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The Testing ground of Sixth Schedule, Bleeding Bodoland Territorial Council, Assam

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Abstract

The origin of sixth schedule can be traced back to policy of exclusion of the British Government in the colonial period. Under the Govt. of India Act, 1935, the hill areas of Assam were divided into two categories-Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas and remained outside the process of development. After Independence, there were demands for regional autonomy and better status within the constitutional framework from the tribes of the hill areas of Assam. The Interim Government of India was sensitive to the political aspirations of the tribal people of the hill areas of Assam in the background of assurances given by the outgoing British rulers.

An advisory committee on Fundamental Rights of Minorities in the Tribal Areas was constituted in May 1946 by the Constituent Assembly of India. One of the sub-committees constituted by the Advisory Committee was the Northeast Frontier (Assam) Tribal and Excluded Areas Sub-Committee under the chairmanship of Assam Premier, Gopinath Bordoloi. The recommendation made on the basis of the observation made by the sub-committee became the substance of the sixth Schedule.

After independence these areas got special administrative machinery in the form of the Sixth Schedule which provided for District and Regional Councils for administration of these erstwhile excluded areas. These institutions were expected to integrate these areas with the modern system of administration while preserving the traditional autonomy and local self-governing institutes of the tribal people. The provision of six schedules however resulted in violence, displacement and loss of trust between different communities.

Key Words: Sixth Schedule, Accord, Exclusion, Inclusion and Deprivation.

Introduction: The provision of Sixth Schedule which was designed by our Constitution makers was aimed at the creation of an enlightened and developed tribal society while preserving their culture, customs and traditional way of life. Undoubtedly their aim was genuine. However this genuine endeavour of our forefathers today is suffering from serious problems. The multiple problems in the Sixth Schedule area ranging from secessionist

movement, ethnic conflicts, corruption challenge the viability of the provision of Sixth Schedule.

The origin of sixth schedule can be traced back to policy of exclusion of the British Government during the colonial period. The British had their commercial interest mainly in tea in the North East. In order to secure their commercial interest in the area British decided to keep the area isolated from the rest of the country. The physical isolation of the area helped them in their task. Inner Line Regulation 1873, Govt. of India Act 1919 and giving the hill areas status of excluded and partially excluded area completed the task of isolating the hill people from the plains people. Under the Govt. of India Act, 1935, the hill areas of Assam were divided into two categories-Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas and remained outside the process of development. The political control of the North East Frontiers tract remained under the governor and the hill area's administration remained detached from the provincial Govt. thus further isolating the area. The Indian National Congress was very critical of the provision for Exclusion and Partial Exclusion of the hill areas. It perceived this as a trick of the British government to divide the people into different groups and thereby keeping these people apart from the rest of the country thereby making it easier for them to exploit the mineral and forest resources in these areas. Congress therefore wanted the abolition of the provision of Excluded and Partially Excluded areas.

The genesis of the movements for greater autonomy by different ethnic groups of the North-East lay in the British policy of exclusion of the region, from the usual administrative measures, effective in the areas of the plains. After Independence, there were demands for regional autonomy and better status within the constitutional framework from the tribes of the hill areas of Assam. The Constituent Assembly considered it is fair to keep the hill people protected. An advisory committee on Fundamental Rights of Minorities in the Tribal Areas was constituted in May 1946 by the Constituent Assembly of India. On the request of the Constituted Assembly the Advisory committee set up a sub-committee on the Northeast Frontier (Assam) Tribal and Excluded Areas Sub-Committee under the chairmanship of Assam Premier, Gopinath Bordoloi. The Sub Committee observed the fear of the hill people of exploitation made them welcome provision like Inner Line Regulation as introduced by the British Government. The Sub- committee considered the distinct customs and traditions of the hill people. Considering various factors like the hill people's fear of exploitation by the plain people the sub-committee recommended the incorporation of the Sixth Schedule to the constitution providing a special arrangement for the administration of the hill people of the area. The recommendation made on the basis of the observation made by the sub-committee became the substance of the sixth Schedule.

