

A REPORT

ON

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE TRIBAL
PEOPLE OF ASSAM : A STUDY OF THENGAL KACHARI
TRIBE IN JORHAT DISTRICT OF ASSAM**

Submitted by

Dr. Sangita Bora
Assistant Professor,
Department of Sanskrit
Women's College, Tinsukia

Sponsored by

**ASSAM INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH FOR TRIBALS AND SCHEDULED CASTES,
JAWAHARNAGAR, GUWAHATI-22**

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PREFACE

Assam Institute of Research for Tribals and Scheduled Castes, Guwahati under the aegis of Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MOTA), Government of India and Welfare of Plain Tribes and Backward Classes Department (WPT & BC), Government of Assam has extensively been doing research studies on various communities of Assam. The fund for doing the same is received both from MOTA, GOI and WPT & BC Department, GOA on 50:50 basis.

In 2013-2014, the Institute decided to outsource research studies to scholars by inviting expression of interest. Accordingly, 61 research study proposals were received out of which 12 proposals were selected.

Dr. Sangita Bora, Assistant Professor, Deptt. of Sanskrit, Women's College, Tinsukia is one of the scholars selected for conducting a research study. She has undertaken a study entitled "Socio-economic conditions of the Tribal people of Assam: A study of Thengal Kachari Tribe in Jorhat District of Assam". The report has incorporated history, marriage, family, kinship, economic structure, religion and culture of the Thengal Kachari Tribe in Jorhat District of Assam. The study also included ethnographic accounts of the Thengal Kacharis of Assam. The study is based on empirical data.

I hope that this study will be of immense help to the students, research scholars, social scientists, NGOs. This study report will also help the policy makers, planners and executors for introducing new methods for strengthening positive interventions.

I take this opportunity to thank Dr. Sangita Bora, Assistant Professor, Deptt. of Sanskrit, Women's College Tinsukia for preparing the report.

I also thank Ms. Mitra Das, Research Officer, AIRTSC for supervising in conducting the study.

Date:

(G.C. Kakati)
Director, i/c,
Assam Institute of Research for Tribals
and Scheduled Castes, Guwahati-22

Acknowledgement

The study has made me indebted to many for their help in different ways. It is my moral obligation to acknowledge the help of all individually. But I have acknowledged the help of a few though the help from many others is not of less significance.

I am grateful to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India and Department of Welfare of Plain Tribes and Backward Classes, Government of Assam for giving the responsibility of carrying out this important study on socio-economic conditions of the Thengal Kachari tribe of Assam.

In completing the work a number of persons have extended their help to me. At the outset, I would like to express my profound gratitude to Sri Ganesh Chandra Kakati, Director i/c, Assam Institute of Research for Tribals and Scheduled Castes, Jawaharnagar, Guwahati for his guidance and valuable suggestions throughout the course of my study.

I offer my heartiest gratitude to Miss Mitra Das, Research Officer, AIRTSC for her guidance and valuable suggestions as research consultant of this study. It is because of her constant advice, encouragement and continuous efforts that the completion of the present study becomes possible.

I am acknowledge the effort made by Sri Biswajit Borah, field investigator engaged for this research study.

My thanks are also due to the members of the Thengal Kachari Community of Nagabat Thengal Gaon, Bhulukichuk, Layet Na-Chungi and Mordholi Kachari Gaon. I remember with gratitude their hospitality and cooperation extended to me during the course of my field work.

I express my indebtedness to all the officers and staff of AIRTSC, for their help in various official matters.

I express my heartfelt appreciation to my parents Sri Lila Ram Bora and Smt. Renu Bora and my brother Sri Amrit Kr. Bora for their sincere help, inspiration and encouragement in carrying out the work. Words are insufficient to my husband Dr. Biswajit Borah for his sincere help, inspiration and encouragement in carrying out the work from time to time at the need.

Finally, I am thankful to Script DTP Centre, Unnayan Super Market, A.T. Road, Jorhat, Assam, for rendering computer DTP, which helped me for the timely submission of the report.

Sangita Bora
(Dr. Sangita Bora)

Assistant Professor
Women's College, Tinsukia

Date:



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CHAPTER-I

The Framework of the Study

Chapter I

The Framework of the Study

Introduction

Assam is a state of exceptional interest and the interest lies in the divergent communities and their rich cultural heritage. This is a place of connection of different ethnic groups where castes and tribes are progressing equally with the ladder of civilization. There are indigenous people in Assam who has been living in inaccessible regions and have identified themselves as earliest inhabitants. In Assam although in the plains large section of population are of mixed origin, including numerous tribes. Among these tribes the Thengal Kachari is one of the major tribes of Assam. Thengal Kachari of Assam is a branch of the Bodo group of the Mongoloid family. Presently they are inhabited mainly in Jorhat, Golaghat, Dibrugarh, North Lakhimpur, Dhemaji and Karbi Anglong districts of Assam. They have close affinity with the Assamese peasantry in socio-cultural aspect. The interaction between the non-tribal Assamese population and the Thengal Kachari have been taking place for last several centuries. There has been socio-cultural as well as biological interaction among these populations and as a result, the tribe is modernized at different level. The influence of Hinduism is very strong among this group of people. Their culture is largely influenced by the Hindu Assamese culture and has already lost their own dialect. The Thengal Kachari villages are situated resemble to non-tribal Assamese villages of Upper Assam. Without a careful observation, it is sometimes difficult to mark any difference between a Thengal Kachari village and a non-tribal Assamese village. In the study villages it was observed that the Thengal Kacharis are influenced by what is prevalent in the neighbouring non-tribal Assamese society. Most of their traditional customs and practices have undergone change due to assimilation with Assamese society.

In case of economic condition of Thengal Tribe is mostly agriculture based and their pattern of cultivation is settled cultivation. The rearing *Eri* (a species of silkworm which feeds on the leaves of the castor), animal husbandry, poultry farming, weaving, fish-catching, bamboo and cane works are the other economic activities of Thengal Kachari tribe. They made their hut from the bamboo, wood and thatch available at hand. In other words the Thengal tribe is mostly depending on nature for gathering and

collecting food materials, which was simply to meet the demands of the basic needs of day-to-day life. Therefore, their economy is mainly at subsistence level, as they generally depended on the mercy of nature. They produced their own foods, cloths, drink (rice beer). They prepared medicine from the local plants and herbs. Lately contemporary Thengal Kachari society is passing through a process of change and the occupational structure is under the process of transformation. There is a gradual shift from agriculture activities to service and business occupations. However, agriculture is still in predominant mode.

The present study is aimed to analyzed, the socio-economic conditions of the Thengal Kachari tribe in Jorhat district of Assam.

Review of Literature

Study on tribe is not a new phenomenon. In India tribal studies have figured prominently in the history of anthropology. These studies were given priority by the British administrators, military officers, officers of census operations and scholars, as well as by the foreign missionaries and travellers during the colonial period, for purposes of colonial administration, socio-cultural life, religious conversions and adventurous memories.

Historically, the studies on tribes have been conducted since 1774. According to Vidyartha (1966a; 1966b) these studies can be classified into three periods the formative period (1774-1919); the constructive period (1920-1949) and the analytical period (1950- onwards). The formative period deals with the life and culture of the tribal and rural groups, classification of tribes and castes in India. The constructive period deals with the theoretical based anthropological researches, which was characterized by ethnological and monographic studies with a special emphasis on research in kinship, social organization etc. The analytical period deals with the systematic study of Indian village, caste and urban studies as well as the problem-oriented researches of power structure and leadership, of religion, of culture and personality which emerged in this period, the tribal studies were also given an analytical and action oriented approach. These studies were based in terms of inter-relations as well as in terms of differences and similarities among the tribal and non tribal communities.

However, in North-Eastern region of India a systematic study was undertaken by Verrier Elwin and his team of anthropologists their contributions can be seen in the form of handbooks, district gazetteers and ethnographic glossaries. Some of such

pioneer works in this area represented in the works of Robinson (1841), Butler (1855), Dalton (1872), Risley (1891), Cole (1912), Gurdon (1914), Nevile and Bardolai (1923), Mills (1922), Hutton (1923; 1924), Smith (1925), Bose (1934a, 1934b, 1934c, 1935, 1938 and 1941), Furer-Haimendorf (1947), Guha (1952) etc. it was followed by a number of studies on different tribes of the region viz. Dutta (1959), Shukla (1959), Barua (1960), Goswami (1960), Sharma (1961), Srivastava (1962), Sinha (1963), Majumdar Jr. (1972), Danda (1977), Gohain (1977), Sarkar (1987) etc. these studies reveal certain specific character of a number of tribes in the region.

Following Vidyarthi's classification, the tribal studies in North-East India can be classified into three phases: Formative Period (1774-1919), Constructive Period (1920-1949) and Analytical Period (1950- onward).

(A) Formative Period (1774-1919)

The North-Eastern India have immense significance from the point of view of administration, the colonial scholars and anthropologists were greatly attracted to the study the land and people of this region. A number of persons belonging to the British administration, foreign missionaries, military officers and census officers wrote about life and culture of the tribes of this region. In this zone among the early scholars who wrote about the tribes of Assam in hand books, ethnography glossaries and district gazetteers, mention may be made of Robinson (1841), Hodgson (1948), Butler (1855), Dalton (1872), Risley (1891), Cole (1912), and others. Gurdon (1914) prepared an ethnographic monograph on the Khasi. The Assam Government took a decision in 1904 to bring together all the scattered fragmentary information collected by the previous investigators and after supplementing it with up-to-date information, publish in the form of monographs.

(B) Constructive Period (1920-1949)

It was Hutton only in 1921, to revise the series with the publication of his monograph on the Angami Naga. His descriptions are more analytical and comprehensive. In a series of notes in the Census volumes of 1921 and a number of papers, Hutton (1923, 1924) attempts comparisons and established affinities among different Nagas and other tribes in North-East India.

Another administrator, Mills (1922) worked under the supervision of Hutton. He worked among Lhota Nagas for several years and published his book *The Lhota Nagas*, in 1922. He also describes the Lhota culture in the process of detribalization under the impact of Christianity of the American Baptist Missionaries and Hinduism of

the Nepalese settlers. In his next monograph (1926) is on the Ao, Mills makes an attempt to estimate the social effect of the American Baptist Mission on the Ao society. This analysis of the acculturation situation of the Ao Naga is confirmed by Smith (1925) who also observes that Christianity has forced the Ao Naga to give up their traditional forms. In the course of his first visit, C. Von. Furer-Haimendorf conduct an exploratory survey (1944-45) and made contacts with three NEFA tribes, the Dafla, the Meras and the Apatanis and published two books (1947 and 1955) in the form of travellers' accounts. In 1931 T. C. Das with his students visited four Purum villages in Manipur hills and published his monograph on the Purums in 1945 and presented an integrated and complete picture of theirs, covering the physical, linguistic, demographic and ethnographic dimensions of anthropological enquiry (1945). Chattopadhyay (1941) applied 'Rivers' genealogical method to the study of kinship system for the first time in the study of the Khasi kinship organization. He also made a study of ownership of land and its inheritance in the Khasi society (1949). Bose studied of the Garo tribe and wrote a number of papers (1934a, 1934b, 1934c, 1935, 1938 and 1941) on the Garo law of inheritance, the religious ceremonies and other subjects.

(C)Analytical Period (1950-onward)

In this period a systematic study of Indian villages started, firstly, with a view to test certain hypothesis, secondly, for referring some of the methodological framework developed elsewhere and third to assist the community Development programmes in the Indian tribal villages i.e. the tribal development schemes and so on.

The first Department of Anthropology in this region was started in Gauhati University in the year 1952 and the next one at Dibrugarh University in 1967. The Department of Gauhati University initially concentrated on the building up of an excellent ethnographic museum. The department has, however, made a special study of the Garo tribe and it is engaged in the study of the patterns of tribal and non-tribal interactions in the spheres of trade and economy, religious belief and practices, participation in fairs, festivals, markets and kinship and marriage.

During this period Guha (1953), the then Director of the Department of Anthropology (Government of India) himself studied the *Moshuk* organisation among the Abor a training centre for the youth. Aalok (1956) conducted field researches among the Nokte Naga in Tirap division in 1954. He studied the Morung organization among the Nokte Naga and described the daily routine of the Naga youth. Gohain (1954) made a special study of agricultural organization among the Abor. Goswami

(1960) made a study of the kinship system of the Lushai. Dutta-Gupta (1960) studied of the *Ponung*, a girl's association of the Padam Abor. Banerjee (1964) made a special study of Phar kinship and residence pattern. The study of culture dynamics, however, is rare and one comes across only one paper. Nag (1965) studied the impact of Christianity on Khasi Culture in Meghalaya. Goswami (1969) studied the socio-cultural relationship between the tribes and non-tribal groups of Assam. Majumdar (Jr.) (1969) analysed the tribe-caste continuum and the process of Sanskritization among the Bodo-speaking tribes of the Garo hills. He also identifies three steps in the process of Sanskritization among the tribes of this area. Goswami and Majumdar (Jr.) both emphasized the need for the study of tribe-caste interaction in Assam. Kar (1969) studied social change among the Adis and he explain the changing scenario of the Adis. In another study D. N. Majumdar (1972a) has studied acculturation among the Hajong of Meghalaya.

Choudhury and Das (1973) have produced ethnography on the Lalung tribes of Assam. They have analysed the forces of continuity and solidarity in Lalung society. Yonuo (1974) studied among the Rising Nagas. He describes the land and people and gives a detailed history with special reference to the British rule during 1880-1974. Horam (1975) has produced a monograph on Nagas. Furer-Haimendorf's *Return to the Naked Nagas* (1976) is a republication of his earlier work which gives details about the Konyak Nagas. He has in a postscript added his impressions about Konyak society and the changes taking place there, when he visited them nearly forty years after his first fieldwork. Natarajan (1977) has tried to find out impact of Christian missionaries on Khasi of Meghalaya. His study deals in a historical perspective with the arrival of missionaries and discusses their impact on various aspects of Khasi life.

Danda (1978) has studied the Dimasa of Assam who is one of the Kachari tribes and are concentrated in the united Mikir and North Kachar Hills. The study reflects that the Dimasa, particularly their youth, do not feel any problem of adjustment to changing conditions. However, they have full faith in the basic values of Dimasa life and culture. Das Gupta (1984) studied life and culture of the Warkhasi, a matrilineal tribe who live in the southern hill slopes of Meghalaya. His study focuses with their material cultural, economic, social, and political as well as the belief system. Danda and Ghatak (1985) studied the Semsá, the offshoot of the Dimasa Kachari of North Cachar Hill District of Assam. Their study mainly deals with environmental set-up, economic and material life of the tribe, their social profiles, rules and regulations, and features in selecting mates.

Das (1985) worked among Maring tribe of Manipur; he examines the structural relationship among various categories of kin groups and the factor contributing to their functional growth. In another study Kabui (1985) has undertaken a small research project on 'Anal' a trans-border tribe of Manipur their origin and migration, society, culture, religious life, the village polity and economic life and also examines the uphold development of the people after independence. Das (1986) studied among the Zami Naga, Dimasa Kachari and the Manipur people. The study deals with ethnic characteristics, traditions, mythology about origin, dress, dwelling, food habit, feasts and festivals, religious beliefs and rites, disposal of the dead, agricultural art and craft and economy.

Das (1987) studied the life style of Indian tribes-'Aka' and 'Adi' tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, Dimasa Kachari, Mikir and Kuki of Assam; Kabui, Gangte, Tharao and Mayon-Monsong of Manipur; Garo and Jaintia of Meghalaya; Mizo, Pawai and Lakher of Mizoram; and the Kutcha Naga, Angami Naga and Zemi Naga of Nagaland. Sen (1987) made an attempt to provide a comprehensive bibliography on the tribes of Nagaland.

Society culture and ecological adoption among the three tribes, Khampti, Padam and Kaman Mishimi of Arunachal Pradesh were studied by Sarkar (1987). Sen (1987) made an attempt to provide a comprehensive bibliography on the tribes of Nagaland. Kamkhenthang (1988) highlights the structure of the Paite society by unfolding the invisible ties of kinship based on consanguinal affinitive and local membership is a corporate body called *Inndongta* or household. Gohain (1994) analyses continuity and change in the Hills of Assam in reference to the Lalung, a matrilineal tribe of Assam. Sonowal (1996) studied on religious trends and identity crisis of a cross cultural study among three plain tribes of Assam. In another study Sonowal (2000) conducted a study of gender system among the Sonowal Kacharis tribe of Assam. Borgohain (2000) analyse industrialization, occupational pattern and changing life style of S.T. employees in an industrial town in Assam. The study reveals the fact that as an impact of industrialization have occurred certain changes in the life of the S.T. people working at HFCL Namrup followed by changes in occupational pattern and life style. Borah and Bharali (2000) analyse the development of Khasi society. The study reveals that no traditional institutions of the Karbi society are functioning due to onslaught of modernization process. Singh (2001) studied the Hmar Tribe. The study reflects the continuity and change in the socio-cultural life of Hmar tribe and special attention is

given to the status of Hmar women. Singh and Paul (2001) studied among the Barmans of South Assam. The study reveals the dynamism of the structure of Barman society. The study also corrects the view both in academic and non-academic fields that Barman is a sub tribe of Dimasa. Paul (2001) studied the process of sanskritization of the Dimasa tribe of North-east India. Datta Chawdhury (2002) studied the impact of modernization on the traditional institution of the Barmans of the Barak Valley (1947-1990). Das (2004) 'Study of North East India' reflects large scale migration from rest of the sub-continent to North-East India. Due to this tribal society undergoing a process of transition from shifting cultivation to settled agriculture, from clan control of land to corporate modification of land urbanization and cultural change in tribal village/society are associated with process of modernization.

Das (2004) studied the four major tribes of North India- Bodo, Garo, Khasi, and Mizo. The author has studied the various aspects of these tribes: origin, history, socio-economic and political aspects, development works and reform measures undertaken at the government and non-government levels, and the important persons and their contributions. Syiemlieh (2006) studied the traditional institutions of governance in the Hills of North East India reference to the Khasi experience. The study reflects that there are many overlapping levels of governance for the Khasi people.

Razvi and Roy (2006) also give an account of Khasi tribe of Meghalaya. The Khasi is primarily territorial groups and they share same language and social structure. Their cultural dialects, economy, usage and political organization only vary. Shrutikar (2007) analyse the trend of change of the Idu Mishmis from traditionality to modernity. The study reveals that the people are moving fast to modernity. Shimray (2008) studied the Naga traditional institutions and contemporary changes. The study is based on the Tangkhul Naga community of Manipur state. The study reflects that Naga society and traditional institutions have undergone tremendous change that many salient features of Naga life have completely disappeared. Lungkumar (2009) studied the Ao Nagas Nagaland. The study reveals the continuity of traditional institution and social organization of Ao Naga. Acculturated development and processes of change is adaptive in nature where most of traditional institutions are retained. Gowloog (2009) studied some issues related to preservation of indigenous cultural heritage of the Khasis of Meghalaya. The study reflects that the traditional knowledge of the Khasis is gradually evaporating from their collective consciousness in the face of gradual incursion of modernity. Sharma (2010) analyse the spaces of ethnicity of Naga tribes in

Manipur. Ghosh and Choudhuri (2011) studied on the nature and dimensions of change in the lives and status of tribal women in Tripura.

But so far as the plains tribes of Assam in general and the Thengal Kachari in particular are concerned, no systematic study has been conducted up till now. Only a few books and papers are found on the Thengal Kachari. Bora (2000) has produced a book on the Thengal Kachari tribes of Assam. The book focuses basically on social life, origin and history of Thengal Kachari. Borah (2013) conducted a study on customary law of the Thengal Kachari. The study light on customary laws of the Thengal Kachari social institutions, economy, land holding and administration of justice in the Thengal Kachari tribe. Some paper has been written by various scholars. Among them Sengupta (2003) published a paper on Thengal Kachari. Borah (2005) in a paper discuss about origin and migration of the Thengal Kachari from China to Doyang and their socio-economic conditions. In another article Borah (2006) focuses on All Assam Thengal Kachari Organization and Thengal Kachari Autonomous Council. Dutta (2008) describe about field experience among the Thengal Kacharis of Assam. Borah and Singh (2008) studied family and kinship among the Thengal Kachari of Assam. Barooah and Pathak (2009) conducted a study on indigenous knowledge and practices of Thengal Kachari women in sustainable management of *bari* system of farming. Hussain and Borah (2010) published a paper on peace process in Thengal Kachari. Borah and Bora (2012) produced a paper about kinship of the Thengal Kachari with symbols and structures. In another paper Borah and Bora (2012) presented about role of the Thengal Kachari women in their economy. Bora (2012 and 2013) focuses on status of women in Thengal Kachari society and economic conditions of the Thengal Kachari Tribe of Assam. Borah & Das (2013) published a paper on ecology, ethnicity, eco-culture and socio-ecological history of Thengal Kachari Tribe of Assam. In a few papers Borah (2012, 2014 and 2014) discuss impact of neo-Vaishnavism, ethnic consciousness and the identity movement and patterns of communication in the Thengal Kachari tribe.

However, it seem that so far no attempt has been made to shed some light on socio-economic conditions mainly their kinship, marriage, family, economic structure, education, ritual structure, festivals and culture. A careful study of the existing literature on the subject leads to the conclusion that a comprehensive study of the socio-economic conditions among the Thengal Kachari can be undertaken.

Objectives of the study

1. To understand the historic conditions of the Thengal Kachari tribe of Assam has been passed.
2. To understand the patterns of family, marriage and kinship of the Thengal Kachari tribe.
3. To study the patterns of economic conditions of the Thengal Kachari.
4. To understand the patterns of education of the Thengal Kachari.
5. To understand the religious & cultural life of the Thengal Kachari.

Methodology

The entire research study was carried out in Titabar subdivision of Jorhat district of Assam. For the study 4 Thengal Kachari dominated villages namely Nagabat Thengal Gaon, Bhulukichuk, Layet Nachungi and Mordholi Kachari Gaon from four different Gaon Panchayat of Titabar subdivision were selected randomly. In order to achieve the objectives of the research study a total of 200 sample households were covered during the field investigation. From each village 50 households were selected through random sampling method.

An investigator was also employed for collection of data by visiting house to house and meeting various sections of people. The field data was collected from the month of June, 2014 to August, 2014.

Sampling Design

Random sampling technique has been adopted while selecting the villages. Effort has been made to diverse sections of people of various ages and sexes, literate and illiterate, cultivators, skilled worker, unskilled worker, so that the data become all inclusive.

Sources of Data

The study is based on both the primary and secondary sources of data. Primary sources of data are field data or oral nature and secondary sources of data are documentary data of historical and contemporary nature. The Field data is collected from Jorhat district of Assam and documentary data, from census records, office of I.T.D.P., and other relevant journals and books. The field data was collected by administering a structured

Household Schedule from 200 Thengal Kachari households and Village Schedule from 4 villages in Jorhat district of Assam.

