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## **Present Scenario of Tea Garden Lower Primary School of Assam Progress and Its Development- Special Reference to Barbaruah Developmental Block, Dibrugarh District**

**Punam Koiri<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Lokman Ali<sup>2</sup>, Prof. Dharam Singh Hernwal<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Research scholar, Dept. of Education, Arunachal University of Studies, Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh. <sup>2</sup>Assistant professor, Dept. of Education, Doomdooma College Rupaisiding, Tinsukia. <sup>3</sup>Vice-chancellor, Arunachal University of Studies, Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh

Email: Punam0884@gmail.com

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### **ARTICLE DETAILS**

#### **Research Paper**

**Accepted:** 28-03-2025

**Published:** 16-04-2025

#### **Keywords:**

Tea garden, Lower primary school, Tea tribe, Tea management

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### **ABSTRACT**

Primary education is the foundation where the child holistic development laid down. For the development of foundation stage of children of tea garden workers, the tea estates or company establish The lower primary schools were run by the tea garden. In Assam there are various numbers of tea garden managed lower primary school. These school teachers are appointed and wages provided by the tea garden management. In present Assam government work on the provincialized of the tea garden schools for the better development of children of tea tribe. This study examines the current state of tea garden lower primary schools in Assam, focusing on their progress and development. This research investigates various aspects of these schools, including infrastructure, teacher's availability and qualifications, student's enrolment and retention rates, learning outcomes and community involvement. This study also analyses the impact of government and non-government organizations aim to improving the quality of education in these schools. By assessing current scenario, this research aims to identify areas of strength and weakness development and progress in tea garden lower primary school. descriptive survey method was used for the study to gather in-



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depth, descriptive information about the opinion and perspective of peoples.

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**DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15243223>**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION:

The tea gardens of Assam, while picturesque, present a unique set of challenges to the education system, particularly at the lower primary level. These communities, historically marginalized, have faced persistent issues regarding access to quality education. Understanding the present scenario of tea garden lower primary schools of Assam requires acknowledging both the progress made and the developmental hurdles that remain.

Children from 6 to 14 now have a fundamental right to elementary education thanks to the 86th constitutional amendment legislation of 2002, which provides that “The state shall provide free and compulsory education to all the children of six to fourteen years in such to all the children of six to fourteen years in such manner as the state may, by law determine”. All children across the globe are entitled to free quality education and must have equitable access to education. It is worthwhile to mention that in the article 45 of the Indian Constitution “all children between the ages of 6-14 shall be provided free and compulsory primary education”. It refers to the completion of elementary or primary school by all children, whether through formal or informal educational methods. Children of various communities, castes, creeds, religions, disabilities, orphans, and underprivileged groups were all included in this. Lower primary, from classes I–V, and upper primary, from classes VI–VIII, are the two stages of elementary education in India. Primary education is the foundation where the child holistic development laid down. For the development of foundation stage of children of tea garden workers, the tea estates or company established the tea garden managed lower primary schools. In Assam there has lots of tea garden managed lower primary school. These school teachers are appointed and wages provided by the tea garden management but the dated 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023 order pass by the governor of Assam in the department of School education is provincializes 419 tea garden managed L.P schools. But the services of the teachers engaged by the tea management will not be provincialized and they can able to continue their services in the same school under pay role of concerned tea garden. And the provincialized schools get the benefits of free text books and PM-POSHAN (mid-day meal) free uniform etc. Tea garden lower primary school consist classes of I to V only and additionally some school attached ‘KA’ chereni (class)



for the age group of 3,4 children. Government has taken various initiatives for the quality development of elementary education like- RTE act 2009, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, Gunotsav etc. These initiatives cover the tea garden primary schools also. At present total 120 tea garden primary schools in Dibrugarh district which are still not provincialized (Office of district mission co-ordination, SSA Dibrugarh) and 11 tea garden management school in barbaruah developmental block. Many labourer organization and social welfare board working for the upliftment of education and sound development of the tea garden people. At present though a number of persons of this community are educated and occupying prestigious positions in different government and non-government organizations including parliament. However, majority of this community are still underdeveloped stage. It is essential to address the factors which are creating barrier for the upliftment of the same.

