total birth rate of Assam was 38.5 percent which is decreased in 1991 upto 30.9 percent, in 2001 upto 27 percent and in 2010 it come to 23.2 percent. Again in case of death rate, in 1971 total percent of death rate was 17.8, it is decreased in 1991 upto 11.5 percent, 9.6 percent in 2001 and 8.2 percent in 2010 (Source: statistical Handbook Assam, 2011). Those data indicate that after independence health facility of the state is developed and till today the government of Assam has taken more schemes and plans for development and improvement of health of the people of the state.

In sum, the development of health care system, establishment of Primary health centre, Medical colleges and hospitals change the indigenous medicine system among the Ahoms. Now the Ahom mainly prefer allopathic treatment, homeopathic treatment in any kind of disease. Therefore, the modern education and modern health care system change the indigenous health system among the Ahom.

In some cases like- Snakebite, pox, Jondish etc. some of the Ahom people believe traditional mantra also.

Development of transport and communication

Transport and communication system is most important factor for change and development of the state as well as country. Development of transport and communication system indicates the development of economy of the region. Assam is the main center to North east region; therefore the development of transport and communication system is more important for growth and development of the region. After independence, in Assam modern transport system viz. roads, railways, waterways and airways facilities are improved by the state as well as central government.

Roads transportation

After independence the principal function of Public Work Department (PWD) is improved for development of transport and communication of the state. For improvements of road communication, the PWD department is responsible for construction and maintenance of roads, bridges and culverts for speedy development of the state. In 1965 the Saraighat Bridge was constructed over the river of Brahmaputra, which bridge serves as a road and rail link with the rest of the country. In 1987, the second bridge over the mighty river Brahmaputra namely Kaliya Bhumura Bridge was inaugurated at Tezpur. This bridge is connecting the South Bank at Silghat.

At present more than 40,000 km road network including 1,635 km National Highways is maintained by the state PWD. Excluding the National Highways, the 36,003 km road length of the state highways, major district roads, urban roads and rural roads consists of 10,979km is blacktopped roads out of which 558 km are intermediate lane and 132 km are double or above(Assam Year Book, 2012).

Railways

The railways line is introduced by the British in Assam for trade and commerce. After independence the railways line is developed and connected Assam to the other parts of India. The Ministry of Railway has undertaken various development activities in the Railway sector in the state and railways line to link the other state of North East India. Saraighat Road-Cum- Rail Bridge was constructed in 1965, which bridge helped to directly link the other parts of India. The Bogibeel rail-cum-road bridge across the Brhmaputra is under construction. Perhaps this railway bridge will be the longest railway bridge in the country. Another ongoing railway project is Broad Gauge conversion of Lumding-Silchar-Jirubum-Badarpur and Badarpur to Barai-gram-Kumarghat, Rangia-Murkongselek project works are on progress. The end of 2009-10, the railway length in Assam was 2433.34 km comprising of 1376.22 km under Broad Gauge and 1057.12 km under Metre gauge (Assam Year Book, 2012).

At present day a good number of new passenger trains were introduced to connect the different place both state and inter-state viz., inter-city trains linking Guwahati, Dibrugarh, Dimapur, Jorhat, Nagaon, Farkating, Tinsukia, Lumding, apart from daily train between Lumding –Bodarpur-Silchar and Agartola(Tripura). The railways daily run a number of inter-State trains of the country, such as Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore etc.

Air Transport

After independence Air transport was developed in Assam. Which is helps the communication system in Assam. The state has seven civil airports namely Gopinath Bordoloi inter-national airport at Guahati, Rawariya at Jorhat, Mohanbari at Dibrugarh, Lilabari at North Lakhimpur, Kumbhigram at Silchar and Saloni airport at Tezpur. The Gopinath Bordoloi Inter-National airport is the only international airport of North-East India. All major airlines including private commercial airlines viz., Kingfisher, JetLite, Indian Airlines, Indigo etc. regular

flights connect the different parts of the country as well as inter-national flight from Guwahati to other country. This communication system has brought the change and development of the state. Due to the development of Air transport the people of Assam connect the other country people within a short period of time and which led to change the value and idea of the people of Assam.

