

## CHAPTER- I

### INTRODUCTION

**1. Introduction:-**In every part of the world there are tribals who are known by different names like natives, adhivasi, aboriginals, tribals, indigenous etc in different parts of the world. They speak different languages which differ from one another. The fact is that about 4000-5000 of the 6000 languages in the world are indigenous which strongly suggest that the indigenous people constitute most of the world's cultural diversity. It is estimated that the present tribal population of the world live in the continents of Africa, Asia, Australia, North and South America, in spite of the socio-economic, political and even cultural perils faced by these communities all over the world.

The word 'tribe' has been a subject for discussion among the scholars and anthropologists. But no definition is accepted so far universally. Jha (1998) defined tribe as a social group having a simple technology, primitive economy, prevalence of animistic and homogeneity of culture. And on the basis of these characteristics, usually an ethnic group is defined as tribe.<sup>1</sup> The Imperial Gazetteer of India 1911, declares "a tribe is a collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and is not usually endogamous though originally it might have been so."<sup>2</sup> Similarly, A. B. Bardhan (1973) has defined the tribe as a course of socio-cultural entity at a definite historical stage of development. It is a single, endogamous community with a cultural and psychological makeup going back into a distant historical past.<sup>3</sup>

The dictionary of Anthropology views a tribe as a social group, usually within a definite area, dialect, cultural homogeneity and unifying social organization. In that sense the word 'tribe' refers to a type of society and marks a stage of evolution in the human society. At the same time, under the provision of the UN the term 'indigenous people' used to mean all tribal population. However, the most acceptable definition of the term tribe was given by D. N. Mazumdar (1958). According to him, "a tribe is a

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1 . Jha, M 1998, *An Introduction to Social Anthropology*, Parama, Mamta Plaza, Dhaka, p. 168.

2 . Singh, K S 1990, *Indian Society and Social Institutions*, Ajanta Prakashan, New Delhi. P.211.

3. Bardan, A B 1973, *The Tribal Problem in India*, Communist Party of India Publications, Delhi. pp.16-17.

collection of families, bearing a common name, members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos regarding marriage, profession or occupation and have developed a well assessed system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligations.”<sup>4</sup> Thus, in broad terms a tribe is defined as a community occupying a common geographic area and having a similar language and culture or beliefs and practices.

From the study of various definitions, it appears that the word tribe has been used for those groups of human beings whose place of residence is situated in remote areas like hills, forest, sea coasts and islands; and whose style of life is quite different from the present day of civilized men. They are relatively isolated from larger cultural influences and have a relative cultural homogeneity. They live in common areas, speaking a common dialect having a good culture and sense of unity that are conscious to preserve their social and cultural identity.

The tribe has many distinctive common features. In India the three important characteristics were used originally to identify a Schedule Tribe (ST). They are (i) primitive way of living, (ii) habitation in remote and less accessible areas, (iii) nomadic habits and love for drinks and dance. The Commissioner of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, in its report, 1952, has listed eight inherent features of a tribe. It is important to mention here that these eight features are also supported by G.S. Ghurye (1963) as the common features possessed by all the tribal groups which are as follows<sup>5</sup>

- (a) They live away from the civilized world in inaccessible parts in the forest and hills.
- (b) They speak the same tribal dialect.
- (c) They belong to either one of the three stocks-Negritos, Austroloid or Mongoloids
- (d) They profess primitive religion known as animism in which worship of ghosts and spirits is the most important element.
- (e) They follow primitive occupation such as hunting and gathering of forest products.

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4 . Mazumdar, D N 1961, *Races and Cultures of India*. Asian Publishing House, Bombay. P. 365.

5. Ghurye, G S 1963, *The Scheduled Tribes*, Popular Book Depot, Bombay, p.25.

- (f) They are largely carnivorous.
- (g) They live either naked or semi-naked.
- (h) They have nomadic habits and love for drink and dance.

Besides, the above features some other features of the tribals are: most of them live in terrains; the main source of their livelihood is agriculture and gathering of forest products; they do not cultivate for profit, they spend a greater part of their earnings on social and religious ceremonies and a large number of them are illiterate.<sup>6</sup>

India is a multicultural country with rich diversity reflected in the multitude of culture, religions, languages, and racial stocks. The fact is that the population of the country comprises different caste, communities and ethnic groups. The tribes in India are spread over the length and breadth of the country. Because of this, at present India has the second largest tribal population in the world, next only to Africa. And it is a home to almost more than half of the world's tribal population.

The constitution of India under Article 342 has notified 700 Scheduled Tribes with their distinct cultures, social practices, religions and dialects. The constitution of India made several provisions for safeguarding the tribals, but silent in defining a tribe. It simply declares that the scheduled tribes are the tribes or the tribal communities or path or or groups within tribes or tribal communities, which the President of India may specify public notification under Art 342 of the constitution. They are often referred to as Adivasi, Vanyajati, Pahari, Adimjati and Anusuchit Jana Jati, the latter being the constitutional name. In fact, tribe as a category, separate from the mainstream caste society, is an invention of the British administrators. According to Sing (1995), "the notion of tribe was introduced by colonial administrators. It was a part of the universal trend to dichotomize the indigenous people and colonizers, the savage and the civilized, the tribal and the non-tribals."<sup>7</sup> The tribals are minority in India and constitute 8.61 per cent of the total population of the country numbering 104.28 million and cover about 15 per cent of the country's area.<sup>8</sup> Despite constitutional safeguards and plethora of welfare scheme the tribes are suffering from underdevelopment, illiteracy, health and

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6. Ahuja, Ram 2008, *Society in India: Concepts, Theories and Recent Trends*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, India. pp.276-277.

7. Singh, K S 1995, *The Scheduled Tribes in India: A Profile*, a Paper presented at World Bank, Delhi Office, Asian Development Research Institute. P.7.

8. Census Report, 2011, Government of India.

communication problem, terrorism and exploitation in every nook and corner of the country.

Thus, the very first chapter includes working definition of the key theoretical concepts, identifies research designing and methodological parameters which includes objectives, methodology, the area selected for the study and different variables. Besides, the second part of the chapter focuses on the ethno-historical profile, the racial affinity, their origin, the demographic distribution and the present Hajong population.

### **1.1. Working Definition of the Key Concepts:-**

The working definitions of some of the key concepts which are used in the study are given below:

#### **1.1.1. Ethnicity and Ethnic Groups:-**

The term 'ethnicity' seems to have often perplexed as defined by the Sociologist. Its varied interpretations create a lot of confusions and contradictions. The psychological differences in biological terms, cultural, linguistic, religious and even colour differences do not determine its relative position in a given society, unless the particular socio-historic circumstances and racial background from which it emerges are examined. It may, therefore, be viewed that 'ethnicity' pertains to a group which is not merely a conglomeration of individuals but occupies a relative position in a given society.

According to Birendranath Dutta (1990) "ethnic and ethnicity are terms that are being frequently used to in both political and academic circles. But the concept associated with them does not appear to be either precise or clear. The term gives the impression of meaning of different things to different people and in different context"<sup>9</sup>. The context of the American society, by 'ethnic group are normally meant minority groups'. Moreover, the meaning of the term, 'ethnic' as found in the standard dictionaries, like the Oxford Dictionary of Current English (1984), the Penguin English Dictionary (1985-86) and Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary (1961), themselves give an indication of the lack of uniformity in respect of the clear idea involved. For example, a few representative specimens referred to the term 'ethnic' in those dictionaries are 'tribal',

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9. Dutta, B N 1990, 'Ethnicity, Nationalism and Sub-Nationalism with special reference to Northeast India', in B.Pakhem (ed.), *Nationality, Ethnicity and Cultural Identity in Northeast India*, Omsons Publications, p.35.

‘primitive’, ‘pagan heathen’, relating to racial groups’, ‘of an exotic, especially peasant culture’, of or relating to races or large groups of people classed according to common traits and customs’. Fredrik Barth (1969) defined ethnic group ‘as a population which is largely biologically self-perpetuating, which shares fundamental cultural values, realized in over unity in cultural forms, which makes up a field of communication and interaction which has a membership identifying itself and is identified by others as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order.’<sup>10</sup> P. K. Dasgupta (1978) defines the term ‘ethnic’ when a tribe or a group of people lives in its traditionally defined territory, the ethnic boundary is maintained through cultural likeness and village, inter-village and regional solidarity.<sup>11</sup>

It is worth to be mentioned here that ‘ethnicity’ refers to the sense of peoplehood and an ‘ethnic group’ is that group whose members share this sense of feeling.<sup>12</sup> ‘Ethnicity’ also involves the elements of descent with essentially a culture-based entity and ‘ethnic group’ is associated with the biological formations of populations with their cultural parameters. In this aspect Hughes (1976) remarked, “an ethnic group is not one because of the degree of measurable or observable difference from other groups; it is an ethnic group, on the contrary, because the people in it and the people out of it know that it is one; because both the INs and the OUTs talk, feel and act as if it were a separate group”<sup>13</sup>. Similarly, H.R. Isaacs (1975) observes that “this is the identity derived from belonging to what is generally and loosely called an ethnic group”. It is composed of what have been called ‘primordial affinities and attachment’. It is the identity made up of what a person is born with or acquires at birth.<sup>14</sup> . It seems that a group is perceived as a distinct group from other groups. Similarly, by ethnic groups we may refer to a group of people dissimilar from other peoples in terms of objective cultural criteria and containing within its membership, either in principle or in practice, the

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10. Barth Fredrik 1969, ‘Introduction’, in Fredrik Barth (ed.), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, George Allen & Unwin, London, pp.10-11.

11. Dasgupta, P K 1978, *Impact of Industrialisation on a tribe in South Bihar*, Anthropological Survey of India, Calcutta, pp.98-104.

12. Punekar, V B 1974, *Assimilation*, Bombay, Popular Prakashan, p.2

13. Burnet, J 1976, *Ethnic Relations and Ethnic Policies in Canadian Society*, Ethnicity in the Americas (ed), Chicago, Mouton Publishers, p.32.

14. Isaacs, H R 1975, *Basic Group Identity, The Idols of the Tribe, Ethnicity-Theory and Experience*, Massachusetts, pp.29-30.

elements for a complete division of labour and for reproduction. This definition emanating from Paul R. Brass (1991) emphasized the cultural basis of ethnicity and distinguishes ethnic categories from other social categories based on class, gender, etc.

Notwithstanding, the concept of ethnicity has a clear relevance with the dictionary of the term 'ethnic' which means "of or relating to races or largest group of people classed together according to common traits or customs".<sup>15</sup> It may, therefore, be viewed that 'ethnicity' pertains to a group which is not merely a conglomeration of individuals but occupies a relative position in a given society.

**1.1.2. Displacement:-**The displacement of people and communities has been one of the challenges facing the livelihood of people of late. The term was used widely during the World War-II. Globally the magnitude of the problem is astounding affecting millions of people uprooted from their homes. In fact, displacement of people render them homeless and are being deprived of their places of abode. Social and human scientists consider displacement of people refers to the forced movement of people from their locality or environment. It can lead to a geographic shift which may preserve or increase economic and racial segregation throughout an area. The displacement can be of different types. The internal displacement which takes place within the territorial boundary and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border. Mr. Francis Deng, while presenting the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (UN) in 1998, defined the Internally Displaced Persons as "persons or group of persons who have been forced to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border."<sup>16</sup> The definition further extended by adding words like forced to flee their home suddenly and unexpectedly in large numbers as a result of armed conflict, internal strife, systematic violation of human rights or natural or man-made disaster. We can cite the example of Kashmiri Pandits who were forced to flee from Jammu and Kashmir and have settled in other parts of India. Such persons are not refugees since Refugee Convention of 1951 defines refugees as 'any person who is outside the country of his nationality'.

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15. The Pocket Oxford Dictionary, 1992. Oxford University Press, p. 296.

16. Agarwal, H O 2008, *Human Rights*, Central Law Publications, Dharbhanga Castle, Allahabad, U.P. p.107.

However, the above definition mainly concerned with the internal displacement of the people. It has not taken into account the forcibly displaced persons who cross-border but deprived of refugee status like the Hajongs of Arunachal Pradesh.

**1.1.3. Migration:** - Migration is not something newly emerged social phenomena. It is an inseparable part of human history. Historically speaking various human races from pre-historic times onwards had started moving from their places of origin. According to Agarwal (2008) “from the antiquity, people are found to move from one place to another, sometimes in search of better opportunities, when they see some of their needs and desires are not adequately fulfilled in their present location, sometimes just to maintain the status quo when they see their present situation seems to be declining one”.<sup>17</sup> Perhaps, because of this reason, man is the most widely distributed social animal on the earth’s surface. From their probable origin in Africa, human groups had spread out to occupy all the major land areas of the earth excepting Antarctica about 20,000 years earlier, long before the beginning of agriculture or written history. In this way human migration is a geographical phenomenon that seems to be a human necessity in every age. Since man has a tendency to leave the areas in which life is difficult, he migrates to those areas where life may be easier and better.<sup>18</sup>

Human migration is defined in different ways on the basis of the nature, scope and purpose of its study. According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English migration means migrate- move from one place to go to live or work in another. On the other hand, Webster’s’ New World Dictionary defines migration as a “movement from one place to another, especially to another country”, and migration as “to move from place to place to harvest seasonal crops”. Social scientist like Weinberg defines human migration as” the changing of place of abode permanently or when temporarily, for an appreciable duration as e.g., in the case of seasonal workers. It is used symbolically in the transition from one surrounding to another in the course of human

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17. Kumar, C 2009, ‘ Migration and Refugee Issue Between India and Bangladesh’ , *Scholar’s Voice: A New Way of Thinking*, Vol-1, No-1, January , Centre for Refugee Studies, Research and Development, New Delhi, p. 64. Viewed 2 December 1012, < <http://www.cdsrd.org> >.

