

Chapter Three

Push Factor-Condition of Nepal and Other Place of Origin of Migrant

Geographical Obligations and Migration:

Nepal is situated in the southern transitional terrain of the central Himalaya in Asia. The Country is rectangle in shape. It is located between 26° 22' and 30° 27' Northern latitude and 80° 4' and 88° 12' Eastern longitude. Highly mountainous, Nepal is situated along the northern border of India. It is nearly 500 miles (804.5 kilometers) extended in length and 120 miles (193.08 kilometer) in breadth and is landlocked between the Tibetan autonomous region of the Peoples' Republic of China and the Republic of India.

Topographical and climatic diversities are very common in Nepal which differs from plain in Terai to the high snow peaks of Himalayan range. Ecologically the country is divided into three regions, running parallel from east to west; mainly Himalayan region (Mountains), hills and the Terai region. Himalayan and hilly areas of the country dominate most of the physical landscape. Nearly 83 percent landscape of the country is hilly and mountainous and rest 17 percent of the land is plain area.¹ There are high peaks, big glaciers and lakes in the mountainous region and only 2 percent of the land area is suitable for cultivation.² The climate of the mountainous region is dry, harsh and not perfect for human habitation. In the Himalayan region there are few big and small passes through which movement of people and trade across the border is possible. Hill region of Nepal is situated between the Himalayas and the Terai. Hill region contain 68 percent of total land area with largest share of land among the regions. There are valleys in between the hill ranges running east to west of the country and most of the population reside in this area. Kathmandu and Pokhara are such valleys where density of population is very high. Terai is the southern part of Nepal adjoining India. Alluvial soil brought by rivers to Terai made the area fertile. The eastern part of Terai is more fertile than central and western parts. So, the

¹ Upreti, B. C., 2002, *The Marginal Migrants: A study of Nepal emigrants in India*, Kalinga Publication, Delhi, p.18.

² Thieme, Susan, 2006, *Social Networks and Migration: Far west Nepalese Labour Migrants in Delhi*, Transaction Publishers, U.S.A., p. 7.

population in the area is large and agriculture is largely possible. Terai area is recognized as the economic backbone of the country. Geographical variation in the country has affected the lifestyle of the people and the economy.

High population growth in the hilly area of Nepal and high man-land ratio and shortage of cultivable land has affected the livelihood of the hill people. In the year 1961 landholding in the mountainous Nepal was 0.47 ha. In hilly region it was 0.56 ha. But in Terai it was almost four times larger than hilly area.³ In an estimate of the year 1979 it has been shown that 85 percent of hill farm households were unable to produce enough food even for their personal consumption and in Terai 50 percent of the farm households had the similar problem.⁴ Terai was primarily not suitable because of the threat of malaria. Traditional method of agriculture, land fragmentation according to Hindu law because of property division among the sons, soil erosion because of harsh topography affected the agriculture in the hills. Agricultural deficit and economic imbalance in the society has become the cause of the constant migration from the country. Migration from Nepal to India has become very common for survival. According to the report of 'Central Bureau of Statistic' it has been mentioned that in the year of 1941, 98.63 percent of foreign Nepali emigrants were from hill and mountain regions of Nepal and only 1.37 percent of emigrants were from Terai. In 1952/54 migration from hills and mountain area of Nepal was 97.13 percent. In the year 1961, 1981, 1991 and 2001 migration from hill and mountain area was 95.09 percent, 91.10 percent, 77.7 percent and 70.2 percent respectively.⁵ It is clear from the figure that migration from mountainous and hilly regions of Nepal has been quite higher than that from the Terai region. However, sharp decline of migration from hill and mountain region of Nepal has been seen in the last two census figure. It may be argued that after the democratic movement in Nepal in 1990 there has been development in the hilly and mountainous regions of Nepal. Development in those areas has reduced the scale of migration. Following table-3 shows regionwise emigration of Nepalis from the year 1952 to 1954.

³ Seddon, David, 1987, *Nepal a State of Poverty*, Vikas Publishing house, p. 21.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 129.

⁵ Adhikari, Jagannath & Gurung Ganesh, 2009, *Migration, Security and Livelihoods: A case of Migration between Nepal & India*, Nepal Institute of Development Studies, Nepal, p. 39.

Table-3
Region wise emigration of Nepalis from the year 1952 to 1954

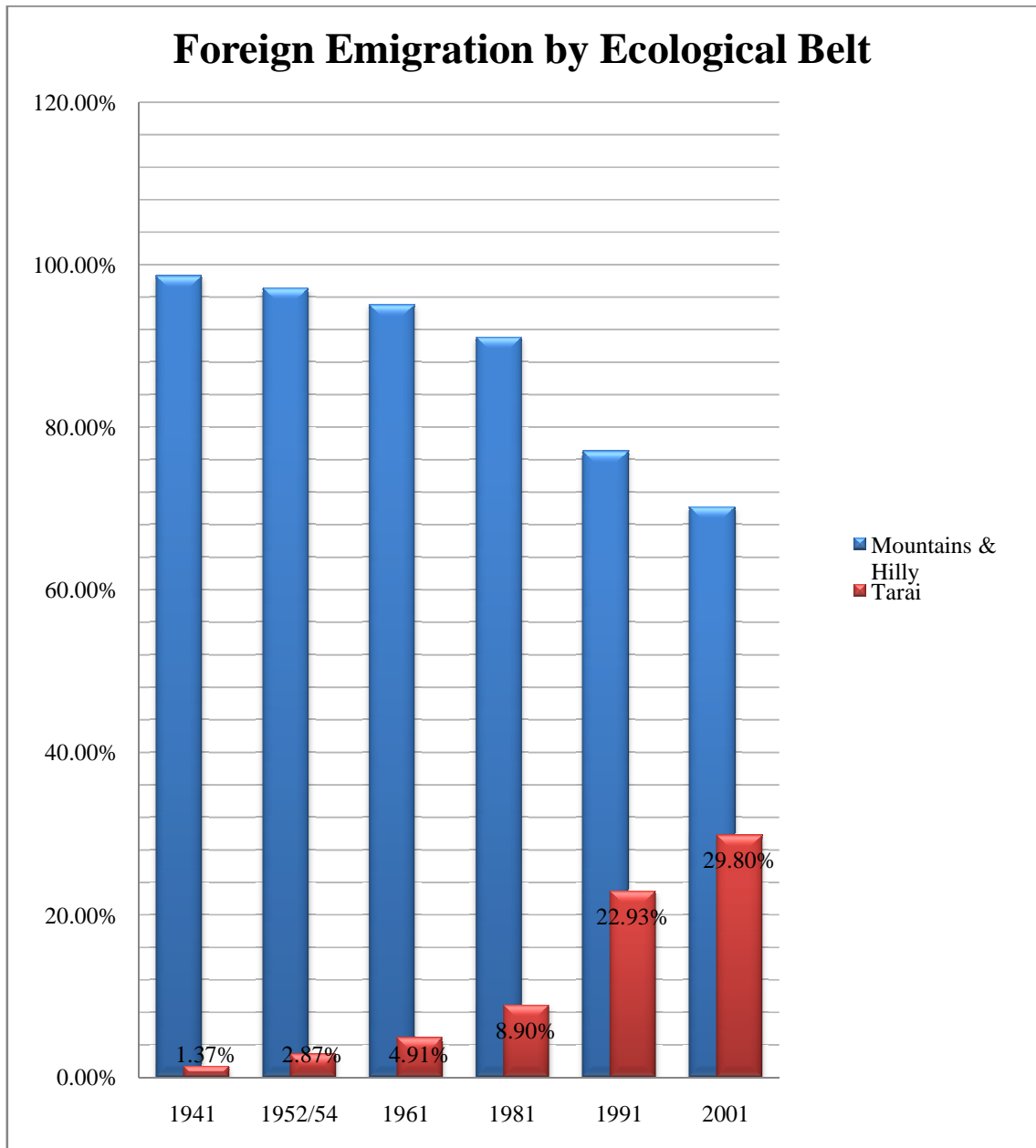
| | Region | Number | Percentage |
|------------|---------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1. | Mountain and Hill Region | 189,917 | 95.9 |
| | Eastern | 49,553 | 25.0 |
| | Central | 96,639 | 48.7 |
| | Western | 43,725 | 22.2 |
| 2. | Kathmandu Valley | 2,911 | 1.5 |
| | Inner Tarai | 3,472 | 1.8 |
| | Eastern | 1,938 | 1.0 |
| | Central | 1,318 | 0.8 |
| | Western | 216 | 0.01 |
| 3. | Tarai Region | 1,830 | 0.9 |
| | Eastern | 1,544 | 0.8 |
| | Central | 163 | 0.1 |
| | Western | 123 | 0.1 |
| ////////// | Nepal | 189,120 | 100.0 |

Source: Subedi, Bhim, Prasad, "International Migration in Nepal: Towards an Analytical Framework, CNAS Journal, Vol. 18, No. 1, Nepal, 1991, p. 96.

People of the hilly and mountainous area are largely dependent on the remittance from the foreign country. At present they sustain their livelihood by entertaining various activities in the hill and mountainous region. So the migration from the region has declined significantly. The info graph bellow shows Nepali migration from various ecological belts from 1941-2001.

