

CONCLUSION

Chapter- VI

Conclusion

6.1 Revisiting the Main Concern of the Discussion

As already mentioned, Dima Hasao had faced ethnic turmoil within the existing diverse communities. The ethnic conflict in Dima Hasao appears to be communal incompatibility, as each group tries to expose its distinct identity on the basis of culture, tradition, custom and ethnicity for political gains. Ethnic conflicts had not only affected one person but the gradual spread had a great impact on the masses and the authority concerned of the district.

The conflict between the Dimasas and the Hmars in 2003 was the worst violent conflict that has a long drawn out consequences in the district. Their ethnic consciousness has also encouraged them to reconstruct their identity which has lead to a violent path. The theoretical aspects of ethnicity, ethnic conflict and multiculturalism in Dima Hasao can be well analysed through the foregoing discussion, that ethnicity if well harmonized is a lone strategy for promoting a sense of sustainable relationship. However, because of ineffective leadership and administration, ethnic rivalry has been prevalent during the past few years and there is a danger of perpetual inter-ethnic clashes on a large scale.

Ethnic conflict has given a dimension of ethnic unrest in the region with less chance of drastic change in the near future and as such security has become an issue of concern for the ethnic community in the district. It also involves serious cost and a consequence as it is not only destructive. The situation is made complex but the fact is that civic education has not been disseminated to the general citizenship as a pre-requisite to peaceful co-existence.

Ethnic diversity which once was a wealth of the district has become a problematic issue in the context of the Hill tribes, ethnic conflicts usually manifest itself more in terms of its socio-economic and political deprivation rather than cultural or religious and racial discrimination. Indeed if there is a history of conflict which had negative impact or which has left a scar upon the other group, it would be difficult if not impossible to change the type of relationship between such groups in conflicts. The history of conflict between different ethnic communities also easily results in the continuation of hostile relationship.

In spite of the Autonomous District Council as an existing institutional framework under the sixth schedule of the Indian Constitution, the district has been interrupted with the politicization of ethnicity. In a multi ethnic social environment like Dima Hasao, it is important for the district to promote the policy of accommodating the ethnic groups rather than excluding from the mainstream. Amidst the widespread increase of ethnic diversity, a long standing history of conflict among the ethnic groups had explained the outbreak of violence which is based on unconstitutional politics and socio-economic biases, rather than cultural and religious issues.

Violent ethnic conflict has become a part of Dima Hasao and such clashes have taken place so regularly and frequently during the last few years that it hardly surprises anybody. As such after the Hmar -Dimasa conflict in 2003, two more violent conflicts has taken place in Dima Hasao namely Dimasa-Karbiconflict in 2005 and Dimasa-Naga conflict in 2009. Although peace has been restored in the district, a fear psychosis still persists in the minds of the people for any future conflict to happen. As such, with the change of the district's nomenclature from North Cachar Hills to Dima Hasao (meaning: land of the Dimasas) by the Government of

Assam in 2011, there has been continuous demand of bifurcation under Article 244(2) of the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution by the marginalized communities comprising of the Non Dimasa community.

Such multiplicity in the nomenclature has compounded the identity question of the Dimasas, creating a situation of utter chaos. Over the years, the discontentment on the fragmentation of the Dimasa people has manifested in the struggle for self-determination amongst a section of the Dimasa youth, driven by a strong will to unite their fellow Dimasas. Such armed movements of resistance have also emerged amongst other tribes within the district—as a consequence of strong perceived sentiments of neglect and ‘step motherly treatment’ from the dominant majority i.e. the Dimasas. Most of these movements were demanding the establishment of an autonomous unit of administration. The struggles are played out between dominant majorities and minorities. The minorities perceiving ill treatment from the dominant come to believe that the State does not represent their interests properly.

The formation of the Indigenous Peoples Forum with its wings as Indigenous Students Forum and Indigenous Women Forum has recreated identity consciousness among the marginalized communities with their demand for bifurcation of the district into two parts one for the Dimasas and the other for the Non Dimasas. This new issue of bifurcation has led to loose the system of administration and political stability in the Hill district of Dimasas.

