

## **Chapter 5**

### **FIELD OF THE STUDY**

This chapter highlights the context of the study and describes the settlement in Doloo Tea Garden village of Cachar district in Barak valley of Assam. It is introduced in terms of its historical, geographical, social, cultural, religious, occupational and political features. The Barak Valley is situated in the southern part of Assam. The main city of the valley is Silchar. The place is named after the Barak River. Barak valley mainly consists of three districts; namely, Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi. The official language of Barak valley is Bangla. However, majority of people speak a dialect, Sylheti Bangla. By religious composition the valley has Hindus with tribals (50%), Muslims (46%) and others (4%). Hindus are in majority in Cachar district (60%) while Muslims are in majority in Karimganj district (53%) and Hailakandi district (57%). Besides the Sylheti Bengalis, Barak Valley is also the homeland of Manipuris (both, Bishnupriya and Meitei), Kacharis, Rongmei Nagas and tea garden labourers. Cachar is an administrative district of Assam and its headquarters are located at Silchar. It occupies an area of 3786 km. The name ‘Cachar’ traces its origin to the Kachari kingdom. Cachar was a part of the greater Kachari kingdom which also included the adjoining Hailakandi and Karimganj districts. Silchar, the headquarters town of Cachar district, is located in the southern part of Assam, on the Barak River near the Bangladesh border. It is the economic gateway to the state of Mizoram and a part of Manipur. It is also a trade and processing centre for tea, rice and other agricultural products. There are found a few industries, principally paper manufacturing and tea-box manufacturing industries. Consequently, it witnesses the settlement of a sizeable population of traders from distant parts of India. The city has an airport and also lies on, both, rail head and national highways connecting Guwahati (Assam), Agartala (Tripura), Imphal (Manipur) and Aizawl (Mizoram) (<http://en.wikipedia.org> retrieved at 3.30 p.m on 17.04.2015). The Brahmaputra Valley, on the other hand is a region situated between hill ranges of the eastern and northeastern Himalayan

range. The valley consists of different regions like the western Brahmaputra valley covering the regions of Goalpara and Kamrup; the central Brahmaputra valley region covering Darrang, Nagaon and Sonitpur districts; and the eastern Brahmaputra valley covering the districts of Lakhimpur, Dibrugarh and Sibsagar. The Teesta River in North Bengal also drains into Brahmaputra River. The Brahmaputra Valley with its rainforest-like climate contains some of the most productive soils in the world. The Brahmaputra River flows from Assam to Bengal where it meets the River Ganges to form the world's largest delta and finally flows into the Bay of Bengal in the south (<http://en.wikipedia.org> retrieved at 3.30 p.m on 17.04.2015).

## THE TEA GARDENS

The labourers in the tea garden were brought by the British from the different parts of the country like Chhotanagpur plateau region, Bihar, Jharkhand, Bengal, Orissa and Central India. At that time, the area was fully covered with jungles and so many brute animals. Later, the owners got it cleared by labourers. After a long struggle, tea tribes established their shelters and made the land under the garden cultivable. According to a story the Britishers made unreal promises that by shaking the tea bushes one could collect as much money as desired or one would be paid money as much as equal to the weight of the leaves plucked by him in a day.

### The Doloo Tea Garden Village

Doloo is surrounded in the North by the North Cachar hills, Mizo hills on the south, Manipur on the east and Bangladesh on the west. Doloo is a big settlement which comes under the Barkhala Block. Doloo is well connected by road. The distance from Silchar (Sadarghat) to Doloo is 38 kilometers. The roads are connected and currently being updated to 4 lane highway (Mahasarak) which is directly linked with North Cachar hills, Lumding and Guwahati. The Doloo have regular bus, taxi, sumo service, connecting Silchar with Udharbandh, Hatichhera, Lalbag, Subang,

Murlidhar and Maynagar. The road is bordered with small tilla (hills) and the tea garden is in both side of the road. P.H.E. water supply office is located in front of the Tea Garden Office, connected by a pocket road. Some mixed household livings are found both the sides of the road. Inner road condition of the village is very poor. Every road is kachcha, slushy and some roads are made with gravelled. They are always filled with filth and cow dung. The drains are shallow and waterlogged, affecting health and hygiene adversely. In night the roads are enveloped in darkness and as the tea-garden authority provide electricity to Doloo Market only.

Doloo Tea Garden is one of the largest tea gardens of Barak Valley. It is situated in the northern part of Cachar district since 1894. Doloo Tea Estate which was bought by the Tea Pioneer, Shri Rambhai Ambalal Patel from the Walter Duncans. Now it produces nearly 2.4 million kgs of CTC Black Tea per Annum. It's the largest tea estate in the south Assam. It has received awards from Govt of India for highest yeild per hectare in South Assam. The factory has capacity of producing nearly 3.0 million kgs of CTC black tea sold under Doloo Supreme Brand. The company estate is called Doloo Tea Estate owned by the Patel Family of Shri Rambhai Ambalal Patel. Tea is sold in bulk and packets and is also exported to other countries. The Patel family exclusively owned the Doloo Tea Company (India) Ltd ([http://kolkata.yalwa.in/id\\_105481469/doloo-tea-company-india-limited.html](http://kolkata.yalwa.in/id_105481469/doloo-tea-company-india-limited.html)).

### **The Achabam Tea Garden Village**

Achabam is one of a big settlement which comes under the Naharkatia Block. Achabam is connected by 2 lane pacca road which is connected with Duliajan and Dibrugarh highway. The distance from Dibrugarh to Achabam is near about 80 kilometers. The Achabam have regular city bus and auto riksa services. The road is bordered with the tea garden is in both side of the road. In the tea garden, road

condition of the village is very good. Every road is pacca. Only few roads are made with gravelled.

‘Achabam’ literally means **good soil**. The planters thought that the name of the place was Achabam. Mr. Knolla European Manager of the Borhat Tea Estate in 1920, impressed with the fertile land, concluded that it was fit for cultivation and subsequently, initiated efforts for establishing a tea plantation in 1921. The estate Achabam Tea Estate was owned by Achabam Tea Company of M/s. James finlay while the visiting agent was Mr. M. S. Waterstorm. The estate is centrally located, within a large number of estates in this area. In a way, this estate is the passage for people residing in connecting areas. It is established between the Desam River and neighbouring villages. As the name suggests, this estate has given a maximum record yield of 2836 kilograms per hectare.

