- understand the causes of the changing nature of inter-community relationship among the ethnic groups of North-east India.
- know about the root causes of ethnic conflict in North-east India.

7.2 INTRODUCTION

The North-eastern region represents India's most complex landscape with multi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious societal context. It is a land of lovely woods and trees, of clustering fruits and of groves dense with trees and sounds of silence. The North-eastern region of India is a splendidly vibrant region which is situated in the eastern part of the sub-Himalayan zone. The region compromises of lofty mountainous terrain and moderately high hills and river-fed valleys. At present the eight states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya and Sikkim are regarded as constituting the North-east India. Surrounded by five Countries, this region is connected with the rest of India through a narrow thirty kilometer corridor located in northern Bengal. Different ethnic groups inhabiting this region have been pressing either for the creation of separate states on the basis of their lingo-cultural identities or for special constitutional safeguards of their respective identities.

"What is your ethnicity?" This is a question that is fairly important in many parts of the world. The United States, like many countries, finds this question to be substantial enough to include on the national census. It is a question we are all familiar with, but do we know what is really being asked here? An ethnic group is a population with shared genetic and cultural traits, making them distinct from other populations because of these traits. If you think that sounds somewhat vague, you are right. Ethnicity is important to us, but that does not necessarily mean that it is easy to define. Let us learn more about the concept in the subsequent sections.

7.3 ETHNIC AND ETHNICITY

7.3.1 Meaning and Characteristics of Ethnic group

Ethnic group is a group whose members have same or all of the following characteristics.

Later, during the emergence of modern nationalism among the Greeks in the early nineteenth century, the term ethnos came to be seen as a 'quint essentially self-realising, self-defining entity'. 'Ethnic' the English derivative of the term 'ethnos' simultaneously changed in its usage and upon gaining popularity in social sciences in last century its application has become broad enough to indicate all groupings with shared culture and history.

In 1996, Hutchinson and Smith in the book *'Ethnicity'* has laid down the six features of an ethnic group/ethnie and each may have all or some of these features in varying degrees.

- A *common proper name*, to identify and express the 'essence' of the community.
- A myth of *common ancestry*, a myth rather than a fact, a myth that includes the idea of a common origin in time and place and that gives an 'ethnie' a sense of fictive kinship. (Ethnie is a French equivalent of 'ethnic group')
- *Shared historical memories*, or better, shared memories of a common past or pasts, including heroes, events, and their commemoration.
- One or more *elements of common culture*, which need not be specified but normally include religion, customs, or language.
- A *link with a homeland*, not necessarily its physical occupation by the ethnie, only its symbolic attachment to the ancestral land, as with diaspora people.
- A *sense of solidarity* on the part of at least some sections of the ethnie's population.

The term ethnic group was also used by some in contradistinction to Race, which is often seen in biological terms. Members of an ethnic group may be identified in terms of racial attributes but they may also share other cultural characteristics such as religion, occupation, language or politics. Ethnic group should also be distinguished from social classes. Ethnic groups are therefore fluid in composition and

Ethnicity is socially constructed and subjectively defined by a combination of aspects related to a group's ancestry, cultural customs, language, religion, national identity, kinship networks and even physical appearance.

7.3.3 Approaches to the study of Ethnicity

As the phenomenon of 'ethnicity' is very varied and complex, different approaches have been adopted by scholars to understand the process. There are mainly three approaches to the study of Ethnicity. The first one is the "Primordialist Approach" the second one is "Instrumentalist Approach" and the third one is "Constructivist Approach".

The most prominent scholar of the Primordialist Approach is Clifford Geertz. He argues that attachments to blood, religion, speech and custom are seen to have an ineffable and at times over powering coerciveness in and of them. The participants tend to perceive these as exterior, coercive and 'given'. He states these to be primodial attachments. Primordiality is a quality that the individuals attribute to these kinds of ties. Geertz suggests that the drive for an efficient, dynamic modern state interact with the other great drive for personal identity, which is based on "Primordial ties". Primordialism as an approach had to face criticisms for lacking explanatory power in addressing ethnic dynamics. However, it enables us to comprehend the nature of attachment that participants of a group can have towards the other members of, as well as, to their group/community.

On the other hand, the "Instrumentalist" treats ethnicity as a social, political and cultural resource for different interest and status groups. One version focuses on elite composition for resources and suggests that the manipulation of symbols is vital for gaining the support of the masses and in achieving political goals. Another version examines elite strategies of maximizing preference in terms of individually rational choice in given situations.

The "Constructivists" looks into the historical dynamics and

7.4 INTER COMMUNITY RELATION WITHIN NORTH-EAST REGION OF INDIA

India is inhabited by multiple ethnic groups who profess different religions, speak different languages, and follow customs and traditions which are different from one another. Since the pre British era, the ethnic groups of NE India co-habituated and assimilated with each other. However, since independence, the emerging political dynamics of this region had led to the emergence of leaders from these ethnic groups who have been very critical towards the policies of the Indian State and have resisted the nation building process. There have been several such groups that have often fought to maintain their traditional self governing institutions, their languages, their cultures, political institutions and drawing the internal boundaries. To achieve this they have demanded autonomy in the form of demanding seperate state. Apart from this conflict with the Indian state, the relation among ethnic groups of the region has been of a hostile nature owing to sharing of resources and conflicting claims.

7.4.1 Assam in Pre British Era

The society and culture of the Brahmaputra Valley is heterogonous. The different ethnic groups immigrated to Assam at different points of time and they came to this region from both its eastern and western frontiers. The Ahom is one of the major communities of Assam. They established their territory in Upper Brahmaputra Valley in 13th century and ruled for more than six hundred years. The Ahoms arrived with their own culture and customs but in course of time they amalgamated with the culture of the other ethnic communities and also caused the amalgamation of the different ethnic groups in Assam particularly in eastern and central part of Assam. It is observed that before the coming of the Ahoms to the Brahmaputra Valley, there were various small tribal kingdoms in the eastern part of the valley such as that of the Chutiyas, Kacharis, Moran and Borahi and in the western part was the Kamrupa kingdom. The Ahom king

and practiced bell metal and brass work as traditional occupation.