18. Prasad, C 1997, ‘Victims of Partition; Chakma and Hajong Refugees of Arunachal Pradesh’, *Think India Quarterly*” Vol-9, No-4, December. p-59, Also in Singh, Mahavir (ed.) 2005, *Home Away From Home : Inland Movement of People in India*, Anamika Publishers & Distributors Pvt. Ltd. Kolkata, p-10.

life.<sup>19</sup> S. N. Eisentadt (1975) argues migration as “the physical transition of an individual or a group from one society to another. This transition usually involves abandoning one social setting and entering another and different one”.<sup>20</sup> He also assumes every migratory movement is motivated by the migrant’s feelings of some kind of insecurity and inadequacy in the original social setting.<sup>21</sup> Some other scholars tried to explain and viewed migration as an economic phenomenon. The people migrate from one area to another in search of improved livelihoods in terms of employment, education and other facilities.<sup>22</sup> Though non-economic factors obviously have significant bearing, most studies concur that migrants leave their area of origin, primarily because of lack of economic opportunities with a hope of finding better opportunities everywhere.

But the scholars like Francis Cherunilam emphasized on the role of historical, cultural and linguistic factors of migration. For instance, the desire of a person to move away from traditional social setup seeking new life style, freedom of social contacts or seclusion, education etc. promoted migration. The migration, on the other hand related with the economic factors viewed as a creation of capitalist expansion in productive sectors. Industrialisation and mechanism of profit accumulation created a pauperized surplus working class that was forced to migrate to new place. As stated by Karl Marx and F. Engels ‘production power’ of capitalism exerted pressure on the population to move from the place of existence.<sup>23</sup>

In modern times people usually migrate either to improve their economic status or to stay at a place where they feel socially and culturally more secure and politically more independent. The political cause of migration is most frequently connected with the use of force against a person or a group of person or even a community. This results mass migration from their place of origin to another safer place inside the territory is termed as internal migration. But when the migrants cross the

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19. Weinberg, A, A.(n.d), *Migration and Belonging: A Study of Mental Health and Personal Adjustment in Israel*’ pp-265-266.

20. Eisenstaedt, S. N 1954 (Reprint, 1975) , ‘The Absorption of Immigrants :A Comparative Study Based Mainly on the Jewish Community in Palestine and State of Israel, Rutledge & Paul, London, p- 1.

21 .Ibid.

22. Barua, P 2014, ‘Border and Beyond: Feminization of Migration’, *The Assam Tribune*, 10 April, p .6.

23. Mathew, K. S . et. al (ed) , *Migration in South Asia*, pp 2-3.



international boundary and take shelter in any other country are termed either migrants or foreigners or refugees if they are recognized the status under international refugee laws. Thus, the concept of migration refers to the movement of persons from the place of origin to another destination with a permanent change in residence for several reasons like social, economic, cultural and political pressure factors. A mere economic factor cannot be the causes of migration. Politically pressurized forced migration is another factor responsible for the mass migration in the world. In simple words, a voluntary migration is synonymous with economic migration; while the involuntary migration is linked to political induced conflict like the migration of the Hajong tribe of East-Pakistan.

**1.1.4. Forced Migration:** - The phenomenon of forced migration with resultant refugee and displaced persons can be traced back to the beginning of human history which can be classified in different continuums. These continuums relate to the distance travelled borders crossed by migrants and the degree of voluntarism or coercion involved. In fact, migration can broadly be voluntarily as well as involuntarily. The point of distinction between the two is that in the case of voluntary migration, the migrants have the scope to make their own decisions whether or not to move. But in case of involuntary ones, the migrants do not retain any scope of independent decisions. In other words, involuntary migration can be called forced migration in political terms,<sup>24</sup> where coercion and threats are involved. In forced migration people are battered against the natural usage for survival. Even 'nation' and 'border' are easily marginalized in the minds of the people who have received continuous threats to their existence from prosecutor and discrimination in their own country. People move from one place to another just to avoid physical torture and extinction. In the case of forced migration the cases of movement and displacement occurs in a collective manner involving groups like families, communities or nations. In such circumstances the forcibly victimised people find legal or illegal ways to tackle the obstacles in the path of their well-being even by crossing the international border. Because border crossing is related not only to the sociology of the migration experience but also has some political dimensions. When people cross the international borders without any legal authorization it becomes illegal migration.<sup>25</sup> This

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24 . Kumar, Chintan, op.cit, p.65.

25. Samaddar, R 1999. *The Marginal Nation: Transborder Migration from Bangladesh to West*

obviously implies that the migrants without any valid documents either considered illegal infiltrators or refugees. And the forced migrants of one state are generally the refugees in the other.<sup>26</sup>

However, a migrant is not necessarily a refugee. Because refugee relates a political term who is legally entitled to the basic human rights like right to life and liberty, equality, subsistence, work, healthcare, primary education etc. . But there are some circumstances when a refugee can be migrants. A migrant is not evicted forcibly. It can be his or her personal choice. Myron Weiner separates the concepts of refugees and migrants by classifying two categories of people who moved across international boundaries- rejected people and unwanted migrants. The category of unwanted migrants embraces those groups, which have crossed international and domestic provincial boundaries in search of economic benefits, or those who have moved as a result of economic and environmental factor. They are unwanted because they are rejected by the host community who feel politically and socially threatened.<sup>27</sup>

Thus, any person who has left or forced to leave the country of his habitat residence becomes international migrants, but he gets a refugee status in the other state or not , that depends on the circumstances and nature of his migrations as well as on the will of the recipient state. In fact, migration and refugee become a problem in international term when they affect the relations between countries severely.

**1.1.5. Refugee:** - The term ‘refugee’ is earmarked for those who have left their country of origin. It is important to mention here that between 1922 to 1926 under the auspices of the League of Nations, several treaties created certain obligations on the contracting states, making it necessary to define the term ‘refugee’. But even before that the League of Nations Treaties initially defined the term refugee as a category or group of persons who were, (a) without their country of origin and (b) without the protection of the government of their home state.<sup>28</sup> The period between 1920s and 1930s was the period of

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*Bengal*, Sage Publication , New Delhi, pp. 131-138.

26. Barman, Dalem. Ch. ,2004, op. cit. .p.161.

27. Hajarika, S 2002, ‘Illegal Migration from Bangladesh: Problem and Long Term Perspective’, *Dialogue*, 3(3) , pp. 25-26.

28. Aung Phyro and Bose, T 1998, ‘Refugee in South Asia: An Overview’, *Refugee Watch*, Issue

mass movement of refugees across Europe. Because of this the international community, particularly the League of Nations had taken a 'category' or 'group' approach to define the refugees. After the Second World War there was no mass movement of refugees across Europe which changed the notions of the western countries towards refugees. It was, in fact influenced largely by the politics of cold war shifting emphasis from the group to the individuals. As a consequence, a more individual definition of refugees was adopted by the United Nations.

A special category of immigrants are known as refugees. Traditionally, any person who has been forced to flee his or her home for fear of life or lack of subsistence is regarded as a refugee. However, a more classical definition of refugees is found in the 1951 UN Convention of Refugees. It defines refugees under Article 1 as a person who owing to a "well founded fear of being persecuted for reason of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or who not having a nationality or being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it."<sup>29</sup> The definition clearly lay down that only those people shall be deemed refugees who are said to be political refugees as opposed to ordinary migrants or economic refugees or those who leave their country for reasons of personal inconvenience. As this definition was limited in scope, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1969 extended the definition to include the victims of aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order. Later in 1984, the Latin American countries in the Cartagena Declaration of Refugees further extended the definition to include the victims of generalized violence, international conflict and serious disturbances to public peace.<sup>30</sup>

Nevertheless, the definition is being questioned today by social scientists and especially by human rights activists. It is because of the process of decolonization which started in the wake of World War II, encouraged liberations struggles, revolutions,

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No-1, January, .Viewed 2 April 2013, <<http://www.merg.ac.in/rw%2520files/Rw1.doc> .>.

29. Yasin, Adil-Ul and Uadhyay, A 2003, *Human Rights: Issues and Challenges*, Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi, p.100.

30. Ibid. ,

coups and counter coups displacing millions in the Afro-Asian and South American countries. At the same time, the readjustment of old colonial boundaries rekindled old rivalries, unleashed ethnic and religious conflict causing large scale movements of populations across border adding more refugees and stateless people. Keeping in view the present situation, the old definition of refugee has been formally extended to cover those forced to flee their homes but who remains within their country of nationality, such as thousands are living in refugee camps in the Darfur regions of Sudan.<sup>31</sup>

It becomes obvious from the above that the refugee movements are involuntary movements of population. International refugee law broadly identifies a refugee as a person who-

- (a) is outside the country of his/her nationality;
- (b) suffers from fear of persecution; and
- (c) is unable or unwilling to return to the home due to such fear.

It is important to mention here that the concept of refugee is frequently entangled with the migrants in the international spheres. Agarwal (2008) stated that refugees are migrants in the boarder sense of the term.<sup>32</sup> Essentially migration is a voluntary action and cannot be treated at par with the refugees who are persecuted in their home state for reason of race, religion or political opinion. But on certain occasion a person fleeing on economic reasons may also be termed as refugee if his economic considerations are interwoven with the political considerations. Likewise, most recent studies reveal that an overwhelming majority of the displaced persons in the Third World are generally classified as migrants by host Governments and international agencies. For instance, between 1950 and 1990 about 21 million people were displaced in India by projects like big dams, mines, industries and wildlife reserves.<sup>33</sup> As these people did not cross any international border who remained in India and termed as Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). But there are some development projects implemented with international support have had adverse impact and deprived many people of their traditional livelihood and at times pushed some of them beyond the borders. These people were termed as

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31. Sargent, L.T 2009, *Contemporary Political Ideologies: A Comparative Analysis*, Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, Canada, p.54.

32. Agarwal, H .O. op.cit. p.133.

33. Refugee Watch, Issue No. 1, 1998.

‘environmental refugees’ or ‘refugees of developments projects’ by concerned organizations and academicians.

Thus, it becomes clear that the terms refugees, migrants and displaced persons are used according to the convenience of time and situation by the states at the national and international spheres. There are strong correlation between organized violence, displacement, migration and refugees.

**1.1.6. Resettlement:** - The resettlement of refugees is regarded as the important means to reduce the number of refugees. It is not acceptable that refugees spent years of their lives in confined spaces. At the same time, a number of refugees cannot go home or reluctant to do so because they will face constant persecution. In such state of affairs, the United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) assist to relocate refugees in a third country. The three durable pursued by the UNHCR in refugee situation are voluntary repartition, integration and settlements. According to Sadako Ogata, the UN Higher Commissioner for Refugees, ‘resettlements can no longer be seen as the least-preferred durable solution; in many cases it is the only solution for refugees’.<sup>34</sup> In 2011, UNHCR presented the reports of some 92,000 refugees for deliberation by resettlement countries. By nationality, the main recipient of UNHCR facilitated relocation programmes were refugees from Myanmar, Iraq, Somalia, Bhutan, Nepal, Thailand and Malaysia. Of the 11 million refugees of concern to UNHCR around the world, only about 1 per cent of them are put forward by the agency for resettlement.<sup>35</sup> Thus, resettlements of refugees are both demanding and rewarding. Refugees are often settled to realm where the civilization, language and culture are totally diverse and new to them. For example, the Hajongs tribe those who are rehabilitated in Arunachal Pradesh are entirely new to the language and customs of the local Arunachalee tribe in Changlang district.

**1.1.7. Statelessness:** - In general, a person is referred to as a stateless person when he does not possess the nationality of any state. All individual who have lost their original nationality without having acquired another are in fact, stateless person.<sup>36</sup> He does not possess or enjoy those rights which are conferred to a person in international law. Even a

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34. Kapoor, P 2013, ‘ The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees’, in *Human Rights: Institutional Arrangements* , Vikash Publishing House, Pvt. Ltd. UP, PP. 64-67.

35. Ibid. p. 67.

36. Agarwal, H O. Op.cit. p.146.

stateless person is not essentially recognized as a refugee. In order to eliminate the position of a person from becoming a stateless, a few attempts have been made. The first such type of attempt was the Convention on the Conflict of Nationality Laws, 1930 was adopted which provided under Article 1 that the Contracting States agree to accord nationality to a person born in their territory who would otherwise be stateless. The provision could not prove effective to solve the problem of statelessness.

