CHAPTER - 3
STUDY AREA

The tribal communities *viz*. Bodo, Rajbongsi, Garo, Rava, Nepali, Bengali, Santhal and Urao inhabiting in the Kokrajhar district have expertise in designing many minor and major bamboo crafts. In many parts of the Kokrajhar district, production of bamboo basketries and other value added bamboo craft are now evolving as a household economic activity.

Kokrajhar district has geographical location of 89º46/ to 90º38/ East longitude and 26º19/ to 26º54/ North latitude. The district is covering total land area of 3,169.22 sq. km. Demographic of the Kokrajhar district is with total population of 8,86,999 with male 4,52,965 and female 4,34,034 (2011 Census). Located on the North bank of the river Brahmaputra, the Kokrajhar district is bounded by international boundary with Bhutan on the North, an interstate boundary with North Bengal on the West, Dhubri district on the South, Chirang and Bongaigaon district on the East. The district has 3 administrative sub-divisions *viz.* (i) Kokrajhar sub-division, (ii) Gossaigaon sub-division and (iii) Parbatjhora sub-division.

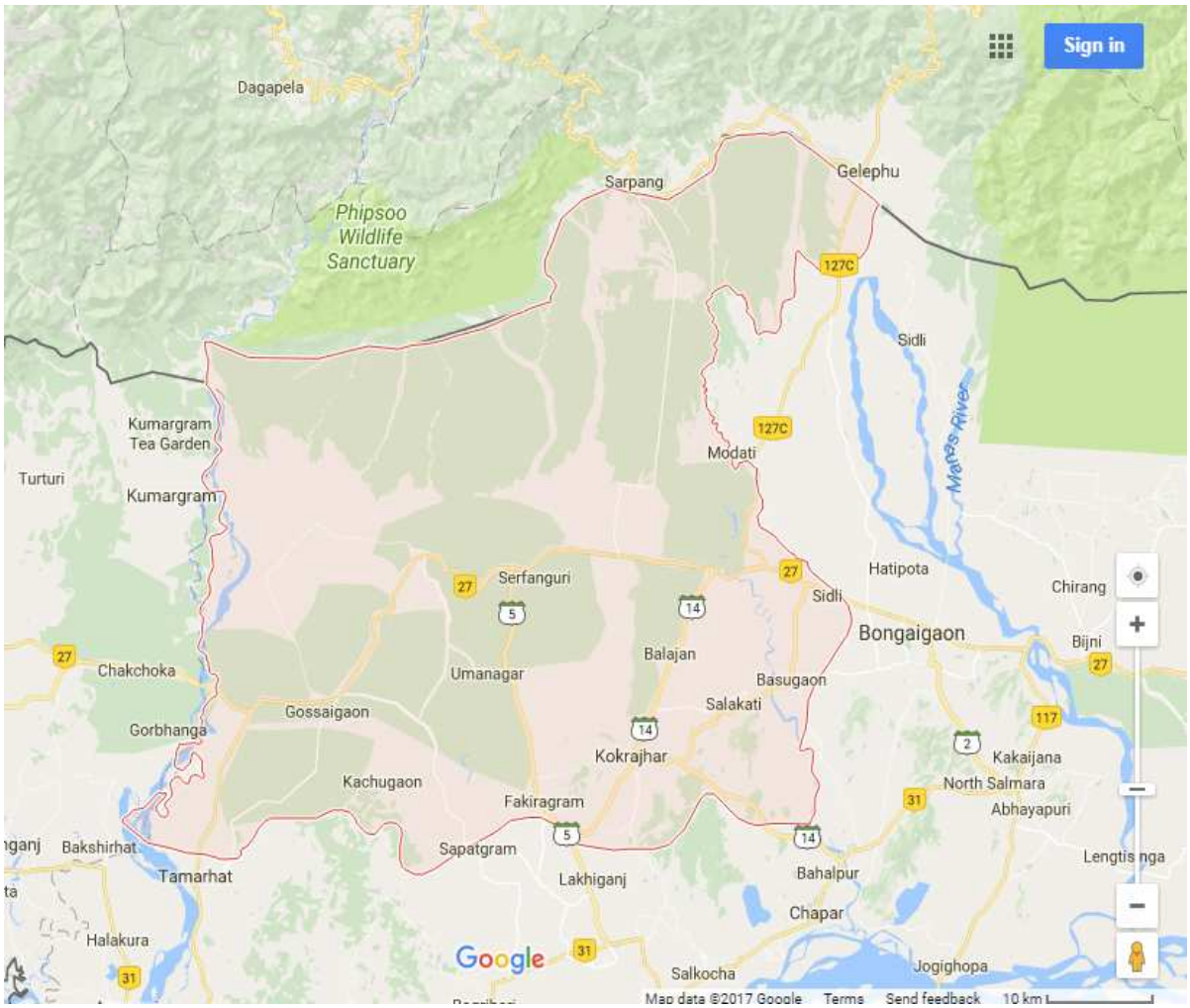
The Kokrajhar district has a sub-tropical climate with hot summer and cold winter. Dust storms are also common during February to April of the year because of its proximity to the Brahmaputra River. Generally, December, January and February are the coldest months of the year. The maximum rainfall generally occurs during the period starting from June to mid October. June, July, August and September are the four months where heavy rainfall takes place. The annual rainfall varies from 1500 mm to 2600 mm. The temperature of the Kokrajhar district ranges from 10^{o}C during December to February and up to 35^{o}C during hot summer days. The district has wet summer and dry winter humidity characters with morning 92% and evening is 55.5%. The Kokrajhar district has a number of seasonal and perennial streams and rivers. Champabati, Sarolbhanga, Gaurang, Gangia, Tipkai, Sankosh are the major rivers of the district that flows from north to south. Other rivulets that contribute water sources are Ultapani, Laopani, Tarong, Samokha, Sabkata, Hel, etc. The important beels of district are

