

SOCIO-POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF BODO MOVEMENT IN ASSAM

¹SANKAR DAS

ABSTRACT:

The movement which was started in 1920s by plain tribes with the demand of identity assertion is still continued in the region. The movement has gone through different phases to assume its present nature. The movement dominates the socio-political scenario of the Assam. It makes impact on socio political foundations of the state. Starting with the demand of identity assertion to demand of autonomy and later on with the statehood demand highly influence the state politics as well as common people of the region. The nature of Bodo movement has to be critically analyzed in order to understand the socio political reality of the region. The movement and its evolution to reach the present nature gives us a real picture of the society and prevailing condition in the region from different perspectives such as social, economic, political . So this paper tries to analyze the bodo movement from all these perspective and in addition tries to critically examine other dimensions such as peace, human rights, cooperation, administrative set up etc.

Key words: Bodos, Non bodos, Peace, Rights

I. INTRODUCTION:

According to 2001 Census, total population of Assam was 26,655,528. Of them 3,308,570 persons is Scheduled Tribe, consisting 12.4% of the total population of the state. There are total 23 notified STs in the state. Assam has two categories of STs, ST (hills) and ST (plains). Among the STs, Bodos represents nearly half of the total STs of the state (40.9%).ⁱ The Bodos are the largest plain tribes of the Assam. The Bodos claim themselves as original inhabitants of Assam and viewed that in earlier period all most all tribes of Assam was part of larger Bodo-Kachari Group and almost all tribe communities in Assam share same ancestry.ⁱⁱ Assam is a homeland of different ethnic groups. People belonging to various cultures, religions, races came to the region in different periods of time and assimilated there. One of the most remarkable among these tribes is Kirata and it also finds a mention in Mahabharata. The Kirata tribe belongs to clan of Mongoloid tribes and Bodo tribe is linked to the Kirata of the Mahabharata period. The Bodo people are categorized as Indo- Mongoloid tribe who migrated to the land in pre – historic period. The Bodo people are known with different names. The ABSU views that the following tribes were known with one single name but at present they have different names to represent their groups. Tribes like Bodo or

¹RESEARCH SCHOLAR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, MIZORAM UNIVERSITY

Boro, Borok, Barman Kachari, Chutiya, Dimasa, Deuri, Dhimal, Hajong, Mech, Modahi, Koch, Rabha, Sonowal, Thengal and Tiwa. They are but cognate tribes of the same ancestry.

II. DATA SOURCE AND METHODOLOGY:

The study is based on descriptive and analytical method. Data for the study has been collected from various books, journals, articles, and news paper etc.

STRUGGLE OF BODOS:

With the time passing, the Bodo tribe lost its significance in the region. Different races came to the region and started living in there permanently. Moreover the evils of caste system and other social evils deteriorated the position of the Bodos in the region. It was in the first decade of 20th century that a Bodo person, namely Kalicharan Brahma took an initiative to reform the Bodo society. Later on a group of youth of Bodo society influenced by Kalicharan Brahma came to the front and showed their concern about their rights and identity. In order to ensure their identity the movement was started on 1929, when the tribal leaders of Assam articulated their demands before the Simon Commission. From that period onwards the largest ethnic group of Assam, the Bodo, viewed that their demand for equality, identity, development were not fulfilled. The plain tribes of Assam including the Bodos were not covered under any special protective provision during the Colonial administration.

In the initial stage of independent India, the scheduled tribe people by living in northern plain area of Assam have been neither covered by the fifth schedule nor the sixth schedule of Indian constitution. Exclusion of plain tribes of Assam under special provision in post independence period symbolized the continued approach of colonial legacy by Indian state.