Chart-2

Nepali migration from various ecological belts from 1941-2001



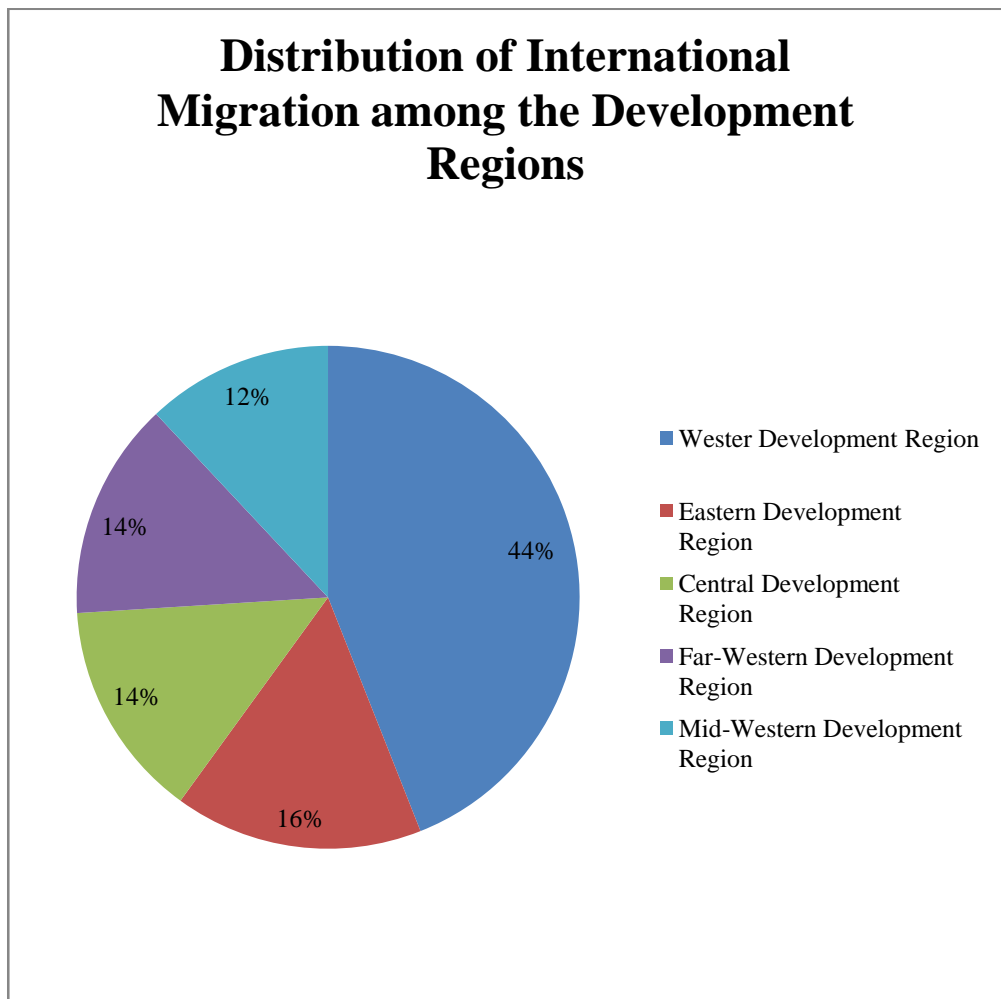
The Country is divided into five development regions, namely Eastern, Central, Western, Mid-Western and Far-Western regions and subdivided into 75 districts.⁶ In a report of 2002, it has been shown that 44 percent of international migration from Nepal took place from western development region. Far western development region, Eastern development region, Central development region and mid-western development region contributed respectively 14 percent, 16 percent, and 12 percent migration internally. It is clear from the study that the trend of migration from Nepal was mainly from western development region. The study also reveals that migration from Nepal to India has basically taken place from far-western region and mid-western region. Nearly 99 percent of migrants from far-west and 95 percent of migrants from mid-west have migrated to India in the year 2002. Comparatively the people living in the better-off eastern, central, and western regions also have preferred to migrate to India. However, certain sections from those regions also prefer other foreign countries. Migration to Gulf country, Europe, USA, Australia, Canada have taken place basically from Central and Eastern development regions of Nepal.⁷ On the basis of human development index and poverty index far-west and mid-west regions lag behind in the country. So, to alleviate poverty and to fulfill the basic needs for survival, migration from those places to India has taken place. As the data of early nineteenth century in this regard is not available, it is difficult to trace the place, wherefrom migration took place in the earlier times. We can safely assume from the trend of migration that the western hill was the source of migrants in the early nineteenth century. In the early nineteenth century as the Gorkha recruitment and their migration was huge in number and western region is basically the home of the Gorkhas, migration to India took place mainly from that area. So, we can say that a good number of presentday migrations from western hill region of Nepal to India are a legacy of past migration. Chart-3 shows the distribution of international Nepali migration from various development regions.

⁶ Thieme, Susan, 2006, *op. cit.* p. 7.

⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 19-21.

Chart-3

Distribution of International Nepali Migration from Various Development Regions



Environmental Factor of Migration:

Environmental factor was also an important cause of the Nepali migration into Eastern and Northern parts of India. People from the hill region of Nepal preferred to

migrate and settle in such a place of India where they found suitable climate. They did not prefer to migrate to Terai or other places where climate was not conducive for them. Earlier Nepali migration and settlement was in the hills eastwards from Nepal where the climatic condition is more or less similar to that of their place of origin. Nepali migration has largely taken place in Darjeeling in Bengal and Sikkim and other northeastern states of India. Climatic condition of those areas is more or less similar to that of their region in Nepal. In colonial period, sanatorium and other British enterprises were established in Darjeeling, Shillong and other specific areas. Those areas have been suitable for the Nepalis. Nepalis from cold climatic regions took chance to migrate to those area. Gradually they spread throughout the hilly area of Northeast where climate has been cold. But it has not been found that Nepalis have migrated to comparatively hot region adjacent to those hills of northeast and eastern India. Nepali migrants moved into valley and plain areas later on. In a conversation, Ghari M., a Nepali migrant says “*We are hillsmen (pahadi), we cannot live in the plains, it is too hot over there*”. Though at present Nepalis are living also in the hottest areas of India. Delhi, Bangalore, Kolkata is also the destination of Nepali migrant people at present. Even they are also moving to Arab countries for economic reason without considering the climate. On the other hand, people of India adjacent to Nepal prefer to migrate to Nepal Terai because of the similarity of climate, and there is hardly any evidence of migration of Indians to the hill regions of Nepal. Climatic condition of the place only helped to determine the direction of the movement of people. Nepali migration was not an exception to this. So, similar favourable climate acted as a push factor for Nepali migration to eastern and northeastern India.

Land Holding System and Peasant Marginality:

Land was the basic source of livelihood of the people of Nepal as it is in the present day. Theory of State right over the land was the feature of the country and no individual right was granted to the land. But because of economic mechanism land was given in tenure to the people. The main form of land tenure system in Nepal was *Raikar* land, *Birta* land, *Guthi* land *Sera* land and *Kipat* land grant system. In the *Raikar* land grant system, peasant had the right to cultivate the land and in return they used to pay the share of it to the State directly. State sanctioned this type of grant frequently to the individuals, or to

monasteries and temples. If this type of grants was to the individual it was known as *Birta* land grant and if it was granted to the temple or monastery it was known as *Guthi* land grant. The Raikar land, which was used for the Crown's personal needs, was known as *Sera* land. And the system whereby the large area of land was granted to the groups of indigenous people on a community basis was known as *Kipat* land grant, where State had no right to bestow or seize the land legally. The Gorkhali State sanctioned *Kipta* right particularly to the tribal communities of Kirat ethnic stock, like Limbu, Subbas or Rais. During the eighteenth century *Raikar* land grant was very common in all parts of Nepal. The owners of the *Raikar* lands could cultivate the land by themselves or else might engage the other peasants to cultivate the land. On the other hand, *Kipat* land grant was very common in several parts of the eastern and western hill regions, mainly to Sunuwars, Kumhales, Majhis, Lepcha, Sherpas, Danuwars, and Tamangs.⁸ *Kipaat* and *Sera* land grant areas were relatively covered small area of the country than *Raikar* grant area. Even *Kipta* land holding decreased gradually in the late seventeenth century. For better understanding of the peasant marginality the study will focus mainly on *Raikar* system.

In *Raikar* system land rights were bestowed directly on the State or few elites, and the size of the land holding was large. Peasant had the right to cultivate the *Raikar* land and consume a share of the produce for their livelihood. The elites specially the Brahmans, nobility, government officials, priests and others who were not of the agricultural class enjoyed the fruit of the land but not the common peasantry. After meeting the production cost and giving the peasant minimum livelihood the surplus production from the land was taken away from the peasant. Although peasants were encouraged to reclaim the waste land and to extend the cultivated area with initial tax exemption and other amenities, after certain time reclaimed land would be taken up under *Raikar* tenure system. So, the condition of peasants under *Raikar* system was miserable and they were nothing but an underprivileged section of the society. In an account 'Hamilton' stated "*The Peasantry are extremely nasty, and apparently indigent. Their huts are small, dirty, and very ill calculated to keep out the cold winds of the winter season, for a great many of them have*

⁸ Regmi, Mahesh, Chandra, 1972, *A Study in Nepal Economic History (1768-1846)*, Adroit Publishers, Delhi, p. 27.

*no other walls but a few reeds supported by sticks in a perpendicular direction. Their clothing consists of some cotton rags, neither bleached nor dyed, and which seem never to be washed. They are a small, hard-favored people, and by no means fairer than the inhabitants of Bengal who are comparatively in much better circumstances.”*⁹ It would be right to argue that in Nepal the position of the peasantry lie in the lowest stratum of the multi-stages hierarchical agrarian system and their sustainability on land depended on the favour of upper stratum.

After the unification of Nepal by the Gorkhas and the expansion of the kingdom, the issue of control of administration in a large area and the extraction of more revenue made the system of land grant prevalent. Vast area of land was sanctioned as reward or emoluments to civil and military personnel, dignitaries, chieftains of subdued principalities and others. In the eighteenth century Nepal, as the monitorial system was not largely established, the *Jagirdari* system was developed. As the agricultural land was abandoned because of the expansionist policy of the State, it was found quite easy to provide *Jagir* land in lieu of payment of cash salary. Assignment of land as source of income mainly to military personnel to continue imperialistic activities of the State became important. *Jagirdar* was obliged to supply forces and arms in time of needs of the Government. On one occasion Prithvi Narayan Shah directed that land should be granted to military personnel to make them free from domestic worries and he also commented in 1793 that if cultivated land is not available for *jagir* grant salaries in cash should be granted to military personnel.¹⁰ In the Karnali region generally land tax was paid in cash and even *Jagirdars* were also paid salaries instead of sanctioning land as in the central and eastern hill regions. The commander of local military unit used to collect revenue and pay the salaries to *Jagirdars*. Remaining part of their collection they used to send to the capital.¹¹ Government toke measures to confiscate the *Birta* land of large area and allotted it to military personnel as *Jagir* land when needed. Cultivator of the land who enjoyed it freely earlier was compelled to pay rent at a later date. In November 1792 an imperial order issued to the residents of Gokarna in Kathmandu stated “*We had confiscated your Birta lands...But we*

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 32.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 39.

¹¹ *Ibid.* p. 93.

*had allotted them to you for cultivation under Adhiya tenure. These lands have now been assigned to the army. But we confirm your continued occupation of these lands on Adhiya tenure... You shall not be evicted from these lands ... as long as you pay the customary dues to the landlord”*¹² Local revenue officers often charged much higher than the government prescribed rate. A study shows that in kind payment per *bigha* of paddy land was 250 percent higher in 1809 than in the year of 1940.¹³ An order passed in 1812 declared that if any cultivator offered higher rates than the existing rate paid by peasant for his cultivation in the land, the higher rate of payment have to pay by him otherwise he would be driven out from land.¹⁴ Occupancy right of peasant to cultivate the land laid on the hand of *jagirdars* in all part of the country. In the hill regions of Nepal *Jagirdars* were too much harsh to peasantry. Lease of cultivable land were given to peasant only for one year tenure and it had to be renewed every year on payment of fresh charges. Regular demand from the tenants made the *jagirdars* greedy. For better earning *Jagirdars* used to demand more rent from the tenant, which new renter easily offered to reclaim the land. It has been seen that in Tarai, peasants were frequently evicted after the reclamation of west land by them and the land was allotted to others by *jagirdars* for better earning.¹⁵ Thus the peasant lost their liberty over land and became just a serf. On the other hand because of the elitist status and professional obligation *Raikar* and *Jagir* owners were used to cultivate their possessed land through tenant labour. Peasant had to work for the *Raikar* and *Jagir* owners and the government had no direct control over them. Peasant had no advantage on the abundant of cultivable land. All the social and economic affair of the life of peasants was dealt by the *Jagir* land owners. As long as *Jagir* holder had cordial relation with the government the misery of the peasant had not been tried to pacify by the government. Because of state power control over land *Jagirdars* of a plot could have changed or Birta land could have converted into *Jagir* or *Raikar* land but the possession of the peasants were remained unchanged.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 76.

¹³ *Ibid.* pp. 82-83.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 88.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 90.

