

The Assam Odyssey

The Complete Assam Part - Explained

1

Assam History

2

Assam Culture

3

Assam Economy

4

Assam Polity

5

Assam Geography



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ASSAM HISTORY



(AI Generated)

"The manners of the people are simple and honest. The men are of small stature and their complexion a dark yellow. Their language differs a little from that of Mid-India. Their nature is very impetuous and wild; their memories are retentive, and they are earnest in study."

Hiuen Tsang, (Hsüan-tsang) (602–664)

Title: Country of Kia-mo-lu-po (Kamarupa)

(Translated by Samuel Beal, Buddhist Records of the Western World)

Chapter 1: Prehistory of Assam

Introduction

- Assam and the wider Northeast formed a **crucial corridor of human migration and cultural exchange** between the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia during the **Late Pleistocene and Early Holocene**.
- Archaeological and genetic studies show that the region witnessed multi-directional dispersal events, linking Africa, South Asia, East Asia, and Oceania. The spread of Hoabinhian cultural traits from Southeast Asia to the northwestern sub-Himalayas through Northeast India evidences this corridor's long prehistoric continuity.
- Despite such importance, the **archaeology of Northeast India remains understudied**, with few systematic excavations and limited stratigraphic or radiocarbon data.

The Palaeolithic Background

- The earliest human presence in Assam is assigned to the **Middle Pleistocene period (781,000–126,000 years ago)** in the **Rongram valley of the Garo Hills**.
- The stone tool assemblage from Rongram shows **Abbevillian affinities**, linking it to the broader South Asian Palaeolithic tradition.
- Additional Palaeolithic occurrences have been reported from the **Daphabum area** of Lohit district in Arunachal Pradesh and from the **Khangkhui caves** in Ukhrul, Manipur.
- The **Khangkhui cave** site, dated to the **Late Pleistocene**, has yielded evidence of **hunting and fire use**, representing cave-dwelling hunter-gatherers.
- The Palaeolithic people of this region exploited river terraces, hill slopes, and rock shelters, using hand-axes, cleavers, and flakes made from quartzite and fossil wood.

The Neolithic Revolution in Assam

General Characteristics

- The Neolithic phase marks the **transition from hunting-gathering to food production**, characterised by polished stone tools, handmade pottery, and early agriculture.
- Early Neolithic cultures of the **Garo Hills developed in close relation to the Hoabinhian culture of mainland Southeast Asia**.
- The **Late Neolithic cultures** show affinities with the **Mon-Khmer** dispersal from the Irrawaddy valley of Myanmar and from South China.
- The Neolithic settlements were often located on **hill slopes and high grounds**, possibly as protection from the Brahmaputra's annual floods.
- Shifting or slash-and-burn cultivation (**jhum**) was a dominant subsistence method, and its persistence today provides valuable **ethno-archaeological parallels** for studying Neolithic lifeways.

Early Discoveries and Explorations

- Archaeological **interest in Assam began around 1850**, when European planters and administrators discovered stone implements from tea-garden areas.

Chapter 11: The Ahoms-Origin & General Facts

Origin and Ancestry of the Ahoms

Early Migration and Ethnic Background

- In the early 13th century CE, a group of **hillmen entered the eastern extremity of the Brahmaputra Valley**, marking the beginning of the Ahom presence in Assam.
- They were the **forefathers of the Ahoms**, who later established a powerful kingdom that ruled Assam for over six centuries (1228-1826 CE).
- The Ahoms belonged to the **Tai race**, particularly the **Shan section**, which inhabited the **northern and eastern hill tracts of Upper Burma and Western Yunnan**.

Mythical and Divine Ancestry

- The **Ahom kings** traced their **divine origin** to **Lengdon**, identified with **Indra**, the king of the gods. This lineage was sanctified both by the **Ahom Deodhais (priests)** and later by **Hindu Brahmin priests**.
- According to **Ahom mythology**, Lengdon directed his son **Then Kharn** to descend to earth and establish a kingdom. When Then Kharn refused, his sons **Khunlung** ("Prince Elder") and **Khunlai** ("Prince Younger") descended to earth by a **golden chain in 568 A.D.**, landing at **Mungri-Mungram**.
- **Lengdon** gifted them divine regalia that symbolized royal sovereignty : the **Somdeo idol** (their tutelary deity), the **Hengdan** (a magic sword of power), **two sacred drums**, and **four cocks** for interpreting omens.
- The two brothers **jointly founded Mungri-Mungram** but later quarreled. **Khunlung**, carrying the sacred **Somdeo idol**, migrated and established a new kingdom at **Mungkhmun**.
- Khunlung's descendants ruled **Mungkang**, while **Khunlai's son, Tyaoaijeptyatpha**, founded the **Aijepi Era** but died childless.
- A later descendant of **Khunlung and Khunchu** became ruler and, after his death, the kingdom was divided into **Mungri-Mungram** and **Maulung**.
- The **Maulung line**, descended from **Khunchu**, ruled for about **333 years** before extinction. Subsequently, another descendant of Khunchu was elected king of Maulung.
- From this **Maulung dynasty** descended **Sukapha**, who migrated westward and founded the **Ahom Kingdom in Assam in 1228 CE**, marking the beginning of over six centuries of Ahom rule.
- Upon settling in Assam, they called the land **Mungdun-Sun-Kham** meaning "*Country full of golden gardens.*"

Insights from LUCENT IAS

The Ahom origin myth blends **Tai cosmology** and **Indo-Aryan divine assimilation**, symbolizing the **syncretic evolution** of Ahom culture in Assam. The migration from **Maulung (Upper Burma)** to **Assam (Patkai Hills-Sukapha's route, 1228 CE)** is regarded as both a **historical migration** and the **mythic fulfillment** of this divine command.