Among the ethnic groups of the region, the Bodos are the largest in number. Almost 12% of the total population is covered by Bodo ethnic group. They have been experiencing the socio economic exploitation and discrimination as they were deprived of the protective and promotive provisions of the two schedules of Indian constitution. The Bordoloi Committee of the Advisory committee of the Constituent Assembly on Fundamental Rights, Minority and Tribal and Excluded areas, in their report argued that the plain tribes of the region should be treated as a minority not as scheduled tribes for all practical purposes. It showed the negligence of mainstream nationalist leaders on issue of recognition to culture and identity of plain tribal peoples of Assam.

The Bordoloi ministry in Assam amended The Assam Land and Revenue Regulation, 1886 to address the demands of plain tribes with regard to preservation of their land in 1947. The continued encroachment in tribal land and growing concern for identity among plain tribes paved the way for the demand 'Udayanchal'. The demand of Udayanchal was the first attempt of plain tribes to establish a separate homeland for plain tribes of Assam. The demand of Udayanchal was not conceded but it made an impact on the nature of plain tribes' struggle relating to their identity, culture, tradition, language, and self determination in the region.

In 1987, the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) led the movement for separate statehood. The term 'Bodoland' was given to the proposed statehood by the ABSU. The separate Bodoland movement, which was launched by ABSU, had gone through different phases. The centre as well as state governments initiated different measures in different phases of the movement to deal with the issues of Bodos. The Bodo Autonomous Council (1993) and the Bodo Territorial Council (2003) were the major administrative initiatives that were taken by Government in response to the Bodos' demands and issues.

Presently, the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU), a powerful student organization argued that those initiatives were not enough. The ABSU opined that only the separate Bodoland state can resolve their demands. Regarding the nature of Bodoland there are different views among the representing groups of Bodo people. The ABSU demands for a separate state under the provision of Articles 2 & 3 of the Constitution of India.

The Bodos view that the areas which are the ancestral land of Bodo people where their fore fathers had been living for generations since the time immemorial should be included in the proposed Bodoland boundary. The concerned government failures to ensure identity issues along with prevention of encroachment of tribal land by non tribes provide the popular support among Bodo people on their demands of separate statehood. All Bodo Students' Union under the leadership of Upendra Nath Brahma initiated the movement for separate statehood within Indian Union for the first time in 1987. From then onwards the movement had witnessed different phases but still the demand for separate homeland remains to be the prime objective of the student union.

The peace and development paradigms of the area were worst affected by violent activities of different Bodo groups regarding the separate Bodoland. The violent and non violent protests of these groups caused serious damage to human development of the region. Polarization on ethnic lines also causes a potential threat to the peace and harmony in the region.

Different phases of Bodo movement and its impact on the region: The plain tribes of Assam fought for their rights to preserve and protect their own unique identity. The fight was started a long back ago and still it is continued in the region. Although initiatives were taken by state and union governments to deal with the issues but still a large section of plain tribes is suspicious and critical on those initiative and raise question on viability of such initiatives. .

The exclusion of plain tribes under protective measuresⁱⁱⁱ of colonial administration made them conscious about their unique identity. The Plain tribes feared that they would lose their culture, tradition and ethnic identity in the process of assimilation with non tribe peoples. So, they organized and submitted memorandum to the Simon Commission in 1929 demanding protective measures to their culture and ethnic identity including demand of separate electorate, separate status in Census Report.^{iv} In 1933, the plain tribes of Assam including Bodos formed a political party, All Assam Plain Tribal League to represent their voices in political platform. The Government of India Act 1935 provided a provision of five reserved seats in Provincial Assembly especially to represent the issues of plain tribes. In the pre independence period, the AAPTTL was vocal but it was dissolved in 1956 with merging plain tribal leaders with Congress. It was transformed into a socio economic body only. Later in 1967, with the emergence of two strong plain tribal organizations, the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) and the Plain Tribal

Council of Assam (PTCA), the issues and demands of plain tribes came to forefront in socio-political scenario of Assam once again. This time the demand was for autonomy. The PTCA cried for separate homeland namely Udayanchal for plain tribes within India in a nature of Union Territory.