Deeplai beel, Kamandanga beel, Sakma beel, Gwmw beel etc. The district has a fertile soil and is suitable for cultivation of several crops. Along with seasonal vegetables, paddy, mustard and jute are the major crops. It has also the evidence of growing of tea and rubber. Daolabari, Kokrajhar and Choibari Teaestates are the three big teaestates of the district. The soil of Kokrajhar district is geo-morphological of upper pedmont plain, lower pedmont plain, flood plain and younger alluvial plain. It has a bhabar soil along the Indo-Bhutan border with bouldery deposition at the lower. The northern plains are mostly tarai soil while southern parts are older and younger alluvial soil type. There is brown, red and yellow type of soil in different locations of the district. (Sources: District Agriculture Office, Kokrajhar).

The estimated area of forest cover of the district is around 1,719 sq. Km which is about 55% of the total geographical area. Kokrajhar district has three forest administrative divisions *viz.* Haltugaon forest division, Kachugaon forest division and Parbatjhora forest division. The four Reserve Forests of the district are Kachugaon Reserve Forest, Ripu Reserve Forest, Chirang Reserve Forest and Guma Reserve Forest. It has also Chakrashila Wildlife Sanctuary and Ripu-Chirang proposed wildlife sanctuary which is for conservation of endangered species Golden langur (*Trachypithecus geei*).

Based on vegetation, the Kokrajhar district has forest type of East Himalayan upper bhabar sal forest, East Himalayan lower bhabar sal forest, Eastern Terrai sal forest, Eastern heavy alluvium plain sal forest, Eastern hill sal forest, Northern secondary moist mixed deciduous forest, Evergreen forest, Riperian fring forest, Khair Sissoo forest, Secondary Bamboo brakes and Cane brakes. Secondary bamboo brakes sporadically occur in hill sub type. The species of bamboo found in forest are *Dendocalamus hamiltonii* (Kako), *Teinostachyum dulloa* (Dolubans), *Dinochloa madellandii* (Batibans), *Psuedostachyum polymorphum* (Bojal), *Bambusa tulda* (Tati) and *B. pallida* (Wakhta). Cane brakes occur in the evergreen patches of several reserve forests. The cane species found are, *Calamus latifolius* (Raidang), *C. tennuis* (Jati-bet), *C. tennuis* (Tita-bet), *C. floribundus* (Lejai-bet), *C. latifolia* (Hauka-bet), *C. loptospadix* (Rangkoli-bet) etc. (Source: Profile on forest and wildlife of BTC, Assam).

Map 3.1 Satellite map of Kokrajhar District



Source: Google Earth.