After independence these areas got special administrative machinery in the form of the Sixth Schedule which provided for District and Regional Councils for administration of these erstwhile excluded areas. These institutions were expected to integrate these areas with the modern system of administration while preserving the traditional autonomy and local self-governing institutes of the tribal people. The provision of six schedules was successful only to some extent in giving some kind of autonomous self-governance. But it

failed to end the economic backwardness of the people of these areas. Within two decades the division of Assam into smaller states, started. The erstwhile Excluded areas and Partly Excluded areas are today full-fledged states.

Following the path of the hill tribes, the plain tribes of Assam started agitation for the demand of autonomy since the beginning of the 21st century. The Bodos are one of the major tribes of Assam who are demanding autonomy initially in the form of autonomous council, later the demand of separate state was raised. The historical development of the Bodos, their legacies of the colonial period, attainment of BTC and the contemporary challenges they are facing are worth discussing in order to understand the loopholes of the provision of Sixth Schedule in India. The Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) is a territorial privilege established according to the Memorandum of Settlement, February 10, 2003, signed by Government of India, Government of Assam and Bodo Liberation Tigers. BTC came into existence immediately after surrender of BLTF cadres. The BLTF laid down their weapons on December 6, 2003 under the leadership of Hagrama Mohilary and Hagrama was sworn in as the Chief Executive Member (CEM) on December 7, 2003. The BTC has 12 electorate members each looking after a specific area of control called somisthi. The area under the BTC jurisdiction is called the Bodo Territorial Autonomous District (BTAD).

Exclusion, Inclusion and Deprivation: While the erstwhile excluded and partially excluded areas were protected under the provision of Sixth Schedule the plain tribal areas remained deprived of this safeguard. Neither had they gained any benefits from their inclusion with the plains people. The Bodos despite being a part of the tribal group had not gained in any way from their inclusion and had not enjoyed any of the protection and privileges that had been extended to other tribals. This was for the reason that they were not included in the erstwhile excluded and partially excluded area under British rule, which were later put under the provision of sixth schedule of the Constitution to safeguard their interests, culture and custom. As the Bodos resided in the plains of Assam in close proximity of to the seat of power in the state, they remain deprived of the provision of sixth schedule. This was despite the formation of Tribal and Excluded Area sub Committee under Chief Minister Gopinatha Bordoloi. They achieved only the constitution of the tribal belts and blocks in 1947 which included an area of 5,704 square miles. (Chdha Vivek Lt Col, (2004)

Immediate aftermath of independence became disastrous to the Bodos, with hordes of refugees migrating to the Bodo dominated areas of Kokrajhar and Goalpara, which threatened to change the demography of the area. The situation became disadvantageous for the Bodos, as the immigrants turned into vote banks for the political parties due to their vast number. The Bodos became minority in their own land. The deprivation in different forms made the Bodos assert their rights as the original inhabitants of the area. Since they do not come under the provision of Sixth Schedule they became apprehensive of the vast scale immigration fearing that it can alienate them from their lands in their own place. It made them demand for autonomous councils first and then raise the demand of a separate state.