Ahom Kingdom: Dynastic Overview

Chapter 16: Key Personalities During Ahom Rule

Atan Buragohain (1662–1679 CE)

Introduction

- Atan Buragohain served from **1662 to 1679 CE**. He played a decisive role in safeguarding Assam during a time of **Mughal invasions and internal political instability**.

Titles and Positions

- Held the title of **Buragohain** (Prime Minister) and later **Rajmantri Dangaria** (after 1664).
- Functioned as both a **counsellor and military commander**, combining statesmanship with martial leadership.

Major Contributions

- **Defence of Assam:** Led resistance against Mughal invasions under generals **Mir Jumla** and **Raja Ram Singh of Amber**.
- **Peace Negotiations:** Served as chief negotiator of the **Treaty of 1663**, ensuring peace after the temporary Mughal occupation.
- **Reconstruction:** Rebuilt villages, settlements, and fortifications after invasions, initiating **defensive structures along the Brahmaputra**.
- **Declined Kingship Twice:** Refused the throne on two occasions, upholding the principle that monarchy must remain within the royal lineage.
- **Diplomatic Initiatives:** Fostered alliances with **Cooch Behar, Jayantia, and Cachar** to counter Mughal aggression.

Key Military Campaigns and Events

1. Mir Jumla's Invasion (1662):

Initially unsuccessful in halting Mughal advances but later harassed the invaders through **guerrilla warfare**, forcing their withdrawal.

2. Treaty of 1663:

Negotiated peace terms; though **Guwahati and Kamrup** were ceded, Assam retained its sovereignty.

3. Reoccupation of Gauhati (1667):

Under his strategic direction, the Ahoms recaptured Gauhati from the Mughals.

4. Battle of Saraighat (1671):

Collaborated with **Lachit Barphukan**, providing critical strategic advice that ensured a decisive Ahom victory.

Administrative and Political Measures

- **Resettlement Efforts:** Restored displaced villagers and revived agricultural productivity after Mughal devastation.
- **Internal Order:** Suppressed conspiracies, including the **execution of Debera Barbarua**, who had destabilized the capital.
- **Infrastructure:** Directed construction of **forts and the Chintamani Rampart**, strengthening Assam's defense network.

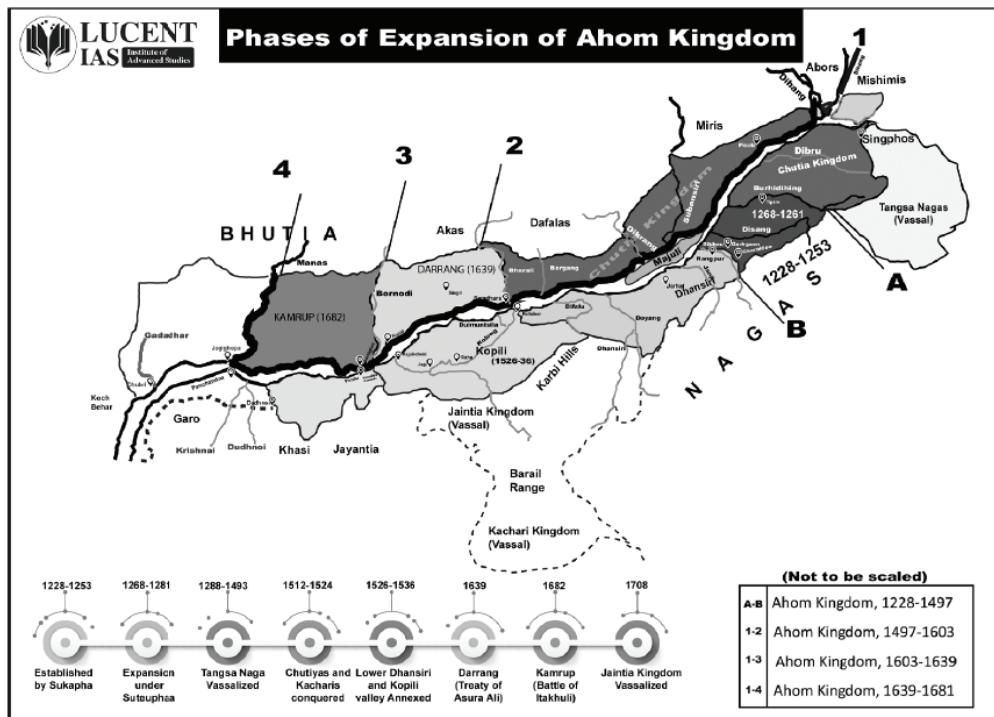
Political Challenges and Betrayals

- **Rivalry with Laluk Barphukan:** Laluk's jealousy and ambition led him to ally with the Mughals, The Assam Odyssey

Chapter 17: Policies of Ahom Kingdom

Expansion and Consolidation of the Ahom Kingdom (1228 – 1826 CE)

The Ahom Kingdom, founded in 1228 CE by Sukaphaa, evolved from a small chiefdom into a powerful multi-ethnic empire that ruled for nearly six centuries. Its history reflects a gradual transition from tribal polity to a complex monarchical state marked by **assimilation, expansion, consolidation** and finally decline.



