

Activities of Ethno-Based Social Organizations for Social Upliftment of Ethnic Groups: A Case Study on All Rabha Students Union (ARSU)



Moyuri Sarma
Assistant Professor,
Dept. of Education,
Gauhati University,
Guwahati, Assam, India



Minakshi Rabha
Research Scholar,
Dept. of Education,
Gauhati University,
Guwahati, Assam, India

Abstract

Ethno – Based Organizations of North-East India have been launching massive movement on the issues of ethno-cultural identity, socio-economic backwardness, etc. Ethno-based youth organizations have emerged as a strong force through which the different ethnic groups in North-East India seek to fulfill their aspirations, rights and demands to safeguard their language, literature and socio-economic heritage as well as safeguard their distinct ethnic identity. The formation of RabhaHasong Autonomous Council (RHAC) has marked the politically significant phase of the ethnic assertive movement of the Rabhas. There are a long list of efforts undertaken by the All Rabha Students Union for educational, social and cultural upliftment of the Rabhas. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the efforts of the ARSU in the spread of education among the deprived groups in the Goalpara District. The objectives of the paper were- 1. To trace the emergence, growth and activities of All Rabha Students Union (ARSU) – the ethno-based organization of Assam. 2. To enquire the efforts of Ethno-Based Social Organisation like ARSU in the social upliftment of the Ethnic groups. Both secondary and primary sources were used for collecting the relevant data. The Secondary data were collected from various published sources such as magazines, newspapers, journals, books and various other publications. For collecting primary information, interview schedule were used. The findings of the study reveals that concerted efforts were taken by the ARSU(All Rabha Students Union) for educational, social and economic upliftment of the Rabha people residing in RHAC(Rabha Hasong Autonomous Council) area of Goalpara District.

Keywords: Ethnic Groups, Social Upliftment, Ethno-Based Social Organisation, Educational Facilities.

Introduction

North-East India is the home to many tribal ethnic groups. The question of ethnic identity in this region is a very complex issue often characterized by various forms of mobilization along ethnic lines leading to the emergence of different types of tribal movements. Such articulation of tribal ethnic sentiments was initially observed among the hill tribes of North East India. In the subsequent period, the plain tribes of the region started asserting ethnic identity as well. Even, they demanded similar institutional safeguards to protect their socio-cultural distinctiveness along the lines of those available in favour of the hill tribes. During the post independence period in India the nation-building process took place amidst large ethno-cultural and religious diversities. The nationalist leaders embarked on a balancing mission by designing a federal state apparatus to reflect the diversities of the nation. At the same time our national leaders have decided to keep the large variety of ethnic groups of north eastern region into one federal unit in the state of Assam. [1]

In India, the students have been playing a commendable role during the major crises ever since the dawn of independence. The formation of ethno-based student and youth organization for the cause of socio- cultural activities has been a vibrant parameter for the growth of nationalism amongst different ethnic communities and sub-nationalist groups. This trend is very much visible in the North-East India. The North-East India has been a store-house of hundreds of different ethnic communities having distinct socio-cultural identities. The student and youth

activism in the region has been observed for the very cause of the protection of their distinct ethno- cultural identities. It has been observed that society, polity, economy of all the states in North-East India are today greatly affected and influenced by these educated youth led students movements or students politics. Ethno-based students organization as well as movement has emerged as a strong mobilising force through which the student's as well as the emerging educated elites of the different ethnic groups in North-East India seek to fulfil their aspirations, rights, demands, to safeguard their language, literature, and socio cultural heritage as well as to safeguard and maintain their distinct ethnic identity, as well as to create a separate political arrangement or political space for all round development of their respective ethnic communities within the existing polity. Even after the several decades of independence, the Rabha educated elites increasingly felt that they remained much more backward in terms of socio-economic, educational, even political power sharing than the other sections of the advanced Assamese society. Indeed they had not only been experiencing the problems of land alienation, unemployment, socio-economic and political oppression under the existing socio-economic system as well as the existing polity but also discrimination and deprivation in achieving their standard socio-economic status as well as their rightful place in the society. The feeling of deprivation among the Rabhas provided a strong means to unite them and it worked as a major factor in building up ethno-based youth organisations for the upliftment of their socio-economic and political status. It appears to them that unless they are organised on a sound footing nobody would care for the development of their respective community. In response to this crisis, they felt the need of strong organisational base for their social liberation. In view of this, the emerging Rabha educated youth elites started to organise the community with a new vigour. In fact, they realised that without organising themselves, they cannot safeguard and develop their language, literature, their rich socio-cultural heritage as well as to upgrade their socio-economic and political status within the existing society and polity. Therefore, the need of strong organisational base for unification, national solidarity, community development, and community activism among the Rabhas, led to formation of the All Rabha Students' Union (ARSU) in 1980. Then onwards, the ARSU has become active in mobilising the Rabha community and become the front-runner of the ethnic identity assertion movement of the Rabhas. [2]

