

# BORO DIASPORA FORUM



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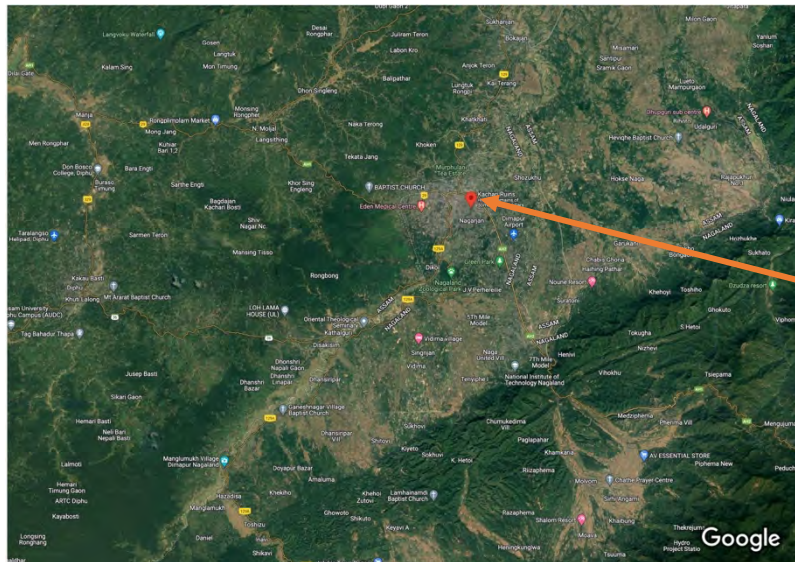
## The BDF लाइसि

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## The Cover Page (Remains of a fort, Dimapur)



**Red pin:**  
*Location of  
the Kachari  
ruins.*

**The** once magnificent Kachari (Rajabari) ruins, also known as the Dimasa Kachari ruins archaeological site, is located in the North-East corner of India. The historically neglected (or forgotten) ruins are made-up of a string of mushroom dome shaped pillars (sandstone and bricks) that were built by the powerful Dismasa-Kachari Dynasty that flourished around the 10-16<sup>th</sup> century AD.

The ruins demonstrate the innovation, creativity, and power with which the Kachari Kings once ruled this landlocked geographical location for many centuries. However, the origin, the history, and the purpose of these pillars remain unknown, or records have been lost; a few remaining pillars still stand in all their glory, while others have been broken or fallen. This site, like many archaeological sites of historical significance found throughout North-East India, has been largely neglected. One could surmise that the mushroom shaped domes were installed to honor the Kachari kings' hobby or their ability to play chess or a similar game skillfully. The ruins are still shrouded in mystery, which calls for further research and rediscovery.

Nonetheless, the pillars are examples of priceless ancient engineering and serve to commemorate the power of Kachari kings who once ruled a vast kingdom in North-East India.

*Cover page pictures are provided by Mr. Gunajit Brahma.*



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**01**

## ***Editorial***

**Dear Readers:**

*Khulumbai!*

The Editorial Board (EB) is pleased to present *The BDF लाइसि*, 3<sup>rd</sup> issue to our readers. There are numerous significant developments and issues that call for discussions and debates. For instance,

***Flood in Assam.*** Earlier this summer's monsoon weather delivered relentless rains that wreaked havoc in Northeast India, especially in the state of Assam, where conditions were among the "worst" than in previous years. There is no hard data, but the cost of flood-related damage could have been comparable to the devastation caused by the deadly Category 5 Atlantic Hurricane Katrina, that killed over 2,000 people and left more than \$125 billion in damages, in the city of New Orleans, in the United States.

The Brahmaputra and Barak rivers' floodwaters, which spread across 32 districts, are said to have caused suffering for 65+ lakh people. There were hundreds of makeshift relief camps, some of which went without food, water, medicine, or clothing for weeks. Unknown numbers of persons died in Assam and the BTR/BTC area floods. Caught off guard, unprepared poor farmers lost their livelihood, including their lands and domestic animals, as well as their life savings.

Every year, India produces thousands of highly qualified engineers, thus it is puzzling that Indian engineers have not been able to develop a mechanism to reduce flooding and flood-related damages. The Assam flood is an annual occurrence that is more like a ritual, than a singular occurrence. Now is the time for our decision-makers and key players, to work together, to address this yearly ritualistic natural disaster caused by monsoon rain and flooding.

We welcome your comments and feedback.

*Gwjwntwng!*

***The Editorial Team, The BDF लाइसि***



**02**

**A few Words from the Vice President  
of the BDF**

*Khulumbai!*

**Resources are limited, but creativity is not.** The almighty gives each of us a long life span with complete freedom to choose as to what we do and how we do. There are countless examples of people in the world, who have accomplished great things during their lifetimes and who have gone from poverty to affluence.

It is for a fact that with the same people and resources, development and progress sometime take downturn and at other time take upturn. Creativity combined with discipline and hard work can change the course of a life or a situation even if resources are inadequate.

For peace and prosperity, we should enhance **Social Capital** and our **Cultural Capital** side by side, while we continue to fight to build our **Economic Capital**.

**Social Capital** is networking of relationships among people enabling society to function effectively. Our community can build a **robust Social Capital** through unity, better interpersonal relationship and understanding, trust and mutual respect and with cooperation and reciprocity. These efforts can be bolstered through effective functioning of our various Social organizations, Civil societies and Forums.

The Boro community is endowed with rich culture and tradition. The *Kherai Mwsanai, Bagurumba Mwsanai, Kham, Sifung, Jotha, Serja, Dokhwana, Aronai, OnlaWngkhrwi, Nafaam* and *Jou* are shining examples of very rich and distinctive Boro culture and tradition that have been part of this community since time immemorial. We need to preserve, protect, and promote these ethnic traditions for the sake of our identity, and for peace and prosperity.

An important step in that direction will be made if, “**A centre for a Boro culture and research studies based on community led collecting, documenting of living and traditional cultural practices in partnership with academic and experts from relevant fields**”, is established in BTR.

*Gwjwngthung.*

*-Atul Basumatary*

Vice President, BDF



03

## बर' सुबुंसार गौथुम

### थांखिफोर:

- (क) लाइमोन, बिथांखि दाफुंग्रा आरो बिसायख'जानाय थान्दैफोरनि गेजेराव सांग्रांथि लाबोनो आरो जुथाइ हादोरफोरनि (United Nations) सुंथाथाव दावगाथाइयारि थांखि (Sustainable Development Goal) गायसंनो।
- (ख) गुबुन हारिफोरजों गोजोनै थावरिनाय मोनसे उदां आबहावायाव बर' हारिखौ फोजौखानो आरो जौगाग्रोहोनो थाखाय थुलुंगा होनो, गियान बिलायनो आरो सुबुं फोनांजाब राहा खालामनानै होनो।
- (ग) बर' हारिखौ गोग्गाथाव खालामनो आरो हादोरखौ फोजौखानायाव समान समान बिहोमा होनो नाजानो।
- (घ) मावबिथांखिफोरखौ मावफुंनायाव खुंथाइनो गोदान सानखांथि आरो नांगौबादि हेफाजाब होनो।
- (ङ) सरासनस्रा सुबुंनि, थियै आसामनि बर'लेण्ड जारखुंथाइयारि ओन्सोल आरो भारतनि गुबुन थावनिफोराव थानाय थागिबि हारि-हारिसाफोरनि थाखाय हाबा मावनो खुंगिरिफोरखौ उदाडै हेफाजाब होनो आरो गोहोम खोखलैनो।
- (च) डिजिटेल फुंखा आरो बिजौंखौ फोजौखानानै आरो गुबुन गुबुन गोजौ थाखोनि हाबाफारिनि जोहै बर' राव आरो थुनलाइखौ फोरौनो, फोजौनो आरो फेहेरनो।
- (छ) बर' हारिनि दोरोडारि गियान, आरिमु, हारिमु, थुनलाइ, दोरोडारि गेलेनाय आरो गुबुन गुबुन गासै दोहोडारि दोहोनखौ थुन्नानै दोननो, सरैखा खालामनो, फोथानानै लाखिनो आरो फोजौखानो।
- (ज) गुबुन गुबुन साख्रियारि आरो जिउराहायारि बिथिडाव फरायसा आरो लाइमोनफोरनो बोसोन, सुबुरुन, थुलुंगा होनो आरो बिसोरनि रौंगौथि आरो हारौंथाइयारि दावगाथाइनि थाखाय गौलै लामा दिन्थिनो।
- (झ) आबहावा सोलायनाय, सुंथाथाइ, खामानि मोनि जेना, सावस्रि आरो सोलौंथाइजों लोब्बा थानाय 21थि जौथाइनि गोब्राब जेनाफोरजों मोगा-मोगि जानानै साबसिनै सौसिहानो थाखाय बर' लाइमोनफोरनि गेजेराव गोदान सानखांथि लाबोहोनो थुलुंगा होनो।
- (ञ) दौ-दाब्ला थासारिखौ गारनानै सोलायसुला बहुमजों आगान सुरफानो थाखाय सुबुं समाजखौ बिथा खालामनानै बिजिरसंनायखौ थुलुंगा होनो।
- (ट) सुबुं गौथुमनानै समाजारि गेनाफोरनि बेरेखायै बिसोरनि गेजेराव साग्रांथि लाबोनो आरो बोसोन होनो।
- (ठ) बर'फोरनि गेजेराव सोरदिडारि आबुं जौगाथाइनि फारसे नाजाग्रा, मोनफुंग्रा आरो बिहोमा होग्रा सुबुं, गौथुम आरो आफादफोरखौ सिनायनानै दिहननो आरो गनायथि होनो।
- (ड) बिबुंथि, सावरायमेल, थि आयदायारि मेल, मावबादा आरो सावरायमामेलफोरनि जोहै गेलेनाय, समाजारि आरो सोलौंथाइयारि हाबाफारिखौ खुंफुंनो थुलुंगा होनो।
- (ढ) निदान सम सैनानाय सुबुंनो अनसुंथाइ होनायजों लोगोसे रांखान्थियारि, फाहामथाइयारि, आदारारि आरो गुबुन गुबुन बिथिडाव हेफाजाब होनो।
- (ण) हारिजों लोब्बा थानाय आरिमु, हारिमु, राव आरो थुनलाइ, दँखो, गेलेनाय, सावथुन आरो गुबुन गुबुन आयदायाव गोदानै जौगानाय बिथिंखौ साफायनो एबा डिजिटेल बिजोडाव फोसावनो।
- (त) बर'लेण्ड जारखुंथाइयारि ओन्सोलजों लोगोसे गुबुन बर' सुबुंफोर थानाय समाज आरो थावनिफोरनि मुलाम्फानि थाखाय बैफोर थावनिनि मिथिंगायारि आरो सुबुडारि - बे मोननैबो बाहायजायि फुंखा आरो खाबुफोरखौ सिनायथिनो आरो बानजाथाव हाबायाव बाहायनो।



## *The BDF Laisi proudly presents our Assam Gaurav 2021 Awardees*

### **Mr. Dharanidhar Boro**



**Mr. Boro** (01/10/1956), was conferred the *Assam Gaurav Award-2021*, the third Highest Civilian Award of the Assam Government, from the Governor of Assam for his exemplary service to Wildlife Conservation. He has worked extensively to protect rhinos from poaching. He sensitized local people around Kaziranga National Park and was instrumental in engaging them in the protection and conservation of one-horned Rhinoceros and other wildlife. His effort resulted in increasing the rhino population at Kaziranga National Park. For his pioneering work on wildlife conservation, he also earned several other recognitions/awards such as *Bragh Sevak Award* (1996), *Fred M Packered Park Merit Award* from IUCN (1997), *WWF PATA Award*, *Real hero Award* by CNN-IBN (2008), *Green Guard Award* by Jungle (2012). He also represented India in several International Conferences and Workshops on Wildlife and Biodiversity Conservation in countries including South Africa, Australia, Bolivia, Nepal. He earned his *H.S.L.C examination certificate* from Dakhin Kamrup Bidyapith High School, H.S. from Polashbari RB Higher Secondary and M.P. School, and earned *B.Sc. degree* from Pandu College, Guwahati. After graduation, he was recruited for Ranger course & training, where he spent 2 years, at the *Eastern Forests Rangers College, Kurseong, Darjeeling*. He joined as *Range officer* at *Kaziranga National Park* in 1987; and after nearly 24 years of service, he was transferred to *Manas National Park*, a World Heritage Site, in 2010 where he retired as *Deputy Conservator of Forest* in the year 2016. He is currently working as a Tourism adviser at the same National Park. His permanent address is, Vill: Gossaihat, P.O.: Gossaihat, Mirza; P.S.: Palashbari, Mirza; Dist: Kamrup; State: Assam.



**Mr. Manoj Kumar Bosumatary**



**Mr. Bosumatary** was awarded the Third Highest Civilian Award from the Govt of Assam, “*The Assam Gaurav Award*” for the year 2021, for his piggery farming entrepreneurship. Mr. Bosumatary was born (on 21-09-1974) to *Shri Kamal Chandra Basumatary* and *Smt Kanaklata Basumatary* at Tezpur. He attended Dhekidal Govt. LP School, Ghoramari; High School and Higher Secondary (1992) from Sainik School Goalpara, Assam. He graduated with Mathematics honours from the prestigious *St. Stephen’s College* (1995), Delhi. Although he joined *State Bank of India* as a Probationary Officer in 1998, however, after serving 15 years he resigned his job in July 2013, despite having a very successful career to do something innovative of his own at his native village. In the year 2014, he started a small piggery farm in his native place. He visited Netherlands and Belgium in 2015 and learned scientific methods of pig farming. His company, the *Symbiotic Foods Pvt. Ltd* is one of the largest integration companies in piggery sector in North-East India that created hundreds of jobs for young people. *Shri Manoj Kumar Bosumatary*, popularly known as *The Pigman of Assam*, has received several other recognitions and awards. The notable among them are: **1. Best Livestock Farmer by Sonitpur District Administration on the Republic Day celebration 2018;** **2. Best Pig Farmer by ALPCO in 2018;** **3. Entrepreneur of the year 2020 by Dy 365 apart.** He is the founding president of the North-East Progressive Pig Farmers Association, which is striving to create a conducive eco-system for commercial piggery in the North-East India to make North-East India a piggery hub. Shri Bosumatary played a key role in launching the Bodoland Pig Mission in September 2021 by BTC administration. He is from the Vill: Dhekidol; P.O.: Ghoramari; P.S.: Tezpur; Dist: Sonitpur (Assam); PIN-784105.





**Late. Kalpana Boro**

**Mrs Boro** was awarded the Prestigious Third Highest Civilian Award from the Govt of Assam, “*The Assam Gaurav Award*” for the year 2021 for her exemplary Public Service. She was born on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1973 to *Late Bhog Ram Boro* and *Smt Kamleswari Boro* and married to *Mr Mohanta Khumrari*. After graduation (Bachelor of Arts) she joined as Anganwadi Worker on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2003 under the Government of Assam. Unfortunately, she passed away on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2022 after a courageous fight with cancer, leaving behind a huge void that will be difficult to fill for many years to come. The BDF family offers its condolences, sympathy, thoughts, and prayers for her family and friends. She had been actively pursuing her dream of helping the community and accomplishing goals through her work with the Anganwadi program and other social endeavors. Her hobby was gardening. She lived in Vill: Balisiha; P.O.: Bhalukmari; P.S.: Rowta; and District: Udalguri; BTC, Assam.

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*For comments, please write to: [Editor@Borodiaspora.org](mailto:Editor@Borodiaspora.org)*



## 05 Brief profiles of the Advisers & Executive Members, The BDF Governing Body (2021-24)

### Chief Adviser, BDF



**Mr Ranjit Shekhar Mooshahary, IPS**

**Mr Mooshahary** is a well-known public figure. Right after his matriculation, faced with severe economic hardship, he had to take up petty jobs to pursue higher education. He earned his B.A. degree with honors in political science, as a night shift student.

He cleared the highly competitive UPSC examination in his 1st attempt and entered the Indian Police Service in 1967, and was the youngest in his batch. In nearly four decades of service in the IPS, he amassed a wide range of assignments across the length and breadth of the country that enriched his perspective and broadened his vision. He approached each assignment with humility,

demonstrated strong leadership, and left a positive imprint.

He rose to the highest level in his career and was the Director General of Police in Kerala, Director General of the National Security Guard and Director General, Border Security Force. He is a recipient of the Police Medal for Meritorious Service, the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service, and D.Litt. (Honoris Causa). He earned a Master's Diploma in Public Administration through an in-service module. Superannuating from IPS in 2006, he became the first State Chief Information Commissioner of Assam, where under his stewardship the Commission became the focal point of transparency and accountability in governance, as envisioned in the Right to Information Act, 2005.

