

PROCEEDINGS
OF
NATIONAL SEMINAR
ON

CURRENT TRENDS ON RESEARCH OF REGIONAL HISTORY

15th-16th September, 2010

Organized by

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Chaiduar College, Gohpur,
Sonitpur, Assam. Pin-784168

(In collaboration with Biswanath College)



SPONSORED BY

University Grants Commission

North-Eastern Regional Office,
Guwahati -781006

Editors
RANJIT KAMAN
SWAPNA KAKATI



Inaugural Function,
15th September, 2010.



Welcome Address by
Principal Dr. A.K.Ozah.



Inaugural Address by
Prof. Dambarudhar Nath,



Keynote Address by Prof. J.N.Phukan,
Gauhati Universi



Lightening of the Lamp



Introduction to the seminar
Ranjit Kaman, Conve



Vote of Thanks by
Swapna Kakati, Organizing Secretary



Faculty members
Introduces with Participants



Participants



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Editorial

The word History is derived from Latin word Historia. It means knowledge through enquiry, research, exploration and information. In German word History is called Geschichte which connotes an intelligible and significant narrative of the past went. History is a science to answer question about human action of the past. We are always curious to know what happened in the past, who were our forefather, where they lived, where from they came etc. Ever Since Herodotus and Thucydides, history has come to be written in various way and styles and write various purpose and objective.

The North East India is very rich with historical events and monuments. Many great historical events took place in different corner of North East India. Moreover there are many historical movements and ruinage remained exist in this region. Moreover, the region is a home land of diverse ethnic groups and lives together in peaceful atmosphere with separate Cultural identity. So far, many researches have been pursued in various subjects of this region, but many subject remained neglected in national Context till today. There is great Scope of Pursuing research in the field of regional history. In recent times, the research finding of regional history gives new knowledge's in various aspects.

The scientific and systematic research on the regional history definitely provides us new knowledge's and enhanced the historical importance of the region in national context. The change of time impacted every sphere of our life. The methodology applied by the researchers in pursuing research is considerably changed. Researchers applied new methodology to gather authentic data and information which suitable in present situation.

The seminar will provide a platform to the researchers, academicians and students to high light their research findings and it will enabled us to familiar with latest information. Further it will introduce the home department into the mainstream research in contemporary history in the country. It provides the latest information and research work being done in Universities and Research institutions in the North East India.

The publication of proceeding is a humble endeavour to publish the findings of different research who are working in different fields. There may be some mistakes and shortcoming in this book due to limited time available to us, but we will remained successful if these research article able to highlight new knowledge's in various subjects.

The editors are grateful to the researchers for their paper and abstract whose effort have helped us to published this book which may provide valuable information to the researchers we like to acknowledge the University Grant Commission for providing financial assistance in the form of National Seminar. Finally we would like to acknowledge the every one who had helped and supported us equal terms in organizing the seminar and publishing this book.

Ranjit Kaman
Swapna Kakati

Welcome Address

It is my great pleasure and privilege to welcome you in this seminar on **current trends** on Research of Regional History organized by department of history, Chaiduar College in collaboration with department of History Biswanath College. This seminar is the first of its kind in History of Chaiduar College held in arts stream of this college.

I take this opportunity to welcoming eminent historian, Prof. J.N. Phukan, Prof. D Nath, B Tripathy, S.K. Singh, N. Gogoi and academician Dr. S. Kakaty, Dr. I.G. Singh in this auspicious movement. I welcome all the participants coming from different Universities, Colleges and educational institutions in the seminar. I on behalf of the organizing committee welcome Gajendra Nath Bbaruah, president Governing body Chaiduar College on this occasion. I heartily welcome all guest, teachers, employee and students present in the seminar.

“Those who do not read history are condemned to repeat it” as told by noted dramatist and playwright Bhism Shahani. The history of our past as we are aware of today has changed several times before we are beginning to accept them as facts. Even at times we may discard them and accept new findings which will be supported by facts and evidences. Historical facts are accepted by the mankind when supported by concrete evidences. Unless research into our past we may be condemned to read and repeat past the mistakes committed by our ancestors. Much research has been done on the national level and we are enlightened by the new findings which were hitherto unknown till mid seventies. But research in the field of regional history is not getting the importance which it deserved due to lack of awareness, cultural diversity and ethnic issues which sometimes snowball into controversies.

Present day research in the subject of humanities need considerable amount of reference materials, journals and other technology gadgets. Thanks to organizations like UGC, ICHR and ICSSR etc which are promoting the cause of research in history in India and research in this field is gaining momentum. The department of History of Chaiduar College rightly chosen the theme of the seminar which bears considerable importance to the contemporary scenario which is full with dispute of boarder, ethnic claims and crisis resulting due to merger with mainstream India. Through hit by researchers and lack of infrastructure the department of history Chaiduar College organized this seminar to address a popular and concurrent in the field of regional history. I again welcome all the participants, scholars, teachers and students to this seminar. I hope you would forgive and of the inconveniences that may result due to our ignorance and bear with us.

Thanking you all

Dr.A.K .Ozah
Chairman
Local organizing Committee.
&
Principal,
Chaiduar College, Gohpur.

**RESEARCH ON REGIONAL HISTORY : THE NORTH EAST INDIA
(Inaugural Speech)**

(Organized by the Department of History, Chaiduar College, Gohpur, Sonitpur District, on 15-16 September, 2010)

Prof. D.Nath
Deptt. of History
Dibrugarh University

WHY REGIONAL HISTORY FOR THE NORTHEAST?

Historical writing in India in the past was always fragmentary and regional. Whether it was vedic, or epical or puranic, or medieval dynastic and genealogical, they were always and bound to be regional or sectarian as the concept of a nation state here emerged quite late. Even the word *bharatvarsha* on which our Sankaradeva had laid so much stress, was a part of what we call today as India or Bharat. As a result, barring the Gangetic valley in the main, and other regional geographical territories, societies in India which had no early written literature and language, such as the northeast, particularly its hill societies, did not find their place in the pre-modern historical writings. Sadly enough, the same trend predominated the historical consciousness of modern Indian scholars too. Thus, even in the standard history text books of independent India the northeastern region is given little or no space by our national historians. It is argued that there is so little literature on the region that could be used fruitfully to reconstruct its history. Thus, while reading the early history of India we do not find Kamarupa-Pragjyotisha. When the question of emergence of population and human settlement in India comes up, the finger is invariably to the north-west through which the so-called Aryans, the Indo-Greeks, the Huns, the Mongals, the Turko-Afghans and the Mughals entered India and formed its civilizations. Paradoxically, so many of the tribes in the hills of the northeast as well as in the southeast plains had made their habitats here long before those civilization makers. History teachers, therefore, find it more problematic to explain to the intelligent students why we in the northeastern Universities have to know Sivaji or Tipu, rather than Lachit Barphukan or Tirot Singh- the one who fought his country's invaders and the latter who fought the British imperialists. To mention the worst, even though a chapter on Assam was prepared for the *Cambridge History of India*, Dodwell, its editor, did not find space enough (!) to incorporate it in the book, although fortunately for us, and perhaps, unfortunately for the planners, that the chapter prepared by Amalendu Guha was finally made a part of the Appendix to the *Cambridge Economic History of India*. Similarly, the freedom struggle of India was fought not by the Gangetic valley people alone, or by the Tamils and the Andhras, or the Marathas; people in the northeast too had their share in it. As pointed out by a historian from the northeast, "Even if the people of the hills did not play a very prominent part in the national movement, the Assamese did take part in large measure in India's struggle for independence. But this too is found 'insignificant'. Historians forget the grievances of the Assamese peasants. The participation of large numbers in 1942 upsurge is as if it is only for histories of the region to mention." (cf. D.Syiemlieh, *Silver Jubilee Volume of the Proceedings of the NEIHA, Shillong, p.425*). But, if anyone has gone through Bipan Chandra's *India's Struggle for Freedom* and R.Suntharalingam's *Indian Nationalism : An Historical Analysis*, one is sure to get merely a blank impression. Dr. Rajen Saikia, in his Presidential Address in the Modern Indian History section of the Indian History Congress, 2009, has therefore used the national platform of the intellectuals and historians to very much say that "It is a pity that even a successful book *India's Struggle for Independence* by Bipan Chandra et.al. (Penguin, 1989), the word Assam does not appear even once on the chapter on Swadeshi. Leave alone other things, the name of the province was Eastern Bengal and Assam!" (Cf. p.14fn.25). Sumit Sarkar's attempt at rectification of that negligence borne by the

nationalist academia towards Northeast, in his *Modern India 1885-1947*, has therefore, been nothing more than a respectable desire towards that end; the role was left to Amalendu Guha who had to dedicate his *Presidential Speech* at the Modern Indian History section, 1984, entirely on that.

In the above context, slowly a sense of protest emerged among the historians of the Northeast; and it is good enough that that has been also endorsed by a few universities in Delhi and Kolkata by adding subjects from this region to their research areas. Even the *Indian History Congress* realized that void in its scope of interests. And therefore, in the year 1979 the *North East India History Association* was formed with green signal from that national body of historians.

BEGINNING OF MODERN TRADITION :

Research in history and culture of the northeastern region of India started with the establishment of the colonial rule in the early 19th century beginning with the English East India Company's occupation of Assam (the Ahom kingdom) in the year 1826. Prior to that the valleys had their own systems of records, while the hill areas carried only oral and material history. Coming of the British revolutionized the earlier systems by carefully and meticulously bringing under observation and study the various culture and social groups in both hills and the plains. This was warranted by the need of the colonial state on one hand, and the sense of inquisitiveness of the English people of the time on the other. Thus a series of enquiries and their reports in the form of anthropological-cum-historical studies emerged. To this may be added the census reports which contained, despite many lapses, information and analysis, about the socio-cultural and economic conditions of the people of the 19th and early 20th century. In totality, the entire set of the Census records and reports of the colonial period form by themselves a class of historical and sociological studies.

The British set a distinct trend in the historical research in India. Warranted by their colonial interest in what was called as 'oriental studies', they formed the first milestone in this regard by founding the *Asiatic Society* in the year 1784 at Calcutta. We find how anthropologists and administrators of British India systematically started their work on almost all aspects of social, ethnical, religious, political and economic studies – be that it was for their own interest or otherwise. Thus, beginning with the works of G.E. Westmacott, Williams Jones and the Asiatic Society down to Edward Gait, the colonial administrators laid the foundation of what we may call modern historical traditions in the northeastern region of India. The fall of the Ahom kingdom facilitated the emergence of a class of local elites who left no opportunity to merge their interests with the new rulers. Thus the old tradition of writing chronicler history in Assam, took a colonial character at the hands of this newly emerging class. It was in the process that Haliram Dhekial Phukan wrote the history of Assam (*Assam Buranji*, 1829) in Bengali language wherein we find two distinct elements : an attempt at looking at the society from the brahmanical and Bengali point of view, and expression of a colonial tune. Following Haliram Dhekial Phukan Maniram Dewan, another members of the emerging Assamese capitalist and elite class, wrote his *Buranji Vivek Ratna* (now published after much of its original text being avoided). Like Haliram Dhekial Phukan's history Maniram's history too suffered from the same Bengali and brahmanical tune- if not ideology, and proved advantageous to the British. About half a century after Haliram, Gunaviram Barooah wrote his *Assam Buranji* in the year 1884 followed by his editorial (*agar din etiyar din*) in the *Assam Bandhu* (1885). In the year 1895 was published Padmanath Gohainbaruah's *Assam Buranji* with the same nature of treatment of the subject. In the beginning of the 20th century Edward Gait wrote his *A History of Assam* (1905). Based on genuine sources as much available to him then as it was possible to collect, Gait's history is a milestone in the modern historiographical development in the entire northeastern region. In the year 1912 was established the *Kamarupa Anusandhan Samiti* (KAS) as a replica of the *Asiatic Society of Bengal*. Scholars like K.L.Barua, R.M.Nath, P.N.Bhattacharyya, B.K.Barua, S.K.Bhuyan and many others were associated with this esteemed research organization its

back. Known also as *Assam Research Society*, the KAS has contributed immensely to unearth the early history and civilization of the northeastern region. In the year 1928 was established the *Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies* (DHAS) at Guwahati. The DHAS under S.K. Bhuyan as its Director gave us a yeoman service to the historical research in Assam. By 1948 we find R.M. Nath's *The Background of Assamese Culture* (1948), and *Glorious Assam* (1948), and S.K. Bhuyan's *Anglo-Assamese Relations* (1947). The same trend was continued by K.L. Barua in his *Early History of Kamarupa* (1966), P.C. Chaudhury in his *History of Civilization of the People of Assam* (1966) and by H.K. Barpujari in his *Assam in the Days of the Company* (1966). Starting with Haliram Dhekialphukan down to K.L. Barua, and others the research was motivated by oriental studies in the model of the colonial historiography. Thus this set of historical research served two distinct purposes : (a) it helped in discovering our past that consequently inspired our spirit of nationalism, and (b) it served the purpose of the colonial powers. ◀

Methods of Approach and Investigation :

A critical school emerged in Assam in the early forties of the last century with Bhavananda Dutta. This school was enriched and established as a school of historical research by scholars like Amalendu Guha, Dr. Hiren Gohain, Dr. Dhruvajyoti Bora and others. Amalendu Guha's *Planter Raj to Swaraj*, *Mayamariya Vaishnavadar Para Moamariya Bidrohloi*, *Medieval and Early Colonial Assam*, and *Jamindarkalin Goalpara Jilar Artha-samajik Avastha* are important additions to the school. Similarly, Dr. Hiren Gohain's *Asamiya Jatiya Jivanaloi Mahapurushiya Parampara* and *Kirtan Puthir rach Bichar* and his numerous writings on the contemporary history of Assam are valuable additions. Already in the national scenario D.D. Kosambi, R.C. Dutt, R.S. Sharma, Romla Thapar, Bipan Chandra, Irfan Habib, D.N. Jha and others have made lasting contribution in the establishment of this approach as the most effective, rational and scientific. Emergence of neighbouring China as a communist giant since 1949 had encouraged Indian scholars to see history in a way, different in both interpretation and understanding from the conventional method. Similar, but with a difference is the subaltern school developed by Ranajit Guha and his team which too has made considerable impact on the historians mind all throughout the Northeast. It is not surprising to note that the historian's consciousness in this part of the country has now been able to maintain parity with the national and international developments. It may not be therefore a far cry as pointed out by J.B. Bhattacharjee, that they would also be able to evolve a separate and independent methodology to study the northeast.

New Interpretations of Facts and Extension of Research Area :

While this is the general trend in the ideological base of historical studies in the Northeast, certain other fundamental changes are to be noted in the field during the last few decades. These changes are to be noticed in the field of dealing with the conventional and non-conventional sources. Historical research in the Northeast was mainly concerned with the plains society- the Brahmaputra and the Surama valley in the main, as also the Imphal valley till very recent times. It is now a welcome trend that area of research has been wide and extended to include all aspects of human life- both geographically and socially. Particularly after reorganization of the northeastern states, its scope is bound to be extended to the hills.

Research in Assam tended to follow the pattern set by the early writers like K.L. Barua, R.M. Nath and P.C. Chaudhury, S.K. Bhuyan or H.K. Barpujari. There were fewer attempts to see things differently other than the face value as presented by the sources; neither was there any attempt for rational and scientific interpretations. These writers appear to bear a pro-brahmanical bias with their ideas that whatever was happening in the Gangetic valley was also happening in the northeast. There was little attempt to interpret sources in the light of their interdisciplinary relevance and connections, and in the light of contextual sequence. Fortunately, however, during the last few decades a critical understanding

and explanation of facts have come to characterize historical research in the northeast now. This new development is due mainly to a class of researchers who have familiarized themselves with the general academic atmosphere of contemporary world. "Northeast region has now not been left untouched- no matter how subtly or sporadically at times- by the march of advances in human history, be it in the field of technology, art and literature, socio-political ideas and institutions, etc." (cf. M. Momin, 25th vol, p.416)

Gender History :

One of the important areas of historical research today is what is termed as *Gender History*. While this history has dominated the western world long time ago, India has been considerably late in undertaking that as a part of history; and the northeast India is later than what has happened in the other parts of the country. Fortunately, during the last one decade or two there has gradually been an interest on study of women and society. This advances in historian's field in the northeast is a fortunate development. Because, as pointed out by Gerda Lerner, "Women are and have been central, and not marginal, to the making of society and to the building of civilization. Women have also shared with men in preserving collective memory, which shapes the past into cultural tradition, provides the link between generations, and connects past and future." It is significant to note that society in the northeast is mainly patriarchal; and therefore, to be able to write a rational gender history will naturally be very difficult. Proper training in the methodology of gender history is a pre-requisite for that. Interestingly, gender studies in the northeast is still at the hands of women in the main. It should be equally shared by men too to make a fruitful advance in the field.

Tribal Studies :

The brahmanical approach to see things everywhere, if not at all ideological standing, had made the scholars concern about the mainland society consisting of the varna-based society. What is missing in them, however, is the fact that of the tribal society named and left as *Kirata* in the early Indian literature. As a result, although the northeastern region formed a different block as far as its demographic complex is concerned, the general picture depicted in social history is that of the Gangetic valley Indian social systems. This lapse in the national historical consciousness was begun to be filled up by the colonial administrators themselves, although their study was motivated by the interest of colonial administration. With Verrier Elwin, however, a new area for the modern Indian historians began, more particularly for the historians of the region. It is a pleasing experience that after the *North East India History Association* was founded in the year 1979, series papers followed by monographs came to light on the tribes of the northeast. The only problem lying with such studies is that there is a general tendency to magnify regional achievements than they ought to have given.

Science, Technology and Environment :

Other aspects of historical studies that have occupied the consciousness of the historians over the country include environmental study, and study of science and technology. Although it was realized long time back that state and society are largely the product of the technological advances of men, little was studied on the indigenous systems technological development and its role in the growth of civilization in this part of India. Similarly, despite the remark of Edward Gait that the climate of Assam had made the Assamese lazy, study on environment and topography did not advance much beyond some criticism of Gait as colonial. Fortunately, it has now been coming to the forefront in historical studies; and more and more researchers are taking interest on such aspects of research. It would perhaps be not surprising to note that despite its slow advance, the northeastern region has been able to familiarize themselves with the general academic milieu at the national and contemporary level, and more and more fields of research will come to add to the already existing lists of research.

History of Disease and Medicine and other Aspects of Human Life :

Recent studies in science of medicine and diseases has occupied a major part of academic interest all over the world; and India too is remaining not far behind in this field. Traditional system of medicine and treatment, colonial medicine and system of practice, diseases – their nature and extent- and politics of contemporary societies have to be studied in historical perspective in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial contexts, as historians and social scientists are exploring much connection between disease, medicine, race and colonialism. Similarly, various aspects of human life, such as mind and mentality, sex and sexuality, anger and atrocity are occupying the most-modern minds elsewhere. We hope, we in northeast India too will have to follow the footprints to place ourselves in contemporary scholastic footing.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, we may say with good amount of certainty that regionalism in historical research in Northeast India has been an effect of the *mainlandism* of the national historians of India. Historical sequences and developments since at least 1826 have contributed largely for creating a sense of challenge in the consciousness in the minds of the northeastern historians. We may further opine that historical research has advanced a long way in the northeastern region since the occupation of this region by the British in the early 19th century. These advances, although slower and later in comparison to the other regions of the country, have shown that historians of this region are well aware of what has developed in the academic milieu of the contemporary world. Thus new systems of methodology, nature of approach, and areas of study have marked the trends of research in history in the northeastern region during the last one hundred years. One should however be careful that regional history is not parallel to the national or international history; nor it is competitive with that. It should be studied as a part of it only. "National history without regional history will be truncated and incomplete, and regional history in isolation will be without moorings" - so says a President of the NEIHA (1985). This, however, does not mean that there should be tendencies to glorify one's own heroes and civilizations as has been done by another President of the same NEIHA when he writes about twenty five years of that large Association. *(See *Silver Jubilee Volume*). According to H.K. Barpujari, regional history should be complimentary to the national history, it should not be competitive. *(See *Presidential Speech*, 1st Session of the NEIHA).

**UGC Seminar at Choiduar College, Gohpur
On 15th and 16th September 2010
on**

**Current Trends in Research in Regional History
(Inaugural cum Keynote Address)**

J.N. Phukan

Professor D. Nath, Chairman of this function, President of the Governing Body, Dr. A. K. Ojah, Principal of Choiduar College, esteemed Professors, Research Scholars, Ladies and Gentlemen present.

When I have been contacted and requested several times over phone by Mr. Ranjit Kaman, Head of the Department of History of Choiduar College and the Convener of this Seminar to deliver the Keynote Address, I expressed my reluctance to do so; but he insisted upon. Considering his earnest desire, at last I consented. One of the main reasons for my 'reluctance' is that I have not been in contact with any academic matters of history departments of several universities in North-East India. Hence, my younger scholar friends who are present here on this occasion you will certainly be not disappointed when I talk things less connection with the main subject. Please excuse me.

Dear scholars from different colleges and universities!

The subject matter of this seminar is "**Current Trends on Research of Regional History**". Though it is not explicitly spelled out by the organizers which this "Regional History" is, but I suppose, it is certainly related to North-Eastern Region of India that comprises today of seven politically organized States of India viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. I use the term "politically organized" because political division is most often arbitrary and ignores the consideration of natural divisions, and cuts across geographically distinct zones; it divides ethnicity; it disrupts human settlements, imperils linguistic groupings, and even disintegrates the past history and culture of a united people. *Political division is more often artificial than natural, and creates problems. There are many such instances in India and outside.*

Let us now look at the definition of the term "regional". We all know that the term 'regional' is an adjectival form of 'region' i.e. (1- a) of or relating esp. to a geographical region (allowing local needs to take

Suniti Kumar Chatterji. Even the label "Kirata", an old term recovered from ancient Indian scriptures to emphasize their indigenous origin could not *create any great degree of uniformity*.

In their economic life, the broad distinction between wet-rice cultivation in the river valleys and the slash and burn method of agriculture in the upland zones caused basic differences of living in the plains and those in the hills. The traditional polity of the hill dwelling peoples was quite different from that in the plains, a factor which still dominates the administrative structure in the hill areas. The polity kingdom dominated Assam, Manipur and Tripura for many hundred years.

Culturally large tracts of Indianised plains can be posited against traditional animistic or shamanistic domains of the highlanders. Being away from the great centers of culture, trade and commerce, and away from the sea, the region could not participate in any form of maritime trade for which some coastal areas of India were well-known. Except Hinduism, there was no other dominant religious tradition. Buddhism and Islam were in the periphery.

The region was thus marked by local diversity—ethnic, political, economic, linguistic, religious, cultural and social.

North-East India: A Colonial Legacy

The origin of the term "North-East" goes back to the early nineteenth century and is associated with the British. Hence in usual parlance, it may be called a colonial legacy.

During the pre-colonial days, North-East region, including Assam, was little known to the outside world. The Mughal writers who came to Assam in the mid-seventeenth century presented Assam as a land of black magic, a country of wilderness where poisonous air blows; a country where one enters does not go back alive.

When the British turned their attention to this part, it was looked as an area lying to the north-east of Bengal which was then the centre of British power in India. Hence they called it North-East Frontier of Bengal. Pemberton (1835) called it "Eastern Frontier of British India", A. Mackenzie (1884) used the term 'North-East Frontier of Bengal'. After Independence, when this region got almost physically separated, the term "North-East" as a region became more relevant. Of late, the term 'North-East India' as a region has gained wide currency and acceptability in many areas such as North-East Cultural Centre, North-East Frontier Railways, North-Eastern Hill University, and lately Ministry of Development of North-Eastern

Region, (DoNER). Many other non-governmental organizations and institutes have come up under the label North-East.

Coming to historical research in the North-East, we may recount that before India's Independence, and particularly before 1948 the year of establishment of Gauhati University, scholars from this region did their research outside the region and some in England under guidance of British scholars. That was the time when only a few could afford to go outside, more particularly to England. Within the region there was no institution of higher learning where a student could go for research. Further unemployment being not acute and the easy availability of employment; put a constraint for going outside for research.

However, perception started changing after the establishment of Gauhati University. Students from all over the N.E. began to flock to Gauhati University for post-graduate education. The Ph. D. programme in History in the G.U. as was natural, at first, a slow growth.

But soon certain new political developments had created a totally *different atmosphere that had affected undisturbed historical research*. The formation of the state of Nagaland in 1960, had accelerated a momentum for the separation of other hills areas from Assam. It ultimately culminated in the creation of three more States in 1970's Meghalaya, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh that drastically reduced the territory of Assam from 2,55,000 sq. km to 78,000 sq. km in 1980. The attainment of full statehood by Manipur and Tripura placed the region entirely on a new setting. The establishment of educational institutions in these states separate from Assam caused certain dislocation in its growth.

The jubilation of political separation from Assam had provided the newly created states a tremendous impetus for a new outlook. The educational institutions and universities established in these new states as seats of higher learning had swept away the earlier hesitant or restrained mood. These new states had injected a forceful vigour and tremendous impetus into the academic life and also in historical research.

Trends and Subjects of Research:

A new vibrant setting thus began to emerge. The imperative was apparent. These newly founded universities with history as a major discipline sought to create new moorings of society, life, culture and economy of the people of those states. Many issues have been taken up. These include their migration to their present sites, old roots have been explored, their traditions and legends were researched and re-examined, and

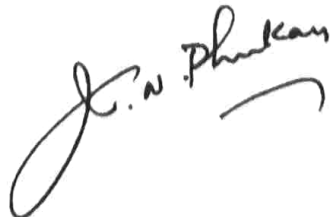
In this context North-East History Association's contribution is certainly noteworthy in the field of historical study in N.E. India. It provides great encouragement to young historians by holding annual conference, paper presentation, discussion, exchange of views and ideas, etc. In the annual proceedings a good number of research papers are published.

The Look East Policy

In 1992, the then India's Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao launched the Look East Policy with the objective of bringing the South-East Asian countries to a closer economic integration and cultural ties. The Look East Policy declared by the Govt. of India and the subsequent strategy adopted has put the North-East Region on a new framework. To obtain greater and intensive knowledge about the eastern countries we must also look into their past and their people. As Shri I. K. Gujral, the former Prime Minister stated in 2004 in a seminar on Lachit Borphukan at the Gauhati University "We should look a little more to the East" than what we are doing.

Shri Sudhir Davere, a former Indian diplomat and presently Director General of Indian Council of World Affairs stated at Tezpur on Friday 27th of August, 2010 that the LEP envisages North-East as a hub of free trade and connectivity with the South-East Asian countries. By pursuing this policy India is discovering its 'eastern identity', and, we believe, to explore this Eastern Identity of India encompasses also history, culture, people and language of our eastern foreign neighbours. Research has also to be oriented in this direction of Myanmar, China, particularly southern China, Thailand, Laos and even Vietnam. I hope our new generation of history scholars will surely look into this area.

With these few words I conclude my speech and hope, the two-day seminar will bring good result. I thank the organizers of the Choiduar College.



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PROBLEM OF TRANS-BORDER TRIBES OF BHUTAN, UNDER THE ADMINISTRATION OF SIR WILLIAM ERSKINE WARD (1891-96)

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Sir William Ward's brief tenure as chief commissioner was significant in the history of the Assam Government's relationship with the Bhutan (Bhutanese) tribes living beyond the northern border of the province. Ward's administration was called upon to restore order in the border villages where the people were subjected to outrages, extortionate raids and intimidation by the Bhutia marauders from across the border. By the end of Ward's administration, order was restored, steps to invigorate trade with these tribes were taken, and friendly relations with the Bhutanese Government re-established.

The Bhutanese were a Tibeto-Burman race inhabiting the sub-Himalayan ranges from east of Darjeeling in Bengal up to the river Bhoroi in the Darrong district of Assam. The Bhutan hills, as they were called after the name of the tribes, were approximately more than 240 miles in length.

Traditionally the Bhutanese had kept their intercourse with the plains through the duars or passes leading from hills to the plains. Along the frontier of Bhutan proper there were eighteen such duars, eleven on the frontier of Bengal and Koch Behar and seven on that of Assam.² Of these seven duars five were in Goalpara and Kamrup and two Darrong. East of Darrong, there was another duar known as the Kariapara duar.³

After the occupation of Assam, the British Government adopted the Ahom frontier policy in case of these frontier.⁴ Since the Treaty of Sinchala (1865),⁵ the policy adopted towards Bhutan was of one of conciliation and non-intervention. Large scale violation of the Treaty of Sinchala was made by the Bhutias when Sir William Ward assumed office in 1891. In early 1891, extortions on a large scale were committed by Bhutia marauders on the villages of northern part of the Kamrup District bordering Bhutan. These were however not brought prominently to the notice of the Government until April 1894.⁶ Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup G. Gordon deputed Inspector of police Shyam Sundar Chakravarti, for an on the spot investigation about the incidents. From 30 April 1891 to 4 May 1891, he visited 19 villages. From the evidence recorded by him, it appeared that the Bhutias (Bhutanese) came in small parties at different times, and took away 2 or 3 maunds of paddy from each house every time they come. In this way they took paddy from 1096 houses, and, taken as a whole, some affected houses had to part with paddy to the extent of 240 maunds.⁷ In the sadar sub-division, dhan (rice) cattle, and cash to the value of Rs. 31955 had been taken from 9 villages, and in Barpeta, master seed and cash to the value of Rs. 444 had been taken from eight villages.⁸

The Bhutias visited the villages in batches of four to eight, placed small packets of chillies in the hands of the villagers or deposited the chillies at their door, and demanded one to two maunds of dhan per house in return. Where there was no sufficient dhan to satisfy their demand they took cash and cattle by force.⁹

In some cases, the Bhutias expressly demanded these contributions as taxes, and asserted that tracts of country was to be again taken possession of by Bhutan Raja. In other cases, the extortions were connected with collection of the forest dues which the government of Assam allowed the Bhutan fiscal officials to levy from certain villages along the frontier. In government however, the exactions were extortions without reason or pretext, or made under the guise of trade or so called begging. In fact it was an organized system of black mail.¹⁰

At Subankhatta, there was a military out post to protect the British subjects from these tribes. Shortly before the Bhutias started the above mentioned extortions, this post was removed by the government of Assam. It appeared as though there was no adequate force to protect the villages. This impression added incentives to the Bhutias for their course of extortions.¹¹

Most of the villages visited by the Bhutias in the Gauhati sub-division were situated in the Tamulpur and some in the Barma Tehsil, and lay about the 10 to 16 miles from the Barma and Tamulpur outposts, and about the same distance south of the cold- weather military outpost at Subankhatta. The villages that suffered in the Barpeta sub-division were to the north of the Roha outpost and towards the extreme western boundary of the district.¹²

As a result of the inquiries made, the Government of Assam entered into communication with the Government of India and with the Bengal Government on the subject. The commissioner of Rajshani was instructed by the Bengal Government to obtain redress from the Bhutia authorities for the villagers that had been looted.¹³

THE EXTORTION OF FEBRUARY

Attempt at extortion was reported on 8 February 1892. Two Bhutias had gone to a village called Dighaldonga, about 16 miles south of Subankhatta and had proceeded to distribute the handful of chillies and demand the dhan at the rate of about 11/2 maunds for two annas worth of chillies. Nine villages came to the Subankhatta out post and reported about the extortions. A party of three sepoy under a Havildar with a civil police constable was sent out immediately. The Bhutias were arrested and taken to the outpost. As they had not than actually taken any dhan though they had distributed the chillies, the officer in-charge of the guard and the head constable of civil police on duty returned their chillies to them and sent them back.¹⁴

One effect of the warnings given by the Bengal and the Assam Governments to the Bhutias was the drastic reduction in the number of Bhutia traders coming to Assam for the purpose of legitimate trade. While visiting Darrong-a traditional trade-marts, on his way to Dewangiri on his annual visit, the officiating Deputy Commissioner of kamrup, Teunon, found only 150 Bhutias. At Subankhatta he found an encampment of about 1000 Bhutias. In previous years the numbers of Bhutias at Subankhatta varied from 2000 to 5000. The decline in the number was attributable to the communications that had passed between the Bengal Government and the "Suba Raja" on the subject of his posa. The "Suba Raja" was prohibited from allowing his subjects to descend to the plains. Further these was an impressio0n that entrance into British territory would be prohibited. Mean time, the tehsildar of Tamulbari informed the Bhutias that the orders of Government prohibited all exactions, but not the entry of Bhutias into British territory for the purposes of legitimate trade. The Bhutias, as a result of these clarifications gradually began to come down to Subankhatta.¹⁵

The head of the Bhutan officials traditionally stationed at subankhatta (called Gaurakhiya) was informed of the extortions committed at the Barpeta sub-division and of the consequent establishment of the additional guard at Kakalabari. They were also informed of the orders to the three guards at Darronga, Subankhatta and Kakalabari, thjat all Bhutias found forcing chillies upon the villages, or extortion rice or other articles, were to be arrested and sent up to Gauhati for punishment. It was impressed upon him that the orders would assuredly be carried out, and also that it was proposed by the British government to deduct the cost of the additional guard and the money value of losses sustained by British subjects from the posa receivable by the Bhutias.¹⁶

On the 28 February 1892, Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup received a report from Barpeta to the effect that in a village called Batakusi, about 5 miles from Kakolibari some eight Bhutias had attempted to commit extortion but had been driven out by the villages. He immediately directed the

subedar of the guard at Subankhatta to detach a party of ten men and a Havildar to Kakolibari to prevent any further attempts of this kind. In the wake of this, no further extortion or attempt at extortion occurred in Barpeta. Nevertheless, the Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup insisted that unless a guard was posted at Kakolibari every cold weather, the Barpeta frontier could not be adequately protected and that without the disarmament of the Bhutias before their entering the villages in Barpeta, these villages would continue to be vulnerable to depredations.¹⁷

MILITARY OUTPOSTS

The Kakolibari outpost: In the backdrop of the insistence by the Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup, on the desirability of disarming the Bhutias entering plains of Assam, Sri William Ward, through his order dated 15 February 1892, formally sanctioned the opening of an outpost at Kakolibari.¹⁸ A guard of Military Police was to be placed at Kakolibari and it was to be empowered to search any armed Bhutias passing that station or the outposts at Darronga and Subankhatta. The Bhutias were to be made to deposit their arms before they were permitted to proceed further into the Kamrup district. The guards were further instructed to arrest and detain, pending arrival of the civil police, any Bhutias against whom charges of plunder, extortion, robbery or other criminal offences were made by the villages.¹⁹ The strength of the Kakolibari out post was, however, utterly inadequate to the task of preventing the Bhutias raids, and outrages. The Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup therefore was constrained to appeal a new to the Chief Commissioner of Assam to raise the strength of the out post. Realising the importance of containing armed Bhutias, Ward sanctioned in early 1893 a detachment of one Havildar and fourteen sepoy of the 13th Native Infantry at Kakolibari out post.²⁰

This no doubt increased the of security of the Assamese raiyats. Indeed, following the strengthening of the Kakolibari oujt post in 1894-95, there was practically no disturbances, raids or extortions caused by the Bhutias in its neighbourhood. Consequently, it appeared to the government of Assam. That there was no necessity for maintaining the guard to protect raiyats against the molestration of the Bhutias.²¹ So in 1895-96 the military guard at Kakolibari was abandoned. However the Bhutias did not visit its neighbourhood in their usual numbers owing mainly to the prevalence of small – pox in the villages of Kakolibari, Khagrabari and Naosali. The conduct of those who came to the plains of Kamrup were peaceable and in offensive.²²

MILITARY OUTPOST OF DARRONGA AND SUBANKHATTA

After the set-up of the Kakolibari Military outpost, the Chief Commissioner of Assam, sanctioned, other outposts at Darronga and Subankhatta, Through the passes of Darronga and Subankhatta, Bhutikas used to come to the plains, for the purpose of trade. In 1892, the Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup while visiting Darronga and Subankhatta, considered the question of the location of the guards on the Kamrup frontier, and came to the conclusion that the main guard with the officer in charge should be posted at Subankhatta and a detachment should be placed at Darronga. Since the Chief Commissioner was convinced that the annual visit of the Deputy Commissioner to Dewangiri was no longer necessary in view of settled state of affairs, and that the only purpose for visiting Dewangiri now onward would be to inspect the boundary pillars, opening of outposts at Darronga and Subankhatta could serve the same purpose. He therefore sanctioned the location of the guards at these places and authorized the discontinuance of the annual visit by the Deputy Commissioner to Dewangiri.²³ The dication was implemented expeditiously. The military guard, consisting of one native officer and 50 non-commissioned officers and men of the 44th Gurkhas Rifles for the protection of the frontier of the Kamrup district arrived at Gauhati. On the 24 December, 1892, it reached Darronga and on 29 December Subankhatta. The main guard was stationed at Subankhatta, and the detachment of Havildar and fourteen sepoy was stationed at Darrong.²⁴ The instructions given to the subedar on his way through Gauhati were

similar to those issued to the guard in the preceding year, viz. (i) that immediately on receiving information of Bhutias looting or extorting, attempting to loot or extort, money or supplies in any village, the officer-in-charge of the post was forthwith to send a party to detain the Bhutias and the property pending the arrival Civil police and (ii) that all Bhutias passing the outposts were to be disarmed. Orders were issued to all frontier outposts and tahsils to make the instructions known to the villagers, and police were further directed on receiving information, to proceed to the spot, make necessary inquiries, and send up to Gauhati any offending Bhutias and the property concerned.²⁵

The orders in regard to disarmament were strictly carried out at Subankhatta and at Darronga and as a result of this, and of the promptitude with which the guard had acted on similar instruction in the preceding year, no depredations or extortion of any kind occurred in the sadar sub-division (Gauhati).²⁶

During the cold weather of 1893-94, the following guards were posted: (i) A detachment of one Havildar and ten sepoy of the 13th Native Infantry and one head constable and two constables of the civil police at Darronga, and (ii) A detachment of one subedar, two Havildars and thirty sepoy of the 13th Native Infantry and one head constable and two constables from the Civil police at Subankhatta.²⁷

The guards arrived at Gauhati by the middle of December 1893, and reached their destination is due time. The Bhutias behaved 'admirably' and not a single charge of extortion was made against them. The Deva Raja evidently understood the limitations under which his subjects should behave with British subjects, and accordingly directed his officers to see that barter was carried on by mutual consent only.²⁸

In 1894-95, the Government of Assam sanctioned a military force Darronga. This included one Havildar, one Naik, and nine sepoy of the Military police and one writer constables of the Armed Civil police. For the outpost of Subankhatta, a detachment of one Jemadar, one Havildar, two Naiks and twenty five sepoy of the Military police and one head constable and two constables of Armed Civil police was also sanctioned.²⁹ The Military guard left Shillong on 13 January and arrived at Gauhati on 17 January 1895. They reached Darronga on 23 and Subankhatta on the 24 January 1895. The military forces left Subankhatta and Darronga for Shillong on the 4 and 6 April respectively.³⁰

As a result of improvement of law and order in the border areas, confidence returned on both sides- the Assamese as well as the Bhutias. This could be grasped from the perusal of the statistics of increase in the number of Bhutia visitors to the border trade centers at Darronga and Subankhatta.

In 1895, annual fair at Darronga lasted from 25 January to 17 March, and that of Subankhatta from 22 January to 31 March. Three thousand Bhutias visited the fair at Subankhatta, against nine hundred in 1893-94, and three thousand seven hundred sixty nine visited Darronga as against two thousand eight hundred sixty-three in 1893-94.³¹ In 1893-94, one thousand nine hundred sixty-three Bhutias passed through Darronga, against two thousand three hundred forty-five in 1892-93, and nine hundred Bhutias visited the fair at Subankhatta, against two thousand in 1892-93.³² This no doubt showed considerable improvement of the position between 1892-93 and 1895-96. And for this, Ward's measures to improve the law and order position in the border region were primarily to be given credit.

One significant development in the relationship of the British with the Bhutias was the meeting between Chief Commissioner Ward and the Bhutan officials in 1896. In February 1896, Ward, accompanied by R.B. Mc Cabe, the Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup, visited Darronga, and Subankhatta and the Lamaguru Temple. He had an interview with the officers sent by the Deba Raja of Bhutan.³³ During the cold weather of 1895-96, a guard of one Naik and nine sepoy of the 42nd Gurkha Rifles and one writer constable and two constables of the Civil police, was stationed at Darronga, and a guard of one Jemadar, two Havildars and twenty five sepoy of the 42nd Gurkhas Rifles, and one head constable and two constables of Armed Civil police was stationed at Subankhatta.³⁴

In 1896-97, a guard consisting of one Havildar, one Naik, one lance Naik and ten sepoy of the 42nd Gurkha Rifles and one writer constable and two constables of Civil police was stationed at Darronga; and a guard of one Jemadar, two Havildar, one lance Naik, twenty five sepoy and one doctor, of the 42nd Gurkha Rifles, one head constable and two constables of the Armed Civil police was stationed at Subankhatta.³⁵

It is noted that as a consequence of Sir William Ward's decision to place armed personnel in the posts of Kakolibari, Darronga and Subankhatta, outrages extortions and robberies committed by the Bhutias considerably decreased. While coming from Bhutan to Assam the Bhutia traders were now required to deposit their arms and ammunition at the outposts and get their names registered. All this had the effect of reducing tension in the frontier.

THE JOINT INQUIRY COMMISSION

To prevent further atrocities of the Bhutias on the plains people, the Government of Assam entered into communication with the Government of India and with the Bengal Government. The Government instructed the commissioner of Rajshahi to obtain redress from the Bhutia authorities for the villages that had been looted, and to call upon the Deva Raja to take steps to put an end to depredations.³⁶ The Commissioner of Rajshahi has been asked to draw the Deva Raja's attention to articles IV and V of the Treaty of Sinchula, under which the British Government would be justified in suspending the payment of the subsidy, either in whole or in part in the event of the failure on the part of the Bhutan Government to check the outrages of its subject, or to give prompt and full redress for all outrages committed by them.³⁷ Meantime the Deva Raja had submitted a proposal through the Bengal government for a joint inquiry into the matter by representative from the Government of Assam and Bhutan. The proposal was accepted and arrangements made for a meeting of the representatives sometime in November 1892. It was later postponed by the Bhutia authorities to February. Accordingly the joint enquiry took place on 18 February 1893.³⁸ Babu Kali Ram Choudhary Extra Assistant Commissioner of Kamrup was deputed to represent the Government of Assam in the joint enquiry.³⁹ The Bhutan Government had deputed an officer of the Nyikume's (second grade Magistrate) wangjong Jimpen and lower grade officer Kuchhap.⁴⁰ The representatives of the Government of Assam and Bhutan met at Subankhatta near Tamulpur, and exchanged the views of the respective Governments. The Bhutia Deputy opined that he had come with full powers to investigate into and otherwise deal with the matter. He further said that his instructions were that the parties should rather punish the offenders in presence of both sides than insisting on restitution of property extorted and thus settle the affair finally. After much discussion, the Bhutia Deputy consented to an inquiry being made at first as to the property taken by the Bhutias.⁴¹

On 18 February 1893, the proposed joint inquiry was instituted and all aspects of the case were investigated. The commission found that the Bhutias used to give to each house in a village in the Assam plains of small quantity of radishes and chillies and demanded rice in exchange. It was not a barter, for the Assamese ryots in most cases were unwilling to accept the chillies and the radishes. The Bhutias generally placed these things in the courtyards of the ryots, and demand rice. If the ryots said that they had no rice to give, the Bhutias would personally go and see their granaries. If there was rice, the Bhutia would ask the owners, the Bhutias would show their swords. The Assamese ryots were afraid of swords, and they would part with their rice much against their will.⁴² The Bhutias generally did not come in a body. They came in batches of four or five on different dates in the month of Magh, Falgun and Choitra. In this way they would obtain rice from all the people of a village. They would then go to other villages and obtain rice in similar ways. Other parties of Bhutias would come and extort rice in the same way.⁴³ The Bhutias also realized from Garamdeo, Ahopa, Thumna and Jogdola of the villages of Subankhatta Rs. 325-40 as tax for their carrying of Bhutan bamboos and other forest produce. This was levied at the rate of 4 annas per

adult male member of a family. One Thelai Raja who occupied position of a forest conservator, realized Rs. 25-4-0 from the village of Subankhatta. The quantity of rice as stated by the people amounted to 13,570 maunds from 1008 houses of 19 villages. Taken at 2 maunds a rupee, the price of the rice amounted to about Rs. 6785.⁴⁴ Two pigs and a cow and a calf were also taken by the Bhutias, the value of which was about Rs. 20. A quarrel persisted between one Bacha of the village of Masalpur and a Bhutia. The fined him Rs. 13 and a pig. Korcha Modani was forced by Sanglo Bhutia to part with a cow and a calf and Rs. 3 in cash. Sanglo took these on the pretext that Korsa owed him money. Thebang Kachari of Garamdeo, refused to pay tax. But he was forced to pay Rs. 30 and to give a pig as a fine.⁴⁵

After the joint inquiry between Assam officials and the Bhutia Deputy, they concluded that the inquiry had showed that the value of rice extorted from the plains people of Kamrup, together with the sum taken in cash, amounted to Rs. 7176-14-0.⁴⁶

However in view of the probability that the actual losses might have been considerably exaggerated. The Chief Commissioner recommended that it would be sufficient if a sum of not less than Rs. 3000 was assessed as compensation to be paid by the Bhutan Government to the villages concerned. A communication from the Government of Assam to the Government of India ran thus: "In a case of this kind it is obviously impossible to prove the exact loss which was incurred, but there is no reason to doubt that the villages suffered seriously. In view of these facts, Sir William Ward felt that the Government would do less than justice if the assessment of losses suffered by the Assamese was fixed at a sum less than Rs. 3000".⁴⁷

Accordingly, Ward suggested to the Government of Bengal that a sum of Rs. 3000 should be deducted from the next subsidy payable to the Bhutan Government, and that amount should be transferred to the credit of the Assam Administration, for the purpose of being distributed as compensation among the affected villages.⁴⁸

The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal had carefully considered all the previous papers of this case. A long correspondence then ensued between the Bhutan authorities and the Bengal and Assam officials. The attitude taken up by the Deva Raja was that the fact was much exaggerated, and that his subjects were engaged in barter according to their custom, and that although petty pilfering might have occurred, no force was used, and at his request it was eventually agreed to make an enquiry into the facts by joint representative from the Bhutan and the Assam authorities.⁴⁹ It was found that the quantity of rice extorted by the Bhutias amounted to 13,570 maunds and it was admitted that these was probability of exaggeration in this. The Bhutia Deputy proposed that these offenders should be punished in the presence of both parties. Further the Assam representatives were only authorized to come to an agreement on the basis of payment of compensation. The Tongsa penlow, who held the seal of office in Bhutan, too addressed a letter to the Deputy Commissioner of kamrup, in which he protested against ay deduction being made from the annual subsidy. He however stated that an order had issued by the Bhutan Government to find out and determine how much could be realised from the traders, who supposed to be guilty of the mischief complained of.⁵⁰

In view of the Tongsa penlow's communication, the Government of India decided to look upon the matter in an altogether different light. It took into consideration the past friendly behaviour of the Bhutan authorities. The attitude of Bhutan had been described as 'eminently friendly' towards the British for several preceding years, especially during the period of the Sikkim expedition 'when ay trouble on their part would have given rise to much embarrassment'.⁵¹

The Lieutenant Governor observed that throughout the long correspondence which had taken place, it had always been reconised that some compensation would eventually be levied from Bhutan on account of the outrages in Kamrup. He was however of the opinion that having regard to the circumstances, and especially to the friendly attitude of the Bhutanese and to the long time which has

elapsed since the outrages were committed, it would be a measure of sound policy to allow the claim to drop.⁵²

Sir William Ward's administration, thus, witnessed the establishment of peace in the border villages of Assam, which were in the neighbourhood of Bhutan. The Assamese villages were saved from the extortionate demands of the Bhutia marauders. Friendly relationship between the British government and the Bhutanese government was reestablished. The border trade between the Assamese villagers of the districts of Kamrup and Darrong with the Bhutias was not only restored, but also increased in volume. Considering the administration of Ward's Chief Commissionership they were indeed considerable achievements.

Footnotes :

1. Francis Hamilton. An Account of Assam, p.67.
2. Alexander Mackenzie. The North-East Frontier of India, pp. 9-10.
3. Ibid. pp. 15-17
4. Lakshmi Devi, Ahom- Tribal Relations, pp. 249-270.
5. Dated 11th November 1865. Text in C.U. Aitchison, Tre-Treaties Engagemets and Sandas relating to India and Neighbouring Countries, reprint, Delhi, 1983 pp. 96-98.
6. ASP. For (A) April, 1892. No. 407. From W. Teunon to the Chief Commissioner of Assam dt. 28th April 1892 p.1.
7. Ibid. No. 114. From G. Gordon to the Secretary to the Chief Commission of Assa. 8 April 1891, p.3.
8. PRK. 1891-92 p.1.
9. Ibid.
10. ASP. For (A) April, 1892. From w. Teunon to the Chief Commissioner of Assam, 28th April 1892. p.1.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. PRK. 1891-92. p.2.
14. RAPA. 1891-92. Part II B. "Bhutan", p.12. .
15. ARNFA. 1891-92 'Bhutan', p.12.
16. RAPA. 1891-92 Part II B. 'Bhutan' p.13.
17. ARA. 1892-93. General summery. "Frontier tribes of Bhutan" part I p. i-ii.
1. PRK. 1891-92. p.4.
2. ARA. 1891-92 part II. 'Bhutan' p.13.
3. ASP. For (A) April, 1893, No.225. p.1.
4. PRK. 1894-95. p.1.
5. RAPA. 1895-96. part B. 'Bhutan', p.17.
6. PRK. 1892-93 p.1. also ARA 1892-93 p.15.
7. Ibid.
8. ARNFA. 1892-93.p. 5.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. RAPA. 1894-95 Section 2. 'Bhutan', p.27.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. RAPA. 1894-95 Section 2. 'Bhutan', p.27.
17. Ibid.
18. PRK. 1894-95, p.1.
19. ARA. 1893-94, Section-2, 'Bhutan', p.21.
20. RAPA. 1895-96, part I 'Bhutan', p.17.
21. Ibid.
22. RAPA. 1896-97, Section-2 'Bhutan', p.21.
23. PRK. 1891-92, 1.
24. ASP. For (A) September 1891, No. 439, p.4.
25. RAPA. 1892-93, Section-2, 'Bhutan', p.16.
26. ASP. For (A) August 1892, No. 99, p.6.

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27. Ibid. March 1893. From Extra Assistant Commissioner; Guwahati, to the Deputy Commissioner, Kamrup, Dt. 27Feb. 1893, p.2.
28. Ibid. December 1893. From Extra Assistant Commissioner; Gawahati, to the Deputy Commissioner, Kamrup, Dt. 27 Feb.1893, p.2.
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30. Ibid.
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33. ASP. For (A) April 1893, No. 313. p.1.
34. Ibid. December 1893, Letter No. 581 For ,5554 p
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GLOSSARY:

Chaitra, Chat	: Assamese month (15 th March to 15 th April)
Choki, Chokey, Chouki	: a frontier outpost.
Coolie	: labour.
Dhan	: rice.
Duar	: a mountain pas, a region adjacent to hill.
Falgun, Pagun	: Assamese month (February 15 to March 15).
Kuchhap	: lower grade officer of Bhutan.
Magh	: Assamese month (January 15 to February 15).
Mound	: Approx. 40 K.G. of weight.
Nyikuma	: Second grade Magistrate of Bhutan.
Posa	: Produce payable to hill men.
Raja	: King.
Rayat	: tenant.
Tehsildar	: a revenue officer.

Writing Social History of Disease and Medicine in Assam

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Introduction:

History writing in its modern post-enlightenment sense has developed in Assam from the 19th century mainly due to the socio-cultural forces released by the colonial rule. In this initial stage, in the writings of pioneers like Haliram Dhekial Phukan we have seen a major emphasis on the political developments and the narration of events in a chronological order. These early enterprise to reconstruct the history of Assam can also be seen as a growing desire to negotiate with and adopted to an alien culture brought by the British rule. At the same time owing to the necessity of knowing the native subjects for the stability of the newly formed empire, the colonial authorities has also embarked on a mission to understand the socio-cultural and political aspects of the India people mainly through ethnographic investigation and reconstruction of history. This explains why by the end of the 19th century we have come across a large number of ethnographic accounts such as *Topography of Assam*, Mill's Report, Robinson's account, etc and *The History of Assam* by A. Gait which can be termed as the first modern western historical account of Assam written by a colonial administrator. From this very humble beginning upto the first decade of the 21st century, history writing in Assam has evolved different trends encompassing the socio-cultural as well as the economic aspects. However, still historical writing in Northeast India in general and Assam in particular is far behind in compare to the development of historiography in the all India context. Different dimensions of our past are still unexplored. Hence, in this paper a modest attempt has been made to understand the newly developed social history of disease and medicine in its scope in the historical writing of Assam. In doing so a survey of the historiography of disease and medicine has been made in the national context and tried to argue that this historiographical trend can also explore different hidden dynamics of the history of Assam.

The National Context: Historiography of Disease and Medicine in India

The social history of disease and medicine is now striving in South Asia. However a decade ago, only a hand full of scholars were conducting research on this subject. By the end of the 20th century, the historiography of disease and medicine has established itself as a mainstream branch of historical scholarship. Taking cue from Foucault and Said, historians have engaged on some exciting and original research work on the relationship between medical knowledge and power. Especially for the British colonial period in India, we have now a vast corpus of historical literature. Earlier, Indologist had studied Indian medical tradition as a part of its philosophical and cultural inquiries on the Indian past.¹ However, in contrast to the early Indologist, the historiography of disease and medicine of the colonial period had emerged out of the imperial and its corollary necessities. From its very beginning the colonial authority was concerned about the epidemiological consequences of empire. In India, the pandemic cholera, which broke out in Bengal in 1817 became a stark reminder of this factor.² With this rising concern for health related issues, medical practitioners as well as western scholars began to write extensively about the topic. However, though these literatures were mainly medical texts³, it marked the beginning of the historiography of disease and medicine in Indian context.

In the last two decades of the 20th century, the most common aspect discussed within the historiography of disease and medicine is how far medicine was used as a tool of empire. Apart from it, issues like medicine as an instrument of social control, spread and diffusion of science in non-European areas, economic efficacy of medicine, public health policies and measures of the British government in India, medical intervention and indigenous response, construction of racial notion through medicine, etc., are also discussed and debated intensely. Similarly this new historiographical trend is also influenced by Foucauldian perspective and questions relating to gender issues. Another important theme discussed and debated within this historiographical trend is the issue of the spread of western science to non-European areas. The earlier idea of a simple diffusion of a monolithic and progressive western science into passively recipient extra-European lands has been challenged from several standpoints, not least by a more interactive and regionally focused understanding of how science developed in India from the late eighteenth century onwards".⁴ Apart from these broad trends other vital aspects about the history of disease and medicine are also discussed and debated within this new trend.

The Regional Context: Historiography of Disease and Medicine in Assam

Writing about the predicament of the people caused by diseases is not a popular norm in the historiography of Assam. Infact before the publication of Dr. Ratan Kumar Katakey's *Ahom Rajatvat Chikitsa Seva*⁵ in 2006 by the Tai Studies and Research, Moranhat, there was not a single book on the history of disease and medicine in Assam. However, the book is basically a compilation of facts from the *Ahom buranjis* and other medieval literatures hence it lacks the approach of social history. For the colonial period there are two edited books by Paramananda Majumdar. The first book, *Bijnan Aru Mulyabodh*, was published in 1993.⁶ Though the articles in this book lack a critical historical approach except the article of Prasenjit Chaudhury, still we can term the book as the first attempt to write the social history of science in general and disease and medicine in particular for colonial Assam. The second book was also edited by Paramanda Majumder entitled *Asamt Bijnan Sarsar Dhara*.⁷ The different articles in this book have covered almost every aspect of the history of science in Assam. However, like every pioneering work this one also has certain limitations. For instance, the recent approaches in the history of science, technology and medicine are totally absent. At best the book is a conglomeration of certain articles full of historical sources without any attempt to interpret them. Apart from the above mention books we find hardly any historical work in the historiography of science, technology and medicine in Assam for the colonial period. In fact not a single mainstream history book has been written so far on the social history of disease and medicine. However, many other disciplines, like anthropology, economics and sociology, take a lead in this respect. They concentrate mostly on recent times, worked within a confined locale and with a narrow data-base, and hence have limited scope. But historical studies can give a wider dimension to and a greater perspective about disease.

Developing a Social History of Disease and Medicine in Assam:

In the Assamese folk-life the miscellaneous powers of nature are recognized in the form of spirits, ghosts, demons and gods. The folk-mind is also revealed through the imagination of these spirits and ghosts. People considered the sun, the moon, the stars, the sky, the clouds, the natural phenomenon such as thunder, lightening, rain, wind, storm, earthquake etc. as the acts of God or as the outburst of heavenly forces. Similarly the various diseases and illnesses were regarded as the acts or external form of the evil spirits. They believed in the existence of an evil spirit within the diseases like fever, arthritis, diarrhea, cholera, smallpox, stomach pain, acidity, liver infection, cough, viral fever, *kala-azar* (black-fever) etc. and tried to get rid of those evil spirits sometimes through prayer and by threatening them through the rituals of *jara-phuka* at others. Various rituals are performed during the birth of a child to protect him/her from the evil forces. The different acts like placing a plum throne on the wall of the

room, to apply cow dung etc. to protect the baby from evil forces are suggestive of some logical reasoning as well of supernatural imagination. The ethnic people's belief in the invisible supernatural power and the traditions built on the basis of these beliefs are manifested through the acts like uttering hymns with the mustard seed after feeding a baby, the arrangement of *Apeswari sabah* in order to protect the child from the grasp of *Apeswari*, the performance of *jara-phuka* to remove the evil acts of the ghost etc. The imaginative forms of the *Bak*, the *Kandha*, the *Yakh*, the *Mah-yakh*, the *Burha Dangaria* etc. are the evidences of the popular imagination. It is also remarkable that the primary source of most of the folk-beliefs and traditions related to the aforesaid subjects were those prevalent within the various tribes of the Austrik and Mongoloid origin. The diversity of such popular beliefs and traditions common within the people of Assam is another remarkable aspect. These beliefs and customs are so vast, diverse and colourful in subject that a detailed discussion on them itself will be a subject of multiple dimensions.

Like in parts of India the nature of the medical system in Assam was plural in character. The existence of different kind of medical practices in the medieval period is referred by the *buranjis*. On the basis of the information provided by the *buranjis*, Dr. R. K. Katakey has divided the medical system in the Ahom period into three distinct categories, i.e., treatment based on herbal medicine, magico-religious tradition and ayurvedic system.⁸ The application of herbal medicine was a traditional practice in Assam among the ethnic communities even prior to the coming of the Ahoms. These ethnic communities had possessed a deep knowledge about the flora and fauna of the region and used it to their advantage for medical treatment. This mode of resource use had not only provided the economic base of these societies, but also helped to create the superstructure of the knowledge system on health-care. The knowledge of these communities was further enlarged after the 13th century with the incorporation of new types of herbal medicine brought by the Ahoms. We find a detail list of these herbal medicines in the account of Dr. Katakey.⁹ Through this process the new information of herbal medicine had adapted and assimilated itself with the existing knowledge of the communities by a process of modification to the needs of the new environment. It also shows the process of synthesis and one of the many aspects of our shared past.

The magico-religious tradition was also a dominant medical tradition prevailing among the ethnic communities of Assam. This type of magico-religious medicine was characterized by demon-caused diseases and medical rituals involving the recitation of potent charms and application of efficacious amulets to exorcise disease demons and ward off their further attacks.¹⁰ Another significant aspect about this tradition is that it was never used by the Hindu sacrificial cults and was not a product of the orthodox Brahminical intellectual tradition.¹¹ However, the traditional accounts of this system was the result of a later Hinduization process applied to a fundamentally heterodox body of knowledge in order to render it orthodox. Specially in the case of Assam, the magico-religious tradition was more heterodox with a distinct Buddhist influence due to its close relationship with the healing arts. The healing *mantras* of Assam were mainly written during the Buddhist period and in terms of the language it had used it had a close resemblance with the Buddhist Doha songs.¹²

The empirico-rational medicine of ayurveda expounded in the classical treaties of Caraka, Bhela and Susruta was begun to be practiced in Assam during the regime of Ahom king Jayadhayaj Singha. During his rule state patronage for the first time was given to the ayurvedic system by appointing Ekaseka Baruah as royal physician and gave him the title 'Bezbaruah'.¹³ However, it will be wrong to assume that prior to it the ayurvedic system had not existed in Assam. But, the important thing is that, the ayurvedic tradition with a sophisticated scholastic system recorded in specialized medical textbooks which presents a distinct medical epistemology relying essentially on empiricism followed by explanation of observable phenomenon had integrated itself with the local environment of Assam dominated by

indigenous medical practices among the ethnic communities. This integration and synthesis was done through a constant process of modification and adaptation on the part of the both medical knowledge system which ultimately led to the development of certain peculiar characters within the ayurvedic system of Assam. In this plural medical system, the Ahom state machinery had never intervened and by that way the synthesis of the indigenous and ayurvedic systems became easier.

Assam's interaction with the western medical science began with the doctors and surgeons who accompanied the military and visited the region since late 18th century. The company began to administer the region since 1820s and soon the health of their employees as well as the natives became one of its primary concerns. They realized that they were now prone to some new diseases, from which they did not suffer in their homeland. On the eve of and beginning with British administration in Assam, Captain R. B. Pemberton, who was the joint commissioner of Manipur, had termed Assam as the third most unhealthy place after Araccan and Rangoon.¹⁴ We have also references to the unhealthy climatic condition of Assam in the *Fathiya-I--Ibriah* of Sihabuddin Talish. In his account, Talish mentioned that the climatic condition of the areas which were located far away from the Brahmaputra river was most unhealthy specially for the foreign people.¹⁵ Hence, all these colonial as well as native writings had a great impact on the British authority in Assam and constructed their views on the climate of Assam. This western construction was also helped by the fact that in 1792 when Captain Welsh was in Guwahati many people died due to the epidemic havoc of dysentery and diarrhoea.¹⁶

In the neocolonial literature, the tropical countries of the Indian Ocean are described as a disease zone. India, in particular, is seen as a quagmire of lethal diseases and epidemics. The plague, malaria, cholera and smallpox are classified as Indian epidemics thriving on an enervating climate, untidiness, obscurantism and the lack of social services among the people. It is argued that the ruling class was not likely to enjoy a healthy life here and they migrated to India only to face death.¹⁷ Similarly, western medical practitioners, after the establishment of British rule in India began to write extensively about the tropic. Though these writings were basically medical texts, they had appropriated the existing colonial vocabulary and termed India as 'white-man's grave'.¹⁸ However, as pointed out by Anil Kumar "the tropics were no white-man's grave as they were scandalized to be in the metropolitan and colonial medical literatures of the 19th century".¹⁹ To substantiate his argument Anil Kumar refers to E. Parke's "Manual to Practical Hygiene", where it was clearly stated that mortality was caused not due to diseases but a reckless mode of living amidst the most insanitary conditions by the British troops.

In case of Assam also most of the colonial constructions regarding the climatic and unhealthy environment are empirically untenable. Most of the diseases stated above were of global occurrence and some like the plague and syphilis were of European origin. The plague had been the most dreaded epidemic since the days of ancient Rome. Britain was pulverized by the plague from the 13th to the 17th centuries.²⁰ Cholera, smallpox and rampant in Europe and on the American continent. We know that Plini, a Roman historian of the first century, said in a celebrated epigram that "Malaria has ruined and is ruining Italy".²¹ Hence, we can safely assume that Assam as a disease zone is a myth created by the colonial writings. The reality is that, epidemic diseases were everywhere during the 19th century, but the methods to combat it were different. In the western world preventative measures were largely seen as public welfare policy. On the other hand, in the colonial countries like India, these same measures were seen as a way to consolidate the imperial authority. Hence we have the phenomenon of colonial medicine.

The colonial government in India until the first quarter of the 19th century was indecisive regarding the type of medical practices to be adopted. Various competing medical systems i.e., allopathic, ayurvedic or unani claimed their stake in matters of public health. In 1835, the group advocating the cause of allopathic won over the company administration ushering a new era in the history of Indian medical science. It had also brought to an end of an era of peaceful cooperation and friendly coexistence

between the western and Indian system and signified the replacement of a benign orientalist policy of patronizing and learning from indigenous medicine, by an intolerant Anglicist one, with disastrous consequences for the subsequent history of indigenous medicine. However, it is also important to mention that the early British attitude to ayurvedic, unani or even folk medicine were often tolerant and even appreciative. This was partly because in their understanding of disease, as in their therapeutic devices, 18th and early 19th century Indian and European medicine shared much in common.²² At a time when other Indian sciences had fallen into growing disrepute among Europeans, these still appeared to be of sufficient practical value to persist in the investigation of Indian medicine. In fact, indigenous drugs and techniques were only one of several influences on western therapeutic practice in early 19th century India.²³ This attitude can be seen in Assam also, as ayurvedic system was taught, though in a grass root level, along with astrology and mathematics in Sanskrit medium in eleven primary schools in Lower Assam established by David Scott in 1826.²⁴ However, this honeymoon of the Indo-European medical system had ended in 1835 and colonial authorities began to propagate western medicine as the hallmark of a superior civilization and corresponding backwardness and barbarity of indigenous practice. This colonial arrogance had multiple effects on the natives. As like other parts of India indigenous medical practitioners of Assam after the loss of the colonial support, combined with an erosion of royal patronage reacted both defensively and assertively, reviving the indigenous tradition on one hand, and promoted it on a nationalist platform on the other.²⁵ However, the irony was that, the revivalism of the indigenous tradition was done by making it rational which was itself a modern western concept. Hence, the revival movement of the indigenous medical practices had some inherent contradictions from its very beginning which in the long run made it less effective. It had also faced stiff resistance from within the Assamese community mainly led by the western educated middle class under the leadership of Anandaram Dhekial Phukan.

As it has been mentioned earlier, treatment based on herbal medicine was an important component in the plural medical structure of Assam. We have an extensive list of herbal medicine used in the Ahom period by the *Kavirajs* and *Baidyas*.²⁶ During the 19th century also, the traditional system of herbal treatment was flourishing with the addition of new herbal medicine in the pharmacopoeia of the indigenous medical practitioners.²⁷ As there was not a great deal of specialization in the medical practices, people from every ethnic community had some basic knowledge about the herbal medicine. This cosmopolitan nature of the medical practitioners had reflected the secular character and easy availability of health-care facilities. In the field of ayurvedic medicine also, medical practitioners were not always from the Brahmin community. However, in a more institutionalized way, it was practiced by *Bezbaruahs*, who were mainly Brahmins, and in popular level every ethnic community practice their own brand of ayurvedic method of treatment with some distinct component of magico-religious tradition. The sources show that ayurvedic medicine derived its major features from the work of heterodox ascetics rather than from Brahminic intellectuals, it became easier for the synthesis of ayurvedic and magico-religious tradition. Apart from it, Brahmins found themselves in a favourable position to adapt to the ayurvedic tradition as the surgical branch of it had not developed in Assam, which was regarded by the Brahmin orthodoxy as barbaric and degraded. This rich tradition of medical practices in Assam had begun to sense the threat of western medicine from the first quarter of the 19th century. It is against this background we can understand the history of conflict and accommodation with the western medical practice in colonial Assam.

The impact of the British attitude on medical ideas and practices prevalent among the ethnic communities can most clearly be seen in the case of smallpox.²⁸ During the 19th century, smallpox was one of the chief epidemic diseases in Assam. Mortality rate with this disease was very high and it mainly affected the poor section of the society. In 1832, smallpox occurred in the Nagaon district in an epidemic

form. In the second half of the 19th century, the epidemic form of smallpox became more frequent in every districts of Assam.²⁹ In the traditional Assamese society, smallpox was widely identified with the Hindu goddess *Sitala*, whose awesome presence was manifested through the disease fever and eruption. A benign outcome to possession by the goddess was sought through songs, prayers, devotional offerings and cooling potions.³⁰ Apart from it smallpox was also sought to be cured through the process of variolation. This involved inoculation by the *Tikadars* with live smallpox matter. Although worship of the goddess *Sitala* was not integral to the inoculators' craft, her assistance was often tactfully invoked by the variolators or *Tikadars* as they began their work. However, this indigenous craft of variolation came under the British target when smallpox vaccination was introduced in India in 1802 by the British.³¹ The smallpox commission of 1850, in comparing variolation to *sati* and female infanticide, declared that the time had come to suppress "this murderous trade". More concrete steps to curb the practice of variolation were taken in Vaccination Act of the 1870s and 1880s by making variolation illegal and vaccination compulsory. All these regulatory provisions had completely undermined the indigenous system of variolation, which "was bound to set off controversies exploding old myths and often creating new ones."³² The native people saw vaccination as ungodly and offensively polluting the caste system by the transmission of body fluid from one individual to another. Belief that *Sitala* was being defiled or assaulted contributed to native distrust of vaccination and thus formed an important site of cultural resistance to colonial medical intervention.³³ In 1837, John M' Cosh in his book *Topography of Assam* had mentioned that, "inoculation with the smallpox virus is practiced by the natives; they have a strong prejudice against vaccination, this aversion is peculiar to the people of plains; those of the hills are very willing to have it performed."³⁴ This fact was also illustrated by Gunaviram Barua when he was the Extra Assistant Commissioner of the Nagaon district in 1873. In a report to the colonial government of Assam, Gunaviram Barua had mentioned that due to religious restrictions some sections of the Hindu community, specially the Vaishnavites and the people from the Muslim community had strong apathy towards vaccination.³⁵ In the annual sanitary report references were made to the Vaishnavite dominated Barpeta area where vaccination was denounced as going as going contrary to the *Shastras*.³⁶ This aversion towards vaccination was also found within the Marwari community of Jorhat.³⁷

Another chief disease which needs special mention is malarial fevers. It was the most common disease among the ethnic communities with far reaching consequences. As it was almost impossible in the 19th century to distinguish the characteristic of one fever from another, government records clubbed together different fivers including *kala-azar* under same heading. However, after 1898 the colonial government started to mention *kala-azar* in separate category.⁴⁰ The heavy concentration of malarial fevers among the native people was the chief challenge for the western medicine in Assam. Up to the 19th century in the western medical discourse the answer to malaria was quinine. This method was also applied in Assam and quinine was sold through the agency of post office.⁴¹ However, as this method was totally inadequate to curb the menace of malaria it had little impact on the indigenous systems. In the traditional treatment of fever *mutha*, capsicum, borax, mace and *papal*; ground and mixed together with lime juice and of which one *rate* weight (about two grains) was given three times a day with the juice of green ginger. A similar preparation, but mixed with goats urine was also prescribed in case of fever.⁴² In the case of *kala-azar*, since its etiology was unknown prior to 1903, the western medical science had failed completely to prevent the disease.⁴³ It left the indigenous practitioners with enough space to challenge the hegemonic diffusion of western medicine in Assam. Hence, it was in the field of *kala-azar*, at least up to the 19th century, traditional Assamese *Bez* address the disease by the following words *Khethali parbotor pora voila utpoti*, here *Khethali parbotor* means the Garo Hills.⁴⁴ In some cases we also have the information that *kala-azar* was successfully treated by the *Bez*.⁴⁵

Throughout the 19th century one thing is very clear that still in the popular level the dominating medical system was the indigenous practices with much more positive results. It has also enabled the 'body' of the native people to stay well outside the domain of colonization. However, though colonialism had marginal or no effect on the 'body', still it had certainly compelled the indigenous practitioners to rethink about their own system. They now sought to revive their profession by making it more institutional. In that direction a medical book *Prasuti* was written by Kukha Kanta Borkakoty in 1898 which was published from Dibrugarh. The monthly Assamese journal *Jonaki* termed this book as the first book in Assamese language on modern medicine.⁴⁶ As these tendencies had reflected the growing dislike for western medicine still it had not able to free itself from the shackles of colonialism. In its effort to restore indigenous practices the ethnic communities of Assam often tried to incorporate some modern rational elements into their medical systems which were itself the product of colonial ideologies. However, the greatest obstacles for the spread of indigenous medicine was the strong dislike on the part of the *Kavirajs* and *Vaidyas* to pass on their medical knowledge to the next generation.⁴⁷ Ironically these kinds of caste and religious prejudices also acted as a hindrance for the spread of western medicine in Assam. In the annual dispensary report for the province of Assam, 1894, it had been clearly mentioned that though there was steady rise of the out-door patients in the dispensaries, owing to caste and other religious prejudices the native population would not resort to the dispensaries for in-door treatment.⁴⁸

"It was fairly clear since the beginning of the British rule that the colonial medicine derived authority from the state and not from the consent of the people. Though chiefly dependent upon the coercive agencies of the army and the police, the British desperately needed the people's consent for the legitimation and longer survival of its newly founded Empire".⁴⁹ In the medical field, for this very purpose, the colonial authority used the help and support of the western educated elites in Assam. Among this group, Anandaram Dhekial Phukan was the first person who supported western medicine and even appointed an allopathic doctor, Sitala Singha, as his family physician.⁵⁰ Similarly Purnananda Barua, who was then acted as the Extra Assistant Commissioner of Nagaon made some effort to establish a charitable hospital in Nagaon and in this regard urged Dr. Miles Bronson for financial help.⁵¹ By his effort a charitable dispensary was established in Nagaon in 1863.⁵² When Gunaviram Barua was the Extra Assistant Commissioner of Nagaon in 1873, he recommended certain measures to the Chief Commissioner of Assam for successful smallpox vaccination.⁵³ However, all these efforts of the educated Assamese elites sometime did not reflect the actual picture. Though they had favoured the spread of western medicine, at the same time they had not able to separate themselves from the indigenous tradition. If we study two articles of Gunaviram Barua, which were published in the monthly Journal *Jonaki* the situation will be clear to some extent. In one article Barua praised Assamese *Bez* for its precise knowledge regarding the origin of *kala-azar*, in the other article Barua appealed the colonial authorities to remove diseases from Assam by the application of western medicine.⁵⁴ This dual and often contradictory attitude of Gunaviram Barua was only a single example of the mental state of the western educated Assamese elites throughout the 19th century.

The post-colonial socio-cultural history of North-East India in general and Assam in particular has marked a tense and contested terrain of political claims and counterclaims with all its cultural overtones and the ascendance of various identities. This particular ascendance of identities is to a great extent informed by the imagined past of each ethnic communities. In the process of imagination they have often asserted the distinctive features of their cultural beliefs and practices and the knowledge system. More often than not the ethnic communities present its cultural features as exclusive without any external influence and synthesis and appropriate it as an important component of its ethnic identities. However, in this process of identity formation the shared history of beliefs and practices, especially indigenous medical practices, has often been overlooked. The history of medical practices among the

ethnic communities in Assam particularly in the British colonial period presents an interesting picture of cultural synthesis and accommodation and provides the traces of our shared past. At the same time the history of disease and medicine also provides us the window to look into the different dimensions of interaction between the ethnic communities and British colonialism. From the beginning of the 19th century, the traditional medical practices of Assam encountered the intervention of western medicine. It was also from this period, we have noticed a conscious British policy to supplant the indigenous medical practices.⁵⁵This had not only threatened the existence of the indigenous medical practices among the ethnic communities of Assam but also generated resistance.

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Sanskritization and Traditional Beliefs and Practices of the Mising Tribes of Assam

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Introduction

India is the land of castes and tribes who belong to quite different historical background and social systems. The caste belongs to Hindu system and the tribe conceptually to primitive way of living in forest, depending on hunting and food gathering for survival. Thus in the past the castes and the tribes lived spatially and socially separate from each other. In course of time, however, interactions between them began under varying circumstances. According to N. K Bose (1993) the tribes are being pulled towards the caste systems mainly through the agriculture and craft based economy of the caste society. It is, however, difficult to specify a period during which the process of interactions between castes and tribes really developed. According to S. Soraf (1982:15) it were the "enterprising British administrators, adventure loving travelers, profit making traders and humanists missionaries rediscovered them for us. Moreover, the exigencies of maintenance of law and order, of administration of justice and of promotion of trade and commerce coupled with the growing humanist concern, however, inaugurated the phase of their cultural transformation when social, political, economic, and religious and the like forces of the non-tribal world clearly invaded the tribal precincts". The expansion of administration incorporating interior forest areas including the tribal land and habitats, by the colonial rule provided opportunities for close contacts between castes and other tribes. The introduction of modern roads and communication system further enabled the tribal to travel to urban industrial and other places meeting people of different castes and creeds. Thus the tribes whom the caste Hindus once called *asura*, *vanavasis*, *adimjanjati* etc. have been in the process of integration with the caste Hindus and other communities of the country. Some tribes have become completely Hinduised. The Misings who call themselves as Hindus but in true sense of the term for they still have such beliefs and practices which are outside Hindu system. It is this group of tribes who tend to sanskritization of their culture by adopting the life style of the high castes to improve their social image in the society at large. The tribe, after coming down to the plain started imitating plains culture notably agriculture and dressed and ornaments. (Nath:1998:132)

The basic objective of the present study is to understand the process of sanskritization in the tribal community of Assam with special reference to the Misings. The study attempts to understand how far sanskritization has prompted social integration between the Misings and the neighboring caste Hindu communities.

Sanskritization

The concept of sanskritization was developed by M. N. Srinivas while studying the "*Religion and Society Among the Coorgs of South India*" in 1952. In his study Srinivas discovered that the low castes emulate the life of the neighboring high caste – that is, the Brahmins. But since the model group might not be necessarily Brahmin alone and it could be other high castes he re-defined it as "a process by which a low caste or a tribe or other groups change their customs, rituals, ideology, and way of life in direction of a high twice born caste" (Srinivas: 1966: 6). As such the concept of sanskritization can be applied to understanding the pattern of social change of the tribes who are non-Hindu but Hindu oriented.

In the process of adaptation of high caste cultural traits, the low castes or tribes discard their own customary socio-religious practices considering them as degrading, irrational and dysfunctional in present day social environment. For, example, low castes or tribal indulge in blood sacrifices with wine in worshipping spirits and deity, marriage by forces or elopement, bride price etc. which the educated section of the low caste or tribe undesirable it. Therefore, they give up such practices and adopt those of the high caste, which are considered superior to their own- that is, low caste.

The Misings are one of the indigenous tribes of Assam. They had become Hinduised under the impacts of neo-vaisnavite movement which emerged in Assam in the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Misings adopted the cult of *kalasamnhati* of the neo-vaisnavism and had become disciples of some of the *satras* of *kala-samnhati*, but they did not give up their traditional beliefs and practices related to spirits. They call their religion- *keoliya dharma*, which is a dilution of Hindu and tribal religious system. They perform rites and rituals in *bhakatiya* method of neo-vaisnavism. Thus the Misings represent semi-Hinduised tribes, which have the pattern of sanskritization.

Traditional Beliefs and Practices of the Misings

The Misings have also their own conception of how the universe, the objects both animate and inanimate including human race were created by a mythical creator. According to their belief the universe was created by *Se:di-Me:lo* out of vast expanse of floating mist called 'Tapapumang' (Panyang (1935:6). In one of their *abangs* – that is, narrative songs recited by the traditional priest called *mibu* stated that prior to the emergence of the earth there was no man, no any matter, no sun and moon, no day and night, no soil, no water, nor fire and no air" (Padun: 1989: 19) Out of the nothingness the father *Se:di*, the supreme lord emerged himself and created mother *M:elo* and out of their conjugal effort the earth, the hills, trees, birds, ants and sects etc were came into being. Thus the conception of creator of the universe is associated with religious system of the Misings.

The Misings conceive the Sun (Do:nyi) as mother (Ane') and the Moon (Po:lo) as father (Abu). Accordingly, the Misings consider the Sun and the Moon as most revered objects for which they are invariably uttered sun and moon in all solemn functions and pray for their blessings. Commenting on significance of Donyi-Polo for Misings N.C. Pegu (2005: 137) writes – "The thought of Do:nyi and Po:lo have permeated each and every fiber of their and as such Do:nyi and Po:lo are considered the visible form of the invisible supreme deities i.e. *Se:di-Me:lo*". On the basis of these beliefs the Misings perform various rituals. Some of them are as described below.

Dobur Uyu

One of the important traditional religious functions of the Mising community is the *Dobur Uyu*. This is a proprietary worship to celestial deities praying for keeping the village safe from epidemics, unnatural calamities and destruction of life and properties of the families and also for welfare of the crops and good harvest. It is performed generally in the month of May which is the beginning of the summer season in which epidemics, storm, heavy raining, flood etc take place and Mising people perennially suffer.

On the day of the *Dobur*, the youths of the village start beating every house by sticks from outside to drive out the evil spirits believed to be hiding in the corners of the house. As the beating goes on from one end to another the inmates of the house announce that the spirits are running out. Then beating is stopped and the youths are offered some food staffs for their job and blessings for the welfare of the households.

Dobur is also performed by individual family when some of its member commit serious crime like murder, incestuous act etc. Misings consider such acts as great sins and therefore, need purification by performing *Dobur uyu*. Such *dobur* is called *Burte Dobur* (Big Dobur). It is considered a kind of social punishment for the offence.

Taléng uyu

Taléng (Upper region) *Uyu* (ritual) is to propitiate the deities (*mugling mirém*) that are believed to reside above the sky. The deities are held responsible for lightening, storms, raining as well as draught. This natural phenomenon may occasionally and unexpectedly cause various troubles including death and destruction of life and properties of man. Every Mising family therefore, perform *Taléng Uyu* propitiating the deities by offering live sacrifices, foods and drinks to keep its members, animals and properties and crops – free from such dangers.

A family holds a *Taléng uyu* at the interval of every five years. A pig and chickens and a large quantity of rice and rice-beer is required for the ritual. About a dozen of male *bhakats* with their individual spouses need to perform the ritual and another dozen of male persons need to do the chores of the function.

Dodgang

Dodgang is last post death ritual performed by the Misings. It is performed to bid farewell to the departed soul for good. The Misings believe that the soul (*urom*) does not leave human world until the family perform dodging. The family therefore, holds a grand farewell ritual which is attended by the relatives, friends and well-wishers. The ritual is conducted by *Satula* and a dozen *bhakats*. The members of the family pay homage by offering prayer to the departed soul for its safe and smooth journey to the abode of eternal peaceful rest. For the purpose a huge amount of meat, fish, rice beer, and vegetables are required. There is no definite period during which dodging to be held after the death of a person concerned. Many families defer it for several years as it is a very expensive ritual, as the rites highly expensive affairs, being marked by liberal entertainment of all the people present with non-vegetarian food and drink (Taid:2007:73)

Urom uyu

Urom uyu refers to ancestral worship. The Misings believe that as soon as a person dies his or her soul leaves the body and becomes a kind of spirit called *urom*. The *urom* goes to *uyu aamong* – the land of spirit and resides in it; but it does not de-link its relation totally with its earthly family. It revisits from time to time desiring for food and drink. The visit is indicated by some unusual happenings in the family or manifested in some uncommon signs generally in the fire place of the family house. Once the sign is observed the worship is arranged and the *urom* is offered food and drink with a prayer for its blessing for the wellbeing of the family.

The ritual is performed by the neo-vaisnatie devotees called *bhakats*. The senior most *bhakat* called *satual* or *sadhuburah* acts as the priest leading the function. They recite hymns composed by *Srimanata Sankardeva* and his principal disciple *Sri Madhabdeva*.

Now-a-days in some areas of the Mising people perform *Sushi* (Purification) in place of *uram aapin*, within a period of one month after death of the person. The concept of *Sushi* is borrowed from non-Mising neo-vaisnavite communities in which it is prevalent. According to this concept death of a person pollutes the home and therefore, the home must be purified by a ritual. The ritual is nothing to do with satisfying the desires of the departed soul. So, *Sushi* is quite constricting to the concept and purpose of *urom aapin*. In *suchi* also pig is sacrificed and rice beer is served to its participants and invitees along with non-vegetarian foods.

It is also observed that those who follow the system *urom aapin* they perform a ritual called *tiloni* on the third of the death of person. This is a purifying ritual. On death of a person the family immediately suspends its entire outdoor works and observes fasting by avoiding solid food and drink. This is also borrowed from the non-Mising neo-vaisnavite Assamese communities which is evident from the fact that term *tiloni* is Assamese word and not a Mising one.

Borsewa

Borsewa, meaning great or large, worship for general wellbeing of the individual and the village community. It is generally held in the month of May during which epidemic breaks out in the remote areas where Misings are mostly concentrated. It is held in the night for which it is called *Rati-Khowa Sakam*.

Borsewa is performed inside a house called *Namghar*, meaning a house or hall for worship by congregational recitation of hymns. The *Namghar* is completely enclosed by a wall made of bamboo splits. It does not have any window. There is only one door in the front-side for entering and exist. The ritual performed inside the house is conducted secretly from outside watch. The bhakats are also strictly warned against disclosing the procedures and activities conducted inside the house to any non-bhakata any time and anywhere. Every thing done in performing the ritual inside the house must be kept secret. However, what transpires from inside is that the bhakats and their spouses after taking plenty of strong rice-beer with meat, fish, vegetable etc. dance around the chief priest singing some typical songs and get blessings from the priest and ends up the ritual. The function continues for the whole night.

Every Mising village holds the Borsewa generally every year depending upon convenience of the village concerned. Since there is no fixed for the function different villages perform it on different dates. But it must be held in the same type of *Namghar* and in the same manner. That is why Mising *namghars* are different from those of their counter part the non-Mising Assamese *Namghars* which are open halls. The basic concept of Borsewa is different from the traditional religious concept of the Misings. Their traditional concept is based on beliefs in spiritism not on polytheism or monotheism. But Borsewa is based on the concept of monotheism. As such the present religion of the Misings is the synthetic product of animism and Hinduism. (Mipun: 1993:27)

Besides, the rituals like *Tinijaniya*, *Satjaniya*, *Naojaniya* and *Ekaishjaniya* are also performed by three, seven, nine and twenty one bhakats respectively. Whenever some difficult days are experienced in the family the ritual is performed according to gravity of problems. The size of the worship by number of bhakats are depends seriousness of the family problems. There had been ancestral worships among the Misings in the past but not by number as from no Mising communities as indicated by the unit of number like three, seven, nine etc. *Dangoria sakam* refers to the worship of the deity guarding the household. Therefore, prayer with foods and drinks are offered to *ghar dangoria* at least once in a year. *Aai sakam* is performed for early recovery from small-fox and measles. This is totally borrowed from non-Mising Assamese communities. Misings have no concept of any spirit or deity causing small fox. They believe it as caused by any spirit. Like many other tribes the Mising have also conception about some deities as follows-

Se':di-Me':lo: Creator of the universe with all the objects living or non-living in it. He is regarded as the Supreme Lord of the universe. **Do:nyi-Po:lo:** The progenitor of human race is including the Mishings. **Tale'ng wie:** Ethereal deity. **Ko:je-yango:** Goddess of wealth and fertility. **Pe'dong Na:ne':** Goddess of rain. **Kine-Na:ne':** Goddess of land beneath the earth. **Karchin-Kartang:** God of crops. **Yi:dum Botte:** God of wind. Writing about Mising deities N.C. Pegu (2005:144) states that "Evidently, the deities of the Mishings could be compared with the deities of early Aryan like Indra (Mukling-Taleng), Agni (Emß or meruk), Varun (asi) Vayu (esar), Bhaumi devi (aamong), Laxmidevi (Koje-yango) of vedic gods and goddesses." These are the high gods and goddesses of the Mising community of Assam.

Divination:

The Misings like any other tribal have also divination practice, which is called *tagir kaanam*. They consult mainly pig liver to find out the signs indicating the impending death or danger to the family.

concerned. When a pig is killed on some religions or social occasions its liver is invariably examined to find out sign of death or danger of the family. Generally the *Mibus* are considered as expert in detecting and interpreting the signs correctly. On the basis of the signs prediction are made about the ensuing dangers and difficulties and avis this proprietary ritual offering sacrifices to the spirit believed to be responsible is performed. The practice of divination has been still continuing among the Misings.

Conversion:

Neo-vaisnavite movement emerged in Assam in the last part of the 15th century under the leadership versatile scholar Srimanta Sankardeva. Meanwhile the Misings were settled in the riverine areas of upper Brahmaputra Valley. Many if not all the ethnic groups including some of the tribes of the valley converted to neo-vaisnavism. But there is no evidence of Misings conversion to the new faith till the middle of the 19th century. It is said that Srimanta Sankardeva appointed one Miri (Mising) devotees as one of his disciples and sanskritised his name as Parmanando; but nothing is known about his parents and original home and post-neovaisnavite life. The Misings long after their migration down to the valley were subjected to the influences of the Gossains of sancha Nomati, Katonipara, Jokai, Elengi, Budhbari and Kuamora Satra and to their alluring doctrines. All these satras belong to kalasamhati sect of neo-vaisnavism. It was Pitambardeva Goswami who admitted the Misings and the scheduled castes to the Satra and treated them equally with the other castes. He also presided the first open session of All Assam Miri Sanmilan in 1936. Thus, under his leadership some Misings had become disciples of the Majuli Satras. But this is also a fact that in the earlier half of the last centuries many Satriya Gossains used to come to the Mising villages by river ways every year and enrolled Mising youths as their disciples and collected some amount of fees for enrolment. It could not be called conversion because except some lessons about code of conduct nothing was taught about principle or doctrine of neo-vaisnavism. As such, the youths remained ignorant of the faith and maintained to neo-vaisnavism. Thus the Misings had come under the influences of neo-vaisnavism much later than the other non-Misings communities of the region. But since about five decades ago the satradhikars have ceased to visit Misings villages mainly due to indifferent or disinterested attitude to the Satras and their cultures. As result a communication gap between the satras and the Misings has developed.

Do:nyi- Po:lo Movement:

Do:nyi-Po:loism is the latest development among the Misings. It is a new religion of the Adis of Arunachal Pradesh of which the Misings of Assam are a part. The concept of Do:nyi (sun) and Po:lo (moon) as the progenies of the human race including the Adi tribes is as old as the tribes themselves. These tribes including the Misings have the belief that they are the progenies of the Do:nyi-Po:lo. Writing on "Do:nyi- Po:lo" An indigenous religion N T Rikom (2005:118) states that 'among the Arunachales, the tribes that dwell in the central belt are the believers of Do:nyi- Po:lo (sun-moon) as a supreme god. On this basis, the tribes whom we call the Tani group believe themselves to be the descendent of Abo Tani (mythical father) are evolving a religion called Do:nyi- Po:loism, thereby posing an indigenous religious identity" The traditional belief was formalized into a concrete faith in the name of Do:nyi- Po:loism in the 1960s by some educated tribal leaders of Padam-Minyong group. According to the faith Donyi- Polo is the supreme power in the universe. Everything is under his care and all the things which are in this world are created him only. Thus Donyi-Poloism is a religion originated in Arunachal Pradesh in the 1960s. Now it is the dominant religion among the Adi groups of tribes. Since the Misings are also a part of the Adis, naturally they become attracted to it and as such a group of educated Mising people started the movement for Do:nyi-Po:loism in Assam. They formed committee in 1993 and established a prayer hall called Ganging at Jonai town which borders with east Siyang district of Arunachal Pradesh. The movement is spreading to almost all the areas of Mising concentration.

Under the leadership of Do:nyi- Po:lo organization of Assam as many as 90 Ganging have been established throughout Assam.

Findings

At present the Misings are found to be in three major groups- viz. (a) *keoliya*, (b) *bhagawatiya* and (c) *do:nyi- po:lo yelam* and (d) *Christianity*

(a) The *keoliyas* worships varieties of spirits and deities in various manners by offering live sacrifices with rice and beer. Most of the rituals are performed by *bhakatiya* system which was introduced after having adopted the *kalasamhati* sect of neo- vaisnavism, as early as the nineteenth century. The *keoliya* is found to be mixed with animism and Hinduism.

Dobur, Taleng uyu, Dodgang, Tiloni, Urom, Gyati (clan worship), Sani puza (worship to Saturn), Napurukiya (worship of nine generation), Risto (worship to planets), Pejab wie (Propitiation to spirit which loves duck meat), Arig Dangoria (Protection of crops in the field), Okum Dangoria (Household Protector), Kanipan (worship to opium eater), Satjania (worship to stream planets/ ancestors), Nojanoya (worship to nine planets/ ancestors), Ekaish Jania (worship to 21 ancestors), Sora ollung yutnam (worship to water deity), Atum Dangoria, Bamud, Barsewa, Uchi, Ai uyu, Asi uie, yumran uyu, Sorai ollung yutnam, , Rokpu done, Boka done, kalika dangoria, Go:ru Bor Bura- Burhiyapou uie, kanya kal

(b) The *bhagawatiyas* may be called Hindu (neo- vaisnavism) without elements of animism. They worship only Almighty god- the Lord Krishna and none else. They do not offer live sacrifices and rice and beer at any ritual. The *bhagawatiyas* regarded the *Bhagawat-Geeta* as sacred book

(c) The *do:nyi- po:los* are the worshippers of sun (*do:nyi*) and moon (*po:lo*). They worship the *do:nyi- po:lo* only without offering any live sacrifice

(d) Oflate, Christianity is also reported to be entering into Mising community. In some Mising villages there are several Churches of different denominations have been established. A good number of families of the community have already converted to Christianity.

Namghar which is one of the indispensable parts of neo- vaisnavite system was found to be established in the villages of the tribe. The *keoliya namghar* is occasionally used and mainly for holding a function called *barsewa*. It remains closed in most of the time. The *bhagawatiya namghar* is used daily. In some villages both the *keoliyas* and *bhagawatiyas* have their respective *namghars*. *keoliyas* may come and offer prayer at *bhagawatiya namghar* sitting along with the *bhagawatiyas* but *bhagawatiyas* do not visit *keoliya namghar*. They also do not participate in any religious functions of *keoliyas*. The Mising *bhagawatiya namghar* is also an open hall where male and female devotees recite hymns of Sankardeva and Madhabdeva every morning and evening. The *namghar* is regarded as most sacred hall for which they bow down at the front door before entering the hall. The devotees also come in proper dress wearing white *dhoti*, full sleeved *Punjabi shirt or ganji* in the summer wearing a piece of white *gamucha* (cotton towel) around neck. Thus the *bhagawatiya* imbibe the norms of neo- vaisnavite in matters of religious behaviors.

Ganging

Ganging is the institution of the *do:nyi- po:lo* religion. It is the place where the followers of the faith gather and offer prayer every day. Religious discourses and functions are also held at ganging. It is regarded as most sacred place for the *do:nyi- po:lo* followers. The devotees come to ganging in proper dress and take off foot wears. The lead man of the prayer is called *mibu* who acts as priest for the rituals performed by the *do:nyi- po:lo* followers but he is not a professional priest.

In general and the Misings in particular do not have any institution like *mandir, majid, church* or *namghar* where the common people regularly offer prayer in groups. However, after having adopted

keoliya system they have started *namghar*. But they do not visit their *namghar* unless *borsewa* or some socio-religious function is held by the village community. Generally when some functionaries of a *satra* come to the village the *bhakats* and the *non-bhakats* called *kencha* (non-initiated) gather at the village *namghar*. The *bhagawatiya* and the *do:nyi-po:lo* attend *namghar* and ganging regularly which means either daily or weekly. It appears that the Misings follow the non-Mising pattern, as the norm of the *neo-vaisnavite* system.

Neo-vaisnavite disciples are required to pay homage to their respective *satra* once in a year. But it is learnt that the Misings have stopped visiting *satras* for paying homage to their gurus since five decades ago. The main reason as informed by the respondents is that initiation is no longer necessary for Misings. They can perform their rituals without priest initiated by the *satra*.

Sacrificial worship

The *keoliyas* still continue the same old sacrificial worships with *aapong* (rice beer). All the *keoliya* respondents stated that without live sacrifices the spirits and deities are not satisfied. They continue the practice because it was introduced by their forefathers and therefore, they could not give it up. The *bhagawatiyas* and *do:nyi-po:los* however, felt that the *keoliya* practices are irrational and unethical. Superstitious beliefs about spirits and deities are still widely prevalent among the Mising folks. The *keoliyas* believed that the spirits and deities need to be propitiated for remedies of their problem. The *bhagawatiyas* and the *do:nyi-po:los* also believe that spirits and deities are responsible for fortune and misfortune of man but they believe that Almighty God or the *do:nyi-po:lo* is the all in all in solving human problem. So, by the grace of God or *Do:nyi-Po:lo* human life and property can be safe. Thus despite change in religious faith the Misings have not been able to free themselves from beliefs in spirits and their effects. They still maintain the same traditional animistic beliefs.

The Misings have been in the state of further change. Under the impacts of neo- vaisnavite movement most of the Misings if not all had become disciple of the *satras* and adopted the *kalasamhati* sect of neo- vaisnavism; but without giving up their traditional animistic beliefs and practices. They continued their sacrificial spirit worships and at the same time adopted some additional Hindu ritual and practices. The religious beliefs and practices maintained by the *keoliya* group may be called antithesis of neo- vaisnavism which is quite opposed to animistic sacrificial worship. Two hypotheses may be put forward as explanation to the question, why the Misings could not be integrated into neo- vaisnavite Assamese communities and continued their traditional religious beliefs and practices despite having adopted a sect of neo- vaisnavism which is diametrically opposed to animism. One explanation may be that at the time of conversion to neo- vaisnavism—that is in the sixteenth-seventeenth century, the Misings were so illiterate and ignorant that they could hardly understand Assamese language and therefore, communication between Assamese and Misings was a very difficult. So, the Misings could not be well taught about the meanings and tenets of the neo- vaisnavism. They remained completely ignorant of the new faith. Secondly, in those days the caste people of Assam used to call the Misings as *pobotiya miri* (hill miri) and treated them as untouchables. However, the Misings were initiated to the *satras* not for converting them to neo- vaisnavism in real sense of the term. By initiating more disciples the *satras* could collect more revenues from them. The *gosains* (religious leaders of *satras*) visited Mising villages more for collection of revenues in cash and kinds than for teaching of neo- vaisnavism. So, there had been wide gap of communication between Misings and neo- vaisnavite castes of Assam.

This was however, learnt from some old Mising men that some devotees of secret sect of *kalasamhati* used to come to Mising villages from time to time and they introduced *tantricism* among the Misings in the name of *kalasamhat*, which is more liberal in inter-caste relation. It may be mentioned here that most of the followers of *kalasamhati* belong to the low caste and non-caste Hindu. The system came to be known as *keoliya dharma* which allows meat and wine in religious function. The

keoliya gosain introduced the nocturnal worship called *barsewa* (great worship) among the Misings who had already practiced sacrificial worship. New *bhakats* (devotees) are initiated in the *barsewa* which is held every year in the Mising villages. As result *bhakatiya* system developed in the Mising community and it has become deeply rooted in the Mising cultural system for which it has been continuing among the Misings despite becoming neo-vaisnavite.

However, of late a new thinking on religion has developed among some members of the educated section of the community. Realizing the demerits of the *keoliya* this section of the community started movement for adopting the *bhagawatiya* sect of the neo- vaisnavism which totally rejects sacrificial worship. Thus *bhagawatiya* group has emerged in the community.

The *do:nyi-po:lo* movement originated among the *Adi* group of the Arunachal tribes. Since Misings were the part of the group so some of their families have adopted it and it is gradually becoming popular among them.

Christianity has also emerging in the community in a limited way for the time being. Thus Misings are becoming divided into two religious groups which may be called tribal and non- tribal systems. The *keoliyas* may be put in the traditional system which contains the elements of both animism and Hinduism and non-tribal contains the elements of monotheism.

Analyses and Conclusion

It may be recalled that main objective of the study is to understand the process of sanskritization in tribal community with special reference to the Misings of Assam and in the context of the study the concept "sanskritization" has been defined as a process of adopting the cultural norms and values of culturally advanced community which might be caste or non-caste by the tribes in preference of their own animistic or primitive type of beliefs and practices. In the light of the definition the conclusion has been drawn.

First, it has been found that the Misings were Hinduised as early as the sixteenth century when neo-vaisnavism emerged in Assam. The Misings adopted the *kalasamhati* sect of neo-vaisnavism by getting themselves initiated into it at some of the *satras* of the sect. Among the Misings the sect is called *keoliya dharma*. Now, most of their religious function is performed by what is called *bhakatiya* system borrowed from the neo-vaisnavite caste communities. *Namghar* is a unique institution of the neo-vaisnavite religious system. The Misings have also adopted it as a part of their religious system. Beside their own traditional rituals the Misings have also adopted some additional Hindu rituals and performed them according to Hindu system. They chant the hymns from *kirtan ghosha* and *namghosha* composed by *Srimanta Sankardeva* and *Madhabdeva* respectively, and regard *Bhagawat Geeta* as sacred book.

The Misings also observe all the socio-religious ceremonies of the non-Mising Assamese communities.

The Misings have given up Shamanic and magical methods of dealing with the problems of unnatural events and diseases and death. Now they consult Hindu astrology and palmistry in dealing with the problems of fortune and misfortune.

Of late, two reformative movements have emerged among the Misings- one, the *bhagawatiya* and the other *do:nyi-po:lo*. *Bhagawatiya* is based on the tenets of neo-vaisnavism which prohibit sacrificial deity worship and as such *bhagawatiya* have given up sacrificial worships of various spirits and deities and use of wine in worship. Similarly, the *do:nyi-po:lo* though based on the traditional belief that Misings are progenies of the sun and the moon does not worship any spirit with sacrificial offer. They worship the sun and the moon conceiving them as only the supreme deity i.e. the Almighty God which should be chanting hymns only and not by any offer.

Thus, Misings have adopted many Hindu beliefs and cultural traits of the neo-vaisnavite communities of Assam.

We may therefore, *conclude that the Misings are in the process of Sanskritizations by having adopted many of the socio-religious traits of neo-vaisnavite communities of Assam but thereby they have not become a part of the caste system. Besides, only a smaller part of them has given up the primitive type of beliefs and practices and become sanskritized.*

Thus sanskritizations does not necessarily mean assimilation in varna Hindu society or jati (caste) at local level. Tribal may call themselves Hindu because they worship Hindu gods, visit Hindu temples, observe Hindu festivals, but they do not get absorbed in the caste hierarchy. The above conclusion, however, subject to verification by further micro level study of different Hinduised tribe.

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ROLE AND STATUS OF THE KARBI WOMEN IN THEIR SOCIETIES

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ABSTRACT

The Karbis are an important tribe in the North East India. They entered Assam from the central Asia in one of the waves of migration. They are a distinct hill tribe of Assam concentrating mainly in the Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills of Assam. A few Karbi Villages are also found in the neighbouring plain districts of Assam. According to the census report of Assam in 1991, the total Karbi population are 285, 8, 11 male 146, 186 and female 139, 543.

The Karbi women have a great contribution to their family. In fact, in a Karbi family a woman works more than a man. Apart from the rearing up her children and doing her household duties they take equal part with the males in cultivation. Among all the Karbi families one important household industry is Handloom industry. The Karbi women are expert weavers and produced all necessary cloths for their family. With the spread of education the ambition of a Karbi woman had also undergone a change. Though the Karbi women play an important role in their economy but they are denied right to inherit property. It is generally believed that in the Karbi societies where women enjoying same privilege where there is no purda system, no dowry, no bride-burning, no female infanticide and no bar on widow remarriage but still there are some restriction in their societies. Despite the governments efforts for their progress the status of women is not satisfactory. So every woman should be conscious about their right and dignity. Otherwise development programmes of government will not be successful. They should make them capable of taking leadership roles, participation in the decision making process not only inside the family but outside the family also.

Introduction :

The Karbis are an important tribe in the North East India. In earlier days the Karbis were known as the Mikirs. "The name Mikir is that given to the race by the Assamese; its origin is unknown". They called themselves Arlen (i-e- theman) in their own dialect. Lakshmi Devi has defined that the Karbis are "one of the most numerous and homogeneous of the Tibeto-Burman races inhabiting the state of Assam". The Karbis entered Assam from central Asia in one of the waves of migration.

The Karbis are a distinct hill tribe of Assam concentrating mainly in the Karbi Anglong and North Cachar hills district of Assam and a few Karbi villages are also found in the neighbouring plain districts particularly in Nowgaon, Kamrup, Darrang, Sibsagar, Jorhat and Sontipur districts of Assam. There are two versions regarding the first appearance of the Karbis in the Ahom territory. One being the tradition of Mikirs while the other is an account of Buranji. According to the account given in the Buranji is that "the Mikirs emigrated into the Ahom territory about the beginning of the 17th century, but they came to the notice of the Ahoms about the middle of that century". But the Mikir tradition is that being driven out of the Khasi and Jaintia hills into the present district of Nowgaon, the Mikirs sent emissaries to seek protection of the Ahom Government of Roha⁴. The Mikir tradition refers to the existence of Rahial Barua, but that post was created first during the reign of king Pratap Singha

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(1603-41 AD). Considering these factors it may be said that the Mikirs emigrated into the Ahom kingdom in the early part of the 17th century.

According to the census report of Assam in 1991, the total population of scheduled tribes are 2, 874, 441. Out of these the Karbi population are 285, 811, Male 146, 268 female 139, 543. Various authors have studied the socio-cultural life of the Karbis. So, in this paper an attempt has been made to study the Role and status of the Karbi women in their societies. The data presented here are mainly based on secondary sources and observations made during the visits to Karbi villages are taken into account. The word 'status' may have various meanings and it may vary from country to country, people to people or tribe to tribe.

"The United Nations defined the term 'Status' as the extent of control that a person has over his /her life, derived from the access to knowledge, social and economic resources, and political power and autonomy enjoyed in the process of decision making (U.N., 1975)". In general status means rank or position.

The Karbis follow the patriarchal system of family structure and father is the head of the family. At the death of the father, his sons inherit the properties not by his daughters. The women in the Karbi society have more or less an equal status with men. In the family, division of labour between the male and female is maintained. Like cooking meals, child rearing, food gathering from the nearby forests, preparing rice beer, fire wood collecting, weaving activities are exclusively meant for the women folk. Work like hunting, stone work, metal work, wood work, house building, ploughing etc. are for the men folk. The Karbi women also take an equal part with the males in some works more than a man. They have a great contribution to their family. In fact, in a Karbi family a woman works more than a man. So it is clear from here that the Karbi women are not status conscious. They can also enjoy same freedom in their family. There is no prevalence of Parda system, no superiority complex among the menfolk. Because a husband also discusses family matters with his wife and if necessary takes suggestion from his wife.

Marriage by negotiations and marriage by selection of life partners are prevalent among the Karbis. But in the marriage system a rule is strictly followed by both plains and hills Karbis that no person is allowed to marry in his own clans. The marriage within the same clan is considered as illegal. If such a type of crime had taken place in earlier days the punishment was given that included the excommunication of the couple from the society, even awarded with the death. The position of the marriageable girl in the Karbi society is higher than the other societies. Because in case of marriage by negotiation the consent of the girl is a must required. They cannot be forcibly married to a boy of her disliking. When a boy decides to marry a girl he has to send his father to the girl's house for making a formal demand along with a golden ring and a gourd of rice beer. After marriage the bride goes to live with her husband but continues to use the surname of her father. After marriage women are allowed to possess personal property like ornaments, cloths etc. When social reformers like Iswarchandra Vidyasagar in Bengal and other reformers in different parts of India tried to establish the widow remarriage system but his system was prevalent much earlier in the Karbi societies. Divorce is rare in the Karbi society. A Karbi husband considers the marriage bond as sacred and the women always conscious to maintain the conjugal life. Like other tribal societies, the Karbis do not have the system of bride price. There is no prevalence of inheinous dowry system.

Though the Karbis are basically an agriculture people but there are references to weaving industry also. Women folk are very much related with this handloom industries. They are expert in this work. They generally manufacture their necessary cloths for all the family members. Women keep themselves busy in spinning and weaving. Every parent wants that their daughter should know the skill

of weaving and produce cloths for her brothers and sisters and for them. The Karbi people are proud of their traditional attire. So women folk also feel proud for the demand of their cloths.

The Karbi women has a high status in their name social functions. The women folk in the Karbi society are allowed to play an active role in the death ceremony called Chomangkan. It can be proved from the most important role played by 'Uchepi' in the death ceremony. The uchepi, generally an old women, is a professional weeper capable of singing the songs of lamentations, cooking of Anjam, the food specially prepared for the deceased and offering of the same to the departed one. In fact she is considered to be well versed in all the rituals the observance of which is a must⁶.

Agriculture is the primary occupation of the Karbis. In the hilly portion they practice shifting cultivation and in plains practice settled or plough cultivation. Besides man woman has also great contribution in this field. Apart from rearing up the children and doing her house hold duties, she helped in cultivation in every stage except ploughing.

With the spread of education the ambition of Karbi women has also undergone a change now the Karbi girl also want to be educated. They have come forward to take education than before. According to the census report of Assam in 1991, the total percentage of the Karbi literacy is 70.2%, male 78.5% and female 60.8%. The modern educational network has been extended to them as a result of which a good number of Karbi women has became educated. Therefore, the present young generation of the Karbi women can not be called having much less educational status as compared to the male folk.

Though in the Karbi societies where there is no Purda system, no dowry no bride-burning, no female inforticide and no ban on widow remarriage but there are also same restriction in their societies like in the community feasts women can not eat with men they eat separately. A women is not allowed to attend a village court for any trial. Though their status in comparatively high but they are also looked upon by the menfolk only as second sex. So every women should conscious about their rights and dignity. Otherwise development programmes of Government will not be successful. Though there are lot of changes occurred among themselves but this material changes has not improved their status. So they should making them capable of taking leadership roles, participation in the decision making process not only inside the family but outside the family also.

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'Some aspects of Siddha literature (Caryapadas) in context of Assam'

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Abstract

Caryapadas were composed by Sahajiya siddha, centering round the esoteric doctrines and esoteric practices of Sahajayana form of Mahayana Buddhism. They were composed mainly between eighth and twelfth century AD. After the discovery of the Caryapadas, different regions of India sought claim to the Caryapadas as their earliest specimen of literary work including the scholars from Assam. Apart from literary contributions to the development of Assamese language and literature, the Caryapadas, provide a realistic picture of early medieval society by describing different occupations of people. It is a class of literature, created outside the perimeter of the society. The composers of Caryapadas used the motifs and similes that they experienced. As the composers of the Caryapadas were closely acquainted with the lower order of the Varnasramadharma, they brought in to focus that section of the society. Assam was a great center of Tantric Buddhism centering round Kamakhya and Hajo and the Sahajiya cult sprung from Tantric Buddhism from 8th to 10th century AD. It is assumed by the scholars that some of the composers of the Caryapadas hail from Assam and the society that was reflected in the Caryapadas was similar to early Assam. The Caryapadas are one of the sources, which have brought to light a section of people in early medieval society and it is a record of historical development of mystical philosophical speculations.

Introduction-

'Siddha' means attainment of certain supernatural power or attainment of Siddhi by performing certain Yogic practices¹. They were attached with mystic schools and associated with some modes of Sadhanas or yogic practice and developed a kind of theology. The Buddhist Siddhas flourished mainly from 8th to 12th centuries. Caryapadas were composed by Sahajiya siddhas centering round the esoteric doctrines and esoteric practices of Sahajayana form of Mahayana Buddhism, composed mainly from eight to twelve century AD². However, there are debates among the scholars regarding the date of composition of the Caryapadas. In 1907, Haraprasad Sastri had discovered the original palm-leaf manuscript of the Caryapada at the royal court of Nepal consisting of a collection of 47 Padas (verses) along with a Sanskrit commentary. It was published by Bangiya Sahitya Parisad, as a part of 'Hajar Bacharer Purano Bangala Bhasay Bauddhagan O Doha' in 1916. In succeeding periods, P.C. Bagchi and Rahul Sankrityayan discovered more Caryapadas composed by Sarahapada, Kanhapada and Tilopada. Caryapadas are often short rhymed poems set to tune or songs and represent the same school of thought or same literary school. The Caryapadas were written by poets mostly from Assam, Bengal and Orissa. It represents the latest phase of Magadhi apabhramsa and the eastern group of modern Indo-Aryan languages³, which prevailed in Eastern India. As Magadhi apabhramsa includes

the languages of Bengali, Assamese, and Oriya, scholars from different regions of India sought to claim the Carya -songs as their earliest specimen of literary work. Scholars like B. Kakati show some phonological and morphological traits registered in these songs that have come down in unbroken continuity to modern Assamese⁴ and P. Hajarika shows that the language is more close to Assamese language by linguistic survey of Caryapadass.

Among the eighty four Siddha Acaryas, according to Buddhist tradition, twenty three Siddhas composed the Carya songs and most of the earlier Siddhas Acaryas hail from this land.⁶ Among them the most prominent Sahajiya Siddhas were LuiPada and Saraha⁷. LuiPada is regarded as the first of the Carya composers, who jointly wrote a book named *Abhisamaya vivanga*⁸. Assam, being a Tantric Buddhist center⁹, some of the tantric works were composed in this region.¹⁰

These Sahajiya Buddhist literature, which are chiefly of religious nature and contain its sublime thought, also have a great historical value. This paper intends to study a few aspects of Caryapadas in this perspective.

I

Assamese language owes its origin to the work of Buddhist monks from the crust of revailing Prakrit and Apabhramsa language. Many morphological and phonological features of the Caryapadas have an unbroken continuity into the Assamese language.¹¹ The Caryapadas, constituting the very basis of Kamrupi speech, also exerted a great influence on the pre- Vaisnava and Vaisnava writings, particularly in Ankiya nats and Bargeets of Srimanta Sankardeva and Madhavadeva.¹² There are many similarities of the language with 'Brajabuli' language used by Sankardeva and Madhavdeva and other litterateurs in succeeding periods.

The popularity of these Caryapadas was wide spread and it had a great contribution to the medieval literature in Eastern India. The evolution of the Assamese literature may be traced back to 'Caryapada' or Caryageeti of the medieval Assamese literature. It had remarkable contribution for the development of literature in Assam. The Caryapada is said to have served as a structural model of the Bargeets.¹³ 'The raga linked music system of the Caryapadas had its successors in the 'Pacali', 'Oja-Pali'.¹⁴ The Metaphors and similes drawn from the day to day life of ommon people found in 'Caryapadas,' seem to have influenced the 'Deh- Bicharar Geet'¹⁵

II

Caryas are not only important for sustaining the literary value but possess great historical value also. Many poems provide a realistic picture of early medieval society in eastern India by describing different occupations of people. Although the Buddhist Siddhacaryas i.e. the composers of the Caryapadas dealt primarily with certain deeper metaphysical doctrines of Sahajayana- an offshoot of Tantric Buddhism, they also described the society that they were in constant touch or associated with. They give a vivid account of the life and occupations of the common people, their work, religious activities, food, ornaments, and musical instruments. The Siddhacayasa used as their spiritual symbol of various rivers, canals, various types of boats and their different parts, ferrying and rowing.

The songs of siddhas retained the regional identity by using the motifs, images and symbols, which bear regional identity. It is a class of literature, created outside the perimeter of the society focusing sometime their apathy and criticism to the Vamasramadharma. One of the examples of Criticism of Sarahapada, who is said to hail from Assam, is as follows, 'Brahmins as a caste cannot reasonably be recognized to be the highest of men, - for the saying that they dropped from the mouth of Brahma is a myth invented by a section of clever and cunning people; on the other hand, a man becomes Brahmin by religious initiations (Samskara)'.¹⁶ Doms, Nisadas, and Kapalikas are described as untouchables in the Buddhist Caryapadas¹⁷; the songs attached with the characters as the Candali, Dombi, Rajaki, Savari and the female names represent some of the lowest castes carrying on the most despised

occupations' 18. In fact, they projected a society they were associated with. P. Hajarika observes the social structure and the metaphors, similes used by the composers of Sahajiya Siddhas as quite similar to the society of early Assam. Particularly, the motifs of carrying the passengers across the river by Dombi boatmen, the selling of the loom (tanti), bamboo basket by Dombi, and the depiction of their life style and society by Sahajiyas seems similar to early Assam 19 The professional castes and their association with works mentioned in Caryapada, were current in early Assam.

From the days of Varman dynasty, the rulers of Assam assigned various land grant to Brahmans, by which they upgraded the Varnasramadharna. Such references of land grants assigned to the Brahmanas by the rulers of Kamrupa are found in various inscriptions, viz Nidhanpur grant, Tezpur Parbatiya plate, Gauhati grant of Indrapala. Accordingly, with the establishment of the Brahmanical norms in the society, developed various professional castes. The reference is also found about the existence of the Dom and Candala in Kamarupa 20 in Tantric text Mahacinacarakramana. Kaivartas are divided into two sections in Assam, viz ,Halowa and Jalowa. Halowa, those working with ploughs and Jalowa, who work as fishermen. 21 Scholars believe that the professional castes like Dandi (towers of boats), Nauki (boatmen), Kumbhakara (potters) are sub branch of Jalowa, which is identical with Dom 22. Hence, the profession of Dom is related with river and boat. It is to be noted here that in other parts of India the work of Dom was associated with funeral grounds 23 Scholars are also of the view that in Assam, Dom was associated with Buddhism. 24 Assam was a great center of Tantric Buddhism centering round Kamakhya and Hajo. The Sahajiya cult sprung from Tantric Buddhism around 8th to 10th century AD. From 9th century onwards, Sahajajana, the offshoot of the Vajrayana philosophy, developed in Assam, which opposed the rituals and magic of Tantrayana. It aimed to realize the innate nature of self ('Sahajia' nature) 25 by practical method. The songs of Siddhas are representative of the aesthetics and images employed and expected by these groups. They affirm the importance of the local culture with tribal based rituals and the naturalness of the jungle. All these values are praised in Buddhist Siddha literature. The early medieval literature i.e. Caryapadas bear a picture that they had accumulated the spirit of criticism of prevailing varna-srama-dharma amid their esoteric practices. The Caryapadas are not only a record of the mystical speculations but also a record of historical development of philosophical speculations with the evolution of society. In fact, the composers of the Caryas were outside the value and norms of the prevailing society and they shaped their own orthodox norms, which are manifested in their songs. The composers of Caryas songs used the motifs and similes that they experienced. As they were closely acquainted with the lower order of the Varna-srama-dharma, they brought into focus that section of the society, with whom they were associated.

III

There is a dearth of sources to know about the socio- religious condition of Assam during the period of the composition of Caryapadas. In absence of a recorded history, these Caryapadas may serve as a missing link of the continuation of Buddhism in Assam. They are dependable documents to know about the existing society as they were composed without the royal patronage and composed in popular language as a medium to propagate a popular religion. The motifs employed in Caryapadas, is similar with early Assamese society. Therefore, they may serve as one of the testimonials to provide evidence about the prevalence of Sahajayana Buddhism in Assam. Though there is no clue until now whether they were composed in Assam or not but as some of the composers of Caryapada hail from this land, they certainly used the motifs and similes, which they experienced in cotemporary society. The society and culture of Assam is an amalgamation of various races, languages and religious system. Its culture is a distinctive composite to which Buddhists, Hindus, Vaisnavas and Muslims have all contributed. Caryas are a part of this cultural and religious heritage of Assam. Thus, the Caryapadas of Buddhist mystic poets or Siddhas not only add to the literary traditions but they also constitute an invaluable

source for the study of Assamese society and can link with the missing part of the historical evolution of Buddhism in Assam.

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EMERGENCE OF POLITICAL AWAKENING IN THE 19TH CENTURY DARRANG AND THE RISE OF ASSAMESE NATIONALISM

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ABSTRACT

The undivided district of Darrang (present Darrang and Sonitpur districts of Assam) has a larger share in India's struggle for freedom. Lots of works have been done on the Assamese nationalism and Assam's role in the national movement, but research in the micro level areas on the same subject is still ignored. So far as the erstwhile Darrang district was concerned, it was an important part of colonial Assam and the people of this district contributed significantly to the success of the freedom movement in the state. The district has a long history of peasant struggle. It produced a host of literary luminaries who played their crucial role in bringing about the Assamese renaissance. Besides, many literary and public associations, which earned their reputation in the state and national level, emerged even in the 19th century. The development of all those things indicates the emergence of political awareness earlier in the district. Hence, an attempt will be made in this paper to focus on all those aspects which helped in rousing the national sentiment, not only in the heart of the people of the district, but also all over Assam. The methodology adopted in preparation of this paper is conventional and analytical, and in this attempt, both- primary and secondary sources are used extensively.