As settlement in the district satisfying one ethnic group alienates some community in another part of the district, the authorities concerned should be well aware of the problems of the ethnic communities. Overcoming marginalization through overall

development is necessary to address the grievances of the ethnic minorities. As such harmonization of inter ethnic relation through equality, inclusion and participation will also help in stabilizing the socio-economic and political condition of the region. The real challenge ahead is to encourage institution such as the autonomous district council to adopt changes in the form of delimitation of seats according to the diverse ethnic population, long term policy such as job reservation, political representation, and proper disbursement of funds.

Therefore in order to maintain peace and harmony in the district it is necessary to recognise and address the grievances of the people. In order to meet the demands some research findings are put forth to understand and analyse the problems and crisis of the marginalized communities so that it can further preventive measures can be undertaken.

6.2 Research Findings

As already stated, some research findings are put forth into consideration so that preventive measures can be adopted to curb the problems of Dima Hasao district of Assam. To have a deeper understanding of the situation of the district, the factors responsible to the causes of ethnic conflict in the district, the conflict between the ethnic communities, the impact of ethnic conflict and the institutional arrangement of the district are put into perception. Apart from the mentioned issues some related factors such as the worst consequences faced by the marginalized communities and new possible initiative are also put into account. The findings are as follows:

Factors leading to ethnic conflict in Dima Hasao district

of Assam: Diversity in itself is not a problem and existence of diverse communities does not necessarily lead to violence or conflict in a region where diverse groups co-exist. But it can also be a reason of ethnic conflict or contest when this is used instrumentally in politics. Ethnic conflicts are born out of instrumental ethnicity in diverse society. Research findings also brings out some factors that are responsible for ethnic conflict in Dima Hasao district of Assam, which are basically the majority-minority issues; whereby the minorities are discriminated and oppressed by the majorities.

Demand for land rights and territorial council is also the other factor responsible for ethnic conflict in Dima Hasao district. Unequal distribution of power through unequal political representation is also considered as the factors leading to ethnic conflict. North Cachar Hills District Council which was later renamed Dima Hasao Autonomous Council was inaugurated and mandated to administer the autonomous district with the proviso that it will have three wings of administration, viz., Legislature, Judiciary, and Executive. Besides the subjects enshrined in the sixth schedule, the Government of Assam claims to have transferred almost all the departments along with the executive power to the Council except General Administration, Police, Treasury, election and judiciary.

It is also experienced that some of the functionaries of the District Councils discharge their powers and functions more or less arbitrarily. They also violate acts, rules and regulations for their selfish interests and for the party interests. They also indulge in favouritism and nepotism. They also misuse financial powers and divert funds arbitrarily by violating procedures, rules and

regulations, integrating the Sixth Schedule areas economically with the rest of the country.

Since its inception in 1952, an agreement was made that there should be equal numbers of members in the Autonomous Council representing the majority group that is the Dimasas and the Non Dimasas. Under this provision, six members from the Dimasa community and six others from the Non Dimasa were elected in the first election held.

But allocation of seats and powers has started deteriorating along with the growth of the population of the majorities. Changes took place in the next Autonomous election where the seats for the majority community was increased from six to fifteen whereas the seats for the non Dimasa basically the seats of the minorities was increased from six to eight. From this unequal allocation of seats in the autonomous council the delimitation of seats is clearly unjustified thereby creating the minority - majority problems which is the major factor for ethnic conflict. But this improper delimitation of seats has never led to ethnic conflict in the district for fear of letting loose the age old cordial relationship among their counter ethnic communities.

Factors such as a desire for self-expression, perceived discrimination and injustice, aspirations of small time politicians, better economic development by any majority results into conflicts. The majority communities do not recognize even the legitimate needs and aspirations of weaker ethnic groups and such intolerance and unresponsiveness lead to the growth of a feeling of discrimination and alienation on the part of the minority group. The smaller groups get lost in the process of forced assimilation in the name of accommodation and integration thus giving rise to the desire for self-expression and an identity separating them from the

dominant groups. Along with such factors of ethnic identity formation, a crisis is created by politicisation.

