

**UTTARAN**

**A Bilingual Research Journal on  
Humanities and Social Sciences**

# উত্তরণ Uttaran

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Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Editor**

**Kanaklata Bharali  
Karabi Kalita**

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*A Bilingual Research Journal on Humanities and Social Sciences*

সম্পাদক

কনকলতা ভৰালী

কৰবী কলিতা

Editor

Kanaklata Bharali

Karabi Kalita

প্রকাশক



বামুন্দী মহাবিদ্যালয়

বামুন্দী, কামৰূপ

# Uttaran

Editor  
**Kanaklata Bharali**  
**Karabi Kalita**

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## Message

I am pleased to be informed that Bamundi Mahavidyalaya is going to publish a multidisciplinary bilingual research volume entitled "Uttaran", which reflects the college's steadfast commitment to academic inquiry, innovation, and holistic learning. This collection of research articles will be published under the aegis of Faculties of Bamundi Mahavidyalaya, Bamundi, Kamrup (R)

I extend my sincere appreciation to all the contributors, editors, and faculty mentors who have worked tirelessly to bring this publication to fruition. Your dedication strengthens the academic foundation of the college and inspires a culture of continuous discovery.

I am confident that this book will serve as a valuable resource and spark new ideas among learners and researchers across disciplines. May it encourage continued exploration and reinforce the shared mission of excellence in education and research.



**(Dr. Anil Kumar Sarma)**  
President, Governing Body  
Bamundi Mahavidyalaya  
Bamundi, Kamrup  
Date : 16/10/2024

**Dr. Champak Kr. Sarma**

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## Message from the desk of Principal

I am pleased to know that 'Uttaran' a bilingual and multidisciplinary ISBN journal will be published under the aegis of Bamundi Mahavidyalaya. I appreciate the editorial board consisting of Mrs Kanaklata Bharali, Asstt. prof. dept. of Education and Mrs Karabi Kalita, Asstt. prof. dept. of Assamese for their tireless efforts in publishing such a research book which will definitely help the writers, students, teachers, academicians as well as researchers to open up new avenues to help the society through their knowledge.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ch. Sarma'.

**(Dr. Champak Kr. Sarma)**

Principal, Bamundi Mahavidyalaya

Bamundi, Kamrup, Assam-781103

Date : 25/10/2024



It gives me immense pleasure to present *Uttaran: A Bilingual Research Journal on Humanities and Social Sciences*, an accumulation of research-based articles and papers published under the patronage of Bamundi Mahavidyalaya. It is indeed a matter of pride to be a part of this scholarly endeavor. This volume brings together a range of thought-provoking articles from diverse disciplines. Kishore Baishya explores “The Golden Thread of Sualkuchi: Legacy, Identity, and Modern Fate of Assam’s Pat and Muga Silk.” Dr. Nibedita Sarma presents an analytical study titled “An Overview of the Language and Literature of Kamrup between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Century CE.” Rimli Deka’s article, “Blue Humanities: A Study of Water Bodies in Selected Works of Literature,” offers a fresh perspective on ecological representation. Dr. Champak Sarma discusses “Charles Dickens as a Social Reformist”, while Pankaj Bikash Sarma contributes a detailed study on “Demographic Dividend, Middle-Income Trap, and Inequality: The Role of Education and the Need to Transform Publicly Funded Education in India”. Diganta Sarma’s article, “Empowering the Bell Metal Industry of Sarthebari through Product Innovation and Adaptation,” examines local industry and entrepreneurship. Dr. Latika Kalita insightfully reflects on the

use of mathematics and abstract thought in the stories of the renowned author Saurabh Saliha. Dr. Utpala Baishya, in her paper “Ultrasonic Waves: Application in Flaw Detection in Rails”, discusses scientific innovation with practical relevance. Nizara Devi Adhikary’s article, “Problems and Prospects of Implementing NEP 2020 in Assam,” evaluates the educational implications of the new policy. Each article in this volume represents a unique area of research and intellectual engagement. It is hoped that the collection will prove enriching for readers and inspire further academic exploration.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Principal and the faculty members of Bamundi Mahavidyalaya for their unwavering support and cooperation. May Uttaran continue to contribute meaningfully to the academic growth of Bamundi Mahavidyalaya and serve as a platform for scholarly excellence in the years to come.

**Kanaklata Bharali**

*Department of Education  
Bamundi Mahavidyalaya*

# সম্পাদকীয়



প্ৰিয় পাঠক-পাঠিকা তথা শুভাকাঙ্ক্ষী,

প্ৰথমেই আপোনালোক সকলোকে ‘উত্তৰণ’ আলোচনীৰ এই প্ৰথম সংখ্যাটিলৈ সাদৰ সন্তোষ জনালোঁ। আমাৰ বামুন্দী মহাবিদ্যালয়ৰ প্ৰথম প্ৰচেষ্টা ‘অনুৰণন’খনে দেখাই দিয়া বাটেৰে এই আলোচনীখনে বাট বুলিছে। ‘উত্তৰণ’ শব্দটোৱে যিদৰে অগ্ৰগতি, বিকাশ আৰু ওপৰলৈ যোৱাৰ ইংগিত বহন কৰে, আমাৰ আলোচনীখনৰ প্ৰতিটো প্ৰচেষ্টাও ঠিক সেই দিশতেই নিবদ্ধ। সমাজ, সাহিত্য, বিজ্ঞান, সংস্কৃতি আৰু বৰ্তমান সময়ৰ বিভিন্ন প্ৰত্যাহ্বান আদিৰ ওপৰত আলোকপাত কৰি আমাৰ লেখকসকলে ইয়াত যি গৱেষণাধৰ্মী আলোচনা আগবঢ়াইছে, সেয়াই আমাৰ এই যাত্ৰাৰ প্ৰাণ। আমি আশা কৰোঁ, আলোচনীখনৰ পাতত সৃষ্টি হোৱা এই জ্ঞান চৰ্চাই আমাক এখন সুস্থিৰ আৰু প্ৰগতিশীল সমাজৰ দিশে আগুৱাই নিয়াত সহায় কৰিব।

আমি ধন্যবাদ জনাইছো আমাৰ প্ৰতিগৰাকী লেখক আৰু শুভাকাঙ্ক্ষীক, যিসকলৰ সহযোগিতা অবিহনে ‘উত্তৰণ’ৰ এই যাত্ৰা অসম্পূৰ্ণ হৈ ৰ’লহেঁতেন। আপোনালোকৰ প্ৰতিটো লেখাই আলোচনীখনক নতুন মাত্ৰা প্ৰদান কৰিছে। আপোনালোকৰ গঠনমূলক মন্তব্য আৰু পৰামৰ্শই আলোচনীখনক আগবাঢ়িবলৈ অনুপ্ৰাণিত কৰিছে। এই নতুন সংখ্যাটিৰ জৰিয়তে আমাৰ জ্ঞানৰ জগতখন আৰু অধিক সমৃদ্ধ হোৱাৰ কামনা কৰি সদৌ শেষত প্ৰকাশৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত অনিচ্ছাকৃতভাৱে ৰৈ যোৱা যিকোনো ভুল-ভ্ৰান্তিৰ বাবে আমি পাঠক সমাজৰ ওচৰত ক্ষমা মাৰ্জনা বিচাৰিছোঁ।

অশেষ ধন্যবাদেৰে—

কৰবী কলিতা

অসমীয়া বিভাগ

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# Charles Dickens as a Social Reformist

*Dr. Champak Kr. Sarma*  
Principal  
Bamundi Mahavidyalaya

## **Introduction**

The Victorian era in England started with the reign of Queen Victoria from 1837 to 1901. We witnessed rapid development in the field of commerce, democracy and Science which helped to shape the culture and society during this period. It was an era of material affluence, political consciousness, democratic reforms, industrial and mechanical progress, Scientific advancement, social unrest, educational expansion, empire building and religious uncertainty. The Victorian era was in many ways a glorious epoch in the history of English literature and the advancement made in the field of poetry, prose and fiction was really commendable.

During the Victorian era, Charles Dickens was one of the greatest social reformer who directed his pen to root out the

evils of the Victorian Society. Through his writing, he wanted to eradicate the evils which were prevalent during his time and he wanted to make a perfect society of his own ideals. His works were mainly for the downtrodden section of the Society who worked in the factory as a daily wagers and who were the victims of the exploitation of privileged classes of the society.

### **Dickens' Use of characters for representation of the society**

Dickens was a humanitarian novelist and luckily for him there was no Dr. Johnson to condemn his reformatory zeal. In the Victorian society, Dickens became very popular because he harnessed his pen for the amelioration of the suffering and pathetic conditions of the poor factory workers, little children groaning under the whips of tyrannical school-masters, litigants moving about law courts without getting any justice, and prisoners subjected to the hardship of rigorous prison life. Dickens tried to arise public conscience to these evils, though he alone was not a pioneer in reformatory zeal which had appeared earlier in the novels of Defoe, Fielding, Goldsmith and in the revolutionary novel of Godwin. But in the novel of Dickens the reformatory zeal was particularly emphasized. After the publication of *Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby* and *The old Curiosity Shop*, he was, to quote W. L. Cross, "the greatest social reformer for full thirty years"

Dickens railed against the social, Political, economic and educational drawback of his times. In *Oliver Twist*, Dickens exposed the weakness of the parish administration. It shows in lurid colors the misadventures of a poor boy, Oliver, who was born in a workhouse and fell in the hands of thieves and receivers

who brought him up in the standards of Fagin's academy. In Bleak House, Dickens shows law's delay and the corrupt system of election. Elections in his novels are always corrupt and comic, the members of Parliament appearing as strutting boobies. Dickens shows the caste system of the ancient regime in A tale of Two Cities. In Nicholas Nickleby, he exposes the evils of the charity schools, tyrannies of the school masters and the lack of education in England. In his novel Hard Times, he exposes through Mr. Gradgrind the whole system of laissez faire system of the Manchester school. All these evils were sought to be reformed by Dickens through the medium of his novels. He awakened the Victorian conscience and stirred it for a better way of life.

Dickens's own life being a series of misadventures and afflictions, he transmuted his personal agonies and sorrows into the sorrows of the children of his fictional world. When his father was confined in the debtor's prison, Dickens lived alone in his lodgings, and the misery of the human waste that he witnessed around him made an indelible impression on his mind. Dickens had revealed a sustaining interest in depraved childhood till the end of his career. In all his novels, he harps on the theme of child exploitation, especially the fate of orphans and abandoned children, on the misery which was the product of the social conditions of his time. The Child characters are drawn with a degree of insight and are capable of arousing the interest as well as sympathy of the readers.

As the greatest social reformer, Dickens directed his pen to root out the evils of the Victorian Society. His Great Expectations (1860), which was relegated to the back shelves

in Dickens's hey days, has now come to occupy a position of Pride. The little boy groomed to be a blacksmith deludes himself, while running after false pretensions. For the best part of his youth, Pip forsakes those whom he had once held dear to his heart and for greater effectiveness changes his place of residence. The beginning of the novel conveys to us an idea of Pip's character, background and setting of the novel. The first page itself shows Pip against the backdrops of his parents and siblings' graves and it is clear that he is an orphan who must find a guardian angel and fend for himself.

Dickens employs the literary devices of betrothal and marriage scenes, with which readers have been familiar since biblical times. Marriage is a social contract signed between two individuals, but having greater social relevance. Normally signifying untold joys and ensuring continuity of life, the wedding gown and feast of Miss Havisham in *Great Expectation*, is a mockery of the event. The yellow bridal gown and state feast on the table, regularly raided by the rats in contrast show the lack opportunities and unfulfilled desires in the lives of Victorian women.

Pip as a character involves self-reflection and hence there is a note of evolving in him. In spite of being as good as told by Miss Havisham that she is not the real benefactor, Pip wills himself to believe in her generosity.

Pip takes exception to the way Trabb's Boy imitates him. Here the older Pip stands out and looks at how he was seen by others, as different from how he saw himself. Dickens exploits his difference between the older and younger pip to hold up the split in ourselves between what we imagine ourselves to be and

what the society understands us to be. Dickens is a conscious artist and right from the beginning he sought to depict the Victorian society marked by certain peculiarities true to its times. The new trend of dry nursing, is exemplified by Mrs. Joe's bringing up by hand, her infant brother, Pip. The figure of Miss Havisham is a statement of the frustrating living conditions of all women, both married and unmarried. Through her, Dickens has shown the external trapping of society, which affects the sociological behavior of women.

*Great Expectations* has innumerable instances from Dickens's own life. He experienced the same kind of neglect that Pip did. His mother's refusal to take him back from the blacking warehouse at the tender age of twelve, colored all his future portrayals of mothers and motherhood.

Dickens like Pip in the story, was continually striving for gentility and social acceptance. Social acceptance was so important to Dickens that like Pip, he did not want to be misremembered after death. He wanted to be remembered by posterity and only for the right reasons-always concerned with what People would say and how they would construe his action. Dickens shows in Pip the natural unconditioned life of the heart and the socially destructive process that weakens and distorts it, transforming instinct into calculation, human love into manipulation, generosity into greed, spontaneity into shame and ambition. Pip's ambitions as he climbs to the top are soiled by the tainted money typical of his society.

We found a lot of injustice, too, depicted in *Great Expectations*; not only the injustice which individual human beings do towards one another under the influences exerted by

money-values and otherwise but also the injustice done by society collectively towards different individuals. The description of conditions in English prisons during the Victorian age reveals the injustice of society as a whole to human beings. At that time, we are told, jails were much neglected, and the period of reaction against public wrong-doing was still far off. The treatment meted out to prisoners was most callous.

### **Social issues in Dickens's novel**

Dickens's another novel *Hard Times* which was published in 1853 shows the role of Dickens as a social reformer. In *Hard times* Dickens denounces a society which is guided by a harsh utilitarian philosophy where knowledge is based on facts and figures and feelings and emotions are not allowed to flourish in a child's mind. Victorian life was, on the whole, dominated by Benthamite utilitarianism. England was being rapidly industrialized, and machinery was coming to occupy the foremost position in English national life. The development of industry was giving rise to problems between capital and labor, that is between employers and workers, and the trade union movement was gaining momentum. It was also a period when snobbery and hypocrisy held a sway over the minds of the upper class people. These, and certain other aspects of Victorian life, receive a powerful expression at the hands of Dickens in *Hard Times* though for obvious reasons Dickens greatly exaggerates what seemed to him to be the evils and abuses of the Victorian industrial and utilitarian life.

Coke town which functions on the basis of the utilitarian philosophy is devoid of creativity. The characters of this

industrial world are lifeless like the machines of the factories. The monotony of the workmen's life is fully conveyed to us. The need for any relaxation or physical relief is never realized by the employers. In fact, the workmen are not men at all; they are "hands", so many hundred hands "so many hundred horse steam power" These men are not supposed to have any souls; they are hands who have to work upon "the crashing, smashing, tearing mechanisms, day in and day out". Time goes on in this industrial town like its own machinery: so much material used, so much fuel consumed, so much money made.

According to the picture of Victorian society which this novel contains, money was decidedly the most important thing in life, and Bounderby is a personification of the greed for money. snobbery or the importance of the class distinctions came only next to money.

The significance of utilitarianism in the lives of the people is analysed from various prospectives. The sad consequences of the utilitarianism are to be seen in the fate which Louisa meets in her married life, the wrecking of Tom's career and the self-interest which governs the action of Bitzer. Harthouse, another specimen of utilitarianism, though different from Bounderby, manages to gain a place in Louisa's heart by his machinations and his devices, and she saves herself only at the last moment. But in the failure of her married life and her return to her father's home lie the ashes of Gridgrind's utilitarian philosophy. Tom takes to evil courses, going to the length of committing a robbery at the bank, and having ultimately to flee from the country. Bitzer thinks that, having paid his fees at the school when he was a student there, he owes nothing at all to

Gradgrind because, after all, Gradgrind's philosophy of utilitarianism does not permit any gratitude. Dickens feared that this kind of utilitarian society would have disastrous effects on its people. It is not the growth of industries that perturbs Dickens, but it is the philosophy lurking behind the functioning of the industries, of ignoring the human needs and impulses of the workers, that dismays him.

Dickens portrayed a society which was dominated by money-value. He showed in his novels what money can do good or bad, or how it can change and make distinctions of classes, or how it can pervert virtue. Most of the characters in his novels showed hankering after money. In *Great Expectations*, when Pip visited Miss Havisham's house for second time, he saw a number of relatives who are jealous of Pip. At the time of his prosperity they fawn upon him, but they left when Pip's prosperity ends Herbert also wanted to make money and accumulate capital for which he rounded Miss Havisham's house to meet the rich old woman who might favor him with her patronage. This reflected the general Victorian domination of money over the minds of people. In *Hard Times*, also Dickens criticized the economic system. He opposed the selfish capitalism. He knew that the capitalists did not pay sufficient money to the working class people of the society against their work and tried to dominate them. Dickens felt that dependence upon capitalistic practically without reference to sympathy and brotherly understanding causes continued difficulties in the relations of capital and labour. His scene was Manchester or Leeds or some other such industrial Centre and he called the place "Coketown". Coketown is described as a

town of machinery. The capitalists never tried to understand the workers. They thought them not as men at all but hands. They have no any souls but hands to work from dawn to dusk in their factory. These capitalists made money through this lower class people of the society. Money was the most important thing in life for the capitalists. Bounderby who was a factory owner had greed for money.

Dickens, the social reformist, suggested to improve the social evils through private benevolence. He had no faith in legislation and charitable institutions, His conceptions of the savior of the poor stresses on a heavy purse and a large heart, who is ready to give money to the poor and to find avenues of employment for them, present gifts to the sick and the suffering. Betsy Trotwood in *David Copperfield* is a generous and kind hearted lady, who provides relief to David and helps him to receive education so that he may enter a suitable career. Dickens repeatedly states that the beauty of moral virtue is discovered in all classes of people without consideration of birth and education. The poor is not looked upon by him from a level of social superiority; his attitude towards them is not one of the patronage but it is one of equality. The advice of Miss Trotwood to David, “Never be mean, never be false, never be cruel” may be taken to be the ideal of conduct which Dickens holds for others to follow. He loved the poor on finding examples of such conduct and virtue among them and they endeared themselves to him. Characters like Joe Gargery in *Great Expectation* and Peggotty in *David Copperfield* are worthy of his admiration and the life of the poor can be made tolerable through such” loving Kindness” and not through

any institutional care. In *Hard times*, Dickens criticized of the rigidity of divorce laws implied through Stephen Blackpool, hypocrisy and false pride of the upper classes through Mrs. Sparsit and his condemnation of trade unionism through Slackbridge. Louisa symbolizes the suffering to which a human being may be subjected as a consequence of the wrong kind of upbringing. Tom symbolizes the dangerous consequences of the kind of education advocated by Gradgrind. Through *Hard Times* Dickens exposes the absurdity of utilitarianism in education, business, and industry and of the theory of laissez faire which allows the factory owners to exploit the workers.

### **Conclusion**

Dickens captures the spirit of the Victorian England through his novels and they earned enduring popularity since their publications. His works are considered valuable in the Victorian era as well as in our times for their social values and literary appeal. Dickens proved himself to be not only the greatest entertainer of his age and his country's greatest novelist. He spoke for millions; and in an age of very great men he was recognized as the most outstanding of them all. His novels did not occupy his sole attention; he also edited magazines, produced plays and acted in them, he travelled extensively not only in England, but throughout Europe and America; he delivered endless speeches sponsoring charitable causes. His energy was, indeed, boundless. The picture which he painted of the English social world is one of the richest in the whole range of literary output. ■

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# Demographic Dividend, Middle Income Trap, and Inequality: The role of education and the need to transform the publicly funded educational system in India

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## **Abstract**

In this paper an attempt has been made to understand the triple challenges– realizing demographic dividends, circumventing middle income trap, and mitigating inequality in society– faced by India as a rapidly growing economy. The focus is on the role of education, in general, and publicly funded educational system, in particular, in addressing these challenges. Education is widely considered as a very effective tool to create and maintain human capital essential for economic growth and national development. The present structure and pattern of

publicly funded educational system has been examined from this prospective. An attempt has been made to devise a strategy to transform the educational landscape for this purpose so that publicly funded educational system becomes an effective tool in generating the required human capital for a growing and sustainable economy.

**Keywords:** *Demographic Dividend, Middle Income Trap, Inequality, Human Capital, Educational System, Public Funding in Education.*

## **Introduction**

With a rapidly growing economy, India is striding ahead in its quest for growth, achieving the status of a developed nation as soon as possible. In the process, millions of people have been uplifted from abject poverty to enjoy the fruits of economic growth and development. As the country is reaching a cherished goal of the third largest economy in the world, surpassing the Asian giant Japan, new challenges have emerged in the horizon. To sustain the growth and fulfil the dream of becoming a developed nation, India must overcome these challenges. Three of the much talked about challenges faced by the nation are realizing demographic dividend, circumventing middle income trap, and mitigating inequality.

Education in general, and publicly funded educational system in particular, plays a huge role in addressing each of these challenges. The nation must develop a system of universal education so that the momentum of economic growth may be maintained, and the widely recognized hurdles of middle-income trap may be avoided. Also, it is extremely important that the

fruits of economic growth are shared equitably by every section of the citizen of the country. Extreme inequality in income and wealth may result in impediments in national integration, breakdown of law and order situation, disturbance in social harmony, and public safety issues etc.

In view of this, every section of the society, particularly the downtrodden and weaker strata, must be strategically equipped so that they can participate in the growth and development sweeping through the nation. Assuming availability of physical capital and infrastructure, economic development is ultimately a function of the skill and knowledge, the so-called human capital, at the disposal in a society. Human capital may be defined as “the knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience individuals possess that can be used to create economic value”. (<https://smowl.net/en/blog/human-capital>).

So, the role of publicly funded education is immense for a sustainable and equitable economic development. A nation must envision the goal and structure of the educational system, set aside adequate funds for public education, and devise a strategy to overcome any hurdles, including cultural norms and barriers.

Before proceeding further, it is time to delve deeper into each of the challenges mentioned here.

### **Demographic Dividend and Education**

As per United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), “the demographic dividend is the economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population’s age structure, mainly when the share of the working-age population (15 to 64) is larger than the non-working-age share of the population (14 and younger, and 65 and older)”. As the number of working age

population is more relative to the dependents, a country with demographic dividend is expected to grow very fast economically during this phase. However, it is not a certainty that demographic dividends will produce the expected results.

Japan, Hong Kong, and Singapore could reap the benefits of the demographic dividends to transform their economies into developed status. These countries entered this phase in the 1960s. Another example is China. China entered its demographic dividend phase in 1980s when it started its economic reforms. What followed was a period of astonishing economic growth for over three decades not witnessed in human history for such a large country. But there are other countries which were not that fortunate. Brazil entered demographic dividend phase in the 1960s. Though it grew rapidly during decade from 1966-75, growth momentum could not be sustained in subsequent years. “The Arab world entered its demographic dividend phase in the 1990s, but without growth and employment, frustration among the population, especially the educated youth, led to the Arab Spring a decade or so ago. There, the dividend became a demographic disaster.” (<https://frontline.thehindu.com/economy/india-demographic-dividend-unemployment-crisis-agriculture/article69873237.ece>)

In case of India the era of demographic dividend has started in 2005. It is expected to last to 2055. As per EY- India, by 2030 share of India’s working age population to total population will reach its highest level at 68.9% and dependency ratio will be at its lowest point at 31.2% ([https://www.ey.com/en\\_in/insights/india-at-100/reaping-the-demographic-dividend](https://www.ey.com/en_in/insights/india-at-100/reaping-the-demographic-dividend)). With a median age of 28.4 years, India has a relatively young population, in

comparison to USA with 38.7 years, Europe with 44.7 years or Japan with 49.8 years. It is also expected that the consumption power of such a young population will provide a big boost to economy. However, the growth story of India since 2005 is somewhat mixed- we observe spells of explosive growth being broken by periods of subdued expansion. So, it cannot be taken for granted that demographic dividends will definitely propel the country into a high income developed status.

UNFPA stipulates that “realizing a demographic dividend requires multiple investments. The most essential are building the capabilities of people and ensuring their rights and freedoms to achieve their potential. Young people need the chance to gain the education and experience to succeed in a competitive global workplace, which demands more skills, education and technical expertise than ever before” (<https://www.unfpa.org/demographic-dividend#0>). Additionally, UNFPA further highlights the need for educating the girls to harvest the fruits of demographic dividend. It comes down to basically improving the human capital of the nation, which may be defined as “the collective knowledge, skills, health, and experience within a population or organization that contribute to economic productivity and growth”. So, investment in education and ensuring affordable education to everyone is essential to reap the benefits of demographic dividend.

Though adequate resources must be allocated to develop the human capital of the young people in a country, it may be reiterated that realizing demographic dividends depends on other factors like availability of plentiful decent jobs, good governance, quality of infrastructure and a business climate that

is conducive for economic growth. So, it is imperative that sufficient and simultaneous investments are made to create and ensure these basic requirements.

### **Middle Income Trap and Education**

Before discussing the concept of middle income trap, it is necessary to look into the classification of countries in terms of income.

The World Bank classifies countries into four income groups—low, lower-middle, upper-middle, and high—based on their annual Gross National Income (GNI) per capita. As of the World Bank's 2026 fiscal year classification, the thresholds are: low income (\$1,135 or less), lower-middle income (\$1,136–\$4,495), upper-middle income (\$4,496–\$13,935), and high income (over \$13,935). (<https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>)

As per World Economic Outlook (April 2025) of International Monetary Fund, GDP per capita of India at current prices is 2880 US dollars, (though in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP), it is 12130 international dollars) ([https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/profile/IND#:~:text=World%20Economic%20Outlook%20\(April%202025,%20s%20%2C%202009%20%2D%202030%20Show%20all\)](https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/profile/IND#:~:text=World%20Economic%20Outlook%20(April%202025,%20s%20%2C%202009%20%2D%202030%20Show%20all))). As GNI and GDP figures are similar for India, India falls firmly into the lower middle income category of World Bank classifications. For comparison with US\$ 13690 GDP per capita, China is categorised as an upper-middle income country as of now.

As per World Development Report 2024 of World Bank Group, around six billion people live in middle income

countries. The report further highlights the difficulties faced by middle income countries to break the barrier and enter into the high income category, despite setting ambitious deadlines for themselves to reach high-income status within the next two or three decades. “Since the 1990s, only 34 middle-income economies have succeeded in that feat. The rest—108 at the end of 2023—have been stuck in the middle-income trap” (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2024>).

As per the World Bank Report, the concept of a middle-income trap was first introduced by Indermit Gill and Homi Kharas in 2007. It was observed that many countries in Latin America and the Middle East, after attaining the middle income status, struggled hard to grow further economically. The momentum of growth slowed down substantially. A possibility of slowdowns in East Asia’s emerging economies also became apparent.

In their paper (Gill, Indermit and Homi Kharas (2007). *An East Asian Renaissance: Ideas for Economic Growth*. World Bank, Washington DC.) Gill and Kharas described that there was rapid growth from low-income to middle-income levels. The sources of this growth were cheap labor, introduction of basic technology, and a concomitant “reallocation of labor and capital from low-productivity sectors like traditional agriculture to export-driven, high productivity manufacturing”. However, such high growth periods are often followed by lower rate of economic growth once the country enters into the middle income category. “As the rural labor force shrinks and wages rise, the factor accumulation that once propelled high growth eventually loses strength. Unless new sources of economic growth are

found, a country may find itself unable to compete with either low-wage country that dominate mature industries or high-income countries that dominate innovative, high technology industries”.

(The Middle-Income Trap: Myth or Reality? Greg Larson, Norman Loayza, Michael Woolcock)

<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/965511468194956837/pdf/104230-BRI-Policy-1.pdf>

This phenomenon, the exhaustion of drivers of growth that have propelled a country from low to middle income level and its inability to mobilise new sources of drivers that would keep it on track of high growth, is referred as The Middle-Income Trap. Though not a theoretical inevitability, middle-income trap has been observed in the transitioning economies across the world.

World Bank has suggested “3i strategy”- investment + infusion + innovation- as a way out of the middle income trap (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2024>). Breaking the middle income trap to achieve the level of a more advanced economy, or a high income status, requires that a lower middle income country complements investment with infusion of global technology. Absorption and diffusion of modern technology enhances the capability of a lower middle income economy to enable it to enter into the upper middle income category. The next focus area is domestic innovation. A primarily upper-middle-income country must add innovation to the mix of investment and infusion to add value to global technologies, ultimately transforming into innovators on their own right. “In general, middle-income countries need to recalibrate the mix

of the three drivers of economic growth—investment, infusion, and innovation—as they move through middle-income status.” (<https://conversableeconomist.com/2024/11/25/the-middle-income-trap/>)

It has been also pointed out that, as they have a relatively smaller pool of skilled talent and are less efficient at utilizing them, Middle-income countries need to improve their methods of accumulating and allocating talent. (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2024>)

From the above discussion it is apparent that for a lower middle income country like India, which is aspiring to be a developed economy in a couple of decades, it is critical to raise its level of human capital substantially. Only a better educated and more skilful population can make seamless infusion of global technology possible. To be a global innovator, even a higher base of human capital will be required. Accordingly, the role of education can't be emphasized enough.

### **Inequality and Education**

In a rapidly developing economy inequality has a tendency to escalate, as all sections of the society are not equally equipped to participate in the growth sectors in the economy. In particular, when economic growth benefits capital owners more than labourers, income inequality may widen. Factors like globalization and technological innovation can disproportionately benefit skilled workers and concentrate wealth at the top (<https://www.tutor2u.net/economics/reference/ib-economics-consequences-of-economic-growth>). However, the relationship is not universal. As it has been pointed out: “Finance, globalization, technology and urbanization – key

drivers of economic growth – can lead to more or less inequality—depending on how prevalent they are in the economy” (<https://blogs.adb.org/blog/does-economic-growth-lead-to-greater-inequality>)

A recent World Bank report has been in the news for placing India as one of the most equal societies globally. As per <https://www.newsonair.gov.in>, “World Bank ranks India 4th among the world’s Most Equal Societies”. To measure consumption or income distribution in a society, the Gini Index is widely used. Gini Index was developed by Italian statistician Corrado Gini in 1912. It is an indicator that shows to what extent income or consumption distribution deviates from perfect equality. A score of 0 represents perfect equality, while 100 indicates maximum inequality, as the graphical tool of Lorenz curve may very well display. As per the report from World Bank, Gini Index of India is 25.5, down from 28.8 in 2011.

Though it is a very good news, it may be speculated that distribution of free foods to a large section of population might have played a role in reducing consumption inequality.

Also, contradictions and methodological issues have been pointed out by many commentators about the World Bank study. “The dramatic difference between India’s equality rankings across different databases stems from a crucial methodological distinction. The World Bank’s assessment relies on consumption expenditure surveys rather than income data, which significantly influences the results and helps explain the apparent contradiction.” (<https://www.visionias.in/blog/current-affairs/india-equality-paradox-world-bank-places-india-among-worlds-most-equal-societies>). The World Bank report, based on

consumption expenditure surveys, may have a smoothing effect showing much less severe inequality. Studies based on income or wealth distribution report drastically higher level of inequality in India. As OXFAM International has put it: “While India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world, it is also one of the most unequal countries”. (<https://www.oxfam.org/en/india-extreme-inequality-numbers>)

Some other sources like World Inequality Database estimates income-based Gini Index of India as 61-62 (<https://www.visionias.in/blog/current-affairs/india-equality-paradox-world-bank-places-india-among-worlds-most-equal-societies>) It has been also commented that “Since the early-1980s, when the Indian government began initiating a broad range of economic reforms leading up to the liberalization in 1991, the decline in top 1% shares halted. From the early-1990s onward, top 1% shares have consistently increased over the next 30 years to reach an all-time high of 22.6% in 2022.” (WorldInequalityLab\_WP2024\_09\_Income-and-Wealth-Inequality-in-India-1922-2023\_Final.pdf). If we zoom in further, the same report has estimated that, “in 2022, just the top 0.1% earned nearly 10% of the national income. The corresponding figures were 4.3% and 2.1% for the top 0.01% and top 0.001% respectively”. In contrast, the share in income of bottom 50% of the population stands at 15% in 2022 ([https://wid.world/www-site/uploads/2024/03/WorldInequalityLab\\_WP2024\\_09\\_Income-and-Wealth-Inequality-in-India-1922-2023\\_Final.pdf](https://wid.world/www-site/uploads/2024/03/WorldInequalityLab_WP2024_09_Income-and-Wealth-Inequality-in-India-1922-2023_Final.pdf)). If these estimates are close to reality, the level of inequality in the country is truly acute.

Regarding wealth inequality, the figures estimated reflect

even a harsher picture. OXFAM has estimated that “the top 10% of the Indian population holds 77% of the total national wealth” (<https://www.oxfam.org/en/india-extreme-inequality-numbers>). The World Inequality Lab puts the share of top 10% in the wealth of the nation at 65% as of 2023, while that of the bottom 50% has “hovered between 6%-7%”. If we focus on the top 1% and beyond, as per World Inequality Lab report, we find that “in 2022-23, the top 1% wealth share was 39.5%, 29 percentage points went just to the top 0.1%, 22 percentage points to just the top 0.01% and 16 percentage points to just the top 0.001%”. Such concentration of wealth at the very top of the pyramid is truly staggering. As noted by Drishti the Vision, with Gini coefficient of wealth at 0.83 in 2017, India is one of the countries with highest inequality (<https://www.drishtias.com/Paper2/inequality-in-india>).

Certain level of inequality in a society, per se, may not be an evil. It may even be desirable “as it provides the incentives for people to excel, compete, save, and invest to move ahead in life” (Causes and Consequences of Income Inequality: A Global Perspective by Era Dabla-Norris, Kalpana Kochhar, Nujin Suphaphiphat, Frantisek Ricka, Evridiki Tsounta <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/sdn/2015/sdn1513.pdf>). Accumulation of human capital, and associated economic performance, may be encouraged by higher returns to education and differentiation in labor earnings through differential income. Also, to ensure economic growth, innovation and entrepreneurship must be rewarded with high income as incentives for appropriate motivation, though it may lead to inequality.

However, high and sustained levels of inequality, especially inequality of opportunity may lead to social costs. Severe and persistent inequality of outcomes may pervert the efforts of individuals undermining their educational and occupational achievements. Instead of rewarding hard work, innovation and entrepreneurship, the society may encourage efforts to ensure favoured treatment, protection and ‘rent seeking’. As a result, resources may be misallocated, and corruption, nepotism, and adverse social and economic consequences may be on rise. “In particular, citizens can lose confidence in institutions, eroding social cohesion and confidence in the future” (<https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/sdn/2015/sdn1513.pdf>). The adverse impact of entrenched inequality on prosperity and growth has been vividly illustrated by Acemoglu and Robinson in their widely popular book, *Why Nations fail*. Drawing examples from across the globe (Asia, Europe, Americas) and across human history (Roman Age, Glorious Revolution, conquistadores etc.), they have established a remarkable association between egalitarianism and sustainable economic growth (the duality of ‘Extractive and Inclusive Institutions’- to borrow their terminology)

Slow economic growth, underinvestment in human capital, poverty traps are cited as some of the economic consequences of extreme inequality. It is detrimental to social cohesion leading to conflict and unrest that may threaten national integration and weaken the democratic processes. Severe economic inequality may exacerbate the existing social divisions based on factors like caste, gender, and religion. Additionally, it may perpetuate intergenerational inequality by restricting access to education,

resources and opportunity to the poor and deprived.

There are numerous causes of entrenched inequality in India that ranges from “historical factors like caste system and colonialism, social issues such as gender discrimination and patriarchy, and structural economic issues like unequal access to education and healthcare, land ownership concentration, the large informal labor market, and skewed economic growth that benefits a few”. Also, as the country is going through rapid economic growth, there are factors associated with a transforming economy that are contributing to inequality. With ever higher level of globalization and technological advancements, demand for skilled labor is increasing with commensurate increase in emoluments, while income of unskilled labour is stagnant. Those segments of the population, particularly in the informal sector, not prepared to take advantage of such transformation have seen lesser growth in their income. Industries like lock industry of Aligarh, UP have suffered from globalisation with closure of factories and job losses. Gender and racial biases, and rural and urban divides are also creating unequal opportunities. It has also been pointed out that economic factors like ‘increased trade, financial deepening, and differing returns on capital’ are responsible for ever increasing inequality in income and wealth.

So, to attack entrenched inequality, without hurting economic growth, innovation, and entrepreneurship, it is essential that a level playing field of equal opportunities to every member of society must be created. This is particularly important for reducing inter-generational inequality. If the poor cannot afford quality education for their children, the inequality suffered

by the present generation will be transmitted to the next with added viciousness. Developing human capital in the weaker segments of the society must be taken up with all due seriousness to address the menace of entrenched inequality.

From the above discussions, it is clear that whether to reap the benefits of demographic dividends, whether to escape the middle income trap, or whether to alleviate existing inequality in society, the role of education, particularly government funded education, is crucial. However, as a lower middle income country, India has limited resources to deploy in the field of education. The current spending of around 4.6% of GDP ([https://www.business-standard.com/education/news/union-budget-2025-education-allocation-growth-global-comparison-125020600340\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/education/news/union-budget-2025-education-allocation-growth-global-comparison-125020600340_1.html)), though looks very healthy, falls short of the target spending of 6% of GDP as envisaged in New Education Policy (NEP), 2020. So, it is important to prioritise expenditure on education in a way that would result in maximum return for the economy and society.

### **Education- Its Deliverables**

Now, before moving further we may focus on the deliverables of educational system. Here we propose these as certificates, skills and knowledge. Skill and knowledge are intertwined, and may look like impossible to disentangle. However, for our purpose of using education as a tool for economic development and empowerment, such a division may be relevant.

Out of these three deliverables, certificates or credentials, however important to individuals, are not significant at societal level, as individuals, possessing credentials but without

necessary skills and knowledge, will not be very productive for the society. So, targeting gross enrolment only may not be fruitful if quality education is not imparted to the participants. This point has been highlighted very eloquently by William Easterly in his masterful creation *The Elusive Quest for Growth*. As he has concluded that “Enrolment in formal schooling may be a poor measure of creation of skills” (Easterly, 2001, p. 84). He has observed that, mostly in the context of Africa, “Administrative targets for universal primary education do not in themselves create the incentives for investing in the future that matter for growth”. And “without incentives to invest in the future, students will goof off in the classroom” without acquiring any skill that may be useful in real life. So, though universal enrolment is a goal that need to be targeted, appropriate incentive structure and environment must be created so that students invest their time and effort to acquire skill and knowledge that will make them more productive economically. Only when human capital, that helps the economy to grow, is developed through public funding in education the expenditure will be sustainable.

We are making a distinction between skill and knowledge to emphasise the point that skills are immediately applicable in the economic and practical sense, while knowledge, particularly in liberal arts and basic sciences, though desirable, may not have much of economic use at the present moment. “The primary difference between knowledge and skills is what and how you learn. Knowledge implies a theoretical component and refers to information about a particular subject you acquire through books, newspapers, magazines, encyclopaedias, the internet or college. Skills imply a practical aspect and refer to applying

theoretical knowledge in practice and on the job.” (<https://in.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/difference-between-knowledge-and-skill>).

“Secondary education, typically encompassing middle and high school, provides a broad foundation of knowledge across various subjects such as mathematics, science, literature, and history. It aims to equip students with essential skills and prepare them for either higher education or entry-level employment”.

In contrast, higher education, which includes colleges, universities, and vocational schools, focuses on specialized and in-depth study in a particular field or discipline. This phase emphasizes critical thinking, research, and advanced knowledge, preparing students for professional careers or further academic pursuits.” (<https://www.ishcmc.com/news-and-blog/higher-education-vs-secondary-education/>)

Generally, specialized knowledge content increases as someone scales higher and higher in an academic field. In primary and secondary levels, it is the basic skills of reading, writing, arithmetic, and languages (also computer skills with increasing relevance) etc. are taught which have immense importance for the economy. It may be argued that the technological base inducted in a lower middle income country, like India, demands a huge workforce that must be equipped with skills but, not necessarily, with high qualification. That need of skilful workforce may be fulfilled with provisions of free and good quality education up to the secondary level.

At graduate and post-graduate level the knowledge content becomes more prominent than the skill content. Providing adequate quality higher education requires much higher level of expenditure from the Government. Also, the commitment

level of the students pursuing higher education needs to be more stringent, as it requires a lot of investment in terms of time and efforts, even if the education is free. Not every student is ready to do so, particularly if return from higher education is not very high. Also, every student may not have the aptitude to go into higher education and excel in acquisition of in depth knowledge in a subject. So, an emphasis only on gross enrolment in higher education will be wasteful, as students without proper motivation or ability to learn will enter the system to obtain certificates/ credentials with any means, including corrupt practices.

Accordingly, it may be argued that, though public funding to provide quality education up to secondary level may be effective in developing the necessary human capital for economic growth, public expenditure on university level education, targeting gross enrolment, may not bring as commensurate a return. In view of this discussion, the present status of publicly funded education system in India may be examined.

### **Status of publicly funded educational system**

With the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act) education has become a fundamental right for every child between the ages of 6 and 14. It is aimed at providing free and compulsory elementary education to children through neighbourhood schools. As per the ECONOMIC SURVEY 2024-25, "India's school education system serves 24.8 crore students across 14.72 lakh schools with 98 lakh teachers (UDISE+ 2023-24). Government schools comprises 69 % of the total, enrolling 50 % of students and

employing 51 % of teachers, while private schools account for 22.5 %, enrolling 32.6 % of students and employing 38 % of teachers” (<https://www.pib.gov.in/>). (Actually, the data looks like a bit inconsistent. If only 50% of students go to Government schools, the remaining 50% must attend some kind of private schools). So, there is no dearth of Government schools in India. However, the quality of education in Government schools, whether perceived or real, may be in doubt: a conclusion warranted by mushrooming of private schools, even in rural hinterland, in India. If we take the above data as correct, around 33% of students go to private school in India (the actual figure looks like 50%), and the number of students attending private schools is on the rise. For comparison, in United States of America only about 10% of students attend private school (<https://www.pewresearch.org>). This significant difference seems to be even starker if we take per capita GDP in the two countries into account- per capita GDP in India at US\$ 2940 is roughly 30 times lower than that in USA with GDP per capita at US\$ 86,000.

But in the domain of higher education, a somewhat different picture emerges. In India “Government Universities constituting 58.6% of total Universities, contribute 73.7% of total enrolment, Private Universities account for 26.3% of total enrolment” (<https://www.pib.gov.in>). These figures are comparable for the higher education sector In USA – as per Wikipedia, in 2022, around 72.2% of American students pursuing higher education went to some kind of public universities, the remaining 27.8% attended private universities. Thus, up to the secondary level, where basic skills and knowledge are imparted, private schools play a bigger role in India as compared to USA.

In terms of quality of education, as perceived by the students and parents, a contrast is readily apparent between secondary and university level of education in India. The growth of private sector in elementary and secondary education in India is attributed to perceived better quality in private schools. But in higher education sector Government institutions led by IITs, IIMs, AIMS, NITs etc. wins hands down in this respect. These are considered the better options by most of the participants. The competition level of various entrance tests like NEET, JEE, CAT etc. is a testimonial of this fact. Introducing of market forces, with sufficient cushion for the meritorious but economically weaker students, may be contemplated to generate resources to run such institutes of eminence.