The Revolt of 1857 is an important event in the history of modern India as well as Assam. Ever since Assam was annexed by the East India Company in 1826, the people of Assam, led by a section of the former nobility, made a number of unsuccessful attempts to overthrow the British rule in Assam. In this attempt the role played by Maniram Dewan, a former revenue *sheristadar* and an adviser of the king Purandar Singha, ex-Raja of Upper Assam (1832-38) is known to all. When he was in Calcutta, secret letters, addressed to the Charing Raja (crown prince), were delivered to Peali Barua, who acted as the chief advisor in the absence of Maniram. In this mission Maniram was greatly helped by some leading men of Bengal and Assam.¹

However an anti-British sentiment evolved in the Biswanath area of the Darrang district, even before the Revolt of 1857 and Maniram Dewan played a very crucial role in this regard. Biswanath was not an unknown place for him. When he was working as a revenue *sheristadar* and then as an adviser of the Ahom king, Purandar Singha, he frequently went to this area to report to the Political Agent on the nature and progress of the rule of the restored king of Upper Assam. It may be believed that he built a house with a small family in the Na-bajar village of Biswanath. It was during his visit to this place he came in contact with a person, Pirbox by name. After the outbreak of the Revolt, Maniram was believed to have started secret correspondence with Pirbox with the help of whom he tried to foment anti-imperialist feelings against the British-Raj.² The result of this attempt is however not known.

However, the plot of Revolt was detected before its execution. A few of Maniram's letters were intercepted by Captain Holryod, the Principal Assistant, Sibsagar, through the instrumentality of Haranath Parbatia Barua, the *Daroga* of Sibsagar *thana*. All the leaders of the revolt were arrested. Maniram was also arrested in Kolkata and sent to Alipur Jail for a few weeks and then brought to Assam for trial. He and Peali Barua were found guilty of treason and were publicly hanged on February 26, 1858.³

Development of Assamese Renaissance:

The second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century had witnessed a new awakening in the Brahmaputra Valley. The introduction of English education, growth of modern industries, spread of trade and commerce, the development of the transport and communication and above all, the influx of new ideas, paved the way for the formation of various organizations and associations which contributed to the growth of political and social awareness among the people of the province.

The harbingers of the new age were Anandaram Dhekial Phukan (1829-59), Hem Chandra Barua (1835-96) and Gunabhiram Barua (1837-94) while a new generation of literary men like Lakshminath Bezbarua (1869-1938), Padmanath Gohain Barua (1871-1946), and Hem Chandra Goswami (1872-1928), among others, infused Assamese literature with the liberalism of the west and the glorious traditions of Assam's past.⁴

The district of Darrang also produced a host of literary luminaries who contributed significantly towards the enrichment of Assamese culture in the later half of the 19th century. Notable among them was Nidhiram Keut (1828-73) of Kalangpur, near Gohpur. Being a staunch critic of Hindu beliefs and practices, he converted himself to Christianity and became well known as Nidhi Levi Farwell. He was among the first four persons who translated the Bible into Assamese for the dissemination of the liberal ideas implicit in Christianity. A regular contributor to the *Arunodai*, Nidhi Levi Farwell is credited with the translation of the *Bharatiya Dandabidhi Ain* and 'Natural Science in Familiar Dialogue' from Bengali (1855). He is one of those Christian Missionaries who laid the foundation of scientific vocals and synonyms together with a flexible prose style for scientific expression.⁵

Another well known man of the period was Haribilas Agarwala (1842-1916), son of a Marwari trader-settler in Gamiri of Darrang district. He owned saw mills, printing press, tea garden and agricultural land and became one of the successful businessmen in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. His contribution to the growth of Assamese literature was immense. The *Kirton Puthi* of Shankardeva was first translated into pure Assamese language by him.⁶

A veteran poet, philosopher, essayist as well as social reformer of this period was *Agnikabi* Kamalakanta Bhattacharyya (1853-1936) who was born in the village Garehagi of Biswanath. He was a literary prophet of patriotism and nationalism. One would find in his poems glorification of the past, rebellion against social evils and vindication of social honour. His intense patriotism found eloquent expression in his poetical works the *Chintanal* (1890) and the *Chintatarangini* (1933). Through his poems, he roused the dormant spirit of his countrymen by reminding them of their glorious past which was then in oblivion. The Assam Central Press at Tezpur which published the *Assam Banti* (1900-1940) was established by him with the joint effort of Padmanath Gohain Baruah.⁷

One of the most enlightened persons of the district of the late nineteenth century was Lambodar Borah (1860-92) of Gamiri. Educated in the Metropolitan College, Kolkata, he earned the reputation of being the first B.A. and B.L. in his district. He could have led a luxurious life by

entering into government service; instead he decided to join the bar. As an organizer, he took the initiative in establishing a branch of the *Asomiya Bhasa Unnati Sadhini Sabha* (1888)⁸ at Tezpur. He also founded the *Chatra Sabha* at Tezpur when he was a student of the Tezpur Government School, which became popular among the student community. He was a scholar of equal caliber with Gunabhiram Barua and Lakshminat Bezbarua, though remained unpopular due to his untimely death in 1892.⁹ Thus, the contribution of Darrang district in bringing about Assamese renaissance was in no way less than any other district of Assam. Chandra Kumar Agarwala (1867-1938), Ananda Chandra Agarwala (1878-1940) and Padmanath Sarma (1887-1906) of Darrang district were some other harbingers of the new age who also actively associated with the task of disseminating new ideas to the people.

Role of the Press:

The growth and development of the press or journalism in Assam was the outcome of the introduction of printing press in the province in the forties of the nineteenth century. The *Arunodai*, the first Assamese monthly, was published by the Christian Missionaries from the American Baptist Mission Press at Sibsagar in 1846. It was religious in tone and published with a view to propagate Christianity among the people of Assam.¹⁰ The second half of the nineteenth century saw the publication of a number of newspapers and periodicals such as the *Assam Bilasini* (1871), the *Assam Mihir* (1872), the *Assam Darpan* (1874), the *Goalpara Hitasadhini* (1876), the *Assam News* (1882), the *Assam Bandhu* (1885), the *Mou* (1886), the *Assam Tara* (1888), the *Jonaki* (1889), the *Bijuli* (1890), the *Assam* (1890) and the *Times of Assam* (1895).¹¹ They were able to generate public opinion and awareness on all burning issues. Of these newspapers and periodicals, the *Assam Darpan* was a monthly journal in Assamese published by Lakhikanta Barkakati, a resident of Biswanath. The journal was printed at Kolkata and published from Biswanath. This journal, though appeared for a short time, succeeded in ventilating the popular grievances of the people before the government.¹² The *Assam News*, a bilingual weekly paper, published from Guwahati, created public awareness on the erosion of Assamese culture in the later part of the nineteenth century. It appreciated Haribilas Agarwala of Gamiri for his work of translating the *Kirton Puthi* of Shankardeva to pure Assamese language.¹³ Another popular periodical published from Tezpur in the last decade of the nineteenth century was the *Assam Banti* (1900-1944). This periodical was started by Kamalakanta Bhattacharyya and Padmanath Gohain Baruah, the founders of the Assam Central Press, Tezpur. Mathuramohan Baruah was its first editor. This periodical created some sort of record in the history of press in Assam by lasting for forty-four years.¹⁴ All these newspapers and periodicals directly or indirectly contributed towards rousing political consciousness among the people during the period of freedom struggle.

Agrarian Revolts:

The transfer of power from the East India Company to the British Crown in 1858 had hardly brought any positive material change to the mass people of the country. The situation in Assam was also not different as the exploitation of the resources which reduced the people to abject poverty went unabated. Indeed, as a result of the huge fiscal deficit caused by the Revolt of 1857, new avenues of revenue had to be found out so as to revamp the financial system of the Government.¹⁵ Hence in 1858 stamp duties and in 1861 income tax regulations were extended to Assam. Excise duties were levied at the *Sadar* Stations of Kamrup, Darrang and Nagaon districts.¹⁶ Already, washing of gold was farmed out and the *Jalkar* or right to fish in the rivers and *beels* was offered to the highest bidder. Taxes for cutting wood (*garkhati*), reeds (bunker) and Grazing tax (*khusary*) became common.¹⁷ The multiplication of taxes could not but be a matter of serious

concern to the agricultural *ryots*. In the district of Nagaon rumors were afloat that the Government was contemplating imposition of taxes on their houses, *baries* (gardens) and *pan* (betel-leaf) cultivation. About this time the introduction of License Tax confirmed the belief of the villagers, particularly of the tribal people of Phulaguri, ten miles from Nagaon town, that before long their *pan* and betel-nut cultivation would be subjected to taxation.¹⁸ On 18 October 1861, the aggrieved *ryots*, over three thousand in number, assembled at Phulaguri to protest against the revenue policy of the government. The Deputy Commissioner of the district, Herbert Sconce, instead of allaying the apprehension of the *ryots*, decided to use force to suppress the protest. In the process a young English civil officer, Lt. Singer, Assistant Commissioner of Nagaon, who was sent to quell the disturbance, lost his life in the mob attack.¹⁹ This episode is still remembered by the people of the locality as the *Phulaguri Dhewa* or the Battle of Phulaguri.

The Phulaguri uprising however did not improve matters. The local authorities in Assam did not cease to impose new taxes whenever possible. In 1868-69 the government increased the rates of revenue on *rupit* and *non-rupit* lands in Assam valley districts. The people, particularly in the former districts of Darrang and Kamrup, reacted sharply through their *raijmels*. The people of the former Lakhimpur district also made a novel way of protest. Thus broke out a series of agrarian outbreaks, officially called the 'Assam Riots', beginning with December 1893 when land revenue was increased once again.²⁰ In 1893 the aggrieved *ryots* of Rangia in the former district of Kamrup looted and destroyed the *hats* at the Rangia bazar. They held *raijmels*, assembled in a crowd of about three thousand and started their demonstration by entering into the *thana* which was seized for hours.²¹

Almost simultaneously, trouble of a serious nature broke out at Patharughat in the Mangal. Sub-division of Darrang district in January, 1894. When the re-assessment of land revenue in the Assam Valley was made, the villagers of the Patharughat *Tahsil*, declined to pay the enhanced rate. They assembled in their *mels* for several days not only to protest against the increase in rates of revenue but also to resist those who would pay revenue to the government. On receipt of the information, J.D. Anderson, the Deputy Commissioner, Darrang district, arrived at Patharughat on 27 January with a force consisting of twelve militia men and nineteen members of the armed civil police.²² The next morning when the police party under Lieutenant Berrington, the Superintendent of Police, proceeded to confiscate the property of a defaulting *ryot*, they were surrounded by a mob of about two hundred. Berrington and his men somehow managed to escape and reported the matter to the Deputy Commissioner. A few hours afterwards, a mammoth crowd of three to four thousand *ryots*, thronged in front of the inspection bungalow where Anderson was encamping. The Deputy Commissioner came out from the bungalow, and asked the *ryots* to go back to their home and pay their revenue unhesitatingly. As the crowd did not move, he threatened them with arms, which compelled the *ryots* to desert the place for a while.²³ About half an hour later the crowd returned, armed with sticks and clods of earth. Sensing danger, the police drove them down the road to an open field. There the mob rallied at the orders of their leaders and began to pelt clods on the police. In return, the police opened fire killing scores of them and injuring several others. In the end normalcy returned to the village.²⁴ The Patharughat incident is still remembered as a *Doli-Ran* or a battle fought with clods of earth by the local people against the armed might of the rulers. Popular verses were composed in the *Purana* style by the village poet Narottam Oja in what is known as the *Doli-Purana* to commemorate its memory.²⁵

The Patharughat Uprising is also marked by Hindu-Muslim unity against the repressive measures of the British government. However, the most striking feature of the revolt was the mass awakening. In their protest movements the *ryots* selected the symbols of colonial authority as their

targets such as the inspection bungalows which showed their precise understanding of the colonial power blocks. Hence, it can be argued that these agrarian revolts in the later part of the nineteenth century were precursors of the freedom struggle in Assam under the leadership of the Indian National Congress.

Emergence of Public Associations:

The later part of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century can be termed as the 'formative years' for the Assamese people.²⁶ There had emerged several public associations, mostly of cultural and literary character, which provided meeting places for exchange of views and promotion of common ideals and objectives. Those were- the *Gyan Pradayini Sabha* (1857), a literary association, established by Anandaram Dhekial Phukan and Gunabhiram Baruah at Nagaon, the *Asamiya Sahitya Sabha* in Kolkata (1872) and the *Upper Assam Association* at Sibsagar (1880)²⁷ by Ganga Gobinda Phukan. In the 1880s, a literary association – the *Alochani Sabha* was founded at Tezpur by Lambodar Borah, when he was studying in the Tezpur Government School. The *Sabha* became a forum of regular discussion on varied subjects, viz. literature and lives and works of great personalities.²⁸ Priyalal Baruah, Deputy Inspector of Schools, was instrumental in organizing the *Assam Desh Hitasadhini Sabha* in 1885 at Sibsagar.²⁹ In 1888, the Assamese youths studying at Kolkata made a serious attempt to form a literary society called the *Asomiya Bhasa Unnati Sadhini Sabha* (Society for Promotion of Assamese Language). Among others, Chandra Kumar Agarwala and Kamalakanta Bhattacharyya of Darrang district attended its inaugural meeting.³⁰ It was due to their efforts and under the initiative of Lambodar Borah branch of the *Sabha* was set up at Tezpur in the same year. The land for building the house of the *Sabha* was donated by Raibahadur Bhabani Charan Bhattacharyya of Chatia (Sootea).³¹ About the same time another literary association- the *Asomiya Bhasa Alochani Sabha* was established at Tezpur by Lambodar Borah. This *Sabha* held its meetings regularly at an interval of one month.³² Towards the end of the nineteenth century a number of public buildings and halls were set up in Darrang district which tremendously contributed towards fostering cultural awakening among the people. Notable among them was the *Bengali Theatre Hall* established by the local Bengali community of Tezpur town in 1899. An important cultural institution was the *Ramkrishna Mission*, set up near the beautiful tank *Padum Pukhuri*, situated at the heart of Tezpur town. Residents of the town every year celebrated several festivals, particularly the *Durga Puja*, in this institution with great enthusiasm. Another landmark of the period was the establishment of the *Ban Ranga-Mancha* or the Ban Theatre Hall in 1906. For construction of this hall a number of leading residents of the town- Krishna Chandra Choudhury, Rabi Chandra Sarmabaruah, Bhabani Charan Bhattacharyya, Lakhikanta Das, Betharam Sarma, Ramratan Choudhury and Padmanath Gohain Baruah, worked day and night, collecting donations and making other preparations connected with the construction work. Some of them even went to Shillong to meet Gopal Rabha, father of the celebrated cultural giant of Assam, Bishnuprasad Rabha for mobilizing fund. Their dream finally came true when in the Kalibari area of Tezpur town, near the premises of the building of the *Asomiya Bhasa Unnati Sadhini Sabha*, the foundation was laid of this historic public hall of the yesteryears. For smooth conduct and operation of this Hall a committee was formed with some of the founders. This institution became a movement of cultural renaissance for the people of the Darrang district. It nurtured and moulded the talents of great artists like *Natasurya Phani Sarma*, *Manchakonwar Chandra Goswami*, *Kalaguru Bishnuprasad Rabha*, *Rupkonwar Jyotiprasad Agarwala*, *Gahan Chandra Goswami*, *Kamala Prasad Agarwala*, *Asom-Ratna Bhupen Hazarika*, *Saranan Barthakur*, *Bipin Pal Das* and others- who played a highly memorable role in the socio-cultural and political life of Assam in the twentieth century.³³

Tezpur Ryot Sabha:

Prior to 1884 there was no broad-based political organization in Assam. The foundation of the *Jorhat Sarbajanik Sabha* at Jorhat in that year is a landmark in the history of political association of Assam. Impressed by the activities of the British Indian Association (1851) and Indian Association (1876), Jagannath Baruah, the first graduate of upper Assam and a tea planter of Jorhat, felt the necessity of forming a similar organization in Upper Assam for the purpose of arousing social and political consciousness of the people. The founder President of the *Sabha* was Raja Naranarayana Singha.³⁴

Political awakening in the district of Darrang may be said to have begun in the eighties of the nineteenth century. An important role in this direction was played by the *Tezpur Ryot Sabha* established in 1884. Among its founder members Haribilas Agarwala, Lambodar Borah, Lakhikanta Barkakati, Jaidev Sarma, Mahendra Nath Daw and *Raibahadur* Bhabani Charan Bhattacharyya were most prominent. The *Sabha* was formed with a view to ventilate grievances of the people mainly of the agricultural *ryots*, against the enhancement of revenue on land. From the beginning the *Tezpur Ryot Sabha* kept itself busy in activities of public interest. Initially it had no fund for public expenditure nor did it have any house to hold its meetings. To overcome this difficulty, the members of the *Sabha*, visited each and every house in the Tezpur sub-division and collected four *annas* per house as donation. The amount thus collected was utilized to erect the Town Hall of Tezpur in 1887. However, for better maintenance and improvement, the Hall was handed over to the Tezpur Municipality, established in 1894. The role of the Hall in rousing national sentiment among the people was remarkable. It was used, in the subsequent period, as a venue of public meetings or meetings arranged by the political or other associations. Following the establishment of the Town Hall, the people of Tezpur also felt the necessity of a public library and thus came into existence the Tezpur Jubilee Library, attached to the Town Hall, later named after *Tyagbir Hem* Baruah, as the *Hem Baruah Memorial Library*.³⁵ The importance of this library lies in the fact that it became a storehouse of all kinds of books, newspapers and periodicals including many contemporary newspapers such as the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, the *Sanjibani* and the *Basumati*.³⁶ The foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 inaugurated a new era in the history of colonial India. In their effort to organize this national organization, the Indian leaders were greatly helped by Allen Octavian Hume, a retired I.C.S. officer and Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy of India (1884-88). The Congress held its inaugural session at Bombay (Mumbai) from 28 to 30 December 1885, under the Presidentship of Umesh Chandra Banerjee.³⁷ So far as its aims and objectives were concerned, the Congress decided to lay the foundation of a secular and democratic national movement, to politicize and politically educate the people, to form an all-Indian leadership group, and to develop and propagate an anti-colonial nationalist ideology.³⁸ The first session of the Congress was attended by seventy-two delegates coming from various places of the country. Assam was not fully prepared to respond to the Congress movement when the first session was held at Mumbai in 1885. A public meeting, held at Guwahati under the presidentship of Ananda Mohan Bose, unanimously passed a resolution supporting the aims and objectives of the Congress which was communicated by a telegram to the conveners wishing them all success.³⁹ However, the *Tezpur Ryot Sabha* took a historic step to the depute Lakhikanta Barkakati to the first session of the Congress.⁴⁰ Unfortunately, this fact of the *Sabha* is still not recorded in the historiography of modern Assam. With the progress of time, Assam's contact with the Indian National Congress became more active as several other associations of the province began to send their representatives to the subsequent sessions of the Congress. The second session held at Kolkata, was attended by Devicharan Baruah and Gopinath Bardoloi as representatives of the *Upper Assam Association*, Kalikanta Barkakati, the *Shillong Association*, Satyanath Borah, the *Nagaon*

Ryot Sabha, Bipin Chandra Pal, the *Sylhet Association* and Joy Chandra Shome and Kamini Kumar Chanda, the *Habiganj People's Association*.⁴¹ Kalikanta Barkakati, the representative of the *Shillong Association* was a resident of Chatla (Sootea) and younger brother of Lakhikanta Barkakati.⁴² For the third session of the Congress held at Madras (now Chennai) in 1887, Lakhikanta Barkakati was again deputed as the representative of the *Assam Conference*.

In this way, political awakening in the erstwhile district of Darrang emerged even before the 20th century which contributed significantly in rousing Assamese nationalism in the subsequent period. The district produced a host of literary luminaries and many public associations which generated a sense of patriotism and inspired the people to raise their voice against the injustice done by the Britishers since the subjugation. This sense of anti colonialism merged with the pan-Assamese nationalism in the 20th century which became evident in their glorious participation in the struggle for freedom, sacrificing their life in places like Gohpur and Dhekiajuli

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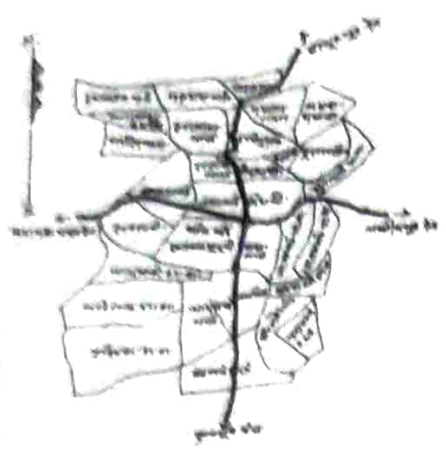
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Participation of Balipara in the Freedom Movement of India: A Micro Study

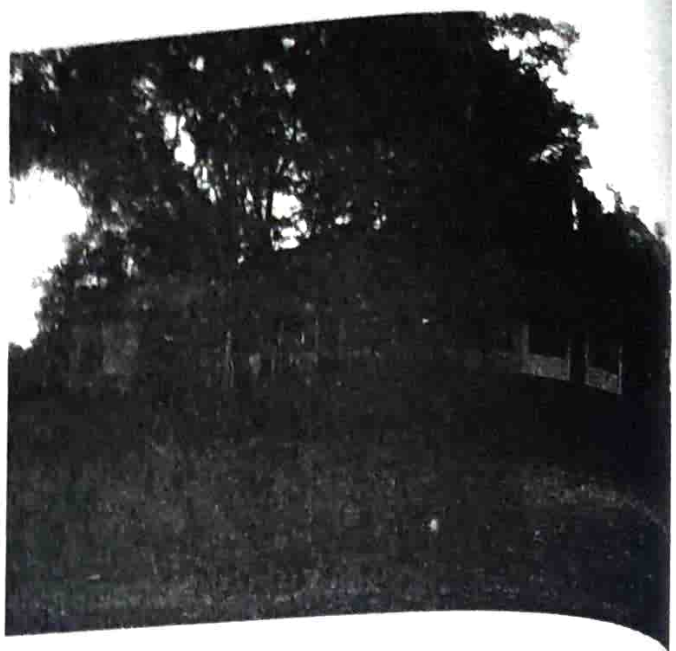
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Freedom Movement of India had its influence on almost all parts of the country. People from every nook and corner participated actively in this movement. Whether it was city or town or village, it had equal contribution in making India a free country. The selfless activities of the freedom fighters of our country made the British Government to realize that its end was inevitable and at last it became true. In this respect it may be mentioned here that the contribution of the Indians in the National Movement is often reminisced by us. It inspires us to be proud of what our forefathers had done for the freedom of our country. Generally we remember the sacrificial activities of the frontline national leaders who led the general people to fight against the alien rule and pay our homage to them. But there are a large number of freedom fighters who are rarely remembered. In fact, the contribution of the frontline leaders as well as the grass root level workers in the Freedom Movement of India was equally important. The success of any movement started by the frontline leaders depended upon the active participation of the general workers in it and where there were active and brave grass-root level workers, the movement of that place was definitely a successful one. So, keeping this fact in mind this paper has been prepared. Here attempt has been made to highlight the selfless and courageous activities of the freedom fighters of Balipara area in the Sonitpur district of Assam. In preparing the paper attempts have been made to collect the actual data and information of the freedom fighters of Balipara and their participation in the Freedom Movement. As the freedom fighters are not alive and sufficient written documents are also not available, the interviews were conducted with the local elderly educated people of the area who had memories of personal conversations with the freedom fighters of this locality. Interviews were also conducted with the family members of the freedom fighters. Important to note that two persons who were the eye witnesses of the activities of the freedom fighters of Balipara could luckily be interviewed. A freedom fighter of Dekargaon, Tezpur also provided a little information regarding this matter. A renowned educationist and retired Principal of Balipara Higher Secondary also provided some information. Moreover, a few written materials were also collected to prepare this paper.

Balipara is situated to the north of Tezpur, the city of blood. It is under the Rangapara Legislative Assembly of Sonitpur district of Assam. Though Balipara is a rural area, it has a history of its own. It is inhabited by the people of different castes and sub-castes who live with peace and prosperity. To the east of the Balipara there is Biswanath Chariali, to the west of it Rangapara town is there. Bhalukpong is situated to the north of Balipara and Tezpur town is to the south of the same. The greater Balipara is constituted of a good number of villages. Some of them are Bokagaon, Baligaon, Khelmati, Adabari, Kamarigaon etc. Balipara is called the holy place of *Charidham* (four pilgrimages)—*Kolia Gohain Than* on the east bank of Mansiri, the tributary of Bharali, *Dakhinpat Satra* at Vakatgaon, *Kamalabari Satra* at Eragaoon and *Ketekibari Satra* at Baligaon. It is said that the *Akas* and the *Nishis* were scattered at Balipara area. The English Government created the Balipara Frontier Tract under the control of Political Officer to check the outrages of the tribal beyond the Inner Line of this area and the Office of the Political Officer was established at Chariduar (about 6 kilometers from Balipara)



MAP OF BALIPARA



DAKHIANPAT SATRA, VAKATGAON



KETEKIBA SATRA, BALIGAON.



KAMALABARI SATRA, ERAGAON.



KOLIAGO HAIN THAN,

It may rightly be mentioned here that at the time of Moamoria Rebellion Assam was passing through a situation of internal disorder and confusion and it was followed by the conflicts among the officials of the Ahom Court. This ultimately led the English East India Company to annex Assam in 1826. No doubt at the initial stage the Assamese people thought that peace would be resorted in Assam under the British and when it was achieved, the British would leave Assam as stated by them at the time when they came to Assam. But in due course of time the hopes and aspirations of the Assamese people proved wrong. Instead of leaving Assam the British decided to administer it as a division of Bengal ignoring the interest of the people of Assam. So, for the restoration of Ahom dynasty movements against the alien rule were started which was initiated by Gomdhar Konwar, a prince of the Ahom royal blood in 1828. But it was an unsuccessful attempt. This was followed by another unsuccessful rebellion of Gadadhar Singha, an Ahom prince and Peali Barphukan. Peali Barphukan and his associate Jeuran Duliya Boruah were hanged to death. Then, when the Sepoy Mutiny broke out in Northern India in 1857, Maniram Dewan, a former revenue Sheristader and the adviser of Purandar Singha, an Ahom king inspired by it and decided to start the same movement in Assam to restore the Ahom rule by overthrowing the British administration. But unluckily it was also suppressed and Maniram Dewan was hanged at Jorhat. After the revolt of 1857 the Indian administration was transferred from the East India Company to the British Parliament but the nature of the Government in India did not change. The

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Government had enhanced the rate of revenue and imposed new taxes. It also decided to ban on sale and cultivation of opium. For all these reasons uprising of the peasants were broken out. They were the Phuluguri Uprising or *Phulagurir Dhewa* (1861), Rangia Revolt (1893), Lachima Revolt (1894), Patharughatar Ran (1894) etc. These uprisings were organized by the *Raij Mels* (people assembly). In the meantime a number of organizations namely *Jorhat Sarvajonik Sabha, Tezpur Ryot Sabha, Nagaon Ryot Sabha*, Upper Assam Association, the Sylhet Association, the Assam Association etc. were also formed to highlight the unpopular governmental measures which acted against the interest of the peasants of Assam. It is to be noted that announcement of partition of Bengal was made on 16th Oct, 1905. At this, the people of Assam reacted very seriously. They feared that Assam would lose their separate identity. So, *Swadeshi* Movement was started in Assam like the people of Bengal to protest against this plan. Thereafter, Assam plunged into the National Movements like the Non – Cooperation Movement, Civil Disobedience Movement, Quit India Movement etc. which were mainly organized under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Thus like other provinces, Assam had also become part and parcel of the Freedom Struggle of India.

The people of Balipara also were very much anxious to earn freedom for the country. The local leaders like Kashiram Medhi, Dayaram Jamadar, Tularam Das, Sukan Koch etc. prepared the plans and programmes of the movements against the English Government. A freedom fighter of Dekargaon (Deka chuburi), Tezpur Mr. Parna Ch. Saikia informed that district level leaders namely Gohan Ch. Goswami, Omio Kr. Das, Bijoy Ch. Bhagawati, Mahadev Sharma, Chandra Kanta Deka Boruah, Mohikanta Das etc. visited Balipara for the purpose of inspiring the villagers to take part actively in the freedom movement. Besides, they discussed with the Congress workers about the progress and preparation of their movement. They generally held discussions at the house of Kashiram Medhi at Bokagaon. Because Mr. Medhi was an influential local leader. The public meetings were also held especially at the *Namghar* (Religious institution of the Assamese) of Udmari gaon or *Kumar pukhuri* and Bokagaon. In those *Namghars* the training of the volunteers was also arranged. Chandra Kanta Deka Boruah (Dekargaon), Ghana Saikia (Dekar gaon) and Golak Ch. Saikia (Cholagaon) supervised the volunteer training camps of Balipara. Mr. Rosheswar Bhuyan has informed that the plans and programmes of the volunteer organizations were conducted from Tezpur. He has also informed that Gagan Ch. Deka, Amarendra (Amar) Das, Abhiram Saikia, Cheni Ram Medhi, Haladhar Das, Kesh Ram Koch, Mohan Ch. Medhi, Jogeswar Bhuyan and Dura Mohan Bhuyan were the volunteers of Bokagaon. The police often visited the villages in search of the volunteers to arrest them. The main objective of the volunteers was to inspire the villagers to take part in the movement against the English Government. They also inspired the villagers to boycott the foreign goods and to use *Khadi* cloth (Hand-spun cotton cloth). Undoubtedly, the volunteers tried to popularized the *Gandhian* technique of *Khadi* and *Charka* (Spinning wheel). It may be noted that to popularize this technique the competition of spinning cotton yarn was conducted at Bokagaon *Namghar* in which both young and old villagers of Balipara wholeheartedly participated. Bhadra Dutta mentions that in the competition a woman named Jamuna Bhuyan won Rs. 10/. Mr. Rosheswar Bhuyan informs that an age-old villager Bhoga Ram Bhuyan's yarn was very fine and he was rewarded. The courageous act of the people of Balipara was seen when they burnt down the fire-wood and bamboo at Baligaon which were stored there for the military camp of the Balipara area.

Participation of Balipara before the Quit India movement

When movements against the English Government in Assam was going on in full swing the people of Balipara could not keep themselves away from it. They enthusiastically came forward to participate in it. Undoubtedly, anti-British movement at Balipara started before the first visit of Mahatma

Gandhi to Assam. Mahatma Gandhi visited Tezpur for the first time on 21st August, 1921 and delivered a speech on the significance of Non-Cooperative Movement which was going on at that very time. A call for boycotting the foreign goods caught the minds of the Assamese people very much. Bhadrachandra Dutta in his article 'Balipara : Ati Samikhyatmak Itibritiya' mentions that according to Gahan Chandra Goswami, a freedom fighter a few *Dafla*-youths of Balipara were arrested for participating in the boycott movement. Important to note that Kunder Ch. Das represented Balipara at the 41st session of the Indian National Congress which was held at Pandu (Guwahati) in 1926. In 1930 the Non-Violent Civil Disobedience Movement began under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The movement spread throughout India. In the same way, the people of Balipara area also came forward to join the same. The freedom fighter like Dinanath Bhuyan, Mohidhar Bhuyan, Nandeswar Das, Baruah Koch, Sukan Koch etc. actively took part in the movement and were arrested. Dinanath Bhuyan was arrested vide U.O. 17(2) C.L.A on 9-06-32 and was retained in prison for three months, Mohidhar Bhuyan of Dhekerigaon left his studies to join the movement in 1932. In the same way Nandeswar Das of Udmari gaon also left his studies in the same year and participated in the movement. Baruah Koch of Dhekerigaon also joined the movement in 1932 as an active volunteer. Similarly Sukan Koch, a well known freedom fighter of the locality participated in the struggle for liberation. According to an official record Sukan Koch was arrested for his activities in the freedom movement on 7-3-32 vide U/S 4, Ord. V. and was kept in jail for six months. Sukan Koch who was also known as Sukan Sulung joined a volunteer camp at Nilkamul Satra at Tezpur along with about 150 *Satyagrahis*.

Needless to say that Sukan Koch was an influential freedom fighter of Balipara. His residence was at Ulubari adjacent to Udmarigaon. Later on he went to Chengelimari gaon under Chariduar Political area where Cuming *Saheb* was the Political Officer. Though Chariduar is about 6 kilometers towards the north of Balipara all his activities were going on in collaboration with freedom fighters of Balipara, Mr. Cuming used to feel very much irritated to see the volunteers with *Gandhian* cap. But Sukan Sulung did not have any feelings for him. He continued his activities without any fear. He inspired the people to spin cotton yarn and to picket at the wine and opium shops. He was also busy in the work of inclusion of the youths as the members of the Congress, collection of volunteers etc. by inspiring the people to join in the war of independence. The well known freedom fighter Powal Baruah of Sukan Koch wrote that in 1932 Sukan Koch followed a new way of showing himself above the British. He declared himself the descendant of king Bana and arranged a red horse. On the forehead of the horse a paper was pasted on which it was written that who caught this horse had to fight with him. No doubt his main target was the Political Officer of Chariduar. On the horse Sukan Koch was there in volunteer's dress and *Gandhian* cap. The flag of the Congress was in his hand. Five other Congressmen wearing white dress and *Gandhian* cap with the congress flag and festoon which contained the slogans 'Bharat Mata Ram', 'Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai', 'Swadhin Bharat Ki Jai' were following the horse. When the horse and the six Congressmen reached Tezpur, they were arrested and kept in jail for six months. As a result of this act Sukan Koch lost his land and one of his followers Tularam Das lost his job of *mandal*.

It is to be noted that Sukan Koch was a peculiar person. He built a house at Bhebolagaon under Chariduar Political Area near the road along which the Political Officer Mr. Cuming and other English men used to travel. With the help of bettle nut tree and bamboo he built his *tongi ghar* (Still House) higher than the two storied *chang bunglow* (a house which was built on a raised bamboo wooden platform) of Cuming Saheb. On the roof two flags were hoisted. Whenever, Cuming Saheb used to go by the newly constructed house, Sukan Koch shouted that he was not under the British Officer. He never went under the *chang bunglow* of the officer. The officer himself should go under

his *tongi ghar* (Sukan Koch's). Interesting to note that Sukan Koch inspired the people of Balipara and Chariduar for participating in the freedom movement by his following self composed patriotic songs.

'Swaraj swaraj karicha samaj

Tulicha swarajar bani

Swarajak pabolai hole he samaj

Sunio Mahatmar Bani.'

(The meaning of the song is that society wants freedom and raised this demand. But to get freedom the teaching of Gandhiji should be followed)

'O Ai Gabharu Aferi Gohari Sun

O Ai Gabharu Aferi Gohari Sun

Kat Kapah Suta, Ar Bilashita

Aride Bilati Dhun'

(O young lady listen to a my request spin cotton yarn and leave luxurious life and foreign style)

Participation of Balipara during the Quite India Movement :-

Due to the failure of Cripps Mission the political situation in India became very much critical. On 8th August 1942 in the session of the Indian National Congress in Bombay the proposal for starting of the historic Quit India Movement was granted under the leadership of Gandhiji. This time Gandhiji also became very much practical by appealing the countrymen to 'do or die'. People all over the country came forward to take part in the movement. In Assam also the movement was started. In this situation the people of Balipara also prepared themselves to participate in this movement. Their active participation in the movement of 1942 was seen on 21st September on which day thousands of them came forward to march towards Tezpur to hoist flag at the court there. Thousands of villagers from almost all the villages of Balipara left their houses fearlessly and organized processions and gathered at the centre of Balipara. From there they started their proposed march to Tezpur. Alongwith the villagers Kashiram Medhi, Amar Das(Amarendra Das), Kesh Ram Koch, Gagan Ch. Bhuyan and Kanak Ch. Medhi were also there. The Government on the other hand, resolved to demoralized the gathering. A group of militaries from Rangapara tried to disperse them. But Gandhiji's slogan 'do or die' had already touched the core of the hearts of the people of Balipara. They gathered much courage and resumed their march to materialize the plan. In the meantime, it started to rain and when the procession reached Dekargaon, the road was blocked by the military vehicles. The police not only tried to disperse the people but also to match away the flags from hands of the volunteers. It was followed by *lathi* charge. In no time, the situation had become very much critical. A large number of people were injured. Finding no way the people tried to hide in the nearby villages to save themselves from the atrocity of the police. They were bound to move to their respective houses. In the midst of bad weather they reached their house at midnight with hunger and tiredness. But Gambhir Bayan, Mathur Das, Lawan Ch. Das and Sabha Ram Das of Udmarigaon managed to reach the destination. In the meanwhile, thousands of people from nearby area of Tezpur assembled at Church Field. Instantly the police and the military surrounded them and ordered them to leave the place in no time. The police also started *lathi* Charge. In this chaotic situation Jiten Ch. Bhuyan of Balipara and Tarun Bora of Dekargaon, Puthikhati managed to hoist the national Flag at the roof of the office of the Deputy Commissioner at Tezur. It may be noted that on 21st September a good number of rebels of Balipara who participated in the march to Tezpur were injured. Among them mention must be made of Adya Ram Das, Haladhar Das, Abhi Ram Saikia, Bogi Ram Saikia, Cheni Ram Medhi, Thanu Ram Das etc.

Important to note that though thousands of villagers of Balipara took part in the Quit India Movement, only the following names have been found in the "Report of the Enquiry Committee Freedom Fighter" as participants and active participants :-

1. Labanya Mohan Bora (Active Participant).
2. Nandeswar Das (Active participant)
3. Amar Das (Active participant)
4. Kunder Das (Active participant)
5. Narendra Nath Das (Active participant)
6. Birahi Medhi (Active participant)
7. Mohidhar Bhuyan (Participant).
8. Tula Ram Das (Participant)
9. Bhebu Ram Deka (Participant)
10. Barua Koch (Participant)
11. Kandura Koch (Participant)
12. Gobhir Koch (Participant)
13. Behenga Koch (Participant)
14. Kanak Ch. Medhi (Participant)
15. Kashi Ram Medhi (Participant)
16. Abhi Ram Saikia (Participant)
17. Dina Nath Saikia (Participant)
18. Gagan Ch. Saikia (Participant)

During the Quit India Movement the process of the formation of *Santi Sena* (Soldiers peace) was going on at Balipara area. The main objectives of *Santi Sena* was to formulate anti programmes and to campaign for peace. Mr. Rajani Bhuyan of Chapalaga, Chariduar has informed that he was involved in the act of formation of *Santi Sena*. He has also informed that he was the *M* (a fiscal unit of a group of villages) Commander and he went to Dhekiajuli to attend the Annual Conference of *Santi Sena* along with Arukanta Bora and Somaswar Das.

Thus the people of Balipara participated in the Freedom Movement of India without caring sufferings they had to face. Their participation in this struggle showed that the grass root level workers of the Freedom Movement also performed important job in making the country independent. Their aims and objectives were not at any case different from that of the national level leaders. So, like national leaders the freedom fighters of Balipara should also be given due importance.

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3. Baruah, Sagar, *History of the Non-Corporation Movement in Assam*, Lanka, 2002.
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INTERVIEWS:-

1. Interview with Mr. Bhadra Dutta who is the retired Principal of Balipara Higher Secondary. He had personal contact with the freedom fighters of Balipara. His article entitled "*Balipara: Aiti Samikhatmak Itibriti*" published in the *Balipara Smaranika* highlights this.
2. Interviews with the family members of freedom fighters of Kashi Ram Medhi and Kanak Ch. Medhi of Bokagaon.
3. Interview with the son of Nandeswar Das of Udmari gaon.
4. Interviews with Mr. Rosheswar Bhuyan, an eye witness of the Freedom Movement. He has informed that after 1942 he went to Tezpur for studies. He is now about 94 years old. He has informed that he was trained the students of higher class to take part in the freedom struggle. During his stay he observed how the Congress Volunteers trained the students of higher class to take part in the freedom struggle.
5. Interview with Rajani Bhuyan, (about 94 years old) an eye witness of the freedom Movement of Udmari gaon, Chariduar. Earlier he was the inhabitant of Udmari gaon, Balipara.
6. Interview with Parna Chandra Saikia, a freedom fighter of Dekargaon, Tezpur. He is now about 95 years old.
7. Interview with Mr. Pranil Saikia, Treasurer and Mr. Rajib Deka Baruah, Secretary of *Sonitpur Jila Mukti Jujaru Sanmilan*, Sonitpur, Assam.

**“SOCIO-POLITICAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF THE MISING COMMUNITY OF ASSAM:
FROM A HISTORICAL POINT OF VIEW”**

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Abstract

Ethnic and tribal issues are now current all over the world. And these issues are regarded as one of the most significant social issues. Assam is inhabited by various racial elements. Their issues have recently caught the attention of many and have gained influence in the academy through student and faculty activism. This work is an attempt to study the Socio-Political and Cultural aspects of the Mising people of Assam.

Assam is the central state of the northeastern region. There are more than 3 million tribal inhabitants in Assam. These tribes speak different dialects and have different manners, customs, festivals and dresses. Racially most of them are of Mongoloid origin. The Mising tribe, previously known as ‘Miri’ is one of the Mongoloid tribes of Assam and speaks a Sino-Tibetan language. No detailed records including literary, epigraphic or other archeological remains have been found which possess any information regarding their early habitat and culture. They do not possess a written script but some Assamese and other literary sources make one or two references to this tribe. Sankardeva’s *Kirtan Ghosha* composed in between 1516-1568 made a reference to this tribe among other non Aryan speaking tribes of the region. A section of Misings, called Chutiya Miri were dwelling in the Chutia kingdom which was arranged by the Ahom King Suhong-Mung Dihingia Raja in AD 1523. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the Mising tribe came into contact with the Ahoms in connection with trade and political relations. The Misings, who were originally hill dwellers, came down gradually to the plains as far as the Brahmaputra valley. John M Cosh recording in 1837, states that strip of alluvial land in the north bank of Brahmaputra, from the large island Majuli to river Dihong, and bounded on the north by the hill countries of Abors. Alexander Mackenjie records that Misings had extensively cultivated the tract of Bardoloni, Sisi and Dhemaji. A reference has been found in unpublished documents of British Government foreign Secret Consultancies in 1912 about a ‘Miri Mission’ under G. C. Kerwood, S.D.O Lakhimpur, to the hill Miri country or tribal belt between the river Dihong and Bhutan to collect information for a scientific frontier to be demarcated between India and Tibetan Chinese Territory. The practice of shifting cultivation was continued among the Misings of Assam even during the British period for which W W Hunter (1879) classified them as ‘Nomadic agriculturist’¹. Lack of settled agriculture among these Mising tribes was one of the most important factors in their failure to form states like the Kacharis, Koches etc.

This study will be based on some important secondary data. Historical Method will be applied for this study. Information have been collected on this community from various written records of all types viz. reports, official documents, travelers’ accounts, gazetteer, census reports etc. An analytical and critical study of these records will be presented here.

Introduction :

Ethnic and tribal issues are now current all over the world. And these issues are regarded as one of the most significant social issues. Assam is inhabited by various racial elements. There are more than 3 million tribal inhabitants in Assam. They have been playing a great role in the development Assamese Culture. Their issues have recently caught the attention of many and have gained influence in

the academy through student and faculty activism. This work is an attempt to study the Socio-Political and Cultural aspects of the Mising people of Assam, one of the great Mongoloid tribes of Assam.

This study is based on some important secondary data. Historical Method is applied for the study. Information have been collected on this community from various written records of all types - reports, official documents, travelers' accounts, gazetteer, census reports etc. An analytical and critical study of these records is presented here. According to the 2001 census of India, 8.6 % of India's population is categorized as scheduled tribes counting 88.8 million distributed into 461 tribal communities. The ST's of India are substantially internally differentiated ; while 86% of STs belong to central India and the remaining within the cultural mainstream of India, only 3% found in the North and South India substantially dispersed groups. In contrast, 11% of STs live in northeast India for which it is called 'land of tribes'². There are eight states in northeastern India which is called 'eight sisters'. These are Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Nagaland and Tripura. The major tribal groups found in the northeast region are the Naga, Lushai, Hmar, Kuki, Chin, Karbi, Tripura, Jaintia, Garo, Adi, Monpa, Mising, Nyishi, Kachari, Bodo, Mizo, Dimasa etc. Assam is the central state of the northeastern region. There are more than 3 million tribal inhabitants in Assam. These tribes speak different dialects and have different manners, customs, festivals and dresses. Racially most of them are of Mongoloid origin. They inhabit the hill areas and a few like the Dimasas, Rabhas, Misings, Lalungs, Bodos and Kacharis live in the plains. Among them, Khasis, Jaintias, Garos, Lalung (a plain tribe of Assam), and the Akas of Arunachal Pradesh are matri-lineal societies, whereas, the rest of them are of patrilineal. The Mising tribe, previously known as 'Miri' is one of the Mongoloid tribes of Assam and speak a Sino-Tibetan language. No detailed records including literary, epigraphic or other archeological remains have been found which possess any information regarding their early habitat and culture. They do not possess a written script but some Assamese and other literary sources make one or two references to this tribe.

Assam is inhabited by various racial elements, because it is situated in "one of the great migratory routes of mankind². The possible routes of migrations were three or four; the first route was through the north or the mountain passes of Tibet, Nepal and Bhutan; the second through valleys of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra from the West; the third by sea, passing through Bengal or Burma, and fourthly the Assam-Burma routes, one over the Patkai passes in the north-east leading from the Lidu-Marghera road to China through the Hukawang Valley in Burma, and the other through Manipur and Cachar to the south-east or south of Assam. Some racial elements, such as the Caucasian-Aipines and the Indo-Chinese made their way in small numbers into Assam through the mountain passes between Assam and Tibet and settled in the region now called Arunachal Pradesh. Besides the Indo-Chinese races, people from South-east Asia and China made their way into Assam through the river valleys of Burma and Assam and the mountain passes on the Assam-Burma borders. When and how the Indo-Aryan speakers entered into Assam is uncertain. But, perhaps their entry might have begun from the time of the Vedic literature, *Brahmanas* and *Epics*. The internal evidence of the Vedic literature supports this view well. In spite of the fact that Assam received various racial elements, including the Alpine-Aryans, the ancient land remained predominantly, as now, a land of Tibeto-Burmans of the Indo-Chinese stock. Assamese, principal language of Assam at present is undoubtedly an Indo-Aryan language, but Austric and Tibeto-Burman elements have contributed largely in the growth of the language and culture of Assam.³

The areas of characterization for the primitive Sino-Tibetan speech appear to have been in Western China between the head waters of the Huang Ho and Yang-tsze Kiang rivers. Possibly the early off-shoots of the Proto-Sino-Tibetan speaking Mongoloids, before the language was fully characterized, came down to South China and Burma, and from them were descended the Man

Miao-tsze peoples of south China and the Karens of Burma- tribes or peoples which are Mongoloid but their speech now appears to be rather distinct from other members of the Sino-Tibetan family. Linguistic researches reveal that Misings fall in the category of Tibeto-Burman speakers of the greater Sino-Tibetan groups. In this connection, it is apparent that, like other Sino-Tibetan language speaking group of great Mongoloid people, the Mising, formerly known as 'Miri' were originally the ancient inhabitants of the upper courses of the Yangtse-Kiang and the Hoang-Ho rivers of North-western China.

According to S.K Chatterjee,⁴ Mongoloid tribes from Western China speaking forms of Sino-Tibetan speech appear to have been pushing south and west from their original homeland from pre-historic times, but certain large scale movements might have begun in the early part of the first millennium B.C. But, P.C Choudhury⁵ has concluded that it is uncertain to predicate, when and how the migration and settlement of the various branches of Tibeto-Burmese family took place on Brahmaputra valley; but, the weight of evidence proves that the migration of tribes is to be attributed to different periods in history of the land and that most of them, if not all, came after the Indo- Aryan speakers from the west. Thereafter, it was after their distribution and occupation of particular areas that they came to be known as Nagas, Bodos, etc and the areas of their occupation were known by their tribal names. Even after their settlement, migrations from one place to another continued till recent times. He has made a few references which indicate that some tribes had already settled in this land before the first century A.D; the Anthropophagi of Ptolemy or the Alitrophagi of Ammianus Marcellinus were probably a branch of the Mishmis or Nagas; Ptolemy mentions other tribes, confirmed by Ammianus. The Garinaoi may be identified with the Garos; Nabannoe, the Rabhas; Asmeraoei, the Miris; Batoe, the Bhutias and the Nagalogoe, the Nagas; Barrhai, the Bodos etc.⁶

The tribes of Tibeto-Burman group of North-Assam branch like the Aka, Dafalas, Miri, Abor and Mishmi, are now occupying the foot of the hills in the north, extending from western Assam to Sadiya in the east.⁷ Most of the tribal names were given by their neighbours and plains people. The Akas call themselves Hrusso, the Daflas, Niso or Bangi, Abor call themselves as Adi-ami(hill-men). The term Miri means man.⁸ Thus the name Aka, Dafla, Abor and Miri are given by the plains people. The etymology of the word 'Miri' is debatable and ambiguously used by many writers to denote numbers of tribes of the hills and plains.⁹ Edward Tuite Dalton quoted in 1872 thus: "For a long period under the Assam Government the Miris managed to keep to themselves the entire trade between Assam and the Abars; and as being thus the only medium of communication between the two peoples, they obtained the name 'Miri', which means mediator or go between, and is the same word as 'Miria' or 'Milia' used with signification in Orissa".¹⁰ L. A Waddell writes, they call themselves 'Mi-shing', but are known to the Assamese as 'Miri'. The Daflas call hill-Miris 'chi-mur'.¹¹ The Khamtis call Mising as 'Hang-Khat' and the Adis or Abors name them as 'Aying' which means 'kinsfolk of plains'.¹² E.A Gait also considers the meaning of 'Miri' as to be 'a middleman' but Nomal Chandra Pegu opines that the word 'Miri' is derived from the improper intonation of the word 'Mirui' - meaning priest prevalent amongst the Adi group of tribes of Arunachal Pradesh and the word had come to the Adis from Tibet, as in Tibetan language, Mi-means man, Ri-means hills.¹³ On the other hand, Pamegam defines that the word 'Mising' derived from the word 'Mi-Yasing'(Mi means man, Yasing means good man) so Misings prefer to call themselves as 'Mising', as the word 'Miri' has no meaning.¹⁴ But, the ancient and medieval literary texts of Assam use the name 'Miri' for this tribe. So when we get references to 'Miri' it implies the tribe of 'Mising'.

Unfortunately, we have only a few references from the ancient and medieval literary texts of Kamrupa on Mising. Misings have only recently come to the lime light of history, which makes it very hard to deal with their early history. No detailed records of this tribe recording their early habitat and

culture are available. The epigraphs so far discovered in this region and those discovered outside, containing reference to the history of ancient and medieval Assam, do not have any information regarding this tribe.¹⁵ This is because of the fact that the Mising as a tribe till very recent times used to live in hills in isolation having no contact with the plain regions where states of other tribes had already been formed.¹⁶ Apart from these Mongoloid peoples of north-east India were absorbed within the folds of Hinduism sometime in the first millennium after Christ. As a result, their early history remained obscure and it is very uncertain where they were and what they were doing prior to 1000 A.D. All this has made for comparative neglect of this chapter of Indian history and civilization.¹⁷ Only a few fragmentary references in some early Indo-Aryan literature have been found because of the some contact with them. Although many of these literary sources do not possess any specific reference to the Mising in particular, but this set of literature gives some data regarding the ethnic and cultural traits of various tribal people of north-eastern India with whom the Mising have some similarities. The *Puranas* and *Tantras* make frequent references to the people having Mongoloid features as the early inhabitants of these regions. So, such literary sources are taken into consideration to make a general idea of the early history of Mising. Literary works of medieval Assam, mostly works of Vaishnavite period and Ahom chronicles or Buranjis make frequent mention of the Miris in connection with their relations with the Vaishnavite saints and the Ahoms. Contemporary Persian chronicles bearing references to the northeastern tribes also mention one or two lines on Mising. The British who travelled throughout the length and breadth of this region during the period of British annexation of this region, have left detailed records of the tribes of north-east including Mising. These have been the useful secondary sources to construct the history of the tribe 'Mising' of present times. Such is the problem of sources to construct the early history of 'Mising'. Under such circumstances, for doing any authentic research, these contemporary literary sources have to be supplemented by linguistic studies and oral sources.¹⁸

The Mising were originally hill-dwellers, migrated to the plains of Assam and are now identified as a plains tribe of Assam. The vivid legendary evidences of dwelling of Mising people in the hills have been found elsewhere in the present Arunachal Pradesh. The existence of Hill-Miri tribe, at present a major tribe of Arunachal Pradesh, inhabiting Lower and Upper Subansiri districts make a ground for the plains Miri as an early hill-dwellers, as the plain Miri acknowledge the Hill-Miri as their kinsfolk.¹⁹ Hunter also states, "Proceeding still down the valley, after crossing the hill course of the Dirjino we come on tribes nearly allied to the Padam or Abors, who are known in Assam as the *parbatia* or hill Miris; but before we enter their domains, it may be as well to explain who the Miris of the plains are. The Miris of the plains are offshoots from the Abors, claimed by that people as runaway slaves; but there are various clans differing in external appearance, and some of these clans have been settled in Assam for ages."²⁰ However, the *Pegu Siyengs* provide evidence of dwelling of the *Pegu* clan of the Mising tribal group of the plains, prior to their migration from the hills to the plains in the long past. Here *siyeng* means natural pond and *Pegu* is a name of a clan of Mising. According to the legend, the *Pegu* clan of the Mising tribe had been dwelling on this spot, where the *Pegu Siyengs* are there till present day in upper Siang valley of East Siang District.²¹

Because of their inhabitation as hill-dwellers of Ancient Kamrupa they might be included in the Kirata people of Kamrupa. It is the consensus of opinion among Indologists that in Sanskrit the term Kirata indicated the wild non-Aryan speaking tribes living in the mountains, particularly the Himalayas and in the northeastern areas of India, who were Mongoloid in origin. These Kiratas were connected with the Cinas or Chinese, the Bhotas or the Tibetans and other Mongoloid peoples.²² While describing the fighting forces of Bhagadatta, the Mleccha king of Pragjyotisha, the Mahabharata mentions that the Cina and Kirata soldiers appeared to be in gold; their troops had the appearance of a forest of Karnikaras (yellow flowers).²³ The association of gold with the skin colour of Kiratas is interesting. For

it was the river Suvansiri from which gold was collected till the days of the Ahoms and it should be noted that the same river is a part of the Mising people since long time back.²⁴

Some Vaisnavite works such as Sankerdeva's *Kirtan Ghosha* composed some time '1516-1568' and Madhavdeva's *Nama-Ghosha* refers to the Miri tribe along with other tribes of the region.²⁵ Therefore, it appears that at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Mising came to be known as a distinct tribe of Kamrupa, attracting the attention of the Vaisnavite reformers of medieval Assam. It is also pointed out that in sixteenth century A.D a group of Mising people had already migrated from the hills and settled in the plains. The Chutiyas who formed a state and ruled the country east of the rivers Suvansiri and Buri Dihing with their capital at Sadiya about twelfth century A.D had come into contact with Mising. The Ahom chronicles record that a section of the tribe lived in the border of the Chutiya territory in Sadiya with whom they had some social and economic relationship. These sections of the Miri are mentioned in the chronicles as Chutiya Miri and also Sadiyal Miri. After the occupation of the Chutiya kingdom in the third decade of the sixteenth century the Ahoms came into contact with the Miris. The Miris who thus became the subject population of the Ahom kingdom, came to be mentioned in the early Ahom chronicles as Sadiyal Miri i.e Miris of Sadiya. Being under the domination of the Chutiyas and having close association with the ruling tribe, the Sadiyal Miris subsequently came to be known as the Chutiya Miri.²⁶ On the other hand, according to a Mising legend, when Ahom king attacked the Chutiya kingdom, some Chutiya people fled from their kingdom and took shelter at Mising villages and later on, to get escape from the eyes of the Ahom kingdom they introduced themselves as Mising people, they are known as *Pagro* clan (Mipag+Aro=Pagro, Mipag means Assamese and Aro means truly).²⁷ It can be assumed that Assamese chroniclers have treated the tribe in their records as outsiders till the seventeenth century since the chronicles record that the Ahom King Pratap Singha (1603-1604) had to engage Kakatis i.e envoys or spies to observe the movement of the tribe. As mentioned by the chronicles, the Miris used to raid villages near the hill slopes and thus created havoc and terrorized the villagers. King Pratap Singha therefore is recorded to have adopted a policy of appeasement whereby he made provision for the posa to the Miris also, like that he had conceded earlier to the other hill tribes. The posa included grant to the tribes of villages, fisheries and fishermen at the nominal cost of their acknowledging the Ahom suzerainty by way of payment of small tributes.²⁸ It appears that till at least the middle of seventeenth century, the Miris could neither reconcile themselves to the ways of living in the plains nor could they treat themselves as the subjects of the Ahom kingdom.

It is known that king Jayadhvaj Singha (1648-1663) having heard of the Miri raids had to send expeditions against them in 1655 and they were defeated. They then offered to be good citizens in future by making payment of a regular annual tribute to the Ahom sovereign. Jayadhvaj Singh then recruited some of the Miris registered them as his soldiers and enlisted them to the Kanri units. He also created the post of the executive officer of the rank of a Barua, i.e who could command a unit of three thousand soldiers in the battle field; called Miri Barua. At the same time the Sadiya Khowa gohain (i.e Governor of Sadiya) and the Barbarua (the chief executive officer of upper Assam) were put to the over all charge of the Miri. The appointment of an officer of the rank of a Barua and putting the Sadiyakhowa Gohain and the Barbarua to the over all charge of the Miris show that the Ahom authority was still suspicious about the movements and activities of the tribe.²⁹

The resistant spirit of the tribe soon found its expression in the north bank, and this time the tribe alongwith the Deori Chutiyas and the Daflas (Nisis) made a combined effort to attack the villages of the plains in 1665 A.D. The Miris were defeated; but interestingly, they fled to the hills and refused to submit. This shows how the Miris did not submit to the authority of the plains till about the middle of the seventeenth century. From the chronicles it is known that the Sadiyal Miris rose in a serious revolt about

the year 1683 during the reign of king Gadadhar Singha when they burnt the house of the Sadiya Khowa Gohain and his family.³⁰

The Ahom army then attacked the Miris, defeated them and compelled them to sue for peace; they also built a rampart on the border of the Assamese villages excluding the Miri territory.³¹

Now onwards the chronicles are almost silent about the Miris rising in rebellion or devastating any village. On the other hand, the Miri factions of the Ahom soldiers are recorded to have rendered great service to the Ahoms in subduing the other rebellious neighbouring tribes, such as Nagas. They also rendered useful services to the Ahom victory over the Kacharis and the Jayantiyas.

Thus by the close of the seventeenth century the Miris began to reconcile themselves to the plains society of Assam. It is because of this fact that the British who succeeded the Ahoms in Assam found little or no resistance from the Miris in the process of their political integration of the region. The only problem that was seen was in the field of social assimilation and cultural transformation of the tribe and their progress. But in this case two important factors have made the problem gradually easy.³² The Ahom rulers followed from the very beginning a conciliatory out-looks towards the tribe. As early as days of king Suhungmung alias Dihingia Raja (1497-1539), one Miri person called Taosungleing Kungring was allowed to take his seat in the court among the high nobles. During king Pratap Singha's reign one Bakala Bargohain adopted a Miri boy as his son and was made a Sandikoi later on who then came to be known as Miri Sandikoi. The chronicles record that a member of this family subsequently became posted as the Sadiyakhowa Gohain.³³

Shihabuddin Talish, a Persian chronicler who accompanied Nawab Mir-Jumla at the time of his invasion of Assam in 1662, gives a conspicuous reference to the Miri-Mishmi tribe in his work *Alamgir-Namah* mentions that "the hills inhabited by the Miri and Mishmi tribes lies in the east of Assam on the Uttarkol side at a distance of eleven days journey from Gargaon". Here Uttarkol means the land stretches from Gauhati to Sadiya. It suggests that the Miri-Mishmi tribes were occupying the range on the north bank of Brahmaputra during Ahoms days. Shihabuddin Talish states that although most of the hill tribes, did not pay tributes to the Ahoms yet they accepted their sovereignty and obeyed some commands.³⁴

During British days in the beginning of the nineteenth century some British travelers and employees made some references to this tribe in their works. John M' Cosh recording in 1837, states that the Miris occupy that strip of alluvial land along the north bank of the Brahmaputra, from the large island Majuli to the river Dihong, the northern branch of the Brahmaputra; and bounded by the hill country of Abors. Alexander Mackenjie records that the Misings had extensively cultivated the tract of Brahmaputra, Sisi and Dhemaji.³⁵ Waddell too narrates in his account, "This (Mising) vigorous mongoloid tribes occupies the north bank of the Brahmaputra in Lakhimpur district up to the Dihong, and extends up to the foot of the hills, where they interpose an offshoot "hill miri" between the Daflas on the west and the Abors on the east, with both of whom they claim distant kinship".

Captains Bedford and Wilcox are the only officers who have penetrated into their hills, endeavouring to trace the Dihong river, and the knowledge they were able to glean respecting this tribe was very trifling. The Abors look upon the Miris as their dependents, and have generally exacted from them a heavy tribute; to escape which, the latter have removed in large numbers into the plains of Assam. The Abor chiefs have constantly demanded that they should all be sent back; but as no compliance has been made to these repeated demands, the Miris have gained confidence in the British authorities, and are emigrating in still greater numbers. The Miris have some villages on the banks of Dihong, of which Matgong is the principal. Till of the late years, their territories were almost deserted on account of the ravages of their formidable neighbours the Abors. Their vicinity continues to act as a great drawback upon the Miris. The only cultivations seen in their territories are on the banks of the

great river. It was at one time understood, that a mission under Dr Griffiths was to have visited the mountains of this chief; but other avocations led to the postponement of the intended expedition. The Miris are by no means so jealous of British influence as most of the neighbouring tribes, and as a better acquaintance with them would lead to a free intercourse, and to the extension of the trade between and the natives of the plains, and thus be of mutual advantage to both parties, it is hoped government will shortly avail themselves of such means as will best insure these advantages; and probably none would better answer the purpose than a friendly embassy.³⁶ So, from this account it can be assumed that though the Mising were protected from the harassments of the Abors by the British government, but they were also unhappy with the British, because of the confiscation of their traditional business (as middlemen between hills and plains). But, no detailed records of revolt made by this tribe against British government have been found.

Thus, very few references are there to establish the place of Mising in the history of north-east India. Now they are of considerable numbers part among tribal population of north-east India. They constitute the second highest tribal population of Assam after Bodo tribe. But, in earlier times they had failed to form a state like Kacharis, Koches, Jayantias etc. The lack of settled agriculture among these tribes was one of the most important factors for their failure to do so. The practice of shifting cultivation somehow or the other continued among the Mising during the British period for which Hunter (1879) classified them as 'nomadic agriculturists'. Now they are assimilating with the mainstream Assamese culture. Elwin Verrier³⁷ divides the tribes into four classes according to their stage of cultural development. The first class comprises the purest form of tribal groups. Their tribal organization is unimpaired and their mythology still vitalizes the healthy organization of tribal life. The second category of tribes consist of tribal groups, consequently has been undergoing change due to contact with the plains. Their communal life and traditions are preserved through their village dormitories. The tribes who belong to the third category constitute the largest section of the total tribal population, about four-fifth of it. They are tribal in name but have become 'backward Hindus' constituting a sizeable section of the lower rung of Hindu society. The tribes of fourth category consist of the tribal groups with old aristocratic traditions. Misings belong to the third category. They had migrated from the hills and assimilated into the Hindu society. They are in a peculiar state of transition. These tribes have been appreciably affected by external contacts. The Misings also have been exposed to the influences of economic, political and socio-cultural forces of Hindu society but sometime there is also the feeling of an identity crisis.

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HISTORY OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN ASSAM : A special reference to North-East India

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Abstract

Education is an essential requirement of a good and enlightened life of the human resource development programme. Education has become a challenge for North-East society. North-Eastern India comprises the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura contains an area of 262.179 km² (7.98 % of India), according to the 2001 census. The growth of higher education in North-East during independence period was at a low ebb. There were 16 colleges in the region before 1947. After independence, the govt. of India has taken a lot of initiations to provide better education to the North-East region of the country. There are 12 universities at present in the North-East which includes central universities also. The govt. of India has opened a lot of central level institutes / universities in the North-East region in order to facilitate its education. Some of such institutes/ universities are Mizoram University, North-Eastern Hill University, Assam University, Tezpur University, Manipur University, Indian Institute of Technology, North-East Regional Institute of Science and Technology (Itanagar), National Institute of Technology (Silchar), North -East Institute of Education(Shillong)etc. Central govt. is also now taking initiation to open at least one Central University in each of the North-Eastern Region. In terms of education, Assam has developed into a top educational destination at the state as well as at the National level. The state has one of the most extensive higher educational institutions networks in the whole of the North - Eastern region of India. Presence of institutions like the National Institute of Technology, Silchar; Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati University, Dibrugarh University, Tezpur University and Assam University, Silchar (Central University); Guwahati Medical College, Assam Engineering College, Jorhat Engineering College, K.K. Handique State Open University and several others help to add status to the higher education system of Assam. According to the 2001 census, the literacy rate of Assam was recorded at 63.30%. The modern age of educational history in Assam began with the annexation of Assam with the British Empire in accordance with the treaty of "Yandabu" in 1826. College education in Assam had its beginning in 1866; when the first year Arts classes were instituted in the Guwahaty Seminary (the present Cotton Collegiate School). It was affiliated to the Calcutta University. Since independence there has been a phenomenal growth of Higher Education in Assam. In Assam, the first University was established at Guwahati on 26th January 1948 and the second one at Dibrugarh University on 1st July 1965. The Assam University (A Central University) was established in 1994, another central university was established in Tezpur in 1993. State Govt is also ready to start new institutions of higher education in various areas. As for example, Assam govt. has set K.K. Handique State Open University, Srimant Sankardev University of Medical Sciences, Bodoland University, Cultural University, Sanskrit University in Nalbari, Science and Technology University in Guwahati, Assam Hills University in Karbi- Anglong, Rajib Gandhi University of Cooperative Management in Sibsagar and also is planning to launch a Women University at Jalukbari.

Introduction:

Education is an essential requirement of a good and enlightened life of the human resource development programme. Education has become a challenge for North-East society. North-Eastern

Deptt. of History

India comprises the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura contains an area of 262.179 km² (7.98 % of India), according to the 2001 census. The growth of higher education in North-East during independence period was at a low ebb. There were 16 colleges in the region before 1947. After independence, the govt. of India has taken a lot of initiations to provide better education to the North-East region of the country. There are 12 universities at present in the North-East which includes central universities also. The govt. of India has opened a lot of central level institutes / universities in the North-East region in order to facilitate its education. Some of such institutes/ universities are Mizoram University, North-Eastern Hill University, Assam University, Tezpur University, Manipur University, Indian Institute of Technology, North-East Regional Institute of Science and Technology (Itanagar), National Institute of Technology (Silchar), North -East Institute of Education (Shillong) etc. Central govt. is also now taking initiation to open at least one Central University in each of the North-Eastern Region. At present there are 594 affiliated colleges in the North -East. The enrolment of students in higher education during 1999 - 2000 in the North - Eastern states can be shown as follows :

<u>States</u>	<u>Enrolment</u>
Assam	200346
Arunachal Pradesh	4374
Monipur	27641
Meghalaya	147862
Mizoram	8132
Nagaland	7502
Tripura	19273

The state wise picture in the North - East higher education are given bellow -

Arunachal Pradesh

Arunachal Pradesh is a state located in the easternmost part of India. Arunachal Pradesh education scenario is gradually improving with several plan and projects being initiated by both state and central govt. The average literacy rate in Arunachal Pradesh as per the 2001 census report was 54.74%. The current education system in Arunachal Pradesh is relatively underdeveloped. Additionally, there are 7 governmental colleges in defferent districts, providing students a higher education. Arunachal Pradesh has a few renowned institutes that offer higher education in the state. Among them North - Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Tecdhnology (NERIST) play a very significant role in raising the technical and managment education in the state. Another premier educational institution in the state of Arunachal Pradesh is Rajiv Gandhi University. The state has two polytechnic institutions, namely Rajiv Gandhi Govt. Polytechnic (2002), located at Itanagar and Tomi Polytechnic (2006), located at Basar.

Manipur.

Higher education has expanded over the years in Manipur, both in terms of the number of institutions and enrolment of students. From only one college in 1946 - 47, today higher education is imparted through two universities, and 68 colleges including 7 women colleges but concentrated mainly in the valley districts. Of this 68 colleges affiliated under Manipur University, 28 colleges are under govt. managment including 2 colleges of teacher education, 1 medical (RIMS) and 1 law college (LMS Law College). The number of aided colleges is 6 and remainiing are privately managed colleges

including 3 law college and 1 college of Physical Education. In terms of enrolment also, there has been a massive expansion in higher education. From only 60 students in 1947 - 48, it rose to 35,424 in 2001 -02. This share of girls students to the total enrolment has also increased considerably, from only 2.01 % in 1950 - 51 to 44.3 % in 2001 -02.

Meghalaya.

Although the state of Meghalaya does not occupy a mammoth portion of the Indian turf but it is developing into

Meghalaya.

Although the state of Meghalaya does not occupy a mammoth portion of the Indian turf but it is developing into one of the most advanced and technically sound states. According to the 2001 census, approximately 63.31 % of the occupants of the state of Meghalaya are literate.

The central university that coordinates the actions of all the smaller educational institutions of the state of Meghalaya is located in its functional capital of Shillong. A few number of colleges are being put up to provide a platform to the youth of the state.

A list of the various educational institutions of Meghalaya are mentioned bellow as counted in 2005 :-

Primary and Junior Basic	5851
Colleges for Arts, Science and Commerce	54
Basic and Non Basic Training Schools	7
Middle and Senior Basic	1759
Universities	1
Polytechnics	1
High and Higher Secondary	711
Teachers Training Colleges	2

Mizoram.

Today, the state of Mizoram is ranked at the first position in India with a literacy rate of 91.1 percent. At present, under the jurisdiction of higher and technical education, there are so many as 8 govt colleges, 12 deficit colleges, 5 private colleges including 1 law college and 2 open university colleges. There are two teacher training colleges and one of which is of Mizoram Hindi Training College.

Tripura.

Education in Tripura has developed at a very fast pace since its formation on 21st January 1972. The beautiful small state of Tripura offers immense opportunities for students from within and outside the region. As per the census of 2001, literacy rate of Tripura is 73.66 % The state of Tripura has two medical colleges, one university, one pharmacy college and wide number of engineering colleges and polytechnic colleges.

Nagaland.

Education in Nagaland gives an emphasis in providing opportunities for the various fields such as commerce, culture, and information technology. The 2001 census report on Nagaland education pointed out that only 67.11 % of the total population in Nagaland were literate. The type of colleges in Nagaland include - Research Institutes, Computer Colleges, Engineering Colleges, Hotel Management, Law College, Polytechnic. The Final level of Nagaland education is the Nagaland University which is a central university established in the year 1994. A total of 47 colleges are affiliated to this university and there are almost 18,000 students who study under this university.

Sikkim.

Educational expansion in Sikkim during the last decade has been phenomenal. The major work

leges that have upgraded the touchstone of education across Sikkim includes the Sikkim Govt. College in Gangtok, Loyola College of Education at Nanchai, Manipal Institute of Technology, Industrial Technique Institute in Rangpo, Research Institute of Tibetology, Manipal Institute of Medical Sciences, Institute for Handicrafts in Gengtok, Damber Singh College in Deorali, SHEDA Institute of Tibetology.

Assam.

The state of Assam is situated in the heart of the North-East of the Indian subcontinent, located in between latitude 24°1' N to 27°58' N and longitude 89°49' E to 97°26' E. Assam is located South of the eastern Himalayas, and comprises of beautiful river valleys and hills. In terms of education, Assam has developed into a top educational destination at the states well as at the National level. Assam boasts of the most wide-ranging networks of higher educational institutions in the whole of North-Eastern region of India. Presence of institutions like the National Institute of Technology, Silchar; Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati University, Dibrugarh University, Tezpur University and Assam University, Silchar (Central University), Assam Medical College, Guwahati Medical College, Assam Engineering College, Jorhat Engineering College, K.K. Handique State Open University and sevel others help to add status to the higher education system of Assam. According to the 2001 cencus, the literacy rate of Assam was recorded at 63.30%. To enhance the status of Assam education, the state govt. has introduced many innovative education polices. With the initiative of various government polices like - Sarba Siksha Mission (2001), it may be predicted that the literacy rate will cross the line of 70% - 75% in the cencus 2011. In order to achieve Universal Elementary Education, govt. of India has initiated a large number of schemes and programmes like DPEP, SSA, Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS), National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary level (NPEGEL), Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), etc. Before completion of the Mission, SSA, the govt. desides to launch an others scheme i.e., Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan at the 11th Five Year Plan for universalization of access and improvement of quality at the secondery and higher secondary stage.

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN ASSAM.

The modern age of educational history in Assam begain with the annexation of Assam with the British Empire in accordane with the treaty of "Yandabu" in 1826. According to the report of late W. Robinson, who was appointed the first Inspector of Schools in 1840 for the Brahamaputra Valley a deplorable condition of the indigenious educational institutions prevailed 1841 and through efforts of govt. and other agencies new initiative were taken to open new schools. By 1875, the number of educational institutions for general education rose to 1,293 with an enrolment of 31,462. College education in Assam had its beginning in 1866; when the first year Arts classes were instituted in the Guwahati Seminary (the present Cotton Collegiate School). It was affiliated to the Calcutta University. Due to the continued poor result in the University examination, the college classes were abolished after ten years. Latter, on public demand, the college was revived which developed into the magnificent Cotton College.

It is after the Independence in 1947, that a repid expansion took place in the field of education. In the post Independence period the major concern of govt. of India and of the states was to give increasing attention to education as a factor, vital to national progress and security. Problems of educational reforms and reconstruction were reviewed by various commissions and committees. In the later part of the last century Policy on Education (1986) has been adopted at the national level. The National Policy on Education (1986), visualises that higher education should become dynamic as never before. The main features of the programme and strategies to impart the necessary dynamism to the higher education system will consist of the following ;

- (i) Consolidation and expansion of institutions,
- (ii) Development of Autonomous Colleges and departments,
- (iii) Redesigning Courses,

- (iv) Training of teachers,
- (v) Strengthening research,
- (vi) Improvement in efficiency,
- (vii) Creation of structures for co-operation at the state and national levels,
- (viii) Mobility.

The University Grants Commission and National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) plays a major role in the quality aspect of it.

PROGRESS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN ASSAM.

Since independence there has been a phenomenal growth of Higher Education in Assam. In Assam, the first University was established at Guwahati on 26th January 1948 and the second one at Dibrugarh University on 1st

July 1965. The Assam University is a Central University created through an Act of the Parliament. The Assam University was established in 1994. Another Central University was established in Tezpur in Assam in 1993 and this University is conducting classes in some new subjects from July, 1994. A table showing expansion of Higher Education is given below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Colleges.</u>	<u>Enrolment.</u>	<u>Teaching Staff.</u>
1947-48	16	5,439	-----
1950-51	19	7,149	271
1960-61	35	25,243	855
1970-71	99	58,575	2,854
1980-81	139	1,11,075	4,291
1990-91	186	2,09,967	5,585
2000-01	189	5,16,651	7,258

(Source : Directorate of Higher education, Govt. of Assam.. 2008)

DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION DURING DEFFERENT PLAN PERIOD SINCE 1951

First Five Year Plan (1951-56)

In 1951-52 the policy for planned development was adopted for the first time in the country. Out of the total State allocation of Rs. 101.15 lakhs for the First Five Year Plan and amount of Rs. 43 lakhs was allocated for University Education. However, the actual expenditure was Rs. 62 lakhs during this period.

During this plan period main emphasis was on construction and also reorientation of the education system. The construction of Gawahati University building was taken up during the period an amount of Rs. 43 lakhs was allocated for the purpose.

Second Five Year Plan (1956-61)

In the Second Five Year Plan period the total state plan allocation for general education was Rs. 608.09 lakhs. Out of this Rs. 66.50 lakhs was for University Education as the expenditure was Rs. 54.90 lakhs. In the Second Plan improvement rather than expansion was the guiding factor in the field of higher education. To maintain the Higher Secondary and Multipurpose schools with qualified teaching staff, schemes like deputation for Post Graduate course were taken up. A Govt. Post Graduate Training College for training of secondary teachers was established at Jorhat.

Third Five Year Plan (1961-66)

In the Third Five Year Plan total allocation was fixed at Rs. 85 lakhs for University Education and expenditure was Rs. 104.80 lakhs. In this plan emphasis was laid on teaching of science in the Post Graduate level. The highlights of the third plan were establishment of Board of Secondary Education, State Institute of Education, Dibrugarh University, removal of disparity of pay and allowances of Aided Institutions with that of Govt. Institutions etc. In other words teachers got covered by equal benefits of pay and D.A. at govt. rate. Sanskrit Education was also reorganised in the state. This scheme envisaged the establishment of 50 reorganised Tools and establishment of a Sanskrit College.

Adhoc Annual Plan (1967-69)

During the three adhoc plan periods the tempo of National development that was inherited from the third plan was maintained. For University Education the provision was Rs. 156.22 lakhs. During the period under review construction of building of science college at Jorhat was taken up.

Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74)

For University Education Fourth Plan allocation was Rs. 470.29 lakhs but expenditure was only Rs. 405.02 lakhs. In the fourth five year plan the emphasis was shifted from rapid expansion to consolidation and qualitative improvement . Considering the low percentage of trained teachers in the Secondary stage, necessary provision has been made for expansion and strengthening of existing B.T. Colleges and establishment of new B.T colleges during the plan period. The main highlights of development during the fourth plan period are the introduction of the new schooling pattern with effect from 1973 in the light of the recommendation of the Kothari Commission . Subsequently, keeping in line with the introduction of above schooling pattern in the Secondary Schools the University authority has taken a decision to convert the one year Pre-University into a two year class.

In 1969-70, nine new colleges and one science section of one existing college have been brought under deficit system of Grant-in- Aid. During 1969-70 post graduate classes in physics was opened in Cotton College and a Govt. Science College was established at Jorhat during 1971. A Govt. Sanskrit College has been established at Guwahati during 1970.

Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79) and Annual Plan. (1979-80)

The Fifth Plan and the Annual Plan 1979-80, and amount of Rs. 369.18 lakhs was spent for University and Collegiate Education. In the field of Collegiate Education, 61 colleges have been brought under deficit system of grant-in-aid and 45 non-govt. college under adhoc recurring system of grant-in-aid. During the plan period 250 additional posts of lecturers were created for non-govt. colleges. A Govt. Law College was established during 1975-76. Post graduate classes were opened in selected subjects. During this period 27 Madrassas and 4 Sanskrit tool were brought under full system of grant-in-aid.

Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85)

In the Sixth Five Year Plan Rs. 901.57 lakhs was for higher education. An amount of Rs. 154.99 lakhs was given to the Guwahati University and Dibrugarh University for expansion , development of academic department, promotion of research and revision of syllabi and curriculum, matching share of UGC grant etc. For this schemes - Madrassa Education, Sanskrit Education, Assam Publication Board, Rastrabhasa Prachar Samiti, Science Society and Institution of Advance Studies etc. and 450 additional post of lecturers have been sanctioned to the deficit colleges. Facilities for opening of P.G.. classes in Cotton College in selected subjects (English, Assamese, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics, Botony, Zoology) has also been to provided to meet the requirment of post-graduate education in the sate.

Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90)
The agreed outlay for the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) was Rs. 1430 lakhs for programme under higher education. During the Seventh Plan Period 24 colleges 9 part (stream) colleges were brought under deficit system of grants-in-aid and 678 additional post of lecturers were created. Non-recurring building grants Rs. 50,000 each was provided to 116 non-govt. colleges, 25 M.Phil Scholarships, 5 under graduate scholarships, 12 additional P.G. Scholarship were created.

Eight Five Year Plan (1990 - 95)
The Eight Five Year Plan (1992 - 93 to 1996 - 97) was fixed at Rs. 12,289.54 lakhs only. The flow to SSCP during Eight Five Year Plan was fixed at Rs. 90 lakhs against which an amount of Rs. 62.12 lakhs was incurred for development of non-govt colleges.

Nine Five Year Plan (1995 - 2000)
The Nine Five Year Plan outlay was fixed at Rs. 29,434 lakhs. The flow to T.S.F. and SSCP was Rs. 642 lakhs and Rs. 336 lakhs respectively.

Tenth Five Year Plan (2000 - 2005)
The Tenth Five Year Plan was fixed at Rs. 30,162 lakhs. During Tenth Five Year Plan period the following development works was undertaken by the govt.

- Establishment of the K.K. Handique State Open University.
- Introduction of 5 years L.L.B. Courses in B.R.M. Govt. Law College.
- Establishment of F.M. Radio Station.
- Introduction of Private University Bill.
- Sanction of Rs. 10 lakhs to each provincialised colleges and Rs. 4 lakhs to all provincialised Sanskrit tools under the scheme "Buniyad".
- Financial assistance to all affiliated non-govt. colleges (133 numbers) and 16 Sanskrit tools under "State Priority Schemes".

Eleventh Five Year Plan (2005 - 2010)
The draft Eleventh Five Year Plan has been proposed for Rs. 34,175 lakhs. The flow to SSCP proposed for Eleventh Five Year Plan is Rs. 300 lakhs. During the current financial year an amount of Rs. 70 lakhs has been agreed for implementation of the above mentioned schemes.

Now it is a challenging task for the both the central as well as the state govt. to attain GER of atleast 15 percent by 2015. The Union Govt. is considering so many options, such as establishment of the world class universities in different places of the country and also the controversial foreign university bill. The Union Govt. has plans to set up 8 new IITs, 7 new IIMs, 5 IISERs and 30 additional Central Universities at selected places spread over the length and breadth of the country by the end of 11th five Year Plan. In the independence speech on 15 August 2007, the Prime Minister announced to set up a few districts of Assam - Bangaigaon, Cachar, Darrang, Sonitpur and Tinsukia are taken into consideration as higher educational backward districts. State Govt is also ready to start new institutions of higher education in various areas. As for example, Assam govt. has set K.K. Handique State Open University, Srimant Sankardev University of Medical Sciences, Bodoland University, Assam Hills University in Guwahati, Rajib Gandhi University of Cooperative Management in Sibsagar and also is planning to launch Women University at Jalukbari.

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Historical Aspects of Priesthood among the Mising

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Introduction

The core meaning of the term Priest in the western usage is (i) the Priest Performs a sacrificial ritual, usually at a fixed location such as altar. (ii) The Priest does as a specialist on behalf of a Communities or congregation. In cross culture and non western use of the tern 'Priest' a Priest any religious specialist acting ritually for or on behalf of a community. A Priest, in any useful sense of the tern is characteristically an inter medially set apart by recognized induction into office and functioning on behalf of other.

In Mising society, their Priest is called 'Mibu' or 'Miri'. He performs all sorts of religious rituals as well as ceremonies. The Mibu plays a very significant role in their society. He is mouthpiece of the people to communicate their grievance and suffering to the spirits for redress. The Priest are believed to have knowledge of a divination. When he is summoned in case of sickness or temporal distress they consulted omens by rice, egg and rice beer (Poro Apong). Further, he determined kind of Sacrifice to be offered and detect the spirit, whom it is to be offered. The function of a Mibu are varied and multifarious, when he performs Puja and other rituals, he is a priest, when he is attending its he is spiritual guide. Further, he maintains the great responsibility of keeping records of oral history. In normal life Mibu invokes the blessing of benevolent deities on behalf of the family and the peoples.

The Mibu, a priest in their beliefs and faiths. He is recognized to be a mediator between mankind and supernatural power. In Mising society, Mibu Performs all the works of propitiation and offering of sacrifices while officiating in community socio- religious functions, individual rites connected with life cycle and illness. So, Mising society has conferred him highest authority of religious administration. In Present situation, due to emergence of Bhakat, Sattula, and modern education had greatly minimized the position of Mibu in Mising society.

Position of Mibu

Mibu has got high position in the Mising society from the time immemorial. In real sense, Mibu means a priest. Etymologically **MI**. Means man (mankind) and **BU** means father – thus giving us the meaning father of mankind. It may be resulted from the fact that Mibu recite the history of mankind through their **Mibu Abang**. On the other hand, Mibu had Prerogative supernatural power to Predict about the present and future. There are very few number of Mibus Scattering among Mising those are inhabiting in the plain of Assam.

Education of Mibu

In institution of Mibuism of Mibu and their right to the Priestly activities are not hereditary a Son of Mibu may not become a Mibu. According to their belief, the acquisition of the qualities of Mibu is purely supernatural and other wordly. Certain youth shows signs of becoming a Mibu from a very childhood. It is also believed that certain signs or Symbols may appear to a mother through her dream to signify that her child would be a priest. The child have to abide by certain taboos like avoiding of eating garlic, Pomkin, fam, yam, amaranth, carlander. Crab, elfish, carp and singimas. He also Abstain from taking food from the house of deceased family for a period of one month. If the Mibu fails the observe these taboos, he may lose his gifted power.

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In the majority of the world's religious, eligibility for priesthood has been restricted to males. In the Mising society, the Mibus are restricted to male only, no female could become a Mibu.

A whole variety of institutions, training and initiation for work as a priest exist among world's religious traditions, the practical side of a priest's training includes most saliently the skill, the community expects for correct performance, of ritual. Discipline is another aspect of training for priesthood in various culture from tribal to modern.

Qualification of Mibu

The Mibu never possessed his power of Mibuism by birth. But they were gifted individual possessing of rare eloquency, power of observation developed Since childhood. In order to possess the power of Mibu such as the spiritual knowledge and Sacred verses, he under go a lengthy process of training and hard labour which required by carefully listening to the recitation of every socio- religious ceremony. In the time of childhood, Mibu is eloped by the **E'pom** (Spirit) to the jungle and gave training of the recitation of Abangs quality of medicinal plants, memorize the items used in the rituals, activities of the spirits and system of wordship to appease spirits. There is no institutionalized training for Mibu in Mising society. He got training from the Epom and elder Mibu to obtain quality to become a perfect Mibu. After completion of training he was released by the Epom.

After acquiring the requisite qualification of the Mibu, he is provided his **YOKSA** (Sword) by the supernatural power. He is informed by his god in dream where about the **YOKSA** and Mibu collected it. Before using Yoksa in Mibu Dagnam, he washed yoksa with **Appi (egg) Poro Apong** (rice beer). Yoksa keep in a wooden khab. Further some pieces of copper ring are in circle in the handel of Yoksa. Yoksa is one of the essential weapons to perform his religious rituals, with out it no religious ritual is performed by the Mibu.

To become perfect Mibu, he had to fulfill some criteria which essential for a Mibu in the Mising society.

The criterias of Mibu are –

1. He should have the capacity to recite the Abang and understand the concept since layman cannot understand the verses.
2. He has to acquire vast knowledge and idea about the supernatural being.
3. He should have capacity of distinguishing the disease caused by different spirits and deities.
4. He should be capable to name the table of ancestor of Mishing in a sequences manner and myths regarding the creation of Mising since in almost all the sacred verses, these narrations are essential.
5. Priest hood should be approved by an omen testing from egg, rice, Poro Apong.

Dresses of Mibu

The Mising priest has own separate dress and ornament which have great significance in religious trait. It is believed that such dresses and ornament enhanced the spiritual knowledge power, wisdom, supernatural power of confidence to the priest in officiating rites and rituals. Incomplete in putting ritual dresses and ornament may adversely affect the Mibu in Propitiating Spirit and duties. The Mibu wears only hand woven cotton cloth while he performing ritual and ceremony such as **Mibu Dagnam** and **Mibu Shoman**. His most essential dress for performing ritual are **Mibu Galuk**, **U gon** and **Dumer**. Mibu Galuk is called **Gandaluktong** and the **Ugon** and **Dumer** are called **Ganar Gansal** and **Dumar** in Mibu language.

According to animistic belief of Mising some spirits survives after the physical death of man. The **Eji Yalo** (soul) is undestructive and immortal. It is believed that **Yalo** is capable of roaming about temporary leaving body under care of Eji during the serious illness, deep sleep or terrible frightened. After death, his Yalo is roaming around the earth until performing **Dodgang** ceremony. It is generally believed that illness is believed to be caused by the **uies** (spirit) and **urom** (spirit of dead). when a person encroaches upon a particular domain in the jungle, the spirit may get angry and capture the soul of the encroacher or any of his family member and damage crops. some urom (spirit of dead person) cause illness to human being.

Function of Mibu

The Mising priest has a wide range of functions in the life cycle of Mising beginning from birth to death. Mibu diagnose the cause of human beings physical, mental and spiritual ailment, cause of accident, committed suicide and unnatural death. Mibu is generally consulted when there is no way out in spite of their best effort in illness or misfortune. Some benevolent spirits help him in incarnation and divination. When the Mibu starts singing and dancing in Mibu Dagna,, he goes into trance and in a state of hysteria, he tells the cause of the illness and detect the evil spirits the responsible for the ailment and decided the nature of sacrifice to be offered. (This function is called **MIBU DAGNAM**.)

Unlike the priest of other community Mibu also performs the all traditional rituals of Mising society. He performs rituals such, **Taleng Uie, Dabur, Dadgang** (of unnatured death), **Satjonia, Na Purukia, Dhangaria, Ai Manoni, Kanya Kalar Dosh, Yalo-Gagnam and all kind of Yumrang Uie** (evil spirits). Further he performs Ashi Kadnam Mibu Shaman Ak Mannam and **Ponumg Nunam** religious functions in their religious festival Porag.

It is a traditional duty of Mibu to perform his service without discriminating rich and poor whenever called for. He never demanded any presents or cash for his service. Earlier he was offered **Dogne** (Colour reed) for his service, But now a days due to lack of dogne, cash money is offered for his service.

The Mising of the plain are very rich in oral literature. As they have no own script, their literature were not preserve in written form. Mibu is one of Prominent preserver of their oral literature. The **Mibu Abang** (devotional song) is one form important oral literature where described about the creation of universe, creation lives, genealogy of Mising, their migration, their beliefs and practices and vivid description of beauty of nature. Only Mibu could recite the verses of the Abang. Laymen could not understand the language of Mibu Abang. As Mibu is began to disappear from society Mibu Abang also to disappear from society.

After migration to the plain of Assam, considerable changes was took place in their socio-religious life. They had been influenced by certain traditions of communities around them. The Mising like other tribe groups of the region come under the influence of the Neo-vaishnavite movement 15th century. As result, they partially accepted the new religious and later on gradually incorporated some of its beliefs and practices in their own system of religious function.

Conclusion

The adoption of Hinduism led to the emergence of the new Bhaktiya cult among the Mising. Moreover, it led to the emergence of the new group of priest and clergy know as Bhakat and Sattula. The new group of priest adversely affected the position of Mibu. They captured the previous place of Mibu and began to perform all rituals of Mising except Dobur Uie. They take the traditional food items like Pig, fowls, rice and Apong. Further, the adoption of Hinduism led to the establishment of **Namgarh** in the place of **MURONG OKUM** in the Mising villages. Mibu become rare phenomenon in the Mising society. But it is noteworthy to mention that the tribe has full faith on the supernatural power of Mibu till today. To also when all efforts to cure illness failed and unnatural death and accident occurred in family then aggrieved family takes help of Mibu to detect the causes of the occurrences.

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TRADITIONAL USE OF DRY FROGS IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH FOR NATURAL CURE

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ABSTRACT:

Arunachal Pradesh is a tribal dominated state of India richly endowed with unique biodiversity. The faunal resources has rich economic potential for human welfare, but need to be protected from extinction. The indigenous tribes of the state collect and utilize many faunal species for food, medicine, poison, ornaments and religious purpose from time immemorial. Till the recent past such traditional practices of animal species by the local tribes have received very little attention. Due to unscientific collection and over exploitation many of these species are under serious threat of extinction. A proper scientific inventory of such animal species should be aimed for documentation of traditional knowledge and belief. Based on field study of the author, the present paper provides an account of amphibian species utilised by local people for natural cure. Present communication provides a list of amphibian species used for traditional food and medicine reported from Arunachal Pradesh. The need for ethnozoological survey and conservation of amphibian species has been emphasized.

Key words : Amphibia , traditional use , ethnozoology , conservation, Arunachal Pradesh.

Introduction:

The records of the uses of animals, animal products and animal parts for food, medicine, ornaments, rituals and other religious beliefs are very ancient. Several such studies have been carried out by a number of workers (Peter, 1866; Man, 1885; Peal, 1896; Bristowe, 1932; Subrahmanium, 1934; Elwin, 1944). The term ethnozoology is of recent origin initiated in the present century (Borang, 1999). The study of ethnozoology is more appropriate and relevant in the tropical areas of the world where the ethnic interaction with biological resources is much pronounced (Borah, 2004). In recent years medicinal uses of animals and animal products received much attention in various tribal inhabited zones of India. Use of poikilothermic vertebrates as traditional drugs in certain tribes of eastern Uttar Pradesh were studied by Azmi (1990), Sharma (1990) investigated ethnomedicozoological studies on the invertebrate fauna of Rajasthan. Borang and Thaplial (1993) reported ethnozoological aspects of non human primates of Arunachal Pradesh. Borah and Borang (1995) made investigation on 45 insects species used as food and medicines by different tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Borang (1996) reported 10 animal species practised by Adi Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Sing et al (1998) reported an account of ethnomedicozoological studies in Manipur. Borang (1999) has documented 90 animal species of ethnozoological importance in Arunachal Pradesh. Borah et al (2001) have made an investigation on ethnozoological aspects of amphibian fauna of Arunachal Pradesh. The indigenous uses of mammals and python by Nishi Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh have been reported by Solanki et al (2004).

During the course of amphibian exploration in the state ,the author find that a number of amphibian species are used by different ethnic tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. There are also other species which are being sun dried and preserved for medicinal use. The dry frogs have been used in remote areas for curing diseases like malaria, fever and stomach problems etc. A clear understanding of these species may provide useful information and economic returns. The dry frogs collected from different household were could not be identified, and future studies in these areas will give a better picture of the amphibian

species. Generally the local inhabitants collected frogs from the habitats during breeding seasons. Bamboo gears and cane traps were used for collection of amphibian species. The traps are laid in such places that are expected to get good catch. Arunachal Pradesh is rich in cultural diversity and equally rich in biodiversity. But the state is ecologically much fragile and disturbed. The earth is extremely unstable and falls under the highly seismic zone. In fact the state is gateway to the Indian region for migration of fauna from Myanmar, China, Nepal, Bhutan etc. Though for its inaccessibility and unexplored conditions, there is a great scope for finding out new information for science. Management plan and practices often failed due to lack of proper understanding of the available faunal resources. Amphibians are vulnerable as they are confined to water bodies during metamorphosis and fall easy victim to predators and amphibian collectors. Due to over exploitation over the years many species might have declined in the natural habitats.

Study area and ethnology :

Arunachal Pradesh is situated in the extreme north east corner of India and lies between 26°28' - 29°31' N latitude and 91°30' - 97°30' E longitude. The state covers an area of 83,578 Km². Physiographically the state is predominantly a hilly rough terrain characterized by lofty hill ridges and deep valleys. Their elevation ranges from 50 m from the flood plains of Assam to the Himalayas up to 7750 m along Tibet China border. There are five big rivers and numerous streams and rivulets dissecting the varied topography of the state. The climatic condition is greatly influenced and characterized by its unique geographical position and varied topography. Being a hilly terrain, the soils in major parts of the state are rocky. The soils is acidic due to heavy rainfall and upper layer is rich in organic matter in forest areas.

The vegetation of Arunachal Pradesh has not been studied in detail. The important work is that of Kaul and Haridasan (1987) and Haridasan (1993). According to Campion and Seth (1968), 19 different forest types have been recognized in Arunachal Pradesh. The state is also the second largest state under forest, covering approximately 61.50% of total geographical area (Shukla and Haridasan, 1996)

There are 26 major tribes and about 100 sub-tribes inhabiting different areas of the state, leading a sort of scheduled life. Major tribes of the state are *Adi, Nishi, Monpa, Tagin, Idu, Khampati, Tangsa, Nocte, Singpho, Mishmi, Mizi, Wancho, Apatani, Aka, Sherdupke, Khawa, Hillmiri* etc. More than 87% of the population is rural and scattered in 3649 villages (Anon, 1998). Broadly, the people may be divided into three cultural groups on the basis of their socio-religious affinities. Each tribes has its own rules and regulations, customs and traditions. Historical inhabitants collected frogs from the habitats during breeding seasons. Bamboo gears and cane traps were used for collection of amphibian species. The traps are laid in such places that are expected to get good catch. Arunachal Pradesh is rich in cultural diversity and equally rich in biodiversity. But the state is ecologically much fragile and disturbed. The earth is extremely unstable and falls under the highly seismic zone. In fact the state is gateway to the Indian region for migration of fauna from Myanmar, China, Nepal, Bhutan etc. Though for its inaccessibility and unexplored conditions, there is a great scope for finding out new information for science. Management plan and practices often failed due to lack of proper understanding of the available faunal resources. Amphibians are vulnerable as they are confined to water bodies during metamorphosis and fall easy victim to predators and amphibian collectors. Due to over exploitation over the years many species might have declined in the natural habitats.

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Different tribes inhabiting in different areas of Arunachal Pradesh have evolved effective traditional ways and they uses different animal species for food, ornaments, poisons, medicine and religious purposes. Most of the areas of Arunachal Pradesh are inaccessible and they practices the natural products for curing different ailments. Doing this, they have developed harmonious relationship with nature and have adopted practices to ensure the survival and good health. But the overexploitation of natural resources with modern technique has greatly changed the harmony with nature leading degradation of animal habitat. The new generation with changing civilization are less interested of the uses of traditional practices of animal species, hence require documentation of such knowledge.

Methodology:

Ethnozoological inventories on the collected amphibian species were made during the period of field surveys. For this purpose the help from *Gams*, village school teacher, and local people were taken. Voucher specimens were taken carefully to the knowledgeable persons and detailed enquiry had been made. Survey of local markets were also carried out to record the flow of amphibians in the market. The vernacular name and local practice of each species by different ethnic tribes have been recorded. Markets were surveyed where edible frogs are sold and photographs were taken. Amphibians used in medicine and food were recorded through interview.

Questionnaires were prepared and distributed among inhabitants of surveyed area who could help in providing information. Adults in the age groups of 40-50 were interviewed to know the local name, and use of the specimen in food, medicines and rituals.

Observations:

Exploration of amphibian fauna of Arunachal Pradesh was carried out for the present study. Along with exploration work data regarding use of amphibia in food and medicine were recorded whenever possible. The findings have been presented in tabular form. It has been observed that different life history stages of frogs are used as food as well as in medicine in all the districts surveyed viz. Towang, W. Kameng, E. Kameng, L. Subansiri, U. Subansiri, Papumpare, W. Siang, E. Siang, U. Siang, Dibang Valley Changlang, Kurum kume, Upper Dibang, Lohit and Tirap.

Eggs are not always used as food. Tadpoles and adults are mostly used as food. Frogs are used as bait while fishing. There are various modes of use, most common being by boiling after removal

of the unused parts like viscera and sometimes the head. When collection is more they are preserved by smoking or by drying in the sun. Dry frogs are difficult to identify up to the species level.

Edible species are collected in the evening by hand. Special bamboo baskets are used in rivers or streams for collecting frogs. These are periodically evacuated. Traps are laid in such places where a good collection is expected. Individuals enter deep forest in search of frogs and toads and return in the evening. Those who practise medicine can identify rare species used in medicine and also know the habitat of the frog.

The common species recorded near human habitation that are used as food are *Fejervarya nepalensis*, *F. teraiensis*, *Euphlyctis cyanophlyctis*, *Polypedates megacephalus*, *Hoplobatrachus tigerinus* and *H. crassus*. All these frogs are sold in the market during breeding season. *Bufo melanostictus* is ubiquitous but this species is not used as food due to some social taboo and religious beliefs. Extracts of the parotid gland of this frog is used as poison.

Discussion:

Vast areas of Arunachal Pradesh are under forest cover. Adult frogs concentrate near the water bodies during the breeding season. From these water bodies different life history stages can be easily collected. Since ancient times important species used in food and medicine are being collected from these areas. Pollution of water bodies due urbanization, *jhuming* practice, use of pesticide and deforestation are some of the causes that make the habitat unsuitable for the delicate early life history stages.

Recording of these traditional knowledge system and taking measures for identification of the species and protecting their habitat will help in the exploration of amphibian fauna in this important biodiversity hotspot.

Table :Use of amphibia in food and medicine by tribes in Arunachal Pradesh, India.

Life History Stages	Local names used by the tribes	Locality	District	Sc. Name	use
Egg	Poup (N)	Laki village	Papumpare	-	-
	Anna (C)	Miao	Changlang	-	-
Tadpole	Tatic kawo (N)	Raga	L. Subansisiri	-	Food
	Paduk aput (A)	Simong	E. Siang	-	Food
	Tezu vellu (N)	Nirjuli	Papumpare	-	-
	Tigo (A)	Nirjuli	Papumpare	-	Food
Adult toad	Padar (A)	Ramsing	E. Siang	-	-
	Mone tigra (A)	Yingkiyong	E. Siang	-	Food
	Dokom tigra (A)	Yingkiyong	E. Siang	<i>B melanostictus</i>	-
	Tigne tigra (A)	Yingkiyong	E. Siang	<i>B. melanostictus</i>	-
	Tuur (N)	Laki village	E. Siang	<i>B melanostictus</i>	Food
	Kachu bang (C)	Miao	Papumpare	<i>B melanostictus</i>	-
Frog	Kachu bang (C)	Chakmabasti	Changlang	<i>B melanostictus</i>	-
	Tir tati	Serrow basti	Changlang	<i>B melanostictus</i>	Food
	Terpokh (N)	Nirjuli	L. Subansiri	<i>B melanostictus</i>	Poison
	Tatik (A)	Ramsing	Papumpare	<i>B. melanostictus</i>	-
Tree frog	Hylong tati (AP)	Serrow basti	Siang	<i>E. cyanophlyctis</i>	Food
	Jane tati	Serrow basti	L. Subansiri	<i>E. cyanophlyctis</i>	Food
Dry frog	Tgru	Serrow basti	L. Subansiri	<i>E. cyanophlyctis</i>	Food
	Ramkamname/	Serrow basti	L. Subansiri	<i>P. megacephalus</i>	Food

W. Kameng *P. teraiensis* Medicine
(Malaria and dysentery)
Ranchinum (N)

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Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh - A-Adi, AP-Apatani, C-Chakma, N-Nishi, '-' not used.

The study indicates that many amphibian species in Arunachal Pradesh are subjected to over exploitation and collected for commercial purposes including folk medicines based on personal observations and enquires made with the local inhabitants it has been noted that common amphibians species in some localities has started declining due to human interference. It is feared that continuous exploitation of few species may endangered their own existence and inventory of the amphibian species should be prepared and popularize not only among tribals but also so called advanced societies. Local scientific organisation should make further scrutiny of such information and effort should be made to choose appropriate technology from the tribal knowledge and skill of the tribals.

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অসমীয়া আখ্যান গীতত ইতিহাসৰ তথ্য : এটি বিশ্লেষণাত্মক অধ্যয়ন

স্মৃতিৰেখা ভূঞা

সহকাৰী অধ্যাপিকা

অসমীয়া বিভাগ, গুৱাহাটী মহাবিদ্যালয়

অধ্যয়নৰ পৰিসৰ, উদ্দেশ্য আৰু পদ্ধতি :

অসমীয়া কাহিনী গীত কেৱল অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰে নহয়, অসমৰ বুৰঞ্জীৰো এক উল্লেখনীয় সম্পদ। ঐতিহাসিক ঘটনাসমূহে সাধাৰণ মানুহকো প্ৰভাৱিত কৰা হেতুকে সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ ৰচনা হোৱা সত্ত্বেও এই ঘটনাসমূহে মালিতাবোৰত স্থান লাভ কৰিছে। প্ৰাচীন সময়ৰে পৰা অৰ্বাচীন কাললৈকে বিভিন্ন সময়ত ৰচিত বুৰঞ্জীকেন্দ্ৰিক বিষয়বস্তুৰ সকলোবোৰ মালিতাকে এই অধ্যয়নৰ পৰিসৰৰ মাজত সামৰি লোৱা হৈছে।

আখ্যান গীতসমূহ অনাখৰী কবিৰ সৃষ্টি হ'লেও এইবোৰ যে বহুতো ঐতিহাসিক তথ্যৰ ভঁৰাল আৰু বহু দিশৰ পৰাই মূল্যবান সেয়া স্পষ্টভাৱে মূল্যায়ন কৰাই হৈছে এই গৱেষণাপত্ৰখনৰ উদ্দেশ্য।

গৱেষণাপত্ৰখনি প্ৰস্তুত কৰোঁতে ঘাইকৈ বিশ্লেষণাত্মক বা বৰ্ণনাত্মক পদ্ধতিৰ মাধ্যমেৰেই বিষয়বস্তু বিচাৰ আৰু উপস্থাপন কৰা হৈছে।

সমল সংগ্ৰহ :

লখিমপুৰ জিলাৰ দুলীয়া গাঁৱৰ ভকতৰাম বৈৰাগীৰ মুখৰ পৰা উদ্ধাৰ কৰি সূৰ্যকুমাৰ ভূঞাই সম্পাদনা কৰি উলিওৱা 'বৰফুকনৰ গীত' পুথিখনি, ভৱপ্ৰসাদ চলিহাই সম্পাদনা কৰা 'অসমীয়া আখ্যান গীত সংগ্ৰহ', হেমন্ত কুমাৰ শৰ্মাৰ 'অসমীয়া লোকগীতি সংগ্ৰহ' পুথিকেইখনকে গৱেষণাপত্ৰখনৰ সমল সংগ্ৰহৰ বাবে গ্ৰহণ কৰা হৈছে।

মূল বিষয়বস্তু :

আখ্যানগীত লোকসাহিত্যৰ এক গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ অংগ। অসম ইতিহাসৰ বহু যুগান্তকাৰী কথাৰ আধাৰত ৰচিত আখ্যানগীতসমূহক 'বুৰঞ্জীমূলক মালিতা' হিচাপে শ্ৰেণীবদ্ধ কৰা হৈছে। বৰফুকনৰ গীত, মণিৰাম দেৱানৰ গীতকে মুখ্য কৰি পৰৱৰ্তী কালত ৰচিত ৰে'ল বৰ্ণনাৰ গীত, খৰ্গেশ্বৰ তালুকদাৰৰ গীত আদিতো বহুতো ঐতিহাসিক ঘটনাৰ সন্নিৱেশ লক্ষ্য কৰা যায়। এইবোৰৰ জৰিয়তে নিৰক্ষৰ চহা কবিৰ স্বদেশপ্ৰীতিৰ আভাস ফুটি উঠিছে।

অহোমযুগীয় অসমৰ গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ জয়মতীক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰি ৰচনা কৰা 'জয়মতী কুঁৱৰীৰ গীত'ত তেওঁৰ জন্মস্থান, পিতৃ-মাতৃ, ককাই-ভাই, বাই-ভনীৰ কথাৰ পৰা আৰম্ভ কৰি গদাপাণিৰ সৈতে চকলং বিবাহ

হোৱা আৰু তাৰ পিছত চাওদাঙৰ হাতত অবৰ্ণীয় কষ্ট পোৱাৰ বিস্তৃত আৰু কৰুণ বৰ্ণনা আগবঢ়াইছে।
গদাপাণিৰ পিতৃগৃহৰ উল্লেখো গতটোৰ এটা গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ দিশ। জয়মতী সম্পৰ্কীয় তথ্য বহনকাৰী দুটা
উদাহৰণ গীতটোৰ পৰা দাঙি ধৰা হ'ল—

'লেচাই বুঢ়াগোহাঁই
জীয়েক মোৰ আইতা
চন্দ্ৰদাৰু সুন্দৰী বৰ,
দেউতা হৈছিলে লাইথেপেনা বৰগোহাঁই
মাদুলি চহৰত ঘৰ।'
'গোবৰ মোৰ শহুৰে ৰাজপাট খাইছিলে
ঈশ্বৰৰ সুদৃষ্টি পাই
মন্ত্ৰীসকলে ৰজাদেৱক বধিলে
নাছিলে অকণো দায়।''

মন্ত্ৰী-বিষয়াৰ সংপৰামৰ্শই দুষ্টমতি বিপথগামী ৰজাক যিদৰে সুপথৰ সন্ধান দিব পাৰে সেইদৰে
কুঅভিসন্ধিকাৰী বিষয়াৰ উপদেশে ৰজা আৰু ৰাজ্যলৈ বিপদ মতাৰ উদাহৰণে অসম বুৰঞ্জীত বহুতো দেখা
যায়। এনে এটা দিশৰ ইংগিত বহনকাৰী উল্লিখিত দ্বিতীয় পদফাঁকি ঐতিহাসিক বিচাৰত সঁচাই গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ কৰি
ক'ব পাৰি।

ৰাজশাসিত অসমত বিভিন্ন জাতি-গোষ্ঠীৰ মাজত সঘনে অসূয়া, বিদ্বেষ, যুদ্ধ আদি সংঘটিত হৈছিল।
নিকটবৰ্তী গোষ্ঠীসমূহৰ মাজত কটকীৰ জৰিয়তে সময়ে সময়ে মিলামিচা, আদান-প্ৰদান হ'লেও সত্য
সন্দেহে দেখা দিছিল। এনে এটা দিশৰ উল্লেখ পোৱা যায় 'নাহৰৰ গীত'ত—

মিচিমি দেশলৈ
নেযাবি চেনাই ঐ
মিচিমি অঁকৰা ঠাই,
অঁকৰা মিমিমি
ঘকৰাই কাটিব
তোৰ লগত কান্দোতা নাই।''

আহোম ৰাজত্বৰ সময়ত একো একোটা অঞ্চলৰ সুপৰিচালনাৰ বাবে কৰ-কাটল তোলা বা আন
খবৰ ৰখাৰ দায়িত্ব একোজন বিষয়াৰ ওপৰত অৰ্পণ কৰা হৈছিল। স্বৰ্গদেউৰ প্ৰিয়পাত্ৰ হোৱাৰ সুযোগতে
বহু মন্ত্ৰী স্বেচ্ছাচাৰী, অত্যাচাৰী হৈ মানুহক নানা শাস্তি ভোগাইছিল। প্ৰজাৰ দুখ ৰজাক উমান পাব
নিদিয়াতকৈ মিছা কথাবে স্বাৰ্থসিদ্ধি কৰা এই শ্ৰেণীৰ মানুহৰ বাবেই ৰাজ্যত অনেক অঘটনো ঘটিছিল। আ
ফকীৰৰ ঘটনাটোত এনে এক উদাহৰণ। আজান ফকীৰৰ গীতত দুৰ্বচিহীয়া ৰজা আৰু স্বেচ্ছাচাৰী মন্ত্ৰীৰ
এক ছবি বিৰাজমান। তদুপৰি ৰজা-মন্ত্ৰীৰ ষড়যন্ত্ৰই সাধাৰণ ৰাইজৰ মাজত ধৰ্মীয় বিবাদ সৃষ্টিৰ ইংগিত
গীতটোত লক্ষ্য কৰা যায়।

‘দৰঙীৰ দেশতে মন্ত্ৰী নাইকিয়া
অকলে মন্ত্ৰী ৰূপাই।’

ক’বলৈ ধৰিলে স্বৰ্গ মহাৰজাই
তহঁতেই যি লাগে কৰ।’

‘হিন্দু-মুছলমানৰ লড়াই লাগিলে
জামাতে আমিন ধৰে।’

পূৰ্ণি কামৰূপত হোৱা দন্দুৱাদ্ৰোহ, হৰদত্ত-বীৰদত্তৰ দুৰ্যোগ, হৰদত্তৰ জীয়াৰী পদ্মকুমাৰীৰ লবলাঞ্জনা আদিৰ বৰ্ণনাও আখ্যান গীতত পোৱা গৈছে। সংক্ষিপ্ত পৰিসৰতো ইংগিতময়তাৰে উল্লেখ কৰা এই তথ্যসমূহে অসম বুৰঞ্জীৰ গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ কেতবোৰ দিশৰ সাক্ষী বহন কৰিছে।

হৰদত্ত জীয়াৰী পদ্মকুমাৰী

ধনৰাত নাখালি ভাত,

কুমেদান বঙালে হাতত ধৰি নিলে

বঙালে মাৰিলে জাত।’

গৌৰীনাথ সিংহৰ দিনৰ নগএগ বিষয়া বাখৰ বৰাক ৰাইজে প্ৰজাদ্ৰোহী বুলি ভাবি বধ কৰাৰ উল্লেখো গীতৰ মাজত পোৱা গৈছে। ‘গা ধুই উঠি মোৰ বাখৰৰ তেমেকাই খাবলৈ নেপালে ভাত’ বুলি এই ঘটনাটোৰ বিষয়ে আগবঢ়োৱা বৰ্ণনা বিস্তৃত নহ’লেও গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ। সেইদৰে মোৱামৰীয়াৰ যুদ্ধত মটকসকলে প্ৰবল প্ৰতাপেৰে সদলবলে নামি পৰাৰ স্বাক্ষৰ দিয়ে ‘ভুলকৈ গুৰি ধৰ মটকৰ ডেকাদেউ ভৰা গিয়াতিৰে নাও’ গীতফাঁকিয়ে। ব্ৰিটিছৰ দিনৰ শিৱসাগৰৰ খ্যাতিমান পুৰুষ পৃথু বৰকাকতীৰ খবৰো আখ্যান গীততে ‘ধনৰে চহকী পৃথু বৰকাকতী ঘৰতে লাগিলে জুই’ বুলি উল্লেখ কৰিছে।

অসম বুৰঞ্জীৰ এটা লেখত ল’বলগীয়া ঘটনা হ’ল মানৰ আক্ৰমণ। এই মানৰ আক্ৰমণৰ আঁৰত এক দীঘলীয়া ঐতিহাস লুকাই আছে। মোৱামৰীয়া বিদ্ৰোহে সৰ্বনাশ কৰা অসম দেশখন পূৰ্ণানন্দ বুঢ়াগোহাঁয়ে পুনৰ গঠনৰ বাবে চেষ্টা চলোৱাৰ সময়তে কামৰূপৰ ফালে ঘিনাই ওৰফে বদন চন্দ্ৰ বৰফুকন হৈ প্ৰজাৰ ওপৰত উৎপীড়ন চলোৱাৰ খবৰ তেওঁ পালে। পূৰ্বৰো আৰু দুই-এটা ৰাজদ্ৰোহৰ অপৰাধ বদনৰ বিৰুদ্ধে আছিল। সকলোবোৰ চালিজাৰি চাই তেওঁক ৰাজদ্ৰোহী বিবেচনা কৰি বুদ্ধিৰে ধৰি আনিবলৈ মহেশ্বৰ পৰ্বতীয়া ফুকনক পঠালে। পূৰ্ণানন্দৰ বোৱাৰী, বচনৰ জীয়াৰী পিজৌ গাভৰুৰ তৎপৰতাত বদন পলাই গৈ কি পৰিস্থিতিত অসমলৈ মানক নিমন্ত্ৰণ জনালে, মানসেনাই অসমীয়া মানুহৰ ওপৰত কেনেকুৱা ভয়াৱহ অত্যাচাৰ চলালে আৰু ৰাজমাওৰ বুদ্ধিত কিদৰে কৌশলেৰে বদনক হত্যা কৰা হ’ল এই গোটেই কথাবোৰৰ বিস্তৃত বিৱৰণ ‘বৰফুকনৰগীত’ত সন্নিৱিষ্ট কৰা হৈছে। আনকি অসমৰ এই যুগান্তকাৰী ঘটনাটোৰ আঁৰত যে পিজৌ গাভৰু, মানৰজাৰ কুঁৱৰী আৰু ৰাজমাও— এই তিনিটি নাৰী চৰিত্ৰই নিৰ্ণায়কৰ ভূমিকা গ্ৰহণ কৰিলে তাৰ গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ

তথ্যও গীতটোত পৰিলক্ষিত হয়।

ব্ৰিটিছৰ হাতত অন্যায়তাৰে মৃত্যুবৰণ কৰিবলগা হোৱা মণিৰাম দেৱানৰ পৰিয়ালৰ গৌৰৱ আভিজাত্য, মণিৰামৰ দেশ উদ্ধাৰৰ কৌশল, তেওঁৰ স্বদেশ চিন্তা, গোপনে গোপনে চাহাবে পতা মণিৰাম অন্যায় বিচাৰ, অসমীয়া মানুহৰ ওপৰত দেৱানৰ মৃত্যুৰ গভীৰ প্ৰভাৱ, অসমভূমিত ব্ৰিটিছৰ চিপাহীৰ গিজনি নিজৰ মানুহৰ ষড়যন্ত্ৰ তথা বিশ্বাসগাটকতাৰ ফলতে মণিৰামৰ লগতে পিয়লি ফুকন, দুতিৰাম কাকতী আদি জীৱনলৈকো বিপদ নামি অহাৰ বিশদ বৰ্ণনা আখ্যান গীতৰ মাজত বিৰাজমান। মণিৰামক লৈ ইংৰাজে অন্যায়

ব্যৱহাৰৰ ছবি কাহিনী গীতত এনেধৰণৰ—

গুপতে গুপতে

ধৰিলে মণিৰাম

গুপতে গুপতে নিলে,

হাওলাট চাহাবে

টোকোলাই পাৰতে

ডিঙিত চিপেজৰী দিলে।^{১০}

আনহাতে চিপাহীৰ অত্যাচাৰে জুৰুলা কৰিলেও স্বদেশপ্ৰেমী অসমীয়াৰ ওচৰত অত্যাচাৰী ব্ৰিটিছ শাসকসকল কিদৰে পৰাজয় আৰু অসমীয়াই হেৰোৱা স্বাধীনতা ঘূৰাই পাবলৈ যে সক্ষম হ'ল সেই কথাও আখ্যান গীত স্পষ্ট আৰু সুন্দৰকৈ প্ৰকাশিত হৈছে—

কোনে বোলে জীলে,

ইংৰাজে দেশখন

আকৌ আমাক দিলে।^{১১}

ঐতিহাসিক 'ফুলগুৰি ধেৰা'য়ো সাধাৰণ মানুহৰ মাজত যে গভীৰভাৱে প্ৰভাৱ পেলাইছিল সেৱ নিশ্চিত। সেয়েহে স্বভাৱকবিৰ ৰচনাত এই ঘটনায়ো ঠাই পাইছে।

'কলং নদীৰ পাৰতে আফু খেতি কৰোঁতে

বগা চাহাবৰ লগত যুঁজখন লাগিলে।^{১২}

অত্যাচাৰী ইংৰাজ শাসকে নভবা-নুশুনাকৈ সাধাৰণ ৰায়তৰ খাজনা বৃদ্ধি কৰাত তেওঁলোকে যথেষ্ট দুৰ্ভোগ ভুগিব লগা হৈছিল। সেয়েহে ইংৰাজৰ এই অন্যায় সিদ্ধান্তৰ প্ৰতিবাদ কৰিবলৈ সাহস গোটেৱ অনেক লোকে চাহাবৰ গুলীত কৰুণভাৱে প্ৰাণ হেৰুৱাইছিল। বিদেশী শোষকৰ হাতত ৰায়তৰ দুৰৱস্থাৰ এই সঁচা কাহিনী আখ্যানগীতত হৃদয়স্পৰ্শী ভাষাৰে বৰ্ণিত হৈছে।

ৰাইজে উঠি বোলে ছজুৰ খাজনা দিবা নৰো।

পাঁচটকীয়া খাজনা আমি কেনেকৈ আদায় কৰোঁ।।

.....
হেন দেখি চাহাবৰ গাত নাই উলি।

চিপাহীক ছকুম দিলা বন্দুক দিয়া বুলি।।

.....

