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GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
WELFARE OF MINORITIES DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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Report of Sub-Group on
Skill Development of
Indigenous Assamese
Muslims of Assam

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"LEARN TO EARN" IS THE
MOTTO.

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Acknowledgement:

The Sub-Group on Skill Development for Indigenous Assamese Muslims of Assam wishes to thank the all the leading citizens, the stakeholders, and other community people who have extensively participated in the interaction meets, and gave their invaluable feedback and suggestions. Without their help, extended both directly or indirectly, the preparation of this study report would not have been such a wonderful experience. The Sub-Group also wishes to express its heartfelt gratitude to the skill imparting institutions of Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE), Assam Skill Development Mission (ASDM) and The Nest for their extraordinary support extended during the respective visits to these institutions. The Sub-Group further wishes to express its sincere appreciation for the Deputy Commissioners of Lakhimpur and Dibrugarh for their help and support in organizing meetings with leading citizens of the target community in their respective districts; and for the Deputy Commissioner of Nagaon, for the socio-economic survey report of the target community in that district. Last but not the least, the Sub-Group also wishes to thank the Chief Executive Officer, GMDA, and the Director, Char Areas Development, for all their invaluable help in conducting this study.

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Executive Summary

The Sub-Group on Skill Development was one of the seven sub-groups/committees the Government of Assam had constituted to undertake studies of Indigenous Muslims Community of Assam. It comprised a Chairman and 3 (three) other members, including an official Member-Secretary. The responsibility of the Sub-Group was to recommend the requisite capacity building, upskilling and need-based training programmes in different fields for enhancing the employment as well as self-employment opportunities of the youth populace of the target group.

The Sub-Group has had three formal meetings besides a large number of informal interactions, both physical as well as online. The Sub-Group visited the skill imparting institutions of IIE (Lalmati), ASDM (Betkuchi) and The Nest (Ambari). It also toured a few representative settlements of indigenous Assamese Muslims having traditional craft as cottage industry; viz. Naharoni (Golaghat) and Kakojan (Jorhat). It further had 2 (two) numbers of meetings with leading citizens of the target community in 2 (two) districts - viz. Dibrugarh and Lakhimpur - on a representative sample basis.

The Sub-Group also took suggestions from the members of its target community, i.e. the indigenous Assamese Muslims, through a specially created email ID for the Sub-Group - subgroupofskilldevelopment@gmail.com. Several important suggestions were received through this online window, some of which have been duly incorporated in this report.

The Sub-Group also analyzed the pros and cons of several alternative scenarios before finalizing its recommendations under this report. In this context, due care has been taken to ensure the practicability and justifiability of the recommendations, their technical feasibility and economic viability, and improbability of usurpation of the suggested measures by the immigrant brethren of the target community.

Among its general recommendations, the Sub-Group has laid stress on the identification of Target Community. While the target community provided by Notification is ipso facto the indigenous Assamese Muslim community comprising five broad segments: (1) Goria, (2) Moria, (3) Fakir, (4) Deshi and (5) Zula; the Sub-Group has opined that the community members should be properly found out through an official socio-economic survey. Besides, the Sub-Group has also proposed that other indigenous Assamese minority communities [e.g. indigenous Assamese Sikhs, indigenous Assamese Christians and indigenous Assamese Buddhists] ought to be included in the target group, in order to make the recommendations practically feasible and sustainable in the long run.

The Sub-Group has also recommended assessment of socio-economic status of target community through the official socio-economic survey mentioned above, on the basis of which it has been proposed to classify the target community on the basis of

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educational qualification. The Sub-Group has further recommended imparting of different skills based on the criteria of educational qualification.

The Sub-Group has on the whole recommended (1) skilling of unemployed and underemployed youth of the target community based on their educational qualification and existing vocational training; (2) up-grading of existing skill for enhancing employability of the youth of the target community including technical graduates; (iii) linking youth of the target community to existing official skill-training schemes and programmes; (iv) creation of large-scale awareness among the target community; (v) reservation of seats for youth of the target community in institutions/ schemes for giving effective scope for implementation of the aforementioned interventions - for which additional seats may be created and additional courses added; (vi) checking of skilling and skill-upgradation training courses for authenticity and effectiveness by a regulatory body; (vii) promotion of Self-Help Group (SHG) movement and self-employment among youth of the target community under existing schemes of NRLM, NULM, NABARD, DDUGKY and MANAS; (viii) promotion of entrepreneurship among youth members of the target community; and (ix) rejuvenation of traditional crafts of the target community like brass metal-craft, bamboo craft, agar-wood perfume extraction, handloom, etc. by systematic and planned measures.

The Sub-Group has also recommended the establishment of a separate Directorate for the extended target community - i.e. the indigenous Assamese minorities, which include not only the Assamese Muslims, but also the Assamese Sikhs, Christians and Buddhists; totally independent of the Directorate of Char Development. The proposed new Directorate of Indigenous Minorities may have bodies like Goriya Moriya Development Council, Assamese Sikh Development Council, etc. under its domain.

The Sub-Group has also made specific recommendations with respect to engineering/ technical graduates from the target community; giving emphasis on the right upskilling. Similar specific recommendations have also been made for the rejuvenation of the traditional crafts of the target community like the brass metal-craft of the Moriyas, bamboo craft and agar-wood perfume extraction of the Goriyas, and handloom of the Zulas.

The Sub Group has also made certain goal-oriented recommendations like setting up of a Programme Implementing Agency (PIA) under the proposed new Directorate of Indigenous Minorities for taking care of the recommendations. The Sub-Group has concluded its report with a set of additional recommendations.

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1. Introduction

The Government of Assam had constituted seven sub groups/committees to undertake studies of Indigenous Muslims Community of Assam on:

- Population stabilization,
- Health care,
- Cultural identity,
- Education,
- Financial inclusion,
- Skill Development, and
- Women Empowerment;

vide Notification No. WMD.62/ 2021/Pt/7, dated Dispur 31st July, 2021.

The Sub-Group on Skill Development comprised the following members:

Sl. No.	Name and Designation	Position
1.	Shri Mozibur Rahman, Head of Civil Engineering, Dibrugarh Polytechnic.	Chairman
2.	Dr. Nekib Hussain, Entrepreneur and Social Worker.	Member
3.	Md. Rashid Arif Hussain, Oil Industry Professional, Technical Expert, NRL	Member
4.	Shri Sazzad Alam, ACS, Joint Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Industries, Commerce & Public Enterprise Deptt.	Member Secretary

On the basis of the aforementioned Notification, it has been understood that the Government of Assam has entrusted the Sub-Group on Skill Development with the responsibility to recommend the requisite capacity building, upskilling and need-based training programmes in different fields for enhancing the employment as well as self-employment opportunities of the youth populace of the target group.

The Sub-Group has had three formal meetings besides a large number of informal interactions, both physical as well as online. The first meeting of the Sub-Group was held online through DVC mode on 7th August 2021 (Saturday) from 4:00 PM onwards (*vide*

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Minutes attached in the Annexure). The second meeting of the Sub-Group was held through physical mode on 11th August 2021 (Wednesday) at 5:30 PM onwards in the Office Chamber of the Member Secretary in Block D (3rd Floor) of Assam Secretariat (Civil), Janata Bhawan Complex, Dispur, Guwahati (vide Minutes attached in the Annexure). The third meeting of the Sub-Group was held through hybrid mode on 24th August 2021 (Tuesday) at 4:30 PM onwards in the Conference Hall of GMDA Office, Bhangagarh, Guwahati (vide Minutes attached in the Annexure). While the Chairman, the Member Secretary and Member Dr. Nekib Hussain were physically present in the GMDA Conference Hall, Member Er. Md. Rashid Arif Hussain joined in from Siliguri through the Digital Video Conference link (vide Photograph below).



3rd Sub-Group Meeting in Hybrid Mode (Photo 1)

The Sub-Group visited the skill imparting institutions of IIE (Lalmati), ASDM (Betkuchi) and The Nest (Ambari). It also toured a few representative settlements of indigenous Assamese Muslims having traditional craft as cottage industry; viz Naharoni (Golaghat) and Kakojan (Jorhat). It further had 2 (two) numbers of meetings with leading citizens of the target community in 2 (two) districts - viz. Dibrugarh and Lakhimpur - on a representative sample basis.

The Sub-Group also took suggestions from the members of its target community, i.e. the indigenous Assamese Muslims, through a specially created email ID for the Sub-Group - subgroupofskilldevelopment@gmail.com. Several important suggestions were received through this online window, some of which have been duly incorporated in this report.

The Sub-Group also analyzed the pros and cons of several alternative scenarios before finalizing its recommendations under this report. In this context, due care has been taken to ensure the practicability and justifiability of the recommendations, their technical feasibility and economic viability, and improbability of usurpation of the suggested measures by the immigrant brethren of the target community.

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2. Background:

The Sub-Group has understood the importance of skill development in facilitating the socio-economic development of any community, including the target community of the study in particular. In this regard, the Sub-Group notes the idea of World Bank – *“Low skill perpetuates poverty and inequality. When done right, skill development can reduce unemployment and underemployment, increase productivity and improve standards of living. Helping people develop and update their skills makes economic sense.”*

As per the dictionary definition, skill is an ability to perform an activity in a competent manner. Skill never dies. Skill refers to the ability of using that information acquired from knowledge and applying it in a context. Skills can be developed and improved over time, by combining abilities and knowledge, but the underlying abilities are needed in order for the skills to be developed.

Skill development is thus the capacity building to do something properly and with effective efficiency. A well-developed skill can make people master their respective field, and such skill can be professionally imparted too. Learning new skills helps in professional life a lot. It helps to achieve goals, gives confidence, and gives motivation for working. It is important because skills determine ability to execute plans with success and in goal achievement. Skills are the tools of goal achievement.

Therefore, basic skills development is the work on remediation practice, doing transition activities and work on individual goals. Skill development is the process of identification of the skills gap in youth and providing skilling training & employment benefits to them. So, it has been observed that State Government is continuously making efforts to provide skill development to the youth populace of Assam with their skilling partners around the country. Like any other community, a young population of working age predominates the society of indigenous Assamese Muslim society in Assam. There is a huge scope of generating skilled workforce and utilize the 'demographic dividend' for the favor of the State Government.

While considering the matter of skill development, the Sub-Group understands that it does not have a monolithic structure. It varies not only with age and educational/vocational standard, but also on its very nature. In this regard, it has been noted that the World Bank defines four sets of skills for succeeding in the labour market of the 21st century; viz. cognitive skills, socio-emotional skills, technical skills and digital skills.

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3. Rationale of the Exercise:

The Sub-Group has understood that on account of the target community gradually losing out on employment and self-employment opportunities, their socio-economic condition has in recent times tended towards the vulnerable. Besides, the traditional crafts for which certain sections of the target community are famous have of late also suffered due to competition from cheaper machine-made products in the market. In view of the above, the Sub-Group has observed that a systematic line of action for providing the youth of the target community the ways and means to earn a sustainable livelihood is the need of the hour. In this context, a methodical take on skill development may be undertaken as a major priority for socio-economic development of target group. This is in the opinion of the Sub-Group would contribute to the reduction in inequality and poverty within the target group.

The Sub-Group further understood that the job and skilling requirements in various strata of the target community needs to be assessed, and suggestions made to formulate and implement placement-linked skill development schemes. While skill development programmes may be long-term continuous projects for socio-economic upliftment of the indigenous Muslims of Assam, there is also the need to formulate purely need-based multifaceted schemes utilizing the available resources, manpower and infrastructure of the particular areas within the State. **"Learn and Earn"** may be considered the motto of such skill development schemes.

The rationale behind the exercise, as noted by the Sub-Group, is the promotion of inclusive development process by skilling of the target community in order to provide its members with opportunities for sustainable livelihood. This may be considered a part of the lofty vision of the Hon'ble Prime Minister under *"Sabka Saath - Sabka Vikas - Sabka Viswas - Sabka Prayas"*.

4. Objectives of the Study:

During its preliminary meeting, the Sub-Group brainstormed and deduced the following objectives of its designated Study:

- i) Identification of the target community and its segregation on the basis of educational qualification as well as latent vocational and technical skills.

As has already been mentioned, since there is no distinct Decennial Census or even Caste Census data identifying indigenous Assamese Muslims; it was decided to undertake the identification of indigenous Muslim population and data collection with the help of Deputy Commissioners of districts and through Circle Officers under them.

- ii) Identification of skilling and capacity building needs of the target community on the basis of their educational qualification and other factors.
- iii) Study and documentation of various opportunities and vistas available from existing Government and non-Government schemes for enabling imparting of training to the youth and other beneficiaries of the target community. The focus decided was on financial viability, sustainability and mass coverage. In order to accomplish that objective, meetings with organizations imparting skills [e.g. ASDM, IIE Lalmati, NEST (Start-Up Hub under Industries & Commerce Department, etc.)] were planned.
- iv) Meetings with other associated stakeholders including interaction with members of associations/ community groups of indigenous Assamese Muslims.
- v) Study of upskilling and green-field skilling opportunities for the target community with a focused approach on existing skills, their market viability and requisite value addition for meeting critical gaps (if any).
- vi) Study on modernization, creation of niche market and ensuring economic rejuvenation of the cottage industries of indigenous Assamese Muslims - including brass craft of Hajo, *japi* manufacturing of Nalbari, Eri-Muga sericulture and silk textiles, and Agar artificial inoculation, perfume extraction, etc.

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5. Target Community of the Exercise:

The Sub-Group noted that Assam has broadly two types of Muslims – viz. Indigenous and Immigrant. The immigrant community refers to the migrated people from East Bengal and Mymensingh during the British colonial era. These people were generally peasants and other labour class people who found it difficult to cultivate or work in the congested areas of their original domicile. Considering the sparsely populated territory of pre-independent Assam, they were encouraged to migrate under the dubious "Grow More Food" scheme of the colonial administration.

The indigenous Muslim community may again be broadly sub-divided into (1) Assamese speaking Muslims of the Brahmaputra valley; and (2) Bengali speaking Muslims of the Barak Valley. However, considering the content and purpose of the formation of the aforementioned sub-group, the **target community** comprises evidently the indigenous Assamese Muslim community.

In order to understand the difference between the indigenous Assamese speaking Muslims and the immigrant Bengali speaking Muslims in the Brahmaputra Valley, the Sub-Group noted the official Census of Assam by the British Government in 1872, (by Hunter W.W. - 'A Statistical Account of Assam') and Census of India Assam 1931, Vol-II, Part-I. These figures have revealed that Muslim people from East Bengal and Mymensingh started migration and settled in the different districts radically changing the demography of the region. The Census data of migration for three decades collected from Census of India Assam 1931, Vol-II, Part-I has been presented below for ready reference:

Table1: Census in Assam showing Demographic Change.

Year	Migrated Muslim population	Undivided District					
		Goalpara	Kamrup	Darrang	Nagaon	Sibsagar	Lakhimpur
1911	From East Bengal	77,000	4,000	7,000	4,000	14,000	14,000
	From Mymensingh	34,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	---	---
1921	From East Bengal	151,000	44,000	20,000	58,000	14,000	14,000
	From Mymensingh	78,000	30,000	12,000	52,000	---	---
1931	From East Bengal	170,000	134,000	41,000	120,000	12,000	19,000
	From Mymansing	80,000	91,000	30,000	108,000	---	2,000

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Total	From East Bengal	In 1911	120,000	1911-21	301,000	1921-31	496,000
	From Mymansing		37,000		172,000		311,000

The figures mentioned above is an instance of three decades only, where total number of migrations increased up to 1437000 out of total Muslim population 1999000 in Brahmaputra Valley in 1931, which means that the indigenous Muslim population in that year was 562000. The migration continued unabated for several decades gradually reducing the indigenous Muslim to a minority in terms of ethnicity within the same religion in comparison to the Immigrant Muslims.

It was further noted by the Sub-Group that Assamese Muslim are not categorized in the Census as a separate community. However, the indigenous Assamese Muslim population has been estimated through *unofficial* sources to be roughly around 28% of the total Muslim population of Assam. The estimated Muslim population of Assam extrapolated during the 2021 Census is 14.61 million out of a total population of 36.54 million, making up 40.03% approximately of the State population. However, the indigenous Assamese Muslims population has been estimated to be roughly around 4 million; comprising 12.8% of the total State population, and almost 28% of the State's Muslim population.

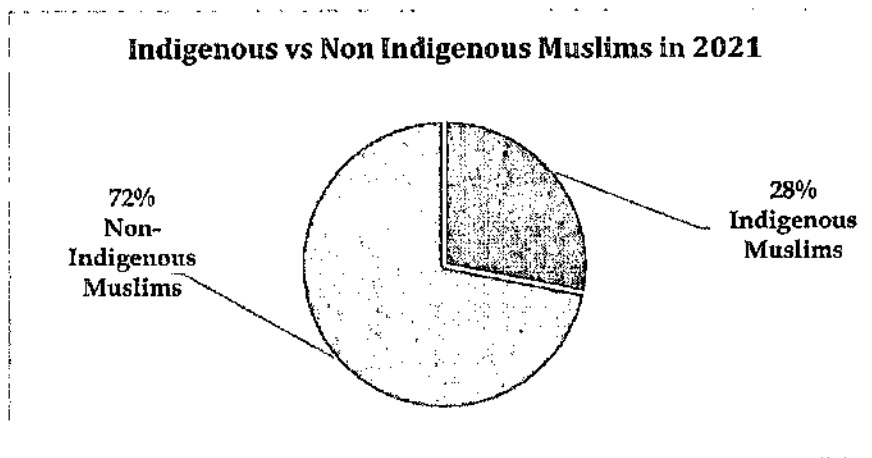


Fig.1: Comparative Population of Indigenous to total Muslim population in Assam

Origin of Assamese Muslims may be traced back to the early 13th century, when a local chieftain Ali Mech was supposed to have converted into Islam following his contact with the invading army of Bakhtiar Khilzi. This has been widely documented, and can be perused in the "Comprehensive History of Assam" by Prof. Heramba Kumar Barpujari, as well as found referred to in Prof. Mohammad Taher's speech "Axomiya Musalman: Eithas aru Abodan" made at the Jorhat Islamic Centre on 8th February 2009. As per available records,

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It has been estimated the Assamese Muslim population in 19th century numbered around 2.2 to 2.3 million.

5.1 Segments of the Target Community:

Within the target community of indigenous Assamese Muslims, there are five broad segments: (1) Goria, (2) Moria, (3) Fakir, (4) Deshi and (5) Zula.

The *Goria* community is an omnibus term for the mainstream Assamese Muslim in both Upper Assam and Lower Assam. Although they originally meant those people brought by the Ahom monarchs primarily from the Gaur region to carry out a number of essential trades, the Goriya community eventually came to comprise a) Muslim people from North and West India voluntarily coming to Assam for trade and commerce as well as for carrying out their diverse occupations, b) local converts of the higher social echelon, and c) Muslim scholars who came to teach local people and work for the native monarchs. Many of them now use surnames given by Ahom kings like Hazarika, Saikia, Bora and Bhuyan. Within the greater Goriya fraternity itself are the so-called high caste (so-called because Islam *ipso facto* is devoid of caste) Muslims – viz. Sheikh, Syed, Moghul and Pathan. They claim their origin from blue-blooded foreign invaders and religious preachers of Arab, Turkish, Afghan, Moghul and Central Asian ilk.

Moriyas are the descendants of the Muslim soldiers – who came with the Turkish and Moghul – and either fell captive to the indigenous rulers like Ahoms and Koches or did not go back otherwise. The Moriyas today form a numerically miniscule but activity-wise significant minority in the Upper Assam districts as well as in the Lower Assam district of Kamrup. They normally live in rural and semi-urban areas forming small settlements and carrying out their traditional trade of brass-metal craft as a cottage industry.

Fakeers refers to the descendants of Muslim Sufi saints, who had came to Assam from both North and West India as well as from Central and West Asia; their companions who came along with them from their places of origin; their followers known as *mureeds*; and erstwhile social outcastes who were converted and brought back to social mainstream by the Muslim Sufi saints.

Deshis are the descendants from original inhabitants of Assam – including Koch-Rajbonshi, Mech, Rabha, Bodo and Indo-Aryan people – who had converted to Islam. With an admixture of Mongoloid and Aryan ethnic structures, the community is found in Lower Assam.

Zulas used to be weavers from the Ansari clan in Bihar and Jharkhand. But they have not only adopted Assamese as their mother tongue in word and deed, their living style and culture leave very little to differentiate them with the other indigenous Muslims.

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5.2 Socio-Economic Status and Stratification of the Target Community:

The Sub-Group analyzed that prior to choosing any of the skill improvement tools for the different strata and sections of the target community, they must be identified first. The socio-economic status, educational background, level of skill and aptitude, etc. of the different sections of the target community must also be evaluated.

Considering the absence of socio-economic data of the target community in particular, i.e. independent of their immigrant and Bengali-speaking indigenous brethren, in the decennial Census or Caste Census or any independent but fundamentally unbiased sample survey; the Sub-Group requested in black and white the Deputy Commissioners of all the 35 districts on Assam to provide data as per the following format:

District:			Revenue Circle:		
Sl. No.	Village inhabited by Indigenous Assamese Muslims	Number of Indigenous Assamese Muslims (with %age)	General Occupation/ Profession of Indigenous Assamese Muslims	Educational Break-Up (Graduate/ Undergraduate Matriculate/ School Dropout/ Illiterate)	Remarks

It was suggested to the Deputy Commissioners for conducting the survey through the land records staff and *gaon-pradhans* of the different Revenue Circles under the supervision of the respective Circle Officers. It was further requested to provide the data on the Revenue Circle-wise number of villages inhabited by Indigenous Assamese Muslims vis-à-vis the total number of villages in the Revenue Circle.

However, only Nagaon District completed the solicited exercise and submitted the requisite data as per format. Yet that district can be considered representative of the entire State as far as the target community is concerned - not only because of its central location, but also on account of the presence of different sections of the community in that particular district.

The data thus submitted by Nagaon District is elucidated as follows:

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Table 2: Population and Socio-Economic Data of Indigenous Assamese Muslims in
Nagaon District

Sl No.	Name of Revenue Circle	Village inhabited by Indigenous Assamese Muslims	Number of Indigenous Assamese Muslims (with % age)	General Occupation/ Profession of Indigenous Assamese Muslims	Education Breakup (Graduate/ Under Graduate Matriculate/ School Dropout/ Illiterate)
[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]
1.	Raha Revenue Circle	Niz-Ballgaon	63.24%	Service Holder = 09	Graduate = 12
				Farmer = 50	Under Graduate Matriculate = 63
				Business = 290	School Drop-out = 0
				Labour = 110	Illiterate = 0
		Phulaguri	0.46%	Service Holder = 01	Graduate = 02
				Farmer = 01	Under Graduate Matriculate = 01
					School Drop-out = 5
					Illiterate = 0
		Dighaliati	14.38%	Service Holder = 09	Graduate = 32
				Framer = 08	Under Graduate Matriculate = 315
				Business = 59	School Drop-out = 0
					Illiterate = 59

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		Khahigarh	13.83%	Service Holder = 03	Graduate = 07
				Farmer= 70	Under Graduate Matriculate = 71
				Business= 50	School Drop-out = 10
					Illiterate = 11
2.	Dhing Revenue Circle	Bilotia - 1765	54.89%	Farmer	Matriculate
		Bechamari - 840	14.00%	Service/ Cultivator	Under Graduate
		Sonarigaon - 875	35.00%	Service/ Cultivator	Under Graduate Matriculate
		Sahariagaon - 180	3.00%	Cultivator	Matriculate
3.	Rupahi Revenue Circle	Teltabebeja	30.94%	Service	Graduate = 15
				Farmer	Under Graduate = 25
				Labour	Matriculate = 65
				Driver	School Dropout = 565
				Housewife	Illiterate = 157
4.	Kampur Revenue Circle	Ghilani	68.54%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Graduate & HS Pass
		Kampur Revenue Town	1.86%	Business & Service	Graduate & HS Pass

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		Uparbor Lalunggaon	0.60%	Cultivation & Business	HSLC
		Paschim Nambor Lalunggaon	00.13%	Labour & Cultivation	Under Matriculate
		Niz-Kathiatoli	00.57%	Driver, Labour & Cultivation	HSLC
		Rangolugaon	00.07%	ASHA & Cultivation	HSLC
		Sagunbahigrant	0.25%	Business & Labour	Under Matriculate
		Sagunbahigaon	0.17%	Cultivation	Under Matriculate
		Hayagrant	00.31%	Cultivation	HSLC
5.	Nagaon Revenue Circle	Bagariguri - 874	41.00%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
		Maj Jajari - 1410	53.00%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
		Badalgaon - 115	15.00%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
		Dewrigaon - 55	08.00%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
		Katanigaon - 5046	78.95%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout

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	Town Norttam - 1993	9.00%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Town Nagaon - 852	15.00%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Town Haiborgaon - 523	2.00%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Dimarguri - 65	1.00%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Difalu - 40	1.00%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Polashani - 284	14.00%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Nottarm - 522	20.00%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Chotahahabor - 550	5.00%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Borpothari Sutar - 8	01.55%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Jolah - 20	05.89%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout

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	Niz-Pakhimoria - 2375	100%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Ujara - 9	6.81%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Hatipara - 504	25.25%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Na- Bebejia	18.79%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Jawonigaon	29.32%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Titajuri	2.00%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Borkandali Mikirpar	1.64%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Dakhin Gamariati	28.11%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Uriagranti Tubuki	0.56%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
	Uriagranti Rangolu	0.56%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout

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		Chengmara	27.38%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
		Sutargaon	15.58%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
		Kuruwabahi Khat	34.00%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
		Kumargaon	4.39%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
		Elengi Satra	56.14%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
		Borbheti	8.99%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
		Katimari Grant	0.26%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
		Bengenaati	0.48%	Agriculture, Business & Service	Matriculate, Graduate, Illiterate, Dropout
6.	Samaguri Revenue Circle	Puranigudam Town - 2100	80.95%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly Graduate & HS Passed
		Bamunigaon - 1245	59.84%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly Graduate & HS Passed
		No.1 Bhoraguri - 945	1.26%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly HSLC Pass & Under Matriculate

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	Khanajan - 434	2.07%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly HSLC Pass & Under Matriculate
	Kumargaon - 6	100.00%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly HSLC Pass
	Sutargaon - 2677	39.22%	Business & Agriculture	Mostly HSLC Pass
	Samgaon - 1560	18.65%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly HS Pass
	Garchuk - 610	1.14%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly HSLC Pass
	Niz-Chapanala - 1015	10.34%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly Graduate & HS Passed
	Kaziranga - 1229	23.27%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly Graduate, HS Passed & Matriculate
	Bebejia - 169	11.83%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly School Dropout
	Hahchora Boraligaon - 1500	53.33%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly Graduate & HS Passed
	Niz Bhelguri - 1950	3.33%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly Graduate & HS Passed
	Missa - 5360	1.15%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly Graduate, HS Passed & Matriculate
	Gendhali Kacharigaon - 614	00.81%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly HSLC Pass

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		Halowagaon - 1304	55.98%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly HSLC, HS, Graduate & Under matriculate
		Deori Ati - 790	12.41%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly HSLC, HS, Graduate & Under matriculate
		Bherbheri - 1528	3.60%	Service, Business & Agriculture	Mostly HSLC, HS, Graduate & Under matriculate
7.	Kaliabor Revenue Circle	Langi Chuk - 450	15.00%	Business & Others	Graduate = 20 Matriculate = 15
		Hatiekhowa - 72	5.00%	Agriculture, Govt. Services, Business & Others	Graduate = NIL Matriculate = 4
		Morigaon - 1584	92.90%	Business & Others	Graduate = 66 Matriculate = 185
		Samdhara - 1100	40.32%	Agriculture, Small Scale business etc.	Matriculate = 36 School Dropout = 12
		Bihdubigaon - 88	15.974%	Agriculture, Small Scale business etc.	Graduate = 1 Matriculate = 36 School Dropout = 12
		Rubbarbarigaon - 51	12.75%	Agriculture, Small Scale business etc.	Graduate = 2 Matriculate = 12 School Dropout = 2
		Silghat Town - 130	10.59%	Agriculture, Small Scale business etc.	Graduate = 1 Matriculate = 36 School Dropout = 12

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	Silghatgaon - 401	38.97%	Agriculture, Small Scale business etc.	Graduate = 3 Matriculate = 4 School Dropout = 30
	Dalgaon - 930	39.69%	Agriculture, Small Scale business etc.	Graduate = 3 Matriculate = 18 School Dropout = 313
	Bhomuraguri - 05	00.43%	Agriculture, Small Scale business etc.	Illiterate = 1 (03 no.s currently reading in school and one is 2 years old)

The Sub-Group has thus observed from the picture exhibited by the Nagaon District that the indigenous Assamese Muslim people are mostly engaged in small and medium business, as well as in agriculture; while a few are engaged as menial labour and professional jobs like drivers and electricians. A small but significant section also appeared to be employed in the services sector. As far as education is concerned, while there are a few illiterate people and a considerable number of school-drop-outs; a large proportion of the community are matriculates and graduates and above. The Sub-Group noted that these factors enable imparting of target-based skilling and upskilling for the target community.

Considering the fact that education provides the foundation for skill development, and also forms a major stratification criterion for the target community centring around levels of efficiency, consistency as well as self-confidence; the Sub-Group decided to classify the target community on the basis of educational qualification as per the following four sub-heads - viz.

- A. Illiterate and School Drop-out below Class X Pass
- B. Class X Pass to Class XII Pass and College Drop-out
- C. Graduate and Post-Graduate
- D. Technical, Management and Professional Graduate and Post-Graduate

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6. Classification of Target Groups & Identification of Impartible Skills:

In order to select the impartible skills, the Sub-Group considered the World Bank categorization of such skills as cognitive skills, socio-emotional skills, technical skills and digital skills.

- i. **Cognitive Skills:** Such skills enable the understanding of complex ideas, effective adaptability to varied environments, learning from experience, and reasoning. Foundational literacy, numeracy, creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, additional language for communication, documentation, electronic communication, etc. are generally recognized as cognitive skills.
- ii. **Socio-Emotional Skills:** Such skills, also christened "soft-skills" in certain circles, enable the navigation of interpersonal and social situations effectively. These include leadership, teamwork, self-control, time-management, public speaking, and grit.
- iii. **Technical Skills:** Technical skills refer to the acquired knowledge, expertise, and interactions needed to perform a specific task; including the mastery of required materials, tools, or technologies. Most of the tangible skills fall under the category of technical skills. These include not only skills for machine operation like installation, commissioning, operations and maintenance of various machines, equipments and electronic gadgets; but also, social service skills like nursing, baby-sitting, geriatric care, etc., and professional skills like carpentry, masonry, tailoring, barbering and hair-styling, painting, cookery, etc. Agricultural/ farming skills comprising organic and sustainable farming, non-conventional farming, group farming, bio-technology etc. also form part of these set of skills.
- iv. **Digital Skills:** Such skills, which are cross-cutting and draw on all of the above skills, encompass the ability to access, manage, understand, integrate, communicate, evaluate, and create information safely and appropriately through the digital medium. Graphic designing, DTP, photo/ video editing, e-marketing, coding and programming, etc. comprise some of the major digital skills.

On the basis of the aforementioned classification of the target community and enumeration of impartible skills, the Sub-Group after due deliberation cate identified a set of skills for being imparted to each of the Target Groups formed out of the target community.

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Table 3: List of Impartible Skills for different Target Groups

Sl. No.	Target Groups		Skills tentatively Identified for being Imparted
	Gender	Educational Criteria	
1.	Boys	A. Illiterate and School Drop-out below Class X Pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Carpentry ii. Masonry iii. Tailoring iv. Barbering & Hair-Styling v. Painter vi. Fast Food Cook vii. Floriculture viii. Vermicompost, Poultry and other Agri-based Skills
2.	Boys	B. Class X Pass to Class XII Pass and College Drop-out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Plumbing ii. Electrician & Car Mechanic iii. AC, TV, Fridge, Mobile, etc. Repair Mechanic iv. Electronics Repairing v. Tools Making vi. Designer Tailoring vii. Woodcraft & Designer Carpentry viii. Wood Paneling, False Ceiling, Steel/ Aluminum/ Wood Fabricating ix. Chef, Hotel Management for Waitering & House Keeping x. Excavator and High-End Machine Driver xi. Security Guard xii. Agar Inoculator
3.	Boys	C. Graduate and Post-Graduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Professional Skills ii. Tally and Accounting iii. Communication Skills - English Speaking and Writing,

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			<p>documentation, electronic communication.</p> <p>iv. Technical skills – installation, commissioning, operations & maintenance of machines, equipment, electronic gadgets, etc.</p> <p>v. Digital & Information Skills (DTP, internet coding, etc.)</p> <p>vi. Soft skills</p> <p>vii. Fashion Designing</p>
4.	Boys	D. Technical, Management and Professional Graduate and Post-Graduate	<p>i. Upskilling of Engineering Knowledge to meet Industry/ Market Needs</p> <p>ii. Electronics Skills (Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, AutoCAD, Computer Programming, App Making and Coding).</p> <p>iii. Computer and Mobile Services Skills</p> <p>iv. Service Engineering of Electronics Goods and Heavy Machineries</p> <p>v. Welding & Electro-Mechanical Works</p> <p>vi. High-Level Accounting (for MBA, BCom and MCom)</p> <p>vii. Cyber Security Skills</p> <p>viii. Tele-medicine & Paramedical Skills</p>
5.	Girls	Illiterate and School Drop-out below Class X Pass	<p>i. Tailoring</p> <p>ii. Handloom</p> <p>iii. Palliative & Geriatric Care <i>including</i> Baby Care, Elderly Care, Home Nursing, On Call Help, etc.</p>

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			iv. Beautician v. Tiffin Service
6.	Girls	Class X Pass to Class XII Pass and College Drop-out	i. Nursing and Paramedical Skills ii. Air Hostess and Hotel Management iii. SHG Formation and Management iv. Small Finance and Marketing Skills v. Basic Computer Skills
7.	Girls	Graduate and Post-Graduate	Same as Boys
8.	Girls	Technical Graduate	Same as Boys

While the Sub-Group notes that the school/ college dropouts have specific skilling and livelihood training opportunities which simply needs to be tapped and links established, the problem lies with the educated unemployed and underemployed – which the sample survey (courtesy Nagaon District Administration) shows that their numbers are quite significant. The Sub-Group feels that special skilling and upskilling for such youth need to be taken up. In this respect, it was deemed necessary to segregate the group into engineering/ technology graduates and general graduates.

In case of engineering/ technology graduates, the Sub-Group desires to focus on 4 (four) aspects so as to ensure proper employability. Firstly, requirement of knowledge and skills of various prospective industries needs to be assessed, and such technical graduates may be provided special training to bridge the critical gap between their latent knowledge/ skill and the requisite knowledge/ skill. Secondly, many of our technical graduates fail to make a mark in campus interviews and other recruitment fora on account of lack of cognitive and socio-emotional skills; including Spoken English, Quantitative and Analytical Aptitude. Therefore, the Sub-Group feels that due training opportunities for those skills may be institutionally arranged for unemployed/ underemployed technical graduates of the target community. Thirdly, many of our technical graduates are also reluctant to take up jobs commensurate with their knowledge/ skill which are outside the State/ country. The Sub-Group feels that such youth needs proper psychological reorientation to induce motivation/ interest for such jobs. For that, special counselling camps may be organized with

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pep-talk by experts/ life coaches and engineers who have done well abroad. Fourthly, the Sub-Group also observed that very few of the engineering graduates have thought to leverage their technical know-how to establish Start-Ups and their own engineering/ industrial firms. The Sub-Group therefore is of the firm opinion that entrepreneurship and Start-Up promotion may be actively considered. In this regard, the Sub-Group visited institutions like Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship and The Nest (the marquee Start-Up hub of the State) in order to delve more into that aspect.

In the case of general graduates/ post-graduates, the Sub-Group opines not only for arrangement of/ linking to training on cognitive and socio-emotional skills - *including Spoken English, Quantitative and Analytical Aptitude*, but also on specific technical skills which would enable the youth concerned to take up jobs available in the private employment market or go for self-employment opportunities. Such technical skills may be selected by the general graduates/ post-graduates concerned as per their choice and aptitude out of the enlisted skills in Table No. 3 above.

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7. Visit of Skill Imparting Institutions:

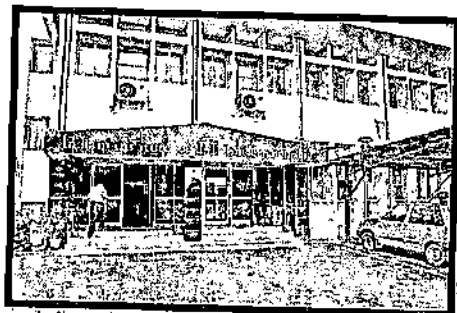
In order to understand the opportunities available for imparting different skills in existing Government sector skill imparting institutions, the Sub-Group decided to undertake visits to such institutions. The institutions shortlisted for that purpose comprised:

- (1) Assam Skill Development Mission (ASDM) – located at Betkuchi, Guwahati, and the North East Skill Centre (NESC) under its ambit;
- (2) Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship – located at Lalmati, Guwahati;
- (3) Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET), Changsari;
- (4) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati – located at North Guwahati;
- (5) Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Guwahati – located at Mirza, Guwahati;
- (6) Indian Institute of Hotel Management (IIHM) – located at Borbori, Guwahati;
- (7) The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), Guwahati – located at Borbori, Guwahati; and
- (8) The Nest, the Start-Up Hub/ Incubator – located at Ambari, Guwahati.

However, in view of scheduling problems, the Sub-Group was able to visit only 3 (three) of the above 8 (eight) institutions; viz. IIE, ASDM and The Nest. Besides, TERI exchanged correspondences with the Sub-Group providing invaluable inputs about vistas of upskilling under its aegis. The visit to IIE (Lalmati) took place on 28th September 2021 (Tuesday); ASDM, on 30th September 2021 (Thursday); and The Nest, on 29th October 2021 (Friday).