The miserable picture of the peasantry would remain incomplete without the discussion of the *Ijara* and *Amanat* system of revenue administration. There were two methods of revenue collection prevalent in the state; *Ijara* and *Amanat* system. In the *Birta* and *Guthi* land tenure system, owners themselves collected the revenue but in *Raikar* and *Jagir* lands, *Ijara* and *Amanat* system was prevalent. In the *Ijara* system, *Ijaradars* or contractors were granted a territory and the right of collection of revenue was assigned to them and the *Ijaradar* had to pay the amount stipulated by the government. The additional revenue collected by the *Ijaradar* beyond the government demand whatever he could raise was his personal income. On the other hand, in the *Amanat* system, after the collection of the revenue the government share would be estimated by the official appointed for this purpose. The demand made in the *Ijara* and *Amanat* system was so high and the oppression of the peasant was extreme that the country was ruined. Evidence shows that in the eastern Tarai, heavy demand of *Ijaradars* compelled the people to migrate to India and depopulate the area and the collection of revenue declined in between 1791 to 1807.¹⁶ The over taxation and the oppression of the commoners acted as the push factor of migration from Nepal to India. Officially government permitted to *Ijaradars* to give relaxation in revenue demand but in practice, the government hardly allowed such relaxation. In reply to the demand of *Ijaradar* of Saptari and Mahottari districts for the relaxation of revenue for the failure of crops because of drought government said “*Once a contract is signed, it is justice to make collections accordingly. Where crops have been good, people will pay willingly. Where crops have failed, they may have to compensate the loss themselves.*”¹⁷ Condition became worse when *Ijaradars* appointed subcontractors for the collection of revenue. *Ijara* system thus ruined the country and the people and was a major cause of migration of Nepalis to India.

A large number of privileged sections of the society like *Birta* owners, *Jagirdars* and other elite classes were exempted from regular payment of tax to the government. So the financial burden of the State was laid on the common peasantry, craftsmen, petty traders and other non-privileged classes. Even illegal tax collection and other charges

¹⁶*Ibid.* pp. 129-132.

¹⁷*Ibid.* p. 135.

extorted by the revenue collector became a chronic problem for the commoners in all parts of the country. The status of the peasants was as similar to the serfs of the feudal society.

Money Borrowing and Rural Indebtedness and Migration:

Landless condition and high taxation on land were not the only causes of the misery of the peasants. High interest rates on the money borrowed by the peasantry in time of their needs was also a cause of harassment of the agrarian class. It was very common in Nepal that the peasants who were engaged in the *Jagir* land cultivation were obliged to supply loans to their landowner. Generally it appears to be confusing that the peasant gives loan to his land lord. But in this case it is true, and it was the system. Especially when the landlord was a military personnel and was deputed to the front usually made demand of such advance payment from the tenant at a short notice. Such type of loan was very much useful to the landowners for fulfilling their immediate needs of money without waiting for the share of his crops produced in his fields. As the monitorial support from the State was not given to the landlord, the system of obligatory loan given to the landlord at the rate of 5 percent of interest by the peasant became prominent in the period. Loan, latter on, was ultimately adjusted against the value of share of the crop given to landlords. Peasant did not have sufficient money to meet the needs of landlord. This type of demand forced the peasant to borrow money from moneylenders even before the crop was harvested. Because of unavailability of monitorial economy there was shortage of money in Nepal and the interest rate was very high. In several parts of the western hills of Nepal interest was normally amounted to 25 percent in cash and 50 percent in kind. Sometimes 50 percent cash had to be paid as interest rate on the borrowed money.¹⁸ On the other hand moneylenders usually hesitated to provide money to the peasant because of insecurity of refund. As the peasant did not have permanent occupancy right on land and there was a chance to be evicted from land the moneylender often refused to provide money to the peasant. Peasants who were unable to pay or not willing to provide loans to the landlord were generally evicted from the land. Thus rural indebtedness became a chronic problem

¹⁸ *Ibid.* 98.

for the peasantry. Little effort of the government to mitigate the misery of the peasantry was not of much help because of scarcity of money in the country.

Slavery and Exploitation of Commoners and Migration:

It has been discussed earlier that the peasantry did not have the right of ownership of the cultivated land and they used to cultivate the land of *jagirdar* or *Birta* owners. Peasants were bound to pay loan to the landlord and that loan would be adjusted later on, from the land lord's share of the crops produced by the cultivator. In this system peasants were bound to collect money from the moneylender for the payment of such loan to landlord even before the harvesting of the crops. As the moneylenders did not have security of the refund of money from the peasant they usually utilized labour of the peasant for their indebtedness. Thus the bondage system appeared in the society among the peasantry. Under this system, peasants who were in debt were compelled to work for the moneylender to accomplish their debt. By this, debtors used to work for the moneylender in lieu of payment of interest. Even the peasant who were in debt, sold themselves or their children into slavery to reimburse their loan. Revenue officials and local administrator not only compelled the peasant to come under slavery but also enslaved their wives and their children and even sold them to India. In the western hill areas, the problem of enslavement became very acute, there the moneylenders used to take up boys and girls of Magar community in bondage because of the failure to refund the interest on the loan borrowed from of moneylender by their parents. Though, this practice was banned in 1837, but it was reintroduced in the establishment of the Rana regime in 1846. Even there was a common practice of selling of children of the peasants of *Dullu-Dailekh* to the purchasers of the plain area and Tibet. Kidnapping of children for such sale was also common in Nepal. Government had imposed ban on the sale of the children.¹⁹ But the situation did not change completely. Because of slavery and selling of children migration took place from Nepal to India. Even trend of women migration from Nepal to India was very common in late

¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 118.

eighteenth and the nineteenth century. It has been seen that severe poverty was the major reason of the slavery.

One of the major causes of the slavery was the oppression of Gorkhali ruler in case of against of the rebellion. The Gorkhas became a national power in Nepal by their expansionist policy and by the oppression of the other ethnic cline. Revolt against this oppression was very common. Gorkhali regime took very hard measure against the rebellions. Most of the protestors above the age range of 12 years were awarded capital punishment. In some cases captivity of the rebels and enslavement of them was common. Though government order to prohibit slavery was passed, local officials hardly fallowed the order.

Cow-slaughter was prohibited according to the Hindu laws in different parts of Nepal before the Gorkhali conquest, which became more rigorous afterwards. Fine, enslavement and even capital punishment was awarded to the offender of the rule. In the year 1805 order was published by the official in Solukhumbu to charge the person who broke the rules as long as they have sons, daughters, wives, and bondsmen available for sale to pay the dues.²⁰ Some sexual ethical code was imposed on the communities who were not believer in Hindu faith and who were not traditionally in high position in the society. Capital punishment was given to the higher caste offender, who was charged of adultery. Punishment like enslavement was awarded to the communal groups like Tamang, Gurung, Khas, Magar, Sunuwar, Damai.²¹ All those forms of oppression were very common in the distant place from Kathmandu. Official record shows that the number of the *ryots* reduced because of the enslavement policy of the state in the Doti district. An English official, who visited Garhwal in the year 1808, stated “*At the foot of the pass leading to Har-Ka-Pairi is a Gorkhali post, to which slaves are brought down from the hills and exposed for sale. Many hundreds of these poor wretches, of both sexes, from three to thirty years of age, are annually disposed of in the way of traffic. These slaves are brought down from all parts of the interior of the hills and sold at Hardwar at from ten to one hundred*

²⁰ *Ibid.* p. 119

²¹ *Ibid.* p. 119.

and fifty rupees each".²² An estimate by a British officer shows that 200,000 persons was been taken into enslavement during the period of Gorkhali rule in Garhwal of Nepal.²³ Thus slavery became a rigorous socio-economic problem of the country whereby a large number of people were enslaved. The mode of harassment of the state or state sponsored institution always compelled people to escape from this hardship and thus migration to India became very common. Though sometimes government tried to mitigate the conditions of the peasantry from enslavement the problem of misery was not been solved and migration from Nepal to India became the regular feature of Nepal.

Forced Labour and Harassment of Commoners and Migration:

At the time of political unification of the state the land was sparsely populated and density was very low. Newly unified state faced difficulties for the shortage of manpower. Shortage of manpower became a chronic problem in the country. Commoners usually engaged themselves in cultivation. On the other hand monitorial economy was not very common in the country and the people used to maintain their livelihood without money. Wage economy was not prevalent at that time. As the cultivable land was available in the state an offer for supply labour against of wages hardly attracted the commoners.

After the unification of the country there was demand of coolies and labourers for the royal service. The expanding nature of the state required continuous military support. There were tremendous needs for production of munitions and the transportation of military equipments and other material to a long distance. So, the demand of labour became prominent. On the other hand construction of road, building, bridge, fortress, palaces and the repair work needed the labor force. But labour in the country was not available. So the system of supply of free labour was initiated in the State to fulfill the military and other needs. Thus a system emerged in Nepal where people were compelled to provide free and compulsory labour service to the State. This compulsory and unpaid labour service was known as *Jhara* system.

²² *Ibid.* p. 120.

²³ *Ibid.*

In a general nature all the adult male population of the country irrespective of their caste and communities were compelled to provide compulsory and unpaid labour services to the state whenever needed. According to the needs, state demanded the free labour service from individuals, sometimes from household and sometimes from village. Nobility and the high class officials were free from this type of service because of their social prestige. The people who were engaged in the royal palace and the family of military personage who were engaged in the service of state and deputed in the front were exempted from *Jhara* service. Royalty had the right to exempt the individuals, residents of the specific areas or to the particular communities from this type of free labour service.

As the worker was not available everywhere people were forced for free labour service for the neighboring places also. Free labour was used for the transportation of wood, stone, building materials and other thing for the construction purpose. Free labour was also used for reclaiming wasteland, construction of irrigation canal and embankment and for other agricultural works. Use of free labour was also very common to hunt the wild animals like elephants, snakes, crocodiles for the royal uses and for trade. Common peasants were also compelled to supply food to the royal pet. *Jhara* labour was used for the work in the royal houses. Royal land was cultivated through free labour system. Various goods from different areas of the country and the imported material from India were transported to the royal palaces through *Jhara* labour system. Processing of various forest products, manufacturing of different materials and supply of those was done by the *Jhara* labour. Free labour was also used for the transportation of revenue. In this free labour system, government exploited the common man of Nepal.

Free labour in the army:

Free and compulsory labour was commonly used in the military service. For the expansion of territory of the state there was huge demand of military personnel. To fulfill the needs of army, state used to employ free labourers. At the time of warfare or uprising state used to employed commoners as soldiers without paying money. During the time of war between Nepal and the British power in the year of 1815 people of the hill districts were directed to *Jhara* obligations. Instruction was also given that “...*Person who can bear*

arms shall come along with their shields, swords, bows, arrows, and guns. Others shall bring spades and axes. Those who work sincerely for us shall be granted honors, rewards and expenses according to their services. Anybody who does not work on Jhara basis according to our order shall be severely punished."²⁴ It is clear that the government drew up the policy of reward and punishment in this system. Award was granted to the person who helped the government and punishment was given to the one who did not support the government.

State harassed the people by using the free labour for the transportation of military equipments, which was known as *Hulak* system. When this type of labour supply was needed in the sparsely populated area, even minors were not been exempted. Military officials of Nepal government in the year of 1808 passed a decree and said "*We have received reports that at places where the number of Hulaki households is small and not enough porters are available, you seize the sons and daughters of the subjects, beat them and force them to carry loads even when the subjects offer to increase the number of relays...*"²⁵ Thus the exploitation to commoners was so nasty that minors and women were not given relieved from harassment.

