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Migration in the North-Eastern Region of India during 1901-1991: Size, Trend, Reasons and Impact

Introduction

THE North Eastern Region of India is the most interior and inaccessible part of the country. It consists of seven sister states—Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. According to the Census of 1991 the population of the region is recorded as 3,15,47,314. This represents only 3.73% of the total population of India. The decadal growth rate of population of the seven states as a whole during 1981-1991 was as high as 27.46% whereas for India the growth rate was 23.85%. Migration is considered responsible for the high growth rate of population of North-Eastern region. The phenomenon of migration has its impact on various aspects of the North-Eastern region. So special attention is needed to study the migration of the North-Eastern region.

The phenomenon of migration and its socio-economic effects has attracted the attention of many social scientists, political personnels and journalists. For example Zachariah (1964), Mitra (1967), Roy Burman (1970), Sarin (1980), Rustomji (1983), Mahajan (1987), Agarwal (1988), Roy (1988), Chakraborty (1989), Dey and Chakraborty (1994). Bandyopadhyay and Chakraborty (1995), Chakraborty, Gupta, and Bandyopadhyay (1997) have made considerable contributions to this field. Besides these studies, researchers like Dass (1980), Sharma (1980), Guha (1977, 1991), Chowdhury (1982), Goswami and Gogoi (1984) etc. have also done some works concentrating on one state, Assam. However, not a large number of works have been conducted to make an overall study of the trend, pattern and reasons of migration in the North-Eastern region.

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The present paper would concern with this. The paper would study the phenomenon of migration in the North-Eastern region and its size, trend, components, reasons and impact. We have organised the paper as follows. In Section I size, trend of migration and its various components will be dealt with. In Section II reasons for migration in the region will be presented. Section III will discuss the impact of migration. Section IV will conclude the paper.

SECTION I Migration in the North-Eastern Region—Size and its Various Components

The concept of Migration' is actually the net product of two dimensionally opposite ideas, viz. "Immigration" and "Emigration". The people who inflowed during a particular period to the place of enumeration is termed as "immigrants", whereas those who outflowed from the place of enumeration is termed as "emigrants". Here we shall confine ourselves mainly within the immigratory movement. So the following discussion regarding the migration of the North-Eastern region of India has concerned with the immigratory movement in the region.

Here we are beginning with the size, trend and share of migrant population to the total population of the region.

TABLE 1 : TOTAL MIGRANTS IN THE NORTH-EASTERN REGION AND ITS SHARE IN THE TOTAL POPULATION

<i>Years</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Total Size</i>	<i>Migrants Share</i>
1901	4272830	715614 ***	16.75%
1911	5058699	824288 ***	16.29%
1921**	6048393	1242885 ***	20.55%
1931**	7231005	1683770 ***	23.29%
1941	8618116	N.A.	N.A.
1951**	10325254	1613190 ***	15.62%
1961	14500572	1861626 ***	12.84%
1971	19582296	2353898	12.02%
1981	24751604	897061 @	3.62%
1991	31547314	1689791	5.36%

N.A. - Not Available.

@ Excluding migration to Assam.

** Here we have estimated the data of Arunachal Pradesh from the population figures of those areas which are included in Arunachal Pradesh in the later period. The data are available from the Census of 1921, 1931, and 1951.

*** We have-estimated the data by identifying those areas which are included in different states of the North-Eastern region.

Source: Census of India. 1901, 1911, 1921, 1931, 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991.

From the Table 1 it is evident that the share of migrants to the total population of the North-Eastern region of India varies through out the period 1901 -1991. The proportion has steadily increased from around 17% in 1901 to slightly more than 23% in 1931. But from 1951 onwards it is declining. It was 15.62% in 1951 and 5.36% in 1991.

Components of Migration in North-Eastern Region

We have divided the total migrants in the North-Eastern region into three groups.

- (i) Migrants in the North-Eastern region from outside India. The people who undertook migratory movements to the region from outside India. In our study we shall denote these migrants as "Foreign migrants".
- (ii) Migrants in the North-Eastern region from the rest of India. The people who undertook migratory movements to the region from rest of India. Here we shall refer these migrants as the migrants from other states of India.
- (iii) Migrants in the North-Eastern region from within the region. The people who undertook the migratory movements to the North-Eastern region from within the region. In our study, we shall refer these migrants as "Intra-regional" migrants. Here we have ignored the intra-state movements of the people of each state of the region.

The trend of various components of the total migration to the region during 1901-1991 is presented in Table 2 and is also shown in Fig. 1.

It is evident from the Table 2 that during the first half of the century (1901-1931), major portion of the total migrants came from the states or the union territories of India, outside the North-Eastern region. Though the proportion of the migrants are steadily declining (from about 77% in 1901 to nearly 50% in 1931) but the number of the migrants have increased steadily from about 550 thousand in 1901 to more than 800 thousand, in 1931. During the period majority of those who came to North-Eastern region of India, were from foreign countries. The share of the foreign migration was nearly 69% during 1951 but in the 1991 Census it has come down to around 49%. For the first time in the century the percentage of the intra-region migrants becomes a double digit figure, slightly more than 21%, during 1981 Census year (which has excluded Assam from its jurisdiction) and around 17% in the Census year 1991.

Foreign Migration to the North-Eastern Region of India

We have already seen that foreign migration is very important component of the total migration to the North-Eastern region of India.

From the Table 3 it can be observed that the foreign migrants, who came to the region were largely from Bangladesh, Nepal and Myanmar (erstwhile Burma). Starting from 1901 it can be observed that the majority of the foreign migrants were from Bangladesh.

TABLE 2 : DIFFERENT TYPES OF MIGRANTS IN NORTH-EASTERN REGION OF INDIA
DURING 1901-1991

<i>Migrants from</i>	1901	1911	1921	1931	1951	1961	1971	1981 ^(a)	1991
Foreign	117923	178494	355213	809000	1109319	1291294	1629678	572587	633753
	(16.48%)	(21.65%)	(26.58%)	(48.05%)	(68.77%)	(69.36%)	(69.23)	(63.83%)	(49.34)
Other States of India	549781	614058	855999	835861	437053	498422	562502	132658	565431
	(76.83%)	(74.50%)	(68.87%)	(49.64%)	(27.09%)	(26.77%)	(23.90%)	(14.79%)	(33.46)
Intra Region	47910	31736	31673	38909	66818	71910	161718	191818	290607
	(6.69%)	(3.85%)	(2.55%)	(2.31%)	(4.14%)	(3.86%)	(6.87%)	(21.38%)	(17.20)
Total	715614	824288	1242885	1683770	1613190	1861626	2353898	897063	1689791
	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)

^(a) Without including the data for Assam.

Source: Census of India, 1901, 1911, 1921, 1931, 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991.