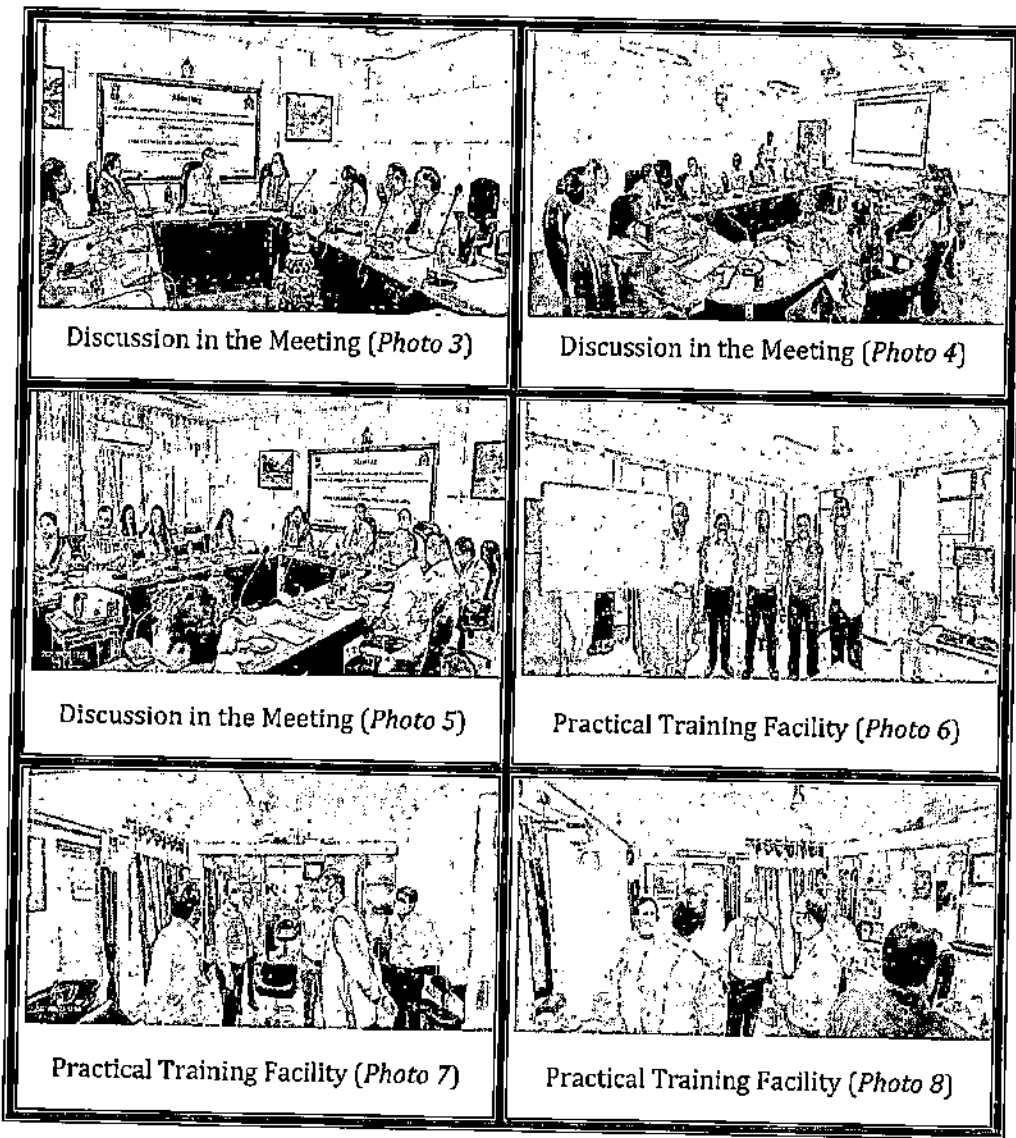
A. Visit to IIE:

The Sub Group team comprising its members Dr. Nekib Hussain and Er. Rashid Arif Hussain, and its Member Secretary, visited the IIE campus on 28th September 2021. They had a meeting with the Director, Dr. Abhijit Sharma, and the faculty of the institute in its conference hall. It was followed by taking a look at various facilities of the institute.



IIE (Photo 2)

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Discussion in the Meeting (Photo 3)

Discussion in the Meeting (Photo 4)

Discussion in the Meeting (Photo 5)

Practical Training Facility (Photo 6)

Practical Training Facility (Photo 7)

Practical Training Facility (Photo 8)

During the meeting, a detailed presentation was made by the Director showcasing different training programmes undertaken by the institute, its facilities, and the various skill upgradation schemes being implemented by the institute. On conclusion of that meeting, the Sub-Group team were shown around the *avant-garde* training facilities and equipments of the institute covering a wide range of training curricula.

From the presentation, discussion and visit of training facilities, the Sub-Group understood that the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE), Guwahati, being a renowned national-level skill training institution under the aegis of Ministry of Skill Dev

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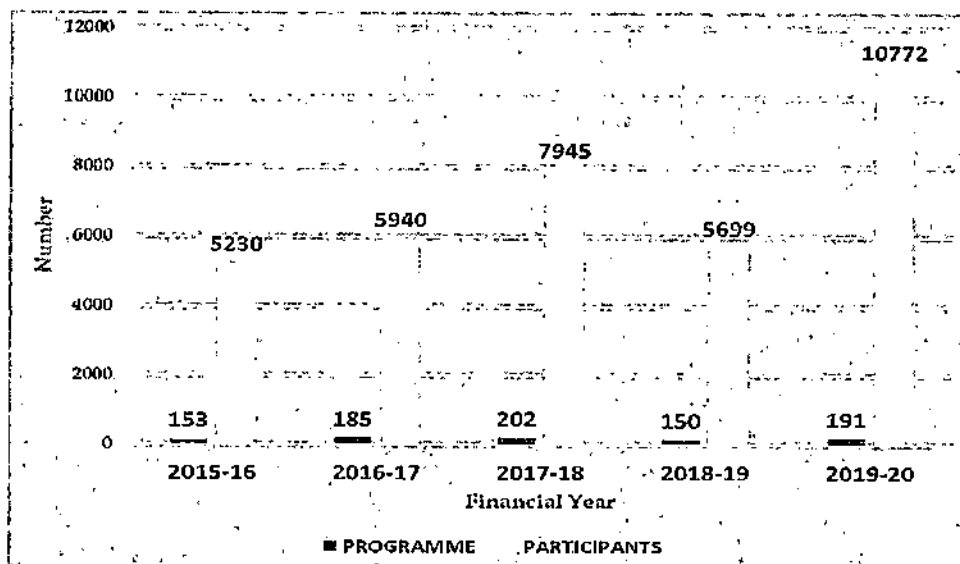
elopment & Entrepreneurship, Government of India, has a quality curriculum & methodology for imparting outcome-based training. While it emphasizes on capacity building, livelihood and employment of the downtrodden section of the society; its skilling programmes enable its trainees to become employable/ 'job ready' based on local resources, skills, market demand, aspiration etc. The target group of the institution are school-dropout youths especially from the socially and economically weaker communities.

The Sub-Group was further made to understand that the training therein is imparted as per the courses provided by Sector Skill Council (SSC) under National Skill Development Council (NSDC), as revised from time to time. The National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) organizes qualifications according to a series of levels of knowledge, skills and aptitude. The duration of the training for any batch is generally based on the job roles/ trades approved by SSC under NSDC. In this regard, the nature of courses conducted by IIE comprise:

1. Entrepreneurship Education
2. Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDPs, WEDPs)
3. Management Development Programmes (MDPs)
4. Skill Development Programmes
5. 1 year course on Textile and Fashion Technology

The training undertaken by IIE in the last 5 (five) years is depicted in the figure below:

Fig. 2: Training by IIE in the last 5 Years (upto 2019-20)



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Besides, IIE is also into facilitating Start-ups and new businesses. It has been promoting ASPIRE incubators, running business incubation centers, mentoring local Start-ups, providing linkages for online and offline marketing, adopting innovative initiatives, and also organizing promotional activities like buyer seller meets, conclaves, exhibitions, etc.

Moreover, IIE further undertakes a wide gamut of field activities for creation of SME clusters and their promotion under various MSME ministry schemes like SFURTI, MSE-CDP, PMVDY, etc. That enables the clusters to receive a major part of their funding from the Central Govt. IIE has also undertaken the implementation of CSR projects, NBCFDC cluster projects, NSFDC cluster projects, SC-ST hub, Sustainable Livelihood Promotion Project, NERES 1.0 and such other projects. IIE is also into research and consultancy; and organizes seminars, workshops, awareness programmes, etc. on a regular basis.

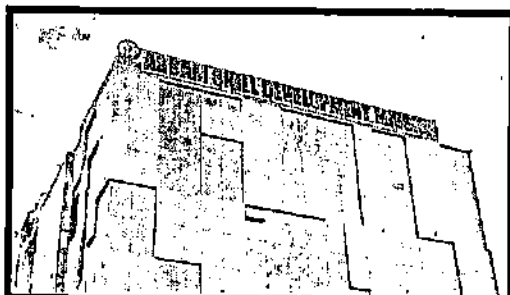
Furthermore, the Sub-Group also observed that the infrastructure for class-room as well as practical training in IIE is state of the art, and enables any trainee to go back home fully equipped on the skilling front.

In view of the above, the Sub-Group saw an opportunity in linking the skilling needs of its target community with the institution under visit. The Sub-Group is of the firm opinion that IIE may be fruitfully used not only for training of youth of the target community under various training programmes, but also utilized to create and promote SME clusters from within the community – especially for traditional/ heritage crafts of the community (*including* the dwindling brass-metal craft of the Moriya sub-community) – under the MSME Ministry's Cluster Development programmes like SFURTI and MSE-CDP. Since the training programmes – although subsidized to a certain extent – are after all paid; the Sub Group feels that the members of the target community besides being provided opportunity to avail the training and capacity building services through a specially created window, may also be further subsidized for economically weaker sections of that target community.

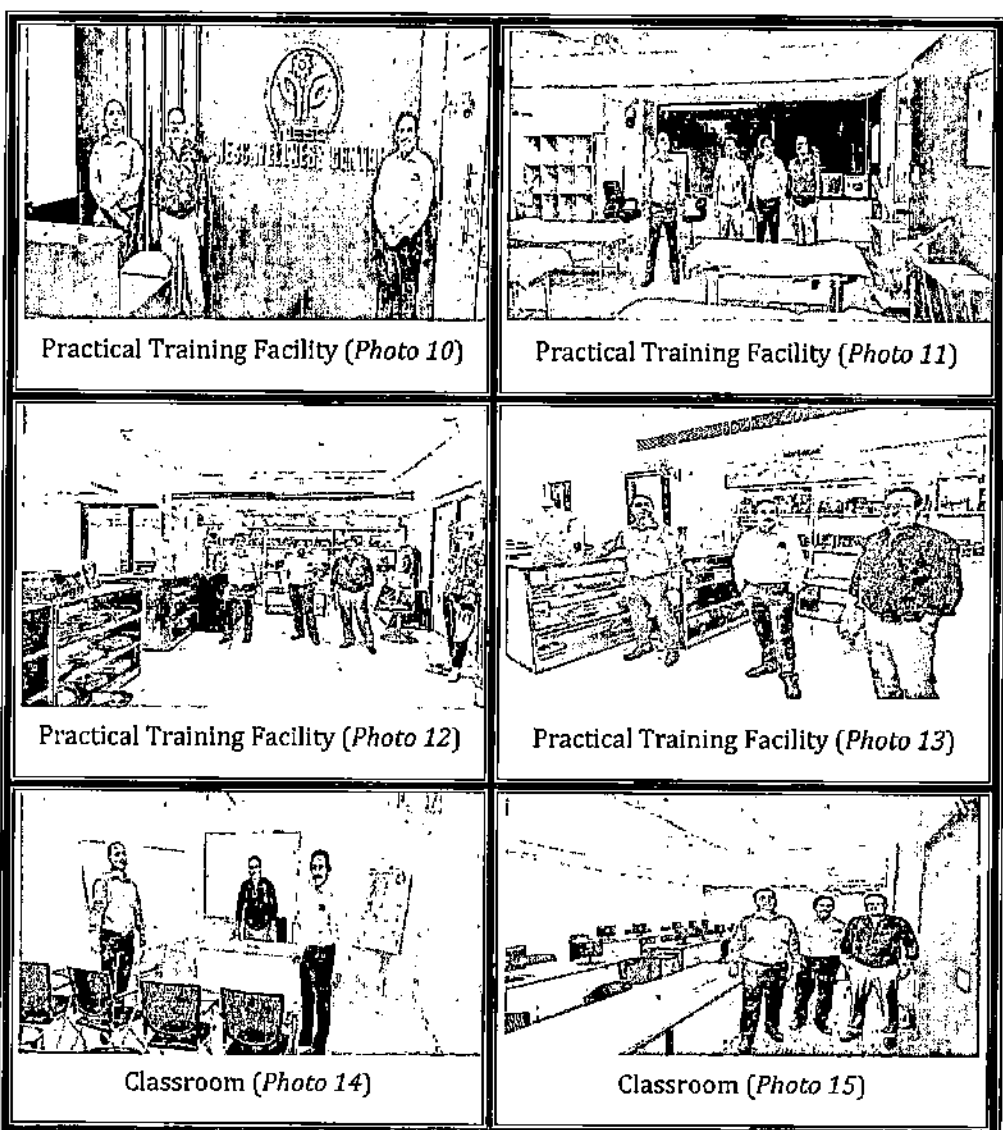
B. Visit to ASDM:

The Sub Group team comprising its members Dr. Nekib Hussain and Er. Rashid Arif Hussain, and its Member Secretary, Shri Sazzad Alam, visited the ASDM campus on 30th September 2021. They had a meeting with the OSD, Shri Hanif Noorani, the functionaries of the Mission, and the faculty of the North East Skill Centre (NESC) under the Mission, in the conference hall of the Mission. It was followed by taking a look at various facilities of the NESC institute.

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ASDM (Photo 9)



Practical Training Facility (Photo 10)

Practical Training Facility (Photo 11)

Practical Training Facility (Photo 12)

Practical Training Facility (Photo 13)

Classroom (Photo 14)

Classroom (Photo 15)

As learnt by the Sub-Group during its visit to ASDM, and deliberation with the functionaries of ASDM and Faculty of NESC; ASDM is the mission under the State

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Government of Assam for systematic and large-scale promotion of skilling in several livelihood providing trades. ASDM had signed an MoU with ITE Education Services, Singapore, for establishing the North East Skill Centre (NESC) at Guwahati with the objective of providing high quality skills training for the rural youth of the State. NESC currently is functioning from the same rented building at Betkuchi which houses ASDM Office.

As observed by the Sub-Group team during North East Skill Centre (NESC) as of now offers specialized skill development training in the following 4 (four) sectors:

- (1) Beauty and Wellness
- (2) Retail Services
- (3) Hospitality – Food and Beverage Service
- (4) Hospitality – Housekeeping

The Sub-Group team also found state of the art infrastructure during its stroll across the multifarious facilities of NESC. These include both theory and practical classrooms, as can be observed from the photographs. The course curriculum has been formulated in collaboration with the Singapore-based knowledge partner, ITEES; and has also been aligned with National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) making it globally portable. It was further found that the training is design to be imparted by professionals in that line, with provisions for industrial collaboration.

However, what makes NESC unique with regard to the current study is its focus on inclusive development of the trainees. This automatically provides a window for youth of the target community to take advantage of the training facilities at NESC.

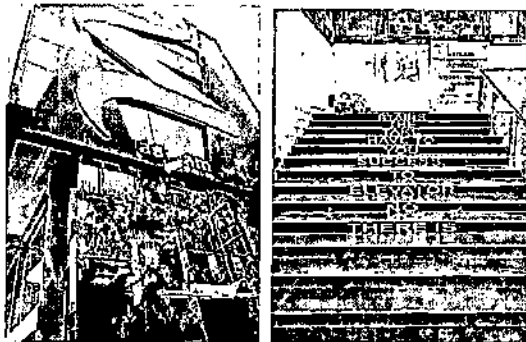
Moreover, during the meeting at ASDM conference hall at the outset of the visit, the Sub-Group was informed that various other skill development programmes under the Ministry of Minority Affairs – viz. Seekho Aur Kamao Scheme, USTTAD, Hamari Dharohar, Nai Taleem, etc. are also being implemented through ASDM.

In view of the above, the Sub-Group would like to envisage a systematic skilling of its target community under the institution under visit. Existing Ministry of Minority Affairs schemes may be utilized for that purpose. Regarding induction for training under NESC, the Sub-Group feels that keeping a few seats exclusively for naturally talented youth of its target community, along with cross-subsidization within the community for taking care of its economically weaker sections, may go long way in skill-wise upliftment of the target community.

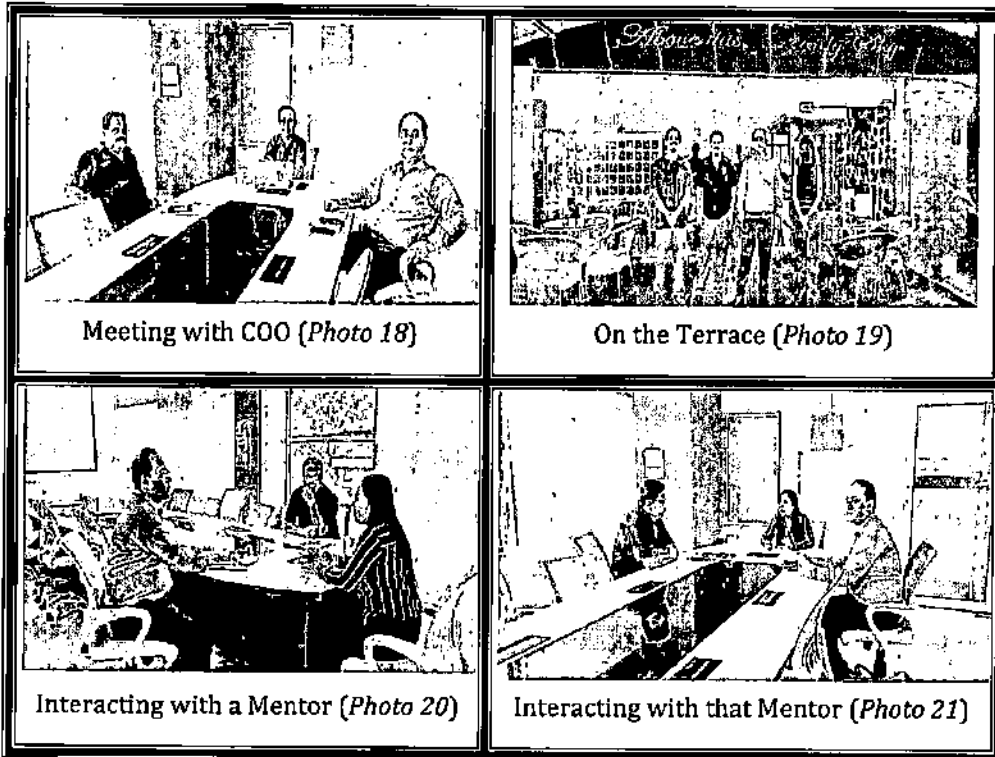
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C. Visit to The Nest:

The Sub Group team comprising its member Dr. Nekib Hussain and its Member Secretary, Shri Sazzad Alam, visited the Nest on 29th October 2021. They had a meeting with the Chief Operating Officer, Shri Pranjal Konwar, in the conference hall of the the marquee incubator under the Industries, Commerce & Public Enterprise Department, Government of Assam. It was followed by their interacting with the functionaries and faculty of incubator, taking a look at its various facilities.



The Nest (Photos 16 & 17)



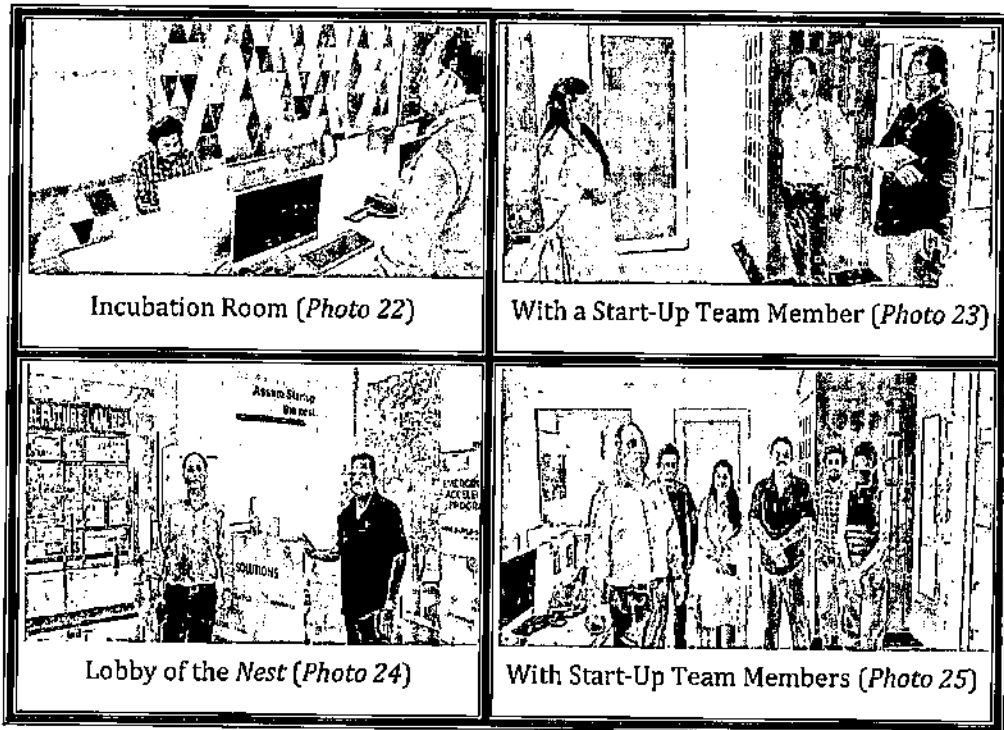
Meeting with COO (Photo 18)

On the Terrace (Photo 19)

Interacting with a Mentor (Photo 20)

Interacting with that Mentor (Photo 21)

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Start-Up refers to an entity which engages a new technology or business model adopting innovation and Information-Communication-Technology. Considering its novelty and probability of lack of investor support, the State Government supports Start-Ups both financially and through provision of vital linkages through its Start-Up Policy. The Nest is a state-of-the-art facility which provides hand-holding support to a few selected Start-Ups – termed as Cohorts.

The Sub-Group feels that there are lot of innovative youth from within the target community. Since the follow-up of the Nest are nano-incubation centres across the State, such centres may be set up in indigenous Assamese Muslim areas with financial support from the Department of Welfare of Minorities Development (WMD). In this regard, the large de-provincialized *madrassas* may be converted into such incubation centres, thereby providing the innovative youth of the target community to exploit their new ideas.

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8. Other Skill Imparting Institutions *studied by the Sub-Group:*

The Sub-Group had corresponded with a number of other skill-imparting institutions. Among them, the Guwahati Centre of TERI (*The Energy and Research Institution*) had replied back with its programmes. Besides, the Sub-Group also found through its study an appropriate institution for its designated goal – *i.e.* Maulana Azad National Academy for Skills (MANAS), which is based in Paharganj, New Delhi.

- ❖ **TERI:** As far as TERI is concerned, it is an independent, multi-dimensional organization, with capabilities in research, policy, consultancy and implementation. It deals with environment-friendly change in the energy basket, environment, climate change and sustainability space. Its work across sectors has focused on promoting efficient use of resources, increasing access and uptake of sustainable inputs and practices, reducing the impact on environment and climate. Although it is primarily research oriented, it also takes action in implementing the fruits of its research on the ground, especially in rural areas. Although headquartered in New Delhi, it has a dedicated centre in Guwahati.

There are no employment-oriented training programmes under TERI. But considering the fact that a significant section of the youth of the target community are unemployed graduates and post-graduates [as can be noted from the representative data from Nagaon District], these educated youth can be engaged in fruitful research work and ground-level implementation under TERI. Such engagement may help them in more productive employment in the private sector in future.

- ❖ **MANAS:** Maulana Azad National Academy for Skills (MANAS) provides skilling and skill upgradation opportunities to members of minority communities, and also promotes self-employment orientation for the youth of such communities. The institution also offers certifications and placements for trainees through the various collaborations with national and international agencies and organizations under PPP mode. It further plays a vital role in bridging the supply of skilled youth created under its aegis and the industries or other enterprises where there is demand for labour force and where employment opportunities are expected to surge.

MANAS also facilitates provision of financial assistance by the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) to individuals trained at MANAS in order to help them establish their own businesses and thus be self-employed.

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The prime objectives of MANAS are:

- 1) Offering an integrated an all-India platform unifying every stakeholder who provides skill training;
- 2) Imparting of entrepreneurship and skill development training to every member of various minority communities through PPP and collaborations with local/ national/ international organizations based on the demands of the local/ national/ international markets;
- 3) Using the skill development architecture of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship by engaging various training partners/ providers, and thereby ensuring the standardization of training and its outcome;
- 4) Linking the concessional credit of NMDFC, or any other NBFIs, with the skills training of the minority communities in order to promote entrepreneurship and self-employment after the training; and
- 5) Offering technical and marketing support for new entrepreneurs through "KaroBaari Salahiyat", a specially designed system of call centres backed by an e-commerce portal for online marketing support.

Therefore, the Sub-Group is of the strong opinion that the target community, being a religious minority community itself, invariably needs to be linked to MANAS by engaging CD Block-level or GP-level institutions like CSCs, as well as private DTP centres and internet cafes, in the areas inhabited by members of the target community.

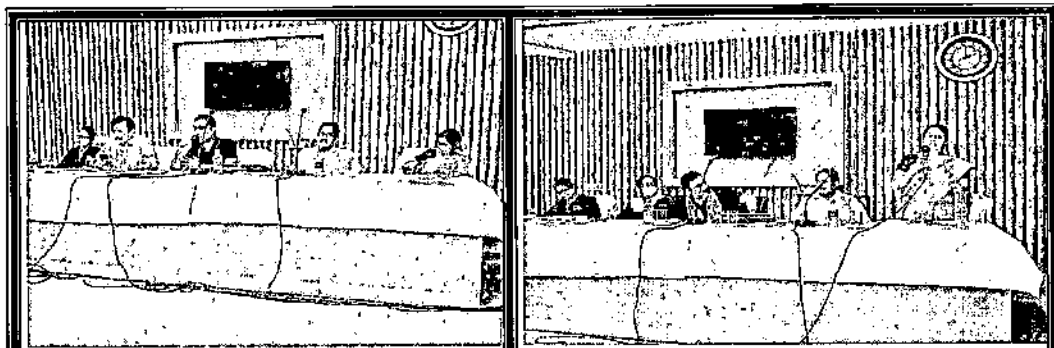
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9. Deliberation with Leading Citizens of Target Community:

The Sub-Group has had 2 (two) numbers of meetings with leading citizens of target community – viz.

- (1) at Dibrugarh DRDA Conference Hall on 5th October 2021 with community members of Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and Sivasagar Districts; and
- (2) at Lakhimpur DC Office on 6th October 2021 with community members of Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Biswanath and Sonitpur Districts.

The meeting with leading citizens of target community held at **Dibrugarh DRDA Conference Hall** was attended by the Sub-Group Team comprising Chairman Shri Mozibur Rahman and Member Md. Rashid Adil Hussain; Addl. Deputy Commissioner, Dibrugarh, Smti. Junimoni Sonowal, representing the Dibrugarh District Administration; Chairperson, Women Empowerment Sub-Group, Dr. Nazrana Ahmed; Member, Women Empowerment Sub-Group, Dr. Naseem Farhin; and leading citizens from Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and Sivasagar Districts. During the course of the meeting, several issues relating to the employability and skilling of members of the target community were raised.



Dias of Dibrugarh Meeting (Photos 26 & 27)



Leading Citizens attending Dibrugarh Meeting (Photos 28 & 29)

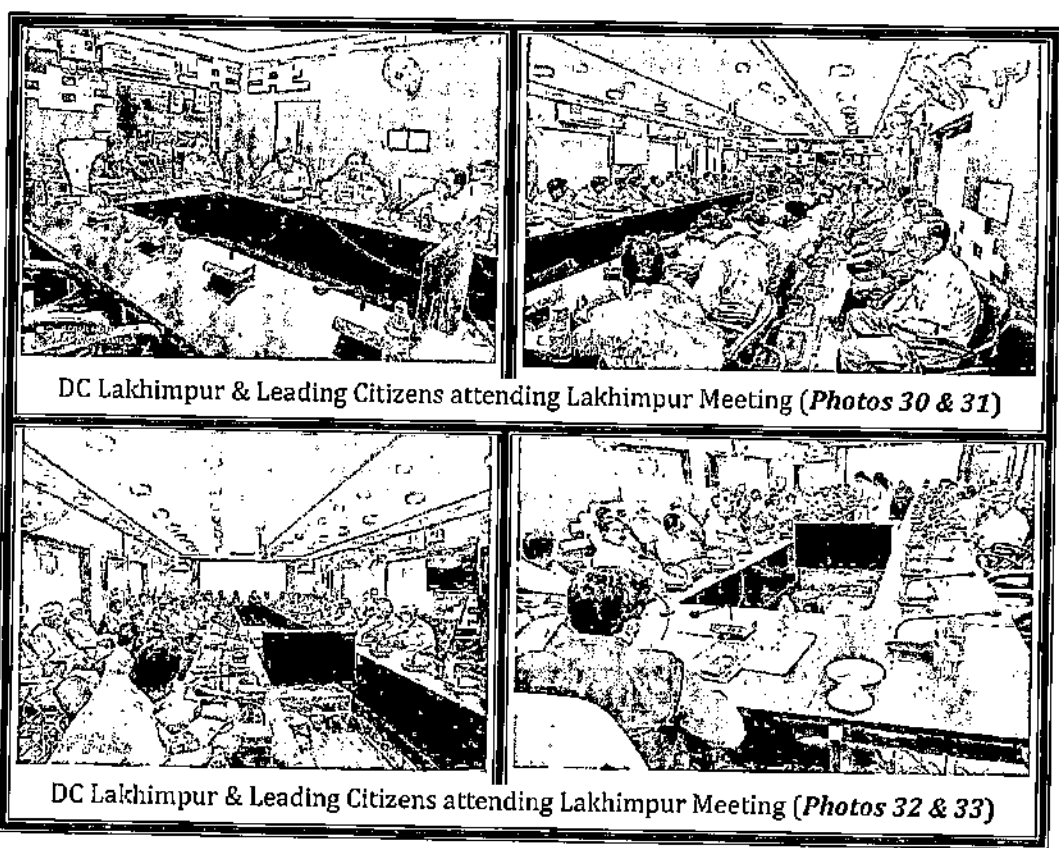
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One of the major suggestions which emanated from the meeting, and which the Sub-Group fully endorses, is conversion of existing *madrassas* into skill development centres. In this regard, the *madrassa* students may be accorded vocational training in those proposed skill development centres - so as to enable them to learn and earn handsomely in future. Another suggestion which arose from the meeting is the seeking of reservation of seats for indigenous Assamese Muslims in Industrial Training Institutes. While the matter of reservation is a policy decision beyond the realm of study of the Sub-Group, the Sub-Group feels that more and more members of the target community may be encouraged and hand-held to undergo vocational training. That need not be only in ITIs and Government polytechnics, but also other private vocational training institutes. Further suggestion relates to credit linkage and easy availability of loans for small enterprises, for which the Sub-Group feels that an institutional linkage mechanism needs to be established especially for members of the target community with existing NBFIs and banks - including the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC).

A memorandum was also received from Upper Assam Muslim Kalyan Parishad (Dibrugarh District Committee) after the meeting - which had a 2 (two) point charter of demands; viz. (1) Manufacture of thread from bamboo, and (2) Manufacture of products from water hyacinth. Both these demands relate to specific nature of craftsmanship; which the Sub-Group feels that may be promoted among members of the target community through specially undertaken training camps to produce master trainers and establish raw material and market linkages.

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The meeting with leading citizens of target community held at Lakhimpur DC Office Conference Hall at North Lakhimpur was attended by the Sub-Group Team comprising Chairman Shri Mozibur Rahman, Member Md. Rashid Adil Hussain and Member Secretary Shri Sazzad Alam; Deputy Commissioner, Lakhimpur, Shri Sumeet Sattwan, and other officials representing the Lakhimpur District Administration; and leading citizens from Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Biswanath and Sonitpur Districts. During the course of the meeting, several issues relating to the employability and skilling of members of the target community were raised.



Among the major suggestions which came out from the meeting comprised measures for reviving Eri-Muga weaving among the *Zula* sub-community, promotion of bamboo craft and industry among the indigenous Assamese Muslim community, introduction of training and setting up of Common Facilitation Centre for making disposable plates and cups from the leaves of areca nut (which would be a perfect substitute for single-use plastics), training and facilitation of pumpkin-based products, etc. The Sub-Group fully endorses the views of the leading citizens, and seeks to propose measures on that count. Another important point raised during the meeting is regarding the organization of awareness programmes among members of the target community for encouraging them to take part in skill upgradation programmes. In this regard, the Sub-Group feels that such

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awareness generating and motivational programmes definitely need to be undertaken in areas dominated by members of the target community.

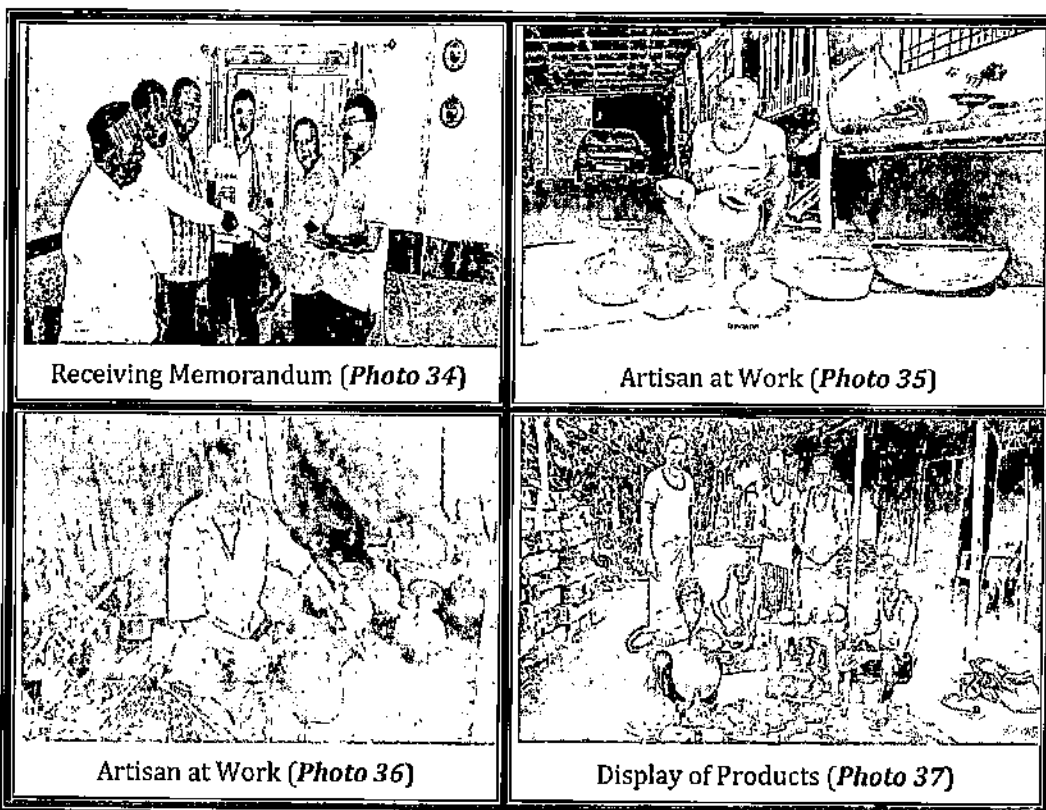
Leading scholar from the target community, Prof. Sajjad Hussain, put forward a few vital points with respect to the matter under discussion. Firstly, he opined that lack of socio-economic survey of indigenous Assamese Muslims has resulted in failure of earlier skilling policies. The Sub Group agrees with his view, and feels that a sample survey ought to be considered to fulfill that lacuna. Secondly, he also sought the revival of traditional trade and crafts; which may be noted that is one of the points of study of the Sub-Group. Thirdly, he also stated that maximum number of drop-outs are from the indigenous Assamese Muslim community, for which the reason should be deciphered. While the Sub-Group does have concern for the drop-outs and suggests proper vocational training for them, it does not see eye to eye with the view that drop-outs dominate the target community. That came out crystal clear from the representative socio-economic survey of the target community of the Nagaon district.

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10. Study of Traditional Crafts of the Target Community:

The Sub-Group visited a number of work-sites of the traditional crafts of the target community, especially the brass-metal craft of the Moriya sub-community. It went around such sites at Naharani in Golaghat District, and Kakojan in Jorhat District, on 4th October 2021 and had meetings with craftsmen therein. Besides, the Sub-Group also met members of the Moriya sub-community during the meetings with leading citizens at Dibrugarh and Lakhimpur. Moreover, the Sub-Group Member Secretary independently conducted a study on the brass-metal craft undertaken by members of Moriya community in Hajo and other places of Kamrup District.

At Kakojan in Jorhat District, the Sub-Group team met the brass-work craftsmen of the Moriya Community, saw them manufacturing their ware, and also listened to their problems. At the end, a memorandum from All Assam MOBC Moriya (Muslim) Association was received citing a charter of demands regarding their trade.



Receiving Memorandum (Photo 34)

Artisan at Work (Photo 35)

Artisan at Work (Photo 36)

Display of Products (Photo 37)

The charter of demands in that memorandum comprised:

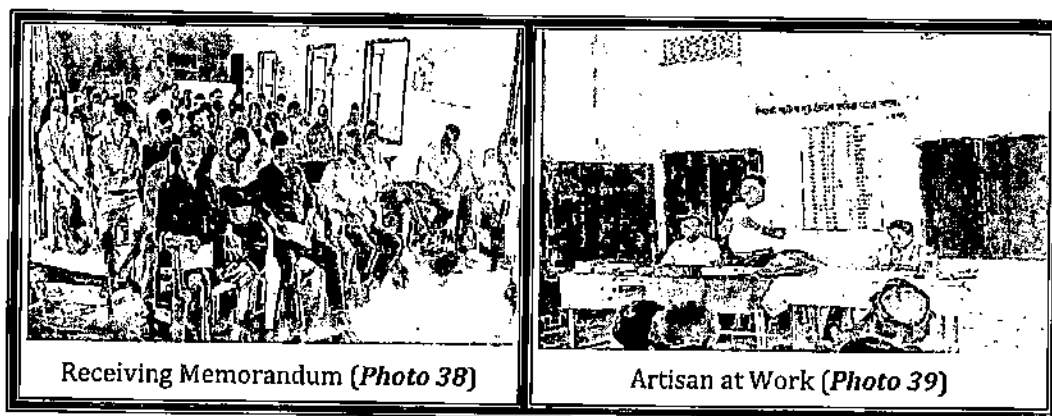
1. Setting up of Common Facility Centre for Brass Metal Crafting;
2. Construction of godowns for raw materials in every district of Assam;
3. Workshops and houses should be built for artisans;

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4. Relief from sales tax;
5. Credit availability for brass metal craft industry;
6. Supply of raw materials of brass metal craft industry (*i.e.* copper and tin) through Government sources, and emancipation from vicious money lenders;
7. Training of workers with new advanced technical skills for enhancement of production; and
8. Reservation of seats in various professional institutions for Moriya youth.

