

# Seeking a Homeland—"Bodohadot"

by Khunghra

Vol. No. I, of June, 1985

Map 2/2/1985

"Udayachal is misnomer but Bodoland is the most appropriate linguistically" said Mr. L. P. Singh, the then Governor of Assam during the talk held on 20th August, 1980 at Shillong Rajbhawan.

In Bodo Language "Land" means "hadot."

Hence Bodoland=Bodohadot.

Map of the proposed Homeland—"Bodohadot"



1. BODOHADOT:— 
2. APPROX. AREA:— 20,000 SQ. K.M.

Published by Mr. J.K. Basumatary B.A., in New Delhi : 8th June, 1985.

Donation Price—Rs. 10/- only.

# Nomenclature of the proposed Homeland.

## Background :

Respected Mr B.K. Nehru discharged his duties efficiently as the Governor of Assam as well as other allied Tribal States of the North-Eastern Region for 14 years and he could well grasp the sentiments of the tribals (Indo-mongoloids) living both in the hills and the plains. He did lot of help in getting solution of the problems of the hills men—recognising their separate identities and also focussed a highlight to the nation that the plains Tribals—the Bodos too were trying to get recognition of their own separate identity. (Illustrated Weekly—Nov./1976).

He got retiremant and Mr. L. P. Singh came in in the office of the Governorship with vast experience.

In the last part of his tenure, the hue and cry on foreign national issue created turmoil in the state and the region as pioneered by AASU and AAGSP which got its momentum during November of 1979 to July 1980.

It was the brain of the Assamese elites who created such hue and cry to crash down the growing power of the Bodos seeking for their separate identity by means of overlapping a popular mass upsurge in the line of the plains Tribal Bodos; to say—drawing a bigger line to show the other one smaller than it.

The moment was rather quiet then on the part of the plains Tribals as because of the fact that the role of political party of the Plains Tribals — PTCA during the said period joined in the Government and in the state of losing their revolutionary character.

It occurred so due to misleading of the some of the top officials of the nationalist organisation—the PTCA.

But a section of this organisation who were the hard liners got alarmed at the plan of those Assamese elites.

The sole nationalist organisation PTCA split into two—one PTCA and other PTCA (P) in 1979.

A three-member delegation of the PTCA (P) headed by Sri P. L. Boro former Parliamentary Secretary, as President met the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi on 8th July, 1980 in New Delhi and submitted a fresh memorandum demanding a separate Homeland.

The kind Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi acknowledged before the delegation of the PTCA (P) that the Bodo Plains Tribals were the original people of Assam.

And this P.T. Land is the Bodoland as the Plains Tribal word will not remain after the lapse of the constitutional safeguards as Scheduled Tribe (Plains) from 1990.

In Bodo language land means 'hadot' and hence it may be better nomenclated as "Bodohadot" in the same sense of Mizoram, Tamilnadu, Telegu Desham, Tamil Elam and the like keeping the valuable suggestion of the said experienced Governor of Assam.

In fact, new states are created in India on the basis of the language and ethnic considerations as the policy was adopted on the matter by the first Prime Minister of free India Late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru which cannot be ignored even to date.

2. On the demand of a Homeland :

The voice of such demand was raised on 27th February, 1967 under the banner of the PTCA.

Reorganisation of Assam on federal plan was then going on.

Mehta Commission ignored the sentiments of the Plains Tribals of Assam. So it did not happen in the fate of the Plains Tribal Bodos.

In the meantime the PTCA (P) got its birth on 22nd May, 1979 due to the treacherous activities of the two top officials of the PTCA.

PTCA(P) adopted two approaches on the demand—

(a) Historical approach & (b) Democratic Movement approach.

The historical approach was dealt with in the book—An Introduction of the Mishings and the Bodos which has been able to give highlight on the past history of the Bodos and the Mishings.

The democratic movement approach was initiated by the PTCA(P) by means of organising public meetings, observation of demand day on 1st January in every year, representation to National Leaders, participation in the elections, and mutual discussion among the Indo-Mongoloids.