Tools and Techniques of Data Collection

For collection of data the techniques like observation, informal discussions also were used. Following tools are constructed for data collection.

- (i). Basic Data inventory Household Schedule to collect data regarding attributes of populations.
- (ii). Village Schedule for collecting data regarding selected villages.

Plan of Data Analysis

For statistical analysis, the Household Schedule data and Village Schedule data is converted into numerical codes against each variable incorporated in the study, considering their sub-categories. Coding form was used to record the transformed and coded data. The trends of association and interaction among the variables were shown calculating the percentage differences and are explained.

CHAPTER-II

Land and People

Chapter II

Land and People

The District Jorhat

The name 'Jorhat' appears to have originated during the Ahom rule. It was the last capital of the Ahom Kingdom of Assam. Ahom king Gaurinath Singha shifted the capital from Sibsagar to Jorhat in 1794. Therefore, it was the nerve centre of the Ahom administration towards its fag end. Barua (1997) states that established as the new capital in the closing years of the eighteen century by the decaying and declining Tunkhungia Ahom Dynasty, Jorhat as the name signifies, was just a couple. (*gor*) of marts (*hat*). From these two parallel marts namely 'Chokihat' and 'Macharhat' which lay on the eastern and western banks of the river Bhogdoi. During Ahom rule the king and the noblemen built some roads and dug a number of tanks in and around the capital. Among those, Dhudor Ali, Kharikatia Ali, Mohbondha Ali, Malow Ali, Kamarbandha Ali, Susandebandha Ali, Choladhora Ali, Borpata Ali, Na-Ali and tanks like, Rajmao Pukhuri, Hatigaon Pukhuri, Buragohain Pukhuri, Bolia Gohain Pukhuri, Kuwari Pukhuri, Choladhora Pukhuri, Bongal Pukhuri, Ketaki Pukhuri, Mitha Pukhuri etc. are the main.

The discovery of the tea plant in Assam in 1823 made the British interested in Assam. With the development of Jorhat as the centre of the tea industry and improvement of transport and communication, people from different parts of India began to come over here. The British employed the local people in the lower executive cadres in their tea gardens, while the workers brought from different parts of India, mainly the tribal people from Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. People from Bengal came for employment in Government offices and railways, while the Marwaris came as traders and bankers to the tea gardens. Besides these communities there are Mishing, Deories, Ahom, Chutia, Thengal Kachari, Brahmin, Kayasthas, Kalita, Koch, Rajbonshi, Baniyas, Kaibartas, Sonowal Kachari, Kumar etc.

Jorhat also made significant contribution to the freedom movement. Prominent freedom fighters like Kuladhar Chalia, Krishnanath Sarma, Debeswar Sarma, Suren Bharali, Harinarayan Barua, Sarbeswar Bordoloi and others took active part in the

movement. Many of the freedom fighters, including Gopinath Bordoloi, were lodged in Jorhat Jail. It was also in Jorhat jail that Swahid Kushal Kouwar was hanged on the 14th June, 1943.

Jorhat has been declared as full fledged district in 1983. At present the district has three sub-divisions namely, Jorhat, Majuli and Titabar. There are six Assam Legislative Assembly constituencies in this district: Dergaon, Jorhat, Titabar, Moriani, Teok and Majuli. Dergaon is designated for scheduled castes and Majuli is designated for scheduled tribes. Dergaon is in the Kaliabor Lok Sabha constituency, Majuli is in the Lakhimpur Lok Sabha constituency, while the other four are in the Jorhat Lok Sabha constituency. It consists 6 revenue circles, 8 Development Blocks, and 110 Gaon Panchayats. Jorhat district is located in Upper Assam consisting of 7 towns and 853 villages.

The district is situated at a strategic place bordering Nagaland. It is located between the Brahmaputra on the North and Nagaland on the South in the central part of the Brahmaputra valley. The district is located on 26^o45' to 26^o75' North and 94^o13' to 94^o22' East (approx.) latitudinal and longitudinal extensions respectively. The district covers an area of 2851 square kms. and situated on South bank of the Brahmaputra River.

According to the 2011 Census Jorhat district has a population of 10,91,295. The district has a population density of 383 inhabitants per square kms. The population growth rate over the decade 2001-2011 was 9.21 percent. Jorhat has a sex ratio of 956 females for every 1000 males, and a literacy rate of 83.42 percent. The district has scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population of 7.61 percent and 12.09 percent respectively of the total population. However, the Majuli sub-division has a tribal population of 70.00 percent who are primarily Mishing.

In recent times, with the growth of trade and commerce, the importance of this route has greatly increased. The district has also its own resources. The district has about 135 tea gardens. Predominant field crop is rice, with per capita food grain production of 205 kilogrammes per annum. There are various minor oil field of ONGC and OIL India Ltd. is available in various part of the district.

Hollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary, more popularly known as Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary, covers an area of 20.98 square kms. is situated in Jorhat district of Assam. It is 19 kms. (approx.) from Jorhat district headquarter town. Jorhat has always been in the mainstream of cultural life in this region. Jorhat also famous for world

largest rivers island Majuli. Majuli is a sub-division of Jorhat district which is also famous for unique Sathya Sanskrit (monastery culture). Bengenati Satra (1524), Kamalabari Satra (1552-1603), Dakhinpath Satra (1662), Gormur Satra (1662) and Aoniati Satra are the main Satras of Majuli. Recently foundation stone was laid in the fond memory of the first Ahom king of Assam, Sukapha at Mohbandha of Jorhat district. The state administration has pledged Rs. 20 crore for the mega project in recognition of the six hundred years of Ahom rule in the region.

Jorhat is considered a good place for modern education. The Jorhat Government Boys' High School is the oldest school established in 1883, HRH the Prince of Wales Technical School (now POW Institute of Engineering & Technology) in 1927 and the Jagannath Barooah College in 1930 made Jorhat an important centre of learning. Jagannath Barooah College is the oldest college in the district and said to be first college in Upper Assam. Various other educational institutions like the Assam Agricultural College and later the Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat Engineering College, the Industrial Training Institute, Normal School, Post-Graduate Training College and numerous other schools and college are established in the district. The Regional Research Laboratory (RRL) established in 1959 on the western out-skirts of Jorhat is engaged in dealing with the industrial problems of the entire North-East India.

The healthy education and cultural life of Jorhat can be best judged from the fact that the district has as many as five daily newspapers published from here. The Saptahik Janambhumi, the Dainik Janambhumi and the Eastern Cornical, the Saptahik Janambhumi celebrated its 50 years of circulation (The Janambhumi group). The G. L. Publication publishes three newspapers from Guwahati and Jorhat simultaneously. They are the North East Times (English), Amar Asom (Assamese) and the Purbanchal Prohori (Hindi). Besides it was Dainik Baatari the first daily newspaper in Assamese and also the first daily newspaper in any language, published from a village in entire India from Thengal Bhawan. Shiv Prasad Barooah was the owner and Bagmibar Nilomoni Phukan was the editor of this daily newspaper

The head office of Asom Sahitya Sabha is located in Chandrakanta Handique Bhawan. Jorhat has produced a host of writers, historians, poets and scholars like Chandrakanta Barua, Gonesh Gogoi, Amulya Barua, Ananda Chandra Barua, Mitradev Mahanta, Nilomoni Phukan, Radha Nath Phukan, Kumud Chandra Barua, Devendra Nath Acharya, Abdus Sattar, Sneha Devi many other. Besides these

Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya, the first Assamese to win India's highest literature award, the Jnanpith Award, was from Jorhat district. Apart from it, reputed ideologist and educationist Krishna Kanta Handique is from Jorhat district. Jorhat has been the home town of a great doctor Dinabandhu Dr. Prasad Bordoloi, great doner Shiva Prasad Baruah, Tea planter Hemendra Prasad Baruah and many more.

Construction of an international airport in Jorhat is under construction outskirts of the city Jorhat Airport, commonly known as the Rowriah Airport, is one of the busiest Airports in Assam. The airport is located within the city itself and this makes traveling to the place by air. Jorhat City is serviced with direct flights to Kolkata, Guwahati, Jorhat to Mumbai via Kolkata, Jorhat to Delhi, new flight Jorhat to Chennai recently introduced.

Jorhat falls under the North-East Frontier Railway zone of the Indian Railways. Jorhat Town Railway Station and Mariani Junction Railway Station are major stations of Jorhat City. Guwahati-Jorhat, Jan Shatabdi Express and Guwahati-Jorhat Mariani Inter-City Express are the main train connections. Computerized reservation facility provided. Jorhat Mariani Junction Railway Station is to the south-east of Jorhat City.

Jorhat is well connects with all major cities of North-East India. The Inter State Bus Terminus (ISBT) located at Tarajan Katokipukhuri, Jorhat the outskirts, provides connectivity with other regions of the North-East with regular buses for major cities and tourist destinations of the neighbouring states. National Highway 37 connects Jorhat with all major Cities of Assam.

The Study Villages

Present study is focused on socio-economic conditions of Thengal Kachari tribe in four villages of four different Gaon Panchayat. The first village Nagabat Thengal Gaon has a mixed population of Thengal Kachari, Ahom, Tea Workers, Chutia etc., however, predominantly inhabited by Thengal Kachari, located remote corner of Jorhat district 30 kms. (Appox.) distance from Titabar Town of Raidanjuri Gaon Panchayat. The second village, Bhuluki Chuk is located 13 kms. distance from Titabar Town, is purely Thengal Kachari village under Madhapur Gaon Panchayat. The third village Layet Nachungi is located 2 kms. distance from Titabar Town surrounded by other caste and communities. The Thengal predominantly inhabits in this village of 82 No. Birinasayek Gaon Panchayat. Fourth village Mordholi Kachari Gaon is located a distance 3 kms. from Titabar Town under 64 No. Thengal Gaon

Panchayat. All these four villages are in a transitional phase of both traditional and modern way of life.

History of the Thengal Kachari

The socio-political history of Assam is neither smooth nor uniform. Political map of Assam was changed many times from the days when it was known as Kamrup or Pragjyotishpur. Before the advent of Sukapha to the Brahmaputra valley in the early thirteenth century, the ancient land was known as the kingdom of Kamrupa with its capital at Pragjyotishapura. The Varman dynasty ruled Kamrupa from 4th century and Bhaskar Varman was the last and the greatest king of the Varman dynasty in the 7th century. After death of Bhaskar Varman in 650 A.D., Kamrupa came under the rule of the Salastambha dynasty till 900 AD. Then the Pallas ruled the kingdom from 900 A.D. to 1100 A.D.

With the fall of Pallas, Kamrupa disintegrated to a number of small principalities with the emergence of powerful landlords known as Bhuyans till the beginning of the 13th century. In first half of the 13th century (1228 A.D.) the Tai entered in Assam who came to be known as Ahoms from the east. The entrance of the Tai Ahoms under Sukapha in 1228 A.D. changed the course of Assam's history. Sukapha established his capital at Charaideo and laid the foundation of the Tai Ahom kingdom in the Brahmaputra valley.

In the thirteenth century it would seem that the Kachari kingdom extended along the south bank of the Brahmaputra from the Dikhow to the Kallang, or beyond and included also the valley of the Dhansiri and the tract which now forms the Dima Hasao district. At that time, the country further west, largely inhabited by Kacharis appears to have formed part of the Hindu kingdom of Kamata. Toward the end of this century, it is narrated that the outlying, Kachari settlements east of the Dikhow River withdrew before the advance of the Ahoms. For a hundred years, this river appears to have formed the boundary between them are recorded until 1490; when a battle was fought on its banks. Ahoms were defeated and were forced to sue for peace. But their power was rapidly growing and during the next thirty years, in spite of this defeat they gradually thrust the Kachari boundary back to the Dhansiri River.

When war was again broken out in 1526 A.D. the neighbourhood of this river was the scene of two battles; the Kachari were victorious in the first but suffered a crushing defeat in the second. Hostilities were renewed in 1531 A.D., and a collision

occurred in the south of what is now the Golaghat district in which the Kacharis were defeated and Detcha, the brother of their king, was slain. The Ahoms followed up their victory and ascending the Dhansiri, penetrated as far as the Kachari capital at Dimapur on the Dhansiri. Khunkhara, the Kachari king, became fugitive, and a relative named Detsung was set up by the victors in his stead. In 1536 A.D. Detsung quarreled with the Ahoms, who again was followed, captured and put to death. After this invasion, the Kacharis deserted Dimapur and the valley of Dhansiri and retreating further south, established a new capital Maibong.

Bora (2000) and Borah (2005) state it was after the war of 1526 A.D. which was defeated Ahoms, two expert young Kachari soldiers, Jong Bahadur and Chakrsdhvaj came with some of their families to establish a separate Kachari kingdom on the bank of the Doyang River at Kachamari (Golaghat). At the time of Jong Bahadur, the Kachari soldiers fought very bravely wearing *Thenga* (pantaloon). But later, besides the war time they used *Thenga* (pantaloon) in day today life. Therefore, this ethnic group were called as Thengal by other people and latter they are known as Thengal Kachari as a separate Kachari community. It is said that during the time of Jong Bahadur's besides the soldiers he divided his subjects into 21 separate groups to perform different work. Latter these 21 groups were known as 21 separate clans. They are- *Hajuwal*, *Manikial*, *Muktal* or *Mukutial*, *Durungial*, *Dalangial*, *Sakurial*, *Hayogial* or *Horgial*, *Sukarial*, *Sugarial* or *Hogral*, *Baghal*, *Kumarial* or *Kumral*, *Kamarial*, *Dheakial* or *Dhekral*, *Nangal*, *Lathial*, *Mekhelial*, *Negurial*, *Dingial*, *Dhulial*, *Formal*, and *Ezjmal* (Bora, 2000; Bora, 2005). Now-a-days there are only exist 21 clan but not division of occupation. Baruah (1998) states that the community served the Ahom Kings and wore a uniform consisting of a long shirt or *Thenga* shirt touching their heels which might have led to the name Thengal.

Another opinion is that the Kachari people were divided 'Sonowal' and 'Rupowal' on the basis of occupation during the time of Ahom rule. There exist a good deal of controversy concerning the origin of the generic term 'Rupowal' and 'Sonowal'. The popular opinion is that, the people used to collect to silver by washing the sands of the Dhasiri River during Ahom rule in Assam. The Assamese equivalent of silver is '*Rup*' and therefore, the people who were involved in the job extracting silver were known as the 'Rupowal'. Some are of the opinion that during the time of Ahom king Godadhar Singh's reign, Keshab Dave Gosai, the Satradhikar's of Aonati Satra (*Satra* is a religious institution in Assam and *Satradhikar* head of a *Satra*) hid

in the jungle of Kundil of Sadiya (presently in Tinsukia district of Assam), the Kachari people wanted to examine divine power of 'Gosai' by offering him a green bamboo cylinder full of silver. After realizing the divine power of Gosai they took initiation under the Gosai. From this event the disciples, that is, those who underwent initiation came to be known as Rupowal and latter this Rupowal became famous as Thengal Kachari (Borah, 2005).

But for these people, the second explanation is very baseless and weak. Because sand-washing silver particles for was in vogue among a section of the Kacharis long before the coming of the Ahoms. The other explanation is also not tenable as the acceptance of Vaishnavism by these people was not very systematic and was somewhat haphazard. Initiation by a monastery head could hardly cause change of name of a tribe.

According to the Memorandum given by the Kacharis to Indian Statutory Commission's Secretary on 14 September 1928, in New Delhi states "The Kacharis are divided into a several sub-races. The Ravas, Sonowals, Meches, Thengals, Lalungs, Saranias, Dimachas and Husai etc. are all from different ramifications of the same community e.g. the Kacharis" (plains Tribes before The Simon Commission or The Indian Statutory Commission). In the same year in 12 August the representatives of different places and tribes proposed a resolution under the presidentship of Bharat Chandra Khaklari - Resolution No.10- "Resolved that all the different sections of the Kachari community such as Rava, Sonowal, Thengal, Dimacha, Lalung etc. of both the valleys be counted and recognized as the Kachari community" (Plain Tribes before the Simon Commission or the Indian Statutory Commission; p.13).

According to Risely, they derived their name 'Thengal' from an ancestor, who is said to have ascended to heaven leg foremost (Sengupta, 2003). According to Borah (2006) in the Assam Gazette published on 12th April 1961, the Kachari including Sonowal, (Sarania, Thengal) is shown. But in 1976 the Scheduled tribe list published as (Kachari, Sonowal). The population record of this group is not available as there is no any official census of the group till now. Perhaps they are included along with the Sonowal Kacharis of Assam. According to 2001, Census the Sonowal Kacharis have a population of 2,89,735 which comprises 8.76 percent of the scheduled tribe population of Assam. As information collected from Thengal Kachar Autonomous Council there are 264 Thengal Kachari villages in Assam. Although, they are a scheduled tribe of Assam, nevertheless they have not been shown separately in the list of scheduled tribe

of Assam (Sengupta, 2003). Basically, the Thengal Kachari tribe is one of many small ethnic communities belonging to a branch of Bodo group of the Mongoloid family. They are one of the ancient inhabitants of Assam and have rich cultural heritage. At present they are mainly inhabit in Jorhat, Golaghat, Dibrugarh, North Lakhimpur, Dhemaji and Karbi Anglong districts of Assam. They have close affinity with the Assamese society in socio-cultural aspect. Most of their traditional customs and practices have undergone change.

Data Analysis of Village Schedule

The study on socio-economic conditions of the Thengal Kachari tribe in Jorhat district of Assam covered 4 Thengal Kachari villages under one each from Raidanjuri Gaon Panchayat, Madhapur Gaon Panchayat, 82 No. Birinasayek Gaon Panchayat and 64 No. Pub Thengal Gaon Panchayat. Nagabat Thengal Gaon is fall under the Police Station of Borhulla while Bhulukichuk and Layet Nachungi under Madhapur Police Station whereas Mordholi Kachari Gaon is under Jalukanibari Police Station. First three villages are fall under the development block of Titabar of Titabar subdivision while Mordholi Kachari Gaon is fall under Bagh Chung Development Block of Titabar subdivision. The table 2.1 shows name of Gaon Panchayat, Police Station, Development Block and Subdivision where the study villages are situated.

Table: 2.1
Showing Basic Information of the Surveyed Villages

Sl. No.	Name of Villages	Name of Gaon Panchayat	Police Station	Development Block	Sub-division
1	Nagabat Thengal Gaon	Raidangjuri Panchayat	Borhulla Police Station	Titabar Development Block	Titabar
2	Bhulukichuk	Madhapur Panchayat	Madhapur Police Station (Out Post)	Titabar Development Block	Titabar
3	Layet Nachungi	82 No. Birinasayek Panchayat	Madhapur Police Station (Out Post)	Titabar Development Block	Titabar
4	Mordholi Kachari Gaon	64 No. Pub Thengal Gaon Panchayat	Jalukanibari Police Station (Out Post)	Bagh Chung Development Block	Titabar

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

As regards of topography from the table 2.2 shows that all the villages are situated in plain area.

Table: 2.2
Showing Topography of the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

No. of Hilly Villages	No. of Villages in Plain	No. of Un-Dwelling Plain	Others	Total No. of Villages
Nil	4 (100.00)	Nil	Nil	4

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Tribal people generally prefer to live in compact area and in the present study it is observed that all (100.00 percent) the study villages are dispersed.

Table: 2.3
Showing Settlement Pattern of the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

No. of Agglomerated	No. of Dispersed	No. of Isolated	Others	Total No. of Villages
Nil	4 (100.00)	Nil	Nil	4

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Table 2.4 shows that in 3 (75.00 percent) villages possess the nearest motorable road from within the village while in case of one village 1-2 kms. In case of nearest railway station for 2 (50.00 percent) village lies at a distance of 3-4 kms. while for 2 (50.00 percent) villages gets the facility at a distance of above 6 kms. Transport facilities for all the villages are adequate as all 4 (100.00 percent) villages having the nearest transport station at a distance of 1-2 kms.

Table: 2.4
Showing Transport and Communication Facilities
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Facilities	Distance from the Nearest Facility (in K.M.)				
		Within the Village	1-2 Kms.	3-4 Kms.	5-6 Kms.	More than 6 Kms.
1	Nearest Motorable Road	3 (75.00)	1 (25.00)	-	-	-
2	Nearest Railway Station	-	-	2 (50.00)	-	2 (50.00)
3	Nearest Transport Station	-	4 (100.00)	-	-	-

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Condition of the roads is good in the 3 surveyed villages. 3 (75.00 percent) villages are having Black Trapping road while only 1 (25.00 percent) village have gravelled road.

Table: 2.5
Showing Condition of Roads in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Types of Road	No. of Villages
1	Foot Track	-
2	Katcha fair weather Motorable Road	-
3	Katcha all weather Motorable Road	-
4	Gravelled Road	1 (25.00)
5	Black Trapping	3 (75.00)
Total		4 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The primary mode of conveyance of all the 4 (100.00 percent) villages is bus, magic, winger and Gamyia Taxi.

Table: 2.6
Showing Mode of Conveyance to the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Primary Mode of Conveyance	No/ of Villages
1	Bus/Tata Magic/Winger/Gamyia Taxi	4 (100.00)
2	Bicycle	-
3	Rail	-
4	Boat	-
5	Other	-
Total		4 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Radio, television, newspaper, mobile phone, youth club, library are the available means of mass communication for the villagers. Modern life style has crept in even in the remote tribal villages as reflected by existence of televisions, radio, newspaper, mobile phone and youth club in all the 4 (100.00 percent) villages. There are only in 1 (25.00 percent) village have library.

Table: 2.7
Showing Means of Mass Communication in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Means of Mass Communication	No. of Villages
1	Television	4 (100.00)
2	Radio	4 (100.00)
3	Newspaper	4 (100.00)
4	Library	1 (25.00)
5	Telephonic Facilities (Mobile Phone)	4 (100.00)
6	Youth Club	4 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Like any other plain area of Assam Kharif crops are grown by the villagers in the surveyed villages. Paddy is the major crops in all the 4 (100.00) villages.

Table: 2.8
Showing Cropping Pattern in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Name Villages	Major Crops grown	Rabi	Kharif	All Seasoned
1	Nagabat Thengal Gaon	Paddy			
2	Bhuluki Chuk	Paddy			
3	Layet Nachungi	Paddy			
4	Mordholi Kachari Gaon	Paddy			

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

As regards of civic facilities 2 (50.00 percent) villages get the police station facilities at a distance of 1-3 kms. while each one (25.00 percent) of the village gets at a distance of 4-6 kms. and 7-10 kms. Post office is located at a distance of 1-3 kms. for 3 (75.00 percent) villages however, for one (25.00 percent) village distance is 4-6 kms. Regarding health care facility state dispensaries are located ranges of 1-3 kms. distance for 3 (75.00 percent) villages while for one (25.00 percent) village distance is 4-6 kms. The distance of all the 4 (100.00 percent) villages to the medical sub-center is 1-3 kms. Block office is located at a distance of 4-6 kms. for 2 (50.00 percent) villages while for another 2 (50.00 percent) villages distance is beyond 10 kms. The distance of 3 (100.00 percent) villages to the weekly market is 1-3 kms. and only one (25.00 percent) village has at a distance of 4-6 kms. 2 (50.00 percent) villages get bank facilities at a distance

of 1-3 kms. while one (25.00 percent) each of the village have a distance of 7-10 and beyond 10 kms. distance.

