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## ANALYSIS OF THE SCENARIO OF MIGRATION IN ASSAM

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### ABSTRACT

Birth, death and migration are the demographic components which are considered as the determining elements of population change. Along with birth and death, migration holds an important position in the concept of population change. Balanced growth and development are necessary for the development and welfare of the nation. But hardly have we found a nation which has all round development. Regional imbalances and underdevelopment are the focal points which mainly lead people to move from one region to the other. People thus tend to move to the areas which have better opportunities in store for them. Migration can be internal and external. Internal migration is when the movement takes place within the country whereas the external migration is when movement of individuals takes place between two different countries. In this paper we try to analyze the secondary data related to the migration scenario in Assam.

**Key words:** Migration, Rural, Urban, Development

### 1. Introduction

Migration of outsiders into Assam has a long history. The colonial period in Assam led to the discovery of tea, coal, oil and natural gas, which led to the influx of huge number of peasants in the land of Assam. The people of Assam were already involved in the farm activities and also because of the misbehavior of the British towards the local, the people were reluctant to work, as a result of which the British encouraged people from outside to settle in Assam.

With the discovery of tea in 1821 and setting up of tea industry in 1830 and shortage of labour, a great number of people basically peasants were brought from areas where population was dense. As a result of which great number of peasants migrated from West Bengal, Bihar and Odisha. Those people were poverty stricken and in a dream of earning better livelihood they migrated and

thus the 'tea tribe' group came into being which is the oldest migrants group in Assam.

In the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there has been a huge influx of migrants from Nepal. These people migrated to earn better livelihood and also to escape compulsory duty in its state. These Nepali people engaged themselves in livestock and dairy farming and grazing buffaloes and cows. During the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many trained Hindu Bengalis were brought into Assam to run the administration as such trained professionals lack in Assam during that time. Doctors, lawyers, teachers, journalists etc were some of the professions. To look after the trade and commerce during the British rule, the Marwaris settled in Assam. However, inflow of Muslim Bengali migrants was seen throughout the entire 19<sup>th</sup> century. These people migrated in order to occupy the land in Assam which was cheap and the procedures were hassle-free. Many Muslims also settled in Assam during the Partition of Bengal which led to a large scale refugee influx from Pakistani Bengal into Assam besides West Bengal and Tripura. In and after 1971, there has been a huge influx of Bangladeshi peasants in Assam.

Apart from the illegal migrants, there have been a huge number of interstate migrations in Assam. In the last two decades with the growth of urbanization in Assam, there has been continuous movement of people from the rural to the urban settlements nearby. In rural areas, it was found that labor migration was one of the main ways of earning money for most of the unemployed people in the regions. Moreover, natural calamities such as flood which is very common in Assam also urge people to move to areas which are less prone to such calamities. If we see the census report on migration in Assam, there has been continuous increase in the number of migrants in the urban areas. Because of the growing population, scarce resource, limited opportunities in the rural areas, people tend to migrate to the areas which serve them with better opportunities.

## **2. Literature Review**

Ravenstein (1885) in his model discusses that the rate of migration between two points will be inversely related to the distance between the points of migration. Migration will first be to nearby places and then to the most rapidly growing cities and even to far off places. Technological development tends to promote greater rates of migration.

Zipf (1946) talked about the "gravitational 'pull factors than about the "push" factors. People migrate even when they are not pushed out of their original places but because greater promises are held out in new places. Economic conditions may or may not be bad in their original place of residence but

people prefer to settle down in big or intermediate cities. They regarded distance as the major/only obstacle.

Lewis (1954) in his paper presented the dual sector model which is characterized by the presence of two sectors namely the subsistence sector and the capitalist sector. Lewis defined the capitalist sector as "that part of the economy which uses reproducible capital and pays capitalists thereof". The use of capital is controlled by the capitalists, who hire the services of labor. It includes manufacturing, plantations, mines etc. This sector is defined by higher wage rates as compared to the subsistence sector, higher marginal productivity, and a demand for more workers. The capitalist sector may be private or public. On the other hand the subsistence sector was defined by him as "that part of the economy which is not using reproducible capital". This sector is typically characterized by low wages, an abundance of labor and low productivity through a labor-intensive production process. The "Dual Sector Model" is a theory of development in which surplus labor from traditional agricultural sector is transferred to the modern industrial sector whose growth over time absorbs the surplus labor, promotes industrialization and stimulates sustained development. The Lewis model emphasized more on the growth and development of the industrial sector whereas he only talked about the transfer of subsistence agricultural labor to the capitalist manufacturing sector. Nothing was discussed about the growth and development of the subsistence sector. Thus we can state the Lewis model as one sided where the impact of such transfer from subsistence sector to capitalist sector was ignored.