The Sub-Group fully endorses the demands relating directly to the brass-metal craft - *viz.* CFC, godowns for raw materials, workshops for artisans, credit availability with consequent emancipation from vicious money lenders, ready supply of raw materials (*i.e.* copper and tin) through Government sources, and training on new advanced technical skills for enhancement of production. Certain demands like relief from sales tax on brass-metal products may be considered by the State Government to give the right fillip to the cottage industry. However, the Sub-Group notes that there is already reservation for Moriya youth in various professional institutions under MOBC category. But certain institutions do not honour the Govt. directives. The State Government may ensure that deserving Moriya youths are not denied their share of reserved seats.

At Nahoroni in Golaghat District, the Sub-Group team had a meeting in Naharani LP school with the Goriya sub-community dealing with Agarwood [(*xasi* in Assamese) *i.e.* *aquilaria khasiana* in Linnaean terminology] and its perfume based products. After detailed deliberation during the meeting, it was made to understand that the sub-community wants extensive cultivation of Agarwood and supply of natural gas for replacing firewood and coal for distillation purposes. The community members also sought promotion of pisciculture. They further submitted a detailed memorandum on that count.



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The Sub-Group feels that with the adoption of the Agarwood Policy by the State Government, and the establishment of an Agar International Trade Centre at Dabidubi in Golaghat District itself; most of the grievances of the people at Nahoroni shall be redressed. Regarding supply of natural gas, the Sub Group further noted that Assam Gas Company Limited has plans for house-to-house gas distribution in Golaghat District. AGCL may be requested to link Nahoroni on its clientele list. As regards promotion of pisciculture, the Sub-Group feels that due coordination may be accorded for ensuring training of youth of the target community in that trade.

The Member Secretary of the Sub-Group, Shri Sazzad Alam, ACS, had made his own study of the brass-metal craft of Hajo way back in 2004-05. The Sub-Group feels that the study itself and the recommendations thereof are still relevant; and may be cited in the current study as well.

The brass metal craft industry in Hajo is a traditional cottage industry carried out by artisans from the Moriya Muslim sub-community. Although the craft has survived the onslaught of ruthless colonial exploitation and the onset of modern mechanized era, increasing competition from cheaper and more handy stainless steel and plastic items of late, coupled with financial exploitation of the artisans, are threatening the very existence of the cottage industry. In this regard, a SWOT analysis has been done as follows:

STRENGTHS:

1. Steady market is assured, because the traditional brass items have religious and cultural significance in the Assamese society with no effective substitute.
2. Inherent skill of artisans being handed down from generation to generation, with little pecuniary motive but mainly to conserve community tradition, thereby precluding the possibility of the skills dying out due to adverse circumstances.
3. Brass products are health friendly, which just needs to be adequately publicized.

WEAKNESSES:

1. Artisans are financially weak and economically exploited; as they buy their raw materials from middlemen, and sell them to another set of middlemen, leaving only a pittance as their earning.
2. No access of artisans to information regarding latest tastes, markets, and technologies, both domestic as well as worldwide.
3. Scarcity of good quality raw material as artisans forced to purchase brass scrap.
4. Production process is traditional and involves tedious and continuous manual beating.
5. Inconsistent quality of products with no effort to introduce newer items.
6. Improper marketing avenues.

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OPPORTUNITIES:

1. Hajo, unlike Sarthebari (the seat of bell-metal industry) is near Guwahati.
2. Recent efforts on the part of local industries and bank officials to engender the mechanization of the industry.
3. Growing international demand for ethnic items, thanks to globalization and e-commerce portals.

THREATS:

1. Other similar centres of brass metal industry elsewhere in the country, like Moradabad, have carried out modernization measures long back; and have been preparing designer items.
2. Globalization is a double-edged sword with probable flooding of the domestic market with cheaper and better quality goods from China and Japan.
3. Inertia among the artisans of Hajo regarding traditional methods of production.

Based on the above analysis, the study elucidates the problems as follows:

- 1) **Lack of Proper Organisation:** Although the artisans do have a cooperative, that is more or less defunct and not representative of the common artisan. It is controlled by a small coterie which is least bothered about the economic and physical wellbeing of the artisans.
- 2) **Raw Material Scarcity:** Raw material scarcity is on account of two factors.
 - (a) *Decrease in availability of the materials required for the crafts manufacture:* The material required in this case is brass (an alloy comprising of 60% copper and 40% tin). Previously, both the metals used to be obtained freely and the alloy preparation done locally. But tin has now become a scarce commodity importable only from Malaysia. As a result, the artisans have lost control over their raw material source. They now have to procure brass sheets from Guwahati-based traders.
 - (b) *Decline in quality of still-available materials:* The so-called brass sheets provided by the Guwahati-based traders is generally of very poor quality. The content of tin therein is seen to be very poor (ranging from around 1% to 5%); and they are also found to contain mud and other trash materials. As a result, the prepared craft product does not possess the qualities a genuine brass item should have. It is brittle and lacks lustre.
- 3) **Inadequate Credit and Loan Facilities:** Since the artisans are not organized, they have to approach financial institutions individually for credit. Various finance schemes available to craftsmen from banking and non-banking financial institutions

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(including NABARD and SIDBI) have lending procedures that completely baffle the simple rural artisans. The arguments put forward by the credit institutions for not granting hassle-free loans are poor recovery rate (*which* is because artisans regard loans as grants); purported misutilization of funds; and asymmetric information between banks and their prospective client craftsmen. As such, the credit flow from financial institutions has been negligible.

Therefore, the craftsmen continue to depend largely on advances from local money lenders/ intermediaries. But the money lenders, who are generally local traders, offer finance at exorbitant rates of interest or in return for indentured labour arrangement. Craftsmen are therefore limited to buying tiny quantities of raw materials (that also of poor quality), resulting in more frequent trips to large towns to procure raw materials and creating fewer marketing opportunities. Besides, the small extent of bank system utilization by the common craftsmen leads to credit rationing on the part of the small craftsmen. This results in increased cost of borrowing, and means of achieving economics of scale thus remain out of reach of ordinary artisan.

- 4) **Lack of Proper Infrastructure:** The artisans continue to use age-old traditional tools manually, consuming considerable time and labour in the process. The profit earned by the artisans is not commensurate with the combined cost of production (both financial and physical) of the brass items. Besides, there is no workshop, let alone factories, for craft production. Rather, the small residential houses of the artisans double up as their work-places. Moreover, even the civic, professional and social infrastructure of this craft industry is of poor quality. In other words, health, sanitary, educational, and other facilities are lacking in the village inhabited by the artisans.
- 5) **Inadequate Access to Information:** The common artisan lives in a world of his own, without any access to outside information regarding latest tastes, markets, and technologies, both domestic as well as worldwide. Besides lack of proper education and e-connectivity on the part of the artisans, means lack of access to internet, which would have provided due marketing opportunities.
- 6) **Marketing Bottlenecks:** Marketing of brass products of this cottage industry suffer from a number of bottlenecks; *viz.*
 - (a) The only viable market apparent to artisans are middlemen traders, who pocket the lion's share of the profits and thereby exploit the former,
 - (b) The cooperative present is largely non-functional, and does not enjoy the confidence of the general artisan, who do not prefer it as a marketing medium,
 - (c) Lack of quality control and standardization of products prevent the cottage industry from tapping sustainable outside markets.

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- (d) Lack of adequate publicity, and absence of proper linkages, prevented the brass metal industry from tapping tourists as a probable market.
- 7) **Middlemen Eating up Profits:** The brass items produced in Hafo do garner reasonably good profit at least in the domestic market. But the cream of the profit is generally grabbed by middlemen who trade in such products. The artisans without access to direct markets, sell their wares to traders in a pittance. The same wares are then sold at a much higher price to the actual buyers.
- 8) **Changing Consumption Pattern of Domestic Customers:** With the onset of modernization, domestic households prefer the lighter and more convenient stainless steel and bone-china utensils over the traditional brass ones. This is compounded by the fact that presently made "brass" items are not of good quality, mainly on account of poor raw material quality (as already explained).
- 9) **Lack of Experimentation and Adoption of Newer Techniques:** Being an age-old craft industry wherein skills have been handed down from generation to generation over several centuries, the cottage industry is largely inert to change in production techniques and product types. The artisans seem to be content in churning out the traditional utensils, *xarais*, pitchers, etc. by the tedious manual method as was done centuries ago. They feel reluctant to adopt the modern mechanized techniques, get training in skill upgradation, and produce newer designer items which would have catered to a larger market.

In order to revamp the brass metal cottage industry, not only in Hafo but also in other Moriya villages like Kakojan and Maobandha in Jorhat District, the Sub Group feels that the following measures ought to be adopted:

MEASURE 1: Reorganization of Institutional Structure: In order to revamp the craft industry, there is a need for a complete re-organization of its institutional structure. Two such models for such a reorganization; but some sort of a union of the models with compromises on both sides is required.

The "cooperative" model, which is based on socialist ideology, has already been put into action in case of several indigenous industries with varying degrees of failure. It is a macro-economic model seeking to organize all artisans under one platform. But in practice, a cooperative is generally run by a few influential persons; and sometimes, by bureaucrats nominated by the government. Such marginalization and consequent lack of interest of common artisan members has led to the decline of cooperatives as a model.

On the other hand, the "self-help group" model is a comparatively recent one; having first been mooted by Prof. Mohd. Yunus of Bangladesh under his Grameen Bank scheme of things, and later widely adopted by NIRD and micro-credit institutions in India.

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It is a micro-economic model seeking to organize individual artisans into a number of small groups known as Self-Help Groups (SHGs). SHGs would get micro-credit from banks, and manage their own affairs with little intervention from above. This ensures whole-scale and democratic involvement of all artisans in the system, and makes complete use of traditional skills and knowledge with respect to production and micro-management. But at the same time, individual SHGs on their own, are likely to find it very difficult to get raw materials at competitive prices (as bulk buying under technically qualified person guarantees better quality at less cost) and to arrange a good market for their products. In effect, these SHGs would be dependent either on government cooperative bodies, or even worse, on middlemen. Such a situation does not make the SHGs economically viable in the long run.

Therefore, the Sub-Group proposes a combination of the two models in a manner such that the lacunae of one is fulfilled by the other, and vice versa. In other words, the SHGs instead of being individual atomized entities, completely independent from one another, should unite to form a cooperative of their own. The governing body of such a cooperative, instead of being a congregation of all the artisans, should only involve one/two representatives of the SHGs; which would elect from among its members, an executive body, to handle the functioning of the cooperative. Such a cooperative would handle bulk raw material purchase, large-scale marketing, and macro-level management of the SHGs. In fact, the cooperative can have a trade brand of its own, and have publicity and advertisement of the products done (which are not possible for the SHGs to do by themselves). At the same time, the micro-level activity would continue to be done by the individual artisans at the SHG-level. Thus, no artisan would feel left behind, and would consider the whole system to be his own.

MEASURE 2 (*Ready Availability of Raw Materials*): The main raw material of brass-metal craft is brass sheet, which is procured from middlemen in Guwahati. There may be 3 (three) solutions to the problem - 2 (two) immediate and 1 (one) for the long-term. The immediate job is to arrange a system of collecting old torn down brass items from the homes of people. Such old items were of good metal, and as such can be used as good-quality scrap metal. Of course, the quality of the metal of such items can be easily tested by Archimedes Principle. The other immediate solution is to procure the alloy directly from bonafide whole-sellers in Kolkata. For that, the proposed cooperative may have their agent therein. The long-term measure would be to set up one or more units (manned by SHGs under the cooperative umbrella) to prepare the alloy from pure metals, which would be procured directly by the cooperative from the genuine whole-sellers of such metals.

MEASURE 3 (*Mechanisation*): The traditional production is tedious and manual involving use of simple hand-held tools like hammer, files and tongs of different sizes, etc. The brass sheets would be cut into pieces of various sizes, which would be joined together and

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smoothened with the help of files. Shine would be given by rubbing with sand; and the design made by engraving with small chisels. However, the entire manual procedure may be simulated by the machineries. For that, there has to be a constant and close coordination with the institutions like IIT (Guwahati) and IIE. Moreover, technical expertise to effect the mechanization process and its improvisation, can also be sought from other qualified quarters like Moradabad brass metal industry.

MEASURE 4 (Training): In order to ensure effective turnaround for the cottage industry, the Sub-Group feels that there has to be an effective training programme for the artisans in 3 stages; viz. (a) Awareness – where all the traditional artisans would be made aware of the modern machineries; (b) Orientation – by dint of which the selected SHGs of artisans would be taught regarding the process; and (c) Skill Development – which would be the overall training regarding use of modern machineries, and how they replicate the manual techniques, preparation of better quality goods with the help of the machineries, and proper orientation and counselling. There could also be an educational tour of Moradabad brass metal industry as part of the training.

MEASURE 5 (Quality Control): For warding off competition from cheaper alternatives, and effective capturing of new markets, it is essential that the products are of good quality. For that, there would be one or more people in the form of SHG to carry out quality control measures. Such measures would involve random checking of finished products, and repair or replacement of defective items. For best/ export quality items, there can be 100% checking. Such checked and corrected items can be given quality control seals.

MEASURE 6 (Experimentation and Value Addition): For catering to the changing tastes of present and probable consumers, there ought to be experimentation of introducing new items, especially of decorative and designer type. Creation of new decorative items by cutting and reshaping common items can also be accomplished. For example, flower pots can be made from pitchers, *xarais* can be decorated, etc. Laser cutters backed by computers wherein design would be fed beforehand, are to be used in due course.

MEASURE 7 (Marketing): Marketing can be accomplished in a number of types:

- a) Sale at the own show-rooms/ shops of the Cooperative.
- b) Sale through the medium of Government/ semi-Government agencies like ARTFED, NEDFI, etc.
- c) E-commerce portals like Amazon, Flipkart
- d) Door-to-door sale through hawkers.
- e) Local sale to tourists at Hajo or the place concerned.
- f) Craft fairs, exhibitions, and emporiums.

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MEASURE 8 (Advertisement and Publicity): The brass-craft Cooperative can have a brand of its own, under which quality goods can be sold. The brand logo can be etched on to the product by use of Fluorine or LASER. Besides, hologram of the brand can be inserted to assert the genuineness of the product. The Cooperative can also take up advertising of the Brand product on a large scale, focusing on traditional and ethnic value of the product and health-friendly nature of brass.

MEASURE 9 (Finance): Financing has to be done at both the microeconomic and macroeconomic levels. At the microeconomic level, the individual SHGs can take micro-credit from commercial banks (primarily the State Bank of India with its various branches) or non-banking financial institutions, as per SGSY guideline. For that, the members of the SHGs would be considered below-poverty-line. As per that guideline, the revolving fund and working capital would be given to the SHGs to run their affairs. When the members of an SHG become above-poverty-line, that SHG would start financing itself, or take commercial bank loans.

At the macroeconomic level, the umbrella Cooperative can take loans or grants from commercial banks (primarily the State Bank of India with its various branches), international agencies, etc. for bulk buying of raw materials, infrastructure development, and such other requirements.

MEASURE 10 (Infrastructure Development): Infrastructure development may include separate buildings (away from dwelling habitations of the artisans) to house the workshops. In course of time, with accumulation of fund, such buildings can be made multi-storied. The arrangement in such buildings would be such that items produced by one set of machines can be the raw materials for the next adjacent set of machines. At one end, the initial raw material (i.e. brass sheets) would be fed into the initial set of machines. The other end would involve various outlets for various finished products. In other words, such a system would replicate the factory-line of a modern large industry.

Besides, the dwelling habitations of the artisans, can also be made in the form of multi-storied flats in due course. Such a step would save enough space to build parks, schools, hospital, water supply, sewage system, and other modern facilities for the artisans.

The Sub-Group strongly advocates the adoption of these measures for revamping the brass-metal cottage industry; which revolves around the identity and tradition of the Moriya sub-community. It further feels that with the adoption of such measures, that traditional cottage industry can have a bright future ahead.

11. Receipt of Suggestions from Members of the Target Community:

The Sub Group published an advertisement in all leading newspapers through the aegis of the Director of Information and Public Relations soliciting suggestions from members of the target community in its specially created email ID:

subgrouponskilldevelopment@gmail.com

In response to that advertisement, quite a number of suggestions were received. The relevant set of suggestions have been placed below:

(i) Abdul Sajeed (Advocate, Dibrugarh)

1. Setting up of one skill development institution each in the fields of electrical, mechanical, computer education, tailoring and other allied subjects, which is easily accessible to the poor students and school dropouts, in every district of Assam.
2. Setting up of one vocational training centre in Dibrugarh town, preferably at Banipur – where all the three running madrassas are within a radius of 5 (five) kilometres. The vocational training courses should be linked with the livelihood of the madrasa students.
3. Setting up of one language learning centre/ institute in the district of Dibrugarh for Assamese language course, for English language course, and Arabic language course. The main stress has to be given not only to reading and writing, but also speaking the language properly. Such courses should engender personality development of the trainees, and the whole training system should be linked with job opportunities for Muslim minority students.
4. Tie up with National Institute of Open Schooling from Classes 8 (Eight) to 12 (Twelve) with both CBSE/ SEBA affiliation for drop-out students from the economically underprivileged section of the Assamese Muslim society.
5. Opening up of an information centre for the minority students regarding all the centrally sponsored minority schemes of Govt of India – including "*Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Yojana*" and "*Learn and Earn Scheme*" – in every minority dominated district of Assam. Necessary steps should also be taken for awareness programmes for highlighting the welfare measures undertaken by the Government for minorities.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestions: While the Sub-Group considers Proposal Points 1, 4 and 5 favourably for recommendation, it opines that Point No. 2 regarding vocational training centre may be expanded to include proposal for such centre in each region inhabited by the target community. Besides, Point No. 3 may be modified to exclude Arabic language course, as it is not linked to any employment opportunity.

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(ii) Ashique Zaman, IRS

(as translated from the original Assamese)

1. There are no records in any decennial Census, sample survey and even independent research-based assessment till date about the indigenous Assamese Muslim community of Assam. There are thus no officially published information about the population of the target community. Therefore, whatever suggestion may be given by the Sub-Group would be based entirely on perception.

Hence, it has been suggested from his end to conduct a socio-economic survey of the target community by a prominent research institution like "Amiya" (*sic.*) Kumar Das Institute of Social Sense and Development before the Sub-Group gives any final recommendations with the Government. Even if the sample size is small, one such survey would give proper justification for the Sub-Group's suggestions/ recommendations. It would also facilitate the Government/ administration in implementing the survey-based recommendations. Besides, the report of that survey would remain a historical document for the masses.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestion: While the Sub-Group fully endorses the philosophy behind the recommendation, it differs on giving the responsibility of conducting the survey through an independent research institute like OKD Institute. Because, not only would field level data not be available easily for such study, but also there is every probability of inherent bias creeping in. Therefore, the Sub-Group had already taken the stand that such survey needs to be conducted by the DCs of districts through the existing apparatus available with the Circle Officers under them. The Sub-Group, as clearly mentioned in this report, had already requested all DCs accordingly; out of which DC Nagaon has responded. Considering Nagaon as a classic representative district for the target community, its survey report has been widely used for assessing its findings and basing the recommendations thereon.

2. The rate of education rate is not a problem for the target community. The main educational problem the indigenous Assamese Muslims is the high rate of school dropouts, besides the lack of higher and technical education. Whether it is Goriya or Desi, all the indigenous Assamese Muslim parents do get their children enrolled in the school properly. But whether it is due to poverty, educational environment or "social laziness" (*sic.*); the boys fail at the school level most of the time - thereby "increasing the burden of unemployment" (*sic.*). In the indigenous villages of Lower Assam, may be due to poverty, there is a rush to leave schools and colleges and go to Kerala to work. After working there for a few months, they come back

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unemployed. School drop-outs thus are currently a major problem in the indigenous Assamese Muslim community.

Hence, it has been opined that the Sub-Group on Skill Development has a lot to do in this regard. The school drop-out students need to be transformed from being unemployed to being employable by providing them with proper skill development. He noted that nowadays in cities like Guwahati, people in professions like electricians, plumbers, etc. earn more than many salaried government servants. He suggested that Government polytechnics/ ITIs should be set up in areas populated by indigenous Assamese Muslims. He further suggested that the Government should provide funds and other facilities for the setting up of private ITIs in these areas.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestion: The Sub-Group fully endorses the suggestion, and has already worked on finalizing recommendations on that line.

3. Although only a few numbers of students from the indigenous Assamese Muslim villages go to Madrassas, yet the trend currently being observed is that many *khareji* (private) madrassas are being created in villages, especially *banat* madrassas for girls. There is no proper curriculum of these *khareji* madrasas, there are no proper teachers; so much so that more often than not their education has no recognition. While he believes that there is undoubtedly a need for religious education, but such kind of madrassas are not fit even for religious education. The unscrupulous business undertaken by a section in the name of religious education should be stopped. The future of young children should not be mortgaged in the name of religious education. So, he feels that it is important to bring madrassas under some Government regulatory authorities. If permission from the Government/ administration is required to open private schools, then why such permission should not be made mandatory to open madrassas? On the whole, the mushrooming of madrassas should be stopped, and also the education system of the madrassas should be forced to include modern content in its curriculum. Besides, those students who are already studying in Madrasa, and who would not be able to be taught as per the new curriculum, should be compulsorily enrolled in ITI. So that, they can earn their own livelihood in future. Otherwise, they would go and set up a new madrassa elsewhere and never let this dreadful chain be broken.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestion: The Sub-Group fully appreciates the aforementioned suggestion. But delving into the workings of the *madrassa* system is not within its purview. Its terms of reference are concentrated solely on skilling and skill-upgradation.

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4. Having computer knowledge is an essential part of modern life, and such knowledge is very important if someone wants to do any job or business. But the rate of computer literacy among indigenous Assamese Muslims in Assam is unfortunately very low. Skill Development Sub-Group can play an important role in this regard by recommending a drive to be undertaken to make at least one person from every household of indigenous Assamese Muslims computer literate. Computer knowledge will undoubtedly help in the skill development of young people of the target community, and also increase their job qualifications.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestion: The Sub-Group fully endorses the suggestion, and has already worked on finalizing recommendations on that line.

5. There is a huge demand for some skills but there are no skilled people in Assam in that line. One such skill is stenography. There is no institution in Assam where stenography and sectoral assistants are trained. Therefore, there are no stenographers from Assam even in an office of the Central Government of Assam and the North East. Thus, if only this skill is well followed by the Sub-Group on Skill Development, and if a few institutions teaching stenography can be set up in the areas inhabited by the target community; then many of such members of that community shall be able to be recruited, almost without competition, in Government jobs.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestion: The Sub-Group fully endorses the suggestion, and has considered incorporating in its set of recommendations.

6. Agriculture is the livelihood of most indigenous Assamese Muslims. Therefore, agro-based skill development should be given the highest importance. One of the main problems in the agriculture sector of Assam is the lack of mechanization. Currently, primitive technologies and equipments are used for cultivation; as a result of which, the productivity of agriculture sector in Assam is negligible as compared to other states. The Government has been focusing on mechanization for the past decade; and has been providing many tractors, power tillers, other machinery to small farmers. But those machines have been provided mainly to SC/ST farmers. The irony of poor indigenous Assamese Muslim farmers is that they have been included within the 'General Caste'; so that, they do not receive any Government facility for development of their agriculture sector.

Therefore, the Sub-Group on Skill Development has a "historical role" (*sic.*) to play in the skill development of indigenous farmers. Instead of traditional rice cultivation, commercial agriculture like stevia, aloe vera, lemon grass, Colorado capsicum, vegetables in demand in the market should be focused upon. The farmers should be assisted not only in increasing production, but also in effecting value

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addition by taking up processing of the original agricultural produce. Then only the economic condition of the farmers shall change for the better. Another major problem in the agriculture sector is market connectivity. Due to lack of market, farmers do not get a fair price for their produce. In this case, a market agency of indigenous Assamese Muslim farmers should also be set up by the Government under the model of 'Trifed'.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestion: The Sub-Group fully endorses the suggestion, and has considered incorporating in its set of recommendations.

7. Sports has become an important skill in the present age. It has also become very easy to get a Government/ private job through sports. The Government has also launched various schemes to protect the future of sportspersons. Therefore, sports should be popularized again in indigenous Assamese Muslim areas by doing away with the religious taboos.

There is immense popularity of sports like athletics, swimming, cricket, volleyball, football etc. Only talented players should be identified from the village area and brought to Sports Authority of India, etc. In this regard, the Sub-Group on Skill Development can work out a road map from training to talent development by contacting the Regional Sports Authority of India. Every Muslim village has *eidgah maidan*, which except for two days of the year lies vacant for most of the time. *Eidgahs* can be converted into centres of sports and other skill development.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestion: The suggestion is beyond the purview of the Sub-Group.

8. Even after having skills many youth of the target community have to sit at home for want of jobs or funds. Many young people with skills cannot stand on their own feet due to lack of funds. For the poor population of the community, the idea of capital formation is still limited to buying LIC policies. Therefore, the Government should create a separate Finance Corporation for indigenous Assamese Muslims under the model of National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation; so that, lack of available funds does not hamper the dream of skilled indigenous Assamese Muslim youth to become self-reliant.

Besides, in the age of online retailing, people are able to make good profits by selling different products through e-commerce portals like Amazon, Flipkart, etc. sitting at home. There is a demand all over the world through the internet for handicrafts, textiles, tribal art, and many agricultural produce of Assam. Therefore, providing a little bit of training to educated unemployed youth will easily enable them to become an online retailer.

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Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestion: The suggestion on having a separate Finance Corporation for the target community may not be feasible. Rather, the Sub-Group has recommended utilization the forum under National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation. However, the Sub-Group fully endorses the suggestion on online retailing, and has considered incorporating in its set of recommendations.

9. There is a huge demand abroad for nurses, paramedics, plumbers, electricians, construction workers, house-maids, bodyguards, bell boys, waiters, etc. abroad. In states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Punjab, almost one member from every household works in the Middle East or Europe-US. The Government also encourages the remittance of foreign currency to India as a consequence. Once Indigenous Muslims from Assam enter this demand-driven labour market in the Middle East, the unemployment problem would almost be eliminated besides improving the economic condition with influx of foreign currency into the system. The Sub-Group on Skill Development may prepare a road map in consultation with prominent manpower supply agencies in India and the Middle East. In this regard, the help of persons already settled in the Middle East as well as of the Ministry of External Affairs of India can be obtained if deemed necessary.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestion: The suggestion on overseas employment opportunities in the blue-collar category is not within the purview of the Sub-Group. However, the Sub-Group has already contemplated giving recommendations on providing skill training for nurses, paramedics, plumbers, electricians, construction workers, house-maids, bodyguards, bell boys, waiters, et al. However, using these skills for getting recruited abroad may be considered by the prospective trainees themselves.

(iii) Dr Ahsanul Hussain, Retd. General Manager, OIL

He has noted the following as far as opportunities for skill development of the target community in the Petroleum and Natural Gas sector is concerned:

1. OIL has a full-fledged Skill Development Institute (SDI) in North Guwahati, which was set-up in 2017 and managed by OIL in collaboration with other major oil and gas PSUs under MoPNG. The idea of establishing SDI in Guwahati is to produce from the youth of the North East India skilled man-power suitable for employment in hydrocarbon as well in other sectors.
2. The Hydrocarbon Sector Skill Council (HSSC) and Skill Development Institute led by ONGC is another placement linked training and entrepreneurship education for

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a pan-India target. The mission of HSSC is to create a pool of skilled man-power for hydrocarbon industry for their employability locally or globally.

3. Oil India Limited has encouraged the unemployed youths of Assam having some technical education (ITI and Diploma Engineering pass outs) for 'on the job training programme' with suitable stipends for one year. Here, the youths are made industry-ready for employability anywhere in India with a good training certificate. But employment in OIL is not guaranteed. Similar schemes may be there in other PSUs. In case of Oil India Limited, the nodal agency is its Learning & Development Department at Duliajan.
4. The Public Affairs (PA) department of OIL under its CSR programme has a Skill Development Project and Capacity Building named 'Project Swabalamban' for providing suitable employment opportunities to the unemployed youths of OIL's operational areas through some placement linked capacity building programme. The basic idea of this project is to impart training to the unemployed youths in some skill and capacity building trades for plumber, mason, carpenter, welder, sewing machine operator, electrician, fitter, technician for beauty & wellness, health care, house-keeping & hospitality, food & beverages, BPO/voice calling, automotive services, general duty assistants, customer care executives, radiology technicians and refractionist. Though this project was initially started for the Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and Charaideo districts, now it has been extended to few other districts of Assam. Similar programmes may also be there in other PSUs like ONGC, IOC and others. You may visit or have discussion with the concerned personnel preferably those who are engaged in CSR activities. Details are generally available in the websites of the organizations.

The different implementing agencies for 'Project Swabalamban' with whom OIL has signed a MoU are: (a) Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE), Lalmati, Guwahati; (b) Construction Industry Development Council (CIDC), New Delhi; (c) IL&FS Education & Training Services (IETS), New Delhi; (d) Pragati Edutech, Guwahati; (e) Gyanjyoti Education Foundation, Guwahati; (f) Gram Tarang Employability Training Centre, Guwahati; and (g) Downtown Charitable Trust, Guwahati.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestion: The suggestion on employment opportunities in the Petroleum and Natural Gas sector have been considered invaluable by the Sub-Group. The Sub-Group feels that this sector has so much scope as far as gainful employment – both directly and indirectly – for the youth of the target community. However, the Sub-Group has definitely considered the same while giving its recommendations.

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He has further suggested the following measures for the Sub-Group on Skill Development while formulating its recommendations for skill development of the target community:

- (a) Suitable youth may be sponsored for training programmes given time to time by various government departments like Agriculture, Horticulture, Sericulture, Animal Husbandry, Forestry, Industry so on and so forth. Such type of training includes poultry farming, duck rearing, bee-keeping, diary production, organic farming, commercial nursery, fishery, weaving, solar energy use, rain water harvesting etc. etc. But to make all these activities economically viable and sustainable in the long run, someone has to take lead from the front by creating Self Help Group (SHG) or Joint Liability Group (JLG). These SHGs/JLGs may be encouraged by various governmental financial aids at various district/sub-division/block/panchayat levels.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestion: The suggestion on having an institutional mechanism for coordinating the training of youth of the target community under the existing schemes of the Government, is very much appreciated by the Sub-Group. But the SHG or JLG would be too diminutive a body to effectively manage the exercise. At the same time, the Directorate of Char Development caters primarily to the immigrant Muslim community. Therefore, the nascent *Goriya Moriya* Development Council may be proposed to be developed as an independent Directorate to look after not only skill-training matters but also other pertinent development needs of the target community.

- (b) A Corpus-Fund may be created by interested Assamese Muslims or others from their donations under "zakat" or any other aid. The fund may be used to create (i) a Skill Development Institute of their own, (ii) a coaching centre for Engineering/ Medical tests for the Assamese Muslim students free of cost or at a nominal price, (c) a coaching centre for grooming the Assamese Muslim youths for UPSC/ APSC examinations free of cost or at a nominal price, (d) a practical language training institute for the technicians/ skilled persons preferably in English/ Arabic languages for the possibility of their employment outside India mostly Middle-East countries.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestion: The idea of a corpus fund is wonderful. The Sub-Group feels that the target community can be independently advised accordingly. However, it doesn't fit within the terms of reference of the Sub-Group, which invariably pertains to recommendations to the Government.

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(iv) Dr. Nurul Amin [JB College (Jorhat)]

He has put forward his opinion on skilling of the target community as follows:

- 1) Based on the principle of 'learn and earn', priority should be given to skilling, upskilling and reskilling of members of the target community who are already in some trade or business. The necessary skill may be selected after consultation with experts in the field and need of the potential groups. Example of some potential groups comprise:
 - a) The huge workforce engaged in Agar oil extraction in Golaghat district;
 - b) People from Sarthebari (*sic*; Hajo Moriapatty?) area engaged traditionally in the business of brass work ('Kah - Pitol'); and
 - c) The huge population of Moria (*sic*; Zula?) community engaged traditionally in the trade of cloth.
- 2) Next priority should be given to the group who are interested in acquiring or upgrading specific types of skill. For that, application may be invited from the interested group and NGOs who want to get engaged in that process.
- 3) For those who are not familiar with the concept of skill and its importance, awareness and motivational programmes may be organized at different places.
- 4) Initially there should be selective and focused target for skilling, instead of having large numbers of programmes. To ensure that more people get involved in skill development programme, there is a need to create, at least, few success stories from which others would be encouraged.
- 5) The selected skills for the community should be as per the programme provided by different government agencies, so that help from such agencies may be taken in due time.
- 6) The students engaged in higher and professional education are generally exposed to the existing facilities of skill development. For them, motivational and counselling programme may be organized, whenever necessary.
- 7) Skill development for girls may be considered separately; as their priority would be different from boys.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestions: The Sub-Group feels that the suggestions put forward are noteworthy, but focusses more on minute details of implementation. However, some of the suggestions have been considered by the Sub-Group while formulating its recommendations to the Government.

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As far as implementation of the skill development programmes of the target community is concerned, he has put forward the following suggestions:

- 1) Success of the process of skilling will depend on the action of the Government as well as recipient community. As Government has already got its mechanism to deliver the processes through the relevant Ministry/ Departments/ Centres, the community shall have to get ready for this. To start with, a few NGOs/ social organizations may be engaged to organize programmes for their localities. Such NGOs/ organizations may be given the responsibility to communicate with the concerned Ministry/ Departments for skill development programmes as per their requirements. An intermediary or help desk for the newcomers shall be necessary at the beginning.
- 2) There are processes to register any NGO/ centre with the Government Departments who are involved in skill development programmes. The Government may be requested to relax the norms for the registration of new NGOs/ organizations from the community to ensure more participation.
- 3) Different PSUs of the State may be approached to organize skill development programmes for the indigenous Muslim living in their operational areas, for which request letter or recommendation from the State Govt. may be attached.
- 4) Government may also be requested to run special training programmes for indigenous Muslims at various existing ITIs, mini-ITIs and other institutes/ centers offering skills. To encourage the participation, financial assistance/ scholarship may be given to the participants.
- 5) The National Education Policy 2020 has proposed skill development programmes at the school and college level. The educational institutes of the localities inhabited by members of the target community must be "concerned" (*sic.*; consulted?) while selecting the course and it should be as per the requirement of the localities.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestions: The Sub-Group feels that the suggestions put forward are noteworthy, but focusses more on minute details of implementation. Besides, the idea of involving NGOs has already been junked by the Sub-Group for operational reasons. It has rather proposed upgrading the *Goriya Mortiya* Development Council to a Directorate along the lines of Directorate of WPTBC. However, some of the suggestions have been considered favourably by the Sub-Group while formulating its recommendations to the Government.

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(v) Dr. Sanjan Hazarika (Jorhat District)

He has made a classification of unemployed youth based on their qualification; viz. below/ upto Class XII; degree level; and post-graduate/ professional degree level. The groups thus created have been subdivided into further sub-groups; viz. Technical - Non-Technical; Male - Female; and Urban - Rural. He has suggested training for each of these groups and sub-groups accordingly as follows.

Table 4: Group-wise Proposed Skill & Training Procedure

Group Qualification	Group Division.	Skill Name	Procedure for Skill Development
School Dropout & Upto/ Below Class -XII	Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welding, • Motor Mechanic, • Hydraulic Mechanic, • Plumber, • Tiles Fitting, • LED Bulb Assembling 	<p>In this group, after 5-10 days theoretical training by experienced personnel, the candidates can be sent to industries or different individual firms for practical training.</p> <p>For hydraulic mechanics, the candidates must be trained in established industries; for which arrangements should be made by the central district committee.</p>
	Non-Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DTP, • Pandal Decoration, • Artificial Flower Making 	<p>For DTP, the candidates can be sent to local DTP centers. The course fee should be paid by the central district committee.</p>

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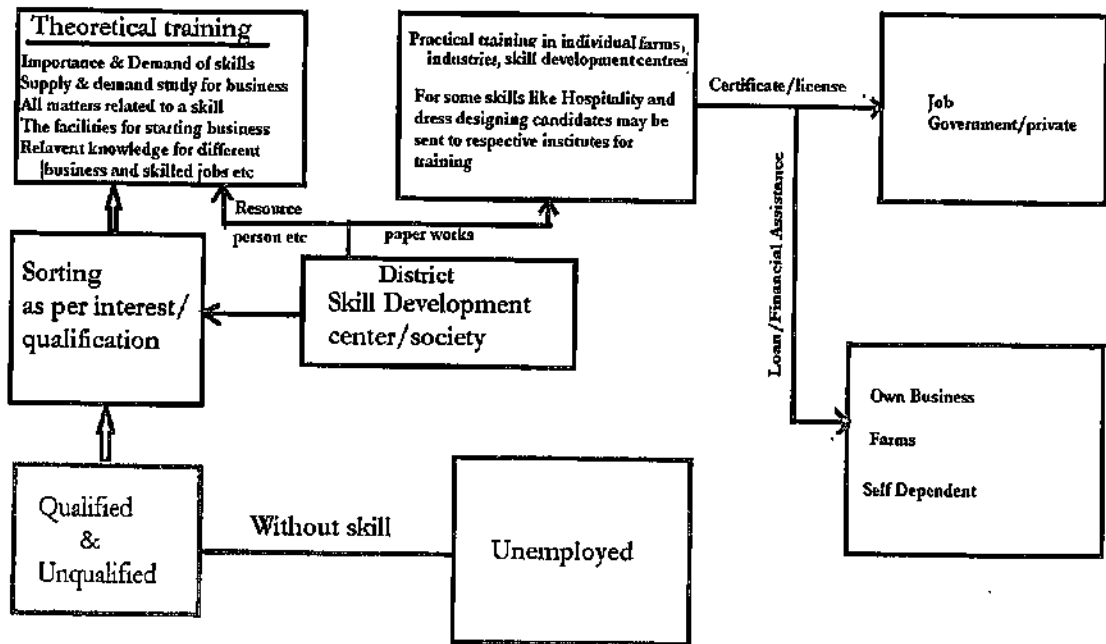
			For the other two trades, the candidates can be trained in groups through skilled professionals locally.
	Female	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewing, Embroidery and Children Dress Manufacturing; • Pickle/ Snacks Making; • Beauty-care & Wellness 	For these categories, the candidates can be trained in groups through skilled professionals locally.
	Rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poultry, • Nursery, • Duck Farming, • Fish Farming, • Bio-Flock Farming 	<p>Theoretical Training can be provided with the help of Agriculture, Veterinary and Fishery Deptt.s. It comprises selection of site, necessary infrastructure requirements, medicine and other chemicals which are to be used.</p> <p>Practical trainings can be arranged with consultation with local farms.</p>
Degree Level	Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A.C., Fridge Mechanic • Dress Designing • Common Service Centre • e-Commerce 	Interested candidates can be given courses in relevant fields in different organizations.

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	Non - Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DTP, • Hospitality Management. • Photography and Video Editing 	Interested candidates can be given courses in relevant fields in different organizations.
Professional Graduate, Post Graduate, MBA, etc.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of Recycling Plants, • Small Scale Industry • Event Management 	Interested candidates can be given courses in relevant fields in different organizations.