Water transport

It is said that Assam is a riverine state. During the British period the water transport communication was introduced by the British for trade and communication system. After independence the state government has improved the water communication system in Assam. The government owned organizations- central Inland Waterways Corporation and Directorate of Inland water Transport (IWT), Assam, are operating transport service on the river Barak and Brahmaputra on commercial basis. At present the Director of Inland Water transport is operating 74 ferry services, while 54 ferries run in the Brahmaputra and 24 in Barak Valley. The IWT Department has introduced 61 nos. of cargo cum passenger service for transportation of commuters throughout the nook and corner of the state where no road communication are available. At present the IWT Department has 240 nos of passenger ferry vessels and 17 nos of commercial vessels of its own.

Postal communication

The postal communication was introduced in Assam during the British periods. After independence number of post offices were established in the state both rural and urban areas. At present in Assam there are total 4005 post offices out of which 3719 post offices are located at rural areas and 286 are located at urban areas. Each Post office serves a population of 7201 in rural areas and 15345 in urban areas. There are total 16386 letter box, out of which 14933 in rural areas and 1453 in urban areas (statistical handbook of Assam 2011). There are three night post Silchar HO for convenience of the people. Apart from the above, there are 4 National Speed Post Centre and 16 Speed Post Centre in the state and Postal Mail Conveyance

covers 4,428 railway km. Airmail facility also available in the region. Traditional money order service has been upgraded and re-introduced as e-Mo for speedy delivery with the same tariff (Assam year book, 2012). The state has also ASTC (Assam State Transport Courier) service and number of private courier service such as for communication.

Telecommunication

After independence in Assam telecommunication is developed. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) is the largest telecom operator in Assam, which was formed in 1987. BSNL is reaching the nook and corner of the state. Mobile communication also is introduced in Assam at present. The number of Mobile Telecom companies launches their service provider in the state. Such as BSNL, Aircel, Airtel, Reliance, Vodafone, Idea etc. The mobile subscriber figure of the state was reached above 87 lakh as on March 2010 while BSNL 13 percent of the total mobile connections and private sector covers 87 percent during the same year (Assam Year book, 2012).

In Assam, recently development of new communication system such as cable television, mobile, internet help to growth of various Assamese channels such as FM radio program, regional TV channels like News Live, Dy 365, Rang, News Time Assam etc. has popularized the Assamese cultural in national and international level. This process increased modernization and change the way of life style among the people of Assamese society. Electronic media like mobile phones, internet and computers have come to occupy in people's day-to-day lives and social relationships. These communication and information technologies also have helped to construct new arrangements of time, space and place in a culture with globalizing tendencies, and the types of identity, experience and interaction with the same community or same group of people. Through new media communication system provide interactive education and training programs which helps to change the social and cultural life of the general people.

Due to the influence of new communication system, a group of new generation of Ahom people set up some new ideas of modernity and transnationalism for the revival. This group is using modern computer technology. Tai-Ahom language can be developed and transnationalized. With the advent of modern technology, it is possible to develop e-learning packages, machine translation software, speech recognition software and other natural language processing (NLP) software etc. Thus new communication system has helped to transmit different language into the Tai-Ahom language. This process has helped the Ahom people to learn their lost Tai language.

From the above discussion, it is said that the development of transport and communication system i.e. road, railway, airway, water transport and modern communication system impact the socio-cultural life of the ahom people in Assam. This process brought change in value system, behavior pattern, food habit, dress pattern and also link the other Tai group of people in the world. On the other hand due to the impact of electronic media Ahom people change the life style in modern way which mainly change their materialistic culture i.e., housing pattern, decoration of house, use modern technology at kitchen such as use LPG for cooking food, Cooker, Refrigerator etc. and in agricultural field use power tiller, tractor for plugging, western style dress pattern and so on.