TABLE 3 : FOREIGN MIGRANTS TO THE NORTH-EASTERN REGION OF INDIA DURING 1901-1991

<i>Countries Migrating from</i>	1901	1911	1921	1931	1951	1961	1971	1981 ^(a)	1991
Bangladesh@	91096	125621	274492	706452	1044843	1175789	1489873	513149	745414
	(77.25)	(70.38)	(77.28)	(87.32)	(94.19)	(91.06)	(91.42)	(89.62)	(89.40)
Nepal	21268	47463	70053	88269	57266	100210	124364	48377	45892
	(18.04)	(26.59)	(19.72)	(10.91)	(5.16)	(7.76)	(7.63)	(8.45)	(5.50)
Myanmar	1666	2292	7395	7749	3674	4571	5507	4931	5824
	(1.41)	(1.28)	(2.08)	(.96)	(.33)	(.35)	(.34)	(.86)	(.70)
Other Countries	3893	3118	3273	6530	3536	10724	9934	6130	36623
	(3.30)	(1.75)	(.92)	(.81)	(.32)	(.83)	(.61)	(1.07)	(4.39)
Total	117923	178494	355213	809000	1109319	1291294	1629678	572587	833753
	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)

^(a) Without the data of Assam.

@ We have estimated the figures for Bangladesh during 1901-31 by identifying those areas which were included in present Bangladesh and for the years 1951-1971 data of Pakistan is taken as an approximation because we have assumed that most of the migrants who came from Pakistan to the region were from the contiguous East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).

Source: Census of India 1901, 1911, 1921, 1931, 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991.

The absolute number of the migrants was more than 91 thousand in 1901. Since then it has been steadily increasing and reached at nearly 745 thousand in the Census year 1991. The share of the migrants from Bangladesh was between slightly more than 70% to slightly more than 87% in pre independence era. In post independence era it reached

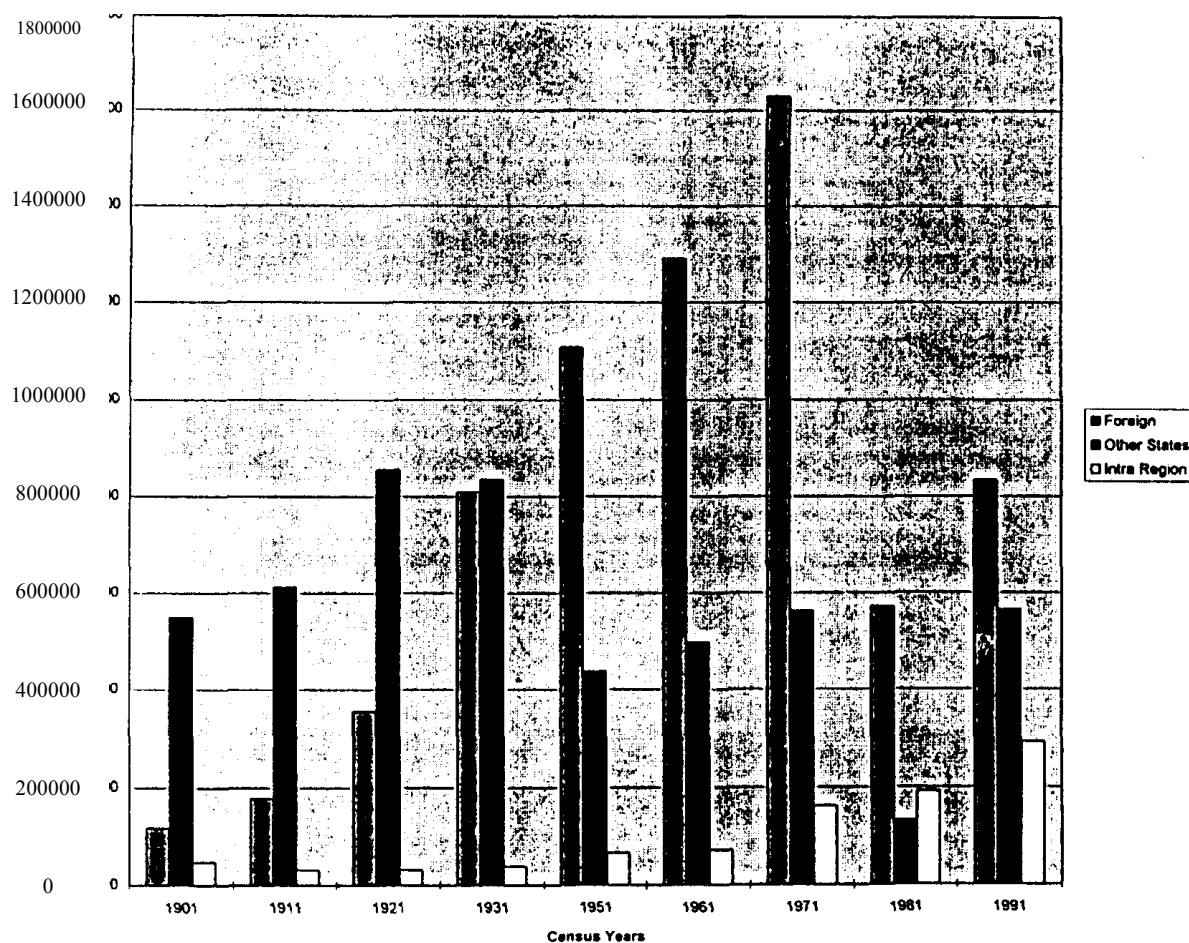


Fig. 1. Different Types of Migrants in the North-Eastern Region of India, 1901-1991

at 94% in 1951—the highest among all the periods under consideration. From 1961 onwards the share started to decline and became around 89% in the Census year of 1991. It is also clear from the Table 3 that Bangladesh was followed by Nepal in sending migrants to the North-Eastern region of India. Among the foreign migrants to the region slightly more than 10% to slightly more than 26% came from Nepal in pre-independence era. But in post independence era it is observed that the share of the migrants from Nepal has declined and remained slightly more than 5% to about 8%. In the Census years of both pre as well as post independence eras, the proportion of the migrants from Myanmar was considerably very low.

The flow of the foreign migrants to the North-Eastern region, state-wise are presented in Table 4. We have already mentioned that bulk of the foreign migrants in the region are from Bangladesh in almost all of the Census years under consideration. For the state of Assam, Tripura and Meghalaya also, it is clear that most of the foreign migrants are from Bangladesh, in pre as well as in post independence eras. In pre independence era in 1901 the share of the migrants who came to Assam from Bangladesh is found to be

75.12% while in post independence era it is observed that the proportion of the migrants from Bangladesh to Assam shot up to nearly 95% in the census year 1951, and remained at 84.85% in 1991. For the state of Tripura it is clear that, at least 99% of the foreign migrants were from Bangladesh, as recorded in all of the census years under discussion. To Meghalaya on the other hand, the proportion of the foreign migrants from Bangladesh has declined from 72.59% in 1901 to 59.27% in 1991. In 1991, the migrants who came from Nepal to this state is around 26%. To the states of Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland

TABLE 4 : FOREIGN MIGRANTS TO THE STATES OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION OF INDIA
DURING 1901-1991

