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DIMASA KACHARI OF ASSAM

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FOREWORD

The Constitution lays down that "the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interest of the weaker sections of the people and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation".

To assist States in fulfilling their responsibility in this regard, the 1961 Census provided a series of special tabulations of the social and economic data on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The lists of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are notified by the President under the Constitution and the Parliament is empowered to include in or exclude from the lists, any caste or tribe. During the Census Operations, the enumerators frequently face the problem of identifying the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. In the President's notification, though in some cases, the names of the sub-castes and sub-tribes and synonyms are given, there are many cases where such names have not been provided in the list. The Census enumerators, therefore, require guidance about the acceptance or rejection of claims that they come across during the operations of some communities to be treated as sub-castes or sub-tribes of the notified Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes. For this purpose, the Census Organisation has thought it wise to undertake detailed ethnographic studies in respect of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of India. This is also in conformity with the past Census tradition of presenting authentic ethnographic account of Indian communities.

For conducting the ethnographic studies, a number of ancillary operations are undertaken by the Social Studies Unit of the Office of the Registrar General, India, as well as the staff of the Superintendents of Census Operations in the various States. These ancillary operations include : (i) compilation of available information on each Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe and preparation of bibliography in respect of them ; (ii) preparation and interpretation of maps showing distribution of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes over time and space and (iii) special studies on cultural, technological and economic changes taking place among the various tribal communities.

Dr. B.K. Roy Burman, Deputy Registrar General, Social Studies Unit, assisted by Sri N.G. Nag, Officer on Special Duty and Sri A.M. Kurup, Research Officer is coordinating all these studies at the central level. I avail of this opportunity to extend my warm thanks to all my colleagues who have undertaken various studies on different aspects of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of India.

Dr. P.D. Sharma, Investigator of the Registrar General Office, conducted the field investigation on Dimasa Kachari of Assam and prepared the draft. Sri N.G. Nag and Dr. B.K. Roy Burman edited the report.

A. CHANDRA SEKHAR
Registrar General, India

PREFACE

As an adjunct of 1961 Census, preparation of ethnographic mono graphs on a number of selected Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and ethnic groups with special status and ethnographic glossaries on all Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been taken up by the Census Organisation.

In India the Census Organisation has a long tradition of undertaking ethnographic studies. Besides, there are certain reasons why, for its own operational purposes, it is necessary for the Census Organisation to take up such studies. During Census operation, the Census Organisation is required to make a complete enumeration of all the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the country. The ethnographic studies are required to establish the identity of the various communities including their segments. The social boundaries of various communities are not always rigid, they are in a state of flux. Ethnographic studies are required to keep track of these changes as well, otherwise comparison of consecutive Census figures would give altogether wrong picture in respect of them. There is other aspect of study in respect of Scheduled Castes and Scheduld Tribes in which the Census Organisation as well as the welfare and planning agencies are interested; it is ethno-demography. In 1961 Census, separate tables were prepared in respect of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on the following items :—

(i) industrial classification of persons at work and non-workers by sex,
(ii) age and marital status,
(iii) education,
(iv) religion,
(v) persons not at work classified by sex and type of activity for Scheduled Castes,
(vi) persons not at work classified by sex and type of activity for Scheduled Tribes,
(vii) mother tongue and bilingualism for Scheduled Tribes.

The data available in these tables are to be analysed in respect of each Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe, so that the historical and cultural factors responsible for the demographic pattern can be identified and the impact of the emergent demographic pattern on the social structure can be determined.

The insight gained by the Census Organisation, through ethnographic studies of the Scheduled Caste s and Scheduled Tribes will be useful for interpretation of the demographic pattern for the country as a whole. Recent studies show that in India, even now, it is difficult to correctly appreciate the various social and economic processes without reference to caste. On the other hand, in the interest of ultimate national goal, caste is not being recorded in Census, except in case of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The insight gained through ethno-demographic studies of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is, therefore, of invaluable help for Census.

At the same time, such study is very much useful for planning of development activities among the castes or tribes, concerned. For instance, if the Census shows that great deal of diversification of occupation has taken place among the Parayans of Kerala, it is important for the planners to know whether the community consists of number of disconnected segments or whether it means that a great deal of individual mobility is taking place where the main focus of community is other than traditional occupation. Again, when among the Bauris of Orissa, it is found that a very high proportion of the population is engaged in agricultural labour and next to them a high proportion is found in cultivation and also that there is considerable diversification of occupation, the following questions of sociological and practical importance arise :—

(a) What is the historical relation between the agricultural labourers and the cultivators among the Bauris of Orissa ? The Census data suggests one of the two possible developments, namely, (1) bulk of the Bauris were cultivators and by a process of degeneration of their economy have become agricultural labourers, (2) on the other hand, it is also possible that the bulk of them were agricultural labourers and through a process of improvement of their economic condition, many of them have become cultivators
(b) The fact that a considerable diversification of occupation has taken place, suggests that the economy has not remained in a stagnant condition. Here, it is to be examined whether the diversification is the result of upward mobility, or downward mobility, or even horizontal mobility, and what is the actual process by which the diversification has taken place.
(c) The social dimensions corresponding to the diversification in economic life have to be examined. It is also to be examined whether in spite of diversification of occupation, the ethos of a particular occupation, for instance agriculture, continues to be dominant. In that case, diversification might have created problems of adjustment in values and attitudes.

Instances can be multiplied, but it is not necessary. What have been stated above, are enough to bring out the significance of ethno-demographic studies for planners.

The above dimensions of ethno-demographic studies have evolved through stages. In 1960, at the intance of Shri Mitra, Registrar General of India, a questionnaire for collection of ethnographic data was circulated among the Census Superintendents. In October, 1961, the Handicrafts and Social Studies Unit was set up in the office of the Registrar General of India, to co-ordinate the ethnographic studies and a few other ancillary studies, like village surveys, handicraft surveys. In December, 1961, a Study Camp was organised in Delhi, where the personnel engaged in ethnographic studies, handicrafts studies and other social investigations in the offices of the Census Superintendents, participated. In the Study Camp, it was considered that the ethnographic notes would mainly aim at making an objective assessment of the state of development of the different Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the context of the changes taking place in technology, economic organisation and total culture pattern of the country. It was further suggested that primary focus of the study should not be on the exotic elements of the cultures of the different castes and tribes. It should be on the efforts of the communities concerned, to adjust to the modern conditions of life. In the light of the above decisions of the Study Camp, rapid ethnographic studies have been carried on by the staff of the Superintendents of Census Operations as well as by the Handicrafts and Social Studies Unit of the office of the Registrar General of India, in different parts of the country. These rapid surveys have brought out a number of methodological and operational problems. In May and June, 1966, two Ethnographic Study Camps were held at Kurseong and Hyderabad, where personnel from the Office of the Registrar General of India as well as from the Offices of the Census Superintendents participated. In the Study Camp held at Kurseong the Secretary, Tribal Welfare, West Bengal, and Director, Tribal Welfare, West Bengal, also participated. In these Study Camps, an integrated frame for preparation of ethnographic notes was discussed and adopted. A copy of the same may be seen at Annexure. In addition to the studies in respect of each Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe separately, a number of subsidiary studies were undertaken by the Handicrafts and Social Studies Unit of the Office of the Registrar General of India, for gaining insight into a number of problems of general nature which have bearing on the different aspect of the lives of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of the country. The subsidiary studies are as follows :—

1. Shifting cultivation in Santal Parganas of Bihar and Garo Hills of Assam.
2. Pattern of Rehabilitation of displaced tribals of Rourkela.
3. Socio-economic survey of the Scheduled areas of Rajasthan.
4. Socio-economic developments among the hillmen of North-East India.
5. Social structure and cultural orientation of Christians converted from Scheduled Castes.
6. Traditional rights of scavenging as claimed by Scavengers in urban areas.
7. Grouping of Castes and Tribes with reference to occupation and inter-group and intra-group comparative study on the basis of the data available in earlier censuses.
8. Social mobility movements among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

On the basis of each of the subsidiary studies indicated above, a separate monograph is under preparation. It is also proposed to prepare separate monographs on a few Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and ethnic groups with special status in each State. Besides, ethnographic glossaries are proposed to be prepared in respect of all Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. For this purpose about one lakh references have been indexed.

The present report on the Dimasa Kacharis is one of the monographs proposed to be brought out by the Census Organisation. The field investigation was done by Dr. P.D. Sharma with operational advice of Shri A.M. Kurup Research Officer, Office of the Registrar General, India. While the specific focus of the study was defined and also the design of the investigation was provided by me, I made only minor editorial changes in the draft prepared by Dr. Sharma.

Shri H.L. Harit, Investigator (now Research Officer) who is looking after the compilation of information from published sources in respect of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and other special ethnic groups of India deserves mention.

Shri A. Mitra, Registrar General of India for 1961 Census, whose far-sighted initiative is responsible for social investigations in a large number of fields including ethnography, deserves thanks from all students of Indology. I have been benefited not only by his inspiration, but also by his valuable suggestions in connection with the ethnograhic studies, as well as the other studies, conducted by the Handicrafts and Social Studies Unit.

The tradition built by Shri Mitra, has been continued by Shri A. Chandra Sekhar, the present Registrar General of India. Under his guidance, the scope of the Social Studies by the Census Organisation has been further expanded. In spite of his other preoccupations, he has gone through the final drafts of the ethnographic notes and given a number of valuable suggestions. I avail of this opportunity to express my gratefulness to him.

B. K. Roy Burman

I. ORIGIN AND HISTORY

The Mongoloid people ot India, speaking various languages and dialects of the Sino-Tibetan language family appears to have come to India through the Eastern and Northern gates ot th country over 3000 years ago. The basic Mongoloid element which gives the tone to the population of Assam is very largely a contribution of the Bodo tribe (Chatterjee, 1959). According to Chatterjee (1959) the Bodos at one time had formed a solid block of a Mongoloid people throughout the whole of North Bihar, North Bengal, East Bengal, and the Brahmaputra valley, with extentions in the Cachar Hills, the Garo Hills, and in the Tripura Hills. Local Austric and Dravidian elements were in possibility absorbed by the Bodos.

In Mahabharata, mention has been made of Bhagadatta-a powerful king who came with his host of *Kirata and Cine* troops and took part in the battle of *Mahabharata* as an ally of the Karaves. *Kirata* appears to be the name by which the Aryan speakers knew the Indo-Mongoloid people. The Bodo (Bara) tribes are linguistically connected with the Nagas, where as the Nagas have always remained isolated, but the Bodos spread over the whole of the Brahmaputra valley and North Bengal as well as East Bengal, forming a solid block of Indo-Mongoloid (Kirata) people in Eastern India (Chatterjee, 1951).

In the *Puranas,* mention has been made of the ancient dynasty of Assam consisting of the Hinduised Bodos, as belonging to the family of Narakasura, of which Bhagadatta was an outstanding figures and appear to have ruled over Assam, right down to the middle of the 1st millennium A.D. (Chatterjee, 1959). There is no direct evidence of the happenings in Assam from the time of *Mahabharata* right down to the time of Bhaskar-Varman (7th Cent. A D) According to Chatterjee (1959) the Bodos have kept up their tribal identity by maintaining their language which has dispersed in several detached pockets in Kachar (both hills and plains) and in Chutiya area to the north of Brahmaputra, and in the Central and Western districts of Assam as well as in North and East Bengal where they are found as Rabhas Meches, Rajbansis and Garos (within the Garo Hills), as well as Hajongs and as Tipparas in Tripura.

According to Endle (1911, p. 4) the people known to as Kacharis to outsiders and to themselves as Bada (Bara) were in earlier days the dominant race in Assam. By Bada or Bara he implies the Bodo race as evidenced from his monumental work on the Kacharis (1911). Endle divided the Kachari group into two broad groups.

(1) Northern group and (2) Southern group where the Brahmaputra was taken roughly as the dividing line. The distribution of these two groups according to him was as follows.