At the pinnacle of his illustrious career, Shri Mooshahary was the Governor of Meghalaya from 2008 to 2013. He is still remembered for his initiatives, responsiveness, scintillating speeches, erudition, accessibility, and simplicity. His passion is governance reform, combating corruption, injustice, inequality and superstition, areas where BDF can take moonshot ideas to stir awakening.

### Adviser, BDF



**Dr Narzary**, originally from Mwidar Khoro (Hatimatha, Kokrajhar), is a Sculptor, Painter, and Art Historian, National Cultural Scholar, UGC Research Fellow, and Fulbright Scholar USA. He taught art history at Kala Bhavan, Visva Bharati, Shantiniketan, WB from 1978 to 2013 and retired as Professor.

He has received *four* International awards, *twelve* National level awards and *one* National Academy award. Dr. Narzary was invited to participate in an international travelling steel sculpture exhibition along with well-known giant sculptors like Antoine Caro, Tony Smith, etc. held in Turkey, Germany, Italy, Spain, France, USA and Mexico.

**Dr Janak Jhankar Narzary,**  
*BA (Kokrajhar College), BFA (Sculpture, Visva Bharati University), MFA (Sculpture, MS University), PhD (Visva Bharati), PG (Art History, Boston University)*

He has authored *thirty* research papers on Arts and Culture published in national and international peer-reviewed journals. He states that the BDF may extend its views and opinions in the time of crisis of the society and draw attention of the community as well as the Government.

His hobby is art, literature, music, drama, and theatre performance.



## Adviser, BDF



**Kishore Wary, PhD**  
(Biochemistry, NEHU, Shillong)

**Dr Wary** grew up at Kokrajhar, currently, a Professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago, USA. He is a Cardiovascular and Regenerative Biologist, an author, serves as an academic editor of several scientific journals, and has several US patents to his credit. His research activities are funded by the US government and by private foundations. Additionally, he is the Chairman of Education Committee of the North American Vascular Biology Organization. Dr. Wary has amassed several academic awards and accolades in the US. His trainees and mentees have gone on to become scientists, professors, CEOs in academia and in biotechnology companies.

Through the BDF, his mission is *“To train future generations through scholarly activities”* and vision *“To network, build trust, value long-term relationships, and develop a thriving community”*.

His hobbies include music, gardening, & tennis.

## President, BDF



**Mr Pinuel Basumatary,**  
MA (English, NEHU), MBA  
(Hull University, UK).

**Mr Basumatary** joined the Civil Services as a member of the Indian Audit & Accounts Service through UPSC in 1983 and superannuated in 2014. Post superannuation, he was appointed by Government of Assam as State Information Commissioner under the RTI Act. Before joining the Civil Services he had taught as Lecturer of English at his Alma Mater St. Edmund’s College, Shillong for a little over two years. He served in various positions including as Director in the Ministry of Finance, Government of India, Member (Finance), Assam State Electricity Board during the crucial period of its reform and restructuring,

Accountant General, Assam, and Principal Accountant General, West Bengal. As Executive Director in the Food Corporation of India for the North-eastern region, he had an opportunity of working with the governments of all the North-eastern States, having a bearing on the Public Distribution System and building up related infrastructure. His dream is to see Boros as a *“Geremsa Hari”*, and wants to work through BDF towards overall advancement of the community particularly focusing on the youth.

For a hobby, he loves music, particularly, traditional Boro and Western choral music.



## Vice President, BDF



**Mr. Atul Basumatary,**  
*BE (Civil), Assam Engineering  
College +PGDM(Public Policy  
&Management), MDI Gurgaon.*

**Mr Basumatary** has amassed experience of working in Central PSU, North Eastern Electrical Power Corporation (1 yr+), Military Engineering Service (3 yrs+), Defence production units & establishments (20 yrs+), and Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, GoI (7 yrs). His domain is Civil Engineering, Public Policy & Management. He joined Indian Ordnance Factory Service, Govt of India thro' Engineering Service exams, 1989, conducted by the UPSC, and is currently working as Deputy Director General. He went to his native village primary school in Baksa; Arya Vidyapeeth H.S. School Guwahati; St. Joseph's High School (boarding) Barpeta Road; Salbari High School Baksa; and Cotton College, Guwahati. He received international exposure in learning through 'Executive Program in Public Policy and Management' from the University of Maryland, College Park, USA during his PGDM (PPM) course at the MDI Gurgaon. Active in extracurricular activities, Atul played volleyball in school and college days and participated in AIR Boro youth programmes that include a group song (1983) + a drama (1988) + a talk (Choosing a right career-1987). For community activities, he worked as a Cultural Secretary at the Guwahati District ABSU (1986), and as an elected Minor Games' Secretary in Assam Engineering College (1987). Atul's goal thro' BDF is to synergise experiential knowledge & ideas for peace and prosperity.

## General Secretary, BDF



**Nirala Ramchiary, PhD**  
*(Delhi University)*

**Dr Ramchiary** grew up and did his school education at Daimalu Bodo High School, Gohpur. After earning a Ph.D. degree from the Delhi University, he went to Chungnam National University, Daejeon, South Korea to work as a Postdoctoral Research Scientist. Upon returning to India, he joined Gauhati University for one year. Currently he teaches Genetics and Genomics at the School of Life Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. In between he worked for two years as Associate Professor at Delhi Technological University.

He received several National and International Fellowships, including National Research Foundation Fellowship for Foreign Researchers funded by the Govt. of Korea to work in South Korea, Erasmus Mundas European Union BRAVE fellowship to visit and work in Greece, and Prestigious Ramalingaswami Re-Entry Fellowship from the Department of Biotechnology, Govt. of India to return back and work in India. He is currently doing research on *Banlu sibro* (Ghost chilli).

His interest is to mentor and participate in educating youths and contribute to society towards Nation building.



## Treasurer, BDF



**Mr Brahma** is a National Award-winning serial entrepreneur and based in Guwahati. Currently he is holding the post of Managing Director, Jeev Anksh Eco Products (P) Ltd.; Co-founder, Farmeasy Technologies (P) Ltd.; Director, Bati Energy (P) Ltd.; Partner, Pan-IIM Consulting Organisation (PICO). He is also a visiting faculty at the Indian Institute of Management, Indore; teaches Entrepreneurship Development Programmes at EEI-NER, Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat and Indian Institute of Entrepreneurships, Guwahati. He received “National Entrepreneurship Award (2016)”, Govt. of India. He wants to uplift youth by helping them become self-employed.

**Mr Gunajit Brahma**  
*PGDM (IIM-Indore), MSc (Microbiology, Bangalore University).*

His hobby is “Trekking, Poetry, Social Work”.

## Secretary, BDF



**Mr Boro** is currently working as a Regional Manager at the New India Assurance, the largest general insurance company in India, stationed in Mumbai. He comes from Baghmara, a village in the Baksa District. He went to Rupahi High School, BH College, and graduated from Cotton College. In addition, he is a recipient of Fellowship in Insurance (FII).

He is actively connected with several social organizations and sports.

**Mr Biswanath Boro**  
*BA (Hons), FIII, Mumbai.*

## Secretary, BDF



**Mr Basumatary** is a member of the Assam Civil Service, and presently working as Secretary, Bodoland Territorial Council, Kokrajhar. He worked in various capacities including as a State Coordinator for the UNICEF, Managing Director in Fisheries Department, and Joint Secretary in Home and Political Dept, Govt. of Assam. He is the first member in ACS from Boro medium background. A native of remote village of Daoraibari in Bijni, Chirang, he studied in Boro medium at Ulubari High School, and graduated with honours in English from Darrang College, Tezpur. He is the first from Boro Medium School to join the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi where he earned his MA degree. He also completed LLB and LLM from the Gauhati University after entering ACS. Naren is a committed and down to earth person and wants to put continuous efforts to contribute towards upliftment of Bodo Community through sensitizing students and youths. He believes that Boros need to shun the political and ideological differences, and grow united to establish the Bodo Nationality, and

**Mr. Naren Basumatary**  
*MA (JNU), LLB & LLM (Gauhati University).*

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the BDF can play a role in connecting, networking and working together under an umbrella. He is an avid sports lover and fitness enthusiastic, and is associated with a number of sports and socio-cultural organizations. He loves social work, organizing sports, socio cultural and academic programmes.

Cooking, sport and physical fitness are his hobbies.

### Executive Member, BDF



***Dharitri Narzary, PhD***  
***(University of Delhi)***

**Dr Narzary** teaches History to undergraduate and graduate students at the School of Liberal Studies at the Ambedkar University Delhi (AUD); she is also an Adjunct Fellow at the Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS), Delhi. She specializes in Japanese history and her interest areas include material/non-material culture, indigenous history, East Asian society and culture among others. Previously, Dr Dharitri worked with the Yomiuri Shimbun, the largest circulated Japanese newspaper at its India Bureau in New Delhi. For her, BDF is a forum of like-minded people to network and work together for the betterment of the community. Vision is to see the community rise through 'self-awareness'. Dr. Dharitri is originally from Mvider Khoro (Hatimatha, Kokrajhar, Assam) and did her matriculation from Kokrajhar Girls School in Bodo Medium.

Her hobbies include gardening, dance and sports activities.

### Executive Member, BDF



***Mr John Borgoyary,***  
***MA, MCA***

**Mr Borgoyary** is presently working as the Regional Head, at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), North-East India and originally from Bhairabkunda, Udalguri, BTC, Assam. He would like to give back to the society by contributing his knowledge and learnings with a vision to be torch bearer for the Boro Society with a mission to have a platform for ideation and sharing of solutions to current complex socio-economics and political challenges through BDF.

He loves cooking, gardening and travelling.

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*For comments, please write to: [Editor@Borodiaspora.org](mailto:Editor@Borodiaspora.org)*



## Executive Member, BDF



**Ms. Mamoni Basumatary**  
*BE (Chemical), Assam  
Engineering College.*

**Ms Basumatary** is a Chemical Engineer by profession and currently working in Indian Oil Corporation as General Manager (Tech. Services and HSE) at Guwahati Refinery. A Petroleum Federation of India (Petrofed) award winner, Mamoni holds a BE (Chem) Degree from Assam Engineering College of Guwahati University. She would like to inspire and help our new upcoming generation to choose a career path they are interested in, and to provide faculty services for awareness programme on environment and energy sector, to highlight the evil practices of our Bodo society and to bring to the notice of the authority for actions, if any. Her expertise lies in Strategic business Planning, Energy Management, and Faculty support services. Sports, Cultural activities and associating with NGO activities are her main area of interest. Ms. Mamoni is originally from Sapatgram, Kokrajhar.

## Executive Member, BDF



**Dr. Phanindra Goyari,**  
*MA (Economics, Gauhati  
University), MPhil (IGIDR  
Mumbai), PhD (UoH)*

**Dr Goyari** is currently a Professor of Economics at the University of Hyderabad. He was born and brought up at a remote Ahomakha village in Udalguri, Assam. He completed his schooling from Hatkata Gudi Foraisali and matriculation from LBS High School in first division in Boro medium. He earned his BA degree in Economics Honours from Udalguri College, and is the first Boro student to pass MA in Economics in the “first class second position” from the Gauhati University. He successfully completed his UGC Raman Fellowship and Post-Doctoral Research works at the Texas Christian University, USA. Some of his successful scholars are now working as regular faculty members in various Universities, IITs and colleges. He wants to help community people and students in particular within his capacity with a vision & mission to connect each other, work together, share ideas/knowledge, develop together by solving socio-economic-political problems together.

His hobbies include music, movies, yoga and sports activities.

## Executive Member, BDF



**Shri Rajani Kanta Brahma**  
*BA (Hons), MBA, CAIIB.*

**Shri Brahma** is working as an Assistant General Manager, IDBI Bank India Ltd. Originally from village Khanthal Bari, Baganpara, Baksa, BTC, Assam. He loves doing social service, and he wants to serve the community through organizations such as the BDF.



## *Why everyone needs a mentor?*



*“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember,  
involve me and I learn.”  
– Benjamin Franklin.*

**Author:** Kishore Wary, PhD  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
Chicago, IL 60612, USA.

I dedicate this essay to my parents, mentors, and mentees.

### **Key points:**

- 1. The goal of mentorship is to accelerate mentees' personal and professional development.***
- 2. Mentored students and trainees are often better prepared, more goal-oriented, and effective in their professional and personal lives than those without mentors.***
- 3. The mentor and the mentee should define a set of goals and agreed upon roles, tasks, and timelines, and be prepared to receive feedback.***
- 4. Mentors and mentees relationships at institutes of higher learning often synthesize new ideas, write essays or papers together, and make discoveries and inventions.***

### **A. What is a mentor?**

A mentor is a *Guru* (in Sanskrit), guide, coach, teacher, trainer, driver, pilot, young or old, a wise person who has amassed years of professional experience and skills and is willing to coach others to

help them develop and sharpen their skills and competencies. A professional mentor has the knowledge, skills, and experience to educate others and provide guidance, support, and tools to help them improve. A mentor can influence the



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growth and development of their mentee's personal and professional lives. For example, mathematics, language, piano, or dance teachers; voice coaches; sculptors; professors; expert chefs; computer web designers; professional graphic designers; experienced painters; and skilled handymen all have specific professional skills, knowledge, and expertise – and they all can act as a mentor. Highly accomplished mentors (e.g., a senior professor or a senior mentor) usually have multiple mentees with various levels of training and skills. For this reason, mentor–mentee relationships can often be found in team environments.



**Figure 1:** A father (mentor) training his daughter (mentee) ride a bicycle. (Source: Adobe free images)

### B. What is a mentee?

A mentee (*Shishya* in Sanskrit) is anyone, young or old, who is motivated and committed to achieving greater professional and personal growth. Often, mentees seek the help and guidance of an accomplished person whom they admire (**Figure 1**). For example, a mentee may

want to learn how to manage their time more effectively, maximize productivity, expand a business, or negotiate the toughest deals. Mentees know that higher-level guidance can help them achieve the growth they crave and be competitive. An ideal mentee is an energetic trainee, ready to learn and sharpen new skills. Almost anyone, even a mentor, can also be mentee as well, as we all need mentors during various stages of our lives.

### C. The mentor's role

A great mentor inspires, and has the wisdom, skills, and guidance to provide effective advice related to the mentee's professional development and personal growth. The primary role of a mentor is to facilitate this development and provide strategic vision (e.g., 1-, 2-, or 5-year visions or goals). Most of the roles played by a mentor ultimately enhance the mentee's personal and professional lives. Typically, a mentor demonstrates discipline and commitment in their profession, which the mentee can use as a model for their own behavior. Mentors also provide hands-on training in problem-solving skills, decision-making, and performing other tasks relevant to the mentee's situation, all while serving as a part of the mentee's support system and providing them with encouragement. When the mentee feels



that their career is affecting them negatively, they need someone to turn to.

Mentors could be respected members of the community who are armed with the knowledge, experience, and strategic abilities to carry out specific tasks and skills that could be helpful to their mentees. Making decisions might be difficult for some mentees in various situations. For example, a mentee might have difficulty deciding which career path to take. In such a situation, the mentor could offer counseling on what they see as best for the mentee by identifying the mentee's professional strengths and weaknesses; for example, a mentor might advise them to follow a business-oriented path, if they have business knowledge. Mentors also help to set goals that will lead to professional



**Figure 2:** *An effective mentor provides higher level challenges, encouragement, and praise in a timely manner, coupled with appropriate rewards and recognition. (Source: Adobe free images)*

and personal growth. Moreover, mentors

can help mentees navigate professional structures, institutions, and politics, and even act as a sponsor to support networking efforts. They can introduce mentees to other experienced professionals, paving the way for professional development. Finally, mentors play an important role by challenging mentees to go beyond what they believe they can achieve. An effective mentor always provides higher level challenges, encouragement, and praise in a timely manner, coupled with appropriate rewards and recognition (**Figure 2**). A great mentor will always remember his/her mentees, even if they are separated by thousands of miles, or if one of them has changed their professional trajectory. ***The main job of a great mentor is to pass the baton to the next generation.***

#### **D. The mentee's role**

The main duty of the mentee is to approach the mentor first. A mentee should have a mental timeline for completing their goals, as well as a list of short- and long-term plans (such as Plan A, Plan B, and Plan C). They must be willing to do a little research, or homework, to learn as much as possible about the mentor. Next, they should be prepared to discuss the goals and deadlines, frequency of interactions, one-on-one meetings or training sessions,

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and how progress will be assessed. These are important milestones to clarify, because mentors might have different goals and objectives for the mentees. A mentee should create action plans for their goals and objectives, and the mentor should then complete progress reports to reassess their strengths and weaknesses over time. The mentee is responsible for keeping records of training, deliverables, tasks, experiments, and performance metrics, to document the progress made during the mentor–mentee relationship.

