

CHAPTER-7

The Changing Scenario of The Border Villages Under Study

The society in this border area is not static rather it is more dynamic in nature than other non-border areas. The dynamics or changes are observed in different areas of livelihoods of the people living in the border villages under study. The dynamics can be understood through the study of society and culture practiced in the villages from the historical, social, cultural, economic, political and infrastructural points of view. These changes can be discussed in the following ways.

7.1: Changes Through History

This frontier area previously basically six to ten decades before was sparsely inhabited by human beings. The different animals like monkey, donkey, snakes and others were the major living beings and a large part of this area was covered by jungles of different trees and shrubs. The people living in this area were not free from different diseases. The black fever and different skin diseases were the enemy of the people living in this area. The changes in the population structure started mainly after sixties. A large number of the families of different communities started to migrate in this area after the Naxalbari Movement and the frequent land slides in hill areas in Darjeeling district. It is found that before the sixties the population structure of this area was consisted of the Rajbanshis and some tribal communities like the Santals, the Mundas and the Haris. The Nepalese and the Bengalees came to this village much latter. Initially the people feared to settle in this area but presently this area has been the living ground of the peoples of different communities. For this reason a special type of socio-cultural relationship has been developed in this area. Here the social relationship developed in this area may be termed as pluralistic society and in terms of culture it may be called as multi-culture. Here it is very hard to consider a particular community as non-migrant. Presently the

villages have been living place of migrant people mainly. It is already mentioned in the table no-2.7 that there are more than 50 percent migrant families live in the village named Chhoto Dilsaram Jote. Here the people have come to this village through different levels of migration. The levels of migration are migration from other villages, migration from other districts, migration from other states, and migration from other countries. The numbers of the families migrated through those levels are 15 or 21.16 percent, 11 or 15.50 percent, 2 or 2.81 percent and 10 or 14.08 percent respectively. Similarly in case of the village named Dulal Jote it is found that the population structure is mainly consisted of the migrant families. Here the number of the migrant families is 83 or 77.57 percent and the number of the non-migrant or early migrant families is 24 or 22.43 percent. The people of migrant families have come to this village through different levels of migration. Thses are migration from other villages, migration from other districts, migration from other states and migration from other countries. The numbers of the migrant families immigrated through the above levels of migration are 59 or 55.14 percent, 5 or 4.67 percent, 3 or 2.80 percent and 16.96 percent respectively (Table no.2.15). The villagers are created on the lands provided by the Rajbanshi land owners. The names of these villages are symbolic to the community. Chhoto Dilsaram Jote is created on the lands given by Dilsaram Das who was a local Rajbanshi jotedar and the lands of Dulal Jote were also given by a local Rajbanshi jotedar named Dulal Singha. Both the jotedars are not alive. Presently the Rajbanshis are not in their previous land holding position.

7.2: Infrastructural Change

Previously the villagers living in both the villages suffered from many infrastructural problems like there are problems in road communication, availability of medical facilities, market facilities, educational facilities and others. The villagers did not get the buses frequently, then they had to go to Panitanki more for bus and the condition of the road was very bad. But this situation is changing. In case of the Dulal Jote, the villagers enjoy some well road communication than the villagers of Chhoto Dilsaram Jote. In Dulal Jote a pucca road passes through the village. But in case of Chhoto Dilsaram Jote, the internal road to enter the village is kuchcha and this is not fitted for the passing

of a truck. Only the rickshaw, van, maruti van can play through the road. The villagers of both the villages can go to any nearby places like Bagdogra, Siliguri etc of India and Jhapa and Morang districts of Nepal very easily by bus at Panitanki more. Bagdogra airport is also located very near to the village.

Due to the increasing population in this area, the medical facilities are also increasing. The villagers are depended on two hospitals (i.e. Kharibari and Naxalbari Hospitals) located nearby the villages. In critical cases the villagers take their patients in North Bengal Medical College. It is said that there were many problems in those two hospitals. There were the shortage of beds, shortage of doctors, nurses and medicines also. But presently many positive changes have been occurred in this field. Now the numbers of doctors, nurses, beds and medicines are increased. There is an Anganwary centre found in Chhoto Dilsaram Jote. In making people conscious about the some common diseases and their treatment , the role of an NGO named BHORUKHA is important. The office of the NGO is located at Dulal Jote.

Previously the villagers were depended on the Naxalbari market to meet their needs. Here the conditions of the market houses were not good and varieties of goods were not available in the market. During the rainy season the people faced difficulty. But presently, the villagers are not totally depended on the Naxalbari market only. In this connection the role of another local market (i.e. Panitanki market) is important. The villagers are also depended on a local hat named Batasir hat. The villagers sell their own production and they also purchase their necessary goods. The villagers purchase some foreign goods in these local hat and markets. Presently the pucca rooms are made as shoping rooms and the variety of goods are gradually increasing in all the markets.