Name	Approximate Number	Chief habitat
	I. *Northern Groups*	
1. Bara (Kachari .	272,500	Western Darrang, Kachari Duars and in North Kamrup.
2. Rabha (Tolata) .	31,370	Goalpara.
3. Mech (Mes) .	93,900	Do.
4. Dhimal . .	..	North-East Bengal.
5. Koch . .	10,300	On Northern Frontier from Jalpaiguri to North-West Darrang.
6. Solanimiyas .	..	Only in Mangaldai sub-division.
7. Mahaliyas, Phulgariyas and Saraniyas	..	Western Darrang All slightly Hinduised Kacharis
	II *Southern Groups*	
Dimasa 1. "Big-water folk" .	15,931	North Cachar Hills.
2. Jojai . .	2,750	-Do- and Nowgong.
3. Lalungs . .	40,160	South-west Nowgong and adjoining districts.
4. Garos . .	150,000	On Garo Hills and at foot of the same.
5. Hajongs, . .	8,766	On Plains adjoining Southern slope of the Garo Hills.
6. Hill Tippera (Tripura) People	105,850	Tripura

According to Allen (1905, p. 23), the Kacharis or Bara (mispronounced Bodo) as they call themselves, belong to the great Bodo tribe, whose original habitat was somewhere between the upper waters of the *Yang-tse-kiang* and *Hoang-ho,* and they gradually spread in successive waves of immigration over the greater part of Assam. Kachâris who had ruled in diferent parts of Assam from time immemorial to the middle of the nineteenth century A.D. are traditionally known as Kiratas (Nath, 1959). Kacharis of North Cachar Hills are known as Dimasa Kacharis Allen, 1905).

Dimasa Kachâri is a Scheduled Tribe of Assam as given in the President's Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes list Modification Order, 1956.

Allen (1905) has given the following account for the separation of the Bodo and Dimasa, but according to him no trace of the story has been found among the Kacharis of Darrang. "Long ago the Dimasa fought against a powerful tribe and were beaten in pitched battle. They were compelled to

give ground, but after a time further retreat was debarred by a wide and deep river. In despair the king resolved to fight again on the following day, out in the night a god appeared to him and told him that the next morning the army could cross the river if they entered it at a spot where they saw a heron standing on the bank. No one, however, was to look back while the movement was in progress. The dream proved true..... .....A heron was seen standing on the bank, and the king and a great portion of his people crossed in safety. A man then turned to see whether his son was following, when the waters suddenly rose and swept away those who were in the river bed and prevented the others from crossing. The Dimasa were those who succeeded in reaching the further bank of safety."

Allen (1903) stated that this legend accounting for the separation of the Bodo and the Dimàsa finds no place among the Kacharis of Goalpara (Kacharis of Goalpara are known as Mech). Thus, one section style themselves as Bara and the other as Dimasa, though both use languages of Bodo origin. According to Allen (1903, p. 45) the Mech tribe is believed to be absolutely identical with the Kacharis. But the Dimasa Kacharis of the N.C. Hills do not support the views expressed by Allen (1903) in toto, through they do not deny that the Mechs are also a branch of Kachari which got separated in the distant past, but how and when is not known; probably it is lost in the mist of the history.

Allen (1905 p. 90) stated that the Totlas are a superior section of the Kacharis, and occupy an intermediate position between the Kacharis and the Koch. Kacharis when they are converted to Hinduism, were generally incorporated into the ranks of the Koch caste, in lower Assam (Assam District Gazetters, Vol. VII; 1905p. 86-87). According to Allen (1905, p. 76) the Kacharis of Nowgong are divided into two sections, those who live in the Darbhangha, Dhing and Khatoalgaon mauzas near the Brahmaputra are said to be Bodos akin to the Kacharis of Darrang, while those in the valley of Kapili are Dimasa. The former are known as Jharuas, or Chaid-varia Kacharis, the latter as Hojais,..... .....There are no sub-divisions among the Jharuas, but the Hojais are said to be divided into endogamous clans as Rabha, Ramsa, Kheremia, Thengal, Sonwal and Jaladha."

The Kacharis may perhaps be described as the earliest known aboriginal inhabitants of the Brahmaputra valley. They are identical with the people called Mech in Goalpara and North Bengal. These are the names given to them by outsiders. In the Brahmaputra valley the Kacharis call themselves Bodo or Bodo fisa (sons of Bodo). According to Endle (1911) the Kacharis became widely separated as the Western (Bara) and Southern (Dimasa) sections. In the North Cachar Hills they call themselves Dimasa, a corruption of Dima fisa or "sons of the great river." They were known to the Ahom as Dimisa, clearly a corruption of Dimasa, so that this name must have been in use when they were still in the Dhansiri valley (Gait, 1963). According to Endle (1911, p. 4), "It is indeed not at all unlikely that the people known to us as Kacharias and to themselves as Bada (Bara) were in earlier days the dominant race in Assam;.....have left traces of this domination in the nomenclature of some of the physical features of the country, e.g., the Kachari word for water (di; doi) apparently forms the first syllable of the names of many of the chief rivers of the province, such as, Dibuta, Dihong, Dibong, Dibru, Dhing, Dimu, Desang, Diku etc. and to these may be added Dikrang, Dipu, Digaru etc., all near Sadiya, the earlier known centre of Chutiya (Kachari) power and civilisation".

"The origin of the word Kachari (the first a is short in Assamese and long in Bengali) is difficult to trace, but it may be mentioned that, according to the Limbu legend of creation given by Risley in the *Tribes and Castes of Bengal,* one of the two progenitors of the human race settled in the Kachar country, which is the name given by the Nepalese to the tract at the foot of the hills between the Brahmaputra and Kosi rivers, and there became the father of the Koch, Mech and Dhimal tribes, or the headquarters of a powerful Mech dynasty, the members of the tribe in Assam may well have been called Kacharis or Kacharis. The Kacharis are believed to be very closely allied to the Koches, and also, so far at least as language is concerned, to the Chutiyas, Lalungs and Morans of the Brahmaputra valley, and to the Garos and Tipperas of the Southern hills, Having regard to their wide distribution, and to the extent of country over which Bodo languages of a very uniform type are still current; it seems not improbable that at one time the major part of Assam and North East Bengal formed a great Bodo Kingdom" (Gait, p. 1963).

Ahom, a branch of the Shan race, crossed the Patkoi (Patkai) range to the South-east of Assam in the early years of the 13th century A.D. (1228-A.D.) under the leadership of Sukapha who was compelled to leave his ancestral kingdom of Nara as he had no prospect of sovereignty there. The Ahoms ruled in Assam from A.D. 1228 to 1826 A.D. till it passed into the hands of the British by the Treaty of Yanadaboo (Bhuyan, p. xviii. 1933). According to Hem Barua (1926) the Anoms are a great Mongoloid race of Hukwang (Hukawang) valley, who migrated into Assam in the 19th century through the Park range.

According to Anderson (c.f Endle, p. XVI) the Dimasa, Great-River-Folk (dimears "rivers" or "water"), were driven out of the valley of the great river Brahmaputra in historical times, and finally became rulers of what is now known as the Cachar District.

There are no written records of Kachari rule, and the traditions current among the people consist of little more than long lists of kings, on the accuracy of which it is impossible to rely. According to Fisher, the Kacharis of North Cachar believe that they once ruled in Kamarupa, and their royal family traced its descent from the Rajas of that Country of the line of

Hatsung-tsa. How long this kingdom existed, it is now impossible to say; but what is known with some degree of certainly is, that they were engaged in a prolonged struggle with the A-Homs, a section of the great Shan (Tai) race, who crossed the Patkoi Hills from the south and east about A.D. 1228 and subdued the Morans, Borahis and other Kachari tribes living near the Northern slope of these hills (Endle, 1911, p.6).

According to Barman (unpublished manuscript; 1966) originally, this eastern region of Bharata was termed as *Kachchha Desha,* indicating land of Runn or narrow sea-gulf and the people of this region used to be termed as Kachari, meaning the inhabitants of the land, called Kachcha.

The Ahoms gradually subdued the Kacharis who drove their opponents to take refuge in or about Dimapur on the Dhansiri at the foot of the Naga Hills. In Dimapur the Kacharies were in comparative security and they appeared to have attained a high degree of material civilisation as evidenced from the architecture and archaeological remains (though not fully excavated) of the Kachari kingdom.

This section of the Kacharies are known as the Dimasas. According to Barman (1969), "Hidimbapur (pronounced as Himbapur) was the real name of this capital and kingdom. Reference is there in the Mahabharata, that Bhima, the second of the Pandava brothers, married the demon princess, Hidimba (Hirhimbba), sister of the local potentate of terrible ways, then called Rakshasa..... The ruling family of the Kachcharis, since the days of antiquity, therefore, assumed the distinction of Hidimbbachha, meaning the progeny of Hidimbaa, their generii mother. This term, *Hidimbaa-chha,* got distorted into Dimbaachha, and then into Dimachha or Dimasa in the later phase."

The Dimasa Kacharies could not live in the peace and prosperity for a long time because their ancient foes, the Ahoms; followed them up to their new capital Dimapur, and about the middle of the sixteenth century the Ahoms succeeded in capturing and sacking Dimapur itself. The Kachari Raja, thereupon, removed his capital to Maibong which is at a distance of .....miles from Dimapur (Maibong literary means "much paddy"). At Maibung the Kachari dynasty would seem to have maintained itself for some two centuries (Endle, 1911). According to Endle (1911). under pressure of an attack by the Jaintia Raja the Kachari sovereign withdrew from Maibong to Khaspur in Kachar (*circa* 1750 A.D.). There they seem to have come more and more under Hindu influence, until about 1790, the Raja of that period, Krishna Chandra, and his brother Govinda Chandra, made a public profession of Brahminism. They were both placed for a time inside the body of a large copper image of a cow, and on emerging thence were declared by the Brahmins to be Hindus of the Kshatriya caste. Bhima of Mahabharata fame being assigned to them as a mythological ancestor. Hence to this day the Darrang Kacharis sometimes speak of themselves as "Bhim-ni-fsa" *i.e.* children of Bhim, though as a rule they seem to attach little or no value to this highly imaginative ancestry.

According to Endle (1911, p. 7), the reign of the last Kachari king, Govind Chandra, was little better than one continuous flight from place to place through the constant attacks of the Burmese, who finally compelled the unhappy monarch to take refuge in the adjoining British district of Sylhet. He was indeed reinstated in power by the aid of the East India Company's troops in 1826, but was murdered some four years later, when his kingdom became part of the British dominion. His commander-in-chief, one Tula Ram, was allowed to remain in possession of a portion of the sub-division now known as North Cachar, a region shown in old maps of Assam as "Tula Ram Senapati's country". But on the death of this chieftain in 1854, this remaining portion of the old Kachari Raj was formally annexed to the district of Nowgong.

As regards this last mentioned migration, *i.e.* from Maibong to Khaspur in about A.D. 1750, and the conversion to Hinduism which soon followed it, it would seem that the movement was only a very limited and restricted one, confined indeed very largely to the Raja and the members of his court. The great majority of his people remained in the hill country, where to this day they retain their language, religion, customs etc. to a great extent "(Endle, 1911)."

The present field investigation shows that even to this day they are sticking fairly rigidly to their old customs and practices unlike the Ahoms.

II. DISTRIBUTION AND POPULATION TREND

The Dimasa section of the Kachari people are mainly concentrated in the United Mikir and North Cachar Hills. The district covers an area of 5891.7 square mile and has a population (1951) of 1,65,444 in which the Dimasa number 14,714. It is larger than any autonomous hill district of Assam and it shows the lowest density, being only 28 per square mile.

The earlier census figures of the Dimasa Kachari Population is as follows:

1931	14,680
1941	15,971
1951	14,714

The total number of Dimasas in Assam, according to the Census of 1961 is 68,718.

Population trend of Dimasa Kachari/Kacharis through the ages.

Year	Male	Female	Total
1911	..	..	2,28,528
1921*	105 364	101,902	2,07,266
1931	7,439	7,241	14,680

*In 1921 Census (p. 99) figures on Dimasa' Kachari not given as such but of Kacharis as a whole. Further Kacharis were divided intd Hindu and Ammist-and the pooled value have been presented here.

†The table above shows the distribution of the Dimasa Kachari in the State of Assam as a whole and in the different hill districts of the State.

Year	Male	Female	Total
1941	..	..	15,971
1951	..	..	14 714
1961	36,575	32,143	68,718

Population of Dimasa Kachari†

State/District		Persons	Males	Females
Assam (Hills)	R	68,405	36,359	32,046
	U	313	216	97
Garo Hills	R	1,309	615	694
	U	11	7	4
U. K. & J. Hills	R	17	14	3
	U	83	69	14
U. M. & N. C. Hills	R	67,069	35,725	31,344
	U	215	140	75
Mizo Hills	R	10	5	5
	U	4	..	4

III. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Endle (1911, p. 1) has given a brief outline of the physical characteristics of the Kacharis as such in general, the same is given as follows. "They are certainly not a tall or handsome race and in general appearance bear some resemblance to the Nepali, being as a rule shorter and stouter than the people of North-West India, though well fitted to bear up against physical fatigue and hardship. In face and figure they show a distinct approximation to what is known as the Mongolian type, *i.e.*, they have square set faces, projecting cheek bones, with almond shaped eyes, and scanty beard and moustache, the last-mentioned being often wanting altogether."