The very crisis arising out of cultural, economic and linguistic deprivation grows and develops into a conflict through political interference. Interaction of institutional and political factors with ethnic emotions leads to ethnic competition, ethnic intolerance and ethnic conflict. The fear of losing identity by the marginalised communities and the want of autonomy also results into misinformation, mismanagement and alienation thereby causing ethnic conflict.

The main factors for ethnic conflict are the fights for their rights and as a self protection against the atrocities made by the majority ethnic groups towards the minority ethnic groups. Minority consciousness, feelings of in – group – out – group, perceived marginalisation have been causing ethnic unrest in the long history of this region. Though the unrest in the district has a history of political causes it is much related to multi ethnicity and the core issues are about gaining more power, land and other resources.

Effects of ethnic conflict in the district: Inter-ethnic conflicts and struggle for identity among the ethnic groups too are not new but a frequently occurring phenomenon. However, such conflicts have become more common and all pervading at present. Ethnic conflicts often involve serious costs and consequences. Economic factors can weaken the political institutions that uphold the social contracts that provide social stability and this is mostly seen aftermath conflicts.

It also weakens the institutions which repressed those cultural groups with political grievances. Economic crisis and change always cause social disruption and radical dislocation of

communities. The social consequences of the violence that is caused by ethnic conflict cannot be quantified. Research findings revealed that in many cases, affected populations devised survival strategies to cope with conflict situations. The most obvious outcome of ethnic conflicts in this area has been deaths directly resulting from injuries sustained during attacks.

Many recounted the scenes very vividly and the impact of such experiences was evident in the tone of their voice. It was not within the scope of this study to interrogate the emotional impact of such cruel incidents on the surviving family members.

However, the impact cannot be underestimated. Most of the deaths were as a result of ordinary citizens attacking others on the basis of their ethnic background. The experience of violence, that demands rapid and unexpected movements, sometimes even at night must have impacted heavily on the elderly. During data collection, it has been noted that in some homesteads, there were division of family members while fleeing from the conflict situation.

The point here is that due to the violence, young people have been left on their own, without moral support in times of marital and other problems. A critical analysis of ethnic conflict reveals that the inter-ethnic tensions opened up a number of other conflicts at individual and family levels. The cumulative effect of ethnic conflict seems to have affected the mental well being of a number of victims as well. Through observation it is analyse that conflicts involving groups that are very close; tend to destroy the relationship and many respondents easily connect their social problems to inter-ethnic violence.

Ethnic violence has also lead to destruction of property, loss of cultivable land, loss of income for many individuals and families. With every new wave of the conflict, victims of violence were forced

to begin all over again: for example, to build new houses, to restock their animals and to buy house hold items such as utensils and furniture. Political instability is seen because of ethnic conflict and the feeling of deprivation of the minority by the majority led loose the ethnic relation. This social fragmentation brings forth a political consciousness among the marginalised which adversely impact a district where different ethnic group are present.

Assumption of the worst consequences faced by the marginalised communities in a conflict situation: The marginalised communities in a conflict situation faced the worst consequences as they are politically, socially and economically weaker than the majorities. For instance even at relatively lower rate of casualties, the destructive capacity of ethnic conflicts often results in massive population displacement of the minorities.

As already mentioned, the misallocation of seats in the Dima Hasao Autonomous Council has divided the animosity among the majority and the minority and this very reason has led lose the stability of the political condition. With the unequal distribution of seats in the Council, political powers along with economic powers have been allocated unequally which in turn leads to perceived discrimination of the minorities. As the political and economic power of the minorities is lesser than the majorities it has internally and externally make them weaker and therefore they are bound to faced the worst consequences during ethnic conflict. Effective steps cannot be taken by the minorities during conflict as they are restrained by the strong hold of powers by the majorities in the Council where important powers are allocated.