Thus, when higher education at Government institutions is the sought after avenue even for the elites in the country, the government schools are catering mostly to the poor and disadvantage section of the society. Providing high quality elementary and secondary education to every child, free of cost, is an essential requirement for the nation. Accordingly, it is necessary to change the educational scenario by bringing the quality of the Government schools to the level of the best of the private schools. Only then, the nation will be able to overcome the three challenges as mentioned in the title of this article. The road to achieve the status of a developed nation demands the genesis of an equal opportunity society (“equal opportunity to be unequal”- to quote a professor at ESCP Paris describing the motto espoused by French society).

Another troublesome statistic is that “enrolment is highest in Arts (34.2%), followed by science (14.8%), Commerce (13.3%) and Engineering & Technology (11.8%)” (<https://>

www.pib.gov.in). In Assam these figures seem to be much more skewed in favour of Arts stream. In 2025, 76.05% of total students who appeared for Assam's Higher Secondary (HS) Final Examinations were from the Arts stream. "A total of 3,06,925 students appeared for the AHSEC HS Final Exams 2025 at 856 exam centres across Assam, of which 2,30,091 students were from the Arts Stream, 57,724 from the Science Stream and 17,869 from the Commerce Stream. Of the total students, 1,62,423 were females and 1,44,502 were male candidates" (<https://www.results.shiksha>).

Education in liberal arts empowers students with the ability of critical thinking which is really important for an enriched life. However, not every student has the aptitude or the interest to put the efforts to acquire this much needed skill. Thus, as pointed out earlier, higher education in liberal arts stream in India results in graduates, who have the certificates of being educated, but are endowed with skills which may not have much economic applications for an economy like India. Because of this lack of essential skills, students with degrees in liberal arts may face difficulties in getting employment after their education is over. "According to Statista, the employability among graduates with a Bachelor of Arts degree across India was only 47.1% in 2024, a decrease from about 49% in 2023" (<https://scroll.in/article/1073308/the-paradox-of-liberal-arts-education-in-india-and-how-to-fix-it>). Considering much higher percentage of students opt for arts stream in Assam, as compared to national average, this problem may be more acute in the state.

The National Education Policy 2020 has identified this critical lacuna in the curricula of the educational system in India.

Accordingly, the policy “aims to enhance skill content in higher education by promoting vocational education, integrating industry experience through internships, fostering 21st-century skills, and improving employability for students”. “One of the most significant aspects of the National Education Policy 2020 is its emphasis on skill development and vocational education” (<https://sleepyclasses.com/the-future-of-education-in-india-insights-from-the-national-education-policy-2020>). However, there are structural issues in the publicly funded educational system that may prove as obstacles in achieving this lofty policy goal in actual reality. We will look into this aspect again subsequently.

Here a pertinent idea to ponder about is the concept of Creative Destruction as propounded by Joseph Schumpeter, the famous economist of Austrian School of Economic thought, in his magnum opus *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (1942). Creative destruction refers to the constantly evolving economic sphere as “introduction of new innovations and technologies disrupts existing economic structures, leading to the obsolescence of older products, services, and industries while simultaneously creating new ones”. This process has been accelerating with ever increasing level of globalization through which new ideas, innovations and technologies, along with financial resources, are penetrating national boundaries to constantly modify the economic structures of the countries across the globe. The industrial bases of the developed west have been replaced by manufacturing powerhouses like China.

This has profound significance for human capital, because the skill sets acquired today may not be economically relevant tomorrow. So, skilling of population through government

intervention as direct targets may not be very fruitful, if economic scenario, and hence relevant skill set, is constantly evolving. Nothing can replace the 'On the Job training'. So, instead of attempting to impart specific skills to grownups, school education up to secondary level may be strengthened with a curricula focussed on broad based fundamental skills, so that high school graduates are capable of absorbing the required skills on the job. Emphasis on quality learning on languages, traditional 3Rs, and computer usage go a long way in this direction.

### **Transforming the System**

Keeping the above discussion in view, we will examine the transformation needed in the Government funded education sector. This analysis will largely be restricted to economic perspective - to extract maximum return from the investment in education for the economic growth of the country. A few economic principles e.g. human capital, economy of scale, comparative advantage, and 'people respond to incentive' will be invoked in the analysis.

Firstly, education up to secondary level must be prioritized, more than higher education, to create the skilled workforce needed by Indian economy. We must remember that without a strong foundation of schooling, students will not be able to internalize the contents of higher education. Accordingly, investment in higher education may bring very poor return. Skill content in secondary education should be emphasized, in place of rote learning and gross enrolment. The perception that Government schools lack infrastructure, in comparison to the private ones must be changed. Massive investment in developing

the existing infrastructure or creating new ones, and a paradigm shift in the prevailing culture, may be required to bring in such a transformation.

Secondly, it is very important to harness the power of economy of scale. The average number of students per school in India, as found in internet, is around 122 (12.4 crore students in 10.16 lakhs Government schools). There may be huge variability in the sizes of Government schools, but on average the number is small. For comparison, if we look at the largest developed nation in the world, USA, the average number of students per school is more than 350. “For the 2022-23 school year, there were roughly 49.6 million students in public schools and about 135,500 public schools, leading to an average of approximately 366 students per school” (<https://nces.ed.gov>). If we take the population density in India into account, which is around 15 times higher than that in USA, the average size of Indian school is relatively very small. With such small size, Government school in India may not be able to exploit the economy of scale. Also, many of the provisions of NEP 2020 intended for enhancing the skill level at secondary education cannot be implemented if the number of students in a school does not cross a threshold. Small size of school may restrict peer to peer learning in one particular respect - limited inter cultural diversity and communication.

India largely lives in villages. The requirement of fulfilling the educational needs of remote and rural inhabitants, in the face of limited transportation facilities in the past, resulted in scattered, and consequent smaller but numerous, school system for elementary/ secondary education in India. Educational opportunity within the neighbourhood was desired policy.

However, with tremendous improvement in transportation and communication in recent days, a re-evaluation of requirement may be attempted to bring in efficiency and quality. Efficient investment in educational infrastructure and modernization of education call for such a change. With larger schools, economy of scale will kick in lowering the average cost of education of each student.

The recent policy of amalgamation of school, pursued by Assam Government, looks like a step in the right direction. However, a complete restructuring of the Government school system may be contemplated. Dividing the state into requisite number of school districts and establishing or converting existing infrastructure to accommodate every student in that school district might be an option. It will ensure adequate number of students to implement various provisions available in NEP 2020. Private- public partnership and outsourcing of various facilities, including transportation, may also be considered.

Thirdly, there is an issue of language, the medium of instruction in Government schools. Generally, Government schools follow vernacular medium, whereas there seems to be a clear preference for English medium private schools, particularly in urban centres. The aspirational class tries their level best to send their wards to English medium school. This is an emotive issue, and many believe that publicly funded schools should promote local language by using it as the medium of instruction in Government schools.

However, if we examine the issue from economic perspective and reckon education as a tool for developing human capital, we must remember that proficiency in English is an

extremely valuable skill. Actually, knowledge of English language is a Comparative Advantage that has helped India to be one of the top destination for outsourced services, particularly in Information Technology Enabled Service (ITES) sector. The theory of Comparative Advantage, as propounded by the 19<sup>th</sup> century British economist David Ricardo in his book *On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* published in 1817, refers to the “ability of an entity (a country, business, or individual) to produce a good or service at a lower opportunity cost than another”. Actually, prevalence of English language in India is at the base of its rise as the software powerhouse in the world. So, depriving the children of the weaker section, who mostly attend Government schools, the opportunity to be proficient in English will nullify many of the benefits of free universal education. Accordingly, it may be opined that. Educationists may explore the possibility of introducing English as a medium of instruction, even if after some elementary education in vernacular media, in Government schools to bring them at par with the elite English medium private schools. Only then a society characterized as ‘equality of opportunity’ through universal quality education will be materialised.

Lastly, there is a need to address the quality paradox. The teachers of Government schools are relatively better paid and endowed with more facilities in terms of leaves than their counterparts in the private sector. Even then, private schools may be perceived as better, and parents pay for private schools, while they have the option to send their kids to free Government schools. As per some studies, “private school teachers have lower levels of education, training, and experience; and are paid much lower salaries (on average, less

than one sixth of government teacher salaries). However, they have much better measures of effort and time-on-task (lower rates of absence, more likely to be actively teaching and to be in control of the class, when measured during surprise visits to schools)” (<https://www.ideasforindia.in/topics/human-development/understanding-the-relative-effectiveness-of-government-and-private-schools-in-india.html>).

This may be a cultural issue that, despite being better off in terms of pay and perks, teachers in Government schools seem to make less effort in imparting education to their students. Authorities are trying hard to solve the problem. Modern technologies have been deployed by authorities to monitor attendance and to control the behaviour of the teachers. In Assam, interesting events like ‘Gunotsav’ have been designed as a tool for external evaluation and to foster a competitive spirit among the schools/ faculties. However, such measures seem to have limited success, as quantifying level of efforts is extremely difficult.

The way out of this imbroglio may be, as people respond to incentive, to devise an incentive structure for the teachers and administrators associated with the Government funded education system. Such an incentive structure must involve the stakeholders- students and parents/ guardians of the students. Significant part of the compensation package of the teachers and administrators should be dependent on their performance. Feedback on their performance from the stakeholders may be the basis of such a formula. Additionally, such feedbacks should have some impact on the tenures of the faculties and others in the system. Non-Governmental entities may also be consulted for such evaluation process.

## Conclusion

The above discussion may be wrapped up with the following concluding points:

1) Free and high quality education up to secondary level is the key to resolve the challenges faced by the Indian economy. The goal should be to create a skilful workforce, with emphasis on broad skills (the traditional 3Rs, English language and computer), so that education leads to development of Human Capital for economic growth.

2) Higher education, essential for an aspiring nation to be an innovative advanced economy, should be more focussed on technology and practical knowledge. A market oriented approach in higher education, whereby public institutions generate resources to be self-sufficient, may free up funds to strengthen the basic education. Also, such an approach may filter out non-serious students, who pursue higher education only to obtain certificates, admitting those with aptitude and interest.

3) Massive investment in improving the infrastructure for basic education is required. However, the approach should be to build big schools to accommodate large number of students.

4) Incentive Structure for teachers and administrators should be linked to individual performance, with involvement of stakeholders. ■

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# An overview on the language and literature of Kamrupa between 7<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century CE

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## **Abstract:**

This paper is an attempt to examine the language and literature prevalent in 7<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century CE of Kamrupa. In Ancient Assam, three languages were commonly used for communication. These three languages are Sanskrit, Non-Aryan tribal language, and a local version of Prakrit. Sanskrit was the official language and was mostly used by the learned section of the society. Austric and Tibeto – Burman language families belong to the Non-Aryan tribal language. The third common language practiced during that period led to the emergence of Kamrupi apabhramsa as opposed to Magadhi apabhramsa which gave birth to three cognate languages– Assamese, Bengali and

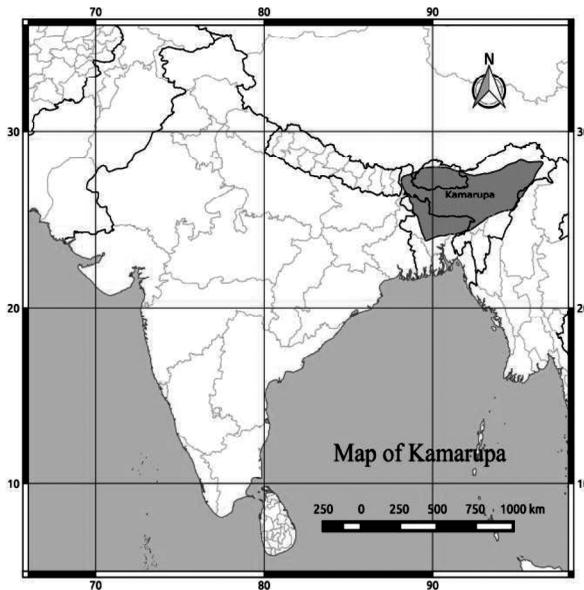
Odia. The powerful king, Bhaskar Varman reigned over Kamrupa during 7<sup>th</sup> century and under his patronage Kamrupi apabhramsa got an environment to flourish in the kingdom. The prominence of Kamrupi dialect is also evident in the writings of famous Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsiang (Xuanzang). According to him the language spoken in Kamarupa was a 'little different' from the one spoken in mid-India which provides the evidence that this apabhramsa existed as early as 5<sup>th</sup> century. Archaeological evidence of Kamrupi dialect can be found in various inscriptions of that period like rock inscriptions, Bhaskar Varman's inscriptions etc.

**Key words:** *language, literature, Kamrupi apabhramsa, inscription, Non-Aryan language*

## **Introduction**

The origin and evolution of Kamrupa as a kingdom is not easily traceable. However, the earliest mention of the kingdom in epigraphic records can be found in the Allahabad Inscription of Samudragupta from the 5th century (Kakati, 2007). A significant turning point in the history of Kamrupa occurred in the 7th century when the renowned Chinese traveller Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsiang) visited the region, referring to it as "Kia-mo-lupo." He later documented his observations in his book *Si-Yu-Ki*, offering valuable insights into the socio-economic and geographical aspects of Kamrupa. He mentioned in his records that the Kamrupa kingdom was nearly 1,700 miles in circuit. According to the 10th-century *Kalika Purana* and Xuanzang's 7th-century account, the western boundary of Kamrupa was marked by the historic Karatoya River, while the eastern

boundary was defined by the temple of the goddess Tamreshvari, located near present-day Sadiya. The kingdom's southern limit stretched towards the border between Dhaka and Mymensingh districts in modern-day Bangladesh. This extensive territory encompassed the entire Brahmaputra Valley and parts of Northeast India, with various periods of its rule also including regions of present-day Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Nepal. A map of Kamarupa may be cited below to show the territorial extent of the region.



However, by the 13<sup>th</sup> century this vast kingdom was fragmented into small entities where Kamata kingdom emerged in the west and the Ahom, Dimasa, and Chutiya kingdoms rose as the prominent successors. In addition, the Baro-Bhuyans ruled over the intervening areas.

## **Objective of the paper**

The aim of this paper is to examine the history, language, and literature of Kamrupa from the 7th to the 13th century, a pivotal era for the region. This period marks the peak of the kingdom's power and influence, especially under the reign of King Bhaskarvarman, who greatly expanded its territory and fostered strong political and cultural connections with other empires. During this time, the Kamrupi script also flourished, playing a crucial role in the documentation of events through inscriptions left by the kingdom's rulers. However, the later part of this era saw the gradual decline of the kingdom, leading to its fragmentation into smaller political entities.

## **Methodology**

This paper is prepared by following narrative and analytical approach which is included in qualitative method of historical research. The resources have been explored through the traditional way of research in addition to an extensive search on the internet. Historical artefacts like rock inscriptions, copper plates etc and the literature of that period have been examined to get the basic ideas expressed in the paper.

## **Language and literature of Kamrupa**

The language and literature of a place or an era serves as a mirror to its culture, reflecting the values, struggles, and aspirations of its people while offering insights into the historical and social context that shaped them.

In Ancient Assam, three main linguistic groups were present: (1) Sanskrit, which served as the official language and was primarily used by the educated elites; (2) Non-Aryan tribal

languages, belonging to the Austric and Tibeto-Burman families; and (3) a local variety of Prakrit, known as MIA (Middle Indo-Aryan), from which the modern Assamese language developed over time as a Modern Indo-Language (MIL) (Sharma, 1978).

Some linguists propose the existence of a Kamrupi Apabhramsa, a regional variation distinct from the Magadhi Apabhramsa and it is evident from Xuanzang's 7th-century visit, during which he noted the distinct phonetic differences between the language spoken in Kamarupa and that spoken in Magadha (Central India). He described the local language as being "slightly different" from the language spoken in Mid-India, lending support to the idea that this Apabhramsa may have existed as early as the 5th century. According to them Kamrupi Apabhramsa served as the linguistic basis for the evolution of the modern languages: Assamese, Bengali, and Odia. The idea is rooted in the political and cultural influence of Kamrupa, which was the dominant and most powerful kingdom in the region, fostering the development of this variant of Apabhramsa. Kamarupi Prakrit is believed to have been a Middle Indo-Aryan (MIA) language spoken in the ancient kingdom of Kamarupa during the 11th to 13th centuries. This language is thought to have evolved from Gauda-Kamarupi Prakrit and is the linguistic ancestor of the modern Assamese language and Kamatapuri dialects. The Kamarupi Prakrit likely existed before 1250 CE when the proto-Kamta language, the predecessor of Kamatapuri, began to emerge. While it remains unproven, the language's influence on Assamese is widely accepted by scholars.

Evidence of the early Kamrupi dialect can be found in various inscriptions across eastern and northern India. A list of inscriptions from 7<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century is listed below:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Kind</b>	<b>Ruler</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Find spot</b>
Dubi	Copper plate	Bhaskarvarman	7th century	Dubi village, Kamrup
Nidhanpur	Copper plate	Bhaskarvarman	7th century	Nidhanpur village, Sylhet, Bangladesh
Nalanda	Clay seals	Bhaskarvarman	7th century	Nalanda, site-1, monastery 1
Sankara Narayana	Image	Sri Jivara	8th century	Deopani, Golaghat
Hari-Hara	Image	Diglekhavarman	8th century	Deopani, Golaghat
Hayunthal	Copper plate	Harjaravarman	9th century	Hayunthal, Karbi Hills
Deopani Vishnu	Image		9th century	Deopani, Golaghat
Tezpur	Copper plate	Vanamalavarmadeva	9th century	Tezpur
Kaliabor	Copper plate	Vanamalavarmadeva	9th century	Dighali village, Nagaon
Uttarbarbil	Copper plate	Balavarman III	9th century	Uttarbarbil village, Karbi Hills
Ulubari	Copper plate	Balavarman III	9th century	Ulubari village, Darrang
Nagaon	Copper plate	Balavarman III	9th century	Sutargaon village, Nagaon

Bargaon	Copper plate	Ratnapala	1035 CE	Naharhabi village, Tezpur
Suwalkuci	Copper plate	Ratnapala	1036 CE	Suwalkuci village, Kamrup
Coratbari	Copper plate	Ratnapala	11th century	Coratbari village, Nagaon
Gauhati	Copper plate	Indrapala	1058	Barpanara village, Kamrup
Gachtal	Copper plate	Gopalavarman	1080	Gachtal village, Nagaon
Subhankar apataka	Copper plate	Dharmapala	12th century	(not known)
Pushpabhadra	Copper plate	Dharmapala	12th century	Pushpabhadra river bed, North Guwahati
Khonamukh	Copper plate	Dharmapala	12th century	Khonamukh village, Nagaon
Kamauli	Copper plate	Vaidyadeva	1142	Kamauli, Uttar Pradesh
Assam	Copper plate	Vallabhadeva	1185	Tezpur
Kanai-Boroxiboa	Rock	(not known)	1206	North Guwahati
Ambari	Stone	Samudrapala	12th-13th centuries	Guwahati

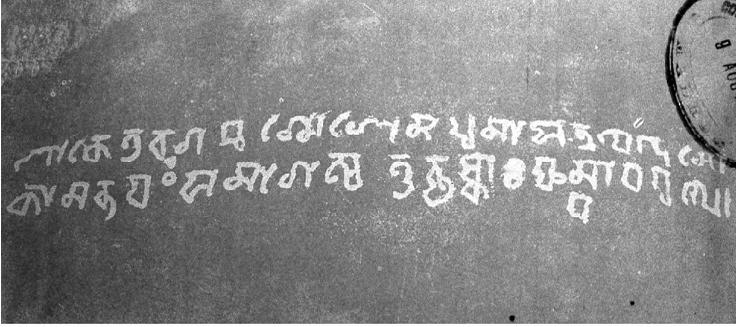
Gachtal	Pillar	(not known)	12th-13th centuries	Gachtal, Nagaon
Surya	Image	(not known)	9th century	Kaki, Nagaon
Gauhati	Copper bell	Srikumara	8th century	Guwahati

The collection of Kamrupa inscriptions, commissioned by its rulers such as Bhaskara Varman, are scattered across various locations in Assam and present-day Bangladesh, representing a vital source of historical information. These inscriptions offer a window into the political, cultural, and social dynamics of the region during their time, shedding light on the governance and administrative structures of the Kamrupa kingdom. As such, they serve as an invaluable resource for understanding the historical context and legacy of the region, providing essential evidence for the study of ancient Assam and its interactions with neighbouring territories. Below are given images of some inscriptions:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय  
 का मरुच्यजितका मरुयः प्रजापति सायुं पर  
 मशुवास् । राजप्रजा रक्षणलववर्षु

9th-century Nagaon Copper Plate Inscription of Valavarman III.

Text: *trailokya vijaya tuEga yenāpah[taC yaśo mahendrasya Kāmarūpe  
 jitakāmarūpa% prāgjyoticākhyāC puramadhyuvāsa rājāprajāraGjana  
 labdhavarGGo.*



*Kanai-boroxiboa rock inscription, 1207 CE,*

The Kanai Boroxi Boa Rock Inscription, engraved in Assamese and Devanagari script represents the earliest known Assamese inscriptions. The inscription reads – *Sake Turaga-Jagmese Madhumasa Trayodase Kamrupang samagtya Turuskah Kshayamayayuh* documenting Turk's defeat in Kamrupa.

Additionally, *Charyapadas*, the Buddhist ballads of 8th-10th century some of whose composers were from Kamrupa and the language of which bear strong affinities with Assamese are considered the first examples of Assamese literature and their influence can be seen in later works like *Deh-Bicaror Geet* and the 15th-16th century *Borgeets*.

## **Conclusion**

The period from 7<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century is very significant for the history of Kamrupa as it may be considered as a watershed era for the development of language and culture under the able patronage of king Bhasker Varman. There is an abundance of archaeological artefacts in the form of rock inscriptions, copper plates etc. which give evidence of a vibrant civilization. All

these inscriptions can be considered as examples of the emergence and development of modern Assamese language. Though Sanskrit was a language for official use and learning, ordinary folks spoke various other languages including Tibeto-Burman dialects and a version of Prakrit. ■

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# Problems and Prospects of Implementation of NEP 2020 in Assam

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## **ABSTRACT**

The National Education Policy 2020, Government of India 2020 categorizes the education in two parts namely school education and higher education. School education in the NEP 2020 follows the 5+3+3+4 structure of education. The first five years are dedicated to pre-schooling (Anganawadi) and the next two years of primary classes first to second. The next three years are for primary education in which students will study in classes third to fifth. More emphasis will be given on the students' health, analytical skills, mathematical approach, reasoning, logical thinking, and creative thinking. The next three years for

secondary schooling in which students will study in classes 6th to 8th. At this stage few more vocational programs will be added and deep knowledge of subjects like science, mathematics, arts, social science, and humanities etc will be provided. Students will be allowed to take up coding from class 6. In the last four years, the students will enter the senior secondary school that will be divided into two stages; in the first stage students will study in classes 9th to 10th and in second stage students will study in classes 11th to 12th. To reduce the stress level exams may be conducted twice in a year.

Although NEP 2020 is implemented in Assam, due to Covid-19 affect since 2020 till now, Assam is facing lots of problems regarding proper implementation of this new policy specially at the school level. During Covid-19 students were ask to stay home which later led to take the online mode to continue their classes. However, in the rural areas due to lack of proper electricity and network, huge number of children were unable to attend their classes through online mode. Hence it prevented them from being updated with their regular studies. In such a difficult circumstance, NEP 2020 by the Government of India was implemented. According to NEP 2020, the whole curriculum has to be changed, new books and infrastructure will be much needed. But due to Covid-19 affect Assam is facing economic downfall, leading the state in lack of infrastructure development. Lack of funds used for the education sector is a big problem in implementing the NEP 2020.

According NEP 2020, regional languages are supposed to be introduced in the primary section. But Assam has multiple ethnic communities which makes it difficult to impose each

regional language in the curriculum and text books. Therefore, implementation of all regional languages of Assam in school education is a complicated issue. Thus, this paper focuses in the issues regarding implementation of regional languages in school education in Assam.

**Keywords:** NEP 2020, COVID 19, School education, Government of India, Regional languages.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The national policy on education was framed in 1986 and modified in 1992. Since then, several changes have taken place that calls for a revision of the policy. The NEP2020 in the first education policy of 21<sup>st</sup> century a replaces the 34 years old National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986. Built on the foundation of pillars of Access, Equality, Quality, Affordability, and Accountability. This policy is aligned to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development and aims to transform India to a vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge superpower by making both school and college education holistic, flexible and multidisciplinary, suited to 21<sup>st</sup> century needs and aimed at bringing out the unique capabilities of each student.

### **1.1. School Education: Ensuring Universal Access at all levels of school education:**

NPE 2020 Emphasizes on ensuring universal access to school education at all levels, pre-school to secondary, infrastructure support, innovative education centers to bring back drop-outs into the mainstream, tracking of students and their learning levels, facilitating multiple path ways to learning involvement both formal and nonformal education modes,

association of counselors or well-trained social workers with schools, open learning for classes 3, 5, & /8 through NIOS and state open schools. Secondary education programs equivalent to grades 10 and 12, vocational courses, adult literacy, life enrichment programs are some of the proposed ways for achieving this. About 2 crore school children will be brought back to the mainstream under NEP 2020.

The Centre had announced the NEP on July 29, 2020 amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. NEP will connect students with their cultural roots, also inspire them to become the world's best citizen. NEP is unique amalgamation of the ancient cultural values and the modern knowledge and science. NEP 2020 concerned by stressing that “attaining foundational literacy and numeracy for all children must become an immediate mission”.

By then, nationwide lockdown had been implemented as a response to the spread of Covid-19. Schools were closed and consequently there was rapid increase in the use of remote education recourses (both old media like radio & television) and new online classrooms, YouTube video and messaging services, whatsApp. In September 2020, by UNICEF rapid assessment of learning during school closures found that only 60 percent children had utilized distance learning resources in the preceding six months.

As per the Observer Research Foundation, close to 250 million children in India were adversely affected due to school closures, due to the early lockdown imposed by the government in response to COVID-19. India has been strengthening its educational system since 2009, when the Right to Education

Act was passed, mandating free and compulsory education. However, this progress has been significantly hindered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **1.2. Differences in Urban and Rural:**

Several children from less privileged circumstances ended up dropping out of school, some were forced to take up jobs to support their families, who were dealing with pandemic related deaths and income loss.

Although private urban school in India were better adapted to new circumstances, Government schools have struggled to transition from traditional in-person learning to an online ecosystem, especially in rural India. The challenges faced by the Indian Education system were amplified during the pandemic. Uninterrupted education relies on the availability of and access to digital infrastructure including the internet, laptop and phones. While students in Urban schools tend to have better access than those in rural schools. Inequalities across class and gender still impact who can and cannot use these tools.

Resuming in-person learning has been delayed multiple times since the start of the pandemic as the government continues to respond to multiple waves of COVID-19 and as immunization efforts continue. Ultimately, a return to school is dependent on vaccination in order to protect both students and teachers.

### **1.3. Post Pandemic World**

The corona-virus pandemic has seriously affected the education system. Along with the shift from classroom to computer screens almost all aspects of learning are being tested.

Format of instruction, attendance, evaluation, the role of technology and human interaction are all being re-imagined and there is a growing possibility that some of these changes will last. Blended learning will be the new norm, which has also been envisaged in our NEP 2020. Learning by screen or remote learning will continue to play a major role even after schools can reopen post-pandemic. For more than a year, online classes and remote learning have been the medium through which learning is delivered to students. Teachers as well as students have adapted themselves to make the best out of this mode of learning. This is not to say that remote learning is the best or the only way forward.

Some school in smaller towns and cities were not in a position to hold classes remotely and a large number of students were suffering because of this. Steps must therefore be taken to make remote learning more accessible, and everyone can benefit from this mode.

#### **1.4. Physical teaching the best mode for leaning**

Conventional classroom teaching with human contact is still the best mode of learning. However, technology is a great enabler and hence has a significant role to play in the education system.

With a majority of the educational institutions experimenting with digital learning and teachers having to learn to adapt to technology, teacher training will also need to be revamped to include practical aspects of technology in education.

Though significant advancements have already been made in digitizing education and hence remote learning. Access to

and quality of resources available for remote learning need to be improved. Access to high-speed internet and affordable gadgets to access online resources is a concern in smaller cities and towns.

Assessing students and testing is another area where changes will have to be made to align with the new reality. Standardized testing, which has been the norm will have to make way for adaptive tests that delivered personalized results. As schools have probably for the first time ever promoted students to the next level without any standardized testing.

### **1.5. Challenges in Implementing NEP in NE region**

Implementation of NEP is a great challenge in Assam with multi-ethnic societies compared to other big states with one language. As per NEP the aim of using regional languages is not just to improve a child's learning outcomes, but also for instilling knowledge of India. The role of the central government is very important in achieving the goals of the policy in North-east. The central and state government have to work closely in developing NEP implementation framework for the region. NE region have a bigger challenge- children have a right to get education in their mother-tongue at least upto class 5. It is a very easy concept when we see the other state like Delhi where everybody knows Hindi. But in our state Assam or in NE region with 180 languages it is a big challenge. States will have to recruit teachers who can teach in these languages and prepare textbooks every year. NE people are very sensitive about their own languages. Even the minor human error is not appreciated.

NEP 2020 give the students an opportunity to go beyond marksheets to strive for knowledge. It will help to make India

more powerful, take the country to greater heights, empower students and afford them opportunities to grow. This will free the student community from the rat race and inculcate creative and innovative thinking in them. NEP is unifying factor in stimulating Indian knowledge system, regional languages, arts and culture and in celebrating our diversity and strengths as a civilization. The diversity of languages cannot be witnessed better than in the North-east where 180 languages been spoken by tribes residing in the region.

In the new National Policy 2020, recommendation is that early schooling in a child's mother tongue can improve learning, increase student participation, reduce the number of dropouts according to an India-spend analysis from around the world. However, there would be needed new books, fresh teacher training and more funding, experts said. NEP 2020 says that whatever possible medium of instruction in schools until grade 5 preferably until grade 8 should be the mother tongue or local regional language. All efforts will be made early on to ensure that any gaps that exist between the language spoken by the child and the medium of teaching are bridged.

Dhir Dhingra, a former Indian Administrative Services officer and the founder of Language and Learning Foundation argue that an English education is not always the best 'one can learn to read and write best in the language that one knows'. Good learning happens when children have high self-esteem, are well adjusted in a classroom that provides a positive and fearless environment.

It also suggests incentives for teachers who know local languages The NEP doesn't detail a plan to change the medium

of instruction. For multilingual education to be successful, it has to be accompanied by pedagogical changes and trained teachers who can deal with several languages in the classroom and teach in the child's mother tongue. The 2011 census listed 270 mother tongues. Of these, as per 2017 study 47 languages were used as mediums of instruction in Indian classrooms.

Singh of Pratham said, "it is a challenge in selecting which mother tongue becomes the medium of instruction in a school which do not." Language is extremely political. For instance, students who speak local languages such as Rabha, Santhali and Nepali attend Assamese medium schools in the Kokrajhar and Chirang areas where Singh works.

As per NEP, if this language is understood only from the point of national integration, where many languages have non standardized scripts that are not accepted by everyone in the community. This is a bigger challenge in areas that have seen ethnic violence in the past.

The policy does suggest technological interventions to "serve as aids to teachers and developing or translating "enjoyable" books into local languages and making these available in school and digital libraries, especially in areas with high dropout rates and overhand of the curriculum to make it more engaging and useful.

### **1.6. Challenges of many Mother-tongues**

India has several languages, the 2011 census identified 270 mother languages, and classrooms might have children with more than one spoken language. Jhingran said, "It might not be possible for all languages to become the medium of instruction, and it might not be possible for large parts of the country to

implement this.” He suggested an alternative to formal MLE- the child’s language would not be the medium of instruction, but the government would formally mandate that the mother tongue be used in the classroom. This will allow students to talk and express themselves in their language while also learning the regional language or English. When these changes were made, we have seen these silent classrooms convert in 2-3 months full of active, engaged children speaking, interacting,” said Jhingran.

### **1.7. Principals, Educational Experts of several Schools talk about NEP 2020 Regional Language Guideline**

According to Vishnu Karthik, Director of Heritage Schools, he said that children’s brain is designed to learn multiple languages, the more they are exposed to many languages, the more they can absorb at an early age. “Thus, teaching in one language is not the best use of the critical learning windows nature has given for learning languages. Teaching only in English or only in the mother tongue is not a good practice. Rather, a healthy mix of 2-3 languages is good for children in primary school,” he said.

According to Alka Kapoor, Principal of Modern School, Shalimar Bagh, English is a universal language and in guidelines, it is written that it can be used wherever possible. “It is not clearly stated if ‘wherever possible’ means subject or place. “English should be one common language as everyone wants their child to know the language and I think if it is taught at the foundation stage, it would be very nice,” she said.

A representative of Green Fields Public School said, “It is okay to promote multilingualism but then to make vernacular

languages the medium of instruction is not a wise approach. Suddenly, when the students move to senior classes, we will find them struggling with English, which is not the official working language at the majority of places”.

Pallavi Upadhyaya, Principal, DPS Rajnagar extension, Ghaziabad, said, “The new education policy focuses on a 3- 3- language approach and aims to teach the students in their early developmental years more than one native language. “The policy mentions that no language will be thrust upon anybody; it will be the choice of the school and students independently. The moves taken by the Ministry of Education is to promote multilingualism and national unity. will plan our course of action only after discussion with the stakeholders,” she said.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

This study is an analytical study on the implementation of NEP 2020 in NE region school education through both primary and secondary data collection. Newspaper, news reader, journals are some sources of this study.

## **3. DELIMITATION**

This study is delimited to school education in Assam.

## **4. OBJECTIVE**

- (i) to study the implementation of NEP 2020.
- (ii) To study the issues regarding medium of instruction.

## **5. DISCUSSION**

*Objective no. i:*

During the formulation of NEP 2020, a large number of consultations were held with different stakeholders including state and union territory governments, government of India

Ministries, Members of Parliament, Public etc. The draft NEP 2019 was uploaded on Ministry of Education's website to elicit comments and suggestions from the various stakeholders. Further letters were written to the States and union territory's Governments and Government of India Ministries inviting their views and comments on Drafts NEP 2019. An Education dialogue with Hon'ble MPs of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nādu, Puducherry, Kerala, Karnataka and Odisha were organized in the month of July August 2019. Around 2 lakhs suggestions on the Draft NEP were received from various stakeholders. A special meeting of CABE was organized in September 2019 to discuss Draft NEP, 26 education ministers of various states and union territories, members of CABE, Heads of Autonomous Organizations, Vice Chancellors of Universities, attended the meeting along with senior officials. With an aim to create an educational environment that matches global standards, the Government of India constituted a committee for Draft National Educational Policy in 2019 chaired by Dr. K. Kasturi Rangan, former chairman of Indian Space Research Organization. The Union Cabinet approved the policy paper designed by the committee and National Educational Policy 2020 came into effect on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020. The policy aims for public investment and aims to reach 6% of the GDP in educational sector from the existing 4.5%. In this paper analysis of policy is carried out in order to assess the impact on the existing educational system in the states. The NEP 2020 is the policy implemented after 34 years, replacing the National Policy of Education of 1986.

First of all, the new Ministry of Education by the Ministry

of Human Resource and Development was formed. Then, the present 10+2 structure is reformed into 5+3+3+4 design corresponding to the age group 3-8 years (foundational stage), 8-11 years(preparatory), 11-14 years(middle), and 14-18 years(secondary). The policy stresses on creating a national curricular and pedagogical framework, which is competency based, inclusive, and innovative and focuses on comprehensive development of children.

One of the key highlights of NEP 2020 is the decision to make mother tongue or regional language as the medium of instruction upto grade V. It is observed that policies over language or culture is significant in India while regional languages debating on use of Hindi or English in their schools as medium of teaching. (Narayan, 2020). The Education policy promote three-language formula with two of the languages being native to India and these languages will be the choice of states, region and chosen by the students. The policy focuses on multilingualism with great cognitive benefit to young children.

NEP 2020 launched in July 2020 provides a set of guiding principles for a paradigm shift across the education sector in India from schools to Doctoral Level. Accordingly, tenth board has been removed and the pattern of 5+3+3+4 will follow.

Assam government will implement 75% of the National Education Policy in 2022 and will achieve 100 percent by 2023 (India Today)

Chief Minister of Assam said that SEBA and CBSE will be merge by next year. “As part of the implementation of National Education Policy 2020, higher secondary classes will be taken out from the colleges at the earliest.” Himanta Bishwa

Sarma said. He has directed the state education department to convert 1000 high schools into higher secondary schools in the first phase.

Assam CM also said that the views of parents and students would be sought for the proper implementation of the National Education Policy 2020 in the state.

Because of the drop out of students, the assam Chief Minister directed that all Lower Primary and nearby Middle English schools should be merged to prevent the dropout of students from LP to ME. He has also urged the state's academic fraternity to work to transform Assam into an educational hub in Eastern India. He said this in the inaugural session of the two-day Conclave on the implementation of National Education Policy 2020 in Assam. Assam Governor Gulab Chand Kataria was also present at the inaugural session of the Conclave, which was organized by Raj Bhavan in association with the Department of Higher Education and the General Administration Department of the State Government. Assam CM requested the universities to publish booklets to help students understand the P.G. and U.G. courses under NEP 2020.

NEP 2020 promotes the idea of encouraging the carrier prospects of students by helping them acquire the skills. The focus here is more on achieving practical learning skills compared theoretical learning modules. For this purpose, it is better to create a wide flexible pool of subject options. This will help the learner pick the relevant topics according to their aptitude, passion and interest. Transforming classes to a fun and entertaining concept. The students have to focus more on activities rather than textbooks.

While 2020 was focused year for preparing the roadmap for NEP implementation in the state, the coming years will witness the rollout of the biggest reforms in the state. SCERT director Dr. Nirada Devi said that 2022 was the year which gave a new dimension to the state academic scenario and some major groundwork for implementing the NEP gained momentum. Assam is prepared for implementing the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) in tandem with NEP. Continuous professional development course in English, ICT and leadership programmes have been developed, the value education curriculum integrating different skills and values with the subjects has also been developed aligned to the objectives of NEP 2020. She said teacher training in the online mode as well as face to face mode has been initiated to prepare the teachers for the new curriculum.

As per NEP, the SCERT, Assam has prepared a six-month certificate course in Early Childhood Care and Education for Anganwadi workers.

Instructional design for teachers for the foundational level has been developed in total 214 teaching learning materials have been developed for grade 1,2 and 3. These included letter cards, word cards, conversation chart, grid for making words in eight mediums. Teacher instruction manual has been developed in different mediums, based on NEP's focus, multilingual learning materials in different indigenous tribal languages have been developed to facilitate learning among children in their home languages in the foundational stage.

NIPUN Bharat mission has been launched in Assam, its objective is to ensure achievement of foundational literacy and numeracy skill by all children by the end of grade 3 in order to

achieve this objective, the state has initiated building awareness of the community, parents, teachers and students by different awareness drives like NIPUN Assam theme song and posters.

The investigator in this study has visited schools in Kamrup district to observe the activity of the children under the guidance of the Education facilitator named Jitu Mani Bhuyan engaged in the Aide Et Action NGO. This NGO is working with the South Asian country since 1981 and now working with NIPUN Bharat mission. NIPUN BHARAT mission is working actively with the children of class1 to 5 helping them in active learning through FLN (foundational Literacy and Numeracy). Some videos and photos have been collected, and enclosed herewith. Those are–

1. Bar lah LP school.
2. Bamundi Buniadi LP School.
3. Gopaleswar Primary School.
4. Pachim Dampur LP School.
5. Sowanchah ME School
6. Saru lah Balika LP school.

Initiatives taken by the Government of India under NIPUN AXOM in foundation of Literacy and Numeracy skills, and importance is given for proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy. For publicity and greater awareness among all stakeholders for smooth implementation of NIPUN AXOM MISSION (FLN) , the state has launched the Mission on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2021 by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam. Video of the message of Hon'ble Minister, Education, Govt. of Assam, video of the message of Lovlina Borgohain and theme Song have been developed and shared with all.

The state has notified the formation of State Cell, Steering Committee at state and district levels, Project Management Unit (State, District and Block), and Academic Task Force (ATE) for National Resource Group (NRG) and Academic Resource Pool at DIETs, Nodal Officers of FLN at state and district levels have been notified.

The Governor of Assam notified state Resource Group, State Working Group and State Core Group at state level under Samagra Shiksha, DIET, BTC, Normal school, schools, different NGOs etc. for full implementation of the activities viz. development of learning materials, imparting training programmes, conduct of assessment, monitoring and support etc. under NIPUN ASSAM MISSION.

The state implemented 100 days Reading Campaign in 45144 schools to improve reading proficiency of the children (ka-shreni to class-VIII.) the campaign was implemented from January 2022 to April 2022. The school conducted activities like story-telling, recitation, reading library books, story composition by children and teachers experiences sharing on reading books, etc. Parents, SMC and SMDC members, community members were also involved. Monitoring was done by DACG and BACG members, faculties of DIETs, BTCs and normal schools.

The state has conducted training on NIPUN AXOM for State Resource Groups, Master Trainers, Resource Persons and Teachers.

*Objective no. ii:*

Regarding language as medium of instruction it has been found that National Education Policy prescribes no language,

states can choose, says Centre's High Powered Panel Chief.

States will have the freedom to choose the language of instruction in the democratic and decentralized process laid out in the National Education Policy, says Chamu Krishna Shastri the head of the high powered Bhartiya Bhasha Samiti, dismissing the assumption of imposition of languages (October 3 2022). The Bhartiya Bhasha Samiti, for the promotion of the Indian Languages, led by the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS), and the affiliated Sanskrit proponent and Padma-Shri awardee Chamu Krishna Shastri. The committee is tasked preparing an action plan for the growth of Indian Languages as prescribed under National Education Policy 2020, which requires mother tongue to be the medium of instruction in school and in higher education institutions. He spoke to the Hindu's Jagriti Chanda on the roadmap being realized by the panel.

A study has been done on the current situation of language in schools. It is found that there are 35 mother tongues as medium of instructions, and as part of the three language formula, 160 languages as well as mother tongues are taught. For example, Hindi is a mother tongue and a language while Garhwali is a mother tongue but not a language.

The first road block in implementing NEP 2020 is providing study material, and our focus for the first year is to prepare books in the languages of eight schedule of the constitution from class 1 to the Post Graduate level in all stream of education such as science, humanities and commerce.

Education in Mother Tongue: August 01, 2020.

Section 29 (f) of chapter V PIB Delhi.

Under Right to Education Act 2009, clearly states that,

‘medium of instructions shall, as far as practicable, be in child’s mother tongue.’

Education is in the concurrent list of the constitution and majority of the schools are under the domain of the states/UTS. As envisaged in para 4.11 of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least grade V, but preferably till grade 8 and beyond is to be the home language/mother tongue, local language, regional language. Thereafter, the home/local languages shall continue to be taught as a language wherever possible.

The NIPUN Bharat Mission of the government of India through its mission implementation guidelines suggest that teaching learning process and development of teaching learning material should be in mother tongue. Vidya Provesh - a three-month play-based school preparation program for Grade 1 and Nishtha FLN (Foundational Literacy and Numeracy) have also reemphasized the same.

