

# FROM HUMAN INSECURITIES TO HUMAN SECURITY WITH REFERENCE TO THE COMMUNAL CONFLICT OF BODOLAND TERRITORIAL AREA DISTRICTS OF ASSAM

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## Abstract

*Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD), an autonomous council formed on 10 February, 2003 within the state of Assam. BTAD is administered by Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), and is created under the sixth schedule of Indian constitution with four districts- Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri. It is noteworthy that Bodos have been sharing as the single largest tribal community with other community in Assam and majority in BTAD area. The Bodos are demanding separate homeland called Bodoland since 1960s and at present under the banner of All Bodo Students Union (ABSU). However, the transitional history of the region is very much painful as the region witnessed various movements, ethnic conflict; arms rebellion etc. and this brings chaos to the lives of individual. Accordingly, the threats to human security can be realized. The development in the region can be seen after the formation of BTAD in some aspects; however, the threats to the live of individual cannot be ignored. The communal tensions remain relevant threats to the people of this autonomous council. The paper therefore will focus human insecurities aspect to human security highlighting the communal violence of the BTAD region of Assam.*

**Keywords:** *Human Security, Communal Violence, BTAD, Assam.*

## 1. Introduction

The recent decades have witnessed several ranges of security threats at different level related to violent acts, communal conflict, environmental changes etc. Therefore, the evolution of threats led to the emergence of wide concept of new security i.e. 'Human Security' a new paradigm for understanding the vulnerabilities. The traditional notion of Security was based on the security of the state whereas it falls short in addressing the broad concept of the lives of the individual. Thus, the Human security is viewed as the people-centered which identifies the security of human lives rather than of the state.

Especially after the cold war, the concept 'Human Security' was formally introduced by Special Advisor to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Dr Mahbub ul Haq with support of Amartya Sen in the publication of Human Development Report (HDR) in 1994. Mahbub ul Haq view human security as a new form of security "the world is entering a new era in which the very concept of security will change-and change dramatically. Security will be interpreted as: security of people, not just territory. Security of individuals; not just nations, Security through development; not through arms. Security of all the people everywhere- in their homes, in their jobs, in their streets, in their communities, in their environment." (Haq 1995 p.115).

The 1994 Human Development Report defined human security as people's "safety from chronic threats and protection from sudden hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life." Seven types of security were listed as components of human security: economic security; food security; health security; environmental security; personal (physical) security; community security; and political security".

The Canadian government also adopted a similar definition on human security: "Human security means freedom from pervasive threats to people's rights, safety and lives".

In simple terms, the United Nations Commission on Human Security defines "Human security as the protection of "the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and fulfillment."

Therefore, the concept on human security defines the individual lives concerns which include security of individuals, community and all forms of violence. The concept also includes human rights aspects and to realize all the necessary basic needs of the lives of individuals.

But the global world challenges different forms of insecurities and especially like the devolving states like South Asia with dynamic threats like limited access of food, limited health facilities, poverty, low quality of life, growth of population, illiteracy etc. The similar threats are also relevant in North east India and BTAD region of Assam. The BTAD region has several forms of movement and sometimes it turned violent, the communal violence etc. which enables to insecurity in the region. The paper therefore will focus on human insecurity to human security highlighting the communal conflict of BTAD on different kinds of threat.

## 2. Brief Profile of BTAD (Assam)

Bodoland Territorial Areas District (BTAD) formed a decade ago is an autonomous council administered by the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), a territorial privilege established according to the MoS on February 10, 2003 within the state of Assam between Assam Government, Indian Government and Bodo Liberation Tiger (BLT). The region is located in the foothills Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh with an area of 8970 sq. km comprising four adjoining districts- Kokrajhar, Baksa, Chirang and Udalguri. The region is predominantly inhabited by the indigenous Bodo speaking people and other groups like Bengalis, Assamese, Rabha, Rajbongshi, Garo, etc.

The region has a painful history, as the region has witnessed several forms of violent activities- movement for separate homeland led by several organization unlike - All Assam Plains Tribal League (AAPTL) 1933, Bodo Sahitya Sabha (BSS) in 1952, Plains Tribal Council of Assam (PTCA) in 1967 and All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) 1967, Peoples Joint Action Committee for Boroland Movement (PJACBM) were formed in order to accelerate the movement in democratic way. On the other hand, armed movement is also not free, National Democratic Front of Boroland (NDFB) in 1986 and Bodoland Tiger Force (BLT) in 1996 also formed to accelerate the movement through arms. The first accord results the formation of Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC) in 1993 MoS signed between ABSU, Assam Government and Indian Government and second accord signed between BLT, Assam Government and Indian Government that results the creation of BTAD under the sixth schedule of Indian Constitution. At present, under the banner of ABSU, the Bodos led a mass movement to achieve separate state homeland- 'Bodoland' in order to protect the self- identity of Bodos and the political power.

The communal conflicts were also witnessed in different phases of history in the BTAD region which has severely affected in the lives of individual. The insecurity in the region makes an individual or community fear of the violence.