During this phase in 1974-1975, a new movement was started by Bodo intellectuals. Bodo, the largest plain tribes of Assam launched movement demanding Roman Script for Bodo language. Bodo Sahitya Sabha which was formed in 1952 led the movement to recognize roman script for their language. The Government authorities did not listen to the issues and demands of Bodo peoples. The government authorities did not give so much importance to the demands. So the protest was started against the state government. The state government took repressive measures to deal with problem. About 18 Bodos laid their lives for the cause of Roman script.^v Later on, Devanagari Script was imposed by central government to Bodos very convincingly. The approach of Assam government was criticized and it made plain tribes of Assam very conscious to their own unique identity. The incident also intensified the demand of Udayanchal. The demand of Udayanchal was not conceded. The political development in the state and absence of common proposal for Udayanchal among plain tribal leaders paved the way for decline of the demand of Udayanchal.

From 1987 onwards, the demand of separate statehood gained more prominence among plain tribes, especially among Bodo peoples. The movement for separate statehood was led by the ABSU and still the movement is carried on. During this phase of the statehood movement, from 1987 to onwards many developments have occurred which give the present structure of today's movement.

From 1987 onwards, the ABSU lead the movement of separate statehood. Upendra Nath Brahma, the then President of ABSU opined that there was nothing apolitical in the hardships faced by the plain tribes of Assam. According to him, all the injustices, exploitation, discrimination and underdevelopment faced by the tribes of Assam were for political nature.^{vi} The ABSU viewed that without a separate state their demands of equality, justice would not be actualized. Only separate state within Indian Union could ensure their demands and provide protection and preservation to their culture, tradition, language and identity. The ABSU started the movement with the demand of separate statehood in 1987. Even they gave the nomenclature of the proposed statehood as Bodoland.^{vii} The ABSU took various activities that made impact on social as well as political scenario of the Assam. The movement for separate statehood was intensified and number of demonstration, hunger strike, and Bandh were called under the leadership of ABSU. It hampered the normal life of people in that region. During the Bandhs, violence was witnessed, which led to the death of many peoples. The state government also took repressive measures to control the law and order in the region. The clash between the police and bandh supporters made the situation more problematic to ensure peace in the region. The economy and development in Bodo dominated areas was badly impacted during the period. Some viewed backward economy was the one reason for such movement; on the other hand, some viewed that due to such activities the development agenda was not possible to implement in such areas. The ABSU argued that the real issue of the movement to ensure and protect the unique identity of plain tribes which was neglected by state as well as central government.

The violent phase of the movement was begun with the emergence of armed organizations like the Bodo Security Force^{viii} (1986) and Bodo Volunteer Force. The both bodo groups had different vision regarding separate homeland. Former one demanded sovereign status for their homeland and other demanded separate homeland with in India. The religion was also a matter of concern. The BSF had Christian majority and BVF was Hindu dominated.^{ix} A majority of Bodos are Hindus and only a sizable section is Christian. A new competition began between these two parties to claim their own party as real representative of Bodos. These organizations joined hand with other insurgency groups of North eastern region and made the situation more complex. The hostility between two armed groups of Bodos entailed a heavy human cost and devastated the economy and peace in the region.

Although there were different views on the nature of Bodoland among different armed groups, but their presence on the scenario of movement decreased the nature of democratic and peaceful element in the movement. The period from February to August 1989 was the first violent phase in the Bodo agitation with the Bodo activities embarking on a series of killings, kidnappings and bomb attacks in which 350 people were killed.^x The presence of violence nature in the movement was slowly decreasing the role of ABSU in the movement. On the other hand, the movement was leaning towards armed organization to take control of the movement. Understanding the complexity of the issue, Union government proposed to talk with non violent organization of the movement to solve the problem and ensure peace and harmony in the region. As part of talks, a committee was appointed by Union government to study the issues of plain tribes of Assam in 1991 under chairmanship of Dr. Bhupinder Singh.^{xi} The recommendation of the Committee was rejected by ABSU and BPAC.

