

Chapter 2

THE STUDY AREA

Field of the Study

This chapter deals with field of the study. The universe of the study constitutes the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) beneficiaries within three villages of Jorhat district of Assam. The study is directly concerned with rural areas of Assam. Therefore, this study has tried to depict the background of India as well as Assam and Jorhat district in general and three villages in particular.

India

India is the country which is located between $8^{\circ} 4'$ and $37^{\circ} 6'$ latitude $68^{\circ} 7'$ and $67^{\circ} 25'$ east longitude. It covers an area of-3,287,263 sq.km. The country geographically shares its borders with Pakistan on West, Bangladesh and Burma on the East, China, Nepal and Bhutan on the North, and Bay of Bangladesh in South. The total population of India is -1,210,193,422 (2011 Census), the second largest country on the basis of population. Out of total population, the number of male is 623,724, 248 and female is 586, 469, 174. The sex ratio of India is 940 female as against 1000 male population whereas the density of population of India is 382 per sq.km (2011 census).

The total rural population of India is 72.22% (1991 census) where urban population is 27.78 %. On the other hand, in 2001 census of India rural population is 68.84 % while urban population is 31.16 %. Thus due to impact of various factors the urban population is increasing respectively. There are 13.82 crore people belonging to the Scheduled Castes (SC) in the country. This constitutes 16.48% of the country's total population. The population of STs were 6.78 crore (1991 census) constituting 8.08% of the country's total population. The literacy rate of India is 74.04% where state of Kerela has the highest literacy rate with

93.91 % (2011 Census). There are 28 states and 6 centrally administered union territories. On the other hand, India is a country where different ethno-cultural groups live in different parts of India.

The North-Eastern region is one of the important region of India. This region comprises of eight states, i.e. Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. The total area of N. E. region is 2, 62,184.69 sq.km. The total population of N. E. region is 38,985,604 (2011 Census Report). Out of total population, the majority population is in Assam bearing 26,655,528. The literacy rates of N. E. region are respectively 73.18 % in Assam, 66.95% in Arunachal Pradesh, 75.48 % in Meghalaya, 79.85 % in Manipur, 91.58 % in Mizoram, 80.11 % in Nagaland, 87.75% in Tripura and 82.20% in Sikkim (2011 census). Thus, it has been observed that in Mizoram, literacy rate is higher than the other states of N. E. region. There are various ethno-cultural groups in this region which have their own ethnic identity.

The main rivers of the North-East India are the Brahmaputra and the Barak. The total length of the Brahmaputra is 2880 kilometers. Its main tributaries are Lohit, Dihing, Subansiri, Ranganadi, Jiyabharali, Jiya-Dhansiri, Bornadi, Puthimari, Pagaladiya, Manah, Saralbhanga, Gangadhar, Sunkusa, Buridhing, Disang, Dikhow, Jaji, Dhansiri, Kapili, Digaru, Krishnai, Dudhnai etc. The sources place of Barak River is in Manipur and it is 564 kilometers long. Jiri, Siri, Jatinga, Sunai, Dhaleswari, Katasal, Singra, Ghagra, Lungai etc are the main tributaries of Barak River.

Assam

Assam is situated in the North Eastern Zone of the Indian Sub-continent. It is located between $24^{\circ} 10' N$ to $27^{\circ} 58' N$ Latitude and $89^{\circ} 49' E$ to $97^{\circ} 26' E$ Longitude. Assam is surrounded by Nagaland, Manipur and Myanmar in the East and by the Meghalaya and West Bengal in the West, Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh on the North, Mizoram, Tripura, Bangladesh and Meghalaya in the South. Assam is often referred to as the land of 'the red river and blue hills' with an area

of 78, 438 sq.km. Assam constitutes 2.39% of the total land area of the country with the total population of 3,11,69,272 (2011 census). The male population of Assam is 1,59,54,927 against the female's population 1,52,14,342. The sex ratio of the state is 954 as against 1000 male population. The density of Assam population is 397 per sq.km. The total SCs population of Assam is 1,826,000 (6.85% of the total population of the country) and STs is 3,309,000 (12.41% of the total population of the country). The majority of STs and SCs population basically lives in rural areas.

The majority people of Assam lives in rural areas bearing 85.92 % and urban population is 14.08 % (2011 Census). The number of total villages in Assam is 25124 and towns are 125. Assam is also recognized as a centre of educational institutions. The literacy rate of Assam in 2011 census is 73.18 % (males-78.81% and females-67.27%). Thus, the literacy rate of Assam is comparatively lower than the India's literacy rate (74.04%).