Das (1960; cf. Gupta and Datta) reported the following measurements on Kacharis which may not be applicable to the Dimasa Kacharis truly speaking since the author has not mentioned the particular group of the Kacharis which he has measured. Nevertheless, the measurements obtained by Das are given below to give an approximate idea of the physical characteristics of the Dimasa Kacharis.

Stature+S.E.	Cephalic Index+S.E.	Nasal index +S.E.	Facial index +S.E.
1630·5 + 5·9	76·74±0·31	76·99± 0·71	80·27±0·49
S.D. 59·4	3·10	7·13	4·90

S.E.	C.I.	N.I.	F.I.
f. %	f. %	f. %	f. %
Vs. 1 1·00	D.44 44·00	L 18 18·00	He 24 24·00
S. 30 30·00	M 46 46·00	M 68 68·00	E 28 28·00
Bm 23 23·00	B 10 10·00	C 14·00	M 32 32·00

S.E.	C.I.	N.I.	F.I.
f. %	f. %	f. %	f. %
M 19 19·00	.. ..	.. ..	L 14 14·00
Am 16 16·00	.. ..	.. ..	Hl 2 2·00
T 11 11·00	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..

The measurements of stature and somatoscopic observation taken on 22 Dimasa Kacharis are presented below.

Individual values (in cms.) of 22 Dimasa Kacharis are as follows :—

152·4	165·1	
153·7	166·4	
153·7	166·4	
154·9	167·6	Mean Stature of 163·9 cms.
154·9	168 9	Dimasa Kacharis
157·5	168·9	
160·0	170·2	
160·0	172·7	
162·6	172·7	
163·8	172·7	
165·1	175·3	

According to Martin's classification they fall into the following categories.

(f=absolute frequency; % percentage frequency)

	f	%
Short	6	27·27
Below Medium	4	18·18
Medium	4	18·18
Above Medium	3	13·64
Tall	5	22·73

The table below gives the frequency distribution of the different somatoscopic observations made on the Dimasa Kacharis (22).

Skin Colour	f.	%
Brown	4	18·18
Yellow Brown	4	18·18
Medium Brown	9	40·91
Light Brown	5	22·73
Hair form		
Low waves	9	40·91
Medium Waves	6	27·27
Deep Waves	7	31 82

Nose

A. Root	f	%	B. Wings	f.	%
Shallow	9	40·91	Normal	14	63·64
Medium	9	40·91	Flared	8	36·36
Deep	4	18·18			

Eye

A. *Eye Slit*	f.	%	B. *Epicanthic fold*	f.	%
Straight	17	77·27	Absent	15	68·18
Oblique	5	22·73	Present	7	31·82

Face	f.		*Chin*	f.	%
Oval	..		Prominent	12	54·55
Round	11	50·00	Medium	10	45·45
Broad	11	50·00	Receding	..	..
Lips	f	%	Prognathism	f	%
Thin	3·	13 64	Absent	16	72 72
Medium	19	86·36	Slight	3	13·64
Thick	..	..	Medium	3	13·64
Cheek	f	%	Marked	..	..
Prominent	10	45·45			
Medium	8	36·36			
Weak	4	18·18			

The Dimasa Kacharis are a short to medium statured people. The mean stature of the Dimasa Kacharis (22) is 163.9 and which is close to the mean value of 1630.5 ± 5.9 observed among the Kacharis (c.f. Gupta and Dutta 1966).

Majority of the Dimasa Kacharis are of medium brown colour, with low waves in hair form. They have a shallow to medium nasal root with normal wings in most of the cases. When the Mongoloid characters like epicanthic fold and eye slit are considered, they suggest more of the non-Mongoloid features as evidenced from the frequency distribution of these characters.

The appearance of the non-Mongoloid features in the Dimasa Kacharis may be due to their mixing in the biological sense with the plains people of Assam through centuries and this might have brought the caucasoid features more to the surface.

They have round to broad face with prominent chin. Majority of them do not show prognathism and they have medium lips with prominent checks

IV. FAMILY, CLAN, KINSHIP AND OTHER ANALOGOUS DIVISIONS

The Dimasa Kachari family is ordinarily of simple type that is a nuclear family consisting of husband, wife and unmarried children. The system of residence can hardly be called patrilocal (Ghosh: 1964) as the husband often settles in his wife's village after marriage. This tradition has been operative from olden times, as it is found, that out of ten inter-village marriage (Ghosh: 1964) which took place from the age-group 40—60 years, five bridegrooms settled in their wive's villages. A bridegroom whose parents have already died, frequently prefers to live in his wife's place. When an inter-village marriage takes place, and if the man decides to shift to his wife's village, he first lives with his mother till he can build a new house of his own. When marriage within the village takes place, the newly-wed man prefers to build his hut by the side of his wife's father's hut.

The family type among the Dimasa Kacharis is usually composed of the parents and their unmarried children. Thus the households are normally small, this is because of their system of residence, where the family can never be extended either vertically or laterally as the sons become separate from the parents after marriage. Thus, the Dimasa family splits up when the sons and daughters get married. Generally, within a year, a man should be able to set up a new house of his own. Though the splitting of the family takes place, nevertheless, due to the characteristic residence pattern among the Dimasa Kachari, the process of proliferation always goes on and most of the families in the village are related to each other by some ties of kinship.

In order to understand the nature of the residential arrangements, it is necessary to examine their rules of descent as both are intimately related.

The Dimasas follow a characteristic lineage system, which is quite different from that of other neighbouring tribes like the Mikirs and the Nagas. The male children reckon their descent along the father's line or *Sengfong*. This is their primary affiliation; but they also feel related to the mother's clan or *Jaddi* which is the secondary affiliation which is avoided in marriags. Similarly, the female children reckon descent along their mother's line or *Jaddi,* but they feel secondarily related to the father's clan, *Senfong* till marriage. After marriage a woman is adopted formerly into the husband's clan and is secondarily attached to her husband's *Sengfong*. The secondary clan affiliation entails certain duties for both men and women towards both respective clan members. Thus, among the Dimasa Kacharis the choice of mate is regulated specifically by means of clans, instead of otherwise, as is observed among the neighbouring Hindus where marriage is avoided in one's gotra as well as with members of one's close kin-group. The *Sengfong* and *Jaddis* plays a very important part in the regulation of the Dimasa Kachari marriage system. The son and son's son all belong to the father's *Sengfong* while the daughter, son's daughter and son's daughter's daughter belong to their respective mother's *Jaddi*. Thus all the sons of all the brother's follow the same *Sengfong* while the daughters differ in *Jaddi*. Thus patrilineal and matrilineal forms of discent are present among the Dimasa Kacharis. The patri-clan is functionally more important than the matri-clan and the old rules of primary and secondary relationship to the clans is more or less strictly maintained in regard to marriage. Ghosh (1965) reported cases in the village of Hajadisa (Mikir Hills) where the rule of avoiding the patri-clan had been broken in 16 out of total of 44 marriages, while there was not a single case of breach of the rule regarding avoidance of the matri-clan for the same purpose. In all the 16 cases of the breach of the custom of exogamy the guilty persons were fined and then allowed to remain as husband and wife. But the usual rule as laid by the age old tradition regarding the breach of the custom of exogamy is punishable by excommunication.

In case of the other four villages in North Cachar Hills District, no case of breach was observed at all in regard to either the *Sengfong* or the *Jaddi*.

Due to their system of residence, the family among the Dimasa can never be extended, either vertically or laterally as the sons become separate from the parents after marriage, thus, the family tends to split up. When marriage within the village takes place, it has been found (Ghosh, 1964) that the newly-wed man prefers to build his hut by the side of his wife's father's hut. After marriage a man may live about a year in the wife's house; this being known as *minhabba*. But it is more often found that many people have settled in their wives' villages though they were at liberty to construct houses in their father's village.

The patri-clans and matri-clans among the Dimasa people are widely dispersed. Each clan has its distinctive names, though totem-like names are used to designate clans, but totemism in its true sense is not found among the Dimasa Kacharis. Thus, the objects which have given names to the clans are not regarded as totems, as they are merely names.

There are 42 patri-clans and 42 matri-clans in all. It is said that there were only 7 *Sengfongs* (Ghosh, 1965) when Dimapur was the capital of the Kacharis kingdom. It became 12 in number when the capital was shifted to Maibong, and lastly became 42 at Khaspur. Upto Dimapur period (middle of 16th

century), there is no evidence of *Jaddis*. According to Dimasa Kacharis the creation of the *Jaddis* by the Kachari king in all probability of Maibong, was done to prevent the Kachari men from marrying the women of other communities like Kuki, Naga etc., who are found around the Kachari Kingdom.

The clans have no hierarchical demarcation, all of them (42 *Sengfongs and* 42 *Jaddis*) enjoy equal status. Out of these, the following 4 *Sengfongs* and 4 *Jaddis* are called *danga,* that is those who lived near the king and took a leading part in all royal activities:

Sengfongs: Riao, Khemprai Phonglesa and Seingyung.

Jaddis: Mairungma, Saidima, Miungma and Bangalaima.

List of Sengfongs and *Jaddis* among the Dimasa Kacharis

Sengfong	*Meaning*	*Jaddis*
1. Naidingsa	Son of Scout	Gachauna
2. Nabingsa	Son of Angler	Rajama
3. Seingyunsa	Son of Big sword	Saidima
4. Khempraisa	..	Miungma
5. Adosa	..	Madarma
6. Daudungsa	Son of a kind of Bird	Buguma
7. Disausa	Son of River	Ranima
8. Riausa	Son of Swimmer	Gorni
9. Langtasa	Son of a Naked man	Bairingma
10. Daudunglangta	Son of a Bird	Banglaima
11. Lamphusa	Hole in the way	Kalachanma
12. Daulagopo	White cock	Mairangma
13. Daulagajao	Red cock	Mairangma Danga
14. Hakmausa	Kidnapped	Saidima Danga
15. Longmailaisa	Pebbles	Muingma Danga
16. Hagjorsa	Intermediary	Banglaima Danga
17. Phurusa	Full	Mairungma
18. Phonglosa	Son of fat man	Desrikni
19. Thaosensa	Son of oil-smearer	Saikhudi
20. Haflongfansa (a Naga word)	Big mound	Sagaodi
21. Hojaisa	Son of a priest	Hamthaidi
22. Batarisa (Bodosa)	..	Samdar Saga odi
23. Daliyasanta	Name of a river	Draingsongma Gedefa
24. Hasnusa	Sand	Draingsongma Kaiba
25. Jibrageda	Big confluence	Pasaidi
26. Londisa	..	Maibang gojodi
27. Woarisa	To cut a tree	Hamlaiginindi
28. Haphilasa	..	Thurujnu
29. Lafthaisa	Small Gourd	Thaliyu
30. Karigabsa	Alkaline ash	Pakhaju
31. Gorlosa	..	Agatinaju
32. Johorisa	..	Panhaobarjilu
33. Maibangsa	Plenty of paddy	Longmaisajilu
34. Kersa	..	Anumajilu
35. Parbasa/Girisa	Hill or mountain	
36. Laobangdisa	..	
37. Diphusa	Name of a river	
38. Jrambusa	..	
39. Mitherfansa	..	
40. Baderbagia	..	
41. Nonisa	..	
42. Smurungfansa	..	

V. DWELLING, DRESS, FOOD, ORNAMENTS AND OTHER MATERIAL OBJECTS DISTINCTIVE OF THE COMMUNITY

The Dimasa Kacharis generally reside in the cleared patches of the forest in the hills and the factors which determine the location of the Dimasa village is the nearness of the cultivating plot and the source of water. In the hills the villages are demarcated not by fencing around but by the natural objects like ditch, small streams, or hillocks which mark the limit of a village. Villages are kept apart from one another in isolated blocks on the foot of the hills near a stream or river for the convenience of cultivation. This is also evidenced from the name of some of the Dimasa villages as *Majadisa; Northdisa; Nablaidisa; Didambra.* The word *disa* or *di* in the Dimasa language means river. A Kachari village in the hills is much more compact as the houses being built more closely together than their brethren in the plains or the Assamese. Even in a compact village, the houses are dispersed in such a manner so as to provide space for rearing of livestocks and for the kitchen garden for each of the houses. The houses in the Kachari village are not clustered clan-wise (Sengfong-Jaddis) but according to the convenience of the individuals.

