

## CHAPTER-3

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF GORKHAS OF ASSAM

#### 3.1 The Social Structure and Caste

Gorkhas are mainly divided into three races: (i) high (ii) medium and (iii) lower, ethnically they are divided into Caucasoid and Mongoloid, and Hinduism is the main religion of the Caucasoid, while some Hindus, Buddhists, and Animists in Mongolian group. Gorkha is a tribe of Indian origin who migrated to Nepal in the fourteenth century. The Gorkhas division is divided into three groups- high, medium, and low based on hierarchical differences (Subba, 2007). The Brahmins themselves are divided into Upadhaya and Jaisis, and all of them are divided into Gotras and Thars (clans and titles). Others are also divided into various titles. For example, the Chetry is sub-divided into the titles Ghimire, Karki, Thakuri, Bhattarai, Bharari, Sutar, Bhandari, Basnet, Paudel, etc. Gurungs are divided into Chandu, Thumung, Jimel, Ramjan, Palami, going, etc. Newars are divided into Shrestha, Pradhan, Rajbhandari, Joshi, etc; the Magars are divided into the titles Ale, Pun, Thapa, Pulami, and Rana; Limbu's are divided into Farrhang, Angbang, Changpang Chamling, Kulung, Nihali, Nemahang, Chourasia, Thulung, Changpang, Lahrung, etc (Shrestha, 2009).

### **3.1.1 Education**

Once thought 'Padi lekhi ke kaam, halo joti khayo maam' i.e. meaningless in educating oneself, to live one has to earn by plowing in the field (Upadhyaya, 2009, p. 201).' The basic feature of colonialism is the influence of education. Nepali-speaking people could come out from the ignorance in which colonial education encounters the community in different ways with its empowerment and liberation. Mani Singh Gurung established Gorkha Pathsala in Shillong, Meghalaya; in the year 1941 Chabilal Upadhyaya established Behali School at Tezpur, Assam; Darrang College was established in Tezpur, Assam by Prashuram Karki; Teligaon High School initiated by Prajapati Rijal; Gorkha High School started Bhuvan Singh Rai; Bhim Bahadur initiated Bhim Bahadur Vidyapeeth (Upadhyaya, 2009).

In the year 1840-56 approximately 37 households of the Gorkha Community were residents in the area of Bogibil in Dibrugarh. Some of the intellectuals came out and established the number of schools in the area and created the history in the development of education in the society. Maherman Thapa Chetry, Chakra Bahadur Thapa Chetry, Abhinarayan Ghimire, Khadanan Bhattarai, Garbalal Newar, Ramlal Bhaaju, etc. who were among of them Rijal High School in the districts of undivided Darang, Tiraap High School in undivided Dibrugarh districts, Chun Pora High School in Sadiya, etc. were the prominent Assamese and English medium school. Interestingly, Bhimlal Upadhaya and Chabilal Upadhaya of Bihali started a primary level school at Gohali (where cows are kept). Chabilal Upadhaya and Ramlal Upadhaya was the pioneer who created the educational awareness in the society. Most of the people were being motivated by their activities and got the courage from them

to start the schools in the society and numbers of educational institutions were established in Biswanath Chariaali, Gahpur Telia Village, Gamiri, etc (Upadhaya, 1971).

### **3.1.2 Culture/Traditions**

Dasai festival is one of the biggest festivals of the Gorkha community. In Nauratha, one recites the Chandi Saptas, worshipping Navadurga. In the name of the festival, someone sacrifices the goat but now the sacrifice of the goat is decreasing. (Upadhaya, 1971). On Dipawali, they call Devi Laxmi (God Laxmi) worshipping variously (Upadhaya, 1971). There are five types of rituals that are followed in the community viz. Kaag Tihar, Kukura Tihaar, Gaai Tihaar, Goru Tihar, and it finishes with the Bhai Tika. On the last day, the sisters use to give Tika on the brother's forehead (Gogoi, 2019).

