

**Search For Identity: A Study on The Autonomy Movement of Tiwa  
Tribe of Assam  
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This research work is intended to study the Tiwa movement for self-identity in Assam and the reaction of the State Government towards the issue. The Tiwa people started their movement with the objective of preserving their identity against the dominant Non-tribal communities in Assam. It is seen that the tribal Belt or Blocks failed to protect the land of the Tribal people. The non-tribal people had deteriorated the economy of the tribal people in various ways. The Govt. had completely failed to protect the identity of the tribal people. Since 1967, the Tiwa people became politically organized in their efforts to protect their Socio-Cultural and land rights. Regarding the works on the Tiwa movement of autonomy issue we have less number of book and Journals. However, regarding the growth of Political consciousness among the Tiwa tribe Dr. Ramesh Chandra Nath of Jagiroad College had studied the causes for the growth of Political Consciousness among the Tiwa People in his book *Growth and Development of Political Consciousness among the Tiwas of Assam in the post-Independence Period*. Besides these A. K Baruah in his book *The Laiung Society* has written on the Socio-Cultural and economic conditions of the Tiwa people of Assam. On the other hand G.C. Sharraa Thakur in his work *The Lafungs (Tiwa)* has given importance on the socio-cultural conditions of the Tiwa People. Mr. Balairam Senapati in his '*Atitar Sandhanat*' has also highlighted on Tiwa nationalism and their cultural aspect. Prof. Mileswar Patar has written several works on the socio-cultural and political condition of the Tiwa people. But there is no works that discuss in details the Tiwa Movement for self-identity in the post-colonial Assam. So, the study on Tiwa autonomy movement will help the researcher to understand and analyze the causes of the Tiwa autonomy movement and the response of the state government of Assam on the problem.

The present study will highlight the factors of Tiwa autonomy movement and the activities of various Tiwa organizations for the cause of Tiwa autonomy. It is necessary to study the topic of Tiwa

movement as it will bring to light the factors, organizations of the Tiwas and reaction of state government on the problem. In keeping with this purpose this paper has been written so that people will know the Tiwa movement and impact in the socio political aspect of Assam. It will also help to know the socio political conditions of the Tiwa tribe. The ethnic movement launched by various organizations in Assam has created many complicated problems to the government and people of the state have to suffer a lot. An amicable solution of the problem is the need of the hour. For this purpose, it is very important to know the problem of Tiwas of Assam and an attempt has been made in this paper to study the Tiwa autonomy movement in the region.

The Tiwas are one of the aboriginal tribes of North-East India. They are also known as the "Lalung", but they preferred to call themselves as the "Tiwa". They are one of the major ethnic tribes in Assam. The people of the Tiwa Community are mostly living in Assam and Meghalaya, particularly in the Nagaon, Morigaon, Karbi Anglong, Dhemaji, Kamrup district of Assam and the Khasi and the Jaintia district of Meghalaya. The Tiwas of Assam have been enlisted as a scheduled tribes but a section of them resides in the hill areas also. They have their own language, culture and traditions distinct from other tribes of North-East India. But due to undue pressure of the non-tribals their culture and the identity of the community is now at stake. The Tiwas have remained backward in all spheres of social life.

During the time of the Ahoms there were several smaller independent kingdoms of indigenous people in the south bank of Brahmaputra. The smaller kingdoms like the Nelly, Gova, Topakuchi, Mayang, Dhing, Tetelia, Rani, Dimoria and Beltola etc., were independent. But the rulers of these states had to pay taxes to the Ahom king. Their relation among themselves was not cordial and to save themselves from the invasion of the Jaintia, the king of Dimoria and Kachari king made relation with Ahom king Pratap Singh by giving their daughters in marriage in 1627.<sup>1</sup> The Lalung king of Gova though initially was under the dominion of the Jaintia king later shifted his allegiance to the Ahom kings.