Phase I: Consolidation

- Chaolung Sukaphaa, avoided direct conflict with powerful tribes, integrating smaller groups like the **Barahi**, **Maran**, and **Bodo-Kacharis** through diplomacy and marriage alliances.
- He introduced **wet-rice cultivation** and irrigation, laying the agrarian foundation of Ahom society.
- His successors maintained stability, suppressing Naga incursions and strengthening the polity.
- Under **Sudangphaa (1397–1407 CE)**, the Ahoms repelled an invasion from a neighboring Tai state, asserting full sovereignty.

Phase II: Territorial Expansion

- **Suhungmung** transformed the Ahom kingdom into a **regional power** and expanded its borders through warfare, diplomacy, and administration.

Chapter 23: Land Revenue Administration in Colonial Assam

The Pre-British Agrarian Context

- Under the Ahoms, the king was the **theoretical owner of all land**, but cultivators held hereditary possession in return for **personal service** to the state via **The Paik System**.

Early Colonial Objectives

- The primary of the British challenge was to introduce fiscal order without triggering resistance.
- David Scott**, the first Commissioner, pursued **gradual reform rather than radical restructuring**.

Key Measures:

- Abolition of Paik Service:
 - Labour obligations were commuted into a **poll or capitation tax**, marking the first monetisation of taxation.
- Introduction of the Mouzadari System:
 - Districts were divided into **mouzas**; local chiefs (*mouzadars*) collected taxes on commission.
- Land Classification:
 - Land was categorised into *Basti* (homestead), *Rupit* (wet paddy), and *Faringati* (highland).
- These measures maintained **state proprietorship of land** while initiating the **transition from feudal labour to cash-based fiscality**.

Evolution of Revenue Systems

Permanent Settlement Areas (Western Assam)

- Western Assam has been historically linked to Bengal, so these regions were absorbed into the **Permanent Settlement of 1793**.
- Sylhet:
 - Settlements made directly with *mirasdars* (actual cultivators).
 - Incorporated into Assam in **1874**, later partitioned in 1947.
- Goalpara:
 - Former Koch and Mughal territory, transferred to the British in **1765**.
 - Contained large permanently settled estates such as **Bijni, Gauripur, and Parbatjhora**.

Ryotwari System (Central and Upper Assam)

- The **Brahmaputra Valley** followed a **Ryotwari framework**, where the **state was the ultimate owner** and the cultivator (ryot) held occupancy rights conditional on revenue payment.
- Local Variants:**
 - Chamuas* in Kamrup and Nowgong, *Khiraj-Khats* in Darrang and Lakhimpur.

Revenue-Free and Partially Revenue-Paying Lands

- Lakhiraj Lands:** Revenue-free religious and charitable endowments confirmed under **Regulation I of 1828**.
- Nisf-Khiraj Lands:** Half-taxed holdings, often attached to Brahmottor or Dharmottor institutions.
- These lands were **heritable and transferable**, representing the **highest legal tenures** in colonial Assam.

Chapter 33: Women's Participation in the Freedom Movement

Women in the Non-Cooperation Movement (1920–22)

- The Non-Cooperation Movement under Mahatma Gandhi marked a watershed in India's freedom struggle, as **Indian women came out of their domestic confines** to participate in the national movement in large numbers.
- Gandhi's call for *Swaraj* and *Swadeshi* had a deeply liberating effect on women, particularly from middle- and upper-class backgrounds, who had so far remained outside the sphere of active politics.
- In Assam, the **social conservatism and patriarchal mindset** initially restricted the open participation of women. However, Gandhi's call and the activities of the Assam Provincial Congress Committee (APCC) gradually encouraged educated women to take up the cause of national liberation.
- A group of pioneering Assamese women such as **Bidyutprova Devi, Girija Devi** (widowed sister of Tarun Ram Phukan), **Hemanta Kumari Devi** (wife of Nabin Chandra Bordoloi), **Dharmada Sundari Devi, Nalinibala Devi, Guneswari Das, Chandraprova Saikiani, and Pushpalata Das** led the way.
- Most of these women belonged to **educated, urban, and politically aware families** connected with Congress leaders. They **organized and addressed meetings** in both rural and urban areas to propagate the **ideas of non-cooperation, Swadeshi, national education, and charkha**.
- Women formed associations, distributed leaflets, and mobilized other women to join the constructive work programme. Their participation extended beyond symbolic support; they also collected funds, managed Congress volunteer camps, and organized community spinning drives.
- Although women were seldom arrested during this phase in Assam, their active involvement created a new awakening among them, preparing the ground for their more militant role in later movements.
- **Gandhi's visit to Assam in July 1921** gave immense momentum to women's participation. His message resonated across social boundaries, influencing not only the elite but also women from marginalized and working-class backgrounds.
- A notable example is **Mongri**, a tea-garden labourer and alcoholic who was inspired by Gandhi to give up liquor and actively participate in the anti-liquor picketing. She became the first Assamese woman martyr when she was killed during a clash while picketing liquor shops.
- Similarly, **Bhanumati Talukdar**, a mother of three from Godabori in Kamrup, left her domestic duties to become a full-time Congress volunteer. She was affectionately called **Volunteerani bai** by villagers and **Sarojini of Assam** by Gandhi himself.
- **Pramila Medak**, from the Mising tribal community of Golaghat, defied her community's ostracism and joined the movement despite being excommunicated.
- These examples illustrate how women across class and ethnic boundaries in Assam contributed
- The Non-Cooperation Movement thus laid the **foundation for a new consciousness among Assamese women** and transformed their social roles from passive dependents to active citizens.