Existing form of institutional arrangement: Under the Government act 1935, the hill areas were divided into two categories namely Excluded Areas and Partially Excluded Areas

under the Sixth Schedule in its attempt to preserve and protect minority rights and identities, provided for the establishment of regional councils for the hill tribes. In order to ensure their participation in decision making and management of the affairs and safeguarding tribal interests, the government appointed a Sub-Committee of the Constituent Assembly – the North-East Frontier (Assam) Tribal and Excluded Areas Committee – under the Chairmanship of Gopinath Bardoloi, the then Chief Minister of Assam. The Bardoloi Committee made a study of the demands and aspirations of the hill tribes and submitted its recommendations for a simple and inexpensive set-up (District Councils) of the tribal areas, which were later accepted and incorporated into the Article 244 (2) of the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. The Bardoloi Committee also made provision for Regional Council for the tribes other than the main tribe, so that the tribal people could preserve their traditional way of life, and safeguard their customs, and cultures.

The North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council renamed as Dima Hasao Autonomous Council may be described as a “State in miniature” having all the components of a Government like Legislative, Executive and Judiciary. It has full autonomy to legislate and administer the subjects like land, revenue, primary education, customary laws etc. assigned to it under Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India.

The District Councils have powers to make laws for allotment, occupation, use of land, other than reserved forests for purposes of agriculture, grazing and other residential and non-residential purposes; management of unreserved forests, use of water courses and canals for agriculture purpose, regulation of shifting cultivation, establishment of village councils and town committees, administration of village policy, public health and sanitation,

appointment and succession of chiefs or headmen, inheritance of property, marriage, divorce and social customs, money lending and trading by non-tribals within the autonomous districts.

The Governor has power to alter laws or rules passed by the District Councils, which are in violation of the provisions of the Sixth Schedule. The Sixth Schedule thus makes the Governor the head of the Autonomous District Council.

Apart from the legislative power, the District Council has the executive powers to construct or manage primary schools, dispensaries, markets, cattle pounds, ferries, fisheries, roads and waterways. It also prescribes the medium of instruction and manner of education in primary schools within its jurisdiction. The District Council has no legislative or regulatory power over the latter subjects.

In Para 4 of the Sixth Schedule the Council is entitled to constitute Village and District Council Courts in the autonomous areas to adjudicate or try cases or customary laws in which both the parties are tribals. The District Council Court and the Regional Council Court are courts of appeal in respect of all suits and cases tried by the Village Council Courts and the Subordinate District Council Courts. No other court except the High Court and the Supreme Court of India have jurisdiction over suits and cases decided by the Council Courts.

The District and the Regional Councils are responsible for framing rules for the management of finances with the approval of the Governor. They are also given mutually exclusive powers to collect land revenues, levy and collect taxes on lands, holdings, shops, entry of goods into market and tolls etc. within their respective jurisdictions. But the District Council has the concurrent power on the professions, trade, callings, employments,

animals, vehicles and huts, tolls on passengers, and goods carried in ferries and maintenance of schools, dispensaries or roads. Under para 9 of the Sixth Schedule, the royalty on the licenses or leases for the extraction of minerals in the autonomous districts goes to the District Council. As regards the tax on motor vehicles is assigned and collected by the State Government on behalf of the District Council. Grants-in-aid, loans and advances etc. from the state government, constitute other sources of income of the Councils. They may be extended there with such exceptions and modifications as are considered necessary by the District Regional Council concerned.

Working of the Autonomous District Councils: The District councils have elaborate functions/powers in the legislative, executive, judicial and financial domains. These powers are expected to uplift the tribal communities in the domains of primary education, health, culture, social customs, social welfare, forest, land, agriculture, water management, and village administration, economic and rural development. However, in practice the performances of the District Councils, have not come up to expectations. Result is that the District Councils have come under severe criticism such as non payment of salary of the council workers in time.

Besides the political and functional deficiencies, some provisions of the Sixth Schedule also contribute to the unsatisfactory performance of the Autonomous Councils. For example the power of nomination is frequently abused for narrow party gains. The concerned Ministers recommend persons for nomination on political considerations and it is the Minister and not the Governor that nominates persons. At times nominations have been used to reverse the majority in Council to minority. In many District Council areas, ethnic minorities; hardly find any

representation in the Councils either by election or by nomination thereby violating the provisions of the Sixth Schedule. Through analysis mention may be made that majority of the seats are occupied by the majorities and for this very reason relative deprivation of the minority is acknowledged.