Year	Countries migrating from	Assam	Arunachal Pradesh	Manipur	Meghalaya	Mizoram	Nagaland	Tnpiira
1901	Bangladesh	59224	N.A.	152	5775	1287	64	24594
		(75.12)		(21.62)	(72.59)	(29.90)	(4.41)	(99.72)
	Nepal	15843		525	2047	1438	1367	48
		(20.09)		(74.68)	(25.73)	(33.41)	(94.15)	(0.19)
	Myanmar	84		4	0	1567	0	11
		(0.11)		(0.57)		(36.41)		(0.04)
	Other Countries	3693		22	134	12	21	11
		(4.68)		(3.13)	(1.68)	(0.28)	(1.45)	(0.04)
	Total	78844		703	7956	4304	1452	24664
		(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)
1951	Bangladesh	799735	1492	1394	24133	6512	1416	210161
		(94.79)	(24.83)	(67.08)	(69.73)	(66.37)	(58.71)	(99.74)
	Nepal	39846	4305	424	9851	1633	937	270
		(4.72)	(71.65)	(20.40)	(28.46)	(16.64)	(38.85)	(0.13)
	Myanmar	1301	94	256	234	1637	30	122
		(0.15)	(1.56)	(12.32)	(0.68)	(16.68)	(1.24)	' (0.05)
	Other Countries	2812	117	4	390	30	29	154
		(0.33)	(1.95)	(0.19)	(1.13)	(0.31)	(1.20)	(0.07)
	Total	843694	6008	2078	34608	9812	2412	210707
		(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)
1991	Bangladesh	288109	8397	1012	11887	1560	303	434136
		(84.85)	(36.75)	(36.05)	(59.27)	(24.51)	(5.82)	(99.37)
	Nepal	22433	12363	743	5222	568	4245	318
		(6.61)	(54.11)	(26.47)	(26.04)	(8.92)	(81.59)	(0.07)
	Myanmar	890	175	686	100	3808	40	125
		(0.26)	(0.77)	(24.44)	(0.50)	(59.83)	(0.77)	(0.03)
	Other Countries	28123	1914	366	2845	429	615	2331
		(8.28)	(8.38)	(13.04)	(14.19)	(6.74)	(11.82)	(0.53)
	Total	339555	22849	2807	20054	6365	5203	436920
		(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)

Figures in () are percentages.

Source: Census of India 1901, 1951 and 1991.

most of the foreign migrants came from Nepal as recorded in the Census year 1991. In Manipur, Nepal was the country from where most of the migrants came to the state in 1901, but the share declined to 26.47% in 1991. People from the countries, Myanmar and Bangladesh also came to Manipur as shown by 1991 Census. In the state of Mizoram, Myanmar and Bangladesh are the countries from where major share of migrants made their way to the state in 1991.

Migration from Other States of India in the North-Eastern Region of India

The migration from other states of India to the North-Eastern region is another component of total migration. This is presented in Table 5 (Fig. 2).

From Table 5 it is clear that the number of migrants who came from other states of India varied between 0.5 million to around 0.8 million during the pre-independence era. But it declined to around 0.4 million in 1951 and reaching slightly more than 0.5

TABLE 5 : MIGRANTS FROM OTHER STATES OF INDIA TO NORTH -EASTERN REGION DURING 1901-1991

States	1901	1911	1921	1931	1951	1961	1971	1981*	1991
West Bengal	60707 (11.04)	84363 (13.59)	123520 (14.43)	171249 (20.49)	26485 (6.06)	59467 (11.93)	78308 (13.92)	20760 (15.65)	116726 (20.64)
Bihar [^]	313509 (57.02)	363474 (59.19)	528620 (61.75)	446419 (53.41)	208608 (47.73)	263483 (52.86)	268421 (47.72)	49320 (37.18)	242008 (42.8)
Orissa	33139 (6.03)				89051 (20.38)	53486 (10.73)	33005 (5.87)	4609 (3.47)	14222 (2.52)
Uttar Pradesh	58820 (10.70)	53594 (8.73)	44062 (5.15)	45298 (5.42)	33904 (7.76)	48934 (9.82)	83000 (14.76)	23351 (17.60)	75188 (13.29)
Madhya Pradesh	56684 (10.31)	75319 (12.27)	98200 (11.47)	90150 (10.79)	10643 (2.44)	11887 (2.38)	15296 (2.72)	1532 (1.15)	8788 (1.55)
Rajasthan	9101 (1.66)	11397 (1.86)	15349 (1.79)	21554 (2.58)	17629 (4.03)	23467 (4.71)	32685 (5.81)	6601 (4.98)	35701 (6.31)
Maharashtra	5910 (1.07)	1096 (0.18)	1330 (0.16)	6043 (0.72)	4838 (1.11)	1897 (0.38)	2556 (0.45)	1230 (0.93)	3996 (0.71)
Punjab	6049 (1.10)	3389 (0.55)	2872 (0.34)	5990 (0.72)	5681 (1.30)	14788 (2.97)	12711 (2.26)	3857 (2.91)	9338 (1.63)
Other States	5862 (1.07)	22326 (3.64)	42046 (4.91)	49158 (5.88)	40213 (9.20)	21013 (4.22)	36520 (6.49)	21398 (16.13)	59464 (10.52)
Total	549781 (100)	614058 (100)	855999 (100)	835861 (100)	437052 (100)	498422 (100)	562502 (100)	132658 (100)	565431 (100)

^(a)Included the data of both Bihar and Orissa for the Census years of 1911-1931.

* Without the estimated data for Assam.

Source; Census of India 1901, 1911, 1921, 1931, 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991.

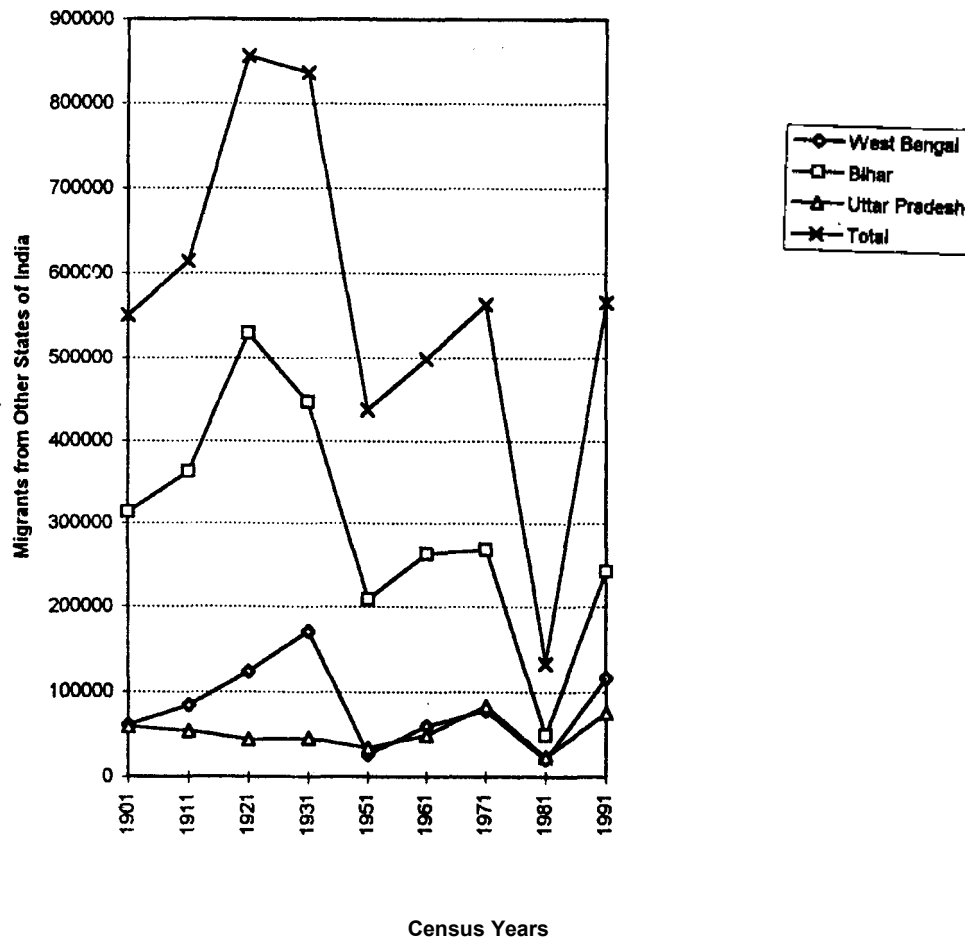


Fig. 2. Migrants from Other States of India to the North-Eastern Region of India, 1901-1991