24	Syed Abdul Malik (Pen Name: Ajagar)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novel: <i>Aghari Atmar Kahini</i> (Sahitya Akademi Winner, 1972). Themes of identity crisis and existential longing. • Volume: Composed 70+ Novels and 2000+ Assamese short stories. • Ruptirthar Jatri is a fictional biography of Rup Konwar Jyoti Prashad Agrwala • Dhanya Nara Tanu Bhal is a fictional novel based on the life and philosophy of Srimanta Sankardev.
25	Saurav Kumar Chaliha (Original Name: Surendranath Medhi)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Stories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Golam</i> (Sahitya Akademi Winner, 1974). - <i>Ashanta Electron</i>. • Style: Published in <i>Banhi, Ramdhenu, Awahan</i>.
26	Chandra Prasad Saikia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novel: <i>Maharathi</i> (Sahitya Akademi Winner, 1995). Based on Karna from the <i>Mahabharata</i>. • Editor: <i>Gariyashi, The Assam Tribune</i>.
27	Devendra Nath Acharya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novel: <i>Jangam</i> (Sahitya Akademi Winner, 1984). Depicts the forgotten exodus of Indians from Myanmar to Assam during WWII.
28	Dr. Indira Goswami (Mamoni Raisam Goswami) <i>Jnanpith Award Winner (2000)</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Mamare Dhara Tarowal Aru Dukhan Upanyasa</i> (Sahitya Akademi, 1982): Issues of workers at a dam construction site. - <i>Dotal Hatir Uye Khowa Hauda</i>: Liberalism vs. traditionalism in a Satra (Adapted into film <i>Adajya</i>). - <i>Chinnmasta Manuhtu</i>: Critique of animal sacrifice at Kamakhya. • Autobiography: <i>Aadha Lekha Dastabej</i>.
29	Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya <i>First Jnanpith Award Winner from Assam (1979)</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Iyaruingam</i> (Sahitya Akademi Winner, 1961): Based on Tankhrool Naga tribes in Manipur. - <i>Mrityunjay</i> (Jnanpith Winner): Based on the 1942 Panikhaiti derailment during the Quit India Movement. - <i>Rajpathe Ringiyai</i> (1957): Socio-political analysis of post-independence India.
30	Homen Borgohain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Pita Putro</i> (Sahitya Akademi Winner, 1978): Psychological study of generational clash. - <i>Halodhiya Soraye Baodhan Khai</i>: Depicts exploitation of farmers (Adapted into a National Award-winning film). • Autobiography: <i>Atmanuxondhan</i>. • Editor: <i>Aamar Asom, Axom Bani, Nilachal, Niyomia Barta</i>.

Chapter 15: Non-Fiction & Historical Works on North East

S I . No.	Author Name	Books & Content Themes
1	Arup Kumar Dutta <i>Noted for accessible history and adventure fiction.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History: <i>The Ahoms</i> – Narrates the 600-year reign of the Ahom dynasty (1228–1826) which unified Assam's tribes. Geography/Culture: <i>The Brahmaputra</i> – Highlights the river's journey from Tibet to India and its economic/cultural impact. Fiction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The Bag</i>: Portrays Assam's insurgency and the human cost of conflict. - <i>Adventures in Kaziranga</i>: Protecting wildlife from poachers. - <i>Adventure Omnibus</i>: Includes <i>A Lure of Zangrila</i> and <i>Revenge</i>.
2	Arupjyoti Saikia <i>Historian specializing in environmental history.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ecology/History: <i>The Unquiet River</i> – A biography of the Brahmaputra, blending nature and human history. Forests and Ecological History of Assam (1826-2000) – Traces colonial forest policies and resource conflicts. Politics: <i>The Quest for Modern Assam</i> – Explores political and economic processes since the 1940s. A Century of Protests – Examines agrarian struggles evolving into nationalist quests. Culture: <i>Bhaona and Assamese Society</i> – Essays on the Bhaona theatre form.
3	Samrat Choudhury <i>Journalist and author.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political History: <i>Northeast India: A Political History</i> – Explores the integration of diverse tribes into the modern Indian state. Travel/History: <i>The Braided River</i> – A journey along the Brahmaputra exploring identity and politics. Anthologies: <i>Insider Outsider & But I am One of You</i> – Essays on migration, ethnic conflict, and the struggle to belong.
4	Sanjib Baruah <i>Professor of Political Studies.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political Analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>In the Name of the Nation</i>: Critiques the “frontier” governance of the Northeast. - <i>Durable Disorder</i>: Analyzes insurgency and the establishment of de facto military rule. - <i>India Against Itself</i>: A seminal work on Assam's insurgency and federalism. - <i>Postfrontier Blues</i>: Argues for democratic reforms over militarization. Editor: <i>Ethnonationalism: A Reader & Beyond Counterinsurgency</i>.
5	Rajeev Bhattacharya <i>Senior Journalist covering insurgency.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insurgency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>ULFA: The Mirage of Dawn</i>: Comprehensive account of ULFA's rise and decline. - <i>Rendezvous with Rebels</i>: Travel memoir into Myanmar's insurgent camps. Visual History: <i>Lens and the Guerrilla</i> – rare photographs of 52 militant outfits.