In 1983 the general election for State Legislative Assembly held during the month of January in spite of threat to boycott the election by the AASU and AAGSP.

PTCA, PTCA (P) and other Left alliance parties co-operated with Congress (I) Party in holding the said election.

As a result the Bodo people of the Gohpur and Telamara areas under the Sanitpur district were killed and their houses were burnt down by the so-called Assamese chauvinist people.

On 7th April, 1983 a Tribal Convention was held at Rowtha in the district of Darrang where a resolution was passed relating to total non-co-operation and non-discussion with any organisation of the Assamese people.

The PTCA (P) organised a demonstration before the Parliament from 19th to 22nd April, 1983 with 150 volunteers in New Delhi's Boat Club and submitted ultimatum to the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi for creation of a separate Homeland.

A photo of the demonstrators shouting slogans at Boat Club, New Delhi is seen below :



Mishing-Bodoland Union Territory must be created was the spirit of the demonstration.

Three members of the PTCA (P) headed by its President and former Parliamentary Secretary Mr. P.L. Boro Ex-MLA submitted the ultimatum memorandum to the Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi in her Parliament chamber on 22nd April, 1983 at 3 p.m.

The kind Prime Minister stated: "How can I do immediately. It will take time. Again, I will have to come back in the power."

The impact of the said demonstration spread nation-wide and Assamese stopped their acts of Bodo killings and their movement got struck down since then.

I organised the press conference in New Delhi and distributed copies of the memorandum and the book called "An Introduction of Mishings and the Bodies" to all press in New Delhi.

The P.T.C.A. (P) made an extensive tour to all the North-Eastern states—Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram,

The said Ordinance was made Bill on 4th April, 1985 by passing the Assam Official Language Amendment Bill, 1985 in the floor of the Assam Assembly at Dispur.

The contents of the Bill runs thus and the Chairman of the UTNLF Mr. B.K. Basumatary MLA took initiative in bringing the said Amendment Bill with following steps :

**Minutes of discussion :**

“Minutes of the meeting of the Representatives of the ABSU and the UTNLF to discuss on the Assam Official Language Bill, 1960 (Amendment of 1985).

Date : 17/3/1985.

Venue : Dispur.

**Signature of the Representative of ABSU :**

1. Sd/- U.N. Brahma,
2. Sd/- Karendra Basumatary,
3. Sd/- Ananta Kr. Kakalary,
4. Sd/- Rabiram Brahma,
5. Sd/- Arun Kr. Brahma,
6. Sd/- Samarendra Brahma,
7. Sd/- Parmeswar Brahma.

**Signature of the Representatives of UTNLF :**

1. Sd/- B.K. Basumatary M.L.A.
2. Sd/- P.L. Boro Ex. M.L.A.
3. Sd/- K. Nazary Convenor,
4. Sd/- Khargeswar Brahma,

The meeting is presided over by Sri Karendra Basumatary President of the ABSU and it discusses the Assam official Language Amendment Bill, 1985 in details in connection with the inclusion of Bodo there in as an Associate State Official Language of Assam along with Assamese and arrives at the following points unanimously.

*Point-1.* This meeting of the Representatives of ABSU and UTNLF unanimously resolves to move the Assam official Language Amendment Bill, 1985 in connection with the inclusion of Bodo Language as an Associate official Language of Assam in the following manners and Mr. B.K. Basumatary M.L.A., who is the leader of the United Minority Front and also the members of the said Minority front are requested to move the said amendment of the bill in the floor of the current session of the Assam Assembly.

The context of the amendment is Enclosed :—

“List of Amendment :—

The Official Language\*(Amendment) Bill, 1985.

**Amendment of Clause-2**

In Clause 2, in the proposed new Section ‘5A’ for the words “administrative and other purposes” occuring in line fourth, the words “all or any of the official purposes of the state of Assam” shall be substituted.

would be taken up in the national level by the responsible leaders of our country?

This subject will be dealt with in details in the Volume No. II of the book "An Introduction of the Mishings and the Bodos" to be published later on.

But the whole question lies on the spirit of our workers :

"Cannon to right of them  
Cannon to left of them  
Cannon in front of them  
Volleyed and thundered,.....  
Then they rode back  
But not, not the six hundred."