As per Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE + 2021) there are 28 languages in which teaching learning is going on in Grade 1-5, the languages are as follows: Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Odia, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, English, Bodo, Khasi, Garo, Mizo, French, Hmar, Karbi, Santhali, Bhodi, Purgi.

The new Education Policy has tried to please all and it is clearly visible in the document. But lacks are there in both the thinking and in the document.

But there are language barriers. Although NEP seeks to enable home language learning upto class V in order to improve

learning outcomes, it is sure that early concept or comprehension is better in, home language but it is critical for future progress. The foundation of education must be sound, teaching and infrastructure should be best. As the core goals of education is social and economic mobility, and the language mobility in India is English, therefore, foundation of education through regional or home language maybe a cause of critical future for the children.

Home language is acceptable where there is all the facilities are available, such as employability, economic support, social support, etc, in the same region. Without such facilities no region can survive itself without global thinking.

The NEP speaks of multilingualism and that must be emphasized. Some states are blissfully considering this policy as a futile attempt to impose Hindi.

### **Conclusion**

In Assam lack of funds used for education sector is a big problem in implementing the NEP 2020. Economic survey by time to time in the state has seen that 6% of GDP is funded but is also doubtful.

The NEP 2020 and RTE Act 2009 are two operative policies. And it is a complex situation of implementing successfully the two policies at the same time.

When the first draft of the policy was unveiled last year, language issues caused the most outrage as it called for mandatory teaching of Hindi to all school students. The clause was later dropped and the final policy document makes it clear that “there will be greater flexibility in the three-language formula, and no language will be imposed on any state”.

“The 3 languages learned by children will be the choices of states, regions, and of course, the students themselves. At least 2 of the 3 languages are native to India. Sanskrit will also be one option at all levels at schools and higher education, other classical languages will also be available, possibly as online modules, while foreign languages will be offered at the secondary level”. ■

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# Women Entrepreneurship— With Reference to Assam

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## **Introduction :**

Of Late, the role of women in entrepreneurship has gained significant recognition worldwide. Women entrepreneurs are catalysts for economic growth, social empowerment and innovation in various industries. Their unique perspectives, resilience, and determination has shattered barriers and transformed the business landscape. Women entrepreneurship refers to the process of identifying opportunities, organizing and managing resources and taking risks to create and run a business venture, led and operated by women (Brush, 1992). It implies women initiating, and growing businesses as well as assuming the associated risks and rewards. Women entrepreneurship goes beyond mere business ownership and encompasses the unique experiences. Challenges and

opportunities faced by women entrepreneurs in various socio cultural contexts. It involves breaking barriers, challenging gender norms and contributing to the economic development and empowerment of Women (Dhewanto, 2015).

According to Kamala Singh, “A women entrepreneur is a confident, innovative and creative women capable of achieving economic independence individually or in collaboration generates employment opportunities for others through initiating or establishing and running an enterprise by keeping pace with her personal, family and social life.”

In the words of former president APJ Abdul Kalam “Empowering women is a prerequisite for creating a good nation. When women are empowered, society with stability is assured. Empowerment of women is essential as their thoughts and their value systems lead to the development of a good family, good society, and ultimately a good nation.”

This paper aims to examine the overview of women entrepreneurship, the importance of women entrepreneurship and the opportunity and challenges faced by the women entrepreneurs.

### **Objectives**

- (i) To highlight the overview of women entrepreneurship in India.
- (ii) To focus the importance of women entrepreneurship in Assam.
- (iii) To identify the opportunities and challenges faced by the women entrepreneurs.

### **Methodology**

The present study is based on secondary sources of data in

order to gather information. The Secondary data are collected from books, research articles, journals, newspaper and the websites.

### **Overview of women entrepreneurship**

Women are increasingly taking on entrepreneurial ventures and playing a crucial role in economic Development. Naturally, women entrepreneurship in the 21<sup>st</sup> century of India has witnessed significant growth and transformation.

**(i) Digital Platforms :** Advancements in technology and the rapid rise of digital platforms have paved the way of new avenues for women entrepreneurs. They take opportunity to reach a wider customer base, expand their businesses and overcome traditional constraints using e-commerce, social media and digital marketing in their concern business. (Ghosh & vyas, 2019).

**(ii) Participation :** The 21<sup>st</sup> century has seen a rise in the number of women entrepreneurs in India. Women are rightly abled to break traditional barriers, pursuing diverse business opportunities and playing significant contributions to diverse sectors of the economy. (Saravathy et.al., 2018)

**(iii) Government initiatives :** Now Government of India has launched numerous programmes and policies in order to encouraging women's Entrepreneurship. Government of India provides financial assistance training for skill development and mentorship through the initiatives like startup India, MUDRA Yojana and Atal Innovation Mission for the women entrepreneurs. (Nanda & Bhatnagar, 2018)

**(iv) Women-led startups :** Indeed the 21<sup>st</sup> century has witnessed a rise in women-led startups in India. These startups

focus on innovation, technology, and social impact, addressing numerous sectors such as health care, education, sustainable development and technology- driven solutions (Bhatnagar et.al. 2020)

**(v) Number of women :** The number of women-led startups in Inida has been steadily rising. According to the ‘Startup India’ initiative, as of March, 2021 around 20% of registered startups had at least one female founder of co-founder (source : startup India Hub-Annual Report 2020-21). It highlights the growing presence of women entrepreneurs in the Indian startup ecosystem.

**(vi) Education and skill development :** These are a lots of initiative underway to offer programmes for women specially to spread entrepreneurship education and skill. To empower women entrepreneurs various opportunities are made available by institutions, organizations and colleges through the required training programmes, workshop, mentorship etc.

### **Importance of women entrepreneurship in Assam**

Women entrepreneurship plays a significant role in the economic and social development of Assam.

Women entrepreneurship is a significant driver of economic growth and development. Women-led business contribute to job creation, income generation, and overall economic prosperities (Dutta, 2016)

Women entrepreneurs have been instrumental in diversifying the business landscape in India. traditionally certain sectors were dominated by men, but women-led business have consistently survived these areas and expanded into new industries. Such type of diversification fosters healthy competition, encourages

innovation and boosts economic resilience. Now a significant portion of women entrepreneurs operate in the Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMES) sector.

Sector, which is a vital component of India's economy. These enterprises contribute to exports, provide goods and services to domestic and international markets and contribute to regional development. Moreover, women entrepreneurs have been active in a wide range of sectors, including manufacturing, services, technology, and agriculture. Their risk-oriented task have contributed to job creation, both directly and indirectly. Providing employment opportunities to a diverse workforce. Thus women entrepreneurs immensely contribute towards GDP, export promotion innovation and creativity empowerment and financial inclusion and so on.

Many women entrepreneurs are actively involved in educational initiatives and awareness campaigns. They contribute to educational program for girls and women, promoting literacy and encouraging access to quality education, particularly in rural areas. They also enter into women's health and well-being. Women enterprises have contributed to business in the health care and wellness, addressing women specific health issues and promoting overall well-being. Moreover many women entrepreneurs focus on eco-friendly and sustainable business practices through their enterprises. They promote environmental conservation, resource efficiency, and green technologies, contributing to a more sustainable future. Thus, women entrepreneurs contribute towards women empowerment, employment and skill development, cultural preservation, networking and mentorship and so on.

## **Opportunities for women entrepreneurs**

(i) **Market Potential** : Now-a-days, the women entrepreneurs are getting immense opportunities from the market, with a large population and increasing consumer spending. The demand for innovative products and services day by day increases across various sectors such as health care, fashion, technology, e-commerce and education.

(ii) **Government Initiatives** : In order to promote women entrepreneurship, the Government of India has undertaken several initiatives. As a result of it, already various programs like start-up India, MUDRA Yojana and Bharatiya Mahila Bank has been provided financial support. Skill development and mentoring opportunities to women entrepreneurs (Ministry of Finance, Government of India)

(iii) **Digital Transformation and E-commerce** : The rapid expansion of digital infrastructure and e-commerce platforms substantially helps to expand business and increase income of the women entrepreneurs. Online market, social media, and digital marketing can provide affordable and accessible avenues to reach a wider customer base and scale businesses in the entire country.

## **Challenges**

The growth of rural entrepreneurship among women in rural areas is not satisfactory. The problems of women entrepreneurship in rural areas of Assam Can be explained at three different levels, namely, Individual problems, Social problems and structural problems.

(a) Individual problems are— Motivation, preserved, overburdened, education, technical know how, awareness, inferior

complexity, emotional attachment, feeling insecurity, finance etc.

(b) Social problems are– Role expectation, Social Taboos, male dominance, social norms, family support.

(c) Structural problems– government attraction, institution, communication, infrastructure.

### **Suggestions**

(i) Promoting entrepreneurship among the women.

(ii) Education is essential to increase the participation of women in entrepreneurial activities.

(iii) Continuous monitoring- training programmes, practical experience and personality development programmes.

(iv) Establishment of proper training institutes for enhancing working knowledge, skills, risk- taking abilities.

### **Conclusion**

The entrepreneurship development is a very noble idea. Such concept can also use to empower the women section of the society. The women in the rural areas are subject to lots of restrictions in Assam, They are not regarded an economic powerhouse, rather they are treated as dependent part of the society. Though they equally possesses the potentialities to be come a successful entrepreneur but the problems. They face which are not similar to the men's problems and creates hindrances in the growth of entrepreneurial activities. Therefore to increase the numbers of rural women entrepreneurs there requires a co-ordinated action from different stackholders of the society. ■

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# Blue Humanities: A Study of Water Bodies in the Selected Fictions of Literature

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## **Introduction**

The Blue Humanities is an emerging interdisciplinary field that reimagines literature, history, and philosophy through the lens of the ocean and other aquatic environments. Unlike traditional environmental humanities, which are often land-centered, Blue Humanities shifts the focus to marine ecologies, oceanic histories, water symbolism, and the human relationship with water bodies. This approach is particularly significant in literary studies as it provides new ways to interpret texts that engage with water, seas, rivers, lakes, and even rain both literally and metaphorically.

Coined by scholar Steve Mentz, Blue Humanities examines

how literature and culture have engaged with water beyond a utilitarian perspective. Instead of treating oceans and rivers as mere settings, it views them as dynamic spaces that shape human history, identity, and ecological consciousness.

However this research intends to analyse the four major fictions of literature -Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies*.. Because, each fictions carries multiple symbolism and significance based on the specific water body. Whether the Congo river in *Heart of Darkness* signifies the idea of colonial expansion, the sea in *The Old Man and the Sea* represents the universe, the Sargasso Sea in *Wide Sargasso Sea* shows the isolation and the black water in the *Sea of Poppies* represents the historical backdrop and migration. Thus, water has a huge significance in literary world which will be examined through this study.

### **Aims and objectives**

The aim of this research is to analyse the role of water in these novels through the lens of Blue Humanities. However the objectives regarding this study are as follows:

- It mainly investigates how seas and oceans are imagined in literature and art.
- It helps to reinterpret how ocean roles as political, ecological and emotional spaces in literature.
- It engages with indigenous coastal knowledge after overlooked in mainstream discourse.
- It focuses on the exploration of aquatic environments and its role in shaping memory and cultural identity.
- It helps to reimagine gender engagement by interrogating

the relationship between gender environment and the ocean.

### **Literature Review**

To analyse the concept of Blue Humanities, some of the works are taken for evidence to boost the purpose of the study.

Most significantly, in the work of one of the pioneers of Blue Humanities, Professor Steve Mentz's *An Introduction to the Blue Humanities*, we find that the term Blue Humanities signifies any water bodies including fresh water, ice, even water vapour, from lakes to glaciers and to groundwater. It is a global, multilingual and cultural practices that based on ocean, sea, river and other water resources.

Secondly, in terms of Nautical fiction American novelist Herman Melville's *Mobydick* can be identified one of the great maritime novel that depicts the idea of sea as a major symbol towards the story and the characters . Here, the setting of sea represents both life and death . In this sense ,by the context of fishing and whaling Melville emphasizes the role of ocean as both as sustenance and destruction where beauty and terror coexist.

On the other hand, the non-fictional work of Amitav Ghosh's *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* emphasizes how the Indian Ocean and other large bodies of water are central to understanding global warming. Ghosh critiques how literature and modern narratives ignore the ocean's role in shaping the Anthropocene.

Again, in Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*, we find the use of sea not just a mere setting but as a psychological and philosophical landscapes that represents trial, truth and transformation through

the character of Jim. Also, the sea here indicates the idea of memory, guilt, exile and redemption through the different phases of development of the protagonist.

In other genres, like poetry, especially in Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" it is found that how the sea can be centered for depicting the supernatural horror, divine punishment, redemption of mankind in comparison to the divinity and power of nature. Similarly, in "The Waste Land" by representing water, T.S Eliot signifies both destruction and salvation of people of modern era.

By examining the theme of Blue Humanities in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, it is seen that it centers on the ocean as a space of imperial mobility, ecological encounter, transformation, and human vulnerability. Though the fiction is not an environmentalist text in a modern sense, it deeply engages with many emerging ideas of Blue Humanities, particularly the relationship between humans and the sea, and the ocean's role in shaping history, identity, and empire.

Significantly, Rachel Carson's *The Sea Around Us* centers on the ocean as a dynamic, ancient, and living force that shapes not only the Earth's ecological history but also humanity's understanding of its place in the natural world. Written in 1951, *The Sea Around Us* is a lyrical and scientific meditation on the sea, and it aligns seamlessly with the Blue Humanities, which seeks to reposition oceans as central to environmental imagination, culture, and ethics.

Also, **in Carson's *Silent Spring***, the idea of Blue Humanities is emerged through the **interconnected aquatic ecosystems**, the **impact of human actions on water bodies**,

and the urgent need to **reconsider humanity's relationship with the oceanic world**. Although *Silent Spring* is more often read as the foundational text of modern environmentalism, it deeply aligns with the **Blue Humanities**, particularly in its treatment of water as a **living, vulnerable, and integral part of ecological systems**.

### **Research Gap**

Through inspecting various works regarding Blue Humanities and its impact and relevance in the literary world, it is found that a lots of gap are ignored in the process of developing the concern for Blue Humanities. Especially, as an interdisciplinary approach, Blue Humanities is mostly rooted in Euro -American literary and philosophical traditions. It needs to conceptualize how Indigenous, South Asian , Africa, Latin American literature and culture engage with sea and other aquatic environments. On the hand, Blue Humanities is still far to incorporate gendered related concept. Therefore, it should be discussed through multiple gendered perspectives. It needs to address how gender and sexuality intersect with oceanic narratives or symbolic representation of fluidity. To fulfill these gaps this research focuses on those unexplored areas where Blue Humanities can help to placed them into center. This research leads to bridge the area of Blue Humanities with race, class, gender, ingenious knowledge and climate activism.

### **Research Methodology**

This present study is conducted with the available literature. It brings out a qualitative study of the selected major texts of literature with a descriptive analytical way. For the

primary sources, the four major fictions are employed to develop the research. On the other hand, for the secondary datas, a number of articles, journals, e-books, are utilized to reach the outcome. Thus, this research is consisted of both primary and secondary datas to evaluate the possibilities and consequences.

### **Analysis**

As mentioned above, Blue Humanities has a great impact in understanding literary pieces with multiple angles. The plurality of ideas, concepts, symbols, metaphors and messages can be interpreted through the oceanic world. It helps to convey a better analysis of texts with its intersecting factors and conditions. To this focus, this study delves with the four significant fictions of literature – Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*, and Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies*.

Firstly, In Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, the Congo River is not just a physical location but a multifaceted symbol that plays a critical role in the novel's exploration of colonialism, the human psyche, and the darkness within both individuals and society. The river is central to the narrative, guiding the protagonist, Marlow, on his journey into the depths of the African continent and into the heart of his own understanding of civilization and savagery. It is emblematic of the colonial enterprise. It represents the European exploitation of Africa, with the river serving as the primary route for Europeans to penetrate the interior of the continent. The river becomes a metaphor for the flow of colonial oppression, facilitating the transport of goods, resources, and human labor from the African heartland to the European colonizers. In this sense, the river is

a symbol of the infrastructure of colonial exploitation, a lifeline that connects the violence of European imperialism to the “darkness” of the African wilderness.

In Ernest Hemingway’s *The Old Man and the Sea*, the sea is an immensely significant symbol that plays a central role in both the narrative and its thematic exploration. The sea is not only a physical setting for the novel but also a complex symbol of nature, struggle, isolation, and existential challenge. The sea represents the vast, uncontrollable forces of nature. For Santiago, the old man, the sea is both a source of livelihood and a powerful, often indifferent force that is beyond his control. Despite his deep respect and love for the sea, he also recognizes that it can be merciless and unpredictable. In many ways, the sea embodies nature’s raw, untamed power—a force that cannot be reasoned with or tamed by human effort. Through Santiago’s interaction with the sea, Hemingway explores universal themes of human existence, illustrating the balance between triumph and defeat, and the dignity found in the struggle itself. The sea is both Santiago’s greatest adversary and his most intimate companion, a mirror to his own soul, and a symbol of the endless challenges and mysteries of life.

In Jean Rhys’ *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the Sargasso sea itself is a central metaphor for entrapment, stasis, and ambiguous identity. It is located entirely within the Atlantic Ocean, which is the only sea without a land boundary symbolizing cultural hybridity, colonial stagnation, and loss of direction in the novel. The Sargasso Sea reflects Antoinette’s psychological and cultural conditions of rootless, trapped between worlds. The novel is set in Jamaica and Dominica, surrounded by ocean

that emphasize isolation, vulnerability, and colonial neglect. The islands' relationship with the surrounding sea underscores postcolonial marginality, echoing Blue Humanities focus on how oceans shape identity and power structures. The sea becomes a medium of transformation and erasure, as Antoinette is renamed "Bertha" and stripped of identity. Thus, it engages with the Blue Humanities by positioning the sea as a force of fragmentation and dislocation. Also, it portrays water as a metaphor for the fluid, unstable identities of the postcolonial world. Again, in terms of concerning of gender and sexuality, the novel reveals the hidden trauma and impact external factors of women through deploying the unusual image of Sargasso Sea.

Blue Humanities in Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* is richly embedded in the novel's engagement with oceans, rivers, and maritime spaces as critical sites of historical transformation, colonial violence, migration, and identity formation. The novel is a key example of how Blue Humanities can illuminate the entanglement between human histories and water ecologies. In the fiction, the journey across the Indian Ocean highlights how maritime routes facilitated forced migration, imperial labor systems, and cultural exchanges. Ghosh explores how the Opium Trade and the sea were fundamentally tied to imperial maritime commerce. Rivers and seas are shown as lifelines of empire, moving not only goods (like opium) but also violence, addiction, and exploitation. The Ganges and the Indian Ocean become agents of the colonial extractive economy, central to Blue Humanities' critique of water's role in empires.

## Conclusion

Thus, Blue Humanities has a huge significance in interpreting literature of different cultures and arenas. It is a valid and versatile path of reframing common ideas and concepts into more transparent manner. It helps to understand the importance of non only land-centric environment but also aquatic world in shaping literature . Therefore , it can be expected that by applying Blue Humanities into these specific works will extend multiple possibilities and positive outcomes in present era as well as futuristic research. ■

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# Empowering the Bell Metal Industry of Sarthebari through Product Innovation and Adaptation

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## **Abstract**

The bell metal industry of Sarthebari, Assam, stands as one of India's oldest and most distinguished handicraft sectors, celebrated for its craftsmanship and cultural heritage. In recent years, however, the industry has struggled to retain its relevance in a rapidly changing market environment. This study explores the empowerment of the Sarthebari bell metal industry through product adaptation by examining market trends, consumer preferences, and artisanal capacities. It assesses the potential for diversifying product lines, integrating modern design elements with traditional craftsmanship, and leveraging contemporary marketing platforms for wider market access. The

paper also highlights the importance of government initiatives and collaborative strategies in fostering sustainable growth. Findings reveal that strategic product adaptation can enhance market opportunities, generate employment, ensure the long-term economic viability of artisans, and preserve the cultural legacy of Sarthebari's bell metal craft.

**KEYWORDS:** *Bell-metal, handicraft industry, product adaptation, market expansion, artisan empowerment.*

### **1. Introduction:**

Bell metal is one of the most popular types of alloy used for manufacturing crafts. The bell metal industry of Sarthebari has been a cornerstone of Assamese handicraft. In Assam the position of bell metal handicraft is next to handloom and textile. It is one of the important and popular types of metal used to manufacture different kinds of day to day utensils and decorative items (Devi,2017). The composition of the alloy is different in Assam which is unique in nature though the bell metal works are also found in other parts of India say Chhattishgarh and West Bengal. Bell metal ore is a sulfied of copper and tin. In Sarthebari the alloy is made by consisting 78% of copper and 22% of tin, apart from requiring the basic raw materials to manufacture the artefacts which are jute fibers, mustard oil, clay, charcoal and lac. The bell metal is called *KAH* and the art of bell metal smithy as *KAH SILPA* in Assam. The artisans are called *KANHAR*. The Assamese culture without the utensils made of bell metal is incomplete. The craft is is not only an artistic tradition but also an economic lifeline for many rural communities in Sarthebari.The products ranging from

ceremonial utensils to decorative artifacts reflect a unique blend of cultural heritage and artisanal skill. Every family of Assamese people tries to maintain those articles as a cultural identity. They are mostly used in everyday life, in religious rituals and marriage ceremonies. The use of bell metal utensils is not only concentrated in Assam alone. Its use has crossed the state as well as national border. The Dafala tribe of Arunachal Pradesh which is surrounded by South China uses a particular type of bell metal dish and bowl. The dish is known as *Dafala Kaahi* and bowl is known as *Dafala Baati*. No other states of India except Assam produce these utensils (Choudhury, 2018).

**1.1 Problem of the statement:** Despite the rich history and cultural significance of bell metal handicraft industry of Sarthebari, it faces several modern challenges. Traditional bell metal products have faced several challenges including a shrinking market, competition from alternative materials, lack of innovation and changing consumer preferences.

Product adaptation introducing us with innovative designs, utility based product and contemporary aesthetics with the presents of a viable strategy to revitalize the industry. This research paper explores the potentiality of empowering the Sarthebari bell metal industry through product adaptation, focusing on market expansion, artisans empowerment and cultural preservation.

**1.2 Objectives:** This study aims–

- (i) To evaluate the current challenges facing the bell metal industry of Sarthebari.
- (ii) To explore the potential for product adaptation through diversification and innovation.

(iii) To assess how digital platforms can enhance domestic and international demand for adapted bell metal product.

(iv) To suggest strategies for the sustainable growth and empowerment of the industry.

**1.3 Area of the study:** Sarthebari is one of the famous trade centre of Assam known for its world famous bell metal handicraft industry. The Sarthebari is one of the eight revenue circles of Barpeta district, Assam. It is the nerve centre of Sarukshetri mouza, situated in the 3 bank of the Aalpa river. It is nearly 90 KM away from Guwahati. According to 2011 census the total population of Sarthebari was 6,913. Infact through jith and kin the art of bell metal smithy passed to adjoining villages of Gomura, Namxala, Palla, Karakuchi etc. and forming a bell metal industrial cluster around Sarthebari. Once upon a time there were nearly 500 bell metal industrial units. But presently only approximate 300 such industrial units with 1800 Kanhars are surviving.

## 2. Literature Review

Number of studies have been found in the literature. Some important studies are narrated here.

In their studies by Kalita (2005) and Sarma (1978) have documented the historical evolution of the bell metal industry, emphasizing its cultural roots and the traditional skills passed down through generation. The practice of bell metal handicraft has been done at Sarthebari from the time immemorial. It is belived that bell metal handicraft was started during the Muyuryan period i.e, 312 -185 BC ( Mishra and Sultana,2015). This back ground underscores the importance of preserving heritage while modernizing product offering.

Kumar (2011), did a cluster study on bell metal handicraft

of Sarthebari. In his study he included raw materials process, tools and equipments, product range, design audit and value chain analysis. The study shows how the traditional tools and techniques can be replaced with the modern and sophisticated tools and techniques.

Research by Choudhury (2018) and Sarkar and Kakoty (2021) indicates that the industry suffers from declining demand for traditional products due to competition from alternative materials and a lack of market innovation. The limited market access for artisans, compounded by financial constraints and a hesitance among younger generations to pursue the craft indicates for strategic innovations.

Again recent literature suggest that integrating modern design trends with traditional craftsmanship can rejuvenate heritage industries. Product adaptation as discussed by Roy(2014) and Sahay(2015) argued that not only design innovation but also the use of digital marketing and advanced production techniques to appeal to a broader consumer base.

Saloj and Barman(2020) argued that the bell metal industry is attractive to the prospective entrepreneurs if they acquire expert skill in production of bell metal products and bring some innovation in design but keeping the ancient royal looks as per the requirements of customs.

Choudhury (2020) did a study on efficiency of traditional marketing strategy of bell metal handicraft of Assam in which he said that in the recent decades the demand for some traditional utensils made of bell metal has been reduced radically. Those are replaced by cheap aluminium and steel products.

Thus it is seen that the existing literature explained the various sides of bell metal industry. But no studies are found

which tried to studies on the potentiality of empowering the bell metal industry of Sarthebari through product adaptation. The present study has filled this research gap by focusing how product adaptation can empowering the potentiality of bell metal industry of Sarthebari.

### **3. Methodology**

**3.1 Research Design:** A qualitative research approach was adopted to explore the potential of product adaptation. The study combined literature review with field research to gather insights from multiple stack-holders.

**3.2 Data Collection:** For collecting the primary data the investigator visited the bell metal town Sarthebari and conducted interviews with local artisans, industry experts and some of the member of Assam Cooperative Bell Metal Utensils Manufacturing Society Limited (ACBMUMSL) which is situated at Sarthebari. The artisans of bell metal industry are the member of this co-operative society.

Interviews were also taken from the retail outlets of Sarthebari regarding the diversity of the products, demand pattern, quantity sold per year, source of raw materials, earning, consumer market etc.

The data collection tools was on interview schedule. For the respondents most of the questions were open ended so that the respondent can get more opportunities to give his best view.

As per the objectives concern the investigator arrange a focus group discussion with the consumer of bell metal product.

The investigator collecting the secondary data from existing research paper, government reports, case studies of similar industries, journal, market analysis etc.

#### **4. Data Analysis and Findings:**

The analysis of data collected from interviews, focus group discussions, survey and secondary sources was carried out using a thematic approach. The process involved carefully coding the responses to identify recurring patterns and themes, which provided a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the Sarthebari bell metal industry.

**4.1 Thematic coding and categorization:** The qualitative data were systematically coded to extract key themes such as product diversification, integration of contemporary designs, digital market expansion, advanced production techniques and the role of government support. This method enabled us to group similar ideas and perspectives from various stakeholders, artisans, industry experts and consumers. It revealing a clear picture of the industry's current state and future potential.

**4.2 Insights from artisans interviews:** Interviews with artisans revealed a strong willingness to diversify product offerings. Many of them expressed that while traditional products remain significant, there is a growing interest in exploring new categories such as home decor items, fashion accessories and corporate gifts. Artisans noted that integrating modern design elements with traditional craftsmanship not only enriches the aesthetic appeal of their products but also caters to evolving consumer tastes.

#### **4.3 Consumer Perspectives and Market Trends:**

Survey and focus group discussions provided valuable insights into shifting market dynamics. Participants showed an increasing preference for products that blend cultural heritage with contemporary design. There was a notable trend towards

the demand for customization and unique, story driven products that stand apart in a market saturated with mass produced goods particularly among the urban consumers. The data indicated that digital platforms, especially social media and e-commerce play a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions and purchasing behaviours.

**4.4 Digital Marketing and Market Reach:** Analysis of secondary data from market reports and digital analytics underscored the significant potentiality of online platforms in overcoming traditional market limitation.

Evidence from case-studies in similar handicraft industries demonstrated that a useful digital presence could expand market reach both nationally and internationally. This insight was supported by artisans feedback who emphasized the need for training in digital marketing and e-commerce to effectively tap into new customer segments.

**4.5 Synthesis of Findings:** In synthesizing the findings it became evident that product adaptation is not merely a matter of aesthetic change but a multifaced approach that requires alignment across production, marketing and skill development.

## **5. Discussion**

The various aspects of Sarthebari's bell metal craft are reflected from the study and we can discussed it as following ways:

**5.1 Balancing Tradition and Innovation:** The findings highlight a delicate balance while there is a need to innovate and adapt, preserving the cultural authenticity of Sarthebari's bell metal products is paramount. Strategic product adaptation should maintain the core elements of traditional craftsmanship while integrating modern design elements.

**5.2 Market Expansion Opportunities:** Digital platforms and e-commerce offer a promising route to overcome the limitations of local market access. By targeting both domestic and international consumers, artisans can tap into new revenue streams and reduce dependency on traditional markets.

**5.3 Socio-Economic Impact:** Revitalizing the industry through product adaptation is not just about economic growth; it also has significant social implications. Empowering artisans, creating employment opportunities, and fostering community pride are important outcomes that support sustainable development.

**5.4 Challenges in Implementation:** Despite the promising potentiality there are some challenges remain to implementation. They are:

- \*Resistance to change among traditional artisans.

- \*Financial constraints and limited access to modern technology.

- \*The need for coordinated policy support and effective training programs.

## **6. Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

**(A) Establish Design Collaborations:** Facilitate partnerships between traditional artisans and contemporary designers to create innovative product lines.

**(B) Enhance Digital Presence:** Develop a comprehensive digital strategy that includes setting up dedicated online stores, leveraging social media and participating in international e-commerce platforms.

**(C) Skill Development Programs:** Organise regular

training sessions and workshops to familiarize artisans with modern design trends, digital marketing, and quality control measures.

**(D) Policy Support:** Strengthen government initiatives by streamlining access to credit, grants, and export promotion schemes specifically for the bell metal industry.

**(E) Market Diversification:** Encourage product diversification into such areas to meet evolving consumer demands.

**(F) Brand Storytelling:** Develop a strong brand narrative that highlights the cultural heritage and craftsmanship of Sarthebari, thereby enhancing the global appeal of the products.

## 7. Conclusion

The bell metal industry of Sarthebari is at a critical juncture. While steeped in tradition, it must adapt to contemporary market realities to ensure long-term sustainability. This research demonstrates that product adaptation—through diversified product lines, integration of modern design, digital marketing and advanced production techniques can revitalize the industry. With strategic interventions, policy support and collaborative efforts, the Sarthebari bell metal industry can regain its competitive edge and emerge as a globally recognized brand, ensuring both economic growth and the preservation of a unique cultural heritage. ■

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# Ultrasonic Waves: Application in flaw detection in rail

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Ultrasonic waves are used to detect flaws. A wave is a disturbance that transmits energy through a medium or even in a vacuum. Generally, waves are classified into two main types: electromagnetic and mechanical waves. Examples of electromagnetic waves include light waves, radio waves, X-rays, and alpha rays, while sound waves are part of the mechanical category. Unlike electromagnetic waves, which can travel without a medium, mechanical waves need a medium to propagate. The speed of mechanical waves depends on the properties of the medium they travel through.

When vibrations are cyclical, they are described by their frequency, which shows how many cycles occur per second. Sound waves can be further divided into sonic, sub-sonic, and ultrasonic categories based on their frequency ranges.

The range of sonic waves spans from 20 cycles per second, referred to as Hertz (Hz), up to 20,000 Hz. Waves with frequencies below 20 Hz are known as subsonic, while those exceeding 20,000 Hz are classified as ultrasonic. The human ear can only detect sounds within the sonic range; we cannot perceive either subsonic or ultrasonic waves. However, ultrasonic waves are relatively common in nature and have gained significant attention in recent years due to their remarkable properties. These properties have found applications across various fields of engineering, with one of the most notable uses being in non-destructive testing of materials.

### **Classification of Waves:**

A sound wave has the ability to travel through any material that possesses elastic properties. All materials consist of tiny interconnected particles that vibrate around their equilibrium position. The speed at which sound waves move is influenced by the elastic characteristics and density of the medium they pass through. Generally, sound waves travel faster in solids than in liquids and gases.

Ultrasonic waves can be classified into three types based on the direction of particle vibration relative to the wave's direction of propagation:

1. Longitudinal Waves
2. Transverse Waves
3. Surface Waves

### **Longitudinal Waves:**

Longitudinal waves are characterized by the oscillation of particles within a medium in the same direction that the

wave travels. When energy is applied to the particles of the medium, they begin to vibrate more vigorously and pass some of their energy to the neighboring particles. This interaction sets off a chain reaction, allowing energy to move from one point to another in the form of longitudinal waves. The wave functions by creating alternating regions of compression, where particles are pushed closer together, and rarefaction, where they spread apart. These types of waves are often referred to as compression waves or pressure wave.

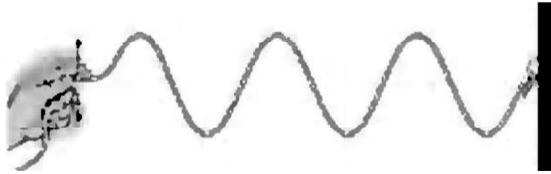
Longitudinal waves are capable of moving through solids, liquids, and gases, maintaining a consistent speed within a particular material. In denser substances, the distance between molecules is reduced, which leads to quicker energy transfer and wave movement. Consequently, longitudinal waves travel faster in denser materials compared to lighter ones.

For instance, the sound waves that propagate through air are examples of longitudinal waves. Additionally, when you strike a tuning fork against a rubber pad, the resulting waves are another illustration of this type of wave.

### **Transverse Waves**

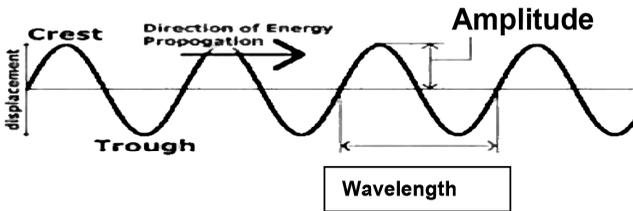
Transverse waves occur when particle vibrations are perpendicular to the direction of wave travel. These waves are often referred to as shear waves because they involve energy transfer through shear movement between different planes. For instance, when a particle moves upward, it pulls adjacent particles upward too, due to the shear strength. Conversely, when a particle moves downward, it similarly drags neighboring particles down. This interaction creates a wave motion within the medium.

For transverse waves to propagate, the medium must possess shear strength. This is why these waves are unable to travel through liquids and gases, as those substances lack shear strength. Nonetheless, transverse waves can move along the surface of a liquid due to surface tension. As these waves travel, they form crests (the high points) and troughs (the low points), with the distance between two consecutive crests or troughs being referred to as the wavelength.



*Fig. Transverse Waves in a Medium*

If we tie one end of a string with a hook in the wall and wave the other end up & down, transverse waves start travelling in the string. The wave propagates along the length of the string while the vibration of the particles is perpendicular to the length.

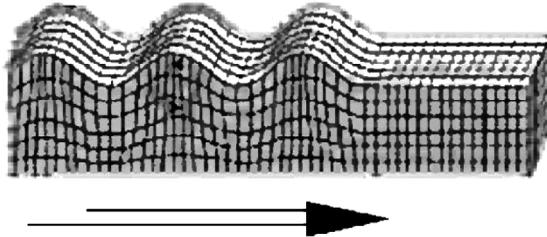


*Fig. Transverse Wave in a Rope*

## Surface Waves

Surface waves only travel over the surface of the material, involving both longitudinal and transverse particle movement. There are various types of surface waves, including Lamb waves and Rayleigh waves. Since these waves only move on the

surface, they're not effective for detecting internal defects in the material.



*Fig. Surface Waves in a Material*

### **Wave Velocity**

For a specific type of wave, like a longitudinal wave, its velocity stays the same in a given medium but changes in another medium. For instance, the velocity of longitudinal waves

Sound waves travel through air at a speed of 330 m/s, but their velocity in steel is much higher, at 5900 m/s.

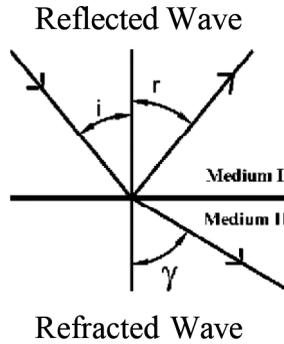
Although we can't change the velocity of a wave in a medium, we can select its frequency, which in turn affects its wavelength. The higher the frequency, the shorter the wavelength, and vice versa.

Velocity varies for different types of waves in the same medium. For instance, in steel, the velocity of longitudinal waves is 5900 m/s, while the velocity of transverse waves is 3230 m/s.

Longitudinal waves travel at roughly twice the speed of transverse waves in the same medium.

### **Propagation of Sound Waves: Reflection & Refraction:**

When a sound wave reaches the boundary of two media, part of the energy comes back in the first medium as reflected wave and part energy goes in the second medium as refracted wave.



*Fig. Reflection & Refraction*

Reflected and refracted waves follow two key principles. The first principle says that the incident wave, the reflected wave, and the refracted wave are all in the same plane. According to the second principle, both reflection and refraction follow Snell’s Law, which states that the ratio of the sines of the angles of incidence ( $i$ ) and reflection ( $r$ ) or refraction ( $\gamma$ ) is equal to the ratio of the velocities of the incident wave ( $v_i$ ) and the reflected ( $v_r$ ) or refracted ( $v_2$ ) waves. We can write this mathematically as

For reflected wave,

$$\sin i / \sin r = V_1 / V_r \quad \text{--- (1)}$$

And for refracted wave,

$$\sin i / \sin \gamma = V_1 / V_2 \quad \text{--- (2)}$$

The incident and the reflected waves travel in the same medium and if the type of the wave is also same (say both are longitudinal or both are transverse), then  $V_1 = V_r$

Hence, from equation (1)

$$\sin i / \sin r = 1 \quad \text{--- (3)}$$

i.e.  $i = r$

As the wave passes through the second medium, it gets bent from its original path at an angle  $y$ . This angle is either lower or higher than the angle of incidence, depending on whether the sound speed in the second medium is slower or faster than in the first medium.

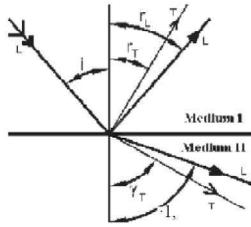
If  $V_2 > V_1$ , then  $\sin y > \sin i$  i.e.  $y > i$ . This implies that the refracted wave will deflect away from the normal in medium 2 if its velocity in medium 2 is higher.

The transducer used for the testing has a perspex sheet on its face and it is kept over the rail for flaw detection. So in this case, medium 1 is perspex and medium 2 is steel. For longitudinal wave,  $V_1 = 2730$  m/s and  $V_2 = 5900$  m/s.

So the refracted wave will get diverted away from the normal.

### **Transformation or Mode Conversion:**

When sound waves are transmitted from one medium to another at an angle, a phenomenon known as mode conversion occurs. This happens when a longitudinal wave strikes the boundary between two media and transforms into a transverse wave due to energy redistribution. As the wave strikes the boundary, some particles continue to vibrate in the original direction, while others start vibrating perpendicular to it. This results in two reflected waves and two refracted waves - one longitudinal and the other transverse. This transformation or mode conversion process affects both types of waves: longitudinal and transverse.



Incident wave

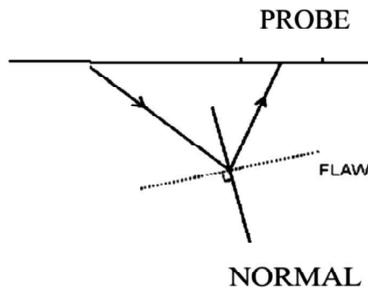
Reflected waves

Refracted Waves

*Fig. Transformation or Mode Conversion*

It's worth noting that no transformation occurs when a wave is coming straight in from the normal direction. This means that a longitudinal wave entering from the normal direction will pass into the second medium as a longitudinal wave without changing form.

At its core, ultrasonic testing relies on the principle that when an ultrasonic wave travels through medium 2, it reflects off a flaw. The probe then picks up this reflected energy, allowing the flaw to be detected, as shown in Figure.



*Fig. Detection of Flaw by Probe*

During testing, we're only interested in waves traveling through medium 2 (rail steel). Using Snell's Law, we can

calculate the angles of refraction for both longitudinal and transverse waves based on the angle of incidence and the wave velocities in each medium, as shown in equations (4) and (5)

$$\sin i / \sin y_L = V_{L1} / V_{L2} \quad \text{--- (4)}$$

$$\sin i / \sin y_T = V_{T1} / V_{T2} \quad \text{--- (5)}$$

Here,  $y_L$  and  $y_T$  represent the angles of refraction for longitudinal and transverse waves.  $v_{L1}$  and  $v_{L2}$  are the velocities of longitudinal waves, while  $v_{T1}$  and  $v_{T2}$  are the velocities of transverse waves in medium 1 and medium 2.

As brought out earlier, the first medium in our case is perspex and the second medium is steel. Therefore,

$$v_{L1}=2730 \text{ m/s, } v_{T1}=1430 \text{ m/s, } v_{L2}=5900\text{m/s, } v_{T2}=3230\text{m/s}$$

We can substitute these values on R.H.S. in equations (4) & (5). We find that–

$$\text{Since } v_{L2} > v_{L1} \text{ so, } y_L > i$$

$$\text{And } v_{T2} > v_{T1}, \text{ so } y_T > i.$$

$$\text{Also, } v_{L2} > v_{T2}, \text{ so } y_L > y_T$$

It means that both refracted waves are bent away from the normal in medium 2. The refracted longitudinal wave is bent farther away from the normal than the refracted transverse wave.

Now, rather than one, two waves (longitudinal and transverse) are traveling through medium 2. They will hit the flaw at different times due to their differing velocities, and will also be detected by the probe at different times.

There's confusion because two waves reflected by the flaw will reach the probe at different times, thanks to the different speeds of the waves. As a result, the operator won't be able to tell which wave is which.

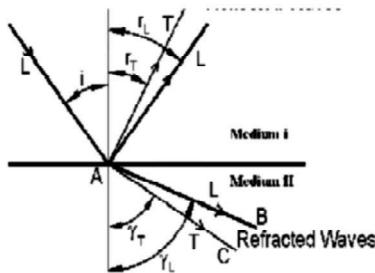
Energy is received from two separate flaws or the same

flaw reflects it for two different waves. To properly test, one of these waves must be eliminated. This is done by applying the concept of total internal reflection, which is explained below.

**Total Internal Reflection and First Critical Angle:**

Let us consider the reflection and refraction again as shown in Fig. Due to transformation, we have two refracted waves – longitudinal wave AB and transverse wave AC. As seen earlier,  $y_L > y_T > i$  since,  $v_{L2} > v_{T2} > v_{L1}$ .

**Incident Wave      Reflected Waves**



*Fig. Refracted Waves*

If  $i$  is increased, both  $y_L$  and  $y_T$  will increase. If we go on increasing  $i$ , there will be a particular value of  $i$  for which  $y_L$  will become  $90^\circ$ . That means the longitudinal wave AB will not be refracted and will become a surface wave. This phenomenon is called ‘total internal reflection’ and this value of  $i$  is called ‘first critical angle’. The value of first critical angle  $i_{c1}$  can be calculated from the equation given below by substituting  $y_L = 90^\circ$ ,  $v_{L1} = 2730\text{m/s}$  &  $v_{L2} = 5900\text{ m/s}$  for perspex – steel combination.

$$\sin i_{c1} / \sin y_L = v_{L1} / v_{L2}$$

We get  $i_{c1} = 27.5^\circ$ . It implies that, if we keep angle of incidence  $27.5^\circ$  or more, the longitudinal wave AB will become a surface wave and only transverse wave AC will travel in medium 2 (i.e. steel). Substituting  $i_{c1} = 27.5^\circ$ ,  $v_{T2} = 3230 \text{ m/s}$  &  $v_{L1} = 2730 \text{ m/s}$  in equation given below

$$\sin i_{c1} / \sin y_T = v_{L1} / v_{T2}, \text{ we get } y_T = 33.1^\circ$$

### Second Critical Angle:

If we keep on increasing angle  $i$  further, there will be another value of  $i$  for which  $y_T$  will also become  $90^\circ$  i.e. the transverse wave will also become a surface wave. This value of  $i$  is called second critical angle  $i_{c2}$ .