Achabam, spread across 701.83 hectares, has a production area of 421.92 hectares. The tea estate has the capacity to produce 13.50 lakh kgs of CTC tea and Orthodox tea, which are the final products that the estate has to offer. The plucking season here, begins in March, runs through the rest of the year and ends in December. Fresh green tea leaves from the garden are plucked and processed in the factory which is located within the estate. The produce is manually sorted and individually graded. They are then packed separately into PP woven sacks, sealed and marked with hand-rollers using non-porous ink (Source: Biren Munda, Doloo tea garden and Haren Bhumij in Acha Bam tea garden).

## THE HABITAT

Habitat is an area that is inhabited by particular Adivasi people and to some extent, tea garden labourers those who are brought by the Britishers in the year of 1837-1840.

Table 5.1  
Habitations in the Doloo Tea Garden

<b>Name of Habitations of Doloo Tea Garden</b>	<b>Name of Inhabitant/Community</b>
Doloo Main, Bazar line, Mura line, Ganju line, Purna line, Satchalan, Tila line, Itkhola Basti, Raman Basti	Santhal+Munda+ Orang/Oraon +Karmakar+Bagdi+Ree+Fulmali+Rabidas+ Kurmi/Mahato+Bhumij
Subang, Maynagar, Murlidhar, Lalbag, Abong, Najirband and Boula Basti.	Orang/Oraon+Mura +Karmakar+Tanti+ Bhumij+ Santhal+ Mahato+Tanti+ Bhumij
Balarampur, Bijoypur, Chhotorampur, Balachhara	Ganju+Rekiason+ Fulmali+Dushad+ Orang/Oraon
Badarpur, Kharil Tea Estate, Kalinagar, Masimpur	Santhal+Karmakar+ Rekiason+ Bhumij+ GouriDas+Munda/Mura
Hatichhera, Leburban, Kanaikuri, Tamachhera	Tanti+Pasi+ Bhumij+ Karmakar+Munda+Dushad+GouriDas+Mahato/Kurmi

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

Doloo Tea Estate is divided into five habitations/hamlets and fifteen sub-habitations/ sub-hamlets locally called ‘Lines’, ‘Paras’ or ‘Bastis’(street) ; namely, Doloo Main and Maynagar, Murlidhar, Lalbag, Abong, Najirband and Boula Basti under Subang division, Bijoypur, Chhotorampur, Balachhara under Balarampur division, Kharil Tea Estate, Kalinagar, Masimpur under Badarpur division, Leburban, Kanaikuri, Tamachhera under Hatichhera division. Each habitation /hamlet/settlement is located in the tea garden, comprising houses on both sides of a road.

Table 5.2  
Habitations in the Achabam Tea Garden

<b>Achabam Tea Garden of Name of Habitations</b>	<b>Name of Habitatnt/Community</b>
Paka Line	Munda+Orang+Kishan+Gour+Kalar
Rajaram Line	Kalar+Parja+Barik
Natun Line	Tanti+Nag+Barik
Bazar Line	Tanti+Nag+Jena+Sathal+saora
Hospital Line	Tanti+Kishan+Kurmi/Mahato
Chhamashiya Line	Mura/Munda
Bombay Line	Tanti+Kishan+Majhi(Santhal)
Choukidar Line	Tanti+Bhumij+Kondo+Saora
Dhipa Line	Mura/Munda
4 No.Line	Sabar+Tanti+Karmakar
10 No.Line	Orang+ Paik

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

Achabam tea garden is divided into eleven streets. These are Paka Line, Rajaram Line, Natun Line, Bazar Line Hospital Line, Chhamashiya Line, Bombay Line, Choukidar Line, Dhipa Line, 4 No. Line and 10 No.Line.

#### POPULATION

Doloo and Achabam tea gardens consists of a mixed population of Adivasis and non- Adivasis. The mixed area inhabits all kinds of people; viz; Adivasi (tea tribes), Bengali and Hindustani (Hindi speaking people) in Doloo while in Achabam tea garden, the population is basically comprised of Adivasi (tea tribes), Assamese and Hindustani (Hindi speaking people). Both the settlements have the residential areas and agricultural lands. The population composition of Doloo and Achabam Tea Gardens is shown in the following table:

Table 5.3  
Population Segments in the Doloo & Achabam Tea Gardens  
(Percentage in parentheses)

Doloo Tea Garden					Achabam Tea Garden			
Population Segment	Number of Families	Population			Number of Families	Population		
		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total
<b>Adivasi</b>	1112 (41.40)	2295 (41.16)	2253 (42.76)	4548 (41.95)	1057 (64.29)	2274 (63.86)	2078 (63.19)	<b>4352</b> <b>(63.54)</b>
<b>Non-Adivasi</b>	1574 (58.60)	3280 (58.84)	3016 (57.24)	6296 (58.05)	587 (35.70)	1287 (36.14)	1210 (36.81)	<b>2497</b> <b>(36.45)</b>
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>2,686</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>5575</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>5269</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>10,844</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>1644</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>3561</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>3288</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>6849</b> <b>(100)</b>

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

The tables reveal that most of the population comprises the non-Adivasis in Doloo and Achabam tea garden. But the Adivasi population is significant in the settlements of the two gardens.

#### THE ADIVASIS

Adivasis in Doloo tea garden belong to five communities; viz., Santal, Munda/Mura, Bhumij, Oraon/Urang and Mahato/Kurmi. In Achabam tea garden they belong to twelve communities; viz., Santal, Munda/Mura, Bhumij, Oraon/Urang, Mahato/Kurmi, Kishan, Kalar, Parja, Nag, Saora, Sabar and Majhi. Number of families in the Adivasis is shown in the following table:

Table 5.4  
Adivasis of Doloo & Achabam Tea Garden  
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Name of the Adivasi Group	Number of Families	
	Doloo Tea Garden	Achabam Tea Garden
Santal	500(44.97)	51(4.83)
Munda/Mura	50(4.50)	304(28.76)
Oraon	17(1.52)	128(12.10)
Bhumij	500(44.97)	232(21.95)
Mahato/Kurmi	45(4.04)	44(4.16)
Kishan	--	22(2.08)
Kalar	--	92(8.70)
Parja	--	67(6.33)
Nag	--	21(1.99)
Saora	--	27(2.56)
Sabar	--	31(2.94)
Majhi	--	38(3.59)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1112(100)</b>	<b>1057(100)</b>

