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**THE POLITICS OF POWER VS. THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY -  
Understanding the Dynamics of Statehood Demands in Assam**

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*“There is a wide- and widening - gap between the exercise of authority and the presumed structure of the polity, between those who wield power and those in whose name it is wielded, between the centres of decision-making and the location of groups communities and regions affected by the decisions” - (Rajni Kothari, 1988)*

## Abstract

*The ‘North-eastern states’ of India have persistently been subject to the idiosyncrasies of political power games, right from being designated as the ‘north-east’ of the Indian ‘mainland’, to the reorganization of states on criteria that hardly respects the character of this complex region. The resultant has been an endless struggle on the part of the ‘forgotten’ communities, who have been sacrificed at the altar of ‘forced nationalisms’, to regain their sense of identity and autonomy from the autocracies of the political elite of ‘democratic India’. Given the fact that only the ‘dominant’ communities of the region have succeeded even if partially, in getting their demands fulfilled by the Centre, by making their presence felt in vociferous terms, the marginalized communities are hardly left with any other alternative than to follow suit by also resorting to violence, to force the Indian state to recognize their claims of statehood. These movements, most of which have been continuing since decades, had somehow become subdued in the current times only to receive a boost by the sudden decision to exclusively grant statehood to the Telangana region, by the Central Government.*

*In Assam, which is currently witnessing an unprecedented growth of demands for statehood by communities such as the Bodo, Karbi, Dimas and the Koch Rajbongshis, the political elite has responded by joining hands to quell any such effort to ‘re-divide’ the state. While arguing that such a move would be detrimental to the ‘development’ of the region, some of these leaders have taken a counter step to press for a ‘greater Assam’ instead. In this milieu, the paper seeks to argue that demands for statehood should be read as signifying the urge of marginalized communities to retain their identity which they perceive as being ‘under threat’, on the one hand, and to take up the task of the development of their homeland and their people in their own hands, which has not come about despite feisty promises made both by the Central as well as the state governments ever since Independence, on the other. This stands explained given the deteriorating law and order situation, growing religious and ethnic strife, rampant corruption, growing unemployment and poverty, the blatant destruction of eco-systems as well as the extensive displacement of communities as a result of the ‘mall-centric’ development policies of the Assam government. Given the strategic location of the North-eastern region, an attitude of indifference and political highhandedness on the one hand, and selective politics and knee jerk reactions on the other, would only serve to further aggravate the nationalistic sentiments of the various communities of this area, which could prove a lethal challenge to the Indian nation state in the not so distant future. In this context, the paper seeks to urge academics and policy makers to undertake judicious steps that would ensure that the marginalized communities of North-east India do not feel further alienated from an inclusive development structure on the one hand, and from their very identity and ethos on the other.*

## **Introduction**

The geographical landmass of India, like most other post-colonial nations, has been an inheritance from its colonial past. An outcome of geopolitics, the North-eastern region of India remains marginalized and isolated, while being connected to the rest of the country through a narrow corridor – the ‘chicken-neck’ in northern Bengal, which barely accounts for one percent of the region, while on all the other sides, it is enclosed by international boundaries. This region is characterized by extraordinary ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity, with more than 160 Scheduled Tribes, and over 400 distinct tribal and sub-tribal groupings, and a large diverse non-tribal population concentrated mainly in Assam, Manipur and Tripura. An estimated 220 dialects belonging to the Indo-Aryan, Sino-Tibetan, and Austro-Asiatic language families are spoken in the region, which may be said to be the largest concentration of languages in the subcontinent (Bhaumik, 2007). The ‘North-eastern’ region of India comprises the seven Indian states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura, - which are also known as the “Seven Sisters”, and since 2003, Sikkim has also been included as the eighth member of the regional North Eastern Council (NEC). While the state of Nagaland attained statehood in 1963, most of the states in the region were reorganized between 1971, and 1987, and the three states of Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram, were carved out of the larger state of Assam in the 1970s. Thus the state of Assam as it stands today has been carved out of a much larger political entity, with an ancient past (Bhaumik, 2007).