In the nineteenth century Nepal, the expansionist policy of the ruler created the situation where commoners were bound to provide free labour to the military. The commoner who did not enjoy the land ownership and was exploited by the *Jagirdar* or *Birta* owners was also squeezed by the rulers for the military obligation. The aspiration of the rulers for limitless territorial expansion deteriorated the position of the common man. Nepal government with an announcement called commoners from far areas to transport timber for the construction of temple of Jagannath in Kathmandu. They were told to carry foods with them for their own consumption for the period of five or six months.²⁶ The peasants who were generally underprivileged and did not have sufficient food to feed themselves were unable to carry food with them. Unpaid labourers were also bound to carry several articles like spades, axes, knives, *Khukuris* and other things with them which

²⁴ *Ibid.* p. 98.

²⁵ *Ibid.* p. 110.

²⁶ *Ibid.* p. 109.

were required for the work. Cruelty of the state towards the peasantry was to such an extent that force used to be applied to gather the peasantry of unpaid labour. Evidence shows that in the year of 1799, troops were dispatched in some of the areas of eastern hill region to bring *Jhara* labourers for the construction of the Jagannath temple in Kathmandu.²⁷ Besides state government, representatives and the prominent personalities for their own need also exploited the general people in the name of *Jhara* obligation.

Thus, it has been seen that after political unification of Nepal the condition of the peasantry and the common man became very worse. Somewhere situation deteriorated to such an extent that peasants left their holdings on land and started to move to other places for better living. Record shows that because of *Jhara* obligation people of Tinpatan, Sindhuli fled to the forest area and in Morang, peasants were bound not to cultivate their lands because of the forced and unpaid labour.²⁸ Even common peasantry started to migrate outside the country to escape the exploitation of the government officials and powerful persons. In this case India always became a favorable destination.

Caste and Tribal hierarchy and Migration:

Nepal possesses a great variety of races in its population. The Gorkhas, Newars, Magars, Gurungs, Limbus, Kiratis, Bhotiyas and Lepchas are the main communities of Nepal. Martial Magar and Gurung who adopted Hinduism were mostly the inhabitants of western hill area of Nepal. They were the best choice of Gorkha ruler and ranked below the *Ksatriya* and above the *Vaishya* and *Sudra*. Large number of Gurungs and Magars, who are basically Mongoloid people, were taken by the Gorkha ruler for the expansion of the empire. These western Hill Nepalis produced very capable commanders who fought for the Gorkha power proudly and were admired for their bravery. The British followed the same policy to recruit the fighting class like Gurung and Magar from western hill of Nepal. Gurungs and Magars who recognized as martial race in Nepal were in poor economic condition. These people were not recruited for high ranks of Gorkha army because of their low caste and discriminating policy of the state. These Gurungs and Magars when got

²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 110.

²⁸ *Ibid.*,p. 111.

opportunities to be recruited in the British Military force in long term military service just entered into it and thus migration of such caste group had begun to take place from Nepal to India. Thus caste discrimination acted as push factor of migration. On the other hand, caste group Khas, known as 'Parbatiya' (highlander) originally were named as Gorkha and their king was a Thakur. In this regard it is to say that large number of Rajputs and Brahmans migrated to the western Nepal from India at the time of Muslim invasion about twelfth century A.D. and spread Hinduism among the tribes. These Indo-Aryan immigration i.e., mainly Brahmins and Chhetris to the hilly areas of Nepal brought about a change in the mode of production and pattern of property ownership in the society. Advance farming technology for wet rice cultivation brought by the Indo-Aryan people made a change in the traditional mode of production, where pastoralism and shifting cultivation was replaced with settled intensive farming. Gradually lowland fields and lower slopes were used for the cultivation of rice. The ethnic people living in the lowland areas were forced to shift upwards in the hills to the less fertile land. Gradually high caste Hindus acquired the more productive lowland areas. With the holding of fertile land high caste people gained the power and got the political ascendancy over the tribes.²⁹ The technological advancement in agriculture through rice cultivation, modern method of ploughing, irrigation facility and terracing system on the one hand and traditional mode of production on the other created a division in the society of Nepal. Gradually a class structure was developed, where one class was left with fertile agricultural lands and another class had their labour without the effective lands. Dominant groups were established in the country, they were land owners, priest class, administrators, soldiers and other upper class people. By the 16th century, a well-established high caste Hindu landlord class emerged in the society with their common socio-political and cultural tradition. Landless tribal groups of people had nothing but their labour and were willing to migrate to India for their well being. On the other hand, Indo-Aryan foreigners and the natives and their progeny emerged with a new identity of *Kshatriya* higher caste of the society, known as *Khas* and their language came to be known as *Khas kura*. The *Khas* marched to the east to conquer the Newars' kingdom in 1768 A.D. under Prthvi Narayan Shah. The community like Murmis

²⁹ Nath, Lopita, 2002, *Labour Migration in an Earlier Phase of Global Restructuring: The Nepali Dairy Farmers in Assam*, North East India History Association, 23rd Session, p. 158-59.

and Newars were in the Kathmandu valley. Newars were in the power prior to the Gorkhas. After the establishment of Gorkha power a huge number of Murmis and Newars moved to India. Lepchas, another community then lived in an area between present day eastern Nepal border area and Sikkim. They largely settled to Sikkim and Darjeeling area of India. The communities like Limbu, Rai, who were mostly the inhabitants of the north and the east of the Nepal valley, were mainly cultivators and shepherds. With the creation of job market after the establishment of British colonial rule in India these people migrated to India in large number.

The presence of Mongoloid and Aryan stock of human race in society and admixture of blood between the indigenous tribes and the immigrants, intermarriage of the so-called high and low caste has created a multicolour society in Nepal. In 2001 census, it has been recorded that 103 ethnic or caste groups were presence in Nepal. Among them, nearly 30 percent of Nepalis belonged to either Brahmin or Chhetri castes and nearly 20 percent of the population belonged to Magar, Tamang, Tharu communities. And nearly 50 percent were of other castes.³⁰ *Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras* are four major groups in the Nepali caste system. In the caste system *Bahun*s, who formed of only 6.5 percent of the people in an account of 2001 census were holding high position in politics, judiciary, and in the civil services. *Bahun*s and *Chetris* together formed 31 percent of population holding two-thirds of the jobs in Nepal. Whereas hill *Janajatis*, excluding Newars and Tharus were 22 percent of population held 7 percent of the jobs. *Madhesis*, who are formed of 31 percent of population, held 11 percent of the jobs, and *Dalits*, constituted of 9 percent of the total population held only 0.3 percent of the jobs.³¹ Deprived section of Nepali caste groups usually preferred to move the country in search of a better option of life.

On the other hand, Hinduism is the dominant religion in the country; nearly 87 percent of population follows Hinduism. Gorkha rulers enforced several Hindu social system and code to establish their strong hold over Nepali society. National legal code of

³⁰ World Food Programme, 2008, *Passage to India: Migration as a coping strategy in times of Crisis in Nepal*, p. 9.

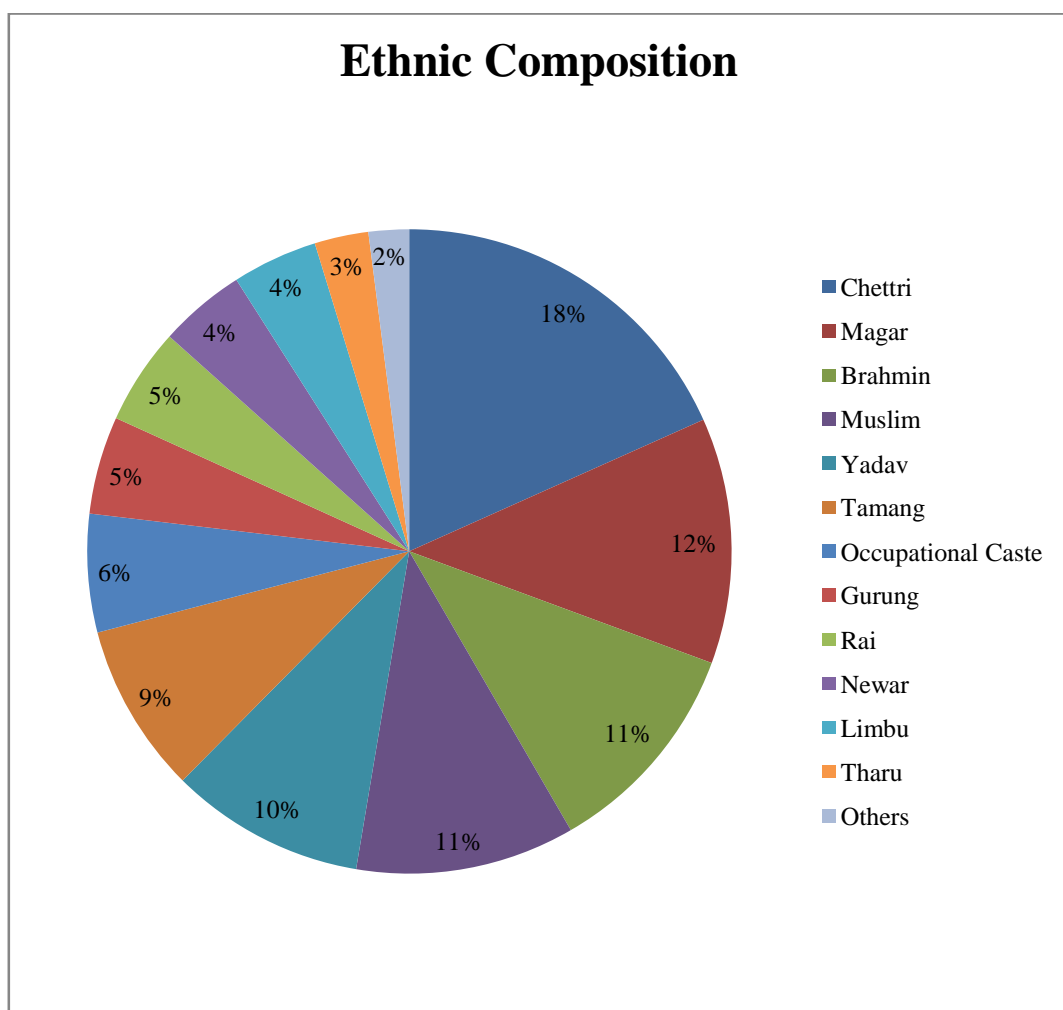
³¹ Gellner, David, N., 2007, Caste, Ethnicity and Inequality in Nepal, *EPW*, Vol. 42, No. 20, p.1825.

1854, *Mulki ains* was established in the country, which was applied to civil and criminal law in accordance to *dharmasastras*. In this law sharp distinction was made for the sacred thread or *Tagadhari* people and the *Matwali* or alcohol-consuming class. *Matwali* caste were recognized as untouchable and low grade people in the society. Dominant Hindu religion in Nepal thus produced a hierarchical social order in the country based on four *varnas*, i.e. The *Brahmins*, *Kshatriyas*, *Vaishyas* and the *Sudras*. Lower class was deprived in the country. Discrimination in the society insisted one section of people to move outside the country and to get relief from caste hierarchy.

It has been shown from a study that Brahmin, Chhetri, Magar, Tamang and other occupational castes were the major emigrants of Nepal in the year of 2002. Chhetri community was in highest proportion among the different caste groups who migrated in the same year with total number of 3689 people with 18.3 percent. Total number of Magar, Brahmin, Muslim, Yadav, Tamang who migrated from Nepal was 2484, 2221, 2219, 1970, and 1719 respectively. Other occupational castes, Gurung, Rai, Newar, Limbu, and Tharu were 1195, 989, 975, 877, 863 and 548 who emigrated from the country in the year of 2002 respectively. Besides them others who emigrated from Nepal for international job market in the year of 2002 was 409.³² Bellow chart-4 indicates the percentage of ethnic communities who emigrated from Nepal in the year 2002.