The whole of Assam can be classified into two natural regions on the basis of two big rivers- Brahmaputra Valley and Barak Valley. There are 27 districts in Assam. Out of 27 districts, Barak valley covers only three districts i. e. Cachar, Hailakandi and Karimganj. On the other hand, Brahmaputra valley Consists of 22 districts and remaining 2 districts Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hilly district of the state constitute the North Cachar Hill. The main economy of Assam is agriculture and allied activities. The majority people of Assam depend on agriculture and some of the people depend on government service, business etc.

The word 'Assam' is derived from the Sanskrit word, 'Asoma' meaning 'peerless' or 'unparallel'. The land whose bewitching picture is conjured by her name 'Assam' is in fact peerless, judged by her exquisite natural beauty, cultural richness and human wealth.

In the epic age, Assam was known as Pragjyotisa or the place of eastern astronomy. In classical Sanskrit literature, Pragjyotisa is also called Kamrupa. A graphic account of the geography of Pragjyotisa or Kamrupa is to be found in the

Kalika Puran (10th century) and Yogini Tantra (16th century), both of which dwell upon the rite-geographical history of mediaeval Assam. According to some historians the ancient name of Pragjyotishpura the city of eastern light, which later changed to Kamrupa- the land where Kamdeva, the god of love was reborn.

The modern name of the Assam is of recent origin. It is connected with the Ahoms who entered the Brahmaputra valley in the beginning of the 13th century. They say that this term is applied to them by the native tribes at the time of their invasion of the valley, and were an index of the awe and admiration with which the later regarded the Ahom conqueror that conciliated them. Noted Orientologist Dr Banikanta Kakoti suggests that 'Asoma' may be a later day Sanskritization of an earlier form 'Acham'. In Tai the root 'Cham' means 'to be vanquished'. With the Assamese prefix 'a' 'Asam' or 'Acham' would mean 'undefeated', 'victorious'. (Source: *History of Assamese Literature, Brinchi Kumar Borah, 1964*) .Besides there are many views behind its style and name. In recent times, the intellectuals of Assam it name as style as 'Asom' denoting argument behind it style.

Assam is an important commercial, cultural, and educational centre of N.E. Region. The literacy rate of Assam is 73.18 % (male-82.76% and female-72.56%) as against the all national average of 74.04 % in 2011 census. The various specialized educational centres help to provide the educational facilities of the state. There are six universities in the state. These are Dibrugarh University, Guahati University, Assam University, Tezpur University, Assam Agricultural University and Krishna Kanta Handique State Open University. Apart from six universities in Assam, Assam Medical college & Hospital, Dibrugarh, Guwahati Medical College & Hospital, Silchar Medical College, Jorhat Medical College, Jorhat Engineering College, National Institute of Technology, Silchar, Assam Institute of Management, Guwahati College of Architecture, Central Institute of Indian Language, Regional Dental College, Guwahati, Regional Nursing College, Guwahati, School of Management Science, Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, Indian Institutes of Technology, Guwahati, National Education Foundation of Law

College, North Eastern Regional Institute of Management, Multimedia Computerized Calligraphy Training Centre, Government Polytechnics at Different Places, National Institute of Fashion Technology, Institute of Hotel Management, Information Technology and other courses at several private institutes, Colleges of teacher education etc help to provide the educational facility of the state.

The climate of Assam is interesting for society. A pleasant sub alpine climate prevails in the hills and the plains of the different valley experience a humid tropical climate with heavy rainfall. The average maximum temperature that normally prevails in Assam lies between 30⁰ c to 33⁰ c during summers and 6⁰ c to 12⁰ c during winters. The state of Assam records one of the highest rainfalls (having approx 178 cm. and 305 cm) in the world. The heavy monsoon rain normally begins from mid June and continues up to October with occasional dry spells.

The cultural life of Assamese people is basically related with the nation of Assam. The Assamese cultural life relates around the activities of two most important socio-cultural institutions called the 'Satra' (the seat of the religious head) and the 'Namghar' (community prayer hall) in where Hindu Vaishnavities pray the God through performing 'Naamkirtans'. Other way, Bihu is the most social and cultural festival of Assam which is observed with great zeal and enthusiasm by the Assamese people. The Assamese people believe that the three kinds of bihu festivals make the unity among the people of Assamese people. The Assamese people respect the two Mahapurusha name as 'Sankardeva' and 'Madhabdeva' due to their contributions towards Assamese nation. The contributions of this two religious reformer helps to forge unity among the Assamese people.

The handloom and handicrafts industries of Assam represent the artistic skill of the Assamese craftsmen. It comprises of cane and bamboo products, toys, masks, brass-wares, jewellery, figures carved on wood and terracotta etc. The handloom products of Assam include basically handloom garments, woolen

shawls, traditional Gamucha, Mekhala Chador, which is traditional dress, worn with pride by the Assamese women. Other way, Assam is traditionally famous for cottage industry and it helps to grow a significant role in the socio-economic infrastructure of the Assamese nation. These industries help to carry an employment opportunity among the Assamese people. The main cottage industry of Assam are silk industry that comprises Eri, Muga and Pat products, weaving industry, bell metal industry, pottery works, ivory works etc.