Table: 2.9
Showing Civic Facilities in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Type of Civic Facilities	Distance from the Village (in K.M.)				
	Within the Village	1-3 Km.	4-6 Km.	7-10 Km.	More than 10 Km.
Nearest Police Station	-	2 (50.00)	1 (25.00)	1 (25.00)	-
Nearest Post Office	-	3 (75.00)	1 (25.00)	-	-
Nearest Block Office	-	-	2 (50.00)	-	2 (50.00)
Nearest State Dispensary	-	3 (75.00)	1 (25.00)	-	-
Nearest Medical Sub-Center	-	4 (100.00)	-	-	-
Nearest Weekly Market	-	3 (75.00)	1 (25.00)	-	-
Bank	-	2 (50.00)	-	1 (25.00)	1 (25.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

In the present study it is found that all the 4 (100.00 percent) villages have Primary School within the villages. Anganwadi centers are also located within the villages for all the 4 (100.00 percent) villages. It is good that little kids no need to walk long distance.

Middle English School for one (25.00 percent) village is located within the village while incase of 3 (75.00 percent) villages are located at a distance of 1-3 kms. High Schools are located at a considerable distance of 1-3 kms. for all the 4 (100.00 percent) villages. More or less the same position is observed in respect of Higher Secondary Schools as many as 3 (75.00 percent) villages are located at a distance of 1-3 kms. while for one (25.00 percent) village is located at a distance of 4-6 kms.

As regards, college 2 (50.00 percent) villages have to go at a distance of 1-3 kms. while in case of one village (25.00 percent) has to go 7-10 kms. and for another one beyond 10 kms.

Table: 2.10
Showing Educational Facilities
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Category of Institution	Distance from the Villages to Educational Institutions (in Kms.)				
	Within the Village	1-3 Kms.	4-6 Kms.	7-10 Kms.	More than 10 Kms.
Anganwadi	4 (100.00)	-	-	-	-
Primary School	4 (100.00)	-	-	-	-
Middle English School	1 (25.00)	3 (75.00)	-	-	-
High School	-	4 (100.00)	-	-	-
H. S. School	-	3 (75.00)	1 (25.00)	-	-
College	-	2 (50.00)	-	1 (25.00)	1 (25.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

As regards source of drinking water 100.00 percent villages depend upon tube wells however in one village a few households covers by supply water and two public pond.

Table: 2.11
Showing Sources of Drinking Water
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Total No. of Villages	Sources of Drinking Water				
	Pond	Well	River/ Stream	Tube well	Water Supply Scheme
4	2 (public)	Nil	Nil	4 (100.00)	1 (25.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Thengal people of the study villages are engaged in various cottage and small industries. Handloom/Sericulture, Bamboo/Cane and poultry firm is found in all the surveyed villages while 50.00 percent each of the villages have pig firm and cattle firm. In other small and cottage industries sector 50.00 percent villages are involved.

Table: 2.12
Showing Cottage Industry/Small Industry in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Total No. of Villages	No. of Villages having Cottage Industry/Small Industry						
	Handloom/Sericulture	Bamboo/Cane product	Carpentry	Poultry	Pig firm	Cattle firm	Other
4	4 (100.00)	4 (100.00)	-	4 (100.00)	2 (50.00)	2 (50.00)	2 (50.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Regarding electrification 100.00 percent villages are electrified under the government scheme of Rajiv Gandhi Rural National Electricity Scheme.

Table: 2.13
Showing Electricity Facility in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Having Electricity Facility	Not Having Electricity Facility	Total No. of Villages
4 (100.00)	00	4 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The data of the 2.14 shows that in the surveyed villages majority (94.00 percent) of the households gets electricity facility while only 6.00 percent households did not get electricity facility.

Table: 2.14
Showing Electricity Facility in the Surveyed Households
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Having Electricity Facility	Not Having Electricity Facility	Total No. of Households
188 (94.00)	12 (6.00)	200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Regarding fair price shops all the 4 (100.00 percent) villages have within the village. All the 4 (100.00 percent) villages have other shop within the village to fulfill the needs of villagers. However for other marketing facilities 3 (75.00 percent) villages have to go at a distance of 1-3 kms. while another one (25.00 percent) village has to go at a distance of 4-6 kms.

Table: 2.15
Showing Marketing Facilities in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Types of Marketing Facility	Marketing Facilities (in Km.)				
	Within the Village	1-3	4-6	7-10	More than 10
Fair Price Shop	4 (100.00)	-	-	-	-
Other Shop	4 (100.00)	-	-	-	-
Other Marketing Facilities	-	3 (75.00)	1 (25.00)	-	-

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Table: 2.16
Showing Distribution of Population as per Age group in the surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Age Group	Sex wise Population			Marital Status-wise Population		
		Male	Female	Total	Married	Unmarried	Total
1	0-6	47 (52.22)	43 (47.78)	90	-	90 (100.00)	90 (9.23)
2	7-15	57 (46.72)	65 (53.28)	122	-	122 (100.00)	122 (12.51)
3	16-35	169 (49.71)	171 (50.29)	340	169 (49.71)	171 (50.29)	340 (34.87)
4	36-45	103 (55.38)	83 (44.62)	186	175 (94.09)	11 (5.91)	186 (19.08)
5	46-59	52 (46.01)	61 (53.99)	113	108 (95.58)	5 (4.42)	113 (11.59)
6	60 or Above	66 (53.23)	58 (46.77)	124	121 (97.58)	3 (2.42)	124 (12.72)
Total		494 (50.67)	481 (49.33)	975	573 (58.77)	402 (41.23)	975 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The total population of the studied villages is 975 which male constitutes 494 (50.67 percent) and female 481 (49.33 percent). Highest numbers of person belongs to the age group of 16-35 year constituting 340 persons, male 49.71 percent and female 50.29 percent. Next larger group is 36-45 year constituting 186 person of which 55.38 percent male and 44.62 percent female. Third larger group is 60 or above 60 years constituting 12.72 percent of the total population which 53.23 percent male and 46.77 percent

female. The fourth larger group is 7-15 which 46.72 percent male and 53.28 female. Similarly in case of age group 46-59 which 46.01 percent are male and 53.99 percent female. 0-6 year Age group consist of 52.22 percent male and 47.78 percent female.

In the age group of 0-6 years and 7-15 years all unmarried 9.23 percent and 12.51 percent respectively. In the age group 16-35 years 49.71 percent married while 50.29 percent unmarried. In the age group of 36-45, 46-59 and 60 or above 60 majority 94.09 percent, 95.58 percent and 97.58 percent are married.

Education was not intuitional as a separate activity, in the past Thengal Kachari society; it was whole through participation of the young in daily life with adults. Mainly after first half of the twenty century a few people went to school or college to study. Among them a few people become school teacher, college teacher, engineers, doctors etc. but now-a-days numbers of educated people increase day by days.

School education is gaining importance among Thengal Kachari day by day. With the help of Household survey schedule data on literacy were collected. For the purpose of the present study of the young children are excluded from the purview of this survey as they are to be schooled.

Table: 2.17
Showing Literacy Rate in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Total Population of the Surveyed Households		Male	Female	Total	Yet too Young to Schooling		
					Male	Female	Total
	Illiterate	17 (3.56)	55 (11.98)	72 (7.69)			
975	Literate	460 (96.44)	404 (88.017)	864 (92.31)	17 (43.59)	22 (56.41)	39 (4.00)
		477 (100.00)	459 (100.00)	936 (100.00)			

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

It is gratifying to note that literacy rate is increasing at a faster rate. Out of 936 (excluding non schooling) total population, 92.31 percent population are literate while only 7.69 percent population illiterate. Male literacy is relatively high (96.44 percent) in compassion to its female counterpart 88.01 percent. In the study villages 4.00 percent young children are yet to schooling.

Table: 2.18
Showing Educational Position in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Position Sex	Primary	ME School	High School	H. S. Level	Graduate	P.G. Level	Technical	Professional	Total
Male	84 (52.50)	53 (49.53)	186 (52.84)	79 (54.86)	45 (56.25)	2 (40.00)	6 (60.00)	5 (83.33)	460 (53.240)
Female	76 (47.50)	54 (50.47)	166 (47.16)	65 (45.14)	35 (43.75)	3 (60.00)	4 (40.00)	1 (16.67)	404 (46.759)
Total	160 (18.52)	107 (12.38)	352 (40.74)	144 (16.67)	80 (9.26)	5 (.58)	10 (1.16)	6 (.69)	864 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

A comparative picture of the male and female literacy rates in the study villages is shown in table 2.18. The data presented in table 18 shows that educational attainment level was as many as 40.74 percent high school level which 52.84 percent male and 47.16 percent female. In Higher Secondary level 16.67 percent population was attained which 54.86 percent male and 45.14 percent female. In the Graduate level total 9.26 percent population attained which 56.25 percent male and 43.75 percent female. At the Post Graduate level only .58 percent population was attained which 40.00 percent male and 60.00 percent female. Similarly only 1.16 percent and .69 percent of the educated population have technical and professional education respectively. 18.52 percent of the population have attained up to only primary level where 52.50 percent male and 47.50 percent female. 12.38 percent of the educated population of the study villages attained up to ME school where 49.53 percent male and 50.47 percent female.

Table: 2.19
Level of Education among the Student in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Level of Education	Frequency & Percentage		Row Total & Percentage
		Boys	Girls	
1	Pre-primary	8 (53.33)	7 (46.67)	15 (6.38)
2	Primary Level	42 (58.33)	30 (41.67)	72 (30.64)
3	Middle School Level	14 (36.84)	24 (63.17)	38 (16.17)
4	High School Level	30 (51.72)	28 (48.28)	58 (24.68)
5	Higher Secondary Level	12 (63.16)	7 (36.84)	19 (8.09)
6	Graduate Level	17 (60.71)	11 (39.29)	28 (11.91)
7	Post-Graduate Level	00	1 (100.00)	1 (.43)
8	Technical Education	00	2 (100.00)	2 (.85)
9	Professional Education	1 (50.00)	1 (50.00)	2 (.85)
Column Total and Percentage		124 (52.99)	110 (47.01)	235 (100.00) {100.00}

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

There are 52.99 percent boys and 47.01 percent girls in various standards of educational intuitions. It is seen that except ME school level all the standards right from pre-primary to graduate level the percentage of girls is quite low. Therefore, in the per-primary level 53.33 boys are against 46.67 percent girls, while 58.33 percent boys against 41.67 girls in the primary level. High school level 51.72 percent are boys against 48.28 percent girls while 63.16 boys against 36.84 percent girls in the higher secondary level. In the graduate level 60.71 percent boys against 39.29 percent girls. On the other hand PG level, Technical and professional education a few student are study where percentage of female is relatively high in comparison to boys.

CHAPTER-III

Kinship System

Chapter III

Kinship System

Kinship form the core of social structure of tribal society as their social-cultural life of a tribal community revolves around this institution. Therefore, the sociologists and anthropologists have paid special attention on understanding of this institution. Murdock (1949) states study of kinship holds a very important position in anthropological literatures. The phenomenon of kinship is interlinked with other institutions like family, descent, marriage and such others. Basic kinship pattern primarily depends on the descent system of any particular society. It may be mentioned here that a major category of kin, i.e. consanguineal kin group, is related through genealogical relationship while descent does not mean recognition of certain genealogical ties to the exclusion of others. It 'refers only to social allocation and fundamentally has nothing to do with genealogical relationship or the recognition thereof' (Murdock).

Clan

In order to analyse the kinship system in tribal society one has to discuss the clan system, which is a core structural unit of their kinship system. The Thengal tribe is divided into 21 clans. But they have not any sub-clan or family clan. It is believed that earlier in the Thengal Kachari society there was perhaps no clan system. Borah (2005) states the complete clan wise division started from the time of Jongbahadur Thengal who established a separate Kachari kingdom on the bank of the Doyang River at Kachamari (Golaghat). The table 1 shows clans of Thengal Kachari.

Table: 3.1

Traditional Occupation of Thengal Kachari Clans

SL. No.	Clan	Traditional Occupation
1.	<i>Hajuwal</i>	Cultivator.
2.	<i>Manikial</i>	A kind of pearl collector.
3.	<i>Muktal</i> or <i>Mukutial</i>	Pearl collector.
4.	<i>Durungial</i>	Maker of boat, boatman
5.	<i>Dalangial</i>	Maker of bridge.
6.	<i>Sakurial</i>	They made bridge of bamboo or timber laid across a ditch for crossing the same.
7.	<i>Horgial</i> or <i>Hayogial</i>	They rear and ride horse.
8.	<i>Sukarial</i>	They rear pig.
9.	<i>Sugarial</i> or <i>Hogral</i>	They rear barking deer.
10.	<i>Baghal</i>	They rear tiger.
11.	<i>Kumarial</i> or <i>Kumral</i>	Potter.
12.	<i>Kamarial</i>	Blacksmith.
13.	<i>Dhekial</i> or <i>Dhekral</i>	Maker of <i>Dheaki</i> and grinder of rice (The <i>dheaki</i> is a wooden pedal for pounding and cleaning or grinding rice.)
14	<i>Nangal</i>	Maker of plough.
15	<i>Lathial</i>	Bamboo worker.
16	<i>Mekhelial</i>	Weaver.
17	<i>Negurial</i>	Maker of rope.
18	<i>Dingial</i>	Butcher
19	<i>Dhulial</i>	Maker of drum and drummer.
20	<i>Formul</i>	<i>Ahu</i> cultivator.
21	<i>Ezmal</i>	Servant of Royal family.

Source: *Thengal Darpan*, 2005.

Earlier in Thengal Kachari tribe clans were divided mainly based on occupation, but now-a-days there exist only 21 clans but not the traditional occupation. From the above table it is clear that in Thengal Kachari tribe has 21 clans. The clan system in Thengal tribe of the under study can be analysed in the light of above observations. The clan wise distribution of families in the study villages is shown in table 3.2.

Table: 3.2
Clan-wise Distribution of Households in the Surveyed Villages
(Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Clan	No. of Household
1	<i>Hajuwal</i>	43 (21.50)
2	<i>Manikial</i>	37 (18.50)
3	<i>Muktal or Mukutial</i>	31 (15.50)
4	<i>Durungial</i>	28 (14.00)
5	<i>Dalangial</i>	2 (1.00)
6	<i>Sakurial</i>	10 (5.00)
7	<i>Horgial or Hoiogial</i>	5 (2.50)
8	<i>Sukarial</i>	00
9	<i>Sugarial or Hogral</i>	00
10	<i>Baghal</i>	4 (2.00)
11	<i>Kumarial or Kumral</i>	00
12	<i>Kamarial</i>	00
13	<i>Dhekial or Dhekral</i>	2 (1.00)
14	<i>Nangal</i>	00
15	<i>Lathial</i>	00
16	<i>Mekhelial</i>	2 (1.00)
17	<i>Negurial</i>	00
18	<i>Dingial</i>	36 (18.00)
19	<i>Dhulial</i>	00
20	<i>Ezmal</i>	00
21	<i>Formul</i>	00
Total		200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The table reveals that the study villages have 11 clans. The major clans found in the study villages is a little more than one-fifth (21.50 percent) of the households belong to Hajwal, a little less than one-fifth (18.50 percent) of the households belong to Manikial and followed by Dingial 18.00 percent, Muktal or Mukutial 15.50 percent and Durungial 14.00 percent. The other clans found in the study villages are Sakurial 5.00 percent households, Horgial or Hayogial 2.50 percent, Baghal 2.00 percent while 1.00 percent each belongs to Dalangial, Dheakial or Dhekral and Mekhelial, whereas no household was found who belong to Sukarial, Sagarial or Hogral, Kumarial or Kumral, Kamarial, Lathial, Negurial, Dhulial, Ezmal and Formul.

Kin

Kinship plays an important role both in the regulation of behaviour between persons and in the formulation of social groups. Social relations of the individuals are primarily regulated by kinship bond in Thengal Kachari society. They use the word *atmiya* to denote any kin, but the meaning of the term depends on the contexts in which it is used. It is believed and expects an *atmiya* to remain with them in both good and bad time. This identification is mainly established through *janma* (birth) they refer as *janmasutra atmiya* while marital relatives are called *mitir*.

Categories of Kin (*Atmiya*)

There are different groups of relatives in Thengal Kachari society which is similar to Assamese society. The Thengal Kachari of the study villages mainly uses *vamsavali* (genealogy) to define boundaries of these groups. Bhattacharjee and Bhagabati (1996) divides *atmiya* in to following division (1) *Vamsa and Pariyal*, (2) *Mitir and Kutum*, (3) *Jnati* and (4) *Samparkiya*. Kin of the Thengal Kachari is discussed in the light of above classification.

(1) *Vamsa and Pariyal*

Vamsa and *pariyal* denote blood relationship by birth in Thengal Kachari society. In their society *vamsa* group is counted up to nine ascending generation of ones' father side and five ascending generation of mother side. *Vamsa* is an exogamous group and pollution rites following birth and death are observed for kinsmen who fall within the limits of *vamsa*. Bhattacharjee and Bhagabati (1996) states *vasma* is the larger group and includes a number of patrilineally related *pariyals*.

From the kinship point of view, *pariyal* is a small unit of *vamsa* in Thengal Kachari society. *Pariyal* indicates the highest degree of shared blood. Decline in the degree of shared blood increases the social distance. All the descendants of a person in the male line up to three generations are generally regarded as a *pariyal*. Bhattacharjee and Bhagabati (1996) describes there is a sense of closeness and solidarity among the members of a *pariyal*. However, common property rights are often retained by a *pariyal*.

(2) *Mitir and Kutum*

Marital relatives are called *mitir* in Thengal Kachari society. The next generation of *mitirs* are transformed into *kutums*. Bhattacharjee and Bhagabati (1996) describes that the word *kutum* neutralizes the wife-giver and wife-taker distinction and establishes a consanguineous idiom. When a man marries, his wife's relatives are treated in the consanguineous idiom. Likewise, a woman would regard her husband's relatives in the same fashion. The behaviour appropriate for a *kutum* is called *kutumbita*. Married daughters of a person also become his *kutum*.

(3) *Jnati*

Jnati refers to another category of relatives in Thengal Kachari society. Such *jnatiss* include *khel* members who may not actually be kin and households inhabiting in a neighbourhood or hamlet in the Thengal Kachari society. Bhattacharjee and Bhagabati (1996) state that *jnati* is a group of recognized agnatic kin and continues after the cessation of death pollution.

(4) *Samparkiya*

Samparkiya (literacy means 'related') is the category of distant kin. When no direct relationship is traceable between two persons who are otherwise indirectly related then are lumped in the category of *samparkiya*.

Marriage

Marriage is one of the universal social institutions which admit men and women to family life. Thengal Kachari tribe have their traditional customs of marriage. They usually practice monogamy. Traditionally, Thengal Kachari used to select their mates from within the tribe. But now-a-days marriage with other tribes and non-tribal groups is widely practiced. Mainly mutual love leads to this form of marriage. Now-a-days

they have made marriage alliances with Chutia, Ahom, Sonowal Kachari and other Assamese Hindu people. Bora (2000) and Borah & Singh (2008) mention three types of marriage of Thengal Kachari. They are:

1. *Poluai Ana Biya*.
2. *Joran Biya* or *Aabioi Biya* and
3. *Bor Biya*.

1. *Poluai Ana Biya*

Poluai Ana Biya or marriage by elopement is widely prevalent in Thengal Kacharis. Traditionally a Thengal marriage held under this system and no social stigma is attached to it. Most of the families try to avoid the irksome procedure of a formal marriage, although they have the eagerness to solemnize formal marriage. Another reason may be the less expenditure involved in the '*Poluai Ana*' marriage. Besides love at first sight is one of the marriage causes for solemnizing '*Poluai Ana*' marriage. The boy and the girl decide this course as they are not sure whether their parents will agree to their marriage. The boy takes away his beloved to his residence or his friend's house at night with the help of his friends.

2. *Joron Biya* or *Aabioi Biya*

Joron Biya or *Aabioi Biya* is an arranged marriage minus the details of a '*Bor-Biya*'. Generally persons who low income groups take resort to this type of marriage. Negotiation and courtship between boys and girls leads to this type of marriage. A Thengal young man is free to court any girl. When a young man wishes to marry a girl of his choice or if a boy and a girl are agreed to become partners in life they convey their choice to their parents who affirm the suitability of such a match, negotiate the proposal through the help of a mediator (*Baruwa*). The parents of boy send the mediator (*Baruwa*) to the girl's parents. If the parents of the boy and girl agree, marriage is usually arranged after *Rahi-jor-cova*, the consultation of the horoscopes of the pair by an astrologer consultation with a *Panjika* (almanac) to find out the suitability of the union between the boy and girl.

(3) *Bor Biya*

The well-to-do educated Thengal prefer this form of marriage which entails a huge expenditure long drawn formalities. This type of marriage continues for two to three days at the groom and the bride house.

Beside the above three form of marriage they have another form that is *Gharjia* or *Gorjovai*. Generally parents having a lone daughter without any male issue prefer to have *Gharjia* or *Gharjovai*. Not much ritual formalities are observed in such type of marriage. Except the entertainment of the co-villagers of the girl's side with a small feast, no other ceremony is necessary for such marriage. It will be clear from the types of actual marriage in the study villages in Table 3.3.

Table: 3.3
Types of Marriages in the Surveyed Villages
(Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Types of Marriage	No. of Marriage
1.	<i>Poluai Ana Biya</i>	131 (43.09)
2.	<i>Joran Biya</i> or <i>Aabioi Biya</i>	100 (32.89)
3.	Bor Biya	71 (23.36)
4.	In Temple	2 (0.66)
5.	<i>Gharjia</i> or <i>Gharjovai</i>	00
Total		304 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The table reveals that in the study villages more than two-fifth (43.09 percent) of the marriage relation were made through *Poluai Ana Biya* while a little less than one-third (32.89 percent) through *Joran Biya* or *Aabioi Biya*, 23.36 percent *Bor Biya* and only 0.66 percent in Temple.

Marriage with Other Community

There are no explicit rules for maintenance of clan exogamy and tribe endogamy in Thengal Kachari society. However, prohibited categories include the close relatives from father and mother side. There are bar to marriage a boy and a girl belonging to the same *Vamsa* but it may take place only after nine generation from father side and five generation from mother side. In the table 3.4 shows the spouse from other community. Therefore, marriage alliances have been classified into two categories: (1) marriage within the tribe and (2) marriage outside the tribe.

