



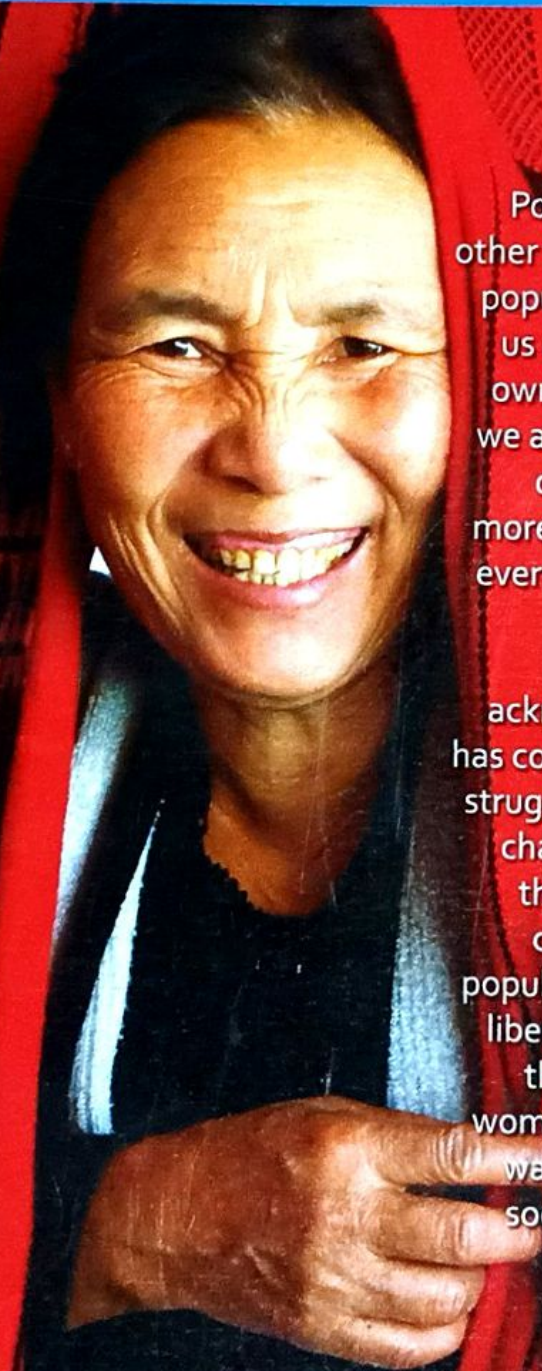
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Emerging Echoes'

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Kakojan College, Jorhat, Assam

Vol. - VII, 2018



Postmodernist thought, among other things, has found its way into popular culture where so many of us are quick to acknowledge our own individual uniqueness. Sure, we are a wife, a mother, a sister, a daughter, a worker, and much more but we are still not quite like everyone else. This may work just fine in our personal lives, however the widespread acknowledgment of 'uniqueness' has complicated 2nd wave feminist struggles for equality. When social change groups become divided, their capacity to challenge and change often falter. Certainly, popular liberal strategies for social liberation have been curtailed by the rightful suggestion that all women are not the same, need or want the same things, or define social equality in the same way.

Editors

Dr. Ruprekha Bordoloi

Dr. Archana Bhattacharjee

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DECLARATION

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Editorial

Welcome to the VIIth volume of "Emerging Echoes" – a peer reviewed ISSN journal published by the Centre for Women's Studies, Kakojan College, Jorhat, Assam. The Journal is dedicated to a challenge rather than to a topic or an intersection of topics. This challenge is to identify all kinds of problems women faces in rural or urban spaces both nationally as well as internationally and to help develop a road map for concerned authorities and organizations to address key questions plaguing our society.

As we all know, in spite of the constitutional and legal guarantees aiming to eradicate the inequality and discrimination in any form, the plight of women still remain far from improved. Even today, evils like child marriage, eves teasing, sexual assaults, wife beating, female infanticide, women trafficking, witch hunting and gender discrimination are prevalent in our society.

However, the scenario is slowly changing because to some degree the realization is taking roots in the various structures of the society and women themselves are seeking justice by raising their voices in a male dominated world.

Keeping the above discussion in view 'The Centre for Women's Studies', Kakojan College has undertaken the responsibility to publish this journal to highlight all kinds of issues related to women both positive and negative to create gender awareness leading to women empowerment and societal transformation.