In former times the Gaonbora belonging to a particular *sengfong* was generally surrounded by the people of his *sengfong*. In majority cases households of the same *sengfong* tied to cluster together. Each house, with its granary and other out-buildings, is surrounded by a ditch and fence. The fencing is usually done by *ekra* reads, jungle grass or split bamboo etc. The ditch, some three or four feet in depth, surrounds the whole homestead and the earth taken from it is used in erecting a mud wall some 2 or 3 feet in height very close to the dwelling house. But those villages which are having some urban influence have fencing around the house with open space in between the fence and the dwelling unit, which is utilized for rearing poultry or for kitchen-garden. Houses are generally large and the shape of the house looks rectangular and the structure as a whole is raised about 2 feet from the ground, supported by stout wooden posts. The whole structure of the house including the side walls is made up of split bamboo finely woven and knitted together so firmly that no plastering of any sort is necessary. But those who are rich or those villagers in the vicinity of the urban areas who can afford, prepare mud plastered houses.

The roof of the house has slopes on either side thatched with sun-grass (*Shan,* Bengali, Thri-Dimasa term) which is generally replaced after three or four years, when it gets rotten up or damaged by natural process. The floor of the house is plastered with mud. The inside of the house is dark except for the scanty light that creeps in through the openings in the split bamboo wall. Generally, there is no window or chimney, the main door and the tiny slits in the bamboo walls serve as a source of ventilation. The houses are of rectangular type varying in length from 35-45 feet and with breadth of about 20 feet and is usually divided into two rooms by a partition. The outer room is called *Nokhung* and the inner room is called *Noshing.* The outer Nokhung is used by the males of the household and is also meant for the outsiders or guest. There are only two doors, one connecting *Nokhung* to the outside which serves as the entrance to the house and the other door connects *Nakhung* with *Noshing* which is meant for the family. The hearth is placed at one corner of *Noshing* almost touching the side wall. The household equipment is generally kept in the inner room.

Below is given a list of household equipment which are generally found in a Dimasa Kachari household.

English	*Bengali*	*Dimasa Kachari*
Metal pitcher	Kalsi	Damsura Dik
Earthen pitcher	Kalsi (earthen)	Dihu (for strong Zu)
Pot	Ghoti	Ara
Plate	Thala	Kopra
Ladle	Hatha	Khuku
Bowl	Bati (of Bell metal)	Bela
Bamboo pipe for storing water	..	Diphong
Axe	..	Rowa
Small stool	..	..
Bamboo baskets	.	Khamplai
Basket for keeping clothes	..	Zapsi
Cereals	..	Maikho

It may be noted that the people from other *Sengfong* are not allowed to touch the Maikho. Almost all the household equipment are of brass or bell metal and are made by the Bengali smiths, which may be obtained from the nearby market.

Household goods are of simple variety meant for the purpose of utility rather than for decoration. There are baskets of various shapes and sizes and bearing different names for different uses. They are generally used for storing cereals, clothes and other articles of daily use. Bamboo pipe each with a mode on one end and an opening on the other are used for carrying water and also for storing spices.

The dress of both males and females is simple. The males commonly put on short dhoti (Gamcha) and shirt particularly those who are residing nearby the urban areas. In the interior villages the upper part of the body is covered by a rectangular sheet of cloth like *Gamcha* called *Rimchau* and is worn like a cross belt, the border of which is embroidered in various colour.

The dhoti (Gainthou) is short and is wrapped round the loin, unlike the Bengalees or the Assamese. The males sometime wear a turban *Sidaupha* more so on festive occasions. This generally has a length of about 20 arm-length or about 7 yds. and in width about a yds length. Boys particularly those who are living near the urban centres generally put on shirt and pant instead of dhoti. Those who are living in town almost always wear the European dress, which has become the fashion of the day. Women put on a short petticoat called *Righ* fastened around the waist by means of a belt made of cotton cloth. Another cloth known as *Rizamphain* is used to cover the upper part of the body which is tied under the arms and is drawn tight over the breast. Over and above these clothes is placed *Righausa* a sort of vail which covers the head and the face and also hang on either side of the shoulder covering the breast. But this is not generally in use except in marriage and other religious ceremonies. The ceremonial dress are similar to the types described earlier except that they are multicoloured and looks gorgeous.

Women generally keep long hair, and tie it in a knot behind the head. Males cut their hair short and seldom care to comb their hair with fingers which usually perform the function of the comb. Though the Dimasas staying in the urban areas or those who have experience of the urban life or are influenced by the plains people like the Assamese or the Bengalees cut their hair in the fashion of the plains people. Nails are trimmed with a knife and the teeth are cleansed with a piece of jungle twig or sometime only with the fingers along with some tooth powder if available; while those who are staying in the urban areas and are enlightened, use tooth paste and brush for cleaning the teeth.

Footwear is seldom used both among the males and the females, particularly in the villages away from the urban centres. The Dimasas who are living in the urban centres, particularly those who are office goers, use modern footwear.

On ceremonial occasions both males and famales will generally put on their traditional dress except in a few cases, especially among the youths who are much influenced by the urban ways of life. The priest or *Hojai,* put on the common dress i.e., *Gainthou* or *Rimchau* and the turban *Sidaupha,* these are the common dress put on by the priest, but they are always worn clean and are not used on ordinary occasion and are set apart for only ceremonial purposes. Those who can afford put on new dress.

The Dimasa Kacharis are very fond of ornaments. Women of prepubertal age put on a nose ring (*Khamauthai*) and necklace of beads shells (*Lick*). *Rangbarsa* is another necklace made of sliver beads which are matched with pearl beads. The thread is also made of silver.

Women of postpubertal age wear *Khadu* in hand which is made up of pure silver and is fairly heavy and weighs upto 15 to 20 tolas. *Khadu* is also worn in anklets but it slightly varies from that worn in hand in that it remains open at one side instead of forming a complete ring.

Ornaments are rarely worn by men even in interior villages. In earlier times men used to wear an ear ring of copper called *Khirik*. As no ear ornament is worn by the males so there is no ear-piereing ceremony. No tattooing is done among the Dimasa Kacharis.

Their staple food is rice and they eat all kinds of meat with the exception of the beef. The following type of rice is generally taken by the Dimasas as-*Maisa*-common rice (*maima* and *maisa*-larger and smaller grains); *maizu*-used for the preparation of the *Zu; Bairing*-a special variety known as *'Biron chaul*: in Bengali.

Meat is taken either roasted or cooked or after it is thoroughly dried in the sun. Dry fish is most preferable which they store in small basket. The following are the common vegetables and fruits which they usually take—sweet pumpkin, corn, gourd, snake gourd and different types of vegetable leaves. Curry is prepared by using *Khar* (Soda) and oil. Only mustard oil is used. *Naphalam* is an indigenous product and is prepared from a fish (Punti in Bengali) mixed with khar, salt and chilly, and is kept for 2 or 3 months. According to them it is very nourishing and is almost always taken along with the rice. There is, however, one common article of food, which no orthodox old fashioned Kachari will ever touch, *i.e.,* milk. Usually no cows are found in the village as they consider them to be an unclean animal. But presently this prejudice against the use of milk seems to be passing away.

All the members of the family eat together in the same house. Meal is generally taken three times a day in the morning, in the afternoon and in the evening. Rice beer or 'Zou' is their favourite drink and figures prominently in the observance of their ceremonies and festivals. Outsiders and strangers are also offered with this for the sake of courtesy.

An essential ingredient in the preparation of this most popular form of refreshment is the condiment known as *emao* which is usually composed of at least three or four distinct elements. To a definite proportion of husked rice is added (1) the jack-tree leaf, (2) bhetai (a jungle plant), and (3) another jungle plant-poison fern. All these ingredients are vigorously pounded together into a powder which is then sieved for at least two times. The powder so prepared is then mixed with water and is made into a paste, these are then left for drying for some weeks and are made into small dishes after that they are kept covered for some time by rice straw. They are then exposed in the hot sun for another four or five days, so as to

become thoroughly dry. Finally, they are kept suspended over a fire place in an earthenware water-vessel and from there they are taken out when required for. The adult people smoke and consume betel with arecanut, the latter is more common and is consumed by both the sexes.

The Dimasas generally record the end of the night with the cock's crow. In the interior villages the time or the period after day is known by the position of the sun or when going on a journey the time is generally recorded by the time taken for the eating of a piece of betel nut which generally takes fifteen minutes for each piece. The periods of the day and night are as follows :

Dawn	Naiju
Morning	Phoron
Ascending sun (9 to 10 A.M.)	Saindaphuba
Midday	Sainjev
Descending sun (1 to 4 P.M.)	Sainjerkheraba
Evening (5-6 P.M.)	Sainblee
Dusk (6-8 P.M.)	Sarifan
Night	Flar
Midnight to Dawn	Hakjer

The recording of space and weight by the Kachari is done according to their Bengalee or Assamese neighbours. The use of Seers, Feet etc. are common even in the interior villages. The type of weights and measures used before the Pre-British days could not be ascertained, but all are of the opinion that they used some different types of measures other than what they are presently using, as for example in some of the interior villages even now they are using the unit-'*mai*'. 1 Mai - 4 Seer (approximately) measured by means of a bamboo basket (12 Mai — 1 Bain = 48 Seers).

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION, HYGIENIC HABITS, DISEASE AND TREATMENT

Dimasa Kachari villages are not compact, because they build their houses on the foot of the hills, on a large open space. Almost every Dimasa Kachari house is having space for the sheds of the domestic animals and for homestead gardens. Generally pigs, goats, poultry are kept in a separate enclosure adjacent to the main house. Those who are rich and can afford to build the sheds for the domestic animals a little away but within the boundary of the individual house. Owing to the keeping of their domestic animals very close to their houses and as rubbish is thrown all around the areas surrounding the house it always remains very dirty and stinky. As there is no common place for throwing the rubbish so it gets accumulated all around and the pigs and dogs act as scavengers. Although their excreta make the whole atmosphere foul smelling but the people are used to such things and they seem to be none the more bothered, thus, sanitation in the real sense of term is totally absent in the villages. There is no drainage system and foul water finds its way to the village streets. Sometime such drain water gets accumulated in the ditch and serve as the bathing pool for the domesticated animals.

Cooking utensils and dishes are washed after every meal. Their houses are dark and one cannot see what is inside unless he is accustomed to darkness. Doorways and in some cases window or the opening in the walls serve as sources of ventilation and as there is no chimney the smoke hovers like a cloud in the ceiling of the house until it is forced by the wind to come outside through some opening.

There is no lavatory or latrine and the nearby jungle offers a good place for the evacuation of the bowels where dogs and pigs would swarm for their food and serve as scavengers. The Dimsasa Kacharis who are living in the rural areas are having lavatory or latrine at one corner of their house away from the main rooms. The village people generally do not care to clean their clothes but they do this only on festive occasions, while those who are rich usually take to new clothing. The common people, who are having urban influence, wash their clothes with soaps. But the poorer section put on the same clothes every day till it is in such a condition that it can not be worn by the person any more due to its torn nature. But in any case even the poorer section of the Dimasa Kachari apparently looks much cleaner than their neighbours the Zemis and the Mikirs. They clean their face and feet and soothe away their fatigue and weariness at the nearby stream or well while coming from their hard day's work in the fields.

The common diseases are dysentry, boils, malaria, and other skin diseases. Some of the Dimasa Kachari names for the common diseases are as follows:

Small-pox	Linthai
Cholera	Murkhi
Ordinary Fever	Limba
Dysentery	Kamri

In the villages far away from the urban centres they do not much rely on the modern medicine, but rely on their indigenous medical herbs with which they treat all kinds of diseases which they can diagnose. There is no particular medicine-men but the old and experienced person gives medicine, sometimes voluntarily to the deceased person. The villages near the urban centres are using the modern medicines and are getting all the modern medical facilities in the Municipal hospitals. While in the interior villages, where facilities of the modern medicines are not available, they use the indigenous medicine and worship and propitiate the god *Medaikho*. The propitiation is done by *Bojai* and the family has simply to bring the materials for the desired propitiation.