It is said that the use of motor cycle, telephones, television, mobile phones, news papers etc were very limited in both the villages. Then the cycles were the main means of local communication for the villagers. But this situation has changed largely. The use of motor cycles, telephones, television, mobile phones, newspapers and the establishment of post office in Dulal Jote is an important change in the communication system in the villages under study.

It is informed that previously the numbers of the primary schools, secondary schools were very limited in this area and even in those schools the numbers of the teachers, benches, even the pucca rooms were also very limited in some schools. Many students took admission in Dilsaram Jote primary school located at Chhoto Dilsaram Jote and some students had to take admission in Nandaprasad high school mainly after completing their primary education. The students of different linguistic groups took admission in the same school. But this situation has changed in large extent. Now-a-days a separate primary school has been established at Dulal Jote for Nepali medium students. Presently the children of these villages can take admission in some other nearby high schools like Shyamdhan Jote High School, Krishna Kanta High School, and Kharibari High School. Even some colleges are established in some distant places from the villages under study and some Nepali students take their college education from the colleges located at hill regions in Darjeeling district also.

7.3: Economic Change

In the field of economy, it is found that the agriculture was the main occupation or the main source of income of the people living in the villages under study and the families were mainly depended on single occupation for their livelihood. But presently this situation has changed largely. The diversification of economic activities is one of the important economic changes occurred in the villages located in this frontier area. Presently the villagers are not restricted to their traditional occupations only. They accept some new occupations also. These new occupations accepted by the villagers are government service, driving, rickshaw pulling, work of labour contractor, masonry, work at bus syndicate at Panianki more, business, work at factory in other states, like Delhi, Gujarat etc. It is already mentioned that in case of Chhoto Dilsaram Jote it is found that the villagers of almost all the communities are engaged in several economic activities found in local and nearby areas. Here the participation of the villagers in other than agriculture is a fact. In the village 34 or 47.89 percent families are depended on agriculture and 37 or 52.11 percent families are depended on other economic activities like agricultural labour, rickshaw pulling, business, government service, work at petrol pump, tea garden labour etc. The participation of the people in other than

agricultural activities is observed among almost all the communities living in this village. Among the Rajbanshis the numbers of families participated in agriculture and other than agriculture are 24 or 44.44 percent and 30 or 55.56 percent respectively and among the Santals the numbers of the families accepted agriculture and other than agriculture are 9 or 69.23 percent and 4 or 30.77 percent respectively (Table no.3.1).

In case of Dulal Jote more or less similar situation is followed. In this village the numbers of families depended on agriculture and other than agriculture are 60 or 56.07 percent and 47 or 43.93 percent respectively. The community wise participation in those activities is as follows. The numbers of families of the Rajbanshis depended on agriculture and other than agriculture are 6 or 22.22 percent and 21 or 77.78 percent respectively and the numbers of families among the Nepalese are 54 or 73.97 percent and 19 or 26.03 percent respectively in the above activities (Table no.3.4)

Previously, a large number of the villagers did not know about illegal cross-border trading activity but presently the participation in illegal cross-border trading activities (i.e. participation in carrying goods illegally through the Mechi River and roads) gets much popularity among the villagers living in the villages under study. In case of business the vegetables, rice, and battle leaves play important role in cross-border trading activities. It is found that due to diversification of economic activities the development in agriculture is not very much remarkable in this area mainly in the villages under study. But the changes in varieties of production have been started. And at the same time the introduction of new agricultural tools and techniques like pump sets, spray machines etc for irrigation and protection of products, use of high yielding seeds, have been started by some of the rich agricultural families. Presently some of the cultivators produce different vegetables like brinjals, tomatoes, chillies, potatoes etc for selling purpose. It is informed that the cultivators previously cultivated those products for households' consumption mainly. But now the orientation has changed from the household consumption to market orientation. Previously no shop was found in both the villages. But presently there are tea shops, grocery shops, found within the village boundary and there were some shops located in Panitanki market mainly.

Another important change in economic life of the people is the gradual lessening of land holding size. It is said that there were some jotedar Rajbanshi families in Chhoto Dilsharam Jote and some nearby villages .They have large amount of lands under their possession. They donated lands for different purposes in different periods. Even some villagers have been named by the Rajbanshi donators. But presently the size of land holding has been lessened very much. In case of Chhoto Disarm Jote it is found that the number of the small size land holding families is larger than the number of families having some more amounts of lands. It is found that the number of families having lands from 1to 6 bighas is 58 or 83.09 percent and the number of the families having lands from 6 to 18 bighas is 12 or 16.91 percent. And more or less similar situation is observed among almost all the communities living in this village (Table no.3.2).

