

PREFACE

The North-Eastern part of India at the foothills of eastern Himalaya Consists of eight states viz.; Assam, Arunahal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. The region covers an area of 262,230 sq. kilometers with a population of 38,857,769 as per 2011 census. In terms of geographical size, North East region constitute about 8 percent of the total India's size and represents 3.10 percent of total Indian population. The region shares two percent of border with the mainland of the country and more than 98 percent is linked with international border i.e. Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Nepal. Due to its geographical location and proximity to the neighbouring countries, the NER has natural trading advantages. The entire region presents a unique natural beauty with lush green thick forests, hills and mountains, flora and fauna all contribute to make the North-East an abode of

mother Nature. Coupled with the luring natural beauty, the cultural heritage of various ethnic population of the region has always been a source of attraction to people from other parts of the country and abroad since ancient times.

The pace of industrialization was started in this region with the establishment of first oil refinery in Asia at Digboi in 1901. Tea industry of this region was about 170 years old. Tea was first discovered in upper Brahmaputra valley by Robert Bruce in 1823. The development of tea industry led to the development of coal and oil industries in this region initially and it was also the cause of development of railway, paving the way for infrastructure development. The economy of this region is mainly agrarian. The land base of the rural economy in NER is not much promising. The land form is not very attractive for cultivation except in some parts of Assam, Manipur and Tripura. Along with settled agriculture, Jhum cultivation (Shifting Cultivation) is also practiced by a few indigenous groups of people.

The pace of economic development of this region is very slow due to lack of basic elements and cannot be equated with that of the mainland. The inaccessible terrain, internal disturbances, resource endowment, ethnic issues, along with strategic advantages are the hindrances for sustainable development of this region. The economic elements pertaining to the development of this region should be unearthed in all possible cases, and all growth oriented efforts are to be har-

nessed with resource endowments of this region. The Government of India announced the "Look East Policy" in the early 1990 to pave the way for international trade between NE states and the South East Asian Countries. NEER is the "Gate Way to South East Asia" and Look East policy is viewed as especially favourable for boosting trade between N.E. India and the South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Jhanji H.N.S. College is celebrating its glorious Golden Jubilee in 2013-14. On this occasion the Principal and teacher of this college contribute a publication fund for publication of books in different disciplines. This research publication is a humble effort in this regard. The book North East India, some issues of Sustainable Development is a compilation of research paper contributed by distinguished academicians and research scholars. I extend my sincere and deep gratitude to eminent academicians and research scholars for their valuable academic contribution. I am thankful to our honourable Principal Dr. Manjit Gogoi for his help and co-operation of this academic effort.

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Dr. Jayanta Gogoi

CONTENTS

1. Agricultural Sustainability in North East India : .
Problems and Prospects
B. N. Borthakur, Upasona Sarmah 11
2. Tea, Maniram Dewan and Tocklai
Dr. Ananda Chanda Dutta 34
3. Sustainable Development of Tourism in North-East
Dr. Pranjal Bezborah, Ms. Arpana Chetia 52
4. Evolution of three Margi dance traditions of Assam and
Persistence of dying Nati dance tradition
Dr. Jagannath Mahanta 61
5. Indian Life Insurance : The Pre-Nationalisation Episode
Dr. Bhupesh Bhagawati 69
6. Behavioural Psychology and its Impact upon
the Present Society
Dr. Krishna Prasad Gogoi 76
7. Foothills Soil Deposition and Loss of Paddy Productivity
A Big Question of Sustainable Development in
NE Region of India
Dr. Rofique Ahmed 94
8. Study on the wild edible fruits of
Charaideo sub-division, Sivasagar, Assam
Dr. Manjit Gogoi 115

9.	Role of Commercial Banks for Development of MSMEs in Assam Dr. Jayanta Gogoi	133
10.	Globalisation and Sustainability of Traditional Assamese Culture Dr. Birinchi Kr. Borah	146
11.	Look East Policy and the North Eastern Region of India Mira Bala Borah	153
12.	Role of Weaving Sector In the Economic Upliftment of Mishing Women A Case Study of Sivasager District Minati Gogoi	166
13.	Ecotourism and Sustainable Development Pranjal Protim Borah	178
14.	Industrial Development of The Ahom Period with Special Reference to Textile Industries Tirtha Baruah	182
15.	Fish Cultivation in India with Reference to North-East Region Bireswar Neog	191
16.	Role of two Proverty Alleviation Programmes in Social Development of Rural Community of Gaurisagar Development Block - Sivasagar, Assam Kundil Kumar Mudoj	201
17.	RUSA for Quality Assurance of Higher Education in North East India Noni Rajkhowa	201
18.	List of Contributors	219