Folk Dance is an essential part of the culture. Sorthi, Saaruni, Ghaatu, Tamang selo, etc are the dancing type song. Johaari, Faagu Naach, Dhaan Naach, Jhaaure Naach, etc are the romantic type dance. In the time of festivals, the community uses to sing or dance Sangini, Deosi-Bhailo, Rateuli, Maalshree, etc. In singing and dancing varieties of instruments are used viz., Madal, Sahnai, Muruli (flute), Jhasta, Khejari, Basuri, etc. The role of the Madal among the instruments is incomparable. (Upadhaya, 1971).

### **3.1.3 Marriage and Family**

Gorkhas rigorously bring up the rules of caste marriage and total temptation. They cannot marry on both sides of the mother and father side. Earlier, it was

customary for a child to get married. At the present moment, adult marriages are considered. Gorkha women use sindoor, pote (green pearl necklace), and glass bangles as symbols of marriage. The dowry or bridal pricing system is not in vogue. Remarriage is allowed for widows and divorces. Gorkhas have both extended and nuclear families. Molecular family is more common. The father is the head of the family who commands respect for each member. Gorkha women are hard working. Their duties include domestic chores, caring for children, woodworking, and bamboo roots, and tubers, farming, animal husbandry, and attending social-religious ceremonies (Upadhaya, 1971).

#### **3.1.4 Food Habit**

‘Cell Roti’, which is a bell-like bread. They also have some traditional delicious food ingredients. They refer to these things as ‘Gundruk’ and ‘Sinki’. These are all dry foods. ‘Gundruk’ is made of dry pieces of leafy vegetables, such as rye leaves, radish, and cabbage. ‘Sinki’ is made from radish. During the winter season, they prepare these items and dry them and preserve them for years or months. Gorkhas have the numbers of cultural food viz. Gundruk, Selroti, Thakoni, Batuk, Fullaura, Jhiliya or Jhiloiya, Bhotmari, Chamre, Malpua, Babor, Kurauni, Khischri, or Khichro, Bhujuri, Bhujuro, Bhutko, Khir, Jaulo, Dhiro, Dhakane, Sinki, Sollar, Kosar, Thebe, Begauti, Apunga, Satu, Pua, Sutuki, etc (Gayatri, 2013).

#### **3.1.5 Handicrafts**

Nepali-speaking people also produce materials of various shapes and styles to meet their needs from bamboo, sugarcane, wood, grass, and leaves. The skills of these

creations are transferred from one generation to the next. They are familiar with various types of folk arts and crafts of their daily use. All these materials are efficiently created from bamboo, sugarcane, wood, grass, and leaves of trees. Various types of gold and silver jewelry are expertly crafted by Gorkha craftsmen (Shrestha, 2013, p. 23). Here is an attempt to describe some of the physical cultural items, which they use in their time.

Kokro (Jhulna) is like the cradle used to nurture a child. Doko is commonly used on the back for carrying luggage. Thunso would also like to have a Doko which can carry rice, maize, lentils, and many other things. Dhungro is made from a piece of bamboo under a knot where milk and other liquid are kept. Thakro and Kaiyo are special types for hairdressing. Nanglo (Winnowing Fan) is commonly used for cleaning rice, pulse, and others. Chalni (Sieve) is round in size where small holes are found that pull out different things. 'Manro' (Mat) is rectangular. It is made of bamboo and used to dry rice and paddy in the sunrise (Shrestha, 2013, p. 24). 'Theki' is a small drum-like container where milk, yogurt, butter, and other things are kept. 'Madanis' commonly used over milk or yogurt. Pira (low flat stool) is used to sit on the ground. Due to the work of Zute, grass, and leaves Gundri is a kind of mat, made of special grass. 'Chakoti' is made of straw. It is used to sit on the floor. 'Namlo' is a type of belt which is made of jute which is commonly used to carry Thunse or Doko (Shrestha, 2013, p. 24).

Khukuri is an essential weapon 18 inches long which is a sign of pride of the Gorkha community. Kardois is a Khukuri with a small size. Katti is also a kind of sword basically to cut the goat or others used in the community. Mano is a copper pot

that can be used for weighing half a kilogram for rice or pulse. Ari is one kind of bucket that is used for four kilograms similar to mano and five-kilogram Pathi is used in the community. Basically, for lighting in the house, Diyo is made of copper or copper pot and for cock rice in the feast Kharkula is used which is a big pot in a size. Tai is made of copper or iron generally the community used for preparing the bread.