Like many other ethnic groups and communities of North East India, Rabhas are also demanding autonomy within the state of Assam under the Sixth Schedule provision of the Indian constitution.[3] The Rabhas are one of the aboriginal tribes of Assam. They are categorized as plain Schedule tribe in the state. They are identified as a sub-tribe of the Bodo-Kachari family who belong to the Indo-Mongoloid racial stock. They are believed to have originated from the Tibetan region and it is estimated that several hundred years ago, they migrated to Garo Hills, now in Meghalaya and spread

to the plains of Assam (B.N. Bordoloi, 1987, p. 128). At present, they are widely scattered in the plains districts of Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang, Dhubri, Nalbari, Kokrajhar etc. but their main concentration is found in the undivided districts of Goalpara, Kamrup and Darrang of Assam. Besides Assam, their distribution spreads over the Garo Hills of Meghalaya, Jalpaiguri and Cooch Bihar districts of West Bengal, Manipur, Nepal and Bangladesh. As per 2011 Population Census, the total Rabha population of Assam is 2, 96,189 and it is 13.1% of the total Schedule tribe population of Assam.

Such development among the Rabhas involved them in organizing movement for asserting a variety of demands as their constitutional rights. As a result of which the Government of Assam had to pass the RabhaHasong Autonomous Council Act as an option of solving the Rabha problems which received assent of the Governor of Assam on 5th July, 1995 (RHAC Act, 1995). Consequently, the Memorandum of Settlement was done by signing the Rabha Accord on 10th March, 1995 (Accord, 1995) through which the RabhaHasong Autonomous Council (RHAC) came into existence. The council includes 779 villages of Goalpara and Kamrup districts of Assam (Notification, 2005) and its headquarter is in Dudhnoi.[4] After the formation of the RHAC, the movement remained subdued for a short period. Consequently dissatisfied with the powers and functions of the RHAC, the Rabhas resumed their second phase of movement with great intense and momentum for greater autonomy demanding constitutional safeguards under Sixth Schedule of Indian constitution. Presently, after election of RabhaHasong Autonomous Council in 2013, the movement for the inclusion of RHAC under Sixth scheduled is gradually resurfacing, but in a slow momentum. Finally, after several rounds of discussion, persuasion and compulsion, the government succumbed under the pressure of the movement and holds the election in November 2013, after 18 years of creation of RHAC. After winning a thumping majority of 29 seats out of 32 in the RHAC, the reign of council came into the hands of the movement leaders and after 2013 next election was held on January 2019. Closed observation for last 4 and half years, it is noticed that despite limited powers and functions, initiative has been taken for development of the areas irrespective of caste and community. Today, the community still continues to fight for protection under the Sixth Schedule through non-violent means.

The purpose of the study is to reveal that concerted efforts were taken by the ARSU(All Rabha Students Union) for educational, social and economic upliftment of the Rabha people residing in RHAC(RabhaHasong Autonomous Council) area of Goalpara District.

Review of Related Literature

A brief review of the relevant literature is given below:

1. Dhruvajyoti Das, in his Article, "Ethno-Based Student's Organisation and Movement for Ethnic Autonomy in North-East India: Understanding the

role of All Rabha Student's Union (ARSU) in the movement for Rabha Ethnic Autonomy in Assam" (2012), stated that it attempts to understand the ethnic student mobilisation and the role of ethno-based student's organization in the movement for ethnic autonomy in North-East India with special reference to All Rabha Student's Union (ARSU), the ethno-based student organization among the Rabha Community of Assam and its role in the ethnic autonomy demand movement of the Rabha ethnic community in Assam. It may be noted that ARSU has been playing an active and leading role for the fulfillment of the Sixth Schedule demand of the Rabha ethnic community in Assam till today.

