

## Chapter Four

### Pull Factor-Condition of Host Country and the Sector of Nepali Employment

Nepalis have been migrating to India in different sectors. Earlier it was mainly in the military job and other civil employment. In recent time they are coming for various civil employments and even for better education, treatment and for other reason. 'Central Burrow of Statistics', in a study states that in the year of 1991 large number of people migrated from Nepal for various employments available in India and very low percentage migrated for trading purpose. Nearly four percent people migrated from Nepal for agricultural activities and only two percent for education and training purpose. Bellow table-9 shows the reason of migration of Nepalis to India.

**Table-9**  
**Reason of Migration of Nepalis to India in the Year of 1991**

<b>Migrants in the Sector</b>	<b>Total Migrant in India</b>	<b>Percentage Distribution of Nepali Migrant in India</b>
Agriculture	27781	4.7
Trade	9719	1.7
Employment	388169	66.1
Education/Training	11386	1.9
Dependency	99980	17.0
Other	32210	5.5
Not Stated	16998	2.9

Source: KC. Bal Kumar, (1998) *Trends, Patterns and Implications of Rural-to-Urban Migration in Nepal*, Central Department of Population Studies, Tribhuvan University,. P. 54.

From the table it is clear that large number of Nepali migrants are coming to India for various employments. From the beginning of nineteenth century Nepalis migrated to Eastern and Northeastern India for different employment activities. So there will be an

attempt to understand the major sectors where Nepali migrant engaged themselves in India and the conditions which pulled them.

### **Grater Nepal Concept and Nepalis into Indian Territory:**

There are scholars who have argued that a section of Nepali communities are not migrants. The concept of greater Nepal is there behind this argument. Till the middle of the eighteenth century, before the establishment of Gorkha as a supreme power in Nepal there were number of principalities in Central Himalayan region. The small principalities were fighting with each other for strategic advantage and supremacy. Gorkha principality in the middle of eighteenth century became a powerful state and subjugated other principalities. Prithvi Narayan shah and his successor played a great role and finally unified Gorkha Empire. Nepal emerged as Nation State and its geographical boundary extended from the Kirat regions eastwards to beyond the karnali principalities of the west. Gorkhali empire lunged westwards across Mahakali river in Kumaon and conquest Kumaon in 1790. Garhwal was also conquered by Gorkhas in the year 1804 and Sulej principality was also captured. Around 1813, historical grater Nepal extended extreme extent from Sulej River to Teesta River measuring 1500 kilometers.<sup>1</sup> Gorkhali rule over the region was for a very short term because of British intervention. After the war of 1814-15 between British and Gorkha power and consequently after the Treaty of Sugauli the vast area estimated 105,000 square mile under Nepal were seized by British. Thus, Gorkhali power possessed a large area of Garhwal over one decade, Kumaon for 25 years and Sikkim for 33 years were transferred to British India.<sup>2</sup>

Many scholars argue that conqueror come with their people into the new conquering territories, which is also true in the case of Gorkhali conquest. After the occupation of the place many people of Gorkha kingdom settled in the area like Garhwal, Kumaon, Sikkim and other present area of Indian Territory. Pressure of state on the various ethnic hill communities, economic exploitation, political upheaval, even probably population pressure, search for new arable land encourage the hill Nepalis to migrate into the new conquest place. After the seized of the territory by the British the people who once settled to the place

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<sup>1</sup> Dixit, Kanak Mani, Himal, Vol. 6, No. 2, March-April 1993, pp. 15-16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 16.

came under the British protectorate. It is impossible to estimate the real number of such inflow of people to this part but those people made a network with Nepal and India and influenced the later date migration. It is also true that before the British interference present day Darjeeling and Sikkim was a single political territory and the scholars argue that tribes like Bhutias, Lepchas, Mangars and Limbus were the original inhabitant of the place. Most of the tribal groups are being identified today as Nepalis for the common people as generic term. Even present day Kalimpong sub-division of Darjeeling district was under the Bhutanese since 1706 when the territory was captured by Bhutan from Sikkim. It was also possible that Bhutanese were settled in the place even before the annexation of the territory. Arable land and healthy climate might have attracted them in the place. So it can be argued that Nepalis, if it is used as generic term, were present there in Sikkim and Darjeeling before the Colonial state formation. In the colonial period major migration took place in Sikkim and Darjeeling with the British sponsorship and mainly Nepalis were encouraged largely to migrate to the place and Nepalis become the largest community in the region. Greater Nepal concept and the event of migration from Nepal to India is an important issue in this present study. Sikkim is in our study area and the impact of population movement even prior to 1816 is very much significant. In the present date Sikkim is dominated by Nepalis. Nepali settlement in the earlier days is the legacy of the later date migration.

### **Historical Treaties and stimulus for Nepali Migration:**

Expansionist policy of both the power, Gorkhali of Nepal and British East India Company led to wars several times and peace was restored with the signing of the Treaty of Sugauli in 1816. The Treaty opened the opportunities for the Nepalis to be engaged in the jobs available in India, especially the military job. The Treaty thus facilitated the migration from Nepal to India. Even before the treaty border between the countries was not demarcated and unrestricted migration of people was easily possible across more than 1400 kilometers open border. Migration of such type was facilitated by the social, religion, cultural and trade exchanges, the volume of which is not possible to quantify. After the war between British power and Gorkha and signing of the treaty of Sugauli a large area of land of Nepal was taken over by British in Indian Territory. Hatred was generated among the Nepalis against the British. After the Sepoy Mutiny, the British realized the importance of

Nepalis in British force for the protection of British interest in India. Even they understood, Nepal and Nepalis could be used for security and trade purpose. So, they took a measure to gratify the Nepal authority. The British went for a fresh treaty with Nepal on first November 1860. With the signing of the treaty the British authority restored the land to Nepal, which was ceded earlier from them into British Indian territory. Treaty of 1860 had created much cordial relation between Nepal and India and led to unrestricted movement of people from both the countries across the border. British colonial power in India lost their trust on Indians for colonial military needs after Sepoy Mutiny and started to depend on the people of Nepal. A good flow of Nepalis to India for recruitment in British Indian Army took place at that phase. Before this treaty it was very difficult for British to recruit the man from Nepal, as Nepal government was not supportive. Evidence shows that the ruler of Nepal prevented the recruiting officer from India to enter into Nepal Territory for Gorkha recruitment and started to harass Nepalis who sought their job in British military. Even returned British Gorkha soldiers were penalized by Nepal authority and confiscation of property; award of severe punishment like death were common. With the treaty a cordial relation developed between the two countries and in the new era huge migration from Nepal to India started. Thus the treaty of 1860 facilitated a huge Nepali migration to India. It was continued with the support of Nepal Government. At the time of World War I, British colonial authority started to recruit Gorkhas for the European battle field as well. Huge number of people from Nepal started to migrate to India especially to the recruiting depots in Darjeeling, Deradun, even to Shilong and other places of India. From those places they were sent to *panipatia* or to overseas to fight the colonial battle. A large number of reservists kept in the Indian Territory for future recruitment for the War field. Nepali soldiers or would be soldiers started to come with their family members to India. Thus a good chunk of migration took place in Eastern and Northeastern India. Gradually more friendly relation was established between the British authority and Nepal Government. Treaty of Friendship was signed between the British and Nepal in the year of 1923 for supporting gesture to Britain by Nepal with human and capital resource in the World War I. The treaty recognized Nepal as an Independent sovereign country and thus Nepal Government received assurance from British power not to be colonized by them. British also assured help in development of the country. In this cordial environment Nepal

government extended their helping hand to facilitate huge Gorkha recruitment in British Army and thus migration took place. Indian migration had also been witnessed in Nepal Tarai for agricultural land and to promote agricultural production. The Rana government encouraged such migration because of enrichment of food production and revenue generation in the country. By the treaty all the restrictions on trade between Nepal and India were withdrawn and flow of commodities into Nepal was sanctioned with the free movement of labour between the countries. Benefits of labour mobility had come in the favour of British power with the migration of able labour force from Nepal to British Indian enterprise.

***Treaty of Peace and Friendship:***

Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Nepal and India was one of the major factors of Nepali migration into Eastern and Northeastern parts of India. Security needs of India and the needs of socio-economic development of Nepal acted for this treaty. To protect Nepal from the influence of China, treaty of this kind was important for India. India wanted to defend aggression of China and made the Himalayas as the safest belt maintaining a good relation with Nepal. India by this treaty isolated China from Nepal and extended her helping hand towards Nepal maintaining a good economic, political and social relation. Thus compulsion of both the countries led to the Treaty of Peace and Friendship. Open border between Nepal and India and easy flow of people between the countries was sanctioned by the treaty. Scholars argue that treaty of friendship between the countries is a major cause of migration of people from Nepal to India. Even, trafficking, smuggling between the countries became very common because of open border agreement. Migration from Nepal to Eastern and Northeastern India has become a regular issue in the twenty first century because of this treaty. Rajbahak has clarified that security needs and political and historical necessities are not only the reason for open border between the countries of Nepal and India. There is physical necessity for the countries to open the borders between the two.<sup>3</sup> Both the states consider open border is beneficial for them. Economic, political and cultural interests of people beyond the boundary have facilitated an open border and to maintain treaty of peace and friendship. Topography of Nepal has made obstruction for the

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<sup>3</sup> Adhikari, Jagannath & Gurung Ganesh, Migration, Security and Livelihoods: A case of Migration between Nepal & India, Nepal Institute of Development Studies, Nepal, 2009, p. 30.

easy internal south-north movement of people and to interact with Tibet. Even watercourse prevents east-west contact in Nepal. This creates the conditions for the open border and Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Nepal and India and allows the people of Nepal easily to cross border to India and vice versa. After India's Independence in 1947 one of the main factors of Nepali migration to eastern and northeastern India has been this Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 31st July 1950. The impact of this Treaty is felt not only in eastern and northeastern parts of the country but also in whole India. While in 1951 there were 27,8,972 Nepal born population in India as a whole, it increased by about 79 percent within the next ten years. Actually the Treaty, in recognition of the ancient friendship between the two countries, provides reciprocal rights to the citizens of each other in respect to land, residence, occupation and in all matters except the right to vote. Article 7 of the Treaty states: "*The Governments of India and Nepal agree to grant, on a reciprocal basis, to the nationals of one country in the territories of the other the same privileges in the matter of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce, movement that privileges of a similar nature*"<sup>4</sup>

The treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950 followed by the Tri-partite Delhi Agreement of 1951 and the 1956 revised Indo-Nepal agreement has motivated Nepali migration. The relevant clauses of those agreements ensured equal rights in term of employment, occupation, movement, settlement, acquisition of property for the nationals of both India and Nepal. The reciprocity which the agreements formulated continues today and the constant migration exists. There are 22 bilateral check points along the Nepal-India border, among them only six check points monitor the movement of the Nationals of third countries across the border.<sup>5</sup> The whole length of the border is not patrolled by security personnel except the check points, so migration between the two countries is very common.

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<sup>4</sup> Bhattari, Raju., 2007, "Open borders, closed citizenships: Nepali labour migrants in Delhi", *International migration, multi-local livelihoods and human security: Perspectives from Europe, Asia and Africa*, Institute of Social Studies, Netherlands. ([www.iss.nl/content/download/8271/80771/file/ponel5Bhattraai.pdf](http://www.iss.nl/content/download/8271/80771/file/ponel5Bhattraai.pdf))

\*\*\* The whole of the treaty has been given in the Appendices III

<sup>5</sup> Adhikari, Jagannath & Gurung Ganesh, 2009, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

### **Tea Plantation and Migration from Nepal:**

Tea is labour intensive industry which attracted huge number of migrant people. Nepali migration in this sector was significantly witnessed in certain parts of India. Tea industry largely flourished with British colonial initiative in Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri district or Dooars area of West Bengal and in Assam in our study area. Migration of people from Nepal to those tea belts of Indian was an important issue. Production of tea started in the places under the encouragement of the British in the nineteenth century. It is believed that, tea was first discovered in China about 2700 B.C. Later on in 805 A.D. it was brought to Japan from China by a Buddhist monk. The Dutch and Portuguese brought tea to Europe around 1600 A.D. gradually tea became popular in England and demand of tea became very high. The demand of tea in England led to the process of commercialization of product through British initiative.

To give an account of how the industry started, we can begin with Assam where experiment with tea was undertaken earlier. Lord William Bentinck the Governor-General of India in 1834 appointed a committee to suggest a plan for introducing tea culture into India<sup>6</sup>. The committee discovered that tea plants grew well in Assam. The committee then gave a complimentary report in favour for plantation. By calculating the future prospect of tea industry British Government itself undertook the initiative in this regard and plantation started on experimental basis in Upper Assam and the district of Kumaon and Garhwal<sup>7</sup>. The Government felt that tea plantation could not develop significantly without private enterprise and with the private initiative Assam Tea Company was founded. As in tea industry demand of labour was very high and labour was not available in tea plantation belt, so, migration was very common. Demand of huge labour force in this sector attracted the people of Nepal in this sector. British Government opened the way for immigration to the place for labour supply. In 1901, there were 5018 persons censused in tea gardens of Assam who were born in Nepal. But in 1931, there were 1597 tea garden Nepali migrant workers in Assam. Out of which there was 106 migrants from Nepal into Cachar, 56 people was migrated to Sylhet district, 147 in Goalpara, 183 in Kamrup, 648 in Darrang, 53 in

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<sup>6</sup> Hunter, William, Wilson, 1877, *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol-X, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, India, p. 164.