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

#### THE CASTES

In the Doloo tea garden, the non-tribal population belongs to various castes; namely, Bengali Brahmin, Non-Bengali Brahmin, Kayastha (Dutta, Dey, Dev), Routh, Sinha, Suklavaidya (Fishermen), Barber, Dhoba (washermen), Malakar, Ganju, Teli, Bagdi, Bouri, Ree, Tanti, Dushad, Rekiason, Gouri Das/ Rabidas while in the Achabam tea garden the non tribal groups are Bengali Brahmin, Non-Bengali Brahmin, Kayastha, Kaibarta, Karmakar, Barber, Dhoba (washermen), Tanti, Paik, Kondo, Gour and Barik. The caste wise distribution of the families in the two gardens is given in the following table:



Table 5.5  
Non-Adivasi Population (Castes) of Doloo & Achabam Tea Garden

Caste	Number of Families	
	Doloo Tea Garden	Achabam Tea Garden
Bengali Brahmin	4(0.25)	01(0.17)
Non-Bengali Brahmin	48(3.049)	03(0.51)
Kayastha (Dutta, Dey, Dev)	45(2.86)	06(1.02)
Routh	30(1.90)	--
Sinha	1(0.06)	--
Kaibarta (Fisherman,Suklavaidya)	639(40.60)	23(3.91)
Barber	12(0.77)	02(0.34)
Dhoba (washermen)	3(0.19)	02(0.34)
Malakar	49(3.11)	--
Mali	2(0.12)	--
Ganju(Hindusthani)	12(0.77)	--
Karmakar	500(31.77)	48(8.17)
Teli	7(0.44)	--
Bagdi	10(0.65)	--
Bouri	99(6.28)	--
Ree	19(1.20)	--
Tanti	50(3.17)	400(68.14)
Dushad	12(0.77)	--
Rekiason	12(0.77)	--
GouriDas	20(1.27)	--
Paik	--	35(5.97)
Kondo	--	19(3.23)
Gour	--	38(6.47)
Barik	--	10(1.70)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1574(100)</b>	<b>587(100)</b>

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

## MIGRATION

In both the tea gardens in Assam, the labourers migrated from Bihar, Bengal, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh (Chhatishgarh) and Chotonagpur of the present Jharkhand.

The following table shows the native places of the tea garden labourers:

Table 5.6  
Native Places of Adivasi and Non-Adivasi populations (castes) in the Doloo & Achabam Tea Garden

Name of the Native Place	Name of the Community
Bihar	Santhal+Munda+ urang/Oraon +Karmakar+Bagdi+Ree+Fulmali+Rabidas
Ranchi/Jharkhand	Mura +Karmakar+Tanti+ Bhumij+ Santhal+ Mahato+Tanti
Orissa	Ganju+Rekiason+ Fulmali+Dushad+ urang/Oraon
West Bengal (Bankura,Purulia)	Santhal+Karmakar+ Rekiason+ Bhumij+ GouriDas
Madhya Pradesh (Chhatishgarh)	Tanti+Pasi+ Bhumij+ Karmakar+Munda+Dushad+GouriDas+Mahato/Kurmi

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

## OCCUPATIONS

In both the tea gardens, the people are engaged in tea plucking which is their main occupation. Besides, they grow at a very small scale rice and seasonal vegetables like potato, cabbage, cauliflower, palak (spinach), lai patta, mustard flowers, ramash, lau etc along with animal husbandry and poultry farming. Tea plucking job is provided in the tea gardens authority. Agriculture and animal husbandry are the activities carried on the land provided to them by the tea garden authority.

## SCHOOLS

In the Doloo tea garden village has three schools; namely, Doloo Higher Secondary (10+2) School with one head teacher and 10 assistant teachers, two clerks and 1 peon, Doloo M.E School with one head teacher, five assistant teachers, one clerk and one peon. Government has also started Sarva Shiksha Mission in L. P. School with 1 teacher in Boula Basti under Doloo tea garden. Besides, Ramkrishna Mission had constructed a hostel for the poor Adivasi and non-Adivasi students in Doloo.

Achabam tea garden has three schools; viz., (i) Achabam Chah Bagicha Prathamik Vidyalaya under the tea company with one principal, one vice principal, five teachers and three non-teaching staff, (ii) Achabam Nabajoyti Prathamik Vidyalaya (govt.) with one head teacher and four assistant teachers and (iii) Jubiya Pukhuri Prathamik Vidyalaya (govt.) with one head teacher and three assistant teacher.

## HOSPITALS

One hospital is catering to health needs of the villagers. It is working under the authority of the Doloo Tea Estate. Hospital staff comprises one doctor, two nurses and three helpers. But Silchar Medical College, Silchar Civil Hospital and private clinics in Silchar, Udharbandh and Doloo Market are preferred by the villagers as the tea estate's hospital lacks medicines, good doctors and medical attention.

Achabam tea estate has also one thirty bed hospital with one doctor, two nurses, one compounder and four ayas (helpers).

## ANGANWARI CENTRE

Anganwari centre also provides basic health care in tea garden villages for labourers' children. These concentrate on basic healthcare activities like distribution of

contraceptives, counseling and supply of nutrients, education and supplementation, as well as pre-school activities. The Doloo tea garden has two anganwari centres for child care which is located in Doloo main and Boula Basti.

Achabam tea estate has four anganwari centres and it is located in near the factory office, one is the inside of Achabam Nabajoyti Prathamik Vidyalaya (government primary school) and child care centre in front of Estate hospital, another seated in Paka line.

#### POST OFFICE

The only post office in the village is located in the Doloo Main Market with one post master, one office staff and one peon. The postman visits only to clear letter box in the village. He distributes letters once a week. During the rainy season the frequency of his visits further declines.

Achabam tea estate has a sub-post office with only one staff.

#### WEEKLY MARKETS

Weekly (rural) market is a place where rural people can buy all essential goods for their daily life. Weekly market has become a part of their life. There is great importance of weekly markets in the daily life of the villagers. In the village, Doloo Market is held once in a week, on Wednesdays, in Doloo Market place. In the weekly market, 200 to 250 shops are arranged, dealing in oil, vegetables, fruits, clothes, sweets, shoe-repairing, spices, chips, cosmetics, metalwares, pots and pans, fish, red meat, pork, chicken, pet animals etc. The weekly market also provides cheap entertainment and fun to the villagers.