## **Geographical and ethnic configuration of Assam in the Pre-Colonial and Colonial Times**

During the pre-colonial times the land mass which now forms the “north-east” of the Indian mainland was composed of a number of sovereign kingdoms, which persisted over centuries, without much interference from the outside world. This included the small states of the hill tribes of undivided Assam – of the Nagas, Mizos, Khasis, Jaintias, Garos, Karbis, Dimasakacharis etc (Hussain, 1987), along with the plains tribe of BodoKacharis, the Ahoms and the Koch Rajbongshis. Most of them are considered to be ancient migrants to this region from Mongolia, and some of them are found to

belong to the Austro-Asiatic and Tibeto-Burman races. Among them, the Bodos are said to have been the inhabitants of the duars – the custom gates on the frontier between Bhutan and the Koch and the Ahom kingdoms, an assertion found in colonial writings as well, which finds reflection in their present claims to statehood particularly with reference to the northern bank of the river Brahmaputra (Baruah, 1999). Again, the Dimasakacharis are an important community within the Kachari ethnic group. According to Sir Edward Gait (1906), the Kacharis were the earliest inhabitants of the Brahmaputra valley, in which they ruled for hundreds of years. The Karbis on the other hand, who speak a Tibeto-Burman language are said to have entered Assam from Central Asia in one of the waves of migration, while the Koch Rajbongshis trace their origins to the great Koch or Kamata kingdom, which is said to have been established by the 13th century AD in the western part of the older Kamrupa kingdom, after the fall of the Pala dynasty.

It is noteworthy that it was only after the Burmese invasion that Assam eventually came to be ruled by the British, as a result of which it came to be politically a part of the pan-Indian imperial formation. The British continued to bring more and more territories into Assam, including the East Bengali district of Sylhet that was historically unconnected to Assam, thereby sowing the seeds of animosity between the people of the Brahmaputra valley and the Surma valley. In 1905, for administrative and economic reasons, the colonial rulers even tried combining the whole of Eastern Bengal with the whole of Assam, which however did not last long. Nonetheless, colonial rule was accompanied by extensive exploitation of natural resources of the region that provided a fertile ground for the development of coal and oil fields, and tea plantation through massive felling of trees that added to the wealth of the British in the form of timber. All this supplemented by the construction of roads, buildings and roadways opened up a lucrative avenue for immigration, which was actively encouraged by the British. These demographic and economic transformations along with the new land policy of the British in turn resulted in massive displacement of the 'indigenous' population, especially the tribes

who were primarily hunting-gathering people or shifting cultivators on the one hand, while the population of Assam rose at an alarming rate on the other.

It may be noted that even before Independence, political consciousness was beginning to emerge amongst the various tribal communities of Assam. Thus the Bodos formed the Bodo Chhatra Sammilani and various literary associations in the 1930s for the promotion of education and welfare, apart from the aim of standardization of their language. Again, the Naga Club was formed in the year 1918, that soon assumed political dimensions and it was renamed the Naga Hills-District Council. In case of the Mizo tribes, the new leaders amongst them formed the Mizo Union in the year 1946, which had the aspirations of the Lushai Hills to become an autonomous district within Assam.

### **Forced Nationalisms, Sub-nationalisms and Statehood demands: The Post Colonial scenario**

It is a well known fact that the British had sought to bifurcate and separate the hill tribes from the plains people of Assam, and thus under the Government of India Act of 1935, the hill areas of undivided Assam were divided into “excluded area” which included the Lushai (Mizo) hills and the North Cachar area, and the “partially excluded area” which comprised the United Khasi and Jaintia hills district (except Shillong which was the then capital of Assam), the Garo hills, Naga hills and Mikir (Karbi) hills. The Government of Assam did not have jurisdiction over the excluded areas that were administered under the special powers of the Governor. This policy was largely followed even after Independence, whereby each hill district was provided with an Autonomous District Council with a fair share of autonomy, under the 6th Schedule (Hussain, 1987).

Within few years of Independence, there was wide spread consensus among some of the tribal leaders that the autonomy that they enjoyed within the Union of India was inadequate for their full development on the lines of their culture and society. This led to secessionist movements particularly among the Nagas and the Mizos. In this

context it may be noted that the attainment of statehood by Nagaland in the year 1963 set a precedent for the other tribes of Assam to demand separate states for themselves. Their grievances were further fomented by the declaration of Assamese as the official language of the state by the Congress Government in the 1960s. All these developments eventually resulted in the formation of separate states of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur and Mizoram, each of which were controlled by “tribal groups”.