<sup>7</sup> O' Mally, L.S.S., 1907, *Bengal District Gazetteers – Darjeeling*; Logos Press, New Delhi, p. 72.

Nowgong, 146 in Sibsagar, 261 in Lakhimpur, 2 in Sadiya and there was no tea plantation labour in Balipara. Migration from Nepal to various tea estates of India was not uniform in nature. Where tea industry of West Bengal i.e. Darjeeling district and Dooars largely was dependent on labour from Nepal but in Assam labour was brought from Chotonagpur area. Very small groups of people from Nepal were involved in the tea estate of Assam and even in Tripura.

Gradually Darjeeling had become prominent place for tea plantation. Establishment of tea industry in Darjeeling district began with the effort of civil surgeon Dr. Campbell. As Darjeeling was sparsely populated and tea, being a labour intensive enterprise required large number of labour force from outside. Nepali hard working hill people were encouraged by the British to join the tea gardens as worker. This was another pull factor of migration. Dr. Campbell, the civil sergeant of the Company after appointment in Darjeeling took initiative for tea plantation in the district. Plantation started in various areas on a trial basis and then large scale production started under private initiative. Government encouraged the plantation and distributed seed to those people who desired to cultivate tea. The more extensive plantation under Dr. Withecombe, the Civil Surgeon, and the Major Crommelin in the lower valley of Lebong was started<sup>8</sup>. In course of time both tea and coffee plantations were started in the lower sites of Pankhabari and Kurseong by Mr. Martin<sup>9</sup>. Success of tea production in those experimental plots made the ground for large production. Tea industry was established to produce tea commercially by the year of 1856 in Takvar, Kurseong, Pankhabari, Alubari, Ging, Ambutia, Takdah, Phubsering and other areas. In course of time planters turned their attention to Tarai areas of West Bengal and by the end of 1866 a number of gardens opened in the Tarai.<sup>10</sup>

The growth of the plantation in the Darjeeling district rose due to the following factor: (a) cheap Labour, (b) available land, (c) revenue free policies in the pre-independence era, (d) special status of the Darjeeling district. With the aim to develop tea industry British administrator made arrangement for selling the land at low price.

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* p. 72.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* p. 74.



Sometimes waste land was sold through open tender, and land was leased out for certain years. British authority even exempted the planters and producers from paying of taxes. In 1951 there were 146 revenue free tea estates in Darjeeling district.<sup>11</sup> Special status of the Darjeeling district was also encouraged tea plantation in the district.

By the British encouragement influx of Nepalis as tea plantation labourers were huge in number. The development of tea plantation in Darjeeling without the migration from Nepal was impossible. There was continued supply of Nepali labourers in Darjeeling hill, which climbed from about 30,000 in 1871-72 to 75,000 in 1951 in 78 settlements<sup>12</sup>.

In the year of 1870 there were no less than 56 gardens with 11,000 acres under cultivation, employing 8,000 labourers<sup>13</sup>. In 1874 the number of gardens had increased to 113, the area that had come under cultivation was 18,888 acres, and the labour force had increased to 19,000. The number further rose to 44,279 in the year 1921; and to 61,540 in 1940. In the year 1941 actual population on tea gardens was 1,46,508<sup>14</sup>. Below table-10 shows the distribution of population in the tea gardens of the Darjeeling district, in accordance with the 1941 census.

**Table-10**

**Distribution of Population in the Tea Gardens of Darjeeling District in 1941**

<b>Subdivision</b>	<b>Thanas</b>	<b>Population</b>
Sadar Subdivision	Darjeeling thana	24,048
	Jorebungalow thana	21,594
	Sukhiapokri thana	14,358
	Pulbazar thana	3,321
	Rangli Rangliot thana	13,202
	Kurseong thana	20,596

<sup>11</sup> Tirkey, Lalit, Premal., 2005, *Tea Plantations in the Darjeeling District, India: Geo-ecological and Socio-economic impacts in Post-Independence Period*, Canada, p. 45. (Retrieved from: <http://www.umanitoba.ca>)

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* p. 43.

<sup>13</sup> O' Mally, L.S.S., 1907, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>14</sup> Dash, Arther, Jules., 1947, *Bengal District Gazetteers: Darjeeling*; Government Printing, Bengal Government Press, Alipore, Bengal, p. 118.

Kurseong Subdivision	Mirik Thana	14,710
Kalimpong Subdivision	Kalimpong thana	0
	Gorubathan thana	6,094
Siliguri Subdivision	Siliguri thana	13,867
	Kharibari thana	5,999
	Phansidewa thana	8,719

Source: Dash Arther Jules, Bengal District Gazetteers: Darjeeling; Government Printing, Bengal Government Press, Alipore, Bengal. 1947, p. 115.

The coolies employed on the estates in the hills are almost entirely Nepalis. Dash, stated in the Gazetteer in 1947 that almost the entire labour force (96 percent) employed in the tea estates in the hills were Nepalis and Nepali was the language used by them. In the Tarai, the population was mixed, with only 7 percent Nepalis and a high proportion of Scheduled Caste immigrants from Chota Nagpur<sup>15</sup>. They were, in general cheerful and hard working and so long as they were treated with justice and consideration they were devoted to their work. So planters in Darjeeling always preferred Nepali workers.

Wages was very much satisfactory in plantation areas of Darjeeling, Dooars and Assam. Common Nepalis, who were suffering from shortage of basic needs in their country, were naturally allured to cross the border and migrate to the tea plantation area. Per head monthly income of plantation workers ranged between Rs. 4 to 8 in the area on the basis of their capacity to work. On other hand in Nepal, there were no such sectors where people could accommodate themselves and could earn their livelihood and even dependency on poor agricultural sectors in Nepal was not satisfactory for them. After working a month in plantation they could easily save Rs. 2 to 4 and could send it as remittance to Nepal to feed their family members.<sup>16</sup> Facilities like land grants, ration in subsidized rates, free medical attendance and medicine, quarter was arranged for them. After the flourish of plantation economy in the area education and other facilities were given to employees of plantation sectors. In Nepal this type of facilities were only the privilege for the upper class people. To avail these facilities in plantation area Nepalis who migrated single at once started to bring

<sup>15</sup> Dash, Arther, Jules., 1947, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

<sup>16</sup> Adhikari, Jagannath & Gurung Ganesh, 2009, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

their family and other relatives with them. Plantation which was largely a labour oriented industry and booming sectors at that time and where work was available for all attracted the people of Nepal to the area with their families. There was a popular saying among Nepalis that ‘*money is produced in tea plants*’.<sup>17</sup> British planters thus encouraged such huge Nepali migration to the area because of labour shortage in the place. Migration which was earlier single and temporary became family issue and took permanent nature. Rais and Limbus migrated in large number to Darjeeling.<sup>18</sup> Not only it was an escape from rural poverty and oppression that prevailed in Nepal for them, plantation life in the area introduced them with a new life altogether.

### **Military Recruitment and Migration from Nepal:**

British first came into contact with Gorkha Army during the Anglo-Nepal war. At that time of war British General David Ochterlony was attracted by the Gorkha soldiers of Nepal. General David Ochterlony asked for permission from his superiors to recruit them in the British Army. After the defeat of Amar Singh Thapa, Gorkha commander in Malaum fort, General David Ochterlony compelled him to sign the “*Capitulation Act*” of 1815. By this Act it was declared that, all the troops in the service of Nepal will be allowed to enter into the services of the British Company Government. In early 1815 the first three ‘Gurkha’<sup>19</sup> regiments were constituted from among the defeated and disbanded Gorkhali Army of Amar Singh Thapa, namely, 1<sup>st</sup> King George V own Gurkha Rifles, 2<sup>nd</sup> King Edward VII own Gurkha Rifles and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Queen Alexandra’s own Gurkha Rifles<sup>20</sup>. By the time about 4,650 soldiers of the Gorkhali Army (Nepali) were recruited in the services of the Company<sup>21</sup>.

After the crush of Gorkha power against of East India Company in the Anglo-Nepal war, the treaty of ‘Sugauli’ was signed in 1816. Ever since Gorkha vision for territorial

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* p. 56.

<sup>18</sup> Besky, Sarah., 2007, *Rural Vulnerability and Tea Plantation Migration in Eastern Nepal and Darjeeling*, P. 1.

<sup>19</sup> The term Gorkha is used for the people of Gorkha subject of the Hindu Shah king of central Nepal. And the term Gurkha is used for the Nepali soldiers who have been recruited in the British Colonial Army.

<sup>20</sup> Pahari, Anup., July/August 1991, “Ties That Bind: Gurkhas In History”; in *Nepalis in Foreign Uniform, Himal Journal*, Himal Association, Nepal, p. 9.

<sup>21</sup> Kansakar, Vidya, Bir, Singh., April 1984, Indo-Nepal Migration: Problems and Prospects, *CNAS Journal*, Vol-11, No-2, p. 50.

extension almost stopped and the prospect of earning through feudal arrangement by means of occupation of new territories dried up. As a result, Nepal was no more able to increase the strength of their Army or even to maintain the existing one. The Nepal Government took the policy of Army service on a rotation basis. The majority of people of the middle hill fell into difficulties to survive only with farming and pasturing. At this juncture Brian Hodgson strongly appealed to the British Government to recruit the Nepali peasant-soldier in the Indian Army. Company Government agreed to this proposal for the following reasons: (i) Nepali military manpower was cheaper and effective and also capable with fighting ability and physical patience. (ii) Friendly relation between British and Nepal was established and there were very less probability of future war with Nepal. (iii) Large recruitment of soldiers from Indian regional state to rule over India had a risk for treachery. As a result Nepali peasant-soldiers began to migrate to Indian lands and be appointed as British soldiers. Thousand of Nepali hillmen were recruited through recruiting centres of the East India Company in the northern India, primarily at Gorakhpur and Ghum near Darjeeling. Thus huge number of Nepalis started to migrate from Nepal to India.

Initially the Nepal government did not support the recruitment of the Nepalis in the Indian Army. Even, right from Bhimsem Thapa to Ranudip Singh, for the period of almost 70 years all the prime ministers in Nepal Durbar did not support the Nepalis' recruitment in India and strong restriction and legal punishment was awarded to Nepalis who tried to migrate into India.<sup>22</sup> Despite various pressures from Nepal Darbar people of Nepal continuously fled from the country. In that period recruitment was carried out in secret by sending recruitment agents into Nepal. It has also been witnessed that recruiting parties were sent to border areas of Nepal and also in the fair at Gorruckpoor, especially in winter to recruit Nepalis for British combat force. From the writing of Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong Hill Tracts it has been seen that in an instance two recruiting parties were sent during the year 1873, one under the command of Havildar Surrubjeet and another under Jemadar Lall Bahadoor in the month of October to the fair of Gorruckpoor. These two men who were also from the same race took an attempt to recruit Goorkha able men who attended the fair. It has mentioned Havildar Surrubjeet had returned with 19 Goorkha

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<sup>22</sup> Devi, Monimala, July 2007, Economic History of Nepali Migration and Settlement in Assam, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XLII, No. 29, , p. 3006.

recruits on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1872 and Jemadar Lall Bahadoor returned with 6 able sepoys.<sup>23</sup> Nepal government took strong measures against the Gurkha soldiers and their families who returned after serving the British force. To give them relief from the harassment and also to facilitate the process of recruitment the Company Government persuaded emigration of the Gurkhas from Nepal with their families to such places as Dharmashala (Bhagsu), Bakloh, Darjeeling, Dehrudun, and Shillong<sup>24</sup> From the year 1815 to 1856, the British did not make any further recruitment. At that time Viceroy Dalhousie's recommended for expansion of Gurkha Brigades, which was rejected. On the eve of the Mutiny of 1857 two new regiments were installed, namely the 4<sup>th</sup> Gurkha rifles and 5<sup>th</sup> Gurkha rifles<sup>25</sup>. After the rise of Janga Bahadur Rana in 1846 in Nepal, the era of active hostility ended. Rise of Jang Bahadur was the important turning point in the history of recruitment of Nepalis in British India force. Initially he continued the previous policy of discouragement of Nepali recruitment in British India force. But soon he realized the needs of the time and understood that to sustain his power in Nepal and to improve economic condition of the country he should maintain a healthy relation with the British and should take assistance from British Indian government. After realizing the fact he extended his helping hands towards British Indian power and sent Nepal Army at the time of Sepoy mutiny in request of British and in return got some part of western Tarai which was confiscated by British earlier. At that time Jang Bahadur himself led 12,000 Nepali troops to help the British to suppress the Mutiny<sup>26</sup>. In his foreign policy he wanted to make British realize that he was a well wisher of the British and agreed to help British power with Nepal troop in their needs. But, Jang Bahadur unofficially informed the people of Nepal not to enter into British force. Thus he followed double standard in regard to the issue of recruitment of Nepalis into British Army. He passed a decree on 1<sup>st</sup> August of 1858 and declared that without seeking permission from Nepal Durbar anybody would not be allowed to get recruited in the British force. He also said that if any one disobeys the order, his property and land would be confiscated and customary support which people usually got from the state would not be provided.<sup>27</sup> To restrict the recruitment of Nepalis

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<sup>23</sup> Tribal Research Institute, 1980, *Foreign and Political Dept. Report 1874 on Eastern Boundary of Hill Tippera*, Govt. of Mizoram, Aizawl, p. 32.