Though the Tiwa people came under the control of the British power, but they acted against the British imperialism and prepared for the revolt against the British Government. They in 1861, revolted against the British imperialism which is popularly known as "Phulaguri Dhawa". The Phulaguri Uprising of 1861 was the first agrarian revolt in Assam against the British Raj. In 1860 the British government banned the cultivation of opium. In Nagaon district rumours circulated that the government was planning to impose tax on their houses, barees (garden) and pan (betel leaf) cultivation.<sup>2</sup> So, the Tiwas of Phulaguri protested through their *mels* against imposition of the new taxes. In September, 1861, some 1500 strong peasants marched to the district headquarter and

demonstrated before the magistrate against the proposed new taxes. When the magistrate showed no sign of withdrawing the proposed taxes a *Raj mel* was held in October 1861 to discuss the matter. About this time the government introduced license tax. This sharpened the belief of the villagers, particularly of the tribals of Phulaguri, on the impending taxes. Therefore, on 14th October, 1861, the *ryots* of Phulaguri revolted against the authority and in the ensuing clash with the police one English Officer, Lt. Singer, lost his life.<sup>3</sup> This incident followed brutal suppression of the uprising by the military forces in which eight tribal leaders belonging to the Tiwa community were arrested and while some of them were sentenced to death.

In the freedom struggle against the British Government, the Tribal people of Assam played a significant role. The Tiwa people had joined the "Tribal League" which was formed in 1933 and actively participated in the freedom movement. The active participation of the Tiwa people of Assam in the freedom movement was seen in the Quit India Movement in 1942. The Tiwas of Raha, Bebejia, Barapujia, Kampur and Jamunamukh have participated in large numbers during the movement. Despite the police harassment they continued their struggle. Till September, 1942 four Tiwas died in the ensuing struggle: Kulai Kach, Hemoram Patar, Gunabhiram Bordoloi and Tilak Deka.<sup>4</sup> On 25th August 1942, people of Kampur took out procession defying the prohibitory orders. The crowd attacked and damaged the local post office, the Circle Office and the Railway Station. The furious people derailed a train at Kampur followed by military atrocities upon the village At Phulaguri the crowd damaged railway station. The people of Kathiatali destroyed an inspection bungalow. At Raha Government Circle Office was burnt down. In Jongalbalahugarh village, near Raha, people became panicky over a rumour that more police forces would be coming to Nagaon from Guwahati. A group of people, apprehending police raid, started to cut the approach road to a bridge, suddenly a military patrol party appeared from the eastern side and opened fire on them killing Hemoram Patar and Gunabhiram Bordoli belonging to Tiwa Community.<sup>5</sup> On 28<sup>th</sup> August the police conducted raids upon Raha, Bebejia and Barapujia. Tilak Luka, who was a volunteer of the 'Santi Sena', was shot dead. Another Tiwa freedom fighter Kolai Koch (Originally Tiwa but converted to Koch) also sacrificed his life.<sup>6</sup> The active participation of Tiwa people in the freedom movement led to the arrest of several people besides innumerable forms of police torture.

The development of social consciousness among the tribal people realized them about their self-identity in the society. The Tribal League in 1947 submitted a memorandum before the constituent Assembly demanding the creation of separate scheduled areas in the plains district of Assam under fifth schedule of Indian Constitution.<sup>8</sup>

When Mikir Hills and North Cachar Hills autonomous district was formed in 1951, there was a controversy about the Tiwa dominated areas of the hills whether it could be included with Mikir Hills or to remain with Jayantia Hills. In that time, Abra Malang of Ulukunchi demanded a separate autonomous district for the Tiwas of Assam for the first time.<sup>9</sup> Abra Malang organized a movement among the hills Tiwas with less followers. He can be say as the father of Tiwa movement for autonomy. Mr. Larshing Khyrim supported the demand of Abra Malong. But his movement was suppressed with cruelty and he was imprisoned for four year and the Government has also seized his property. Then Mr. Bonnily Khongman, the first M.P. from that area, manipulating the population structure of Tiwa on paper and showed less Tiwa population and more Karbi population by submitting bogus data to the Mikir Hills boundary Commission and accordingly the Commission recommended that they could be included with the Mikir Hills.<sup>10</sup>