### **3.1.6 Dress**

Gorkhas wear their traditional attire, such as Topi, Oscoat, Daura, and Suruwal. The Daura is a long-sleeved dress, which is as long as the knee; the Suruwal has a tight long shift. The Cap (Dhaka Topi) is very important as an ornament (Shrestha, 2013). There are many different types of women's clothing. During working hours they wear simple dresses such as Blouse, Gunio (Saree) and gourmet. They love the red colored blouse. Gunio is a simple saree. It is limited to the lower body. The whole Gunio is surrounded at the waist. Potuka is a pixel of cloth. It is tied to a gunio at the waist (Shrestha, 2013). Potuka is a piece of cloth that is 4 to 5 feet long which is generally used on the gunio. Gorkha women normally used the chadar (majetro), whereas school-going girls used mekhela chadar, frocks, blouse, etc. Choli is also a kind of blouse covering the entire body of women from waist to neck (Sarma & Sarma, 2013).

### **3.1.7 Ornaments**

The community mostly uses ornaments namely nose rings, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, etc. Most of the rings of the ear are made of gold covering varieties of designs, whereas someone also uses the silver earring and women use to wear

silmundri. There are so many types of earrings are used in the community namely Kandhungri, Godavari, Marwari, etc. Sirbandi is another kind of ornament that adorns the forehead which has one, two, or sometimes three-wire stripes of silver or gold, the Sirphul being ornament use to wear on the head with a combination of the dress. For the rings of nose phuli (which is called dhungri), bulaki, nathi is used either made of silver or gold. Different types of necklaces are used which is called pote, naugedi where only married women except widows can wear which is the symbol of marital life. Besides, so many ornaments like kanthi, chandrahar, tilhari also called saubhagya, etc. which are essential to the community. (Shrestha, 2013).

### **3.1.8 Traditional belief and custom**

Gorkhas do consider cow as God and worship during the festival named 'Tihar', whereas the Assamese society does also worship cow considering God during the time of 'Bihu'. The Gorkha community is the assimilation or combination of Aryan, Ostrich, Mongolia origin, the similar combination can be seen in the Assamese community. Although diversity between the communities is seen yet both the communities originated from Charyapada that is the family of Sanskrit and Hindu family. (Sarma & Sarma, 2013).

### **3.1.9 Organisational-support**

In Assam, from 1943 to 1951, the All India Gorkha League helped the Gorkhas to organize has started with a pure socio-economic and cultural program. The Gorkha people have actively supported the cause of education, unity, land, and business. They have taken the initiative to settle the matter. The Gorkha people also assisted in their

struggle for independence in India. During the non-cooperation movement in 1921 Chabilal Upadhaya and his brother Hari Prasad Upadhaya has undergone six months of rigors imprisonment in Tezpur jail at the same time Dalbir Singh Lohar during the student's life also faced six months imprisonment (Upadhaya, 1971).

'Gorkha League' being the mother amongst the numbers of social organizations contributed a lot during the time of freedom movement in India in general and Assam in particular. A large number of periodicals named The 'Pravat'; 'Gorkha Sewak' played a crucial role in unifying the mass gathering in terms of various programs, propagandas, etc at that time. A big conspiracy was made by the British ruler for the separation of Assam from India and to inclusion into the Pakistan that is East Banga in 1946 categorizing in 'C' Group. On 1<sup>st</sup> January of 1947 in the conference of Gorkha League lakhs of Gorkha stood against the proposal in favor of Assam. All Assam Nepali Students Union (Now All Assam Gorkha Students Union) played a core role in the movement of language in the sixties decades. During the movement, Omio Kumar Das stated, "we are proud of the Nepalese of Assam as the majority of their total population have used Assamese as the second language". In the time the Student Union on behalf of Assam submitted a memorandum on 24<sup>th</sup> July of 1980 to the Prime Minister of India regarding the various issues of Assam namely migration, a crisis of identity, etc, whereas the movement was regarded in terms of socio-economic development of Assam. Numbers of Gorkhas sacrificed their valuable lives during the movement viz. Khirod Bahadur Tamang of Goalpara, Dhan bahadur Chetry of Bako of Kamrup, Bhim Bahadur Tamang of Gohpur, Padma Bahadur of



Lakhimpur, Boijayanti of Tezpur, Kul Bahadur Chetry of Lakhimpur, etc. (Sarma & Sarma, 2013, p. 4).