Chapter 16: The Ethnographic Landscape of Assam

Introduction

Assam is often described by anthropologists as a living museum, an intricate meeting ground where **Austric**, **Tibeto-Burman**, **Indo-Aryan**, and **Dravidian** racial streams blend seamlessly into a shared cultural space. The Indo-Mongoloid tribes, referred to in ancient texts as *Kiratas*, form the foundational layer of this ethnographic canvas. Their settlements along riverbanks, hills, forests, and floodplains have shaped not only their social identities but also the cultural rhythms of the entire state.

Demographic Overview & Statistics

According to the **Census of India (2011)** and subsequent state government statistical handbooks, the demographic breakdown reveals a significant tribal presence.

- **Total Population of Assam (2011):** ~31.2 Million
- **Scheduled Tribe (ST) Population:** ~3.88 Million (Approx. 12.45% of the total population)
- **Tea Tribe (Adivasi) Community:** Estimated at ~6–7 Million (Approx. 18–20% of the total population).*

Major Scheduled Tribes by Population (Census 2011 Data)

Tribe	Approximate Population	% of ST Population(as per 2011 Census)	Primary Districts
Bodo	1.36 Million	~35.1%	Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa, Udalguri
Mising	680,000	~17.5%	Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Majuli, Jorhat
Karbi	420,000	~11.1%	Karbi Anglong, West Karbi Anglong
Rabha	296,000	~7.6%	Goalpara, Kamrup
Sonowal Kachari	253,000	~6.5%	Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Dhemaji
Dimasa	110,000	~2.9%	Dima Hasao
Tiwa	180,000+	~4.9%	Morigaon, Nagaon, Karbi Anglong

The Bodos

The Bodos are the largest indigenous tribal group in Assam. Belonging to the Indo-Mongoloid family (origins traced to Tibet/China), they are the bedrock of the Brahmaputra valley's ethnic history.

- **Culture & Livelihood:** They are expert bamboo crafters and weavers. The **Dokhona** (draped garment) and **Aronai** (traditional scarf) are symbols of their identity. **Dokhona** is often decorated with intricate **Agor** motifs.
- **Religion:** Traditionally, they practice **Bathouism**, worshiping the supreme god *Bathou* (identified often with Lord Shiva) at the altar of the *Sijou* (Euphorbia) tree.
- **Language:** The **Bodo language** is part of the Sino-Tibetan family, written in Devanagari. It gained Eighth Schedule recognition in 2004, marking a linguistic renaissance.
- **Festivals:**
 - **Bwisagu:** The spring new year festival (coinciding with Bohag Bihu).
 - **Kherai:** It is the most significant religious dance ritual conducted by the *Douri* (priest). It

ASSAM ECONOMY



"The unit of the Assamese social organization was the family... The economy was self-sufficient. Every family had its own bari (homestead) containing the dwelling house, the granary, the cattle shed, and a garden for vegetables, bamboo, and betel nut. The bari economy provided almost all the necessities of life except salt."

Dr. S.L. Baruah (Historian, A Comprehensive History of Assam)

Important initiatives for conservation:

1. Tree Outside Forest in India (TOFI):

- Initiative: 5-year joint project by USAID and MoEFCC, Govt. of India.
- Objective: Expand tree cover outside forests; promote livelihood, ecosystem benefits, and climate change mitigation.
- Goal: Increase Assam's tree and forest area by up to 38%.
- Linked with Chief Minister's Institutional Plantation Programme (CMIPP), 2022 for planting native species under "Amrit Briksha" initiative.

2. Amrit Briksha Andolon, 2023:

- Launched: 8 June 2023; plantation drive held on 17 September 2023.
- Achievement: Over 1 crore saplings planted within 24 hours, setting 9 Guinness World Records.

3. Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation (CWRC):

- Agencies: Assam Forest Department & Wildlife Trust of India (MoU).
- Location: Near Kaziranga National Park.
- Facilities: 4 Mobile Veterinary Services (MVS) — Dhola, Diphu, Kokrajhar, Sejusa.

4. Pygmy Hog Conservation Program (PHCP):

- Habitat: Manas National Park, Assam.
- Started: 1996, led by Assam Forest Department with Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, IUCN, MoEFCC, and Ecosystems-India.
- Achievements:
 - Captive population: ~70 hogs.
 - 108 reintroduced into Sonai Rupai, RG Orang, and Barnadi Wildlife Sanctuaries.

