

ABSTRACT

This thesis is an attempt to capture the total picture of the people living in char land of Assam which is recurrently fall under flood every year and affected by river erosion frequently. The socio-economic condition of the households is trying to measure in terms of their income and consumption expenditure, assets and liabilities, housing status, availability of safe drinking water, source of energy use, toilet facility, use of radio, television, telephone, literacy rate and health problems.

Flood and erosion are a natural phenomenon. Rivers especially the mighty Brahmaputra and its tributaries erodes vast areas of land every year in Assam. In Assam more than 70 percent of the rural population is depends on agriculture for their livelihood. Agriculture requires fertile land which erodes by the river every year. The Number of people displaced due to erosion is increasing. The occupational structure, income, living standard of the people of the agrarian society badly effected due to erosion especially of the agricultural land. It stands as a challenge for the people as well as the Government for the resettlement of displaced people. As the char area is peculiar in its nature and in its geographic position the impact of flood and erosion fall on the people basically live in *Char areas* in the district. A brief overview of the chapters of this thesis is given below:

The first chapter introduces the research problem, reviews available relevant literature, states objectives, rationality and background, scope, significance and limitations of the study. The second chapter deals with the data base and methodology of the study. For collection of data char villages are divided into four categories. From each category four villages are selected at random and then thirty households are taken at random from each village to the sample. Data collected using a structured questionnaire and analysed with statistical tools like ANOVA, Chi Square, Average etc.

The third chapter presents a brief history of people and land tenure system of char area as it appears significant for the socio economic and socio-political condition of the state as well as the district of Dhubri.

The fourth chapter deals with the issues like flood, erosion and displacement. In Assam, during the period of 1954 to 2007 total of 4,25,932 hectares of land had been eroded and there more than 8 lakh households displaced in erosion. The severity of problem of erosion is more acute in lower parts and the Dhubri district is a worse affected district in Assam.

The fifth chapter present an account of the measures and initiatives adopted at Government level to control flood and erosion in Assam. The flood and erosion management measures started in Assam after the declaration of National Flood policy in 1954. Accordingly, a huge network of flood embankments was erected all over the state. Till 2006, total length covered by embankment has been increased to 4465.19 km. The National Flood Policy included measures like anti erosion and river training works that mostly comprise of bank revetments, construction of stone spurs, boulder deflectors, and R.C.C. porcupines.

The sixth chapter has analyses various impacts of flood and erosion on the char dwellers. Social aspect of char dweller is seriously affected by flood and erosion. After displacement, they lost shelter and all means of livelihood. They take shelter in other place where they supposed to be illegal immigrant by pro-active organisations and harassment in different form taken place. In workplace they experience different types of discrimination like payment of lesser wage, expulsion from the work field, assaulting behaviour etc.

The seventh or final chapter summarises all previous chapters and major findings, suggestions as well as future scope of the study.