VII. LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The Dimasa Kacharis speak the Kachari language, which is followed by the other sections of the Kacharis like Barman Kachari, Mech Kachari, Sonwal Kachari etc. Sir George Grierason (Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. III, Part II) classed the Kachari language in the Naga-Bodo group. In 1921 Census there were 259,587 Bodo, Mech on Plains Kachari speakers (P. 58) while Dimasa speakers (P. 59) were 11,040 persons of which 5519 were males and 5521 were females. In 1931 Census (p. 228-229) Bara, Bodo or Plains Kacharis were 282,582 of which 143,544 were males and 139,038 were females, while the Dimasa or Hill Kacharis numbered 14680 of which 7439 persons were males and 7241 were females.

The total number of Dimasa Kacharis who have stated their mother-tongue as Dimasa Kachari is given below (Census of India 1961: Assam Vol. III, Part V.A.; pp. 370-381).

Tribe	Total speakers		
	Males	Females	Mother-tongue
Dimasa Kachari	2,323	1.920	Assamese
	[6,641	5,460	Bengali
	31	61	Bodo/Boro
	6	..	Haijong/Haijong
	[8,604	7,483	Kachari
	8,087	7,683	Mikir
	1	1	Naga-unspecified
	8	..	Rabha
	10,874	9,490	Dimasa
	..	45	Garó

The table above shows that the Dimasa Kacharis who had reported Dimasa to be their mother-tongue are maximum in number, the next in descending order comes Kachari and Mikirs respectively. Thus, it is evident that the Dimasa Kacharis have reported different languages as their mother-tongues. Majority of the Dimasa Kacharies belong to the Dimasa Kachari, Mikir, Bengalee and Assamese language group.

There are a few publications like magazines and books in the Dimasa language with the Bengalee script. Some of them are translations of famous Bengalee books like *Naukabilas*.

A list of few books are given as follows:

1. *Jamyani Rajthai*
2. *Malaokhruni Malaotheothai Ranghha Dihahashe.*
3. *Dimasa*

The table below shows the rural and urban figures on the distribution of literacy and different education level of the Dimasa Kacharis.

TABLE

Education in Urban/Rural Areas : Division—Assam Hills
(Census of India, 1961)

Total		Illiterate		Literate (without educational level)		Educational Level											
						Primary or Junior Basic		Matriculation or Higher Secondary		Technical diploma not equal to degree		Non-technical diploma not equal to degree		University degree or post-graduate degree other than technical degree		Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	Fe	M	F	M	F	M	F
Urbn																	
216	97	83	67	63	15	39	13	23	2	..	..	..	..	8	..	..	..
Rural																	
36,359	32,046	32,020	30,442	3,354	1,343	953	259	32	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

The literacy percentage among Dimasa Kacharis is 8,89% while, the literacy percentage of Dimasa Kacharis is 29.57 per cent among the Scheduled Tribes of Assam and, 0.66% when the total population of the State is concerned.

M=Males, F=Females.

VIII. ECONOMIC LIFE

Land is one of the most important economic resources of the people, their livelihood, mainly depend on cultivation. The lands may be classified into the following categories: uncultivable land, cultivable land and land under forest.

The land which are used for homestead purposes, playground, footpaths etc. are included in the non-agricultural lands; uncultivable land signifies the barren land area which are unfit for cultivation and the land under forest indicates the area which is covered with jungle trees and which is not included in the net areas cultivated. In addition to this there is another type of land known as cultivable waste land, that is, the land area which is cultivable out is left fellow for the present time.

The *jhum* land in a village is restricted to a particular area for a village in consultation with the *Sarthe* or the '*gaonbora*' of a village. If any disagreement arise about selection of the jhuming site among the villagers, the gaonbora refers the case to the District Council, whose decision in consultation with gaonbora is taken as final. Individual plots within the selected area for jhuming may be demarcated by the individuals in consultation with the gaonbora. There is no restriction as to the size of the land allotted to different individuals, it depends upon the ability or capacity of a family to cultivate. A family or a person loses the right of occupation or cultivation if they leave the village or shift to another village for the purpose of permanently settling there which is under the jurisdiction of another 'gaonbora'. When the old plot is exhausted and the person wants to shift to a new plot for cultivation they have to get the permission of the gaonbora. Sometimes a temporary dewlling is constructed near the jhuming site only to stay during the operational session if the jhum is at a fair distance from the house.

The village people obtain the fuel from the felled trees while clearing the forest for jhuming, which they may also store for future utilisation. If needs arise the people have the right to cut trees either for construction purpose or for fuel from the unclassed state forest *i.e.* the forest area near the village which is not reserved. This area is forest in name only, since unrestricted jhuming has virtually eaten up almost all the forest trees rendering the whole area covered with only bamboos and grasses with a few scattered trees here and there. In reserved forests the people have no right to utilise the forest material. The forest reserves of the district are potentially very rich which give a very good revenue to the district, particularly for the bamboo trees. The evergreen forest are the home of various kinds of wild animals such as elephants, wild buffaloes, tigers, bears, deers etc. The menace of the wild animals in the villages is not an uncommon sight. Rabbits are a great pest in the jhum fields and the villagers are always for the look out of rabbit holes and always try to scare the rabbits. Various kinds of poisoneous as well as non-poisonous snakes abound in the jungle, and the villagers have to tread with an open eye while moving through the jungles. Monkeys often assail the jhum fields in company. Varieties of birds break the silence of the forest with their sweet melodies.

The forests are chiefly infested with the different species of bamboo, cinnamon, sal, deodar and many other trees for valuable timber. The wild plantain trees abound in the forest and form a ready source of food for elephants, monkeys and the like.

The secondary occupation of the Dimasa Kacharis is the rearing of livestock. Poultry, goats, and pigs are commonly reared either for their food and commercial purposes or for ceremonial and sacrificial importance. Milch and drought cattle are kept for milk and for ploughing the fields respectively. Deer and wild pigs, are frequently caught, sometimes by the use of large nets enclosing a considerable extent of grass land in which some keen eye has detected the presence of the much prized game. The net gradually encloses the prey which comes within the reach of the man or the party, hunting, and then the *dao* speedily brings an end of the animal.

Fishing by the Dimasa Kacharis is a very favourite pastime as well as an occupation. On certain prearranged dates men as well women of a village, some if not all, in a group go to fishing in the nearby streams. The day for fishing is fixed by mutual consultation. The fishing implements used are of a very simple nature and are commonly prepared from materials which are indigenous. The river water being shallow the nets are rarely employed for fishing. *Zakhi* and *Palha* are the two implements commonly used for fishing, the former being employed chiefly, but not exclusively, by women. Both implements are made of split bamboo fastened together with cane. The *Zakhi* is a triangular basket, open at one end, the three trinagular sides closing to a point at the other end. This is attached to a bamboo handle some three or four feet in length. By holding the bamboo handle one enters the steam which is usually very shallow, and lowers the basket to the bottom, keeping the open end in front of the person and then quickly lifts the basket and examine the content, and if any fish is found trapped it is rapidly transferred to the fish basket. *Palha* is the other fishing implement. It is made of split bamboo festened together by cane strips and is about 4½ feet in height and about 3 feet in diameter at the base. The upper portion is drawn somewhat closely together, leaving an open space at the top sufficient to allow the admission of a man's

hand the whole structure be quite light and easily manipulated by one hand. With this in hand the fisherman quietly enters the shallow water at any likely spot and places the basket closely clutching the ground, and the fish so enclosed are then withdrawn by the hand through the opening in the upper part of the instrument.

Another instrument used by the Kacharis in catching fish is a small, pointed spearhead attached to a light bamboo. With this fish like eels are caught by spearing. This instrument has become obsolete even in interior villages; instead, rod and line has become popular particularly among urban folks more so those who are having white collared jobs.

Industrial Classification of Persons at Work and Non-workers by Sex

Rural

DIMASA KACHARI

Total			Total worke		As Cultivator		As Agricultural Labourer		In Mining, Quarrying, Livestock, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Plantations, Orchards and allied activitie		At Household Industry	
Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
68,405	36,359	32,046	15,509	12,512	14,927	9,473	123	46	11	12	25	2970
Urban												
313	216	97	84	24	5	..	..	..	.	..	..	..

In Manufacturing other than Household Industry		In Construction		In Trade and Commerce		In Transport, storage and communication		In ther Services		Non-workers	
Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Female	Males	Females
30	..	24	..	18	1	7	..	344	10	20,850	19,534
..	15	3	..	..	..	1	..	75	9	132	73

One of the important household industries among the Dimasas is the culture of the *eri* silk-worm and the manufacture of the *eri* cloth. They also manufacture *muga* cloth.

The loom employed for weaving the *eri* silk is simple tension loom and is made from the material available in the village. This loom is unlike the loin loom. The loom is usually kept under a thatched cover which protects the weaver from the scorching sun. The weaving is always done by the lady of the house or by one of her daughters. The cloth which they weave are mainly for their personnal use and if there is any surplus they sell it in the market. But this does not happen very often as almost all the households are having their own looms. Among Dimasa women weaving is a must; a woman who does not know the art of weaving is looked down upon in the society. With the exception of weaving which is done by the females the bamboo and cane works are done by the males only. The blacksmithy are done by their Bengalee or Assamese neighbours. Bamboo and cane works are taken up by the males mostly for their personal use rather than for sale. The person knowing the art of basketry makes bamboo or cane basket of various kinds according to the use to which they are put. For example, baskets for carrying and storing paddy or foodgrains or for keeping clothes and ornaments etc.; cane-tables, chairs, *murrah* (low stool) are also made by them, particularly those who are living in the urban areas.

After the allotment of the jhum land to the individuals of the village, the plot is put to cultivation, trees are felled and jungle is cleared. The felling of the trees is done during December or January. The felled trees are allowed to dry till March when they are set on fire. Tillage and spreading of the ash, obtained from burning the trees, is then done with the help of the hoe.

In the interior villages the agricultural implements are invariably of very simple type and the manures they use are the dried and decomposed leaves and burnt up ashes. The important agricultural equipment are the following:— axe (*rowa*), spade, sickle and dao. All these are obtained from the market or are prepared when ordered by blacksmiths, particularly in the interior village who usually do not get ready made things for use

Paddy is then sown with the first rains in April-May. Everything regarding cultivation like, clearing, slashing, burning, tillage, sowing and harvesting are done by individual families and sometimes with the help of daily wage labourers. Joint participation at the family or the clan level is not found, except in harvesting where friends and relatives extend their helping hands. Paddy is sown by broadcast in April or May and is harvested in November-December. In addition to paddy, other crops like maize, millet, mustard etc. are also sown along with paddy as side lines in the holes, so made for the purpose by hoes. Thus the sowing is over before the first rains and the harvesting is done in the ensuing cold weather. The ears of paddy are cut with the help of a sickle. The sheaves, on getting dry are collected and thrashed on the spot by beating against some stone.

Those Dimasa Kacharis who are much influenced by their Bengalee or Assamese neighbours and who are having plain lands for cultivation and adequate water supply for their fields from nearby stream, take to wet cultivation if they can afford. In wet cultivation the soil is made into a thick paste by means of a hoe or in some cases those who can afford to use bullocks for ploughing. Weeding and transplantation are done generally by women. Sometimes no transplantation is done, where the water is not adequate, and sometimes plants which are blown off by the wind are carefully replanted. Sometimes a watch house is also constructed in the field so that the owner or any one of his family may stay to watch the crops and keep the animals and birds away from the field, particularly before harvesting.

The pattern of income and expenditure of a Dimasa Kachari village Gongjung (Source: unpublished V. S. M.) is given below:

The main source of income of the whole village under discussion is cultivation. The majority of the household in the village, which fall within the annual income group of Rs. 301—600, come to be 28 households. The second largest number of households, *i.e.*, 16 households fall in the income group of Rs. 601—900, while 7 households are in the income group of Rs. 901—1200 and only 6 households are in the income group of Rs. 1201 and above. The villagers take to jobs other than cultivation also, like some unskilled jobs in the Public Works Department or Government hospitals or some other offices, but such services are only taken up when the agricultural operations are over.

Each household in the village pay revenue of Rs. 3/- to the District Council.