In this case no wave will travel in medium 2 and the testing will not be possible.

So, value of  $i$  should be less than  $i_{c2}$ .

$i_{c2}$  can be calculated from equation

$\sin i_{c2} / \sin y_T = v_{L1} / v_{T2}$ , by substituting  $y_T = 90^\circ$

$v_{L1} = 2730 \text{ m/s}$  and  $v_{T2} = 3230 \text{ m/s}$ . we get  $i_{c2} = 57.7^\circ$

So we design the angular probes to keep  $i$  more than  $i_{c1}$  but less than  $i_{c2}$  i.e. between  $27.5^\circ$  &  $57.7^\circ$  for USFD testing of

Here, it is important to note that the probe angle is not the angle of incidence but rather the angle of refraction, which is the angle at which the wave enters the steel after refracting from the boundary between the perspex and steel. Therefore, the probe angle can range between  $33.3^\circ$  and  $90^\circ$  based on these criteria. All angular probes use transverse waves for flaw detection in the material, as longitudinal waves are eliminated by total internal reflection.

rails.

Transformation only occurs when the incident wave is traveling in a direction other than normal. In the case of a normal probe, the transformation doesn't happen, and the longitudinal wave travels through medium 2 as a longitudinal wave. As a result, normal probes use the longitudinal wave to test for flaws. ■

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# Status of Women's Rights: A Study on the Status of Married Women under Hajo Char Area in Kamrup (Rural) District of Assam

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## **Abstract**

Women's rights in India are constitutionally guaranteed, yet their realization remains uneven across regions, communities, and socio-economic classes. The riverine Char areas of Assam represent one of the most marginalized spaces where ecological vulnerabilities and patriarchal norms intersect to shape women's lives. This study examines the status of married women in the Hajo Char area of Kamrup (Rural) district, focusing on their access to legal rights, socio-economic participation, and decision-making power within households and communities. Drawing on feminist theoretical frameworks

and field-based observations, the research highlights issues such as early marriage, economic dependency, limited educational opportunities, and restricted political participation. The findings reveal a wide gap between constitutional provisions and women's lived realities, underscoring the need for targeted policy interventions, gender-sensitive governance, and grassroots empowerment strategies.

**Keywords:** Women's rights, married women, Char areas, Hajo, Assam, gender justice

## 1. Introduction

The status of women in India has long been a subject of concern and research, as gender inequality continues to persist despite significant constitutional and legal safeguards. While the Indian Constitution enshrines equality and justice, patriarchal traditions and socio-economic constraints hinder the realization of women's rights in everyday life (Government of India, 1950). In Assam, women play crucial roles in family and community life, yet they remain disadvantaged in terms of property rights, access to education, and decision-making power (Goswami, 2013; Baruah, 2015).

The Char areas—riverine islands formed by the Brahmaputra—are marked by ecological fragility, poverty, and limited infrastructure, exacerbating women's marginalization (Hazarika, 2018). The Hajo Char area in Kamrup (Rural) district offers a vital case study to understand the intersection of gender, ecology, and socio-economic conditions. This research aims to investigate the status of married women in this locality, focusing on their legal, social, and economic rights.

## **2. Review of Literature**

Previous scholarship on women in Assam highlights the persistence of patriarchal structures that limit women's agency. Kabeer (1999) emphasizes empowerment as a process of expanding resources and agency, while Nussbaum (2000) argues for a capabilities-based approach to women's development. In the Assamese context, Goswami (2013) and Baruah (2015) document how traditional roles often confine women to domestic labor, restricting their autonomy.

Specific studies on the Char areas indicate unique challenges: frequent floods, displacement, illiteracy, early marriages, and limited healthcare facilities disproportionately affect women (Kalita, 2017; Ahmed, 2019). Hazarika (2018) notes that Char women are among the most vulnerable groups in Assam, facing "double marginalization" due to both geography and gender. However, there remains a lack of focused research on married women in Hajo Char, justifying the present study.

## **3. Objectives of the Study**

1. To analyze the socio-economic and cultural status of married women in Hajo Char area.
2. To examine women's awareness and access to constitutional and legal rights.
3. To assess the role of patriarchy and traditional norms in shaping women's everyday lives.
4. To identify gaps between constitutional guarantees and the lived realities of married women.
5. To suggest possible measures for empowering women in Char areas.

#### 4. Methodology

This research employs a qualitative and descriptive research design, supplemented by primary and secondary data.

- *Primary Data:* Collected through structured interviews, questionnaires, and focus group discussions with married women in selected villages of Hajo Char area. Sampling is purposive, focusing on women across different age groups and socio-economic strata.

- *Secondary Data:* Derived from government reports, census data, scholarly books, and journal articles on women's rights and Char areas of Assam.

- *Analytical Framework:* Feminist theories of empowerment (Kabeer, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000) are applied to interpret the findings.

#### 5. Findings

The study reveals the following key findings:

5.1. *Early Marriage and Education:* A majority of married women in Hajo Char marry before the age of 18, leading to early dropout from schools and restricted access to higher education.

5.2. *Economic Dependency:* Most women are engaged in household work and agricultural labor but lack independent income sources. Economic decisions are largely controlled by male members.

5.3. *Limited Awareness of Rights:* While constitutional provisions exist, awareness about legal safeguards such as the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005) and rights to property is very low.

5.4. *Health and Reproductive Rights*: Poor healthcare infrastructure and high fertility rates result in adverse impacts on women's health. Access to reproductive healthcare is limited.

5.5. *Political Participation*: Participation in local governance bodies like panchayats is minimal. Even when elected, women often act as proxies for male relatives.

5.6. *Cultural Constraints*: Patriarchal traditions and religious conservatism restrict women's mobility, decision-making capacity, and engagement in public life.

## 6. Conclusion

The study demonstrates that married women in the Hajo Char area face structural inequalities that limit their rights and opportunities. While constitutional and legal frameworks guarantee equality, patriarchal norms, economic backwardness, and ecological vulnerabilities hinder their realization. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-pronged approach, including:

- Enhancing women's access to education and vocational training.
- Strengthening healthcare facilities in Char areas.
- Implementing gender-sensitive development programs.
- Promoting awareness campaigns on women's rights.
- Encouraging active participation of women in local governance.

By bridging the gap between policy and practice, meaningful progress can be made toward ensuring gender justice in Assam's Char areas. ■

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# Golden Threads of Sualkuchi: Legacy, Identity, and the Modern Fate of Assam's Pat and Muga Silk

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## **Introduction**

Sualkuchi of North-East India, also adorned with titles like “Manchester of North-East” and “Silk Heaven of India” has been able to preserve its historical glory also been able to add special importance to its economic aspects. Traditional handicrafts have preserved and reshaped Assam's heritage, art and culture in new ways. A person coming from different places and entering Sualkuchi, immersed in the rhythmic sounds of the loom shuttle on the handloom, experiences a unique feeling. Sualkuchi, the satra town blessed by Sri Shrimanta Sankardev and Madhavdev, inspired by the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, has for years been tirelessly upheld day and night by local

weavers as well as weavers from various parts of the state, ensuring its glory never fades.

### **Literature Review**

Historical Emergence and Royal Patronage Sualkuchi is widely recognized as the epicentre of Assam's silk handloom industry, with silk weaving traditions reportedly dating back to the 10th–11th centuries under King Dharma Pal of the Pala dynasty. The settlement of the Tanti weaver community and royal endorsement transformed Sualkuchi into a “craft village” with several cottage industries, eventually dominated by silk production.

Significant expansion occurred during the Ahom reign (13th–19th centuries) when administrators like Momai Tamuli Barbarua institutionalized weaving practices, making Sualkuchi a key note in Assam's textile economy. During this era, silk weaving was not just a household practice; it became emblematic of royal and noble prestige, with dedicated royal looms (Rajagharia looms) supplying the courtly wardrobe and diplomatic gifts.

### **Cultural and Artistic Impact**

Pat and Muga silk weaving in Sualkuchi is deeply interwoven with Assamese culture and heritage. Literature notes the ritual and social significance of Mekhela Chador—especially in weddings, Bihu, and religious events—with scholars highlighting its motif-rich designs and use of native silks (Muga, Pat, Eri) as hallmarks of traditional Assamese textile artistry.

Motifs such as kolka, kingkhap, and lata-phool, traditionally handwoven by skilled weavers, have preserved their

aesthetic and cultural relevance, while newer designs reflect evolving consumer tastes, social media influence, and contemporary market demand

### **Historical Context**

The tradition of sericulture and silk weaving in Assam dates back centuries, with documented references as early as the 4th century B.C. and significant development evidence during the reign of the Kamrup kings like Bhaskarvarman in the 7th century A.D. Kamrup's geographic location made it a strategic trading gateway on routes connecting India with China, Tibet, and Southeast Asia, facilitating the export of silk and other commodities (Barpujari 1994; Das 2008). Ancient texts like the Arthashastra mention Suvarnakudya—a region within Kamrup—as a renowned center for silk production, highlighting its economic and cultural importance (Baishya 2005).

### **Economic Contributions**

Silk production contributed significantly to the Kamrup kingdom's economy through employment generation in sericulture, weaving, dyeing, and ancillary crafts. The royal patronage system established by kings like Bhaskarvarman and later the Ahom rulers, including Pratap Singha and Rudra Singha, institutionalized silk weaving as a major industry. This patronage included incentivizing skilled artisans, regulating production, and mandating spinning and weaving among communities, which helped stabilize and enhance production quality (Phukan 2012).

Trade in Assam silk was a major source of revenue, with silk fabrics exported by land and river routes to regions such as

China, Tibet, Bhutan, Bengal, and Burma. These trade relations not only brought wealth but also facilitated cultural exchanges, aiding the socio-economic development of Kamrup and its hinterlands (Baruah 2000; Sudeshna 2005).

### **Regional and Cultural Impact**

Beyond economics, Assam silk was a cultural marker symbolizing status and identity within Kamrup and beyond. The fine Muga silk was highly prized, often used in royal garments and diplomatic gifts, further enhancing Kamrup's prestige (Sharma 1978; Preserve Culture 2020). The weaving communities established during this era laid the foundation for generations of artisans, maintaining the craft tradition integral to Assamese culture today.

### **Importance of Assamese pat muga mekhela chador**

Assamese Pat Muga Mekhela Sador plays a deeply symbolic and ceremonial role in weddings, Bihu, and religious events, embodying blessings, tradition, and cultural pride for Assamese women and the community as a whole. It has been playing a vital role among the Assamese women to fascinate themselves with a pair of mekhela-sador. In today's world, modern designs are crafted with great care to match the tastes of customers. This is the era of social media. When someone does a photoshoot using advanced technology and uploads a set of pat silk attire to social media, that design often remains in trend for a while. Yet, the traditional motifs such as kolka, kingkhap, and lata-phool have not faded away; they continue to hold their timeless charm. In contemporary Assamese society, the significance of Pat and Muga silk garments from Sualkuchi

is markedly growing, indicating a positive cultural revival. For individuals deeply connected with Assamese identity and sentiment, the demand for authentic Pat-Muga attire is of paramount importance. The handwoven Chulung shawls, intricately patterned Pat gamochas bearing floral motifs, and the mekhela-chadors crafted by the skilled artisans of Sualkuchi are emblematic treasures of Assamese cultural heritage and pride. In social gatherings and community functions, welcoming guests with a traditional Assamese Pat Chulung is a gesture that stirs collective pride. During religious festivals and pujas, young brides aspire to adorn themselves in newly woven Pat silk from Sualkuchi. The vibrant celebration of Bohag Bihu becomes truly meaningful when women wear the Muga riha and mekhela and perform the Bihu dance. Today, Pat silk attire has become nearly indispensable in Assamese wedding ceremonies. From the bride's gifting ritual (koynar joran) to her transition to the groom's household, multiple sets of Pat silk garments are customary. Relatives such as the bride's mother, maternal aunts, and other kin also anticipate handwoven Pat silk. Moreover, the groom's family traditionally wears Pat silk cheleng sador, dhuti, and kurta. After the wedding, a customary ceremony honors the groom's senior male relatives, where women present Pat silk mekhela-chadors as tokens of respect. However, the escalating market price of Pat silk fabric presents challenges; while affluent families manage with ease, some find it difficult to meet these expectations. The emotional attachment to this fabric makes it hard for those unable to procure sufficient sets, often leading to poignant moments during traditional ceremonies.

Thus, the cultural and emotional importance of Pat-Muga attire to the Assamese community is profound, making the demand for these textiles both heartfelt and enduring.

Understanding the historical role of Assam silk in Kamrup's economy provides insights into the contemporary challenges faced by handloom industries. Preservation of this legacy through supportive economic policies, promotion of authentic silk products, and sustainable development of artisan communities is essential for keeping the tradition and its economic benefits alive (Baruah 2020; Sharma 2019).

### **Modern market challenges for Assam silk**

In contemporary Assamese society, the significance of Pat and Muga silk garments from Sualkuchi is markedly growing, indicating a positive cultural revival. For individuals deeply connected with Assamese identity and sentiment, the demand for authentic Pat-Muga attire is of paramount importance. The handwoven Cheleng shawls, intricately patterned Pat gamochas bearing floral motifs, and the mekhela-chadors crafted by the skilled artisans of Sualkuchi are emblematic treasures of Assamese cultural heritage and pride.

In social gatherings and community functions, welcoming guests with a traditional Assamese Pat Cheleng is a gesture that stirs collective pride. During religious festivals and pujas, young brides aspire to adorn themselves in newly woven Pat silk...

In several villages surrounding Sualkuchi, the production of counterfeit pat fabrics has proliferated in recent years, largely due to the demand for low-cost substitutes. These spurious textiles, priced significantly lower than authentic pat silk, appeal to unsuspecting buyers who are often unable to distinguish

between genuine and synthetic varieties. As a result, the imitations deteriorate rapidly, leading to consumer dissatisfaction and an erosion of confidence in the traditional handloom sector. This situation poses a serious threat to the sustainability of Assam's pat silk weaving, which has long been regarded not only as an economic resource but also as a repository of Assamese cultural identity and heritage (Goswami 2013; Saikia 2017).

The influx of machine-made and short-lived pat-like fabrics, many of which are imported from outside the state, has further destabilized the local market. Unscrupulous traders exploit this influx to maximize profit by misleading buyers, thereby marginalizing weavers and undermining the authenticity of Assamese handloom traditions (Baruah 2020). The result is a handloom industry that struggles to survive, teetering on the edge between cultural resilience and economic precarity. It is therefore imperative for consumers, cultural stakeholders, and policymakers to recognize that the preservation of genuine pat silk weaving must be regarded as a shared responsibility, integral to safeguarding Assamese pride, tradition, and intangible heritage (UNESCO 2003; Sharma 2019).

The modern market challenges for Assam silk include several key issues affecting production, marketing, and sustainability. Despite high demand for Assam silk, especially Muga silk, production has not increased significantly over the years due to factors such as urbanization and shortage of skilled agricultural labor. The industry is largely unorganized, with many small-scale producers lacking systematic marketing knowledge, leading to exploitation by middlemen. Quality

standardization and pricing mechanisms are weak, allowing adulterated or blended silk products to flood the market, which undermines genuine producers.

Climate change poses a serious threat as erratic weather conditions disrupt the lifecycles of Muga silkworms, affecting yield and quality. Additionally, deforestation reduces natural habitats for silkworms. The influx of cheaper synthetic fabrics creates tough competition, making it difficult for traditional handwoven silk products to maintain market share. Limited global marketing and branding efforts restrict Assam silk's presence in international markets, despite its unique qualities and sustainability appeal.

Financial instability among weavers, inadequate government scheme implementation, and lack of modern infrastructure and skill development further hinder growth. However, there are opportunities in expanding product ranges, global collaborations, and tapping into niche markets for eco-friendly, artisanal textiles. Strengthening supply chains, improving production capacity, and promoting Assam silk through modern marketing are key to addressing these challenges.

### **Economic Impact of Assam Silk on the Kamrup Kingdom**

The Kamrup kingdom, located in present-day Assam, was historically an important hub in the ancient silk trade network spanning South and Southeast Asia. Assam silk, particularly renowned varieties such as Muga, Eri, and Pat, was not only a symbol of cultural heritage but also a vital economic resource that enhanced the kingdom's prosperity and regional influence (Goswami 2013; Baruah 2020).

## **Economic Evolution and Trade Networks**

Sualkuchi's silk was integral to Assam's prosperity. Sources document its export through ancient overland and riverine routes connecting Bengal, Tibet, Bhutan, and China. Under the Ahom dynasty, silk became a chief export, with queens personally involved in training Muga weavers and storing luxurious silk costumes for royal gifting.

The Second World War contributed further to Sualkuchi's economic boom, by intensifying weaving and expanding market reach. By the late 20th century, almost every household in Sualkuchi was engaged in silk weaving, indicating the sector's capacity for employment, entrepreneurship, and sustaining local economies.

## **Contemporary Challenges**

Recent scholarship highlights threats to Sualkuchi's handloom sector: the influx of counterfeit Pat-like fabrics, synthetic textiles, and non-local competitive products undermine both cultural authenticity and market share. Weak marketing channels, inadequate government support, and environmental pressures—such as climate change and urbanization—further destabilize artisan livelihoods and production output.

Yet, there is consensus that Sualkuchi's artisanal resilience, ongoing product innovation, and the emotional attachment of Assamese people to Pat-Muga textiles remain crucial for future revival.

## **Conclusion**

Sualkuchi, celebrated as the “Manchester of North-East” and “Silk Heaven of India,” continues to uphold its historical

and economic legacy as Assam's most prominent silk weaving center. Rooted in centuries-old traditions dating back to the Pala dynasty and further nurtured under Ahom royal patronage, Sualkuchi stands as a living testament to the resilience and adaptive spirit of Assamese craftsmanship. The rhythmic sounds of looms echo stories of generations, reminding visitors and locals alike of a thriving heritage shaped by devotion, artistry, and tireless labor.

The Pat Muga Mekhela Chador, meticulously handwoven in Sualkuchi, occupies a central place in Assamese culture. Its ceremonial and ritual significance—in weddings, Bihu festivities, and religious observances—transcends ornamentation, embodying blessings, collective pride, and deep emotional attachment among Assamese women and their families. As contemporary tastes blend with tradition, digital platforms have rejuvenated and broadened the appeal of these textiles, bringing about new opportunities for both design innovation and cultural revival.

Despite its vibrant legacy, Sualkuchi faces modern market challenges: counterfeit fabrics, influx of synthetic materials, and uncertain livelihoods for artisans threaten the sustainability and authenticity of the industry. The preservation of genuine Pat and Muga silk weaving—integral to Assamese identity and intangible heritage—demands committed efforts from policymakers, cultural custodians, and local communities. This is critical to protect not only economic interests but also the enduring emotional and cultural bonds that these fabrics represent.

Historically, Assam silk helped shape the prosperity and

prestige of the Kamrup kingdom and brought global renown to the region's sericulture. Its role as both cultural marker and economic engine persists, powering community livelihoods and regional pride even today. The challenges confronting Sualkuchi—and the broader Assamese silk industry—offer pathways for renewal: supply chain strengthening, ethical production, global branding, and support for artisan welfare.

In sum, the continuum from Sualkuchi's ancient silk traditions to its modern struggles and triumphs illustrates how intangible heritage, artistry, and economic resilience can coexist and reinforce each other. The Pat Muga Mekhela Chador remains at the heart of this narrative—an emotive emblem of Assamese pride, a marker of social history, and a vibrant cultural inheritance cherished by generations. ■

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# Ration Card Policy and its effectiveness in Assam

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## **Introduction:**

Ration cards are authorized documents issued by the government authority for obtaining benefits under Public Distribution System (PDS). Before implementation of National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013, in the state there were three types of Ration Cards which also known as Family Identity Cards (FIC) in Assam. The following three types of ration cards were primarily meant for beneficiaries under PDS/TPDS (Targeted public Distribution system).

- 1 .APL (Above Poverty Lime)
- 2 .BPL (Below Poverty Line)
3. AAY (Antodaya Anna Yojana)

Besides, there was another type of Ration Card issued by the Assam government which was called as MMASY (Mukhya Mantri Anna Suraksha Yojana) card.

With the implementation of NFSA'13 in Assam, there are only two types of ration cards under NFSA' 13

1. AAY card under NFSA'13
2. Priority Household Card under NFSA'13

### **Types of ration cards**

<b>Types of cards</b>	<b>Colour</b>	<b>Income of family per annum</b>	<b>Amount of rice issued per month in kg</b>
AAY	Multicoloured Cover pages	Below Rs. 4 lakhs	35 kg/ card
Priority household	Multi-coloured Cover pages	Below Rs. 4 lakhs	5 kg /per member of the family

The NFSA was implemented in Assam in December 2015. The scheme provides food grains at a subsidized rate to the state's population. The beneficiaries are divided into two categories—

(i) AAY beneficiaries: Receive 35 kg of rice per month per ration card.

(ii) Priority Household beneficiaries: Receive 5 kg of rice per month per family member

NFSA Covers up to 75% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population under these two categories of beneficiaries.

### **Main Aspects of the Ration Card policies**

The National Food Security Act of 2013 led to standardization of ration card types in Assam focusing on AAY and PHH Categories.

\*Assam allows one station one Nation One Ration Card [ONORC] scheme for beneficiaries of ration card holder to access their food grains from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) across the country using their existing ration card with biometric authentication.

\*A state-specific scheme was launched by the Assam government to provide rice to AAY and PHH beneficiaries namely Affordable Nutrition & Nourishment Assistance (ANNA).

### **Positive Impacts of Ration Card**

1. After implementation of NFSA in Assam 2015, it covers a large proportion of state's population and is tried to provide food and nutritional security to the beneficiaries.

2. It provides rice and other essential goods at low prices.

3. The Assam government has made efforts to expand coverage to eligible families. By January 2024, an additional 42 Lakh beneficiaries received ration cards.

4. Assam lastly implemented One Nation One Ration card (ONORC) scheme to allow migrant workers and other beneficiaries to access their food items from any electronic point of sale device-enabled Fair price shop from anywhere in India.

5. After linking of ration cards with Aadhaar and the use of epos machines at FPS have improved transparency and reduced leakage by identifying duplicate ration cards.

6. In Assam ration card holders can access additional government benefits like Ayushman Bharat and Ayushman Assam Healthcare Schemes for free medical treatment, free admission up to P.G. level, home loan, business loan at subsidized rate etc.

7. The state government also provides additional support through its own schemes like the ANNA scheme supplements NFSA benefits.

### **Negative Impacts**

1. Sometimes it becomes very difficult to detect marginalized families. All have general character to take free facilities. In this regard actual needy families may be excluded in receiving their new ration cards.

2. Again some applicants also face too much delays in receiving their new ration cards.

3. Sometime we hear some news about Fair price shop dealers that some beneficiaries are receiving less grain than their entitlement in spite of the technological improvement.

4. Verification shows that huge amount of food grains is illegally sold on the open market instead of reaching beneficiaries which are poor.

5. Digitalization of ration card may exclude individuals without internet access, technical knowledge or necessary documents like Aadhaar, particularly in rural areas. The dependence on biometric authentication can also cause issues if the technology fails.

6. A general complaint is that PDS distributes poor quality food grains

7. A huge wastage of food grains and government income is regularly occurred in this distribution system due to poor storage facilities and transportation particularly in remote areas like Assam; Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh etc. Poor transportation may affect timely distribution of commodities.

### **Important viewpoint**

As we know maximum Assamese people have general habit to survive by free, from this side, question will arise whether the ration card scheme really beneficial to Assam? Most Assamese have the habit of drinking alcohol, taking gutkha which make them lazy in their working habit. Again they have general habit to survive their life buy feed only no more any progressive motive of wealth. In this regard issue of ration card and easy way of gaining basic no needs makes lazy Assamese more lazy, which leads shortage of local daily workers. Shortage of Local daily workers increases wage level as well as price level and it inspired huge amount of migration of Bangladeshi workers. Again excessive migration makes crowded Assam and turbulent Assam.

Moreover, all free scheme contains huge corruption from grass root to top level leads wastage of public wealth and increases disparities.

### **Conclusion**

Atal Bihari Vajpayee has advised us that free will be profitable for nation when it is given only on education and health sector. All other free scheme makes people lazy. So, from his advice and above discussion conclusion may be done that ration card scheme is no more suitable and profitable for Assam. Free scheme should be issued for all types of education and diseases only. ■

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# Importance of Mental Health in Student's Life

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## **Abstract**

Inspite of economically advance country India's happiness ranking is on so pitiable condition to acquire happiness in life every citizen must be mentally healthy. Being a mentally healthy person one must have a realistic goal setting, must free from stress, tension, mental pressure and Physical illness. Students good mental health leads to better academic performance, stronger social connections and a solid foundation for adulthood. Increasing suicide cases among student are now a matter of concern. About 720,000 suicide cases are reported annually. Steps should be taken for mental well being and overall development of the students.

## **Introduction**

About 720,000 suicide are reported annually, that is one death on average every 43 seconds, one of the many disturbing

finding in the latest and most comprehensive analysis published in *The Lancet Public Health*. World Mental Health Day, is observed in every year on 10<sup>th</sup> oct but only some of the countries are acquiring in happiness ranking. Out of the 192 countries India ranks 118<sup>th</sup> out of 147 participating countries. Finland tops the eight consecutive year, 2nd Denmark, 3rd Iceland, 4th Sweden, 5th Netherland. In spite of economically advance country India's happiness ranking is on so pitiable condition. To acquire happiness in life every citizen must be mentally healthy.

Being a mentally healthy person one must be free from stress, tension, mental pressure, physical illness and must have a realistic goal setting with positive thinking.

The theme of World Happiness Day 2025 was 'caring and sharing'. This theme highlighted the importance of nurturing mental health through kindness- generosity and compassion in fostering happiness and building stronger communities by strengthening social connections and supporting one another.

Mental health is a critical but often neglected aspect of Indian schools and colleges, workplace marked by high stress, burnout and significant stigma that prevents students and employees from seeking help due to fear of discrimination and career impact. While India has mental health legislation, lack of awareness and inadequate support systems exacerbates the issue, leading to decreased mental happiness in both students and employees.

Key factors contributing to poor workplace mental health include long hours pressure, bullying and poor work-life balance, requiring a shift towards promoting open dialogue and implementing supportive programmes.

As Mental health is a type of health, we need to concentrate

on that along with our physical health. For this we must eat good food, do exercise, take proper rest. But we always ignore our mental health. Good mental health comes with a good physical health, good thoughts, good habits and with a spiritual mind. Spirituality does not mean worshipping god all the time. It is the on going quest to understand one's place in the world and to find the meaning of life's experiences. It often means as to understand connection of oneself with the other individual and with god. Mentally healthy person always wants to live a better life and let the other to be live in harmony. No one is perfect in this world. Everyday has some drawbacks and limitations in life. Better understanding of acceptance of those limitations brings balance and focus on life. The feeling of interconnectedness of the elements of the earth and universe including both animate and inanimate brings happiness and joy in our lives with over all sense of wellbeing.

**Area of study:**

Maintaining Mental health of the students of school and college going students of Assam.

**Problem:**

Due to poor mental health suicide cases are increasing in schools and colleges.

**Objectives:**

1. Make the student aware of mental health.
2. To empower students to develop will power to be resilient in every situations of life.
3. Create a safe place and talk about mental health in schools and colleges.

4. To understand the ways to manage mental health to make everybody happy.
5. Let the students know remedial measures for keeping mental health well.
6. Yoga should be included in the curriculum and let them know about the benefits of yoga.
7. Be happy with self, creating holistic activity, sharing things/thoughts with others, spreading knowledge with others for healthy living.
8. Broaden mind to forgive the mistakes of others to be happy in life that makes mentally healthy.
9. Prayers, worshiping god, meditate with own thoughts or god make space for immense joy of life or being here on the earth.
10. Overcome conflicts. Logic depends on limited knowledge. Where there is total understanding and no scope for conflict. It brings total integrity and harmonious development.

**Review of related literature:**

My reviewing topic is “A study to assess the knowledge on mental health among high school students in a selected high school of guwahati, Assam” written by— Farmin Rahman.

**From the topic**

“An adjustment of human being to the world and to each other when with a maximum of effectiveness and happiness.”

“Research studies on mental health among high school student are still a new concept and more studies are recommended in this regard. This is particularly important as it

is possible that the knowledge on mental health among high school students on the quality of teaching and learning process and ultimately in the quality of students knowledge.”

Maintaining the mental health of student can be considered one of the primary aims of education because without satisfactory mental health it is impossible to develop the adolescent innate abilities. Students who become victims of fear, anxiety, despair and frustration and problems of adjustment cannot concentrate upon studies and hence they do not make progress in learning.

### **Important terms**

Mental health, suicide, happiness, healthy, disorders, frustration, adjustment, stress, anxiety, despair.

### **Methodology**

A qualitative study has been done by overviewing secondary sources of data like writings, websites and books, newspapers etc.

### **Data Collection**

*Major problems facing by the college students are—*

(a) **Anxiety Disorders (AD)**: Anxiety disorders are the most prevalent psychiatric problems: Excessive worry, panic attacks are some persistent tensions that can disrupt daily life.

(b) **Academic Pressure**: Tough course, completion of the course within a time period, attaining 75% of attendance before examination are the common academic pressures.

(c) **Financial Pressure**: The looming costs of education contribute significantly to student's stress; most of the students belong to BPL community. Sometimes they have to provide

financial support to the family along with their study. Broken home, drunken father tense them a lot. Some students are also indulge in gutkha, pan masala even in drugs for which they are continuously becoming problematic for the college or society.

(d) **Stress:** The pressure of financial support to family, pressure of higher education can lead to chronic stress and affecting mental well-being.

(e) **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) :** Childhood trauma, including physical, emotional or sexual abuse, neglect or household dysfunction is strongly linked to later mental health problems.

(f) **Stressful life events :** Significant stress from events like the death of a love one, divorce, severe financial problems or chronic illness can trigger mental health issues.

(g) **Discrimination and stigma :** Facing prejudice due to one's background can negatively impact mental health. Negative or harsh parenting styles can increase mental health risks.

(h) **Poverty:** Poverty, homelessness, debt and unemployment of parents can create significant stress and increase vulnerability.

(i) **Lack of social support:** Being away from home, friends and familiar communities can lead to feelings of disconnections and loneliness.

(j) **Social Media :** Loneliness and excessive social media use are linked to stress and depression. Non reliable content of social media may mislead students, brings discomfort to the students and chaotic among youths.

(k) **Adjustment to Adolescent :** Adolescent period brings a significant life transition where students need to get involved

in more responsibilities, manage their finances and learn to be independent. Students may often find it difficult to cope up with this situation without prior experiences or maturity.

(l) **Limited Mental health support services** : Lack of proper support from mental health professionals and teachers in schools and colleges are contributing in poor quality care of mental health. Fear of being treated differently or facing discrimination prevents many students from seeking help, leading delayed or avoided treatment. We must develop strategies to integrate mental health services into general healthcare systems fostering a whole of community approach.

(m) **Negligence** : Negligence from both parents and teachers may cause serious mental stress among students of the schools and colleges. Sometimes teachers give preference to good students and don't even listen to the poor (low quality in study). In home also parents take care of the good and smart one and neglect or deprive the dull. This may develops inferiority complex among the slow learner students.

(n) **Rejection in love** : Unable to keep balance between love and study also create stress and conflict among students of the college. Mainly rejection or betrayal in love someimes leads the student to commit suicide. This happens because of the lack of emotional maturity at this stage. They are living in fantasy world of fairy tale stories and belief in happily live ever after. But in real life, struggle, sadness, conflict and problem are the parts of life. If they become capable of understanding the truth, they can handle all the situation in smart way.

(o) **Generation Gap** : Conflict between parents and children in terms of values, ideas and belief is also a cause of

mental illness. So called zen G generation thinks themselves smarter and trendy in relation to their parents.

### **Warning signs and risk factors of mental illness in schools and colleges**

Some mental illness may be hereditary and some are developed by environment and conditions of life. Some warning signs of mental health problems are–

- Appetite changes and disruption of sleep.
- Engaging in risky behaviour (self harm, sexual acting out, disordered eating or other compulsive behaviour).
- Mental distress (tension, insecurity, worries).
- Negative impact on relationship (isolating, arguing etc.)
- Harm others, rude behaviour to others.
- Suicidal thoughts.
- Students separated themselves in the class, stop talking with friends.
- Hyperactivity in students.
- Inattentive
- Impulsivity
- Losing interest in life.
- Fear and Panic.
- Physical symptoms like dizziness, chest pain, nausea, headaches, rapid heart beat rate.

### **Some common mental health disorders in students**

- (a) ADHD– Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- (b) Anxiety Disorder
- (c) Behavioural Problem
- (d) Depression

- (e) Dyslexia (Difficulty in reading) – With proper care and support it can be cured.
- (f) Dyscalculia (Difficulty with numbers and maths) – It can be totally cured with proper care.
- (g) Dysgraphia (Difficulty with physical act of writing words) – Proper care and support can cured this.
- (h) Autism spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- (i) Borderline personality disorders.
- (j) Neuro developmental disorder
- (k) Schizophrenia
- (l) Disruptive behaviour and dissocial disorder.
- (m) OCD – Obsessive Comulsive disorder.
- (n) Phobia – Many more phobias are there.

These types of mental illness are prevalent in classroom situation and in society. Though they are ill, they may not be treated as mad. Sick and illness can be cured by treatment or counselling. Severe illness may not be cured but hospitalization can make their better. Duties of teachers are to identify the mental illness among students. Proper guidance may make their lives better and prevent them from committing suicide.

#### **4. Steps that can be considered for improving mental health of students:**

##### **4.1 External Support**

**4.1 (1) Promote Accessible Services:** Establish confidential on campus counselling centres with qualified professionals.

**(2) Equip Faculty and Staff :** Arrangement of FDP program among faculties helps to recognize and respond to mental challanges and integrate mental health promotion into student's life.

(3) **Reduce Stigma:** Foster a campus culture that encourages open conversation about mental health.

(4) **Utilize Peer Programs :** Implement easily accessible peer counselling programs for students to connect with relatable individual.

(5) **Collaboration with External :** Partner with community organizations to expand available resources and support.

(6) **Offer Accomodation :** Provide reasonable Accomodation such as extended time for exams or coursework for students with mental issues.

#### **4.2 Internal Support: In order to foster a proper mental well being, a student need to follow the activities listed below**

(i) **Physical Health :** Maintain a balanced diet, get regular exercise and ensure sufficient sleep.

(ii) **Mindfulness :** Practice relaxation techniques like deep breathing, yoga or meditation to manage stress.

(iii) **Spending Time with Nature :** Spend time in outdoors for its calming effects.

(iv) **Seek Support:**

(a) **On campus resources:** Utilize the college's confidential counselling services.

(b) **Peer Support:** Join groups or find a peer counsellor to talk about the challanges.

(c) **Crisis Support:** Contact the emergency services like suicide and crisis life line for immediate help in crisis.

(v) **Build Community:** Get involved in campus events and clubs to find a sense of belongingness and meet new people.

- (vi) **Manage Academic Stress** : Prepare well for exam, join study groups and practice self talk.
- (vii) **Holistic approaches** : Adopt a life course approach that incorporates prevention, treatment and recovery within a multisectoral framework including social protection and economic upliftment.

## CONCLUSION

In August 2021 the Assam state Diaster Management Authority (ASDMA) launched a helpline dedicated to provide mental health and psychosocial help to the individuals. Introducing Mentor-Mentee process can help the needy students beyond the study circle. They can gain all the attention from mentor in aspects like psychological or personal problems, social problems. This is one of the best support system for mentally unhealthy students.

Clarity, Connection, Coping, Control and Compassion are helpful framwork for mental health.

To protect mental health of a person, prioritize healthy habits like regular exercise, a balance diet and quality sleep. Nurture social connections by staying in touch with friends and family. Practice self care through hobbies and relaxing activities and set realistic goal. Say no to negative things and masala news that brings chaos. Eating good food and maitaining proper time of eating and sleeping is one of the best rules for keeping oneself mentally healthy. Moreover minimizing digital time and keeping time for own activity and social activities can definitely make a person mentally healthy.

In 2024 AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Science) Guwahati, introduces a program for improving mental health

of students in collaboration with ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) to sensitize the students of every schools and colleges of kamrup district. Certain steps are taken for improving mental health of the students of all institutions belonging to kamrup district. At the initial stage SWT Students' Wellness Team has been formed. In order to guide the needy students with mental problems, Youth Champion Training has been organized in every institution along with the Gatekeeper training for teacher to deal with the mental problems of the students in the institution. ■

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# সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ গল্পত কল্পবিজ্ঞান (‘ওপৰত’ আৰু ‘বাপতি সাহোন’ গল্প দুটিৰ বিশেষ উল্লিখনেৰে)

ড° লতিকা কলিতা

সহকাৰী অধ্যাপক

বামুন্দী মহাবিদ্যালয়, অসমীয়া বিভাগ

**সংক্ষিপ্তসাৰ:** সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহা অসমীয়া গল্প সাহিত্যত বহুদিনলৈ আছিল কুহেলিকাৰ নামাস্তৰ মাথোঁন। তেখেতে ‘বামধেনু’ কাকতে অনুষ্ঠিত কৰা গল্প প্রতিযোগিতাত (১৯৫০) ‘অশান্ত ইলেক্ট্ৰন’ নামৰ গল্পটোৰে প্ৰথম পুৰস্কাৰ লাভ কৰি অসমীয়া গল্পসাহিত্যত এক আলোড়নৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল। অসমীয়া চুটিগল্পৰ ইতিহাসৰ সকলো পৰম্পৰা ভংগ কৰি নতুন ধাৰাৰ সৃষ্টি কৰোঁতা জনৰ প্ৰকৃত পৰিচয় বিচাৰি পাঠক সমাজ বিমূঢ় হৈছিল। তেখেতে পাঠক সমাজক আগেয়ে নোপোৱা চুটিগল্পৰ এক অপৰিচিত স্বাদ দিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছিল।

সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাই গণিত আৰু কল্পবিজ্ঞানৰ সংযোগত ৰচনা কৰা গল্পবোৰ বহুসময়ত পাঠকৰ বাবে বৌদ্ধিক কচৰত যেন লাগিলেও এইবোৰে পাঠকক অনাস্বাদিত সোৱাদৰ যোগান ধৰে। তেখেতৰ কল্পবিজ্ঞানৰ সংযোগত ৰচিত দুটি গল্প হ’ল ‘ওপৰত’ আৰু ‘বাপতি সাহোন’। ‘ওপৰত’ গল্পটোত গল্পকাৰে আদিৰপৰা অন্তলৈ কিছুমান উচ্চস্তৰৰ বৈজ্ঞানিক প্ৰযুক্তিগত কল্পনা অতি বুদ্ধিদীপ্ততাৰে প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে। ইয়াত গল্পকাৰে

আমেৰিকাৰ আই, বি আৰু জাপানৰ মাইনিছৰ যুগ্ম প্ৰচেষ্টাত উত্তৰ হোৱা মস্তিষ্কৰ গ্ৰাহক যন্ত্ৰৰ সহায়ত ৰোগীৰ মস্তিষ্কৰ নিৰ্গত হোৱা তৰংগবোৰ ধৰা পেলাই চিকিৎসা কৰাৰ কল্পনাই ঠাই পাইছে।

‘বাপতি সাহোন’ গল্পটোত অসমৰ ভোগালী বিহুৰ মেজিবোৰক বৈজ্ঞানিক পদ্ধতিৰে আধুনিকীকৰণৰ সপোন দেখিছে। গৱেষণা পত্ৰখনত ‘ওপৰত’ আৰু ‘বাপতি সাহোন’ গল্প দুটাৰ সহায়ত সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাই প্ৰযুক্তিগত জ্ঞানেৰে কিদৰে মানুহৰ নতুন জীৱনদানৰ কল্পনা কৰিছিল সেইবিষয়ে আলোচনা কৰাৰ চেষ্টা কৰা হ’ব। গল্প দুটাত গল্পকাৰৰ জাতিপ্ৰেম আৰু মানৱপ্ৰেম কিদৰে প্ৰকট হৈছে সেই দিশটোও সামৰি লোৱাৰ চেষ্টা কৰা হ’ব।

‘ওপৰত’ আৰু ‘বাপতি সাহোন’ গল্প দুটাত কল্পবিজ্ঞানৰ প্ৰকাশৰ বিষয়ে বিশ্লেষণ কৰিবলৈ হ’লে কল্পবিজ্ঞানৰ সম্যক ধাৰণা থকাতো প্ৰয়োজন। সেয়েহে কল্পবিজ্ঞানৰ বিষয়ে খুলমূলকৈ ধাৰণা এটা গৱেষণা পত্ৰখনত দিয়াৰ চেষ্টা কৰা হ’ব।

**বীজ শব্দ :** মস্তিষ্ক, তৰঙ্গ, গ্ৰাহক যন্ত্ৰ, এলুমিনিয়ামৰ পৰ্দা, উপগ্ৰহ, বায়ুমণ্ডল, বিকীৰণ, কল্পবিজ্ঞান, প্ৰযুক্তিগত, বুদ্ধিদীপ্ত, কাৰিকৰী, কল্যাণ, মাইনিছ-আই-বি-এম, শ্বেৱাইৎচাৰ, বাপতি-সাহোন।

**প্ৰস্তাৱনা :** সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ প্ৰৱেশ ঘটিছিল ‘ৰামধেনু’ৰ পাতত। কিন্তু তেওঁৰ প্ৰতিভাৰ সম্পূৰ্ণ বিকাশ হৈছিল উত্তৰ ৰামধেনু যুগত। তেওঁৰ নতুন বিষয়বস্তু, নতুন আংগিকে অসমীয়া চুটিগল্প সাহিত্যত এক আলোড়নৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল। তেওঁৰ অপৰিসীম প্ৰতিভাৰ বিষয়ে ক’বলৈ গৈ নগেন শইকীয়াই কৈছে— “নগৰ জীৱনৰ এক দ্ৰুত পৰিৱৰ্তিত পটভূমিৰ বিষয়বস্তুৰ নিৰ্বাচন, প্ৰকাশভংগীৰ অভিনৱত্ব আৰু যন্ত্ৰনিৰ্ভৰ আধুনিক জীৱনৰ মানসিক অৱস্থাৰ চিত্ৰণেৰে সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাই আধুনিক অসমীয়া গল্পক এটা অভূতপূৰ্ব মাত্ৰা দান কৰে।...”

সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ অধিকসংখ্যক গল্প আধুনিক মানুহৰ মনৰ অন্বেষণৰ পটভূমিত ৰচিত। তেওঁ বৌদ্ধিক স্পৃহা আৰু প্ৰকাশভংগীৰ বুদ্ধিমত্তাৰে পাঠকৰ সন্মুখত অন্য এখন আধুনিক জগত মুকলি কৰি দিছে। ‘ওপৰত’ আৰু ‘বাপতি-সাহোন’ গল্প দুটিত চলিহাই নিজৰ কল্পনা শক্তিৰে পাঠকক লৈ যায় প্ৰযুক্তিবিদ্যাৰে উন্নীত হোৱা অত্যাধুনিক হৈ উঠা দুখন সমাজৰ মাজলৈ।

**গৱেষণা পদ্ধতি:** ‘সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ গল্পত কল্পবিজ্ঞান (‘ওপৰত’ আৰু ‘বাপতি-সাহোন’ গল্প দুটিৰ বিশেষ উল্লিখনেৰে)’ নামৰ গৱেষণা পত্ৰখনৰ কাৰ্য আগবঢ়াই নিওঁতে বিশ্লেষণাত্মক পদ্ধতিৰ সহায় লোৱা হৈছে। এই পদ্ধতিৰে গৱেষণা কাৰ্য আগবঢ়াই নিওঁতে মুখ্যসমল আৰু গৌণ সমলৰ সহায় লোৱা হৈছে।

**অধ্যয়নৰ লক্ষ্য আৰু উদ্দেশ্য:** সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ গল্পত নতুন দৃষ্টিভংগী, নতুন বিষয়বস্তুৰ প্ৰকাশ ঘটা দেখা যায়। সেই গল্পসমূহ পাঠকৰ মাজলৈ নিবলৈ হ’লে গল্পসমূহৰ বিশ্লেষণ হোৱাতো প্ৰয়োজন। এই উদ্দেশ্যেৰে গৱেষণা পত্ৰখন আগবঢ়াই নিবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰা হৈছে।

‘ওপৰত’ আৰু ‘বাপতি-সাহোন’ গল্প দুটিত সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাক মানৱ কল্যাণকামী বৈজ্ঞানিক হিচাপে পাঠকে লগ পায়। ইয়াৰ সমান্তৰালভাৱে সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ জাতিপ্ৰেমীৰ পৰিচয়টোও লাভ কৰিব পাৰি। এই সকলোবোৰ দিশ গৱেষণা পত্ৰখনত সামৰি ল’বলৈ চেষ্টা কৰা হ’ব।

### সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ পৰিচয় আৰু সাহিত্যকৃতি:

সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ প্ৰকৃত পৰিচয় বিচাৰি এটা সময়ত পাঠকসকল কিংকৰ্তব্যবিমূঢ় হৈছিল। মৃত্যুৰ লগে লগে তেখেতৰ জীৱনৰ আঁৰ-কাপোৰো আঁতৰি গ’ল। সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহা আৰু সুৰেন্দ্ৰনাথ মেধি যে একেজন ব্যক্তি সেয়া পৰিষ্কাৰ হৈ পৰিল। সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাক তেখেতৰ বয়সৰ কথা সুধিলে উত্তৰ দিছিল “থাটি থী” নেকি মনত নাই। হ’লেও ১৯৩৩ চনেই তেখেতৰ জন্মদিন হিচাপে মানি লোৱা হৈছে। তেখেতৰ জন্মস্থান সম্পৰ্কে নিশ্চিত তথ্য নাই যদিও বিভিন্ন সূত্ৰৰপৰা জনা গৈছে দৰঙ জিলাৰ মঙলদৈ তেখেতৰ জন্ম ঠাই। শৈশৱ, কৈশোৰ আৰু যৌৱনৰ আৰম্ভণিৰ সময়ছোৱা কটাইছিল গুৱাহাটীৰ পাণবজাৰত। পিতৃ আছিল প্ৰাক-স্বাধীনতাকালৰ অসমৰ এগৰাকী সুদক্ষ অসামৰিক বিষয়া, ভাষাবিদ আৰু সাহিত্যিক কালিৰাম মেধি (১৮৭৮-১৯৫৪)। মাতৃ আছিল স্বৰ্ণলতা মেধি।

সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহা নামৰ প্ৰথিতযশা সাহিত্যিকজনৰ পোছাকী নামৰ আঁৰত লুকাই থকা সুৰেন্দ্ৰ নাথ মেধি গুৱাহাটী অভিযান্ত্ৰিক মহাবিদ্যালয়ৰ পদাৰ্থ বিজ্ঞানৰ অধ্যাপক আছিল। ছেইণ্ট মেৰিজ কনভেণ্টত শিক্ষা জীৱনৰ পাতনি মেলিছিল যদিও

পিছলৈ তেওঁ নামভৰ্তি কৰিছিল কটন কলেজিয়েট স্কুলত। তাত পঢ়ি থকা অৱস্থাতে নিপ বৰুৱাই উলিওৱা হাতে লিখা আলোচনী 'অঞ্জলি'ত হাজোৰ হয়থীৰমাধৰ মন্দিৰ চাই লিখা ভ্ৰমণ কাহিনী প্ৰকাশ পাইছিল। কটন কলেজিয়েটৰ বছৰেকীয়া আলোচনী 'প্ৰগতি'ত আন এটা ভ্ৰমণ কাহিনী 'কলিকতাত এভুমুকি' প্ৰকাশ পাইছিল। এইকেইটা লিখনিত তেওঁ নিজৰ প্ৰকৃত নাম ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছিল।

১৯৪৪ চনত ডা° দীননাথ শৰ্মাৰ দ্বাৰা সম্পাদিত কলিকতাৰ পৰা প্ৰকাশিত 'পাৰিজাত' নামৰ আলোচনীখনৰ দ্বিতীয় বছৰৰ তৃতীয় সংখ্যাত পোনপ্ৰথমবাৰৰ বাবে সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ নামত 'পাঞ্জাৰ সীমান্তত সহযাত্ৰী' গল্পটো প্ৰকাশ পাইছিল। ১৯৪৫ চনত 'জয়ন্তী' আলোচনীত মাক্সবাদী গল্প 'বিজ্ঞান, দীনবাবু, আৰু তিনিলাখ বনুৱা' প্ৰকাশ পায় এইবিষয়ে তেওঁ 'গল্প নহয়' সংকলনখনত লিখিছে— "একেবাৰে তামাম মাক্সবাদী গল্প, বিপ্লৱ কৰি দিলে চব ঠিক হৈ যাব, এই বকম বস্তু— এই মাক্সবাদৰ ভূতটো বোধহয় ডেকা বয়সত সকলোৰে কান্ধ চাপে, কিন্তু ভাগ্যক্ৰমে এইটো চিন্দবাদৰ কান্ধত উঠা বুঢ়াটোৰ দৰে নাছোড়বান্দা নহয়, কিছুদিন পিছতে ঘামি জ্বৰে এৰে।"<sup>২</sup>

কটন কলেজৰ স্নাতক শাখাত পঢ়ি থকা অৱস্থাত সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহা বাঁওপহী আন্দোলনৰ সৈতে জড়িত হৈ পৰে। ভাৰতীয় বিপ্লৱী সাম্যবাদী পাৰ্টীৰ লগত জড়িত থকাৰ অপৰাধত ১৯৫০ চনত তেওঁ গ্ৰেপ্তাৰ বৰণ কৰিবলগীয়া হয়। জেলৰ পৰাই পৰীক্ষা দি পদাৰ্থবিজ্ঞানত অনাৰ্চসহ বি,এছ,চি পৰীক্ষাত উত্তীৰ্ণ হয়। ইয়াৰ পিছতে পৰিয়ালে তেওঁক উচ্চশিক্ষাৰ বাবে লণ্ডনলৈ পঠিয়ায়। ১৯৫৭ চনত লণ্ডন বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ৰপৰা এম. এছ. চি. ডিগ্ৰী লাভ কৰে। ইয়াৰ পিছত তেওঁ জাৰ্মানীৰ ভিতৰুৱা ঠাই গ্যাটিংগেনৰ এখন স্কুলত শিক্ষকতাৰে নিজৰ নতুন জীৱন আৰম্ভ কৰে। পৰৱৰ্তী সময়ত লণ্ডন আৰু জাৰ্মানীৰ ভালেমান শিক্ষানুষ্ঠানত শিক্ষকতা কৰে।

১৯৬০ চনত সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাই গুৱাহাটীলৈ প্ৰত্যাবৰ্তন কৰে আৰু অসম ইঞ্জিনিয়াৰিং কলেজত পদাৰ্থবিজ্ঞানৰ প্ৰবক্তা হিচাপে যোগদান কৰে। ১৯৮৮ চনত এই কলেজৰপৰাই পদাৰ্থবিজ্ঞানৰ মুৰব্বী অধ্যাপকৰূপে স্বেচ্ছাই অৱসৰ গ্ৰহণ কৰে। ১৯৯০ চনত ইঞ্জিনিয়াৰিং কলেজৰ 'লাইফ টাইম এছ'চিয়েট' সন্মান লাভ কৰে। গল্পৰ জৰিয়তে আধুনিক মানুহৰ অস্থিৰতা চেতন-অৱচেতন মনৰ দ্বন্দ্ব আৰু বহুমাত্ৰিক চৰিত্ৰৰ উন্মোচন কৰা এই বিৰল ব্যক্তিজনৰ মৃত্যু হয় ২০১১ চনৰ ২৫ জুনত।

**সাহিত্যকৃতি:**

সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ গল্পপুথিসমূহ:

- (১) অশান্ত হিলেক্টন (১৯৬২)
- (২) দুপৰীয়া আৰু অন্যান্য গল্প (১৯৬৩)
- (৩) এহাত ডাবা (১৯৭২)
- (৪) গোলাম (১৯৭৪)
- (৫) আজি শুক্ৰবাৰ (অনূদিত গল্প সংকলন, ১৯৯২)
- (৬) সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ স্বনিৰ্বাচিত সংকলন (১৯৯৪)
- (৭) সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ স্বনিৰ্বাচিত গল্প (১৯৯৮)
- (৮) কবি (২০০১)
- (৯) ছয় দশকৰ গল্প (২০০১)
- (১০) জন্মদিন আৰু অন্যান্য গল্প (২০০৫)
- (১১) জোনবিৰি (২০০৬)
- (১২) নৱজন্ম (২০০৮)

**ৰচনা সংকলন:**

- (১) গল্প নহয় (১৯৮৮)
- (২) ভাল খবৰ (১৯৯৮)
- (৩) ৰচনা সমগ্ৰ (১৯৯৯)
- (৪) একেশ শতিকা ধেমালি নহয় আৰু অন্যান্য ৰচনা (২০০৪)
- (৫) দ্ৰোণ আৰু গ্যেটে আৰু অন্যান্য ৰচনা (২০০৭)

**নাটক:**

অৱৰুদ্ধ চহৰ (১৯৯৪)

**অনুবাদ গ্ৰন্থ:**

- ডক্টৰ জেকিল আৰু মিষ্টাৰ হাইড (১৯৯৯)
- আশী দিনত পৃথিৱী পৰিভ্ৰমণ (২০০১)
- বিজ্ঞানভিত্তিক গ্ৰন্থ (সুৰেন্দ্ৰনাথ মেধিৰ নামত)

- (১) তৰঙ্গ জগত (দ্বিতীয় প্ৰকাশ ১৯৮৩)
- (২) মহাকাশত প্ৰাণীৰ সন্ধান (১৯৯৪)
- (৩) চিন্তাৰ বেগ কিমান (১৯৯৩)

### কল্পবিজ্ঞান:

কল্পবিজ্ঞানৰ বীজটো বিচাৰি চালে প্ৰাচীন সাহিত্য আৰু শিল্পকৰ্মৰ মাজলৈ উভতি গ'লেই বিচাৰি পোৱা যায়। অতীতৰ বিভিন্ন ভৌতিক কাহিনী, ফেণ্টাচি অথবা অতিমানৱীয় চৰিত্ৰৰ অলৌকিক ক্ৰিয়া-কাণ্ডত কল্পবিজ্ঞানৰ ধাৰণা একোটা অন্তৰ্নিহিত হৈ আছে।

সৰলভাৱে ক'বলৈ হ'লে কল্পবিজ্ঞান হ'ল সাহিত্য আৰু শিল্পকৰ্মত কাল্পনিক বিজ্ঞান, বিজ্ঞান আৰু প্ৰযুক্তিবিদ্যাৰ অভাৱনীয় সফলতা, মহাকাশ ভ্ৰমণ, এই বিশ্বৰ সমান্তৰাল অন্য মহাবিশ্বৰ অন্বেষণ অথবা অন্য গ্ৰহৰ প্ৰাণী সম্পৰ্কে ধাৰণা একোটা সৃষ্টি কৰি লৈ হোৱা সাহিত্য কৰ্ম। কল্পবিজ্ঞানত বাস্তৱৰ পৰা কিছুদূৰত অৱস্থান কৰি বিজ্ঞান আৰু কাল্পনিক মিশ্ৰণত বিশ্বাসযোগ্য বৈজ্ঞানিক উপাদান প্ৰয়োগ কৰি এখন কাল্পনিক জগত নিৰ্মাণ কৰা হয়। কল্পবিজ্ঞান সম্পৰ্কে অধ্যয়ন কৰিলে ইয়াৰ কিছুমান লক্ষণ দৃষ্টিগোচৰ হয়।

(১) প্ৰতিভাশালী লোক এজনে নিজৰ সৃষ্টিশীল কল্পনাৰ জৰিয়তে উন্নত প্ৰযুক্তিবিদ্যা উদ্ভাৱন কৰি সাহিত্য নিৰ্মাণ কৰে।

(২) কল্পবিজ্ঞানত অৱশ্যেই বৈজ্ঞানিক ধাৰণা সন্নিৱিষ্ট থাকিব লাগিব। সেইকাৰণে কল্পবিজ্ঞানক বহুতে 'ধাৰণাৰ সাহিত্য' বুলিও ক'ব বিচাৰে।

(৩) ৰাতিৰ আকাশখন নিৰীক্ষণ কৰিলে দেখা যায় হেজাৰ হেজাৰ গ্ৰহ-নক্ষত্ৰৰ অৱস্থিতি। মানুহৰ দৃষ্টিৰ অগোচৰেও ৰৈ যায় অগণন গ্ৰহ-নক্ষত্ৰ। সেয়েহে বহুজনে সন্দেহ কৰে পৃথিৱীৰ বাহিৰেও বৰ্তমানৰ বিজ্ঞানে চুকি নোপোৱা অন্য কোনো গ্ৰহত মানুহতকৈও বুদ্ধিমান জীৱ আছে। কল্পবিজ্ঞানত এনে জীৱৰ অস্তিত্বৰ সম্ভাৱনাৰ লগতে মহাকাশ ভ্ৰমণৰ কথা উত্থাপন কৰা হয়।

(৪) বিজ্ঞান আৰু প্ৰযুক্তিবিদ্যাৰ অভাৱনীয় সাফল্যই মানৱ সভ্যতাক কিমান উন্নত কৰিব পাৰে সেই দিশটো প্ৰকাশ কৰাতো কল্পবিজ্ঞানে গুৰুত্ব দিয়ে।

সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ গল্পত কল্পবিজ্ঞানৰ প্ৰয়োগৰ বিষয়ে পৰিচ্ছন্ন বিশ্লেষণ বাবে কল্পবিজ্ঞান সম্পৰ্কে চমুকৈ আলোচনা কৰা হ'ল।

### ‘ওপৰত’ আৰু ‘বাপতি সাহোন’ গল্প দুটাৰ বিষয়বস্তু:

‘ওপৰত’ গল্পটোত গল্পকাৰে আদিৰপৰা অন্তলৈ কিছুমান উচ্চস্তৰৰ কল্পনা বুদ্ধিদ্বীপুতাৰে আগুৱাই লৈ গৈছে। হয়তো তেওঁ মানুহৰ বুদ্ধিৰ বিকাশ গল্পটোত উল্লেখ থকাৰ দৰে ওপৰৰ স্তৰলৈ যোৱাটো কল্পনা কৰিছে।

পৃথিৱীৰপৰা বহুত ওপৰত কৃত্ৰিম উপগ্ৰহত মাধ্যাকৰ্ষণ শক্তিৰ জৰিয়তে অচেতন, স্মৃতিভ্ৰংশ ব্যক্তি এজনৰ চিকিৎসাৰ কথা উল্লেখ কৰিছে। আমেৰিকাৰ আই, বি আৰু জাপানৰ মাইনিছৰ যুগ্ম প্ৰচেষ্টাত উদ্ভৱ হোৱা মস্তিষ্কৰ গ্ৰাহক যন্ত্ৰৰ সহায়ত ৰোগীজনৰ মস্তিষ্কৰ পৰা নিৰ্গত তৰংগবোৰ যন্ত্ৰটোত ধৰা পৰিছে। যন্ত্ৰটোত পৃথিৱীৰ দৃশ্যপটসমূহ মানুহজনৰ মগজুৰ পৰা এটা এটাকৈ ভাহি উঠিছে। ৰোগীৰ মস্তিষ্কৰ তৰংগবোৰ যন্ত্ৰটোত লিপিবদ্ধ হৈছে, কিন্তু হেৰ’ প্ৰফেচৰে ইয়াৰ কোনো অৰ্থ উদ্ঘাটন কৰিব পৰা নাই। ৰোগীজনক উন্নত চিকিৎসাৰ বাবে শুক্ৰগামী এম্বুলেঞ্চখনত ৰোগীক একেবাৰে মধ্যাকৰ্ষণ শক্তিৰ বাহিৰৰ হাস্পতাল শ্বোৱাইৎচাৰলৈ লৈ যাব তাতেই বিশেষজ্ঞৰ দলে ৰোগীজনক ভালদৰে নিৰীক্ষণ কৰিব। সেইসময়ত পৃথিৱীৰ পৰা কৃত্ৰিম উপগ্ৰহলৈ যোৱা যানত জ্যেষ্ঠ চিকিৎসক প্ৰফেচৰ হেৰ’ অতি আগহেৰে বাট চাই থকা বাখ্ সংগীতৰ স্পুলটো আহিছে। কিছুসময়ৰ পিছতে শ্বোৱাইৎচাৰলৈ নিবলৈ ওলোৱা ৰোগীজনৰ সৈতে বাখৰ সেই স্পুলটো দি পঠাবলৈ জ্যেষ্ঠ চিকিৎসকজনে দি পঠাবলৈ ঠিৰাং কৰিছে। এই কথাখিনিয়ে হেৰ’ প্ৰফেচাৰৰ জীৱনৰ প্ৰতি অনুৰাগ নে বিৰাগৰ ভাব প্ৰকট কৰিছে সেই বিষয়ে পাঠকৰ মনত প্ৰশ্নৰ উদ্ৰেক হয়। পাঠকে লগতে ভাবিব পাৰে মুমূৰ্বু ৰোগীজনৰ জীৱনৰ প্ৰতি প্ৰেম জগাই তোলাই হেৰ’ প্ৰফেচাৰৰ উদ্দেশ্য। গল্পটোত পৃথিৱীৰ অশেষ দুখ-কষ্টৰ মাজতো বাখৰ দৰে স্বৰ্গীয় সংগীতে মানুহৰ দুখ-কষ্ট পাহৰাই ৰখাৰ ইংগিত দিছে।

সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহা অসমীয়া জাতিৰ আত্মনিয়ন্ত্ৰণৰ সপক্ষে আছিল। তেওঁৰ কিছুমান গল্পত ইয়াৰ প্ৰকাশ ঘটা দেখা যায়। ‘বাপতি সাহোন’ গল্পটোত সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাই অসমক লৈ দেখা এনে সপোনৰ কথা পাঠক সমাজে উপলব্ধি কৰে।

সপোনৰ অন্তত যেতিয়া বাস্তৱত উপস্থিত হোৱা যায় তেতিয়া অসমীয়া সমাজৰ দুৰাৱস্থাই হতাশ কৰে।

‘বাপতি সাহোন’ গল্পটোত চলিহাই সপোন দেখিছে মাঘ বিহুত সমবায়ে প্ৰতিঘৰ অসমীয়া মানুহৰ তাত মাছ, চাউল, অসমীয়া পিঠা-পনা যোগান ধৰিছে। আধুনিক প্ৰযুক্তিবিদ্যাৰে সজা হৈছে বিভিন্ন প্ৰকাৰৰ মেজি। অসমীয়া মানুহে নিজৰ পছন্দমতে সেইবোৰ ক্ৰয় কৰিছে। সমবায়ৰ এনে পদক্ষেপৰ ফলত ডাঙৰ ডাঙৰ কোম্পানী আৰু মাল্টিনেশ্বনেল কৰ্পৰেশ্যনৰ এক্সপ্লয়টেশ্যনে বুঢ়া আঙুলি কামুৰি ৰৈ আছে। হিন্দু-মুছলমান সকলোৱে একেলগে বিহু পালন কৰিছে। বিদেশীয়ে অসমৰ মাটি দখল কৰিবপৰা নাই। কাৰণ অসমীয়া কৰ্মঠ ডেকাই খালী মাটিত শাক-পাচলি ৰুই সকলোবোৰ উভৈনদী কৰিছে। ফলত লাভখোৰ বেপাৰীয়ে ওঁঠ চেলেকি আছে। আনৰ পৰা দান-বৰঙণি তুলি অসমীয়া ডেকাই বিহু নাপাতে। তেওঁলোকে শ্ৰমৰ মোল বুজি পায়। থলুৱা পদ্ধতিৰে কাঠ, বাঁহ, বেতেৰে মানুহবোৰে ঘৰ সাজিছে, জেওৰা দিছে, গেট সাজিছে। ফলত চিমেণ্টৰ ক’লা বেপাৰীসকল বিপাণ্ডত পৰিছে। আনৰ জেওৰা ভাঙি, লেটাৰ বক্স ভাঙি অসমীয়া ডেকাই মেজি নুপুৱায়, বৰঞ্চ দুখুনী বিধৱাৰ ভাঙি যোৱা গে’টখন ভালদৰে সজাই দি থৈ আহে। পিছ মূহূৰ্ততে গল্পকাৰ বাস্তৱলৈ উভতি আহে। অসমীয়া নৱপ্ৰজন্মই ৰ’ক, প’প হিন্দী গীতেৰে পৰিবেশ উত্তাল কৰি ৰাতিপুৱালৈ উৰুকাৰ ভোজ পাতিছে, দাবী, ধমকিৰে আনৰ কষ্টোপাৰ্জিত ধন আদায় কৰিছে। জেওৰা, গেট, লেটাৰ বক্স জুইত জাপিছে। অসহায় বিধৱা নাৰীগৰাকীৰ জেওৰাখনো বাদ পৰা নাই। লেটাৰ বক্সত থকা কাৰোবাৰ দৰকাৰী চিঠি, তিনিহেজাৰ টকাৰ চেকখনো মেজিত জাহ গৈছে। গল্পটোত গল্পকাৰৰ অসমীয়া জাতিক লৈ দেখা সপোনৰ নিৰ্মোহ প্ৰকাশ দেখা যায়। গল্পটোৰ জৰিয়তে অসমীয়া জাতিৰ শুভচিন্তুক এজনক পাঠকে লগ পায়।

### মূল বিষয়ত প্ৰবেশ:

অপূৰ্ব শৰ্মাই ‘ওপৰত’ গল্পটোৰ বিষয়ে কৈছে— “...মিউজিক কোৱা, ছায়েন্স কোৱা, টেকন’লজীৰ কথা কোৱা, গল্পটোত কোনটো বস্তুৰ ওপৰত দখল নাই? ক’তো অকণমান দুৰ্বল বিন্দু এটাও নাই। আটাইতকৈ গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ কথাটো হ’ল যে বিষয়বস্তুৰ যিটো ঘনত্ব,মই যিটো কৈছোঁ যে মানুহৰ প্ৰজ্ঞা আৰু প্ৰযুক্তিৰ চৰম উৎকৰ্ষৰ সময়ত

মনৱীয় সত্তাৰ মহত্ব, আন এক বিপন্ন মানৱীয় সত্তাৰ প্ৰতি যি সঁহাৰি, তেওঁ এনেধৰণে আত্মীয়তা অনুভৱ কৰিলে যিটো খুব ছাটলী অনুচ্চাৰিতভাৱে আহিছে।”<sup>৩</sup>

‘ওপৰত’ গল্পটোত সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাই কল্পনাৰে চিকিৎসা বিজ্ঞানৰ যি নতুন কৌশলৰ আৱিষ্কাৰ কৰিছে সেয়া সঁচাকৈয়ে অভূতপূৰ্ব। কৃত্ৰিম উপগ্ৰহত ক’মাত থকা মানুহ এজনৰ চিকিৎসাৰ যি প্ৰক্ৰিয়া চলিহাদেৱে বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে সেই কৌশলে পাঠকক চমৎকৃত কৰাৰ লগতে আলোড়িতও কৰিছে। ইমান ওপৰত চিকিৎসা কৰাৰ কাৰণে চলিহাদেৱে ব্যাখ্যা কৰিছে। তেওঁৰ মতে— “সেইটো ইমান ওখত কৰিবলগীয়া অৱশ্যে এই কাৰণেই যে ওপৰৰ এই পাতল মধ্যাকৰ্ষণ আৰু বায়ুচাপ হৃদৰোগৰ চিকিৎসাৰ কাৰণে আশাজনক। তাৰোপৰি, বায়ুমণ্ডলৰ বাহিৰত আছে বিভিন্ন বিকীৰণৰ কল্যাণ।...”<sup>৪</sup>

এই কাৰণ ব্যাখ্যা সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ গভীৰ অধ্যয়নৰ ফচল। গল্পটোৰ মূল চৰিত্ৰ প্ৰফেচাৰ হে’ৰিয়ে অহৰহ চেষ্টা কৰিছে সংজ্ঞাহীন ৰোগীজনৰ মস্তিষ্ক তৰংগৰ মাজেৰে পাৰ হৈ যোৱা বিচিত্ৰ প্ৰতিচ্ছবিসমূহৰ অৰ্থ উদ্ঘাটন কৰিবলৈ, কিন্তু তেওঁ বাৰে বাৰে ব্যৰ্থ হৈছে। ইয়াৰপিছত গল্পকাৰে ৰোগীক উন্নত চিকিৎসাৰ বাবে আন এখন কল্পবিজ্ঞানৰ জগতলৈ নিয়াৰ যো-জা কৰাৰ কথা উল্লেখ কৰিছে— ‘চন্দ্ৰত প্ৰজ্জ্বালক বজাই কৰি শুক্ৰগামী এম্বুলেন্স’খন আহিব আৰু ৰোগীক একেবাৰে মধ্যাকৰ্ষণ ক্ষেত্ৰৰ বাহিৰৰ আন্তৰ্গ্ৰহ আস্পতালৰ শ্বোৱাইবচাৰলৈ লৈ যাব, য’ত বিশেষজ্ঞসকল আছে।...”<sup>৫</sup>

‘ওপৰত’ গল্পটোত গল্পকাৰৰ কল্পবিজ্ঞানৰ জৰিয়তে মানৱ কল্যাণৰ স্পৃহা প্ৰকট হৈ পৰিছে।

‘বাপতি সহোন গল্পটোত কল্পবিজ্ঞানৰ প্ৰকাশ ঘটিছে। অসমীয়া জাতিৰ দোপতদোপে উন্নতি হোৱাৰ সপোন দেখা সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাই মেজিৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো অসমীয়াই নতুনত্ব অনাৰ সপোন দেখিছে। আনৰ বয়বস্ত্ৰ ক্ষয় নকৰি অসমীয়া লোকসকলে বিজ্ঞান-প্ৰযুক্তিৰে মেজি তৈয়াৰ কৰিছে আৰু এইবোৰ বজাৰত বিক্ৰীৰ বাবে উলিয়াই দিছে। ইয়াৰ বাবে মেজিৰ কেটেল’গ্ তৈয়াৰ কৰা হৈছে। কেটেল’গত থকা বিভিন্ন মেজিসমূহ হ’ল মিনি চাইজ, মিডি চাইজ, কিং চাইজ আপাৰ আসাম টাইপ, কামৰূপী টাইপ ইত্যাদি। মেজি তৈয়াৰ কৰাৰ পদ্ধতি চলিহাই যিদৰে প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে, সেইদৰে এক উচ্চ স্তৰৰ বৈজ্ঞানিকেহে কল্পনা কৰিব পাৰে। তেওঁ গল্পটোত লিখিছে— “এইটো— আপোনাৰ— ইক’নমি মডেল, কিন্তু কম্পেক্ট, কলাপ্চিবল্,

এণ্ড ফুল্লী অটোমেটিক— তলৰ এই ষ্টাৰ্ট ছুইচটো টিপিলে বাকচটো খোল খায় আৰু স্প্ৰিং একশ্যানেৰে ভিতৰৰপৰা গোটা খেৰৰ মেজিৰ দৰে ষ্ট্ৰাক্‌চাৰ ওপৰলৈ উঠি যায়, বাকচৰ তলিৰ পৰা ৮০ চেণ্টিমিটাৰ ওখ; এইবোৰ খেৰ অৱশ্যেই বিশেষভাৱে প্ৰস্তুত আঁহ আৰু তন্ত্ৰ, তাৰপিছত ‘ইগনাইট’ বুটামটো টিপিলে এটা পিজ’—ইলেক্ট্ৰনিক ছুইচে ক্ৰিষ্টেল এটুকুৰাৰ ওপৰত চাপ পৰি সৃষ্টি হোৱা ভল্টেজ— এটা পেৰাফিন-বে’নজিন ডিৰাইটিভ মিক্‌চাৰ প্ৰজ্জ্বলিত কৰে।”<sup>৬</sup>

এনে প্ৰক্ৰিয়াৰ মাজেৰে সৃষ্টি হোৱা মেজিটো ৩৫মিনিট জুৰি আঁহবোৰ পুৰি নিয়ে আৰু এইবোৰ জুইৰ দৰে দেখি। সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাই ইমানলৈকে কল্পনা কৰিছিল যে ইগ্নিশ্যন ছুইচৰ কাষত উছৰ্গা বুলি আন এটা বুটাম থাকিব। সেইটো টিপিলে সৰু খুপৰি এটা খোলা যাব আৰু ভিতৰৰ পৰা সৰু প্লাষ্টিকৰ পেকেটৰপৰা তামোল-পাণ, তিলপিঠা, নাৰিকলৰ লাডু, তিলৰ লাডু, ধূপকাঠি আদি মেজি জ্বলাওতে প্ৰয়োজন হোৱা বস্তুবোৰ ওলাই আহিব। এইবোৰৰ উপৰিও মেজি জ্বলাওতে অডিঅ’ ইউনিটৰ জৰিয়তে বাঁহৰ গাঁঠি ফুটাওতে হোৱা ধম্ ধম্ শব্দ হ’ব। মেজিত থকা প্ৰি-ৰেকৰ্ডেড টেপৰ ফিটাৰপৰা উৰুলি, জয় ৰাম বোলা জয় হৰি বোলা ধ্বনি বাজি উঠিব। এইদৰে গল্পকাৰে যিদৰে এটা বিজ্ঞানসন্মতভাৱে মেজি নিৰ্মাণ কৰাৰ বৰ্ণনা দিছে সিয়ে সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ অনাৱিষ্কৃত দিশ এটা পাঠকৰ সন্মুখত উন্মোচিত কৰে।

### সৌৰভ চলিহাৰ লিখনশৈলী:

সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ গল্পত পৰিলক্ষিত হয় অলংকাৰবৰ্জিত সহজ-সৰল পৰিচ্ছন্ন গদ্য। আধুনিক অসমীয়া সাহিত্যত সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাক এক নতুন গদ্যশৈলীৰ উদ্ভাৱকৰূপে স্বীকৃতি দিয়া হৈছে। প্ৰথমাবস্থাত সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ ভাষাক আচৰ্ষা বুলি বহুতে ক’বলৈ বিচাৰিছিল যদিও পিছলৈ সকলোৱে মানি লয় যে তেওঁৰ এয়া ব্যতিক্ৰমী ৰচনাশৈলী। সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহা ভাষাৰ ব্যৱহাৰৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত গোড়াৰপৰা সম্পূৰ্ণ মুক্ত। কিছুমান গল্পত তেওঁ প্ৰয়োগ কৰিছে অগতানুগতিক শব্দ।

সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ গদ্যই ব্যাকৰণ নামানে। চলিহাই সততে কৃত্ৰিম ভদ্ৰভাষা পৰিত্যাগ কৰি মিশ্ৰিত ভাষা ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছে। সৌৰভ চলিহাৰ ভাষাৰ বিষয়ে ক’বলৈ গৈ নগেন শইকীয়াই লিখিছে— “...তেখেতে ইংৰাজী শব্দৰ কথা এৰিও বাংলা অবলীলাক্ৰমে প্ৰয়োগ কৰি যায়।...”<sup>৭</sup>

সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ গল্পত আধুনিকতাই বহুমাট্ৰিক আয়তন লাভ কৰিছে। ইয়াৰ কাৰণ হিচাপে মুনীন বায়নে তেওঁৰ সৰ্বগ্ৰাসী বৌদ্ধিক অন্বেষণৰ কথাকে কৈছে। বায়নে আৰু মতপোষণ কৰে যে তেওঁৰ গল্পৰ শৈলী আৰু কথকতা এক বৈখিক নহয়।<sup>৭</sup> মুঠতে, সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহা অসমীয়া গল্প সাহিত্যত নিজেই এক ধাৰা। সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহা নতুন প্ৰজন্মৰ আটাইতকৈ নবীনতম প্ৰতিনিধি।

### সামৰণি:

সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাই কেতিয়াও নিজকে কোনো সীমাৰদ্ধতাৰ মাজত নাৰাখিছিল। তেওঁ নিজৰ ভাব-অনুভূতিসমূহ নিজস্ব লেখনশৈলীৰে প্ৰকাশ কৰি গৈছিল। সেয়েহে হয়তো তেওঁৰ দৃষ্টিত তেওঁৰ গল্পৰ জটিলতা এটা অবাস্তৱ প্ৰশ্ন। পাঠকৰ বাবে গল্পৰ সৰলীকৰণৰ চৰ্ত চলিহাৰ বাবে অৰ্থহীন। বিষয়বস্তুৰ সৈতে তেওঁৰ গল্প সাঙুৰ খাই পৰি কেতিয়াবা জটিল হৈছে অথবা কেতিয়াবা সৰল। ■

### প্ৰসংগটোকা:

- ১। শইকীয়া, নগেন— অসমীয়া চুটিগল্পৰ এটি আভাস, ৰাজখোৱা, অৰবিন্দ সম্পাদিত, পৃষ্ঠা-১৩
- ২। চলিহা, সৌৰভ কুমাৰ— গল্প নহয়, পৃষ্ঠা-২০
- ৩। শৰ্মা, অপূৰ্ব— সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহা— এক অনন্য, অনতিক্ৰম— দাস, শোণিত বিজয় সম্পাদিত— কথা গুৱাহাটী, পঞ্চম সংখ্যা, প্ৰথম সংখ্যা, এপ্ৰিল, মে ২০১২, পৃষ্ঠা-৪৮
- ৪। চলিহা, সৌৰভ কুমাৰ: ছয় দশকৰ গল্প, পৃষ্ঠা-১৪৮
- ৫। চলিহা, সৌৰভ কুমাৰ— ছয় দশকৰ গল্প, পৃষ্ঠা-১৫৩
- ৬। চলিহা, সৌৰভ কুমাৰ— ছয় দশকৰ গল্প, পৃষ্ঠা-৪৩৮
- ৭। শইকীয়া, নগেন— এটা ব্যক্তিগত ইম্প্ৰেছন, দাস শোণিত বিজয় সম্পাদিত— কথা গুৱাহাটী, পঞ্চম বৰ্ষ, প্ৰথম সংখ্যা, ২০১২, পৃষ্ঠা-৩৭
- ৮। বায়ন, মুনীন: ছদ্মনামৰ আঁৰত আধুনিক গল্প সাহিত্যৰ এক বৰ্ণাঢ্য বিস্ময় সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহা— দাস, শোণিত বিজয় সম্পাদিত— কথা গুৱাহাটী, পঞ্চম বৰ্ষ, প্ৰথম সংখ্যা, ২০১২, পৃষ্ঠা-১০

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- চলিহা, সৌৰভ কুমাৰ: ছয় দশকৰ গল্প। প্ৰকাশক: ষ্টুডেণ্টচ্ ষ্ট'ৰচ, গুৱাহাটী-১ প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ: ২০০১, ফ্ৰেব্ৰুৱাৰী
- চলিহা, সৌৰভ কুমাৰ: সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহাৰ স্বনিৰ্বাচিত সংকলন। প্ৰকাশক: ষ্টুডেণ্টচ্ ষ্ট'ৰচ, কলেজ হোস্টেল ৰোড, গুৱাহাটী-১, প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ: ডিচেম্বৰ, ১৯৯৪।

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- দাস, শোণিত বিজয়, বায়ন, মুনীন সম্পাদিত: সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহা ৰচনাৱলী। প্ৰকাশক: কথা, জি, এফ কমফোৰ্ট মাৰ্কেট পাণবজাৰ, গুৱাহাটী-১, প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ: ডিচেম্বৰ, ২০০৮
- দেৱ গোস্বামী, ৰঞ্জিত কুমাৰ: সৌৰভ কুমাৰ চলিহা আৰু অন্যান্য প্ৰবন্ধ। প্ৰকাশক: জিতেন ডেকা, সময় গ্ৰন্থালয়, নলবাৰী-৭৮১৩৩৫। প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ: ১ জানুৱাৰী, ১৯৯৫

### অসমীয়া আলোচনী:

- দেৱ গোস্বামী, ৰঞ্জিত কুমাৰ দাস, শোণিত বিজয় সম্পাদিত: কথা গুৱাহাটী-২৯, ছেপ্টেম্বৰ-অক্টোবৰ ২০০৬।
- তৃতীয় বছৰ, চতুৰ্থ-পঞ্চম সংখ্যা, প্ৰকাশক- কথা পাণবজাৰ, গুৱাহাটী-১
- কথা গুৱাহাটী, পঞ্চম বৰ্ষ, দ্বিতীয় সংখ্যা, জুন-জুলাই ২০১২, প্ৰকাশক: কথা, পাণবজাৰ, গুৱাহাটী-১
- Science Fiction: The Literature of Ideas Writing, World.com 2003. <http://www.writingWorld.com/ff.Shtm>

# উৎসৱ-অনুষ্ঠানৰ সৈতে জড়িত জনজাতীয় লোকনৃত্য

ড° বনলতা কলিতা

পাতিদৰং মহাবিদ্যালয়

সহকাৰী অধ্যাপিকা, অসমীয়া বিভাগ

জনজীৱনৰ ওপৰত ওপচি পৰা আনন্দৰ ৰূপ সমুজ্বল আৰু ছন্দোময় প্ৰকাশ হ'ল লোকনৃত্য। আনহাতে যি নৃত্য ৰীতিবদ্ধ, পৰিমার্জিত আৰু সুগঢ়ী নহয় তেনে নৃত্যক লোকনৃত্য আখ্যা দিব পাৰি। আনহাতে যি পৰম্পৰাগত নৃত্য কৃষক বা গঞলোকৰ দ্বাৰা অনুষ্ঠিত হয়, যি নৃত্যত আত্মসজাগতা নাথাকে, যি নৃত্যত সামাজিক সজাগতা থাকে, যি নৃত্যৰ নৃত্য পৰিকল্পনা ৰীতি মুখ পৰম্পৰাত চলি থাকে আৰু যি নৃত্য স্বতন্ত্ৰ গুণ বিশিষ্ট তথা আকৰ্ষণীয় সেয়াই হ'ল লোকনৃত্য।

লোকনৃত্যত সেয়েহে সৰল প্ৰাণৰ, সৰল বিশ্বাসৰ ইংগিত আছে, সহজ গতি আছে, স্বভাৱসুলভ কমনীয়তা আছে। শাস্ত্ৰীয় নৃত্যৰ দৰে বোধৰ মসৃণতা আৰু ব্যাকৰণ নাই, বিশিষ্ট সংজ্ঞা নাই। অৱশ্যে গতি-ৰীতি শাস্ত্ৰীয় নহয় যদিও জন নৃত্যতো শৃংখলা আছে, অংগ সঞ্চালনৰ সংগতি আছে। একেধাৰে ক'বলৈ হ'লে নৃত্যৰ প্ৰথম উৎস হ'ল 'অনুভৱ'। কম বেছি পৰিমাণে মানৱ জাতিৰ সকলোৰে মাজত শিল্পী আৰু দৰ্শকক সমানভাৱে আনন্দ দিব পৰা নৃত্যৰ ইতিহাসো দেখিবলৈ পোৱা যায়। আৰণ্যক জীৱনৰ

প্ৰথম স্তৰত চিকাৰৰ পৰা ঘূৰি অহাৰ পিছত তৃপ্তিৰ প্ৰাচুৰ্যত সামাজিক জীৱনৰ কেন্দ্ৰ স্বৰূপ জুইকুৰাক মাজত লৈ নচা নাচে, কৃষিজীৱী সমাজত শস্য চপাই অনাৰ পাছত মুকলি মুকলি লগা মনবোৰে ধুনীয়া ফৰকাল বতৰৰ গহীনা লৈ দল বান্ধি উৎসৱ পাতি নচা নাচে বা প্ৰকৃতিৰ আৰু জীৱনৰ প্ৰতি থকা ভয় আৰু বিচিত্ৰ বিশ্বাসৰ পৰা উদ্ভূত নৃত্যৰ প্ৰাচুৰ্যৰে ভাৰতীয় তথা পৃথিৱীৰ সংস্কৃতি সমৃদ্ধ কৰিছে।

কৃষিজীৱী সমাজৰ অভিজ্ঞতা ঋতু পৰিৱৰ্তন আৰু প্ৰকৃতিৰ ওপৰত নিৰ্ভৰ কৰিছিল, বুদ্ধিৰ বিকাশ নোহোৱা অৱস্থাত নিজৰ কৌশলতকৈ মানুহে প্ৰকৃতিৰ দয়াৰ ওপৰত বেছি ভৰসা কৰিবলগা হোৱাটো স্বাভাৱিক আছিল। সেই সময়ত কৃষিজীৱী লোকসকলৰ শস্য উৎপাদন আৰু সন্তান বৃদ্ধি এই দুটাই প্ৰধান আকাংক্ষা আছিল। জীয়াই থাকিবলৈ আহাৰ লাগে আৰু সৰহ আহাৰ উৎপাদনৰ বাবে লাগে যথেষ্ট জনশক্তি। ফলমূল শস্যৰ প্ৰাচুৰ্যৰে মানুহক বিস্ময়ৰূপে যোগান ধৰিব পৰা প্ৰকৃতিক নাৰীৰূপে কল্পনা কৰা হৈছিল আৰু পৃথিৱীৰ এই শক্তিক নাৰীৰ সন্তানদায়িনী শক্তিৰ লগত সমান আসনত অধিষ্ঠিত কৰা হৈছিল। আদিম মানুহৰ সৃষ্টিস্পৃহাই সেয়েহে পথাৰত সৃষ্টিৰ উৎসৱ পাতিছিল, উদং পথাৰ বুকুত ডেকা-গাভৰু মিলি যৌৱনৰ নাচ নাচি সৃষ্টিৰ আকাংক্ষা আকুলভাৱে ৰূপায়িত কৰিছিল।