শত শত মানুহ মৰিল তাৰ সীমা নাই।

চোৰা ভাই খেদা খোৰা ৰাইজৰ বিলায়।’^{১০}

ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ মূল চালিকাশক্তি মহাত্মা গান্ধীৰ ওপৰত অসমীয়া মানুহৰ যে কিমান গভীৰ আস্থা আছিল তাৰ গান্ধীজীয়েও সাধাৰণ ভুলগিটিয়াৰৰ সুখ-দুখৰ সমভাগী হৈ আন্দোলনটোক কিদৰে সুপৰিচালনাৰে আঙুৰাই নিছিল— এইবোৰৰ কথাৰ তথ্যসন্মত বিৱৰণ ‘গান্ধীৰ গীত’ত বিস্তৃতভাৱে পোৱা যায়। তদুপৰি অসমৰ অস্তিত্ব বিপন্নকাৰী চীনা আক্ৰমণৰ কাহিনীও আখ্যান গীতে দৰি ৰাখিছে এনেদৰে—

শিবসাগৰ শিৱদৌল

চীনা যুদ্ধ লাগিল গ’ল,

টোৱাঙলৈ যাবলৈ

পাহাৰেদি ৰাজ্য হ’ল।’^{১১}

সৰ্বভাৰতীয় প্ৰেক্ষাপটৰ ঐতিহাসিক ঘটনাজিৰ দৰেই কেৱল অসমত অসমীয়াৰ বাবে গঢ়ি উঠা ভাষা আন্দোলন, অসম আন্দোলন আদিৰ বাস্তৱভিত্তিক কাহিনীবোৰো আখ্যান গীতত সুন্দৰকৈ বৰ্ণিত হৈছে। এই আন্দোলনসমূহত ছহিদ হোৱা মোজাম্মিল হক, অনিল বৰা, খৰ্গেশ্বৰ তালুকদাৰ আদিৰ জীৱনৰ কৰুণ পৰিণতিয়ে মানুহক যে স্পৰ্শ কৰি গৈছিল এই গীতবোৰেই তাৰ উজ্জ্বল সাক্ষী। আনহাতে সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ চেতনাক জাগ্ৰত কৰি তোলা এই আন্দোলনবোৰৰ সফল যেন লগা সমাপ্তি দেখি সৰল ৰাইজৰ মাজত কিদৰে সন্তুষ্টি বিয়পিছিল তাৰ ভাসো গীতবোৰত বিৰাজমান।

‘মোজাম্মিল শ্বহীদ হ’ল অসমীয়া মাধ্যম হ’ল

অসমত অসমীয়া হৈল আৰ ঐ’^{১২}

বিদেশী খেদা আন্দোলনত অসমৰ শিক্ষক, ছাত্ৰ, উকীল সকলোৰে নিজৰ পঢ়া-শুনা, কাম-কাজ বাদ দি সহযোগ কৰা কাহিনী, পুলিচৰ হাতত মানুহৰ দুৰৱস্থা, আন্দোলনটোক লৈ সাধাৰণ মানুহে কৰা আশাবোৰ, ছাত্ৰ সন্থাৰ মিটিং, দিল্লীযাত্ৰা, অসমত জৰুৰী অৱস্থা ঘোষণা, ’৭১ চনক ভিত্তিবৰ্ষ হিচাপে লৈ চৰকাৰে আগবঢ়োৱা প্ৰস্তাৱ, সঞ্জয় গান্ধীৰ মৃত্যু আদি অসম আন্দোলন সম্পৰ্কীয় সৰু-বৰ অনেক কথা গীতবোৰত সন্নিৱিষ্ট হৈছে। ভাষাগত বা বিষয়গত দিশৰ পৰা এই গীতবোৰ কিছু অৰ্বাচীন সৃষ্টি হ’লেও আখ্যান আৰু অজ্ঞাত ব্যক্তিৰ নিৰ্মিতি এই মালিতাবোৰৰ ঐতিহাসিক গুৰুত্ব কোনোমতেই অস্বীকাৰ কৰিব নোৱাৰি। অসম ইতিহাসৰ তথ্যসম্বলিত এনে মালিতাৰ উদাহৰণ হৈছে—

ভাষা সমস্যাত মৰা অ’ অনিল বৰা

নগাঁও কলেজৰ ল’ৰা।’^{১৩}

‘অসমৰ ছাত্ৰ-ছাত্ৰী আন্দোলন কৰে।

পঢ়া-শুনা বাদ দি মিটিং কৰি ফুৰে।।

.....
মোৰ বাছ খৰ্গেশ্বৰ কৈক গৈলা এৰি।

তোৰ হকে মায়ে কান্দে ধূলিতে বাগৰি।।”

ভাৰত তথা অসমৰ বুৰঞ্জীৰ বহুতো মূল্যবান তথ্য সংৰক্ষণকাৰী অসমীয়া আখ্যান গীতসমূহ অৱশ্যে স্থানবিশেষে ঐতিহাসিক সত্যৰ কিছু সালসলনি নঘটা নহয়। স্বভাৱকবিৰ অতিৰঞ্জিত বৰ্ণনাৰ দোষে কোনো কোনো ক্ষেত্ৰত সত্যতাৰ ওপৰত আঁচোৰ লগাইছে। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে ‘বৰফুকনৰ গীত’ত বৰফুকনৰ কলিকতা যাত্ৰাৰ বৰ্ণনা প্ৰসংগত উল্লেখ কৰা ‘কলিকতাত খালেগৈ বিলাতী পাৰ’^{১৮}, অসমলৈ নিমন্ত্ৰণ কৰা প্ৰসংগত বৰফুকনৰ বজাই কোৱা ‘সৰুপানী’ চোৱাম, বাপেকৰ মঙহৰ পুতেকক খুৱাম”^{১৯}, মানৰ আক্ৰমণৰ প্ৰসংগত সন্নিবিষ্ট কৰা ‘পেট ফালি চলে কলাদিল উলিয়াই ফৰিকা দি খালে’^{২০} আদি পদৰ কথা উল্লেখ কৰিব পাৰি। সেইদৰে মণিৰাম দেৱানৰ গীততো ‘ঘেণীয়েক কান্দিলে চাহাবৰ মাচিয়াত ধৰি’^{২১} আদিৰ দৰে বাস্তৱভিত্তিক কথাত অনেক ঠাইত সন্নিবিষ্ট কৰিছে। অৱশ্যে এনে দুই-এটা তথ্যবিভাট ঘটিলেও অধিকক্ষেত্ৰতে যে গীতসমূহে ঐতিহাসিক সত্যকে ব্যাখ্যা কৰিছে সেয়া নিশ্চিত। সেয়েহে অনাখৰী কবিৰ সৃষ্টি হ’লেও অসমীয়া আখ্যান গীতসমূহ বুৰঞ্জীৰ দিশৰপৰা যথেষ্ট মূল্যবান আৰু বিশেষত্বপূৰ্ণ।

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Origin and Development of the Bodo Community in Assam: A Historical Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The Bodo Community, one of the largest of the 18 ethnic sub-groups within the Bodo-Kacharis group, has carved a niche on the annals of Assam history. With its unique socio-cultural and economic identity, the community opens up new vistas of observation and research. This aspect is likely to unearth the hitherto unknown facts and issues relating to the community.

In this paper, an attempt is made to look at the community right from their advent to the extent of the Bodoland Movement. In between, a cursory look is also given at their many and varied problems leading to the rise of their struggle for self-assurance in Assam

Key Words: Bodo Community, Ethnic group, Bodo Kachari, British, Bodoland Movement.

1. Introduction:

Among the ethnic groups in Assam, the Bodos are credit with having in possession a rich heritage that dates many years back. It is because of the sheer lack of the written records of historical development that the early history of the Bodos is largely unknown. Unavailability of sufficient data and adequate analysis is one of the areas to be given due attention. On the basis of the availability of materials, it comes to our notice that the Bodos formed a large group of Mongoloid people living in Mongolia. Then, as usual, migration started and some parts China, Hwangho valley and Tibet were occupied by them. In course of time, they shifted their habitation to different parts of the North-East India. They led their own life touching upon their unique language, customs, myths, legends etc. Simple and easy-going by nature, the Bodos could easily mix up with other ethnic groups in Assam. But their natural self and self-assured identity underwent many upheavals as time society, marked changes took place in their pattern of life. History, being a living witness to happenings, unveils the picture of the community. It is the picture which is at once grim and serious. Despite inheriting a rich social and cultural legacy, we find the Bodos struggling, particularly in the post independence period, to liberate themselves from the clutches that have proved determined to their overall progress. After their struggle, the community has reached a phase which seems to bring a rapid change to every sphere of the Bodos.

2. Methodology:

The study is completely descriptive and theoretical. It is based on secondary data collections from article, magazines, research papers, books, journals, government publications and Internet.

3. Discussions:

Bodo-Kachari is a generic term applied to a number of ethnic groups predominantly in Assam speaking Tibeto-Burman languages or claiming a common mythical ancestry. They have prominent Mongoloid features with high cheek bones, slit eyes and a slight growth of hair in the body and scant beard. The Bodo-Kacharis were first classified by S. Endle as the Kacharis. Here Bodo is derived from "Bod" which is Tibet and Kachari is derived from "kassar" meaning the foothills of the Himalayas. They are

considered to have reached the Brahmaputra valley via Tibet and settled in the foothills of the eastern Himalayan range which includes the whole of Assam, Tripura, North-Bengal and parts of Bangladesh. That the Bodo-Kacharis were early colonizers of the river valleys is taken from the fact that most of the rivers in the Brahmaputra valley today carry Tibeto-Burman names—"Dibang", "Dihang", "Dikhou", "Dihing" etc.—where "di-" means water in Tibeto-Burman.

The Bodos, previously known as Kacharis or Kirata had close affinity and was related by blood with the races termed as Deori, Barman, Rabha, Dimasa, Tiwa, Mech, Lalung, Motok, Garo, Hojai, Chutiyas, Moran, Sonowal, Tippera, Mahaliya, Koch-Rajbonshi, Sarania Hajong, Thengal etc. Man, by nature, is adventurous and tries ever to hold a better life than the present one.

For this reason, migration became a general tendency of man coming under this urge, the Bodos, a large group of Mongoloid people who lived in Mongolia around 2000 B.C., came and settled in some parts of China and gradually extended their dwelling in the Hwangho valley and Tibet for many centuries. Again, charged by their adventurous zeal, some of them migrated to the plain areas of Bhutan. Though they settled in a wide area of Bhutan yet some of them were in search of fortune and came to live in Koch Behar, Rangpur, West Bengal, Nepal, Bangladesh etc. Thus, this Mongolian race divided into different sections in course of time, took different name and liked to identify themselves differently either by the process of assimilation with the people lived before their settlement or by their adjustment to the new environment. Rivers, mainly the Brahmaputra and Barak in the NE, had a great role in moulding the life of these people. Most of the groups hailing together adopted the name of their residing place after the name of the rivers and mountains, i.e. the Morans and the Borahis settled on the banks of the Dikhou and Disang. But it was in 1228 AD that Sukapha made his campaign to this land from Burma. He defeated and invaded the wide territory of the NE which was previously attached to some parts of the greater Naga Hills. Then he defeated the Morans and Borahis and occupied the land. Sukapha with his followers tried to assimilate with these people to increase his strength with a vision to win over the Kachari kings who ruled upon nearly all the groups included into the greater Bodo race.

A cursory look at the ancient Indian Vedic literature and the Mahabharata shows that Pragjyotishpur was the capital of the greater undivided Assam. The mighty Danava or Asuras or Mleches or Kiratas ruled for a long time. The ancient mighty kings like Mahiranga, Narakasura, Ghatakasura, Banasura, Bhagadatta, Bhuluk etc. belonged to the Mleches. These kings were related with the place presently known as Guwahati, Shillong, Sonitpur, Bhulukpung, Sibsagar etc. So, in this long period the Great Bodo race passed many generations leaving their offshoots in different parts of the NE. As time passed on they adopted new customs, religion, language, habits in their process of assimilation with other people. They came into contact with various affairs of their life and customs to adjust and regulate their life. In this process, some of them got privileged while most of them remained backward. Thus, all the greater Bodo race was divided into some sects and giving the name as mentioned above they confined themselves within those variations. Thus, the present Bodo community includes only the persons, bearing the surname as-Basumatary, Bodosa, Boro, Bargary, Brahma, Daimary, Goyary, Narzary etc.

The Bodos were once a powerful race. They are said to have ruled over the whole of Kamrup. Just before the arrival of the Ahoms in the 13th Century, the Kacharis and the Chutias (including Maran and Motak) two branches of the Bodos ruled over a large part of Eastern Assam. Moreover, the Bodos had royal glories and occupied the thrones of Koch Behar, Bijni, Darang and Beltola in Guwahati. The Bodos of the eastern part established a powerful kingdom with its capital near Sadia and also at Dimapur, Maibong and Khaspur against the continuous invasion of the Ahoms and neighbouring kingdoms till the advent of the British rule in Assam.

The Bodo people could not develop much under the British rule. During that period, large numbers of the Bodo people were converted into Christianity. Their social, political,

economic and cultural sides remained neglected. This grim picture continued ever after Independence. People taking the upperhand in the so called Assamese society did not accord equal position to different ethnic groups to which the Bodos were no exception. Multifarious issues and problems remained unaddressed. They looked for some one or some organization to stand for their cause.

Bodo Movement:

Looking at the age-old negligence and apathy shown to the Bodo people and other tribals of Assam, the Plains Tribals Council of Assam (PTCA) was formed in the early 1960's. they demanded a Union Territory called Udayachal to safeguard the tribal belts and blocks which were being encroached by rich landlords and new immigrants through illegal means. Education, health, transport, communication were some other areas raised by the Council. But the demand remained far from being materialized.

The visionary talent Upendranath Bhahma, the Bodofa of the Bodos advocated strongly equal rights and status for all human beings and wanted to lead his community to the portals of highly accomplished world community in which no social barriers and prejudices exist. When he was the President of ABSU, he saw fractured loyalties of people with different interest and opinions. Those who opposed his views initially, started respecting and favouring him after the long meetings of the delegate sessions conducted by him. Soon, the opponents in the PTCA too, supported him and joined the subsequent movements.

Bodoland Movement:

In the late 1980's, All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) and Bodo political parties jointly moved and demanded a separate state, called Bodoland. Given the decades-long unaddressed issues and negligence to them, the Bodoland Movement was in the right direction under the leadership and relentless effort of Upendranath Bhahma. The Movement was also joined by an armed militant group called Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT). During the time of Mr. Hiteswar Saikia, the Chief Minister of Assam, the Bodo Accord was accepted and thereby a glimpse of hope for the upliftment of the Bodos came into being. The BSF, Boro Security Force, an underground organisation of Bodos, now NDFB, National Democratic Front of Bodoland, is still involved in insurgency. Under Hagrama Mahilary, the former BLT members formed an alliance with the Indian National Congress and came to power in Dispur in 2006 Assam Assembly elections.

Religion:



Bodo girls performing the Kherai dance.



Drummers at the Kherai puja.

In the past, Bodos worshipped their forefathers. In recent years, Bodos practice Bathouism, Hinduism and Christianity. In November of 2006 the Bodo Religious Bathou ejected seven Christian families from Haldibari and surroundign villages. Among Christian groups that some Bodo belong to is the Bodo Evangelical Lutheran Church. **Bathouism** is a form worshipping forefathers called **Obonglaoree**. The *siju* plant (belonging to the Euphorbia genus), is taken as the symbol of Bathou and

worshiped. In the Bodo Language *Ba* means *five* and *thou* means *deep*. Five is a significant number in the Bathou religion. A clean surface near home or courtyard could be an ideal for worship. Usually, one pair of Betelnut called 'goi' and betel leaf called 'pathwi' could be used as offering. On some occasion, worship offering could include rice, milk, and sugar. For the Kherai Puja, the most important festival of the Bodos, the altar is placed in the rice field. Other important festivals of the Bodos include *Hapsa Hatarnai*, *Awnkham Gwrlwi Janai*, *Bwisagu* and *Domashi*.

Language and Literature:

Bodo language, a branch of the Sino-Tibetan family of languages, is a language of the Bodo group under the Assam-Burmese group of languages. It is closely related to the Dimasa language of Assam and the Garo language of Meghalaya. It is also a very closely related language of Kokborok language spoken in Tripura.

In the aftermath of socio-political awakening and movement launched by the Bodo organizations since 1913, the language was introduced as the medium of instruction (1963) in the primary schools in Bodo dominated areas. Currently, the Bodo language serves as a medium of instruction up to the secondary level and an associated official language in the state of Assam. The language has attained a position of pride with the opening of the Post-Graduate course in language and literature in the University of Guwahati in 1996. The language is officially written using the Devanagari script, although it also has a long history of using the Roman script. Some researchers have suggested that the language originally used a now-lost script called Deodhai. But there is a difference in using the letters in Bodo than the Devanagari. The Bodo language, recognised constitutionally in 2003, has now become a national as well as an international language at present.

Musical Instruments:

Serja, Siphung, Kham, Jotha, Gongwna, Gorkha etc. are the main musical instruments of the Bodos. They play the musical instruments in the 'Kherai', 'Garja' and 'Baisagu' particularly in celebrating their multifarious festivals.

Dress and Ornaments:

In their mood of dress the Bodo do not differ from their Hindu neighbours, but they show certain fondness for the coloured garment and are aware of natural art of dying, the materials for preparing the dying (usually blue and various shades of the red) being derived generally from the leaves or roots of trees. The male persons, both young and the old put on 'Gamocha' when they are at home, which hangs down to the knees from the waist. The women generally tie a cloth round the chest just bellow the arm pit that hangs to the toe. It is called the 'Dokhona'. And if it is plain, it is called 'Salamath' and if ornamented it is called 'Dokhona Thawshi'. The Bodo women also wore 'Pasra' or 'Jwmbaigra' along with Dokhona. The womwn use very few ornaments made of silver and gold namely 'Khera or Kheru, Jabkring, Putty, Nak-Phul for the nose. For the neck Chandrahar, Thanka-Siri, Jibou-Zinjiri. For the hands Ashen, Mutha.

4. Conclusion:

From the above discussion, it comes to over view that the Bodos passed through different phases of turmoil and suffering. Their problems and the issues related to social, political, economic and cultural spheres could not reach the table of negotiation and solution for a long time. Even after the assimilation with the larger mainstream Assamese society, they had to sustain the life of alienation and isolation. Their identity of being the 'other' has led them take resort to the struggle for self-determination. Despite being the descendents from a rich heritage, their quest for self-identity and self-affirmation bear the veil of irony to some extent. However, it is to be mentioned that despite the establishment of the BTC and different and *thou* means *deep*. Five is a significant number in the Bathou religion. A clean surface near home or courtyard could be an ideal for worship. Usually, one pair of Betelnut called 'goi'

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be done on the community so that its rich heritage is kept intact. Moreover, they would show new areas and issues to be developed in near future.

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EVOLUTION OF EDUCATION AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT

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Abstract

Education in ancient Assam was centred round the Guru Griha. Sanskrit Tolas and village schools were provided by the Brahmanas. Curriculum was mainly Vidya and Kala. Only kings and elites were educated and there was no provision of education for common man. Education in medieval Assam witnessed developing new centres of learning and education in the form of Satras. Satradhikars visit villages to disseminate knowledge. Sankardeva started education in Sanskrit Tolas. The great Koch king Naranarayana was educated in Banaras. But still there were no facility for mass education.

The present educational system of India as well as Assam is an implantation of British rule. Wood's Despatch of 1854 laid the foundation of present system of education. British government started giving funds to schools to spread education among the people. Gopal Krishna Gokhle tabled a private member's bill in Imperial Legislative Council demanding free and compulsory primary education for the boys between the age of 6 and 10 but could not pass it on vote. His Highness of Baroda had made primary education compulsory in his state in 1906. The new education policy of 1913 emphasized on expansion of lower primary education and Local Board Schools were established.

Education was listed as a Directive Principle of State Policy of the Indian Constitution and was placed in the Concurrent List. India was a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights to Child, 1989 and World Declaration on Education for All, 1992. The Supreme Court of India, in Mohini Jain Vs State of Karnataka and J. P. Unnikrishnan Vs State of Andhra Pradesh held that children have a fundamental right to education. The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act of 2002, prescribes to provide free and compulsory education. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill (RTE), 2008, was passed by the Parliament in 2009 which grants fundamental right status to Right to Education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years as per provisions of Eighty-sixth Amendment of the Constitution.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the most potent mechanism for the advancement of human beings. It emancipates the human beings and leads to liberation from ignorance. India was the only country where knowledge was systematized and where provision was made for its imparting at the highest level in ancient times. University education on almost modern lines existed in India as early as 800 B.C.

ANCIENT PERIOD

Early education in India commenced under the supervision of a Guru. The education was imparted on the basis of caste. The Brahmanas learned about scriptures and religion, while the Kshatriyas were educated in the various aspects of warfare. The Vaishya caste learned commerce and other specific vocational courses while education was largely denied to the Shudras, the lowest caste. The earliest venues of education in India were Ashrams set up by the Gurus and medium was Sanskrit. Buddhist institutions of higher learning like Taxila and Nalanda imparted formal education to thousands of pupils every year and were attended by students from China and Central Asia also.

Education in ancient Assam also was centred round the Guru Griha. Sanskrit Tolas and village schools were provided by the Brahmanas of Agrahara villages. Curriculum was mainly Vidya and Kala. Vidya means the study of veda, vedanga, upanishada and puranas while kala relates to music, dancing, painting etc. Only kings and elites were educated and there was no provision of education for common man.

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MEDIEVAL PERIOD

Examples of royal patronage in this period include construction of buildings under the Rastrakuta dynasty in 945 AD. The institutions arranged for multiple residences for educators as well as state sponsored education and arrangements for students and scholars. Similar arrangements were made by the Chola dynasty in 1024 AD, which provided state support to selected students in educational establishments. Temple schools from 12–13th centuries included the school at the Nataraja temple situated at Chidambaram which employed 20 librarians, out of whom 8 were copiers of manuscripts and 2 were employed for verification of the copied manuscripts. With the advent of Islam in India the traditional methods of education increasingly came under Islamic influence. Islamic institution of education in India included Madrassas and Maktabas which taught grammar, philosophy, mathematics, and law.

In Assam, Ahom rulers from Rudrasinha started patronizing Hindu religion. Traditional education consisted of Sanskrit grammar, religious texts etc. taught in Sanskrit Tolas with brahmana pundits. Sankardeva started education in Sanskrit Tolas. The great Koch king Naranarayana was educated in Banaras. Education in medieval Assam witnessed developing new centres of learning and education in the form of Satras. Satradhikars visit villages to disseminate knowledge but still there were no facility for formal education to the masses.

BRITISH PERIOD: 19TH CENTURY

The present educational system of India is an implantation of British rulers. The Charter Act 1813 provided that a sum of not less than one lac rupees in each year shall be set apart by the East India Company and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and education and promotion of science for the native Indians. It fully empowered the Missionaries to come to India and spread education. Royal Charter of 1813 laid the foundation of state funded modern education system in India but it immediately lead to some confusions regarding way of spending money for education, aims of the education, agencies of education, medium of instruction and method to be adopted for spread of education etc.. Macaulay's minute in 1835 stressed on English as the medium of instruction. The Britishers were not keen to spread knowledge to the common man and Downward Filtration Theory adopted during 1830s insisted on providing education to the higher strata of the society only. Wood's Despatch of 1854 was one of the greatest landmarks of the history of Indian education. It recommended creation of Department of Education in each of the five provinces, giving Grant- in – aids to the institutes managed by private bodies or organizations to encourage opening of more schools and rejection of downward filtration theory. It was realized that western education was good for public and as such English should remain as the medium of instruction. Indian Education Commission 1882, known as Hunter Commission was set up to review the condition of Indian education. The commission recommended that effort should be made by the state for the expansion and development of primary education and preferably to made it compulsory through regulation. Primary education should be imparted through vernacular language. Elementary education was brought under Local Boards and District and Municipal Boards were entrusted with the management of the schools including allocation of funds. Even then towards the close of the nineteenth century, the progress and expansion of primary education was slow and illiteracy was the main concern.

In Assam, the British established first English school at Guwahati in 1835 followed by at Sibsagar in 1840. American Baptist Missionary set up first school at Sadia in 1837. By 1845 Baptist Missionaries set up 3 schools in Nagaon, 5 in Kamrup and 14 in Sibsagar. First girls' school was set up at Sibsagar in 1840, at Nowgaon 1843 and at Guwahati 1850. By 1845 Baptist Missionaries set up 22 schools with having 347 students. By the year 1902 there were total 3534 Govt. and non Govt. schools with 1,03,541 students in Assam. Cotton College was established in 1901. Education was still confined to the elite and affluent class and there was no provision of education for the common masses.

20TH CENTURY, PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

The Swadeshi movement leaders felt that the education policy of the British was not wholly immune from ulterior political motives. Successes of complete boycott call of foreign goods lead to propagation of national education. A private body named 'The National Council of Education' was formed. His Highness of Baroda had made primary education compulsory in his state in 1906. Gopal Krishna Gokhale tabled a private member's bill in Imperial Legislative Council on March 19, 1910 demanding free and compulsory primary education for the boys between the age of 6 and 10 but he had to withdraw it. Next year in 1911, he reintroduced the same bill but could not pass it on vote again due to opposition from the British Govt.. Despite the rejection of Gokhale's bill, Govt. organized Delhi Durbar on December 12, 1912 and the new education policy of 1913 of the Govt. emphasized on large expansion of lower primary education and free education in backward and poor areas. Under the provincial autonomy from 1937 education received special attention. Gandhiji adopted the Basic Education Scheme or Wardha Scheme in 1937 and gave emphasis on vocationalisation of education but there was no mention about universalisation of primary education. Gandhiji advocated for development of vocational skills of the students in a particular craft and made the educational institutions self sufficient by selling the handicraft products produced by the students and thereby he tried to reduce state responsibility to grant money for expansion of mass education.

During the first part of the twentieth century, Assam witnessed establishment of more and more primary schools set up by Local Boards. The system of state funding on the basis of the result was a major threat to survival of the schools. Literacy rate was still as low as 6% and primary education did not reach the common masses. Assam Primary Education Act was passed in 1926 to provide free and compulsory education to the whole or any part of an area to children of the age group between 6 and 11 of either sex or both sexes. The expenses were to be born by the local authority and the state gov. in a ratio of 1:2 and local authority could levy educational cess for that purpose but could not collect fee from the students. The Act which made it compulsory to the gov. to provide free and compulsory education up to a certain age remained a dead letter as the Assam Primary Education Act, 1926 was never given effect to due to lack of political will of the Govt. and non Govt. schools with 1,03,541 students in Assam. Cotton College was established in 1901. Education was still confined to the elite and affluent class and there was no provision of education for the common masses.

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POST INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

India has been making consistent efforts for free and compulsory education prior and later to 1947. A sub-committee on Fundamental Rights of the Constituent Assembly placed Free and Compulsory Education on the list of Fundamental Rights. However it was not agreed to and the same was listed as a non-justiceable right under Article 45 of Directive Principle of State Policy. Article 45 stated, "The state shall endeavour to provide, within a period of 10 years from the commencement of this constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years." The commitment to provide free and compulsory education within ten years was not fulfilled. In fact, Policy proclamations towards universalizing elementary education have remained a dead letter for fifty years. Elementary education was not a political priority and the education officials concluded that financial resources for universalizing education were not available. Since the early nineties, the government of India has been under tremendous pressure to universalize education.

A. EXTERNAL PRESSURE

Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights specifies, "Everyone has the right to education, and therefore, education should be free and compulsory at least in the elementary stages". India was a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights to Child, 1989. Article 28 categorically states - "States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and shall make primary education compulsory and available free to all." India's ratification of this Convention in 1992 placed a legal obligation on the Government to respect children's rights and bring new laws. The Education for All Initiative which was kick-started during the World Conference on 'Education for All (EFA); Meeting Learning Needs' held at Jomtein, Thailand in March 1990 saw the adoption of the 'World Declaration on Education for All'. It held, 'Education is a fundamental right for all people, women and men, of all ages, throughout the world'. The initiative was sponsored by UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO and World Bank.

B. INTERNAL PRESSURE

In 1992, while hearing a case of capitation fees in professional colleges, in *Mohini Jain v State of Karnataka*, the Supreme Court of India held that 'every citizen has a right to education under the Constitution'. This judgment was reconsidered in 1993 by a five-member bench of the Supreme Court, in *J. P. Unnikrishnan, v State of Andhra Pradesh*. The Court held that right to education means: (a) every child/citizen of this country has a right to free education until he completes the age of fourteen years and (b) after a child/citizen completes 14 years, his right to education is circumscribed by the limits of the economic capacity of the State and its development'.

EDUCATION AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT

Right to education includes the right of access to education, right to quality education, right to education throughout all stages of childhood and beyond, right to availability and accessibility of education and right to equality of opportunity in education. Until recently the Government of India did not have a binding legal obligation to provide education to all children. The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act of 2002, prescribes that 'the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of

the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine' (Article 21A) also inserted Article 51A (k) under Fundamental Duties which reads, 'who is a parent or guardian provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, ward between the age of six and fourteen years'. The Parliament recently passed the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE), 2008. The Act is the enabling legislation that seeks to operationalise the Fundamental Right to Education enacted under 86th Constitutional Amendment. The new Act provides that every child who has attained the age of six years shall have the right to participate in full time elementary education and to complete it, and towards that end shall have the right to be admitted to a neighbourhood school and to be provided free and compulsory education in such school. A non-enrolled child who is in the age group seven - nine years, at the commencement of this Act shall have the right to be admitted to an age appropriate grade in a neighbourhood school within one year from the commencement of the Act. It shall be the responsibility of the State to ensure the availability of a neighbourhood school for providing free and compulsory education for every child. It shall be the responsibility of every parent/guardian to enroll his child or ward, which has attained the entry age in a school, and to facilitate her completion of elementary education.

CONCLUSION

Education has been recognized as the centerpiece of human resource development. It is realized at the highest levels that education will play a key role in balanced socio-economic development. Education helps people to break intergenerational cycles of poverty, deprivation and exploitation. Unless there is political will, adequate resources, appropriately functioning institutions and well trained personnel the best policy and legislation will be of little or of no significance. Right to Education, therefore, need not be confined to the period of formal schooling. It should sow in the child the seeds of virtues, like sincerity, honesty, straight-forwardness, courage, altruism, patience, endurance, perseverance, self-control and so on. The fundamental right to education, like other fundamental rights, gives a very tall order to the State and the society. In order to be entitled to global recognition as civilized, democratic and developed country, we must have educated and enlightened citizens.

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Herbal Medicine System: History and present status

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Introduction:

Plants have been used as a source of medicines from ancient times and even in modern times, plant-based systems continue to play an essential role in health care. The use of various plant parts to cure specific ailments by different ethnic groups around the world is in vogue since time immemorial. The world is endowed with a rich wealth of medicinal plants of the total 297,000–510,000 plant species in the world, 70,000 (10-18 per cent) are estimated to be employed in healthcare. India due to its unique variety of geographical and climatic factors had a rich and varied flora of medicinal plants. In India, of the total 17,500 native plant species, 6,000 (34.3 per cent) are known to have medicinal importance (Foundation for Revitalization of Local Health Traditions, 2007). The Himalayas including Northeast India harbour about 8,000 plant species of which 2,500 (21.3 per cent) have been reported to have important medicinal properties. Throughout history, from the Bible, Koran, Vedas and other old texts, the medicinal benefits of herbs are quoted. Herbs have a variety of uses including culinary, medicinal, or in some cases even spiritual usage. General usage differs between culinary herbs and medicinal herbs. In medicinal or spiritual use any of the parts of the plant might be considered “herbs”, including leaves, roots, flowers, seeds, resin, root bark, inner bark (cambium), berries and sometimes the pericarp or other portions of the plant. A great deal of research is currently being focused worldwide on various herbs and traditional medicine in the hope that new cures for illness and disease can be found.

History of Herbal Medicine System:

According to written record, the study of herbs dates back over 5,000 years to the Sumerians, who described well-established medicinal uses of plants. In Ancient Egyptian medicine during 1000 B.C, garlic, opium, castor oil, coriander, mint and other herbs were used as medicine. Indian Ayurveda medicine has used herbs such as turmeric possibly as early as 1900 B.C.^[1] Many other herbs and minerals used in Ayurveda were later described by ancient Indian herbalists such as Charaka and Sushruta during the 1st millennium BC. The Sushruta Samhita in the 6th century BC describes 700 medicinal plants, 64 preparations from mineral sources, and 57 preparations based on animal sources.^[2]

The first Chinese herbal book, the *Shennong Bencao Jing*, during 2700 B.C., lists 365 medicinal plants and their uses - including ma-Huang, the shrub that introduced the drug ephedrine to modern medicine.

The ancient Greeks and Romans made medicinal use of plants. Greek and Roman medicinal practices, as preserved in the writings of Hippocrates and - especially - Galen, provided the pattern for later western medicine. Hippocrates advocated the use of a few simple herbal drugs - along with fresh air, rest, and proper diet. Galen, on the other hand, recommended large doses of drug mixtures - including plant, animal, and mineral ingredients. The Greek physician compiled the first European treatise on the properties and uses of medicinal plants, *De Materia Medica*. In the first century, Dioscorides wrote a compendium of more than 500 plants that remained an authoritative reference into the 17th century. Similarly important for herbalists and botanists of later centuries was the Greek book that founded the science of botany, Theophrastus' *Historia Plantarum*, written in the fourth century B.C.

In early medieval Europe many Greek and Roman writings on medicine were preserved by hand copying of manuscripts in monasteries. The monasteries thus tended to become local centers of medical knowledge.

During 9th century, in the medieval Islamic world, the medical schools known as Bimaristan began to appear among Persians and Arabs which was more advanced than medieval Europe. The Arabs venerated Greco-Roman culture and translated thousands of texts into Arabic for further study.^[3] As a trading culture, the Arab travelers had access to plant material from distant places such as China and India. Herbals, medical texts and translations of the classics of antiquity filtered in from east and west.^[4] Muslim botanists and Muslim physicians significantly expanded on the earlier knowledge of medicinal practice. Among them, al-Dinawari described more than 637 plant drugs in the 9th century,^[5] and Ibn al-Baitar described more than 1,400 different plants, foods and drugs, over 300 of which were his own original discoveries, in the 13th century.^[6] The experimental scientific method was introduced in the 13th century by the Andalusian, an Arab botanist. Al-Nabati introduced empirical techniques in the testing, description and identification of numerous medicinal plants and he separated unverified reports from those supported by actual tests and observations which evolves the science of pharmacology.^[7]

Avicenna's *The Canon of Medicine* (1025) lists 800 tested drugs, plants and minerals.^[8] Book Two is devoted to a discussion of the healing properties of herbs, including nutmeg, senna, sandalwood, rhubarb, myrrh, cinammon, and rosewater.^[3] Baghdad was an important center for Arab herbalism, as was Al-Andalus between 800 and 1400. Abulcasis (936-1013) of Cordoba authored *The Book of Simples*, an important source for later European herbals, while Ibn al-Baitar (1197-1248) of Malaga authored the *Corpus of Simples*, the most complete Arab herbal which introduced 200 new healing herbs, including tamarind, aconite, and nux vomica.^{[3][9]} Other pharmacopoeia books include that written by Abu-Rayhan Biruni in the 11th century and Ibn Zuhr (Avenzoar) in the 12th century (and printed in 1491),^[10] The origins of clinical pharmacology also date back to the Middle Ages in Avicenna's *The Canon of Medicine*, Peter of Spain's *Commentary on Isaac*, and John of St Amand's *Commentary on the Antedotary of Nicholas*.^[11] In particular, the *Canon* introduced clinical trials,^[12] randomized controlled trials,^{[13][14]} and efficacy tests.^{[15][16]} The continuing importance of herbs for the centuries following the Middle Ages is indicated by the hundreds of herbals published after the invention of printing in the fifteenth century. Theophrastus' *Historia Plantarum* was one of the first books to be printed. The fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries were the great age of herbals, many of them available for the first time in English and other languages rather than Latin or Greek. The first herbal to be published in English was the anonymous *Grete Herball* of 1526. The two best-known herbals in English were *The Herball or General History of Plants* (1597) by John Gerard and *The English Physician Enlarged* (1653) by Nicholas Culpeper.

Present status of Herbal Medicine System:

A great number of natural products have come to us from the scientific study of remedies traditionally employed by various cultures, most of them being plant-derived. Ingredients sourced from the wild plants are not only widely used in traditional medicines, but are also increasingly valued as raw materials in the preparations of modern medicines and herbal preparations. Greater demand and increased human populations are leading to increased and often unsustainable rates of exploitation of wild sourced ingredients, with some wild species already threatened with extinction. Commoditization of plant medicine was an insignificant aspect of the practice of traditional medicine. In the last few decades, however, there has been a marked increase in the sale of herbal remedies, precipitating large scale harvesting of medicinal plants, factory-like production of herbal drugs in many parts of developing countries. Most medicinal plants are gathered from the wild and countries like India and China reportedly harvest 90% and 80% of their medicinal plants respectively from the uncultivated sources.

The use of herbs to treat disease is almost universal among non-industrialized societies.^[17] A number of traditions came to dominate the practice of herbal medicine at the end of the twentieth century:

- *The "classical" herbal medicine system, based on Greek and Roman sources
- *The Siddha and Ayurvedic medicine systems from various South Asian Countries
- *Chinese herbal medicine (Chinese herbology)
- *Traditional African medicine
- *Unani-Tibb medicine
- *Shamanic herbalism: a catch-all phrase for information mostly supplied from South America and the Himalayas
- *Native American medicine.

Many of the pharmaceuticals currently available to physicians have a long history of use as herbal remedies, including opium, aspirin, digitalis, and quinine. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 80 percent of the world's population presently uses herbal medicine for some aspect of primary health care.^[18] Pharmaceuticals are prohibitively expensive for most of the world's population, half of which lives on less than \$2 U.S. per day.^[17] In comparison, herbal medicines can be grown from seed or gathered from nature for little or no cost.

In addition to the use in the developing world, herbal medicine is used in industrialized nations by alternative medicine practitioners such as naturopaths. A 1998 survey of herbalists in the UK found that many of the herbs recommended by them were used traditionally but had not been evaluated in clinical trials.^[19] In Australia, a 2007 survey found that these Western herbalists tend to prescribe liquid herbal combinations of herbs rather than tablets of single herbs.^[20]

The use of, and search for, drugs and dietary supplements derived from plants have accelerated in recent years. Pharmacologists, microbiologists, botanists, and natural-products chemists are combing the Earth for photochemical and leads that could be developed for treatment of various diseases. In fact, according to the World Health Organization, approximately 25% of modern drugs used in the United States have been derived from plants.^[21]

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Role of the Assamese-Nepali in Indian Freedom Struggle

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India Freedom Struggle had started from the Sepoy Minuty (1857) and came to an end with the attainment of freedom (1947) from the British Colonial rule in India. The freedom movement brought the Indian People together on the basis of a new unity on the concept of Indian nationhood. The people of North-eastern part of India too, were not logging behind in this movement against the British regime. Assam as an integral part of India too actively participated in the Sepoy Mutiny which is also called as first war of independence. The hero of that revolt was Moniram Dutta Borbhandar Baruah popularly known as Maniram Dewan. Like other communities, the Assamese Nepali had also actively participated in the freedom struggle led by India National Congress. In various phases of the national freedom struggle, their wholehearted participation and their courage to face adverse consequence thereof were really praiseworthy.

Chabilal Upadhyaya, a Nepali leader of Behali in the erstwhile Darrang district (now Sonitpur) played prominent role in the struggle for freedom. His contribution towards the freedom struggle was recognized when he was offered the chairmanship in the historical meeting of the 'Assam Association' in 1921 at Jorhat. This session was considered significant because it led to the conversion of the 'Assam Association' into 'Assam Provincial Congress Committee'. The Assam Association which had changes its name and virtually turned itself into a Congress platform in its Tezpur Session has its last meeting at Jorhat with Chabilal Upadhyaya in the chair in April 1921. Besides, condemning the recent eviction of Nepali graziers from the Kaziranga Forest Reserve and police atrocities on them, the meeting also discussed the non-co-operation program and organizational matters.¹ Realising his ability to impress other by patriotic ideals the British police officers tried to keep him away from the Congress and made lucrative offers like government job and financial assistance. But a born patriot, Upadhyaya refused all these offers and said to police officer- "I born and brought up in Assam and shall die in Assam. Nepal may be an independent country, but I have not seen Nepal. Assam is my motherland. I cannot leave the Congress."² Perhaps being impressed by the patriotic ideals, Hem Boruah, former president of the Assam Sahiya Sabha had recognized Chabilal Upadhyaya as 'living symbol of Assamese Nationalism.'³ Chabilal Upadhyaya who had already proved his able leadership during the Kaziranga incident in 1920 relating to eviction cases of the Assamese Nepali⁴ took the leadership of the community in the Non-cooperation Movement in Assam. In 1921, he was imprisoned in the Tezpur Jail for 6 months on the pretext of forming Swayam Sevak Dal (volunteer's party) in Tezpur Town Hall under his presidentship. His younger brother Hari Prasad Upadhyaya was also arrested and imprisoned in Tezpur jail for a period of three months.⁵ The contribution of Chabilal Upadhyaya in connection with the collection of donations for Tilak Swaraj Fund was a glaring example of his love towards motherland.⁶ Deucharan Upadhyaya, another freedom fighter of the hardcore batch whole-heartedly participated in the Non cooperation movement led by Mahatna Gandhi was imprisoned in the Guwahati jail Later, he was shifted to Jorhat jail and died in 1922 in the jail by restoring to fast into death against the British rule in India.⁷

Born in 1915, Dalbir Singh Lohar of Dibrugarh was another renowned leader from the Assamese-Nepali. In 1921, Mahatma Gandhi come to Assam to propagate the ideals of the Congress.

Gandhiji had visited Dibrugarh as a part of the program. In the procession, Dalbir Singh Lohar had participated with the Congress flag in hand where he happened to be the centre of attraction for being too young in the group.⁸ He became Congress volunteer in the year 1929. During Civil Disobedience movement, Lohar was imprisoned from 13-10-1930 to 12-01-1931 for protesting Cunningham circular. He also received training in the Shantisena training camp at Golaghat and he himself organized a Shantisena Bahini in 1940.⁹ One Bir Bahadur Chetry of Rangjuli in Barpeta under Kamrup district was arrested by the police on 10th January 1931 for participating in the civil disobedience movement. On the other hand, Anantalal Sarma, an Assamese-Nepali was sentenced for trying to enlist local Gorkha soldiers alleging him to involve soldiers in the civil disobedience movement.¹⁰ Influence by the principle non-violence of Mahatma Gandhi, Bhakta Bahadur Pradhan another freedom fighters from Digboi joined the Indian National Congress in 1934 and jumped into the Indian freedom movement. Being an employee under the British Government he had to face a lot of trouble in organizational works of the Congress keeping the British administration in dark. But soon, the British administrations came to know his involvement in the freedom struggle and discharged him from the government job and externed him from Digboi. Later on he again caught red handed for his involvement in the congress works and externed even from Assam. In spite of all this he involved himself in freedom movement in disguise in many parts of Assam. But ultimately in 1942 he was arrested and put into jail for one year.¹¹

The last phase of Indian freedom struggle started with decision of Quit India Resolution adopted by the All India Congress Committee held in Bombay under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi on 8th August, 1942. The next day, i.e. on 9th August, the prominent leaders of the movement Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Ballav Bhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and many others were arrested by British administration. The prominent leaders of Assam Gopinath Bordoloi and Siddhinath Sarma who had gone to attend the All India Congress Committee session were also arrested.

During the Quit India Movement the Assamese-Nepali freedom fighters who were sentenced rigorous imprisonment and kept in different jails of Assam were Chabilal Upadhyaya, Dalbir Singh Lohar, Bhakta Bahadur Pradhan, Ramlal Upadhyaya, Hari Prasad Upadhyaya, Bishnual Upadhyaya, Narapati Upadhyaya, Kumud Chandra Sarma, Kashinath Laitel, Homnath Guragain and many others.¹² During the movement, Jyoti Prasad Agarwala and Puspalata Das organized Shanti Sena Bahini and Mrityu Bahini in the erstwhile Darrang district.¹³ The aim of such organizations was to hoist the tricolour at various police stations which were symbols of the British power. It needs to mention that the Shanti Sena was formed in 1930 in Bombay. Aman Beshnet, a resident of Teliagaon of Sonitpur district of Assam received training of Shantisena in Tezpur in 1935. He was the commander of this camp for more than seven years. The prominent persons among those trainees were Kamalapati Dahal, Prajapati Rijal, Keshar Bahadur Basnet, Man Bahadur Karki etc. A procession was taken out from Teliagaon to Dekiajuli Thana on 20 September, 1942 and many volunteers were arrested by the police among whom Kashinath Luitel and Homnath Guragain were from the Nepali community. They were sent to the Tezpur jail.

In the similar vein, another procession was taken out from Naubil Puthimari by Bhim Koirala Nemang Subba, Ram Nath Nirala, Rabilal Luitel, Nandalal Luitel, Narapati Luitel and Premlal Luitel. On 20th September, 1942, about five thousand people marched to Police Thana and hoisted the flag defying police firing. In this attempt the persons who sacrificed their lives were- Tileswar Baruah, Kumud Devi, Khahuli Nath, Monbar Nath, Moniram Kachari, Mohiram Koch, Sarunath Chutia, Dayal Das Parikh, Mongal Kurku and Lerela Bora. Fifty persons who belonged to Assamese Nepali with 'Khukuris' in their hands became uncontrollable who wanted to achieve the goal even by means of violence, necessary.¹⁴

Similarly, a large number of Nepali volunteers of Burachapari, led by Prasad Singh

Subba came to Tezpur to hoist the flag. It is to be mentioned that Subba was associated with Tezpur Graziers Association (1933) under the initiatives of Chabilal Upadhyaya and Puspatal Upadhyaya. He had also good contact with other prominent leaders of Assam like Mahadev Sarma, Mohikanta Das, Kamala Prasad Agarwala, Jyoti Prasad Agarwala, Bijoy Chandra Bhagawati etc.¹⁵

'Jamuguri and Chatia (Sootea) established virtually a Peoples Raj for a long time and even the police and military dared not come to these places at the earliest stage of the movement'.¹⁶ Persons like Tikaram Parajuli, Hari Bhakta Adhikari, Lilakanta Kafle, Bhimlal Acharya, Bhagirath Dhungel, Homnath Chamlagain and many others from the Assamese-Nepali participated in the Quit India Movement from Jamuguri covering villages like Gomiripal, Panpur, Erabari and Talkabari. At Nalbari No.3 of Sootea, a Shantisena training camp was organized in which twenty two Assamese Nepali took their training. Baparam Gogoi Baruah was its commander and Nara Bahadur Chetri and Narapati Upadhyaya were his main associates and colleagues. Bal Bahadur Chetri, Padma Prasad Upadhyaya and Narapati Upadhyaya were imprisoned from 10th September 1942 to 5th May 1943 for participating in the freedom struggle.

The prominent personalities who had joined the Quit India Movement from Biswanath Chariali were Nabin Chandra Hazarika, Kunja Hazarika, Cheniram Das, Loknath Sarma, Harakanta Hazarika and Puhiram Das. Two camps for Mritu Bahini led by Jiban Baruah and Loknath Sarma were organized at 'Bhirgaon Pukhuri' of Biswanath Chariali where Khadananda Parajuli, Dilliram Sapkota, Chabilal Gojurel, Mahendra Kafle, Tikaram Upadhyaya and Pandit Ramji Gyawali got their training. Shantisena Camp was led by Binit Baruah and most of the freedom fighters of that locality initially received training in the camp. More than 150 students assembled at Biswanath Chariali in order to take out a procession towards the Sootea Thana under the leadership of Bhadreswar Saikia and Binit Baruah. However, the procession could not proceed towards Sootea because the flag was already hoisted in the early morning on 20th September, 1942.¹⁷

At this juncture, people of Behali area also were not lagging behind. Two volunteer groups of Shantisena, male group led by Debi Prasad Sarma and female group led by Tileswari Mahanta came out in procession from Gangmouthan to Bihali Thana with their badges super scribed 'Death or Freedom' to hoist the tricolour flag. Female participants of Gangmonthan (Mazgaon) of Behali were Tileswari Mahanta, Gujeswari Devi, Bhogmaya Devi, Tilarupa Devi, Tilareya Devi, Annapurna Devi, Monmaya Devi, Harkamaya Devi and many others. Crossing all the barriers of the British Police force, the volunteers successfully carried out their mission. Just after the episode, Police arrested prominent leaders of the Assamese Nepali – Hari Prasad Upadhyaya, Ramlal Upadhyaya, Bishnual Upadhyaya and Premananda Parajuli and sentenced them to rigorous imprisonment in the Tezpur jail.¹⁸

Like in other places, a procession of about 150 Nepali Shantisenas from Batiamari (near Bedeti) led by Kosheswar Bania marched towards the Bihali Thana. Similarly, several processions came out towards Gohpur Thana from Gomiri, Dipara, Teleni and Barangabari. In these processions, a large number of Assamese Nepali volunteers participated in the freedom movement. Some of the volunteers from Gomiri were Bishnual Subedi, Bilash Dhamala, Gahate Kami, Kashi Ragai, Jugute Kami, Pundari Nirola, Tara Acharya and Nandalal Dhamala. The prominent leaders of Gohpur area who had taken great effort in mobilizing the people for hoisting the swaraj flag at Gohpur Thana were Jonaram Bhuyan, Jiten Borah, Lakhikanta Borah, Giridhar Baruah, Kameswar Hazarika and Mukunda Kakati.¹⁹ A secret meeting was held at Barangabari on 18th September, Puspatal Das too attended the meeting and decided to hoist the flag on 20th September at Gohpur Thana and Mritu Bahini and Shantisena would make the necessary arrangements for the proposed procession. As per programme decided, thousands of people assembled in front of Gohpur Thana to hoist the flag. In this mission, Kanaklata Baruah of Barangabari became the first victim when the police opened fire.²⁰ The second firing wounded

Konakeswar Baruah of Balijan, Thuleswar Rajkhowa of Domarpukhuri, Bholo Bardoloi of Kathalanibari who were in the same row with Mukunda Kakaty.²¹ In this mission Mukunda Kakaty also sacrificed his life. The flag was hoisted by Rampati Rajkhowa. Two Assamese-Nepali volunteers, Dambaru Bhandari and Pravakar Adhikari were severely injured when police lathi charged on them.

A Shantisena camp at Bihpuria had trained more than 120 persons led by Loknath Goswami, Yogeswar Baruah, Nandeswar Doley, Golok Chandra Baruah and Sailendra Saikia. A large number of Assamese-Nepali received training among whom the prominent persons were Pandit Motilal Upadhyaya, Khadananda Bhattarai, Monikanta Upadhyaya, Hari Prasad Upadhyaya, Gopal Singh Chetri, Pahalman Karki, Tikaram Gautam, Bhimlal Dahal, Bhimlal Sarmah and Balabhadra Sarmah.

It is to be mentioned that the Gorkhas who joined the Indian National Army (INA) from the undivided Assam were Nara Bahadur Gurung (now Meghalay), Krishna Bahadur Chetri (now Nagaland), Mohan Singh Chetri and Suman Thapa from Manipur. A large number of Gorkhas of the INA became the martyrs in Myanmar (erst while Burma) while fighting against the British forces. They were Mohan Singh Gorkha, Gian Bahadur Lama and Manilal Gurung of 2/1 Gurkha Rifles, Bhim Singh Rana, Sher Bahadur Bhandari, Bhim Singh Thapa, Kumraj Thapa, Mohan Singh Thapa, Shital Bahadur, Man Bahadur Thapa, Kul Bahadur, Dhan Bahadur, Damar Bahadur and Golpal Singh Sahi.²²

From the above, it is clear that the Assamese-Nepali had jumped into the Indian freedom struggle to make free the motherland from the British colonial rule. Like any other communities, the Nepalese of Assam also equally extended their whole-hearted participation in the freedom movement. It appears in this paper that Sonitpur district, being a largest Nepali populated district of Assam, had played their laudable role in the freedom struggle.

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The *Satras*: A Unique Cultural Heritage of Assam.

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The *Satra* institution of Assam in its present form which is still functioning as a living organization for propagating and spreading Vaishnavite ideals in the state and out side, was brought into existence by the Vaishnava leader of medieval times such as Sankardeva, Madhabdeva, Damodardeva and others initially to serve as a centre of religious propagation and literary creation and cultivation of fine and performing arts. Thus it became in course of time a pioneering institution in bringing about social changes in Assam. Its impact on religion literature and social and political life of Assam is therefore significant and abiding.

The *Satra* as a kind of unique socio religious and cultural organization were established in and developed in Assam since the 16th century A.D. The history of emergence of this institution goes back to the period of growth and spread of Neo-Vaishnavite movement in Assam led by Sankardeva (1449-1568) and his followers. By following the ideals of the all India *Bhakti* movement, Sankardeva and few of his followers such as Madhavdeva (1489-1596), Damodardeva (1488-1598) and others started a great socio-religious reform movement in the land with primary objective of simplifying the complicated *vedic* religion and to bring about reforms in existing social orders. The leaders discarded the idea of belief in the existing of multiple Gods and taught peoples to believe on one supreme God, who was no other than Lord Vishnu. The system of this worship involved simple prayer and devotion without making sacrifice. In the social plan the movement leaders encouraged flexibility of the caste system. According to those preachers, as creations of God everybody is equal to him. This new tenet emphasised on the worship of Lord Vishnu is very simple form of belief, and is popularly known in Assam as Neo-Vaishnavism. Its prime mover and soul energy was Sankardeva. Beginning from the first decade of 16th century and within about 200 years of its inception the movement firmly established Vaishnava faith as the most popular religious order over almost the entire Brahmaputra valley and thereby it gave a new turn into the religious history of contemporary Assam.

The nerve centre of the growth of the new tenet is the *Satra* institution or the monastery, through which the faith was propagated in the society. The plan of the institution as a centre of religious discoursed and deliberation and exercise of the gospel of the sect was conceived during the life time of the great saint, Sankardeva himself when he started preaching of his ideals at Bardowa within the present Nagoan District of Assam and then at Belaguri Dhowahat in the Majuli Island¹. The centre of Vaishnava preaching at the *Satras* at Belaguri, however, did not last long; the conflict then soon arose between the growing Ahom monarchy and Neo-Vaishnava teaching impressing on socio-cultural liberation of people soon had its pangs, and Sankardeva had to shift to lower Assam seeking shelter some where in the Koch kingdom then ruled by king Nara Narayana (1540-1587)². This ultimately saved his life; but by then the *Satra* institution got much set back and could not revived during his life time. Sankardeva thus left his job to his successors.

THE SATRA INSTITUTION:

As mentioned above, the Neo-Vaishnavite movement evolved a new institution known as *Satra* that served as the nerve center for emitting the ideals of the faith among the masses and helped to sustain and stabilise Neo-Vaishnavism. Indeed, one cannot study the Neo-Vaishnavite movement in Assam separated from the *Satra* institutions which is no less then the other side of a coin called Neo-Vaishnavism. It is not known as to what inspired the great reformer to conceive the idea of an institution like the *Satra*, or from where he got its ideal. There is, however, no doubt that his religion being based on the teachings of the *Bhagavata Purana*, Sankardeva much have gone throw the word *Satra* in the *Bhagavata Purana* itself. In the opening chapter of *Bhagavata Purana* it is stated that "twenty thousand sages, all expert in the *Vedas* formed the assembly in the forest of Naimisha and by putting

Suta, the expert recite, in the center to recite the *Bhagavata* made it a *satra*. All sages, the chief among them being Saunaka, used to listen to the recitations, and performed a long session of sacrifice of thousand year duration.³ Here the word *Satra* has been used to denote an assembly of sages devoted to religious and philosophical discussions. The discussion (*Yajna*) as mentioned lasted for thousand years duration (in the forest of Naimisha). It is narrated in the same context that in course of the session, the entire *Bhagavata Purana* was recited and explained to the sages. In another context also the work uses the word 'Satra' in the sense of an assembly. There is no doubt that the *Bhagavata Purana*, from where the references are cited above, confirms its character of an assembly. It is possible that the *Satras* of those days had been formed for different purposes. The *Bhagavata Purana* itself refers to different classes of *Satras* such as *Brahma-Satra* and *Karma-Satra*. Noted scholar, M. Neog defines in his explanation, *Brahma-Satra* as "a discussion of the Brahmin, in which the speaker and listeners combine as equal partners"; and *Karma-Satra* to be "a type of sacrifice, in which the officiating priest and the sacrificers play equal roles". Ananta Kandali, a later contemporary of Sankardeva, in his translation of the Xth canto of the *Bhagavata* mentions that he was born to Ratnapathak, his father, who mentions a *Satra* at Hajo, where regular recitation of the *Bhagavata* was done before the assembly of persons.⁵ By the use of this term *Satra*, however, Ananta Kandali might have referred to a home of temporary nature where his father used to recite the *Bhagavata Purana* to the gatherings. Thus, the word *Satra* was possibly applied in Assam Vaishnavism to mean an assembly of devotees where things about Vishnu were discussed, in analogy of *Brahma-Satra*.

There is no doubt that the concept of *Satra* has been taken by Sankardeva from the *Bhagavata Purana*. But the interesting point in this regard is that there are epigraphic records to show that institutions called *Satra* with most of the paraphernalia's which a typical Vaishnava *Satra* possess, was already there in Assam at least two hundred years before the birth of Sankardeva. The Ambari Stone Inscription, of Saka era 1154 (A.D. 1232) throws much light in this regard⁶. This epigraph speaks of a *sabasika Satra* along with its cloisters of houses, for residential disciples (*hati*) to have existed at yogihati, i.e., in Guwahati (Kamrupa) where religious discussions were regularly held.⁷ Some scholars therefore believe that such *Satras* with their physical structures encouraged Sankardeva with the idea of developing his *Satra* institutions⁸. Be that as it may be, one thing is clear that Sankardeva had ideals of a *Satra* before him not only from the *Bhagavata Purana* but also from such institutions which existed in Assam prior to his time.

STAGES OF GROWTH OF SATRAS:

In the initial stage of the Neo-Vaishnava movement the word 'Satra' was used in the sense of a religious sitting or association. It was given the shape of a systematized institution by Sankardeva. Bhusana Dvija, one of the earliest biographers of Sankardeva referred that "Ramaraya (the brother of Sankardeva) very gladly built a *Satra-griha*, (house for meeting of *bhakats*)"⁹. He, however, used the word *Satra-griha* to indicate that the *Satra* at that time was a house where the reciter (Sankardeva) used to reside along with a few other followers. Other references also indicate that similar houses were built at Gangmau,¹⁰ Dhuwahata Belaguri,¹¹ and at Patbausi¹². In the *Katha Guru Charita* it is mentioned that a regular *Satra* had to be built at Patbausi as the number of disciples had already grown large.¹³ Ramananda, another biographer of Sankardeva, mentioned in his *Gurucharita* that "He (Damodara) sits in the *Satra* (assembly) and chants nama everyday."¹⁴ It therefore appears that Sankardeva's *Satra* at Bardowa in Nagoan, at Dhuwahata Belaguri in Majuli and Patbausi in Kamarupa were small establishments of which consisted of the residential and recital houses only. Baikunthanath Bhatta, later known as Bhattadev, a 16th century *Bhagavata* scholar of Assam and a disciple of Demodardeva, has therefore defined *Satra* of his time as follows: "The supreme place adored by gods and Vaishnavas, where ardent devotees perform duties pleasing to God and where nine fold *bhakti* daily prevails, is called *Satra*; Vaishnavas residing there are naturally prone to *Harinama*."¹⁵

Thus, it became clear that a religious assembly or association in a particular place providing residence to the preacher and to disciples where the *Bhagavata* and other religious or sacred books were regularly recited and or explained was designated as a *Satra* during the early years of the growth of the institutions in Assam. This *Satra* therefore, contain at the best, (a) the residential part of the preacher and a few of his followers called *Gurugriha* and *Hati*, (b) the public hall for recitation of the

Bhagavata and other religious discussions called *Namghar*, and (c) the place of the shrine called *Manikut*. This was the embryonic form of establishment of a *Satra* till the death of Sankardeva. But the physical feature of it significantly changed to accommodate many other things in post-Sankardeva period when his disciples – notably Damodardev, Madhavdev, Gopaldev, Vamsigopaldev and Aniruddhadev brought the Neo-Vaishnavite movement to Upper Assam back in the 17th century.

EVOLUTION OF VAISHNAVA SATRAS IN POST-SANKARDEVA PERIOD:

The *Satra* has been a well-known and perfect establishment for all kind of religious activities in Assam at present. With its immovable properties of value-land and buildings included, its residential disciples- normally bachelor, and sometimes householders; the *Gosain* (Goswami) or the preacher (*guru*), the common prayer hall (*Namghar*), the shrine (*Manikut*), and the line of residential cottages of the disciples (*Hati*) and their residences called (*Baha*) all around, the *Satra* institution of Assam is a distinguished kind of religious institution (monasteries). Situated normally in a solitary area away from the hub-hub of society, its preacher –the *Satradhikar* along with the disciples or *Bhakats* devote themselves to religious discussion and practices including the practice of preaching, perform theatrical performances called *Bhaona*, a discovery of Sankardeva himself as an instrument of popularizing Vaishnavism among the masses, at regular intervals.

It was at the time of Damodardev (1488-1598 A.D.) and Madhavdev (1489-1596 A.D.) that the *Satra* institution attained the second phase of its growth. As we have mentioned above, the history of post-Sankardeva Vaishnavism in Assam is a history of schism in the faith – all the leading disciples, establishing their own sects with addition of new elements to the original one of these that distinguished each one the new sects. It is to be noted that this period of the history of Neo-Vaishnavite movement is marked by two things – (a) spread of the faith in Upper Assam and (b) accordance of royal support and patronage to the growth of the movement. It was during this period that Madhavdev, Damodardev and other hand established their own *Satra* with most of the paraphernalia as we see today.

One of the major *Satras* that was built by Damodardev was the Paibausi *Satra* near Barpeta, which was established by Sankardeva between the year (1560-1590 A.D.). The biographical works record that this was a fulfilled *Satra* from which Damodardev began to preach¹⁶. From here Damodardev directed activities of his disciples whom he sent to different directions of Kamrupa and Upper Assam. Another *Satra* established by the same preacher was the Baikunthapur *Satra* at Koch Behar. Ramaraya, biographer of Damodardev, who wrote his book *Gurulila* in the second quarter of the seventeenth century, mentioned that Damodardev made a *Satra* within the capital of Koch Behar and named Vaikunthapur with the kind patronage of Lakshminarayana (1584-1622 A.D.)¹⁷ the ruler of Koch Behar. And this *Satra* had a shrine (*Manikuta*) and a large prayer hall (*Namghar*) which was well decorated with various designs and carvings and surrounded by the residential line of huts (*Charihati*).¹⁸ Of the most well known *Satra* that was established with all its paraphernalia was the Barpeta *Satra* established by Madhavdev between the year 1570-1590 A.D. The biographical literature of the saints contain detailed of the *Satra*¹⁹. It is known from the *Katha Guru Charita* that was one hundred and twenty celebrate devotees in the *Satra* during the times of Madhavdev.²⁰ Later on Madhavdeva nominated Mathuradas Burha Ata, to the senior ship of Barpeta *Satra* and set out for Koch Behar. Mathuradas who was an able organizer and an unflinching devotee, reconstructed the *Satra* and systematized its management. Besides Barpeta *Satra* Madhavdev's two other important disciples of Padma Ata (also called Badala Ata) and Keshab Ata established two *Satra* in upper Assam – one at Kamalabari within Majuli and the other at Barjaha between the year 1600 – 1625 A.D. Those three *Satras* formed the order known as *Nika – Sanghati*. The next group of *Satras* expended from Gopal Ata of Bhawanipur. Gopal Ata, was one of the twelve apostles (*Dharmacharya*) nominated by Madhavdev, who established a permanent *Satra* at Kaljhar, a place situated a few miles distant from Bhawanipur, between the year 1600 – 1625 A.D. He also nominated twelve preachers (*Acharyas*) to preach the message of the *Kala – Sanghati* in different directions.²¹

Apart from these *Satras* there were a number of *Satras* established by the direct descendant of Sankardeva. Among them, Purusottam Thakur, the grandson of Sankardeva, and from whom the name of the sub-sect called *Purusha-Sanghati* was originated, appointed twelve of his principal followers as

apostles (*Dharmacharya*) to initiate disciples in different parts of central and eastern Assam by establishing Satras. Another descendant of Sankardeva was Chaturbhuj Thakur, the younger brother of Purusottam Thakur. He too nominated twelve principle disciples as religious heads or apostles to preach the tenets of his sub sect.²²

It is already mentioned that Damordev established two *satra*, one at Patbaushi and the other at Vaikunthpur in Kamrup. His disciple Vamsigopaldev had taken the charge of bringing the sect of Neo-Vaishnavism to upper Assam, where he established three Satras during the years 1600 to 1625 A.D.. They are Kalabari in present Sonitpur district, Deberapar in present Lakhimpur district and Kuruwabahi in present Golaghat district.

Thus the final phase of the evolution of the Satra institution was attained with the expansion of the movement to Upper Assam and extension of the royal patronage to the Satras in the second half of the seventeenth century, which placed the Satras on a sound economic footing. The patronage of the Ahomkings towards Vaishnava movement therefore formed a turning point in the history of the Satra institution of Assam.

CURRENT TRENDS ON RESEARCH ON THE SATRAS:

Satra studies have attracted attention of a great number of scholars in the past. The early history of the Satra in its origin, growth and nature has been studied by a few scholars of eminence who have thus been able to draw the attention of scholars all over the country. It was from the time of post independence period the trend of research on Satra institution began. Gradually the study has been gone deeper and the present day researches have been done in the micro level study of any particular Satra in their contributions towards society. This new trend of researches had unveiled many new truths and established the Satras as a unique socio-cultural institution of Assam. For the last four centuries a half, the Satras had exercising great influence over the minds of the people of Assam and its neighboring area. During the period this institution has been able to expand both its physical and moral aspects creating for itself an image of reverence and honour. As such it has tremendous impacts on almost all aspects of social, cultural life of the people of the state. By proselytising of different casts and communities to Vaishnavism it has helped in bringing about social integrity. Particularly, its contributions to literature and cultural life, distinguishes the Satra from all other class of institutions. The head of each Satras (Satradhikar) and the residential disciples (Bhakats) had took care to cultivate performing and other arts including painting, wood, bamboo and cane works, so that they may not only uplift their cultural life but also their material life. In fact those arts and crafts are no longer confined to the disciples themselves, they have now spread to far and wide in the society. Similarly, being an institution established and maintained by the medieval state, the Satra has role the political matters as well..

Therefore, the micro-level study of the Satras contributions can explore many truths which may give a new stage of our cultural history and proves Satra institution as a kind of unique cultural heritage of Assam.

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1. *Guru Charit Katha*, ed. M. Neog, Guwahati, 1997, p.38; *Katha Guru Charita*, ed, U.C. Lekharu, 19th edn, Guwahati, 1987 p. 45;
2. *Guru Charit Katha* p.41; *Katha Guru Charita* p.45;
3. *Srimadbhagavad*, ed. Panchanan Tarkaratna, Calcutta 1908,

The verse runs thus—

*Naimese Nimise Kshyetra Rdishashya Saunakadayah
Satrang Swargashya Lokaya Sahashra Samamasata.*

Book 1, Chapter 1, v-4

4. M. Neog, *Sankardeva and His Times: Early History of the Vaishnava Faith and Movement in Assam* Guwahati University, 1965, p. 215.
5. Ananta Kandali Gives this very explanation in one verse (v-3084-85) of his *Bhagavata X*, Sesa khanda.
6. "Importance of Archeological Studies in Assam", *Journal of Historical Research*, Vol.-1 Deptt. Of History, Dibrugarh University, March, 1974; M. Neog, *Pachya Sasanavali*, Guwahati, 1974, p.(Intro). 128.
7. The inscription runs thus —

Deptt. of History

Adityasama Sri Saudrapala Rajye
Prabala Sabasika Satra Saguna-Kriya
Sannasina Bule Dana Puyana Saja
Yogihati Saka Isha Bana Chakra
Muha Bhanati

Contents : (There was a big residential Satra in the kingdom of Samudrapala, where sacrifices and other religious functions held regularly by the *sanyasis*. This inscription was written by one Muha in the *saka* era 1154.
8. (Few significant derivations from the Ambari stone Inscriptions), by D.Nath, *Proceedings of NEIHA*, 20th session, Dibrugarh University, Dibrugarh, p.100.

9. Bhusana Dvija, *Mahapurash Sankardev*, vv.173, 184

The verse runs thus— *Satra griha sajailanta*

Ramaraya Maharangamane (Ramaraya very gladly built a house for the meeting of *bhakats*).

10. M.Neog, *op. cit.*, p.313. ; L.N. Bezbaruah, *Mahapurush Sri sankardev aru Madhavdev*, 1984, new edn., Guwahati, 1997, p.36.

11. *ibid.*

12. *Katha Guru Charita*, pp. 100-101.

13. *ibid.*, pp.100,125,142.

14. *Gurucharita*, by Ramananda Dvija, v.832. (The verse runs thus—*Satrate basiya nama ganta nityagata*.

15. Bhattadeva writes in his *Prasangamala*—

Yatracharanti Sad-dharma Kevala Bhagavata priyah

Navadha Bhagavad bhaktir pratyaham yatra varyate

Tat Satram uttamam kshetram vaishnava sura-vanditam

Tatrastha - vaishnavah sarve harinama parayanah.

16. *Kathagurucharita*, pp.100, 125, 142.

17. *Ramaraya, Gurulila*, v. 683

18. *ibid.*, v. 686

19. Daityari Yhakar, *Sankardev aru Madhavdev charit*, vv.1276-89 and 1302-10; Ramcharana; *op cit*, p.310; *Katha Guru Charita*, pp. 345-356; *Gurucharit Katha*, p.289.

20. *ibid.*, pp. 357-362.

21. See for details—S.N.Sarma, *The Neo-Vaishnavite Movement and the Satra Institutions of Assam*, Guwahati, 1966.

22. See for details—K.D.Goswami, *Post Sankardeva Vaishnava Faith and Culture of Assam*, Delhi, 1988.

Missionaries and Education in 19th century Assam

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In the 19th Century Christian Missions and Colonialism seemed to follow upon each other in Africa and Asia. Entry of the various Christian Missions into the North East regions was not under the dictate of the Imperial direction. It was purely the outcome of the individual enterprise and effort in association with Western Christian Missions to bring the light of the Gospel to the tribes. Thus Evangelization and preaching was their main focus, only to realize that such activities could not be fulfilled without basic literacy ability on the part of the people. On the other hand the British Officials were finding it difficult to control over their subjects due to poor, uncivilized and illiterate conditions of the people. The Britishers entered Assam established their rule in the early years of the 19th century. Soon after, the different Christian denominations also gradually established their outposts and started their work. Their main objective, no doubt, was to spread their religion. But they also undertook to spread literacy, render medical aid, open schools and other educational institutions, etc. Out of all denominations which worked in the Northeastern region, the American Baptists were able to spread out in many parts. Even today the followers of the American Baptist denomination form the majority of Christians in the region.

The Pioneering Journey:

The first attempt to reach Sadiya, Assam, was made from Burma in 1835.. The primary objective of the mission was to promote Community Organization process through education. The fruits of the education process are the tangible different developments that can be witnessed today. Dr. Nathan Brown played a very significant role in the history of Assamese language and literature. Having greatly contributed to the literary and spiritual life of the people in Myanmar within a short period, he headed for Assam upon the request of Captain Francis Jenkins, the Commissioner of Assam. This request was made to launch the Shan Mission aiming to help the British administration to enlighten, refine and educate the warrior tribes of Shan, Khamtis and Singphos. Brown and his associate Oliver Cutter along with their printing press sailed to Calcutta. After a stopover in Calcutta, they set out for Sadiya by river. A long, tiresome and dangerous trip by a country boat brought them to their destination, i.e., Sadiya on March 23, 1836.

Missionaries efforts to usher an educational movement:

With the establishment of the first printing press in Assam, Brown's arrival ushered in an era of literay development in the region. Due to inadequate assistance from the Mission and due to tribal aggression in Sadiya, Brown had to shift his base to Jaipur near Naharkatiya in 1839 and then to Sibsagar in 1843. He found Sibsagar to be the most suitable place for his missionary work. There, making his base on the bank of Dikhow River, he worked until 1855. Towards the end of 1844, Brown travelled on foot from Sibsagar to Guwahati, visiting villages to study personally the diverse cultural and racial characteristics of the people. He along with two other missionaries, Miles Bronson and Cyrus Barker, organized and founded the first Baptist church at Panbazar in Guwahati on January 25, 1845. Brown also pioneered in establishing schools in different parts of the state. He established 14 Assamese

medium schools in and around Sibsagar by 1846. Brown was a linguist par excellence. Very soon he could master Assamese and appreciated the beauty of this language. Brown admired the Assamese language; its open, agreeable vocalization, its picturesque Sanskrit characteristics and its quaint inflections and idioms became native to him. He was deeply involved in teaching, translating and preparing books in Assamese. He translated and published a catechism in Assamese. A good number of his translated hymns are still sung in many churches in Assam. In 1848 he published, *Grammatical Notes of the Assamese Language*, which served as the first Assamese Grammar book. In the introduction of this book, he wrote, "For beauty and softness, the Assamese language is much superior to the Bengali", showing his keen love and appreciation of this language. Brown found that the Assamese Bible published by William Carey, which was in circulation at that time, was full of Bengali and Sanskrit terms, so it was idiomatically inadequate. Therefore, he undertook to translate the Bible and published the New Testament into pure and simple Assamese in 1848. Brown was also a pioneer in writing school books. He wrote books on elementary arithmetic called *Prathamganana* (1845), *Dutioganana* (1855) and geography called *Bhugulor biboran* (1851) which were much superior to Bengali books used in the schools at that time. He translated John Bunyan's famous *Pilgrims Progress* into Assamese. Brown's wife, Eliza, opened boarding school for girls. She was also actively involved in literary work. She translated a dozen tracts into Assamese and wrote arithmetic and story books for children.

The magnum opus of Brown was *Orunodoi* which means 'the dawn'. It was the first news magazine in Assamese published from Mission Press, Sibsagar, beginning from January 1846. Brown did the editorial work whereas Cutter was involved in printing and publishing the magazine. The print line of the magazine stated: "THE ORUNODOI, A monthly paper, devoted to Religion, Science, and General Intelligence, is printed and published at the Sibsagar Mission Press by O. T. Cutter, for the American Baptist Mission in Assam." The columns of the magazine brought various news from all corners of the globe. With illustrative articles on science, geography, astronomy, history and many other topics it soon found an encouraging readership among the Assamese intelligentsia and thereby paved the way for Assamese journalism. Many Assamese scholars like Anandaram Dhekial Phukan, Gunabhiram Baruah and Hemchandra Baruah also contributed articles in this magazine that became a launching pad in the struggle for restoration of Assamese language. Brown was the editor of this magazine till he left for US. After Brown, the *Orunodoi* was in circulation with occasional breaks until 1880. Following the example of *Orunodoi*, several newspapers and magazines were published in Assam in the second half of the 19th century. Prominent among these were *Asam Bilasini*, *Asam Darpan*, *Asam Bandhu*, *Asam Deepika*, *Jonaki* and *Assam News*. Brown was also a pioneer in the unearthing of old manuscripts and in editing and publishing them. Under his able editorship, *Orunodoi* published history by bringing out the texts of old chronicles in properly edited form such as *Chutia Buranji*, *Purani Asom Buranji* and *Kamrupar Buranji*. Through his encouragement, some Assamese scholars published books. Among these publications Kashinath Tamuly Phukan's *Asom Buranji* (1842) and Anandaram Dhekial Phukan's *Asomia Lorar Mitro* (1849) and *A Few Remarks on the Assamese* in Sibsagar are worth mentioning. A stream of new ideas relating important aspects of social life circulated through *Orunodoi*. The missionaries thus paved the ground for a new phase of life and a new era in literature.

Efforts to restore Assamese as a medium of instruction:

In 1836, the British rulers imposed Bengali as the court language as well as the medium of instruction in Assam. The justification of this imposition was that Assamese was thought to be a colloquial dialect and sub-language of Bengali. William Robinson, Inspector of Government schools, in his book *Grammar of the Assamese Language* published in 1839 stated that Assamese was identical with Bengali. Robinson asserted saying, "Assamese was essentially the same as Bengali". Therefore his

book could not be considered as the grammar of the Assamese language. Strangely, except a very few including Anandaram Dehekial Phukan, the Assamese people by and large did not protest this imposition. In contrast, Brown established that Assamese was a widely understood vernacular in Assam and that it was a language distinct from Bengali. Moreover, in contrast to the government, the schools founded by Brown and other Baptist missionaries used Assamese as the medium of instruction. Taking the legacy of Brown, Miles Bronson spearheaded the struggle for restoration of Assamese language until the battle was finally won in 1873. Modern prose-style in Assamese literature to a great extent is credited to the work of Brown and other missionaries. The currently prevalent standard of Assamese has its roots in the language of Upper Assam, particularly of Sibsagar. Renowned Assamese littérateur Banikanta Kakoti notes, "The missionaries made Sibsagar in Eastern Assam, the centre of their activities and used the dialect of Sibsagar for their literary purposes". Since the initial printing and literary activity occurred in Upper Assam, this language was introduced in schools, courts and offices and thus came to be formally recognized as the Standard Assamese. Therefore the language which the missionaries mastered, used and promoted through their literary works became the standard language. Another well known Assamese literary figure Maheswar Neog states, "...but now in contact with English speaking people Assamese developed modern prose-style; and this should perhaps be considered the greatest contribution of the Baptists to Assamese literature and culture. The everyday language of the people could now be the medium of literary expression, which now began to imbibe the qualities of English rhythm and syntax". Language is the chief ingredient of culture. The missionaries, rather than threatening Assamese culture, liberalized and preserved it and helped in modernizing the language. Therefore, the historians have termed the era of American Baptist Missionaries as a period of 'cultural progress' in Assam. The people of Assam would ever remain greatly indebted to Brown for his unparalleled contributions to the Assamese language and literature at a very crucial time of its history.

Pioneering women education:

On entering Assam the missionaries felt that Assamese women had a degraded position in respect of education. During that period prejudice against women's education was very strong. It can be said that with considerable sacrifice the missionaries pioneered women's education. The practical activities of the missionaries in the field of women's education in Assam proves their sincerity for the cause. The work among women began from the schools. A few ordinary women were persuaded to come to the mission bungalows where they were taught by missionary wives, on many practical subjects. Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Cutter in Sibsagar, Mrs. Barkar in Guwahati and Mrs. Bronson in Nowgong were such missionary wives. The wives of the American missionaries Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Cutter, Mrs. Brown had initiated for setting up school for girls. The first girl's school was opened at Sibsagar in 1840 and then at Nowgaon and Guwahati consequently. It was hoped that while these schools would provide opportunities for girls to learn about Christianity they would also be a solution for increasing the prospects of Indian women. For Miles Bronson, emancipation of women appeared to be his main concern and consequently he has even been confronted with lack of success in his and his colleagues' evangelization in the plains of Assam. In 1842 he founded Nowgaon Orphan Institute, the first co educational institution in the entire northeast. It was started to include more women in the schools of learning. The work among women started with very slow progress due to several practical problems, chief among them being the absence of ready availability of women to teach. Another significant problem faced is the deep patriarchal practices in family and in religious life. To break through that situation and to encourage gender equality and gender empowerment work was very difficult. Lack of effective workers to work with women was a great hindrance. The Golāghat Mission Girls School, Nowgong Mission Girl's School with residential facilities were the only schools for girls in the region and produced eminent women leaders.. Gender sensitiveness has been incorporated in all walks of life. Any inconsistent behavior

in value inculcation process is strongly discouraged. Deliberate cultural reforms were attempted to wean away people from what was seen inconsistent to human development. Women-zenana work shows that missionaries play a vital role regarding women emancipation in north east India.

Conclusion:

The activities of Christian missionaries in India are both appreciated and criticised. They are often accused of destroying the traditional culture of native people. Whatever the criticism maybe, the contributions of missionaries for betterment of our society cannot be overlooked. From the above discussion it can be said that the contact with the British and liberal education imparted by the Christian missionaries brought about a remarkable social and intellectual awakening which led to the emergence of a new literary era in Assam. The christen missionaries who came from far America did not attempt to change the social customs by introducing education. The missionary endeavour is the reflection of an ideological position where interpretation of the needs of the underprivileged or unenlightened group is explained by the more powerful and the enlightenment.

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SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGES OF KHAMTIS DURING THE POST INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

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Introduction:

The Khamti belongs to the great Tai or Shan race which migrated to Assam in the 18th century from Burma and established their first settlement near Tengapani River, south of Sadiya. At present, most of the Khamti people are living in Narayanpur under Lakhimpur district of Assam. There are seven Khamti villages in Narayanpur area of Lakhimpur district and these are Borkhamti, Sribhuyan, Gosaibari, Deotola, Borpathar, Tonijan and Tippling. According to census of 1881 and 1891 the number of Khamti population in those areas were 2843 and 3040 respectively. Presently, though there is no exact Govt. report on the population, yet according to an old Borkhamti villager there are almost 10,000 people still living in these regions. The Khamti people were known as "Hills tribes living in the state of Assam till 2002. But later on they have been recognized as plain tribe in the State of Assam." Borkhamti village, one of the 73 (seventy three) villages of Kherajkhat mouza of "Narayanpur Revenue Circle" of Lakhimpur district, has been selected as a representative model village for the study of socio-cultural changes of Khamtis during the post Independent period. It is the greatest Khamti inhabitant village (comprise of Muslim, Deuri, Bangali, Mishing) in Lakhimpur district with total Khamti population is 160 (approx.) in number and total household is 42 (fourty-two). The village is situated in west of Lakhimpur district. The head quarter of Lakhimpur district - Lakhimpur, is at a distant of 50 (fifty) km. from Narayanpur Borkhamti village.

There is a Bouddha Vihar (which was replaced and re-established in 1966) and a primary school (1941) inside the village which cater to the basic religious and educational needs of the people. Besides, "Khamti Youth Organisation" (1986), "Khamti Student Union" (2005), "Khamti Sahitya Sabha", "Khamti Mahila Samittee" and a Majjid (1988) are also there at present. For all other social and cultural amenities like marketing, administration, justice, post and wireless service, medical treatment, games and sports etc, the villager have to go to Narayanpur, Bihpuria, and Lakhimpur town. The roads inside the village are kacha, kacha with sand graveling except one pacca road.

Though they are Buddhist, a number of household belongs to Hindu and Muslim. They are living in the plains amidst the Assamese and non Assamese people for about more than two centuries. During this period, many changes have been taken place in the socio-cultural life of Khamti society. In spite of these changes, the Khamti people still maintains their distinctive dialect and some of the fundamental social customs, traditions and beliefs.

Housing System:

General type of houses of Khamtis is chung ghar, made up of bamboo and wood. The houses are rested on piles 5-6 ft high from the ground. There is only one staircase similar to ladder for entering the houses, which is made up of bamboo and wood. In the lobby they gossip, weave their clothes and do their household work. The roof of the houses are made up of a kind of long leaf known as 'Saran Kher' which is abundantly found in that society. The walls of the houses are split bamboo and are mostly unplastered. But during post independence period, the houses of Khamtis are gradually changed due to lack of bamboo, wood, kher etc.

Now, we see, well to do family began to make their houses as pacca, semi-pacca in different style. Though some of them have changed their housing type, still some of them are maintaining their housing type of their own culture.

Economy:

The main economy of Khamtis is mainly Agriculture. Though their traditional occupation is agriculture and using traditional method of cultivation, in post independence period they have been adopting the science and technology, such as power tiller, tractor, fertilizer, hybrid seeds etc. The process of globalization initiated considerable changes in the economy and occupation of Khamti society. For several decades, the service sector comprising of Banks, Insurance and financial institutions, telecommunication and postal networks were showing limited or no growth. With the onset of the globalization process, the financial sector has shown a tremendous growth. Presently, the Khamti people also engaged themselves in different services (private or govt.), business, contract, LIC agent, NGO's, SHG's etc.

Dress:

General dress of a Khamti man is a lungi (Fa-roy), a jacket (Fa chye) and the turban of thin white cloth. Women wear mekhela (chi-enu), riha (long wat), and a long sleeve jacket or chyu. When they go to some occasion, they wear their traditional dresses. There seems a very significant impact of globalization on their traditional dresses during independence period. Now, they are quite familiar with the western dresses found in the market. Due to their contact with outside world, Khamti people do not wish to wear their traditional dresses any more. As traditional handicrafts were lazy and costly, so they use modern cost effective dresses.

Religion:

In religion, Khamtis are the follower of Hinayana Buddhism. The Kyong (Buddhist temple) is the main sacred centre. Besides, in every household they keep the idol of Lord Buddha and offer prayer. The over all in charge of a Kyong is bhikkhu (Buddhist monk). The sramanas (assistant monks) help him in all socio religious activities. There was a vast change in beliefs and practices among khamtis after the period of their entrance to the Narayanpur Bor Khamti. During this period they began to accept animism more or less. As a result, there was an unrestrained currency of use of drinks, pig, hen etc. in religious functions. But an attempt had been made to remove these by the effort of an honest and excellent priest. Indeed somebody used to go for offering sacrifice and worshiping in the places of Saktas for cure against calamities. They only believe in Lord Buddha for all-purposes.

Rituals:

Khamti people follow their own rituals. In case of normal death, they perform doha-kaj till the seventh day. Bhikkhu recite Mangalacharan and give Panchasheel to the family member and the relatives of the deceased. In case of a royal family as well as Bhikkhu they celebrate Poy-leng festival. In unnatural death they do not perform doha-kaj and bodies are burnt in stead of cremation. Children below 15 years of age are also buried.

They believe in deities like 'Chang-Pha-Apuk', 'Pha-Burha Bhakat' etc. In post independence period, all these rituals have been changing more or less due to scarcity of goods and money. For example, now, they do not change the bamboo floor (chang-ghar) because of scarcity of bamboo; the Rath is now disappearing because of costly nature of construction by which the dead body takes to the cemetery. But, some of their rituals which they have been continuing till now.

Marriage system:

General system of marriage of Khamtis is monogamous. Sometimes polygamy is also seen in their society. But their society does not accept them. The system of polyandry is restricted in their society. There is no widow remarriage system in their society. In their society, the system of marriage

by capture was prevalent in the past; but now, it is not prevalent and arranged and love marriage is seen. Court marriage is also seen in their society which is very rare in their past society. It is prevalent only in post independence period. Inter caste; inter tribal and marriage with non-tribal also seen in their society.

Health and Hygiene:

There is marked change in respect of health system in post independence period in comparison to pre independence period. Now, epidemics like Malaria and Pox, which were once the killer diseases, are completely out rooted from the village. Now they do not depend upon the indigenous medicine. They depend upon the local dispensaries, Primary Health Centre and any private Doctors available in Narayanpur, Bihpuria and Lakhimpur town.

Drinking Water:

Earlier to independence Khamti people depended upon the river- Mori-Dikrong for their day to day necessity. After independence the Public Health Department had supplied water to the villagers but all the mechanism became useless since nearly 2000-2001. Now, 2-3 well-to-do family use running water and others depends on ring well and tube well.

Conclusion:

- (1) The most important gain, in post independence period the attainment of a stable life after 1950. Due to set up of Narayanpur developmental block their socio-economic condition becomes developed. Because of educational facilities and Govt. welfare measures percentage of literacy increased. In terms of quality also lease of life.
- (2) The other important change occurred in their society is the socio- political life. As soon as India gets independence, Panchayati Raj system was introduced and accordingly the villages were run and controlled by the Panchayats. Along with the election of a Goan Panchayat Secretary, some changes in respect of leadership pattern took place. The Khamti society was governed by the traditional village chief, goan burha and also by the goan Panchayat. The traditional village chief controls the whole problems of society except political affairs. Though the Govt. has given much power to the new emerging political system, it does not affect the power of traditional village chief. In the entire affairs within the village, the power of the village chiefs is very significant.
- (3) There is no significance change in religious aspects. All the rituals and ceremonies are observed with their traditional believe and practices.
- (4) Vast Changes are seen in cultural aspects such as dress and daily habit. Now they began to use modern utensils and some other product of sciences and technology in their day to day life. In considering the above finding, we may conclude that changes are taken place in different aspects of the Khamti society since Independence. But at the same time it is also observed that continuity is also maintained by the Khamtis in different aspects of their society. It is noteworthy that the major changes take place only after the independence period.

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অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ক্ৰমবিকাশত বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যৰ ভাষা :
এটি আলোচনা

অৰুণিমা হাজৰিকা
প্ৰবক্তা অসমীয়া বিভাগ
ছয়দুৱাৰ মহাবিদ্যালয় গহপুৰ

মহাপুৰুষ শংকৰদেৱৰ অংকীয়া নাটত পোন প্ৰথমে অসমীয়া গদ্যৰ বীজ অংকুৰিত হ'লেও প্ৰকৃতাৰ্থত বৈকুণ্ঠ নাথ ভাগৱত ভট্টাচাৰ্য্যৰ হাততহে অসমীয়া গদ্যই দ্বিজত্ব লাভ কৰে। ভট্টদেৱে কাব্যবীতিৰ পৰা আঁতৰি আহি কথা ভংগিমাক সাহিত্যত ঠাই দিলে সচাঁ, কিন্তু গতানুগতিক বীতিৰ পৰা তেওঁ একেবাৰে মুক্ত হ'ব পৰা নাছিল। কিন্তু ভট্টদেৱৰ ৰচনা ৰাজিৰ পাছৰ কথা ভাষাৰ নিদৰ্শন হ'ল চৰিত পুথিসমূহ আৰু বুৰঞ্জীসমূহ। সময়ৰ ব্যৱধানৰ বাবেই হওঁক বা বিষয়বস্তুৰ বাবেই হওঁক এই দুই গদ্যৰ ভাষা বেছি সহজ আৰু ঘৰুৱা। চৰিত পুথিত ৰচকে অতি বিনীত ভাৱে অকৃত্ৰিম শ্ৰদ্ধাভক্তি সহ গুৰু আৰু ধৰ্মাচাৰ্যসকলৰ বিষয়ে কথা চৰিত ৰচনা কৰিছিল। সেয়েহে চৰিত পুথিৰ গদ্যত এক ভকতীয়া ঠাঁচ বিদ্যমান। আনহাতে বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যত সৰস, তীক্ষ্ণ, অথচ বাহুলা বৰ্জিত কথা ভাষাৰ প্ৰয়োগ হোৱা এক মন কৰিবলগীয়া কথা।

ভাৰতীয় সাহিত্যৰ ভিতৰতে আপুৰুগীয়া সম্পদ 'বুৰঞ্জী' আহোমসকলৰ দান। 'দেওধাই', 'অসম বুৰঞ্জী' মতে চুকাফা ৰজাই খামজাং পাই তাতে মানুহ লেখিচালে 'মৰিল তিনিকুৰি, সাতজন হেৰাল। পাছে ৰজাদেৱে বোলে "যি মৰে, যাক পাও", বাটত যি কথা হয়, পণ্ডিতে লিখি থব।" সেইদিন ধৰি আহোম পণ্ডিত চিৰিং ফুকনৰ তহাৱধানত বুৰঞ্জী লিখাৰ সূচনা হয় আৰু গন্ধিয়াফুকনৰ তলে ৰজাঘৰৰ গন্ধিয়া ভৰাঁলত ৰাজকীয় পত্ৰ, বিৱৰণ আদি বুৰঞ্জী ৰচনাৰ আহিলা সৰ্জুলি সংৰক্ষিত কৰা হয়। বুৰঞ্জী লেখক ৰূপে পোনতে আহোমৰ পুৰোহিত শ্ৰেণী, দেওধাই মন, বাইলুৰ সকলে টাই ভাষাত লিখিছিল। পিছলৈ কথিত অসমীয়া ভাষাত উচ্চ পদস্থ আহোম ডাঙৰীয়ায়ো বুৰঞ্জী লিখে। বুৰঞ্জীসমূহ চুকাফাৰ দিনধৰি চন্দ্ৰকান্ত, পুৰন্দৰ, কমলেশ্বৰ সিংহলৈকে কেৱল ৰজা শাসক আৰু ৰাজনীতিৰ ধাৰাবাহিক নীৰস বৰনাই নহয়, সমাজ বা ব্যক্তি বিশেষৰ ঘটনাবলি বিৱৰণো তাত আছে। ৰাজনৈতিক ঘটনাৰ লগত জড়িত ব্যক্তিৰ উক্তি প্ৰত্যক্তিবোৰ হবহ অথচ সুন্দৰকৈ অৱতাৰণা কৰি এক প্ৰকাৰ নাচটকীয় গুণবিশিষ্ট কৰি তোলা হৈছে। ড॰ সূৰ্য্যকুমাৰ ভূঞাৰ ভাষাৰে "বুৰঞ্জীৰ কথা শুকান হাড় চাল নহয়। তাত ভাৱৰ সমাৱেশ আৰু আৱেগৰ সৌৰভ লক্ষ্য কৰিব পাৰি। সেই দেখি এই বুৰঞ্জীসমূহক বুৰঞ্জীৰ শাৰীৰ পৰা আনি বিশুদ্ধ সাহিত্যৰ অংগীভূত কৰা হৈছে। বুৰঞ্জী আৰু সাহিত্যৰ এনে অপূৰ্ব সংগম বিট্টিছৰ পূৰ্বযুগৰ কোনো ভাৰতীয় সাহিত্যত দেখিবলৈ পোৱা নাযায় বুলি ক'লেও সত্যৰ অপলাপ কৰা নহয়।" বুৰঞ্জীক জ্ঞানৰ উৎস বুলি ধৰি ৰজাঘৰীয়া, ডা-ডাঙৰীয়া ল'ৰাক তাৰ শিক্ষা নীক্ষা দিয়া হৈছিল আৰু চকলংৰ পৰত বুৰঞ্জীৰ এছোৱা পঢ়ি শুনোৱাৰ নিয়ম আছিল। বুৰঞ্জীবোৰত একোটি অৱস্থা চৰিত্ৰৰ আৱেগ, অনুভূতি, তাৎপৰ্য্য মনোমোহাৰীকৈ ধোৱতে বহুত বুজোৱাকৈ প্ৰকাশ কৰা হৈছে "লাও তল যাব, শিল ওপঙিব, কোৱা বগা হব, লুহুট উজাই ব'ব, তেৱে কি আমাৰ কবুল চৰিবেক" (দেওধাই অসম বুৰঞ্জী)

বুৰঞ্জী গদ্যৰ অন্য এক বৈশিষ্ট্য হ'ল প্ৰাঞ্জলতা। এই গদ্য ভাৱ প্ৰৱণতাৰ পৰা মুক্ত। কল্পনাৰ ঠাই বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যত থাকিব নোৱাৰে। ইয়াৰ ভাষা যেন জুখি মাখি কোৱা কথা। এই গদ্যৰ কথাও পোনপতীয়া আৰু অৰ্থও পোনপতীয়া। বুৰঞ্জী গদ্য সাধাৰণতে উকা। এই গদ্যৰ অন্যান্য বৈশিষ্ট্যৰ ভিতৰত দেখা যায়, সহজ সাধাতা বা আয়াসহীনতা, সংযম আৰু গাভীৰ্য্য। উল্লেখ যোগ্য যে এই বৈশিষ্ট্য সমূহৰ বাবেই বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যবীতি অৰুণোদয় কাকতত ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱাত কালক্ৰমত এই ভাষাই অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ মান্যভাষা ৰূপে পৰিগণিত হয়।

অসমীয়া গদ্য সাহিত্যৰ ইতিহাসত পোনপ্ৰথমে শংকৰদেৱৰ নাটকৰ গদ্যৰেই নাম ল'ব লাগিব। শংকৰদেৱৰ নাটকত ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা ভাষাক সাধাৰণতে ৰজাৱলী ভাষা বুলি কোৱা হয়। শংকৰদেৱৰ নাটকত ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা গদ্যৰ আন এটি বিশেষত্ব হ'ল এই গদ্য লয়যুক্ত। সেয়েহে শংকৰদেৱৰ এই নাটকত ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা গদ্যক বিশুদ্ধ অসমীয়া গদ্য বুলি বহুতে স্বীকৃতি দিব নোখোজে। মহাপুৰুষ শংকৰদেৱৰ প্ৰায় চাৰিকুৰি বছৰৰ পিছত বৈষ্ণৱ সাধক কথা সাহিত্যিক বৈকুণ্ঠ নাথ ভাগৱত ভট্টাচাৰ্য্যৰ একান্ত প্ৰচেষ্টাত অসমীয়া গদ্য সাহিত্যৰ এক গৌৰৱময় অধ্যায় আৰম্ভ হয়। 'ভাগৱত', 'গীতা'ৰ দৰে তত্ত্ব গধুৰ বিষয়ৰ প্ৰশ্নক সইৰূপে কথাত ৰচনা কৰি অপবিসীম পণ্ডিতাৰ পৰিচয় দিয়াৰ লগতে ভট্টদেৱে অসমীয়া গদ্যসাহিত্যকো যোগ্য আসনত প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰি থৈ গ'ল। ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ প্ৰাক্তীয় প্ৰদেশ এখনৰ ভাষা এটিৰ বৈষ্ণৱধৰ্মৰ মতবাদসমূহ জনসাধাৰণৰ অতি উপযোগী আৰু হৃদয়স্পৰ্শী হ'ব বুলি দৃঢ়তাৰে ভাৱি ষোড়শ শতাব্দীত ৰচনা কৰা ভট্টদেৱৰ গদ্যই ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ প্ৰাদেশীক

ভাষাসমূহৰ গদ্যৰ ভিতৰত সবাতোকৈ শীৰ্ষস্থান লাভ কৰিবলৈ সমৰ্থ হ'ল। পূৰ্বৰ কোনো উৎকৃষ্ট গদ্যৰ আদৰ্শ নোপোৱাকৈ জাৰ্জি শাস্ত্ৰীয় বিষয়ৰ গ্ৰন্থক কথাকপত প্ৰকাশ কৰাতেই ভট্টদেৱৰ গভীৰ পাণ্ডিত্যৰ প্ৰমাণ দাঙি ধৰিছে। ভট্টদেৱৰ গদ্যৰ বৈশিষ্ট্য হ'ল এই গদ্য সমাসবহুল। ৰচনাৰীতি প্ৰায়ে সংস্কৃতীয়া পোন প্ৰথমবাৰৰ বাবে উচ্চ আধ্যাত্মিক চিন্তা আৰু দার্শনিক তত্ত্ব কথাত মাধ্যমৰূপে গদ্যক ব্যৱহাৰ কৰাৰ বাবে ভট্টদেৱৰ গদ্যত এনে বৈশিষ্ট্য সমূহ বিদ্যমান। ভট্টদেৱৰ ৰচনা-ৰাজীৰ পাছৰ কথ্যভাষাৰ নিদৰ্শন হ'ল চৰিত পুথিৰ গদ্য আৰু বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্য। বৈষ্ণৱ সত্ৰ সমূহৰ আশ্ৰয়ত চৰিত পুথি সমূহ উদ্ভৱ হৈছিল। চৰিত পুথিৰ গদ্যই অসমীয়া গদ্য সাহিত্যৰ ইতিহাসত এক গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ ভূমিকা গ্ৰহণ কৰি আহিছে। চৰিত পুথিৰ ভাষা সহজ, বোধগম্য, প্ৰত্যক্ষ, সংযমিত আৰু গাভীৰ্য্যপূৰ্ণ। সত্ৰৰ চাৰিবোৰৰ মাজত থাকি উক্ত সকলে গুৰু সকলৰ প্ৰতি শ্ৰদ্ধাত নিমজ্জিত আলোচনা কৰাৰ বাবেই যথেষ্ট গাভীৰ্য্য পূৰ্ণ এনে পৰিমাৰ্জিত কথ্যৰীতিৰ সহজ আৰু প্ৰত্যক্ষ হোৱাৰ বাবেই চৰিতপুথিৰ গদ্য ৰীতিয়ে অসমীয়া গদ্য সাহিত্যত এক সুকীয়া আসন গ্ৰহণ কৰি আহিছে। নানা সংঘাত আৰু সংমিশ্ৰনৰ সমন্বয়ৰ মাজেদি ভাৰতীয় জীৱন আৰু সংস্কৃতি গঢ় লৈ উঠাৰ দৰে ভাষায়ো ক্ৰমে ন ন ৰূপ লয়। সংঘাত সংগ্ৰাম, মিলন মিশ্ৰন, সমন্বয় সংশ্লেষণৰ মাজেদি গঢ় লৈ উঠা অসমীয়া মানুহৰ ভাষাৰ যেন ই এক সুন্দৰ সমন্বয়াত্মক বিকাশ। ভক্তহৃদয়ৰ গুৰুৰ প্ৰতি ঐকান্তিক শ্ৰদ্ধাভক্তি তথা আৱেগৰ কাৰণে ইয়াৰ গদ্য শৈলীয়ে এক সুৰময় কাব্যিক গুণ লাভ কৰিছে। চৰিত পুথিৰ ভাষাত এফালে সাধাৰণ মানুহৰ মাত কথাত সাধুকপতো যিদৰে পাব পাৰি আনফালে ডকত বৈষ্ণৱসকলৰ কৃত্ৰিম ডকতীয়া ভাষাৰ লগতো পৰিচিত হ'ব পাৰি। এনেধৰণৰ কিছুমান বিশেষ বৈশিষ্ট্য চৰিতপুথিৰ গদ্যত লক্ষ্য কৰা যায়।

অসমীয়া গদ্য সাহিত্যৰ ভিতৰত বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যৰ এক সুকীয়া স্থান আছে। আহোম ৰাজত্বৰ আমোলত ৰচনা হোৱা বুৰঞ্জীবোৰ সাধাৰণতে ৰজাঘৰীয়া সম্পদ। বুৰঞ্জীবোৰ প্ৰথমতে আহোমসকলে অসমলৈ অহাৰ প্ৰথম অৱস্থাত অৰ্থাৎ ত্ৰয়োদশ চতুৰ্দশ শতিকাত টাই ভাষাত লিখা হয় যদিও পিছলৈ অসমীয়া ভাষাতে এই বুৰঞ্জী বোৰ লিখা হয়। আহোমসকলে অসমত স্থায়ী ভাৱে ৰাজ্য স্থাপন কৰাৰ পিছত বিভিন্ন ভাষা ভাষীৰ মাজত যেতিয়া ৰাজকীয় কাৰ্য পৰিচালনা কৰিব লগা হ'ল তেতিয়া তেওঁলোকৰ এটা গ্ৰহণযোগ্য ভাষাৰ প্ৰয়োজন হৈ পৰিল। সেইবাবে তেওঁলোকৰ নিজৰ ভাষাৰ সলনি অসমীয়া ভাষা গ্ৰহণ কৰি অসমীয়া ভাষাক ৰাজ্যভাষালৈ উন্নীত কৰি এই ভাষাতেই তেওঁলোকে বুৰঞ্জী প্ৰণয়ন কৰিবলৈ ধৰিলে। সম্ভৱতঃ পঞ্চদশ শতিকাৰ মানৱপৰাই অসমত অসমীয়া ভাষাত বুৰঞ্জী ৰচনা কৰাৰ চেষ্টা চলিল আৰু এই চেষ্টাৰ সুফল স্বৰূপে অসমীয়া গদ্য সাহিত্যই বুৰঞ্জী সাহিত্য নামৰ আন এবিধ অতুলনীয় বহুমূলীয়া সম্পদ অধিকাৰী হোৱাৰ সুযোগ লাভ কৰিলে। উল্লেখযোগ্য যে পূৰ্বৰ বৈষ্ণৱ গদ্যত থকা পদ্যৰ ধ্বনি প্ৰবাহ, ব্যঞ্জনা শক্তি ; ছন্দৰ স্পন্দন, ভাৱোচ্ছাস প্ৰভৃতিৰ বিলোপ সাধন কৰি বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যই গদ্য সাহিত্যৰ দৃঢ়-বন্ধ সংহতি ৰক্ষা কৰিব পাৰিছে। জনসাধাৰণৰ কথিত ভাষাৰ লগত সংযোগ স্থাপন বুৰঞ্জীসমূহৰ সবাতোকৈ উল্লেখযোগ্য কথা। ৰজাঘৰীয়া কথাত ওপৰত ভিত্তি কৰি বুৰঞ্জীসমূহ ৰচনা কৰিছিল যদিও সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ দৈনন্দিন জীৱনৰ লগত সহকৰ্মী থকা ব্যক্তিয়ে বুৰঞ্জীসমূহ ৰচিছিল আৰু সেইবাবে তেওঁলোকে জনসাধাৰণৰ কথিত ভাষাৰ ওপৰত ভেজা দি বুৰঞ্জী লিখা কাম সম্পাদন কৰিছিল। বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষা নীৰস প্ৰাণহীন ৰচনা নহয়। বুৰঞ্জীবোৰ ৰসযুক্ত কাহিনী, উপকাহিনীৰে ৰংচঙীয়া, যাৰ ফলত সাহিত্যৰ স্বাদ পোৱা যায়। বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষা আৰু বাক্য বিন্যাস ৰীতি বাহ্যিকভাৱে অনাড়ম্বৰ আৰু সংক্ষিপ্ত অথচ তীক্ষ্ণ। নীতিকথা বা প্ৰবাদ মূলক অনেক বাক্যৰদ্বাৰা বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্য অনেক সময়ত আকৰ্ষণীয় কৰি তোলা হৈছে। অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ক্ৰমবিকাশত বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যৰ ভাষাই এক গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ ভূমিকা গ্ৰহণ কৰিছে। এই বিষয়ে এটি সম্যক আলোচনা দাঙি ধৰা হ'ল।

ধ্বনিতাত্ত্বিক বৈশিষ্ট্য :- বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যৰ ভাষাত ধ্বনি তত্ত্বৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত কিছুমান বিশেষ বৈশিষ্ট্য আছে।

যেনে:- আ > অ আমৰো

ই	> এ	; এমান
ও	> অ	; অহম
ক্ষ	> খ	; দখিন
ষ	> খ	; পানী কাখৰে
হ্ৰ	> ৰ	; ৰাস
ন	> ল	; লোম
জ	> ঞ	; মুঝ
স	> হ	; বহতি
ৰ	> ল	; শৰীল

বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যৰ ভাষাত য'ত অনুনাসিক থাকিব লাগে সেই ঠাইত অনুনাসিকৰ প্ৰয়োগ দেখা যায়। যেনে :- নৌপাওঁতেই, কোঁঠত, হুঁকি, বোলাহুঁক ইত্যাদি। উল্লেখযোগ্য যে সমসাময়িক সময়ৰ ৰচনা হ'লেও চৰিতপুথিৰ গদ্যত

অনুনাঙ্গিক দেখা পোৱা নাযায়। যেনে :- তহত, গাত, ইত্যাদি। বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যৰ ভাষাত অন্ত্য 'ত' আধুনিক অসমীয়াৰ দৰেই লিখা দেখা যায়, যেনে :- ঘোঁৰাত, দেওপানীত, ৰাজাত, হাবিত ইত্যাদি।

তত্ত্ব কথোৰ মাধ্যমৰূপে গদ্যক ব্যৱহাৰ কৰাৰ বাবে উট্টদেৱৰ গদ্যত এনে বৈশিষ্ট্য সমূহ বিদ্যমান। উট্টদেৱৰ ৰচনা-ৰাজীৰ পাছৰ কথাভাষাৰ নিদৰ্শন হ'ল চৰিত পুথিৰ গদ্য আৰু বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্য। বৈষ্ণৱ সত্ৰ সমূহৰ আশ্ৰয়ত চৰিত পুথি সমূহ উদ্ভৱ হৈছিল। চৰিত পুথিৰ গদ্যই অসমীয়া গদ্য সাহিত্যৰ ইতিহাসত এক গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ ভূমিকা গ্ৰহণ কৰি আহিছে। চৰিত পুথিৰ ভাষা সহজ, বোধগম্য, প্ৰত্যক্ষ, সংযমিত আৰু গাভীৰ্য্যপূৰ্ণ। সত্ৰৰ চাবিবোৰৰ মাজত থাকি উক্ত সকলে গুৰু সকলৰ প্ৰতি শ্ৰদ্ধাত নিমজ্জিত আলোচনা কৰাৰ বাবেই যথেষ্ট গাভীৰ্য্য পূৰ্ণ এনে পৰিমাণিত কথাৰীতিৰ সহজ আৰু প্ৰত্যক্ষ হোৱাৰ বাবেই চৰিতপুথিৰ গদ্য ৰীতিয়ে অসমীয়া গদ্য সাহিত্যত এক সুকীয়া আসন গ্ৰহণ কৰি আহিছে। নানা সংঘাত আৰু সংমিশ্ৰনৰ সমন্বয়ৰ মাজেদি ভাৰতীয় জীৱন আৰু সংস্কৃতি গঢ় লৈ উঠাৰ দৰে ভাষায়ো ক্ৰমে ন ন ৰূপ লয়। সংঘাত সংগ্ৰাম, মিলন মিশ্ৰন, সমন্বয় সংশ্লেষণৰ মাজেদি গঢ় লৈ উঠা অসমীয়া মানুহৰ ভাষাৰ যেন ই এক সুন্দৰ সমন্বয়াত্মক বিকাশ। উক্তহৃদয়ৰ গুৰুৰ প্ৰতি ঐকান্তিক শ্ৰদ্ধাভক্তি তথা আৱেগৰ কাৰণে ইয়াৰ গদ্য শৈলীয়ে এক সুৰময় কাব্যিক গুণ লাভ কৰিছে। চৰিত পুথিৰ ভাষাত এফালে সাধাৰণ মানুহৰ মাত কথোৰ সাধুকপতো যিদৰে পাব পাৰি আনফালে উক্ত বৈষ্ণৱসকলৰ কৃত্ৰিম উচ্চতীয়া ভাষাৰ লগতো পৰিচিত হ'ব পাৰি। এনেধৰণৰ কিছুমান বিশেষ বৈশিষ্ট্য চৰিতপুথিৰ গদ্যত লক্ষ্য কৰা যায়।

অসমীয়া গদ্য সাহিত্যৰ ভিতৰত বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যৰ এক সুকীয়া স্থান আছে। আহোম ৰাজত্বৰ আমোলত ৰচনা হোৱা বুৰঞ্জীবোৰ সাধাৰণতে ৰজাঘৰীয়া সম্পদ। বুৰঞ্জীবোৰ প্ৰথমতে আহোমসকলে অসমলৈ অহাৰ প্ৰথম অৱস্থাত অৰ্থাৎ ত্ৰয়োদশ চতুৰ্দশ শতিকাত টাই ভাষাত লিখা হয় যদিও পিছলৈ অসমীয়া ভাষাতে এই বুৰঞ্জী বোৰ লিখা হয়। আহোমসকলে অসমত স্থায়ী ভাৱে ৰাজ্য স্থাপন কৰাৰ পিছত বিভিন্ন ভাষা ভাষীৰ মাজত যেতিয়া ৰাজকীয় কাৰ্য পৰিচালনা কৰিব লগা হ'ল তেতিয়া তেওঁলোকৰ এটা গ্ৰহণযোগ্য ভাষাৰ প্ৰয়োজন হৈ পৰিল। সেইবাবে তেওঁলোকৰ নিজৰ ভাষাৰ সলনি অসমীয়া ভাষা গ্ৰহণ কৰি অসমীয়া ভাষাক ৰাজ্যভাষালৈ উন্নীত কৰি এই ভাষাতেই তেওঁলোকে বুৰঞ্জী প্ৰণয়ন কৰিবলৈ ধৰিলে। সম্ভৱতঃ পঞ্চদশ শতিকাৰ মানৱপৰাই অসমত অসমীয়া ভাষাত বুৰঞ্জী ৰচনা কৰাৰ চেষ্টা চলিল আৰু এই চেষ্টাৰ সুফল স্বৰূপে অসমীয়া গদ্য সাহিত্যই বুৰঞ্জী সাহিত্য নামৰ আন এবিধ অতুলনীয় বহুমূলীয়া সম্পদ অধিকাৰী হোৱাৰ সুযোগ লাভ কৰিলে। উল্লেখযোগ্য যে পূৰ্বৰ বৈষ্ণৱ গদ্যত থকা পদ্যৰ ধ্বনি প্ৰবাহ, ব্যঞ্জনা শক্তি ; হৃন্দৰ স্পন্দন, ভাৱোচ্ছাস প্ৰভৃতিৰ বিলোপ সাধন কৰি বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যই গদ্য সাহিত্যৰ দৃঢ়-বন্ধ সংহতি ৰক্ষা কৰিব পাৰিছে। জনসাধাৰণৰ কথিত ভাষাৰ লগত সংযোগ স্থাপন বুৰঞ্জীসমূহৰ সবাতোকৈ উল্লেখযোগ্য কথা। ৰজাঘৰীয়া কথোৰ ওপৰত ভিত্তি কৰি বুৰঞ্জীসমূহ ৰচনা কৰিছিল যদিও সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ দৈনন্দিন জীৱনৰ লগত সেইকৈ থকা ব্যক্তিয়ে বুৰঞ্জীসমূহ ৰচিছিল আৰু সেইবাবে তেওঁলোকে জনসাধাৰণৰ কথিত ভাষাৰ ওপৰত ভেজা দি বুৰঞ্জী লিখা কাম সম্পাদন কৰিছিল। বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষা নীৰস প্ৰাণহীন ৰচনা নহয়। বুৰঞ্জীবোৰ ৰসযুক্ত কাহিনী, উপকাহিনীৰে ৰংচঙীয়া, যাৰ ফলত সাহিত্যৰ স্বাদ পোৱা যায়। বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষা আৰু বাক্য বিন্যাস ৰীতি বাহ্যাবৰ্জিত অনাড়ম্বৰ আৰু সংক্ষিপ্ত অথচ তীক্ষ্ণ। নীতিকথা বা প্ৰবাদ মূলক অনেক বাক্যৰদ্বাৰা বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্য অনেক সময়ত আকৰ্ষণীয় কৰি তোলা হৈছে। অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ক্ৰমবিকাশত বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যৰ ভাষাই এক গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ ভূমিকা গ্ৰহণ কৰিছে। এই বিষয়ে এটি সম্যক আলোচনা দাঙি ধৰা হ'ল।

ধ্বনিতাত্ত্বিক বৈশিষ্ট্য :- বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যৰ ভাষাত ধ্বনি তত্ত্বৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত কিছুমান বিশেষ বৈশিষ্ট্য আছে। যেনে:-

ই	> এ	; এমান
ও	> অ	; অহম
ক্ষ	> খ	; দখিন
ষ	> য	; পানী কাখৰে
হ	> ব	; ৰাস
ন	> ল	; লোম
জ	> ঙ	; যুঝ
স	> হ	; বহতি
ৰ	> ল	; শৰীল

বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যৰ ভাষাত য'ত অনুনাঙ্গিক থাকিব লাগে সেই ঠাইত অনুনাঙ্গিকৰ প্ৰয়োগ দেখা যায়। যেনে :- নৌপাওঁতেই, কোঁঠত, ছইকি, বোলাইক ইত্যাদি। উল্লেখযোগ্য যে সমসাময়িক সময়ৰ ৰচনা হ'লেও চৰিতপুথিৰ গদ্যত অনুনাঙ্গিক দেখা পোৱা নাযায়। যেনে :- তহত, গাত, ইত্যাদি। বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যৰ ভাষাত অন্ত্য 'ত' আধুনিক অসমীয়াৰ

দৰেই লিখা দেখা যায়, যেনে :- ঘোঁৰাত, দেওপানীত, বাজাত, হাবিত ইত্যাদি।

কপতত্বৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যৰ ভাষাত কিছুমান বৈশিষ্ট্য বৰ্ণিত হোৱা দেখা যায়। বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যত বচন দুবিধ। একবচন আৰু বহুবচন। এটুক বুজাবলৈ একবচন আৰু এটুকৈ অধিক বুজাবলৈ বহুবচন ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা দেখা যায়। যি বচন বুজাবলৈ দুহট বুজোৱা কৰাৰ পাছত নিৰ্দিষ্টতা বাচক প্ৰত্যয় যোগ দিয়া হয়। যেনে:- দুহট ভবি, বুজনা গোহাঁহট, দুহট পুখুৰী হটত্যাৰ্হি। বহুবচন বুজাবলৈ হঁত, বিলাক, সকল, ইত্যাদি প্ৰত্যয়ৰ সংযোগ কৰা হয়।

যেনে :- তহঁত আমাৰ, ভোৰ, নেওগবিলাক, বাজাসকল হটত্যাৰ্হি।

লিংগৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাত মূল ব্যঞ্জনান্ত কৰাৰ পাছত ই (ঈ) স্ত্ৰীবাচক প্ৰত্যয় পোনপতীয়াকৈ যোগ হয় যেনে:- দাস দাসী। ই স্ত্ৰীলিংগৰ প্ৰত্যয় যোগ হোৱাৰ বাবে আকাৰান্ত পুলিংগ কৰাৰ শেষত থকা 'আ'ৰ লোপ হয়। যেনে :- বুচা-বুচী।

কেতিয়াবা সমক্ৰবাচক ভিন্ন শব্দ প্ৰয়োগ কৰি লিংগ ভেদ কৰা দেখা যায়। যেনে :-

বাপ	-	মাওঁ।
বুপা	-	আই
পুত্ৰ	-	কন্যা।
পুখাও	-	এনায়।

বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাত থকা সৰ্বনামবোৰ এনেধৰণৰ : যেনে:- আপোনাৰ (নিজৰ), তাহঁত, তেপ্ৰা, তঞি, মঞি, মিসকল, মই মোৰ, আমাত, তুমি, তোক।

ক্ৰিয়াবাচক পৰসগবোৰৰ ব্যৱহাৰ মন কৰিবলগীয়া। যেনে :-

গৈ	-	ইট দুই নগাক ধৰিব দিলেগৈ।
হি	-	ৰজাদেৱৰ ঠাইত দিলেহি।
হনু	-	কলেহনু।
উপাৰে	-	হাজোৰ উপাৰে।
মধ্যত	-	দুয়োজন মধ্যত।
নি	-	দিলেনি।
সসে	-	বৰফুকনৰ সসে।
সমে	-	গোহাঁই সমে।
একা	-	নহল একা।
বুলি	-	এইবুলি।

বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যত দেখা পোৱা কৃদন্ত ৰূপবোৰ, হ'ল হ'বৰ শুনি, আহিবৰ দেখি, কিনিবৰ ছলে ইত্যাদি। হৰ্ষসাপেক্ষতা বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাত দেখা পোৱা যায়। যেনে:- "মই যদি ৰজাহলোঁহেতেন, ম'হ খোৱাক ম'হ ছাগ খোৱাক ছাগ, মেঠন খোৱাক মেঠন, এহট কপে দিলোঁহেতেন।

বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাত থকা নিৰ্দিষ্টতা বাচক প্ৰত্যয়বোৰ হ'ল :-

টি/টে - ল'ৰাটি, দৰাটে।

ডাল	-	খৰিকাদাল।
খন	-	তামোলখন।
যোৰ	-	খাৰু এযোৰ।
চট্ট	-	ঘৰ এট্ট।
চলা	-	শিল এচলা।
জুৰি	-	চেংকুকুৰা এজুৰি।
জনা	-	তিনিজনা।
গছ	-	ছিৰী দুগছ।
ছৱা	-	দোছোৱা।

সংযুক্ত শব্দৰ ব্যৱহাৰ বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাৰ অন্য এক বৈশিষ্ট্য।

যেনে :- অস্ত্ৰ-শস্ত্ৰ, খোৱা-পিকা, মাছ-পহ, ভূত-পিশাচ, পান-শুৱা, বোল-বচন, দ্ৰব্য-বস্তু ইত্যাদি।

সেই দৰে ধ্বন্যাত্মক শব্দবোৰ হ'ল ঘাটফাট, মানুহ-দুহুহ, ৰং-চং।

বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাত শব্দ বিভক্তিৰ প্ৰয়োগ এনেধৰণৰ-

প্ৰথমা - এ : পখীয়ে।

দ্বিতীয়া : ক : প্রজাক।
 তৃতীয়া : বে : জখলাবে।
 চতুর্থী : লৈ : স্বর্গলৈ।
 ষষ্ঠী : ব : সোনৰ।
 সপ্তমী : ত : অৰণ্যত।

ক্রিয়াটো সকৰ্মক হ'লে সচৰাচৰ কৰ্তাৰ পাছত প্ৰথমা এ বিভক্তি যোগ হয়। যেনে :- বজাদেৱে কটকটী পঠালে কেতিয়াবা ক্রিয়াটো.....