7.4.2 Tribal and Foreign Relations

The policy of Ahom rulers towards the frontier tribes varied from time to time according to the exigencies of the political situation. In the each early phase, these 'proud conquerors' followed a policy of slow but steady penetration occasionally attended with revolting cruelties. To terrorize the Naga, Sukapha 'caused many of them killed and roasted and compelled their relatives to eat their flesh'. Those period of foreign wars demanded active help and cooperation from the neighboring tribes and chiefs. The aggressive policy of earlier years had to be replaced by one of conciliation.

The Daflas in the north were allowed by the same monarch the right of levying posa in specified areas of the district of Darrang under which Assamese paiks known as bahateahs. They were bound to serve the hillmen with their requirement of personal service and produce. Apart from this Pratap Simha constructed a fort at Daflagarh in the east of Tezpur to check their oppressive acts on Assamese ryots.

The reign of Rudra Simha witnessed not only the subjugation of Kachari and Jayantia kingdoms but also the establishment of friendly commercial relations with the most important Khasi State of Khairam and Khyrim. It was again during the time of Rudra Simha that diplomatic relations were first established with Tripura with the intention of extending his sphere of influence throughout Bengal and Eastern India as a part of his wider scheme of fighting the Mughals.

7.4.3 Colonial Era

During the last phase of the Ahom rule some internal conflict such as the Moamoriya rebellion and external aggression like the Burmese invasion weakened the political power of the Ahoms and British east India Company got the opportunity to extend their rule in Assam. After the Treaty of Yandaboo was signed in 26th February

Assam's immigrant groups who immigrated during the modern period. Recruitment of the workers for the tea plantations from outside Assam began in the nineteenth century and continued until 1960. They were recruited from among tribal groups such as Santhal, Mundas, Oraongs, Kharias, Gonds, Khonds, Kisang. Most of those recruited to work in tea plantations over the years settled in Assam at the end of the contract period. Some left tea plantations and tried making a living by settling in the surrounding agricultural lands before the expiration of their labor contracts. There are different linguistic elements in Assam's tea garden labor community. Yet very few people of the tea labor community today speak any of these languages and dialects. Most of the tea garden labor community speaks a patois that is called Sadani or "Garden baat". There is often intermarriage among them. There are a few Assamese literary and cultural figures belonging to this community.

The migration of Hindu Bengalis to Assam began in the earliest days of colonial rule. Historically the immigrants of Hindu Bengali origin settled in urban areas and took up jobs in the modern sector in the British administration. Later this has been a more persistent source of conflict in Assam. However their presence in Assam in was not always a source of resentment given Calcutta's status as the Capital of British India. The Bengali language, culture and fashions were imitated by a section of the Assamese students who studied in Calcutta.

Another visible immigrant community in Assam is the "Marwaris", a term that strictly refers to a commercial caste from Rajasthan. The Marwaris played a major role in Assam's transition in the nineteenth century from a largely non-monetized economy to a market economy. The earlier Marwaris came to Assam along with the British and in the absence of competition from a local trading class; they soon dominated the region's trade and commerce.

Immigration thus began as a consequence of the colonial conquest. Once Assam became a part of British India, it came to be

the defeated village or community proposed for peace. The weaker group would offer spear, wine and meat to the stronger. If the stronger village killed any of the weaker villagers, the stronger village would be perished.

- In the case of equal strength of the warring villages or communities, they exchanged spear, wine and meat. They ate and drank together.

Here an attempt is made to understand the relationship between Nagas and Kukis through their relations in the Naga National Council Movement, which traces its root to the Naga Club of 1918 in the Naga Hills. After the formation of the first organization of the Nagas, the Nagas and Kukis raised their voices against the Colonial power. The Naga Club encompassed members of various Naga tribes and the Kukis in the Naga Hills. The Kukis also played a vital role in the Naga National Council Movement. On 10th January 1929, when Naga Club's delegation submitted memorandum to Royal Commissions led by Sir John Simon also called as 'Simon Commission', they demanded the Nagas to be left alone and to let them determine their own future. Shir Lengjang Kuki was one of the twenty delegations that submitted memorandum to the Simon Commission. After the formation of first Naga political organization Naga National Council (NNC), late Seikhohen Kuki and Jankhosei Kuki represented the Kuki tribe of Naga Hills as a full-fledged member of Naga National Council. Despite the clash with the Nagas, a section of Kukis always worked together with the Nagas to achieve Naga sovereignty. The Kukis joined the Naga underground movement since the beginning of NNC's armed wing Federal Government of Nagaland.

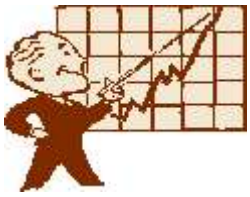
7.4.3 Post Colonial era

India achieved independence at the cost of partition on August 15th 1947. Partition of the country led to redrawing the territorial boundaries of the country. After independence the process of modernization took place in Assam. The Community Development

Language tangle is one of the most critical and sensitive problems of North East India. After independence, the Assamese speaking people sought to make Assamese as the official language of Assam and this was perceived by several ethnic communities as an imposition of Assamese language upon the non-Assamese speaking people including the indigenous tribal people. As a consequence there were bitter clashes between the Assamese speaking people on one hand the tribal and other linguistic groups.

This hegemonic linguistic assertion of the Assamese speaking people is one of the key factors of the transformation of the prevailing relationship between the ethnic groups of NE India.