Achabam tea estate has small weekly market which is held once in a week, on Thursday. In the market, 100 to 150 shops are arranged. The shopkeepers generally

sell daily necessary commodities like mustard oil, kerosene oil, various seasonal vegetables, fruits, clothes, sweets, chops and cutlet, spices, chips, cosmetics, fish, red meat, chicken, pet animals and very specially pork meat etc.

#### NACH MANTAP, GREEN ROOM AND CARECHESS HOUSE

Doloo has a Nach Mantap (Nach Ghar or theatre) and a green room (Yatra dal uses it for dressing and relax) situated in Tilla Line, made of tin roof, pacca wall and platform. The villagers use it for organizing worship of various kinds; namely, Karam Puja, Tusu Puja, Durga puja, Kali puja, Swaraswati puja etc. and entertainment programmes like yatra or theatre.

Achabam tea estate has no nachghar. It has creches for careing children. The labourers keep their children when they go on work. Garden labourers use it for other purposes also to organize such as Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Karam Puja, Shiv Puja, Swaraswati Puja and some entertainment programmes like yatra or theatre.

#### CLUBS

The Doloo tea estate has three clubs; namely, (i) Doloo Rising Club near Doloo Tea Factory, (ii) Maynagar Youth Club at Maynagar market and (iii) Netaji Yubak Sangha situated in the centre of Baula Basti. The clubs have television sets, carom boards, foot balls and other game articles. Once in a year a film show is organized at the time of Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Saraswati Puja and amount of money is collected from the tea workers, which is called 'Chanda' (contribution) for film shows.

Achabam tea estate has also three clubs; namely, (i) Achabam Cha Majdur Club, (ii) Bombai Line Majdur Club for labourers of the garden and (iii) Naharkatiya Planters Club only for managers, deputy managers and assistant managers.

## GOLF PLAY FIELD

Doloo tea garden has no golf play field but Achabam tea estate has a golf play field for managers and staff. Sometimes labourers also play various games like football, cricket, volley ball etc. In this field, the garden authorities organize various functions, inter- line football and cricket matches.

## TEMPLE AND NAMGHAR

In the Doloo tea estate there are many temples. There is a Hanuman temple in the Tila Line near Nach Ghar, a Jal Kali Mandir near Maynagar, a Shiv Mandir and Gach Baba Mandir near Boula Basti.

Achabam tea estate has four temples; namely, Shiv Temple, Hanuman Temple, Radhakrishna Temple and Kabir Panthi Temple. In this garden, there are also four Namghars for worship of the god and the goddess (Radha and Krishna). Generally the Assamese worship the god and the goddess every day in the morning and the evening.

## CHURCH

There is no church in the Doloo Tea Garden. But Achabam Tea Estate has four churches. The Christian labourers pray there in every Sunday.

In sum, both the tea gardens have big residential settlements of labourers in Cachar and Dibrugah districts respectively of Assam. The gardens comprise two types of population; namely, tribal and non-tribal. There are 1112 tribal families and 1574 non-tribal families in the Doloo Tea Garden of Cachar District. Its total population is 10,880. On the other hand, Achabam Tea Estate of Dibrugarh District has 1057 tribal families and 587 non-tribal families and its total population is 6,849. Adivasis in Doloo Tea Garden belong to five communities; viz., Santal, Munda, Oraon, Bhumij

and Mahato/Kurmi while in Achabam Tea Garden has many Adivasis groups namely Santal, Munda/Mura, Bhumij, Oraon/Urang, Mahato/Kurmi, Kishan, Kalar, Parja, Nag, Saora, Sabar and Majhi. Non-tribal population in Doloo comprises various castes; namely, Brahmin, ( Bengali and Non-Bengali), Kayastha (Dutta, Dey, Dev), Routh, Sinha, Suklavidya, Das (fishermen), Barber, Dhoba (washermen), Malakar, Ganju, Teli, Bagdi, Bouri, Ree, Tanti, Dushad, Rekiason, Gouri Das / Rabidas etc. Besides, Achabam Tea Garden has also many non-tribal and non-Adivasi/caste groups; namely, Brahmin (Bengali and Non-Bengali), Kayastha, Kaibarta, Karmakar, Barber, Dhoba (washermen), Tanti, Paik, Kondo, Gour, Barik etc. In both the tea garden settlements, the people are engaged in tea plucking which is their main occupation. Besides, they also cultivate rice and seasonal vegetables like potato, cabbage, cauli flower, *Palak* (spinach), *lai pata* (mustard leaves), *ramash*, *lau* (pumkin) etc. along with animal husbandry and poultry farming. Tea plucking job is provided in the tea gardens. Agriculture and animal husbandry are the activities by these families carried on the land holdings provided of the tea garden authority and both the settlements have schools, Post Office, Tea Garden Hospital, Nach Mandap, Green Room and Careche, Temples/ Namghar/Churches, Charch, Clubs, Golf play ground and weekly market.

#### KINSHIP SYSTEM

In both, the tea garden, Doloo Tea Garden and Achabam Tea Garden, all the Adivasis generally practice usages of avoidance; for example, father-in-law avoid daughter-in-law; daughter-in-law must avoid mother-in-law and son-in-law must avoid mother-in-law and other female relatives of his wife. Even some relatives must avoid each other in their everyday relationships and in that way, they do not speak to each other, do not touch each other, do not sit together, do not mention each other's name

and even do not look each other in face during interactions. Besides, there is joking relationship between sister-in-law and brother-in-law, between brother's wife and her husband's younger brother, between grandfather and granddaughter. Thus, the Adivasis are still continuing their traditional kinship usages.

The Adivasis use Bengali kinship terms in Doloo tea garden of Cachar and Assamese kinship terms in Achabam Tea Estate in Dibrugarh district as they have forgotten their own kinship terms because they (except Sathals) have not practiced their own mother tongue for the last three generations in the tea plantations and they have adopted Bengali and Assamese languages in the Barak and Brahmaputra valleys respectively. There is observed a process of acculturation due to contact with the majority community, i.e., the Bengali and the Assamese respectively.