অকৰ্মক হ'লেও প্ৰথমা বিভক্তি যোগ হোৱা দেখা যায়। যেনে :- মহাৰজাই শদিয়া নগৰলৈ গ'ল। প্ৰথমা বিভক্তিয়ে কেতিয়াবা তৃতীয়া বিভক্তিৰ কেতিয়াবা সপ্তমী বিভক্তিৰ কাম চলোৱা উদাহৰণ বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাত আছে। নাৱে গ'ল, যুজে বলে নোৱাৰি, কটকীৰ মুখে, দ্বিতীয়া বিভক্তিয়ে কেতিয়াবা চতুৰ্থীৰ কামো কৰে চুঃক্ৰানফাৰ ঠাইক মানুহ পঠালে অৰণ্যক গ'ল। দ্বিতীয়া বিভক্তিৰ সলনি সপ্তমী বিভক্তিৰ প্ৰয়োগো নোহোৱা নহয়, যেনে :- কিংলুসে বজাদেৱত ক'লে, চুকাফা, ৰাজাত কলেহি। কেতিয়াবা কোনো শব্দবিভক্তিৰ ব্যৱহাৰ নোহোৱা উদাহৰণো আছে, বজা মৃত্য হ'ল, তৃতীয়া বিভক্তি 'বে'ৰ উপৰি এবে য়েৰে আদিৰ ব্যৱহাৰ পোৱা যায়: পখি এবে, তুমিয়েৰে, সুৰা এবে ইত্যাদি। অপাদান অৰ্থত ষষ্ঠী 'ব'ৰ পাছত 'পৰা' পৰসৰ্গ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়: দুখৰ পৰা।

বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাত থকা ক্রিয়াৰ নাম্যৰ্থক ৰূপৰ ব্যৱহাৰ এনেধৰণৰ :- নালাগে, নাজানে, নেবাজে, নোবোলে, নাখাৰ, নুখুৱাব, নুওচে, নিদিলে ইত্যাদি।

সেইদৰে বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাত সংখ্যাবাচক শব্দৰ ব্যৱহাৰো দেখা যায়। যেনে :- পোন্ধৰট, এঘেৰট, আঘাৰে ইত্যাদি।

সম্বন্ধবাচক শব্দৰ বহল প্ৰয়োগ বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাৰ এক সুকীয়া বৈশিষ্ট্য যেনে :- জোঁৱাই, শহৰ, জেঠেদি, বৰপুতেক, বৰমাজু পুতেক, নাতিককা, আজোককা, পুলিন পুখাও, এনাই, নিচাদেউ, এপাদেউ ইত্যাদি।

শব্দতাত্ত্বিক দৃষ্টিত বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাত কেতিয়াবা একোটা বাক্যত তৎসম শব্দৰ প্ৰাচুৰ্য্য মনকৰিবলগীয়া। যেনে :- আকুন্ডিত কেশ, সিংহবন্ধ গীবা, হস্ত-পাদ, চক্ষু-ৰজবৰ্ণ, দক্ষিণ হস্তত তিনিটা তিল, শঙ্খ-পদ্ম, বাম হস্তত অক্ষুশ, গদা ইত্যাদি। বুৰঞ্জীত দেখা পোৱা অৰ্ধতৎসম শব্দ মুকুতা বিৰিষি, বিৰিষণ, ঘৰিণী ইত্যাদি। তদ্ভৱ শব্দবোৰ হ'ল হাজী, ঘোৰা, দাঁত, পৰু, ম'হ, বামুন, হাঁহ, পাৰ, তেল, আম ইত্যাদি।

বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাত পশ্চিম অসমৰ ভাষাৰ ৰূপ প্ৰচুৰ পৰিমাণে সংৰক্ষিত হৈছে। যেনে :- আঘন, বেলা, বয়া, ছাপল, আমৰা, জানিছ, দিছি, পাহ, গেল হৰাল ইত্যাদি।

বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাত প্ৰাচীন অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ বহুতো ৰূপ পোৱা যায়। যেনে :- বহিলন্ত, পাৰ্থিত পঠাই, কৈক, কৈত, আপোন দেশক গৈলা, তৈৰপৰা, ধৰিবাক প্ৰতি, আসিবাৰ, মাখাত হস্তে ইত্যাদি।

বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাত থকা বিদেশী শব্দ যেনে :- কোৰান, ছফেদ, খাজানা, নফব, কপীয়া, তজু, ফাৰাক, আদমি, গোলাম ফৌজ, চৰ্দাৰ, ভব, মালুম, পৌচা ইত্যাদি।

বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যৰ ভাষাত থকা আন এটা বৈশিষ্ট্য হ'ল, টাই ভাষাৰ শব্দৰ প্ৰচুৰ প্ৰয়োগ যেনে :- "আতপাচে ত্যাওতাংৱনৰ পুত্ৰ ত্যাও ত্যাংলৌ লাকনি বিহিমিত শকত মুংবিমুংৱানৰ পৰা মুংখামুংজা ৰাজালৈ আহিল। তাৰপৰা মাওলুং পালেহি। পাচে পামেউপুং পুখামেকে ত্যাওতাংলৌৰ আগত বুলিলে বোলে "তই নাম কিউৰ পাৰ নহ'বি। পাচে ত্যাই পুসৰ পুতেক পামেউপুং, জীয়েক বকল খামচেন। পাচে ত্যাওতাই পুসৰ জীয়েক লাংমুংবকল খামচেনক ত্যাওতাংলৌলৈ দিলে। এওঁৰেপুতেক চুখানফা, এওঁকে এনামেকে তুলিলে। এৰেঁহট এনামেক পুখামেকৰ ঘৰত উনিশ বছৰ আছিলে। ত্যাওতাহট পুসৰ পুতেক পামেউ পুসৰ পুত্ৰ নহ'ল (দেওধাই অসম বুৰঞ্জী)।

উক্ত ছেদটোত পাঁচপন্নতা শব্দৰ তেইশটা শব্দই টাই ভাষাৰ শব্দ।

বুৰঞ্জীসমূহ ৰচিত হৈছিল ৰজাঘৰৰ পঠ্যপোষকতাত, সেয়েহে এই গদ্যৰ ভাষা মৃদু নহয় বলিষ্ঠ। যেনে :- 'শামুকটো মানিক, কদলীটো কপুৰ, আত তই সংশয় নকৰিব, সূৰ্যপুৰী লক্ষ্মীটো ৰাক্ষসে ভোগ কৰে, ক'ত শ্ৰুনিছা খুন্তৰজাৰ বচন লৰে, "আমি বঙালৰ জেওৰা হৈ আছো, এতেকে তুমি বা নাপাইছা আমি যদি বঙ্গালৰ জেওৰা ভাঙিলো, "তোমাৰ গড়পাওঁ হাৰীৰ পেৰা, ধোবাৰ পাট হ'ব।" (তুংখুঙ্গীয়া বুৰঞ্জী)

বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্য উচ্চা নিৰাভাৱণ বাক্যবোৰৰ গঠনশৈলীও সৰল। যেনে :- "মূৰৰ চুলি দুই এডাল পাকিল তাক কাঢ়িলে শোভা দেখি, সকল যদি পাকল তাক কাঢ়িলে আপোনাৰ মূৰত দুখ পাবলৈহে আছে"। (অসম বুৰঞ্জী)

কথিত ভাষাৰ গত বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যত বিদ্যমান। ইয়াৰ বাক্যবোৰ চুটি চুটি। কথাবোৰ সংক্ষেপে কোৱা ভাষাৰ ল'ৰা লুৰি নাহট " এতেকে আগলৈ পাছলৈকে আশা নাহট, মহট ৰজা হ'লে ভাল নহয়, তুমিহে ৰজা হবলৈ ভাল

তথাপি তুমি তেও বজা নোহোৱা, ভাল, ময়ে বজা হৈ বজা নাম লৈ খাই থাকিম, বাজা পাট সকলো খিনি তোমাৰহে।" (দেউৰাই অসম বুৰঞ্জী)

জতুৱা ঠাঁচ, খণ্ডবাক্য, ফকৰা যোজনা আদিৰ যথাযথ প্ৰয়োগে বৰ্ণনীয় বিষয় অধিক স্পষ্ট আৰু আৰু আকৰ্ষণীয় কৰি তোলে। বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্যৰ ভাষাত মাজে মাজে এইবোৰৰ প্ৰয়োগৰ ফলত সুখপাঠ্য হৈ উঠিছে। ইয়াৰ ফলত বৰ্ণনীয় বিষয় অধিক আকৰ্ষণীয় হৈ উঠিছে। যেনে :- "পাচে আইকুঁৱৰীয়ে চাবলৈ আহি বোলে "কি কৰিছ নিক ছাই ? বোলে, " পায়েৰে থৈছে ঠিক চাই '। (অসম বুৰঞ্জী)

" হস্তিৰ দান্ত ওলাইপুণক্বাৰ সোমবাৰ কৈত দেখিছ।'২ (পুৰণি অসম বুৰঞ্জী)

বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষা অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ইতিহাসত এক বিশিষ্ট মাইলৰ খুটি। মধ্যযুগৰ অসমীয়া ভাষা আৰু আধুনিক অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ বচনাকপে বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষাৰ স্বকীয় বৈশিষ্ট্য ৰাজিয়ে অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ধাৰাবাহিকতা বক্ষা কৰাত বিপুল অৰিহণা যোগাইছে। বুৰঞ্জীসমূহত প্ৰধানকৈ ৰাজনৈতিক ঘটনাৱলী আৰু ৰজাঘৰৰ কাৰ্যকলাপৰ বৰ্ণনা থাকিলেও ইয়াত মধ্যযুগৰ অসমৰ সামাজিক জীৱনৰ চিত্ৰও প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। বুৰঞ্জীৰ ভাষা মধ্য যুগৰ অসমীয়া জনসাধাৰনৰ বাস্তৱ কথা ভাষাৰ নিদৰ্শন। বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্য অধ্যয়ন কৰিলে আধুনিক গদ্যৰ পূৰ্ব আভাস লাভ কৰিব পাৰি। সহজ সবল ভাষাৰে জনসাধাৰনৰ মাত কথাৰ আশ্ৰয়ত গঢ় লৈ উঠা বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্য অসমীয়া প্ৰকৃত গদ্যৰ সমুজুল ৰূপ। কথাবীতি বা ঘৰুৱা মাতকথাক স্পষ্টভাৱে প্ৰকট কৰা গদ্য সাহিত্যসমূহৰ ভিতৰত বুৰঞ্জীৰ গদ্য অসমীয়া কাব্য সাহিত্যৰ যুগান্তকাৰী কীৰ্ত্তিস্তম্ভ।

সহায়ক গ্ৰন্থপঞ্জী

গোস্বামী, উপেন্দ্ৰনাথ	: অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ উৎসৰ সমৃদ্ধি বিকাশ।
ঠাকুৰীয়া, ৰামমল	: কথা গুৰিচৰিতৰ মনি মুকুতা।
নেওগ, মহেশ্বৰ	: অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ৰূপৰেখা।
পাঠক, ৰমেশ	: অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ইতিহাস।
বৰুৱা, বিৰিঞ্চিকুমাৰ	: অসমীয়া কথা সাহিত্য।
হাজৰিকা, অৰুনিমা	: গুৰু চৰিত কথাৰ ভাষা (এটি অধ্যয়ন)

ক্ষুদ্ৰ গৱেষণা পত্ৰ (গুৱাহাটী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়)

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BASUDEV DAUL, KALABARI: THE GLORY OF THE GREAT AHOMS

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INTRODUCTION

Ahom is an old historical ethnic of Northeast India. They are one of the six recognized Tai group living spread in Assam. They had migrated from Mung Mao Kingdom situated in the Mao river valley (present Burma) during A.D. 1212 to A.D. 1228 and established their rule in "Mung Dun Chun Kham" or "land full of golden garden", i.e., Assam. They ruled in the Brahmaputra Valley of Assam from A.D. 1228 to A.D. 1838. The decedents of this Tai Ahom family still live in the north-eastern corner of this country. This Ahom constitute the only dynasty in the world to have continuously ruled in any province for 600 years. They also carried with them their culture, tradition and other philosophical treasures.

During the long rule of the Ahom, they built a large number of religious buildings and royal palaces in this land. With their own tradition and knowledge, they provide us several architectural skill in different places of Assam. Among them, the Basudev *daul* of Kalabari came under front line. It is situated in a small place known as Kalabari, in the Sonitpur district of Assam. Kalabari is a small area located between 26 302 to 27 22 N latitude and 90 172 to 93 472 E longitude. It is bounded by Lakhimpur district in the east, Gohpur town in the West, Arunachal Pradesh in the north and river Brahmaputra in the South. Its distance from state capital (Guwahati) is 350 km, district head-quarter (Tezpur) is 160 km. and Sub-Divisional head-quarter (Gohpur) is 20 km.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

The History of Basudev *daul* can be traced back to the age of the great Ahoms. A *satra* was established here by Banamali Dev, the founder of Dakshinpat *Satra* of Majuli¹. It was patronized by the Ahom King Sulikpha (1679-81 A.D.)². Some others give this credit to the Ahom King Udayaditya Singha (1669-73 A.D.)³. But its style and workmanship spoke of a later age. In 1758 A.D. A *daul* was erected near the *satra* by Numali Borgohain during the reign of Ahom King Rajeswar Singha⁴.

PRESENT STATUS:

The Basudev *daul* is one of the best example of Ahom architecture. It is a *nagara* temple of *Pancharatha* type (Fig-1). Soaring to a height of 20 metres, this structure is typically Ahom in style. The *daul* is situated in North-South direction and is divided into four parts (Fig-2)– *garbhagrha*, *antarala*, *Main-Mandapa* and *Mukha-Mandapa*. The base of the temple foundation has depicted as "Pancharatha" style which are more common architectural feature seen in Ahom and other Indian temples between mid to late-medieval period. The length of its *garbhagrha* is 28 feet and its breadth is 15 feet. The thickness of its wall is 4 feet. The radius of the base is 26 feet. A close look at the *bada* show that it was a *anga-bada*. The *Antarola* part and main *Mandapa* of the *daul* is found gradually damaged. The roof of the *Mandapa* has completely broken. It contains four doorway – one to the *garbhagrha*, one door to Main *Mandapa* and the other two leads to outer side of the *daul*. The main

Mandapa is rectangular in shape. The Archeological Survey of India, Guwahati Circle has started some repairing works on September 2007 on this *daul*. Their works resulted recently the existence of a brick wall on the outer side of the *Mandapa* which indicates the existence of *Mukha-Mandapa*. But this brick structure is badly damaged.

Vertically the plan of the temple can be divided into three parts (Fig-3) – *padabhaga*, *triangabada* and *sikhara*. Its *anga – sikhara* and the form of the *mastaka* speak of an advanced stage of development. According to local tradition and belief, its “*kalasa*” made of gold was stolen by the “*Manas*” during the Burmese invasion of Assam.

The *daul* is associated with a *satra*. A big pond is also found on the western direction (Fig-4). The *garbhagriha* of the *daul* is internally linked with the pond. The whole premises is surrounded by earth embankments. The Ahom Swargadeo donated 12.99 *bighas* 2 *kathas* and 7 *lochas* of land for this *daul*. A good number of stone sculptures are attached to the outer side of *bada* of the *daul*. The local people speak about 36 such sculptures. But at present, only twelve is found. They are mainly the icon of *Narayan*, *Brahma*, *Kuber*, *Kartika*, *Budha*, *Yama*, *Parsurama*, *Kalki*, *Agni*, *Durga*, *Matsya* Incarnation, *Rama* and one unidentified figure. Stone blocks are also found in the southern wall of the *Mandapa* some of which are already missing. On the whole, the *daul* contains no stone carvings and floral decoration. The stone sculpture on the outer side of the *bada* of *garbhagriha* and *mandapa* suggests the Vaishnavaid Philosophy or ideology. Because the *daul* is constructed near the *satra* of Vaishnava frith, its sculpture also prove the same. In 1936, the *daul* handed over to the government of

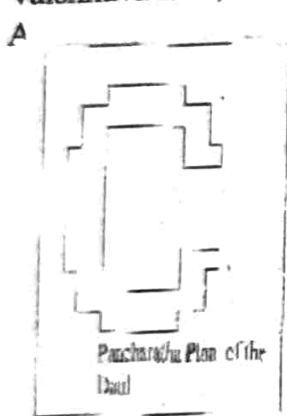


Fig 1: Pancharatha Plan of Basudev Daul (figures are not to scale)

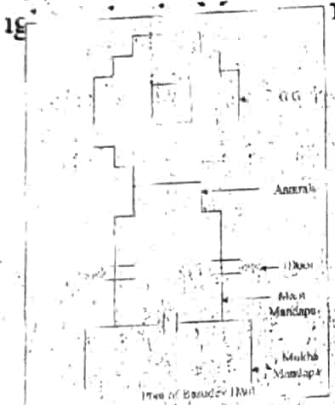


Fig 2: Plan of Basudev Daul

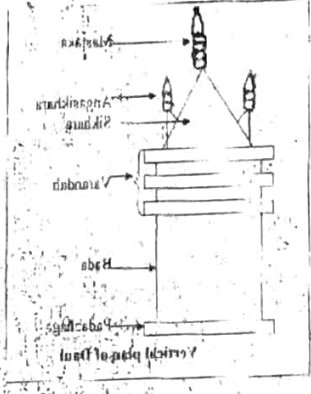


Fig 3: Vertical Plan of Basudev Daul

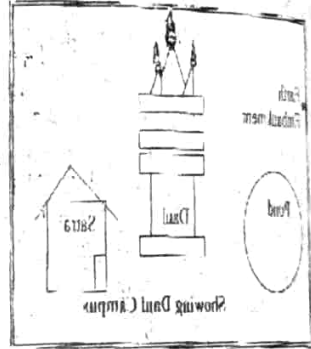


Fig 4: Daul Campus

THREATS:

It is very unfortunate that this old monuments of Sonitpur district is not taken proper care of. Natural causes and time have done great havoc to this monument of the great Ahoms. The brick structure is going to damage and the stone blocks are highly weathered due to deterioration. High rainfall help in growing of algae, fungus and lichens like substance, which are prime agent for this deterioration. Its main deity of *Basudev* was damaged by the root of a big “*jari tree*” (Peepal Tree). As a result, these valuable archaeological objects have gradually been damaged and out of shaped. Since the time of its construction, it had remained almost static. Efforts are, therefore, required to restore local level management for preservation of this medieval historical monument and also should preserve its tradition and cultural heritage. It should be well preserved before it completely ruined. The floor of the pond is also not its original feature. *Daul* committee have been dug the bed of pond to utilize it as fishery.

RECOMMENDATIONS / SUGGESTIONS:

In order to protect and preserve the rare heritage, some of the suggested measures are as under:-

- * Periodic maintenance in the form of removal of harmful vegetation, removal of soil and moss from the sites.
- * Diversion / Construction of drains to prevent soil erosion to the pond and easy clearance of rainwater.
- * Debates and discussions should be held in the *daul* premises among scholars. It will help to create general awareness at fringe areas of *daul* plots and would give valuable insight for the management of the historical monument.
- * To suggest the state government to promote this place to a tourist spot.

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নাৰায়ণপুৰ অঞ্চলৰ কেইখনমান উল্লেখযোগ্য ঠাইৰ 'নামৰ' ইতিহাস তথা কিস্বদন্তি

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প্ৰতিখন ঠাইৰ নামৰ আঁৰত সেই নামটো সৃষ্টিৰ গুৰিত একোটা বুৰঞ্জী থাকে। বহুদিন ধৰি ব্যৱহাৰ কৰি অহা পাছত তাৰ নামটোহে মনত ৰয়গৈ, তাৰ জন্মৰ আঁৰত বুৰঞ্জী বিচাৰি উলিওৱা মানুহ কমহে হয়গৈ। কোনোবা বুৰঞ্জীৰ বুকুত থকা ৰজা-মহাৰজাৰ নাম বা কাৰ্যকলাপৰ বাবে অথবা বুৰঞ্জীয়ে ঢুকি নোপোৱা দিনৰ পৰাও মুখ বাগৰা কাহিনীৰ ওপৰত ভিত্তি কৰি নাইবা পবিত্ৰ দৌল-দেৱালয়, নদীক ভিত্তি কৰিও এডোখৰ ঠাইৰ নামৰ উৎপত্তি হ'ব পাৰে। অসমৰ স্থান নামসমূহ বিভাজন কৰোতে কেইবা ধৰণেও শ্ৰেণী বিভাগৰ প্ৰক্ৰিয়া গ্ৰহণ কৰিব পাৰি। যেনে-

১। নৃতাত্ত্বিক আৰু ঐতিহাসিক।

২। ঐতিহাসিক, ভৌগোলিক, জনগোষ্ঠীগত, ভাষাতাত্ত্বিক, ধৰ্মীয়, সাংস্কৃতিক, লোক সাহিত্য ইত্যাদি।

ঐতিহাসিক শ্ৰেণীসমূহক আকৌ সময় অনুসাৰে ভাগ কৰিব পাৰি। যেনেঃ

১। প্ৰাগঐতিহাসিক ২। ঐতিহাসিক ৩। প্ৰাৰম্ভিক মধ্য ৪। মধ্য ৫। শেহতীয়া মধ্য ৬। আধুনিক ৭। উত্তৰ আধুনিক।

এই আলোচনাত লক্ষীমপুৰ জিলাৰ পশ্চিমাঞ্চল নাৰায়ণপুৰ আৰু তাৰ আশে-পাশে থকা কেইখনমান উল্লেখযোগ্য ঠাইৰ নামৰ ইতিহাস বিচাৰি উলিয়াবলৈ বিচৰা হৈছে। এই প্ৰয়াসে এই ঠাইৰ নামৰ আঁৰত থকা ঐতিহাসিক তথা কিস্বদন্তিৰ সমলবোৰ বিচাৰি পোৱাত সফল হ'ব বুলি আশা কৰা হৈছে।

এই আলোচনা যুগুত কৰোতে বিভিন্ন গ্ৰন্থ তথা স্মৃতিগ্ৰন্থত প্ৰকাশিত প্ৰবন্ধ তথা অঞ্চলটোৰ দুজনমান বিশিষ্ট ব্যক্তিৰ সহায় লোৱা হৈছে।

নাৰায়ণপুৰ বুলিলে বৰ্তমান এই নামৰ এটা মৌজা আৰু তাতকৈ সৰু এখন ঠাইৰ কথাহে বুজায় যদিও মধ্যযুগত এই নামে বৰ্তমানৰ শোণিতপুৰ জিলাৰ কলংপুৰৰপৰা বিহপুৰীয়াৰ একাংশ আৰু হাৰমতি পৰ্যন্ত অৰুণাচল প্ৰদেশৰ পাদদেশলৈকে সামৰি লৈছিল; আৰু এই সমগ্ৰ অঞ্চলটোক 'বৰ নাৰায়ণপুৰ' বোলা হৈছিল। লক্ষীমপুৰ জিলাৰ পশ্চিমাঞ্চলত অৱস্থিত এই বৃহৎ অঞ্চলটো অসমৰ ৰাজনৈতিক, সামাজিক আৰু সাংস্কৃতিক ইতিহাসত বিশেষভাৱে ঐতিহ্যপূৰ্ণ। নৃতাত্ত্বিক দিশতো অঞ্চলটোৰ জনগাঁঠনি বিশেষভাৱে বৈচিত্ৰ্যপূৰ্ণ। কোচ-আহোমৰ যুদ্ধৰ সময়ত এই অঞ্চল এটা বিখ্যাত ঘাট হিচাপে বুৰঞ্জীত উল্লেখ আছে। ইয়াত বাস কৰা বিভিন্ন জাতি-উপজাতিৰ লোকসকলে তেওঁলোকৰ স্বকীয় সংস্কৃতিৰে সমগ্ৰ অঞ্চলটো বৈচিত্ৰ্যময় আৰু মহত্বপূৰ্ণ কৰি ৰাখিছে।

নাৰায়ণপুৰঃ বৰনাৰায়ণপুৰৰ বিস্তৃত বিৱৰণ বুৰঞ্জীত পাবলৈ নাই যদিও পুৰণি সাহিত্যৰ ঠাই বিশেষত এই অঞ্চলৰ উল্লেখ চেগা-চোৰোকাকৈ পোৱা যায়। নাৰায়ণপুৰৰ বৈষ্ণৱ-অবৈষ্ণৱ কবিসকলৰ ৰচনাৰ আত্ম পৰিচয়ত এই অঞ্চলৰ উল্লেখ পোৱা যায়। 'নাৰায়ণপুৰ' নামটো মহাৰাজ নৰনাৰায়ণে এই অঞ্চলটো আক্ৰমণ কৰাৰে পৰা তেওঁৰ নামানুসাৰে

খোলা বুলি অনুমান কৰা হয়। অৱশ্যে প্ৰত্নতত্ত্ববিদ ৰাজমোহন নাথৰ 'The Background of Assamese Culture' নামৰ গ্ৰন্থত উল্লেখ কৰা অনুসৰি নাৰায়ণপুৰ অঞ্চলত হাবুঙত ৰাজত্ব কৰা কলিতা বংশৰ সত্যনাৰায়ণ ৰজাই বৰাহীসকলক ৰখা দিবৰ বাবে অস্থায়ী ৰাজধানী পাতি আছিল। তেওঁৰ পুত্ৰ লক্ষ্মীনাৰায়ণে চুতীয়াবিলাকক বাধা দিবৰ বাবে লক্ষ্মীপুৰত অস্থায়ী ৰাজধানী পতাৰ কথা কোৱা হৈছে। সত্য নাৰায়ণৰ ৰাজধানী থকা অঞ্চলটো বৰ্তমান সাউকুঁছীৰপৰা ডেব মাইলমান পূবৰ দক্ষিণ-পশ্চিম অঞ্চলতে থকা বুলি অনুমান কৰা হয়। এই দুয়োজন ৰজা নাৰায়ণ বা বাসুদেৱৰ উপাসক আছিল। সেই মৰ্মে তেওঁলোকে ব্ৰাহ্মণক ভূমিদান কৰা তাম্ৰফলিও উদ্ধাৰ হৈছে। বহুতে অনুমান কৰে যে, সত্য নাৰায়ণে সেইবাবেই অঞ্চলটোক নাৰায়ণপুৰ বুলি নামকৰণ কৰে।

খেৰাজখাত: নাৰায়ণপুৰৰ উত্তৰে খেৰাজখাত মৌজা অৱস্থিত। ১৮৪৩ চনত বৃটিছসকলে খামতি ৰাজকোঁৱৰ চাওলা মৌজাৰ সৈতে কিছু খামতি লোক আনি ডিক্ৰুঙৰ পাৰত স্থাপন কৰে। নাৰায়ণপুৰ মৌজাৰ একাংশ উক্ত ৰাজকোঁৱৰ পৰিয়ালক খাজনা (খেৰাজ) তুলি বতী থাকিবৰ কাৰণে খাত (পাম) হিচাপে দিয়ে। তেতিয়াৰ পৰাই এই অঞ্চলৰ নাম খেৰাজখাত হয়।

মাঘনোৱা: নাৰায়ণপুৰ অঞ্চলৰ সকলোবোৰ পুৰণি কীৰ্তিচিহ্নৰ ভিতৰত মাঘনোৱা দৌলেই বেছি পুৰণি। এই দৌল কোলে কেতিয়া নিৰ্মাণ কৰিছিল তাৰ স্পষ্ট প্ৰমাণ পাবলৈ নাই। দৰং জিলাৰ গেজেটিয়াৰৰ মতে ফুলবাৰী দেৱালয় (মাঘনোৱা দ'ল) স্বৰ্গদেউ ৰুদ্ৰসিংহই প্ৰায় ১৭০৫ খৃষ্টাব্দত নিৰ্মাণ কৰে। চাংৰুং ফুকনৰ বুৰঞ্জীৰ মতে "১৬৪৩ শকৰ (১৭২১ খৃঃ) ফাগুনত বান্ধিছে ফুলবাৰী দেওঘৰৰ দৌল।" উক্ত মত শুদ্ধ বুলি ধৰিলে ফুলবাৰী দেওঘৰ বা মাঘনোৱা দ'ল ১৭২১ খৃঃ (১৬৪৩ শক)ত শিৱসিংহই স্থাপন কৰিছিল বুলি ভাবিব পাৰি। কাৰণ সেই সময়ত আহোম ৰাজপাটত স্বৰ্গদেউ শ্ৰীশিৱসিংহই (১৬৩৬-১৬৬৬ শক) ৰাজত্ব কৰিছিল। উল্লেখযোগ্য যে, প্ৰত্নতাত্ত্বিকসকলে ফুলবাৰী দেৱালকেই মাঘনোৱা দৌল বুলি চিনাক্ত কৰিছে।

অসমীয়া সমাজত মাঘবিহুৰ দিনা পুৱা মূল গৃহস্থই দোকমোকালিতে উঠি নিজৰ বাৰীৰ গছ-গছনিৰ উৎপাদন বিহুৰ বাবে ধনখেৰেৰে গছত একোটা গাঁঠি দিয়ে। এই প্ৰথাটোক আহোমসকলে 'মাক্‌নোৱা' বুলি কয়। মাঘনোৱা দৌলকো আহোম, চুতীয়া, বৰাহী আদিয়ে তেনে অৰ্থত বিশ্বাস কৰি পূজা-সেৱা আগবঢ়াইছিল বাবে ইয়াৰ নাম 'মাক্‌নোৱা' বা 'মাঘনোৱা' হ'ল। ঐশ্বৰ্য-বিভূতিৰ গৰাকী হিচাপে লোৱা এই মাঘনোৱা দৌলৰ নামকৰণত আন এক বিশ্বাস প্ৰচলিত আছিল। মাঘ মাহত অতি পূৰ্ব কালতে দৌলৰ মূৰ্তিভাগ ৰাইজে অতি উলহ-মালহেৰে নোৱাই-ধুৱাই নি পুনৰ দ'লত স্থাপন কৰিছিল। মাঘত নোওৱা হৈছিল বাবেই মাঘনোৱা দৌল নামৰ উৎপত্তি হ'ল বুলি বিশ্বাস হয়। মাঘনোৱা দৌল অনুসৰি ঠাইখনৰ নামো মাঘনোৱা হ'ল।

তাঁতিবাহাৰ: মোৰামৰীয়া বিদ্ৰোহৰ সময়ত মায়ামৰাৰ শিষ্য হৰিহৰ তাঁতিয়ে নিজকে ৰজা বুলি ঘোষণা কৰে ১৭৮৬ খৃঃ। তেওঁ টেমাই কটকীৰ পুতেকক বৰফুকন পাতি হাহা, হাওহা, লহং, অভগন, পৰশু আদি এঘাৰ জনক সেনাপতি পাতি জাপৰিভিটাত বিদ্ৰোহ আৰম্ভ কৰে। তেওঁ আহোম ৰজাৰ বিৰুদ্ধে ঘোষণা কৰা বিদ্ৰোহত বহু মোৰামৰীয়া আৰু মহিলাইয়ো যোগদান কৰেহি। এই বিদ্ৰোহ সফল হোৱাৰ কথা জনা নাযায়। হৰিহৰ তাঁতিয়ে ঘৰ বা বাহৰ থকাৰ বাবেই ঠাইখনৰ নাম তাঁতিবাহাৰ হ'ল।

বিহপুৰীয়া: 'বিহপুৰীয়া' নামকৰণৰ সঠিক ঐতিহাসিক তথ্য পোৱা নাযায় যদিও এটা জনপ্ৰবাদ অনুসৰি আহোমে তৎকালক দমন কৰি যোৱাৰ পিছতে মোৰামৰীয়া আৰু ডফলাৰ মাজত মিত্ৰতা স্থাপন হয়। সেয়ে মোৰামৰীয়া বিদ্ৰোহৰ সময়ত মিত্ৰতাৰ চিনস্বৰূপে মোৰামৰীয়া সেনাই ৰণত ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিবলৈ বিহকোঁড়ৰ বাবে ডফলাই বিহপুৰীয়া তৈয়াৰ কৰি

মোৰামৰীয়া সেনাক এই ঠাইতে যোগান ধৰিছিল। এই ফালৰ পৰাও অঞ্চলটোৰ নাম 'বিহপুৰীয়া' হ'ব পাৰে। ভৱিষ্যতে বিহপুৰীয়াত ডফলাই উপদ্ৰৱ কৰিব নোৱাৰাকৈ বিহপুৰীয়াৰ উপকণ্ঠত ডফলা কটকী থকা ঠাইডোখৰ আজিও কটকীবৰী নামে জনাজাত। এই কটকীবৰীতে বৰ্তমান বিহপুৰীয়া খণ্ড উন্নয়ন বিষয়াৰ কাৰ্যালয় আৰু পঞ্চায়ত আছে।

পিঠাগুৰি: পথালি পাহাৰৰ পূব অংশত অৱস্থিত এটা অঞ্চল 'পিঠাগুৰি'। কিম্বদন্তি অনুসৰি এই অঞ্চলটো প্ৰাচীন কামৰূপ কমতা ৰাজ্যৰ ৰজা আৰিমন্তৰ ৰাজ্যৰ অংশবিশেষ আছিল। আৰিমন্ত পিতৃহস্তা বুলি গোটেই অসমত এটা জনশ্ৰুতি আছিল। পিতৃহস্তাৰ পাপ মোচনৰ বাবে আৰিমন্ত ৰজাই ইয়াতে অনুদানৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰি আৰৈ চাউলৰ পিঠাগুৰি সংগ্ৰহ কৰিছিল। কিন্তু তেওঁক মহাপাপী জ্ঞান কৰি পিঠাগুৰি ভক্ষণ কৰিবলৈ কোনো নাছিল। ফলত পিঠাগুৰিয়ে দ'ম বান্ধিলে। তেতিয়াৰে পৰাই ঠাইখনৰ নাম পিঠাগুৰি হ'ল বুলি বহুতে কয়।

আন এক প্ৰবাদ অনুসৰি অসম-অৰুণাচলৰ সীমান্তৰ ভৈয়াম অঞ্চলত পাহাৰীয়া ডফলা লোকসকলে ঘনাই উপদ্ৰৱ চলাই থকাত আৰু আহোম শাসকসকলৰ বাবে ভৌগোলিক পৰিবেশটো প্ৰতিকূল হোৱাৰ হেতু সীমান্তৰ অসমীয়া মানুহবোৰে আন উপায় নেদেখি ডফলাৰ লগত 'মিটুৰ' পাতিছিল। সেয়ে প্ৰতি বছৰৰ আঘোণ মাহৰ নিৰ্দিষ্ট দিনত ভৈয়ামলৈ নামি অহা ডফলাসকলক আপ্যায়িত কৰিবলৈ প্ৰতিঘৰ অসমীয়াই এডোনকৈ পিঠাগুৰি সংগ্ৰহ কৰিছিল আৰু ডফলাসকলে পিঠাগুৰি জলপান খাই গধূলিৰ আগে আগে অৱস্থা অনুপাতে প্ৰতিঘৰতে দুই-এজনকৈ গৈ পাহাৰীয়া দুই-এপদ বস্ত্ৰ দি 'মিটুৰ' পাতে আৰু দুই-এদিনৰ বাবে আলহী হৈ থাকে। পিঠাগুৰিৰ জলপানেৰে ডফলাসকলক আপ্যায়ন কৰা এই অঞ্চলটোকেই পিঠাগুৰি বোলা জনশ্ৰুতি উলাই কৰিব নোৱাৰি।

কাছিকটা: 'কাছিকটা' নাৰায়ণপুৰৰ এখন সৰু নৈ আৰু এই নৈৰ পাৰৰ এটা অঞ্চল। এটি অৰ্বাচীন জনশ্ৰুতি অনুসৰি মাধৱদেৱৰ জন্মৰ পিছত নাভিকটা কাছিকন পেলাই দিয়াৰে পৰা এই নাম হ'ল। কিন্তু ধাৰণা হয়, এই অঞ্চল এটা সময়ত মিচিংসকলৰ বাসস্থান আছিল আৰু তেওঁলোকৰ উপাস্য দেৱতা 'কাৰ্চিং কাৰ্টান' ৰ নামেই অনা মিচিঙৰ মুখত পৰি কাছিকটা হয়।

ওপৰৰ আলোচনাৰপৰা দেখা পোৱা গ'ল যে বৃহত্তৰ নাৰায়ণপুৰ আৰু ইয়াৰ আশে-পাশে থকা ঠাইৰ নামৰ আঁৰত ইতিহাস যেনেদৰে জড়িত আছে তেনেদৰে জড়িত হৈ আছে কিম্বদন্তি। নৃতাত্ত্বিক দিশৰ পৰা তথা জনগোষ্ঠীগত ফালৰ পৰাও ইয়াৰ কিছুমান ঠাইৰ নাম উৎপত্তি হৈছে। লিখিত নিদৰ্শন প্ৰায় বহুবোৰ ঠাইৰে নাই। জনালোকৰ সংখ্যাও সীমিত। বৰ্তমানৰ অধ্যয়নৰ মাত্ৰ কেইখনমান ঠাইৰ আলোচনাকে আগবঢ়োৱা হৈছে। বিজ্ঞানসন্মত অধ্যয়নৰ জড়িয়েতে এনে অধিক তথ্য উদ্ধাৰ হোৱাৰ থল আছে।

পাদটীকা:

- ১। নামতত্ত্ব, শৰৎ কুমাৰ ফুকন, ২০০৬
- ২। নাৰায়ণপুৰৰ নামোৎপত্তি আৰু ইয়াৰ ভৌগোলিক অৱস্থান', পদ্ম বৰা, নাৰায়ণপুৰৰ ইতিবৃত্ত, সম্পাঃ জগত গগৈ, লুইতপৰীয়া শাখা সাহিত্য সভা ২০০৮ খৃঃ।
- ৩। "মাঘনোৱা দ'ল আৰু বৰকালিকা থান,' বিপুল চন্দ্ৰ ভট্টাচাৰ্য, সোৱণশিৰি, অসম সাহিত্য সভা, লক্ষীমপুৰ অধিবেশনৰ স্মৃতিগ্ৰন্থ '২০০৩' সম্পাঃ হেমন গগৈ।
- ৪। 'নামনি লক্ষীমপুৰৰ কেইখনমান ঠাইৰ ঐতিহাসিক গুৰুত্ব, এটি আলোকপাত, গোলোক হাজৰিকা, স্মৃতিগ্ৰন্থ, ৰূপালী জয়ন্তী সমাৰোহ, শংকৰদেৱ মহাবিদ্যালয়, সম্পাঃ অৰুণ গোস্বামী।
- ৫। 'বিহপুৰীয়াৰ ইতিবৃত্ত' ধৰ্মেশ্বৰ কটকী, অসম সাহিত্য সভা বিহপুৰীয়া অধিবেশনৰ স্মৃতিগ্ৰন্থ, ১৯৮৫

সম্পাঃ তৰণী চৌধুৰী আৰু হেম গোস্বামী।

৬। 'পথালি পাহাৰৰ ঐতিহ্য আঁতিগুৰি বিচাৰ,' বীৰেন্দ্ৰ নাথ ভাগৱতী, মহীকহ,

সম্পাঃ অনিল শইকীয়া।

গ্ৰন্থপঞ্জীঃ

- ১। স্বৰ্ণজ্যোতি, নাৰায়ণপুৰ উচ্চতৰ মাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয়, সোণালী জয়ন্তী স্মৃতিগ্ৰন্থ।
- ২। নাৰায়ণপুৰৰ ইতিবৃত্ত।
- ৩। 'দেবী,' বিহপুৰীয়া বাৰোৱাৰী শ্ৰীশ্ৰীদুৰ্গাপূজাৰ হীৰক জয়ন্তী স্মৃতিগ্ৰন্থ।
- ৪। অসম সাহিত্য সভাৰ বিহপুৰীয়া অধিবেশন ১৯৮৫ ৰ স্মৃতিগ্ৰন্থ।
- ৫। 'মহীকহ' লক্ষীমপুৰ জিলা শাখা শ্ৰীমন্ত শংকৰদেৱ সঙ্ঘৰ স্মৃতিগ্ৰন্থ।
- ৬। 'সোৱণশিৰি' অসম সাহিত্য সভাৰ লক্ষীমপুৰ অধিবেশন (২০০৩)ৰ স্মৃতিগ্ৰন্থ।
- ৭। স্মৃতিগ্ৰন্থ, ৰূপালী জয়ন্তী সমাৰোহ (২০০৮), শংকৰদেৱ মহাবিদ্যালয়।
- ৮। নামতত্ব, শৰৎ কুমাৰ ফুকন, ষ্টুডেন্টচ্ ষ্টোৰ্চ, পানবজাৰ, গুৱাহাটী, ২০০৬।

Role of Assam in the Struggle for Independence

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ABSTRACT

At the treaty of yandoboo, 26 February 1826, his Majesty, the king of Ava surrendered amongst others his claim over Assam and the neighboring states of Cachars, Jayantia and Manipur to the British government. By right of conquest these territories might be brought directly under the control of the government. But the hopes entertained by the Assamese who hailed the advent of the British with unbounded joy were soon turned to bitter disappointment. Shorn of their power and privileges, the official aristocracy of the former government gave vent to their bitter feelings and hostility in a number of abortive attempts to overthrow the alien government and to satisfy the nobles British restored Ahom king in upper Assam. Later a further attempts were made to oust the Britishers from the land, by the sepoy mutiny, the sporadic uprising of the tribal king, peasant movement. But the situation however altered towards the close of the nineteenth century with the emergence of a group of English educated Assamese intelligentsia imbued with advanced political ideas. They took the lead not only in ventilating the grievances of the people through the press and platform but also in bringing about a regeneration of the Assamese economically, culturally and politically ideas. The latter took the lead not only in ventilating the grievances of the people through the press and platform but also in brining about a regeneration of the Assamese economically culturally and politically. It was to the lasting credit of those patriotic sons of Assam that they roused the dormant spirit of the masses and thereby prepared the ground for the ultimate struggle for freedom in the next few decades. And ultimately on 15th August 1947 India achieved Independence.

Indroduction:

The British rule was established in Assam after they had, driven out the Burmese from Assam and its neighbouring areas. But the people did not welcome it and as-a-result there was an open revolt against the British rule within three years of the Treaty of Yandaboo (1826). One of the main reasons of resentment was that the members of the Ahom royal families as well as the nobility were deprived of the social status and privileges they had enjoyed earlier. Abolition of the 'Paik' system was a great blow to the aristocratic class of Assam. Therefore, they resolved to get back their privileges by driving out the British from Assam.

1. Anti-British Movments: Early Phase.-

1.1 Revolt of Gumdhar Konwar:

Towards the close of 1828, a group of nobles headed by Dhannajay Borguhain, a former officer of rank, took up the cause of Gumdhar Konwar, a scion of Ahom Royal family. At Bassa, in the south-east corner of Jorhat, Gumdhar was formally enthroned. In the last week of November 1828, in order to concert measures with their collaborators at the head quarters the rebels advanced towards Moriani, 12 miles fro0m Jorhat, where they were intercepted by a detachment under the Lieutenant Rutherford. The govt. of the company suppressed the revolt with a firm hand and Gumdhar Kunwar was sentenced to imprisonment for 7 years.

1.2 Revolt of U. Tirat Singh:

In 1882 Nangkhlaosiyem U. Tirat Singh declared war, against the British. But prior to this Tirat Singh had permitted the British to construct a road from Rani in Kamrup to Sylhet through his territory.

Eighteen months after the project had started the Khasis rebelled and killed two British officers and some labourers at Nangkhlaio. The massacre of Nangkhlaio was followed by a large-scale rebellion. It continued for several years till the surrender of Tirat Singh in 1833. Tirat was taken to Dacca (Dhaka) where he was kept confined till his death on July 17, 1835.

1. Revolt of Gadadhar Singh:

In 1830 the Khamtis and the Singphos of the North East Frontier rose in rebellion against the British. The leadership was given by an Ahom prince called Gadadhar. The rebellion was suppressed immediately. At about this time a plot was being made by some Ahom nobles of Upper Assam against the British. Among the people that were involved in the conspiracy were Piyali Phukan, son of Badan Chandra Borphukan. Jeuram. Duliabaruah. Piyalia Borgohain and a few others. They made a scheme of driving out the British from Assam and for this purpose they had established contact with the chiefs of the Nagas, Manipuris, Jayantias, Khasis, Daflas, Kharntis and Singphos. They had planned to get fire to the British magazine at Rangpur on March 25, 1830. Though the rebels succeeded in setting fire to the magazine, they had been caught before they carried out their scheme. Of the rebels Jeuram and Piyali were given death sentences and the others were punished with transportation. Piyali and Jeuram, were hanged at Sibsagar in August 1830.

2. Restoration of Ahom King:

In view of the frequency of such uprisings David Scott sent a proposal to the Company's office at Calcutta to restore Ahom monarchy in Upper Assam. The Government of the Company accepted the suggestion and Upper Assam was restored to Purandar Singha on condition of payment of Rs. 50,000/- annually as tribute to the Company. In the meantime David Scott had died in 1831 and was succeeded by Robertson in 1838 Upper Assam was again thought under the direct control of the Company on the ground of misgovernment and default in payment of the tribute by Purandar Singha. The Company promised a pension of Rs. 1000/- to Purnandar Singha which he refused to accept.

At the time of restoration of Upper Assam to Purandar Singha, the British annexed Lower Assam, Cachar and Khasi Hills to their dominion. Soon the Company brought Sadiya and the Matak Kingdom also under their control and merged them in the district of Lakhimpur. The Company also annexed North Cachar in 1854 on the ground that the two heirs of Tularam Senapati had failed to give protection to the inhabitants against the raids of Angami Nagas. Within about a period of two decades from the occupation of North Cachar the extensive area of Naga Hills, Garo Hills and Lushai Hills came under the control of the British. The British rule was thus established all over Assam and its neighbouring areas and the Company established their capital at Cherrapunji. The Capital was shifted to Shillong in 1864.

The Government of the East India Company now introduced social, political and economic reforms for the greater interest of the British empire. These changes were greatly resented by the members of the Ahom royal families and Ahom nobles. Chandra Kanta Singha had been granted a monthly pension of Rs. 500/-. But at his death this benefit was not extended to his son. Purandar Singha, though he declined to accept pension, had expected, real estate and other privileges. His grandson kandarpeswar Singha even cherished the hope that upper Assam would be restored to him. But the Government of the Company followed a policy of complete indifference such demands.

3. Sepoy Mutiny and Assam :

In 1853, when Mr. Mills, the Judge of civil court of Kolkata visited Assam to make an enquiry into the state of administration in Assam, Maniram. Dewan, a prominent personality of the period submitted memorials highlighting the evils of British rule and the grievances of the people against it. In his memorials he prayed for favour on his own behalf and also pleaded to restore Upper Assam to Ahom prince, Kandarpeswar Singha. But Mr. Mills turned down the proposal of 'Monism Dewan. So

Dewan went to Kolkata to plead personally before the higher authorities of the Company at Kolkata on behalf of Kandarpeswar Singha and also on his own behalf. During his stay in Kolkata the Sepoy Mutiny began in the Northern India. The news of the Mutiny his imagination and he made up his mind to liberate Assam by fomenting a similar revolt of the sepoys posted in Assam. He accordingly wrote secret letters to Kandarpeswar Singha and other prominent persons of Jorhat. It was arranged that the sepoys would revolt under the leadership of Kandarpeswar Singha and Maniram would come to their help from Kollatta with arms and ammunitions. But the government got the scent of the conspiracy and Captain Holroyd, district officer of Sivasagar, arrested Kandarpeswar Singha in his palace at Jorhat. Madhu Mallick, a Bengali Muktear, who was sent by Maniram Dewan from Kolkata was also arrested. Kandarpeswar Singha was sent to Kolkata and kept confined in Alipur Jail.

The arrest of the prince was followed by the arrest of Maniram at Kolkata and a host of rebels in Upper Assam. Maniram was sent to Jorhat to stand trial. Captain Holroyd was appointed Special Commission to try the conspiracy case. In the trial Maninm Dewan and Piyali Barua were sentenced to death. On February 26, 1858, both of them were publicly hanged at Jorhat. Madhu Mallick, Marrangikhowa Gohain, Mayaram Nazir, Dutiram Baruah, Bahadur Gaonburah, Shaikh Farmud Ali received sentences of transportation. Kandarpeswar Singha was released, but he was not allowed to return to Assam till 1863. When the Mutiny was over Dutiram Baruah, Shaikh Farmud Ali, Bahadur Gaonburah and a few others were allowed to return to Assam after Queen Victoria's Proclamation of general amnesty.

4. The Peasant Movement in Assam:

This unsuccessful attempt by Maniram Dewan was the last revolt of Ahom princes or nobles against the British rule. Since 1860 there was a radical change in the nature and character of all revolts against the British rule. Henceforth, revolts and uprisings against the foreign rule were led by peasantry of the country. The Government of the Company did away with the traditional old *Paik* system and imposed agricultural tax on land. A system of granting periodical tenancy or settlement for ten, twenty or thirty years was introduced. The land revenue was revised and increased from time to time. Such revisions of the rates of land revenue were not linked with the quality of the land or the expected return from it. As such the peasants suffered a lot. The fiscal policy of the government was widely resented and there were sporadic protests against such policy. These protests often developed and took the shape of revolts.

Besides agricultural tax, the government also imposed tax on income, government deeds and papers, salt etc. In 1861 a total ban was imposed on the cultivation of poppy. This prohibition of the cultivation of poppy led to a serious riot at Phulaguri in Nowgong district. Tribal people, mainly the Jayantias, who depended on this cultivation for their livelihood, were badly affected. Meanwhile there was a rumour that the tax would also be levied on betelnut and on income. This led the peasants to rise up in revolt against the government. Public meetings were held to criticise the taxation policy of the government. Without having tried to find out the root of the trouble, the district authorities of Nowgong sent Lieutenant Singer to suppress the revolt with a firm hand. On October 16th Lt. Singer the asstt. Commissioner arrived there and found a huge gathering armed with 'Lathis'. Lt. Singer ordered them to lay down their arms and disperse. In the scuffle that followed someone from the infuriated people struck him on his head. He was then beaten to death. Receiving the message, Lt. Sconce, the Deputy Commissioner immediately sent an arm forced to the spot. Firing took place and several people lost their lives. This episode remains berried by the people of Assam as 'Phulaguri Dhowa'. Many rioters were killed some were sentenced to death or transportation afterwards. This incident is known in history as the Phulaguri Uprising.

4.1 Revolt of Ukiang Nangba:

During this period, i.e., between 1860 to 1862, the Jayantias revolted against the British rule in protest against the imposition of new, taxes and interference with the traditional customs and rites. The

leader of this revolt was Ukiang Nangba. The English army suppressed this revolt and its leader Ukiang Nangba was hanged publicly on December 30, 1862. The revenue policy of the Government of Assam greatly annoyed the peasantry. There were protests and demonstrations against the enhancement of the rate of revenue in Bajali of Kamrup and Patharughat of Darrang in 1868-69. The government used armed forces to suppress these demonstrations.

4.2 Revolt of Tikendrajit

Since the days of the treaty of Yandaboo the British maintained friendly relations with the king of Manipur and a British political agent was deputed to Manipur in 1835. But in 1890 there was serious dispute over the succession to the throne. King Surachandra was deposed by the prince Kulachandra. The British were in favour of Kulachandra, but they disliked his chief supporter General Tikendrajit. In fact, Tikendrajit was powerful as well as popular among the people. The British did not want such an influential person to stay in power in Manipur. The Chief Commissioner of Assam Mr. Quinton went with armed forces to Imphal and asked Tikendrajit to surrender. But he refused to comply with the orders which led to a severe confrontation. Mr. Quinton with four of his British officers were killed by the Manipuris. After this within a short period British army marched to Manipur and occupied it. Tikendrajit and his assistant Major Tongal were captured. They installed Churachandra Singha on the throne deposing King, Surachandra. Tikendrajit and Tongal were publicly hanged. At about this time the Lushais or the Mizos rose in revolt in protest against the British occupation of their country and killed Mr. Brown, the Political Agent at Aizawl. In 1898 Lushai Hills District was formed and brought under the Chief Commissioner of Assam.

5. The Assam Riot:

Of all the uprisings that took place in Assam and its neighbouring areas against the British rule the peasants revolt of 1893-94 was the most important. After the death of Mr. Quinton, William Ward became the Chief Commissioner of Assam. In his time, rate of land revenue was doubled in 1893. As a result, a strong public opinion was created and at Rangia, Byaskuchi, Lachima and other places of the Kamrup district, public meetings (Mel) were held to criticise government policy. The riots of Patharughat of the Darrang district also rose up in rebellion. The government suppressed these uprisings ruthlessly with the help of armed forces. Many people died in police firing and many were injured. National papers of India gave wide publicity to this incident and focussed on the repressive policy of the government. National leaders criticised the revenue policy of the government in the central legislature. As a result the government was compelled to lower the rate of land revenue.

6. Political Consciousness in Assam:

Before the close of the nineteenth century some Political organisations of the middle class Indians like the Indian Association and Indian National Congress were formed. In Assam also some organisations were formed. They were the Sarbajanik Sabha of Jorhat, Ryot Sabha of Tezpur, Nowgong Ryot Association, Shillong Association and Upper Assam Association. The middle class Assamese took active part in these organizations. From the inception the Indian Association and the Indian National Congress had links with the various organisations of Assam. The middle class had always been sympathetic to the national demands of these Indian Congress. They had also full support to the demands of the peasants though they did not take part in their uprisings. They believed in the policy of prayer and petition and did not favour direct confrontation with the government. It was only towards the end of the nineteenth century that political consciousness was seen among the masses of Assam. It was during this period some youths of Assam who were in Kolkata for higher studies devoted themselves to the service of Assamese language and literature. It was through their endeavours that Assamese people became aware of their past glory rich cultural heritage. But as yet there was no political organisation in Assam.

6.1 The Assam Association:

In fact the Assam Association which was established in 1903, was the first political organisation in Assam. Among the founders of this organisation were Manik Chandra Baruah, Prabhat Chandra Baruah, Jagannath Baruah, Mathura Mohan Baruah Radhanath Changkakati, Kamala Kanta Bhattacharjya, Prasanna Chandra Ghose and a few others. Manik Chandra Baruah was the secretary and Prabhat Chandra Baruah was the president of this organization. Besides bringing the hopes and aspirations of the people of Assam to the notice of the government, it roused the political consciousness of the people.

From its inception it raised its voice for the fulfillment of the legitimate demands of the Assamese people and it became a very popular organisation. At the beginning the moderates were in control of the organization, but later on the extremist elements came to the fore. This group became prominent for their active participation in the Nationalist Movement launched by the Indian National Congress. This group included prominent personalities like Nabin Chandra Bordoloi, Tarun Ram Phukan, Chandra Nath Sarma and Faiznur Ali.

6.2 The Assam Students Association

The Assam Students Association was formed in 1916 and the Asom Sahitya Sabha was formed next year. Many enlightened youths of these two associations were also the members of the Assam Association. These young people became instrumental in turning this association virtually into a provincial committee of the Indian National Congress. Meanwhile the non-co-operation movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi was started and the people of Assam took active part in the movement under the leadership of Nabin Chandra Bordoloi and Tarun Ram Phukan.

7. Freedom Movement : Latter Phase:

7.1 Swadeshi Movement and Assam:

Just after the Assam Association had been formed was the Partition of Bengal during the time of Lord Curzon and a new province was formed comprising East Bengal and Assam. The Swadeshi and Boycott movement that followed the Partition had serious repercussions in Assam, particularly in Surama Valley. People were greatly stirred by the extremist leader of the Congress Bipin Chandra Pal. In Assam the Assam Association expressed their apprehension about the plan. The Association opposed to tag Chitagong to Assam. The Voice of Assam Press was heard in the editorial of 'The Assam Banti' on July 10, 1905 where its editor Padmanath Guhaibaruah reacted sharply to the prospect of the new province being called The North-east Province. He gave a cry of alarm that the very name of 'Assam' will be obliterated forever and repeated this in another editorial letter.

The protest started against injudicious partition and Swadeshi became rallying cry and soon spread to all over the country. Responding to the call, at Dhubri of Assam, there was public 'Sankirtan' where members of different communities participated. Again in Dibrugarh, in the grand procession organized, where Hindu and Muslim residence of the town passed through the streets singing National Anthem and shouting slogans like 'Bande Mataram' and 'Allah Ho Akbar'. The Govt. of India was ultimately compelled to declare annulment of the partition in 1911 and Assam was once again made a separate province under a chief commissioner.

7.2 Non-Co-operation and Boycott Movement :

In Assam the non-co-operation and Boycott movement was started under the leadership of Tarun Ram Phukan and others in 1921: Mahatma Gandhi came to Assam and visited Guwahati. On August 18, 1921 there was a mammoth public meeting where Gandhiji himself set fire to foreign clothes. The government suppressed the revolt with a firm hand. Along with the Congress leaders like Phukan, Bordoloi, Rohini Kumar Choudhury, Gauri Kanto Talukdar and Md. Tayabullah some 4,000 Congress volunteers were put in jail. In this movement Women and students of Assam participated in large

numbers. After the tragic Chauri Chaura incident Mahatma Gandhi suddenly suspended the movement. The suspension of the movement led some leaders like C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru to form the Swaraj Party. In Assam also a branch of this party was formed under the leadership of Torun Ram Phukan. This new party decided to participate in elections and to exert pressure on the government from within until the demands of the people were met. At the initiative of Phukan and Bordoloi 41st session of Indian National Congress was held at Pandu in 1926.

7.3 Civil Disobedience Movement and Cunningham Circular:

In 1927, the Simon Commission was appointed by the British Government to look into the working of the Reforms Act of 1919 and suggest changes. As the Congress boycotted the Commission there were demonstrations and protests wherever the Commission went. In Assam also demonstrations were staged. In 1929, in the Lahore session of Congress, it was decided that complete independence was the aim of the Congress and the Civil Disobedience Movement was launched under the leadership of Gandhiji. This movement created great enthusiasm in Assam. Participation of a large number of students in this movement made the Government apprehensive and a circular was issued by the Director of Public Instruction, Mr. Cunningham to keep the students away from politics. By this circular, the guardians were required to submit undertakings assuring that their wards would not participate in the political movement. Many students left government schools and colleges in protest and joined the newly established nationalist institutions.

7.4 Horizon Movement:

After temporary suspension the movement was renewed when the Second Round Table Conference had failed. People of Assam participated in this movement. Meanwhile Gandhiji was released from jail. Coming out from jail Gandhiji devoted himself in the works for the upliftment of Harijans. In this connection he visited Assam. Gandhiji attracted people like, Krishnath Sarma of Jorhat to this Harijan. Movement and these people devoted themselves to the Service of Harijans.

7.5 Congress participates in the Election:

In 1935 the Government of India Act. was passed and the system of provincial self government was introduced. The provincial Legislature Assembly and the Legislative Council. In the election, the Congress party failed to secure majority in the Legislative Assembly and so the ministry was first formed by Sir Syed Sadullah. At the fall of this ministry in 1938 a coalition government was formed under the leadership Gopinath Bordoloi. In 1939 the Second world war broke out and Congress did not co-operate with the government in its war effort. When the Congress decided that the Provincial ministries should resign, Bordoloi ministry in Assam also resigned after 14 months in power.

7.6 The Quit India Movement and Assam:

The individual Civil Disobedience (Satyagraha) movement was started by Gandhiji in October, 1940. Gopinath Bordoloi and other leaders symbolically broke the law individually and offered themselves for arrest. The Mass revolution of 1942 commonly known as Quit India Movement is a glorious chapter in the history of Indian Freedom. The fall of British Military bases in Asia and the pressure of Britain's war allies like China, Australia and USA forced the British Govt. to send a mission to India. Peoples expectation soared sky high with the visit of Cripps Mission. But the Mission failed to put forward any tangible solution to the Indian Political problem. As a result, Gandhiji launched the famous 'Quit India' movement on August 8, 1942. With the arrest of Gandhiji and other national leaders it took the turn of a popular mass movement. In Assam also all leaders including Gopinath Bordoloi, Bishnu Ram Medhi, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, Md. Tayabullah, Debeswar Sarma, Krishnanath Sarma, Arun Kumar Chandra and many others were arrested in 9th August. A group of leaders who directed the movement from underground included Shankar Baruah, Jyotiprasad Agarwala, Laxmiprasad Goswami,

Mahindra Nath Hazarika and several others. Tyagbir Hem Baruah, the president of Assam Provincial Congress Committee gave the movement its general direction being inspired by socialist leader Jayprakash Narayan and Aruna Ashraf Ali. In the strong leadership of Hem Baruah, people in big numbers took the streets in response to Gandhi's slogan 'do or die'. Sankar Baruah became a household name all over the state as he traveled in hiding from village to village in upper Assam. For three years, this legendary hero of Assam thwarted all attempts by the police to apprehend him in spite of a lucrative offer of rupees ten thousand on his head. In the mean time the youths of Assam formed 'death squad' by revolutionary thoughts and challenged the government policy. The police violence mounted as people enthusiasm reached dizzy heights. Injuries from lathis and bullets became the order of the day. As many as thirty freedom fighters lost their lives and many were rendered invalid for life. Villagers had to bear the brunt of the police atrocities and even women were not spared.

In some areas of the country the movement turned violent with leaders like Jay Prakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohiya and Aruna Ashif Ali directing acts of sabotage from underground. This perhaps reflected the desperation on the part of the common people. In comparison with the rest of the country incidents of violence were very rare in Assam. In two major cases of derailment of military trains at Panikhaiti and Sarupathar, a huge number of British and American soldiers were killed. Kushal Konwar, the president of Sarupathar Congress Committee, was wrongly convicted for the act of sabotage at Sarupathar and hanged after a farce of a trial. Even the magistrate involved in trying the case had to admit that there was no concrete evidence against the accused.

Another great person, who sacrificed his life for freedom, was Kamala Miri. He died in jail after a hunger strike. The British Government advised him to sign a bond paper in exchange of his release. But he refused strongly and embraced death in jail bearing indescribable police atrocities. Kanaklata Baruah, a 15 years old girl as well as Mukunda Kakati, was shot dead by the police on the 20th September 1942, while raising the national flag and became the epitome of courage and sacrifice. Kanaklata was leading a long procession of men and women, mostly peasants and students, to the police station at Gohpur with the intention of hoisting the national flag at thana building. "You do your duty and I will do mine" were her famous last words to the officer-in-charge of the thana before she was shot down.

The struggle also touched the sentiments of the people of Behali. Bishnual Upadhyaya, a B.A. final year student of Cotton College, inspired by the great person, Chabilal Upadhyaya and several people took part in the struggle. At that time to encourage the people, Jyotiprasad Aggarwala a revolutionary and cultural icon, visited Behali and attended several meetings. He appealed the people to participated into the struggle with vigor. In September 17, a meeting was held at Behali High School, where Jageswar Mishra, a senior national leader attended and decided to hoist the national flag at Behali Police Station.

In September 20, Bishnual Upadhyaya along with several congress volunteers viz., Devi Prasad Sarma, Baneswar Saikia, Purna Kumari Devi, Tileswari Goswami, Gujeswari Upadhyaya, Padmabati Saikia, Lakheshwar Hazarika and other proceed to hoist national flag at Behali Police Station. Most of them were apprehended for the participation in the movement. Bishnual was tried and sentenced to imprisonment for six months.

In another incident at Rihabari of Bajali, two students of 6th standard of Bajali High School, Madan Barman and Rauta Koch were shot dead by Tularam Daroga of Patacharkuchi thana on the 25th September 1942. One Panoram Das was rendered invalid for life in the incident.

On the 18th September, Captain Finis killed Thagiram Soot, Bhogeswari Phukanani, Lakshmi Hazarika and Baloram Soot with his own revolver at Barhampur of Nagaon District. On the same day Tilak Deka, a member of "Shanti Sena Bahini" of Saraibahi of Nagaon was shot dead.

by military.

One Nidhanu Rajbangshi of Fakira (village) of Goalpara district had to embrace death in a pathetic situation.

On the 26th August, Hemram Patar and Gunabhiram Bordolai were killed by the police near Tongalbahu of Raha.

On the 25th August, Dambaru Das, 80 years old Panchanan Sarmah, a woman named Rohini, pregnant wife of Baloram Sarmah along with about four hundred revolutionaries were arrested at Bebejia and they became victim of police atrocities. The very next day, Hemkanta Borah and Kalai Koch were killed by military and many others were seriously wounded.

On the 20th September, a long procession of about 6/7 thousand people intended to hoist the national flag at Dhekiajuli thana. Manbar Nath and Golok Neog hoisted the national flag on the thana. In that tragic incident, Manbar Nath, Mahiram Koch, Numali Nath, Mani Kachari, Ratan Kachari, Tuleswari Koch, Maina Nath, Dayal Panikar, Somnath Chutia, Lerela Kachari, Matal Kurmi and a saint were killed in police firing.

The Quit India Movement brought out the valour and patriotism in the people of Assam in an unprecedented manner. It was a tidal-wave of mass movement reaching out into every nook and corner of the province. The movement could not deliver the desired result because it lacked proper organization and direction in the absence of all the major leaders who were in jail. But it allowed the patriotic spirits to rise out of the soil of the villages and turn themselves into legends sacrificing their lives at the altar of the country.

8. **Cabinet Mission Plan:**

In 1945 the World War came to an end. Meanwhile in England, the Labour Party came to power and Clement Attlee became the Prime Minister. He sent the Cabinet Mission to India to evolve some means for the constitutional reform of India. This Mission prepared scheme or grouping under which Assam was to be grouped with East Bengal. By that time the Congress ministry headed by Gopinath Bordoloi was formed after its victory in the election held in 1946. Under the leadership of Bordoloi, people of Assam strongly opposed the scheme of grouping and thus Assam was saved from the crisis.

In March 1947, Lord Mountbatten came as Viceroy of India. He presented a plan for division of India into two independent states as he found that there was little hope of the two main political parties of India the Congress and the Muslim League coming to an agreement. On the basis of this plan the British Parliament passed the Indian Independence Act in July 1947 and transferred power by 15th August 1947. Pakistan was formed with West Punjab, North - West Frontier Province, Baluchistan, East Bengal, Sind, North of the Sylhet district of Assam. The rest came to be known as the Indian Union.

Conclusion:

Assam had played an important role in the struggle for freedom. After the glorious era of the Ahom rule came to an end after the second Anglo-Burmese war. At the treaty of Yandaboo, February 26, 1826, king Ava surrendered his claim over this region, to the British Govt. But the hopes entertained by the Assamese who hailed the advent of the British with unbounded joy were soon turned to bitter disappointment. Shorn of their power and privileges, the official aristocracy of the former Govt. gave vent to their bitter feelings and hostility in a number of abortive attempts to overthrow the alien Govt. Restoration of a Ahom king in Upper Assam will not satisfy Assamese people and latter a further attempts were made to oust the Britishers from the land. The sepoy mutiny, the sporadic uprising of tribal king, peasant movement were the example to make the land free from the foreign Yoke. But it was Mahatma Gandhi under whose able leadership the freedom struggle was turned as a national move-

ment. English educated Assamese intelligentsia and even general people shown their patriotism and sacrifice their life for Assam and for the nation. People of Assam are not only proud to be a Assamese but also as a Indian. The People of Assam have always known the boundaries of their 'Punya Tirth Bharati' as ' Gandhara' in the West, Kanyakumari in the South, Himalaya in the North and Parasuramkunda in the East. It was the reason for which Gopinath Bordoloi and his associates strongly opposed the Cabinet Mission Plan and be a part of the Indian Republic.

Though Assam Played an important role in the Freedom Struggle, but still Assam become neglected states of India. Gomdhar Konwar was the first martyr of the Indian struggle for Independence. But still he is not recognise as a Freedom fighter of Indian Republic by the central Govt. Assamese People hopes and aspirations is still to be realised. Lack of Industrializations, unused natural resource and colonial pattern of exploitation of Indian Republic, impact the economy and society at large. The Serious implications of the massive infiltration into Assam following the partition of the Country is also a serious threat for the nation. But it does not much reflect the nation's concern for Assam, its eastern sentinel.

Assam, in the depth of her heart always cherishes the tender hope and the fond feeling that the great nation of which she is proud to be an integral part will fully understand her hopes and fears, her smiles and sobs and her problems and possibilities. She knows the warmth of the nation will remove her pangs, and it will be the true homage to all martyrs and freedom fighter who sacrifices their lives in the struggle for Freedom and greater national building. But just now it is perhaps ordained by history and circumstances that the country's eastern sentinel goes on looking to the nation with a question mark.

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A HISTORICAL STUDY ON SOME EDIBLE INSECTS OF GOHPUR SUB-DIVISION OF ASSAM

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Abstract:

The insects are highly rich in protein and /or fat (and thus energy) and many vitamins and minerals; they have played an important role in the history of human nutrition. Although not common to all, the traditional use of insects as food is widespread in tropical and subtropical countries as they provide a significant nutritional, economic and ecological benefit for rural communities. The present paper deals with 10 (ten) edible insect species are consumed by different ethnic groups of rural areas of Gohpur Sub-Division.

Key Words: Edible insects, ethnic groups, Gohpur Sub-division.

Introduction:

The Gohpur Sub-Division (26°31'N lat., 92°21'E long. At 200m msl) of Sonitpur district, Assam is bounded by Lakhimpur district of Assam in the East, Arunachal Pradesh on the North, Biswanath Sub-division in the west and the River Brahmaputra in the South. The main ethnic groups are Bodo, Mising, Tea tribes Nepali, Ahom etc. These ethnic groups mainly the tribal have consumed different insect species for their nutrition, medicine and other religious purposes. The natural habitats of this locality are very rich in insect diversity.

Insects belong to the largest group of invertebrate animals known as Arthropods. Insects constitute the largest number not only of the animal kingdom but also of the whole living world. An important component of all types of ecosystem, they exist in nearly all types of habitats and in most areas of the world.

An estimated 2,000 species of insects are used as edibles around the world. The consumption of edible insects in human society is probably as old as man himself. From the point of view of nutritional value and abundance of these creatures they are highly beneficial. Among different insects collected from natural habitat, the edible insects have a great relevance in the socio-economic upliftment of the poor communities. A thorough study was conducted from January 2008 to July 2010 to document the edible insects of Gohpur Sub-Division along with other species. The edible insects are quite rich and needs detailed study. The present paper highlights some of the edible insect species that has been used by the different tribes of this Sub-division.

Materials and Methods:

The present investigation was done in Gohpur Sub-division during 2008 to 2010 and field work was conducted in different tribal villages such as Allopara, Lohitmukh, Sonapur, Rajgarh, and Baliyan etc. The village people were contacted to gather information regarding the edible insects consumed by them.

Standard literature was followed for identification of the collected species. The collected species are preserved and deposited in the laboratory of Zoology Department, Chaiduar College, for future record. A list of edible insects with their local and English name and edible parts is shown in the following table 1:

Result and Discussion:

The study revealed that 10 species belonging to Phylum Arthropod are used as nutritional or other purposes. The edible insects consumed by the people not only as food delicacy but also as

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medicine or other important purposes. At the time of Bohag Bihu (festival of Assam), some tribes consumed red ant larva as festival rituals.

Insects contain more protein, fat and carbohydrates than beef or fish and they have a higher energy value than soybeans, maize, beef, fish and lentils. According to a 2004 United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) report, caterpillar of many species are rich in potassium, calcium, magnesium, zinc and iron as well as B-Vitamins. In the North Eastern Region of India, particularly the tribal communities of Assam, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh use silkworm late instars larvae and pupae, chiefly the Eri and muga as food. For the tribes of this region, the pupa of the erisilkworm is so highly regarded food delicacy that the cocoon is more or less a byproduct. Most of the tribal people of Assam are also habituated with the consumption of Belo stoma (giant water bug), cricket, locusts, honey bee brood, especially late in star larvae and pupae, wasp, grasshopper, ant larvae and pupae etc. Consumption of insects is also prevalent among the people of Africa, Japan, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Nigeria, Angola, Congo etc. Children of Africa fight malnutrition by eating flour made out of dried caterpillars. Pregnant and Nursing women as well as anemic people also eat caterpillar species which is highly rich in protein, calcium and iron.

Table 1: List of Edible Insects consumed by people of different tribes.

Serial No	Edible Stage /Parts	Local Name	English Name
1	Amarali/ronga parua	Red Ant	Larva l stage
2	wechiringa	Cricket	Whole
3	Eri palu	Eri silkworm	Cocoon
4	Muga palu	Muga Silkworm	Cocoon
5	Wne pock	Termite	Adult
6	kakora	Crab	Whole
7	Misa mach	Prawn	Whole
8	Boral	Wasp	larvae
9	Kakoti phoring	Locust	Whole
10	Honey bee /mou	Honeybee	Late in star larvae

Conclusion:

Insect consumption and conservation of forest are two related phenomenon. Many caterpillar feed on fresh leaves. Although trees respond by producing a second growth of leaves, after several attacks trees might lose vitality. Harvesting caterpillars thus contributes to maintaining the natural reproduction of trees and serves as a biological control of pest as recorded in the FAO report on edible insects. The predicted world protein shortage could be ameliorated by using insect protein, but that an education program me would be necessary "to overcome the taboos currently held in the west", said Mercer, formerly senior lecturer in entomology at the Papua New Guinea University of Technology.

Recommendations:

In North Eastern India though a large number of insects are used as food by different ethnic tribes, research relating to distribution, abundance and their market demand as well as qualitative analysis as food is not investigated. Such studies are of utmost important since finding a nutritional and economical use for edible insect species provides an important means to avoid species extinction. Moreover the nutritional and economic value of edible insects is often neglected and we should further encourage their collection and commercialization, given the benefits to the environment and human health.

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**SOCIO-POLITICAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS
OF NORTH-EAST INDIA: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE DEORI
COMMUNITY IN ASSAM**

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Introduction:

The North Eastern region of India indeed presents glorious example of diversity which is very well reflected in the mosaic of socio-cultural traits which are followed by myriad of district aboriginal tribal communities inhabiting this region. The state Assam which is populated by various groups of people is situated on the North East region of India. Physically the state is divided into two parts. The Brahmaputra Valley and Borak Valley. The state Assam is a meeting place of many races, cultures, languages and religious which have largely moulded a unified cohesive cultural identity known as Assamese culture. Due to constant interaction and cultural adaptation of multiple ethnic groups a symbolic culture was developed. Kabiguru Rabindra Nath Tagore has expressed this symbiosis in the following Stanza

“Hethaai Arya Hethai Anaariya
Hethaai Draviracin
Sak Hun Dal Pathan Mugale
Ek dehe hol lin”

Historical Background:

The Deories among them are no exception to this rule. They too have been maintaining their district identity vis – a vis social, religious, cultural and traditional practice from the hoary Past and all these have made a definite imprint on the socio-cultural landscape of this region. The tribes are traditional and custom bound. They have become the victims of superstitious beliefs. Like other tribes and communities the Indian Constitution has regarded the Deori as scheduled tribes of Assam. Deori is aboriginal tribes of Assam. They are distinguished from the other societies by certain mode, behavior such as their dresses, food, habits and socio-cultural rituals etc. They were settled nearby Sadiya first. At present they are found in the district of Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Sibsagar, Jorhat, Sonitpur, Dibrugarh and Tinisukia of Assam. According to 2001 census the total revenue villages of Deori in Assam are 133 and their population are 2,45,000.

Cultural Background:

Deori is a plain tribe of Assam, the worshipper of Kundimama (Kundi – siva, mama – parvati) from ancient time maintaining their own custom and tradition. They worship Kundimama. Through they have not their own written history. Yet reliable documents and the writing in ancient book such as kalika puran, Jogini tauntra and thoughts of historian’s, researcher’s etc. reveals the original settlement of Deori.

Actually Mongolian Characteristics are visible on the Deori. They are strong built and possess charming features Outsiders are attracted with their simplicity and hospitality. Co-operation is the salient feature of Deori social life. Both male and female are very laborious. They reap a bumper crop of sail paddy by the strenuous labour of both seeds. The unity is scrupulously maintained and interfamily disputes are amicably settled in the villages. The youths play active role in the

smooth running of the individual or community festival or religious occasions.

The Deori type belong to different ethnological groups possess diverse socio-religious characteristics and are at various levels of economic development of family particularly Deori of the revenueers of the Brahmaputra Valley with their traditional socio-cultural life being unimpaired by the widespread contact with non tribes.

Under the impact of modernization and their effects on the socio-culture of Deori :

In the present time the modernization effects on the socio-cultural and personality pattern of Deori community of Assam. The new trends of development of the Deori of Assam are in the areas of language and literature.

The speakers of the Deori languages of Assam have established their own literary body for the development of their respective languages in the area of literature and various linguistic studies as well as their introduction in the system of Education. Individual and also organization of Deori Sahitya Sabha are effort to contribute to such development.

Now the idea behind the sixth Schedule is provide the Deori peoples with a simple administration of their own Deori Autonomy Council (D.A.C). So, they could safeguard their own customs and tradition and to provide them maximum autonomy in the management of their tribal affairs.

Conclusions

The tribes have own made of living amidst nature and they have unfathomable socio-religious attachment to their territories in which they live. Outwardly one may get the impression that the Deori are happy with motor able road inside the territory or a dispensary within easy reach. But very soon they realized the evils attached to these. But it should be our endeavour to see that while making new innovations in to socio-cultural fabric of the Deori society we should be cautions. Generations have passed in a particular selling with a set cultural pattern and close attachment to the objects of nature such as the forest, rivulet etc.

The unsophisticated Deori people apprehend that new innovations may rob them of the traditional treasures and the value system.

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Kanaklata of Gohpur : A Legend of 1942 Quit India Movement

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Abstract

The quit India movement has usually been regarded as the 3rd great mass struggle of the people of India for freedom from the independence of British rule. In deed, the Quit India Movement was a mass up struggle of unprecedented dimensions. In the quit India Movement Assam also took special Part. Along with the rest of India, Assam played a heroic role in the August Revolution of 1942. In Assam, the most signifying events that took place at Sootea, Gohpur and Dhekiajuli of Sonitpur district. In Gohpur an eighteen year old girl, Kanaklata Baruah took a special part in the 1942 Revolution. In this paper an attempt has been made to focus the large-scale partition of Kanaklata of Gohpur in the Quit India Movement.

Key Words: Kanaklata, Gohpur, British, Quit India Movement.

Introduction:

The failure of the Cripps Mission and the ill treatment & discriminating behaviours meted out to the Indian evacuees from Malaya and Burma by the British Officers and takes of their suffering when made public further increased anti British feelings. Whatever credibility the British has earned till then had all evaporated. The mass people were convinced that the British would lose the war and some seemed to welcome a probable Japanese victory. The bitterness against the Britishers was so intense that the people refused to think of the consequences of a Japanese conquest of India.

After the Non-Cooperation and civil disobedience movement, the Quit India Movement has usually been regarded as 3rd great mass struggle of the people of India for freedom from the independence of British rule. Indeed, the Quit India Movement was upsurge of unprecedented dimensions. The Quit India struggle beginning on 9th August 1942 expedited the liberation of the country, albeit through negotiations after the post 2nd world war upsurge in India.

Assam's Response to the Movement:

Along with the rest of India, Assam played a heroic role in the august Revolution of 1942. With resolve of "do or die" the people of Assam jumped into the struggle unmindful of the hardship in their economic condition brought about by the war. Leaders like Tayyebullah, president of the Assam provincial congress committee, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, Bishnuram Medhi, Debeswar Sarma, chief whip of the congress party and some others were arrested on 9th August, 1942. The Assam Congress had already made necessary arrangements for building up a non-communal, non-political and purely non-violent santi sena organisation. The Government of Assam, on its part, slowly but steadily rounded up the prominent leaders.

The most signifying events that took place Sootea, Gohpur and Dhekiajuli in Sonitpur district (the then Darrang) drew the attention of the millions of people all over the province. The whole responsibility of organizing the women in the district was entrusted on Puspalata Das with active support on all police thanas and courts of the district. September 20, 1942 was proclaimed as the day of hoisting the national flag flung areas made a bee-line to enlist themselves in the santi-Bahini and mrityu bahini.

Role of Kanaklata in Quit India Movement:

During the last phase of our struggle for freedom the heroic ladies who come to the fore front and became immemorial through Martyrdom, Kanaklata Baruah of Gohpur was also one of them. Kanaklata Bauah was born on 22nd December 1924 in Barangabari village in the Sonitpur district. Her father name was Krishna Kanta Baruah And name was Karneswari Baruahni. Kanaklata was a girl of different type. She did not like to move like other girl's of her age of the village. She had been exposed to political influence while she was still very young. Some political events 'likechaiduar Ryot Sabha' under the leadership of Jyotiprasad Agarwalla in 1931 and knowledge of the persecution of the eminent and respected leaders like Cheniram Das, Mahim Chandra, Lakhidhar Sarma and Mahadev Sarma, did much to sharpen her attitude towards the Britishers. Further maternal uncle Debendra Nath Bara and Jaduram Bara were active congress workers who very often visited her house and had talks with her. Naturally such words as "Mahatma Gandhi", "congress", "independence" became familiar with since her childhood. Kanaklata thought of fighting for freedom from the core of the heart and joined the meeting secretly. The songs of Jyotiprasad and lectures of Bishnu Prasad Rabha attracted her much to make up as the soldier of war itself. However Kanaklata's grandfather Ghana kanta Baruah forbade her to muddle her head in such matters. But she convinced her step mother and joined the meetings. At the time Pusalata Das advised the members of the Mahila Sangathan to wear Gandhi caps and flags were made through this organization.

The congress working committee passed a resolution in July 14th 1942 demanding the withdrawal of the Britishers from India. This 'Quit India Resolutions' was approved by the All India Congress Committee which was held on 8th August, 1942. Then the resolution was moved by overwhelming majority.

It was declared that, should the Britishers refuse to withdraw from India, a mass struggle on All India scale would be started under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji's thundering declaration that "we would win the war by fight". Our motto would be 'do or die' had profound and immediate effect upon the masses of the country. However, the movement launched by Gandhiji in August 1942 was popularly known as the "Quit India Movement".

At some places this movement took the shape of a violent revolution. But in Assam the revolution was more or less conducted on peaceful lines. However for the smooth conduct of the movement, the Assam provincial congress committee formed the santi sena. At that time though the congress leaders of Tezpur sub-Division were at a loss, yet they were well determined to continue the independence movement as they were already inspired by the maha mantra 'Do or Die' of Gandhi. In this case the Tezpur sub-division took an exceptional role in the whole of India.

However a secret meeting was held in the house of Brahmananda Borkakati of Tezpur Town. At that time Amiya Kr. Das. The president of Tezpur district congress fell ill and so the responsibility of the programme of India movement was placed on Jyoti Prasad Agarwala. Gahan Ch. Goswami, the secretary of Tezpur district Congress and puspapati Das were also present in that secret meeting. It was settled in this meeting that a district level programme will be accepted in the first week of September.

Jyoti Prasad Agarwala advised the Congress volunteers to run the movement all non-violently and proceeded to the Thanas of Tezpur district for hosting the Congress flag with the shouts of Quit India. He formed the "Mrityu Bahini" for the success of the Programme of the movement with the mantra of Do or Die.

He directed the volunteers to face death if necessary for the success of the movement. With the end in the view some Congress leaders were sent to Chaiduar and Dhekiajuli areas for the training of the volunteers. It was settled that the members of the Mrityu Bahini would hoist the flags in all the Thanas of Tezpur District. Kanaklata was highly satisfied with the advice and inspiration of Jyoti Prasad. As a female volunteer of the Congress of Assam, She requested all the male and female leaders of the

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party to proceed to the Thana with flags in their hands ahead of the groups of the young girls on the appointment day of the 20th September 1942.

Kalyanpur camp under Kalyanpur Mouza was the main camp of the freedom fighter during 1942 movement. Kanaklata Baruah joined the volunteers. In this camp it was decided to which death squad Kanaklata would join and unfurled the tri colour on the 20th September 1942. On the 18th September 1942 meeting was held in the "Kirtan Ghar" of Jeranial Satra at 2 P.M. near Kanaklata's village under the presidenship of Maghiram Borah. Puspalata Das hold meeting on Kalyanpur and delivered her strong speech. Kanaklata requested Puspalata Das to get her name and listed ion the "Mitruya Bahini". But after much hesitation Pusp[alata Das fulfilled her desire at last such was Kanaklata's desire to fight as a soldier for freeing her mother land from the hand of the Britishers.

Like other young girls of the village Barangabari of Kalongpur Mouza, Kanaklata was also a young girl who was absorbed in the dream of hope. She could not turn a deaf ear to the freedom loving call of her motherland. The fire of the movement was burning in all village, towns, cities for making India free from the bondage of the English. This fire was burning in the whole parts of India, Assam and Kolangpur.

Konaklata was passing many a sleepless night and was eagerly waiting for the 20th September 1942 for hoisting the Congress flag on the building of Gohpur Thana. On the appointed day Kanaklata led a big procession to the Gohpur Thana to hoist the National Flag in the Thana compound. She was all agog with enthusiasm and excitement inwardly though she was calm outside. They proceeded towards thana and the authorities prevented them from proceeding towards the thana.

However Kanaklata and also the other precisionists were not daunted. They were determined and the mantra which inspired them as "Do or die". But the police officer in charge fired at Kanaklata and hit her right on the chest. She fell down on the ground but Mukunda Kakati who was following her did not allow the flag to fall down on the ground and held it high. Mukunda Kakati, who was seriously injured also died later. Taking advantage of such situation one Rampati Rajkhowa, a daring volunteer, hoisted the congress flag over the police thana.

Conclusion:

In the whole phase of freedom movement, the people of Gohpur more or less took a significant part. The Quit India Movement brought the women flock of gohpur to the vortex of the freedom struggle. Specially, under the leadership of Puspalata Das some of the ladies showed exemplary courage and devotion for their motherland by directly participating in the movement while some others braved death by joining the mrityu bahini. Among the ladies, Kanaklata Baruah came to the fore front. She sacrificed her life for her motherland. The people of Gohpur still remembering her bravery and sacrifice for the nation. The martyrs of the 1942 movement were the living symbols of bravery and patriotism.

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6. Sharma A.K. ; Quit India Movement in Assam.

Traditional Use of Animals of Gohpur sub-division, Sonitpur District, Assam

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Abstract

Gohpur Sub-Division is situated in the north bank of river Brahmaputra between 26° 30' N and 27° 02' N latitudes and 92° 17' E and 93° 43' E longitudes. It occupies an area of 603 sq. Km. It is bounded in the east by Lakhimpur district of Assam, on the west by Biswanath Chariali sub-division of Sonitpur district, on the north by Arunachal Pradesh and on the south by river Brahmaputra. The area extended from Hawajan to river Buroi. It covers 129 villages. The total population of Gohpur sub-division is 2,41,987 (2001) of which 1,29,217 are males and 1,17,770 are females.

The sub-division is inhabited by diverse ethnic groups with their unique culture and heritage. Traditionally the indigenous people collect and utilize various animals and its parts for food, medicine, traditional beliefs, taboos, restrictions, and avoidance etc. in their daily life. A case study was conducted among different communities of Gohpur sub-division of Sonitpur district, Assam to know about their knowledge and utilization of bioresources. The present study deals with the ethnomedicozoological importance of different animals by different communities of Gohpur sub-division for the treatment and cure of human ailments. The practice of uses of such traditional knowledge seems discouraged with the advent of modern allopathic medicine. A detailed scientific investigation on such information is urgently felt and efforts should be made to choose appropriate technology from the traditional knowledge. The present paper discussed about various animals used in the treatment of various diseases and suggests the importance of conservation of such ethnomedicozoological knowledge for future generation. **Key words**-Ethnomedicozoology, Gohpur sub-division, conservation,

INTRODUCTION :

The North East India along with eastern Himalaya forms a megabiodiversity area in India and is one of the major centers of species diversity. The eastern Himalayan ecosystem is unique and perhaps no other single geographical feature had greater influence on the life, culture and history of the people of Indian subcontinent than these mountains. In addition, these are extremely rich repositories of natural resources and biological wealth. The eastern Himalayan hill ranges show exceedingly diverse geology, topography and climate that accounts for the rich faunal diversity. The region comprises different vegetational.

The study area is socio-culturally diversified where various ethnic groups co-exist. The Gohpur sub-division of present Sonitpur district of Assam is very rich in cultural diversity having different major ethnic groups. The use of different animal species by the indigenous people as food and medicine

indicates the potential for economic utility and ethnomedicozoological importance. Local inhabitants have been using various animals as food and medicine since time immemorial. A detailed ethnomedicozoological study may highlight various applications of the species and could provide a scope of knowledge for developing indigenous economy and environmental security. Documentation of tribal knowledge has become an utmost priority as we are rapidly losing this knowledge base, passed from generation to generation verbally. Along with taxonomic exploration, documentation of ethnomedicozoological data has been done wherever possible. Information on use of animals as food, medicine, ritual, and folklore by different tribes inhabiting in Gohpur sub-division have been included in this study.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

The proposed study area is socio-culturally diversified where various ethnic groups coexist. The use of different animals like earthworms, leeches, red ants, caterpillars, pupa, beetles, crabs, fishes, frogs, snakes different species of birds and mammals by the indigenous people as food and medicine indicates the potential source for economic utility and ethnomedicozoological importance. Amongst the earliest works reference may be made to the description of uses of animals as food and medicine by the tribes of Bhuttianah and Harrianah (Peter, 1866). Man (1885) studied the uses of animal food by the tribes of Andaman. Peal (1896) described the food habits of eastern Nagas of northeast India. Bristowe (1932) reported insects and other invertebrates for human consumption in Siam. Subratnam (1934) reported the collection and uses of termites for food in south India. Elwin (1944) investigated different types of traps utilized for the collection of animals used by Kuttia Khond tribes of Rajasthan.

In recent years considerable works in the ethnomedicozoological aspects of animals has been carried out in India by various workers. Use of poikilothermic vertebrates as traditional drugs in certain tribes of eastern Uttar Pradesh were studied by Azmi (1990). Sharma (1990) investigated ethnomedicozoological studies on the invertebrate fauna of Rajasthan. Borang and Thaplial (1993) reported ethnozoological aspects of non human primates of Arunachal Pradesh. Borah and Borang (1995) made investigation on 45 insect species used as medicine and food by Nishing and Apatani tribes of Lower Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh. Borang (1996) studied on detailed ethnozoological aspects of 10 animal species used by Adi tribes of Siang districts Arunachal Pradesh. Lumpul (1998) made an investigation on plants and animals used for treatment of various ailments among the Mishmi tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Singh et al (1998) reported ethnomedicozoological study of vertebrates among the Meetei Community in Manipur. Borang (1999) has documented 90 lesser known animal species of ethnozoological importance used by Adi tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Borah, Bordoloi and Borkotoky (2001) have published an account of ethnozoological findings of amphibian fauna of Arunachal Pradesh India. Recently, Borah et al (2006) studied ethnomedicozoological aspects related to amphibian fauna of Arunachal Pradesh.

METHODOLOGY :

Ethnomedicozoological inventories on the collected species were made during the period of field surveys. For this purpose the help from Gams, village school teacher, and local people were taken. Voucher specimens were taken carefully to the knowledgeable persons and detailed enquiry had been made. Survey of local markets were also carried out to record the flow of animals in the market. The vernacular name and local practise of each species by different ethnic tribes have been recorded. Markets were surveyed where edible animals are sold and photographs were taken. Animals used in medicine and food were recorded through interview.

Questionnaires were prepared and distributed among inhabitants of surveyed area who could help in providing information. Adults in the age groups of 40-50 were interviewed to know the local name, and use of the specimen in food, medicines and rituals.

Sl. No.	Common name	Uses /mode of application
1	Earth worm	Fever , Stomach ache
2.	Leech	Hair growth ,Impotency
3	Honey bee	Cough , Cold , Epidemics , General appetizer
4	Cockroach	Healing of wound of cattle& other pets
5	Crab	Cancer ,Liver disorder,enlarged abdomen
6	Spider	Ear problem
7	Water bug	Stomach problem
8	Cicada Beliefto check	profuse menstruation
9	Cricket Malaria ,	Fever
10	Gundhi bug	Rheumatic pain
11	Tiger beetle	Ear ache
12	Red ant	Sinus, fever
13	Termite	Improve lactation
14	Kumoti	Skin desease
15	Silk worm	food
16	Silk worm	Cold ,Dysentary , Abdominal pain
17	Firefly	Night blindness , Eaten raw
18	Prawn	Wounds,diabetes,anemia,removing embedded thorn
19	Apple snail	Urinary problem & eye disease
20	Patimutura	Nocturnal anurisis
21	Puthi	Night blindness
22	Chelkona	Malaria ,dysentery
23	Kokila	Removing blood & push from wound
24	Kurkuri	Loss of stamina
25	Cuchia	Anaemia ,malnourished
26	Bull frog	Legs used as food,pharingitis
27	Monitor lizard	Rheumatic pain,skin disease
28	Tortoise	Burnings , rituals
29	Python	Rheumatic pain
30	Horn bill	Rheumatic pain
31	Cuckoo	Paralysis , loss of stemina
32	Cormorant	Chronic dysentry
33	Owl	Eye complaint
34	House sparrow	Impotency
35	Rhesus monkey	Gallbladder
36	fox	Gall bladder
37	Bat	Rheumatic pain
38	Rat	Epilepsy
39	Mongoose	Epilepsy
40	Otter	Asthma , palm is used for removing fish throne
41	Dog	Urine used for ear ache
42	Goat	Tongue used for vocal problem , legs used for improvement of bone of feet

Table..showing different animal species of ethnozoological importance

OBSERVATIONS :

The study of animal fauna used as food and medicine of Gohpur sub-division region was started in March 2009. Along with our field work data regarding use of animal in food and medicine were recorded whenever possible. Our findings have been presented in table.. There are various modes of use, most common being by boiling after removal of the unused parts like viscera and sometimes the head. When collection is more they are preserved by smoking or by drying in the sun. Dry animals are difficult to identify up to the species level.

Few edible species were collected by hand or special collecting gears. Special bamboo baskets are used in rivers or streams for collecting different species of aquatic fauna. Traps are laid in such places where good collection is expected. In older days, individuals enter deep forest in search of species and return in the evening. Those who practise medicine can identify rare species used in medicine and also know the habitat of the animal.

DISCUSSION :

Various areas of Gohpur sub-division are potential source of ethnozoological information. Edible adult frogs concentrate near the water bodies during the breeding season. Since ancient times important species and informations used in food and medicine are being collected from these areas. Pollution of water bodies due to urbanization, jhuming practice, use of pesticide and deforestation are some of the causes that make the habitat unsuitable for the delicate early life history stages and other edible species.

Recording of these traditional knowledge system and taking measures for identification of the species and protecting their habitat will help in the conservation of faunai diversity in this important biodiversity region.

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Historical evidences of medicinal plants -A brief review.

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All human societies have medical beliefs that provide explanations for birth, death, and disease. Throughout history, illness has been attributed to witchcraft, demons, adverse astral influence, or the will of the gods. These ideas still retain some power, with faith healing and shrines still used in some places, although the rise of scientific medicine over the past millennium has altered or replaced spirituality in most cases.

Prehistoric medicine

There are no established records in using plants as medicine, but tradition and belief followed generation to generation as traditional folk culture. The tribal cultures are rich and specialized in the uses of plants based medicine. Most of the world population, particularly in the third world are fully dependent on medicinal plants for meeting their health care needs given the undisputed role of medicinal plants in to-days health care needs, it is of almost importance that these should be cultivated and propagated. It will also riddance the pressure on natural resources, as our forests, still continue to provide major share of raw materials to the pharmaceuticals and other concern industries. Cultivation is the only option for providing genuine raw material for pharmaceutical industry that will help in conservation of some of our medicinal plants that are being pushed to the danger of extinction.

Ancient Egyptian medicine

In the Ancient Egypt people developed a large, varied and fruitful medical tradition. Herodotus described the Egyptians as "the healthiest of all men, next to the Libyans",¹ In the oldest Babylonian medical was the *Diagnostic Handbook* written by the physician Esagil-kin-apli of Borsippa,¹⁰ during the reign of the Babylonian king Adad-apla-iddina (1069-1046 BC).¹¹ They introduced the concepts of diagnosis, prognosis, physical examination, and medical prescriptions. Medical institutions, referred to as *Houses of Life* are known to have been established in ancient Egypt as early as the 1st Dynasty.⁹

India

The Atharvaveda, a sacred text of Hinduism dating from the Early Iron Age, is the first Indian text dealing with medicine. The Atharvaveda also contains prescriptions of herbs for various ailments which later form a large part of Ayurveda.

The world's first scientific system of medicine emerges known as Ayurveda, literally meaning the science of life. Its two most famous texts belong to the schools of Charaka, born 600 BC, and Sushruta, born 600 BC.

According to the compendium of Charaka, the Charakasamhita, health and disease are not predetermined and life may be prolonged by human effort. The compendium of Susruta, the *Susrutasamhitâ* defines the purpose of medicine to cure the diseases of the sick, protect the healthy, and to prolong life.

The published Indian treaties of ancient past are as follows. in table 1

Traditional Chinese medicine

China also developed a large body of traditional medicine. The foundational text of Chinese medicine is the *Huangdi neijing*, or *Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon*, which is composed of two books: the *Suwen* ("Basic Questions") and the *Lingshu* ("Divine Pivot"). They have vast traditional resources and experiences in the field of herbal drugs and contributed a lot to the modern systems medicine.

sacred groves:
Men's relationship with tree or groves can be found from the ancient Vedic age. The Hindu Hermits and Saints used to do hymn and penance for the blessing of almighty under the trees of these forests. The four great scriptures of Hindus namely- Rig,

Table 1

Indian Treatise	Author	Dates	Number of Medicinal plants include
1. Vedic Period: Rig Veda & Atharva Veda	-----	Ca 2000-1000 B.C.	148
2. Post Vedic Period			
a) Caraka Samhita	a) Caraka	a) 100 A.D.	a) 400-450
b) Sushruta Samhita	b) Sushruta	b) 800-900 A.D.	b) 573
c) Astanga Hridayam Samhita	c) Vegbhatta	c) ca- 700A.D	c) 700-800
d) Dhanawanti Nighanta	d) Mohendra Bhogick	d) -----	d) 373
e) Shodal Nighanta	e) Shodal	e) 1200 A.D.	e) 4499
f) Raj Nighanta	f) Narhari	f) 1600 A.D.	f) 750
3. Modern Period :			
a) Indian Medicinal Plants	a) Kirtikar and Basu	a) 1935	a) 1775
b) Glossary of Indian Medicinal Plants	b) Chopra et al	b) 1956	b) Over 3500

A list of some of the important Indian treaties is presenting where medicinal plants are included Shah (1990)

Changes in the interpretation of Ethnobotany.

Date	Interpretation of ethnobotany	Sources
1873	Aboriginal botany the study of all forms of vegetation which aborigines used for commodities such as medicine, food, textiles and ornaments.	Powers 1873 (in Castetter 1944)
1895	Ethnobotany- the use of plants by aboriginal peoples.	Harshberger (1896)
1916	Not just a record of plant use, but the traditional impressions of the total environment as revealed through custom and ritual.	Robbins et al (1916) (in Castetter 1994)
1932	Not only tribal economic botany, but the whole range of traditional knowledge of plants and plant life.	Gilmour (1932)
1941	The study of the relations which exist between humans and their ambient vegetation	Schultes (1941)(in Castetter 1944)
1941	The study of the interrelations between 'primitive' humans and plants.	Jones (1941) (in Castetter 1944)
1981	The study of the direct relationships between humans and plants.	Ford (1978)
1990	The study of useful plants prior to commercialization and eventual domestication	Wickens (1990)
1993	The recording and evaluation of environmental knowledge that different cultures have accumulated throughout millennia.	FEB (1993)
1994	All studies (concerning plants) which describe local people's interaction with the natural environment.	Martin (1995)

Yajur, Sama and *Atharva* are known to contain numerous information on herbal medicines and domestic remedies. The Assamese (community) is a great lover and worshipper of *Aegle marmelos*, *Ficus religiosa*, *Mangifera indica*, *Ficus benghalensis*, *Ficus benjamina*, *Ocimum tenuiflorum* etc. The Bodo people performed their *Kheri puja*, Bathao puja under a *Euphorbia nerifolia*. These beliefs and practices, related to the sacred groves, have helped in preserving the indigenous and endangered plants flora of the area such as *Cymbidium aloefolium*, *Dendrobium sp.* and these are also used in medicinal purposes.

Greek and Roman medicine

The early medical works from ancient Greece strongly associated with the ancient Greek physician Hippocrates and his teachings and was known from Cnidus in 700 BC.

Middle Ages

Islamic Middle Ages

The manuscript, dated 1200 CE, titled *Anatomy of the Eye*, authored by al-Mutadibih. Persia's position at the crossroads of the East and the West frequently placed it in the midst of developments in both ancient Greek and Indian medicine. The Arabs were influenced by, and further developed Greek, Roman and Indian medical practices. Muhammad ibn Zakariya al-Razi became the first physician to systematically use alcohol in his practice as a physician.

Christian Middle Ages

In western Europe, with the collapse of Roman imperial authority, medicine became localised; folk-medicine supplemented what remained of the medical knowledge of antiquity. In the twelfth century universities were founded in Italy and elsewhere, which soon developed schools of medicine.

Modern medicine

Medicine was revolutionized in the 19th century and beyond by advances in chemistry and laboratory techniques and equipment, old ideas of infectious disease epidemiology were replaced with bacteriology and virology. Bacteria and microorganisms were first observed with a microscope by Antonie van Leeuwenhoek in 1676, initiating the scientific field microbiology.

After Charles Darwin's 1859 publication of *The Origin of Species*, Gregor Mendel (1822-1884) published in 1865 his books on pea plants, which would be later known as Mendel's laws. Re-discovered at the turn of the century, they would form the basis of classical genetics. The 1953 discovery of the structure of DNA by Watson and Crick would open the door to molecular biology and modern genetics. Linking microorganisms with disease, Pasteur brought about a revolution in medicine.

The participation of women in medical care (beyond serving as midwives, sitters and cleaning women) was brought about by the likes of Florence Nightingale. It was not until the 20th century that the application of the scientific method to medical research began to produce multiple important developments in medicine, with great advances in pharmacology and surgery.

The 20th century witnessed a shift from a master-apprentice paradigm of teaching of clinical medicine to a more "democratic" system of medical schools. With the advancement of information technology the process of change is likely to evolve further, and able to create new addition to the systems of modern medicine.

ASSIMILATION OF THE NEPALESE OF ASSAM WITH THE MAINSTREAM

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Assimilation is an important concept for students of ethnicity. It can be defined as a multi-dimensional process. Assimilation, when treated as a variable, ranges from the smallest beginning of interaction and cultural exchange to the through fusion of the groups. The Nepalese in Assam, ever since their advent in this region, are assimilated into mainstream of the Assamese life and society. Assimilation of the Nepalese in Assam was a process of boundary reduction between the minority ethnic Nepalese and the majority Assamese although traces of ethnic variation still persist even after several generations of social and physical contact, assimilation of this process is a continuing one.

The advent of the Nepalese in Assam in the North-Eastern states of India has been accepted as an inevitable consequence of the colonial conquest of this region. Although there was interstate migration of the people in neighboring lands and Assam had matrimonial¹ as well as ethnic relations² with Nepal as early as the 8th century A.D., it was only in the colonial context, to be Precise in 1817, that a large scale migration of the Nepalese towards North-East India with serious Socio-Political ramification took place. Following the Anglo-Nepal Treaty of Segowlee (1815-16), there began the deployment of the Gorkhas in the British army. These soldiers, after their retirement from service, encouraged by the colonial masters, settled in the foothills, forest fringes as well as other strategy points on this north-eastern frontier. Besides granting wastelands on favorable terms and giving pecuniary assistance for their journey they were encouraged to settle in the districts of the present day Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram and the colonial rulers and the private companies required a plaint labors force and the versatile Nepalese a both migrants and permanent settlers were perfect for lumbering, clearing forest lands for oil, coal, lime and tea industries and also for surface communication, cultivation and settlement etc.

Again, the natural environment scope of employment and avenues in the economic sectors like agriculture, dairy, etc. propelled migration both inter state and international to Assam. Interestingly, this migration was not only from Nepal but from other states of India and neighboring lands that in course of time were annexed to India. Likewise Darjeeling in 1835, Dooars in 1865 and Sikkim in 1974 were annexed. In all these lands a large number of Nepalese were there since time immemorial and by virtue of their right to more into any parts of India, many of them came to Assam and settled here since long back. On the other hand in the post-colonial period, after 1950, the earlier trends of migration found formal manifestation in the "Indo-Nepal Friendship Treaty of 1950", followed by the "Tripartite Delhi Agreement of 1951" and the revised "Indo-Nepal Agreement of 1956". Article 7 of the 1950 Treaty provides for free movement and ensures equal rights and Privileges on a reciprocal basis for the nationals of both Nepal and India. On this basis a rough picture of the Nepali population is shown in the following statistics:

The Nepali population in India.

YEAR	NEPALI POPULATION	PERCENTAGE
1901	21,347	0.35
1911	47,654	0.67
1921	70,344	0.94
1931	88,306	1.02
1951	1,01,388	1.26
1961	2,15,213	1.98
1971	3,49,116	2.38
1991	4,32,519	1.93

(Sources: Census of India report, 1901-71: 1991)

YEAR	NEPALI POPULATION	PERCENTAGE
1951	1,01,388	1.26
1961	2,15,213	1.98
1971	3,49,116	2.38
1991	4,32,519	1.93

(Sources: Census of India report, 1901-71: 1991)

Process of Assimilation:

Assimilation ranges from the smallest beginnings of interaction and cultural exchange to a larger and a through fusion of different communities. Besides other factors, here in this context the process of assimilation was facilitated by the congenial social climate in the host society with which they choose to live. Some aspects of such assimilation in Assam are shown below.

Language:

The settlements of the Nepalese had been grown up amidst Assamese villages and settlements. The Nepalese laborers engaged in various activities such as diary farming, cultivation, chowkider, construction of roads, clearing forest and chaprasi. These draw them closer to the Assamese people. As a consequence of it, there was the learning and later adoption of the Assamese language. With the passage of time, the Nepalese in Assam became bilingual and came to regard themselves as Nepali Asomiya³.

Gradually, the Nepalese in Assam accepted Assamese as the state language and medium of instruction because they realized that their interests could best be protected if they remained with the Assamese. Thus, they in Assam not only whole heartedly supported Assamese as the state language, but also accepted it as a vernacular in the schools. In 1972 they fought for the official recognition of Assamese as the medium of instruction up to the graduate level at par with English. Dr. Maheswar Neog, in his Presidential address of the Assam Sahitya Sabha at Mangoldoi in 1974. For all practical purposes the Nepalese are Assamese. Almost all the Nepalese can speak Assamese and majority can also write it. The Nepali students studying in Assamese schools have Assamese as their vernacular.

Education:

The Nepalese of Assam, having adopted Assamese language as a state language, took an active interest in spreading education in different parts of the state. Noted freedom fighter Chhabilal Upadhyaya in 1919-1920, took an active part in establishing National Schools in the Assamese undivided Darrang district took shape. The people of Nepalese provided financial assistance. For example, the Behali High School in Sonitpur district was set up in 1943. Jawaharlal Uchha Bunniyadi Bidyalaya of Naojan in Golaghat district was set up in 1954. Another Nepali gentry of Bajipohumara of Dibrugarh district, Lal bahadur Newar, established the Bajipohumara, Late Nara bahadur primary school in

1973. These institutions played a major role in the education of not only the Nepalese but also the Assamese students of the area.

Literature:

The Nepali people of Assam had also immense contributions in the field of Assamese literature. Our contributors to Assamese language and literature was Hari Prasad Gorkha Rai (1912) of Kohima and D.B. Sonar (1917-1994) of Shillong. They had immensely enriched Assamese literature by their short stories, articles, etc. Hari Bhakta Katwal (1935-1980) was also a profile writer who wrote both Assamese and Nepali. The names of literateurs like Tikaram Upadhyaya, Tarapati Upadhyaya Drona Upadhyaya and others of Sonitpur district had great contributions to Assamese literatures. Man bahadur Chhetry of Digboi wrote *Asomiya Nepali Samaj Aru Sanskritir Ruprekha*, published by Assam Sahitya Sabha. Agni bahadur Chetry who translated Shyamtaj Jaishi's book entitled *Itihasar Adharat Asomor Nepali*, is a major contribution not only to the Assamese literature but also to the history of the Asomiya Nepali. Bishnulal Upadhyaya, Gita Upadhyaya, Padma Dhakal, Dr. Rudraman Thapa etc are few more examples of established Assamese writers.

Social Assimilation :-

The Nepalis in Assam have preserved and maintained their own traditional social customs. There is enough evidence that they actively participated in all the customs and traditional festivals of the Assamese community. In the process a certain degree of assimilation with the host society has been noted. This is evident from the festivals celebrated, food habits and matrimonial relations where a high degree of assimilation is noted.

There are some ceremonies performed by the Nepalis in Assam in addition to their traditional religious ceremonies. This shows a high level of assimilation into the Assamese fold. Besides the Nepalis of Assam actively participated in the local festival called Bihu⁴. Assam celebrates these Bihu - Magh, Bhogali and Kati. The Magh Bihu celebrated in Magh or January has a Nepali equivalent in Makar Sankranti. The Bohag or Rongali Bihu celebrated in April or Baishakh, is actively participated by the Nepalese. Bohag Bihu is celebrated with fun and gaiety with a lot of open air functions where different competitions and cultural items are presented.

Religious Assimilation :-

The Nepalese in Assam are generally Hindu by faith and are divided into many castes and sub castes. This division is only within the community and to others they transcend these caste divisions and are known commonly as "*Nepali*" or *Gorkhali*. In the religious field as priests, pundits and even astrologers. Another important factor of assimilation is the adoption of the Mahapurushia dharma or Neo-vaishnavism, as propagated by Srimanta Sankardev and his disciple Madhavdev and others to bring the different ethnic groups under one umbrella. These are two satras one at Teok in Jorhat district and one there in Nagaon District named Nepali satra⁵, because Nepali Brahmins called Ratikanta Upadhyaya established these Satras. Again, another Nepali Jaganath Upadhyaya established at Padumoni under Dhan0-siri Sub-division of Golaghat district⁶.

Matrimonial relations:

Though largely endogamous in nature, in the process of time, matrimonial relations between the Nepalese and the Assamese have occurred. These intercommunity alliances have been attributed to the personal preferences of the boys and the girls who wish to marry outside their community. But these relations are well accepted by both the communities. These alliances are now-a-days, not limited only to love marriage but are also arranged with proper social rituals⁷.

Food habits:

Though a section of the Nepali Brahmins or upper caste Hindus are vegetarians, majority of the Nepali people are non vegetarians. Among all of them rice, milk and milk products, tea, tamol pan

(areca nut and betel vine leaves) are common and similar to the process of intercommunity food acceptance. Asamiya dishes like fish tenga (light sour curry) have become common in Nepali home in Assam, while Nepali dishes like Gundruk (dried leafy vegetables), Selroti (baked round rice powder bread), Sinki (wispy dried raddish) etc. have entered into Asamiya homes. The Nepalese in Assam have largely accepted the local food habits.

Housing standards:

The common feature of the Nepali housing is the double storeyed tungi house. But with time this system has practically disappeared, barring a few exceptions. Now-a-days, they opt for the more convenient Assam type, thatched roofed house and where finance permits, the asbestos roof, RCC houses etc. In villages their houses are furnished in a simple manner and do not contain excessive luxuries of the modern times. Since dairy farming and cattle rearing is common a huge haystack in front of the house often identifies a Nepali household.

Conclusion:

The process of assimilation of the Nepalese in Assam is a continuing process. Assam which has had a long History of receiving migrants, offered a favorable atmosphere which allowed the people to assimilate imperceptibly. The Nepalese who came to these parts of the land since long back and also in the early rush of the colonial conquest assimilated into the host society and contributed much to the social, economic and political development of the state. Their affinity with other ethno-linguistic communities of the valleys and hills and their occupational versatility also made them easily acceptable to these communities. This led to admixture of cultures, which in turn led to the evolution of a distinct Asomiya Nepali identity.

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HISTORY OF PETROLEUM RESOURCES OF ASSAM

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Introduction

Today's civilization in a greater way depends upon petroleum. Our movement becomes obsolete without petroleum and it's by products. From our kitchen to flying in the air we need petroleum. But its discovery is not a present day phenomenon. The earliest known oil wells were drilled in China in 347 A.D. or earlier. They had depth of up to about 800 feet and were drilled using fits attached to bamboo poles. Petroleum was known as burning water in Japan in the 7th century. The first streets of Baghdad were paved with tar, derived from petroleum that became accessible from natural fields in this region. In the 9th century, oil fields were exploited in the area around modern Baku, Azerbaijan to produce naphtha. These fields were described by Arab geographer Abu-al-Hasan, Ali-al Mas'udi in the 10th century and by Marco Polo in the 13th century. The earliest mention of petroleum in the America occurs in Sir Water Raleigh's account of the Trinidad Pitch Lake in 1595.

In 1710 or 1711 the Russian born swiss physician and Greek teacher Eyrini d' Erinis discovered asphaltum at Val-de-Travers(Neuchatel). He established a bitumen mine *de la presta* there in 1719 that operated until 1986. In 1745 under the queen Elisabeth of Russia the first oil well and refinery were built in Ukhta by Fiodor Priadunov. Through the process of distillation of the "rock oil" (petroleum) he received a kerosene-like substance, which was used in oil lamps by Russian churches and monasteries.

The modern history of petroleum began in the 19th century with the refining of kerosene from crude oil. The process of refining kerosene from coal was discovered by Nova Scotian Abraham Pineo Gasner in 1846, it was only after Ignacy Lukasiewicz had improved Gesner's method to develop a means of refining kerosene from the more readily available "rock oil" ("petr-oleum"), seeps in 1852, and consequently the first rock oil mine was built in Bobrka near Krosno in central Europe Galicia(Poland/ Ukraine) in 1853 and second in nearby Romania in 1857. These discoveries rapidly spread around the world, and Meerzo eff built the first modern Russian refinery in the mature oil fields at Baku in 1861. At that time Baku produced 90% of world's oil.

The first oil well in North America was in Oil Springs, Ontario, Canada in 1858 dug by James Miller Williams. The U.S. petroleum industry began with Edwin Drake's drilling of 69 foot oil well in 1859. By 1860 there were 15 refineries in operation known as "tea Kettle" stills; they consisted of large iron drum and a long tube which acted as a condenser. Capacity of these stills ranged from 1 to 100 barrels a day. The success in refined petroleum products greatly spread the technique and consequently the numbers of refineries in operation were increased to 194 in 1865.

By 1910, significant oil fields had been discovered in Canada and were being developed at an industrial level. Until the mid 1950s coal was still the world's foremost fuel, but after this time oil quickly took over.

Oil Discoveries in India in the State of Assam

Oil seeps were reported in Assam geologic province as early as 1825. Soon after Edwin Drake drilled the World's first oil well in 1859 at Titus Ville, Pennsylvania, USA, sub surface oil exploration activities started in the dense jungle of Assam in the North-east India in the year 1860 and consequently oil was struck in the well at a depth of 35 meter drilled near Makum in March 1867. This was first successful mechanically drilled well in Asia.

The first commercial discovery of crude oil in the country was, however made in 1889 at Digboi when a group of gallant oilmen erected a 20 meter high thatch covered wooden structure at the head of Brahmaputra valley, in the extreme corner of north-eastern India. It marked the beginning of the saga of the quest for petroleum on India and indeed, Asia territory.

The discoverer of this Digboi oilfield was the Assam Railway and Trading Company Limited (AR&T Co. Ltd), a registered company of London in 1881, with the objective to explore the rich natural resources of upper Assam. The earliest recorded reference of oil in Assam can be traced to Lieut. R. Wilcox of 46th Regiment Native Infantry who saw it as "...rising to the surface at Supkhong with great bubbling of gas and green petroleum in.. "Memoir of a survey of Assam and the Neighboring Countries executed in 1825-6-7-8." Asiatic Researches Vol. XVII, pp. 314 - 467.

Legend has it that an elephant working for the AR&T Co. Ltd. returned with distinct traces of oil on its trail. The excited owners of the elephant tracked its footprints and found seepage of oil bubbling to the surface. "Dig! Boy! Dig!", cried the Englishman to his men, hence the name "Digboi". Albeit very low production, Digboi still retains the distinction of being the world's oldest continuously producing oilfield.

Mr. Goodenough of McKillop, Stewart & Co. Calcutta was the first in India to start a systematic programme of drilling for oil in November 1886, at Nahorpung about 30 miles south east of Digboi. Although drilling for oil first began in 1886, by Assam Railways and Trading Company, the first commercially viable well was struck at Digboi in 1889. Following the discovery of Digboi well no. 1, systematic drilling began in 1891 and by 1901 a refinery had been established in Digboi and 500 barrels of oil a day were being produced. Realizing the importance of petroleum a new company known as Assam Oil Company was formed in 1899. Between 1922 and 1932 Burma Oil Company (BOC) drilled 10 structures in the Schuppen Belt. BOC also conducted seismic surveys in 1937 and further exploration was postponed until after World War II.

After World War II, the Assam Oil Company, a subsidiary of British owned Burmah Oil Company resumed exploration with little success. Assam finally achieved a major find in Naharkotiya in 1953, but a row ensued between Burmah and government. The government refused Burmah any right to refine or market this oil and allow the company joint ownership in production. As a result Burmah refused to undertake further exploration. Soon afterwards, the government claimed, Burmah-Shell and other foreign companies were charging excessive prices for imported oil. A controversy ensued over the company's refusal to refine imported Soviet Oil.

These controversies led to the creation of ONGC. Burmah retained the control of Digboi but development of other Assam fields was taken over by a new company Oil India Limited. In December 1955 an Oil and Natural Gas Directorate was set up within the Ministry of Natural Resources and Scientific Research to specialize in exploration. Early in the 1956 its status was changed to a commission. In October 1959 the ONGC was made a statutory body by an act of parliament. The ONGC become successful in finding oil at Cambay, Gujarat in 1958. After long cherished effort ONGC discovered the major Bombay High off-shore with a strike from the advanced Japanese-built Sagar Samrat drilling platform. Further offshore oil and gas was discovered at Godavari and gas off Portonovo and the Andaman islands in 1980.