It is noteworthy that the Karbis and the Dimasakacharis, who did not join the other states at the time the North-east was being reorganized by the Centre, has revamped their statehood demands in the recent times. It may be mentioned that unlike the tribes of the other tribal states such as Mizoram, Nagaland and Meghalaya, the Karbis and the Dimasakacharis are Hinduized non-caste tribals. Their refusal to join the state of Meghalaya has been analyzed as a product of their fear of dominance by the Christianized tribes, and also on account of the fact that the Congress leaders belonging to the districts where they are in a majority, were well represented in the council of ministers as well as in the Congress organizational networks that was not in favor of these communities joining the state of Meghalaya (Hussain, 1987).

Again, after the formation of Nagaland, the Bodo leadership on having anticipated further changes to the political configuration of the North-Eastern region, formed the Plains Tribals Council of Assam (PTCA) in 1967. Ever since its formation, the PTCA has been demanding a separate state for the Bodos and the other plains tribal populations of the region, with the name of Udayanchal. The movement was further strengthened by the formation of the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) in 1967. Again, the language question was coming to the fore and the BodoXahitaXobhalaunched a movement in 1974-75 demanding the adoption of the Roman script for the Bodo language, which was not a written language in the past, after which it was written using the Assamese script. This was evidently to distinguish the Bodo identity from that of the Assamese. However, on the

intervention of the Central Government the Devnagri script was decided upon as a middle path.

In the meantime, Assamese sub-nationalism was getting crystallized and the Assamese identity was becoming more exclusionary in nature. One major reason for this was the predominance of the immigrant Bengali Hindu people in most of the sectors of employment on account of their having received English education, thanks to the Bengal renaissance, and this eventually led to a series of anti-Bengali agitations, which reached its peak in the BongalKhedaAndolan of the early 1960s, and then in the Assam movement. The former had led to the displacement of nearly half a million Bengalis who fled to the neighboring West Bengal and Tripura and even to the Bengali dominated Barak valley of Assam (Bhaumik, 2008). However, the ethnic cleansing process was much more blatant during the Assam Andolan of 1979-85.

This Andolan was spearheaded by the All Assam Students Union (AASU), who wanted the “detection disenfranchisement and detection” of the “foreigners” in Assam, and the AxomXahityaXobha (The Literature Society of Assam). As a consequence of the movement, the Assam Accord was signed between the then Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi and the leaders of the Assam Movement on 15th August, 1985, according to which all the illegal immigrants having entered the state between January 1966 and March 1971, would be disenfranchised for ten years and those who came after 1971 would be deported. An amendment was effected to the Constitution of India to this effect. The aftermath of the signing of the accord also saw the emergence of two political parties, the AxomGonoPorixod (AGP) formed by the student leaders of the movement, for whom the accord was the central issue, and the United Minorities Front formed by the dissident Congress (I) politicians, who were either Bengali Hindus or Muslims of Bengali descent who demanded that the accord be scrapped (Baruah, 1999).

However, although the AGP came to power with overwhelming popular support, after holding the reins of the government, it could not effectively deal with the illegal



immigration question. This created a fertile ground for the separatist United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) to grow and flourish in the soils of Assam, with the goal of restoration of Assam's "lost independence", thereby giving Assamese sub-nationalism a radical and militant turn. It viewed the non-implementation of the accord as yet another piece of evidence of the Central government's lack of initiative and interest in protecting the interests of the "indigenous" Assamese. It may be noted that during the Assam Movement, a significant number of Bodo youth had worked in collaboration with the AASU for success of their movement against the illegal immigrants. With the formation of the AGP government, their hopes were raised about the fulfillment of their long standing demands, which however did not come about. Infact, the clause of the Accord that promised the eviction of illegal encroachers from public lands with a clear objective of removing the "foreigners", actually led to the eviction of a number of shifting cultivators belonging to the Bodo and other tribal communities, who had been pushed to these lands on account of having lost their traditional land entitlements under the so called modern regime of permanent land rights. Besides, Clause 6 of the Accord, that promises safeguards to protect the cultural identity of the "Assamese people", was apprehended by some Bodo leaders to be a justification of the imposition of the Assamese language and culture on the Bodos. As disenchantment spread amongst the Bodos, the ABSU launched a movement in 1987 for the creation of a full fledged state of Bodoland, a name which they now preferred to the erstwhile Udayanchal, by dividing Assam "fifty-fifty".