The five national parks of Assam have attracted tourists of India. The parks are Kaziranga, Manas, Dibru Saikhuwa, Nameri and Orang. Assam is a melting pot of diverse races, ethnic groups like Indo-Burmese, Indo-Tibetan, Mongolian, Aryans etc. who were, in different points of time, transformed in the colorful Assamese society. Apart from this, the state is known for the monuments which were built by the ruler of the Ahom dynasty. Some of such historical monuments are Sivadoul, Rang ghor, Kareng Ghor, Jaidoul, Joysagor Pukhuri (tank), Rudrasagor Pukhuri (Tank) etc which are seen by the tourist of the India as well as outside the nation.

Jorhat District

Jorhat is the significant district among the districts of Assam. Jorhat was the last capital of Ahom kingdom, is perhaps the only town in the North-East region of India the very name of which has connection with trade and commerce. Historians have established that the name 'Jorhat' emerged from two 'hats' or weekly bazaars 'Macharhat' and 'Chowki Hat'. During the early Ahom period Jorhat was not an important place. It was known as 'Disoi Bahor'(temporary resort). Later on it was made the capital of Assam; and probably, for the convenience of people living in the capital, these two 'Hats' were established. Prior to declaration as district, Jorhat was a civil sub-division and administrative headquarter of Sibsagar district. However, on 23rd June of 1983, Jorhat got the district status.

Jorhat as an important district of Assam is situated at 27.35⁰ N to 26.30⁰ N Latitude and 93.45⁰ E to 94.30⁰ Longitude. It is bounded by Sibsagar district on the East, Golaghat district on the West, Sonitpur and Lakhimpur district on the North and the state of Nagaland on the South. The present district of Jorhat is geographically covered with an area of 2851 sq. km., accounting to 3.63% of the total area of the state. The district has three civil sub-divisions, viz., Jorhat, Majuli and Titabor. There are five numbers of revenue circles in the district, of which four under Jorhat sub-division and one under Majuli sub-division. The administrative headquarter of the district is located at Jorhat town at a distance of 308 km. by road from Guwahati.

According to 2011 census, the provisional population of Jorhat district stood at 1, 091, 295 as against 10, 09, 197 in 2001. During 1991-2001 periods the population of the district recorded growth rate of 15.84% whereas the total population for the same period in Assam had increased by 18.85%. The density of the population in the district is higher than that of the state average. According to 2011 census, the density of the population in the district was 383 per square kilometer as against the state average of 397 per sq.km. The majority people of Jorhat live in villages. According to 1991 census, there were 851 villages in the district. In 2001, 15 more villages included in the district and accordingly total number of villages in the district stood at 866. All the villages have been grouped into eight Community Development Blocks. Other way, the Jorhat district has also the higher proportion of people residing in rural areas. According to 1991 census, the total rural population in the district was 7.38 lakhs as against 1.33 lakhs of urban population. However, in 2001 census, it has revealed that the percentage of decadal growth (1991-01) of urban population in the district is much higher than that of the decadal growth of rural population that is 28.28% as against the 13.60% respectively. Except this, a total of 111 numbers of Gaon Panchayat are there in the district. The district has one Municipal Board (Jorhat) and town Committee (Mariani).

The district has a varied topography. On the north lies the famous river Island Majuli, the soil of which is mostly alluvial and varies from sandy loam to sand. Majuli geographically covers 924.6 km, with a population of about 1.50 lakh. Majuli is the principal place of pilgrimage of Vaishnavites since the age of Ahom rule. There are several Satras such as Bengenawati Satra (1524), Dakhinpaat Satra (1562), Garmur Satra (1562), Auniati Satra (1562) etc. The southern part of the district extends up to the foothills of Nagaland state and the soil of this side is very suitable for tea plantation. Most part of the district is characterized by plain land casually interspersed by small hillocks. As a whole the soil of the district is mostly alluvial deposit, consisting of sand, clay and silt of varying proportions. The valley of the river Brahmaputra and its tributaries are very must fertile.

The major river of the district is Brahmaputra which flows from east to west on the northern part of the district. The main tributaries of the river Brahmaputra that flows through the district are Bhogdoi, Kakojan, Teok. The river Jhanji, another tributary of Brahmaputra flows through the border between Jorhat and Sibsagar district, and that of the Kakodonga river flows through the border between Jorhat and Golaghat district.