million in 1991. We have already observed that the percentage share of the said migrants varied between nearly 77% in 1901 of the pre independence era to around 33% in 1991. Table 5 also listed the states from where the migrants came to the region during 1901-1991. From the Table 5 it is observed that in the pre as well as in the post independence eras most of the migrants came from the state of Bihar. The percentage of the migrants from Bihar to the region was around 57% during 1901 and declined to around 43% in 1991. We have clubbed data for Bihar and Orissa for the three successive census years 1911, 1921, 1931 which present that these two states together send about 53% to 62% of the migrants in the pre independence period. Even in the post independence era the migrants from Bihar and Orissa, constituted a large portion of the migrant population from the other states of India to the region. Besides Bihar and Orissa, among other states (outside the region) West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh were the other major states from where the migrants made their way to the region, in the pre as well as in post

independence era. The percentage share of the migrants both from West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh among the migrants from other states of India to the region was around 11% each in 1901 but reached to nearly 21% and nearly 13% respectively in 1991.

Let us look into the destination of the migrants from other states of India to different states of the North-Eastern region of India. For the sake of simplicity we have considered Tables 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 which depict only three Census data of 1901, 1951 and 1991 respectively. It is clear from the tables that during the Census year 1901, except in Manipur, most of the migrants who came from other Indian states to different states of North-Eastern region were from Bihar. It may be observed from the Table 6.1 that about 57% of this type of migrants to the state of Assam was from Bihar whereas about 43%, 32%, 30% and 26% respectively to the states—Tripura, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland. In Manipur it can be seen that Uttar Pradesh (sending about 59%) was the major state from where the migrants came in the Census year 1901. Besides Manipur other North-Eastern states also got considerable migrants from Uttar Pradesh. Besides these states other major states from which migrants came are West Bengal (to Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram), Madhya Pradesh (to Assam), and Punjab (to Nagaland) during the Census year 1901. The dominance of Bihar among the other states (outside the region) of India in sending migrants to different states of North-Eastern region even in the post independence era is clearly noted from Tables 6.2 and 6.3. As it is observed that in at least five out of the seven states of the region got most of the migrants from Bihar during 1951 and 1991. Bihar contributed maximum in sending migrants to Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura in 1951; to almost all states in 1991. Besides, Bihar other major states from where migrants made their way are West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

TABLE 6.1 : PER CENT MIGRANTS FROM OTHER STATES OF INDIA TO DIFFERENT STATES OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION DURING 1901

<i>States</i>	<i>Assam</i>	<i>Arunachal Pradesh</i>	<i>Manipur</i>	<i>Meghalaya</i>	<i>Mizoram</i>	<i>Nagaland</i>	<i>Tripura</i>
West Bengal	11.05	N.A.	5.39	17.02	22.60	17.50	4.29
Bihar	57.42	N.A.	21.48	32.91	30.14	26.38	43.36
Orissa	5.04	N.A.	0.51	7.00	3.15	2.25	7.88
Uttar Pradesh	10.28	N.A.	58.81	27.73	29.45	25.13	31.64
Madhya Pradesh	10.42	N.A.	1.93	1.52	04.79	03.75	06.63
Rajasthan	1.64	N.A.	3.09	4.30	0.96	07.25	0.32
Maharashtra	1.08	N.A.	0.71	1.18	02.05	0.10	0.22
Punjab	1.03	N.A.	7.04	5.77	06.16	15.13	01.18
Other States	1.04	N.A.	0.51	2.57	0.68	01.63	04.48
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Census of India 1901.

TABLE 6.2 : PER CENT MIGRANTS FROM OTHER STATES OF INDIA TO DIFFERENT STATES OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION DURING 1951

<i>States</i>	<i>Assam</i>	<i>Arunachal Pradesh</i>	<i>Manipur</i>	<i>Meghalaya</i>	<i>Mizoram</i>	<i>Nagaland</i>	<i>Tripura</i>
West Bengal	04.39	07.42	13.37	14.37	20.85	09.36	09.85
Bihar	50.23	45.60	12.08	26.81	64.66	37.34	38.68
Orissa	20.11	11.90	03.60	0.97	01.77	11.91	29.03
Uttar Pradesh	07.00	15.43	02.31	29.56	06.71	17.11	07.02
Madhya Pradesh	02.28	01.81	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.14
Rajasthan	04.34	07.20	52.19	06.89	0.00	19.08	02.77
Maharashtra	0.87	01.55	0.00	01.00	0.35	0.23	0.55
Punjab	01.15	02.23	11.31	13.26	03.81	01.50	02.91
Other States	08.63	06.86	05.14	07.14	02.47	03.47	09.05
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Census of India 1951.

TABLE 6.3 : PER CENT MIGRANTS FROM OTHER STATES OF INDIA TO DIFFERENT STATES OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION DURING 1991

<i>States</i>	<i>Assam</i>	<i>Arunachal Pradesh</i>	<i>Manipur</i>	<i>Meghalaya</i>	<i>Mizoram</i>	<i>Nagaland</i>	<i>Tripura</i>
West Bengal	21.48	14.16	15.37	20.39	09.83	13.76	29.26
Bihar	44.27	39.14	28.02	37.69	43.06	38.74	35.90
Orissa	02.34	04.80	1.30	1.24	01.41	03.64	02.38
Uttar Pradesh	12.40	22.21	15.74	11.74	09.74	16.95	10.25
Madhya Pradesh	01.72	0.74	01.56	1.01	01.32	00.89	01.32
Rajasthan	06.72	03.01	07.37	06.01	0.94	08.46	03.34
Maharashtra	0.55	0.42	0.77	03.09	01.97	0.61	01.31
Punjab	01.48	01.32	01.97	03.97	01.41	01.16	03.43
Other States	09.03	14.19	27.90	14.86	30.32	15.78	12.81
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Census of India 1991. *Intra-Regional Migration in the North-Eastern Region of India*

To study from which states of the region migrants made their way to the states of the region we have tried to construct intra-regional 'Immigration-Emigration' matrices (given in Tables 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3) for the Census years 1901, 1951 and 1991, though there is gap in state-wise data in the Census years.

