

# A STUDY OF WOMEN’S HUMAN RIGHTS OF BODOALND TERRITORIAL COUNCIL, ASSAM

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**Abstract:** Human rights are those rights which are essential for all the individuals as they are consonant with their freedom and dignity and are conducive to physical, moral, social and spiritual welfare. Human rights are a birth rights of and individual, and therefore inherent in all the individuals irrespective of their caste, creed, religion, language, sex and nationality. Attaining equality between women and men and eliminating all forms of discrimination against women are fundamental human rights and United Nations values. Women around the world nevertheless regularly suffer violations of their human rights throughout their lives, and realizing women’s human rights has not always been priority. Achieving equality between women and men requires a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which women experience discrimination and are denied equality so as to develop appropriate strategies to eliminate such discrimination. ‘A Study of Women Human Rights of Bodoland territorial Council’ is based on some important assumptions on the Study of Women’s human rights especially in the BTC area. Bodoland Territorial Council is a Sixth Schedule area which was created on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2003, and is basically a backward and one of the most conflict prone areas of Assam. Several types of common conflicts have been occurring in the region like communal conflict, ethnic conflict, insurgent and government conflict, parties’ conflict, etc. incidents of violation of rights of women have become a matter of serious concern in the rural as well as urban areas of the country. Women from economically backward and less educated communities have been primarily affected. This paper mainly focuses the study of women’s rights especially in the area of education, health, socio-economic, gender discrimination, domestic violence, unequal rights at the workplace and political participation of the Bodoland Territorial Council. The condition of women’s human rights in the Bodoland Territorial Council, is basically in education, health, socio-economic and political lower than in rest of the Assam.

**Keywords:** Women, Rights, BTC, Health, Education, Human

## **Introduction:**

Women’s and girl’s rights are human rights. They cover every aspects of life – health, education, political participation, economic well-being and freedom from violence, among many other. Women and girl are entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of all their human rights and to be free from all forms of discrimination – this is fundamental to achieve human rights, peace and security, and sustainable development. The rights of Women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. It is clear that the women’s rights as defined as the freedom, liberties and opportunities that women have, especially the opportunity to be treated equal to and given the same legal rights as men. The term women’s rights refers to the freedoms inherently possessed by women and girls of all age, which may be institutionalized, ignored or suppressed by law, customs, and behavior in a particular society.

Women’s rights are those rights which are regarded as the fundamental human rights that were enshrined by the United Nations for every human being on the planet. These rights include the right to live free from violence, slavery and discrimination; to be educated; to own property; to vote; and to earn a fair and equal wage or equal pay; to work; to integrity and autonomy; to enter into legal contracts. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted. It, too, proclaimed the equal entitlements of women and men to the rights contained in it, “without distinction of any kind, such as... sex ...” In drafting the Declaration, there was considerable discussion about the use of the term “all men” rather than a gender-neutral term. The Declaration was eventually adopted using the terms “all human beings” and “everyone” in order to leave no doubt that the Universal Declaration was intended for everyone, men and women alike. In 1967, the United Nations members States adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which states that discrimination against women is an offence against human dignity and calls on States to “abolish existing laws, customs, regulations and practices which are discriminatory against women, and to establish adequate legal protection for equal rights on men and women”. It is very important to note that the stimulus was the United Nations General Assembly resolution of December 1972, declaring 1975 as the International Women’s Year. In 1975, the first UN world conference on Women, held in Mexico City, declared 1976-1985 as the United Nations Decade for Women. The intensive efforts and actions undertaken during the decade included organizing more conferences on women, the creation of specialized agencies, such as the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), elevating the Branch of the Advancement of Women to a “Division” status and putting women’s rights and concern on the agenda of other conferences and organizations. Significantly, the most important development that took place during the Decade was the preparation of the

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted by the Assembly in 1979.

The UN Millennium Development Goals set specific targets to reduce poverty, including targets for increased gender equality in education, work, and representation. UN women found that progress was uneven. Globally, more women are now in school and work. Yet girls are still more likely than boys to be out of school (particularly at the secondary level). And although the number of women in elected office has risen, they are still only 21.8 percent of parliamentarians. What's more women's rights remain at risk in many areas not addressed in the millennium goals – from violence against women to sexual and reproductive rights. And women who are already marginalized because of their race, caste, sexuality, income, or location see the fewest gains of all.