As reported by the District Fishery Officer, in the 2001 census the district had 46 numbers of registered beel fisheries and 8 numbers unregistered beel fisheries covering an area of about 1243 hectares. The numbers of registered river fisheries in the district stood at 6 during the same year. In addition to the above the district had also 3,858 numbers of private village ponds with an area of 239 hectares and 316 numbers of community fisheries covering an area of about 55 hectares. During the year 2001-02 the production of quality fish seeds were 4.30 lakes of IMC fry and fingerlings size and 20 lakhs of exotic camp fingerling size.

There are a good number of Small Scale Industrial units that are registered under the District Industry and Commerce Centre (DICC), Jorhat. As per available information, altogether 45 of Small Scale Industrial units were registered during the year 2001-02 as against the registration of 51 units during 2000-01 and 39 units

during 1999-2000. At present there is only one industrial estate in the district which is located at Jorhat town. The tea industry occupies a special place in the economy of the district. From the British to recent period Jorhat became a centre of the tea industry in Assam. The only Oil field found in the district is Borholla Oil Field which was discovered by ONGC in 1983. Besides, hand loom and textile, sericulture etc occupy an important place in the district economy. In the district the most important means of communication for goods and human being is road transport. The total road length including national highway in the district was 1668.17 km during the year 2001-02. The facilities of Road transport communication are provided by the public and private sector organization. Besides, railway, water transport, post and telegraphs are available as per official's records. Besides, the first Assamese to win the highest literature award, the Jnanpith Award Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya was born in the district.

The Panchayati Raj (PR) system of Jorhat has been implementing various rural developmental programmes in the district through Development Blocks. According to the information available from PR the following schemes are implemented in the district, viz., SGSY, IAY, EAS, JGSY, IRDP, NREGA etc. The schemes are implemented for the socio-economic upliftment and infrastructural development of rural people in Jorhat district. Other way, various Self Help Groups of the district have tried to develop the economic conditions of the people through their work.

Jorhat is the tea capital of Assam, an important commercial, cultural, and educational centre of upper Assam. Moreover, the district enjoys the highest number of literacy rate and ranked '1' among the districts of the state as revealed by 2001 and 2011 census. The literacy rate of Jorhat was 77.91% (male-82.76% and female-72.56%) as against the all Assam average of 64.28 % in 2001 census. In 2011 census, it had increased to 83.42 % (male-88.38 % and female-78.22 %) as against the state average of 73.18 %. The rural literacy rate in 2001 census is 74.07% as against the urban literacy rate 86.92%. The various specialized institutes

also continued to impart education in the district, viz., Engineering College, Law College, Agricultural College, Institution of Post Graduate Studies, Polytechnic, Industrial Training Institution (ITI) and Sericulture Training College. There is only one university located in the district, viz., the Assam Agricultural University which is situated near Jorhat town. On the other hand, Jorhat Government Boys School is the oldest educational institute of the district which was established in the year of 1883. The Jagannath Barooah College is the oldest college in the district set up in the year of 1930 and it is recognized as the first college in upper Assam. The district has a one historical religious centre known as 'Dhakiakhowa Bornamghar' which was established by Mahapurash Madhabdeva (religious reformer) in the year of 1461. It is located at Dhekiakhowa village of Jorhat, 3.5 km away from National Highway 37. Besides, the Toklai Research Association (TRA) is the oldest and largest tea research station of its kind in the world. Apart from this, the North East Institute of Science & Technology (NEIST) as a well-known research institution is functioning in the district. The Indian Air Force has a station at Rowriah, which serves as the commercial air hub for the city.

The district is historically significant for the Lachit Borphukan Maidan. Lachit was the Ahom general who defeated the mighty Mughals at Saraighat in 1672. Besides, there is an organization in the district known as 'Chandrakanta Handique Bhavan'. The Chandrakanta Handique Bhavan is the head quarter of Asom Sahitya Sabha. It was built in the year of 1926. Apart from this, the Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary is situated in the Hoollongapar which is 19 km away from the town. The Hoollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary was earlier known as Hoollongapar Forest during the British period in 1981.

Villages under study

Keeping in view the facts of the district of Jorhat as stated above, three villages have been selected for field study. The names of the villages are Komar Khatowal, Dulia Gaon, Gohain Pothar. Their historical background and socio-economic as well as infrastructural development have been given below.