He has also suggested a flowchart for the processes proposed as follows:

Fig 3: Flowchart of Group-wise Proposed Skill Training Procedure



Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestions: The Sub-Group has already made such a classification, and identified skilling needs. This current proposal appears to be a fine-tuning of that. The Sub-Group has therefore considered the proposed structure favourably while formulating its recommendations to the Government.

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(vi) Dr. Sirajul Islam (Supervisor, ITI Jorhat)

Among the various categories of youth belonging to the indigenous Assamese Muslim community of Assam based on educational qualification, the category that requires skilling the most is that of the school dropouts or those who studied up to 10th standard. When we speak about skill training for this category, our focus should invariably be on vocational training. Because, other means of skilling such as soft skills etc. are less likely to fetch proper employment at this level. However, farming and related skills may also be effective in generating self-employment, especially for the rural youth. It is also necessary that the trained persons are provided with incentives like stipend during training; and Government/ Govt. recognized certification and financial assistance/ loan to start their own enterprises after successful completion of training.

Vocational Training in Assam is conducted through the Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) under the Skill, Employment and Entrepreneurship Department, Govt. of Assam. At present, almost every district of the State has a Government ITI. These institutes provide vocational training of 1 year/ 2 years duration in various post matric and under matric trades in accordance with the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) aligned curriculum. The admission into the ITIs takes place through a centralized online admission portal. It is worth mentioning that in order to increase participation of various backward/ less privileged communities in vocational training, the State Govt. has made suitable reservation policy for admission into the Govt. ITIs. For example, there is reservation of two seats in each trade for the tea garden labourer/ ex-tea garden labourer community. Under the same principle, the Government may consider reservation of one seat in each trade (both post matric and under matric) for the indigenous Assamese Muslim community, at least in the ITIs located in the districts inhabited by a sizeable population of that community.

In addition to the regular courses, the ITIs also provide skill training of short duration under various Govt. schemes from time to time. Hence, special short term training programmes may be organized for the school dropouts belonging to the indigenous Assamese Muslim community, utilizing the existing infrastructure, machinery and faculty of the Govt. ITIs. Various NSQF compliant sector-specific short-term courses have been designed by the Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) under the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). A few short-term courses designed by the SSCs for the school dropouts are listed below:

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Table 5: Short-Term Courses in Government ITIs designed by SSCs

Name Of Course	Sector	NSQF Level	Duration of Course	Entry Qualification
Assistant Mason	Construction	2	350 hrs.	5 th pass
Field Technician-Other Home Appliances	Electronics	4	360 hrs.	8 th pass
Field Technician-UPS and Inverter	Electronics	4	360 hrs.	8 th pass
Assistant Beauty Therapist	Beauty and Wellness	3	350 hrs.	8 th pass
Automotive Service Technician	Automotive	3	500 hrs.	8 th pass

Detailed course contents along with job roles etc. for a host of NSQF compliant short-term courses are available in the websites of the SSCs. The selection of course/ sector will, however, depend upon the market demand of a particular district/ area as well as availability of infrastructure in ITIs (or other relevant technical institutes).

In view of the changing market requirements, short-term vocational training alone is not sufficient to secure employment in an organized sector. It may therefore be proposed that the above mentioned short-term vocational courses are to be followed by a brief training on soft skills/ entrepreneurial skills plus basic IT skills. Agencies like Quest Alliance offer short term learning programme on life skills and digital literacy. The Govt. may consider collaboration with such agencies so that a blended skill package of Vocational Skills + Soft Skills + Basic IT Skills may be designed for a short duration of about 3-4 months for the target group. It is pertinent to mention here that apart from the Govt. institutes, Assam Skill Development Mission (ASDM) is also actively involved in providing short term vocational training through the accredited Skill Training Providers. Hence, ASDM may also be mandated to design and implement skill package of similar nature for the school leavers of the indigenous Assamese Muslim community. As far as skill training in farming sector is concerned, the Agriculture Department of the State has been implementing the scheme of Skill Training for Rural Youth (STRY) under the National Mission on

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Agriculture Extension & Technology (NMAET). Under this scheme, 50 different skilling areas have been identified spanning Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Fisheries. Special schedules under this scheme may be arranged for the youth of Indigenous Muslim Community so that they get attracted towards farming and allied activities. Alternatively, some special skill courses may be designed by the Agricultural Department in consultation with Assam Agricultural University exclusively for the community.

Specific skill training programmes like motor driving are expected to generate direct employment/ self-employment. The Govt. may sponsor such training for the unemployed youth of the community in specific training centres. Motor driving training may also be conducted in some ITIs having the relevant trades. However, such training will be effective only if proper test/ assessment is conducted at the end of training in presence of Transport Department officials and Driving License (Learner) is issued on the basis of such test.

The entrepreneurial acumen among the Assamese youth including those belonging to the indigenous Assamese Muslim community has increased over the years. It is time that they are equipped with the right skill and are provided with a platform from where they can set their own goal and step into the path of progress. A collaborative effort in this regard from various stakeholders is the need of the hour.

Views of the Sub-Group on the Suggestions: The Sub-Group has found these set of suggestions extremely informative and comprehensive. Therefore, it has taken the liberty of incorporating most of the above while formulating its recommendations to the Government.

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12. Recommendations of the Study:

The Sub-Group, taking into consideration all the above factors and aspects of the Study, hereby offers the following recommendations to the Government of Assam in the Department of Welfare of Minorities Development:

a. General Recommendations: -

- i. **Identification of Target Community:** The target community provided by Notification is the indigenous Assamese Muslim community, which comprises five broad segments: (1) Goria, (2) Moria, (3) Fakir, (4) Deshi and (5) Zula. The Sub-Group feels that the community members should be properly found out through a special socio-economic survey through the infrastructural apparatus and manpower available in the Revenue Circle Offices under the overall aegis of their respective District Administrations. This is to offset any attempt to include any member of the immigrant Muslim community [including the Bengali Muslims, the so-called *Na-Axomiyas* (i.e. Neo-Assamese Muslims), and Muslims of Char-Chaporis] into the ambit of the target community. In case of inter-marriage and grey areas, patrilineal descentance and primary language spoken at home (not the language reported during census operations) should be the basis for sorting into the target community.

The Sub-Group further feels that especially for assistance and facilitation for skill development, keeping the target community exclusively for indigenous Assamese Muslims may not be practically feasible and sustainable in the long run. There is every likelihood of immigrant Muslims and Muslims of doubtful nationality availing the proposed benefits through the back-door or unscrupulous means.

Therefore, the Sub-Group proposes that **other indigenous Assamese minority communities ought to be included in the target group.** These primarily comprise:

1. **Indigenous Assamese Sikhs:** The community comprises 2 (two) wings; viz. (a) Sikhs who came with Guru Tegh Bahadur to Assam just prior to his martyrdom in the late seventeenth century, and who used to live in Dhubri District, and are now scattered across the State; and (b) Sikhs whose forefathers came as soldiers sent by Maharaja Ranjit Singh for fighting the early nineteenth century, and settled in and around the Borkola village of Nagaon. The Dalit Sikhs and Sikhs pertaining to the business community, who were brought from Punjab during the British era, ought not to qualify as part of this group.

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- 2. Indigenous Assamese Christians: The community comprises the Anglo Indians along with Bodo, Garo, Kuki and tea-tribesmen who have been evangelized.
- 3. Indigenous Assamese Buddhists: The community comprises tribal people like Singphos, Phakials, Chakmas, Lamas, Aitons, Khamtis and Khamyangs.

ii. **Assessment of Socio-Economic Status of Target Community:** The assessment of the socio-economic conditions can be undertaken as part of the aforementioned special socio-economic survey proposed to be through the infrastructural apparatus and manpower available in the Revenue Circle Offices under the overall aegis of their respective District Administrations. The data collected has to be comprehensive and adduced in the following format:

District:			Revenue Circle:		
Sl. No.	Village inhabited by Indigenous Assamese Muslims	Number of Indigenous Assamese Muslims (with %age)	General Occupation/ Profession of Indigenous Assamese Muslims	Educational Break-Up (Graduate/ Undergraduate/ Matriculate/ School Dropout/ Illiterate)	Remarks

Based on the aforementioned survey, the entire population of the working age of the target community has to be classified on the basis of educational qualification under the following four sub-heads - viz.

- A. Illiterate and School Drop-out below Class X Pass
- B. Class X Pass to Class XII Pass and College Drop-out
- C. Graduate and Post-Graduate
- D. Technical, Management and Professional Graduate and Post-Graduate

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iii. Interventions Proposed for Skilling and Creation of Employment Opportunities:

The Sub-Group recommends that based on the criteria of educational and social background of the members of the target community in the working age, the following interventions.

- a) Skilling of unemployed and underemployed youth of the target community based on their educational qualification and existing vocational training.
- b) Up-grading of existing skill for enhancing employability of the youth of the target community including technical graduates.
- c) Linking youth of the target community to existing skill-training schemes and programmes under Skill Employment & Entrepreneurship Department, Government of Assam, and Union Ministry of Minority Affairs.
- d) Creation of large-scale awareness among youth of the target community, and parents/ guardians thereof, regarding interventions earmarked above as (a), (b) and (c). The programme may be undertaken by an official community body like *Goriya Moriya* Development Council with the help of Gaon Panchayat functionaries in Gaon Panchayats inhabited by members of the target community.
- e) Reservation of seats for youth of the target community in institutions/ schemes for giving effective scope for implementation of interventions (a), (b) and (c) above. In this regard, around 5% seats may be considered for being reserved for the students belonging to the target community in various skill imparting institutes/ organizations. Additional seats may be created and additional courses added for implementation of that recommendation; so that the existing free seats for the other communities are not disturbed. In order to give effect to that, the existing infrastructure for the imparting technical/ vocational training institutes of the State - viz. ITIs, polytechnics, etc. - have to be further developed/ enhanced; so as to accommodate the additional seats and courses.
- f) The skilling and skill-upgradation training courses have to be checked for authenticity and effectiveness by a regulatory body under the Skill Employment & Entrepreneurship Department, Government of Assam, and certified accordingly. It must be ensured that (i) the curricula followed by such certified institutions cover all requisite theoretical knowledge and hands-on skills necessary for ensuring employability; and (ii) the certificates provided by such certified institutions, either directly or through the aegis of an external competent authority, are mandatorily acceptable to all potential employers.

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- g) Promotion of Self-Help Group (SHG) movement and self-employment among youth of the target community under existing schemes of NRLM, NULM, NABARD, DDUGKY and MANAS.
- h) Encouragement of entrepreneurship among youth members of the target community. To order to facilitate that, necessary bank credit may be assured by security guarantee from a community body maintaining a minimum corpus fund. Financial assistance from the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) and other similar institutions may also be utilized for providing easy subsidized loan facilities to the interested entrepreneurs from the target community.
- i) Rejuvenation of traditional crafts of the target community like brass metal-craft, bamboo craft, agar-wood perfume extraction, handloom, etc. by systematic and planned measures.

iv. **Skilling Proposed based on Educational Qualification:** The Sub-Group recommends imparting of skill based on the criteria of educational qualification in the following manner.

Sl. No.	Target Groups		Skills tentatively Identified for being Imparted
	Gender	Educational Criteria	
1.	Boys	A. Illiterate and School Drop-out below Class X Pass	i. Carpentry ii. Masonry <i>including</i> Tiles Fitting iii. Tailoring iv. Barbering & Hair-Styling v. Painter vi. Artificial Flower Making vii. Pandal Decoration viii. Fast Food Cook ix. Floriculture x. Vermicompost, Poultry & Agri-based Skills
2.	Boys	B. Class X Pass to Class XII Pass and College Drop-out	i. Plumbing and Hydraulic Mechanic ii. LED Bulb Assembling

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none">iii. Electrician, Car Mechanic & Weldingiv. AC, TV, Fridge, Mobile, etc. Repair Mechanicv. Electronics Repairingvi. Tools Makingvii. Designer Tailoringviii. Woodcraft & Designer Carpentryix. Wood Paneling, False Ceiling, Steel/ Aluminum/ Wood Fabricatingx. Chef, Hotel Management for Waitering & House Keepingxi. Excavator and High-End Machine Driverxii. Security Guardxiii. Agar Inoculator
3.	Boys	C. Graduate and Post- Graduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Professional Skillsii. Tally and Accountingiii. Communication Skills - English Speaking and Writing, documentation, electronic communication.iv. Technical skills - installation, commiss- ioning, operations & maintenance of machines, equipment, electronic gadgets, etc.v. Digital & Information Skills (DTP, internet coding, etc.)vi. Soft skills

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4.	Boys	D. Technical, Management and Professional Graduate and Post-Graduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Upskilling of Engineering Knowledge to meet Industry/ Market Needs ii. Electronics Skills (Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, AutoCAD, Computer Programming, App Making and Coding). iii. Computer and Mobile Services Skills iv. Service Engineering of Electronics Goods and Heavy Machineries v. Welding & Electro-Mechanical Works vi. High-Level Accounting (for MBA, BCom and MCom) vii. Cyber Security Skills viii. Tele-medicine & Paramedical Skills ix. Establishment of Recycling Plants, x. Event Management
5.	Girls	Illiterate and School Drop-out below Class X Pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Tailoring ii. Handloom iii. Palliative & Geriatric Care <i>including</i> Baby Care, Elderly Care, Home Nursing, On Call Help, etc. iv. Beautician v. Tiffin Service
6.	Girls	Class X Pass to Class XII Pass & College Drop-out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Nursing and Paramedical Skills

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			ii. Air Hostess and Hotel Management iii. SHG Formation and Management iv. Small Finance and Marketing Skills v. Basic Computer Skills
7.	Girls	Graduate and Post-Graduate	i. Digital & Information Skills (DTP, internet coding, etc.) ii. Soft skills iii. Fashion Designing
8.	Girls	Technical Graduate	Same as Boys

v. **Institutional Infrastructure of the Target Community:** In order to implement the recommendations, and also ensure gradual skilling and employability of the members of the target community, the Sub-Group recommends the establishment of a separate Directorate for the extended target community – i.e. the indigenous Assamese minorities, which include not only the Assamese Muslims, but also the Assamese Sikhs, Christians and Buddhists. The Directorate should be totally independent of the Directorate of Char Development, which may take care of minorities of non-indigenous origin. The proposed new Directorate may be christened – Directorate of Indigenous Minorities. Bodies like Goriya Moriya Development Council, Assamese Sikh Development Council, etc. should all be brought under the control of this new Directorate of Indigenous Minorities.

b. **Specific Recommendations:**

i. **Engineering/ Technical Graduates:**

The Sub-Group, considering the poor employability ratio of engineering/ technology graduates from the target community, proposes action on four major aspects:

- 1) The requirement of knowledge and skills of various prospective industries needs to be assessed, and such technical graduates have to be provided special training to bridge the critical gap between their latent knowledge/

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skill and the requisite knowledge/ skill. In this regard, special upskilling programmes is proposed to be adopted under the aegis of MANAS and NESC institute with industry participation, and utilization of campuses of ITIs and polytechnics after their classes are over.

- 2) Since many of our technical graduates fail to make a mark in campus interviews and other recruitment fora on account of lack of cognitive and socio-emotional skills; including Spoken English, Quantitative and Analytical Aptitude; the Sub-Group recommends that due training opportunities for those skills may be institutionally arranged for unemployed/ underemployed technical graduates of the target community.
- 3) Since many of our technical graduates are also reluctant to take up jobs commensurate with their knowledge/ skill which are outside the State/ country, the Sub-Group feels that such youth needs proper psychological reorientation to induce motivation/ interest for such jobs. For that, special counselling camps may be organized with pep-talk by experts/ life coaches and engineers who have done well abroad.
- 4) Since very few of the engineering graduates have thought to leverage their technical know-how to establish Start-Ups and their own engineering/ industrial firms, the Sub-Group therefore recommends active promotion of entrepreneurship and Start-Up promotion may be actively considered.

ii. **Rejuvenation of Traditional Crafts:** The target community is a proud inheritor of a number of traditional crafts like the brass metal-craft of the *Moriyas*, bamboo craft and agar-wood perfume extraction of the *Goriyas*, and handloom of the *Zulas*. However, the Sub-Group has observed that rising cost of production due to non-adoption of modern technology and management practices, lack of access to credit and optimal working capital, diminishing market on availability of cheaper machine-made goods and changing public consumption pattern, and over-dependence on middlemen - have all contributed to the gradual decline of these traditional crafts. This has also led to large emergence of unemployment and unemployability among youth of the target community whose families had been practicing these crafts, but who have opted to seek green pastures elsewhere. In view of the above, the Sub-Group recommends the following measures with respect to traditional crafts:

- a) In order to revamp the craft industry, the Sub-Group recommends a need for a complete re-organization of the institutional structure prevalent among artisans/ craftsmen practicing such traditional crafts. In this regard, the Sub-Group opines that the micro-level manufacturing activity of the

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traditional goods should be done by individual artisans forming Self-Help Groups. However, these SHGs instead of being atomized entities completely independent from one another, should unite to form a cooperative of their own. The governing body of such a cooperative, instead of being a congregation of all the artisans, should only involve one/ two representatives of the SHGs; which would elect from among its members, an executive body, to handle the functioning of the cooperative. Such a cooperative would handle bulk raw material purchase, large-scale marketing, and macro-level management of the SHGs. In fact, the cooperative can have a trade brand of its own, and have publicity and advertisement of the products done (which are not possible for the SHGs to do by themselves).

- b) The Sub-Group feels that wherever possible to adopt without corrupting the basic hand-crafted nature of the handicraft items, mechanization has to be adopted. In this regard, the entire process of manufacture should be delineated and a flow-chart prepared accordingly. Then a Craft-Process-Reengineering (CPR), akin to Business Process Reengineering (BPR) adopted for computerization of old manual business procedures, has to be done analyzing and finding out which of the sub-processes can be mechanized. The mechanization can be done with the help of institutions like IIE Lalmati, CIPET Changsari, NESC under ASDM, IIT Guwahati (Mechanical and Industrial Design Departments). For the mechanized part, common facilitation centres (CFCs) can be set up in community centres of the villages inhabited by members of the sub-community of the target community. Such CFCs can be utilized by all such members engaged in the craft activity.
- c) In order to ensure effective turnaround for the cottage industries, the Sub-Group recommends effective training programme for the artisans in 3 (three) stages; viz. (i) Awareness - where all the traditional artisans would be made aware of the modern machineries; (ii) Orientation - by way of which the selected artisans would be taught regarding the process; and (iii) Skill Development - which would be the overall training regarding use of modern machineries, and how they replicate the manual techniques, preparation of better quality goods with the help of the machineries, and proper orientation and counselling.
- d) In order to ward off competition from cheaper alternatives, and effective capturing of new markets; the Sub-Group stresses on the essentiality of good quality of the products. Quality control measures should include random checking of finished products, and repair or replacement of

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defective items. For best/ export quality items, there can be 100% checking. Checked and corrected items can be given quality control seals.

- e) The Sub Group recommends effective marketing modules to shore up the traditional craft industries. Measures may include setting up own show-rooms/ shops of the community in the model of TRIFED; sale through the medium of Government/ semi-Government agencies like ARTFED, NEDFI, etc.; effective use of e-commerce portals like Amazon, Flipkart, etc.; participation in craft fairs, exhibitions, and emporiums; obtaining of GI tag; and creation of a distinctive brand of the craft.
- f) The Sub-Group feels that financing of the traditional crafts is vital for their rejuvenation. This has to be done at both the microeconomic and macroeconomic levels. At the microeconomic level, National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) may finance the individual artisans, while SHGs can take micro-credit from commercial banks or non-banking financial institutions with security guarantee given by a community body having a corpus fund. At the macroeconomic level, the craftsmen's Cooperative can take loans or grants from commercial banks, financial institutions, etc. for bulk buying of raw materials, infrastructure development, and such other requirements.

c. Goal Oriented Recommendation:

The Sub Group also desires to offer these goal-oriented recommendations:

- i. Under the proposed new Directorate of Indigenous Minorities, there should be a Programme Implementing Agency (PIA) for taking care of the recommendations.
- ii. Labour force surveys have to be regularly conducted to identify prospective training areas based on the demand of the employers. PIA should submit action plans on the prospective training areas which would facilitate employment. The development of curriculum should be outcome based, linking training with the available employment.
- iii. PIA may plan their own dedicated training programmes in the already available infrastructure of Government schools, ITIs, polytechnics, etc. during off-curricular hours.
- iv. The training programmes should be trade based; and for every single trade, there should be two stages, viz. MODULE 1 and MODULE 2. MODULE 2 should be started as upgradation and perfection of MODULE 1. The number of candidates to be trained should not be strictly defined. While allocating targets for training,

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the number of candidates in a single batch should depend on the openings available.

- v. A proper mechanism should be there of assessing skill demands at the State level so as to ascertain appropriate manpower requirements and make any scheme more demand driven. Such a procedure shall ensure that the training offered becomes more closely linked to employment opportunities.
- vi. A full-time staff should be available with the PIA exclusively for management, monitoring and physical inspection of the facilities, quality of training, availability of faculty, tools, machinery and other services related to the trainings being offered; so as to ensure the quality of the training infrastructure and the training programmes themselves.
- vii. The PIA or the Govt. Directorate for Indigenous Minorities should take steps to guide training providers or any other competent authority to issue certificates to the trained persons and ensure uniform recognition of all the certificates across the Government and the industries concerned. The certificates for MODULE2 should be made equivalent to ITI.
- viii. The State Government should ensure uninterrupted allocation of fund to meet the training, assessment cost, reimbursement, management, monitoring and administration of the scheme.
- ix. There should be simplified and streamline processes relating to registration for new vocational training programmes, allotment of batch numbers, issuance of certificates, scheduling assessments, etc.

d. Additional Recommendations

- i. Ensuring unified access to the target community for Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Training Programs (E&SDPs) for the skill sets which shall be in demand in the market leading to self/wage-employment, with added emphasis on entrepreneurship.
- ii. Utilization of the Skill Development architecture of Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship by working through NSDC/NSDA, training partners etc. and other leading training providers; so as to ensure standardization of training and its outcome.
- iii. Engendering tie-ups of the PIA with local/ national/ international organisations for imparting training on entrepreneurship & skill development.
- iv. Linking of concessional credit of NMDFC and other NBFIs for members of the target community so as to promote entrepreneurship and self-employment among them.

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- v. Provision of technical & marketing support by the PIA through setting up of call centres for new entrepreneurs and e-commerce portals for online marketing support.

Mozibur Rahman
(Mozibur Rahman)
Chairman

Nekib Hussain
(Dr. Nekib Hussain)
Member

Rashid Arif Hussain
(Md. Rashid Arif Hussain)
Member

Sazzad Alam
(Sazzad Alam, ACS)
Member Secretary

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ANNEXURES

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ANNEXURES:

1. Notification of Sub-Groups - *vide* No. WMD.62/2021/Pt/7 Dated Dispur the 31st July, 2021 of Welfare of Minorities and Development Department, Government of Assam.
2. Minutes of the Sub-Group on Skill Development:
 - A. Meeting No. 1 held ONLINE on 7th August 2021.
 - B. Meeting No. 2 held PHYSICALLY on 11th August 2021.
 - C. Meeting No. 3 held in HYBRID MODE on 24th August 2021.
3. Newspaper Advertisement published on 15th September 2021 in all leading dailies of Assam informing about the email ID of the Sub-Group, and soliciting suggestions on skill development of indigenous Assamese Muslim community.
4. "Axomiya Musalman: Eithas aru Abodan" - Speech by Late (Prof.) Mohammad Taher, Retd. Professor of Geography, Gauhati University, on Indigenous Assamese Muslims at Jorhat Islamic Centre on 8th February 2009.
5. Suggestions received from different members of the public on skill development of indigenous Assamese Muslim community.

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Annexure 1 (Notification)

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
WELFARE OF MINORITIES AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
:: DISPUR ::

ORDERS BY THE GOVERNOR OF ASSAM
NOTIFICATION

Dated Dispur the 31st July, 2021

No. WMD.62/2021/Pt/7: In partial modification of this Department's earlier Notification No. WMD.62/2021/Pt/6 dated 9th July, 2021, and in pursuance of decision taken in 'Alaap Alochana' (Interactive Session) held on 04/07/2021 at Assam Administrative Staff Collage, Khanapara, Guwahati-22, the following Sub-Groups/ Committee are hereby constituted to undertake thorough studies on Population stabilisation, Health care, Cultural identity, Education, Financial inclusion, Skill Development and Women Empowerment of Indigenous Assamese Muslim Community of Assam:

A. Sub-Group/ Committee on Population Stabilisation :

	Name & Address	Designated as	Contact No.
1.	Dr. Ilias Ali (Padmashree)	Chairman	9864061796
2.	Akabor Ali Ahmed, Retd. Professor, BN College, Dhubri	Member	9678109177
3.	Dr. Tanvir Alam Tezpur Medical College	Member	9706037060
4.	Sahabuddin Ahmed Journalist, Mukalmua	Member	8638919139
5.	K.J. Hilaly, ACS, CEO, GMDA	Member-Secretary	9435080266

B. Sub-Group/ Committee on Health :

	Name & Address	Designated as	Contact No.
1.	Dr. Syed Iftikhar Ahmed (Anti-AIDS Campaigner & Social Activist)	Chairman	8723950583
2.	Dr. Javed Ali, Professor, GMCH.	Member	
3.	Dr. Aftab Ali Ahmed (Assistant Professor, Jorhat Medical College)	Member	9957100114
4.	Zahid Chistie, ACS, Joint Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Personnel Deptt.	Member-Secretary	9435055161

C. Sub-Group/ Committee on Cultural Identity:

	Name & Address	Designated as	Contact No.
1.	Wasbir Hussain (Editor- in-Chief, Northeast Live TV & Commentator)	Chairman	9864265980
2.	Imran Hussain (Writer and Poet)	Member	9435608844
3.	Nurul Sultan (Film producer and Cultural Activist, Dergaon)	Member	9435092888
4.	Mahmud Hassan, ACS, Addl. Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Forest Deptt.	Member-Secretary	9435027583

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D. Sub-Group/ Committee on Education :

Name & Address	Designated as	Contact No.
1. Dr. Adil Ul Yasin, Retd Prof Dibrugarh University, Political Science	Chairman	9435735840
2. Sheikh Hedayetullah (Prof of English, Ratnapith College, Chapar, Dhubri. President, Deshi Jonogosthiya Mancha, Assam)	Member	9435616079
3. Moinul Haq, Writer & Poet	Member	9957860880
4. Inamul Hussain, ACS, Joint Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Personnel Deptt.	Member-Secretary	9435023966

E. Sub-Group/ Committee on Financial Inclusion :

Name & Address	Designated as	Contact No.
1. Ms. Naffa Ahmed, IAS Retd.	Chairperson	7086070962
2. Dr. Nissar Ahmed Barua, Prof of Economics, Gauhati University	Member	9864034527
3. Safiur Rahman, Retd/Jt Director, Economics & Statistics Dept & P&RD Assam	Member	9207001289
4. Fayek Azad (Deputy General Manager, Assam Financial Corporation)	Member	9435101171/ 9859916509
5. Syed Ishfaqur Rahman, ACS, Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Finance Deptt.	Member-Secretary	9435156139

F. Sub-Group/ Committee on Skill Development :

Name & Address	Designated as	Contact No.
1. Mr. Mujibur Rahman, Head, Mechanical Engineering Dept, Dibrugarh Polytechnic	Chairman:	8474074803
2. Dr. Nekib Hussain (Entrepreneur and NGO)	Member	9435017680
3. Md Rashid Arif Hussain, Oil Industry Professional, Technical Expert, NRL.	Member	7053204241
4. Sazzad Alam, ACS Joint Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Industries & Commerce Deptt.	Member-Secretary	7002238965

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G. Sub-Group/ Committee on Women Empowerment:

Name & Address	Designated as	Contact No.
1. Dr Nazrana Ahmed, Industrialist & Lawyer	Chairperson:	9435031080
2. Dr Naseem Farhin Akhtar, Director, Centre for Womens' Studies, Dibrugarh University	Member	9435004378
3. Dr (Mrs) Jishan Ahmed, Head Surgery, Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh & Rotarian	Member	
4. Farida Samsul, ACS Director, Char Area Development Assam	Member Secretary:	9435024034

1. The Sub-Groups/Committee will submit detailed report/ Recommendation to the Welfare of Minorities and Development Department within 3 months for taking further necessary action.
2. The Chairman and Members of the Sub-Groups/Committee will be entitled for a sitting allowance of Rs. 2500/- (two thousand five hundred only) each.
3. Each Sub-Group/ Committee can undertake tour and meet different stakeholders, if required.

Sd/-

Commissioner & Secretary, to the Govt. of Assam
Welfare of Minorities and Development Department


Memo No. WMD.62/2021/Pt/7-A

Dated Dispur the 31st July, 2021

Copy forwarded to:

1. The Principal Secretary to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Assam for kind appraisal of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Assam, Dispur.
2. The Principal Secretary / Commissioner & Secretary/ Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Guwahati Development Department/ Health & Family Welfare / Personnel/ Cultural Affairs/ Environment & Forest/ Education/ Finance/ Skill De3velopment/ Social Welfare/ Welfare of Minorities and Dev. Deptt./ Home & Political Deptt/ Panchayat & Rural Development Deptt. for information.
3. S.O to the Chief Secretary, Assam for information of the Chief Secretary, Assam Dispur.
4. PPS to Hon'ble Chief Minister, Assam for kind appraisal of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Assam, Dispur.
5. PS to the Hon'ble Minister, Welfare of Minorities and Development Department for kind appraisal of Hon'ble Minister.
6. All Chairman/ Member (All Sub Groups/Committee) for information and necessary action.
7. All Deputy Commissioner for information and necessary action. They are also requested to take necessary step for serving the Notification to Chairman and Members of Sub- Groups/ Committee within their jurisdiction and action taken may be intimated to this Deptt. at the earliest.
8. All Officer concerned for information and necessary action.
9. All persons concerned for information and necessary action.

By order, etc.



Joint Secretary, to the Govt. of Assam
Welfare of Minorities and Development Department

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Annexure 2 (Minutes of Sub-Group Meetings)

A. Meeting No. 1 on 07 AUG 2021 (Online):

MINUTES OF MEETING OF SUB-GROUP/ COMMITTEE ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS MUSLIMS UNDER WELFARE OF MINORITIES AND DEVELOPMENT HELD ONLINE THROUGH DVC MODE ON 07/08/2021 FROM 4:00 AM ONWARDS UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SUB-GROUP/ COMMITTEE.

The meeting was presided over by the Chairman of the Sub-Group, Shri Mr Mujibur Rahman; and attended by all the members of the Sub-Group [viz. Dr. Nekib Hussain and Md Rashid Arif Hussain] including the Member Secretary, Shri Sazzad Alam, ACS, Joint Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Industries and Commerce, Act East Policy Affairs Departments.

At the outset, the Chairman welcomed all the members present and took up the agenda for discussion. He spoke about having 4 (four) categories of targeted beneficiaries - viz. people with education and awareness but with constraints of economic capacity, people with education but without awareness, people with awareness but without education, and people without education and awareness. He also suggested working on self-employment measures with low investment.

The other members also shared their invaluable views on the agenda items. The member-secretary briefed about the scope and mandate of the Sub-Group.

After detailed deliberation, the following decisions were arrived at:

1. A detailed schedule for study of the issues, meeting various stakeholders, field visits, brainstorming and preparation of report shall be made during the first physical meeting of the Sub-Group.
2. The Target Groups shall be identified and differentiated in accordance with educational qualification as well as latent vocational and technical skills.
3. Since there is no distinct Decennial Census or even Caste Census data identifying Assamese/ indigenous Muslims, the identification of indigenous Muslim population and data collection shall be done with the help of Deputy Commissioners of districts and through Circle Officers under them.
4. In order to enable imparting of training to the youth and other beneficiaries of the target groups, the Sub-Group shall study and document various opportunities and vistas available from existing Government and non-Government schemes. The focus shall be on financial viability, sustainability and mass coverage. In order to accomplish that objective, there shall be meetings with organizations imparting skills [e.g. ASDM, IIE

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Lalmati, IIT Guwahati, NEST (Start-Up Hub under Industries & Commerce Department, etc.) and NBFIs (e.g. NEDFI, NABARD etc.).

5. There shall also be meetings with other associated stakeholders including interaction with members of associations of Target Groups including community groups of indigenous Muslims.
6. While suggesting upskilling and green-field skilling during report submission, there shall be a focused approach on existing skills, their market viability and requisite value addition for meeting critical gaps (if any).
7. Modernization and ensuring economic rejuvenation of the cottage industries of indigenous Muslims like Brass Craft of Hajo, Eri-Muga sericulture and silk textiles, and Agar artificial inoculation, perfume extraction and trade, shall also be given due attention during the Study. Steps for creation of a niche market for these items shall also be studied and suggested.

The Sub-Group also decided to have the next meeting in the physical mode on 11th August 2021 (Wednesday) at 5:30 PM in the Office Chamber of the Member Secretary in Block D (3rd Floor) of Assam Secretariat (Civil), Janata Bhawan Complex, Dispur, Guwahati - 781006.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks from the chair.



(Sazzad Alam, ACS)
Member Secretary,
Sub-Group on Skill Development

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B. Meeting No. 2 on 11 AUG 2021 (Physical):

MINUTES OF SECOND MEETING OF SUB-GROUP/COMMITTEE ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS MUSLIMS UNDER WMD DEPARTMENT HELD IN THE OFFICE CHAMBER OF THE MEMBER SECRETARY IN ASSAM SECRETARIAT (CIVIL) ON 11/08/2021

The meeting held on 11th August 2021 (Wednesday)] from 5:30 PM onwards in the Office Chamber of the Member Secretary in Block D (3rd Floor) of Assam Secretariat (Civil), Janata Bhawan Complex, Dispur, Guwahati - 781006. It was presided over by the Chairman of the Sub-Group, Shri Mozibur Rahman; and attended by all the members of the Sub-Group as per the Attendance List at Annexure.

At the outset, the Chairman welcomed all the members present and took up the pre-scheduled the agenda for discussion. The minutes of the 1st meeting were confirmed by the Sub-Group.

I. FINALIZATION OF TENTATIVE DETAILED SCHEDULE: The Sub-Group finalized a tentative detailed schedule for sub-group meetings, study of the issues, meeting various stakeholders, field visits, brainstorming and preparation of report, as follows.

1. **Sub-Group Meetings - 5:30 PM onwards every 1st, 3rd and 5th Saturdays** through *either* physical, or DVC, or hybrid mode.
2. **Meetings with Institutions imparting or arranging Upskilling or Skill Training** - *viz.* ASDM, IIE (Lalmati), CIPET, IIT (Guwahati), IIHM (Borbori), Don Bosco Technical Institute, etc. - **Mid Sept. 2021** through face-to-face interaction only.
3. **Meetings with Community Group Functionaries** - Interaction with different non-political groups/ organisations of the target community - both in Guwahati and in certain representative District Headquarters [*viz.* North Lakhimpur, Jorhat, Tezpur, Nagaon, Mangaldai, Barpeta and Goalpara]- **Last Week of September 2021 & 1st Week of October 2021.**
In case of COVID relapse, certain District Headquarters may be covered by DVC meetings. Even otherwise, the meetings should meet all COVID 19 protocols.
4. **Field Visits** to Dhubri, Nagaon, Hajo, Naharani and Sibsagar - **September 2021** as per mutual convenience.
5. **Reporting -**
 - (a) Review of Report - 1st draft: **4th October 2021**
 - (b) Review of Report - 2nd draft: **16th October 2021**
 - (c) Review of Report - 3rd draft: **30th October 2021**
 - (d) Report Finalization and Production - **1st Week of November 2021**

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II. CLASSIFICATION OF TARGET GROUPS & IDENTIFICATION OF IMPARTABLE SKILLS:

The Sub-Group then classified the Target Groups within the Indigenous (Assamese) Muslim community for study and eventual recommendation of skilling and upskilling measures as follows:

Sl. No.	Target Groups		Skills tentatively Identified for being Imparted
	Gender	Educational Criteria	
1.	Boys	E. Illiterate and School Drop-out below Class X Pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> xi. Carpentry xii. Masonry xiii. Tailoring xiv. Barbering & Hair-Styling xv. Painter xvi. Fast Food Cook xvii. Floriculture xviii. Vermicompost, Poultry and other Agri-based Skills
2.		F. Class X Pass to Class XII Pass and College Drop-out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Plumbing ii. Electrician & Car Mechanic iii. AC, TV, Fridge, Mobile, etc. Repair Mechanic iv. Electronics Repairing v. Tools Making vi. Designer Tailoring vii. Woodcraft & Designer Carpentry viii. Wood Paneling, False Ceiling, Steel/ Aluminum/ Wood Fabricating ix. Chef, Hotel Management for Waitering & House Keeping x. Excavator and High-End Machine Driver xi. Security Guard xii. Agar Inoculator
3.	Boys	G. Graduate and Post-Graduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vii. Professional Skills viii. Tally and Accounting

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ix. Communication Skills – English Speaking and Writing, documentation, electronic communication. x. Technical skills – installation, commissioning, operations & maintenance of machines, equipment, electronic gadgets, etc. xi. Digital & Information Skills (DTP, internet coding, etc.) xii. Soft skills xiii. Fashion Designing
4.		H. Technical, Management and Professional Graduate and Post-Graduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> xi. Upskilling of Engineering Knowledge to meet Industry/ Market Needs xii. Electronics Skills (Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, AutoCAD, Computer Programming, App Making and Coding). xiii. Computer and Mobile Services Skills xiv. Service Engineering of Electronics Goods and Heavy Machineries xv. Welding & Electro-Mechanical Works xvi. High-Level Accounting (for MBA, BCom and MCom) xvii. Cyber Security Skills xviii. Tele-medicine & Paramedical Skills
5.	Girls	Illiterate and School Drop-out below Class X Pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vi. Tailoring vii. Handloom viii. Palliative & Geriatric Care <i>including</i> Baby Care, Elderly

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		Care, Home Nursing, On Call Help, etc. ix. Beautician x. Tiffin Service
6.	Class X Pass to Class XII Pass and College Drop-out	i. Nursing and Paramedical Skills ii. Air Hostess and Hotel Management iii. SHG Formation and Management iv. Small Finance and Marketing Skills v. Basic Computer Skills
7.	Graduate and Post-Graduate	<i>Same as Boys</i>
8.	Technical Graduate	<i>Same as Boys</i>

III. IDENTIFICATION OF INDIGENOUS MUSLIM POPULATION & DATA COLLECTION:

Although it was decided in the last meeting to effect data collection through Circle Officers under the overall supervision of the Deputy Commissioners of the districts concerned, it was re-decided to leave the identification process for execution by the WMD Department centrally.