Mentees are expected to develop a mentoring plan that is agreeable to both parties, which should also include detailed agenda for each mentoring session; and this can be done by asking questions related to their interests. A mentoring agreement helps to clarify the mentor’s and mentee’s responsibilities and details the commitments made by both parties during the mentorship period. Mentees should be proactive and take responsibility for maintaining the confidentiality of the mentoring relationship, since such circumstances sometimes lead mentors to share intimate details about their professional or personal lives; the mentee should be respectful of the mentor’s privacy. Mentors will often provide feedback on issues raised by mentees, and the mentee should act on it, or specifically request feedback if it has not been provided. This

helps the mentee apprehend within which areas they need improved and wherever they must dedicate more attention. They should also give the mentor feedback, to ensure that the mentorship runs productively. Mentee should respect the mentor, as should the mentor respect the mentee. In other words, there should be a space to ask difficult questions to their mentor and their mentor should welcome new ideas. Finally, mentees should follow through with the recommendations and proposals provided by the mentor. A mentee will only attain results by implementing what they learn within the mentorship.

### Conclusion

The goal of mentoring is to help someone improve at what they already do, or to fulfill their plans in a timely manner



*Figure 3: The goal of mentor and mentee relationship is to accelerate mentees’ personal and professional development. (Source: Adobe free images)*



**\*Table I: Mentor and Mentee Dos and Don'ts**

<b>Mentor Dos</b>	<b>Mentor Don'ts</b>
Provide mentorship only in your areas of expertise. Suggest other mentors as resources outside your expertise or when the attempted mentoring relationship is not working.	Don't take on more mentees than is realistically manageable.
Indicate openness to being a mentor. Be accessible to the mentee.	Don't treat mentees as free labor.
Maintain clear, distinct boundaries with the mentee. Set clear expectations.	Don't make personal requests of the mentee.
Treat the mentee professionally and in an ethical fashion. Be thoughtful and sensitive about the mentee's feelings and time.	Don't gossip about the mentee.
Display professional behavior.	Don't micromanage the mentee. Provide advice and counsel, but do not direct the mentee to take specific actions.

<b>Mentee Dos</b>	<b>Mentee Don'ts</b>
Set specific goals and expectations for the mentoring relationship. Clearly communicate what you want from the relationship. Maintain distinct boundaries and understand what the mentor expects.	Don't expect the mentor to make decisions for you. Learn to resolve problems and issues independently of the mentor.
Be proactive. It is the mentee's responsibility to maintain contact with the mentor and schedule future interactions.	Don't take advantage of the mentor. Respect the mentor's time and help.
Treat the mentor professionally and in an ethical fashion. Be thoughtful and sensitive about the mentor's feelings and time.	Don't gossip about the mentor.
Be present 15 minutes before the start the session.	Don't take rejection of a mentoring request personally.

**\*Source:** *American Psychological Association (www.apa.org)*

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(**Figure 3**). A skilled and advanced mentee might become their own mentor by transmitting the knowledge they have learned from their mentor. They can then refine and strengthen their own mentoring approach. This is significant since there isn't a one mentoring strategy or method that works for everyone in every situation. A wise person (*a Guru*), like many parents, understands the importance of mentoring early in life (e.g., at a young age), so that individuals

can stay on the cutting edge in today's fiercely competitive marketplace. Young people can benefit from mentoring by learning how to write a strong cover letter and create a resume that will help them land interviews and close the toughest business deals. *Sir Isaac Newton's famous line, "If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants,"* serves as my final quotation for this essay. I hope this essay is helpful to young readers.

*“If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants.” - Sir Isaac Newton.*

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## जारिमिन, हायुंखान्थि, आरो राव

**ड. धरित्री नार्जारी**

### सिनायथि (Introduction)

आथिखालनि मुगायाव जों नुनो मोन्नाय बादिब्ला मुलुगनाडै सावरायजानाय आयदायानो जाबाय हायुंखान्थि। जों सानफ्रोमबो रादाब बिलाइयावनो जा, TV एबा social media-फ्रावनो जा गुबुन गुबुन हादोरफ्राव जालांनाय एबा जागासिनो थानाय हारि-माहारिफोरनि बिग्रायनाय, सोमावसारनाय, जांखिखांनाय, बायदि बायदिनि सोमोन्दै गोबां खौरां मोनो। बेफोरबादि राजखान्थियारि मावखान्थिनि जारिमिननि गुदिया मा बेखौ गोथौयै बिजिरनानै नायोब्ला नुनो मोनोदि गोबाडानो एखुथिया हारि-माहारिनि सिनायथि, मोन्थाइ आरो थानानै थानायनि सौंथि (question of survival) बायदि जेंनाफोरखौनो गाहाइ खालामनानै जुजिनाय मावखान्थिफोर। नाथाय, बेफोरबादि नांथाबनाजायारि सान्थौनि सिडाव हाबनानै थानाय हायुडारि सान्थौखौ जों गोबाडानो नायसनफलाडा एबा नुयैबादि थायो जायनि जाहोनाव बेफोरबादि गोबां मावखान्थि आरो मावथिफोरखौनो हादोरनि सुथुर होन्नानै बेरेखा मेगनै नायनायखौबो जों नुनो मोनो। बेफोर मावखान्थि आरो बेफोरजों लोब्बा थानाय जाथाइफोरनि थाखाय समाजाव माबादि सोलायनाय फैयो बेनि मोन्दांथिखौ जों बयबो थोंजोडै आरो खेंसालियायैबाबो मोनबोदों होन्नानै बंनो हायो। नाथाय, गोबां बेबादि जाथाइफोर दं जायफोरनि सोमोन्दै जों मोनबो मिथिनो मोना। मानोना, बेफोरखौ फोसावनाय एबा बेफोरनि सायाव लिरनाय जारिमिन एबा लिरबिदांफोर गैया, आरो थाब्लाबो बेसेबां फोथायजाथावै बेनि सावगारिखौ दिन्थिनाय जादों बेखौ बंनो हाया। बेनिखायनो, जारिमिन फरायनायजों लोगोसे जारिमिनखौ बिजिरनाय आरो फोसाबनाया जोबोर गोनां। मानोना, जारिमिना जाखांनानै थानाय जाथाइल' नडा, बे जाथाइफोर आरो बेफोरनि बिबुंथिया माबादि बेनिफ्रायनो जोंनि आथिखालाबो महर मोन्दों।

What is history? बिजाबखौ जारिमिनगिरि E. H. Carr बिथाडा लिरनानै गालांदों, जाय बिजाबा दुलाराय बुहुमावनो बिथांखौ गनायथि गोनां सानसुमा आरो लिरगिरि महरै गायसंदों आरो मुंदांखा खालामदों। बेवहाय, बिथाडा जाखांलांनाय जाथाइफोरखौ जारिमिन महरै लिरनायाव सैथोखौ फोरमायनायनि अनगायैबो मा थांखियै जारिमिनखौ लिरो बेनि सायाव सावरायनाया औंथि गोनां। सरासनसा जारिमिनखौ मानि आरो सोरनि थाखाय लिरनाय जायो बेनि सोमोन्दै गोबाडानो साना, मानोना जारिमिन फरायनायनि गिबि थांखियानो जाबाय जाखांनानै थानाय जाथाइफोरनि गुमुर लानाय। फरायसालिफ्रावबो सोलौंसाफोरखौ जारिमिनगिरिफ्रा लिरनाय गोनां-गोनां आयदाफोर एबा जाथाइफोरखौनो गाहाइ खालामनानै फोरोंबोगासिनो थानाय जादों, नाथाय जारिमिनाव लिरनाय बिदांफ्रा बेसेबां सैथो बेखौ सोंखारिनायनि सोलौंथिखौ गोबां नुनो मोना। गोजौ थाखोनि एबा मुलुग सोलौंसालिनि सिरियाव गाखोनायनि उनावसो गोबाडानो जारिमिन सुजुनाय आरो बिजिरनाय बायदि आयदाफोरजों मोगा-मोगि जानायनि खाबु मोनोब्लाबो जारिमिन सुजुनायनि राजखान्थिखौ गोथौयै सान्नानै नायनायखौ नुनो मोना।

गोदान मुगानि जारिमिन लिरनाय आरो सुजुनायाव बिगियानारि फोसाबथि गोनां बिजिरनाय थाब्लासो बे बिदांखौ जारिमिन महरै गनायनाय जागोन होन्नानाय सोनाब मुलुगनि बिबुंथिखौनो आथिखालावबो बांसिन जारिमिनगिरिफ्रानो मानियो। जारिमिनारि सैथोखौ दिन्थिनो हानाय मोन्थाइ गैयाब्ला बेखौ जारिमिन होन्नानै बंनो हाया होन्नानै फोरमायनायखौनो बिन्दो खालामनानै गोदान मुगानि सिगां इउरपनि अनगायै गुबुन हादोर-हालायाव लिरनाय एबा सुजुनाय लिरथुमफोरखौ जारिमिन बंनो हाया

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होन्नाय जादोंमोन। बेनि जाउनाव नैजिथि जौथाइनि गेजेरसिमहालागै भारत हादोराव हायुडारि जारिमिन फोसाबनाय आरो लिरनायनि दाहारा उदांसि जांखिखानायजों लोगोसे दावगादोंमोन। बेनि गुबे थांखियानोमोन भारत हादोरखौ गेबें आरो आबुं सोदोमसि गोनां हरिमा होन्नानै दिन्थिनाय। बेबादि लिरथुमनि गेजेरजों बै बिलियाव सोलोंथाइ मोन्नाय गोबां गेदेमाफ्रा इंराजफोर भारताव फेनायनि सिगांनि राजखान्थि, नेसॉनखान्थि आरो सोदोमसिनि सायाव जारिमिन लिरदोंमोन जाय लिरनायफोरखौनो बिन्दो खालामनानै उदांसिनि उननि जारिमिनगिरिफ्राबो बिगियानारि फोसाबथिजों फेहेरलांदोंमोन (Thapar 1996: pp. 3-4)। बे लिरनायफोरखौनो जों हायुडारि जारिमिन लिरनाय (nationalist history writing) होन्नानै मिथिबोदों एबा बुंनाय जायो। बेनिफ्रायनो बुजिनो हायोदि जारिमिन लिरनाया जेब्लाबो गोथों नडा; जेरै जिगुथि जौथाइयाव जेब्ला फामुखान्थिखौ (colonialism) फोसारनो थाखाय सोनाब मुलुगनि फामुवारिफ्रा गावसोर गायसन्नाय फामुफोरखौ मोजाडै बेंनो एबा खुंनो थाखाय फामुफोरनि सोमोन्दै मिथिनाया गोनां जानायाव गोदान मुगानि बिगियानारि फोसाबथिजों गोदोनिफ्राय सोलिबोनाय समाजखान्थि, राजखान्थि, माहारियारि फोरबादि गुबुन-गुबुन खान्थिफोरनि सायाव बिजिरनायखौ जुरिजेनो। बेनिफ्रायनो भारत हादोरावबो गोदान मुगानि गोहोम गोग्लैदों होन्नानै बुंनो हायो। मानोना, बेबादि गोहोमनिफ्रायनो गोसारदोंमोन सोनाबारि राजखान्थियारि सान्थौवा। बयनिखुडुबो बांसिन गोहोमा फेदोंमोन सोदोमसियारि बादायलायनाय आरो सावरायनायनिफ्राय जायफोरनि थुनलाइफ्रा दुलाराय मुलुगावनो गोसारदोंमोन। बे थुनलाइफोरनिफ्रायनो एसियानि सुबुं माहारिफ्रा मिथिनो मोन्दांमोन इउरपाव उजिनाय समानथि, गियाथि (फोलेर), उदांसि, मोन्थाइ, बायदि सान्थौफोरनि सोमोन्दै, जायखौ बिन्दो खालामनानैनो फामुखान्थिनि हेंथायै सोमावसारनाया जाजेन्दोंमोन।

**जारिमिन आरो हायुंखान्थि:** जिगुथि जौथाइया जारिमिननि बिलाइयाव मोनसे गोदान बुब्लिनि रिंखां लाबोदोंमोन जायखौ आं मोननै नोजोरजों बेवहाय सावरायनो सान्दों- 1) जिगुथि जौथाइनि

फामुवारि सोबख'नाया बयनिखुडुबो गोजौ थाखोनिमोन; जाहोना जाबाय- बे जौथाइयाव फामुफ्राव थानाय सुबुं माहारिफ्रा रांखान्थियारि सोबख'नायल' नडा, बिसोर गावसोरनि जारिमिनखौबो सेनानै लाजादोंमोन, जाय जारिमिनखौ बिसोर गावबा-गाव हरिमुवारि सान्थौजों गोरोबहोनानै, माहारि दानानै दावगाबोदोंमोन। बिसोर गोबांनि जारिमिना लिरथुमनाय थुनलाइ महरै गैयामोनब्लाबो खुगा थुनलाइ आरो गोसोखांथिजोंनो (memory) गावसोरनि फोलेरनि जारिमिनखौ सुजुबोदोंमोन। नाथाय, फामुखान्थिनि बुब्लियाव गोबां लिरखानाय थुनलाइ गैजायि सुबुं माहारिनि जारिमिनखौ सोनाबारि रोंगौथिफ्रा गावसोरनि खाबु, मुलाम्फा आरो फोसावथाइनि थाखाय गावसोरनि सानबिजिरनायजों लिरनानै गालांनाय थुनलाइखौनो इयुननि सुबुं सोद्रोमाफ्रा गनायनानै लानाया बेसेबां खहा खालामदों बेयो बिजिरनानै नायनो गोनां। जेरै- बर'फोरनि जारिमिनखौ जिगुथि जौथाइयाव इंराजफ्रा लिरलांनाय बिदांफोरनिफ्रायनो जों मिथिनो मोनो आरो बेखौनो सैथो होन्नानैबो हमनानै लायो। बे जौथाइनि गोहोमा दुलाराय मोनब्लाबो बेनि मोन्दांथिया नाथाय गुबुन गुबुन हादोराव गुबुन गुबुनै नुजाथिदोंमोन। जेराव, भारत हादोराव बायदि बायदि हारि-माहारि आरो हरिमुवारि सुबुं सोद्रोमाफ्रा गावसोरनि उदांसि आरो मोन्थाइनि थाखाय खौसे जानानै इंराजनि हेंथायै जुजिनो आंखारदोंमोन, गुबुन फार्से चायनानि सुबुं-माहारिया गावसोरनिनो हादोरमानि (empire/imperial system) बेरेखायै जुजिदोंमोन। बेबादिनो, गावनि सोरगिदिं गोसारबोनाय फामुखान्थि आरो बुहुमसार राजखान्थियारि सान्थौनि गोहोमनि थाखाय जापानाव हायुडारि सान्थौवा जौगाखांबोदोंमोन जाय सान्थौनि बिहोमाखौ जों दिनैसिम मोनफ्रोमबो हाबाथिलि आरो थावनियाव नुनो मोनो। एसियानि हादोरफ्राव गोदान मुगानि हायुडारि सान्नाया थारै जिगुथि जौथाइयावसो बेरखांजेन्दोंमोन होन्नानै बुनो हायो। बे सान्नाया नैजिथि जौथाइहालागै सौहैगौमानि गोबां मोन्दांथिनि गेजेरजों दावगानानै गोबां गाब आरो महर लाबोदों जायनि जाहोनाव दिनै

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जों हायुंखान्थिनि सायाव सावरायफिननो गोनां जानानै फेदों।

2) नैथि सावरायथाइखौ थोंजों नायग्रोमनाय एबा positivism महरै बेवहाय दिन्थिनाय जादों। मानोना, जिगुथि जौथाइ बुडोब्ला जों सरासनसा फामुवारि जौगाखानायखौनो मिथियो एबा हमनानै लायो। बे जौथाइयाव दुलाराय एसिया आरो आफ्रिकानि हादोरफ्राव फामुखान्थिनि जौगाखानायजों लोगोसे फामुफ्राव थानाय सुबुं माहारिफ्रा बे जौगाखानायनि फिथाइखौ बेसेबां आरो मा महरै मोनजादोंमोन, आरो बेनि बिहोमाफोरखौ बबेयाव-बबेयाव नुनो मोनो बेखौ बिजिरनानै नायनो गोनां। जेरै- इंराजफोर फैन्यानि उनाव बिसोर गावसोर हान्थिनो आरो गोजान गोजाननिफ्राय बेसाद थफलाफोर लांलाय-लाबोलाय खालामनो थाखाय राजालामा आरो रेललामा बानायहोनाय, फाहामसालिफोर लुनाय, गोदान मुगानि सोलौंथाइ फोसारनो लुनाय फरायसालिफोर, लिरबिदांफोर सेबखानायनि थाखाय सेबखांसालिफोर (printing press) गायसन्नाय, दारिमिन फसंनाय (industrialization), रांखान्थियारि फोसाबनायजों लोगोसे बेंकबादि आदब गायसन्नाय, बायदि बायदि। बुंनो थाडोब्ला जों जेसेबां गोदान मुगानि जौगाखां मोन्दांथिफोरखौ मोनबोदों, गासैबो इंराजफोरनिफ्रायनो मोनजेन्नाय। माखासे समाज फोसाबनायनि; जेरै- आइजोफोरनो फरायनाय-लिरनायनि खाबु होनाय, सति सावनाय बादि गाज्जि समाजखान्थिखौ होबथानाय, लाइमोन बैसोआवनो फिसाइ थैजानाय हिन्जाउफोरखौ हाबा होफिन्नायखौ फोसारनाय बादि सान्नायाबो बे सामावनो जुरिजेन्दोंमोन। बेफोरबादि गोदान मोन्दांथि आरो जाथाइनि जाहोनाव उन जानानै थालांनाय एबा गोग्लैसोनानै थानाय सुबुं माहारिफ्राबो गावसोरनि थासारिखौ फोजौनायनि, फिसाब्लाबो मोनसे खाबु मोन्दोंमोन जेरावनिफ्राय बिसोर गोदान जारिमिननि फार्से आगान सुरजेनो। नाथाय, बे मोन्दांथिया बयनिबो थाखाय समान नडांमोन। मानोना, फामुखान्थिनि सिगांनिफ्रायनो सोलिबोनाय आदब-खान्थियाव समानथि गैयामोन जायनि जाहोनाव सिगांनिफ्रायनो समाजारि आरो रांखान्थियारि जौगाखां गोनां गोजौ थाखोनि सुबुं माहारिफ्रा गावसोरनि गोहोमजों फामुवारि