The language policy of the Assam Government which made Assamese compulsory brought the sense of feeling of insecurity among the tribal leaders in Assam. The Tiwa people of Assam also felt that their language and culture is in at stake. They wanted to preserve their own ethnic identity. During that time a dynamic youth Mr. Indrasing Deuri while he was in government job in Garo Hills left his job and came back to his native village and organized some educated Tiwas. A meeting of the Tiwa community was conveyed at Umsuai of Mikir hills. Ananda Ram Deuri of Jagiroad and many others of Neilly delivered lecture in that meeting. They had spoken that the imprisonment of Abra Malang and confiscation of his property was the humiliation for entire Tiwa Community. The meeting took many resolutions and formed 'Lalung Darbar' as the political organization of the Tiwa people in 1967.<sup>11</sup> Late Abra Malang was the first president of the 'Lalung Darbar' though he died soon. Regarding the death of Abra Malan it is said that he was tortured physically in jail for which his health deteriorated later on. After his death Hemaram Bordoloi and Indrasing Deuri took the leadership of the organization.

The main aim of 'Lalung Darbar' was to demand for the creation of 'Lalung Hill Autonomous District', taking the Tiwa dominated areas of Mikir Hills, Nagoan and Kamrup district of Assam and the Tiwa inhabited areas of Jayantia Hills. Since then, the 'Lalung Darbar' had organised several public meetings among the Tiwa people. The "Lalung Darbar" sent a telegram to the Home Minister of the Govt. of India on 8th July, 1967, demanding for the creation of Lalung Autonomous Hill Sub-division with separate council.<sup>12</sup> But the government did not respond to this demand and on 19th May, 1968 a general meeting was held at Neilly under the president ship of Mr. Gambhir Bordoloi and adopted some resolutions. In the resolution No.5, it was stated that the Tiwa people supported the creation of Lalung Hill Autonomous Sub-Division and urged the central as well as the state government to take

necessary step. When the government did not respond another telegram was sent to the Home Minister of India on 20<sup>th</sup> June, 1968 demanding to create an autonomous Hill Sub division.

Again on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1968, a public meeting was held at Chahari, Amsoi under the president ship of Madan Konwar and strengthened their demand for autonomous Hill Sub division. On 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> October 1969, the two days convention was held at Makangkuchi L.P. School, Jagiroad and was presided over by the Ex M.L.A. Baliram Das. The convention took the resolution that the Tiwa people unanimously supported the "Lalung Autonomous Hill District" instead of "Hill Sub division" and urged the Central and State government to create Lalung Autonomous Hill District and to take necessary steps to implement the demand.<sup>13</sup>

On 15<sup>th</sup> July, 1970, a delegation of Tiwa people consisting of 9 persons namely Indrasing Deuri, Raiman Patar, Bin Maloi, Narayan Kumar Kakoti, Thal Amsong, Minaram Patar, Butbar kharai, Madan Deka and Parshing Roma meet the then Governor of Assam, B.K. Nehru at Raj Bhawan, Shillong and submitted a memorandum to create "Lalung Autonomous Hill District" and urged to take necessary step for that. this delegation also met the chief minister of Meghalaya Mr. William Changma and the Health Minister of Assam Mr. Chatrasing Teron and requested them to create the Lalung Autonomous Hill District.

The Tiwa people became gradually conscious of their ethnic identity. They started articulating their identity to gain political power and overcome their socio-economic backwardness. After formation of Lalung Darbar in 1967, the Tiwa people tried to organised themselves in different fronts. The Tiwa leaders realized that without co-operations of different sections of Tiwa people, it would not be possible to run their movement. But in 1971, a difference of opinion arose between the hills Tiwas and the plains Tiwas. In that time Mr. Giridhar Patar, as young educated Tiwa with his friends Mr Budhiram Bordoloi and Khirod Patar organized a convention to form 'Tiwa (Lalung) Yuva Chatra Sanmilon'. After discussing the matter they convened a public meeting at Barapujia in 1971.<sup>14</sup>