### **3.1.10 Contribution of Gorkhas in Freedom Movement**

Chhabilal Upadhaya, who took a crucial role in the freedom movement, was of Gorkha origin, and the first president of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee. Before the birth of the Assam Pradesh Congress, Chhabilal Upadhaya associated with the Assam Association and first of all started the movement against the British (Chetry, 2016). In the year 1921 on the April month at Jorhat, Chhabilal Upadhaya presided at the conference of the Assam Association as president. Due to the involvement in Freedom Movement Chhabilal Upadhaya was being sent to jail. He did not take the path of the Divide and Rule policy of Britishers, as the Britishers tried to convince him to take their side by giving various assistance, ultimately, Chhabilal Upadhaya took the right way and gave concentration on the freedom movement. Dalbir Singh Lohar took part in 'Flag March' which was guided by Mahatma Gandhi. Bhakta Bahadur of Digboi, Anantalal Sarmah of Darrang, Oman Basnet, Gobinda Pokhrel, Rabilal Luitel, Ramnath Niroula, Nemang Subba, Bhim Koirala, etc. also participated in the freedom movement. (Sarma & Sarma, 2013).

### **3.1.11 Contribution of Gorkhas in Public Representative or politics**

Dal Bir Singh Lohar was elected as MLA in the district of Tinsukia LAC in the year 1946 and 1952. was pioneered by Tea Tribe Labour Union. In Tezpur Local Body in the year 1948 and 1950, was nominated as the member. Dal Bir Singh Lohar was

again elected INC- Candidate in LAC in the year 1952 (Bashyal, 2016). Bishnual Upadhaya was elected as Gohpur LAC in the years 1957, 1962, and 1967. From Digboi LAC Chandra Bahadur Chetry was elected in the year 1972. Padam Bahadur Chauhan from Tamulpur, Kul Bahadur Chetry from Margherita, Ram Prasad Sharma from Gohpur, Bishnual Upadhyaya from Behali LAC in 1978 was elected in the Legislative Assembly in Assam. In 1985 from Margarita LAC Kul Bhadur Chetry and Padam Bahadur Chouhan from Tamilpur were elected again. In the parliamentary constituency of Sonitpur Swarup Upadhyaya was elected as MP in 1991, at the same time Kul Bahadur Chetry again was elected from Margherita as MLA. In the year 1996 Mani Kumar Subba from Nawboicha, Rudra Parajuli from Borsola, and Kul Bahadur Chetry from Mergheriya LAC were elected as MLA's. In the Gorkha history, Mani Kumar Subba was elected three times of MP from Sonitpur Parliamentary constituency i.e. from the time of 1998 to 2008 (Sarma & Sarma, 2013). Ram Prasad Sharma was the last Gorkha MP from Tezpur and at Present Bhaskar Sharma has been elected as MLA from Margherita and Ganesh Limbu has also been elected in MLA election from Barchalla Constituency.

### **3.1.12 Tribal Belt and Block**

In the year 1947, an amendment was made on the basic land and The Assam Land and Revenue Regulation of 1886 was amended which was a historical landmark of Assam. In this amendment, a new chapter was added named Chapter X which created the vibrant into Assam in the system of revenue administration, especially in the Protected Belts and Blocks. There was a provision for the requirement of the amendment as due to a large number of immigrants from the erstwhile Bengal during

1911-21 and use to settle the char areas of Goalpara, Barpeta, Kamrup, Nagaon, Darrang, etc. which created the serious threat for the tribal and forest dwellers since time immemorial. Basically to give safeguard to those people from immigration and to control the system was amended (Assam Land Act, 1947).