5. Assam Project on Forest and Biodiversity Conservation Society (APFBCS)

- Approach: Formation of Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) and Eco Development Committees (EDCs).
- Status: 185 EDCs active across protected areas in Assam for forest conservation.
- State Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (State CAMPA)
- Major Achievements (2023–24):
 - Aided natural regeneration: 430 ha; Rs. 1091.23 lakh spent.
 - Artificial regeneration (afforestation): 3135.82 ha; Rs. 3479.84 lakh spent.
 - Nurseries: 1.5 ha (6 nos.), 3.0 ha (6 nos.), and ABA Nursery (54 nos.) — all under maintenance.
 -

Industry, Trade and Mining

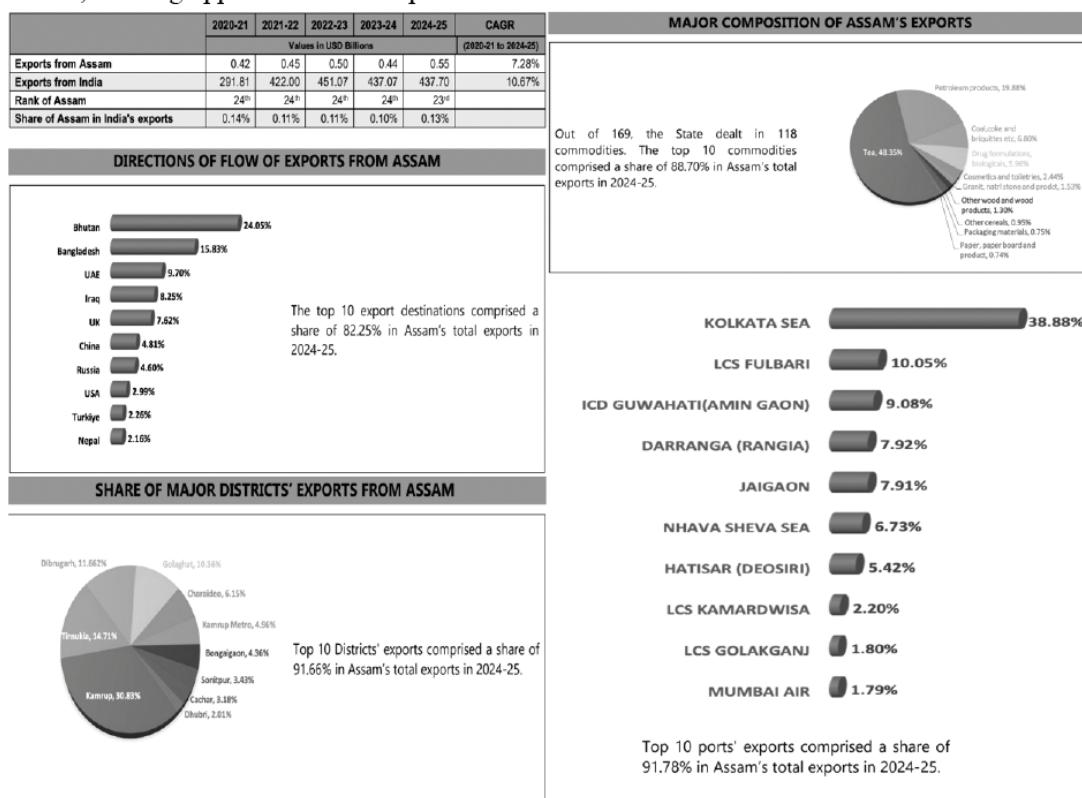
Significance of Industry Sector

- Contribution of industry to GSDP (2024–25):
 - 33.17% at current prices
 - 48.26% at constant (2011–12) prices
- Index of Industrial Production (IIP) - In 2022–23, the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) for Manufacturing stood at 157.64 for Assam compared to 137.1 for India, indicating Assam's stronger industrial performance.

Chapter 8: Exports from Assam

EXPORTABLE ITEMS FROM ASSAM AND BORDER TRADE WITH NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

Tea continues to be the dominant export commodity from Assam, contributing over 50 percent of India's total tea exports to global markets. The state's long-standing reputation for high-quality CTC and orthodox teas ensures consistent international demand. Alongside tea, a range of niche and high-value products from Assam—such as **Joha rice**, **Bhut Jolokia**, **cane and bamboo crafts**, **and Muga and Eri silk fabrics and made-ups**—are now entering global markets. These items are mostly exported through third-party agencies and trading houses based in Mumbai, Kolkata, and New Delhi, which highlights both the growing export potential of Assam and the need for stronger local export facilitation systems. Assam's geographical proximity to **Bhutan and Bangladesh** has enabled the export of select commodities through various Land Customs Stations located along the border, creating opportunities for expanded cross-border trade.



Source: Federation of Indian Export Organisation, Govt of India report 2025

Land Customs Stations and Trade Infrastructure

The Government of India has notified 32 Land Customs Stations (LCSs) across the Northeast, although only 18 are currently functional while 14 remain non-functional. In Assam, 13 LCSs have been notified, yet only three are operational, with the remaining ten still non-functional. This gap demonstrates the infrastructural challenges that continue to limit Assam's export

Chapter 3: Makers of Indian Constitution-Assamese Saga

Introduction

The framing of the Indian Constitution was a momentous event in the nation's history, symbolizing India's transition from colonial rule to a sovereign democratic republic. The people of Assam, representing a region marked by ethnic diversity, frontier challenges, and a rich cultural heritage, played a significant role in this process. The Assamese representatives in the Constituent Assembly ensured that the distinctive needs of the Northeast - particularly those related to tribal autonomy, minority rights, and regional development - were thoughtfully incorporated into the final constitutional framework.