In case of inter generational occupational mobility it is not easy to say that there is only the upward or downward mobility is followed among the villagers living in the villages. A large number of people of both the villages have accepted some occupations of low status like rickshaw pulling, etc. and some people have accepted high prestigious occupations like government service, work at bus syndicate, work at petrol pump etc. Here it will be better to say that both the upward and downward mobility are occurred among the villagers living in both the villages.

The economic role of the women is very important. It is found that previously the women of some of the communities living in the villages did not work outside their houses. They took part in household works mainly. But now-a-days, the participation of the women is not limited in household works only. The women of almost all the communities take part in agricultural activities inside and outside of their houses. They work as agricultural labourers also. Biside the plantation of paddy, they take part in the cultivation of maize, chilly, potatoes and some other vegetables. Here both the married and unmarried females of some families take part in those economic activities. Here a large number of women can do many agricultural activities except ploughing. Even the role of women in maintaining the livestock is also important. Actually the

traditional concept of division of labour between male and female is not maintained here.

7.4: Social Change

It is already mentioned that the Rajbanshis were the numerically, socio-culturally, and politically dominant in this frontier area. Except the Rajbanshis the number of other communities like the Santals was very small. But gradually the dominance of the Rajbanshis has decreased. The social structure has been formed by the multi-communities. In case of Chhoto Dilsaram Jote it is found that initially the Rajbanshis mainly lived in this village. Till now they are living in this village and in some other nearby villages as major group. After the Rajbanshis, the Santals and the potters came to this village. Thus the social situation has changed in a large extent. Similarly the village Dulal Jote has been formed in the lands taken from the Rajbanshis and presently in this village the number of the Rajbanshis is very small. The Rajbanshis are the early settlers in this village. After the Rajbanshis, the Haris, the Nepalese came and settled in this village. Now-a-days the Nepalese are numerically dominant in this village.

Actually the lower caste people are living in this frontier area. In case of the village Chhoto Dilsaram Jote mainly the scheduled caste and tribes are living for long time. Here the social stratification is observed on the basis of possession of property and occupation. It is found that the some of the rich Rajbanshis use the term colony to indicate the area where the rickshaw pulling Rajbanshis live. In case of the village Dulal Jote there are some heterogeneity on the basis of caste identity is found among the Nepalese but the larger number of families are belonged to lower rank of social hierarchy. So the caste difference doses not act as an important factor in social stratification among the Nepali people living in this village.

Changes in family organization in this frontier area are very much remarkable. It is informed that some people lived in joint families and the size of the joint families was very large. The joint families where they lived were mainly patrilineally joined. The role of the head was very dominant .The role of joint families in possessing lands, imparting education to their younger generations, earning white colour jobs or high prestigious jobs was more

effective than role of small or nuclear families. But presently, this situation has changed in a large extent. In Chhoto Dilsaram Jote, it is found that the number of joint families is very smaller than the number of nuclear families. In this village the number of joint and nuclear families are 9 or 12.68 percent and 57 or 80.28 percent respectively. The number of joint families is in decrease in almost all the communities living in this village (Table no 4.2). The number of joint families is also small in Dulal Jote. Here the numbers of joint and nuclear families are 20 or 18.69 percent and 76 or 71.02 percent respectively and the number of the joint families is smaller than the number of nuclear families among almost all the communities living in this village also (Table no 4.18).

Presently the size of the families found in both the villages under study has been smaller than previous size of the families. In case of Chhoto Disaram Jote, it is observed that large number of (i.e. 44 or 61.67 percent) families have population between 4 to 6 persons. The number of families having 7 to 9 and more than 10 persons is very small (Table no 4.1). In Dulal Jote, more or less similar situation is observed. It is found that the number of families having 4 to 6 persons is highest among almost all the communities living in this village and the number of the families having 7 to 9 persons or more than 10 persons is very low (Table no 4.17).

It is informed that the depth of generations in composition of the families was very wide. Previously the joint families were consisted of more than three generations and in each joint family had a large size of members. Here some changes are introduced in the joint families found in both the villages. The change in the depth in generations is a fact. In Chhoto Dilsaram Jote, the depth of generations in joint families' is limited within three generations mainly. In this village the number of joint families having three generations is 5 or 55.56 percent out of total 9 joint families (Table no 4.3). In Dulal Jote, the number of the joint families having composition of three generations is highest among all the joint families. The number of joint families having composition of three generations is 11 or 55 percent out of total 20 or 100 percent joint families (Table no 4.17).

In case of relationship between family and occupations, it is informed that previously the members were depended on agriculture and agricultural labour activities mainly. But presently the villagers are not completely depended on those activities only. The participation in non-agricultural activities is in gradual increase. This is observed in both the villages. In Chhoto Dilsaram Jote, it is found that 53 or 74.65 percent families depended on agriculture and agricultural labour activities and the number of the families depending on non-agricultural activities is 18 or 25.35 percent (Table no 4.4). Similarly in Dulal Jote, the number of families depending on non-agricultural activities is in gradual increase. The number of families depending on agriculture and agricultural labour activities is 69 or 64.48 percent and the number of families depending on non-agricultural activities is 38 or 35.52 percent (Table no 4.20).