And last but not the least we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all our paper contributors, reviewer, the editorial board, Mr. Lakhya Pratim Nirmolia for his unwavering technical support and Mr. Gunin Kharghoria of Multico, without whose whole hearted support the task of making the journal see the light of publication would have been difficult.

Dr. Ruprekha Bordoloi
Dr. Archana Bhattacharjee
Editors

CONTENTS

Parity Progression Ratio, Literacy and Complete Fertility of Women: An Analysis of Two Major Communities of Assam	- Dr. Sangeeta Borah	11
Economic Empowerment of Rural Scheduled Caste Women Through Self-help Groups: A Case Study	- Puna Das	17
Initiative of Sankaradeva in Spreading Gender Equality: An Analysis	- Chandan Sharma Ratul Chandra Borah	21
Role of Woman in Eri-culture as an Agro Based Activities: A Study in Titabor Sub-division of Assam	- Junmoni Boruah	28
Role of Women in Family Health Through Traditional Practices	- Prasanna Hazarika	36
Articulation of Social Injustices – Gender Discrimination and Patriarchy Tradition in Bama's Autobiography "Sangati"	- Dr. Archana Bhattacharjee	41
Life in Death: A Reading of Kate Chopin's <i>The Awakening</i> from Feminist's Perspectives	- Suborna Haque	48
Golden Ratio: The Secret of Perfect Body	- Subhasis Kotoky	52
Study of Health and Hygienic Condition Among Female Tea Garden Workers of Meleng Tea Estate	- Dr. Nibedita Gogoi	57
The Status of Women in Assamese Society in Pre-independence Era: A Study of Tilottama Mishra's Novel 'Swarnalata'	- Sarmistha Goswami	62
Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain: Forerunner of Muslim Women in India	- Lakhya Pratim Nirmolia	67
Biodiversity Management and Role of Rural and Ethnic Women of India : A Review	- Babita Phukan Borkotoky	74
A study on Medicinal Plants for the Treatment of Women Diseases in Dihingia Kalita Gaon of Teok Circle of Jorhat District, Assam	- Jayanta Duarah	80

A Study on Some Medicinal Plants Used by the People of Kakojan Area of Jorhat District with Special Reference to Women Diseases	- Ashish Pratim Hazarika	84
Gender Division of Labour in Society and its Reality: A Sociological Study	- Borsharani Bora	89
Marriage System of Mishing Tribe in Assam: Changes and Continuity (A Study on two Mishing Villages of Teok, Jorhat District of Assam)	- Minakshi Mili	94
Witch-hunting: A Major Social Evil of Assam	- Rintirani Sarmah	101
An Analysis on Role and Achievement of Girl Players in the Field of Badminton in the District of Jorhat, Assam – An Analytical Study	- Inumoni Gogoi	105
Role of Women in the Freedom Struggle Movement in Assam : An Analysis	- Joyashree Saikia	113
Portrayal of Women in Mass Media: A Study	- Nizora Baruah	117
Dilemma of Successful Women : A study of the women characters of Caryl Churchill's Drama <i>Top Girls</i> (Act I)	- Dibyajyoti Boruah	124
The Position of Women in the African Tribal Societies: An Overview	- Angshumalee Dutta	129
Role of Women in Rural Development under ageis of NGO: A Sociological study	- A.K. Bhatia	133
মামণি বয়ছম গোস্বামীৰ উপন্যাসত নাৰী শ্ৰমিক (চেনাবৰ সোঁত, অহিৰণ আৰু মামৰে ধৰা তৰোৱাল উপন্যাসৰ আধাৰত)	- ড° বাজু বৰুৱা	145
লক্ষ্মীনাথ বেজবৰুৱাৰ চুটিগল্পত প্ৰতিফলিত নাৰী মনঃস্তম্ভ : এটি বিশ্লেষণ (নিৰ্বাচিত গল্পৰ আধাৰত)	- পৰিস্থিতা দাস	152
ভিজোৰীয়া নৈতিকতা, জোনাকী আলোচনী আৰু উনবিংশ শতিকাৰ শিক্ষিত মধ্যবিত্তৰ জাতীয় লজ্জা	- ড° পাপৰি বৰা	158
স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত নাৰী : যোৰহাট জিলাৰ প্ৰসঙ্গৰে	- মানৱজ্যোতি শইকীয়া	164