<sup>24</sup> Kansakar, Vidya, Bir, Singh., April 1984, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

<sup>25</sup> Pahari, Anup., July/August 1991, *op. cit.* p. 8.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* p. 8.

<sup>27</sup> Adhikari, Jagannath & Gurung Ganesh, 2009, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

into British Army Nepal government implemented many other strict and stringent rules. Order was given to the village headman to prevent migration of Nepalis from their village without permission of royalty. Even family members of the British employees who were residing in Nepal were tortured and Nepali British soldiers after their return home of Nepal were punished severely. It was difficult to return back for the Nepalis to their home in Nepal even after their retirement from British Army and to withdraw their pension regularly. Evidence shows that in Ghachok, Kaski district of Nepal land and property of the recruited Nepali personnel were confiscated and death penalty was awarded to the returned Nepalis who came to their home on leave or after their retirement.<sup>28</sup> In this regard British authority was worried. At that time, Mr. Berkeley argued that the Gorkhas serving in British Army should be allowed to settle with their families in India permanently. With this process in the long run in future their children could be recruited for Colonial Army and by this course British government could be less dependent on the Nepalis from Nepal. The strategy of British Colonial authority was executed efficiently, which could be understood by the Military Department letter No. 698 of 18<sup>th</sup> March, 1864 written by Lt. Colonel H.W. Norman to the Secretary to the Government of India. He said about the establishment of regimental homes for the families of Gorkha soldiers.<sup>29</sup> Gradually with the increase of Gorkha population in the settlement area other facilities like arrangement of schools, clubs, hospitals etc. were set up. Lands were also provided to the Gorkha people around the Regimental Centers. Ignoring the restriction imposed to recruit of Gorkhas by Nepal Darbar, the British authority continued to recruit them. At that time recruitment of Nepalis in British force was usually conducted by agents, who usually used to enter to Nepal from Indo-Nepal border to convince the Nepalis for British Army. After realizing this thing Nepal government took the measure to execute of those recruiting agents who were engaged in recruiting process. But the British Government was very much agger to recruit Gorkhas from Nepal for their force and started to provide various facilities to them. Besides providing regular pension, and other facilities the British allowed recruited soldiers to come to India with their families. Encouraged retired Gorkha personnel to be settled in India and avail their pension from India. The British Government provided money to Darbar for each

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* p. 62.

<sup>29</sup> Shangpliang, A.M., 1997, Recruitment Policy of the British and its Impact in the North East: A Case Study of the Gorkhas, *NEIHA Proceedings*, 18<sup>th</sup> Session, Shillong, p. 182.

Nepali recruited from Nepal. With the increasing demand of Gorkhas the British authority started to compromise with the recruitment. Earlier they were only dependent on Nepali martial class but later on less martial tribes from Nepal, and native of Kumaoun, Garwal and Punjab hill also recruited in British force. Yet government of Nepal continued to discourage the recruitment of Nepalis by the British. But the harsh conditions in Nepal, like poor economic conditions, high taxation, exploitation of landlords and government officials, problem of livelihood pushed the common people of Nepal for the Army job of British power. After realizing the problem in Nepal common people fled from the country and crossed the border to India to enlist them in British force. British East India Company after understanding the ground reality opened several camps along the border areas of Nepal and India and made the process easier to travel to the camp for would be Nepali soldiers. The British authority also gave assurance that the Nepalis who would migrate to India for military recruitment would be allowed to settle there in India. Many migrant communities took the facilities and after retirement settled themselves in various places of Eastern and Northeastern India and were engaged in other civil jobs. Nepal government was always in fear of British power and prime ministers did not want to go in direct conflict with British power. Political support from British power was more important for the Prime ministers of Nepal. After the death of Janga Bahadur Rana dispute among his sons and his brother's sons arose and the dependency on British power for political sustainability became more important. The prime minister became progressively more moderate and friendly towards British government of India. After the death of Dhir Shamsher in 1884 scenario changed dramatically. New Prime Minister Ranodeep Singh after coming into power declared that recruitment of Nepalis from Nepal would be open for the British power and no obligations would be imposed on recruiting authorities. Agreement between Ranudip Singh and British viceroy Dufferin legalized the recruitment of Nepalis for British India even in exchange of arms from British power.<sup>30</sup> Rulers after him like Bir shamsher and Chandra Shamsher not only permitted the British authority to continue their recruits of Nepalis for British Army from Nepal but also extended their helping hand to get more aspirant Nepalis for British India. Rulers gave fixed target to local administrator to supply able Nepali men in every region of Nepal. Rulers also arranged to provide incentives to the

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<sup>30</sup> Devi, Monimala, July 2007, *op. cit.*, p. 3006.

local authorities who could fulfill the recruiters' demand and awarded punishment who could not fulfill the targets or who showed their negligence or unwillingness in recruitment. The British authority in India asked for the able Nepalis from Nepal Darbar according to their demand. Recruiting authorities specified that recruitment should be done mainly from Gurung, Magar community of Nepali people. On unavailability of those groups recruiting could be done from Rai, Lambu, Thakuri, Chettri Khas, Sunuar, Rana, Dura, Ghale, Kiranti, and Bhat communities of Nepal.<sup>31</sup> In an estimate between the years 1894 to 1913, in the Gorkha force the majority were from the Magar community. In an estimate Magar, Gurung, Limbu, Rai were respectively 36.1, 23.8, 13.4, and 14.1 percent. Others like Khas, Chetri, Sunwar etc. were 12.6 percent in the British Army.<sup>32</sup> British recruiters also specified some physical parameters for the aspirant Gorkha British soldiers. Roughly, men from 18 to 25 years of age having 5'2" height and 32" minimum chest with eyes having normal visibilities with good hearing conditions were chosen.<sup>33</sup> British recruiters with the help of Nepal authorities took certain measures to encourage recruitment. Decision was taken to convince the family members of the aspirant soldiers and in addition Rs 5 was given for food at the time of travel to recruiting centers, and Rs 24 was given as family allowance to the family of recruited personnel.<sup>34</sup> Assurance was given that on their return from India their service would be continued in Nepal Army or they would be recognized as employee. Throughout the period huge Nepalis migrated to India and served the British colonial power. During the period British colonial power fought in various regional wars with the help of Gurkhas. Gurkhas successfully participated in Pindari war of 1817, the Maratha war of 1817-18, the Anglo-Sikh war of 1845-46, the Indian Mutiny of 1857, and also in various wars in north and northeast India and even in Afghan wars (1878-1919), Waziristan (1860-1900), Malaya (1875), Cyprus (1878), Burma (1885), China (1900), Anglo-Sikh war (1845-46).<sup>35</sup>

There is no record about the number of Nepali recruits in military service of British power and their migration to India in the initial period. But the recruitment of Nepalis from

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<sup>31</sup> Adhikari, Jagannath & Gurung Ganesh, Migration, 2009, *op. cit* p. 63.

<sup>32</sup> Ragsdale, Tod, A., 1990, Gurungs, Goorkhalis, Gurkhas: Speculations on a Nepalese Ethno-History, *CNAS Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 1., Nepal, p. 13.

<sup>33</sup> Adhikari, Jagannath & Gurung Ganesh, Migration, 2009, *op. cit*, p. 63.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* p. 63.

<sup>35</sup> Pahari, Anup., July/August 1991, *op. cit*, p. 8.



Nepal increased day by day. Mr. Nicholas Beatson Bell stated that at the time of preparation of Assam Rifles Manual ideal class composition of British force was prescribed as follows and which was unchanged till British left India.<sup>36</sup>

**Table-11**  
**Ideal class composition of British force**

//	Class of Recruits	1 <sup>st</sup> Battalion	2 <sup>nd</sup> Battalion	3 <sup>rd</sup> Battalion	4 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	5 <sup>th</sup> Battalion
1.	Gorkhas	50%	62 ½ %	50%	50%	50%
2.	Jarumas, Cacharis, Ahoms	37 ½ %	37 ½ %	37 ½ %	37 ½ %	50%
3.	Nagas	-----	-----	12 ½ %	-----	-----
4.	Lushais	12 ½ %	-----	-----	-----	-----
5.	Kukis	-----	-----	-----	12 ½ %	-----

Source: Shangpliang, A.M., "Recruitment Policy of the British and its Impact in the North East: A Case Study of the Gorkhas", *NEIHA Proceedings*, 18<sup>th</sup> Session, Shillong, 1997, p. 181.

Till the last day of the year of 1888 there were 88.69 percent and 93.42 percent of Gurkha people respectively in the 43<sup>rd</sup> Gorkha Light Infantry and 44<sup>th</sup> Gorkha Light Infantry.<sup>37</sup> Number of Gurkha battalions increased to 16 by the year of 1904. Just before the First World War there were about 23,000 Nepali migrant workers in British Army. Major Nicolay stated that on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1913 there were 18,142 employed Nepalis in British Indian Army; 1,028 in Imperial Service troop and 5,135 in Assam Bengal and Burma Military Police. All total 24,305 Nepali people were working in India during the period.<sup>38</sup> In Indian Army Gurkha soldiers were consist 10 percent in the year 1914.<sup>39</sup> In this figure almost all were migrated people from Nepal. Due to the outbreak of the World War I there

<sup>36</sup> Shangpliang, A.M., 1997, *op. cit*, p. 181.

<sup>37</sup> Gurung, Tejimala, 2001, Human Movement and Colonial State: A Study of the Nepalis in North-East India under the British Empire, *NEIHA Proceedings*, 22<sup>nd</sup> Session, Shillong, P. 407.

<sup>38</sup> Adhikari, Jagannath & Gurung Ganesh, 2009, *op. cit*, p. 63.

<sup>39</sup> Ragsdale, Tod, A., 1990, *op. cit*, p. 11.

was a big wave of recruitment drive between 1910 and 1917 and migration from Nepal to India had been witnessed largely. A good number of Nepali hill people had migrated in that period and engaged themselves in the Gurkha regiments. Even, the Nepal Government, in order to continue their friendly relation with India campaigned to convince the hill peasants to enlist themselves in British Indian Army and arranged to supply able Nepalis for those regiments. With the help of Nepal authority six recruiting centers were opened in the hills all together. In the east of Nepal in Dhankuta and Ilam two recruiting centres, in the west in Pokhara, Palpa and Syangja three recruiting centres were opened. In far west Nepal in Doti a recruiting centre was also opened. Recruiting centers were increased to ten within a short period. Earlier in Kathmandu valley and in adjoining areas recruitment was usually prohibited, but in the war period temporary recruitment centers were opened in Kathmandu itself.<sup>40</sup> Overall in the war period 2,00,000 were recruited from Nepal, of which a good number were from Nepali's own Army. Nepal Darbar also supplied their own soldiers and helpers to British Indian Government. There were 2,43,000 Nepali workers in British Army during the World War I period.<sup>41</sup> Throughout the period there was a huge drain of Nepalis from hills areas. Demand of able Nepalis for British Army and their recruitment and migration to India was so high that it became difficult for the authorities to manage more able men of martial races for further recruitment. But British power realizing the importance of Nepalis in their force continued their efforts to get them. Various facilities were provided by them to impress the authority of Nepal for easy recruitment. One million rupees annually was gifted to Nepal government by the British Indian Government as assistance. This gift was personally given to Rana Prime Minister as his personal income and the amount was deposited to Indian Bank in his name.<sup>42</sup> To maintain friendly relation 'Treaty of Friendship' of 1923 was signed between two powers. With this treaty British ensured full independence of the State Nepal. Nepal government also promised to provide more efficient man for the British military force. At the time of World War II when demand of Gurkhas increased government of Nepal fully satisfied the British power providing able Nepalis. In that period Nepal offered every kind and class of male labour to British government. Those Nepalis were absorbed into Gurkha regiment during the period. British

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<sup>40</sup> Adhikari, Jagannath & Gurung Ganesh, 2009, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* p. 63.

<sup>42</sup> Kansakar, Vidya, Bir, Singh., April 1984, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

officer, Bolt stated near about 160,000 Nepali men were recruited on the eve of World War II. In addition to this extra eight battalions were provided by the Nepal government in 1940 for border service to release the regular troops in British Army. To maintain existing Gurkha force there was need of nearly 3,500 able men annually from Nepal. In addition, during the recruiting season of 1940-41 extra 7,000 Nepalis were recruited for six new battalions. Whereas there were 20 battalions before 1940, extended to 51 battalions by the year 1943 comprising of 44 infantry and parachute battalions, 6 training battalions and 1 garrison battalion.<sup>43</sup> Demand of Nepalis was very high and it was difficult for Nepal government to provide such huge number of people to British power. Even Prime minister of Nepal in his letter to A.P. Wavell, Indian Commander in Chief remarked that from a small country like Nepal supply of 65,000 Nepalis for recruitment in the last three years was an achievement for Nepal.<sup>44</sup> Kanskar remarked that in the period it was very difficult to get able men not only from Gurung and Magar's lands, but also from Rai and Limbu's lands and formerly which areas was prohibited for recruitment those areas were also opened up and recruiters somehow managed to continue their recruitment from such new areas. Recruiters lastly started to accept Nepalis of any social and ethnic background to fulfill their demand. Nepal sent more than 350,000 Nepalis during the World War II period under British colonial power in the European fields. They fought in all the battlegrounds of France, Belgium, Mesopotamia, Iran, Palestine, Greece, Soviet, and Central Asia and faced heavy casualties. Near about 20,000 died, several were wounded or disabled.<sup>45</sup> Among the fighting soldiers 23,655 were wounded or disabled in the battle field and even 40,000 men disbanded after coming from battle fields because of injuries.<sup>46</sup>

Scenario changed after the World Wars. During the World War huge recruitment was taken place from Nepal but at the end of the war all the additional force which was recruited at that period was disbanded. Pension and other retirement facilities was not given to disbanded soldiers as they were recruited for a short period and were not in job for certain requisite time to avail those facilities. Even those discharged earlier with the injuries was not properly compensated. Those people were in difficulties after lost their job. But,

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<sup>43</sup> Adhikari, Jagannath & Gurung Ganesh, 2009, *op. cit*, p. 65.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* p. 65.

