

## **CHAPTER – III**

### **A BRIEF SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF NAGAON DISTRICT**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The geographical area selected for study is the Nagaon district of Assam. This district is selected for the following reasons. It is one of the most backward districts of Assam and is thickly populated (density of population is more than 700 per square km as per 2011 Census which is the highest in the state). As per HDR of Assam- 2003, the position of Nagaon in HDI ranking is 14 out of 23 districts of the state and its GDI rank is 22. The negative difference (-8) between the district's HDI and GDI ranking implies that the district is comparatively better placed in terms of HDI index than in the GDI index and that the women do not have the same level of development in dimensions of health, education and income as men. These points speak out the prevalence of relatively high gender disparity in the society. Moreover, the female work participation rate is only 12.24 in 2001 which is the third lowest in Assam, Dhubri being the lowest and Karimganj, the next. Considering these aspects, Nagaon district is selected purposively for conducting the present study which will also be a pioneering one in the area of livelihood and empowerment of women.

Nagaon district which is situated in the central Assam is one of the largest administrative districts of the state. As per census data 2011, Nagaon district was the most populous district of Assam and one of the largest in area. The district is bounded by Sonitpur district and the river Brahmaputra in the North, West Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills in the South and East Karbi Anglong and Golaghat district in the East. The mighty river Brahmaputra flows along the

northern part of the district. Other major tributaries which are worth mentioning and flowing through the district are Kolong, Kopili that drain into the Brahmaputra. Located at a distance of 123 kilometers by road from Guwahati, Nagaon town constitutes a vital corridor linking the Upper Assam districts of Golaghat, Jorhat, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and the North Assam districts of Sonitpur and North Lakhimpur. Nagaon has a total geographical area of 3,831 sq. km.

### **3.2 History of Nagaon District**

According to scholar Rajmohan Das, the name of Nagaon district was old 'Ratnapith'. The small Kopili River originated from the big river Brahmaputra at Arikuti (local name of the place) and flowing through many places met again the Brahmaputra at Kajalimukh (local name of the place). The region touched by the Kopili in its course was formed as a district. For administrative purpose three areas within the district were created and they were Tinibor, Hatbor, Kaliabor/ NijKaliabor. Three outposts were Changchaki, Rahachaki, Jagichaki and three ghats were Silghat, Dhinghat and Borghat. These nine villages of the region are together known as present Nagaon district. The people of the region practice different languages, dialects; religions and are from Mongolian origins and Tibetan families of Indo-China.

In earlier days Nagaon was spelt as Nowgong. The people of the district were amongst the chosen targets of violence during the subsequent Burmese rule in the late 1810s. In those days there was no leadership to organize resistance movement against the Burmese. When the British entered into Assam, people heaved a sigh of relief because the British came down heavily on the Burmese and compelled them to retreat from Assam. According to the treaty of Yandaboo in 1826, this area of the province passed off silently into the hands of the British. Nagaon was

carved out as a separate district administrative unit in 1832. It took a couple of years before the British finally settled on the present site on the bank of the Kolong River as the district headquarters in 1839. The district headquarters was called Nagaon and gradually it emerged into a town. It became a municipality in 1893.

In Nagaon district, at the social level a great majority of the people are the Vaishnavites. Sankardeva, who is the great saint of the Bhakti movement era, was born at Bordowa, at a distance of fifteen kilometers from the district headquarters. His life and work have been social exemplifiers and one can feel the long shadow of his influence even in the remotest part of the district. The entire credit of introducing modern education system in Nagaon district goes to Christian Missionaries. Of them, the name of Miles Bronson, the American missionary, shines as brilliantly as ever. Apart from him, his apostle of the new age Anandaram Dhekial Phukan spent the best part of his life at Nagaon. His spiritual successor Gunabhiram Barua also worked in Nagaon for education system about two decades. The district is basically a rural conglomerate of agricultural population.

### **3.3 Education System in Nagaon District**

Education is a basic primary right of human beings and an inevitable part of social development. To know about the extent of education in Nagaon district, the report of Sir Mills written in 1853 is a valuable source. According to this report, there were at least twelve schools in the district at that time. Missionaries also contributed to the creation of educational atmosphere in the district.

Dr. Miles Bronson, who came here in 1841, established an institute for orphans. The contributions by the Missionaries to women education must be remembered with gratitude. In 1843 the Missionaries paved the way for women education by establishing Mission School in Nagaon district. Dr. Bronson even took pains to establish a technical school in the district during his stay.

The arrival of Anandaram Dhekial Phookan in 1853 in the district made a remarkable excitement in the intellectual field. He worked for the improvement of Assamese language and his intimacy with Bronson and Butlar, the then DC, helped him in that mission a lot. Anadaram Dhekial Phookan was the pioneer soldier of Assamese Renaissance. It is only because of his personality and endeavor for the upliftment of Assamese language, that Nagaon has become the center for intellectual renaissance.

The literate section of that time (1930-35) realized the necessity of separate institutions for women. There was only one middle school for girls. However, for the persisting efforts of a few persons the first women high school was established in 1936. Gradually, in this way Nagaon district started its upward motion in the educational movement. After few years Nowgaon College appeared in 1944 as the first college to give higher education to aspiring students. The second college for higher education was established in the district in 1959 as Lumding College. In the same year Anandaram Dhekial Phookan College was established in the district. Similarly, keeping in view the importance of higher education for women, Nowgaon Girls College was established in 1962. In this way, some more colleges have taken their shapes in the district for higher education. Nowgaon Law College in 1967, College of education, Nagaon in 1968,

Khagorijan College in 1972, Gopinath Devgoswami Commerce College in 1984 etc. are worth mentioning in this case. At present there are more than thirty colleges in the district which are approved by Gauhati University. Besides this, in order to meet the demand of the students at present, some more private sector high schools and junior colleges at higher secondary level have been established in Nagaon district.

The picture of literacy rate of Nagaon district and Assam is shown in the following Table- 3.1

**Table-3.1: Literacy Rate by Sex in Assam and Nagaon District**

District	2011 Census					Male-Female Literacy Gap 2011		
	Total	Male	Female	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Assam	72.19	77.85	66.27	69.34	88.47	11.58	12.37	6.87
Nagaon	72.37	76.51	68.07	69.96	86.34	8.44	8.70	6.82

*Source: Statistical Handbook Assam 2014, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Assam*

The low literacy rate and gender disparity in literacy has remained as a perpetual problem in the arena of education in Assam since long. Nagaon district is no exception to that. Even in 2011, the Male-Female literacy gap in the district has remained as high as 12.37 percentage point in rural areas of Assam and 6.87 in urban areas of Assam. The corresponding figures for Nagaon district are 8.7 and 6.82 respectively.

### 3.4 Geography of Nagaon District

Geographically, Nagaon district is located between 25 degree 45 minutes to 26 degree 45 minutes north Latitudes. The highlands of the district include the Hatimura Parbat with an elevation of 186.5 meters above the sea level, the Kamakhya Parbat with an elevation of 244 meters above the sea level and the Barkandali with an altitude of 853 meters. The average altitude of Nagaon District is 60.6 meters above the sea level. It sprawls across almost 4000 square kilometers of fertile alluvial plains and thickly forested hills.