In case of marriage it is stated that traditionally the people, both the males and females living in both the villages under study were married in early ages and the negotiation form of marriage was the conventional to the villagers. But many changes are occurred in this field. Now-a-days the number of the married males and females married within or above the present legal age at marriage has been increased. This situation is followed among the villagers living in both the villages. Monogamy is the general form of marriage found in both the villages. It is observed that in Chhoto Dilsaram Jote the number of the married males married below the legal age at marriage are 44 or 57.15 percent out of the total married males found in this village (Table no 8). The age at marriage of the females is also in gradual increase. Here the number of the females married within or above the legal age at marriage are 17 or 22.08 percent (Table no 4.9). In Dulal Jote, the number of males married within or above the legal age at marriage is also in gradual increase. It is found that in the village 49 or 41.53 percent males are married within the or above the legal age at marriage (Table no 4.25). Here the number of the female married within or above the legal age at marriage very low. The number f females married within or above the legal age at marriage are only 8 or 6.77 percent (Table no 4.26). In case of type of marriage, except one all the marriages are characterized by monogamous form of marriage. In this village one Rajbanshi male married two females.

It is generally stated that previously the parents mainly fathers selected the partners for their marriageable sons and daughters. And the marital relationship was limited within the local areas mainly. In this connection bride price played an important role. But presently, many changes have been started in the above aspects. Presently the marriageable males and females select each other before their marriage in some extent. In some cases love marriage also gets importance. In Chhoto Dilsaram Jote, it is found that 33 or 42.86 percent out of the total married couples selected each other before their marriage. Beside this, the role of the parents, uncles, and elder brothers is also remarkable in some cases (Table no 4.15). In Dulal Jote, the number of couples married by self selection is 25 or 21.18 percent and the couples married by their parents, uncles, and elder brothers are also remarkable. In this village mainly among the Nepalese, the incidence of love marriage is very high. Here a large number of the adult males and females select each others secretly first then their parents recognize it very easily. Here this kind of selection is claimed as a selection made by the parents (Table no 4.31).

Presently the marital relationship is not limited within the same village or within some nearby villages. It crosses not only the boundary of the village, blocks, district, state and even the boundary of the country where the villagers live. In this connection the cross-border marital relationship occupies an important part. In Chhoto Dilsaram Jote, it is observed that 7 or 9.09 percent couples are married by the males and females living in Nepal and Indian Territory. In this village a large number of couples are married within two blocks. The number of the couples is 36 or 46.75 percent (Table no. 4.12). More or less similar situation is observed in Dulal Jote also. Here the number of the cross-border marriage is also high. The number of the cross border marriage is 13 or 11.01 percent (Table no 4.28).

Presently the role of the gotra is not given much importance in selecting the brides and bridegrooms. Marriage between same or two different gotras is found. Marriage between near and distant relatives is also observed in both the villages. In case of Chhoto Dilsaram Jote, the number of the couples married within the near relatives and distant relatives are 14 or 18.18 percent and 16 or 20.78 percent respectively (Table no 4.13).

In making marital relationship, the role of bride price is getting less importance than dowry among the villagers living in both the villages under study. It is pointed out that in Chhoto Dilsaram Jote; the number of married couples married with dowry is 42 or 54.55 percent. It is stated that the introduction of dowry is not very old among the villagers living in this village. In this village, some cases of marriage with dowry are also found (Table no. 4.14). In Dulal Jote, the number of marriage with bride-price is also small in number. The numbers of marriage with dowry and bride-price are 15 or 12.21 percent and 12 or 10.17 percent respectively (Table no. 4.32).

In terms of kinship relationship, previously the relatives (both the affinal and consanguinal) were mainly concentrated within some nearby villages, block, district mainly. But presently the concentration of relatives is not limited within the nearby villages, block, and the district only. It crosses the national boundary also. The relatives of the villagers live in other states and countries. Many families living in this village have relatives in Nepal and Bangladesh. In Chhoto Dilsaram Jote, it is found that the number of families having relatives in outside Indian Territory (i.e. Nepal and Bangladesh) is 14 or 19.72 percent (Table no 4.17). In Dulal Jote, the number of families having relatives in other nations outside Indian Territory is very high. The number of families having relatives outside India especially in Nepal is 44 or 44 percent (Table no.4.33).