Table: 3.4
Marriage within the Tribe and outside the Tribe in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Marriage & Percentage		Total Marriage
Marriage Within the Tribe	Marriage Outside the Tribe	
184 (60.53)	120 (39.47)	304 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The data of the Table 3.4 shows that in the study villages more than half (60.53 percent) of the marriage alliances were made within the tribe while 39.47 percent outside the tribe. Thus, it can be said that in the study villages Thengal Kachari tribe do not restricted marriage alliances within the tribe. It will be clear from table 3.5.

Table: 3.5
Spouse from Other Community in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Name of Communities	Numbers of Marriage
1.	Ahom	42 (35.00)
2.	Chutia	35 (29.16)
3.	Kalita	2 (1.00)
4.	Brahmin	00
5.	Sonowal Kachari	30 (25.00)
6.	Rajbansi	1 (0.83)
7.	Kuch	1(0.83)
8.	Rabha	1(0.83)
9.	Keote	1(0.83)
10.	Bodo Kachari	2(1.66)
11.	Moran	1(0.83)
12.	Mech	1(0.83)
13.	Kaibatrya	1(0.83)
14.	Adi	1(0.83)
15.	Tai Phaki (Shyam)	1(0.83)
Total		120 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The data of the above table shows that in case of spouse from other community most of the marriage alliances were made with Ahom (35.00 percent), Chutia (29.16 percent) and Sonowal Kachari (25.00 percent). It is because of continuous and close contact with these groups of people.

Divorce

Divorce is a rare phenomenon among the Thengal Kachari tribe. Borah and Singh (2008) state that there is no customary law for divorce in Thengal Kachari society. The divorce is allowed only on the ground of adultery, physical disability, lunacy and impotency etc. At the time of divorce, *Gaonbura* (village headman) and others are called to settle the matter and the accused is given some punishment in the form of fine. In the study villages only 4 divorce cases were reported at the time of field work. So, it is clear that divorce in Thengal Kachari is not usual phenomena.

Remarriage

Remarriage is prevalent among Thengal Kachari since immemorial. There is no bar in contacting a junior levirate marriage i.e. the younger brother marrying the wife of his elder brother on the event of his (elder brother's) death. But in no case senior levirate marriage can take place. Again marriage under junior sororate system can take place but not senior sororate marriage, i.e. on the event of death of one's wife or alive, the elder sister of the deceased wife cannot be as a wife. Much the same principle holds good in the case of the remarriage of the widows which is freely permitted, the one limitation being that a widow may marry her deceased husband's younger brother, but not the elder. In the study villages only 5 remarriage cases were reported at the time of field surveyed. Therefore, it is clear that remarriage is rare in Thengal Kachari tribe.

More than one Wife/Husband

Thengal Kacharis prefer monogamy, but cases of men having two wives are also observed in the study villages. If the first wife proves to be childless, their custom permits to have a second wife. Illegal union especially incestuous relations are very much hated and in no circumstances social recognition is given to such unions. Similarly cousin marriage is also not approved by the society. However, the widow remarriage is permissible and in such case the widow shares her second husband's house without performing any marriage rituals. It may be mentioned here that as there is no class or clan distinction in the Thengal Kachari society, the question of judging

social status of the partners never arises. In other words hypergamy has no place in the Thengal Kachari society. In the surveyed villages 4 cases were reported a male having two wives while no case found a female having two or more husbands. So, it can be said that Thengal Kachari tribe is monogamous group and polyandry is strictly prohibited.

Family

The basic unit of Thengal Kachari society is patriarchal family with its patrilineal descent and inheritance rules. The father is considered to be the head of the family and remains so till death. Traditionally a Thengal Kachari family is composed of parents, unmarried sons and daughters and the married sons with their wives and children. The structure of family among the Thengal Kachari can be analysed in terms of type of family and the size of family.

Type of Family

In the Thengal Kachari society both joint and nuclear types of family are found. But under the influence of modern forces the joint family system has not gained so much importance among them now-a-days most of the Thengal Kachari families have nuclear families. The distribution of household in relation to their family type is shown in table 3.6.

Table: 3.6
Types of Family in the Surveyed Villages
(Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Types of Family	No. of Household
1	Joint	83 (41.50)
2	Nuclear	117 (58.50)
Total		200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The data reveals that in the study villages 58.50 percent of the households nuclear family type while 41.50 percent households were joint family. Thus, it can be said that the nuclear family type is dominant in the Thengal Kachari in the study villages.

Size of the Family

For analytical purpose, on the basis of size, the family can be categorized into three categories, (1) Small size family, comprising of one to five members; (2) Medium size family, comprising of six to ten members and (3) Large size family, having more than

ten members. The distribution of the size of family in the study villages is shown in table 3.7.

Table: 3.7
Size of Family in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Size of Family	No. of Household
1	Small Size (1-5 members)	149 (74.50)
2	Medium Size (6-10 members)	45 (22.50)
3	Large Size (Above 10 members)	6 (3.00)
Total		200(100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The data reveals that in the study villages most of the families are small size families (74.50 percent) while 22.50 percent medium size family and only 3.00 percent are large size family. It suggests that in the study villages most of the Thengal Kachari households are small size family.

From the analysis of this chapter Thengal Kachari tribe has 21 clans but now-a-days there exist only 21 clans but not the division of traditional occupation. There are found 11 clans in the study villages. The major clans are Hajwal, Manikial, Dingial, Muktal or Mukutial and Durungial. In case of kin (*Atmiya*) there are different groups of relatives in Thengal Kachari society which is similar to Assamese society. Thengal Kachari has three forms of marriage. They are- *Poluai Ana Biya*, *Joron Biya* and *Bor Biya*. *Poluai Ana Biya* is the oldest form of marriage and still popular among them. In the study villages Thengal Kachari people do not restricted marriage alliances within the tribe. They mostly marriage alliances were made with Ahom, Chutia and Sonowal Kachari. It is because of continuous and close contact with these groups of people. Therefore, the structure of Thengal Kachari society is dynamic, which is evident from the changes in the structure of marriage and family over the years. In the traditional Thengal Kachari society joint family system was in practice but under the influence of modern forces the joint family system is at decline and nuclear family system is on an increase. The study also reveals that they prefer small size family rather than larger size of family. They are also not maintaining exogamy or endogamy at the level of clan or tribe. Therefore, the process of change in these structural elements of the Thengal Kachari society is taking place at a faster rate. Extension of marriage ties beyond the boundary of the tribe has been a source of change in the structure. The structure of Thengal Kachari society is the capacity to absorb the change beyond its premises, in the

sense that they have not maintained tribe endogamy. They also allow remarriage and divorce but such case is very rare. Finally, it can be said that Thengal Kachari society is in transitional phase moving away from its traditional structural and cultural base to a modern one.

CHAPTER-IV

Economic Structure

Chapter IV

Economic Structure

The socio-economic structure in tribal communities is markedly different from that of the non-tribals or advanced groups of people. They have a very simple technology which fits well with their ecological surroundings and conservative outlook. Moreover, their economy can be said to be subsistence type. They practise different types of occupation to sustain themselves and live on “Marginal economy” (Mehta, 1999). Thengal Kachari economy is mostly agriculture based and their pattern of cultivation is settled cultivation. Under settled cultivation, human labour, cattle (ox and buffalo) and land are the principal means of production. They use plough, hoe, harrow etc., which are generally homemade tools. The cultivation of Thengal Kachari is labour intensive and it requires participation of the family as a whole.

Besides agriculture, rearing *Eri* (a species of silkworm which feeds on the leaves of the castor), rearing pig, cotton weaving, fish-catching, basket making, are the other economic activities. They also make their hut from the bamboo and thatch available at hand. The bamboo and cane works are other important activities. Thengal male peoples are specialized in bamboo and cane works, they made different kinds of fish catching gears from bamboo. They also made baskets of numerous designs and sizes required for various purposes in their day-to-day life.

The weaving is one of the important activities of Thengal Kachari women. Every Thengal household possessed at least one loom and Thengal women are expert in weaving. Earlier knowledge of weaving regarded as one of the most important criteria of a bride. In past most of the clothes of domestic use were made on the family looms.

They rear some domestic animals like, cow, bullock, buffalo, pig, goat, etc. They also rear hen, duck, goose, pigeon, etc. They produced their own foods, cloths and drink (rice beer). They prepared medicine from the local plants and herbs. But changes have taken place at a faster rate, however, till today some elements of traditional system are still continuing.

In order to get in-depth information, a micro level study was conducted in 200 households of the 4 selected villages of the Thengal Kachari tribe.

Table: 4.1
Village-wise distribution of Thengal Kachari Households in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Name of the District	Name of the Subdivision	Name of the Villages	No. of Total Household	No. of tribal Household
Jorhat	Titabar	Nagabat	132	68
		Thengal Gaon		
		Bhulukichuk	120	120
		Layet Nachungi	128	98
		Mordholi	144	101
		Kachari Gaon		

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Occupation

There was clan-wise occupational diversification in past Thengal Kachari society. But clan-wise occupational diversification is not found now-a-days. However, contemporary Thengal Kachari society is passing through a process of change and the occupational structure is under the process of transformation. Broadly, there are five types of occupation in Thengal Kachari society, these are, agriculture, business, service, unskilled work and skilled work.

In agricultural field, they cultivate cash crop, which they sell in the local market or to dealer. Moreover almost every household has a good number of betel nut, betel leaves and bamboo plantation. Business category includes the activities like grocery shop, stationary shop, tea stall, pan shop, furniture shop etc. In service sector, they are engaged both in government and private organizations, such as educational institutions, army, police, ONGC, public health, welfare department, clerical job and fourth grade jobs in government department, salesman in private shops etc. But due to scarcity of land for cultivation or lack of capital for business or lack of proper education for service now-a-days some people bound to adopted daily labour (unskilled worker) and skilled worker as livelihood. The distribution of households into these fiver occupational categories may reveal the trend of occupational mobility. The distribution of Thengal Kachari households into these occupational categories in the surveyed villages is shown in the table 4.2.

Table: 4.2
Distribution of Household as per Main Occupation of the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Total No. of Household	Main Occupation of the Households in the Surveyed Villages				
	Cultivation	Service	Business	Unskilled Work	Skilled Work
200	145 (72.50)	23 (11.50)	12 (6.00)	17 (8.50)	3 (1.50)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Majority (72.50 percent) of the people engaged themselves in cultivation and allied agricultural activities as main occupation. There are 11.50 percent households engage in service as main occupation, till two/three decades back earning daily board through business was unheard of as there was no scope for such ventures, but today 6.00 percent households has been engaged in business as main occupation. There are 8.50 percent and 1.50 percent households who engaged in unskilled and skilled worker. Thus, it suggests that the occupational structure is still dominated by cultivation in the study villages.

Land Holding and Utilization Pattern in the Surveyed Villages

The land ownership is classified into seven categories on the basis of land holding: (1) Land less, (2) Less than 1 bigha, (3) 1-5 bighas, (4) 6-10 bighas, (5) 11-15 bighas, (6) 16-20 bighas and (7) Above 20 bighas. The distribution of the households into these seven categories is shown in table 4.3.

Table: 4.3
Showing Land Holding and Utilization Pattern in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Category of Land	Total Land Possessed (in Bighas)							Total land 1960 Bighas	
	Landless	Less than 1 Bigha	1-5 Bighas	6-10 Bighas	11-15 Bighas	16-20 Bighas	Above 20 Bighas	Cultivated Land	Homestead Land
Amount of Land									
No. of Household	00	3 (1.50)	82 (41.00)	64 (32.00)	17 (8.50)	13 (6.50)	21 (10.50)	1505 (76.79)	455 (23.21)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

In the tribal setting having agriculture and allied activities, a household requires minimum 6 to 10 Bighas of land at least in the context of family pattern of the Thengal Kachari. But in the present study shows that including homestead and cultivated land in the category 6 to 10 Bighas of Land, there are 32.00 percent while 41.00 percent households are possessing 1 to 5 Bighas of land whereas 8.50 percent possess 11 to 15 Bighas, another 6.50 percent households possess 16 to 20 Bighas of land. 10.50 percent households possess above 20 Bighas of land and only 1.50 percent households possess less than 1 Bighas. In the study villages there are no problem of Flood and erosion. According to Borah (2013) in the Thengal Kachari terminology there are two types of land, *Bari mati* (homestead land with garden and kitchen garden and fishery) and *Pathar mati* (cultivated land). In the study villages 76.79 percent of the land is cultivated land while 23.21 percent are homestead land. In the study villages respondents were also asked whether they have fishery. The responses are shown in table 4.4.

Table: 4.4
Showing Fishery in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Fishery in the Surveyed villages		Total Households
Having Fishery	Not Having Fishery	
90 (45.00)	110 (55.00)	200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

In the study villages more than half (55.00 percent) of the households possess fishery while 45.00 percent did not possess. As informed by the villagers they rear fishes but mainly for household consumption only not for any business purpose. These fishes are kept for lean season when fish will not available in streams or other wet land. Surplus fishes are fermented to make *Sukati* for consumption during the lean season.

Source of Irrigation

The main backbone of the Thengal Kachari tribe is cultivation. For cultivation purpose irrigation facilities are required otherwise modern cultivation is not possible. In the study villages it was observed that there were no irrigation facilities. All the four villages are located in the plain area; the source of irrigation is only rivulet and local ponds. The people is also facing problem of irrigation facilities. Irrigation facilities in the study villages are shown in table 4.5.

Table: 4.5
Showing Irrigation Facility for Cultivation in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Irrigation Facilities			Total Households
Having Irrigation Facilities	Not Having Irrigation Facilities	Does not Arise	
61 (30.50)	130 (65.00)	9 (4.50)	200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Irrigation facilities are not inadequate in the study villages majority (65.00 percent) of the households do not have irrigation facilities. Only 30.50 percent households have irrigation facilities which also self arranged by the cultivators while 4.50 percent does not arise because they did not have cultivated land. The households those who have irrigation facilities also asked types of energy use. The irrigation facilities are classified into four categories: (1) Electricity (2) Diesel, (3) Manpower and (4) Other. The distribution of the households into these four categories is shown in table 4.6.

Table: 4.6
Showing Types of Energy use for Irrigation in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Types of Energy Use	No. of Household
1	Electricity	00
2	Diesel	30 (49.18)
3	Manpower	31 (50.82)
4	Other	00
Total		61 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

As regards types of energy use for irrigation facilities 49.18 percent households use diesel while 50.82 percent use manpower as source of energy. In case of diesel energy they use pump set and in case of manpower they use *Leheti* and *Lahani* made of tin.

Use of Seeds and Fertilizers

The use of seeds and fertilizers in the study villages by the farmers indicate the level of advancement in the field of agriculture. The Thengal society is an agriculturist

society, where economy is directly related to agriculture. Without using the advance technology the farmer cannot improve their economic condition.

Seed used

Among the Thengal Kachari both the local variety seeds and high yield variety seeds are used in the study villages. Local seeds are preserved by using traditional techniques while high yield variety is purchase from Agriculture Research Centre Titabar.

On the basis of seed used the households are classified into two categories: (1) High Yield Variety seeds and Home preserved seed. The distribution of the families into these categories is shown in table 4.7.

Table: 4.7
Showing High Yielding Variety Seed Use in the Surveyed Villages
(Percentage in Parenthesis)

Using Seed		Total Households
Using High Yielding Variety Seed	Home preserved Seed	
185 (96.86)	6 (3.14)	191 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Out of 200 households 191 households engaged in cultivation as they have land for cultivation. Regarding use of HYV seed in the study villages it is observed that 96.86 percent of the households use HYV seed while 3.14 percent home preserved seed. It is because as informed by the respondents, production of HYV seed is more than local seed. Besides Agriculture Research Centre is located in Titabar. However, problem is with irrigation facilities because without proper irrigation facilities HYV seed production will be low.

Fertilizer/Insecticide/Chemical for Cultivation

In case of use of fertilizer, cow dung is most common but most of households use fertilizers and pesticides such as urea, super phosphate, potash, melathan etc. in their agriculture fields. The distribution of households those who use fertilizer /insecticide/ chemical for cultivation or not is shown in table 4.8.

Table: 4.8
Showing Use of Fertilizer/Insecticide/Chemical for Agriculture in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Use of Fertilizer/Insecticide or Chemical		Total Households
Using Fertilizer/Insecticide or Chemical	Not Using Fertilizer/Insecticide or Chemical	
175 (91.62)	16 (8.38)	191 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Use of fertilizer/insecticide is being become popular as 91.62 percent households use while 8.38 percent households did not use. The households those who engaged in cultivation also asked whether they sell surplus agricultural produce during last year. The responses are shown in table 4.9.

Table: 4.9
Showing Surplus Agricultural Product Sell during Last Year in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sell Surplus Agricultural Product during Last Year		Total Households
Sell Surplus Agricultural Product	Not Sell Surplus Agricultural Product	
165 (86.39)	26 (13.61)	191 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The data of the table 4.9 shows that majority (86.39 percent) of the households sold their surplus agricultural product during the last year in the study villages while only 13.61 percent households did not sell.

Types of House

Bora (2000) mentions that a typical Thengal Kachari house has four parts. These are *Bar Ghar*, *Marol Ghar*, *Chara Ghar* and *Akhal Ghar*. *Bar Ghar* is the main building, it is divided into compartments depending upon the number of family members and their economic status as require. *Akhal Ghar* is kitchen room. *Marol Ghar* is builded near the *Bar Ghar* it is like a store house and one side is cover by *Dheaki Sal* (The *dheaki* is a wooden pedal for pounding and cleaning or grinding rice.). *Chara Ghar* is like drawing-room and one side is cover by a fireplace. Generally the roof of the

houses is thatched with grass and walls are made of bamboo reeds with mud plaster on both the sides. The mud is used to make the floor which is kept clean by plastering it with a mixture of cow dung, soil and water. However, well-to-do families have borrowed the better designs for their house. The house has space on all sides which is generally fenced by bamboo. Types of house are classified into five types- (1) R.C.C., (2). Pucca Assam Type, (3). Kutcha Assam Type, (4). Thatched Bamboo made and (5). Bamboo and Mud Plaster with Tin roof. The distribution of households into these five categories is shown in table 4.10.

Table: 4.10
Showing Types of Houses in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Types of House	No. of Household
1	R.C.C.	16 (8.00)
2	Pucca Assam Type	48 (24.00)
3	Kutcha Assam Type	103 (51.50)
4	Thatched Bamboo made	19 (9.50)
5	Bamboo and Mud Plaster with Tin roof	14 (7.00)
Total		200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Present study found that 51.50 percent households have Kutcha Assam Type while 24.00 percent households have Pucca Assam Type whereas 8.00 percent households are R.C.C. There are 9.50 percent households are Thatched Bamboo made and 7.00 percent are Bamboo and Mud Plaster with Tin roof. Overall in the study villages Assam Type is the popular model. Numbers of room is mainly depended upon numbers family members as well as economic condition. Numbers of room is classified into four categories, which is shown in table 4.11.

Table: 4.11
Showing No. of Rooms in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	No. of Room	No. of Household
1	1-3	4 (2.00)
2	4-6	98 (49.00)
3	7-9	95 (42.50)
4	10 or Above 10	3 (1.50)
Total		200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The data reveals that in the study villages 49.00 percent households have 4-6 rooms while 42.50 percent households have 7-9 rooms whereas a few 2.00 and 1.50 percent households have 1-3 and 10 or above 10 rooms respectively.

Household Items

As far as economy is concerned with the household property in the study villages a few items have taken which are considered as status symbol items of household consumption and determine the status of a family in the society. The variation in the consumption of household items among the Thengal Kachari households of study villages is shown in the table 4.12.

Table: 4.12
Showing Household Properties in the Surveyed Villages
(Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No	Household Properties	No. of Household
1	Motor Cycle	61 (30.50)
2	Bi-cycle	185 (92.50)
3	Television	111 (55.50)
4	Radio	38 (19.00)
5	Watch	192 (96.00)
6	Mobile Hand set	198 (99.00)
7	Bullock Cart	2 (1.00)
8	Power Tiller	38 (19.00)
9	Tractor	2 (1.00)
10	Maruti/Alto/Van	11 (5.50)
11	Tata AC	4 (2.00)
12	Magic	2 (1.00)
13	Jeep	1 (.50)
14	407	1 (.50)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Modernization has not far flung tribal villages of Titabar and the modern items of entertainment form properties. In the study villages 30.50 percent households possess motor cycle, more than half (55.50 percent) of the households have Television, 19.00 percent households own power tiller, 5.50 percent households possess Maruti/Alto/Van, 2.00 percent households possess Tata AC, 1.00 percent each households possess tractor

and magic, only .50 percent each households own Jeep and 407. These additions items properly indicate more or less sound economic status. Radio has lost its' past popularity only 19.00 percent households own radio. Similarly bullock carts which constituted prize property in 3/4 decades now lost its' past glory only 1.00 percent households possess bullock cart. However, there are enough bicycles of the households and the percent comes to 92.50 percent. In the study villages 96.00 percent households own have watch while 99.00 percent households possess mobile hand set.

The main source of income of Thengal tribe is cultivation. Besides cultivation public and private services, management of livestock, petty business, skilled work and unskilled work are the other source of income. The annual incomes of households are classified into four categories: (1) Up to Rs. 25,000, (2) Rs. 25,001 to 50,000), (3) Rs. 50,001 to 1,00,000 (4) Above Rs. 1,00,000. The distribution of the households on the basis of monthly income in Titabar Town is shown in table 4.13.

Table: 4.13
Showing the Distribution of Household Annual Income in the surveyed Villages
(Percentage in Parenthesis)

Source (Primary Income)	Total Income of the Households in Rs.				Row Total
	Up to Rs. 25,000	Rs. 25,001 to 50,000	Rs. 50,001 to 1,00,000	Rs. Above 1,00,000	
i. Service	00	2 (8.70)	3 (13.04)	18 (78.26)	23 (100.00) (11.50)
ii. Cultivation	40 (27.59)	48 (33.10)	29 (20.00)	28 (19.31)	145 (100.00) (72.50)
iii. Business	00	6 (50.00)	3 (25.00)	3 (25.00)	12 (100.00) (6.00)
iv. Unskilled Work	9 (52.94)	8 (47.06)	00	00	17 (100.00) (8.50)
v. Skilled Work	1 (33.33)	2 (66.67)	00	00	3 (100.00) (1.50)
Column Total	46 (23.00)	66 (33.00)	35 (17.50)	53 (26.50)	200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Cultivation is the major source of primary annual income of the households and as many as 72.50 percent households belong to this category. It suggests that the occupational structure is still dominated by agriculture in the study villages. In this sector 33.10 percent households earn Rs. 25,001-50,000 in every year while 19.31 percent households earn above Rs. 1 lakh per year.

11.50 percent households engaged in service as the primary source of annual income of which as many as 78.26 percent households annual income is above 1 lakh.

In the area of business sector only 6.00 percent households engaged as main source of annual income. In this category as many as 50.00 percent household earn Rs. 25,001-50,000 while 25.00 percent each earn 50,001 to 1 lakh and above 1 lakh. 8.50 percent households are engaged in unskilled work as a primary source of annual income which as many as 52.94 percent earn up to Rs. 25,000. In the category of skilled work only 1.50 percent household engaged as a main source of annual income which as many as 66.66 percent earn Rs. 25,001-50,000.