<sup>45</sup> Pahari, Anup., July/August 1991, *op. cit*, p. 9.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* p. 9.

when they migrated to India for a short period in their service time had realized the opportunities of job markets in India in civil sectors. There was no such scope for them in Nepal. So, to maintain their families in the rural hills and to sustain the livelihood disbanded soldiers came to India once again and accommodated themselves in civil job market. Even the people who were in the regular service also interested in availing civil job in India. Their service in British force for a longer period and good earning differentiated them economically and socially from their counterpart in Nepal. So many of them preferred to migrate permanently to India and they settled largely in Darjeeling, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland and other area of Eastern and Northeastern states and took various civil jobs. Even the people who after their retirement from military service settled primarily in Nepal did not receive their pensions properly and a share of it was taken by the Nepal authority. So, a large number of them preferred to migrate and settled to India. After the World War I, among the 10,932 discharged soldiers, only 3,838 were returned home in 1919 and others settled permanently in India<sup>47</sup>. Those soldiers started to work either as watchmen or in government police or in other works available in surroundings.

After the World War I, when independence movement got momentum British officials in India became afraid for their life and security. They encouraged Gorkha ex-Army personnel and their family to be settled around them. Mainly the hills stations where British officers resided became prominent place for Nepali retired personal and Darjeeling, Shillong got priority for this. Side by side, other Nepali people who were not in military job also preferred to settle in Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Dehradun, Shillong and other places because of the racial linkage with those areas.

After independence in 1947, there was a debate whether Gorkha Army should continue in Independent India or not. Argument was against of Gorkha reputation because of their involvement to suppress the Indian Independence Movement, like the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny, their participation in the event of Jalinwala Bagha massacre in Amritsar and other fronts. So, a certain section of people was not in favour of maintaining Gorkhas in Independent Indian Army and sporadic movement was witnessed. Gorkhas, who settled in

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<sup>47</sup> Kansakar, Vidya, Bir, Singh, April 1984, *op. cit*, p. 53.

various places in India felt threatened and became vulnerable. Nepalis in India formed 'All India Gorkha League'. They started to defy the accusation on them by proclaiming their participation in Indian Independence Movement, even in the INA of Subash Chandra Bose. Even Britain at that time was not in favour to transferring the Gorkha Army to Independent India. The British were aware of the absolute dedication of Gorkhas and their contribution to British colonial power to sustain vast colonies around the world and were in favour keeping Gorkha Army with them. On other hand, the leaders of Independent India wanted to have absolute control over Gorkha Army in India for various socio-political regions. Nepal government had clear view about the aspiration of resent Independent India and about the landlocked nature of their country and economic dependency of them on India. Even Rana royal families had a good contact with India. They had their landed property in India and also had cash in Indian banks. So, they wanted to continue a friendly relation with India. Employment in Army was one of the main livelihood strategies of Nepal; it was difficult for the country to sustain their economy without having this facility. Kanskar argued that it was the need of Nepal to maintain at least 100,000 men from their country to Indian Army, because income from foreign armies was the major economic source of Nepal and without such foreign employment Nepal would fall in difficulties.<sup>48</sup> Understanding the needs of the country Indian Government in 1945 increased their annual gift to Nepal from one million to two million rupees. After long arguments British and Independent Indian government reached an understanding and split the Gorkha Army into two segments. One part of the Gorkha Army was taken by British government and one was continued their work with Indian Defense Force. It was decided on 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1947 that 2<sup>nd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> Gorkha regiments would serve in British army and other six regiments would work with Indian Army and the salary of Gorkha Army personnels were fixed to Rs 350.00 or US \$ 40 in both the countries in same scale.<sup>49</sup> However, the British Government later on paid other extra allowances and benefits to Gorkha personnel working under them. After 1947, Indian Government also increased the strength of Nepalis in the Indian Army according to their needs. In Indian scenario after Independence migration for military job became full-fledged contract issue between the employers of Indian Army and with the Gurkha suppliers of Nepal. In the Tripartite agreement basic clause regarding Gurkha recruitment in

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<sup>48</sup> Adhikari, Jagannath & Gurung Ganesh, 2009, *op. cit*, p. 65.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* p. 66.

India was settled. Pay structure, terms and conditions, recruitment ceiling and other issues were also settled, which are continuing till today with adjusting to the situation and time.<sup>50</sup> During the period Army job in India was more attractive for the people of Nepal because of good income and security of jobs. In the World Wars period there was panic of casualties among the Nepalis who were enlisted or were to be enlisted in Gorkha Army but after World Wars and after Independent of India such panic went out and Nepalis eagerly joined the Indian Army. Good volume of people from Nepal were recruited and they migrated to India and actively worked for India. Gorkha Army was employed to protect the Indo-Pak border and they also actively participated in the Hyderabad conflict in 1948, the Pakistan war of 1965 and 1971, the China war of 1962 and other internal conflicts. Gradually the Gorkhas became the strength of Indian defence. Beside the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> regular Gorkha regiments, Nepalis are working today in Jammu and Kashmir Rifles, the Gharwal regiments, the Kumaon regiments, Assam Rifles, Naga force, the Border Security Force, Central Reserve Police force, Bihar Military Police and territorial Army. Gorkhas are also working on Military Engineer corps, Signals, Military transport and other sectors. There were around 150,000 Nepalis in the Indian Army in 1991<sup>51</sup>. The volume of the Gorkhas working in the Indian Army was three times larger than the entire royal Nepal Army. This people settled themselves in many regions of India; Darjeeling district of West Bengal and Northeastern states being some of those. Indian government recently prefers to recruit Gorkhas from Indian origin and not largely from Nepal.

### **Dairy Farming and Employment of Nepali Migrant:**

Agriculture has not been an essential source for the economy of the Himalayan and the hill regions. Unfavorable climate and high terrain always have affected the agriculture of the area. But the Himalayan and the Hill region of Nepal contain widespread grazing land for live stock breeding. So, animal husbandry and dairy farming has become very common in those regions and has been an important part of the economy. Nepali communities of the region, mainly Gurung and Limbu have maintained numerous flocks of

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<sup>50</sup> Uesugi, Taeko, 2007, *Re-examining Transnationalism from Below and Transnationalism from Above: British Gurkhas' Life Strategies and the Brigade of Gurkhas' Employment Policies*. In Hiroshi Ishil, David N. Gellner and Katsuo Nawa, *Nepalis Inside and Outside Nepal* (Ed.) Monoha. p. 386.

<sup>51</sup> Pahari, Anup., July/August 1991, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

sheep in the lower mountains and in valleys in winter and in the alpine regions in summer.<sup>52</sup> Even, available grazing land in the forest of Tarai region of Nepal has attracted the dairyman also from India.<sup>53</sup> So, we can safely say that animal husbandry and dairy farming were very common in Nepal as of now. Pastoral migration from Nepal to India has been witnessed significantly from the very past days. In an interview it has been revealed that Nepali migrants used to come to Terai (Southern plains of bordering India) and to India in winter season to sell refined butter or ghee or medicinal herbs, or to graze buffaloes.<sup>54</sup> Nepalis settled in the hills, valley, towns and the villages of the whole Northeastern and Eastern India became significant part of British military force and as labour force in the tea gardens, coal mines, oil refineries and also worked as porters, marginal cultivators, skilled and unskilled workers. But, one of the most important features of Nepalis' presence in Northeast India has been their own economic establishment as pastoralists and dairy farmers and as well as supplier of milk or milk products. Nepali Grazier in the Northeast established themselves as a separate social category since long. In the district gazetteer of Assam it has been told that in the most part of the region Nepalis were graziers, who kept large herds of cows and buffaloes. Nepali dairy farmers entered the interior places and established their *Khuties* and some of them also enjoyed cultivation. Lopita Nath, in her study through an interview has made it clear that Nepalis migrated to India and from a soldier became a professional grazier. She said, interviewee Min Raj Joshi, a dairy farmer from Noonmati, Guwahati told "*My father came from Nepal, when he was seven years old to Gauhati. Joined the British Army and went to Nagaland. After the war...Left the army, came to Gauhati during World War II, when there was a big demand, he was engaged in milk supplying and bought cows with a loan of Rs. 300 from one Chandi Charan Bharati of Maligaon area in '57'. Ram Prasad Joshi, Min Raj Joshi's father became an established dairy farmer. They later shifted to Noonmati area and has about 30/35 cows in Panikheti area*"<sup>55</sup> She also provides other evidences of people from Nepal who came to Assam to get job in police force but turned to dairy business. Chief cause of the immigration of graziers

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<sup>52</sup> Regmi, Mahesh, Chandra, *A Study in Nepal Economic History (1768-1846)*, Adroit Publishers, Delhi, 1972, p.19.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* p.17.

<sup>54</sup> Brusle, Tristan, 2008, *Choosing a Destination and Work: Migration Strategies of Nepalese Workers in Uttarakhand, Northern India*, Mountain Research Development, Vol. 28, No. ¾, p. 241.

<sup>55</sup> Nath, Lopita, 2002, *Labour Migration in an Earlier Phase of Global Restructuring: The Nepali Dairy Farmers in Assam*, North East India History Association, 23<sup>rd</sup> Session, p. 166.

from Nepal to India was the scarcity of grass lands in Nepal for the grazing of animals and for cultivation. Third generation Nepali migrants stated in response of field investigation that originally they are dairy farmers and the place, where they lived in Nepal, was not suitable for dairy farming. To search for suitable and trouble-free land for grazing they came to Assam and established themselves in the province.<sup>56</sup> Available grass land which was treated as waste fields in Assam and even undulating topography of the region which is greatly favourable for grazing attracted the Nepali grazier or herders towards the east. Though third and fourth generation people of migrant community of dairy farmer who permanently have settled themselves in Assam were not able to say anything specifically about the cause of migration of their forefathers.<sup>57</sup> It has been stated that among the Nepali graziers in Assam Sharmas, Jaisis and Upadhyay Brahmins and Chettris from non-military classes are numerous.<sup>58</sup> Large number of people of Nepal who migrated to Northeastern parts of India took dairy farming as their profession and established dairy industries in many places of whole Northeastern India. British colonial authorities also extended their helping hand to establish the industry for their own interest. Needs of milk, ghee and other milk products for British officials, military personnel encouraged the industries to flourish. Even grazing tax was the major source of revenue for the British colonial government.

Before the pastoral migration from Nepal practice of dairy farming was not very common in the Northeastern parts of India. Indigenous hill people were basically dependent on hunting and very little on agriculture, but not at all on dairy farming. In some cases milk was a taboo for some communities. In jaintia hill new born baby would be fed local plantain (*bhat kela*) after chewing it well but the practice to feed milk to the new born baby was not there.<sup>59</sup> Mainly orthodox Nepali Brahmins non-martial castes like Joshis, Upadhyaya, Sharmas have taken dairy farming as their profession in the Northeast India.<sup>60</sup> There was no particular area selected for grazing. The herdsmen used to move from one barren forest

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* p. 165.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* p. 165.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* p. 164.

<sup>59</sup> Sinha, A.C., 2012, *Colonial Legacy and Environmental Crisis in North East India*, EBH Publishers, Guwahati, p. 76.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* p. 75.



patch and mountainous land to others in search of grass land. Destruction of the agricultural fields and the forest by the cattle of those herders was very common in those days. Even clashes between the indigenous agriculturists and the migrant herdsmen from Nepal had been seen in the Northeastern parts of India and complaint by the indigenous people against those herdsmen to the British officials was very common phenomenon. British officials always tried to protect the migrant herders, might be because of revenue gain, supply of milk and milk products and also to counter balance the ethnic composition in the regions. Later on, the British authority granted special grazing grounds for graziers from Nepal and gave them place to settle with their family permanently. Gradually various villages were established in the hilly slopes of the Northeastern parts of India. For their own needs grazier started to produce food grain in the surroundings of their settlement and many of them turned into petty cultivators. Thus horticultural multi-cropping was introduced in the regions.

In the report on Professional Grazing Reserves in Assam Valley, it has been mentioned that was requirement of grazing land for the buffaloes and cattle for the maintenance of at least the present standard of physical and economic well-being of the people of the area concerned. The report also has stated that buffaloes and cattle grazing in the reserves play vital role in the life of the people. They are the source of—(i) Supply of animals for the plough or the cart, (ii) Supply of milk and milk produce to the neighborhood and beyond the area (iii) Supplementary income to a number of persons interested in the production and distribution of milk, milk products etc. The report also has mentioned the land pattern suitable for cattle keeping. The report has indicated that high level reserves are fit for cattle. This level gives shelter to the buffaloes in the rains, when low-lying reserves goes under water and become unsuitable for the cattle. Otherwise low-lying reserves are suited to buffaloes. Buffaloes can continue to remain in these reserves even during the rains when they are tethered for the night on high or artificially raised ground. When the water subsides from the land and dry season sets in grazing starts in full swing. The report has mentioned the common practice of Graziers. Nepali graziers used to graze their cattle near the *khuti* areas and frequently shifted their *khutis* within the reserve where the fodder was preserved. The report said such movement of Nepali graziers could not be possible further.