Later on, in 1993, the talks reached an agreement point and Memorandum on Settlement on Bodo Autonomous Council was signed among Union government, Assam State government and ABSU-BPAC leaders. The Memorandum provided the provision to create the Bodo Autonomous Council and leave the decision regarding boundaries of BAC to state government. The state government failed to demarcate boundaries of BAC because ABSU denounced the notification of Assam government on BAC boundary.^{xii} Moreover, growing presence of armed groups and activities in the scenario of the Bodoland movement made it difficult implement the provision of Accord. Ultimately, the Accord was proved as failure.

Post 1993 Accord, the BAC area witnessed too much violence. Normal law and order situation was devastated. The Accord was failed to ensure peace and harmony in the region. At last, the accord was dissolved. The provision of Accord was criticized by non Bodos of BAC for not considering the demography of the region. The state government action towards the Accord also dissatisfied the signatories of the Accord.^{xiii} Violent activities dominated the BAC scenario. The absence of proper policy to solve the Bodoland issues caused more damage to the region.

The clash between Bodos-non Bodos made the situation more complex. The human lives were not secure at that time. In October 1993, the Bodo-Muslim violence was occurred. It had displaced about 3,568 families consisting of 18000 persons.^{xiv} It led to the death of 19 person, almost all of them were Muslim.^{xv} Another massacre was happened in July, 1994 in northern part of Barpeta, almost a few hundred Muslims of Bengali ascent were killed in that massacre.^{xvi} In 1996, Bodo-Santhal clash was occurred in kokrajhar district. It was spread over 2,500 sq km,

devasted 75 villages in both sides,rendered 200000 people homeless and left 100 dead,^{xvii} where 200 Adivashis being killed and forced 250000 people to take shelter in relief camps. Moreover, during the phase, the clash between armed organizations, NDFB and BLT made the situation worse. In this context, scholar Baruah, Mahanta defines the presence of violent activities of NDFB and BLT as part of “contentious politics” which they view as representation of violence as continuum with other non-violent social movements, political parties and interest groups in the area.^{xviii} Thus, in the BAC area at that time witnessed violence “interweaves incessantly with non violent politics.”^{xix} The next accord was signed in 2003 among Union Government, state government and BLT to ensure peace and address Bodoland issue.^{xx} But the structural issues were not dealt properly, for which the BTC area witnessed large scale violence in the ethnic clash of 2008 and 2012.

Impact on other Autonomy Movements led by other Tribes: The Bodo movement made the other plain tribes also conscious towards their identity and uniqueness. The question on Assamese Chauvinism was raised from other tribes of Assam. The Bodoland Movement also gave the momentum to other tribes of Assam to cry for autonomy..

Bodoland Statehood Movement and Issues of Non-Bodos: Bodos consists only 32% of total population of BTAD. Other major groups of BTAD are Bengali speaking muslims, adivasis including santhals, Koch rajbonghi. Other communities including Bengali hindus, nepalis, caste assamese, sarania kachari and rabhas also share good portion of total population of BTAD areas.

Table 4: Ethnic composition of BTAD areas.^{xxi}

Ethnic groups	Percentage to total population
Bodo	32
Bengali ascent Muslims	19
Adivasi communities including Santhals	17
Koch- Rajbngshi	16
Other communities including Bengali Hindus, Nepalies, Caste Assamese, Sarania Kachari, and Rabhas	16
Total	100

Source: Kalita, Uttam(2016), p. 825-826.

Meanwhile, the ABSU's demand of divide Assam 50-50 to establish a new state of Bodoland has very little share of Bodo population. They view that the proposed state is not just for Bodo speaking people but also for all plain tribes of the region who used to share same ancestry. But the differences that existed among plain tribe groups made this proposed land very unrealistic. Every group tried to identify their selves in their own community perspective. The levels of development and the process of assimilation with Assamese culture are also differing from each other. Every plain tribe group comes with their own demand of autonomy so a dream about Bodoland on principle of divide Assam 50-50 is not acceptable.