#### CLANS

A clan is a group of people united by actual or perceived kinship and descent. Clans in indigenous societies are likely to be exogamous, meaning that their members cannot marry one another. So, a clan is a unilineal kin group which is usually exogamous, claiming descent from a common ancestor who is often represented by a totem. Clans are of either matrilineal or patrilineal descent, recruiting the children either male or female members. A clan is usually segmented into lineages, which are the branches of descent from a common ancestor. In Doloo Tea Garden and Achabam Tea Garden, there are in all 14 tribal clans as given in the following table:



Table 5.7  
Clans in the Doloo & Achabam Tea Garden

Name of the Adivasi	Name of clans
Santal	Bitol Murmu, Soren
Munda/Mura	Tesa, Hen, Barla
Oraon/Urang	Kachhap, Tirki, Baguar
Bhumij	Nag, Tesa, Khejur
Mahato/Kurmi	Kathiar, Soyar, Kishab

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

From the above tables reveals that the Santhal villagers belonged to two clans; namely, Bitol Murmu, Soren; Munda belonged to three clans; namely, Tesa, Hen and Barla; Oraon/urang belonged to three clans; namely, Kachhap, Tirki and Baguar; Bhumij belonged to three clans; namely, Nag, Tesa and Khejur and Mahato/Kurmi belonged to three clans; namely, Kathiar, Soyar and Kishab.

#### MARRIAGE

Adivasis do not follow their traditional ways of spouse selection. They are depended on family to choose spouses and sometimes Adivasi choose spouse through the professional matchmaker. Thus, they are influenced by the patterns of mate selection and marriage prevailing in non-tribal population. Divorce and re-marriage is permitted among the Adivasis. Traditionally breach of marriage and re-marriage are common phenomena in the Adivasis.

#### FAMILY

In both the tea gardens, Doloo tea garden in Barak Valley and Achabam tea garden of Brahmaputra Valley, all the families are nuclear. The types of family are related to its size also. Descriptive types indicate that most of the families are not

large in size. The following table shows the size of families of Doloo Tea Garden and Achabam Tea Garden.

Table 5.8  
Family Size of Adivasisin Doloo & Achabam Tea Gardens  
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Family Size	Number of the Adivasi Families											Grand Total	
	Doloo Tea Garden					Total	Achabam Tea Garden						Total
	Santal	Munda	Oraon	Bhumij	Mahato/ Kurmi		Santal	Munda	Oraon	Bhumij	Mahato/ Kurmi		
1 – 2	5 (13.52)	2 (6.67)	-	4 (10.81)	3 (10)	14 (9.33)	8 (26.67)	3 (10)	7 (23.33)	-	2 (6.67)	20 (13.33)	34 (11.33)
3 – 4	18 (48.64)	24 (80)	12 (75)	25 (67.56)	22 (73.34)	101 (67.33)	17 (56.66)	26 (86.66)	20 (66.67)	23 (76.67)	27 (90)	113 (75.33)	214 (71.34)
5 – 6	8 (21.62)	3(10)	3 (18.76)	5 (13.51)	1 (3.33)	20 (13.33)	3 (10)	1 (3.33)	2 (6.66)	7 (23.33)	1 (3.33)	14 (9.33)	34 (11.33)
7 – 8	6 (16.21)	1 (3.33)	1 (6.25)	3 (8.10)	4 (13.33)	15 (10)	2 (6.66)	-	1 (3.33)	-	-	3 (2)	18 (6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b> (100)	<b>30</b> (100)	<b>16</b> (100)	<b>37</b> (100)	<b>30</b> (100)	<b>150</b> (100)	<b>30</b> (100)	<b>30</b> (100)	<b>30</b> (100)	<b>30</b> (100)	<b>30</b> (100)	<b>150</b> (100)	<b>300</b> (100)

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

Above table shows that from both the tea gardens, 71.34% of the Adivasi families have a size of 3 to 4 members, 22.66 % of the families each have 1 to 2 members and 5 to 6 members respectively and the rest have 7 to 8 members. So, the average family size of the Adivasi labourers is 3 to 4 members in both the tea gardens.

#### OCCUPATIONS

The tea garden economy is based on tea leaves plucking, tea processing and tea manufacturing which are carried out by the labourers. The tea tribes are basically involved in seasonal tea plucking, lasting from March to December. There are two kinds of tea plantation workers, viz; permanent and casual. The wage of the labourers is paid weekly. The daily wage of the labourers in Doloo is Rs. 75/-Rs. per day for

permanent and casual, male and female, labourers. The fixed monthly salary of labourers is Rs.2250/-.

Achabam Tea Garden labourers are paid wage of Rs.115/- per day and the fixed monthly salary is Rs. 3450/-. So the labourers of the Doloo tea garden get a salary less than that those in Achabam tea garden. The wages and jobs of the labourers are shown in the two tables given below:

Table 5.9  
Daily Wage of Permanent/ Casual Tea Garden Workers in Doloo & Achabam Tea Gardens

Occupational Category	Doloo Tea Garden			Achabam Tea Garden		
	Leaves as per kg	Per Day Salary	Monthly Salary	Leaves as per kg	Per Day Salary	Monthly Salary
Permanent/ Casual tea garden workers	21 kg	75Rs.	2250/-	24 kg	115 Rs	3450/-
Extra Hajira of the tea garden workers	1 kg	50 Paise	--	1 kg	1 Rs	--
Majuri Thika	1 kg	1.75 Paise	--	1 kg	2Rs	--

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

Table 5.10  
Occupational Categories of Workers in the Doloo & Achabam Tea Gardens  
(Percentage in parentheses)

Occupational Category	Number of Families in the Tea Garden Labour		Grand Total
	Doloo Tea Garden	Achabam Tea Garden	
Permanent tea garden workers	886(80.18)	845(79.95)	1731(80.06)
Casual tea garden workers	219(19.82)	212(20.05)	431(19.94)
Total	1105(100)	1057(100)	2162(100)

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

The table shows that of the 1105 Adivasi families in the Doloo Tea Garden village most (80.18%) have permanent labourers and 19.82% are casual labourers. On

the other hand, in Achabam Tea Garden village out of 1057 families 79.95% are permanent labourers and the rest (19.94%) are casual labourers. Thus, there is no significant difference of the labour employed in the two gardens. The following table shows the monthly income including ration and extra income:

Table 5.11  
Ration of Permanent/Casual Tea Garden Workers Doloo & Achabam Tea Gardens

Ration	Doloo Tea Garden		Achabam Tea Garden	
	Commodities	Weekly (in kg)	Commodities	Weekly
Permanent/ Casual Labourers	Rice	3.2	Rice	3 kg
Permanent/ Casual Labourers	Atta	1.2	Atta	3 kg
Child Labourers	Rice	1.6	Rice	3 kg
Child Labourers	Atta	1.6	Atta	3 kg

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

Ration is the part of the monthly salary of the labourers in each tea garden in Assam. In the Doloo tea garden, every adult labourer gets 3 kgs and 20 grams rice and 1 kg. 20 gram flour every week and for child labourers get 1 kg and 600 grams of rice and the same quantity of flour. In Achabam tea garden, every adult and child labourers get 3 kgs. of rice and 3 kgs.of flour every week. Thus, ration provided in the two gardens is almost the same in quantity and kinds.