The new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) hold real promises to embed advances in women's rights, and include a specific goal for gender equality. It is more broad-based than the last gender goal and includes targets on ending gender-based violence, eliminating child marriage and female genital mutilation, and ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health. It also includes equal access to education, expanding women's economic opportunities, and reducing the burdens of unpaid care work on women and girls. Now it is up to all of us to hold governments accountable for their commitments and make sure the goals are met. Involving women – and funding the solution of grass-root women's groups – will be critical to success.

#### **Statement of the Problem:**

The research problems formulated for the study is 'A Study of Women Human Rights of Bodoland territorial Council' is based on some important assumptions on the study of Women's human rights especially in the Bodoland Territorial Council area. Bodoland Territorial Council is a Sixth Schedule area which was created on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2003, and is basically a backward and one of the most conflict prone areas of Assam. Several types of common conflicts have been occurring in the region like communal conflict, ethnic conflict, insurgent and government conflict, parties' conflict, etc. It is also important that during the conflicting situations various atrocities took place like the attempted and committed suicide, molestations, abduction, rape, torture, threatening and they were also become an easy prey to human trafficking due to lack of their education and the knowledge about the rights and the less consciousness. This is understood to focus on the discriminate position of women in the family and the society in BTC. This paper mainly focuses the study of women's rights especially in the area of education, health, socio-economic, gender discrimination, domestic violence, unequal rights at the workplace and political participation of the Bodoland Territorial Council. The condition of women's human rights in the Bodoland Territorial Council, is basically in education, health, socio-economic and political lower than in rest of the Assam.

#### **Profile of the Study Area:**

The Bodoland Territorial Council is one of the District Council of Assam State and it was the result of vigorous Bodoland Movement launched by the Bodo people since 1986. The prolonged Bodoland Movement it came to signed after 30 rounds of tripartite talks held from March 2000 to February 2003 between the representative of the Government of India, Government of Assam and the Bodo Liberation Tiger. Consequently, a Memorandum of Settlement was signed on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2003, which established the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC). The main objective of the agreement are to create an autonomous self-governing body to be known as Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) within the State of Assam and to provide Constitutional protection under Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution to the said Autonomous Body, to fulfill economic, educational and linguistic aspirations and prevention of land right, socio-cultural and ethnic identity of the Bodos, and to speed up infrastructural development in BTC area. The BTC which was created on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2003 comprising the four districts of Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri – curved out of eight existing districts- Dhubri, Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Nalbari, Kamrup, Darrang and Sonitpur. The study area focuses of the four districts of BTC. The area under the BTC jurisdiction further Subdivided into 10 Civil Subdivisions and 40 Development Blocks, some of which are partly in BTC area and partly outside of it. The provisional geographical area of BTC is 8,795 Sq km. The four districts of BTC's geographical boundary lies between 260 7' 12"N to 260 47' 50"N Latitude and 890 47' 40"E to 920 18' 30"E Longitude and is in the North Western Part of the Assam State. The BTC constitutes 35 percent of marginalized Tribal groups like Bodos, Garos, Rabhas, etc. The major religions of the area are Hindu, Muslim, Christian and others. The region falls within the geographical map of least developed region in India. The agro-based economy is the only source of livelihood of the people in the region. The industrialization and other employment opportunities are scant. The boundary of the BTC in the north is shared by Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh and these boundary lines are called Indo-Bhutan International Boundary and Assam-Arunachal Pradesh Inter State Boundary; in the east are the Panchnoi River and Sonitpur district of Assam; in the south is an artificial boundary line that is shared with parts of Dhubri, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Nalbari, Kamrup, Darrang and Sonitpur districts of Assam; and the west is the River Sankosh. The area is outline by the Assam-West Bengal Inter State Boundary in the northern portion and down below by an artificial boundary line shared with the remaining portions of Kokrajhar and Dhubri district.

According to the 2001 and 2011 census report with the female literacy rate of 45.15 percent and 59.70 percent of all four districts of BTAD area is too lower than male literacy rate of 55.21 percent and 67.11 percent respectively. In 2001, the literacy rate of Kokrajhar had 52.29 percent, Chirang 52.61 percent, Baksa 59.57 percent and Udalguri 56.40 percent. The district wise rate of literacy and their rankings where Baksa was top in the list and the Kokrajhar district in the bottom list in 2001 census

report. According to 2001 census report, the female literacy rates in four districts of BTAD were as: Baksa districts in 1<sup>st</sup> place, Udalguri in 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Kokrajhar in 3<sup>rd</sup> place and Chirang in 4<sup>th</sup> place respectively.