In the BTAD areas, although Bodos are the largest community when compared to other groups in terms of population, but combination of all non Bodo groups, including Bengali speaking Muslims, Koch Rajbangshi, Bengali Hindus, Nepalis, caste Assamese, Sarania Kachari and Rabhas than it would be much higher than the total population of Bodos in BTAD areas. Regarding the failure of Accord (1993), Hiteswar Saikia, the then C.M of Assam criticized union government for their hurriedness to sign the Accord. He advised that the problem would be raised if they include non Bodos areas under purview of BAC without taking consent from non Bodos, as Bodo dominated areas in Lower Assam were not contiguous.^{xxii}

Non Bodos share almost 2/3 percent of total population of BTAD areas. When there was talk about the formation of BTC. The non Bodo population represented by an apex body of such population under the banner of Sanmilito Janagostiyo Sangram Samiti (SJSS) had opposed the idea on the grounds of the demographic reality of proposed area and suggested that the recommendation lay out by the three members Expert Committee led by Bhupinder Singh should be the basis of Bodo autonomy.^{xxiii}

The Accord on BTC in 2003 was also criticized by non Bodos groups of the BTAD. Non Bodo organizations opposed the formation of BTC as they felt such administrative structure recognized the Bodo hegemony in legal way. The ethnic clash in 1993, 1994 and in 1996 raised question on non Bodos' mind, residing in BTAD area about the security of their lives. They also condemned the power sharing structure of BTC for its unequal treatment and over emphasis on Bodos. The two most important constituents of BTAD, Koch rajbongshi and Adivasi have been demanding inclusion in ST category, but Bodos did not agree such demands as their political space would be reduced.^{xxiv} Non Bodos also criticize the present structure of BTC. Non Bodos question the composition of BTC council. They view that the percentage of political representation does not logically correspond to the actual demographic strength of the Bodo. In the BTC, 30 seats reserved for STs to the council of 46. five open for all, five for non tribal and six to be nominated by governor from unrepresented communities. The non Bodos, especially non tribal groups of BTAD claim that it is injustice to them to have 30 reserved seats for ST in the council. The non Bodos claim that the selection of reserved seats promotes the interest of Bodos. The reserved constituencies to BTC are drawn in such a manner where Bodos have minimum presence. So the provision of reserved seats helps Bodos to make presence in the political scenario of those areas without getting opposition from non tribal groups. The other open seats are in bodo majority areas so non Bodos have only remote chance of being elected.^{xxv}

Another major issue comes in the way of Bodos' demand for separate statehood from Koch rajbonghi community who is the one of the major groups in BTAD and in proposed statehood area of Bodoland. In the BTAD, Koch rajbonghi used to share almost 16% of total population of BTAD. Koch Rajbongshi community led by All Koch Rajbongshi Students' Union (AKRSU) has also demanding 'Kamatapur' state in Assam. The areas that they demand for separate kamatapur state includes some areas of proposed Bodoland. AKRSU demands that proposed Kamatapur would be created including 11 districts from Assam namely Lakhimpur, Sonitpur, Darrang, Morigaon, Kamrup, Nalbari, Barpeta, Goalpara, Dhuburi, Bongaingaon, and Kokrajhar and 5 districts from West Bengal.^{xxvi} So it is difficult to resolve the demands of either of these two groups that could lead to community clash in the region. In 1993, when the Bodo Autonomous Council Bill was introduced, Koch Rajbanshi was against the Accord. Their immediate demand was Scheduled Tribe status for them to secure equal share in political sphere of the BAC.^{xxvii} Even in 2003, BTC Accord, when the provision of 30 reserved seats for ST was declared, the Koch Rajbanshi continued their demand for ST status for them to ensure equal representation in BTC. Still the demand for ST for Koch Rajbanshi is present in Koch rajbongsi organization's agenda. In 2014, general election BJP gave pre-poll assurance to include Koch Rajbanshi in ST list along with six other communities of Assam. At present, Koch Rajbonsi enjoys the status of other backward class only in Assam, no action is yet taken by Government to fulfill its pre poll promise.