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Parity Progression Ratio, Literacy and Complete Fertility of Women: An Analysis of Two Major Communities of Assam

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ABSTRACT

The term Fertility is the single most important determinant of population dynamics and growth. In this work an attempt has been made to examine the effect of religion on fertility especially Hindu and Islam in Assam. The Complete Fertility Rate of women is computed by Parity Progression Ratio for each district of Assam. The district wise disparities have also been observed in the growth of population in Assam. Literacy gives the best indication about the socio-economic development of a society. The literacy gap replicates the changes of fertility. We have explore this differentials for both Hindu and Muslim community. The relevant data are drawn from Population Census.

Key words : Education, Parity, Fertility, Population Growth.

Introduction :

Fertility may be defined as the number of live births that a woman produces during her reproductive span. In other words it is the child-bearing activity of a population. Fertility refers to the actual production of children. Only a particular section of the female has the capacity to bear children viz. female belonging to the age group 15 to 49. It is to be noted that only live births are to be taken into account while measuring fertility as it is only a live birth which accounts for increase in population. The control of fertility is the most important way to check high

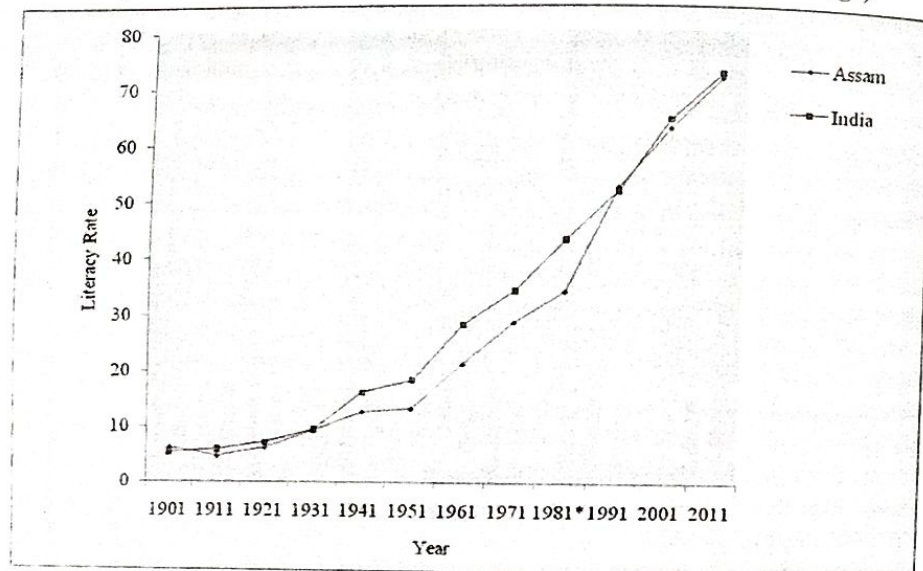
population growth. It is directly influenced by a set of sociological and biological factors. The factors such as women's age, education level, age at marriage, economic status and religious attitudes etc., are often called intermediate fertility variables.

The term religion plays an important role in determining the attitude of the people in limiting the fertility. Religion wise disparities also play an important role in declining or increasing fertility. The Literacy Rate and Parity Progression Ratio are also the important factors to determine fertility. The goals of population growth and sustainable

development can be achieved only by bringing equality between men and women through education. Literacy and education is considered as one of the key indicators of human resource development. Education is essential to eliminate gender gap and being

women in parity with men in the society. According to census report 2001 and 2011 we have observed a huge gap in education which reveals the educational disparities pertaining in Assam.

Fig. 1 : Literacy rate of Assam and India, 1901-2011(in percentage)



*Estimated

Female Education and Fertility

Female education plays a key role in the social development approach. Female education can be expected to reduce family size for a number of reasons. For the underdeveloped countries, the level of education is considered to be a depression of fertility. Educations enhance the quality of human capital and is indispensable for