However, considering the gravity of the problem of statelessness, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR), 1948 provided under Article 15 that each person is entitled to have nationality and which cannot be taken or snatched away arbitrarily. Subsequently, two more Conventions relating to the status of stateless persons were held. The first Conference was convened in 1954 by the Economic and Social Council to regulate and improve the status of stateless persons. The Convention defined the term stateless person as a person who is not considered as a national under the operation of its law.<sup>37</sup> It gave such person judicial status but no provision was made to reduce or eliminate statelessness. The second conference was held in 1961 and adopted a resolution on the Reduction of Statelessness. More importantly, the convention classifies the ways in which a person who would otherwise be stateless can acquire or retain nationality through an established link with a state by birth or descent.

In addition to these, in 1996 the UN General Assembly called on United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to encourage agreement to the two international conventions on statelessness and to assist government with technical and legal advice on their nationality legislation. The efforts of the UNHCR were commendable in this regard. In fact, the UNHCR's association with stateless person is founded on the well built links between statelessness and displacement of the persons. For example,

- (a) Displacement can be the reason of statelessness;
- (b) Displacement can be a corollary of statelessness;
- (c) Statelessness can be a barrier to the decree of refugee problem.

Despite of all these efforts, there are millions of stateless persons around the world. Ten million people worldwide have no nationality, leaving them in a legal limbo. This was

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37 . Ibid. p.147.

stated by the UNHCR chief Antonio Guterres launching a campaign “ I Belong” to eradicate statelessness within a decade. He reported that, “every 10 minutes a new stateless person is born.” describing the situation as “absolutely unacceptable and anomaly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”<sup>38</sup> It may be because of the determination of nationality question is still within the competence of each state. The case of the Chakma-Hajong refugees who are still living a stateless life in the state of Arunachal Pradesh may be cited here.

**1.1.8. Identity-**Originally, the concept of ‘identity’ is used as a piece of sociological imagination and at present an offshoot of the politics of multi-culturalism. In fact, the idea of ‘identity’ is born out of the crisis of belonging to and out of their efforts it triggers to bridge the gap between the ‘out’ and the ‘is’ and to lift reality to the standard set by the idea to make the reality in the likeness of the idea.<sup>39</sup> It is assumed that people fight their specific interest and some of their interests constitute their distinct identity. In the analytical framework of Emile Durkheim, identity is to be considered as an objective, an aim rather than pre-defined factor.<sup>40</sup> In this way, it refers to a set of separate and unique selfhood, but it also acknowledges that how people themselves is shaped by a web of social and other social relationships that distinguish the other people. Identity, thus, implies difference; an awareness of difference sharpens or clarifies our sense of identity.<sup>41</sup>

There are a number of theories regarding the construct of identity. The Political Identity Theory refers to struggle over the appropriate forms of social, legal, political and constitution recognition. It seeks to accommodate the identities of individuals, immigrants, refugees, women as well as the minorities of all religious, social, cultural, linguistic, ethnic and regional. It covers the struggles of the indigenous people as well of the resident aliens who do not subscribe to the dominant culture rather agitate against the hold of their rulers what they denounce as social and cultural imperialism. It may lead to ‘sub-national’ and ‘trans-national’ forms.<sup>42</sup>

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38. The Assam Tribune, November 5, 2014. P.4.

39. Zygmunt, Bauman 2004. *Polity*, Polity Press, Cambridge, p.20.

40. Ibid. p.15.

41. Heywood, A 2004, *Political Theory: An Introduction*, Macmillan, Palgrave, London, p.46.

42. Tully, J 2003, ‘Identity politics’, in T. Bull and R. Bellamy(ed.), *The Cambridge History of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press,pp.517.

Further, the Social Identity Theory, Tajfel (1972) considers that a person has not one 'personal self', rather several selves that correspond to widening circles of group membership. On the other hand, the social categorization theory Turner (1999) built on Tajfel's (1972) work which considers that people define themselves in terms of membership in particular social categories. The theory states that when people perceive their identity in terms of "we and us" as opposed to "I and me". The theory concludes that the identity occur in relation to the wider group to which they belong to and not be considered to a concept of personal identity. Conversely, Burke and Stet's Identity Control Theory (2005) supports the main tenets of both the Social Identity and Social Categorisation theory. The theory regards that the identity is a set of meanings that define who is a person both in terms of the group to which they belong to and their personal attributes.

Thus, the phenomenon of ethnic identity crisis is an intrinsic component of the socio-political reality of multi-ethnic states in North-East India. In fact, the issues of ethnic identity crises have, of late, transcended the other problems and become one of the major foci of national politics. It is absolutely essential to locate the problem of ethnic identity as a political problem.

**1.1.9. Acculturation:** -The concept of acculturation occupies an important place in the study of cultural and psychological change that results following meeting between cultures. Historically speaking, the earliest recorded thoughts towards acculturation can be found in Sumerian inscriptions from 2370 B.C. These age old inscriptions laid down certain rules for commerce and interactions with foreigners to limit acculturations in order to protect their traditional cultural practices. Even in ancient Greece, there were efforts to control acculturation. According to Plato, acculturation should be avoided as he thought it would lead to social disorder. Nevertheless, the history of western civilization and in particular the histories of Europe and United States, are largely defined by patterns of acculturations.

**1.1.9.1. Definition:** - The concept of acculturation has been studied systematically since 1918 and has made the approaches in the field of psychology, anthropology and sociology. Since then numerous theories and definitions emerged to describe the



elements of the acculturation process. In general, it is a multi- dimensional process in which members of one cultural group adopts the beliefs and behaviour of another group. Although, acculturation is usually in the direction of a minority groups adopting cultural beliefs and values, habits and language patterns of the dominant group. In a simple line it means the structural assimilation- the integration of members of the minority group into the social structure of the majority group.<sup>43</sup> But it can also be reciprocal also wherein the dominant group also adopts typical patterns of the minority groups. Merriam Webster Dictionary defines acculturation as the cultural modification of an individual, group or people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture; also a merging of cultures as a result of prolonged contact.<sup>44</sup>

The study of the above definitions reveals the effects of acculturation which can be seen at two levels of interacting cultures-(a) at the group level, where acculturation often results in changes to culture, customs and social institutions, (b) at the individual level, effect of acculturation changes mainly in psychological and physical well-being.

**1.1.9.2. Conceptual Models of Acculturation:** - There are numerous models that exist to study the changes occurring at the group and individual levels. John Berry (1997) who developed the concept of acculturation which states that there are two main issues relating to groups who migrate and settle in a culture different to their own, namely, cultural maintenance, contact and participation. The first relates to the extent resettling groups believe their own cultural identity and characteristics are important and the second relates to the extent they should become involved in other cultural groups or remain primarily among themselves.

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43. Acculturation n.d., Viewed 17 March 2014, <<http://www.rice.edu/projects/HispanicHealth/Acculturation.html>>.

44. Acculturation-Definition, Viewed 17 March 2014, <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/acculturation>>.

However, majority of these models divided the ways in which individual approach of acculturation into four main categories. John Berry's (1997) conceptual framework also demonstrates four alternative acculturation strategies.<sup>45</sup> They are-

- (a) Assimilation- it occurs when negates attachment to one's cultures of origin and adopts the cultural norms of the dominant or host culture;
- (b) Integration- it allows for a continuing attachment to one's original culture while becoming involved in the culture of the host society;
- (c) Separation- it involves a commitments to one's own culture with little or no contact with the host culture and
- (d) Marginalization-it results in a lack of connection to both one's original and host cultures.

Thus, the effects of integration of acculturation can be seen at multiple levels in the Hajong society. But the problem of assimilation occurred in several displaced Hajongs who were rehabilitated outside the North East regions of India.

**1.1.10. Multi-Culturalism-** Most recently, the concept of multi-Culturalism plays an important role in the study of the politics of identity or recognition. It emerged as a theoretical stance through the activities of the 'Black Panthers' in the United States in 1960s. But in a short course of time, it covered all agitations of the excluded, marginalized or stigmatized sections of the society in other countries of the world. Multi-culturalism, therefore, attaches importance to the separate and distinct identity of certain neglected and stigmatized sections of the society. It advocates preserving their distinct recognition and struggle for having a respected place in a pluralistic society.

Multi-Culturalism, attacks the present day socio-political order based on injustice. It focuses on cultural injustices rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation and communication. Moreover, it openly rejects the imposition of a particular culture on all section of the people and reacts against the tendency of forced

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45. Berry, John 1997, 'Immigration, Acculturation and Adaptation', *Applied Psychology: An Internal Review*, 46(1), p.9.

assimilation. Heywood (2004) has stated certain features of multiculturalism like, preservation of distinctive cultures when they belong to minority or vulnerable groups; such a position is based upon a belief in value pluralism; social justice and state should adopt the policy for the benefit of the underprivileged sections of the society; such groups are no longer willing to be silenced or marginalized, or to be defined as 'deviant' and it desires a pluralistic order ensuring 'differentiated citizenship'.<sup>46</sup> Besides, the multi-culturalism also provides remedy for cultural or symbolic change to upwardly revalue disrespected identities and cultural products of maligned groups, or positively value cultural diversity.<sup>47</sup>

**1.2. Ethno-Historical Profile of the Hajongs:** - The phenomenon of displacement and ethnic identity crises is an intrinsic component of the socio-political reality of multi-ethnic states in North-East India. The issues of displacement and tribal identity crisis of North-East India, of late, transcended the other problems and become one of the major foci of our national politics. It is absolutely essential to locate the problems of displacement and ethnic identity as a historical problem.

In the history of remote past, the Kiratas, among other groups of people, were reigning in many parts of Assam up to the middle part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century since time immemorial.<sup>48</sup> The areas covering Hoang-ho and Yang-Tse-Kiang rivers to the north-west China on the east, the entire Brahmaputra valley on the west, Tibet on the North Patkai mountains on the south were predominantly inhabited by the present so-called Indo-Mongoloid people in the ancient times, and these Mongoloid people were no doubt, the kiratas in those old times as mentioned in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. In the later periods, numerous ethnic groups of people had been sprouted from these Kiratas. These vast tracts of the North-East India were the land of early settlement of the Mongoloid people in India under the name of kiratas.<sup>49</sup> It may rightly be pointed out that the land of kiratas once extended up to Punjab in the west.<sup>50</sup> According to Suniti Kumar

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46. Heywood, A. Op.cit. pp. 215-16.

47. Kymlicka, W 2002, *Contemporary Political Theory*, Oxford University Press, London, pp. 332-333.

48. Nath,Rajmohan, 1996, ' The Background of the Assamese Architecture, ( in Assamese), in H. P. Neog and L. Gogoi (ed.), ' *Asamiya Sanskrhikti* ', p.35.

49. Chatterjee, SK 1974, *Kirata Janakriti*, p.26., also in Barua, BK 1969, *A Cultural History of Assam*, p.7.

50. Grierson, G.A1967 (Reprint), *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol, part-II, pp.48-49.

Chatterjee (1974), ancient Assam and its Eastern Frontiers were adjacent to the South-Eastern China and the Kirata country comprised of Tibet, Sikkim, Bhutan, Manipur and adjacent areas of these vast tracts of north-east India. Viewing the expansion of the Sino-Tibetan speakers including the Bodos, Chatterjee says;

*“ the area of characterisation for the primitive Sino-Tibetan speech appears to have been north-western China between the head-waters of the Huong Ho and the Yang- tsze King rivers....Mongoloid tribes from western China speaking forms of Sino-Tibetan speech appears to have been pushing south and west from their original homeland from pre-historic times; but certain large-scale movements of which we have faint inklings seem to have begun in the early part of the first millennium B.C...The Bodos, who spread over the whole of the Brahmaputra valley and North Bengal as well East Bengal, forming a solid block in North-Eastern India, where the most important Indo-Mongoloid people in Eastern India and they formed one of the main bases of the present day population of these tracts. Judging from the wide range of extension of their language, the Bodos appear first to have settled over the entire Brahmaputra valley, and extended west into North Bengal (in Koch Bihar, Rangpur and Dinajpur district). They may have pushed into North-Bihar also, and the Indo-Mongoloids who penetrated into North Bihar might equally have been either Bodos or Himalayan tribes allied to the Newars. They skirted the southern end of the Brahmaputra and occupied the Garo Hills, where as Garos, they form a block of Bodo speech. South of the Garo Hills they spread in Northern Mymensing, where the semi-Bengalised Hajong tribe is of Bodo origin. From Nowgong district in Assam their area of occupation extended to Cachar district (particularly in the North Cachar Hills) and into Sylhet and from Cachar and Sylhet they moved further to the south to Tripura state, where there is still a Bodo speaking block in the shape of the Tipra tribe which founded the state from Tripura they spread into Comilna and possibly also Noakhali districts, and thus they occupied the mouths of the Ganges by the eastern sea, with the exception of the isolated Khasi and Jaintia Hills, the whole of Assam (barring the eastern parts inhabited by the Nagas and the south-eastern parts inhabited by the Kuki-Chins) and North and East Bengal was the country of the great Bodo people. But at the present moment, except where some inlands of Bodo speech*

still remain, the Kirata Bodos have merged in to the Bengali and Assamese speaking masses, Hindu as well as Musalman, in the area".<sup>51</sup>