According to 2011 census, the districts under BTAD, Baksa is in the highest among the four districts with the literacy rate of 70.53 percent and Chirang in the lowest position with the literacy rate of 64.71 percent, and Kokrajhar in 2<sup>nd</sup> position with rate of 66.63 percent and Udalguri in 3<sup>rd</sup> position with rate of 66.60 percent. There could be seen a little improvement of female literacy rate the four districts under control of BTAD in comparing with previous 2001 census. Baksa district has recorded in the highest female literacy rate in the 2011 with the literacy rate of 62.23 percent and Chirang district in the bottom list with the literacy rate of 57.87 percent, as well as Kokrajhar district in 2<sup>nd</sup> place with the literacy rate of 59.54 percent and Udalguri in 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the list with the literacy of 59.17 percent.

**Objective of the Study:**

The central point of the study of this paper is to focuses that how the peoples are going to responses on the conditions of Women’s human rights especially in the Bodoland Territorial Council. It is to make broader study on the people’s conception about the Women’s human rights of the societies and the actual motives and causes for the violence and its impacts of the society. To explore facts and find out the nature of the problems and to understand the problem, and suggest the measure is the central study of this paper.

**Methodology:**

In order to make an analytical study the data for this paper have been collected from both the primary and secondary sources. The required primary data and information have been collected through interview, observation and as well as discussion method from the study area. For the data collection self structured questionnaire will be distributed to the selected respondents. This research has a target to cover total 600 responses from 600 households of four districts of Bodoland Territorial Council 150 each district. On the other hand, the secondary data and information have been collected from different statistical records of the Government of Assam, Statistical Handbook of Assam, various local bodies, different books and journals, published research papers and articles, etc. Hence, the study is analytical and mainly based on secondary sources of data.

**Survey and Measurement:**

To bring the focuses of the study an in-depth field survey has been undertaken in the study area. The collection of the primary sources field survey was administered to 600 respondents in various blocks of four districts based on the purposive and convenience sampling method. The factors affecting human rights of women have been examined in the study. Education, health, social, economic, political status of women, awareness of human rights etc. have taken in the consideration in the measurement of human rights of women. The 600 respondents have been classified into various clusters on the basis of education, residential place and the income conditions.

**Women and Educational Rights:**

Women are the indispensable part of our family and the society. Education has been recognized as an essential agent social change and development in any society. There is famous saying by Brigham Young that, “You educate a man; you educate a man. You educate a woman; you educate a generation.” Hence, to think of harmonious development without education of women is impossibility. Moreover, it can be rightly observe that to educate a woman is to educate the whole family. By educating the women we can educate the whole nation. The education of women is the realized to be the most essential part of the development of the society to known their rights and responsibilities. It helps every woman to educate their children in a proper way and also helps them to be good manager of the family as well as active member of the society and the good citizen of the nation. Basically the children learn their manners behaviours at home and mostly mothers are the responsible for cultivating good behaviour in their children. Every educate women can think and run house well and made it a paradise on earth. The educated women are well known their rights and responsibilities of the society think well about her future and her aim in life and then choose the appropriate subject which will be useful to her throughout the life. The education status of women in the Bodoland territorial council is not very good or satisfactory. The female literacy rate in the BTC area in the four districts, it has been increasing considerably over the year as compared to the male literacy rate. It has increased from 45.15 percent in 2001 and 59.70 percent in 2011 respectively. However, as compared to the male literacy rate in the Bodoland Territorial Council (male literacy rate of BTC were 64.77 percent in 2001 and 74.28 percent in 2011) the literacy rate of women is remained low. The following table represents the male-female and gender gap between the literacy in the Bodoland territorial Council during the period of 2001 and 2011:

Table 1: Literacy gap between male-female in the BTC area of 2001 and 2011

Districts	Literacy Rate of 2001		Literacy Rate of 2011		Male-Female Gap	
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	2001 (%)	2011 (%)
Kokrajhar	61.01	43.06	73.44	59.54	17.95	13.90
Chirang	61.82	42.87	71.35	57.87	18.95	13.48
Baksa	70.32	48.33	78.55	62.23	21.99	16.32

Udalguri	65.94	46.34	73.79	59.17	19.60	14.62
Average	64.77	45.15	74.28	59.70	19.62	14.58