Burmah and Oil India were originally confined to the Assam fields, where ONGC was excluded. The Oil India discovered largest oil fields in Naharkotiya, Moran, Rudrasagar, Lakwa in 1953, 1956, 1960 and 1964 respectively. Naharkotiya, Moran, Lakwa fields each contain more than 500 million barrels of oil equivalent (MMBOE) discovered recoverable reserves. According to the Petro consultant International oil and Gas field database (Petro consultant, 1996) 38 oil fields and 1 gas field have been discovered within the Assam geologic province. These oil fields each have more than 1 MMBOE of cumulative production and proved reserves. These 39 fields contain at least 89 reservoirs that have produced oil, gas or condensate. Subsequently more than 100 oil and gas fields including Jorajan, Kumchai, Hapjan, Shalmari, Lakwa, Lakhmani, Geleki, Amguri Charali, Borholla, Khoraghat, Baghjan, Dirok etc. have been discovered. With the discovery of large numbers of oil fields problem of refining crude oil became acute and this led to establishment of first public sector refinery at Noonmati near Guwahti. Subsequently another public sector refinery at Bangaigaon and a joint sector refinery at Numaligarh were established. Thus until the 1974 discovery and subsequent development of the Bombay High field on the Western Indian Shelf, the Assam geologic province was the largest producer of oil in India. Assam geologic province covering approximately 74000 square kilometer bounded by the river Brahmaputra on the north and the west and by the Indo-Burma Ranges and the Central Burmah Basin on the south and the east. Assam geologic province includes the Assam Shelf, Brahmaputra river valley, Shillong plateau, Mikir Hills and foreland portion of the Indian Shield. The Assam Shelf consists of a portion of the Paleocene to Eocene continental shelf of the Indian plate which became emergent and which is being over thrust by the Himalayas on the northwest and by the Burma micro-plate on the southeast. The Sylhet-Kopili/Barail-Tipam composite total petroleum system is located in the Assam Province in northern most India and includes the Assam Shelf south of the Brahmaputra River.

Basin Introduction

The Assam-Arakan Basin is situated in the northeastern part of India categorized as category-I basin. The basin covers an area of 116000 square kilometer. Major tectonic elements of the basin are:

- Assam Shelf
- Naga Schuppen belt
- Assam-Arakan Fold belt.

Bulk of the oil and gas, discovered in Upper Assam till late 1980s, has been found in the Barail Group of Upper Eocene to Lower Oligocene age and the Tipam Group of Upper Miocene age. During the last decade, oil and gas accumulations have been discovered within the Langpar and Lakadong formations of Paleocene to Lower Eocene age in several structures like Dikom, Kathaloni, Tengakhat, Tamulikhat, Shalmari, Baghjan, Panidihing, etc. In the Borholla oil field, oil occurs in fractured granitic basement rock of Precambrian age. The oilfields, discovered so far, are situated mainly in the areas south and southeast of the Brahmaputra river and a few in the thrust belts, associated with Naga-Patkai hills. However, the area to the north of the Brahmaputra river up to the Eastern Himalayan foothills has remained poorly explored. In the Naga Schuppen zone, apart from the Digboi oil field, two more major oil fields, namely, the Kharsang field, having oil accumulations in Upper Miocene to Pliocene reservoirs and the Champang field, having oil accumulations in fractured granitic basement rock of Precambrian age, have been discovered. In the Khoraghat and Nambar fields situated in southeastern part of the Dhansiri Valley, oil occurs in the Bokabil Formation (Middle Miocene) which is not developed towards north in the Brahmaputra valley. In some of the exploratory wells, drilled in the southwestern part of the Dhansiri valley, good shows of oil have been observed in Eocene and Oligocene sands.

The major field of petroleum is clear from the following table:

Petroleum Plays:

S.No.	Plays	Formation	Major Field
1	Mio-Pliocene	Girujan	Kharsang, Kumchai, Dirok
2	Miocene	Tipam	Hapjan, Digboi, Geleki, Charali Lakwa, Lakhmani
3	Oligocene	Barail	Naharkatiya, Lakwa, Lakhmani, Rudrasagar, Demulgaon, Sonari, Amguri, Hapjan, Shalmari, Kusijan, Laiplinggaon, Geleki
4	Mid-Upper	Eocene	Kopili Geleki
5	Lower Eocene	Lakadong+Therna	Dikom, Kathaloni, Baghjan, Panidihing, Tamulikhat, Tengakhat
6	Archean	Fractured Granatic Basement	Borhola, Champang

Conclusion:

From the history of petroleum development in Assam it is clear that once oil was found in the dense jungle of upper Assam it paved the way for development of petroleum industry in India. Digboi refinery have been playing a major role in shaping and developing petroleum industry in India as a nucleus for the past 100 years and its history still evoke inspiration for exploration of petroleum in this part of the world.

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Development of Women Education in Assam: An Overview

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1. Introduction

Education is the root cause of civilization and there is no denial of the fact that society cannot progress if half of its population is not exposed to the chances of proper education. Education not only makes women more capable and competitive to perform their traditional duties as mother and wife but it also makes them more efficient members of society. Though Indian constitution guarantees equality between men and women, in reality women are still less educated and un-employed and they have been still sufferings from the customs and norms of paternal traditions. In the field of education women are always lagging behind. Their ambition of education is easily destroyed by various socio-cultural bindings. The objectives of this paper is to find out the following –

- History of women education in Assam.
- Present women educational scenario of Assam.
- Obstacles of women education in Assam.
- A way of overcome the obstacles.

2. Development of women Education

For the convenience of study, in this paper the development of women education of Assam is divided into three divisions-

- i) Pre-Independence Period
- ii) Post-Independence Period
- iii) Present Scenario

2.1. Pre-Independence Period

Before independence when the education system of Assam was almost neglected, no one could think of women education. Neither society nor parents wanted their girl child to send to school. Even there was a superstition that if a girl went to school, then she would be a window in future. Yet Assamese women of that time educated themselves by listening to the scriptures. "Satras" and "Namghars" gave spiritual and religious knowledge to those women, who were not even familiar to the letters of Assamese alphabet. Assamese women were able to recite the scriptures and to sing the devotional songs unerringly.

During the British rule in India, the Christian Missionaries took several reformative steps against the prevailing superstitions and women education was one of them. At first they introduced a kind of non-formal education for higher class women, which was known as 'Zenana'. But due to superstitions and class discrimination that system of education failed to make any significant contribution. Even the Wood's Dispatch of 1854 had failed to make any remarkable impression on women education. In the middle part of the 19th century Anandaram Dekiyalphukan advocated for women education. In the beginning of the 20th century, the women literary rate was almost Zero. In 1901, it was only 0.6%, but Indian Independent Movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, brought a new horizon to women education. Gandhiji appealed for equal footing of both men and women, which helped to dispel different superstitions related to women.

1916 a girls' high school was established at Dibrugarh. The second girls' high school was established at Guwahati in 1926, which is now known as Panbazar Girls' High School. The third and the fourth girls' high schools were established at Dhuburi and Jorhat. But due to various reasons, only a few women came forward to take education. Before independence, total 31 girls' schools were established in different corners of Assam. Some girls of upper class went to Calcutta for their education. Durgaprabha and Hemprabha from Dibrugarh, went to Bethun College of Calcutta to get their education. Durgaprabha was the first Assamese girl to complete matriculation.

Till the second decade of 20th century, no woman had gone to college. In 1929, a woman took admission at Cotton college. In 1933, the first women college was established at Shillong (Lady Kin College). Radha kanta Handique Girls' College, the first women college of the Brahmaputra Valley was established in 1939. The college was initially started with only two girl students and later became known as "Handique Girls' College". Being inspired by this institution, several girls' colleges were established at Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Nagaon, Sivasagar and in other parts of the state for women higher education.

2.2. Post-Independence Period

The development of women education in Assam was very slow because, the East India Company as well as the Missionaries did not interfere with customs and traditions of the society. Girl's Education was not favoured by the parents. Therefore, the percentage of women literacy was much lower than that of men. The women literacy rate from 1951 to 2001 in Assam is shown in the following table-

Year	Male	Female	Total
1951	24.9%	7.9%	16.6%
1961	34.4%	12.9%	24%
1971	39.51%	18.88%	29.45%
1981	Not Held		
1991	63.86%	39.82%	52.11%
2001	71.93%	56.03%	64.28%

(Sarma et. al.; P-229)

However, the expansion of women education during the recent years was remarkable. At the pre-primary and the primary stages the enrolment has increased enormously. At the secondary stage appreciable progress has been made. At the college level also the expansion of girl education is very rapid. The number of girls' colleges has been increasing day by day. Facilities for post-graduate studies in Assam were not available before the establishment of the Guwahati University in 1948. (Saikia; P-101)

The State Council for Women's Education was also formed to advise the government on the improvement and expansion of women education in the state. The state council for Women's Education in Assam recommended certain steps in 1963 for the expansion of women's education in the state. To look after the development of women's education, several women officers were appointed in the Department of Education of the Govt. of Assam.

2.3. The Present Scenario

Today, women's participation in education is quite high and growing day by day due to high job aspiration and parental support. Education started playing a great role in the emancipation of women from traditional dependencies; women are becoming more vocal, articulate and assertive. The Constitutional Amendment of 1976; the new Educational Policy of 1986 and the Revised Education Policy of 1992 laid adequate emphasis on women's education. Sarva Shiksha Avijan 2000 gives importance to girl's education. The girls need not have to pay their tuition fee up to class XII. Now-a-days, many women participate in higher education both in local and foreign universities. Many girls have joined law,

commerce, science, engineering, medicine and other professions.

3. Obstacles of Women Education in Assam

In Assam, though women literacy rate is increasing day by day, yet the female literacy rate is always lower than that of men. Many literate women are also deprived of any higher education. There are several reasons for this lower level of women literacy in Assam. In Assam, poverty is a main obstacle of women literacy. Many poor parents prefer only their boy child to send school. Many parents view educating son as an investment because they will be responsible for earning for aging parents. On the other hand parents may see the education of daughter a waste of money because daughter will eventually live with their husband's families. And the parents will not be benefited directly from their education. Poverty, negative parental attitude towards educating daughter, inadequate school facilities, shortage of female teacher in schools are some major obstacles for the women education.

4. A Way to Overcome

Some suggestions are put forwarded to overcome those obstacles-

1. A favourable atmosphere should be created for encouraging women for education in every corner of the country. Parents, guardians and teachers should encourage the girls to get proper education.
2. Gender biasness should be removed in all forms and a daughter must not be considered to be inferior to a son.
3. Government and NGOs should promote scholarship to impart education among women.
4. Marriage should not be allowed to act as a constraint for education.
5. Any forceful activity that can deprive women from getting proper education should be considered as a legally punishable offence. Now, the time has come to realise the urgency of the fact that society cannot progress by keeping half of its population inside the kitchen. At first, we must change our mind set that we are women; we are not inferior to men. Sooner we realized this fact, better will be our future.

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HISTORY OF SCRIPT MOVEMENT OF THE BODO LANGUAGE (1974 -2000)

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ABSTRACT

Before discussing the history of script movement of the Bodo language, it is better to know briefly about the history of Bodo language. The state of Assam was meeting ground for diverse races and tribes. Streams of human races and tribes of Austro- Asiatic, Negritos, Dravidians, Alpines, Indo-Mongoloids, Tibeto Burmans penetrated into Assam through different routes and contributed in their own way towards the unique fusion of a new community which came to be known as Assamese to the world. The language of the Bodos is called 'Boro'. It is known as Meche in Nepal and North- Bengal, Dimacha in North-Cachar and Borok or kok-Borok in Tripura. In his Linguistic Survey Of India (1903) G.A. Grierson has explained that the Boro language is one of the languages of Sino-Tibetan or Tibeto-Chinese speech family belongs to the Bodo -Naga group of the Assam-Burmese branch of the Sino-Tibetan family. Robert Sefar also has classified the Boro language as one of the branches of the Barish Section of the Sino-Tibetan speaking family in his classification of Sino-Tibetan language (1955).

The present day Bodo of the North-East India were of course not known by the name of Bodo. During the time of Ramayana and Mahabharata and in other Hindu scriptures the present day Bodos are known as Danavas, Asuras, Kiratas, and Mlechhas. The reknown historian of Assam Mr. Rajani Kanta Hazarika mentioned in the book Mangal Kachari Gupta Itihas (1986), that the king of the kirata of that early age used the Boro language of the present age along with their subject. During the period of Mahabharata age there was no inhabitant of any other nations in the eastern part of the Guwahati than the Kirata-Mangal people. Dr. T.C. Sharma writes "from the record of Epics - the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, it is known that the north eastern frontier kingdom of India, a Mlechha territory ruled by the bodo king, referred to as Danava and Asuras, by Aryan of the Ganga Valley, was known as pragyatisha and latter as Kamrupa with its central shrine of mother goddess Kamakhya on the Nilachal Hill overlooking the mighty Brahmaputra within the present metropolitan complex of Guwahaty. Some says that, about 5000 B.C. the forefather of the Bodo came to north eastern corner of the present country of India from Mongoloia, Tibbet and Siberia of central Asia. Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee writes "one may say that the Bodo who spread over the whole of the Brahmaputra valley and North Bengal as well as East Bengal, forming a solid bloc in North-Eastern India, were the most important Indo-Mongoloid people in Eastern India and they form one of the main base of the present day population of the tract. Judging from the wide range of extension of their language, the Bodo appear first to have settle over the entire Brahmaputra valley, and extended west into North Bengal (in Koch Bihar, Rangpur and Dinajpur district.), they may have pushed into North Bihar also, and the Indo-Mongoloids who penetrated into North Bihar might equally have been either Bodos or Himalayans.

The bodo speech community now well-spread throughout the North-Eastern states of India including assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Tripura and Northern parts of West Bengal, Bihar and adjoining areas of Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan. Bodo group of

speech community includes Boro, Dimasa, Rabha, Tiwa, Tipera, Deuri (Chutiya) Koch, Hazong, Garo etc. Bodo is a developing language in the field of education and literature. It was recognised as the medium of instruction in the school level from 1963 and as one of the Modern Indian Language (M.I.L.) from 1977 under the Guwahaty University in Assam.

The language was recognised as the Associate State Language of Assam from 1985. Before 1953 Bodo had no standard form of writnig. It has dialect area extending in the plains of Assam from Dhuburi in the west to Sadia in the east. Asmong the dialects that are current outside Assam the prominent one is the Mech dialect prevailing in the northern areas of west Bengal. Dr. Pramod Chandra Bhattacharjya in his doctoral thesis "A Descriptive analysis of the Bodo Language" (1977)says that there are atleast four dialect areas of the Bodo language as follows -

- (i) North West dialect area having sub-dialects of North Kamrup and North Goalpara District.
- (ii) South West dialect area comprising South Goalpara and Garo Hills Districts.
- (iii) North Central Assam Dialect Area comprising Darrang, Lakhimpur Districts and a few places of Arunachal Pradesh.
- (iv) The Southern Assam Dialect Area comprising Nogaon, North Cachar, Mikir Hills (Karbi Anglong) Cachar and adjacent district.

The Bodo dialect area divided by Dr. Pramod Chandra Bhattacharjya may be re structured according to the change brought out due to further divisions of the prevailing districts. These are the dialect current in (1) Kokrazhar and Dhuburi districts (formerly North Goalpara), Nalbari and Barpeta Districts (Formerly North Kamrup) known as North Eastern Dialect Area. (2) Goalpara (formerly South Goalpara) and South Kamrup extended upto Garo Hills of Meghalaya state, which is known as South Western Dialect Area. (3) Darrang and Lakhimpur Districts extended upto Arunachal Pradesh which is known as North Central Assam Dialect Area and (4) Nowgaon, North Cachar and Karbi anglong district known as Southern Assam Dialect Area. Again as the creation of Bodoland these dialect area agaian restructured. These dialects vary in the levels of structures of phonology, grammar and vocabulary. The dialect current in Kokrazhar and Dhuburi districts differ from those current in Nalbari, Barpeta and North Kamrup districts areas in the structures of sound grammar and words.

Obviously Bodo had no scripts of its own. The Bodo like many great nations of the world did not inherit any script or invent any script. With the spread of education among the bodos it was felt by the Bodos intellectuals that Bodo language is a rich language. They realised that the Bodo have rich cultural haritage and so creation of Bodo literature is essential. It is seen that The Roman, Assamese and Devanagiri scripts were used to write the bodo language. The roman script in modified form were used by the Chrisstian Missioneries to write the Bodo language toward the last part of the 19th century in preparing Bodo text books and religious books relating to Christianity. The Bodo people used Assamese and Bengali scripts toward the first part of 20th century to write the Bodo language. Toward the beginning of the last quarter of the 20th century Devanagiri scripts were used by the Bodo people to write the Bodo language. The Christian Missionaries, who came to propogate their religion in India, learnt Bodo language and its branches current in different area of Assam for this purpose prepared some preliminary books including grammer and established educational institutions in different area of Assam. Among the religious propagators Reverend Sidney Endle prepared one Bodo grammer named "The Outline Grammer of Bodo Kachari Language" in 1884, as spoken in the district of Darrang in Assam. After that Bodos tried themselves to bring out some magazine and books in manuscript form "Zenthokha" was the speciment of the Bodo magazine of the then endeavour. It is said that Padmashree Madaram Brahma was in the charge of editor of that magazine. The "Bibar" was the first published magazine in the Boro language. It was edited by Satich Chandra Basumatary and brought out in 1924 as its first issue in Kokrazhar. Though "Boroni Gudi Sibsas Aroj" (1926) by Modaram Brahma is

called the first published books in Bodo language, the same demand is there for "Boroni Phisa O Ayen" (1915) in Golpara district. The Christian Missionaries had used the Roman script and Bodo speaking people both the Assamese and Bengali script in their writing. But from 1963 the Assamese script had solely been used in writing Bodo text books.

Sometime there may rise a question how did the Bodo Kings inside the greater Assam in those days able to rule their great kingdom in discipline and order without having written constitution and written transaction with their neighboring states or countries? No historical record or documents is available so far as evidence to answer this question. Even then it is said that the Bodo had a kind of scripts known as 'Deodhai' script to be used to fulfil their purposes. The specimens of this script were available till now in the inscriptions of stone pillar wreckages and main gate of the Royal palace of Bodo (Kachari) king in Dimapur, now in Nagaland a state of India. According to late Bishnu Prasad, a prominent Bodo literateur and artist of Assam, an old stone plate written with Deodhai script on Bodo language is still found in a certain family of Naga Tribe in Nagaland as he reported to Dangkha Brahmachari of Phulmati Ashrama in Bijni. Dr. Pramod Chandra Bhattacharjya also write in his doctoral thesis "Bishnu Prasad Rabha, the famous artist of Assam, told me that in ancient times there was a kind of Deodhai scripts among the Kachari. Rabha represented in writing the Deodhai alphabets gathered from an informant of Dimapur area which was noted for Kachari reign and remains representing the art and architecture." It is said that the Deodhai script are comparable to original Brahmi script used by the Hindu Brahmins in India. According to Ram Chandra Brahma, a prominent Boro scholar the Brahmi script themselves might have developed from some original scripts like Deodhai or the like used by the Bodo who were known as the Kiratas.

Devanagiri scripts were originally Sanskrit scripts used by the Aryan people for writing Sanskrit language. But it is now used for Hindi writing also. Since Bodo language has been introduced as the medium of instruction in primery stage in 1963 and secondary stage in 1977, it was directly felt by the Bodo Sahitya Sabha, a literary organisation of entire Bodo, that a script for writnig Bodo language must and should be finalised. So far Bodo children were introduced to writing Bodo language in Assamese script, Bodo Sahitya Sabha has been exploring a suitable script for writing bodo language for a long time. After mush discussion on the issue of script the Bodo Sahitya Sabha in its Guwahaty Session in 1969 and Mahaklaguri (Jalpaiguri, West Bengal) Session in 1970 decided to adopt Roman Script for the Bodo language. Since then the Bodo Sahitya Sabha has been pleading with the Govt. of Assam for approval of Roman Script for the Bodo language. But the Govt of assam did paid no attention to the pleading of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha.

The Bodo Sahitya Sabha, who take the leadingship part in the script movement, already printed the 30,000 copies of books for primery level of education known as 'Bithorai' in Roman Script and was introduced and taught in class I of Bodo Medium primery school from the academic year of 1974. The Assam Govt. reacted to this decision of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha and stopped grants to those school which are introduced the book. The Govt. of Assam said that the text book called 'Bithorai' is not recognised hence no grant shall be given. The Bodo Sahitya Sabha in turn observed a token strike against the high-handed decision of the Govt. on 12 September 1974 and from 18 to 22 September 1974 the Bodo Sahitya Sabha staged mass picketing in school of the area. The Minister of Tribal Affairs and the Tribal MLAs invited the leaders of the Bodo Sahitya Sobha to discuss on the matter with the Chief Minister of Assam. The discussion was held on 23 Septembers 1974. The leaders of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha recented their case before the Assam govt. for approval of Roman script. But the govt of Assam unsympathetically turned down to the request of the BSS. Having failed to obtained the favour the Assam govt. the BSS decided to lunch a vigorous movement in 1974-75. The All Bodo Students Union strongly support the BSS and actively participated in the movement. The Assam govt

ruthlessly suppressed the movement and arrested thousands of supporters. During the course of Roman Script movement fifteen supporters were shot dead by the Assam police. They are -

1. Amlaram Boro (Barpeta).
2. Sibaram Boro (Barpeta).
3. Phaniram Daimary (Rowta, Darrang).
4. Khanteswar Goyary (Bijni).
5. Maising Goyary (Bijni).
6. Nidhiram Basumatary (Kokrazhar).
7. Haitaram Basumatary (Kokrazhar).
8. Ajendra Basumatary (Kokrazhar).
9. Khonsai Boro (Bijni).
10. Bisturam Basumatary (Kokrazhar).
11. Budhbar Boro (Udalguri).
12. Dino Boro (Bijni).
13. Sombar Muchahary (Udalguri).
14. Anjelus Baglary (Udalguri).
15. Narayan Narzary (Kokrazhar).

In the history of the the world it may be first example who were give their lives for the script for writing their language. And finally the case was forwarded to the govt of India. The then Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi intervanted on the matter and she invited the Bodo leaders to discussions. After the prolong discussion with central govt and Assam govt the Bodo leaders accepted Devanagiri Script for writing Bodo language. About Devanagiri scripts Ramcharan Brahma, a research scholar among the Bodos in his Assamese article 'Devanagiri Lipi Kar Abadan' (whose contribution is the Devanagiri script) published in "Kamrup Bisambi" the souvenir of the annual Conference of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha in 1976 says "looking forward the future of the Bodo Tribe, Bodo language and the Bodo medium, the Bodo Sahitya Sabha has accepted the Devanagiri script which is used for Hindi, the national language as common script". The govt of Assam extended their willingness to undertake production of Bodo text book for Bodo medium schools in Devanagiri scripts.

Although the Devanagiri script was accepted by the Bodo leader for writing of Bodo language in 1975, there are some Bodo intellectual who are still in favour of roman Script. So the script issue was again taken up by the BSS and ABSU with the Assam govt. The Governor of Assam made a Gazette Notification in the Assam Gazettee on 9 March 1998 recognizing Roman Script for Bodo language and literature in the state of Assam including BAC area. As a result Bodo intellectuals become two division, some are in favour of Roman Script and another is in favour of Devanagiri script. But by the interference of All Bodo Students Union the Bodo Sahitya Sabha decided again to continue Devanagiri script for writing of Bodo language in its 39th annual Conference of 2000 held at Simborgaon in Kokrazhar District.

The argument in favor of acceptance of Devanagiri script for Bodo language forwarded by All Bodo Students Union and many of the Bodo intellectuals are that the Devanagiri script which have been used for Bodo writing for long 25 years from 1975 in education and literary field should batter to continue. Otherwise major lose will occur in Bodo language and literature, and particularly on the students who are engaged in educational field if this scripts are switched over to Roman or any other scripts suddenly in the middle. Anyway finally the Bodo Sahitya Sabha decided to continue the Devanagiri script only on the ground that it is still current in use for Bodo language and maximum books have been published so far in this script only. Many other organisation of Bodos are also supported this decision on the ground that Bodo people as a whole should forget their pettiest problems like the question of

scripts and try to improve their language, literature, culture for the greater interest of the Bodo nation. And this way the script movement of the Bodo people for writing of Bodo language is ended in 2000. Later on the Sabha decided to develop the Bodo standard to have recognition from Sahitya Academy and its inclusion to the 8th schedule of the Indian constitution. And finally the dreams of the Bodo become true because the Bodo language get recognition from Sahitya Academy and the language get the recognition as a one of the 8th schedule language of Indian constitution in 2003.

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TEMPLE RUINS OF DARRANG AND UDALGURI DISTRICTS

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The early civilization of Assam grew up along the river valleys of the state where several archaeological remains have been discovered so far. Most of them are in the forms of temple. Compared to the other states of India, in the field of archaeology, particularly in the field of historical archaeology, Assam is not very rich. No standing monuments belonging to the pre-Ahom period has survived to the present day. It is because of two reasons - rains and earthquakes that all the objects of archaeological importance of the period are scattered throughout the state in a ruined state¹.

Darrang and Udalguri districts of Assam also contains some temple ruins of early and medieval period. Both the districts are situated in central Assam and stand on the north bank of the river Brahmaputra. Darrang and Udalguri were a part of the ancient kingdom of Kamarupa. In the post Pala period both the districts were a part of the Darrangi Kingdom. According to D. Sarma. Balinarayan who was also known as Dharmnarayan was the founder of the Darrangi Kingdom². In this study the term Darrang will also be used to mean the present Darrang and Udalguri districts of Assam as a whole. The district which once formed a part of ancient Kamarupa, was ruled by three successive dynasties, viz, the Varmans, the Salastambhas and the Palas³. The inclusion of Darrang is also proved by the epigraphic evidence. Tezpur Rock Epigraph of Harjjara and his Hayunthal grant prove that during the early part of the 9th century A.D., Darrang lay within Kamarupa⁴.

The early history of Darrang is obscure. Though we have a few chronicles and works of local composition that refer to Darrang most of the events mentioned in them, especially those relating to the more ancient history are intimately blended with what is fabulous and uncertain, so that we are obliged to accept them with the greatest diffidence. They are silent about the temple ruins of the area. The ruins are the valuable sources to study the history of the area. The study of these ruins leads one to believe that socio-religious, political and economic activities were thriving in this area during the time of the Varman, Salastambha, Palal, Ahom, Koch dynasties and the like. The study of the ruins not only reflect the architectural and sculptural activities, but also reflect the socio-religious, political and economic life of the people. They indicate the presence of a highly cultured people who contributed the development of a definite culture and tradition of Assam. The present topic seeks to study some aspects of the temples of Darang and Udalguri districts. In the present study emphasis is laid on few temple ruins of the area including recent archaeological discoveries at Jaljali. This study clearly indicates that a prosperous people flourished in the area since early times. Besides, the present topic also encompasses a brief glimpse of the early cultures. Darrang and Udalguri region are a meeting ground of various linguistic groups like the Austric, Mongoloid and Indo-Aryans who migrated to the area through different routes in the remote past. The region is an anthropological museum with various socio-cultural groups and the people of the area have been closely linked with India. That Darrang has a rich cultural heritage and a variegated culture is proved by the temples of the region. In the past the fertility of the territory may have attracted the settlements along the course of the Brahmaputra Valley. The archaeological remains of the area are mostly religious in nature like icons and temple ruins. The temple building activities of Assam are an offshoot of the same architectural type that was once popular in North India. They are basically *nagara* type with regional elements infused into them⁵. The temples of the area were mostly of brick and stone. However timber was also used for specific purpose in combination with brick or stone. The ruins of sacred places like Kukurakata, Nalkhamara, Muradeor, Deulpur etc. and the pre history of the surrounding areas including rest of Assam prove that this area was once inhabited by the people mostly of Tibeto-Burman stock since remote past.

At Tamreswar in Udalguri district there are the ruins of a big temple and small shrines which are in complete ruins. There are ruins of stone and brick structure. There certainly was a complex of structures, covering about 6 *bighas* of land. The main temple or shrine might have been surrounded by a brick wall. Various images of gods, goddesses, small and very beautiful Ganesha heads, flowers, creepers, big lotus and some of the significant works on stone. Just near the complex there are three big ancient tanks⁶. The *garbhagrha* of the temple noticed at the site appears to be renovated at a later period and employed the chiseled stone blocks there. At the site the chiseled stones used in the temple are lying scattered. Here the *sirapatti* of a shrine shows a figure of Ganesa in the middle. Above the figure of Ganesa there is a row of seated cross-legged two-armed figures holding a lotus each. To the extreme right of the *sirapatti* is seen a figure riding on a horse while to the extreme left is seen a miniature figure holding an umbrella. The *sirapatti* is very interesting and peculiar from an iconographical point of view⁷. From the stylistic point of view the ruins belongs to 10th century, if not earlier⁸.

The ruins of another bearing historical significance have been found at Lakhimpur. It is a Kamakhya Math near the ancient tank at Lakhimpur. The site of the ruined temple shows a standing image of modern period, in the *garbhagrha* of which a *Visva-padma* curved beautifully on a block of stone has been placed and is worshipped by the local people as the deity. This is identified as the naval portion of Sati or mother goddess Parvati and considered as a Sakti Pitha. This *Viswa-padma* and other architectural piece and chiseled stone blocks seen around the modern temple may be dated around 10th century A.D. if not earlier. This shows that there was a temple belonging to the Pre-Ahom period⁹.

Recent discoveries at Jaljali, in Dahi Mouza of Darrang district bear great significance. In January 2008, under the NREGA scheme of government of India, the renovation work of the ancient Jaljali tank started. The tank was a huge one having 18 *bighas* of land and associated with many legends. During renovation, a large number of stone remains were discovered. It is mostly a stone built temple. The ruins contain image of Ganesh, Vishnu like image, huge *linga*, temple *Sikhara*, Nataraja, *linga* with *yonipitha*, besides more than three hundred pieces of chiseled stone. Besides these, lotus-basements for the posts and walls, very smoothly engraved decorative creepers on doorframes, unique lock-joints for the pillars, both ends-pointed iron nails for fitting and fixing the cut-stones of wall and basement of the posts, decorative sixteen-petaled lotuses probably as fixers over the deities, large and small *lingas* are the common findings amidst the ruins¹⁰. A large number of bricks were also found on the western side of the tank. From stylistic point of view the temple can be assigned to 10th- 11th century A.D. The ruins clearly indicate that it was a Siva temple. Two male deities flanked by consorts, carved in stone are of very high artistic value. These two icons are yet to be clearly identified¹¹. The quality of design of architecture and sculpture, techniques of cutting the stone, standard of art, the proliferation of gods and deities open the door for a wider comparative study.

The existence of a brick-built temple from the time of the Koch period has, of late, been discovered in present Udalguri district, known as Muradewar, this temple retains only its *bada* portion. It is *pancaratha* in its outer profile and possesses a square *cella* of 2.63 metre side. The temple contains a small *mukhamandapa* also¹². The most attractive part of this temple are the decorative bands carved in high relief, on each side. The wall surfaces do not provide any *devakosthas* as are seen in the late medieval temples of Assam. The temple, in spite of its ruined state, retains enough to prove the precise workmanship of a bygone period. In appearance it differs from the Ahom and the Kachari temple. If the temples of Kamakhya and Hajo are rejected as only innovation work of the Koches, the Muradewar temple is the only example of the high architectural proficiency of the Koches¹³.

There are a large number of temple ruins in the districts of Darrang and Udalguri, belonging to Pre-Ahom and Ahom Period. This also shows the pre-Koch culture around 10th century flourished in these parts of Assam as in other parts of the Brahmaputra Valley.

Religion was the pivot of architecture and sculpture in ancient India. When temples were built, the idea of decorating them inside and outside also caught the imagination of the builders. According to M. Dutta, In India, religion was the potential source for the development of sculptural art¹⁴. That the builders and sculptors of ancient Darrang reached a high standard can be judged from the few remains that have so far come to light. Many of these carved and chiselled stone were broken into fragments to provide road-metal. Those which are preserved include some early sculptured images of deities, chiselled octagonal or hexagonal stone pillars and carved stone. Pedestals of pillar and finely chiselled panels containing figures of elephant heads, lion heads, human heads, were used to decorate the outer side of the stone plinths of the temples¹⁵. Sculpture is one of the finest works of human endeavor. It helps us to know the growth of various stages of human life. It developed only when man became civilized. Majority of sculptures that have so far been found in the Darrang and Udalguri region are of gods, goddesses and other semi-divine figures which serve as an ornament to architecture. Like Indian sculpture in general these sculpture may also be divided into three classes –

- (i) Sculpture of human form, (ii) Images and icons of gods and goddesses (iii) Sculpture of animal forms and (iv) Sculptural designs.

The temple ruins are the clear indicators of the wide prevalence of the cult of Siva and Sakti in the area since remote past. Lord Siva, in various forms, was worshipped in the ancient temples of Tamreswar, Mukteswara, Deulpur, Nalkhamara, Jaljali etc. In most of the temples lord Siva was worshipped as the central deity. However other gods and goddesses were also worshipped in these places along with the presiding deity Siva on all occasions¹⁶ The temple ruins, in and around Lakhimpur, Tenneswar, Muradeur etc. clearly indicates the wide practice of Saktisim in the area. The worship of the goddesses like Manasa, Kali, Durga were also prevalent in the area. In the temple of Muradeur, a snake, beautifully carved on a ruined stone pillar base indicates Manasa worship there in the past. Thus from the above discussion, it can be observed that the temple ruins of Tamreswar, Lakhimpur, Jaljali, Muradeur etc. indicate that the Darrang and Udalguri area was rich in cultural remains from early Christian era to medieval period. The study area has a rich ancient heritage. The sites are progressively being spoiled, both by nature and by man. Hence the need of the hour is to explore the whole area. Such explorations will help us to widen the horizons of our knowledge of our past and enable us to preserve them for posterity.

Footnotes

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HISTORY OF TRADITIONAL MEDICINE AND CONTRIBUTION OF TRIBAL PEOPLE TO THE SOCIETIES

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Introduction:

The medicinal properties of plant species have made an outstanding contribution in the origin and evolution of many traditional herbal therapies. These traditional knowledge systems have started to disappear with the passage of time due to scarcity of written documents and relatively low income in these traditions. Over the past few years, however, the medicinal plants have regained a wide recognition due to an escalating faith in herbal medicine in view of its lesser side effects compared to allopathic medicine in addition the necessity of meeting the requirements of medicine for an increasing human population. Through the realization of the continuous erosion of traditional knowledge of plants used for medicine in the past and the renewed interest at the present time, a need existed to review this valuable knowledge of medicinal plants with the purpose of developing medicinal plants sectors across the different states in India. Our major objectives therefore were to explore the potential in medicinal plants resources, to understand the challenges and opportunities with the medicinal plants sector, and also to suggest recommendations based upon the present state of knowledge for the establishment and smooth functioning of the medicinal plants sector along with improving the living standards of the underprivileged communities. The review reveals that northern India harbors a rich diversity of valuable medicinal plants, and attempts are being made at different levels for sustainable utilization of this resource in order to develop the medicinal plants sector

Tribal communities are mainly the forest dwellers who have accumulated a rich knowledge on the uses of various forests and forest products over the centuries. India possesses a total of 427 tribal communities, of these more than 130 major tribal communities live in North East India, which is comprised of the 8 states Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Tripura, Sikkim, Assam, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh. The major tribal communities of the North East India have been categorized into sub-tribes and if these sub-tribes are taken into account the total number of tribal groups reach up to 300. In general, the tribes of North East India have been categorized into two broad ethnic communities, such as the Khasi and the Jaintia tribe of Meghalaya, who belong to 'Monkhemar' culture of Austoic dialect, and the rest of the tribal groups are basically Mongoloid, who belongs to Tibeto-Burman subfamily of Tibeto-Chinese group [1-3].

In the North East India, each state contains a number of tribal groups. Arunachal Pradesh is one of the states in North East India inhabited by 28 major tribes and 110 sub-tribes [4]. Arunachal Pradesh is the 12th mega biodiversity region of the world [5]. More than 545 species of orchids have been reported from the state, which is the highest number of orchid species known from any single state of India [6]. Such a rich biodiversity in the state has provided an initial advantage to its inhabitants for observing, and scrutinizing the rich flora and fauna for developing their own traditional knowledge. Most of the tribe economies have been historically engaged in subsistence agriculture or hunting and gathering. Over the years, they have developed a great deal of knowledge on the use of plants and plant products in curing various ailments.

A review of the literature reveals that many tribal areas and tribal communities in the eastern Himalayan region of India are either under explored or unexplored with regard to their floral wealth

used in curing diseases. Therefore, a need was felt to gather in-depth information on the plant species used by this tribal group and suggest that similar studies need to be carried out across the various groups of tribes for comparison as well as for documenting the knowledge which may be under threat due to the influence of modernization.

Background:

Forests have played key roles in the lives of people living in both mountains and lowland areas by supplying fresh water and oxygen as well as providing a diversity of valuable forest products for food and medicine [7]. The age-old traditional values attached with the various forest types and the varieties of forest products (i.e., medicinal plants) have gained tremendous importance in the present century [8,9]. Furthermore, the cosmetic industries are increasingly using natural ingredients in their products, and these natural ingredients include extracts of several medicinal plants [10]. India and China are two of the largest countries in Asia, which have the richest arrays of registered and relatively well-known medicinal plants [11]. Since the Indian subcontinent is well known for its diversity of forest products and the age-old healthcare traditions, there is an urgent need to establish these traditional values in both the national and international perspectives realizing the ongoing developmental trends in traditional knowledge. Apart from health care, medicinal plants are mainly the alternate income-generating source of underprivileged communities [12,13]; therefore, strengthening this sector may benefit and improve the living standard of poor people. A great deal of traditional knowledge of the use of various plant species is still intact with the indigenous people, and this fact is especially relevant with the mountainous areas such as the Himalaya due to less accessibility of terrain and comparatively slow rate of development [14,15].

The ongoing growing recognition of medicinal plants is due to several reasons, including escalating faith in herbal medicine. Allopathic medicine may cure a wide range of diseases; however, its high prices and side-effects are causing many people to return to herbal medicines which have fewer side effects [16]. The instant rising demand of plant-based drugs is unfortunately creating heavy pressure on some selected high-value medicinal plant populations in the wild due to over-harvesting. Several of these medicinal plant species have slow growth rates, low population densities, and narrow geographic ranges [17,18]; therefore they are more prone to extinction [19]. Conversely, because information on the use of plant species for therapeutic purpose has been passed from one generation to the next through oral tradition, this knowledge of therapeutic plants has started to decline and become obsolete through the lack of recognition by younger generations as a result of a shift in attitude and ongoing socio-economic changes [20,21]. Furthermore, the indigenous knowledge on the use of lesser-known medicinal plants is also rapidly declining [22]. Through the realization of the continuous erosion in the traditional knowledge of many valuable plants for medicine in the past and the renewal interest currently, the need existed to review the valuable knowledge with the expectation of developing the medicinal plants sector.

Challenges in medicinal plants sector

The continuous increase in human population is one of the causes for concern in meeting the daily requirements of food and medicine as the economy and livelihoods of human societies living in developing countries primarily depend on forest products. This phenomenon is leading to continuous erosion of forest and the forest products [23] thus making challenge to meet the requirements as well as to conserve useful bio-resources. More and more species are being gradually added in the *Materia Medica*; however, the standards of their purity and correct identification do not keep pace with the process of expansion [24]. The market prices for medicinal plants and derived materials provide only a limited insight into the workings of the market, and not on the precise information of profits, supply and demand. We have identified the following major features and challenges on the basis of examining the existing knowledge on the medicinal plants sector.

Rising demand

The World Health Organization (WHO) has estimated the present demand for medicinal plants is approximately US \$14 billion per year. The demand for medicinal plant-based raw materials is growing at the rate of 15 to 25% annually, and according to an estimate of WHO, the demand for medicinal plants is likely to increase more than US \$5 trillion in the year 2050. In India, the medicinal plant-related trade is estimated to be approximately US \$1 billion per year. According to an estimate, the quantity of export of Ayurvedic products produced in India has tripled between in the two financial years (2001–2002 and 2002–2003).

The projected escalating demand of medicinal plants has led to the over-harvesting of many plants from wild, which subsequently results in the loss of their existing populations. For example, the large quantity of Himalayan yew (*Taxus baccata*) has been gathered from the wild since its extract, taxol, was established as a use in the treatment of ovarian cancer. *Aconitum heterophyllum*, *Nardostachys grandiflora*, *Dactylorhiza hatagirea*, *Polygonatum verticillatum*, *Gloriosa superba*, *Arnebia benthamii* and *Megacarpoea polyandra* are other examples of north Indian medicinal plant species which have been overexploited for therapeutic uses and have subsequently been placed today in rare and endangered categories. Many medicinal plant species are used in curing more than one disease and as a result, these species are under pressure due to over collection from wild. For example, *Hemidesmus indicus* is used to cure 34 types of diseases; *Aegle marmelos*, *Phyllanthus emblica*, and *Gloriosa superba*. Over-exploitation and continuous depletion of medicinal plants have not only affected their supply and loss of genetic diversity, but have seriously affected the livelihoods of indigenous people living in the forest margins.

More than 95% of the 400 plant species used in preparing medicine by various industries are harvested from wild populations in India. Harvesting medicinal plants for commercial use, coupled with the destructive harvest of underground parts of slow reproducing, slow growing and habitat-specific species, are the crucial factors in meeting the goal of sustainability. Harvesting shoots and leaves of medicinal plants may decline their photosynthetic capacity, and as well as the potential for survival and effective propagation. Medicinal plants tolerance to harvest varies with climatic conditions as the temperate herbs become highly vulnerable to harvest of individuals. Furthermore, rising demand with shrinking habitats may lead to the local extinction of many medicinal plant species.

Bio-prospecting and bio-piracy

The former remote green forests have now become part of a dynamic, profit-seeking economy and demanding pluralistic politics worldwide. Reducing the pressure on various forest products, especially on the medicinal plants, is therefore a tough challenge both for policy makers and for economists. Medicinal plants are the local heritage with global importance. The Convention on Biological Diversity at Rio had agreed on a framework that would help the biodiversity to be utilized in a prudent and controlled way. Bio-prospecting, at present, occurs in an environment of suspicions and growing tensions between the bio-piracy and rights of sharing benefits between the developing and developed countries. Most of the issues relating to the protection of the legal status for indigenous knowledge and compensation of the indigenous herbal practitioners for that knowledge are extremely complicated. There are arguments for the present state of compensation or benefit sharing under the intellectual property rights, which is being considered a new legal form of bio-piracy by one group, whereas other groups argue that the intellectual property right is a legal tool to protect the rights of knowledge holders.

Different ways and systems for awarding patents on the medicinal plants in India, United States, Europe, Canada and other countries have widened the confusion. In many countries, the plants and inventions directed to the plants and the plant products (i.e., seeds, flowers, gums, and resins) are not eligible for filing a patent. In United States, however, any living organism derived by human invention, such as by breeding or by laboratory-based manipulation, can be filed for awarding patent. The Indian

Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Act of 2001 recognize the contribution of farmers who actively participate in the breeding programs. Furthermore, this act contains provisions for benefit sharing whereby local communities are acknowledged as a contributor of plants. Unfortunately, there is a wide gap between developed and developing nations such as India on patenting the products. For example, out of the 3,125,603 patents filed in 91 countries, only 301,177 or 9.6% are registered in developing countries while the rest is in industrialized countries. Of these, only 0.2% of the total and 2.3% of those registered in developing countries belong to residents. In addition, 97.7% of the total patents filed thus far are in the name of non-residents, who apply solely to control export markets in developing countries [63]. Developing nations and many scientists who want to exploit medicinal plants demand more specific rules about the recording of nationality of samples and sharing of their benefits between the nations of origin, the inventor, and the commercial sponsors. Some developed nations are not inclined to accept such provisions. These conflicts have frustrated many scientists who believe that natural products remain the most promising source for new drugs. To mitigate such conflicts and gear up to find out new sources for drugs, the representatives of 188 nations at Kuala Lumpur Conference in 2004 agreed to try to build such a framework that would be acceptable to all signatories and thus the proposed framework will be placed for consideration at the next meeting in 2006 going to be held in Brazil.

Conclusion:

The traditional medical systems of northern India such as Ayurveda and Tibetan are part of a time-tested culture and honored by people still today. These traditions have successfully set an example of natural resource use in curing many complex diseases for more than 3,000 years. Many advantages of such eco-friendly traditions exist. The plants used for various therapies are readily available, are easy to transport, and have a relatively long shelf life. The most important advantage of herbal medicine is the minimal side effects, and relatively low cost compared to the synthetic medicines. The success of medicinal plants sector mainly depends on the awareness and interest of the farmers as well as its other stakeholders, supportive government policies, availability of assured markets, profitable price levels, and access to simple and appropriate agro-techniques. The successful establishments of medicinal plants sector may help in raising rural employment, boost commerce around the world, and contribute to the health of millions.

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Identity Crisis and emergence of movements for Autonomy-A Case Study of the Deori Autonomy Movement in Assam

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Abstract:

The present study reveals that the respondents wanted to have a separate identity and they will be happy to maintain the distinct identity. However, it is not the factors such as language or culture which determine their course of action but economic, social backwardness, political deprivation determine the activities of the people. For protection of the identity they feel the need of Autonomous Council to the Deori Community. Moreover, for protection of the Deori community's identity, they are in favour of the ethnic political party (Married Male 75%, Unmarried Male 80%) also. The study also reveals that socio-economic backwardness (majority of the both male (62.5%) and female (47.5%) respondents feel all round backwardness in economic status, cultural position, and languages backwardness in comparison to the other communities) and rise in ethnic feelings, lead to the origin of the feeling for Autonomy which was strengthened by lack of adequate political representation in State Legislature (Male 85% Female 97.5%) and parliament (Male 67.5% Female 97.5%), identity crisis. Most immediate cause may be inspiration for granting Autonomous Council to the other communities (Male-Married 70%, Unmarried 85%, Female-married 95%, unmarried 5%).

Introduction:

In contemporary India, much of political contestation seems to take place in the shape and form of politics of identity immediately after the independence of India. The range of politics of identity in this country is wide, may vary from region to region, and case to case and with the exceptional. But all the articulations of identity demand various degrees and forms of autonomy. The proliferation of a particular kind of autonomy movements in Assam by smaller and smaller ethnic groups mostly tribal communities to demarcate and exclusivist territory and political space for themselves, is an important issue in contemporary situation. The State has to spend a huge amount of resources in terms of finance and manpower in order to manage sporadic autonomy movements. Moreover, the Government granted some amount of autonomy through granting them Autonomous Council to their respective communities but it never ended their movement and continued movements in a different form. Simultaneously, apart Moran, Chutia, Ahom, Tea tribes etc. who are demanding for Schedule Tribes status and are launching their movement for autonomy.

Objectives of the Present Study:

The objective of the present study is: To find out the root causes for the emergence of Deori Autonomy Movement in Assam.

Deptt. of History

Methodology:

The present study was conducted in Lakhimpur District of Assam. In the present study Stratified random sampling method was followed by the investigators. The investigator has selected 524 samples. The sample contained of both married and unmarried, Male and female with equal proportionately. Interview schedule and focused personal discussions were used to elicit the required information.

Emergence of Ethnic Identity movement of the Deori community:

Like the other the Plains Tribal community of Assam i.e, Sonowal, Thengal etc; Deori community also started their movement for autonomy to their community. The Autonomy movement of the Deori community was started since 1982. The leaders claimed that although their political demands for Autonomous Council had arisen in 1982 at Sadia Conference of All Assam Deori Students Union but informally their movement for identity was started before independence of India. With the special initiative of Bhimbar Deori, there emerged a new Deori organization namely "Deori Janagosthi Ganatanttic Yakhya Mancha-Deori Sanmilan" in 1935 to protect the identity of the Deori community. In 1951, 12th February, another Deori organization namely "Deori Satra Sanmilani" was formed in Nakari, Lakhimpur District of Assam {Chigasi, (Fifth issue), 2005}. The main purpose of this organization was to protect *the Deori identity, their culture and tradition, their language and also to remove the backwardness of the Deori community.* In 1959 another Deori organization was formed namely "All Assam Deori Student's Union." The founder President and General Secretary was Sri Rajen Deori and Late Janak Deori respectively (Hazarika, 2005). With their political process in 20th January of 1965, they established "Deori Sahitya Sabha", and later stage "Nikhil Bharat Deori Yuba-Satra Santha", "Sado Deori Mahila Samiti", "Deori Sanskriti Sangha" and at last to fulfill the political aspiration of the deori community formed "All Assam Deori Autonomous Demand Committee" in the year of 1994.

Table No. – 1 Deori Population in Assam according to the Census of India report

Census of India	1951	1961	1971	1991	2001
Deori Population	11000	13876	23,080	35,839	41,161

Source: 1. Encyclopedic profile of Indian tribes, Sachchidananda, R.R.Prasad, P-206, 2. Religious Practices of the Deoris, Saranan Deori, P-9, 3. The Assam Movement Class, Ideology and Identity, Manirul Hussain, Page No-170, 4. Frontline vol-21,issue-11,May 22-June 04,2004 5. Census of India 2001 report

In 1982 Sadia conference of All Assam Deori Students Union, they took two main decisions: **First**, Separate Autonomy for the Deori community people, **Secondly**, Recognition of Deori language as a Government language. For fulfilling these decisions, under the leadership of the former President of Sadiya conference *Tanjing Bor Deori*, along with some leaders of the Deori community went to Delhi and submitted a memorandum to then Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi on 5th June 1982 but had not received positive response from the side of the State Government. As a result, All Assam Deori Students Union announced mass movement against the Government. On 31th July, 1991 a discussion was held between AADSU and then Chief minister Hiteswar Saikia. In their discussion the AADSU demanding 3 tiers satellite Autonomy in various levels. The AADSU proposed Separate Greater Deori Autonomy consisting of District like Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Sonitpur, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Sibsagar, Tinsukia and Kamrup.

But the both sides (Government and Deori Organisation) had not reached any final solution (Memorandum submitted to the Government by AADSU). Since the year of 2002, the Deori Movement became violent. The Deori Student Union announced several programme like *Dharna, Picketing, Annahan etc.*, against the Government demanding their Autonomy. In the meanwhile, a decision had taken in the joint meeting of W.P.T. & B.C. (Welfare of Plains tribes and Backward Classes) Department of the Government of Assam and AADSU and other Deori organization, a joint survey of Deori population

in all Deori Villages was carried out in April-May 2003 by the concerned Circle officers involving also the members of AADSU. The survey showed a total Deori population was 2, 17,357 (Demands and Justification, AADSU). There are 7(Seven) Constituencies and 43(Fourty Three) Villages within the Lakhimpur District of Assam. There are about 57,784 (Fifty Seven Thousand Seven Hundred and Eighty Four only) Deori community populations in Lakhimpur District. However, in 2004 the Deori Autonomy Movement stands a remarkable position. Before the strong mass movement of the Deori people, the State Government of Assam declared Deori language as a Government language on 28th of January, 2005 and on 4th day of March 2005 in Guwahati signed the historical agreement of "Deori Autonomous Council". In the month of October 2005, interim Deori Autonomous Council had been constituted under the Chief Executive Member of Mrs Amrit Prava Deori by the State Government. But after constituting the council, there emerged a conflict within the leaders of the deori Community and dissolved the Mrs Amrit Prava Deori leads interim Deori autonomous Council and formed a new DAC under the Chief Executive Member of Pitambar Deori. At present the Deori Autonomous Council is running by the new elected memebers.

Results and Discussion:

The present study was conducted with the aim to find out the "root cause for the emergence of Deori Autonomy Movement". The information was elicited as per the objectives of the study.

Table No. -2 Ethnic reason for emergence of Deori Autonomous Council

Sl. No.	Particulars	Marital Status			
		Married		Unmarried	
		% Male	% Female	% Male	% Female
1. Knowledge about caste organisation	70	85	80	5	
2. Relationship with the caste organisation	30	15	20	5	
3. Identification with the caste	90	100	95	95	
4. Attachment with the mother tongue	90	100	95	5	
5. Preference of language (Deori)	30	95	10	5	
6. Faith on ethnic Political parties	75	95	80	5	

The study reveals that the majority of the male both married and unmarried respondents except in case of relationship with the caste organization (Married Male 30%, Unmarried Male 20%) and preference of the best language counterparts (Married Male 30%, Unmarried Male 10%), they all have affiliation to the caste organization (Married Male 90%, Unmarried Male 95%), attachment with the mother tongue (Married Male 90%, Unmarried Male 95%) and at the same time they have maintained full faith on ethnic political party (Married Male 75%, Unmarried Male 80%), which may ultimately lead to the Ethnic feelings and it may be one of the causes (Ethnic identity) for the emergence of the Deori Autonomy movement. The same is the case with the female respondents also which reflects in its above mention data.

Table No.-3 shows that majority of the both male and female respondents believe that the identity of the Deori community is at stake. Whereas the female respondents feelings in this aspect is more pronounced than the male counterpart. On the other hand, basing on the educational qualification, right from illiterate to Graduate level 50% of the respondents felt that there is identity crisis of the Deori community. While the cent percent of the Graduate respondents feels that unemployment and the awarding of Autonomous Council to other communities are the primary reasons for identity crisis.

The maximum number of both male and female respondents feels the lack of adequate representation in both the State Legislature (Male 85% Female 97.5%) and the Parliament (Male 67.5% Female 97.5%). In case of faith on the Ethnic Political parties, failure of existing political set up and Government initiative for improvement of the Deori language 70 percent of male believe the above mentioned cause for the rise of Deori Autonomy movement. Only 47.5% of female supports this view. It indicates that the feeling of political negligence is more in male counterpart than the female. Moreover, with the increasing educational status the feeling of political deprivation is more pronounced i.e. the more persons is educated, the more politically deprived he feels. This may be due to rise of political awareness level with increase in education. This may be an important trigger for emergence of Deori Autonomy movement.

Table No. -3 Identity crisis as a cause for the emergence of Deori Autonomous Council

Sl. No.	Particulars	Sex		Educational Qualification						
		%	%	a	b	c	d	e	f	g
		Male	Female							
1.	Migration for the other community surrounding with the Deori community	62.5	55	82.22	50	76.19	50	Nil	50	Nil
2.	Lack of adequate representation in the State Legislative assembly	85	97.5	95.55	100	90.47	0	Nil	50	Nil
3.	Lack of adequate representation in the Parliament	67.5	97.5	95.55	70	76.19	0	Nil	50	Nil
4.	Absence of adequate employment opportunities	77.5	97.5	95.55	70	80.95	100	Nil	50	Nil
5.	Awarding Autonomous Council to the other communities	77.5	50	91.11	70	80.95	100	Nil	50	Nil

N.B- 1. Nil means no respondents, 2. Educational Qualification: a. Below Matric b. Matric pas c. H.S.pass d.Graduate e. Post-Graduate f. Illiterate g. Others (Please specify).....

Sl. No.	Particulars	Sex		Educational Qualification						
		%	%	A	b	c	d	e	f	g
		Male	Female							
1.	Lack of adequate representation in the State Legislative assembly	85	97.5	95.55	100	90.47	0	Nil	50	Nil
2.	Lack of adequate representation in the Parliament	67.5	97.5	95.55	70	76.19	0	Nil	50	Nil
3.	Faith on ethnic Political parties	77.5	47.5	53.33	70	85.7	50	Nil	0	Nil
4.	Failure of existing political setup	70	47.5	55.5	50	80.95	0	Nil	0	Nil
5.	Government initiative on Deori language	87.5	47.5	53.33	80	95.23	100	Nil	0	Nil

N.B- Nil means no respondents

Table No. 5- Economic reason for the emergenc of Deori autonomous Council

Table No.- 5 (a) Annual Income of the respondents

Sl. No.	Particulars	Sex							
		Male(% wise)				Female(% wise)			
		0-20,000	21,000-40,000	41,000-60,000	61,000-above	0-20,000	21,000-40,000	41,000-60,000	61,000-above
1.	Annual Income	85	10	2.5	2.5	95	2.5	0	2.5

Table No.- 5 (b) Wealth approximately) of the respondents

Sl. No.	Particulars	Sex									
		Male					Female				
		0-5000	5001-10000	10001-15000	15001-20000	20000-above	0-5000	5001-10000	10001-15000	15001-20000	20000-above
1.	Wealth	87.5	7.5	2.5	2.5	0	95	2.5	0	2.5	0

Table No.- 5 (c) Profession of the respondents

Sl. No.	Particulars	Sex													
		Male							Female						
		a	b	c	d	e	f	G	a	b	c	d	e	f	g
1.	Profession	80	5	0	10	2.5	2.5	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0

N.B.Profession: a. Agriculture b. Business c. Teachers d. Students e. industrialist f. government employee g. others (specify)

Table No.-6 Respondent's opinion on inspiration of the other Autonomy Movement

Sl. No.	Particulars	Male			Female		
		Total Male	Married	Unmarried	Total Female	Married	Unmarried
1	Inspiration of the other Autonomy movement	77.5	70	85	50	95	5

Table No. - 7 Root cause for the emergence of the Deori Autonomy movement

Sl. No.	Particulars	Sex	
		Male	Female
1.	Backwardness of Deori community comparatively than the other community	15	50
2.	Negligence of Government for the Welfare of the Deori community	15	2.5
3.	Failure of the existing political setup in protecting the language, culture, tradition, custom of Deori community	7.5	0
4.	All the above	62.5	47.5

Majority of the male and female respondents are in the economically backward category, this may be one of the reasons which stimulate the emergence of Autonomy tendencies. 85% of male and 95% of female respondents belongs to the Annual income group of 0-20,000. And 87.5% of male and 95% of female respondents have personal property an amount of about 0-50,000. On the other hand, 90% of male and cent percent of female respondents are related to agriculture. Moreover, out of the both categories of respondents majority of them are in Agricultural profession. It signifies the low economic background of the Deori community. Hence, for improvement or upliftment of the economic life of the Deori community, the respondents feel the need of a Deori Autonomous Council resulting in various agitations.

The above table 6 depicts a clear picture of the overall opinion of the both Male and Female married and unmarried respondents in this regard. It is observed that majority of the both Male (Married 70%, Unmarried 85%) and Female (married 95%) married and unmarried except Female unmarried (5%) respondents, believes that other Autonomy movements have inspired the rise of Deori Autonomy movement.

Table No.-7 clearly depicts that majority of the both male(62.5%) and female(47.5%) respondents feel all round backwardness in economic status, cultural position, and languages backwardness in comparison to the other communities may be the root causes for the emergence of the Deori Autonomy movement. In this context negligence of the Government has fueled the process.

From the above analysis it can be says that the respondents wanted to have a separate identity and they will be happy to maintain the distinct identity (table-2). However, it is not the factors such as language or culture which determine their course of action but economic, social backwardness, political deprivation determine the activities of the people (table-5a,5b, 5c, table-7). For protection of the identity they feel the need to start the Autonomy movement of the Deori Community. Moreover, for protection of the Deori community's identity they are in favour of the ethnic political party (table-4) also. It can be concluded that socio-economic backwardness and rise in ethnic feelings, lead to the origin of the feeling for Autonomy which was strengthened by lack of adequate political representation in state and parliament, identity crisis. Most immediate cause may be inspiration for granting Autonomous Council to the other communities (table-6).

Conclusion:

It can be concluded that socio-economic backwardness and rise in ethnic feelings, lead to the origin of the feeling for Autonomy within the Deori community people which was strengthened by lack of adequate political representation of their community people in the State legislature and in the Parliament and identity crisis. The most immediate cause may be inspiration of other Autonomy movement in Assam.

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Higher Education through Distance Education: in a Historical Light

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Assam is a land of rich biodiversity, inhabited by tribes and non tribal population speaking different languages and dialects. Comparatively, the human development report of Assam, 2003, highlights the problems of the state. The unemployment rate, the growing poverty level, etc is a problem the state has been tackling with. Higher Education is very instrumental for the socio economic development of the country. It is rather referred to as a single indicator of the country's development. Historically, Higher Education in Assam developed only way back in the nineteenth century with the Gauhati School being raised to the collegiate level. However, the only option for the aspirants of higher education was to go to Bengal. Even then, higher education was accessible to only the affluent and well established families.

As the new century unfolds, there has crept in a lot of challenges that Higher education is facing. Besides, the growth of knowledge economy, new technologies, more public scrutiny and less trust in government reforms has led to the growth of privatization.

The formal mode of education has become very traditional and problem infested. Even then, it cannot be done away with it. But the emergence of Distance Education has given a ray of hope to the deprived section of the society.

The paper is a brief study on the historical growth of Distance Education in Assam and the potential of it in developing the state.

Introduction:

The world has well passed through the times when mercantilism, capitalism, etc. were the important factor which determined the economy of a nation. The world we live in, is all depended on the knowledge and hence the growth of "knowledge" or "information" economy. The emergence of knowledge economy has thus laid more emphasis on education, especially higher education.

Higher Education implies the level of "graduates and above". It includes "all types of studies, training or training for research at the post-secondary level, provided by universities or other educational establishments that are approved as institutions of higher education by the competent State authorities" (UNESCO Declaration, 1998).

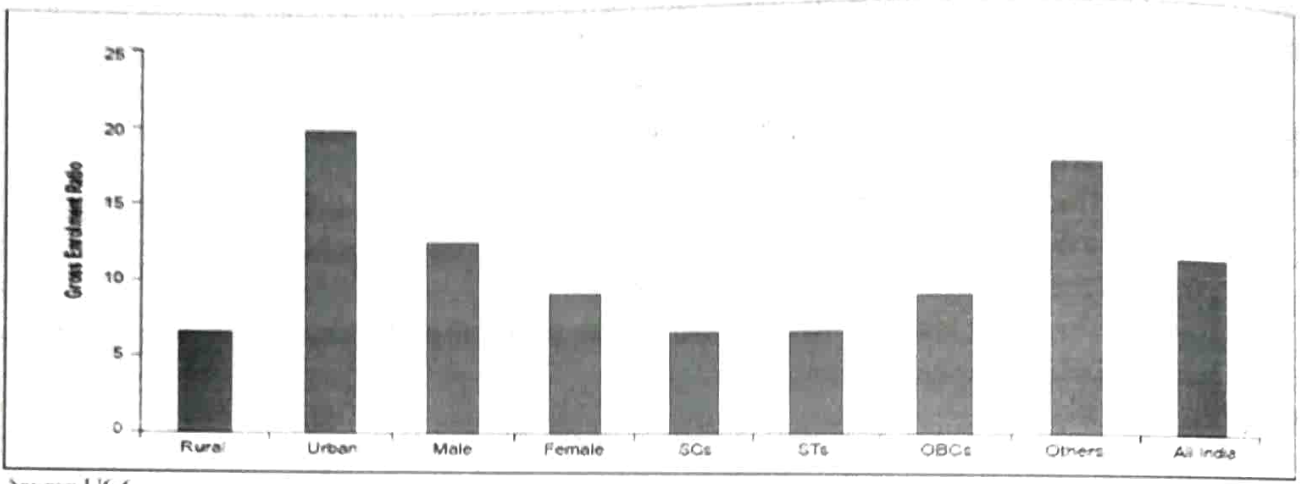
Indian scenario:

Looking into the present situation of higher education in India, it is noteworthy to notice that the demand for higher education has grown up rapidly since the time of Independence. The day India was freed from the rule of the foreign power; there were only 20 Universities and 500 colleges for pursuing higher education. Currently, there exists 504 Universities, 25,951 colleges (which include 2,565 women colleges) - it also boasts of 40 Central Universities, 243 State Universities, 53 State Private Universities and 130 Deemed Universities, and 33 Institutions of National Importance, on the eve of the year 2010. The enrolment of students in Higher Education has also been estimated around 136.42 lakh students, as in 2009. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in India stands at 9.97% in 2005-06, but for the other developing nations it rests at 25%. More developed nations like USA, UK and Japan have a high (GER) of 81%, 54% and 49% respectively. Indeed, in a London Times Higher Education Supplement, only 1 Indian University was ranked among the top Universities.

Problems in Higher Education:

The Indian Higher Education is a gift from the British Government. From the time of Macaulay's minute and Wood's Despatch way back in 1854 till today, the educational scenario has undergone a lot of changes. Higher Education means the education from the graduate level and above which prepares the individual for better opportunities in life by giving them quality training in skills and knowledge. Many problems have cropped up in the higher education system. Indian Higher Educational system is marked by high scale disparities. Higher education had been offered by the British to create a class of loyal supporters of British rule and thus only the affluent sections of the society could avail of this advantage. India just completed her 63 years on independence and yet it could not do away with exclusive nature of higher education. A wide gap is noticed in terms of access and reach of higher education to the deprived section of the population. Table 4 describes the disparities in regarding the enrolment in higher education (2004-05). The table makes it visibly clear that the enrolment in the rural areas, enrolment of women, the SC, ST and OBC are less than the all India average, which is marked at 11.

Table 4 Disparities in enrolment in higher education Source:



Source: UGC.

National Knowledge Commission. This means that Higher Education is still in the hands of those who can afford it. With the coming of new technologies and the boom in the information sector, as well as the onslaught of globalization, the concept of privatization has set in. This only increases the already widening gap.

India has an uphill task to make its presence felt in the educational scenario, as it is grappling with the issue of quality. The poor quality of higher education has led to the outflow of Indian students to foreign destinations and the loss of billions of money. Quality in higher education implies, a process that satisfies the needs of the society leading to the turn out of a strong human resource power contributing to the development of the nation. The expenditure incurred by the Government on higher education is even not adequate. While the Central Advisory Board for Education (CABE) recommends spending 1 per cent on higher education and 0.5 per cent to technical education, the proportions in 2004-05 were 0.34 per cent for higher education and 0.03 per cent for technical education. It is the lowest public expenditure when compared in a global context.

Assam:

Tucked in the arms of nature at the farthest corner of India, inhabited by people of varied ethnic origin, abundant in flora and fauna and its rich bio diversity as well as resources (tea and oil), Assam has all the potential to emerge as a "developed state", but the paradoxical position of Assam is best highlighted

in the study of Deepti Gujral on "Disparities and Development: Status of Women and Social Opportunities: Indian Experience" (Gujral, 2009). The state fares worst in Gross Domestic Product per capita income, which is Rs. 6762 only better than UP, which is Rs. 6500 while its position was lot worst in poverty estimate fro the year 2001. The average poverty estimate was 26.10 fro India. The Human Development Index for Assam was 0.386 while the all India average was .472. Assam did not make much progress in her GDP growth since 1981. In 1981, it was .272 against an all India average of .302 which reveals the pace of development in Assam (Gujral, 2009).

Higher Education in Assam:

Higher Education that we practice today is the remnant of the colonial legacy of the British. It was considered an element of earning the loyalty of a section of the society in order to sustain their rule in the Indian soil. From the time since Macaulay's Minute of 1835 to this date, higher education has developed and diversified to an astonishing extent.

Higher education in early Assam was mostly religious in nature, imparted in *tols* and *maktabs* and such other religious spaces. The coming of the British led to the subsequent growth of education in Assam. Higher Education started very late in Assam. With the establishment of schools, the number of students slowly began to rise. There were two Schools for higher English education_ one in Guwahati and the other at Sibsagar. The Gauhati School was affiliated to the Calcutta University. The aspirations of the people for higher education found its reality when the Gauhati School was raised to the status of a collegiate in 1866 (Barpujari, 1998). It was affiliated to the First examination of Arts and later in law in 1870.

However, the cost of higher education on the Government treasury was too heavy and the depressing performance of the students in the examinations led to the closure of the collegiate section. This led to the reversion of "the Gauhati School to its former status." New efforts for providing higher education was made by granting scholarships of Rupees 10 and Rupees 15, which was later raised to Rs. 20. It was with establishment of Cotton College at the initiative of Sir Henry John Stedman Cotton, that higher education made a firm root in the soil of Assam. There were only 7 colleges in Assam prior to 1940 (Lyndem and De, 2006). Today, Assam has 5 Universities, 5 Governmental Engineering Colleges, 3 Government Medical colleges IT) and more than 600 colleges. There are plans for the establishment of a Women's University, a Cultural University, a campus of Tata Institute of Social Science, and many other institutes are coming up. This is a clear sign of positive sign of the growth of higher education and the development of Assam as a "Knowledge Hub". Of all the North eastern States, Assam boasts of the highest number of educational institutes like colleges, Universities (both in Public and Private).

Initially, the people were less responsive to the British call for education due to some reason. The missionaries had started with their proselytizing work in the name of education. This had created a strong resentment amongst the people. Secondly, the lack of educated people led the British to recruit personnel from Bengal, termed as "Amolahs" in Assam. The influx of this class posed as a great threat to those who aspired for government services.

Problems of Higher Education in Assam:

Higher Education today is grappling with a lot of problem. Access, Quality, Accreditation and Technology are some of it. Assam is going through a paradigm shift in the field of higher education. The number of institutions for pursuing higher education is not adequate. The few that exist is hardly enough to accommodate the population. Moreover, most of the institutions are situated in the urban areas, thus creating a big urban rural gap. The quality of the higher educational institutions in the region is hardly able to compete with its counterparts in the country. This has led to the outflow of many student. Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai have become popular hubs for higher studies to these students. Similarly, Assam has neither has it been able to attract students from the other regions to Assam except for IIT. The use of modern technology is scarce too. With the developments in the IT sector, higher education cannot

refrain away from the sweep of technological urgency. However, Assam is yet to make a mark in regard to this. Higher Educational is still traditional to its core.

Distance Education:

Distance Education emerged with the development of postal services and the development of shorthand by Isaac Pitman way back in 1830's. It was specially meant for those who were left out from the traditional schooling. It is best explained as that form of teaching and learning, wherein the teacher and learner are at a distance and the learner is supported by materials. Distance Education has been defined by many as the most cost effective form of providing higher education to a larger population. Holmberg defines it as covering "the various aspects forms of study at all levels which are not under the continuous, immediate supervision of tutors present with the students at lecture rooms or on the same premises". According to him, Distance Education implies the separation of space and time as well between the learner and the instructor. Desmond Keegan defined it as a quasi-permanent separation of the teacher and the learner throughout the learning process, as well as the quasi-permanent absence of the learner group throughout the learning process. However, Distance Learning in its earliest "avatar" was termed as Correspondence study, Postal Course, Home Study, etc. However, with the use of Technology, Distance education is no longer a correspondence course but it has been termed as Open and Distance Learning, Distance Learning, Virtual Learning, etc. Today we are more familiar to concepts like E-learning, virtual learning, Virtual University, etc. Distance Education has gained much acceptance and support from the people all over the world due to its flexible curriculum, wide reach, and cost effectiveness. It promises opportunities of higher education and life long learning to the youths and the adults alike. It supports it students through a well generated support systems, learning materials, counseling sessions. With the paradigm shift in Higher Education, the focus is more on the learners than the teachers. Distance Education is student or learner centric unlike the formal mode of study.

The importance of Distance Education is emphasized by the National Policy of Education, 1986 which states that the "future thrust shall be in the direction of distance and open learning system's" (Menon, 1998). Today India can boasts itself of the largest Distance Educational system in the globe with 13 state open universities, a national Open University (IGNOU) 140 correspondence course institutes delivering distance education through dual mode establishments. The following table gives the idea of the success of distance education in India.

Year	Conventional system	%	ODL System	%	Total enrolment in Higher Education
1975-76	24,26,109	97.42	64,210	2.58	24,90,319
1980-81	27,52,437	94.30	1,66,428	5.70	29,18,865
1985-86	36,05,029	90.40	3,82,719	9.60	39,87,288
1990-91	49,24,868	88.53	6,38,231	11.47	55,63,099
1995-96	64,25,624	88.23	857,317	11.77	73,00,941
2000-01	82,68,717	83.26	16,06,736	16.27	98,75,453
2006-07	1,05,16,639	72.00	35,78,444	28.00	1,46,06,444
2007-08	1,19,39,246	68.00	38,20,128	32.00	1,57,59,374

Sources: Various UGC Annual Reports and DEC Reports (2007-08) Sharma D.C. (2005) Management of DE, as estimated by UGC.

Distance Education in Assam:

Distance Education in Assam started with the provision for external examinations or attempt to sit in the exams as private candidates for the candidates who failed to join for the regular classes. It still prevails. This system of getting degrees is regarded as the earliest form of distance education. Correspondence courses started as an extension of the earlier external system. With the setting up of a Regional Centre in Guwahati in 1996, Distance Education made its way to the soil of Assam. Prior to this IGNOU had introduced in service personal training in Shillong, NEHU in 1986. (Patwari, Dowarah, et al, 2005).

The number of Universities providing distance education in North East region is 7; of which Assam has two Universities - Gauhati University and the Dibrugarh University. The Gauhati University provides distance education through its correspondence course institute named Institute of Distance and Open Learning (IDOL) while the Dibrugarh University has a full fledged Directorate of Distance Education. Both the Institutes provide distance education in traditional and vocational courses. The Institute of Distance learning (IDOL) was earlier known as Post Graduate Correspondence School (PGCS) under Gauhati University. It was established in May, 1998 with an aim to facilitate higher education to the students of the state. The Distance Education wing under the Directorate of Distance Education, Dibrugarh University started in 2000. The University offers programmes through its study center. There are 28 study centers providing post graduate and post graduate diploma programmes.

We also have the only State Open University in Assam, the Krishna Kanta Handique State Open University which started functioning from 2006. Besides the National Open University (IGNOU), there are two dual mode Universities (IDOL, G.U. and DDE, D.U.), one state Open University (Krishna Kanta Handique State Open University), there are many private institutes too, catering to the interests of the students.

IGNOU started its first initiative with 6 study centers and 35 programme's (IGNOU Regional Center website). The enrolment in the year 1997 was just 3071. The enrolment increased rapidly to 17,482 in 2009 (IGNOU Guwahati Regional Center website). IDOL offers 3 programmes, which include undergraduate and certificate course (three), post graduate diploma courses (eight) and post graduate course (fifteen) in 11 of its study centers (IDOL website).

Developmental phase of Distance Education in Assam:

Distance Education has come a long way from being termed a "postal"/ "correspondence" course or "home study course" to the phase when it is termed as Virtual Learning, Open and Distance Learning, Open Learning etc. The change in the terminology is signified by the application of latest technology in the teaching learning process through the distance mode. The transitional phase of Distance Education is best explained by James Taylor, an eminent scholar in the field of Distance Education, who identified five phases of Distance Education generation based on the use of delivery technologies. The chart is given below:

Generation/ Phases	Delivery Technologies
1 st Generation Correspondence model	Print
2 nd Generation Multi-Media model	Print Audio Tape Video Tape Computer based learning (e.g. ML/ CAL) Interactive video disk (disk and tape)
3 rd Generation Tele-Learning model	Audio Conferencing Video Conferencing Audio graphic Communication Broadcast TV/Radio and Audio- Conferencing
4 th Generation Flexible Learning Phase	Interactive Multi-Media (IMM) Internet based access to WWW resource Computer mediated Communication
5 th Generation The Intelligent Flexible Model	Interactive Multi-Media (IMM) Internet based access to WWW resource Computer mediated Communication, using automated response systems.

Source: (Bates, 2005).

In the Indian scenario, IGNOU has made much progress with the use of multi media technologies for its programme delivery like Gyan Vani (an FM radio broadcasting services which is devoted to curriculum related programmes) which has 27 stations and Gyan Darshan, an educational Television programme channel.

In Assam, IDOL of Gauhati University launched the first web portal or e-learning portal for the common good of its students. Named Bodhidroom, it started functioning from November 13, 2009. A major shift from Print education to computer education was made. This e learning portal enables the student to gather any information or resources for their needs and queries. Mention in this regard should

also be made of the use of mobile technology, for dissipating University news and announcements to the student subscribers.

Krishna Kanta Handique State Open University:

A milestone was reached in the field of Distance Education with the establishment of Krishna Kanta Handique State Open University in the year 2006. It is the first and the only State Open University in Assam. Enacted by the State Government, it started functioning from the 11th December with Prof. Sreenath Baruah acting as its first Vice Chancellor. Distance Education touched a new height with the establishment of KKHSOU and helped in breaking the traditional mindset regarding the idea of Distance Education. The slow pace of the growth of distance education in Assam was a result of the mass callous attitude towards it. It was considered lowly, and as an alternative option for students who were poor, or were drop outs, or who did not fare well in their examinations and therefore could not qualify for a regular course. Hence, it was considered "lowly" and not at par with the traditional form of higher education. As Prof. Panda puts it, "the beginning of single mode open universities at both the state (provincial) and central (federal) levels was met with government approval and public skepticisms" (Panda, 2005) The skeptical attitude towards distance education among the people was the question regarding the quality of education, the opportunity for employment it offered, and much more. However, the establishment of the University brushed aside all this thoughts and the table provided on the enrollment of the university will surely give a positive light on this. The growing demand for higher education for purposes which differ from person to person and needs have created a favourable atmosphere and the University has been able to earn the trust and support of the people of the State. There are students from different socio-economic backgrounds. The University has set up study centres at the conflict zones, like Bongaigaon, Karbi Anglong, Kokrajhar, etc. so as to enable the students coming from disturbed areas to avail of the opportunity of higher education.

The motto of the University "Education beyond Barriers" highly emphasizes the vision and mission of taking education to the door steps of the people so that a knowledgeable society is created, leading to the development of a strong economy. The University targets those who live in remote and troubled areas, the housewives, the school and college drop outs, the educationally backward classes, people with disabilities, prisoners, people who are engaged in some business, etc.

The University started operating from the year 2008. At present the University offers 5 educational programmes: Bachelor Degree Programme, PG Diploma Programme, Diploma Programme, Certificate Programme and a BPP Programme. It also offers Ph.D programme. For the further development towards the cause of distance education, research and teaching assistantship under the KKHSOU-DEC collaborative project have been launched whereby the scholars are required to assist in preparing and designing course materials as well as do research in the field of distance education. At present there are 6 RTA's.

The University will soon offer PhD. programme in a regular mode following the UGC guidelines in concerned subjects. The University lays emphasis on research which is very vital for the growth of Open distance.

M.Phil. (Master of Philosophy) the university plans to start M.Phil degree programme in selected professional and other social science and humanities subject.

The University will soon launch the following master degree programmes in the following areas: Master of Mass Communication (MMC), Master of Business Administration (MBA), and Master of Computer Application (MCA). It will be soon followed by other subjects in social science and humanities as well as professional disciplines. There also has been some initiatives taken for introducing 1 year BPP programme as well certificate course on Scientific Piggery farming (CSPF), Commercial Goat

Rearing (CCGR) and Commercial Layer farming (CCLF) and Commercial Duck Farming (CCDF) from the year 2010.

The University aims to give more emphasis on the vocational training of the students of the region. Training programmes are also held in different types of trades at separate places, at ITI's and polytechnics. The technical institutes are assigned by the University to conduct programmes. The training programmes are mostly in the areas of Welding, Plumbing, Pump Installation, housewiring, 2/3 wheeler maintainance and repairing, computer application, beautician, AC motor rewinding, 4 wheeler servicing, repairing of domestic appliances, RCC masonry, etc. The skill and development training has been a priority for the University in order to build a sustainable economy by imparting vocational skills. Starting with print media, now the University has taken up major initiatives to reach the students through technology. In this regard, it has to be mentioned that University is the first Open University to have launched a Community Radio Station. Though the programmes have not been broadcast on air, it has been recording both Audio and Audio Video programmes. The Audio programmes so far recorded are 61 in numbers and 21 for Audio Video programmes. The University has a Multi media Studio meant for recording programmes. The Distance Education Council has provided the financial support for producing the Audio and Audio-Visual programmes. The University also provides phone-in-counseling which allows the learners from different corners of the region to interact with the key officials and authorities. This counseling programme is meant for the learners to consult on the admission procedure, regarding course available and such other problems that learner have to face. There is scope for the phone in counseling to be taken to a higher stage when the learners can interact with their subject experts. This will be further put into use in distant future for using teleconferencing and mobile services in providing student support services.

Similarly, the university also provides for mobile services through which the learners can get university news and announcements. Till date the number of SMS subscribers are 210, it is 99 for the email subscribers with 10 others are following the RSS (Really Simple Syndication). RSS implies the web based feed format. The website of KKHSOU has 257 visitors per month.

As far as the enrolment is concerned, the University has been giving positive signs. The following table gives a detail of the rate of enrolment in the University as per the latest admission roll:

Course	Enrolment
BPP	4274 (January 2010)
BA	7408 (2009)
B.Com	344 (2009)
BMC	320 (2009)
BBA	251 (2009)

The university has also been conducting examinations for all its programmes. The table below shows the results of the last 5 BPP Programmes. The results have fluctuated though with little difference.

BPP	Pass %
1 st year	65.9%
2 nd Year	69.55%
3 rd Year	90.49%
4 th Year	86.5%
5 th Year	78.27%

The results from the Bachelor degree programmes have been encouraging as shown below in the table.

Programme	Pass %
BBA	74.55%
BMC	89.5%
B.Com	83.10%
BCA (2010)	85.33%

The table reveals the latest pass percentage of the students of KKHSOU who sat for their Degree examinations as per the latest records available from the University. The BCA 1st semester examinations were held in 2010 with a pass percentage of 85.33%.

The enrolment has shot up over the years, even though it is still in its nascent stage. However, it's no mean achievement for a new University, which had started its programmes from 2008, to have enrolled so far as 4929 students for the BPP Programme and 8783 students for its Degree Programme (Horizon, 2009). The rise in the number of study centre indicates the demand for distance education and the blowing up of the old apprehension regarding distance education courses. The University has more than 180 study centers across the State.

Conclusion:

The National Knowledge Commission in its report (2006-09) stated that India needed a massive expansion of higher educational opportunities to reach a target of 15% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) by the year 2015. This conveys the meaning that higher education should be made accessible to all the people. Distance Education can step in and fill up the vacuum in this regard left by the traditional mode of education. Distance Education can enrich the human resource of the state by providing education at the very doorsteps of the people. With a favourable wind blowing in, for the expansion of distance Education, there's hope for every deprived person to be highly educated and qualified to live a decent life.

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ঐতিহ্য মণ্ডত অসমীয়া ভাষা আৰু বৰ্তমান ই সন্থখন হোৱা প্ৰত্যাৱান

নিলিমা বৰা, অসমীয়া বিভাগ,
ছয়দুৱাৰ মহাবিদ্যালয়, গহপুৰ

সূচনাঃ

অসম বহুভাষিক ৰাজ্য। আৰ্য আৰু আৰ্য ভিন্ন, লিখিত আৰু অলিখিত বহুতো ভাষাৰ প্ৰচলন অসমত আছে। কিন্তু অসমীয়া ভাষা অবিধাটোৰ এই সকলোবোৰ ভাষাকে বুজোৱা নহয়। এই অবিধাটোৰে নিৰ্দিষ্টকৈ অসমৰ ৰাজ্যভাষাৰূপে স্বীকৃত ভাৰতীয় আৰ্যভাষা পভূত বিশেষ ভাষাটোকহে বুজোৱা হয়। ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰ উপত্যকাৰ বিস্তৃত ভূখণ্ডত এই ভাষা প্ৰচলিত।

অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ইতিহাসঃ-

অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ইতিহাস হাজাৰ বছৰ পুৰণি। খ্ৰী. একাদশ দ্বাদশ শতিকামানতে^১ স্বকীয় ৰূপ লবলৈ আৰম্ভ কৰা নব্যভাৰতীয় আৰ্যভাষা সমূহৰ লগতে অসমীয়া ভাষায়ো নিজৰ স্থিতিযোষণা কৰাৰ প্ৰস্তুতি চলাইছিল। অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ উদ্ভৱ সম্বন্ধে মতবিৰোধ আছে যদিও অধিকাংশ ভাষাবিদে মাগধী অপসংশৰ পৰাই অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ইতিহাসক ডঃ বাণীকান্ত কাকতিয়ে তিনিটা প্ৰধান ভাগত ভাগ কৰিছে^২-

ক) প্ৰাচীন অসমীয়াঃ চতুদ্দশ শতিকাৰ পৰা ষোড়শ শতিকালৈকে। এই কালছোৱাৰ ভিতৰত প্ৰাক বৈষ্ণৱ আৰু বৈষ্ণৱ যুগৰ কবিসকলৰ ৰচনাৰাজি পৰে।

খ) মধ্য অসমীয়াঃ সপ্তদশ শতিকাৰ পৰা ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ^৩ আদি ভাগলৈকে অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ বিকাশৰ দ্বিতীয় স্তৰ।

গ) আধুনিক অসমীয়াঃ ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ প্ৰাৰম্ভৰ পৰা বৰ্তমানলৈকে অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ আধুনিক যুগ।

খ্ৰী. অষ্টম শতিকাৰ পৰা দ্বাদশ শতিকাৰ ৩ ভিতৰত ৰচনা হোৱা বুলি অনুমান কৰা চ্যাপদ সমূহতে অসমীয়া ভাষাই নিজৰ ভেতি স্থাপন কৰে যদিও অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ভগ্নীস্থানীয় ভাষাকেইটায়ো চাৰ্য্যাপদক নিজৰ সমপত্তি বুলি দাবি কৰে। তেতিয়াৰে পৰা চতুৰ্দশ শতিকালৈকে অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ কোনো লিখিত সাহিত্য উদ্ধাৰ হোৱা নাই। প্ৰাকশংকৰী যুগৰ চতুৰ্দশ শতিকাৰ বুলি অনুমান কৰা কবি হেম সৰস্বতী আৰু তেওঁৰ সমসাময়িক কবিসকলৰ কাব্যৰ প্ৰকাশকৰী যুগৰ চতুৰ্দশ শতিকাৰ বুলি অনুমান কৰা কবি হেম সৰস্বতী আৰু তেওঁৰ সমসাময়িক কবিসকলৰ কাব্যৰ মাজেৰে অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ এক সৌষ্ঠৱশালী ৰূপে প্ৰকাশ লাভ কৰে। অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ এই সৌষ্ঠৱশালী ৰূপে এক উন্নত আৰু সমৃদ্ধিশালী ভাষা পমপৰাৰ স্বাক্ষৰ বহন কৰে। তাৰ পৰৱৰ্তী সময়ত শমকৰী যুগত শ্ৰী শ্ৰী শংকৰদেৱ, শ্ৰী শ্ৰী মাধৱদেৱ আৰু তেওঁলোকৰ শিষ্য-প্ৰশিষ্য সকলৰ হাতত অসমীয়া সাহিত্যই বিস্তাৰ লাভ কৰিলে। এই সময়ছোৱাত তেওঁলোকৰ লগতে অন্যান্য অবৈষ্ণৱ কবিসকলেও অসমীয়া ভাষা সাহিত্যৰ বিকাশত অৰিহণা যোগাই। আহোম ৰাজত্বৰ শেষলৈকে অৰ্থাৎ ইংৰাজৰ আগমনৰ আগলৈকে অসমীয়া ভাষাই ইয়াৰ গতিপথত কোনো হেঙাৰ নোহোৱাকৈ আগবাহি থাকিল। ইংৰাজৰ ঔপনিবেশিক শাসনকালত অসমীয়া ভাষাই এক গভীৰ সংকটৰ সন্থখন হ'ল। ১৮৩৬ চনৰ পৰা ১৮৭৩ চনলৈকে প্ৰায় দুকুৰি বছৰ কাল বঙলা ভাষাৰ প্ৰভাৱত অসমীয়া ভাষা বিদ্যালয় আৰু সকলো ধৰণৰ কাৰ্য্যালয়ৰ পৰা বহিস্কৃত হ'ল। কিন্তু খ্ৰীষ্টান ধৰ্ম প্ৰচাৰৰ বাবে অসমলৈ অহা মিছনেৰী সকল আৰু কেইজনমান দেশপ্ৰান শিকিত অসমীয়াৰ প্ৰচেষ্টাত অসমীয়া ভাষাই আকৌ হেৰোৱা মৰ্য্যদা ঘূৰাই পালে আৰু পুনৰ প্ৰতিস্থ লাভ কৰিলে।

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মিছনেৰী সকলেই অসমীয়া ভাষাক আধুনিকতাৰ সাজ পিন্ধালে। অসমত তেওঁলোকেই ছপা যন্ত্ৰৰ প্ৰচলন কৰিলে, অসমীয়া ভাষাত ব্যাকৰণ আৰু অবিধান ৰচনা কৰিলে আৰু সকলোতকৈ ডাঙৰ কথা অৰুনোদয় কাকতৰ জৰিয়তে অসমত সংবাদপত্ৰৰ ইতিহাসৰ শুভাৰম্ভ কৰিলে। তাৰ পিছতে অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ বিকাশৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত এক আন্দোলন গঢ়ি তুলিলে। মিছনেৰী সকলে আধুনিকতাৰ সাজ পিন্ধোৱা অসমীয়া ভাষাই পৰৱৰ্তী সময়ত জোনাকী, বাঁহী, আবাহন আদি বিভিন্ন যুগৰ মাজেৰে বিকশিত হৈ আহি আজিৰ ৰূপ পৰিগ্ৰহণ কৰিছেহি। বৰ্তমানৰ অসমীয়া ভাষা এই হাজাৰ বছৰীয়া ক্ৰমবিকাশৰ সুমিষ্ট ফল।

বৰ্তমান অসমীয়া ভাষাই সন্মুখীন হোৱা প্ৰত্যাহ্বানঃ-

অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ এক গৌৰবোজুল ইতিহাস আছে। কিন্তু আজি যদি আমি অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ স্থিতি বিশ্লেষণ কৰো, তেতিয়া আমাৰ অনুভৱ হ'ব যে, হাজাৰ বছৰীয়া ইতিহাস গৰকি অহা অসমীয়া ভাষাই নিজৰ গৌৰৱ আৰু মৰ্যাদা যেন ক্ৰমাৎ হেৰুৱাই পেলাইছে। ঘাইকৈ ইংৰাজী ভাষাই প্ৰসাৰ আৰু জনগোষ্ঠী সমূহৰ মাজত গা কৰি উঠা বিচ্ছিন্নতাবাদী মনোভাৱে অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ভবিষ্যতক এক শংকা আৰু সন্দেহৰ আবৰ্তলৈ খেলি দিছে। বৰ্তমান সময়ৰ প্ৰেক্ষাপটত এইটো বিষয় এক জৰুৰী আৰু প্ৰয়োজনীয় বিষয় হিচাপে চিহ্নিত হৈছে।

ইংৰাজী ভাষাৰ প্ৰসাৰঃ-

ইংৰাজৰ ঔপনিবেশিক শাসন কালতে অসমত ইংৰাজী ভাষাৰ প্ৰসাৰ ঘটিছিল। ইংৰাজে দেশ এৰি যোৱাৰ অৰ্ধশতাব্দী পাৰ হৈযোৱাৰ পিছতে ইংৰাজী ভাষাৰ প্ৰভাৱ কমি নগল। বৰঞ্চ বাহি হৈ গল। অসমত অসমীয়া ভাষাক ৰাজ্য ভাষা মৰ্যাদা দিয়া হৈছে যদিও বৰ্তমানো অসমৰ উচ্চ শিক্ষাৰ মাধ্যম ইংৰাজী। অসমৰ আদালত আৰু সকলো ধৰণৰ চৰকাৰী বেচৰকাৰী কাৰ্যালয়ত ইংৰাজী ভাষাহে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়। অকল উচ্চ শিক্ষাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতে নহয় বৰ্তমান প্ৰাথমিক শিক্ষাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো ইংৰাজী মাধ্যমৰ বিদ্যালয়ৰ প্ৰতিহে অভিভাৱক সকলৰ বেছি আগ্ৰহী হোৱা দেখা যায়। যেতিয়া শিশু আৱস্থাতে পৰা ব্যক্তিৰ মাতৃভাষাৰ লগত সমপৰ্ক কমি আহে তেতিয়া তেনে ব্যক্তি নিশ্চয়ে মাতৃভাষা ক্ষেত্ৰত দুৰ্বল হৈয়ে থাকিব।

বৰ্তমান পৃথিৱী বিশ্বায়নৰ পৃথিৱী। এই বিশ্বায়নৰ পৃথিৱীখনত ইংৰাজী ভাষাৰ অধিপত্য বিস্তাৰৰ লগে লগে অসমতো ইংৰাজী ভাষাৰ স্থিতি আৰু সৰল হৈ পৰিলে। ইংৰাজী ভাষাৰ এই সৰল স্থিতি অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ কাৰণে এক চিন্তাৰ বিষয় হৈ পৰিছে।

বিচ্ছিন্নতাবাদী মনোভাৱঃ-

অসমীয়া সংস্কৃতি যেনেকৈ অসমৰ সকলো জন কৃষ্টিৰ সংমিশ্ৰন ঠিক তেনেকৈয়ে আৰ্যমূলীয় হলেও অসমীয়া ভাষা বহু যুগৰে পৰা সহ অৱস্থান কৰি অহা বিভিন্ন অনাৰ্য মূলীয় ভাষাৰ উপাদানৰ সংমিশ্ৰনেৰে সমৃদ্ধ। অসমীয়া ভাষা অসমত বাস কৰা সকলোৰে সমূহীয়া ভাষা। অসমত বাস কৰা সকলো জনগোষ্ঠীয়ে অসমীয়া ভাষাকে সংযোগী ভাষা ৰূপে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰি আহিছে।

বৰ্তমান সময়ত অসমৰ বিভিন্ন জন গোষ্ঠীৰ মাজত থকা ঐক্যৰ মাজত বিচ্ছিন্নতাবাদে গাকৰি উঠিবলৈ ধৰিছে। প্ৰতিটো জনগোষ্ঠীয়ে অত্বনিয়ন্ত্ৰনৰ অধিকাৰ বিচাৰিবলৈ আৰম্ভ কৰিছে। তাৰ লগতে প্ৰতিটো জনগোষ্ঠীয়ে নিজৰ ভাষা আৰু সংস্কৃতিৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত স্বকীয়তা ৰক্ষাৰ প্ৰচেষ্টা অব্যাহত ৰাখিছে। এই প্ৰচেষ্টা শুভ প্ৰচেষ্টা। অসমত বাস কৰা সকলো জাতি জনগোষ্ঠী অসমীয়া জাতিৰ অংগ হোৱাৰ দৰে সকলোবোৰ জনগোষ্ঠীয় ভাষা অসমীয়া ভাষাৰে অংগস্বৰূপ। জনগোষ্ঠীয় ভাষা -সাহিত্যৰ বিকাশ মানে অসমীয়া ভাষা সাহিত্যৰে বিকাশ। কিন্তু অসমীয়া ভাষা গঠনৰ মূল উপাদান স্বৰূপ কিমান ভাষাই স্বকীয়তা লাভৰ অৰ্থে অসমীয়া ভাষাক এনেবোৰ পৰিত্যগ কৰি নিজস্ব পছত গতি কৰিছে। পূৰ্বৰ দৰে আমাৰ জনগোষ্ঠী সমূহৰ মাজত অসমীয়া ভাষা গুৰুত্ব নাই। তাৰঠাই অধিকাৰ কৰিছে ইংৰাজী ভাষাই। পূৰ্বতে অৰুণাচল আৰু নাগালেণ্ডতো সংযোগী ভাষা ৰূপে অৰুণামিজ আৰু নাগামিজৰ ব্যৱহাৰ হৈছিল।

কিন্তু অতিয়া ইয়াৰ ঠায়ো ইংৰাজী ভাষাই দখল কৰা দেখা গৈছে।

উপসংহাৰ:-

এটা ভাষাই এটা জাতিৰ পৰিচয় বহন কৰে। ভাষা সংকটাপন্ন হোৱা মানে জাতিটোৰ অস্তিত্ব সংকটাপন্ন হোৱা। আজি এই প্ৰতিযোগিতাৰ যুগত তিষ্ঠিব নোৱাৰি পৃথিৱীৰ বহু ভাষা ইতিমধ্যে বিলুপ্ত হৈ গৈছে। আজিৰ নৱপ্ৰজন্ম যদি ইয়াৰ প্ৰতি সচেতন নহয় তেতিয়া অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ভৱিষ্যত সংকটাপন্ন হোৱাৰ সম্ভাৱনা আছে। বৰ্তমান নৱপ্ৰজন্মৰ মনত অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ প্ৰতি কমি অহা শ্ৰদ্ধা আৰু তেওঁলোকৰ অশুদ্ধ ভাষাৰ ব্যৱহাৰে এই আশংকাৰ জন্ম দিছে।

অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ভৱিষ্যত সুনিশ্চিত কৰিবলৈ প্ৰথমেই অসমীয়া মানুহৰ মনত ভাষাটোৰ প্ৰতি হোৱা শ্ৰদ্ধা আৰু বিশ্বাসৰ ভাৱ পুনৰ জগাই তুলিব লাগিব। নৱপ্ৰজন্মই যাতে ভাষাটো শুদ্ধকৈ শিকে তাৰ প্ৰতিও অভিভাৱক সকল সচেতন হোৱা প্ৰয়োজন।

বিভিন্ন জাতি জনগোষ্ঠীৰ মাজত অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ প্ৰতি যি অৱজ্ঞাৰ ভাৱ সৃষ্টি হৈছে, তাক দূৰীকৰণৰো প্ৰচেষ্টা হাতত লব লাগিব। অসমীয়া ভাষা তেওঁলোকৰ ওপৰত বাহিৰৰ পৰা জাপি দিয়া ভাষা নহয়। অসমত বাস কৰা সকলো জাতি জনগোষ্ঠীৰে সমূহীয়া ভাষা অসমীয়া ভাষায়ো গতি ৰুদ্ধ নোহোৱাকৈ বিকাশৰ পথত আগবাহিব পৰা পৰিবেশ সৃষ্টি কৰিব পাৰিলেই অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ সন্মুখত থিয় দিয়া সকলো প্ৰত্যাহ্বান দূৰ হব।

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৪. হাজৰিকা, পৰীক্ষিত, চৰ্যাপদ, ২০০৭।

আলোচনী:-

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১। সত্যেন্দ্ৰনাথ শৰ্মা, অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ সমীক্ষাত্মক ইতিবৃত্ত, পৃষ্ঠা-২

২। Banikanta Kakati, Assam: its Formation and Development, Page-3

৩। ডঃ পৰীক্ষিত হাজৰিকা, চৰ্যাপদ, পৃষ্ঠা-৫৩

Epigraphs available in Certain Temples of Sonitpur District, Assam

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Introduction :

Present Sonitpur district lies between 26°30' N and 27°01' N Latitude and between 92° 16' E and 93° 43' E longitude. Located between mighty Brahmaputra river and Himalayan foothills of Arunachal Pradesh, the district is largely plain with some hills. It is bounded by Arunachal Pradesh in the north, Lakhimpur district in East, Darrang district in West and river Brahmaputra in South. The district is spread over an area of 5324 sq. Kms. As per 2001 census, the population of the district is 16,77,874 out of which 8,64,125 males and 8,13,749 female. The district is known for its historical antiquities and culture. Tezpur, the district headquarter is regarded as the cultural capital of Assam. This district of Assam is scattered with different ancient and medieval temples.

Study Area :

In the present study, a total of twenty temples(**Table-1**) have been thoroughly studied. Out of these temples, five temples existed during Salastambha period, two existed during the Baro-Bhuyan period and eleven belongs to the Ahom period and the patronage of two temples studied are still unknown. The summary of the findings are mentioned as below-

Sl.no.	Name of temples	Location	Period of construction
1	Mahabhairab temple	Tezpur	7 th -8 th century
2	Biswanath temple	Biswanath Ghat	7 th -10 th century
3	Chandi <i>deyalay</i>	Biswanath Ghat	8 th -9 th century
4	Uma <i>deyalay</i>	Biswanath Ghat	8 th -9 th century
5	Surya temple	Balijan	8 th -9 th century
6	Surya -Madhab <i>deyalay</i>	Biswanath Ghat	8 th -9 th century
7	Bhairabi temple	Tezpur	9 th -10 th century
8	Burha -Madhab <i>deyalay</i>	Pratapgarh tea estate	9 th -11 th century
9	Kalyani <i>deyalay</i>	Gamiri	10 th century
10	Nagsankar <i>deyalay</i>	Sootia	10 th -13 th century
11	Borkalika <i>than</i>	Hawajan	12 th -13 th century
12	Nandikeswar <i>Deyalay</i>	Jamugurihat	17 th century
13	Kamdewal <i>satra</i>	kamdewal	17 th century
14	Basudev <i>daul</i>	Kalabari	17 th 18 th century
15	Muktinath temple	Biswanath Ghat	18 th century
16	Purba -Sankar <i>deyalay</i>	Biswanath Ghat	18 th century
17	Bordole	Biswanath Ghat	18 th century
18	Dhandi <i>daul</i>	Dhandi village	18 th century
19	Kamaleswar Siva temple	Biswanath Ghat	18 th century
20	Basudev <i>daul</i>	Biswanath Ghat	18 th century

Table-1 (table shows the temple studied)

Discussion :

During the period of present investigation, the author is able to find inscriptions of only eight temples. In most cases, the inscription present in copper plates, on the bells, on different weapons used for animal sacrifice, metal containers, ornaments and on other items related to the temples. Although the rock inscription of Sonitpur district is studied thoroughly by different scholars, the inscription available in these temples of Sonitpur district is not received the attention they deserve.

Table-2 provide the information about the script and number of inscription present in different temples of the district.

Sl. no	Name of temples	No. of inscription present	Language
1	Borkalika than, Deurigaon, Hawajan	1	Old Assamese
2	Kalyani deyalay, Kalangpur	3	Old Assamese
3	Biswanath temple, B. Chariali	3	Tai-Ahom, old Assamese
4	Uma deyalay, B. Chariali	1	Assamese, Tai-Ahom
5	Purba-Sankar deyalay, B. Chariali	1	Sanskrit
6	Bordole, B. Chariali	1	Tai-Ahom, Assamese
7	Muktinath temple, B. Chariali	1	Tai-Ahom, Assamese
8	Nandikeswar deyalay, Jamugurihat	2	Old Assamese, Tai

table -(table shows inscription found and their respective languages).

Inscription of Borkalika Than :

It is 12 km. to the east of Gohpur town, near Tezpur Lakhimpur main road. This than (originally a daul) believed to have been established originally in Maghnoa village near Narayanpur. After the Burmese invasion it was transferred to Deurigaon, Howajan. It is famous for "Daodhani nritya". Devotees from far places still coming to enjoy the buffalo sacrifice during Durga-puja.

In the bell of this temple, an inscription is seen where it is written that this bell was donated by Borphukan in 1737 saka. The length of the metal bell is 35cm and its radius is 12.50cm. The script is written in old Assamese language and the text is written as- "srimadhat kalikayoi ghantang pradang subhakhnanang senapati brihatnnanti sutah sribarphukan-1737 sake mase 5"

Inscription of Kalyani Deyalay :

To the south of Gohpur town, on the bank of river Brahmaputra the Kalyani Deyalay is situated. The main temple was destroyed due to erosion of river Brahmaputra. Now the dayalay is transferred to Dipara Village of Gamiri, under Kalongpur area. From time immemorial, this dayalay is famous for "daodhani nritya" and "buffellow sacrifice" during the time of Durga puja. Several devotees from different places have increasing to visit this holy place. The king Kosan or Arimatta² was associated with the construction of this temple as narrated by mythology and local belief.

A silver "Bota" bearing a inscription of Ahom King Siva Singha in the year 1643 saka, a silver "Vringer used for bathing of goddess Manasa containing an inscription saying that it was donated by Thatuwalia Burhagohain to this deyalay, one silver chain donated by Ahom Queen Phuleswari Kuwari and one slaughtering weapon or "Dao" inscribed the date A.D. 1286 is still present in this deyalay. In the silver bota, the following line is written in old Assamese language and gorgaya script- "prigadhar madange bou kalyanou rajahnripah: |ema srisivasingha kha :sake grisindhusa sidhou||"

Inscription of Biswanath Temple :

Biswanath temple, one of the famous and oldest temple in the north-east India, is situated at Biswanath Ghat, 9km south from Biswanath Chariali town. In the Kalikapurana, it is mentioned that a major shrine of Hindu religion was set up at Biswanath. It also gives a detailed description of location of Biswanath, the rules and customs of worshipping gods and goddesses and the rules of recitation of hymns. From available literary sources and scattered ruins of temples, it can be said that during the 7th or 8th century A.D, Biswanath temple was existed³.

Presently, three inscriptions of Biswanath temple are found. The first Copper Plate Inscription was donated by Ahom King Gadadhar Singha to Gobinda Chakrabarty by appointing him as the priest of Biswanath temple. In 1605 A.D.⁴. The length of this copper plate is 38cm and its breadth is 15cm. It was written in Assamese on one side and in Tai-Ahom language on the other side. The Assamese side of the plate contains 9 lines and the other side, i.e., Tai-Ahom side contains 7 lines. The famous historian Golap Ch. Baruah also studied the same and written its script of Tai-Ahom language to English script as "Hi lakni Katkeo Chuchan Cupatpha hen tay dey bai hen Gobinda Chakravarty Pumna piklamtam makarkundal cay Kucai Khamanby Kun khray citu luphay camkun Kai nam tu by hoiam Barpatharat nadin cam can cira piaam nay by Bicunath nu hen khek luk cham Khan pamity cham Khenkoi champha ba tan nyen chuluntay phaen pin khun cham khan zara nay dai cham rah era bak khen koi nam nad"⁵. He translated it into English as "In lakni Katkeo the king Chupatpha makes the copper plate and offers it to Gobinda Chakravarty with a grant of two pairs of maker kundals, one gold sacred thread, four Deyalia men, viz, three musalmans, one Dom, eighty puras of land in Samuk Bhanga Barpathar and a Bil. The Brahmin, his sons and grandsons will offer worship to Biswanath and bless the king for safety.

The King prays earnestly that anybody whom Goddess places as king in future should not cancel or take by force the grant made to the Brahmin but should preserve it."⁶

The second Copper Plate Inscription of Biswanath temple was also donated by the Ahom King Gadadhar Singha in 1605 A.D.⁷ by which he appointed Narayan and Kamala as "Thakur" of the temple and also appointed 52 persons in different positions. The plate is 25cm in length and 9cm in breadth. It consists of 7 lines and it was written in Assamese language on one side of the plate. The text is written as "*sri sri Swarganarayandeve saumeswar Srigadadharsingha maharajar aagyare sribiswanathar samaste alankar na kori ga / tai die narayan kamaladui thakurar hatat sonar ku/ sa dui rupa kosa sari tamar jari sari arga dui ghanta dui dorgha dui sankha dui bamun sari sudra paik sallish natini aath sak sollasa pondhara/ boisagot bezdoloir nati bharali borkakatie koi dia nanda baloram/ narayanak sabish pura manuh dui got prabortiboloi.*"

The third Copper Plate of Biswanath temple is preserved in State Museum, Guwahati⁸. It was of 7 lines and donated by Ahom King Laxmi Singha⁹.

Inscription of Uma Deyalay :

Uma *deyalay* is situated in a small island of river Brahmaputra called Umatumoni in Biswanath Ghat area. It makes a triangle with Biswanath temple and Chandi *deyalay*. Available literature indicates that its date goes back to 8th-9th century A.D.¹⁰.

One Copper Plate Inscription of Uma *deyalay* is also found. The length of the plate is 20cm and its breadth is 13cm. The one side of the plate was written in Ahom or Tai language and the other is written in Assamese language and both side contains 10 lines.

Inscription of Purba-Sankar Deyalay :

Inscription of Purba-Sankar *deyalay* is also found. Its length is 23cm and breadth is 10cm. Both side of the plate contains 11 lines each and was written in Sanskrit language. The lists of *paiks* of this *deyalay* was inscribed in the plate. The second side of the plate contains the name of *paiks* as "Bondi Keot|Bhobola|Ramnath|Koch Gandharai|Latar Tuya|Bhomram| Pat Gandhat| Katia|Nayana| Tibidha Kakila|Raman]"

Inscription of Bordole :

Baneswar Bordole, one of the living temple of medieval period of Assam, is situated in Biswanath Ghat. Literary records proved the construction of this temple by Ahom king Rajeswar Singha in 1759 A.D.¹¹. It was also known as Yajneswar Sadasiva temple¹² during the Ahom period. This temple is now popularly known as Bordole. The inscription of Bordole is written in Tai-Ahom language. Its size is 33cm x 17cm. One side of the plate is written in Assamese language and consists 11 lines while the other side (Tai-Ahom) consists of 9 lines.

Incription of Muktinath Temple :

The inscription of Muktinath temple was donated by Ahom King Chandrakanta Singha in 1737 Saka to Gadadhar Thakur of Muktinath temple¹³. It was written in Assamese in one side and tai-Ahom language on the other side. It consists 17 lines on one side and 11 lines on the other side. Its size is 40 cm x 17cm.

Inscription of Nnadikeswar Deyalay :

Nandikeswar *deyalay* is situated in the Nandikeswar village, about 4 km. north-west to Jamugurihat. It was established by Ahom King Rudra Singha¹⁴ in 1697 A.D.

The inscription of Nandikeswar temple was donated by Ahom King Siva Singha to Raghunandan Bhattacharya of Nandikeswar temple. It was written in Assamese in one side and tai-Ahom language on the other side. It consists 17 lines on one side and 11 lines on the other side. Its size is 40 cm x 17cm.

Conclusion:

The temples served as the repository of antiques such as scrolls, icons of different types, religions sculptures, religious equipments and old records which depicts the socio-religious life of the people. The study of temple inscription is a fascinating subject and are valuable assets of historical sources. The informations thus collected would increase the database of the district which would further aid in the study of the region. Moreover, the findings of archeological objects in this district visualized the growth of civilization. The study will help in bringing out first hand information on the various aspects of temple art and architecture of the district which have not received the attention they deserve. Also, the temple inscriptions of this district are not taken proper care of. All these should be well preserved before they become completely ruined or lost. This study is an attempt to collect data and information about ancient monuments and the objects of historical importance available in these monuments of the district and to scientifically study of their historical background, religious beliefs and practices related to these temples. By means of extensive field surveys with suitable technology in this area may throw more light on a few dark chapters on temple architecture, sculpture and painting and as yet uninvestigated field of historical studies of the district.

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ISSUE OF ILLEGAL MIGRATION AND PROVOCATION IN THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF ASSAM— A PERSPECTIVE SINCE INDEPENDENCE

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Migration is the movement of people from one place in order to settle permanently in another. It is an ingenuous fact that a person coming from a foreign country with a purpose to settle in the host country is an illegal settler. No nation can allow the foreigners to settle in it. No foreigner was allowed to enter Assam without special permission by the Ahom Kings who had ruled the valley of the Brahmaputra for the six hundred years prior to the advent of the British. The British allowed a huge number of migration of the tea garden labourers in the 1870' followed by the next stream of Muslim peasant immigrants from the East-Bangle. During the colonial rule, the British planted tea industries in Assam and they imported labourers from Bihar, Orissia, Bangle and other states in order to work in the tea gardens. In the post-independence period Assam had provided shelter to a large number of immigrants. With the resources available at the time of Independence the Assam was not in a position to welcome further immigration. But the partition of the country compelled a large number of Hindu refugee to migrate into Assam and other neighbouring states. Even a considerable number of Muslim farm labourers came to Assam after partition. Again during the Bangladesh Liberation Movement a large number of people from East Pakistan fled to North Eastern states. Another stream of immigrants consisted of Nepali graziers who started setting down in the uncultivated hill slopes.

Discussion:

It is transparent that the amount of immigration is large and has evoked a serious concern in Assam. The continual migration of foreigners from neighbouring countries has threatened the political sovereignty of the state. It also poses a grave threat both to the identity of the Assamese people and to our national security. The process of social polarization on the basis of changed demographic character has already started in Assam. The survival against the demographic aggression has become an intricate problem for indigenous people today. The Muslim infiltration into Assam has been a serious concern for a strategic border state like Assam. Because Assam is sharing a common border with an Islamic country. Assam had already accommodated several lakhs of Muslim immigrants before partition, who were brought to Assam by the then state government led by Sir Mohammed Saadullah and then premier of Assam, in 1939 on the pretext of 'grow more food'.

Illegal migration from Bangladesh into Assam has been a major political, economic, social and security issue for Assamese society, so much so that it evoked the non-violent, highly visible, Assam Agitation (1979-1985) spearheaded by the All Assam Student Union. That agitation resulted in the Assam Accord of 1985 which stated that anybody settled in Assam from Bangladesh after March 25, 1971 is not a citizen but an illegal migrant. This provision of the Accord has not been implemented and has therefore failed to change the nature of Bangladeshi immigration into Assam, now termed as a 'silent invasion' with the majority of the infiltration taking place through the Dhubari District in lower Assam bordering West Bengal, the districts of Cachar and Karimganj in Assam bordering Bangladesh and the 443 k.m Bangladesh-Meghalaya border. Assam shares a highly porous 262k.m border with Bangladesh with portion of it left completely unchecked due to the difficult nature of the terrain. Though

There is no documented data on the number of illegal migration, it is assumed that out of 26 million people residing in Assam, around six million are illegal Bangladeshi migrants.

Most political parties have recklessly imported them to inflate their vote banks. The first voter list discrepancy in Assam was noticed way back in 1979 when 45,000 illegal migrant names were found in the Mangaldoi Assembly Election voter's list. From 1994 to 1997, 57 out of 126 Constituencies in Assam showed an increase of 20 percent in the number of voters whereas the All India average was 7.4 percent for the same period. This rather unnatural increase in the number of voters list in Assam is perhaps due to the addition of names to the voter list through dubious means. It is an open secret that most of the political parties of Assam depend on the votes of the illegal migrants for their hold on power. This is a political paradox at its worst as it creates strong incentives to do nothing on an issue that affects the society which is ironically represented in power structures by these political parties. Hence, there is a sense of growing helplessness and cynicism amongst the local population on the credibility of local political party discourses on tackling illegal migration from Bangladesh.

The indigenous population is usually threatened by the migrants to their region. A series of incidents, common to all complex societies but more likely when local militias have formed, raises tensions between the groups. In Assam, violent incidents between locals and immigrants were part of the warp and woof of daily life. Assamese staged processions to assert local domination that provoked violent Bengali reactions. There were assaults and counter-assaults at rallies, including the burning of imported Calcutta newspapers by Assamese student agitators. The police started shooting the protestors at Gauhati on July 1961, and killed one student. The riots continued for a month (Chattopadhyay 1990, 57-59). Newer migrants moved up to the Brahmaputra valley, always moving into waste lands and settling there. Migration increased during the Bengal famine of 1942, and continued in the 1950s (even after Partition) when the migration became international (and illegal). Many Assamese complained that the Muslim League was encouraging the migrants. Yet once the migration route was established by state authority, it developed a momentum of its own. The British tried to stem the migration tide. The Line System in 1920 prevented migrants from entering some tribal areas. But this merely redirected migrants from the hills to the plains (Weiner 1978, 95-102, 109).

This inability of the state to commit to a policy of restricting all future migration into areas claimed by sons-of-the-soil helps explain the significant duration of this type of civil war. If duration were merely a function of showing resolve, after several years relevant information about resolve should be revealed. Yet the Moros have been fighting for 30 years, the West Papuans for 35, and some of the Burmese sons-of-soil for a half-century. By contrast, if duration is a function of the inability of the government to commit to a peace agreement, a negotiated settlement can hardly be sustained. Second, states that give into the demands of indigenous groups to limit migration may worry about inviting similar demands from other groups (Walter 2006). Rulers may fear that concessions to indigenous groups might help activate other groups into sons-of-the-soil movements for economic gain at the expense of perceived exploiters. States can face a never-ending spiral of sons-of-the-soil movements. For example, India conceded local autonomy to nativist Assamese. But the victory of the Assamese launched a counter attack by the Bodo Sahitya Sabha, pressing for the creation of a union territory of the Bodo regions outside the ambit of Assam. In the late 1980s, when Upendra Nath Brahma became president of the ABSU (All Bodo Students' Union), he led the entire movement with diatribes against "Assamese Chauvinism". Rajiv Gandhi's government, however, paid little attention to this issue. In 1987 the ABSU held a big rally in Gauhati with a 92-point program, and upon returning home, one group of Bodos was violently attacked by a group of Assamese youth, with one death (Bhattacharjee 1996, chap. 4). In 1989 after a bout of terrorist violence, the ABSU formed a Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC), which was able to procure for the Bodos legal autonomy for social, economic, educational, ethnic and

cultural matters. Next, however, the aboriginal Koch-Rajbongshi population mostly within now-official Bodoland staged a protest demanding their right to self-determination. Of the 1.8 million people living in Bodo villages, 1.2 million are Koch-Rajbongshi, and now their fate was, according to one spokesman, "at the mercy of the Bodo leaders in the name of geographical contiguity of the BAC area..." Other Bodo organizations argued about getting as yet excluded villages into the zone of the BAC. State authorities, to the extent that they side with the indigenous, may be in for a never-ending set of autonomy demands. In Assam, it wasn't only Assamese, Bodos and Koch-Rajbongshis. The Nagas pressed for Nagaland and other tribal groups did similarly, with the result that Assam has been broken up into discrete cultural-political units (Weiner 1978, 120-22).

These illegal migrants manage to Procure Indian citizenship by Producing documents bought in the black market. Subsequently, the migrant families, being amongst the poorest section of Society benefit from schemes like the National Rural Employment scheme (NREGS) and the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Moreover, to create a block of votes which would enable the political parties to keep winning elections without caring for legitimate electoral rolls. The methodology adopted is to supply to these people ration Cards, on the basis of which they get enrolled on the electoral list and become the Politicians' electoral fodder. They any Cost do not like to lost these Vote-banks. Whenever these illegal migrants detected, they have made a Communal issue of their detection and raised the Communal banner. It makes their detection difficult.

Results :

The social impact of Bangladesi migrant on Assamese society is mostly to do with culture and life styles. The social fear is that the Assamese way of life will get subverted once the migrants dominate the state. A strong impact is also envisioned in the spheres of language and religion. Most of the social crimes like thief, robbery, smuggling, dowry were taught to the Assamese by the migrants that came to the land in different time and different forms. Dowry was not a custom of the Assamese but now-a-days it can be seen frequently which is a blind following of those so called fortunated migrants. Assam, being a Hindu majority state, fears it will become Muslim - dominated due to the influx of illegal migrants. This has also resulted in unnecessary tensions between Assamese Hindus and Assamese Muslims who have made Assam their home for Centuries. Government's report like the report sent by the former Assam Governor, Lt. Gen. (Retd). S.K. Sinha to Present K.R. Narayanan in 1998 also created a sense of insecurity in Assam as it categorically stated that. 'The influx of illegal migrants is turning the lower Assam districts into Muslim majority region. The Economy of the Assam is rooted in its colonial legacy. As agriculture is the Predominant means of livelihood for the bulk of working population, yet the agricultural surplus is nominal. The Economic take is limited and migration from Bangladesh translate to a reduced share of an already limited cake is limited and migration from Bangladesh translate to a reduced share of an already limited cake. Land, likewise, limited and the illegal immigrants' preference to initially settle in the riverine areas of the Brahmaputra Valley notwithstanding the migrants have slowly apportioned a slice of the economic cake. Besides, the question of language got tied up with the economic issues, which therefore got highly politicised. Economically, most of the business of Assam is Controlled by the Marwaris and Europeans. Although numerically small, the Marwaris are the most visible of the migrant Communities in Assam, dominating trade, Commerce, banking and Credit. At the same time, the Bangalee had largely Captured the petty trades, Clerical and other jobs and profession like medicine and law. Infact, position of influence and profit which the Assamese elite wished to hold were in large part in the hands of migrants. It is interesting to note that although the Marwaris and Europeans exploited the Assamese economically, the Assamese elite did not feel the pinch of their dominance much. The Assamese elite who were late in coming to Commercial and industrial fields found themselves greatly handicapped and hence they developed a sense of deprivation. Infact, the development of a

capitalist economy could provide very little benefit to the Assamese middle class. It is important to note that most Bangladeshi migrants form the manual workforce in Assam as rickshaw pullers, house construction workers, painters, gardeners, field workers, road construction workers, vegetable vendors etc. Women immigrants mostly work as maids. These migrants are willing to work very hard, at odd hours and in the most arduous activities which local Assamese are unwilling to do. Hence, there is enough space in the workforce for the poorer sections of the Bangladeshi society in Assam motivating them to risk coming illegally to the state to make a living.