7.5: Cultural Change

Cultural life of the people living in these villagers was characterized by one or mono culture mainly. The cultural life in the of religious behavior, education, dress-pattern, foot-habits and possession of languages etc of the people living in this frontier villages was not framed by many other groups except the cultural pattern of the Rajbanshis. The contact of different cultures was also limited. The dress-pattern, food-habits were very simple. Educational status and the ability of using languages were also not very high. Many changes are happened in the cultural life of the people living in the villages under study. These can be discussed in the following way.

Changes in the field of educational status, the people living in the frontier villages under study are remarkable. Initially the people did not pay

much attention for the education of their children. But now the people of different communities or the people of different occupational groups have been interested for the education of their children. Previously the lack of consciousness about education and the educational facilities was not developed in this area. Presently the number of primary and secondary schools and colleges is gradually increasing in this area. It is found that the number of the persons educated up to graduation level is very small. Here only two persons are in colleges. One is a Rajbanshi boy and another is Nepali boy. This is the result of increased educational consciousness of the family members especially the heads of some families. The establishment of the primary school located at Chhoto Dilsaram Jote is also one of the important instances of increased educational consciousness of the Rajbanshis living in this village. The education of the women is not neglected in this area. Due to some economic barriers they are not given higher education like B.A., M.A etc.

Religious life of the villagers living in the frontier area under study bears several changes. It is informed that previously the villagers were very keen to their religious activities and the number of the gods and goddesses was very large. Even both the males and females performed their religious activities. Initially the Rajbanshis celebrated many religious practices and they made some restrictions in participating in those practices. But the number of the festivals and the number of the gods and goddesses is gradually decreasing among almost all the communities living in the villages located in this frontier area. The participation of the people mainly the children and the women are very open. The children and the women take part in different festivals of any house of the Rajbanshis or any house of the Nepalese very often without any invitation. In both the villages most of the religious activities are performed by the women folk mainly.

Another important change in the religious life of the people living in the frontier villages is the creation of new gods and goddesses and the worship and adoption of the new gods and goddesses by almost all the communities living in the villages. Here the goddess Pitha Bechi is created by a Rajbanshi family but this goddess is worshipped by almost all the communities. The people of almost all the communities collectively organize a fair in Dulal Jote which is

numerically dominated by the Nepalese. Here the Rajbanshis, the Nepalese, the Santals and many others also take part in this fair.

Beside this, the participation of the people in the fairs held in some nearby villages and blocks is very enthusiastic. The participation of the villagers living in this frontier area in the fairs held in Jhapa and Morang districts of Nepal and the participation of the many people of some districts mainly from Jhapa and Morang districts of Nepal in several fairs held in this area is a common phenomenon. It is learnt that previously the villagers lived in the kuchcha houses mainly and the structure of the houses were designed in some extent. Tin planted houses were very rare. Presently some changes have been introduced in housing pattern. The sizes of the houses have been turned into smaller than previous size. Change in composition is also noticed. Now-a-days, a large number of the houses have tin planted roofs. In this frontier area, some of the families have built some full walled tin planted rooms (half pucca) also. Beside this, almost all the roofs of the houses are tin planted which is locally called *chhapra ghar*. The walls of this *chhapra ghar* are normally made of some locally produced materials like bamboo, rope etc. In short the introduction of the half pucca rooms is an important change in the house pattern among the villagers living in this frontier area.

Changes in dress-pattern are also remarkable. Previously the male children aged up to 12 to 15 years old did not use pants normally and old men of the Rajbanshis used *lenti* (i.e. a small piece of cloth used by men), *Dhuti*, trousers etc. The married women used sari mainly. The unmarried females used frocks and the old women used patani. But there are many changes occurred now-a-days. Actually these traditional dresses are losing their previous popularity and in place of these dresses, some new dresses get more popularity among this group of peoples. It is found that in these two villages under study, the use of *lenti* is not found and only a widow uses sari as patani. Some of the villagers call it as bukani. The use of *dhuti* has been very limited among the adult and the old men. Many people use pants in place of *dhuti*. Many people use half pants in their day-to-day life. The women in these frontier villages use nighty, jeans pants, three quarter pants etc with much popularity. Among the Nepalese the use of the nighty is very popular. Beside this, the married and

unmarried females use churidar, sari, pants etc in their daily life. It is observed that the use of nighty and churidar for the women folk is very new to this community. In case of the males, the use of t-shirts and jeans pants and jacket is also very new to this community.

Changes in the field of food-habits are also noticed. Previously the people normally lived separately and their foot-habits were designed by their own ways of habits. But now-a-days the intermixing of food items is a normal phenomenon and interdining among different communities is usually happened during different occasions. It is found that interdining among the Rajbanshis, the Nepalese, the Santals, the Haris and others do not make any problem in this rural society. It is found that the Rajbanshis have accepted some new food items like chowmin, momo, from the Nepalese in one hand and on the other hand, the Nepalese have accepted many food items procured by the Rajbanshis. It is noted that many Rajbansi women make *Bhaka pitha* during the winter season and this food item now-a days has been an important food item of the Nepalese and some of the Nepali women can procure this bhaka pitha also. Beside this, the old people of the Rajbansi community used hukka for smoking. But this tool is not found in both the villages. It is also found that the habit of drinking haria and some other liquor is also new to the Rajbansi community living in both the villages. The habit of taking liquor is a general fact among the Santals and some of the Nepalese living in these villages under study.