In the year on 5<sup>th</sup> December in 1947 vide Government notification No Rd. 19/46/19 declared the following Tribals and Forest dwellers under the protection:

1. Plains Tribals
2. Hills Tribals
3. Tea- Garden Tribals
4. Santhals
5. Nepali Grazier-Cultivators
6. Scheduled Castes

### **3.2 Economic Conditions**

Nepali-speaking people work on construction sites, roads, forests, etc. The Britishers for the revenue from the land encourage the Gorkhas to migrate to India especially for plantations and agriculture. During the time of Independence Nepali speaking people were engaged in three occupational areas namely dairying, agriculture, and armed services (Subba, 2018).

#### **3.2.1 Settlement of Gorkhas as Workers or Labours**

After the Chinese aggression in 1962 for the infrastructure, road-building, industrialization, etc. searched for the demand of unskilled laborers after the independence. For the jobs such as kitchen helper (Cook), gatekeepers (darbans), etc.

positions were filled by the Nepali-speaking people (Nath, 2006). Nepalis worked as laborers in the province's tea gardens, oil refineries at Margherita and Digboi, and coal mines and sawmills in Upper Assam and Meghalaya in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (Nath, 2006). The following table will illustrate the Nepali laborers engaged in oil refineries, sawmills, and tea gardens in Assam, 1897-1903:

**Table 3.1: Nepali laborers employed in oil refineries, sawmills, and tea gardens in Assam, 1897-1903:**

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|-------------|--------------|
| <b>1897</b> | <b>179</b>   |
| <b>1898</b> | <b>231</b>   |
| <b>1899</b> | <b>188</b>   |
| <b>1901</b> | <b>272</b>   |
| <b>1902</b> | <b>102</b>   |
| <b>1903</b> | <b>184</b>   |

**Source: Nath, 2006, p. 137**

### **3.2.2 Settlement of Gorkhas as Marginal Farmers and Pastoralists**

During the time of colonial Nepali speaking people can be considered as the migratory inflows from Darjeeling and Nepal into Northeast India. There were especially two ways of migration of Nepali speaking people that one is natural and the other is sponsored. The workers in the coal mine in various industries and soldiers (Army) for the recruitment into various regiments are those who migrated through the

process of sponsored by the colonial state. The marginal farmers and graziers or herdsman came naturally in which they gradually came to build the industry of dairy farming in Northeast India until the 1980s (Gurung, 2008).

The following tables will help to know the populations of Nepali speaking people in colonial Assam

Mackenzie in 1885 gave the statistical account of settlers of Gorkhas:

**Table 3.2: the statistical account of settlers of Gorkhas**

| <b>Surma Valley</b> | <b>Brahmaputra Valley</b> | <b>Hill Tracts</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 499                 | 2,521                     | 1465               | 4,485        |

**Source: Sapkota, 2009, p.217**

During the period of pre-colonial cattle farming and grazing as avocation was not given much importance. During that time mostly the tribal did not use for the cultivation or agriculture. They prefer animals mostly for the flesh to get protein where they were not aware of keeping animals or cattle for milk. The Sherdukpens and Monpas in Kameng, only a few among the tribes drew attention for cattle herding to get milk, while the area is located in Arunachal Pradesh (Gurung, 2008).

The following table will illustrate the Growth of Nepali-speaking people in Assam:

**Table 3.3: Growth of Nepali-speaking people in Assam**

| Year | Population of Assam | Gorkha Population | Gorkha % |
|------|---------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 1901 | 32,89,680           | 21,347            | 0.35%    |
| 1911 | 38,48,617           | 47,654            | 0.67%    |
| 1921 | 46,36,980           | 70,344            | 0.94%    |
| 1931 | 55,60,371           | 88,306            | 1.02%    |
| 1951 | 80,28,855           | 1,01,338          | 1.26%    |
| 1961 | 1,08,37,329         | 2,15,213          | 1.98%    |
| 1971 | 1,46,25,152         | 3,49,116          | 2.38%    |
| 1991 | 2,24,14,322         | 4,32,519          | 1.93%    |
| 2001 | 2,66,55,528         | 5,64,790          | 2.12%    |
| 2011 | 3,12,05,576         | 5,96,210          | 1.91%    |

**Source- Koirala, 2020, p.113**

The full of dense forest surrounding hills including the available forest land and the 'Chars' of the mighty Brahmaputra gave the attraction of most of the people in general and Gorkhas in particular. For being the convenient area covering huge forest land Gorkhas were attracted mostly, on the other side the soldiers after the retirement decided to stay in the region by cattle breeding as an occupation. Most of the professional graziers at that time were of Gorkha origin (Chetry, 2016).