The climate of Nagaon district is different from other districts of Assam. Rainfall from south to north increases from 1000 mm per annum to 2000 mm per annum. The pattern of rainfall is such that the south part is usually dry and the north part is relatively rainier. The average rainfall of the district is about 1750 mm. Besides these, the area around Lanka is like semi desert. The cold weather season stretches from December to February. It is followed by the pre-monsoon season of thunderstorms. January is the coldest month with temperatures varying from 10 degree celsius to 24 degree celsius. June and July are the warmest months.

Floods create havoc usually from June to October. The monsoon season lasts from April to June and the post monsoon season lasts from September to November in the district. Deforestation, El-Nino effect, speedy urbanization and global warming in general are changing the rainfall pattern of Nagaon district. In summer, temperature varies from a maximum of 32.9 degree celsius to a minimum of 25.5 degree celsius. The annual average maximum temperature is 30.4 degree celsius and the minimum is 19.8 degree celsius. Nagaon district has a vegetation cover of only 12%.

The geographical classification of the area of the district is shown in the following Tables- 3.2 and Table-3.3.

**Table-3.2: Total Area and Classification of Area in Assam and Nagaon District, 2011-12**

Place	Geographical Area	Forest	Barren and Uncultivable Land	Net Area Sown	Total Cropped Area	Area Sown More Than Once
Assam	7849975	1853260	1408380	2900597	4074021	1363446
Nagaon	411030 (5.24%)	88024 (4.75%)	21659 (1.54%)	235626 (8.12%)	299322 (7.35%)	63696 (4.67%)

Source: As shown in Table-3.1

**Table-3.3: Forest Division Wise Area under Forest in Assam and Nagaon District (As on 30.01.2013) (Area in Hectare)**

Forest Division	Reserved Forest	Proposed Reserved Forest	Protected Area	Total Forest (Excluding Unclassified State Forest)
Assam	1397315.873	175741.670	362115.781	1935173.324
Nagaon	35310.086 (2.53%)	3573.000 (2.03%)	-	38883.086 (2.01%)

Source: As shown in Table-3.1

The figures in the parenthesis show the percentage share of Nagaon district out of the total of Assam. The district has 4.75 percent of the total forest area of Assam. However, the total forest

excluding unclassified state forest in Nagaon is only 2.01 percent of that of Assam. The total cropped area of Nagaon is 7.35 percent of the total cropped area of Assam.

### **3.5 Administrative Division**

In case of administrative division of the district, Nagaon has eleven legislative assembly constituencies, namely Raha, Dhing, Batadraba, Rupahighat, Nagaon, Barhampur, Samaguri, Kaliabor, Jamunamukh, Hojai and Lumding and three civil sub-divisions namely Nagaon, Kaliabor, Hojai. There are ten revenue circles in the district namely Nagaon, Raha, Kampur, Dhing, Rupahi, Samaguri, Kaliabor, Doboka, Hojai and Lanka. Besides these, Nagaon district is divided into eighteen development blocks. They are Khagorijan, Pakhioria, Dolonghat, Raha, Batadraba, Juria, Rupahighat, Bajiagaon, Pachimkaliabor, Kaliabor, Lowkhuwa, Barhampur, Kathiatoli, Binakandi, Jugijan, Dhalpukhuri, Odali and Lumding. Out of seven towns of the district, Nagaon town tops the list with highest population. Moreover, Nagaon district has 1396 revenue villages, 241 gram panchayats, 4 municipal boards and 4 town committees. Total number of police stations is 21. Nagaon district is well connected by National Highways- NH36 and NH37, 37A and state roads. In case of Indian Railways Network, the important junctions are Chaparmukh, Lumding and important stations are Nagaon, Haiborgaon, Dhing, Silghat, Kampur, Hojai and Lanka.

### **3.6 Demographic Characteristics**

As per the Population Census 2011, Nagaon district had population of 2,826,006. Out of which the male and female were 1,440,307 and 1,385,699 respectively. Nagaon district's population constituted 9.07 percent of total population of Assam. Besides, Nagaon district



population constituted 9.05 percent of total Maharashtra population. In 2001 census, this figure for Nagaon District was at 8.68 percent of Maharashtra population.

The population density of Nagaon district for 2011 was 711 per sq. km. In 2001, it was 583 per square km. The population growth rate of the district over the decade 2001-2011 was 22.09 percent. The Sex Ratio in Nagaon stood at 962 per 1000 male. The average national sex ratio in India is 940 according to the latest reports of Census 2011 Directorate. In 2011 Population Census, the child sex ratio of this district was 958 girls per 1000 boys.

The average literacy rate of Nagaon district in 2011 was 72.37 percent as compared to 61.73 percent in 2001. If it is found out gender wise, male and female literacy rates were 76.51 percent and 68.07 percent respectively. Total literate in Nagaon district were 1,710,716 of which male and female were 921,850 and 788,866 respectively.

Out of the total population of Nagaon district for 2011 census, 13.09 percent live in urban areas. In total 369,534 people live in urban areas of which males and females are 188,127 and 181,407. As per 2011 census data, sex ratio in urban areas of the district was 964. Similarly, child sex ratio was 961. In urban areas the average literacy rate was 87.23 percent out of which male and female were 90.58 and 83.76 percent as per 2011 census data. In actual number 288,216 people are literate in urban region of which males and females are 152,333 and 135,883 respectively.

According to the same census data, 86.91 per cent of population lives in rural areas of villages in the district i.e. the total Nagaon district population living in rural areas are 2,454,234 of which males and females were 1,250,985 and 1,203,249 respectively. Sex ratio in rural areas

of Nagaon district was 962 females per 1000 males. Similarly in rural areas of the district, literacy rate was 69.96 per cent of which male and female literacy rates were 74.22 and 65.52 per cent respectively as per census data, 2011. In total, 1,422,500 people are literate of which males and females are 769,517 and 652,983 respectively.

### **3.7 An Overview on the Population of Nagaon City**

Nagaon city is governed by Municipal Corporation which comes under Nagaon Metropolitan Region. As per provisional report of Census India, population of Nagaon city in 2011 was 111,355, of which males and females were 59,021 and 57,334 respectively. Although Nagaon city had population of 116,355, its urban/ metropolitan population was 147,137 of which 74,824 were males and 72,313 were females. In education section, total literates in Nagaon city were 98,068 of which 52,690 were males while 45,378 were females. Average literacy rate of Nagaon city was 93.43%, male and female literacy was 98.58% and 88.08%. The sex ratio of Nagaon city was 971 per 1000 males. In Nagaon district the metropolitan areas are Chota Haibor, Dimaruguri, Kachalukhowa, Morongial, Nagaon and Nartam Gaon. The district has been the meeting ground of diverse ethnic groups, cultural streams since time immemorial. Throughout the history, people of different stocks have been migrating into this land and merged into a common harmonious whole in a process of assimilation and fraternization.

The Table-3.4, Table-3.5 and Table-3.6 throw light on some important characteristics of the overall population of Nagaon district of Assam.