After independence and the state reorganisation in this region, there was a continuation of inter-ethnic conflict in Northeast India which resulted in the demand for separate state. These demands include the demand for Nagalim by NSCN, demand for soverignity by ULFA, Kamatapur by AKRASU, Bodoland by ABSU and NDFB, a separate state by KarbiAnglong,Dimaland by KLNLF formally UPDS and Garoland in Meghalaya to name a few. The demand for separate statehood sees no end at present time. With coming to power of each new government, the different groups demanding greater autonomy strengthens their demands by taking up many programs like dharna, andolan, strike, etc. Each group pressurizes the government to fulfill their demands.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q3. During whose reign Kachari and Jayantia Kingdoms were subjugated?

.....

.....

Q4. In which year General Turbaq was killed?

.....

.....

term measure to allow the Army to counter the armed separatist movement in the Naga Hills. It was a part of the bundle of provisions passed by the central government to retain control over the Naga areas in which the Naga Nationalist Council demanded further autonomy rights. AFSPA, however violates provisions of international human rights law including the right to life, right to be protected from arbitrary arrest and detention and the right to be free from torture and cruelty.

Conflict in the region is further compounded by complex political and economic issues such as struggle over natural resources, migration related issues, displacement and social exclusion and so on. According to Dr. Clemens Spiess "the politics of identity lay at the heart of the bigger part of the current conflict constellations in the Northeast".

7.6.2 Foreign Policy Imperatives

India's 'Look East Policy' which was formulated in 1991 as a part of India's economic liberalization was a foreign economic policy initiative towards South East Asia. The Northeast is geographically situated between mainland India in South Asia and the South East Asia. The region's diverse natural resources, rich bio-diversity and enormous hydro-electrical potential among others could also help to overcome the widespread feeling of backwardness among the inhabitants of the Northeast. But an argument gaining ground resides on the fear and perception of threat perceived by the people of this region that the impact of increased introduction of market imperatives in the traditional society of the region would have irreversible impact on the people's culture and life and it would also lead to increased settlement of mainland people in the Northeast.

- Sengupta Sarthak (ed.2002) Tribal Studies in North East India, Mittal publications; New Delhi.



7.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Chifford Geertz.

Ans to Q No 2: 1953

Ans to Q No 3: Rudra Sinha

Ans to Q No 4: 1532AD.



7.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

Short Questions (Answer within 150 words)

Q 1: What is the meaning of Ethnicity?

Q 2: State the meaning of Ethnic group?

Q 3: What do you understand by Ethnic identity?

Long Questions (Answer within 300 - 500 words)

Q 1: Discuss inter-community relationship during the Ahom period.

Q 2: Write an essay on inter-community relationship in British period.

Q 3: What has been the nature of inter-community relationship after India's Independence.

Q 4: Explain the various issues of ethnic conflict in Assam.

*** ***** ***

In this unit, you will learn about the origin and development of insurgency in Northeast India, the politics of state-making and its connection with the growth of insurgencies, and about some of the major insurgent groups from this region.



LET US KNOW

State-making: Extending the political reach of the government at the centre by institutionalizing the spaces in the frontier zones.

8.3 INSURGENCY IN NORTH-EAST INDIA: ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

The roots of insurgency in Northeast India have manifold connections with the history and geography of the region. Before the colonial state made inroads into this region, a relationship of friendship and familiarity largely prevailed among its people. There was constant and continuous crisscrossing across the geographical boundaries that resulted in the creation of numerous oral narratives of human encounter. Thus, ethnic ties transcended political boundaries imposed by the British regime upon what they considered a 'hinterland'—large swathes of unexplored terrain inhabited by people aloof from the notion of civilization. With later developments like the demarcation of boundaries through administrative categories like hills, plains, inner line, outer line, frontier, trans-frontier, reserves etc., inter-ethnic tensions got heightened. Earlier, friction between the different ethnic communities was confined mostly to the overlapping of spatial domains. Once the boundary-making exercises caught pace, the ethnic ties of friendship weakened for the worse. Thus, the first seeds of identity politics were sown. Boundaries were drawn up arbitrarily to convert an entire geography into a frontier zone.

For the British, nothing was more important than marking their presence and legitimacy over a huge geographical expanse through territorial demarcation. What they saw in the Northeastern region of India was an immense economic potential, which they decided to tap before anyone else

Sylhet, Rangpur—now in Bangladesh. Migrants from the Chota Nagpur Belt were moved in to work for the tea plantations. Hence, there prevailed a climate of loss—of territories, of homelands, of spaces—to outsiders. The same could be said to have applied in the postcolonial era. Scholars have argued that today the colonial frontier is conceived primarily as a postcolonial 'borderland'. The logic of 'violence against violence' has been the mainstay of postcolonial politics in the region. Time and again the loyalty of the people inhabiting this region has been questioned, on grounds of the assumption that they could forge alliances with enemy states. The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA), a counter insurgency measure resting in the hands of the Indian nation-state has been employed to tame this suspect loyalty by use of force and bestowing politico-legal impunity to its stakeholders. Renaming of territories like the ones in Arunachal Pradesh with 'Indianized/ Sanskritized' varieties has furthered the incorporation of the multitude of ethnic communities into the fold of the singular category of Northeast India. Much of the insurgent movements have stemmed from such drills, as animated responses. On a side note, development projects in Northeast India never took place until very recently. The region has been ravaged by a high degree of poverty and unemployment. Coupled with these, there is a sense of emotional disconnect with the entity of mainland India. There also have been allegations of negligence on the part of the Indian nation to bring about growth and prosperity in this region. Those among the citizens who were disillusioned with the political machinations took to arms to protect the interests of the 'sons of the soil' and remove the non-native from the land. These are briefly the causal factors that led to the growth of insurgency in Northeast India. Subir Bhaumik, a journalist of international repute, has classified the types of insurgencies in Northeast India under the following categories :

- Insurgencies that are secessionist in aspirations.
- Insurgencies crying a separatist rhetoric but having autonomist aspirations, and thus can be co-opted.
- Insurgencies having separatist overtones but ultimately co-opted by the Indian state through sustained negotiations.