With the incensement of population grazing area would be restricted and would not be increased. Even grazing revenue had no longer the sole source of revenue. With the clearance of extensive lands in neighborhood by immigrants, the demand for thatch, fuel and timber had gone up and increasing population in the neighborhood, cutting down jungle with a view to bringing waste land under cultivation reducing the grazing ground. So advice was given to reserved the sufficient area for grazing.

It has been understood that British authority had realized the immense importance of grazing in the Northeast India and had amended certain rules for the promotion of it and to control graziers. Graziers communities also had applied to British authority regarding facilities provided to them. Among the grazier communities Nepalis were very significant group in Northeast India. Nath, while saying about the dairy farmers in Assam mentioned about the two distinct categories among them. One is who have land property and are the owner of cattle and other who supply milk to town or other places. The first category dairy men have their large farms and mainly belong to the upper caste Jaisis and Upadhyays. These people rear the cattle and produce milk and milk made product but do not directly supply house to house in towns and other places. On the other hand another group mainly Chetis and little extent Gurungs, Magars, Thapas and others do work as milk suppliers. They generally do not maintain their land and cattle and they buy the milk from the producers and supply it to households, hotels, restaurants and even sweetshops and other customer on door to door base. The milk suppliers are known as *Paikari* milk man. In her opinion milkmen who are temporary migrant go back to Nepal frequently. They usually stay in the Northeast as dairy men for few month or years for to earn many and go back to Nepal with their earning. They went back to Nepal because of their social contact with their counterpart in Nepal and for their economic asset in their home country. By the words of interviewee Nath established that many of the dairy farmers in Assam have their land and cultivation in Nepal and for that they frequently return to their village in Nepal. In India this people maintain a minimum standard of life, live with the cowshed or in a temporary structured shed. Their lifestyle in the region indicates the volatile nature of their existence.<sup>61</sup> Evidence has shown that Nepali herdsman used to move from one place to other. 1912-13

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<sup>61</sup> Nath, Lopita, 2002, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

Administration Report of Assam has pointed out that a good number of professional Nepali graziers had migrated to Assam from the adjacent areas of Jalpaiguri for to escape from high grazing fees levied there.<sup>62</sup> In Northeast India Nepali graziers with their cows and buffaloes lived a nomadic life and sometime made prayer to British authority for some favour. Record shows, one Captain Kalu Thapa and other Pensioned Gurkha officers applied for allotment of certain grazing grounds in Jaintia Hills and the Cachar Hills for Grazing purpose. In their petition they said about the history of settlement of Nepali grazier in the province. In 1869, the sepoy and the native officers of the Light infantry regiment complained to their officer commanding about the scarcity of milk, ghee and other milk product in the hill area. They requested the then Deputy Commissioner for allowing the Gurkhas to import buffaloes in these hills for to fulfill the needs of milk and milk made product in the region. For the better supply of milk and to increase the number of buffalos specific places had been set for keeping the animal and its number increased rapidly which had become a valuable asset of the majority of the Gorkhas living in these hills.<sup>63</sup>

Though a good number of animals were grazed but there was no effective and reliable enumeration of all the animals-belonged to the graziers or villagers derived their fodder from professional grazing reserves. The only firm figure we have is that of the number of animals assessed to grazing tax. Assam Forest Regulation introduced the provisions of levy tax for the grazing of cattle. Tax was imposed initially at the rate of Rs. 1 for per buffalo and Rs. 0.25 per cow on Un-Classed State Forests. The rates were increased by time to Rs. 3 for per buffalo and Rs. 1 for per cow.<sup>64</sup> As the rate of tax was very high and no area was specified initially as grazing grounds herders used to move from one place to another to escape from taxpaying. In an estimate among 3,36,323 cows and buffaloes grazed in the forests 5,079 were charged for grazing fees.<sup>65</sup> British authority implemented hard laws to the defaulter and insured the tax collection from cattle herders. Herdsmen delayed by one day to pay the grazing tax were fined by extra payment. Even herdsmen

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<sup>62</sup> Gurung, Tejimala, 2001, Human Movement and Colonial State: A Study of the Nepalis in North-East India under the British Empire, NEHA Proceedings, 23<sup>rd</sup> Session, Sillong, p. 410.

<sup>63</sup> State Archive of Assam, December 1920, Finance-Department, Forest Branch, B-Progress. Nos. 101-108. Page-26.

<sup>64</sup> Sinha, A.C., 2012, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

moved without informing the authority to other grazing grounds were liable to be punished by imprisonment. Once, civil and British forest authorities met in a conference in Shillong to regulate the grazing in the province and to ensure the grazing tax collection. After prolonged dictation it was decided to provide grazing grounds to the grazers and to impose lower grazing tax to prohibit the herders from unnecessary move from one place to others without permission and to protect cultivable area from grazing. In the Eastern Circle of Forest Reserve, an area of 1976 square miles of the reserved forests were closed for grazing and 470 square miles in the Sibsagar Division was open for grazing the cattle. As a whole, 7,700 square mile of the Government Wasteland was opened to free grazing for grazers.<sup>66</sup> Although, it has been seen, the number of cattle and the pressure on grazing grounds increased rapidly in the Northeast India. In the year of 1893-94, there were 12,915 grazing buffaloes in the Un-Classed State Forests at full rate, which rose to 26,257 in 1904-05. And in the year of 1911-12, the figure rose to 45,893. The number of buffaloes has increased very rapidly in the Garo hill district. In the year 1911-12, in Assam total number of buffaloes was counted 73,902. In the year 1913-14, there were 25,409 buffaloes, 15,898 cows and 632 other animals were charged for grazing and 22,178 buffaloes, 65,265 cows and 100 other animals grazed free of cost on the Government Westland. In the year of 1918-19, there were 82,205 buffaloes, 2,25,603 cows and more than 18,028 other animals grazed in the Western Circle of forests and contributed Rs. 3,11,055 as revenue. On the other hand in the Eastern Circle of forest in that particular year Rs. 2,11,274 was collected as grazing fees. And the amount of near about thirty thousand rupees were pending as arrears in the year. In the year of 1916 to 17 the collection of grazing revenue was 1,83,000; which was doubled in between the year 1920-21 with rising to Rs. 3,41,499.<sup>67</sup> Below table indicating that in between the period 1895 to 1920 following number of buffaloes were taxed in the Brahmaputra Valley.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> Gurung, Tejimala, 2001, *op. cit.*, p. 410.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

**Table-12**  
**Buffaloes Taxed in Brahmaputra Valley Between 1895-1920**

Year	1895	1900	1905	1910	1915	1920
Number	15,640	18,735	24,246	40,000	42,000	86,325

Mr. W.J. Arbuthnot in his report on grazing in the Assam Valley has told important information about grazing in the province. Report said that consumption of both the *ghee* and *dahi* in the Sibsagar and Lakhimpur districts was far in excess of local production. Distribution of *ghee* and other milk products within the valley was mainly by river, stemmer and rail service. In this connection utility of a large grazing reserve in Nowgong district has been mentioned and it also has told that if the pasture there be found suitable near Lankajan area it would be great. In other side, condition of the Northeast Frontier Tract was discussed. Census of cattle taken in this district in February 1915, has shown that there were 4,375 cows, 3,239 calves, 1,159 cow buffaloes and 643 buffalo calves. It has been told that professional graziers were restricted to fairly large chapari areas up and downstream from Sadiya. *Dahi* and milk used to sell at Sadiya and Saikhoa bazaars at 2 to 2 ½ *annas* a seer and those further away prepare *ghee* and sell it at Rs. 1-4 to Rs. 1-6 a seer. It has also been told in the year of 1917 that in addition of local sell, about 650 mounds of *ghee* has imported yearly for the Military Police and Coolies Corps, mainly from Calcutta and another 100 or 200 mounds has imported mainly from Tezpur for local consumption. There was also evidence of small selling of *ghee* at Nangingaon by graziers of the Majuli and Bairagi Chaparis.<sup>69</sup> Officer also told in 1917 that in the year fees collected was Rs. 8 per annum for buffaloes and at proportionate rate for other cattle. He said graziers are paying this high fees and the price of milk has not risen. He added, though most of the graziers also have cultivation and have every facility for concealing the real numbers of their herds. He said graziers are almost entirely Nepali Chettries and not looked on with favour by the local tribesmen. Nepalis also used to supply Mishrais with young buffaloes for consumption. He said that graziers were scattered too widely and a system of grazier-mauzadars were there for better performance of grazing system. He also said about the shortage of staff or

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<sup>69</sup> State Archive of Assam, May 1917, Revenue Department, A-File, , File Nos. 98-111.

manpower to supervise the work of such mauzaders or to control the graziers strictly. Therefore he suggested maintaining the tax of Rs. 8 per buffalo in this district in order to deter the entry of more graziers. He suggested as the district opens up and the staff increases it would however be desirable to form grazing reserve for the supply of *ghee* to the upper Assam trade block, and it may be necessary, in view of the large demand for milk at Dibrugarh. He said that he would not suggest any methods of controlling such grazing reserves or areas in the Frontier Tract.<sup>70</sup>

Some British officers commented in favour of Gurkhalis in the province. Some of them argued that everywhere Gurkhalis are looked upon as object-lessons in thrift and diligence. It was contended by Mr. Shadwell and others that without these *khuti-wallahs* and their buffaloes, elephants, bears and other wild beasts it would become more intolerable and dangerous nuisance in the Bhoi country.<sup>71</sup> Mr. Dentith said to Commissioner unofficially that practically he has no complaints against Gurkhalis. He said during his tours he finds that the universal prayer is not for the abolition of Gurkhalis but of elephants, and he said that if elephants became as extinct in these hills as the Dodo, the joy of the unfortunate cultivator would be intense. He also said elephant is the cultivator's enemy, not the Gurkhali, who is usually a cultivator himself. Gurkhalis has everything to lose and nothing much to gain by acts of lawlessness. He said that Gurkhalis recognizes this fact so thoroughly that they willingly used to pay compensation to the Khasi cultivator if their buffaloes damage the Khasis' cultivation. He also said according to his impression the Gurkhali, especially the *khutiwallas* are more amenable to discipline than the Khasi. He ventured to think that so far as this area is concerned the average Gurkhali is law-abiding, decent individual. He said that the grazing conditions in the hills differ very much from the plains. In the plain there were plenty of buffaloes, large *dhankhets* and a few watchers. In those hills there were comparatively few buffaloes, and only small isolated patches of cultivation, though there were vast expanses of uncultivated land. In these circumstances the damage caused by the buffaloes of Nepali *khuti-wallahs* to the cultivation of the local Khasis, was he thought to be much exaggeration. He also said if however, the Nepali graziers were summarily deported from those hills he was confident that there would arise a

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> Assam State Archive, February 1916, Political-A, No. 25.

howl of protestation from Europeans and Khasis alike. He said large volume of dairy produce of Shillong was supplied by these Gurkhali *khuti-wallahs* and that without them the only ghee which would be obtainable in the Shillong bazaar would be adulterated ghee from Calcutta. He mentioned that dairy businessman like Munshi Golam Rahman and Munshi Mowla Baksh stated to him that they could not get on without the Gurkhali graziers and that without Nepali graziers they would have to close down their dairies. Their evidence was corroborated by Babu Dina Nath Dhar, the Municipal Overseer. He said in fact the removal of the Gurkhali would spell the ruin of the Shillong dairy industry. Furthermore in his view 90 percent of the bazaar *kulis* and porters in Shillong were Gurkhalis, those men were said to be quiet law-abiding and their deportation could be contemplated with equanimity. So he ventured to urge Commissioner that no case had been made out against the Gurkhalis. He argued Nepalis were law-abiding hard working settlers, who were by no means unpopular with the Khasis among whom they lived. He also informed that the Nepali population in all the *khutis* including men, women and children was said to vary from 1,000 to 2,000 and they were said to own 10,000 buffaloes worth from 4 to 8 lacs.<sup>72</sup> He thought the graziers and their herds, however, should be confined to the reserves already sanctioned. He proposed Siems that the competent Gurkhalis be appointed as Sardars to exercise such authority over the *khuti-wallahs* as might be necessary and to check that no fresh *khutis* be started in their States without their express sanction.<sup>73</sup>

To understand the importance of Nepali graziers in the province Commissioner of Assam Valley Districts asked all the Deputy Commissioners regarding the existence of Nepali *khutis* in their areas and wanted to know whether the Nepali *khutiwalas* pay the revenues for the land occupied by them in the province. Deputy Commissioners of different areas had expressed different views regarding the revenues paid by Nepalis and the necessity of existence of Nepalis in their local areas. Some Commissioners said there is friction between the Nepalis graziers and the cultivators. Whenever press of population and extension of cultivation has taken place; buffaloes has frequently injured the crops, and the villagers always made their effort to take up the land which has been manured by the keeping of buffaloes and Nepalis have compelled to move further away with their herders.