**Table-3.4: The Demographic Characteristics of Nagaon District (2011)**

Total Population	2,826,006
Total Male Population	1,440,307
Total Female Population	1,385,699
Sex Ratio	962
Average Literacy Rate	72.37 percent
Male Literacy Rate	76.51 percent
Female Literacy Rate	68.07 percent
Total SC Population	266350
Total SC Male Population	136473
Total SC Female Population	129877
Total ST Population	115153
Total ST Male Population	57759
Total ST Female Population	57394

*Source: Census Report, 2011*

**Table-3.5: The Demographic Characteristics of Urban Areas of Nagaon District**

Total Urban Population	369,534
Total Urban Male Population	188,127
Total Urban Female Population	181,407
Sex Ratio	964
Average Urban Literacy Rate	87.23
Urban Male Literacy Rate	90.58
Urban Female Literacy Rate	83.76

*Source: Census Report, 2011*

**Table-3.6: The Demographic Characteristics of Rural Areas of Nagaon District**

Total Rural Population	2,454,234
Total Rural Male Population	1,250,985
Total Rural Female Population	1,203,249
Sex Ratio	962
Average Rural Literacy Rate	69.96
Rural Male Literacy Rate	74.22
Rural Female Literacy Rate	65.52

*Source: Census Report, 2011*

The livelihood options are limited in the Nagaon district of Assam as is evident from the percentage of workers in the district as shown in Table- 3.7. The percentage of total workers is

only 34.71 out of the total population of the district. The important point to note here is the abysmally low percentage of female main and marginal workers in the District. These figures point towards the low level participation of women in the workforce.

**Table-3.7: Total Number of Workers and Non-Workers of Nagaon District (2011)**

Category		Number	Percentage
Total Workers (Main and Marginal)	Persons	979,998	34.71
	Male	766,728	53.28
	Female	213,270	15.40
Main Workers	Persons	734,993	26.03
	Male	636,533	44.23
	Female	98,460	7.11
Marginal Workers	Persons	245,005	8.68
	Male	130,195	9.05
	Female	114,810	8.29
Non-Workers	Persons	1,843,770	65.29
	Male	672,384	46.72
	Female	1,171,386	84.60

*Source- District Census Handbook Nagaon, Series-19, Part XII-B, Directorate of Census Operation, Assam*

From Table-3.7 it is clear that in Nagaon district, the percentage of total female workers is 15.40 which is very low. Similarly, in case of total main female workers the percentage is only 7.11

and in case of marginal female workers it is only 8.29 in the district. But for non-workers the percentage of female is 84.60, which is very high.

**Table-3.8: The Category of Workers in Nagaon District (Main And Marginal),2011**

<b>Category</b>		<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Cultivators	Persons	346,123	35.32
	Male	297,695	38.83
	Female	48,428	22.71
Agricultural Labourers	Persons	196,174	20.02
	Male	142,446	18.58
	Female	53,728	25.19
Workers in Household Industry	Persons	38,122	3.89
	Male	18,270	2.38
	Female	19,852	9.31
Other Workers	Persons	399,579	40.77
	Male	308,317	40.21
	Female	91,262	42.79
Female Teacher (In 2012-13)	High School	1060	-
	Higher Secondary	459	-
	Junior Colleges	71	-

Source- As shown in Table-3.1 and Table 3.7

From Table-3.8 it is seen that as per census 2011 in Nagaon district, the percentage of female cultivators is 22.71, the percentage of female agricultural labourers is 25.19, the percentage of female workers in household industry is 9.31 and other female workers is 42.79.

The socio-economic characteristics of the households of Nagaon district can be shown in the following Table- 3.9

**Table 3.9: Total Households and Amenities (%), Census 2011**

Place	Total Household	Drinking Water within Premises	Drinking Water Near Premises	Electricity As Source Of Lighting	Latrine Facilities Within Premises
Assam	6406471	54.8	26.7	37.0	64.9
Nagaon	559340 (8.73% in terms of total)	64.6	19.9	34.9	75.3

*Source: As shown in Table-3.1*

In case of socio-economic characteristics of the households of Nagaon district, Table-3.9 shows that 64.6 percent households have the source of drinking water within premises and 19.9 percent households have the source of drinking water near premises. Again 34.9 percent households in Nagaon district use electricity as a source of lighting as compared to overall 37 percent of Assam. 75.3 percent households have latrine facilities within premises as compared to overall 64.9 percent in Assam.

**Table 3.10: Composite Index of Backwardness of Nagaon District**

Nagaon District		
2009-2010	Composite Index	11.2
	Rank	8
2010-2011	Composite Index	12.5
	Rank	11
2011-2012	Composite Index	13.8
	Rank	14

*Source: As shown in Table-3.1*

From the Table-3.10 it is clear that the rank of composite index of backwardness of Nagaon district in 2009-10 was 8<sup>th</sup>, in 2010-11 it was 11<sup>th</sup> and in 2011-12 the rank again fell to 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Table 3.11: Electrification of Number of Villages in Assam and Nagaon District**

Place	Number of Villages Electrified (Cumulative)			
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Assam	20465	22294	22520	22587
Nagaon	1216(5.94%)	1317(5.91%)	1327(5.89%)	1327(5.88%)

*Source: Economic Survey Assam 2014-2015, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Assam, Planning and Development Department, Government of Assam*



From Table-3.11 it is shown that the number of electrified villages in Nagaon district in 2010-11 was 1215 which was 5.94 per cent of Assam. But in 2013-14 the number of electrified villages in Nagaon district was 1327 which was 5.88 per cent of Assam.

### **3.8 Livelihoods in Different Sectors of the Economy**

#### **Agriculture**

The economy of Nagaon district is purely agrarian in terms of natural resources endowment. Agriculture is the backbone of its economy and it provides livelihood to about 78% of the total population of the district. Rice is the main food of the inhabitants and paddy is the principal crop cultivated in the district. Other major crops cultivated in Nagaon district are wheat, jute, maize, sugarcane etc. Besides these crops, mustard seed, vegetables etc. are also important agricultural products cultivated in the district. Floods, however, are a major impediment in the development of the agricultural sector of the district. Though the flow of credit has also been very low, this aspect has now started showing signs of improvement. Present marketing linkages in the agricultural sector of Nagaon district are very weak. Besides these, the average size of land holding is also low. But with the development of various government schemes and credit linkages programmes from banks, fund requirements are met by various agencies like Irrigation Department, ASEB, DRDA, Banks etc.

The following tables represent the picture of crop production in Nagaon district-

**Table-3.12: Area under High Variety of Rice in Assam and Nagaon District, 2013-2014**

Place	Autumn Rice	Winter Rice	Summer Rice	Total
Assam	142931	1222482	223940	1589353
Nagaon	7736 (5.41%)	91159(7.45%)	24866(11.10%)	123761(7.79%)

*Source: As shown in Table-3.1*

**Table-3.13: Net Area Irrigated in Assam and Nagaon District (Area in Hectare)**

Place	2012-2013	2013-2014 (P)
Assam	154973	161398
Nagaon	28802 (18.59%)	29991(18.58%)

*Source: As shown in Table-3.1*

From Table-3.13 it is seen that the net area irrigated in Nagaon district in 2012-13 was 28802 which was 18.59 per cent of total net area irrigated in Assam and in 2013-14 it was 29991 which was 18.58 per cent of total net area irrigated in Assam.

**Table-3.14: Crop & Crop Season Wise Area Irrigated in Assam and Nagaon District, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 (Area in Hectare)**

Place	2012-2013		2013-2014	
	Kharif Crop Season (Total)	Rabi & Pre Kharif Crop Season (Total)	Kharif Crop Season (Total)	Rabi & Pre Kharif Crop Season (Total)
Assam	153377	181745	159257	186806
Nagaon	29549(19.26%)	33774 (18.58%)	29991(18.83%)	33326(17.84%)

*Source: As shown in Table-3.1*

From Table-3.14 it is seen that in Nagaon district in 2012-13, the net area irrigated in Kharif crop season and Rabi and Pre-Kharif crop season were 29549 and 33774 respectively which were 19.26 per cent and 18.58 per cent of Assam. In 2013-14, the net area irrigated in Kharif crop season and Rabi and Pre-Kharif crop season were 29991 and 33326 which were 18.83 per cent and 17.84 per cent of Assam.