Problems of diversity in the region despite the existing institution: According to the research findings, the existing institutional arrangement does not wholly address the problems of diversity in the region because there is no concrete policy to curb the problems of ethnic conflict in the Dima Hasao district. The Dima Hasao Autonomous councils are unable to play any significant role in strengthening the planning process at the micro level.

As a result, the councils have neither been able to do anything of standard in the interest of the masses nor involve the tribes in development activities. The Sixth schedule has become a disputed excuse for making the society motionless and serving the minorities at the cost of the majority. Diversity in itself is not a problem and the existence of diverse communities in the Dima Hasao district does not necessarily lead to violence or conflict but it can become a reason of conflict when it is used instrumentally in politics. When diversity is used instrumentally in politics the majorities are benefitted and the minorities remain outside the mainstream as they are lesser in population. This relative deprivation has simultaneously leads to the outbreak of violence and conflict.

When the marginalised communities experienced relative deprivation simultaneously; it results in the outbreak of violence and conflict. Even with the existence of the Autonomous Council under the Sixth Schedule, the socio-political relationship between

the subgroups remain along with the struggle for tolerance and equity because of the changing group numbers and shifting political condition.

Limitations of the existing institutional arrangements:

Through analysis, assumption is made that the Autonomous Councils have also failed to carry out the aspirations of the ethnic groups for whom such council was created but prove that power corrupts and stimulate the want for more powers. Now that the Autonomous Councils are no longer limited to look after the welfare of a diverse ethnic population as a whole, the need for some objective should be relooked. As the Institutional arrangement of the Autonomous council gives advantage to the major communities it have become like a miniature state where the majority rules the system.

The minorities have not much benefitted from the institutional arrangement concerning with the allocation of seats in the Autonomous council. As it is basically territorial based, more demands for autonomy comes from the disadvantage community. Mention may be made of the bifurcation demand made by the Non Dimasa community under Article 244(2) for a separate autonomous council under the name of Indigenous People's Forum to preserve and protect their cultural and economic interest. Political division is analysed with unequal distribution of power in the council and this brings forth the marginalised intolerance of compromise and commitment to attain their ethnic rights.

Unequal economic development backed by political power of the majority in the Autonomous Council led loose the ethnic relation in the district. Unequal delimitation of seats in the Council is also the other cause of ethnic concern where the minorities are

deprived. The employment system in the district is also another cause of concern.

The institutional structures of autonomy in the forms of District Council provides an opportunity to the respective ethnic groups to maximise the claims to identify their rights but not much is seen in case of the Dima Hasao Autonomous Council where majority runs the system of administration. Disbursement of funds among the various constituencies is also not much seen in the district, and because of this the tribal people in the villages cannot see much development in various fields.

Possible new initiatives to be taken to address the problems of the marginalised communities and the problem of ethnic conflict: The system of the existing institutional arrangement should be changed whereby seats in the autonomous council should be allocated equally among the different ethnic groups based on the population. Secondly territorialisation should be reduced. More long terms policies should be adopted and based and proper settlement such as free education should be given to implement. Political issues should be restrained whereas moral issues should be maintained and district's internal political organisation should also try to address the problems of the marginalised and manage conflict.

Economic imbalances should be resolved by the existing institutional arrangement so that the financial problems faced by the marginalised can be removed. As such the people employed under the district Autonomous council are not paid their salary regularly and this economic instability should be resolved through proper financial arrangement. Funds that are disbursed by the centre for the development of the hill areas specially Dima Hasao district should be mandated properly and as such curb the

problem of corruption and irregular payment of salaries of the official workers of the district.

Long term policies such as employment should be adequately given to every ethnic community to solve the problems of the marginalised communities. Schemes that are implemented for the development of the poor and the needy should also be distributed according to the given rules and regulation to prevent further chaos among the ethnic groups.

Apart from the above given preventive measures, joint meetings of the various ethnic groups in Dima Hasao district should be held once or twice in a year so that a common brotherhood and unity be further maintained. Literacy also serves as one of the most important factors for preventing conflict; as illiterate citizens residing in remote villages are not aware about the necessity of unity in diversity. As such they should be made aware about the importance of the presence of different ethnic groups in the district so that hatred and resentment towards a different ethnic group can be removed to prevent further chaos and conflict.