Expenditure Pattern

Expenditure pattern is basically depended upon income and economic condition of the households. Expenditure pattern of the households are shown in table 4.14.

Table: 4.14
Showing the Approximate Annual Expenditure Pattern in the Surveyed Villages
(Percentage in Parenthesis)

Head	Approximate Annual Expenditure in Rs.				Total
	Less than 10,000	10,001 to 20,000	20,001 to 30000	Above 30,000	
i. Food Items	4 (2.00)	41 (20.50)	61 (30.50)	94 (47.00)	200 (100.00)
ii. Dress & Ornaments	156 (78.00)	32 (16.00)	6 (3.00)	6 (3.00)	200 (100.00)
iii. Education	166 (83.00)	28 (14.00)	4 (2.00)	2 (1.00)	200 (100.00)
iv. Other Social Obligations	161 (80.50)	33 (16.50)	3 (1.50)	3 (1.50)	200 (100.00)
v. Health	178 (89.00)	17 (8.50)	3 (1.50)	2 (1.00)	200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The expenditure pattern of the households shows that quite a large number of households were incurred during the year as many as 47.00 percent households spend Above Rs. 30,000 on food items and 30.50 percent spend Rs. 20,001-30,000 during the year. 20.50 percent households spend Rs. 10,001-20,000 while only 2.00 percent households spend less than Rs. 10,000 on food items during the year.

Expenditure on dress and ornaments was not negotiable as 78.00 percent households spend less than Rs.10,000 during the year while 16.00 percent households spend Rs. 10,001-20,000 during the year. Only 3.00 percent each of the households spend Rs. 20,001-30,000 and Above 30,000 on dress and ornament.

Thengal Kachari of Titabar are gradually become conscious about education which is reflected in the annual expenditure pattern on this head 83.00 percent of the households spend less than Rs.10,000 during the year while 14.00 percent households spend Rs. 10,001-20,000 during the year. Another 2.00 percent and 1.00 percent household spend Rs. 20,000-30,000 and Above 30,000 respectively during the year.

In other social obligations 80.50 percent households spend less than Rs.10,000 during the year while 16.50 percent households spend Rs. 10,001-20,000 during the year. Health is another head of expenditure where as many as 89.00 percent households spend less than Rs. 10,000 during the year while 8.50 percent households spend 10,001-20,000 during the year. Only 1.50 percent and 1.00 percent households spend Rs. 20,001-30,000 and above Rs 30,000 respectively.

Bank Account

In order to analyse awareness about saving of the people, they were asked whether they have bank accounts/Post Office account or not. Their responses are shown in table 4.15.

Table: 4.15
Showing Post Office or Bank Account in the Surveyed Villages
(Percentage in Parenthesis)

Post Office Account or Bank Account		Total Household
Having Post Office Account or Bank Account	Not Having Post Office Account or Bank Account	
179 (89.50)	21 (10.50)	200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

In order to analyse the awareness of the people of banking systems, they were asked whether they have bank accounts or not for saving money future unforeseen expenditures. Good numbers of households (89.50 percent) have saving account in post office/banks while only 10.50 percent did not have saving account.

Table: 4.16
Showing the Habits of saving Money Regularly in Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Saving Money		Total Household
Saving Money Regularly	Not Saving Money Regularly	
22 (12.29)	157 (87.71)	179 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

It is also interesting to know whether those entire account holders have the habit of regular saving. Although quite a sizeable household have accounts in banks/post offices, yet only 12.29 percent households save regularly.

Table: 4.17
Showing Having Loan in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Loan		Total Household
Having Loan	Not Having Loan	
12 (6.00)	188 (94.00)	200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

In the study villages a few people have taken loan from both governmental organization such as bank and non governmental organization such as self help group or individuals to remit financial crisis. However, only 6.00 percent households have taken loan.

Table: 4.18
Showing the Earning Details in the Surveyed Village
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Name of the Subdivision	No. of Household	Category	Total Population
Titabar	200	No. of Earners	361 (37.03)
		No. of Non Earning Dependent	614 (62.97)
		Total Population	975 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

In the study villages earners detail was also enquired. It is found that 62.97 populations are non earning dependent which is not so favourable economic condition of tribal

people. It is also observed that these non earners are mostly aged person, female and children.

Table: 4.19
Showing the Number of Unemployed Adult in the Surveyed Village
(Percentage in Parenthesis)

Number of Unemployed Adult			Total
Sex	Male	Female	
Educated Unemployed	40 (37.38)	67 (62.62)	107 (100.00) (95.54)
Uneducated Unemployed	2 (40.00)	3 (60.00)	5 (100.00) (4.46)
Total	42 (37.50)	70 (62.50)	112 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Majority of the unemployed person are educated 95.54 percent which as many as 62.62 female while its male counterpart is 37.38 percent in the study villages. However, uneducated unemployed adult is very low only 4.46 percent. Overall 62.50 female are unemployed while male counterpart is 37.50 percent.

Cooking Practice

Technology used for cooking purpose is one of the important measures of economic conditions of household. Six types of cooking practice are inquired in the study villages, viz. (1) Wood, (2) Kerosene, (3) LPG, (4) Wood and LPG, (5) Wood and Kerosene stove and (6.) Wood, Kerosene and LPG. The distribution of the households into these six categories is shown in table 4.20.

Table: 4.20
Showing the Type of Fuel Use in the Surveyed Village
Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Fuel Use	No. of Household
1	Wood	93 (46.50)
2	Kerosene	00
3	LPG	00
4	Wood + LPG	104 (52.00)
.5	Wood + Kerosene	2 (1.00)
6	Wood + Kerosene + LPG	1 (.50)
	Total	200 (10.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

More than half (52.00 percent) of the households use wood and LPG for cooking purpose, while 46.50 percent households use only wood. Only 1.00 percent of the households use both wood and kerosene stove for cooking purpose while only .50 percent household use wood, kerosene and LPG for cooking purpose. No one of the household use either only Kerosene or only wood for cooking purpose.

It is important to mention here that those households who use kerosene stove, they use it as an additional source of cooking. It is generally used at the time of crisis. Those who practice LPG belong to economically prosperous group in the study villages. But interestingly in the study villages most of households use LPG along with fire wood. It suggests that the effect of modernization is rapid in the study villages.

Livestock Husbandry and Poultry Farming

Domestic animal and bird is also an important variable of socio-economic analysis. The households are also classified on the basis of number of domestic animals they had.

Table: 4.21
Showing Livestock Husbandry and Poultry Farming in the Surveyed Villages
(Percentage in Parenthesis)

Category	No. of Household with the Following No of Livestock					Total
	Does not Have	1-3	4-6	7-9	10 or Above 10	
Cow/ Bullock	24 (12.00)	105 (52.50)	57 (28.50)	10 (5.00)	4 (2.00)	200 (100.00)
Buffalo	195 (97.50)	5 (2.50)	00	00	00	200 (100.00)
Goat	108 (54.00)	43 (21.50)	30 (15.00)	11 (5.50)	8 (4.00)	200 (100.00)
Pig	177 (88.50)	22 (11.00)	1 (.50)	00	00	200 (100.00)
Fowl	52 (26.00)	36(18.00)	26(13.00)	8(4.00)	78(39.00)	200 (100.00)
Duck	88 (44.00)	48(24.00)	32(16.00)	7(3.50)	25(12.50)	200 (100.00)
Pigeon	177 (88.50)	11(5.50)	8(4.00)	00	4(2.00)	200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

It was found that more than half (52.50 percent) households have 1-3 cow/bullock while 28.50 percent households possess 4-6 cow/bullock. Only 5.00 percent and 2.00

percent households possess 7-9 and 10 or above 10 cow/bullock respectively. 12.00 percent households did not have cow/bullock.

Buffalo was not found in 97.50 percent households only 2.50 percent households possess 1-3 buffalo. More or less the same position prevails in case of pig. 88.50 percent households did not possess pigs while 11.00 percent and .50 percent households possess pigs 1-3 and 4-6 respectively. Goat was not rear in more than half (54.00 percent) households. 21.50 percent households rear 1-3 goats while 15.00 percent 4-6, 5.50 percent 7-9, and 4.00 percent households rear 10 or above 10.

18.00 percent households rear 1-3 fowl, while 13.00 percent households rear 4-6 fowl, 4.00 percent households 7-9 fowl and 39.00 percent households rear 10 or above 10 fowl. 26.00 percent households did not rear fowl at the time of surveyed in the study villages. Although duck is essential for their socio-religious ceremonies 44.00 percent of the households did not rear duck while 24.00 percent households have 1-3 duck, 16.00 percent 4-6 duck, 3.50 percent possess 7-9 and 12.50 percent rear 10 or above 10 duck.

In case of pigeon 88.50 percent households did not rear while 5.50 percent households rear 1-3, 4.00 percent rear 4-6 and only 2.00 percent households rear 10 or above 10 pigeon.

Source of Drinking Water

Tribal people are living in natural setting or near to the nature, so they use water from natural source for day today use. But at present picture has been change because of development. Therefore, in the present study five types of sources were inquired, these are (a). Well, (b). Pond, (c). Hand-Pipe or tube wells, (d). Pipe-water and (e). Rivers/Streams. The distribution of households into these categories is shown in table 4.22.

Table: 4.22
Showing Source of Drinking Water in the Surveyed Villages
(Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Source of Drinking Water	No. of Household
1	Well	00
2	Pond	00
3	Hand-Pipe	187 (93.50)
4	Pipe-Water	13 (6.500)
5	Rivers/Streams	00
Total		200 (100)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

As regards drinking water facilities only 6.50 percent households have been provided with pipe water. Most of the households (93.50) percent depend upon hand-pipe (tube wells) while none of the households depend upon well, pond and rivers/streams.

Table: 4.23
Showing the Source of Drinking Water (present in) in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Source of Drinking Water (present in)	No. of Household
1	Own Residence	93 (46.50)
2	Public Place	90 (45.00)
3	Neighbour's Residence	17 (8.50)
Total		200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

In the study villages 46.50 percent households' source of the drinking water is present in own residence while 45.00 percent households use public places water and only 8.50 percent households collect water from neighbours' residence.

Weaving

Like other tribal women Thengal women are also very expert in weaving. For them weaving is most worth mentioning economic activity because after own use they also sale clothes and earn money. Earlier knowledge of weaving was regarded as important criteria of a bride. Among them weaving has now become a household industry, not a single household is found without a loom. Most of the daily used cloths are produced by themselves in their own family loom.

Table: 4.24
Showing Weaving Cloth in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Weaving Cloth		Total Household
Weaving Cloth	Not Weaving Cloth	
176 (88.00)	24 (12.00)	200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

A good numbers of households (88.00 percent) have own loom and weave cloth while only 12.00 percent households did not weave cloth. Thengal women weave most of the clothes for both male and female. They weave 'Mankapor', 'Borkapor', 'Seleng', 'Eri chadar', Chadar, Mekhela, Riha, Gamocha, Tongali etc. In the past Dhoties woven by

the womenfolk were the major items of dresses. Types of cloth weave are shown in table 4.25.

Table: 4.25
Showing Production in the Loom in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Production in the Loom	No. of Household
1	Women Wear	176 (100.00)
2	<i>Eri Chaddar</i>	75 (42.61)
3	<i>Gamocha</i>	176 (100.00)
4	<i>Shawl</i>	22 (12.50)
5	<i>Seleng</i>	43 (24.43)
6	<i>Dhuti</i>	9 (5.11)
7	<i>Tongali</i>	10 (5.68)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

100.00 percent households those who have loom weave women wear and *gamucha* while 42.61 percent households weave *eri chaddar*, 12.50 percent households *shawl*, 24.43 percent *seleng* and almost equal 5.11 percent and 5.68 percent produce *dhuti* and *tongali*. The households those who have loom and weave cloth were also asked whether they sell surplus produce during last year. The responses of the households are shown in table 4.26.

Table: 4.26
Showing Surplus Product sell in during the Last Year in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Surplus Product sell in during the Last Year		Total Household
Surplus Product sell in during the Last Year	Not sell Surplus Product in during the Last Year	
56 (31.82)	120 (68.18)	176 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Although weaving is a popular activity of Thengal Kachari women however, it was observed that majority (68.18 percent) of the households have not taken as business purpose while 31.82 percent households sell their surplus product. No doubt weaving is still popular among them, but its place is being gradually taken over by the machine made productions. The households those who sell surplus cloth were also asked about the place of selling surplus produce. The responses are shown in table 4.27.

Table: 4.27
Showing Sell Surplus produce in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Place Sell Surplus produce	No. of Household
1	In the Market	3 (5.36)
2	In the Village	53 (94.64)
3	To the Middle Men	00
4	To Marketing Societies/Co-operatives Societies	00
Total		56 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Those who sell their surplus produce mostly (94.64 percent) households in the village while only 5.36 percent households sell their produce in the market in the study villages. Therefore it is clear that a few people produce surplus cloth for business purpose.

Handicraft Item (Cane, Bamboo, Basketry etc.)

Thengal men are expert in bamboo and cane works. Bamboo mats some with artistic designs, fishing traps and other household equipments of day-to-day use in the family are manufactured by the people themselves at their leisure. Different size of basket, products like 'Japa' (a suitcase), 'Pera' (a big suitcase) 'Petari' (a small suitcase), 'Dunari' (a small basket), 'Pasi' (a basket) are the specialties of the men folk. They also make canoes, spinning wheel by cutting wood pieces. Moreover they also produce fish-catching instruments like *Jakhai*, *Phala*, *Juluki*, *Khaloi* (a kind of fish-basket), Trap, etc. The distribution households of those who produce handicraft or not is shown in table 4.28.

Table: 4.28
Showing Handicraft Item (Cane, Bamboo, Basketry etc.) in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Making Handicraft Items		Total Household
Making Handicraft Items	Not Making Handicraft Items	
45 (22.50)	155 (77.50)	200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Although Thengal men are expert in Bamboo and cane work, however, 77.50 percent households did not produce handicraft only 22.50 percent households produce handicraft items. The households those who produce handicraft were also asked whether they sell surplus produce during last year. The responses of the households are shown in table 4.29.

Table: 4.29
Showing Surplus Produce of Handicraft Item Sell in the Surveyed Villages
(Percentage in Parenthesis)

Surplus Produce of Handicraft Item		Total Household
Sell Surplus Produce Handicraft Item	Not Sell Surplus Produce Handicraft Item	
15 (33.33)	30 (66.67)	45 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Households those who produce handicraft items a little more than two-third (66.67 percent) did not sell while 33.33 percent households sell their surplus produce. The households those who sell surplus produce of handicraft also asked about the place of selling surplus produce. The responses are shown in table 4.30.

Table: 4.30
Showing Sell Surplus Produce of Handicraft Item in the Surveyed Villages
(Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Surplus Produce of Handicraft Item Sell in	No. of Household
1	In the Market	2 (13.33)
2	In the Village	13 (86.67)
3	To Middle Men	00
4	To Marketing Societies/Co-operative Societies	00
Total		15 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Majority of the households (86.67 percent) those who produce surplus handicraft items sell in the village while only 13.33 percent households in the market. The households those who produce handicraft items for business purpose were also asked whether they received any grants from the government. The responses are shown in table 4.31.

Table: 4.31
Receive Any Grants from the Government in the Surveyed Village
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Receive Govt. Grant for Handicraft		Total Household
Receive Govt. Grant for Handicraft	Not Receive Govt. Grant for Handicraft	
1 (2.22)	44 (97.78)	45 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Majority of the households 97.78 percent those who produce handicraft items they have not receive any grants from government while only one (2.22 percent) household receive grant from Thengal Kachari Autonomous Council.

Household Consumption Pattern

The pattern of consumption is an important indication of status in modern society. It is also related to the style of life of the members of the family.

Table: 4.32
Showing Consumption Pattern of the Household in the Surveyed Villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Consumption Pattern of the Household					Total
	Items	Daily	Weekly	Occasionally	Never	
1	Milk or Card	117 (58.50)	8 (4.00)	75 (37.50)	00	200 (100.00)
2	Pulses or Bean	106 (53.00)	80 (40.00)	14 (7.00)	00	200 (100.00)
3	Green Vegetables	191 (95.50)	9 (4.50)	00	00	200 (100.00)
4	Eggs	8 (4.00)	70 (35.00)	122 (61.00)	00	200 (100.00)
5	Meat/Fish	00	46 (23.00)	154 (77.00)	00	200 (100.00)
6	Rice Beer	00	10 (5.00)	88 (44.00)	102 (51.00)	200 (100.00)
7	Light Meal	7 (3.50)	30 (15.00)	163 (81.50)	00	200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

As regards consumption pattern of food items is concerned new trend is noticed among the Thengal Kachari due to impact of acculturation process. It is evident from the study that Thengal Kachari used to take rice beer as beverage and it was the prestigious items

of local consumption as well as for entertaining guests and religious rituals. Now-a-days consumption is reduced considerably more than half (51.00 percent) never take while 44.00 percent consumed occasionally, only 5.00 percent households weekly whereas no households take daily or regularly. On the other hand more than half (58.50 percent) of the households take milk daily while only 4.00 percent weekly and 37.50 percent occasionally.

The tribal people generally prefer vegetables, roots creepers and few decades back except few family uses of pulses in daily meal was uncommon. But at present in the study villages more than half of the households (53.00 percent) take pulses or bean while 40.00 percent households take weekly and only 7.00 percent occasionally.

As mentioned above their favourite food item includes green vegetables which the women folk collect from their kitchen garden and the study shows that as many as 95.50 percent of the households use vegetables in the daily menu and only 4.50 percent households use it weekly.

Use of meat, fish, and egg is resorted to by majority of the households occasionally. Thus 61.00 percent consume egg occasionally while 35.00 percent households consume weekly and only 4.00 percent daily. Daily consume of meet/fish is not found in the study villages. Majority of the households (77.00 percent) consume meet/fish occasionally while 23.00 percent weekly.

Now-a-days among the Thengal Kachari light meal is also popular item however, majority (81.50 percent) of the households use it occasionally while 15.00 percent households weekly and only 3.50 percent daily.

The analysis of the economic condition of the villages under study, suggest that contemporary Thengal Kachari society is passing through a process of change and the occupational structure is under the process of transformation. Broadly, there are three types of occupation in Thengal Kachari society, these are, agriculture, business and service. But due to agricultural landlessness some households bound to engage in unskilled and skilled work. In all the study villages more or less farmers are using advanced technique of cultivation to exploit the full potential of the fertile land of the region. Some significant amount of occupational diversification is also observed. There is a gradual shift from agriculture activities to service and business occupations. It can be noted here that in the study villages, sector of service activity is more developed in comparison to business sector. However, in all the study villages traditional occupation agriculture is still predominant mode. Women are equal partner in economic activities

of the every household. Poultry farming is very popular economic activity of the Thengal women and earn good amount of money. They are very expert in weaving and also agricultural work, with man folk they equally participate in the work along with household duties. Along with all these economic activities of women a few women are found in government jobs but percentage of such women is still very low in the study villages. So, it can be said that the economy of the Thengal Kachari tribe in the study villages are under the process of transformation.

CHAPTER-V

Religion and Culture

Chapter V

Religion and Culture

Animistic beliefs and practices involving the worships and propitiation of various Gods, Goddesses and tutelary have since time immemorial in the Thengal Kachari society. These worships are for personal as well as group wellbeing whenever occasion demands for averting untoward events of life. Bora (2000) refers the 'Yoginitrantra' as source to trace the origin of the Kachari religion. According to him, the origin of Thengal Kachari religion is 'Kairataj'. The traditional religious beliefs and practices of Thengal Kachari tribe are based on 'Lord Shiva'. They worship Lord Shiva by different names, like 'Bhola-Nath', 'Sodashiva', 'Moheswar', etc.

Bora (2008) states that Thengal people believe in the existence of many other God, Goddess, spiritual beings and ghosts and causing various ailments, like dysentery, pox, etc. and perform numbers of rituals. As informed by the villagers *Mritokak Diya* (ancestral worship) is an important ritual of Thengal Kachari in the study villages. However, the follower of Sankarsamgh, Namdharma and Krishnaguru do not perform *Mritokak Diya* ritual. Bora (2000) mention some rituals of Thengal Kachari, like *Kanipan Diya*, *Bhitar Sakam*, *Mritokak Diya*, *Pir Diya*, *Ai Sabha* or *Ai Sakam*, *Apesari Sabha* or *Duporia Sabha*, *Bhur Uttua Puja*, *Panitula Sabha*, *Bor Sabha*, *Lakhimi Sabha* etc. on the other hand Bora (2008) mention some rituals like *Deo Sakam*, *Apesari Sabha*, *Gosani* or *Durga*, *Na-Palia Devata*, *Ghar Dangaria*, *Jalkonowar-Jalknowari* or *Jal-Narayan* and *Jal-Narayani*, *Takela*, *Bhuruli Ai* or *Bhuruli Gosani*, *Ai Sakal*, *Mohadeva* or *Sodashiva*, *Habi-Dangaria* etc. Borah (2005) mention that Thengal Kacharis are mainly worshiper of Lord Shiva. According to him they also perform many rituals like *Durga Puja*, *Chuwa Uttua*, *Gorakhia Bhuj*, *Chuwal Khuwa*, *Mritokok Diya*, *Sodashiva Puja*, *Sani-Rabi Chuwal Khuwa*, *Rahu-Mangal Chuwal Khuwa*, *Guru Paraman Khuwa*, *Ai Chuwal Khuwa*, *Bhitarban*, *Apesari Sabha*, *Gopini Sabha*, *Lakhimi Sabha*, *Ai Sabha*, *Bak Devata Sakam*, *Ghar Dangaria Puja*, *Hatuali-Batuali Puja*, *Sarasati Puja*, *Lakhimi Sumuwa Sabha*, *Bhoral Swa Sabha*, *Aiush Tula Sabha*.

But at present the process of religious contract made the Thengals a part of the regional culture and of the great tradition of Hinduism. Before their initiation to Vaishnavism, the Thengals were animists. Even today some of them, the traditional pattern of worship is not completely abandoned. According to Borah (2005) Thengal Kachari embraced to Vaishnavism in 1597-1598 A. D. through initiation by Bsudeva Gosai.

Mahanta (1996) states by the time Vaishnavism (*Eka Saran Bhagavati Dharma*), it underwent a good deal of modification especially after the demise of the prime abbot Sankardeva and his close associate and follower Madhavdeva. Sankardeva introduced Neo-Vaishnavism in Assam with the prime objective of weaning away so called low-caste and high caste. A large section of Assamese people regardless of caste, community, language or faith, got initiated into the new faith. Sankardeva himself initiated Sudras including Kaibarttas, a Muslim, a Garo, a Mishong, a Naga, a Kachari and an Ahom and a large number of Brahmins. Neo-Vaishnavism flourished and remained intact during the life time of Sankardeva. But after his demise, controversy arose about the succession of the *Abbotey*. After demise of Madhavdeva, Neo-Vaishnavism was divided into four sectarian divisions or *Samhatis* namely *Brahma Samhati*, *Purusha Samhati*, *Kala Samhati* and *Nika Samhati* under the different dissident preceptors.