**Table-3.15: Production and Average Yield of Tea in Assam and Nagaon District**

		Place	
		Assam	Nagaon
Area Under Tea Cultivation (in Hect.)	2011	322210	8024 (2.49%)
	2012	322210	8086 (2.51%)
	2013	322210	8086 (2.51%)
Production (in '000Kg.)	2011	589110	16045(2.72%)
	2012	590120	15990 (2.71%)
	2013	629050	17029 (2.71%)
Average Yield (Kg. per Hect.)	2011	1830	1707
	2012	1831.48	1977.49
	2013	1952.30	2105.99

Source: As shown in Table-3.1

From Table 3.15 it is clear that the area under tea cultivation (in Hect.) in 2013 was 8086 which was 2.51 per cent of total area under tea cultivation of Assam. The production of tea (in '000Kg.) in the district in 2013 was 17029 which was 2.71 per cent of total production of tea in Assam. And average yield (Kg. per Hect.) of tea in 2013 in Nagaon district was 2105.99.

**Table-3.16: Area and Production of Rubber in Assam during 2013-14**

		Place	
		Assam	Nagaon
Area (in Hectare)		49000.95	257.84(0.56%)
Production (in MT)		13700.19	193.33(1.41%)
Tapping Area (in Hect.)	2012-2013	7633.83	108.50(1.42%)
	2013-2014	10000.63	124.35(1.24%)
Employment Generation (No.)	2012-2013	381992	-
	2013-2014	417425	-

*Source: As shown in Table-3.1*

Table-3.16 shows the percentage of area of Nagaon district cultivated (in Hect.) for rubber production in 2013-14 as 0.56 percent of total area cultivated in Assam. And the percentage of rubber production in 2013-14 in Nagaon district was 1.41 percent of total rubber production of Assam.

### **Fisheries**

Assam gets a lot of rainfall and fish is an integral part of the diet of the people of Assam. Considering these facts it can be said that the state produces just about 5.7% of the total freshwater fish production in India. Nagaon district produces about 14,000 million tons of fish in a year which is about 9% of the total production in the state. It is estimated that 95% of the

population of the district are fish-eaters. This would estimate the total requirement of fish in the district in a year at about 23,000 MT. There is a visible dominance of imported fish in the organized markets. There is a lot of demand for local fish because of its better taste and quality when compared with the imported fish. There are about 20 small and big rivers, large areas of water bodies, swamps and beels in Nagaon district having unique potential for development of inland fisheries. The district also has a 23,000 strong fishermen population. Another important advantage which the district enjoys is the high water table. Thus, there is no requirement to dig deep for water. There are a number of unemployed youth in the district and therefore it has been observed that more and more of them are choosing fisheries as a livelihood option. In earlier days, there were a few social factors among people because of which fishing was not considered as a very respectable livelihood option; but these days there are no such adverse social factors and fishing sector is being looked at as a decent livelihood option.

During the last few decades, there has been a lot of development in aquaculture technologies on account of which experimental production of 10,000 to 15,000 Kg/Ha/yr has also been achieved. These technologies are mainly based on judicious manipulation of species ratios/stocking density and management practices on sound scientific lines. But due to absence of fishing on scientific/commercial principles, the fishery sector in the district results in low levels of productivity. Therefore, there is a need to train the fish farmers properly. As a result of low level of productivity profits in the sector get reduced. It leads to the reduction of the settlement values of the water bodies resulting in less incentive for the licensee to invest in the fishery. In fact, it almost becomes like subsistence fish farming. The problem is further compounded by the short average lease periods. An important problem which is experienced in the sector is low level

of flow of credit. Due to the risk involved because of flood and absence of insurance cover, banks have not come forward to finance this sector. Therefore this situation can be improved by launching pilot projects in the sectors of developing derelict water bodies and riverine fishery through the Self-Help-Group (SHG) methods.

**Table-3.17: Number and Area under Fisheries in Assam and Nagaon District, 2013-2014  
(Area in Hectare)**

		Place	
		Assam	Nagaon
Beel Fisheries	Nos.	1197	134(11.19%)
	Area	100817	9919(9.83%)
Ponds & Tanks	Nos.	367701	40984(11.14%)
	Area	60230	6298(10.46%)
Derelict Water Bodies/Swamp	Nos.	3887	143(3.68%)
	Area	116444	23578(20.25%)
Reservoir Fisheries	Nos.	2	-
	Area	2553	-
Forest Fisheries	Nos.	71	8(11.27%)
	Area	5017	410(8.17%)

Source: As shown in Table-3.11

From Table-3.17 it is clear that the number of Beel Fisheries in Nagaon district during 2013-14 was 134 which was 11.19 per cent of total Beel Fisheries of Assam. The number of forest

fisheries during 2013-14 in the district was 410 which was 8.17 per cent of total number of forest fisheries of Assam.

**Table-3.18: Number of Hatcheries and Production of Fish Seed and Fish in Assam and Nagaon District, 2013-2014**

		Place	
		Assam	Nagaon
No. of Hatcheries	Govt.	17	1(5.88%)
	Pvt.	347	113(32.56%)
Production of Fish Seed (in Million Nos.)	Govt.	12.00	1.60(13.33%)
	Pvt.	4533.72	1075.38(23.72%)
Production of Fish (in Tonne)		266700	27030(10.13%)
Fish Imported (in Tonne)		12830	150(1.17%)

Source: As shown in Table-3.11

From Table-3.18 it is clear that the percentage of production of fish in Nagaon district in 2013-14 was 10.13 per cent of total production of fish in Assam. And the percentage of fish imported to Nagaon district during 2013-14 was 1.17 per cent of total fish imported of Assam.

### **Animal Husbandry**

#### **Poultry**

People of Nagaon district are predominantly non-vegetarian and prefer both eggs and meat of birds of local variety. But its production is less than the demand in the district. The climatic



condition of Nagaon district is suitable for poultry farming. Most of the poultry birds are found in small units. However, the farmers have to depend on other districts/states for supply of day-old-chicks. Non-availability of quality poultry feed in the local market of the district along with high cost of ingredients and limited supply of essential medicines/ vaccines are the major constraints for development of this sector.

The people in the rural areas of Nagaon district have long tradition of maintaining cows and buffaloes for draught power and milk. The production of milk per local animal is 1.5 liter per day. But due to poor genetic character of the local cows there is low productivity of milk. There is high preponderance of small holdings in the district. Considering demand and supply in the district, there is ample scope for development of this activity in the district, particularly in rural areas adjacent to urban and semi-urban areas.