The 92-point charter of the ABSU enlists the Bodo grievances, which according to them have historically been neglected by the political centre as well as by the Assam government. These include the development of language and the cultural symbols of the Bodos and the abolition of the language requirement of Assamese for state government employments, economic development of their region and the expansion of economic opportunities, detection and deportation of foreign nationals and settlement of border disputes (Baruah 1999). There was a widespread rumor that the Bodo grievance was being fomented and facilitated by the Congress government

at the political centre that was trying to destabilize the AGP government, and this in turn led to the movement being dealt with vengeance by the state government (Hussain, 2000). With the Congress (I) government coming to power in Assam, the process of dialogue was however initiated and the Bodo leadership settled for autonomy within Assam instead of a separate state under the Bodo Accord of 1993. The resultant was the formation of a Bodo Autonomous Council (BAC), to which elections could not be held owing to the lack of agreement about the extent of territorial jurisdiction of the body. Thus, several militant wings unleashed large scale violence with the objective of “cleansing” their areas of the non-Bodos, to claim majority in the areas which they had sought to be included under the BAC. The outcome was large scale ethnic riots between the Bodos, the Bengali Hindus, the Bengali Muslims and even the Santhals, where the non-Bodo communities were primarily at the receiving end of the violence that led to substantial internal displacement of people, while hundreds of Bodo people were also affected. According to an estimate at the peak of the “ethnic cleansing” process that is in 1997-98, there were about 2,40,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Western Assam (Bhaumik, 2008). It was not until after a decade that the Bodo Territorial Autonomous Council (BTAC) was formed which went through elections in 2005. However owing to conflict of interest and factional rivalry based on religious as well as political lines, a number of separate voices have emerged in the Bodo movement, and no consensus has been reached. It may be noted that Christianity with its perceived connotation of the West has been more attractive for the Bodos than Vaishnavism or Caste Hindusim with its connotations of ‘oppression’, as for most of the tribes of North-East India, and there has been a significant rise in the followers of Christianity amongst the Bodos. The Christian leadership has parted ways with the older generation of Bodo leaders who were more moderate in their approach. This has led to extreme violence between the various groups and outfits thereby resulting in killings of a number of Bodo leaders by people of their own community.

Thus, although a significant section of the Bodo speaking population had become gradually assimilated into the Assamese community, over the years, Bodo sub-

nationalism has come to manifest itself in a more and more prominent form. It may be observed that the womenfolk who had resorted to the mekhela-chador (traditional Assamese dress for women) have now gone back to their Dokhona (traditional Bodo dress for women), and there is rise in the usage of the Bodo scarf Arunai by the men folk, while there is a revival of Bathou worship and also a shift from cremation of the dead to the burial of the dead bodies. The most significant development in this regard has been the increasing trend of speaking only Bodo rather than Assamese, and as has been mentioned before, the stress on the usage of the Roman script rather than the Assamese script for the Bodo language. Again, the Bodo heartland was jolted by a massive ethnic strife between the Bodos and the Muslims, in the year 2012, that resulted in the displacement of over 400,000 people, the razing of whole villages and creation of immense mistrust between people of different religious and ethnic communities. This resulted in a near complete communal divide, the aftereffects of which was felt by people from the whole of North-east India, working or studying in different parts of the country.

It may be observed that the various militant and civil society groups amongst the Karbis, Koch Rajbongshi and the Dimasa people have been demanding a separate state for themselves. The Dimasas had succeeded in compelling the government to create the Dima Hasao Autonomous Territorial Council in the Dima Hasao district, after almost two decades of struggle. These accommodative measures of the Indian state, in addition to the usage of naked force, had succeeded in curbing the various statehood demands of the tribes to a certain degree. However, with the sudden declaration of Telangana as the 29th state of the Indian Union, the proverbial Pandora's box of troubles has again been reopened and tampered with, thereby leading to a flurry of statehood demands in the country, with as many as four different demands from within the state of Assam itself – by the Bodos, the Karbis, the Dimasa and the Koch Rajbongshis. The agitations that have followed ever since along with the demand for a separate Gorkhaland in North Bengal has brought the entire North-eastern region to a stand still, which stands on the verge of an unprecedented economic blockade of the region, if the talks fail and if all of these

forces unite. Worse still, it threatens to destabilize the territorial integrity of the Indian state itself, given the strategic location of the North-east, and the very well known assistance that the militant outfits of this region receive from across the international borders.