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<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

He said, sometimes it also has seen that Nepalis himself have taken up the manured land for themselves and have cultivated mustard on it and naturally have not been agreed to abandon the grazing land in favour of others. District commissioner of various region said Nepali *khutis* were not now assessed to land revenue though he believed that graziers used to pay grazing dues. They said *bathans* in the area are mostly temporary and frequently changed. Land lease should not be issued to them. He said it will be well for the Deputy Commissioner to eject the herdsmen in a position if at any time it is found that the herding of buffaloes proves a nuisance in any particular locality. Many of them said permanent *khutis*, which are few in number are assessed to land revenue. but he do not think it is desirable to charge land revenue for shifting *khutis*. But in other districts he has witnessed constant trouble and has found that the only practicable course is to prohibit the establishment of a new *khuti* within a mile of existing cultivation and similarly prohibit new cultivation within a mile of an established *khuti*. He said it seems to him that this diversity of practice is not necessarily wrong. In comparatively-settled areas where land is being gradually taken up for ordinary cultivation, buffaloes ought to be carefully herded when they graze, and it would perhaps be best to settle defined area at low rates with the Nepali herders and allow them to cultivate but not as they wish. This area should be settled annually in order that if the settlement holders gave up keeping buffaloes and become ordinary cultivators, the rates might be revised. In unsettled areas where there is an indefinite extent of waste land and uncontrolled grazing does no harm, he said, he would not compel the owners of the *khutis* to pay revenue on specific plot unless actually cultivated. But he said that he understand the importance of grazing dues at present. On the country, Nepalis frequently opens out land that would otherwise be laid waste.<sup>74</sup> often cultivation springs up round the buffalo *khutis*.. Generally *khutis* lay out of the way place and the animals feed in heavy jungles. The Nepalis are nomadic in their habits and move their camp frequently. For this reason the Forest Department, who now collect the poll-tax on the animals, are facing difficulties in collecting their dues. The *mauzadars* and *tahsildars* would be facing equal difficulty in collecting the land revenue. The damage done by their buffaloes to cultivation, roads, etc., is not greater than the damage done by the cattle of ordinary villagers who take little care in preventing them from straying. He said for this

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<sup>74</sup> Assam State Archive, April 1903, Revenue Department-A, File No Missing.



reason he already gave order to keep buffaloes usually in out of the way place. *khutis* in this subdivision are always assessed to land revenue. The graziers occupy the land just as much as any cultivator and make much larger profits, even after deducting the grazing fees paid to the Forest Department. The Nepali graziers in this subdivision are not at all desirable class of immigrant. They are quarrelsome and inclined to bully their indigenous neighbours. The depredations of their buffaloes check the extension of cultivation. Deputy Commissioner of Lakhimpur reported to the Commissioner of the Assam Valley Districts said as Nepalis pay the grazing fees for their buffaloes and to impose land revenue on there *khutis* would in a measure be taxing them twice over, and this seem hardly fair. He also said Nepalis are troublesome settlers, and he is doubtful about the desirability of encouraging them to settle in the Assam.<sup>75</sup>

After reviewing the views the Commissioner of the Assam Valley Districts said all the Deputy Commissioners except Nowgong that he was happy with the expression of the opinion of the Deputy Commissioners to the expediency of assessing to land revenue of the Nepali buffalo *khutis* in their districts. He said in considering this the commissioners should keep in mind the desirability of encouraging the settlement of Nepalis in the Assam districts.<sup>76</sup> Commissioner of the Assam Valley Districts had written to the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam that he thought the settlement of Nepalis in the Assam Valley should be encouraged. He said when Nepalis settled to cultivation, they made good settlers, and they were able to stand the Assam climate. Keeping of buffaloes is no doubt at that time a nuisance and a cause of conflict with neighbouring villagers. He said the best way of meeting the difficulty would be to assess the *khutis* to land revenue if keeping of cattle prevents the settlement of the land with others, or in any other cases when much damage has been done by buffaloes to cultivation in the neighbourhood. The *pattas* should be annual *pattas*, so that there may be less difficulty in ejecting the buffalo-keepers, if necessary. Conversation of British officials signifies the intentions of British higher authorities to access land revenue from Nepali graziers and also to get benefit of milk and milk product. Even they wanted to open the way to evict them if necessary.

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<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

On the other hand on different occasion it has been seen that graziers has appealed to the British authority for new grazing lands when their herds increased and also has seek permission to established new cow shads or *khuties* or also Nepali villages. As some graziers in the year of 1920 asked for grazing lands in different locations and said, grazing ground in the specific area were not sufficient enough for them to maintain their existing number of buffaloes. They said; since the last few years the Khasias also have engaged themselves in paddy and other cultivation and thus the already insufficient grazing grounds are gradually decreasing every year. More over by constant grazing the existing grazing grounds are becoming devoid of ample grass. Consequently the buffaloes are ill fed and the yield of the milk is now much less than what it used to be earlier. Grazier said if the same state of affairs will continue longer they fear that their stock will disappear and they will compel to give up the profession after suffering a heavy and unbearable loss. They said grazing is only one pursuit which affords the means of livelihood for the majority of them and they are quite incapable of pursuing any other job for poverty and intellectual backwardness. They also said that the authority should not ignore this important fact that the disappearance of the buffaloes from the hills will surely cause great scarcity of milk, butter, ghee and other milk made product, when the daily consumption of these articles is enormous. They mentioned that under this circumstances they needs more grazing lands and they also prayed to the authority to allot the grazing grounds for them available in the Jaintia Hills near the Hot spring and also in the other side of Kopila River, Rupai and Nongjong within the boundaries of the Cachar district on payment of the usual fees.<sup>77</sup>

In response to the demand Commissioner of Surma valley & Hill Districts wrote to Second Secretary to the Chief Commissioner that Hot Springs is absolutely unsuitable for Gurkhali settlement as it will be out of control of authority and that is one reason why Gurkhas want to settle there. He also said the Deputy Commissioners of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and Cachar and he himself opposed this proposal. In this regard he said they agreed the views expressed by Mr. Arbuthnot, who said "*Presently I am strongly of opinion that the rates should be raised in the North Cachar Hills especially with regard to buffaloes. In April 1908 I spent a month making special enquiries into the matter with the*

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<sup>77</sup> State Archive of Assam., December 1920, Finance-Department, Forest Branch, B-Progress. Nos. 101-108. Page-26.

*sub-divisional officer Mr. Ballantine. It was then decided to reserve the area between the Kopili and the Dyang Rivers from the incursions of vagrant Nepalese with their herds of buffaloes. I found that these people had entirely destroyed the pine forests at karongma and that re-forestation on the hills between Hot springs and Karongma with oak and pine was impracticable owing to the devastation occasioned by buffaloes which permanently destroy all useful vegetation young trees and thatching grass. There were also innumerable complaints from the indigenous inhabitants Mikirs and Kukis whose crops were habitually destroyed by the buffaloes. The Mikirs near Hot Springs have some permanent cultivation but all cultivation was rendered impossible by the depredations of Nepalese owned buffaloes".*<sup>78</sup> In various official records like in Mr. Clark's letter it has also been mentioned that Nepali settlers always been a nuisance in these hill. He said, they destroy the forests in order to make grazing grounds for their buffaloes and their buffaloes ruin the crops of the original inhabitants of the place. He said, Mr. Dentills and others official also have confirmed the same fact. In addition to that he also said that settlement of Nepali grazier into Hot springs area would in no way help the milk supply of Shillong. But the Commissioner said he has the information that Manipur State is allowing Gurkhalis to settle near Khanpokpi. Further he suggested an area for grazing near cherrapunji or in the Garo Hills. Even Second Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam also mentioned that no buffalo grazing should be allowed anywhere near the cultivation area, in or near any game reserve and even he was not in favour to put pressure on Khasi siems to give facilities to the petitioner. He mentioned it is impossible to him to grant the land to Gurkha grazier.<sup>79</sup>

In an another instance it has also been seen that one, Subadar Jangbir Rana, who was retired from British Gurkha Army and a pension holder, wanted permission to establish *khutis* and a village on sites chosen by himself on the Musalding plateau just inside the Jowai subdivision in the vicinity of Umthngaw in the Khyrim State. He said, he would pay revenue to the British authority for the village. He also said he would be responsible for the payment of revenue fixed by the Government for all the settlers in this area, or else he would pay Government Rs. 500 per annum himself if he does not get any settlers, and would run his own *khuti* there as his own concern. Jangbir also suggested that the settler in

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

the area might be useful for Government work, if required. He said that he would make a condition with Nepali would be settler in this regard that they would agree to be so used. It was also told by Jangbir Rana to A. W. Dentith that there were numerous *khutis* in Khyrim territory and the *khuti*-wallahs graze their buffaloes in the area.<sup>80</sup> It could be understood from the study that Nepalis had settled in the new places of Northeast India with their *khuties* and also established new Nepali villages in the Northeast India. Even Gurkha officers, who were influential among the Nepali laymen and a fellow of British authority, how ensured the utilities of Nepalis for British colonial master. Very often British authorities by understanding the safe immigration into the empty lands of Northeast India have encouraged the Nepalis to the place to be settled. B. C. Allen said the policy of the Government of India is to encourage the Gurkhas of fighting castes to return to Nepal. In this circumstance it would hardly be possible for them to give Subadar Jangbir Rana any special facilities for settling hers. It is to say here that British authority as maintained good relations with Nepal authority and had the responsibility to obey the proposal of Nepal government of retraining the Gurkha ex-employee to Nepal officially. But it has seen that strict control over the issue was not been maintained by the British authority, somewhat because of their own interest and for their compulsion. So, it has been seen that W. J. Reid and Colonel Wilson, British officer suggested that Subadar Jangbir Rana should be permitted to establish *khutis* and a village in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills.<sup>81</sup> Here interesting point is that the British authority did not prohibit Subadar Jangbir Rana, ex-Army to be settled in the Indian land; rather they supported him to be settled in the place where they liked or where settlement policy was beneficial for British power. Thus in various places of Northeast India *khutis* and the villages of Nepalis has been established.

From the British official letter a clear picture has also come out about the grazing taxes and other demands from the graziers and also the discrepancy of it in different places. Records also signify the intention of British authority to maximize the revenue from this source and also fulfill the demand of milk and milk made products. British authorities sometimes has encouraged the Nepali graziers in one place and discouraged their business in other place by the enhancement of demand of tax or by taking different attitude in

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<sup>80</sup> Assam State Archive, February 1916, Political-A, No. 25.

<sup>81</sup> Assam State Archive, April 1903, Revenue Department-A.

different places or to different groups of graziers. Even as political authority of the place British also has supported the local people to impose specific taxes on migrant Nepali graziers. According to letter from Deputy Commissioner of Naga Hills to the Commissioner of Surma Valley and Hill Division, Silchar, grazing rates in the Naga Hills was Rs. 3/- per buffalo and 8/- per cow except in the case of goalas near Kohima, who supplied their milk to the station. For the goalas who used to supply milk to the military station preferential rate of Rs. 1/- per buffalo and 4/- per cow were fixed by Notification 497 A.P. of 16.7.34. In addition to the tax paid to Government the goalas lived outside Government Grazing Reserves, generally had to pay rent of some kind to the village owning the land grazed.<sup>82</sup> In this connection few grazers of the Kohima mauza in the district of Naga Hills expressed to the Governor in Council of Assam about the reduction of rate of taxes paid by them for grazing. They said formerly when the ghee sold at about Rs. 80/- to 90/- per maund they had to pay a tax of 4/- for each head. For last few years the market has considerably gone down and the ghee now sells at Rs 40/- to 45/- per maund and presently they are paying a tax of Rs. 3/- for each head and above that they also pay Naga taxes as well. But on the other hand in Manipur District the graziers used to pay very less taxes and they have nothing to pay in addition to the Manipuries. They also said as their only source of income is the sale of proceeds ghee and the fall down of price in ghee for last few years dragged them into debts. They said, last year they paid the taxes in four installments with great difficulty by borrowing the amount. They have not yet been able to clear the debts. Therefore they are quite in a miserable condition to pay the taxes of this year as there is no chance of getting any further loan from the Mahajans because their previous accounts have not been settled. They told that Deputy Commissioner of Naga Hills is well acquainted with the untold misery they have fallen. Under the circumstances they have prayer to Governor in Council, Assam to reduce the rate of taxes as in Manipur and there by save the poor subjects from hardship, starvation and misery<sup>83</sup>. Similarly Bisundayal Chetri and others Nepali *khutiwalas* of Chaikhowa Chapari have made their prayer to British officer regarding the reduction and re-assessment of grazing tax at Sadiya and made the rates as prevailing in the Assam valley division. To acknowledge the petitions of graziers Under

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<sup>82</sup> State Archive of Assam, Progress for June 1935, *Petition of Certain Nepali Graziers in the Naga Hills for reduction of Grazing tax*, Political –B, Nos. 511-515.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam, Revenue Department has written to the Political Officer, Central and Eastern Sections, North East Frontier about the problem of graziers. In replay Political Officer suggested to adhere to the existing rates at Sadiya, as recommended by Mr. Arbuthnot, at any rate until that area developed then the case at present. On an another occasion Political Officer, Central and Eastern Sections, North East Frontier requested and has seek permission to the Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam for the reduce the grazing fee of certain *goalas* whose whole milk supplied to the Military Police and Civil hospital at Sadiya. He also proposed that the amount to be charged from the men would be Rs. 2 a buffalo per year. He also said as a result of the high rate (Rs. 8) in the district compared with only Rs. 2 in Lakhimpur, he fined 7 *goalas* from Bimra Chapari, 2 from Poma Chapri and one from Sismi Chapari have recently moved out of the district. He said they and other *goalas* who will also go out from the area will be no less. Only point he significantly mentioned that until other arrangements could be made he is dependent on the *goalas* on whom the hospitals are reliant for milk. Under Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam, Revenue Department suggested that a list should be maintained of those *goalas* who have been granted the reduced rate. He said list should be maintained in order that this concession might not be claimed by other graziers on the ground that they also supply milk to the Military Police and Civil hospital.<sup>84</sup> It has been signifies from the official conversation that *goalas* who was to supplied the milk and other milk made products to the military authorities and the civil hospital were exempted from high taxation but other was to gave high taxes. It also shown that tax levied to the *khutiwalas* or *goalas* was deferent in places, somewhere it was high and somewhere it was low. Because of that reason *goalas* used to move from one place to another, obviously from high tax paying area to low tax area. Even some evidence is also there which shows that the *khutiwals* used to move to other places for to escape from taxpaying. Which justifies the nomadic nature of the Nepalis in the Northeast India, but gradually with the dependence of them in agriculture settled life has been taken place in the area.