The most important ethnic group of the Kiratas or the Mongoloid people was evidently the Bodo and its sub-groups. B.K. Barua writes that the most important groups of tribes of the Tibeto-Burman race known as Bodo formed the numerous and important sections of the non-Aryan peoples of Assam and built strong kingdoms and under various tribal groups like the Kachari, the chutiya, the Koch etc. held sway over one or another part of Assam in different historical periods.<sup>52</sup> Anthropologically it is accepted that a group of people together known as the Bodo-Kochari were the first inhabitants of the foothills of the eastern Himalayan range which includes the whole of Assam, North Bengal, Northern part of Bangladesh and Tripura .In fact, the word 'Bodo is derived from the 'Bod' which means Tibet and Kachari is derived from Kassar meaning the foothills of the Himalayas. The Bodo-Kacharis are considered to have reached the Brahmaputra valley through Tibet and they were the early colonizers of the river valleys of Assam. Many scholars agreed that Bodo-Kachari is the term applied to a number of ethnic groups. These groups were classified for the first time by Sydney Endle as the Kacharis.<sup>53</sup> The Census of India, 1881, lists 19 number of groups under the Kachari fold. They are- 1. Bodo; 2. Chutiya; 3. Dhimal; 4. Dimasa; 5. Garo; 6. Hajong; 7. Hojai; 8. Lalung; 9. Madani; 10. Mahalia; 11. Mech; 12. Moran; 13. Phulgaria; 14. Rabha; 15. Rajbongshi (Koch); 16. Sarania; 17. Solaimiya; 18. Sonowal and 19. Tipra ( Jamatia, Bru, Mogs, Noatia, Debberma) .<sup>54</sup> However, most of the scholars are of the opinion that the important ethnic groups (communities) of the Bodo are – Garo, Kachari, Chutiya, Rabha, Koch, Tiwa (lalung), Mech, Hajong, Dimasa, Kok-Borok (tripuri), Dhimal, Sonowal,Thengal, Mohalia, Moran etc.<sup>55</sup> and based on these an ethnographic profile of the Hajong is shown in the following table-1.1.

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51. Chatterjee, S K., op.cit, pp.21-46.

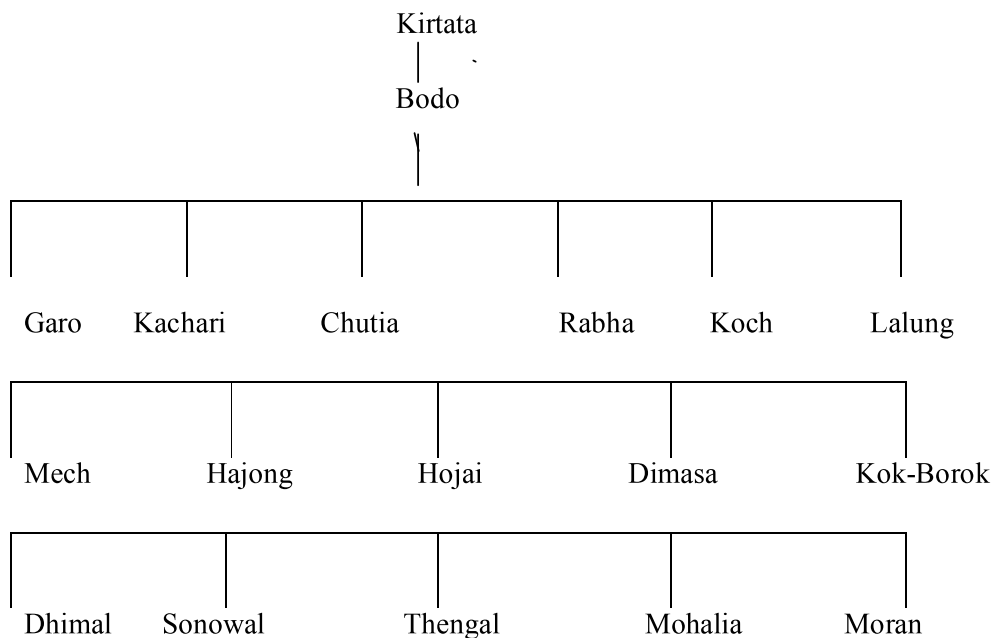
52. Barua, B K. op. cit., p.7.

53. Endle, Sydney 1975, *The Kacharis*, Cosmos Publication, Delhi, p.5.

54. The Census of India, 1881, Abstracts.

55. Chaudhury, P C 1959 (Reprint1987), *The History of Civilization of the People of Assam to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century A.D.* pp.87-88; Endle, S 1975, *The Kacharis*, p. 5; Grierson, GA 1903, *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. III, Part II, Calcutta , pp. 7-8.

**Table.1.1.**  
**Ethnographic Profile of the Hajongs**



Source:- Machahary, P 2004, *Socio-Political Life of the Boros in Karbi Anglong District of Assam*, M. Offset Press, Hojai. p.11.

### **1.3. Racial Affinity of the Hajongs:-**

Regarding ethnic or racial affinity of the Hajongs there have been a lot of confusions and it is very difficult to say what precisely their racial affinity with other tribal groups is. In regard to their racial affinity different scholars have revealed divergent views. Intensive investigations and researches were done to ascertain the ethnic affiliation of different tribal groups in North-East India. Waddel in 1901, perhaps for the first time, initiated a comprehensive investigation to study in physical anthropology of the tribes of North East India. Later on researchers accumulated sufficient data on the Northeastern tribes in different courses of time. Among these tribes the Hajongs have been analysed from different angles in order to establish its ethnic affiliation with other tribes. Scholars like Colonel Delton regard Hajong as one of the branches of the Kacharis. To quote in his own words –

*“the Rabhas and Hajongs of the Go-walparah Distric are branches of the kachari race and connected with the Garos”.*<sup>56</sup> Delton has also mentioned further – *“the Hajongs appear to be identical with the Hajai kacharis of north-cachar-”*<sup>57</sup>

Delton, however, did not mention in what way the Hajongs and the Hojais of the North-Cacher hills are identical. It is because of the Hojai or Hojaisa is one of forty male clans of the Dimasa kacharis called ‘Sempong’. In their material culture we do not find any identical features between the members of Hojaisa clan of the Dimasa Kacharis and the Hajongs.<sup>58</sup> Like Delton, Mr. L.A. Waddell also, regards the Hajongs as the primitive kachari of the hilly tracts.<sup>59</sup> Besides, some writers and scholars of foreign origin along with Indian writers like Dr.Suniti Kumar Chatterjee express similar views that the semi-Bengali Hajong inhabitants of North-Mymensing belong to the Bodo groups of people.<sup>60</sup> Sidney Endle also opined that the Hajong people are one of the branches of Bara race (Bodo). Most possibly these people (Hajong) are modern representatives of the ancient Koch-Hajo dynasty of present Goalpara district. The language spoken by the Hajong people is nothing more than a medley of Assamese and Bangla. The total number of Hajong people living nearby areas of Garo-Hills is 8766.<sup>61</sup>

Notwithstanding, there are some dissimilarities exists between Bodo and Hajong tribe,<sup>62</sup> as shown in Table (1.2)

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56. .Dalton, E.T 1978, *Tribal History of Eastern India*, New Delhi, p. 87.

57. Ibid: p. 88.

58 . Bordoloi, B.N 1991,*Tribes of Assam, Part III*, Assam Institute of Research for Tribals and Schedule Castes, Guwahati – 28, p. 21.

59. Waddel, L.A 1975, *The Tribes of the Barahmaputra Valley*, Delhi, p. 4.

60. Chatterjee, S.K. op. cit. p.34.

61 . Endle, S. op.cit. p.5.

62 . Sheikh, E. A 2012, *Hajong Janoghosti*, Moromi Printers, Goalpara, Assam, pp. 45-46.

**Table. 1.2.**

**A Comparative Study of the Hajongs and Bodo-Kachari**

Hajong	Bodo-Kachari
1. Hajongs use to live at a permanent settlements.	1. Bodos are believer in temporary settlements for habitation.
2. Hajongs are not accustomed in Jhum cultivation. They are proficient in wet cultivation.	2. Jhum cultivation is the main cultivation of the Bodos.
3. The name of the forefather of the Hajongs were known as 'Hajo'.	3. The forefather of the Kacharis were known as Rangtsa (Dalton p.84).
4. Hajongs are mostly vegetarian; meat of dog and pork are strictly prohibited.	4. Kocharis are meat lovers; pork is their favorite food item.
5. Hajongs are fewer drinkers of wine and other alcohol.	5. Lover of excessive wine drinking.
6. Hajongs are exogamous.	6. Bodos are endogamous.
7. Maintain principle of Patrilocal system	7. Believes in Matrilocal principles.
8. Dead bodies are burned to ashes by the Hajongs	8. It can be said that the burning of dead bodies was not prevalent among the Bodos in earlier days.. According to S. Endle (Reprint 1974:p. 85) that they threw out their body after death.

Source: Sheikh, E. A., (2012), *Hajong Janoghosti*, pp.45-46.

Despite the above mentioned variations; thinkers like Stephen Fuchs expressed different views which are some extent different from others also. According to him the Bodo originated Hajong tribe are similar with the small tribe like Garo, one portion of the tribe migrated from the Garo hills to the Surma valley which subsequently divided into two main groups-the first group used to reside on the hilly areas maintaining its traditional tribal life and against it the second group used to live nearby the plain areas relinquishing their traditional tribal life converting to Hinduism and Bengali as their language of expression.<sup>63</sup> Funchs expression seems that the Hajong tribe belongs to the greater Bodo tribe who resided around the areas of Garo Hills. The groups which migrated from the Garo Hills are used to live not in the hills but also nearby hilly or plain areas abandoning tribal way of life accepting Hinduism as their religion are no one other than Hajong tribe.

At the same time, there are some thinkers who tried to establish a close link of social affinity of the Hajongs to the Garos also. It becomes amply clear that in the

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63. Funchs, Stephen 1992, *The Aboriginal Tribes of India*, New Delhi, p. 215.



Census Report of 1891 the Hajongs have been considered as a separate tribal ethnic group and their racial affinity to the Garos and the Kacharis have also been referred to.<sup>64</sup> But the existence of differences between Hajong and Garos in their socio-cultural, religious and economic way of life manifests hindrances in maintaining racial affinity between the two tribes. To cite one major point of difference among them is that while the Hajongs are patrilineal, but the Garos are matrilineal. Still a few scholars tried to link the racial affinity of the Hajong tribes with the Garos. It is because of one reason that since the Hajongs and the Garos has been living in close proximity from time immemorial. Dalton observed that the Rabha and Hajongs of the Goalpara district are branches of the Kachari race and connected with the Garos.<sup>65</sup>

Thus, majority of the scholars opined that the Hajong as the sub-tribe of the Bodo-Kachari group connected with the Rabha, Koch, Garo, Mech, Tripuri etc<sup>66</sup>, of the North-Eastern states of India. Rajmohan Nath like S.K. Chatterjee also called these tribal groups as 'kirata'<sup>67</sup> or Mongoloid people which includes the Hajong tribe too. It becomes obvious that the Mongoloids people are not other than Kiratas. The Kirata is a synonymous word of Kachari which includes the Bodos and its sub-tribes. The Bodo-Kachari is a generic term applied to a number of ethnic tribes speaking Tibeto-Burman languages. Because of this in many cases these sub-tribes of Bodos were named as-Bodo-Kachari, Rabha-Kochari, Hajong-Kachari, Dimasa-Kachari and Lalung-Kachari.<sup>68</sup> As such majority of the respondents (78%) interviewed wanted to say that they belonged to the Bodo group of people in the remote past. A few, however, expressed their affinities with Rabhas (15%) and Garos (5%) may be presented in the following table 1.3.

**Table- 1.3.**

**Response on Racial Affinities of the Hajongs**

Response			
Bodo	Rabha	Garo	Others
78%	15%	5%	2%

Source:- Field Data generated by the investigator.

64. Majumdar, D N 1984, *Hinuduised Communities of Western Meghalaya* in L.S. Gassah (ed.)

*Garos Hills and the People*, Guwahati,p.151.

65. Goswami, Bhaskar Jyoti (ed.) : *Tribal Studies*, Tribal Research Institute, Assam Sahitya Sabha, Vol. I, No.1 & 2, Rangina Bhawan, Diphu, 2011, p. 123.

