

# *Enajori 2012*

## এনাজৰী

বহাগবিহু ২০১২



## *VIC ASSAM*



Bohag Bihu 2011





# এনাজৰী বহাগবিহু ২০১২



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21<sup>st</sup> April 2012

## Editorial

This is our great honour to be part of Enajori 2012 that witnesses the whole-hearted welcoming of our beloved Rongali Bihu to the Assamese Community in Melbourne, Victoria. This 6<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Enajori 2012 has taken her shape once again with the diverse collection of colourful write-ups from many prolific contributors residing in Australia and abroad. One of the most significant inclusions of the Enajori 2012 edition is the tribute by the Vic Assam Community to the cultural icon of Assam "Bhupen Da" who departed for resting in peace on 05 Nov 2011. The contribution of Asom Ratna Dr. Bhupen Hazarika (1926-2011) to Assamese nation marked by humanity and universal brotherhood was deeply honoured by the Vic Assam Committee for 2011-2012 on the news of the departed soul. Most notably the contribution received from Bhudenda's son, Tez Hazarika on his initiatives to establishing a "Sudhakontho Bhupen Hazarika Foundation" during such difficult time for this Enajori is highly commendable.

Over past years, Enajori has become one of the key inspirations for documenting the expressions of people within the community. Every year we are witnessing more and more contributions from our new generation youngsters in the forms of their own scientific research, thematic paintings and posters related to Bihu and the Assamese lives. Clearly, the publication of Enajori for Rongali Bihu in Melbourne has been able to abridge the cultural gap between Assam and our growing Assamese-Australian children in the community. Through Enajori, we are now able to communicate the celebration of our cultural heritage to the wider community outside Australia as well. No doubt that the formal publication of Enajori leapfrogs our cultural promotions and enhancements of ethnicity of Assamese community within the Australian Multicultural Society. The rich contributions in Enajori over past years on multifaceted aspects of Assamese culture by many distinguished members of our wider community have been helping us making good cases for funding supports in the eyes of Victorian Multicultural Commission. So far, our success in securing two funds from the Victorian Multicultural Commission to celebrating the Rongali Bihu in Melbourne in 2011 and 2012 is highly significant. We wish that this edition of Enajori will herald further success in spreading our cultural heritage to wider audience abroad.

Last but not least, our sincere gratitude goes out to all the contributors for their kind support and commitments to make this Enajori 2012 a great success.

Wishing you all a very happy Rongali Bihu and a successful Assamese New Year.

### EDITORIAL TEAM



Hemanta Doloi



Vaivab Jyoti Borgohain



Aradhana Mazinder Barua  
Borgohain





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## From the President of Vic Assam Committee



Happy Rongali Bihu to all the Axomiya Raij and our friends.

It has been a privilege to work as the President of Vic Assam in 2011-2012.

The great work of the previous committee must be acknowledged. They were successful in obtaining our first two grants from Multicultural Commission of the State Government of Victoria.

In 2012, we have had a few functions. At the beginning of the year, we had a function at Deakin University to commemorate the death of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika. It was great to see our friends from the Bangladeshi community taking an important part in this function.

The next function that we had was Magh Bihu, held at Hillside. Apart from the usual festivities, this year we had traditional games like Koni Jhus and Tekeli Bhanga. The ladies participated in musical chairs, before the children's games. Serving of Sira Doi and Pithas was followed by a sumptuous dinner prepared by the ladies. The function ended with a Mukoli Bihu.

This years Rongali Bihu is being held at a new location where the facilities are better. Also, we are privileged that Mr. Chin Tan, Chairperson of the Victorian Multicultural Commission has agreed to attend our Rongali Bihu celebrations.

Most importantly, this year we are fortunate to have a visitor from Assam Mayukh Hazarika, son of the late Jayanta Hazarika to perform at our Rongali Bihu function. It is an honour for an artiste of his caliber to perform for us.

All this is due to the hard work done by the committee members, and I thank them for their support.

I hope that the Vic Assam functions continue to reflect our Assamese traditions and that the younger generation take an active role.

Indrani Bora

President, Vic Assam 2011-12



"Koni Jhus" winner Mr. Ajit Dutta from Sibisagar with his grand son Rahul and the current president of Vic Assam







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## Tribute to Dr Bhupen Hazarika



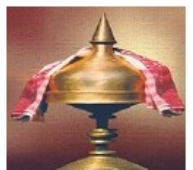
November 5, 2011 will be marked in the history of Assam. On that day, we lost Dr Bhupen Hazarika, the doyen of Assamese music and a legendary Indian singer, composer, lyricist, music director, film maker. Dr Hazarika received many awards including Indian's second highest civilian award Padma Vibhushan, Dadasaheb Phalke Award which is the highest award in the Indian film industry, and Assam Ratna, the highest civilian award of the State of Assam. Dr Hazarika was also conferred posthumously the Friends of Bangladesh Award.

The Assamese community in Victoria gathered in Deakin University, Geelong on 19th November to pay tribute to the life and times of Dr Hazarika. Joining the Assamese were our Bangladeshi friends, and friends from other parts of India. The event was organised by Vic Assam Inc with the help of students from India and Bangladesh at Deakin University, Australia. The President of Vic Assam Inc, Mrs Indrani Bora, started the proceedings with a short speech about Dr Hazarika. It was followed by a minute silence and floral tribute to the legend. The life and musical journey of Dr Hazarika was played on the screen. Bhupenda's music was brought to life by various singers, who remembered the songs that all of us have grown up with and learnt to love.

Of particular note was the contribution of Anita Baruah, Mani Rajkhowa, Taranum Afrin and Kafi Abdullah with Bhupenda's memorable songs which filled people's hearts with emotions. Also Mofizul Islam from Bangladesh gave beautiful renditions of some of Bhupenda's classic songs. The program was put together by Sanjiv Goswami, Rangam Rajkhowa and Tarranum Afrin.



By Rangam Rajkhowa  
On Behalf of Vic Assam Committee 2011-12





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## Intellectual Community, Cultural Heritage and a reflection

~ Dr. Hemanta Doloi

The great occasion of Rongali Bihu 2012 has given us an opportunity to show our strengths, passions, enthusiasms and inspirations as a community here in Melbourne once again. We are truly fortunate to be able celebrate our cultural ritual away from our homeland with symbolic preparation of dances, songs and food. While this festive season back in Assam touches hearts and souls of the entire nation, the celebration of this hereditary culture does not come without posing some hurdles to common families. The sky rocketing prices of basic commodities and ever increasing urbanisation across the state have been exerting significant challenges to common families in both economical and social settings. While this festive season meant to bring hope for love, happiness, prosperity and success to each and every person in the community, paucity of the unique items that symbolise the uniqueness of this season and hyped Bihu markets simply repel many families from celebrating this cultural heritage. As the entire state of Assam prepares to rejuvenate through the month-long celebration of Rongali Bihu with Dhol, Peppa, Gogona etc., majority of Assamese families especially in remote villages are hammered down by their priorities of social and economic needs. Talking about social and economic constraints, people somehow linked to Assam can easily understand how measurable is the life of most of Assamese families especially in villages in terms of their livelihoods. Among these communities, one of the key heritages of the Rogali Bihu for presenting new cloths to family members and relatives has been greatly compromised.

Compared to the people of Assam, we are highly fortunate to celebrate this festive season abroad. Our fortune in such celebration is supplemented by our intellectual and professional backgrounds where we have managed to leave our homes for the sake of adopting to a better life in Australia. Fortunately, Australia is a place where basic human needs are almost guaranteed. We all have quite a high standard of living compared to our families and friends back in Assam. When we share our feelings with people of Assam through such ritual, we not only emit our bonding to the place of our birth but also act as a catalyst of hopes and aspirations in the form of role models especially for the younger generation. At least, this is quite true for me being a Jorhotian came long way to establishing myself as part of our intellectual community in Melbourne.

While my heart goes out to those needy families back in Assam, making an impact to anyone's life with a single hand is insignificant. However, by joining hands with a few like minded people, the opportunity for giving



A moment from Assamese drama "Aahha" Bohag Bihu 2011

back to the society is enormous. Over last three years, being an active member of our Non Government Organisation (NGO) known as Social Empowerment, Service, Training and Awareness, Australia (SESTAA), I am highly privileged to steer my thinking along this front and possibly making a contribution for the betterment of a few needy families in Assam. I wish that every one of us in our Vic Assam Community reflects for a moment during the celebration of our Rongali Bihu 2012 and puts a step forward supporting those disadvantaged towards making them prosperous, happy and successful within the community. God bless us all.



Kid's Tug-Of-War Bohag Bihu 2011







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## Sudhakontho Bhupen Hazarika Foundation

*The Golden Voice of Assam*

Why I propose a brand new popular trust to safeguard and propagate Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's Legacy

Dear Fans and Followers of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika,

End of December 2011 the following draft proposal for a new trust for my father's legacy was presented to the Govt. of Assam. Since my departure from Assam on November 26th I had been in touch with my family and associates drafting the same proposal, the gist of which I am now making public. While work in the field proceeds unabated, still absent is a universally accepted trust for Dr. Bhupen Hazarika. **This public statement is not a tool to pressurize anyone, including the Govt. of Assam, to accept my idea; I am releasing this due to the requests and demands of a number of people in Assam who are evidently concerned about the legacy of Bhupenda.**



The Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika

1926-2011

Cremating my father was a profound blessing. Like his song, I find myself on a confluence of oceans. I feel accepted even as something is expected of me. I opt to honor the motherland through my service. After all I was born in India and for the knowledge of all who do not know, I have been working here through various foundations for many years now. So I regret any disturbance I may have caused people while they grieved. However when I made my views public, I was only reflecting the public's perception and concern about the representation. It surfaced questions and triggered a necessary forum for previously repressed feelings and positions. Honesty and transparency should be key elements supporting his legacy. I have my personal history with my father, my mother, his siblings, and his partner. I had no choice but to make known my deep reservations and to announce the formation of a new popular trust.

We project a transparent and democratic organization amenable to flexibility, longevity and success. It is to operate as a partnership between the Government of Assam, higher educational institutions, representatives of cultural and civic groups, leaders of ethnic minorities, the private sector and siblings of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika. Outlined is a list of objectives to be fulfilled by working committees. Our structure can be a turning wheel or a galaxy, take your pick. Whatever the hard realities, the work must go on. We need your expertise to build this ship.

The GOA should be an important partner and guardian of the trust. Our popularly grounded umbrella organization should represent, enhance and publicize the legacy with all parties working towards the same goal. If each of us puts our heart into making it happen, it can be a reality. I pledge my diligence, to help build a stable trust out of the willing and convinced members-advisors -specialists working harmoniously. Cultivating new alliances in Assam and the North East we will coordinate projects with communities in North America from New York.

Honorable elders, protectors, guardians, ministers, chairmen, secretaries, treasurers and record keepers of all denominations, this is a call to rally around a plan, not around me. I am proposing it on behalf of its core supporters. More information will flow in the days ahead. Please consider the pros and cons given the choices. I am soliciting your valuable advice and endorsement of what I believe to be our mutual cause, path and goal. It will require hard work, funding from the private sector as well as the government. But most of all your input and support is crucial for making it a reality. In anticipation of this foundation, some people have started pledging their monetary and other forms of support to jump start our operation. Your help in any specific capacity will be needed. Let us know how you can help. Meanwhile please share this plan with everyone.

Let us realize the Sudhakontho's vision for humanity together.

**This is the right time to forge a worthy vessel for Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's Legacy.**

Yours for Assam,

Tej Hazarika





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Following is the outline of the objectives of our proposed trust. Organized under topics near and dear to his heart, are our objectives to uphold and to propagate the legacy of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika.

## Sudhakontho Bhupen Hazarika Foundation

### - Proposal for Discussion -

We request the Government of Assam (GOA) to -  
Review and consider this proposal

1. Spearhead this foundation
2. Request GOA to offer a foundation office space in the department
3. Request GOA to appoint and fund a full-time liaison officer
4. Guide its overall functioning
5. Structure a Formation Team

[Note: We propose the name 'Sudhakontho Bhupen Hazarika Foundation', however the name can be discussed and revised if required by the Formation Team]

### 1. Objectives of the foundation:

The overall objective of the foundation would be to 'preserve' and 'propagate' the work and philosophy of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika. We are all aware of the fact that he was a multi-faceted personality. He was a writer, composer, film-maker, performer, artist, social ambassador and much more. He was a monolithic creative institution in himself. There is a need to operate in tracks or focused work-groups in order to research, collate, document, archive and propagate his work. The foundation would thus have tracks and track-committees specializing on individual work streams.

The foundation would like to propose the following tracks:

1. Education
2. Translations
3. Publishing
4. Global Initiative
5. Writings & Art
6. Commonality Initiatives
7. Cultural Awareness Initiatives

8. Music

9. Lyrics

10. Films and video archive

11. Life of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika

12. Website/Online Repository

13. Fund Raising

### 2. Tracks & Objectives:

**Track 1. Education:** To develop speakers to bring new ideas to schools, as catalysts, to provide leadership perspective in keeping with Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika's role in life as advisor, patron and advisor to institutions of learning, he was able to inspire young and old to do better. The Foundation will cultivate and send specialists and personalities to address affiliate schools' student, parent and teacher bodies. To equip people with key information required to make advancements or transformations. To assist affiliate independent educational institutions in long term associations including the attraction of assistance from overseas educational philanthropic organizations while inculcating the ethic of giving back to the society.

**Track 2. Translations:** To facilitate, manage and regulate the quality of translation projects to completion of all the written works including song lyrics of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika into major sub continental (Hindi, Urdu, South Indian groups) and other language groups of the world (English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, etc).

**Track 3. Publishing:** To oversee publishing initiatives of original and translated writings of Dr Bhupen Hazarika for production and distribution world-wide. To creatively publicize the works and develop markets nationally and internationally. To introduce his works to reading curriculums through all levels of education in Assam and

eventually India and overseas and to establish avenues to introduce his books into schools, colleges, universities and libraries. Under this initiative our trust will be able to collaborate with new and worthy projects that keep emerging from innovators inspired by his legacy and example.

**Track 4. Global Initiative:** To associate Dr Bhupen Hazarika's name with excellence in the fields of poetry, modern urban and folk musical traditions, songs with messages, and music used for social change and education. To cultivate proponents for chairs, fellowships or awards in his name or to honor him with names of buildings or classrooms. Liaise with NE and Indian communities globally to expose and popularize his work through events and creative collabo-







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rations abroad. Seek ways to present his lyrics as a window into the culture of Assam while using them as a bridge for the seven sister states to rest of India and the world.

**Track 5. Writings & Art:** To research and archive, catalogue and publish his contributions to literary prose, poetry, essays as well as his painting/drawings/art designs including his calligraphy. His contributions and impact on society in Assam, North East, West Bengal, Bangladesh and nationally to be fully explored and documented. Research, archive and publish accounts of his work as a peacemaker and jewel of India.

**Track 6. Commonality Initiatives:** To address issues of fair representation of minorities, to provide venues and forums for personalities from different groups (including but not limited to Muslims, Christians and Buddhists) to participate and be heard by interested citizens live and through television and for them to meet each other under the umbrella of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika's central message of peace, celebration of commonality and peaceful resolution of conflicts. The broad distribution of participating members over a term participation in executive committees will ensure fair representation of all groups on a decision making level. A culture of building long term relationships will be encouraged. These collaborations will seed other cooperation between groups, facilitated by the foundation. This initiative will also maintain a volunteer dedicated group of legal and social advisors to protect the rights of the weak segments of society.