Table 3.1: Average year round rainfall patterns of Kokrajhar district recorded for the year 2014 to 2015

Sl. no.	Month	Average rainfall (cm)
1	January	3.2
2	February	5.2
3	March	17.5
4	April	140
5	May	137
6	June	255.1
7	July	321
8	August	294.6
9	September	232.8
10	October	47.3
11	November	12
12	December	3.6

Table 3.2: Average year round patterns of maximum and minimum temperature (^{o}C) of Kokrajhar district recorded for the year 2014 to 2015

Sl. no.	Month	Maximum	Minimum
1	January	21	8
2	February	22.8	9.8
3	March	24.7	15.2
4	April	26.9	18.7
5	May	29.4	23.1
6	June	31	24
7	July	32.3	25.1
8	August	30.6	25.1
9	September	29	23.9
10	October	28.9	23.2
11	November	24.9	16.6
12	December	22.1	9.6

Sources: Divisional forest office, Haltugaon Division, Kokrajhar.

Table 3.3: Average year round humidity patterns (%) of Kokrajhar district recorded for the year 2014 to 2015

Sl. no.	Month	Maximum	Minimum
1	January	95	46
2	February	92	42
3	March	92	52
4	April	90	56
5	May	91	61
6	June	91	69
7	July	91	68
8	August	92	74
9	September	93	73
10	October	93	67
11	November	95	63
12	December	95	45

Sources: Divisional forest office, Haltugaon Division, Kokrajhar.

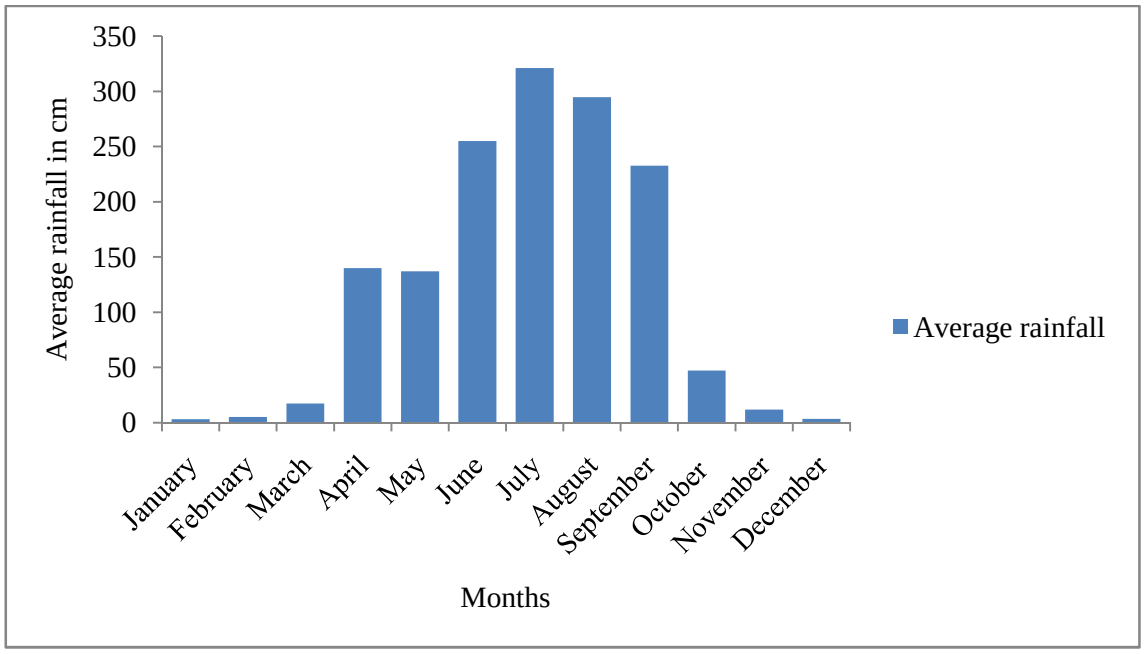


Figure 3.1: Average year round rainfall patterns of Kokrajhar district recorded for the year 2014 to 2015