66. Hussain I 2014, 'Bodo-Kachari Mane Soronia-Kochari ', *Nomiya Barta*, 10, June, p.4.

67. Nath, Rajmohan, op. cit., p. 37.

68. Niomiya Barta, op.cit.p.4.

However, a few foreign writer those who made a comprehensive studies about the tribes of North-East India and come to the conclusion that the tribes including Hajong tribe belong to the Mongoloid or kiratas group. However, thinkers like E.T. Dalton expressed different views on it .He preferred to call the black coloured Koch as Dravidian instead of Mongoloid. In his own words-

*'the dark skinned people are ko'cch, who have hither to, erroneously I think, been classed as belonging to the Lohitic or Indo-Chinese race. I believe the ko'cch to be a branch of the great Bhuiya or Bhuniya family, whom I class as Dravidian'.*<sup>69</sup>

It is a formidable step taken by Dalton to link the Koch with the Dravidian instead of Mongoloid. According to Singh (2001) the Hajongs looks more Dravidian than Mongoloid.<sup>70</sup> In order to make it more clear scholars forwarded several inherent features of the Mongoloids race which could be placed under the two important heads-

1.3.1. Physical:- The physical features that distinguishes the Mongoloids from Dravidians or other races are yellowish or brown colour of body, dark and uncurl hair, scanty bearded, less hair on the body, big and flattened complexion, curved eyes and narrow corner of both the eyes. Similarly, 'spreaded head or big sized nose and round faced'.<sup>71</sup>

1.3.2. Cultural:- There are some cultural traits or features which are prevalent among the Indo-Mongoloids. They includes-(a) head-hunting; (b) common sleeping houses for the unmarried men which are taboo to women; (c) dwelling houses built on post and piles; (d) disposal of the dead body on raised platforms; (e) a sort of trial marriage ,or great freedom of pre-marital sex; (f) betel-chewing; (g) aversion to milk as an article of diet; (h) tattooing by pricking;(i) absence of any powerful political organization; (j) the double-cylinder vertical forge;(k) loom for weaving cloth; (l) a large quadrangular or hexagonal shield; and (m) residence in hilly regions with a crude(primitive) form of agriculture.<sup>72</sup>

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69. Sheikh, E A: op. cit., p.43.

70 . Singh, R. (2001), *Ethnic Peoples of Bangladesh*, A. H. Development Publishing House, Dhaka, Bangladesh, p.342.

71. Das, Bhubhan Mohan, 2000, *The Peoples of Assam and their Cultures*, (in Assamese), Review: Gauhati University, p. 37.

72. Smith, W.C 1925, *Ao Naga Tribes of Assam: A Study in Ethnology and Sociology*, London, p. 120.

P.C. Bhattacharya (1977) also agrees with W.C. Smith who has shortlisted five outstanding characteristics are found among the Indo-Mongoloid groups of people in Assam like-(a) habit of betel-chewing, (b) they have the aversion to milk as an article of diet; (c) they have the simple loom for weaving clothes; (d) they have the large type of shield used in war; and (e) they have often changing residence in isolated regions with a crude (primitive) form of agriculture.<sup>73</sup> To the contrary, 'with long height and long nose, blue eyes, golden hair, brownish yellow colour of body' are some of the characteristics of the Aryan people.

From the study of physical as well cultural characteristics we cannot say that the Hajong tribe is purely Mongoloids groups of people. On the other hand, there are some problems when we group them as Dravidian as done by Dalton because of their dark complexion. It is like the black Koch people the darkness of Hajong people is not their physical features. It may be because of the Hajong people are hard working people and sun burn of their skin might be the cause of their darkness. But comparatively the neighbour Garo people are more fair complexioned than to the Hajong tribe. In order to make it clear some of the physical features of the Hajong tribe are –round complexioned face, scanty bearded, less hair on the body, flattened nose etc. The Hajongs are fair skinned, bearing good health with fatty body. Sole is flattening than the body, hair densely blackish, and eye moderate to small and black. Hair is available in body, eye lid and brow. But some of the Mongoloid characteristics like head-hunting, tattooing by pricking, aversion to milk, primitive form of agriculture, joom cultivation, dwelling house built on posts and piles, disposal of the dead body on raised platform etc. are very much absent among the Hajong tribe. Again some of the features like chewing betel-nut, tattoo, loom for weaving clothes, burned or boiled food, wet cultivation, patrilineal<sup>74</sup> etc, prove to claim the Mongoloid features of Hajong people.

P.C. Bhattacharya (1977) observed that the Hajongs are dark coloured Mongoloid People, close affinities are there with the Garo and Boro-Kachari which can be seen from their physical structure and language'.<sup>75</sup> But no scholars or anthropologist supported the possibilities of dark coloured Mongoloid people. Especially, brownish

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73. Bhattacharya, P.C 1977, *A Descriptive Analysis of the Boro Language*, Gauhati University, p. 18.

74. Sheikh, E A. op. cit. p.44.

75. Ibid :

yellow colour is the vital feature of Mongoloid people. While the Hajong male members have dark-tan complexion, the women are fair complexioned with long uncut hair. The average height of a man is about 1.60 meters while that of a female it is about 1.40 meters. They have round face and the size of their eyes is not so small like some of the tribal communities of the North-East India. Physically they are strong and stout and capable of hard labour and physical strain.<sup>76</sup> The racial affinities of the Hajongs in comparison to other ethnic groups of North East India was analysed to affiliate them with Mongoloids becomes vivid from the below anthropometry table.<sup>77</sup>

**Table. 1.4.**  
**Racial Affinities of the Hajongs and Comparison with other tribes**

Community	Stature	Head length	Head breadth	Cephalic index	Total facial height	Bi-zygomatic breadth	Total facial index	Nasal height	Nasal breadth	Nasal index
Hajong	159.03	17.88	13.96	79.96	10.66	13.41	80.14	4.82	3.56	74.37
Rabha	161.25	18.85	14.20	75.40	11.20	13.50	83.04	4.76	3.83	81.52
Garo	160.70	18.75	14.14	75.45	11.39	13.82	82.57	4.73	3.97	83.34
Boro-Kachari	163.05	18.69	14.33	76.74	11.43	13.70	80.25	5.00	3.84	76.99
Dimasa-Kachari	159.87	18.77	14.51	77.41	11.74	13.49	86.92	5.09	3.75	74.27

Source:- *The Hajong tribe*, Monday, 25 April 2011.[Internet]. Viewed 25 March 2013, < [http:// birendranathhajong.blogspot.in](http://birendranathhajong.blogspot.in). >.

The study on the physique of the Hajong tribe also reveals that the Hajongs, irrespective of sex, are short statured people, the mean stature of the male and female being 159.03 c. m. and 148.33 cm. respectively. The men have predominantly mesocephalic head with mesorrhine nose. A majority of the women have mesocephalic head and mesorrhine nose. Both the sexes have majority hypsicephalic and acrocephalic head and hypereuryprosopic face.<sup>78</sup>

76. Bordoloi, B N. op. cit. pp. 22-23.

77. *The Hajong tribe*, Monday, 25 April 2011.[Internet]. Viewed 2 Feb.2014, < [http:// birendranathhajong.blogspot.in](http://birendranathhajong.blogspot.in). >.

78. Bareh. H M (ed.) 2001, *Encyclopedia of North-East India*. Meghalaya, Mittal Publication, Delhi, pp. 214-215.

It has also been proved in a recent genetic survey in four Mongoloids population namely, Garo, Hajong, Rabha and Koch of the Garo Hills of Meghalaya. The study tried to explore the genetic distance as well as affinity among these tribes which were measured on the basis of collected data applying Sanghvi's  $G^2$  Statistics. It can be shown by the following table-<sup>79</sup>

**Table.1.5.**  
**Genetic Values (G-V) of the Hajongs with Garo, Rabha and Koch**

Community	Garo	Hajong	Rabha	Koch
Garo	---	3,750	3,647	2,167
Hajong	10,000	----	2,496	3,704
Rabha	9,727	6,657	---	3,569
Koch	5,779	9,879	9,519	---

Source:-Deka.R 1984, A genetic Survey in Four Mongoloid Populations of the Garo Hills, India', *Anthropologischer Anzeiger, Jahrg.42* , p.44 , Viewed 21 October 2013, < <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29539494> >.

It becomes clear from the G-Values (Table 1.5) that although these four Tibeto –Burman tribes live in close geographic proximity there is genetic affinity only between Garo and Koch on the one hand, Hajong and Rabha on the other. Many thinkers like Playfair (1909, Reprint 1998) mentioned close ethnic affiliation between Garo, Koch and Rabha and most probably these tribes were members of one single stock and who had migrated from Tibet in the remote past. The following table obviously serves as an explanation for the genetic similarities between Garos and Koch but the results of Rabha is confusing. The relative genetic closeness between Hajong and Rabha may be due to chance, as no evidence for any historical or marital relationship between them is available. The position of Hajong is such that though they are sub-tribe to Bodo group of tribes, they ethnically closer to the caste population of North-East India. More importantly, the Hajong also display relatively more Caucasoid morphological features as are observed among the castes in India. Rightly they may be called a hybrid. It might be a

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79. Deka.R 1984, A genetic Survey in Four Mongoloid Populations of the Garo Hills, India', *Anthropologischer Anzeiger, Jahrg.42* , p.44 , Viewed 21 October 2013, < <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29539494> >.

sub-tribe of the greater Bodo-Kachari group of people with Mongoloid and some non-Mongoloid features.

#### **1.4. Origin of the Name 'Hajong':-**

The Hajong is a numerically small ethnic tribe of North-East India and Bangladesh. The evidence of the early history of the Hajong tribe is extremely thin. It is because of this, different scholars hold different views regarding the origin of the term 'Hajong'. All these views seem to be partially correct and cannot be accepted without proper scrutiny. These views, however, can broadly be placed under the following two groups-

1.4.1. **Mythological Perspective:-**It is very herculean task to discuss the Hajong tribe from historical perspective .It may be for lack of ancient literature, records, anthropological monuments etc. The Hajong people cannot be called a hilly tribe with all tribal features. It may be because of influence of Hinduism cannot be denied in social life of the Hajong. The tribe lost many fundamental elements of their culture as a result of frequent migration and shifting of their inhabitation. So, in order to trace out the ancient history of the Hajong tribe, one has to rely on the prevalent myth, proverbs, folk tales, mythology, anthropological science and cultural life of the Hajong tribe.

1.4.2. According to Paresh Hajong, a reputed writer hailing from the Hajong community states that the Hajong are the descendent of Kartayavirjarjun, one of the greatest kshatriya king of Mahabharata, who killed the father of Parasurama named, Jamadagni . Being angry with this saint Parasuram vowed to kill the killer of his father along with all the Khasatriyas from the earth merely for taking revenge on king Kartyabirajan, who was killed by Parasurama in the process. His queen Swarupa Devi who was pregnant at that time saved herself by fleeing away from the palace and took shelter in the hermitage of the sage Kamadutta in ancient Kamrupa. She gave birth to a male child, who was known as Padangsku. It is believed that Padangsku who occupied the ancient the Hajo township and ruled over the Hajo area. Further, they believe that the king of Bhaskar Verma was one of the decedent of Padangsku. <sup>80</sup>

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80. Hajong Sarkar, Prafulla R 1973, *Hajong Itihas*, S.G. Press, Hojai, Nagaon, Assam, p.7.

1.4.3. According to another statement Bharat Bharman, who was the son of Bhaskar Bharman, was the last king of the dynasty. During his time the Hajo Township was destroyed and as a result about twelve thousand people fled away to the Garo hill under the guidance of a man named Kashyap. The place in Garo hills where they established their first settlement was called Hajari . Subsequently, from Hajari they spread over to nearby areas. They gave a new name to the newly settled areas as ‘Haj’ corresponding to their place of origin ‘Hajo’ and in the course of time ‘Haj’ became Hajong.<sup>81</sup> This traditional anecdote assumes that the word Hajong is derived from the ‘Haj’ which refers to the inhabitants of the ancient township of Hajo.

1.4.4. Another myth prevalent among is that once there was a Mech (Koch) king named ‘Haj’ who ruled over Hajo. The name of the capital named after the name of the Haj king. Later on, because of some of historical reasons the people who run away from Hajo was known as Hajong. Dr. Bukanon Hamilton (1808 A.D) has mentioned the name of king Hira whose father was known as Hajo. Gunabhiram Barua also agreed with Hamilton and the same king was named by him ‘Hajor’. ‘Haji’. or ‘Hakhiya’. Many western scholars like Hudson, Dr. Latham, E.T. Dalton also agreed and cited that the father of Hira Devi as ‘Hajo’. The mother of Hira Devi was also known as ‘Mira’ in their writings. <sup>82</sup> Sri Sambu Dutta Sharma in his work ‘Sri Sri Haigrib Madhab’ has also confirmed that the ‘Haj’ was the king of Hajo.<sup>83</sup>

1.4.5. According to Ratan Kumar Rai, the term Hajong is derived from ‘Harajan’ which means a section of the people who had accepted a new occupation by abandoning the traditional one. To him ‘Ha’ means to express sorrow and ‘Jan’ means people .The Hajong were once a part of larger community. In the course of time they broke from the greater community and formed a separate entity by accepting a new occupation. <sup>84</sup> Rai, however, did not mention from which greater community the Hajong had broken away. He even did not indicate the traditional occupation and the newly accepted occupation

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81. Hajong, Paresh , (n.d), Hajong Janajati Janma Rahashya, an Article in Assamese published in *Janasikhya*, pp. 11-12.