Photo shows Mr. Ram Nath Narzadry, my friend, reading out the welcome address to Mr. Hiteswar Saikia, C.M. of Assam, at the inauguration ceremony of the Declaration of Ordinance of Bodo Language at Lokrajbar on 28.12.84 as Chairman of the Action Committee of the Lokrajbar District Bodo Sahitya Sabha.



Bodo language and literature is written in Devanagri script in modern days and it should flourish having state patronage of its own.

“हिन्दी बढो भाई भाई — जिन्दाबाद”

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Amendment of Clause-3

(i) In item 3 of the Schedule to clause 3, for the words "Important Government Rules, Regulations notifications" the following shall be substituted—

(a) All ordinances promulgated under Article 213 of the Constitution of India.

(b) All Acts passed by the State Legislature.

(c) All orders, Regulations, Rules and Byelaws issued by the State Government under the Constitution of India or any law made by Parliament or the Legislative of the State.

(ii) Delete the word "important" occurring in between the word "of" and "Government" in line one in item 4 of the Schedule to clause 3."

*Point-2.* This meeting also decides to bring a wide publication of the Amended Assam Official Language Bill, 1985 and the Original Assam Official Language Bill, 1960 for the wide knowledge of the people of Assam, particularly the Bodo People from both the organisations of the representatives of this meeting both in Bodo and English Languages.

Passed,  
Sd/- K. Basumatary,  
President of the Meeting.  
17-3-1985

N.B.—The Amendment bill was passed in toto except sub-clause (a) stated above.

The Bill was later moved by the C.M. himself and our chairman it being redundant left his move for motion honouring the Chief Minister Mr. Saikia.

Now, Bodo Language has got its status in state administration in Assam.

But the Bodos feel quite unsafe if this Bodo Language is not deep-rooted in one particular place.

And this means to give this place in its own Homeland - Bodohadot.

This time I have undertaken the venture to make a tour with Bodo cultural troupe in all the hill states of the North East Indo-Mongoloid world with a view to achieving a better understanding amongst our Indo-mongoloid brothers.

Hope, our learned men and intelligentsia will encourage with all kinds of help and fund and thereby to give me the chance to prove the idea—In a land of the Great Mahatma Gandhi why the question of self-determination of the Bodo Plains Tribals of Assam would not be solved through discussions, negotiations and mutual understandings if it

would be taken up in the national level by the responsible leaders of our country?

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April, 1984 in the convention of All Tribal Organisations held at Harishinga in the district of Darrang.

The P.T.C.A. (P) brought the AATSU into an agreement in support of the Union Territory demand on 25.10.83.

The unified force of the PTCA, PTCA (P) and the ABSU came to be known as United Tribal Nationalist Liberation Front (UTNLF) and the first delegation of this front met the Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi on 2nd May, 1984 in New Delhi when she stated :