From the intra-regional immigration-emigration matrices given in the Tables 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 it is observed that most of the migrants who came to Assam from other North-Eastern states were from Meghalaya in all of the Census years (for which data are

TABLE 7.1 : INTRA REGIONAL MIGRANTS IN NORTH-EASTERN REGION DURING 1901 (in percentages)
STATES OF ENUMERATION

<i>States Migrating from</i>	<i>Assam</i>	<i>Arunachal Pradesh</i>	<i>Manipur</i>	<i>Meghalaya</i>	<i>Mizoram</i>	<i>Nagaland</i>	<i>Tripura</i>
Assam	-		65.20	96.91	34.12	64.34	*
Arunachal Pradesh	N.A.	-	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	*
Manipur	9.22		-	1.88	55.49	28.42	*
Meghalaya	23.98		18.68	-	9.99	6.32	*
Mizoram	0.57				-	0.91	*
Nagaland	66.22		16.12	1.21	0.40		*
Tripura		N.A.	-		-		-
Total	100		100	100	100	100	

*The migrants from undivided Assam are taken as intra-regional migrants to Tripura. *Source:* Census of India 1991.

TABLE 7.2 : INTRA REGIONAL MIGRANTS IN NORTH-EASTERN REGION DURING 1951 (in percentages)
STATES OF ENUMERATION

<i>States Migrating from</i>	<i>Assam</i>	<i>Arunachal Pradesh</i>	<i>Manipur</i>	<i>Meghalaya</i>	<i>Mizoram</i>	<i>Nagaland</i>	<i>Tripura</i>
Assam	-	89.7	*	83.25	28.27	77.36	**
Arunachal Pradesh	4.44	-	*	0.09	0.38	0.38	**
Manipur	9.4	1.98	-	4.12	26.35	12.88	3.22
Meghalaya	29.52	2.55	*	-	18.46	5.72	**
Mizoram	4.04	1.03	*	5.89	-	0.58	**
Nagaland	6.1	2.71	4	4.5	0.77	-	**
Tripura	46.5	2.03	0.23	2.14	25.77	3.08	-
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

*There are clubbed data for migrants from other five states except Tripura.

**There are clubbed data for migrants from other five states except Manipur. *Source:* Census of India 1951.

TABLE 7.3 : INTRA REGIONAL MIGRANTS IN NORTH-EASTERN REGION DURING 1991 (in percentages)
STATES OF ENUMERATION

<i>States Migrating from</i>	<i>Assam</i>	<i>Arunachal Pradesh</i>	<i>Manipur</i>	<i>Meghalaya</i>	<i>Mizoram</i>	<i>Nagaland</i>	<i>Tripura</i>	<i>Total</i>
Assam	—	94.08	72.1	89.99	49.78	75.59	87.8	57.91
Arunachal Pradesh	7.78	-	0.32	0.51	0.90	0.55	0.49	2.79
Manipur	7.78	0.95	-	2.57	12.13	17.54	1.72	5.49
Meghalaya	32.92	2.81	2.49	-	8.34	1.95	4.53	12.5
Mizoram	2.89	0.22	13.95	2.31	-	0.61	4.08	2.2
Nagaland	10.16	0.57	3.39	1.39	1.67	-	1.38	4.02
Tripura	38.47	1.38	7.74	3.23	27.18	3.75	-	15.09
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

*The migrants from undivided Assam are taken as intra-region migrants to Tripura. *Source:* Census of India 1991.

available). From the matrices it is also evident that Assam is the major state from where migrants came to the other North-Eastern states.

SECTION II

Reasons for Migration in the North-Eastern Region

So far we have analysed the size, trend and component of migration. Let us discuss why different types of migrants made their way to the North-Eastern region. In this section attempt will be made to look for the reasons for migration of the three groups.

Reasons for Foreign Migration of the North-Eastern Region

The history of immigration to the North-Eastern region dates back to the beginning of the present century. Assam became a British protectorate of the East India Company after the Burmese invasion in 1826. The then Government in its revenue earnings pursuit declared certain terms for granting waste lands for cultivation, in 1827. At first this was offered to the Assamese only, but later observing failure the Government decided in 1856 to grant the waste lands to "Europeans, Assamese, Bengalees and others without distinction and cultivation of whatever the grantee might think proper to produce" (Barpujari, 1980). As a consequence, from the time onwards, the cultivation of tea began by European capital in Assam. Assam with its favourable climate for tea plantation and abundant land attracted the Britishers to invest their capital for the production of this important item of consumption, which has a great demand in the U.K. market. In spite of the availability of abundant land and capital, they had to face the severe shortage of labour supply. In Tripura also plantation began after World War I. Local conditions were such as to release working population for tea gardens, in addition to that employment was not so attractive in the tea garden. Therefore, one who had minimum livelihood refused to work there and as a result migration of labour took place from other parts of the country as well as from outside the country. So migrants from foreign countries may have been attracted by these employment opportunities. Besides, the immigration of cultivators from Bangladesh (erstwhile East Bengal) began from the start of the present century. The cultivator-migrants mainly came from the contiguous districts of Bangladesh. The basic cause of the migratory movement was the availability of abundant cultivable land. The ryotari land tenure system in Assam giving the opportunity of new life of cultivator proprietorship, also attracted the migrants.

Discussing the 'pull factors' now we shall look into the 'push factors' prevailing in their native places. Firstly, the pressure on land. For example Mymensingh, the main emigrating district, had one of the fastest growth rates of population among all other districts of Bengal. In 1911 Mymensingh had 4.5 million inhabitants with a density of

724 per sq mile which was 29% above density of the average Bengal districts. By 1913 the density had risen to 823 per sq mile which was 34% above the average. Secondly, the permanent settlement of Bangladesh (erstwhile East Bengal) under which they had to face Zamindari oppression because they were either tenants or under tenants or virtual bonded labourers. Besides, devastating floods often made them landless and even without their homesteads. So these people felt that their expenses in migration was not higher than their earnings from the cultivation at their native places.

Thus we observe that in the early decades of the period, under our discussion the foreign migrants came in the North-Eastern region, to capture the lands lying unused, for cultivation. There was further immigration of the Bangladeshi migrants to North-Eastern region between 1931 and partition. Among them were Muslims encouraged by the Sadulla Ministry governed the then Assam after 1937. According to Goswami (1984), "It was during this period that the Sadullah Ministry under pretext of raising the state's agricultural production, engineered the systematic settlement of people from East Bengal in Assam. Though it was protested later in Assam, but in Tripura the cultivator immigrants were welcomed as there was abundant supply of virgin land in the valleys and local people (tribals) were outnumbered by the immigrants."

Mangalam (1968) has opined that migrants prefer to go to a destination where the social organisation is as similar as possible to that of their places of origin. Psychic, non-monetary costs of migration, therefore, do play a role in migrational movement along with the monetary costs. The reflection of the above view is seen, when we observed that on the eve of partition thousands of Bengali speaking Hindus migrated to various parts of India, particularly in Assam, Tripura, and West Bengal. Besides these, during and after the riots (Hindu-Muslim) those took place in 1950 and in 1964 the inflow took place in North-Eastern region.

During the period 1941-51, most of the foreign migrants were compelled to enter into North-Eastern region. A large number of Indian evacuees from Burma (now Myanmar) during the Second World War and the Hindu refugees from Bangladesh were the main constituent of the foreign migrants during the decade. They began to pour since October 1946, immediately after the Noakhali riots. The insecurity feeling after the partition compelled many Hindus to abandon their place of birth to enter the contiguous North-Eastern region and West Bengal. Besides, in the post partition era, along with Hindu refugees Muslim farm labourers also came to the region at the same pre-Independence rate, if not on a larger scale, reversing the general expectations that partition would prevent the influx of Muslim migrants from the newly emerged East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) to the North-Eastern region. Also influx of the Bangladeshi migrants to the region happened in connection with the Bangladesh liberation movement. Many people who took shelter never went back. A large number of Chakmas entered Mizoram, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh.