IX. LIFE CYCLE

The Dimasa Kacharis believe that the birth of a child is at God's hand. A pregnant woman is always looked upon with care and is not allowed to do any heavy work. She is exempted from doing work in the field and also from carrying fire wood and other such things, but is allowed to do light household chore. Delivery of a child is generally and preferably done by an experienced elderly women among the relatives. Before the delivery the woman is given normal diet as is taken by the other members of the households, while after the delivery is given *Mudru i.e.*, boiled vegetables. In audition as a substitute of milk she is also given the juice of *Mishage*, a plant leaf, which is a good substitute for milk. The local *dhai* known as *'hajaijig'* if available is given the responsibility of delivering the child, assisted by experienced relatives. In return the *dhai* is paid in cash or kind. When the child is about to be born the expectant mother is made to lie on a mat on the floor and the attendant *dhai* keeps watch over her. Then all the things like piece of cloth, sharp bamboo split, thread etc. are kept ready for the delivery of the child. When the child is born the *dhai* cuts off the naval cord with sharp split bamboo and a piece of cloth is tiel around it. After she has given birth to a child she is kept in isolation. The confineness lasts till the performance of the *'dausathauba'* ceremony which is usually held after the removal of the naval which usually dries up and comes out by itself This ceremony is done so as to be free from the bondage of debt incurred during the delivery from the relatives and friends.

In this ceremony a pair of chicken is sacrificed and the killed animal is given to the *dhai* by the parents. The naming ceremony of the child is also performed by the *'hajaijig'*. The child's name is usually selected by its parents or grandparents according to their likings. This ceremony is known as *Nanabasinjiriba* and in this the horoscope of the child is prepared and then one chicken is sacrificed and the boy is presented with *Thali, Bati,* clothes and jewellery etc. Not all are able to perform this ceremony, particularly the poorer section and as it is not obligatory so only those who can afford perform this ceremony. A feast is held on this occasion in which friends and their relatives are invited and *zu* and pork or other meat with the exception of beef are supplied to the invited guests.

Until about a month the mother is held unclean and is subjected to certain restrictions in social and religious matters. That is, she is not allowed to approach the domestic altar in which her relatives offer rituals and offerings to the gods. This period of ceremonial uncleanliness is usually terminated by the use of the holy water (dithar) by the priest (jonthai), which is sprinkled on the mother as well as at the different places and corners of the house. Then only the mother is considered free from the social, religious limitations and is at full liberty to resume all her social and religious duties.

The child is fed with the mother's milk till the end of the suckling period which usually lasts for about seven to eight months when the child is old enough to be fed with rice. On approaching the end of the suckling period the child is given rice masticated by the mother. When the child's teething period is over and all the teeth have come out, normal diet, that is, that which adults take, is given. The mother generally carries the child on her back while at work when the child attains an age of 3 or 4 months. The child is allowed to crawl on the floor all by itself till it learns to stand.

The Dimasa Kacharis who are living in the urban areas or those who are living near the urban centres take the help of the hospital during delivery and every thing goes according to the routine of the hospital authorities.

Marriage

Marriage among the Dimasa Kacharis is strictly monogamous. Marriage within one's *sengfong* or *jaddi* is not permissible and they strictly follow the rules laid down by their traditional customs. Marriage outside the community is looked down by the society and the parents out of disgrace, may drive the boy or girl away from their home. Seduction is rare and if at all it occurs the girl's parents have to give their girl away in marriage. Illegitimacy and adultery is very rare and if at all and such case is detected it is usually tried by the village council and the guilty pair is tried publicly thus subjecting them to the jeers and scorn of the neighbours. They are released only when the fine imposed by them is paid. The amount of the fine varies from Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 depending on the case and the decision of the Council and the amount is given to the injured husband or wife.

A younger brother may marry his elder brother's widow, but an elder brother cannot marry the widow of his younger brother. Marriage with one's wife's younger sister (after the death of the former) is permitted, but not the elder. Child marriage is not found and the above rules are strictly enforced and any breach of them are liable to be outcast from the society.

Generally the boy's father will go to the girl's parents for formal negotiations though only after ascertaining the wishes of the boy. In absence of

Age and Marital Status

DIMASA KACHARI

(Division—Assam Hills)

REF : *Census of India* 1961 : *Vol. III, Assam; Part V-1A*

Total			Never Married		Married		Widowed		Divorced or Separated		Unspecified Status	
Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
68,718	26,575	32,143	18,753	16,213	17,291	13,670	477	2,080	23	137	31	43
Age 0—14 Years												
16,510	14,736		16,483	14,682	2	39	..	..	..	..	25	15
Age 15—44 Years												
14,920	13,645		2,242	1,514	12,523	11,624	134	390	15	94	6	23
Age 45 Years†												
5,135	3,760		18	15	4,766	2,007	343	1,690	8	43	..	5
Age Not Stated												
10	2		10	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

father, a close relative like uncle will represent for marriage negotiations. The marriage negotiations are done in a sort of set pattern of phrases. When the proposal is accepted then a basket (made of cane and leaf) full of salt weighing about a seer is given to the girl's father. This is known as *'Saudidang Singpha'*. If the girl's father does not accept the proposal even at the later stage, then the salt has to be returned to the boy's father and the engagement is broken. After the formal engagement the girl's father seeks approval from the clan members and conveys the same to the boy's father who comes thereafter for finalisation of the marriage. At this time the boy's father goes to the girl's father with two or three gourds of rice beer accompanied by some of the close relatives for finalising the marriage day. This is known as *Laotai langba*, i.e., taking of gourd. Then after sometime again a meeting is held between both the parties and on this occasion the price of the bride known as *Kalti* is fixed. The amount of the *Kalti* varies from Rs. 50 to Rs. 200, according to the economic position of the bridegroom's father as well as his position in the society. The number of animals to be sacrificed during marriage as well as the quantity of rice beer, is finally decided and settled along with the *Kalti*. The proposal being thus finalised, the date of marriage is fixed according to the convenience of both the parties. The *Kalti* is paid on the date fixed for marriage. Thus the actual marriage ceremony takes place usually after five or six months from the first day of negotiations. According to the Dimasa Kachari the following days of the week are not auspicious: Saturday, Tuesday, Sunday and the birthday of the daughter or son. The marriage ceremony is held at the bride's house. If the groom is of a distant village then the groom's party reaches a day earlier than the actual marriage day, as it is on this day that the bride price is given. The arrangement for the staying accommodation of the groom's party is done by the friends and relatives of both the parties. The marriage ceremony is completed before the end of the afternoon. Both the parties assemble together in some open space in the village or if the house of the bride is fairly large, with a big courtyard, then the ceremony is held at the bride's house.

In this ceremony the members of both the parties varying from about 200 to 300 members sit in the open space on either side facing each other. The

sitting arrangement is so made that the '*Khunang*' or village headman sits at the centre, the groom's party sits on the right hand side, the bride's party on the left and the invitees in the front. When this is done, the bridegroom is summoned to bow and touch the feet of the elders of both the parties and each one of them touches him on his head and blesses him. The groom moves towards each of the relatives and members of the other side under a cover, usually as big umbrella or a big canopy, held by six, or seven friends of her. When the blessing by the elder members is over then the 'Sampradan' ceremony takes place. In this the elder members of both the parties have verbal fight, which is followed in a traditional way, over the eligibility of the boy or the girl in the marriage, in which the grooms party will invariably win and the girl's father will offer his daughter in marriage.

In the earlier days the bride did not come to the courtyard before the public, but now in families who are influenced by the urban ways of life, particularly their neighbours, the Bengalese and the Assamese, come out in the courtyard along with the relatives and friends during the 'Sampradan' ceremony. Thereafter the bridegroom accompanied by the girl's relatives goes to the house of his father-in-law leaving the guest behind to feast merrily. The bridegroom spends the night in the outer chamber *nokhong* apart from the bride. He is admitted the following day into the inner chamber (*nosing*), to live with his newly wedded wife. On the third day after the marriage, the bridegroom with his bride and relatives and friends return to the parent's house. This is known as '*Phira Phoiba*' or the visit of the daughter-in-law. After staying for some time he along with his wife again returns to his father-in-law's house to stay with him as long as he desires which usually lasts for about a year. This period of staying with his father-in-law is known as '*min-ha-bha*'. During this period the newly wedded couple help the bride's parents in jhuming and other domestic work. The groom stays in his father-in-law's house until he is able to build his own house and start life at their own accord.

A man may divorce his wife on any reasonable ground but he will not get back the *Kalti* paid by him on the day of marriage. If the wife commits adultery and she is divorced, she should return the 'Kalti' to the injured husband. She has also to pay to the husband Rs. 40 to Rs. 50 as a fine and all presents given to her must also be given back. Should the husband commit adultery the wife may divorce him and he will not be entitled to get back the 'Kalti' as well as the presents which he has given to the wife either on the day of marriage or during their stay as husband and wife. If husband and wife agree for separation the 'Kalti' is not returnable but may be kept with the wife or her parents. The children invariably belong to the wife if the husband does not come to claim them. In all cases of divorce both the parties are free to remarry and all the ceremonies are performed as in the case of the first marriage. The decision of divorce always comes through the '*Khumong*' whose decision is final and when he announces it publicly then only the legality is valid. The only act performed by the husband or the wife for divorce is the tearing of a betel leaf into two pieces, indicating thereby that their married life is severed for ever.

Death

The Dimasa Kacharis always cremate the dead body except in cases where a person has died of unnatural death as well as in the case of child's death. The body of a child less than two months old or where no erruption of tooth has taken place, then burial is the usual practice, but wherein a child is having at least one tooth the body is qualified for cremation. A woman dying in child-birth is buried and no feast is held and friends and relatives generally do not assemble except the close elderly relatives who attend the burial and all the personal belongings of the woman are thrown out in the jungle or burnt. The belief behind this practice is that if any one takes it the same fate will befall on the person. Dimasa Kacharis believe that all deceased persons go after death to the place called—*Habson,* i.e., the place above the earth. And people who have done good deeds during their life are able to go to *Dambra* or the heaven.

When a person dies the relatives of the deceased inform close friends and relatives, who flock to the house of the deceased. The ceremony starts with the killing of a fowl. The dead body is then washed and dressed in clean clothes by any elderly man or woman of the family depending on the sex of the deceased and then the body is put on a mat on the floor. The dead body is placed to lie flat with the head towards the west. Then the friends and relatives who have flocked to the deceased house console and sympathise the bereaved family and pay their last respect to the deceased person by placing a gift like a piece of cloth or money by the side of the dead body, depending on the ability of the person. When all the guests have seen the dead body it is taken on a bier (*doli*) to the cremation ground(*mankulungling*) which is generally situated on the bank of a river or stream. Seven layers of dried wood are raised to form the funeral pyre (*thairik*) and over this pyre the corpse is placed and fire is lighted by a male relative of the father's side. In case the body does not burn well it is stated that the cause is due to the absence of some relative or friend. In such case any of the male relatives standing there throws some grass and states the reason of the relative's absence. This practice is known as '*dohongsuba*' (throwing sungrass) which is usually done when two third of the body is burnt. When the body has been thoroughly burnt the bones and ashes are collected and thrown into the nearby stream except the frontal bone (*tain*) which is retained and placed in the memorial house (*Mangklong*) which is erected on the cremation ground preferably on the spot of cremation. The structure is made of bamboo and looks like a small temple. The bone so placed in *Mangklong* is allowed to remain there till the *Shradha* ceremony takes place. The date of the *Shradha* ceremony is fixed by the relatives, which must be over before the

harvest or the Bihu festival. Until the 'Shradha' ceremony (*maimutharba*) is over the family is considered to be in mourning and throughout the period meal has to be offered after the name of the deceased person at *Mangklong* or it the structure has not been erected then the meal to the deceased person may be given in the house on a plantain leaf. On *maimutharba* ceremony the memorial house a *Mangklong* is burnt and friends and relatives who took part in the cremation of the dead today are given feast. On this occasion only rice beer is served. Burning of the Mangklong is performed on the day fixed for 'shradha'. While returning from the cremation ground every individual has to dip one's big toe in a half open bamboo pipe where water is kept. 'Shradha' is usually held with great pomp and the ceremony lasts for two days. Animals like pigs and fowls are killed and rice beer is prepared and all these are served to the invitees. Thus with the end of the 'shradha' the death ceremony or the purification ceremony is over.

On the death of the husband, a wife takes off all her ornaments and remains in mourning till the next harvest festival. For the first three day after death she is not allowed to take rice. Similarly, on the death of one's wife, a widower remains in mourning until the harvest festival. On the death of parents, children are not allowed to eat until the following night. During the period of mourning neither widow nor widower can remarry.