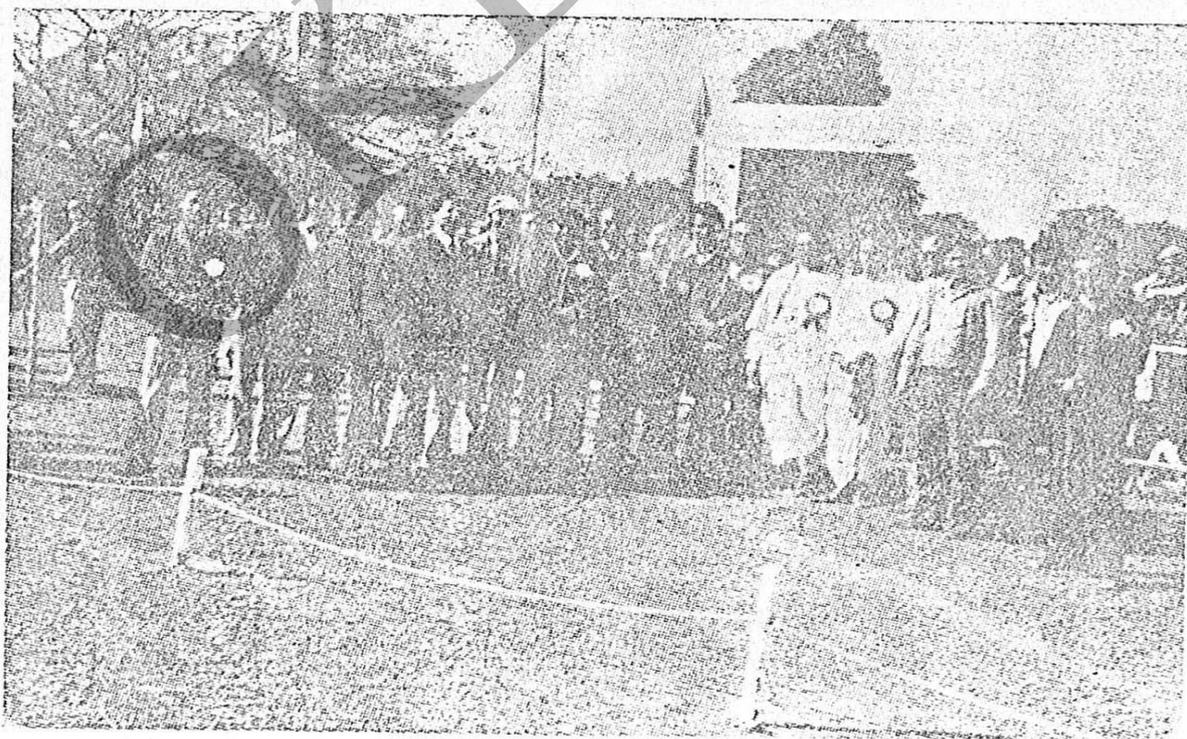
“I will have to make a long talk with you.”

And our chairman respected Mr. B. K. Basumatary MLA and I myself could not get that chance to make a long talk with the beloved Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi due to her being assassinated on 30th October, 1984.

Now, our dream for a Homeland rests on her affectionate son Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India being a fresh matter.

But within those hard days of losing our beloved Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi the Bodos achieved certain goals—out of the sincerity of workers of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha, All Bodo Students Union, the UTNLF and others that the kind Chief Minister of Assam Mr. Hiterwar Saikia declared an Ordinance recognising Bodo Language as an Associate Official Language of Assam on 28th December, 1984.