India. Accordingly, the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution was enacted to provide special provisions to people from the tribal belts.Political autonomy of these areas was a necessary trade-off to achieve the integration of hill people with those from the plains. This was the most significant reason for instituting the Sixth Schedule. People inhabiting these areas were clubbed under the category of 'Mongoloid fringe' that all the more justified their incorporation into the pan-Indian ethos, as a means to correct their primordial allegiances. All of these exercises were aimed at constructing a nationalized space in the Northeast so as to achieve its political and economic integration with the rest of the country. State presence in the border areas had to be made strong, as the geographical landmass of Northeast India shared its boundaries with China, Bhutan, Myanmar, and Bangladesh. The security paradigm springs into action here. SanjibBaruah calls the maintenance of such a regional order as 'cosmetic federalism'. Under such a framework, security and development were coterminous with each other. The power of the Centre over the Northeastern states was overarching and the Centre always took the key decisions. Hence, it was not a true form of federalism. It enabled the Indian state to make inroads into the region which was mostly outside the domain of federal governance. On top of that, indigenous communities began to see immigration—both external and internal, as a threat to the ethnic composition of Northeast India. There have been repeated calls for making Assam a tribal state to ascertain constitutional safeguards and land rights, against encroachment by immigrants. Under such a backdrop, insurgency grew out of popular resentment, of which most groups were composed of ethnic militias. People from Northeast India were subjected to the binding nature of citizenship and governance. Citizen-centric policies were kept on the back foot and military actors were instituted at the helm of civil life. To quell the demands for recognition and movements towards assertion of identities, military generals were appointed as governors, who also engaged themselves in scholarly pursuits to generate an alternative discourse for peace and stability. The agenda was of containment of uprisings. However, such operations failed to alter the deplorable conditions of life, and in some cases entered into a nexus with the militias by means of soft power. Strategies of counter insurgency, as opposed to its intended

thought of the mainstream NNC group as fostering traitors (Cline, 2006). In 1980, the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) was formed under the leadership of Isak Cwu and Thuengaling Muivah. This group further split along tribal lines into two opposing groups—the NSCN (IM) led by Isak and Muivah and the NSCN (K) led by S.S. Khaplang. These factions agreed to a compromise by raising demands of a Greater Nagaland (Nagalim) in return for a loss of sovereignty. Both the groups are now in a ceasefire agreement with the Indian government.

- **Assam**

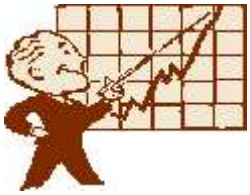
The most formidable insurgent force in Assam is the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA). It formed against the backdrop of the issue of illegal immigration that was raised during the Assam Movement. ULFA was formed on 7th April 1979. Riding on the backs of the immigrant issue, it pressed demands for the independence of Assam. ULFA was involved in a series of high-profile kidnappings of businessman, tea estate owners, and a Soviet engineer. The rise of ULFA was a variant of Assamese sub-nationalism. It started out as a political force but soon distanced itself from its political roots to take the militant turn. ULFA found endorsement in the Assamese collective imagination, which is reflected by the fact that in one particular year MaghBihu celebrations were held in a sombre manner to protest the military operations against the ULFA cadres. The public endorsement of ULFA has waned ever since it got its hands red with the blood of innocent children and women at the Dhemaji Blasts of 2004.The Peoples' Consultative Group (PCG) formed to carry forward peace talks with the central government on behalf of the ULFA. Later, a pro-talk group emerged from the ranks of the 28th Battalion to negotiate the peace talks.

Another major insurgent group from Assam is the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), which splited from the Bodo Security Force (BSF) formed on 3rd October 1986. The demands of this group have been that of a sovereign homeland in the form of Bodoland, the establishment of a democratic society, and the use of the Roman script for the Bodo language in lieu of the Devanagiri script. There was another Bodo insurgent group

Volunteer Force (TVF) which later became the Tripura National Volunteers Force (TNVF) went on a massacring spree killing hundreds of Bengali people. This group, led by Bijoy Hrangkhawl later entered into a ceasefire agreement with the government. Those cadres who refused to surrender went on to form the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) and the All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF). The ATTF however suppressed its revolutionary zeal in order to bring lasting stability to the region, which is why it aligned itself with the left-front government.

Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh

In both these states, the intensity of insurgent operations was in a diminutive form. The prominent low-intensity insurgency campaigners in these states were: in Meghalaya—the Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC), and in Arunachal Pradesh—the Arunachal Dragon Force (ADF), and the Arunachal Peoples Liberation Army (APLA).



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q3. ULFA (Pro-talk) emerged from a faction of the 28th Battalion. (True/False).

Q4. The KNA is a Meitei insurgent group. (True/False).



ACTIVITY 1

Find out the powerful and popular rule

.....

.....



8.6 LET US SUM UP

- In this unit, you have learnt about how insurgency originated and developed through across time in Northeast India. You also learnt about some of the major insurgent groups of Northeast India.

8.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: 1917

Ans to Q No 2: Sylhat, Rangpur

Ans to Q No 3: True

Ans to Q No 4: False

8.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

Short Questions (Answer within 150 words)

Q 1: Write about the insurgency in Manipur.

Q 2: What are the different types of insurgencies found in Northeast India?

Long Questions (Answer within 300 -500 words)

Q 1: Explain the notion of 'cosmetic federalism' with respect to postcolonial politics in Northeast India.

Q 2: Why have counter insurgency measures by the Indian government not achieved much success in bringing about peace in Northeast India?