X. RELIGION

The Dimasa Kacharis claim themselves to be the followers of Hinduism. It, however, contains many of the elements of their traditional religion and their adoption of Hinduism is marked by the process of synctretism to a large extent. The general conversion of the Kachari people into Hinduism took place in the latter part of the eighteenth century. The Ahoms succeeded in capturing and sacking Dimapur about the middle of the sixteenth century, there upon the Kachari Raja removed his capital to Maibung, where the dynasty seemed to have maintained itself for some two centuries, and finally when attacked by the Jaintia Raja the Kachari Kingdom was shifted from Maibong to Khaspur in Kachar in *Circa* 1750 A.D. It is during this period that the Kacharia were more and more under the Hindu influence, until about 1790 the Raja of that period, Krishna Chandra and his brother Govinda Chandra made a public profession of Brahminism. It is said that they were both placed for a time inside the body of a large copper model of a cow and in emerging from there were declared by the Brahmins to be Hindus of the Kshatriva caste, and Bhima of Mahabharata fame was assigned to them as a mythological ancestor (Encle 1911, p. 6).

The conversion to Hinduism was formerly limited only to the members of the Royal family and the great majority of the Dimasa people retained their language, religion, customs etc., to a great extent intact. But as the time passed more and more people were influenced by Hinduism, particularly the Barman Kacharis who are residing in the plains of Cachar.

The Dimasas have many gods and goddesses, of which there is one supreme called *Madai*. Under him there are many other *Madais*, some are family deities and some are evil spirits. The progenitor of these family deities or *madais* is known as '*airekhidima*', who is supposed to have the form of a big female bird. According to traditional beliefs, the bird (*airekhidima*) after looking for a suitable place for her nest at last came to the banyan tree and built her nest on it. In course of time the bird laid seven eggs. The first one to come out of these eggs was '*Braisibrai*'. It was then followed in succession by '*Aloomaja*' (also known as '*Dooraja*'), '*Naipharaja*', '*Waraja*', '*Morangraja*' and '*Hamiado*' when the last egg was not yet matured and *hamaiado* being impatient kicked at it. The egg broke and the liquid content fell hither and thither on land and water and thus turned to evil spirits or *madais*. These *madais* or evil spirits caused trouble to the people and hence they were deprived of being treated as deities. '*Braisibrai*' being the eldest one is worshipped as a common god by all the Dimasa Kacharis and the last one '*Hamaido*', became of his misdeed was not worshipped as an ancestral god. The remaining *madais* became the family deity or *nokhoni madais* and are worshipped as such by the Dimasa Kacharis annually but there is no fixed time, for it depends upon the wish of the family members.

Community worship is done periodically at an interval of three or more years when '*mawingba*' or sacrifice of animal is offered to a presiding diety, at a '*Madaikho*' gods house or temple. These are located in certain fixed places, some of the clans combine to form a big circle and each such circle has one *Madaikho*. As the clans are spreal over vast area so they have to get together whenever such ceremony takes place. Before the community deity, goats which are completely white or completely black are sacrificed in addition to pigs, fowls, pigeon's eggs etc.

There is no specialised priestly clan among the Dimasa Kacharis. In common *Hojai* represents the priest In one village there may be 2 or 3 priests but in other village there may not be any priest. In such cases, priest is borrowed from the nearby village. The following are the office bearers who deal with the religious practices.

I.	Dainya . . .	perform the sacrificial ceremony
II.	Janthai . . .	assistant
III.	Gisia . . .	highest priest
IV.	Phatri . . .	through him god speaks or through him comes the divine utterances.

In early days all these offices were heriditary but now except the Gisia others are not heriditary. They can lead a married life but all have strictly to follow a good and devout life. They should not partake of food from other's hand. These office bearers may be classified on the basis of the food they take.

(a) Misham—*i.e.* those who take all the food or takes food without restriction.

(b) Gathar:—*i.e.* those who do not take pork, crab, snail and vegetable like *Bairethai* and *Yaulaisa*.

All these officials perform religious ceremonies during the community worship.

For worshiping in the family level only two categories of priest perform the religious functions, they are

(a) Hojai—priest

(b) Barowa—Assistant

These offices are not hereditary and any one who knows the art of worshipping becomes *Hojai*, and to them there is no restriction for eating. The deities

are not represented by any figures or objects but by small mounds of earth and these are known as *Habim.*

Among the family deities, the '*nokhone madai*' is the most important. The performance of the ceremony is different from that performed in the community level. Here the priest sacrifices the animals beside performing the duties of prayer and rites. This ceremony is usually performed just before the sowing season for bringing about the prosperity of the whole family. Another performance known as '*madaima daimba*' is performed for the well-being of an individual in the family.

Community worship is generally held at the times of famine which brings successive failure of crops due to drought etc. A meeting of the village priests and eldermen takes place and the date and place is fixed where such ceremony is to be performed and the representatives of the respective village bring their animals and birds to be sacrified.

XI. LEISURE, RECREATION AND CHILD PLAY

The Dimasa Kacharies who are staying in the villages and are agriculturist work in their fields from morning till evening and relax themselves only after coming from the fields. The men and women sit around the hearth snapping stories and gossiping about the fields and crops and the prospects of the coming harvest; thus removes the fatigue due to the day's work. When they meet with friends and relatives the inevitable subject of crops always comes up for discussion among them apart from some family matters or other matters. Sometimes they sing in chorus while working in the fields or sing simple melodies while thrashing the crops, which seems to dispel the fatigue due to the hard labour and weariness from both body and mind. Though they have to undergo the rigours of nature which make their life hard yet, their hearts are full with hope and joy and they are satisfied with what they have. They are the children of the nature and find music in the winds, streams and woods which fill their mind with much delight.

The little boys and girls in the village do not play any specific game. To them, game is like climbing trees, or throwing stones, or other similar activities with which they remain engaged and thus spend the lay till they feel tired and go home. The grown up boys and girls play some of the modern games borrowed from outside, generally learnt through the school mates or from the plains people. Hide and seek is played generally by girls. Football is a favourite game among the boys, especially those who are saying in the urban areas. Sometimes teams are formed among themselves for friendly match for the tournament. Indoor games like carrom, ludo, and card etc. are also played by both young and old. Those who have received some education read newspapers, story books etc., or sometimes listen to the radio or transistor if available, in a neighbour's house or if possessed by them.

The housewives and elderly women are hard pressed with their household chores such as fetching water, cooking, cleaning and washing etc. and whatever little time they get to spare as leisure time, that they spend in gossiping or visiting friends and relatives. The young men frequently go during their leisure time for shooting some wild games or fishing in the nearby ponds. The village young men, particularly those who are staying in the interior villages, generally spend their leisure time in dancing or singing or playing on drums or discuss problems which they come across in their day-to-day life and exchange their experiences.

XII. RELATION AMONG DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY

The people generally known as Kacharis, as they call themselves Boro or Bodo (Endle, 1911, p. xv) were once a very powerful and widespread race in the whole of Assam. Through the passage of the centuries this large and powerful group of Bodos gradually broke up into a number of segments, in different geographical regions of Assam, and they can only be linked with the common language. According to Endle (1911, p. xvii), "no one who has heard members of the five branches of the Bodo race speak their respective languages can fail to recognise that they belong to the same linguistic group".

The different branches of the great Bodo race have been influenced in varying degrees by the veneer of Hinduism. Each group is strictly endogamous though there are instances where marriage has taken place among Dimasa Kachari and Burman Kachari or Mech Kachari. Such alliances are, however, as a rule not looked upon with favour.

XIII. INTER-COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

The Dimasa Kacharis who are staying in the urban areas may engage the services of barbers, washermen, tailors and shoe makers from other communities, but the Dimasas who are far away from the urban centres in the interior villages never allow persons other than their community members. Untouchability is absent and they do not forbid any one who belongs to another community to inerdine with them or take water from the same wells though this is observed only in urban areas or among those who are educated. Inter-marriage with communities other than their own, though not at all forbidden is not very much approved by the society. Intermarriage with other communities like Barman Kachari, Mech Kacharis are permissible since they are having the *Sengfang* and the *Jaddis* like the Dimasa Kacharis.

The tribal ways of the Dimasa Kacharis are preserved more among the people living in the hills than those living in the plains. The Dimasa Kacharis who are surrounded by the Assamese and the Bengalee neighbours in the plains and their long experience and steady contact with the plains people has resulted in certain changes in their customs and manners as compared to the Hill Dimasa Kacharis.

Dipali Ghosh (1965) observed that "the Dimasa have recently developed a tendency to conceal the presence of their matri-clans and matrilineal descent of their women from outsiders. Nowadays girls are being sent to school and they are being given the surname of their father (which is that of his *Sengjana*) as in the case of their Assamese or Bengali classmates."

Marriage is not prohibited between the Barmans of Cachar District and the Dimasa of the North Cachar Hills as both of them observe the rules relating to *Sengong* and *Jaddi*. In contrast to the Dimasa Kacharis, the Boro Kacharis have no concept of a matrician or *Jaddi*. So no marriage takes place between the Dimasa and Boros.

The dress has also been influenced by their neighbours in so far as the Dimasa Kachari males of the plains or the educated Dimasa Kacharis are concerned. Most of the males who have come in contact with the plains people have substituted their traditional cloth for dhoti, pants and shirts while those in the interior hills still retain much of their traditional dress. Most of the people have changed from jhuming to wet cultivation possibly due to the influence of their Assamese or Bengalee neighbours. Even if they are aware of it they are not in a position to follow the wet system due to the condition of the terrain. The Dimasa Kacharis who are living in the urban areas or in the plains are more educated than the hill people, possibly this may not only be due to the fact that there is lack of proper facility in the urban areas, this may also be due to an urge to get educated which may be the effect of their Bengalee and Assamese neighbours. Another fact is that the Dimasa Kacharis of the hills are reluctant to accept the change of their social customs, while their brethren in the plains are apt to adopt changes according to the needs of the time.

XIV. STRUCTURE OF SOCIAL CONTROL, PRESTIGE AND LEADERSHIP

The Dimasa Kacharis have been much influenced by their Assamese and Bengalee neighbours particularly those who are living in the plains. Much of the old customs of their social organisation has survived even in the present day administrative change. The routine administration of each village is run by the village council, particularly by the village headman the *gaonbora*.

The jhum land in the village is distributed by the *gaonbora* whose voice in this matter is final. If any disagreement comes, then only the case goes to the District Council. The *gaonbora* is elected by the village people, who is usually an elderly person and commands respect of the villagers. The District Council is simply an approving authority and has no say in the election of the *gaonbora*. The District Council recognises the functions and duties of the 'gaonbora' and does not interfere with the customary rights and previleges of the community.

As already mentioned there is no specialised priestly clan among the Dimasa Kacharis. In common *Hojai* represents the priest. *Gisia* is considered to be the highest priest and only 4 or 5 village combined may have one Gisia and all the religious ceremonies are performed under his supervision. In early days the religious offices were hereditary but now except the Gisia—the highest priest, others are not hereditary. *Gisia*—commands respect—from all the village people. The distant villages which do not have any Gisia of their own, may take the services of the Gisia from other villages.

It is the duty of the *gaonbora* to summon the members of the village council to a sitting and it is he who put forward proposals relating to the affairs of the village and the members discuss the matter and give their verdict. The *gaonbora* can only preside over the vilage council but cannot take any decision of his own without the consent of the members of the village council. The village council plays an important role in regulating the social, economic and religious life of the community, though its power has been somewhat curbed with the establishment of the District Council and all important matters like theft, murder, disputes over land (which cannot be settled by the village council) are dealt with the above body, the village council still occupies an important place in the social organisation and still retains much of its traditional powers in deciding various matters affecting the community as a whole.

XV. SOCIAL REFORM AND WELFARE

A number of community development blocks have been established during the five-year plans covering almost every village in the state, there are also other organisations for social reform and welfare, working among the Dimasa Kachari. The Dimaraju organisation look after the welfare of the Dimasa. There are branches of this organisation throughout the North Cachar district in all important places like—Barakhola, Jaipur, Tungpreng, Halfong, Maibong Sheoratal, Diphu, Dhanashri, Hojai, Haoraghat, Dimapur, Lamding, Lanka, Bikrampur, Dhalai, Thaligram and Darmikhal.

There is a good number of members in all these centres ranging from 12 to 107 persons. The Assam Tribunal Welfare Works have also organised some primary schools in the villages where the tribal children get free education.

Since the Dimasa Kacharis are not much influenced by Christianity so there is no missionary welfare organisation working in the Dimasa Kachari villages.

The District Council has taken initiative to enact a number of legislations and adopt administrative and development measures which have far reaching effect on the social and economic life of the Kacharis. A list of the same is furnished in appendix.