### **Towards some conclusions**

A nation, said Benedict Anderson (1983), is “an imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign,” and he had identified language as playing a very important role in the development of nationalistic sentiments amongst a particular community. In this sense, many tribes of Assam have emerged as small nationalities, through the development of their own language and the revival of their cultural symbols, with a nostalgia of a glorious past whereby most of them had their own sovereign kingdoms, with little outside interference. One may trace the rise in nationalistic sentiments amongst the “tribal” communities of Assam to the prolonged exploitation of their habitat and the eventual land alienation, the precedent set by other hill tribes of the North-eastern region who could force the political centre to concede to their demands for statehood, the cultural hegemony and the forcing of Assamese sub-nationalism on all the tribal communities of Assam without much concern for the uniqueness of tribal culture, and without any attempt to accommodate tribal languages, and customs within the Assamese identity and also the rise of the Church as a significant force to reckon with amongst many sections of the tribal populace, since the missionaries helped in spreading education amongst the marginalized communities, thereby leading to increased political consciousness.

The grievances of various communities have eventually condensed in the form of several insurgent groups that have paralyzed the everyday life and living of the people inhabiting the region. In fact, the disturbances and violence in Assam and the whole of North-east have almost been “normalized” over the years – a fact which the inhabitants are expected to live with, and both the political centre as well as the national media have restrained from highlighting. Although the immigration policies

are dealt with by the political centre, yet, even the AGP government which rode on the success formulae of “detection disenfranchisement and deportation” of the “foreigners” in Assam, failed to bring about any positive change during its rule, despite it being a product of the youth movement, and it also eventually gave way to corruption. The Congress government which has been in power in Assam for almost the whole of the post colonial era with short stances by the AGP government and the Janata Government in between, have been notorious for latently supporting illegal immigration, thereby resulting in a massive rise in the Muslims and Bengali speaking population in Assam, which has been attributed by scholars to the continuous immigration from Bangladesh (Bhuyan, 2006; Nath and Nath, 2012; Nath et. al, 2012). This has resulted in unrest and discord amongst the “indigenous” communities of the region, who are being threatened to become the minorities in their own state. Besides, there appears to be a vertical solidarity amongst the political elite with even the leaders of the various rebel outfits that had been formed to fight for community rights are seen to lead lavish lives, while the poor members of such outfits lead miserable lives in the hope of a better tomorrow, only to die cruel deaths either in the hands of the armed forces or in the hands of the opponent factions/groups.

Again, besides being a victim to the exploitative policies of British India, the ‘indigenous’ communities of Assam have suffered extensively on account of the developmental policies of the state government, which has resulted in massive displacement of the tribal populations and destruction of their fragile ecosystems, be it on account of the construction of hydro-electric projects, factories, mills and brick-kilns, or on account of the urban expansion of the city of Guwahati. That the developmental policies of the state which have focused primarily on adding more malls, showrooms and industries, and therefore to the glitz and glamour of the city of Guwahati, have proved highly adverse for the state on the whole is more than clear in the fact that according to the Planning Commission estimates, Assam has only grown poorer in the past few years with 37.9% of its population living below the poverty line in 2009-2010 (40% of its rural population and 26.1% of the urban

population), which has risen from 34.4% in 2004-2005, and with a Human Development Index (HDI) rank as low as 16 out of 23 in 2007-2008. The Human Development Report of North eastern states, 2011, observes that there has been a consistently higher maternal mortality ratio and the ratio of anaemic women in Assam as compared to national averages, while it has the worst HDI score as compared to the other states of NE. Assam also has a high drop out rate in schools with the mean year of education being only 4.6, while the public health and sanitation facilities are in a dismal state. Only 6.3% of rural Assam and 36.6% of urban Assam receive clean drinking water, while in 2008-2009, only 40.8% of rural Assam had electricity. Besides a recent study on the gender score, by the Delhi Police group reveals that Assam is one of the worst performing states with the worst score in almost all of the indicators such as sex ratio, health, education, political representation, crime against women, employment and decision making (The Hindu, 2013). In fact crimes against women have risen to unprecedented heights in the recent times in the state of Assam.