**Track 7. Cultural Awareness Initiatives:** through the performing arts: In keeping with his vision of cultural syncretism and appreciation of all forms of art, to promote and co-produce special events and contests to promote reciprocal cultural exchange between Assam and other countries through performance and events.

**Track 8. Music:** To collect, archive, the musical songs, compositions and arrangements of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika. To liaise with other groups already archiving his works to contribute to the sum total of 'Bhupendra Sangeet'. To seek effective ways to brand and present his body of work in a context true to his philosophy, view of the creative process and transformation of society. To retrieve and publish his recorded but as yet unpublished musical works using appropriate media.

**Track 9. Lyrics:** To research, collect, archive, catalogue and publish the lyrics of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika. To facilitate intellectual discussion, analysis and interpretation of his lyrics. To conduct propagation via reading sessions and writing forums. To highlight the freshness and uniqueness of his central humanist message embedded in each of his lyrical masterpieces. To seek ways to present his lyrics as a window

into the culture of Assam as well as the interlinked culture of the north eastern states.

**Track 10. Films and video footage:** To collect, archive and enhance with subtitles, for international consumption, all his film and video work with the objective to make them available to the public in the best form possible. Complimentary to that task will be the collection, research, archiving and publishing of articles, scripts for films, essays and books written on audio visual media and education by Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika. To collect and archive video footage of all his performances. To make available his films to the public and to film schools school and libraries.

**Track 11. Life of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika:** Document his life and the achievements/awards of Xudhakontho. Collect, catalogue and archive video footage of his performances. Record personal first-hand accounts of people. Stories from musicians who travelled and performed with him are a great source of information. Contacts will be pooled by word of mouth, to establish direct links with all individuals with information to share about Bhupendra. To gather information, interviews, letters and articles related to him in order to create a more complete documentation of his life for the public and posterity.

**Track 12. Website/Online Repository:** Maintain a dynamic official website and media page with live updates and interactivity with public to facilitate greater traffic and flow of information. Website can be a learning resource for the works of Late Dr Bhupen Hazarika.

**Track 13. Fund Raising:** To cultivate sponsors and raise funds from the private sector to accomplish the objectives of the trust. To maintain transparent records for all financial activities of the foundation in conjunction with the Govt of Assam.

*Note: For further details, please contact the author.*





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## Assamese community in Victoria over the years

~ Kamal Dutta

I arrived in Australia and went to Tasmania in 1959. That was much before many of the young people today were even born. Time has passed a long way since then. At that time, Australia had a small population but though I came from Assam, I was able to blend in well. I studied chemical engineering at Hobart and later joined service.

In 1967, I came to Melbourne and joined Carborandum P Ltd at Thomastown as Technical Manager, before joining the Ministry of Defence as a scientist. The initial history of Melbourne was that it was just a place with tents and huts on the banks of the Yarra river. The river was used for bathing and drinking water and by mid 1800s had become quite polluted and the cause of an epidemic of typhoid fever which resulted in many deaths. In due course, Melbourne became bigger and when the six Australian states federated into one, Melbourne became the capital city of Australia from 1901 - 1927. Since the 1970s, the pace of change in Melbourne has been increasingly rapid. The end of the [White Australia Policy](#) brought the first significant Asian migration to Melbourne and Melbourne became a highly multi cultural society.

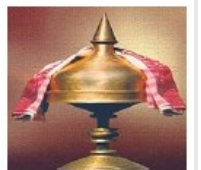
Till the arrival of Deepali Choudhury Dhillon & Gurjit in the early eighties (around 1981), I was perhaps the only Assamese in Victoria. In fact, there were very few Indians at that time. It was only in the late 1970s that many Indians from South India came to Melbourne. By 1980 however, a large number of Bengalis had come and as there were hardly any Assamese, I was a regular invitee in their functions and community festivals. By the early 1980s, I became one of the founding members of the Bengali Association of Victoria and in due course became the founder Secretary of the Carramdown Shiva Vishnu Temple. I remember those days, when to get Indian groceries, I had to go to Hallam where Abul Hasnat had opened the first Indian shop. As far as I know, there never has been anyone from Assam doing in business in Melbourne. But some like Amarendra Changkakati have been active in promoting cultural activities voluntarily and had established VicSangeet to encourage people from North East India to promote its culture, while Nilkashi Bora, who arrived with her husband Ritwick, in late 2000s, now runs Nila Dance Studio, a dancing school teaching Odissi dance.

Slowly more and more people from Assam started to arrive. While many like Sundar & Rita Sarma were already in Australia in other places since the early 1970s, their arrival to Melbourne was in early 1990s, when Indrani and Deep also arrived at Geelong. Soon Amarendra & Aparajita Changkakati, Nova & Chandana Basumatary as well as Zeenat & Riachard, and Seuj came and settled down. The early 2000s saw the arrival of Smita & Sanjeev Sabhlok and thereafter by mid 2000s others like Leon, Lon and Bijita Miri, Hemanta & Monjita Doloi, Rangam & Jhum Rajhkowa, Sanjay & Limpi Sarma, Anita & Sandip, Raj & Mani Rajhkowa, Raj & Rashmita Cheleng arrived. Soon came others like Gauri & Lipi Konwar, Partho & Jonali and Achyut & Madhusmita Haloi. By late 2000s, Pranjal & Jeeni Deka and Sanjib & Ruma Goswami arrived as did many other students.

There were others from Assam who were in Melbourne but who have since left to other places for professional reasons. Nandita & Gautam has since left for Canberra while Dushmanta & Rukmi and Saaz & Geeta are now in Sydney. Gaurav & Anila are now in India.

Melbourne has always boasted a multi cultural society and because the migrants from Assam were nearly all professionals, there was not much of a problem in assimilation. Of course, the normal problems of settling in a new place had to be overcome by all. Issues such as accommodation and transport had to be overcome. While these initial hiccups are expected, it is also a fact that the broader Australian society has accepted the Assamese people warmly and the community is also contributing positively to the society here. There has been positive contribution in the field of education, health, technical and IT sector by many of us. In fact the second and third generation of Assamese are already starting to make a contribution to the society at large. .

Before the community became big, we used to organize Bihu in private homes by turns. It was much fun then as it was a time for a personal and exciting interaction. Of course, the fun and enjoyment that Bihu holds now was absent and it was just like a lazy afternoon get to gather in some one's home. Noted singer Anirban Das came to Melbourne as an invited guest in 2007 and a musical function was held at Boxhill, which was the first official function by the Assamese community in Melbourne. This years invited guest Mayukh Hazarika's musical function is eagerly awaited. These Bihu functions involved community feast, songs and dance and basically was a period of merry making. I remember when one such function was held in my home in 2005 and over 50 people had participated.







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When the community enlarged, it was finally decided to formalize our community and to form an official organization. Vic Assam was thus born after a meeting at Indrani and Deep Bora's house at Geelong where I was elected the President. It was to the credit of our community that the Govt of Victoria gave us a financial grant in the very first year itself which amounted to giving us due recognition. This is the second year of Vic Assam as an organization and I am sure in the years to come, our community will take up more projects and make great strides. I personally wish a cultural school to impart knowledge and research on Assam can one day be set up.



Kamal Dutta is a Justice of the Peace in Melbourne, Victoria and a retired scientist from the Department of Defence, Government of Australia. Any names forgotten to be mentioned in this short write up is entirely inadvertent and may be excused.

## ৰঙালী বিহুৰ “স্মৃতি গ্ৰন্থ”- ড° বুলজিৎ বুঢ়াগোহাঁই

ৰঙালী বিহু অসমৰ জাতীয় উৎসৱ। ৰাজ্যখনৰ সকলো অঞ্চলত জাতি, ধৰ্ম, বৰ্ণ নিৰ্বিশেষে ৰঙালী বিহু পালন কৰে। প্ৰবাসী অসমীয়া সকলেও ৰঙালী বিহু পালন কৰে। ৰঙালী বিহু সমিলন সমিতিবোৰৰ উদ্যোগত ৰঙালী বিহু উপলক্ষে সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান আয়োজন কৰে। ইয়াৰ লগত সংহতি ৰাখি বহুতো ৰঙালী বিহু উদযাপন সমিতিয়ে “স্মৃতি গ্ৰন্থ” প্ৰকাশ কৰে আৰু “স্মৃতি গ্ৰন্থ”বোৰত বিহু সম্পৰ্কীয় প্ৰবন্ধ পাতিৰ লগতে বিভিন্ন লেখা প্ৰকাশ হয়। কিন্তু এই “স্মৃতি গ্ৰন্থ” সমূহ সাধাৰণতে যি অঞ্চলত প্ৰকাশ হয় সেই অঞ্চলসমূহতে বিতৰণ হোৱা দেখা যায়। বেলেগ অঞ্চলৰ ৰাইজে সংগ্ৰহ কৰিবৰ উপায় নাথাকে। আমাৰ ৰাজ্যখনৰ লগতে প্ৰবাসী অসমীয়া সকলৰ ৰঙালী বিহু উদযাপন সমিতিবোৰক আহ্বান জনাব বিচাৰিছোঁ যে বিহু উপলক্ষে প্ৰকাশিত “স্মৃতি গ্ৰন্থ”ৰ এটিকৈ কপি ৰাজ্যিক কেন্দ্ৰীয় পুথিভঁৰাল তথা জিলা পুথিভঁৰালবোৰলৈ পঠিয়ালে ভাল হয়। পুথিভঁৰালবোৰৰ কৰ্তৃপক্ষই “স্মৃতি গ্ৰন্থ” সমূহ ৰখা ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব লাগে।

এতিয়া তথ্য-প্ৰযুক্তিৰ যুগ আমি সকলোৰে ইয়াৰ সুযোগ গ্ৰহণ কৰা উচিত। প্ৰযুক্তিৰ সহায়ত আমি আমাৰ জাতীয় উৎসৱ ৰঙালী বিহুৰ বিষয়ে বিশ্ব দৰবাৰত দাঙি ধৰিব পাৰোঁ। বিহু উপলক্ষে প্ৰকাশিত সকলোবোৰ “স্মৃতি গ্ৰন্থ” ইণ্টাৰনেটত উপলব্ধ কৰিব লাগে যাতে পৃথিৱীৰ বিভিন্ন প্ৰান্তত থকা লোকে পঢ়িব পাৰে। এই “স্মৃতি গ্ৰন্থ”বোৰত বিহুৰ বাদ্যসমূহ- ঢোল, পেঁপা, তাল, টকা, গগনা, সুতুলী, বাঁহী আদিৰ বৰ্ণনা ফটো সৈতে দিব লাগে। “স্মৃতি গ্ৰন্থ”বোৰত অতি কমেও এটিকৈ ইংৰাজী আৰু হিন্দী ভাষাত বিহু সম্পৰ্কীয় প্ৰবন্ধ প্ৰকাশ কৰিব লাগে আৰু প্ৰবাসী অসমীয়া সকলে ৰঙালী বিহু উপলক্ষে যদি “স্মৃতি গ্ৰন্থ” প্ৰকাশ কৰে তেন্তে “স্মৃতি গ্ৰন্থ”বোৰত যি অঞ্চলত বসবাস কৰে সেই অঞ্চলৰ ভাষাত বিহুৰ বিষয়ে প্ৰবন্ধ লিখিব লাগে। তাৰ ফলত পৃথিৱীৰ বিভিন্ন প্ৰান্তত থকা লোকসকলে বিহুৰ বিষয়ে কিছু হ'লেও আভাস পাবলৈ সক্ষম হ'ব। তেতিয়া বিহুৰ বিষয়ে বেছিকৈ জানিবলৈ আগ্ৰহ প্ৰকাশ কৰিব, হয়তো বহুতো বিহু বিষয়ে গৱেষণা কৰিবলৈও আগবাঢ়ি আহিব। সেইদৰে বিহুৰ প্ৰতি আকৰ্ষিত হৈ দেশী-বিদেশী পৰ্যটক আমাৰ ৰাজ্যখনলৈ আগমন হ'ব আৰু তাৰ ফলত ৰাজ্যখন কিছু পৰিমাণে হ'লেও অৰ্থনৈতিক ভাৱে লাভবান হ'ব।

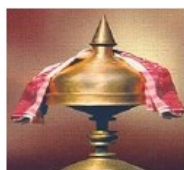
ৰঙালী বিহু উপলক্ষে বিভিন্ন ঠাইত আয়োজন কৰা সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠানবোৰৰ ভিডিঅ কৰি ৱেবচাইতবোৰত (যেনে- YouTube) আপলোড কৰিব লাগে আৰু অসমীয়া, ইংৰাজী আৰু হিন্দী ভাষা উপৰি সম্ভৱ হ'লে পৃথিৱীৰ বিভিন্ন ভাষাতো এই কাৰ্যসূচীবোৰৰ বৰ্ণনা দিব লাগে যাতে পৃথিৱীৰ সকলো অঞ্চলৰ ৰাইজে চাই বুজিব পাৰে। বিহুৰ বিষয়ে প্ৰচাৰৰ বাবে উপযুক্ত মাধ্যম হ'ব পাৰে ব্লগ (blog)। ব্লগবোৰতো ৰঙালী বিহু সম্পৰ্কীয় প্ৰবন্ধ প্ৰকাশ কৰিব লাগে।

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# এনাজৰী বহাগবিহু ২০১২



VIC ASSAM

21<sup>st</sup> April 2012

## Global Warming- Climate Change- Carbon Tax

~Sundar Sarma

Global Warming has become a household word and almost everyone has heard the words "Green house Gas". CO<sub>2</sub> is the most dominant component of Green house gas and the Carbon emission tax is to be introduced in Australia to reduce the emission of Green house gas. I am a swinging voter and I need to know if I want this tax to be introduced. If you are in the same boat as me you may like to read what I have discovered so far.



**Pollution, climate change and Global Warming** - these three issues are very badly mixed up in the media, mostly by the politicians and by the people who have very little knowledge in science.

When fossil fuels such as coal, gas and petrol are burned, there are a number of by-products.

Particulate matter that is not filtered from exhausts and escapes from smokestacks is polluting and contributes to smog and serious respiratory and other community health problems. Particle emissions contribute to global cooling not global warming but are definitely pollution.

Gases such as nitrogen oxide and sulphur dioxide arising from the combustion of coal can cause acid rain; they also are pollution. Carbon dioxide is also produced in great quantities when coal, gas and oil are burnt. But CO<sub>2</sub> is colourless and normally benign, is not a pollutant. It is a greenhouse gas which, as its concentration increases in the atmosphere, contributes to the warming of the planet. It is a greenhouse gas, not a pollutant, in the context of climate change. CO<sub>2</sub> is necessary to plant life and in regulating our temperature and climate. Many cold regions in the northern hemisphere welcome global warming. Think of Scotland, parts of Scandinavia, Russia, Canada. To them, increasing CO<sub>2</sub> is not a problem. Is it possible for the same CO<sub>2</sub> to be a pollutant in the other warmer regions of the world? We all studied in the school that the plants take in CO<sub>2</sub> from the air and give out oxygen for us. We need CO<sub>2</sub> for the survival of the plant and the animal life. **The term "climate" refers to the general weather conditions in an area over a long range of time.** In the last few years we are not only seeing exceptionally hot days in various places in the world, we are also seeing exceptionally cold days in various parts of the world. Europe, Canada and USA had unprecedented snow

fall in December 2011.