Source: Statistical Handbook BTC 2011, Population Census (India), Assam

The above table 1 representing the male-female literacy rate of four districts of the Bodoland Territorial Council. Table clearly indicated that there is reasonable gap between the male and female literacy rate in the BTC area. According to census report of India 2001 the male-female average literacy gap of four districts of BTC were 19.62 percent. According to census 2011, the table has surprisingly indicated that the male-female literacy gap rate reduced of 14.58 percent, but it is not enough to challenge with rest of the country. So it is indicate that the female literacy rate in the Bodoland Territorial Council is lagging behind compared to the male literacy rate in the region. During Field Survey it was clear that the education facilities in both the schools and colleges level are not appreciable and it’s also found that there are not enough educational institutions to bear the knowledge into the present context. To examine the fact, asked to respondents, “How do you evaluate female education facilities of BTC Area?” The following table shows the reality (questionnaire applied only for women respondents):

Table 2: How do you evaluate female education facilities of BTC area??

Sl. No	Villagers of Four Districts of BTC	No Comment	Poor	Good	Very Good	Number of Persons
1	Rural Villagers	10	157	90	43	300
2	Urban Villagers	05	125	87	83	300
3	Average	15(02.50%)	282(47%)	177(29.50%)	126(21%)	600

Source: Field Survey

From data collection in table 2 reveals that a numbers of women, whichare 47 percent of women respondents, were not satisfied the present system education in the BTC area.Only 29.50 percent says that female education facilities of BTC is good, interestingly still no comment comes from the 02.50 percent and another 21 percent says it is very good. Consequently, it could not be possible without educating a majority of women to protect from the violation of their human rights in the region. Due to lack of education they are not sufficient to capture the root condition or causes of violations of her rights in the family, local, national and international levels. The education in the Indian Constitution is a concurrent issue and both centre and state can legislate on the issue. Right to Education Act (RTE), is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted on 4 August 2009, which describes the modalities of the importance of free and compulsory education for children between 6 an d14 in India Article 21A of the Indian Constitution. The Act lays down specific responsibilities for the centre, state and local bodies for its implementation. The states have been clamouring that they lack financial capacity to deliver education of appropriate standard in all the schools needs for universal education.

**Women and Health:**

In 1983 the Government of India came out with a National Health Policy (NHP) to govern the functioning of the public health sector. The first National Health Policy of 1983 was a response to the commitment to the Alma Ata Declaration to achieve “Health for All by 2000”. It accepted that health was central to development and had a focus on access to health services, reiterated the resolution of taking health services community and ensuring cooperation of the community. It recognizes nutrition, prevention of food adulteration and maintenance of the quality drugs, water supply and sanitation, environment protection; immunization programme, maternal and child health services, school health programme, and occupational health services as priority attention for inputs required for improved health cared. Also calls on for reorientation of the existing health personnel and inclusion of various systems of medicine and health care at the appropriate levels, with specified area of responsibility and functioning in the over-all health care delivery system especially in regards to the preventive, promotive and public health objectives. Women’s access to healthcare needs to be strengthened by making public hospitals more women friendly and ensuring that the staffs have orientation to gender sensitivity issues. This policy notes with serious and wide ranging consequences of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and recommends that the health care to the survivors/victims need to be provided free and with dignity in the public and private sector. There will be enhanced provisions by reproductive morbidities and health needs to women beyond the reproductive age group. Every woman has right to enjoy the human rights to the highest attainable standard of mental and physical health. Enjoyment of the human rights to health is vital to all aspects of a person’s life and well-being. Poor condition of health is one of the main causes of which the women of four districts of the Bodoland Territorial Council are facing since long time. The achievement of BTC area in the field of health care facilities is not satisfactory rather disappointing in the region. To examine the fact and the Government efforts for women health care facilities, asked to respondents, “How do you pronounce Government’s efforts on women health care in the BTC Area?” The following table shows the result (questionnaire applied only for women respondents):

Table 3: “How do you pronounce Government’s efforts on women health care in the BTC Area?”

Sl. No	Villagers of Four Districts of BTC	Not-Satisfied	Poor	Good	Very Good	Number of Persons
1	Rural Villagers	184	57	36	23	300
2	Urban Villagers	195	59	29	17	300
3	Average	397(66.16%)	116(19.33%)	65(10.83%)	40(06.66%)	600

Source: Field Survey

From the data collection in table 3 reveals that 66.16 percent of women were not satisfied of government performance/efforts about the women health care facilities in the BTC area. Only 10.83 percent of women respondents were say well (good) on women health care facilities, the 19.33 percent of women respondents reply poor performance of government efforts and another that was only 06.66 percent says it is very good. On the basis of the above analysis it might conclude that the majority of women were not satisfied in the field of government performance and its effort on the health care facilities especially for the women. During field survey, it comes to know that they were not happy due to various irregularities and unconsciousness performance of government services in the region. Some example which they are not happy like the absence of Doctors, shortage of medicine, lack of maternity facilities in emergency situation, insufficient civil hospitals, lack performance of primary health centre, lack of community health centre, unavailable of first referral unit and out dated service performance of sub centre the main.