In around 1971 the Tiwas were divided into two groups- Hills Tiwas and Plains Tiwas. Budhiram Bordoloi and Giridhar Patar both president and Secretary of the Tiwa Yuva Chatra Sanmilon tried to bring unity among the Tiwa people of both hills and plains. They tried to make the people understand that the split between the hills Tiwas and plains Tiwas was only due to misunderstanding. So, for the unification of hills and plains Tiwa they convened a public meeting at Shahari village, Amsoi in 1977 in that meeting they changed the name of Tiwa Yuva Chatra Sanmilon and renamed as "All Assam Tiwa Sanmilon" with the Tiwas. This organization worked for the unification of all the Tiwa people and asked them to maintain their cultural identity.<sup>15</sup> They wanted to revive the lost culture of the Tiwa people.

In 1977, the "Lalung Darbar Youth Frony" was formed in a special convention which was held under the banner of Lalung Darbar. This LDYF was the youth wing of the Lalung Darbar. The first president and Secretary of this organization was Rabatsingh Deuri and Mukunda Bordoloi respectively. This youth front also demanded the creation of Lalung Hill Autonomous District. At the 9th general conferences of Lalung Darbar held at Umsuai, 1978, there was great debate regarding the agitation programme. Majority members of the Lalung Darbar did not agree for agitation but the youth wing was in favour of agitation to achieve its goal. Due to this controversy, it came out from the Darbar to establish its own identity. In 1980, it was re-organised and changed its name as "Lalung Youth Front".<sup>16</sup> Tulsi Bordoloi an educated Tiwa Youth of Jagiroad was elected as secretary respectively. Later on both the organisation united and on 24th June, 1983, the Lalung Darbar and Lalung Youth Front jointly submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister of India Mrs. Indira Gandhi for the creation of the Lalung Autonomous Hill District.

When the Assam movement was started in 1979, majority of the Tribal people participated in the movement against deporting the foreigners. The Tiwa people of Nagaon and Morigaon actively participated in the Assam movement. The Tiwa people of west part of Nagaon played active role in Neilly's violence. When the Assam Accord was signed in 1985 the Tiwa people were dis-satisfied over the article 10 of the Assam Accord which emphasised on the eviction of tribal people from forest land. From that time they became conscious for their self-determination.

On 30th October 1985, the Lalung Youth Front tried to co-ordinate all Tiwa people and all Tiwa organization into one common platform and held a public meeting at Jagiroad. In that meeting the Tiwa people formed the "Autonomous Lalung District Demand Committee" (ALDDC) as Giridhar Patar and Narayan Radu Kakat as president and secretary respectively. The main aim of this organization was to gain autonomy. The leaders of the organization decided that as majority of the Tiwa people are living in plains and so they would change their views and decided to demand the Autonomous Lalung District instead of Autonomous Lalung Hills District.<sup>17</sup> From that time the ALDDC has submitted several memoranda to the central and state government to formed Autonomous Lalung District. They demanded to include part of Karbi Anglong, Nagaon and Kamrup district to the proposed Lalung Autonomous District. But significantly the ALDDC did not include any part of Khasi and Jaintia hills of Meghalaya which was formally demanded by the Darbar.

The Tiwa students and Lalung people realized that the main struggling fronts of the Tiwa people are becoming inactive. They failed to place the demand strongly in front of the central as well as state government. So, on 25th February 1989, the "All Tiwa Student Union" (ATSU) was formed with broad out look at the Tribal Rest House, Nagaon. The birth of ATSU was the result of the failure

of ALDDC (Autonomous Lalung District Demand Committee) in fulfilling the aspirations of the Tiwa people. From its beginning this organization was very active and this organization succeeded in arousing the feelings of nationalism among the Tiwa people. The first conference of the ATSU was held on 16th and 17th March, 1990 at Raha.<sup>18</sup> Madan Bordoloi and Hemakanta Deuri was the first president and secretary of the student organisation. In the first conference the ATSU demanded the creation of an autonomous district to preserve the socio-economic and political rights of the Tiwas. The conference adopted a resolution to launched a mass of the constitution be upgraded granting more legislative, administrative and financial powers by the amendment of the constitution. They submitted a memorandum to the cultural and state government demanding the creation of a separate Tiwa autonomous district under the provision of the sixth schedule of Indian Constitution. But the Govt. did not respond to the call given by ATSU and so the ATSU launched several agitation programmes to strengthen their demand.