In Australia, we are experiencing record breaking floods and very dry periods. Climate change is cyclical and has been occurring again and again over the past millions of years. Climate change is a natural phenomenon. Lake Eyre stays as a dry lake for most of the time. It was full of water in 1970 and it became full of water after the record breaking flood in 2011 after a gap of 40 years.

Various activities of the human being like creating pollution or deforestation etc aggravates the changes in the climate locally in addition to its natural cycles. We all know what deforestation does - it helps in removing the top soil, it reduces humidity and it reduces rainfall. Cherapunji in Assam, India once the place for world's highest rainfall is suffering from drinking water problem due to deforestation.

The word Global warming is being used to indicate the increase in the atmospheric temperature of the earth due to the increase in the concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> produced by the activities of human being. It does not include the CO<sub>2</sub> produced or reduced by other natural phenomenon. The major effect of global warming is - it has the potential to melt the ice and the glaciers on earth which will increase the sea level and thereby putting a huge amount of low lying coastal areas all over the world under water. The scientists are using various mathematical models to calculate in how many years the sea level will rise by how much.

There is a high degree of disagreement among the scientists on the measurement of the rise in sea level, on the measurement of increase in the atmospheric temperature of the earth and on the value of the various variables that is being used in those model studies. It is reported that ice and glaciers are melting in Antarctica but ice and glaciers are increasing in the Himalayas. A minor change in any of the variables being input to the models yields vastly different results.

Rise and fall in the sea level occurred many times on earth during the past 500 million years or even earlier. The geologist calls the fall in the sea level as the age of the Ice and Glaciers which is the effect of global cooling. In between the Ice ages are the interglacial periods when the rise in sea level occurs due to the increase in the atmospheric temperature of the earth which relate to what is being currently referred as Global warming. The rise and fall in the sea level is a natural phenomenon occurring in a huge scale and it has its own cycle.

**According to Dr. Phil Playford**, a highly respected Australian geologist "During the past million years there have been large alternations in global temperatures between glacial and interglacial periods at frequencies averaging about 100,000 years. We are currently experiencing a mild interglacial period. At the peak of the last ice age, only 17,000 years ago, sea level was about 130 m below its present level and the coastline in the Perth area was 12 km west of Rottnest Island. The climate at that time was cold and arid, and active sand dunes developed in the Great Sandy, Gibson and







# এনাজৰী বহাগবিহু ২০১২



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Simpson deserts.

As the climate warmed at the end of the last ice age, global sea level rose extremely rapidly, reaching about its present level some 6,500 years ago. The present sea level and temperatures are thought to be lower than they were at the peak of the last interglacial, 130,000 years ago.

Al Gore and others have pointed to the supposed coincidence between rising atmospheric temperatures and rising CO<sub>2</sub> levels in ice cores from Antarctica and Greenland. However, the rising levels of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> lagged about 800 years behind rising temperatures at the end of the last ice age. In other words the rising temperatures caused CO<sub>2</sub> levels to rise, rather than the reverse. It seems that as the oceans gradually warmed part of their dissolved CO<sub>2</sub> was driven off. Moreover, when temperatures fell at the beginning of each ice age, CO<sub>2</sub> levels declined much more slowly than atmospheric temperatures. ”

Dr Garth Paltridge, Emeritus Professor and Honorary Research Fellow, IASOS, University of Tasmania, was involved in the early development of the World Climate Program in Geneva, as well as working with the US National Climate Program Office at the time of the establishment of the IPCC.

Paltridge argues that models produced by the IPCC give directly contrasting results and that it is only those that predict global warming which are openly publicised. He also highlights that nearly all climate change science within Australia is conducted by government agencies, prompting him to ask exactly how objective this research is.

According to Paltridge the real problem is that climate models include unproven physics to do with the behaviour of cloud and water vapour in the atmosphere, and this behaviour vastly amplifies the quite small response of Earth's temperature to increasing carbon dioxide. In the vernacular of the scientist, cloud and water vapour provide 'positive feedback' in climate models. We have no actual measurements accurate enough to support that idea, and it is just as likely that, in the real world, this feedback is negative and would greatly reduce the response of Earth's temperature to increasing carbon dioxide.

There are lots of materials available in the internet supporting and opposing the global warming. I have come to the conclusion that Global warming is a natural phenomenon in a very large scale and it occurred many times in the past even when human being did not exist in the earth. Because we cannot have real data from the last sea level rise or sea level fall to use in the model studies, results coming from those models will never be reliable. We human being may consider ourselves very intelligent but all our science and technology could not help Japan from its last 2011

earth quake disaster which was accompanied by a huge Tsunami, could not help USA in 2005 when Hurricane Katrina undid in 2/3 days what drainage engineers had spent decades planning and constructing.

When I think about these events I find it difficult to believe that turning the light off when I leave the room will save the planet.

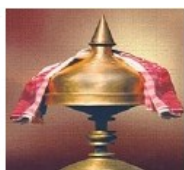


Lighting Candle Bohag Bihu 2011

১) কথাত কটা যাই, কথাত কটা পাই

kothat kota jai; kothat bota pai

How we speak is very important. One's success in life depends on how one speaks. In fact this proverb tells that if one knows how to speak, he will be rewarded (bota pai). On the other hand, if one does not how to speak properly, he will be punished or may in worst case lose his life (kota jai). A good speaker is a good leader.





# এনাজৰী বহাগবিহু ২০১২



VIC ASSAM

21<sup>st</sup> April 2012

## চৰণেহে জানে মৰণৰ ঠাই

### শ্ৰী অনিতা মজিন্দাৰ বৰুৱা

ডাঃ হিমাদ্ৰী প্ৰমাদ বয় এই সৰু চহৰখনৰ এজন নামী ডাক্তৰ। এই অঞ্চলত তেওঁৰ নামেই আছে যে - তেওঁ এবাৰ ৰোগীজন হাতেৰে চুলেই ৰোগীৰ বেমাৰ-আজাৰ নাইকিয়া হয়। সেয়েহে এই অঞ্চলৰ লগতে ওচৰৰ গাওঁ অঞ্চলৰ পৰাও বহুতো বেমাৰী তেওঁৰ ওচৰলৈ বেমাৰ দেখুৱাবলৈ আহে। গোটেই দিনটো তেওঁ বেমাৰীৰ লগতে ব্যস্ত হৈ থাকে। দিনটোৰ ব্যস্ততাৰ পাছত গধূলি পৰত তেওঁৰ চাং বঙলা হেন ঘৰটোৰ ওপৰৰ বাৰান্দাত বহা এটা নিত্যনৈমিত্তিক স্বভাৱ। তাতে বহি অতীতৰ সুখদুখৰ স্মৃতি ৰোমন্থন কৰি তেওঁ নিজৰ মনত অপাৰ আনন্দ লাভ কৰে। পয়সন্তৰ বয়স পাৰ কৰা ডাঃ হিমাদ্ৰী ৰয়ে আজিও বাৰান্দাত বহি দিনটোৰ কথাবোৰৰ লগতে পাৰহৈ অহা দিনবোৰৰ কথা ৰোমন্থন কৰি আছে। ডাঃ হিমাদ্ৰী ৰয়ৰ ছোৱালী দুজনী। দুয়োজনী ছোৱালীৰে বিয়া হৈ গৈছে। ঘৈণীয়েক মালাই পাকঘৰত ইটো-সিটো কৰি আছে। গতিকে প্ৰকাণ্ড ঘৰটোৰ আগপিনৰ বাৰান্দাত তেওঁ অকলে অকলে বহি আছে। এনেতে তেওঁ বাৰান্দাৰ পৰা দেখিলে বাহিৰৰ ল'নখনৰ গছজোপাৰ কাষতে এটি চিনাকী ছাঁ। ওপৰৰ পৰাই তেওঁ দুবাৰমান মাতিলে। কিন্তু একো সঁহাঁৰি নাপালে। সেয়েহে তেওঁ তললৈ নামি আহিল। ওচৰ চাপি দেখিলে তেওঁৰ সেই চিনাকী ছাঁটো আন কোনো নহয় মাত্ৰ এজোপা গছৰ ছাঁহে। তাতে নৰখি লাহে লাহে ডাঃ হিমাদ্ৰী ৰয়ে ওপৰলৈ উঠি আহি আকৌ আৰামি চকীখনত বহি পৰিল। লগে লগে তেওঁৰ মনটো অতীতলৈ ঘূৰি গ'ল সেই চিনাকী ছাঁটোৰ মাজলৈ।

আজি প্ৰায় ত্ৰিশ বছৰৰো আগৰ কথা। দিনটো ঠিককৈ মনত নাই। জেঠ মাহৰ এটা গৰম দিনত বেমাৰী চাই আছে। বেমাৰীৰ অসম্ভৱ ভীৰ। শেষ বেমাৰীজন মাতি ডাঃ ৰয়ে দেখিলে এইজন এজন নতুন ৰোগী। মানুহটো মিঠা বৰণৰ। বৰ ওখ ও নহয় ছুটিও নহয়। পিঙ্গলত সাধাৰণ চাৰ্ট আৰু চুটিকে পিন্ধা ধৃতি। চুলিবোৰ অলপ অলপ পকিছে। মানুহটো বেচ শক্তিশালী দেখিলেই অনুমান কৰিব পাৰি। মানুহটোক মাতি ডাঃ ৰয়ে তাৰ নামটো সুধিলে। গোমোঠা মুখৰ মানুহটোৱে গহীন মতেৰে ক'লে — কানিয়া। নামটো শুনি ডাঃ হিমাদ্ৰী ৰয়ৰ মনে মনে হাঁহি উঠিল যদিও হাঁহিটো লুকুৱাই সাধাৰণ ভাৱেৰেই শুধিলে — কোনো বেমাৰ হৈছে তোৰ? কানিয়া নামৰ মানুহটোৱে অতি কৰুণ ভাৱেৰে ক'লে — দেউতা মোৰ বৰ অসুখ। বহুত ডাক্তৰক দেখুৱাইও ভাল পোৱা নাই। মই হয়তো বেছিদিন বাচি নাথাকো। আপোনাৰ কথা অইনৰ মুখত শুনি আজি ইয়ালৈ আহিছো। মোক বচাওক

দেউতা। ডাক্তৰ ৰয়ে কানিয়াক ভালদৰে পৰীক্ষা কৰি তেনে একো বেমাৰ নাপালে।

তেওঁ কানিয়াক ক'লে তোৰ দেখোন তেনে একো বেমাৰ নাই। কানিয়াই কন্দনামুৰা হৈ ক'লে - নহয় দেউতা আপুনি মোক বচাওক। ডাঃ ৰয়ে বুজিলে তাৰ শৰীৰত তেনে একো বেমাৰ নাই - এইটো তাৰ মনৰ বেমাৰহে। সেয়েহে তাক ভিটামিন ইঞ্জেকছন এটা দি সপ্তাহত এটা এটাকৈ তিনি সপ্তাহ ল'বলৈ ক'লে। তিনি সপ্তাহৰ মূৰত কানিয়া আহি উপস্থিত হ'ল। এইবাৰ তাক বহুত প্ৰফুল্লিত যেন লগা হ'ল। ডাঃ ৰয়ে তাক চাই ক'লে — তই এতিয়া সম্পূৰ্ণ সুস্থ। কানিয়া ঘৰলৈ গ'ল।

প্ৰায় ছমাহ মানৰ পাছত কানিয়া এদিন আকৌ উপস্থিত হ'ল। ডাঃ ৰয়ে সোধাত কানিয়াই ক'লে — দেউতা মোৰ সঁচাকৈয়ে বৰ অসুখ। মোক আপোনালোকৰ ঘৰতে ৰাখক। যি পাৰো ঘৰুৱা কাম কৰি দিম। ঘৰলৈ গ'লেই মই মৰি থাকিম। কানিয়াৰ ঘৈণীয়েক নাই। ল'ৰা দুটা। ঘৰৰ অৱস্থা ভাল। খেতি বাতিও যথেষ্ট আছে। ডাঃ ৰয়ৰ কানিয়াৰ প্ৰতি অজানিতেই এটি সহানুভূতি জন্মিছিল। সেয়েহে তাক তলত থকা সৰুৰুৱা এটাত থাকিবলৈ দিলে। এনেদৰে কানিয়া বহুত বছৰ থাকিল। মাজে মাজে পুতেকহঁতে কানিয়াক ঘৰলৈ লৈ যায়। ডাক্তৰেও পইচা পাতি দি জোৰকৈ ঘৰলৈ পঠিয়াই দিয়ে। ঘৰত কোনোমতে পোন্ধৰ দিনমান থাকি কানিয়া আকৌ আহি ওলায়হি। কানিয়াৰ এটা ডাঙৰ গুণ আছিল সি কোনো সময়তে বহি নাথাকে। বাৰী ঘৰ চফা কৰাৰ উপৰিও ইটোৰ পিছত সিটো অনবৰত কাম কৰি থাকে। তাৰ নামৰ লগত স্বভাৱ অকনো মিল নাছিল। মাজে মাজে ডাক্তৰে ভাৱে তাৰ এই বজিতা নোখোৱা নামটো বা কোনে দিছিল।

এনেদৰে কেইবছৰমান গ'ল। কানিয়াৰ পুতেক দুটাও ডেকা হ'ল। এদিন দুয়োটা পুতেক আহি ডাক্তৰক ক'লে — দেউতা (সিহঁতেও ডাক্তৰক দেউতা বুলি মাতে) আমি আমাৰ পিতাইক লৈ যাবলৈ আহিছো। আমাৰ খেতি বাতি আছে। পা-পইচা বা খোৱা বোৱাৰ একো অভাৱ নাই। পিতাইয়ে এনেদৰে লোকৰ ঘৰত কাম কৰা দেখিলে মানুহে হাঁহে। আমিও লাজ পাওঁ। সেয়েহে পিতাইক একেবাৰে লৈ যাব আহিছো। ডাক্তৰ হিমাদ্ৰী ৰয়ৰ মনটো বিষাদেৰে ভৰি গ'ল। নজনাকৈ তেওঁৰ মনৰ কোনোবাখিনি তাৰ প্ৰতি এটি যেন সহানুভূতি লুকাই আছিল। তেওঁ কানিয়াক বুজাই বঢ়াই সিহঁতৰ লগত পঠিয়াই দিলে। কানিয়া গ'ল যদিও তাৰ মনটো একেবাৰে মৰা।







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কেইবছৰমান কানিয়াৰ কোনো খবৰেই নাই। লাহে লাহে কানিয়াৰ কথা প্ৰায় পাহৰি যোৱা যেন হ'ল। হঠাৎ এদিন ৰাতি চাং বঙলাৰ ওপৰৰ পৰা ডাং হিমাদ্ৰী ৰয়ে আজি দেখা ছাঁ এটাৰ নিচিনা দেখি তললৈ নামি আহিল। ওচৰ চাপি দেখে যে কানিয়া কি হ'ল বুলি সুখিলত সি কোনোমতে উত্তৰ দিলে — দেউতা মোৰ সঁচাকৈয়ে অসুখ। মোক আপুনি কেতিয়াওঁ ইয়াৰ পৰা নপঠিয়াব। ডাং ৰয়ে ক'লে হ'ব বাৰু। তোৰ ৰুমটোত কাপোৰ কানি আছে। তই এতিয়া শুই থাক। কাইলৈ ৰাতিপুৱা ভালদৰে তোক চাই দিম।

ডাং ৰয় ৰাতিপুৱা সোনকালে উঠে। আজিও উঠি কানিয়াৰ ৰুমৰ দুৱাৰখুলি সোমাই গ'ল। কিন্তু এইয়া তেওঁ কি দেখিছে — কানিয়াৰ নিঠৰ দেহাটোহে বিচনাত পৰি আছে। ডাক্তৰৰ মনটো বিষাদেৰে ভৰি গ'ল। এইয়া কানিয়াই বেমাৰ দেখুৱাই ভাল হ'ম বুলি আহিছিল নে জীৱনৰ অন্তিম যাত্ৰা বুলি এইখন ঘৰলৈ আহিছিল। ডাক্তৰে ভাবি উলিয়াব নোৱাৰিলে। নিজেই মনতে ভাবিলে — “চৰণেহে জানে মৰণৰ ঠাই।”

২) দিনৰ পাহৰ, ৰাতিৰ জুই  
তাক নেক্‌হেদি, থাকিব শুলি

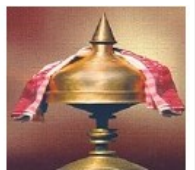
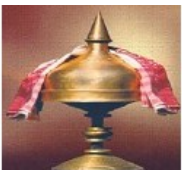
dinor pahar, ratir jui  
tak nekhedi thakiba xui

Assam is full of hills and valleys. However in daytime, the distance of a hill is very misleading. It would look to be very near. But when you walk towards it very soon one realizes that the hill is actually very far away. So the advice here is to avoid chasing a hill simply by its appearance in day time. The same thing goes for fire at night. A fire in dark night is visible from a very distance. It is again advised not to chase a fire at night which may appear to be very near. The appearances are misleading.