## 3. Literature review

The study is devoted to the review of literature which has directly relevance to the problem of study. The available review of literature are- *Nani .G.Mahanta*, stated that "however, in some pockets in Assam, particularly in the district of kokrajhar, there has been huge displacement due to inter-ethnic clashes between the Bodos and the Santhals, forcing thousands of Santhals to live in relief camps for years". In the journal of *Hiramoni Das, 2015*, "In my observation I found that due to ethnic violence the human security of people threatened in BTAD. A govern"ment most fundamental responsibility is to ensure the safety of its citizens and when it is violated". In 1994 the Human Development Report focused explicitly on human security. The Report argued that: "For too long, the concept of security has been shaped by the potential for conflict between states. For too long, security has been equated with threats to a country's borders. For too long, nations have sought arms to protect their security. For most people today, a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than from the dread of a cataclysmic world event. Job security, income security, health security, environmental security, security from crime, these are the emerging concerns of human security all over the world". (UNDP, 1994: 3)

## 4. Theoretical concept

To explore, how the communal conflict is a threat to human security or lives of individual and to establish a theory with the facts and information on human security.

## 5. The Concept of Communal and Communal Conflict

Communal means a group of people or members of community that shares in common. The term "communal conflict" is a form of violence or clashes between communities of different ethnic groups or religions. It may

also be referred as racial violence, inter-religious conflict, inter-communal conflict, racial violence, minorities conflict etc.

## 6. Objective of the study

The objectives of the study are the following

- i. To find out the roots of communal violence in BTAD areas of Assam
- ii. To find out the different threats on Human Security because of Communal conflict.
- iii. To find out the relevance of human security concept in BTAD.

## 7. Methodology

The study is based on secondary sources, collected information through direct and indirect sources like, journals, books, newspaper, internet websites etc. and the study is empirical in nature.

## 8. Communal Violence and impacts on Human Security of BTAD (Assam)

Human security in the BTAD region has been severely affected by communal conflicts in the different phases of conflicts. After the emergence of human security concept, some of the notable conflicts in the BTAD region are: The communal clashes between Bodo-Muslim on October, 1993 which costs many lives and several families around 18000 rendered homeless in the Kokrajhar district of BTAD, Assam. Again, a major conflict between Bodo-Santhal in Kokrajhar district in 1996, where more than 2 lakh people were rendered homeless and again the same activity geared up in 1998 and this forced to leave their home. From the above scenario, it can even be seen today that some victims are still rendered homeless and remain infear of the situations.

Another conflict that flared up in 2008, October 3 for three consecutive days at Udalguri district of BTAD region between Bodo-Muslim where thousands of people are rendering homeless from both the communities. More than 50 people were killed from both the communities. The same conflict broke out at Kokrajhar District in July, 2012, later affected to all BTAD regions and this conflict has several attentions from the world. The conflict displaced over 4 lakh people and took more than 100 people lives. Again another bloody conflict that broke out on 2014 December between Bodo-Santhal took many lives of several people, including childrens. Today, this type of violent activities has led to deprivation and poverty which turns to serious infectious disease, educational drop outs etc. and this brings insecurities in the life of individual or people.

Therefore, the ethnic conflict arouses several threats to human and the lives of individual in the region from both the communities. The BTAD region, hence it can be noteworthy that people live in fear and are insecure as the transitional history remains very painful, as the series of conflict can be witnessed by the people. Apart from communal conflict, the militant activities in the region and the movement turn violent activities which bring fear and chaos in the region where people remains in fear. Thus, it can be viewed that human insecurities in the region has its existence with great extent. The human security concept which is regarded as the people-centered security regardless of age, gender or ethnic groups and further includes protection of individuals and communities from all forms of violence has been a serious threat in the region. Accordingly, the two important aspects of human security i.e. 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want, which is equally important for giving security of the people has been minimally witnessed in BTAD region.

## 9. Conclusion

BTAD region has witnessed several threats of human security, without or with the existence of human security concept. Several issues of violent act can be witnessed in the region which brings insecure feeling to many individuals. The new paradigm and emergence of human security is very relevant in the BTAD region to study in practice, it has a greater scope to explore the problems or threat of human security into larger extent.

The human rights violation in the region can also be realized; therefore the region should be given utmost importance and should resolve to peace and say no to violence. Accordingly, possible recommendations should be brought forward from individual, scholars, or any other agencies for permanent solutions and bring positive changes to the BTAD region for permanent peace and eliminate the fear factor. The efforts by all concerned scholars, civil societies and any other agencies should come forward to face the practical challenges of human security of the region. Some of the recommendations that this study suggests are- The root causes of communal violence like illegal migration issues, separate State movement for Bodoland issues must be resolved at the earliest. The government should take mere steps into this regard and bring all armed terrorists group for peace and permanent solution talks. The awareness of human rights, political agendas etc must be imparted for

their knowledge. Therefore, the human security in theory has a larger scope of study in the region for practical application of the concept.

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