*** ***** ***

variety of crops can be produced and for what purpose, how food and agricultural revenues can be disseminated, and in what manner or in what conditions the agrarian segment is connected to the remaining of economy of a society. Note, that in an agrarian country like India, wherein the majority of population still dwells in villages and are directly or indirectly connected with agriculture the primary means of livelihood, dominations over ownership of land and rural resources continue along with caste-based discrimination and subjugation. The control over land, credit and markets are in the hands with a few individuals causing a social developmentcategorized by a stiff class structure connected to land and land relations. Additionally, the agrarian relations in India have been manifested by numerous struggles of the oppressed class.

9.3 LAND TENURE

Land tenure is the association, legally or customarily defined, among people, as individuals or groups, in connection to their land. Herein, it is pertinent to mention that, “land” is used here to as an encompassing term for other natural resources like water and trees.) Take note that, and tenure is an establishment, i.e., rules devised by societies to control behaviour. Rules of tenure outline how property rights to land are to be apportionedinside societies. Such rules describe how admittance is approved to rights to use, control, and land transfer, along withaccompanying responsibilities and limitations. In simple terms, land tenure systems regulates who can utilize what resources for what period of time, and under what circumstances.

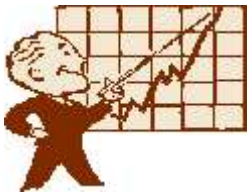
Land tenure is an important part of social, political and economic structures. It is multi-dimensional, bringing into play social, technical, economic, institutional, legal and political aspects that are often ignored but must be taken into account. Land tenure relationships may be well-defined and enforceable in a formal court of law or through customary structures in a community. Alternatively, they may be relatively poorly defined with ambiguities open to exploitation.

Land tenure therefore, comprises a network of interconnecting

forests, etc, where there may be free access to the resources for all. (An important difference between open access and communal systems is that under a communal system non-members of the community are excluded from using the common areas.)

- State: On the other hand, property rights that are allocated to certain authority in the public domain. For instance, in certain countries, forest lands fall under the directive of the state, whether at a central or decentralized level of administration.

Based on the above given below are few questions that will help you recapitulate the introductory part of this unit.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. What do you understand by land tenure?

.....

.....

Q2. What is meant by an agrarian society?

.....

.....

Q3. What are the different categories of land tenure?

.....

.....

Q4. What is land administration?

.....

.....

Q5. Define tenure security.

.....

.....

Having discussed, the overview on land relations in general, the focus now shifts to Northeast India. Herein the attempt will be to get an outline of the land relations in the region, which has a majority of tribal populace.

it is specified: "Notwithstanding anything in this constitution – no Act of Parliament in respect of (i) religious or social practices of the Nagas; (ii) Naga customary law procedure; (iii) administration of civil and criminal justice; and (iv) ownership of land and its resources shall apply to the state of Nagaland." Akin to this, protections are made for the state of Mizoram under Article 371G and for the tribal population of Manipur under Article 371C. Arunachal Pradesh enjoys certain provisions of the States coming under the Sixth Schedule do (Fernandes and Barbora, 2008).

- **Assam**

At this juncture it is pertinent to note, unlike the rest of the subcontinent, Assam retained several elements of the tribal economy well into the 19th century. Post the British annexation the scenario steadily transformed. Post the turn ofthe 20th century, the alteration was more radical as therevenue abstraction of the colonial rule congregated with the rent and profit motivations of the local landlords and merchant wealth respectively. Supply of labour was expedited through immigration. The new system of complex of production was nevertheless not influential in bringing in amassing of productive capital. Production evolved by outspreading the agrarian boundary. Growing pressure on the land led to the enlargement of the ranks of landless labourers and tenant cultivators. Additional,emblems of subcontinental semi-feudalism such as moneylending, interweaved transactions and extensive reach of market became a prevalent practice. It thus resulted, in the production mode of the regionspeedily became one with the remaining of British India. A nuanced understanding of the modern state of Assam cannot impedeinvestigation of the tidal waves of men and money from over a century ago.

- **Meghalaya**

In the case of the state of Meghalaya, the system of land tenure and land ownership is very multifaceted. The system comprises of two authorities i) the traditional and ii) non-traditional institutions. The traditional organizations operate on the basis of indigenous customary laws and customswhich have not yet been collated and are founded on customs and

Constitution does not present legal sanctity to this structure of local authority by customary laws in Arunachal Pradesh. Yet, the tribe's people of the state continue to give preeminence to customary laws. In most circumstances, the state government abstains from interfering. As social scientist Walter Fernandes states, "in theory the formal law applies but in practice the customary law holds sway

- **Manipur**

The Manipur Land Reform and Land Revenue Act, 1960 is applicable to the entire valley but is applicable only to aninsignificant portion of the hill area. Over the years, the state government of Manipur has endeavored to legislate numerous land laws with some amendments like the New Land Use Policy, 2014. Herein, it is pertinent to mention that, each time the state government endeavors to do so, it restores ethnic polarisation and increasedskirmishes within the state. Note that, the introduction of any legislation such as land tenure in the hill areas is perceived with mistrust and ruminates being disparaging to tribal land ownership system,founded on traditional customary laws. Popular sensitivity is that, such a law will erode the customary polity but also downgrade the tribal's and isolate them from their tenure and possession of the land.

- **Tripura**

The tribal's of Tripura present a different picture. Research has shown that the tribal's of the state face a severe difficulty of landlessness. The under lying causes recognized are the internal organization, and the flow of immigrant populace from 1947 to 1971 from the erstwhile East Pakistan (present day Bangladesh). In earlier times, tribal villages had some form of shared land ownership that was acknowledged by the Raja (king) of Tripura. Every village had a chief who relished customary rights of control on the village and its individuals. People paid taxes to the raja through the village chief. It was in the year 1886, the law of 'Landlord and Tenant' was approved by the autonomous state of Tripura. The law contained all the rudiments of changing communal land into individual property, implying private tenure of land. The individuals who profited from the law were the Bengali settlers

management. The Village Chief was customarily considered as the outright proprietor of all lands inside his territorial jurisdiction and he was liable for distribution and administration of land within the village. The ordinarily practiced form of agriculture in Mizoram was shifting cultivation, which was locally known as jhum. Through the course of enormous political, social and economic evolution between the 1950s and 1970s, Mizoram sustained with the laws it inbred from its days as the Mizo District. From the time Mizoram was raised to a Union Territory and to statehood, no new land laws were sanctioned and the numerous simultaneous land laws were not reconciled, which frequently fashioned circumstances of indistinctness. To make up for this void in the legal framework, in 2013, the state of Mizoram sanctioned the new Mizoram (Land Revenue) Act, 2013 and the Mizoram (Land Revenue) Rules, 2013. This Code revoked all preceding legislations governing land allotment, management and land revenue.