## 2.0: LITERATURE REVIEW:

**Ghatowar, K.N. (2015)** A study conducted in the Bokakhat subdivision of Golaghat district, Assam, highlighted the critical need for improved educational amenities within tea garden schools. While lower primary education up to class IV is available, the absence of Middle English (M.E.) and High schools significantly hinders students' aspirations for further education, creating a stark educational gap. This deficiency underscores the urgent need for government intervention to address the educational needs of these students. The implementation of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has demonstrably improved infrastructure in many tea garden schools, providing better facilities than previously available. However, persistent challenges remain. Beyond the lack of higher-level schools, issues like inadequate classroom space, limited access to clean drinking water and sanitation, and a shortage of qualified teachers continue to affect the quality of education. Furthermore, the lack of extracurricular activities, such as sports and cultural programs, limits students' holistic development. Addressing these multifaceted challenges requires a comprehensive approach, including the establishment of M.E. and High schools, improved teacher training and recruitment, and the provision of essential resources to ensure that tea garden students have access to equitable and quality education.

**Sarma, N. (2011)** The study found that the existing system is failing to adequately serve the tea tribe communities, with alarmingly low attendance rates and a significant prevalence of school dropout. This points to systemic issues beyond mere infrastructural deficiencies. Contributing factors likely include socioeconomic challenges, such as poverty and the need for children to contribute to family income, as well as cultural barriers and a perceived lack of relevance in the current curriculum. Furthermore, the quality of teaching, the availability of qualified educators, and the accessibility of schools, particularly



in remote tea garden areas, likely play crucial roles. The research underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions to address these complex issues, including community engagement programs, financial support for families, culturally sensitive educational approaches, and improved teacher training and retention strategies. Comprehensive efforts are required to ensure that all children within the tea tribe communities of Jorhat district have access to and remain engaged in quality upper primary education.

**Dawson, Sisodia & Noqvi (2009)** A study examining the effectiveness of a reading enhancement program within Assamese primary schools in tea garden areas highlighted the critical educational disparities faced by these communities. The research underscored that tea garden regions are among the most educationally marginalized in Assam, stemming from historical and systemic disadvantages. This marginalization is evidenced by alarmingly high rates of student absenteeism and dropout, coupled with consistently low academic performance within these schools. The urgent need to achieve universal elementary education is therefore paramount. The study further revealed that a significant portion of tea garden children either do not enroll in school at all or abandon their education prematurely. This contributes to a broader educational profile characterized by widespread illiteracy within the adult population. Contributing factors likely include socioeconomic hardships, such as child labor and poverty, limited access to quality educational resources, language barriers, and a lack of parental engagement in their children's education. Furthermore, the effectiveness of reading enhancement programs may be hindered by factors such as a shortage of trained teachers, inadequate classroom resources, and a lack of culturally relevant teaching materials. To address these challenges, a multi-faceted approach is required, including targeted interventions to improve school attendance and retention, enhance teacher training and support, provide culturally sensitive educational resources, and promote community engagement in education.

**Saikia, R., (2017):** Her study looked at the issues of children of tea garden laborers not being enrolled and dropping out. According to the study, girls experience greater rates of both of these characteristics than boys do, and the severity of the issue varies from garden to garden. The fact that tea garden workers are not accustomed to being admitted to elementary schools at the proper age is another significant result. Some of the causes of dropout and non-enrolment include caregiving for siblings, involvement in wage-earning activities, irregular attendance, and an unappealing educational environment. One of the biggest obstacles to the children of tea garden laborers' educational success is their parents' alcoholism.