³² Dhungel, Binod, 2005, *Labour Emigration from Nepal, 2002: Mechanism and Socio-economic Status of Migrants*, (Unpublished Master degree dissertation) Tribhuvan University, Nepal, p. 47.

Chart-4
Ethnic Composition of Emigrant Nepalis from Nepal in 2002



Source: Dhungel, Binod, Unpublished Master degree dissertation on “Labour Emigration from Nepal, 2002: Mechanism and Socio-economic Status of Migrants”, Tribhuvan University, Nepal, 2005, P. 47. (Percentage calculated on the basis of number)

Study also revealed that Tamangs from Mountains, Chhetris from hills and Muslims and Yadav from the Terai largely migrated to foreign countries from Nepal in the year of 2002 then other caste groups³³

Social exclusion of the Commoners and Migration:

The policy of Gorkha rulers to assign land grant was confined to particular class and section of the people in the society. This policy simply excluded the others from the royal patronage. After the *Hinduization* of the society the common tendency of state was to provide grant only to the Brahmans, Chhetris and Thakuries from the western hill region of Nepal who upheld the political authority of Gorkhas. Tamangs, Magars, Newars and Gurungs did not receive such type of favor.³⁴ State took over the landed property and assigned it to elite class under *Jagir* or *Raikar* system. Common people gradually lost their hold on land owing to this state policy. After the occupation of eastern hill area of Nepal by the Gorkhas, the *Kipta* land of fugitive Limbu community was confiscated and granted to non Limbu communities under *Raikar* system. In this circumstances a large number of Limbu population migrated to the adjoining place of Sikkim and other parts of present Indian.³⁵

Revenue collectors who acted as judge often imposed fines on commoners in the name of judgment. Inability to pay the fine brought common people under enslavement. The Policy of suppression and exclusion created conditions for the migration of commoners from Nepal. After the Gorkhali conquest of Nepal some traditional Hindu code of conduct was imposed. Fine was imposed to ban the cow slaughter in the country. In an estimate it has been shown that in the year of 1805, Rs 12,000 or Rs 15,000 was collected from the offenders who were found involved in cow slaughtering.³⁶ Non-secular policy of state was not cordially accepted by all religious believers. Thus social exclusion of common people of Nepal pushed them out of the country.

³³ *Ibid.* p. 48.

³⁴ Regmi, M., C., 1972, *op. cit.* p. 40.

³⁵ *Ibid.* p. 50.

³⁶ *Ibid.* p. 71.

Rana Rule and Migration:

Prithvi Narayan Shah unified Nepal with his ability but his successors were not strong enough. Conflicting interests among the affluent to hold the power of the state made the situation worse. Appointment of Gorkhali aristocracy as a controlling authority of the government was very common phenomenon in the political history of Nepal. After the court massacre of 1846 power struggle between the aristocracies ended in Nepal. Jang Bahadur Rana emerged as a strong Prime Minister of the country.³⁷ King Surendra in 1856, by issuing a royal charter established the rule of Rana family in the country.³⁸ The decree sanctioned life time prime-ministership of senior most male member of Rana family. Thus, the Rana order was established from the families of Jung Bahadur and his brothers. Jung Bahadur Rana, strongly founded Rana regime with the special power vested in him. Right to appoint or discharge government officials, declare war and maintain peace with foreign nations, formulation of new laws or dismiss old one for the judicial, military and other departments, award of capital punishment were bestowed to him. The charter thus placed the Rana as absolute ruler of the Kingdom and the position of the King became insignificant. Thus, the Ranas, established the system of hereditary leadership and the Gorkha military aristocracy who were ranked below grabbed the social, political, judicial and administrative power of the state. Gradually Rana regime centralized the whole administration of the state. Ranas used the state power for their own interest and exploited the resources of the country for enhancement of their personal assets. To perpetuate power Rana rulers took the policy of appeasement of nobility and the bureaucracy of the state. Right to lands, forests and minerals were confined to state. No right of such natural resources was sanctioned to peasantry. Rana regime thus established the barbaric rule in the eighteenth century Nepal. Land revenue system like *Birta*, *Jagir*, and free labour service, slavery became more painful for the commoners in the Rana regime. Jang Bahadur Rana and his descendants lavishly exploited the *birta* system for them and their family members. In the name of fines, fees, penalties exploitation of the commoners reached the extreme

³⁷ Hachhethu, Krishna, May 2007, Legitimacy Crisis of Nepali Monarchy, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 42, No. 20, p. 1828.

³⁸ Regmi, Mahesh, Chandra, 1988, *An Economic History of Nepal 1846-1901*, Nath Publishing House, Varanasi, p. 4.

stage. Special levies like *darshan-bhet*, *tikabhet*, *fattemubarak* etc. were also collected by the Rana royal family. At the time of the appointment, reconfirmation or promotion of the government officials *darshan-bhet* levy was collected by the royal authority and *tikabhet* was levied at the time of Vijaya Dashami celebration. Similarly the *fattemubarak* levy was collected at the time of *Indrajatra* festival, the festival which was celebrated in commemoration of Prithvi Narayan Shah's conquest of Kathmandu in September 1768. Even at the time of weaving sacred thread by the prince, ascension to the throne, in the wedding ceremony of the eldest royal princess levies were collected. Revenue under the following heads was collected in the year of 1861.³⁹

Table-4
Revenue from Crown Levies, 1861

| Source | Amount of Revenue |
|--------------|-------------------|
| Darshan-Bhet | Rs. 36,946 |
| Tikabhet | Rs. 1,825 |
| Fattemubarak | Rs. 259 |
| Total | Rs. 39,030 |

Source: Regmi, Mahesh, C., *An Economic History of Nepal 1846-1901*, Nath Publishing House, Varanasi, 1988. p. 40.

Records also show that a sum of Rs. 449,914 was collected at the time of the weaving of sacred thread by the prince Surendra Bir Bikram Shah in 1840 and Rs. 441,001 was collected at the time of his coronation.⁴⁰ Revenue collection in the central treasury of Nepal in the year of 1851 was as follows.⁴¹

Table-5
Revenue Receipts of the Central Treasury of Nepal, Year- 1851

| //////// | Source of Revenue | Amount* | Percentage of Total Revenue |
|----------|-------------------|---------|-----------------------------|
| | | | |

³⁹ *Ibid.* p. 40.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p. 40.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* p. 57.

| | | | |
|--------|---------------------------------|---------------|--------|
| 1. | Agrarian Taxes | Rs. 1,021,107 | 72.16% |
| 2. | Income from State Sector | Rs.158,682 | 11.2% |
| | (i) Forest sector- Rs. 38,863 | | |
| | (ii) Mining sector- Rs. 119,819 | | |
| 3. | Commercial Taxes | Rs. 134,514 | 9.5% |
| 4. | State Intervention in Trade | Rs. 20,635 | 1.45% |
| 5. | Other sources | Rs. 80,664 | 5.69% |
| ////// | Total: | Rs. 1,415,602 | 100% |

Source: Regmi, Mahesh, C., An Economic History of Nepal 1846-1901, Nath Publishing House, Varanasi, 1988. p. 40.

* Amount was given in Mohar rupees (Nepali units). The official exchange rates of Indian rupees with Mohar rupees maintained at Patna was 100:123.⁴²

Ten years later, revenue collected in the central treasury of Nepal was Rs. 3.5 million. Revenue collection increased by 827.5 percent in between the years 1851 to 1900.⁴³ Heavy taxation by the state was generally harassed the people of the country and improved the health of the Royal Treasury.

Collected Tax at the time of marriage ceremony of the prince and princess was also at the cost of the commoners. Besides this, tax was collected on the occasion of for the various festivals and ceremonies and also at the time of extraordinary expenditure done by the royal house. Tax was collected from each household in the form of animal like pig, goats, sheep; necessary items like ghee, oil, honey, egg, agricultural produce, blankets, wax, turmeric powder and firewood or in cash. Though, the members of the royal household had their independent sources of income it was hardly was used for their personal needs and the massive royal expense was met from the state revenues. At the time of emergency or the war demand of the special taxes imposed upon people made the condition more pathetic. Peasants and the common people except the elite class and the nobility reached the extreme marginality during the Rana rule. Generally marginal people escaped from such subjugation migrating to India.

⁴² *Ibid.* p. 57.

⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 58.

The Rana Prime minister, basically Jung Bahadur realized that hostility against the British power would not be favorable for the political existence of Nepal. So the Rana ruler maintained friendly relations with the British power. The Rana rulers assisted the British power in crises. They supported the British by sending the troop in the Mutiny of 1857, First World War and Second World War. Thus large number of Nepalis migrated to India and to the European states. Many Gorkhas who migrated to European countries during World War returned to India and permanently settled there. Demand of Gorkhas was huge for the Britisher and by any means they tried to get them and consequently migration got encouraged. Details about the migration for Gorkha recruitment in the British force has been discussed in another segment. British Government as reward to help of Ranas returned the territory of Nepal, seized by them in the Nepal-British war of 1816 and assured about the sovereignty of Nepal. Thus Rana autocracy acted as push factors in respect of Nepali migration to eastern and northeastern India.

Population Pressure and Migration:

Nepal was very sparsely populated in the pre-unification period and the problem of reclamation of wasteland badly affected the economy of the country. After the unification, the ruler tried to populate the area even by encouraging the people to immigrate from outside. But actually population of the country started to increase rapidly from the middle of the eighteenth century. 'Kirkpatrick' argued that in the middle of eighteenth century new crops like maize, rice, millet, buckwheat were introduced in the country. Huge production of these crops supplied healthy diet to the common people of Nepal.⁴⁴ Arguments emerged that because of the consumption of such healthy food lifespan of the common masses increased. And subsequently population of the country started to rise. Primarily indigenous people of the country practiced shifting cultivation and used hand implements for that purpose. They were also largely dependent on livestock. Even in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century pastoralism was means of livelihood for a large chunk of rural population in the hilly region. But revolutionary change took place when Hindu-Rajput migrated to Nepal. They brought with them innovative agricultural technology including wet rice cultivation and the plough. In the dry and arable land area of hilly Nepal maize

⁴⁴ Seddon, David, 1987, *op. cit.* p. 8.

cultivation became very fruitful with the help of newly obtained technology. Thus in the hills of Nepal introduction of new healthy crop and the increase of productivity indirectly helped the population growth of the country. David Seddon, remarked that if the experience of other parts of world is traced, it is right to comment that population of Nepal significantly increased in the middle of the eighteenth century because of healthy development in agricultural productivity.⁴⁵ Macfarlane argued that during the pre-modern period population of Nepal grew rapidly even despite the absence of any medical and sanitary development. He also commented that population growth in Nepal was either by scientific development in farming or by chance discovery of a particular resource. He further commented, decline of warfare between the local communities or regional powers because of unification of the country in the eighteenth century and implementation of law and order and even interference of British for peace keeping by preventing war in the country created conducive environment for gradual population growth.⁴⁶

Population figure available in the earlier record was given by Hamilton in 1810. He remarked that there were no more than half a million population in Nepal at the end of the eighteenth century.⁴⁷ But more scientific figure of population is only being possible to get from first census figure of Nepal of 1911. In the census of 1991 population of Nepal was estimated to be 18.5 million and in 2001 census, population of Nepal is shown to have increased to 23.15 million. Rate of population growth is very high in Nepal. It is growing rapidly and doubling-up in every 29 years⁴⁸. The maximum increase in the population has been recorded in the Terai region, which holds close to 47 percent of the total national population⁴⁹. The average family size of Nepal is estimated to be 5.6 members. Women are almost half of the whole population of Nepal.⁵⁰ It would be easy to understand the population pressure of Nepal by the following table and figure. The Table-6 bellow shows the site of population by the place of birth and the average annual growth rate in percentage

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* p. 7.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 2-3.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* p. 1.

