

# Socio-Economic Issues of Assam



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## PREFACE

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*Assam is one of the states of India and it is situated in the North-Eastern region with a land of socio-cultural diversity. Assam is a multi cultural, multi ethnic, multi religious and multi lingual state. The state of Assam has demographic, economic and strategic significance. Demographically, Assam is the hub of diverse social groups and economically is filled with natural resources including oil, tea, mineral and water resources. A wide range of ethnic group is also present in the region and they have contributed a lot towards the socio-cultural development of the state.*

*In the post- independent India, Assam was one of those states of North East which had to suffer from the development strategy of the Indian state. Assam is economically a backward region, though the state has a lot of natural resources which, if properly tapped, will bring a huge boost to their economic development and improve the living standards of the people. But unfortunately because of the absence of large scale industries these raw materials cannot be manufactured within the region and hence it has just become only a major supplier of raw materials. Agriculture in the region is quite primitive, subsistence farming is mostly practiced;*



hence the total output of agriculture is very low when compared with that of other states of India.

The growing competition for limited social and economic space has further intensified the hostilities and prejudices among the ethnic groups since the colonial period. There has been a constant attempt of looking at the issue of demographic change due to constant migration and how these immigrants destroyed the homogeneity of Assamese society. Various ethnic groups viewed the state government as an instrument to extend, consolidate or transform their position in the economy and social system. All these involved competition, conflict and power struggle. In this process of every ethnic group trying to protect its own interest, the region witnessed a number of conflicts between the state and ethnic groups as well as between groups themselves.

Modernization brings in improvement in education, media and technology and increases the level of competition for jobs. As a result this has made ethnic groups become more keen in promoting their identity and to be very competitive in protecting the limited resources at their disposal from external invasion. In promoting their ethnic identity groups make efforts to acquire social, economic and political rights for its members of their group. The surprising is that it appears that the more the society is



*modernized, the more ethnic demands are manifested and similarly, the higher economic development has also related to greater ethnic conflict. Different cultural and linguistic ethnic groups wanted to retain their tradition and relative prestige while desiring to improve their socio-economic and political status arose boundlessly. Among them those who have already forgotten their past heritage, are now reverting back to their old tradition through revival of language and culture. These entire issues involved competition conflict and power struggle.*

*Another important problem of Assam's economy is unemployment. The numbers of unemployed youth are increasing day by day. The special care for job opportunity for Women in Assam and their security in society and women reservation in centre and state is deplorable. The government has failed to provide job opportunities to them. As a result, the problem of unemployment is becoming more and more dangerous to the economy of the state. Apart from these factors, drainage of wealth, historical consequences, geographical location, poor infrastructure, slow process of modernization, leadership crisis and political culture, slow pace of industrialization are some of the major constraints or impediments on the way of rapid socio economic development in Assam.*

However, this edition of book 'Socio-Economic Issues of Assam' highlights on various existing problems of Assam. It is expected that this book will be able to create awareness among the readers and the people and also develop consciousness and create thoughts to resolve the issues which stands as challenges at the pace of socio-economic growth and development of the state.

I am very much grateful to the Principal and LAQC of Bengtoll College for giving such an opportunity to bring out this edition. I am thankful to the Editors for the help and support they extended while compiling this book and for bring out in reality.

I would also like to wish and thank all the authors for their valuable contribution of research papers and write up for this book.

Last but not the least I must extend my heartfelt thanks to the Oasis Offset Printers for taking the effort of printing and bringing the book well in time.

**Rimash Narzary**  
*Chief Editor*



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