IV. MEETINGS WITH SKILL IMPARTING INSTITUTIONS & NON-BANKING FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS:

It was reiterated by the Sub-Group to have meetings with institutions imparting skills [e.g. ASDM, IIE Lalmati, IIT Guwahati, NEST (Start-Up Hub under Industries & Commerce Department, CIPET, Don Bosco Technical University, IHM Borbori, etc.) as well as NBFIs (e.g. NEDFI, NABARD etc.). But for setting the agenda for the meetings, the Sub-Group decided to study the web portals of these institutions and have back-track information thereof; so that the meetings would be focused and result-oriented. Besides, the Sub Group also decided to approach the institutions for meeting through the WMD Department of the State Government.

V. FEEDBACK & SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY:

In order to solicit feedback and suggestions from members of the indigenous Muslim community, an email ID shall be created - viz. subgroupofskilldevelopment@gmail.com

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Members of the community and functionaries of all groups/ organizations of the community shall be requested to send their feedback or suggestions for skill development of the community by email to that aforementioned email ID. WMD Department shall be requested to provide wide publicity by publishing the aforementioned email ID, and similar email IDs of other Sub-Groups, in newspapers.

VI. BASIC FORMAT FOR FINAL REPORT: The Sub Group also decided that the basic format for its Final Report as follows:

- i. Executive Summary
- ii. Table of Contents
1. Introduction
2. Demography of Indigenous Assamese Muslims and Skilling Standards
3. Skill Classification Index based on Educational Criteria
4. Meetings with Stakeholder Groups
5. Meetings with Skill Imparting Institutions & NFBIs
6. Suggestions received from Members of the Public
7. Recommendations
- iii. Photographs
- iv. References.

The Sub-Group also decided to have the next meeting in the physical mode on 24th August 2021 (Tuesday) at 4:30 PM in the Conference Hall of GMDA, Christian Basti, Dispur, Guwahati – 781005.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks from the chair.



(Sazzad Alam, ACS)
Member Secretary,
Sub-Group on Skill Development

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C. Meeting No. 3 on 24 AUG 2021 (Hybrid Mode):

MINUTES OF THIRD MEETING OF SUB-GROUP/ COMMITTEE ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS MUSLIMS UNDER WELFARE OF MINORITIES AND DEVELOPMENT HELD ON 24/08/2021 FROM 4:30 AM ONWARDS AT THE CONFERENCE HALL OF GMDA OFFICE UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SUB-GROUP/ COMMITTEE

The meeting was presided over by the Chairman of the Sub-Group, Shri Mr Mujibur Rahman; and attended by all the members of the Sub-Group [viz. Dr. Nekib Hussain and Md Rashid Arif Hussain] including the Member Secretary, Shri Sazzad Alam, ACS, Joint Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Industries and Commerce, Act East Policy Affairs Departments - as per Attendance Sheet attached herewith. Md Rashid Arif Hussain joined online from Siliguri.

The Chairman welcomed all the members present and took up the agenda for discussion. At the outset, the minutes of the last meeting dated 11th August 2021 was confirmed with the following additions: (1) organizations imparting skills which would be visited and approached for meetings shall also include NEST (Start-Up Hub under Industries & Commerce Department, etc.) and TERI; and (2) district headquarters to be visited shall also include Dibrugarh and Dhubri.

Regarding follow-up on the decisions of the 1st and 2nd meetings, the following decisions were arrived at after detailed deliberation:

1. The discussion with organizations imparting skills [viz. ASDM, NEST (Ambari), IIT (Guwahati), IIHM (Borbori), TERI, NEDFI, IIE (Lalmati), Don Bosco Technical Institute, SIRD, DICC (Dibrugarh) and CIPET] and NBFIs [viz. NEDFI and NABARD] shall start from mid-September 2021. They shall be approached both directly and through WMD.

In order to have a focussed discussion, a point-wise questionnaire and a tentative plan of visit shall be prepared by mutual discussion among the members within 4th September 2021. The questionnaire and the tentative plan shall be based on materials available on the websites of these organizations, and on information obtained through informal discussion with these institutions.

2. There shall be meetings with (1) top functionaries of the 16 no.s of recognized Assamese Muslim community group, and with (2) general community leaders in the 1st week of October 2021 in Guwahati. The venue shall be either the Assam Administrative Staff College at Khanapara or Conference Hall of Commissioner, Industries & Commerce at Bamunimaidam.
3. After the Durga Puja holidays, there shall be field visits comprising meetings with community leaders in specific District Headquarters and visiting traditional craft sites.

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The District Headquarters selected were [in clockwise direction from extreme North-East (i.e. top-right)]: (1) Dibrugarh (for Dibrugarh, Sibsagar, Charaideo, Tinsukia and Dhemaji Districts); (ii) Jorhat (for Jorhat, Majuli and Golaghat Districts); (iii) Nagaon (for Nagaon, Morgaon, Hojai, Karbi Anglong, West Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao Districts); (iv) Goalpara [for Goalpara, Kamrup (South Bank Portion) South-Salmara Mankachar, Bongaigaon and Chirang Districts]; (v) Dhubri (for Dhubri and Kokrajhar Districts); (vi) Barpeta (for Barpeta, Bajali, Nalbari and Baska Districts); (vii) Mangaldai [for Darrang, Kamrup (North Bank Portion) and Udalguri Districts]; (viii) Tezpur [for Sonitpur and Biswanath (Sadar Sub-Div.) Districts]; and (ix) North Lakhimpur [for Lakhimpur and Biswanath (Gohpur Sub-Div.) Districts]. The local community leaders shall be invited through the Deputy Commissioners of their respective districts, which the local arrangement in the venues shall be requested from the Deputy Commissioners of the districts concerned.

The sites of traditional crafts to be visited shall include Hajo (Bell-Metal), Chandkuchi (Cane & Bamboo), Dhubri (Incense Sticks), Naharani (Agar), and other places to be selected after due research.

Visit itinerary shall be scheduled in 6 packages – viz. Lower Assam (South Bank), Lower Assam (North Bank), Middle Assam (South Bank), Middle Assam (North Bank), Upper Assam (South Bank) and Upper Assam (North Bank).

4. Socio-economic data on Assamese Muslims are not only not available in the Census Reports, but also the research reports prepared (if any) on them may be unbiased or skewed in nature. Therefore, the Sub-Group decided to request the Deputy Commissioners for data on total population, Assamese Muslim population, economic and education parameters thereof, APL and BPL data thereof, major trade, agricultural, unemployed data thereof. A format shall be prepared by mutual discussion within 10th September 2021 for gathering of such data.
5. The Sub-Group also decided to study literature and research reports on Assamese Muslims including socio economic survey by OKD Institute, Assam Human Development Report, etc. for carrying forward its study.
6. Regarding suggestions/ feedback received by email from various stakeholders shall be arranged in MS-Excel Spreadsheet having format such as: (1) Date, (2) Name, address, and other details of sender (including e-mail ID and mobile number), (3) brief content of information, and (4) remarks.
7. The next meeting has been tentatively scheduled on 4th Sept. 2021 by DVC mode.

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The meeting ended with a vote of thanks from the chair.



(Sazzad Alam, ACS)
Member Secretary,
Sub-Group on Skill Development

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Annexure 3 (Newspaper Advertisement)

Newspaper Advertisement published on 15th September 2021 in all leading dailies of Assam informing about the email ID of the Sub-Group, and soliciting suggestions on skill development of indigenous Assamese Muslim community.

গোহাৰি

ছন্দ-গ্ৰুপ অন স্কিল ডেভেলপমেণ্ট (Sub-Group on Skill Development) হৈছে অসমৰ মাননীয় মুখ্যমন্ত্ৰী ড° হিনজু বিশ্ব শৰ্মাদেৱৰ নিৰ্দেশমৰ্মে খিলঞ্জীয়া অসমীয়া মুছলমান সম্প্ৰদায়ৰ উন্নয়নৰ বাবে [অধিসূচনা নং W/MD 62/2021/PL/7 তাং 31/07/2021-ৰ দ্বাৰা] গঠন কৰা ৭ (সাত)-টা উপ-গোটৰ ভিতৰত এটা। এই বিষয়ে উপ-গোটটোৰ কাৰ্যসূচী [অৰ্থাৎ লক্ষ্যত বখা সম্প্ৰদায়টোৰ দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন] - ৰ সম্পৰ্কে সৰ্বসাধাৰণ বহিঃস্বৰ মতামত আৰু পৰামৰ্শ লোৱাৰ প্ৰয়োজন নোপ কৰা হৈছে।

সেয়ে উক্ত বিষয়ৰ ওপৰত বহিঃস্বৰ মতামত / পৰামৰ্শ এটা নিৰ্দিষ্ট বৈদ্যুতিক ডাক (e-mail) ঠিকনা হ'ল subgroupofskilldevelopment@gmail.com-ত দিবলৈ আহ্বান জনোৱা হ'ল।

মজিবুল বহমান
Janasanyog/D/5852/21 অধ্যক্ষ, দক্ষতা বিকাশ উপ-গোট

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Annexure 4 (Contents of Contextual Speech)

"*Axomiya Musalman: Eithas aru Abodar*" – Speech by Late (Prof.) Mohammad Taher, Retd. Professor of Geography, Gauhati University, on Indigenous Assamese Muslims at Jorhat Islamic Centre on 8th February 2009.

অসমীয়া মুছলমানঃ
ইতিহাস আৰু অৱদান

ড° মুছম্মদ তাহেৰ
প্ৰাক্তন অধ্যাপক, ভূগোল বিভাগ
জালুকবাৰী, গুৱাহাটী - ৭৮১০১৪

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অসম তথা উত্তৰ-পূব ভাৰত, যুগ যুগ ধৰি প্ৰসিদ্ধ হৈ থকা মানৱ প্ৰজন্ম সৌভাগ্য এক সংগমস্থল। মধ্য এছিয়াৰ ভিতৰত আন মুসলিম অঞ্চলৰ পৰা, দক্ষিণ-পূব এছিয়াৰ ম্যানমাৰ, থাইলেণ্ড, কাম্বোডিয়া আদিৰ পৰা, পশ্চিমৰ গংগা উপত্যকাৰপৰা আৰু দক্ষিণ-পশ্চিমৰ অংগ-বংগৰ পৰা যুগ যুগ ধৰি এই অঞ্চলটোলৈ প্ৰব্ৰজন চলি আহিছিল আৰু এতিয়াও চলি আছে। এনে প্ৰব্ৰাহ্মান প্ৰব্ৰজনৰ সৌভাগ্য কেতিয়াবা বৰণ কৰিবলৈ, কেতিয়াবা ধৰ্মপ্ৰচাৰ কৰিবলৈ, কেতিয়াবা বেহা-বেপাৰ কৰিবলৈ আৰু কেতিয়াবা স্থানীয় বজা-জমিদাৰৰ দ্বাৰা আমন্ত্ৰিত হৈ পশ্চিমৰ গংগা উপত্যকা আৰু বংগদেশৰ পৰা অলপ-অলপকৈ হ'লেও কিছু মুছলমান লোক অসমলৈ যোৱা ৮০০ বছৰৰ আগৰে পৰা আহিবলৈ লৈছিল।

ইতিহাস :

ঐতিহাসিক প্ৰমাণেৰে অসমলৈ মুছলমানৰ আগমন অনুধাৱন কৰিবলৈ হ'লে আমি দেখা পোওঁ যে মহম্মদ ঘোৰীৰ সেনাপতি ইফটিকাৰদিন মহম্মদ বিন বখটিয়াৰে ১২০৫-০৬ খৃষ্টাব্দত এদল সৈন্য লৈ কামৰূপৰ মাজেৰে ভিতৰলৈ বুলি আগবাঢ়ি গৈছিল। কিন্তু হিমালয়ৰ পাদদেশৰ পৰা তেওঁ সদলবলে ঘূৰি আহিছিল আৰু তৎকালীন কামৰূপৰ নৃপতি পৃথুৰ হাতত যুদ্ধত পৰাজিত হৈ কিছু সৈন্য লৈ পলাই গৈছিল। কিন্তু তেওঁৰ লগত অহা ভালেমান মুছলমান সৈন্য বন্দী হৈ ইয়াতেই থাকি গৈছিল। এওঁলোকেই সম্ভৱতঃ অসমত বসবাস কৰিবলৈ লোৱা প্ৰথম মুছলমান। সময়ত এওঁলোকে স্থানীয়ভাৱে বিয়া-বাক কৰাই ইয়াতেই বসতি কৰিবলৈ লৈ অসমীয়া সমাজৰ এটা অংগ হৈ পৰিল।

বখটিয়াৰ খিলিজিৰ পাছত গৌড়ত থকা বংগৰ নবাব গিয়াচুদ্দিনে ১২২৮ চনত আৰু তুঘল খাঁই ১২৫৭ চনত কামৰূপ আক্ৰমণ কৰে আৰু তৎকালীন বজাৰ বাজধানী উত্তৰ গুৱাহাটী অধিকাৰ কৰে। প্ৰবাদ আছে যে বাজধানীত তেওঁ এটা মছজিদ সজাই দি তাত নিয়মীয়াকৈ নামাজ পঢ়িবলৈ লয়। এইটোৱেই অসমত প্ৰথম মছজিদ। ইয়াৰ পাছত ১৩২১-২২ চন মানত গিয়াচুদ্দিন নামৰ এজন সেনাপতিয়ে আৰু ১৩৩৭ চনত মহম্মদ ছাহ নামৰ আন এজন সেনাপতিয়ে কামৰূপ আক্ৰমণ কৰি পৰাজিত হৈছিল বুলি জনা যায়। ১৪৯৮ চনত কামৰূপ কমতাপুৰত নীলাম্বৰ ৰজা হৈ থাকোঁতে বংগৰ নবাব ছেছন ছাহে অঞ্চলটো অধিকাৰ কৰি লয় আৰু তেওঁৰ পুতেক দেনিয়েল ছাহৰু ছাহেৰে শাসনকৰ্তা পাতে। এই সময়ৰপৰা কামৰূপত মুছলমান বসতি পাতলীয়াকৈ হ'লেও

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দুৰ্ভাগ্যেৰে নাটকবলৈ গ'ল। তেওঁলোকে ছাৰে মজলিসত এটা মজলিসো নিৰ্মাণ কৰায়।

অসমৰ মুসলী আৰু মোগলসকলৰ শাসনৰ লগত জড়িত ষ্টোৰী (Chronicle) আৰু অসম আক্ৰমণকাৰীসকলৰ কাৰ্যকৰণৰ লগত জড়িত ষ্টোৰীসকলৰ পৰা যাক যেনে ১৬৮২ চনৰ পৰা ১৬৮২ চনলৈ এই চাবিশ পয়সাত্ৰন বছৰ জোনা দীৰ্ঘকালীয়া সময়চোবাত দিখাব পাঠান, তুৰ্কী আৰু মোগল সাম্ৰাজ্য আৰু গৌড়ৰ মৰাবসকলে মুঠতে ১৭ খণ্ড অসম আক্ৰমণ কৰিছিল।

মেনেগোৰ আক্ৰমণত আগ্ৰাণী সৈন্য বাহিনীবোৰত অধিকাংশ মুছলমান সৈন্য পক্ষৰ উপৰিও যুগ্মত কামত অহা হাতত কানীকৰ, মিলী, মজলী, বৰটোপ মেৰামত কৰা বোক, গাৰ-বাকদ প্ৰভৃতি কৰা কোক, টোকা লিখাৰ (Scribe), গায়ক, বাদক, পৰোহিত, ফকিৰ, দুবাবৰ বহুৰা (begar), কামাৰ, টিকিৎসক (হেৰিক), শও (হাতী আৰু ঘোৰা) চিকিৎসক, জড়িব কান কৰা কোক আদিত আছিল। (উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে পোৰামকান আৰু দীয়াছদ্দিন, বাহাদুৰান ই-গায়নীয়াত মীজা নাখন, মীৰজমলাৰ লগত অহা ফাতিহা-ই-ইব্ৰীয়াৰ প্ৰণেতা ছাহাবুদ্দিন তাগিছ আৰু কানী মজা, মনৰোম আৰু মনজুৰ গাঁৱ লগত অহা 'পাটীছাহ বৰলী'ৰ মূল লোক মনজুদ আক্ৰিম নামৰ জেৰাশু কানী পানী।) এনে মনৰূপে অহা সৈন্য আৰু সহযোগীসকলৰ কিছু সংখ্যকে যুদ্ধৰ শেষত বন্দী অৱস্থাতেই হওক বা তেওঁলোকৰ পৰিচৰিত হওক অসমত চিহ্নস্বৰূপে নাম কৰিবলৈ লৈছিল। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে আহোম বজা মগদেউ চুহুংমুঙৰ দিনত ১৫২৫ খৃষ্টাব্দত মিতমাণিক বৰউজিপে কৰা আক্ৰমণত বহুতো হিথে আৰু সৈন্য অসমীয়া সেনাৰ হাৰ্ডত পৰি। ষ্টিক ভেটনকৈ জাৰ ছাহাবৰ পাছত ১৫৩২ চনত পাঠান সৈন্যপতি তুবকৈ কৰা আক্ৰমণত ভেঙ দিকবাইমুখৰ লগত পাটল আৰু মুছলমান সৈন্য, বাদক, হাতী আৰু ঘোৰা আহোম সৈন্যৰ হস্তগত হ'ল। এইদৰে হস্তগত হোৱা বৰটোপ জই আহোম বজায়ো বৰটোপ নিৰ্মাণ কৰিবলৈ গ'ল। তদুপৰি তুবকৈ এই বৰৰ সময়ত বন্দী হোৱা পাঠান সৈন্য বহুতো অসমত থাকি যাব। তেওঁলোকে পাছলৈ গিতলৰ সাজ-বাচন প্ৰস্তুত কৰিবলৈ লৈছিল আৰু 'মৰীয়া' জনগোষ্ঠী হিচাপে চিহ্নিত হ'ল। আকৌ দেখা যায় যে ১৫৮১ খৃষ্টাব্দত নবনাবায়ণে বধুদেৱক কোচহাজৌ দিবৰ সময়ত, বাজৰ লগতে যি সৈন্য-সামন্ত দিয়া হৈছিল সেই সৈন্য বাহিনীত মুছলমান বৰুৱা আৰু ওণা-পানি বিখয়া আছিল। দিল্লীৰ বজা জাহাংগীৰৰ দিনত মোগলে ১৬১৬ চনত কোচ ৰাজ্য দখল কৰিছিল। ইয়াৰ পাছত ১৬৩৮ চনৰ পৰা একলে মোগল আৰু আনফালে কোচ আৰু আহোমৰ সংগলিত শক্তিব মাজত নিমিষা গড়, হাজৌ, আগীয়াচুড়ি, শোৱালকুছি, পাণ্ডু আদি ঠাইত বহু বছৰ ধৰি যুগ্ম-যুদ্ধ হৈ আছিল। সেই সময়তে ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰৰ উত্তৰে হাজৌৰপৰা ভূমীচকীৰ ভিতৰত আৰু দক্ষিণে পলাশবাৰী, ভোলাগাঁও আদি ঠাইবোৰত বহুতো মুছলমান বসতি গঢ়ি উঠিছিল। কোচ-হাজৌ অৰ্থাৎ অবিভক্ত কামৰূপ আৰু অবিভক্ত গোৱালপাৰা জিলাত ১৫১৩ ৰ পৰা ১৬৮২ লৈ প্ৰায় ৭০ বছৰ কাল মোগলে ছেগাচোবোকাকৈ শাসন কৰিছিল। এই কালছোৱাতে নামনি অসমত মুছলমানৰ বসতি আৰু বাঢ়িবলৈ লয়। ১৬৩৮ চনত মোগল বাদছাহ জাহাংজাহান আৰু আহোম বজা চুচেংফা বা বুদ্ধিগনাবায়ণৰ ৰাজত্ব কালত গুৱাহাটীৰ অন্তৰ্গত

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অসমৰ আজি (ৰাজগড়) আৰু উত্তৰে বৰনদী দুয়ো বাজাৰ সীমা নিৰ্ণয় কৰা হয়। তেতিয়াৰ গুৱাহাটী আৰু তাৰ পশ্চিম অঞ্চলত পুনৰ কিছু মুছলমানৰ বসতি আৰম্ভ হোৱাৰ সম্ভাৱনা নাই কৰিব নোৱাৰি। সপ্তদশ শতিকাৰ আগভাগতে, সম্ভৱ ত্ৰিছব দশকত শ্বাহ মিলান বা আজান পীৰ লগত আৰু তিনিজন (ফোনোৰ মতে চাৰিজন) পীৰৰ সৈতে অসমলৈ আহে। ইয়াত তেওঁলোকে থিতাপি কৈ বসবাস কৰি জিকিৰ, জাৰী, নামাজ, তিলাৱত আদিৰ মাজেৰে ইছলাম ধৰ্ম প্ৰচাৰ কৰিবলৈ লয়। ইয়াৰ ফলত কিছুমান অমুছলমান ইছলামলৈ দীক্ষিত হোৱাৰ উপৰিও অসমত আগৰে পৰা থকা মুছলমানসকলে, তেওঁলোকে পাহৰি যোৱা ধৰ্ম-কৰ্মৰ নীতি-নিয়মবোৰ পুনৰ শুদ্ধভাৱে চৰ্চা কৰিবলৈ সুযোগ পালে। ১৬৬২-৬৩ চনত মীৰজুমলাৰ আক্ৰমণৰ সময়ত শিৱসাগৰকে ধৰি অসমৰ বিভিন্ন ঠাইত মুছলমান বসতি থকাৰ কথা ছাহাবুদ্দিন তালিছৰ ফাতেহা-ই-ইব্ৰিয়াত পোৱা যায়। তেওঁ অসমত আগৰেপৰা থকা মুছলমানসকলক “নামতহে মুছলমান ধৰ্ম-কৰ্মত নহয়, তেওঁলোকৰ অন্তৰ মুছলমানতকৈ থলুৱা অসমীয়াসকলৰ ফালে অধিক দোঁ খাই গৈছিল” বুলি লিখিছে। এই মীৰজুমলাৰ লগত সৈন্য বাহিনীক ধৰ্মীয় চৰ্চাত ব্ৰতী কৰি ৰাখিবলৈ আৰু সম্ভৱ অসমত ইছলাম প্ৰচাৰ কৰিবলৈ লগত পাঁচজন পীৰ আহিছিল বুলি জনা যায়। তেওঁলোকৰ নাম হ'ল শ্বাহ আকবৰ, শ্বাহ বগম্বাৰ, শ্বাহ ছৰণ, শ্বাহ ছুফী আৰু ছাহ কামাল। আকৌ ১৬৬৮ চনত বামসিংহয়ো অসম আক্ৰমণ কৰিবলৈ আহোঁতে শিখ ধৰ্মৰ নৱম গুৰু টেগবাহাদুৰক আৰু পাঁচজন মুছলমান পীৰ আনিছিল। অসমতে এওঁলোকৰ মৃত্যু হৈছিল আৰু ধুবুৰীত একে স্থানতে এওঁলোকক সমাধিস্থ কৰা হৈছিল। এই সমাধিস্থল এতিয়াও আছে। ইয়াক পাঁচ পীৰৰ দৰগাহ বোলে। এইদৰে অনুমান কৰা যায় যে সপ্তদশ শতিকাৰ আগভাগতে অসমত তেতিয়ালৈকে চিৰস্থায়ীভাৱে বসবাস কৰিবলৈ লোৱা মুছলমানসকলে অসমীয়া সমাজ সংস্কৃতিৰ লগত বহুখিনি মিলি গৈছিল। সময় পাৰ হোৱাৰ লগে লগে মুছলমানসকল আৰু অমুছলমান থলুৱা অসমীয়া সমাজৰ মাজত সংস্পৰ্শ বাঢ়ি আহিবলৈ ধৰে। জনা যায় যে ষোড়শ শতিকাত ইছলাম ধৰ্ম প্ৰচাৰক গিয়াছুদ্দিন আউলিয়া হাজোতলৈ ধৰ্ম প্ৰচাৰ কৰিবলৈ আহিছিল। তেওঁ মক্কা শ্বৰীফৰপৰা লগত অনা মাটি এপোৱা দি গড়ুবাচল পাহাৰৰ সৰ্বোচ্চ স্থানত এটি মছজিদ স্থাপন কৰিছিল, যাক এতিয়াও পোৱা মক্কা বোলা হয়। ইয়াৰ লগতে হাজোত এখনি মুছলমান উপনিবেশ তেওঁ স্থাপন কৰিছিল। পৰবৰ্তী সপ্তদশ শতিকাত হাজো অঞ্চলটো মোগলৰ অধীনলৈ যোৱাত হাজো নগৰখনক ছুজাবাদ নাম দি তাত এজন মোগল শাসনকৰ্তা নিয়োজিত কৰা হৈছিল। আবুল গাজী ছুজাউদ্দিন মাহমুদ চাহৰ অধীনত মীৰ লুটফুল্লা-ই-চিৰাজে ১৬৫৭ চনত পোৱা মক্কাৰ মছজিদটো পুনৰ নিৰ্মাণ কৰিবলৈ আৰম্ভ কৰে। ইতিমধ্যে তেওঁৰ মৃত্যু হোৱাত তেওঁৰ পুতেক নিয়ামতুল্লাহে এই নিৰ্মাণ কাৰ্য সম্পূৰ্ণ কৰে। কামৰূপ অঞ্চলত কোঁচ শাসন আৰু মোগলৰ শাসনৰ কালতেই বহুখিনি মুছলমানৰ বসবাস আৰম্ভ হোৱাৰ কথা আমি ইতিমধ্যে পাই আহিছোঁ। বৰপেটাৰ দুৰ্গাপুৰ দৰগাহ, ভেল্লাৰ হৈয়দ ছাহনুৰ দেৱান ফকীৰৰ দৰগাহ, কিছুদিনৰ বাবে মোগলৰ ছাউনি থকা ধমধমাৰ দৰগাহ, গুৱাহাটীৰ কামৰ গাড়ীগাঁৱৰ হজৰত জালালুদ্দিনৰ তাৱিজীৰ

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দৰগাহ আদিবোবৰ অৱস্থিতিয়ে এই অঞ্চলত যোড়শ আৰু সপ্তদশ শতিকাত মথৌল সংখ্যক মুছলমানৰ বসতি গঢ়ি উঠাৰ কথা কৈ সূচায়। তদুপৰি ফকৰুলপুৰ অঞ্চলৰ মদানভাৰা মৌজাৰ টেংগাৰী বা পিয়ালীখাটা মীৰতলা, ঢাকপাৰা আৰু কৰবা অঞ্চলৰ বাথান গাঁৱৰ পুৰণি মছজিদকেইটাই পীৰপাল মাটি বহুদিনৰ পৰাই ভোগ কৰি থকাৰ কথা জনা যায়।* এইখিনিতে মন কৰিবলগীয়া যে আহোম ৰজাসকলে মুছলমানৰ মছজিদ, দৰগাহ আদিৰ ভৰণ-পোষণৰ বাবে, দেৱালয় মাৰ দৰক দিয়া দেৱোত্তৰ মাটিৰ দৰে, পীৰপাল মাটি দিছিল। ১৭৮০ চনত স্বৰ্গদেৱৰ লক্ষ্মীসিংহে ফাইপটীয়া খেলৰ আনোৱাৰ হাজী-ফকীৰক মাটি-বৃত্তি আৰু খাতোৱাল মানুহ দি চাৰিখন মকাম বা দৰগাহ ভোগ কৰাৰ স্বত্ব দিয়ে। মকাম চাৰিখন হ'ল বাউসী পৰগণাৰ শ্বাহ মাদাৰ বৰমোকাম, বৰনগৰ পৰগণাৰ শ্বাহ ফকীৰৰ মোকাম, ক্ষেত্ৰী পৰগণাৰ পাঁচ পীৰৰ মোকাম আৰু হাজোৰ বৰমোকামৰ এক চতুৰ্থাংশ।†

১৭৯৪ চনত কদ্রসিংহৰ মৃত্যুৰ পাছত শিৱসিংহ, তেওঁৰ পাছত তেওঁৰ পুতেক প্ৰমত্ত সিংহ আৰু তেওঁৰো পুতেক ৰাজেশ্বৰ সিংহৰ দিনলৈকে স্বৰ্গদেউসকলৰ পৃষ্ঠপোষকতাত কিছুমান মুছলমান পৰিয়াল, বিশেষকৈ শিলাকটীয়া, ৰাজমিন্দি আদি ব্যৱসায়ৰ মুছলমান লোক অসমলৈ আহি থকাৰ কথা জনা যায়। লক্ষ্মীসিংহৰ দিনৰ পৰা অৰ্থাৎ ১৭৬৯ চনৰ পৰা দেশত মোৱামৰীয়া বিদ্রোহ আৰু অন্যান্য অস্থিৰ অৱস্থা আৰম্ভ হোৱাত মুছলমানৰ প্ৰৱৰ্ত্তন কমি আহিছিল। কিন্তু ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ আগভাগত বৃটিছে অসম হস্তগত কৰাৰ লগে লগে অসমত চাহ বাগিছা স্থাপনকে ধৰি যিবোৰ অৰ্থনৈতিক উন্নয়ন আৰু ব্যৱসায়-বাণিজ্যৰ কাম আৰম্ভ হৈছিল সেইবোৰৰ লগত জড়িত হৈ কিছু মুছলমান উত্তৰ ভাৰত আৰু বংগদেশৰ পৰা আহি ইয়াৰ নগৰ আৰু চাহ-বাগিছাসমূহৰ আশে-পাশে বসবাস কৰিবলৈ লৈছিল। এওঁলোকৰ ভিতৰত কটি-বিসুট প্ৰস্তুতকাৰক অৰ্থাৎ বে'কাৰ (Baker), জোতাৰ দোকানী, মনোহৰী সামগ্ৰীৰ দোকানী আৰু কিছুসংখ্যক জোলা সম্প্ৰদায়ৰ লোক আছিল। এওঁলোক সংখ্যাত কম হোৱাৰ বাবে স্থানীয় অসমীয়া মুছলমানৰ লগত বিয়া-বাৰু কৰাই অসমীয়া হৈ গ'ল। জোলাসকল ঘাইকৈ চাহ বাগিছাৰ কামত বৰ্ত্তমানৰ বাৰখণ্ডৰ হাজাৰিবাগ জিলাৰ পৰা বনুৱা ৰূপে আহিছিল। এওঁলোকৰ অধিকাংশই সময়ত চাহ বাগিছাৰ পৰা ওলাই বাগিছাৰ আশে-পাশে বসতি কৰিবলৈ লৈ অসমীয়া মুছলমানৰ লগত মিলি গ'ল। এওঁলোক অবিভক্ত শিৱসাগৰ জিলাৰ বাদুলিপাৰ, দেবগাঁও, নেঘেৰিটিং, ৰঙামাটি, দৰিয়া, সৰুপথাৰ, বৰকাঠনি, দক্ষিণ হেঙোৰা, বৰহোলা আৰু তিতাবৰ আৰু তিনিচুকীয়া, ঢেকীয়াজুলি আদি ঠাইত বসবাস কৰি থকা দেখা যায়।

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এই আলোচনাব পৰা আমি জনসংখ্যা, মছজিদ, মোকাম আৰু বজাৰবীয়া স্বীকৃতি আৰু পৃষ্ঠপোষকতাৰে এটি বলিষ্ঠ অসমীয়া মুছলমান সম্প্ৰদায় গঢ়ি উঠা দেখিবলৈ পালোঁ। অসমত ইছলাম ধৰ্মীসকলে কোনো প্ৰকাৰৰ বাধা নোপোৱাৰ দুটা সাংস্কৃতিক-সামাজিক কাৰণ চিনাক্ত কৰিব পাৰি। ইয়াৰ প্ৰথমটো হৈছে— বাহিবৰ মুছলমানসকলৰ ইয়াত বসবাস কৰাত কোঁচ আৰু আহোম দুয়োটা ৰাজবংশৰে পোষকতা আৰু দ্বিতীয়টো হৈছে— আহোম আৰু কোঁচ ৰাজ্যত মধ্যযুগত গঢ়ি উঠা নৱবৈষ্ণৱ আন্দোলন। ইছলামীয় ছুফিবাদৰ লগত নববৈষ্ণৱবাদৰ যি আধ্যাত্মিক সাদৃশ্য আছে সি হিন্দুসকলৰ মাজত ছুফিবাদৰ জনপ্ৰিয়তা গঢ়ি তোলাত তথা মুছলমানসকলক এই অঞ্চলত গ্ৰহণযোগ্য কৰি তোলাত সহায় কৰিছিল। এইখিনিতে নামঘোষা আৰু জিকিবৰ সাদৃশ্যৰ কথা উল্লেখ কৰিব পাৰি।

আমি অসমত মুছলমান বসতি বিস্তাৰৰ এটা ঐতিহাসিক-ভৌগোলিক সমীক্ষা কৰিলে তিনিটা সুকীয়া বিস্তাৰ-পদ্ধতিবিশিষ্ট অঞ্চল দেখিবলৈ পাওঁ। প্ৰথমটো খণ্ড হৈছে পশ্চিম অসমৰ অবিভক্ত গোৱালপাৰা আৰু অবিভক্ত কামৰূপ জিলা। যিহেতু দিল্লীৰ বাদছাহৰ সাম্ৰাজ্যৰ অধীনস্থ বংগদেশ তথা গৌড় পশ্চিম অসমৰ কাষতে আছিল, সেয়েহে ইয়াত সাধাৰণতেই এফালে কমতাপুৰ বা কোঁচ ৰাজ্য আৰু আনহাতে দিল্লীৰ বাদছাহৰ ৰাজ্য বা গৌড় প্ৰদেশৰ মাজত শত্ৰুতাৰ সময়ত যুদ্ধ-বিগ্ৰহ আৰু মিত্ৰতাৰ সময়ত মানুহৰ অহা-যোৱা আৰু বেপাৰ-বাণিজ্য চলি আছিল। এনে ঐতিহাসিক সংস্পৰ্শ-জনিত কাৰণত এই খণ্ডটোত মুছলমান বসতি লাহে লাহে বাঢ়ি আহিছিল। তথাপি কোঁচ ৰাজ্যৰ পৃষ্ঠপোষকতাত বিভিন্ন ব্যৱসায়িক দিশ আৰু শিল্প-কলাত পাৰ্গত মুছলমান লোক পশ্চিমৰ পৰা বা গৌড়ৰ পৰা ইয়ালৈ আহিছিল। এই দুবিধ বাহিবৰ পৰা অহা মুছলমানৰ বাহিৰেও স্থানীয় ভাৱে কিছু অমুছলমান অৰ্থাৎ হিন্দু বা জনজাতীয় লোকো মুছলমান হৈছিল। এনে স্থানীয় ধৰ্মান্তৰিত লোকৰ কিছু সংখ্যক মুছলমান শাসকৰ পৃষ্ঠপোষকতাত আৰু কিছুমান পীৰ, ফকিৰ আৰু ধৰ্মপ্ৰচাৰকৰ প্ৰভাৱত মুছলমান হৈছিল। অৱশ্যে কিছু স্থানীয় লোক ইছলাম ধৰ্মত থকা জাতিভেদহীনতা আৰু সামাজিক সাম্যৰ দ্বাৰা আকৰ্ষিত হৈও ধৰ্মান্তৰিত হৈছিল। এই সংক্ৰান্তত বখটিয়াৰ খিলিজিক কামৰূপ আক্ৰমণৰ সময়ত সহায় আগবঢ়োৱা আলি মেচৰ নাম উল্লেখ কৰিব পাৰি, যি এজন থলুৱা লোক আছিল আৰু মুছলমান হৈ মুছলমানৰ হকে অস্ত্ৰ ধাৰণ কৰিছিল। অবিভক্ত গোৱালপাৰাৰ দৰে অবিভক্ত কামৰূপ জিলাতো হাজো মুছলমানৰ প্ৰায় ৭০ বছৰ কাল অধীনত থকাৰ বাবে একে তিনিটা প্ৰক্ৰিয়াতে মুছলমানৰ জনসংখ্যা বাঢ়িবলৈ লৈছিল আৰু বসতি বিস্তাৰ হৈছিল।

দ্বিতীয়তে, দৰং জিলাত মুছলমান বসতি প্ৰসাৰৰ প্ৰক্ৰিয়া অলপ সুকীয়া। দৰং আছিল আহোম আৰু কোঁচ ৰাজ্যদ্বয়ৰ মধ্যৱৰ্তী অঞ্চল। দৰং জিলাৰ মুছলমানসকলৰ মাজত চলি অহা পৰম্পৰা মতে ত্ৰয়োদশ শতিকাৰ মাজভাগ বা শেষভাগত গৌড়ৰপৰা এদল তুৰ্কী বংশোদ্ভূত মুছলমান নতুন বাসভূমিৰ সন্ধানত আহি দৰং জিলাৰ মুছলিম যোপাত বসবাস কৰিবলৈ লৈছিলহি। তাৰপাছত কোঁচ হাজো মুছলমানৰ হাতত থকা কালত নিশ্চয় কিছু মুছলমান পাতিদৰং পাব হৈ দৰংতো বসবাস কৰিবলৈ লৈছিল। তাৰো পাছত ১৬১৪ খৃষ্টাব্দত দৰঙত যেতিয়া আহোম বজাই

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তলতীয়াকৈ কোঁচ বজাক স্থাপন কৰে, তেতিয়াৰ পৰা কোঁচ বজা ধৰ্মনাৰায়ণ বা বলিভিনাৰায়ণ, সুন্দৰনাৰায়ণ, চন্দ্ৰনাৰায়ণ, সূৰ্য নাৰায়ণ আদি বজাসকলে ব্যৱসায় আৰু শিক্ষিত জড়িত পাৰ্গত মুছলমান প্ৰজা আনি নিজৰ ৰাজ্যত বহুৱাই লৈছিলহি। এওঁলোকৰ মাজত ঢুলীয়া, ফালীয়া, দেউৰী আদি লোক আছিল। এই মুছলমানসকলৰ মাজত সময়ত ওজা আৰু পালিও গঢ়ি উঠিছিল। এওঁলোকে কোঁচ ৰাজহাউলিৰ বাহিৰে হিন্দুসকলৰ সমাজতো পৰম্পৰাগতভাৱে গীত-বাদ্য পৰিবেশন কৰি আহিছিল। ইয়াৰ পৰা বুজা যায় যে দৰঙত মুছলমান বসতি পুৰণি আৰু তেওঁলোকৰ মাজত ধৰ্মান্তৰিত লোকতকৈ গংগা উপত্যকা, গৌড়, অবিভক্ত গোৱালপাৰা আৰু অবিভক্ত কামৰূপৰ পৰা অহা মুছলমানেই অধিক।