In addition to the above discussed migrants there were Nepali migrants. Most of them were originally soldiers of Gurkha regiments. Besides, there were the immigration

of Nepali graziers which was continuously unnoticed 'as they settled only in hill slopes which are not demanded either by the indigenous farmers or immigrants from East Bengal. Some of these are Government waste land and some belong to the local people. By allowing the Nepalis to settle down the landowners are able to get some income instead of the land remaining unoccupied. The rising demand for milk and milk products and fire wood in urban centres encouraged the Nepalis to settle in hill slopes near the line of communication from/to urban market centres' (Goswami, 1984).

Thus, we observed that the foreign migrants have moved across difficult geographical obstacles driven by possibilities of better economic opportunity. The strength of the economic force that drives migration can further be explained (Chakraborty, Gupta, Bandyopadhyay, 1997).

In line with the Harris-Todaro framework (1970), let W_R and W_M be the per capita income in the rural and modern sectors. Let W_R be downward flexible and market determined such that every body is employed at that income (or wage) level. Let W_M be institutionally determined and fixed. Let p be the probability of finding employment in the modern sector, which is $(1 - q)$ where q is the rate of unemployment in the modern sector. Thus, for an individual, in the rural sector, the post migration expected income is given by the wage in the modern sector times the probability of finding employment which, in this case is $p \cdot W_M$ or $(1 - q) \cdot W_M$. It is worthwhile for him to migrate as long as this expected income exceeds the current wage, W_R . Migration will continue to occur as long as the following inequality holds :

$$(1-q)W_M > W_R$$

Applying this frame work, in the present context, we will attempt to estimate the difference between the left side over the right side and use this as a representative measure of the strength of the driving force of migration. This simple modified Harris-Todaro framework captures the basic elements of Harris-Todaro model but is easy to test empirically the model for explaining migration from Bangladesh (from where most of the migrants came) to North-Eastern region of India. We construct below the comparative figures where North-Eastern region of India is considered to be the modern sector and Bangladesh the rural sector (Table 8).

The last column shows the difference in expected income in North-Eastern region over actual earnings in Bangladesh, which is a measure of how strong the pulling force of migration, on the individual. The above table actually under estimates the strength of the force of migration since:

- (i) Unemployment figures of India have been taken in place of North-Eastern region's data.
- (ii) Unemployment figures in Bangladesh is ignored.

Per capita income is not a good measure of expected wage, but is taken here for representative purposes. The serious difference in economic opportunity is clearly borne

TABLE 8 : ESTIMATES OF DIFFERENCE IN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY BETWEEN NORTH-EASTERN REGION OF INDIA AND BANGLADESH

<i>Year</i>	<i>Annual Avg. per capita income.: Bangladesh (in US \$)</i>	<i>Annual Avg. per capita income: (in US \$)</i>	<i>*Rate of unemployment N.E. region (in US \$)</i>	<i>Expected Income in N.E. region (in US \$) $(3) \times (1 - (4)) =$</i>	<i>Difference in economic opportunity (in US \$) $(5) - (2) =$</i>
<i>(1)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(3)</i>	<i>(4)</i>	<i>(5)</i>	<i>(6)</i>
1973-74	69.28	83.87	10.4%	75.15	5.87
1981	117.76**	157.75	8.25%	144.74	26.98
1991	211.52	246.85	6.09%	231.82	20.30

* India's data are taken.

** For 1982.

Sources: (a) World Development report of different years.

(b) International financial statistics.

(c) Plan documents of India.

(d) Estimates of state domestic product.

(e) Basic Statistics of North-Eastern, 1995.

(f) Committee of Experts on Unemployment, 1973.

(g) Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific, 1975.

out in the last column. In the main, we are led to believe that the average Bangladeshi migrant fared better in the North-Eastern region. This continued experience would naturally lead to a constant stream of migrants. It is important at this point to note the role of information in the process. While income differentials of the Harris-Todaro type can explain migration, the process must be continuously fueled by the availability of information about wages and employment opportunities in the modern sector flowing to the rural hinterland.

Linguistic and cultural contiguity and the initial presence of a large number of migrants with deep rooted ties to Bangladesh would lead to the conclusion that such information was always available and continuously updated through personal contact and by mail. Thus the readiness of the information must have smoothened the process of migration from Bangladesh to North-Eastern region of India.

For the first time in 1981 Census data included the tables on 'reasons for migration'. But data of Assam were not available. In the Census year 1991 we have the data of all the seven states of the region. The possible reasons of migration are 'employment', 'business', 'education', 'family moved', 'marriage', 'Natural Calamities' and 'other reasons'. So with the help of such data we can get some ideas about the reasons for migration.

From the Table 9, we observe that except in Tripura and Nagaland most of the foreign migrants came for the reason 'family moved'. In Tripura foreign migrants came primarily

for 'other reasons', whereas in Nagaland primary motive of the foreign migrants was 'employment'. However, in these states also 'family moved' is another important reason for foreign migration. Among the male migrants 'employment' is an important cause for those who came to Arunachal Pradesh (45.59%) and Nagaland (49.62%). But 'family moved' is important reason for migration of the males to the other states except Tripura whereas in Tripura they came mostly for the 'other reasons'. Also it is clear from Table 9 that the females moved mainly for 'family moved' to all the North-Eastern states except Tripura where 'other reasons' are prominent.

TABLE 9 : REASONS FOR FOREIGN MIGRATION TO THE DIFFERENT STATES OF THE NORTH-EASTERN REGION, 1991

		<i>Employment</i>	<i>Business</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Family moved</i>	<i>Marriage</i>	<i>Natural calamities</i>	<i>Other reasons</i>	<i>Total</i>
Arunachal Pradesh	P	27.76	3.42	1.76	28.95	10.65	0	27.47	100
	M	45.59	5.19	2.3	15.87	0.81	0	30.23	100
	F	4.12	1.08	1.04	46.27	23.69	0	23.8	100
Assam	P	3.96	4.32	0.45	39.65	15.7	0	35.92	100
	M	6.39	7.08	0.57	41.37	1.18	0	43.4	100
	F	1.1	1.08	0.3	37.62	32.79	0	27.12	100
Manipur	P	8.8	7.75	0.42	49.22	8.97	0	24.84	100
	M	12.32	9.44	0.29	44.6	3.67	0	29.68	100
	F	3.85	5.37	0.61	55.72	16.41	0	18.03	100
Meghalaya	P	13.54	6.15	1.86	34.97	12.34	0	31.14	100
	M	20.76	8.52	2.37	28.63	5.79	0	33.93	100
	F	3.74	2.93	1.18	43.58	21.23	0	27.35	100
Mizoram	P	7.38	3.04	1.03	55.03	8.43	0	25.09	100
	M	10.81	4.11	1.15	50.55	2.75	0	30.62	100
	F	4.33	2.09	0.92	59.02	13.49	0	20.16	100
Nagaland	P	34.85	10.11	1.57	25.02	8.96	0	19.49	100
	M	49.62	13.26	1.75	13.63	1.32	0	20.42	100
	F	6.1	3.98	1.22	47.21	23.83	0	17.66	100
Tripura	P	2.55	0.82	0.29	30.58	9.34	0	56.42	100
	M	4.04	1.21	0.41	31.83	0.72	0	61.79	100
	F	0.96	0.41	0.16	29.25	18.5	0	50.71	100

Source: Census of India 1991, Table D-3.