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Kids enjoying Bohag Bihu 2011





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## ODISSI - AN INDIAN CLASSICAL DANCE

~ Nilakshi Barah

Odissi is one of the eight classical dance forms of India. It originates from the state of Orissa, in eastern India. It is the oldest surviving dance form of India on the basis of archaeological evidences.

The classic treatise of Indian dance, Natya Shastra, refers to it as Odra-Magadhi. First century BCE bas-reliefs in the hills of Udaygiri (near Bhubaneswar) testify to its antiquity. It was suppressed under the British raj but has been reconstructed since India gained independence.

It is particularly distinguished from other classical Indian dance forms by the importance it places upon the tribhangi (literally: three parts break), the independent movement of head, chest and pelvis, and upon the basic square stance known as chauka.



### ORIGIN AND HISTORY

The first clear picture of Odissi dance found in the Manchapuri cave in Udaygiri which was carved at the time of king Kharavela. Flanked by two queens Kharavela

himself was watching a dance recital where a damsel was performing dance in front of the court with the company of female instrumentalists. Thus Odissi can be traced back to its origin as secular dance. Later it got attached with the temple culture of Odisha. Starting with the rituals of Jagannath temple in Puri it was regularly performed in Shaivite, Vaishnavite and Sakta temple in Odisha. An inscription is found where it was also engraved that a Devadasi Karpursri's attachment to Buddhist monastery, where she was performing along with her mother and grandmother. Thus it proves that Odissi first originated as a court dance. Later it performed in all religious places of Jaina as well as Bud-

dhist monasteries. Odissi was initially performed in the temples as a religious offering by the 'Maharis' who dedicated their lives in the services of God. It has the closer resemblance with sculptures of the Indian Temples.

The history of Odissi dance has been traced to an early sculpture found in the Ranigumpha caves at Udaygiri (Odisha). Dating to the 2nd century BC. Thus Odissi appears to be the oldest classical dance rooted in rituals and tradition. In fact, the Natya Shastra refers to Odra Magadhi as one of the vrittis and Odra refers to Odisha.

### TRADITION AND DANCERS

The Odissi tradition existed in three schools; Maharis, Nartaki, and Gotipua. Maharis were Orissa Devadasi or temple girls (their name deriving from Maha (great) and 'Nari' or 'Mahri' (chosen) particularly those at the temple of Jagannath at Puri. Early Maharis performed mainly nritya (pure dance) and abhinaya (interpretation of poetry) based on mantras & slokas, later Maharis, especially, performed dance sequences based on the lyrics of Jayadev's Gita Govinda. Bhitari gauni Maharis, were allowed in the inner temple while bahari gauni Maharis, though in the temples, were excluded from the sanctum sanctorum.

By the sixth century the Gotipua tradition was emerging. One of the reasons given for the emergence of Gotipuas is that Vaishnavas did not approve of dancing by women. Gotipuas were young boys dressed as girls and taught the dance by the Maharis. During this period, Vaishnavas poets composed innumerable lyrics in Oriya dedicated to Radha and Krishna. Gotipuas danced to these compositions. The Gotipuas stepped out of the precincts of the temples.

Nartaki dance took place in the royal courts, where it was much cultivated before the British period. At that time the misuse of Devdasis came under strong attack, so that Odissi dance withered in the temples and became unfashionable at court. Only the remnants of the Gotipua School remained, and the reconstruction of the style required an archaeological and anthropological effort that has tended to foster a conservative purism.

### DANCE VOCABULARY AND REPERTOIRE

Traditional Odissi repertoire consists of:

#### Mangalacharan:

An invocational piece. After paying homage to Lord Jagannath a sloka (hymn) in praise of some God or Goddess is sung, the meaning of







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which is brought out through dance. Mangalacharan also includes the 'bhumi pranam', begging forgiveness of mother earth for stamping on her, and the 'trikhandi pranam' or threefold salutation - above the head to the Gods, in front of the face to the gurus and in front of the chest to the audience.

#### Battu Nritya:

A dance piece offered to the Lord of dance - Lord Shiva in his 'Batuka Bhairava' form. This piece brings out the essence of Odissi. The interrelationship between temple sculptural art and Odissi dance is established with an array of sculpturesque poses taken directly from the innumerable dancing sculptures adorning the temples of Orissa. These poses are strung together with steps in different rhythms.

#### Pallavi:

A pure dance item in which a raga is elaborated through eye movements, body postures & intricate footwork. Pallavi literally means "blossoming". This is applicable not only to the dance, but also to the music, which accompanies it. Pallavi starts with slow, graceful & lyrical movements of the eyes, neck, and torso & feet & slowly builds in a crescendo to climax in a fast tempo at the end. Both the dance and the music evolve in complexity as the dancer traces multiple patterns in space, interpreting the music dexterously in the multilayered dimensions of Taal (rhythm) and laya (speed).

#### Abhinaya:

An expressional dance where a story conveyed to the audience through mudra or hand gestures (the language of Indian classical dance), facial expression and body movement. Abhinaya can be performed on verses in Sanskrit or Oriya. Most common are Abhinayas on Oriya songs or Sanskrit Ashthapadis or Sanskrit stutis like Dashavataar Stotram (depicting the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu) or Ardhnanari Stotram. Most of the abhinaya compositions are based on the Radha-Krishna theme. The Ashthapadis of the kāvya 'Gita Govinda' written by the Saint Jayadeva are an integral part of its repertoire. The beginning pieces are dedicated to God of Orissa, Lord Jagannath - an incarnation of Lord Vishnu.

#### Dance drama:

Usually longer than Abhinaya and typically performed by more than one dancer. Some of the much appreciated dance dramas

composed by Guru Kelucharan Mahapatra are: Sudama Dharitra Bhanjana, Mathamani Pradhana, Balya Leela, Rutu Samhara, Krishna Sudama, Dushmanta Sakuntala, Utkala Mauda Mani, Yagnaseni, Meghadoot, Kumara Sambhava, Sapan Nayaka.

Usually Hindu mythologies are chosen as themes, but experimenting with the theme and form in recent years has led to extremely unique creations. Some worth-mentioning themes in recent years are Panchakanya, Ganga yamuna, Shrita kamalam, Mrutyuh and Tantra.

#### Moksha:

The concluding item of a recital. Moksha means "spiritual liberation". This dance represents a spiritual culmination for the dancer who soars into the realm of pure aesthetic delight. Movement and pose merge to create ever new patterns, ever new designs in space and time. The dance moves onto a crescendo that is thrilling to both, the eye and the ear. With the cosmic sound of the "Om", the dance dissolves into nothingness — just like Moksha or the deliverance of the soul in real life.

#### Odissi Music

Odissi dance accompanied by Odissi music. Odissi music is a synthesis of four classes of music, i.e. dhruvapada, chitrapada, chitrakala and panchal. The dhruvapada is the first line or lines to be sung repeatedly. The use of art in music is called chitkala. Kavisurya Baladeva Rath, the renowned Oriya poet wrote lyrics which are the best examples of chitrakala. Chitrapada means the arrangement of words in an alliterative style. All these were combined to form the style peculiar to Odissi music. Chhanda (metrical section) contains the essence of Odissi music. The chhandas were composed combining bhava (theme), kala (time), and swara (tune) the chaurisha represents the originality of Odissi style. All the thirty-four letters of the Oriya alphabet from 'Ka' to 'Kasha' are used chronologically at the beginning of each line. A special feature of Odissi music is the padi which consists of words to be sung in druta tala (fast beat). Odissi music can be sung to different talas: navatala (nine beats), dashatala (ten beats) or egar tala (eleven beats). Odissi ragas are different from the ragas of Hindustani and Karnataki music. The chief Odissi ragas are Kalyana, Nata, Shree Gowda, Baradi, Panchama, Dhanashri, Karnata, Bhairavee and Shokabaradi. Odissi music is sung through Raganga, Bhabanga and Natyanga Dhruvpadanga followed by Champu, Chhanda, Chautisa, Pallabi, Bhajan, Janana, and Geeta govinda, which are also considered to be in the repertoire of Odissi or an allied act form of Odissi. Odissi music has codified grammars, which are presented with specified Raagas. It has





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also a distinctive rendition style. It is lyrical in its movement with wave-like ornamentation. The pace of singing in Odissi is not very fast or slow, and it maintains a proportional tempo which is very soothing.

## ODISSI GURUS AND PERFORMERS

Padma Vibushan Kelucharan Mohapatra, Guru Pankaj Charan Das and Guru Deba Prasad Das were the three major gurus who revived Odissi in the late forties and early fifties. Sanjukta Panigrahi, the great exponent of Odissi, was a leading disciple of Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra's and popularized Odissi by performing extensively, both in India and abroad. In the mid-sixties, two other disciples of Kelucharan Mohapatra, Kumkum Mohanty and Sonal Mansingh, were best known for their performances, both in India and abroad. Shrimati Laximipriya Mohapatra performed a piece of Odissi abhinaya in the Annapurna Theatre in Cuttack in 1948. This is widely upheld as the first ever performance of a classical Odissi dance item after its contemporary revival.

Most of the present day gurus were Gotipua dancers themselves, and have trained dancers and teachers all over India and abroad. In the early fifties, the outside world began to take note of Odissi. Priyambada Mohanty Hejmadi and Dr. Susama Tej represented Orissa in the classical dance category at an Inter University Youth Festival in 1954 and 1955. It was here that Dr Charles Fabri witnessed their performances, hailed Odissi as a great classical dance form, and helped Indrani Rehman and Sonal Mansingh study it. Sadly, Priyambadi Mohanty Hejmadi left for the US for 16 long years, where she hardly performed, barring a recital or two here and there. She returned to India only in the mid-nineteen seventies, by which time well known dancers had already occupied a permanent space on the Odissi horizon, and by which time Odissi had evolved considerably. The baton in India was wielded gloriously, and with outstanding success and public acclaim by Sanjukta Panigrahi, Kumkum Mohanty and Sonal Mansingh, each of whom was a major and distinctive star.

Kelucharan Mohapatra, Pankaj Charan Das, Deba Prasad Das, Mayadhar Raut, Sanjukta Panigrahi, Surendranath Jena, Kumkum Mohanty, Ritha Devi, Minati Misra, Bandana Das, Sonal Mansingh, Oopali Operajita, Kumkum Lal, Cuckoo Meena Mohanty, Dr. Nandita Samuel and Protima Bedi contributed notably to the propagation of Odissi starting in the fifties, right up to the eighties and nineties.

**NILAKSHI BARAH** In Melbourne, Nilakshi Barah is trying to spread

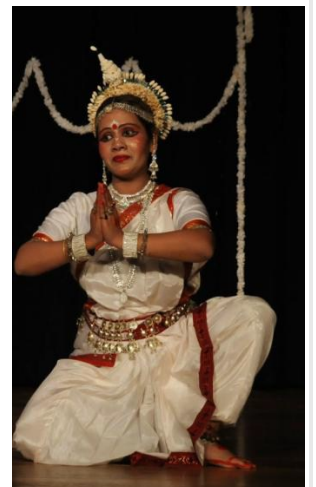
the art of Odissi dancing among all Melbournians. She has students from across diverse communities which include Indians settled in Melbourne, Australians and students from South Asian countries.

Nilakshi Barah is an accomplished dancer, who has been trained in traditional Indian classical dance - Odissi.

She got her training in Odissi from renowned and internationally famous Guru - Padmashree Late Guru Pandit Gangadhar Pradhan and Guru Minakshi Barah (her mother) of India. As part of her professional training, she has done her graduation, Bachelor of Music - Odissi dance from Prachin Kala Kendra, India.

Nilakshi started her dancing career at a very young age of 4 years. She is a National Talent award holder from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Government of India. She has undergone vigorous training of learning of Odissi dance for 10 long years, under the guidance of internationally famous Gurus - Guru Pandit Gangadhar Pradhan and Guru Kanduri Charan Behra of India. Nilakshi has many laurels in her cap like - "State Best Dancer" in many programs in India. She has performed in many stage performances in India as well as in Melbourne, Australia.

Currently Nilakshi runs her own Odissi Dance Studio in Keilor Downs. Apart from these she regularly conducts performs at the invitation from different organizations like ISKCON Melbourne, Assamese Society of Victoria, Bengali Association of Victoria, Bangladesh Association and many more. She is an executive committee member of newly formed Federation of Indian Music & Dance Victoria.







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## THE DAY OF THE VULTURE

So my children, prepare for the great feast.  
Thirty million nice, juicy, rotting bodies trapped in the mud... Wow !!

They started arriving at the venue from early morning,  
Alone or in small groups  
Gliding noiselessly like retreating soldiers of a once great army  
Reaching their base camp.  
Shadowy ghosts on cushioned toes, timidly settling on the few trees

That are still allowed to stand like Miniature mementos.  
They folded their six feet or more of magnificent arrogance

Only to reveal skeletal memories of a lost empire,

Spread over sensuous mountains, bashful forests and pregnant paddy fields.

The Old One regarded them with sad eyes and started the roll call;  
A scarcely audible squeak.  
Long periods of silence sandwiched between lazy responses.  
The gaps outnumbered the check marks.  
Roll call over, the Old One started speaking.  
The voice rattled the branches of the ancient banyan tree.  
My children, I have good news, Nay, great news,  
From the great mountains; Your days of misfortune  
Are finally coming to an end!