**Table-3.19: Estimated Livestock and Poultry Population in Assam and Nagaon District, 2013-2014**

Place	Indigeneous Cattle	Crossed Breed Cattle	Buffaloes	Goats	Fowls	Ducks
Assam	8754988	483567	496062	3230577	11118230	4340883
Nagaon	472639 (5.4%)	27496 (5.69%)	23398 (4.72%)	150472 (4.66%)	501016 (4.51%)	235695 (5.43%)

*Source: As shown in Table-3.1*

From Table-3.19 it is seen that during 2013-14, the percentage of indigeneous cattle of Nagaon district was 5.4 per cent of total indigeneous cattle of Assam. In case of crossed breed cattle Nagaon district had 5.69 per cent of total crossed breed cattle of Assam. In case of buffaloes,

Nagaon district had 4.72 per cent of total buffaloes of Assam. In case of goats, Nagaon district had 4.66 percent of total goats of Assam. In case of fowl, Nagaon district had 4.51 per cent of total fowls of Assam and in case of ducks; Nagaon district had 5.43 per cent of total ducks of Assam

### **Handloom**

The handloom industry is the most important cottage industry in Assam with a glorious past. This handloom industry is closely associated with art and culture of the society of Assam. Mahatma Gandhi made no exaggeration when he remarked- “Every woman of Assam is a born weaver. No Assamese girl can expect to become a wife if she does not weave. And she weaves fairy tales. Some of the old patterns were of matchless beauty”. Therefore, it can be said that weaving is a traditional activity of the state.

Nagaon district also presents a unique picture in the handloom and textile sector. Weaving of fabrics is a way of livelihood of large number of rural families and artisans in Nagaon district. Looms are part and parcel of rural households and weaving is an integral part of rural livelihood. However, this handloom sector is yet to be exploited commercially. It is important to note that weaving is only a part- time activity and not the primary bread earning activity for rural households. As a result, handloom has not been able to develop to its fullest potential. It is proposed that the inherent advantage which women have in weaving skills shall be exploited. It is felt that demand for the products already exists. Jajori, which is located about 17 km from Nagaon town, is a very important centre of handloom production in the district. Famous for its “Kacha Pat” products, there are approximately 6,705 numbers of weavers in Jajori covering most of the families of the place. Considering its importance, government has

established a Handloom Production Centre at Jajori. The area has immense potential by way of organizing, modernization, training and providing adequate marketing linkages. It is proposed to use the SHG method here to develop its inherent advantage fruitfully.

### **Industries**

The district of Nagaon is practically dependent on agriculture. Therefore the industrial sector has not yet assumed a dominant role in employment generation. Tea manufacturing is the predominant industry in Nagaon district. In addition to Tea Industry, in the medium scale industry sector, Hindustan Paper Corporation, The Assam Spun Silk Mill, Assam Co-operative Jute Mill Ltd., Kampur Co-operative Sugar Mill, Katimari Weaving Project and Sack Craft Paper Project at Dhing are the main industrial projects taken up in Co-operative and State sectors. Whereas the Jute Mill at Silghat is flourishing, the Kampur Sugar Mill has been struggling in the district. There is good scope for agro-based industries and sericulture. But there are identified weaknesses which include power shortage, seasonal floods, shortage of industrial labor, lack of practical entrepreneurial development/motivation, lack of practical exposure for perspective entrepreneurs to the development of the various economic activities elsewhere.

**Table-3.20: Total Number of Registered Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises (MSME) Units and Total Number of Workers in Assam and Nagaon District**

		Place	
		Assam	Nagaon
Unit Registration During the Year	2011-2012	1287	74(5.75%)
	2012-13	1451	123(8.48%)
	2013-14	1860	180(9.68%)
Total Workers	2011-12	13886	603(4.34%)
	2012-13	11671	718(6.15%)
	2013-14	12971	1286(9.91%)

Source: As shown in Table-3.11

From Table-3.20 it is seen that total number of micro, small and medium units registered in Nagaon district during 2013-14 was 180 which was 9.68 per cent of total number of units registered in Assam. Again total number of workers in Nagaon district in 2013-14 was 1286 which was 9.91 percent of total number of workers of Assam.

**Table-3.21: Number of Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises (MSME) Registered in Assam and Nagaon District during the Year 2013-14**

	Unit Registration			
	Micro	Small	Medium	Total
Assam	1677	171	12	1860
Nagaon	172(10.26%)	8(4.68%)	0(0%)	180(9.68%)

Source: As shown in Table-3.11

Table-3.21 shows that during 2013-14 the number of micro, small and medium enterprises registered in Nagaon district was 172, 8 and 0 respectively. Total number of MSME registered in Nagaon district was 180 which was 9.68 per cent of total number of MSME registered in Assam.

### Handicrafts

Handicraft is an important cottage and household industry sector in Nagaon district, which is largely emphasized for providing self-employment opportunities in the rural areas to supplement their earnings. The focus may be given to development of (1) Kuhila craft, (2) Pottery and Terracotta, (3) Jute, Cane and Bamboo products, and (4) Rantholi Jewellery. Resources in nearby areas may also attract investment in Nagaon district because of better terrain and both railway and road infrastructure.

### 3.9 The Picture of Employment in Nagaon District

The picture of employment in Nagaon district in different sectors is shown in the following Table-3.22

**Table-3.22: Distribution of Main Workers in Assam and Nagaon District, 2011**

Place	Main Workers				
	Total	Cultivators	Agricultural Labourers	Household Industry	Other
Assam	8687123	3138554	903294	242071	4403204
Nagaon	734993(8.46%)	287452(9.16%)	107649(11.91%)	20130(8.32%)	319762(7.26%)

Source: As shown in Table-3.1

From Table-3.22 it is found that as per census 2011, in case of total main workers, Nagaon district has 8.46 per cent of total main workers of Assam. In case of cultivators and agricultural labourers, Nagaon district has 9.16 per cent and 11.91 per cent of total cultivators and agricultural labourers of Assam. In case of main workers of household industry and other main workers, the same district has 8.32 per cent and 7.26 per cent of total main workers of household industry and other main workers of Assam.

**Table-3.23: Distribution of Marginal Workers in Assam and Nagaon District, 2011**

Place	Marginal Workers				
	Total	Cultivators	Agricultural Labourers	Household Industry	Other
Assam	3282567	923073	942052	249250	1168192
Nagaon	245005(7.46%)	58671(6.35%)	88525(9.4%)	17992(7.22%)	79817(6.83%)

*Source: As shown in Table-3.1*

Table-3.23 shows the list of marginal workers as per census 2011. Total number of marginal workers in Nagaon district was 245005, which was 7.46 percent of total marginal workers of Assam. In case of cultivators, agricultural labourers and household industry, total number of marginal workers in Nagaon district was 58671, 88525 and 17992. Number of other marginal workers in the district was 79817.

**Table-3.24: Enrolment and Teacher in Lower Primary Schools in Assam and Nagaon, 2013-2014 (in Nos.)**

		Place	
		Assam	Nagaon
Schools	Government/ Prov.	40355	2654(6.58%)
	Tea Garden/Local Bodies	451	33(7.32%)
	Total	40806	2687(6.59%)
Enrolment	Girls	1668047	164895(9.89%)
	Total	3301842	326765(9.9%)
Teachers	Government/ Prov.	115218	10102 (8.77%)
	Tea Garden/Local Bodies	1222	90(7.36%)

*Source: As shown in Table-3.1*

From Table-3.24 it is seen that the number of teachers in lower primary schools in Nagaon district during 2013-14 in Government/Prov. sector was 10102 which was 8.77 per cent of total teachers in lower primary schools of Government/Prov. sector of Assam. In case of teachers in tea garden/local bodies, total number of teachers in Nagaon district was 90 which was 7.36 per cent of total teachers in tea garden/local bodies of Assam.