⁴⁸ Gurung, Ganesh., 2000, *Patterns in Foreign Employment and Vulnerability of Migration Workers*. Nepal Institute of Development Studies, Kathmandu. p.3. (Retrieved from: <http://www.Childtrafficking.Com>, Retrieve on:25/10/2009)

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

from 1911 to 2001. Chart-5 shows the annual Population growth rate in Nepal in graphically from the year 1911 to 2001.

Table-6
Population by Place of Birth and the Average Annual Growth Rate (Percent) in Nepal

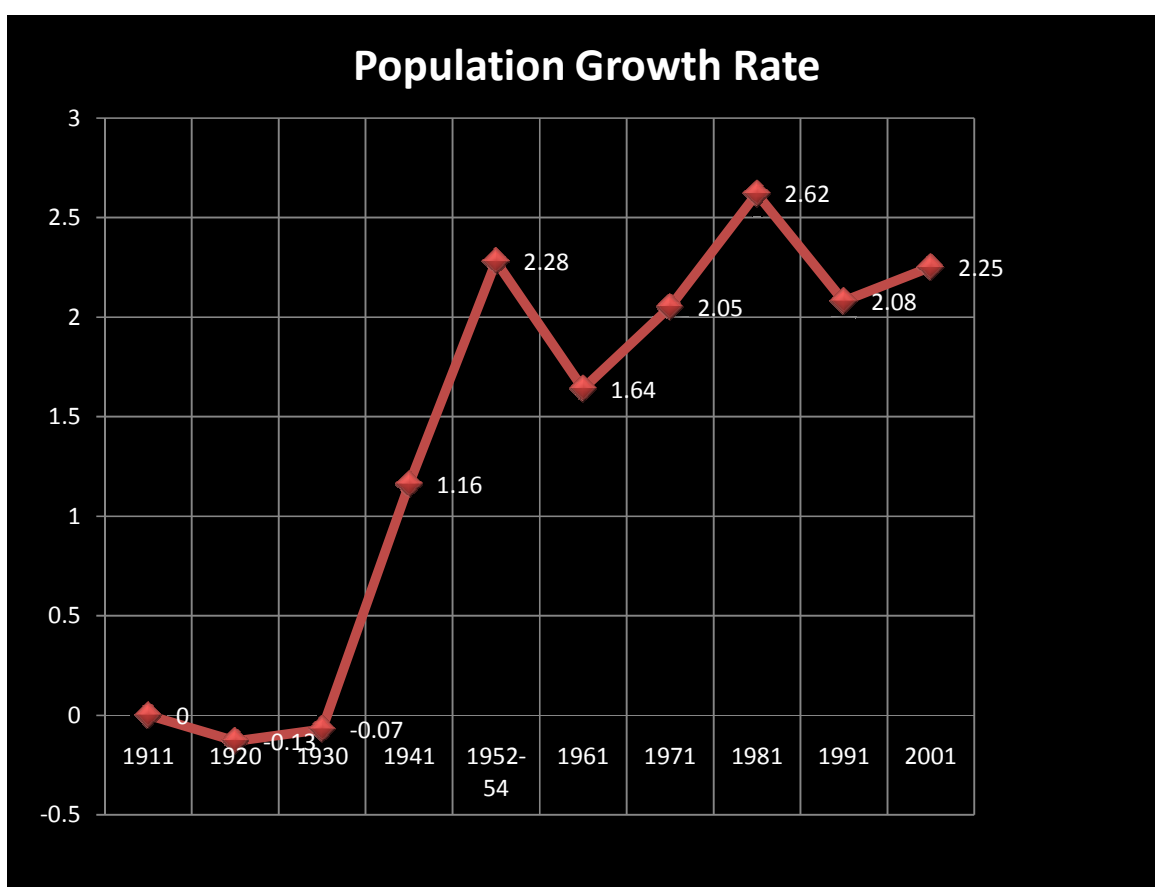
| Year | Population | Average Annual Growth Rate |
|------------------------|------------|----------------------------|
| 1911 | 5638749 | – |
| 1920 | 5573788 | -0.13 |
| 1930 | 5532574 | -0.07 |
| 1941 | 6283649 | 1.16 |
| 1952/54 ^{***} | 8256625 | 2.28 |
| 1961 | 9412996 | 1.64 |
| 1971 | 11555983 | 2.05 |
| 1981 | 15020839 | 2.62 |
| 1991 | 18462081 | 2.08 |
| 2001 | 22736934 | 2.25 |

**** The census 1952/54 was conducted in two phases covering one half of the country in 1952 and the remaining in 1954. There is, therefore, possibility of double counting of people in 1954 due to the movement of sizable proportion of those already counted in 1952.*

Source: (i) Population from the year 1911 to 1991 (Silwal, Uma, Kant., *Population Growth and Agricultural Change in Nepal*, 1995.), (ii) Population for the year 2001 (Bastola, T.S, Strengthening National Statistical Capacity by Promoting The 2010 Round of Population and Housing Census, Expert Group Meeting on ESCAP Regional Census Programme, 2006. <http://www.unescap.org>), (iii) Average annual growth rate (KC. Bal Kumar, *Migration Poverty and Development in Nepal*, Economy And Social Commission For Asia and The Pacific <http://www.unescap.org>).

Chart-5

Annual Population Growth Rate in Nepal from 1911-2001**



** Chart has been prepared on the basis of table-6

From the above table and figure we can observe the irregular trend of population growth in Nepal. In the census figures of 1920 and 1930 the population of Nepal is shown to have declined. One of the measurable factors behind this decline of population was the heavy casualties of Gorkha troops in the World War, who had migrated to India and were recruited in the army through the various recruiting centres in India. A sluggish growth rate

is seen in the census of 1941. This too was because of Gorkha recruitment in British Indian Army on the eve of the Second World War and the huge casualties in the war⁵¹. So, it is clear that India witnessed heavy Nepali migration in the period of World War. It is also observed that, reduced growth rate shown in 1961 census may be explained in terms of the easy flow of Nepalis to India after the Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1950. However, on the whole, it can be observed that population of Nepal has increased significantly. The total population of the country increased more than four folds during the ninety years period between 1911 and 2001.

Every year 300,000 young people of Nepal enter into the job market. Poor agricultural system, lack of industrial development and service are not able to provide job for the growing population. This facilitated the migration of the people from Nepal. Migration of people from the hilly area of Nepal has been very common phenomenon because of the need of the basic amenities which is not easily available in the hills.

Economic Factor of Migration:

Nepal is one of the poorest states in the world. The economy of Nepal is greatly dependent on agriculture. Over 90 percent of the economically active labour force is engage in subsistence agriculture. But landownership arrangement of Nepal is the main cause of rural poverty. Vast area of cultivated land in Nepal is held by very few persons and rest of the population in the country is landless or have small holdings. Even large and affluent land owners are the possessors of best agricultural land. Inequality in land holding is more acute in the Terai area. In the year of 1961, it was estimated that in Nepal, as a whole 10 percent of the land was owned by 46 percent of population. On the other hand top 8 percent of people were owners of 40 percent of land, whereas nearly 8 percent of household were landless.⁵² Unequal arrangement of land ownership and the pressure of population on cultivated land have forced the people to go out to work elsewhere. Majority of people who do not have possession of cultivated land were very poor in the country, even not capable to collect minimum livelihood for themselves and their family. Migration

⁵¹ Silwal, uma, kant., 1995, *Population Growth and Agricultural Change in Nepal*, Vikas Publishing house Pvt LTD, New Delhi, p. 41.

⁵² Seddon, David, 1987, *op. cit.* p. 119.

southward has been the only option for the survival of such people. Even there has been a clear tendency of the majority of middle stratum of peasants to rely on outside source of income beside agriculture. So migration among them has been very common phenomenon since long.

In Nepal there were not even basic industries till the third decade of the twentieth century. Even situation did not change in later days. Very small size of the urban population is engaged in industrial activities even at present. Manufacturing and industrial production in Nepal has been concentrated mainly in Kathmandu valley and in the eastern Terai. In an estimate less than 2 percent of the labour force has been engaged in the industrial sector even in recent past. However, one million people have been employed in cottage industries of Nepal.⁵³ The share of agricultural sector alone in the country's gross domestic production has been consistently higher. In between 1975/76 to 1990/91 it was 60 percent. Share of the manufacturing and production sector to the GDP was 5.26 percent and 8.25 percent, respectively in 1988/89.⁵⁴ Because of high population concentration, almost all land suitable for cultivation has come under farming. Yet, agriculture has faced several problems like shortage of fertilizers, improved seeds, and use of inefficient techniques etc. As a result, agricultural productivity in the country has been stagnant since the early times. Due to the lack of sufficient transportation system it has not been easily possible to transport the surplus foodgrains from the Tarai towards the north i.e. into the food-deficient areas of the mid mountain regions.

In Nepali major trading activities were controlled by the elite classes. Even situation has been changed in later period. In an account of the Christian Missionaries personnel in the year 1740, it has been told that major foreign trade of Nepal was controlled by the persons of royal family and the aristocracy.⁵⁵ So, it may be rightly argued that the artisans who used to produce goods for export were only the wage earners and the foreign trade had nothing to do with the economic development of the common mass of the country. Except the partial economic dependency of urban areas of Nepal on trade, the

⁵³ Silwal, Uma, Kant., 1995, *op. cit.* p.8.

⁵⁴ Ministry of Finance, 1991, *Economic survey: 1990/91*, HMG, Kathmandu; in Silwal, uma, kant., *op.cit.*, p. 8.

⁵⁵ Mahesh, C., R., 1972, *op. cit.* p.25.

country as a whole was mainly dependent on agriculture and agriculture was the livelihood of the masses. Foreign trade of Nepal is characterized by the large trade deficit due to the massive importation of construction materials, vehicles, machineries and petroleum products. The amount of trade deficit reached Rs 9,833 million in the first eight months of 1990-91; whereas it was Rs 813 million in 1875-76.⁵⁶ Poverty is widespread in Nepal. The ‘World Bank’ estimates that 53.1 percent of Nepalis live on less than a dollar a day. The growth rate of the GDP in the Sixth Plan (1980-85) and Seventh Plan (1985-90) period remained 4.40 and 4.6 percent respectively. The GDP growth rate in 2000 was 6 percent⁵⁷. Unequal distribution of wealth, low growth rate of economy, high rate of inflation and deficit in foreign trade have acted as push factor and motivated the people to migrate to foreign countries in search of a better livelihood.

The bellow table gives an idea about the percentage of population engaged in different sectors of the economy.

Table-7
Economically Active Population in Nepal in 1996

| Economic Sector | Active Population | Percentage(%) of total population |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry | 5,961,788 | 81.2 |
| Mining and quarrying | 2,361 | - |
| Manufacturing | 150,051 | 2.0 |
| Electricity, gas, and water | 11,734 | 0.2 |
| Construction | 35,658 | 0.5 |
| Trade, restaurant and hotel | 256,012 | 3.5 |
| Transport, communications and | 50,808 | 0.7 |

⁵⁶Silwal, Uma, Kant., 1995, *op. cit.* p.9.