Previously the interaction of the people was very limited. They were accustomed with their own mother tongue mainly. But presently due to pluralistic character of the frontier society and day-to-day need of the people living in this frontier area, the use of languages carries some special features. The villagers living in both the villages are multilingual. A large number of the people can speak in more than one language. Many villagers can speak in five languages. In case of the Chhoto Dilsaram Jote it is found that the number of the people speaking in five languages is 15 or 4.46 percent and the number of the people speaking in two languages is very high in this village. The number of the people speaking in two languages is 140 or 38.78 percent (Table no 2.8). More or less similar situation is observed in Dulal Jote also. Here the number

of the people using five languages is 03 or 0.55 percent. In this village the number of the people using one language is very high. The number of the people speaking in one language is 294 or 54.14 percent. Here the number of the females speaking in one language is also very high (Table no 2.16). In both the villages, the males and the females can use several languages. In case of the Rajbanshis many people can speak in Nepali, Bengali, Hindi, Santali beside their mother tongue and in case of the Nepalese, many of them can speak in Rajbanshi, Hindi, Bengali, and Santali beside their mother tongue. Even some of the Rajbanshis and the Nepalese can speak in English also.

It is informed that previously the people of both the villages used the wells as the main source of drinking water and the use of latrine was very limited. But presently the use of water from tube-wells has been increased largely. It is found that in Chhoto Dilsaram Jote, the wells used by the Santals, were not used by the non-tribal people. It is stated that the children of the Santals threw garbage in the well. But presently, this type problem is not observed among the villagers and the well used by the Santals is also used by the non-tribal people also. In this village, the use of the latrine is very limited mainly among the Rajbanshis. Here the open field is used for this purpose. In Dulal Jote, the number of tube wells is very high and the villagers are habituated in using the water of tube-wells mainly and even the use of the latrine is also very high among the villager mainly among the Nepalese. Here most of the houses have pucca latrine and some have kucha latrines.

7.6: Political Change

Previously the villagers largely believed in one party and the local jotedar (a land owner having some large amount of lands) decided the name of the party. If the Jotedar supported the Congress Party, all the villagers under his local area basically the agricultural labourers, tenants would support the congress Party. No body would make different opinion. It is found that Nimal Singh a man of 60 years old living in Chhoto Dilsaram Jote stated that few years back when he supported the B.J.P, all his agricultural labourers, and tenants supported the party. But now nobody listen to him. All the people select the party according to their own choice. Here the villagers living in this frontier

area have been more conscious in political field. It is also found that in case of selecting the political party, some collective interest are functional to the later migrants but it is not functional to the early settlers or non-migrants. The local leaders among the later migrants select the party to which they will cast their votes. Here the local people or the early settlers mainly the Rajbanshis are divided into different groups in supporting the political parties. Some of them support the C.P.I (M), and some of them support the K.P.P (Kamatapur Peoples' Party) and some support the congress party also. Here the role of caste identity in selecting the panchayat members is not much effective in this frontier area. Here the community sentiment is strong in some extent among the later migrants mainly among the Nepalese. The later migrants select the party on the basis of the facilities they are given from the party. In short, it can be said that in terms of selection of the political party or the panchayat members, the later migrants are more conscious about the attainment of facilities. But this kind of consciousness is not found among the early settlers or the non-migrants living in this frontier area.

The following table may be helpful (Table no. 7.1) to understand the major changes happened in the villages under study easily.

Table 7.1: Major Changes Noted in the Border Villages Under Study.

Past	Present
1. Stratification is based on ascribed status.	1. Stratification is based on achieved status largely.
2. The number of joint families was more than nuclear families.	2. The number of nuclear families was more than joint families.
3. The size of the families was very large. It was formed by more than 10 members.	3. The size of the families is not very large. It is basically limited within 4-6 members.
4. Depth of the joint families was characterized by more than three generations, mainly.	4. Depth of the joint families is limited within three generations mainly. Contd..