The issue of illegal migration has an implication for national security. It is now established that most of the armed insurgent group in Assam like ULFA, KLO, NDFB had established camps in Bangladesh and also procured their weapons from the Cox Bazaar area near Bangladesh Myanmar border. Moreover, they had amassed a huge fortune through the real estate and restaurant business in Bangladesh and by investing and sharing in the Banks of Bangladesh. The ability to function with impunity within Bangladesh was not only due to help from within Bangladesh but also because of facilitation provided by a network of illegal migrants from within Assam. Logistical information about the areas in Bangladesh is also provided by this network in lieu of money given to them, which in turn compromises the security of Assam.

Conclusion

Thus, it is quite natural that the indigenous people's mind must be agitated against the unabated influx of immigrants who tilt the demographic balance by swaying over the sons of the soil. In fact, there is a long history of the apprehension and resentment of the indigenous Assamese people against the inflow of immigrants who started to occupy the vast low-lying tracts of the Brahmaputra valley from the beginning of the last century and, therefore, they have been raising their voice against the immigrants from time to time. In fact, migration has been identified as one of the major factors in determining the shape and destiny of a particular society. A viable solution to the problem of illegal immigration to Assam must be related to the development of a policy or approach which has general public approval and which must be based on a judicious mix of firmness, commitment and conciliation. Firmness should be displayed in enacting a non-discriminatory, comprehensive, yet stringent immigration law. Commitment should be seen in the development of effective strategies in securing the border and containing infiltration; conciliation should be adopted for purposes of determining who should be detected and deported and who might be re-settled, if not as full-fledged citizens but as permanent residents without voting rights for the first generation. A conciliatory approach could also mean an emphasis on stopping future influx. Besides, the border line should be strengthened by establishing the villages of indigenous people of Assam along with tight security. In view of unabated influx of illegal immigrants and ever increasing activities of the Islamic fundamentalists backed by the ISI of Pakistan, unless very early action is taken, it will be only a question of time when the identity of the Assamese will be lost in posterity, and Assam eventually.

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TRADE ACTIVITIES OF THE MISINGS: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

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The main focus of our attention in this paper is on the trade activities of a tribal community known as Miris or Misings during pre-colonial and colonial period. But just before delving deep into the crux of the problem an attempt has been made to introduce the tribe as such in a brief manner. Therefore, the entire paper has been divided into two sections. The first section gives a brief account of the tribe, the second attempts to glean information regarding trade activities of the tribe under four headings: 1) Cross-country trade, 2) Inter-tribal trade, 3) Trade fairs, and 4) Local trade.

SECTION-I

The Misings, known in earlier times as 'Miris' and mentioned as such in the constitution of India, are the present Mising community of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. They are a well-known tribal community of North East India. Although presently a section of the Mising community has been living along the foot-hill belt of Siang, mostly in the East Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh, adjoining the plains of Assam, a major part of the community live in eight districts of Assam viz. Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sibsagar, Jorhat, Golaghat and Sonitpur along the courses of the river Brahmaputra and its tributaries. The name 'Miri' was given them, evidently by the plains people, but they always preferred to be known by their own name 'Mising'.

Ethnically, the Misings belong to the Tibeto-Burman language speaking group of the great Mongoloid¹ and originally they belong to the same group of tribes comprised of Nishis, Adis, Apatanis, Hill-Miris, Mishmis, etc. of present day Arunachal Pradesh. **The Census of Assam** conducted for the first time in 1881, describes that,

"The Miris, (Misings) Daflas, (Nishi) and Abors (Adis) are names which have been given by the Assamese to three sections of one and the same race inhabiting the mountains between Assam valley and Tibet."²

Thus, the Misings were originally hill tribes and dwelling in the northern hills. However, their folk literature suggests that they migrated down to the plains of Assam in search of a peaceful and better economic life in the medieval period by following the river courses. Henceforth, they have been living mostly along the banks of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries for which they are called by the British writers as the riverine people.

SECTION-2

Trade had played an important role in the economic life of the Misings in the pre-colonial and colonial period. It has already been mentioned that once, the Misings had been hill dwellers in the region to the north of the valley of Assam bordering China since a remote period of history. During that stage, the traditional economic structure of the Misings was mainly based on the shifting agriculture (*Jhum*) supplemented by hunting and fishing. But "the methods the Mising had applied in cultivation was less productive and as such, their basic force of economy remained always weak".³ They had, therefore, engaged themselves in small trade through the ages between hills and plains; and also carried on commercial relations with Tibet and China. In early days, generally, the barter trade was quite familiar

*It was under such conditions that the tribe as recorded in the Ahom chronicles, used to loot and plunder the plain areas in order to compensate the deficiencies in subsistence. with them, as such, they had freely resorted to it with the responsive neighbours. In such a trade the 'price' of a commodity was determined on the basis of its supply, and demand was quoted in terms of other commodities. Beads, bowels, cattle, cowries and others articles were used as medium of exchange. It was inter-village or inter-tribal trade. However, it was supplemented by trade across the frontier. It may be recalled that the traders from the various tribal groups of erstwhile N.E.F.A. presently known as Arunachal Pradesh, have traditionally bartered their goods with their counterparts, and for this purpose they traversed great distances along different trade routes to get in exchange the necessities of life required by individuals, families or villages. As such, although politically exclusive, some of the tribes maintained extensive commercial inter-course with the plains of Assam and even provided routes to Tibet, China and Burma through their territories. Hence, some of the tribes acted as 'go-between' in respect of the tribes beyond them and their buffer role enabled a trade between Assam and the countries beyond Indian frontier like Tibet, China and Burma. It is interesting to quote the observation of E.T. Dalton, "For a long period under the Assam Government, the Miris (Misings) managed to keep themselves the entire trade between Assam the Abors (Adis) and as being thus they obtained this name 'Miri' which means mediator or 'go-between'".⁴ Thus, the above accounts testify to the facts that once, the Misings had played an important role as traders and interpreters between the Assam plainsmen and the hill tribes, such as, the Adis and trade was the main basis of the hills-plains contacts in the north east in the pre-colonial period. It was accomplished through an extensive network of market system in the plains and in the foothills to the mutual benefit of the people on both sides, as the surplus generated in an area balanced the deficit in the other. The trade structure of the Misings during pre-colonial and colonial period may be classified under from headings: 1) Cross-country trade, 2) Intertribal trade, 3) Trade fair and 4) Local trade

CROSS-COUNTRY TRADE:

Although, so far we have not been able to trace any specific record that mention about the Misings cross-country trade in particular during early period, a careful examination of the facts enumerated in a number of sources, such as, the Aryan literature, the Greek and Roman classical literature, the traveller's account of ancient and medieval period etc. reveal some facts beyond doubt that north eastern region was mainly inhabited by the great Indo-Mongoloids and the region was noted for its textiles and various other forest and mineral products. These sources maintain that many of these articles were not only exported by these tribes to neighbouring provinces but also found their way into Tibet, China and Burma by different trade routes. Their racial affinity and their original habitat proved advantageous for them to successfully carry on trade with China and vice-versa.⁵ However, it may be cited here the view of S.K. Chatterjee, "The different branches of the great Sino-Indian speaking people which had their original home land near the head-waters of the Huang-Ho and the Yang-tse-Kiang rivers to the north west China pushed south and west probably from 2000B.C."⁶ Further he says, "The North-Assam tribes of Abors(Adis) and Akas,(Hrussos) Daflas(Nishis) and Miris,(Misings) and Mishmis, appears to come later and to have established themselves in the mountains to the north of the Brahmaputra plains already in occupation of the Bodos".⁷ Therefore, it may be concluded that the Indo-Chinese people of India had already settled in India since 2000 B.C. and the North-Assam tribes including the Misings had also settled in their present habitats since the beginning of Christian era. So, it may not be impossible that being one of the early inhabitants of this region, they (Misings) might have been engaged in cross-country trade along with their cognate tribes in early period. A brief look into the picture of early trade among the north-eastern tribes found in the above mentioned sources indicate that the Misings were also their trading partners in such a cross-country trade. Moreover, some of the materials used by the Misings even to-day since time immemorial as their valuable property also indicates

the existence of cross-country trade during early period. For example, like the Adis, the Misings also have their own heirloom, the precious beads known to them as *Tadok/Doknc* and their proud possession of the priest's sword known as *Yoksa* which they price very much are said to be of many generations old and the article in question being bartered with Tibetans. Interestingly it may be mentioned that Col. E. T. Dalton and some other authorities believed it to be of either Tibetans or Chinese origin.⁸ The early people of the Brahmaputra valley and hill tracts of what is now Arunachal Pradesh were known to the Vedic Aryan as Kirata long before Christ. *The Mahabharata* (Shabha Prava)⁹ clearly suggests that the Kiratas and Chinas (Tibeto-Chinese people) were living during the time of king Bhagadatta of Pragjyotisha in Prachya region. Moreover, the classical works beginning at least with the 1st century A.D. (*The Periplous tes Erythras Thalosses*, datable to C. 1st century A.D.) refers to production and trade in malabathrum (*tezpat*) with Sesatai, identified with some hill tribes of Assam.¹⁰ Ptolemy also located Kirradia, i.e. the land of Kiradai, where 'they say the best malabathrum is produced'¹¹ The Kiradai can be easily identified with the Kiratas, a well-known hilly people of ancient India.¹² It is interesting to note that it is found in the record of Ptolemy, a tribe known as Asmeraoei which is identified with the Miris (Misings)¹³

The above accounts, therefore, testify to the fact that the locations of the Kiratas, Sesatai and Kiradai may very well be identified with some of the early habitats of the Mongoloid people in one of the hilly regions of the north-east India. Moreover, the identification of Asmeraoei with the Misings further indicates that the Cina-Kiratas among other tribes included the Misings as well.

The early literary works mentions that the Cina-Kiratas produced gems of various kinds, sandal wood, agallochum, cloths, pearls and blankets, gold, silver and lapis-lazuli.¹⁴ The *Mahabharata* mentions that heaps of sandal and black aloes-wood, skin, jewels, gold, perfumes, ten thousand slaves girls of Kirata race, animals and birds and gold acquired from mountains, among the items of the tributes presented to Yudhisthira by the Kiratas inhabiting *inter-alia* "the mountain from (behind) which the sun rises" (Suryodayagiri) and the both sides of the Lauhitya (i.e. Brahmaputra).¹⁵

Thus, all these references indicate that the north-eastern region was rich with all natural wealth including forest products and minerals. The articles of trade were silk, *tezpat*, (malabathrum of *Periplous*) gold, lac, skin, aloe, musk, ivory, cloth etc. They were expert in weaving cloths of fur and cotton. These people carried on trade particularly in silk between India and China as early as 2nd century B.C. as reported in the Chinese* and Greek accounts.**

As pointed out by S.K. Chatterjee, it was these trading tribes who carried not only material goods from China, but also at times brought ideas down to the second half of first millennium A.D.¹⁶ As the industry (silk) was mainly confined in the past to the Tibeto-Burman elements in Assam, it is not unlikely that along with their migration to Assam, they introduced some ideas from China. and this land, like China, had a world wide reputation of the manufacture of varieties of silk cloths, and had a profitable foreign trade in such articles.¹⁷

*Chinese envoy Chen Kien records that as early as 2nd century B.C. there was trade between north-eastern India and south western China through routes among southern barbarians. These were Indo-Mongoloids or the Kiratas. S. K. Chatterji, *Kirata-Jana-Kriti*, cal-1974, P,37. ***The Periplous tse Erythras Thalasses* of the 1st century A.D. surely suggests the existence of some sort of a route between the borders of Thina (or China) and India (sec.65). It refers to the production of silk and silk trade in and through Assam.

It is interesting to note that the Misings who are proficient in weaving colourful cloths, especially the *endi* or *erandi* (*attacus ricini*) cloth (made from the silk of the worm of the same name) and who till very recent times engaged themselves in trade between hills and plains had been hill dwellers in the region to the north of the valley of Assam bordering China and formed a fraction of Indo-Mongoloids. Therefore, it is likely that being one of the early inhabitants of this region, they might have been engaged themselves in trade between China and India in early period. As pointed out by D. Nath, "The production

of *endi* cloth and the popularity of bamboo flute among the present Mising tribe, might have been their heritage from China"¹⁸

Further, he writes, "Trade in Chinese silk and Chinese bamboo flutes through routes running among the hill tribes had been carried on by them between two countries"¹⁹

Therefore, from the above accounts it can be presumed that the Misings once formed a trading class between China and India through north eastern routes. As already mentioned their racial affinity and their original habitat proved advantageous for them not only to successfully carry on trade with China and vice-versa but also ideas.

INTER-TRIBAL TRADE

Normally, the tribal groups this region had a mutual economic dependence on each other for certain essential commodities. For certain essential articles, such as, salt, implements of agriculture and husbandry, beads, cloths, cooking utensils of metal etc., they had to depend on adjoining areas. This led to growth of trade. However, it may be mentioned that during that period only the barter system of trade was popular as they freely resorted to it with the responsive neighbours and once used to it, they considered this privilege as a prescriptive right.

It may be noted that after migration to the plains of Assam, for a long time under the Ahom rule particularly since 16th century the Misings managed to keep themselves the entire trade between Assam and the Adis. As a matter of fact, there was a considerable inter-tribal trade between the Misings and the Adis during pre-colonial period. Moreover, the Misings also acted for them as intermediaries. The Ahom accounts, therefore, refer to the Misings (Miris) as 'go-between' of the Adis and traders of Assam, a fact in which the Assamese term 'Miri' meaning intermediary has had its origin. The **Census report of Assam, 1881**, states that, "The accepted explanation of the name 'Miri' is that it is an Assamese word signifying a 'go-between' and that it was applied to this section of the northern hill people in their special character as traders and interpreters between the mountain and the plains."²⁰ As already mentioned, E.T. Dalton had also conjectured about the origin of the name 'Miri' from this. He pointed out that for a very long time, the Miris (Misings) monopolised the entire trade between the plains of Assam and the Adis. Therefore, it appears that inter-tribal trade had been in existence between the Misings and the Adis in pre-colonial period.

The Adis obtained from the Misings salt, eri cloths or cloths of Assamese manufacture or any articles imported by the Misings from Assam. The Misings, in return, procured from the Adis *manjeet*, (madder) beads, *daos*, cooking utensils of metals (copper pots) and slaves; some of these form the imports of Tibet.²¹

Thus, to fulfil the deficiencies of certain essential articles, the Misings and the Adis had resorted inter-tribal trade during pre-colonial period. Though the Misings had no direct contact with the Tibetans, they used a good many articles of Tibetan origin, which reached to them by 'devious tracks' through their Adi neighbours. Likewise, the Adi economy was linked up with the Misings as well.

TRADE FAIR

The origin of trade fair may be dated back to the Ahom rule. The Ahom rulers encouraged the trade fairs for mutual benefit of the hill tribes including the Misings and their own subjects on the basis of barter and exchange. The site of fairs were so selected that each of the tribal group in the territory now called Arunachal Pradesh could visit at least one of the fairs. The fairs at Udalguri (Kariaparaduar) and Doimara (Charduar) dated back to the Ahom rule and these were continued throughout the British period.²² The Sadiya fair was of course, introduced by the British in 1867.²³

It may be mentioned during that period the Misings were settled in and around Sadiya region and hence, attended at Sadiya trade fair. The Sadiya trade fair was attended by the Adis, Miris, (Misings) Mishmis, Khamtis, Singphos, and other tribes.²⁴ Moreover, the Adis, Miris, (Misings), Mishimis, Khamtis

and Singphos used to bring pepper, munjit, ginger, wax, ivory, cotton etc. which they exchanged for glass, beads, cloths, salt and money.²⁵

Thus, from the above accounts it becomes clear that the Misings had participated at Sadiya trade fair during colonial period. The scarcity of some of the articles of daily consumption had kept the Misings dependent on others and salt figured prominently in the list of such articles. However, the Sadiya trade fair catered to the needs of the Miris, (Misings), Adis, Mishmis, Singphos, Khamtis and Duaniahs. The export items of the hill people at the fairs consisted mostly of forest resources and their handlooms and handicrafts. As far as the imports were concerned, salt was in great demand among the tribes who come down to the Sadiya fair.²⁶

However, the importance of the Sadiya fair to the Misings diminished since closing years of the last century to some extent because of establishment of numerous shops by the *Marwaris* at the outskirts of Lakhimpur district. *Bazaars* were opened at Saikhowa, on the south bank of the Brahmaputra opposite to Sadiya where *Marwaris* carried on trade with the Miris (Misings) and Daflas (Nishings).²⁷

LOCAL TRADE

Besides annual fairs, there had been a long inter-course of trade between the Misings and the people living in their settled habitats in the plains of Assam during colonial period. As the brisk trade in the fairs began to decline since the closing years of the last century the local trade flourished and become more popular due to the greater facility offered by the *Marwaris*. During that time, the *Marwaris* began to open shops in the site of the administrative centre and police and military posts where the authorities could provide security to the traders. As a result, a number of weekly market and shops had been established in such places. Sadiya for example, had developed almost into a market town where permanent constructions were set up and police and military posts located. Some European and *Marwari* companies made fortune by engaging themselves in different kinds of trade at such centres. R.B. Pemberton, (1835) writes, "The protection offered by its presence (presence of police and military) has induced four native *Murwaree* (Marwaris) merchants from western extremity of India, to seek fresh channels of profitable traffic in this remote corner of our eastern possessions. They reside at Sadiya, and import broad cloths, muslins, long cloths, coloured handkerchiefs, chintzes, and various other descriptions of cloths; salt and opium, liquor, glass, and crockery-ware, tobacco, betel-nut and rice for the troops; these articles occupying the surrounding hills from whom they obtain in exchange, gold dust, gold, ivory and silver, amber, musk, *daos*, a few of Burmese cloths, and some small Chinese boxes."²⁸ Thus, since the closing years of the last century the local trade flourished and became more popular due to greater facility offered by the *Marwaris*. Moreover, the authorities could not encourage trade in any and every place, as it was its responsibility to provide security to the traders and the local people.

It may be mentioned that the Misings are also said to have frequented at such trading centres in search of their essential commodities. They had brought their agricultural products and exchanged their goods, which they didn't have. R.B. Pemberton (1835) writes, "The Meerees (Misings) bring down pepper, ginger, *munjit*, (madder) and wax which they exchanged with the Assamese inhabitants of the plains."²⁹

Moreover, besides Sadiya a number of trade centres and weekly huts had developed in and around Mising inhabited areas where considerable trade occurred. They are Saikhowa, Lakhimpur, Nizamghat, Dibrugarh, Golaghat, etc. Therefore, they started resorting to such trading centres for trading purposes. In addition to annual fairs, the local trade occurred between the Misings and the people living in their settled habitats during colonial period.

Conclusion:-

The preceding analysis indicates that the Misings, being one of the early inhabitants of this region had engaged themselves in trade between India and China along with their cognate tribes in pre-

colonial period. Originally, they had been hill dwellers in the region to the north of the valley of Assam bordering China and formed a fraction of Indo-Mongoloids. Therefore, their racial affinity and their original habitat proved advantageous for them to successfully carry on trade with China and vice-versa. But after their migration to the plains of Assam during medieval period particularly since 16th century for a long time under the Ahom rule the Misings managed to keep themselves the entire trade between Assam and the Adis. Hence, there was a considerable inter-tribal trade between the Misings and the Adis during pre-colonial period. Of course, during colonial period the Misings had frequented at trade fairs organised by the British particularly at Sadiya trade fair, which was introduced by them in 1867. Moreover, besides annual trade fairs, there had been a long intercourse of trade between the Misings and the people living in their settled habitats in the plains of Assam during colonial period.

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Formation and Development of Vaishnavism of Assam in Historical Perspective: An observation with special reference to Indian Bhakti Movement.

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Abstract of the paper

The Neo- Vaishnavite Movement of Assam is an expanded form of Indian Bhakti movement. Though it was spread in Assam as a popular form of worship at the time of fifteen-sixteen century, which was leaded and guided by Shankardeva, the great saint of Assam, with his followers and most obidient deciple Madhabdeva. The term 'Vaishnavism' has entered in this geographical area, which old name was Pragjyotishpur, at the time when Aryan people have used to live in this part of the Country. Shankardeva was not the first person to introduce vaishnavite trends in Assam, but he was the leader of the Neo-Vaisnavite Movement of Assam. The evidence were found in different inscription that the worship of Vishnu was pre-vailed in Assam in pre-Shankardeva era.

Indian Bhakti Movement was started in Tamilnad and the Alvars were the leaders of this movement. They have composed the Bhagavata Purana. Later, this movement is spread towards Maharastra and North India. In North India it gives stress on Bhagavata Purana and Gita. Finally, this movement entered in Assam at the time of Sankaradeva in fifteen-sixteen century, as Neo-Vaisnavite Movement. In Assam, Sankardeva have changed some manner of worship on the basis of Bhagavata Purana, Gita And Padma Purana.

In this paper we have discussed the Indian Bhakti Movement and also the trend of historical evidence of vaisnavism of Assam, which we can find in different inscriptions.

ঐতিহাসিক পৰিপ্রেক্ষাত অসমৰ বৈষ্ণৱবাদৰ উদ্ভৱ আৰু বিকাশঃ ভাৰতীয় ভক্তি
আন্দোলনৰ প্ৰসঙ্গৰে এক অৱলোকন।

গৌতম কাকতি
প্ৰবক্তা, মাধৱদেব কলেজ
নাৰায়নপুৰ

১.০ অৱতৰণিকা :

শঙ্কৰদেৱে অসমত প্ৰৱৰ্তন কৰা একশৰণ ভাগৱতী বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্ম ভাৰতীয় ভক্তি ধৰ্মৰে এক বিৱৰ্তিত ৰূপ। অসমত শঙ্কৰদেৱে এই নৱ বৈষ্ণৱ আন্দোলনক নেতৃত্ব প্ৰদান কৰিছিল। এই ক্ষেত্ৰত তেওঁৰ একান্ত সহযোগী আছিল মাধৱদেৱ। কিন্তু শঙ্কৰদেৱৰ আগতেয়ে অসমত বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্ম একেবাৰে নাছিল তেনে নহয়। আৰ্যসকলৰ আগমণ ঘটাব সময়ৰে পৰাই এই দেশত বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্মৰ উন্মেষ ঘটিছিল। ইয়াৰ প্ৰমাণ অসমত আৱিষ্কৃত বিভিন্ন শিলালেখ আৰু কলিসমূহৰ মাজত পোৱা যায়।

অন্যহাতে, পঞ্চম শতিকাৰ পৰা নৱম শতিকাৰ ভিতৰত দক্ষিণ ভাৰতৰ আলৱাৰসকলৰ প্ৰচেষ্টাত জন্ম আৰু বিকাশ লাভ কৰা ভাৰতীয় ভক্তি আন্দোলনে খৃষ্টীয় পঞ্চদশ-ষোড়শ শতিকাত শঙ্কৰদেৱৰ নেতৃত্বত অসমত বিস্তাৰ লাভ কৰে। এই আলোচনাত শঙ্কৰ-পূৰ্ব অসমৰ বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্ম সম্বন্ধীয় তথ্য আৰু ভাৰতীয় ভক্তি আন্দোলন সম্পৰ্কে এক অৱলোকনৰ প্ৰয়াস কৰা হৈছে।

২.০ ভাৰতীয় ভক্তিবাদী আন্দোলনৰ স্বৰূপ :

হিন্দুসকলে হিন্দু ধৰ্মক এক 'ঐশ্বৰিক ধৰ্ম' বুলি অভিহিত কৰিলেও ই দীৰ্ঘসময় ব্যাপি হোৱা পৰিবৰ্তনৰ এক মতবাদ। এই পৰিবৰ্তনৰ স্বাক্ষৰ বহন কৰিছে বেদৰ পৰৱৰ্তী ব্ৰাহ্মণ, আৰণ্যক আৰু উপনিষদসমূহে। পুৰাণসমূহৰ মাজত বিভিন্ন দেৱতাৰ গুণ-গৰিমা প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত হ'ল। বেদত বিষ্ণুতকৈ ইন্দ্ৰৰ গুৰুত্ব বেছি আছিল। এই ধাৰা খৃ. পূ. তৃতীয় শতিকালৈকে ব্ৰাহ্মণ্যবাদী ধাৰাত প্ৰচলিত আছিল। হিন্দুসকলৰ দুখন পৱিত্ৰ গ্ৰন্থ হ'ল 'ৰামায়ণ' আৰু 'মহাভাৰত'। ৰামায়ণ আদিতে পাঁচ কাণ্ডে আছিল। খৃ. পূ. তৃতীয় শতিকামানত কোনোবা কবিয়ে প্ৰথম আৰু সপ্তম কাণ্ড সংযোজন কৰে। তেতিয়ালৈকে কিন্তু বিষ্ণুৱে ইন্দ্ৰতকৈ বেছি গুৰুত্ব পোৱা নাছিল। কাৰণ ৰামায়ণত ৰামক এজন মানৱ হিচাপেহে অংগ কৰা হৈছিল, বিষ্ণুৰ অৱতাৰ ৰূপে নহয়। বাল্মীকিয়ে নাৰদৰ মুখেৰে সং. চৰিত্ৰবান, প্ৰজাৰঞ্জক, পিতৃভক্ত ইত্যাদি ৰথতো গুণেৰে গুণাগুণিত এজন ব্যক্তিৰ বিষয়ে শুনিবলৈ মন কৰাতহে নাৰদে দশৰথৰ পুত্ৰ ৰামৰ কথা কৈছে। ৰামক বিষ্ণুৰ অংশৰূপে অংকণ কৰাটো খৃ. দ্বিতীয় শতিকামানৰ ঘটনাকে।

ভাৰতীয় বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্মৰ ইতিহাসত এক গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ স্থান লাভ কৰিছে মহাভাৰতে। বাসুদেৱ-কৃষ্ণ, নাৰায়ণ আৰু বিষ্ণুৰ উপাসনাৰ ধাৰাৰ ইয়াত উল্লেখ আছে। মহাভাৰতৰ পূৰ্বৰূপ 'ভাৰত গ্ৰন্থ'ত কেৱল চৌবিশ হাজাৰ শ্লোকহে আছিল। মহাভাৰতৰ উপাখ্যানসমূহত উল্লেখ থকা 'ভাৰগ'সকলে 'শান্তি' আৰু 'অনুশাসন পৰ্ব'ত গণ-নীতিমূলক শিক্ষা একত্ৰীকৰণ কৰিছিল। সুকটকৰ মতে ভৃগুসকল আছিল 'ধৰ্ম' আৰু 'নীতি' সম্পৰ্কীয় বিশেষজ্ঞ। 'মনুস্মৃতি' নামক 'ভৃগুস্মৃতি' নামেৰেও জনা যায়, এই ভৃগুসকলেই সৃষ্টি কৰা। এই ভৃগুসকলেই বৈষ্ণৱবাদী প্ৰৱৰ্তাৰ বিকাশ কৰিছিল।

বাসুদেৱ কৃষ্ণ সম্বন্ধীয় তথ্যৰ এক প্ৰধান উৎস হৰিবংশ। আনহাতে পুৰাণসমূহৰ ভিতৰত কৃষ্ণ সম্বন্ধীয় কথাৰ সৰ্বপ্ৰাচীন উল্লেখ আছে ব্ৰহ্মপুৰাণত।^{১০} বৈষ্ণৱসকলৰ আদৰ্শ গ্ৰন্থ ভাগৱত পুৰাণো বিষ্ণু পুৰাণৰ কৃষ্ণ সম্বন্ধীয় তথ্যৰ আধাৰত প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত। কৃষ্ণ সম্বন্ধীয় তথ্যৰ অন্য এক উৎস হ'ল মৎস্য পুৰাণ।^{১১}

উপপুৰাণৰ ভিতৰত নাৰায়ণ-বিষ্ণু সম্বন্ধীয় তথ্য 'বিষ্ণু ধৰ্মোত্তৰ পুৰাণ'ত আৰু সূত্ৰ গ্ৰন্থসমূহৰ ভিতৰত 'বৈখানস গৃহ্য সূত্ৰ' আৰু 'বৈখানস ধৰ্ম সূত্ৰ'ত পোৱা যায়।^{১২}

৩.০ বৈষ্ণৱ পন্থ :

নাৰায়ণ-বিষ্ণুৰ উপাসনাক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰিয়েই বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্মই ক্ৰমে বিকাশ লাভ কৰিবলৈ ধৰিলে। 'মহাভাৰত' আৰু পুৰাণসমূহত বৰ্ণিত নাৰায়ণ আৰু বিষ্ণু একেজন দেৱতাই।^{১৩} 'শতপথ ব্ৰাহ্মণ'তেই প্ৰথম 'নাৰায়ণ'ৰ উল্লেখ আছে।^{১৪} কেনী আদি গৱেষকে নাৰায়ণক দ্ৰাবিড় মূলীয় দেৱতা বুলি কব খোজে। দ্ৰাবিড় ভাষাৰ 'নীৰ' (পানী)ৰ লগত '-অয়' (কোনো ঠাইত শয়ন কৰা) আৰু পুৰুষবাচক '-অন' সংযুক্ত হৈ নাৰায়ণ শব্দটো সাধিত হৈছে।^{১৫} 'মনুস্মৃতি' আৰু 'পুৰাণ'ৰ^{১৬} লগত 'মহাভাৰত'ৰ^{১৭} সামান্য পাৰ্থক্য থাকিলেও এই কথা কোৱা হৈছে যে নাৰা > নাৰ (অৰ্থ- পানী) হৈছে পৰম সত্ত্বাৰ জিৰণি স্থান। সেয়ে তেওঁ নাৰায়ণ। মহাভাৰতৰ 'উদ্যোগ পৰ্ব' আৰু 'নাৰায়ণীয়' অংশত 'নাৰায়ণ'ৰ উল্লেখ আছে।^{১৮} ভাণ্ডাৰকাৰে আকৌ মনুৰ ব্যাখ্যাৰ 'মেধাতিথি' ভাষ্যৰ আলমত কৈছে যে মনুষ্য বা মনুষ্যসমূহ (নৰাঃ বা নৰাঃ)ৰ জিৰণিৰ স্থান অথবা 'লক্ষ্য' (-অয়ন) হৈছে 'নাৰায়ণ'।^{১৯} 'ব্ৰহ্মাণ্ড পুৰাণ'ত আকৌ 'ব্ৰহ্মা' আৰু 'নাৰায়ণ' অভিন্ন বুলি কৈ তেওঁ সমস্ত মনুষ্যৰ (নাৰানাম) পৰম 'নিদ্ৰাৰ স্থান' বুলি কৈছে।^{২০}

নাৰায়ণ সম্বন্ধীয় বিভিন্ন মত চালি জাৰি চাই নাৰায়ণ শব্দটো মনুষ্যৰ সকলো সঞ্চয়, প্ৰতিষ্ঠা আৰু শেষ 'আশ্ৰয় স্থল'ৰ লগত জড়িত বুলি জানিব পাৰি।^{২১}

নাৰায়ণেই যে সমস্ত বিশ্ব ব্ৰহ্মাণ্ড, জগত প্ৰপঞ্চৰ একমাত্ৰ গৰাকী, এই জগত যে তেওঁৰেই 'বিশ্বৰূপ' বা 'বিৰাটৰূপ' সেই ধাৰণাটো গীতাই জনপ্ৰিয় কৰে।^{২২} ভগৱদ গীতাই 'বাসুদেৱ-কৃষ্ণ'ত 'নাৰায়ণ'ৰ গুণ আৰোপ কৰি 'নাৰায়ণ' আৰু 'বাসুদেৱ-কৃষ্ণ'ত প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰিলে।

৪.০ ভক্তি মতবাদৰ বিকাশ :

গ্ৰীয়াৰ্ছন^{২৩}, ভাণ্ডাৰকাৰ^{২৪}, মেক্‌নিকল^{২৫}, ৰায়চৌধুৰী^{২৬}, দে^{২৭}, দাসগুপ্তা^{২৮} প্ৰভৃতিয়ে মত প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে যে প্ৰথম স্তৰৰ বৈদিক সাহিত্যত উপাসনাৰ ভাৱত ভক্তি শব্দৰ প্ৰয়োগ নাছিল। তথাপিও ঋকবেদৰ বিশেষকৈ বৰুণৰ আৰাধনা অংশত যি পৰিপূৰ্ণ অনুভূতি প্ৰৱণ উপাসনা আৰু নিভৃত প্ৰেম তাতেই ভক্তিৰ প্ৰাণ নিহিত আছিল। হপকিন্সে কৈছে- ঋকবেদৰ স্তোত্ৰসমূহে বৰুণৰ দৰে মহান দেৱতাসকলৰ লগত মানুহৰ প্ৰকৃত প্ৰেম-ভক্তিৰ সম্বন্ধকেই আঙুলিয়ায়।^{২৯}

বৈদিক প্ৰথাৰ পিছৰ কাললৈ বৰ্ণবাদৰ লগতে বিভিন্ন আনুষ্ঠানিকতাৰ প্ৰৱেশ ঘটিল। এই অৱস্থাত উপাস্য আৰু উপাসকৰ মাজৰ সম্পৰ্ক ৰীতিমত আৰু যান্ত্ৰিক হৈ পৰিল। এনে ব্যৱস্থাৰ ফলত মানসিক প্ৰেম আৰু শ্ৰদ্ধাও অন্তৰ্হিত হ'ল। সাধাৰণ লোকৰ বাবে প্ৰেম-ভক্তিয়ুক্ত উপাসনাৰ এক বিকল্প পন্থাৰ প্ৰয়োজন হ'ল। ফলস্বৰূপে ভক্তিবাদ এক অৱশ্যসন্ধানী প্ৰক্ৰিয়া স্বৰূপে ভগৱান আৰু ভক্তৰ এক ধাৰাৰূপে বিকাশৰ পথত আগবাঢ়িল। এই ধাৰা প্ৰধানভাৱে বিষ্ণুৰ লগত সম্পৰ্কিত হ'ল। পৰমজনৰ প্ৰতি বিশুদ্ধ আসক্তিয়ে ইয়াত প্ৰধান স্থান পালে। কাৰণ ভগৱদ গীতাৰ ভক্তিয়েই হৈছে পৰমজনৰ প্ৰতি নিহিত থকা বিশুদ্ধ আসক্তি।^{৩০}

গীতা বিশ্বমানৱৰ বাবে এক উপাদেয় মহৎ গ্ৰন্থ বাবেই গীতা সম্পৰ্কে দেশী-বিদেশী অনুসন্ধিৎসু বিহ্বৎ সমাজৰ

স্বাক্ষৰিত নাই। কোনোবাজনে যদি গীতাৰ ভক্তিক 'দাস্যভক্তি' বুলি কৈছে, কোনোবাজনে আকৌ- "intellectual conviction and faith" বুলি অভিহিত কৰিছে। ক্ৰমে গীতাত নিহিত থকা ভক্তি তথ্যই বিস্তৃত ৰূপত এক নতুন ধৰ্ম আৰু জীৱনৰ পথ হৈ পৰিল।

মৌৰ্য যুগতেই প্রতিষ্ঠা লাভ কৰা ব্ৰাহ্মণ্যবাদ আৰু বৰ্ণবাদে সমাজৰ নিম্নস্তৰৰ লোকসকলৰ প্ৰতি পোষণ কৰা নতুন সমাজত দুটা স্পষ্ট বিভাজনৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল। এটা ভাগত আছিল ব্ৰাহ্মণ আৰু ক্ষত্ৰিয়সকল, তাৰ নেতৃত্ব দিছিল ব্ৰাহ্মণসকলে। আনটো ভাগত সাধাৰণ জনগণ আছিল আৰু তাৰ নেতৃত্ব লৈছিল শূদ্ৰসকলে। মনুস্মৃতিত উল্লেখ আছে যে ধৰ্ম সম্বন্ধীয় যজ্ঞবোৰ নকৰা, বেদ নপঢ়া, ব্ৰাহ্মণৰ সংস্পৰ্শ ত্যাগৰ বাবে পৌণ্ডিক, ওদ্র, দ্ৰাবিড়, কাশ্মীৰ, যৱন, পৰ, পান্দ, পল্লৱ, চীন, কিৰাত, দৰদ আৰু খশসকলৰ সামাজিক স্থান অৱনমিত হৈ শূদ্ৰত্ব প্ৰাপ্ত হৈছিল। অন্যহাতে ভগৱত পুৰাণে কৈছে যে কিৰাত, হন, আন্ধ্ৰ, পুলিন্দ, পুলকস, আভীৰ, কঙ্ক, যৱন, খশ আৰু এনেধৰণৰ অন্য জনগোষ্ঠীসমূহেও বিষ্ণুৰ উপাসনা কৰি পৰিশুদ্ধ হৈছে। এই তথ্যও পোৱা গৈছে যে খৃ. ৪০২ত সানকানীক বংশৰ কৰ্ণাটীয় ৰজা বিষ্ণুদাসৰ পুত্ৰই উদয়গিৰিত এটি বিষ্ণু মূৰ্তি স্থাপন কৰিছিল। মনুস্মৃতি ৰচনাৰ সময়তো বহুতো শূদ্ৰ আছিল।

ক্ৰমে ক্ৰমে সমাজৰ নিম্ন স্তৰৰ মানুহৰ মাজতো বিষ্ণু কেন্দ্ৰিক ধাৰণাৰ বিকাশ হ'বলৈ ধৰিলে। লাহে লাহে কৃষ্ণ কেন্দ্ৰীয় ধাৰণাৰো বিকাশ হ'ল। অষ্টাদশ মহাপুৰাণৰ ভিতৰত ব্ৰহ্ম, ব্ৰহ্মবৈৱৰ্ত, গৰুড়, স্কন্দ, কূৰ্ম, পদ্ম, বায়ু, বিষ্ণু আৰু ভগৱত পুৰাণ কৃষ্ণৰ জীৱন বৃত্তান্তকলৈ ৰচিত হয়। ইয়াৰ ভিতৰত ভাগৱত পুৰাণতেই কৃষ্ণৰ জীৱনৰ পূৰ্ণ চিত্ৰ আৰু প্ৰেক্ষাপ্ৰকাশ পাইছে।

ভাগৱত পুৰাণৰ ৰচনাকাল সম্বন্ধে পণ্ডিতসকলৰ মাজত মতভেদ আছে। তথাপি এই পুৰাণখনে ইয়াৰ প্ৰাচীনতা এটাক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰি পৰিবৰ্তন আৰু পৰিবৰ্তন লাভ কৰে আৰু শেষত তামিল সাধকসকলৰ প্ৰচেষ্টাত পূৰ্ণ ৰূপ লাভ কৰে। ভাগৱত পুৰাণৰ ৰচনাৰ স্থান যে তামিল দেশ বা দ্ৰাবিড় দেশ, সেই কথা এক প্ৰকাৰ নিশ্চিত। এই গ্ৰন্থই ক্ৰমে স্বীকৃতি লাভ কৰি পঞ্চদশ-ষোড়শ শতিকাৰ ভিতৰত সমগ্ৰ ভাৰতত বিস্তৃত হৈ পৰে আৰু ভক্তিবাদী আন্দোলনৰ প্ৰধান প্ৰেক্ষাপে স্বীকৃতি লাভ কৰে। পৰৱৰ্তী সময়ত ভাৰতীয় ভক্তি আন্দোলনৰ প্ৰামাণ্য গ্ৰন্থৰূপে ভাগৱত পুৰাণৰ গুৰুত্ব বৰ্তন স্বীকৃত।

দক্ষিণ ভাৰতত সূত্ৰপাত হোৱা ভক্তি আন্দোলনক সঁচল কৰে আলৰাৰসকলে। এওঁলোকৰ ৰচনাৰাজিৰ মাজতেই ভক্তি আন্দোলনৰ মূল বৈশিষ্ট্যসমূহ নিৰূপিত হ'ল আৰু কৃষ্ণৰ জীৱন কেন্দ্ৰিক বিভিন্ন অৱতাৰৰ লীলা বৰ্ণিত হ'ল। ক্ৰমে ক্ৰমে ইয়াৰ প্ৰভাৱ দ্ৰাবিড়ীয় অন্য ভাষাত পৰাৰ উপৰি ই কৰ্ণাটকলৈয়ো বিস্তাৰিত হ'ল। সময়ত মহাৰাষ্ট্ৰ, গুজৰাট আৰু উত্তৰ ভাৰতত বিস্তাৰ হোৱা এই ভক্তি আন্দোলন সম্পৰ্কে পদ্ম পুৰাণত কোৱা হৈছে-

উৎপন্ন দ্ৰাবিড়ে সাহংবৃদ্ধিং কৰ্ণাটকে গতা।

স্থিতি কিঞ্চিন্ মহাৰাষ্ট্ৰে গুৰ্জৰে জীৰ্ণতাং গতা।

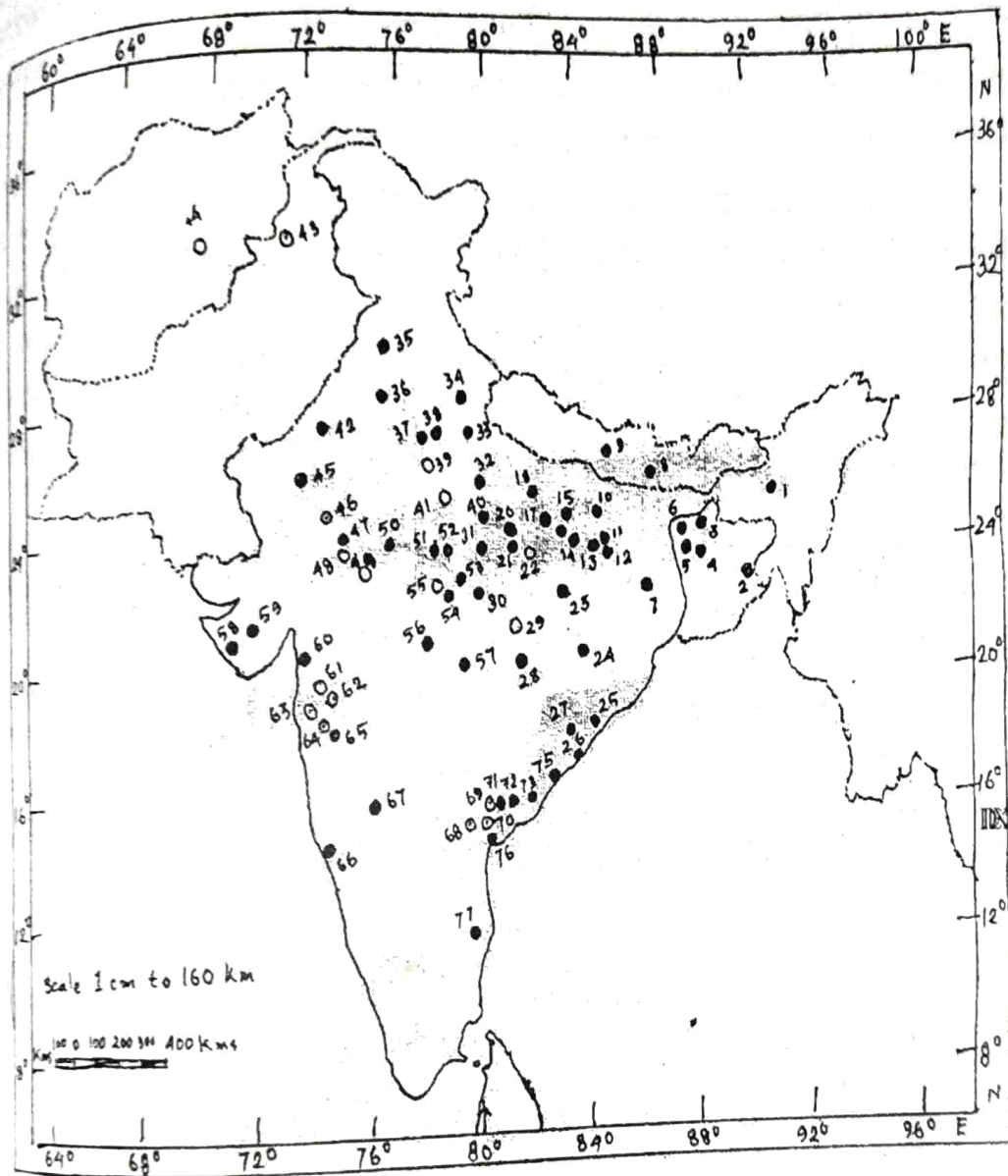
মহাৰাষ্ট্ৰ, গুজৰাট, উত্তৰ ভাৰত, পঞ্জাব, বংগ, অসম আদিত ভক্তিবাদী ধাৰাক নেতৃত্ব প্ৰদান কৰিলে ৰামানন্দ, হৰদেৱ, নামদেৱ, তুকাৰাম, মীৰাবাদি, কবীৰ, নানক, চৈতন্য, শঙ্কৰদেৱ, মাধৱদেৱ আদিয়ে। চৈতন্যই সগুণ উপাসনাৰে গৌড়ীয় ভক্তি ধাৰাক কিছু ভিন্ন ৰূপত গঢ় দিলে। প্ৰধানকৈ বঙ্গ আৰু উৰিষ্যাৰ বিস্তৃতি লাভ কৰা এই ধাৰাত বাখা-পুৰাণ যুগল উপাসনাই প্ৰাধান্য পালে। অসমত শঙ্কৰদেৱে এই ভক্তি আন্দোলনক নেতৃত্ব দিলে। মাধৱদেৱে শঙ্কৰদেৱৰ

যোগ্য উত্তৰাধিকাৰী ৰূপে ইয়াৰ বিস্তাৰ ঘটালে। ভক্তি আন্দোলনে ভাৰতৰ সৰ্বত্ৰ বিকশিত হৈ সৰ্বসাধাৰণক ভক্তি ধৰ্মৰ প্ৰতি আকৰ্ষিত কৰে। এই আন্দোলনৰ ফলত ভাৰতীয় সমাজৰ বহুদেৱতা আৰু বৰ্ণবাদৰ বিপৰীতে এক বিষ্ণু বা কৃষ্ণৰ প্ৰতি ভক্তি আৰু সামাজিক সাম্য প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত হ'ল।

খৃ. পূ. ২০০ৰ পৰা খৃ. ৫০০ৰ ভিতৰত বৈষ্ণৱবাদৰ প্ৰসাৰ হোৱা স্থানসমূহৰ মানচিত্ৰ ১৯৭৪ খৃ.ত ছপা হোৱা Survey of Indiaৰ মানচিত্ৰক ভিত্তি কৰি সংযোগ কৰা হৈছে। (সিপিঠিত)

মানচিত্ৰত উল্লিখিত স্থানসমূহ

১) কামাখ্যা	২৭) পোদাগড়	৫৩) এৰণ
২) গুণাইঘৰ	২৮) ৰায়পুৰ	৫৪) উদয়গিৰি
৩) বৈগ্ৰাম	২৯) বুঢ়িখৰ	৫৫) বেসনগৰ
৪) ধনৈদহা	৩০) সিন্দুৰ্শি	৫৬) বেতুল
৫) পাহাৰপুৰ	৩১) খোহ	৫৭) নাগপুৰ
৬) ডিনাজপুৰ	৩২) ভিতৰ গাঁও	৫৮) জনাগড়
৭) শুশুনিয়া পাহাৰ	৩৩) অহিচ্ছত্ৰ	৫৯) ৰলভি
৮) বৰহাছত্ৰ	৩৪) নাইনিতাল	৬০) চুৰাট
৯) কাঠমাণ্ডু	৩৫) সুমেট	৬১) ননাঘাট
১০) বসড়	৩৬) তুসাম	৬২) নাচিক
১১) বৰাবৰ পাহাৰ	৩৭) ভণকাৰি	৬৩) কল্যাণ
১২) বিষ্ণুপাদ	৩৮) গোৰইখনা	৬৪) ভজ
১৩) দেৱাংগড়	৩৯) মথুৰা	৬৫) পুনা
১৪) মুণ্ডেশ্বৰী পাহাৰ	৪০) চিত্ৰকূট	৬৬) গোৱা
১৫) ভিতৰি	৪১) পৰায়্যা	৬৭) বাদামী
১৬) বেনাৰস	৪২) ৰঙ্গমহল	৬৮) নাগাৰ্জুনীকোণ্ড
১৭) জৌনপুৰ	৪৩) পেছোৱাৰ	৬৯) চেড়াগিৰি
১৮) অযোধ্যা	৪৪) আইখুম (আফগানিস্থান)	৭০) অমৰাৱতী
১৯) ঝুসি	৪৫) মন্দোৰ	৭১) চিল্লা
২০) ভিটা	৪৬) নন্দসা	৭২) গোদাৱৰী জিলা
২১) গধৰ	৪৭) মাধ্যমিক	৭৩) জয়্যাপুৰ
২২) ভাৰহুত	৪৮) ঘোসুন্দি	৭৪) কৃষ্ণা জিলা
২৩) মানপুৰ	৪৯) মন্দাসোৰ	৭৫) ৱিণুকোণ্ড
২৪) সম্বলপুৰ	৫০) গঙ্গাধৰ	৭৬) গণ্টুৰ
২৫) গঞ্জাম	৫১) তুমাইন	৭৭) কাঞ্চী
২৬) শ্ৰীককুলম্	৫২) দেওগড়	



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- ⊙ Places with Vaisnavite Associations in the Saka-Kusana Period.
- Places with Vaisnavite Associations in the Gupta Period.

Source : Survey of India Mapping 1974

৫.০ অসমৰ ভক্তিবাদী আন্দোলন :

তেতিয়াৰ পৰা অসমত আৰ্য বসতি আৰু হিন্দু ধৰ্মৰ প্ৰচাৰ হৈছে স্পষ্টকৈ জনা নাযায়। কিন্তু খৃষ্টীয় আৰম্ভৰ শতিকাবোৰত যে এই দেশত (কামৰূপ) আৰ্য গোষ্ঠীৰ প্ৰজাৰ বসবাস ঘটিছিল, বুজিব পাৰি।^{১০} অসমত যেতিয়াৰে পৰা বৈদিক ধৰ্ম আৰু সংস্কৃতিৰ প্ৰৱেশ ঘটিল তেতিয়াৰে পৰাই বিষ্ণু আৰু বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্মৰো প্ৰৱেশ ঘটিল। ৰামায়ণ, মহাভাৰত আদিত উল্লিখিত নৰক, ভগদত্ত, ভীষ্মক, বাণ, বক্ৰবাহন আদিৰ উল্লেখ ভাৰতীয় আৰ্য পৰম্পৰাৰ লগত অসমৰ সম্পৰ্কৰ কথাকেই ইঙ্গিত দিয়ে। পালকাপ্য, সামগায়ন, ভাৰ্গৱ আদি মুনি, তপস্বী আৰু যোগীসকলৰ এই দেশতেই বাসস্থান আছিল। গুৱাহাটীৰ সন্ধ্যাচল পৰ্বতত বশিষ্ঠৰ আশ্ৰম, বেলতলাৰ কোনো এঠাইত গালৰ মুনিৰ আশ্ৰম আৰু হাজোত গোকৰ্ণ নামে এজন মুনিৰ আশ্ৰম থকাৰ কথা গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱায়ো কৈছে।^{১১} এখেতে পাণ্ডুৰ ওচৰত থকা মন্দিৰটি পাণ্ডুৱে স্থাপনা কৰাৰ সপক্ষে মত প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে।^{১২} মহাভাৰতত উল্লিখিত নৰক, ভগদত্ত আৰু পালকাপ্য, সামগায়ন, বশিষ্ঠ আদি তপস্বীসকলৰ ঘটনাবিলাক যদি সত্য হয়, তেতিয়াহলে তেতিয়াৰে পৰাই অসমত আৰ্য-সভ্যতা, বৈদিক সংস্কৃতি প্ৰসাৰিত হোৱাটোও সত্য।^{১৩}

‘হস্তাযুৰ্বেদ’ গ্ৰন্থৰ প্ৰণেতা মহৰ্ষি পালকাপ্যৰ আশ্ৰম লৌহিত্যৰ ওচৰত আছিল আৰু এই গ্ৰন্থত বিষ্ণু পূজাৰ উল্লেখ পোৱা যায়।^{১৪} ‘কালিকা পুৰাণে’ অসম-কামৰূপৰ আৰ্যীকৰণ যশস্যা দিব খোজে নৰক নামে মিথিলাৰ এজন কোঁৱৰক।^{১৫}

অসমৰ বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্মৰ বিকাশৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত প্ৰথম প্ৰমাণ স্বৰূপে ষষ্ঠ শতিকাৰ মহাভূতিবৰ্মাৰ বৰগঙ্গা শিলালিপিলৈকে আঙুলিওৱা হয়। মহেশ্বৰ নেওগ^{১৬}, মনোৰঞ্জন শাস্ত্ৰীয়ে^{১৭} শিলালিপিখনত মহাভূতিবৰ্মাই নিজকে ‘পৰম ভাগৱত’ বুলি উল্লেখ কৰাৰ কথা কৈছে। কিন্তু ডিম্বেশ্বৰ শৰ্মাৰ দ্বাৰা সম্পাদিত কামৰূপ শাসনাৱলীত ‘পৰম ভাগৱত’ৰ ঠাইত ‘পৰম ভট্টাৰক’ শব্দহে আছে।^{১৮} এই ফলিখনৰ সম্পৰ্কে এটি চমু প্ৰৱন্ধ এন. কে. ভট্টশালিয়ে ১৯৪১ খৃ.ত লিখে।^{১৯} এই প্ৰৱন্ধত তেওঁ ‘পৰম ভট্টাৰকৰ ঠাইত ‘পৰম ভাগৱত’ বুলি উল্লেখ কৰিছিল। পৰৱৰ্তী সময়ত তেওঁ ইয়াক বিস্তাৰিত ৰূপত প্ৰকাশ কৰে।^{২০} কামৰূপ শাসনাৱলীৰ পাঠৰ লগত ভট্টশালিৰ পাঠৰ কেইবাটাও অমিল আছে। যি কি নহওক ভট্টশালিৰ পাঠতেই পোন প্ৰথম বাৰৰ বাবে অসমৰ শিলালিপিত ‘পৰম ভাগৱত’ শব্দৰ উল্লেখ পোৱা গ’ল।

বানভট্টৰ ‘হৰ্ষ-চৰিত’ত কামৰূপৰ বৰ্মণ বংশ আৰু পাল বংশৰ ৰজাসমূহক বৰাহকপী বিষ্ণুৰ বংশধৰ বুলি উল্লেখ কৰিছে। এই বংশৰ আদি পুৰুষ নৰক।^{২১}

এতিয়ালৈকে আৱিষ্কৃত হোৱা অসমৰ শিলালেখ আৰু তামৰ ফলিসমূহলৈ লক্ষ্য কৰিলে বিষ্ণু সম্পৰ্কীয় তথ্যৰ উল্লেখ পোৱা যায়। সপ্তম শতিকাৰ ভাস্কৰ বৰ্মাৰ ডুবি তাম্ৰশাসনত লক্ষ্মী-বিষ্ণু (৭,৬০), চক্ৰপাণি নাৰায়ণ (২৬), দশৰথ, ৰামৰ উল্লেখ (৩৮); ভগৱান শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ (৫৩), বলোৰাম-অচ্যুত (৬৮), কৃষ্ণ-বলৰাম (৬৯)ৰ উল্লেখ আছে।^{২২} ফলিখনৰ ২৬ সংখ্যক শাৰীত চক্ৰপাণি নাৰায়ণক ‘মানৱৰ পাপ নাশ কৰোতা’ বুলি উল্লেখ কৰা হৈছে। ৬১০ খৃ.ৰ ভাস্কৰ বৰ্মাৰ নিধানপুৰ তাম্ৰফলিত প্ৰথমতে ‘শশিশেখৰ পিনাকী মহাদেৱ’ক সেৱা জনালেও নাৰায়ণ আৰু লক্ষ্মীৰ উল্লেখো (১৯) পোৱা যায়।

হৰ্জৰ বৰ্মাৰ হাইয়ুংথল তামৰফলি (খৃ. ৮২৫)ত ‘কুন্তীৰ গৰ্ভত যুধিষ্ঠিৰৰ জন্ম’ আৰু ‘সুভদ্ৰাৰ গৰ্ভত অভিমন্যুৰ জন্ম’(১১)ৰ উল্লেখ আছে। বনমাল বৰ্মাৰ তেজপুৰ তাম্ৰশাসন (খৃ. ৮৫৪)ত লক্ষ্মী (১১), যুধিষ্ঠিৰ, ভীম (১২),

গোপীসকলৰ দ্বাৰা আনন্দিতমন বিষ্ণু' (১৩) আৰু চক্ৰপাণি (১৪)ৰ উল্লেখ আছে। দেওপানীৰ হৰিহৰ মূৰ্তিত খোদিত প্ৰথমখন লিপিত নাৰায়ণৰ নাম কীৰ্তন কৰাৰ উল্লেখ আছে আৰু দ্বিতীয় ফলিত 'হৰিৰ শতনাম জপ' কৰাৰ কথা আছে।

গুপ্তযুগৰ বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্মৰ এক বিশিষ্টতা হ'ল অৱতাৰবাদ। এই বিশিষ্টতাৰ বাবেই প্ৰাচীন অসমৰ তাম্ৰ ফলিবোৰত 'বৰাহ, নৰসিংহ, জমদগ্ন্য বাম, দাশৰথি বামৰ উল্লেখ আছে। নন্দ-যশোদা, বসুদেৱ-দৈৱকী, গোপ-গোপীয়ে সৈতে কৃষ্ণ লীলাৰ আভাসো আছে।'^{১২}

বলবৰ্মাৰ নগাঁৱৰ তাম্ৰ ফলি (খৃ. ৮৮৩)ত বৰাহকপী বিষ্ণু (৩)ৰ উল্লেখ আছে। এওঁৰ হাওৰাখাট তাম্ৰ ফলিত 'বৰাহকপাৰী ভগৱান বিষ্ণু' (৩)ৰ উল্লেখ আছে। নগাঁও আৰু হাওৰাখাট- দুয়োখন ফলিৰে বিষয় একে।

বত্ৰপালদেৱৰ প্ৰথম তাম্ৰ ফলি (বৰগাঁও লিপি, খৃ. ১০২৫)ত 'বৰাহকপী হৰি' (৩) আৰু দ্বিতীয় তাম্ৰ ফলি (গুৱালকুচি লিপি, খৃ. ১০২৬)ত লক্ষ্মী (১৮)ৰ উল্লেখ আছে।

ইন্দ্ৰপালৰ প্ৰথম তাম্ৰ ফলি (গুৱাহাটী লিপি, খৃ. ১০৩৮)ত 'শূকৰকপাৰী হৰি' (৪), লক্ষ্মী (৬), বাম আৰু কৃষ্ণ (৯), নাৰায়ণ-লক্ষ্মী (১৪) আৰু দ্বিতীয় তাম্ৰ ফলি (গুৱালকুচি লিপি, খৃ. ১০৫১)ত দেৱকী, বসুদেৱ, যশোদা আৰু 'গোপহিতৈষী শ্ৰীহৰি' (২৪)ৰ উল্লেখ আছে।

গোপালদেৱৰ গাছতল লিপিত 'মহাবৰাহ অৱতাৰ পুৰাণ পুৰুষ ভগৱান বিষ্ণু' (৪)ৰ উল্লেখ থাকিলে চাই সেই সময়ত বিষ্ণু শ্ৰেষ্ঠ পুৰুষৰূপে পৰিগণিত হোৱাৰ তথ্য পাব পাৰি। লিপিখনত 'পুৰুষোত্তম বিষ্ণু' (৫,২২) শব্দও পোৱা গৈছে।

ধৰ্মপালদেৱৰ প্ৰথম তাম্ৰ লিপি (খোনামুখ লিপি, খৃ. ১০৯২)ত বিষ্ণু-লক্ষ্মী (২০), শুভঙ্কৰ পাটক লিপিত 'বৰাহদেহাৰী ভগৱান বিষ্ণু' আৰু পুষ্পভদ্ৰা লিপি (খৃ. ১১১০)ত 'বৰাহদেহাৰী গৰুড়ধ্বজ ভগৱান বিষ্ণু'ৰ পৰা নৰকৰ জন্ম হোৱাৰ কথা আছে।

ত্ৰয়োদশ শতিকাৰ সমুদ্ৰপালৰ আমবাৰী শিলালিপিত সগুণক্ৰিয়া (যাগ-যজ্ঞাদি) অনুষ্ঠান কৰাৰ কথা আছে। শিৱসাগৰ পুখুৰী পাৰৰ পৰা সংগৃহীত শিলৰ মূৰ্তি আৰু স্থাপত্যৰ নিদৰ্শন চাই ক্ৰাশীনাথ দীক্ষিত্তে দশম-একাদশ শতিকামানত নিৰ্মিত শিৱসাগৰ অঞ্চলত এটি বিষ্ণু মন্দিৰ আছিল বুলি অনুমান কৰিছে।^{১৩} মহেশ্বৰ নেওগে কৈছে- 'শুক্ৰেশ্বৰ বিষ্ণু-জনাৰ্দন মূৰ্তি অষ্টম কি নৱম শতিকাৰ হব পাৰে বুলি ভবা হৈছে। কামাখ্যা মন্দিৰৰ চাৰিফালৰ দেৱালৰ পশ্চিম দুৱাৰৰ শিলত কটা বেণু-গোপালৰ মূৰ্তি সপ্তম-অষ্টম শতিকাৰ বুলি অনুমান কৰা হৈছে।'^{১৪}

নগাঁৱৰ ডবকা অঞ্চলৰ পৰা যি নটি বিষ্ণু-মূৰ্তি উদ্ধাৰ কৰা হৈছে, সেইবিলাকো এই সময়ৰে বুলি অনুমান কৰা হৈছে।^{১৫} আনহাতে বৰপেটাৰ ন-সত্ৰৰ ভাঁজ-ঘৰত শক্তিয়ে সৈতে ক'লা শিলত কটা বিষ্ণুৰ চতুৰ্ভুজ মূৰ্তিটিৰ সময় কোনোপ্ৰকাৰে দশম শতিকাৰ পিছৰ নহয় বুলি মহেশ্বৰ নেওগে মত প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে।^{১৬}

ষষ্ঠ শতিকাৰ পৰা দ্বাদশ শতিকাৰ ভিতৰত খোদিত এই শিলালেখ, তাম্ৰশাসনসমূহৰ জৰিয়তে এটা কথা প্ৰতীয়মান হয় যে সেই সময়ত বামায়াণ, মহাভাৰতকে আদি কৰি বৈদিক আৰ্যসকলৰ ধৰ্মগ্ৰন্থ, শাস্ত্ৰসমূহৰ অধ্যয়ন অসমত হৈছিল। সাধাৰণ প্ৰজাৰ মাজত বিস্তৃত ৰূপত ইয়াৰ প্ৰসাৰ নহলেও ৰাজন্যবৰ্গ আৰু বিদ্বৎ সমাজত ইয়াৰ আলোচনা বিলোচনা চলিছিল।

বৰ্তমানৰ উত্তৰ লক্ষীমপুৰৰ ঢকুৱাখনা মহকুমাত সুৰিৰিপু বংশৰ শ্ৰী সত্যনাৰায়ণে ১৩২৪ শকত আৰু তেওঁৰ

৫.০ অসমৰ ভক্তিবাদী আন্দোলন :

কেতিয়াৰ পৰা অসমত আৰ্য বসতি আৰু হিন্দু ধৰ্মৰ প্ৰচাৰ হৈছে স্পষ্টকৈ জনা নাযায়। কিন্তু খৃষ্টীয় আৰম্ভৰ শতিকাবোৰত যে এই দেশত (কামৰূপ) আৰ্য গোষ্ঠীৰ প্ৰজাৰ বসবাস ঘটিছিল, বুজিব পাৰি।^{১০} অসমত যেতিয়াৰে পৰা বৈদিক ধৰ্ম আৰু সংস্কৃতিৰ প্ৰৱেশ ঘটিল তেতিয়াৰে পৰাই বিষ্ণু আৰু বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্মৰো প্ৰৱেশ ঘটিল। ৰামায়ণ, মহাভাৰত আদিত উল্লিখিত নৰক, ভগদত্ত, ভীষ্মক, বাণ, বক্ৰবাহন আদিৰ উল্লেখ ভাৰতীয় আৰ্য পৰম্পৰাৰ লগত অসমৰ সম্পৰ্কৰ কথাকেই ইঙ্গিত দিয়ে। পালকাপ্য, সামগায়ন, ভাৰ্গৱ আদি মুনি, তপস্বী আৰু যোগীসকলৰ এই দেশতেই বাসস্থান আছিল। গুৱাহাটীৰ সন্ধ্যাচল পৰ্বতত বশিষ্ঠৰ আশ্ৰম, বেলতলাৰ কোনো এঠাইত গালৰ মুনিৰ আশ্ৰম আৰু হাজোত গোকৰ্ণ নামে এজন মুনিৰ আশ্ৰম থকাৰ কথা গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱায়ো কৈছে।^{১১} এখেতে পাণ্ডুৰ ওচৰত থকা মন্দিৰটি পাণ্ডুৱে স্থাপনা কৰাৰ সপক্ষে মত প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে।^{১২} মহাভাৰতত উল্লিখিত নৰক, ভগদত্ত আৰু পালকাপ্য, সামগায়ন, বশিষ্ঠ আদি তপস্বীসকলৰ ঘটনাবিলাক যদি সত্য হয়, তেতিয়াহলে তেতিয়াৰে পৰাই অসমত আৰ্য-সভ্যতা, বৈদিক সংস্কৃতি প্ৰসাৰিত হোৱাটোও সত্য।^{১৩}

‘হস্তায়ুৰ্বেদ’ গ্ৰন্থৰ প্ৰণেতা মহৰ্ষি পালকাপ্যৰ আশ্ৰম লৌহিত্যৰ ওচৰত আছিল আৰু এই গ্ৰন্থত বিষ্ণু পূজাৰ উল্লেখ পোৱা যায়।^{১৪} ‘কালিকা পুৰাণে’ অসম-কামৰূপৰ আৰ্যীকৰণ যশস্যা দিব খোজে নৰক নামে মিথিলাৰ এজন কোঁৱৰক।^{১৫}

অসমৰ বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্মৰ বিকাশৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত প্ৰথম প্ৰমাণ স্বৰূপে ষষ্ঠ শতিকাৰ মহাভূতিবৰ্মাৰ বৰগঙ্গা শিলালিপিলৈকে আঙুলিওৱা হয়। মহেশ্বৰ নেওগ^{১৬}, মনোৰঞ্জন শাস্ত্ৰীয়ে^{১৭} শিলালিপিখনত মহাভূতিবৰ্মাই নিজকে ‘পৰম ভাগৱত’ বুলি উল্লেখ কৰাৰ কথা কৈছে। কিন্তু ডিম্বেশ্বৰ শৰ্মাৰ দ্বাৰা সম্পাদিত কামৰূপ শাসনালীত ‘পৰম ভাগৱত’ৰ ঠাইত ‘পৰম ভট্টাৰক’ শব্দহে আছে।^{১৮} এই ফলিখনৰ সম্পৰ্কে এটি চমু প্ৰৱন্ধ এন. কে. ভট্টশালিয়ে ১৯৪১ খৃ.ত লিখে।^{১৯} এই প্ৰৱন্ধত তেওঁ ‘পৰম ভট্টাৰকৰ ঠাইত ‘পৰম ভাগৱত’ বুলি উল্লেখ কৰিছিল। পৰৱৰ্তী সময়ত তেওঁ ইয়াক বিস্তাৰিত ৰূপত প্ৰকাশ কৰে।^{২০} কামৰূপ শাসনালীৰ পাঠৰ লগত ভট্টশালিৰ পাঠৰ কেইবাটাও অমিল আছে। যি কি নহওক ভট্টশালিৰ পাঠতেই পোন প্ৰথম বাৰৰ বাবে অসমৰ শিলালিপিত ‘পৰম ভাগৱত’ শব্দৰ উল্লেখ পোৱা গ’ল।

বানভট্টৰ ‘হৰ্ষ-চৰিত’ত কামৰূপৰ বৰ্মণ বংশ আৰু পাল বংশৰ ৰজাসমূহক বৰাহকপী বিষ্ণুৰ বংশধৰ বুলি উল্লেখ কৰিছে। এই বংশৰ আদি পুৰুষ নৰক।^{২১}

এতিয়ালৈকে আৱিষ্কৃত হোৱা অসমৰ শিলালেখ আৰু তামৰ ফলিসমূহলৈ লক্ষ্য কৰিলে বিষ্ণু সম্পৰ্কীয় তথাৰ উল্লেখ পোৱা যায়। সপ্তম শতিকাৰ ভাস্কৰ বৰ্মাৰ ডুবি তাম্ৰশাসনত লক্ষ্মী-বিষ্ণু (৭,৬০), চক্ৰপাণি নাৰায়ণ (২৬), দশৰথ, ৰামৰ উল্লেখ (৩৮); ভগৱান শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ (৫৩), বলোৰাম-অচ্যুত (৬৮), কৃষ্ণ-বলৰাম (৬৯)ৰ উল্লেখ আছে।^{২২} ফলিখনৰ ২৬ সংখ্যক শাৰীত চক্ৰপাণি নাৰায়ণক ‘মানৱৰ পাপ নাশ কৰোতা’ বুলি উল্লেখ কৰা হৈছে। ৬১০ খৃ.ৰ ভাস্কৰ বৰ্মাৰ নিধানপুৰ তাম্ৰফলিত প্ৰথমতে ‘শশিশেখৰ পিনাকী মহাদেৱ’ক সেৱা জনালেও নাৰায়ণ আৰু লক্ষ্মীৰ উল্লেখো (১৯) পোৱা যায়।

হৰ্জৰ বৰ্মাৰ হাইয়ুংথল তামৰফলি (খৃ. ৮২৫)ত ‘কুস্তীৰ গৰ্ভত যুধিষ্ঠিৰৰ জন্ম’ আৰু ‘সুভদ্ৰাৰ গৰ্ভত অভিমনুৰ জন্ম’ (১১)ৰ উল্লেখ আছে। বনমাল বৰ্মাৰ তেজপুৰ তাম্ৰশাসন (খৃ. ৮৫৪)ত লক্ষ্মী (১১), যুধিষ্ঠিৰ, ভীম (১২),

গোপীসকলৰ দ্বাৰা আনন্দিতমন বিষ্ণু' (১৩) আৰু চক্ৰপাণি (১৪)ৰ উল্লেখ আছে। দেওপানীৰ হৰিহৰ মূৰ্তিত খোদিত প্ৰথমখন লিপিত নাৰায়ণৰ নাম কীৰ্তন কৰাৰ উল্লেখ আছে আৰু দ্বিতীয় ফলিত 'হৰিৰ শতনাম জপ' কৰাৰ কথা আছে।

শুণ্ডযুগৰ বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্মৰ এক বিশিষ্টতা হ'ল অৱতাৰবাদ। এই বিশিষ্টতাৰ বাবেই প্ৰাচীন অসমৰ তামৰ ফলিবোৰত 'বৰাহ, নৰসিংহ, জমদগ্ন্য বাম, দাশৰথি বামৰ উল্লেখ আছে। নন্দ-যশোদা, বসুদেৱ-দৈৱকী, গোপ-গোপীয়ে সৈতে কৃষ্ণ নীলাৰ আভাসো আছে।"^{১২}

বলবৰ্মাৰ নগাঁৱৰ তামৰ ফলি (খৃ. ৮৮৩)ত বৰাহকপী বিষ্ণু (৩)ৰ উল্লেখ আছে। এওঁৰ হাওৰাঘাট তামৰ ফলিত 'বৰাহকপধাৰী ভগৱান বিষ্ণু' (৩)ৰ উল্লেখ আছে। নগাঁও আৰু হাওৰাঘাট- দুয়োখন ফলিৰে বিষয় একে।

বত্ৰপালদেৱৰ প্ৰথম তামৰ ফলি (বৰগাঁও লিপি, খৃ. ১০২৫)ত 'বৰাহকপী হৰি' (৩) আৰু দ্বিতীয় তামৰ ফলি (গুৱালকুচি লিপি, খৃ. ১০২৬)ত লক্ষ্মী (১৮)ৰ উল্লেখ আছে।

ইন্দ্ৰপালৰ প্ৰথম তামৰ ফলি (গুৱাহাটী লিপি, খৃ. ১০৩৮)ত 'শূকৰকপধাৰী হৰি' (৪), লক্ষ্মী (৬), বাম আৰু কৃষ্ণ (৯), নাৰায়ণ-লক্ষ্মী (১৪) আৰু দ্বিতীয় তামৰ ফলি (গুৱাকুচি লিপি, খৃ. ১০৫১)ত দেৱকী, বসুদেৱ, যশোদা আৰু 'গোপহিতৈষী শ্ৰীহৰি' (২৪)ৰ উল্লেখ আছে।

গোপালদেৱৰ গাছতল লিপিত 'মহাবৰাহ অৱতাৰ পুৰাণ পুৰুষ ভগৱান বিষ্ণু' (৪)ৰ উল্লেখ থকালৈ চাই সেই সময়ত বিষ্ণু শ্ৰেষ্ঠ পুৰুষৰূপে পৰিগণিত হোৱাৰ তথ্য পাব পাৰি। লিপিখনত 'পুৰুষোত্তম বিষ্ণু' (৫,২২) শব্দও পোৱা গৈছে।

ধৰ্মপালদেৱৰ প্ৰথম তামৰ লিপি (খোনামুখ লিপি, খৃ. ১০৯২)ত বিষ্ণু-লক্ষ্মী (২০), শুভক্ষৰ পাটক লিপিত 'বৰাহদেহধাৰী ভগৱান বিষ্ণু' আৰু 'পুষ্পভদ্ৰা লিপি (খৃ. ১১১০)ত 'বৰাহদেহধাৰী গৰুড়ধবজ ভগৱান বিষ্ণু'ৰ পৰা নৰকৰ জন্ম হোৱাৰ কথা আছে।

ত্ৰয়োদশ শতিকাৰ সমুদ্ৰপালৰ আমবাৰী শিলালিপিত সশুণক্ৰিয়া (যাগ-যজ্ঞাদি) অনুষ্ঠান কৰাৰ কথা আছে। শিৱসাগৰ পুখুৰী পাৰৰ পৰা সংগৃহীত শিলৰ মূৰ্তি আৰু স্থাপত্যৰ নিদৰ্শন চাই কাশীনাথ দীক্ষিতে দশম-একাদশ শতিকামানত নিৰ্মিত শিৱসাগৰ অঞ্চলত এটি বিষ্ণু মন্দিৰ আছিল বুলি অনুমান কৰিছে।"^{১৩} মহেশ্বৰ নেওগে কৈছে- 'শুভেশ্বৰৰ বিষ্ণু-জনাৰ্দন মূৰ্তি অষ্টম কি নৱম শতিকাৰ হব পাৰে বুলি ভবা হৈছে। কামাখ্যা মন্দিৰৰ চাৰিফালৰ দেৱালৰ পশ্চিম দুৱাৰৰ শিলত কটা বেণু-গোপালৰ মূৰ্তি সপ্তম-অষ্টম শতিকাৰ বুলি অনুমান কৰা হৈছে।"^{১৪}

নগাঁৱৰ ডবকা অঞ্চলৰ পৰা যি নাটি বিষ্ণু-মূৰ্তি উদ্ধাৰ কৰা হৈছে, সেইবিলাকো এই সময়ৰে বুলি অনুমান কৰা হৈছে।"^{১৫} আনহাতে বৰপেটাৰ ন-সত্ৰৰ ভাঁজ-ঘৰত শক্তিয়ে সৈতে ক'লা শিলত কটা বিষ্ণুৰ চতুৰ্ভুজ মূৰ্তিটিৰ সময় কোনোপ্ৰকাৰে দশম শতিকাৰ পিছৰ নহয় বুলি মহেশ্বৰ নেওগে মত প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে।"^{১৬}

ষষ্ঠ শতিকাৰ পৰা দ্বাদশ শতিকাৰ ভিতৰত খোদিত এই শিলালেখ, তাম্ৰশাসনসমূহৰ জৰিয়তে এটা কথা প্ৰতীয়মান হয় যে সেই সময়ত ৰামায়ণ, মহাভাৰতকে আদি কৰি বৈদিক আৰ্যসকলৰ ধৰ্মগ্ৰন্থ, শাস্ত্ৰসমূহৰ অধ্যয়ন অসমত হৈছিল। সাধাৰণ প্ৰজাৰ মাজত বিস্তৃত ৰূপত ইয়াৰ প্ৰসাৰ নহলেও ৰাজন্যবৰ্গ আৰু বিদ্বৎ সমাজত ইয়াৰ আলোচনা বিলোচনা চলিছিল।

বৰ্তমানৰ উত্তৰ লক্ষীমপুৰৰ ঢকুৱাখনা মহকুমাত সুৰিষু বংশৰ শ্ৰী সত্যনাৰায়ণে ১৩২৪ শকত আৰু তেওঁৰ

পুত্ৰ লক্ষ্মীনাৰায়ণে ১৩২৪ শকত লিখোৱা দুখন ফলি পোৱা গৈছে। প্ৰথমখনত গনেশ, বাসুদেৱ, ঈশান আৰু অম্বাক বন্দনা কৰা হৈছে। দ্বিতীয়খনত বাসুদেৱ পূজাৰ উল্লেখ পোৱা গৈছে। মহেশ্বৰ নেওগে কৈছে যে পুৰণি কামৰূপ-অসমত বাসুদেৱ ধৰ্মৰ সত্ত্বৰতঃ এয়ে বীজ।" বৰ্তমানেও ঢকুৱাখনাৰ বাসুদেৱ থানত দৈনিক বাসুদেৱ পূজা কৰা হয়। আগতে এইখন নৰোৱা গোৰ্গাইৰ থান আছিল।

শঙ্কৰদেৱে বৰদোৱাত কীৰ্তন ঘৰৰ ভেঁটি বান্ধোতে চাৰিখন হাতৰ বিষ্ণুমূৰ্তি পোৱা কথাই" শঙ্কৰদেৱৰ পূৰ্বতেও অসমত বৈষ্ণৱ পৰম্পৰাৰ প্ৰচলনৰ কথাকেই সোৱঁৰায়। আনহাতে সেই সময়ৰ ব্ৰাহ্মণসকলৰ নামবোৰো মন কৰিবলগীয়া। তামৰ ফলিসমূহত আমি কেশৱ, জনাৰ্দন, মাধৱ, মধুসূদন আদি ব্ৰাহ্মণৰ নাম পাওঁ।

একাদশ শতিকাৰ পৰা পঞ্চদশ শতিকাৰ ভিতৰত প্ৰাচীন অসমত ৰচিত হোৱা বিভিন্ন গ্ৰন্থ যেনে- স্বল্পমৎস্য পুৰাণ, কালিকা পুৰাণ, অঞ্জিৰস সংহিতা, যোগিনী তন্ত্ৰ আদি গ্ৰন্থসমূহতো বিষ্ণুৰ কথাই স্থান পাইছে।

৬.০ উপসংহাৰ :

তামিল প্ৰদেশত জন্ম হোৱা ভক্তি আন্দোলন সমগ্ৰ ভাৰততে বিস্তৃতি লাভ কৰাৰ আগতেই অসমত যে বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্মৰ প্ৰচলন আছিল সেই কথা ওপৰৰ আলোচনাৰ পৰা গম পোৱা যায়। হেম সৰস্বতীৰ প্ৰহ্লাদ চৰিত পুথিয়ে লোক সমাজত সঞ্চারনিকৈ বিষ্ণু কথাৰ প্ৰচলনৰ প্ৰমাণ দাঙি ধৰে। মাধৱ কন্দলিৰ ৰামায়ণৰ সময়ৰ পৰা ই বিশেষভাৱে জনমুখী হয় বুলি কব পাৰি।

প্ৰাক্ শঙ্কৰী যুগৰ কবিসকলৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত আমি বিষ্ণু মাহাত্ম্যযুক্ত কথা আৰু ঘটনাৰ প্ৰমাণ পাওঁ। পাঁচজন প্ৰাক্ শঙ্কৰী কবিৰ ভিতৰত মাধৱ কন্দলি নিঃসন্দেহে শ্ৰেষ্ঠ। শঙ্কৰদেৱে উত্তৰাকাণ্ড ৰামায়ণত মাধৱ কন্দলিক 'অপ্ৰমাদী' কবি আখ্যা দিছে। তেতিয়াৰে পৰা নিৰৱচ্ছিন্নভাৱে অসমৰ বৈষ্ণৱ সাহিত্য আৰু ইয়াৰ ইতিহাস পোৱা যায়। শঙ্কৰদেৱ আৰু তেওঁৰ একান্ত অনুৰক্ত মাধৱদেৱে অসমৰ বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্মক সৰ্বভাৰতীয় স্তৰত গঢ় দিলে। বিভিন্ন গ্ৰন্থৰ পৰা সাৰ সংগ্ৰহ কৰি প্ৰধানভাৱে ভাগৱতৰ আদৰ্শত যি ধৰ্মীয় আদৰ্শৰ গঢ় দিলে, সি এফালে মূল ভাৰতীয় আদৰ্শকো ৰক্ষা কৰিলে আৰু থলুৱা উপাদানকো সংযোজিত কৰিলে।

সংস্কৃতিৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত থলুৱা উপাদানৰ সংযোজনাৰে বিভিন্ন জাতি-জনজাতি, জনগোষ্ঠীৰে পৰিৱেশিত হৈ থকা অসমখনক একশৰণ ভাগৱতী ধৰ্মৰ বীজ মন্ত্ৰৰে সম্প্ৰীতিৰ একতাৰ ডোলেৰে বান্ধিলে। শঙ্কৰদেৱক গুৰু ৰূপে প্ৰতিষ্ঠা, কৃষ্ণ ভক্তি প্ৰচাৰ, বিগলিত হৃদয়েৰে কৰা আত্ম নিবেদন আৰু শঙ্কৰদেৱৰ যোগ্য উত্তৰাধিকাৰী ৰূপে মাধৱদেৱো শঙ্কৰদেৱৰ লগত অসমীয়া সমাজত চিৰদিনৰ বাবে দুজনা গুৰু ৰূপে পৰিগণিত হ'ল।

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সংক্ষিপ্ত রূপঃ

ABORI-	Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
IHQ-	Indian Historical Quarterly.
JBBRAS-	Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
JRASGI-	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.
SOAS-	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.

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ETHNIC MOVEMENTS IN NORTH- EAST INDIA: A CASE STUDY OF THE AHOMS

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The most debatable topic of the present day Assam in North East India is increasing tension and turmoil arising out of Ethnic crisis among the people of the state. It is a well accepted fact that there has been an unprecedented worldwide upsurge of ethnicity in the past few decades. The North East India is no exception in this regard. The politics of ethnic assertion by different ethnic groups has been a living phenomenon in the politics of North East India. Different ethnic groups of this region have been either demanding separate states on the basis of their lingo – cultural identities or pressing for their special constitutional safeguards regarding their respective identities. It appears that in the late forties of the last century, there has been a strong sub – regional and their elites. Most of the ethnic groups or their elites believe that ‘adequate share’ of political power is necessary for the preservation of distinct lingo – cultural identity and for all round development of their respective communities. In effect, politics of North East region has been increasingly besieged by the politics of identity emanating from awakening of ethno – cultural consciousness and assertion of ethnic interests. The identity assertion of various ethnic groups has been articulated through religion, language, culture, region, caste and race.

The Ahoms are the members of the Shan branch of great Tai or Thai family of South – East Asia. The Shans were so called because they first inhabited a land named Tyai – Shan on the bank of the river Tarim which flowed to the north of Mongolia and China. The Tai – Ahoms came to this country in the early part of the 13th century and ruled over Assam for a period of six centuries (1228 – 1826). Eventually they acquired the local name ‘Ahom’ from which in the course of time the Brahmaputra valley came to be known as ‘Assam’. The rule of the Ahoms heralded the dawn of a new era of socio – political integration of the Bodos, the Kacharies, the Chutias, the Morans, the Muttaks, the Borahis and various other groups of this part of the country. The Ahoms had intensified a process of socio – cultural fusion among divers groups which gave birth to a composite Assamese society. Despite having their own language, religion and customs they absorbed into the Hindu social structure and contributed a lot in the consolidation of composite Assamese society. However, during British rule, the Ahoms failed to occupy prominent place in administrations and became backward socially, economically, educationally, and politically. Indeed, from a position of dominance, they sank to the rank of a ‘Backward Class’ eligible for favour and largesse granted by the British Govt. in order to remove their backwardness the Ahoms began to organize and articulate. In the pre – independence as well as post – independence period the Ahoms continue to insist on retaining their cultural identity and put end to what they call, cultural and political domination of upper caste elite. They have been fighting relentlessly through various organizations for establishing their community into rightful place. In effect, the Ahoms continue to be a significant political force in Assam and have already acquired considerable influence over contemporary

political scenario of the state. Therefore an attempt has been made to see different aspects of the ethnic movement of the Ahoms.

The politics of Ahom identity became articulate for the first time when an eminent Assamese litterateur Padmanath Gohain Baruah constituted the *Ahom Sabha* on 13 May, 1893 which was renamed as All Assam Ahom Association (AAAA) in 1910. At the initial stage its leadership pleaded conceding the demands such as free studentship, appointment in government services, reservation of seats in local bodies and provincial legislature. Therefore, the Act of 1909 and 1919 recognised the Ahoms as a Minority community which was abolished by the Act of 1995. Tai Ahom elite felt the need of adequate share of political power to accelerate their pace of socio-economic development. For this reason a representative of AAAA Surendra Nath Buragohain unsuccessfully moved a Private Members' Resolution in the Assam Legislative Assembly on 20 November 1943 for consideration and acceptance of the community as a minority.

While failing to materialise their demand for 'minority status' they devised an alternative plan as a measure of maintaining distinct Ahom identity. Thus, on the eve of independence, the AAAA pleaded for a 'sovereign independent status' of Assam. By forming 'All Assam Tribes and Races Federation' in October 1944 the Ahom leaders had mobilized other Mongoloid communities in support of this demand. In the event of independence, when the constitution was being framed, the Ahom leaders collaborating with other ethnic elite pleaded for adequate constitutional safeguards through their 'real representatives' in the Constituent Assembly elected by themselves. The support made by the leaders of Mongoloid communities to send their representatives to the Constituent Assembly became futile and their hopes and aspiration appeared to be shattered.

After independence, in the changed political circumstances, the AAAA felt the need of a broad based and coherent political organization to fight against the Congress in Assam. For this purpose Surendra Nath Buragohain in collaboration with some other leaders formed a new political party called 'All Peoples' Party (Sarba Dal) in 1948 in order to challenge the Congress in the First General Election of 1952. Although initially it had the potentialities of a strong political force, the Congress allegedly maneuvered defections in the party and the party lost its effectiveness. The electoral alliance of the AAAA with the Congress in the first general election made the former weak and lost their organizational strength to bargain with the ruling elite for an adequate share of political power in the state. In order to cope with the situation 'The Tai Historical and Cultural Society of Assam' (THCSA) was formed in Assam in 1955 by the Ahom intellectuals to generate consciousness of their history and culture. In the early sixties, the Ahoms became much concerned with their lingo-cultural identity. Therefore, the All Assam Mohan Deodhai Bailung Sanmilan (AAMDBS) established in 1962 pleaded for adequate facility for the development of Tai language and culture. Similarly, the All Assam Tai Students' Association was formed in 1964. In the subsequent period the Ban Ok Pup Lik Mioung Tai (Purbanchal Tai Sahitya Sabha) was established in 1981 which made forceful demand for introduction of Tai language. In response, a Diploma course was introduced in Dibrugarh University in 1984 and of late Tai language has been introduced at the primary schools of Tai Ahom inhabited areas of Assam. Besides for maintaining distinct identity of the Tai Ahoms the Buddhist Society of Pharlung Culture (BSPC) was formed in 1963 which was renamed as All Assam Pharlung Sangha (AAPS) in 1975. Thus the Ahom elite wants to generate a religious sentiment for uniting the community

In the wake of revivalism of the Tai Ahom tradition and culture. All Assam Tai Students' Association (AATSA) mobilized the Ahom students in favour of various demands of the community. It worked very closely with the *Ahom Tai Mongoliya Parishad*, a political platform of the Ahoms. With the emergence of Hiteswar Saikia, an Ahom elite, as the Chief Minister of Assam the AATSA gradually became inactive as he could neutralize the Ahom force in his favour. However, the AGP government

miserably failed to fulfill the outstanding demands of the Ahoms and other ethnic communities. Therefore, the Ahom students decided to revive the AATSA and renamed it as All Tai Ahom Students' Union (ATASU) in 1988. Though the ATASU declared itself as a socio-cultural organization, it appears to be very much vocal in political issues.

The Ahoms have been recognized as one of the 'Other Backward Classes' (OBC) due to their socio-economic backwardness. The Ahom elites feel that the 'backward class' is not adequate to remove their economic backwardness. Therefore, a section of the Ahom elites has been pleading for recognizing the community as 'Scheduled Tribe'.

Again the co-ordination committee of different organizations of the Ahoms has been pleading for an establishment of an autonomous state comprising the districts of upper Assam. For this purpose different Ahom organizations merged into one and formed 'Ahom Tai Mongoiya Rajya Parishad' (ATMRP) in 1967 in order to demand a separate state comprising undivided Sibsagar and Lakhimpur districts. In order to give it a secular colour to contest in the election, it was re-christened as "Ujani Asom Rajya Parishad" (UARP) in 1970.

At present, although different Ahom organizations are not contesting in the elections, the organizations like the Tai Ahom Council, *Ahom Jatiya Sanmilan*, All Assam Tai Ahom Samaj, All Tai Ahom Students' Union, *Ban Ok Puplic Mioung Tai and Ahom Sabha* have been demanding inclusion of the Tai Ahoms in the schedule of Scheduled Tribes, reservation of Assembly and Parliamentary seats for the Ahoms, demanding an autonomous state comprising the upper Assam districts, retention of Asom's original name as 'Assam' etc.

Thus this study reveals that the degeneration and degradation of Ahoms finally led its emerging elite to perceive that their community would never prosper and develop unless they are organized and articulate on a sound footing. They increasingly realized that the development and prosperity of the community depends on the maintenance of distinct identity of the community within a larger Assamese society. For this reason, the Ahom elites are mobilizing the Ahoms consciously or unconsciously on the basis of their distinct lingo-cultural and social traits capable of bargaining with the ruling elite to gain for the community.

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Assamese Language- from the *Bhasha Andolan* to Globalisation

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1.0. Introduction

Language is a means of communication. Only human being has language. Human language can be distinguished from animal communication for its creativity. Animals communicate with help of utterances; they do not have any language. Human being can use language in a creative way. Apart from meeting the need of the day to day communication, we, human being can use language to create some special effect in heart of our listeners or readers. That creativity begets literariness, and this literariness is the essence of our literature. Creativity is basically concerned to one's mother tongue. Mother tongue is acquired, while other languages, second, third, whatever they may be, are learned. One always feels at home in its mother tongue.

People dream only in their mother tongue. If you do not have a mother tongue, your dreams will be dumb. People think in their mother tongue. If we lose our mother tongue, our thoughts will be handicapped. One's mother tongue is his/her identity. We are Assamese because we speak Assamese. If its culture and language is lost, a nation itself is lost.

This paper is neither a deep survey of history nor a serious linguistic study; it rather a casual observation of a serious problem related to the future of Assamese language. In this paper, we are trying to highlight on how a language for which recognition many people gave their blood has been started to decline only after forty years.

1.1. The *Bhasha Andolan*- Blood for Language

From 1826 to 1874 the British ruled Assam as part of Bengal. Assam's Barak Valley districts historically possessed a sizeable Bengali speaking population and even as a separate province, Assam, until the very end of the British rule, included the large Bengali-speaking district of Sylhet. From 1837 to 1872, Bengali was the official language of the courts and government schools of Assam. From 1873, Assamese was again adopted as the official language of the courts and schools. In the next year, on 6th February, 1874 Assam was separated from the Bengal and gained the status of a separate province. But much later in 1905, the British rule divided the Bengal province into two distinct divisions (*Bangalaha*) and attached the East Bengal to Assam to form a separate province. This policy encouraged large scale immigration from Bengal to Assam. The way in which Assam's boundaries was drawn during that period, made the Assam's language question highly controversial. At the same time, there was a grudging cultural admiration for the Bengali Hindus from Calcutta, the capital of Bengal.

Even after the separation of the Bengali-speaking Sylhet at will of its people, Assam remained a strikingly multilingual region. According to the first post-independence population census in 1951, 56.7% of Assam's population was Assamese-speaking. In Assam's hills and valleys, people spoke other "indigenous" tribal languages and dialects apart from Assamese. But the first challenge to the idea of Assamese as the state's official language came from the Bengali speakers who in 1951 made up 16.5% of Assam's population, including a large number of partition refugees from Sylhet as well as almost the entire population of Barak Valley.

On 11-12 March, 1950 Asam Sahitya Sabha for the first time, placed demand before the government of Assam that "Assamese language should be declare as the state(official) language of

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Assam and medium of instruction in all the high schools of Assam, with the exception of the high schools in Khasi and Jaintia, Lushai and Garo hill districts,..." (Maheswar Neog, P-69). On 10 July, 1951, Assam Sahitya Sabha celebrated the first State Language Day. On 18-20 April, 1959, the Nagaon annual session of Assam Sahitya Sabha gave Assam government the deadline of 1960 to declare Assamese as the state language.

During this time, the ongoing linguistic conflict between the Bengalis and Assamese acquired momentum and turned into a fierce agitation with one side demanding official language status for Assamese and the other side defending the existing status of Bengali. The conflict had a definite political undertone and in 1960-61 burst into violent language riots causing several deaths from both sides. The *Bhasha Andolan* gave birth of communal violence between Assamese and Bengali. Ranjit Barpujari, a student of Cotton college died in front of his Room No. 13 (now Room No. 113) in Police firing, led by the then SP of Kamrup District Mr. Pabbi on 4th July, 1960. He was declared as the first martyr (*swahid*) of the Assamese Language Movement in 1960.

On 24 October, 1960 the Assam government passed 'the Assam Official Language Act, 1960'. This Act declared Assamese as the official language of Assam.

The people of the then Cachar district went all out in protest against this Act and the provisions of which they felt would deprive them of their linguistic right. Some Bengali political leaders from both Assam and West Bengal gave an unhealthy twist to the situation. On 19 May 1961, police opened fire on the protesters in Silchar Railway Station that left eleven people dead one among them being a woman. In 1961, it was decided that Assam would have not one but two state languages—Assamese in the Assamese-dominated Brahmaputra Valley and Bengali in the Bengali-dominated Barak Valley.

Riots on a lesser scale broke out again in 1972, when Gauhati University tried to introduce Assamese as the medium of instruction in Assam's colleges. Total 21 people were killed in police firings and communal violence in various places. Finally a compromise allowed for a continuation of English teaching alongside Assamese in Assam's colleges.

Gradually some serious studies have been undertaken on the relationships between Assamese and Bengali languages. Probably, Dr. Nathan Brown was the first grammarian to dismiss this idea that Assamese could be a dialect of Bengali. He wrote in the introduction to the "Grammatical Notes on the Assamese Language" published in 1846: "The Assamese is often regarded as merely a corrupt form of the Bengali, by persons who become acquainted with the language previous to their arrival in Assam. Finding so large a proportion of words common to Bengali and Assamese, and not considering that this similarity necessarily results from the derivation of these languages from Sanskrit, the common parent of both, it has been hastily concluded that the Assamese is an uncouth jargon, formed by incorporation of Bengali with various dialects of the country."

Dr. Banikanta Kakati's *Assamese: Its Formation and Development* has a detailed discussion on the differences between Assamese and Bengali. He concluded his discussion by saying that the two languages were derived in parallel from Sanskrit.

Golok Goswami has added a footnote on page 8 of Banikanta Kakati's *Assamese: Its Formation and Development*, where he says that Dr. Kakati has not discussed all the points of difference, some of which are very important. These points may be discussed under four divisions as follows: a) phonological, b) morphological, c) glossarial and d) orthographical.

1.1. The Present Scenario.

The enrolment of the Assamese medium schools has been degrading day by day. Now-a-days, parents prefer to send their children to some English medium schools. The government aided Assamese medium schools are usually only for those students, whose parents cannot afford the cost of education of an English medium school or a private Assamese medium school. In many cases, if we find our

children more fluent in English, than in his/her mother tongue, instead of being ashamed, we feel proud. There is no denial of the fact that English is the language of globalisation. And at present whether we want it or not, we cannot escape globalisation. In the market of globalisation, English is one of the most saleable commodities. Giving back to English may mean giving back to development, giving back to the job opportunities. Therefore, it can be concluded that we need English. But at the same time, we must not forget that we need English only fulfill some of our specific purposes, and for that, we need not have to abandon our mother tongue. The 'prestige issue' should be concerned only with one's mother tongue, not with a foreign language. In order to learn a second or third language, we need not have to sacrifice our first language.

But the present situation says something else. Even from a general observation of the contemporary Assamese society, it can be said that in Assam, only a few people can speak English in real life situations. The Assamese medium students, even after completion of their graduation, can neither speak nor write English properly. The English medium students, to some extent can speak English, but in writing, they make lots of grammatical and spelling mistakes. All these suggest that there must be something wrong with the system. But whatever it may be, it bears a serious threatening for the existence of Assamese language. It is felt that many people of Assam, especially those who belong to the so-called modern generation have been trying to cover-up their inferiority complex which is caused by their inability to speak in English, by speaking Assamese in English way. Many Assamese people of the present time, who consider English as a standard of life, try to cover up their inability to speak English by deforming their mother tongue. Many fashionable men/women of today speak Assamese words with English accents and intonations. They pronounce the Assamese words in English way. If the process continues, Assamese sounds like /x/ as in *kuxum* (Kusum) will lose forever. Many people, who cannot speak connected English sentences, usually hide their limitations by inserting English words in Assamese sentences. This kind of invasion, they believe can improve the quality of their talk. Look at the sentence-

bR □ tR □ rt □ gR □ rR □ m hT □ le bR □ r amR □ ni lage
 weather-t □ hot hT □ le bR □ r bore feel kR □ r □

'I feel very bore when the weather is very hot'

But this type of ill-practice does a great harm to our mother tongue by pushing the words of our mother tongue to the dustbin of forgetfulness. Again, there are many Assamese words, which the modern men and women hesitate to use, because they look unsmart. *heten, dehi, besera* are a few examples of such words, which are rarely used by modern Assamese people. Again case markers, definitives, plural markers, gender markers are either rarely or improperly used by many modern Assamese speakers. All these deteriorations may cause potential harm to Assamese language, for which once so many people gave their blood. All these influences are the outcome of a kind inferiority complex of the Assamese speakers, rather than an influence of globalization. One can be global as well as Assamese at the time. English is our need while Assamese is our identity. Globalisation cannot devour our identity, unless we sacrifice it at the altar of globalisation. Our existence will depend upon how we interpret globalisation.

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Cultural Changes of Assamese People resides at Dimapur Town, Nagaland: A historical prospective.

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Abstract.

Dimapur is the business capital of Nagaland. Nagaland granted statehood in the year 1963. Assam shared its south-eastern border with Nagaland along with the other North-Eastern states. Many Assamese people for the different purposes both for the business and government services, migrated to the Nagaland and stay at Dimapur town both in permanent and temporary in nature. In this study we covers the people who lives permanent in nature, at least 5 year stay in Dimapur Town, and trying to trace out the cultural changes in their life style. The survey covers the different section of people like different from the income groups, age, cast community etc. It is also giving importance to find out the impact of the organizations founded by the Assamese people on the Assamese people. The studies will analysis the cultural changes among the first generation and second generation resident of Assamese people live at Dimapur Town from historical prospective.

Objectives :

Study the cultural changes of the Assamese People live in the Dimapur Town from historical prospective.
Role & impact of the different organization lead by the Assamese people.

Methodology :

Random survey method is applying in the study and the data will be analysis as objectively as possible.
The conclusion will be trying to drawn with the analysis and cross checked of the collected data.

Introduction :

The people of Assam and Assamese culture both are conservative in nature. The pattern of migration among the Assamese people is peculiar. They normally migrated individually or with the family to the different parts of the country only for professional reasons. Among these the job seekers and the students for higher education are large in numbers. Some of them are permanently settled in their service places and others are return back to the state. Assamese people don't have the history of migration in bulk to any place of the country like Maruary and Oriya people have. Rather, Assam has the history of migration of accommodating different community people from the different parts of the country. From the 13th century onward Assam has the recorded history of accommodating different ethnic tribes and other Indian communities in the social formation process of Assamese society. However, it is also true that the Assamese people started to migrate from the period of British Rule in this region. Now we have the record of second generation Assamese people settlement in different parts of the globe. Assam has long history of relationship with the neighboring tribes. Likewise Assam has both the history of war and peace, relations and border disputes with Nagaland. After independence many Assamese people settled as a government service holder in the different parts of the Nagaland. Likewise in the border area of Karbi- Anglong and in undivided Sivasagar district of Assam, many Naga people settled permanently.

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At Dimapur Town:

The settlement of Assamese people in Dimapur town selected for the cultural study because the Nagaland has long historical relations with Assam and Assamese people. The Dimapur was the capital city of the Kochari Kingdom. Latter on it was included in the Nagaland state. The original inhabitants of the land, the Kochari people, are still living nearby the Rajabari area of Dimapur town. Dimapur is the business capital of Nagaland. In this study we covers the people who lives permanent in nature, at least 5 year stay in Dimapur Town, and trying to trace out the cultural changes in their life style. The survey covers the different section of people like different from the income groups, age, cast community etc. It is also giving importance to find out the impact of the organizations founded by the Assamese people on the Assamese people. The studies will analyse the cultural changes among the first generation and second generation resident of Assamese people living at Dimapur Town.

The Assamese people at Dimapur town are organizing as a community under the leadership of Dimapur Namghar Committee. The organization formed in 1956 and founded by Govinda Poirra. The Namghar committee has a trust under which the other sister organizations are also run. In 1965 under the patronage of the Namghar Committee they founded the Assam Sahitya Sabha, Dimapur Branch. In 1990 the Namghar Committee, within the campus established an English medium high school. In this school the Assamese subject is compulsory for all students, (Naga community students also) up to VII standard. In 2010 the school is promoted to the higher secondary level. We have found total 415 numbers of students presently studied in the school. The teachers are appointed from the different communities and tribes. In 2004 Dimapur Sanmilian is founded under the leadership of Bendang Aou. The Namghar committee celebrates the tithes of Sri Sri Sankar Dev Sri Sri Madhav Dev, Janastami, birth day of Lord Sri Krisna. It is found during the survey that Assamese people both resides in temporary and permanent in nature associated with the Dimapur Namghar committee. They regularly attended the Namghar and contributed in the different field. The Naga girls married to the Assamese boys also comes regularly comes to the Namghar though some of them are the believer of Jesus Christ. The Bihu is normally celebrated under the sister organization called Dimapur Sanmilian. It is interesting to note that the leadership of the Dimapur Sanmilian is in the hands of Naga people. The local tribes are equally take part in the celebrations.

In our survey we have collected data from the Dimapur resident Assamese people across the cast, community, economic group and service holder. We have been giving stress to collect along with the name and address- the community/cast/sub-cast, occupation, family education, food habits, presents & previous religious practices, changes of language, news paper and magazine read, community organization, changing habits in daily life etc.

We have covered total 30 household interviewed 17 numbers male and 25 numbers of female. The children are found very few in numbers as they are busy in the school. It is found that in most of the family the male members are the serviceman while the female members are the housekeepers. Total 25 household settled permanently in the Dimapur Town. They have marital relations with the local Naga tribe. 20% of the of the Dimapur resident Assamese people during festivals comes to Assam celebrating with the relatives. 70% household still has faith and strictly followed the customary thoughts and beliefs and other religious beliefs. 80% Dimapur resident Assamese people has believe to have marital relations with their own community.

Findings:

The second generation Assamese people residing at Dimapur town has been changing their culture very rapidly. They change their food habits, dress code and they feel more comfort with the local people's culture rather than the Assamese culture they belonged. Though normally they have taken Assamese foods, occasionally they eat the Naga tribal food like boil vegetarian, meets, dry fish,

Akhuni (a variety of Dall), bamboo shoots, crabs, snail, frog etc. The second generations are more habituated with the Naga local food.

The second generation Assamese people live in the Dimapur town, married with the local tribes. Therefore, the cultural changes are coming in a natural way among the Dimapur resident Assamese people.

It is interesting to note that the Assamese organization giving stress to teach Assamese language in the school run by the Assamese organization at Dimapur Town. They have the provision to teach Assamese language up to VII standard. The role of *Asom Sahitya Sabha*, Dimapur branch is appreciable not only in promoting the literary activities but also creating good relationship between two communities. Many books are published by the branch. It is also noteworthy that the people from other states of India like Bihar, Orissa etc are also becoming the member of the *Sahitya Sabha Dimapur Branch*.

The Dimapur resident Assamese people through organizing different cultural and literary activities wants to keep alive their own cultural identity in Nagaland. It is interesting that we can divide the whole Assamese community residing at Dimapur town into two broad divisions i.e. the first group staying at Dimapur only for professional reasons. After the service period they will come back to their own places. Therefore they are not advocating the assimilations with the Naga culture. The second group advocating the assimilations with the Naga Culture and they attended the same. They have the intention to live at Dimapur town permanently.

The Assamese organizations are celebrating many cultural and religious festivals at Dimapur town where many Naga people are actively involved in celebration. But not a single Naga festival is celebrated or attended by the Assamese people under the banner of Assamese organizations. The Dimapur resident Assamese people married the Naga girls but we didn't find single Assamese girl married to the Naga boy. The Christian Naga girls married to the Assamese boy attended to the Hindu religious celebrations at *Namghar*.

The Assamese people residing at Dimapur town attended the religious celebrations with traditional dresses like *Dhoti-Kurta, Sadar-Mekhela* etc.

In conclusion, it can be said that the Assamese community residing at Dimapur town; Nagaland keeps their cultural activities alive and helps to grow the friendly relations between the two communities.

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History of Assamese spelling system- The Word Form and Formation of 'Arunoday' and 'Guru Charit Katha': a comparative study.

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Abstract :

Assamese newspapers and journals play an important role in the formation and development of Assamese language as well as literature. They reflect the quest for the revival of a new nationalism, a new perspective towards the outer world in the context of globalisation. The formation of Assamese words was a long historical process. During the 5th and 6th century A.D, Assamese language got a new dimension with some significant changes in its pronunciation pattern. Different evidences of these change are engraved on the copper plates, stone inscriptions and the manuscripts of 'Sachi' of that period. 'Charyapada of that time also gives clear evidence of the fact.

The word form and formation of Arunoday which was published in 1846, plays an important role in the formation of Assamese language. Therefore, in the paper, an attempt is made to do a comparative study between the word form and formation process of 'Arunoday' and 'Guru Charit Katha.

- ০.০১ : আধুনিক অসমীয়া ভাষা আৰু সাহিত্যৰ জন্ম আৰু বিকাশৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত অসমীয়া কাকত-আলোচনীৰ এক গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ ভূমিকা আছে। নতুন দৃষ্টিভঙ্গী, বৰ্হি বিশ্বৰ লগত সংযোগ স্থাপন, ভাষা-সাংস্কৃতিক আৰু জাতীয় চেতনাৰ ঐতিহ্যক নতুন অন্বেষণৰ সুদীৰ্ঘ ইতিহাস অসমীয়া কাকত-আলোচনীৰ মাজত বিধৃত হৈ আছে। অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ আখৰ-জোঁটনি সুদীৰ্ঘ সময়ৰ ইতিহাসৰ ভেটিত গঢ় লৈ উঠিছে। ৫ম-৬ষ্ঠ শতিকা মানৰ পৰা উচ্চাৰণ বৈশিষ্ট্যৰে এক পৃথক ৰূপ লাভ কৰা ভাষাটোৰ লিখন পদ্ধতিতো সেই পাৰ্থক্যই ধৰা দিছিল। তামৰ ফলি, শিলৰ ফলিত এনে বৈশিষ্ট্যসমূহ প্ৰকাশ পাব ধৰিছিল। 'চৰ্যাপদ' সমূহতো এনে ৰূপৰ প্ৰকাশ পাইছিল।
- ০.০২ : অসমৰ প্ৰথম আলোচনী (সম্বাদ-পত্ৰ) 'অৰুনোদই' প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ পায় ১৮৪৬ চনৰ জানুৱাৰী মাহত। ১৮৮২-৮৩ চনলৈকে 'অৰুনোদই' প্ৰকাশ পায়। অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাসৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত 'অৰুনোদই' কাকতে অসম বুৰঞ্জীৰ বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাসৰ আশ্ৰয়ত উচ্চাৰণ অনুসৰি আখৰ-জোঁটনি ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিবলৈ লয়। 'অৰুনোদই'ৰ পৰৱৰ্তী হেমচন্দ্ৰ বৰুৱাৰ দ্বাৰা সম্পাদিত "আসাম নিউচে" অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ মান্য-ৰূপ প্ৰতিষ্ঠাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত অগ্ৰণী ভূমিকা লয়। 'অৰুনোদই'এ আৰম্ভ কৰা ভাষাৰ নতুন ৰূপটোক 'আসাম নিউচে' সৰল, মার্জিত আৰু সংস্কৃত ৰূপ দিয়ে। 'জোনাকী'ত এই ৰূপে পৰিপূৰ্ণতা লাভ কৰে। 'অৰুনোদই'ৰ পৰা 'জোনাকী'-লৈকে বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাসে এক স্থিৰ আৰু নিৰ্দিষ্ট ৰূপ লাভ কৰা নাছিল। স্থিৰ ৰূপ লৈছিল 'বঁহী'ত।
- ১.০১ : অসমীয়া বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাস বিষয়ক সাম্প্ৰতিক আলোচনা সমূহত বহুতে প্ৰাচীন অসমীয়া বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাসৰ ভেটিত আধুনিক অসমীয়া বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাস ৰীতি গঢ় লৈছে বুলি ধাৰণা দিব বিচাৰে। 'অৰুনোদই'-ৰ বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাস মূলৰ পৰা বিচ্ছিন্ন বুলি ক'ব বিচাৰে। বৰঞ্চ, আধুনিক অসমীয়া বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাস সংস্কৃতৰহে ওচৰ চপা। 'অৰুনোদই' কাকতে প্ৰাচীন অসমীয়া বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাসক বাস্তৱমুখী আৰু বিজ্ঞানসন্মত ৰূপত প্ৰতিস্থা কৰিব বিচাৰিছিল। তৎকালীন অসমীয়া ভাষাত ব্যাকৰণ আৰু অভিধান নাছিল। সেয়েহে 'অৰুনোদই'-ৰ সন্মুখত আদৰ্শ ৰীতি হিচাবে গ্ৰহণ কৰিবলৈ বিকল্প নাছিল।
- ১.০২ : 'অৰুনোদই' কাকতে গ্ৰহণ কৰা বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাস ৰীতি সম্পৰ্কে ১৮৫৪ চনৰ এপ্ৰিল মাহত প্ৰকাশিত 'Style and mode of spelling' প্ৰবন্ধত স্পষ্ট উল্লেখ কৰিছে। কিন্তু আমি কেবল পণ্ডিতলৈ লিখা ন হই, সকলো মানুহৰ নিমিত্তে লিখিটো। সংস্কৃত আৰু ভাসা মিহলি কৰিলে, আমি ভাল নে দেখোঁ; সংস্কৃত হলে সুখ সংস্কৃত হব লাগে; ভাসা হলে সুদা ভাসা

হব লাগে। সংস্কৃতত পাই সঞ্জোগি আখৰ, ভাসাত গোট গোট আখৰ। আগৰ কালৰ মানুহৰ মুখত সংস্কৃতৰ সকলো মাত লিখা দৰে ফুটিছিল; এতিয়া পাই পণ্ডিতৰ মুখতো নু ফুটে। ভাসা লিখোঁতে, আখৰৰ জিমান জাতি, তিমানহে লিখিব লাগে; একে জাতিৰে দুই তিনি প্ৰভেদৰ সকাম নাই। জ, য জৰ, এই দুইবো একেটা উচ্চাৰণ, এই হেতুকে অস্তস্থ যৰ বাহিৰে আন য নি লিখে। শ, য, স তিনিটাৰে একে মাত; শ্ৰী স্ৰীৰ একো ভেদ নে দেখোঁ; আমি কেবল সহে লিখোঁ। ন, গ আৰু হুস্ব দিৰ্ঘতো এই দৰে বুজিবা। ভাসাত বণ নো বোলে, বনহে বোলে, পানী হলে পানি বোলে পানীৰ ঠাইত পাপি; কুলৰ ঠাইত কুল; সূৰ্য্যৰ ঠাইত সূৰ্জ বা সূৰুজ। আৰু বেফৰ পাচত এটা আখৰ দুটাকৈ নু ফুটে; পৰ্বত নো বোলে, পৰ্বতহে বোলে; সৰ্ব, ধৰ্ম, কৰ্ম, মৰ্ম, মুখত নোলাই; সৰ্ব, ধৰ্ম, কৰ্ম, মৰ্ম নাইবা ধৰম, কৰম, মৰম এই কপে ওলাই। স্নোক লিখিলে সংস্কৃতৰ ভাৱেৰে অৱসো লিখিব লাগে; ভাসাত হলে আমাৰ দাই ন ধৰিবা। আৰু আমাৰ অৰুনোদইত জদি কোনো কোনো কথা ভাল নে দেখা, তেন্তে তাক এৰি ভাল খিনি গ্ৰহণ কৰিবা; ফলত উচ্চাৰণত গুৰুত্ব দি 'অৰুনোদই'-এ হুস্ব-ব্যঞ্জনৰ এটা বৰ্ণ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰি বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাস ৰীতি গঢ় দিলে।

'অৰুনোদই' কাকতত সততে ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা স্বৰবৰ্ণ আৰু ব্যঞ্জন বৰ্ণসমূহ হৈছে-

স্বৰবৰ্ণ : অ, আ, ই, উ, এ, ও = ৬ টা

ব্যঞ্জন বৰ্ণ : ক, খ, গ, ঘ, চ, জ, ঞ;

ট, ঠ, ড, ঢ, ণ, ত, থ, দ, ধ, ন;

প, ফ, ব, ভ, ম; ৰ, ল, ৱ, য;

শ, ষ, স, হ, ঙ, * = ৩২ টা

উদাহৰণ : গচ ৩২, বচৰ ১১, টকা ১৭, ডেৰ ১৭, প্ৰাণনাথ, সূৰ্জ ১৯, তাৰিখ ২, শিৱসাগৰ ১, শব্দ, আকাশ ১২, খং আদি।

কেতিয়াবা ইয়াৰ ব্যতিক্ৰমো দেখা যায়।

উদাহৰণ : শ্ৰীজুত, পূয়, ছাতৰ, মাঝত, য়ো আদি।

১৮৬১ চনৰ পাচতহে এনে ব্যতিক্ৰমসমূহ দেখা গৈছে। ১৮৬১ চনৰ জানুৱাৰী মাহৰ পৰা 'অৰুনোদই' 'অৰুনোদয়'-লৈ

পৰিৱৰ্তন হয়।

বৰ্তমান অসমীয়া বৰ্ণমালাত থকা কেইবাটাও আখৰ ইয়াত দেখা নগ'ল। ইয়াত নথকা আখৰসমূহৰ পৃথক উচ্চাৰণ অসমীয়া ভাষাত বিৰল। 'অৰুনোদই' কাকতৰ বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাসৰ অন্য এক বৈশিষ্ট্য হৈছে আখৰৰ স্থান অনুসৰি আখৰৰ ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা নাছিল। উদাহৰণ : জানোআৰি ১, জোৱা ৯, দেস ৩, ময়, পৰাজই ৩ আদি।

'অৰুনোদই' কাকতত হোৱা ধ্বনি তাত্বিক পৰিৱৰ্তনসমূহ হৈছে -

আ) এ : কোনো পদৰ প্ৰথম দুই বৰ্ণত আ-কাৰ থাকিলে প্ৰথমটো বিকল্পে 'এ' হয়। উদাহৰণ : এসা (আশা) ৩৪।

ঝ) ষি, ইৰ, ৰে : অসমীয়া ভাষাত সংস্কৃতৰ দৰে স্বৰ উচ্চাৰণ পোৱা নাযায়। 'অৰুনোদই'-ত 'ঋ'ৰ স্থানত ষি, ইৰ, ৰে ব্যৱহাৰ হৈছে। উদাহৰণ : প্ৰিথিবি (পৃথিৱী) ১৩, ত্ৰেথা (বৃথা) ৬৭, দ্ৰিঢ় (দৃঢ়) ১৪, স্ৰিত্য (মৃত্যু) ৩৭।

ঐ) অ : দ্বিতীয় বৰ্ণ য-কাৰ যুক্ত হ'লে পদৰ প্ৰথম বৰ্ণৰ 'ঐ' 'অ' আৰু 'ঔ' লৈ পৰিৱৰ্তন হৈছে। উদাহৰণ দৈন্য) দন্য ১৯১, ধৈৰ্য)ধৰ্জ)ধৌৰ্জ ২২, ভৈয়াম)ভঁয়াম ১৩৯।

ব) ঋ : 'ব' 'খ' লৈ পৰিৱৰ্তন হৈছে। উদাহৰণ : বৰমুণ) বৰখুন ৩৩, বৰষা) বৰখা ৮৬ আদি।

শ) ঋ : কেতিয়াবা 'শ' 'খ' লৈ পৰিৱৰ্তন হয়। কেতিয়াবা একে থাকে। উদাহৰণ : মানিখা ৰাতি (মাজ নিশা) ৩৫১, মানিখা ৫৫৪ আদি।

ও-অ : বিশেষকৈ 'টো' প্ৰত্যয় আৰু কেতিয়াবা অন্য স্থানতো 'ও' আৰু 'অ'-ৰ পাৰ্থক্য নোহোৱা হৈছে। উদাহৰণ : মৰাটৰ (মৰাটোৰ) ১৪০, কাপৰ (কাপোৰ) ৩২, পহৰ (পোহৰ) আদি।

ৰ : অসমীয়াত 'ৰ'-ৰ উচ্চাৰণ 'ওঅ'-ৰ দৰে। 'অৰুনোদই'-এ 'ৰ' পদান্তত 'ও' ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছে। উদাহৰণ : স্বভাও (স্বভাৰ) ৪৪৩, অনুভও (অনুভৱ) ২০০, গোআহাটি (গুৱাহাটী) ২৫ আদি।

জ) গ্য, ক্ষ) খ্য, হ্য) জ্য : যুক্তাক্ষৰ জ (জঞ), ক্ষ (ক্খ), হ্য (হয়) সংস্কৃতৰ নিচিনাকৈ অসমীয়া ভাষাত উচ্চাৰণ নহয়। অসমীয়া ভাষাত ক্ৰমে গ্য, খ্য, জ্য - হে উচ্চাৰণ হয়। 'অৰুনোদই'-এ উচ্চাৰণ অনুসৰিহে

লিখিবলৈ ললে। উদাহৰণ : আগ্যা (আঞ্জা) ১৪, সিখ্যা (শিক্ষা) ১৩৭, গ্ৰাজ্য (গ্ৰাহ) ৪, সাখ্যা (সাক্ষাৎ) ২৩ আদি।

য়) ই : যৰ সলনি ই ব্যৱহাৰ হৈছে। উদাহৰণ : বিসই (বিষয়) ১৩।

ণ) ন : বানি (বাণী) ৩, সোন (সোণ) ৫।

'অৰুনোদই' কাকতত অসম আৰু অসমীয়াক বুজাবলৈ আসাম, অচম, অসম, অচমীয়া শব্দ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছিল। উদাহৰণ : অচম মতে কথা' (অক্টোবৰ, ১৮৫০), 'অচম ভাষা' (আগষ্ট ১৮৫০), 'আসাম কম্পানিএ' (ফেব্ৰুৱাৰী, ১৮৪৮) অসম (চেপ্তেম্বৰ, ১৮৪৬)। ইংৰাজীত (Assam) (আগষ্ট, ১৮৪৬) লিখিছিল।

- ২.০০ : যতিচিহ্ন বা কূট চিহ্ন : পুৰণি অসমীয়াত যতি চিন হিচাবে দুটা ফোটাৰ : (কলোন) আৰু দাড়ি (কবিতাত : এডাল প্ৰথম শাৰী, দুডাল দ্বিতীয় শাৰী) ব্যৱহাৰ হৈছিল। পশ্চিমীয়া ছপাশাল অসমলৈ অহাৰ পাছতহে বৰ্তমানৰ ব্যৱহাৰত যতি চিহ্নৰ ব্যৱহাৰ হ'বলৈ ধৰে। 'অৰুনোদই' কাকতৰ ১৮৫৩ চনৰ নৱেম্বৰ সংখ্যাত পূৰ্ণানন্দ শৰ্মাই 'ভাল ৰূপে কাকত পৰ্হাৰ নিয়ম' (Direction for reading) শীৰ্ষক প্ৰবন্ধত যতি চিহ্নৰ বিষয়ে বিতং ব্যাখ্যা আগবঢ়ায়।
- ৩.০১ : অসমৰ সাহিত্য-সংস্কৃতি ইতিহাসত 'গুৰু-চৰিত-কথা'ই এক বিশেষ স্থান দখল কৰিছে। বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্ম প্ৰচাৰৰ ইতিহাস, শংকৰদেৱ-মাধৱদেৱকে ধৰি অন্যান্য গুৰুসকলৰ চৰিত ব্যাখ্যা গ্ৰন্থখনৰ মূল বিষয় বস্তু। অসমৰ সমাজ-সংস্কৃতিৰ ইতিহাসৰ লগতে 'গুৰু-চৰিত-কথা'ত ব্যৱহৃত বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাস অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ এক বিশেষ গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ দিশ।
- ৩.০২ : 'গুৰু-চৰিত-কথা'ৰ ৰচনাৰ সঠিক সময় নিৰ্ণয় কৰিব নোৱাৰি। বিষয়-বস্তুৰ পঞ্চদশ শতিকাৰ শেহভাগৰ পৰা সপ্তদশ শতিকালৈকে বিস্তৃত। ৰচনাৰ সঠিক সময় নিৰ্ণয় কৰিব নোৱাৰিলেও ১৬৮০ শক বা ১৭৫৮ চনৰ পিচত পুথিখন সঁচিপাতত সংকলিত হৈছিল বুলি অনুমান কৰিব পাৰি। 'গ্ৰন্থখনৰ ৰচক একাধিক বুলি অনুমান কৰিব পাৰি। চক্ৰপানি বৈষ্ণৱী বা আতৈৰ মুখে শুনা গুৰুসকলৰ চৰিতৰ ভেঁটিতেই পুথিখন ৰচনা কৰা হৈছে বুলি অনুমান কৰিব পাৰি।
- ৩.০৩ : অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ প্ৰাচীন বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাসৰ নিদৰ্শন হিচাবে 'গুৰু-চৰিত-কথা'ৰ বৰ্ণ বিন্যাসৰ এক বিশিষ্ট মূল্য আছে। আধুনিক অসমীয়া বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাসৰ লগত সাদৃশ্য দেখা যায়।
- ৩.০৪ : সংস্কৃতৰ ষনিসমূহৰ 'গুৰু-চৰিত-কথা'ত হোৱা পৰিৱৰ্তন সমূহ হৈছে
 আ)এ : কোনো পদৰ প্ৰথম বৰ্ণত আ-কাৰ থাকিলে বিকল্পে 'এ' হয়। একাৰ (আকাৰ) ৩০৮, প্ৰযা (আশা) ২৩১।
 ঙ)ই : বৈষ্ণৱী (বৈষ্ণৱী) ২।
 আ)অ : মধ্যৱৰ্তী 'আ'-কাৰ 'অ' লৈ পৰিৱৰ্তন। গমচা (গামোচা) ৪১৫।
 ঞ)বি : 'ঞ' 'বি' লৈ পৰিৱৰ্তন। বিবি (ঞবি) ৩৯৫, বিন (ঞণ) ১৭৭।
 ঞ)অ : মধ্যৱৰ্তী 'ঞ' 'অ' লৈ পৰিৱৰ্তন। চতন (চৈতন) ১৬৫।
 ণ)ন : ঞন (ঞণ) ১৭৭।
 ৰ)লোপ : মধ্যৱৰ্তী 'ৰ' লোপ। প্ৰভাত (প্ৰভাৰ) ১৭৭।
 ৱ)ও : অন্তৱৰ্তী 'ৱ' 'ও' লৈ পৰিৱৰ্তন। মাধও (মাধৱ) ৮৯৯ প্ৰভাও (প্ৰভাৰ) ৮৫৯।
 ৱ)ৰ : 'ৱ' 'ৰ' লৈ পৰিৱৰ্তন। বৰখিলেগৈ (বৰখিলেগৈ) ৩২১।
 ষ)য : পৰিবি (পৰীক্ষি) ৯৪, দখিনা (দক্ষিণা) ১২, বিচমুখ (ঞমুখ) ২৭।
 য)ই : বিন্মই (বিন্ময়) ২১, জাই (যায়) ২২।
- ৩.০৫ : 'অৰুনোদই' ৰ নিচিনাকৈ 'গুৰু-চৰিত-কথা'ত আছিল (আছিল) ৯৩, জৌৱন (যৌৱন) ৭১৯, নিচই (নিশ্চয়) আদিৰ ব্যৱহাৰ পোৱা যায়। আখৰৰ স্থান অনুসৰি আখৰৰ ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা নাছিল। উদাহৰণ : চাইদিনত (চাৰিদিনত) ১৮, সেয়েহে (সেয়েহে) ৫০ আদি।
- ৩.০৬ : যতি চিহ্ন বা কূট চিহ্ন : যতি চিন হিচাবে দুটা ফোটাৰ : (ক'লন), এডাল আৰু দুডাল দাঁৰি ব্যৱহাৰ হৈছে।
- ৪.০০ : 'অৰুনোদই' কাকতৰ বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাস আৰু প্ৰাচীন অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাসৰ এক তুলনামূলক অধ্যয়নে বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাসৰ নতুন দিশ উন্মোচন কৰাৰ থল আছে। মধ্যযুগৰ বুৰঞ্জী আৰু অন্যান্য চৰিত পুথিত চ, ছ; শ, ষ, স; ত, ট; জ, য, ঞ-ৰ উচ্চাৰণৰ পাৰ্থক্যহীনতা দেখা যায়। স্বৰ ধ্বনিৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো ই)এ, ঙ)ই আৰু আখৰৰ স্থান অনুসৰি আখৰৰ ব্যৱহাৰ নোহোৱা লক্ষণ দেখা যায়। 'প্ৰহ্লাদ চৰিত'ৰ পাতনিত কালিৰাম মেধিদেৱে উল্লেখ কৰিছে- "কবিৰ ভাষা সংস্কৃতমূলক কিন্তু বৰ্ণবিন্যাস সম্পূৰ্ণ প্ৰাকৃতিক।" কালিৰাম মেধি সম্পাদিত 'প্ৰহ্লাদ চৰিত'তো জত (য'ত); উপাই (উপায়), সুন (শুন), জিৱন (জীৱন), মৰন (মৰণ) আদিৰ ব্যৱহাৰ পোৱা যায়। 'চাং ৰং ফুকনৰ বুৰঞ্জী'তো জদি (যদি) ২৫, গচ (গছ) ২৫, জাওঁতে, জাৰোতে (যাওঁতে) ৩, সিল (শিল), মাঝৰ (মাজৰ) ২, লাগিচে (লাগিছে) ১৩, ফুলবাৰি (ফুলবাৰী) ১৩, আদি ব্যৱহাৰ পোৱা যায়। 'দেওধাই অসম বুৰঞ্জী'ত সন্য (সৈন্য), বপাই (বোপাই), যাএগতে (যাওঁতে), দেখ (দেশ) ৯৭, পৰীখিত (পৰীক্ষিত) ৮১, দেওৰাজ (দেৱৰাজ), মাধনোওৱাত (মাঘনোৱাত) ৫০, কাখিৰত (কাষৰত), যৌতক (যৌতুক) ১০, ভই (ভয়) ২০, কাপৰ (কাপোৰ) ৮৪, কুতুষ (কুটুষ) ৮৫, নাওত (নাৱত) ৮৫, গাড়ি (গাড়ী) ১২৭ আদিৰ ব্যৱহাৰ পোৱা যায়। আখৰ-জোঁটনিৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত মিছনেৰীসকলে অসমৰ পুৰণি লেখন পদ্ধতি আৰু উচ্চাৰণ তথা বৰ্ণ-তাত্ত্বিক সূত্ৰক গুৰুত্ব দিছিল। অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত লক্ষ্য কৰিবলগীয়া বিষয় হৈছে- এক সুস্পষ্ট নীতিৰ সলনি প্ৰাচীন পৰম্পৰাত এক শব্দৰ বিভিন্ন আখৰ-জোঁটনিৰ ব্যৱহাৰ হৈছিল। হেমচন্দ্ৰ বৰুৱাই তিনিটা নীতিৰ আধাৰত অসমীয়া আখৰ জোঁটনি গঢ় দিছিল। উচ্চাৰণ অনুসৰি আৰু জনা লোকসকলে বহুদিন ধৰি ব্যৱহাৰ কৰি অহা নিয়ম এই তিনি নীতিৰ আধাৰত গঢ় দিছিল। সেই আখৰ-জোঁটনিৰে পৰৱৰ্তী স্তৰত মান্য ৰূপ লাভ কৰিলে। অসমীয়া আখৰ-জোঁটনি সৰলীকৰণৰ পৰিৱৰ্তন আৰু বিজ্ঞানসন্মত ৰূপত গঢ় দিবলৈ একান্তভাৱে সামূহিক প্ৰচেষ্টাৰ প্ৰয়োজন হ'ব। সঁচিপাতীয়া পুথিৰ বৰ্ণ-বিন্যাস অধ্যয়ন কৰিলে নতুন তথ্য পোৱাৰ সম্ভাৱনা আছে। 'অৰুনোদই'-ৰ ৰূপ ৰচনাৰ বিষয়েও আলোচনা কৰাৰ থল আছে।

পাদটীকা :

১ 'অৰুনোদই', সম্পাদনা : মহেশ্বৰ নেওগ, ১১৩৩ পৃঃ।

২ চক্ৰপানি বৈষ্ণৱী আতৈৰ মৃত্যুৰ বছৰ ১৬৮০ শক বা ১৭৫৮ চনৰ পিছতেই নিশ্চয় চৰিত খনি সঁচিপাতত সংকলিত হৈছিল এই

কথা বোধ দৃঢ়ভাৱে ক'ব পৰা যায়। ভূমিকা, 'গুৰু-চৰিত-কথা', মহেশ্বৰ নেওগ, পৃঃ ৫৭।

বিঃ শব্দৰ কাষত থকা সংখ্যাবোৰ সংশ্লিষ্ট গ্ৰন্থৰ পৃষ্ঠা নম্বৰ বুজাবলৈ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হৈছে।

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- : অসমীয়া অভিধান আৰু ভাষা, গুৱাহাটী, ১৯৭৭।
- : অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ব্যাকৰণ, গুৱাহাটী, ১৯৮১।
- : অসমীয়া ব্যাকৰণ আৰু ভাষাতত্ত্ব, অসম প্ৰকাশন পৰিষদ, গুৱাহাটী, ১৯৭৮।
- : প্ৰহ্লাদ চৰিত
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Poverty, Population and Ethnic Crisis of Assam

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Abstract

This paper focus the Poverty may be the root cause of economic social and ethnic conflict of Assam. The conterminous influx of migrants to Assam since the British rule and the abnormal growth of population of Assam in between the 1971-1981 putting tremendous pressures on land and the land man ratio has been coming down and the economic computation to natural resource for operation and even cultural identity in the reason behind economic social and ethnic conflict occurrence of Assam.