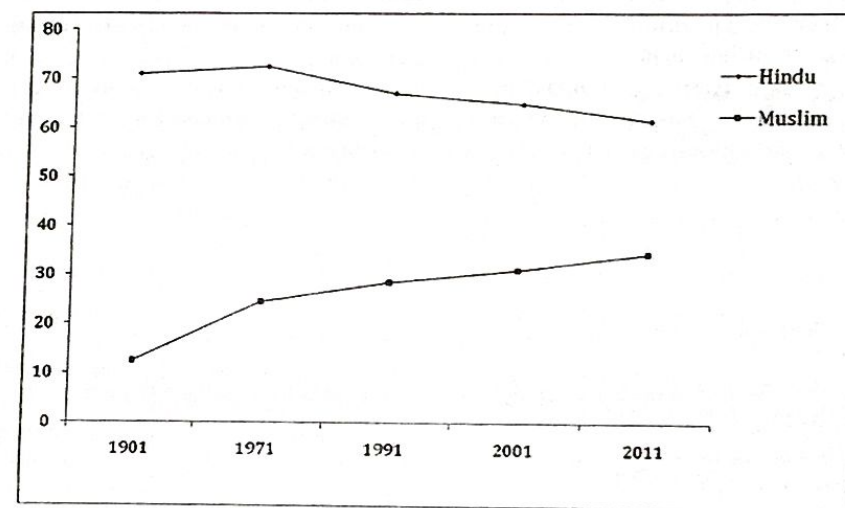
modernization. Education raises the opportunity cost of women time and generally, opens up greater opportunity for women that after conflict with repeated child-bearing[2]. This may lead educated women to want fewer children than the ill-literate. The educated women may reduce their dependence on sons for social recognition or support in old age. This may lead to some reduction in desired family size.

Religion wise Population of Assam

The religious data of India in Census-2011 was released by the Government on 25 August 2015. Here it was reported that in India, Hindu population slides from 80.5 percent to 79.8 percent while Muslim climbs from 13.4 percent to 14.2 percent. In Assam, Islam is the second largest religion. It is also the fastest growing religion in Assam according to 2011 census report [5]. As a consequence total demography of Assam is being change. The demography as a whole in the world are

concerned with understanding the fertility behaviour. Since, the Hindu population set to fall below 80 percent in Census 2011. That is, for the first time in over a century, the proportion of the Hindu population in the country will probably fall below the 80 percent in keeping with the long-term trend of a significant divergence between Hindu and Muslim growth rates. Assam is the state where proportion of Muslim population is more than 30 percent of the total population of the state.

Fig.2: Population Proportion of Hindu and Muslim in Assam (in percent), 1901-2011



Objective :

The objective is to examine the change of population composition in terms of religion, (mainly Hindu and Muslim) in the districts of Assam. We are trying to evaluate the relationship between Parity Progression Ratio

(PPR), literacy and Complete Fertility Rate (CFR) of the two major communities. The CFR of women is also computed for each district of Assam.

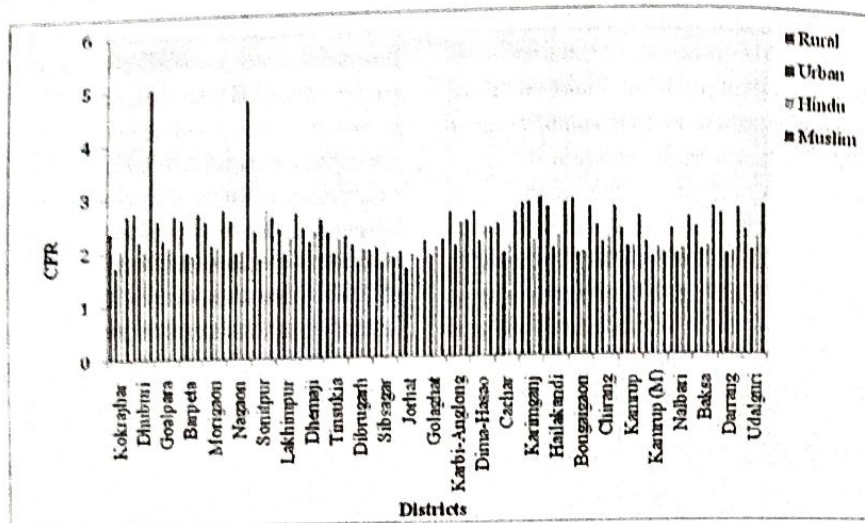
Methods and Analysis:

Parity Progression Ratio is the

probability of having another child given that mother has reached certain parity i.e. has had a certain number of children. The average number of children ever born to women in a birth cohort may be expressed as:

$$CFR = a(0) + a(0)a(1) + a(0)a(1)a(2) + a(0)a(1)a(2)a(3) + \dots + a(0)a(1)\dots a(n)$$