Komar Khatowal Gaon

The village is situated at a distance of about 12 km away from Jorhat town which starts from National Highway No 37 with a distance of 3¹/₂ km on a contiguous land. There is a historical reason behind the name of Komar Khatowal gaon. The people of the village believe that in historical period, some of the family of 'Komar Community' (iron smith) lived in this village. The people mainly depended only iron goods and they provided various iron instruments to Assamese society when Ahom Community was in power. In present times, there are 4/5 numbers of komar community family in this village. After that there were paddy field known as 'Rojar Khat' and 'Dokhin Pat Satra Khat' and people of the village did agriculture in that khat. The person who did farming and depended on agriculture is known as Khatowal. Therefore, the name Komar Khatowal had emerged from historic point of view. (*Source: Dr Rajen Borah edited a souvenir 'Brindabon' on the occasion on Silver Jubilee of Rash Utsab of Komar Khatowal, article on Tuniram Bhuyan pp.28*)

Having explained the historical background of this village from various sources, now we shall explain the population distribution, caste distribution and infrastructural development regarding Educational Institutions, Mass-media and Communication, Health facility, Water and Marketing facility and Socio-cultural Identity of these villages.

Land and population distribution

The total numbers of households in this village are 207 and total populations against the households are 1321, of which 879 are males 842 are females (2001 census). According to the census 2002-03 of Economics and Statistics Department, Jorhat District, the working populations are 880 of which 541 are male and 339 are females. The total lands of this village are 3338 Bighas 3 Lochas (446.09 hectares) of which 3264 Bighas 2 Kothas 16 Lochas (437.02 hectares) are cultivated lands (*Source: Circle office, Teok*). There are various castes of this village like as Brahmin, Kalita, Chutia, Koch, Kewot, etc.

Educational Institutions or Facility

The village progresses respectively in the context of education. The literacy rate of the village is 85.45% of which 89.34% are male and 80.05% are female. The educational institutions established in and around this village have provided the students to increase the rate of literacy. As reported by concerned department, in the year 2006, the village had a total number of 3 primary schools, 1 middle school, 1 high school, four Aganbadi centres. The only M.V. School named, 'Komar Khatowal Mojoliya Vidyalaya' (estd 1959) has already completed its Silver Jubilee. The enrolments of the school are 63 as against the 07 numbers of teachers. The name of the primary schools are respectively 'No. 648 Govindrapur Prathomik Vidyalaya' (estd-1958) and it has 42 students against the 02 numbers of teachers, 'No 600 Sudhakor Prathomik Vidyalaya' (estd-1977) has 37 students against 02 numbers of teachers, 'Komar Khatowal Sankardeva Shisu Niketon' (private, estd-1997) has 53 students against 06 teachers contributed the knowledge among the students. There is only one High School named 'Komar Khatowal Jawaharlal Nehru High School' which was established in the year of 1966. The enrolments of the students in High School are 307 as against the 11 numbers of teachers with 2 fourth grade employees. In spite of being situated in a rural area, this institution deserves its position as a place of pride among the high schools in Kakojan regional area. According to the Head Master Mr. Deban Dutta of this school, this institution is only the educational centre for high school studies near some villages. Thus it has been observed that this school is not only the study centre of that particular village but also of other neighboring villages students. Besides, around this village, a large number of Aganbadi centers have imparted education among the children of the village.

Transport and Communication

Means of Communication plays an important role in rural area. Komar Khatowal has a post office name as 'Komar Khatowal Post Office'. The post office facilitates stamp-vending, cards, envelopes, and limited banking like savings

account schemes. Letters and parcels are regularly delivered at home in the village. There are large numbers of TV, DTS, DVD, Computer sets. Radio is less popular among the medium of mass-media of this village. The people of the village subscribe to Assamese and English dailies news papers namely the Dainik Janambhumi, Pratidin, Khobor, Agradoot, Amar Assam (Assamese papers), the Assam Tribune, the Sentinel and the Hindustan Time. The communication system of the village is not so good due to kachha road. Of course, this year 2010, the road is being constructed under the scheme of 'Prime Minister Gram Sarak Yojona' (PMGSY). For road transportation many people in these village posses their motor vehicles, motor bikes, bicycles etc.

Medical facility

At present the village has one primary health sub centre which is known as 'Komar Khotowal Primary Health Centre' with one physician supported by a family welfare centre. Except this, there is no medical facility in this village.

Water and Electric Facility

The drinking water facility is not so satisfactory in the village. The Public Health Department has recently provided drinking water facility in this village. But due to lack of capital or other reasons of public, the people can't get the facility of drinking water. At present, the scheme of drinking water has been completely out of service. Therefore, the public of the village take water through the use of public and private ponds and tube wells. The electric facility is also available in this village. Some of the rural people get the free electric connection from the state government.

Social and Cultural Organizations

There are various social, cultural and religious organizations which help to develop the personality among the people of the village. The 'Cultural Development Centre' name and style as 'Sanskrit Unayan Kendra' is the most important organization which has completed silver jubilee in the year of 2009. The traditional Rash Mahotshab has been celebrated in this cultural centre. On the other

hand, the different cultural festivals like Bihu, Drama etc have been organized by this respective cultural centre. It is observed that the people of the village recognize this centre as a mile stone of this village. Besides, the 'Namghar' (religious centre) helps the people to exercise their religious faith and practice along with cultural development.