2. JagmohanBoro, in his Article, "RabhaHasong Autonomous Council: A Case of Contested Autonomy in Indian State of Assam" (2017), stated that States have adopted different mechanisms in order to deal with growing ethnic uprisings and accommodate cultural diversities. In this context, the paper tries to analyze the nature and functioning of the autonomous councils in Assam and seeks to discuss autonomy related conflict in Assam with special reference to the RabhaHasong Autonomous Council (RHAC) of Assam. From the study it is known that such territorial and non-territorial dilemma has made the council unconstitutional by keeping it aside from falling under the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of Indian Constitution. The State Government's failure in implementing the RHAC Act, 1995 for a long period of time has also made the council mal functional. Such malfunctioning and inclusive-exclusive nature of the council may be considered one of the causes for emerging debate among the Rabhas, other tribals (Garos) and non-tribals in the council area.
3. Dr. MonojGogoi, in his Article," Marginality and Ethnicity: Understanding Autonomy Movement of the Rabha Tribe of Assam, India", (2018) stated that Poor and lackluster economic development; large scale unabated migration into their land, feeling of marginalization and social exclusion; political exploitation and failure of RHAC and creation of BTAD under sixth scheduled of Indian constitution are the prime socio-economic and political factors that led to the resurgence of the autonomy movement among the Rabhas. It also stated that the demographic changes brought about by the continuous influx of outsiders both from across the borders as well as from different parts of the country have sharpened divisions and 'anti foreigner' sentiment has spawned the autonomy movement. The Government must take immediate measures to stop such infiltration of illegal migrants into the tribal belts and blocks of the region. Prompt but systematic action is required for proper economic development of the region. Initiatives should be taken to establish private and public sectors units to harness local products so as to generate avenues for income and unemployment. More autonomy to

the council will pave the way for better solution of the problems.

Significance of the Study

Considering the literature reviews it has been found that few studies has been done in the area of Rabha ethnic group residing in RHAC area of District Goalpara. The RHAC (RabhaHasong Autonomous Council) is mainly benefited by the people who are residing in RHAC area, they are mainly concentrated plains districts of Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang, Dhubri, Nalbari, Kokrajhar etc. but their main concentration is found in the undivided districts of Goalpara, Kamrup and Darrang of Assam. The purpose of the study is to trace the emergence, growth and activities of All Rabha Students Union (ARSU) and their efforts in social upliftment of the people residing in RHAC area.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study as follows:

1. To trace the emergence, growth and activities of All Rabha Students Union (ARSU)
2. To enquire the efforts of Ethno-Based Social organization like ARSU (All Rabha Students Union) in the social upliftment of the ethnic groups

Methodology

The methodology adopted in the study is described as follows-

Method

The study is based on Descriptive Survey method.

Sources of Data

Both primary and secondary sources of data were collected. The primary sources include personal interview with the Office Bearer of Rabha Hasong Autonomous Council (RHAC), Dudhnoi, District Goalpara, Assam. The secondary data were collected from various published sources such as research journals, articles, books, newspapers, websites etc.

Tools

One set of interview schedule for collecting data.

Population of the study

All the Office bearers of ARSU i.e. 30 members are population of the study.

Sample of the study

A sample of 10 Office bearers was selected based on convenient sampling technique.

Operational Definition

Ethnic Group

An ethnic group is a category of people who identify with each other, usually on the basis of a presumed common genealogy or ancestry or on similarities such as common language or dialect, history, society, culture or nation.[5] There are many Ethnic groups in Assam. But For this study the Rabha Ethnic group, residing in RHAC area, District Goalpara, Assam has been selected.

Social Upliftment

Social Upliftment refers to all round development in the area of economic, educational, socio-cultural and ethnic identity of Rabha people.