## POLITICS

The Adivasi have both the traditional and modern political institutions. Traditionally they have their own village councils. After introduction of the Panchayati Raj they have become part of modern democratic system. Besides, they are now part of national and state level political institutions as well. The Doloo Tea Estate comes under the jurisdiction of the Silchar Parliamentary Constituency and the Silchar

Legislative Assembly Constituency. Achabam tea estate comes under Dibrugarh Parliamentary Constituency.

In both, Doloo and Achabam tea gardens, all the Adivasis have cast their valuable votes during the last elections of their Gaon Panchayats, state assembly and Parliament constituencies. Among the Adivasis there are found three political parties; namely, Indian national Congress Party and Bharatiya Janata Party and Communist Party of India (Marxist). The following table shows the political parties supported among the Adivasis in Doloo and Achabam Tea Gardens.

Table 5.12  
Political Parties and Participation of the in Doloo & Achabam Tea Garden  
(Percentage in parentheses)

Name of the political party they supported	Number of the Adivasi Families												
	Doloo Tea Garden						Achabam Tea Garden						
	Santal	Munda	Oraon/ Orang	Bhumij	Mahato/ Kurmi	Total	Santal	Munda	Oraon/ Orang	Bhumij	Mahato/ Kurmi	Total	G.Total
Indian National Congress	23 (62.16)	14 (46.67)	11 (68.76)	7 (18.92)	22 (73.33)	77 (51.33)	10 (33.33)	12 (40)	8 (26.67)	17 (56.67)	23 (76.67)	70 (46.67)	147 (49)
Bharatiya Janata Party	8 (21.63)	9 (30)	2 (12.5)	9 (24.32)	--	28 (18.67)	4 (2.67)	5 (16.67)	9 (30)	3 (10)	2 (6.66)	23 (15.33)	51 (17)
Communist party of India (Marxists)	6 (16.21)	7 (23.33)	3 (18.75)	21 (56.75)	8 (26.67)	45 (30)	16 (53.33)	13 (43.33)	13 (43.33)	10 (33.33)	5 (16.67)	57 (38)	102 (34)
Total	37 (100)	30 (100)	16 (100)	37 (100)	30 (100)	150 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	150 (100)	300 (100)

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

The table shows that in Doloo tea garden, over half of the families support Indian National Congress; one third support Communist Party of India (Marxists) and 18.67% support Bharatiya Janata Party.

In Achabam Tea Tarden near half of the families support Indian National Congress; over one third support Communist Party of India (Marxists) and 15.33% support Bharatiya Janata Party.

Thus, all the tea tribes participate in political parties, by supporting them directly or indirectly. Indian National Congress seems to be the most popular party in the villages and the next to it is Communist Party of India (Marxist). Indian National Congress party is old one, its roots have been there among the labourers since pre-Independence period and CPI (M) is also having roots among them through their work.

### **Bagan Panchayat**

Bagan Panchayat in Doloo and Achabam Tea Garden has of positions like President, Vice-President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Members who are democratically elected for four years. Cachar Cha Sramik Union and Dibrugarh Cha Mazdur Sangha, both the union are affiliated to Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), supervise the elections in the respective village. The office bearers are selected by the permanent workers in both the tea gardens.

In both the tea gardens, there is a Bagan Panchayat one each situated between the management and the labourers, on the one hand, and between the labourers and the trade unions, on the other hand all of the problems regarding various demands, implementation of various agreements, settlements of bonus disputes and increase in wages are placed before the managers by the Bagan Panchayat. The minor problems, individual or collective, like house repairing, water supply, Provident Fund advance

for treatment etc are placed before the authority through the panchayat. Recruitment of labourers in place of the retired or expired workers from the same family is also suggested by the panchayat to the manager. Some matters which are left for the panchayat to sort out, and the managers do not like to interfere, are kidnapping, pre-marital sexual relationship between their boys and girls etc. Such matters which are ignored by the managers are brought to the notice of the Cachar Cha Sramik Union by the Bagan Panchayat.

### **The Adivasi Panchayat**

In both the tea gardens, the villagers are locally controlled by an Adivasi Panchayat each headed by a Mukhiya/Murabbi/Murol/Manjhi. It maintains discipline and social cohesion among the Adivasis within their group. As the situation demands in the plantation society there are informal institutions like Adivasi Panchayat at the community level, whose members are exclusively from one community. This panchayat meets for settling the disputes of the community which arise from time to time. The disputes are generally related to custody of children of separated parents, inter- community marriage, etc. In a plantation where a community is numerically very small no such panchayats can be observed.

The other Adivasi Panchayat is found at the level of residential sector or at the plantation level whose members are drawn from a number of communities. It decides the cases of inter- community quarrels, theft, witchcraft, inter- community marriages, inter-religious marriages etc. The traditional leaders are today replaced by trade union leaders to a large extent because of the politicization of the workers.

Thus, in Doloo and Achabam tea garden the Adivasis continue their traditional politics at community level but the major changes have taken place in the wake of the

democratic political system constituted through panchayat/state assembly and parliamentary elections.