Borah (2006) states the Thengal Kachari on the contrary did not take initiation from these religious preachers. They became the disciple of the famous *Aoniati Satra* which was in the main stream of the original Neo-Vaishnava religion. It is said that Thengal Kachari were initiated into Neo-Vaishnava religion by Basudeva Gosai at the time of Pranhari Gosai *Satradikar* of *Aoniati Satra* as novice.

Acceptance and spread of Vaishnavism has multi-dimensional impact on the life of Thengal people. Once the tenets that were adopted and practiced as a means of social and economic mobility are now thought of as rules of life.

At present the Thengal Kacharis have several sects among the converts. Whatever past socio-cultural condition might be, the people underwent a lot of change in this process. They forgot ways of several rituals and oral traditions. On the contrary, those who did not forego their tradition retained a dual form of religious beliefs; Vishnavism and animism. Therefore, respondent were asked whether they follow any *Dharma Guru*.

Table: 5.1
Showing the *Dharma Gurus* in the Surveyed Village
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Total No. of Households	Following <i>Dharma Guru</i>	Not Following <i>Dharma Guru</i>
200	200 (100.00)	00

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

In the study villages found that 100.00 percent households follow *Dharma Guru*. Again these followers of the households are divided religious teacher wise. The distribution of households on the basis of religious teacher in the study villages is shown in table 5.2.

Table: 5.2
Showing the *Dharma Guru* in the Surveyed Village
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Dharma Guru	No. of Household
1	Sankardeva	167 (83.50)
2	Dimbeswar Kakati	31 (15.50)
3	Lord Sri Krishna	1 (.50)
4	Sri Arun Goswami	1 (.50)
Total		200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The data of table 2 shows that majority (83.50 percent) of the households are following Sankardeva as religious teacher while 15.50 percent households regards Dimbeswar Kakati as religious teacher. Only .50 percent each of the households regards Lord Sri Krishna and Arun Goswami as religious teacher.

Sect is another classification in the Thengal Kachari. As far as sect is concerned, 4 sects are reported by the respondents of the present study. These are namely *Eka Saran Bhagavati Dharma*, Sankarsangha, Namdharma and Krishnaguru.

As informed by the villagers now-a-day the follower of Sankarsangha, Namdharma and Krishnaguru groups does not use country liquor, chicken, duck, pork etc. in their rituals and do not worship many deities that need country liquor and meat. They use milk in place of country liquor. On the other hand the traditional group adds some new features like holding and practicing of *Nam-Kirtan*, *Bhaona* etc. with their traditional rituals. However, in the traditional group also gradually gave up many

traditional rituals. The people irrespective of the new affiliation recite the *Kirtan*, *Bhagawata* two holy books in Neo-Vaishnava religion at household rituals as well as in the *Namghar* (village monastery). The *Namghar* that is the outcome of neo-Vaishnavism is also used community worship regularly in the surveyed villages. Like other Assamese people every Thengal villages have *Namghars*. The visit of *Bor-Medhi* and *Satradhikar* provides the people with an occasion for usual religious activity accompanied with great merriment and rejoicing. It is an occasion for novices for undergoing *Saran* by accepting religious codes of conduct from the *Satradhikar*.

The people have to offer religious tax (*kar var*) to the *Satra* annually. The *Satra* gives the novices a clay-bar (*Mrittika*). The religious impure people of the family drink holy water on secreted by mixing a little clay of the bar in the water.

In totality, Neo-Vaishnava religion served to a great extent to form a harmonized Assamese society with certain common religious and socio-cultural aspects. Borah (2005) states there are certain legends and mythical stories regarding the relationship of this tribe with Hindu deities or heroes of epic ages. For example, the Thengal Kacharis consider themselves as the descendants of the legendary Ghotkos who was son of great hero Bhima of the Mahabharata. There are several other such myths and stories which show that Hinduism acted steadily to absorb tribal tradition within its wide folds. In this way the spread and absorb the tribal tradition into Hinduism or more strictly speaking, into Vaishnavism.

At present considerable changes have taken place in the way of worship. As informed by the villagers sacrifices of animals and fowl rarely resorted to 'Mah parasad' (*Mongu*, gram, banana, and coconut) is offered as 'Naibedyā' for the God in the surveyed villages. This is happening due to the influence of the 'Eka Sarana Bhagavati Dharma' which is gaining some ground among most of Thengal people. The types of rite and ritual perform in a year in the surveyed villages is shown in table 5.3.

Table: 5.3
Showing Rite and Ritual perform in a Year in Surveyed villages
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Rite and Ritual perform in a Year	No. of Household
1	<i>Kanipan Diya or SadaSivha Puja</i>	83 (41.50)
2	<i>Mritakak Diya</i>	131 (65.50)
3	<i>Pir Diya</i>	00
4	<i>Bhitar Sakam</i>	8 (4.00)
5	<i>Na-Palia Devata</i>	1 (.50)
6	<i>Ghar Dangaria</i>	00
7	<i>Apesari Sabha</i>	42 (21.00)
8	<i>Ai Sakam</i>	136 (68.00)
9	<i>Nam Kirtan/Nam Prasanga</i>	200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

In the study villages 100.00 percent households perform *Nam Kirtan/Nam Prasanga* annually while 68.00 percent households perform *Ai Sakam*, 65.50 percent households perform *Mritakak Diya*, 41.50 percent *Kani Pan Diya* or *Sada Siva Puja*, 21.00 percent *Apesari Sabha*. Only 4.00 percent and .50 percent households perform *Bhitar Sakam* and *Na-Palia Devata* respectively.

Culture

The interaction between Assamese population and the Thengal Kachari have been taking place for last several centuries. There has been socio-cultural as well as biological interaction among these populations. The influence of Hinduism is very strong among them. Their culture is largely influenced by the Hindu Assamese culture. The Thengal Kachari people are some pockets in Assam where they developed a distinct culture and identified themselves as Thengal.

Festival

Like other Assamese people Thengal Kachari tribe also observe *Bihu* festival. The *Bihu* is predominantly a natural festival. It is a popular festival which is largely based on agriculture. *Bihus* can be broadly divided into three types namely, *Bohag Bihu*, *Kati Bihu* and *Magh Bihu* celebrated at different period and cycles of the year and nature.

Bohag Bihu Festival

Bohag Bihu festival is associated with the beginning of the spring season. *Bohag Bihu* is associated with *Visuva Samkranti* or the vernal Equinox. The *Bohag Bihu* is the most popular and colourful of the three Bihus among the Thengal Kachari, and celebrated with the advent of the Assamese New Year (mid April). Bezbaruah, (2003) states that the term *Bihu* has to be derived from Sanskrit *Visuvat* and its use is not confined to Assam.

After the harvest is over, Thengal people can relax and attend to tending their gardens or repairing their houses. Womenfolk start weaving the clothes. Folk-dance is the main item of the *Bohag Bihu* festival. Bora (2000) states earlier Thengal Kachari people started *Bihu* on the first day of the month of *Chot* therefore it was known as "*Chot Bihu*" (*Chot* is the last month of Assamese Calendar; mid of March.). In past Thengal girls started their "*Rati Bihu*" on the first day of *Chot*. "*Rati Bihu*" performed under banyan tree at night, and it was going on till '*Chot's Samkranti*' or '*the Bohag Bihu Uruka*' (junction of two Assamese month *Chot* and *Bohag*). On the other hand, from the very first day of the *Bohag* month they performed at day time instead of night. Now-a-day this *Bihu* is known as '*Maiki Bihu*' (female *Bihu*) or '*Gabharu Bihu*'. Some time this *Bihu* also went to the home when newly married son-in-law come to his father-in-law house. *Bihu* group demand some cash from son-in-law by dancing and singing. Elderly womenfolk and girls also perform *Bihu* separately from house to house.

Bora (2000) also states "*Tara-Chira Bihu*" or "*Bali Husari*" and "*Nara Chiga Bihu* were two other types of *Bihu* prevalent among them. According to the traditional customs of Thengal Kachari, on the day of '*Goru Bihu*' the neck of the cows is decked with new rope of '*Tara*' (a wild cardamom) in the evening. For these purpose the young lad went to the near by forest to collect *Tara* by dancing and singing *Bihu* Song. Elderly male people prepared (twisted) '*Tara rope*' from '*collected Tara*' by singing *Bihu* song. These songs and dances are known as '*Tara Chira Bihu*'. After the harvest is collected the young lad severed '*Nara*' (stable of paddy) to again cultivation by singing *Bihu* Song. This *Bihu* is known as '*Nara Siga Bihu*'. But now-a-days '*Tara Chiga Bihu*' or '*Bali Husari*' and '*Nara Chiga Buihu*' are not prevalent among them and various changes have been taken place of the *Choat Bihu* or *Bohag Bihu*.

Now-a-days *Bihu* starts on the last day of *Chot*, but it begins with a sort of cattle worship. The first day is called *Goru Bihu* or the day for cow and bullock, the second is *Manuh Bihu* or the day for man, the third day is called *Gosain Bihu* or the day for God. *Uruka* or the eve of day of the *Bihu* is a day for house cleaning, washing of cloths, preparation of various eatables like *Chira* (parched rice), *Doi* (curds), *Gur* (raw sugar), *Sandahguri* (wet rice parched), *Pitha* (cakes), *Laru* (balls of scraped coconut roasted sesame) and so on.

Another important aspect of *Bihu* is *Husari* Carol singing and this starts from the day of *Manuhar Bihu*. *Husari* constitutes a team leading by an elderly member including other young members. They perform *Bihu* dance every households of the village. *Husari Dal* is generally presented with *Tamul-Pan* (*Guwapan*), *Seleng Chadar*, *Bihuwan* or *Gamucha*, *Rumal* (handkerchief) and some amount of cash money. The money collected from *Husari Dal* is used for community development works. People also have community feasts with the money collected by *Husari Dal*.

In the early hour's of the morning of the *Garu Bihu* elderly people prepare pieces of bottle gourd, aubergine, turmeric, brinjal and bitter-gourd and keep them fixed on three-pronged bamboo sticks. They rub black gram (*Matikalai*) paste and turmeric on the foreheads and horns of the cow and bullock. They also rub mustard oil on the horns. The cattle are taken to a near by pond or stream for a bath. On the way, the pieces of gourd, aubergine, etc. are thrown on the cow and bullock. The boys also strike the cattle with springs of '*Dighlati*' (a kind of plant) and '*Makhiyati*' (a kind of small shrub) plants.

After the bath is over, the old ropes are cast of through away, as it indicating the casting off of all the evil that may have proved harmful to them. The animals are then let loose in the fields. The boys return home after their bathe, carrying back some of the pieces of gourd or aubergine. These sticks are interchanged with other

The grown-ups too rub a paste of black gram and turmeric on their bodies and take a bath. Then they all offer prayers to God in their private chapels or at their *Namghar*. A peculiarity of Assam's Vaishnavism is that offerings made to God not include sweets or cooked food: they are *Mungomah* (a kind of bean), sugarcane, banana, coconut, apple, orange, ginger and so on is offered as '*Naibedyā*'. After finishing the prayers and offering they discuss about *Husari* where and when it will be started. Generally *Husari Dal* starts from the house of *Medhi* (religious head of the *Namghar*). They offer respect to their elders, and have a meal of *Chira*, curd, cake and

other things which are specially prepared. The people have to eat hundred and one kinds of herbs which normally grow in the fields and these herbs have medicinal value also elderly ladies pick the herbs.

Before the cattle are brought back in the evening a smudge of paddy, chaff and certain kinds of strong smelling leaves is lighted at the gate of the compound and near the cattle shed. The custom is meant to drive away mosquitoes and other pests. Fans can be used only after they have been utilized smoke of the smudge. Next morning the ash is mixed with the oil and smeared on the neck of bullocks.

Later in the evening when the cows return home they are tied with new *Pogha* (new rope) and *Tara* ropes are twisted on their neck and also given *Pitha* (cake) to eat and then tied up in the cow shed.

In the evening they perform '*Mritokok Dia*' ritual by offering rice, meat (generally duck), rice-bear, roll-up betel leaf etc. for their forefathers. But instead of above mentioned things now a day some people offer uncooked food, *Mah Prasad* (gram, *Mungomah*, coconut, banana, apple, sugarcane, etc) as a *Naibedya*. On the other hand the followers of Sankarsangha, Namdharma and Krishnaguru do not perform this ritual.

The day after *Garu Bihu* is the *Manuh Bihu* i.e. the first day of *Bohag*. This day, people show respects to their elders, are given the *Bihuwan* or *Bihu* present, mostly a *Gamocha* or *Hachati* (a sort of handkerchief and towel combined), *Dhoti* for male and *Chadar* for female. The cloth presents are family affairs, but servants, near relatives and even close friends can get them. Visiting relatives and friends may start on this day. Egg-fights are other practices of this day.

Husari Dal singing starts on this day, the first songs, mostly hymns, being sung communal *Namghar*. *Husari* may sometimes start on the *Goru Bihu* day, for it is considered beneficial to secure the blessings of the *Husari Dal*.

The third day is *Gosain Bihu* and other day till *Sat Bihu* or the seventh *Bihu* day have no special functions assigned to them. However, *Husari* singing goes on from house to house on the day of the *Garu Bihu*.

Bora (2000) state another important character of the Thengal Kachari Bihu is the "*Buka Bihu*" (*Mud Bihu*). On the *Goru Bihu* day in the evening elderly male and young lad start *Bihu* from the house of *Medhi*. In the beginning of *Bihu* they pour water on the court-yard and make it muddy then sing and dance by smear with mud (Assamese equivalent of Mud is '*Buka*'). Therefore this *Bihu* is known as "*Buka*

Bihu". The *Husari* bands of young and middle aged persons are the symbols of the *Rajj* of community and to secure their blessings is a kind of social recognition. There is a custom of *Bihu* given a ceremonial parting and this is called '*Bihu Uruwa*' or flying *Bihu* away when *Husari* singing is over in the Thengal Kachari society.

***Kati Bihu* Festival**

Kati Bihu, held in the autumn, (October-November) as a festival of agricultural significance. It synchronizes with the time when the green shoots put forth the initial blossoms in the fields. Bora (2000) state light i.e. earthen lamps are lighting on the occasion at the foot of a *Tulsi* plant (black basil), in front of corn-house, cowshed, gateway, garden and so that Goddess of prosperity is propitiated. At the time of *Kati Bihu* farmers granary is become empty hence it is also known as *Kangali Bibu*.

Another aspect of *Kati Bihu* is that the farmer does certain things for the protection of his crop. He stands a small bamboo post in the field and lights *Chakis* (earthen lamp) on it. Some persons light the *Akash-banti* or the sky-lamp hanging from a tall bamboo. *Kati Bihu* cannot be called a festival as such.

Magh Bihu

Magh Bihu is the post-harvest winter festival, held in the month of *Magh* (January-February). Thengal Kachari people observe this festival very joyfully and it is the festival of feasting. *Magh Bihu* is known as *Bhogali Bihu* or the *Bihu* of enjoyment. The first day of the *Magh-Bihu* is known as *Uruka* in the Thengal Kachari. This ceremony is mainly associated with fire; the people make *meji* in the shape of a temple where people can make fun after harvest is over. Usually elderly male people and young lads take a hand in this. *Meji* is made with bamboo, wood and also *Bhelaghar* (hut like). Generally cowherds pass the night in a *Bhelaghar* warming them by fire. They also steal vegetable and eatables from villager's gardens.

On the day of *Uruka* womenfolk get ready for the next day with *Pitha*, *Laru*, curd, *Chira* and other delicacies. Bora (2000) state Thengal Kachari has a custom of someone in the family ties paddy straw around fruit-bearing trees, the post and beam of cashed, living house, corn-house, loom, *Dheki* etc (The *Dheki* is a wooden pedal for pounding and cleaning or grinding rice). Womenfolk clean the house and cooking pans. In the early hours of the next day all take bath and put on washed clothes. The male folk and children then move on to the '*Mejis*' and *Bhelaghars* where offerings of

eatables are made to the God of fire, *Agni*. Elderly persons give blessings put marks of ash on the forehead.

After the *Meji* and *Bhelaghar* are burnt and prepare another feast in the morning. After finishing the feast they return home and take *Chira*, *Pitha* (main food of festival), and curd various kinds of potatoes (*Kaath Aloo*, *Mitha Aloo*) and so on. Bora (2000) states they believe that it is necessary to every one to eat sweet potato and yam because they believe that if any one not takes these, in the next rebirth he will become pig. They also make *Sunga-saul*, the sticky bare rice steamed in a bamboo tube. When done the sticky roll is made into pieces and eaten mixed with milk and *Gur*. There seems to be a preference for fried *Pithas*. In the evening they perform “*Morak Dia*” or “*Mritak Dia*” rite for the propitiation of their forefathers with rice, rice-bear, meat (generally duck), roll up betel leaf etc.

Besides the above mentioned *Bihu* festivals they observe birth and death anniversary of Srimanta Sankardeva and Sri Sri Madhav Dev, *Janmastomi* (birth date of Lord Sri Krishna) annually in *Namghar*. Festivals observe in the study villages are shown in table 5.4.

Table: 5.4
Showing Festivals observed in the Surveyed village
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Total No. of Household	Festivals observed	Not observed Festivals
	200 (100.00)	00

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The data of the above table shows that 100.00 percent households observe festivals.

Table: 5.5
Showing Name of Festivals observed in Surveyed village
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Festivals observed	No. of Household
1	Bihu	200 (100.00)
2	Sankar Utshav	200 (100.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

In the study villages 100.00 percent households observed *Bihu* festival and Sankar Utshav. Thengal Kachari people came in contact with their neighbours long back and adopted their religion (Vaishnavism), language (Assamese) and polity, mainly after

they became subject to Ahom rule, developed interaction with other tribes and non-tribal people of Assam.

It can be said that change is a vital phenomenon among the Thengal. At present moment, assimilation is continuing in all aspects of their life. And if the process continues the ultimate result may be detribalization of the Thengals. However, now-a-days the ethnic consciousness is seen among them.

Ceremonies Attending Birth

There would seem to be no formally recognized *Dhais* (midwives) or respectable and competent matron being at liberty to give attendance and assistance to the patient in such case in Thengal Kachari society in the study villages. But now-a-day people take help from doctor. The matron who officiates as *Dhais* received no money payment for her services but on the third day a feast is provided at the parent's expense in which aum curry seasoned with black pepper must needed items (*Kasu-jal Diya*). Purification ceremony for a boy held on the day of 21st while for a girl after a month. In this period the mother, the family and the clan members in which husband belong are to be technically "unclean", and are subjected to certain social and religious limitations. This period of ceremonial uncleanness is usually terminated after *Shudi Sabha*.

Tulani Bia (Puberty)

Some ceremonies and beliefs are generally associated with puberty in the Thengal Kachari society. When a girl attains puberty she is kept in a separate room and is not allowed to see her any other male relatives. On the forth days girl is bathes ceremonially by women of the co-villagers and relatives. They arrange another final ceremonial bathe on the seven days or nine days or eleven days. They invite co-villagers and their relatives and provide them special meal. After puberty girl has to obey certain social and religious limitations.

Death and Disposal of the Dead

Bora (2000) states cremation is the general rule and practice of death in the Thengal Kachari society. However, the dead body of minors, girl who has not attained puberty, pregnant women, epidemic cases, people who has not taken *Saran* (religious instruction) is buried. After death occurs, immediately the corpse is carefully washed by the nearest relatives, the arms and legs straightened out, the head anointed with oil,

and the hair reverently combed. New clothes are wrapped over the body. The corpse is wrapped with a bamboo mat and carried to the cremation ground by the sons, relatives and co-villagers. As per the customary law of the Thengal Kachari the eldest son puts fire in the pyre of deceased father; while deceased mother pyre puts fire by youngest son. After returning from the cremation ground all are purified in the courtyard of the deceased with holy water prepared by a women of the family by adding Cow dung, *Taluki* and a Copper coin.

The purification ceremony of the Thengal can be divided into three parts viz. *Tilani*, *Daha* and *Kaj*. On the third day after death they perform *Tilani*. It is a neat without feast and fun. The persons who attend *Tilani* are invited to *Daha* and *Kaj*. *Daha* is held on day of tenth while '*Kaj*' is the final purification ceremony performed religious ceremony generally on 30th days. But as informed by the villagers now-a-days it is reduced up to 16 or 17 days among the followers *Eka Saran Bhagavati Dharma* while among the followers of Sankarsamgh and Namdharm it is reduced up to 11 days in the study villages. A feast is arranged (*jnati-bhoj*) where all the relatives take part in the evening. In the society such *jnatis* include *khel* members who may not actually be kin.

Ceremonial Friendship

In addition to the consanguineous and affinal kinsmen in the Thengals there is a practice of making friends ceremonially. Borah (2014) states the ties of such friendship are very much akin to the kinship bond. Such ceremonial friendship never occurs between opposite sexes. Generally selection of a friend is made from other than one's own clan with mutual consent. After selecting a person with whom friendship is to be made *Saran* (religious instruction) from a common *guru* is taken by both of them. As the Thengals are Vaishnavite people therefore the pontiff of a *Satra* (a Vaishnavite institution of Assam) gives *Saran* and makes them his disciples and true Vaishnava. The male friends are called *Hari-bhakat* and the females are called *Hari-bhakatani*. The bond of such relationship is very strong. A feature of Chhattisgarhi social life which Edward J. Joy (1973) call 'ceremonial friendship' also similar with Thengal Kachari of Assam.

Dress

The Thengal Kachari women use similar dresses to other rural Assamese women. Their dress constitutes one '*Mekhele*', one '*Chadar*' and one '*Riha*' and a blouse. In past

however, women use *methoni* (riper). Thengal women are expert in weaving and they weave most of the clothes for both male and female. They weave 'Mankapor', 'Borkapor', 'Seleng', 'Eri Chadar', Chadar, Mekhela, Riha, Gamosha, Tongali etc. The dresses of the men folk are similar to those of other Assamese men folk. In the past *Dhoties* woven by the womenfolk were the major items of dresses. Now-a-days only elderly men wear or occasionally used it. Knowledge of weaving is considered as a qualification for the bride and the women feel ashamed of if they do not know the art of weaving. In their daily work of life the office bearers do not wear any special dress.

Ornaments

In past elderly Thengal women wear silver and gold necklaces, *Thuria* (earbob), ear rings. The womenfolk used to wear 'Gamkharu' (silver or gold bracelets), *Gotakharu* (bracelet), 'Dhulmoni', 'Sipatamoni' (necklace), 'Senpatia Angathi' (a specially designed ring), *Thuria* etc, but now-a-days these are not used by the younger generation of womenfolk. Today these items are replaced by modern style of ornaments. In past men folk also used to wear some kind of earring but now-a-days they do not used it. In table 5.6 shows traditional dress and ornaments in the study villages.