खान्थिजों गोरुबनानै एखुथिया दावगानायनि लामा दिहुन्नानै लादोंमोन। बे आदबा दुलारायमोन अदेबानि मोनफ्रोमबो फामुवावनो गोसारदोंमोन। जेरै- गोजेर थाखोनि सुबुंनि जौगानायाबो (rise of middle class) बे जौथाइनि जोबनायथिनो जाजेन्दोंमोन जायनि जाउनाव भारत हादोरनि सुबुं माहारिया कास्टनि अनगाथै क्लास महरैबो बाहागो जादोंमोन- साखि मावगा, फेक्टरनि मावथि, आबादारि, नोगोरारि (towns/urban people), गामिनि सुबुं (village or rural people), बायदि बायदि।

बुंनो थाडोब्ला, जिगुथि जौथाइया जेरै गोनोखोरि जौगाखानायनि जारिमिनखौ बेखेवनानै गोदान लामाजों इयुननि थाखाय मिजिं थिनायनि खाबु खालामनानै होदोंमोन, बेबादिनो गुबुन फार्से, हारि-माहारिनि सुबुंसाफोरखौ गावसोरनि थासारिनि सोमोन्दै सांग्रां खालामदोंमोन। बे सांग्रांथिया मोननै थाखोनिमोन होन्नानै बुंजायो- हादोरारि हायुंखान्थिनि साग्रांथि (nationalism) आरो माहारियारि सान्थौनि सांग्रांथि (sub-nationalism) जायनि दाहारखौ जों दिनैसिम नुनो मोनो।

### हायुंखान्थि आरो राव

गोजौवाव, आं हायुंखान्थिनि सोमोन्दै सावरायदोंमोनब्लाबो, हायुंखान्थिया माखौ बुडो बेखौ गेबेडै सावरायनाय जायाखैमोन। आं सुंद'यैनो बेखौ एसे सावरायनो नंदों। गोबां मिथिजानाय आरो गनायजानाय जारिमिननि लिरगिरिफ्रा हायुंखान्थिनि सायाव गोहोम गोनां बिजाबफोर दिहुनबाय; जेरै- एन्डारसन, गेल्लार, हब्सबम, चेतार्जी, बिपिन चन्द्र आरो गोबां (Anderson 1983: pp. 1-7.)। बेफोर लिरथुम बिलाइफोरनिफ्रायनो मिथिनो मोनोदि हायुंखान्थियाबो जारिमिनारि दावबायनायजों लोगोसे गबुन गबुन समाव गुबुन गुबुन महरै सोलायलांदों। नाथाय, मोनसे बिथिडा हायुंखान्थि सान्थौवाव सोलायनाय गैयाजासे दावगाबोदों आरो बेयो जाबाय एन्डारसना बुंनायबादि- एखुथा सुबुं माहारिनि गोरुबथि गोनां जारिमिनारि मोन्दांथि जेरावनिफ्राय खौसेथि जानायनि जाहोनखौ मोनो। बे मोन्दांथिया गोबां रोखोमनि जानो हागौ आरो



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बेवहाय जेब्लाबो हादोर एबा रायजोर्जो सिथाबफानानैसो हायुंखान्थिखौ साननो हायो बेबादि नडा। बेखौ जो पस्ट-मदार्निस्ट सानथिर्जो बिजिरनानै नायोब्ला हमदांनो हायो। गरथियै बुडेब्ला, नैजिथि जौथाइनि जोबनायथिं बेरखांनाय आरो गोसारनाय गोबां जाथाइफोरखौ नायफिनहरोब्ला नुगोनदि खोन्दो खोन्दो रायजोफ्राव गोव्लैसोनानै थानाय हरि-माहारिफ्रा गावसोरनि सिनायथि, गनायथि आरो मोन्थाइनि थाखाय खौसे जानानै सिगांबोनायनि राहालामा दिहन्नानै गावसोरनि गेजेराव हायुडारि खौसेथि (oneness) सान्नायखौ फोसारनानै लादो ।

**हायुंखान्थि आरो राव -** बे मोननैनि सोमोन्दोआ जोबोर गोथौ आरो बिजिरनानै नायनो गोनां। गरथियै, एसियानि एबा एसियायाव बेरखांनाय हायुंखान्थिया सोनाबारि हायुंखान्थिनिस्रुइ जुदा होन्नानै बुंजायो। बेनि गाहाइ जाहोनानोमोन फामुखान्थि। गोजौवाव सावरायनाय बादि बे फामुखान्थिनि सान्थौनिफ्रायनो गोसारदोमोन गोबां रोखोमनि हायुडारि सानस्रि आरो बे सानस्रिफ्रा बेरखांदोमोन हरिमुवारि आरो समाजारि मावथाइ-जाथाइफोरनि गेजेरजो। रावजो थानाय हादोरारि हायुंखान्थिनि गोथौ सोमोन्दोखौ एसियायाव नुजेन्नाया जापान हादोराव होन्नानै आं सानो। मानोना, जिगुथि जौथाइयाव जेब्ला जापाना सोनाबारि हादोरफोरनि फामु जानायनिफ्राय बारग'दोमोन, होमब्ला बिसोर गावसोरनि हादोरखौ मात्रै गोहोगोरा आरो जौगाखां खालामनानै लानो बेनि सायाव गोबाडै बिजिरनानै सावरायदोमोन। बेनि मोन्थाइयाव माखासे रौंगौथि मोन्नाय दैदेनगिरिफ्रा खौसेथै, *सोलोथाइनि ओंथिया बेसेबां गोनां?* बेखौ गनायनानै लादोमोन आरो दुलाराय हादोरावनो गिबि फरायसालि लुनानै होदोमोन। बेजो लोगोसे आरो गोदानै फसंथानाय हादोरमानि फार्से नोगोरारिफोरनि गोसोआव आंगोथिनि सानथिखौ गोरखौ खालामनो थाखाय जापानिस रावखौ हादोरमानि राव एबा हायुडारि राव महरै गायसंनानै समानै फोसारदोमोन। मानोना, 1868नि सिगां जापानाव लिरनाय आरो फरायनायाव गोबाडानो चायनिस बिदां आरो हांखोखौनो बाहायोमोन। बेनिखायनो, बे माइथायाव जेब्ला गोदान हादोरमाखौ फसंथायो अब्ला गावसोरनि हरिमुवारि

सिनायथि आरो गनायथिखौ मिथिसार होनायाव रावनि गोनांथिखौ गनायना लायो। बेनिफ्रायनो हायुडारि सान्थौवाबो उदांयै गोसारनायनि खाबु मोन्दोमोन। जैरै- मोनफ्रोमबो थाखोनि सुबुंसाफ्रा गावनि रावजो हायुंखान्थिनि सायाव लिरथुमनाय बिलाइफोरखौ फरायनानै बेनि ओंथिखौ मोन्दांनो एबा बुजिनो हादोमोन। बेबादिनो, आथिखालनि चायनायाव कमिउनिस्ट सोरखारा माखासे हालाम जेरावहाय चायनिस रावखौ बाहायनाय जायामोन, जैरै- टिब्लट आरो सोनाबहा थानाय सिनचियांबादि अट'न'मास ओन्सोलफ्राव चायनिस रावनि गेजेरजो बिसोरनि हरिमुवारि सिनायथि आरो माहारियारि खान्थिफोरखौ सोलायनायनि खान्थिफोर फसंथिनाया चायनिस हायुडारि सान्थौखौ फोसारनाय राजखान्थिखौनो फोरमायो। बेवहाय टिब्लटियान आरो सिनचियांनि उइघुर हायुंखान्थिखौ नारसोमनानै बयखौबो नौसोर चायनिस जानांगौ होन्नाय दब्थायारि खान्थिनि जारिमिना गोदान मुगानि समाव माबादि महरै बेरखाडो बे सान्नो गोनां।

गुबुन मोनसे बिदिन्थिया जाबाय- उदांसिनि उनाव भारत हादोरनि रायजोफोरखौ बाहागो खालामनाय समाव गोबां बेले-बेजेजो मोगा-मोगि जानांदोमोन सोरखारा। आलोयै रायजो खुंनायनि थाखाय बेफोर नारसोमजानानै दोन्नाय जेनाफ्रा नुजाथिनायाव नेहरुआ हरिमुवारि खान्थि आरो सिनायथिनि सौंथिफोरनि सोमोन्दै साननो गोनां जादोमोन। राववारि हादोरसा दानायनि सायाव गोबां सावरायलायनाय आरो बादायलायनायबो जादोमोन। गोबांनि सान्नाय बादिब्ला रायजो खुंनायाव आरो हादोरनि दावगानायाव रावनि गोनांथिया गाहाइ नडामोन। गोदान भारतनि नोगोरारि जानानै हादोरनि खौसेथि आरो रैखानि थाखाय गावबा-गाव एखुथिया राववारि हादोरसा बिनायखौ नागारनाया गाहाम होन्नानै सानजादोमोन। बेरा फार्से, माखासेनि बादिब्ला जाय हादोराव एसेबां गुबुन गुबुन हरिमुवारि आरो रावनि सुबुं माहारिफोरा गोदो-गोदायनिफ्रायनो थानानै रायजो जाबोगासिनो दं बिसोरनि रावनि उदांसिखौ मात्रै सेख'नानै लानो (Rao 1953: p. 183)। जिगुथि जौथाइयाव बृटिशफोरनि आमोलाव बिमारावजो फरायनो-लिरनो आरो गावनि रावखौ बाहायनो

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मोन्नायनि जाहोनाव गोबां हादोरसानि रावफ्रा गेवलांनो खाबु मोन्दोंमोन। जायनि जाउनाव हादोरसाफ्राव बिमाराव आरो हरिमुजों गोरबफ्लेनाय सानस्रिया रोदा सुनानै गोसारदोंमोन। उदांसि जांखिखांनयाव vernacular language-जों लिरनाय फोसाव बिलाइफ्रा जाबादि बिहोमा होदोंमोन बेनिफ्रायनो रावनि गोनांथिखौ हमदांनो हायो। बेनिखायनो, जेब्ला हिन्दिखौ हायुडारि राव महरै दुलाराय भारताव गनायथि होनायनि बाथा आंखारो एबा सावरायनाय जायो, अब्ला हादोरसाफ्राव बेखौ लानानै गोबां दावराव-दावसि जादोंमोन। रायजो दाफिन्नायनि सायाव रिपर्ट दिहुन्नो थाखाय नेहरूवा 1953 माइथायाव मोनसे कमिशन दादोंमोन जाय रिपर्टनि बेरेखायै माखासे हादोरसाफ्राव; जैरै-महाराष्ट्र, सोनाब बेंगल, उरिसा, तामिलनाडुवाव गोबां सावरायबिलाइफोर आंखारदोंमोन। बे बुब्लियाव, माद्रास प्रेसिडेन्सिनि सिडाव थानाय तेलुगु रावजों रायज्जायग्राफोरनि दाबिखौ गारनो हायैयाव बिसोरनि थाखाय एखुथिया आन्ध्र प्रदेश मुडै रायजो दानानै होनांदोंमोन। उनाव, 1956 माइथायाव हायद्राबाद हादोरसानि तेलुगु थावनिफ्रा आन्ध्र प्रदेशजों बुजाबजाफादोंमोन (Mallikarjun, The Hindu, May 23, 2016)। बेनो उदां भारतनि राववारि गिबि रायजो दानाय महरै जारिमिनाव थाबाय। बेनिफ्रायनो जुरिजेन्दोंमोन राववारि राजखान्थि आरो हायुंखान्थिया दुलाराय भारताव।

उदांसिनि उनाव आसामावबो बेरखांदोंमोन बे गाबनि हायुंखान्थियारि सान्थौवा जायनि जाहोनाव बेवहाय थानाय सुबुं माहारिफ्रा, गरथियै बुडोब्ला, बेंगलि आरो बर' बिमारावखौ गनायथि मोनहोनो थाखाय गसंथिदोंमोन आरो दासिमबो जैरै बर' रावा आबुंयै गनायथिजानायनि थाखाय सांगं जानानै थानाडो। 1960 माइथायाव The Assam Official Language Act-आव फोसावनाय बादिब्ला दुलाराय आसामावनो असमिया आरो इंराजिनि अनगायै गुबुन रावखौ जेरावबो बाहायनाय एबा गनायथिनाय जानाय नडा होन्नाया बै समनि राजखान्थियारि सान्नायजों गोरबनाय दंमोन। बे फोसावबिलाइयाव लिरनाय दंमोनदि इंराजिनि जायगायाव हिन्दिखौ बाहायनो हागोन। बेनि जाउनाव 1961 माइथायाव बराक हायेनाव गोबां

दावराव आरो बिग्रायनाय जादोंमोन, कासार गण संग्राम परिषद मुडै बेंगलिखौबो मावख'वारि राव खालामनांगौ आरो आसामाव थानाय गुबुन गुबुन हरि-माहारिनि रावफोरखौ गनायथि होनांगौ होन्नानै। बेवहाय खासिया आरो मणिपुरिफ्राबो बाहागो लादोंमोन। मानोना, बै समाव मेघालय आरो मणिपुराबो आसामजों जमोन आरो बृटिशफोर थांजासे गोबाडानो बेंगलि रावखौनो बाहायोमोन। बे बिग्रायनायखौ दबथायनो पारामिलिटारिखौबो बाहायनाय जादोंमोन आरो गावनि बिमारावनि थाखाय गुलि नांजानानै खायसे जिउ बावनांदोंमोन (Bhattacharjee 2012, e-article.)। बे बिग्रायनाया गोसारनानै त्रिपुरा आरो सोनाब बेंगलावबो नांहैदोंमोन। उनाव, दबथायनायनि गुबुन राहा गैयैनि कासाराव बेंगलिखौ मावख'वारि राव महरै गनायथि होनांदोंमोन।

बेबादिनो, बर'फ्राबो बिबार मुगानिफ्रायनो गावनि रावजों थुनलाइ सुजुनानै दिहुनबोदोंमोन। नाथाय, उदांसिनि उनावसो बर' थुनलाइ आफादनि गोबां जुजिथाबनायनि जाहोनाव 1963 माइथायनिफ्राय कक्राझार आन्सलिक पन्चायत एलाकानि गुदि फरायसालिफ्राव बर' बिजोंखौ थिसन्नाय जादोंमोन। बेबादिनो, गोबां खनले खनले आरज गाबनाय आरो जुजिथाबनायनि उनाव 1968 माइथायाव गेजेर खलबनि थाखोसिम, बेनिफ्राय थाखो थाखो दावगानानै 1976 माइथायाव मेट्रिकखौ बर' बिजोंजों होजेन्नो मोन्दोंमोन। बे समसिम बर' बिजोंजों फरायब्लाबो हांखो गैयैनि थाखाय असमिया हांखोखौसो बाहायनांदोंमोन। देबनागरिनि सिगां (1974) बर' रावनि सिनायथि आरो रैखानि थाखाय रमान हांखोखौ दाबिनाय जादोंमोन जेराव गोबां बर' सुबुंसाफ्रा सोमावसारनायाव बाहागो लादोंमोन आरो पुलिसफोरनि लावथि मोनजानांदोंमोन, जिउ गोमोजानांदोंमोन (खाख्लारि 2017: pp. 43-48)। नाथाय, अब्लाबो देबनागरिखौसो होसनजादोंमोन। बुनो हायोदि देबनागरि हांखोजों दाबफा दाबफानि सुबुं माहारिफोरखौ भारत हादोरमाजों खानानै दोन्नायनि बेबो मोनसे राजखान्थिमोन।

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जोबथियाव आंनि बिबुंथिया जाबाय- जारिमिना  
थारैनो, अरायबो, समब्रा-समब्रि बुब्लिनि गोनांथार  
आयदा जानानै थागोन। जारिमिननिफ्राय जौं गोबां

सोलोनो हायो जाय सोलौंथिया जौंनि आथिखालखौ  
बुजिनायाव आरो गोरौन्थिखौ फेनायाव हेफाजाब  
होनो हायो।

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56 थि सिमेन साप'रि जथुम्मा. बर' थुनलाइ आफाद.