Bora (2002) looked into the primary education facilities that were in place in the Dibrugarh District's Tea Gardens. Among the conclusions are Schools in the tea garden area are unable to foster a welcoming environment that would encourage pupils to attend. In addition to teaching, teachers are working on other tea garden projects. Infrastructural facilities of the schools are also rated not adequate. Low proportion of enrolment of girl children in the schools was reported due to parents' illiteracy and early marriage of the girl child. Schools have huge playground but no games and sports materials except football. The study's schools have teacher-to-pupil ratios ranging from 1:30 to 1:35.

A report from the Tea Garden Education Committees (GoI, 2007) states that tea garden schools have a number of issues and subpar facilities, including: Very subpar facilities; most tea gardens only have a lower elementary school that can accommodate 100-250 pupils. The premises used for classes are of very low quality, and the desks and benches are insufficient. For four classes with 100–250 pupils, there are often one or two teachers. Teachers in most schools work half a day in the tea garden and half a day in the classroom. Since both teachers and students work in the garden during the plucking period, the majority of schools are closed during that time. Since the management pays the teacher, children typically drop out of school to work in tea gardens for manager pay because child labour is heavily encouraged there. Due to their lack of involvement in the industrial process, teachers receive extremely low salaries. In the related literature review, many researchers have studied the availability of facilities in schools in tea garden areas of different districts of Assam. There should be more research done on the subject. However, as they are crucial to the investigation of tea garden school facilities in Assam, parents, educators, students, and others should also be involved. This would make it easier to comprehend and evaluate how tea garden schools' amenities affect pupils.

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY:

In order to gather precise information about the current state of the school, the study was carried out using the descriptive survey technique of research. All of the tea-garden lower elementary schools in the Barbaruah developmental block are included in this study. Therefore, all of these schools' heads of institutions have been chosen as the study's population. The current study's sample was chosen using a straightforward random sampling procedure. Within the Barbaruah Developmental Block, there are eleven Tea Garden Lower Primary Schools. For this study, a sample of five students from 11 Tea Garden School has been chosen.



#### 4.0 OBJECTIVES:

1. To investigate the current state of the tea garden lower elementary school's infrastructure in the Barbaruah district of Assam
2. To study the government and non-government organization initiatives to improve the quality of education.

#### 5.0 ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:

##### Objective 1:

Data analysis is fundamental to any research endeavour. In this study, primary data was gathered through a descriptive survey conducted across five tea garden lower primary schools located in barbaruah developmenatl block. Following collection, the data was organized and presented in tabular format, as detailed in Table 1

TABLE 1:

##### PRESENT INFRASTRUCTURAL CONDITION OF THE SCHOOL:

SL.NO	INFRASTRUCTURE	NAME OF THE SCHOOL		PERCENTAGE	
		YES	NO	YES	NO
1	PUCCA SCHOOL BUILDING	5	0	100%	0%
2	BOUNDARY WALL	4	1	80%	20%
3	ELECTRICITY	5	0	100%	0%
4	ADEQUATE CLASSROOM	3	2	60%	40%
5	SCHOOL LIBRARY	1	4	20%	40%
6	SCHOOL PLAYGROUND	4	1	80%	20%
7	TEACHERS COMMON ROOM	0	5	0%	100%
8	BOYS TOILET	5	0	100%	0%



9	GIRLS TOILET	5	0	100%	0%
10	RUNNING WATER	5	0	100%	0%
11	HAND PUMP	5	0	100%	0%

Regarding the infrastructure, the table above reveals that:

- a) There is no kuchha school building or electrical facility, and all of the tea garden lower primary school buildings of the Barbaruah developmental block are pucca.
- b) Four schools out of five have a perimeter wall.
- c) Only 60% of the schools have adequate classroom.
- d) Only 20% of the lower primary schools in Tea Garden have a school library and playground, while 80% of the school's lack both.
- g) Of the five schools, none have a common area for teachers.
- f) Every school has separate restrooms for boys and females.
- g) Of the eight schools, all exclusively use hand pumps to supply drinking water; none of them have the ability to run water for students.