তৃতীয়তে উজনি অসমৰ মুছলমানসকলৰ প্ৰসাৰ ঘাইকৈ দুটা প্ৰক্ৰিয়াৰ পৰা হৈছিল। ইয়াৰ প্ৰথমটো হৈছে যুদ্ধবন্দী হৈ বাধ্যতামূলকভাৱে বা স্বইচ্ছাই থাকি গৈ ইয়াতে বিয়া-বাৰু কৰাই থিতাপী লোৱা। এনে মুছলমানৰ সংখ্যা ১৫২৫ চনত বৰউজীৰে কৰা মুছলমানৰ ৫ম অসম আক্ৰমণৰ পৰা বাঢ়িবলৈ ধৰিছিল, কাৰণ বৰউজীৰ যুদ্ধত ঘাটি একুৰি হিলৈ আৰু কিছু সৈন্য এৰি পলাই গৈছিল। তাৰপাছত ১৫৩২ খৃষ্টাব্দতো তুৰ্বক দিকৰাই মুখত হাবিছিল আৰু তেওঁৰ লগত অহা বহুতো সৈন্য বন্দী হৈ থাকি গৈছিল। তুৰ্বকৰ এই পৰাজয়ৰ ফলস্বৰূপে তেওঁলোকে এৰি থৈ যোৱা বৰটোপ আহোমৰ হাতত পৰে আৰু তেতিয়াৰপৰা আহোমসকলেও যুদ্ধত বৰটোপ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিবলৈ লয়। এই যুদ্ধবোৰত থাকি যোৱা কিছু মুছলমান সৈন্যক বৰটোপ চলাবলৈ, তাৰ খাব-বাৰুদ প্ৰস্তুত কৰিবলৈ আৰু প্ৰয়োজন অনুযায়ী বৰটোপ মেৰামতি কৰিবলৈ আৰু প্ৰস্তুত কৰিবলৈ নিয়োগ কৰা হৈছিল আৰু তেওঁলোকক আহোম ৰজাই মাটি-ভেঁটি, বাব-বিষয় দি স্থাপন কৰিছিল। সেই যুদ্ধতে বন্দী হোৱা এহাজাৰ মান পাঠান সৈন্য থাকি গৈ ইয়াতে বিয়া-বাৰু কৰাই বসতি কৰিবলৈ লয় আৰু পিতলৰ সাজ-বাচন প্ৰস্তুত কৰি জীৱন-নিৰ্বাহ কৰিবলৈ ধৰে। তেওঁলোক 'মৰীয়া' নামে পৰিচিত। উজনি অসমত এইদৰে বন্দী হৈ থাকি যোৱা মুছলমানৰ বাহিৰেও আহোম ৰজাৰ পৃষ্ঠপোষকতাতো বিভিন্ন ব্যৱসায়, হস্তশিল্প আৰু বাঢ়ৈৰ কামত পাৰ্গত মুছলমান পৰিয়াল অসমলৈ আহিছিল। গদাধৰ সিংহই ১৬৮২ চনত ইটামুনি বণত মোগলক পৰাস্ত কৰি বাহিৰৰ মুছলমানক অসমলৈ অহাটো বন্ধ কৰিছিল। কিন্তু তেওঁৰ পুত্ৰ ৰুদ্ৰসিংহই নিজ দেশৰ কাৰিকৰী উন্নয়নৰ বাবে দিল্লীৰ বাদছাহৰ অনুমতি সাপেক্ষে ফাৰ্ছীপটীয়া, আখৰকটীয়া, শিলাকটীয়া, গুণাকটীয়া, নেগেৰীয়া, খনিকৰ, দৰ্জী আৰু জোলা বা তাঁতী, এই আঠটা মুছলমান পৰিয়াল নিজৰ ৰাজ্যলৈ আনিছিল। ৰুদ্ৰসিংহই গোৱালপাৰাৰ পৰা এটা নবাবৰ পৰিয়াল আনি ৰজাঘৰীয়া বাব দি প্ৰথমে অভয়পুৰত (নাজিবাৰ ওচৰত) স্থাপন কৰিছিল বুলি জনা যায়। চমুকৈ ক'বলৈ হ'লে উজনি অসমত উপৰোক্ত দুটা প্ৰক্ৰিয়াতে মুছলমান বসতিৰ বিকাশ ঘটিছিল। কিন্তু ইয়াতো অলপ-অচৰপ স্থানীয় হিন্দু বা জনজাতীয় পৰিয়াল ধৰ্মান্তৰিত হৈ মুছলমান হোৱাৰো প্ৰমাণ আছে।

ত্ৰয়োদশ শতিকাৰ আগভাগৰ পৰা ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ আগভাগলৈকে ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰ উপত্যকাত মুছলমান বসতিৰ বিকাশ আৰু জনসংখ্যা বৰ্ধনৰ ফলত বৰ্তমান খিলঞ্জীয়া অসমীয়া মুছলমানৰ

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সংখ্যা ২২-২৩ লাখ মান হৈছেগৈ বুলি অনুমান কৰিব পাৰি। খিলঞ্জীয়া আৰু অনা-
খিলঞ্জীয়া মুছলমানৰ সুকীয়া সুকীয়া পৰিসংখ্যা লোকপিয়লত দিয়া নহয় বাবে খিলঞ্জীয়া মুছলমানৰ
প্ৰকৃত সংখ্যা জনা নেযায়। যদিও ২০০১ চনৰ লোক-পিয়ল মতে অসমত মুছলমানৰ সংখ্যা
৮২,৪০,৬১১, ইয়াৰে ১৩,৬২,১১৪ জন হ'ল বনাক উপত্যকাৰ বাংলাভাগী মুছলমান আৰু
২২-২৩ লাখ মান খিলঞ্জীয়া অসমীয়া মুছলমান আৰু বাকী ৪৫-৪৬ লাখ মান পূৰ্ববংগীয় মূলৰ
অভিবাসী মুছলমান। তলত প্ৰস্তুত উপত্যকাৰ প্ৰতিখন জিলাৰে মুঠ মুছলমানৰ সংখ্যা ২০০১
চনৰ পিয়ল মতে আৰু খিলঞ্জীয়া মুছলমানৰ সংখ্যা (সেই চনৰে) আনুমানিক হিচাপ মতে দিয়া
হৈছে:

জিলা	মুঠ মুছলমান ২০০১ চনৰ পিয়ল	খিলঞ্জীয়া মুছলমান ২০০১ চনৰ আনুমানিক
১) ধুবুৰী	১২,১৬,৪৫৫	১,৯৫,০০০
২) কোকৰাঝাৰ	১,৮৪,৪৪১	৫০,০০০
৩) গোৱালপাৰা	৪,৪১,৫১৬	১,১০,০০০
৪) বৰপেটা	৩,৪৮,৫৭৩	৮০,০০০
৫) বৰপেটা	৯,৭৭,৬৪৩	১,৯০,০০০
৬) কামৰূপ	৬,২৫,০০২	৪,৬০,০০০
৭) নলবাৰী	২,৫৩,৮৪২	১,৯০,০০০
৮) দৰং	৫,৩৪,৬৫৮	৩,৫০,০০০
৯) মৰিগাঁৱ	৩,৬৯,৩৯৪	১,২০,০০০
১০) নগাঁও	১১,৮০,২৬৭	১,৬০,০০০
১১) শোণিতপুৰ	২,৬৮,০৭৮	৬৫,০০০
১২) লক্ষীমপুৰ	১,৪৩,৫০৫	৮৫,০০০
১৩) ধেমাজী	১০,৫৩৩	৮,০০০
১৪) তিনিচুকীয়া	৪০,০০০	৩২,০০০
১৫) ডিব্ৰুগড়	৫৩,৩০৬	৪৫,০০০
১৬) শিৱসাগৰ	৮৫,৭৬১	৮০,০০০
১৭) যোৰহাট	৪৭,৬৫৮	৪৫,০০০
১৮) গোলাঘাট	৭৬,৮০৮	৭০,০০০
স্বত্বপূৰ্ণ উপত্যকা মুঠ	৬৮,৭৯,৭৪০	২৩,৩৫,০০০

এইখিনিত মন কৰিবলগীয়া যে অবিভক্ত গোৱালপাৰা (ধুবুৰীকো ধৰি) জিলাৰ খিলঞ্জীয়া
অসমীয়া মুছলমানসকলৰ ভাষা গোৱালপাৰীয়া আৰু তেওঁলোকে নিজকে 'দেশী' বুলি চিনাক্ত
কৰে।

অসমৰ খিলঞ্জীয়া অসমীয়া মুছলমানসকলৰ গাওঁ ভাৰতৰ মুছলমানসকলৰ দৰেই মোগল,
পাঠান, তুৰ্ক আৰু ভাৰতৰ স্থানীয় লোকৰ সংমিশ্ৰিত বক্তৃ প্ৰযোজিত। অসমত অবশ্যে স্থানীয়

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লোকৰ বক্তৃত মঙ্গোলীয় বক্তৰ পৰিমাণ যথেষ্ট অধিক আছে বাবে খিলঞ্জীয়া মুছলমানৰ গাভো মঙ্গোলীয় দেহাৱয়্যিক লক্ষণ বহুতো দিশত দেখা যায়।

অসমৰ খিলঞ্জীয়া মুছলমানক আন আন লোকে 'গৰীয়া' বুলি কোৱা শুনা যায়। এই নামটো পুৰণি যেন লাগে। অসমলৈ যিবোৰ আক্ৰমণ, অভিযান আদি পশ্চিমৰপৰা হৈছিল সেইবোৰ বঙ্গদেশৰ মধ্যযুগৰ প্ৰাদেশিক ৰাজধানী গৌড়ৰ যোগেদি হৈছিল। গৌড়ৰ নবাবেই কামৰূপ বা অসমলৈ হোৱা আক্ৰমণ, অভিযান আদি নিৰ্ধাৰণ কৰিছিল। সেয়েহে কোঁচ ৰাজ্যত তথা নামনি অসমত মুছলমান সৈন্য-সামন্ত বা তেওঁলোকৰ বংশোদ্ভূত লোকক গৌড়ীয়া বা গৰীয়া বোলা হৈছিল অৱশ্যে এই সৈন্য সামন্তবোৰ গৌড়ৰ পৰা আহিলেও তেওঁলোক প্ৰথমাহাত বঙ্গদেশীয় মুছলমান নাছিল, কাৰণ ১২০৩ খৃষ্টাব্দতহে বঙ্গদেশ দিল্লীৰ বাদছাহৰ অধীনলৈ গৈছিল আৰু তাৰ বহুদিনৰ পাছতহে বংগদেশত ধৰ্মাস্তকৰণ আৰম্ভ হৈছিল। সেইকালত কামৰূপ বা অসমলৈ অহা সৈন্যসকল পাঠান আৰু তুৰ্কী আছিল। অৱশ্যে গৰীয়া নামটোৰ উৎস সম্পৰ্কে মতান্তৰো নথকা নহয়। সি যি কি নহওক নামনি অসমত মুছলমানক যেনেকৈ গৰীয়া বোলা হৈছিল আহোম ৰাজ্যত তেওঁলোকক 'বঙাল', 'তুৰুক' আৰু শংকবদেৱ মাধৱদেৱৰ পুথিবোৰত 'যৱন' বুলি উল্লেখ কৰিছিল। কিন্তু ১৬১৩ খৃষ্টাব্দত কোঁচ ৰজা বলিতনাবায়ণক যেতিয়া নৰনাবায়ণৰ পৰিয়ালৰ লোকে মুছলমানৰ সহায়ত ৰাজ্যচ্যুত কৰিছিল তেতিয়া তেওঁ আহোম ৰজা প্ৰতাপ নাবায়ণৰ ওচৰত, 'মোৰ বংশে গৰীয়া সাগৰত মজিলে, স্বৰ্গদেউ তুমি মোক বক্ষা কৰা' বুলি আবেদন কৰিছিল। তেতিয়াৰপৰাই উজনিতো স্থানীয় মুছলমান বুজাবলৈ গৰীয়া শব্দটো ব্যৱহৃত হ'ল বুলি জনা যায়।

অসমৰ খিলঞ্জীয়া মুছলমানসকলক আনসকলে 'গৰীয়া' বুলি চিনাক্ত কৰিলেও মুছলমানসকলৰ নিজৰ মাজত আকৌ গৰীয়া মৰীয়া আৰু ছৈয়দ নামৰ তিনিটা উপভাগ আছে। অসমত ধৰ্ম প্ৰচাৰ কৰিবলৈ অহা আজান ফকীৰ আৰু তেওঁৰ লগৰীয়া আন কেইজন পীৰ আৰু আন আন সময়ত অহা ছৈয়দ পীৰ-ফকিৰসকলৰ বংশধৰ হ'ল ছৈয়দসকল। মৰীয়াসকল হৈছে তুৰ্কৰ আক্ৰমণত থাকি যোৱা পাঠান সৈন্যসকলৰ বংশধৰ। এই দুটা উপভাগৰ বাহিৰে ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰ উপত্যকা যি গৰিষ্ঠ সংখ্যক খিলঞ্জীয়া মুছলমান আছে তেওঁলোক হ'ল গৰীয়া।

অৱদান :

ত্ৰয়োদশ শতিকাৰ প্ৰথম দশকৰপৰা ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ আগভাগলৈ, ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰ উপত্যকাত মুছলমান বসতিৰ এই ছশ বছৰজোৰা ইতিহাসৰ আঁহে আঁহে হিন্দু-মুছলমানৰ দিয়া আৰু লোৱাব, আদান আৰু প্ৰদানৰ পৰম্পৰা সোমাই আছে। কোঁচ আৰু আহোম দুয়ো ৰাজ্যৰ ৰজাই বন্দী হোৱা মুছলমানেই হওক বা বাহিৰৰপৰা অনোৱা বৃত্তিধাৰী মুছলমানেই হওক, দুয়োবিধকে উদাৰভাৱে স্থাপন কৰিছিল আৰু ৰজাধৰীয়া এই পৰম্পৰাই প্ৰজাৰ মাজত মুছলমানৰ প্ৰতি এটি সম্ভৱ ৰোপন কৰাত সহায় কৰিছিল। এই ঐতিহাসিক কালত মুছলমানসকল অসমীয়া সমাজৰ লগত এনেভাৱে মিলি গৈছিল যে পদ্মপুৰাণত বচকে আৰব দেশৰ বীৰ শহীদকো এই পুথিত স্থান দিছিল।

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অসমীয়া মানুহৰ সকলোবোৰ দিশতে মুছলমানসকলৰ অৱদান পৰিষ্কাৰকৈ দেখা যায়। পুৰণিকালত যুদ্ধ-বিগ্রহ বা দৈনন্দিন জীৱনত ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা বহুতো অস্ত্ৰ-শস্ত্ৰ মুছলমানসকলৰ পৰা আহিছে। ১৫৪৩ চনত তুৰ্বকৈ কলিয়াবত অসম আক্ৰমণ কৰোঁতে গণবাজিত হৈ বৰটোপ এৰি থৈ যায় আৰু সেই বৰটোপ চাই আহোম বজাৰ কাৰিকৰে প্ৰথম বৰটোপ নিৰ্মাণ আৰু ব্যৱহাৰ কৰাৰ কথা আমি জানো। ইয়াৰ পাছতে গদাধৰ সিংহৰ দিনত গড়গঞা সন্দিকৈ ধৰ্মযুকনৰ আদেশত গেম্বেলা গৰীয়াই এটা বৃহৎ বৰটোপ সাজিছিল বুলি স্বৰ্গীয় বেনুধৰ শৰ্মাই 'অসমৰ পুৰণি আশ্ৰয়স্থ' নামৰ প্ৰবন্ধত (নৱম্বাৰ, ১৯৬৪) লিখি থৈ গৈছে। তদুপৰি মুছলমান খাৰঘৰীয়া আৰু হিলৈ গঢ়া ফৈদৰ কাৰিকৰ হতুৱাই বন্দুক-বাৰুদ হিলৈ-বৰটোপ আদি তৈয়াৰ কৰোৱা হৈছিল। বৰ্তমান খেলৰ মুছলমান কৰ্মাৰে গঢ়া তীক্ষ্ণ তৰোৱালেৰে অসমীয়া সৈন্যই যুদ্ধ কৰাৰ কৰ্মাও জনা যায়।

অসমীয়া সমাজত ব্যৱহৃত ভালেমান সাজ-পোছাক মুছলমানসকলৰ পৰা অহা বুলি জনা যায়। চিলাইকৰা আৰু গুণা কৰা জামা, চাপকন আদি এই ক্ষেত্ৰত মন কৰিবলগীয়া। জনা যায় যে আউবংজেরৰ পুতেক আজমতবালৈ আহোম কুঁৱৰী ৰমণী গাভৰু তথা বহুমত বানুক বিয়া দিয়া হৈছিল আৰু সেই সূত্ৰে আহোম ৰাজ পৰিয়াললৈ মোগল ৰাজ-পৰিয়ালৰ পৰা মাজে মাজে এনে ধৰণৰ মূল্যবান সাজ-পোছাক আহি আছিল। তদুপৰি ডাওনাৰ সূত্ৰধাৰ জনে পিন্ধা চাপকন আৰু পাগটোও মুছলমানসকলৰ পৰা অহা বুলি সংস্কৃতিৰ পণ্ডিতসকলে মত পোষণ কৰে। পৰবৰ্তী কালত মুছলমানসকলে পিন্ধা পায়জামা, পাঞ্জাৰী কুৰ্তা আৰু নেগেৰা জোতা অভিজাত অসমীয়া হিন্দুসকলৰ মাজতো জনপ্ৰিয় হৈ উঠা দেখা যায়। ('জোলাই বৈয়ে দিলে ফুলামকৈ কাপোৰ' স্মৰ্তব্য।)

মুছলমানসকলৰ বিভিন্ন ধৰণৰ আহাৰ-পানী আৰু খাদ্য সামগ্ৰীও সময়ত অসমীয়া সমাজৰ বন্ধন প্ৰকৰণ ব্যঞ্জনাময় কৰি তুলিলে। পোলাও, কোৰ্মা, কালিয়া, কাবাব, চিক্ কাবাব, পৰঠা, কোফতা, হালোৱা, চেৰে, ফিৰ্গি আদি এনেবোৰ আহাৰ। বিভিন্ন প্ৰকাৰৰ চৰবৎ, ফেলুদা আদি পানীয়ও আজি অসমীয়া সমাজত সমাদৃত হৈছে।

অসমীয়া ঘৰ এখনলৈ মুছলমানসকলৰ পৰা ধৰুৱা সামগ্ৰীও কিন্তু কম অহা নাই। চোৰহীৰ আৰ্হিৰ ঢকঢকী, বদনা, গিকদানী, হেঁকা, নলিচা, পুথি পঢ়োতে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা ঠগা বা ৰেহাল, আঁতৰ, আঁতৰ দানী আদি তাৰেই প্ৰমাণ।

অসমৰ সুকুমাৰ কলা আৰু শিল্প-ভাস্কৰ্যত মুছলমানসকলৰ অৱদান অনস্বীকাৰ্য। আমি আগতে শিলাকটীয়া, আখৰকটীয়া, গুণাকটীয়া, খনিকৰ, দৰ্জী, জোলা আদিসকলক স্বৰ্গদেউ কদ্ৰসিংহই অসমলৈ অনোৱাৰ কথা পাই আহিছোঁ। এওঁলোকে শিলত আৰু চূণ চুকীত কাৰুকাৰ্য কৰা, কাপোৰত সোণ-ৰূপৰ গুণা লগোৱা, ফুলাম কাপোৰ প্ৰস্তুত কৰা আদি শিল্প কলাৰে অসমৰ বস্ত্ৰ-সংস্কৃতি মন্থীমান কৰি তুলিছিল। মুছলমান শিল্পীয়ে আহোম বা কোঁচ বজাৰ বাবে মুদ্ৰা তৈয়াৰ কৰি আখৰ কটাৰ কামো কৰিছিল।

আগৰ কালৰ চিত্ৰ-ৰঙ্গা আৰু সাঁচিপতীয়া পুথিৰ চিত্ৰকলাতো মুছলমান শিল্পীৰ অবিহণ

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বহুতো দেখা যায়। হস্তীবিদ্যাৰ্ণৰ পুথিখন দিলবব আৰু দোচাই নামৰ দুজন মুছলমানে চিত্ৰিত কৰিছিল বুলি পুথিখনতে লিখা আছে। সত্ৰসমূহৰ বহুতো পুথিত মোগল চিত্ৰকলা (Mughal Miniature Painting)-ৰ প্ৰভাৱ দেখা যায়। ঠিক সেইদৰে গীত-গোবিন্দ আৰু শঙ্কাচূড় বধ পুথি দুখনৰ চিত্ৰতো এনে প্ৰভাৱ স্পষ্ট।

মধ্যযুগৰ অসমৰ স্থাপত্য শিল্পলৈও মুছলমানসকলৰ অৱদান কম নহয়। হাজোত লুটেকুৱা চিৰাজীয়ে সজোৱা মহজিদ বা ছেছন ছাহে বঙামাটিত সজোৱা মহজিদত যি মোগল স্থাপত্য দেখা যায় সেই স্থাপত্য পাছলৈ, ঘাইকৈ ৰুদ্ৰসিংহ আৰু তেওঁৰ পাছত সজোৱা মঠ-মন্দিৰবোৰৰ একো একো অংশতো দেখা যায়। বিশেষকৈ জয়সাগৰৰ দক্ষিণ-পশ্চিমত থকা ঘনশ্যামৰ ঘৰ বা ঘনশ্যাম দ'লত মোগল স্থাপত্য যথেষ্ট পৰিস্ফুট। মন কৰিবলগীয়া যে ইতিহাসবিদ ডুবনচন্দ্ৰ সন্দিকৈৰ মতে জয়দলৰ স্থপতি ঘনশ্যামৰ প্ৰকৃত নাম ঘনছামুদ্দিন আৰু এওঁক কোচবিহাৰৰ পৰা অনা হৈছিল।

সময় পাৰ হোৱাৰ লগে লগে মুছলমানসকল অসমৰ উচ্চতাপৰ সংস্কৃতিলৈও অৱদান আগবঢ়াবলৈ সমৰ্থ হ'ল। অসমত হিন্দু আৰু মুছলমানৰ মাজত গঢ়ি উঠা সৌহাৰ্দ্য নিদৰ্শন অজস্ৰ আৰু আচৰিত কথা এইটোহে যে সৌহাৰ্দ আৰু সমন্বয়ৰ নিদৰ্শন ধৰ্ম সম্পৰ্কীয় দিশতেই অধিক। এই ক্ষেত্ৰত অসমৰ হিন্দু আৰু মুছলমান দুয়োটা সম্প্ৰদায়ৰ মাজত গঢ়ি উঠা সহনশীলতা আৰু বুজাবুজিৰ দৃষ্টান্ত সম্ভৱ পৃথিৱীতে বিৰল।

মধ্যযুগত হিন্দু-মুছলমানৰ মাজত সম্পৰ্ক ইমানে গাঢ় আছিল যে নামনি অসমৰ ভালেমান মঠ-মন্দিৰৰ ব্যৱস্থাপনাত মুছলমান মানুহক জড়িত কৰা হৈছিল। তেওঁলোকক 'দেৱলীয়া পাইক' বোলা হৈছিল। গুৱাহাটীৰ নৱগ্ৰহ দেৱালয়ত ৰাজেশ্বৰ সিংহৰ দিনত এজন বাৰী চোৱা মুছলমান আছিল। এইজনা ৰজাৰ দিনতে দীপেশ্বৰ দেৱালয়ৰ ব্যৱস্থাপনাৰ লগত কৈঠালকুছিৰ আবাচুদ্দিন, দেবক আৰু গঠিয়া নামৰ তিনিজন মুছলমান লোক জড়িত আছিল। আহোমৰ ৰাজত্বৰ দিনৰ ভালেমান দেৱোত্তৰ মাটিৰ শাসনাৱলীত মুছলমান পাইক দিয়া দেখা যায়। পছমৰা গৌৰীবল্লভ মন্দিৰ আৰু বাইহাটাৰ মদন-কামদেৱ মন্দিৰৰ লগতো মুছলমান লোক জড়িত থকা জনা যায়। হাজোৰ পোৱা মছা আৰু হয়গ্ৰীৱ মাধৱ মন্দিৰক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰিও হিন্দু-মুছলমানৰ সমন্বয়ৰ এক অপূৰ্ব উষ্ণতা অনুভূত হয়। হয়গ্ৰীৱ মাধৱ মন্দিৰক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰি আৰম্ভ হোৱা 'মাঘ মেলা' আৰু সেই একে সময়তে পোৱামক্কাক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰি হোৱা 'উৰুছ মেলা' ই দুয়োটা সম্প্ৰদায়ক একীভূত কৰা যেন লাগে। আকৌ চ'ত মাহৰ অশোকাস্তমীত হয়গ্ৰীৱ মাধৱ, কেদাৰ আৰু কামেশ্বৰ মন্দিৰৰ বিগ্ৰহ লৈ উলিওৱা সমদলটোৰ আগত থাকি মুছলমানসকলে ছাতি ধৰি লাঠী লৈ ইয়াক আগবঢ়াই লৈ যায়। তদুপৰি জেঠ মাহৰ বুদ্ধ পূৰ্ণিমাৰ দিনা হাজোৰ হিন্দুসকলে পোৱামক্কা দৰ্শন কৰাৰ পৰম্পৰাও আছে।

ধৰ্মীয় সমন্বয়ৰ এনে পৰম্পৰা থকা বাবেই অসমীয়া ধৰ্মীয় গীত-মাতত মুছলমানসকলে অৱদান আগবঢ়াব পাৰিছে। ছেছন ছাহে ১৪৯৮ চনত কমতা বিজয় কৰাৰ পাছৰে পৰা নামনি অসমত সভ্যপীৰৰ গীত হিন্দু-মুছলমান সকলোৰে মাজত সমানে জনপ্ৰিয় হৈ পৰিল। তাৰপাছতে

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শ্রীশংকৰদেৱৰ সমসাময়িক ছান্দ সাহি বচা গীতবোৰো দুয়ো ধৰ্মৰ মানুহৰে আদৰ্শীয় হৈ পৰিছিল। তেওঁ বৃত্তিক্ত এজন দৰ্জী আছিল যদিও আধ্যাত্মিকতাৰ ফলস্বৰূপে তেওঁৰ গীতবোৰ উচ্চ শ্ৰেণীত প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত আছিল। মানৱ সমাজৰ ঐক্য আন্দোলন আৰু সকলো জীৱৰ প্ৰতি সম মনোভাৱ তেওঁ প্ৰাচাৰ কৰি ফুৰিছিল। বজা নৰনাৰায়ণ আৰু শ্রীশংকৰদেৱ দুয়োৰে এওঁ প্ৰিয়পাত্ৰ আছিল। তেওঁৰ বহুসংখ্যক তত্ত্বমূলক গীত আছিল এনে ধৰণৰ—

‘কিনো গীত গাইলি চান্দে বে ববাই
কিনো গীত গাইলি চান্দে
গতুৱা এদুৰৰ পাছতে পৰিয়া
বোন্দা বিৰালীয়ে কান্দে।’

শ্রী শংকৰদেৱৰ দিনৰ পীৰ-ফকিৰসকলৰ ভিতৰত মজলুৰ দিন নামৰ এজন ফকিৰ আছিল যি জনাজাত জিকিৰ বচক আছিল আৰু হিন্দু-মুছলমানৰ ঐক্যৰ সেতু তৈয়াৰ কৰাত বহুতো অৱদান আগবঢ়াইছিল। নামনি অসমত এতিয়াও বিখ্যাত এজন পীৰ হ’ল খোৱাজ পীৰ। এওঁ সমন্বয়ৰ গীত বচনা কৰিছিল। পশ্চিম অসমত এতিয়াও প্ৰচলিত কুশান গীতত হিন্দুৰ আখ্যানৰ দৰেই সোণপীৰ, মাণিকপীৰ আদি পীৰৰ মহিমা গীতাকাৰে বৰ্ণনা কৰা হয়।

অসমৰ দেহ বিচাৰৰ গীত আৰু টোকাৰি গীত হিন্দু আৰু মুছলমান দুয়ো ধৰ্মৰ বাউল আৰু ফকিৰে সমান আগ্ৰহেৰে গায়। বহুতৰ মতে ছান্দ সাৰ তত্ত্বমূলক গীত, যেনে— ‘সাগৰৰ মাজত ঘোঁৰাৰ থকথকি/নগৰত বুৰালে নাও/কহতু চান্দ সাহি এই গীত বচিলে/বুজা ভকতিৰ জাও’, এফালে যেনেকৈ জিকিৰৰ শাৰীত পেলাব পাৰি আনফালে সেইদৰে দেহ বিচাৰ মূলীয় বুলিও ক’ব পাৰি।

মজলুদে অঞ্চলত প্ৰচলিত চিয়াঁ গীত, ঢেক গীত, ওজা-পালি আৰু মাৰৈ গীত আদি হিন্দু-মুছলমান দুয়োটা সম্প্ৰদায়েই গায়। অবিভক্ত গোৱালপাৰা জিলাত হাতী ধৰা প্ৰথা ব্যাপক হৈ উঠিল তেতিয়া, যেতিয়া দিল্লীৰ বাদছাহ আৰু গৌড়ৰ নবাবৰ যুদ্ধ-বিগ্ৰহৰ বাবে হাতীৰ প্ৰয়োজন অধিক হৈ আছিল। গতিকে হাতী ধৰা কামত বহুতো মুছলমান ফান্দী সোমাই পৰিল। সেয়েহে হাতী ধৰা গীত-মাতলৈ মুছলমান ফান্দীৰ অৱদানো অনেক। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে, “আল্লা আল্লা বলৰে ভাই, হয় আল্লা বচুল/কোন মহলেৰ হাতীৰে ভাই, হয় আল্লা বচুল...” বুলি গোৱা গীতটোলৈকে আঙুলিয়াব পাৰি।

দৰঙৰ কোঁচ বজাৰ দৰবাৰত যেনেকৈ মুছলমান কালীয়া আছিল, আহোমৰ কাৰেঙতো মুছলমান সঙ্গীতজ্ঞই গীত-বাদ্যৰ অনুষ্ঠান পৰিবেশন কৰিছিল আৰু এওঁলোকক বজাই মাটি বৃত্তি দি স্থাপন কৰিছিল।

অসমীয়া গীতি-সাহিত্যলৈ এক অনবদ্য অৱদান হৈছে আজান ফকিৰ তথা ছৈয়দ শ্বাহ মিলানৰ জিকিৰ জাবী-মাৰ্চিবোৰ। এইবোৰ আধ্যাত্মিক আৰু ভক্তিমূলক গীত, যাক অতিসহজ সৰল অসমীয়াত লিখি নাম-কীৰ্তনৰ দৰে ঘোষা আৰু পদব-সম্বন্ধত গোৱা হৈছিল। ছৈয়দ আবুল মালিকে তেখেতৰ ‘আজান ফকিৰ আৰু সুবীয়া জিকিৰ’ত জিকিৰ জাবীবোৰ ১৬৩৪

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চনৰপৰা ৰচনা কৰা হৈছিল বুলি মত প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে। জিকিববোৰ অতি সহজ মৰল ভাষাত আৰম্ভ কৰা হৈছিল, যেনে- 'দিশৌ নৈৰ কাষৰি শৰাপুৰি চাপৰি/বজাই সজাই দিলে মঠ/ছকুৰি ভকতে লয় আল্লাৰ নাম/মাদুৰী বনৰে কঠ।' আজান ফকীৰৰ জিকিববোৰ বিশ্লেষণ কৰিলে দেখা যায় যে সেইবোৰৰ তিনিটা অতি মহৎ উদ্দেশ্য আছিল। প্ৰথমটো হৈছে ইছলাম ধৰ্ম প্ৰচাৰ। তলৰ পংক্তিটো মন কৰিলেই কথাটো স্পষ্ট হ'ব : 'নেৰিবা কলিমা, ধৰিবা কলিমা, /কলিমা নামেৰে গুৰি/আওৱালত এই কলিমা/আখেৰতো এই কলিমা/জাহিৰতো এই কলিমা/ বাতিনবো মূল।'

আজান ফকীৰৰ দ্বিতীয় উদ্দেশ্য আছিল ঈশ্বৰতত্ত্ব বা দাৰ্শনিক অনুসন্ধান। তলৰ বহস্যবাদী কবিতা ফাঁকিলৈ মন কৰিলেই কথাটো পৰিষ্কাৰ হ'ব :

'ভালৈকৈ ধৰিবা মাটিৰ কলবুদ
দিবগৈ অময়াত বুৰ
অময়াৰ দেশতে মায়া নেদেখিবা
জানো মায়া লাগি ৰয়।'

এনে দাৰ্শনিক অনুসন্ধানৰ জিকিববোৰত দেহ বিচাৰো দেখিবলৈ পোৱা যায়। যেনে- 'বগৰ কাঠি-কামি দমৰে ধৰণী/সজাই লও থাকৰে ঘৰ,/হাড়ৰ কাঠিকামি ছালৰে ছাটানী/ সজাই লও কলিমাৰ গড়।'

এই পীৰজনাৰ জিকিব ৰচনাৰ তৃতীয় উদ্দেশ্য অতীব মহান। সপ্তদশ শতিকাত তেওঁ হিন্দু আৰু মুছলমানৰ মাজত সংহতিৰ সেতু ৰচিবলৈ আৰু সকলো ধৰ্মৰে শেষ উদ্দেশ্য যে এক আল্লাৰ নৈকট্য তাক সুন্দৰভাৱে পৰিবেশন কৰিছিল এনেদৰে 'মোৰ মনত আন ভাব নাই ও আল্লা/মোৰ মনত ভিন পৰ নাই ও আল্লা/হিন্দু কি মুছলমান একে আল্লাৰ ফৰমান/মোৰ মনত একেটি ভাব।'

এইদৰে আজান ফকীৰে অসমীয়া গীত-মাতলৈ সপ্তদশ শতিকাত এটি স্বৰ্গীয় অমিয়া ধাৰা নমাই আনিছিল। গীতি-সাহিত্যৰ বাহিৰে গজলেও অসমীয়া গীত-মাতলৈ এক মূল্যবান অৱদান আগবঢ়াইছে।

সত্যপীৰৰপৰা আৰম্ভ কৰি আজান পীৰলৈকে, অসমীয়া লোকগীতলৈ মধ্যযুগৰ মুছলমানসকলে যথেষ্ট অৰিহণা আগবঢ়াইছে। বৃটিছ অহাৰ পাছত ১৮৪৬ চনত অৰুনোদই প্ৰকাশৰ লগে লগে অসমীয়া মুছলমানে আধুনিক অসমীয়া সাহিত্যলৈ অৱদান আগবঢ়াবলৈ ল'লে। মনকৰিবলগীয়া যে শিৱসাগৰৰ (পাছলৈ গুৱাহাটীৰ বাসিন্দা) আব্দুল জালাল জোনকাদ আলি নামৰ এজন ধাৰ্মিক পণ্ডিতে ১৮৩০ৰ দশকত 'তৰিকুল হক ফি বয়ানে নুৰুল হক' নামৰ এখন ইছলাম ধৰ্ম সম্পৰ্কীয় পুথি অসমীয়া ভাষাত কিন্তু উৰ্দু লিপিত লিখি থৈ গৈছিল। এইখনেই সম্ভৱ অসমীয়া ভাষাত প্ৰথম ইছলাম ধৰ্মীয় পুথি। ই পাণ্ডুলিপি অৱস্থাত আছিল আৰু তেওঁৰ নাতিয়েক হালেহ কাজিমে 'সত্যৰ পথ' নাম দি ইয়াক অসমীয়া লিপিত ১৯৬৭ চনত প্ৰকাশ কৰিছিল। লেখক পাটীগটীয়া পৰিয়ালৰ ফৰজন্দ গাওবুঢ়াৰ পুতেক। পুথিখনৰ ভাষা অৰুনোদইৰ

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ভাষাতকৈ অলপ বেলেগ। ইয়াক মানব আক্ৰমণৰ সময়ৰ মান্য অসমীয়া ভাষাত লেখা। ইয়াৰ পাছত শ্ৰীসেখ হাজ্জ নামৰ এজন জ্ঞানী ব্যক্তিয়ে আৰু মীৰ মজফ্ৰ হুচেন নামে এজন চিকিৎসা বিজ্ঞানৰ ছাত্ৰই ১৮৫০ আৰু ১৮৬০ দশকত অকনোদইত সাকৰা প্ৰবন্ধ লিখিবলৈ লয়। ১৮৬০ দশকত মুক্ৰী কেফায়তুল্লায়ো 'বঙ্গিলীৰ পুথি' নামৰ কেইটামান প্ৰবন্ধ সেইখন আলোচনীতে লিখিছিল। তেওঁ 'পৰমার্থ দৰ্পণ' নামৰ এখন তত্ত্বগধূৰ পুথিও লিখিছিল, যিখন কুবি শতিকাৰ আগভাগত স্নাতক মহলাৰ পাঠ্যপুথি আছিল। তাৰ পাছত ১৮৯৬ চনত ফজিউদ্দিন আহমদ হাজ্জিকাই তেওঁৰ অমৰ প্ৰস্থ 'জ্ঞান মালিনী' প্ৰকাশ কৰি অসমীয়া সাহিত্যক চহকী কৰে। তাৰ ছবছৰৰ পাছত মহম্মদ চুলেমান খাঁৰ 'কবিতাপুথি' আগচোৱা আৰু ১৯০৮ চনত নজিকউদ্দিন আহমদৰ 'অসমীয়া মৌলুদ শ্ববীফ' নামৰ এখনি অতি মূল্যবান কাব্যগন্ধী পুথি প্ৰকাশ পায়। ইয়াৰ পাছতেই ফাইজুদ্দিন আহমদৰ 'হজৰত মহম্মদ (দঃ)' নামৰ এখন সুপাঠ্যপুথি প্ৰকাশ পায়। ১৯২৯ ব পৰা ১৯৩২ চনলৈ প্ৰথম অসমীয়া ইছলামীয় আলোচনী 'প্ৰচাৰক' প্ৰকাশ পায়। এইদৰেই দেখা যায় যে আধুনিক অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ চালুকীয়া কালত ভালেমান মুছলমান লোকে ইয়ালৈ বৰঙণি আগবঢ়াইছিল। দ্বিতীয় মহাযুদ্ধৰ আগলৈকে যি কেইজন অসমীয়া মুছলমানে অসমীয়া সাহিত্যলৈ অৱদান আগবঢ়াইছিল সেইসকলৰ ভিতৰত গুৱাহাটীৰ মহম্মদ চালেহৰ সম্পাদনাত ওলোৱা ১৯৩০ দশকৰ আলোচনী 'সাধনা', পজিকুদ্দিন আহমদৰ 'গুলেনাৰ', চান্দ মহম্মদ চৌধুৰী কামকপীৰ 'বিবাহ চিত্ৰ' আৰু অন্যান্য চিন্তামূলক প্ৰবন্ধ আদিয়ে অসমীয়া সাহিত্যলৈ বহুতো অৱদান আগবঢ়ায়। তাৰপাছত সাহিত্যাচাৰ্য হৈয়দ আব্দুল মালিকে প্ৰায় ১৯৩৭ চনৰপৰা ২০০০ চনলৈ ৬০ বছৰৰো অধিক কাল অসমীয়া সাহিত্যলৈ ২০০০ ব অধিক চুটিগল্প, ৭০ খন উপন্যাস, ১০ খন মান শিশুপুথি, ৬ খন মান কবিতাৰ পুথি আৰু অনেক অনতিদীৰ্ঘ ব্যঙ্গ আলেখ্য আৰু কেইবাখনো নাটক দান দি ইয়াক চহকী কৰি থৈ গৈছে। তেখেতৰ 'মই অসমীয়া' যেনেকৈ এটা কালজয়ী কবিতা 'খন্য নৰ তনু ভাল' তেনেকৈ অসমৰ সৰ্বকালৰ প্ৰধান পুথিবোৰৰ এখন। তেখেতৰ লগে লগে যি কেইজন স্নানামধ্য লেখকে অসমীয়া সাহিত্যলৈ অবিহণা আগবঢ়ালে তেখেতসকলৰ ভিতৰত এম. ইব্ৰাহীম আলি, আব্দুছ ছাত্তাৰ, মহম্মদ পিয়াৰ, জমিকুদ্দিন আহমদ, তফজ্জুল আলি আদিসকল প্ৰধান। তফজ্জুল আলিৰ অসমীয়া গীতি-সাহিত্য আৰু সংগীতলৈ অৱদান অনন্য। ইয়াৰ বাহিৰেও আমাৰ মাজত জীৱিত কেইবাজনো গল্পকাৰ, কবি, নাট্যকাৰ আৰু গীতিকাৰ আছে। আমি তেখেতসকলৰ নাম নলৈ তেখেতসকলৰ পৰা আৰু অৱদান আশা কৰিছোঁ। এইখিনিতে এটি সুখবৰ দিয়া উচিত যে যোৱা ১৯৪১ চনৰ পৰা ২০০৩ চনৰ ভিতৰত পৱিত্ৰ কোৰাণখনৰ ছটাকৈ সৌষ্ঠৱপূৰ্ণ অনুবাদ প্ৰকাশ হৈছে আৰু এইবোৰে অসমীয়া ধৰ্মীয় সাহিত্য চহকী কৰিছে।