The Constitution of India has been amended on numerous occasions for the well-being of the people in the entire country. The need of the hour is to make improvements to recognize, protect and also promote the existence of these Institutions. These age-old institutions need re-moulding to make it more vibrant in further serving the interest of the diverse ethnic groups to bring development and progress. It is therefore imperative for the policy makers of the Dima Hasao district to transfuse and transform these institutions as lively functionaries thereby pulling out the ethnic communities such as the Hmars from the problem of marginalisation, stagnation and neglect.

6.3 Suggestion for Easing Ethnic Conflict

It is learnt from the preceding chapter that the existing framework of resolving ethnic conflict hardly able to meet the ends. In this section the research will try to provide a new possible framework aiming to provide harmony among different groups. It will be proper to start with a relooking at the existing framework. Apart from the existing framework, a suggestion for possible framework and conclusions about the policy and theoretical implications on the dimensions of ethnic conflict will be analysed.

Existing institution has been deployed consisting of the N.C Hills Autonomous Council (renamed Dima Hasao Autonomous Council) which was inaugurated under the provisions of the sixth schedule to the constitution of India. This North Cachar Hills Autonomous District Council (N.H.A.C) was mandated to administer this autonomous district with the proviso that it will have three wings of administration, viz, legislature, judiciary and executive. Along with the inception of the autonomous council, the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) also plays an important role in developing the socio- economic condition of the people. Instead of interpreting ethnic conflicts as an expression of uncontrolled human nature or as a necessary stage in universal history, they have to be related to a specific form of state-building.

It needs to be mentioned here that the tribal people are very much obliged to their democratic institution. The Apex bodies of the ethnic communities and the government must come forward to ward off all evil politics that affected the sentiments of tribal people.

Political conflicts take on ethnic forms when the resources of a modern state are unequally distributed along ethnic lines because the process of state formation takes place before a strong civil

society could be established. Under these conditions, communities of political loyalty form around the belief in a common ethnic heritage and politics thus become a matter of power relations between ethnic groups. Taking this perspective, we understand why it is precisely in recent years that we can observe a world-wide increase in ethnic conflicts.

There seem to be two possible ways to rescue the concept of ethnic conflict, one for each of the ends- and means-based for understanding ethnicity. An ends-based concept might be one that meets a series of strict necessary conditions. Ancient hatreds and religious intolerance are nearly miraculous as a social observable fact for ethnic conflict, but this issue has never been a factor of conflict in Dima Hasao district. In the means-based case the concept may be useful in those rare instances where structural deprivation has become so profoundly ethnic-specific that ethnicity has come to be defined precisely in terms of this deprivation. That is, it may apply where the mobilization of ethnicity creates a path dependence which decisively shapes the movement.

Ethnic mobilization caused by a general failure to legitimate inequalities is constantly in danger of being overtaken by a broader social movement. Alternatively, a structure-based concept might make sense if the structures that give rise to ethnic mobilisation are in some sense is not adaptable to easy change. If imperfect ethnic diversity management usually brings ethnic mobilization it might make sense to settle ourselves on studying how this 'ethnic conflict' rules out in the district.

Yet, time and again predictions of on-going ethnic violence based on absolute structural conditions have been disproved. In all these cases the concept of ethnic conflict has become conditional. Ethnicity and ethnic conflict do not offer opportunity to make good

causal assumption as ethnicity is important both to identity and to political conflict. In order to devise effective peace building strategies, it is necessary to recognize and address the multiple factors that cause ethnic conflicts.

Analysis of ethnic conflicts in the Dima Hasao district along multiple dimensions provides a source for a more broad approach to peace building and post-conflict development in ethnically divided societies. Long term peace policy such as employment opportunity should be considered to maintain further prevention.

Minorities are distinct among ethnic groups and can face particular barriers due to their cultural identity or political status. This requires strategic responses to their marginalization and the assumption is overcoming the minorities by addressing the inequalities in power and entrenched structure of discrimination. It is necessary to highlight the negative impact that inequality has upon the overall development and support those in power to make changes that enables the full participation of even the most marginalized ethnic group in the society. The competence of ethnicity should be identified for a successful performance of eliminating ethnic differences.