82. Kha, Chowdhury, Amanat Ullah 1936, *History of Kochbihar (Kochbiharer Itihash in Bengali)*, Reprint, Kolkata, p.81.

83. Dutta, Sharma, Sambhu, 2006, *Sri Sri Haigrib Madhab*, Hajo, p. 37.

84. Bordoloi, B.N. op. cit, p. 20.

by the Hajong community after breaking away from the larger group forming a separate ethnic group.

1.4.6. The most prevalent myth among the Hajong is that the word 'Hajong' is derived from the Bodo and Rabha word 'Haju' which literally 'high hills' or 'high land'.<sup>85</sup> Majority of the scholars are of the opinion that the word 'Hajong' emanates from the Garo word 'ha-jong'. In Garo 'Ha' means 'earth' and 'zong' means 'ants' or 'worms'.<sup>86</sup> The inner meaning is that the Hajong are expert in wet-cultivation. On the other hand, Garos are not proficient in wet cultivation, since they are habituated in shifting cultivation in hilly areas.

1.4.7. According to Biren Hajong, ex-president, Hajong Sahitya Sabha, that 'the Hajong in Garo hills and Garos called them 'Ajong' which means outsider or non-Garo or it means 'earth-worm with an amusing feelings'. The latter denotation was heartily accepted by the Hajongs for the obvious reasons. He also stated that it may be due to faulty pronunciation the word 'Ajong' has become 'Hajong' and subsequently 'Hajwang' and now simply Hajong. Sri Niren Hajong has also agreed with Biren Hajong and expressed similar views regarding their origin from the Garo words 'Ajong' and later on 'Hajong'.<sup>87</sup>

1.4.8. Nikhil Rai Hajong expressed his inability to accept the present way of analysis about the origin of the Hajongs. He asserted that many a time the Hajongs were forced to face difficult situations by others. For that, they were to get ready or prepared which is in Assamese known as 'Khaju Huwa' and later on it became Hajong.<sup>88</sup>

It appears that there are divergent views regarding the origin of the Hajong tribe. The lack of historical documents about the early history of the Hajongs may be the cause of such divergence. According to N. C. Mosahari, there are no dependable historical documents about the Hajong tribe.<sup>89</sup> Majority of the Hajong people interviewed expressed their ignorance about the origin of the term Hajong. However, some educated

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85. Ibid.

86. Ibid. p. 21.

87. Hajong, Niren 1983, Hajong Janajati Somu Parichay, *Chetana*, (in Assamese), Preface, First Edition, Hajong Welfare Association, Meghalaya.

88. Sheikh, E A, .op. cit. pp.20-21.

89. Hajong, P. C 2007, *Hajong Loko Sanskriti*, The Assam Institute of Research for Tribals and Scheduled Castes, Jawaharnagar, Gauhati-32, p.19.



scholars from among the Hajong agreed to club them with the Bodos, Garos and Rabhas while analysing their origin. The claim of Delton to group the Hajong tribe with Dravidian cannot be accepted. Delton perhaps did it for the dark coloured skinned of the Hajong tribe. It has been found that the Hajong people are fond of hard labour and expert in wet land cultivation. This type works naturally cause sun burn which also confirms their cause. Similarly, some scholars came forward to call the Hajongs as Aryans<sup>90</sup> was refuted because of shortage of enough historical documents.

The following Table (1.6) obviously indicates the response of the respondents interviewed about the place of their origin:

**Table. 1.6.**

**Response on the origin of the name Hajongs**

Hajo (Ancient Kamrup).	262	77.05 %
Borhazari(Meghalaya)	39	11.47%
Chittagong Hill Tracts (Bangladesh)	20	5.88%
Others	6	1.76
Don't Know	18	5.29%

Source:- Field data generated by the investigator.

The claims of the majority Hajong respondents may be accepted that the name Hajong originated after the name of the place 'Hajo'. The residents of ancient Hajo came to be known as Hajong in the course of time. The Garo word 'Ha-Jong' which later on became the Hajong is unacceptable for one or two reasons. It is because even before the migration of the Hajongs to the Borhazari of Garo Hills District, the inhabitants of Hajo areas were known as Hajongs. In the same way, as sub-tribes of the greater Bodo tribe the Garo, Rabha and Hajong used to live in adjacent areas as neighbours for many centuries. As a result, the Rabhas and Garos called the 'Hajons' or later on Hajongs for their migration from the 'Hajo' areas. It is also worth to be mentioned here that the Hajong tribe are known by different names in different regions. During my field study I have found that in Bangladesh they are called Hajong or alternately 'Hajang', but in

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90. Ibid.

Assam, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh they are known as Hajong or Haijong and rarely Hazong. But the census reports of 2001, named them as Hajang in West Bengal. Thus, there is possibility that the word ‘Hajongs’ may emanate from the word ‘Hajo’, and majority of the scholars and respondents claims that they are called Hajong as they came from ancient Hajo areas of Kamrup district and have migrated to Borhazari and other areas of Garo Hills and Mymensing district.

### **1.5. Geographical Distribution of the Hajongs:-**

The Hajongs are one of the numerically small ethnic tribe in the Indian sub-continent. They are spread out across North-East India and Bangladesh. Majority scholars wanted to say that the ‘Hajo’ of the present Kamrup district was the original abode of the Hajongs. Like many other indigenous tribe the Hajongs are considered as the sub-tribe of the greater Bodo tribe belonging to Mongoloid group of people.

The aboriginal dwelling places of the Hajong were found in Goalpara in North, Sylhet in South-east of present Bangladesh and in western part of Garo Hills district of Meghalaya. Since the beginning of the 19th century following natural calamities and socio-political disturbances the tribe were disintegrated and displaced from their original abode and started living a scattered refugee life in different parts of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Andaman and Nicobar. After the partition of the Country, the Hajong tribe which remained in East Pakistan (present Bangladesh) was displaced massively. They were oppressed and suppressed by the majority groups on the one hand and put atrocities by the Government forces of erstwhile East Pakistan on the other. Finding no shelter, the Hajong tribe along with other community had left East Pakistan and took shelter in India as refugee.

The Hajongs are the ancient among the ethnic minorities of the North-East region of Bangladesh. Prior to the partition of Indian sub-continent, there were several Hajong settlements in Mymensing and Sylhet district of present Bangladesh. They have been living for many generations in the hilly parts of Mymensing district and Sherpur, Sylhet and Netrokona regions of Bangladesh. In fact, the narrow strip of borderland that stretches from close to Rangpur district in the west as far as Sunamganj district in the

east can be considered the southern outpost of the greater Hajong community.<sup>91</sup> The boundary of Hajong land is marked in the North by Suwarkuna in Goalpara district, on the East by Jamkuna (near Sylhet), in the South by Jongkona (Sherpur) and to the West by Morkona which is near Mankachar of South Dhubri district. There are a few unconfirmed reports of some Hajong living in Chittagong Division of Bangladesh.<sup>92</sup> The partition of the country had resulted in massive migration of the Hajongs from the East-Pakistan. A few Hajong families still remain in Bangladesh especially in Mymensing and Sylhet district. Their main settlements are in Sreebardi, Haluaghat, Nalitabari, Susang Durgapur, Kalmakanda and Birishiri areas. They are also available in Darampasa, Tahirpur and Bishmbor in Sunamganj, Sripur and Kaliakoer in Gajipur; Safipur and Bhaluka in Tangail districts of present Bangladesh.<sup>93</sup>

In India, the Hajongs are mostly found in both the Garo and Khasi Hills of Meghalaya. They are concentrated in the plains of the southernmost end and in the western portion of the west Garo Hills district. Some Hajong villages are situated with the east and west Khasi Hills districts borderline Bangladesh.<sup>94</sup> The plain areas of Dadengre Civil sub-Division may be stated for concentration of the Hajongs in Present Meghalaya. The Hajongs are the fourth largest majority tribe in the state of present Meghalaya in respect of population, next to the Khasi, Jaintia and Garos. But the Hajongs are the second largest tribe in number and next to Garos in the Garo Hills District.<sup>95</sup>

Besides Meghalaya, the Hajongs were found only some areas of Goalpara and Dhubri district of Assam. According to Biren Hajong except the native Hajongs living in southern part of Dhubri district and in some part of Goalpara district all are migrants from erst-while East Pakistan inhabiting in different states of North-East

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91. Kim Amy, et. al , 2005, *The Hajong of Bangladesh: A Socio-Linguistic Survey*, ( Un published manuscript), SIL International, p. 9, viewed 23 November 2013,  
< [http:// www.01.sil.org/./silesr042.pdf](http://www.01.sil.org/./silesr042.pdf) >.

92. Ibid.

93. Anon 2003, *Manush, Jatigushti Parichiti*, Series-4, FIDDB, Dhanmondi, Dhaka, Bangladesh , p.56.

94. Bishat, S. Narendra & Bankoti, T. S. (ed), 2004, *Encyclopedic Ethnography of the Himalayan Tribe*, Global Vision Publishing House, Delhi-110093, p.522

95. Hajong, P C. op.cit. P.27.

India.<sup>96</sup> This becomes amply clear that majority of the Hajongs living in different district of Assam migrated from the Mymensing and Sylhet district of the Erst-while East Pakistan in different phases in the wake of the partition of the country. The large chunk migration of the Hajong took place between the periods 1964- 1971. They were rehabilitated by the Government of Assam as part of the Refugee Rehabilitation Programme in the districts like Kamrup, Darrang, Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Goalpara, Nalbari, Kokrajhar, Tinsukia, Nagaon and Karbi Anglong districts of Assam.<sup>97</sup> However, claims for the main concentration of the Hajongs to be found in Goalpara and Nagaon district<sup>98</sup> lack documentary support. Because in Nagaon district a few migrated Hajong refugee families were rehabilitated at Tengripar, Maudangapather and Derapather areas of Present Hojai Sub-division. They were shifted from different refugee camps of Garo Hills District and sheltered at the Jamunamukh transit camp before they were sheltered at Barhampur Refugee Camp in Nagaon along with other refugees before they were rehabilitated in 1971. Instead, at present the main concentration of the Hajongs are found in the Goalpara, Dhubri and Dhemaji district of Assam.

The internal migration that took place among the Hajongs cannot be denied. Because there are some Hajong families of Garo Hills and Goalpara districts had left their original abode and migrated to different districts of Assam in search of available cultivable land for their survival.<sup>99</sup> During the time of partition a few Hajong families also came in to Assam by transferring their land between Assam and East Pakistan. Most of the Hajong families living in the Udalguri district of Assam came from East Pakistan especially from the Mymensing district as a result of mutual land transfer deal, during 1950s. A few Hajong inhabitations are also reported in the Karbi Anglong and North Cachher Hills districts of Assam.

The third large concentrations of the Hajongs are found in the state of Arunachal Pradesh of North east India. All the Hajongs residing in Arunachal Pradesh migrated from the Erst-While East Pakistan in 1964. They were rehabilitated as refugees

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96. Hajong, Biren, op.cit, p. 9.

97. Hajong, Paresh. Chandra, op.cit., p.22.

98. Singh, K. S, Bodoloi, B. K., Athaparia, L. R. K. 2003, *People of India, Assam*, Vol. xv, Part-II, p.268.

99. Hajong, Biren. Op. cit. ,p.9.

by the Government of Assam in NEFA (now Arunachal Pradesh), which was a part of the undivided Assam. In fact, the Hajongs were mainly settled in the Diyun circle of the erstwhile Tirap district (now Changlang) of NEFA. At present the Hajong inhabitation are also found in Miao and Madhupur of Arunachal Pradesh.<sup>100</sup>

In Mizoram and Tripura a few Hajong inhabitations were reported in the census report conducted by the Government of India.

Beyond the North Eastern states of India, a few Hajong families those who migrated from the erstwhile East Pakistan were also rehabilitated in several areas of West Bengal including Kochbihar, Nodia, Santipur and Khordah. Besides, many Hajong refugee families were also sent Dandakaranya and Andaman Islands for rehabilitation by the Government of India. The table (1.7) displays the present inhabitation of the Hajong tribe both in different districts of Assam.

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100. Rabha, Dhananjay, 1988, '*Rabha Jonojatir Somu Itihas*', (in Assamese), Assam Institute of Research for Tribals and Schedule Caste, Gauhati-22, pp.22-24 .