ARSU (All Rabha Students Union)

All Rabha Student's Union (ARSU), is an ethno-based student organization which works for

educational and social upliftment of the Rabha students residing in RHAC area.

Rabha Hasong Autonomous Council (RHAC)

RabhaHasong Autonomous Council (RHAC) is an autonomous administrative area within Assam, India. It was formed under the RabhaHasong Autonomous Council Act of 1995. The autonomous council was established through a state legislation for socio-economic, educational and cultural advancement of the Rabha tribe. Jurisdiction of RabhaHasong Autonomous Council includes almost entire Goalpara district, excluding Balijan, Lakhipur and Matia revenue circles; and Rani in Kamrup district. It covers discontinuous satellite areas and RabhaHasong village councils in areas with not more than 50% tribal population. Headquarters of the council is located at Dudhnoi consists of 40 members out of which 36 are directly elected. The council includes 779 villages of Goalpara and Kamrup districts of Assam (Notification, 2005). [6]

Discussion and Findings

The discussion is done objectives wise-

Objective 1

Emergence, Growth and Activities of All Rabha Students Union (ARSU).

It has been observed that ethno-based students' as well as youth organization has emerged as a strong mobilising force among the different ethnic groups in North-East India and they have played pivotal role in the ethnic identity assertion movement as well as autonomy movement of their respective communities. The genesis of the Rabha ethno nationalism was started with the formation of the Assam RabhaChatraSanmilan in 1926 under the patronage of GobardhanSarkar, an educated youth and one of the path-finders of Rabha community. The Assam RabhaChatraSanmillan was formed under the leadership of DwarikanathRabha, Holiram Rabha. Therefore, the need of strong organisational base for unification, national solidarity, community development, and community activism among the Rabhas, led to formation of the All Rabha Students' Union (ARSU) in 1980. Then onwards, the ARSU has become active in mobilising the Rabha community and become the front-runner of the ethnic identity assertion movement of the Rabhas. Formation of All Rabha Students' Union (ARSU) on 12th February, 1980 under the leadership of founder President Mr. KantaRabha and Secretary Mr. SabyashasiRabha marked a significant step in the growth and development of ethno-based student's organisation and ethno-based student's politics among the Rabhas (Hazarika, 2005:259). These ethno-based student

organisations were not very strong and effective due to lack of modern education among the Rabha community at that time, lack of proactive leadership, and communication skills among them. Thus, emergence of All Rabha Students' Union has been remarkable for community mobilization of Rabhas and in strengthening the movement for the Rabhaautonomy.

ARSU provides the greatest contribution and has played active and dynamic role in the ethnic autonomy demand movement of the Rabhas popularly known as the RabhaHasongmovement (RabhaDhaneswar, 2005:23). ARSU provided a common socio-cultural and political platform among the Rabhas to raise their voices in each and every spheres of their socio-political life. ARSU becomes the fort-runner in the ethnic autonomy demand movement of the Rabhas in Assam and achieved the Rabha Accord, 1995 and subsequently the RabhaHasong Autonomous Council in 1995 without the Sixth Schedule status. ARSU provided a strong spirit and encouraged in the efforts of All RabhaSahityaSabha (ARSS), the common literary forum among the Rabhas, to upgrade their Mother language 'the Rabha' and to provide it a constitutional safeguard with a view to promote it as a medium of instruction (RabhaDhaneswar,(2005:23-29). Their claims for a long duration resulted in the introduction of Rabha language as a subject up to class iii in 70 primary schools in Goalpara, Dhubri and Bongaigaon district in 1988 (Hazarika, 1998:247-8). At present, ARSU with the Cooperation of ARSS are still demanding the State Govt. to provide a Constitutional safeguard to their language and promote it as medium of instruction and to appoint 300 Rabha language teachers in the schools of Rabha dominated areas in Assam. It may be noted that ARSU has been playing an active and leading role for the fulfilment of the Sixth Schedule demand and for educational, social and economic upliftment of the Rabha people residing in RHAC (RabhaHasong Autonomous Council) area.

Objective 2

Efforts of Ethno-Based Social organization like ARSU (All Rabha Students Organization) in the social upliftment of the ethnic groups-

All Rabha Students Organization (ARSU) is an Ethno based organization associated with social upliftment of the Rabhas residing under the jurisdiction of RabhaHasongAutonomus Council. ARSU receives financial assistance and administrative support to organize several activities and programmes for the welfare of the student groups residing in the study area.