The barbarians have at last vindicated my belief;  
They are as foolish as they are arrogant.  
Can you imagine what these fools are planning?  
They are stopping the great river.  
Now, now....please do not laugh; I know it sounds ridiculous.

But this Old Bird never lies:  
I have verified this report from multiple sources.  
It is correct. The fools are indeed building this contraption.  
They believe that their molehill would last for half a millennia;  
Himalayan insanity, matched only by the height of their stupidity.  
Soon the great valley will be cleaned of these abominable vermins.  
Just imagine, thirty million bodies trapped in the mud!  
Oh, what fabulous feast it promises to be.  
A feast to celebrate the reclaiming of the great land,  
That originally belonged to the rest of us.

Syed Ahmed Shah  
Guwahati, Assam

Syed Ahmed Shah is an officer in  
the Department of Customs, Gov-  
ernment of India



Inauguration of Enajori 2011





# এনাজৰী বহাগবিহু ২০১২



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## Glimpse into the Bihu by different communities in Assam

~ Dr. Nitin Dutta

While the term Bihu gets immediately related to the Assamese language people all over the world, yet it is a cultural festival of nearly all the indigenous people of Assam. The word *Bihu* is derived from the language of the Dimas Kacharis who have been agrarian since time immemorial. The different indigenous communities across Assam, all perform the Bihu dance but with slight variations, all following the main theme of the festivity. During the performance of Bihu, there are songs and dance, expressing the colours and traditions of the varied culture of Assam, covering topics such as nature, dreams and feelings of young lovers, fields of crops, trees, birds and seasons. My photographs here depict a glimpse into the variety of dress and Bihu in Assam.

**Moran Bihu:** Moran Bihu is a typical form of Bihu Dance practiced by the Moran tribe of Assam. Generally, young Moran boys select a place far away from the din and bustle of the city. Here they make a wooden bamboo-house known as the Bihu-Ghar. The ghar is separated into two areas - one for the young boys and the other for the girls. Their songs and dances are woven around the theme of love and yearning. Indigenous instruments such as Dhol and Pepa provide the musical accompaniments.

**Baisago:** The Bodo Kachari people celebrate Baisago for seven days. The first day is for cattle (*Magou*), the second day is for man (*Mansoi*) and ancestor worship, feasting, singing and merriment. Songs follow the same themes as the Bihu songs



Bodo Folk



Jhumur Dance

**Deori Bihu:** The Deoris of Assam are a riverine tribe who originally belonged to the Lohit district of Arunachal Pradesh. They have preserved and maintained their traditions, religious beliefs and practices. The Deories celebrate the Bohag Bihu or Bhoagiyo Bihu and the Magh Bihu or Maghyo Bihu. The presentation of Bihu by this community has a distinct style which is known as "Bishu". In both Magh Bihu and Bohag

Bihu, prayers and animal sacrifice are preformed. An important aspect of the the Bohag Bihu of the Deoris is the "Deodhani" dance, where it is believed the Gods and Goddesses bestow divine powers upon certain persons to perform the dance.

**Mishing Bihu:** Mishing Bihu is a form of Bihu dance associated with the Ali-Ai Ligang festival (seed sowing festival) of the Mishings. The dance demonstrates the various stages of the process of cultivation from sowing to reaping. The Mishings have starkness in their Bihu that captures the spirit of the festival of spring, fertility, longing, of the beautiful kopou flower (the Assamese orchid) and love like no other. It is the time to sing about Jonki and Panoi, the Romeo and Juliet of the Mishings.

**Jeng Bihu:** Jeng Bihu is an ancient form of Bihu Dance from Upper Assam. Only women perform this form of Bihu Dance on a moonlit night in a place far away from an inhabited area. The word Jeng possibly means an obstructive barrier between the performers and the audience.

**Beshma:** This is the Bihu festivity celebrated by the Koches. In this festival 'bhurbhura', 'shak' are merry making and feasting.

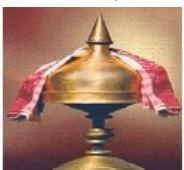
**Rongali Bihu:** With the advent of spring come the Bohag Bihu or Rangoli Bihu, a festival of music and dance when nature like a young woman blossoms into radiance of light, beauty and colour. It is in this atmosphere that young boys and girls perform the Bihu Dance, inviting each other to the land of romance. The Bohag Bihu or Rangoli Bihu not only ushers in the Assamese New Year, but also the sowing time and the season of marriage. In fact, this festival has its roots in some earlier fertility cult. The Bohag Bihu Dance is an expression of the joys of spring and the exuberance and vigour of youth. Amidst nature's pristine beauty, young boys and girls perform this dance, accompanied by songs of erotic sentiment, virile beating of drums (dhol), soft strains of Pepa made from buffalo horns and many other musical instruments.



Assamese Bihu Dance at Ranghar



Bodo Dance with the boy on a Khaam







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**Faat Bihu:** This is a very old form of Bihu, characterized by spontaneity, popular in the Lakhimpur area of Assam. According to legend, the first Ahom king, Sukaphaa, traveled to the region to watch it in the early 13th century.



Tiwa Dress



Rabha Dress



Hmar Dress

A few dresses of indigenous people in Assam are also depicted in the photos above. They show the traditional dress of the Tiwa community in Marigaon area, the dress of the Rabha community in Goalpara area and the dress of the Hmar community in Dima Hasao districts.

Dr Nitin Dutta is Director, Eye Foundation, R G Baruah Road, Guwahati, Assam and a freelance photographer. He has held several photographic exhibitions and the photos depicted here are from the museum of Sankardev Kalakheta, Guwahati. Text details courtesy [www.ezccindia.org/assam.html](http://www.ezccindia.org/assam.html) and <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bihu>.



3) চাৰো আঙুলিৰে খাই  
বুহি খেলিলেহে যাই

sari angulire khai  
burhai thelilehe jai

We need five fingers to eat food or to hold anything by hand. Out of all the fingers, the thumb is the main. Without the thumb, the other four fingers become useless. They cannot eat or in fact do anything without the help of the thumb. This is similar to saying that you need a captain or a leader in every team to do a work efficiently. Without a leader, the team is useless.

4) অভ্যাসৰ নৰ  
কৰ্ম পথে কৰ শৰ

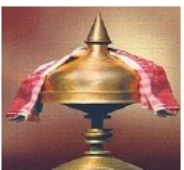
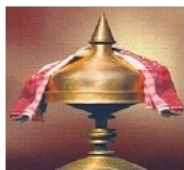
obhyaxor noro  
korno pothe kore xoro

You need to practice, lot of practice, to do anything properly. With repeated practice people can in fact do miracles. The Assamese proverb says that by practice one can even shoot an arrow from a distance through the small hole of the ear. So the morale of the proverb is 'practice, practice and practice' to achieve any hard work.

5) মাতিলে বৰলৈকে যাৰ  
নৈমাতিলে ভোজলৈও নেযাৰ

matile rono-loikw jaba  
nematile bhwjo-loiw nejaba

Assamese people are very much sensitive and self conscious regarding invitation to any event. For any event, a person needs to be properly invited. In fact for wedding, it is a tradition in Assam that a family needs to be invited with an offer of Tamul-Pan. At the same time, this type of invitations has great strength. This proverb actually states that if one is invited, one will go to even join the war. But if one is not invited, then one will not go even to a feast.









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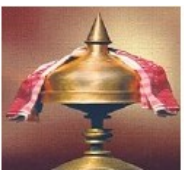
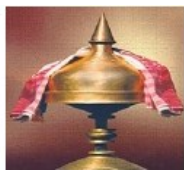
বহাগতে

— দীপ্তি বৰুৱা  
গুৱাহাটী

এইমেলি বহাগত মই মেনবনত। প্ৰশাসনকাৰক বায়ে বিদ্যুত বহাগ বিহু বিদ্যুৎ পানন ক'ৰু চাবলৈ পাম। বিভিন্ন দেশত অসমীয়া সকলে একত্ৰিত হৈ বড়ালী বিহু পানন ক'ৰাৰ কথা বাতৰি কাকতত পঢ়িবলৈ পাম। আজিকালি দুৰদৰ্শনৰ পদাৰ্থ উপভোগ কৰা। বহাগ মানেই অসম, অসম মানেই বহাগ — এই কথা আমি প্ৰতিটো বহাগত অনুভৱ কৰা। বহাগ অহাৰ উমান আমি আজিকালি সৰুত শুনাত দৰে টেম্বিৰ মাতত, গাঁওমানৰ খুঁট খুঁট মৰুত শুনাত নাপালেও জোটেই অসমজুৰি বিহু নামৰ আখৰত ঢোলৰ মাত- শুনিলে পাও, 'মহানগৰীত' শুনিলে পাও কলি চাই শুনাত। দীঘলীপুখুৰীৰ পাৰৰ গছ কেইজোপাৰ পৰা অহা কলিৰ মাত মনেটো ওকাই তোলে। মোকাত্তা বিহুত মই কৃষ্ণনগৰত (চানমাৰি) থকা বাবেই এগৰাকীক বিহু ওলগ জনাবলৈ ফ'ন কৰাত তুমতক মই বিহু ওলগ জনাবলৈ পাৰৰি দিগৰি উঠিছিলো — 'ইমান সুন্দৰ কলিৰ মাত শুনিলে পাৰেছো মহানগৰীত।' বহাগৰ আগমন মেনবনত মই কিমান অনুভৱ কৰিব পাৰিম নাজানো কিন্তু অসমৰ প্ৰকৃতিৰ চৰিখন মনৰ দাপোনত বায়ে বায়ে উঠি উঠিছিলো মেনবনতো কলিৰ কুঁড় কুঁড় মাত, মানিকিৰ মাতত অসমতে থকা মেন অনুভৱ কৰা।

সপৰী অসমী আইৰ সপ মানব সন্মানেই ধৰ্ম কৰিছে। গুৱাহাটীৰ চাৰিওফালৰ সুন্দৰ পাৰাবোৰ কাটি প্ৰকৃতিৰ ধৰ্ম কৰিছে। হাবি জখ্মন নোহোৱা হৈছে। ফলত জীৱজন্তু মহানগৰীলৈ নাহি আহিছে। প্ৰান্তৰ বান্ধ, বাঘ আৰু হাবিৰ উপদ্বীপ ইয়া জনঅধনত।

বিহু ফুঁসৰী, বিহুজানী, বিহু সান্ধাজী, পিঠাপনা আদি প্ৰতিযোগিতাত অসমীয়া সংস্কৃতিক জীয়াই ৰখাৰ প্ৰচেষ্টাক আমিও আদৰি লৈছো। কাৰণ আমাৰ সংস্কৃতিক এইদৰে জীয়াই ৰাখিব লাগিব। প্ৰবাসী সকলোতকৈয়ো আমাৰ উঠি অহা প্ৰজন্মই যেন অসমীয়া সংস্কৃতি, মাত কথা পাহৰিবলৈ লৈছে। অসমতে থকা পশ্চিমীয়া সংস্কৃতিক আঘাট ধৰি আধুনিক হবলৈ প্ৰয়াস কৰিছে। শুনিলে পাৰেছো মোকাত্তা ফালুৱা উৎসৱত বহুতো মাতান মুক, মুকজীৰ দুৰ্ঘটনাত মৃত্যু হৈছে — আৰু বহুতো আহত হৈছে। এনে অপসংস্কৃতি বোৰ দূৰ কৰিবলৈ আমাৰ প্ৰবাসী অসমীয়া সকলে আদৰ্শ ডাঙি ধৰিলে, সংস্কৃতিক জীয়াই ৰাখিলে 'আমি অসমীয়া নহওঁ দুখীয়া' বুলি সকলো অসমীয়াই কব পাৰিম।





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## Who Is An Assamese

~ Sanjiv Goswami

Clause 6 of the Assam Accord 1985 stipulates that the Government would initiate steps to “safeguard and protect the constitutional, legislative and cultural threats of the the Assamese people.” But when this issue of “defining an Assamese” or “Assamese people” was lobbed back to people of Assam by the Government, the Assamese community was faced with a confusing situation. This became accentuated because many indigenous tribes in the state of Assam such as Bodos, Karbis and Dimasas preferred to be known by their ethnic identity rather than being clubbed with the “Assamese”. The President of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha even went to the extent to say that the All Assam Student Union had no authority to speak for the entire people of Assam.



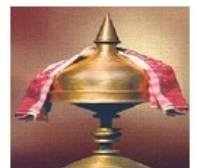
In this backdrop, the All Assam Students Union tried to suggest that Clause 6 was in the context of a particular issue which related to illegal immigrants and that they are not trying to define who constitutes an Assamese. So their argument was that anyone who resided in Assam in 1951, when the Constitution of India came into being, should be regarded as Assamese, only for the purpose of Clause 6. But this brought sharp reactions from other organizations like the All Assam Minority Students Union which maintained that since the Assam Accord itself cites the cut off date for illegal immigrants as 1971, and relevant citizenship laws have already been enacted on this basis, so there was no justification in having 1951 as the cut off date for any purpose in Assam.

The term Assamese, it seems, is something that many in Assam do not want to be identified with anymore. Tracing the history of this term, Prof. Yasmin Saikia of Arizona State University, USA in her book “Fragmented Memories, Struggling to Tai Ahom” states :: “It appears that the more the British merchants and administrators penetrated the interiors of Assam to expand the reach of colonialism, the more British scholars wrote of the lack of history of the natives in these margins. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, colonial practise had already established a neat category to classify natives of India - Aryan and non Aryan - and within these broad classification were several groups and subgroups of caste and religion. Subjected groups had to fit within these categories. In the margins of Assam, the colonial found Tai Ahom but could not fit them into the established categories of known caste

and religious groups. Thus they dismissed them as “unknowable” community and soon declared them dead. For convenience, a new category, Assamese, was devised and everyone in the region of Assam was christened with this new name. The vast majority of Assamese, the colonial found, were some sort of caste Hindu. They also found that within Assam, there were Assamese and Bengali speaking Muslims. The Assamese Muslims became Assamese by colonial estimation and the Bengalis were deemed an immigrant community. Beyond this, the late colonial administrators did not explain what Assamese meant or signified. While the British started to change the history of Assam, no one questioned the colonial power of myth making; rather the local intellectuals accepted the colonial version of their own, simply adding new inputs to the history already told”.

Since Assam’s geo-political map has been changed several times over the last 65 years, neither history nor geography can help in defining the Assamese people. The term, as stated by Yasmin Saikia is of British origin. While Indian states were demarcated on the basis of language, in Assam, the Assamese language, has also failed to bring all the people of the state into one homogenous identity. Cultural hegemony of the Assamese language speakers is one reason for this rejection by the indigenous people. Religion, another identity marker, has already been rejected in this exercise. In the end, the Assamese community, world wide faces a difficult situation as it is unable to identity itself.

Self identification is an important identity marker world wide.. Right from Australia to the Amazon, people who identify themselves as being of one nation or community are accepted and assimilated into the new nation. That is the way people from Assam are welcomed into Australia or other western nations and given an equal footing in the socio-political life. But, the history of partition and the post partition issues in India, unfortunately cast a shadow of doubt on anything alien in Assam. This has led the Assamese people to what is known as the “culture of local xenophobia”. This affects not only the residents in Assam but is also carried abroad by many from Assam who do not wish to be identified with other non Assamese communities from India in the foreign land. In some cases, it has gone to such an extent, that Assamese NRIs refuse to even accept other language speakers from Assam as their own. Even Bihu is not celebrated as a multi-cultural event, though the event is celebrated by many communities in Assam.