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APPENDIX

THE NORTH CACHAR HILLS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Acts

1. The North Cachar Hills Land and Revenue (Adoption of Assam Land and Revenue Regulation & Rules) Act, 1953.
2. (i) The North Cachar Hills Forests (Adoption of Assam Forest Regulation and Rules) Act, 1953.
   (ii) The North Cachar Hills Forests (Adoption of Assam Forest Regulation and Rules) Amendment Act, 1956.
   (iii) The North Cachar Hills Land and Revenue (Adoption of Assam Land and Revenue Regulation and Rules) Act, 1953.
3. (i) The North Cachar Hills District (Salary and Allowances of the Exceeutive Members) Act, 1955.
   (ii) The North Cachar Hills District (Salaries and Allowances of the Executive Members) Amendment Act 1963.
4. (i) The North Cachar Hills District (Deputy Chairman's Salary and Allowances) Act, 1955.
   (ii) The North Cachar Hills District (Deputy Chairman's Salary and Allowances) Amendment Act, 1960.
   (iii) The North Cachar Hills District (Deputy Chairman's Salary and Allowances) Second Amendment Act, 1963.
   (iv) The North Cachar Hills District (Chairman's Salary and Allowances) Act, 1960.
   (v) The North Cachar Hills District (Chairman's Salary and Allowances) Amendment Act, 1963.
5. (i) The North Cachar Hills District (Members' Salary and Allowances) Act, 1955
   (ii) The North Cachar Hills District (Members' Salary and Allowances) Amendment Act, 1959.
   (iii) The North Cachar Hills District (Members Salary and Allowances) Second Amendment Act, 1963.
6. (i) The Constitution of the North Cachar Hills District Council (Amendment) Act, 1955.
   (ii) The Constitution of the North Cachar Hills District Council (Second Amendment) Act, 1956.
   (iii) The Constitution of the North Cachar Hills District Council (Third Amendment) Act, 1957.
   (iv) The Constitution of the North Cachar Hills District Council (Fourth Amendment) Act, 1958.
   (v) The Constitution of the North Cachar Hills District Council (Fifth Amendment) Act, 1958.
   (vi) Amendments to the Assam Autonomous District (Constitution of District Councils) Rules, 1951 Under Notification No.TAD/R/5/61 dated 15-1-62.
7. The North Cachar Hills District (Administration of Town Committees), Act, 1956.
8. The North Cachar Hills District (Christian Marriage) Act, 1959.
9. The North Cachar Hills District (Christian Marriage) Act, 1960.

Regulation

1. The North Cachar Hills District (Revenue Assessment), Regulation, 1953.
2. (i) The North Cachar Hills District (Taxes) Regulation, 1953.
   (ii) The North Cachar Hills Disctrict (Taxes) (Amendment) Regulation, 1955.
   (iii) The North Cachar Hills District (Taxes) (Amendment) Act, 1958.
   (iv) The North Cachar Hills District (Taxes) (Third Amendment) Regulation, 1963.
3. The North Cachar Hills District (Taxes on Entry of Goods into Markets) Regulation, 1959.
4. The North Cachar Hills District (Taxes) (Third Amendment) Act, 1963.
5. The North Cachar Hills District (Trading by nontribals) Regulation, 1954.

Rules.

1. The Council has aaopted the Assam Autonomous Districts (Constitution of District Councils) Rules, 1951.
2. The North Cachar Hills District Fund Rules, 1953.
3. The North Cachar Hills District (Trading by non-tribals) Rules, 1955.
4. The North Cachar Hills Autonomous District (Administration of Justice) Rules, 1955.
5. The North Cachar Hills District (Taxes on Professions, Trades, Callings and Employments Rules, 1964.
6. The North Cachar Hills District (Constitution of Town Committees) Rules, 1963.
7. The North Cachar Hills District Council (Employment Contributory Provident Fund) Rules, 1964.
8. The North Cachar Hills District (Members Travelling and Halting Allowances) Rules, 1962.

ANNEXURE

FRAME WORK FOR ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDIES

I. *Name, Identity, Origin and History*

1. Name, synonym sub-caste/sub-tribe as in President's Order, as in other published sources such as Census reports, monographs etc. Grouping with other castes and tribes during Censuses. Affinity with other castes and tribes according to recognised authorities.
2. Etymological significance of the name, Names by which other call the community, by the community itself.
3. Identification of the community by occupation or any other way of life.
4. Myths and legends connected with the origin and history of the community and its segments. Historical references and popular beliefs about history and migration of the community.

II. *Distribution and Population Trend*

1. Area where found, population and concentration in the State and outside. Physical aspects of the areas of concentration.
2. Numerical strength in 1961 and population variation from 1901—1961. Sex, age-group, rural-urban distribution in 1961.

III. *Physical Characteristics.*

1. Racial stock, appearance and affinity with other known communities.

IV. *Family, Clan, Kinship and other Analogus Divisions*

1. Family: size (observed and published), Types, residence after marriage, descent, line age and its economic and religious function; variations.
2. Clan/gotra and sub-clans; names, etymological meaning, clustering of clans, belief and mythology abou origin, status among clans, clan and regulation of marriage (preference and prohibition) occupation and clan and rituals, clan and food (restrictions, prescriptions etc.)
3. Others : Phratry, Dual organisation like moities etc. as in 2.

V. *Dwelling, Dress, Food, Ornament and Other Material Objects Distinctive of the Community*

1. Settlement: Village site, location, settlement pettern (Agglomerated, nucleated, dispersed sprinkled, involved etc. and amorphous, star shaped, Horse-shoe shaped, Linear, rectangular, circular or ring shaped etc.) and variations, regional pattern *vis-a-vis* pattern of the community.
2. Neighbourhood pattern on the basis of religion, community (Caste Hindus, untouchable) clan, caste and Tribe etc. with segregations if any and the bases thereof.
3. Dwelling unit, compound, entrance, source of water the use of differient parts of the house (latrine, cattle shed, isolation huts etc.) Shape (Square, round, irregular etc.) storeys, nature of floor, wall, roofing, thatching, ventilations and doors, materials used decorations and embellishments, temporary structures.
4. Dress including head gear and foot wear; used ordinarily, on ceremonial occasions and special occasions, sex-wise and according to majority or minority. Dress of priests and office bearers-variations.
5. Ornaments used, material used, from where obtained, sex-wise and according to age, variations.
6. Personal decoration : tattooing, chipping of teeth etc. hair cutting etc. how done, sex and age, purpose, attitude towards these variations.
7. Food and drink; materials (staple and others), prescriptions and prohibitions connected with food and drink; fuel, utensils and mode of preparation; practices connected with serving and taking of food; preservation of food; rituals, if any.
8. Equipments connected with economic pursuits, religion and rituals.

9. Other household equipments.

10. Equipments connected with recording of time, space and weight and their methods of use.

VI. *Enviromental Sanitation, Hygienic Habits, Disease and Treatment.*

1. Environmental sanitation, settlement, disposal of night soil, garbage etc.

2. Hygienic habit: cleanliness of body, teeth, dress, cleanliness of domicile, utensils etc.

3. Diseases; incidence, local names of diseases, interpretation of the causes, cure of diseases (persons and methods involved) symptoms etc.

4. Modern systems of medicine and attitude of the community towards it.

VII. *Language and Literacy.*

1. Ancestral language, classification according to Grierson, persistence of ancestral language.

2. Mother tongue, classification according to Grierson,bilingualism and multi-lingualism. Regional language

3. Information collected during 1961 on language and literacy.

VIII *Economic Life.*

1. Economic resources ; Land, community land, individual ownership and types of land possessed and land utilization.

2. Forest wealth, flora and fauna, nature and extent of right in the forest, forest utilization.

3. Fishery, Livestock and others.

4. Working force (Sex-wise) Urban and rural variation and comparison of the same with the region.

5. Non workers;

6. Industrial classification (details as collected in the field and compared with that of the 1961 figures Traditional occupation and changes in the pattern. Main and subsidiary occupations.

7. Forced labour, bonded labour, patren client relationship (*Jajmani*), mode of payment.

8. Seasonal migration connected with occupation; recruitment, formation of working groups.

9. Nomadic movement and occupation.

10. Shifting cultivation; method, implements and equipments, produce, participation, cycle of rotation, measure to regulate shifting cultivation and its impact.

11. Terrace cultivation : as above.

12. Income and expenditure. Sources of income, extent; expenditure on food, clothing, house, education social functions, others.

13. Other aspects of economic life.

IX. *Life Cycle*

A. Birth. 1. Beliefs and practices connected with conception, barrenness, still-birth, miscarriage, abortion, child death, regulation of sex etc.

2. Pre-natal practices ; (residence, diet, work, taboos etc.) Delivery place, assistance, equipments used in delivery, position during delivery, severance of umbilical cord (who does and how done), disposal of placenta.

3. Post natal practices : Confinement and segregation, ceremonial pollution, diet for mother and child, rituals.

4. Protection and care of child and training,.

5. Attitude towards birh of child. Preference about sex, preference about number, segregation of sex etc.

B. Initiation : 1. Does initiation ceremony exist; Description.

2. Pre-marital sex relations, within the community, outside the community, sanctions and taboos.

C. Marriage : 1. Age at marriage for both sexes. Prohibited degrees of relationship, preferences, widow remarriage (preferences and taboos).

2. Civil status and social status.
3. Types of marriage · monogamy, polygamy (Polyandry and polygyny).
4. Selection of spouse : qualities valued (for bride and groom) who selects, procedure.
5. Modes of acquiring a mate : by negotiation, by force, intrusion, elopment, etc.
6. Terms of settlement : Payment, bride price, dowry, service, exchange, adoption, etc.
7. Ceremonies connected with marriage (details) including who presides over the marriage and services of functional castes.
8. Statistical data as per 1961 Census.
9. Divorce : Reasons and procedure.

D Death—1. Concept about death, measures to ensure future well being of the soul, measures to avert harm by the spirit.

2. Preparations for disposal of dead, informing friends and relatives, treatment of the dead body, digging of pit etc. for disposal.
3. How carried, who carry, who accompany, place of disposal, methods of disposal, norms and taboos.
4. Ceremonies connected with disposal.
5. Methods of disposal ; burial, cremation, by exposure, floating as water etc.
6. Tombs, megaliths, etc.
7. Pollution : duration, restrictions in work, food, dress, shaving, hair cropping, sex life etc., how pollution removed.
8. Mourning, duration, who does? Death rites.

X. *Religion.*

1. Deities, supreme deity, benevolent deities, malevolent spirits, presiding deity of village and other aspects of life including occupation, clan, tribe etc.
2. Place of the deities in the regional pattern and Brahmanical traditions.
3. Detail and concepts connected with the pantheon.
4. Spots associated with the deities, pilgrim centres and methods of worship.
5. Functionaries.
6. Calendar of festivals and their observance.
7. Concept of soul, hell, heaven, rebirth, trans-migration of soul, etc.
8. Sects and denominations : name, distribution, beliefs and practices, etc.
9. Statistical information.

XI. *Leisure, Recreation and Child Play*

1. Use of leisure time (males, females, children and adult) Seasonal variation in leisure time.
2. Recreation, their mode and extent, for males, females and children.
3. Leisure and recreation with reference to work.

XII. *Relation among Different Segments of the Community*

Recognised segments-name, basis (territorial, ceremonial, social, prestige, religion, sect, education, age, etc.) Interrelationship among various segments. Status of the segment, Status of women.

XIII. *Inter-community Relationships.*

1. Ceremonial relationship, Service by Brahmins, Traditional Service by castes like barbers, washermen, etc.
2. Pollution by touch or proximity to High Caste Hindus, use of well, admission to temple.

3. Secular relationship : model for other communities; dominance due to economic resources, political status, social status, etc.

4. Bridge role, buffer role, alliance and antagonism of the community.

XIV. *Structure of Social Control, Prestige and Leadership.*

1. Social control : levels of Social control (community level, regional level, hereditary, special functionaries etc.) Social control by other agencies.

2. How the offices are filled up.

3. Control exercised by traditionally recognised leaders, functionaries of statutory bodies of the region, powerful individuals belonging to the community etc. at the regional level and local level.

4. Relationship between spheres of social control and agencies of social control.

5. Leadership for social change, for technological change, for political action and for other organised activities in the community level, regional level and local level.

6. Social prestige : method of gaining social prestige (by performing ritual, merit of feast, associating with historical association etc.) symbols of social prestige.

XV. *Social Reform and Welfare.*

1. Social reform movements: Intensity, reasons for the movement (for raising social status, establishing traditional norms, for westernisation etc.) History of the movements.

2. Social welfare : agency, (religious organisation, community as a whole etc.), role of the social welfare movements and impact.

XVI. *Bibliography.*

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