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08

## The Boro Kacharis: *Their Past, Present, and Future*

**Ranjit Shekhar Mooshahary**

*“The Boros are as happy as they can be in their primitive way of life. To them happiness does not depend on their social rank in this miserable world, nor even - as with most of us – on their bank account. It means primarily the existing equilibrium between the world around them and the secret world within. It is the latter that I want to make my home, now that I have found it,”*

So wrote Gabrielle Bertrand in her book ‘*Secret Lands Where women Reign,*’ (1958, London). That was true in the past; the Boros experienced the joys of village life far removed from modernity. They were not rich; they did not suffer the vagaries of being poor either. They did not have wants beyond their means; most importantly, they did not have to sleep with the pangs of hunger. The land, the forests yielded enough food for sustenance and protection from the elements. Their most important asset was simplicity, a life untouched by conflicts of avarice and ambition, of conceit and deceit. It was the bliss of innocence, not innocence of experience in which no race remains cocooned in time. The changing world impacts us all. The harsh realities of competition, of desire for possession have supplanted the life of easy contentment in the natural world. Ms. Gabrielle Bertrand possibly would not recognize the Garos and Boros in the midst of whom she had exhilarated in serenity and peace while researching for her book if she were to meet them now in the same villages. Things have changed so drastically, more so in the last half a century with the digital technology and AI out-pacing life, be it in village or in city. Nevertheless, in certain aspects the Boros have not changed; they continue to hold on to their superstitions and witch-hunt, their laid-back way of life, the fondness for their rice wine (*juwu*) and *naapaam*, the odorous powdered minnows mixed with herbs and preserved in bamboo tubes, which the Boro olfactory finds irresistibly appetizing but others obnoxious. These are ingrained in Boro DNA, in their historical vicissitudes and cultural evolution.

In the Brahmaputra river valley, where they are spread in large number, they are known as the Bodos, Boros, or Bodo-Kacharis, Kacharis (also pronounced Kossaris or Kocaris). The Bodoland Territorial Region, which is an autonomous dispensation within the state of Assam, bordering north Bengal in the west, and the Kingdom of Bhutan in the north, is considered the Bodo heartland. Over a million of the Bodos live in BTR, which they consider as their place in the sun. With the exception of Mizoram in all other north-eastern states they form a scattered population. They are also found in Jalpaiguri, Cooch Behar and Darjeeling districts of north Bengal where they are called the Meches, and on the banks of the Mechi river stretching to Morong region of Nepal where they are

identified as the Mechis. In Bangladesh hemming in the state of Meghalaya there are still Boro villages in dwindling habitation. Their own name for their race is Bodo or Boro and they call themselves as Bodo/Boro *fisa* – children of Bodo/Boro. The constitution of India has classified them as the Scheduled Tribe under the sub-group *Boro-Kacharis*. In Assam they are categorized as the plains tribal and their kindred group, the *Dimasa Kacharis* as the hill tribal.

Their language is called Bodo (or Boro) which is one of the 22 languages of the country listed in the Eight Schedule to the constitution of India. It was a dialect of the Tibeto-Burman branch of Indo-Chinese family, an unwritten language, so had no script and for the first time the Christian missionaries wrote some books in Bodo in the nineteenth century using the Roman script. In this connection special mention may be made to the books written by the Rev. Sydney Endle (1840-1907) who for many years was the Chaplain of Tezpur and in charge of the Kachari Mission of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel at that place. He was very popular and respected by all and he could preach his sermons with equal ease and eloquence in Assamese and Bodo as much as in English.

The scriptless languages are easily absorbed by the language of the conquerors or by the languages of numerically superiors in the normal course and become extinct, but there is also another phenomenon. The language and culture of the victors are sometimes assimilated completely into the culture and religion of the vanquished, and this is the triumph of soft power. Nations use it as a powerful tool to co-opt without coercing another nation and subsume its identity. So, the capacious and absorbent Hindu religion had slowly and steadily overarched the tribal faith and practices and had converted into its fold many a tribe who once ruled the land in the north-east India. The Ahom who had vanquished the greater part of the territory in that region and ruled there for six hundred years slowly lost their identity; they were Buddhists but became Hindus and adopted Assamese language leading to complete obliteration of their own language and culture. There was no external force applied to achieve that outcome; the Hindu priests used their persuasive skill to convert the ruling elites and gave them the exalted status of *Kshatriya* class. In due course the caste classification of Hindus was also introduced among them to signify complete Hinduization of the victors. The fact that there were no women in the Ahom contingent when they marched into the fertile territory could have contributed to their conversion into the Hindu faith. They married women from different tribes they encountered like the *Kacharis*, *Chutiyas*, *Morans*, *Borahis*, etc. many of whom had already been converted to the Hindu religion. Another factor that could have played a role in their accepting the Hindu way of life was that the Hinduism soft power was already at work in Siam and other south Asian countries making it easier for them to imbibe its contents and absorb the spiritual values of India.

The Boros too proselytized into the Hindu faith, not all them, but majority of them – but the Bodo language and culture refused to disappear in the mist of

history. They were an obstinate tribe; they continued using their dialect and ways of worship in time and clime. They continued with their animist faith and worship of Bathou. Some of them also became Christians following the dedicated work by the gospel propagators beginning nineteenth century. In the present time may be up to fifteen-twenty percent of the Bodos are Christians. J D Anderson ICS (retired) in his introduction to Rev. Endle's book, "*The Kacharis*", mentions that Endle's "heart was chiefly in his missionary work among his beloved Kacharis. The Bodos of the kachari *dwards* (the *dwards* or the doors of the Kachari plains are the passes that lead into the rough mountains of Independent Bhutan) are, like most of the aboriginal races of Assam, cheery, good-natured, semi-savage folk; candid, simple, trustful, but incorrigibly disrespectful according to Indian notion of good manners. To a casual observer, they may well have seemed incapable of comprehending the gentle reserve and unaffected unselfishness of their pastor's nature. Among them, however, it was his delight to unbend, and give way to the almost boyish simplicity and sense of fun which to the last were his most engaging traits. When Mr. Endle approached a Kachari village during one of the prolonged preaching tours which were to him at once a duty and the keenest of pleasures, he was always greeted with a joyous and often noisy welcome. He travelled on foot, and the villagers would turn out to see the *gaami-ni-brai*, the old man of the village, as they affectionately called him." The Hindu neighbors on the contrary called him the *mlechcha padre*, because of his association with the Kacharis.

The difference between conversions to Hindu and Christian religions of the tribes is that in conversion to Hinduism the people followed their rulers and elites. They got converted first inspired by the Brahmins and priests; it was a top-down metamorphosis. In conversion to Christianity the common folks were first convinced to accept the new faith based on their understanding of it so the process started at the bottom. The uniqueness of both the processes was that there was never a discrimination or commotion at a social level because of conversion. The Boros always rise above religion, they are Boros first, *Boro-fisa* or *Boro-hari*, children of the Boros or the Boro race.

The tribes were inferior mortals in the eyes of the Hindus. The word *Mech* is the corruption of *mlechcha* a *Sanskrit* word used to describe the tribal and lower caste people, the untouchables. This discriminatory social practice could be a strong reason for conversion of the tribes to religions other than Hinduism. Also, nobody from Hindu community – not the Brahmins, not any priests - had ever ventured into the inhospitable terrains of the tribal territories to tell them about the fine aspects of Hindu philosophy. The Christian missionaries, on the other hand did reach the interiors of hills and vales, and even sacrificed their lives in propagating the gospel with missionary zeal. They established schools and hospitals in those isolated habitats, lived with them and guided them to see the light of hope and salvation and won their hearts. Therefore, many tribal groups in the north east, and also in central India, were proselytized to Christianity.

The Kacharis, however, in droves embraced Brahma Dharma, another version of Hinduism, inspired by the teachings of *Kalicharan Mech*, famously known as *Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma* (1860-1938).

It will perhaps surprise many that the first lot of Islam followers that entered Kamrupa was led by a Bodo, *Ali Mech*, who was a Chieftain of a statelet in western Assam. In 1205 AD, he assisted Ikhtiyaruddin Mohammad Bin Bakhteyar Khilji, a Bengal ruler of Turkish origin of Mongoloid countenance, as the guide during the latter's Tibet expedition via the territory of Kamrupa kingdom. Ali Mech and his followers thus became the first group of indigenous people of Assam to have embraced Islam, which led to the emergence of indigenous Muslim population in western Assam. In the current time, however, it is difficult to find an Islam convert among the tribes of north east.

There is another class of converts to Hindu faith, which the noted social scientist M N Srinivas termed as Sanskritization in the 1950s. It is a process by which castes or tribes placed lower in the caste hierarchy seek upward mobility by emulating the rituals and practices, and food habits and language of the dominant community or upper castes. This phenomenon mostly happens in the plains where communities live in clusters of easy accessibility. It does not usually happen among the hill tribes, where interfaith intermingling is far between and the tribes live in isolation. In order to escape this abominable caste ostracization some Boros in a group would *en masse* renounce their original tribal status and embrace upper caste faith which is called taking *saran* (refuge or surrender). A new community sprang up through these religious circumambulations; in Assam they were called *saraniya Kacharis*; they no longer considered themselves as tribal having acted in pursuit of higher status in the social pyramid. Of late, however, in the surge of atavistic awakening of the tribes, and when more and more communities are clamoring for tribal status across the country, especially in Assam, the *Saraniya Kacharis* are making efforts to reclaim their identity as the *Boro-Kacharis*.

In the classification of tribes, in the constitution of India, there is no *Saraniya Kachari* or any other *Kacharis*, but only the *Boro-Kachari*, so the caste certificates can only be issued to the *Boro-Kacharis*. This has given rise to some legal issues: whether the tribes who had left their tribal identity can claim to be tribal again and whether the state government is competent to classify them as the tribal and issue caste certificate. A case is currently pending in the Supreme Court for decision on these concerns, but in the meantime the caste certificates continue to be issued to *Saraniya Kacharis* as the *Boro-Kacharis*.

*To be continued. Mail feedback to: [mooshahary@gmail.com](mailto:mooshahary@gmail.com)*



## *Whither We Mech (Boro) community of the State of West Bengal*



**Author: K Mochhary**

Kolkata

06/08/2022

***It is only natural for Boro people to become intrigued and interested in learning more about the Mech (Boro) people living in the northern parts of West Bengal (North Bengal), whether they live in India or overseas. Thousands of Boro people living in Bodoland in the State of Assam, have long since relocated to other parts of India to pursue higher education in various fields, work, and engage in different professions. In addition, there are hundreds of Boro people living abroad for the duration of their careers for similar reasons. Due to the political and geographic reasons, there are limited opportunities to interact physically with the Boro-Kachari and "Mech" people of Assam and West Bengal, outside of the recurring yearly conferences, such as the Bodo Sahitya Sabha (BSS) and the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU).***

1. In the state of West Bengal, the ethnic minority *Mech* (Boro) population approximately stands at 2.40 lacs as of the 2011 Census, compared to the overall WB Scheduled Tribe (ST) population of 52,96,963 people. It is roughly 5.8%, or perhaps 6%, of West Bengal's overall population of 9,12,76,115. However, the Scheduled Caste (SC) population makes up 2,00,80,000 people, or 22% of all people living in the state of West Bengal, which is significantly more than the ST population. The Santhal group, which accounts for 51.80% of the total ST population in West Bengal, occupies first place among STs. During the British-Raj, a caste-based census was last taken in 1931. Since then, independent India has not conducted a caste-based census. The political leaders and the central government have consistently shown reluctance and caution when it comes to making the actual

population data broken down by caste or tribe public. Perhaps, administrative machinery might be afraid that these marginalized groups will begin to seek greater reservation in seats for MLAs, MPs, and the like upon accurate and credible population data for their specific castes and tribes. As a result, the public does not currently have access to credible caste- or tribe-specific data. The socioeconomic census, however, was conducted as part of the 2011 Census. The pertinent information is examined and compiled from those census reports. It should be noted that according to the 2011 census, the general literacy rate was 73 percent, while the ST literacy rate 58 percent.

2. In the past, many *Mech* (Boro) families were legally in possession of vast tracts of land in West Bengal's Jalpaiguri district (now Alipurduar district, which was



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formed on and from June 25, 2014), including Kumargram Block, Alipurduar I, Alipurduar II, Kalchini Block, and Madarihat - Birapara Blocks, ranging in size from 100 acres to 200 acres. Immediately after coming into force of the West Bengal Estate Acquisition Act, 1953, the total areas of land owned or possessed by a person stood fully vested in the State free from all encumbrances. Till then, a landowner was known as “intermediary”; and after coming into effect or force of the West Bengal Land Reforms (WBLR), Act, 1955, a recorded landowner was known as ‘*raiyat*’. A family was only given the opportunity to keep up to 45 acres (45 x 3 = 135 bigha) in total. After that, the West Bengal Land Reforms, Act, 1955, quickly took effect with more reforms on the quantum of land a *raiyat* or land is entitled



**Figure 1:** Arun Brahma, Superintendent of Customs (retd), with Balendra Mochhary, Head Master of Kamakhyaguri Mission High School, in his multi-plants garden of areca nuts, tea leaves, black pepper etc. at Satali Mondal Para, Kalchini Block, Dist- Alipurduar (West Bengal).

to hold, preparation of *raiyat-wise* land records etc. The amount of land that a *raiyat* was allowed to keep was further diminished. A ceiling of land was imposed. According to section 14M of the WBLR Act of 1955, a family of one person is permitted to maintain 8.65 acres of property, whereas a family of more than five people is only permitted to retain a total of 24 acres of land. As a result, the *Mech* (Boro) families who were completely dependent on the land, that too, unirrigated one, were adversely affected. The per capita land ownership of the *Mech* (Boro) further decreased because of a significant influx of immigrants (legal and illegal) from across the international border (then East Bengal, and now Bangladesh). They gave in to the lure of easy money, and the lands were illegally transferred to those immigrants.

3. In a Parliamentary democracy, a community's weight and influence in electoral politics are determined by the number of voters or electors. Naturally, our community has little importance in electoral politics in the elections of the Legislature Assembly or the Parliamentary elections. The majority of our *Mech* (Boro) population resides in the following 5 (five) Blocks in the Alipurduar district: Kumargram Block, Alipurduar Block II Block, Kalchini Block, Madarihat - Birpara Block, and a few villages in Alipurduar I Block. Besides, there is a miniscule *Mech* (Boro) population in Malbazar Block under Jalpaiguri district, and in Naxalbari areas under Siliguri Sub-Division of Darjeeling district. As a result, our community currently has very few representations in politics at the State or even at the district levels.

However, it should be noted here that in the first term of Loksabha, Birendra Nath Katham (belonging to *Mech*-Boro

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community) was elected as the Member of Parliament (LS) from the then Jalpaiguri (ST) Parliamentary Constituency, for the term 1952-1957. He was a contemporary of Sita Nath Brahma Chaudhury, MP (LS) of the first term of Lok Sabha from Goalpara Garo Hills Parliamentary Constituency. The sole MP (LS) from the *Mech* (Boro) community in West Bengal so far is Birendra Nath Katham. In actuality, the process of calculating electoral wins based on caste or tribe had not yet begun.

The *Mech* (Boro) people do, however, have some representation in the Panchayat Raj system at the Gram Panchayat and Panchayet Samity levels.



**Figure 2:** This is the ancestral homestead of Late Michael Basumata, Headmaster of Mahakalguri Mission HS School, at Paschim Nararthali (Dist. Alipurduar, West Bengal), and also one of the prominent founding members of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha (BSS).

4. The government-sponsored primary schools, as well as the high or higher secondary (10+2) schools located in their respective villages, provide free education

to our *Mech* (Boro) children in West Bengal. Of course, to attend high or higher schools, they must travel to locations outside of their villages. More recently, a few so-called private primary schools with English as the medium of instruction have mushroomed in some villages. Working parents with steady income can afford to pay the high tuition costs associated with sending their kids to such private schools. The young people must travel a great distance from their respective villages to attend colleges located in semi-towns, Sub-Divisional or District towns for degree-level education, nevertheless. There are not many young people in West Bengal who are pursuing professional degrees like an MBA, BCA, MCA, or LLB. There are therefore very few *Mech* (Boro) working in these professions. Regularly paying large tuition fees is the only way the parents with steady employment can send their children to such professional courses. Nevertheless, the number of Boro boys and girls pursuing medical education in government medical colleges across the State or nation has increased recently. Many of them are enrolled in engineering programs like BE, ME, BTech, and MTech at prestigious institutions like IITs and NITs as well as at government engineering colleges with free/or subsidized tuition and housing.