### 3. Current Scenario of Migration in Assam

If Assam is taken into consideration, it is growing and development is taking place at a very fast pace. Growth of urban areas is the major outcome of the development taking place in Assam. As a result of urbanization, rural urban migration of the individuals are also taking place at a fast pace. This has obviously led to shore up the number of population in the urban areas which has a major impact on the demographic distribution of the state. Obviously the rural urban migrants impose various positive and negative impacts in the urban areas. Likewise, rural urban migration also spells positive and negative impacts in the rural areas. In the present study, an attempt is made to study the impact of rural urban migration in the rural areas.

Table 3.1: Migration in Assam by different streams

<b>STREAMS</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2011</b>

<i>RURAL TO RURAL</i>	40,51,345	38,86,599	63,44,780
<i>RURAL TO URBAN</i>	5,49,433	6,74,172	10,35,023
<i>URBAN TO RURAL</i>	1,65,783	1,52,126	3,23,786
<i>URBAN TO URBAN</i>	3,32,749	5,27,419	8,96,406

Source: Census of India Assam, Migration Table, 1991, Vol-1, Table: D-2, D-10 and Census of India Assam, Migration Table, 2001, D-Series

The graphical representation of the different streams of migration as shown in table 7 is represented in the following graph.

The above table gives us the clear picture of the different streams of migration as represented in the Census of India 1991, 2001 and 2011.

Among all the streams of migration, rural to rural migration is the highest in the entire census i.e. 1991, 2001 and 2011. Rural to rural migration was 40,51,345 in 1991 but it decreased to 38,86,599 in 2001 and it further decreased to 12,24,674 in 2011. Though there is a decrease in the rural to rural migration but it occupies the dominant position in terms all the other streams of migration.

If we consider the census report on migration of 1991, 2001 and 2011, we see that there is an increase in rural to urban migration. In 1991, rural to urban migration was 549433, in 2001, it was 674172 and in 2011 it further increased to 8,94,923. Thus rural to urban migration shows an upward trend in the number of migrants.

Urban to rural migration shows a downward trend in the number of migrants. In 1991, urban to rural migration in Assam was 165783 while in the year 2001 it decreased to 152126 and it further decreased to 1,05,620 in 2011. However the decrease seen is considerably very less.

Like the rural to urban migration, urban to urban migration also showed an upward trend in respect to the number of migrants. In 1991 urban to urban migration was 332749, it increased to 527419 in 2001 and further increased to 7, 46,703 in 2011.

Thus from the above discussion we see that rural to rural migration holds the dominant role in terms of the number of migrants in Assam. Rural to urban migration and urban to urban migration increased in the subsequent year. Rural to rural and urban to rural migration showed a downward trend in respect to the number of migrants in Assam.

Table 3.2: Classification of migration in Assam by different types

Table 3.2.1 Intra-district migration (Census of 1991, 2001 and 2011)

<b>STREAMS</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2011</b>
<i>RURAL TO RURAL</i>	29,46,562 (90.17)	31,14,901 (82.06)	49,56,497 (81)
<i>RURAL TO URBAN</i>	2,02,242 (6.18)	3,04,954 (8.03)	4,99,599 (8.2)
<i>URBAN TO RURAL</i>	59,840 (1.83)	82,795 (2.18)	1,82,932 (2.9)
<i>URBAN TO URBAN</i>	58,884 (1.80)	2,92,824 (7.71)	4,79,632 (7.9)
<i>ALL STREAM</i>	32,67,528	37,95,474	61,18,660

Source: Census of India, Assam, Migration Table, 1991, Vol-1 (Table D-2) and Census of India, Assam, Migration Table, 2001, De-Series Table D-2

In case of Intra-district migration in Assam, rural to rural migration holds the dominant role in terms of the number of migrants. Rural to rural migration in Assam was 2, 94,656 in 1991, 31, 14,901 in 2001 and it further increased to 49,56,497 in 2011. The decline in terms of rural to rural migrants is 9 percent.

Though it is decreasing at a substantial rate, it still holds the top position in terms of migrants.

Rural to urban migration in intra-district migration showed an upward increase in respect of the number of migrants in Assam. Rural to urban migration in Assam in 1991 was 202242, 304954 in 2001 and 499599 in 2011. In 1991, rural-urban migration held 1.83 percent of the total migrants. However it increased to 2.18 percent in 2001 and to 2.9 percent in 2011.