অসমত সাহিত্যৰ বাহিৰেও নাট্য আৰু চিনেমা আন্দোলনতো কেইবাজনো সফল মুছলমান নাট্যকাৰ আৰু পৰিচালকে অসমীয়া সংস্কৃতি চহকী কৰিবলৈ সমৰ্থ হৈছে।

অসমীয়া ভাষালৈ মুছলমানসকলৰ মাজেৰে বহুতো আৰবী ফাৰ্ছী আৰু উৰ্দু শব্দ আহি অসমীয়াত সোমাই পৰিছে আৰু ইয়াক চহকী কৰি তুলিছে। অলপতে কৰা এটি সন্মীক্ষা মতে

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অসমীয়া ভাষাত প্ৰায় ১৫০০ মান আৰবী ফাৰ্ছী আৰু উৰ্দু শব্দ মজ্জাগতভাৱে সোমাই পৰিছে। ইয়াৰে বহুতো শব্দ অপবিবৰ্তিত ভাৱে সোমাই পৰিছে। যেনে- অচিলা, আচমান, আইন, আনাম, আচমী, আন্দাজ আদি। কিছুমান শব্দ আকৌ অলপ পৰিৱৰ্তিত ৰূপে ব্যৱহাৰ হৈছে, যেনে- আৰ্জি (অৰ্জ), আচল (অচল), আলাদা (অলাহিদহ), আপোচ (আপচ), আমোজ (আমজ) আদি। আৰবী ফাৰ্ছী শব্দবোৰৰ ভিতৰত বাজহ আৰু প্ৰশাসনৰ লগত জড়িত শব্দ অসমীয়াত বহুতো দেখা যায়। যেনে- কাছবী, মহাপেচখানা (মোহাফেজখানা), চাপ্ৰাহী, দফতৰ, দফতৰী, খাজানা, হাকিম, হুকুম, মুক্কাফ, খেবাজ, লা-খেবাজ, নিস্পীখেবাজ, হুজুব, ইত্যাদি।

আমাৰ আহাব আৰু সাজ-বাচনতো বহুতো আৰবী-ফাৰ্ছী শব্দ সোমাই পৰিছে। সেইবোৰৰ ভিতৰত আমি সাধাৰণতে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা শব্দবোৰ হৈছে পোলাও, কোৰ্মা, কোণ্ডা, কাবাব, চিক কাবাব, পাৰাথা, কালিয়া, আনাব, চেব, কিছুমিচু, তবমুজ, নিমখ, পদিনা, পেণ্ডা, ময়দা, মছলা, চিৰিকা, বদনা, বাচন, চোবাহী আদি।

পঢ়া-শুনাৰ লগত জড়িত বহুত শব্দও অসমীয়ালৈ আৰবী আৰু ফাৰ্ছীৰ পৰা আহিছে, যেনে- কিতাপ, কলম, কাগজ, খবৰ, চিঞাহি, হিচাব ইত্যাদি। সেইদৰে সাজ-পোছাকৰ লগত জড়িত কুৰ্তা, পায়জামা, কামিজ, চাপকন, চুবিদাৰ আদি শব্দবোৰো মুছলমানসকলৰ পৰাই আহিছে। সঙ্গীতৰ বহুতো বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰৰ নাম ফাৰ্ছীৰপৰা আহিছে। সেইবোৰৰ ভিতৰত নেগেনা, তবলা, চেতাব, সৰোদ, চেনাই, বৰাব আদি প্ৰধান। গালি-গালাজ ভিৰঙ্গাৰ আদিৰ লগত জড়িত বহুতো শব্দও আৰবী ফাৰ্ছীৰ পৰা আহিছে। যেনে-দোচমন, বজ্জাত, চোস্তি, বেইমান, হাবাগী, চোপী, দগাবাজ, বেকাৰ, নিচাখোব, গোলাম ইত্যাদি। ইয়াৰ বাহিৰেও মুছলমানসকলৰ ধৰ্মৰ লগত জড়িত শব্দবোৰ যেনে- নামাজ, বোজা, হজ, জাকাত, কলিয়া, নেক, বদি, ফিৰিষ্টা, বচুল, পয়গম্বৰ, আল্লা, খোদা, মালিক, দুনিয়া, দোজখ, বেহেস্ত আদি বোৰতো আছেই।

এই শব্দবোৰে অসমীয়া ভাষা এহাতে চহকী হৈছে আৰু আনহাতে উত্তৰ ভাৰতৰ হিন্দী, হিন্দুস্তানী আদি ভাষা বুজাত আমাৰ অলপ হ'লেও সুবিধা হৈছে।

মাতৃভূমিৰ স্বাধীনতাৰ প্ৰতি অসমীয়া মুছলমানৰ অৱদানো কম নহয়। শবাইঘাটৰ বণ্ড বাঘহাজৰীকা ওৰফে ইছমাইল চিদ্দিকি; চিপাহী বিদ্ৰোহৰ সময়ত বাহাদুৰ গাঁওবুঢ়া আৰু কৰ্ণুদ আলি আৰু শেহতিয়াকৈ অসহযোগ, আইন অমান্য আৰু ভাৰত ত্যাগ আন্দোলনত জেল খোৱা মুছলমান ভলেনটিয়াবসকল আৰু তৈয়বুল্লাহ, ফককদিন আলি আহমদৰ দৰে নেতাসকলৰ অৱদান জানো আমি পাহৰিব পাৰিম!

ওপৰত অসমীয়া মুছলমানৰ ইতিহাস আৰু অৱদানৰ এটি অতি চমু আভাসহে ডাঙি ধৰা হ'ল। সমগ্ৰ ইতিহাস আৰু অৱদানৰ এটি অনুপুংখ বৃত্তান্ত আগবঢ়াবলৈ হ'লে এক দীৰ্ঘ অধ্যয়ন আৰু গৱেষণাৰ প্ৰয়োজন। সি কিন্তু বিমানেই কষ্টসাধ্য নহ'ক লাগে তাক আমি কৰিবই লাগিব। তাকো কৰিব লাগিব তৎপৰতাবে। আমি এইটো মনত ৰখা দৰকাৰ যে বি জাতিৰ ইতিহাস হোৱাই গৈছে তাৰ ঐতিহ্যও হেৰাই গৈছে। তেনে জাতি ছিন্নমূল হৈ যাব আৰু কালৰ কুটিল চক্ৰবাক্ত নিশ্চিন্ত হৈ যাব।

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Annexure 5 (Newspaper Advertisement)

Suggestions received from Distinguished Members of the Citizenry on Skill Development of Indigenous Assamese Muslim Community:

1.	Dr Ahsanul Hussain, Retd. General Manager, OIL	Pg. 107
2.	Dr. Sirajul Islam, Supervisor, ITI Jorhat	Pg. 109
3.	Md. Toufiqul Hussain, Entrepreneur, Jorhat	Pg. 117
4.	Mr. Jayanta Barua, CEO, Skill Development Institute, Guwahati	Pg. 119
5.	Ms. Sumaiyah Begum, Golaghat	Pg. 128
6.	Dr. Nazrul Haque, Joint Director, Technical Education, Assam	Pg. 129
7.	Dr. Sanjan Hazarika, Jorhat District	Pg. 136
8.	Dr. Nurul Amin, Associate Professor, JB College, Jorhat	Pg. 139
9.	Md. Rainur Ahmed, Central President, All Assam Goriya Moriya Parishad	Pg. 142
10.	Mr. Ashiq Zaman, IRS	Pg. 143

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1. Dr Ahsanul Hussain, Retd. General Manager, Oil India Limited (OIL)

Before starting any Skill Development project, formulation of policies/schemes for the indigenous Assamese Muslim Community, an updated demographic study of the said population is a must. The study may include various age-groups, educational backgrounds including school-dropouts, male-female etc. This population survey will be useful for all future developmental plans/projects by the government, NGOs or any other entities who will work for this community.

Here are a few suggestions from my end based on a research-work carried out on CSR activities of Oil India Limited (OIL) a couple of months back:

1. OIL has a full-fledged *Skill Development Institute (SDI)* in North Guwahati which was set-up in 2017 and led by OIL in collaboration with other major oil and gas PSUs under MoPNG. The idea of establishing SDI in Guwahati is to produce skill man-power from the youth of North East India suitable for employment in hydrocarbon and other sectors.
2. The *Hydrocarbon Sector Skill Council (HSSC)* and *Skill Development Institute* led by ONGC is another placement linked training and entrepreneurship education for a pan-India target. The mission of HSSC is to create a pool of skilled man-power for hydrocarbon industry for their employability locally or globally.
3. OIL has encouraged the unemployed youths of Assam having some technical education (ITI and Diploma Engineering pass outs) for '*on the job training programme*' with suitable stipends for one year. Here, the youths are made industry-ready for employability anywhere in India with a good training certificate but employment in OIL is not guaranteed. Similar schemes may be there in other PSUs. In case of OIL, the nodal agency is the Learning & Development Department, Duliajan.
4. The Public Affairs (PA) Department of OIL under its CSR programme has a Skill Development Project and Capacity Building named '*Project Swabalamban*' for providing suitable employment opportunities to the unemployed youths of OIL's operational areas through some placement linked capacity building programme. The basic idea of this project is to impart training to the unemployed youths in some skill and capacity building trades for plumber, mason, carpenter, welder, sewing machine operator, electrician, fitter, technician for beauty & wellness, health care, house-keeping & hospitality, food & beverages, BPO/voice calling, automotive services, general duty assistants, customer care executives, radiology technicians and refractionist. Though this project was initially started for the Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and Charaideo districts, now it has been extended to few other districts of Assam. Similar programmes may also be there in other PSUs like ONGC, IOC and others.

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The different implementing agencies for 'Project Swabalamban' with whom OIL has signed a MoU are: (a) Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) Guwahati (b) Construction Industry Development Council (CIDC) New Delhi (c) IL&FS Education & Training Services (IETS) New Delhi (d) Pragati Edutech Guwahati (e) Gyanjyoti Education Foundation Guwahati (f) Gram Tarang Employability Training Centre Guwahati (g) Downtown Charitable Trust Guwahati.

The Sub-Group on Skill Development of the indigenous Assamese Muslims may further think of the following while formulating their Report:

- (a) For sponsoring suitable youth for training programmes given time to time by various government departments like Agriculture, Horticulture, Sericulture, Animal Husbandry, Forestry, Industry so on and so forth. Such type of training includes poultry farming, duck rearing, bee-keeping, diary production, organic farming, commercial nursery, fishery, weaving, solar energy use, rain-water harvesting etc.etc. But to make all these activities economically viable and sustainable in the long run, someone has to take lead from the front by creating Self Help Group (SHG) or Joint Liability Group (JLG). These SHGs/JLGs may be encouraged by various governmental financial aids at various District/ Sub-Division/ Block/ Panchayat levels.
- (b) You may also think for creating a *Corpus-Fund* by inviting interested Assamese Muslims or others from their donations (*Zakat*) or any other aids. This fund may be used to create (i) a Skill Development Institute of their own (ii) a coaching centre for Engineering/Medical tests for the Assamese Muslim students free of cost or at a nominal price (c) a coaching centre for grooming the Assamese Muslim youths for UPSC/APSC examinations free of cost or at a nominal price (d) a practical language training institute for the technicians/skilled persons preferably in English/Arabic languages for the possibility of their employment outside India mostly Middle-East countries.

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2. Dr. Sirajul Islam, Supervisor, Industrial Training Institute, Jorhat.

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Among the different categories of youth belonging to the Indigenous Muslim community of Assam based on educational qualifications, the category that requires skilling the most is that of the school dropouts or those who studies up to 10th standard. And, when we speak about skill training for this category, our focus should invariably be on vocational training, as other means of skilling such as soft skills etc. are less likely to fetch proper employment at this level. However, farming and related skills may also be effective in generating self employment, especially for the rural youth. It is also necessary that the trained persons are provided with govt. / govt. recognized certification and incentives like stipend during training and financial assistance/loan after successful completion of training to start their own enterprises.

Vocational Training in Assam is conducted through the Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) under the Skill, Employment and Entrepreneurship Department, Govt. of Assam. At present, almost every district of the State has a govt. ITI. A list of Govt. ITIs of Assam, along with available trades, is furnished as Annexure of this Write-Up. These institutes provide vocational training of 1 year/ 2 years duration in various post-matriculate and under-matriculate trades in accordance with the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) aligned curriculum. The admission into the ITIs takes place through a centralized online admission portal. It is worth mentioning that in order to increase participation of various backward/ less privileged communities in vocational training, the govt. has made suitable reservation policy for admission into the govt. ITIs. For example, there is reservation of two seats in each trade for the Tea Garden Labourer/ Ex-Tea garden Labourer community. In the same principle, it is proposed that the Govt. considers reservation of one seat in each trade (both post-matriculate and under-matriculate) for the Indigenous Muslim Community, at least in ITIs located in the districts inhabited by a sizeable population of indigenous Assamese Muslims.

In addition to the regular courses, the ITIs also provide skill training of short duration under various govt. schemes from time to time. Hence, special short term training programmes may be organized for the school dropouts belonging to the Indigenous Muslim Community, utilizing the existing infrastructure, machinery and faculty of the govt. ITIs. Various NSQF compliant sector specific short term courses have been designed by the Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) under the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). A few short term courses designed by the SSCs for the school dropouts are listed below.

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Name of Course	Sector	NSQF Level	Duration of Course	Entry Qualification
Assistant Mason	Construction	2	350 hrs.	5 th pass
Field Technician – Other Home Appliances	Electronics	4	360 hrs.	8 th pass
Field Technician – UPS and Inverter	Electronics	4	360 hrs.	8 th pass
Assistant Beauty Therapist	Beauty and Wellness	3	350 hrs.	8 th pass
Automotive Service Technician	Automotive	3	500 hrs.	8 th pass

Detailed course contents along with job roles etc. for a host of NSQF compliant short term courses are available in the websites of the SSCs. The selection of course/ sector will, however, depend upon the market demand of a particular district/area as well as availability of infrastructure in ITIs (or other technical institutes).

In view of the changing market requirements, short term vocational training alone is not sufficient to secure employment in an organized sector. It is, therefore, proposed that the above mentioned short term vocational courses are followed by a brief training on soft skills/ entrepreneurial skills plus basic IT skills. Agencies like Quest Alliance offer short term learning programme on life skills and digital literacy. The govt. may consider collaboration with such agencies so that a blended skill package of Vocational Skills + Soft Skills + Basic IT Skills may be designed for a short duration of about 3-4 months for the target group. It is pertinent to mention here that apart from the govt. institutes, Assam Skill Development Mission (ASDM) is also actively involved in providing short term vocational training through the accredited Skill Training Providers. Hence, ASDM may also be mandated to design and implement skill package of similar nature for the school leavers of the Assamese Muslim community.

As far as skill training in farming sector is concerned, the Agriculture Department of the state has been implementing the scheme of Skill Training for Rural Youth (STRY) under the National Mission on Agriculture Extension & Technology (NMAET). Under this scheme, 50 different skilling areas have been identified spanning Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Fisheries. Special schedules under this scheme may be arranged for the youth of Indigenous Muslim Community so that they get attracted towards farming and allied activities. Alternatively, some special skill courses may be

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designed by the Agricultural Department in consultation with Assam Agricultural University exclusively for the community.

Specific skill training programmes like Motor Driving are expected to generate direct employment/ self employment. The govt. may sponsor such training for the unemployed youth of the community in specific training centres. Motor driving training may also be conducted in some ITIs having the relevant trades. However, such training will be effective only if proper test/ assessment is conducted at the end of training in presence of Transport Department officials and Driving License (Learner) is issued on the basis of such test.

The entrepreneurial acumen among the Assamese youth including those belonging to the Indigenous Muslim Community has increased over the years. It is time that they are equipped with the right skill and are provided with a platform from where they can set their own goal and step into the path of progress. A collaborative effort in this regard from various stakeholders is the need of the hour.

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ANNEXURE

List of GOVT. ITIs in Assam along with Available Trades

Sl. No.	Name of ITI	Available Trades under	
		National Council For Vocational Training (NCVT)	State Council For Vocational Training (SCVT)
[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]
1.	Guwahati	Fitter, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, Machinist, Turner, Mechanic Diesel, Welder, Stenographer & Secretarial Assistant (English), Sewing Technology, Wireman Construction & Wood Working Sector (BBBT-CoE), Draughtsman Civil, Draughtsman Mechanical, Electrician, Machinist, Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Technician.	Mechanic Diesel, Electrician, Multimedia Animation, Stenographer & Secretarial Asstt.(English), Welder, Fitter, Turner, Mechanic Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Technician, Fire Technology & Industrial Safety Management, Plumber, Machinist, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, Wireman, Electronics Mechanic, Dress Making, Computer Operator & Programming Assistant (COPA), Information Technology & Electronic System Maintenance (ICTSM)
2.	Jorhat	Stenographer & Secretarial Assistant (E), Fitter, Electrician, Turner, Machinist, Mech. Motor Vehicle, Mechanic Diesel, Welder, Plumber, Mech. Tractor, COPA, Cosmetology, ICTSM, Sewing Technology, Plastic Processing Operator Sector (BBBT- CoE), Refrigerator & Air Conditioning Technician, Wireman, Instrument Mechanic, Draughtsman Civil, Draughtsman Mechanical, Surveyor	Soil Testing and Crop Technician, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, COPA

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3.	Nagaon	COPA, Cosmetology, ICTSM, Fitter, Turner, Machinist, Electrician, Wireman, Sewing Technology, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, Mechanic Diesel, Welder, IT Sector (BBBT-CoE), Draughtsman Civil	Fitter, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, Mechanic Diesel, Wireman, Welder, Stenographer & Secretarial Assistant, Digital Photographer, Solar Technician (Electrical)
4.	Srikona	Draughtsman (Civil), Welder, Mechanic Diesel, Sewing Technology, Stenographer & Secretarial Assistant (E), Surface Ormentation Techniques, Turner, Fabrication (Fitting & Welding) Sector (BBBT-CoE), Fitter, Electrician, MMV, ICTSM, Electronics Mechanic, Wireman, ICTSM	Mechanic Diesel, Electrician, Fitter, MMV
5.	Tezpur	Turner, Machinist, Fitter, Electrician, Welder, Wireman, Sewing Technology, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, Stenographer & Secretarial Assistant, Mechanic of Agricultural Machinery, ICTSM, COPA	Turner, Machinist, Fitter, Electrician, Welder, Wireman, Mechanic Diesel
6.	Tinsukia	Stenographer & Secretarial Assistant (E), Fitter, Electrician, Turner, Machinist, Mech. Motor Vehicle, Mechanic Diesel, Welder, COPA, ICTSM, Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Technician, Wireman, Instrument Mechanic, Draughtsman Mechanical	
7.	Bongaigaon	Turner, Fitter, Electrician, Welder, Wireman, Sewing Technology, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, Stenographer & Secretarial Assistant, Mechanic Diesel	Mechanic Maintenance (Chemical Plant), Draughtsman Civil, ICTSM, Plastic Processing Operator, COPA, Cosmetology

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8.	Barpeta	Fitter, Electrician, Welder, Wireman, Sewing Technology, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, Stenographer & Secretarial Assistant, Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Technician, COPA, Cosmetology, Electronics Mechanic	Fitter, Electrician, Wireman, Sewing Technology, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, Stenographer & Secretarial Assistant, Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Technician, COPA, Cosmetology, Electronics Mechanic
9.	Goalpara	Electrician, Welder, Cosmetology	COPA
10.	Kokrajhar	Electrician, Welder, Sewing Technology, COPA, Cosmetology	Electrician, Electronics Mechanic, Bodo Typewriting
11.	Nalbari	Fitter, Electrician	Fitter, Electrician, Cosmetology, ICTSM, Welder, Mechanic Diesel
12.	South Salmara		ICTSM, COPA, Cosmetology, Electrician
13.	Dhemaji	Electrician, Welder, Sewing Technology, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, Stenographer & Secretarial Assistant	
14.	Bhergaon	Electrician, Fitter	Mechanic Motor Vehicle, COPA
15.	Dibrugarh	Secretarial Practice, Cosmetology, Plastic Processing Operator Sector (BBBT-CoE), Electronics Mechanic.	Fitter, Welder
16.	Gargaon	Electrician, Electronics Mechanic, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, COPA, Fitter, Welder, Mechanic Diesel	Electrician, Fitter, Welder, Mechanic Diesel, Machinist
17.	Morigaon	Electrician, Electronics Mechanic, Dress Making, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, COPA	Electrician, Electronics Mechanic, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, Welder, Mechanic Diesel
18.	Dhansiri	Fitter, Dress Making	Fitter, Electrician, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Technician, COPA, Cosmetology, Electronics Mechanic, Mechanic Auto Body Repair, Mechanic Auto Body Painting

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19.	Diphu	Fitter, Electrician, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, Welder, Mechanic Diesel, Wireman	Welder, Draughtsman Civil
20.	Haflong	Electrician, Mechanic Motor Vehicle, Welder, Pump Operator Cum Mechanic	Electronics Mechanic, Electrician, COPA
21.	Karimganj	Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Technician, Dress Making	
22.	Hailakandi	Electrician, Motor Vehicle	COPA
23.	Majuli	Mechanic Diesel, COPA, Sewing Technology, Electronics Mechanic	Mechanic Diesel, Electrician
24.	Golaghat	Welder, Fitter	COPA, Wireman, Cosmetology, Fitter
25.	Guwahati (W)	Electronics Mechanic, Secretarial Practice, Draughtsman Civil, Fashion Design & Technology, COPA	Electronics Mechanic, Secretarial Practice, Draughtsman Civil, Cosmetology, Front Office Assistant
26.	Tinsukia (W)	Electronics Mechanic, Secretarial Practice, Draughtsman Civil, Dress Making, Cosmetology, Surface Ornamentation Technique	
27.	Majbat (W)	Electronics Mechanic, Draughtsman Civil, COPA	Dress Making
28.	Silchar (W)	Draughtsman Civil, Cosmetology	Electronics Mechanic
29.	North Lakhimpur (W)	Sewing Technology	
30.	Dudhnoi		Cosmetology, Welder, Wireman, Fitter, Painter, COPA, ICTSM
31.	Rangia		Cosmetology, Welder, Wireman, Fitter, Painter, COPA, ICTSM
32.	Titabor		Fitter, Mechanic Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Technician, Mechanic Diesel, COPA, Cosmetology, Electrician
33.	Biswanath Chariali		COPA, Cosmetology, Welder

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34.	Pathsala		COPA, ICTSM, Welder, Fitter, Painter, Cosmetology
35.	Sootea		COPA
36.	Divyang ITI Dibrugarh		COPA (For Exclusively Visually Impaired)

Contd/-...

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3. Md. Toufiqul Hussain, Entrepreneur, Jorhat.

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Skill Development Programme

Introduction: Before going to the main project on skill development we have to decide who are indigenous (Khilonjiya) Muslims. Assam government has not yet confirmed who the indigenous Muslims are and who are not. So we are in dilemma.

To short out this problem here I would like to attach a copy of published Assamese lecture given by Late Dr. Muhammad Taher, Ex. Professor Department of Geography, Guwahati University organized by Jorhat Islamic Centre, dated 8th February 2009.

Now, we have to discuss how to uplift the status of Indigenous Muslims through skill development. First we should divide into some categories as stated below:

1. School dropouts studied up to Class X
2. Class X to under graduate level
3. Graduate level
4. Professional graduate to post graduate

Secondly, we have to consider the different fields. Such as service sector, agricultural sector, industrial sector, digital sector, technology sector etc.

Category - I: School dropouts/studied up to class X: The main causes of dropout is mainly due to financial constraints. Hence, vocational training programmes such as, tailoring, beautician, mobile repairing, carpentry, fabricators, poultry, nursery, welder, plumber etc. for this first we should find out the actual data's of dropouts or students studied up to class X through government reputed survey agencies. And for trainings government should take necessary steps through their related branches or through NGO's.

Category - II: Class X pass out to under graduate level: Here also government should provide free trainings or providing stipend for the following vocational courses. Such as, ANM and GNM nurse, computer hardware, solar items manufacturing, X-Ray, MRI, Ultrasound, CT scan, ECG operator or technician courses, driving, optical technician courses, fishing training, goat farming, handicraft, bamboo craft, horticultural training, electrician etc.

Category - III: Graduate level: Students in Assam there is a lack of government institutions for the following professional courses.

1. Digital marketing course

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2. Graphic designing course
3. PMP (Project management professional) certification course
4. Business analytics course
5. Data science

The majority these institutes are located outside Assam and financially weaker sections of our community are unable to attend. So the government should take the initiative to set up the said courses.

Category - IV: Professional graduate to post graduates: Actually this category is not so important in comparison to other categories. Because profession graduate or post graduate are itself a part of skill development sector. So before choosing the professional courses and post graduate courses one should know the job aspect or should choose courses of their personal interest.

At this category of skill development state government should provide soft loan or interest free loan to set up their own small industry.

Furthermore, the government could choose certain brilliant experts and send them on free overseas industrial visits to learn about the latest technologies or get experience.

Things, we should know: Assam Skill Development Mission (ASDM) has initiated a state sponsored skill development training programme primarily aiming to trained the youth of the state and after completing the training offering them placement. But most of the indigenous Muslims do not know about the said programmes due to the lack of awareness.

Suggestions: From my personal experience the government shows a keen interest in implementing such projects. But later on it only remains restricted to files. So my recommendation is to pick a few viable schemes and priorities implementing them within a specific time frame.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE GUWAHATI

Introduction: India's rapid economic growth has led to a huge demand for vocational skills across traditional as well as new and emerging sectors. Simultaneously, there is a need to ensure that this growth is inclusive, in order to have positive impact on poverty levels. Alongside a young and growing labour force, there is a significant shortage of skilled manpower, essentially due to gaps in skill availability and skill needs. Accelerating growth and providing productive employment for the continuously increasing labour force is an integral part of the objective of inclusive growth.

India's emergence as a potential economic and social power rests on the Indian youth. The skills development initiative is designed to leverage potential of the youth population (19% of India's population is in between 15-24 years of age) by developing their employability skills. However, the challenge remains in developing right skill sets among these youth to conduit the skilled manpower requirement of industry both at National and International level. The key to reaping the real benefits of demographic dividend lies in skilling the youth as per Industry standards thereby to fulfill skill gaps which can serve the purpose of national missions like 'Make in India', 'Digital India' etc. The purpose of the Skills Development Pillar is to achieve economic growth and social development that will enrich the creation of decent work and sustainable livelihoods for youth across India.

The Indian Oil and Gas sector is one of the six core industries in India and has very significant forward linkages with the entire economy. India has been growing at a decent rate annually and is committed to accelerate the growth momentum in the years to come. This would translate into India's energy needs growing many times in the years to come. Further the anticipated business growth in the sector is contingent on the availability of skilled manpower in the country. Hence, there is an emphasized need for generating a pool of skilled workforce to conduit the industry manpower need.

In line with National Skill Development Mission of Govt. of India, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India has taken a unique initiative of setting up of Skill Development Institutes in different parts of the country. The SDI's are world class state of art institute's that primarily focus are imparting skill development training in the Oil and Gas sector. Till date, six such Skill Development Institutes (SDI) have been set up at Kochi (Kerala), Vizag (Andhra Pradesh), Bhubaneswar (Odisha), Guwahati (Assam) Ahmedabad (Gujarat) and Rae

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Bareilly established by BPCL, HPCL, IOCL, Oil India, ONGC and GAIL respectively.

A Society was set up with the name **Skill Development Institute, Guwahati (SDIG)** registered on 26-07-2017 under the Society Registration Act XXI of 1860 (No RS/KAM(M)/263/P/157 of 2017- 2018).The objective of the SDI is to cater to the skill needs of the youths of North East region in order to enhance their employability in hydrocarbon as well as other Sectors. To this end, the Institute has adopted National Council of Vocational Training (NCVT) /State Council of Vocational Training (SCVT) and National Skills qualifications Framework (NSQF)/ Sector Skill Council (SSC) approved courses. SDIG was dedicated to the Nation by Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship on 8th December 2017.

Skill Development Institute, Guwahati, has been set up by OIL along with IOCL, ONGC, HPCL, BPCL, GAIL India Limited, Balmer Lawrie and EIL. OIL is the managing PSU for SDIG. From Oil India Limited, the affairs of SDIG are mentored and monitored by Director (HR), OIL, Corporate Office, Noida. A Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Secretary and Treasurer of the Society have been appointed. A newly built ITI complex at Village Uttar Phulung, Amingaon, Guwahati was taken on lease for 10 years from Govt. of Assam.

The entire Training Programme is free for the students, with no training fees, free fooding and lodging , free medical(if any during the course) and free travel expenses to place of posting

INITIAL START-UP: Initially, the following two courses have been adopted:

1. Industrial Electrician (Oil & Gas) HYC/Q6101, Sector: Hydrocarbon Sector Skill Council .Training Period: 1000 Hours .NSQF level :4 ,Minimum educational qualification : Class XII Pass . Age Limit: 18 Years
2. Industrial Welder (Oil & Gas) HYC/Q 9101 ,Sector : Hydrocarbon Sector Skill Council. Training period: 1000 Hours. NSQF level: 4.Minimum educational qualification : Class X Pass . Age limit : 18 Years.

Both the above two courses are listed in National Qualification Register under Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and are NSQF Compliance Courses.

INFRASTRUCTURE & FACILITIES AVAILABLE: The spacious and attractive complex with Administration Building , Hostel Block, Computer Lab, Welding Shop ,Electrical Shop ,Conference Hall, Surveillance System and outdoor Sports Facilities having in total 2100 Sqm of floor area. The Hostel Capacity is 60 trainees, who are provided free lodging and boarding at the Hostel, with no Training Fees.

INITIAL PROGRAMME AT SDI, GUWAHATI: Initially, SDI Guwahati was conducting two placement linked Skill Training Courses i.e. Industrial Electrician and Industrial Welder. The Programs are aligned as per National Occupational Standards issued by Hydrocarbon SSC under

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ambit National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) .The duration of the programme is six (6) months.

Initially, total 60 candidates were undergoing Skill Training i.e. 30 candidates in Industrial Electrician and 30 candidates in Industrial Welder, per batch. The annual intake was:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|-------------|
| (1) Industrial Electrician | - | 60 Trainees |
| (2) Industrial Welder | - | 60 Trainees |

EXPANSION OF SDIG WITH ADDITIONAL EXTENSION CENTRES: In accordance with the directive of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and the stakeholders comprising of General Body Members and General Council members, SDIG was advised to expand their training programmes and increase the quantum of youths trained keeping the employability factor in mind. As a consequence, further Extension Centres were opened, Training Providers increased, number of courses increased culminating into the increase of the number of trainees.

SDIG TRAINING PARTNERS: At present there are four training partners carrying out the Training Programs at SDIG Complex at North Guwahati as well as in the SDIG Extension Centres:

A. Learnet Institute of Skills:

S.B. COMPLEX, Brindaban Path, H. No. 5 Opp. BP Petrol Pump Main Road, Hatigaon, Guwahati, Assam 781038

It was initially known as IL&FS, then later on it was hived off to Learnet Skills. It has carried out programmes under Health Sector, Hydrocarbon Sector and Apparel Sector. Its Corporate Office is in New Delhi. It is also carrying out many CSR programmes of Oil India Limited.

B. Pragati Edutech Pvt. Ltd. Guwahati

(An ISO 9001-2015 Certified Organization)

Budhin Bhawan, RG Baruah Road, Jonali Path, near DurgaMandir, Guwahati, Assam 781024

Its specialty is in carrying out training in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector. It has also carried out many CSR Project programmes of OIL in addition to SDIG.

C. Tool Room and Training Centre

North Guwahati Road, Amingaon, Amingaon Industrial Area, Guwahati, Assam 781031

It is a Central Govt. training institute under MSME Department. Its speciality is in the Capital Goods Sector. It is also carrying out many programmes of Govt. of Assam

D. Gram Tarang Employability Training Services

Near Mizoram House, G.S. Road, Guwahati-781005.

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It is an Odisha based training organization and has set up the Centurion University for Skill Training. It has two extension centres of SDIG at Rowta (Dist. Udalguri) and Byrnihat (Meghalaya)

COURSES AT PRESENT AND ANNUAL TRAINING INTAKE

Sl. No.	Institution	Course Name	Duration	Candidates
1.	LEARNET SKILLS	Industrial Welder (Oil & Gas)	6 months	60
2.	LEARNET SKILLS	Industrial Electrician (Oil & Gas)	6 months	60
3.	LEARNET SKILLS	General Duty Assistant	3 months	60
4.	LEARNET SKILLS	General Duty Assistant (Advanced)	6 months	30
5.	LEARNET SKILLS	Sewing Machine Operator	2 months	60
6.	LEARNET SKILLS	Emergency Medical Technician	3 months	30
7.	LEARNET SKILLS	Emergency Medical Technician (Advanced)	6 months	30
8.	LEARNET SKILLS	Technical Intern Training Programme	9 months	30
9.	LEARNET SKILLS	Certificate Course in Hospital Front Office Desk	6 months	30
10.	TRTC	Certificate Course CNC Turning	4 months	60
11.	TRTC	Certificate Course Fitter & Rigger	4 months	30
12.	TRTC	Certificate Course in CNC Milling	4 months	30
13.	TRTC	Machine Operator	8 months	30
14.	PRAGATI EDUTECH	F&B Service Steward	3 months	400

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15.	GRAM TARANG	Automotive Service Technician	8 months	30
16.	GRAM TARANG	Coffee Brewing Steward	3 months	30
TOTAL				1000

It may be mentioned that the entire training programme is planned such that the Operating Expenses, training fees, free fooding/lodging etc falls within the annual contribution of the sponsoring organizations.

SELECTION OF TRAINEES: The selection of trainees for the various trades are carried out by the Training Providers through various modes such as advertisement in News Paper, utilization of social media, using electronic media such as FM Channels, Publicity through local TV Channels like News scrolling, holding mobilization camps , placing banners and posters outside ITI's etc. If the quantum of candidates is high in regard to the training course capacity, entrance exams are also conducted. After the written examinations, oral screening and interviews are also conducted. Candidates are assessed on their interest in the course and their willingness to work outside the state when they are offered employment.

Student mobilization is a crucial function – both from the standpoint of meeting the desired numbers and quality within the stipulated time. Therefore the mobilization process is undertaken with great care to achieve the following:

- Students, their guardians and even local influential people are made aware of the entire program, its outcome and expected employment opportunities
- The group is made aware of desired student conduct.
- The prospective student is interviewed to know that he/ she understands what is required and that he/ she is committed to the proposed program and post training plans

The Training Provider, in association with the Indian Army, helps to reach out the interested candidates in remote areas. They also have a dedicated network of Local Resource Person (LRP) in each locality of mobilization. The resource person can either be local teachers, journalists or other professionals – but in each case they are persons of good reputation in their community. They are motivated to do this job out of a genuine desire for welfare of the local youth. These Local Resource Persons mobilize the prospective candidates at local. The LRPs arrange transportation of the students to Guwahati and remain communication bridges with the students' guardians and local communities.

Involvement of the LRPs have helped in:

- Identifying and not selecting undesirable candidates;

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- Driving discipline among the students during the period of training; and
- Preventing mischief mongering by a few non serious candidates.

Once in the hostel, the students are constantly monitored for their attendance in class by the faculties and in the hostel by the administration staff. Every incidence of indiscipline, accident or ailment gets reported to the authorities – and appropriate measures are taken immediately.

To mobilize the candidates, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) is carried out at the community level to ensure transparency and accountability.

- They organized mobilization camps and meetings at various locations which were attended by prospective candidates, parents/ guardians and local community leaders in various villages.
- To generate greater public interest, they distributed and displayed posters, banners etc. in the areas of mobilization.
- At each location, the gathered candidates, guardians and local people were informed about the SDIG initiative to train young people for providing jobs under the Skill Development Training Program.
- Tele-calling set up at their office which caters to the prospective students by means of providing information about the Placement Linked Skill and Capacity Building Training Program and also resolving their queries.
- Promote awareness about the program through Ex-Students who are already successfully working in the Industry.

DETAILS OF TRAINING: From its inception till date, Skill Development Institute Guwahati has trained 2576 youths of the North Eastern region in the aforementioned 16 different trades with a placement percentage of over 80%. The rest of the trained youths are either self employed or have not ventured out to seek employment due to personal and extraneous reasons.

YEAR	NO OF YOUTHS TRAINED
2017-18	60
2018-19	636
2019-20	910
2020-21	970

TOTAL 2576

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DETAILS OF EMPLOYERS:

In the **Hydrocarbon Sector**, the trainees have been placed mainly in North India, Rajasthan and Gujarat at organisations such as Adani Solar Pvt. Ltd, Technique Control Facility Bengaluru, Hero Motors, Cosmos Industries, Eco Pure Guwahati, etc.