There are various social organizations which contribute to socio-economic development of the village. Among these organizations 'Amor Jyoti Sangha' (Youth Club), 'Sudhakor Gyan Bikash Kendra' (Youth Club), 'Amor Jyoti Moina Parijat' (Child Development Centre), 'Komar Khatowal Branch Student Union' etc are significant for this village. Educational Development, Cultural Development, Communication Development etc are the main objectives of these organizations. Amor Jyoti Maina Parijat, a child development organization also has played a major participative role for mental and physical development of the children of the area. Other way, the 'Village Defense Party' (VDP) has helped to maintain the chaotic situation among the people of the village. Above all it is observed, the socio-cultural organizations have contributed towards the development of the village in a systematic way.

The Dulia Gaon

The village is situated at a distance of about 14 km away from Jorhat town and starts from National Highway No 37 with a distance of 3¹/₂ km on a contiguous land. The name 'Dulia Goan' originated from the fact that a Dulia Boruah family of Ahom community lived in this village during the Ahom period. Therefore the name Dulia goan emerged from historic point of view.

The population distribution, caste distribution and infrastructural development regarding Educational Institutions, Mass-media and Communication, Health facility, Water and Marketing facility and Socio-cultural Identity of these villages are discussed below.

Land and population distribution

The total numbers of households in this village are 203 and total populations against the households are 1593 of which 807 are males 788 are females (2001 Census). According to the census 2002-03 of Economics and Statistics Department, Jorhat District, the working populations of this village are 938 of which 542 are male and 396 are female. The village geographically located with the area of 2133 Bighas and 1 Katha 15 Lochas (285.58 hectares) as of which 1948 Bighas 3 Katha (260.85 hectares) are cultivated land (*Source: Circle office, Teok*). The caste distributions are an important part of the village. The major castes of the village are Kolita, Brahmin, Koch, Kowat.

Educational Institutions or Facility

Education plays an important role in the progress and development of a particular village. The literacy rate of Dulia Gaon is 73.78% of which 76.87% are male and 70.34% are female. The educational institutions established in and around this village have provided the knowledge among the students of the village. As reported by concerned department in 2006, the village has only 2 primary schools with 2 Aganbadi centers. Except this, there are no educational institutions in this school. The primary School, '73 No Dulia Prathomik Bidyalaya' (estd 1959) has 40 students as against the 02 numbers of teachers. The other primary school named 'Namoni Dulia Prathomik Vidyalaya' was established in the year of 1968. The enrolments of the students in this primary school are 36 as against the 02 numbers of teachers. Besides, around this village, 2 numbers of Aganbadi centres have shed light the knowledge among the children of the village. Hence it is observed, the educational facility is not well for this village. The village people has gone neighboring educational institutions for others study.

Transport and Communication

Communication plays an important role in rural area. Dulia gaon has a post office name as 'Kakojan Dulia Post Office'. The major facilities are stamp-vending, cards, envelop, and limited banking like savings account schemes. Letters

and parcels are regularly delivered at home in the village. TV, DTH, DVD, Computer etc are somehow available in this village. Radio is less popular among the medium of mass-media in this village. The members of the village regularly subscribe both Assamese and English dailies news papers namely the Dainik Janambhumi, Pratidin, Khobor, Agradoot, Amar Assam (Assamese papers), the Assam Tribune and the Sentinel. The subscribers of English daily are very few. The communication system of the village is bad due to kachha road. The village people face so many problems due to bad communication conditions. For road transportation many people in these village posses their motor vehicles, motor bikes, bycycle etc.

Medical facility

The village has no primary health sub centre. It has been observed that the village people have faced so many problems in the context of health service. Therefore, they demand local MLA to provide the medical facility immediately in the village.

Water and Electric Facility

The Public Health Department has recently provided drinking water facility in this village. But all the people can't get the facility of drinking facility. The electric facility is also available in this village. Some of the rural people get the free electric capacity.

Social and Cultural Organizations

There are various socio-cultural and religious organizations of the village which help in the socio-cultural and infrastructural development of the village. The Cultural Development Centre name as style as 'Dulia Gaon Kola Kristi Kendra' is the most important organization which was established in the year of 1985. The Rash Mahatshab has been celebrating traditionally in this cultural centre. On the other hand, the different cultural festivals like Bhaona, Drama, Cultural Night etc are organized in this respective cultural centre. Besides, the different 'Namghar' (religious centre) of the village has helped the people to exercise their religious

faith and practice along with cultural development. The only youth club named as 'Dulia Gaon Yuba Sangha' helps in the infrastructural development of the village. On the other hand, the village has a big and old library named 'Dulia Gaon Puthibhoral', established in 1989. This library has a stock of about 2000 books and many of them are very old. This library has fulfilled the needs among the students as well as children of the village. Hence, this library has been increasing reading awareness among the youth and other people in the village. Other way, the 'Village Defense Party' (VDP) has helped to maintain the chaotic situation among the people of the village. Above all it is observed, the socio-cultural organizations of the villages have contributed to progress the village in a systematic way.