**Table-3.25: Enrolment and Teachers in Upper Primary Schools in Assam and Nagaon District, 2013-2014 (In Nos.)**

			Place	
			Assam	Nagaon
Schools	Govt./ Prov.	UP	7646	530(6.93%)
		UP with HS	1588	113 (7.12%)
	Recognized	UP	3735	286 (7.66%)
		With HS	193	11(5.7%)
	Tea Garden/Local Bodies	UP	0	0(0%)
		UP with HS	17	1(5.88%)
	Total	UP	11381	816(7.17%)
		UP with HS	1798	125(6.95%)
Enrolment	Girls		826666	80581(9.75%)
	Total		1580709	144479(9.14%)
Teacher	Govt./Prov.		67519	4735(7.01%)
	Recognized		26693	2203(98.25%)
	Tea Garden/Local Bodies		204	12(5.88%)
	Total		94416	6950 (7.36%)

Source: As shown in Table-3.1

Table-3.25 represents the enrolment of teachers in upper primary schools during 2013-14 in Nagaon district. In government/prov. sector in the district it was 7.01 per cent of total teachers in upper primary schools of government/prov. sector of Assam. In recognized sector it was 98.25 per cent of total recognized teachers of upper primary schools of Assam. In tea garden/local bodies, the figure of the district was 5.88 per cent of total teachers of tea garden/local bodies of



Assam. And in total, Nagaon district had 7.36 per cent of total teachers in upper primary schools of Assam.

**Table-3.26: Enrolment and Teacher in High, Higher Secondary Schools and Junior Colleges in Assam and Nagaon District, 2012-2013**

			Place	
			Assam	Nagaon
High school	Number of institutions		5743	351(6.11%)
	Enrolment	Female	451238	38071(8.44%)
		Total	864030	66953(7.75%)
	Teachers	Female	14066	1060(7.54%)
		Total	48256	3286(6.81%)
Higher Secondary	Number of institutions		1080	73(6.76%)
	Enrolment	Female	78396	4952(6.32%)
		Total	161029	9398(5.84%)
	Teachers	Female	5259	459(8.73%)
		Total	16163	1289(8%)
Junior College	Number of institutions		466	19(4.07%)
	Enrolment	Female	73848	2366(3.20%)
		Total	152099	4390(2.87%)
	Teachers	Female	1985	71(3.58%)
		Total	6146	222(3.61%)

Source: As shown in Table-3.1

Table-3.26 represents the employment of teachers in high schools, higher secondary schools and junior colleges of Assam and Nagaon district during 2012-13. In high schools, total female teachers in the district were 1060 which was 7.54 per cent of total female teachers in high schools of Assam. In higher secondary, total number of female teachers in Nagaon district was 459 which was 8.73 per cent of total female teachers in higher secondary of Assam. In case of junior colleges, total number of female teachers in the district was 222 which was 3.61 percent of total female teachers of junior colleges of Assam.

**Table-3.27: Job Cards Issued and Employment provided in Assam and Nagaon District, 2013-2013 (In Nos.)**

	Place	
	Assam	Nagaon
Job Card Issued	4148981	230096(5.55%)
Household Demanded Employment	1321148	116434(8.81%)
Household Provided Employment	1261778	111835(8.86%)
Household Provided 100 Days Employment	15505	4315(27.83%)
Disabled Persons Provided Employment	2372	64(2.69%)

Source: As shown in Table-3.1

Table-3.27 represents that during 2013-14, total job card issued in Nagaon district was 230096 which was 5.55 per cent of total number of job card issued in Assam. Household Demanded

Employment in the district was 8.81 per cent of total Household Demanded Employment of Assam. Household Provided Employment of the district was 8.86 per cent of total Household Provided Employment of Assam. Again Household Provided 100 Days Employment of Nagaon district was 27.83 per cent of total Household Provided 100 Days Employment in Assam. Besides these, employment provided to disabled persons in the district was 64 which was 2.69 per cent of total employment provided to disabled persons of Assam.

**Table-3.28: Employment through Employment Exchanges in Assam and Nagaon District, 2013**

Place	Number of Registration	Number in Live Register	Number of Vacancies Notified	Number of Placement
Assam	214654	1677192	4204	745
Nagaon	11138(5.18%)	130732(7.79%)	110(2.62%)	5(0.67%)

*Source: As shown in Table-3.1*

From Table-3.28 it is seen that total number of persons registered in employment exchanges in Nagaon district during 2013 was 1138 which was 5.18 per cent of total number of persons registered in employment exchanges in Assam. But the number of placement was only 5 which was only 0.67 per cent of total number of placements in Assam.

**Table-3.29: Distribution of Registered Factories and Workers in Assam and Nagaon District-2013**

Place	Factories	Workers
Assam	5271	192543
Nagaon	340(6.45%)	16463 (8.55%)

*Source: As shown in Table-3.1*

Table-3.29 shows that total number of factories registered in Nagaon district during 2013 was 340 which was 6.45 per cent of total number of factories registered in Assam. And total number of workers registered in Nagaon district during 2013 was 16463 which was 8.55 per cent of total number of workers registered in Assam.

Table-30, Table-31 and Table-32 represent total number of establishments and number of persons employed excluding crop production, plantation, public administration, defense and compulsory social security services activities in rural areas, in urban areas and in rural-urban combined areas separately.

**Table-3.30: Total Number of Establishments and Number of Persons Employed Excluding Crop Production, Plantation, Public Administration, Defense and Compulsory Social Security Services Activities (In Rural)**

			Place	
			Assam	Nagaon
Total Number of Establishments	Outside HH with Fixed Structure		500975	47712(9.52%)
	Outside HH without Fixed Structure		513551	47841(9.32%)
	Inside HH		396728	50458(12.72%)
	ALL		1411254	146011(10.35%)
Number of Persons Employed on Last Working day	Hired	Male	771134	81401(10.56%)
		Female	286749	24048(8.39%)
	Non-Hired	Male	1273219	132884(10.43%)
		Female	272345	30237(11.10%)
	All		2603447	268570(10.32%)

Source: As shown in Table-3.11

From Table-3.30 it is clear that total number of persons employed (excluding Crop Production, Plantation, Public Administration, Defense and Compulsory Social Security Services Activities) in rural areas of Nagaon district on last working day, including both hired and non- hired male and female, was 268570 which was 10.32 per cent of total numbers for the same of Assam. And total number of establishments including all was 146011.

**Table-3.31: Total Number of Establishments and Number of Persons Employed (Excluding Crop Production, Plantation, Public Administration, Defense & Compulsory Social Security Services Activities (In Urban))**

		Place		
		Assam	Nagaon	
Total Number of Establishments	Outside HH with Fixed Structure	278045	16205(5.82%)	
	Outside HH without Fixed Structure	149337	9225(6.18%)	
	Inside HH	115107	5257(4.57%)	
	ALL	542489	30687(5.66%)	
Number of Persons Employed on Last Working day	Hired	Male	467021	26409(5.65%)
		Female	91269	4433(4.86%)
	Non-Hired	Male	507367	28839(5.68%)
		Female	65655	2655(4.04%)
	All	1131312	62336(5.51%)	

Source: As shown in Table-3.11

From Table-3.31 it is clear that total number of persons employed (excluding Crop Production, Plantation, Public Administration, Defense and Compulsory Social Security Services Activities) in urban areas of Nagaon district on last working day including both hired and non- hired male and female was 62336 which was 5.51 per cent of total number of the same of Assam. And total number of establishments including all was 30687, which was 5.66 per cent of total number of the same of Assam.