The Adivashis or Tea Tribe^{xxviii} one of the major groups in BTAD is also demanding ST status for them. Adivashis are Munda, Oron, Santhal and other tribals of Jharkhanda origin who were brought to Assam as plantation laboureres after the rapid growth of the tea industry in 1880. The Bodo based organizations like BPPF denounced the claims of tea tribes as they are not basically original inhabitants of Assam. Nani Gopal Mahanta views that the main reason for opposing ST status to the adivasis is their numbers. Nearly three million tea garden or ex-tea garden laboureres would make up about 50% of the total ST population of the state thereby making it the most powerful ST group replacing the Bodos.^{xxix}

The issue of illegal migration is also one of the major issues in BTAD areas. The tribal peoples along with other Assamese peoples held them responsible for change in the demographic equation in the land. The issues of encroachment of tribal belts and blocks remain a major issue for conflict in the Bodoland area.. Later on, their population growth in all over Assam provided the ground to believe the synthesis of the influx of the Bangladeshi immigrants. This phenomenon made the Bodos against Muslim peasants or laboureres with Bengali ascent as Bodos held them potential threat to their land and socio-political structure of Bodo dominated areas.

The emergence of strong Non-bodo bodies in BTAD like All Bodo Minority Student Union (ABMSU) and Ona Bodo Surakha Samiti (OBSS) can be viewed as resentment against socio political structure of BTAD. It has widened the gap between Bodos and Non Bodos. Ona Bodo Surakhya Samiti (OBSS) claim to have support from 27 organizations in Lower Assam including the All Assam Students' Union (AASU), the All Assam Minority Students' Union (AAMSU), the All Koch Rajbanshi Students' Union, the All Assam Tea Tribe Students' Association (AATTSA).^{xxx} All of these groups have strong hold over their common peoples of respective communities. The

growing importance of non-Bodos groups in the BTAD election and Assembly election in BTAD area lead to new phenomena in BTAD politics. The non-Bodos issues come to the forefront in socio political scenario of Assam.

The problem of non-Bodos in BTAD is that each group of non-Bodos has their own unique goals and objective. So, although they used to take stand against any injustice to them but the common objective is absent. The alliance of non-Bodos can be viewed as necessity to Bodos' domination, nothing else. So the political, social phenomenons easily make impact on the alliance of non-Bodos. The stability of alliance is still a question. For e.g. Bengali speaking/ ascent Muslim are the second highest groups in BTAD areas^{xxxii} but other groups don't feel comfortable to unite their goals and objectives with them because they, Bengali speaking Muslim are tagged as immigrant Bangladeshi who are condemned for changing demography of whole Assam. The demand of Kamatapur led by All Koch Rajbanshi Students' Union is also conflictual with the interest of other non-Bodos groups in BTAD.

Regarding the non-Bodos groups' stand against the proposed Bodoland, THE ABSU views that such movements are politically motivated to counter the movement for separate Bodoland. There is no reason for fear to non-Bodo communities, because if Bodoland is created, the rights of non-Bodos will be secured through provisions of the Constitution of India.^{xxxiii}

Bodoland issue and Post-Accord (2003) Political Development: The Bodo People's Progressive Front (BPPF) party, led by Hungrama mahilary was in power of interim government after the Accord. The BPPF party faced split due to different vision of Bodoland among their leaders. Later on, Hungrama led one section of BPPF and renamed it as Bodoland Peoples' Front (BPF). The other section remains the name of BPPF with them and continues their work. BPF is in power in BTC since its formation. The outbreak of riots in 2007, again in 2012 and in 2014 put question on BTAD administration's ability to govern the area. The opponent of BPF alleged that the availability of illegal arms in BTAD areas is still burning issue in BTAD and it poses a danger threat to human security and peace of the region. Along with this, other serious allegation on BTAD administration are corruption and nepotism.