- **Sikkim**

In 1975 when Sikkim became an Indian state, the first step taken by the government was the elimination of mediators. Consequently, it made the provision of land rights to the landless rudders, imposed ceiling laws of landholding, dissemination of surplus land and fortification of occupancy rights through statutes like the Sikkim Cultivators Protection Act (1975), the Sikkim Agricultural Land Ceiling and Reforms Act (1978), and the Sikkim Land (Requisition and Acquisition) Act 1978. Land tenure of the nativeLepchas and Bhutias, which were sheltered earlier by the revenue order no 1 of 1917, continued to be so post the unification of Sikkim with India because of the tribal status of these two ethnic communities.



9.6 LET US SUM UP

- In summation it is imperative to understand that, land, particularly for the tribals, has persisted as the single most significant physical ownership.

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9.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Land tenure is the association, whether legally or customarily demarcated, among people, as individuals or groups, in relation to land.

Ans to Q No 2: An agrarian society is any civilization whose economy is grounded on producing and sustaining crops and farmland.

Ans to Q No 3: Land tenure is often classified as Private, Communal, Open Access and State.

Ans to Q No 4: Land administration is defined as the manner in which the rules of land tenure are applied and made functional.

Ans to Q No 5: Tenure security is defined as the certainty that a person's privileges to land will be acknowledged by others and sheltered in cases of definite contests.



9.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer within 150 words)

1) Write a note on the connection between land relations and types of agriculture.
2) Elucidate how land is important in a tribal society?

B) Long Questions (Answer within 300-500 words)

1) Write an essay on the genesis and evolution of the existing pattern of land tenure system in Northeast India.
2) Discuss with the help of relevant examples the economic implications of the land tenure system.

*** ***** ***

10.3 ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

It has been argued that economic problems of this region have historical roots. Colonial history and exploitations have had long lasting impact on its economic infrastructures. Even after independence from colonial rule, specter of colonial history is still following its economic sectors. In spite of having natural resources, economic development of this region is lagging behind the overall development of the country. Economic underdevelopment of this region has multiple factors and causes. All these have been discussed in the following sections.

10.3.1 Unemployment

Unemployment is the situation of actively looking for employment but not being currently employed. Unemployment can be regarded as a huge economic problem. Unemployment can also be regarded as a major social problem because it can lead to other social disasters. In every state a person should get employment according to his/her merit and qualification. Ensuring a decent job according to ones qualification is the prime responsibility of any state. But it has been seen that, in every country unemployment become a visible content. North East India is not indifferent to this. According to employment and unemployment survey 2012-13, conducted by Ministry of labour and employment, unemployment rate among people in the north eastern states are more than the national average. North eastern states like Assam, Manipur, and Arunachal are facing huge unemployment problems. It leads to some other social evils like terrorism, crime and suicide, which will be discussed later. Before understanding social consequences of unemployment, we must know its causes

Causes of unemployment: According to the report published by the ministry of the development of the north east region (DONER), northeastern states have net unemployment rate of 12 per cent. North eastern state Tripura reported India's highest unemployment rate,

groups. Decades of economic and political exploitation have been articulated through different insurgent groups and terrorist outfits. Regular ambush, abduction, extortion demands have decreased the chances of establishing new industries in the region. Violent activities of terrorist outfits like ULFA, NDFB, NSCN, PLA etc have made hindrance towards setting up new industries in the region. It is note worthy that terrorism and unemployment have reciprocal relations. Terrorism can be regarded as a consequence of unemployment which further contributes to unemployment. Economic development and industrialization cannot be achieved without proper development of law and order. In North east region, terrorist activities have almost collapsed the law and order situation which ingrained fear among the investors to invest in the region.

- **Transportation -** Geographical remoteness of this region is corresponded by pathetic road connectivity. Though in recent times, some initiatives have been taken yet poor road connectivity and communication of the north-east India can be regarded as major problem towards industrialization and economic development. All these lead to increase in number of unemployment.
- **Employment regeneration -** Even after almost 70 years of independence, proper initiatives were not taken to regenerate employment through introduction of new sectors and new skills. State policies are hovering around traditional and conventional sectors. In this way limited number of government sector could not deal with increase in number of unemployment in the North eastern region.
- **Lack of entrepreneurial skills -** In the era of globalization too much dependence on government sector jobs cannot be accepted as a good exercise. Entrepreneurial skills followed by the ideas of establishing start ups can be an alternative solution to the problems of unemployment. In north east India

youths of this region are gradually fascinated towards terrorist activities because they have seen less chances of getting government jobs. Corruption and nepotism in government job have made them hopeless. On the other hand lack of infrastructure and industrialization has made a huge hindrance towards regeneration of private jobs. Thus they have seen that terrorism followed by abduction; extortion etc can be a profitable business for them to have a decent life style. It has been observed that after 1980s, terrorism becomes a profitable industry in the north east region.