In the **Health-Care Sector**, they have been placed at Sharda Hospital Noida, Nemcare Hospital Guwahati, Sarvodaya Hospitals, Mamota Homecare, Hayat Hospital, etc.

In the **Apparel Sector**, they have been placed at Shahi Exports Bengaluru, C.R. Garments, Tirupur (Tamil Nadu), etc.

In the **Capital Goods Sector**, the trainees have been placed at Pidilite Industries, Marico Industries, GIS Ahmedabad, ITC Mirza, Dhoot Transmission Pune, Jerico Chemicals etc.

In the **Automotive Sector**, the trainees have been placed at dealers of Bharat Benz and Tata Motors at various places of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

In the **Hospitality and Tourism Sector**, they have been placed at renowned Hotels and Resorts in India and abroad.

The most prestigious training programme under SDIG has been the Technical Intern Training Programme, which is under the Health Sector and envisages placement of Care-Givers at Nursing and Old Age Homes in Japan, to take care of their elderly population. The trainees have passed the qualifying tests but have not been posted owing to travel restrictions due to COVID 19 pandemic.

FUTURE PLANS OF SDIG IN TERMS OF INCREASE OF TRAINING COURSES:

The following courses are planned to be introduced at SDIG:

- 1) Pipe Fitter and Welder for CGD
- 2) Plumber for CGD
- 3) LPG Mechanic
- 4) Hospital Front Office Executive
- 5) X-ray Technician
- 6) Dialysis Technician
- 7) OT Technician
- 8) EMT & GDA-to be enhanced
- 9) Industrial Electrician- to be enhanced
- 10) Industrial Welder-to be enhanced
- 11) Automotive Service Mechanic for two wheelers and four wheelers.

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INFORMATION REGARDING THE HOSTEL FACILITIES OF THE STUDENTS:

As mentioned the trainees are provided free boarding and lodging, in addition to their free training. For their stay during the course duration hostel facility is provided along with fooding. The hostels are managed by the Training Providers and there are caretakers and cooks to provide the services. There is also full time security and no incidents at all have been reported. It is a standard norm that all hostels has to enter Hostel by 6 P.M. Responsible people are appointed to cater to any problems.

Some pertinent details of Hostels are that Learnet Skills have three hostels in the Hatigaon area of the city where the students of the Hatigaon Centre resides. In addition, they are also monitoring the SDIG Hostel at North Guwahati. Pragati Edutech is running six hostels in the Zoo Road and Ambikagiri Nagar area of the City. TRTC has a massive 300 bed boy's hostel and 200 bed girl's hostel at Amingaon, where the trainees are put up. Gram Tarang has two hostels at Rowta and one Hostel at Byrnihat. The food and the menu are regularly checked by SDIG officials and menu displayed at the dining halls. Religlous Festivals such as Saraswati Puja, Vishwakarma Puja, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Independence Day and Republic Day are celebrated. All hostels have Outdoor Sports and Indoor Sports facilities and Cable TV is also there for recreation.

FUTURE REQUIREMENTS OF SDIG TO CATER TO ITS EXPANSION PLANS: To cater to its future expansion plans and also for increase in trainees as well as training courses, there are urgent necessity of three requirements: (a) Increase in Funding from the sponsoring organizations; (b) Look into the possibility of having paid training courses to enable SDIG to be self-sustainable; and (c) Requirement of Government land to set up an additional institute to have a cohesive training set up and reduce the costs. Relevant authorities have been approached with regard to the issues (a) and (c).

HOW TO ADDRESS THE SKILL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES OF THE MINORITY SUB-GROUP:

SDIG does not cater to Post Graduate or Professional pass outs. There is one course for Graduate, i.e. Hospital Front Office Desk. There is also graduate programme for ANM and GNM pass nurses for the TITP Japan placement program. Mainly it caters to Class 10 pass and Class 12 pass drop outs.

For any skilling issues, one has to first look at the market. What is the demand, how much is the shortfall, and how long would it take to fill it up? Based on that the course size or training intake can be formulated. Now this market is made up of various Sectors. They may fall in the Sector of Industry, Health, Agriculture, Pisciculture, Horticulture ,Apparel, Electronics repairing, Capital Goods and Machinery etc etc. Different training programmes will be based on the different Sectors.

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The training course has to be as laid out by National Skill Development Council and the curriculum laid out by National Skill Qualification Format. Only then would standardised training can be provided. The courses are also available under the various Sector Skill Council, depending upon the Trade.

Then one has to look at the availability of trainees. Whether there are sufficient numbers and whether their qualifications make them suitable to attend the training programme. Who is going to mobilize them? Through Advertisement, Social Media or Direct Meetings and Canvassing? Normally the training group does this job because they are more informative to explain the nitty gritty details of the training.

There has to be motivational classes or informative sessions to explain to the trainees about the programmes. Normally this is done before the commencement of the training course. The parents, guardian, and local village heads are also invited and are involved. All stakeholders are involved to make the entire issue completely holistic.

The crucial factor in the entire skilling process are the trainers. Usually there are a part of the larger Training Provider group. The Trainers have to be qualified, motivated and have aptitude to impart Skill education. Unless they do justification to their job, the entire exercise would be wasted. They are the direct interface between the trainees and the training organisation. But however skilled or motivated a trainer would be, all his efforts would be futile if he doesn't have the resources. There must be proper classrooms for the Theory part and adequate Labs and workshops for the Practical part. These must be sufficiently staffed with proper and latest state of the art infrastructure. If the equipments are outdated, then the trainees, after passing out, will have no market value. In addition to the basic training, Soft Skills training also has to be provided, such as Operating Computers, English Speaking, How to face an interview etc.

After the training course is over, the trainees have to appear in Examinations and have to be assessed by Independent Third Party assessors. Only then can they be qualified with Certification to appear for jobs.

The culmination of the entire Skilling Programme is the employment or placement part. If, after completion of the training programme, the trainees are left with having no jobs, or have to search for jobs, the total training programme would be an absolute wastage of resources of Money, Manpower, Time and Materials. Hence the Training Organisation has to simultaneously scout around for jobs and contact employers, industries and various organisations.

The ideal training size is normally 30. That way the trainer can pay full attention to the group and for practical classes, it can be divided into 5 groups. We at SDIG are willing to train any group of trainees in our aforementioned 16 courses, provided we are paid the full training fees in advance, which is presently been done by our Funding Organizations.

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5. Ms. Sumaiyah Begum, Golaghat

- Training in market skills: Youngsters & job seekers should be guided and trained in the current in-demand skills such as coding, Aptitude, analytics, digital marketing, etc. An in-depth study may be conducted to identify the in-demand skills.
- Honing and development of soft skills and interpersonal skills, familiarization with GD, PI, interview, etc.
- More vocational institutes with courses keeping up with market demands should be established in minority-dominated areas. A few suggested courses for vocational training are IT course, tell calling, BPO training, tally/accountancy, etc.
- Courses and training regarding the utilization of opportunities provided by e-commerce platforms to encourage entrepreneurship. This shall include familiarization with buying and selling via e-commerce, legal aspects and registration of business, e client and targeted advertising, understanding supply chains and all other relevant aspects.
- Courses on quality management, maintenance and control of products intended for ecommerce, small business, quality packaging and presentation of products.
- Courses and training on registration of business, legal aspects, etc. Also, dedicated explanatory videos should be uploaded on YouTube for this purpose.
- Baking is a skill found commonly among the community. The skill should be honed and developed among enthusiasts to enable them to make a professional business out of it. Intensive courses by qualified experts may facilitate the initiative.

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6. Dr. Nazrul Haque, Joint Director, Technical Education, Assam

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1. Introduction: The Govt. of Assam under the initiative of Hon'ble Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, has constituted seven Sub-Committee to study various aspects relating to the Indigenous Assamese Muslim communities of Assam. It may be noted here that employment and the occupational pattern of a population group or a community living in a particular area depend on factors like available resources of the households, their educational and skill levels and socio-economic conditions prevailing in the region. In this scenario skill development is an important aspect for inclusive growth and sustainable development as it helps in poverty reduction by improving employability and productivity.

In this connection I would like to submit this report which has been prepared on the basis of available data, relevant information collected from various sources and personal experience.

2. Skill India Mission:

The National Skill Development Mission was officially launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi on 15.07.2015 to create convergence across sectors and States in terms of skill training activities. The National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015 laid out Skill India Mission, and envisaged the creation of Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and accordingly priority sectors are identified based on the skill gap analysis.

Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) under NSDC are the apex organization that facilitates an ecosystem for skilling various sectors that play key role in maintaining training standards through National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) compliant curriculum, certification and assessments by coordinating with the industry, training partners (TP) and academic institutions across India.

Prime Minister Kaushal Vikash Yojana (PMKVY) is a skill certification scheme of Govt. of India to enable a large number of Indian youths to take up industry-relevant skill training for securing a better livelihood. PMKVY strongly focusses upon short term trainings, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and providing placements to the skilled youth of the country.

3. Skill Development Ecosystem in Assam: There are 28 Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) in different districts of Assam under the Directorate of Skill Employment and Entrepreneurship, Govt. of Assam offering courses in various engineering and non-

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engineering trades with intake capacity of around 14000 students per year. The entry qualifications for all these trades start from Class VIII passed to Class X passed. ii. There are 120 Higher Secondary Schools with Vocational streams under the Directorate of Secondary Education, Assam. The entry qualification is Class X passed.

There are 26 Polytechnics in different districts under the Directorate of Technical Education, Assam offering Diploma level Engineering courses with intake capacity around 4400. The minimum entry qualification for all these courses is Class X passed. There are 155 Training Partners (TP)s having 348 Training Centers offering free of cost skill development training programme all over Assam in 121 different Job Roles under Assam Skill Development Mission (ASDM), Govt. of Assam.

There are many Govt. of India sponsored schemes under which various skill development training courses are run from time to time. Few examples of such schemes are Assam State Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) under Urban Development Department, Assam State Rural Livelihood Mission under PN&RD, Govt. of Assam, SAMETI under Agriculture Department, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), Prime Minister Kaushal Vikash Yojana (PMKVY).

Govt. of India agencies like National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT), Tool Room & Training Centre (TRTC), CIPET: Center for Skilling and Technical Support (CSTS) etc. are running industry oriented long-term/short-term/sponsored skill development training programme for the educated youths of Assam.

State Universities and its affiliated Colleges and few other autonomous institutions are also conducting short-term skill development courses. There are different Council/Board/Corporation under Govt. of Assam who have been sponsoring students from different communities of Assam for various professional course.

4. Some Relevant Issues for Discussion relating to Short Term Skill Development Training:

Skill development training is yet to become aspirational amongst the unemployed youths due to various reasons.

- i. The unemployed youths are yet to accept skill development training as a path for career growth.
- ii. Skill development courses are not accepted as a viable alternative to formal education.
- iii. General perception is that skill development training is associated jobs with low dignity and low wages/salaries.

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- iv. Skill training is often considered as the last option for those who have been unable to become successful in formal education.
- v. Youths in the rural areas normally lack information about latest job opportunities and so they fail to acquire the required skills for a particular job.
- vi. Youths in the rural areas normally lack information about latest job opportunities and so they fail to acquire the required skills for a particular job.
- vii. One of the biggest challenges of skill development training programme is to provide placements or self-employment opportunities to the formally trained youths.

5. Discussion based on available data and collected information: Available data of 15 Indigenous Assamese Muslim Community concentrated villages taken as sample from the Census 2011 data:

Sl. No.	District	Village	No. of House-holds	Population Details			Literacy Details in %		
				Total	Male	Female	Overall Literacy	Male	Female
1	Dhubri	Borkanda	208	860	438	422	46.47	47.56	45.32
2	Dhubri	Simlakandi	139	660	335	331	56.65	60.51	52.75
3	Goalpara	Manikpur	531	2467	1222	1245	57.99	69.81	66.03
4	Barpeta	Chenga Muslim Gaon	1317	6385	3382	3003	68.75	73.73	62.95
5	Barpeta	Bhella	983	4626	2404	2222	75.12	81.18	68.59
6	Nalbari	Dipta	872	4470	2315	2155	68.30	73.99	62.18
7	Nalbari	Mulaghata	475	2529	1284	1245	71.87	77.53	65.88
8	Kamrup	Saru Dampur	868	4450	2320	2130	84.27	89.46	78.61
9	Kamrup	Gog	374	1,848	972	876	92.20	94.31	89.83

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10	Kamrup (M)	Kahikuchi	487	2211	1090	1121	74.47	79.24	69.69
11	Darrang	Muslim Ghopa	610	2705	1414	1291	86.58	92.21	80.43
12	Biswanath	Ghahi Gaon	469	2357	1209	1148	85.13	88.36	81.82
13	Nagaon	Chalchali	288	1328	664	664	90.86	92.93	88.75
14	Sivasagar	Namati Gaon	505	2119	1087	1032	93.54	95.75	91.20
15	Dibrugarh	Bokul	391	1765	907	858	86.87	91.91	81.45

- i. The total literacy rate of Assam is 72.19% which is less than average literacy rate 72.98% of India. Also, the male literacy rate is 77.85% and the female literacy rate is 66.27% in Assam.
- ii. Census 2011 figures in the Table above reveal that there are some villages where literacy rates are much below the State literacy rate and there are some other villages where the Literacy rates are near the state average or much above the State average.
- iii. In most of the 15 villages, female literacy rate is much lower than that of male.
- iv. It is observed that villages in upper Assam districts have better literacy rates than villages in lower Assam districts.

Discussion based on information collected from some Indigenous Assamese Muslim Community concentrated villages from the Table:

- i. Number of youths completing technical and professional courses are very less. Similarly, number of youths completing Graduate and Post Graduates courses in Arts, Science, Commerce, etc course are also less.
- ii. In most of these villages there are no centers/facilities for undergoing short-term skill development training courses that are run under various govt. schemes and so the number of youths with skill training are also less.
- iii. In most of these villages educational and schooling facilities for girls are much less compared to that of the boys.
- iv. In most of these villages the unemployment rate is very high and the numbers of govt. employees are also less.



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- v. Most of the youths lack basic qualifications and soft skills to try for jobs in private sector companies.
- vi. As the number of students having graduate and post-graduate qualifications are few in most of these villages and so there are less numbers of adequately educated students to compete in various competitive examinations for govt. jobs.
- vii. The village level non-govt. organizations (NGOs) in most of these villages are not active to create awareness on socioeconomic issues in their respective societies and therefore these villages fail to perform in many social parameters even after having potential to perform better in some specific areas.
- viii. Although in some village, women organizations are active but the overall scenario of the women community is not satisfactory which may be due to their lower level of education level, other social or religious factors.

6. Some Important Issues relating to Indigenous Assamese Muslim Community:

- i. Although religion wise data regarding admissions in various institutions may be obtained but there is no data available to show separately for the students or youths belonging to Indigenous Assamese Muslims communities of Assam.
- ii. As per information received from various sources it may be stated that the overall enrollment in higher educational institutions is not satisfactory. The qualified ones are also not motivated enough to compete for various competitions and this has been a major obstacle for getting gainful or decent livelihood opportunities.
- iii. A high dropout occurs at high school and higher secondary school levels mostly due to poor family background and as such, a large number of students from these communities are unable to take admission in various courses in govt. recognized vocational/technical/medical/para-medical/agriculture/veterinary and various other professional courses as they fail to acquire the entry level educational qualification.
- iv. It has been observed that dropout youths are mostly employed in informal sector and they are not even semi-skilled as they do not want to acquire skills through any course or training etc.
- v. Information from various sources indicate that youths in rural areas mostly suffer from lack of information, motivation and guidance on issues relating to skill development.
- vi. Short-term skill development training facilities in rural areas of Assam are not adequate in general. But this problem seems to be more acute in cases of areas mostly inhabited by the Indigenous Assamese Muslims communities.

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- vii. It is very difficult to motivate the youths with poor economic background to attend short term skill development training courses if it is not organized at their own village or nearby villages.
- viii. It has been observed that in many villages people have abandoned their traditional work/occupation as its products are not competitive in the market. As a result, they have shifted to some other sources of livelihood.

7. Some Suggestions in connection with various aspects of Skill Development relating to Indigenous Assamese Muslims Community:

- i. Steps may be taken to upgrade the employability of youths having higher educational qualifications (graduate, post graduate, professional graduate etc.) depending upon present economic trends and the market potential with collaboration of various Govt. agencies with the objective of making the youths suitable for employment. In this case skill training in the sectors like IT/ITes, Telecom, Tourism & Hospitality, Financial Service, Healthcare, etc. may be preferred.
- ii. It is important to identify vocations which are specific to a particular area or traditional vocations still prevalent in some villages and to take steps for modernizing the functional aspects of the identified vocations by organizing special skill development training to attract youths of the area.
- iii. It is suggested to find out ways to involve village panchayats, municipal bodies, NGOs and civil society organizations to setup Career Guidance Centre in concerned areas to guide the high/higher school going students from financially backward families for successfully passing the examination of Class X/Class XII and thereby helping in minimizing the high dropout rate.
- iv. NGOs and civil society organizations may be engaged to create awareness amongst the targeted communities on the benefits of education and skill training through awareness meeting, audio & visual media, street plays etc.
- v. The concerned authorities can incentivize the recognized Training Partners registered under Govt. agencies for organizing special skill development training programme in Indigenous Assamese Muslim Community inhabited areas.
- vi. Special drive may be taken for skill enhancement programme for the benefit of school/college dropouts who are mostly employed in informal sector in the pattern of 'Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)'. In this case skill training in the sectors like Automotive, Construction, Plumbing, Infrastructure, etc. may be preferred.
- vii. Special drive may be taken for skill enhancement programme in the sectors like Weaving/Handicraft/ Apparel/Healthcare/Beauty & Wellness/ Gem & Jewellery/



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Domestic Worker, etc. with the aim of enhancing livelihood of women who could not pursue their studies beyond Class X or Class XII due to various reasons.

- viii. Assam Minorities Development Board may take new initiative to start special batches for the youths from Indigenous Assamese Muslim community in its ongoing professional training programme in various courses.
- ix. Self-employment lending scheme for youths with skill training may be emphasized for commercially viable and technically feasible venture. In this case sectors like Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Dairy, Fisheries, Technical trades, traditional occupations, Transport, services sector etc. may be preferred.
- x. The training programs details such as optimum size of group, reaching to target community, screening and identification methodology, training facility with machineries & tools/space/area, training course curriculum structure, tracking after completion of training, assessment and certification, etc. must be made as per existing guidelines/norms of Govt. so that the certificates awarded to the trainees are recognized by recruiting agencies or employers everywhere.

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7. Dr. Sanjan Hazarika, Jorhat District

Most of the unemployed lie in the group with qualification below up to / below Class XII. This group can be subdivided into groups, Technical - Non Technical minded, Female and Rural. Training can be provided to them accordingly.

Table 4: Group-wise Proposed Skill & Training Procedure

Group Qualification	Group Division.	Skill Name	Procedure for Skill Development
School Dropout & Upto/ Below Class -XII	Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welding, • Motor Mechanic, • Hydraulic Mechanic, • Plumber, • Tiles Fitting, • LED Bulb Assembling 	In this group, after 5-10 days theoretical training by experienced personnel, the candidates can be sent to industries or different individual firms for practical training. For hydraulic mechanics, the candidates must be trained in established Industries; for which arrangements should be made by the central district committee.
	Non-Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DTP, • Pandal Decoration, • Artificial Flower Making 	For DTP, the candidates can be sent to local DTP centers. The course fee should be paid by the central district committee. For the other two trades, the candidates can be trained in groups through skilled professionals locally.

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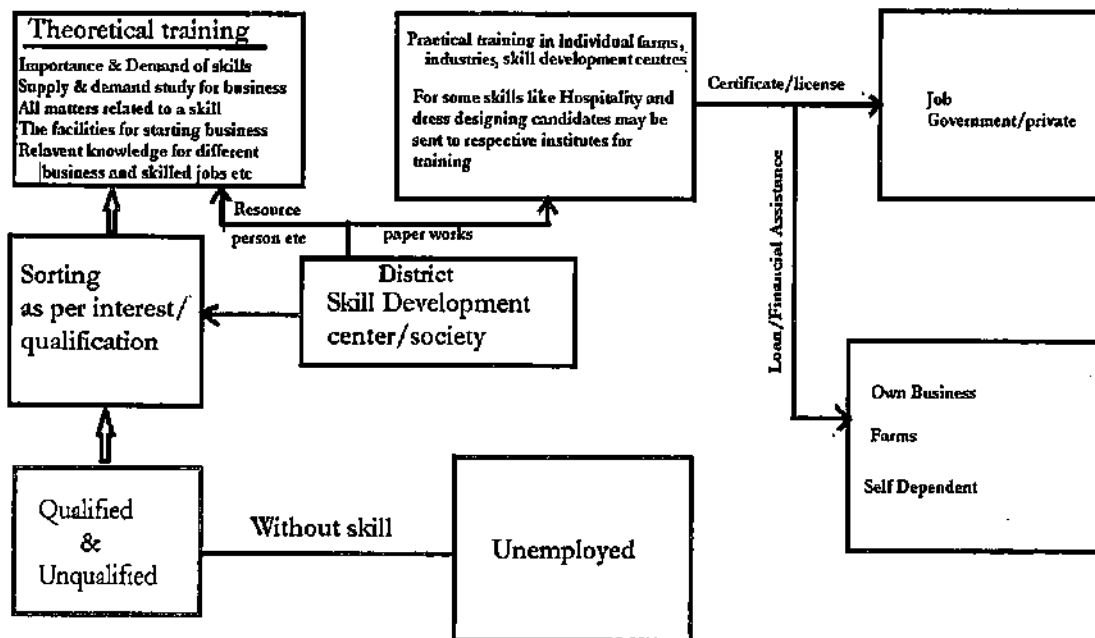
	Female	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewing, Embroidery and Children Dress Manufacturing; • Pickle/ Snacks Making; • Beauty-care & Wellness 	For these categories, the candidates can be trained in groups through skilled professionals locally.
	Rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poultry, • Nursery, • Duck Farming, • Fish Farming, • Bio-Flock Farming 	Theoretical Training can be provided with the help of Agriculture, Veterinary and Fishery Deptts. It comprises selection of site, necessary infrastructure requirements, medicine and other chemicals which are to be used. Practical trainings can be arranged with consultation with local farms.
Degree Level	Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A.C., Fridge Mechanic • Dress Designing • Common Service Centre • e-Commerce 	Interested candidates can be given courses in relevant fields in different organizations.
	Non - Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DTP, • Hospitality Management. • Photography and Video Editing 	Interested candidates can be given courses in relevant fields in different organizations.

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Professional Graduate, Post Graduate, MBA, etc.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of Recycling Plants, • Small Scale Industry • Event Management 	Interested candidates can be given courses in relevant fields in different organizations.
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He has also suggested a flowchart for the processes proposed as follows:

Flowchart of Group-wise Proposed Skill Training Procedure





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8. Dr. Nurul Amin, Associate Professor and Head Department of Geology, Jagannath Barooah College, Jorhat, Assam.

Govt. of Assam, for the first time, has taken initiatives for the betterment of the indigenous Muslims of the state, for which Govt. deserve appreciation. So far, the issues related to the skill development is concerned, both Central and State government has taken different schemes, through various agencies, for imparting skills to the employable force of the country. Still it is observed that the concept of skill development in India is yet to strike the mind of unemployed / under employed people at large. As per the NITI Aayog report of 2015 only 10% of total work force of India is trained, out of which only 3% is formally trained and rest 7% is trained through informal mode. The situation might have slightly improved in last 5 years. Still it is much below the required level. Another important observation was that the number of unemployed are high among the persons with higher education. School drop outs are better employed even though they are not eligible for formal mode of skill development programme. The report have lots of other observations, but above mentioned observations are important from the development of skills of Assamese Muslims. Although different sections of the society has got the benefit of different schemes of government on skill development, it is still not clear that how much benefit of such schemes has reached the indigenous Muslims of Assam. The above mentioned report shows that, in India, participation of minority communities in such programmes are limited.

So, a detail assessment is necessary in this regards. Whatever will be said here will be based on perception, not on any field based survey. The present effort should aim to analyze the situation holistically. Solution for all issues may not be possible for the government, but finding of the study will give a picture where the community stands today in terms of skill development. This may be a guideline for others, who want to work in this field.

Present Situation: It is observed that in most of the areas of Assam the education of indigenous Muslims restricted to senior secondary or higher secondary level. The number of students pursuing higher education or any other professional education is limited. People of the community living in urban and semi urban area have more aligned to the higher and professional education, but the scenario is poor in most of the rural areas. Another important observation (which need validation through proper survey) is that most the students leave formal education joins some tread or business. Based on the nature of tread as well as social value, in some area the most of the students leave school before class 10 and in other area it goes up to 10+2 level. So, where the distribution of the workforce is concerned, most of them are dropout between high school and higher secondary level, and in some cases up to undergraduate level. Under such condition any programme on skill development for Assamese Muslim should focus to address these

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groups. The national scenario is also similar to this, as dominant labour force is of age group between 21 and 30 for male. For female such age is 31 to 40.

So far the education of boy and girl students are concern, it appears that in some areas numbers of girls pursuing higher and professional education is higher than boys.

Another observation about this ethnic group is that the indigenous Muslims are less interested in acquiring new skills as well as up skilling and re-skilling of existing one. This is also at per with the national scenario. For this, introduction of new skill among this ethnic group need more effort.

What can be done? Under the above situation following course of action may be taken -

- 1) Based on the principle of 'learn and earn', priority should be given to skilling, upskilling and reskilling of members of the target community who are already in some trade or business. The necessary skill may be selected after consultation with experts in the field and need of the potential groups. Example of some potential groups comprise:
 - a) The huge workforce engaged in Agar oil extraction in Golaghat district;
 - b) People from Sarthebari(*sic.*; HajoMoriapatty?)area engaged traditionally in the business of brass work ('Kah - Pitol'); and
 - c) The huge population of Moria(*sic.*; Zula?) community engaged traditionally in the trade of cloth.
- 2) Next priority should be given to the group who are interested in acquiring or upgrading specific types of skill. For that, application may be invited from the interested group and NGOs who want to get engaged in that process.
- 3) For those who are not familiar with the concept of skill and its importance, awareness and motivational programmes may be organized at different places.
- 4) Initially there should be selective and focused target for skilling, instead of having large numbers of programmes. To ensure that more people get involved in skill development programme, there is a need to create, at least, few success stories from which others would be encouraged.
- 5) Selected skills for the community should be as per programme provided by different government agencies, so that help from such agencies may be taken in due time.
- 6) The students engaged in higher and professional education are generally exposed to the existing facilities of skill development. For them, motivational and counselling programme may be organized, whenever necessary.

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7) Skill development for girls may be considered separately; as their priority would be different from boys.

How to implement:

- 1) Success of the process of skilling will depend on the action of the Government as well as recipient community. As Government has already got its mechanism to deliver the processes through the relevant Ministry/ Departments/ Centres, the community shall have to get ready for this. To start with, a few NGOs/ social organizations may be engaged to organize programmes for their localities. Such NGOs/ organizations may be given the responsibility to communicate with the concerned Ministry/ Departments for skill development programmes as per their requirements. An inter-mediator or help desk for the newcomers shall be necessary at the beginning.
- 2) There are processes to register any NGO/ centre with the Government Departments who are involved in skill development programmes. The Government may be requested to relax the norms for the registration of new NGOs/ organizations from the community to ensure more participation.
- 3) Different PSUs of the State may be approached to organize skill development programmes for the indigenous Muslim living in their operational areas, for which request letter or recommendation from the State Govt. may be attached.
- 4) Government may also be requested to run special training programmes for indigenous Muslims at various existing ITIs, mini-ITIs and other institutes/ centers offering skills. To encourage the participation, financial assistance/ scholarship may be given to the participants.
- 5) The National Education Policy 2020 has proposed skill development programmes at the school and college level. The educational institutes of the localities inhabited by members of the target community must be "concerned" (*sic*; consulted?) while selecting the course and it should be as per the requirement of the localities.

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9. **Md. Rainur Ahmed, Central President, All Assam Goriya Moriya Parishad, Mukalmua, Nalbari, PIN Code: 781126..**

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নামনি অসমৰ খিলঞ্জীয়া মুছলমান অধ্যুষিত এখন জিলা হ'ল নলবাৰী। এই নলবাৰী জিলাৰ দক্ষিণ প্ৰান্তৰ কেইবাখনো গাঁওৰ লোকে স্বাধীনতাৰ পূৰ্বেৰে পৰা মৰাপাট খেতি কৰি সেই মৰাপাটৰ জাৰত বিক্ৰী কৰি উপাৰ্জন কৰি আহিছে। নলবাৰী জিলাৰ মুকালমুৱা আৰু পেৰাধৰা সাপ্তাহিক বজাৰত এই মৰাপাট বিক্ৰী হয়। এই দুই বজাৰত প্ৰতি বছৰে ২০ হাজাৰৰ পৰা ৩০ হাজাৰ কুইন্টল মৰাপাট বিক্ৰী হয়। এই মৰাপাটখিনি অসমৰ বাহিৰলৈ ৰপ্তানি হয়। কাৰণ অসমত মৰাপাটৰ পৰা নিত্য ব্যবহাৰ্য সামগ্ৰী উৎপাদনৰ বাবে কোনো উদ্যোগ নাই।

নলবাৰী জিলাৰ ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰৰ উত্তৰপাৰৰ এই খিলঞ্জীয়া মুছলমান গাঁওৰ কৃষকসকলৰ দ্বাৰা উৎপাদিত উক্ত ২০ হাজাৰৰ পৰা ৩০ হাজাৰ কুইন্টল মৰা পাটৰ কেঁচামালেৰে এটি বহুমুখী মৰাপাট উদ্যোগ স্থাপনৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব পৰা যায়। বস্তা, চটি, ৰছী, বেগ আদিৰ উপৰিও নিত্য ব্যবহাৰ্য সামগ্ৰীৰ উৎপাদন কৰিব পৰা এটি অত্যাধুনিক কাৰিকৰী কৌশলযুক্ত উদ্যোগত মৰাপাটৰ এই কেঁচামালখিনিয়ে ই যুঁঠে। এই উদ্যোগত হেজাৰোধিক নিবনুৱা সংস্থাপিত হোৱাৰ সম্ভাৱনা আছে। ইয়াৰো পৰি উৎপাদিত সামগ্ৰীৰ এখন সফল বজাৰ অসমৰ যুৱপ্ৰজন্মই চলাই নিবলৈও সক্ষম হ'ব।

ইয়াৰ বাবে প্ৰয়োজন হ'ব চৰকাৰৰ তৰফৰ পৰা সঠিক কৌশল প্ৰশিক্ষণ আৰু আৰ্থিক সাহায্য। নলবাৰী জিলাৰ এই প্ৰস্থাবিত মৰাপাট উদ্যোগটিৰ দ্বাৰা নলবাৰী জিলাৰ উপৰিও নামনি অসমৰ বহু প্ৰশিক্ষণ প্ৰাপ্ত শিক্ষিত যুৱক যুৱতী উপকৃত হ'ব। সমান্তৰাল ভাবে মৰাপাটৰ কৃষি কৰ্মত জড়িত লোকসকলো উপকৃত হ'ব। এই উদ্যোগটি নলবাৰী জিলাৰ বৰক্ষেত্ৰী বিধানসভা সমষ্টিৰ বৰক্ষেত্ৰী ৰাজহ চক্ৰৰ অন্তৰ্গত যিকোনো স্থানত স্থাপন কৰাৰ সুবিধা আছে। উল্লেখযোগ্য যে বৰক্ষেত্ৰী বিধান সভা সমষ্টিৰ লচিমা গাঁওত মৰাপাট ধূনা কৰা এটি উদ্যোগ ইতিমধ্যে স্থাপন হৈছিল যদিও উৎপাদনক্ষম উদ্যোগৰ অভাৱত কেবা বছৰো ধৰি নিষ্ক্ৰিয় অবস্থাত পৰি আছে। এটি উন্নত আৰু আধুনিক প্ৰযুক্তি-সম্পন্ন মৰাপাট উদ্যোগ প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰিলে এই মৰাপাট ধূনা কৰা কাৰখানাটিও পুনৰ সক্রিয় কৰিব পৰা যাব।

আমাৰ পৰামৰ্শ নলবাৰী জিলাৰ মুকালমুৱা মহকুমাত স্থানীয় মৰাপাটৰ কেঁচামালেৰে এটি বহুমুখী মৰাপাট উদ্যোগ স্থাপনৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব লাগে।

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10. Mr. Ashiq Zaman, IRS

(as translated from the original Assamese)

- 1. There are no records in any decennial Census, sample survey and even independent research-based assessment till date about the indigenous Assamese Muslim community of Assam. There are thus no officially published information about the population of the target community. Therefore, whatever suggestion may be given by the Sub-Group would be based entirely on perception.

Hence, it has been suggested from his end to conduct a socio-economic survey of the target community by a prominent research institution like "Amiya" (sic.) Kumar Das Institute of Social Sense and Development before the Sub-Group gives any final recommendations with the Government. Even if the sample size is small, one such survey would give proper justification for the Sub-Group's suggestions/ recommendations. It would also facilitate the Government/ administration in implementing the survey-based recommendations. Besides, the report of that survey would remain a historical document for the masses.

- 2. The rate of education rate is not a problem for the target community. The main educational problem the indigenous Assamese Muslims is the high rate of school dropouts, besides the lack of higher and technical education. Whether it is Goriya or Desi, all the indigenous Assamese Muslim parents do get their children enrolled in the school properly. But whether it is due to poverty, educational environment or "social laziness" (sic.); the boys fail at the school level most of the time - thereby "increasing the burden of unemployment" (sic.). In the indigenous villages of Lower Assam, may be due to poverty, there is a rush to leave schools and colleges and go to Kerala to work. After working there for a few months, they come back unemployed. School drop-outs thus are currently a major problem in the indigenous Assamese Muslim community.

Hence, it has been opined that the Sub-Group on Skill Development has a lot to do in this regard. The school drop-out students need to be transformed from being unemployed to being employable by providing them with proper skill development. He noted that nowadays in cities like Guwahati, people in professions like electricians, plumbers, etc. earn more than many salaried government servants. He suggested that Government polytechnics/ITIs should be set up in areas populated by indigenous Assamese Muslims. He further suggested that the Government should provide funds and other facilities for the setting up of private ITIs in these areas.

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3. Although only a few numbers of students from the indigenous Assamese Muslim villages go to Madrassas, yet the trend currently being observed is that that many *khareji* (private) madrassas are being created in villages, especially *banat* madrassas for girls. There is no proper curriculum of these *khareji* madrasas, there are no proper teachers; so much so that more often than not their education has no recognition. While he believes that there is undoubtedly a need for religious education, but such kind of madrassas are not fit even for religious education. The unscrupulous business undertaken by a section in the name of religious education should be stopped. The future of young children should not be mortgaged in the name of religious education. So, he feels that it is important to bring madrassas under some Government regulatory authorities. If permission from the Government/ administration is required to open private schools, then why such permission should not be made mandatory to open madrassas? On the whole, the mushrooming of madrassas should be stopped, and also the education system of the madrassas should be forced to include modern content in its curriculum. Besides, those students who are already studying in Madrasa, and who would not be able to be taught as per the new curriculum, should be compulsorily enrolled in ITI. So that, they can earn their own livelihood in future. Otherwise, they would go and set up a new madrassa elsewhere and never let this dreadful chain be broken.
4. Having computer knowledge is an essential part of modern life, and such knowledge is very important if someone wants to do any job or business. But the rate of computer literacy among indigenous Assamese Muslims in Assam is unfortunately very low. Skill Development Sub-Group can play an important role in this regard by recommending a drive to be undertaken to make at least one person from every household of indigenous Assamese Muslims computer literate. Computer knowledge will undoubtedly help in the skill development of young people of the target community, and also increase their job qualifications.
5. There is a huge demand for some skills but there are no skilled people in Assam in that line. One such skill is stenography. There is no institution in Assam where stenography and sectoral assistants are trained. Therefore, there are no stenographers from Assam even in an office of the Central Government of Assam and the North East. Thus, if only this skill is well followed by the Sub-Group on Skill Development, and if a few institutions teaching stenography can be set up in the areas inhabited by the target community; then many of such members of that community shall be able to be recruited, almost without competition, in Government jobs.

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- 6. Agriculture is the livelihood of most indigenous Assamese Muslims. Therefore, agro-based skill development should be given the highest importance. One of the main problems in the agriculture sector of Assam is the lack of mechanization. Currently, primitive technologies and equipments are used for cultivation; as a result of which, the productivity of agriculture sector in Assam is negligible as compared to other states. The Government has been focusing on mechanization for the past decade; and has been providing many tractors, power tillers, other machinery to small farmers. But those machines have been provided mainly to SC/ST farmers. The irony of poor indigenous Assamese Muslim farmers is that they have been included within the 'General Caste'; so that, they do not receive any Government facility for development of their agriculture sector.

Therefore, the Sub-Group on Skill Development has a "historical role" (*sic.*) to play in the skill development of indigenous farmers. Instead of traditional rice cultivation, commercial agriculture like stevia, aloe vera, lemon grass, Colorado capsicum, vegetables in demand in the market should be focused upon. The farmers should be assisted not only in increasing production, but also in effecting value addition by taking up processing of the original agricultural produce. Then only the economic condition of the farmers shall change for the better. Another major problem in the agriculture sector is market connectivity. Due to lack of market, farmers do not get a fair price for their produce. In this case, a market agency of indigenous Assamese Muslim farmers should also be set up by the Government under the model of 'Trifed'.

- 7. Sports has become an important skill in the present age. It has also become very easy to get a Government/ private job through sports. The Government has also launched various schemes to protect the future of sportspersons. Therefore, sports should be popularized again in indigenous Assamese Muslim areas by doing away with the religious taboos.

There is immense popularity of sports like athletics, swimming, cricket, volleyball, football etc. Only talented players should be identified from the village area and brought to Sports Authority of India, etc. In this regard, the Sub-Group on Skill Development can work out a road map from training to talent development by contacting the Regional Sports Authority of India. Every Muslim village has *eidgah maidan*, which except for two days of the year lies vacant for most of the time. *Eidgahs* can be converted into centres of sports and other skill development.

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- 8. Even after having skills many youth of the target community have to sit at home for want of jobs or funds. Many young people with skills cannot stand on their own feet due to lack of funds. For the poor population of the community, the idea of capital formation is still limited to buying LIC policies. Therefore, the Government should create a separate Finance Corporation for indigenous Assamese Muslims under the model of National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation; so that, lack of available funds does not hamper the dream of skilled indigenous Assamese Muslim youth to become self-reliant.

Besides, in the age of online retailing, people are able to make good profits by selling different products through e-commerce portals like Amazon, Flipkart, etc. sitting at home. There is a demand all over the world through the internet for handicrafts, textiles, tribal art, and many agricultural produce of Assam. Therefore, providing a little bit of training to educated unemployed youth will easily enable them to become an online retailer.