## RELIGION

The Adivasi people are believers of Hinduism. They are animist. Worship of traditional gods and spirits is still continuing by the Adivasi people. Each one has its traditional ancestral deity. The following table shows the religious worships among all Adivasis of Doloo and Achabam Tea Garden:

Table5.13  
Traditional religious worship in the tea Doloo & Achabam Tea Garden

Name of the Adivasis Group	Name of Religious Worship	Month of Worship
Santal	Marang Buru, Majhi Haram, Jaher Era, Gachh Baba	February/March
Munda/Mura	Bar Pahari, Gachh Baba	February/March
Oraon/Urang	Surja Narayan Puja, Bar Pahari, Gohal Puja, Gachh Baba	February/March
Bhumij	Shikar Puja, Gohal Puja	October/November
Mahato/Kurmi	Ancestor worship (dead Father and Mother) Surja Puja, Bar Pahari, Gohal Puja	February/March

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

Along with their traditional practice, the Adivasis have in their respective location adopted the Bengali and Assamese religious festivals or ceremonies like Ganesh Puja, Jhulan Yatra, Biswakarma Puja, Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Laxmi Puja, Swarasati Puja, Shiv Puja, Holyor Dol Yatra, Basanti Puja, Charak Puja and Chaitra



Shankranti in Doloo tea garden and on the other hand, in Achabam tea garden, Bihu, Pitha Sankranti, Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Laxmi Puja, Swarasati Puja, Shiv Puja, Holy or Dol Yatra and Charak Puja as the main festivals, organized by the tea garden labourers. The field survey witnessed religious worship among tea garden labourers in Doloo and Achabam Tea Garden. The following table shows the religious worship among the Adivasis of Doloo and Achabam Tea Gardens:

Table 5.14  
Village and family Level Religious Worship in Doloo & Achabam Tea Garden

Name of Religious Worship	Level of Celebration	Month of Worship
Jhulan yatra	Community	August/September
Durga puja	Community	September/October
Laxmi puja	Family	October/November
Kali puja	Community	November
Saraswati puja	Community	January/February
Shiv puja	Community	February/March
Charakpuja	Community	April
Basanti Puja	Community	April
Bihu	Community	March/April
Pitha Sankranti	Community	February/March

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

Thus, the Adivasis practice the Bengali and Assamese Hindu religious ceremonies in their respective locations. These are commonly organized in their respective village communities or families.

## DRESS AND ORNAMENTS

In both the tea gardens, the youth Adivasis wear full pants and shirts. The women wear sari with blouse and petti coat. The women especially younger generations wear informal dress like salwar, jeans pant, skirt and top, frock, nighty (maxi) trousers and top. The Adivasis love ornaments and decorate themselves with a variety of these, generally made of brass comprising hair-pins, earrings, necklets, necklaces, armllets, wristlets and rings. Flowers are used by both sexes for decoration. Tattooing is still another form of decoration and the women get their forehead, neck, arms and palms tattooed. Thus, they have retained the traditional sense of decoration and tattooing along with adoption of various ornaments available in the market.

## FOOD HABIT

Adivasi people traditionally secured food through two methods; namely, hunting and gathering and agriculture. They have changed their traditional food by adopting the Bengali food like rice, dal, vegetable, curry, all kinds of fish and Sidol (a kind of processed fish), red mutton and chicken in Doloo tea garden of Barak valley and the Adivasis of Achabam tea garden in Brahmaputra Valley adopted Assamese food like rice, dal, vegetable curry, all kinds of fish with tenga, gahori (pork) Kethli Pitha, Bash Pitha etc. But in the both valleys most of the Adivasis (over 95%) take rice beer and red wine. It appears that they have continued the tradition of taking rice beer on festive and ceremonial occasions. Bottled wine is now emerging as substitute to their traditional rice beer. On religious and ritual ceremonies such as death rituals they take both pure vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods which are considered sacred and offered to the gods or goddesses and ancestors. This has been adopted from the Bengali and the Assamese culture where pure vegetarian food is served in the day and non-vegetarian food in the night after the period of impurity on account of death is over.

## QUARTERS AND HOUSES

Both the tea gardens, the Adivasis (permanent workers) are living in semi-pacca quarters which are provided by the tea garden authority. These are built of bricks and mortars with mud floors. The casual labourers live in kachcha houses made of bamboo; mud walls and tin or polythene roofs. They make these by their own labour.

## ELECTRICITY

Both the tea gardens, the tea management authority extends grid power supply to the labour quarters through the state electricity board. The cost of internal wiring and maintenance inside the quarters is entirely borne by the management. But the cost of procuring electric bulbs and consumption of electricity is totally borne by the labourers.

## EDUCATION

In both the tea gardens, traditionally the Adivasis have been illiterate. But now situation is somewhat better and educational level of Adivasis in the tea gardens indicates improvement. It has improved by efforts of the state. However, distance of school and shortage of teachers are the main hurdles in spread of education. Education is quite a new element in their traditional cultures but not new to the present generations.

Table 5.15  
Political Parties and Participation of the in Doloo & Achabam Tea Garden  
(Percentage in parentheses)

Educational Status	Number of the Families of the Adivasis												
	Doloo Tea Garden						Achabam Tea Garden						
	Santal	Munda	Oraon/ Orang	Bhumij	Mahato/ Kurmi	Total	Santal	Munda	Oraon/ Orang	Bhumij	Mahato/ Kurmi	Total	G.Total
Illiterate	36 (25.35)	42 (35.29)	28 (33.73)	33 (37.74)	36 (37.11)	175 (30.17)	--	30 (29.41)	9 (9.18)	--	--	39 (7.35)	214 (19.27)
Literate	28 (19.72)	24 (20.16)	15 (18.07)	38 (27.33)	26 (26.81)	131 (22.58)	83 (70.94)	37 (36.27)	56 (57.14)	78 (70.27)	39 (38.23)	293 (55.28)	424 (38.19)
Class I-V	20 (14.08)	17 (14.28)	19 (22.99)	19 (13.66)	22 (22.68)	97 (16.72)	23 (19.65)	13 (12.74)	18 (18.36)	15 (13.51)	29 (28.43)	98 (18.49)	195 (17.56)
Class VI-VIII	12 (8.45)	23 (19.32)	21 (25.30)	27 (19.42)	9 (9.27)	92 (15.86)	11 (9.40)	19 (18.62)	3 (3.06)	--	34 (33.33)	67 (12.64)	159 (14.32)
Class IX-X	20 (8.45)	12 (10.08)	--	14 (10.07)	4 (4.12)	50 (8.62)	--	1 (0.98)	7 (7.14)	12 (10.81)	--	20 (3.76)	70 (6.30)
Class XI-XII	8 (5.63)	1 (0.84)	--	6 (4.13)	--	15 (2.58)	--	--	5 (5.10)	--	--	5 (0.94)	20 (1.80)
Undergraduate	18 (12.67)	--	--	2 (1.43)	--	20 (3.44)	--	2 (1.96)	--	6 (5.40)	--	8 (1.50)	28 (2.53)
Total	142 (100)	119 (100)	83 (100)	139 (100)	97 (100)	580 (100)	117 (100)	102 (100)	98 (100)	111 (100)	102 (100)	530 (100)	1110 (100)

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

The table shows that in both the tea garden, 80.73% of the Adivasis are literate and rests 19.20 % are only illiterate and in Doloo tea garden, near about seventh tenth of the Adivasis (69.83%) are literate and only 30.17% persons are illiterate.