⁵⁷ Gurung, Ganesh., 2000, *op. cit.* p. 3.

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------|
| storage | | |
| Finance and Real Estate | 20,847 | 0.3 |
| Community and Social Services | 752,019 | 10.2 |
| Others | 28,004 | 0.4 |
| Unidentified | 70,298 | 1.0 |
| Grand Total | 7,339,580 | 100 |

Source: Gurung, Ganesh., 2000, *Patterns in Foreign Employment and vulnerability of Migrant Workers*, Nepal Institute of Development Studies, Kathmandu, p.4. (<http://www.Childtrafficking.Com>)

Table shows that agriculture is the mainstay source of the economy of Nepal. Scholars like Ghai and Rahman remarked that nearly 60 to 80 percent of rural population in Nepal is poor. In Terai, inequality in income distribution is far greater than other parts of Nepal.⁵⁸ ‘National Planning Commission’ in their report of 1977 has cleared that poverty is very nasty in far west and in the east development regions of Nepal. Bellow table-8 shows the scale of poverty in different development regions.

Table-8
Poverty Line in the Development Regions of Nepal

| Development Region | Percentage of population bellow poverty line | Percentage of household below poverty line |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Eastern | 44.8 | 48.1 |
| Central | 29.8 | 35.8 |
| Western | 40.6 | 43.9 |
| Far-Western | 51.8 | 59.2 |
| Total (All Nepal) | 40.3 | 45.1 |

Source: Seddon, David, *Nepal a State of Poverty*, Vikas Publishing house, 1987, p. 137.

From this table it is clear that in the far western Nepal more than fifty percent of households and the population are below the poverty line. Position of Eastern development region is second at the poverty level. Central development region is comparatively in a

⁵⁸ Seddon, David, 1987, *Ibid.* p. 137.

better position. So, it could be safely argued that Nepali migration from hill area of western and eastern part of Nepal is very high because of poverty in the region. Thus poor agricultural condition basically in hills and mountains, trade deficit in the form of decline of exports and increase of foreign import, absence of manufacturing industries, ecological crises, rapid population growth, extensive cultivation, rapid deforestation, erosion of land all together have hampered the economy of the country and has created the circumstances for migration.

Political Upheaval in Nepal and Migration towards India:

Nepal and India have maintained close political relation from very past. Whenever the political condition of one country became unstable political exile has been seen in the other country. As at the time of Muslim invasion in India large number of Ranas migrated to Nepal, similarly at the time of worse political conditions people of Nepal always has preferred to migrate to India. At the time of Gorkha invasion into the Malla kingdom of Nepal, many people politically exiled to India. Even in Gorkha rule many communities who were not favoured by the ruler migrated to India and similar incident happened in the Rana regime. Though, data of very past such political migration are not available but present day political instability in Nepal and the migration from Nepal to India could strongly be proved. Agitation and armed struggle against the feudal monarchic system in Nepal was an age old event. Armed struggle after 1950 had overthrown the Rana autocracy from the country. Even, after the restoration of King's power over state several anti-feudal struggles was continued during 1952 to 1953, mainly in western Nepal. Disturbance in the country forced many people to move to India. In the struggle feudal landlords were removed from their position, foodgrains were looted and redistributed among the commoners. Property of elites was seized, government officials were removed from the post.⁵⁹ Atrocity in the country pushed various sections of Nepalis into Indian. Armed struggle of 1960, 1962, 1971 and the armed struggle in Jhapa of 1972-73 also disturbed the peaceful environment of the country.⁶⁰ Conditions of the state enforced Nepalis to migrate Nepal to Indian land. After 1970 migration of people picked up in

⁵⁹ Verma, A., S., and Gautam, Navlakha, 2007, People's War in Nepal: Genesis and Development, *EPW*, Vol. 42, No. 20, p.1839.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* p.1839.

search of livelihood, which surged at the end of the 1980s. After the restoration of multiparty democracy in Nepal parliament was formed in 1990 and following the election of 1994 a coalition Government was formed for the first time with the participation of the Communist Party. But since 1996 the Communist party split. 'Communist Party of Nepal-Maoists' was established. Communist Party of Nepal-Maoists launched "People's War" to overthrow the monarchy as well the government in order to establish Maoist people's democracy. Armed conflict between the government and the rebel CPN-Maoist started. The conflict lasted for years. Maoist insurgency crippled the economy of the state. It has caused a sharp decline of the economic growth of the country. GDP of Nepal, which was 6.44 percent in the year of 1990-91 shrank to 4.9 percent in 2000-01 and it further went down in 2001-02 by 0.6 percent. An estimate of The Nepal Rashtra Bank Economic Survey shows that the per capita income of the people of Nepal went down to US\$ 226 in 2001 in comparison to US\$ 240 in 2000.⁶¹ To protect Maoism, state defense budget was increased significantly. Business activities, foreign investment, development projects suffered in the period. Industrialists shutdown their business, export of country declined, tourism and hotel industries were badly affected. In this period of devastating armed conflict 8,000 people lost their life, many more were detained and many disappeared, a huge number of people moved from the Maoist affected areas. Maoist forcefully engaged children and women in guerrilla warfare. Forceful recruiting process was initiated by the Maoist.⁶² The armed conflicts had its adverse effect on the human rights situation. General people started to leave the country and many youths were forced to move from their native land and migration to India was a consequence. Naturally there was migration in a mass scale to the Eastern and Northeastern parts of India. The host place acted as a safety valve on the issue of security and economic survival for the Nepali migrants. Refugees International in their survey conducted on the group of workers in India who have migrated for the Maoist insurgency said, whereas previously a male member of a family used to come for work to India, now entire families are migrating⁶³. On 14th March 2005, United Commission on

⁶¹ Upreti, B.C., 2006, The Maoist Insurgency in Nepal: Nature, Growth and Impact, *South Asian Survey*, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 47.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Sukla, Kavita and Michelle, Brown., 2005, Nepali migration is need to protection, *RI Bulletin: A Powerful Voice For Lifesaving Action*, Refugees International .Org, Washington, DC. p. 2.

Human Rights in their 61st sessions reported that 200 Nepali nationals crossed the border to reach India every hour.⁶⁴

Migration of Nepalis from Bhutan to Eastern and Northeastern India:

After the Anglo-Bhutanese war of 1864 Sinchula Treaty was signed between the Bhutanese and British Indian power. By the conclusion of this treaty eastern, western and southern boundaries of Bhutan were demarked. Since then British colonial authority established their influence over Bhutan. Scope of Nepali migration towards Bhutan was opened up after signing this treaty. British Colonial authority to implement their ethnic strategy encouraged the Nepalis to migrate to Bhutan in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.⁶⁵ *Lhotshampas* are those Nepali people who migrated to the foothill of Southern Bhutan mostly in the nineteenth and the early twentieth century on the invitation of the Bhutan Raja and with encouragement of the British. Many Nepali herdsmen, casual labourers, lumbermen penetrated into southern Bhutan at that period. These Nepalis entered the state to clear the *Duars* or the foothills of Southern Bhutan and many others migrated to the land in search of cultivable land. Nepali immigrants for their activities in Bhutan used to pay taxes to the Bhutan Government in cash and kind. This migration was very much seasonal at the initial phase. Nepali migrants used to return home from Bhutan before the rainy season. But at a later stage permanent migration and settlement took place. After 1865, within two decades, rulers of Bhutan allowed 'Samchi Kazis', contractors and tax collectors from Sikkim to facilitated the settlement of the Nepalis in the southwestern portion of Bhutan. Within a short time Nepalis were well settled in the area and for Bhutanese authority this place became a good revenue paying district. Sufficient land resource, grazing areas, unregulated resourceful forest of southern Bhutan were the attractions of the Nepali migrant people. Within a short time demography of the state changed dramatically and Nepalis formed one-third majority of population in Bhutan within three decades. By the year 1932, the share of *Lhotshampas* in the state reached to twenty percent of the estimated Bhutanese population of 300,000. By 1880s Nepali

⁶⁴ Kar, D.P., 2009, *Gorkhaland Movement a Clandestine Invasion*, Janachetana, p. 42.

⁶⁵ Gurung, Tejimala, 2001, Human Movement and Colonial State: A Study of the Nepalis in North-East India under the British Empire, *NEIHA Proceedings*, 22nd Session, Shillong, p. 404.

migrants populated the districts like Chhukha, Samchi, Tsirang, parts of Sarpang, and also other isolated remote areas.⁶⁶ At the initial stage condition was favorable for the migrant Nepalis in Bhutan. But it changed drastically and forceful remigration of Nepalis towards India and Nepal took place. Other important cause of migration from Bhutan to India was Gorkha recruitment in British colonial combatant force from Bhutan.

In the colonial time British authority understood that Nepali fighting class people which they needed for their defense was not easily possible to recruit from Nepal every time because of the obligation of Nepal government. The British then started to seek an alternative measure. During the war period normal recruitment increased and traditional source of able Nepalis was not sufficient to meet the demand. In that case Nepalis living in Bhutan became a good source for British authority. First attempt at recruitment of Nepalis from Bhutan was initiated in 1917, which did not succeed. Later attempt also failed, because of the apathy of Bhutan Durbar. At last Bhutan Raja allowed a British officer to enter Bhutan for looking into the possibilities of recruitment of the Gorkhas in Assam Rifles. Bhutan Durbar expressed that enlistment of immigrant Nepalis of Bhutan could be done for a period of three years preferably in Gorkha Regiment stationed at Shillong on experimental basis. Morris, Assistant Indian Army Recruitment Officer of Gorkhas visited the southern district of Bhutan adjoining Indian border in the cold season of 1932. Morris visited Chirang of the Eastern and Samchi (Chamurchi) of the western district of Bhutan, especially in the *hats* or the weekly markets and to the settlement areas. It has been told that 'J.C. Morris', during his visit to southern district of Bhutan reported that Nepali communities thickly populated and settled in southern Duars. He visited the villages like Suntale Gauri, Lamidera and Dhaji and found respectively 400, 200 and 100 houses belonging to Nepali families. He recommended the establishment of a recruitment outpost in Jalpaiguri, present day West Bengal to recruit Bhutanese Nepalis from the whole of Bhutan.⁶⁷ He estimated approximately out of 60,000 Nepalis living in the area a sufficient number of recruitment could be possible from the ethnic groups like Limbu, Rai, Gurung,

⁶⁶ Sinha, A.C., 2008, Lhotshampa, Madhesi, Nepamul: The deprived of Bhutan, Nepal and India, *Himal Journal*, Vol. 21, No. 5, Nepal, pp. 53-54.

⁶⁷ Sinha, A.C., 1986, An Aspect of the Nepalese Recruitment from Bhutan to the Assam Rifles, *NEIHA Proceedings*, 17th Session, p. 217-219.

Magar, Tamang and Chhetri communities. He said this much of able population could be equivalent to two infantry battalions. He mentioned as the Assam Rifles was permitted to recruit soldiers from Nepal, they could focus their attention on Bhutan to recruit Nepalis for their force. He advocated that area should be opened up for recruitment of sufficient number of able healthy Nepalis which is available in Bhutan. He also remarked that enlistment of Nepalis from Bhutan for Assam Rifles would be the best means of getting a foothold in Bhutan. In the process of enquiry for future potential recruitment 14 Bhutanese Nepali able persons were enlisted for military training with the 2nd and 10th Gorkha Regiments stationed at Shillong. These people after completion of two years course returned to Bhutan in February 1935.⁶⁸ Bhutanese ruler also welcomed the British government to recruit able Gorkhas for British Army from their country. At that phase recruitment of Gorkhas took place and some of them were sent to Shillong for training.⁶⁹ In this process a good number of Gorkhas had migrated to Indian Territory and particularly to Eastern and Northeastern India.