Development of Print Media

It is said that during the British period number of newspapers and magazines were published in Assam. In 1947, The Assam Tribune, Saptahik Janambhumi was published from Jorhat and this is the oldest newspaper continuously running till date. In 1949 Janambhumi acquired own printing press and the newspaper continually published till date and it is the first Assamese newspaper to celebrate its Golden Jubilee. Another Assamese newspaper was published weekly by The Assam Tribune Group namely *Asom Bani* in 1955. In 1965 daily newspaper *Dainik Asom*

was published and this newspaper published Federal plane, the emergency and many other burning issues of the state. In 1972, Dainik Janambhumi an Assamese daily newspaper was first published from Jorhat. For the begging this newspaper was considered as the voice of upper Assam and it continued the hopes and ambition of the people through its service. This newspaper also played an important role in the six year Assam agitation. Currently Janambhumi is published from Guwahati, Tinsukia, Jorhat and Tezpur. In 1973 *Agradoot* was published from Guwahati as a bi-weekly. In 1983 under the editorship of Dhirendranath Bezbarua, *The Sentinal*, an English daily newspaper was published from Guwahati. In 1995 *Asomiya Pratidin*, an Assamese newspaper was published by Sadin group and now this newspaper is daily highest circulated newspaper of Assam. At the same year *Agradoot* group published an Assamese newspaper namely *Dainik Agradoot*, in 1997, *Amar Asom* an Assamese newspaper was published and moreover this is the first Assamese daily newspaper to be published from two places (Guwahati and Jorhat) simultaneously and providing a magazine with the Sunday issue. Another Assamese daily newspaper *Aji* was published since the year 2000 and this newspaper also Sunday supplement called *Aji Deobar* magazine. In 2001 *Asomiya Khabar* an Assamese daily newspaper was published. This newspaper also published a Sunday magazine, Wednesday supplement, Saturday special *Bhinnosuri* etc. In 2003, *Dainik Janasadharan* was published and it also publishes a Sunday magazine named *Ityadi*. After two years later in 2005 *Dainik Batori* was regularly published from three places at the first time in the state namely Guwahati, Dibrugarh and Lakhimpur. It also published a Sunday special magazine entitled *Anubhuti*. Above them a number of newspaper are published in Assam. Like the other parts of the country first afternoon or evening newspaper were published in Assam in 1980s namely *Biyolir Batori* edited by Naba Kumar Hazarika. In 1991, *Sandhyo Batori*, another evening daily newspaper was published by Chadrakanta Press Pvt. Ltd, Guwahati, edited by Surjya Hazarika.

In the field of Magazine, after independent in 1951 Ramdhenu an important Journal was published from Guwahati. This magazine contributed a lot in integrating various streams of Assamese literature. Ramdhenu brought a class of serious of readers and delineated the post war psyche of Assamese people through the side of literature. After Ramdhenu, Monideep and Aamar Protinidhi (1959), these two journal were deeply influenced the Assamese readers in the field of literature. Among them some of other magazines were Posuwa (1948), Purbakash, Probha (1955), Kandari (1950), Naam Nai (1958) in the contemporary time. After that Bismoi was published in 1969 to till that and this magazine set up a new trend in the Assamese literature. In 1981 another Assamese news-magazine was published namely Prantik and it is published till date. This magazine brought socio-cultural, economic, cultural, international incidents among the readers of Assam. Another highly standard magazine at present day in Assam Goriyoshee was published in 1993. This magazine can be described as the one and only complete literary magazine in the Assamese language today. It is also research oriented magazine and studies various aspects of Assamese language. After that several magazine were published such as Sakhi, Rahasya, Maya, Sathari, Nandini (for women) etc. A few among these magazines are discontinued. But all the Magazines and newspapers have played an important role in the field of journalism and literary consciousness among the people of Assam, those help to growth and developments of Assamese language, Culture, literature and also help in the change and development of the people of Assam.

The print media is an important media in the modern society. It gives any kind of information to the mass people. The print media also impacts the Ahom people in Assam and through this they receive various information i.e., politics, social, educational, economy, cultural and also help to know their old culture. Various writers' writes now translated Ahom *Buranji* into Assamese language and English language which helped the Ahom to know the old tradition and culture.

Thus, development of print media universalized the traditional Ahom culture and linkage in international level.