Assam had a lot of wasteland and ripple topography. Here, the Gorkhas were encouraged by the British to colonize new land for farming or livestock. Pastoralists were the first Gorkhas who started earning a substantial income from the British as the

Gorkhas population grew. Dairy farming became the primary occupation for Gorkhas in the region. The increasing attraction for Gorkha migrants in Northeast India was the availability of grazing land and the increasing supply of milk to the growing urban economy (Nath, 2006).

As far as the Gorkhas of Assam economy is concerned, for centuries, they have been engaged with cattle farming as their livelihood. The British government encouraged them to settle down in Assam. They select most of the hard-working landowners who owned the lands were originally farmers and they assumed the agriculture and livestock business. The government too extended facilities for such settlements. Before the British rule, the Nepali-speaking luxuries for grazing. Generally, they were all farmers and cattlemen and not seasonal travelers or colonial merchants. Assam is relatively sparsely populated but because of the abundance of grassland along the river bank, these are the major reasons for the migration of the Brahmaputra valley and the major factors contributing to the trend of population growth there. Working hard and familiar with the forest environment, these Nepali-speaking people started using grassland for livestock farming (Upadhyay & Das, n.d.).

Livestock farming is known as the primary and cultural heritage of Gorkha in Assam. The development of any sector in an economy depends primarily on the primary stakeholders. In Assam, Gorkhas are mainly the dairy farmers before the British rule in India. They are primarily engaged and penetrated towards the dairy rearing than other potential income sources. The Upadhaya (Bahuns) received the gifts of cows in a particularly enjoyable ritual, as the Gorkhas believed that if they offered a

cow to the priest, the deceased could cross the river by holding his tail can be reached to heaven(Upadhaya, 2017).

The martial class especially the Magars, Gurungs, etc use to take dairy farming as their profession after their retirement in Northeast India. Therefore, the number of cattle cultivators in the Gorkhas is higher than the number of farmers. The Nagas had been involved in the upbringing of the cattle from the very beginning; they did so for meat but not for milk. For the first time Gorkhas who teach the Nagas to keep cattle for milk. In Shillong, Gorkhas kept the Buffaloes for the milk. It has continued culturally for generations. The provincial government imposed variable taxes and authorized the Syiems (heads) of various Syiems to collect revenue in the Khasi hills (Upadhaya, 2017).

The marital relationship between India (Kamrup that is old Assam) and Nepal particularly among the imperial category created the historical facts for the resilience of migration for both the respective countries. The Gorkha soldiers of East India Company as so as retired or after retirement they selected various areas for their livelihood. Most of the soldiers draw their attention to take cattle-rearing for their primary livelihood in Northeast India. The government of Assam has taken program and policies in the year between 1920 and 1930 which created Village Grazing Ground (VGG) or Village Grazing Reserve (VGR), Professional Grazing Reserve (PGR) which mostly encouraged the Gorkhas to animal husbandry. The community gave their absorption in river islands and the river banks of Assam (Sapkota, 2009).



### 3.2.3 Dairy Farming as well as Grazing

During the period of pre-colonial, there were no restrictions regarding grazing where numbers of peasants could graze their cattle in the wastelands. The government for generating more revenue or taxes the peasants were allowed by the colonial state. According to the horned of each cow or buffaloes, the government listed the collection as the taxes or revenue. The government wanted to intervene in the unexpected migrants of peasants and graziers from different parts of the land. In this regard during 1892-93, there were 13,025 buffaloes and 1,162 numbers of cows in which to pay for this Rs. 6,772 as the grazing revenue or fees. This fee was mainly collected by herdsmen of the Gorkha community (Gurung, 2008).

The following table shows the increasing the grazing cattle and the Revenue between the years 1910-25 in Assam.