**Table: 1.7.**  
**Hajong populated Areas in Assam**

Country	State	District	Name of Village
India	Assam.	Nagaon	1.Tengripar. 1. Derapather No. 1 2. Derapather No. 2 3. Derapather No. 3 4. Derapather No. 4 1. Moudonga Gaon.
		Goalpara	1.Suarkuna, Matia, Sidhabari, Dhamora(Pub-Patpara), Dhamor, Harimura, Gasua Para, Khaglamari(Lakhipur), Rang Juli(Rupnagar), Dhari Gaon, Bhai-Bhoni, Khardang, Dubapara, Milan Para(Raksha sini), Paikan(Makoribari), Medhipara, Kushdhua, Manasha Para, Baghuan, Goalpara Town.
		Darrang	1. Dhansiri, Dhalaibil, Kasari Toop, Kajiamati, Maimonshing Hajong Gaon, Nepali Basti.
		Dhemaji	1.Kupsapori, Lekha Bali, Cement Chapori, Joyrampur Elaka, Baro Bhuyan, Chaigoria, Kanchan kuna, Darrang Para, Sorupam, Shankarpur, Chapori, Sunapur, Soshan para, Borbil, Cement Mukf Area, Hijar Bari, Muktiar, Nalbari, Harinathpur, Tulsipur, Krishnapur, Bhaga Para, Sula Gaon, Koroi Bari, Pan Bari, Silapather, Baro Ghari, Alipur.
		Dhubri Chirang	1. Aidhuba, Dhanua, Dhapa bill, Putimari. 1. Bishnupur, Batabari, Jakhati.
		Tinsukia.	1. Katha Sema Adarsha Hajong Gaon, Manmau Kohiyarbari Hajong Gaon.
		North Lakhimpur	1.Joyrampur, Nalbari, Bayei Para, Nakari, Shankarpur, Kadam Hajong Gaon, Chaul Dhua Ghat, Katori-Chapori Hajong Gaon, Bortuli, Kamalpur Hajong Gaon, Pani Gaon, Borjuli, Borgaon, Rupahi.
		Kamrup.	1. Boko, Bamuni Gaon, Angra Kata, Pub-Goibari, Bunda (Gauhati).
		Karbi Anglong.	1. Raja Gaon, Lalmati Area.
		Cachar.	1. Silchar.

Source:- Sheikh, EA 2012, *Hajong Janaghosti*, Moromi Printers, Goalpara, pp.34-35.

Sri Biren Hajong (2000) made an estimation which reveals that there are 163 Hajong villages in Indian territory side of East and West Khasi Hills and composite Garo Hills including southern pocket of present Dhubri district of Assam excluding the scattered Hajong habitations in different district of Assam. In addition, there are about 249 available Hajongs habitations in present Bangladesh which comprised different Hajong Paraganas.<sup>101</sup> Regarding estimation of 249 Hajongs inhabitation in present Bangladesh could not be confirmed. It is because majority of the Hajongs had left their original inhabitation from the erstwhile East Pakistan and migrated to India in the wake of partition of the country in 1947. The geographical distribution and inhabitation of the Hajongs during pre-independence India is shown in Appendix-II.

**1.6. Hajong Population-** Numerically the Hajong population is very small in numbers. Their populations are spread out across North-East India and Bangladesh with majority of the people resides in India. After the partition of the Indian sub-continent in 1947, majority of the Hajongs migrated to India after their displacement from the Erstwhile East-Pakistan, later on Bangladesh. Scholars, writers and the census report contradict itself about the numbers of Hajong people residing both in India and Bangladesh. It may be because of their frequent migration causing segregation in social life and insignificant in numbers of their population.

Various censuses done during the British period has also confirmed the presence of the Hajongs in the region. Mr. A. Mackenzie in census report of 1881 gave the figure 3689 of Hajongs.<sup>102</sup> However, the census conducted by the British Government in 1891, perhaps for the first time, considered the Hajongs as a separate tribal ethnic group.<sup>103</sup> It reported the presence of 8766 numbers of Hajong population in the region. But the same census report showed only 1102 numbers of Hajong speaking people. Out of the total 1102 Hajong speaking population, there were 606 males and 496

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101. Hajong, Biren, op. cit. p. 9.

102. Mackenzie, A 1974, *The North-East Frontier of India*, Reprinted, India, p. 549.

103. Sarma, N .C 2011, ' The Hajongs and their Verbal Art', in Goswami, Bhaskar Jyoti, (ed), '*Tribal Studies' Annual Research Journal*, Vol.-1, No. 1 &2, Tribal Research Institute, Assam Sahitya Sabha, Ragsinha Bhawan, Diphu, p.123.

females respectively. At the same time it had been mentioned in the census report of 1891 that the census operation of 1872 was not infallible. The total numbers of Hajong populations and their habitation which had been mentioned in the census report of 1891<sup>104</sup> may be presented under the following table-

**Table.1.8.**  
**Census Report, 1891**

	District	Male	Female	Total
	Cacher(plains)	242	243	485
	Sylhet	1516	1289	----
	Surma Valley total	1516	1289	2805
PLAINS	Goalparta	195	202	
	Kamrup	1	----	
	Darrang	7	----	
	Nowgong	3	----	
	Sibsagar	----	----	
	Lakhimpur	----	----	
	Total Brahmaputra Valley	206	202	408
	Total in plains	1722	1491	3213
HILL DISTRICTS	Khasi Jaintia Hills	164	131	
	Garo Hills District	2720	2538	
	Total Hill Districts	2884	2669	5553
	Total in Entire Regions	4606	4160	8766

Source----- Allen, B C 1891, Census Report, Vol. 1, p.29

It is worth to be mentioned here that the census report of 1891 is indistinct in its total. Because, if the Hajongs of Cachar (plains) 485 is added then it goes to 9251.

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104. Allen, B C 1891, Census Report, Vol. 1, p.29.



Perhaps, mistakenly or for some other reasons the Cachar (Plains) 485 was not added to the total 8766.

The Census Report of 1891 which was prepared B. C. Allen also depicted a clear picture about the human migration of that period. Because the census report of 1905 prepared by the same person revealed a different picture. As per the Census Report of 1905, there were 5318 numbers of Hajong people in the region. This abruptly decrease in their numbers clearly indicates the questions of the migration of the Hajong tribe. B. C, Allen(1905) writes-

*“Goalpara is another district that loses by inter- district transfer, the emigrants exceeding by 7293. Nearly all the immigrants come from Kamrup (4891) and the Garo Hills (2183) and the latter district absorbs more than half of the emigrants (7923) the remainder having either crossed the boundary in to Kamrup or gone up to the valley to seek for work on tea gardens. In 1891, the result of inter-district transfers between Kamrup & Goalpara was in favour of the former district but, owing to the damage floods in Barpeta, the position have now been completely reversed. (p. 36)*  
*.....but the only district where emigration has gone on to appreciable extent is the Garo Hills, where over 10,000 persons have crossed the boundary between that district and Goalpara, the net results of the transfer being largely in favour of the Garo Hills.*  
*(p. 37)*

In fact, a large concentration of the Hajong is found in the Garo and Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya. They are recognized as the native indigenous tribe in the state. As per the Allen Gazetteer of Khasi Jaintia and Garo Hills (1905), there were 5318 (2720 Males and 2598 females) Hajongs in these Hills district.<sup>105</sup> At present the Hajongs

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105. Allen ,B C 1905, *Gazetteer of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, Garo Hills and Lushai Hills*, Part- II, Garo Hills, p. 29.

are the fourth largest majority tribe in Meghalaya and second largest tribe in number next to the Garos in the Garo Hills district in respect of population. The Census Report of 1961 reported 45,152 Hajong people in undivided Assam. It has been mentioned separately as in the Garo Hills 21,522, Khasi-Jaintia Hills 1054 and in Assam 22,576 Hajong people together. Similarly, the census report of 1981 recorded 24,331 Hajongs in the state. The 1991 Census Report recorded 29,997 (15,256 males and 14,741 females) in Meghalaya.<sup>106</sup> Similarly, there are 31,381(15,929 males and 15,452 females) sizeable Hajong population which constitute 1.6 per cent of the state's total ST population as per the Primary Census Abstract for Individual Scheduled Tribe-2001.<sup>107</sup>

In Assam, the Hajong population as per the 1971 Census, in the two Autonomous Hills Districts of Assam was 386. And out of which there were 227 males and 159 females. However, this population figure did not include the Hajongs inhabiting in the plains districts of Assam. They constituted 0.0026 per cent of the total tribal population of Assam and 0.146 per cent of the total hill tribal population of Assam as per 1971 census. Their sex ratio was 700 females per 1000 males.<sup>108</sup> It may be noted here that the census of population was not held in Assam in 1981. But the total Hajong ST population in Karbi Anglong 338 and North Cachher Hills 1255 respectively as recorded in 1991 census is 1638 (887 males and 751 females).<sup>109</sup> It is to be noted that the primary census abstract for individual scheduled tribe-2001 figured 256 (139 Males and 117 Females)<sup>110</sup> Hajong population in the state. B. Dutta Ray (2000) while elaborating the decadal growth rate of common tribes in North East India stated about the Hajong tribe as 11.95 per cent in 1961-71, 22.39 in 1971-81 and 7.76 per cent in 1961-81.<sup>111</sup> This shows the decreasing number of trends of populations among the Hajongs in North East India,

According to Biren Hajong (2000) in Assam the Hajongs are mostly found in the district of Dhubri, Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang, Shonitpur, North Lakhimpur, Nowgong, Karbi-Anglong, and Dibrugarh of upper Assam. Taking together all the

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106. Bishat, S. Narendra, & Bankoti.T. S. op.cit. p.522.

107. A-11, State Primary Census Abstract for Individual Scheduled Tribe-2001. Meghalaya, P.21.

108. Census of India, Scheduled Tribes Population of Assam, 1971.

109. Census of India, 1991, Series-4, Assam, Special Table Scheduled Tribes, Vol. 1, pp. 8-34.

110. A-11, Primary Census Abstract for Individual Scheduled Tribe-2001. Assam, P.21.

111. Ray, Dutta. B (ed.) 2000, *Population, Poverty and Environment in North East India*, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, p.82.

Hajong population of Assam, Meghalaya, Bangladesh and Arunachal Pradesh it may be around (60+60+10+05 Lakhs)=1,35,000 only, up to the end of 2000 year.<sup>112</sup> However, Monoranjan Roy Hajong claimed about the presence of 3 Lakh Hajong populations both in India and Bangladesh in 2001.

Sri Kanuram Hajong also claimed 80,000 Hajong populations in Assam on the basis of the non-governmental census Report collected by the Assam Hajong Jatiya Parishad (National Council of Hajongs, Assam) in 2000.<sup>113</sup> But in another place, the same census report revealed 59,616 Hajong populations in Assam.<sup>114</sup> On the basis various collected information, the All India Hajong Welfare Association claim 80,000 Hajongs in Meghalaya<sup>115</sup> and 1, 20,000 altogether in India till 1988.<sup>116</sup>

A limited number of Hajong families are at present inhabitants of Arunachal Pradesh. It may be mentioned here that all the Hajongs of Arunachal Pradesh were migrated from the East Pakistan from 1964- 1969. They are counted with the Chakmas while counting their numbers in the state. It may be because of the migration took place from the same country at the same time and rehabilitated at the same area simultaneously. In fact, the Hajongs were mainly settled in the Diyun circle of the erstwhile Tirap district (now Changlang) of NEFA. At present the Hajong inhabitation are also found in Miao and Madhupur of Arunachal Pradesh.<sup>117</sup>

As per AAPSU's unofficial estimate the Hajong and Chakma population in Arunachal Pradesh had gone up to 70,000 in the 1990s. On the other hand it appears from a White Paper issued in 1996 by the Government of Arunachal Pradesh that Hajong and Chakma themselves claimed to have a population of 65,000. An erroneous impression meanwhile already gained currency that 60,000 Hajong and Chakma were rehabilitated in Arunachal Pradesh from 1964 to 1969. But subsequent report revealed different picture. They clearly indicate that in three district of Arunachal Pradesh 14,888

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112. Hajong, Biren. ,op. cit. p. 9.

113. Hajong , Kanuram, 2002, '*Hajong Jonojati : Ati Somu Avash*, Tikrirao, Souvenir, Nikhil Rabha Sahitya Sabha, December, p. 77.

114. Sheikh, E A. ,op. cit., p. 49.

115. Hajong, K. Op.cit. ,p.77.

116. Sheikh, I. A. ,op. cit, p.49.

117. Rabha, Dhananjoy, op. cit. pp.22-24 .

Hajong and Chakma were rehabilitated between 1964 to 1969. The number was increased to 21,494 in 1979 and 30,64 as per Census Report of 1991. If it was so, it is reasonable to assume that 60,000 Hajongs and Chakma were not settled in NEFA from 1964 to 1969.<sup>118</sup> If Hajongs are taken alone, it has been reported that nearly 1000 members of Hajong tribe, a Hindu group from Mymensing district of Bangladesh were settled in NEFA.<sup>119</sup>

The number of Hajong population figures 30,000 in 2006.<sup>120</sup> Sri Abadesh Hajong,<sup>121</sup> at the time of interview claimed 15,000 in Diyun circle and 3000 in other areas of Arunachal Pradesh till January, 2013. This obviously shows that about 18,000 Hajong populations are residing in Arunachal Pradesh as stateless person in 2014.