Though the Autonomous Lalung District Demand Committee, All Tiwa Student Union, All Tiwa Woman Association, the Lalung Youth Front (LYF), Tiwa Sanmilon had submitted several memorandums to the Central and State Government, but there was no reaction till July, 1992. On 13<sup>th</sup> September, 1992 the ATSU had organized a special convention at Jagiroad College premises to discuss the autonomy problem. The convention resolved to continue the agitation until the autonomy demand was fulfilled. From that time the ATSU organized group meetings, Conventions and public meetings at different places of Morigaon, Nagaon and Sonapur area of Kamrup district on 11<sup>th</sup> March, 1993, the chief Minister of Assam Mr. Hiteswar Saikia announced in the public meeting at Lakwa of Dibrugarh district, that Government was considering to grant autonomy to the Mishings, Rabhas and Tiwas.<sup>19</sup> For that announcement the leaders of Autonomous Lalung District Demad Committee (ALDDC) became very happy and met the Chief Minister at Janata Bhavan on 10<sup>th</sup> May, 1993 and requested to create an autonomous Tiwa district. The delegation of ALDDC was led by Giridhar Patar and Narayan Radu Kakati both president and secretary respectively.

Gradually the ATSU had noticed that the leaders of the ALDDC were going away from the link of ATSU. The leaders of ATSU surprised that the Government had maintaining close contact with the leaders of ALDDC. So, on 30<sup>th</sup> August, 1993 the ATSU and ATWA convened a press meeting at ASEB Guest House, Jagiroad and chalked out new agitational programmes. They protested the Government action for dividing the Tiwa people and asked the Government to grant autonomy to the Tiwa people immediately. They alleged that the Chief Minister was playing his own game in the name of autonomy among the different tribes of Assam. They demanded to stop the cavalier attitude of the Government towards the Tiwa people.

When the Tiwa movement was going on in full swing, the Government of Assam responded to the demand of the Tiwa community. Accordingly, the Govt. of Assam invited the leaders of ALDDC and ATSU to discuss the autonomy problem on 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1993. On that day the Govt. of Assam constituted an Autonomy Committee under the Chairmanship of Mukut Sarmah, the Revenue Minister of Assam. The other members were Mr. Gomeswar Pegu, Minister of State for Tribal Welfare and Backward classes, Mr. Jatin Hazarika, adviser to the Chief Minister, T.L. Baruah, the Commissioner of Home and Political affairs and the special Secretary to the Chief Minister.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand three different committees were also constituted for Mishing, Rabha and Tiwas on that same day.

The Government had also forwarded a draft proposal to all the autonomy demand committee regarding the problem of autonomy. Following this a meeting was held on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> December, 1993 at Janata Bhavan, Dispur between Autonomy Committees and the Govt. of Assam. They discussed regarding the modalities concerning the final draft. The Chief Minister was himself present on 15<sup>th</sup> December. The ATSU objected to some points of the Govt. draft proposal as there was no fix boundary where they would implement the powers of the council. The ATSU demanded greater autonomy and powers for the Tiwa autonomous council. But the ALDDC did not object and accepted the Government proposal.

Another round of discussion was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 1993 at Janata Bhavan between five member delegation of ATSU headed by Bhupen Kholar and Rimal Amsi and State Government represented by Mukut Sarma and Gomeswar Pegu. Govt. had assured to consider the demands of ATSU for greater autonomy.