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In this context, the issue of the immigrant Muslims in Assam bears special mention. These groups of migrants have been living in Assam since before 1901 and in consecutive censuses in 1901, 1911, 1921 and 1931 have been shown to occupy a vital space in Assam's socio-cultural-political life. However, Lord Curzon in 1905, in order to break the freedom struggle, framed a policy known as the "Curzon scheme" by which he envisaged that *"a thin wedge could be driven between the Hindu and Muslims of Bengal"*. Accordingly, in the 1931 census, when the Assamese language speakers showed a mere 31%, S C Mullan, the Census Superintendent added in the census document *"Without fuss, without tumult, without undue trouble to the district revenue staffs, a population which must amount to over half a million has transplanted itself from Bengal into the Assam Valley during the last twenty-five years."*

The Government of Assam, after independence, tried to address this issue by decline in Assamese language speakers by issuing a circular on 4<sup>th</sup> May, 1948, based on the principle of land for language formula. Gopinath Bordoloi and Bishuram Medhi, whose contributions to Assam is often quoted, thereby tried to bring linguistic homogeneity and increase the Assamese language speakers so that the problems that Assam faced during partition are not repeated. This move helped to push the Assamese speaking population up to 58% in the 1961 census and subsequently to 72% in 1991 census as the immigrant Muslims mentioned their mother tongue as Assamese and started to have their education in Assamese medium. They sent out a strong message of their desire to live and assimilate in harmony with the Assamese language people. However, the Assamese people are yet to reconcile to this offer for acceptance.

While the events since 1979 have not helped the cause of the Assamese people, it is time for the people of the state to ponder and frame a multi cultural approach to this whole identity issue. A minority community cannot move forward with an ideology of cultural nationalism, trying to dominate the Bengali Hindus, the Bengali Muslims and other language speakers while it is itself being rejected and excluded by the indigenous community. Nagas, Mizos, Khasis, Arunachalis, Karbis, Bodo, Dimasas have all excluded the Assamese from their areas. It is high time for the Assamese NRIs worldwide, including those in Australia, who have seen and experienced the concept of multiculturalism to convey this idea as an ideology to the people in Assam.

6) নহি পো গোফে, নহি পো মুখে  
নহি পো লনি, নহি পো ধনি

**nai pw gwphe, nai pw mukhe  
nai pw loni, nai pw dhoni**

For success in life one need to have certain traits. The proverb says these four traits are very important: (pw পো means son).

- 1) How strong one is (gwphe = moustanche);
- 2) How much talkative a person is (mukh = mouth)
- 3) How good one looks (loni = good look)
- 4) How good a voice one has (dhoni = voice)

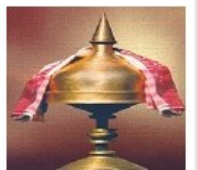
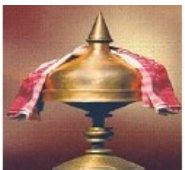
The proverb says, if one does not have at least any one of these four traits, one is in bad luck. He or she cannot succeed in life.

7) য'তে ব'ৰ ভয়, ত'তে ৰাতি স্থা  
**jote baghor bhoi, tote rati hoi**

If you fear the worst, generally it happens. Or when it happens, Assamese use this proverb.

8) য'তে ৰাতি ত'তে ৰাতি  
**jote rati tote kati**

Speaks of a guy who is so easy going that he does not care where he sleeps at night. In fact for him, he will sleep in any place when the night comes. Here rati means night and kati mean sleep.





# এনাজৰী

## বহাগবিহু ২০১২



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### Slutwalk : Will it transcend Symbolism?

~ Mayur Bora

*Mayur Bora tries to demystify several aspects of the feminist movement symbolized by Slutwalk.*

Famous Irish writer Oscar Wilde felt that there could never be friendship between a man and a woman. He thought there could only be passion, enmity, worship or love between the two genders. May be he is right at times, but outrageously off the mark at other times, due to the preponderance of innumerable nuances that have crept into this relationship in the present times. In fact, the study of this very important relationship, which has steadfastly buttressed the cradle of human civilization from time immemorial, has been bedeviled by many complexities. Those complexities of the relationship have further increased with the fast changing values, mores and manners of modern times. Even then, any dispassionate observer of human behaviors would not dispute the fact that majority of men try to unduly dominate and control women as and when they get the opportunity. If someone can't do it in reality, that overwhelming feeling of a need to exercise hegemonic control over women is firmly ingrained in his psyche. I think in the backdrop of the presence of such a mentality among majority of the males, the famous remark of the police officer in Canada in January 2011 has to be evaluated.

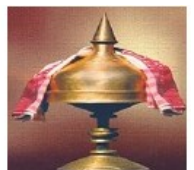
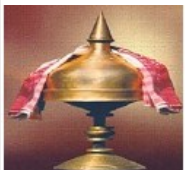
While addressing the students at Osgoode Hall Law school in Toronto on campus safety and self-protection, the police officer remarked that to prevent victimization, women "should avoid dressing like sluts." This led to the organization of first 'Slutwalk' of the world on 03 April 2011 in Toronto. The officer could never imagine that a seemingly 'innocuous' remark like this could spark such vigorous protests by the women and quickly apologized. But by that time, due to the spreading of the message like wildfire through internet, similar slutwalks were also organized in other important cities of the world like, Melbourne, Chicago, London, Amsterdam, Seoul, Dublin etc. In India also, first such walk was scheduled in New Delhi on 25 June, but was postponed over the issue of dress code of the participating women. Subsequently, it was held on 31 July in the capital city. Moreover, by deliberately using a word like 'slut', the proponents wished to reclaim the word from its pejorative meaning meant for women. There is no doubt that language and more importantly, some derogatory slang words have always been used to denigrate the dignity of women in society. So by regularizing the use of 'slut', the

negative edges of the word can be successfully blunted. But a question inevitably comes to the minds of all sensible people irrespective of gender as to why such a big fuss has been created over slutwalk and does it really signify coming of age of feminism?

Many people would be surprised at the sharp reaction to the police officer's remark, which seems quite 'normal' for the safety of the girls in the society. But if one delves deeper, one would find that under this veneer of normalcy, several abnormal attributes of our collective (both men and women) mindset take firm root and rapidly grow. Slutwalk is a symbol of protest against such a mindset, which knowingly or unknowingly accepts a subservient position of women in society. This attitude gets adequately amplified whenever a rape is committed in any place. Most of the time, instead of solely blaming the man for committing the most heinous crime, people also discuss about the character, dress and oomph factor of the victimized woman which undoubtedly ends up in reducing the magnitude of the diabolical act by the man. Opinions of many educated people partially blaming the outfits and 'loose morals' of North Eastern girls whenever they are raped in Delhi effectively underscore this abominable attitude. The proponents of slutwalk want to decimate this syndrome, which partially shifts the blame of any rape or molestation to the victim, thereby reducing the burden of the perpetrator. Moreover, they feel a serious offence like rape should not be viewed through the prism of sexual violence alone, as actually, it is the vilest of attack on the basic human dignity.

There is not a modicum of doubt about the aforesaid facts. In fact, it gets clear whenever parents teach their own children especially during their adolescent years. At a time when the hormonal upsurge is at its zenith, virtually no parents teach their sons not to look at a woman as an object, which can be used for satisfying their lascivious instincts. However at the same time, almost all girls are given regular lessons by their mothers how not to get molested or raped. I don't blame the parents for that. Perhaps, we have been conditioned and attuned to think on those lines, which eventually aim at strengthening the defensive mechanism of girls from a very impressionable age. Slutwalk wants to bring about a change in that thinking process by strongly emphasizing the equality of women in all aspects of human life.

However, their insistence on wearing revealing outfits while participating in the walk in order to powerfully drive home the message should not be applied uniformly all over the world. This apprehension







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in the minds of many people in India can be attributed to relatively lukewarm response generated by this movement in Delhi. People feared that if Indian organizers blindly follow their western counterparts in terms of dress code, the whole exercise might take an undesirable colour. Because without caring for the local sensibilities of the place, it would be very difficult to keep the movement on the right track. Besides this, it may degenerate into an opera of misplaced sense of sensuous showmanship, which would end up titillating the men instead of making them realize their own follies and perverted inclinations. This aspect is bound to become greatly magnified in the perspective of any objective observer as the capital of India has the dubious distinction of having the fourth rank from below in terms of safety of women in comparison to other cities of the world.

The opponents of this movement are also quite trenchant in their criticism and they mainly denounce it as a middle-class and city-centric indulgence of some women. There is no doubt about that, but at the same time, we should not lose sight of the historical fact that the middle class generally leads any new effort in society. And instead of being cynical at the beginning, if we give them an opportunity, the future events may unfold in a different way. If this movement ends up in strengthening feminist underpinnings of society, its eventual benefits would not be restricted in the domain of the middle class women alone. Rather it can infuse a breath of fresh air and revitalize the lives of countless rural women of our country who are already groaning under the weights of several intractable problems from their births.

Owing to these multi dimensional issues, both the supporters as well as the opponents of slutwalk are keeping a close watch on the progress of this movement. I feel if they don't ignore the sensibilities of the local society while deciding about the outfits of the women, a symbolic gesture like slutwalk can definitely amplify certain attitudinal problems of our mindset and also help in finding a way towards a solution. The wide popularity of these walks in the western countries has also provided impetus in reorienting the feminist movement of the world to keep pace with fast changing ethos of society.

Needless to say, the modernist mores of this movement are unmistakably palpable from the moment it was born in Canada. In a country like India, if the proponents of slutwalk proceed with poise and proper planning and succeed in preventing modernization from being fully eclipsed by westernization, it may brighten the horizon for women in the algebra of our society with a distinct and decisive tilt towards its male members. But failure in this regard would brand the movement as an outrageously sen-

sational event of ephemeral nature and also expedite its descent towards the abyss of irrelevant symbolism.

(The writer is working as AGM in NABARD, Jorhat)

Mayur Bora is a well known writer in Assam with several published books. He is a regular columnist in different newspapers writing both on serious and fiction topics. Bora presently works as Assistant General Manager in the National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development .



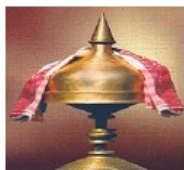
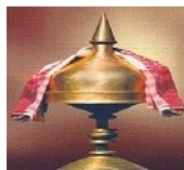
[mayurbora@yahoo.com](mailto:mayurbora@yahoo.com)

৭) ভীমৰ ভাও ললে গদা ঘূৰাব জৰিব লাগিব  
bhimor bhaw lole goda ghubabo paribo lagibo

If one wants to take the part of Bhim the epic warrior, one should at least have the strength to handle the goda (a heavy weapon for fighting) which is Bhim's traditional weapon. This also means that when one takes any position he or she should have capability or the talent to perform the duties for the position.

১০) বহিৰ ৰঙ চঙ ভিতৰে ক্লেৰা ভাতুৰী  
bahire rong song, bhitore kwa bhaturi

A thing may look very valuable from the outside, but inside it may be valueless. All that glitters are not gold. (bahir = outside; rong-song = colorful; bhitore = inside; kwa bhaturi = a useless fruit).





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## DRESSING DILEMMAS

~ Mitra Phukan Guwahati

It's often said, especially about our country, that the burden nurturing the heritage of "culture" often rests on the shoulders of women. Whether it is making sure that the culinary heritage is being cultivated just right in the kitchen, or whether it is taking pains to see that the ritual morning Puja is carried out in the family shrine in the proper manner, these aspects, and more, are generally seen to be carried out by women.

It is also true that in many societies, (ours included) women are expected to be embodiments of what is perceived to be the traditional elements of culture, in a way men are not. Therefore, they are the ones who are supposed to cover their heads (in most rural and many urban homes) while in the presence of seniors. They are the ones who are expected to speak in lowered voices (as befits the concept, perhaps an imaginary one, of the daughter-in-law of previous centuries).

Nowhere is this idea of women as needing to uphold traditional values in a society more pronounced than when it comes to dress. It is through women's dress, one sometimes thinks, that the culture of a society is preserved. And indeed, this is a very gender-specific thing. Today, urban men are hardly ever expected to be torchbearers of a sartorial tradition of a society, except on special occasions. Therefore the urban middle class (and working class, too) has long ago discarded the dhuti and panjabi as being too impractical for everyday use. Indeed, when there is a sudden requirement that a man don a dhuti, (as for example when his parent dies and he needs to perform the obsequies) there are small crises regarding the wearing of this long wrap. In the urban middle class context, many men below forty find wearing a dhuti mystifying, and need help to get it right. Women, on the other hand, are not nearly so bewildered when needing to put on the mekhela sador for "ceremonial" purposes.

Of course things are changing very fast. Younger women in urban areas of Assam, especially those who work in the corporate sector, are not seen wearing mekhela sadors in their workplace. They are usually smartly attired in business suits, either trousers or skirts, which are practical as well as professional-looking. Teachers, though, and Government employees, and those who work in such areas as public sector banks, wear the more sedate sari or the ubiquitous salwar kameez.

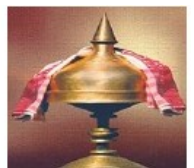
However, when there is a special occasion - Founder's Day in the school, or a seminar in the college - the women in every workplace in this State almost always come in wearing mekhela sadors.

It is seen that the more traditional a society is, the more rigid it is in the matter of women's dress. In this respect, perhaps the urban areas of our State are slowly becoming less unyielding, with younger women feeling much freer to wear whatever dress they wish. This is a welcome change from those days of unrest a couple of decades ago, when the turbulence on the streets was matched by the dictat that women should come dressed in mekhela sadors to colleges. This was autocratic, indeed, it was almost fascist, and also highly impractical. Today, girls can and do wear the dress of their choice if their college does not have a uniform.

However, even in the context of urban Assam, all kinds of boundaries and codas exist when it comes to women's dress. This leads to many practical problems, some of which are so off-putting that they douse the flame of good intentions, and keep the person from carrying out the original objective.

Take, for instance, wedding celebrations. Men can, and often do, go straight from office to the venue of the wedding, before going home again. This is smoothly done, and convenient. However, most women cannot yet take advantage of this kind of convenience, dress being the prime reason for it. Even if the lady has her makeup bag with her, even if she can freshen up and do up her face beautifully before leaving office, in most cases she cannot make it to the wedding before a trip home. For obviously, it is a no-no for her to nip across to the wedding venue in her office dress of trouser-suit. Even if she is a doctor or a teacher, wearing a sari, she will still need to go home to wear an "appropriate" dress, usually a rather fancy mekhela sador, along with matching accessories. This makes the whole process tedious to the extreme.

When it comes to condolence visits, things are even more fraught. For as things stand today, it is just not seemly for women to run to a bereaved family to grieve with them without wearing the mandatory dress of light coloured sari or mekhela sador. This "rule" is such a dampener that it is often a deterrent for women to go to pay their respects to the deceased person before he or she is taken for cremation, even though one's emotions may be bubbling up. This strait-jacketed code that the matter of "appropriate" dress imposes on emotions is a sad thing indeed. It shows that as a society we place







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more importance on form, to the setting aside of fellow feeling, emotion and empathy.