Gohain Pothar Gaon

The Gohain Pothar is one of the important village of Jorhat district which is situated 15 km distance from Jorhat town. There is a historical reason behind the name of Gohain Pothar Gaon. The 'Gohain Community' of Ahom (which are basically Alpine ethnic group) lived in this village. The people of such community did paddy crops in the pothar (means paddy field). Therefore, the village recognizes as 'Gohain Pothar'. Of course, due to the attack on Maan upon Assamese Community, the Alpine community people had distributed different parts of Assam.

The socio-economic setting of a particular village is one of the important parts of a rural society. The educational development, health, water facility, population and land distribution, caste distribution, cultural developments are important part of a particular village. Therefore, the study tries to explain the socio-economic, cultural development as well as cultural settings of the Gohain Pothar gaon.

Land and population distribution

There are 183 households in Gohain Pothar and total populations against the households are 961 of which 491 are males and 470 are females during the 2001 census. According to the census 2002-03 of Economics and Statistics

Department, Jorhat District, the working populations of this village are 700 of which 393 are male and 307 are female. The village geographically located with the area of 2133 Bighas and 1 Kothas 15 Lochas (191.45 hectares) of which 1948 Big has 3 Kothas (167.40 hectares) are cultivated land (*Source: Circle office, Teok*). The various castes of the village are Kolita, Chutia, Brahmin, and Rajasthani. The caste system plays a dominant role in village social structure.

Educational Institutions or Facility

Education is a powerful instrument to acquire knowledge and social change as well as conditions to change an individual situation. The village progresses respectively in the context of education. The literacy rate of the village is 80.43% of which 85.76% are male and 74.65 % are female. The various educational institutions have provided the students of Gohain Pothar to increase the rate of literacy. The village has a total number of 2 primary schools, 1 high school, and 2 Aganbadi centre. One of the primary school of this village named as 'Gohain Pothar Madhabdeva L. P. School' was established in the year of 1976. There are only 10 students as against 02 numbers of teachers. The 'Teok Rajabari Govt. Jr. Basic School' (Established-1953) has already completed silver jubilee. The enrolments of the school are 107 as against the 06 numbers of teachers. According to the Head Master Mr. Natu Kolita of this school, this institution is only the educational centre for child education studies near some villages. There is an only High School name 'Teok Rajabari Nilamoni Phukon Girls High School' which was established in the year of 1979. The enrolments of the students in High School are 150 as against the 14 numbers of teachers with 2 fourth grade employee. Besides, around this village, the two Aganbadi centre have contributed the knowledge among the children of the village.

Transport and Communication

Communication is the way to progress a particular area. Gohain Pothar post office name is known as 'Teok Rajabari Post Office'. The major facilities are stamp-vending, cards, envelop, and limited banking like savings account schemes.

Letters and parcels are regularly delivered at home in the village. The TV, DTH, DVD, Computer etc are also available in this village. Radio is less popular among the medium of mass-media in this village. The members of the village regularly subscribe both Assamese and English dailies news papers namely the Dainik Janambhumi, Pratidin, Khobor, Agradoot, Amar Assam (Assamese papers), the Assam Tribune and the Sentinel. The subscribers of English daily are very few. The communication system of the village is not so bad. A road running from Modoijan to Janjimukh passes through this village. It is a metal road and sub roads of the village are completely kaccha. For road transportation many people in these village posses their motor vehicles, motor bikes, bicycle etc.

Medical facility

The village has no primary health sub centre. It has been observed that the village people have faced so many problems in the context of health service. Therefore, they demand local MLA to provide the medical facility in the village.

Water and Electric Facility

The Public Health Department has provided drinking water facility in this village. Drinking water is tapped from tube-wells and then pumped into distribution network after purification by Public Health Department. Thus it has been observed that all the people of the village get the free drinking water facility. The electric facility is also available in this village. Some of the rural people get the free electric facility.

Social and Cultural Organizations

There are various socio-cultural and religious organizations of the village which help in the socio-cultural and infrastructural development of the village. The Cultural Development Centre name as style as 'Teok Rajabari Kola Kristi kendra' is the most important organization which was established in the year of 1949. The Rash Mahotshab has been traditionally celebrated in this cultural centre. On the other hand, the different cultural festivals like as Drama, Cultural Night, and Meeting etc are organized in this respective cultural centre. Except this, the 2

‘Namghar’ (religious centers) of the village has helped the people to exercise their religious faith and practice along with cultural developments. It has been observed that the local MLA of Teok has recently provided 2 lakhs rupees for library facility of the village.