The ABSU alleged BPF members and its chief for ignoring the real issues of Bodo people for their own political aspirations. The creation of new state Telegana worked as fuel to the issue of separate Bodoland. Once again ABSU pointed out the ignoring attitude of government mechanisms to resolve the Bodos' issues and problems.

The ABSU revived the statehood movement once again in 2012 onwards and it is continued till today. The ABSU demands that only a separate statehood can ensure the identity of Bodos people. They argue that the ruling authority of BTAD areas is not able to secure peace and development of the region..

The non Bodos play a prominent role in political scenario of BTAD areas. The Bodo Peoples' Front led by Hagrama Mohilary dominated the political scenario of BTAD in the initial phase of post accord (2003). After ethnic clash in 2008 and 2012, the issues of non-Bodos came to the forefront. Differences among Bodo groups also paved the way of new political phenomenon in BTAD areas. During first and second election of BTAD, BPF dominance was all over in BTAD areas. BPF was an alliance with Congress party in the above elections. BPF supported Congress during State Assembly election in 2007 and 2011 and general election in 2014. But with the emergence of

non-Bodos organizations and victory of BJP in general election in 2014, BPF switched their loyalty to BJP. In 2014, an independent candidate from non-Bodo community, Naba Kumar Sarania was elected from Kokrajhar constituency of parliament. The candidate got full support from Sanmilita Janagostiya Aikkyamancha (SJA), which is the common banner of 20 non-Bodo ethnic and linguistic communities.

From the non-Bodos groups, the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) contested 8 seats and managed to win 4 seats in the constituencies having large number of Muslim population in 2015 BTAD election. The common banner of non-Bodos under SJA was able to win only 4 seats because a new non-Bodo organization namely, Obodo Suraksha Samiti (OSS) came to the political scenario. The presence of two non-Bodo organizations led to division of non-Bodo votes in 2015 BTAD election. The OSS was splintered out from SJA and got 2 seats in the BTAD election, 2015.^{xxxiii}

Recently, a political level tripartite talks with Government of India, Assam and Bodo representative group including leaders of the ABSU, NDFB (Progressive) and People's Joint Action Committee for Bodoland Movement (PJACBM) was held over Bodoland issue on 25th April, 2017 at New Delhi. The talk was observed by Rajnath Singh, present Union Home Minister, Sarbananda Sonowal, present Chief Minister of Assam, Satyendra Garg, Joint Secretary for Home in North East. A memorandum was submitted to the Union Home Minister from Bodo delegates seeking early solution of long standing demand of Bodoland statehood to meet good governance in the region and demanding solution of the Bodoland issue through democratic movement as soon as possible.^{xxxiv}

III. CONCLUSION-

To sum up, the major issue in Bodoland is to ensure peace and development. If peace and development can be ensured, the structural issues of Bodos will be addressed. The development is not refer only infrastructure development, but the all-round development where Bodos issues like language, culture, tradition could be protected and ensured. The different stakeholders of BTAD area argue for the all-round development policy where every issue of Bodos can be ensured and a culture of peace can be developed among different communities of BTAD. In the absence of peace, even a separate Bodoland state would not able to survive. The importance of peace can be realized by these views. The role democratic institutions in BTAD region can be emphasized to ensure the culture of peace.

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ⁱCensus of India, 2001.

ⁱⁱAll Bodo Students Union (2017): “History in Glimpse: All Bodo Students Union (1967-2017); A Journey of Struggle”,p.4.

ⁱⁱⁱ Bengal Eastern Regulation Act (1873), Scheduled Act (1874), Chin Hills Regulation Act (1896), Government of India Act (1919) and Government of India Act (1935). The British preferred non interference policy into local issues of tribal peoples. All these policies benefitted the hill area tribes as they were included under the jurisdiction special policies due to their backwardness and primitive condition

^{iv} Prakash, Ved(2007): “Encyclopedia of North East India”, Vol 2, New Delhi, p.687.