**Women and Societal Discrimination:**

Women are an integral part of today’s society. They have an active social life. They participate in various social and cultural functions. A woman today no longer lags behind the man in the most occupations. The women can no more be kept behind the curtains doing only domestic duties. Our society is accepting the wide participation of women. Women, with her intelligence and personality, protect the family from disruptions and disintegration. Women play a great role in everyone’s life without which we cannot imagine the success of life. They are the highly responsible for the successful continuation of the life on this planet. The way of behaving, thinking and doing of women is completely different from the men so we can say that the women are physically, physiologically and psychologically not equal to men. But the women are more responsible than men in various means like child-bearing and child-rearing. Women are treated differently than men in terms of rights and dues in many Indian societies even in modern world. Men have dominating nature over women in various perspectives. It is the matters think that if women are given all the same facilities like men and force them to be free from all the home responsibilities and think like men then why not it is possible for women to be like men psychological in every areas of life. Earlier women were limited to home works only and not allowed to go outside to perform social works like men. But things are getting changed now that the women are being aware of their rights and responsibilities well the dominating nature of men over their whole life. The table shows the total women population of four Districts of the BTC area:

Table 4: Total Population of BTC in four Districts (2001 - 2011):

District	Persons		Male		Female	
	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011
Kokrajhar	843,243	887,142	433,360	452,905	409,883	434,237
Chirang	433,061	482,162	222,364	244,860	210,697	237,302
Baksa	857,947	950,075	438,345	481,330	419,602	468,745
Udalguri	758,746	831,668	388,690	421,617	370,056	410,051

Sources: Population Census 2001 & 2011 (India), Assam

Table 4, As per the population census 2001 reports the BTC has 2,892,997 persons including of all its inhabitants. The highest population could be seen in Baksa district of 857,947 of which 438,345 were male and 419,602 were female. Kokrajhar district had population of 843,243 of which male and female 433,360 and 409883 respectively. Udalguri district had a population of 758,746 of which male were 388,690 and remaining 370,056 were female. Finally, in 2001 census report the Chirang District had have received a population of 433,061 of which 222,364 were male and remaining 210,697 were female.

According to 2011 census reports the total population of TBC area is found 3,151,047 persons where Baksa district top with the total population of 950,075 and lowest seen in the Chirang district with total population of 482,162. Kokrajhar district has total population of 887,142 and Udalguri has 831,668. In 2011 census, out of total population Kokrajhar has 452,905 male and 434,237 female respectively, Chirang 244,860 male and 237,302 female, Baksa 481,330 and 468,745 and Udalguri male 421,617 and 410,051 female. The above table shows the comparative size of districts in terms of male population the number women population is not less in the region. The Bodo community is based on the patriarchal system women occupies important position in the society. It’s clear that the women of four districts of the BTC have also face a number of specific problems due to the male domination society. For the discrimination on the basis of sex the question was asked to know the opinion of the regarding the

positions and rights of women in the society. The following table shows the result: (questionnaire applied only for women respondents):

Table 5: “What do you think women are socially dominating in the society by men in the BTC Area?”

Sl. No	Villagers of Four Districts of BTC	Disagree	Agree	No comment	Number of Persons
1	Rural Villagers	112	178	10	300
2	Urban Villagers	88	189	23	300
3	Average	200(33.33%)	367(61.16%)	33(05.05%)	600

Source: Field Survey

From the field survey data collection table 5 shows that, 33.33 percent respondents were disagreed the women are not socially dominating in the society by men in the BTC area. Similarly, 61.16 percent a majority of women opine or agree that women are socially dominating in the society in the BTC area, on the other hand, only 05.05 percent of respondents opine that they have no comment or no ideas. On the basis of above analysis it is clear that the majority of women think they had been dominating since long time and are the main causes or hindrances of women’s rights in the region.