On the other hand the ALDDC had submitted a 'Model' of autonomous council on 15<sup>th</sup> December with some modifications of their previous demands. Again discussion was held on 30<sup>th</sup> December, 1993 between autonomy Committee of the govt. and ALDDC and ATSU. On that day ATSU submitted a memorandum to the Chairman of autonomy Committee with a new type of proposal for granting autonomy.<sup>21</sup> In that memorandum they clearly expressed their position and reached to some consensus regarding the Govt. proposal. They demanded autonomy like the Bodoland type autonomous council. ATSU had completely rejected the Govt. draft proposal regarding the creation of Tiwa Autonomous Council.

On 4<sup>th</sup> March, 1994, another round of discussion was held between the Govt. of Assam and ATSU. But no solution was arrived regarding the final draft of the proposed Tiwa Autonomous Council. On the occasion of Independence Day on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1994, after hoisting the National Flag at Judge Field, the Chief Minister Mr. Hiteswar Saikia publicly announced that after discussing with

the Central Govt. the State Govt. would grant autonomy to the Mishing, Rabhas and Tiwas according to the recommendation of the three man expert committee led by Bhupinder Singh.<sup>22</sup>

The ALDDC though submitted a memorandum for some modification of the Tiwa Autonomous Council but agreed to accept the Government proposal. The ATSU criticized the ALDDC for their division to accept the Govt. proposal without a fixed boundary. The Government was also interested with their supporting groups to grant autonomy in their hands. The Government had signed the Rabha Accord on 16<sup>th</sup> March, 1995 and then invited the ALDDC to sign the Tiwa Accord. But interestingly ATSU was not invited. On 13<sup>th</sup> April at about 9.00 A.M. Mr. Mukut Sarmah, the Chairman of autonomy Committee called the AUST leaders over phone through Deputy Commissioner of Morigaon District. But ATSU did not accept such invitation. Because Govt. had no any clarification regarding the proposed autonomous council with fix boundary. So, they requested Mr. Mukut Sarmah to postpone that day. But the Government did not give importance to the ATSU and on 13<sup>th</sup> April, 1995 the State Government had signed the Tiwa Accord with the leaders of ALDDC at about 1 P.M. From the Govt. side Mr. Arunodoy Bhattacharjee, the Chief Secretary of Assam signed in presence of Chief Minister Mr. Hiteswar Saikia and all the members of autonomy committee. From the ALDDC the Tiwa Accord was signed by Sridam Deuri (President, ALDDC), Narayan Rudu Kakoti (Secretary, ALDDC), Giridhar Pata (Legal Adviser), Madiram Deuri and Kapana Patar.<sup>23</sup>

In the accord signed on 14<sup>th</sup> April, 1995, the most important fact is that it did not mention the areas to be included in Tiwa Autonomous Council. According to the accord, there will be an Apex Council of the Tiwa Autonomous Council consisting of satellite areas of the village council called Lalung (Tiwa) Village Council (LVC). There will be no boundary of the proposed council. The Apex council will consist of 144 villages of Nagaon, Morigaon and Kamrup with 28 blocks. The ALDDC had demanded 174 villages.

The Tiwa Autonomous Council (TAC) will consist of 30 elected members out of which 4 will be nominated by the Government to give representation to the people of other community. Out of these 30 seats, 15 will be reserved for the Tiwa Community and 3 seats will be reserved for women.

Each village council will consist of 10 elected members out of which 5 will be from Tiwa Community, out of 5 reserved seats one will be reserved constituency will be ex-officio members. There will be an elected president and a Vice – President. The term of office of Tiwa Autonomous Council and Village Council will be for 5 years.<sup>24</sup>

Moreover the signing of the Tiwa accord was strongly protested by the ATSU, ATWA and Lalung Youth Front. The general people also did not support the attitude of the ALDDC for signing an accord where there was no fix boundary of the Tiwa Autonomous Council. They alleged that the

leaders of the ALDDC were more opportunists and as they had no mass support of the Tiwas, they had no right in signing the Tiwa Accord. The ATSU protested against the action of ALDDC and asked the Govt. of Assam to cancel the Tiwa Accord. When the leader of ALDDC arrived after signing the accord at Jagiroad, they were gheraud, humiliated with strong unbearable words and the mob insulted them.<sup>25</sup> The mob threw stones and bricks at them. But the officer in charge of Jagiroad Police Station controlled the situation.