Reasons for Migration from Other States of India to North-Eastern Region of India

The Britishers had imported thousand of tribal workers from Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Central India to employ them in their tea plantation. The potential immigrants with their earnest desire to be the master of their land readily accepted the proposal of emigrating from their native land permanently.

The tea plantations in this North-Eastern region were solely dependent on migrant labour. The source of importation was Lohardage, Chotanagpur, Manbhum and Haranibagha of Bihar and Orissa, Ghazipur, Azamgarh and Jaunpur of United Provinces and Sambalpur, Bilaspur and Jabalpur of central provinces. Women also participated in the tea garden work. In fact, it is a common belief that women are more efficient than men in plucking up tea leaves. To avoid desertion, the tea plantation agents encouraged family movement, which also explains why women were numerous in tea gardens. Migration of tea garden labourers began as early as in 1853 and continued till 1937. Besides the above migrants from Bihar and Orissa, Marwari merchants who were the natives of Rajasthan (formerly Rajputana) also migrated to the North-Eastern region to capture trade and commerce, from the later part of the last century. Their migration to the region began to increase gradually and these merchants capture almost all of the business of the Brahmaputra valley. They mostly came to the tea producing industry which hinted the effect of the tea industry upon trade in general. For example, Gauhati in Kamrup, being an important centre of commerce and centre of the mustard trade in lower Assam, attracted lesser number of people from this place whereas the three great tea-districts—Darrang, Sibsagar, Lakhimpur were their centre of attraction.

The migrants from Punjab were mostly contractors, skilled mechanics, carpenters, 'motor mistries' and motor drivers. These people were attracted to the province by the Assam-Bengal Railway. They concentrated principally in Lakhimpur, the most developed industrial district in Assam.

During the period 1951-71 the North-Eastern region witnessed a moderate increase in the inflow of migrants from the states of India out side the region. The most important of such migrants being from Bihar, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh. The people from Rajasthan had established their control over the secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy, of the state of Assam which experiences the most immigration among the states of North-Eastern region. The migrants from Bihar have monopolised the laborious jobs like portering, rickshaw pulling, brick-making, construction labour etc. in the Brahmaputra valley. Besides them a major constituent of the migrants from other states of India to the North-Eastern region were the persons, who were the employees of government and semi-government organisations, including service personnel.

After Independence, the development and other economic activities geared up in North-Eastern region. For instance, along with wood-based industries several cottage and small scale industries were started' flourishing. Besides cultivation of 'coffee' as was encouraged to be a potential exportable commodity. All these activities required a large number of labourers. But local population, specially in Arunachal, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya and Mizoram were too small and scattered to provide sufficient labour for production, for construction and for infrastructural developments. Besides, Assam is the only state where tea industry could attract not only the foreign migrants but also the migrants from the non-adjacent states especially from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The

tribal people of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and partly from Orissa in the tea gardens of the state was an important component of the migrants from other states of India in Assam. The reasons for the migration for male and female migrants as recorded in Census of India, 1991 are presented in the Table 10.

TABLE 10 : REASONS FOR MIGRATION FROM OTHER STATES OF INDIA TO THE NORTH-EASTERN REGION, 1991

<i>Reasons</i>	<i>{percentages}</i>		
	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
Employment	19.61	29.76	4.32
Business	17.11	27.10	2.05
Education	1.73	2.09	1.20
Family moved	25.47	20.17	33.47
Marriage	20.13	1.65	47.98
Natural Calamities	0.94	1.06	0.75
Other reasons	15.01	18.17	10.24
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Census of India 1991, Table D-3.

Here it is observed that, nearly 20% of the migrants from states of India came to North-Eastern India in search of job whereas 25% for 'family moved'. Among the male migrants the main cause was 'employment'. About 30% of them came for this reason.

A look at the reasons for migration of the above migrants, statewise it is also observed from the Table 11 that 'employment' is an important reason for migration of the males for almost all the states whereas females moved mainly for demographic reasons.

Reasons for Intra-regional Migration in the North-Eastern Region

Most of intra-regional migrants preferred to go to the adjacent states. Assam got maximum immigrants from the other states of the region and also it is the major migrant sender states to most of the other states of the North-Eastern region. Assam with its various industries tea, coal, oil and other miscellaneous industries attracted large number of people from inside as well as outside the region. Availability of land for settlement may also influence the intra-regional migration. For example, N.E.F.A., a comparatively new settled area got a large number migrants from other parts of the region.

From the Table 12, it is evident that 'family moved' and 'employment' plays an important role for intra-regional migration. Around 29% and 30% male migrants moved for the reasons 'employment' and 'family moved' respectively.

TABLE 11 : REASONS FOR MIGRATION FROM OTHER STATES OF INDIA TO THE DIFFERENT STATES OF THE NORTH-EASTERN REGION, 1991

		<i>(percentages)</i>							
		<i>Employment</i>	<i>Business</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Family moved</i>	<i>Marriage</i>	<i>Natural calamities</i>	<i>Other reasons</i>	<i>Total</i>
Arunachal	P	36.04	11.11	2.51	32.49	9.31	0.26	8.28	100
Pradesh	M	51.63	16.42	2.90	17.53	2.13	0.3	9.09	100
	F	6.52	1.05	1.76	60.82	22.92	0.18	6.75	100
Assam	P	16.39	18.31	1.57	24.27	22.69	1.04	15.72	100
	M	25.47	29.59	1.91	20.69	1.53	1.19	19.62	100
Manipur	F	3.29	2.02	1.07	29.45	53.25	0.82	10.1	100
	P	21.57	22.31	0.66	28.5	10.93	0.35	15.68	100
	M	29.33	29.29	0.69	20.84	1.91	0.34	17.6	100
Meghalaya	F	4.99	7.42	0.6	44.85	30.19	0.37	11.59	100
	P	23.94	11.39	3.38	32.62	13.3	1.13	14.25	100
	M	36.44	17.77	4.31	20.63	3.84	1.35	15.67	100
Mizoram	F	4.81	1.63	1.95	50.97	27.78	0.79	12.07	100
	P	43.86	6.67	1.18	23.37	4.14	0.15	17.36	100
	M	56.27	8.59	1.02	11.97	15.83	0.15	17.85	100
Nagaland	F	11.87	1.72	1.58	52.77	0.15	0.13	16.09	100
	P	33.26	22.11	2.28	22.46	8.45	0.47	10.99	100
	M	43.45	29.47	2.16	11.5	0.59	0.37	12.46	100
Tripura	F	9.03	4.62	2.55	48.49	27.11	0.71	7.48	100
	P	36.12	4.43	1.62	31.38	10.28	0.42	15.75	100
	M	49.64	6.68	1.83	25.12	1.09	0.53	15.13	100
	F	17.58	1.33	1.33	39.98	22.9	0.28	16.6	100

Source: Census of India 1991, Table D-3.