5. The Bodo Sahitya Sabha (BSS), WB State Committee and the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) WB State Committee, the Dularai Boro Samaj and other allied *Mech* (Boro) organisations have at times staged demonstrations and have also been submitting a series of the memoranda, urging the State Government of West Bengal: **A)** To allow minority Boro students to study Bodo language as a subject, initially at the primary stage of education to protect and promote their mother language, but to no avail. **B)** Additionally,

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they have also appealed to the State Government to constitute a Development and Cultural Board for the *Mech* (Boro) indigenous tribal people of West Bengal. The State Government has established up to 15 or more Development and Cultural Boards by the end of 2017. *The Terai, Dooars, Siliguri Development and Cultural Board* (Gorkha Community 2018), *The WB Rajbanshi Development and Cultural Board-2017*, *The Mayel Lyang Lepcha Development Board* (2013), *The Tamang Development Board* (2014), and *The Bhutia Development Board* are a few of these Development and Cultural Boards that may be mentioned (2015).

However, the State Government of West Bengal is not giving in to this legitimate request to give this linguistic minority and indigenous *Mech* (Boro) people of North Bengal the chance to have their children study in their mother tongue at least at the primary stage of education as a subject, let alone establish a Development and Cultural Board for this indigenous



**Figure 3:** *Farmhouse of Sailendra Mochhary at Paschim Narathali of Kumargram Block, Dist., Alipurduar, West Bengal.*

*Mech* (Boro) tribe and/or Koch-Rabha tribe, and Toto of the Mongolian descent. These ethnic minorities have been arbitrarily excluded. The State Government's policies ought to be unbiased and fair in the strictest sense.

6. It is here, in Article 350-A of the Indian Constitution that states, "*It shall be the endeavour of every state or every local authority within the state to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups ,and the President may issue such directions to any state as he considers necessary or proper for securing the provision of such facilities.*" It is unclear why the state government is not taking cognizance of specific this constitutional provision or mandate. It reeks of a complete lack of empathy and sensitivity on the side of the eminent intellectuals and political figures who together head the State of West Bengal's government. How can this State Government dominated by Bengali intellectuals and elites, who have a profound love and devotion to their own mother language, literature, and rich cultural heritage, be so callous and insensitive to this reasonable and legit request repeatedly made by the *Mech* (Boro) people? Why does the state government not allow *Mech* (Boro) boys and girls to study in their Bodo language at the elementary education level? Shouldn't the *Mech* people protect their mother language from gradual extinction?

The State School Education Minister(s), both in previous Left Front regime and the present regime, have been well aware of the fact that "*Mech*" tribe listed in the Presidential Orders of Schedule Tribes (ST) of the State of West Bengal, is ethnically and linguistically identical to that of the "*Boro-Kachari*" tribe appearing in the Presidential order of ST (Plains) of the State of Assam, and Bodo language spoken both by these groups has already been listed under the Eight Schedule of the constitution in 2004.



**Figure 4:** A community meeting to plan for the celebration of the ensuing Christmas, 2022, at the house of Sirish Narjihary, retired High School teacher, Kamakhyaguri Mission High School (West Bengal).

Why does the State Government of West Bengal continue to ignore the rightful demand of the *Mech* (Boro) people? Why not these people be given the chance to present their argument with supporting documentation? These questions are relevant, as the New Education Policy-2020 states that, "*Whenever possible until at least grade 5, but preferably till grade*

*8, and beyond will be the mother language/mother tongue/local language, regional language for both public and private schools.*" I hope this essay highlighted the status of *Mech* (Boro) people living in the State of West Bengal.

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6. Miscellaneous: From personal knowledge and experiences acquired during my service career (1980 to 2019) with different departments/offices of the Government of West Bengal (GoWB) and with WB Land Reforms & as an Administrative Member of the Tenancy Tribunal (WBLR & TT).

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*For comments, please write to: [Editor@Borodiaspora.org](mailto:Editor@Borodiaspora.org)*

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***Debicharan Brahma***

## **Debicharan Brahma:** *An Unknown Bodo Sculptor, Pioneer of site-specific installation sculpture among the Bodo*

***Author:*** Janak Jhankar Narzary

### **Introduction**

The modern Indian culture is an amalgamation of various aspects borrowed from the tribal culture to revitalise and re-establish its native or national character and identity. On the other hand, the intermingling of tribal culture with the mainstream Indian culture is a part of natural courses of change and evolution of human civilization. Significantly tribal art has strengthened the identity of art and culture of modern India as it is in the case of art and culture of the modern world. Windows for such cultural interactions must be kept open so that different cultures of the country can grow and merge with each other to be one as an unified cultural entity while maintaining their distinctiveness to represent the cultural diversity of our land. Indian sculptors like Ramkinkar Baij, Meera Mukherjee, Dhanraj Bhagat, Nanda Gopal, Kanhai Kunhraman and others mark strong Indian identity as they had been inspired from the spirit and character of the Indian folk and tribal art.

To this end, Debicharan Brahma, an unknown Bodo sculptor from a remote Bodo village *Goybari* of Kokrajhar district of BTR, Assam becomes relevant. With an unusual style of expression, the sculptures of Debicharan exemplify the freedom of his creative mind deeply rooted in his religious faith which seems to be quasi-Hindu in the Bodo Socio cultural context.

It is a mystery, how Debicharan created original works of sculpture, carved on wood, displayed on wooden pillars, walls and ceilings of his own mud houses in a kind of a site-specific installation of postmodern art. He had no sources to know any kind of sculpture to follow, as the existence of Bodo sculpture in the past is not known till

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date. Usually decoration with horns of antelope, tiger skins, elephant tusk on walls and pillars of residential houses are the symbol of economic and cultural status of the rich Bodo individuals, and it is also a common practice of Bodo people to hang their household objects aesthetically on walls and pillars of their homes. Debicharan might have observed the ritual practice of displaying objects temporarily while worshipping of ancestral deities by the Bodos. His art was not derived from any convention or tradition of art and showed strong individualistic style. He emerged himself to be an artist of a kind of postmodern art of the modern west; but it is an isolated phenomena in a location of remote Bodo village. With a significant number of works Debicharan established his own style and tradition of Bodo sculpture which unfortunately perished after his death.

## The Background

The Bodos have been maintaining a distinctive social and cultural identity, which is unique and living. Traditionally, the Bodos worship `Sijou', the cactus tree enshrined as `Bathau', a shrine made of bamboo. The rituals of `Bathau' worship involve the `Kherai' dance, which is a form of ritual dance to worship the male deity `Bathau Bwrai'. The `Daudini', a female priest dancer leads the `Kherai' ritual dance with musical rhythm of *Kham* (long dram) and *Sifung* (long flute). The ritual performance can last for a week - day and night. The sounds of `kham' and `Sifung' can be heard from afar. *Kherai* is the origin of all performing art forms of the Bodo and represent the essence of the community culture. In 1957, the marriage dance `Bagurumba' presented at the Republic Day tableau in Delhi received a grand prize from the President of India. Since then, the Bodo dance became known in the country.

In the beginning of 20th century, the Bodos had adopted Brahma religion. *Kalicharan Brahma*, born in 1860 at Kajalgaon village of the then Goalpara district of Assam, embraced Brahma religion propagated by *Swami Shibnarayan Paramhansa* in 1905. Since then, he transmitted Brahma religion among the Bodos till his death in 1938. With the advent of modern education and changing socio-cultural environment, the Bodos have emerged to be modern and progressive, but also maintaining their unique cultural identity intact. However, the Bodos are catholic in their religious beliefs and faiths, and the traditional `Bathau' worship is still practiced along with `Brahma Upasana' or `Brahma-Yagna' worship. Nowadays some sections of the Bodo people worship Hindu gods and goddesses. In fact, the Hinduisation process of the Bodos started since the Hindu mediaeval period when the kings of Pala and Sena dynasty extended their rules in Pragjyotisha, the ancient Assam during their rules from 8th to 12th century AD.

## The Framework

The assertion of the social and cultural history of the Bodos is not the purpose of this paper. It is rather an attempt to introduce Debicharan Brahma, an unknown Bodo wood carving sculptor whose sculptures are representative of the Bodo life and

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culture. Debicharan Brahma was born in 1899 and died in 1985 at the age of 86 (as told by Rikunjay Brahma, grandson of Debicharan Brahma).

In 1977, I travelled to *Goybari*, a Bodo village about 40 miles away from Kokrajhar town in search of the unknown Bodo sculptor Debicharan Brahma. As I



***Veranda pillars decorated with birds***

x 30' feet situated at the southwest end of the compound facing to the east and consists three rooms. Originally it was used for living but in course of time it was transformed into a 'Sculpture House'. The wooden pillars in the corridor were decorated with sculptures representing known and unknown creatures from nature such as birds, animals, insects, and others. Each piece of sculpture was carved separately from local wood, mostly from his own garden and forests, painted bright and fixed on pillars, walls and doors of the house. The ceiling of the house was decorated with hanging



***A singing and dancing  
Debicharan Brahma***

reached the entrance gate his son received me and took me into the garden behind the house where he was busy working in his pineapple garden. He politely responded to my inquiries and agreed to show his works. The large compound of his house was clean, surrounded with betel nut trees and decorative hedge plants. There were five separate houses within the compound built in mud and wood, roofed with corrugated iron sheets.

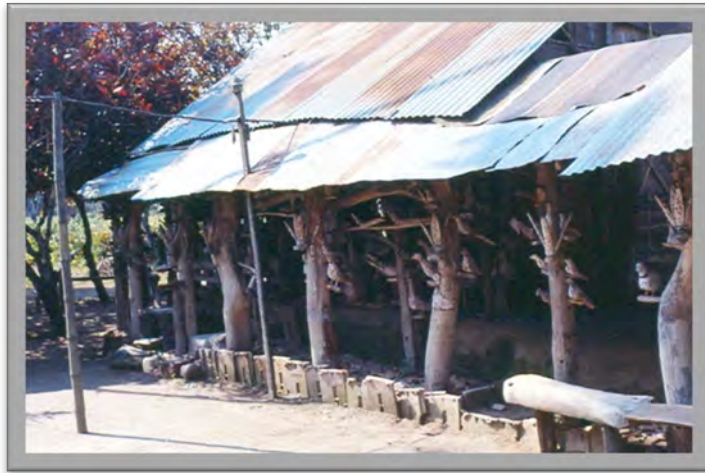
The largest house is about 12'

sculptures representing flying birds, butterfly, angels, flying horses and modern airplanes. The representational sculptures from folktales, mythological and other popular stories of ancient Bodo heroes and heroines and scenes from Bodo social and cultural life occupied the inner walls of the house.

In 1983 when I visited again, I found that the corridors of the house are extended, and the pillars of the extended corridors are adorned with new sculptures. In addition, a new mud house temple was built with wooden structure and roof with corrugated sheet at the northeast corner of the compound that achieved the accomplishment of Debicharan Brahma's creation. The pillars and railings of the long

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***Veranda pillars decorated with birds***

spirit of Bodo ancestors and images of Bodo heroes and heroines as well as scenes of the ritual and festival dances. In the ceiling the hanging sculptures represent the Bodo heroes on winged horses and chariots, angels, and unknown mythological figures also found a place on it. The sculptures displayed in a kind of installation in the interior space and on the railings of the long entrance corridor was unique in totality. A newly built prayer house in square shape was at the centre of the compound, with newly carved sculptures placed on the pillars and arches of it and he was still adding his new sculpture on it.

## **Debicharan – The Sculptor**

Debicharan did not receive formal education as his parents were landless labourers. He himself passed his childhood as a bonded labour. He was a sincere and hardworking young man and in the course of time he accumulated properties of his own. Since his early age he demonstrated creative skill in making various household objects. Debicharan told me that he made a bullock-cart fitted with wheels made out of bamboo that he used for years.

It remains unknown as to at what age he started carving sculptures. In fact, he had no background of learning sculpture too. There was no instance of sculptural works known to him, or to follow either. He was the only sculptor known to the people of Kokrajhar District during his time. It is heard that he would mostly left home in the morning and came back with pieces of finished sculptures in the evening. He never carved sculptures in front of others. People believed him to be a spirit of God or to be an evil spirited person. But he was living a normal and happy life with his family. Most of the time he kept to himself, busy with gardening or working in the paddy field. But when his creative mind



***A mythical bird***

corridor of the entrance to the temple had been similarly decorated with sculptures of birds, animals, and figures from mythological stories. Inside the temple almost all the spaces of walls, pillars and ceiling had been occupied by images of *Christ, Buddha, Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Krishna, Balaram, Jagannath* and the deities of Bodo faith like *Bathau Bwrai, Kubir Bwrai*, thrones for the



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awakened, he was forced to go out and keep himself busy in the creation of sculptures. He believed himself to be God's prophet creating all the creatures as directed by God. Debicharan believed in one God, the universal power who is known by different names and images in different religions. The images of various gods and goddesses as well as the creatures of the nature created by Debicharan predominates the characteristics of tribal art, the form are simple, archaic, geometric and colours are bright, often wooden forms are assembled with other available materials like cloths, metal sheets etc. that enriched the visual dimension of his sculptures.

The purpose of Debicharan's creation was not to fulfil his passion or to acquire fame, but to fulfil his simple and sincere faith in God. He used to take great care of his own works. In his lifetime he refused to sell them to buyers who came to him, and he also advised his sons not to sell them at any cost even after his death. Sobha Brahma, the then Principal of the Gauhati Art College once invited him for a demonstration to the art college students, but he refused to do so as he did not believe in the teaching of sculpture or any art form. He believed that such power of creation could be gifted only by God, sculpture cannot be made either to train students or sell to buyers.

The images of gods and goddesses he carved are stylistic and iconic, not conventional, but his unique creation. In fact, he had no background to know the iconic images of traditional style. He never had the opportunity to see any traditional sculpture except some calendar pictures of icons in the popular style, also he might have seen some iconic images worshipped by the local Hindus in the local market towns during the puja festivals. The style of representation is personal, free from any other conventional style; he intuitively conceived and depicted the religious, mythological, and secular images and household objects of daily uses. The figures are carved from branches of tree, joined the carved pieces with main body, if necessary, draped with cloths, often added readymade metal sheets and painted.

A major part of his carvings represents the elements of social and cultural life of the contemporary Bodos like ploughing, harvesting, village meeting, weaving, market scene, mother and child, bullock cart, fishing, hunting, festival and ritual dances. He carved in wood various kinds of birds, animals and insects innumerable, also carved largely depicting pineapple plants, fixed them on the pillars along with birds and animals. He carved them freely in the form of sculptures from his observations. He carved and treated them fast resulting in a bold and rough textural form that mark a strong tribal character. But the narrative or story telling nature of his representation at the same time reminds the style of quasi-Hindu or Hindu folk art, too. Technically, the sculptures show an indigenous process of carving carved freely and spontaneously with knives and chisels used in everyday household works. The simple figures of animals, birds and insects are significant for their sculptural forms, either massive and voluminous or linear, fresh, and lively. Often the forms of his sculpture are derived from the character of the wooden branches used, carved them, be it figure, animal, bird, or insect that they have a commonness in treatment and style.

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Wooden chairs or thrones in painted wood are the other works of his special interest, he made them for the spirits of the Bodo ancestral kings and queens, heroes and heroines. Their arms decorated with heads of the various animals like the tiger, lion, elephant, deer, peacock or heads of some unknown animals and painted brightly, decorating the body with ornamental motifs of crowns, stars, moon etc. gave them unique characteristics. He also produced some musical instruments like the Serja, bamboo and wooden drums, flute, and such others, he himself was a singer and knew how to play all these instruments.



***A dedicated chair for the ancestor***

In 1985, Debicharan died, survived by two sons and a daughter. His sons neither inherited the father's talent, nor had the interest in their father's creations, rather they believed him to be a '*devata*' or the man of evil spirit. They were not hard workers like their father was. After the death of their father, the misfortune struck them. The villagers too

believed that the evil spirit of the '*devata*' could live in their home if the sculptures remained there. So, his sons dismantled and pulled down all the sculptures from the pillars, walls, doors, and ceilings and dumped them in a corner. Children had taken away some of these to play with and a few interested persons, at the news of this event, went to the place and collected as much as possible. The '*Sculpture-house*' and '*temple*' which was once adorned and occupied by sculptures, was lively and gorgeous, which now stood empty and abandoned.