**Table 3.4: Increasing the Grazing Cattle and revenue 1910-1925 in Assam**

|                                 | 1910  | 1915  | 1920   | 1925   |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| Number of Cattle Assessed       | 12993 | 44199 | 135690 | 182605 |
| Number of Professional Graziers | 90    | 184   | 6626   | 9165   |
| Total Revenue collection        | 12525 | 64007 | 301077 | 361947 |

**Source: Chetry, 2016, p. 24**

The Government of Assam implemented the Dairy Development Plan in the state in the last part of the Second Five Year Plan in 1961. Under this scheme, various milk pockets and milk shed areas were surveyed in the state. With this plan and

policies, the only basic target was to secure utter and freshly milk for the delivery to the buyer of Guwahati city. Various cooperatives were formed of dairy producers under this scheme. In 1963, the state has started functioning's the Dairy Development Scheme. A large section of people formed the cooperative societies in the United Khasi Jaintia Hill districts in which numbers of personalities led for this. Nandalal Upadhaya, Pulin Barua, Bhimlal Lamsal, Madhusudhan Bhandari (Kardem), Homlal Lamsal (Mawhati), Dhaneswar Tiwari (Umrum), Jagannath Bawri (Shillong), etc. who motivated all for the Dairy Development Scheme (Upadhaya, 2017).

### **3.2.4 Professional Graziers and Agriculturalists**

The grazing revenue had been increased along with the various way of collection machinery. The professional graziers had to pay the fees for all herd where no exemption from giving the fees of each cattle or buffaloes to the government. Unlike the professional graziers, the agriculturalists were allowed exemption from giving the fees up to the ten herds of cattle under the rules and regulations taken by the government. In the year 1917-18 having 622 cattle owners were given the name of professional graziers.

The Gorkha community has lots of contributions to beast keeping and agriculture. Milk production as well as animal keeping is the fundamental component of the community. In 1880 Gorkhas and Missings used to keep cows in Kaziranga Graziers. In the year 1885 the data of keeping cows in Brahmaputra valley, Churma valley which was mentioned in 'The North-east Frontier of India' Delhi by Mecangi Alexander. The illiterate people contributed a lot to the enhancement of National Income. Dairy Farms were raised in different places for commercial purposes, the

places were Guwahati, Tezpur, Amonighat, Jagiroad, Tinsukia, Digboi, Tangla, Barpeta, the Lower part of Bongaigaon, etc. (Sarma & sarma, 2013).

Gorkhas also able to create records in the Agricultural field, helped a lot towards the national economic growth by producing Sugar Cane, Jute, Tea, Mastered, Rice, etc. Devi Prasad Upadhaya from Kokrajhar was rewarded in 1965 by the Agriculture people of different occupations who came to Assam and settled permanently. Most of them found Assam a fertile land for their agricultural pursuits and

Department of Assam whereas he produced a large quantity of rice from varied seeds. Kashinath Upadhaya of Sonitpur district was rewarded with 7000/- cash due to his distinguishing role in the field of agriculture by the Agriculture Department of Assam Government (Sarma & sarma, 2013).

For many years the Gorkhas have been working in the agricultural sector with cattle rearing in BTC and Assam. Agriculture is one of the foremost reasons of the community for staying in North-east India. 80% of the Gorkha cultivators are marginal farmers as per the estimate is concerned. As soon as Gorkhas retired from the regiments they happily settled at various parts of Assam. Before the British rule Gorkhas had come to Assam with different professions where they initiated growing rice, potato, jute, sugarcane, chilly, wheat, mustard, pulses, etc. (Upadhaya, 2019). The following table will illustrate the district wise break up of landholding of the Nepali speaking people in Assam, 1939-40:

**Table 3.5: District Wise break Up of Landholding of the Nepali speaking people in Assam, 1939-40**

| Districts  | Area (acres) | Percentage |
|------------|--------------|------------|
| Goalpara   | 9790         | 9.34       |
| Kamrup     | 11386        | 10.87      |
| Darrang    | 57186        | 54.58      |
| Nowgaon    | 5491         | 5.24       |
| Sibsagar   | 6896         | 6.54       |
| Lakhimpur  | 13987        | 13.35      |
| Garo Hills | 37           | 0.04       |
| Total      | 104,773      | 100.00     |