Indeed, often women have to resort to all kinds of stratagems in order to accommodate society's expectations of them in this matter. It is not unusual, in our close knit society, for a woman to be invited to a rather lavish wedding reception and a shradh ceremony on the same day. She feels duty bound to attend both, after a long day at work. But then again, the dress code thing makes matters even more complicated for her. She has to go home to change from her work clothes to a simple mekhela sador which will make her fit to attend the shradh ceremony. But these clothes again are not suitable for the wedding. So it's back home once more, to change into yet another pair, this time a lavish set.

Yes, urban women today are indeed going to great lengths to uphold culture in sartorial matters. Previously, of course, and perhaps even today in rural areas, these complexities do not arise to befuddle women folk. Going for a corporate day job, a shradh, and a wedding, each with its own dress code, is not something that rural women would normally have to deal with.

Of course women are nothing if not innovative, and they have all evolved stratagems to deal with these convolutions. One woman throws an ornate shawl over her simple mekhela sador, changes her eartops for danglers, loosens her hair, brightens her lipstick, and presto! She is transformed from a mourner to a wedding guest! Yet another has brought down her "changing moment" to such a tiny slot of time that she takes very few minutes to do her quick change act. Besides, she finishes her toilette in the back seat of the car, fixing her face and going from simple to glamorous in a matter of moments. A third person packs her change of clothes and takes it along to the first venue. From there, she pops into a friend's house, and wears the heavy mekhela sador that she has brought in the car. In minutes, she is ready to become a wedding guest! All Things Considered, it does seem as though women in our city are taking their role as upholders of culture very seriously indeed.

Mitra Phukan is a well known author of several popular books such as "The Collector's Wife", "A Monsoon of Music" and "Mamoni's Adventure". She has received the UNICEF-CBT Award for children's writing and is one of the most prominent literary voices in English from North-East India. She is a regular newspaper columnist and is also a trained classical vocalist.



A tribute to Dr. Bhupen Hazarika

## A Glimpse of Mayukh Hazarika

In the wake of departure of the cultural icon of Assam Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, Vic Assam community is privileged to have Mayukh Hazarika in Rongali Bihu 2012 during his visit in Australia. Mayukh Hazarika is a noted lyricist-musician-singer from Assam. He was born on 13 January 1971 in the illustrious Hazarika gharana which gifted several artists of national and international repute. His father late Jayanta Hazarika was an eminent singer, instrumentalist, composer and music director who is arguably the most melodious singer and composer in the world of Assamese music. His mother Manisha Hazarika is a popular singer of Assam and Mayukh's uncle, the doyen of Indian Music, Dr Bhupen Hazarika requires no introduction.

Assam lost the golden voice of late Jayanta Hazarika when he was only 33 years and Mayukh was only seven years old. Hence Mayukh tries to fill the gap and fulfils popular demands by singing Jayanta Hazarika's evergreen hits. But Mayukh's own creative talent is reflected in his emotional and vulnerable compositions depicting human emotions, happiness, love, and social awareness. His maiden album 'Sokue Jodi Kotha Koy' was released by Dr Bhupen Hazarika in 2009 which has Mayukh's classic numbers 'Sitore Rati Bur', 'Anamika', 'Ritu Ahe Ritu Jae', 'Uri Jowa Pokhi Bure' and 'Prem Jodi Bhool Hoy' etc.

A post graduate from IIM, Indore and a talented creative videographer with NDTV Mayukh has been engaged for the past years in singing Jayanta Hazarika's hit songs and his own compositions around the world with his wife musician and singer Laili Hazarika.





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## Jetuka ..... A verve of Rongali Bihu

~Shrutidhara Kaushik

A society is marked by its uniqueness in cultural heritage, ethos, principles, tradition, diversity, emotion, sentiments, beliefs, practices, ethnicity and other elements which create a strong bond within the group. Assam is a land of exotic and diverse culture. It is the land, the epitome of an impressive blend of culture. It's a confluence of assimilation which unites people through celebration of varied festivals. The ethnic traditions of various tribes have a definite impact on the festivals and carnivals of Assam.

Bihu being the traditional and foremost festival of Assam is indeed an inseparable part of Assamese society and culture. Irrespective of other prevailing festivals of Assam, Bihu is the only festival which binds and bridges the gap across all ethnic tribes and religious communities of the state. It creates a sense of solidarity, togetherness & feeling of oneness amongst members of the Assamese Community. The word Bihu is used to mean a festival though the word is connected with the word Mahavisuva Samkranti meaning Vernal Equinox - the passage of the sun from one zodiac house to another in mid April to other house to usher in the spring season.

Rongali Bihu, the major Bihu amongst all three Bihu's, the other two being Bhogali or Magh and Kongali or Kati Bihu, is observed with great enthusiasm, zeal & thrill irrespective of class, caste, creed and religious affinity in the state. It is a way of life for Assamese people. It is the festival of spring which symbolizes prosperity & harmony. The word 'Rongali' is derived from the root word 'rong' meaning gaiety and happiness indicating thereby that the festival is marked by a fervor and jollity that find their manifestation in the various Bihu songs and dances that are performed through 'Husori'.

The rhythm and euphony of Rongali Bihu pulsates in the veins of the people of Assam spreading messages of goodwill, peace and harmony. Bihu dances are the most integral part of the festival and symbolize the fertility rites of Assam. The farmers have envisaged that the erotic content of the songs would sexually arouse the earth's body, leading to a verdant harvest. Bihu dance with its sensuous movements using the hips, arms, etc, by the young women aspire to celebrate their fertility. In this respect, the Bihu dance can also be called a mating ritual by the young men and women.

It is the time when the entire environment becomes colorful, vibrant & charismatic. Puffy clouds and fast blowing gusty northwest wind-Bordoichila enters and brings freshness in the air. Budding trees and copious foliage blooming, Kuli, Keteki's (cuckoo) chirping sound, Koupou Phool (orchid) blossom everywhere - these sounds, fragrance enthrall and trigger the mind, soul and body of everyone. Bihu Nachonis (dancer) excites for moving away from usual humdrums of life and prepare them to celebrate the festivals of fertility with their dear ones. They sway to the beat of Dhol, (drum), Pepa, (instrument made from buffalo horn), Gogona (bamboo instruments), and empower with the innate energy in the heart which is not only filled with pleasure but a feeling of warmth, growth & happiness. Young women decorate their hair knob with 'Kopou Phool'. They paint the palms and soles of her feet with the red juice of the 'Jetuka plant' and their lips with the redness of the 'borhomthuree flower' (a plant which is used by the ladies to color their lips. Women look very graceful with their traditional Assamese attire, golden coloured Muga Silk Mekhela Sador and red Riha.

This Jetuka or organic mehendi plays an important role in Assamese culture & tradition especially in Rongali Bihu. Jetuka is a plant (*Lowsonia inermis*), and widely used as a medicinal plant and in beauty industry.

"Haatore aanguli kino saai zaaba  
Zilike zetukar bol  
Murnu mainaak kino saai zaabaa  
Boi jai ghaamore zol"

(Would you see her fingers  
There shines the color of the Jetuka,  
Would you see my love  
Sweat stream down her body.)

(A popular Bihu Song)

**Jetuka** is a symbol of beauty and festivity. For ages, Assamese ladies and girls have applied Jetuka especially on the eve of Rangali Bihu to make them look alluring and elegant. The association of redness in their fingertips, palms, lips and their dress are meaningful and evocative. Red symbolizes ripeness and maturity and hence announces an inner vitality. It adds a very beautiful and unique colour to skin and nails which cannot be attained by any artificial colours. It is believed







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that it keeps all types of skin disease away for the coming year. During Rongali Bihu, it's a kind of ritual to apply Jetuka. Jetuka is a way of bringing colour to life as it's an emblem of womanhood. By applying it and dancing Bihu Naas women attain their most matured and fertilized stage. They celebrate their sexuality through singing Bihu Geet. Romanticism and love encompasses the environment. Unmarried young men and women move out in groups or form circles in the midst of which the prettiest woman dances and perform Mukoli Bihu.

As times are changing and as we step into the threshold of modernization, industrialization and globalization, the use of Jetuka is gradually diminishing. Traditional Assamese dye is now predominantly taken over by the Rajasthani Mehendi.

In this context, I still remember how we used to apply the fresh paste of the jetuka leaves on the night of Goru Bihu (the first day of Bihu when cows are worshipped), on our thumbnails, toe nails and palms. We applied it and then covered with a plastic foil or kol paat (banana leaf) followed by a clean white muslin cloth and left it overnight. We would get up excited the next day to see the beautiful colour that the jetuka leaves have left behind. The fragrance of Jetuka in the particular eve really creates a different feeling. But last year when I visited my home town Jorhat, during Rongali Bihu after many years it was observed that the thrill of using Jetuka is missing in urban areas as compared to earlier years. Nowadays people hesitate to apply jetuka paste on the hands and are rather willing to decorate their hands with one or two polka dot mehendi designs or may be other artistic design. The dark chocolate red colour of Jetuka and its smell is so nostalgic to me even today. Today far away from home I have many wonderful memories to recollect at every stage of my life while celebrating Bihu. At different stages of my life I have been celebrating Bihu differently in different places. But its charm is still exuberantly unique and extraordinary for me every year.

Bohag Bihu has the uniqueness of breaking all the boundaries and bringing all the people together on the propitious fiesta. The way colour of Jetuka brings happiness and prosperity to all, likewise may the festival of Rongali Bihu herald immense sun shine and glee to the lives of everyone.

## Sources:

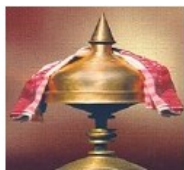
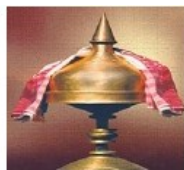
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11) শুই থক শিয়ালে হহ ধৰিব নোৱাৰে  
xui thoka xiale hah dhoribo nware

A sleeping jackal cannot catch a duck. One must work hard for success in life. A lazy person cannot succeed in life.

12) ৰাইজে নখ জোকাৰিলেই নৈ ৰয়  
raije nokh jwkarilei noi boy

Raij = public; nokh = nail; jwkara = shake; noi = river, boi = flow  
A finger may hold only droplets of water. However, if lot of people shake their fingers which may hold only droplets of water, a river of water can flow. The proverb is generally used to show that if many people donate to a cause, great things can be achieved.





# এনাজৰী বহাগবিহু ২০১২



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21<sup>st</sup> April 2012

## Reverse Migration and Contributions to Assam

~ Ruma Goswami

Last year, the media in Assam carried a news report of reverse migration of 300 tea workers from the state to their original homeland in Telengana. As the first tea garden was established in 1837 and by 1900, there were 804 tea gardens in the state. As the native people of Assam, engaged in independent agricultural farming, did not wish to be involved in contract farming in the gardens, the British had at that time encouraged migration of the tea workers from central India and for them to leave now, after more than 150 years, is indeed a worrying factor.



While reverse migration can be destabilizing, scholarly discourses speak of various forms. Basically, reverse migrants seek to make a place for themselves in the original homeland for a variety of reasons or for the economic well off NRIs it can also amount to trying to give back something to the nation that nurtured them or their forefathers. While several instance on such efforts immediately come to mind in Assam, most NRIs are involved in undertaking projects and programmes in the state. While the idea of undertaking a project in Assam can appear daunting and challenging, two instances about which I learned recently and which can be done at short notice with practically no cost needs mention.

One is the work of schools like Parijat Academy where visitors to Assam spend some time pro bono in imparting education to the children telling stories about western life and encouraging them to do well. Then there are similar other pro bono instances at the higher education level where some NRI academics from Assam get involved in by giving lectures in their old colleges with a similar aim of encouraging the new students. Many names come to mind in these areas of activity and I hope to get involved similarly one day.

But one innovative way in trying to support the Assamese community in a multi directional do something for Assam by an NRI needs special mention. This involves the use of social media such as Facebook. When I came to Australia, I did not know much about cooking. My husband would tease me by saying that I know how to cook only two dishes: boiled water and boiled eggs, though the latter does require some skills in having the perfect egg. As I looked up the internet, I came across many websites but these were not interactive, I could not ask questions

and in any case, websites only mention about the author's own recipes. But one Facebook page titled Assamese Cuisines and Recipes caught my eye. This Facebook page not only provided me with a variety of recipes but also had added advantage that I could ask for a particular recipe or seek clarifications. Most of the recipes are posted by members on the page and so these are more "cook friendly" without much of the technical jargon or complex ingredients that formal websites and books contain. This page is managed by Sharmin, who it turned out, is the cousin of one of our Melbourne family. She is an NRI living in Dubai and I am posting two recipes from her page for the community.



Pura Bengena with Maas



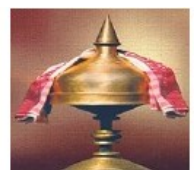
Chicken in Banana Leaf

### PURA BENGENA PITIKAR LOGOT MAAS (Roasted and Mashed Aubergine With Fish)

#### Ingredients:

1. Filleted fish - 1/2 kg
2. Large aubergine - 1
3. 2 Large tomatoes - 2
4. Onion, chopped - 1
5. Turmeric powder - 1 tsp.
6. Salt to taste.
7. Mustard oil - 2 tsp
8. Green chillies - 2 chopped
9. Handful of fresh coriander, coarsely chopped

**Procedure:** 1. Rub the fish with one-half teaspoon of salt and 1/2 teaspoon turmeric. After 30 mins, grill (pura) on a charcoal fire (or shallow fry till done). Remove and keep aside. 2. Meanwhile, grease the eggplant and tomatoes with oil and grill on charcoal fire (If coal is not available it can be grilled on gas stove on slow flame ) until vegetables are tender. Remove from heat, peel and mash. 3. Heat 1 tsp mustard oil in a pan. Add chopped onions, chillies, a pinch of turmeric powder and salt. Add the mashed vegetable and cook few mins to combine the spices. 4. Add the cooked fish and stir gently to mix the vegetable with the fish, taking care not to break the fish. Cook until water has evaporated. 5. Remove to a serving dish and sprinkle fresh coriander and drizzle with remaining mustard oil.







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Serve hot with rice.

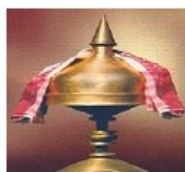
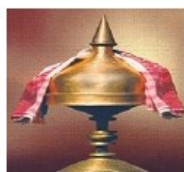
## CHICKEN COOKED IN BANANA LEAF WITH BAMBOO SHOOT

- |                                     |                           |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Small chicken (800g) - 1 no.     | 2. Bamboo shoots - 4 tbs. |
| 3. Onions, grated - 3               | 4. Ginger paste - 1 tsp   |
| 5. Garlic paste - 1 tsp.            | 6. Chilly - 2 or 3        |
| 7. Tomato, chopped - 1              | 8. Mustard oil - 3 tbs.   |
| 9. Lemon juice - 3 tbs              | 10. Salt to taste.        |
| 11. Fresh coriander leaves, chopped |                           |
| 12. Banana leaves or aluminium foil |                           |

**Procedure:** 1. Clean and wash the chicken thoroughly. 2. Mix all the ingredients from\* to \* in a small bowl. 3. Add the mixture to the chicken. 4. Mix well and marinate for 30 minutes. 5. Pass one side of each of the banana leaves over the flame of a gas cooker (5-10 seconds is sufficient) to soften the leaves. 6. Cut away the thick edges and central stem. 7. Place the chicken in the center of the banana leaf and wrap the sides around to obtain a package. Secure the parcel with tooth picks. 8. Place over a charcoal fire. Rotate from time to time till they are cooked. 9. Open the packets and serve garnished with fresh coriander leaves.