Immediately after the death of Debicharan there had been a proposal by some local art loves, placed before the local authority to build a '*House*' (museum) to preserve the sculptures of Debicharan Brahma, but no initiative was taken to protect and restore the sculptures. I believe that some of these sculptures are still with few local people who are ready to hand over the sculptures to any organised museum. Considering the historical significance of the sculptures of Debicharan the authorities of the art and cultural department of BTAD or the existing museum of Kokrajhar can take measures to collect and preserve them.

The Bodo art and culture is rich and has a significant role in the survival of the Bodos with racial identity. The sculptures engineered by Debicharan are highly creative and individual in style, but strongly Bodo in essence.

*This article is an abstraction of the article 'Debicharan Brahma an Unknown Bodo Sculptor' in a book Ratna Dipa, editor Dr. Gauri Parimoo Krishnan and Dr. Raghavendra Rao H Kulkarni, Agam Kala Prakashan, New Delhi, 2021.*

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*A few examples of Debicharan Brahma's creations*



*Birds and insects*



*Birds*



*The art of brewing wine and tasting*



*Three mothers and a big fish*



*Three fisherwomen*



*Gods, Goddesses, and Worshippers*



*Three farmers and a man ploughing the field*



*A traditional dance*

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*For comments, please write to: [Editor@Borodiaspora.org](mailto:Editor@Borodiaspora.org)*



## ***Thulungani Funkha*** ***Mrs. Padmini Brahma***

*The BDF Laisi proudly presents to our readers, an extraordinary Boro woman of our time, a self-made, a passionate social activist  
Mrs. Padmini Brahma.*



***Mrs. Padmini Brahma,***  
*Social Activist*

***Father:*** *Lt. Kusheswar Brahma*

***Mother:*** *Mrs Pramila Brahma*

***Spouse:*** *Mr. Debarshi Kr. Brahma*

***Children:*** *Mr. Bhavyansh Brahma (3 years old son)*

***Contributors:*** *Mamoni Basumatary, Atul Basumatary, Pinuel Basumatary*

### ***Key points:***

- 1. Ms. Padmini gave us an explanation of the inspiration and passion for being a social activist during this conversation.***
- 2. Her parents' financial struggles were so severe that her younger brother, who is physically challenged, never received medical attention.***
- 3. Her parents believed that proper education was the only way to emerge out of adversities experienced by young Ms. Padmini.***
- 4. The highlights of Mrs. Padmini Brahma's accomplishments are shown here. She has won honours and accolades on a national and international levels.***

### ***A. Conferences and workshops:***

- 1. The 9th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP), Bali, Indonesia.***
- 2. The National Consultation on Countering Human Trafficking & HIV/AIDS and Promoting Cross Border Cooperation, October, 2009, Paro, Bhutan.***
- 3. The National Consultation on Countering Human Trafficking & HIV/AIDS and promoting Cross Border Cooperation, December, 2010, Paro, Bhutan.***

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4. 10th International Conference on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP), August, 2011, Busan, South Korea.
5. Global Forum on Migration & Development (GFMD), November, 2012, Mauritius.
6. China and Mongolia, 2013
7. International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP), 26th February- 16th March, 2018, USA.
8. International Conference on “Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking” (GIFT) organized by United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime, New Delhi.
9. Training programme to address the social issues and reaching out to the community through drama & street plays, organized by North-East Network (NEN) , Tezpur, Assam.
10. Training programme on “Gender Planning & Mainstreaming” organized by NIPPCD, Regional Centre, Guwahati, Assam.
11. “Youth Leadership Training Programme” conducted by the The Art of Living (Vyakti Vikas Kendra), Bangalore.
12. Monitoring and Evaluation Systems Strengthening tool workshop (MESST), 2nd- 8th July, 2013, Delhi.



13. Review meeting organized by India HIV/AIDS Alliance, September, 2014, Imphal, Manipur.
14. Third Training of Trainer CMIS Training, December, 2014, Kolkata.
15. Received certificate of participation in understanding and bridging GAPS in Programme Implementation organized by HIV/AIDS India Alliance, March, 2015, Hyderabad.
16. Educational Exchange Programme between the Department of Education, Delhi and Government of BTR, December, 2021, Delhi.

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### ***1. Please tell us about your early life, education, challenges faced in pursuing your goals.***

**PB:** I was born and raised at Bongaigaon Thermal Power Station (BTPS), currently known as the NTPC Campus, Salakati. Because my father worked for BTPS/NTPC, I have fond memories of growing up in a tranquil setting amidst other communities, ethnicities, religions, and languages. Being fluent in my vernacular, Boro, made learning another language for me not difficult. I have always loved chatting, since I am a straightforward person who is amiable, open to learning new things, and I have always had high dreams.

For my high school education, I attended Kendriya Vidyalaya Kokrajhar, until 10th grade. After that, I went to Kokrajhar Government College to pursue bachelor's in Arts. At that point, I decided to volunteer for 2 years with the NEDAN Foundation, an NGO to develop a better understanding of field work and to learn about project initiatives and implementation processes. Soon after my bachelor's degree, NEDAN Foundation offered me a full-time job as a Project Associate. It was an unexpected opportunity, and I was a little unprepared, as I also had a plan to pursue further studies. However, after some thought, I chose to accept a full-time job and while also attending IGNOU to earn my postgraduate degree in rural development.

My mother carried my physically challenged brother with cerebral palsy on her back, and I also grew up witnessing my mother struggle financially to enroll me at the Kendriya Vidyalaya School. My parents struggled to buy me new school shoes, uniforms, and fees each month. My father borrowed money from his coworkers to cover school fees and other obligations. The attitudes of some people who had little understanding or awareness of people with disabilities contributed to some of the issues I had to encounter. When my mother dropped me off at school, other parents treated her unfairly and insulted her, e.g., comments such as "*fwrwngnw hayabla manw fwrwngw, thabainw rungwi gotho khou bebaidi school aou lana fwinangya*" (*If you don't have the resources, why do you send your child to school; and don't bring your disabled son to the school*) were frequent. Even if all of these negative things did bother me and interfere with my studies, I saw it as a challenge. I still firmly think that my brother could have gone to school like any other typical youngster if he had received treatment when it was needed. Sadly, because my father was the only provider for the family and was struggling financially, my brother's condition was not treated in a timely manner. Let's just say that my brother's illiteracy has persisted to this day, because of the antiquated and exclusive education policies.

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**2. You are young and dynamic. Does anybody guide or mentor you in your pursuit of social work?**

**PB:** Thank you. For me, there is no other type of work that comes close to the satisfaction of social work. Yes, I've had a few mentors, who have helped me along the way and pointed me in the proper direction. My appreciation and respect to my parents, who have always encouraged me on this journey and allowed me to pursue my own aspirations of giving back to the community.

**3. It requires a great deal dedication and commitment to pursue social work; for a woman it is always better to settle down and enjoy a settled life. What is the reason you choose social work as a career?**

**PB:** When I was young, I never heard someone express their goal was to become a social worker; instead, most people would choose to become doctors, engineers, or pursue other careers. This is why, I decided to pursue a career in social work. It was likely a turning point for me when I started thinking seriously about serving our community and the society. When I started volunteering in NEDAN Foundation; some people questioned whether it was the right thing to do as I will not be paid well or paid nothing. Most people discouraged me from volunteering or interning at an organization and continued to ask me to get a government job. However, I started getting opportunities to explore abroad

and represented the organization. Being a woman, choosing social work as a career and travelling alone, indeed, was not easy task and I would say it's challenging. Nevertheless, life has taught me to be a stronger and positive woman. At one point of time, some people asked me if I had any plan of getting married and have children. Today, when I meet them, I proudly say that I got married at the age of 30 and I am a beautiful mother of a handsome son.

I believe that my motivation for working in social services stems from a deep-seated sense of therapeutic and intellectual fulfillment that I might not have found in higher-paying employment. I believe that by choosing to volunteer, I was able to study social service and gain knowledge from first-hand experiences.

**4. Who are the philanthropists you admire? What has made biggest impact on your life?**

**PB:** I admire Mr. Ratan Tata. His outstanding contributions to improving cancer care in Assam have had the greatest influence on my life.

**5. How is your professional experience linked to this role? How does your background relate to your position?**

**PB:** My professional background is heavily interconnected with my current position. I have a background in rural development, and the 13 years of my

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professional experience have given me the chance to explore and address the issues that the women and children in the community confront.

### ***6. Social worker operates to meet challenges within societies and often work in difficult environments. Share an occasion where you overcame a problem.***

**PB:** Where there is a problem there is a solution. I feel that developing problem solving skills are key to success. Having said that, I belong to a society where women are given less preferences, do not usually participate in decision-making processes, always expected to do household chores, take care of children, prepare meals. When I go for a field visit, I feel so helpless. I don't see women-participation in many programs. People are not aware of existing schemes for women and children- they are not aware of their rights, and anything related to child protection issues. Due to a shortage of qualified teachers, children are unable to study in a proper manner, and parents are unable to concentrate on their children and adolescents, since they are working as daily wage laborers. Mobile phones had a harmful effect on children's and adolescents' lives during COVID-19 under the pretext of online classes. During the pandemic, the number of child marriage instances quickly climbed. Unfortunately, most people in the rural areas don't have any information related to the services of Child helpline, Women helpline, One

stop centres, Ujjawala Home, Swadhar home, District legal Services Authority etc. My biggest challenge as a social worker is budget constraints, I cannot reach remote areas despite my will. However, at each visit I make sure to inform all the services available in a District.

For example, I was recently invited as a Resource Person to speak related to my project on Adolescent' empowerment and ending child marriage, and the information related to the services that one can avail of whenever required. After couple of days, I had received a call from villagers informing me about a child marriage scheduled to happen in a village. I was happy to know that at least my voice had reached the community and that the information I shared about hotline numbers and services was helpful. The villagers stepped forward to prevent the child marriage. I guided and gave them my support to register a complaint, and together we stopped the child marriage in the village. I am convinced that among a large group of people, if I can make a small number of people aware, then it is worth doing and can be considered as an achievement.

***7. How are you connected with UNICEF mission? How will you help us make more people aware of your mission?*** **PB:** At one point, the ethnic conflict had led to the forced displacement of children and families.



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Forced displacement and the children's long stay in relief camps had severely disrupted their access to education. There was a time when UNICEF came forward to provide psychosocial support to the children and adolescents in conflict-affected areas. UNICEF has been implementing many projects through their partner organizations. I have since been part of UNICEF-supported projects in Kokrajhar. My current mission is about empowering adolescents and ending child marriages, a program supported by UNICEF. Currently, I provide technical support and work closely with the Department of Social Welfare and other operational departments in the district. I have been conducting awareness programs on various social issues related to women & children in district, at block and village levels, and reaching out to the communities in collaboration with relevant authorities.

**8. Is your work primarily responding to crises around the world? How do you keep yourself abreast with current affairs, and what sources you use to get your information from?**

**PB:** Yes, we respond to crises as quickly as possible. UNICEF and its partner organizations have identified only a few main areas where projects are being implemented. My favorite way to keep up to date is through social media platforms.

**9. How do you manage your work and personal life?**

**PB:** I have developed and learned skills to balance personal and professional life. Because I like my job, it doesn't seem like a chore. I always make sure that when I am home, my family gets my attention first. On weekends, I do my things for myself and ensure that I rejuvenate before the work week begins.



**10. Tell us what social issues millennial care about and what are their concerns?**

**PB:** It's mostly financial. The gap between the wealthy and the less fortunate is growing. Although living expenses are rising, earnings are not. The wealthy continue to amass wealth, while

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the underprivileged continue to struggle to make ends meet. Women have been particularly hit hard by this since, despite rising childcare expenses, we are still expected to maintain our careers and families. Families are finding it more difficult than ever, to make ends meet on one income, which is encouraging women to return to the jobs. With automation, technology, systems and outsourcing labour and materials to minimise spending and maximise profits, jobs are harder to come by, morale is low, workers' rights have barely improved for the less affluent. These are the main issues, in my opinion, that the current generation is worryingly being pushed toward.

### ***11. Please tell us odds you have come across so far in your work?***

**PB:** The job is rewarding, but it can also be stressful, emotionally draining, and physically demanding. Working conditions and pay can be just as daunting at times. This profession is not meant for everyone. One must have passion to become a social worker. For example, one day we received a tip-off regarding a child marriage incidence at a village. My colleagues and I immediately went to the village to stop the marriage ceremony. However, when we tried to negotiate with the villagers, we realized that nobody was willing to listen to us, rather they wanted the ceremony to occur. As we were chased away from the village, we informed authorities to prevent the marriage and a timely action

was taken. The key outcome was - we stopped the child marriage and happy to report that both minors went back to school.

### ***12. What is your greatest strength, where do you see yourself in five years from now?***

**PB:** I feel my greatest strength is my communication skill. In five years from now, I see myself in a position where I will have a good team to work with for the social cause.

### ***13. Who supports you the most for your activities?***

**PB:** If I am assigned to do a task, I make sure that I meet deadlines. My colleagues support me in completing official works.

### ***14. Women in rural areas are victim of superstition, no administration can uproot such prevailing evil system. How can we improve the life of a women in rural area?***

**PB:** I believe we can improve the lives of women in rural areas only by educating people through regular social protection awareness campaigns, providing training on the social and financial education program for women in partnership with NGOs, recruiting women by encouraging participation in decision making processes. Superstitious beliefs negatively impact the social well-being of people in society as they are strongly associated with financial risk-taking and gambling behavior. It is a shame to know

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that so many lives have already been lost in the name of superstition.

### ***15. What did you learn from national and international exposures?***

**PB:** My learnings and reflections are:

- Experiencing how another culture does things, prompts me to re-examine our hometown practices.
- The international experience has enriched me and my work in my hometown and I return with many new ideas to help our social work.
- I have learned the importance of developing meaningful, impactful

international collaborations, networking and alliances for the mutual benefit.

- National and International exposures have brought more experience in terms of new skills, language, cultural intelligence, exceptional learning experience, etc., which has enhanced my professional portfolio.

### ***16. What is your message to our youth?***

**PB:** "Keep doing the good work, the GOOD will undoubtedly come back to you," is my message to the youth.

*The BDF Laisi congratulates Mrs. Padmini Brahma on her accomplishments and for doing much needed social works. The Boro community is very proud and wishes Mrs. Padmini success in her future endeavors.*

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*For comments: Please write to [editor@Borodiaspora.org](mailto:editor@Borodiaspora.org)*



## ***Boro Weavers' Community On The Cusp of Change***

***"There are opportunities even in the most difficult moments."***

***—Wangari Maathai***

### **Contributors:**

***Ms. Sabana Basumatary***

*Founder of SIKIRY*

***Ms. Marina Basumatary***

*Co-founder of SIKIRY*

The global fashion industry is considered the polluter number one as accumulating data show that anthropogenic activities are affecting our climate system for the worse (Climate Change 2021: the Physical Science Basis, IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report (AR6)). The fashion industry is struggling to meet its Green House Gas (GHG) emission targets by 2030. Although it is notoriously difficult to account for the industry's overall emission levels, they have been pegged in between 4% to 10% of global carbon emissions, which is substantial and calls for urgent action (The BoF Sustainability Gap Report, 2021). Additionally, systemic inequalities within the industry thrives on low cost and fast production, lack of transparency in supply chain, unethical purchasing practices and overconsumption of resources adding to waste generation. The global fashion industry negatively impacts environmental and economic sustainability, therefore, it is pertinent to reiterate the views of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) - "*Given the close interdependence of indigenous communities with the environment and its resources, the direct consequences of climate change multiply and aggravate*

*their vulnerabilities and extent of marginalisation.*" The position of weaver artisans, belonging to indigenous communities, is doubly convoluted as they are affected both by the systemic inequalities of the industry as well as the effects of climate crisis. In an ever-changing modern world, tribal traditional occupations like weaving, find themselves on the cusp between tribal and modern economies. The tensive contrast of the two, change and shape the dynamics of weavers' ecosystem.

Intricacy weaved into handloom products is still beyond machines which cannot replicate the designs. Yet, there exist dichotomous views concerning this small-scale industry. On one hand, it calls for preservation of traditional handlooms. This view recognises the intrinsic value and significance of handloom in non-monetary terms, that satisfies the "*aesthetic yearnings of man*". On the other, the Western neoliberal capitalistic narrative, demands innovativeness upon traditional craftspeople in order to maintain their relevance in the modern world. Building on the latter's perception of weavers "*being too tradition-bound to manage change on their own*", social groups that advocate for



the modernisation of the craft industry have unwittingly "*legitimised outside intervention for managing this change*". Differences between crafts and modern industry have been interpretively emphasised, resulting in the state's formulation of economic plans and initiatives which miserably failed to conceptualise the artisans as "*the agents of development*". Artisans are reduced to mere objects, and consequently, a huge number of them are caught in a vortex of contradictions between the old and the viable new markets (Mamidipudi, 2016). In India, a sizeable population of artisans belong to the weaving industry, and it is imperative to look into what the census reveals.