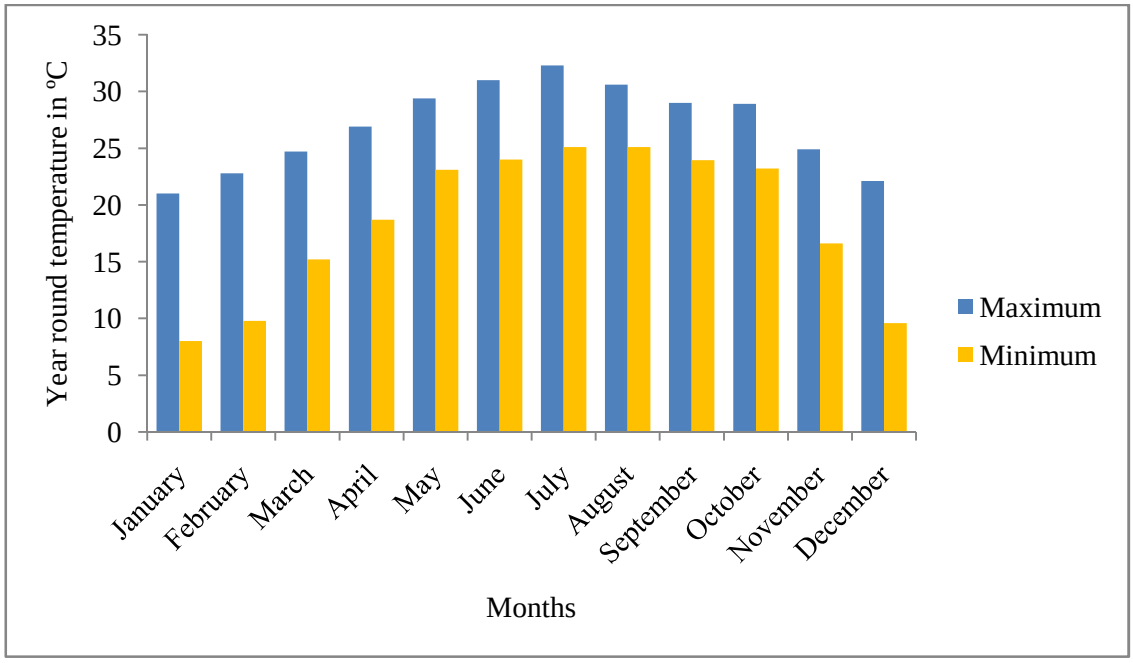


Figure 3.2: Average year round patterns of maximum and minimum temperature of Kokrajhar district recorded for the year 2014 to 2015

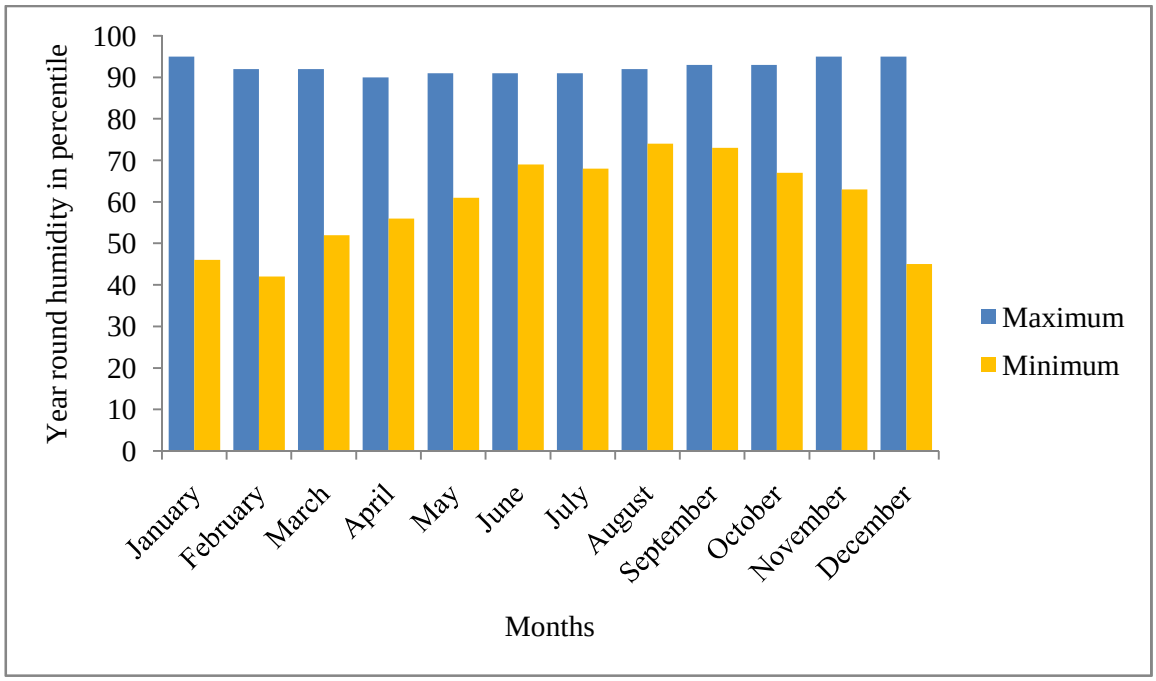


Figure 3.3: Average year round humidity patterns of Kokrajhar district recorded for the year 2014 to 2015