A taste of Ladies Night 2011





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## Paakghorot Ebhumuki

(A Glimpse into the Kitchen)

~ Kalpana Dutta

As Rongali Bihu approaches, the mood is one of festivity. Song and dance are in the air. But air cannot fill out stomach and though Bhogali Bihu has passed, we still need to eat while we enjoy the festival and the season. So here are a few recipes enjoy.



### 1. PATOT DIYA PHOLA MOGU MAH

#### Ingredients:

Phola mogu mah 3 tea cups  
Green chilli 4 no  
Ghee 2 tsp  
Banana leaf (or if this is not available, try aluminum foil)

Ginger one small piece  
Salt to taste

#### Method

Soak the mogu in cold water. When soft, remove scales and wash. Grate the ginger into and make a paste with the mogu. Add salt. Soften the banana leaf in flame. Make small balls with the mogu paste and fold them in the banana leaves. Put the banana leaf packets in a bowl, then put the bowl in hot water in a saucepan on flame or pressure cook. When pressure cooker blows two or three whistle, remove. When cold, remove the mogu balls from the banana leaf packets, then add ghee and chilli. Fry the balls in oil, then add to mixed vegetable or make a curry. Eat with rice.

### 2. BAHOR GAAJOR TORKARI

#### Ingredients

Bahor Gaaj (Bamboo shoot) 12 inches or tinned as per need  
Potato 4  
Chana Dal 1 tea cup  
Tez Paat (bay leaf) 2  
Haldi ½ tsp  
Mustard oil 1 tbspn  
Garam Masala 1 tsp

Salt as per taste  
Dhania powder 1 tsp  
Chilli powder 1 tsp  
Jeera guri 1 tsp  
Onion 1

#### Method

Clean and grade the bamboo shoot. Soak chana dal and soften. Cut potato into large pieces. Then pressure cook the bamboo shoot, chana dal and potato. Keep aside. In a kerahi (wok) fry the tez paat and grated onion, then add the boiled bamboo shoot and mix. Add haldi, salt, chilli, jeera, dhania and mix well. When the mixture dries, remove and add garam masala and cover. Eat hot with rice.

### 3. BHAPOT DIYA MOSUR DAIL

#### Ingredients

Mosur dail (pulses) 2 tea cups  
Salt to taste  
Green chilli 2  
Dhonia one small bunch

Onion 1 no  
Mustard oil 1 tbsp.  
Clean piece of cloth

#### Method

Soak the pulses. When soft, make into small ball and wrap in the cloth. Then put the cloth wrapped balls in a bowl and put in pressure cooker in a water base. Cover and steam for 2 to 3 whistle. Remove onto a plate. Add finely chopped onion, dhania, salt and oil and make into small balls. Eat with rice.

### 4. DAHI POTAL

#### Ingredients

Potal 300 gms  
Sour yogurt 1 tea cup  
Onion, adda, garlic paste 5 tsp  
Tez paat 2 nos  
Khismis (sultana) 20 nos  
Whole garam masala to taste

Potato 1  
Sugar 1 tsp  
Chilli powder 1 tsp  
Ghee 2 tbsp  
Mithi (fenugreek) ½ tsp  
Salt to taste

#### Method

Cut potal into pieces and potato in long stripes. Fry in oil and remove. Fry onion paste, methi, tez paat, garam masla, mithi fry and add vegetable and mix. Add salt and chilli powder, then add yogurt with water. Add khismis. When done, remove and have with rice.







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## 5. KOTHALOR MUSIR TORKARI

### Ingredients

Kothalor (jackfruit) musir 1 or have from tin

Jaluk, jeera, dhani paste 5 tsp

Onion 2 Garlic 2 Ginger 1 in a paste

Potato 1

Tez pat 2

Garam masala 4 tsp

Salt to taste

Tomato 2

Mustard oil 4 tbsp

Sugar 2 tsp

Haldi ½ tsp

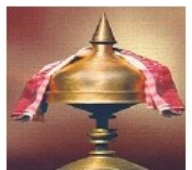
Ghee 2 tbsp

### Method

Cut kothal into pieces. Boil potato and kothal pieces in water. When done, remove. Keep water aside. Fry sugar in oil, when golden add potato. Remove. Fry tomato, then add onion paste and other ingredients and fry with the kothal musir and potato. Add salt. When sufficiently fried, add the water and cook till thick and done. Remove, add garam masala and ghee. Eat a special bihu delicacy with rice.



Best dish winner at Ladies Night 2011









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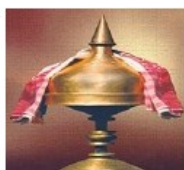
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মিষ্ণুসাগৰ চাকিত হাউচটো, কিম্বা এটা সুনন্দ সুনন্দী, আকৃত মোৰ আঙৰ-  
জাইটিটোৱে এই বৰপুখুৰী পাৰত থকা এগুলা ব্ৰাউন ইংলিচ স্কুলখনত পাঠছিল।  
এদিন মোৰ বৰদেউজাই ভাইটিক ডুকাই কৈছিল যে তাৰ স্কুলখন আচলত 'গোন্ধোলা  
বৰুৱা' নামৰ মানুহ এজনৰ নামতহে পাঠছিল। তেওঁ মোকিমা Christian বৰ্চ  
গ্ৰহণ কৰিলে, তেওঁ তেওঁৰ নামটো অন্যাই 'গোন্ধোলা বৰুৱা' ঠাইত 'এগুলা  
ব্ৰাউন' কৰি নিলে। এই কথাটো পিছে কিমান সঁচা নাজানিলো। কিন্তু  
এইটো মোৰ কাষৰে ইমান আচোন্দ জনক আছিল যে মোৰ মনত থাকি গ'ল।  
আৰু এইমো কিম্বাসাগৰ Tennis ক্লাবৰ Court খন, তাৰ মগত যেন মোৰ এটা  
বিশেষ অস্থান আছে। সেই চতুৰ্থ শ্ৰেণী থকাৰ পৰা এই Tennis Court খনত  
ব্যক্তিগত চাৰু পাঁচ বজাত শুৱাৰ পৰা উঠি খেলিবলৈ যোৱা মোৰ আৰু  
তিনিটা বজাত স্কুল চুটিৰ পাছতে বদ হওঁক বৰমুন হওঁক খেলিবলৈ মোৰা যেন  
মোৰ মনৰ পাতত এতিয়াও অঁজা হৈ আছে।  
মিদিনাই সেই অষ্টম শ্ৰেণী দুপৰীয়া পৰীক্ষাত অষ্ট-কম নম্বৰ পালে,  
সেইদিনাই মোৰ এই টেনিছ খেলৰ অধ্যায় সামৰনি পৰিল। এই কিম্বাসাগৰ  
দিনব্যৱৰ্থ কথা স্মৰণাই থাকোতে হঠাতে দেখিলো মূৰীটোত দুপৰীয়া তিনিটা বাজি  
দহ মিনিট গলেই, তাৰ মানে ইহঁক স্কুলৰ পৰা আনিবলৈ ইলৈই আৰু মোৰ  
স্মৰণী বিষিকখন বন্ধ কৰাৰো সময় ইন।



Monjita in action with Lipi Rongali Bihu 2011







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VIC ASSAM

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## Paintings

~ Rima Goswami (6 years)



### 1. About the Japanese Bridge:

Claude Monet (1840 - 1926) was a founder of French impressionist paintings, and the most consistent and prolific practitioner of the movement's philosophy of expressing one's perceptions before nature, especially as applied to plain air landscape painting. During the early 1880s, Monet painted several groups of landscapes and seascapes in what he considered to be campaigns to document the French countryside. His extensive campaigns later evolved into his series' paintings. His paintings sold for astronomical amounts with several sold for above \$ 25 million with one titled Le Bassin aux Nymphes fetching \$ 80.5 million in 2008.

This reproduction by Rima Goswami (6 years, Footscray West Primary School, Victoria) is from one of the original paintings by Claude Monet titled "Waterlilies and Japanese Bridge", 1899, oil on canvas, has been loaned to the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra by the Art Museum, Princeton University, USA. It is one of the 236 recorded canvases in the Waterlilies sequence that he painted. This garden formed part of Monet's estate in Giverny, now a public trust, and in the painting, he depicted his fondness of painting controlled nature.



Rima reproduction formed part of an art exhibition that the school had put up in 2011.



### 2. About the Weeping Woman:

Pablo Picasso (1881 - 1973) was a Spanish painter and one of the most influential artists of the 20th century. He is widely known for co-founding the Cubist movement and collage and the invention of constructed sculptures. Analytic cubism involved taking objects apart and analysing them in terms of their shapes. Several of his paintings are ranked amongst the most expensive with many sold for over \$ 100 million and one titled "Nude, Green Leaves and Bust" fetching \$ 106 million.

Rima's reproduction here of his "Weeping Woman" also formed part of the art exhibition by the school in 2011. In this painting, the model Dora Maar, is described by Picasso as "always weeping" and depicts a lady in eternal pain. The Weeping Woman went on an international tour with Guernica and other works to publicise the plight of the Spanish Republic. It has been part of British historical memory since it was shown here in 1938. In focusing on the image of a woman crying, the artist was no longer painting the effects of the Spanish civil war directly, but rather referring to a singular universal image of suffering. The painting is presently housed in the Tate Modern Gallery, London.







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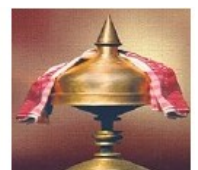
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21<sup>st</sup> April 2012

### 3. Sunflower on fabric:

Vincent van Gogh (1853 - 1890) was a Dutch post impressionist painter whose work, notable for its rough beauty, emotional honesty, and bold colour, had a far-reaching influence on 20th-century art. He was famous for his painting of sunflowers. Vincent van Gogh's sunflower paintings opened a door to a new evolution in decor and art. Not only did Vincent van Gogh inspire others to paint sunflowers, but he also created a trend that would span various lifestyles and personas. Van Gogh's infamous sunflowers altered many views on color schemes, exaggerated features, and stereotypically beautiful flowers in minimalistic form.

Rima's fabric painting of sunflower was also part of the school art exhibition in 2011. It was done on a off white cloth bag. Though van Gogh died a poor man, many of his paintings have in later years been sold for over \$ 50 million with one titled "Portrait of Dr Gachet" fetching \$82.5 million in 1990.





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VIC ASSAM

21<sup>st</sup> April 2012

## Assamese Crafts

Assam has a wide variety of crafts and I have researched them. I'd like to share some of the most important ones with you

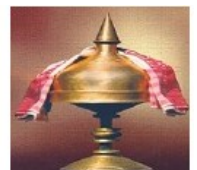
### The Jaapi:

Usually made from bamboo and a round leaf known as 'taku paat', the jaapi's usage is protecting the user from sun, like a hat. It is used traditionally and is always decorated. Its name comes from 'jaap', a bundle of taku leaves. It is also the symbol representing Assam.



### The Mekhela Chador:

It is a traditional dress worn by woman on special occasions. It is like a sari and has two main pieces of clothes draped around the body. The bottom portion is called the 'mekhela'. Traditional Mekhela Chadors are made from cotton, muga or Pat. Every one of them has a unique and beautiful pattern which is one of the many reasons why it is so important to Assam.







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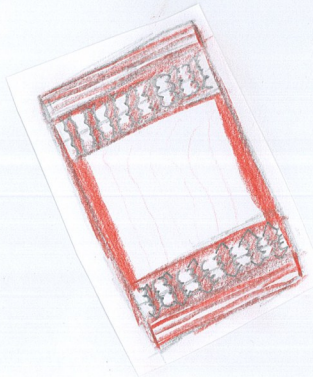
## The Xorai:

The Xorai is the traditional symbol of Assam. It is used as an offering tray, a decorative symbol in bihu and a gift to a person in honour. Traditional xorais are made out of bell-metal but can also be made out of brass and silver. Its top looks like a rocket ship's front side with a sharp needle pointing out of it from my point of view.

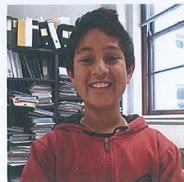


## The Gamosa:

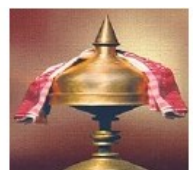
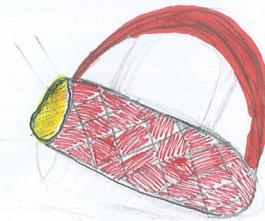
Something like a towel, gamosa means 'something to wipe the body' as 'ga' means body and 'mosa' means to wipe. It is used as a towel and is used to cover something (either holy or ordinary), therefore making it symbolising the life and culture of Assam. It has red and white decorations and it is made out of Assamese silk for special occasions.



Thank you for reading my work and I'd like to say...HAPPY BIHU TO ALL!!!



-By Rishov Doloi







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VIC ASSAM

21<sup>st</sup> April 2012

## MULTICULTURAL DIVERSITY IN AUSTRALIA.



MRIGANK

I am writing this piece based upon my learning from my school term one investigation topic -

Cultural Diversity In our Community.  
I gained the knowledge from my research on the internet about the Melbourne Immigration Museum.

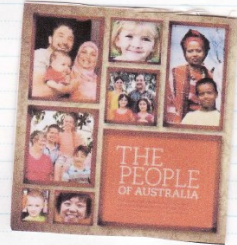
Australia is a unique country with diversity of its people, their culture and lifestyle.

Australia welcome people from many different countries and cultures.



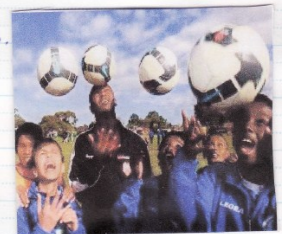
## Diversity in Australian Community can be seen in:-

- ① Place of birth.
- ② Diversity in language.
- ③ Different religion and beliefs.
- ④ Different festivals and cultures.
- ⑤ Different food styles.



The Melbourne Immigration

Museum:- tells us real peoples stories from all over the world who have migrated to Victoria. These stories are sometimes sad, sometimes funny but always engaging. One should visit the museum in Melbourne city to get the experience.







# এনাজৰী বহাগবিহু ২০১২



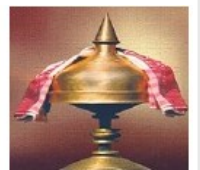
VIC ASSAM

21<sup>st</sup> April 2012

I can conclude by saying that today Australia is unique with a population of 20 million with cultural and language diversity. One great example is the Assamese Community of Victoria who celebrates Bihu with songs and dances from Assam. People enjoy the occasion wearing Assamese clothes and eating Assamese food. People from other communities also join in the celebrations.



By Mrigank Bora  
Year-3.





*Twilight of Melbourne CBD*

## **Assamese Proverbs ( ফক্সা-বোজনা )**

Contributed By : Rajen Barua, Houston, Texas

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