As there was no immigration policy in Bhutan the status of Nepalis was undefined in the state. Initially condition of the *Lhotshampa* or the Bhutanese Nepali was conducive. Bhutan government granted citizenship to the *Lhotshampa* in the year of 1958 and favoured them with financial grants, inter-ethnic marriages and encouraged the promotion of Nepali language. Gradually situation changed. In 1950s the Bhutanese government drew up a number of policies to evict the *Lhotshampas* from Bhutan. King Jigme Singye Wangchuck in the year of 1975 strongly adhered to the use the term *Lhotshampa* (inhabitants of southern Bhutan) instead of Nepalis or *paharias*.⁷⁰ Further in December 1990, the Bhutan Government insisted on documentary evidence to prove Nepali citizenship in Bhutan and announced that *Lhotshampas* who could not prove their residentship in Bhutan in or before 1958 have to leave the country.⁷¹ In the phase constant threat of eviction, expulsion was witnessed. School, temples, houses and other properties were vandalized, teaching of Nepali language was banned, code of '*driqlam-nazha*' or the

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* p. 217-219.

⁶⁹ Sinha, A.C., 2008, *op. cit.* p. 53.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* p. 54.

⁷¹ Hutt, Michael., 2003, *Unbecoming Citizens: Culture, Nationhood, and the Flight of Refugees from Bhutan*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi. pp. 134-135.

policy of 'one king, one country, one dress code of public conduct has ordered to be maintained.'⁷² After facing the stringent citizenship law, harassment by the police and anticipating further misery in future, the *Lhotshampas* fled from Bhutan. It has been estimated more than 100,000 *Lhotshampa* people were bound to flee from Bhutan during the early 1990s.⁷³ Though as refugees they mainly settled in the relief camps at Jhapa in Nepal, many fled to India as well. 'Regional Centre of Strategic Studies', in their report said that about 20 to 30 thousand *Lhotshampas* fled to Northeast India and are currently living in the Jalpaiguri Duars and Darjeeling Hill Council area in West Bengal, as well as in Kokrajhar and Darrang districts of Assam⁷⁴. It is to be mentioned here that, Darjeeling Hill Council area comprises, three hill subdivisions of Darjeeling, Kurseong, and Kalimpong, a thin strip of land in the plain and a few Nepali-majority villages (mauzas) including Lohargarh, Barachenga, Rangmohan, Panighatta, Chota Adalpur, Paharu, Sukna, Pantapati, Mahanadi, Champasari and Salbari in the Siliguri Subdivision⁷⁵. So, it is only natural that because of the stringent citizenship laws of Bhutan, many Lhotsampas, who were unable to prove themselves as bonafide residents of Bhutan fled and took shelter in the parts of Darjeeling district of West Bengal and in Assam where they could get mixed up with the local Nepalis. Bhutanese Nepalis who fled to India managed to get voter Id and other residential proof with the help of some local dishonest authorities. Prof. A.C. Sinha confirmed of such migration. But it is very difficult to identify Bhutanese Nepali as they have mixed with the Indian Nepalis.

As mentioned earlier, a large number of Nepalis has been recruited by the British in the military force from Bhutan. The British was fond of Gorkhas and they even tried to search them in Bhutan and Sikkim among the settled Nepali population and recruited them at the time at their needs. Thus, British-Bhutan relationship and political conditions of the country pushed the Nepalis to eastern and northeastern India.

⁷² Sinha, A.C., 2008, *op. cit.* p. 55.

⁷³ *Ibid.* p. 54.

⁷⁴ Nath, Lopita., January 2005, Migrants In Flight: Conflict-Induced Internal Displacement of Nepalis in Northeast India, *Peace and Democracy in South Asia*, Vol- 1. No- 1, p. 67.

⁷⁵ Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad., 1934, *Migration between India and Nepal: A social-cultural study*, Firma KLM Publishers Private Limited, Calcutta, p. 95.

Political Conditions of Burma and Nepali Migration into Northeast India:

After the establishment of British control over Burma, the British colonial rulers played an effective role for the migration and settlement of Nepalis in that country. The British power in 1852-53 annexed Lower Burma. They understood the importance of the strategic location of Burma and also the economic potentiality of the place. Potentiality of the country as supplier of foodgrains, specially rice, resourceful forest produce, like timber, minerals and other things encouraged the British to pay their attention to the country. With the colonial intervention, economy of the place changed. The concept of private property was introduced at that time. Vast areas of fertile land in Lower Burma were opened up for profitable cultivation. Demand of rice in the export market increased. Gradually British and Indian firms as well as Indian merchants captured export and even large part of import trade in the country. Earlier majority of agriculture and overall economy was under Burmese hand, but, the hold of economy changed in the later period. Chinese and Indian captured the major holding of commerce, industry and transport economy of the country and a very little share of that were held by the Burmese. Even in the British Colonial period the country's natural resources were extracted for raw materials and little stress was given on developing manufacturing units. Burmah Oil Company, mining companies like Bawdwin Mines, Mawchi Mines were established and outsiders were encouraged to migrate as being labourers. British for their colonial interest encouraged large scale migration from outside to the place. In the period between 1883-84, the number of immigrants to Burma was 83,000. In the period 1901-1905 the number was 180,000 which rose to 336,000 from 1911 to 1915, and further increased to more than 400,000 during the twenties. It has been said that most of the immigrants were labourers and were recruited and controlled by Indian managers. Most of the labourers were temporary immigrants and usually arrived in the country in the end of the rainy season in October and November for seasonal rice harvesting and milling operations.⁷⁶ Influx of immigrants was from India, China, even from Nepal and these were mostly employed in those sectors, and no Burmese labourer was recruited.⁷⁷ Nepali migration to Burma was a part of the colonial policy. A good number of Gorkhas were recruited in the military police of Burma and also in other

⁷⁶ Cady, J. F., 1976, *The United States and Burma*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, p. 94.

⁷⁷ Ghosh, Anjali, 1989, *Burma: A Case of Aborted Development*, Centre for South and South-East Asian Studies, Calcutta, p.32.

forms of military establishment, and a huge number of Nepalis were sent to Burma for military purpose. Later on Gorkha people were encouraged to settle down with their families at Myitkyina and other headquarters of the Burma Military Police after their retirement and discharge.⁷⁸ Gradually Nepalis were also encouraged to engage in other civil sectors like mining, oil companies and as forest staff in Burma. In 1921 there were 13712 Nepali migrants in Burma and in 1931 the figure rose to 23889.⁷⁹ This migrant Nepali people effectively participated in the economic activities of the country. Nepalis who worked there for years and participated in the economic activities were forced to leave the country in the period of political consolidation. A large number of the migrants escaped to Northeastern states of India.

In the world war period Burma faced economic crises, economically and anti-foreigner sentiment was directed against the Indian labourers and Chinese shopkeepers residing in the place. Nationalist sentiment against foreign labourers, moneylenders, colonial administration, big merchants and businessmen were seen. With the passage of time, nationalist revolution got momentum. The Saya San revolution of 1930 was an early outburst of the peasants against foreign rule. Burmese nationalists sought the help of Japan against the British rule. At the time of tussle between the British and the Japanese powers the Burmes economy got crippled. But after political independence in 1948, attempt was made to revive the economy and politics condition of Burma. At the end of the British rule two-thirds of the rice land was under the non-resident landlords and the major portion of trade was under non-Burmese people. Even all the senior executive posts and decision making posts were under the English and non-Barmans. Since the struggle for independence Burma had gone through the political consolidation and after independence the process of consolidation was continued. '*The Burmese Way to Socialism*' was adopted as the policy of state. Independent Burmes constitution of 1948 focused on Nationalization, Burmanization and Industrialization. It emphasized the ultimate ownership of the State of all land, right to reserve it, possess and distribute it for collective or co-operative farming or to agricultural tenants and prohibit large scale holding. Plan was drawn up for the state

⁷⁸ State Archive of Assam, June 1920, Revenue Department, A-file, Nos. 30-38, p.4.

⁷⁹ Census of India, 1931, Vol. XI, Burma, Par-I.

ownership of basic industries and permitted private enterprise only in those areas where state ownership was practically impracticable.⁸⁰ Large area of land was nationalized in this process and redistributed to agriculturists, who were citizens of Burma. It has been reported that at the time of nationalization process of trade and commerce by the Revolutionary Government of Burma large scale influx was witnessed from Burma to India. Because of the political change in Burma in 1951 a large number of Nepalis migrated to India and settled there. A policy was also drawn up to nationalize the cattle and agricultural produce of the farmers beyond certain limit in accordance with the nationalization scheme of Burmese Government. Freedom of the people was curtailed and many politicians were taken under house arrest. An atmosphere of suspense and fear prevailed in the life of common people. At that time many people of Indian origin and also Nepalis migrated to India. In the year 1964 when new citizenship Act was enacted in Burma another fresh migration also took place in India. It has been said that few Nepali and Mizo settlers of Chin Hills, mainly small shopkeepers, whose shops were taken over by the Government of Burma allegedly without any compensation had left for Mizoram and other Northeastern states with their families.⁸¹ The present Mizoram, has boundary with Burma with numerous surface routes. It has been maintained that from Falam and Tiddin in Chin Hills, people could easily move to Champhai, Vaphai and other places of Mizoram. An entry could also be possible through Haka side via Thingsai or at any other place in Lungles subdivision crossing the Tiao River. Many people during that period migrated to Mizoram through those routes.⁸² Thus, a good number of Nepalis who had migrated once to Burma under British policy left the place and came to Mizoram and other places of Northeast. The number of this people is not possible to be estimated because of the unavailability of proper records. But, evidence shows that six Nepali families comprising 40 member reached Aijal around 1964.⁸³ Other Nepali families might have left Burma for Mizoram and other Northeastern state.

⁸⁰ Ghosh, Anjali, 1989, *op. cit.* pp.11-23.

⁸¹ State Archive of Mizoram, SI No. 1452, DOC/No. 2, File/Letter No.: Carton Box: 120.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*

As several factors in India acted to pull Nepalis into Indian land there were also various push factors of Nepali migration to eastern and northeastern India. Landlessness of the majority of common people, heavy taxation, oppression of moneylenders and local officials, slavery, social exclusion of the non-favourable castes and other factors ruined the common people of Nepal. Growth of population from the middle of eighteenth century created pressure on the limited resource of the country. Operations of aristocracy, rulers, even the Rana families made the situation more difficult for the common people in Nepal. It is true that people of the hilly region of Nepal largely migrated into India because of lack of the facility in the area. After the political unification of Nepal a trend of huge Nepali migration to India was witnessed. Nepal government before the Rana rule tried to check the Nepali emigration to India but failed. Unavailability of monitorial economy to a large extent forced the commoners to work as free labour for the elites. Shortage of land and unavailability of landed property made the condition of general people more pathetic. Overall poor economic condition, slow industrial growth, trade deficit in the country created unemployment for the growing population. In this circumstances, political instability in the country and Maoist movement pushed the common Nepalis from the country. Even socio-political condition of Bhutan and Burma also pushed the residing Nepalis from there to eastern and northeastern India.