1. *Nibaran Chandra Lahkar (1902–1964)*

- Nibaran Chandra Lahkar was an **eminent educationist, freedom fighter, and parliamentarian** from Cachar district of Assam.
- He served as the **Founder Professor of Guru Charan College** and the **Founder Principal of Cachar College**, contributing immensely to the spread of higher education in southern Assam.
- Lahkar was elected as a **Member of the Assam Legislative Assembly** from 1947 to 1952, where he advocated for inclusive governance and rural upliftment.
- He played a crucial role in the **Drafting Committee (Sub-group)** of the Indian Constitution between 1947 and 1950, where he contributed to discussions on socio-economic policies and administrative reforms.
- As a **Member of Parliament** in both the First and Second Lok Sabha (1952-57, 1957-62), he continued to voice the concerns of the people of Assam at the national level.
- He held several key administrative and developmental positions such as **Deputy Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation (1951-52)**, **Member of the Public Accounts Committee (1955-57)**, and **Member of the All India Cottage Industries Board (1949-52)**.
- Lahkar's efforts symbolized the bridge between constitutional ideals and ground-level development, particularly in the domains of rural economy, rehabilitation, and education.

2. *Dharanidhar Basumatari*

- Dharanidhar Basumatari was a prominent leader from the Bodo community and represented the aspirations of the tribal population of Western Assam.
- He served as a **Member of the Constituent Assembly of India**, where he worked to ensure fair representation and autonomy for tribal groups in the newly emerging Indian polity.
- After Independence, he was elected to the **Lok Sabha from Kokrajhar** in 1957, 1962, 1967, and 1971 as a member of the **Indian National Congress**, reflecting his continued political relevance and the trust of his constituency.
- His contributions in the Assembly emphasized the inclusion of **marginalized and indigenous voices** in the democratic process, strengthening the foundations of equality and justice.

Chapter 14: Movement in Bodoland

Background of the Movement

Roman Script Movement (1952 to 1975)

- The **Bodo Sahitya Sabha (BSS)** was founded in 1952 to promote the Bodo language and secure its inclusion as a medium of instruction.
- In 1963, the Assam Government allowed the use of **Bodo-medium instruction** up to Class III. It extended this to the secondary stage in 1966, but the implementation remained slow and uneven.
- The delays generated frustration among the community and prompted the BSS to intensify its campaign for **time-bound enforcement** of language policy.
- A significant debate also emerged regarding the adoption of the **Roman script**, which had been used for Bodo publications since 1886.
- After prolonged disagreement, the Union Government resolved the issue in 1975 by adopting the **Devanagari script** for the Bodo language.

Demand for Udayachal (from 1967)

- In 1967, plains tribal leaders formed the **Plains Tribal Council of Assam (PTCA)** with the demand for an autonomous region known as **Udayachal**.
- The movement stemmed from concerns relating to **land alienation, cultural marginalisation** and limited political opportunities for plains tribes.
- Inspired by the movement led by the **All Parties Hill Leaders Conference**, PTCA argued that plains tribes deserved similar **Sixth Schedule protections**.
- PTCA organised peaceful protests, election boycotts and mass meetings across tribal areas.
- These activities strengthened **ethnic identity and political awareness** among Bodos and other plains tribal groups.

Political Dynamics in the 1970s

- By the late 1970s, PTCA reduced its demand from full statehood to an **Autonomous Region**, leading to internal disagreements and organisational splits.
- The faction known as **PTCA Progressive**, led by Binoy Khungur Basumatary, revived the call for a separate state.
- Many Bodo youths also participated in the **Assam Movement from 1979 to 1985**, motivated by concerns about illegal immigration and demographic insecurity.
- After the Assam Accord, Bodo leaders such as **Upendranath Brahma** were excluded from key positions in the new AGP Government, deepening feelings of political neglect.
- These developments paved the way for a more organised movement for a **separate Bodoland**, rooted in ethnic assertion and territorial aspirations.

Demand for Bodoland

Launch of the Bodoland Statehood Movement in 1987

- On 2 March 1987, the **All Bodo Students Union (ABSU)** under Upendranath Brahma launched a

Chapter 7: Demography of Assam

History of the population

Geographically Assam, in the middle of Northeast India, contains fertile river valleys surrounded and interspersed by mountains and hills.

It is accessible from

- Tibet in the north (via Bum La, Se La, Tunga),
- Across the Patkai in the Southeast (via Diphu, Kumjawng, Hpungan, Chaukam, Pangsau, More-Tamu) and
- From Burma across the Arakan Yoma (via An, Taungup).

These passes have been gateways for migration routes from Tibet, Southeastern China and Myanmar.

Pre-History

- The earliest culture in Assam is Neolithic, there is no evidence of chalcolithic culture and first state formation began only from middle of 1st millennium CE.
- The archaeological sites of Sarutaru in Kamrup and Daojali Hading in Dima Hasao district display neolithic cultures.
- Some other Neolithic sites in Northeast include those in Arunachal Pradesh, Sadiya, Dibrugarh, Lakhimpur, Nagaon, Naga Hills, Karbi Anglong, Kamrup, Garo and Khasi hills of Meghalaya, etc.
- The neolithic culture discovered in Assam has East and Southeast Asian affinities of the Hoabinhian tradition.