Already the interim council was formed by the Government of Assam on line of Rabhas and Mishings by an ordinance, namely, “Lalung (Tiwa) Autonomous Council”, ordinance, 1995 effective from July 27th m 1995 vide notification no. – AAD/ST/ 276/ 94- 95 and the Councils is expected to look after the additional duties of the village Councils till the same are constituted und eth aforesaid ordinance.

Accordingly, 28 members interim Tiwa Autonomous Council under the leadership of Mr. Narayan Radu Kakoti was sworn in by the Upper Assam Commissioner Mr. Bhaskar Mushahari at a function at Nelly Pujathali on 27<sup>th</sup> July, 1995.<sup>26</sup> The members of the TAC who took oath were Narayan Radu Kakoti as Chief Executive Councilor, Kamal Patar, Basistha muni Rumdu and Panindra Bordoloi as executive councilors. The other general members were Madiram Deuri, Puheswar Bordoloi, Shashi Bordoloi, Ruhit Deuri, Budheswar Konwar etc. The Chief Minister Mr. Hiteswar Saikia, the Education Minister Mr. Mukut Sarmah, the Minister of Plain Tribes Mr. Gomeswar Pegu, the Chief Executive Member of Boroland Autonomous Council Mr. Preamsingh Brahma, the Chief Executive Member of Rabha Autonomous Council Mr. Sabyashashi Rabha and the CEM of Mishing Autonomous Council Mr. Lakshminath Panging were attended the oath ceremony.

### **Conclusion:**

From the study on the issue of Tiwa autonomy movement it is clear to us that there were various factors for this movement. The issue of land alienation of Tiwas, the desire to preserved ethnic identity with their language and culture, the growth of socio political organizations in the post-colonial period, the language policy of Assam government, backwardness in almost all spheres of life, impact of other tribal autonomy movement in North East India, growth of socio political consciousness etc. were the factors for the Tiwa autonomy movement. The past history of the Tiwas encouraged the Tiwa people to demand an autonomous Tiwa district in Assam. The activities of Lalung Darbar increased the political consciousness of the Tiwas. It was the ATSU that transformed the movement to a mass movement of Tiwa people. Though the state government had created Tiwa Autonomous Council in

1995, but it did not end the movement of the Tiwas. During the course of negotiations with the Tiwa organizations the government had favoured those organizations which had close touch with the ruling Congress party.

The Tiwa people started their movement with the objective of preserving their identity against the dominant non-tribal communities in Assam. Land alienation was central to their movement. It is seen that the Tribal Belt or Blocks failed to protect the land of the tribal people. The non-tribal people had deteriorated the economy of the tribal people in various ways. Most of the Tiwa people of Sonapur, Jagiroad, Morigaon and West part of Nagaon lost their lands in their own villages for the lack of protection within the existing belts and blocks.<sup>27</sup> The Govt. had completely failed to protect the identity of the tribal people. Since 1971 the Tiwas become politically organized in their efforts to protect their socio-cultural and land rights. Their movements under the aegis of various tribal organizations have earned them Tiwa Autonomous Council under Tiwa Accord in 1995 without any territorial demarcation. Although the ALDDC accepted the Accord it was strongly opposed by other Tiwa organizations like ATSU, ATWA and LYF. Central to the opposition of the Accord to these organizations was its borderless nature based mainly on tribal council. Besides under this Council many Tiwa villages were left out. It was demanded that Tiwa community should have all the belts, blocks, forests and tribal sub-plan villages under the autonomous council. The Accord was rather considered by the people to be a political game of the government to deceive the Tiwas as was similarly done in the cases of the other tribes like the Mishings, the Rabhas and the Bodos.

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