Table: 5.6
Showing Traditional Dress and Ornaments in the Surveyed Village
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Total No of Household	Having Traditional Dress and Ornaments	Not Having Traditional Dress and Ornaments
	19 (9.50)	181 (90.50)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

Majority of the households (90.50 percent) do not have traditional dress and ornaments in the study villages; only 9.50 percent households have traditional dress and ornament. In table 5.7 shows the distribution of traditional dress and ornaments in the study villages.

Table: 5.7
Showing Types of Traditional Dress and Ornaments in the Surveyed Village
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Type of Traditional Dress and Ornaments	No. of Household
1	<i>Dug Dugi</i>	16 (8.00)
2	<i>Thuria</i>	6 (3.00)
3	<i>Dhulmoni</i>	2 (1.00)
4	<i>Gam kharu</i>	6 (3.00)
5	<i>Angothi</i>	1 (.50)
6	<i>Dress</i>	3 (1.50)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

8.00 percent households have *Dugdugi*, 3.00 percent each of the households have *Thuria* and *Gam Kharu*, only 1.50 percent, 1.00 percent and .50 percent have dress, *Dhulmoni* and *Angothi* respectively in the study villages. In table 5.8 shows the occasions of using traditional dress and ornaments in the study villages.

Table: 5.8
Showing Occasions of Using Traditional Dress and Ornaments
 (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Sl. No.	Occasions of Using Traditional Dress and Ornaments	No. of Household
1	During Bihu Festivals	9 (4.50)
2	Religious Rite	00
3	On marriage	8 (4.00)
4	In all the above	10 (5.00)

Source: Field survey conducted during June-August, 2014.

The data of the table 6 shows that in the study villages 4.50 percent households use traditional dress and ornament during *Bihu* festivals while 4.00 percent on marriage and 5.00 percent all the above.

Musical Instruments

Thengal are lovers of music and dance. They observe various religious ceremonies throughout the year and various musical instruments are used on these occasions e.g. *Dhul* (drum), *Tal* (cymbal), *Pepa* (pipa), *Bahi* (flutes made of bamboos) are mainly

used at the time of *Bihu*; *Mridong* and *Khol* are played in some religious rite, *Thogari* (a string instrument) with religious song.

The study and discussion above show that refinement sought to be brought in the socio-cultural life of this group cannot be properly equated with the process called Sanaskritization. There was no evidence of caste mobility or transition from tribalism to casteism in the communal way. Though in the past people accepted Vaishnavism to raise their status, they were not ready to detach themselves from tribal identity and sentiments. Nor they forgo the main traditional religious practices. A distinct mode of proselytization occurred in the Brahmaputra valley under the patronage of neo-Vaishnavism. Sonowal (1996) terms this movement as 'Vaishnavization' of the tribal people of Assam.

The tribal people contributed a lot in the process of the formation of Assamese community. They always preferred to identify themselves as Assamese people and religiously as Hindu (Vaishnava). Therefore, Vaishnavism served a lot in community formation. But in this emerging process the tribal people underwent a good deal of changes. Their internal social harmony took a new shape leading almost to disharmony, as the Vaishnavite religious leaders introduced several sectism and sub-sectism among the people. These resulted in chronic conflicts among fellow persons. Moreover, those tribes especially the Thengal Kacharis parted with most of their age-old traditions. At present, they find nothing special to stand for their distinctiveness as a unique and distinct tribal group. The new generation has emerged being conscious of and worried about the extinction of their unique identity. At present, they are trying to re-establish and revive their age-old traditions to get back their socio-cultural identity. Rightly or wrongly their view is that in the process of Vaishnavisation and also in community formation, they were betrayed by higher castes and classes and they remained at the same level of social status and development. Instead of gaining a new life, they have lost their own cultural life-ways. Therefore, a movement of revivalism is now going on among them.

CHAPTER-VI

Major Findings and Concluding Observation

Chapter VI

Major Findings and Concluding Observation

Major Findings of the Study are as Follows

The present study of the Thengal Kachari tribe of Jorhat district covering 200 households of 4 villages spread over 4 Gaon Panchayats of Titabar Development Block and Bagh Chung Development Block throws some light on the socio-economic conditions of Thengal Kachari tribe.

As regards of topography, all the villages (100.00) are situated in plain area and settlement pattern is dispersed. Transport and communication condition of all the villages are almost adequate as 3 (75.00 percent) villages possess the nearest motorable road from within the village while in case of one village (25.00 percent) 1-2 kms. and having the nearest transport station at a distance of 1-2 kms for all the 4 villages. However, in case of nearest railway station for 2 (50.00 percent) village lies at a distance of 3-4 kms. while for 2 (50.00 percent) villages gets the facility at a distance of above 6 kms. Condition of the roads is good in all the 4 surveyed villages. 3 (75.00 percent) villages are having Black Trapping road while only 1 (25.00 percent) village have gravelled road. The primary mode of conveyance of all the 4 (100.00 percent) villages is bus, magic, winger and Gamyia Taxi.

Mass Communication has crept in even in the remote tribal villages as reflected by existence of televisions, radio, newspaper, mobile phone and youth club in all the 4 (100.00 percent) villages. However there are only in 1 (25.00 percent) village have library.

As regards of civic facilities like police station, post office, health care facility, Block office, weekly market, bank etc. at a communicable distance. Besides as informed by the villagers transport and communication facilities develop in last decade help the villagers a lot.

Educational facilities, particularly primary and Anganwadi centres are within the villages for all the surveyed villages. It is good that little kids no need to walk long distance. Moreover other educational facilities like, Middle English School, High school, Higher Secondary School and college also situated easy communicable distance.

Like any other plain area of Assam Kharif crops are grown by the villagers in the surveyed villages. Paddy is the major crops in all the 4 (100.00) villages. Besides Thengal people of the study villages are engaged in various cottage and small industries like Handloom/Sericulture, Bamboo/Cane and poultry firming. However, there is more scope of development of these cottage/small industries.

As regards source of drinking water all the 4 (100.00 percent) villages depend upon tube wells however, in one village a few households covers by supply water. Regarding electrification 100.00 percent villages are electrified. In the surveyed villages majority (94.00 percent) of the households gets electricity facility. But those having electric connection are not getting supply regularly. The villagers find it difficult to operate the modern gadgets.

Regarding shopping all the 4 (100.00 percent) villages have fair price shops and a few other shops within the village. However to other marketing facilities they have to go Titabar town or near by weekly market.

The total population of the surveyed households is 975 which male constitutes 494 (50.67 percent) and female 481 (49.33 percent). Highest numbers of person belongs to the age group of 16-35 year constituting 340 persons (34.87), followed by age group 36-45 year constituting 186 persons (19.08), age group 60 or above 60 years constituting 12.72 percent of the total population.

In the age group of 0-6 years and 7-15 years all are unmarried 9.23 percent and 12.51 percent respectively. In the age group 16-35 years 49.71 percent married while 50.29 percent unmarried. In the age group of 36-45, 46-59 and 60 or above 60 majority 94.09 percent, 95.58 percent and 97.58 percent are married.

It is gratifying to note that literacy rate is increasing at a faster rate. Out of 936 (excluding too young to schooling) total population, 92.31 percent population are literate. Male literacy is relatively high (96.44 percent) in compression to its female counterpart 88.01 percent. In the study villages 4.00 percent young children are yet to schooling. However, majority (71.64 percent) of the population are High School or below High School level. There are 52.99 percent boys and 47.01 percent girls in various standards of educational intuitions.

Thengal Kachari tribe has 21 clan, divided mainly based on occupation, but now-a-days there exist only 21 clans but not the traditional occupation. In the earlier society the settlement of the Thengal Kachari were based on clan line. But now-a-days

the clan-clustered villages were broken up and hetero-clan clustered villages emerged openly exposing them to non-tribal counterparts in new settlements.

There are found 11 clans in the study villages. The major clans found in the study villages are 21.50 percent of the households belong to Hajwal, 18.50 percent of the households belong to Manikial and followed by Dingial 18.00 percent, Muktal or Mukutial 15.50 percent and Durungial 14.00 percent.

There are different groups of relatives (*atmiya*) in Thengal Kachari society which is similar to Assamese society. There are four types of *atmiya* in Thengal Kachari society viz. *Vamsa-Pariyal*, *Mitir-Kutum*, *Jnati* and *Samparkiya*. Traditionally, in Thengal Kachari kinship system *vamsa* groups are formed in the male descent and females excluded from a *vamsa*.

Broadly, the Thengal Kachari has three forms of marriage. These are- *Poluai Ana Biya*, *Joron Biya* or *Aabioi Biya* and *Bor Biya*. *Poluai Ana Biya* is the oldest form of marriage. Beside the above three forms of marriage, they have another form of marriage that is *Gharjia* or *Gorjovai*. In the study villages 43.09 percent of the marriage relations were made through *Poluai Ana Biya* while 32.89 percent through *Joron Biya* or *Aabioi Biya*, 23.36 percent *Bor Biya* and only 0.66 percent in Temple. In the study villages 60.53 percent of the marriage alliances were made within the tribe while 39.47 percent outside the tribe. Thus, it can be said that in the study villages Thengal Kachari people do not restrict marriage alliances within the tribe. In case of spouse from other community most of the marriage alliances were made with Ahom (35.00 percent), Chutia (29.16 percent) and Sonowal Kachari (25.00 percent). It is because of continuous and close contact with these groups of people.

Divorce is a rare phenomenon among the Thengal Kachari tribe. In the study villages only 4 divorce cases were reported at the time of field work. So, it is clear that divorce in Thengal Kachari is not usual phenomena. Remarriage is prevalent among Thengal Kachari since immemorial. In the study villages only 5 remarriage cases were reported at the time of field survey. Therefore, it is clear that remarriage is rare in Thengal Kachari tribe. In the Thengal Kachari society now-a-days monogamy is the normal practice and polygamy is rare. In the surveyed villages 4 cases were reported a male having two wives while no case found a female having two or more husbands. So, it can be said that Thengal Kachari tribe is monogamous group and polyandry is strictly prohibited. Cousin marriage is strictly prohibited in the Thengal Kachari society. Marriage by exchange is also not preferred by this group of people.

The Thengal Kachari society is patrilocal family with its patrilineal descent and inheritance rules. Traditionally Thengal Kachari follows joint family system. In the study villages 58.50 percent households are nuclear family type while 41.50 percent households are joint family. Thus, it can be said that among the Thengal Kachari, traditional joint family system has lost its importance and at present nuclear family type is a dominant pattern in the Thengal Kachari in the study villages. It is because of the influence of modern forces that now-a-days most of the Thengal Kachari families have nuclear family pattern.

In case of size of family majority of the families are small size families (74.50 percent) while 22.50 percent medium size family and only 3.00 percent are large size family. It suggests that in study villages most of the Thengal Kachari households are small size family. It also suggests that traditional large size family is gradually lost its importance in the Thengal Kachari society in the study villages.

The analysis of marriages in empirical situation indicates that the structure of Thengal Kachari society is the capacity to absorb the change beyond its premises, in the sense that they have not maintained tribe endogamy. They prefer to make marriage alliance with Assamese Hindu. Thus, we can say that Thengal Kachari society is more open than other tribal society of Assam. This, extension of marriage ties beyond the boundary of the tribe has been a source of change in the structure. It also suggests that structurally, Thengal Kachari society is not static but dynamic in nature. This also reflects the capacity of adaptation in social structure of the Thengal Kachari society.

In economic sphere many changes have been taken place in the study villages. Contemporary Thengal Kachari society is passing through a process of change and the occupational structure is under the process of transformation. Broadly, there are three types of occupation in Thengal Kachari society, these are, agriculture, business and service. But due to agricultural landlessness some families bound to engage in unskilled and skilled work. Majority (72.50 percent) of the households engaged themselves in cultivation and allied agricultural activities as main occupation. There are 11.50 percent households engage in service as main occupation; 6.00 percent households have been engaged in business as main occupation. There are 8.50 percent and 1.50 percent households who engaged in unskilled and skilled worker. Thus, it suggests that the occupational structure is still dominated by cultivation in the study villages.

Although agriculture is the sole means of livelihood of majority of the villagers, people are handicapped due to insufficiency of land as 32.00 percent households possess 6-10 Bighas of land including homestead and cultivated land. While 41.00 percent households possess 1 to 5 Bighas of land. Only 10.50 percent households possess above 20 Bighas of land. In the study villages there are no problem of flood and erosion. In the study villages 76.79 percent of the land is cultivated land while 23.21 percent are homestead land. In agricultural field, they cultivate cash crop, which they sell in the local market or to dealer. They cultivate paddy along with certain cash crops. Presence of some groves of bamboo is a usual feature of the most of the Thengal Kachari households. A few people also engage in tea cultivation. They also produce fruits and vegetables for their own consumption and surplus portion sell in market for money.

In the study villages 55.00 percent of the households possess fishery. In these fisheries they rear fishes but mainly for familial consumption only not for any business purpose. Irrigation facilities are not inadequate in the study villages only 30.50 percent households have self arranged irrigation facilities which 49.18 percent households use diesel while 50.82 percent use manpower as source of energy. Without proper irrigation facilities High Yielding Variety seed production is always low. As informed by the villagers last few years drought handicapped their cultivation.

Regarding use of HYV seed in the study villages it is observed that 96.86 percent of the households use HYV seed. It is because as informed by the respondents, production of HYV seed is more than local seed. Use of fertilizer/insecticide is being become popular as 91.62 percent households use. 86.39 percent of the households sold their surplus agricultural product during the last year in the study villages.

In the study villages Assam Type is the popular model as 51.50 percent households have Kutcha Assam Type and 24.00 percent households have Pucca Assam Type which as many as 49.00 percent households have 4-6 rooms and 42.50 percent households have 7-9 rooms.

Household items among the Thengal Kachari households of study villages is 30.50 percent households possess motor cycle, 55.50 percent of the households have Television, 19.00 percent households own power tiller, 5.50 percent households possess Maruti/Alto/Van, 2.00 percent households possess Tata AC, 1.00 percent each households possess Tractor and Magic, only .50 percent each households own Jeep and 407. These additions items properly indicate more or less sound economic status. Radio

has lost its' past popularity only 19.00 percent households own radio. Similarly only 1.00 percent households possess bullock cart. However, there are enough bicycles of the households and the percent comes to 92.50 percent. In the study villages 96.00 percent households own have watch while 99.00 percent households possess mobile hand set.

The main source of income of Thengal tribe is cultivation. Cultivation is the major source of primary annual income of the households and as many as 72.50 percent households belong to this category. It suggests that the occupational structure is still dominated by agriculture in the study villages. However, 19.31 percent households earn above Rs. 1 lakh per year. 11.50 percent households engaged in service as the primary source of annual income of which as many 78.26 percent households annual income is above 1 lakh.

In the area of business sector only 6.00 percent households engaged as main source of annual income. In this category as many as 50.00 percent household earn Rs. 25,001-50,000 while 25.00 percent each of the households earn 50,001 1 lakh and above 1 lakh. 8.50 percent households are engaged in unskilled work as a primary source of annual income only 1.50 percent household engaged as a main source of annual income.

Although quite a sizeable households (89.50 percent) have accounts in banks/post offices, yet only 12.29 percent households save regularly money future unforeseen expenditures. To remit financial crisis only 6.00 percent households have taken loan. There are only 37.03 percent earners supporting 62.97 percent non earning dependents which is not so favourable economic condition of tribal people. Majority (95.54 percent) of the unemployed person are educated which as many as 62.62 percent are female.

Technology used for cooking purpose 46.50 percent households use only wood. But interestingly in the study villages 52.00 percent households use LPG along with fire wood. It suggests that the effect of modernization is rapid in the study villages.

Domestic animal and bird is also an important variable of socio-economic analysis. In the study villages 88.00 percent households possess cow/bullock however; only 2.50 percent households possess buffalo. Only 11.50 percent households possess pigs and 46.00 percent households possess goats. 74.00 percent households rear fowl while 46.00 percent households rear duck. Only 11.50 percent households rear pigeon.

Regarding drinking water facility only 6.50 percent households get pipe water facility and rest of the households depend on tube wells. It may be mentioned that 46.50 percent households' source of the drinking water is present in own residence while 45.00 percent households use public places water and only 8.50 percent households collect water from neighbours' residence.

In the study villages like other tribal women Thengal women are also very expert in weaving. A good numbers of households (88.00 percent) weave cloth. 100.00 percent households those who have loom weave women wear and *gamucha*, 42.61 percent households weave *eri chaddar*, 12.50 percent households *shawl*, 24.43 percent *seleng*. Although weaving is a popular activity of Thengal Kachari women however, only 31.82 percent households have taken as business purpose and sell their surplus product mostly (94.64 percent) within the village.

Although Thengal men are expert in Bamboo and cane work, however, only 22.50 percent households produce handicraft items which only 33.33 percent households sell their surplus produce mostly (86.67 percent) within the village. Only one person (2.22 percent) receive grant from Thengal Kachari Autonomous Council.

As regards consumption pattern of food items is concerned new trend is noticed among the Thengal Kachari due to impact of acculturation process. Consumption of rice beer as a beverage is reduced considerably 51.00 percent never take while 44.00 percent consumed occasionally. On the other hand 58.50 percent of the households take milk daily. 53.00 households take pulses or bean regularly. 95.50 percent of the households use vegetables in the daily menu. Use of meat/fish (77.00 percent) and egg (61.00 percent) is resorted to by majority of the households occasionally. Now-a-days among the Thengal Kachari light meal is also popular item however, majority (81.50 percent) of the households use it occasionally.

At present the Thengal Kachari has several sects. Whatever past socio-cultural condition might be, the people underwent a lot of change in this process. In the study villages there are four sects among the Thengal Kachari. They are- *Eka Saran Bhagavati Dharma*, Sankarsangha, Namdharma and Krishnaguru. The *Eka Saran Bhagavati Dharma* sect is the traditional group. They follow Vedic rite and rituals along with some of their tribal rituals. This group also acknowledges the *Satra* institution. However, they forgot ways of several rituals and oral traditions such as, *Pir Dia*, *Bhitar Sakam*, *Habi-Dangoria Puja*, *Bhur Uttua Puja* or *Nau Uttua Puja*, *Deo Sakam*, *Jakha-Jakhini Puja*. On the contrary, those who did not forgot their tradition,

retained a dual form of religious belief of vaishnavism and animism. Now-a-days the groups those who follow Sankarsangha, Namdharma and Krishnaguru do not use country liquor, chicken, duck, and pork, in their rituals and do not worship many traditional deities that need liquor and meet. On the other hand the traditional group adds some new features like holding and practicing of *Nam Kirtan* or *Namprasang*.

In the study villages found that 100.00 percent households follow *Dharma Guru* of which majority (83.50 percent) of the households are following Sankardeva as religious teacher while 15.50 percent households regards Dimbeswar Kakati as religious teacher..

In the study villages 100.00 percent households perform *Nam Kirtan/Nam Prasanga* annually while 68.00 percent households perform *Ai Sakam*, 65.50 percent households perform *Mritakak Diya*, 41.50 percent *Kani Pan Diya* or *Sada Siva Puja*, 21.00 percent *Apesari Sabha*. Only 4.00 percent and .50 percent households perform *Bhitar Sakam* and *Na-Palia Devata* respectively.

Bihu is the main festival of Assamese society. Thengal Kachari people also observe *Bihus* festivals according to their own tradition and custom. Traditionally Thengal Kachari has some special feature of *Bohag Bihu* festival. They have many songs and dance which are related to *Bohag Bihu* festival. But they have lost many song, dance and traditions such as '*Chot Bihu*', '*Rati Bihu*', '*Maiki Bihu*' or '*Gabharu Bihu*', '*Pat Gabharu Bihu*', '*Tora Chira Bihu*', or '*Bali Husori*', '*Nara Chiga Bihu*' are now-a-days not found among them. However, some tradition and customs are still prevail among them, such as '*Goru Bihu*' (cattle worship), *Mitokok Dia* (ancestor worship), twisting the cow and bull with *Tora* rope on the day of *Goru Bihu*, feeding rice cake to the cow and bull, eating hundred and one kinds of herbs on the day of *Goru Bihu*, egg fights, giving *Bihu* present to their elders etc. They also observe birth and death anniversary of Sankardeva and Madhavdeva and Krishna *Janmastomi* annually at Namghar. In the study villages all (100.00 percent) households observed *Bihu* festival and Sankar Utshav. Only 9.50 percent households have traditional dress and ornament like *Dugdugi*, *Thuria*, *Gam Kharu*, dress, *Dhulmoni*, *Angothi* etc. which use various occasions.

Of course, except some tribal rituals, customs and institutions, the Thengal people are similar to the Assamese people. In this context, it can be mentioned that the Vaishnava *Gosains* (Clergy and Preachers) and *Satras* (Monasteries) are responsible for their conversion to Vaishnavism. Now-a-days, a considerable number of the Thengals

have been following Vaishnavism which is based on the doctrines of Sankardeva (Hinduism). Vaishnavism has introduced new priests (*Gosain, Satradhikar*), new institutions (*Namghar, Satra*), a new value system and the notion of purity and pollution through restrictions on food and drinks.

The impact of Vaishnavism and regional culture is found in the changing pattern of food habits of the Thengals.

The Vaishnavism in Assam centers on *Namghar* and *Satras* (Monasteries). In the study villages the Thengal Kachari belong to the different *Namghar* and *Satras*. As regard the religious institutions the *Namghars* has been playing important roles in their day to day life.

In totality, Vaishnavism served to a great extent to assimilate Thengal Kachari society with greater Assamese society with certain common religious and socio-cultural aspects.

As far as the process of cultural change among the Thengal Kachari is concerned, it has passed through a massive cultural change over a period of time. The process of religious contract made the Thengals a part of the regional culture and of the great tradition of Hinduism. Before their conversion to Vaishnavism, the Thengals were animists. At present the Thengal Kachari has several sects. Whatever past socio-cultural condition might be, the people underwent a lot of change in this process. In the study town there are found four sects among the Thengal Kachari.

In the conclusion it can be said that change is a vital phenomenon among the Thengal Kachari. At present moment, assimilation is continuing in all aspects of their life. Their society is quite open and they are moving toward class society rather than caste. The study reflects that Thengal society is structurally flexible, adoptable and inclusive. And if the process continues the ultimate result may be detribalization of the Thengals. However, the ethnic consciousness among the Thengal Kachari is a very recent phenomenon. Although some element of their tribal culture continued in Thengal Kachari society and they still retain these elements even today. Thus, one can see the presence of three types of elements in their cultural milieu (i) the elements of tribal culture; (ii) element of traditional Hindu culture; and (iii) growing value patterns of modern culture, inculcated among them through their exposure to modern education, modern media of mass communication and their experience to the modern political institutions such as Thengal Kachari Autonomous Council. Thus, the Thengal Kachari

tribe first moved towards the traditional Hindu culture but this process was redirected towards the process of modernization of the tribe after independence.