**Women and discrimination on economic activities:**

Female economic activity is common measures of gender equality in an economy. It is one of the numbers used by the UNDP in the calculation of the Human Development Index (HDI). The women participation in economic activities is perceived to be a signed of empowerment. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the recent current Sustainable development Goals (SDGs) emphasize on the importance of women’s participation in the workplace in achieving women’s empowerment and the gender equality. This is true particularly in relation to women’s work in rural setting because women have always been engaged in productive activities and in most cases, when women participate in market based activities, it is still primary out of economic compulsion, not occupational choice. For the women of the four districts of the Bodoland Territorial Council is not satisfactory at all from the point of occupation. Women’s wages tend to be lower than wages for corresponding work by men. Much of women’s labour is none waged since it is categorized as household labour, even when it is for market consumption. The Bodos who constitute the major population generally cultivates for mustard seeds, tobacco, jute, vegetables like cabbage, potato cucumber, cauliflower, gourd, green leaves, spices, chilly, onion, ginger garlic, ladyfinger, etc. for their daily needs and use and economic gain purpose. Castor plants are cultivated for producing Endi (in local language) cocoon, which is a part of home industries in spinning and weaving especially for the women folk. The Bodo women also weave various types of cotton cloths on their hand-looms both for their own use as well as for the market purpose. It is however only recently that these hand-loom products of the Bodos women have caught the attention of outside markets and hence a new avenue of employment has opened up for them. But all these activities of women have not enough and unrecognized by their family and for the society in the BTC area. The following table shows the result (questionnaire applied only for women respondents):

Table 6: “Do you think that women’s household work is not recognized because it is non-salaried in character especially in BTC Area?”

Sl. No	Villagers of Four Districts of BTC	Yes	No	No comment	Number of Persons
1	Rural Villagers	252	43	05	300
2	Urban Villagers	269	29	02	300
3	Average	521(86.83%)	72(12.00%)	7(01.16%)	600

Source: Field Survey

Data in table 6 shows that a majority of women which 86.83 percent women respondents were think that their household work is not getting recognized by the family and the society because of its non-economic character. 01.16 percent of respondents say no comment or no idea and on the other hand, 12 percent of women respondents agree that their household work get recognized by their family and the society.

**Women and Politics:**

The women’s political participation plays a pivotal role in the general process of advancement of the Women. Political training should be imparted to both the men and women to increase the political in the country especially for the women. More and more our women leaders should inspire women to participate in the political meetings, rallies, election companying, campaigned etc. and this will increase women’s interest in the politics. Women’s participation in the local, regional and national political activities expands the more reliable and broadens the democratic system in a country like in India. The political power is the main weapon of women to bring equal welfare in the society. While the women of BTAD have been taking active role in various social and political movements, there are only a few of them who have been elected to the State’s Legislative Assembly. The women participation in politics is very low comparison to male. Only a few women have got elected and the very rarely have the opportunity to successfully perform their responsibilities as ministers. The political arena is mainly dominated by male of the

four districts of BTC area at every level. Though the percentage of women electors or voters increase considerably over the time, still they are lagging behind the decision-making power. The BTC has 46 Executive Members each looking after a specific area of control called ‘Somisthi’. A provision is made in Para 2(1) of the Six Schedule for the increasing the member of members for BTC up to 46 out of which 30 is reserved for Schedule Tribes, 5 for non-tribal communities, 5 open for all communities and 6 to be nominated by the Governor of Assam from the unrepresented communities from the BTC area of which at least 2 nominated members should be women categories. The nominated members have the rights and privileges as other members including voting rights. The election from the 40 constituencies is based on Adult Franchise and the tenure of the elected members is of 5 years. The following table shows the result:

Table 7: Women Participation in BTC Legislative Assembly since 2005:

Year	Total No. of Seats	No. of Male Elected Members	No. of Female Elected Members	(%) of Female Elected Members
2005	46	44	02	04.54
2010	46	43	03	06.97
2015	46	41	05	12.19
Total	138	129	09	23.70

➤ Including Six Nominated Members of BTCLA

Source: BTCLA Elections, Bodoland.gov.in

The above table 7 shows the numbers of women participation in all the BTC Legislative Assembly constituencies of four districts are less than the male participation. In 2005 out of total 46 seats only 2 members were female. As a result, no female candidates were able to win in the first BTC Legislative Assembly election, except two nominated women. It is found that all four districts of BTCLA constituencies’ male participation are dominating factor in comparison to female. In 2010, Labita Das was only single women member who elected from the Udalguri district and the two women were members nominated in the BTC Legislative Assembly election. However, there was no significant improvement or increase in the number of female members of BTCLA. Again in 2015 the Third BTCLA election, only single women candidate was elected because of the women participation in politics continues negligible. Out of the total seats a single woman was elected, it is not the good symbol of future political participation in the BTC area. Besides, it is important that a few brave women fought the election under the independent banner but could not win to their male counterpart.