সামাজিক আচাৰ-অনুষ্ঠানৰ চাৰিটা উপ-বিভাগ— বিশ্বাস-ধৰ্ম, উৎসৱ-অনুষ্ঠান, ঔষধ চিকিৎসা, অৱসৰ বিনোদন তথা খেল-খেমালিৰ লগত গীত-নৃত্য অভিনয়ৰ সম্পৰ্ক অতিকৈ নিবিড়। ধৰ্মীয় অনুষ্ণংগতেই বিবিধ গীত-নৃত্য-অভিনয়-নাটক আদিৰ জন্ম। গ্ৰীক দেৱতা ডায়োনিছৰ সন্তুষ্টিৰ অৰ্থে অনুষ্ঠিত নৃত্যৰ পৰাই গ্ৰীক ট্ৰেজেডিৰ উদ্ভৱ হৈছে। শিৱ-ৰুদ্ৰৰ তাণ্ডৱ নৃত্যৰ পৰাই উদ্ভৱ হৈছে ভাৰতীয় নাটকৰ। দেৱ-দেৱীক গীত-নৃত্য-অভিনয় আদিৰে যিমান সহজে সন্তুষ্ট কৰিব পাৰি পূজা-উপাসনা-নৈবেদ্যৰ দ্বাৰা সিমান সহজে নোৱাৰি। ধৰ্মীয় অনুষ্ণংগ অৰ্থাৎ পূজা-উপাসনা, সভা-সবাহ, গোল-গন্ধ-জাগৰ-অধিবাস আদিৰ প্ৰসংগত ওজাপালিৰ দৰে দৃশ্য-শ্ৰব্য কথাশৈলীয়ে গীত-নৃত্য-অভিনয়-নাটক প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰে। উৎসৱ অনুষ্ঠানৰ প্ৰসংগত বিশেষকৈ ঋতুমূলক উৎসৱ-অনুষ্ঠান বা কৃষিমূলক উৎসৱৰ অনুষ্ণংগত ধৰ্মনিৰপেক্ষ নৃত্য-গীত-অভিনয় অনুষ্ঠিত হয়।

পুৰণি অসমৰ লোকনৃত্য নাচৰ ভিতৰত বসন্তকালীন উৎসৱৰ সৈতে জড়িত

বিহ্নুত্ব বা নাচৰ নাম ল'ব পাৰি। সৌমাৰ অঞ্চলৰ নিম্ন হিন্দু আৰু জনজাতিসকলৰ দ্বাৰা উদ্‌যাপিত বিহু উৎসৱৰ অনুৰূপত বিহ্নুত্ব বা নাচ অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। অসমীয়া সংস্কৃতিৰ অন্যতম প্ৰধান অংগ বিহু উৎসৱৰ জন্ম, বিকাশ আৰু অগ্ৰগতিত বিভিন্ন ভাষাগোষ্ঠীৰ সাংস্কৃতিক প্ৰভাৱ অস্বীকাৰ কৰাৰ উপায় নাই। সংস্কৃত 'বিষুবৎ' শব্দৰ পৰা 'বিহু' শব্দটো ওলাইছে। চিটাগঙ অঞ্চলতো 'বিষু' উৎসৱৰ প্ৰচলন আছে। এই উৎসৱ ব'হাগ মাহত অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। "Oraon"বিলাকে তেওঁলোকৰ গ্ৰীষ্ম চিকাৰক 'বিষু চিকাৰ' বোলে। দক্ষিণ ভাৰতৰ নায়াসকলৰ মাজত প্ৰচলিত নৱবৰ্ষৰ উৎসৱটোও 'বিষু'ৰূপে পৰিচিত। তেনেদৰে হিমাচল প্ৰদেশৰ খাচবিলাকৰ মাজতো 'বিষু' নৱবৰ্ষৰ উৎসৱৰূপে উদ্‌যাপিত হয়। ইয়াৰ বাহিৰে ভাৰতৰ বিভিন্ন প্ৰদেশত বসন্তোৎসৱ, মহাবিষুৰ সংক্ৰান্তি আদি উৎসৱ জাকজমকতাৰে পালন কৰা হয়। অসমৰ এই প্ৰধান জাতীয় উৎসৱ বিহু মূলতঃ আৰ্য-ভিন্ন জনগোষ্ঠীৰ প্ৰভাৱত গঢ় লৈ উঠিছে। বিহু মূলতঃ কৃষি উৎসৱ আৰু সেয়ে এই উৎসৱৰ সৈতে ভালেমান লোকবিশ্বাস আৰু সামাজিক লোকাচাৰ জড়িত হৈ আছে। ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ বিভিন্ন জনগোষ্ঠীৰ মাজত নতুন বছৰটোক আদৰিবৰ কাৰণে বিহুৰ অনুৰূপ কেতবোৰ লোক উৎসৱ উদ্‌যাপিত কৰা দেখা যায়।

বিহুৰ নিচিনা এই লোক উৎসৱ বা কৃষিভিত্তিক উৎসৱ মূলতঃ প্ৰজননৰ উৎসৱ। সেইবাবে বিহু উৎসৱত ডেকা-গাভৰুৰ পাৰস্পৰিক মিলন-বাসনা প্ৰকট হৈ উঠা দেখা যায়। পৃথিৱীৰ উৰ্বৰা শক্তি বৃদ্ধিৰ কামনাৰে কৰা প্ৰকৃতিৰ আৰাধনাই হ'ল বিহু অৰ্থাৎ ৰঙালী বিহুৰ মূল ভেটি। এই ৰঙালী বিহুত ডেকা-গাভৰু উভয়ে মিলি নাচিছিল। আগতে ডেকা আৰু গাভৰুবিলাকে বেলেগ বেলেগকৈ নাচিছিল। যেনে— ডেকা বিহু, গাভৰু বিহু। বিহুগীতৰ বিষয়বস্তুক নাচৰ মাধ্যমেৰে চাক্ষু্য বা দৰ্শনীয় ৰূপ দিবলৈ উভয়ে চেষ্টা কৰে। বতাহত গছ এজোপাই যেনেদৰে হালি-জালি নাচে বসন্তৰ পৰশত মোহময়ী যৌৱনৰ উন্মাদনাত গাভৰু সকলে নাচে আপোন পাহৰি গীতৰ সুৰে সুৰে, ঢোল, তাল, পেঁপা, ম'হৰ শিঙা, গগনা, টকা আদি বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰ ছেৰে-ছেৰে পুৰণি কালত বিহুগীত গোৱা আৰু বিহুনাচ অনুষ্ঠিত হৈছিল পথাৰত, কাৰণ বা উদ্দেশ্য আছিল আই বসুমতীৰ প্ৰজনন শক্তি বঢ়োৱা।

বিহুগীত আৰু নাচ হ'ল বনৰীয়া অৰ্থাৎ এই গীত বা নাচ অনুষ্ঠিত হৈছিল পথাৰত বা বননিত নাইবা চাপৰিত আৰু হুঁচৰি গীত আৰু নাচ আছিল ঘৰুৱা অৰ্থাৎ হুঁচৰি গীত

আৰু নাচৰ শুভাৰম্ভণি হয় গোসাঁইঘৰত, নামঘৰত, তাৰ পৰা সেই গাঁও বা অঞ্চলৰ প্ৰতিটো পৰিয়ালৰ ঘৰলৈ গৈ আশীৰ্বাদসূচক গীত আৰু নাচ নচা হয় গৃহস্থৰ মংগল কামনা কৰি। হুঁচৰি গীত আৰু নাচত ডেকা-বুঢ়া সকলোৱে অৰ্থাৎ পুৰুষসকলেহে অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰিব পাৰে, মহিলাসকলে অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰিব নোৱাৰে। আন আন অঞ্চলৰ লোকসকলৰ নিচিনাকৈ উত্তৰ-পূব ভাৰতত বিভিন্ন জনগোষ্ঠীৰ মাজত অনুৰূপ কৃষি উৎসৱৰ প্ৰাধান্য লক্ষ্য কৰা দেখা যায়। শস্যবৃদ্ধিৰ কামনাৰে আই বসুমতীৰ সন্তুষ্টি বিধানৰ অৰ্থে বিহুগীত আৰু বিহুনাচৰ পৰম্পৰা জনজাতিসকলৰ মাজতো প্ৰচলিত। বড়োসকলে বিহুনৃত্যৰ সমধৰ্মী বৈশাণ্ড নৃত্য বৈশাণ্ড উৎসৱৰ প্ৰসংগত অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। এই উৎসৱত বড়ো ডেকা-গাভৰুসকলে ঘৰে ঘৰে গৈ বৈশাণ্ড গীত গায় আৰু গীতৰ লগে লগে বৈচাণ্ড মুচানায় (নাচ) নাচে। বৈশাণ্ড উৎসৱৰ প্ৰায় আটাইকেইদিনতেই ডেকা-গাভৰুসকলে মুকলি পথাৰলৈ গৈ বৈশাণ্ড নৃত্য প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰে। বৈশাণ্ড নাচত চিফুং, জোখা, থৰ্খা, ৰামতাল, খাম আদি বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰ বড়োসকলে বজায়। বিহু নৃত্যৰ দৰে বৈশাণ্ড নৃত্যও দলীয় আৰু বৃত্তাকাৰ নৃত্য। বৈশাণ্ড নৃত্যৰ লগত আবৃত্ত গীতৰ নামেই বৈশাণ্ড গীত। বিহুগীতৰ দৰে বৈশাণ্ড গীতবোৰৰ মূল প্ৰেৰণা যৌনমূলক। পূৰ্বৰাগ, সন্তোজ, বিপ্ৰলম্ব, মিলন আদি বিভিন্ন স্তৰত বৈশাণ্ড গীতবোৰ শ্ৰেণী বিভাজন কৰিব পাৰি। বৈশাণ্ড নৃত্য বিহুনৃত্যৰ দৰে সৰল আৰু অজটিল গতি বিশিষ্ট। হাত আৰু ভৰিৰ ভংগীতেই এই নৃত্যৰ পৰিসৰ সীমিত। লোকনৃত্য বৈশিষ্ট্য সৌন্দৰ্য আৰু মাধুৰ্যৰে বৈশাণ্ড আৰু নৃত্য মহীয়ান। বড়োসকলৰ মাজত প্ৰচলিত নৃত্যসমূহৰ ভিতৰত আন এবিধ ধৰ্মনিৰপেক্ষ নৃত্য হৈছে বাগৰুস্বা বিশেষভাৱে বসন্ত কালত এইবিধ নাচ নচা হয়। এই বাগৰুস্বা নৃত্য মুখ্যতঃ নাৰীকেন্দ্ৰিক নাচ। বাগৰুস্বা মুচানায় সামূহিক আৰু বৃত্ত নাচ। গাভৰুসকলে দীঘলীয়াকৈ বা বৃত্তাকাৰভাৱে বহুৰঙী ফুলাম দখনা আৰু আলোৱান পৰিধান কৰি খাম, চিফুং, জখা, চেৰজা আদি বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰ তালে তালে আৰু গীতৰ বিষয়বস্তুৰ সুৰে সুৰে দুয়োখন হাত আনুভূমিকভাৱে প্ৰসাৰিত কৰি দুয়োফালে হালি জালি নাচে। বড়োসকলৰ আন এবিধ নৃত্য খেৰাই হ'ল তাণ্ডৰ নৃত্য অন্যহাতে বাগৰুস্বা লাস্য নৃত্য। লাস্য নৃত্যৰ কোমলতা আৰু মসৃণতা বাগৰুস্বা নৃত্যত বিদ্যমান। বড়োসকলৰ ধৰ্মনিৰপেক্ষ নৃত্যৰ উপৰিও ধৰ্মীয় পূজা-পাতলৰ লগত জড়িত কিছুমান নৃত্য হ'ল— খেৰাই নৃত্য। খেৰাই নৃত্য সামূহিকভাৱেই বাথৌ পূজাৰ অনুসংগত অনুষ্ঠিত কৰা হয়। বড়ো ভাষাত

খেৰাই নৃত্যক খেৰাই মুচানায় বুলি কোৱা হয়। বড়োসকলৰ মাজত আন এবিধ ধৰ্মীয় উৎসৱৰ লগত জড়িত নৃত্য হ'ল হাবা জনায় নৃত্য। এই নৃত্যত বৈৰাখীসকলে মূৰৰ ওপৰলৈ হাত তুলি লাস্যপূৰ্ণভাৱে সঞ্চালন কৰি গীত গাই নাচে।

বড়োসকলৰ দৰে ব'হাগ মাহৰ নতুন বছৰটোক আদৰিবলৈ ৰাভা জনজাতিসকলে বায়খু উৎসৱ পালন কৰে। বায়খু তেওঁলোকৰ জাতীয় উৎসৱ। এই উৎসৱৰ জৰিয়তে ৰাভাসকলৰ পৰম্পৰাগত ভাষা-সংস্কৃতি, গীত-মাত-নৃত্য-সাজপাৰ আদিৰ প্ৰতিফলন ঘটে। ইয়াৰ লগে লগে সামাজিক বান্ধোন সুদৃঢ় হয়। বায়খুদেৱীক মূল দেৱী হিচাপে লৈ বিভিন্ন দেৱ-দেৱীক আৰাধনা কৰে। বায়খু দেৱীক সন্তুষ্ট কৰিবলৈ জ্বলন্ত অগ্নিকুণ্ড (বাৰাকদম) গচকি নৃত্য কৰে। নৃত্য শেষ হোৱাৰ পাছত মদ পৰিৱেশন কৰে। পূজাৰ শেষত উপস্থিত হোৱা ৰাইজৰ মনোৰঞ্জনৰ বাবে ডেকা-গাভৰুসকলে ছাথাৰ গীত গাই নৃত্য কৰে। বিহুনাচৰ দৰে ছাথাৰ নৃত্যৰ লগতো গীত জড়িত। বিহুগীত বা বৈশাণ্ড গীতৰ দৰে ছাথাৰ গীতো প্ৰেম-প্ৰণয়মূলক। খাম, শিঙা, তাল, বাঁহী আদি বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰ ছাথাৰ নৃত্যৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত বজোৱা হয়। 'বহুৰঙী' বা 'বগেৰাৰী' গীত আৰু নৃত্যও অঞ্চল বিশেষে বিহু উৎসৱৰ সময়ত অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। সাধাৰণতে ৰাভা পুৰুষ-মহিলাসকলে খেতি-বাতি সামৰি উঠি মনৰ মাজত থকা হৰ্ষ-আনন্দ প্ৰকাশ কৰিবলৈ বৃত্তাকৃতি ধৰণে খাম-তাল-বাঁহী-শিঙা আদি বজাই গীত গাই গাই বগেৰাৰী বা বহুৰঙী নৃত্য নাচে। এই নৃত্যত নাচি থকা ডেকা-গাভৰুসকলে গীত আৰু নাচৰ মাধ্যমেৰে নিজ নিজ অন্তৰৰ গোপন অভিলাষ আৰু বেদনা প্ৰকাশ কৰে।

ছাথাৰ নৃত্য-গীতৰ লগতে ৰাভাসকলৰ আন এটা ধৰ্মীয় উৎসৱ হ'ল মাৰে বা মনসা পূজা। এই পূজা চ'তৰ পৰা জেঠ মাহলৈকে বিভিন্ন অঞ্চলত ধুমধামেৰে ৰাইজে সমূহীয়াভাৱে পালন কৰে। মনসা দেৱীক আৰাধনাৰ লগতে ওজাপালিয়ে গীত-নৃত্যৰে দেৱীক সন্তুষ্ট কৰে আৰু উপস্থিত ৰাইজেও উপভোগ কৰে। এইবিলাকৰ উপৰিও ৰাভাসকলে মৃতকৰ প্ৰতি শ্ৰদ্ধা জনাই শ্ৰাদ্ধ ক্ৰিয়াত ফাৰকান্তি নৃত্য আয়োজন কৰে। মৃতকৰ শ্ৰাদ্ধ কৃত্যৰ নামেই ফাৰকান্তি। কোনো মৃতকৰ শ্ৰাদ্ধৰ দিনা তেওঁৰ পৰিয়ালৰ লোকে ইনাই-বিনাই বিলাপ কৰে আৰু এই বিলাপ বিননিৰ আধাৰত সৃষ্টি হৈছে শোক-গীত ফাৰকান্তিৰ আৰু এই শ্ৰাৱণিক গীত-পদবোৰৰ চান্দুৰূপেই হ'ল ফাৰকান্তি নৃত্য। এই নৃত্যৰ লগত 'কানটুকুৰী' নামৰ সৰু তাল, কাঢ়নলৰ বাঁহী, খাম, কাঁহ, শিঙা

আদি বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰ সংগত কৰা হয়। ‘ফাৰকান্টি’ নৃত্যৰ প্ৰসংগত বাঁহ আৰু কাঠেৰে নিৰ্মিত এটি বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰ সংগত কৰা হয়। এই বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰ দুটা অংশৰ সমষ্টি, মাঞ্চেলংকা আৰু বাতিক্তিকা। ‘ফাৰকান্টি’ নৃত্যত প্ৰয়োগ কৰা এই বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰত নিহিত থকা মাঞ্চেলংকা (মাছৰোকা), বাতিক্তিকা এই চৰাই দুটি মৃতকৰ আত্মাৰ প্ৰতীক ৰূপে ব্যৱহৃত হ’ব পাৰে, যিহেতু ৰাভাসকলৰ জাতীয় জীৱনৰ লগত মাঞ্চেলংকা, বাঢ়েটোকা আৰু বাতিক্তিকা এই তিনিবিধ চৰাইৰ তাৎপৰ্যপূৰ্ণ সম্পৰ্ক ৰক্ষিত হৈ আহিছে।

ৰাভাসকলৰ আন এবিধ লোকনৃত্য হ’ল হামজাৰ নৃত্য। হামজাৰ নৃত্য বুমখেতিৰ লগত জড়িত নৃত্য। ৰাভা ভাষাত ‘হা’ মানে মাটি। ‘মাজাৰ’ মানে হ’ল মাজৰ। অৰ্থাৎ হাবিতলীয়া মাটিত বন চিকুণাই খেতি কৰা পদ্ধতিয়েই হ’ল হামজাৰ। বুম খেতিৰ আৰম্ভণিতে তেওঁলোকৰ এক লোক উৎসৱ পালন হ’ল ‘হামজাৰ নৃত্য’। ডেকা গাভৰুৱে হামজাৰ গীত গাই এই নৃত্য কৰে। এনেদৰে ৰাভা জনগোষ্ঠীৰ প্ৰচলিত আন কিছুমান নৃত্য হ’ল— বহুৰঙী নৃত্য, ওজাপালি নৃত্য, দেওধনী নৃত্য, ধাওৱা নৃত্য, হানা-যোঁৰা নৃত্য, হাছং নৃত্য, গিৰকায় নৃত্য ইত্যাদি।

আন আন জনজাতীয় লোকৰ নিচিনাকৈ দেউৰীসকলেও ধৰ্মীয় কৃত্য আৰু গীত নাচ আদিৰ দ্বাৰা ব’হাগ বিহু (বিসু) পালন কৰে। দেউৰীসকলে ব’হাগ মাহৰ প্ৰথম বুধবাৰৰ পৰাহে বিসু পাতে। দেউৰীসকলৰ মাজত বিসুৰ প্ৰসংগত নাচা নাচৰ অনুষ্ঠান দুটা— এটা গাভৰুৰ, আনটো ডেকাৰ। গাভৰুসকলৰ গীত আৰু নাচৰ তাল-মান, লয়-ছেও আৰু সুৰ বৈশিষ্ট্য অতিকৈ আকৰ্ষণীয়। ডেকাসকলেও বাদ্য বাজনাৰ ছেৰে-ছেৰে গীত গাই গাই বৃত্তাকাৰভাৱে নাচ প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰে। নাচৰ প্ৰসংগত ঢোল-তাল, টকা-গগণা আদি সংগত কৰা হয়। সাধাৰণতে অ-জনজাতীয় অসমীয়া বিহুনাচত নেদেখা বিভিন্ন ভংগী আৰু খোজ দেউৰী বিহুনাচত দেখা যায়। দেউৰীসকলৰ মাজত প্ৰচলিত মিডিকবা বা দেও উঠা বা দেৱধ্বনি নৃত্য দেওশালাত অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। সাধাৰণতে দেওবাৰ বা বুধবাৰে কেৱল দেউৰীসকলৰ দ্বাৰাহে এইবিধ নৃত্য প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰা হয়। মিডিকবা নৃত্যৰ প্ৰসংগত ঢোল, তাল, পেঁপা আদি বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰ সংগত কৰে।

দেউৰীসকলৰ নিচিনাকৈ লালুং বা তিৱাসকলেও ধৰ্মীয় কৃত্য আৰু গীত-নাচনেৰে ব’হাগ বিহু পালন কৰে। লালুং বা তিৱাসকলে ৰঙালী বিহুৰ ঠিক পিছৰ বুধবাৰে উদযাপন কৰা বাসন্তিক উৎসৱৰ নাম হ’ল ‘ছগ্ৰামিছাৰা’। আটাইবিলাকেই মিলিজুলি নাচা নাচৰ

নামেই 'ছগ্রামিছাৰা'। এই অনুষ্ঠান বিশেষকৈ নৃত্য-গীতে প্ৰাধান্য লাভ কৰি আহিছে। এই নৃত্যত থুৰাং বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰ অপৰিহাৰ্য্য। এইবিলাকৰ উপৰিও খ্ৰাম (ঢোল), দগাৰা (নাগাৰা), তাল আদি বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰ এই নৃত্যত সংগত কৰা হয়। ছগ্রামিছাৰা নৃত্যত ডেকা-গাভৰু উভয়ে যোগ দিব পাৰে।

সোণোৱাল কছাৰীসকলৰ বিভিন্ন নৃত্যসমূহৰ ভিতৰত প্ৰধান নৃত্য হ'ল বিহু নৃত্য। বিহু নৃত্যৰ উপৰিও তেওঁলোকৰ মাজত কিছুমান পৰম্পৰাগত লোকনৃত্য আছে। সেই পৰম্পৰাগত লোকনৃত্যৰ ভিতৰত বহুৰা নৃত্য, হগ্ৰা নৃত্য, হাইদাং নৃত্য কুল্ল বুঢ়ীৰ নৃত্য আদি উল্লেখযোগ্য।

বহুৰা নৃত্য সোণোৱাল কছাৰীসকলৰ মাজত প্ৰচলিত এবিধ লোকনৃত্য। ব'হাগ বিহুৰ সাতদিনৰ দিনা বহুৰা নৃত্য অনুষ্ঠিত কৰে। এই নৃত্যত বহুৰা-বহুৱালী আৰু কেইগৰাকীমান নাচনীয়ে নৃত্য কৰে। সোণোৱাল কছাৰীসকলৰ উপাস্যদেৱতাৰ পূজা আৰু ধৰ্মীয় জীৱনৰ লগত জড়িত আন এটা লোকনৃত্য হৈছে হগ্ৰা নৃত্য। হগ্ৰা মানে গাহৰি অৰ্থাৎ বাইথ পূজাৰ বলিৰ কাৰণে যি গাহৰিৰ প্ৰয়োজন হয় সেই গাহৰি চিকাৰ কৰি আনি কেনেদৰে বলি দিয়া হয় সেয়া নৃত্যৰ যোগেদি প্ৰকাশ কৰে আৰু এই নৃত্যই হ'ল হগ্ৰা নৃত্য। আকৌ এই সোণোৱাল কছাৰীসকলে হাইদা গীতৰ তালে তালে বাঁহীৰ সুৰ, খুতিতাল আৰু বাঁহৰ টকাৰ ছন্দত জেমা টঙালি সাজপাৰ পৰিধান কৰি হাতত ম'ৰা চৰাইৰ পাখি লৈ নৃত্য কৰে আৰু সেয়াই হ'ল হাইদাং নৃত্য। এনেদৰে এওঁলোকৰ মাজতো বহুত লোকনৃত্য প্ৰচলন হয়।

মিচিংসকলৰ বসন্তকালীন উৎসৱৰ ভিতৰত অন্যতম হ'ল 'আলি-আই-লিগাং'। 'আলি-আই-লিগাং' উৎসৱৰ আৰম্ভণি সূচিত হয় ফাগুন মাহৰ প্ৰথম সপ্তাহৰ বুধবাৰৰ পৰা। ধৰ্মীয় কৃত্য আৰু গীত-নৃত্য আলি-আই-লিগাঙৰ অবিচ্ছেদ্য অংগ। উৎসৱৰ প্ৰসংগত মিচিং ডেকা-গাভৰুসকলে চেনাই ধনৰ বাতৰি থকা 'অই নিতম' গায়, দুমদুম, গুংগাং, টকা, কাঁহ আদি বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰ সংগত কৰি। পৰম্পৰা মতে মিচিংসকলৰ ঘৰৰ চাঙৰ 'টিপাশাল'ৰ চাৰিওফালে ডেকা-গাভৰুহঁতে ঘূৰি-ঘূৰি অইনিতমৰ তালে তালে নাচে। নাচৰ শেষত গৃহস্থই বিহুৱা দলক যথাসাধ্য মাননি আগবঢ়ায়।

ভৈয়ামৰ কাৰ্বিসকলেও ব'হাগ বিহু বা দোমাহীৰ প্ৰসংগত দোমাহী আলুন গায়। নানা বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰ সংগত কৰি আলুনৰ সুৰে সুৰে আৰু বাদ্য বাজনাৰ তালে তালে ডেকা-

গাভৰুৱে নাচে দোমাহী কেবান অৰ্থাৎ নাচ নাচে আপোন পাহৰি। ডিমাচাসকলৰ মাজতো ব'হাগ বিহুৰ সময়ত পুৰুষ-স্ত্ৰী বা ডেকা-গাভৰু উভয়ে মিলি বিবিধ বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰ সংগত কৰি গীতৰ সুৰে সুৰে আৰু বাদ্যযন্ত্ৰৰ ছেৰে-ছেৰে নাচ নাচে। এইদৰে নচা নাচৰ নামেই হ'ল বাই ডিমা-নাচ বা বিচু নাচ। পুৰুষ আৰু স্ত্ৰী উভয়ে বৃত্তাকাৰ হৈ ঠাইতে দুপাক দি হাত দুখন বিশেষ ভংগিমাতে মুৰৰ ওপৰলৈ তুলি তললৈ নমাই আনে। মূৰী বা মৰীৰ কৰুণ সুৰ, পেঁপাৰ বিননি আদিয়ে নৃত্যটিৰ ভাবৰ গভীৰতা বৃদ্ধি কৰে। অসমীয়া বিহুগীত আৰু বিহুনাচৰ অনুষ্ণংগ, সংযুতি, অৰ্থ, তাৎপৰ্য আৰু বিষয়বস্তুৰ লগত বিচু নৃত্য অথবা বাই-ডিমা নৃত্যৰ সাধাৰণ সাদৃশ্য নথকা নহয়।

এনেদৰে অতি কম পৰিসৰৰ ভিতৰত জনজাতীয় লোকসকলৰ উৎসৱ অনুষ্ঠানৰ সৈতে জড়িত লোকনৃত্যৰ এটি চমু আভাষ দিবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰা হৈছে। ■

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**সহায়ক গ্ৰন্থপঞ্জী :**

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# অসমীয়া সংস্কৃতিত সাজপাৰ আৰু সাজপাৰ বনোৱাত ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা আহিলা

ড° দিপিকা ৰাণী দাস

সহকাৰী অধ্যাপিকা, অসমীয়া বিভাগ, বামুন্দী মহাবিদ্যালয়

ফোনং : ৮৬৩৮৪-০৭৭৭৯

কালিকা পুৰাণত সাজ-পাৰক বস্ত্ৰ বা 'আস্বাদন' বোলা হৈছিল। কালিকা পুৰাণত চিলোৱা আৰু নিচিলোৱা দুয়োবিধ সাজৰে বৰ্ণনা আছে। অতি পুৰণি দিনৰে পৰা অসমীয়া সাজপাৰ চিলোৱাৰ নিয়ম আমাৰ সমাজত আছে।

অসমৰ জলবায়ু সেমেকা। সেমেকা জলবায়ুৰ নিত্যব্যৱহাৰ্য সামগ্ৰীসমূহো ইয়াৰ বাতাবৰণ মতেই বনোৱা হয়। শীতত নোমাল আৰু উমথকা এৰীৰ বৰ কাপোৰ আৰু গৰমত কপাহী কাপোৰ অতি যতনেৰে বৈ লোৱা হয়।

সভ্যতা সংস্কৃতিৰ অন্যতম পথ নিৰ্দেশক হৈছে সাজপাৰ আৰু অলংকাৰ পাতি। সাজপাৰৰ পৰাই বৰ্ণ, বিবাহিত, অবিবাহিত, বয়স, লিংগ এই প্ৰভেদসমূহ আমি নিৰ্ণয় কৰিব পাৰো। পুৰোহিত, ব্ৰাহ্মণ, মহন্ত, সত্ৰাধিকাৰ, বৈৰাগী, সন্যাসী আদিৰ সাজপাৰৰ পাৰ্থক্য আজিও আছে। ধাৰ্মিক আৰু সামাজিক জীৱনৰ লগতো বস্ত্ৰ অলংকাৰৰ বিশেষ সম্বন্ধ আছে। পূজা পাৰ্বণত পূজাৰীয়ে নতুন বস্ত্ৰ অথবা সাধনাত আৰু কোনো কোনো পূজা অৰ্চনাত ৰঙা কাপোৰ পিন্ধাৰ নিয়ম। দুৰ্গা পূজাত নতুন কাপোৰ পিন্ধাৰ নিৰ্দেশনা

কালিকা পুৰাণে দিছে। বিবাহ অনুষ্ঠানত দৰা-কইনা উভয়ে নোৱনিৰ পিছত নতুন বস্ত্ৰ পিন্ধিব লাগে। পুৰণি বস্ত্ৰ আঁতৰাই নতুন বস্ত্ৰৰে মৃতকৰ দেহ ঢকাৰ বিধি শাস্ত্ৰীয়। গুৰু-গোঁসাই অথবা নামঘৰত সেৱা জনালে কান্ধত চাদৰ বা গামোচা ল'ব লাগে।

পুৰণি অসমৰ চাৰিওপিনে সিঁচৰিত হৈ থকা মিকিৰ পাহাৰ, গাৰো পাহাৰ, মিচিং পাহাৰ আদিত কপাহৰ খেতি ভাল হৈছিল। আনহাতে ভৈয়ামত এৰী, মুগা-পাট সূতাৰ বাবে পলু পুহিবলৈ এৰা গছ, চোমগছ, সোৱালু গছ, মেজাংকৰি গছ, কেচেৰু গছ, দীঘলতি, নুনি আদি গছ পৰ্যাপ্ত আছিল। সেই বাবে সাজ-পোচাকবোৰ ইয়াত উৎপন্ন হোৱা সূতাবোৰেৰে তৈয়াৰ কৰি লৈছিল।

অসমৰ ভাস্কৰ্যসমূহত অসমীয়া সাজ-পোচাকত মাত্ৰ তিনিখন বস্ত্ৰৰ অনুমান কৰা হয়। সেয়া হ'ল— ভূনি (ধুতী), পছৰা (চেলোং) আৰু মূৰত পাগুৰি মাৰিছিল। কনৌজৰ ধৰ্মানুষ্ঠানত কামৰূপৰ ৰজা ভাস্কৰ বৰ্মাৰ মূৰত ৰত্নখচিত মুকুট পিন্ধিছিল। বৰ্তমানেও গাঁওৰ মুখিয়াল মানুহে মূৰত এটা পাগুৰি মৰা দেখা যায়। পূৰ্বাঞ্চলৰ জনজাতি বিশেষকৈ খাচী, মণিপুৰীসকলৰ মাজতো শিৰা ভৰণ দেখা যায়।

প্ৰাক্ আহোম কালত অসমীয়া মহিলাই কেৱল দুপদ বস্ত্ৰ পৰিধান কৰিছিল। এপদ কঁকালৰ পৰা তলৰ অংশলৈ 'নিবিবন্ধ'ৰে বান্ধি ৰাখিছিল আৰু আনপদ দেহৰ ওপৰত অংশ ঢাকিবলৈ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছিল। বৰ্তমানেও কামৰূপ জিলাৰ গাঁও অঞ্চলৰ তিৰোতাই দুখন কাপোৰহে সাধাৰণতে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে। মেখেলাখন বুকুত মেঠনি মাৰি পিন্ধি পছৰা বা পাতনিখনেৰে মূৰত ওৰণিৰে সৈতে পিঠিৰ অংশ ঢাকি লয়। উজনি অসমৰ নগাঁও আদি কিছুমান ঠাইত তিৰোতা বিধৱা হ'লে দুখন কপাহ কাপোৰ পিন্ধা নিয়ম এতিয়াও আছে।

আহোম যুগত সাজপাৰৰ কিছু পৰিৱৰ্তন আহিছিল। প্ৰৱ্ৰজনকাৰী ক'লা কাপোৰ পৰিহিত আহোমসকলে অসমীয়া সাজ-পাৰৰ বাতাবৰণত সোমাই পৰি বগা আৰু বিভিন্ন ৰঙৰ কাপোৰ পৰিধান কৰিবলৈ লৈছিল। আহোমৰ মাজত চোলা আৰু ঠেঙা পিন্ধা নিয়ম আছিল। গাত 'উত্তৰীয়া' লৈছিল। তিৰোতাই কঁকালত 'মেখেলা' বা 'লহঙা' পিন্ধি বুকুত মেঠনি মাৰি মূৰত এখন কাপোৰ লৈছিল। 'বিহা' আহোম যুগৰ পৰা জনপ্ৰিয় হয়।

আগতে পুৰুষ মহিলা উভয়ে হাবিৰ পৰা চোম, মেজাংকৰি আদি গছৰ পাত

আনি মুগা, দেওমুগা, এৰী পলু আদিক পাতবোৰ খুৱাই পলু পুহিছিল। এই পলুৰ পৰাই সূতা কাটি আঁহ উলিয়াই মুগাৰ সোণবৰণীয়া সূতা, এৰী সূতা আদিবোৰ উলিয়াই তাৰ পৰাই মুগা কাপোৰ, এৰী কাপোৰ, পাট কাপোৰ আদি বৈ উলিয়াইছিল।

পাট সূতাৰে অসমীয়া মহিলাই ৰিহা-মেখেলা, তিনি কঠীয়া, ছয় কঠীয়া, চেলেং, খনিয়া কাপোৰ আদি বৈ উলিয়াইছিল। পুৰুষসকলৰ বাবে চোলা, চুৰিয়া, পাগ, চেলেং আদি বৈ উলিয়াইছিল।

কালিকা পুৰাণমতে ৰঙা আৰু হালধীয়া পোছাকে সন্ত্ৰম বুজাইছিল। সেয়ে অসমত ধৰ্মীয় অনুষ্ঠানত ৰঙা, নীলা পোছাক পিন্ধাৰ অনুমোদন কৰা নহৈছিল। যেতিয়া দৰা-কইনাই বিবাহ সম্পন্ন কৰে তেতিয়া তেওঁলোকে বগা পাটৰ কাপোৰহে পিন্ধিব লাগিছিল।

কোঁটিল্যৰ অৰ্থ শাস্ত্ৰত উল্লেখ কৰা ঘেঁহু বৰণীয়া মিহি কাপোৰ বা স্ফৌম দুকুল পত্ৰোমৰ উৎপন্ন হোৱাৰ কথা কোৱা আৰু হৰ্ষচৰিতত বিভিন্ন উল্লেখৰ পটভূমিত এইবোৰ যে অসমৰ এৰী-মুগা-পাট তাক দেখুৱাবলৈ পণ্ডিতসকলে যত্ন কৰিছে।

মহাৰাজ ৰুদ্ৰ সিংহৰ দিনত মোগলাই সাজ-পাৰৰ প্ৰভাৱ অসমত পৰিছিল। তেতিয়া অসমৰ মুছলমান তিৰোতাৰ সাজ কিন্তু ৰিহা মেখেলাহে আছিল। মোগলৰ পাগ জমা আদিৰ প্ৰভাৱ সত্ৰৰ ভিতৰলৈকো সোমাই নৃত্য, ভাওনা বিশেষকৈ সূত্ৰধাৰী নৃত্যত সোমাই পৰিছিল। আহোমৰ দিনতেই তিৰোতাই চীনা আৰ্হিত হাত-দীঘল চুটি চোলা পিন্ধিছিল।

অসমত শাৰীৰ প্ৰচলন নাছিল। দিহিঙ্গীয়া ৰজাৰ দিনত কোচ ৰজাই শাৰী উপহাৰ হিচাপে পঠাওঁতে সেইবোৰ ‘খাৰচাই’ (নীচ তিৰোতা) তিৰোতাই পিন্ধে বুলি উপনুঙা কৰিছিল। ঊনবিংশ শতিকাত বঙালী লোক অসমলৈ অহাত ইয়াত শাৰীৰ প্ৰচলন হ’বলৈ ধৰে।

আহোম ৰজা শিৱ সিংহৰ ৰাজত্বত তেওঁৰ ৰাণী ফুলেশ্বৰী কুঁৱৰীৰ নিৰ্দেশত অসমীয়া ছোৱালীক ৰাজকাৰেঙতেই সূতা কাটি তাত ববলৈ শিকোৱা হৈছিল। এটা সময়ত মোগল সংস্কৃতিৰ প্ৰভাৱত অসমীয়া তিৰোতাই মেজাংকৰী কাপোৰ ব’ই মোগল সংস্কৃতিক অসমীয়া সংস্কৃতিৰ ভিতৰলৈ কৰিছিল। ৰাণীসকলে সাধাৰণতে মেজাংকৰী কাপোৰ হে পৰিধান কৰিছিল। মেজাংকৰী কাপোৰ সাজত গোটেই গাতে গুণাৰে কাম

কৰা হৈছিল। কিংখাপ কাপোৰতো গুণাৰে বন কৰা হৈছিল। কিংখাপ কাপোৰত ভৰিৰ পৰা কঁকাললৈকে কেৱল গুণাৰে লতাফুল ওপৰত কঙ্কা তুলি ময়ূৰ বা সিংহৰ ছবি তুলি দিয়া হৈছিল। এইবিধ কাপোৰ খাচীয়া জয়ন্তীয়া সকলৰ অৱদান।

আহোম শাসন নীতিত সকলো বিষয়াৰ বাবে শ্ৰেণী অনুসৰি সাজপাৰ নিৰ্ধাৰিত আছিল। মূৰৰ পাগ, চেলেং, কাপোৰ আদিয়ে বিষয়াসকলৰ মৰ্যদা কৈ দিছিল। ৰুচি আৰু সপ্তম অনুসৰি আহোম যুগত মানুহে কাপোৰ পিন্ধিছিল।

সাধাৰণ অসমীয়া তিৰোতাই কপাহী মেখেলা-চাদৰ পিন্ধিয়েই সন্তুষ্ট থাকিব লগীয়া হৈছিল। অসমীয়া মহিলাৰ প্ৰত্যেকেই কপাহৰ পৰা বা পাট, মুগা, এৰী পলুৰ পৰা সূতা কাটি নিজৰ যাবতীয় সাজ তৈয়াৰ কৰাৰ লগতে আনকো দিব পাৰিছিল। এওঁলোকে যুদ্ধলৈ যোৱা স্বামীক ৰাতিটোৰ ভিতৰতে কপাহ ধুনি সূতা কাটি 'কবচ' কাপোৰ ব'হি দিছিল।

সাজপাৰৰ অধিক পৰিৱৰ্তন আৰু বিকাশ ঘটে মহাৰাজ ৰুদ্ৰ সিংহৰ দিনত। অসমীয়া মহিলাই ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা 'বিহা', 'মেখেলা' খনীয়া কাপোৰ ভাৰতৰ আন ঠাইত ব্যৱহাৰ নহয়। অসমৰ চাৰিওদিশে থকা জনজাতীয় তিৰোতাই বিহা, মেখেলা নিজৰ নিজৰ ঢঙত পিন্ধে। অৱশ্যে ভাষা অনুযায়ী ত্ৰিপুৰীসকলে 'বিহা'ক 'বিশ্বা' কয়। অসমৰ পূব দিশত বসতি কৰা টাই, মংগোলীয়া, অষ্ট্ৰিক আদি জনগোষ্ঠীৰলোকৰ মাজত মেখেলাৰ প্ৰচলন বহুলভাৱে আছে। তেওঁলোকে মেখেলাক 'চিম' চাৰং আৰু বিহাক নংগুবাট বুলি কয়।

অসমীয়া ডেকা-গাভৰু বিবাহযোগ্য হ'লে মাক বৌৱেকহঁতে নানা তৰহৰ কাপোৰ বৈ দিয়ে। জোঁৱায়েকলৈ বোৱা কাপোৰত তোলা ফুলৰ বৰ্ণনা—

“শাহু আই কাপোৰ দিছে

সোণৰ গুণা টানি ঐ

... ..