Fig.3: Complete Fertility Rate for Assam

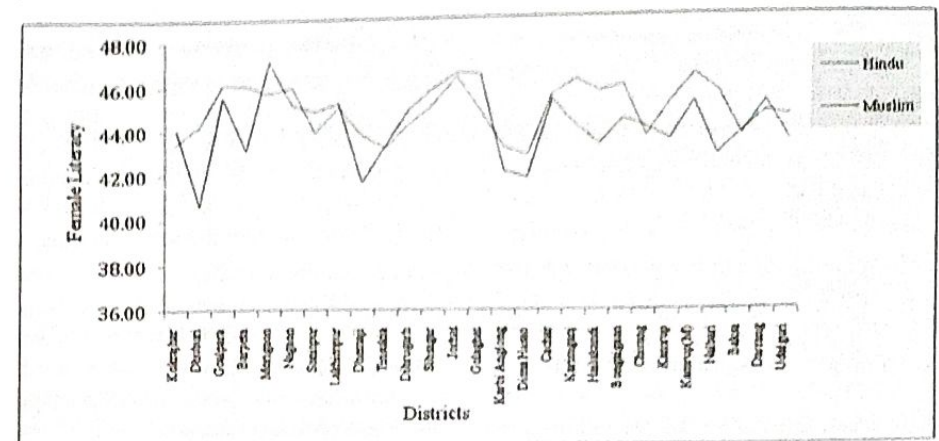


It has been observed from the Fig.3 that the complete fertility rate is the highest in Dhubri district and the second highest district is Nagaon. The districts where the Muslim growth is high, the CFR is also large for that districts. In most of the districts Muslim women fertility rates are higher than the Hindu women. It witnesses the higher value of parity for Muslim than the Hindu. It is a common knowledge that the population growth rate is always higher among the illiterate people.

Where, $a(0)$ is just the proportion of women in the cohort who become mothers. The CFR has been computed for the two major communities of Assam. Also, computed the CFR for rural and urban are separately for each districts of Assam. The graphical inference of CFR is shown in Fig.3.

Female education can be expected to reduce family size. Hence, Literacy is an important factor for fertility analysis. If we observe, then we can see that the women literacy rate of Hindu and Muslim in different districts of Assam is different, which is evaluated and shown in Fig.4. It is observed from the plot that the average literacy rate of Muslim women is lower than the Hindu. It reveals the higher fertility rate of Muslim women [3,6]. The following figures show the literacy rate of Hindu and Muslim for female.

Fig. 4: Estimated female literacy rate of Hindu and Muslim



In the census report of 2011, the district Kamrup(M) has the highest literacy rate (88.71) and the district Dhubri has lowest female literacy rate (54.26). Hence, from this analysis we can pronounce that the district where female literacy rate is high, the fertility rate is low. In rural areas, the influence of female education on fertility is important in both the religions, but in urban areas this is not always true.

Conclusion :

From the above analysis it is worthwhile to conclude that for higher order birth, the estimated PPR of Hindu is lower than the Muslim. It implies that PPR for Muslim women increases more rapidly than the Hindu women. Same result is found in the case of CFR for two communities. It has been observed that the computed CFR for Muslim is highest in Dhubri district. Hence, we may summarize that female education is an

important influencing variable in fertility differentials among the Muslims than the Hindus. To find the root cause we need more analysis on socio-cultural status of both Hindus and Muslims.

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Economic Empowerment of Rural Scheduled Caste Women Through Self-help Groups: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Self-help groups is a way of organizing the poor and the marginalized to come together to solve their individual problems. Through this method thousands of poor people in the country are building their lives; promote income generating activities for their families and society. But rural poor women are still far from empowered, majority of them are illiterate, unemployed and lack social recognition which creates inequality in the society. Presently the Self Help groups mushrooming in rural area of Assam play an important role in providing opportunities for women to make them empowered economically and socially. The present paper mainly discuss how rural women got scope to be empowered through engagement in SHGs in rural area of Assam with special reference to the schedule castes women's SHGs in Chabua of Dibrugarh District. The present study is descriptive in nature and consists of primary data.

Keywords: Economic empowerment, schedule cast women, self-help group, etc.