Ethnic Consciousness and the Identity Movement of the Thengal Kacharis

The Thengal Kachari of Assam is a branch of the great Bodo group of the Mongoloid family. They are close affinity with the Assamese peasantry in socio-cultural aspect. Thengal Kachari has never been separately enumerated in any of the six Census operations (1951, 1961, 1971, 1991, 2001 and 2011) conducted in Assam since Independence. Probably in all these Censuses, they were counted as a tribal community but not enumerated so separately.

The ethnic consciousness among the Thengal Kacharis is a very recent phenomenon in the history of Assam. However, they never considered themselves as a separate community, different from the other people of Assam till today. Some of their conscious and educated members formed an organization named, 'Thengal Kachari organisation'. They formed this organisation on 25th November, 1990 and latter replaced the name of the organisation as 'All Assam Thengal Kachari organization' (AATKO) in an annual conference held on 24, 25 and 26 April, 1992 at Kawaimari village in Lakhimpur district of Assam. In the initial stage the main aim of the organisation was reintroduce the word 'Thengal' in the Plain Scheduled Tribe list of Assam. Borah (2006) states that the name of the Thengal Kacharis was there in the list of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes of Assam till the year 1976. But then it is not found latter. Besides this other aim of the organization was to unite all the Thengal Kachari people living in different parts of Assam and protect their culture and identity and to fight unitedly for their rights. Demanding a separate status, preservation of the culture and tradition are some of its other objectives. From the very beginning the AATKO members are trying hard to carry out their identity. To solve this problem they submitted a detailed memorandum to the then Chief Minister Late Hiteswar Saikia. Because they feel that they have been easy targets for many injustices for decades due to illiteracy and simplicity. Dutta (2008) stated that until few decades back, the community considered themselves as the member of Assamese community only. They lost their language and some elements of their customs and traditions. One section came under the influence of *neo-vaishnavism*, preached by the great saint poet Sankardevya. But as the members feel that they have been deprived of their basic rights in all spheres, at present they are trying to assert themselves as a separate group.

A youth organization of the community called 'All Assam Thengal Kachari Student Union' was also formed for the students of the community on 23rd November, 1997. The primary demand of this organization is also the inclusion of the community in the list of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes list of Assam.

They were instead included with the Sonowal Kachari, a people closely related, and their numbers were subsumed in the total of the Sonowal Kachari. Indeed, the Thengal Kachari Autonomous Council Bill as originally drafted clubbed the Sonowal Kachari and the Thengal Kachari and envisaged the creation of a Sonowal Kachari-Thengal Kachari autonomous council. However, it was not acceptable to either of the communities. As result it came into being two separate autonomous councils for the Sonowal Kachari and the Thengal Kachari. Finally, they got an autonomous council in 2005 in a very peaceful manner.

Government of Assam has been also making earnest effort to provide more power to different tribal and ethnic group within Assam, so as to bring about speedy development in the areas inhabited by these groups. Towards this end series of discussions, it has been felt expedient to set up an administrative authority for the areas predominantly inhabited by the Thengal Kacharis. The Thengal Kachari Autonomous Council Bill 2005 was passed by Legislative Assembly of Assam on 12th August, 2005. The objectives of setting up the Administrative Authority is to provide maximum possible autonomy within the framework of the constitution of India for social, economic, educational, ethnic and cultural advancement of the Thengal Kachari people in the state. A understanding accord was signed among All Assam Thengal Kachari Organisation, Thengal Kachari Autonomous Demand Committee and Assam Government on 10th August, 2005 to form a interim council which was continue till the first election of the council. It is the youngest autonomous council of Assam and a satellite one.

Thengal Kachari Organisations agree to extend co-operation to the Government for implementation of Thengal Kachari Accord, Dispur 10th August 2005 and establishment of peace and progress of the state. But still the main issue of the movement that is re-introduce the word 'Thengal' in the Plain Scheduled Tribe list of Assam. From that time, they got autonomous rights to some extent. People are very much conscious of the existence of this council.

Now-a-days they are also conscious about maintaining a distinct culture and tradition. Dutta (2008) states as the community does not have its own language, oral

literature is the greatest source for them. Now-a-days the colourful demonstration of ethnic dresses, songs, processions is seen at their annual conferences. Besides, they try to observe their customs and traditions in a conscious way. Their leaders and the intellectuals are trying hard to preserve cultural element systematically. They also revive some age-old festivals and tradition which they had left in the past. The community revived a festival known as *Tora Chinga Bihu* or *Bali Husari* in March 2009 ('a festival of tearing a wild cardamom leaves for making ropes for the cows'). In past, they observed this festival in natural setting for more than a month. Besides the traditional dances of the *Bihu* festival, they also try to show all the ceremonies associated with it. Moreover one can see some of their new attachments to historical places and the material culture.

Their identity movement is that unlike all other ethnic groups of Assam, their identity movement is peaceful in nature. The identity movement of Thengal Kachari had all long been a non-violent. The method adopted has been the constitutional method of submitting memorandums and sending delegations. The movement was conducted peacefully and never adopted agitational path.

Besides, the movement especially in the beginning of twenty first century had a firm leadership and a regular course of its own. Moreover Thengal Kachari people never demand separate statehood outside Assam. But it is important that the main issue of the movement that is re-introduce the word Thengal in the plain Scheduled tribe list of Assam. Their demand for Thengal Kachari Autonomous Council is based on the argument that a separate political entity for Thengal Kachari within Assam is necessary in order to protect the indigenous identity and to make an end of discrimination against and deprivation of Thengal Kachari. They are worried about the extinction of their traditional identity due to conversion into new faith. The movement of the Thengal Kacharis under the banner of All Assam Thengal Kachari Organisation over a period of time resulted in Autonomous Council in Thengal Kachari dominated areas of Assam. In the present circumstances they are facing the problem of identity crises; they are trying hard to revive their age-old traditions and customs.

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APPENDICES

Appendix – I

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

ASSAM INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH FOR TRIBALS AND SCHEDULED
CASTES: JAWAHARNAGAR, GUWAHATI-781022

Research Study on 'Socio-Economic Conditions of the Tribal People of Assam: A
Study of Thengal Kachari Tribe in Jorhat District of Assam'

VILLAGE SCHEDULE

Name (s) of informant (s)	Age	Sex	Education	Occupation

1. A. General Information:

- i. Name of the Village :
- ii. Name of the Gaon Panchayat :
- iii. Police Station :
- iv. Block :
- v. Sub-division :
- vi. District :
- vii. Total No. of households :
- viii. Total No of Tribal households :
- ix. Total Population (a). Male..... (b). Female.....(c). Total.....
- x. Total tribal population (a). Male..... (b). Female..... (c). Total.....
- xi. Name of the tribes living in the village:.....

B. Topography:

(Use (√) tick mark wherever is applicable)

- (a). Hilly (b). Plain (c). Un-dwelling Plain (d). Others (Specify)

C. Settlement Pattern:

(Use (√) tick mark wherever is applicable)

- (a). Agglomerated (b). Dispersed (c). Isolate (d). Others (Specify)

2. Transport and Communication facilities:

A. Distance of the village from :

i). Nearest Motorable road :

ii). Nearest Railway station :

iii). Nearest Transport station :

B. Condition of the road to the village:

(Use (√) tick mark wherever is applicable)

i). Foot track :

ii). 'Katcha' fair weather motorable road :

iii). 'Katcha' all weather motorable road :

iv). Gravelled Road :

v). Other (Specify) :

C. Mode of Conveyance:

(Use (√) tick mark wherever is applicable)

i). Bus :

ii). Other vehicle :

iii). Cycle :

iv). Rail :

v). Boat :

D. Other means of mass communication available:

(Use (√) tick mark wherever is applicable)

i). Television :

ii). Radio :

iii). Newspaper :

iv). Library :

v). Telephonic facility :

vi). Youth Club :

3. Cropping Pattern:

a). Major Crops grown :

b). Rabi :

c). Kharif :

d). All Seasoned :

4. Civic facilities:

A. Distance of the village under study in K.M. from

- i). Nearest Police Station :
- ii). Nearest Post Office :
- iii). Nearest Block Office :
- iv). Nearest State Dispensary :
- v). Nearest Medical Sub-Centre :
- vi). Nearest Weekly Market :
- vii). Bank :

5. Educational facilities:

(Mention the number of institutions present within the village if not write the distance to the nearest one)

Sl. No.	Institute	Nos. (present within the village)	Distance from the village to the nearest one
I	Anganwadi		
II	Primary School		
III	Middle English School		
IV	High School		
V	Higher Secondary School		
VI	College		

6. Source of drinking water:

Sl. No.	Source	No.	Private owned	Govt. Agencies
1	Pond			
2	Well			
3	River			
4	Tube Well			
5	Water Supply Scheme			

7. Cottage Industry/Small Industry

Sl. No.	Name of the Industry	Total No. of Families engaged	Run by Individuals/Groups
I	Handloom/Sericulture		
II	Bamboo/Cane product making		
III	Carpentry		
IV	Poultry		
V	Pig Firm		
VI	Cattle Firm		
VII	Others (Specify)		

8. Electricity:

- i). Whether the village is having electricity facility. Yes/No.....
- ii) If yes, total No. of households having electricity facilities.....

9. Marketing facilities:

- i). No. of fair price shops within the village.....
- ii). No. of other shops within the villages (Specify).....
- iii) Other marketing facilities.....

10. Any other worth mentioning information not covered by the schedule.....

11. Self-Help Group

- i). Are there any Self-Help group in your village? Yes/No.....
- ii). If yes, total No. of the group:.....

12. Remarks:.....

Data collected by.....

Supervised by.....

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

**ASSAM INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH FOR TRIBALS AND
SCHEDULED CASTES: JAWAHARNAGAR,
GUWAHATI-781022**

Research Study on 'Socio-Economic Conditions of the Tribal
People of Assam: A Study of Thengal Kachari Tribe in Jorhat
District of Assam'

Household Schedule

1. Identification:

- i. Sl. No. of Sample Household :
- ii. Name of the Village :
- iii. Name of the Head of the Household :
- iv. Name of the informant :
- (a). Age.....(b). Sex.....

vi). Do you have any surplus agricultural product to sell during the last year?

Yes	
No	

C. Particulars of household properties

(Use (√) tick mark wherever is applicable)

i). Types of houses

- a). R.C.C. :
- b). Pucca Assam Type :
- c). Kutcha Assam Type :
- d). Thatched :
- e). Others (Specify) :

ii). Other properties

Name	No.
a). Motor Cycle	
b). Bi-cycle	
c). Television	
d). Radio	
e). Watch	
f). Bullock Cart	
g). Other vehicle (specify)	

D. Particulars of household income and expenditure:

1. Total annual income of the household from all sources:

Source	Income
i). Service	
ii). Cultivation	
iii). Business	
iv). Other (Specify)	

2. Total approximate annual expenditure of the household:

Head	Expenditure
i). Food items	
ii). Dress and ornaments	
iii). Education	
iv). Other social obligatory/marriage/religious celebration	
v). Health	
vi). Other (Specify)	

E. Particulars of Savings:

- i). Do you have a savings accounts in a Post Office/Bank etc.: Yes/No.....
- ii). If yes, Do you save money regularly: Yes/No.....

F. Particulars of household indebtedness:

- i). Did you receive any loan in cash or from any sources during the last one year?

Yes	
No	

- ii). If yes, state the principal amount cash.....Kind.....
- iii). Source.....
- iv). Rate of interest.....
 - a). Cash.....b).....
- v). Amount repaid
 - a). Cash.....b).....
- vi). Purpose for which the loan was taken.....

G. Earner details:

- i). Total family member :
- ii). No. of earners :
- iii). No. of Non-earning dependent :

H. Is there any unemployed adult members in the household? Yes/No.....

If yes, state the number.....

- i). Educated unemployed (a). Male.....(b).Female.....
 ii). Un-educated unemployed (a). Male.....(b).Female.....

I. What kind of fuel does your household mainly used for cooking?

Type of fuel	Use tick mark
a) Wood	
b) Kerosene	
c) LPG	
d) Other (Specify)	

J. Particulars of household livestock and poultry:

Livestock	Number	Poultry	Number
a) Cattle		e). Fowl	
b) Buffalo		f). Duck	
c) Goat		g). Pigeon	
d) Pig		h). Others (Specify)	

K. i). What is the main source of drinking water for the members of your family?

(Use (√) tick mark wherever is applicable)

- a). Well b). Pond c). Hand-pipe d). Pipe water
 e). River/Streams f). Others (Specify)

ii). Source of drinking water (present in):

(Use (√) tick mark wherever is applicable)

- a) Your own residence
 b) Public place
 c) Neighbour's residence

L. Do you weave cloth? Yes/No.....

i). If yes, what do you produce in the loom?

(Use (√) tick mark wherever is applicable)

- a). Women wear, b). Endi Chadar c). Gamocha d). Shawl e). Other
 (Specify)

ii). Do you have any surplus product to sell in during the last year:

Yes/No.....

iii) Where do you usually sell your surplus produce?

(Use (√) tick mark wherever is applicable)

- a). In the market b). In the village
c). To the middle men d). To Marketing societies/co-operatives societies
e). Others (Specify)

M. Do you make handicraft item: (cane, Bamboo, Basketry etc.): Yes/No.....

i). If yes, where from you get the raw materials?

ii). Do you have any surplus produce to sell during the last year? Yes/No

iii). Where do you usually sell your surplus produces?

(Use (√) tick mark wherever is applicable)

- a) In the market b). In the village
c). To the middle men d). To marketing societies/co-operative societies

iv). Did you receive any grants etc. from the Government? Yes/No.....

5. Religion and Culture:

A. Religious Activities:

i). Are you a follower of any dharma guru? Yes/No.....

If yes, name of the guru.....

ii). What are the religious rites and rituals you perform in a year?

(Use (√) tick mark wherever is applicable)

- a). Kanipan Dia b). Mritakak Dia c). Pir Dia d). Bhitar Sakam
e). Na-Palia Devata f). Ghar Dangeria g) Apesari Sabha h). Other
(Specify)

B. Culture:

i). Do you have traditional dress and ornaments: Yes/No.....

If yes, mentioned those.....

ii). In what occasions you have worn your traditional dress and ornaments?

(Use (√) tick mark wherever is applicable)

- a). During Bihu festivals b). Religious rite
c). On marriage d). In all the above e). Others (Specify)

iii). Do you observe any festivals? Yes/No.....

If yes, mention those

iv). Consumption pattern of the household:

Sl. No.	Item	Daily	Weekly	Occasionally	Never
I	Milk or Card				
Ii	Pulses or bean				
Iii	Green Vegetables				
Iv	Eggs				
V	Meat/fish				
Vi	Rice Bear				
Vii	Others (Specify)				

6. Any other information:

Date:

Collected by:

Supervisor by:

Appendix-II



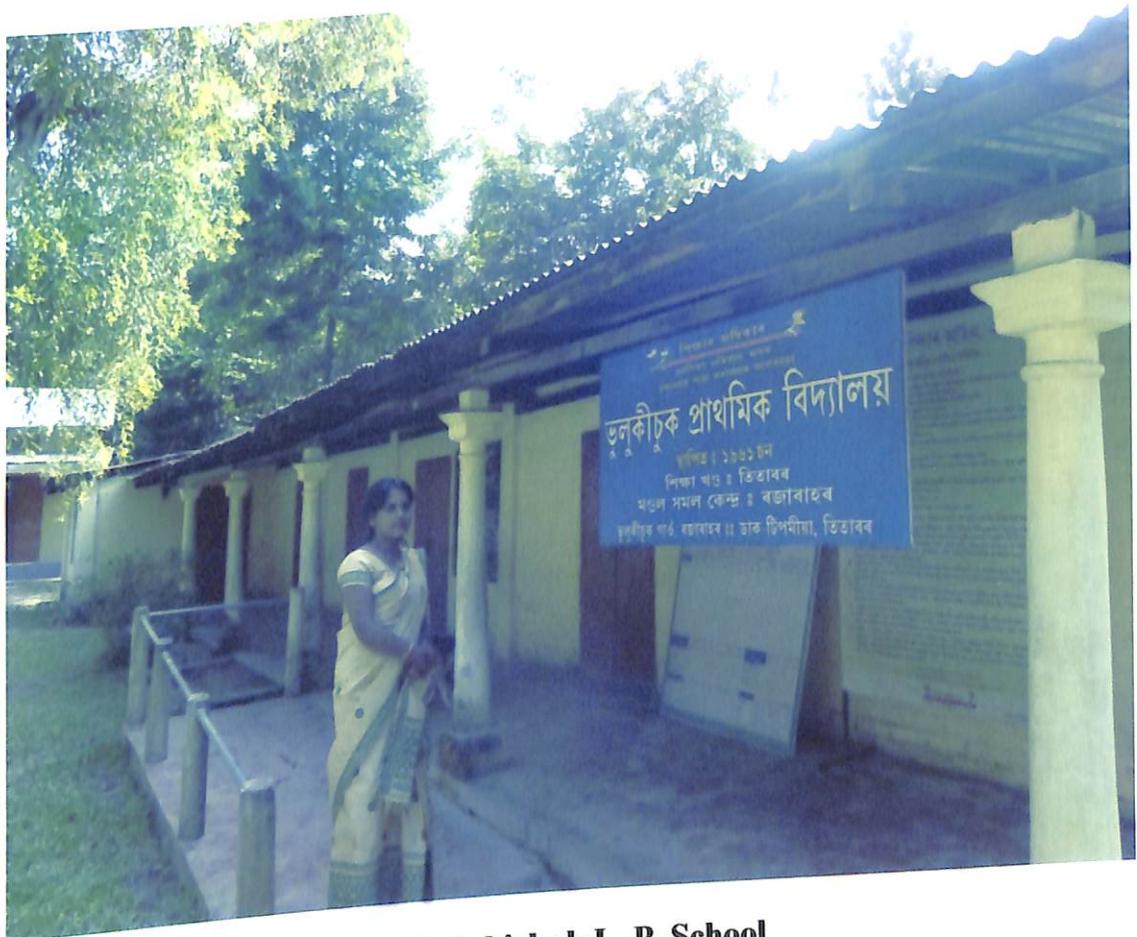
Granary of a Thengal Kachari Household in Mordholi Kachari Gaon



Village Informant of Layet Na-Chungi



Dry stable of paddy preserved for cow in Nagabat Thengal Gaon



Bhulukichuk L. P. School



Layet Na-Chungi Jagaran Mancha (Youth Club)



Devotees offering prayer in Bhulukichuk village Monastery



Gravelled road to Bhulukichuk village



Black Trapping Road to Layet Na-Chungi



A Tube Well sponsored by Thengal Kachari Autonomous Council in Mordholi Kachari Gaon



Layet Na-Chungi L.P. School

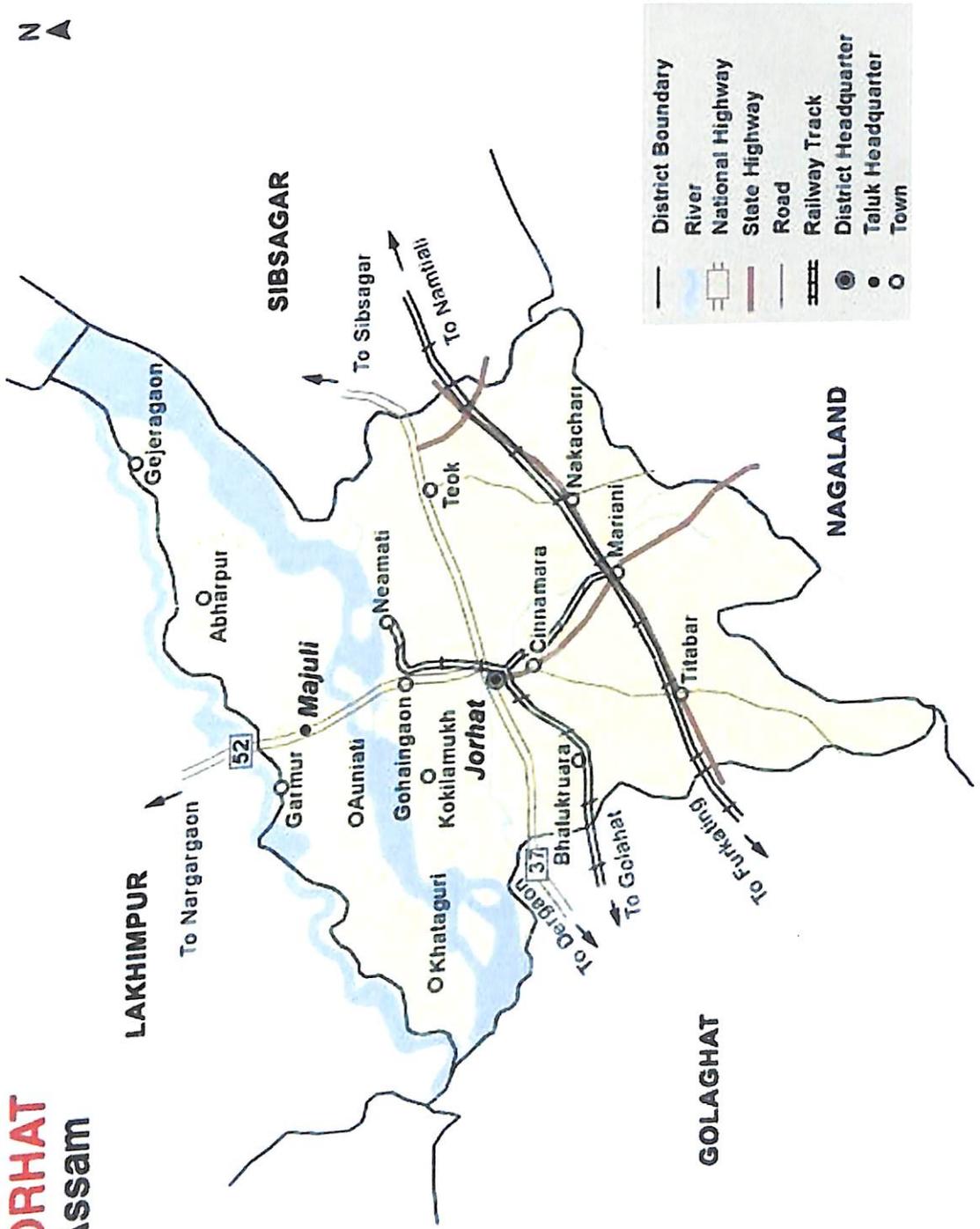


A Power Tiller of a Thengal Kachari Household sponsored by Thengal Kachari Autonomous Council in Nagabat Thengal Gaon



On our way to the field with Research Supervisor Miss Mitra Das (Right side) in Bhulukichuk Village

JORHAT Assam



	District Boundary
	River
	National Highway
	State Highway
	Road
	Railway Track
	District Headquarter
	Taluk Headquarter
	Town