To bring light the fact during field survey, asked to respondents, “Do you think that women political participation is less because of male domination in the BTC area?” The following table shows the result (questionnaire applied only for women respondents):

Table 8: “Do you think that women political participation is less because of male dominance in election of BTC area?”

Sl. No	Villagers of Four Districts of BTC	Agree	Disagree	No comment	Number of Persons
1	Rural Villagers	252	32	16	300
2	Urban Villagers	225	63	12	300
3	Average	477(79.50%)	95(15.83%)	28(04.66%)	600

Source: Field Survey

Data in above table 8 shows that 79.50 percent of women respondents were agree the patriarchal society is the main reason of low participation rate of women in politics and decision-making process in the Bodoland Territorial Council. But 15.83 percent of women respondents were do not think so and another 04.66 percent replied no comment or no idea.

**Suggestions:**

- [1] Awareness programmes amongst illiterate women should be developed by organizing some issues relating human rights violence like witch hunts in rural areas.
- [2] It is needed to care that, the educational status of women in BTC is not very satisfactory. The female literacy rate in BTC during the field survey it was found that the condition of education facility was not sound. Majority of the women were not satisfied of government performance on education.
- [3] The voluntary organizations including women organizations should responsible and the children should be socialized by properly without gender bias while giving the human rights.
- [4] To keep equal and sound footing with men in the dynamic or changing world, they must challenge and change the ideologies; patriarchal attitudes and stereotypical view of family with have marginalized them for so long.
- [5] To overcome from the main women’s human rights problems women class must realize their subordinate position and should take some efforts for emancipation.
- [6] It is really important that the change of mindset of both male and female is necessary to fight with the women’s human rights violence in the society like in the Bodoland Territorial Council.

- [7] To reduce women's human rights violence against women it is necessary to value education in school, college and university level.
- [8] Voluntary organizations especially women organization and such other social organization, print and electronic medias should be encouraged to work for women's human rights awareness of the women of Bodoland Territorial Council.
- [9] Poor health is one of the main problems which the women of the BTC facing since long period. Majority of women were satisfied of the Government performance on Health care facilities. To improve poor health condition of the region the Government should implement several health schemes for the development of women.
- [10] Most importantly, both the Centre and the State Government should initiate special education policy and encourage programmes for women of remote rural areas of Bodoland Territorial Council through which they may be aware to all women's human rights, all rule and regulations of the Society, plan and policies of the Government and rights and responsibilities and etc.

#### Conclusion:

This paper has shown a variety of reasons women are deprived getting their basic rights in the rural and the urban women in the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC). It has been found that the women's human rights become a matter of serious concern in the BTC area. They have been discriminating in all respect like –social, political, economic, education, and access to their rights, health and so on. It is important to say that the women themselves should be very conscious about their right and liberties. The women must realize their subordinate position and should take some efforts for emancipation. The Indian Constitution has to ensure participation of people in its politics guaranteeing to its Citizens' Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity assuring dignity of the individual and Unity and Integrity of the Nation. The Constitution of India provides equal to women and several provisions are inserted to protect the women right in the country. But in reality there is a huge gap between the men and women in terms of education, health, and public decision-making, it could also be seen in the Bodoland Territorial Council. Thus there is urgent need to remove the hindrances and provisions a strong public opinion and the public willingness because so long as conservative social thinking remains deep rooted in the society laws will not be able to society and try to create awareness among others also so they can give respect and rights to others. If you believe that women and girls everywhere deserve equal rights, and that those rights must be protected by you. Equality is a recurring issue when it comes to women and girls, whether it's unequal access to schooling for girls in developing countries, or unequal pay for women in the workplace. In a world where 95 per cent of countries are led by male head of state, it's clear that was as a global community have long way to go before women are given a fair shake. Indian Society continues to be a male dominated society. Women of India continue to live with certain inequalities and exploitations. The constitution of India grants equal fundamental rights to all the citizens. It declares that there is to be no discrimination on the basis of gender. Legally women enjoy equal opportunities for development as are being enjoyed by men. Article 39 of the Constitution of India calls upon the state to provide that adequate means of livelihood to all men and women. Article 51A makes it is a duty of every citizen to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women. There is to be equal pay for equal work. The state has been also directed to take special steps for protecting the interests of the weaker sections of society, women and children. In 2006 the state enforced an act aimed at preventing domestic violence against women. All Five Year Plans have been giving special attentions to the need for securing the objective of empowerment of women. Women in India still continue to face several types of discriminations. Female feticide represents the ugliest face of such discrimination. They are still deprived section of the Indian Society. In particular, the position of rural women continues to be quite bad. Despite reservations in Panchayats, Indian Rural Society continues to be male dominated society. In almost every home, girls continue to occupy a secondary place and mad love for a male child continues to be there. In the in-law house bridge burning, violence against women, dowry deaths and exploitation of women continues. In the society at large, women continue to face rapes and crimes. In the political life, women continue to live with grossly inadequate representation. Despite Constitutional provisions and directives, women in India continue to suffer discrimination, injustice and exploitation. The need for empowerment of women is being advocated by all the political parties and social leaders, and yet nothing really concrete is being done and secured.