বৰণৰ কাপোৰত তুলি থৈছে পহু ঐ

এই পহু চাবলৈকে ঐ

সৈন্য গৈছে বহু

বৰণৰ কাপোৰত তুলি থৈছে সাপ ঐ

মুখ মেলি খাব খোজে  
ৰাইজে দিছে হাক ঐ

বন্ধা-বঢ়া কাৰ্যত তিবোতা পুৰুষ সকলোৱে ৰঙীন কাপোৰ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰাৰ নিয়ম এতিয়াও গাঁৱে-ভূঞা চলি আছে। অসমৰ বড়ো, কাৰ্বি, লালুং আদি বিভিন্ন জনজাতিৰ তিবোতাসকলৰ মাজত ৰঙীন কাপোৰ বৰ প্ৰিয়। ৰাফ্ৰানি ঘৰত ভাত ৰাফ্ৰিবৰ বাবে আগতে তিবোতাবোৰে মেখেলা আৰু পাতনি ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছিল। পুৰুষসকলে আঁঠু বা তিনিহতীয়া গামোচা ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছিল।

দুৰ্গাপূজাত নতুন কাপোৰ পিন্ধাৰ নিৰ্দেশ কালিকা পুৰাণে দিছিল। বিবাহিত ঘাইকৈ প্ৰতিদিনৰ নোৱানিৰ পিছত দৰা কন্যা উভয়ে নতুন বস্ত্ৰ পিন্ধাৰ নিয়ম আজিও আছে। গুৰু-গোসাঁই অথবা নামঘৰত সেৱা জনালে কান্ধত চাদৰ বা গামোচা গলবস্ত্ৰ ৰূপে ল'ব লাগে।

বস্ত্ৰদান পুণ্যকাৰ্য। ব'হাগ বিহুত ন-কাপোৰ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰাৰ ওপৰিও আত্মীয় কুটুম্বৰ মাজত বস্ত্ৰৰ আদান-প্ৰদান চলে। আগতে ৰজাৰ ঘৰলৈ পঠোৱা সন্দেশ বাৰ্তাৰ লগত বস্ত্ৰ-অলংকাৰো উপঢৌকণ-স্বৰূপে পঠোৱা হৈছিল। আহোম স্বৰ্গদেউসকলে মোগললৈ পঠোৱা উপহাৰৰ ভিতৰত নানা ধৰণৰ বস্ত্ৰ লগতে সাজপাৰো আছিল। বিবাহ, মৃত্যু অনুষ্ঠানত আৰু বছেৰেকীয়া কৰ হিচাপে গুৰুঘৰলৈ বস্ত্ৰ আগবঢ়োৱা ৰীতি এতিয়াও প্ৰচলিত। নৱবস্ত্ৰ আগবঢ়াই দৰা-কইনাই মানীজনক সেৱা জনোৱা ৰীতি এতিয়াও প্ৰচলিত।

ভাৰতৰ অন্যান্য প্ৰদেশৰ দৰে ধোতি বা ধূতিয়েই সৰ্বশ্ৰেণীৰ অসমীয়া মানুহৰ সকলো যুগতে প্ৰধান অধোবাস আছিল। এই ধূতি পিন্ধা পদ্ধতিৰ পৰাই মানুহৰ সামাজিক মৰ্যদা নিৰ্ণয় কৰিব পাৰি। খেতিয়ক, গৰখীয়া আদিয়ে নাইৰ তলত আৰু আঁঠুৰ ওপৰত পেলাই ধূতি পিন্ধিছিল। কাম-বন কৰোঁতে সুলকি নপৰিবলৈ ধূতিৰ এটা আচল কঁকালত টানকৈ মেৰিয়াই বান্ধিছিল।

দ্বিতীয় বস্ত্ৰ হ'ল উত্তৰীয়া বা চাদৰ। চাদৰ সাধাৰণতে ডিঙিত পেলাই দুই বাহুৰ ওপৰেদি সন্মুখলৈ অনা নিয়ম। এই প্ৰথাই শোভা বঢ়ায়, কিন্তু শৰীৰৰ আচ্ছাদিত নকৰে।

আহোম আৰু মোগলৰ দিনৰ পৰাই মূৰত পাগুৰি মৰাৰ প্ৰচলন হয়। অৱশ্যে কনৌজৰ মেলত ভাস্কৰ বৰ্মাই শিৰোবেষ্টনেৰে যোগ দিয়াৰ উল্লেখ আছে। পুৰণি পুথিত

অনেক প্ৰকাৰৰ শিৰোবেষ্টনৰ চিত্ৰ আছে। বিষয়াসকলৰ বাহিৰেও সৈনিকসকলেও মূৰত কাপোৰ বান্ধিছিল। এতিয়াও গাঁৱৰ ডেকাসকলৰ মাজত মূৰত গামোচা মৰা প্ৰথা চলি আছে।

অসমীয়া উচ্চ শ্ৰেণীৰ তিৰোতাই ভবিৰ সৰু গাঁঠিলৈকে পেলাই সনুখৰ পিনে দুটামান দীঘল ভাঁজ বখাই মেখেলা পিন্ধে। বুকুৰ কঁকাল তপিনালৈকে ঘূৰাই, ঘূৰাই বিহা লোৱা হয়। বিহাই কঁচলি বা স্তনপট্টমৰ কাম কৰে। বিহা লোৱা ভঙ্গিমাই পিঠি সম্পূৰ্ণভাৱে আচ্ছাদিত কৰে। নাৰী দেহৰ কোনো অংগই যাতে লোকদৃষ্টিৰ গোচৰীভূত নহয় সেই ভাৱৰ পৰাই অসমীয়া তিৰোতাই চাদৰ চলেং ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে।

আহোম যুগৰ পৰাই অসমীয়া সাজপাৰত বিদেশী প্ৰভাৱ বিশেষভাৱে পৰিলক্ষিত হয়। সী লোৱা বস্ত্ৰৰ ব্যাপক প্ৰচলন এই সময়ৰ পৰাই হয়। চোলা, এঙ্গাচোলা, জামা, চৌগা-চাপকন, ঘাপথা, জোতা এইবোৰ আহোম-মোগলসকলৰ দিনৰ পৰাই চলি আহিছে।

বৈচিত্ৰ্যৰ মাজত এক্য সাধনেই হৈছে অসমীয়া সংস্কৃতিৰ বৈশিষ্ট্য। অসমলৈ নানা মানুহ যুগ যুগ ধৰি আহিছে আৰু গৈছে। সেইবিলাকৰ অনেক উপাদান ইয়াত সংযোজিত হৈছে। সাজপাৰ আদিতো ইয়াৰ বৈশিষ্ট্য ৰৈ গৈছে।

### বস্ত্ৰ শিল্পত ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা আহিলা—

অসমৰ প্ৰাচীন কালৰে পৰাই বস্ত্ৰ শিল্পৰ বিকাশ হৈ আহিছে। অসমৰ সভ্যতা সংস্কৃতিৰ ঐতিহ্যমণ্ডিত আৰু গৌৰৱময় জাতীয় শিল্পসমূহৰ ভিতৰতো বয়ন শিল্পৰ স্থান অতুলনীয়।

বিভিন্ন কুটীৰ শিল্পত চহকী অসমৰ তাঁত বা বয়ন শিল্প বিশেষ উল্লেখযোগ্য। প্ৰাচীন যুগৰে পৰা কপাহী মুগা, পাট, এৰী আদিৰ বহুল প্ৰচলন অসমৰ বয়ন শিল্পৰ গৌৰৱপূৰ্ণ ঐতিহ্যকে সোঁৱৰায়। প্ৰাচীন মহাকাব্য ৰামায়ণ, মহাভাৰত আদিতো অসমৰ বস্ত্ৰশিল্পই ব্যাপকতা লাভ কৰিছে।

অসমৰ বয়ন শিল্পৰ উৎকৃষ্ট নিদৰ্শন বৈষ্ণৱ যুগত বিশেষ উল্লেখযোগ্য কোচ ৰজা নৰনাৰায়ণৰ অঞ্জাত মহাপুৰুষ শংকৰদেৱে তাঁতীকুছিত নানা ৰঙ বিৰঙৰ সূতাৰে শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ লীলা চিত্ৰ বস্ত্ৰত বোৱাই তুলিছিল। সেয়া আছিল বৃন্দাবনী বস্ত্ৰ। এই বৃন্দাবনী বস্ত্ৰৰ শিল্পকলা আছিল অপূৰ্ব অতুলনীয়।

স্বৰ্গদেউ প্ৰতাপ সিংহৰ ৰাজত্বকালত মোমাই তামুলী বৰবৰাই প্ৰতিগৰাকী অসমীয়া তিৰোতাক প্ৰতিদিনে একোটা সূতা লাহি কটাৰ নিয়ম বান্ধি দিছিল। এই জনা বৰবৰাই শুৱালকুছিত বহুওৱা তাঁতীসকলে মুগা-পাট বস্ত্ৰ উৎপাদন কৰি অসমীয়া সাজপাৰৰ স্বকীয়তাৰে সকলোকে চমক খুৱাব পাৰিছিল।

তলত তাঁতশালৰ লগত জড়িত বা সাজ-পাৰ বনোৱাত ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা কেইপদমান আহিলাৰ বিষয়ে আলোচনা আগবঢ়োৱা হ'ল—

**টোলোঠা বা গাৰী**— তাঁতশালৰ কাপোৰ আৰু দীঘ সূতা মেৰিয়াবৰ কাৰণে এই গাৰী বা টোলোঠা ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়।

**দোৰপতি (দেহঠেনী)**— তাত শালৰ বাঁচখন ধৰি ৰাখিবলৈ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা কাঠেৰে নিৰ্মিত এবিধ সঁজুলি। দোৰপতিয়ে বাঁচখন লৰাব নোৱাৰাকৈ শালখনে হেঁচা মাৰি ধৰি ৰাখে। জাকি ডাঙি মাকো সৰকায় সূতাত তাৰ দি গ'লে কাপোৰ তৈয়াৰ হৈ গৈ থাকে। শালখনৰ কাম হ'ল বাঁও হাতেৰে তাৰ দি যোৱা।

**ৰাঁহ (ৰাচ)**— লোহা বা বাঁহেৰে এই ৰাঁহ বনোৱা হয়। এই ৰাঁহবোৰত সৰু সৰু অসংখ্য ফুটা থাকে। এই ফুটাবোৰে দীঘ সূতা টানি আনি টোলোঠাত ভৰোৱা হয়।

**মাকোঁ**— দুই মুখ জোং থকা এবিধ সঁজুলি। ইয়াৰ ভিতৰত মছৰা ভৰাই কাপোৰ বোৱা হয়। মাকো দুবিধ আছে। এবিধ উৰণীয়া মাকো আনবিধ হাত শালৰ মাকো।

**মছৰা**— কাঠ বা প্লাষ্টিকেৰে এই মছৰা বনোৱা হয়। ইয়াত সূতাবোৰ যঁতৰৰ সহায়েৰে ফুৰাই লোৱা হয়।

**নাচনী**— কাঠ বা বাঁহেৰে নিৰ্মিত এবিধ সঁজুলি ইয়াত সৰু ৰচী লাগই তাঁত শালৰ জাকি তোলা হয়।

**গুৰি**— বাঁহেৰে নিৰ্মিত মিহিকৈ চাঁচি লোৱা গোটা দীঘলবাৰী। গুৰিবোৰ সাধাৰণতে তামোল গছৰ পৰা তৈয়াৰ কৰা হয়। এই গুৰিবোৰে সাধাৰণতে—

**যঁতৰ**— কাঠ বা চাইকেলৰ ৰিঙেৰে নিৰ্মিত এবিধ সঁজুলি। ইয়াৰ সহায়ত মছৰা বটা, ববিন ফুৰোৱা, গুণা পাক দিয়া আদি কামবোৰ কৰা হয়।

**বহনি**— পাটসূতা লোৱা এবিধ সঁজুলি। ইয়াৰ দুয়োমূৰে দুটা বাঁহৰ খুটি থাকে। এই খুটি দুটাতে পাট বা মুগাৰ সূতা সোমাই দি নটাতে সূতা লোৱা হয়।

**উঘা**— বাঁহেৰে নিৰ্মিত এবিধ সঁজুলি। ইয়াত সূতা লৈ বাটি কঢ়া হয়।

**নটা**— বাঁহেৰে নিৰ্মিত এবিধ সঁজুলি। নটাটো আগফালে জোঙা। ইয়াত পাট বা মুগাৰ দীঘ সূতা, বাণি সূতা লোৱা হয়।

**গৰকা**— সৰু গোটা বাঁহেৰে নিৰ্মিত এবিধ সঁজুলি। ইয়াৰ সহায়ত শিপিনীয়ে ভৰিৰে গৰকা দাঙি কাপোৰ বয়। পাট-মুগা শালবোৰত গৰকা সাধাৰণতে তিনিটা থাকে। এটা মেচিনৰ গৰকা আন দুটা জাকি দঙা গৰকা।

**চেৰেকী**— বাঁহেৰে নিৰ্মিত এবিধ সঁজুলি। ইয়াত সূতাৰ খাত ভৰোৱাই মছৰা বা ববনি বটা হয়।

**চেৰী**— চেৰীৰে পাট, মুগাসূতাৰ কাপোৰত ফুল তোলা হয়। এইবিধ বাঁহেৰে নিৰ্মিত এবিধ সঁজুলি।

**পুতল**— কাপোৰ বৈ থাকোঁতে এই পুতলযোৰ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়। পুতলযোৰ সাধাৰণতে বাঁহ বা কাঠেৰে নিৰ্মাণ কৰা হয়।

**নাচনী**— এইবিধ আহিলা বয়ন কাৰ্যত অত্যন্ত প্ৰয়োজনীয়। নাচনীয়ে বহাৰ সহায়ত কাপোৰৰ জাকি তল-ওপৰ কৰি বয়ন কাৰ্যত সহায় কৰে।

**জখলা মাৰি**— এইবিধ আহিলা দোপ্তী আৰু চালিমাৰি কাঠামত ধৰি ৰাখিবলৈ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়। ইয়াৰ গাৰ ওপৰ অংশত জখলাৰ দৰে খাজ কাটা।

**চালিমাৰি**— এই আহিলাবিধ নাচনী ওলামবলৈ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়। সাধাৰণতে চালি মাৰিডাল বাঁহেৰে সজা হয়।

**মুঠি**— মুঠি সাধাৰণতে কাঠেৰে সজা এটি সৰু আহিলা। মুঠি টানিলে শালৰ মাকোটো ইফালৰ পৰা সিফাল কৰিব পাৰি।

**নিগনি খুটি**— বাটি কাঢ়োতে ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা তিনিটা খুটিৰ মাজৰটোক নিগনি খুটি বুলি কোৱা হয়।

**মেৰ খুটি**— দীঘ সূতা মেৰ দিবলৈ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা খুটি।

**ককিলা মাৰি**— ককিলা মাছৰ দৰে দুই মূৰ জোঙা বাবে এইবিধ আহিলাক ককিলা মাৰি বুলি কোৱা হয়। গৰকাৰ সন্মুখত মূৰ দুটাত খোলনি কৰি, সেই খোলনিত ককিলা মাৰিডাল পথালিকৈ ভৰাই দুটা সৰু খুঁটিত সুমুৱাই লৈ সংস্থাপন কৰা হয়। এই ককিলা মাৰিত সুমুৱাই লোৱাৰ বাবে গৰকা দুটা চলোৱাত ই ধুৰাৰ দৰে কাম কৰে।

**শালৰ খুটা**— আগতে মানুহে শালৰ খুটা তামোল বা বাঁহ গছৰে তৈয়াৰী কৰি

লৈছিল। এই খুঁটা চাৰিটা। প্ৰত্যেকটো খুটাৰে নাম আছে। যেনে— বিশ্বকৰ্মা খুটা, কুমাৰ খুটা, পুলি খুটা ইত্যাদি।

**জোখ খাঠি**— আগৰ দিনত আজিৰ দৰে জোখ-মাখ কৰা কোনো ধৰণৰ ফিটা বা স্কেল নাছিল। তেতিয়াৰ দিনত শিপিনীবোৰে জোখ-মাখ কৰিবলৈ জোখ কাঠি ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছিল। একাঠি মানে একগজ। শিপিনীৰ হাতৰ দৈৰ্ঘ্যৰ জোখত সাজি লোৱা এনে একেডাল কাঠিৰ জোখ আছিল তিনিহাত। সেই হিচাপে অসমীয়া শিপিনীয়ে ডেৰকঠীয়া গামোচা, দুকঠীয়া তিয়নি, তিনিকঠীয়া চেলেং আদি জোখত বিভিন্ন কাপোৰ বৈ উলিয়াইছিল।

**সামৰণি**— এইদৰে ওপৰত উল্লেখ কৰা ধৰণে বস্ত্ৰ শিল্প বা সাজপাৰ বৈ উলিওৱাত ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা আহিলাসমূহ আমি পুৰণি দিনৰ পৰা এতিয়ালৈকে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰি আহিছোঁ। ইয়াৰে কিছু বস্ত্ৰ আধুনিক যুগৰ লগত খাপ খুৱাই উন্নতমান বিশিষ্ট হৈছে। ■

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# গোৱালপৰীয়া লোকগীতত প্ৰেমৰ চিত্ৰ

সংগীতা বৈশ্য

সহকাৰী অধ্যাপিকা, অসমীয়া বিভাগ

পাতিদৰং মহাবিদ্যালয়

বিভিন্ন জাতি-জনজাতিৰ মিলনভূমি সুজলা-সুফলা, শস্য-শ্যামলা অসমী আই। এই অসমী আইৰ বুকুতে সমৃদ্ধ হৈ আছে মৌখিক গীত-মাত, সাধুকথা, বিহুগীত, আখ্যান, ফাঁকৰা-যোজনা আদি আৰু ইয়াৰ সংমিশ্ৰণতে গঢ় লৈ উঠিছে বৰ্ণাঢ্য অসমীয়া সমাজৰ সামগ্ৰিক সৃষ্টি। বিষয়বস্তুৰ বৈবিধ্য আৰু গঠনৰীতিৰ বিচিত্ৰতাৰে অসমীয়া লোকগীত সমৃদ্ধ। অসমীয়া লোক সাহিত্যৰ ইতিহাসত এই লোকগীত সমূহে এক বিশিষ্ট স্থান দখল কৰি আহিছে।

ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ পূৰ্বদিশত অৱস্থিত নানা গুণেৰে বিভূষিত ৰূপহী অসম। এই অসম ৰাজ্যৰ পশ্চিম প্ৰান্তত অৱস্থিত অবিভক্ত গোৱালপাৰা জিলা। এই জিলাখন লোকগীতৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত চহকী। এই লোকগীত সমূহৰ মাজেৰে গোৱালপৰীয়া গঞৰ দাম্পত্য জীৱনৰ সুখ-দুখ, হাঁহি-কান্দোন, আশা-নিৰাশা, মান-অভিমান, প্ৰেম-বিবহৰ বাস্তৱ ছবিখন আকৰ্ষণীয় ৰূপত ফুটি উঠিছে। এওঁলোক গোৱা বিভিন্ন গীতৰ ভিতৰত অধিক জনপ্ৰিয় গীত হ'ল প্ৰেমমূলক লোকগীত সমূহ আৰু এই গীতসমূহে গোৱালপৰীয়া লোকগীতৰ পথাৰখনৰ এক বিস্তৃত অঞ্চল আগুৰি আছে।

এই গীতবোৰৰ মাজেৰে প্ৰকাশ হয় প্ৰেমিক-প্ৰেমিকাৰ সুখ-দুখ, হাঁহি-কান্দোন, বিবহ-মিলনৰ ছবি আৰু এই গীততেই প্ৰতিধ্বনিত হৈছে প্ৰোষিত ভৰ্তৃকা নাৰীৰ

অপূৰ্ণ কামনা আৰু প্ৰিয়জনৰ সংগ লাভৰ প্ৰতি থকা অদম্য বাসনা।

### গোৱালপৰীয়া প্ৰেমমূলক লোকগীতৰ প্ৰকাৰ:

গোৱালপৰীয়া প্ৰেমমূলক লোকগীতসমূহ সংবেদনশীল আৰু অনুভূতিৰ তীব্ৰতাৰে সিন্ধু। এই গীতসমূহৰ মাজেৰে খাঁটিখোৱা, অনাখৰী চহা, সম্ভ্ৰান্ত সমাজৰ দ্বাৰা অৱহেলিত-নিষ্পেষিত এক শ্ৰেণীৰ লোকৰ দুৰ্বিষহ জীৱনৰ ছবি প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। গোৱালপাৰা অঞ্চলত প্ৰচলিত হৈ থকা প্ৰেমমূলক গীতৰ ভিতৰত উল্লেখযোগ্য চাৰিবিধ গীত হ'ল—

- (ক) মাছত বন্ধুৰ গীত (মাউত)
- (খ) নাইয়া গীত (নাৱৰীয়া)
- (গ) গাড়ীয়াল গীত
- (ঘ) ম'ইয়াল গীত

ইয়াৰ উপৰিও ভৱাইয়া আৰু চটকা প্ৰেমমূলক আৰু কৰুণ বসাত্মক গীত। হস্তীকন্যাৰ গীত আৰু মৈষালী গীতো কৰুণ বসাত্মক। ভাসান গীতৰ সুৰো কৰুণ বসাত্মক। এই শ্ৰেণীৰ প্ৰেমমূলক গীতৰ মাজেৰে স্বামী বিৰহত কাতৰ হোৱা নাৰী মনৰ বিৰহ তথা প্ৰিয়জনক পোৱাৰ বাসনা আৰু নোপোৱাৰ বেদনা মূৰ্ত হৈ উঠিছে। ভাসান গীতৰ মাজেৰে নাৰী হৃদয়ৰ গোপন আশা, বিৰহ-বেদনাৰ ছবি পৰিস্ফুট হোৱা দেখা যায়। আনহাতে, চটকা গীতৰ মাজেৰে খুছতীয়া ৰূপ প্ৰকাশ পায়।

গোৱালপৰীয়া গীতসমূহ চহা জীৱনৰ সুখ-দুখৰ বাস্তৱ দলিল। খাঁটিখোৱা চহা লোকসকল সদায় নিষ্পেষিত তথা উপেক্ষিত হৈ আহিছে জমিদাৰী, ধনাঢ্য শ্ৰেণীৰ লোকৰ দ্বাৰা। জীৱন-জীৱিকাৰ তাড়নাত কম মজুৰিত এই লোকসকলে মূৰৰ ঘাম মাটিত পেলাই নিজৰ জীৱন বিপদাপন্ন কৰিও নিষ্ঠাসহকাৰে কাম কৰি যায়। যাৰ ফলস্বৰূপে, জমিদাৰসকল চহকী হোৱাৰ বিপৰীতে খাঁটিখোৱা লোকসকল নিষ্পেষিত হৈ আহিছে। এই নিষ্পেষিত চহা লোকসকলৰ মুখ বাগৰি অহা সুখ-দুখ, হাঁহি-কান্দোনৰ প্ৰকাশ ঘটা গীতসমূহেই লোকগীত। এওঁলোকে গোৱা গীতৰ মাজেৰেই প্ৰেম-ভালপোৱা, আশা-নিৰাশা, বিৰহ-বেদনা আদিৰ কাৰুণ্যৰ ছবি ফুটি উঠা দেখা যায়। কিন্তু আমাৰ আলোচ্য বিষয় হ'ল গোৱালপৰীয়া প্ৰেমমূলক লোকগীত। এই লোকগীত সমূহৰ অন্তৰ্গত গীত সম্পৰ্কে চমু আলোচনা আগবঢ়াবলৈ প্ৰয়াস কৰা হ'ল—

## (ক) মাছত বা মাউত বন্ধুৰ গীত:

মাছত বন্ধুৰ গীত প্ৰেমমূলক গোৱালপৰীয়া লোকগীতৰ অন্যতম শাখা। অতীজৰে পৰা গোৱালপৰীয়া ৰাজপৰিয়াল, জমিদাৰ, ধনাঢ্য, অভিজাত লোকসকলে নিজৰ আভিজাত্য প্ৰকাশৰ বাবে তথা বেপাৰ-বাণিজ্য, চিকাৰ, যুদ্ধ-বিগ্ৰহ আদি কৰিবলৈ হাতী পুহিছিল আৰু সেই বন্যহস্তীক বশ কৰি, পোহপাল দিয়াৰ বাবে নিয়োগ কৰা আৰ্থিকভাৱে দুৰ্বল শ্ৰমজীৱী হাতী চালকজনেই হ'ল 'মাছত' বা 'মাউত'। নিজৰ সুখ স্বাচ্ছন্দ্য, পৰিয়াল পৰিজনক এৰি ৰ'দ-বৰষুণ, শীত-তাপক আওকাণ কৰি দুবেলা দুমুঠি ভাতৰ বাবে আনৰ তলত কাম কৰা অনাদৃত, নিষ্পেষিত মাছতসকলৰ দুৰ্বিসহ জীৱনক লৈ গোৱা গীতবোৰেই হ'ল 'মাছত গীত'। চৰিত্ৰৰ ফালৰপৰা লেখত নপৰা বিধৰ, সামাজিক পৰিচিতি কম থকা মাছতে নিজৰ দায়িত্ব পালন কৰিবলৈ কুৰ্ণাবোধ নকৰে। এই চৰিত্ৰটো নগণ্য চৰিত্ৰ হ'লেও তেওঁলোকো 'মানুহ'। তেওঁলোকৰ অন্তৰতো সুখ-দুখ, হাঁহি-কান্দোন, প্ৰেম-প্ৰীতি, আশা-নিৰাশা আছে। সেয়েহে এই চৰিত্ৰটো গোৱালপৰীয়া চহা গীতত প্ৰাণ পাই উঠিছে। বাস্তৱ সমাজৰ পৰা আঁতৰি থাকিলেও এই চৰিত্ৰটোৰো প্ৰেম হ'ব পাৰে। প্ৰেম প্ৰেমই। প্ৰেমত উচ্চ-নীচ, জাতি-ভেদৰ কথা নাথাকে। কিন্তু মাছতৰ সেই প্ৰেম যেন ক্ষণেকীয়া, তেনেভাৱ হয়, যেতিয়া মাছত স্বামীয়ে হাতীৰ গৰাকীৰ ঘৰত চাকৰি কৰিবলৈ গৈ পৰাধীন জীৱন কটাই নিজৰ পত্নীকো পাহৰাৰ উপক্ৰম হয়। সেয়েহে দুখনী পত্নীয়ে গীতৰ মাজেৰে মাছতক কৈছে—

“হাতীৰ পিঠিত ছড়িয়াৰে মাছত,  
হাতীৰ মায়া জানেন।  
পৰৰ ৰমণীৰ কথা,  
তোমৰা কিবা জানেন ৰে।।”

এই গীতৰ মাজেৰে স্বামীৰ বিৰহত কাতৰ নাৰীৰ মনৰ হুমুনিয়াহ প্ৰকট হৈ উঠিছে। চন্দ্ৰবিহীন আকাশখন যিদৰে অলেখ তৰাই পোহৰাৰ নোৱাৰে সেইদৰে স্বামীৰ অনুপস্থিতিত স্ত্ৰীৰ মনৰ চৌপাশো আন্ধাৰে আঙুৰি ধৰে। আনকি স্বামীৰ অনুপস্থিতিত নাৰীৰ ৰূপ লাৱণ্যও যে মূল্যহীন সেই কথা স্পষ্ট হৈ পৰিছে দুখনী মাছত পত্নীৰ গীতৰ মাজেৰে—

“আকাশত নাইৰে চন্দ্ৰ  
তাৰা কেমন জ্বলে।

যেবা নাৰীৰ পুৰুষ নাইও  
তাৰ ৰূপে কি কাম কৰে।”

জীৱিকাৰ সন্ধান আৰু কৰ্তব্যৰ তাগিদাত মাছতে মৰমৰ ঘৰ-সংসাৰ তথা মৰমী পত্নীক এৰি আঁতৰি আহি অটব্য অৰণ্যত হাতী চিকাৰৰ বাবে ঘূৰি ফুৰোঁতে হাবিয়নিৰ মাজত বালি চৰাই এজনীয়ে মতা চৰাইটো ওচৰত নথকাৰ বিৰহত কান্দি থকা দেখা পাইছিল। চৰাইজনীৰ এই মৰ্মস্তুদ দৃশ্য দেখি মাছতৰ অন্তৰতো দুখৰ উদ্ৰেক হৈছে আৰু ঘৰত অকলশৰে এৰি অহা পত্নী-পৰিয়াললৈ মনত পৰি বজ্ৰ কঠোৰ হৃদয়খনো দুখতে ভাঙি চুৰমাৰ হৈছে—

“বালু টিল্-টিল্ পংখী কান্দে  
ও হয় বালুতে পৰিয়া  
গৌৰীপুৰীয়া মাছত কান্দে ও  
সখী ঘৰ-বাৰী ছাড়িয়া ৰে।”

কৰ্তব্যৰ তাগিদাত সদ্য বিবাহিত পত্নীক এৰি যোৱাৰ দুখত দুখিত মাছত বন্ধুই পুনৰ দুখ প্ৰকাশ কৰি এনেদৰে গাইছে—

“আই ছাড়িলং, বাই-ছাড়িলং  
ছাড়িলং সোণাৰ পুৰী  
বিয়া কৰিয়া ছাড়িয়া আইলং ও  
সখী অল্প বয়সেৰ নাৰী ও।”

বিৰহ কাতৰা মাছত পত্নীয়ে স্বামীৰ সান্নিধ্যৰ পৰা বঞ্চিত হৈ মনৰ বেদনা প্ৰকাশ কৰি জমিদাৰৰ ঘৰত চাকৰি কৰি ঘৰ-সংসাৰৰ মায়া ত্যাগ কৰি, মাছতৰ হৃদয় শিলৰ দৰে কঠিন হোৱা বুলি প্ৰোষিতভৰ্তৃ মাছত পত্নীয়ে দুখ কৰিছে—

“ৰাজাৰ ঘৰেৰ চাকৰি নিয়া  
ছাৰিছেন ঘৰ-বাৰী  
পাষণ দিয়া বান্ধিলেন হিয়া  
না আইসেন ফিৰি ৰে।”

‘মাছত’ পৰকীয়া প্ৰেমৰো নায়ক। গোৱালপুৰীয়া গীতৰ মাজেৰে মাছতৰ পৰকীয়া প্ৰেমৰ আবেগ-বিহ্বল ছবিখনো ফুটি উঠা দেখা যায়। প্ৰেমত, ধনী-দুখীয়া, জাতি-অজাতি, বিবাহিত-অবিবাহিতৰ ভেদ নাই। সাধাৰণ মাছতৰ প্ৰতি বিলাসিতাৰ জীৱন

কটোৱা নাৰীও আসক্ত হৈ সংসাৰ গঢ়াৰ সপোন ৰচিব পাৰে। ইয়াৰ প্ৰকাশ ঘটিছে গীতৰ মাজেৰে—

“মুই নাৰীটা চাইয়া থাকোং  
সকালে আৰ বিকালে ৰে।।  
ৰাজাৰ ঘৰেৰ মাছত তই  
মঙল ঘৰেৰ বেটী মুই  
মোক নিয়া যান মাছত তোৰ সাথেৰে।”

গোৱালপৰীয়া চহা গীতিকাৰ সকলৰ মুখেৰে স্বতঃস্ফূৰ্তভাৱে নিগৰি অহা মাছত বন্ধুৰ গীতৰ মাজেৰে মাছতৰ প্ৰেম, বিৰহ পাৰিবাৰিক তথা কৰ্মময় জীৱনৰ ছবি অংকণ কৰাৰ উপৰিও এই গীতৰ মাজেৰেই মাছতৰ সৰলতা, সততা, সাহস আৰু ধৈৰ্যৰ উমান পাব পাৰি। সাধাৰণ দৃষ্টিৰে চাবলৈ গ'লে মাছত চৰিত্ৰটো নিঃশ্ৰেণীৰ চৰিত্ৰ হ'লেও এই চৰিত্ৰটোৰ মাজেৰে এজন কৰ্তব্যপৰায়ণ, স-প্ৰতিভ, মানবীয় ভাৱ-অনুভূতিৰে জীপাল মানুহৰ ছবি অংকিত হৈছে।

(খ) 'নাইয়া' বা নাৱৰীয়াৰ গীত:

'নাইয়া' বা নাৱৰীয়া গীতো একশ্ৰেণীৰ প্ৰেমমূলক গোৱালপৰীয়া লোকগীত। 'মাছত' চৰিত্ৰটোৰ দৰে 'নাইয়া' চৰিত্ৰটোৱেও জীৱিকাৰ তাড়নাত জমিদাৰ বা ধনাঢ্য লোকৰ অধীনত নূন্যতম পাৰিশ্ৰমিকত চাকৰি কৰা বা নাওবাই জীৱন নিৰ্বাহ কৰা লোক। পুৰণি কালত গোৱালপাৰা অঞ্চলত স্থলপথেৰে যাতায়াতৰ ব্যৱস্থা সুচল নথকাত জলপথকে যাতায়াতৰ বাবে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হৈছিল আৰু এই ক্ষেত্ৰত অৰিহণা যোগাইছিল 'নাইয়া' চৰিত্ৰটোৱে। গোৱালপাৰা অঞ্চলত জলপথেৰে বেহা-বেপাৰ কৰা প্ৰথা থাকিলেও নাইয়া চৰিত্ৰটোৱে লোকগীতত বিশেষ প্ৰাধান্য লাভ কৰিব পৰা নাই। এই চৰিত্ৰটোক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰি কিছুসংখ্যক গীতহে ৰচিত হৈছে আৰু কমসংখ্যক গীতৰ মাজেৰে নাইয়াৰ প্ৰেম, পৰকীয়া প্ৰেম, দাম্পত্য জীৱনৰ ছবি, আধ্যাত্মিক ভাৱৰ তথা শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ বিষয়ক কিছু গীত ৰচিত হৈছে।

নাও বাই জীৱন নিৰ্বাহ কৰা 'নাইয়া' চৰিত্ৰটো লেখত ল'বলগীয়া চৰিত্ৰ নহ'লেও তেৱোঁ মানুহ। গতিকে তেওঁৰ হৃদয়তো প্ৰেমে ঘৰ সাজিছিল। এই নাইয়া বন্ধুৰ প্ৰেমত হাবু-ডুবু খোৱা প্ৰেমিকা বিধৱা গাভৰুৱে তেওঁৰ সংগসুখ বিচাৰি মনৰ গোপন বাসনা গীতৰ মাজেৰে প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে, এনেদৰে—

“নাও চাপাও নাও চাপাও  
 ও মোৰ সুন্দৰ নাইয়া বে,  
 নাও চাপাও নাও চাপাও  
 নাও চাপাও বগলে।  
 কাষেৰ কলস ঘাটে থুইয়া  
 যাবো তোমাৰ সাথেৰে।  
 নাও চাপাও নাও চাপাও  
 চলো আমাৰ বাৰী, বিধাতাই কৰিছে মোৰে  
 কাঁচা চুলেৰ আৰী বে।”

চুলি নপকোতেই বিধৱা হোৱা গাভৰু এগৰাকীৰ বৈধব্যৰ যন্ত্ৰণা সকলোৰে বাবে সহ্যাতীত। ভৰ যৌৱন কালত বৈধব্য জীৱন অতিবাহিত কৰাটো তেওঁৰ বাবে সম্ভৱ নহয়। সেয়েহে বৈধব্যৰ প্ৰাচীৰ ভাঙি তেওঁ ‘নাইয়া’ৰ সংগসুখ বিচাৰি বাউলী হৈ পৰিছে আৰু তেওঁক ওচৰত বিচাৰিছে। ‘নাইয়া’ গীতত নাইয়াৰ প্ৰতি অনুৰক্তা নাৰীৰ মৰ্মবেদনাহে ফুটি উঠা দেখা যায়।

বিদেশলৈ বেহা-বেপাৰ কৰিবলৈ যোৱা ‘নাইয়া’ স্বামীক ‘সাধু’ বুলি সম্বোধন কৰি তাত পৰ স্ত্ৰীৰ সৈতে সম্পৰ্ক স্থাপন নকৰিবলৈ পত্নীয়ে সৰ্ব্বশক্তিৰে দিছে আৰু কৈছে যে, যি ঘাটত তেওঁক বিদায় জনাইছে সেই ঘাটতে পুনৰ মিলনৰ বাবে তেওঁলৈ বাট চাব—

“কোচৰ কড়ি সাধু না কৰেন ব্যয়  
 পৰাৰ নাৰী সাধু আপোননা হয়ৰে,  
 পৰাৰ নাৰী সাধু বধিৰে পৰাণ বে।।”  
 ‘বণিজ কৰিয়া সাধু ভালে, ভালে  
 আইসেন ফিৰিয়া সাধু বাৰিষা কালেৰে  
 মুই নাৰী থাকিম নদীৰ ঘাটে বসি বে।।”

‘নাইয়া’ক লৈ ৰচিত একশ্ৰেণীৰ গীত হ’ল শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ আৰু গোপী বিষয়ক বা আধ্যাত্মিক প্ৰকাশক গীত। শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণই ‘নাইয়া’ বা ‘মাৰি’ৰ বেশলৈ গোপিনীসকলক নদী পাৰ কৰা বৰ্ণনা এইগীতত পোৱা যায়—

“আৰ সুন্দৰীক পাৰ কৰিতে বে,

কন্যা নিছোং আনা আনা।

তোক সুন্দৰীক পাৰ কৰিতে বে, কন্যা খসাইম কাণেৰ সোণা।

ভৰা গাঙ্গৈৰ খেওৱা দিয়া যাও।।”

(গ) গাড়ীয়াল বা গাড়োৱান গীত:

গোৱালপাৰা অঞ্চলত প্ৰচলিত আন একশ্ৰেণীৰ গীত হ'ল 'গাড়ীয়াল' গীত। 'মাছত' বা 'নাইয়া' চৰিত্ৰৰ লেখিয়াকৈ সামাজিক জীৱনত প্ৰাধান্য নথকা গাড়ীয়াল চৰিত্ৰই চহা গীতিকাৰৰ ৰচনাত প্ৰাণ পাই উঠিছে। এই গীতৰ মাজেৰে গাড়ীয়ালৰ সুখ-দুখ, প্ৰেম-বিবহ, কৰ্মময় জীৱনৰ ছবি ফুটি উঠাৰ পৰিৱৰ্তে এই চৰিত্ৰটোৰ যোগেদি সমাজৰ আন ব্যক্তিৰ মনৰ বতৰাহে দিবলৈ যত্ন কৰা হৈছে।

'গাড়ীয়াল' হ'ল গাড়ী চালক। এই গাড়ীয়াল চৰিত্ৰৰ লগত জড়িত গীতসমূহেই মূল 'গাড়ীয়াল গীত'। অভাৱ, অনাটনক আজন্ম সহচৰ হিচাপে লৈ নিম্ন শ্ৰেণীৰ শ্ৰমজীৱী এই লোকসকলে জীৱন নিৰ্বাহ কৰে। গাড়ীয়াল গীতত গাড়ীয়ালৰ ব্যক্তিগত জীৱনৰ ছবি প্ৰতিফলিত হোৱাৰ পৰিৱৰ্তে এই গীতৰ মাজেৰে গাড়ীয়ালৰ প্ৰতি আসক্ত নাৰী হৃদয়ৰ গোপন আসক্তি, হৃদয় স্পৰ্শী ৰূপত প্ৰকাশ পাইছে—

“যেদিন গাড়ীয়াল উজান যান,

নাৰী মন মোৰ বাৰিয়া বয় বে।

ওকি গাড়ীয়াল ভাই, কতই থাকিম মুই

পত্ৰেৰ ভিত্তি চায়া বে।।”

'গাড়ীয়াল' কেন্দ্ৰিক গীতৰ মাজেৰে বিয়া হৈ পতি গৃহলৈ গমন কৰা নাৰীৰ মনৰ গোপন বেদনাও প্ৰকাশ পাইছে। বিয়া হৈ নিজৰ ঘৰখনৰ লগতে পিতৃ-মাতৃ, ভাই-ভনীক এৰি অহাটো এগৰাকী নাৰীৰ বাবে অসহনীয়। ছৈদিয়া গাড়ীত উঠি যেতিয়া এগৰাকী জীয়াৰীয়ে পিতৃগৃহ এৰি স্বামী গৃহলৈ যোৱাৰ পৰত গাড়ীৰ ভিতৰৰ পৰা তাইক বিদায় দি কান্দি-কাটি বাউলী হোৱা মাক-দেউতাক, ভায়েক-ভনীয়েকক জুমি চাবলৈ যত্ন কৰিছে আৰু গাড়ীয়ালক গাড়ীখন লাহে লাহে চলাবলৈ অনুৰোধ কৰিছে, যাতে পিতৃগৃহৰ সেই কৰুণ পৰিৱেশটো এবাৰ চাব পাৰে—

“ধীৰে বোলাও গাড়ীৰ গাড়ীয়ান,

আস্তে বোলাও গাড়ী।

এক নজৰ দেখিয়া নেং মুই

দয়াৰ বাপেৰ বাৰী।”

এই গীতটিৰ মাজেৰে নাৰী হৃদয়ৰ কৰুণ সুৰ ফুটি উঠিছে।

এগৰাকী নাৰী অন্তৰত অজস্ৰ সপোন লৈ এঘৰলৈ বোৱাৰী হৈ আছে। এই বোৱাৰীগৰাকী স্বামীৰ ঘৰখনৰ বিষয়ে জানিবলৈ ব্যাকুল হৈ পৰে। এই ব্যাকুলতা ‘গাড়ীয়াল’ চৰিত্ৰৰ মাধ্যমত গীতৰ মাজেৰে প্ৰকাশ পাইছে এনেদৰে—

“আৰু কত দূৰ শশুৰবাৰী, গাড়ীয়াল

আৰ কত দূৰ বাৰীৰে।

কেমন ভাশুৰ-শশুৰ

শশুৰী মায়ৈৰ কেমন দয়া।

..... কেমন ননন্দ, দেওৰাৰে গাড়ীয়াল

আৰ কত দূৰ শশুৰবাৰী।।”

নাৰী মনৰ আবেগ-অনুভূতি প্ৰকাশৰ উপযুক্ত মাধ্যম হিচাপে ‘গাড়ীয়াল’ চৰিত্ৰটি গোৱালপৰীয়া লোকগীতত প্ৰাণ পাই উঠিছে।

**(ঘ) ম’ইষাল গীত বা ম’ইষাল বন্ধুৰ গীত:**

ম’ইষাল গীত বা ম’ইষাল বন্ধুৰ গীত হ’ল অন্য একশ্ৰেণীৰ গোৱালপৰীয়া প্ৰেমমূলক লোকগীত। ম’ইষাল মানে হ’ল ম’হ গুৱাল। এই শ্ৰেণীৰ চৰিত্ৰটো প্ৰেমিকা, পত্নী-পুত্ৰ, পৰিয়াল-পৰিজনক এৰি জীৱিকা নিৰ্বাহৰ বাবে জমিদাৰ শ্ৰেণীৰ লোকৰ ঘৰত ম’হ ৰখিয়া হিচাপে কৰ্মৰত এটি সাধাৰণ নগণ্য চৰিত্ৰ। গোৱালপৰীয়া লোকগীতত ম’ইষাল এটি আকৰ্ষণীয় চৰিত্ৰ। চহা গীতিকাৰে এই চৰিত্ৰটিক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰি তেওঁৰ প্ৰেম, পৰকীয়া প্ৰেম, দাম্পত্য জীৱনৰ মনোৰম চিত্ৰ গীতৰ মাজত চিত্ৰিত কৰিছে। ম’ইষাল এটি নগণ্য চৰিত্ৰ হ’লেও এই চৰিত্ৰটোৰ প্ৰতিও কোনো সময়ত নাৰী হৃদয়ত প্ৰেমৰ বীজ অংকুৰিত হ’ব পাৰে। কিন্তু ম’ইষালৰ জীৱন নাৰী সংগ ৰহিত তথা বিপদ সংকুল। সমাজৰ সম্ভ্ৰান্ত শ্ৰেণীৰ দ্বাৰা উপেক্ষিত এই চৰিত্ৰটিৰ প্ৰতি গোৱালপৰীয়া চহা গীতিকাৰৰ সহানুভূতিৰ অন্ত নাই। আনৰ ‘বাথান’ত কাম কৰা শ্ৰমজীৱী ম’ইষাল ডেকা যেতিয়া এগৰাকী নাৰীৰ ওচৰত দীৰ্ঘদিন থকাৰ পিছত আঁতৰি যাবলৈ ওলায়; তেতিয়া নিজৰ প্ৰেমাম্পদক আঁতৰি যাব দিবলৈ নাৰী হৃদয়ে বৰ কষ্ট অনুভৱ কৰে আৰু ম’ইষালক আঁতৰি নাযাবলৈ গীতৰ যোগেদি কাকুতি কৰে—

“ধিকো ধিকো ধিকো ম'ইযাল ৰে  
ওহো ম'ইযাল ধিকো গাবুৰালী।  
এহেন যুৱতী নাৰী  
কেমনে যাইবেন ছাড়ি ম'ইযাল ৰে?  
আৰ তখনে না ক'ইছোং ম'ইযাল ৰে  
ওহো ম'ইযাল নাযান গুৱালপাৰা।”

ম'ইযাল বন্ধুৰ অৱৰ্তমানত বিবহ কাতৰা নাৰীয়ে পূৰ্বৰ স্মৃতি সুঁৱৰি কান্দি উঠিছে—

“মন কান্দে মোৰ মৈযাল বন্ধু ৰে  
ৰাতি-নিশাৰ কালে  
তোৰ কথা মনত পৰিলে  
হিয়াই আগুণ জ্বলে মৈযাল ৰে।।”