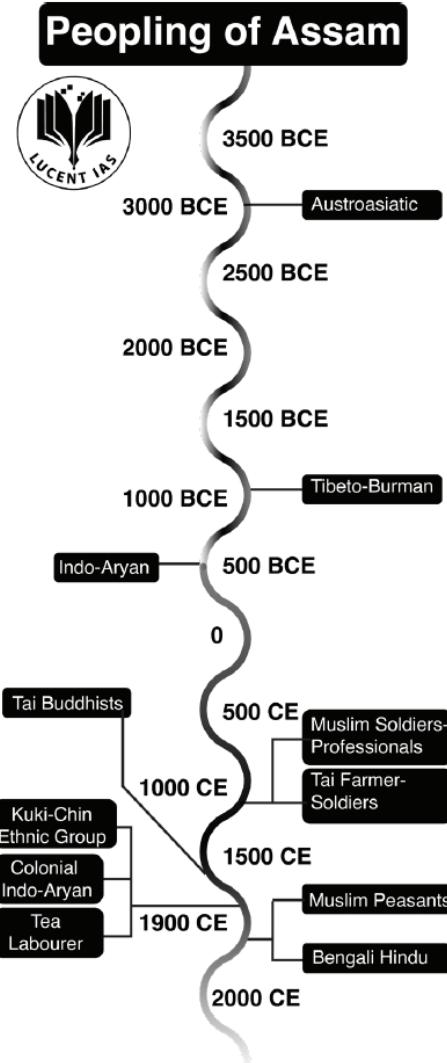
Muslim cultivators

- To increase land productivity, the British encouraged Muslim cultivators from Mymensingh in present-day Bangladesh (Wave 10) to settle in Assam that began in 1901.
- These Muslims are now known as the Miya people.

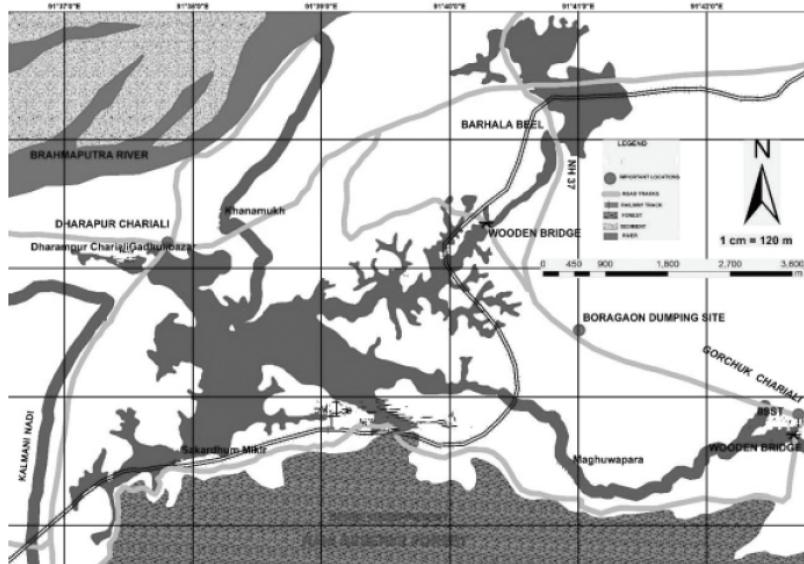
Post-Colonial

Hindus from East Pakistan

The last major group to immigrate are the Hindu refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan, especially from the Sylhet district of Bangladesh following the Sylhet referendum.



17. Deepor Beel Wildlife Sanctuary



- Deepor Beel is a permanent fresh water lake and largest Beel in the Brahmaputra valley of Lower Assam. Deepor Beel is the only Ramsar site in Assam and amongst the third Ramsar site of the north eastern region of India.
- Ramsar Convention in 2002 declared 40.14 sq km as Deepor Beel wetland and 4.14 sq km area was proposed as a bird sanctuary under the Wildlife Protection Act of India, 1972.
- The main inlets of the beel are the Mora Bharalu and the Basistha-Bahini rivers which carry the sewage as well as rain water from Guwahati city.
- The only outlet of the beel is Khanajan located towards the northeast having connection with the main river Brahmaputra.
- The beel is fringed by Rani-Garbhanga reserve forest in the south and the beel has also been playing crucial role in catering the biological need of elephant population of Rani and Garbhanga Reserve Forest with other important mammals of the area.
- Deepor Beel is the only major storm water storage basin and acts as the natural storm water reservoir for the Guwahati city through the Mora bharalu rivulet.
- Mora bharalu river is a channel that is abandoned by the river Bharalu at Fatasil Ambari and meets Basistha Bahini river at Pamohi which eventually confluence with Deepor Beel. The length of the Mora Bharalu rivulet from Fatasil Ambari till the confluence with Deepor Beel is 13.5 kms and runs through Fatasilambari, Bishnupur, Kalapahar colony, Dhirenpara, Manpara, Subhash Pally, Garchuk and Pamohi.

18. Bordoibam Beelmukh

- Bordoibam-Bilmukh is a large freshwater lake that was created during the great earthquake of 1950.
- It was part of the River Subansiri, which now flows 7 km away from the lake.

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