Introduction

Women are the backbone of an economy and leads to future development of the nation. The overall development of a nation remains a paradox until the women get empowered. Empowerment of women refers to the creation of an environment for women where they can make decision of their own benefits as well as for the society. Over the past, it is noticed that women earn money working in productive activities usually includes agriculture, working in small scale firms, trading, handloom, weaving, livestock and many other business that are mostly

unorganized. So the earning capacity of the women also limited which is not sufficient for their financial liberty. Lower literacy rate, discrimination in land and property rights and problem faced in accessing proper medical policy and rural finance. So the economic empowerment of women is a prerequisite for inclusive and sustainable development of a nation. In this regard women's ability to earn income can be improved significantly through engagement in micro credit programs like SHGs and NGOs or other organization. In the last decade it has been noticed that various government entities like RBI, NABARD,

DRDA, Bandhan Bank etc. has increased their level of involvement in the SHGs programs. The involvement of rural women in SHGs programs not only help economic empowerment of their own but also help in inclusive growth of the nation. Presently the Self Help Groups mushrooming in rural area of Assam play a significant role in providing opportunities for women to make them empower economically and socially. The SHGs acts as a social intermediation, opportunity to acquire the ability to their own lives, set their agenda, gains skill, solve problems and developed autonomy (Meenai, 2003). Involvement in SHGs makes them confident for the economic self reliance of the rural poor women. The present paper mainly focus on present status and impact of SHGs on economic empowerment of women in rural areas of Assam with special reference to scheduled caste women's SHGs in Dibrugarh District of Assam.

Objectives :

1. The basic objective of this paper is to study the socio economic status of the scheduled caste women's self help groups.
2. To study how the scheduled caste women get empowered through their engagement in SHGs.

Method :

The present study is descriptive in nature and consists of primary data. The unstructured interview method has been used for collection of data. This research is conducted in Panitola Development Block (Chabua) of Dibrugarh district, Assam. A personal interview was conducted with the

BDO in order to reveal the representative of Scheduled caste women's SHGs in the study area. In this block, a total 1023 SHGs and scheduled caste women SHGs are mostly concentrated in the Dinjoy Panchayat, around 40 SHGs were accounted where all the members of the groups belongs to scheduled caste. In Hatiali Gaon Panchayat, around 25 SHGs consists of scheduled caste women. To achieve the objectives, the scheduled caste women SHGs in the Dinjoy Panchayat is considered and total 6 self help groups (each group contains 10-15 women) belonging to scheduled caste women are selected randomly as sample. The data were collected through self structured questionnaires and a personal interview of the sample SHGs group members and a simple percentage system has used for data analysis.

Analysis and Discussion :

Present status of scheduled caste women SHGs:

The purpose of the study was to understand the economic status of the women Self Help Groups belonging to scheduled caste under the Panitola Development Block of Dibrugarh District of Assam. Present study reveals some socio economic characteristics of the sample SHGs women which are mentioned as ...

- ❖ The data reveals that the average number of members of per self help group was 10 to 15 women.
- ❖ The age group of sample SHGs members is 20 to 55 years.
- ❖ The study reveals that approximately 85% of the sample SHG members belong to

Scheduled caste and other members was found from any other caste in the Dinjoy Panchayat of the respective development block.

❖ The average level of education of sample members was revealed to be below 10th standard, and more than 80% members have got primary education and high school level and remaining portion are out of formal education.

❖ The study stated that the group members took loan 2-3 times in a year and the average loan amount per SHG member was Rs. 7500. Majority of them (about 45% of the sample member) utilized the loan amount in productive purposes. The data reveals that about 53% of the members use the loan for consumption purpose which includes education of their children, medical purpose and house repairing, painting, roofing, and spendings on household's article, ornaments of their own and repayment of previous debt etc.

❖ Majority of SHGs members are engaged in various traditional activities such as making of Assamese dresses- Mekhela-Chadors, Gamusa, Shawls, Dhoti etc. also producing fruit jam, khorisa and some members are engaged in farming like poultry and goat farm. Out of 6 sample SHGs, 4 groups able to received government subsidy from the funding organization under subsidy loan scheme of DRDA, NABARD in the form of capital.