- **Poverty:** poverty can also be regarded as another consequence of unemployment, when the chances of getting private and government jobs become less it leads to dire economic conditions.
- **Crime-** unemployment can lead to criminal activities. Unemployment can instigate people to indulge in criminal activities. Social insecurity and frustration carried by unemployment can instigate people to engross in criminal activities. According to different scholars, increase amount of crimes like robbery, drug dealing, child trafficking, flesh trade etc have direct relation with unemployment.
- **Social insecurity, suicide-** It has been observed that unemployment can bring social insecurity and mental agonies. When people understand his/her self as capable human being, who is capable of doing decent jobs but unable to get it due to corruption or red tapism and nepotism, a sense of frustration and social insecurity gradually emerge in his/her mind. It can lead to deviant social behavior, crimes or suicide.
- **Migration-** In north east India, out migration of youths to other parts of the country is very significantly increasing. Lack of proper infrastructure, prevailing conditions of unemployment and socio-political conditions of the region have inculcated the belief within the youths of this region that economic stereotypes

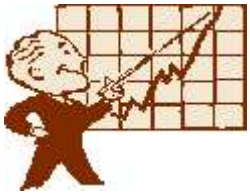
economist of Assam, the more important and difficult job in the development process of the country is to provide the basic infrastructural facilities. These infrastructural facilities include various economic and social overhead viz., energy (coal, oil, and electricity), irrigation, transportation and communication, banking, finance, insurance, science and technology and other social overheads like education, health, and hygiene.

Agriculture provides livelihood to 70% of the region's population. In Mizoram, around 51% of the population lives in rural areas and is dependent on agriculture. The figure in Sikkim is high at 89%. However, the pattern of agricultural growth has remained uneven across regions. The states continue to be net importers of food grains even for their own consumption. Though agriculture is the main source of livelihood here but it has been observed that Limited amount of land is available for agriculture. The region has a forest cover of more than 66.1% (ranging from 35.3% in Assam to 90.7% in Mizoram) against the national average of 21.1%. Apart from paddy, rubber, sugarcane, tea etc are cultivated in the region.

Tripura is the chief production hub of rubber. It has been declared as the 'second rubber capital of India' right after Kerala by the Indian Rubber Board. The NE states also produce a substantial percentage of bamboo, accounting for 65% of India's production value and 20% of the global production value. Mizoram alone contributes to around 40% of the country's bamboo production. In agricultural sectors different problems can be observed. Fragmented land holdings by small and marginal farmers which dominate the landholding pattern in the north east is uneconomical. The region has low proportion of irrigated area and investment in building irrigation capacity has been insufficient and ineffective. The use of agricultural inputs in the north east is also low compared to the rest of the country. Fertilizers used per hectare during 2010-11 were negligible in the region, especially in Nagaland (2.35 kg), Arunachal Pradesh (3.01 kg); and between 13 kg in Meghalaya and 63 kg in Assam compared to the national average

For any industrial and economic development, infrastructures like those of power and electricity are very important. Earlier in case of power and electricity we cannot say that north eastern region had an advantage. But recent development of hydropower projects has made a significant change. According to the report published by the DONER ministry 3 north eastern states, Sikkim, Tripura and Mizoram became power-surplus state. According to the DONER ministry report 16 hydropower projects is are under construction in the region which includes lower Subansiri project, Kameng project, Umtru hydropower project, Turial project of Mizoram, etc. According to this report completion of these projects will ensure 5576 mw power. Though it has significant impact on prospect industrial development, it has created wider environmental problems too.

For industrial development, educational infrastructure and skill development are essential. In case of north east, several central and state universities, engineering and medical institutions are developed. But development of technical institutes and higher educational-skill base institutes are not up to the mark. Development of IITS, IIMS, NITS are not significant in the region. It is noteworthy that without proper development of skills and entrepreneurial abilities proper industrial development cannot be achieved.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q3. How many international airports does the north-eastern region has?

.....

Q4. How many hydro power projects has been constructed in the north-eastern region?

.....

.....

Oil refinery in Digboi. In spite of having all such resources industrial development have not been taken place convincingly. In tea sector problems of small tea planters and medium tea planters were not adequately addressed by the governments. There has been a huge ongoing debate on quality of the tea products in North East. In Oil sectors proposed auctions of oil fields in Assam showed huge loss of ONGC and Assam petro chemicals limited. In case of silk industry, a village of Assam, Sualkuchi got its prominence due to the presence of cottage industry. It has been regarded as Manchester of Assam. Meghalaya has a strong reservoir of lime stones, granite which is a potential source of cement industry. In case of bamboo industry and handloom, Manipur and Tripura have huge potentialities. As it has been already discussed, rubber production has another potential in North eastern region. Bamboo production in Sikkim can also be a potential industrial development. In case of tourism it has been observed that scenic beauty of Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Gangtok, etc. have attracted tourist of the different countries, special festivals like Hornbill festival, Tawang festival, Ambubachi mela have attracted tourists from different parts of the world. Presence of the rivers like the Brahmaputra, the Barak, the Kaladan, etc, presence of world's largest and smallest river islands, presence of the places of highest rainfall, cleanliest village of Asia has made northeast one of the important destinations for the tourist. In spite of having all such facilities tourism industry has not been developed up to the mark in the region.

Main reasons for this underdevelopment are:

- Colonial oppression and exploitation
- Post-independent negligence followed by unequal distribution of resources.
- Corruption
- Underdevelopment of infrastructure
- Insurgency and violence



10.5 FURTHER READING

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5) Presentation on infrastructure development in north-east Indian states, presentation submitted in conference of chief ministers of north eastern region.
6) North eastern council news letter, vol, 1. Issue.1.December, 2017.



10.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: 150 year

Ans to Q No 2: colonial exploitation, remotive

Ans to Q No 3: 2

Ans to Q No 4: 16



10.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

Short Questions (Answer with 150 words)

Q 1: Mention two consequences of unemployment.

Q 2: Mention two causes of underdevelopment of the industrial sector.

Long Questions (Answer with 300 - 500 words)

Q 1: Discuss the main factors of un-employment in North-east India.