TABLE 12: REASONS FOR INTRA-REGIONAL MIGRATION, 1991

<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>(percentages)</i>	
		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Employment	17.19	29.09	4.54
Business	6.68	12.06	0.98
Education	3.34	4.45	2.16
Family movement	34.01	30.00	38.28
Marriage	22.15	3.28	42.18
Natural Calamities	1.89	2.62	1.11
Other reasons	14.74	18.51	10.74
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Census of India 1991. Table D-3.

SECTION III

The Impact of Migration on the North-Eastern Region

Migration has its impact on the social, economic, cultural and political sphere of the North-Eastern region. In the early stages of development many countries welcome migration to get skilled labourers, as the tea garden labourers were an important component of the migrating population to the North-Eastern region. There had never been economic, cultural or political threats to the local people because the jobs for which they came, were not preferred by the local people. Also the migration of the East Bengal cultivators was beneficial to the region because they helped the growth of the region's agriculture. These farmers were described as "hardy and prolific cultivators working their way north-wards. These people are accustomed to the risk arising from deluvian and devastating floods which other cultivators are unwilling to face" (Census of India, 1911). The migrant cultivators diversified the pattern of land use. They began the production of jute for the first time in Assam. This cash crop occupied an important place in Assam's agricultural economy. It also goes to their credit that extensive areas of char (alluvium) lands had been turned into lush green agricultural scene of Assam. These cultivators also ease the labour scarcity in the rural economy of the region. The local people could use this abundant factor of production for various productive activities. But with the virgin lands changed into productive resource and consequent increase in the land value, the local people began to understand the advantage of keeping land as a form of wealth. The migrants were eager to possess as much land as possible. Gradually, the influx to the region started jeopardising the interests of the local people. The region had to accept varied ethnic groups as migrants and faced such issues which few other regions in the country encountered in such an acute form. The influx to the region is large enough to change the ethnic composition of the population and rouse the feeling of the threatening cultural identity among the local people. As we have observed that thousands of migrants came to this low density region from different parts of the country as well as from neighbouring countries like Bangladesh, Nepal etc. Inadequate safeguards were taken to protect them from economically advanced section of people. Their position worsened. As a consequence, a section of youth have embarked on a violent struggle. The large scale ethnic violence and insurgency grew in the region.

The demand for expulsion of the 'foreigners' started at Assam in the early sixties. This demand with the passing of time had spread to the other states and has made the situation more grave. The rival groups wage battle against one another to safeguard their distinct identities and languages.

The Bengalees were a threat to the local people. The local people felt that the Bengalees were taking advantages of their dominant position in the British administration, They not only were able to penetrate into the region particularly to Assam but also they

persuaded the British to establish Bengali as the official language of Assam together with English and to treat the Assamese as culturally subordinate and inferior to the Bengalees. So they were threatened to be overwhelmed by a process of cultural absorption. Besides the fairly educated migrants competed with the local people in every appointment for different services. Since it touched both the issue of employment and cultural identity, language policy became the focal point of controversy between the two communities. This resulted in the agitation demanding the expulsion of the foreigners. Open conflict in regard to the language issue has gradually subsided but the undercurrent of tensions is still there. The Assam accord was signed in 1985 to solve the foreigners problem confronting the state. The Centre put up a legal barrier in the form of the Illegal Migration Determination by Tribunal Act (IMDT) to determine the foreigners. But this Act is not above controversy. Also "the Assamese efforts to assimilate non-Assamese into their political and cultural framework has largely resulted in the breakup of Assam into discrete cultural-political units. Because one by one each of the major non-Assamese groups pressed the central government for the creation of a separate political structure apart from Assam, the Nagas pressed for Nagaland, the NEFA tribes for Arunachal, Khasi and Garos for Meghalaya and the Mizos for Mizoram" (Weiner, 1978). Even after the formation of different states carving from Assam it is still on an 'ethnic time bomb.'

In Arunachal Pradesh the Chakma and the Hajong refugees are facing the wrath of the locals who want their eviction. "The souring of relationship with the locals apparently hardened the Arunachal Government's stance on the granting of citizenship to the Chakmas" (The Hindustan Times, 28 Dec. 1995).

In Mizoram the "foreigners" are mainly Chakma tribals from Bangladesh and Chin tribals of Myanmar. "Most people point out that the Radcliff Award is at the root of the Chakma problem in the North-East. Being non-Muslim they hoped that the Chittagong hill tract would remain in India after partition but the Radcliff Award frustrated them by placing the tract under Pakistan and the Chakmas' problems began" (The Telegraph, 17th February, 1996). They migrated to Tripura, Assam, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh and are facing a serious crisis of existence. Another ethnic violence that has shaken the region is the Naga-Kuki rivalry. "Naga-Kuki rivalry dates back to 1845 when the British authorities had, after taking over-whelming control over the hills in the region started using the fierce 'New Kuki' tribesmen against the Nagas to counter the latter. The New Kukis were given rehabilitation by the British in the North Cachar hill region, apparently in a move on putting up a defence line against Naga hostiles" (The Statesman, 9th February, 1996).

In Tripura. Mizo-Reang conflict also caught our attention. Mizos are known to have a traditional rivalry with the Reangs, generally employed as manual labourers in Jhum land by the better off Mizos. "Tripura's north-eastern fringe adjacent to Mizoram is dominated by a Mizo population of over 5000. Besides, about 4000 Reangs identified

as the primitive tribes in Tripura live in the lower ridges. In December 1995, the Reang insurgents, belonging to the Tripura Resurrection Army served quit notices asking many of the Mizos to pack up and leave the Jampui hills. Mizo owners of the orange plantations were asked by TRA to pay 'subscriptions' at rates ranging from Rs 30,000 upto 2,00,000 each. About 3000 hectares of land is now under orange farming by the Mizos in 13 Jampui hamlets" (The Statesman, 9th February, 1996).

So the entire north-eastern region has to face widespread unrest among the various ethnic groups giving rise to insurgency and secessionist movements. Those who have not resorted to violent methods to assert their identities have strongly articulated their demands for the right to self-determination. The situation of the entire region is very grave.

SECTION IV

Summary and Conclusion

The paper has discussed the migration in the North-Eastern region and its trend, reasons and impact. With the help of the Census data, we have studied the pattern of migration in the region by dividing it into three components—(i) Migrants to the North-Eastern region from outside of India, (ii) Migrants to North-Eastern region from rest of India, (iii) Migrants who undertook migratory movements within the region. We have observed that prior to partition, the migrants to the region came mostly from rest of India while in post partition era proportion of migrants from outside of India were dominating. Also it has been observed that the migrants from outside India came to the region mainly for economic reasons but political reasons (partition of India) also played some role. For the male migrants from rest of India and within India economic opportunities were the important reason, but females moved mainly for demographic reasons. Migration has its impact on the social, economic, cultural and political sphere of the North-Eastern region. Insurgent activities of the various groups—ULFA and Bodo movement in Assam, NSCN in Nagaland have threatened the fabric of the society of India and North-Eastern region in particular. So a serious thought is needed to find a solution to the problem at least from two angles—one is economic and the other is political.

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