Key words: - poverty, migration and ethnic conflict of Assam.

1.1 Introduction:

The state of Assam occupies 2.4% of total geographical area of the country. The land contributes 2.3% of the total population of India by the state. The density of population in Assam was 340 per sq.km while the all India was 325 per sq.km. In terms of rural-urban population where rural areas household 87.10% and 12.90% is belongs to urban areas of the state. The North-Eastern reason is predominantly tribal character and 23 schedule Tribes inhabited. The states of the regions Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalya and Arunachal Pradesh, Schedule tribe comprise more than 60% of population. In Assam the overall scheduled tribe population was about 8.02 % (in 2001)

The vast discrimination and complexion of cultural, social political, topographical, languages/dialects and civil societies traditional are becomes a self problem of the state. At present the Assam Common features of being crisis and conflicts.

Through the Assam in a land of river and blue hill natural resources harmonious cultural phenomenon it problem of conflict among the peoples have some basic causes which should be study intensively. In this study an attempt has been made to analyses poverty and population may be the root cause of the conflict and crisis of the people of Assam

1.2 Objectives:

The objectives of the study is to examine the root cause of conflict among the peoples of Assam. Keeping the view of the importance of the study the following specific objectives has been taken-

1. to analysed the living standard of Assamese people..
2. to analysed the poverty and unemployment scenario of Assam.
3. to analysed the growth of population of Assam since British rule
4. to study the causes of conflict and crisis of Assam based on the analysis of the data.

1.3 Data and Methodology :

The methodology to be used in this paper will be conventional and analytical. The data collected were processed and analysed as per the requirement of the study to draw inferences and conclusion. Important inputs for the study were also received from the experts, made available from different journals, published books, news papers and various websites etc. Personal experience and knowledge in the field also helped to make meaningful interpretation.

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1.4 Analysis the Living Standard of Assam (HDI):

In the India contributes on deprivation in there exceptional element of human life i.e. longevity, knowledge and a decent living standard.

The National Human Development Report 2001 shows the index number of 15 major states. The

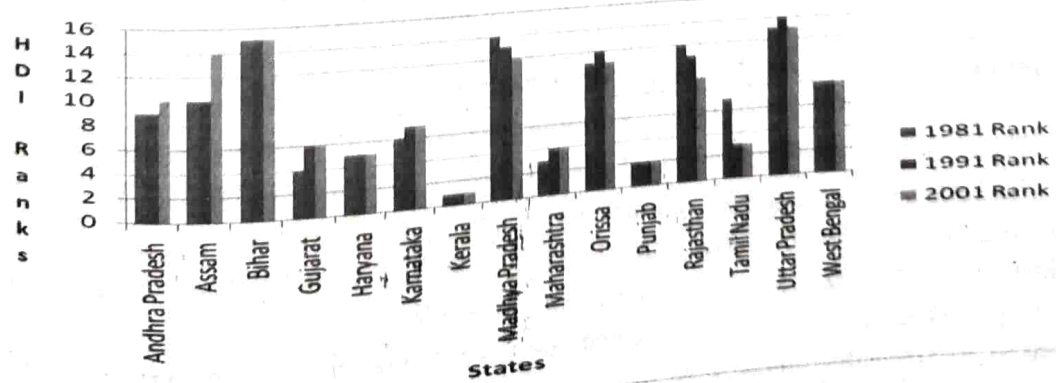
Table No-1.1.

Table-1.1 Human Development Index in 15 selected States of India from 1981-2001

States	1981		1991		2001	
	Value	Rank	Value	Rank	Value	Rank
Andhra Pradesh	0.298	9	0.377	9	0.416	10
Assam	0.272	10	0.348	10	0.386	14
Bihar	0.237	15	0.308	15	0.367	15
Gujarat	0.360	4	0.431	6	0.479	6
Haryana	0.360	5	0.443	5	0.509	5
Karnataka	0.346	6	0.412	7	0.478	7
Kerala	0.500	1	0.591	1	0.638	1
Madhya Pradesh	0.245	14	0.328	13	0.394	12
Maharashtra	0.363	3	0.452	4	0.523	4
Orissa	0.267	11	0.345	12	0.404	11
Punjab	0.411	2	0.475	2	0.537	2
Rajasthan	0.256	12	0.347	11	0.424	9
Tamil Nadu	0.343	7	0.466	3	0.531	3
Uttar Pradesh	0.255	13	0.314	14	0.388	13
West Bengal	0.305	8	0.404	8	0.472	8
India	0.302	—	0.381	—	0.472	—

Source:- National Human Development Report 2001, Government of India

Fig. 1 Trends in HDI ranks of some selected states of India



Source: - Form the table-1.1

Chaiduar College, Gohpur.

Table-1.2 Trend of Human Development in North-East India 1981-2000.

SLNo	State/Country	Combined(R/U)1981		Combined (R/U) 1991		Combined *(R/U) 2000	
		Value	Ranks	Value	Ranks	Value	Ranks
		2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Arunachal Pradesh	0.242	(8 th)	0.328	(8 th)	0.411	(6 th)
2	Assam	0.272	(7 th)*	0.348	(7 th)*	0.362	(7 th)*
3	Manipur	0.461	(1 st)	0.536	(2 nd)	0.455	(3 rd)
4	Meghalaya	0.317	(5 th)	0.365	(6 th)	0.436	(4 th)
5	Mizoram	0.411	(2 nd)	0.548	(1 st)	0.552	(1 st)
6	Nagaland	0.328	(4 th)	0.486	(3 th)	0.515	(2 nd)
7	Sikkim	0.342	(3 rd)	0.425	(4 th)	0.411	(6 th)
8	Tripura	0.287	(6 th)	0.389	(5 th)	0.434	(5 th)
9	INDIA	0.302	-	0.389	-	0.435	-

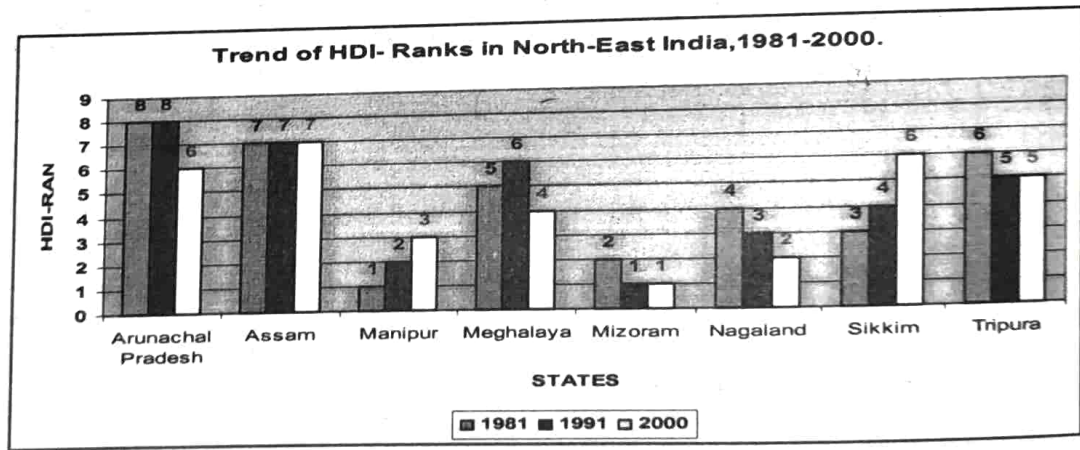
Source: -National Human Development Report 2001, Planning Commission, Govt. of India

Source:-The*figures are estimated by Purusottam Nayak.

Table-1.1 depicts HDI in some selected states of India. As evident from the Table, although the HDI value of Assam has improved consistently in the last three decades like the other states, its rank has deteriorated significantly from 10 to 14.

It is depicts from the table-1.2 that although the value of HDI in Assam has slightly increase from 0.272 in 1981, 0.348 in 1991 and 0.362 in 2000 but it's HDI-Rank has consistently stagnant at the same position in the last three decades. This signifies the fact that although Assam has improved a lot with respect to human development, it lagged far behind the other states in the process. A comparison of HDI-1981, 1991 and 2000 is shown with the help of bar diagram in the following fig-2

Fig-2



Source:-From table-1.2

1.5 Unemployment Scenario of Assam and all India:

The inter-state disparities show in the unemployment rate. The unemployment rate in Kerala was 20.97% of the labour force and lowest rate of 2.96% was around in Himachal Pradesh.

The Assam's rate of unemployment is higher then the national level. The actual unemployment in Assam may be higher than the shown data. The Survey Report 2009-10 of Assam shows the educated unemployment on the basis of Live Registers in the table-1.4

As per the data of employment exchanges of Assam the total job seeker in the live Register increased to 2006389 during the year 2008 from 1921563 in the year 2007. The table shows the educated job seekers during the year 2007 and 2008

SL.No.	State	Unemployment Rate	
		1993-1994	1999-2000
	2	3	4
1	Andhra Pradesh	6.69	8.03
2	Assam	8.03	8.03
3	Bihar	6.34	7.32
4	Gujarat	5.70	4.55
5	Haryana	6.51	7.77
6	Karnataka	4.94	4.57
7	Kerala	15.51	20.97
8	Madhya Pradesh	8.50	4.45
9	Maharashtra	5.09	7.16
10	Orissa	7.30	7.34
11	Punjab	3.10	4.03
12	Rajasthan	1.31	3.13
13	Tamil Nadu	11.41	11.78
14	Uttar Pradesh	3.45	4.08
15	West Bengal	10.06	14.49
16	Himachal Pradesh	1.80	2.96
17	All India	5.99	7.32

Note: Figure a based on the corrent Daily Status.
 Source: - Report of the Special Group (2002)

Table-1.4
Number of Live Register in Assam in 2004-08

SL.No.	Year	No. of Live Registered	% increased in live register
1	2	3	4
1	2004	1631216	4.02%
2	2005	1763430	8.01%
3	2006	1827149	3.61%
4	2007	1921563	5.17%
5	2008	2006389	4.41%

Source:-Directorate of Employment and Craftsmen Training Assam

Table-1.5
Number of Job seekers in Assam in 2007-08

SL.No.	Level of Education	Registration		% increased/decreased in registration
		2007	2008	
1	2	3	4	5
1	Engineering Graduate	211	237	12.32
2	Medical	134	159	18.66
3	Agriculture	97	175	80.41
4	Veteinnry	65	63	-3.08
5	ITI Traders			
	(a) Engg. Trade 970	1011		4.23
6	(b) Non-Engg. Trade	510	623	22.16
7	Post Graduate	3216	4289	33.30
8	Graduate	19135	22493	17.55
9	H.S.S.L.C	37178	38121	2.54
10	HSLC	58068	66157	13.93
11	Diploma Holders (Eng)	210	283	34.76
12	Others	360	492	36.67
	Total	120154	134101	11.61

Source: - Directorate of Employment and Craftsmen Training, Assam.

These data shows that educated unemployment increased with in between 2009 and 2008 11.61% which indicates the misuse of human resource of the state and it will be one cause of deprivation and tension of the people of Assam.

1.6 Poverty:

**Table-1.6
Population below Poverty Line 2004-05 (Based on URP Consumption)**

SLNo.	States	% of Rural BPL population	% of Urban BPL population	% Combined
1	2	3	4	5
1	Andhra Pradesh	11.2	28	15.8
2	Assam	22.3	3.3	19.7
3	Bihar	42.1	34.6	41.4
4	Gujarat	19.1	13.0	16.8
5	Haryana	13.6	15.1	14
6	Karnataka	20.8	32.6	25
7	Kerala	13.2	20.2	15
8	Madhya Pradesh	36.9	42.1	38.3
9	Maharashtra	29.6	32.2	30.7
10	Orissa	46.3	44.3	46.4
11	Punjab	9.1	7.1	8.4
12	Rajasthan	18.7	32.9	22.1
13	Tamil Nadu	22.8	22.2	22.5
14	Uttar Pradesh	33.4	30.6	32.8
15	West Bengal	28.6	14.8	24.7
16	All India	28.3	25.7	21.8

Source: - Planning commission estimates and Statistical hand book of Assam in 2009-p-353.

Incidence of poverty in Assam is similar to that at the all India level where poverty in urban Assam is much lower then that observed for urban areas at the all India level.

**Table-1.7
Number of poor in Assam (Percent of total)**

SLNo.	Year	Rural Head Count Ratio	Urban Head Count Ratio	Combined Head Count Ratio
1	2	3	4	5
1	1973-74	52.67	37.16	51.23
2	1977-78	59.82	37.58	57.63
3	1983-84	42.60	26.38	40.86
4	1987-88	39.35	9.94	36.21
5	1993-94	45.01	7.73	40.86
6	1999-00 (30 days recall)	40.04	7.47	36.09
7	1999-00 (7 days recall)	34.00	6.29	30.64
8	2004-05 (Based on URP consumption)	22.3	3.3	19.7

Source:-www.indiastat.com (Planning commission estimates based on expert group methodology) and tatistical Hand book of Assam 2009.

The trend in recent years shows that there has been a worsening of rural poverty even through there has been a declared in urban poverty in Assam. Concentration of poverty in urban areas is much lower then in rural areas. Along with these trends if we consider the fact that most of (87.10%) of the people live in rural areas we can say the poverty in Assam is pre dominantly a rural phenomenon, which may be the frustration of the people of rural Assam.

1.7 Population Growth and Trend in Assam:-

The abnormal growth of population begins in Assam after the discovery of tea in 1821. The first tea garden was established around 1835 after the consignment of tea from Assam was exported to

London, the British cleaned more and more land brought under tea plantation. In the business the British brought labour for tea garden from far way places, mainly tribals Orauns Mundas from Chotangpur, Sinthals from Santhal Paraganas and West Bangle, Orissa and Central province. All this created systematic harassment of the local tribes after the long time the tension began grow much because of the political economical changes did not ensure equitable distribution of wealth generated through the system of trade. In the process of trade major wealth siphoning out from the state, as the major processing and marketing operations located outside the states. It is evident that the dividends from tea were enjoyed by the British Empire and the trade communities like Marwaris who also migrated to the state. Another backwash of the Assam's economy that the trading communities send the dividends send to their own state.

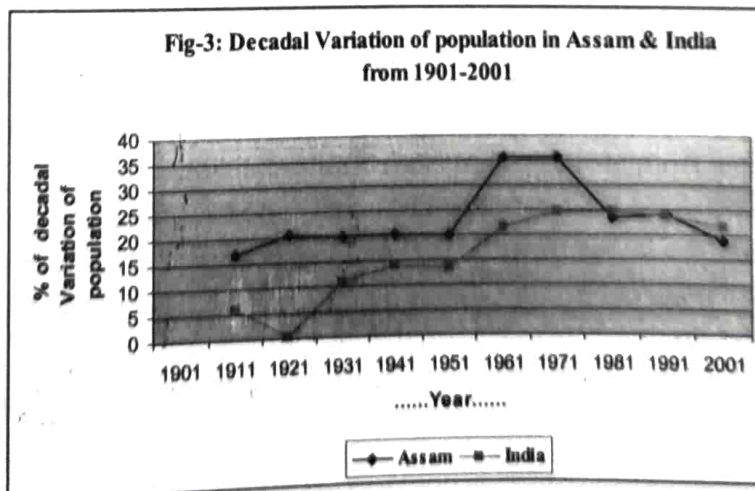
The comparison of growth of Population trend in Assam and India from 1901-2001 clear the actual picture of abnormal growth of population which is shown in the table-1.8 & fig-3

Table-1.8
Population Trend in Assam and India from 1901-2001

SLNo.	Year	Population in Lakhs		% of decadal Variation		Density of population (Per sq.k.)	
		Assam	India	Assam	India	Assam	India
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	1901	33	2384	-	-	42	77
2	1911	38	2521	17.0	5.8	49	82
3	1921	46	2513	20.5	0.3	59	81
4	1931	56	2789	19.9	11.0	71	90
5	1941	67	3186	20.4	14.2	85	103
6	1951	80	3611	19.9	13.3	102	117
7	1961	108	4392	35.5	21.5	138	142
8	1971	146	5481	35.5	24.8	186	177
9	1981	180*	6833	*23.4	24.7	*230	230
10	1991	224	8463	24.2	23.9	286	267
11	2001	266	10270	18.9	21.5	340	325

*Interpolated

Source: Census of India 2001.



Source:-From the table-1.8

- q The data reveals that the population growth of Assam is higher than the all Indian average. In the decades especially 1961 to 1971 is abnormal one which is as high as 35.5%.
- q Similarly the density of population of Assam was lower than all India average up to 1961 but it cross the national level of density of population after 1961 to 2001. It's indicates that the man land ratio has coming down from 2376.9 Sq.k. (in 1901) to 294.87 Sq.k. (in 2001) per person.
- q The abnormal growth is not normal one. Several discuss and debate and written make it very evident that this growth is abnormal. A large scale immigration from other side of international boundary from Bangladesh is actually quite vesible.

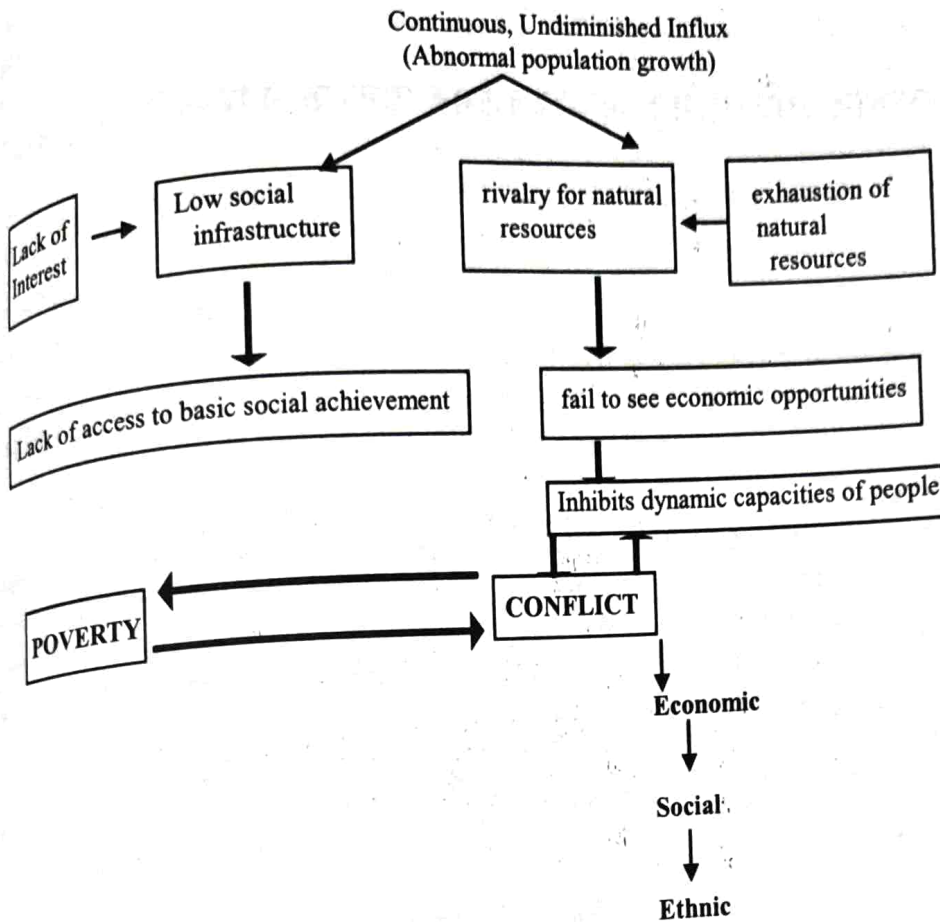
Hazarika (2001) express that "population density computed at about 800 persons per square Km, makes Bangladesh the most densely populated part of the world. The pressure on the land is acute". He also found that the tremendous pressure on land, the recurring and severe intensity floods force a large segment of this population to cross the fence. In this context he also puts the evidence from the study of Dr Imtiaz Ahmed of Dhaka University, of Bangladesh. Dr. Ahmed estimates that 1.72 mn people crossed into India between 1961-71, another half a million for 1971-81 and not less than 6.0 lacs crossed over into Assam. Hazarika (2001) puts the figure at 1.8 mn over a 30 year period. It is threat event today, which is one of the unsolvable problem of Assam.

Goswami (1988) mentions that the partition of the country in 1947 led to an inflow of Hindu Bengali middle class refugees from East Pakistan who settled down mostly near urban towns or rural areas where they had relatives or linguistic affinity. 19The inflow of Muslim farm settlers from East Bengal again began post 1951 to Government waste lands, grazing lands, forest land and *chars* (read riverine islands)

The influx of different communities - Bengali Muslims (Bangladesh) Bengali Hindus (East Bengal), migrant tribes from other states like Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar, has always been the most treatable sensitive issues of Assam. The pressure of already dwindling economy and migrant population eteriorating social infrastructure and the major fear in the minds of indigenous people of Assam that the decorate situation would completely change the religious, demography, linguistic demography and ethnic population or original inhabitants population of Assam specially the tribes. As a result of the situation the six year long agitation by the Assam students from entire Assam from 1979-85 against illegal migration and the separatist activities by one of the native tribes - the Bodos – against migrated tribes and also "foreigners" (read the settlers from Bangladesh) as examples of crises of Assam. These types of violent clashes will contributed ethnic and linguistic conflicts and change the basic social structure of Assam.

The cause and effect of migration population growth poverty and conflict can be explain with following flow chart.

Chart-I



1.8 Conclusion:

From the above on growing analyse, the abnormal growth pf population due to continuous influx of migrants has putting tremendous pressure on land man ratio of Assam. As a result the competition for natural resources to acquire economic opportunities may be the rote cause of social economic and ethnic crisis of Assam. It is extremely relevant to future study.

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অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ঐতিহাসিক ক্ৰমবিবৰ্তনৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত কামৰূপী উপভাষা

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নাবায়ণপুৰ, লক্ষীমপুৰ

১.০ সূচনা-

ভাৰতৰ উত্তৰ পূব প্ৰান্তত অৱস্থিত অসমৰ অন্যতম ভাষা হ'ল অসমীয়া। পৃথিৱীৰ বৃহত্তম ভাষা পৰিয়াল ইন্দো-ইউৰোপীয়ৰ অন্তৰ্গত ভাৰতীয় আৰ্য শাখাৰ ক্ৰমবিবৰ্তনত অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ উদ্ভৱ। উদ্ভৱ কালৰে পৰা নিজা লিপি আৰু লিখিত সাহিত্যৰে পুষ্ট হৈ অসমীয়া ভাষাই বিবৰ্তনৰ সাক্ষৰ বহন কৰি আহিছে। আৰ্য-সম্ভূত অসমীয়া ভাষাই আৰ্য ভিন্ন ভাষাৰ মাজত বিকাশ লাভ কৰিব লগা হোৱাত ভাষাগত সংস্পৰ্শৰ বাবেই অসমীয়া ভাষাটোৰে স্বকীয় ৰূপত উদ্ভাসিত হোৱাটো ইয়াৰ অন্যতম বৈশিষ্ট্য। উদ্ভৱ কালৰ পৰাই বিবৰ্তনৰ সাক্ষৰ বহন কৰি অহা অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ক্ৰমবিকাশৰ ইতিহাস অধ্যয়ন এক গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ কথা।

আমাৰ এই আলোচনা পত্ৰত অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ক্ৰমবিকাশৰ ইতিহাসৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত কামৰূপী উপভাষাৰ গুৰুত্ব কেনে হব পাৰে, বা এই কামৰূপী উপভাষাই ঐতিহাসিক বিবৰ্তনৰ কেনেধৰণৰ সাক্ষৰ বহন কৰে, সেই সম্পৰ্কত দুটামান দিশ সংক্ষিপ্ত ৰূপত উল্লেখ কৰিব বিচৰা হৈছে।

১.১ অসমীয়া ভাষা

অসমীয়া ভাষা পৃথিৱীৰ বৃহত্তম ভাষা পৰিয়াল ইণ্ডো-ইউৰোপীয়ৰ ভাৰতীয় আৰ্য শাখাৰ পৰা উদ্ভূত অসমৰ অন্যতম ভাষা। ভাৰতীয় সংবিধান স্বীকৃত ২২ টা আনুষ্ঠানিক ভাষা (Literary language) ৰ ভিতৰত অসমীয়াও এটি গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ ভাষা। আৰ্য সম্ভূত সংস্কৃত মূলীয় এই অসমীয়া ভাষাটো অসমীয়াৰ মুখৰ ভাষা হিচাপেই যে গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ এনে নহয়, ওচৰ চুবুৰীয়া ৰাজ্য তথা আন ভাষিক সম্প্ৰদায়ৰ মাজৰ যোগাযোগৰ মাধ্যম, অৰ্থাৎ সংযোগী ভাষা (lingua franca) হিচাপেও ইয়াৰ গুৰুত্ব অসীম।

দ্বাদশ ত্ৰয়োদশ শতিকাত জন্ম লাভ কৰা অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ক্ৰম বিকাশৰ ইতিহাস এক গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ দিশ। সাধাৰণতে যিকোনো এটা ভাষাৰ ক্ৰমবিকাশৰ ইতিহাস অধ্যয়ন কৰিবলৈ হ'লে, বৰ্তমানে প্ৰাপ্ত ভাষাটোৰ ক্ষেত্ৰীয় ৰূপ সমূহৰ অধ্যয়ন অতীত গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ কথা। অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ক্ৰমবিকাশৰ ইতিহাস অধ্যয়ন কৰিবলৈ হ'লে, অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰীয় ৰূপ অৰ্থাৎ উপভাষা সমূহৰ অধ্যয়ন অতীত প্ৰয়োজন।

১.২ অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ উপভাষা

ভাষা এটাই বিস্তৃত অঞ্চলত পৰিব্যাপ্তি লাভ কৰাৰ ফলত, সামাজিক, প্ৰাকৃতিক, ৰাজনৈতিক, সাংস্কৃতিক আদি কাৰণত কিছুমান ক্ষেত্ৰীয় ৰূপে মূৰ দাঙি উঠে। ফলত এই ৰূপ সমূহৰ মাজত ধ্বনিগত, ৰূপগত আৰু বিশেষকৈ শব্দগত দিশত কিছুমান পাৰ্থক্য পৰিলক্ষিত হয়। সুকীয়া বৈশিষ্ট্যযুক্ত এনেবোৰ ক্ষেত্ৰীয় ৰূপকে সেই নিৰ্দিষ্ট ভাষাটোৰ উপভাষা বুলি কোৱা হয়। অসমীয়া ভাষাইও এক বিস্তৃত অঞ্চলত পৰিব্যাপ্ত হৈ পৰাত একেই কাৰণতে ভাষাটোৰ ক্ষেত্ৰীয় ৰূপ কিছুমানৰ সৃষ্টি হয়। অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ এই ক্ষেত্ৰীয় ৰূপ বা উপভাষা সম্পৰ্কত বাণীকান্ত কাকতি প্ৰমুখ্যে বিভিন্নজনে আলোচনা কৰা দেখা যায়। অৱশ্যে অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ উপভাষা বুলি ক'লে প্ৰধানত বাণীকান্ত কাকতিয়ে উল্লেখ কৰা পূব অঞ্চল অৰ্থাৎ উজনি অসমৰ উপভাষা আৰু পশ্চিম অঞ্চল অৰ্থাৎ নামনি অসমৰ ভাষাৰ কামৰূপী আৰু গোৱালপৰীয়া উপভাষাকে বুজায়।

১.৩ কামৰূপী উপভাষা

অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ পশ্চিম অঞ্চল অৰ্থাৎ নামনি অসমৰ অবিভক্ত কামৰূপ জিলাত প্ৰচলিত ভাষাকপটোৰে হ'ল কামৰূপী উপভাষা। পূবৰ পিনৰ মান্য ভাষা আৰু একেবাৰে পশ্চিমৰ পিনৰ গোৱালপাৰাৰ উপভাষাৰ মাজতে এই কামৰূপী উপ ভাষাৰ প্ৰচলন।

অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ প্ৰধান উপভাষাকৰূপে পৰিচিত কামৰূপী উপভাষাৰ উজনি অসমৰ উপভাষা তথা মান্য অসমীয়াৰ লগত ধ্বনিগত, ৰূপগত আৰু বিশেষকৈ শব্দগত দিশত অনেক বৈসাদৃশ্য পৰিলক্ষিত হয়। উল্লেখযোগ্য যে কামৰূপী উপভাষাৰ বিস্তৃতি হেতু এই উপভাষাটোৰো স্থানীয় ৰূপ (sub dialect) পোৱা যায়। অৱশ্যে এই ৰূপসমূহৰ মাজৰ পাৰ্থক্যই বৃহৎ অঞ্চলটোৰ ভাষা ভাষী লোকসকলৰ মাজত কোনো অসুবিধাৰ সৃষ্টি নকৰে।

১.৪.১ ভাৰতীয় আৰ্হ ভাষা অসমীয়াই উত্তৰ কালৰে পৰা ক্ৰমবিকাশৰ বিভিন্ন স্তৰ গৰকি বৰ্তমানৰ ৰূপ লাভ কৰিছে। ক্ৰমবিকাশৰ স্তৰ অতিক্ৰম কৰি লাভ কৰা বৰ্তমানৰ ৰূপটোৰ আলোচনাৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত কামৰূপী উপভাষাটোৰ কোনবোৰ দিশত কেনেধৰণৰ গুৰুত্ব উপলব্ধি কৰা যায়, সেই সম্পৰ্কত দুটামান দিশ চমুকৈ উল্লেখ কৰা হ'ল :

১.৪.১.১ তন্ত্ৰৰ শব্দৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত

সংস্কৃত মূলীয় ভাষা হিচাপে অসমীয়া ভাষাত তৎসম, অৰ্দ্ধতৎসম আৰু অনেক তন্ত্ৰৰ শব্দৰ প্ৰয়োগ লক্ষ্য কৰা যায়। অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ অনেক তন্ত্ৰৰ শব্দ অৰ্থাৎ সংস্কৃতৰ পৰা বিকাশ প্ৰাপ্ত ৰূপটোৰ যথাযথ প্ৰয়োগ কামৰূপী উপভাষাতহে পোৱা যায় : যেনে-

সং. চক্ষু > প্ৰা. চক্খু > চখু. কাম. চখু

সং. বুভুক্ষা > প্ৰা. ভুক্খ > ভোখ. কাম. ভোখ/ভুখ

সং. হস্তী > প্ৰা. হস্তী > হাথী. কাম. হাথী

মূল্য অসমীয়াত, কামৰূপী উপভাষাত প্ৰচলিত এই শব্দ কেইটা ক্ৰমে- চকু, ভোক, হাথী ৰূপেহে উচ্চাৰিত হয়। আন কেইটামান শব্দৰ বিকাশলৈ লক্ষ্য কৰিলেও দেখা যায় বিকাশপ্ৰাপ্ত ৰূপটোৰ যথাযথ প্ৰয়োগ কামৰূপীতহে আছে-

সং. লোমন > ম.ভা.আ. লোম > ন.ভা.আ.লোম ; কাম লুম / লোম

সং. গচ্ছ + আক > ম.ভা.আ.গচ্ছ + আঅ > ন.ভা.আ. গাছ + আ. কাম. গাছ

সং. কাণ + আক > ম.ভা.আ. কাণ + আঅ > ন. ভা. আ. কাণা, কাম. কাণা।

মূল্য অসমীয়াত শব্দকেইটা-নোম,গছা, কণা ৰূপেহে পোৱা যায়।

এনেদৰে অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ শব্দ কিছুমানৰ ইতিহাস উদ্ধাৰত যে কামৰূপী উপভাষাৰ বিশেষ গুৰুত্ব আছে তাক সহজে অনুমান কৰিব পাৰি।

১.৪.২ সমগোত্ৰীয় ভাষাৰ লগত সম্পৰ্ক বিচাৰাৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত

বঙলা, উড়িয়া, ভোজপুৰী, মৈথিলী আদি অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ সমগোত্ৰীয় ভাষা। একে মূলৰ পৰা বিকাশ লাভ কৰা ভাষা হিচাপে ইয়াৰ মাজত কিছুমান উটমহতীয়া বৈশিষ্ট্য তথা সাদৃশ্য দেখিবলৈ পোৱা যায়। কামৰূপী উপভাষাই এনে সাদৃশ্যৰ অনেক সাক্ষ্য বহন কৰে।

লত কেইটামান শব্দগত সাদৃশ্য উল্লেখ কৰা হ'ল :

বঙলা	কাম	ভোজপুৰী	কাম.
চাকা	চাকা 'চকা'	আখড়া	আখ্ৰা 'সোঁৰবণী'
বাজা	বাজা 'বজা'	সপন	সপন 'সপোন'
টাকা	তাকা 'টকা'	ভৰথ	ভৰথ/ভৰাথ 'ভৰত'
তৰা	তাৰা 'তৰা'	ঢেমনী	ধেমনী 'ধেমনী'
কাক্ৰা	কাক্ৰা 'কেকোঁৰা'	ৰূপা	ৰূপা 'ৰূপ'
কাকা	কাকা 'ককাইদেড'	নুন	নুন 'লোন'
আন্ধাৰ	আন্ধাৰ 'এন্ধাৰ'	তুহাৰ	তুঁহাৰ 'তোমালোকৰ'

ইত্যাদি।

ইয়াৰ উপৰিও সামগ্ৰিকভাবে মগধীয় ভাষাৰ আৰু আন আন ভাষাৰ বৈশিষ্ট্য কিছুমানেৰে সৈতে কামৰূপী উপভাষাৰ বৈশিষ্ট্য কিছুমানৰ মিল দেখা যায়। সেই বাবে অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ প্ৰাচীন স্তৰৰ সন্ধান দিয়াত সহায় কৰে। তেনেধৰণৰ দুটামান দিশ হ'ল :

(ক) মগধী প্ৰাকৃতত সংস্কৃতৰ 'ৰ' ধ্বনি 'ল' লৈ পৰিবৰ্তন হয় ; কামৰূপী উপভাষাত এই বৈশিষ্ট্য পোৱা যায় ; যেনে-

সং. বথ্যা > কাম. লেছা ; মা. অস. 'নেচা'

সং. শৰীৰ > কাম. শৌৰীল / শৰীল ; মা. অস. 'শৰীৰ'

(খ) মগধী প্ৰাকৃতত স্বাৰ্থিক 'আ' প্ৰত্যয়ৰ ব্যৱহাৰ দেখা যায় ; কামৰূপী উপভাষাতো ইয়াৰ বহুল প্ৰয়োগ আছে :

সং. সৌৰৰ্ণক > কাম. সনা ; মা. অস. সোণ

সং. বৌপ্যক > কাম. ৰূপা ; মা. অস. ৰূপ।

(গ) অপিনিহিতিৰ প্ৰয়োগ মগধীয় ভাষাত প্ৰায়েই দেখা যায় ; কামৰূপী উপভাষাতো অপিনিহিতিৰ প্ৰয়োগ এটা বিশেষ মন

কৰিব লগীয়া বৈশিষ্ট্য।

১.৪.৩ প্ৰবু অসমীয়া ভাষা ৰূপৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত

অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ বুৰঞ্জীৰ সৈতে চৰ্যাপদৰ ভাষাৰ সম্বন্ধ যেনে ভাবে সাঙোৰা হৈ আছে, চৰ্যাপদৰ পৰবৰ্তী ৰচনা 'শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ কীৰ্তন'ৰ কাৰণে সৈতেও অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ নিগূঢ় সম্পৰ্ক ৰক্ষিত হৈছে। এই কথা কামৰূপী উপভাষাৰ জৰিয়তে সহজে অনুমান কৰিব পৰা যায় :

(ক) প্ৰা. ভা. আ. ভাষাৰ 'শ' ধ্বনি 'খ'ত পৰিণত হৈছে ;

সং. আদেশ ক্. কী. আদেশ, কাম. আদেশ

(খ) 'শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ কীৰ্তন'ত মহাপ্ৰাণ ধ্বনিৰ প্ৰচলন বেছি; কামৰূপী উপভাষাতো মহাপ্ৰাণ ধ্বনিৰ বহুল প্ৰয়োগ আছে:

ক. কী.	কাম.
ভোখ	ভোখ/ভুখ 'ভোক'
সুখান	শুখান 'শুকান'
আন কিছুমান সাদৃশ্যযুক্ত শব্দ-	
ক. কী.	কাম.
গেল	গেল 'গল'
আৰ	আৰ 'আৰু'
সিন্দুৰ	সিন্দুৰ 'সেন্দুৰ'
গাছ	গাছ 'গছ'
ৰূপা	ৰূপা 'ৰূপ' ইত্যাদি।

১.৪.৪ আৰ্য ভিন্ন ভাষাৰ প্ৰভাৱৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত
ভাষাগত সংস্পৰ্শ (Language in contact) ৰ বাবে অসমীয়া ভাষাত আৰ্য ভিন্ন ভাষাৰ অনেক সমল লক্ষ্য কৰা যায়।
আৰ্য ভিন্ন জনজাতীয় ভাষা বিশেষকৈ বড়ো আদি ভাষাৰ প্ৰভাৱ অসমীয়াত যে পৰিব পাৰে সেই কথা কামৰূপী উপভাষাৰ জৰিয়তে সহজে
অনুমান কৰিব পাৰি:

বড়ো	কাম.
আবলি	আবলি 'এবিধ বন'
আব্ৰা	আব্ৰা 'একো নজনা লোক'
আগৰা	আগৰা 'এবিধ বন'
আনালি	আনালি 'কষ্ট'
নিচলা	নিচলা 'মাছ'
লেব্বা	লেব্বা 'বাওহাতেৰে কাম কৰা জন'
লেঙৰা	লেঙৰা 'লেঙেৰা' ইত্যাদি।

১.৪.৫ অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ প্ৰাচীন সাহিত্যৰ অৰ্থ উদ্ধাৰৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত
ভাষা এটাৰ ক্ৰমবিকাশৰ ইতিহাস জানিবলৈ হ'লে সেই ভাষাটোৰ লিখিত সাক্ষ্য অৰ্থাৎ সাহিত্যাদি অধ্যয়ন এটা গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ কথা।
অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ক্ৰমবিকাশৰ ইতিহাসৰ প্ৰসঙ্গতো প্ৰাচীন সাহিত্যৰাজিৰ ভাষাগত বৈশিষ্ট্য বিচাৰ কৰাটো অতীব প্ৰয়োজন। প্ৰাচীন অসমীয়া
সাহিত্যত অনেক কামৰূপী উপভাষাৰ শব্দ পোৱা যায়। তেনে কিছুমান হ'ল-

ক্ষ > খ: পোখি (হে. স.)

শ, ষ, স > ষ: আদেখ, কোখিপু (হে. স.)

ব > উ: জীউ, সদাশিউ (মা. ক.)

মহাপ্ৰাণীকৰণ- সিমান, ভাঠি, ঠোঠ (মা. ক.)। নিম্ন স্বৰধ্বনিৰ ঠাইত উচ্চস্বৰধ্বনিৰ প্ৰয়োগ- দামুদৰ (হে.স.), সিন্দুৰ (মা. ক.)।

আন আন অনেক লেখকৰ ৰচনাতো কামৰূপী উপভাষাৰ- গল (ডিঙি), বৰ (দৰা), ছলি (সন্তান), ভেল (ভুৰ), জোকাৰ
(উকলি), মৈৰা (মৰা চৰাই), আমৰা (অমৰা), কাউৰ (কাউৰী), লোক (এছাৰি), চক্ৰি (পখিলা) আদি অনেক শব্দৰ উল্লেখ পোৱা যায়।
আহোম যুগত ৰচনা কৰা 'ঘোৰা নিদান' আৰু 'কামৰূপ-তন্ত্ৰ' নামৰ পুথিতো- বয়া, লোম, লেজ, দাপনা, জৰি, বাহা, গাছ, ঠাৰা,
ডিমা, বাক্ৰা, খাৰা, ভোমৰা, শিহা, ঠানি, ছায়া আদি কামৰূপী উপভাষাত প্ৰচলিত অনেক শব্দৰ উল্লেখ আছে।

অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ আধুনিক যুগৰ ভোলানাথ দাসৰ 'সীতা হৰণ কাব্য', গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱাৰ 'ৰামনৰমী' নাটতো ক্ৰমে- আড়াল
(আঁৰ), লেজ, ইন্দুৰ, লাংটা, আতাহ, বাজা; শৰীল, কাকা, তিৰী-চলি, জানাহ-না, এনাই, নৰেই দে, গঠৈ আদি কামৰূপী উপভাষাৰ অনেক
শব্দৰ প্ৰয়োগ লক্ষ্য কৰা যায়।

১.৫. সামৰণি

অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ সবিশেষ আলোচনা প্ৰসঙ্গত ভাষাটোৰ উদ্ভৱ আৰু ক্ৰমবিকাশৰ আলোচনা এক গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ কথা। দ্বাদশ ত্ৰয়োদশ শতিকাত
উদ্ভৱ হোৱা ভাষাটোৰ ক্ৰমবিবৰ্তনৰ ইতিহাস বৰ দীঘলীয়া নহয় যদিও বিকাশগত বৈশিষ্ট্যই ইয়াক স্বকীয় ৰূপত উদ্ভাসিত কৰি তুলিছে।
আৰ্য অনাআৰ্যৰ উপাদানেৰে বিকাশৰ পথত আগবঢ়া অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ক্ৰমবিকাশৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত কামৰূপী উপভাষাৰ গুৰুত্ব যে যথেষ্ট আছে,
সেই কথা ওপৰৰ সামগ্ৰিক আলোচনাৰ পৰাই অনুমান কৰিব পাৰি। সংস্কৃত মূলীয় অনেক শব্দৰ ক্ৰমবিকশিত ৰূপ কামৰূপী উপভাষাত
যথাযথ ৰূপত প্ৰচলিত থকা কথাটোৱে ভাষাটোৰ ক্ৰমবিকাশৰ ধাৰাটোক স্পষ্ট ৰূপত উপলব্ধি কৰাত বিশেষভাবে সহায় কৰে। ইয়াৰ
উপৰিও সমগোত্ৰীয় ভাষাৰ লগত সম্পৰ্ক বিচাৰাৰ প্ৰসঙ্গকে ধৰি আৰ্য ভিন্ন ভাষা আদিৰ প্ৰভাৱ সম্পৰ্কীয় দিশৰ সন্বেদ প্ৰদান, প্ৰাচীন
অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ অৰ্থ আদি উদ্ধাৰতো যে কামৰূপী উপভাষাৰ বিশেষ গুৰুত্ব আছে সেই কথা সহজেই অনুমান কৰিব পাৰি।

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LANGUAGE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT: EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

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Abstract

What makes for effective teaching? Effective teaching and effective learning takes place when a number of efficient and effective teaching strategies are used. The paper will discuss a range of strategies that make for effective teaching and learning in the language classroom.

Objective of the Paper

The present paper discusses major issues, which in my opinion; make for effective teaching and learning. These views are based on my years of practical teaching and interaction in the language classrooms of different levels such as undergraduate and post graduate at different institutions.

View of Teaching

In order to understand and appreciate the first issue i.e. the importance of Feedback in the classroom let me first discuss my perception of teaching. Teaching must be seen in the same light as communicating. This is because the teacher has to disseminate some information to the receiver, in this case the students or learners. The message that is transmitted to the receiver must be understood by the receiver. The receiver of messages in the classroom context generally is the learner. My view is that the communication circle is not complete until the message receiver, through some feedback channels, informs either verbally or non verbally, the message transmitter i.e. the teacher that the message understood has been the message sent. At the heart of effective teaching there should be an ongoing process of ensuring that what the teacher has said is what learners have understood.

Importance of Ongoing Feedback

The teacher, based on this feedback is then in a position to transmit new bits of information. On the other hand, if the feedback from the student advises the teacher that the message sent has been misunderstood the responsibilities is then on the teacher to retransmit the information. This time the message must be transmitted in such a way that the message sent equates with the message understood. Communication i.e. learning takes place only when messages sent or information disseminated is on par with the information received. Teaching is effective when learning takes place, otherwise the very purpose of being a teacher does not serve the very objective which every teacher is looking forward.

Learning and Adjusting Information Accordingly

Teachers can and should also learn from students. As we know communication is after all a two way process. The message giver at times becomes the message receiver and vice versa. When students inform the teacher of what they have understood from her/him the effective teacher should make use of the information. With the help of this feedback information, the teacher should determine what is going right or wrong with the ways, methods and procedures he has used or uses to transfer information. He can consequently improve on his teaching techniques by applying the suitable methods and approaches.

All too often what goes on in the mind of the learner remains an enigma to those who teach. Thus feedback from the learner opens to the teacher the mind of the learner. The teacher, to some extent, gets to know how the learner responds to information that the teacher had earlier disseminated. With such knowledge from the learner the teacher can then retransmit the message that was sent earlier.

in such a way that the learner easily understands it. In short, the feedback responses enable the teacher to assess what students have actually learned (which may not necessarily be what had been taught). The effective teacher should make use of this knowledge to respond appropriately.

In a paper presented at a conference in Langkawi many discussed different strategies used by teachers to obtain feedback from learners in relation to the information that had been communicated. (David, 1996a).

Continuous feedback must be the teacher's goal in every lesson and within a lesson in everything that is disseminated. Teachers and students build on each other's responses. A secondary objective of the paper was to determine the techniques and strategies used by the teacher to retransmit his/her earlier message, if the feedback techniques show that what was earlier communicated has been misunderstood. I cannot stress too strongly that the communication cycle in the language classroom is only complete when there is equivalence between the message transmitted and the message received. An effective teacher should always ensure that what is being taught is the same as what is being understood.

Non-verbal Feedback

An effective teacher should also watch attentively for signs of comprehension in the facial expressions of the students, such feedback can be seen in nods or shakes of the head, eye contact, smiles (of confidence or hesitancy), silence etc. In order to obtain such non-verbal feedback, which is expressed not through language but by facial expressions and body language, it is imperative that the teacher should be able to see all the students (See David, 1995a).

Seating Arrangements

In order to see all the students and obtain such non-verbal feedback the normal sitting arrangements in classrooms i.e. rows upon rows of students is not conducive. Students should sit in a circle with the teacher also making up part of this circle. This will enable the teacher to constantly monitor the facial expressions and body language of students in order to determine whether they have understood the information disseminated. (David, 1996a). Nonverbal feedback is especially important in the northeastern Indian context, as many students tend to fight shy of openly admitting they have not understood the teacher.

Sensitivity to Noise

Teachers must be perceptive and aware of the noise level in the classroom. When a teacher says something and some students start chatting as if they were asking questions from each other this should alert the teacher that some problem in understanding her message has arisen. As earlier mentioned Indian students tend to be a bit inhibited when it comes to asking or requesting a rephrase or a repetition from the teacher or even to ask her what she meant. Teachers must therefore be alert to other feedback signals such as noise and other non-verbal signals.

Checking on Understanding

To check or confirm understanding the teacher, can through either spoken or written output, obtain feedback on whether what has been taught has been understood. Communicative activities, both spoken and written should alert the teacher whether the teaching point made has been understood. Such exercises and activities alert the teacher as to whether what is taught is on par with what has been learnt.

Spoken strategies by the teacher to elicit feedback include redirects, teacher directed questioning strategies, and communicative tasks. Redirects are a procedure in which a teacher redirects her communication. She asks one student to report to her peer what the teacher had said. This is an informative way of determining whether students have understood the teacher's message.

Importance of Questions

There are many different kinds of questions teachers might use to review their own classroom practices. By asking students questions and analyzing students' responses the teachers can measure and evaluate the progress of learners.

Sensitivity to Students' Questions and Responses

Students, by providing examples in their responses to information disseminated, check on their understanding of something that had been earlier taught. Students make inquiries to clarify doubts and

teachers should never dismiss these queries. Sensitivity to the ways Indian students expressed disagreement for instance led to an inquiry and research on how L1 norms affected L2 behavior. (See Jariah and David, 1996).

Readjusting Information

The teacher should, based on the content of the feedback received, adjust his communication accordingly. The teacher, as a result of the responses of the students, can readjust instruction in response to student behavior, relate new knowledge to previous knowledge, monitor the effects of a particular teaching methodology consistently, identify the bits of information which have been misunderstood, and make decisions on how to represent the information.

Peer Learning

Incidentally, the teacher does not need to be the sole retransmitter of information. Peer learning appears to have acted as a strong motivational tool for those who felt they were lacking in some ways as compared to their peers. If, through the feedback of some students, the teacher is given to understand that there has been a communication breakdown, she can turn to students who appear to have understood, (as noted in their body language) and use them as secondary informants to retransmit the information to the student/s who appear not to have understood the teacher.

Facilitating Learning

Apart from this first issue of the perception of teaching as communication and the importance of feedback I now want to move on to the second issue which, in my view, makes for effective learning. "As a teacher it is our job not only to disseminate information but to do this in a way that is easily understood by the learner." (David, 1993: 74) Teachers should make use of any means to facilitate learning and boost learners' self-esteem. One important way of boosting learners' self-esteem is by linking new input to familiar or old knowledge. By linking the students' known knowledge of familiar lexical or grammatical items to new knowledge or information being disseminated the effective teacher can not only facilitate understanding but also retention of meaning of new information. The schema theory postulates that in order to facilitate reading and comprehension on the part of learners the language teacher should carefully select texts which are familiar. In this way links can be made with known knowledge or existing schemas. Such links facilitate understanding and learning (See David, 1994a).

Language teaching involves not only passing on new knowledge but also making learners conscious of their innate abilities and known knowledge. For instance, every learner is capable of executing communicative strategies but they may not be able to use the appropriate strategy spontaneously. In an exploratory research paper entitled "Consciousness Raising of communicative Strategies: A Springboard to Language Proficiency?" (David, 1992a) I argue that if, through a consciousness-awareness phase, learners are made aware of the strategies already available to them, and this could be a springboard to self esteem and language proficiency. Incidentally, teachertrainees' self-esteem can also be boosted by a similar strategy. (See Lini and David, 1995). In another paper "Capitalizing on Language Contact and Borrowing" (David, 1993) I argue that the language teacher can take advantage of the learners Li (in this case their mother tongue) which has borrowed fairly extensively from different language so as to extend the learners confidence in extending his/her knowledge of English lexical items.

Action Research

The effective teacher is continually carrying on some action research in order to improve teaching and learning. Action research simply means being vigilant and aware of one's teaching and learning in the language classroom. For instance, if English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or English as Second Language (ESL) is to play a vital role in equipping the present and future workforce with relevant communicative skills to ensure effective communication, then it is vital that grassroots or downstream research in the dynamics of interactional discourse at the work place precedes language instruction in the academic setting. For information on other kinds of action research please refer to David, 1991a and for an example of research conducted to facilitate reading see "Are parents and teachers walking the same path?" (David, 1992b). The professional should constantly be thinking of ways of improving his/her teaching and students' learning. One way is perhaps even to suggest changes in syllabi (see

David and Taib, 1996) although I do realize that in some institutions more leeway is given than in others to make such changes.

Conclusion

In this paper I have described some of the issues that are vital to effective learning and teaching. First, the view of teaching as communication and the importance of feedback. The teaching feedback model is a process that combines systematic and continuous observation of student and teacher's behavior and examines congruence of teaching objectives, classroom behavior and student learning. The advantage of insisting on continuous feedback is that one improves on one's teaching as one is constantly judging one's own performance. The teacher obtains the feedback through sensitivity to both verbal and non-verbal cues. To check on understanding the teacher elicits and questions the students. The teacher's response to miscommunication on the part of students is to clarify, exemplify and re explain. The teacher may have to use both verbal and non-verbal language to correct a wrong perception. He/she might have to resort to body language and visual illustrations in order to get her message across. The result of such continuous and intense monitoring of student understanding is that students are provided with sequential, consistent and formative feedback to clarify doubts and misunderstandings.

The importance of scaffolding to facilitate learning is another important factor. By linking new knowledge to the knowledge students already possess the effective teacher not only makes the job easier for herself/himself but also for the students. This is because scaffolding facilitates not only understanding but also retention. It also boosts students' self-esteem. Finally an effective teacher is constantly thinking of new ways to improve on her/his teaching. One way of doing this is by action research.

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A study of Assamese society as reflected in War (2nd world war) novels: war as destroyer of values (A synopsis)

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The great two world wars, later viewed by the sociologist and peace-lovers as a very big threat to the very existence of humanity on this planet, had a lasting impact on the European society in particular and the rest of the world in general. Assam, being the province of then occupied British Empire also shares the horrible experiences of the Second World War, though not to the degree of Europe. Though there were not so many casualties in the war in Assam, the Second World War brought some lasting changes to the people and society in Assam. To mention, many negative social phenomena began to hit a society hither to totally unknown to this evils, the ones capable enough of ruining that society morally. As for example, corruption in public and private life, prostitution as a commercial institution, the atrocities on the ethnic Assamese minorities settled in Burma etc are bad social issues that pushed on otherwise simple and honest society to the path of crisis of social and moral values as a direct impact of the second world war, where the foreign soldiers worked as the bearers of these social evils in our agricultural-based society. Assam was an underdeveloped province under the British administration till to the independence and colonial economy of the British authority in Assam posed an obstruction to the development of the society and the people in all spheres of life. So when there was a temptation for cashes etc, people rushed like madman towards that. In some Assamese novels we find a good picture of that great social event. Yogesh Das in 'Dawar Aru Nai' (No more clouds), Syed Abdul Malik in Adharshilla (the foundation) and Debendra Nath Acharya in Jangham (The Movement)-these three master story-tellers of Assamese literature have delineated the impact of the 2nd world war, told excellently through their novels. The novelists in discussion have shown that the otherwise simple Assamese society of that time, rich with traditional feudal values received a great blow as the war-mongers pushed like war weapons the above mentioned social evils towards Assam. The general people with little or medium educations were swept away by these social forces with little or no obstruction at all. Hankering after easy money through war contracts became a common pursuit what we see in the social documentary-type novel, "Dawar aru Nai" Only one person in the novel, Bhakhar, the protagonist remains aloof of this madness – a rare adamant quality in a race of men for hedonism. But it costed him badly. His wife Anupama and many other close relations including his father left him for his stubborn resistance to the run for easy money introduced by the foreign war agencies in Assam. Bakhar really remains a pure piece of precious mental till the end of the war showing the exclusive superior quality of the traditional Assamese society's values.

The great Second World War surfaces in the same form with greater intensity in Syed Abdul Malik's 'Adharshilla' in that novel, based on the 2nd world war, the novelist brings forth the evils of corruption and prostitution through a well-knit story in details. Samir, the protagonist, a village boy turns into a war contractor and collaboration of prostitution. He and other boys in the locality supply poor girls to military personals in order to secure monetary gains. The opportunities brought by war mongers have made them a group of people devoid of any sense of resort to the trade of flesh on their own for earning money easily. In fact, they all fell victim to a unfriendly social and economic situation. The commercialization of prostitution is a very alarming social evil for an agriculture society. The author brings this message home. Abdul Malik has crafted in a masterly way this social problem in the context of 2nd world war in his much acclaimed novel.

The third novel based 2nd Second World War is Jangham by Devendra Nath Acharya. The oil engineer turned author had an eye to-eye experience of the horrors of the 2nd world war when he was working in the Burma oil company during the war. The Japanese was ruling Burma during 2nd world war as their occupied territory. The ultra-nationalistic force of then Burma started an evil design of eviction of the immigrant Indian peasants, mainly the Assamese peasants settled in Burma for generations. Pertinent to mention here is that India as part of the British Empire was against the Hitler and company. So Indians

were like enemies to the Japanese in Burma. The Indian peasants had to pay price for that reason. War interest and ultra-nationalism went hand in hand in Burma. The story of the Indian peasants of Burma at that time was beyond beggar's description, when they were forced to quit Burma for ever. It is a tragic story of the fall of humanity at that hand of the war mongers. Ram Kumar is the narrator of that tragedy.

The three novels are set in different places, yet they speak of a common social problem arise out of wars in Assam and neighboring Burma. There were no incidents of bombing like Hiroshima or Nagasaki. But the erosion of traditional values of an agricultural society speaks volume of more destruction than those in Europe or America as it corresponds to the total degradation of social and cultural values amounting to the degree of a suicide by a nation under the influence of the great wars. What a horrifying story we find in the classic 'Is Paris Burning' co-authored by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapiere, we can also get the same experience of wars in the three Assamese novels in discussion.

Assam had never experienced the direct impact of world war II (1939-45) as those by the other Eastern countries like Burma (now Mynmyar). The Japanese, an ally of German made some important advances in the upper Assam districts from its Burma Base in association with INA. To prevent the Japan's aggression, the allied forces of America and England established some military camps in those districts of Assam bordering Burma. As a result of the increasing military activities, the then Assamese society underwent some changes in regards to values. The factor of the World War II had a direct and deep impact within a short period on the Assamese society. The war worked as a catalyst in developing some negative values hitherto unknown or less known to the Assamese people. It rocked the very structure of the society. The Assamese society in the 1930s and in early 1940s, otherwise a traditional society based on agrarian economy, had little time or opportunity to resist the all pervading influences of the evils of the war on it. The good things, what came with the Western soldiers in significant. The flood of dollars and pounds swept some of precious traditional values of the then Assamese society and brought significant changes as to their scales. To mention, many negative social phenomena began to hit a society hither to totally unknown to this evils, the ones capable enough of ruining that society morally. As for example, corruption in public and private life, prostitution as a commercial institution, the atrocities on the ethnic Assamese minorities settled in Burma etc are bad social issues that pushed on otherwise simple and honest society to the path of crisis of social and moral values as a direct impact of the second world war, where the foreign soldiers worked as the bearers of these social evils in our agricultural-based society. Assam was an underdeveloped province under the British administration till to the independence and colonial economy of the British authority in Assam posed an obstruction to the development of the society and the people in all spheres of life. So when there was a temptation for cashes etc, people rushed like madman towards that. In some Assamese novels we find a good picture of that great social event. Yogesh Das in 'Dawar Aru Nai' (No more clouds), Syed Abdul Malik in Adharshilla (the foundation) and Debendra Nath Acharya in Jangham (The Movement)- these three master story-tellers of Assamese literature have delineated the impact of the 2nd world war, told excellently through their novels. The novelists in discussion have shown that the otherwise simple Assamese society of that time, rich with traditional feudal values received a great blow as the war-mongers pushed like war weapons the above mentioned social evils towards Assam.

Let us first discuss the impact of war in Adharshilla, a novel by Saed Abdul malik(1913 - 1996). He is a prolific writer in Assamese. Some of this works have already been translated to English and other Indian languages. The foundation, the unfinished dairy of Dr. Arunabh, The story of homeless spirit, Dhanya nara tanu Bhal, with laughter

and tear. The stone and bridge etc. are his major fictions in Assamese. He has written travelogues, poems and criticism books also. Sahitya Academy award winner in 1967 and Williamson major Brahmaputra valley literacy award winner 1988, Saed Abdul Malik was also a nominated M.P. in the Rajya Sabha in 1970s. his famous novel The foundation is the source of our present study of Assamese society of 1940s. Dr. Prafulla Kotoki, noted writer and translator remarks, "Adhharsila" remains and an immortal works as it is the part of an endeavor to established a healthy life and study of character in the back round of a vast life atmosphere," the rise and fall of Samir is the sad story of a traditional society with values falling under the clutches of war. Only Dollars and Pounds, the foreign soldiers brought with them an alien culture also, which polluted the local culture. Let us, now find out in The foundation how war an corruption, war and prostitution accompanied by sudden breakdown of the educational system brought a significant change in the Assamese society.

War and Corruption: The great second world war was a symbol of terror and destruction to most European Nations. As a subject nation India also had to face the war. But there was no many casualties in Assam. It had only damages. The foreign soldiers, while establishing their base in some places of Assam, made some irreparable losses to the Assamese society. At first, they sponsored rampant corruption. Some officers during to the Ahom rule, that ended in 1826, was corrupt, but it was not a general practices. The foreign soldiers offered easy money to all in order to secure their support for the allied forces. Huge amount of money was given for supply of bamboos, woods, foods, construction of roads and aerodromes. Even the daily labours were paid high wages. The shining dollars and Pounds mesmerised the common people also including the middle class. Samir also saw that his classmate Bhadeshwar Bora and teacher Purnananda Saikiya has joined the military. He also left the town one day in the woo hours of the day in search of fortune. For his little education and identify he could not find a military career. But he was able to work under a war contractor helper. There he learnt many things and discovered the way of earn money. If one applies a little intelligence and toil and mainly if one can adjust to the corruption rules, a bigger is certain to turn into a millionaire in this profession. One successful contractor during wartime, Trilok Shing also taught him some tricks. In the novel we read, "After working six months with the contractors in the field work he started on his own. He takes up the construction and supply contracts, as he brings maximum profit. Were profit are the main things all rules are flouted there. After a few days Samir becomes his friends and he become a rich man with lots of money. He becomes favorite person for a Bank managers and businessman." Samir became a modern Midas, what he touched turn into gold. The depot Managers of Trilik Shing just three months back with a fixed Salary of some hundreds became a big contractor himself. Yogesh Das in his novel No more clouds also describes a similar situation. When Assamese youths became corrupt. The family of the hero in that novel disintegrated as the hero refused to be corrupt during the war time. Rather he, a headmaster got busy with some literary works during that period. But those with no values joined the processions in the burial of some precious traditional values. Before joining this profession, Samir had only three hundred rupees, what he got as tips from Mr. Ahmed as his capital, now he is the owner of thousands of rupees. Trilok Sing's advices brought good dividend in this respect. He even went on to the extent of supplying local poor girls to military officers with one or two bottles of wine as bribe to quicken

payment of bills, Running after money, wine and women became a passion for him. The boy, who used to fight with the military for molesting Assamese girls in his school days is now doing the same thing himself. The novelist has exposed the liking and hankering for easy money by some Assamese youths of that generation, who easily fell victim to the foreign army's conspiracy in order to spoil them morally. The author describes, "The ugliness and barbarity of war made and camp sites he earned a lot more than he expected and after spending lavishly, a lot of money still remained with him. Military dress, costly American watch, belt, woodbine cigars and many more modern things. And some currency notes.....By the end of the war, Samir earned not less than a huge amount of Rs. 2.5 Lacs". His immoral life, high standard life style etc. Made him alienated from his kith and kins. In his native village, he is still a bastard. After winning the world of money, now he goes back to his original position that hw is a bastard. The writers says, "Why would he be looking for his relatives? He, now understands very well that he is a bastard. A bastard has none whom he can call his own. Both his identify and morality are lost in the thick smoke of war. This is how the author describes the degradation of some Assamese youths during the war time through the sad story of Samir. So the war had a bad impact on Samir, and of course many other Samirs who became rich by easy money, but without friends and relatives.

War and Prostitution : Like all other literary works on the Second World War in Assamese, The Foundation also provides the readers with sensational information of the roaring business of the prostitutes during the war. Like corruption, the foreign soldiers made many poor but innocent girls prostitutes tempting them with money or sometimes using forces. The local agents, including some influential contractors like Tilok Sing or Samir helped them secure girls for bad purposes. Sometimes, the delinquents of the red-light area or slums also worked as agents for commissions. Samir met one such prostitute before his joining in war named Juti, who took this profession in order to run her family. She confessed it to Samir. We have such prostitutes in the new town of Bahadur Singh nagar. In the by-lanes, there are prostitutes, who were made so by war. At day time they look like thirty years old woman, but at night they turn into sixteen year old girls. They pass the day time silent, but with the coming of evening become lively and the trade of flesh also start.

The business runs very normally without disturbing others. The business of the prostitutes in Bahadur Singh nagar was running openly with the full knowledge of the police and municipality authority. Perhaps, they are bribed by the offenders, who are involved in a chain. Sometime, some good girls from respectable family also were seen in the profession, as they were forced to do that by the military. At one time, they are not accepted by the society. So they are compelled to live by this profession. In Yogesh Das's "No more clouds" also, Gauri, a beautiful maid in the house of dthe hero had to die following inhuman atrocities on her body by the soldiers. Earlier, we see this practice in Assam in low scale. It was done secretly. But war created some professional prostitutes and it turned gradually into a business, more particularly for the poor women. In the novel we meet some characters like Madhab, Arjun and Mubarak who work as agents for the soldiers. They are born and brought up in a slum area of the town, they have no sense of morality at all. Even they can sell their own sister. Juti was loved by Madhab, but Madhab sold her to the soldiers for money. We have a similar episode in the picture "Jana Arnya" by Satyajit Roy where the unemployed protagonist used his own sister as

bribe to as high officers in order to secure a job. So, we see that the second world war provided a situation for running the business of prostitution in Assam.

War and Education : Before independence the education scenario in Assam was not good. The colonial rule only wanted to produce some clerks with working knowledge of English. The war made this conditions more deplorable. We find in the novel that, Samir, his classmate Buddheswar and many others turned drop-out because of the emergency situation during war time. Their school was occupied by the military for using as camp. The same thing happened everywhere including the capital city of Guwahati. As a result of that the standard of education degraded sharply in the state as a whole and no. of drop outs increased. The census report of 1941 and 1951 and some other specific study of that period have established this fact. This loss could be made up only after 1947.

War and Philanthropy : it is not that the war had no positive impact at all on the people. Through only a few people of the major towns knew some urban ways of living, some others in the affected area learnt some uses of modern things from the contacts with the foreign soldiers. The use of packaged food in tin, the use of toilets and bathrooms etc. are the things learnt by the common people. The war also made some people aware of political matters. In the foundation. We find that Samir and his friends stoned at the military vehicles passing through their school under the influence of one teacher named Jatin Sarma, who was strong supporter of INA. These people were not purchable by the foreign soldiers. They were very small in numbers, but very strong in principle. Again another good thing we see in the novel that Dr. Mohsin Ali, who had an orphanage learnt many medical matters from an army doctor Lawson. Dr. Mohsin was a kind-hearted man. He even treated the wounded foreign soldiers. Dr. Mohsin was a voracious reader, and he borrowed books from Dr. Lawson. Dr. Mohsin was helped by a nurse named Senehi and her daughter Jinia. When Samir met Dr. Mohin in connection of his desease. He was almost ruined mentally. He could not stand the extreme form of hedonism. A devastated soul was almost restored to normalcy by the caring affection of Chenehi and Jinia and the advices of Dr. Dr. Mohsin. In other words, the orphanage of Dr. Mohsin rehabilitate Samir mentally. Latter on Samir said good bye to the world of hedonism and resolved to go back to his ancestral home. Not only that, he decided to take responsibility of Sonpahi's bastard son and he decided to complete the half-done mosque of his village. So, in a vary critical period of the Assamese society, when most of the people were running after money like madman, a class of people like Dr. Mohsin, Chenehi, and Jini were clutching the virtue of humanity. One prostitute named Juti in the novel was also rehabilitated by Dr. Mohsin. His passion for social reform is a striking contrast to the dominant theme of the novel.

Moreover, like Yogesh Das's No More Clouds, the foundation also informs us about the emergency economic situation of the state. The price of the things went high, even a chicken costed Rs. Ten at that time, then ten times more than the actual price. Poor people's life became miserable. Samir's family had to face such a condition that they could not purchase other things. During war time, due to high inflation state in Germany, while going to market people carried currency notes Mark in big bag, but returned home with things in their pocket. But, one good aspect is that some people took other professions than agriculture, contracts, supply of food items, of bamboos of fire woods needed some people for the foreign soldiers. A class of middle man also were created.

Yogesh Das has also portrayed the impact of the 2nd World War on Assamese people as to their life style and values. The hero of the novel is Bhakhar, a school teacher and representative of traditional Assamese educated youths. When the foreign soldiers began to build an aerodrome at Chukeriting near Dumduma in upper Assam. This region of Assam is bordering with Burma and China. It has importance from the military point of view. The foreign countries distributed dollars and pounds among the local people for working in the construction work site. All the workers of the nearby tea gardens joined it. Bhakhar's father the head clerk of Kherajham tea garden became a middleman in selecting labour for the construction work. He demanded money from the laborers for sending them to the site at higher wage. Moreover, he invested some money through Girin, a distant relative in contracts for gaining easy money. Girin became a rich contractor. He even spoiled the life of Gauri, a tea garden women and wife of Saikia's servant Bhim under the influence of money. Girin even used Gauri for his business purposes in securing orders and money from the military authority. Ultimately Gauri died in tragic situation. Bhakhar's own wife Anupama even left Bhakhar for not earning money. Only Bhakhar remained a precious stone till the end of the novel. But he also holds a dual personality in some respects. He never resists his father or others for corruption immoral activities. He only wants to remain clean in a pool of dirty water. It is weakness of the character of an Assamese educated middle class man of 1940's. so, under the influence.

Jangham (The movement) is also very famous novel on the background of 2nd World War. Written by Debendranath Acharya and published in 1982 it tells a very sad story of the Indian community in then Burma, when they were forced to leave Burma for ever. It is a political issue no doubt, as the great war changed the political equation in the South East Asian countries. Burma, after being a colony of the British Empire was captured by the Japanese army in support with the ultra-nationalist forces of the Burmese People. The new ruler, an ally of the Hitler's plan was against the English authority in Burma, they became very hostile to the English and Indian settlers there. The Indian peasants living in the Manku region forgot their roots in Assam, from where their forefathers migrated to Burma they accepted Burma as their motherland. They were born and brought up there and assimilated themselves with the Burmese culture and people. But the ultra-nationalized Burmese youths in association with the Japanese Army wanted to get rid of the immigrants Indians and others. In fact, war provided them an opportunity to break with their age-old social tradition of unity and brotherhood. Before coming of the Japanese they and the immigrant Indians were living a peaceful life which was threatened by the evils of Second World War. In such a situation, the hero of the novel named Ramgovinda, his pregnant wife, aged mother, his seven year old son Thanu along with many others made an uncertain journey in search of their roots for the sake of their precious life. After losing many dear ones, and after undergoing so much of trouble on their journey of uncertainty, they finally arrived at the India-Burma Border near Assam. At that time, the ultra nationalists of Burma became so violent that they did not care for the new Burmese who assimilated with their culture. In fact, the war mongers inspired them to be so as the Indian people were subject of their enemy in India. So they considered all Indians- in India or in Burma as enemies. Ramgovinda lost his mother on way his son suffered from many diseases. Many of them died of starvation. It is only Ma-

pu, and anglo-Burmese girl, who were rescued by them when her house was set on fire by the ultra nationalists. She actually saved the life of Ramgovinda's son by her tender care. The Assamese-origin Burmese people became victims of the new imperialist force under the banner of new ultra nationalism. So it is a big blow to the permanent settlers in Burma whose forefathers migrated to Burma from Assam in search of food and work. Ultimately many of them died in the incident and many more were displaced. Migration ultimately resulted in migration. So it is a story of humanity retold in a very tragic tone. What happened to the Jews in Germany under Hitler's rule same was the fate to the Assamese origin migrated people in Burma. It all happen under the influence of the Second World War. The author also dislikes war. It is even evident in his famous novel "Anya Yug Anya Purus, (1970)" where the protagonist expresses his disgust at the outbreak of the first World War. The author also brings the subject of corruption in Assamese society in the novel. The hero says that the govt have encouraged corruption among the common people, people preferred govt- contracts for earning easy money then cultivation. Moreover the high price rise of essential commodities due to war affected all people very badly. It is evident from the statement of the hero that corruption began to cripple the entrepreneurship of the Assamese middle class and the work culture of the poor people as well what we see in the novel "Adharsilla" or in "Dawar Aru Nai"

The three novels are set in different places, yet they speak of a common social problem arise out of wars in Assam and neighboring Burma. There were no incidents of bombing like Hiroshima or Nagasaki. But the erosion of traditional values of an agricultural society speaks volume of more destruction than those in Europe or America as it corresponds to the total degradation of social and cultural values amounting to the degree of a suicide by a nation under the influence of the great wars. What a horrifying story we find in the classic 'Is Paris Burning' co-authored by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapiere, we can also get the same experience of wars in the three Assamese novels in discussion.

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ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত অসমৰ ভূমিকা (কেইখনমান বিশেষ উপন্যাসৰ আলম লৈ)

গীতিবেশা ভূঞা

গুৱাহাটী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, গুৱাহাটী

ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা :

বিশ্ব ৰাজনৈতিক ইতিহাসৰ এক অন্যতম যুগান্তকাৰী অধ্যায় হ'ল ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলন। সমাজ সচেতন কবিশিখৰ ৰাজনৈতিক সৃষ্টিত এনে ৰাজনৈতিক আন্দোলনৰ প্ৰতিচ্ছবি প্ৰকাশ পাইছে। বাস্তৱিকতে ৰাজনৈতিক গতিক্ৰমক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰিয়েই গঢ় লৈ উঠে এখন সমাজ। মানুহৰ মানসপটত জোকাৰণি তোলা এনে এক ৰাজনৈতিক প্ৰেক্ষাপট ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ ওপৰত ভিত্তি কৰি অসমীয়া সাহিত্যত বহুকেইখন উপন্যাস ৰচিত হৈছে। এই উপন্যাসকেইখনৰ মাজত ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত অসমৰ জনগণে সক্ৰিয় অংশগ্ৰহণেৰে যি বিশিষ্ট ভূমিকা পালন কৰিছিল তাৰ এক স্পষ্ট আভাস পোৱা যায়।

অধ্যয়নৰ পৰিসৰ, উদ্দেশ্য আৰু পদ্ধতি :

এই আলোচনাত কেইখনমান অসমীয়া উপন্যাস অধ্যয়নৰ আলমত ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনত অসমে গ্ৰহণ কৰা ভূমিকাৰ ভিত্তিত বিষয়বস্তুৰ পৰিসৰ নিৰ্ধাৰণ কৰা হৈছে। এই পৰিসৰৰ মাজত অসমৰ লোকসকলে বিভিন্ন বাধাৰ সন্মুখীন হোৱা কঠোৰ শ্ৰম-ত্যাগেৰে কেনেদৰে দেশসেৱাত আত্মনিয়োগ কৰিছিল সেই বিষয়ে বিশ্লেষণাত্মক অধ্যয়ন দাঙি ধৰা হৈছে।

ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত অসমৰ লোকসকলে দেখুওৱা কঠোৰ ত্যাগ সঁচাকৈয়ে আদৰণীয়। অসমৰ লোকসকলে ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনত পালন কৰা এনে কঠোৰ দুখ-কষ্ট-সংগ্ৰামৰ চিত্ৰ ফুটাই তোলাটোৱেই হ'ল এই আলোচনাৰ মূল উদ্দেশ্য।

এই পত্ৰখনি প্ৰস্তুত কৰোঁতে ঘাইকৈ বিশ্লেষণাত্মক বা বৰ্ণনাত্মক পদ্ধতিৰ মাধ্যমেৰেই বিষয়বস্তু উপস্থাপন কৰা হৈছে।

মূল সংগ্ৰহ :

এই আলোচনাত বিৰিঞ্চি কুমাৰ বৰুৱাৰ 'জীৱনৰ বাটত', বিষ্ণুপ্ৰসাদ ৰাভাৰ 'মিচিং কনেং', পশুপতি ভৰদ্বাজৰ 'ৰঙা ৰঙা তেজ', বীৰেন্দ্ৰ কুমাৰ ভট্টাচাৰ্যৰ 'মৃত্যুঞ্জয়', ত্ৰৈলোক্য ভট্টাচাৰ্যৰ 'সাঁচিপাতৰ পুথি', চন্দ্ৰপ্ৰসাদ শইকীয়াৰ 'জন্মান্তৰ' আৰু অক্ষয় শৰ্মাৰ 'আশীৰ্বাদৰ ৰং' নামৰ উপন্যাসকেইখনকে অধ্যয়নৰ উৎস হিচাপে গ্ৰহণ কৰা হৈছে।

মূল বিষয়বস্তু :

বিশ্ব ইতিহাসৰ পাত লুটিয়ালে দেখা যায় যে একো একোটা কালৰ ৰাজনৈতিক গতিক্ৰমক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰি একো একোখন কালজয়ী উপন্যাস ৰচিত হৈছে। অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো এনে ৰাজনৈতিক পটভূমিৰ প্ৰেক্ষাপটত বহুকেইখন উপন্যাস ৰচনা হোৱা পৰিলক্ষিত হয়। ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ বিস্তৃত ৰাজনৈতিক পৰিসৰৰ ভিত্তিতো অসমীয়া সাহিত্যত কেইবাখনো উপন্যাস সৃষ্টি হৈ উঠিছে। এই আলোচনাত অধ্যয়নৰ সমল হিচাপে গ্ৰহণ কৰা উপন্যাসকেইখনৰ মাজত ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত অসমে গ্ৰহণ কৰা ভূমিকাৰ ৰাজনৈতিক প্ৰতিচ্ছবি এখন স্পষ্ট ৰূপত অংকিত হৈছে।

ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ প্ৰতিচ্ছবি সন্মিলিত বিৰিঞ্চি কুমাৰ বৰুৱাৰ অন্যতম উপন্যাস হ'ল 'জীৱনৰ বাটত'। ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ পৰিপ্ৰেক্ষিতত গঢ় লৈ উঠা মহাত্মা গান্ধীৰ অসহযোগ আন্দোলনৰ লগতে কানি নিবাৰণী আন্দোলনৰ চিত্ৰ এখনো উপন্যাসখনত প্ৰকাশ পাইছে। 'ধৰণী' নামৰ চৰিত্ৰটো উপস্থাপনৰ জৰিয়তে গান্ধীৰ অসহযোগ আন্দোলনত সক্ৰিয় অংশগ্ৰহণকাৰী দেশপ্ৰেমী অসমীয়া যুৱকৰ চৰিত্ৰ ৰূপায়ণ কৰা হৈছে, যিয়ে দেশৰ কাৰণে সকলো ত্যাগ কৰিছে। ব্ৰিটিছ শাসনযন্ত্ৰৰ লগত সোঁৱৰণী অসমীয়া যুৱকৰ চৰিত্ৰ ৰূপায়ণ কৰা হৈছে, যিয়ে দেশৰ কাৰণে সকলো ত্যাগ কৰিছে। ব্ৰিটিছ শাসকৰ দৃষ্টিৰ পৰা ধৰণীয়ে পলাই ফুৰিবলগা অৱস্থাৰ সৃষ্টি হোৱাৰে ধৰণীৰ সংঘৰ্ষ সৃষ্টি হৈছে আৰু ইয়াৰ ফলস্বৰূপে ব্ৰিটিছ শাসকৰ দৃষ্টিৰ পৰা ধৰণীয়ে পলাই ফুৰিবলগা অৱস্থাৰ সৃষ্টি হৈছে।

Chaiduar College, Gohpur.

হৈছে।

গান্ধীজীৰ অসহযোগ আন্দোলনৰ টোৰে গভীৰভাৱে প্ৰভাৱিত কৰা অসমত স্কুল-কলেজৰ ছাত্ৰ-ছাত্ৰীয়েও পঢ়া-শুনা ত্যাগ কৰি জননীৰ সেৱাত জঁপিয়াই কৰিছিল। এই আন্দোলনৰ চিত্ৰ উপন্যাসখনত প্ৰকাশ পাইছে এনেদৰে—

‘স্কুল-কলেজ এৰি দলে দলে ছাত্ৰই আহি গাঁৱত সভা-সমিতি পাতি গাঁৱলীয়া ৰাইজক সজাগ কৰিবলৈ লাগিল। ৰাতি-দিন বাটে-পথে ‘বন্দে মাতৰম্’, ‘মহাত্মা গান্ধীৰ জয়’, ‘ভাৰত মাতাকী জয়’ আদি ধ্বনিৰে গাঁও-ভূঁই তোলাপাৰ লাগিল। যুগ যুগ ধৰি অচেতন হৈ পৰি থকা গাঁওবাসীয়েই উদ্দীপ্ত মন্ত্ৰধ্বনিত সজাগ হ’ল।’

এই আন্দোলনৰ পৰিপ্ৰেক্ষিতত বিদেশী বস্ত্ৰ বৰ্জন, বিদেশী বস্ত্ৰ দাহনৰ আন্দোলনো তীব্ৰ হৈ উঠিল। ইয়াৰ লগতে অসমৰ চুকে-কোণে থকা কানিৰ দোকানে দোকানে পিকেটিং আৰম্ভ কৰি অসমৰ ৰাইজে আন্দোলনত জঁপিয়াই পৰিল। এই কানি নিবাৰণী আন্দোলনে স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ কালছোৱাত অসমত ব্যাপক ৰূপ ধাৰণ কৰিলে। ভলণ্টিয়াৰসকলে কানি নিবাৰণী আন্দোলনত সক্ৰিয় অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰি কানিৰ প্ৰচলনৰ বিৰোধিতাৰে জনসাধাৰণক উদ্বুদ্ধ কৰিবলৈ ধৰিলে বস্ত্ৰতাৰ মাধ্যমেৰে—

‘কানি এৰিলেই স্বাধীনতা নাই, সঁচা কথা। কিন্তু কানিয়ে গাঁৱলীয়া মানুহক নিৰ্বোধ পশুৰ দৰে ভয়-ভীত কৰি তুলিছে। আমাৰ মনুষ্যত্বক অৱমাননা কৰি তিলে তিলে চেপি-খুন্দি মৃত্যুৰ মুখলৈ আগবঢ়াই লৈ গৈছে।’

কানি নিবাৰণী আন্দোলনত কেৱল যে ডেকাসকলেই অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰিছিল এনে নহয়।

বাৰ বছৰীয়া কিশোৰ ‘ধনঞ্জয়’ৰ চৰিত্ৰটো উপস্থাপনৰ জৰিয়তে উপন্যাসখনত একনিষ্ঠ দেশপ্ৰেমিকৰ ছবি এখন তুলি ধৰিছে। এই কিশোৰজনে কানি নিবাৰণী আন্দোলনত অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰি ব্ৰিটিছৰ কঠোৰ শাস্তি গ্ৰহণ কৰিবলগা হৈছে। ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ টো অসমত কেনেদৰে বিস্তাৰিত হৈ উঠিছিল আৰু ভলণ্টিয়াৰসকলে যে কঠোৰ সংগ্ৰাম কৰিছিল তাৰ আভাস উপন্যাসখনে স্পষ্টভাৱে দাঙি ধৰে। উপন্যাসিকৰ ভাষাত—

‘জন্মভূমিৰ স্বাধীনতাৰ স্বপ্নত বিভোৰ তৰুণ দেশকৰ্মী দলক গ্ৰীষ্মৰ প্ৰচণ্ড উত্তাপে আত্মত্যাগৰ বাসনাত উন্মাদ কৰি তুলিছে। দোকানৰ সন্মুখত বহি গৰখীয়া গীতৰ সুৰৰ জাউৰিয়ে জাউৰিয়ে গীত জুৰিছে; ব’হাগমহীয়া ৰ’দৰ লগত ফেৰপাতি তেওঁলোকৰ ‘বন্দে মাতৰম্’ ধ্বনিয়ে চাৰিওদিশৰ বতাহ অধিকতৰ গৰম কৰি তুলিছে।’

গান্ধীজীৰ অহিংস নীতিত আস্থাশীল দেশপ্ৰেমিকৰ চৰিত্ৰ উপন্যাসখনত অংকিত হৈছে। ইয়াৰ লগতে দেশসেৱাত আত্মনিয়োগ কৰা আন্দোলনকাৰীসকলৰ পৰিয়ালৰ দুৰৱস্থাৰ ছবিও উপন্যাসখনে বহন কৰে। দেশসেৱক ‘ধৰণী’ৰ অনুপস্থিতিত পত্নী ‘তগৰে’ ব্ৰিটিছ শাসকৰ পৰা পোৱা লাঞ্ছনাৰ চিত্ৰই এই কথাৰে প্ৰতীয়মান কৰে। তদুপৰি দেশসেৱকৰ ঘৰৰ ক্ৰমাৎ দৰিদ্ৰগামী অৱস্থাৰ আভাসো উপন্যাসখনৰ মাজত পোৱা যায়।

প্ৰকৃত অৰ্থত ‘জীৱনৰ বাটত’ উপন্যাসখনত দেশপ্ৰেমী আন্দোলনকাৰীসকলে ব্ৰিটিছ শাসকৰ অত্যাচাৰ মুৰপাতি লৈ স্বৰাজ লাভৰ আকাংক্ষাত কেনেদৰে অগ্ৰসৰ হৈছিল তাৰে এখন বাস্তৱ তথ্য দাঙি ধৰিছে। দেশসেৱকসকলৰ মৃত্যুপৰ্যন্ত আগবঢ়োৱা কঠোৰ ত্যাগৰ বৰ্ণনাত ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত অসমৰ লোকসকলে গ্ৰহণ কৰা বিশিষ্ট ভূমিকাৰ চিত্ৰই প্ৰতিফলিত হৈ উঠিছে।

অসমৰ অন্যতম প্ৰধান জনগোষ্ঠী মিচিংসকলৰ জীৱনক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰি বিষ্ণুপ্ৰসাদ ৰাভাই ‘মিচিং কনেং’ নামৰ উপন্যাসখন ৰচনা কৰে। উপন্যাসখনত কাহিনী হিচাপে কুমঙ-পাৰ্ছলীৰ প্ৰেমকে মুখ্যস্থান দিয়া হৈছে যদিও পিছলৈ এই প্ৰেমৰ স্থান দেশপ্ৰেমে অধিকভাৱে গ্ৰহণ কৰিছে।^{১৫}

উপন্যাসখনৰ প্ৰধান চৰিত্ৰ কুমঙে কলেজীয়া শিক্ষা লাভ কৰিবলৈ যোৱাৰ পিছত ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনত যোগান কৰিছে। কিয়নো সেই সময়তে গান্ধীৰ নেতৃত্বত গঢ়ি উঠা স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ টোৰে ভাৰতৰ অন্যান্য ঠাইৰ লগতে অসমতো খলকনি তোলে। কুমঙৰ অন্তৰতো স্বাধীনতাৰ বীজ ৰোপণ হয় আৰু সেয়ে সি পঢ়া-শুনা ত্যাগ কৰি আন্দোলনত জঁপিয়াই পৰিছে। কুমঙৰ মনত দেশৰ স্বাধীনতাৰ বাহিৰে আন সকলো কথাই তুচ্ছ হৈ উঠে। বিষ্ণুপ্ৰসাদ ৰাভাই এই চৰিত্ৰটোৰ স্বদেশপ্ৰেমী ৰূপটো স্পষ্ট ৰূপত অংকিত কৰিছে এনেদৰে—

‘লিখা-পঢ়াই কি কৰিব যদি দেশ স্বাধীন নহয়, পীৰিতি কাৰেং কেনেকৈ সাজিব, জীৱনৰ সম্পূৰ্ণ বিকাশ কেনেকৈ হ’ব যদি জাতি এটা পৰাধীন হৈ থাকে। পীৰিতি মিছা, জীৱন মিছা, পাৰ্ছলী মিছা।’^{১৬}

স্বাধীন ভাৰতৰ সপোন ৰচি দেশসেৱাত আত্মনিয়োগ কৰা মহাত্মা গান্ধী, জৱাহৰলাল নেহৰু আদি নেতাসকলৰ

স্বাধীনতাকামী আদর্শই কুমঙৰ অন্তৰত গভীৰ সাঁচ বহুৱায়। সেয়েহে আন্দোলনকাৰী নেতা কমলা মিৰিৰ দলত যোগদান কৰি কুমঙৰ দেশৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনত সম্পূৰ্ণ আত্মনিয়োগ কৰে। গান্ধীৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ টো ইতিমধ্যে মিচিং গাঁওসমূহতো বিধি পৰে। কুমঙহঁতৰ গাঁওখনত গান্ধীৰ নেতৃত্বত গঢ়া এই স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ প্ৰভাৱৰ কথা উপন্যাসখনত চিত্ৰায়িত হৈছে এনেদৰে—

‘... চাৰিওফালে মিৰি গাঁওবোৰত গান্ধীৰ কথা।... কুমঙহঁতৰ গাঁৱত সংগঠনৰ বৰ টনকিয়াল।... প্ৰায়েই শুনা যায় নেওঠনিৰ কেৰ্কেৰণি, ধুনুৰ ধুনুধুনি, তাঁতশালৰ খিটখিটনি।... গাঁৱত কপাহ গছৰ বাগিচা হয়।...’

স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ টো কুমঙহঁতৰ গাঁৱৰ লগতে তাৰ প্ৰেয়সী পাৰ্ছলীহঁতৰ গাঁৱলৈও বিস্তাৰিত হৈ পৰে। পাৰ্ছলীয়েও ইয়াৰ পিছত কুমঙহঁতৰ দলত যোগদান কৰি স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনত জঁপিয়াই পৰে। ইতিমধ্যে ডাঙৰ ডাঙৰ নেতাসকল জে’লত বন্দী হোৱাত নেতাবিহীন জনতাই নিজেই নেতৃত্ব লৈ অসমৰ আকাশ-বতাহ কঁপাই তোলে। গোপনে শক্তিবাহিনী, মহিলাবাহিনী সংগঠিত হোৱাৰ লগতে বে’ললাইন উৎখাত আদি ধ্বংসকাৰী কাৰ্যও সংঘটিত হয়। এই আন্দোলনতে শ্বহীদ হোৱা কনকলতা, ভোগেশ্বৰী ফুকননী, মদন ৰাউতা, কুশল কোঁৱৰ আদি দেশপ্ৰেমিকে দেশৰ কাৰণে কৰা ত্যাগৰ উল্লেখ উপন্যাসখন বাস্তৱধৰ্মী কৰি তুলিছে।

প্ৰকৃতৰ্থত বিষুৱ ৰাভাৰ এই উপন্যাসখনৰ মাজেদি বুৰঞ্জী অলঙ্কিত বৈ যোৱা অসমৰ এখন ভিতৰুৱা মিচিং গাঁৱৰ লোকসকলে কেনেদৰে ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ অৱদান আগবঢ়াইছিল তাৰ বাস্তৱ তথ্য দাঙি ধৰিছে। দেশসেৱাকে জীৱনৰ ব্ৰত ৰূপে গ্ৰহণ কৰা আন্দোলনকাৰীসকলৰ বিভিন্ন কাৰ্যৰ দ্বাৰা ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ চিত্ৰ এখন স্পষ্টভাৱেই প্ৰকাশি উঠিছে।

উপন্যাস ৰচনাৰে অসমীয়া সাহিত্যক সমৃদ্ধ কৰা প্ৰখ্যাত ঔপন্যাসিক বীৰেন্দ্ৰ কুমাৰ ভট্টাচাৰ্যৰ ‘মৃত্যুঞ্জয়’ৰ মাজত ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ বাস্তৱ ৰূপ এটা প্ৰকটিত হৈছে। ১৯৪২ চনৰ ৰাজনৈতিক বাতাবৰণৰ এক হ্বহ প্ৰতিচ্ছবি উপন্যাসখনৰ ছত্ৰে ছত্ৰে বিৰাজিত।^১ বিয়াল্লিশৰ গণ আন্দোলনৰ শেহতীয়া স্তৰৰ অগ্নিদীপ্ত ভয়াৱহ বিস্ফোৰণৰ বাস্তৱ চিত্ৰই উপন্যাসখন প্ৰাণস্পৰ্শী কৰি তুলিছে।

ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ পৰিপ্ৰেক্ষিতত অসমৰ বুকুত হোৱা ‘মহৎ জাগৰণ’ৰ এক ৰাজনৈতিক দিশৰ আভাস উপন্যাসখনৰ প্ৰাৰম্ভতে পোৱা যায় এনেদৰে—

‘ধনপুৰেই পতাকা তুলিছিল। সেইদিনাই তাক মাতি নি শান্তিসেনাত ভৰ্তি কৰি ‘কৰিম বা মৰিম’ পণ লোৱালে। ... তিৰিৰামহঁতৰ খং উঠিছিল, কিন্তু নেতাবোৰ গ্ৰেপ্তাৰ হৈ যোৱাৰ পিছত কৰ্মীবোৰক কৰ্মসূচী দিব লগা হ’ল। কৰ্মসূচী হ’ল মিলিটেৰীৰ যোগান বন্ধ কৰি আৰু দলং ভাঙি যাতায়াত ভংগ কৰা। ... কমিউনিষ্টবোৰেও যুদ্ধৰ বিৰোধিতা নকৰি তাক কোঁবিৰোধী সংগ্ৰাম বুলি অভিহিত কৰি কৰ্মীসকলৰ এই সিদ্ধান্ত ভুল বুলিলে। এনে অৱস্থাতো কৰ্মীসকল নিৰাশ নহৈ বহা ৰা কৰ্মী বিচাৰি উলিয়ালে।’

১৯৪২ চনৰ গণ আন্দোলন হিংস আৰু অহিংস এই দুটা পৰ্যায়ত প্ৰকাশ পাইছে। ‘মৃত্যুঞ্জয়’ৰ পটভূমি যিহেতু বিয়াল্লিশৰ গণ আন্দোলনৰ ভেটিতেই নিৰ্মিত, সেয়েহে ইয়াত অসম তথা ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ হিংসাত্মক আৰু অহিংস আন্দোলনে অন্তৰ্জগত সৃষ্টি কৰা সংঘাতৰ চিত্ৰকেই ৰূপায়িত কৰিছে। চল্লিশৰ দশকৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ চূড়ান্ত পৰ্যায়ত অহিংস পন্থাৰ বৈষয় আৰু গান্ধীবাদী লোকসকলেও কেনেদৰে বে’ল বগবোৰাৰ পৰিকল্পনা কৰিছিল আৰু জীৱন্ত ৰূপে উপন্যাসখনত পোৱা যায়। বে’ল বগবাই ব্ৰিটিছৰ বিৰুদ্ধে প্ৰতিবাদ সাব্যস্ত কৰিলেও ই কেনেকৈ মানৱতাবিৰোধী শাস্তিৰ পথ, সেই কথাও উপন্যাসখনত প্ৰতিপাদিত হৈছে। এই দুঃসাহসিক কাৰ্যত জড়িত থকা চৰিত্ৰসমূহ কল্পনাপ্ৰসূত হ’লেও কেইটামান চৰিত্ৰ প্ৰকৃত ঘটনাৰ লগত প্ৰত্যক্ষভাৱে লিপ্ত সঁচাসঁচি যুঁজাৰ ব্যক্তিৰ আদৰ্শত পৰিকল্পিত।

সমগ্ৰ ভাৰতব্যাপি ‘ভাৰত ত্যাগ’ ধৰ্মি মুখৰিত হোৱাৰ লগে লগে মহাত্মা আদি কংগ্ৰেছৰ নেতৃত্বত মুম্বাইত গ্ৰেপ্তাৰ হ’ল আৰু ইয়াৰ লগে লগে বিপ্লৱৰ জুয়ে অসমকো স্পৰ্শ কৰে। স্ত্ৰী-পুৰুষ নিৰ্বিশেষে অসমৰ লোকসকল স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰিবলৈ আগবাঢ়ি আহিল। গান্ধীৰ আদৰ্শই বহুতকৈ প্ৰভাৱান্বিত কৰিলে। অৱশ্যে এচাম মানুহৰ গান্ধীৰ অহিংস নীতিৰ ওপৰত আস্থা হেৰুৱাই পেলাবৰ উপক্ৰম হ’ল। অহিংস নীতিত বিশ্বাসী লোকেও উপলব্ধি কৰিছিল যে মানুহৰ মুক্তিৰ

যুঁজ অহিংসাৰে অনা কঠিন। কিন্তু ইংৰাজক ভাৰতৰ পৰা খেদি পঠোৱাটো হ'ল প্ৰথম কাম। উপন্যাসখনত 'ৰূপনাৰায়ণ' নামৰ চৰিত্ৰটোৰ মাধ্যমেৰে অহিংসাৰ দ্বাৰা যে স্বাধীনতা অনা অসম্ভৱ সেই কথা স্পষ্টৰূপত প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে—

'সুভাষ বসুৱে ঠিক কথা কৈছে। যুদ্ধ কৰিব লাগিব আমি। ... গান্ধীয়ে যিখন যুঁজ দিছে সেইখন কেৱল আদৰ্শতহে আছে। ... প্ৰত্যেক মানুহেই গান্ধীৰ দৰে সাহসী হৈ অহিংস সেনা হোৱা সম্ভৱ নহয়।'

স্বাধীনতাৰ প্ৰাকক্ষণত মানুহৰ মনত জাতীয় চেতনা এনেদৰে আগ্ৰহ হৈছিল যে ডাকঘৰ, কাছাৰী আদি স্থানত জাতীয় পতাকা উৰুৱাটো নিত্য-নৈমিত্তিক কাৰ্য হৈ পৰিছিল। উপন্যাসখনত অংকিত 'ধনপুৰ'ৰ চৰিত্ৰটো দুৰ্দান্ত সাহসী ডেকাৰ প্ৰতিভা। স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত আত্মনিয়োগ কৰি শহীদ হোৱা ডেকাসকলৰ হৃদয় বিদাৰক কাহিনীয়ে উপন্যাসখন বাস্তৱধৰ্মী কৰি তুলিছে। উপন্যাসিকৰ ভাষাত—

'মাৰিব বুলি জানিও শিঙা ফুকিলে।

শিঙা নুফুকা হ'লে সেইদিনা সোপাই ধৰা পৰে। ... শিঙাৰ ধ্বনি গৈ গঞাৰ কাণত পৰিলগৈ, কিন্তু লগে লগে তিলক ডেকাৰ কেঁচা দেহটো মাটিত বাগৰি পৰিল।''

বিয়াল্লিশৰ এই আন্দোলনৰ ইমানেই ব্যাপ্ত হৈ পৰিছিল যে কাৰাবৰণ কৰাটোও এটা সন্মানীয় বিষয় হৈ পৰিছিল। এই আন্দোলনৰ পুৰুষৰ লগতে নাৰীসকলেও সক্ৰিয় অংশ লৈছিল। 'ক'লী বাইদেউ'ৰ চৰিত্ৰটোৰ জৰিয়তে ইয়াত তেনে এগৰাকী দেশপ্ৰেমী নাৰীৰে চৰিত্ৰ অংকন কৰা হৈছে। তদুপৰি মহদা গোহাঁইৰ পৰিবাৰ, টিকৌৰ পত্নী ৰতনী, ডিমি আদিৰ চৰিত্ৰৰ জৰিয়তেও দেশপ্ৰেমী অসমীয়া নাৰীৰ বাস্তৱ ৰূপ এটা অংকিত হৈছে। ইয়াৰ লগতে খাদী, গ্ৰামোদ্যোগ, গাঁও উন্নয়ন, শিক্ষা-প্ৰচাৰ আদি আন্দোলনৰ বিভিন্ন কাৰ্যসূচী ৰূপায়ণৰ চিত্ৰই উপন্যাসখনক এক বিচিত্ৰ মৰ্যাদা প্ৰদান কৰিছে।

ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ শেষছোৱা সময়ৰ প্ৰত্যক্ষ চিত্ৰসম্বলিত অন্যতম উপন্যাস হ'ল পশুপতি ভৰদ্বাজৰ 'ৰঙা ৰঙা তেজ'। ১৯৪২ চনৰ 'ভাৰত ত্যাগ' আন্দোলনত দেশব্যাপী হোৱা হিংসাত্মক ঘটনাৰ প্ৰভাৱ যে অসমতো গভীৰভাৱে পৰিছিল তাৰ এক বাস্তৱ চিত্ৰ হ'ল এই উপন্যাসখন।

অসমত বৰনগৰ থানাক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰি তাৰ চাৰিওকাষৰ গাঁওবিলাকত দ্বিতীয় মহাযুদ্ধৰ পৰিপ্ৰেক্ষিতত যুদ্ধ আয়োজনৰ নামত গাঁওবাসীয়ে যি অবগনীয় অকথ্য অত্যাচাৰ সহ্য কৰিছিল তাৰ জ্বলন্ত প্ৰমাণ উপন্যাসখনত স্পষ্ট। এই উপন্যাসখনৰ চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ মাজত বৈপ্লৱিক দিশটো স্পষ্টভাৱে প্ৰকাশ পাইছে, কিয়নো সমগ্ৰ উপন্যাসখন কিছুমান বিপ্লৱাত্মক আৰু অত্যাচাৰ-উৎপীড়নৰ পৰিস্থিতিয়ে বিৰাজ কৰি আছে। উপন্যাসখনৰ নায়ক শিৱনাথৰ বৈপ্লৱিক সত্ত্বাক উপন্যাসিকে ইয়াত বলিষ্ঠ পদক্ষেপেৰে অংকন কৰিছে। ৰে'লৰ দলং ভঙা, তৰা-বনৰ বিমানকোঠ নিৰ্মাণ কাৰ্যত অগ্নিসংযোগ, বৰনগৰ থানা আক্ৰমণ আৰু জাতীয় পতাকা উত্তোলন আদি কাৰ্যত শিৱনাথেই নেতৃত্ব লৈছিল। বিয়াল্লিশ চনৰ এই অগ্নিময় পৰিৱেশত সংঘটিত বিপ্লৱী কাৰ্যত অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰি শিৱনাথৰ সাহকৰ্মী অৰবিন্দ, নিজাম আৰু ৰূপৰাম শহীদ হয়। আনহাতে বৰনগৰ থানাত হেজাৰ হেজাৰ লোকক নেতৃত্ব দি জাতীয় পতাকা উৰুৱাবলৈ গৈ শিৱনাথ আৰু কাৰিকৰে মৃত্যুক আকৌৱালী লয়।

পুৰুষৰ সমানে নাৰীসকলেও এই বৈপ্লৱিক কাৰ্যত সক্ৰিয় অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰাৰ স্বাক্ষৰ উপন্যাসখনে বহন কৰিছে। উপন্যাসখনৰ নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ সাৱিত্ৰী আৰু উমাই ৰাস্তাৰ দলং ভঙাত অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰাৰ লগতে সুমিত্ৰাই বৰনগৰ থানাত তাঁৰৰ বেৰাৰ মাজত আবদ্ধ হৈ ৰঞ্জনৰ লগত বন্দীসমূহক পলাবলৈ পথ উলিয়াই দিয়াৰ দৰে দুঃসাহসীক কাৰ্যত লিপ্ত হৈছিল।

এনেদৰে দেখা যায় যে ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ প্ৰেক্ষাপটত গঢ় লৈ উঠা আন্দোলনৰ হিংসাত্মক ৰূপ এটা উপন্যাসখনত বিদ্যমান। স্ত্ৰী-পুৰুষ, ল'ৰা-ছোৱালী উভয়ে এই বিপ্লৱী কাৰ্যত অংশগ্ৰহণৰ ভিত্তিত স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ হিংসাত্মক নীতিয়েহে অসমত ব্যাপকতা লাভ কৰিছিল তাৰ স্পষ্ট আভাস উপন্যাসখনে দাঙি ধৰে। গতিকে, ক'ব পাৰি যে ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰি সংঘটিত হোৱা বিদ্ৰোহাত্মক কাৰ্যত অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰি অসমৰ অজস্ৰ বিপ্লৱীয়ে বহু কষ্ট-ত্যাগেৰে দেশৰ স্বাধীনতা আনিবলৈ গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ ভূমিকা পালন কৰিছিল।

ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ চিত্ৰ পৰিস্ফুট হোৱা অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ অন্যতম উল্লেখযোগ্য উপন্যাস হ'ল ত্ৰৈলোক্য ভট্টাচাৰ্যৰ 'সাঁচিপাতৰ পুথি'। তিনিটা সৰু সৰু খণ্ডত বিভক্ত হৈছে এই উপন্যাসখনৰ বিষয়বস্তু। অসমত বেপ্তিষ্ট মিছনেৰীসকলৰ প্ৰথম পদাৰ্পণ তথা কাৰ্যৰম্ভ, অৰুণোদয়ৰ যুগ আৰু চিপাহী বিদ্ৰোহ— এই তিনিটা অধ্যায়ত কাহিনীভাগ পৃথকে পৃথকে সন্নিৱিষ্ট কৰা হৈছে।

প্ৰকৃত অৰ্থত উপন্যাসখনৰ তৃতীয় খণ্ডতহে স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ পৰিপ্ৰেক্ষিতত গঢ়ি উঠা আন্দোলনৰ প্ৰতিচ্ছবি এখন পোৱা যায়। ১৮৫৭ চনৰ চিপাহী বিদ্ৰোহৰটো অসমত কেনেদৰে বিয়পি পৰিছিল আৰু এই বিদ্ৰোহৰ পৰিপ্ৰেক্ষিতত ব্ৰিটিছ শাসক চলোৱা অত্যাচাৰ অসমীয়া আন্দোলনকাৰীয়ে কেনেদৰে মূৰপাতি ল'ব লগা হৈছিল তাৰ তথ্যভিত্তিক বৰ্ণনা এই উপন্যাসখনত পোৱা যায়।

চিপাহী বিদ্ৰোহৰ টোৱে অসমৰ চিপাহী বেৰেকত সূচনা কৰা কাৰ্যকলাপৰ আভাস পোৱাৰ লগতে চিপাহীৰ মাজৰ পৰিপ্ৰেক্ষিতিক ঠিকাই এই বিদ্ৰোহৰ আয়োজন ধ্বংস কৰিবলৈ দিয়াৰ ইংগিতো উপন্যাসখনে বহন কৰিছে। ইংৰাজ শাসক শাসনৰ পৰা আঁতৰাবলৈ যোৱাৰ পৰিণতিত মণিৰাম দেৱান, পিয়লি বৰুৱা আদি বীৰপুৰুষসকলৰ কেনেদৰে শ্বহীদ হ'বলগা হ'ল তাৰ তথ্যও উপন্যাসখনত স্পষ্ট।

ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ এছোৱা অসমৰ সামাজিক আৰু ৰাজনৈতিক পটভূমিৰ উপস্থাপনৰ মাজতে উপন্যাসখনত অসমীয়াৰ স্বকীয় সত্ত্বাৰো প্ৰকাশ ঘটিছে। বিভিন্ন সময়ত বিভিন্ন ৰূপত দয়াৰামে, আনন্দৰাম ঢেকিয়াল ফুকনে, পিয়লি, বাহাদিল গাঁওবুঢ়া (অন্যতঃ বাহাদুৰ গাঁওবুঢ়া) ইত্যাদিয়ে একেটা আকাংক্ষাকে প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে— তীব্ৰতৰ মাত্ৰাৰ পাৰ্থক্য অৱশ্যে আছে— সেই আকাংক্ষা স্বাধীনতাৰ আকাংক্ষা, স্বকীয় সত্ত্বা বজাই ৰখাৰ আকাংক্ষা।^{১১১}

এনেদৰে উপন্যাসখনৰ মাজত ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰি গঢ়ি উঠা চিপাহী বিদ্ৰোহত অসমৰ জনতাই কঠোৰ শ্ৰম-ত্যাগেৰে অগ্ৰণী ভূমিকা পালন কৰাৰ প্ৰতিচ্ছবি অংকিত হৈছে। এই কঠোৰ শ্ৰম-ত্যাগৰ বাবেই দেশসেৱক আন্দোলনকাৰীসকলে ফাঁচিৰ দৰে শাস্তিও গ্ৰহণ কৰিবলৈ হেলাৰঙে আগবাঢ়ি গৈছিল। এনে ঘটনাৰ দ্বাৰা স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনত অসমীয়া বিপ্লৱীসকলে যে গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ ভূমিকা পালন কৰিছিল, তাৰ জ্বলন্ত নিদৰ্শন প্ৰকাশ পাইছে।

ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ লগতে এই সংগ্ৰামৰ পটভূমিত গঢ়ি উঠা অসহযোগ আন্দোলনৰ স্পষ্ট তথ্যভিত্তিক চিত্ৰ এখন চন্দ্ৰপ্ৰসাদ শইকীয়াৰ উপন্যাস 'জন্মান্তৰ'ত অংকিত কৰা হৈছে। এই উপন্যাসখনত এফালে ব্ৰিটিছ শাসকৰ ৰক্ষক অসমীয়া সামন্ত প্ৰভু আৰু আনহাতে মাতৃভূমিৰ স্বাধীনতাৰ সেৱাত ব্ৰতী দেশপ্ৰেমিকৰ মাজৰ দ্বন্দ্বই বিচিত্ৰতা আনিছে।

স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ প্ৰেক্ষাপটত গঢ় লোৱা অসহযোগ আন্দোলনত অসমৰ জনতাই কেনেদৰে অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰিছিল তাৰ বাস্তৱ চিত্ৰ এখন উপন্যাসখনত পোৱা যায়। আন্দোলনত অংশগ্ৰহণকাৰী ভলণ্টিয়াৰৰ কথোপকথনৰ মাজত পৰাধীন ভাৱৰ অতি দুখজনক অৱস্থাটো চিত্ৰিত কৰি দেশৰ জনসাধাৰণক স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত ব্ৰতী কৰিবলৈ চেষ্টা চলাইছিল। ভলণ্টিয়াৰসকলৰ সৈতে হোৱা বক্তৃতাৰ অন্তত স্বাধীন দেশ গঢ়াৰ সপোন অসমৰ জনতাৰ অন্তৰত জাগি উঠে। গান্ধীজীৰ অহিংস আদৰ্শই জনসাধাৰণক এনেদৰে প্ৰভাৱিত কৰে যে ব্ৰিটিছ শাসকৰ প্ৰতি তেওঁলোক ক্ৰমাৎ বিৰোধী হ'বলৈ ধৰে। উপন্যাসিকৰ ভাষাত—

'চৰকাৰৰ লগত, চৰকাৰৰ বিষয়াৰ লগত অসহযোগ কৰাৰ স্পৃহা সকলোৰে মনত উমি উমি জ্বলি উঠে। সকলোৰে মনত নিজৰ দেশৰ প্ৰতি ধীৰে ধীৰে মমতা জাগি উঠে। নিজৰ দেশক ভালপোৱাৰ প্ৰমাণ দিবলৈ তেওঁলোক আগ্ৰহী হয়।'^{১১২}

গান্ধীজীৰ অসহযোগ আন্দোলনে অসমৰ জনসাধাৰণক গভীৰভাৱে ৰেখাপাত কৰে। এই আন্দোলনত যোগদানকাৰী পোন্ধৰ বছৰীয়া ল'ৰাজনে মহকুমাধিপতি মেকমিলান চাহাবক ফাঁচিৰ শাস্তিৰ প্ৰত্যুত্তৰ যেনেদৰে দাঙি ধৰিছে, তাৰ মাজত এজন নিৰীক দেশপ্ৰেমিকৰ চৰিত্ৰ ৰূপায়িত হৈছে এনেদৰে—

'ফাঁচিৰ কথা কৈ কাক ভয় খুৱাব খুজিছা, চাহাব। ফাঁচিৰ কথাশুনি আমাৰ ভয় নালাগে। ... আৰু মোক ফাঁচি দিলেই বা কি হ'ব? পিছৰ জনমত মই আকৌ এইখন দেশলৈকে আহিম। আহি আকৌ তোমালোক বিদেশীৰ বিৰুদ্ধে সংগ্ৰাম কৰিমহি।'^{১১৩}

উপন্যাসখনৰ অন্যতম চৰিত্ৰ 'প্ৰকাশ'ৰ মাজত স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামী অসমীয়া ডেকাৰ দুখ-কষ্ট-ত্যাগৰ ছবি এখন বিচাৰি পোৱা যায়। দেশৰ স্বাধীনতাৰ অৰ্থে পঢ়া-শুনা ত্যাগ কৰি তথাকথিত ব্ৰিটিছ শাসনৰ ৰক্ষক নিজৰ 'মৌজাদাৰ ককায়েক'ৰ লগত প্ৰকাশে দ্বন্দ্বত অৱতীৰ্ণ হৈছে। দেশসেৱাকে জীৱনৰ ব্ৰত হিচাপে গ্ৰহণ কৰা প্ৰকাশে পঢ়া-শুনা, ভোগ-বিলাস, সুখ-শান্তি সকলো ত্যাগ কৰি অৱশেষত বিপ্লৱৰ কণ্টকময় পথত আত্মনিয়োগ কৰিছে। প্ৰকাশে কৈ উঠিছে—

'দেশ স্বাধীন হোৱাৰ পিছত আকৌ মই পঢ়িবলৈ আৰম্ভ কৰিম... দেশৰ প্ৰতি মোৰ এটা দায়িত্ব আছে। সেই দায়িত্বৰ পৰা আঁতৰি ঘৰত সোমাই থাকিলে মই বিবেকৰ দংশনৰপৰা ৰক্ষা নাপাম।'^{১১৪}

ইয়াৰ পিছত প্ৰকাশে সম্পূৰ্ণ বিপ্লবী পন্থা অৱলম্বন কৰি দেশসেৱাৰ কাৰ্যত আত্মনিয়োগ কৰিছে। এই উপন্যাসখনত 'সাদৰী' নামৰ বিধবা তিৰোতাগৰাকীৰ চৰিত্ৰৰ আলমত অসমীয়া নাৰীৰ স্বদেশপ্ৰেমী মনটোৰ আভাস দাঙি ধৰা হৈছে। গান্ধীৰ স্বাধীনতাকামী আদৰ্শই অসমৰ জনতাক কেনেদৰে উদ্বুদ্ধ কৰিছিল তাৰ আভাস গান্ধী অহা সভাখনত হোৱা বিপুল জনসমাগমেই দাঙি ধৰে। এই সভাত গান্ধীয়ে যেতিয়া হৰিজন ফাণ্ডলৈ ৰাইজৰ সাহায্য বিচাৰি প্ৰস্তাৱ আগবঢ়াইছিল তেতিয়া সভাত থকা প্ৰায়বোৰ তিৰোতাই নিজৰ হাতৰ-কাণৰ অলংকাৰ দান কৰিবলৈ ধৰিলে। সাদৰী নামৰ বিধবা তিৰোতাগৰাকীয়েও নিজৰ অংগৰ শেষ অলংকাৰখিনিৰে সাহায্য প্ৰদান কৰি কৃতার্থ হৈছে। ইয়াৰ পিছত অৰ্জুনপুৰ থানাত পতাকা উত্তোলন কৰিবলৈ গৈ এই দেশপ্ৰেমী তিৰোতাগৰাকীয়ে মৃত্যুক আঁকোৱালী লৈছে। উপন্যাসখনত বৰ্ণিত মতে প্ৰকাশে শেষত বিদ্ৰোহাত্মক পন্থাৰে দেশসেৱাত ব্ৰতী হৈছে। তাৰ অন্তৰত কেৱল স্বাধীন ভাৰতৰ ধ্বনিয়ে প্ৰতিধ্বনি তুলিছে আৰু সেয়েহে আত্মকথন ভংগীৰে সি শেষত 'জননী জন্মভূমিচ্চ স্বৰ্গাদপি গৰীয়সী' বুলি স্পষ্টভাৱে প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে। প্ৰকৃত্যৰ্থত এই উপন্যাসখনত ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত অসমে গ্ৰহণ কৰা সক্ৰিয় ভূমিকাৰ বাস্তৱ তথ্য বিস্তৃত ৰূপত ৰূপায়িত হৈছে। ইয়াৰ লগতে মহাত্মা গান্ধীৰ প্ৰতি থকা অসমীয়া মানুহৰ গভীৰ আস্থাৰ ছবি এখনো উপন্যাসখনে দাঙি ধৰে। তদুপৰি প্ৰকৃত দেশপ্ৰেমিক হ'বলৈ যে কঠোৰ শ্ৰমৰ লগতে ধৈৰ্যবো অশেষ প্ৰয়োজন সেই কথাৰ আভাসো উপন্যাসখনত পোৱা যায়। এককথাত ক'ব পাৰি যে ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত অসমে লোৱা অগ্ৰণী ভূমিকাৰ বাস্তৱ আৰু বিস্তৃত ছবি এখন উপন্যাসখনত অংকিত হৈছে।

ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত অসমৰ সক্ৰিয় ভূমিকা গ্ৰহণৰ নিদৰ্শনসমৃদ্ধ অন্যতম উপন্যাস হ'ল অৰুণ শৰ্মাৰ 'আশীৰ্বাদৰ ৰং'। এই উপন্যাসখনত প্ৰকৃত দেশপ্ৰেমিকসকলে নানা বাধা-বিধিনি ক্ৰমেণে কেনেদৰে দেশসেৱাৰ কামত আত্মনিয়োগ কৰে, সেই কথাকে চিত্ৰিত কৰা হৈছে। 'গজেন'ৰ চৰিত্ৰৰ মাধ্যমেৰে উপন্যাসখনত এনে দেশপ্ৰেমিকৰ চিত্ৰ ফুটাই তোলা হৈছে।

বাস্তৱিকতে এই উপন্যাসখনত সমত ব্ৰিটিছ সাম্ৰাজ্যবাদী শোষণ আৰম্ভ হোৱাৰ লগে লগে স্বাৰ্থস্বেষী অসমীয়া সামন্ত প্ৰভু শ্ৰেণীটোৱে দেশসেৱাত আত্মনিয়োগ কৰা জনসাধাৰণক কেনেদৰে পদে পদে বাধা প্ৰদান কৰিছিল সেই বিষয়েও বৰ্ণনা পোৱা যায়। সাধাৰণ শ্ৰেণীৰ এই প্ৰকৃত দেশপ্ৰেমিকসকলে বহু বাধা-বিধিনি অতিক্ৰম কৰি স্বাধীন ভাৰতৰ সংগ্ৰামত জঁপিয়াই পৰিছিল। স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনত যোগদান কৰা দেশসেৱক সাধাৰণ গঞা লোকসকলে ব্ৰিটিছ পুলিচৰ লাঠিৰ কোব, চৰ-গোৰ, বন্দুকৰ গুলী হাঁহিমুখে গ্ৰহণ কৰি দেশসেৱাত আত্মনিয়োগ কৰিছে। ভাৰতৰ এই স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ সময়ছোৱাত অসমত ৰোপণ হোৱা সাম্প্ৰদায়িকতাৰ বীজেও দেশখনলৈ অৰাজকতা আনি দিয়ে। সাম্প্ৰদায়িকতাৰ এনে এক প্ৰেক্ষাপট 'আশীৰ্বাদৰ ৰং'ত বিস্তৃত ৰূপত প্ৰকাশ পাইছে।

উপন্যাসখনৰ 'গজেন' চৰিত্ৰটোৰ মাধ্যমেৰে এজন একনিষ্ঠ দেশসেৱকৰ ছবি ফুটাই তোলা হৈছে। যিয়ে বহু বাধাৰ সন্মুখীন হৈ দেশসেৱাত মনোনিৱেশ কৰি জনসাধাৰণক একতাৰ ডোলেৰে বান্ধিব বিচাৰিছে। কিন্তু শেষত এনে এজন দেশপ্ৰেমিকে আৰক্ষীৰ নিষ্ঠুৰ আঘাত সহ্য কৰিব লগা হোৱাৰ লগতে শোষণকাৰী শ্ৰেণীটোৰ হাতত মৃত্যুবৰণ কৰিছে। জাতীয় পতাকাৰ প্ৰতি গজেনে দেখুওৱা সন্মানৰ মাজতো প্ৰকৃত দেশপ্ৰেমিকৰ স্বৰূপ ফুটি উঠিছে। স্বাধীন ভাৰতৰ পতাকা উত্তোলনৰ প্ৰথম সভাখনত সেয়েহে গজেনে যোগদান নকৰি নিজৰ ঘৰতে আইতাকৰ সৈতে পতাকা উত্তোলন কৰি স্বাধীনতাৰ আমেজ ল'ব বিচাৰিছে। কাৰণ ৰাজহুৱা সভাখনত স্বাৰ্থস্বেষী অসমীয়া দেশদ্রোহীৰ সংখ্যাই অধিকসংখ্যক আছিল, যিসকলে গজেনৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামী কাৰ্যত পদে পদে ব্যাঘাত জন্মাইছিল।

এনেদৰে উপন্যাসখনত স্বাধীন ভাৰতৰ সংগ্ৰামত ব্ৰতী একনিষ্ঠ সেৱকসকলৰ কঠোৰ ত্যাগৰ ছবি স্পষ্ট ৰূপত অংকিত কৰিবলৈ বিচৰা হৈছে। ইয়াৰ দ্বাৰাই অসমীয়া প্ৰকৃত দেশসেৱকসকলে যে অশেষ দুখ-কষ্টৰে স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত নামি পৰিছিল তাৰ বাস্তৱ ছবি এখন প্ৰতিফলিত হৈ উঠিছে।

সামৰণি :

ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত অসমৰ সংগ্ৰামী জনগণে অশেষ ত্যাগ-কষ্টৰে দেশসেৱাত আত্মনিয়োগ কৰিছিল। বুৰঞ্জীৰ পাতত বৈ যোৱা আৰু বুৰঞ্জীৰ অলঙ্কিত থাকি যোৱা স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামীৰ জীৱনৰ বহু বাস্তৱ তথ্য এই উপন্যাসকেইখনে দাঙি ধৰিব পাৰিছে। গতিকে, ক'ব পাৰি যে বিভিন্ন জাতি-জনজাতিৰ ডেকা-গাভৰু, পুৰুষ-মহিলা নিৰ্বিশেষে সমাজৰ সকলো স্তৰৰ লোকে নানা বাধা-বিধিনি ক্ৰমেণে ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত সক্ৰিয় অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰি যি বিশিষ্ট ভূমিকা পালন কৰিলে তাৰ

આ બેઠકે બંધી ઉપરના ઉત્કાચના અભ્યાસને પ્રોત્સાહન આપવાનો ઉદ્દેશ્ય રાખીને યોજાયેલ છે.

