

Geographical Importance of the Capital Cities of the Ahoms

Luhit Buragohain

Senior Assistant Professor, Deptt of History Tingkhong College, Tingkhong
Dist-Dibrugarh(Assam)-786612

ABSTRACT: The Ahoms belong to the *Tai* or *Shan* race inhabiting in Southern Siam and Southern China happened to be the early settler of Eastern Assam of the Brahmaputra Valley. In the early part of 13th century they established their state in the eastern division of the Assam State where from the actual ruling of the Ahom dynasty started. They established their five Capital cities at Charaideo, Charagua, Garhgaon, Rangpur and Jorhat of Brahmaputra Valley due to its geographical location and natural resources.

KEY-WORDS: Ahoms, Capital cities, Geographical Location.

Date of Submission: 29-04-2020

Date of Acceptance: 13-05-2020

I. INTRODUCTION

The Ahoms belong to the *Tai* or *Shan* race inhabiting in Southern Siam and Southern China happened to be the early settler of Eastern Assam of the Brahmaputra Valley. In the early part of 13th century they established their state in the eastern division of the Assam State where from the actual ruling of the Ahom dynasty started.(Gait 2013:38) They ruled over six hundred years (1228-1826 AD) with a reasonable stable government, and their kings governed till the British's annexation in the 1st half of 19th century. It is learnt that they had efficient political and administrative system for which they could establish their dynasty in five capital cities at Charaideo, Charga, Gargaon, Rongpur and Jorhat. Geographical environment is one of the important factors for establishing a Capital in a place. The geographical importance of the Capital cities of the Ahoms will be discussed in this paper.

Aims/Objectives of the Study

- The aim of the study is to highlight the geographical location of the capital cities.
- To highlight the natural resources of the capital cities at that time.

Methodology:

- The information related to the above study is collected through field study.
- The secondary data are collected from various published documents of the recent times including the subject related publications of the state/central governments.

GEOGRAPHICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE CAPITAL CITIES

Assam is situated in the north eastern part of India. It extends from 24^o8 N to 27^o25 N latitude and from 89^o42 E to 96^o E longitude.(Bhattacharya 2004:55) Assam is bordered by Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh to the north, Arunachal, Nagaland and Manipur to the east, Mizoram, Tripura and Meghalaya with in the south and Bangladesh and West Bengal in the West. Bhutan and Bangladesh are the international boundaries of Assam. Assam may be divided in to three physical divisions viz on the basis of physiographic characteristics. These are- Brahmaputra Valley, Barak Valley and the Hilly region consisting of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills.(Baruah2013:4)

The Brahmaputra valley is bordered by Arunachal Pradesh and Himalaya in the North, Naga Hills in the South – East and Karbi and Meghalaya plateaus in the South. The plain areas consist of both new and old alluvium deposited by the river Brahmaputra and its numerous tributary Rivers. It is covers with swamps and there are isolated hillocks on both the banks of the Brahmaputra in the central and lower parts. (*ibid*)

The tropical monsoon climates, associated with dry winter and hot summer, which are mainly determined by the location and physiographic of the respective places of Assam. The climatic condition of Assam is an important determined of livelihood and recreational life of the people. The economy of Assam is mainly agro based. So the major fairs and festivals have a close link with the crop circle determined by the seasonal characteristics of climate. The fertility of lands, heavy rainfall, high relative humidity and a relatively high temperature favour luxuriant growth of natural vegetation in the region. The region harbours many species

of rare plants. The valley is considered as a part of one of the hot spots of biodiversity in the world. Natural vegetation of Assam comprises the forest of trees, grasses and shrubs. The soil of Brahmaputra valley is suitable for the cultivation of orange, banana, pineapple, mango, vegetables, rice, wheat, sugar cane, tobacco, mustard, Lemon, *Ou-tenga* (Dillenia), *Thekera* (garchinia), Jack-fruit, mango, banana, guava, pineapple, *leteku* (baccaurea), *poniol* (Flacourtia), *jamu* (syzygium) etc. Betel-nut and betel vine are so abundantly grown that they have played an important role of Assamese culture.

Nature has gifted all her beauties on Assam, the hills and the forests, besides enhancing beauty to the land, contain valuable flora and fauna. Approximately one third of the total area of Assam has been considered as forest region. The forest region of Assam contains much valuable timbers. These are *Sal* (Shorea), *khair* (Acacia), *Sisso* (Dalbergia), *Gamari* (Gmelina), *Sonaru* (Cassia), *Cham* (Artocarpus), *Bonsom* (Phoebe), *Nahar* (Mesua), *Amari* (Amoora), *Khokan* (Duabanga); *Koroi* and *Maz* (Albizia), *Simalu* (Bombax), *Ajar* (Lagerstroemia), *Champa* (Michelia), *Mezankari* or *Adakuri* (Tetranthera) etc. which helps in the rearing of Silk-Worms and helps to growth and development of the silk-industry of Assam. Sealing wax, gum and rubber are also produced here. Medicinal herbs and varieties of beautiful Orchids are exported from Assam.