Urban to rural migration increased from 59,840 in 1991 to 82,795 in 2001 and further to 182932 in 2011. Urban to rural migration occupied 1.83 percent of the total migrants in 1991 which increased to 2.18 percent in 2011. Thus there was a slight increase in urban to rural migration in Assam.

Urban to urban migration showed a significant increase in 2001. In 1991 urban to urban migration in Assam was 58884 and in 2001 it increased to 2,92,824 and to 479632 in 2011. Thus it increased from 1.80 percent in 1991 to 7.9 percent in 2001 which is quite remarkable.

Table 3.2.2 Inter-district migration

<b>STREAMS</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2011</b>
<i>RURAL TO RURAL</i>	8,97,501 (66.31)	6,36,646 (59.68)	12,24,674 (61.5)
<i>RURAL TO URBAN</i>	2,15,579 (15.92)	2,37,392 (22.25)	3,95,321 (19.8)
<i>URBAN TO RURAL</i>	70,735 (5.22)	44,600 (4.18)	1,05,620 (5.3)
<i>URBAN TO URBAN</i>	1,69,599 (12.53)	1,48,128 (13.88)	2,67,071 (13.4)
<i>ALL STREAM</i>	13,53,414	10,66,766	19,92,686

Source: Census of India, Assam, Migration Table, 1991, Vol-1 (Table D-2) and Census of India, Assam, Migration Table, 2001, De-Series Table D-2

In inter-district migration, rural to rural migration holds the dominant position as in case of intra-district migration in Assam. Rural to rural migration was 897501 in 1991, decreased to 636646 in 2001 and increased (almost doubled) to 1224674 in 2011. Though it decreased from 66.31 percent in 1991 to 59.68 percent in 2001, it still holds the dominant position.

If we see the rural-urban migration, we see that it increased from 15.92 percent in 1991 to 22.25 percent in 2001 but decreased to 19.8 percent in 2011.

Urban to rural migration however showed a downward trend in the number of migrants. In 1991, urban to rural migration was 5.22 percent and it further decreased to 4.18 in 2001. However, in 2011, it showed a slight increase to 5.3 percent.

Urban to urban migration also increased from 12.53 percent in 1991 to 13.88 percent in 2001 and to 13.4 in 2011. Thus a slight increase was pictured in the statistics.

Table 3.3 INTER-STATE MIGRATION

<b>STREAMS</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2011</b>
<i>RURAL TO RURAL</i>	207279 (43.33)	135052 (35.72)	163609 (35.4)
<i>RURAL TO URBAN</i>	131612 (27.51)	131826 (34.86)	140100 (30)
<i>URBAN TO RURAL</i>	35208 (7.36)	24713 (6.54)	35234 (7.6)
<i>URBAN TO URBAN</i>	1,04,266 (21.79)	86,467 (22.87)	122703 (27)
<i>ALL STREAM</i>	4,78,365	3,78,076	461646

Source: Census of India, Assam, Migration Table, 1991, Vol-1 (Table D-2) and Census of India, Assam, Migration Table, 2001, De-Series Table D-2

In case of inter-state migration, rural-rural migration is very dominant as in case of other types of migration. We see that in all the census report from 1991 and 2011, rural to rural migration is the highest. In 1991, it was 207279, in 2001 it was 135052 and in 2011 it was 163609. However in 2001, there is a decrease in the number of migrants from 43.33 percent to 35.72 percent leading to further decrease to 35.4 percent in 2011.

Rural to urban migration in 1991 is 131612, in 2001 it is 131826 and in 2011 it is 140100. In 1991, rural to urban migration is 27.51 percent and in 2001 it increased to 34.86 percent. But it decreased to 30 percent in 2011.

Urban to rural migration showed a downward trend in the number of migrants from 1991 to 2001. In 1991, total number of urban to rural migrants is 35208 and in 2001 it is 24713. It decreased from 7.36 percent to 6.54 percent. Thus there is a slight decrease in the number of urban to rural migrants in 2001 compared to 1991. However, 2011 census data on migration showed an increase up to 7.6 percent.

Urban to urban migrants showed an upward trend alike the rural to urban migration. In 1991, it is 104266; in 2001 it is 86467 and 122703 in 2011. Thus it increased from 21.79 percent in 1991 to 22.87 percent in 2001 and further to 27 percent in 2011. Though the increase is very less, it can still be considered significant.

### **Conclusion**

It is thus very evident that migration from different streams is increasing day by day. With the increase in population, migration of population from every sphere is inevitable. In Assam, there has been huge influx of population from rural areas to urban areas. The Government must adopt policies to accommodate the rural migrants in the urban areas so that the migrants become resourceful to the state.

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