BTAD came into being after a long struggle which began with the Bodoland movement. The movement not only aimed for a separate political unit, preservation of the group's language, culture, and ethnic identity also was part of the movement's agenda. (Prabhakar M. S. (2003)) One can say that the movement for separate Bodoland was an outcome of the deprivation faced by the Bodos in the Assam movement. But the emergence of the ethnic consciousness of the Bodo people dates back to the colonial period. The Bodos since the pre-independence period were very conscious about their distinct identity separate from the Assamese in terms of their history, language, culture and customs. When Simon Commission visited Shillong in January 1929 the Bodos along with other groups submitted memorandums to the Commission demanding autonomy and distinct treatment from the rest of the state. They did not demand separation from Assam rather for their political representation within Assam, which they considered as a solution to their social and economic backwardness. The Bodos also demanded greater political autonomy within the state through a memorandum to the Indian Statutory Commission. Thus it can be seen that the Bodos had started asserting their identity politically since the time of arrival of Simon Commission in India. In 1933 the Tribal League was formed keeping in view the forthcoming provincial elections. The period from 1933 to 1966 can be considered as the first phase of Bodo nationalist movement, which was a period of political awakening. This was the period when the Bodos started feeling the need of political party to represent their interests. The first phase was followed by the period from 1967 to 1986. In this period the demand for autonomy came to the forefront. However it was a demand made through peaceful means, with no violence resorted. The third phase was characterized by open and persistent demand for autonomy which was from 1987 to 1992. ABSU took over the Plains Tribal Council of Assam (PTCA) and spearheaded the movement. The fourth and last phase began in 1987 and after a brief period of large scale agitation, bands and demonstrations violence commenced heralding yet another low intensity conflicts. (Chadha Vivek Lt Col, 2004)

The All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) was formed in the year 15th February 1967 at Kokrajhar. Since birth this organization took the responsibility of fighting for the cause of the Bodos. It has been on the forefront of the Bodo movement and led the struggle for linguistic equality and political recognition, including the demand for a separate state within the ambit of the Indian Constitution.

Besides ABSU the other organization that led the Bodo movement for separate autonomous region was the Plain Tribal Council of Assam (PTCA). It came to being on 27th February 1967 at Rongjasali Hall at Kokrajhar. Though initially they demanded autonomous region subsequently they raised their demand for a Union Territory named 'Udayachal'. But this demand for autonomy was again substituted by the demand for autonomous territory. Due to this split occurred in PTCA and PTCA (P) was formed on 22 May 1979. The PTCA and PTCA (P) merged on 19 April 1984 to form United Tribal Nationalist Liberation Front (UTNLF). They wanted the formation of a Union Territory called 'Tribal Land'.

The ABSU fought for the right of the Bodos to study in their native language till the secondary level, and to have English introduced as the medium of instruction in colleges. Finally the Bodos emerged as powerful political force in their involvement in the antifoigner movement led by AASU and AAGSP (All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad). The Bodos who had suffered due to the encroachment on their land by the migrants participated actively in the movement. Although the AGP government formed in 1985 by the leader of Assam movement included many plain tribe members these members were not concerned about the separate identity of the tribal groups. Upendra Nath Brahma, a Bodo student leader who established the ABSU in 1967 on similar lines of the AASU resented due to the alienation they faced after the success of the Assam movement. On 2nd March 1987 declaration of the Bodo movement with democratic and peaceful Gandhian principle was made. The ABSU released a 92 point charter of demand on 2 March 1987. (Chadha Vivek Lt Col (2004)) The major political demand of the ABSU were

- Creation of separate state of Bodoland
- Creation of two District councils on the southern Bank of the Brahmaputra
- Inclusion of the Bodo-Kacharis of Karbi Anglong into the Scheduled Tribes (Hills) list.

However later in the 18th Annual Conference of the ABSU a decision was taken to suspend 89 out of the 92 points and concentrate on the three major political demands. In the same Conference decision to launch Bodoland People's Action Committee (BPAC) was taken with the objective to generate a mass movement aimed at the attainment of a separate state for the Bodos. But treatment of the movement by the state government as a law and order problem and brutal handling of the situation by the police legitimised the violence to which the militant Bodo youth resorted. The Bodoland movement soon escalated from being a merely an identity movement to a violent movement as a means to achieve its goal. It was the year 1989 when for the first time violence came to be used in a vast scale by the Bodo militants. Series of killings, kidnappings and bomb attacks were resorted by the Bodo Security Force (BSF) which resulted into several deaths. These atrocities continued till the signing of the Bodo Accord (1993). The state government also resorted to tough measures to deal with the militants. The violence and counter violence led to tense situation in the area.