Growth of urbanization in Assam

Urbanization in India is neither unique nor exclusive but is similar to a world-wide phenomenon. Indian urbanization has proceeded as it has elsewhere in the world as a part and product of economic change. Occupational shift from agriculture to urban-based industry and services is one part of the changes. After independence in Assam the process of urbanization was developed and which change the traditional economic structure of the people. Due to the growth of urban center in the different parts of the state the rural people of Assam has migrated to the urban areas to search a job, for education and for business purposes. The rural to urban migration has been changing the demographic profile of the urban centers in Assam. It can be said that according to census 1951 to total urban population of Assam was only 4.29% and it was increased 12.90% in the census 2001. According to census 2011 the total urban population in Assam is 14.08% and highest growth of urbanization is shown in the capital city of Guwahati with urban population 24%. The census figures also reveal that maximum urbanization has taken place in the district of Kamrup (Metro) having an urban population of 82.09 per cent, while Baksa district recorded the minimum urban population with a count of just 1.28 per cent (Provisional census report 2011).

In Assam, Guwahati, Tezpur, Goalpara, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Sibsagar, Golaghat, Nowgaon, Silchar, Dhubri, Karimganj are the oldest town in Assam established by the British period. In 1951 total towns of Assam was 24 and it was increased in 2011 upto 214 (statistical handbook of Assam, 1980 and 2011), which indicate the process of urbanization in Assam. Guwahati is the main town in Assam and number of education center, nursing home, number head offices of small and big companies are established in Guwahati. The people of Assam now first prefer to go

the capital city of Guwahati and which has changed the structure of the state. It is noted that the people migration into the urban areas are categories into three types namely -----1.Intra-state migration 2. Inter-state migration and 3.inter-country migration. These three types of migrations are seen in Assam and the migrating people from different sides to urban centers are performing a different culture. It can be said that modern cultural elements are first come to the urban areas viz. dress pattern, food habit, life style etc. and then it come to the rural areas.

Now a day due to the development of modern communication system has changed the social life of the people of Assam. In urban centers people are more modern than the rural people and they are always accepting the modern technology in their everyday life. Cinema hall, libraries, new market, government and non government office etc. are mainly established in the urban areas. The educated people when they get job in the offices of the urban centers they settled in the urban areas. It can be said that in the urban societies people are materialistic than rural areas. The process of urbanization changes the value of the Assamese people. From sociological point of view value are constructs of society created through the interrelationships of its members. They are socially created rather than determined biologically or inherited (J.B. Chitambar, 1997).

Therefore, it is said that after independence process of urbanization was developed due to the establishment of industry and modern institutions i.e. education, government and non government offices etc. In Assam the process of urbanization developed the folk (little tradition) culture of Assamese society, which called 'great tradition' (Redfield, 1969). In Assam majority of the people live in the rural areas and rural people maintain the folk culture (little tradition) and urban people transmitted those culture into elite level called 'great tradition'. In this regard, it can be said that *Bihu* is the main festival of Assamese people and it has a tradition in nature. But, due to the development of modernization and process of urbanization, *Bihu* song and dance is now nationalized by the urban people as well

as rural people also. The urban elite Assamese people are mainly interested to organize *Bihu* functions on commercial basis and competitive in nature. At the present day some modern musical instruments also used in *Bihu* songs and these are helped to glamorize the *Bihu* festivals.

Modernization and Structural change

After independent the process of modernization is running first in Assam in every side i.e. education, administration, law, justice, military, political etc. It gradually influences in social as well as cultural side of the Assamese society. Modernization is a process which implies changes the social structure of a societies i.e. change in the system of social relationship, impose new role in institutional side, change political power, changes structure of family, changes elite structure of a society etc.

Structural change implies change in the whole system of social relationship. The process through which structural change appears in the social system is that of differentiation. The model of differentiation is the abstract theory of social change. When one social role or organization become archaic under changing historical circumstance, it is differentiated by definite and specific sequence of events into two or more role organization which function more effectively in new historical circumstance and finally bring about a structural change in social system. These new social units which emerge through differentiation are structurally distinct but functionally equivalent to the structure, they have replaced the process of structural differentiation functionally specialization. For instance in Assamese society Joint family is not only an agency of socialization and procreation but also perform some other work i.e. religious rituals, economy activity, leisure etc. Modernization gives a new form of production system to use of new scientific tools in agricultural field for high production of agricultural product. All these are indicate the growth of

economy activity and modern form of society. In case of Ahom society, people also do the same activity which is generally playing in the every side of the state.