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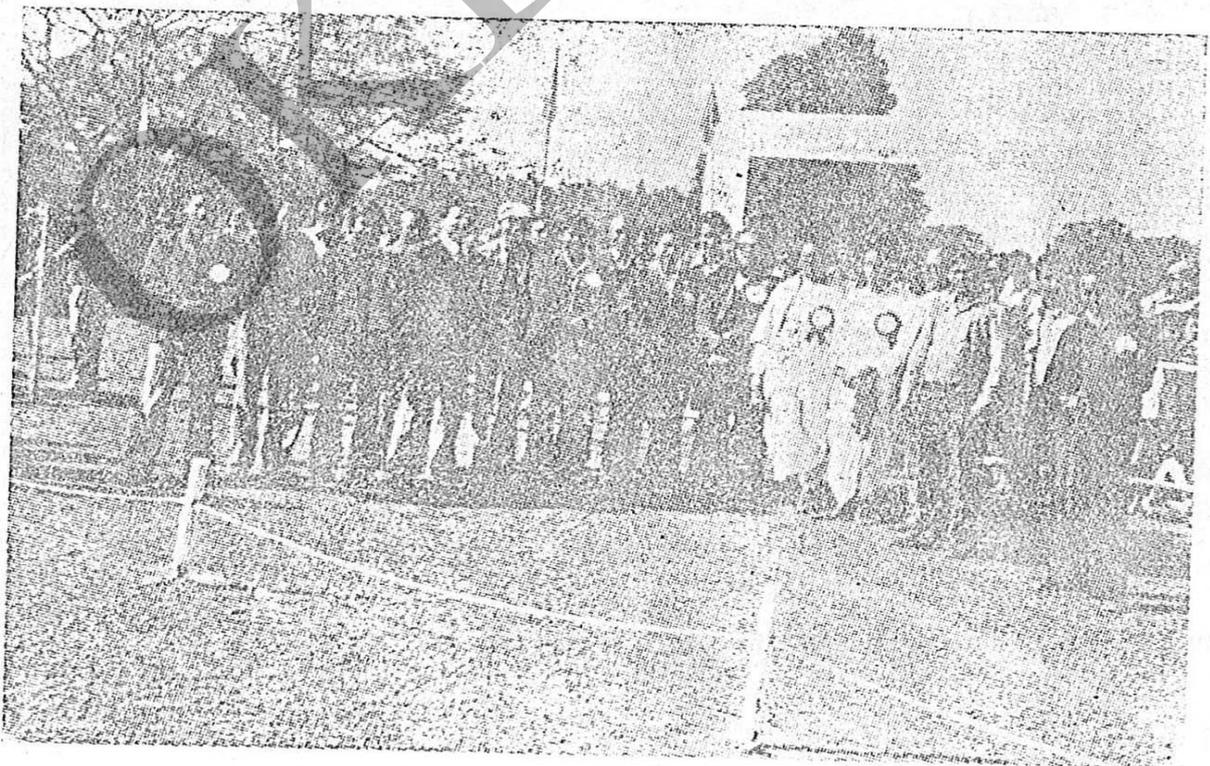
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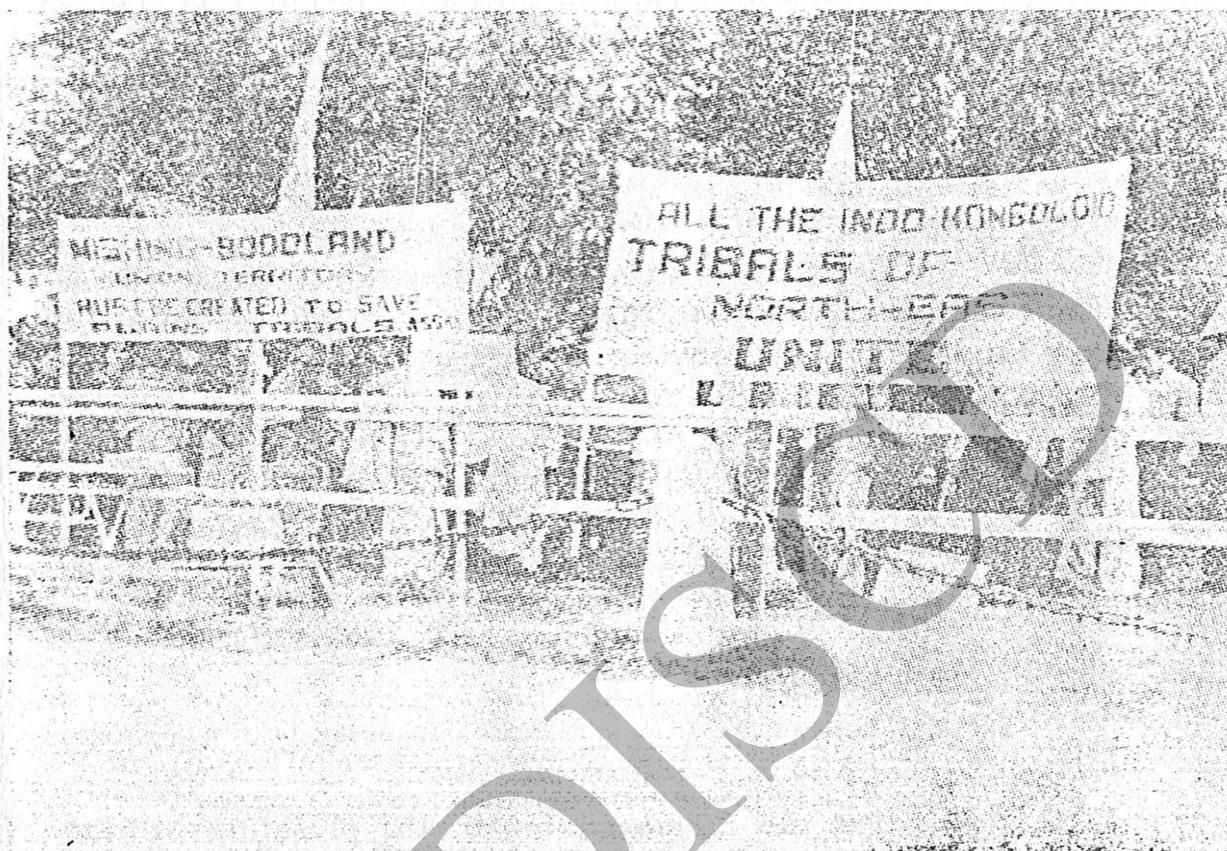
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The banners showing the slogans "All the Indo-mongoloids of the North East-United" is seen below :