Objective 2:

The improvement of lower primary schools in tea garden areas is a complex issue that requires the combined effort of government and non-governmental organizations.

GUNOTSAV:

Gunotsav stands as a significant government initiative in Assam aimed at driving qualitative improvements in school education, including those within tea garden areas. This comprehensive evaluation process assesses schools across key dimensions: scholastic performance, co-scholastic activities, community participation, and infrastructure. By conducting thorough evaluations and assigning grades, Gunotsav enables the identification of learning gaps and facilitates targeted remedial measures. The program fosters increased accountability and encourages active community involvement in school activities. For tea garden lower primary schools, Gunotsav provides a structured framework for identifying areas needing improvement, leading to focused interventions that enhance the quality of education and ultimately benefit the students within these communities. Gunotsav, an initiative by the



Assam government, provides significant benefits to lower primary schools within tea garden areas. This program facilitates a comprehensive evaluation of these schools, identifying crucial learning gaps and infrastructural deficiencies that often hinder the educational progress of children in these marginalized communities.

#### SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN:

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has provided numerous benefits to lower primary schools within tea garden areas, significantly impacting access and quality of education. By focusing on universal elementary education, SSA has worked to improve school infrastructure, ensuring that more children have access to learning spaces. This includes the construction of new classrooms, provision of sanitation facilities, and access to clean drinking water. SSA has emphasized teacher training, aiming to enhance the quality of instruction and improve learning outcomes. The provision of free textbooks and uniforms has also helped to alleviate the financial burden on families, encouraging higher enrollment and attendance rates. SSA's initiatives have contributed to reducing social and gender disparities in education, striving to provide equal opportunities for all children within these often-marginalized communities

#### NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

(NGOs) play a vital role in supplementing government efforts to improve lower primary education in tea garden areas. Their involvement often focuses on addressing the specific challenges faced by these communities. NGOs provide crucial support through initiatives like supplementary education, bridging gaps in the formal curriculum and offering extra help to struggling students. They conduct teacher training programs, equipping educators with modern pedagogical techniques and resources. Community mobilization is another key area, where NGOs work to raise awareness about the importance of education, encourage parental involvement, and build stronger school-community relationships. Furthermore, many NGOs contribute to infrastructural improvements, building or renovating schools and providing essential learning materials. By addressing these critical needs, NGOs contribute significantly to creating a more conducive learning environment for children in tea garden communities, fostering improved educational outcomes.

#### THE DIRECTORATE FOR WELFARE OF TEA GARDEN





The Directorate for Welfare of Tea Garden and Ex Tea Garden Tribes plays a crucial role in the development of lower primary schools within tea garden areas. This directorate is responsible for implementing various schemes and initiatives aimed at improving educational infrastructure, enhancing teacher quality, and increasing access to education for children in these communities. By providing financial assistance, scholarships, and grants-in-aid, the directorate supports the construction and renovation of school buildings, the provision of educational materials, and the organization of teacher training programs. Furthermore, it works to address the specific needs of tea garden communities, considering their unique socio-economic challenges and cultural context. Through its focused efforts, the Directorate for Welfare of Tea Garden and Ex Tea Garden Tribes strives to create a more equitable and effective educational environment, fostering the development of young learners in these historically underserved regions

## 6.0 CONCLUSION:

This study reveals a significant improvement in the infrastructural condition of tea garden lower primary schools within the Barbaruah Developmental Block following government intervention. Previously plagued by poor facilities, these schools now largely benefit from proper boundary walls, electricity, and dedicated teacher common rooms. However, challenges remain, with a limited number of schools possessing adequate classrooms, libraries, and playgrounds. Furthermore, while the appointment of government teachers with strong academic qualifications after April 18, 2023, represents a positive shift, 50% of the teaching staff remains untrained, teachers previously appointed by tea management often lacked sufficient qualifications. Despite these lingering issues, the overall condition of the tea garden lower primary schools in the Barbaruah Developmental Block can be considered satisfactory, demonstrating the positive impact of government oversight

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