Table 1: Educational Efforts of ARSU (All Rabha Students Union)

Educational Efforts			
S.No.	Particulars	Year	No. of Beneficiary
1.	• Students securing 60% and above in HSLC and HS examination were felicitated by the All Rabha Students Union (ARSU) to the Rabha students.	1993-1999	200+
	• Students securing 60% and above in HSLC and HS examination were felicitated by the All Rabha Students Union(ARSU) to the Rabha students.	2000-2016	400+
	• Students securing 75% (star mark) and above in HSLC examination were felicitated by the All Rabha Students Union(ARSU) to the Rabha students.	2017-19	130+
2.	• Students securing 80% and above in HSLC and HS examination were felicitated and cash Award of Rs.10,000 by RHAC to all category students of RHAC area.	2016-19	150+
	• Simple pass in HSLC and HS for BPL Students one time scholarship of Rs.5000 by RHAC to students of RHAC area.	2016-19	1000+
3.	One time scholarship of Rs.5000 in Higher Education by RHAC for BPL students in RHAC area.	2017-19	2000+
4.	One time scholarship for students who have cleared All India Competitive examination.	2016-19	5+
5.	RHAC provides educational financial support to the students of BPL families.	2016-19	500+
6.	RHAC organizes counseling programme for Higher Education and career by professional counselor for the students of RHAC area.	Occasionally	

From the table 1 it has been found that ARSU being a ethno-based students body is taking responsible role for supporting the spread of education in RHAC area. They have a number of activities for motivating upcoming youths in the field of education. During the period 1993 to 1999 more than 600 Rabha students residing in the Council have been felicitated for securing 1st Division in the HSLC Examination. In order to provide educational encouragement to the Rabha students residing in the Rabha Hasong Autonomous Council more than 100 students have been felicitated for securing 60% and above in both HSLC and HSSLC examination. Approximately 130 Students securing 75% (star marks) and above in HSLC examination was felicitated by the All Rabha Students Union (ARSU) in the period 2017-2019. Students irrespective of different castes were felicitated and cash Award of Rs.10,000 was awarded by ARSU to the students securing 80% and above in HSLC and HS

examination. Apart from that one time scholarship of Rs.5000 was awarded to the students simply passing the HSLC and HS examination belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) Students by RHAC of RHAC area.

In order to encourage the aspirants of higher education studies among the BPL students in RHAC area, one time scholarship of Rs.5000 was awarded to more than 2000 students during the period 2017-2019. In order to promote the competitive spirit among the Rabha students ARSU is offering one time scholarship for students who have cleared All India Competitive examination in the period 2016-19.

Again more than 500 students were provided with educational and financial support to the students belonging to BPL families in the period 2016-19. ARSU also organizes counseling programme for the students aspiring Higher Education and career as well as professional counselors for the students of RHAC are organized occasionally.

Table 2: Activities for Social and Cultural Upliftment

Social And Cultural Upliftment		
Sl.No.	Particulars	Year
1.	Publish of books, magazines on folk culture development of cultural activity	Yearly
2.	Bi-cycle distribution to poor students and fisherman in RHAC area.	2016
3.	Tri-cycle to Physically challenge person in RHAC area.	2016
4.	Workshop cum seminar on Rabha folk culture in RHAC area.	2016
5.	Distribution of bedding materials to BPL families in RHAC area.	2016
6.	Distribution of Rickshaw to BPL families in RHAC area for economic support.	2016
7.	Distribution of Water pump-set among poor farmer for agricultural purpose in RHAC areas	2016
8.	Distribution of school bags to poor students in RHAC area.	2016
9.	Distribution of 'Teen-paat '(Aluminium Sheet) to BPL families in RHAC area.	2016
10.	Organization of Textile fair to showcase the Rabha ethnic dresses.	2004,2008,2016

From the table 2 it can be stated that ARSU undertakes a number of activities for the Social and Cultural upliftment of the Rabhas residing in RHAC area. Some of the most commendable work are Organizing Textile fair to showcase the Rabha ethnic dresses, Publishing books and magazines on folk culture, Workshop cum seminar on Rabha folk culture and development of cultural activities etc.