The Accord Politics: The violence from both the sides made the government to seriously think about the solution of the problem. On 25th February 1991 the Government of India, set up a three member committee under Dr. Bhupinder Singh. The committee was to decide the territorial extent of the proposed autonomous area and the nature and degree of autonomy to be granted. The report suggested the establishment of two autonomous Councils on the north of the river Brahmaputra. The Bodos rejected the Committee's recommendations. Finally the then chief minister of Assam Hiteswar Saikia, negotiated with ABSU to jointly sign the Bodo Accord with ABSU president S. K. Bwismutiary on 20 February 1993. The Accord was put into effect with the inauguration of the Bodo Autonomous Council (BAC) on 7th March 1993 at Kokrajhar. Satisfactory delineation of the villages under the

jurisdiction of the BAC was never done leading to differences of opinion regarding the area under the BAC. During the signing of the Accord all the parties representing different groups were not intimidated thereby leading to differences, and resulting denouncement of the Accord by some of the groups. The Bodo Security Force rejected the Accord. Rather they increased their violent activities in the demand of separate Bodoland. In order to prove Bodo majority in the proposed Bodoland the BSF resorted to riots and killings of the minority people in the regions of Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon.

An All Party Committee was formed to demarcate the BAC area. However, the committee was dissolved before it can make any solution. The government announced the designation of 2750 villages under BAC. It excluded 515 villages as demanded where the Bodo people constituted 2% of the population. Bwisemuthiary resigned in the protest of non-inclusion of a 10- kilometer belt along Bhutan border and the Manas Reserve forest and the Manas Game Sanctuary. According to government the Bodos constitute majority in only 1100 villages out of the 2750 villages notified under the BAC. But the Bodos contended that the remaining villages are part of the traditional homeland.

The deadlock remained unsolved due to the uncompromising attitude of both the parties. The BSF continued its militant activities against the state government. They got the support of ULFA, National Social Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muiva) [NSCN (IM)], the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and Bangladesh intelligence agencies as well. (Chadha Vivek Lt Col (2004))

Bodo Liberation Tigers Force (BLTF), also called Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT), came into being on June 18, 1996 under the leadership of Prem Singh Brahma. The leaders of the BLT, together with the leaders of All Bodo Students' Union, formed a political party called BPPF. The BSF was redesigned as Bodoland Army, whose political wing is National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB). The problem of Bodoland increased due to the factional fights between the two militant outfits.

Apart from militant activities against the state government, the Bodo militants resorted to ethnic cleansing of the non Bodos. In order to prove their majority in the area, they took up violent activities against the santhals in 1996 and 1998 in which several deaths were reported and large scale internal displacement of the population occurred. With the help of the violence the militants were trying to clean their proposed Bodoland of the non Bodos and simultaneously put pressure on the Government so that it considers their demands seriously.

The government reached a ceasefire agreement with the BLTF in March 2000. This agreement was extended twice in 2001. After series of negotiations on 10 February 2003, a Tripartite Accord was signed between the Central government, the state government and the BLTF forming the Bodoland Territorial Council. The creation of BTC which brought hopes for peace and prosperity, in no time became the hotbed of violence and counter violence.

The Bodo Accord of 1993, which attempted to bring to an end, years of arson, violence and instability, sought to identify areas where the Bodo population exceeded 50 per cent as 'Bodo Areas', to be brought under the direct administration of the Bodo Autonomous Council (BAC). An unintended consequence of this provision has been the recurring organised ethnic cleansing in areas where the Bodos do not yet constitute 50 per cent of the population. The failure and subsequent collapse of the BAC notwithstanding, Bodo leaders, drawn either from political or community-based organisations or insurgent factions, have participated in these movements. Their targets sometimes were the adivasis (tribal from outside Assam, brought to work in the tea plantations) and sometimes, the Muslims (Bangladeshi or otherwise). The formation of the BTC with exclusive autonomous rights for the Bodos along with provisions of sharing of political power with non-tribal groups was supposed to promote cultural assimilation. Yet, the lack of an agenda of inclusion, an exacerbation of ethnic divisions, the utter failure of the established political leadership, combined with the campaign to "save" the Bodos from the "illegal migrants" have continued to hamper normality in the BTAD and other parts of Assam as well.