5. Marital relationship was mainly limited within the families living in Indian territory.	5. Marital relationship is not limited within the families living in Indian territory only. It exceeds Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bangladesh border lines also.
6. The number of child marriage was very large.	6. The number of child marriage is not very large.
7. Bride-price was more important than dowry.	7. Dowry is more important than bride-price.
8. The identity of gotra was given more importance in selecting brides and bridegrooms.	8. The identity of gotra is not given more importance in selecting brides and bridegrooms.
9. The villages were sparsely populated.	9. The villages are densely populated.
10. The families were largely dependent on one occupation (i.e. cultivation).	10. The families are not dependent on one occupation (i.e. cultivation) only. The acceptance of new occupations has been an important attribute.
11. Agricultural products were produced mainly for household consumption.	11. The agricultural products are produced both for selling and household consumption.
12. The use of chemical fertilizer, high yielding seeds and modern agricultural tools were very limited or not at all.	12. The use of chemical fertilizer, high yielding seeds and modern agricultural tools are in gradual increase.
13. There was no Anganwari centre and NGO Office, grocery shops, in the village.	13. There was an Anganwari centre and NGO Office, grocery shops, tea shops, in the villages.
14. Local big land owners controlled the political lives of the villagers.	14. The local big land owners have been useless in controlling the village politics. The villagers basically cast their votes by their own choice.

Contd..

15. Some dresses like, <i>Patani</i> or <i>Bukani</i> and <i>lenti</i> were conventional to some villagers.	15. The use of <i>Pathani</i> or <i>Bukani</i> and <i>lenti</i> are almost not found among the villagers.
16. Interchange of food items and the process of making the food items among the communities were not observed.	16. Interchange of food items and the process of making the food items among the communities is observed

7.7: Factors of Change

From the above discussion it is observed that many changes are occurred in the socio-cultural, economic, political life of the people living in the villages located in this frontier area under study. In most of the cases the changes have brought some positive as well as negative impacts upon the society. It is found that due to land encroachment of the Mechi River many families of a village named Antaram Jote have been alienated from their lands and they came to Chhoto Dilsaram Jote. In this way the number of the population of Chhoto Dilsaram Jote increased largely in one hand and on the other hand, due to this migration of the population in this village, occupational diversity is occurred in this area. Due to this migration of the families, many of the people accepted some other non-agricultural occupations like rickshaw pulling, driving of truck and maruti and some small business on betel leafs and nuts etc. Therefore it can be said that it has brought positive change for the village Chhoto Dilsaram Jote and it brings negative change for the families which have been alienated from the lands and have been bound to accept the low prestigious occupation for their livelihood. Therefore it is very clear that each change produces some results in society. It is also right that every change is the result of a factor or combination of some factors; no change is produced without any factor or factors. The factors in bringing changes in socio-cultural, economic and political life of the people living in this frontier area discussed below.

Physically this area is located very near to the Indo-Nepal Border line in Darjeeling district of West Bengal. Here the border line acts as an important

source of bringing changes in this frontier area. Due to the nearness of the border line this area has been a meeting ground of various groups of peoples. Gradually the settlement of the various groups of the people have been started in this area and due to this reason the demographic structure of this area has been changing fast. It is also found that due to frequent land slides in hill areas in Darjeeling district, many Nepali people have migrated to this area.

Due to the physical and demographic structure of the villages, the people have accepted some new occupations very easily. Many people have accepted work at bus syndicate, work of labor contractor, rickshaw pulling, and business on vegetables, betel leafs etc in one hand and on the other hand they are losing their traditional occupations. Even due to the increase of the population in this villages and nearness of the border line, many people have participated in illegal border trading activities.

In this frontier area due to open border system, immigration is a very normal fact and by the immigration of the people, many cultural groups have come to this area and settled. Thus to meet their daily need, the people of the different cultures have come in contact with each other. In this way assimilation of the cultures have happened in this area. Here the people get the chance of meeting with many cultures. The mixing of cultures is spontaneous. Thus mixing of cultures has developed a composite culture in this area and society has been turned into pluralistic in nature.

Religion is also acts as an important factor in bringing changes in the social and cultural life of the people living in this frontier area. It is observed that during the observance of different fairs, a large number of people of Nepal and other sides come to this area and many people of this territory also go some nearby districts like Jhapa and Morang districts of Nepal to participate in some fairs observed there. During the time of the observance of fairs and religious practices, the people of different areas wear various types of dresses which can make the local villagers selective the dress pattern they have to follow. Even this type of meeting in those fairs and religious practices make the people identified with different food items. These religious fairs and religious practices

also bring the chances to the villagers to meet with the people of other villages and countries.

Communication in this frontier area is not very developed. Here only one road reaches to Nepal through Panitanki Market. Beside this road the people use the Mechi River for communication of goods illegally whole year except the rainy season. This kind of easy communication and the poor economic condition of the families living in this area impelled or compelled the people to accept illegal trading activities as a source of income. The factors of changes and the changes can be easily understood through the following table (Table no.7.2).

Table no. 7.2: Changing Factors and Changes in this Border Villages.