Despite the finding that extreme cultural differences are related to more conflict, the study indicates that institutions matter, because the different types of administration and duration, electoral systems, and federalism all influence the severity of ethnic protest and violence. Institutional design has important implications for the stability of most political systems and administration. Therefore implementation of a new design in the institutional arrangement should be made.

The problem, of course, is that politicians making choices about institutional design worry about not only what is best for

their region and what is best for each ethnic group's security but also what is best for them. In theoretical terms, it is necessary to think more clearly about the causal processes at work as to what extent ethnic demands produce political change, and to what degree can institutional change take off ethnic unrest. It is also found that political differences exacerbate ethnic conflict, so if the reduction of conflict is the goal, then leaders should not discriminate the minorities politically.

6.4 Limitations of the Study

This research is not free from limitation and as such it needs to be relooked and analysed. This study has encountered some limitations, nevertheless, it is worth noting that the limitations were identified in advance and it has been attempted to minimize them. The data collection has encountered problems as some respondents from the remote areas were also not reluctant to share their experiences during conflict.

Moreover some respondents could not recount the actual losses they have faced during the time of ethnic conflict leading to an inappropriate data collection. Yet another limitation needs to be mentioned of the difficulty in analysing all the consequences that were faced by the ethnic groups after ethnic conflict due to insufficiency of adequate data. Therefore data applied in the Research might not be sufficient enough to acknowledge all the problems faced by the ethnic groups during conflict situation in Dima Hasao district.

6.5 Concluding Remark

If there is a lesson to be learnt and remembered, it is that once ethnic conflict occurs it becomes difficult to resolve it. Therefore prevention should be taken to prevent conflict from occurring. Although early government responses are critical in determining ethnic conflict from further escalation, policies of respects and inclusion of minority communities in every field should be acknowledged. Accommodation and Autonomy no doubt contribute to civil peace but marginalisation should be repressed for uplifting the minorities' rights.

If resolution of ethnic conflict in Dima Hasao district is to be a realistic long term goal, in the short and medium term, a lot would depend on how effectively these conflicts are managed as conflict management entails the establishment of a peace process which would allow for maximising the potential benefits acquiring from the conflict while at the same time minimising the destructive consequences unleash in it.

The local government and administration must set up long time planning to eradicate poverty, spread education, economic development, developed transport and communication system to wipe out the problem of ethnic identity and identity crisis. It is the duty of the authority to see that everyone respect others culture, tradition and tribe. For the development of minor tribes economic package is a need of the hour. An increasing awareness among the tribes that violence is not the solution for all is the duty that the tribal democracy now needs to follow.

Yet the existing political structures provided within the scope of the provisions of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution have not been able to do justice. The purpose with which the Council was

formed has not been realized over these years. Although transfer of finances from both the Central as well as the State Government has been steadily increasing over the years and the development at the grassroots has not been forthcoming. Creation of smaller units of administration in the region might have been a political strategy for the Central Government, but in the long run the viability of finance was not taken into account. This short sightedness has created its own vicious cycle. Huge sums of money are pumped into these administrative set ups in the form of grants---in---aid, but very little is being done by these units to become self---generating revenue earners.

From the above discussion it can be infer that; what Dima Hasao district of Assam requires is a major change of power from district security to people's security, where people can take care of their cultural, socio-economic and political issues democratically. The Autonomous Councils, based on the Sixth Schedule, were initially formed to protect the culture and life of the tribal communities. To that end, they have seen a measure of success. But, it has been found to be lacking immensely as an autonomous entity working towards fulfilling the aspirations of the tribal communities.

Lack of transparency in the functioning of the Council, failure to adequately tap into the available resources, inherent complexities in the political, administrative structure, discrimination, dominance of vested interests and presence of insurgent outfits have all accounted for poor governance of the Councils. Thus, the study provides an opportunity to reflect and analyze the provisions of the Sixth Schedule as a feasible instrument of political change within the political context in India.

As a concluding remark, it would be necessary to mention that the a diverse ethnic society that recognises the rights and plurality

of other ethnic and minority groups can only strive for peace and development and a better future for human society between and among contenders of ethnic groups.