Tripura, West Bengal and discussed with the Chief Ministers and other important leaders both opposition and ruling parties so as to gather public opinion and moral support to their cause within 1983.

Then the party also met with all other opposition leaders in New Delhi within the month of September to October, 1983 from Shri Chandra Shekhar, President of Janata Party down to Mr. Biswa Goswami M.P. (Rajya Sabha), Mr. Jagjivan Ram M.P., Mr. E.M.S. Nambudripat, Gen. Secy., C.P.I. (M), Mr. N.R. Laskar, Mr. Venkat Subbaiya, Ministers of State for Home Affairs, President of India and Mr. P. C. Sethi, Home Minister of India and who stated:

"The Government of India has taken the matter in principle and observing the situation for doing so.."

The original map of the Linguistic Survey of India showing Bodo areas were shown to the Prime Minister and the idea got a place in the deep heart of the Prime Minister.

Meanwhile, the All Bodo Students Union sponsored for unifying the PTCA and the PTCA (P) and it was accepted by the Legislature Party of the PTCA where PTCA (P) supported and it got unified on 19th

The said delegation also met the then Home Minister Mr. G. Z. Singh and suggested him to invite representatives from all the Tribal Organisations to join in the talk on the issue of the foreign nationals. The Home Minister accepted the idea and thus a joint talk was held on 20th August, 1980 at Raj Bhawan in Shillong.

Mr. Yogendra Makwana the State Minister for Home Affairs headed the talk as emissary of the Prime Minister and Mr. L. P. Singh, the Governor of Assam, Mr. H. C. Sarin, the Principal Advisor to the Governor helped the minister in the talk.

The representatives of the political and non-political organisations of the Plains Tribals of Assam participated in the said talk to discuss on the foreign national issue and the identity question of the Plains Tribals.

I, as a general secretary of the then PTCA (P) put two points only :

(a) The Plains Tribals are concerned with the problems of the Plains Tribals, so, the PTCA (P) urges upon the Govt. of India to give effect of the recommendation of the Dhebar Commission and thereby to clear up the Tribal lands from the illegal encroachers either foreigners or the Assamese people with effect from 26th January, 1952 so far 33 Tribal Belts and Blocks are concerned.

(b) To concede the demand of a Separate Homeland for the Plains tribals changing the political map of Assam.

While I handed over the memorandum to the presiding Minister through the hand of the respected Governor of Assam Mr. L.P. Singh immediately he had noticed the map of the proposed Homeland and expressed a view that:

“Udayachal is misnomer and Bodoland is the most appropriate linguistically.”

At this, all the representatives both Govt. and the Plains Tribal organisations attended in the said talk remained silent save few disappointed words uttered by Mr. C. Nargany, Gen. Secy. of the PTCA.

In this way, the nomenclature of the proposed Union territory for the plains Tribal people gradually got development as follows :

Udayachal (since 1973 by P.T.C.A. till its denouncement on 4 April, 1977).

↓

Mishing-Bodoland (since 9th July, 1980 by P.T.C.A. (P) ).

↓

Bodoland (since 20th August, 1980 as advised by the Governor of Assam Mr. L.P. Singh).

↓

Plains Tribal Land (P.T. Land) (since 22nd Nov. 84 by the UTNLF).