**Table-3.32: Total Number of Establishments and Number of Persons Employed Excluding Crop Production, Plantation, Public Administration, Defense and Compulsory Social Security Services Activities (Rural, Urban Combined)**

		Place		
		Assam	Nagaon	
Total Number of Establishments	Outside HH with Fixed Structure	779020	63917(8.2%)	
	Outside HH without Fixed Structure	662888	57066(8.61%)	
	Inside HH	511835	55715(10.89%)	
	ALL	1953743	176698(9.04%)	
Number of Persons Employed on Last Working day	Hired	Male	1238155	107810(8.71%)
		Female	378018	28481(7.53%)
	Non-Hired	Male	1780586	161723(9.08%)
		Female	338000	32892(9.73%)
	All	3734759	330906(8.86%)	

Source: As shown in Table-3.11

From Table-3.32 it is clear that total number of persons employed (excluding Crop Production, Plantation, Public Administration, Defense and Compulsory Social Security Services Activities) in rural- urban combined areas of Nagaon district on last working day, including both hired and non- hired male and female, was 330906 which was 8.86 per cent of total number of the same of Assam. And total number of establishments including all was 176698, which was 9.04 per cent of total number of the same of Assam.

**Table-3.33: Percentage Growth in Total Number of Establishments Employed (Excluding Crop Production, Plantation, Public Administration, Defense and Compulsory Social Security Services Activities) and Employment in 2013 (Sixth EC) as Compared to 2005 (Fifth EC)**

		Place	
		Assam	Nagaon
Growth in Establishments	Rural	108.35	135.02
	Urban	81.61	29.22
	Combined	100.17	105.76
Growth in Employment (%)	Rural	85.55	130.6
	Urban	65.11	24.33
	Combined	78.84	98.72

Source: As shown in Table-3.1

Table-3.33 shows that in Nagaon district the percentage growth in total number of establishments in rural, urban and combined areas was 135.02, 29.22 and 105.76 respectively. And percentage growth in total number of employment in the district in rural, urban and combined was 130.6, 24.33 and 98.72 respectively.

### 3.10 Tourism in Nagaon District

Tourist places of Nagaon district attract travelers from different parts of the world. One of the most important places among all the places of interest for tourists is Kaziranga National Park. Kaziranga is known all over the world for successful conservation of Great One Horned Rhinoceros. It is also home to a large number of threatened wild animals and migratory birds.



The Kaziranga landscape comprises sprawling grasslands, numerous water bodies and woodlands that provide an ideal habitat for a variety of flora and fauna. The flood plain ecosystem, which acts as important refuge of rich biodiversity, is the result of River Brahmaputra and its tributaries. Other tourist places of Nagaon district are Bordowa, birthplace of Sankaradeva, Pokhi Tirtha (Samaguri Beel) where migratory birds from around the world come to nest in the winter. This beel is located at about a distance of 16 km towards east from Nagaon town. Lowkhowa, the wild-life sanctuary is situated at Lowkhowa named “Avayaranya” covering an area of 70 sq km and located at a distance of 25 km from Nagaon town towards north. The main attraction of this wild- life sanctuary is the Great Indian One-horned Rhinoceros. Other attractions include tiger, leopard, Asiatic buffalo, wild boar, civet cat, leopard cat, hog deer and various species of birds and reptiles. Hojai, renowned as Assam’s granary, is famous for agar, an aromatic substance which is used in perfumes and is widely exported to Arab countries. Jugijan in southern Nagaon is another place of historical importance. Besides these, Kaliabor, by the Kolong river, has been the scene of several critical battles of the Ahoms. Doboka, Silghat, Hojai and Champawati Kunda are some other tourist attractions of this district.

### 3.11 Transport System of Nagaon District

The transport system of Nagaon district can be shown with the help of the following table-

**Table-3.34: Length of Roads According to Type in Assam and Nagaon District (in Km.)**

Place	National Highways 2013-14 (Total)	P.W.D. Road, March’2014 (Total)
Assam	3739.673	45500
Nagaon	278.924(7.46%)	3120(6.86%)

*Source: As shown in Table-3.1*

Table-3.34 shows that the length of National Highways in 2013-14 in Nagaon district was 278.924 Km which was 7.46 percent of total length of National highways of Assam and the length of P.W.D. Road, March, 2014 in Nagaon district was 3120 which was 6.86 percent of total length of P.W.D. Road of Assam.

**Table-3.35: Length of Roads per Lakh of Population & Per '00 Sq. Km. Geographical Area in Assam and Nagaon District, 31.03.2014**

Place	Total Road Length	Road Length Per Lakh of Population	Road Length per '00 Sq. Km. of Geographical Area
Assam	45500	145.98	58.01
Nagaon	3120(6.86%)	110.40(75.63%)	78.53

*Source: As shown in Table-3.1*

Table-3.35 shows that up to March, 2014, total road length per Lakh of population in Nagaon district was 110.40 km., which was 75.63 per cent of total road length per Lakh of population of Assam. And total road length per '00 sq. km. of geographical area of Nagaon district was 78.53 km.

### 3.12 Personnel in Health Sector of Nagaon District

**Table-3.36: Medical & Paramedical Personnel in Assam and Nagaon district for the Year 2013-14**

			Place	
			Assam	Nagaon
Medical & Para- Medical Personnel	Doctors under the existing govt. facility	Rural	3909	300(7.67%)
		Urban	940	52(5.53%)
	Nurse under the existing govt. facility	Rural	4307	362(8.40%)
		Urban	652	52(7.98%)
	Midwives under the existing govt. facility	Rural	8934	652(7.3%)
		Urban	878	117(13.33%)

Source: As shown in Table-3.1

Table-3.36 shows that during 2013-14, total numbers of doctors under the existing govt. facility in rural and urban areas of Nagaon district were 300 and 52 which were 7.57 per cent and 5.53 per cent of total numbers of doctors under the existing govt. facility in rural and urban areas of Assam. Again, total numbers of nurse under the existing govt. facility in rural and urban areas of Nagaon district were 362 and 52 which were 8.40 per cent and 7.98 per cent of total numbers of nurse under the existing govt. facility in rural and urban areas of Assam. Besides these, total numbers of midwives under the existing govt. facility in rural and urban areas of Nagaon district

were 652 and 117 which were 7.3 per cent and 13.33 per cent of total numbers of midwives under the existing govt. facility in rural and urban areas of Assam.

### **3.13 From the Historical Period to Modern Age the Contributions of Women of Nagaon District in Different Fields of the Social System**

In 13<sup>th</sup> century Nagaon district there was a great woman and she was none other than the grandmother of Srimanta Sankardeva. Kherkhuti is worth specifying for her devotion towards bringing up and taking care of great Sankardeva during his childhood. As Sankardeva was an orphan child, Kherkhuti, being his grandmother, took him under her care and took pains for his education and ultimately placed him on a lofty and majestic position. Had not she been present during that time, Sankardeva could not have become a social reformer, poet, dramatist, and scholar. The Assamese will remain ever obliged to him for his works. Assamese language, literature, culture, religion have now become a brighter star in the world sky and this was possible for his persistent efforts throughout his life.