The forest regions in Assam are famous for many kinds of animals- like one horned rhinoceros, elephant, wild buffalo, tiger, leopard, bison, Himalayan bear, black panther, sloth bear, various kinds of deers and monkeys, pigmy hog (the smallest pig in the world), the yellow primula (floribunda) which is only found in the region and the painted bat with its red wings which is the only coloured bat in the world. Besides the common species, there are some rare types of birds found in the forest of Assam including pelican, blue coot, green pigeon, imperial pigeon, different varieties of parrot, partridge, quail, Florican, different kinds of pheasants, Scarlet, yellow, hornbill, Maina, Egret etc. Some water birds like Whistling tell, Snipe, Adjutant, Cormorants, White and black billed storks and a varieties of seasonal migratory ducks are also found in this region. Among the reptiles found in the region, mention may be made of Crocodile, King Cobra, Lizard, Monitor lizard and python.

The founder of the Ahom kingdom Sukapha (1228-1268 AD) who migrated from Mong mit in the modern Shan states of Burma crossed the Patkai hills in 1228 and arrived at Brahmaputra valley. Sukapha arrived safely on the bank of the Burhi Dihing River which place was known as Namrup. In the long endeavours of establishing the kingdom a phase of Dampuja was performed in Namrup by Sukapha. In that Dampuja Sukapha sought blessings from his forefathers for the establishment of a sovereign state. (*ibid*:221). Next to it after leaving Namrup he occupied Myung la Khen ten SA. He appointed Fralung Khun Tong as the ruler of the new kingdom so that the local ethnic groups could be administered with care and affection. After that place Sukapha arrived at Tipam. Tipam was a suitable place for cultivation. Therefore various types of paddy were planted at Tipam by the people of Sukapha. The Buffaloes were engaged in ploughing. That way both the low lying and the high lands were utilized for different types of cultivation. Gradually Sukapha came towards the lower region of Brahmaputra valley. He along with his followers reached Solguri. He stayed there for about one year and started cultivation in the low lying areas, then went to Habung nearby. After spending a few years at Habung, Sukapha went to nearby Dilihmukh. After that Sukapha brought Santak under his control and appointed Takhunla as the ruler of that place. Sukapha came to Simaluguri after ordering Takhunla to collect taxes from that kingdom. He saw lots of fallow land also in Simaluguri. Various types of fishes and tortoises were found in the rivers of those places. He saw the forests of Simaluguri had many types of Medicinal flora. In order to establish a permanent Capital near Simaluguri Sukapha searched for a suitable place and went to Dimow by treading the course of the river Dikhow. He went ahead through the Timak River as Dimow was flooded. Timak River had mix with Disang. Timak was a small river coming out of the Naga Hills. So he took the riverine way from Dimow through Timak to Disang. He along with his followers reached Charaideo. During that period the areas was under Bodausa of Moran and Thakumotha of Barahi were under subjugation. Sukapha brought them under his control through friendship. Gradually the neighbouring small kingdoms came under his suzerainty. In this way all the small principalities of Saumar were subjugation by Sukapha and he could establish a peaceful kingdom. Since there was no possibility of inundation by flood, he selected Charaideo for establishing the capital. The followers of Sukapha along with Barahi, Moran also supported him in the establishment of the Capital. For that reason in 1253 the first permanent capital was established at Charaideo by Sukapha. (Bhuyan 1994:48) After Sukapha his later successors established another four capital cities at Charagua, Gargaon, Rangpur and Jorhat in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam.

II. CONCLUSIONS

From the Above discussions, it is learnt that geographical location plays an important role for establishment of the Capital cities of the Ahoms. The Ahom Kings established their five Capital Cities in the Brahmaputra Valley of Assam because of the climatic condition and geographical location of the valley.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Barua,SL(2013), *A Comprehensive History of Assam*, New Delhi:Munsiram Manohoral Publishers Pvt Ltd, pp.4,221.
- [2]. Bhattacharya, Prashanata(2004), *Tourism in Assam*, Guwahati:Bani Mandir,p.55.
- [3]. Bhuyan, SK (Ed.)(1994), *Satsori Asom Buranji*, Guwahati:Lawyers Book Stall,pp.48.
- [4]. Gait, Sir Edward (2013), *A History of Assam*, Guwahati: Bina Library,p.38.

SUGGESTED REFERENCES

- [5]. Bakatial, Bhadreswar (2009),*Buranjir Pom Khedi*, Dibrugarh:Bhadreswar Bakatial.
- [6]. Gohainbaruah, Padmanath (2004), *Asamar Buranji*, Guwahati: Asom Prakashan Parishad.
- [7]. Barbaruah, Hiteswar (1981), *Ahomor Din*, Guwahati: Asom Prakashan Parishad.

Luhit Buragohain. "Geographical Importance of the Capital Cities of the Ahoms." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 25(5), 2020, pp. 12-14.