On the other side Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills in his letter to the Commissioner of Surma Valley and Hill Division told that the rates fixed in the area was

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<sup>84</sup> Assam State Archive, April 1903, Revenue Department-A.

originally intended to discourage graziers to be settled there. He said it would hope that graziers will leave the Naga Hills and will go wherever the rate is lighter. But he said that this hope was not been fulfilled. He mentioned that the Nepali graziers are foreigner and take back to Nepal whatever they make and give nothing at all in exchange but an example of bad citizenship. They are a curse to all the neighbours as their buffalos repeatedly damage crops and ruin the land for cultivation and usually spoil the ground on which a Khuti is situated. Damaged land takes years to recover. Nepali graziers almost always refuse to give compensation till the case pulled into court, he said. The general Nagas do not want to tolerate graziers for a moment because of their activities. The Nagas who finds difficulties to raise cash by cultivation and other way, prepare to rent their land to graziers with knowing the fact that it is against their real interests.

Deputy Commissioner agreed with the view that the rate in Manipur is lower and he said he would be glad to see all the graziers outside Government reserves goes there. The rate at Dimapur was lower by Rs. 1/- per buffalo than in the hills. He said even if the plains rates be reduced, he should recommend retaining a higher rate in Naga Hills. Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills said few graziers, who supply kohima can be accommodated in the grazing reserves and for any other graziers there is no real room in this district and they are not wanted at all<sup>85</sup>. Mr. Arbuthnot, Chief Commissioner on his report advocated that in the Sadiya Frontier Tract grazing fees should retain Rs. 8 with the object of deterring the entry of more graziers in the province. He said it is desirable to discourage grazing within the frontier tract. On other hand he mentioned graziers are a good pioneer and they shows the way for the cultivator to follow them. He was not quite certain whether this policy of raising grazing fee will be very effective or not. He also admitted about the great demand of dairy products in Lakhimpur. He also said that price of milk in Dibrugarh is high and imported ghee is supplied to Military Police Battalion some extent at any rates. On other occasion it has been seen that some of 14 graziers submitted their petition to reduce the rate of grazing and asked to assess the rate as it was in other districts. They said they have their *khutis* at Chaikhowa Chapari, Pomoa Chapri and Bhatikhuti Chapari within the jurisdiction of the political officer at Chaparis and paid grazing taxes on their buffaloes at Rs. 1 per

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<sup>85</sup> State Archive of Assam, Progress for June 1935, *op. cit.*

head till last year. But the rate has increased to Rs. 8 per head throughout the province at present. They also said that they have submitted an application to the political officer for the reconsideration of rate and to reduce the rate to Rs. 2 per head throughout the province. They also said that the petitioners have no business since the disastrous flood of the last year and all the calves of their buffaloes have been carried away by flood. The last flood of this year also caused them no less a havoc than those of the previous years. Chief Commissioner of the province accepted the proposal to reduce the rate of grazing to Rs. 2 or even lower in certain specific areas where the supply of milk is made to military headquarters or the districts where grazing is allowed for the purpose of milk supply. Grazing rates of the Central and Eastern Sections, North East Frontier, have been fixed by the letter issued to the political officer on January 1917. The rate has fixed to Rs. 8 per buffalo and Rs. 1 per other horned cattle for the professional graziers and rupees 2 per buffalo for those graziers who supply milk at headquarters. Under secretary of Sadiya sanctioned the reduction of rates of Rs. 3 in case of the goalas who supply milk to the Military Police and Civil hospitals at Sadiya, which was decided to effect from the beginning of the July 1917.<sup>86</sup> On other side grazing rates of the Assam and Surma Valleys has been notified under the Forest regulation.

Thus, in the Northeast India grazing as well as dairy farming has become a booming profession and majorly has conducted by the migrant of Nepal. In the colonial period migration increased day by day and the huge flow of Nepalis took place in the dairy sector. Number of family member of British Gorkha Army engaged themselves in this industry, even after retirement from British Army and other government employment migrant settled themselves in the province with taking the occupation of dairy farming. B C Allen, in the District Gazetteers commented about the increase of grazing cattle in the province and about the unavailability of suitable grazing ground and the decision of increase the tax levied on grazing.<sup>87</sup> Huge tax collection from this sector by the British Colonial master was very important issue. British power indirectly helped for the migration from Nepal to India in this sector and tried to short out the every problem concern with dairy farming and

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<sup>86</sup> State Archive of Assam, May 1917, Revenue Department, A-File, File Nos. 98-111.

<sup>87</sup> Sinha, A.C., 2012, *op. cit*, p. 75.



grazing with providing land and other facilities to the migrant and even with disturbing the economical setup of the place and the ethnicity.

### **Coal Mine Sector and Nepali Migrant:**

Migration of Nepalis into Eastern and Northeastern parts of India took place in different form, sometime as Military men and sometime as labourer in different sectors. After the Colonial establishment private enterprises started to work for coal mining. As the labour force was not available in the province labour was imported to the area and significant number of migration took place into the coal field of upper Assam. Migration of Nepalis into Coal mine sector was a significant event in context of migration history. Importance of Nepali coolies in the sector could be understand by the wordings of G.C. Webster. Who remarked, *“they will do any kind of work they are put on to do, whereas this cannot be said of any other class of labour”* He also said *“They are far more tractable to reasons... make most trustworthy and capable men inside the colliery”*.<sup>88</sup> Evidence shows that initially, Nepali labourers were recruited in coal mine by the ‘Assam Railways and Trading Company’ from Darjeeling. Even in needs Nepali coolies were recruited by the company through the ‘Tea Districts Labour Association’, Gorakhpur. Recruitment of Nepali job seekers was so lucrative that beside official effort attempt was also made privately. Alongside through recruitment agencies many Nepali migrant labours were recruited by the *Sirdars* of the coal mines. With non marshal class many Gurkha martial castes people were also recruited in that period. Recruitment of the Gurkha martial caste people of those sectors was so alarming that Nepal Government expressed their grievance at it. Labour was recruited for the short term period but not for the whole year and did not recruit under any contract. Attractive assistance was given to the labourer to attract them into the work of coal mines. Travailing cost from the destination to mining area was paid by the Company. In the month of December of 1913 the Company recruited 284 persons through the sub-agency from Basti and 50 persons from Gorakhpur.<sup>89</sup> Recruiting Officer of Gorakhpur, ‘Major Brook Northey’ to indicate the recruitment of fighting castes mentioned that in the month of December 1922 the Tea District Labour Association was busy to recruit 2000 coolies for

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<sup>88</sup> Gurung, Tejimala, 2004, Gurkha Recruitment in the Coal Mines of Assam, *NEIHA Proceeding*, 25<sup>th</sup> Session, , p. 243.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.* p. 242.

the coal mine of Assam, who all were fighting castes like Magar, Thakurs, Chettris, Gurung. Even the petition submitted by Captain Lal Dhoj to the Government of Assam in March 1923 mentioned that many Nepalis including ex-sepoy and other people from military caste were working in the coal mines of Makum viz Ledo, Tikak, Rangring (Namdang), Golai, Lekhapani, and Margherita in bad conditions. Nepali labours who worked in the coal mine numbered 1357 in the year of 1921, and in the year of 1922, it went up to 1368. The number of Nepali labourers further increased to 1906 in the year 1923. It has also been mentioned that because of unfavourable conditions 305 coolies escaped from the mining site in the year of 1921, and 247 in the year of 1922.<sup>90</sup> In an enquiry, H.C. Barnes, 'Officiating Commissioner of Assam Valley Division' in the year of 1923 mentioned that 'Assam Bengal Railway Trading Company' forcibly retained the Nepali colliers at the collieries and labour was recruited deceitfully.<sup>91</sup> Though coolies in coalmine in Northeast were theoretically free but they were treated as indentured labour.

#### **Agricultural Sector and Migration from Nepal:**

After the Anglo-Burmese war and the treaty of Yandaboo of 1826 when British Colonial Power established their colonial hold over Assam the track was very sparsely populated with vast of wasteland. For the first time when British took over Assam nearly 6/8 or 7/8 part of the area was covered with forest. Nearly 7/8 parts of arable land of Kamrup District was waste. Out of the available 5790 sq. miles area of Nagaon only 140 sq. mile was under cultivation. By the year 1853, only 2242 sq. mile area was taken under cultivation of the total area of 34,345 sq. mile.<sup>92</sup> This uncultivated, unsettled forest and grass waste land was the major opportunity of revenue collection for the Colonial authority. On the other hand dense forest was the obstacle for cultivation and the timber of forest was also useful for British Empire. David Scott, British official in September 1827 announced that waste land of the area would be granted to any parson who would bring such land under cultivation with certain conditions and cultivator would be granted holding right on it

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<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.* p. 245.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.* p. 245.

<sup>92</sup> Handique, Rajib, 1998, West Land Grants Under the British and their Impact on Forest Resources in Assam, *NEIHA Proceedings*, 19<sup>th</sup> Session, Shillong, p. 175.

on paying the revenue after certain period.<sup>93</sup> Land for cultivation of tea and other purpose was also granted. But there was scarcity of human resource in the province. British authority realized that if the vast area of wastelands could not be brought under cultivation neither the condition of people of the place nor the demand of the government could be improved. Generally, Colonial Power encouraged outsiders to the province. By the year of 1931 the immigrated population of the area rose to 1.3 million and reached to the one-sixth population of the province.<sup>94</sup> Nepalis were also welcomed in the province and pecuniary assistance was given to them. In Nagaon, British Colonial Power due to their overall colonial scheme encouraged Nepali migration into the vast wasteland. Administration Report of 1905-06 shows that huge number of Nepalis settled themselves in Lakhimpur, Darrang and Barpeta sub-division of Kamrup districts in vast waste land. Land Revenue Administrative Report of 1913-14 indicated that Nepalis were also settled in the colonies in Darrang district in around 17,000 acres of cultivable land. In the year of 1914-15 Nepali settlement was recorded as 35,786 acres of land, half of which was in Darrang. In the year of 1915-16 land holding by Nepalis was 40,935 and in 1916-17 it rose to 43,725 acres. Thus the specific areas of land of Northeast and Eastern India was populated by the Nepalis. Most of the land under Nepalis was taken for large scale cultivation. Sugarcane, which had become a commercial crop, had also been cultivated by the Nepalis.<sup>95</sup> Thus Nepalis settled as cultivator in the Northeast and became third largest single immigrant group who took up land for settlement and agriculture and gradually started jute and paddy cultivation in Assam. In the year 1939-40 the total area of land settled down by the ex-tea garden labourers and other immigrants in the Assam Valley division was 10,70,761 acres, out of which 1,04,773 acres or nearly 9.8 percent were under the settlement of Nepalis. In this period 9,790 acres of land was under Nepali people in Goalpara, 11,386 acres in Kamrup division, 57,186 acres in Darrang, 5,491 acres in Nowgong, 6,896 acres in Sibsagar, 13,987 acres in Lakhimpur and 37 acres in Garo Hills.<sup>96</sup> It was told in the Administration Report of 1925-26 that in the North-west subdivision of Manipur wet rice cultivation was tried, but the hill men of this area in some ways the most backward of all and had not as yet been

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<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.* p. 176.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.* p. 139.

<sup>95</sup> Gurung, Tejimala, 2001, *op. cit.*, P. 411.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.* P. 411.

persuaded to diverge from their traditional methods of cultivation. *Jhum* cultivation was good everywhere in North-East and South-west areas.<sup>97</sup> The fact was not true only to the state of Manipur but also to whole hill area of the Northeast. Nepali migrant community entered Manipur and other areas of the Northeast and started cultivation significantly. Even in Sikkim Nepalis also established themselves in land and started cultivation considerably. In Kalimpong and other areas of Darjeeling district was also taken under cultivation by the Nepalis. The British facilitated this process. The British wanted to bring more wastelands under cultivation and to earn more revenue by this and for that reason they encouraged Nepalis to settle in the vast waste land of Northeast India.