Besides, in Achabam tea garden, over nine tenth (92.64%) of the Adivasi people are literate and only 7.35% are illiterate.

## HEALTH

All the Adivasi labourers are dependent on tea garden hospital but in Doloo tea garden, the labourers prefer to going to Silchar Medical College and Hospital, Silchar Civil hospital and private clinics in Silchar due to lack of medicines and proper medical attention whereas in Achabam tea garden labourers never visit to Dibrugarh Medical College and Hospital, private clinic or Naharkatia Block Hospital because they have a good well-qualified doctor with two nurse and one compounder and four ayas (helpers) with 24 hour services. The hospital has got enough medicines from the tea garden authority for the staff and labourers.

## WATER

In the Doloo and Achabam tea gardens, the Adivasis have traditionally depended on rivers and ponds for water. But the Adivasis of both tea gardens have now got P.H.E supply water in each and every line or residential supplied area three times a day. So, now they are used to P.H.E supplied water and in addition they also use well, river and pond water for cleaning clothes and bathing.

## TOILET FACILITY

Latrine facility is part of health and it contributes to health, hygiene and proper living. Both the tea garden authorities, Doloo and Achabam, do not provide proper

sanitation. All the Adivasis have kachcha latrines and toilets in their houses. The Adivasi people have made holes in the ground to make toilets, without water connection. These are made of bamboo and thatched walls.

#### MASS MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

Mass media and transport, both, have become integral elements of the life of the Adivasis in Doloo and Achabam tea garden. They are using mass media such as mobile phone, television, radio and newspapers.

#### MOBILE PHONE

In recent time mobile phone became necessary commodity. The Adivasi people also started to use the new device to communicate each others. The following table shows the uses of mobile phone among the Adivasis of Doloo and Achabam Tea Gardens:

Table 5.16  
Uses of the Mobile Phone in Doloo & Achabam Tea Garden  
(Percentage in Parentheses)

User of Mobile Phone	Doloo Tea Garden					Total	Achabam Tea Garden					Total	Grand Total
	Santal	Munda	Oraon	Bhumij	Mahato /Kurmi		Santal	Munda	Oraon	Bhumij	Mahato /Kurmi		
<b>Yes</b>	23 (62.16)	27 (90)	7 (43.76)	32 (86.48)	12 (40)	101 (67.33)	29 (96.67)	28 (93.33)	26 (86.67)	24 (80)	22 (73.33)	129 (86)	<b>230</b> <b>(76.67)</b>
<b>No</b>	14 (37.84)	3 (10)	9 (56.25)	5 (13.52)	18 (60)	49 (32.67)	1 (3.33)	02 (6.67)	4 (13.33)	6 (20)	8 (26.67)	21 (14)	<b>70</b> <b>(23.33)</b>
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>37</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>30</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>16</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>37</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>30</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>150</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>30</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>30</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>30</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>30</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>30</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>150</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>300</b> <b>(100)</b>

Source: Field survey conducted from November 2014 to March 2015

The above table reveals that over three fifth of the Adivasi uses mobile phone and rest 32.67% do not have the phone in the Doloo tea garden and among of them, most of the Munda(90%) uses the mobile phone. On the other hand, in Achabam tea garden near about the nine tenth (86%) of the Adivasis uses the mobile phone and rest of the Adivasi do not have the mobile phone and among of them Santhal is highest (96.67%) user of the mobile phone.

Thus, in both the tea garden, near about eight tenth (76.67%) of the Adivasis uses the mobile phone and rest 23.33% of the Adivasi do not have the mobile phone. In generally, Adivasi uses the mobile phone to call relative house, friends, tea garden office and some other emergency occasion.

#### TELEVISION

In both the tea garden, television and radio are very common elements to all the Adivasis in both the tea garden. Adivasis are entertained the television by various Bengali serials, Bengali and Hindi movies. Bengali and Hindi movie songs are very popular among of them. Sometimes they saw Bagani Dances with songs by higher DVD from local market.

#### RADIO

Radio is very common instrument for the Adivasi families because it is very easy to use and low cost. The Adivasis listened news on current events of politics, crimes. Radio sports news is very popular. Sometimes, they listen film songs, drama etc. for entertainment.



## MODE OF TRANSPORT

In the tea garden of Doloo, the Adivasis' families are using mechanized mode of transport; viz., bicycle, bus, taxi and sometimes auto riksa for go to Barkhala market, Silchar, Udharband, Silchar Medical College. But in Achabam tea garden only depends on the auto riksa to go Naharkatia, Duliajan and Dibrugarh town for medical treatment, marketing and sometimes they go also relative house.

## LANGUAGE

The Adivasis are a large Dravidian group categorized as the Kolarian on linguistic ground. All Adivasis are bilingual and they speak either Bengali or Hindi in Doloo tea garden and Assamese or Hindi in Achabam tea garden in Assam. Their mother tongue belongs to the Austro-Asiatic family of languages like Mundari or Santhali. Now, the present generation of the Adivasis speaks a new dialect which is mixed with Hindi, Bhojpuri, Bengali and Assamese, locally named as **Bagani vasha or Sadri** in Doloo and in Achabam tea garden.

In sum, the labour class in the tea gardens of Doloo and Achabam as well as Assam is perhaps the most exploited class in the tea garden sector of economy. Low wages, poor housing and lack of avenues for social mobility have been a recurring theme since its inception in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The tea garden labour lines have unique identity as it is neither an urban nor industrial nor a rural area. Of the tea garden working labourers in both tea gardens 80.06% are permanent employees. During the peak season, each garden employs casual labourers (called 'Faltoo labour') at the same wage structure but the fewer benefits given to the permanent labourers. Besides, poor socio-economic

condition, illiteracy, over-crowded and unhygienic living conditions in the residential areas make tea garden populations helpless to various communicable diseases and underfeeding.