Structural change involves similar role differentiations in almost all aspect of social life. Change is an exceptional phenomenon in every society. The increasing new structural differentiation forms come into being and older once gradually. For instance in Ahom society, though Saklong marriage system has been still prevalent among the Ahoms, yet in some circumstances they prefer to modern marriage party *Pandal* and court marriage in the modern period.

Impact of Globalization

According to Lehman, globalization has two-fold ways of interaction with local culture-homogenization and cosmopolitanism. Globalisation either eliminates local elements or incorporates them without acknowledging it. Secondly, it may incorporate and celebrate local elements. Globalised market economy as well as the entertainment industry has already encroached upon the traditional culture and the life style of the people of Assam. To meet the global standards, the cultural products may be modified, re-designed and even at times be distorted. Thus globalization is an opportunity for unhindered trade and economic empowerment and a force which will erase unique identities. Let us have a cursory look at the present scenario of the Assamese culture. With the influence of modernisation, attitudes towards the celebration of many traditional festivals have changed. For instance, the celebration of Bihu festival is currently a common practice for Bihu celebration committees in which flags of no definite design, guests and speeches and “Bihu Rani”, “Bihu Samragani” competitions etc have become the new necessities. To be an effective player in the global market, the smaller communities are needed to act together and should have adequate resources. Otherwise the identities embodied in such cultural products will be eliminated for greater marketability (Boruah, 2008).

Role of Elite structure

The social and cultural history of Assam reveals the existence of a variety of macro structure from 13th century onwards, Ahom and later British government centralized political and economic control. After independent the government of Assam controls the every branch and department of the state. The process of Modernization was started in Assam during the British periods but this process is rapidly progress after independent in Assam. Now we discuss below which type of changes have been taken place in micro structure in Assam after independence.

Elite structure of a society is important for social change. It represent not only its basic values but find a concrete expression in the Power- structure and decision making process of the society.(Singh,1972). The elite structure has rightly been suggested that “the ‘leadership’ of a society is a criterion of the values by which that society lives. The manner in which the ‘leadership’ is chosen the breadth of the social base from which it is recruited; the way in which it exercises the decision-making power; the extent and nature of its accountability.....these and other attribute are indicators of the degree of shared power, shared respect, shared well-being and shared safety in a given society at a given time. By learning the nature of the elite, we must learn about the nature about the society” (Singh, 1972).

Elite also represent the standard of value excellence in different domains of life through their roles and these roles are achieved by power, wealth and educational qualification. There are number of elite in a society like political elite, bureaucratic elite, intellectual elite, educated elite, socially respected elite etc. Elite structure in a society is the process of differentiation which changes the social system as a whole.

In Assam, after independence, the progress of modern education system, democratize the political power, increased the towns etc., which help to emerge number of Assamese elite in the state. They work in different side i.e. political elite modernized the political side, intellectual elite take the decision making of a society,

educated elite also play in the side of development of education system etc. thus, elite class people are socially, educationally, politically take more innovative role to change of Assamese society into modern way. Elite classes also are connecting to give the awareness among the people of Assamese society. In case of Ahom elite they are also actively participated in the every sphere like political side, business side, cultural side etc. Both in rural and urban areas strengthened the elite structure at various levels in the state and led to rapid differentiation in its internal structure. The social effect of these elite class people are too radical transformation of culture, political and social side in the Ahom society and Assamese society as whole.

The political, intellectual and bureaucratic all these elite are forms of macro-structure which contributed to structural modernization of Assamese society. The role structure of these elite implies conformity to cultural goal consistent with democracy, legal, rational institutions, and universalistic norms in public life emphasis on achievement and competent etc. which are basically modern in ethos. The intellectual and bureaucratic elite both two are culturally nearer the value system of modernization are structurally, or in terms of power relation, less effective than the political elite; moreover, often the structural goals of modernization, such as liberalism, equality of opportunity, wider political participation, etc., themselves generate social forces which change the balance of power relationship in favour of populist political elite rather than westernized liberal intellectual elite (Singh, 1972).