The village has one youth club known as ‘Rajabari Cyclone Club’ which was established in the year of 1997. The youth club helps in the socio-cultural development of the village. ‘Alok Proyash’ a well known Non Government Organization (NGO) is situated in this village. The main objectives of this NGO are growing awareness in the context of Education, Health, and Culture etc. The NGO provides free training in the field of economy, computer training, social service in different field, and economic help for poor people etc in different areas. The ‘7 No Pachim Teok Goan Panchayat’ office is situated in the village. One of the Veterinary dispensaries is also situated in this village which provides veterinary services among the villages. Other way, the ‘Village Defense Party’ (VDP) has helped to maintain the chaotic situation among the people of the village. Above all, the socio-cultural organizations have contributed to progress the village in a systematic way.

All three villages do not have well marketing facility within the village. The economy of the villages is mainly depend on agriculture and allied activities and some of the people of the villages depend on government services and business. Flood is a recurrent phenomenon of the three villages taken for study. The Brahmaputra and Kakojan River have destroyed the agricultural economy of Komar Khatowal and Dulia gaon. Other way, the Teok River has basically affected in Gohain Pothar agricultural settings. Some times, flood of Brahmaputra River enter the home of the many people in the context of Dulia and Komar Khatowal gaon. Due to the lack of water in agriculture, the irrigation facility have not provided by the government for paddy crops in the fields of agriculture. Therefore it has been observed that the village people face so many problems in the context of agriculture.

The three villages enjoy a moderate climate condition followed by heavy rainfall and scorching heat in summer days. The rainy season starts from May and continues up to October during which river Brahmaputra overflows and is often devastated by flood. During the summer it becomes extremely hot and temperature rises up to 36⁰ C. The best period is winter which starts from early November and continues up to mid February.

The villages have both regional and national level political parties and have its own 'Gram Sabha'. All three villages belong to 'No 7 Pachim Teok Goan Panchayat'. Its politics is also faction-ridden. In spite of all the odds, the people especially, the youth are politically more alert for which they have been publically benefited.

The villages are socio-economically backward. The majority people of the three villages lie in Below Poverty Line (BPL). Therefore, the government of India as well as State government has provided some welfare schemes for economic and infrastructural development of the village. All three villages are lies within the No. 7 Pachaim Teok Goan Panchayat which has provided free latrines, houses, rice of Rs 3 and Rs 7 for the people of the village. In the three villages taken for study, several rural schemes were launched by the government which is still continuing.

1. Briddha Pension. (National old age Pension)
2. Anganbadi Achani.
3. Janani Surakha Yojana. (For child and woman)
4. Indira Awas Yojana.
5. Self Help Group Schemes.
6. Family welfare schemes for poor widows.
7. Kutir Jyoti and Rajib Gandhi Gramya Bidyutkoran Achani. (Cottage and electric connection for the poor)
8. Gramin Rojgarh Yujana (construction of Road, Pool, Pure Drinking Water, Latrin construction etc.)
9. Kalpataru Achani.

10. Jibon Jyoti.

11. Prime Minister Gram Sorok Yujana.

12. National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA).

NREGA is basically a wage employment scheme which provides fuller wage employment to basically the rural poor. The State Government provides to every household in a rural area at least a minimum of one hundred days of work in a financial year. The scheme also impacts the rural areas of Jorhat district of Assam. There are large numbers of NREGA beneficiaries in different villages of Jorhat district of Assam. The No. 7 Pachim Teok Goan Panchayat has total 835 numbers of NREGA beneficiaries. Therefore, the present study has been conducted specially NREGA beneficiaries in three villages of No. 7 Pachim Teok Goan Panchayat of Jorhat district of Assam. The three villages are Komar Khatowal, Dulia Goan and Gohain Pothar. The NREGA beneficiaries of Komar Khatowal Gaon are 226 of which 219 are male against 7 numbers of female. Dulia Goan has 68 NREGA beneficiaries against only 4 numbers of female beneficiaries. On the other hand, there are 53 NREGA beneficiaries in the context of Gohain Pothar gaon of which 2 are female NREGA beneficiaries. (*Source: Kaliapani Block Development Office*). Therefore, the present study is to understand the process of planning and implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) and its impact on socio-economic conditions in Jorhat district of Assam. The present study makes an attempt to explore the planning, implementation and its impacts on socio-economic condition on rural poor people by providing them guarantee of minimum wage employment through NREGA in three villages of Jorhat district of Assam.