History of ethnic violence: It was in 1989 when the first ethnic conflict took place in present day BTAD. In this conflict the Bodos and Koch Rajbongsi's confronted each other. It was only two years after the launch of the Bodo movement. The enhanced identity consciousness among the Bodo inhabitants of the area may be the reason of the increased tension between the Bodos and Koch Rajbongshis which ultimately led to the violent confrontation between the two. Immediately after the conflict the Koch Rajbongshis had to flee their villages and take shelter in temporary camps provided by the state government in school buildings in Bongaigaon, Chapaguri, Dhaligaon etc. (Dutta Anuradha, Sengupta Urmimala, (2011)). Many inmates of the relief camps succumbed to diseases like jaundice, diarrhea, and viral fever as the camps lacked the basic human amenities like the provision for sanitation, proper drinking water and adequate medical aid. In 1990 a rehabilitation package was given to each affected family, which consisted of ½ bigha of land and cash compensation of Rs 2500. The displaced people settled in the land provided by the government. However the settlers of this land were not given legal land deeds. *ibid*

In 1993 almost 5000 families of Muslim had to flee as their houses were burned by Bodo militants (BSF at that time). Almost 27000 people had to take shelter in 9 relief camps built by the government in Bongaigaon and Kokrajhar. Along with the government, there is also some non-government organizations like an NGO based in Kerala, namely Rehab foundation, which had built shelter homes for the displaced people. On conversation with officials from Bijni Circle Office, we have come to know that the displaced people have been compensated in financial terms three times by the government since 1993. The first was in 1993, where the people were given compensation of Rs 10, 000/- per family. Again in 1999 they were given a compensation of Rs 10,000/- and five bundles of Aluminium roof sheet per family. In 2007 a survey done by the govt. showed 1075 families. Before 2011 election the families were provided with Rs. 50,000/- with the agreement that they shall then settle somewhere outside the camp. As per agreement the families resettled in different

places. From 2007 to 2010 Doctors made weekly visit to the camp. But after 2010 the practice has stopped. They can avail the facility of free medicine to some extent. Pulse Polio vaccine is given to the children in the camps. After the 2007 survey some families entered into the camps, which were not recorded. Till 2011, each family was given 10 day relief per month.¹

Between 1996 and 1999, several deaths were reported and large internal displacement of the population occurred due to prolonged ethnic clashes between the Bodos and Adivashi. The causes of the conflict are described differently by different section of people. The Bodo youths alleged that the main stream Assamese society used Bodos and did not give them their dues, owing to which Bodos had to launch the movement for Bodoland. However similar is the view of the leaders of the AATSA. According to them, the Bodos used them in various stages of the Bodoland movement, but they deliberately forgot them when enjoying the benefit of the movement. However one common view was there among the parties of conflict. Months before the conflicts took place the feeling of alienation, neglect, fear of losing hard earned autonomy had plagued the minds of both Bodos and Adivashis. These two groups had been living side by side for generations before the outbreak of the conflict. They have similar characteristics of life styles. There are similarities in their languages as well.

On October 3, 2008 violence occurred between Bodos and Muslim in many areas in the two districts of Udalguri and Darrang in Assam. It lasted for three consecutive days. A total of 54 persons were killed in the clashes between Bodos and Muslims, including 25 in police firing. The toll in Udalguri district was 31 persons (including 11 killed in police firing) and in Darrang district 23 persons (including 14 killed in police firing). Those killed mostly belonged to the Bodo and the Muslim communities. Hundreds of houses belonging to people of both the communities were burnt rendering thousands of people homeless.