**Source: Upadhyay, 2019, p. 42**

The British government instructed the Gorkha graziers to nurture cattle and buffaloes had to pay fees as grazing tax. According to the horns or if the horns of buffaloes are longer than one foot or aged 3 years, the Gorkha graziers had to give the taxes for it. Similarly, aged 3 years or more the cows were also not exempted from giving taxes. But, the older cows are sometimes exempted from such kinds of taxes. During the year 1888, the annual tax for each buffalo was 8 annas and 4 annas for each cow. Gradually, for each buffalo, the tax was raised to Rs.1 in the year 1907. Afterward, the tax was increased up to Rs 3 for each buffalo and 6 annas for each cow. Though the British left India the tax has remained the same. In the year 1917 in some

of the hill districts increased the rate of tax from Rs 4 to 6 for each buffalo (Sapkota, 2009).

The following table will illustrate the total number of Buffaloes in the year between 1895 and 1960-61 in the Brahmaputra valley.

**Table 3.6: Number of Buffaloes taxed in Assam, 1895-1920**

| YEAR | NO.    |
|------|--------|
| 1895 | 15,640 |
| 1900 | 18,735 |
| 1905 | 24,346 |
| 1910 | 40,000 |
| 1915 | 42,000 |
| 1920 | 86,325 |

**Source: Nath, 2006, p.141**

The following table shows the Revenue collected from the Nepali dairy farmers in Assam, 1916-1921:

**Table 3.7: Revenue collected from the Nepali dairy farmers in Assam, 1916-1921**

| Year      | 1916-1917 | 1917-1918 | 1919-1920 | 1920-1921 |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Rs (1000) | 183       | 342       | 277       | 341       |

**Source: Nath, 2006, p.141**

### **3.2.5 Gorkha Soldier**

In the nineteenth and twentieth century, a war was fought which can be considered as the movement of migratory named Treaty of Segowlee came to an end on 2<sup>nd</sup> December of 1815. The treaty was considered in the name of friendship and relationship between the respective countries. British gave the recognition the valor and courage of Gorkha in the field of war and recruited them as their soldier, firstly recruited in the Cuttack Legion (Assam Light Infantry), was formed in the year 1817. As the recruitment started the entrance into Northeast India took place and the settlement as permanently of Gorkhas in the region started formally (Chetry, 2016).

The 8th 'Gorkhas Rifles' in the North-Eastern Border and the border of Manipur, Barma, Bhutan, and Tibet created a prestigious history amongst the regiments. Before 125 years a true story of the 8<sup>th</sup> Gorkha Rifles created unexpected honor for the regiment in which amongst the Rifles a Gorkha soldier who got the responsibility of Civil Magistrate where he could able to get the popularity and respect from Khasiya hill. Major Alwan Wilson of 1<sup>st</sup> Gorkha Rifles said, "In the year 1845, a command of this Paltan was placed under the command of the handsome Devraj Ale, in the land of Khasi hill, near Umbai Cherapunji. He was granted the third class of Civil Magistrate. (Upadhaya, 1971).

The following table will show the employment of the 8<sup>th</sup> Gorkha Rifles in Northeast India:

**Table 3.8: Deployment of 8<sup>th</sup> Gorkha Rifles in the Northeast**

| <b>Place/Tribe</b> | <b>Year</b>                           |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Khasi              | 1827, 1835-36, 1847, 1861-62          |
| Naga               | 1839, 1850-51, 1875, 1879-80, 1912-13 |
| Mizo (Lushai)      | 1851, 1869-71, 1890                   |
| Jaintia Hills      | 1861-63                               |
| Garro Hills        | 1873                                  |
| Dafla (Nishi)      | 1873                                  |
| Mishmi             | 1881-82, 1899                         |
| Aka (Hrusso)       | 1883-84                               |
| Manipur            | 1891, 1944                            |
| Abor (Adi)         | 1893-94, 1911-12                      |
| Burma and Assam    | 1943-45                               |

**Source: Subba, 2007, p. 63**