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**THE GROWTH OF ECONOMY IN NORTH EAST INDIA: A review on Trade activities
in early medieval Assam**

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The economy of Assam is greatly shaped by the topography of the North-East Region, the physical environment and soil as well as the demographic and socio-cultural forces. In fact, the situational and geographical factors must have some systematic relationship in any region. The growth of the early states is as well within those processes. The food supply, water resources, and geo-political location entangled in the pre-industrial and non-capitalistic ages. Those peoples also interacted with the environment more intimately and more continuously at that changing time. In the early 13th century, all the autochthonous groups had in appearance state like formations. It seems to have been formed in the context of the living and housing pattern, food and dress habit and culture. The political encompass attached the trade activities regarding to fulfillment of needs to human beings. The North-Eastern Route to China in India was of great importance in the history of commercial and cultural relations in Chinese sources to the southern sea-route to China from ancient Assam.

Geographically, the North-east region located in the periphery of the mainland India and the larger parts of the region consist of the lower hill ranges or splinters of the Himalayas, while the plains areas are connected with the Gangetic plains. The major plains segments are (i) the Brahmaputra valley, (ii) the Barak-Surama valley and the Tipura plains, and (iii) the Trans-Barak Manipur valley. The economic development of this region took place in endless way since early times from the Indo-Gangetic plains as well as the Himalayan and the Southeast Asian regions. The region today comprises of seven states of India, and provides 4,200 km. international boundary with Bangladesh, Myanmar, Bhutan and China, and is connected with the rest of the country by a narrow 'Siliguri neck' of less than 25 km. in North Bengal bordering lower Assam.¹

The source-materials are not enough for the wealth of the states in Northeast India in context of the trade policies and some old aged practices are still prevailing in its large parts. It is accredited by significance of likewise development of productions, urbanization, monetary, market, feudalism etc. Among these, the considerable emphasis has been placed on the level of production in the dynamics of the overall economic scene. The Brahmaputra valley laid in the heartland of the state of Assam where many small rivers continuously flowing through the hills supplies abundant of manure. The valley and its tributaries which originate in the Himalayas, traverse these extremely fertile alluvial plain that covers large areas which the process have appeared under the study, relating to production and distribution.² It is well documented from the reference that the King Bhagadatta of Kamarupa supplied manpower, equipments and valuable objects, including gold, to support the war efforts of the Kauravas in the battle of Kurukhetra.³ The growth of the craft technology seems in the Harshacharit⁴ about the different presents sent by Vaskarvarmana to Harsha. In early medieval period when Sukapha established his capital at Charaideo, the local inhabitants like Moran, Borahi, etc. offered valuable and inevitable things to the king, as evidence enough to the contemporary status of economy.⁵ It is important that the development of castes on the basis of various professional, lead to the growth of various crafts and

industries in the society. The necessity for an economic base for growth and manufacture of a state shaped and organized led to growth of various crafts and individuals like agriculture.

Some scholars say that the tribal and non-tribal strains, urban or semi-urban pockets or rural areas around the capital as to be seen in different context, possibly rested upon an economic interdependence that mutually advantageous and essentially non-competitive.⁶ Sanskritisation in the valley also led to the growth of craft/ industries and trade/ commerce. The changes came into the industrial life of the people of the Brahmaputra valley and necessary to compare between the contents of important data regarding economic pursuits in the North East. It is found in reference that the Kirata people's particularly predicted as-Sandal-wood, agallo-chum, cloths, germs, rubies, pearls and blankets, gold, silver and very hard lapis-lazuli.⁷

Besides, the evidence shows that crafts and industries such as that of weaving, carpentry, leather works, bamboo and cane, work on gold, silver and other metals, ivory works, jewellery making etc. developed after the foundation of the Ahom state in the 13th century A.D. Epigraphic and literary sources like-palm-leaf (*talapatra*), birch-bark (*bhurjapatra*), the land-grant inscriptions, population records in the Tai chronicles, a serious census operation in the early 16th century and the literary works of pre-Sankardeva indicate the economic status under the study. To the crown ownership, trade was a primary means of consumption that the king should notify the autonomy in production to underlying the control over them. The trade extent was a policy from the west part of the Brahmaputra valley in case of production and extraction to raise the new strategy of their liberal mind for increasing force and economic aid.⁸

Both internal and external commerce were highly developed in agricultural and industrial products. Assam possibly exported more commodities than those imported from outside. Inscriptions refer to direct and good road connections between towns and both road and water connection with other countries. There was a class of people called "Sadagars" who carried the merchandise of Assam in large boats to distant lands on the sea-coast. The cultural and commercial contact between Assam and China both by land and sea routes is shown by various sources. Trade and commerce were also carried on with other countries like Tibet, Bhutan and Lanka and commercial intercourse was maintained with the South-East Asian countries. Some other contract was maintained with Magadha, Gujarat and Kashmir to extent the media of exchange with them.⁹

Moreover, trade activities are related with the currency system based on *kapardakas* or cowries in the Brahmaputra valley during the period of study witnessed the ramification of industry and commerce. The base was related to a unit of silver ingot and also a unit of gold, each having a fixed weight. The system was occasionally supplemented by coins, which could be exchanged with cowries. In the Barak valley area Silver coins, related to the Silver coinage of Harikela (south-Eastern Bangladesh) came into circulation. The practice of carrying on trade through exchange of goods, known to have been a practice in different parts of proto-medieval India, could have continued in medieval India, including the area of Assam.¹⁰ They had trained officials to connect the sea-route to China or of the maritime route to Burma which was connected by land with China.

It can be said, 'the main stimulus of the monarchical system was control over the avenues of material wealth, and its acquisition and accumulation by a non-producing minority'.¹¹ It goes without saying that trade (internal or external) is considered as an important component of economy. It is also an index to the wealth of a state or region, for trade is possible only when there are enough commodities either raw-materials or manufactures to export or exchange. The participation in external trade is, therefore, possible only for a wealthy state. In fact, an indication of the wealth of the Northeast is the extensive nature of its external trade in the early period. Detailing the 'earliest datable routes', 'economic

products, craft and industries', 'articles of export and import', 'mechanism of trade', and 'state and the external trade'.

Trade: Internal and External

The major portion of the region, called Northeast India today, is hill state while Assam covers both hills and plains. The opening to the Indo-Gangetic plains near Dhubri that forms a narrow neck, the rest of the Brahmaputra valley is encircled by a continuous hill chain in succession by Garo, Khasi-Jaintia, Dimasa, Karbi, Naga, Arunachalese and the Bhutanese hills like a garland. It is not impossible that the markets and the neighbouring areas influenced the technological innovations and refinement. In fact, one of the chronicles mentioned that a person man aged to visit Tipura and stay there for a long time to learn iron technology and on his return there was virtually a revolution in iron-work.¹²

These must have been common modes while trade between Assam plains and the rest of India was maintained through the Brahmaputra a chain of foothill marts and fair served as the necessary base for the plains-hill transactions. We have referenced about the volume of internal and external trade was rather small and the economy of the region was far from self-sufficient in a state which passed through an unprecedented economic crisis in the crucial existence. But some of the minor craft like pottery works, gold washing, weaving etc. produced in good quality. The gold also locally collected (from river sand) derived as an important industry as well as other crafts products in Assam from which the rulers might have earned a considerable amount of revenue.

The mobilizing groups of the people as seems always who preferred only the riverine forest areas. They multiplied labour, oxen, other animals and agricultural implements due to more production. It was the upward flow of agricultural products and craft items into higher riches of the marketing system. The extraction and the market were linked by the state, in fact led to the formation of the credit network. Guha shows, 'many groups of people were engaged in exchanges of their products with their neighbours while money was used extensively. It can be stated, there were not using of coins as the means of money exchanged in the North-Eastern India comprising the Brahmaputra valley due to the lack of industrial growth (or technological barrier) while the barter ruled out the capital accumulation in the local network of exchange.

When money was not introduced the exchange of goods for goods used as continuous process in the society through barter. Before the barter system, there was direct distribution of goods among the people without any system of exchange. The people then jointly produced and distributed the goods amongst themselves. It was major confusion about networks of credit in the early medieval period of North East India particularly in Assam.¹³ There was evidence from other lands that the shortage of bullion and coins does not necessarily lead to a strengthening of feudal or personal ties. For our better understanding about the economic exchange, either coins or cowry and barter, we have planned to telescope to the Indian method of introducing.

Ambari Rock Inscription shows, 'made of kaolin or Chinese clay' which made of the same clay used for making pottery vessels and terracotta art objects in China. However the range of goods that figures as exchangeable items may be large due to kind purchases. Another issue was the delineation of the conditions under which increased mercantile activity was associated with the terms *hatta* was widespread which as signifying centre of exchange and *mandapika* a centre where commercial chess was imposed and collected. To strengthen the feudal ties/ties of personal dependence some location for centre of exchange have created by ruling lineage.¹⁴ The eastward movement by the Aryans in the Brahmaputra valley in search of valuable commodity and they obviously had the mature knowledge to 'plough-economy & transplantation' as well as constant dynamics in trade and commerce.

In case of Northeast region the Khasis and Jayantias were expert iron smith.¹⁵ Archeologists had discovered a pit of indigenous iron smelting technology which turned the economic development in

the Borpathar-Dubaroni areas in Golaghat. At the arrival period of Ahom, the local population cultivated paddy without the use of the plough. They used the hoe or the digging stick, land rotation for fallowing, slash and burn, and seed sowing having no knowledge of the transplantation method in the both valley: Brahmaputra and Barak-Surama. M. Momin indicates how the local 'big men' appropriated socio-economic power. But the data regarding those persons associated with the function of revenue collection and its distribution.

The paddy fields, homesteads, ponds, mounds, refuse lands, and other provisions for productivity required a self-contained rural life. The natural products and horticultural activities included fruit, timber, cash-crops and flowering.¹⁶ The growing urban centres included the political headquarters, places of pilgrimage and trade centres. The urban centres were not much different from the rural settlements in general outlook, and the demand for non-agricultural production was very limited and the trade only supplemented a subsistence economy. It is found that the rice production was important factor of state formation in the early Brahmaputra Valley and the land grants generally formed undeveloped and isolated pockets and this isolation was to a great extent responsible for the slow economic development.¹⁷

The Kacharis excavated channel for water communication where the plain portions contributed more to the states-wealth than the hills divisions. The sources of income included land revenue, house tax, taxation of mines and minerals (salt wells), exercised by the kings on export and import, the duty levied on transit stations and markets, and the gifts and tributes received from the hill chiefs and the head of the villages on festive occasions.¹⁸ They used timber and bamboos and mud plasters walls. The kings contact with Bengal and settled peasants for reclamation of the forested and fallow lands in the plains division to increase the product. Besides internal revenue, the kings earned income from external trade. The fertile agricultural lands in the plains and the forest rich in timber and abounded by elephants constituted the wealth of the state.

In Ahom's case the process of political consolidation over the centuries was coterminous with the twin processes and one of them is economic consolidation through market links.¹⁹ Their use of buffaloes as the major source of animal power, as in south-east Asia, was another factor that contributed to their efficiency in bringing wastelands under the plough. However, their main strength lay in the traditional Tai militia system they shared with their kinsmen in Thailand and Vietnam. Such a militia had to render service to the state for all public purposes in war and peace. Next to defense, the most important function of this militia was to build and maintain an infrastructure for the wet-rice economy.²⁰ Various professional communities occupied the industries of the states. These industries were mainly pottery making, gold & black-smithy, carpentry, brick making etc. Gold was collected from some rivers of the country. As such, gold washing became an industry of the same. Of all the industries of the state the most important was silk industry. Since long past Assam has a great reputation for her silk fabrics. The three varieties of silk viz. Muga, Pat and Endi produce by the people.²¹ The Ahom king made guilds for the artisans in Assam where the arts and crafts have been practiced. The iron ores found in the Tiru hills near Charaidew, where extracted and smelted by blacksmiths, a guild called the *Tiruwals*.²² The poll taxes were realized annually from gold washers, braziers, oil-pressures, fishermen, silk weavers, and the hill tribes.

The Chutiyas, first settled in the lower Brahmaputra valley and gradually poured into upper parts and set up their kingdom ousting the Kacharis who were then inhabiting round about Sadiya. The region was in abundant wild life and good qualities timber, and elephant catching and boat-building must have emerged as profitable industries. Black-smithy, jewellery, wood-work and aromatics, manufacture of silk and lace and several minor crafts like brick-building, leather-work and pottery are known from epigraphic and literary evidence. The fact that the Chutiyas were one of the earliest tribes of the valley to be Hinduised and to form a state, might be pointed to their surplus economy. The growth

of numbers of professions among the people of this kingdom like Tanti, Kahar, Sonari as mentioned earlier, indicates the growth of some rural industries among the Chutiyas.²³

The archeological ruins which are ascribed to the Chutiyas bear close similarity to the art of Orissa or of the Guptas in other parts of India. The splendours of the capital cities were more magnificent. The presence of the routes, trade centres and trading castes or communities are also known from the same sources. While the barter system was definitely followed in internal trade, the references in various sources to gold coins and black and white cowries could be relevance as medium of exchange for external trade.²⁴ The Chutiya state was mostly developed in case of external trade. Since early time, the Chutiyas contracted with the neighbouring countries like Tibet, China and Myanmar, and closely with west India to open the business way into the foothills of Sadiya as a international marketing place.

In the Koch Kingdom the peoples cultivated rice, different kinds of pulses, fruits and vegetables, and mustard seeds, areca-nut and betel-vines were the common articles for trade. Cotton also appeared to have been cultivated by a large number of people in the hilly parts of Chikanagram area. Of the cultivated fruits the most common were jack-fruit, coconut, orange, mango, olive, myrobala, bananas, emblica etc. and different kind of citrus fruits like lemon and shaddock. The list includes, besides those already mentioned, grape, papaya, brinjal, plum, guava, pomegranate etc. Shihabuddin Talish mentions that a large number of oranges was produced in the Koch kingdom, and Stephen Cacella writes, Koch Behar is 'famous for its fruits, which are better here than I have seen them in India, and especially for its oranges of every kind'.²⁵

The traditional trade routes to Tibet passed through this territory, and there are reports of brick trade with neighbouring Bhutan on one side and the Garo Hills on the other. The rivers provided the channels of trade, and the state collected tolls on trade. The construction of palaces and temples and the public utility measures like the digging of large number of tanks and construction of important roads are examples of the wealth of the state. The Koch king (Naranarayana) also came into contact with the north-eastern states, namely, the Ahom state, Jayantiya, Khyrim, Dimarua, Dimasa, Manipur, Tripura and the sultan of Bengal. The North-eastern campaign was possibly the collection of booty, indeed accomplished with remarkable success, as a part of the scheme to strengthen its position for an assault on the Muslim rulers of Bengal.²⁶

The trade relations in Assam with Bengal, Tibet and Bhutan supplemented the income. In fact, Cooch Bihar was the centre of inter-state commercial transaction between Bengal, Assam and Bhutan. The Koch kings raised Considerable revenue from *Hatkar*, *Ghatkar*, *Din* etc. from the trader and manufactures. The state also earned income by supplying a large number of elephants which were captured by kheddah. The economy was monetized to a limited extend.²⁷ Although like all other north-eastern states of the time the Koch coins were mostly commemorative in nature, there were also trade coins as in terms of large quantity known as far. The number Naranarayana's coins seem to be the largest among those issued by the kings in Northeast. These served the purpose of medium of exchange in the neighbouring areas.²⁸

However, the most noted industries were silk and textile. This part of the country has a reputation from very early times for its indigenous silk-*pat*, *muga* and *endi*, manufactured from cocoon.²⁹ Sualkuchi in the present district of Kamarupa, which has been the most noted centre of silk industry in Assam, might have been so during the days of the early Koch kings as well. Verities of flowers and fruits i.e. wild and cultivated which not to be met with elsewhere in the whole of India. The *cocoanut*, *nim*, *pepper*, *spikenard* and many species of lemon are abundant. Mangoes are full of worms, but plentiful and sweet though yielding scanty juice. Its pineapples, sugarcane is of the black, red and white verities exchanged with the neighbouring states.

Economic Change and Present Commercial Trend

References have been made in inscriptions of the *vaniks* and *vipanis* and also of the horses, elephants and camels which carried on internal trade. Marketable commodities were exported not only to the neighbouring provinces but also to adjacent countries: Burma, Tibet and China by mountain passes, land and water routes. The promotion to the internal trade extended by the Ahom monarchs by setting up hats or markets at convenient locations. Disposal of surplus produce was the primary objectives of these markets. Dihingia set-up a mart at Dalauguri while his son and successor Suklengmung established another on the bank of the Dikhow for the new settlement after clearing the jungles of the two banks. Obviously the trade circles constituted to growth the population and settlement.

We have planned in our framework that the Northeast Indian scenario was unlikely to be different from the global historical experience in formation of the early medieval states. It is found in the investigation of Surajit Sinha, who included among the case studies, the Ahom, Dimasa, Meitei, Jaintia, Khasi and Mizo politics and identified 'surplus generation, extraction and redistribution' as a governing factor in the polity and state formation processes and noted a significant correlation between the degree of surplus generated through appropriate technological innovations and the level of functional differentiation, stratification and centralization of a polity.

It is the current trend that the large-scale population movements and migrations in the post-partition decades have caused dramatic changes in the demographic ratios and the social and cultural mix of people in some states where the local population feared endangered and beleaguered. Even through, there exists a great diversity; the people of the Northeastern region have now entered economically distinct groups and frequently they started boundary dispute among the hill tribes, the plain tribes and the non-tribal population of the plains. In spite of the modernization and emergence of the present day problems, the people still dearly cherish the essence of country's old mutual trade ties and culture.

The colonial policy in the North-east was aimed at the socio-economic and political segregation of the hills and the plains. Social division and inequalities are convenient tools in the arsenal of the colonizers to pay off one against the other. While the economic upheavals appeared in the society in the region, some of the social ills, particularly of the tribal societies, were presented by the western elites with a contemptuous trade potentiality from the implements are automatically increased. The artisan and craftsmen, like *kumar*, *kamar*, *tanti*, *jugi*, *sudradhar* etc. were also required to hand over a fixed share of the products to the hands of the villages for the palace and even the headman made higher demands to retain portion for them.

A major outcome of Globalization, many theoretician believe, is the gradual and in evitable decline of the nation-state. With the rise of a transnational capitalist class and groups, heralded by the growing prominence of international institutions- such as the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Funds, and the World Banks- the national demarcation lost all utility. The structural adjustment policies have often a very high social cost of the so called welfare states of the third world countries. Under stood in that light, globalization is an evil that needs to be resisted at all costs. This can partly account for the numerous anti-globalization demonstrations in many parts of the world including the Northeast particularly in Assam.³⁰

Conclusion

It was widely felt that the time had come to take a new look and serve as a vested interest where the hill societies have also witnesses great change over the past decades. New sources of wealth including commercial forestry and craze for 'white collar' or govt. jobs by the emerging middle class people etc., are creating sharp social stratification in North-eastern societies; and because of these social changes new and newer challenges to the Nation-state are coming from the 'periphery' i.e. the

north-East. All said, the observation in this discourse are preliminary or synoptic in nature and can not go beyond making a plea for exploring more empirical evidence for future research on the subject in the specific context of North East India. The role of wealth can be further explained with the trade activities in the region. The requirement of the wealthy states, and this factor enabled the Meitei, Tipuri, Dimasa, Koch, and the Ahom states to survive till the British colonization.

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অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ইতিহাসত খৃষ্টান মিছনেৰী সকল

যোগেন চন্দ্ৰ শইকীয়া
অধ্যাপক, অসমীয়া বিভাগ
মাধৱদেৱ মহাবিদ্যালয়

১.০. সূচনা :

আধুনিক অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ত্ৰান কৰ্তা আৰু প্রতিষ্ঠাতা স্বৰূপে ঊনবিংশ শতিকাত অসমলৈ অহা আমেৰিকাৰ খৃষ্টান মিছনেৰী সকলে গ্ৰহণ কৰা ভূমিকা অসমীয়া ভাষা-সাহিত্য তথা জাতীয় জীৱনৰ ইতিহাসত চিৰস্মৰণীয়। আহোম ৰাজত্বৰ বেছি মান যোৱাৰ লগে লগে অন্ধকাৰাচ্ছন্ন হৈ পৰাৰ সময়ত খৃষ্টান ধৰ্মৰ বস্তি জলাবলৈ অহা মিছনেৰী সকলেই আমাৰ ভাষাৰ অন্ধকাৰ দূৰ কৰিবলৈ দায়িত্ব লৈছিল। তেওঁলোকৰ যত্ন আৰু সেৱা অবিহনে আজিৰ অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ অৱস্থিতি অকল্পনীয় হ'লহেতেন।

ইষ্ট ইণ্ডিয়া কোম্পানীয়ে মিছনেৰী সকলক আমন্ত্ৰণ কৰাৰ মূলতে ধৰ্মাস্তকৰণতকৈ ৰাজনৈতিক আৰু নিৰাপত্তামূলকহে আছিল। থামাটিক আৰু চিংফৌ বিলাকৰ সঘনাই হোৱা লুটপাট আৰু অত্যাচাৰত শদিয় অঞ্চলত অশান্তিৰ সৃষ্টি হৈছিল। দমন কৰাতকৈ তেওঁলোকক বাঁচুৰ কণী প্ৰচাৰেৰে আয়ত্বলৈ অনাৰ উদ্দেশ্যে গৱৰ্ণৰ জেনেৰেলৰ এজেণ্ট কেপ্তেইন জেনকিন্সে বংগ সচিবলৈ ১৯৩৫ চনত মানদেশত প্ৰচাৰ কাৰ্য কলাই থকা আমেৰিকাৰ খৃষ্টান মিছনেৰী সকলক আমন্ত্ৰণ জনাবলৈ অনুৰোধ কৰিছিল। বঙ্গ সচিবৰ প্ৰস্তাব আমেৰিকান বোৰ্ডে গ্ৰহণ কৰি ব্ৰহ্মদেশৰ কাম কৰি থকা নাথান ব্ৰাউন আৰু ওলিভাৰ টি কট্টাৰক শদিয়াত মিচন পাতিবলৈ পঠায়। বৰ্ডৰ নিৰ্দেশ পালন কৰি ব্ৰাউন আৰু কট্টাৰ ১৮৩৬ চনৰ ২৩ মাৰ্চ তাৰিখে শদিয়া পালেহি। তেওঁলোকক সহযোগ কৰিবলৈ ১৮৩৭ চনত মাইলচ বন্দন শদিয়ালৈ আহে। হঠাতে ১৯৩৯ চনৰ ২৮ জানুৱাৰী পূৱতি নিশা থামাটিক সকলে সৈন্য বাহিনীৰ চাউনী আক্ৰমণ কৰি সকলো চিপাহী আৰু মেজৰ হোৱাইট চাহাবক কাটি গেলালে। এই ভয়তে মিছনেৰী সকলে নাৱ এখনত উঠি ভটিয়াই আহি বৰ্তমানৰ তিনিচুকীয়া জিলাৰ জয়পুৰত আশ্ৰয় ললেহি। তিনি চাৰি বছৰ লাভ কৰিব নোৱাৰি ১৮৪৩ চনত নাথান ব্ৰাউন আৰু ওলিভাৰ টি কট্টাৰ শিৱসাগৰলৈ আহে। মাইলচ বন্দন নগৰলৈ গৈ এটি মিচন স্থাপন কৰে।

১.১. অসমীয়া সাহিত্য :

অসমীয়া সাহিত্য বুলি কলে মৌখিক সাহিত্যৰ কথা দি লিখিত সাহিত্যৰ নিৰ্দেশন পোৱা যায় খৃষ্টীয় চতুৰ্দশ শতিকাত। ইয়াৰ পৰৱৰ্তী বছৰ পৰাই অসমীয়া সাহিত্যই বিকাশ লাভ কৰাৰ পথত অগ্ৰসৰ হয়। এই অসমীয়া সাহিত্যই ক্ৰমে বিশালতৰ হৈ পৰে- শংকৰদেৱ আৰু তেখেতৰ সমসাময়িক কবি সাহিত্যিকৰ লগতে অনুগ্ৰামী শিষ্য প্ৰশিষ্যৰ হাতত। অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ সৃষ্টি আৰু বিকাশত ৰাজ পৃষ্ঠপোষকতাৰ ভূমিকাও আছিল অপৰিসীম। চতুৰ্দশ শিকাতে আৰম্ভ হোৱা অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ এই প্ৰবাহ গ্ৰহণ-বৰ্জন নীতিৰে আজি একবিংশ শতিকালৈ এক নিৰ্বাচ্ছিন্ন গতিৰে বৈ আছে।

১.২. অসমীয়া সাহিত্য আৰু মিছনেৰী সকল চতুৰ্দশ শিকাৰ পৰা একবিংশ শতিকালৈ প্ৰবাহিত অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ সূতি যে এক নিৰ্দিষ্ট ক্ৰমত বৈ আছিল, সেইকথা কব নোৱাৰি। আৰ্থাৎ নিৰ্বাচ্ছিন্ন গতিৰে বৈ থকা অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ প্ৰবাহ বিভিন্ন সময়ত স্তব্ধ হৈ যোৱাৰ উপক্ৰমে হৈছিল। বিশেষকৈ মানৱ তৃতীয় আক্ৰমণ আৰু ইয়াণ্ডাবু সন্ধিৰ পাছত অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ৰচনা আৰু বিকাশৰ প্ৰবাহ প্ৰায় স্তব্ধ হৈ পৰিছিল। ইয়াৰ এটা অন্যতম প্ৰধান কাৰণ হ'ল অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ দুৰাৱস্থা। বঙলালোকৰ প্ৰৰোচনাত বৃটিশ চৰকাৰে ১৮৩৬-১৮৭২ চনলৈকে অসমীয়া ভাষাক স্কুল-আদালতৰ পৰা বিতাড়িত কৰা কাৰ্যই অসমীয়া ভাষা-সাহিত্যৰ গঠন আৰু বিকাশত অন্তৰায়ৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল। স্তব্ধ হৈ যাব পৰা অসমীয়া ভাষা সাহিত্যক পুনঃ উজ্জীৱিত কৰি তুলিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছিল। খৃষ্ট ধৰ্মৰ প্ৰচাৰৰ উদ্দেশ্যে অসমত পৰ্দাপণ কৰা মিছনেৰী সকলৰ প্ৰচেষ্টাত অসমীয়া ভাষা-সাহিত্যৰ ইতিহাসত মিছনেৰী সকলৰ অবদান সম্পৰ্কে কেইটামা দিশ তলত উল্লেখ কৰা হ'ল।

১.২.১ ইংৰাজ চৰকাৰৰ ভুল ভাবনীতিৰ সৰ্ব প্ৰতিবাদ জাতীয় সাহিত্যৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত জাতীয় ভাষাৰ গুৰুত্ব অসীম। যিকোনো জাতিৰ সৃষ্টি, সৰল জাতীয় ভাষা অবিহনে সেই জাতিটোৰ সৰল জাতীয় সাহিত্যৰ কথা কেতিয়াও কল্পনা কৰিব পৰা নাযায়। অসমীয়া জাতিৰ জাতীয় ভাষাৰ প্ৰসংগত ইংৰাজ চৰকাৰে গ্ৰহণ কৰা ভুল নীতিয়ে জাতিটোৰ জাতীয় সাহিত্যৰ বিকাশত অন্তৰায়ৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল। কিন্তু খ্ৰীষ্ট ধৰ্ম প্ৰচাৰৰ উদ্দেশ্যে অহা মিছনেৰী সকলে ইংৰাজ চৰকাৰৰ ভুল ভাবনীতিৰ বিৰুদ্ধে যুঁজ দিয়াৰ উপৰিও কাকত পত্ৰৰ দ্বাৰা ভুলবোৰ আঙুলিয়াই দিছিল। মোকট মিলাচৰ প্ৰতিবেদনত (১৮৫৪) অসমীয়াৰ ঠাইত বঙলা প্ৰবৰ্তন কৰা কাৰ্যক নিন্দাকবি পুনৰ অসমীয়া ভাষা প্ৰবৰ্তন কৰাৰ সপক্ষে যুক্তি দিয়াৰ দাবী কৰিছিল। এইক্ষেত্ৰত মাইলচ ব্ৰনছন, নাথান ব্ৰাউন, ডেন ফোৰ্থ, হুইটিং, ওৱাৰ্ড আদিৰ নাম বিশেষভাবে উল্লেখ কৰিব পাৰি। ইয়াৰ উপৰিও ১৮৭২ চনত ব্ৰনছন চাহাবৰ নেতৃত্বত অসমীয়া ভাষাক প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰাৰ বাবেই ব্ৰনছন চাহাবে নিজৰ নেতৃত্বত বঙ্গ গৱৰ্ণৰ জৰ্জ কেম্বলৰ ওচৰত

স্মাৰক পত্ৰও প্ৰদান কৰিছিল। মিছনেৰী সকলৰ সৰ্ব প্ৰতিবাদৰ বাবেই ইংৰাজ চৰকাৰে নিজৰ ভুল বুজি পাই ১৮৭৩ চনত পঢ়াশালি আৰু আদালতত অসমীয়া ভাষাক পুনৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰিছিল।

১.২.২. জাতীয় লেখক গোষ্ঠীৰ সৃষ্টিত মিছনেৰী সকল যিকোনো এটা জাতিৰ জাতীয় সাহিত্যৰ ভেঁটি সুদৃঢ় হ'বলৈ হ'লে জাতিটোৰ মাজত এচাম লেখক গোষ্ঠীৰ বাৰুকৈয়ে প্ৰয়োজন আছে। অসমীয়া জাতীয় সাহিত্যৰ ভেঁটি প্ৰতিষ্ঠাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো তেনে এচাম লেখক গোষ্ঠীৰ নাম আমি সততে মনত পেলাব লাগিব। এই লেখক গোষ্ঠী সৃষ্টিৰ মূলতে আছিল মিছনেৰী সকল। অসমীয়া এই লেখক গোষ্ঠীৰ ভিতৰত আমি আনন্দৰাম ঢেকীয়াল ফুকন, নিধিৰাম ফাৰবেল, যাদুৰাম ডেকা বৰুৱা, সোণাৰচাঁদ ডেকাবৰুৱা, পূৰ্ণানন্দ বৰুৱা, হেমচন্দ্ৰ বৰুৱা, গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱা, বলৰাম ফুকন, কিনাৰাম সত্ৰিয়া আদিৰ নাম বিশেষ ভাবে উল্লেখযোগ্য।

১.২.৩. ব্যাকৰণ, অভিধান আদি প্ৰণয়নৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত মিছনেৰী সকলে অসমীয়া ভাষাক পুনৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰিয়েই ক্ষান্ত থকা নাছিল; তেওঁলোকে ভাষাটোৰ গাঁঠনিক দিশ অৰ্থাৎ ব্যাকৰণ, অভিধান আদিও প্ৰণয়ন কৰিছিল। এই ক্ষেত্ৰত উইলিয়াম ৰবিন্সন চাহাবৰ 'এ গ্ৰামাৰ অব আচামিজ লেংগুৱেজ'; নাথান ব্ৰাউনৰ 'গ্ৰামেটিকেল নট্চ অব দ্যা আছামিজ লেংগুৱেজ'ৰ কথা উল্লেখ কৰিব পাৰি। মিছেচ এইচ বি. এল কট্টাবে ইংৰাজী অসমীয় শব্দকোষ; মিছেচ এছ আৰ ওৱাৰ্ডে ইংৰাজী আৰু অসমীয়াৰ চমু শব্দ কোষ ৰচনা কৰি অসমীয়া ভাষাক সবল কৰি তোলাৰ প্ৰয়াস কৰিছিল।

১.২.৪. আলোচনী আৰু বাতৰি কাকতৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত মিছনেৰী সকলেই অসমত মিছন প্ৰেছ স্থাপন কৰি সংবাদ পত্ৰ তথা বাতৰি কাকত প্ৰচলনৰ শুভাৰম্ভ কৰে। এই ক্ষেত্ৰত ১৮৪৬ চনৰ জানুৱাৰীত শিৱসাগৰৰ মিছন প্ৰেছৰ পৰা প্ৰকাশ পোৱা সংবাদ পত্ৰ 'অৰুণোদয়' কথা উল্লেখ কৰিব পাৰি। অৰ্থ বিপৰ্যয়ৰ মাজতো কাকতখনে প্ৰায় ১৮৮০ চনলৈকে এৰাধৰাকৈ প্ৰকাশ পাইছিল। খৃষ্টান ধৰ্মৰ প্ৰচাৰৰ বাহিৰেও কাকতখনত বিভিন্ন দেশ বিদেশৰ বাতৰি, চীনাযুদ্ধ, স্পেইনৰ বিদ্ৰোহ, ভূগোল, বিজ্ঞান, জ্যোতিবিদ্যা, প্ৰাকৃতিক বুৰঞ্জী, উপন্যাসোপম কাহিনী, জীৱ-জন্তু, গছ বিৰিখৰ বিবৰণ, অসমৰ বিভিন্ন বুৰঞ্জী সমূহৰ প্ৰকাশ, সমাজ সংস্কাৰ মূলক প্ৰবন্ধ, কানি বৰ বিহৰ বিষয়ে সমালোচনা, মাহটোৰ পঞ্জিকা আদি অনেক বিষয়ৰ লিখনিৰে অসমৰ মানুহৰ মানসিক দিগন্ত প্ৰসাৰিত কৰি তুলিছিল। এইদৰে কাকতখনে পশ্চিমীয়া ভাৱ তথা বিদ্যাৰ সৰবৰাহৰ জৰিয়তে অসমীয়াৰ বৌদ্ধিক আৰু ৰাজনৈতিক জাগৰণ আনিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছিল।

১.২.৫. পাঠ্যপুথি ইস্কুল খোলাৰ লগে লগে দেখা দিয়া পাঠ্য পুথিৰ সমস্যা নিৰ্মূল কৰি পাঠ্য পুথিগণিত, ভূগোল, সাধাৰণ জ্ঞান, বৰ্ণমালা, আদিৰ গ্ৰন্থ ৰচনা কৰি উলিয়ায়। ইয়াৰ বাহিৰেও যোচেফৰ বুৰঞ্জী, ধৰ্মশাস্ত্ৰৰ অংশ বিশেষ, বাইবেলৰ সাধু, জাত্ৰিকৰ জাত্ৰা, মুক্তিৰ বাট, পণ্ডিত আৰু ধৰ্ম প্ৰচাৰক, হেনৰি আৰু তেওঁ লগুৱা, নিউ টেষ্টামেণ্ট অসমীয়া ভাঙনি, ধাৰ্মিক চহা, মাউৰা ছোৱালী, সৰুকালৰ ধৰ্ম, বিজ্ঞানৰ কাহিনী আদি অনেক পাঠ্য পুথি ৰচনা কৰিছিল। কাশী নাথ তামুলী ফুকনৰ আসাম বুৰঞ্জী ছপা কৰি উলিয়াইছিল। একে গাৰ্গায়ে ৰুথ আৰু যোচেফৰ কাহিনী, কাণি বেহেৰুৱাৰ কথা, এলোকেশী, বেশ্যাৰ কথা, কামিনী কান্তৰ চৰিত্ৰ, ফুলমণি আৰু কৰুণা আদি উপন্যাসোপম কাহিনী ৰচনা কৰিছিল।

১.৩. যীচুখ্ৰীষ্টৰ বাণী প্ৰচাৰৰ উদ্দেশ্য লৈয়ে আমেৰিকান মিছনেৰী সকলে অসমত পদাৰ্পন কৰিছিল যদিও নিজৰ উদ্দেশ্যক একমাত্ৰ লক্ষ্য হিচাপে নলৈ অসমীয়া ভাষা সাহিত্যৰ পুনৰুদ্ধাৰতহে বিশেষ মনোযোগ দিছিল। অসমীয়া ভাষাক স্থাপন কৰাত আৰু অসমৰ ঐতিহ্যক সংৰক্ষণ কৰাত তেওঁলোক বৰঙণি অপৰিসীম। ব্ৰাউন বনইনৰ অসমীয়া ভাষা সাহিত্যৰ উন্নতি আৰু সমৰ্থন অবিহনে অসমীয়া ভাষা পুনৰ স্কুল আদালতত স্থাপন হ'লহেতেন বুলি আশা কৰিব নোৱাৰি। অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ গদ্যৰ বিকাশ হ'ল। সাংবাদিকতা আৰম্ভ হ'ল।

মিছনেৰী সকলৰ জাৰ্ণেল, চিঠি পত্ৰ সমূহৰ জৰিয়তে সেই কালৰ অসমৰ সামাজিক, অৰ্থনৈতিক, ৰাজনৈতিক, সাংস্কৃতিক জীৱনৰ ছবি এখন পাব পাৰি। অসমীয়া জাতীয় জীৱনলৈ মিছনেৰী সকলে নাৰী শিক্ষাকে ধৰি বৈজ্ঞানিক দৃষ্টিভঙ্গীৰ সৰবৰাহ কৰি অসমীয়া জাতীয় সত্বাক সবল ভাবে প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰা বিশেষ অবিহনা অগবঢ়াই থৈ যায়।

স্থপঞ্জী :

অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ সমীক্ষাত্মক ইতিবৃত্ত-সত্যেন্দ্ৰ নাথ শৰ্মা

অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ দৃষ্টিপাত-হেমন্ত কুমাৰ শৰ্মা

অৰুণোদয়ই ধলফাট- মহেশ্বৰ নেওগ

অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ৰূপৰেখা-মহেশ্বৰনেওগ

অৰুণোদয়- সম্পাদনা- মহেশ্বৰ নেওগ

চিত্ৰৰ আভাষ- ড° প্ৰহলাদ কুমাৰ বৰুৱা

আমেৰিকান মিছনেৰী সকল আৰু ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ অসম- হেৰম্ব কান্ত বৰপূজাৰী

Ethnic Crisis in North-East India : Its Impact on Socio-Economic, Political & Culture With Special Reference to Assam

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INTRODUCTION :

India being a third world country had experience the test of colonialism. During the period of 200 years of colonial rule in India, the British Government did nothing the development for the people of India. What they did in India was done for fulfillment of their interest at cost of the people of India and as such exploitation by colonial power is the main reason for the backwardness of India. Immediately after Independence, India adopted the model of planning for attaining socio-economic development of the country. Even after the completion of several Five Year plan, yet India has not achieved all round development of her people.

India is the largest democratic nation in the world. Democracy has been regarded as an Ideal form of Government, where the voice of the people is supreme and where the laws are fashioned according to their wishes. But in practical, there is a gap between promise and performance. We enjoy every right in theory, but not in practice. The idea of socialistic pattern of Society has remained a dream only. Real Democracy comes in to being only when the masses awakened and take economic and political life in the country. India today is a rich man's democracy. Our democracy is a democracy of the rich, for the rich and by the rich. Elections today are a farce. So violence, Kidnapping, Killings various type of movements strikes of statehood and sovereignty demands, corruption, terrorisms are now common features in Indian politics. The North-East region is not free from political juncture due to ethnic clash and crisis. Before we go to discuss about the ethnic movement in North-East India particularly in Assam, we must know the importance of the word ethnicity as mentioned below.

THE MEANING OF ETHNICITY :

Ethnicity itself is a puzzling phenomenon. In the beginning of the 20th century, a new definition is coined which is universally accepted. The word ethnic has a long history. The word ethnic is derived from a Greek word 'Ethnos' meaning nation which refers to the unity of people of common blood. But in the present century, according to the sociological terminology it referred to 'ourselves' and not to 'others'. Famous social thinker Max Weber declared that 'we shall call ethnic groups those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent of same physical migration. To the speak frankly, a ethnic group is "a group of people who are generally recognized by themselves or by others as a distinct group with such recognition based on social or cultural characteristics."

ETHNIC MOVEMENTS IN NORTH-EAST INDIA :

Our constitution says that India is a welfare state. Welfare State means that Government which pays more importance for all round development of the people. But if we critically analyses above mentioned doctrine 'welfare state' then we find that it is theory but not practice. After Independence, the North-East India is deprived from all socio-economic and political spheres, which is the root cause of ethnic movements. The North-East is comprising seven States Assam, Tripura, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal are a compact geographical zone with wide social, economic and cultural variation. The political map of North-East has changed during the last five decades.

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The crisis among the deferent ethnic groups are occurred mainly due to past isolation and psychological alienation and the sudden exposure of primitive societies to the complexities of a system imposed of conflicting social forces and ethnic diversity in the region. During the British period, the colonists did not take part any interest for the development of the people. The same policy of neglect, exploitation and discrimination continued unabated even after Independence. Even during Chinese aggression 1962, the Tribal and other backward people had to faced a new complex situation and fear of lossing their identity loomed larged.

The recent crisis in the North-East arising out of search for separate identity by different groups by indigenous population can be traced to the British policy. The politics in Manipur today, centres around the relation between the peoples in hills and plain. In Tripura, the Tribal reaction against the dominance of Bengali settlers is generally described as the root caused for the emergence of extremist movement there. The NSCN of Nagaland, People Liberation Army (PLA), People Republic Party of Kangleipak, Manipur, ULFA of Assam have already reached a alliance to build up a joint struggle against the Central Government.

Now, the ethnic movement also start in Assam due to some relevant causes. Assam presents such a picture as a number of small ethnic groups instead of asserting with their small and insignificant boundary trend to identify themselves as Assamese. In Assam, if we analyse the basic concept of ethnicity then we fined that the issue of ethnic identity of different groups overlap boundary like ancestry, place of origin, cultural practice, language and religion. At the present time identity crisis is the main burning problem. Many new organisations are coming out on the basis of caste and religion. Such an example BNDF of Bodo, Cobra Militant of Adivashi and Karbi and Dimasa also organised their self-styled militant groups to meet their demand. Demand of Ahom Land, demand of Nilachal for Koch-Rajbongshi, Mising land for Mising are also sometimes creating panic situation in our state. The boarder clash among the neighbouring states give more pains to our state. Lastly, the boarder clash between Arunachal and Assam, Nagaland and Assam at Charaipung turns in to a great threats to the boarder areas. The common people have loss their properties, lives even they become homeless. It is also published in the latest news papers that with the help of NSCN, the Naga people threatened the Hindus to convert their religion from Hindu to Christian. As a result, many Hindus family have left their locality and they have to take shelter in their relatives. Points should be noted that, the Assam Government still failed to take drastic steps against the NSCN or any other Militants. These type of anti-social activities minimized the popularity of Government and it proves the inability of the Government to protect the subject.

REASONS OF THE ETHNIC MOVEMENT IN NORTH-EAST :

There are so many reasons that North-East India is always raised their voices against the Central Government. If we critically examined the reasons than we find the below mentioned fact finding conditions.

1. Negligence of the Central Governments since its Independence.
2. Public corruption done by Administrator and political leaders.
3. Poor communication, lack of proper education and socio-economically backward condition.
4. Power lust of political leaders and lack of leadership qualities.
5. Religion and caste politics.
6. Language discriminations.

The economic neglect by the Government and the economic exploitation by land owners and the trading community may be called the major reasons for the rise of the ethnic unrest. In Assam, the core of the problem lies to our mind, in the filling of humaniliation and the apprehension for the loss of identity in the hands of upper class.

In certain cases, the Government itself was responsible for the economic degradation of the Tribals. When ever an industry was set up in Tribal area, they were evicted and their land requisitioned, but little effort was made to rehabilitate them. More over the Tribals were not in the habit of registering their land. They received little compensation and that too after long years of struggle.

The year 1962 was nightmarish year for those ethnic people. In that year the Assam Legislative Assembly passed a bill that Assamese as the official language of the entire state. This inflamed the separatist urge that had long be doormat among the tribes and ultimately result in the creation of separate hill states starting with Nagaland. It was Assamese chauvinism which instead of creating a greater Assam reduced Assam to a narrow geographical boundary.

Then came the year 1972 on September 23rd, the Assam Legislative Assembly took a resolution to the effect that in all educational institution under the Two Universities in Assam the medium of the instruction should be Assamese. The decision had a serious repercussion in many places, mostly Bodo dominated area. There were clashes and confrontation and twelve Bodo youth lost their lives, in their movement against the imposition of Assamese language. The decisions of the Government was one sided. It was not made in consultation with the Tribal organization.

In the early Twenty century, some of the zaminders of the then Goalpara district of Assam conspired to set the district tagged with Bengal in order to get certain benefits offered by the Montagu Chelsford reform act of 1919. The scheme was vehemently opposed by the Bodo community. Now less than nine decades the Bodo, who could by no means called themselves other than Assamese have not only disdained to be known so but even considered as bugbear to be alarmed of. Under the present circumstances, the formation of a composite Assamese society embracing all the Tribal groups of the state appears to be far distance dream. All one can hope is to live peacefully with them in spirit of fraternity, equality, liberty and friendship.

In fact, there are so many reasons which play a vital role for autonomy movement not only in Assam but also in other North-East States. The constitution of India provides some important provisions for the Tribals people. Such an important provision is the Sixth Schedule of Indian constitution article 214 (2) and 275 (1) provides for the administration of the Tribal areas particularly Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram. But we can not claim that this article have been properly applied among the poor people.

CONCLUSION :

We are the members of the democratic Government in India. As a citizen of the free India we have some responsibilities and duties to our nation. Democracy is on its trial now. Democracy has not failed itself. It is we, who failed due to our ignorance and lack of political consciousness. If we develop democratic spirit, temper and character becomes India in true sense it can certainly become success. The future of the democracy will be bright only when our people posses national character, consciousness and responsibility. Intellectual should come forward and create healthy and better society with a true democratic spirit to march further. Democracy in our country is still in the childhood, yet the hope for future is bright.

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Role of Economic dimension in Ethnic Crisis-With special reference to Assam

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Ethnic crisis is the phenomenon that has emerged as a burning cause of concern for the whole World is the recent scenario. Especially in a multi lingual, multi racial state like Assam, ethnic crisis is a common phenomenon. Every ethnic groups, aboriginals, or animists lived in hills or plains try to maintain their cultural traits, traditions to strengthen their social as well as economic and political status. And this intentions initiate competition, conflict and crisis among every ethnic groups. The recent socio-economic and political situation in the North-east India cannot be viewed without placing ethnicity as a major component. The ethnic consciousness that arise due to various changes in the social, political, economic, religious and demographic life has moulded itself in an assertive movement in the recent past. As a result, the present socio-political and economic life of the region has been undergoing serious upheaval. Initially, it was an ethnic assertion movement, which has nothing to do with political issues. There was the movement of establishing one's cultural identity. Various cultural activities were promoted and some of the lost traits and entities were revived to boost the ethnic revivalist movement. But gradually the situation has manifested itself in a tendency that has been taking shape in various kinds of developments. There have been a feeling that the tribes have been neglected and deprived of their due rights and privileges and that the large scale presence of 'outsiders' in the economic and even in administrative machinery have been causing a threat to the future of these communities. In Assam, ethnic struggle insurgency is interwoven in most of the cases.

There are many causes, which are responsible for ethnic crisis or conflict and insurgency in Assam i.e. geographical, Assamese chauvinism, historical, socio-cultural, economic etc. are the basic causes of ethnic crisis. But among these reasons the economic dimension is one of the most outstanding causes, which led to the rise of ethnic problems in Assam. The present paper is attempt to highlight this issue in terms of existing scenario of ethnic crisis in Assam.

In this regard, the study tribal economy is a must. Generally Assam Tribal economy is agro based without economic mobility. They produce their products not for trading purpose but only for consumption. They adopt traditional ways, methods and artefacts in agriculture for which they don't produce a surplus amount of crops for which their social and economic status remains stagnant. Due to literacy, absence of proper knowledge, lack of consciousness they are unable to apply such modern science and technology of cultivation for which their economy remain underdeveloped.

Economic underdevelopment in Assam may be termed as negligence and indifference of union Govt., inefficiency of the State Govt., Rampant corruption prevailing top to the bottom of administration. As a result, Assam remained as a village based agricultural state, although it is rich in natural resources. The economic backwardness and lack of job opportunities resulting from inadequate use of natural resources, underdeveloped infrastructure, absence of development not only in the secondary and tertiary sectors but also in agriculture have made the people, especially the educated youths fall as easy prey secessionist groups. The Tea and Oil industry fail to provide much needed employment opportunities and development of the region. The condition of masses is very distressing. At the most this factors is mainly responsible for the ethnic crisis of Assam.

The Crisis and Conflict in the North East

Ashabur Rahman

INTRODUCTION

The North-East India stands out for its unique ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity. This uniqueness is not found in any other region of the country. When the Britishers landed in this part of India in the first half of the 19th century, they were enthralled and delighted by the unique composition of the North-East. The British administrator J.B. Fuller once stated, "The province of Assam at the far North-Eastern corner of India is a museum of nationalities". (Introduction in Major A. Playfair, *The Garos* London : Oxford University Press, 1909). In fact, the ethnic heterogeneity of the region is based on distinctive historical experiences.

At present, however, a deep malady has struck the North-East. Multi-dimensional crisis has cropped up in the region and it revolves around three principal points : (a) politics, (b) economics and (c) culture. These are, of course, not mutually exclusive, but intimately connected with each other. The troubled region assumes the character of a 'conflict zone' today. Virtually all aspects of community life has become politicised. Religiously homogeneous as well as heterogeneous communities and societies are at war. The valued social relationships have been ruptured. Divisions on ethnic lines are being created and intra-community trust is being destroyed. The erection of barriers — social, cultural, psychological and physical — has been breaking long established patterns of community living.

The aggressive activities of the insurgent outfits and related response of the state-machinery, naked violation of human rights, increasing number of ethnic clashes, socio-economic backwardness, discriminatory attitude of the central government, economic disparities and deep-divide between the haves and have-nots, institutionalised corruptions amply manifest the deep-rooted crisis.

In the North-East today, questions of cultural and national identity dominate the intense public discourse. Recurring bouts of violence has damaged the whole fabric of civic governance and cultural mosaic of the region. The epicentre of violence keeps on changing from state to state, district to district. In fact the cherished values of 'unity in diversity' are being challenged and a war-culture has emerged. Another very strong factor complicating the ethnic problem in the North-East is the issue of illegal migration from across the border, particularly from Bangladesh. The border disputes and frequent disturbances in border areas of the North-Eastern states has also been a major problem. Additionally, construction of big dams and hydroelectric projects in Arunachal Pradesh without comprehensive scientific study on downstream impact has invited wrath and anger of the people.

The region's economy is being ruined and developmental activities have come to a halt. The weaker and poorer sections of the people have become the worst-sufferers. The crisis has been accentuated by the loot and plunder of public money. The nexus between the corrupt sections of politicians-bureaucrats and extremists has siphoned off huge fund meant for developmental activities. The recent revelation of financial scam and diversion of funds to the extremist outfits in the North-Cachar Autonomous Council exposes the magnitude of corruption and the nexus between politicians and extremists.

PEOPLE IN HILLS AND PLAINS

The North-East zone of India occupies an area of 2,55,083 sq. km. which is about 7.76 per cent of the total geographical area of the country. The 2001 Census Report mentions that the total population of this region is about 38.31 million of which 90 per cent live in the villages and hilly areas. (For obvious reasons, the state of Sikkim is excluded in our present discussion). Out of the seven states — emotionally called 'seven sisters' — as many as four states are tribal majority states. These are — Arunachal Pradesh (64.2% tribal people), Meghalaya (85%), Mizoram (94.5%) and Nagaland (89.1%). The culture and

economy of these tribal dominated states are remarkably different from the other tribal regions of the country. The three other units—Assam, Manipur and Tripura—have a majority of non-tribal plains population. But even in these three states the tribal population is substantially high. (Assam—12.4%, Manipur—34.2% and Tripura—31.1%).

It is to be further noted, the North-East India is inhabited by a little less than 4 per cent of the total Indian population with considerably low density of population (148) compared to that of the All India average (313). The proportion of Scheduled Tribe population to the total population of India, as per 2001 Census, was 8.2 per cent, while the same ratio for the North-East region was more than 27 per cent. The similarity among the seven North-Eastern states in terms of numerical strength of ethnic groups does not, however, reflect uniformity with regard to their socio-economic settings and the levels of economic development. There are large number of ethno-cultural tribal groups divided into various sub-tribes and clans.

The tribal population of the North-East can be broadly divided into two categories : (i) those inhabiting the hilly tracts or the majority of the inhabitants of Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Nagaland, as well as, the inhabitants of the hill districts of Assam, Manipur and Tripura and (ii) those living in the plains of Assam, primarily the Brahmaputra and Barak Valley. This implies that the demography of the North-East is characterised by sparsely populated hilly areas and densely populated plains. They also indicate differences in cultural characteristics. The tribals of the hills (except for a few) remained isolated from the rest of the population until recently, while the tribes in the valley lived together with the other non-tribal groups for centuries.

The region presents the complexities of the sub-Himalayan ranges, the Indo-Burmese hills of Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram and the eroded surfaces of the Meghalaya plateau. They all are encircling the Brahmaputra valley. The region presents itself as a replica of the subcontinent both physically as well as culturally—but on a much smaller scale. It is also essential to understand the geographical significance of the region. The North-East has boundaries which are vulnerable to outside powers. The area is surrounded by four foreign countries, viz. Bhutan, China, Bangladesh and Myanmar.

The physical environment has provided an ideal habitat for the tribal culture and economy to continue relatively undisturbed till the modern times. It is no wonder, therefore, that the region supports high concentration of tribal population. The present distribution of diverse ethnic identities is a result of a long process which brought a great variety of ethnic and cultural groups. The favourable environmental conditions with fertile river valleys, high humidity, abundant rainfall, luxuriant vegetation and rich fauna had attracted the primitive human kind ever since Paleolithic age.

ETHNO-CULTURAL DIVERSITY

According to the anthropologists, human habitation started in the North-East with the coming in of the Austro-Asiatic speaking people from the South-East Asia quite a few millennia B.C. The second major incursion into the region was that of the groups speaking Tibeto-Burma stock languages. Racially, they belonged to the Mongoloid stock but spoke a variety of languages. Another stream of tribal people entered the Brahmaputra valley during the British colonial period itself when the colonial rulers recruited labourers from among the tribes from the mid-Indian location. Apart from these major streams found among the tribes, there are many others who have come into the region during pre-historic and historic times and the process continues even today. Immigrants from erstwhile East Bengal (presently Bangladesh) found land in Assam's water-logged, jungle-infested, riverine belt since late 19th century. The North-East represents a much greater linguistic diversity than any other comparable regions in the entire sub continent.

Religious composition is also equally complex. The most interesting aspects of religious composition of North East India is the significant influences of Christianity and Tibeto-Chinese Buddhism in some areas. The influence of Hinduism is largely confined to Brahmaputra, Barak and Imphal valley and parts of Tripura plains. On the other hand, Christianity has made significant inroads among the tribal population living in Naga, Mizo and Manipur hills as well as in Meghalaya plateau and among large section of

Bodo, Karbi etc. The influence of Buddhism is confined to the high altitude zone in Arunachal Himalayas. Muslim concentration has also been very high in Assam valley.

CHANGING SITUATION

Virtually all accounts of the North-East crisis begin with a historical account as a backdrop to the contemporary. The plains and certain attractive areas in the hills witnessed a smooth transition from primitive economy to advanced socio-economic changes. But the bordering hilly and forested areas have sheltered tiny tribal habitats isolated from each other. These isolated groups resisted far-reaching changes in their economy and society.

Compared to other parts of the country, the colonial incorporation of the North-East started much later. Under the colonial dispensation, certain areas were either 'excluded' or 'partially excluded' from the purview of the then prevailing administrative and statutory controls. It had allowed the people to maintain their control over land and forests. Although, by the middle of the 19th century, substantial part of North-East came under the overall control of the colonial authority, no strong linkages were established with the outside market. The regional economy thus remained out of the orbit of the capitalist path and the people continued to lead a life of relative independence. The dominant mode of agricultural practice restricted the transformation of the tribal social settings. The strong ties of kinship, the community-control of land and the associated social network provided a solid base for building ethnic identity among the hill people. Sir Edward Gait in his '*A History of Assam*' says, "the unrestricted intercourse which formerly existed between British subjects in Assam and the wild tribes living across the frontier frequently led to quarrels and, sometimes to serious disturbances. This was especially the case in connection with the traffic in rubber brought down by the hillmen, for which there was great competition. The opening out of tea gardens beyond the border-line also at times involved the Government in troublesome disputes with the frontier tribes in their vicinity." Gait further adds, "In order to prevent the recurrence of these difficulties, power was given to the local authorities by the Inner Line Regulation of 1873 to prohibit British subjects generally, or those of specified classes, from going beyond a certain line, laid down for the purpose, without a pass or license, issued by the Deputy Commissioner and containing such conditions as might seem necessary." (Lawyer's Book Stall, Fifth Edition, 1992, page 316-317).

However, the situation started changing in the subsequent phases of history. Assam opened up for tea-plantation by the middle of the 19th century and, afterwards, exploitation of natural oil, coal mines and forests. While agriculture was almost stagnant, outsiders were attracted for new economic activities. As a result, indigenous people's control over local resources began to decline and the process of land alienation started. Eminent historian Dr. Amalendu Guha comments, "The Raj appeared on the scene in the guise of saviours of the people who were suffering under the chaos, lawlessness and oppression that had persisted since the 1770s, starting with the Moamaria civil war and culminating in the Burmese occupation of the Assam plains (1817-24). But it soon dawned on the people that the Raj had come to stay. Its purpose was to turn Assam into an agricultural estate of tea-drinking Britons and to transform local traditional institutions to suit the colonial pattern of exploitation. The people found out from experience that the new masters' immediate concern was extortion of land revenue, even to the detriment of the welfare of their subjects." (*Planter Raj to Swaraj*, Revised Edition, Tulika Boos, 2006, page -2).

The British rule had released forces of modernisation without a structural change in the socio-economic frame-work. Influence of religion, urbanisation, modern education, increased immigration of people of diverse origin have all contributed to an explosive situation to which the little communities in the North-East have been abruptly exposed. Their age-old self-sufficiency and closed-door policies are slowly waking up to this newly emerging reality of market forces.

With the advent of independence and introduction of qualitatively new economic and political processes, the growing contact with the non-tribal society has brought significant changes. First, it has brought about a transformation of the tribal social order. Secondly, the opportunities being enjoyed by the tribal groups in free India and their exposure to non-tribal socio-cultural milieu have generated new hopes and aspirations amongst the large section of the tribal population. The situation is undergoing

rapid changes in the recent decades, specially after the introduction of the imperialist driven neo-liberal economic policies. The class division in tribal societies has also emerged and primeval contradictions sharpened. A newly educated strong middle class has become influential in the socio-economic and political life of the tribal society.

HISTORICAL ROOTS OF CRISIS

Several dimensions of the North East crisis had their roots during British colonial rule. But partition of the country in 1947 gave birth to new dimensions and deepened the crisis further. It is, therefore, apparent that there is some amount of historical continuity in the ethnic issues being raised in North-East today. The phenomenon of identity and its manifestations are rooted in the nature of the socio-economic development of the area. Initially the process of identity formation in North-East was based on the idea of large group formation. Attempts were made to bring several smaller tribal groups together to project a unified identity. Just after independence, the term 'hill people' was made popular and was projected as a collectively comprising hill tribes from different areas of the region. But such an identity could not sustain for long. Another attempt in this direction was to develop generic terms to include various groups located mainly in a particular geographical territory. The Nagas and the Mizos, for example, consist of several tribes, each having a distinct dialect, a well demarcated territory and a supposed socio-cultural system. However, religious and racial elements have played a crucial role in bringing them together. The common identity of these heterogeneous tribes were either Naga or Mizo.

A similar attempt was made in Assam when a broad definition of 'Assamese identity' was provided by showing that the Assamese society was formed by a process of long assimilation of mainly Austro-Mongoloid tribals and Aryans. But such a fusion could not be stable due to inherent contradictions and the process of fission set in under the impact of new situations. As such small group identity follows. The emerging situation among the Mizo can be cited as an example. Several smaller groups, till now forming the part of the larger Mizo society, have started asserting their separate identity by calling themselves by different names such as Zomi, Zou, Hmar etc. Among the Nagas, uneven pace of economic development among various tribes has led to growing competition among them, causing simmering discontent and tension. The 'greater Assamese' society has also witnessed division and fragmentation on ethnic lines. The Bodos, who once identified themselves as 'Assamese', have already asserted their separate identity and emerged as a distinct nationality. The Mishings, Tiwas, Rabhas, Deuris etc. who were also part and parcel of the greater Assamese society have now been asserting their own identity and demanding autonomy for self-rule, for development of their own language and culture.

INSURGENCY AND ARMY OPERATION

A unique consideration in the assessment of the crisis in the North-East is the growing militarisation of this region. Movements for independence quickly turns into armed struggles or insurgencies. The official Indian response to this is an armed solution, whether in the form of army operation, or of police and para-military action. Inter-ethnic violence and separatist demands from ethnic groups increased the security apprehension of the state. Large-scale army deployment followed to counter violence and suppress these demands. The armed forces personnel, with sweeping powers granted under special laws, have violated human rights very frequently. The major Act that governs military action in the North-East is the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958 (amended in 1972). This draconian law confers special powers upon army in 'disturbed areas' in the seven states of the region. Earlier, when the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, 1985 was in force (now replaced by POTA), it was grossly abused by the security forces. Reports of human rights violations are still pouring in from the Naga inhabited areas of Nagaland and Manipur which include extra-judicial killings, illegal imposition of curfew, rape, molestation, desecration of churches and other religious places. Instead of negotiated settlement, the Centre has been seeking military solutions to the problems of insurgency and extremism.

AUTONOMY FOR TRIBALS

The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India contains provisions as to the administration of tribal areas in the State of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. The aim of the Sixth Schedule was

to protect hills and other tribal communities from the control and power of the groups of the plains. The process of protection began with the formation of the district councils in Assam.

Since 1952, district councils were formed in the United Khasi-Jaintia Hills District, Garo Hills District, Lushai (Mizo) Hills District, Mikir Hills District and North-Cachar Hills District. The Nagas were not impressed with such arrangements and rejected it outright and took to insurgency. The Naga Hills District alongwith Tuensang Hill District had been promoted to statehood in 1963. Thereafter, the Khasi and Jaintia Hills were made a sub-state and then upgraded into a full-fledged state of Meghalaya in 1972. Again, in 1972, the Mizo Hills District and Arunachal were made Union Territories first, and then into full-fledged states of Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh.

The United Mikir and North-Cachar Hills District came under the provision of Sixth Schedule in 1952. In 1976, the North Cachar Hills were carved out as a separate district while the Mikir Hills were renamed as Karbi-Anglong. Following the first Bodo accord in 1993, which gave birth to the Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC), the Assam government created three more autonomous councils through state legislation for the Mishings, the Rabhas and the Lalungs (Tiwas) in 1995. Continuing with this trend of granting autonomous councils, again in 2005 the State Government passed legislation providing for creation of autonomous councils for the Sonowal Kacharis, Thengal Kacharis and Deuris. When the BAC experience failed and led to the creation of Bodo Territorial Council (BTC) in February, 2003, there has been growing demand among the plain tribes for creation of BTC-style councils under Sixth Schedule. On the other hand, following the steps of Meghalaya and Mizoram, the Karbis and Dimasas are up in arms for creation of separate state for themselves under the provision of Article 244(A) of the Constitution. On the other hand, the emergence of Naga national consciousness and its consistent demand for the right of self-determination for the last more than sixty years has provided the ideological basis of the Naga movement.

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENTAL STRATEGY

We should also discuss the nature of developmental strategy adopted in the North-East. The most significant aspect in this context is the gap between the proclaimed policy and adopted programmes of development undertaken in the region. While both the national and the regional planning authorities have recognised the backwardness and specific problems of the North-Eastern situation, they have failed to adopt a suitable alternative strategy that could develop the region without disturbing the ecological balance and people's welfare. The proper use of huge natural resources, massive industrialisation, development of infra-structure and creation of employment avenues have become the crying need of the hour.

The central goal of developmental policy is to use natural resources of the region and almost all programmes are in tune with this objective. However, its local impact in terms of improvement of economic condition of the people has not only been minimal but more often unfavourable. While treating the rich natural resources of the North-East as a national property, the centre refuses to recognise the problems of the region as a national problem. It can safely be concluded that the seeds of inequality and discrimination have been sown because of unfavourable socio-economic consequences of developmental programmes. Most of the new developmental schemes have benefited a handful of people who are aligning themselves with the ruling parties or classes. Corruptions have also been institutionalised in the North-Eastern states and central funds for developmental activities are being misappropriated or embezzled in large-scale.

The continuing influx of people from outside the country, particularly from Bangladesh, continue to be a cause for concern. Naturally, the demand for detection and deportation of infiltrators assumes greater significance in the present context. The worsening employment situation in the region has further accentuated the crisis. The growing frustration and sense of alienation has gripped the unemployed younger generation and this has created a fertile ground for extremism and militancy. Agricultural stagnation and lack of infrastructure have made major contribution into the crisis.

Disparities in the socio-economic development inevitably result in political fragmentation. Emerging

regional elites and newly formed middle class tend to utilize the existing conflict potential for more share in power. Regional political parties and groups emerge to mobilize large section of population on issues appropriate to common cultural, linguistic, ethnic and economic interest in their states. They add to the bargaining power of the states and provide more strength to the periphery in bringing about a balance between the union and the states. The prevailing situation in the North-East corresponds to this pattern.

CONCLUSION

The North-Eastern States are economically backward and deep rooted crisis has engulfed the entire region. The people suffer from a sense of deprivation and alienation. In fact, problems such as tribal-non tribal conflicts, direct secessionist demands based on assertion of ethnic identity, and demand for further reorganisation and vivisection of states, are all intertwined in the continuing backwardness and under-development of the region.

The ethnic conflict assumes a new dimension. All communities, small or large, of the region are assertive as to their ethnicity and apprehensive of losing their identity. Most of the communities, at present, are restive and from amongst them insurgent outfits have cropped up with the objective of liberating themselves from what they call 'Indian domination'. It is to be noted, by using ethnicity, ethnic groups articulate their demands for increased share in political power, more opportunities for economic well-being and protection of their culture and tradition. It is true that wide consensus should be evolved for the development of tribal languages and cultures, protection of their constitutional rights and fulfilment of their genuine aspirations.

The central government should address the multi-faceted problems with all seriousness at its command. It must adopt a strategy with priority for removal of backwardness and speedy development of the region. The hopes and aspirations of the different ethnic groups should be addressed sympathetically and with a positive attitude. The genuine aspirations of the tribal people must be fulfilled in a democratic set-up. While strong administrative actions are required to contain violence, the government must seek solutions to the problems of extremism and insurgency through political dialogue. The North-East should be treated as a priority region in the nation-building. The 'sub-streams' should join the national 'main stream'.

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Post- Sankardeva Vaishnava Movement And Social Change Among The Morans And The Matakas:

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Introduction-

The Bhakti Movement popularly called in Assam the Neo-Vaishnavite Movement was launched by Sankardeva (1449-1568AD) and his disciple Madhavdeva (1489-1596AD) in the 16th century. The movement headed by Sankardeva was not only a religious reform movement but also a great social revolution. The Satra is the most important organ of the Neo-Vaishnavite Movement. It is an institution perceived by Sankardeva himself, however, it became a fullfledged organization only after his death; at the hands of Madhavdeva and Damodardeva (1488-1596AD), both followers of Sankardeva, who gave it a definite structural form. In post- Sankardeva period Neo- Vaishnavism became more wide spread and well-established in Assam and it became religion of the mass people of the Ahom and the Koch kingdom.

Like the Kacharis, Koches and the Chutiyas, the Morans and Matakas are also aboriginal inhabitants of Assam. The objective of the paper is to study the nature and extent of changes brought about by the Neo- Vaishnavism among the Morans and the Matakas.

Sankardeva's Neo-Vaishnavite Movement-

The doctrine of Neo- Vaishnavism taught by Sankardeva was mainly based on the *Bhagavata Purana*, further reinforced by the teachings of the Gita, which enjoins complete surrender to one God, which principle is very strictly enjoined. The *Bhakti* Movement led by Sankardeva in Assam is better known as the Neo- Vaishnavite Movement and the faith is actually called *Eksaraniya Nama Dharma*, meaning worship of a single God namely Vishnu by reciting his name or *Nama* with absolute *Bhakti* or devotion.

By following the main principles of *Bhakti*, Sankardeva propagated his faith by teaching devotion to one Supreme God only through *Nama-kirtana* or divine services in the form of community prayer. His creed was thus one of qualified monism as proposed by Ramanuja. As his teachings were based principally on the *Bhagavata Purana*, so his creed was also known as *Bhagavati dharma*. It is also popularly called as the *Mahapurushiya dharma*, because both Sankardeva and his chief apostle Madhavdeva were extolled to the status of *Mahapurusha* or saints by their disciples. Sankardeva laid much emphasis on the first two ways of devotion among nine form of devotions as mentioned in the *Bhagavata Purana*. These are *Sravana* (listening to the name of God) and *Kirtana* (chanting the name of God). Like Ramanuja and Kabir, Sankardeva strongly denounced the caste system and the elaborate rituals and sacrifices of the Brahmanical ways and esoteric rites practiced by the Saktas. He also did not consider it necessary to abandon the life of a householder for becoming a devotee of God¹.

Neo-Vaishnavism in the post- Sankardeva period-

Two significant developments took place in the Vaishnava movement in the post Sankardeva time. First, schism or sectarian division came to the order leading to creation of four different sub sects called *Sanghati* or *Samhati*, and the second, the movement which was till then expanded mainly over the lower Assam or Kamrup region, now got expanded to Upper Assam under the direct patronage of the Ahom kings. The post- Sankardeva era witnessed split in the main stream of the Vaishnava faith known as '*Samhati*'. They were *Brahma Samhati*, *Purusha Samhati*, *Kala Samhati* and *Nika Samhati*. Accordingly, its followers also become divided into four distinct groups with variations in their religious practices.

The process began soon after the demise of Sankardeva, when he nominated Madhadeva as his successor, Damodardeva, a Brahmin follower of Sankardeva seceded from the cult and formed a separate subject for his own which came to be known as *Brahma Samhati*, where Brahmanical elements predominated. The four leading Satras of this Samhati are- Auniati, Dakhinpat, Garamur and Kuruabahi. The process of further divisions ensured after the death of Madhavdeva. Gopal Ata, a disciple of Madhavdeva refusing to accept Mathuradas Burha Ata as the head, had seceded from the order and established his own by claiming that he was the real successor of Madhavdeva. Thus the second sectarian division within the main order came into being. Gopal Ata's sect came to be known as *Kala Samhati* after the name of the place Kaljhar where he established his Satra. Twelve Satras were established by Gopaldeva in eastern Assam, six presided by Sudra and six by Brahmana pontiffs formed the Kala- Samhati. Of the six Satras presided by Sudra pontiffs, those of Dihing and Mayamara were the most prominent². The final phase of division of the sect was, however, still to come seeing such divisions at the hands of different claimants, the descendants of Sankardeva too established their own order. As it became an order of the members of Sankardeva's family, it came to be gradually spread over upper Assam. Vasigopaldeva, Yadumanideva, Aniruddhadeva and Badala Padma Ata took leading role to spread message of Bhakti in Upper Assam in the post- Sankardeva period. Aniruddhadeva concentrated his work mainly amongst the Chutiya, Morans, Kacharis and other tribal people⁵. Aniruddhadeva was the founder of the Mayamara Vaishnavism which is an important branch of the *Kala Samhati* of the Neo- Vaishnavism.

The Moran and the Matak-

Assam, a frontier state of India is inhabited by people mostly of Mongoloid origin. Like the Kacharis, Koches and the Chutiyas, the Morans and the Matak are also oaboriginal inhabitants of Assam. The Morans is a branch of the great Bodo group of the *Tibeto- Burman* linguistic family. This tribe came to Assam through Patkai ranges and settled on the bank of the river Tiphuk in the present Tinsukia district. The exact date of their migration is not clearly known. The Morans settled in the region to the north of the Dilli river at the time of the Ahom invasion in 1228 AD⁶. As their numbers were meager they were easily subjugated by the Ahoms⁷. According to many scholars, the Morans and the Matak are people of the same racial stock. The group of people who are called 'Matak' in the chronicles written in Tai- Ahom language are called 'Moran' in those written the Assamese language. But in reality it is not true.

There are numerous opinions regarding the origin of the term 'Matak'. One group of scholars used the term 'Matek' instead of *Matak* (*Mat*- principle or creed, *Ek*- one) which means people of one opinion or creed⁸. It is said that the word 'Matek' was later corrupted in to 'Matak' According to several *Buranjis*, the Ahoms had to face a strong resistance of a section of the 'Morans' which means their strong physical traits or nature⁹. In Ahom language, 'Ma' means powerful and 'Tak' means weighed or tested i.e. tested powerful man. These reasons make one to believe that impressed by the courage of the Morans, Sukapha and his followers might have name them as Matak¹⁰. According to S. Dutta, the term applied to a community instead of a tribe, because many members of the caste- Hindus like Kayastha and Kalita got themselves assimilated with the tribal people like the Morans, Chutias, Kacharis and the so called depressed castes like the Kaivartas and Haris, who were all disciples of the Mayamara Satra founded by Aniruddhadeva¹¹. According to P. Gogoi, even the Ahoms who were disciples of the Mayamara Satra introduced themselves as Matak and not as Ahoms¹². Thus the greater Matak community was formed with the members of different castes and communities. However, the difference between the terms Matak and Moran are very thin and hence they are used synonymously in the Ahom *Buranji* to denote the same people. Sometimes the term Matak denotes a tribe who rose in rebellion against the Ahom Government and sometimes as the disciples of the Mayamara Satra. Similarly, there is no clear difference between 'Moamaria' and 'Mayamaria', because neither the *buranjis* nor the British

records are using the terms, Matak, Moran, Moamaria and Mayamaria separately. Thus Moran is a tribe, while the Moamaria or Mayamaria is a sect and Matak is a community, which includes all the disciples of the Mayamara Satra.

The Morans and Matak were animists before their conversion to Vaishnavism¹³. Most of the tribes belonging to the Mongoloid stock like the Moran, Matak, Kachari, Chutiya and Barahis worshipped their primitive gods and goddesses. Before conversion to Neo-Vaishnavism, the Kacharis worshipped their male deity as *Bathou* or *Bathoubrai*¹⁴, the Chutiyas as *Kundimama* or *Pesha-dema*¹⁵. The Morans and the Matak called their male deity as *devata*. Before conversion to Neo-Vaishnavism, the Morans and the Matak worshipped some primitive gods and goddesses like *Burha-Dangaria*, *Habial* (god of forest), *Jal-Devata* (god of water), *Sthall-Devata* (god of Earth), *Jakhini* (goddesses of evil spirit) etc. The Morans specially worshipped the goddess of *Kechaikhati* or 'eater of raw flesh' of Sadiya and sacrificed men and animals. The Morans and Matak also believed in tranticism and reciting *Tantra mantra* (magical songs).

Aniruddhadeva's Vaishnavism or Mayamara Vaishnavism-

Gopaldeva, the founder of the *Kala Samhati* order of the Neo-Vaishnavism deputed twelve *Acaryas* to different parts of Assam for propagating the message of *bhakti*. Out of them Aniruddhadeva and Yadumanideva were prominent. Aniruddhadeva founded the *Mayamara* branch of the *Kala Samhati* order. He started propagation of the Vaishnava faith from 1601 AD and established a Satra at his native village Bishnu-Balikunchi in present Lakhimpur district. He made extensive tours and sent apostles to the tribal areas in an effort to spread the message of love, equality and brotherhood. Within a short span of time the Morans, Kacharis, Chutiyas, Borahis, Ahoms and the Brittials accepted Vaishnavism¹⁶. It is to the credit of Aniruddhadeva, the founder of the Mayamara Vaishnava Satra, that he could unite people from different castes and tribes into a homogenous community which came to be known as the Matak community¹⁷. The democratic outlook of the Satra and the spirit of humanism appealed the tribesmen and they immediately accepted him as their religious preceptor. Aniruddhadeva followed some rules and code of conduct in his teachings. His teachings of equality were strictly followed in practical life. All his disciples whether a *Brahmin* or a *Kaivarta* was considered as equal. No Brahmin because of his high birth or any person because of his high birth or any person because of his high social position could demand any privilege or priority. This sense of equality fostered among his disciples a sense of unity. Secondly, unlike other Satras, in the Mayamara Satras, the Guru was always accessible to the disciples. Any disciple at any moment could directly come to the Guru and discuss any problem with him; but community feeling being very strong, disciples usually came in groups to visit the Guru. A disciple could directly come to the Guru and consult with him any problem that he faced. Even in practicing certain social rites in the Satra and namghar, the spirit of equality was greatly emphasized, where all disciples irrespective of age or sex were given equal importance. Thirdly, in Mayamara Vaishnavism, God can be worshipped only by *nam-kirtana* and no idol or *Vigraha* is to be worshipped. It is noticeable that the Mayamara disciples do not touch the *Prasad* and *nirmali* of the idol or *vigraha* worshipped. Fourthly, Aniruddhadeva was not in favour of pilgrimage or observing fast because he thought that *Sat-Sanga* and *nam-kirtana* have such superior power that if one takes resort in them, there is no use of fast or pilgrimage. Finally, Aniruddhadeva did not permit staging of *Bhaona* or performing of *Rashlila* used by Sankardeva to popularize the faith. He also discarded performing festivals like *Holi* and *Dolyatra*. The reason behind this might be that in such ceremonies certain evil forces like *Asura* and other gods and goddess get importance which might divert the mind of common people from the strict monotheism of Mayamara Vaishnavism¹⁸. Besides these, it has also been told that Aniruddhadeva and his successors were not merely disseminating religious ideas, they were also teaching certain crafts as well as cultivation by ploughing among the tribal communities, who had been resorting to jhumming¹⁹. This was an incentive to the tribal members to accept the new faith.

Among the tribes, the Morans were the first to be converted. They were followed by the Kacharis, Chutias, Barahis, Ahoms and the *Brittials* (professional castes). Within a short period of time Aniruddhadeva occupied among them a position higher than a temporal overlord, so they would bow their heads only to him and no one else.

Social change among the Morans and the Matak-

Neo- Vaishnavism led to drastic change among the Morans and the Matak people. Aniruddhadeva mixed freely with them and honoured their religious sentiment and feelings. As a farsighted Vaishnava reformer, Aniruddhadeva realized that any imposition or drastic change in their traditional pattern of life, would have naturally caused a hostile reaction. He and his successors i.e. the *Mayamara Mahantas* had, therefore, to proceed with tact and caution, so that the sentiments of the tribal people were left unhurt, and their traditional cultural values were not injured. The *Mayamara Mahantas* accordingly, shaped their religious dogmas and practices in such a way so as to suit the temperament of the tribal communities²⁰. Relaxation and compromises, thus became the corner- stone of their policy in their dealings with these people.

(a) Social integration and harmony-

By preaching oneness of God, Aniruddhadeva brought all the heterogenous ethnic groups to a common platform of Vaishnava religion. Consequently, the various gods and goddesses became merged in that of Vishnu or Krishna and all the devotees accepted a common pattern of prayer, namely nam-kirtana. Of course, so far as the monotheistic principles are concerned, the *Mayamara Mahantas* were not as strict as Sankardeva and Madhavdeva. On the other hand, it seems that they ignored the observance of some of the traditional rites by some of their disciples. As a result, even after their conversion to Neo-Vaishnavism, the tribes continued to worship their tribal deities, while accepting at the same time Krishna, Vishnu or Hari as the supreme God and nama-prasanga as the superior and binding practice of enchanting the name of God²¹. Thus it is seen that the converted Kacharis gave up the practice of offering sacrifices to the Siju tree and their Chutiya counterparts gave up the practice of worshipping *Kechaikhati* with human or animal sacrifice. In fact, the very practice of worshipping gods and goddesses with the sacrifice of living beings or with liquor was discontinued. Aniruddhadeva and his successors, however, honoured their sentiment for discontinuing the age old practice by a novel way²². The disciples of the *Mayamara Satra* still continued to worship their tribal deities like *Aai* (goddess of small pox) and *Burhadangaria* (god of the village) etc. Celebration of *Yagnyas* in the months of *Vaisakh* (April / May), *Bhadra* (August / September), *Puha* (December/ January) and *Magha* (January / February) continued to be performed by the tribal disciples. Birds and animals are sacrificed instead of human in the name of the whole community²³.

Earlier, the tribes were living within their respective areas constantly fighting against each other. Within a tribe the bond of kinship was very strong. But the bond was very narrow because any person not belonging to their ethnic group was considered as outsider. They did not have any spirit of catholicity or universal brotherhood. But, as a result of their acceptance of the Neo- Vaishnavism, their tribal identity got undermined and the common identity of *Mayamara Vaishnavas* became dominant. On the platform of religion, most of their distinctions and narrowness got eroded and they learnt to live in a wider society in peace and harmony. Thus *Mayamara Vaishnavism* are playing an important role in the formation of the greater Assamese society.

Aniruddhadeva and his successors always encouraged inter-tribal marriage. Inter-tribal marriage strengthened the bond of unity among the devotees and thus fostered among them a strong community feeling. It is because of this unity built through ties of religion that the *Moamarias* could stand as one man during the time of rebellion against the Ahom government in 1769 AD, in which they achieved remarkable success. According to B. C. Allen inter- marriage is prevalent amongst certain castes and sub-castes religiously attached to the *Mayamara* branch of the *Kala samhati*. He writes : "The majority of the

Mataks are Ahoms, Chutiyas and Doms, but there are certain members of the Kalitas, Keots and Koches amongst them. All these castes except the Doms inter-marry²⁴. This statement of Allen was vigorously contradicted by followers as well as by the head of the Mayamara Satra²⁵. It is a fact that inter-marriage or inter-dining is not prevalent in any of the Vaishnavite sects. But it is also a fact that the Kala samhati is more liberal in its attitude towards these social problems²⁶. Thus after conversion to Neo-Vaishnavism, inter-tribal marriage was practiced by the Morans and the Mataks and gradually they were more liberal in its attitude towards the cast distinction problem.

(b) Food habit- As a farsighted person with practical outlook, Aniruddhadeva realized that unless he became one with the common people, taking their food habits and honouring their social rites and customs, he would never be successful in his mission. He therefore, identified himself with the common people and at the same time transformed their social outlook from a narrow orbit to a broad orbit. He forbade sacrifice in the name of Vishnu or Krishna but he did not suggest a vegetarian diet in the social function and household, because all tribal people were and are still non-vegetarians²⁷. The Mayamara Mahantas might have suggested their disciples to give up the tribal food habits but did not make it mandatory.

(c) Upliftment of position of women- Aniruddhadeva also gave a respectable place to women in his religious fraternity. He had not only given them initiation, in the matter of which both Sankardeva and Madhavdeva were reluctant but also the right to participate in the *nama-kirtana* and in any high religious discussion along with men. By giving equal status to women, Aniruddhadeva brought a radical change to the conservative society. While taking initiation, the novices of the Mayamara Satra was told that the *srutis* of the Vedas which were instructions of the Guru were binding upon them like the words of their mother²⁸. Such an attitude made the image of women high in the society.

(d) Education- In the field of education the Neo-Vaishnavite Movement did a lot. Like other Vaishnava reformers, Aniruddhadeva made his Satra a centre of education. Being a saint of scholarly talent, he explained to his devotees the essence of the philosophy of the bhakti and also teachings of the Vedas, Puranas and other religious texts. Since the days of Aniruddhadeva, a tradition has been set up in which religious discussions are held daily in the Mayamara Satra, namghar or in the residence of the Adhikar Mahanta.

(e) Absence of Brahmanical priesthood- Aniruddhadeva usually avoided imposing Brahmana priesthood on his followers. The Mayamara Vaishnavism had, therefore, no relation with Brahmana priesthood. In course of time, when they became more Hinduised, they gave up most of their tribal rites but did not accept Brahmana priesthood unlike most of the followers of Neo-Vaishnavism. All social and religious rites are performed through the recitation of the name of God called *nama-kirtana*.

At the time of the foundation of the Mayamara Satra most of the tribal people were illiterate and they could not read the religious texts written by Aniruddhadeva or other Vaishnava reformers. Moreover, being accustomed to worship some concrete object so long, they could not grasp immediately the philosophy of Neo-Vaishnavism. To meet the problem, the Guru himself was considered as the *Murti* or the image of God and Aniruddhadeva, the founder of the Mayamara Satra, was thus conceived as the *Adyamurti* (The Primal image)²⁹. It may also be mentioned here, that unlike other Vaishnava Satras of Assam, the Mayamara Satras never had any *Birgaha* Worship (image worship). This honour was always given to their Gurus. This practice is still prevalent in the Mayamara society.

Conclusion-

Thus Neo-Vaishnavism brought radical changes in the social organization and mental outlook of the people of the Morans and the Mataks. It changed their very concept of God and hence their view about the society. Before conversion to Neo-Vaishnavism, they worshipped their gods and goddesses with sacrifice of birds and animals and even human beings. But Vaishnavism taught them the worship of one God, namely Vishnu through *nam-kirtana*. Vaishnavism also taught them the advanced methods of

cultivation who were initially resorted to *Jumming* or shifting cultivation. The *Namghar* and the *Satra* became the venue of the village Panchayat where all cases relating to the devotees were settled. This practice is still prevalent among the Morans and the Matak society. *Satradhikars* and other ecclesiastical officers used to guide every walk of the lives of their devotees, formulated norms and regulations to teach them lessons on morality and polished manners and discipline and enabled them to lead an ideal life and consequently attain eternal bliss. The social formation achieved through the bond of the Neo-Vaishnavite faith had been so strong among the Morans and the Matak and respect for their guru had been so deep rooted that they are still united in the name of their religious preceptor. Neo-Vaishnavism also brought about a broadening of the social outlook of the Morans and the Matak. Not only did they start practicing inter-tribal marriage but also there was a great upliftment in the position of women because of the liberal principles. The positive impact of Neo-Vaishnavism was also seen upon their food habits, dress, education and manners. Thus it can be said that it was the Neo-Vaishnavite movement which enabled the Morans and the Matak to proceed from a purely tribal way of life to becoming a part of the greater civilized society.

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Student Article

Border Disputes of Assam with neighboring states

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Border Disputes of Assam with Neighboring States is a burning issue in the present day political life. Border is always demarcated fulfilling certain presentations- it may be demarcated on the basis of ethnic identity or behind. There is huge problem of border dispute- Specifically in North-East India. In the name of identity and 'habitat' separatist tendencies are becoming more and more active and encroachment of one's territory by another is becoming a natural means of acquiring more and more state power. North-East, which was once a unified sovereign territory now have separated itself into 7 states. The separation is not over, it is becoming sharper and sharper day by day. In the name of 'division is solution' some small ethnic groups are demanding separate statehood which some other North-Eastern states are engaging themselves in the task of acquiring more territory from neighboring countries by means of diplomacy and armed forces. Here comes the need for studying border disputes of Assam with neighbouring states.

Border Dispute of Assam with Nagaland:

Nagaland was constituted as a full-fledged state on December 1, 1963 after truncating Assam. But the border problem between this two states still persisted. It was well marked out, during the inception of Nagaland, as per the notification of 1925. It is an official document which is looked upon to be the one single, but vital written evidence or yardstick whatsoever to decisively and constitutionally define the boundary between the Naga Hill district and its contiguous districts in Assam. It is a document the Nagaland State Act or even earlier Nagaland tulnsang Area Act of 1957 to made use of as the mainstay or the only basis for the purpose of demarcation. Its motive is to - 'Constitutionally defined' inter-state boundary line between Assam and Nagaland. But still occasions are not rare when Naga leaders laid claims on some areas of Assam. As in, 1947 the than NNC (Naga National Council), in one of its memoranda presented before the Governor of Assam, demanded modification of the administrative division- 'In order to restore all its forests to the Naga Hills district and bring, as far as possible, all Nagas under one unified administrative unit.'

Again, in 1960, Naga leaders submitted a memorandum to the Centre renewing their allegation that the British had in the machiavelia manner detched certain areas from the Naga hills district.

Kohima kept on basung her claim for territorial adjustment on the 1866 notification. One particularly gleaming example is the 1970 ruling party of Nagaland itself, which is trying to win over the rebels, harped on the 2 point demand that first, certain reserved forests 'which, since, 1903 have been parts of Sibsagar and Nowgong districts of Assam' should included in Nagaland, and, second, 'Nagas living within other areas' should be allowed to join the Naga State, if they so desired' Significantly, there two demands were incorporated in the 16 point memorandum which a 19 member delegation on behalf of the Third Naga People's contention (representing all the Naga Tribes) submitted before the then P.M. Nehru, towards the end of July 1960.

Through, the 16 point charter is the basis of statehood accorded to Nagaland yet, the Naga leaders were not satisfied over the 2 points and hence showed their frustration over States, 'constitutional boundary'. The last two points are again issued on Nov. 11, 1975 but no satisfactory solution was made.

Mediating on the past, it can be contended that the controversy concerning the inter-state boundary started raging in fact four years after the birth of Nagaland in 1967. The rebellions Nagas, led by firebrand, Phizo, would not accept the 1925 notification of the then British Government. Since the unfortunate incidents in the kakodonga forest reserve of 1965; encroachments, depredations and pitched battles on Assam's side of border is continuously going on. In the Marapani sector of state's border, the Nagas have started constructing schools, offices and even video halls.

It is estimated that Nagaland have-grabbing nearly 30,000 hectares of land of a total 85,000 hectares within the periphery of Assam covering four reserved forests of Rengma, Dayang, Diphu and Nambor in Golaghat district, as reported recently a section of media.

Border disputes are not over, infect assuring to brworsning by digress. Murders, burning encroachments are turning to be normal incidents in border area.

It is interesting to note that within 15 years, 4 Nagaland sub-division are incorporated in Assam. In 1987 Nagaland government formally declared the 'New Land Subdivision' in sector B of Dhanshiri subdivision of Golaghat district. In 1991, the 'Kohabotu Subdivision' was formally declared in the Sector A of the Dhanshiri subdivision inside Assam Border. Thereafter, it declared, the two other Naga subdivisions namely 'Haldhighat' and 'Runak' in the Naojan-Chungajan and Uriamghat areas respectively around the year 2005. But, the sign boards of these Nagaland sub-division are still created within the very territory of Assam. Through legally and constitutionally recognized on the side of Assam; Nagaland occupation is going on.

(b) Border Disput of Assam with Arunachal Pradesh:

Border dispute with Arunachal Pradesh is the headline of every newspaper, in these days. It is over the charipung area of Sonari, in Sibsagar District that border clashes is going on in full swing with the help and support of Arunachal Government and in collaboration with Nagaland Government the NSCN (I-M) i.e. National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Iiaq Muivah), a militant group is carrying on its operation of encroachment, by burning houses and terrorizing people. The NSCN (I-M) call is to incorporate these areas in Arunachal Pradesh and also to form hand in hand, 'Greater Nagalim.' It is a matter of great regret and worry that the Assam Government and Assam Police has almost failed to preserve the territorial integrity of the state. The Assam police has not yet removed the bunkers that were built by NSCN ultras with the help of Arunachalists in the 5 village of Naharoni, Asin Basti, Hasirucha, Kamko and Tanglum within Assam territory. Apart from armed clashes, the rotation among the these states was further ditoriated by the Economic blocked since 14th August, 2010. The tea growers stopped plucking green tea leaves in Charipung.

It is only 30th August that this economic blocked is over. Some sorts of initiations from the top ranking leaders and ministers – Himanta Biswa Sarmah (Health Minister), Rockybull Hussain (Forest Minister) and acting C.M. Bhumidhar Barman – by temporal visits to the scence but still no effective step in visible. The Pressure groups AASU and Pro-talk ULFA under Mrinla Hazarika is condemning the Arunachalists and the Militant group for their interventionist and terrorizing activities and pressured to govt. to seek for either negotiation or solution.

(c) Border dispute of Assam with Meghalaya:

Though not very fresh and interest border dispute, yet some sort of demands and counter-demands are raised on this context. Tust after attaining full fledged state (North-Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act, 1971) – Meghalaya demanded the inclusion of Blocks I and II of than Mikir Hills (Karbi Anglong) in its geographical territory. Historically, these two Blocks have been parts of the Mikir Hills since 1951. This district was created according

to the Provisions of the constitution of sovereign India. Meghalaya's argument, on the contrary, was that both the blocks were parts of the the Khasi and Taintia Hills district as far back as 1835 when the British Government formed it.

Conclusion:

Border being a line of demarcation and distinction between two nationalist or two culters or two political entities – is also contributing towards 'Ultra' or 'narrow' nationalism which ultimately gives rise to encroachment of one's nations/states territory be another, by means of force and pressure. With the formal disappearance of colonialism and imperialism in Asia and Europe, acquiring of more and more power for a state now lies on the ability of the state to extend its territorial boundaries. Boundary dispute is not only a great concern among North-Eastern States but with other states also boundary dispute (of India) is noticeable. We can also point out the migration of illegal Bangladeshies into Assam and their permanent habitat in some of the districts of lower Assam whether it be Dhubri or Barpeta or Darrang. It has happened mainly because of the absence of strong boundary demarcation and the inability of state government to put forwards a passive resistance. Proper boundary wall (or other devices) and consciousness of security forces is not enough to tackle the problem as mass consciousness has to do a lot in his regard. To conclude, border dispute along with migration, if not controlled in a new future, will prove to be very destructive and infect, it will lead Assam to inevitable fall. So, it is the honest duty of both Assam Government and Assam Security Forces to tackle the problem. Uttar suppression is not the solution; compromise, understanding and constitutional means should be taken from both the parties (attacking and defending) for a ever lasting or permanent settlement. Along with this mass consciousness and student's consciousness has the responsibility to learn the political situation and to seek for a permanent settlement. Historical Seminars, Historical study of political life actually can guide us to reach in a satisfactory agreement. It is the noble and honest task of all the people of Assam.

The involvement and importance of Religious Ethics in Biodiversity upkeep in Sonitpur district, Assam

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Assam is the rich place of diverse culture and traditions. Indigenous religious traditions in India seem to have promulgated an ecological ethics, built around the dependence of the indigenous communities on local biodiversity. People have some sacred trees and groves known in various parts of India and Northeast. The religious beliefs, culture and plant conservation in the historical places express significant messages to the society which ultimately create a background for ecological movements. Fruits, sacred and shed trees are naturally available or planted for different means without any knowledge of conservation. Archaeologists have given relatively little attention about the plants distributed around the historical sites with exception of planting of few exotic and ornamental plants.

Keywords: Tradition, Religious ethics, Biodiversity, Conservation, Assam

Introduction

Cultural and spiritual thoughts increase the level of moral ethics which have motivating forces in nature conservation and ecosystem management. Sometimes the religious thoughts and practices are difficult to say as the process of proper management system. Though the cultural movement's gives nonprofit services to the nature and build awareness among the different sections of people on environment since long time. Different sections of religious people and tribes have different ideologies and thoughts by which they are able to maintain the traditional myth and belief. As a result they are unknowingly contributed to the nature where they started struggle for existence.

Hindu, Buddhist and Jain monks and saints sought a natural and peaceful environment, the highest expression of which is the forest. Thus traditionally temples were often built in forests, and by association the surrounding forest became sacred space to be preserved rather than exploited. Traditionally this would tend to promote the conservation of all the species diversity within the surrounding ecosystem (Deb, 2006).

Cultural perceptions have immense impact ecosystem. As Schama (1995) notes, 'Landscapes are culture before they are nature; constructs of the imagination projected onto wood water and rock'. The traditional and spiritual value has now given special interest to protect the right of local people so, that they can entangled with system of conservation. The topic now gauges interest from scientists and policy-makers, who have subsequently lead relevant policies and scientific studies, namely, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Article 8j of the CBD, the entering into force of the 2003 UNESCO Convention on Intangible Heritage (2003), and the recognition of cultural services of ecosystems in the recently released Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) (2003; 2005), as well as the prominent position of indigenous people at the UN through the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. From the viewpoint of cultural services, ecosystems provide critical, often intangible, non-material and information services (de Groot et al, 2002; MA, 2005). The UNESCO Convention on Intangible Heritage³⁴ has defined (Article 2, Para 1) such intangible heritage as; 'the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills - as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith - that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage'. The protected areas including the historical places have some special features and nature of biodiversity.

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Assam having a good number of monuments belonging to the medieval period i.e., 6th century A.D. to 19th century A.D. It maintained cultural relation with the main land. The history of architecture in Assam can be divided in to different periods like Pre- Ahom period, Ahom dynasty, Koch dynasty, Chutia dynasty, Jaintia & Kachari dynasties, Muslim architecture and Secular architecture (It will be justified to mention about the secular building architecture of Assam in brick).

Sonitpur district is spread over an area of 5324 sq kms. on north bank of Brahmaputra river. In terms of area Sonitpur is the second largest district of Assam after Karbi Anglong district. The people here are not a homogeneous lot. Rather, they are a mosaic of ethnic groups, an admixture of diverse types of people. Sir Edward A. Gait (1906) had made reference to the nine line inscription of Harjjar Varma in his "A History of Assam." The inscription is the first recorded history of Assam and dates back to 829 A.D The famous King of the dynasty Harjjar Varma, besides other things had excavated a large pond in 70 acres of land, later came to be known as Hajara Pukhuri (Harjjara Pukhuri). Agnigarh hill, Bamuni hills etc. are famous for their exemplary artistic finesse. The sculptural remains date back to the ninth and tenth century A.D. Besides these, temples and other historical sites represent the rich diverse cultures and tradition of district that was earlier. So, these religious symbol and myth plays significant role in conservation of biodiversity in one hand and motivated the people to convert these places of interest in eco-tourism center near future.

Results

The present survey work listed the name of some plant species that are normally found or planted in the surroundings of the historical places of Assam and Sonitpur district for various means since long time. It shows natural exquisiteness, symbol of belief of living creatures and man and unseen part of eco-restoration.

Table 1. Major crops in North-East India. Source: Hore (2001)

Crops	Estimated diversities	Diversities
Taros	300	272
Yams	230	200
Citrus	17 spp.+52 vars.	80
Banana	16 species	120
Orchids	700 species	15

Table 2. Major plant diversities in Assam and North East India.

Common name	Species	Distribution
Mango	<i>Mangifera indica</i> L.	Tropical areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura
Indian Jujubi	<i>Zizyphus mauritiana</i>	Plains and Hills upto 500m
Pineapple	<i>Ananas comosus</i> L.	Found in Assam
Amlakhi	<i>Emblia officinalis</i> Gaertn	Found in all states of north east.
Guava	<i>Psidium guajava</i> L.	Tropical and subtropical (up to 1000m) zone of India
Banana	<i>Musa acuminata</i> Colla. <i>Musa balbisiana</i> Colla.	Throughout the tropical and subtropical zones of the country
Lime,	Citrus spp.	Lime and lemon in both lemon & oranges tropical subtropical
Peach	<i>Prunus persica</i> Benth & Hook.f.	Meghalaya, Nagland and AP
Plum	<i>Prunus domestica</i> L. spp.	Meghalaya, Mizoram and Assam
Strawberry	<i>Fragaria vesca</i> l.	Hills of NE region
Apple	<i>Malas sylvestris</i> (L)	Arunachal Pradesh

Table- 3. Major plant species in an around historical monuments

Botanical name	Local name	Common purposes
<i>Actinodaphne obovata</i> (Nees.) Bl.	Patisonda	Ornamental plant
<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Bel	Sacred plant
<i>Areca catechu</i>	Tamul	Fruit plant
<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	Kathal	Fruit plant
<i>Averrhoa carambola</i> L.	Jalpai	Fruit plant
<i>Averrhoa billimbii</i> L.	Bilambi tenga	Fruit plant
<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Mahanim	Ornamental plant
<i>Bauhinia purpurea</i>	Kanchan	Ornamental plant
<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	Narikal	Fruit Plant
<i>Delonix regia</i> (Bojr.) Raf.	Krishnachura	Ornamental plant
<i>Elaeocarpus sphaericus</i>	Ridra rudrakhya	Sacred plant
<i>Ficus religiosa</i> Linn.	Ahot gach	Sacred plant
<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i>	Jabab phul gach	Ornamental plant
<i>Ixora coccinea</i>	Rangol	Ornamental plant
<i>Justicia adhatoda</i>	Boga bahek	Ornamental plant
<i>Mimusops elangi</i>	Bakul	Ornamental plant
<i>Mesua ferrea</i>	Nahor	Ornamental plant
<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i>	Podum	Ornamental plant
<i>Nyctanthus arbor-tristis</i>	Sewali phul	Ornamental plant
<i>Ocimum basilicum</i>	Tulasi	Sacred plant
<i>Plumeria acuminata</i>	Gulanchi, gul	Ornamental plant
<i>Saraca indica</i>	Asoka	Ornamental plant
<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	Kalajam	Fruit plant
<i>Tamarindus indica</i>	Tetuli	Fruit plant
<i>Tabernaemontana divericata</i> (L.) R.Br.	Kathanda	Ornamental plant
<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	Arjun	Sacred plant
<i>Terminalia chebula</i> (Gaertn.) Retz.	Silikha	Fruit plant
<i>Thevetia nerifolia</i>		Ornamental plant

According to recent research underpinning the importance the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment put on assessing the real value of ecosystem services, the research community needs to develop analytical tools for projecting future trends and evaluating the success of interventions, as well as indicators to monitor biological, physical and social changes (Carpenter et al, 2006) The marrying of biophysical and social sciences also has implications for the development of bio-cultural indicators for conservation and ecosystem management. The changes in conservation ethics bring forth a shift towards including local and indigenous people in day-to-day conservation management. According to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous People, the issues of scale should be addressed when proposing indicators, including at the international, regional and national levels. It is increasingly realized that effective management is more dependent on multi-user, multi-ctional models that interact constructively with local and indigenous populations. This also implies recognition and respect for the values these people deem to be of importance, specifically in relation to the natural environment (Interview with George Schaller in National Geographic Magazine, 'World parks', October 2006).

Conclusion

Recently cultural values have been recognized to be of importance by various international associations like CBD's, UNESCO, UNEP, WWF, IUCN etc. The religion and cultural aspects making a bridge among the people with knowledge transfer, maintaining ecosystems and information to the technology for sustainable conservation. Sonitpur is place of historical importance with potential resources of nature to maintain community based ecosystem management.

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Education for all : A Historical Perspective

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Introduction:

The only power in the world which can ensure the sustainability of the future of our only dear world by ensuring the evolvement of the human values by equal rights to all and entertaining this conception that, it is, our common duty of all the inhabitants of the world that we should protect, not only protect but save our dear world which is now burning – It is nothing but EDUCATION.

Not simply education, but education for all, Education should reach all the nook and corner of a country if we think that the country should develop and at the same time ensure its sustenance.

In this paper, the writers focus and the point out how this particular aspect – Education for All, develops during its long History of Education of the country, i.e. India.

Education for all in the pre-British Ages (Up to 1000BC)

In the vedic age, it is seen that though knowledge in this age was open for all, it was open only as an ideal. In practice, vedic knowledge was confined within a few families of only the saints (Rishis). The children of the royal families went to the homes (Ashram) of the Rishis for knowing reading and writing. The vast majority of the people were illiterate and access to education was denied to some castes also. We all know that education was denied to Ekalavya and Karna by their gurus because they were considered untouchables. This attitude of denying education to all was seen increasing in the post Vedic period (1000 BC – 600 BC). Education had been confined into the Brahmanic families and was imparted in Sanskrit language which was no longer a first language of the people at that time. The Buddhist Education (550 BC to 800 AD) system which started in about 550 BC allowed regional languages as medium of education. Through this system was institutional, (not administered by a single particular guru but, Sangha) democratic and said to be open to all; it could not reach all the lives and activities of the populace because women were denied this education and it had no relation with the social lives and activities. This system of education was exclusively for the ascetics

and celibates. During the Muslim period, most of the kingdom of the country were occupied and dominated by the Muslim Kings and they started the Muslim system of education. The period can be calculated from 1194 to 1857. During this period, the education system was institutional and it included social aspects into the system and ideally, it was also open and even the Hindus could avail this education and free to all. Nobody had to pay anything for learning. But in practice, it is seen that the system was not secular, the Hindus were denied if they did not want to be Muslim and there was a separate system of education for the people of higher classes. Women were also denied education and the medium of education was not regional languages. It is Arabic or Percy.

During the period between 1700-1813, the Indigenous education system in India could show some signs of education coming to the lives of the populace, and yet the untouchables and the women were deprived of education and the whole system was not supported by the kings.

The first step of education for all can be traced in the activities of the missionaries and the British East India Company before 1813. Through it is seen that the activities of the missionaries and the charter Act of 1813 were an impediment to the indigenous system of education and the main aim of the missionaries for establishment of school and developing the regional languages was propagating Christianity, the indirectly paved the way for education for all.

The charter act of 1813 and thereby issued solution by Lord Macaulay (Although it is said that the Minute is the starting point of modern Indian education system) cannot be told as education for all. The minute can be termed as an intrigue (The downward filtration theory) to chain the nation under their governance. The Woods' Despatch of 1854, which was called the Megna Carats of Indian education system, seems to have reformed the minute and to have taken some steps for mass education and yet it was not a declaration of education for all. The Indian education commission (Hunter commission) constituted in India in the year 1882 was responsive towards mass education. It was, however because of the sepoy mutiny of 1857. But even now the medium of instruction was English and Govt. of England did not help the primary sector of education. Lord Curzon, as benevolent autocrat

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literacy of the country. For example that the government must ensure that the scheme of compulsory education for children below 14 years is completed before the beginning of 21st century. The World Bank also provided grant in aid to Human Resource Development Ministry in 1994 for elementary education and education for children of backward places.

The Sarba Siksha Abhijan started in the year 2001-02 in the most magnificent National Scheme of the country after independence. It is a holistic strategy that includes the central, the state as well as the local governments to ensure that all children go to school and 100% literacy is ensured. And again, we must praise the government of India that the free and compulsory education for children Bill of 2009 has been recommended after the signature of the President. Now elementary education has been considered as a Fundamental Right of the citizens of India.

To conclude, it can be said that though the period before the independence of India especially the pre British period denied education for all, the post independence period did never neglect it even a bit.

But still, it is seen that though the commissions, policies etc. are honest enough in this respect, literacy rate has not increased as expected and a vast majority of people are not politically conscious enough so that corruptions exploitations can be minimized, good governance and all round development can be ensured. It can be said that a proper study of the problem is very essential to find out why such a vast discrepancy is yet posing a threat to the development of the country.

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