The structural change of Ahom society in Assam we may discuss about the inter-linkages of the social structure with regard to direction of adaptation of modernization. The structural inter-linkages are two broad categories; macro structure and micro structure. Micro structures such as family, clan, social relationship etc. is relatively autonomous institution and provide a social space for primary relationship. Micro structure relationships are more affective and particularistic and their functions are focused mainly to the needs of primary nature.

The network of these relationships in these groups is also limited and quality of relational bond is diffused rather than specific. Relationship is governed by Kingship, birth, territorial bonds which delimit the horizon of social interaction and reinforced values which may be in apparent contrast with those of a modernized role structure (Singh, 1972). In every society social roles performed by the micro-structures such as family it constitutes structural universal. For instance, in Ahom society family role does not change but after independence due to the influence of modernization gradually family are radically reduced some functions in a relatively modern society. Such functions as the process of socialization of child are now done by the primary education system and some specific agency.

The structural framework of micro-structures, organization role in such a manner which reinforces the process of structural or cultural modernization without basically altering the essential nature of the functions they perform. The structural differentiation is the former, generalized nature of role structure is rendered more and more specific and many of the former role which were not essential to a particular micro or macro structure are relegated to other specialized structure.

Under these circumstances, Ahom society in Assam localizes linkages among the member of their group structure are transformed to nationalized linkage. Their linkage are now also internationalize level and the elite people of the Ahom society represent in the social, political, cultural etc., in all side.

Growth of Political consiouness and Revivalist movements among the Ahoms

It can be said that during the time of freedom struggle the people of Assam all were alien and equally struggle against the British. After independent they educationally, politically, socially developed due to the modern education system. The modern science and technology, process of industrialization and urbanization have changed the social structure of the people of Assam including Ahom. Their

social life, family structure and economic structure have been changed due to the influence modernization, westernization and urbanization.

But, at the same time it is said that Ahom had a distinct culture, language, beliefs and practices. Now a days Ahom of Assam claims to make a case for their individual group identity as distinct from the rest of the ethnic groups of Northeast of India. Assam happens to be the place where they established their kingdom in 1228 AD and remained a force to reckon with in the political arena till 1828 AD. Emerging as a very stable and settled ruling class, this ethnic group contributed to the consolidation of the concept of Assam encompassing all the aspects of a society – literary, cultural, linguistic, social, political, economic and religious. The rulers not only shaped this geographical territory as their stronghold but helped to accomplish an acculturation process beyond easy imaginable heights. It has been a synthesis of identity. Therefore, Ahom people had formed a number of socio-cultural organization such as *All Assam Ahom Sabha* (1893), *All Assam Ahom Association* (1910), *All Assam Ahom Students Federation* (1944), *The Tai Historical and Cultural Society of Assam* (1955), *All Assam Mohan Deodhai Bailung Sanmillan* (1962), *All Assam Tai Students Association* (1964), *Ahom Tai Mongoliya Rajya Parishad* (1967), *Purbanchal Tai Sahitya Sabha* (1981), *All Ahom Students Union* (1988), *The Tai Ahom Council* (1987) etc. These organizations have been pursuing agendas that have led to considerable awakening among the people with regard Ahom revivalism. What is noticeable is the fact that the methods adopted by these organizations are many, all contributing to the chief cause of creating a definite space for the Tai-Ahoms. Yasmin Saikia rightly observes that “Strategies used in achieving this goal have been multidirectional and multivoiced” (Saikia, 2004).

From the above observation it can be said that after independence change had taken place in the Ahom society in every side. Due to the influence of modern forces like industrialization, modernization, westernization, modern education, technological development mainly help to change the socio-cultural life of the

Ahoms. These changes are shown in their family structure, marriage system dress pattern, occupation, level of education etc. Now most of Ahom prefers nuclear family both in rural and urban areas. In case of marriage are also similar to Assamese society but some of them still follow their traditional *Chak-Long* marriage system with some modification. But at the same time they are also conscious about their identity which mainly related to politics. A number of political and social organization was formed by the Ahom elite people and started a movement which is related to their identify consciousness. Therefore, some of the Ahoms started to practices their traditional culture, religious beliefs, customs.

