

NEPALI MIGRATION IN EASTERN AND NORTHEASTERN INDIA (1816-2001)

Kousik Mandal

Research Scholar, Department of History, Jadavpur University, India

Received: 13 Mar 2021

Accepted: 19 Mar 2021

Published: 31 Mar 2021

ABSTRACT

The main focus of the paper is that to find out the historical facts of Nepali migration into Eastern and Northeastern parts of India and its impact. Sikkim, which at once was scarcely populated, has become predominant by the Nepalis. By the middle of the 20th century the Nepali population of Sikkim rose to 60 percent and the demographic feature of the state has changed¹. With the passing of time the local ruling elites Lepcha-Bhutias has become minority and the Nepalis become majority. According to Banerji's West Bengal District Gazetteers in 1941, 61 percent of the residents were of Nepalis origin in Darjeeling district². Volume of migration that had taken place from Nepal is much larger than migration from any other state or district. While in the case of Manipur British did not permit other outsiders except Nepalis to be settled. They exempted the Nepalis to be settled in Khas and forest grazing land not previously under cultivation. It is a reality that Nepalis have become predominant in the various belts of Eastern and Northeastern India. In the Colonial period, retired Gorkha soldiers were encouraged to settle in Northeastern India rather to return their homeland. After independence, Indian government also favoured the Nepalis to be settled in the Eastern and Northeastern India. Thus the growth of Nepali population changed the demographic composition in various parts of the Eastern and Northeastern India. The growth was largely because of the Nepali migration. Therefore, there is a need to study the phenomenon of Nepali migration in Eastern and Northeastern India in its totality: the causes and push factor in the Nepali migration, the migratory routes and favoured destination, the politics of migration, the settlement and conflict over resource showering in the host area and the overall impact of such migration.

KEYWORDS: *Nepali Migration, Push and Pull Factors, Impact of Nepali Migration, Colonial Intervention, Eastern and Northeastern India*

¹ Dutt, Srikant, Jun.1981, "Migration and Development: The Nepalis in Northeast", *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol-16, No-24, p. 1054.

² Banerji, A. K. *et. al.*, *West Bengal District Gazetteers*; Darjeeling, Calcutta: Govt. of West Bengal. 1980. p. 101- 104.