In order to support economically backward people ARSU provides Bi-cycle to poor students and fisherman and Tri-cycle to the Physically challenge person. 'Teen-paat '(Aluminum Sheet), school bags, bedding materials, Rickshaw, Water pump-set were distributed to BPL families in RHAC area.

Table:3 Rural Infrastructure Development

Rural Infrastructure Development		
Sl.No.	Particulars	Area
1.	Bi-cycle stand in rural schools at different constituency under RHAC.	Rural RHAC area.
2.	Construction of village roads under RHAC.	Village roads in RHAC area.
3.	Community and Cultural Hall Funded by RHAC.	In Moirapur village, under Silputa constituency, and in Dudhnoi under RHAC.

ARSU being a student body is not only working for in the field of Educational, social and cultural upliftment but they are equally focusing for the rural development under the jurisdiction of RHAC. From the TABLE-3 it has been found that ARSU

through the financial assistance of RHAC is constructing village roads, Community and cultural hall and building Bi-cycle stands in rural schools at different constituency under RHAC.

Table-4: Training Programme For Skill Development

Training Programme For Skill Development				
Sl.No.	Course	Duration	Year	No. Of Beneficiary
1.	Nurse Training	6months	2017 Onwards	30+
2.	Weaving Training	3months	2017 Onwards	80+
3.	Beautician Course	3months	2017 Onwards	100+
4.	Horticulture Training	3months	2017 Onwards	80+
5.	Office Management	6months	2017 Onwards	50+
6.	Basic Computer course	3 months	2017 Onwards	200+
7.	Electrician	3 months	2017 Onwards	50+
8.	Plumber	3months	2017 Onwards	30+

From the TABLE-4 it has been observed that ARSU with the support of RHAC has been organizing Skill development training programmes for the interested candidates residing in RHAC area. For the Higher Secondary pass outs 6 months training programmes are organized in the field of Nursing and Office Management. For both HSLC and Higher Secondary pass outs 3 months training programmes are organized in the areas like Computer, Weaving, beautician, horticulture, electrician and plumber.

Findings

1. It has been found that emergence of ARSU the ethno-based students organization has been remarkable for community mobilization of Rabhas and strengthening the movement for the Rabha autonomy.
2. For the better development in the areas of educational, social, economical and political upliftment, ARSU took proactive efforts and initiatives among the Rabha community residing in RHAC area.
3. More than 200 Rabha students residing in the Council have been felicitated for securing 1st Division in the HSLC Examination since the year 1993-1999.
4. During the period 2000 to 2016 more than 400 Rabha students residing in the Council have been felicitated for securing 1st Division in the HSLC Examination.

5. In order to provide educational encouragement to the Rabha students residing in the Rabha Hasong Autonomus Council more than 100 students have been felicitated for securing 60% and above in both HSLC and HSSLC examination.
6. Approximately 130 Students securing 75% (star marks) and above in HSLC examination was felicitated by the All Rabha Students Union (ARSU) in the period 2017-2019. And approximately 150 Students irrespective of different castes were felicitated and cash Award of Rs.10, 000 was awarded by ARSU support from RHAC to the students securing 80% and above in HSLC and HS examination in the period.
7. Apart from that one time scholarship of Rs.5000 was awarded to the students simply passing the HSLC and HS examination belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) Students by RHAC of RHAC area.
8. ARSU undertakes a number of activities for the Social and Cultural upliftment of the Rabhas residing in RHAC area. Some of the most commendable work are Publishing books and magazines on folk culture, Workshop cum seminar on Rabha folk culture and development of cultural activities etc.
9. In order to support economically backward people RHAC provides Bi-cycle to poor students

and fisherman and Tri-cycle to the Physically challenge person. 'Teen-paat' (Aluminium Sheet), school bags, bedding materials, Rickshaw, Water pump-set were distributed to BPL families in RHAC area.