### **What does the Handloom census tell us about the sector?**

In the Handloom sector, weavers are predominant as engagement in allied activities is comparatively low. For its size, this sector assumes significance among the Rural Non-Farm Activities and forms one of the major thrust areas in the rural developmental policy. According to the Third National Handloom Census of Weavers and Allied Workers conducted in 2010, Handloom Sector in India is the second-largest employment provider after agriculture, with nearly 27.83 lakh handloom worker households enumerated across 29 states and Union Territories of India. This sector is also one of the largest unorganised sectors of economic activity and is mainly rural, with 87 per cent of these households located in the countryside. In the Northeastern states, that account for 60.5 per cent of all handloom households, the sector has major differences in employment structure and gender composition compared to other states. More than half of the total adult

workforce belongs to Northeastern states, and the dominance of female weavers in the total weavers' workforce is 99 per cent, the highest across the country. About 96 per cent of all adult handloom workers in the North-East work in independent production systems, whereas in other states, 76 per cent of all adult handloom workers are contract workers. Majority of looms in the Northeastern states engage in domestic production (62%), and a relatively small proportion is in mixed production (34%). Thus, the Handloom sector forms one of the largest family-based traditional industries. This underscores the significance of small non-farm enterprises that exhibit a high absorption rate of excess labour in rural areas (Bhagavatula, 2010). The Northeastern states, in respect of this sector, depart from the rest of the country owing to their differential nature.

The majority of Northeastern weavers belong to indigenous communities and, at a micro-level, operate as independent workers. Mainly production is for subsistence consumption, but when they engage in commercial production, owing to the small size of operations, profitability and viability of their businesses are fairly low. They individually manage business operations at all levels by themselves, beginning from procurement of raw materials to marketing finished products. Hence, risk assessment, management and mitigation capacities are not adequate. Lack of education, vulnerability to competition due to lack of resources, dependence on middlemen, restricted access to start-up finance and gender discrimination due to patriarchal social structure contribute to the failure of potential entrepreneurs to convert their creativity into a profitable business (Bhuyan et al.). The role of social capital is crucial, as Bhagavatula describes, how the



differential performance of weaving entrepreneurs results from the difference in their respective social networks. Network size is directly proportional to entrepreneurs' viability and marketability as it determines the flow of different types of information through strong and weak ties. In existing circumstances, weaving is a part-time occupation and continues to be a source of supplemental income. The Handloom Census states that, the share of handloom income to total household income stands at a meagre 18.8 per cent across all handloom households in Northeastern states. In comparison, it is 58.1 per cent for households in the states of other regions where many work solely for commercial purposes. Furthermore, owing to the low penetration of mills and power looms in Northeastern states, the threat perception regarding competition is very low (2.2%). Thus, at a macro level, these figures suggest that extent of commercialisation in the Northeastern states has been at the lowest despite accounting for the highest proportion of household looms in the country.

### ***Boro* weaving culture and Modern Economics**

Among the indigenous communities of North-East, *Boro* women weavers have come to earn a celebratory distinction for their excellent craftsmanship. They are known to weave unique and distinct motifs onto their traditional apparels like *Aronai*, *Dokhona*, *Gamsa Fali*, and other household fabrics. The culture of weaving took roots during the Neolithic Period (New Stone Age), which was the final stage of cultural evolution among prehistoric humans. Treading a multivalent path, this tradition developed from meeting the basic clothing needs to a complex art of expression and cultural assertion among various

indigenous communities, including the *Boro* tribe. Gender profiling of *Boro* weavers indicates that this traditional occupation is largely practised by young girls and women. Weaving, a specialised skill was transmitted as familial wisdom to the daughters over several generations. Women are at the centre of the weaving ecosystem in the *Boro* community, which supports and sustains the tribal economy. The production and the consumption of woven fabrics had been fairly localised until market-driven production systems threatened the local weaving artisans. As many *Boro* women migrate to commercial production setups to capitalise on their weaving skills, they have fallen prey to subversive trends of modern economics.

The global fashion industry is known for its lack of minimal or no labour rights, harrowing and highly exploitative working conditions. There are tens of thousands of women weavers who seasonally migrate to work on a contractual basis in *Sualkuchi*, the largest silk village in lower Assam's Kamrup district. These migrant weavers mostly belong to the *Boro* community. These commercial production sites are installed with ball-bearing and jacquard machines to assist the weavers and speed up production rates. The technical know-how of these machines is generally acquired by males who belong to different caste groups and are designated as Master weavers. This breaks the homogeneity of the gender profile of weavers in North-East states which is otherwise female-dominated within the indigenous traditional economy. Thus, a shift from subsistence production to commercial production followed contractualization of *Boro* women weavers. Within the handloom industry, the establishment of new firms takes either of the 2 routes: Setting up fresh start-ups or splintering existing firms. Increasing



number of contractual weavers who are relatively new entrants in the market, get employed under multiple master weavers. They comprise of those who are not indebted and resultantly, are better positioned to negotiate terms and conditions related to their work. Contractualization is favoured by two prime stakeholders, i.e., the weavers and the master weavers, as it keeps the cost of operations low (Bhagavatula, 2010). More recently, there have been shifts in the patterns of artisanal occupation within the *Boro* tribe owing to internal and external pressures. Moreover, these artisans are not insulated from the effects of modernisation and globalisation. With its varied responses to these forces, weaving as an

occupation has witnessed both revival and attrition unevenly in different areas inhabited by the tribal group.

### ***Boro weavers within the discourse of sustainable fashion***

Lately, the movement for sustainable fashion has been gaining traction both from outside and within the Global Fashion Industry. However, these voluntary initiatives are far from making a dent in rising levels of carbon emissions attributable to the industry. In addition, concerns over greenwashing are not unwarranted as major brands have failed to substantiate their green claims. To understand what sustainable fashion entails, we look into the most accepted definition to date:

***Sustainable fashion (also known as eco-fashion) is an all-inclusive term describing products, processes, activities, and actors (policymakers, brands, consumers) aiming to achieve a carbon-neutral fashion industry built on equality, social justice, animal welfare, and ecological integrity (Alves, Ana, 2022).***

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues underscores the vitality of indigenous communities, who can bring forth creative solutions and add to the global efforts towards sustainability. The repository of traditional knowledge of weaving, if guided into sustainable means of production, can form a significant part of this positive change and offer ways to move forward. *Boro* artisans with the know-how of an age-old art of weaving and practice of rearing Eri silkworms had traditionally been weaving with natural heritage yarns and creating exotic fabrics. However, the market was flooded gradually with cheaper synthetic substitutes, and soon working with natural yarns was no longer profitable for independent workers. Furthermore, power-looms and ballooning counterfeit industry pose a major threat to the weavers. Substitution of labor becomes

even more acute when consumers' choice within the tribe group, shifts to machine-made textiles specifically for traditional *Boro* attires. Truckloads of cheap *Dokhonas* from West Bengal, destined for *Sidli Bazaar* of *Namalpur* in *Chirang* district is one of several cases that points to this change. "A livelihood can be sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, while not undermining the natural resource base" (Chambers and Conway, 1992). Although this community has exhibited a high degree of adaptability in changing markets, the emerging trend exacerbates challenges and threats to their livelihood. Consequently, we can reasonably conclude that status quo *vis-à-vis* the situation of our *Boro* weavers is not sustainable, neither from an economic



perspective nor from a social nor an environmental perspective.

At this point, we take this opportunity to introduce you to SIKIRY, in brief!

### ***Conception of SIKIRY***

Our meeting with a young *Boro* girl, working in a dingy handloom shed in *Sualkuchi*, entrapped in a vicious cycle of debt, was the first conception point of our brand, SIKIRY. We aim to set a precedent that pioneers a change in work culture of our unorganised tribal weaving community, and help build a safe space for growth. We are mindful at every stage of production process to keep it green and eco-friendly. We work exclusively with natural heritage yarns like Endi/Eri Silk and Mulberry Silk hued in rich natural

dyes. We source our cocoons from local growers and process it further by local skilled artisans. Our fabrics' superior quality is thoughtfully designed to create beautifully relaxed and modern silhouettes. As a brand, we envision to emerge as a converging point of creative energies of tribal women weavers from various parts of North East Region (NER) of India.

As we embark on this journey, we thank our collaborators, our matriarchs, a powerhouse with exceptional know-how of weaving beautiful and timeless artisanal couture. We look forward to celebrating the forebearers and the keepers of our unique craftsmanship. Together, we can and will strive for a solution.

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*For comments, please write to: [Editor@Borodiaspora.org](mailto:Editor@Borodiaspora.org)*





## Obituary



### **Mr. Nova Basumatary**

(07-03-1960 to 05-08-2022)

79 Haversham Avenue,  
Wheelers Hills, Melbourne,  
Victoria -3150, Australia

### **Mr. Nova Basumatary (1960-2022)**

**Mr. Nova Basumatary** was born in Tengapara, at Kokrajhar town. He is best remembered at Kokrajhar town, as one of the toppers at the Pre-University (Science) final examination from Kokrajhar College, 1978; thereafter earned a B.Tech. degree from the IIT-Kharagpur, 1983, in Electronics and Communication Engineering. He spent a few years working for Air India in Mumbai before moving to Australia (1990) in search of better professional opportunities. He played basketball, volleyball, and cricket, but also learned Indian classical music.

On August 5th in Melbourne, Australia, Nova passed away in his sleep after a valiant fight with lung cancer. Everything mentioned about Nova during the livestreamed funeral in Australia had one thing in common. He was a wonderful human being, a supporting member of the Indian community in Australia and India, a kind father, a loving brother, and a committed husband. *They never die who live in the hearts of those they leave behind.*

Social media was abuzz with messages of sorrow, sympathy, prayers, and a profound feeling of loss. A moving eulogy was delivered by Nova's sister, Jogyabati Basumatary, which included a few lines in Boro language, "*Oh Obonglaori, aafa ishur, manshini jiuwa thaso bilaini dwi baidi, danw dong, danw gwia...*" Despite the fact that you left us too soon, you instilled in us a sense of discipline and humility, as well as love and respect. We shall continue to obey your heavenly instructions as your spirit continues to lead us from above.

The BDF members extend their sympathies to the family of Nova Basumatary, which includes his wife, daughter, brother and sisters, and in-laws. Nova will be remembered not only by his family members, but also by his friends, associates, and several different communities he left behind. *May his departed soul live in eternal peace.*

Nova is survived by his wife and a daughter (22), in Melbourne, Australia.

**The Editorial Team, The BDF लाइसि**



***Mr. Nova Basumatary***

(07-03-1960 to 05-08-2022)

79 Haversham Avenue,  
Wheelers Hills, Melbourne,  
Victoria -3150, Australia

**A. Education**

- 1969:** Received All India Merit Scholarship award. *Govt. of India selects about 370 students from across the country. Pays scholarship to study in select Residential schools.*
- 1970:** Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar, Bihar, Started in Class-V.
- 1976:** Best Athlete at Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Class-X.
- 1977:** Best Athlete at Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Class-XI.
- 1977:** All India Higher Secondary (Class-XI), CBSE, with 4 Distinctions – *Maths, Physics, Chemistry & Biology.*
- 1978:** Pre-University from Kokrajhar College with 3 Letters – *Maths, Physics & Chemistry*; Stood 8<sup>th</sup> in Gauhati University Pre-University (Science) examination.
- 1978:** Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur, Department of *Electronics & Electrical, and Communications Engineering*
- 1983:** Earned B.Tech. degree with Honours; *Majored in Computers – Hardware & Software*

**B. Professional Positions**

- 1983:** Air India, Bombay, Computer Engineer.
- 1990:** PCR Systems, Melbourne, Australia.
- 1994-2022:** ACA Pacific, Melbourne, Australia.

*SOURCE: Dr. Subhas Basumatary (Brother-in-law of Nova)*



## The Members of Editorial Board of the BDF Laisi



**James Basumatary** is a strategy consultant by profession, currently working in PwC Middle East Consulting Practice. He earned an MBA from Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad and is stationed at Dubai. His expertise lies in Strategy Formulation, Public Policy Development and Business Planning. James is an avid reader, video games aficionado, loves watching documentaries and movies, playing drums and is a big-time sports fan.



**Dr Kishore Wary** is a faculty member at the University of Illinois at Chicago, USA. He is a published author and serves as an academic editor of several scientific journals. His hobbies include gardening, music, and tennis.



**Dr Ajit Boro** is the Principal of B.Ed. College, Gossaigaon, Assam. Dr. Ajit is a member of Bodo Advisory Board, The Sahitya Academy, the Govt of India and a recipient of the Bal Sahitya Puraskar (Children Literature Award-2020). He has authored 15+ books and edited 70+ magazines. He specializes in school administration, teachers training, and provides motivational speeches to students.



**Dr Dharitri Narzary** teaches History to Undergraduate/Graduate students in the School of Liberal Studies at Ambedkar University Delhi (AUD) and an Adjunct Fellow at the Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi. She specializes in Japanese history and her interest areas include material/non-material culture, indigenous history, East Asian society. Previously, Dr Dharitri worked with the Yomiuri Shimbun, the largest circulated Japanese newspaper at its India Bureau in New Delhi.



**Mamoni Basumatary** is a Chemical Engineer and currently working at Indian Oil Corporation as General Manager (Tech. Services) at the Guwahati Refinery. A Petroleum Federation of India (Petrofed) award winner, Mamoni earned a B.E. (Chem) Degree from Assam Engineering College of Gauhati University. Her expertise lies in Strategic Business Planning, Energy Management, and Faculty support services. Sports, Cultural activities, and associating with NGO activities are her main area of interest.



**Bibi Prasad Brahma** is an Assistant Teacher, currently working at the Harinaguri High School, Kokrajhar. He earned his B.Sc. from Cotton University, Guwahati and M.Sc. (Maths) Dibrugarh University, Dibrugarh and D.El.Ed. from KKHSO University, Assam and TET qualified. He is the E-Content creator in DIKSHA, SCERT, Assam and his expertise lies in the E-content review in Mathematics (Bodo Medium).



**Biswanath Boro** is currently working as a Regional Manager at the New India Assurance, the largest general insurance company in India, stationed in Mumbai. He comes from Baghmara, a village in the Baksa District. He went to Rupahi High School, BH College, and graduated from Cotton College. In addition, he is a recipient of Fellowship in Insurance (FII). He is actively connected with several social organizations and sports.

# The BDF Laisi

## Issue 1, Vol 2, 2022



**Aleendra Brahma** is a Lecturer & Junior Research Officer at the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysuru, and currently the Head of the Press & Publication Unit of CIIL. He is also the Officer-in-Charge of the North-Eastern Regional Language Centre, Guwahati; the Centre for North-Eastern Language Development; and Centre for Folklore, Lexicography and Creative Writing. He has authored 12, edited 11 and translated 3 books, and published 13 peer-reviewed research articles; several book chapters and >60 popular articles in Bodo, Assamese and English. His areas of interest include Assamese and Bodo-Garo languages and linguistics, folklore, science-fiction, and translation. Recently, he received the *Abou Khobam Raja Uttam Chandra Kherkatary Literary Award* 2021 from Salbari District Bodo Sahitya Sabha for his poetry *Angni Gwrbwao Nwng Dinwibw Jujaini Or*.

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# The BDF Laisi

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**RE:** An invitation- Submit a letter to the Editor of The BDF लाइसि.

### **Dear Readers:**

The Editorial Board (EB) of *The BDF लाइसि* invites letters to the editor to be featured in the coming issues.

*Why should you write A Letter to the Editor? Here are a few general suggestions:*

- You are concerned and have questions about specific topic(s) or issue(s) and you want others to know about it. Your concern is crucial that you must talk about and ask for clarification or resolution.
- Your letter to the editor could supplement, praise, comment in relation to the contents published in the newsletter.
- Your letter could also suggest an idea to others, influence readers opinion, educate the readers on a specific topic, emerging issues, influence stakeholder or elected officials directly or indirectly.
- Your letters to the editors could publicize the work of your organization and attract volunteers and participants.
- Your letter should be relevant to the mission of the BDF, and most importantly concise and tell the readers what should be done, your suggestion should be feasible and actionable.
- A letter to the Editor of *The BDF लाइसि* should be written in plain English or Boro, in no more than 500 words. Font, Georgia; size, 12.
- Please email your letter in word format to: [Editor@borodiaspora.org](mailto:Editor@borodiaspora.org)

The EB may contact you (the contributor) for clarification. The editorial team reserves the rights to edit your letter to improve readability and shorten according to the space available without altering the primary content of the letter. However, the editorial board will have the right to reject irrelevant or incomplete letter. Please include your name, contact details including your phone number and verifiable email.

**-Thank you**

*The Editorial Team*  
Contact [Editor@borodiaspora.org](mailto:Editor@borodiaspora.org)

# The BDF Laisi

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## The End