Finally, since the assembly elections are round the corner in Assam, there are invigorated activities on the part of the ABSU, to press for the formation of Bodoland. Identity politics shall seem to be at its peak around this time, and the granting of Scheduled tribe status to Bodos, Karbis and Mikirs by the central government, is yet another attempt at pacifying the disgruntled communities. While the BJP government has promised development in the BTAD region, it has cautiously stayed away from the statehood issue. Again, with the central government granting refugee status to the Hindu immigrants from Bangladesh, who have sought shelter in India before the 31<sup>st</sup> of December, 2014, “due to religious persecution or fear of religious persecution”, another debate, on the lines of religion and identity, has been raked up, and there have been fresh protests against this issue, spearheaded by the AASU. It has been argued that Assam shall be unable to shoulder the burden of refugees, irrespective of their religious affiliation, and that the decision to grant shelter to the Hindu immigrants from Bangladesh is against the tenets of the Assam Accord. On the other hand, the Nikhil Bharat Bengali UdbastuSamanaySamiti

(NBBUSS), along with the Bengali LokManch, have been seeking amendments to the four Acts under which a person is declared an undocumented migrant by the tribunals set up by the Assam Government, under instructions from the Supreme Court of India. These organizations along with a number of others have been fighting to secure citizenship for the displaced Bengali Hindu community. They have been arguing that the Bengali Hindu immigrants run the risk of being tortured and killed on religious grounds, if they are sent back to Bangladesh, while the Muslim migrants from Bangladesh do not have any such fears, and hence may be distinguished from the former. This has created a fragile situation in Assam, with polarization on the basis of language and religion and possibilities of fresh ethnic violence looming large.

In the ultimate analysis, the problems related to statehood demands in Assam could be described as a clash of certain binaries: that of the politics of power and the politics of identity, ethno nationalism and forced nationalism, centripetal forces and centrifugal tendencies and finally, centering tendencies and decentering processes. The formation of new states would only mean the disbursal of more power and expenditure on the local political elite, with little hopes of it serving as the panacea for all of the troubles facing the state. Thus, the need of the hour is addressing the severe deficits that have arisen in legitimacy, development, democracy and governance (Kumar, 2011) of the state – a process that should be undertaken by both the central as well as the state government, while the civil society has to play the most vigilant role in the current times. Significant strides on the path of restoration of “normality” can be taken by ensuring respect for the existence of multiple identities, safeguarding the land rights of the hunting and gathering tribes and shifting cultivators of the state, solving the “foreigner” issue and prevention of illegal immigration, halting of exploitative development policies and shifting of the focus of emphasis on balanced and sustainable development and hence on poverty reduction. Besides adherence to true federalism, and implementation of political decentralization in letter and spirit, apart from ensuring proportionate representation according to population in local bodies and the adequate representation of minorities are important political measures that need to

be ensured to arrive at a judicious solution to the problems and demands of multiculturalism. Finally, adequate safeguards and positive measures should be undertaken for the development of language and culture of the different sections of the populace, which could be materialized only when 'integration' rather than 'assimilation' underlines the policy concerns of the Central as well as the state governments. Thus the 'ultimate aim', as Kothari (1988) observes, is '*democratic restructuring: enabling the people to participate in shaping their collective future. Political decentralization is only a means to this and federalism a means to that means...the great thing about a functioning democracy is that it can itself become a vehicle of revolutionary change through structural changes in response to historic needs. And it can do this without an upheaval. But if it fails to do this for long, its future is in peril. Indian democracy faces this challenge at the present time.*'



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Vivek Manthana Foundation was established in the year 2011 by some eminent persons for the action research in different areas of socio—economic development. From its inception VMF is working towards the empowerment of the marginalized population. From the beginning we have been organizing different training programmes, workshops and camps. In the recent past we had also organized workshop and seminars on different governance and policy issues on the development and empowerment of marginal groups of our county.

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