According to official spokespersons, around two lakh persons were forced to take shelter in 82 relief camps set-up after the clashes. Of these, 42 camps were set up in Udalguri district and 36 camps in Darrang district. While the majority of people living in the relief camps belong to the Bodo and the Muslim communities, there are also some who are Assamese, Nepalese, Adivasis and Bengalis. (Barman Uddhab, 2008)

The conflict that started on 19th July 2012 is a clash between the indigenous Bodo community and the immigrant Muslims. More than 100 lives were lost and almost 400000 people were rendered homeless. The education of the children came to a halt for more than three months. The HSLC candidates appeared in their final exams without schooling since the outbreak of conflict.

On 23rd December, 2014, 81 people, mostly Adivasis, were brutally killed, half of them women and children in the violence unleashed on by the extremist outfit the 'National Democratic Front of Bodoland' (Songbijit),. Out of them 3 innocent people were killed

¹ Interview with Circle Officer, Bijni

Indian soldiers, using their mighty power of 'shoot on sight order' when villagers were protesting against the violence. Besides, 15,000 people were made homeless and forced to live in the relief camps. A financial compensation of Rs. 5, 00000 has been provided by the government for each dead person. (Dungdung Gladson, 2015)

In all these conflicts the most vulnerable are always the poor strata of the society. Their livelihoods are irrevocably lost; their children's education got disrupted. Children brought up in the relief camps don't get any opportunity for proper education or vocational training. It is not that only the non Bodos suffered loss in these conflicts, but the Bodos also suffered a huge loss.

The impact of the violence: One serious implication of these ethnic conflicts is the large scale displacement of the people in their own place. These internally displaced people are in a worse position than the international refugees. In contravention of humanitarian law, the access of the IDPs to humanitarian assistance is often impeded. Feeling of exclusion as well as the struggle for survival and protection may lead the children to join parties to the conflict or to become street children. Armed conflict and destruction caused by it to the civic amenities result in a severe deterioration of the health care service to the victims. Many more children die from malnutrition and disease caused or increased by armed conflicts compared to the direct killing during the conflicts. The interruption of food supplies, the destruction of food crops and agricultural infrastructures, the disintegration of families and communities, the displacement of populations, the destruction of the health services and programmes and of water and sanitation system result in increasing risk of malnutrition and fatal diseases. For the IDP families resettlement and reintegration becomes very difficult. Areas which have experienced prolonged conflicts often retain the sense of mutual suspicion between the returnees and the residents. Many often the IDPs hesitate to return to their homes in the fear of attack on them.

Women in all ages may be victims of violence in conflict, but adolescent girls are particularly at risk for a range of reasons. Their vulnerability is even greater in some localities where they are considered less likely to have sexually transmitted disease and HIV/AIDS. Characteristics such as ethnicity, class, religion or nationality may be factors that determine which women or girl may be subjected to violence. Women and girls are not safe in any place, be it in home, in flight or in the refugee camp. Children affected by gender based violence also include those who have witnessed the rape of family member and those who are ostracized because of mother's assault. Not only girls but boys also face sexual abuse, the case of boys however mostly goes unreported. Sexual exploitation has a devastating impact on the all-round development of the child. It is also likely to result in sexually transmitted disease and HIV/AIDS. Adolescence girls silently suffer the trauma of sexual exploitation.

Education is worse affected during armed conflict. Armed conflicts create an environment of fear and disruption making it difficult to create an atmosphere conducive to learning. In prolonged conflicts, economic and social conditions suffer and educational

opportunities become more limited or even cease to exist altogether. Sometimes, even when educational opportunities exist in war-torn areas, parents may be reluctant to send their children to school due to the fear that the children will not be safe while they are on their way to and from school, or during classes.