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**APPENDEX-I**

**Parliamentary Panel claims Assam records highest incidents of violent crimes in nation, over 81 percent of kidnap victims are women:**

Assam has now earned the dubious distinction of recording the highest incidents of violent crimes, including extortion and abduction, in the country. A parliamentary panel attached to Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said in its latest report that it is disconcerted to note that Assam has the highest rate of violent crimes, including kidnappings and abductions, among all the States of India. The Parliamentary Standing Committee, headed by P Chidambaram of the Congress party, in its report 'Security Situation in the North Eastern States of India' said it accepts that the insurgency-related instances of kidnappings and extortions may be on a decline, but the general rise in the instances of crimes is worrying. The report was table in the Parliament. The committee is perplexed that despite a waning trend in insurgency, violent crimes have been on may be indulging in such crimes for ransom. It was recommended that the Central Government, in coordination with the State Government, should closely monitor the activities of insurgents, who have surrendered during the last decade, and also those with whom the government is presently holding negotiations. It is deeply worrisome to note that a large number of victims, who were kidnapped or abducted in Assam before and during 2016, are yet to be traced. More worrisome is the fact that large majority, at over 81 percent, of victims are women. This may also point towards a connection between such abduction and human trafficking. It was, therefore, recommended that and inter-State investigation may be carried out to find out the reasons for this extremely high rate of kidnapping of women. It was also recommended that sustained operations must be launched to traced and recover the victims of kidnapping and abductions. The committee desire that he ministry submit a detailed status note about the action taken to recover such victims. Assam also had the highest rate of violent crimes among all the States in 2016. An overwhelming 87 percent of the victims of kidnappings and abductions were women. Moreover, out of 6,128 abductions, only 249 victims were recovered. Assam also reported a huge number of 13,413 unrecovered victims of kidnappings and abductions that happened before 2016. While the number of kidnappings related activities of the insurgents a marked decline from 94 in 2014 to 14 in 2016, the number of kidnappings and abduction, in general, as reported by the National Crime Record Bureau in the Crime in India 2016 report, shows a significant rise during this period from 4,824 in 2014 to 6,128 in 2016. The report also shows that with a rate of 18.8 percent kidnapping and abductions per thousands in 2016, Assam had the highest rate of kidnappings and abductions among all the States across the country. There was a substantial improvement I security situation in the State in 2017: the insurgent related incidents declined from 246 t in 2014 to just 81 in 2015, and further came down to 75 in 2016 and to 33 in 2017 being lowest since 1997. The casualties of civilians and security forces personnel were also lowest at 9 in 2017. This was approximately 99 percent less than the 1,136 deaths of civilians and security forces that occurred in 1997. Moreover, 16 insurgents were killed, while 204 were arrested during 2017.

Assam's parliamentary panel report

Abduction by Insurgents		Abduction in General	
Year	Number of Victims	Year	Number of Victims
2014	94	2014	4,824
2016	14	2016	6,128

1. 87 percent of the total victims were women.
2. Of 6,128 victims in 2016, only 249 were rescued.
3. A total of 13,413 victims, who had been abducted before 2016, are yet to be rescued.

Source: Departmental-related parliamentary standing committee on home affairs.

The committee recommended that the government ensure that talks are held with the Assam-based insurgent groups, including the ULFA and NDFB factions, on a continuous basis with utmost sincerity to keep the insurgent groups at the negotiating table and maintain the security scenario in the northeastern region, achieved with painstaking efforts and numerous sacrifices.