Besides, a few Hajong inhabitations are also reported in Mizoram. The census 1981 recorded 85 Hajong tribes in the state. The declining trend of the Hajong population in the state is very much clear from the census report of 2001, in which only two(2) persons returned as male having no Female in the state.<sup>122</sup>

Similarly, beyond the North East India, the Hajong inhabitations are also recorded in the West Bengal. The census of 1981, recorded 1035 numbers of Hajong tribe in the state and especially in the Jalpaiguri district. The diminishing number of Hajong population are also recorded in the census report of 2001 which reported 597 (334 Males and 263 Females) in the West Bengal.<sup>123</sup>

In Bangladesh, the total population of the Hajong community was reported 11,477 in 1992.<sup>124</sup> Another report recorded 8000 Hajongs in Bangladesh in 2005. But

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118. De, Shibopada 2005, *Illegal Migration and the North-East: A Study of Migrants from Bangladesh*, Anamika Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi-110002, p.161.

119. Nag, Channu, P 2007, 'Students Movement in Arunachal Pradesh and the Chakma-Hajong Refugee Problem', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42 (15), p.1373-1379.

120. Sheikh, E A. ,op. cit. p.50.

121. Interviewee--Hajong, Abadesh, Madhupur-1, Diyun Bazar, Diyun, Changlang District, Arunachal Pradesh,

122. A-11 State Primary Census Abstract For Individual Scheduled Tribe-2001, Mizoram, p.14.

123. Ibid., West Bengal. .p. 62.

124. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), 1992 and Bangladesh Population Census, 1991, Zila Series, Sherpur, Ministry of Planning, GOB, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

some assumes the number to be around 15,000, although the population was about 40,000 once in the country.<sup>125</sup>

After examining various census report and non-governmental records about the Hajong population in Bangladesh and India, the total population does not exceed more than 2, 00,000 in the year 2006.<sup>126</sup> Sheikh (2012) has presented an elaborate list of the Hajong population and their inhabitation based in the year 1996 and 2006 <sup>127</sup> respectively which may be presented in table No 1.7

**Table -1.9.**  
**Hajong Habitation and their Population-**

			1996	2006	Total	
India	Assam	Goalpara	22,483			
		Dhemaji	8,910			
		Dhubri	8,466			
		Lakhimpur	5,102			
		Nagaon	3,776			
		Kamrup	3,480			
		Tinsukia	1,871			
		Darang	1,850			
		Nalbari	1,707			
		Bongaigaon	1,176			
		Karbi-				
		Anglong	386			
		Barpeta	350			
		Sunitpur	302			
		Dibrugarh	136			
	Kokrajahr	7				
	Meghalaya				60002	
		Garo Hills	----	55,902		
		Khasi Hills	-----	9,722	65,624	
	Arunachal Pradesh	Changlang(Miao)	----	11,000		
		Lohit	----	11,000		
		Tirap	----	11,000	33,000	
	Tripura	-----	----	2,500	2,500	
	West Bengal	Jalpaiguri	----	3,000	3,000	
	Madhya Pradesh	Dandhakaranya	-----	3500	3,500	
	Andaman Islands	Portblair	-----	900	900	
Bangladesh		Mymensing		17,600		
		Sylhet		2,280	19,880	
Total					1,88,406	

Source- Sheikh, I. A., (2012), '*Hajong Janoghosti*' p.50.

125. Anon, op. cit, p.56.

126. Sheikh, E. A. ,op. cit. p. 49.

127. Ibid. ,p.50.

Thus, from the above it becomes amply clear that the Hajongs belong to the Mongoloid and a sub-tribe of the Bodo groups of people. Ethnically they are closer to the caste population of North East India. Again there is much possibility that the word 'Hajong' is derived from the name of the place 'Hajo'. Scholars and majority of the respondents claimed to have come from the Hajo areas of Kamrup District of Assam. Subsequently, they have migrated to Borhazari and other areas of Garo Hills, North Mymensing and Sylhet Districts of East Bengal. The inhabitations are found both in India and Bangladesh. After the partition of the Indian sub-continent majority of the Hajongs was displaced from the erst while East Pakistan and started living a segregated life in different parts of India especially in North Eastern states. After examining various census reports, non-governmental records that their population would not exceed more than 2 Lakh both in India and Bangladesh.

**1.7. Objectives:** - The present study is conducted keeping in view of the following five objectives-

1. To study the causes and impact of displacement of the Hajong tribe.
2. To identify the ethno-historical affinity of the Hajong tribe with other indigenous tribal groups.
3. To assess the extent of ethno-political identity crisis of the Hajong tribe in the region.
4. To find out the cultural assimilations problems and changes as a result of living a refugee life for a long period.
5. To know the present socio-political status of the Hajong tribe in North Eastern states of India.

**1.8. Hypotheses:** - The study is pursued to test the following hypotheses-

1. The smaller tribal groups tend to merge with the larger groups for cultural assimilation.
2. Displacement and stateless refugee life of tribal groups of Hajong lead them to socially segregation and politically non-represented.

3. Numerically small and displaced tribe is much prone to face the identity crisis.

**1.9. Methodology:** - The methodological parameters of the present study may be mentioned as follows-

The present study adopted multi method approaches of research. Historical, descriptive and even analytical study design are pursued for the study. In fact, this design was indispensable to study the ethno-historical background and the various causes of displacement and migration of the Hajong tribes. According to Somenath Bhattacharjee (2011) an ethnographical study should adhere to a suitable research design for descriptive analysis. Ethnographical data on a tribal community may be collected on the issues related to their early settlements, traditional occupational pursuit, traditional socio-cultural practices, major forces and factors related to socio-economic condition, their social structure and organization, folk cultural perspective and their health, disease and treatment etc.<sup>128</sup>

**1.9.1. Sources of Data:** - The proposed study is based mainly on primary sources like firsthand information from the informants belonging to the Hajong tribe and extensive field works. Most of the informations have been collected by participatory observations of the displaced and undisplaced Hajong villages. The informants were selected primarily from the knowledgeable person having good information about the Hajong history, polity and culture is provided in Appendix-II. Thus, an interview schedule has been used to collect necessary primary data from the sample respondents. It has been conducted to 340 sample respondents who have been selected through purposive sampling method.

The secondary sources of data have been collected from published and unpublished works mainly from historical Documents, Records, Accounts, Government Reports, and Memoranda to study the displacement and crisis of identity of the Hajong tribe. Besides, relevant research articles have also been collected from journals,

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128. Bhattacharjee, S 2011, 'Tribal Ethnography: A Methodological Framework From An Anthropological Perspective', *Tribal Studies*, Annual Research Journal, Tribal Research Institute, Assam Sahitya Sabha, Jorhat, vol.1, No. 1 & 2, pp.214-215.

periodicals and news papers. Internet sources for various websites have also been used in the study.

**1.9.2. Participatory Observation:** - Participatory observation method is one of the most suitable method for all kinds of micro level studies at rural (village) level for understanding human society and culture. As participatory observer of the Hajong tribe I have observed and recorded information and about the Hajong cultures and lives. I talked with rehabilitated Hajongs of Madhupur and Haipur of Arunachal Pradesh, Matia, Sidhabari, Derapather, Kohiar Bari Hajong Gaon of Assam, Laskarpara Hajong village, Chelapara, Gandhipara, Halchati of Meghalaya. I moved from house to house to observe their conditions and collect informations

**1.9.3. Universe of the study:** - A purposive sample which is one of the type of non-random sampling is used to gather data from target population, the Hajong populated areas in the North-East region. Most qualitative research samples are purposive in nature. The field or universe for the study are selected purposely keeping in mind the displaced inhabited Hajong populated areas are widely dispersed and scattered in different North-Eastern states. Accordingly, two districts from Meghalaya, three districts from Assam and one district from Arunachal Pradesh are selected purposely having highest concentration of rehabilitated Hajong people. Again, two revenue villages from each district selected randomly for the study. They include Derapather and Tengripar of Nagaon District, Matia Camp-1 and Sidhabari Camp of Goalpara, Mymensing Kohiarbari Hajong Gaoan and Kothasema Adarsha Hajong Gaoan of Tinsukia District of Assam. Similarly, Laskarpara, Cheelapara, Gandhipara, Halchati of West and East Meghalaya respectively. And Madhupur-1 and Haripur-1 are selected from the Diyun of Changlang District of Arunachal Pradesh. The study covered 20 percent of the household of selected villages. Only twenty percent are selected having more than 20 households. But all are included to the sample respondents having less than 20 percent Hajong households fixing the total 340 respondents, In fact, numerically small size of the Hajong population is taken into account while selecting the universe of the study. The Government published census reports; official records and assistance of the local



respondents were helpful in identifying and selecting study areas. Otherwise it would have been unmanageable to investigate them qualitatively.

**1.9.4. Selection of Respondents:** - The present study is mainly concerned with the displacement and crisis of identity of the Hajong tribe. Therefore, it is obvious and convenient to select the head of the family member as the older person, whether male or female, to know the real facts behind their displacement. The second key consideration has been the gender and adults above the age of 18 years to know their citizenship status, political rights, and attitude towards their language, culture, social customs and religious festivals. But the priority is given to the older people

**1.9.5. Designing of Interview Schedule and Variables:** - An interview schedule is framed for the collection of primary data which comprises ninety three fixed questions. The Part 'A' of the schedule contains the personal background of the respondent and Part 'B' includes the questions about the origin and racial affinity of the Hajong tribe to study the objective of the study. Part 'C' includes different questions relating to the displacement and migration of the Hajong tribe in order to test the hypothesis No. 2 of the study. In the same way, Part 'E' contains 8 questions to investigate the political identity crisis of the Hajongs. Besides, Part 'F' contains seven different sections having 48 questions relating to the housing, dress pattern, marriage and ornaments, religious beliefs and festivals, language, education and economic life to investigate hypotheses 1 and 3 of the present study.

In the proposed work different variables used like ethnography, racial affinity, displacement, migration, refugee and rehabilitation, statelessness, citizenships, residential status, political representation, occupation, age, educational status, housing status, land and other assets, customs and traditions, dress pattern, marriages and ornaments, religious beliefs, festivals, foods, and language to prove the objective of the present investigation.

**1.9.6. Data Analysis:** - In analysing and interpreting the data the methods used like historical, analytical and statistical as per requirements. The primary

data collected through the interview schedule and through the secondary sources were edited and analysed manually. The statistical methods were avoided and more emphasis was given on qualitative approach to the study of the problem. Wherever necessary cartographic representation through maps, charts and figures have also been included.

#### **1.10. Chapter Scheme of the Study:-**

##### **Chapter-I, Introduction:**

The chapter includes some of the working definition of the concepts, identifies research designing and methodological parameters which includes objectives, methodology, the area selected for the study, different variables, Chapter Scheme and also a few Limitations of the study. Besides, the second part of the chapter focuses on the ethno-historical profile, the racial affinity, their origin, the demographic distribution and the present Hajong population.

##### **Chapter-II, Review of Literature:**

In this chapter an effort has been made to give a comprehensive review of the related literature on different aspects of the study. Besides, it narrated the rationality and research gap with the significance of the study.

##### **Chapter-III, Political Life and Struggles of the Hajongs:**

The chapter focuses on various struggles and movements started by the Hajongs against the exploitative system by the zaminders in the erstwhile East Bengal and later on in East Pakistan.

##### **Chapter-IV, Displacement & Migration of the Hajongs:**

An attempt has been made in this chapter to discuss the displacement causing forced migration of the Hajong tribe in different part of North-East including Nagaon district of Assam.

##### **Chapter-V, Refugee Life of the Hajongs:**

This chapter focuses on the refugee life of the Hajong tribes including the steps taken by the Government of India as well as concerned state Governments of North-Eastern States to resolve the Hajong refugee problems

#### **Chapter-VI, Identity Crisis of the Hajongs:**

The chapter gives a complete picture of the changes mainly in socio-cultural life of the Hajong tribe as a result of displacement causing identity crisis in the Hajong society.

#### **Chapter-VII, Conclusion:**

The concluding chapter outlined in the preceding chapters presents an observation and major findings on the historical, socio-cultural, political and displaced refugee life of the Hajong tribe of North Eastern states. The chapter draws the conclusion of the study through the analysis of data. It also present some suggestions based on the findings of the study that may have policy formulation by the Government for their social and political improvement

**1.11. Limitations of the Study:** - During my whole study period I have faced a few limitations. They are-

1. Majority of the respondents above age group fifty years have generally provided information from their own memory or asking the assistance of others. The schedule meant for the respondent remains half done without the cooperation of others. Because of this the outcome of the analysis of primary data is within the limitations of the responses to various questions in the interview schedule.
2. A number of respondents were initially reluctant to provide information about the country from where they were displaced. Even in a number of cases the year of migration was misinformed because of the threat perception for expulsion especially in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam.
3. The language spoken by the respondents mostly in Hajongs languages also created a lot of troubles. I had to rely on my interpreter for the information.

4. The ethnic strife that broke out in different part of Assam and Meghalaya especially in 2012-13 also severely hampered my field work wasting my precious time.

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