Summery

After independence, road and communication system, information technology, community development programs, Panchayati Raj institution, establishment of Oil refinery, educational institution, military were developed and all these helped in the growth of the process of modernization in Assam in particular and India in general. At the same time trade and commerce was also developed; which brought the economic prosperity of the people of Assam.

After independence the population complex of Assam was change rapidly which impact of socio-cultural life of the Ahom society in Assam. It also impacts their occupational structure, family structure and their social life.

The development of education and establishment of educational institution in different parts of the state are impact the Ahom people also. The educated people of Ahom society now migrated in differerent parts of the country for different purpose like- job, business, and educational purposes etc. which impact their social-cultural life. This change is shown in their dress pattern, food habit, family structure, style of living. Although a number of Ahom people are also appointed in different educational institution in different type of jobs.

The development of science and technology, establishment of agricultural department, influence of mass media changes the traditional agriculture in village settings. Now a days, they like to use fertilizers, high yield Varsity seeds, use Tractor and power-tiller for Plugging in their agricultural sector. Thus, after independence changes have taken place in the context of agriculture. They were also like to do tea agriculture and most of the Ahom people started plantation as a subsidiary occupation.

The process of industrialization is developed which impact on socio-economic life of the Ahoms in Assam and also influenced on agricultural based Ahom society. Now, a number of Ahom people are migrated from rural to industrial areas and engaged in different work in those industries. A section of Ahom people also engaged in high ranking official post in those industries. Due to the impact of industrialization many change have been taken place in family structures, marriage, food habit, beliefs and practices, housing pattern, furniture etc. in Ahom Society.

The development of health care system, establishment of Primary health centre, Medical colleges and hospitals change the indigenous medicine system among the Ahoms. Now the Ahom mainly prefer allopathic treatment, homeopathic treatment in any kind of disease. Therefore, the modern education and modern health care system change the indigenous health system among the Ahom. In some cases like- Snakebite, pox, Jondish etc. some of the Ahom people believe traditional mantra also.

The development of transport and communication system i.e. road, railway, airway, water transport and modern communication system impact the socio-cultural life of the Ahom people in Assam. This process brought change in value system, behavior pattern, food habit, dress pattern and also link the other Tai group of people in the world. On the other had due to the impact of electronic media Ahom people change the life style in modern way which mainly change their materialistic culture i.e., housing pattern, decoration of house, use modern technology at kitchen such as

use LPG for cooking food, Cooker, Refrigerator etc. and in agricultural field use power tiller, tractor for plugging, western style dress pattern and so on.

Process of urbanization was developed due to the establishment of industry and modern institutions i.e. education, government and non government offices etc. In Assam the process of urbanization developed the folk (little tradition) culture of Assamese society, which called 'great tradition' (Redfield, 1969). In Assam majority of the people live in the rural areas and rural people maintain the folk culture (little tradition) and urban people transmitted those culture into elite level called 'great tradition'. In this regard, it can be said that *Bihu* is the main festival of Assamese people and it has a tradition in nature. But, due to the development of modernization and process of urbanization, *Bihu* song and dance is now nationalized by the urban people as well as rural people also. The urban elite Assamese people are mainly interested to organize *Bihu* functions on commercial basis and competitive in nature. At the present day some modern musical instruments also used in *Bihu* songs and these are helped to glamorize the *Bihu* festivals.

From the above observation it can be said that after independence change had taken place in the Ahom society in every side. Due to the influence of modern forces like industrialization, modernization, westernization, modern education, technological development mainly help to change the socio-cultural life of the Ahoms. These changes are shown in their family structure, marriage system dress pattern, occupation, level of education etc. Now most of Ahom prefers nuclear family both in rural and urban areas. In case of marriage are also similar to Assamese society but some of them still follow their traditional *Chak-Long* marriage system with some modification. But at the same time they are also conscious about their identity which mainly related to politics. A number of political and social organization was formed by the Ahom elite people and started a movement which is related to their identify consciousness. Therefore, some of the Ahoms started to practices their traditional culture, religious beliefs, customs.