Factors of Change	Changes Happened
Environmental 1. Nearness of Mechi river and landslides in Darjeeling hill area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Migration of people. ♦ Occupational Diversity ♦ Land Encroachment ♦ Lose of traditional occupations. ♦ Participation of local people in illegal cross-border trading activities.
Political 2. Nearness of open border.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Immigration of people from other countries <p>Development of composite culture and pluralistic society.</p>
Socio Cultural 3. Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Participation of the people living in India and Nepal in religious ceremonies is largely observed.

7.8: Nature of Change

Changes occurred in the life of the people living in this frontier area under study is reformative or corrective in nature. Total or revolutionary change is not observed .Most of the cases the people accept new things not leaving the old or traditional characteristics. Changes in some cases are happened very fast and in some cases it is occurred slowly. In the cases of the food-habit, dress-pattern, occupation, language and adoption of modern

amenities, changes are fast. Here some of the local people are presently using some new dresses like nighty for women, pants, shirts, towel, jacket very easily. Similarly, taking of some food items like momo, chowmin are happened very fast. The use of Motor Bike, T.V, Radio, C.D, D.V.D etc has also been accepted very fast. More or less similar situation is observed in using ornaments.

But the speed is slow in case of acceptance of some new issues like love marriage. The acceptance of love marriage, wearing of nighty among some local women etc takes a long time. In case of the Haris it is observed that a boy, youngest brother of a family eloped a girl of their own caste and brought her in the boy's house. All the family members are not agreed to accept the girl as a bride of the boy and due to this reason the boy is made separated from the parental family. But after three years, the marriage was accepted by the all other members of the family. Then the couple was given marriage socially. Love marriage among the Nepalese does not create any problem to get social recognition. But this type of marriage creates some difficulties among some local people mainly among the Rajbanshis living in the villages.

7: Findings

Changes in the villages under study are in dynamic process. Once basically before the Naxalbari Movement, this area was sparsely populated. Due to natural calamity, killing by animals like snakes etc this area was sparsely populated and one or two communities were the main inhabitants in this area. But gradually due to immigration of population from different parts of India, Nepal and Bangladesh, the population structure of this area is changing gradually.

Economic life of the villagers living in the villages was associated with one occupation mainly. The villagers produced agricultural products for household consumption mainly. The use of modern agricultural tools and techniques, high yielding seeds, chemical fertilizers was very limited. Presently many changes have been introduced in the economic life of the villagers living

in this frontier area under study. Diversification of occupation has been introduced and the use of chemical fertilizers, high yielding seeds etc has also been increased. The production of vegetables selling purpose is also increased. The participation in non-agricultural activities like rickshaw pulling, work at bus syndicate at Panitanki more, participation in cross-border illegal trading activity, work at factory outside of this state is in gradual increase. Infrastructure of the villages in terms of roads, health, education, postal communication, and number of local markets, use of telephones, news papers, and motor cycles previously was very unsatisfactory. Only cycle was the means of village communication and transport mainly. The people were depended on two hospitals (the Naxalbari and Kharibari) mainly in their need. But presently some infrastructural changes are observed in the above fields. The number of primary and secondary schools has been increased in this frontier area. Even some Nepali medium schools are also opened. The use of mobile phones, news papers is also increased. Political life of the villagers was mainly regulated through non-democratic way. The local land owners regulated the political life of the villagers. But this situation has been changed in large extent. Now the political life is regulated by attainment of individual benefits. There are many changes occurred in socio-cultural life of the villagers living in this frontier area under study. Here the stratification of the people is guided by the economic condition mainly not by the caste position. Changes in family structure mainly in type, size and depth of generation are observed. The nuclear family becomes very popular in this area and the number of families having 4 to 6 members is very high. Even the depth of generation among the joint families found in the villages is limited within three generation mainly. The dependence on non-agricultural activities is in gradual increase. In case of marital relationship, monogamy is the general form in the frontier area villages. Marriage relation is not limited within the villages, blocks and districts only; it crosses the Indo-Nepal and the Indo-Bangladesh border lines. Changes in education, dress-pattern, food-habits, and religious life are observed. Consciousness about the education of the children is in gradual increase and the number of the literate persons is also increased largely. A large number of the villagers are multilingual. The use of bukani for women and lenti for the men are almost

obsolete in the villages under study. Some foods of the Nepalese like chowmin, momo have newly been accepted by the Rajbanshis and some foods of the Rajbanshis like bhaka pitha have also been accepted by the Nepalese. The use of nightyas a indoor dress is new to the Rajbansi women. This is accepted from the Nepalese. In case of religious life, the number of the gods and goddesses is in gradual decrease and some new gods and goddesses are worshipped by almost all communities. The change in this frontier area is not revolutionary in nature. It is reformative in nature. Here migration, Immigration of people, open border system, religion etc. play important role in bringing social, cultural, economic and political changes in this frontier area.