Another woman was named Kanaklata who was granddaughter-in-law in relation to Sankardeva. At that time 'Bardowa than' was about to lose its existence after demise of great Sankardeva. Nobody was there to look after the 'Bardowa than'. Kanaklata took the upper hand in saving the Bardowa then from being extinct by making painstaking efforts, though there was no right of women to enter into the 'Satra' as per conventional customs. It was only by the leadership of Kanaklata that the Satriya social system was set up in Bardowa. Thus, she rescued the birth place of Sankardeva and reconstructed it with satisfactory look.

### **3.14 The Role of Women of Nagaon District in Freedom Movement**

When the freedom movement was in full swing, its impact had created high excitement in women society of Nagaon district as well and a good number of women from the district played important roles in freedom movement. Khagendrepriya Boruahni, who was the president of Nagaon Mahila Samitee formed in 1926, took active role in Khadi Movement of Mahatma Gandhi. In 1927, Women of Nagaon also took part in movements such as avoid foreign cloth, alcoholic substances drive, which were a part of freedom movement. A road procession was organized and the women from Nagaon district who took leading roles in it were Tarinipriya Devi, Aruna Bhuyan, Usha Borthakur and many others including Guneshwari Devi, Mohini Guhain, Darbai Mech, Kiranwala, Muktawala Baishnavi, Kiranmoyee Boruah, Sumitra Bhuyan, Kunjalata Mahanta, Sarujoni Boruah. Many more women freedom fighters from Nagaon district had to suffer physical and mental torture for being involved in the movement. It is worth mentioning here that Bhogeshwari Phookanani had to breathe her last when a bullet from the English force penetrated her body while she was taking stubborn role in the freedom movement. Therefore, the civil hospital of Nagaon district has been named as Shwahid Bhogeshwari Phookanani Hospital. Besides these, many women were there from Nagaon district whose names cannot be traced out for want of proper records.

### **3.15 Contribution of Women in the Growth of Modern Assamese Literature**

The history of literature in Nagaon district is long. From 14<sup>th</sup> century to present times, many writers have contributed a lot to Assamese literature by writing valuable stories, novels, poems, dramas, articles etc. But from sixth and seventh decades of 19<sup>th</sup> century the volume of

literary works and its progress approached almost its full bloom. The poets, liberators, critics have created a healthy environment in the society by their valuable writings. Madhab Kandali and Srimanta Sankardeva, who were the legendary scholars of Assamese literature of two consecutive periods, took birth in this Nagaon district. The people of Assam feel proud because Sankardeva took birth in this district as he preached Vaishnav religion in Assam, founded Vaishnav literature and contributed towards various fields of national and social life of Assam.

Among the persons of Nagaon district whose contributions towards the Assamese society, its literature, culture etc. must be kept in mind are Lakshminath Bezboruah, Anandaram Dhekial Phookan, Gunabhiram Boruah, Manikchandra Boruah, Bhulanath Das, Dr. Surjya Kumar Bhuyan, Ratnakanta Borkakati, Hemchandra Goswami, Dr. Lakhinandan Bora, Mahim Bora, Dr. Birinchi Kumar Bora, Debakanta Boruah, Nabakanta Boruah, Dr. Bhabendranath Saikia, Radhikamohan Goswami etc. are worth mentioning. Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was a person of international fame. He was a singer, poet, playwright, music director who won Dada Saheb Phalke Award.

In the growth of modern Assamese literature the contribution of women is worth mentioning. Some of the legendary women figures are as under.

**Nilima Boruah**- A famous novelist, her novels named Akashbanti, Dhumuhar Pisot, Sil Shikhar, Pranshikha etc. have claimed a separate place in Assamese literature.

**Swarna Bora**- Swarna Bora has contributed more than fifteen novels pertaining to rivers, tribal class and various spheres of life to the Assamese literature. She is the only writer in Assamese literature who has written novels on lives of different tribal people of Assam. Diyung Nadir

Geet, Pagladia Sonali Rong, Simsang Nadir Hanhi, Kalongparor Kiron etc. are some of her novels which have enjoyed much response from the society.

**Padmawati Devi Phookanoni**- She was the daughter of Anandaram Dhekial Phookan. She was ever first novelist among women writers. She wrote the novel 'Sudharmar Upakhyan' in 1884 which was the first Assamese novel.

**Bishnupriya Devi**- The second wife of Gunabhiram Boruah, Bishnupriya Devi was a person of valiant mentality. She even dared to send her nine year old daughter Swarnalata to Bethun College in Calcutta without caring for social bindings, conventional at that time, which proved that her mind was free from prejudice. Her book 'Nitikatha' was a wonderful contribution to children's literature of Assam.

**Swarnalata Boruah**- Her birth took place in seventh decade of 19<sup>th</sup> century, but she was influenced by the philosophy of the eastern and western countries. She composed a book 'Arhi Tiruta' by name at the age of fourteen. In 1885, her 'Koremoti Bai' was published in 'Assam Bandhu'.

**Hiranmoyee Devi**- She is popular for composing books pertaining to children. Her contributions to children's literature of Assam are Akhoror Akhoi Ladu, Moinar Mou Maat, Phoringor Peng, Redcrossor Sadhu etc.

**Hiranyamoyee Devi**- Hiranyamoyee Devi is well known for writing books, poems, short stories and novels for children. She took the chairmanship in the Sadou Asom Lekhika Samaroh held at Bishwanath Chariali of Assam.

**Tushaprava Kalita-** She is a poet, writer of children textbooks and primarily translator. Her poetry collections are Bishwarupa, Abhigyanlipi, and Nirbachita Kabita.

In addition to the above there are considerable numbers of women from Nagaon district who have contributed to the growth of Assamese literature.

Apart from the different above mentioned literary and cultural fields, in the field of sports also the contribution of women of Nagaon district is great in almost all events at both national and international level.

### **3.16 Conclusion**

Thus, from the facts and figures mentioned above, one can conclude by saying that the female section of Nagaon district has fallen short in achievements in different areas of life. When compared with the men although in every field of social-cultural activities in Assam the women of Nagaon district have made great contributions. The government has introduced various important programmes and schemes for the upliftment of the women section but the result obtained so far is found to be not up to the expected level. Government has declared 30 per cent reservation for women in Assembly, parliament and also in various other fields for women section. Practically it is seen that the percentage of political participation of women is lower than 30 percent, which point towards low awareness level among women. There are some institutions in Assam as well as in India which have been especially set up for women. The number of women institutions is less than that for the males. Women generally think that they are less strong and courageous than men. They have a habit of depending upon the males. Though the government and other non-government organizations have taken various steps for the women



section in our country, the average position of women of Nagaon district, especially in rural areas, is not so satisfactory. The rural women of Nagaon district are still lagging behind in taking advantage of the facilities and programmes launched by the government. According to Assam Human Development Report 2003, on the basis of human development indicators with 2001 as reference year, Nagaon district ranked 14<sup>th</sup> with Human Development Index (HDI) value 0.356, Income Index value of 0.179 and Education Index value of 0.538 which were lower than state average values. Thus, the position of Nagaon district on the basis of HDI rank, income rank, education rank and health rank in 2001 were 14<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> in Assam. In order to improve the status of women of Nagaon district and to make them socially, economically, politically empowered, meaningful research needs to be carried out on women of the district to find out the remedies of the above stated perpetual problems concerning women.