জীৱন আৰু জীৱিকাৰ তাগিদাত ম'ইযালে নিজৰ মৰমী পত্নীক ঘৰত অকলশৰে এৰি থৈ দুৰ্গণৰ বাথানত কাম কৰিব লগা হয় আৰু তেতিয়া স্বামীৰ সংগ সুখৰ পৰা বঞ্চিত ম'ইযাল পত্নীয়ে স্বামীৰ সংগ লাভৰ বাবে বাউলী হৈ পৰে। ম'ইযালে পত্নীৰ হৃদয়ৰ বতৰা অনুভৱ কৰিব পাৰিলেও তেওঁ পত্নীৰ বাসনা পূৰণ কৰিবলৈ অপাৰগ। সেয়েহে স্বামীৰ সংগ সুখৰ পৰা বঞ্চিত বাথান ত্যাগ কৰি ঘৰলৈ উভতি আহিবলৈ ম'ইযাল স্বামীক কৰা কাতৰ আহ্বানৰ মাজেৰে পত্নী গৰাকীৰ অন্তৰৰ বিবাদ মৰ্মস্পৰ্শী ৰূপত প্ৰকাশ পাইছে—

“বাথন ছাৰো, বাথান ছাৰো ৰে  
ম'ইযাল ঘূৰিয়া আইসো বাৰী।  
গলাৰ হাৰ বেচেয়া দিম মুই  
ঐ চাকিৰিৰ কড়ি ম'ইযাল ৰে।।”

এগৰাকী নাৰীৰ বাবে স্বামীয়ে সৰ্বস্ব। গতিকে, স্বামীক সদায় ওচৰত পাবলৈ হ'লে ম'ইযাল পত্নীয়ে ডিঙিৰ হাৰ বেচি হ'লেও অন্য চাকৰি বিচাৰি দিবলৈ প্ৰস্তুত। প্ৰিয়জনৰ অনিষ্ট বা অমংগল হোৱাটো কোনো নাৰীৰে কাম্য নহয়। প্ৰিয়জনৰ কাৰণে সকলো নাৰীয়ে ত্যাগ স্বীকাৰ কৰিবলৈ সদা সতৰ্ক। সেয়ে প্ৰেমমূলক গোৱালপৰীয়া লোকগীতৰ নাৰীয়েও ম'ইযালৰ বিপদ সংকুল জীৱনৰ সন্ত্ৰেদ পোৱাত নাৰী হৃদয় দুখত কাতৰ হৈ পৰিছে আৰু ৰ'দে-বৰষুণে অনাই-বনাই ম'হ চাৰি ঘূৰি ফুৰা ম'ইযালৰ

বাবে ছাতি এটা পঠাই দিছে যাৰ বাবে তাই লোকৰ গঞ্জনা সহ্য কৰিব লগা হৈছে—

“মুই নাৰী পঠাং ছাতা  
মৈষাল বন্ধুৰে লাগিয়া  
বাপ-মায়ে পাৰে গালি  
মৈষাল ভাতৰী বলিয়া।”

ম'ইষালে ম'হৰ জাক লৈ এঠাইৰ পৰা আন এঠাইলৈ যাত্ৰা কৰাৰ আগমুহূৰ্তত সম্ভাৱ্য বিচ্ছেদ আৰু অনিশ্চিত ভৱিষ্যতৰ কথা ভাবি নাৰীগৰাকী দুখিত হৈ পৰিছে আৰু দুচকুৰে চকুলো বোৱাই ম'ইষালক উদ্দেশ্য কৰি গাইছে—

‘মৈষাল যাইবেন পৰদেশ  
নাৰীৰ মন মোৰ ৰাৰিয়া থাকে।’  
মানৱ জীৱন ক্ষণভংগুৰ।

এই ক্ষণভংগুৰ অনিশ্চিত জীৱনৰ আশংকাত লোকগীতৰ নাৰী শংকিত হৈ পৰিছে আৰু ভৱিষ্যতৰ সম্ভাৱ্য ভয়াৱহ জীৱনৰ চৰম পৰিণতিৰ কথা গীতৰ মাজেৰে প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে—

“অ’ মৈষাল ৰে দুখ খুৱাইলেন সেৰে-সেৰে  
অ’ মৈষাল দুখ খুৱাইলেন হাড়ি  
তুই মৈষাল মৰিয়া গেলে  
হ'ব আমি বাঁৰী মৈষালৰে।”

ম'ইষাল গীতৰ মাজেৰে পৰকীয়া প্ৰেমৰ ছবিও প্ৰতিফলিত হোৱা দেখা যায়। নদীৰ ঘাটৰ কাষত বাথান পাতি থকা ম'ইষালৰ প্ৰেমত পৰা পৰস্ত্ৰীয়ে প্ৰেমৰ জ্বালা সহিব নোৱাৰি নাৰী জীৱনৰ লজ্জাকো সামৰি ম'ইষালক নিজৰ ঘৰলৈ নিমন্ত্ৰণ জনাইছে—

“আম জাম আৰ পাণ শুপাৰি  
ঐটায় হয় ম'ইষাল আমাৰ বাৰী।  
দৈ দুখ ধৰি ম'ইষাল যান আমাৰ বাৰী।।”

ম'ইষাল, এই শ্ৰমজীৱী চৰিত্ৰটিৰ মাজেৰে চহা গীতিকাৰে তেওঁলোকৰ বিপদসংকুল, যাযাবৰী, দুখ-কষ্টৰে জৰ্জৰিত অভাৱগ্ৰস্ত জীৱন আৰু সেই জীৱনৰ দুখত দুখী নাৰী হৃদয়ৰ কোমল অনুভূতি তথা কৰুণ বিননি সুন্দৰ ৰূপত গীতৰ মাজেৰে উপস্থাপন কৰিছে।

**সামৰণি:**

অসমীয়া লোক সাহিত্যৰ সমৃদ্ধি আৰু বিকাশৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত গোৱালপৰীয়া লোকগীতৰ অৱদান অনস্বীকাৰ্য। লোকসাহিত্যৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত চহকী এই গোৱালপাৰা জিলাত বিভিন্ন বৃত্তিধাৰী লোকসকলৰ ভিতৰত মাছত, ম'ইয়াল, নাইয়া, গাড়ীয়াল আদি উল্লেখনীয়। এই লোকসকলৰ জীৱন সংগ্ৰাম, প্ৰেম-বিবহ, আৰেগ-অনুভূতি, আশা-আকাংক্ষাক লৈ সৃষ্টি হৈছে গোৱালপৰীয়া প্ৰেমমূলক লোকগীত সমূহ। এই গীতত উল্লেখ থকা শ্ৰমজীৱী এই চৰিত্ৰসমূহ গীতিকাৰৰ কাল্পনিক চৰিত্ৰ নহয়। আটাইবোৰ চৰিত্ৰ সুখ-দুখেৰে পৰিপূৰ্ণ বাস্তৱ চৰিত্ৰ। এওঁলোকৰ ঘৰ-সংসাৰ, পত্নী-পুত্ৰ তথা প্ৰেমিকাও আছে। কিন্তু জীৱিকাৰ তাড়নাত এওঁলোকে নিজৰ জীৱন তুচ্ছ কৰি গৰাকীৰ আঙুলিৰ নিৰ্দেশত কাম কৰিব লগা হয়। আমাৰ আলোচ্য চৰিত্ৰ কেইটাৰ অন্তৰত নিহিত হৈ থকা সুখ-দুখ, আশা-আকাংক্ষা, প্ৰেম-বিবহৰ ছবি গোৱালপৰীয়া চহা গীতিকাৰে গীতৰ মাজেৰে ফুটাই তুলিবলৈ যত্ন কৰিছে আৰু এই প্ৰেমমূলক লোকগীত সমূহে অধিক জনপ্ৰিয়তা লাভ কৰিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছে। এই গীতৰ মাজেৰেই ফুটি উঠিছে মিলনৰ বাসনা, প্ৰিয় বিবহৰ বিননি তথা নাৰী মনৰ চিৰন্তন অনুভূতি। নিজা বৈশিষ্ট্যৰে সমৃদ্ধ এই প্ৰেমমূলক লোকগীত সমূহে অসমীয়া গীতি সাহিত্যৰ ইতিহাসত যুগান্তকাৰী পৰিচয় বহন কৰিব বুলি আশা কৰিব পাৰি। ■

**সহায়ক গ্ৰন্থপঞ্জী :**

- (ক) গোৱালপৰীয়া লোক সংস্কৃতি আৰু লোকগীত— ড° ধীৰেন দাস।
- (খ) অসমীয়া লোকগীত সমীক্ষা— ড° বসন্ত কুমাৰ ভট্টাচাৰ্য।
- (গ) গোৱালপৰীয়া লোক সংস্কৃতি— দ্বিজেন নাথ।
- (ঘ) অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ সমীক্ষাত্মক ইতিবৃত্ত— ড° সত্যেন্দ্ৰ নাথ শৰ্মা।
- (ঙ) গোৱালপৰীয়া লোক সাহিত্যত দৃষ্টিপাত— দ্বিজেন নাথ।

# গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱাৰ ‘ৰাম-নৰমী’— এক সামগ্ৰিক বিশ্লেষণাত্মক আলোচনা

কৰবী কলিতা

অসমীয়া বিভাগ, বামুন্দী মহাবিদ্যালয়

পাতনি:

অসমীয়া সাহিত্যত গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱাই তেওঁৰ ৰচিত সৃষ্টিৰাজিৰ অৱদানেৰে এটি যুগৰ সৃষ্টি কৰে যাক আমি “হেমচন্দ্ৰ-গুণাভিৰামৰ যুগ” বুলি জানো। অসমীয়া আলোচনী ‘অৰুণোদই’ৰ পাতত তেওঁ সাহিত্যিক হিচাপে আত্মপ্ৰকাশ কৰে। বৰুৱাৰ ১৮৫৭ চনত ৰচিত প্ৰথম নাটক “ৰাম-নৰমী”ৰ পৰাই অসমীয়া নাট্য সাহিত্যৰ আধুনিক ধাৰাটো আৰম্ভ হয়। নাটকখনৰ বিষয়বস্তু সমাজ সংস্কাৰমূলক। ইয়াত বাল্য-বিবাহৰ কুফল আৰু বিধৱা-বিবাহৰ সপক্ষে যুক্তি দাঙি ধৰাৰ চেষ্টা কৰা হৈছে।

বিশেষকৈ ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ মধ্যভাগৰ সময়ছোৱাত অসমৰ সমাজখনত প্ৰচলিত বাল্য-বিবাহৰ কুফলসমূহ বৰুৱাই পৰ্যবেক্ষণ কৰিছিল। বাল্য-বিবাহৰ ফলস্বৰূপে অতি কম বয়সতে ছোৱালীসকলে বিদ্যা-শিক্ষা লাভৰ পৰা বঞ্চিত হৈ সংসাৰী হ’ব লগা হৈছিল। ফলত শাৰীৰিক তথা মানসিকভাৱে অপৈণত হোৱা বাবে নানা দুখ-যন্ত্ৰণাৰে পীড়িত হ’ব লগা হৈছিল। সেইবোৰ নাট্যকাৰে অনুধাৱন কৰিব পাৰিছিল। তাৰোপৰি এই কম বয়সতে বিধৱা হ’লে পুনৰ বিবাহ হ’ব নোৱৰাৰ বাবে জীৱনৰ পৰবৰ্তী সময়ছোৱা

অন্ধকাৰাচ্ছন্ন হৈ যায়। বৰুৱাই এইবোৰ পৰ্যবেক্ষণ কৰি সমাজখনক এনে কুসংস্কাৰৰপৰা মুক্ত কৰাৰ উদ্দেশ্যে হাতত কাপ মৈলাম তুলি লৈছিল। আলোচনাটিত “ৰাম-নবমী” নাটকখনৰ এই দিশৰ লগতে এটা সামগ্ৰিক আলোচনা দাঙি ধৰা হৈছে।

### নাট্যকাৰৰ পৰিচয়:

**জন্ম:** গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱাৰ জন্মৰ চন সম্পৰ্কে মতবিভেদ থকা দেখা যায়। তেওঁৰ পুত্ৰ জ্ঞানদাভিৰাম বৰুৱাই উল্লেখ কৰা অনুসৰি তেওঁৰ জন্ম ১৮৩৪ চনৰ ১২ জানুৱাৰীত হৈছিল। আন বহুতো লেখকৰ মতে তেওঁৰ জন্ম চন ১৮৩৭ হে। পিতৃ ৰণৰাম বৰুৱাই গুণাভিৰামৰ জন্মৰ সময়ত আহোম ৰাজ্যৰ দুটা অতি গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ পদবী ঢেকিয়াল ফুকন আৰু খাৰঘৰীয়া ফুকন পদবীত কাৰ্যনিৰ্বাহ কৰি আছিল। গুণাভিৰাম ৰণৰাম বৰুৱাৰ দ্বিতীয় পত্নী শচী দেৱীৰ প্ৰথম সন্তান আছিল। তেওঁৰ চাৰি বছৰ বয়সতে পিতৃ বিয়োগ ঘটে আৰু তাৰ আঠ বছৰৰ পাছত মাতৃকো হেৰুৱায়। তাৰ পিছত বৰদেউতাক গঙ্গাৰামে তেওঁৰ জীৱনৰ দায়িত্ব লয় যদিও গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱাই নিজে লিখি থৈ যোৱা মতে আনন্দৰাম ঢেকিয়াল ফুকনৰ একান্ত অভিভাৱকত্ব আৰু তত্বাৱধানত তেওঁ ডাঙৰ হৈছিল।

**শিক্ষা:** তেওঁ গুৱাহাটীৰ এখন স্কুলত পঞ্চম শ্ৰেণীলৈকে শিক্ষা লাভ কৰিছিল। তাৰ পিছত আনন্দৰাম ঢেকিয়াল ফুকনৰ লগত কলিকতালৈ গৈ তাতে পুনৰ শিক্ষা আৰম্ভ কৰে। ১৮৫৪ চনত তেওঁ জুনিয়ৰ স্কলাৰশ্বিপ পৰীক্ষাত উত্তীৰ্ণ হয়। তাৰ পিছত প্ৰেচিডেঞ্চি কলেজত দুবছৰ পঢ়ে যদিও দ্বিতীয় বছৰৰ পৰীক্ষাত তেওঁ উত্তীৰ্ণ হ'ব নোৱাৰিলে। তাৰ পিছত তেওঁ আইনৰ পাঠ্যক্রমত নাম লিখায় আৰু সেই পাঠ্যক্রম সম্পূৰ্ণ কৰি ইমানতেই শিক্ষা সমাপ্ত কৰে।

**কৰ্মজীৱন:** তেওঁ ১৮৫৯ চনত কলিকতাৰ পৰা আহি ব্ৰিটিছ চৰকাৰৰ অধীনত অতিৰিক্ত সহকাৰী উপায়ুক্তৰ চাকৰিত যোগদান কৰে আৰু এবছৰ পিছতেই এক্সট্ৰা-এছিষ্টেণ্ট কমিছনাৰ পদলৈ পদোন্নতি লাভ কৰে। ১৮৯০ চনত অৱসৰ পোৱাত তেওঁ কলিকতাত নিগাজীকৈ থাকিবলৈ লয় আৰু তাতেই ১৮৯৪ চনৰ ২৫ মাৰ্চত ইহলীলা সম্বৰণ কৰে।

**সাহিত্য কৰ্ম :** গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱা একেধাৰে সাহিত্যিক, নাট্যকাৰ, প্ৰবন্ধকাৰ,

বুৰঞ্জীবিদ আৰু সমাজ-সংস্কাৰক। কলিকতাত শিক্ষা গ্ৰহণ কৰি থকা অৱস্থাতে অসমীয়া ভাষা-সাহিত্যলৈ বৃটিছৰ আমোলাত যি ক'লীয়া ডাৱৰ নামি আহে সেই সংকটৰ সময়ত ভাষা-জননীৰ উদ্ধাৰৰ বাবে এই মহান দেশপ্ৰেমিকজনে উঠি পৰি লাগে। মিছনেৰীসকলে দেখুৱাই দিয়া বাট অনুসৰণ কৰি গুণাভিৰাম প্ৰমুখ্যে হেমচন্দ্ৰ বৰুৱা আদিও আগুৱাই আহে আৰু ১৮৪৬ চনত শুভাৰম্ভ হোৱা মাহেকীয়া আলোচনী “অৰুণোদই”ত তেওঁলোকৰ কাপেৰে নিগৰা সাহিত্যৰাজি প্ৰকাশ কৰিবলৈ আৰম্ভ কৰে। বৰুৱাই সামাজিক কু-সংস্কাৰ, অন্ধবিশ্বাস আৰু ব্যভিচাৰ দূৰীকৰণৰ বাবে উদ্দেশ্যধৰ্মী সাহিত্য ৰচনা কৰি অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ভেটি মজবুত কৰে। উল্লেখ্য যে, ‘অৰুণোদই’ কাকতৰ জৰিয়তেই গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱাই সাহিত্য জগতত প্ৰৱেশ কৰে।

উনবিংশ শতিকাৰ আধুনিক অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ এগৰাকী পথ প্ৰদৰ্শক বৰুৱাৰ “ৰাম-নৱমী” নাটৰ পিছত ১৮৮৬ চনত ‘বিবাহ-ৰহস্য’ নামে আন এখন সামাজিক নাটক লিখে, য’ত কানি আসক্ত অসমীয়া মানুহৰ চৰিত্ৰৰ বৰ্ণনা আছে। কিন্তু এইখন অসম্পূৰ্ণ। ১৮৮৫-৮৬ চনত বৰুৱাই “আসাম-বন্ধু” নামৰ এখন আলোচনী প্ৰকাশ আৰু সম্পাদনা কৰে। ১৮৮০ চনত “আনন্দৰাম ঢেকিয়াল ফুকনৰ জীৱন চৰিত্ৰ” নামে প্ৰথম অসমীয়া জীৱনী লিখি উলিয়ায়। প্ৰাচীন কালৰপৰা অসমত ব্ৰিটিছ শাসনৰ আৰম্ভণিলৈকে ঘটনাৱলীৰ বৰ্ণনাৰে ১৮৮৪ চনত লিখে “আসাম বুৰঞ্জী”। তাৰোপৰি তেওঁৰ হাস্যৰসাত্মক পুথি “কঠিন শব্দৰ ৰহস্য ব্যাখ্যা” ১৯১২ চনত মৃত্যুৰ পিছত প্ৰকাশ পায়। ‘জোনাকী’ আলোচনীত “সৌমাৰ ভ্ৰমণ”, “অলিখিত বুৰঞ্জী” আদি প্ৰবন্ধ প্ৰকাশ পায়। “বিজুলী” কাকতত গুৰুদত্ত ছদ্মনামেৰে কেইবাটাও কবিতা লিখিছিল।

### ‘ৰাম-নৱমী’ নাটৰ বিষয়বস্তু :

“ৰাম-নৱমী” এখন সামাজিক বিয়োগান্ত নাটক। ইয়াত শোকাবহ পৰিণতিৰে বাল্যবিবাহৰ কুফল আৰু বিধৱা-বিবাহৰ সপক্ষে যুক্তি দাঙি ধৰা হৈছে। শিৱকান্ত শৰ্মাৰ দুহিতা নৱমীৰ বাল্য-বিবাহৰ পিছতেই বিধৱা হৈ মাকৰ ঘৰত থাকিবলৈ লয়। তাতে উদাৰমনা শিক্ষিত যুৱক ৰামচন্দ্ৰৰ সৈতে প্ৰথম দৰ্শনতে প্ৰেম হৈ সখীয়েকৰ মধ্যস্থতাত দুয়ো প্ৰীতিৰ দোলত বান্ধ খায়। কিন্তু সেই সময়ৰ সমাজখন বিধৱা-বিবাহৰ পক্ষপাতী নাছিল। সেয়ে ৰাম আৰু নৱমীয়ে গোপনে লগ হৈছিল। গোপন মিলনৰ ফলস্বৰূপে

নৰমী অন্তঃসত্ত্বা হয়। নৰমীয়ে ভবিষ্যতৰ অন্ধকাৰ জীৱনৰ কথা চিন্তা কৰি আৰু লগতে সমাজত তাইৰ ঘৰখনৰ মৰ্যাদা হানি হোৱাৰ আশংকাত আত্মঘাতী হৈ মৃত্যুক সাবটে। নৰমীৰ মৃত্যুৰ বাতৰি পাই ৰামচন্দ্ৰ আৰু সখীয়েক জয়ন্তীও আত্মঘাতী হয়। এনেদৰে কু-সংস্কাৰৰ বলি হৈ তিনিটা জীৱন ধ্বংস হৈ যায়। এই ঘটনাই সমাজৰ মুখিয়ালসকলক ভাবিবলৈ বাধ্য কৰায় আৰু পলমকৈ হ'লেও বিধৱা-বিবাহৰ যুক্তিযুক্ততা মানি লয়।

### চৰিত্ৰ চিত্ৰণ :

নাটকখনৰ নায়ক ৰামচন্দ্ৰ, আৰু নায়িকা নৰমী। পাৰ্শ্ব চৰিত্ৰসমূহ হ'ল জয়ন্তী, উৰ্বশী, কামদেৱ, শিৱকান্ত আৰু ফুলেশ্বৰী আৰু অন্যান্য চৰিত্ৰত আছে সয়েন্দী, মহাজন, মঙলু, সীত্ৰাম, দতো, নিগদতি, হৰনাথ, ধৰ্মনাথ, দেবদত্ত, ৰঙ্গনাথ, খাটনিয়াৰ, সাজতোলা, কুলনাথ আদি।

নায়ক ৰামচন্দ্ৰ এজন ব্ৰাহ্মণ পৰিয়ালৰ শিক্ষিত যুৱক। বিধৱা-বিবাহৰ দৰে স্পৰ্শকাতৰ বিষয়বস্তু এটাক সাফল্যমণ্ডিত কৰাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত এই চৰিত্ৰটোৱে বৰ বিশেষ ইন্ধন যোগোৱা দেখা নাযায়। কাৰণ পোনপ্ৰথমে ৰামচন্দ্ৰ চৰিত্ৰটোক আমি সুবিধাবাদী চৰিত্ৰ হিচাপে দেখিবলৈ পাওঁ। নৰমীক দেখাৰ পিছত তাইৰ সৈতে সম্পৰ্ক কৰিবলৈ তেওঁ জয়ন্তীৰ কাষ চাপে আৰু অতি কম সময়তে আগ-পিছ বিবেচনা নকৰি নৰমীৰ সৈতে সহবাসৰ বাবে আগবাঢ়ে। সেই সময়ত তেওঁৰ মনত কোনো সংস্কাৰকামী ভাবৰ উদ্বেক নাট্যকাৰে ঘটোৱা নাছিল। য'ত চৰিত্ৰটোত মানসিক অন্তৰ্দ্বন্দ্বৰ উন্মেষ ঘটাব পৰাৰ থল আছিল। কেৱল দৈহিক মিলনৰ আশাহে চৰিত্ৰটোত স্পষ্ট হৈ উঠিল। ৰামে নৰমীৰ সৈতে সম্পৰ্কত থকা সময়তে এবাৰ কামদেৱৰ ওচৰত আক্ষেপ কৰাও দেখা যায়। তলত উল্লেখিত সংলাপটি ইয়াৰ উদাহৰণ—

কামদেৱ : বন্ধো! ময় সিদিনা কবৰে পেৰা তুমি যে নৰমীৰ পৰা মন  
পালটাইছা ইয়াত ভাল পাইছোঁ।

ৰামচন্দ্ৰ : হয় বন্ধো! সি মিচা। এতেকে তেনে কৰ্ম কৰা ভাল নহয়।  
(পৃষ্ঠা-৭৮)

কিন্তু তাৰ পৰিৱৰ্তে তেওঁ দৃঢ় হ'ব লাগিছিল। এইখিনিতে ৰাম চৰিত্ৰটোৰ দুৰ্বলতা ফুটি উঠে। আকৌ তাৰ পিছতেই চৰিত্ৰটোত মানসিক পৰিৱৰ্তন দেখা যায়। বিধৱা

বাবে নৱমীৰ লগত সম্পৰ্কৰ আক্ষেপ কৰা বামে পিছমুহূৰ্ততে বিধৱা-বিবাহৰ বাবে যুক্তি দিয়াটোত অসামঞ্জস্য লক্ষণীয়। তেওঁ বিধৱা-বিবাহ শাস্ত্ৰ বিহিত বুলি কোৱাৰ লগতে বিধৱা-বিবাহৰ মত বহুকালৰ পৰা থকা বুলিও উল্লেখ কৰে। নৱমীৰ অন্তঃসত্ত্বা হোৱা কথাটো যেতিয়া ইমুখে সিমুখে বাগৰি সমাজত জনাজাত হ'ল, ভবিষ্যত অন্ধকাৰাচ্ছন্ন জীৱনৰ কথা আৰু তাইৰ মাকৰ ঘৰখনৰ ঘাটপানী এলাগ কৰা কথাটো সহ্য কৰিব নোৱাৰি তাই আত্মঘাতী হোৱাৰ খবৰ পাই ৰামচন্দ্ৰইও ডিঙিত ফাঁহি লগাই আত্মঘাতী হোৱা কথাটোৱে চৰিত্ৰটোৰ দুৰ্বল দিশটো ফুটাই তোলে। তাৰ পৰিবৰ্তে সমাজৰ বিৰুদ্ধে যুক্তিৰে বিদ্ৰোহ ঘোষণা কৰি জীৱিত কালতেই নৱমীক সমৰ্থন কৰি পত্নী হিচাপে আঁকোৱালি লোৱাহেঁতেনো চৰিত্ৰটোৰ মৰ্যাদা বৃদ্ধি পালেহেঁতেন।

নাটকখনৰ নায়িকা নৱমী অল্পশিক্ষিতা বাল বিধৱা। ৰামচন্দ্ৰক মনে-প্ৰাণে স্বামী বুলি ভবা নৱমীয়ে ৰামকে মন-প্ৰাণ-দেহ সকলো সপি দিছিল। ফলত অন্তঃসত্ত্বা হৈ সমাজৰ কঠোৰ নিয়মৰ সৈতে মুখামুখি হ'ব নোৱাৰি কটাৰীৰে ডিঙি ৰেপি আত্মঘাতী হৈ কঠোৰ দেশাচাৰৰ বিৰুদ্ধে বিদ্ৰোহ ঘোষণা কৰে। ইয়াতেই নৱমী চৰিত্ৰটোৰ দুৰ্বল দিশ এটা প্ৰকট হয়। ৰামচন্দ্ৰৰ সৈতে মিলনৰ সময়ত তাই যি সাহসিকতাৰ পৰিচয় দিছিল শেষ পৰ্যন্ত সেয়া টিকি নাথাকিল। নাটকখনৰ উদ্দেশ্য সাৰ্থক হ'বলৈ এই চৰিত্ৰটোৰ আত্মঘাতী হোৱাটোৱেই একমাত্ৰ পথ নাছিল। বৰং সাহসেৰে সমাজৰ বিৰুদ্ধে যুঁজ দি ন্যায্য প্ৰাপ্তিৰ চেষ্টা কৰিব লাগিছিল।

“জয়ন্তী” হ'ল নৱমীৰ সখীয়েক আৰু ৰামচন্দ্ৰৰ সম্পৰ্কীয় বৌয়েক। জয়ন্তীৰ মধ্যস্থতাত ৰাম আৰু নৱমীৰ মিলন হয়। জয়ন্তী শিক্ষিতা, দেশ-বিদেশৰ খা-খবৰ নিয়মিত ৰখা এটি সক্ৰিয় চৰিত্ৰ। তেওঁ সেই সময়তে প্ৰচলিত বহুকেইখন তত্ত্বগধুৰ সংস্কৃত গ্ৰন্থ অধ্যয়ন কৰিছে। কিন্তু পিছলৈ জয়ন্তীয়েও বিবেক দংশনত ভুগি নৱমীৰ সৈতে একেটা পথকেই বাছি লোৱাটো যুক্তিসংগত যেন নালাগে।

উৰ্বশী চৰিত্ৰটো নৱমীৰ সখী হিচাপে অংকন কৰা এটা প্ৰায় নিষ্ক্ৰিয় চৰিত্ৰ। নৱমীৰ মাক ফুলেশ্বৰী চৰিত্ৰটোৱে গতানুগতিক মাতৃৰ ভূমিকা গ্ৰহণ কৰা দেখা যায়। পুত্ৰীৰ বৈধব্যই শোকাভূৰ কৰা এই চৰিত্ৰটোৱে নৱমীৰ সুখৰ বাবে অহৰহ চেষ্টা কৰা দেখা যায়।

মহাজন চৰিত্ৰটো নৱমীৰ ঘৰখনক এঘৰীয়া কৰিবলৈ মুখ্য ভূমিকা লোৱা এটা চৰিত্ৰ। ৰাম, নৱমী আৰু জয়ন্তীৰ মৃত্যুৰ পিছত এটি সপোনো তেওঁৰ মানসিক পৰিৱৰ্তন

ঘটোৱা দেখা যায়। যাৰ ফলত তেওঁ পিছলৈ বিধৱা-বিবাহৰ পক্ষপাতী হয়। কামদেৱ চৰিত্ৰটো কামুক হিচাপে ধৰা দিয়ে।

আন চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ বেছিভাগেই গতানুগতিক আৰু কিছুমানে সমাজৰ লঘু দিশটো ফুটাই তুলিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছে।

### ভাষা, গদ্য আৰু সংলাপ:

ভাষাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত নাট্যকাৰে নিৰ্দিষ্ট এটা শৈলী ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা দেখা নাযায়। ভাষাটো ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ মধ্যভাগৰ নামনি অসমৰ প্ৰাম্য ভাষা, “অৰুণোদই” আলোচনীত ব্যৱহৃত গদ্য শৈলী আৰু কিছুমান পাৰ্শ্ব চৰিত্ৰৰ মুখত কামৰূপীয়া উপভাষাৰ ব্যৱহাৰো দেখা যায়। অংকীয়া নাটৰপৰা ফালৰি কাটি পোনপ্ৰথমবাৰ সমাজক লৈ ৰচনা কৰা নাটখনত বৰুৱাই অংকীয়া নাটৰ ভাষাটোকো পৰিহাৰ কৰি ব্ৰজাৱলীৰ ঠাইত দৈনন্দিন ব্যৱহৃত মুখৰ ভাষাক সংলাপ হিচাপে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছে। সংলাপৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত ক'বলৈ গ'লে কিছু সংলাপ দীঘলীয়া আৰু আমনিদায়ক। অৱশ্যে বেছিভাগ সংলাপ চুটি, পোনপটীয়া আৰু অৰ্থবহ। যেনে—

হৰি : এৰি পেলোয়া আই। যি যিমানলৈ নামে, সি সিমানলৈ তিতিব।  
(পৃষ্ঠা-৩৯)

জয়ন্তী : সখী! তোমাৰে নো কি হইছে?

নবমী : সখী! মৰিবলৈ ওলাইছোঁ।

জয়ন্তী : ছিঃ শত্ৰুৰ মূৰে নেওচন কেওঁচন যাওক। এনে কথা কব নেপায়?

নবমী : আৰ সখী! আমাৰ মৰাই ভাল। (পৃষ্ঠা-৬১)

ইয়াৰ উপৰিও মাজে মাজে নবমীৰ মুখত স্বগতোক্তি জাতীয় সংলাপ দিয়া দেখা যায়। নাটখনত ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা কামৰূপীয়া উপভাষা যেনে—

“শুনচাহ না কাকা। এই ঠাইক গাঁহে আহিছিল।” (পৃষ্ঠা-৯১)।

ইয়াৰোপৰি গোৱালপৰীয়া উপভাষা যেনে—

চুহিলে, আজলা, হাউস, বিকচিনা (বিতৃষণ), সাজবেলীয়া আদি শব্দৰ প্ৰয়োগ মন কৰিবলগীয়া।

অহ্নি ভাষাৰ শব্দ যেনে— মৰগ, এমদনী, ফৌদাৰী, মকন্তমা আদিৰ ব্যবহাৰ লক্ষণীয়।  
জতুৰা ঠাঁচৰ ব্যবহাৰ যেনে— “হলা গছ পালেই বাগি কুঠাৰ মৰা”, “ভুকুতে  
কলটো নপকা”, “সাপেহে সাপৰ ভৰি দেখে” ইত্যাদি।

অনুৰূপ শব্দৰ প্ৰয়োগ যেনে— হেলেঙ্গ-পেলেঙ্গ, মুখ-চুখ, নেওচন-কেওচন  
আদি।

প্ৰবচনৰ ব্যৱহাৰ যেনে— “বাঁৰি হলো যেতিয়াই খাঁৰি হলো তেতিয়াই”, “পচোয়া  
বতাহে দুয়াৰ মেলে, বৰলাৰ গাত দায় লাগে” আদিৰ প্ৰয়োগ মন কৰিবলগীয়া।

নাটকখনত উপমাৰ ব্যৱহাৰো লক্ষণীয়। যেনে—

“তিৰোতাক কোনে বিশ্বাস কৰে সাপৰ যেনে দুখন জীবা তিৰোতাৰো সেই ৰূপ।  
দলিবাৰী পচৰীয়াৰ গাখীৰৰ নিচিনা।” আদি।

### সামাজিক চিত্ৰ:

সাহিত্য হৈছে সমাজৰ দাপোন স্বৰূপ। ৰাম-নৰমী নাটকখনো এই প্ৰভাৱৰপৰা  
মুক্ত নহয়। নাটকখনৰ কাহিনীটোৱেই প্ৰধানকৈ অসমৰ মধ্যযুগৰ সেই বিশেষ সময়ছোৱাৰ  
সামাজিক সমস্যা এটিৰ ওপৰত প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত। সেয়েহে সমাজখনত প্ৰচলিত সকলো দিশেই  
ইয়াক স্পৰ্শ কৰি যোৱাটো স্বাভাৱিক। নাটকখনৰ মাজেৰে সেই সময়ৰ বহুকেইটা দিশ  
উন্মোচন হৈছে। তাৰ ভিতৰত প্ৰধান দিশটো হৈছে বাল্যবিবাহৰ সমস্যা আৰু বিধৱা  
বিবাহ। তাৰ উপৰিও সেই সময়ত শিক্ষাক্ষেত্ৰতো লোকসকল সজাগ হোৱা দেখা  
যায়। ৰাম শিক্ষিত যুবক হোৱাৰ লগতে জয়ন্তীয়েও বিদ্যা অৰ্জনৰ লগতে পুথি-পাঁজি  
পঢ়াৰ কথাৰ উল্লেখ আছে।

সামাজিক বাধ্যবাধকতাৰ দিশটোও নাটকখনত সুন্দৰকৈ প্ৰকট হয়। বিশেষকৈ  
নৰমী বিধৱা হোৱা বাবে মাংগলিক অনুষ্ঠান আদিত ভাগ ল'ব নোৱৰা, আ-অলংকাৰ  
পৰিধান কৰিব নোৱৰা আদিয়ে সেই দিশটো উন্মোচন কৰে।

নাট্যকাৰে নাটকখনত শিৱৰাত্ৰি আৰু তীৰ্থযাত্ৰাৰ অন্তঃসাৰশূন্যতাৰ কথাও উদঙাই  
দিয়ে। বিশেষকৈ প্ৰথম দৰ্শনত শিৱকান্তই তীৰ্থ ভ্ৰমণ কৰি উভতি আহিয়ে জোৱায়েকৰ  
মৃত্যুৰ বাতৰিটো পাইছিল।

তাৰোপৰি আৰু সৰু সৰু বিভিন্ন দিশত পোহৰ পেলোৱাৰ যত্ন দেখা যায়। সেই  
সময়ৰ সমাজখনত আত্মদি বা কাম সেন্দূৰৰ ব্যৱহাৰ, অকাৰণত গা বেয়া লাগিলে মুখ

ভঙাৰ দৰে অন্ধবিশ্বাস কিছুমানৰো প্ৰচলন আছিল। কোনো ছোৱালীৰ অৰ্বেধ গৰ্ভধাৰণত গৰ্ভপাত কৰোৱা অৰ্থাৎ ভ্ৰূণ হত্যাৰ কথাৰো উল্লেখ পোৱা যায়। যিখন ঘৰত এনে পাপ কৰ্ম হয় সেই ঘৰখনক জুই পানীৰ বা ঘাট পানীৰ এলাগ কৰাৰ কথাও উল্লেখ আছে। তাৰোপৰি ব্ৰাহ্মণ পৰিয়ালৰ বিধবাসকলৰ আমিষ ভোজন নিষিদ্ধ আছিল।

### অইন নাটৰ প্ৰভাৱ:

নাটকখনত যিহেতু বংগদেশৰ ঈশ্বৰচন্দ্ৰ বিদ্যাসাগৰৰ নেতৃত্বত গঢ় লৈ উঠা বিধবা বিবাহৰ প্ৰসংগক আধাৰ কৰি কাহিনী নিৰ্মাণ কৰা হৈছে, গতিকে লক্ষণীয়ভাৱে ক'ব পাৰি নাট্যকাৰ ঈশ্বৰচন্দ্ৰ বিদ্যাসাগৰৰ আদৰ্শৰ দ্বাৰা অনুপ্ৰাণিত হৈ মধ্যযুগীয় অসমৰ বক্ষণশীল সমাজৰ জ্বলন্ত সমস্যা এটিৰ সমাধানৰ উদ্দেশ্য আগত ৰাখি এই মহান কৰ্মটোত ব্ৰতী হৈছে।

নাট্যৰীতিৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো নাট্যকাৰে প্ৰধানকৈ পাশ্চাত্য নাট্যকলাকেই অনুকৰণ কৰা দেখা যায়। ৰাম আৰু নৰমী চৰিত্ৰ দুটিকো নাট্যকাৰে শ্যেঞ্জপীয়েৰৰ ৰোমিও জুলিয়েটৰ দৰে গঢ় দিয়াৰ এটি চেষ্টা কৰা দেখা যায়।

মহাকাব্য কালিদাসৰ অভিজ্ঞান শকুন্তলমৰ চৰিত্ৰ দুয়ান্ত, শকুন্তলাৰ ছাঁও দৃশ্যমান হৈ ধৰা দিয়ে। কণ্ঠমুনিৰ আশ্ৰমসদৃশ ফুলনি বাগিছাৰ উপস্থাপন, ভোমোৰা এটাই শকুন্তলাক আমনি দিয়াৰ লেখীয়াকৈ নৰমীকো ভোমোৰাই আমনি দিয়া, ৰামৰ দ্বাৰা আঙুঠি প্ৰদান, শকুন্তলাক কুশে বিন্ধিছে বুলি পাছলৈ দুয়ান্তলৈ ঘূৰি চোৱাৰ দৰে নৰমীয়েও ৰামলৈ ঘূৰি চোৱা আৰু দুয়ান্ত শকুন্তলাৰ পূৰ্ববাগ আদিবোৰৰ ছবছ অনুকৰণ মন কৰিবলগীয়া। শকুন্তলাৰ বান্ধৱী দুগৰাকী অনুসূয়া, প্ৰিয়স্বদাৰ লগত সাদৃশ্য ৰাখি জয়ন্তী, উৰ্বশীৰ অংকন। এনেদৰে আলোচনা কৰিলে অভিজ্ঞান শকুন্তলমৰ দুয়ান্ত-শকুন্তলাৰ বহুখিনি সাদৃশ্য দেখা যায়।

### ৰাম-নৰমী নাটকত নাৰীৰ স্থান আৰু সাম্প্ৰতিক সময়ত ইয়াৰ প্ৰাসংগিকতা:

গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱাই নাটকখনত নাৰীৰ সম্পৰ্কে যিবোৰ ভাষ্য চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ মুখেৰে ব্যক্ত কৰাইছে তাত বহুতো বিতৰ্কৰ অৱকাশ থাকি যায়। তেখেতে নাৰীক যিটো স্থানত ৰাখিলে সাম্প্ৰতিক সময়ত সেয়া প্ৰযোজ্য নহয়। বিশেষকৈ কামদেৱ আৰু ৰামচন্দ্ৰৰ কথোপকথনৰ মাজেৰে তেখেতে নাৰী সম্পৰ্কে অসন্মানজনক কথা কিছুমান প্ৰকাশ কৰা দেখা যায়।

ৰামে দ্বিতীয় অংকৰ প্ৰথম দৰ্শনত নাৰী সম্পৰ্কে কৰা মন্তব্য উল্লেখযোগ্য—

“তিৰোতাক কোনে বিশ্বাস কৰে। সাপৰ যেনে দুখন জীৱা তিৰোতাৰো সেই ৰূপ। দলিবাৰী পচৰীয়াৰ গাখিৰৰ নিচিনা। গৰুৱে যেনেকৈ প্ৰতিদিনে ন ন ঘাঁহ খাব খোজে সিহঁতো সেই ৰূপ।”

“বিৰলীয়ে যেনেকে পেট ভৰাই উঠি গামুৰী এটা দি দোখোজ মান কাঢ়িলে আকৌ সেইদৰে খাবৰ ইচ্ছা কৰে সিহঁতেও খাই উঠি এবেলি গামুৰী দি বাহিৰৰপৰা আহিলে আকৌ সেই ৰূপ ক্ষুধাৰ্ত্ত হয়। সিহঁত চঞ্চল প্ৰকৃতি, আৰু সন্ধিগন্ধাচিত্ত। বাতিপুয়া এবিধ, দুপৰীয়া এবিধ, গধূলি এবিধ, আৰু টোপনী আহিলে এবিধ। সিহঁতত বিশ্বাস নাই।

কিন্তু নাৰী সম্পৰ্কে এনে মন্তব্য কৰা চৰিত্ৰটোৱে বিধৱা নৱমীৰ সৈতে লোকচক্ষুৰ পৰা আঁতৰত ৰাতি কটোৱা কথাটো সমীচীন নহয়। তাৰোপৰি নৱমী অন্তঃসত্ত্বা হোৱাত ৰামৰ কৰণীয়খিনি অৰ্থাৎ নৱমীৰ সৈতে থিয় দিব পৰা সাহসকণৰ অভাৱে চৰিত্ৰটোক নিম্নস্তৰলৈ অবনমিত কৰা যেনহে লাগে। পুৰুষৰ এনেধৰণৰ নাৰীসম্পৰ্কীয় ব্যাখ্যাই নাৰীৰ প্ৰতি থকা মনোভাৱ প্ৰকাশ কৰাৰ লগতে এক শ্ৰেণী পুৰুষৰ মনঃস্তম্বক উদঙাই দিয়ে।

### সামৰণি:

“ৰাম-নৱমী” নাটকখন পৰ্যালোচনা কৰিলে আমি দেখিবলৈ পাপুঁ যে নাটকখনত কেৱল সমাজ-সংস্কাৰৰ দিশটোকহে অধিক জোৰ দিয়া হৈছে, সেয়ে বাকী দিশবোৰৰ দোষ-ত্ৰুটিক বাদ দিব পৰা যায়। তাৰোপৰি নাটখন ৰচনাৰ সময়টোকো আমি পাহৰিব নালাগিব। লগতে সমসাময়িক সময়ত অসমীয়া ৰচনা বা আৰ্হিৰ অভাৱলৈ লক্ষ্য ৰাখি এই নাটখনে সমাজৰ নতুন দিশ এটা উন্মোচনৰ লগতে অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ক্ষেত্ৰখনত এক নতুন ধাৰাৰ সংযোজনেৰে সন্মানীয় স্থান লভিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছে বুলি ক’ব পাৰি। ■

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