Destruction of educational infrastructure during conflict poses a serious threat to the education of the children in conflict. The education facility provided if any in the post conflict area or the relief camp are usually not up to the mark. The eligible teachers usually fled during conflicts in order to survive. As a result serious crisis of qualified teachers affect the better educational service to the affected area. It is one of the greatest developmental setbacks for areas affected by conflict. Years of lost schooling and vocational skills will take equivalent years to replace and their absence imposes a greater vulnerability on the ability of societies to recover after armed conflict.

Children who have been continually exposed to violence almost always experience a significant change in their beliefs and attitudes, including a fundamental loss of trust in others. This is especially true of children who have been attacked or abused by people previously considered neighbours or friends. Rebuilding the ability to trust is a universal challenge in the wake of conflicts, but it is particularly important for those who are a part of children's daily lives.

Adolescence is a highly significant period in which young people learn future roles and incorporate the values and norms of their societies. But extreme and prolonged armed conflict hampers the identity development of the adolescent. It results in the adolescent not conceiving any future prospect for them. They suffer from serious depression and suicidal tendency may grow in them. The change of behaviour in the adults due to conflict as extreme protectiveness or authoritarianism also create difficulty in the minds of the children. They often fail to understand the change of behaviour of the adults.

Livelihoods of the poor people got irrevocably lost during the ethnic conflicts. The relief they got from the government often is not sufficient even to rebuild their burnt houses. Immediately after the outbreak of the conflict scarcity of the necessary articles put the people into severe difficulty. During conflicts often the livelihood assets of the people are destroyed by their enemy groups, thereby making it difficult for them to restore their previous livelihood. The mutual suspicion of the conflicting groups also poses a threat for the daily labourers. People belonging to one group do not employ daily labour from the other group.

The seriousness of the impact of violence is not only the physical and material loss, but the most disastrous loss is the loss of trust between the inhabitants of the BTAD area to each other. The loss of trust has done much harm to the people in general. Most concerning fact is the youth grew up in an environment of mutual suspicion and distrust with the other castes. No effort had been taken by any agency government or non-government to build an environment of mutual trust and cooperation. The children grow up in an environment of mutual suspicion and they think it is a normal phenomenon. They don't trust their

neighbours. An environment loaded with distrust and hatred can never led to the creation of healthy society a dream that our Constitution makers had in their mind while introducing the provision of Sixth Schedule.

Conclusion: The major problem in a multi ethnic country is the maintenance of balance between the differing demands of the different ethnic communities. It is the most challenging task before a democratic country like India. Ever since the pre-independence period, India has been facing challenges in preserving the unity and integrity of India as a nation, due to linguistic and ethnic assertions. Therefore India resorted to a middle path i. e. accommodating the aspirations of the different communities, within the state. It was an attempt to preserve the unity of the nation while recognizing the diversity of the country. However this strategy adopted by the Government of India had given rise to a vicious circle of ethnic assertions by smaller and smaller ethnic groups. Providing autonomy in the form of Sixth Schedule paved the way for the demand of the creation of linguistic states. Creation of linguistic states raised the aspiration of the smaller ethnic groups to demand their own state based on their own imaginary homelands. Another major problem is that the homeland demanded by one ethnic group often overlap with the area under some other ethnic groups. Giving autonomy to one ethnic group in a particular area resulted into the negligence of the other ethnic groups residing in the same area. While giving autonomy to a particular group often it is seen that the government does not properly demarcate the area under control of the said group. It resulted in inclusion of area inhabited by majority of the other communities under the control of one ethnic group. The Bleeding BTAD is an eye opening phenomenon of the mistake done in providing autonomy without considering many vital and highly complex and contentious issues relating to the demography, territory and boundaries of the area under autonomous council, in particular the inclusion or exclusion of villages with a mixed population composition in an autonomous territorial council area.

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