^vMwsahary Subungcha (2016): “Bodoland Movement : A Study in Ethnicity and Political Development among the Bodos of Assam from 1967 TO 1993”, Guwahati, p.70.

^{vi}All Bodo Students Union (2017): “History in Glimpse: All Bodo Students Union (1967-2017); A Journey of Struggle”, p.9.

^{vii}Ibid.

^{viii}Bodo Security Force was renamed as National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) in 1994. Presently NDFB has three factions. NDFB (progressive), NDFB (Ranjan Daimary faction) and NDFB (Songbijit faction), the former two is now in ceasefire, but NDFB (Songbijit) faction is still engaged in armed activities for sovereign Bodoland.

^{ix}Mahanta, Nani Gopal (2013): “Politics of Space and Violence in Bodoland”, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol XLVIII No 23. p.51.

^xChadha, Vivek (2005): “Low Intensity Conflict in India”, Sage publication, New Delhi, p.264.

^{xi}Prakash, Ved(2007): “Encyclopedia of North East India”, Vol 2, New Delhi, p.697.

^{xii}For details see chapter III, Role of THE ABSU.

^{xiii}ABSU(2017),op.cit , p.12.

^{xiv}Mahanta, Nani Gopal (2013),op.cit, p.52

^{xv}Prakash,Ved (2007),op.cit,p.701.

^{xvi}The incident was occurred in the relief camp Bashbari in the Barpeta district on 24th July, 1994 in which more than 100 immigrant Muslims were killed, hundreds of houses were torched and 70000 were rendered homeless.(Barooah, R.N.: “The Ethnic Violence in Barpeta”, the Sentinel, Saturday, 4th September, 1994.)

^{xvii}Prakash, ved (2007),op.cit, p.705-706.

^{xviii}Mahanta, Nani Gopal (2013): “Politics of Space and Violence in Bodoland”, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol XLVIII No 23.

^{xix}Baruah, Sanjib(2012): “The Rise and Decline of a Separatist Insurgency; Contentious Politics in Assam,India”. in Rajat Ganguly (ed.) Autonomy and Ethnic Conflict in South and South-East Asia (London and New York: Routledge).

^{xx}Memorandum of Settlement or Bodo Peace Accord in 2003 was finalized and signed as a result of the negotiation process between Bodo Liberation Tigers and Union Government.

^{xxi}Kalita, Uttam(2016): “Viability of Bodo Movement for a separate State in Assam: A politico- Geographical Analysis.” International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, 6(9), September, p. 825-826.

^{xxii} Chaudhury, K (1994): “The North-East Area of Darkness: Accord Unclear of Territories”, Frontline, 26th August, pp 30-31.

^{xxiii}Hussain, Banajit(-): “The Bodoland Violence and the Politics of Explanation.”

^{xxiv}Mahanta, Nani Gopal (2013): “Politics of Space and Violence in Bodoland”, Economic and PoliticaWeekly, Vol XLVIII No 23.

^{xxv}Ibid.

^{xxvi}Kalita, uttam (2016), “Viability of Bodo Movement for a Separate Stae in Assam: A Politico-Geographic Analysis”, International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications. Pp 823-827.

^{xxvii}Prakas, ved (2007), op.cit, p. 702.

^{xxviii}Tea tribe is a politically given term to denote labourers and ex labourers who are engaged in tea plantation in Assam. Basically the term ‘tea tribe’ is used because some communities of this ‘tea Tribe’ enjoy ST status in other parts of India.

^{xxix} Mahanta, Nani Gopal (2013), op.cit, p.54.

^{xxx}Seven sisters post, guwahati,,28 may 2012.

^{xxxii}Table 4.

^{xxxiii}In an interview with Praomod Bodo, held by Ratnadip Choudhary of Tehelka, aug 31. Published in Meghalaya times.

^{xxxiii}Ibid.

^{xxxiv} The Assam Times, Tripartite talk held on Bodoland Issue, Apr 26,2017.