Q 2: Do you think infrastructural development of North East India is sufficient

UNIT 11: DEVELOPMENT IN NORTH-EAST INDIA

UNIT STRUCTURE

11.1 Learning Objectives

11.2 Introduction

11.3 Development in Northeast India

11.4 North Eastern Council and its significance

11.5 The Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region

11.6 Look East Policy and Northeast India

11.7 Let Us Sum up

11.8 Further Readings

11.9 Answers to Check your Progress

11.10 Model Questions

11.1 LEARNING OBJCTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- explain the significance of North Eastern Council
- learn about the Ministry Development of North Eastern Region
- conceptualise the idea of Look East Policy and its relevance to Northeast India

11.2 INTRODUCTION

Over the years development of the northeastern region in India has been one of the major concerns. Towards this end the North eastern council (NEC) and the Ministry of Development of the North Eastern Region (MDONER) has played a major role. In this unit we will disscuss about the role of NEC and MDONER in details.

11.3 DEVELOPMENT IN NORTH-EAST INDIA

Development in Northeast India has been mainly based on security concerns and thus the centre's state-centric approach has kept the region mostly underdeveloped and isolated.



ACTIVITY 1

Answer the following:

1) What is the logic of developmentalism associated with?

.....

.....

2) What is cosmetic federalism?

.....

.....

11.4 NORTH EASTERN COUNCIL AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

North Eastern Council is a statutory body and a nodal agency for the socio-economic development of the North Eastern Region. It consists of the Governors and Chief Ministers of all the eight states of the Northeast, including Sikkim, apart from the Chairman and three Members who are nominated by the President of India. Constituted in 1971 by a parliamentary act, the council has been playing a significant role in setting forth a dynamic and rigorous form of economic development in the region. It is listed as one of the associate organisations of the Ministry of DONER. It comprises as its members the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. Its headquarters is located in Shillong, Meghalaya. It has both balanced development and security as its twin objectives. It played an instrumental role in the preparation of North Eastern Region Vision 2020 which is basically a road map for implementation of goal-oriented schemes and activities. It implements its projects through State and Central Government Agencies.

As Northeast India has a strategic location for facilitating all forms of major economic activities, the council has enabled better prospects for the same, for instance, by making inter-state connectivity in the regions better. By doing so, it has removed all possible inter-regional barriers of the region, paving the way for the region's development. It formulates proposals for

of North Eastern region), it got upgraded to ministry of the Indian Union in May 2004 as The Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, better known as MDoNER. As a nodal department under the Central Government which it dealt with the crucial matters and issues of development of the eight Northeastern states of India, pertaining to socio-economic parameters. It takes responsibilities for matters pertaining to the planning, execution and monitoring of development schemes and projects in the NE region. It received the status of a full-fledged ministry only in the year 2004. The Minister of DoNER is assisted by Union Secretary and other Joint Secretaries. Concerned mainly about the infrastructural advancement and development of Northeast India, it functions as the facilitator of capacity-building process, advocacy and coordination with the Central Ministries and the State Governments of the NE states. By doing so, it functions as a mediator between the Central Departments and the State Governments of the North Eastern Region in regard to economic progress. Areas of concern include providing minimum services, triggering economic competitions in the market thus enabling an environment for private investment, ensuring peace and harmony in the region etc. The Ministry has played an active role in the region's economic development. The ministry has different organisations that function under it: 1) Northeast Council 2) North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd. 3) The Sikkim Mining Corporation Limited. 4) North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation Limited 5) North Eastern Handlooms and Handicrafts Development Corporation.



ACTIVITY 2

Find out some of the important projects undertaken by the DoNER Ministry.

.....

11.6 LOOK EAST POLICY AND NORTH-EAST INDIA

The historic partition of the country had put the region of northeast India in a condition of extreme isolation. In fact, B.G Verghese describes the region as South Asia's third landlocked 'state' with Bhutan and Nepal (Baruah, 2007).

number of bi-lateral and multi-lateral agreements that provide the foundation for India's growing relations with Southeast Asia, for example, BIMSTEC (Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand Economic Cooperation).

The northeast region of India is a storehouse of abundant natural resources with great developmental potential. However, it still has not been harnessed and also, a sense of discomfort grew in the wake of independence with the advent of profound economic and political changes. However, the question of national development in recent times has seen the inclusion of the question of the development of this region. Such development is believed to accelerate India's relations with other countries. In this context, the Look East Policy becomes important as India has given a new dimension to it by building partnership with ASEAN countries, keeping the economic and security interests of Northeast India into account. Growth and development in Northeast India thus was started to be seen as dependent on India's commercial exchanges with Southeast Asia.

The Modi government took forward the idea and implemented its own formula of Act East Policy in order to build and improve its relation with ASEAN and East Asian countries. The opening up of the region of Northeast India was seen as a step to control or eliminate the insurgency problem in the region. The Northeast emerged as the frontier and as the region bridging the gap between mainland India and other Southeast Asian nations. As already mentioned, increased rail and air connectivity, border trade, etc. has led to the idea that the fortune of the Northeast seems to be intricately tied to the Look East Policy.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q4. The idea of regional cooperation and regional groupings historically saw manifestation with the end of Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. (True/ False)

Q5. The Look East Policy was launched during Manmohan Singh's rule. (True/ False)

building process, advocacy and coordination with the Central Ministries and the State Governments of the NE states.

- The Look East Policy of India was launched in the year 1991 during the government led by P.V Narasimha Rao. It aims at establishing crucial economic and strategic relations with Southeast Asian nations in order to ensure a strong foothold of India as a regional power.
- It becomes important as India has given a new dimension to it by building partnership with ASEAN countries, keeping the economic and security interests of Northeast India into account.
- The Modi government took forward the idea and implemented its own formula of Act East Policy in order to build and improve its relation with ASEAN and East Asian countries.



11.8 FURTHER READING

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11.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: True

Ans to Q No 2: True

Ans to Q No 3: True

Ans to Q No 4: True

Ans to Q No 5: False



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