10. It has been found that ARSU through the financial assistance of RHAC is constructing village roads, Community and cultural hall and building Bi-cycle stands in rural schools at different constituency under RHAC.
11. It has been found that ARSU with the support of RHAC has been organizing Skill development training programmes for the interested candidates residing in RHAC area. For the Higher Secondary pass outs 6 months training programmes are organized in the field of Nursing and Office Management. For both HSLC and Higher Secondary pass outs 3 months training programmes are organized in the areas like Computer, Weaving, beautician, horticulture, electrician and plumber.

Conclusion

From the study it can be conclude that ethno-based students' as well as youth organization has emerged as a strong mobilising force among the different ethnic groups in North-East India and they have played pivotal role in the ethnic identity assertion movement as well as autonomy movement of their respective communities. The Rabhas constitute a distinct ethnic community in North- East India as well as in Assam. All Rabha Student's Union (ARSU) emerged as an active ethno-based student's organisation among the Rabha community and mobilised and organized the community with the aim to safeguard Rabhaethnonationalism. ARSU took proactive efforts and initiatives towards educational, social, economical and political upliftment for the Rabha community. During visit in Council office they expressed that funds allotted for the Council are not sufficient for the development of the people in the Council area. Funds are not allotted according to the population in the Council area because of which they are lacking the schemes aiming at creation of the community assets which will bring sustainability among the peoples. Rather they are mostly implementing the populist welfare schemes. This is probably due to the fact that through such populist schemes they can easily earn popularity among the common voters of their respective areas or might the corrupt practices taking place in implementation of the schemes.

We have found that even after the constitution of RabhaHasong Autonomous Councils, the educational and socio-economic conditions of the

common masses of the Rabha communities are not remarkably improved though lots of efforts has been taken by ARSU in support of RHAC. It might be because of shortage of funds or lack of awareness about the schemes among the people residing in RHAC area. So it may noted that proper awareness programme must organize by the ARSU as well as RHAC through media, advertising on newspaper and also through social media, through which people will become aware and benefited with the implemented schemes. Thus ARSU has been playing an active and leading role for the fulfilment of educational, social and economic upliftment of the Rabha people in Assam till today and will pave the way for better solution of the problems in future.

Reference

1. Dewri, Dadul, "Demand for Autonomy by the Tiwas and the Rabhas in Assam and constitution of Autonomous Council", *KrishnaKantaHandiqui State Open*, 2016, <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/201867>
2. Das, Dhruvajyoti, "Ethno-Based students Organization and Movement for Ethnic Autonomy in North-East India: Understanding the role of All Rabha Students Union (ARSU) in the movement of Rabha Ethnic Autonomy in Assam", *Indian Streams Research Journal*, volume 2 and issue. 10, Nov 2012, www.isrj.net
3. GogoMonoj, "Marginality and Ethnicity: Understanding Autonomy Movement of the Rabha Tribe of Assam, India", *Scholars Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Scholars Academic and Scientific Publishers (SAS Publishers), ISSN 2347-5374(Online)ISSN 2347-9493(Print), 30.09.2018, DOI:10.21276/sjahss.2018.6.9.1, http://www.sasjournal.com/sjahss*
4. Boro, Jagmohan, "RabhaHasong Autonomous Council: A Case of Contested Autonomy in Indian State of Assam", *TICI Journals*, Vol.2, Issue 3, No.4, February 2015, Published on September 21, 2017, Pp.37 To 45, <http://www.ticijournals.org/rabha-hasong-autonomous-council-a-case-of-contested-autonomy-in-indian-state-of-assam/>
5. Wikipedia, *The Free Encyclopedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_group
6. *assams.info*, [http://www.assams.info/answers/what-is-rabha-hasong-autonomous-council#targetText=Rabha%20Hasong%20Autonomous%20Council%20\(RHAC,within%20Assam%20state%20of%20India.&targetText=It%20covers%20discontinuous%20satellite%20areas,at%20Dudhnoi%20of%20Goalpara%20district](http://www.assams.info/answers/what-is-rabha-hasong-autonomous-council#targetText=Rabha%20Hasong%20Autonomous%20Council%20(RHAC,within%20Assam%20state%20of%20India.&targetText=It%20covers%20discontinuous%20satellite%20areas,at%20Dudhnoi%20of%20Goalpara%20district)