### **Trafficking and Human Migration from Nepal:**

Human trafficking is an established method of labour supply to labour market. It becomes an effective system to supply women and children to job market. Women trafficking in sex industry is very alarming today. Children are also trafficked in various sectors of economy. Practice of human trafficking has increased with an annual turnover of 7 to 13 billion USD and it becomes the third largest trade around the world after drugs and weapons.<sup>98</sup> In trafficking migrant are treated as commodities and badly comes under the hold of agencies. Women and children are main victims of trafficking. Women are being sexually abused, tortured and forced to do the work which is not chosen by them. Human trafficking is one of the major factors of migration from Nepal to Eastern and Northeastern parts of India. Trafficking of Nepali children and women into Indian brothels and other sector has been a part of life in Nepal. Trafficking from Nepal is because of the backdrop of gross inequalities in gender, caste, wealth and educational achievement level. Earlier trafficking was mainly concerned with Nepal and India, but recently trafficking to Gulf States are also been witnessed. In that case mostly Nepalis are trafficked to India first and then from India to other countries. Women are promised good and lucrative job to foreign countries, but after migration they are forced to work in brothels. The social dogma like '*dukis system*', in which wealthy families buy young girls to offer to the temple idols and the '*Kamayani system*' which is nothing but a ritualized form of prostitution has forced the

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<sup>97</sup> State Archive of Manipur, Year: 1925-1926. Acc No. 46, R-No/S-No: R-N-2/S-A.

<sup>98</sup> Munir, Shafqat, September 2003, Trafficking, South Asia and Pakistan, *Himal Southasian*, Vol. 16, No. 9, p. 41.

Nepali girls to work as sex workers since long.<sup>99</sup> In the Rana reign Tamang girls were recruited as concubines for the rulers. Thus involvement of women as sex work was very common issue in Nepal. Recently in the middle of 1990 decline of carpet making industry in Nepal has acted for female migration to India. It is to say that Carpet industry was formerly accessible to female young girls of Nepal. In a study it has been shown that girls from carpet industry of Tamang village are moving outside from Nepal.<sup>100</sup> Even armed conflict in Nepal was also a cause of trafficking. Because of disturbed political situation opportunity of job gone down and trafficking has taken place. At present teenage girls are running to India and other countries for domestic work because of handsome earning. Nepali girls especially Tamangs, Sherpas, Lamas, and Gurungs are the target of the brokers or *dalal* and are mainly trafficked to India's red-light areas. Brokers play a vital role in migration to foreign countries. They usually arrange travel documents and make contact with the client. Generally those brokers are local persons. Even parents of those ethnic groups send their daughters to India for better employment. In addition to young girls, children of both sex and people of all age are the victim of trafficking by the brokers in the Indian job market for work in carpet and other factories, road building, construction works and other sectors. Poverty, social oppression, organized network, demand for white skin girl, delicate Mongolian features, illiteracy, social unconsciousness, social acceptance of multi-partner sexuality and open border between India and Nepal are the main reasons of trafficking and illegal migration.

'US Trafficking in Persons Report of 2008' stated about the growing business of child sex tourism in Nepal. The report stated that 5,000 to 7,000 girls trafficked from rural areas to Kathmandu for commercial sexual exploitation in accordance to the year of 2008.<sup>101</sup> It is very alarming that many Nepali girls and boys are the victims of trafficking to India from Kathmandu. Even via India they are being taken to other foreign country, like Gulf States- Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait. Though, Nepal Government in many occasions has put ban on such female Nepali migration. Dr. I.S.

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<sup>99</sup> Datta, Pranati., July 2005, Nepali Female Migration and Trafficking, *Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-11, No-1, Kamala – Raj – Enterprises, Delhi, P. 53.

<sup>100</sup> Tom O'Neill, 2001, Selling Girls in Kuwait: Domestic Labour Migration and Trafficking Discourse in Nepal, *Anthropologica*, Vol. 43, No. 2, p. 153.

<sup>101</sup> Nepal Migration Year Book-2008, 2008, Nepal Institute of Development Studies, Nepal, p. 46.

Gilada, general secretary of the Indian Health Organization (IHO) estimated in various studies conducted between the year 1985 and 1994 that there were between 70,000 to 100,000 prostitutes in Bombay, 100,000 in Calcutta, 40,000 in Delhi, 40,000 in Pune and 13,000 in Nagpur. Based on his statistics, Nepali social workers estimated the number of Nepali girl and women working in Indian brothels. They estimated that around 1990s there were 200,000 Nepali girls and women in Indian brothels. They also said near about 5,000 to 7,000 new Nepalis end up in Indian brothels every year.<sup>102</sup> Out of them 35 percent girl and women have been trafficked.<sup>103</sup> With a sample study it has been shown that age groups between 12 to 19 are mostly trafficked. Among them majority were through fake job promised and in the second number it was the marriage, by which trafficking has taken place.<sup>104</sup> Trafficking and migration of young boys are increasing in recent days. Not only in the major towns, but also a large number of migrants concentrate in this sector in Eastern and Northeastern districts of India. But, it is difficult to estimate the real number of girls and minor boys who have been victimised of trafficking.

### **Nepali Migration into Various Other Civil Sectors:**

Migration from Nepal to Eastern and Northeastern India in the nineteenth century was largely because of recruitment of Nepalis in military job of British colonial power. Beside this military recruitment, a large number of people have migrated for civil employment opportunities available in those places. Tea industry, Grazing and Dairy farming, coal mining was the main civil employment sectors where huge migration has taken place. But, other jobs like porter, watchmen, wood cutter, construction works have also attracted the Nepalis significantly since the past. As the sectors are not well organized it is difficult to get proper estimation of migration in those sectors. It is true that huge migration took place due to military recruitment but after retirement those military personnel preferred to settle in various places of Eastern and Northeastern India and accepted the civil job largely. Even a large number of people came from Nepal to India states with the military personal and accepted the civil jobs. Nepalis, who were kept

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<sup>102</sup> Human Right Watch, June 1995, *Rape for Profit: Trafficking of Nepali Girls and Women to India's Brothels*, Human Rights Watch, p. 7. (<http://www.unher.org>) (Retrieve No. 27/09/2008)

<sup>103</sup> Mishra, Mira, 2002, Trafficking of Women in South Asia: A Sketch, CNAS Journal, Vol. 29, No. 1, p. 131.

<sup>104</sup> Crawford, Mary, and Michelle, R., Kaufman, 2008, Sex Trafficking in Nepal: Survivor Characteristics and Long-Term Outcomes, P. 911. (Retrieved from [www.sagepublications.com](http://www.sagepublications.com). On. 23/07/2008)

reserved for future recruitment in military job or expected military employee also mostly accommodated themselves in civil employment. Nepalis who had migrated to India for military employment and worked there for a long time were aware about the availability of opportunities for civil employment in Eastern and Northeastern parts of India and encouraged their counterparts to come in the place. Nepalis who had been living in India for such a long time adapted themselves in the environment. On other hand, absence of male member in the home had shattered the village economy of Nepal and encouraged other members of the family to come into East and Northeastern parts of India for civil job opportunity. All these conditions had attracted the Nepalis to come permanently from their state to India with their families and to take the civil job available in the market.

Treaty between British and Nepal Darbar in 1923 encouraged migration from Nepal to India for civil employment. Treaty ensured free movement of labour from Nepal to India and the economic growth in India at that time encouraged Nepalis to migrate. So, since 1920s migration for civil employment witnessed largely. Migration from Nepal to Darjeeling for tea industry as labourer continued largely during the period. Men as well as women migrated in the civil employment of tea estate of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal and in Northeast India. As Nepalis were proved to be hard working were encouraged to this civil sectors. After the tea industry had flourished development took place in the areas and demand of labour for other civil employment increased. Tea plantation migration has been discussed earlier. There is evidence regarding the migration of Sherpa Nepali mainly from eastern hill of Nepal to Darjeeling area as porter, who actively participated in carrying of loads in the mountainous areas. Even, Oil Company of Assam, head quarter of which was situated in Digboi in the Lakhimpur district attracted Nepali labourers from Nepal. During the period 1921-31 field of operation of the company had increased and 146 new wells were drilled. Modern plant and equipment were installed both in the field and in the refinery and the output of crude oil increased significantly. Earlier which was just over 5 million gallons in 1921 amounted to 53.4 million gallons in 1931. At Badarpur and Masimpur in the Cachar district there were also oil fields managed by the Burma oil company. This oil field and refinery attracted Nepali migrants work force with the labourers from Assam, Bihar and Orissa, Central Province, Choto Nagpur,

Madrass, Bombay and other places. Among the workers 25 percent Nepali workers were used to return to their villages every year in April and May.<sup>105</sup> Throughout the years good number of people of Nepal migrated to India. Census of India, 1941 witnessed that out of foreign immigration 45 percent was from Nepal. Nepalis were also imported for the construction of roads and railway line. At the time of Chinese aggression of 1962, Indian government realised the need to build a new communication beside the existing road from Assam to Arunachal Pradesh. Construction of more roads, strategically important border roads, 350 kilometre new Ranagapara-North Lakhimpur-jonai-Murkoke-Selek railway line generated the scope of employment of the Nepalis. Nepalis engaged themselves in the labour job for the construction of these new roads. A good number of Nepalis migrated to Assam and Arunachal Pradesh during that period.<sup>106</sup> It is not possible to get the figure of migration into civil employment from Nepal to India. Documents indicate about the employment of Nepalis in the forests of Assam. It has been noticed that a large number of Nepalis were recruited in the Forest department as sawyers. As, strict control was imposed by the British Indian Government to restrict the recruitment of the able fighting class Nepalis to civil sector other than military purpose there was problem to recruit sawyers in the work of forest department. This order was due to the objection of Nepal Durbar. Forest department had applied to the Indian government for the relaxation of order of recruitment of Nepalis as sawyers. The department said, without sawyers mostly from Nepal, they would not be able to turn out the sleepers from forest. They said they employed the men who came down yearly for work in the plains from October to April, and then returned to their homes to Nepal for their cultivation. Forest department also said this Nepalis were not necessarily of fighting castes. The department said that on medical grounds combat recruiting officer usually reject very high percentage of Nepalis for military force and many others would be rejected in future. The department argued that if they give employment to those Nepalis, these people would be kept in one place and in necessity any recruiting officer would be able to find them if they require.<sup>107</sup> Conservator of Forests, western circle, in September 1918 remarked that all possible steps would be taken to prevent the employment of the Nepalis who are fit for military service. It was also stated that Nepal

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<sup>105</sup> Mullan, C.S., Census of India, 1931, Vol. III, Assam, Part-I, Report.

<sup>106</sup> Raatan, T., Encyclopedia of North-East India, Assam Meghalaya, Vol. I, Kalpaz Publication, Delhi, p. 68.

<sup>107</sup> Assam State Archive, April 1919, Forests Department, Judicial Branch, File-A, No. 1-5.



Durbar had no objection to civil employment being provided for Gurkhas who, though born in Nepal, but, domiciled in India. Government of India accepted the view of Nepal Darbar and said that Gurkhas would not be encouraged to seek civil employment in India or to domicile in the country. Regarding the question of the temporary employment of Gurkhas who had come to Assam to seek work in the forest department it was told that the Gurkhas, who were unfit for military service could be employed as sawyers in the forests. In this regard it was also told that the Assam forest largely depended on Nepali labours, as there were very few sawyers among the local races and Assamese did not take this form of labour. It also mentioned that most of the sawyers in Assam forest were Nepalis, and many of them usually would come for the dry season and returned to their own country in the rainy season. It also mentioned that without this Gurkhas work of the forests would suffer most. The Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign and Political Department stated in 1918 to the Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam that the Government of India recognised the importance of the employment of Nepalis labour in Assam forests. He also said that His Excellency the Prime Minister of Nepal had intimated that they had no objection to the temporary employment Nepalis in tea gardens and forests and other sectors who would come down to India of their own accord in search of temporary work for the dry or winter months and thereafter return to their homes in Nepal.<sup>108</sup> The statement of Nepal Darbar in regard to employment of Nepalis as Sawyers had helped to recruit the Nepalis in the work of forest. Though British government accepted the view that no recruitment party by civil or labour organization would be sent inside the Nepal border and employment of Nepali fighting class who were of military age would be discouraged as far as possible.

Nepali migration to India has taken place since long and with the colonial intervention migration has significantly increased into Eastern and Northeastern parts of India as well as in the whole country. Various pull factors have been responsible for the migration of Nepalis into Eastern and Northeastern India. Earlier Nepalis accommodated themselves mainly in the lands of Eastern India with the conquest of the place. But colonialism opened the way for new entrepreneurship. Tea plantation, coalmine and other sectors opened in the colonial time created the conditions for the huge recruitment of labour

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<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

forces. Shortage of capable labour force in Eastern and Northeastern India pulled the Nepalis into the land. For colonial existence treaties were signed and various avenues were created for the exploitation of resource and for the generation of cash revenue. Colonial system pulled the Nepalis into forest field as labourer, as graziers to supply milk and milk products to military personnel and civilian, and as load bearer in various sectors and also as workers in different infrastructural activities. There were also many other pull factors for Nepali migration into postcolonial stage. Treaty of Peace and Friendship, open border have pushed the Nepalis to India. Even infrastructural development has created the demand for Nepali labourers in India and Nepalis migrated in large number at that period and settled in Eastern and Northeastern India. Trafficking in postcolonial era has acted as strong pull factor for Nepali migration. Demand of Nepali women in the brothels has pulled them into Eastern and Northeastern parts of India as well as to whole country. Even at present, large migration are taking place in the mining sectors, in hotels, construction work and also in many unorganised sectors. Thus till today various sectors in India are pulling the Nepalis into the Eastern and Northeastern India.