❖ It is found that the member of SHG compulsorily saves a fixed amount Rs. 50 to Rs. 300 per member that makes capital for their internal lending. The members of SHGs

can borrow funds from their respective bank as loan for internal lending at lower rate of interest (2% per month for internal loan). And the loan repayment period is 12 to 24 months for their members.

❖ The respondent revealed that the member don't distribute any part of the capital at the end of the year, as they share equally the amount of profit earned from internal lending and from weaving and other group activities among the group members.

Findings of the study

In order to analyze the objectives, it is necessary to understand the status of scheduled caste women SHGs and certain areas are to be considered such as improvement of family income, social recognition and decision for self etc.

a. Regarding income of the sample members, out of 60 sample members, majority of them was found to have increased their income level after engagement in the group. More than 75% sample member has been found to bear the family expenses, about 87% illiterate sample members have been found bear their family expenses.

b. It is found that empowerment of scheduled caste women has also been experienced regarding taking family decisions. About 55% samples member mostly literate women have taken their own decisions.

c. The study reveals that participation in social activities of scheduled caste women is very poor. Only 30% women are involved in social activities. In this sense, these women are yet to be empowered. Also 20.5% scheduled caste women of the SHGs have been found working outside the home in freedom.

d. It is found that participation of scheduled caste women in SHGs improve their access to credit lending and increase the confidence level in repayment of loan. A majority of member opined that they have easy access of getting quick money for emergency needs from the SHGs after joining in the groups.

Conclusion

Women empowerment is an important issue in recent era. Indian women are still exploited in the male dominated society which is a major drawback of the development of the nation. A common thinking has been in the society that women are weaker than men, but it is not true. Women occupying an important position in the society and have to be empowered. The study revealed that the scheduled castes women are empowered through engagement in the SHGs. It enhanced self employment, self confidence among sample group members, bringing change in family violence, change in saving pattern of SHGs members, frequency of interaction with outsiders, involvement in community function, achieving social justice and social harmony, establishing equity within SHG group members. Regarding their income generation from the SHGs, an improvement in income level of the scheduled caste women is significant after joining their respective self-help-groups.

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Initiative of Sankaradeva in Spreading Gender Equality: An Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Gender equality is essential for economic development of a country. But it is seen that in the present Vaishnavite religious order of Assam, women are not enjoying equal status. They are not given the right to enter into the core area of a *Sattr*, nor allowed to pour oil in the main *cāki* in some *Nāmghars*, *Thān* and *Sattras*. The Vaishnava leaders also started to consider the women as unclean, the body of women as the source of sins, and the women as a barrier in the path of salvation etc. Since, Vaishnavism is a major religious cult in Assam, their negative attitude towards women affects the gender equality in the state. The present paper tries to answer whether Sankaradeva is responsible for the development of gender inequality? To get the result the paper discusses the status of women before Sankaradeva and also studies his effort to spread gender equality. It is found that the discrimination against women which is available in the present Vaishnavite society is completely to the opposite of Sankaradeva's ideology. So, efforts must be made to remove such discrimination for gender equality in Assam.

1.0: Introduction

Gender equality represents a situation where both male and female enjoy equal access to resources and opportunities, particularly in economic participation and decision making. **European Institute for Gender Equality** defines Gender Equality

as 'Principles of equality of women and men, equal recognition and the enjoyment and exercise of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as measures providing for equal treatment of, and equal opportunities for, women and men in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil,

domestic or any other field'. In our society majority of the tasks are performed by women. But most of the works done by women are non-economic activities and hence not counted in the national income accounting. Lack of economic power means women's hard work is not recognized in the society which ultimately forced them to lead a miserable standard of living. So, investment in women is crucial for rapid economic growth of a country.

2.0: Statement of the Problem

In the present Vaishnavite religious order of Assam, women are not enjoying equal status. There are still prohibited from entering into the core area of a *Sattra*. They are not allowed even to pour oil in the main *cāki* in a number of famous *Nāmghars*, *Thān* and *Sattras*. The Vaishnava leaders started to consider the women as unclean, the body of women as the source of sins, and the women as a barrier in the path of salvation etc. Since, Vaishnavism is a major religious cult in Assam, their negative attitude towards women affects the gender equality in the state. Now, the important point is to see whether Sankaradeva, the founder of Assamese Vaishnavism, is responsible for the development of gender inequality in Vaishnavite religious order of Assam or not.

3.0: Objective

The present study aims—

- To know the status of women before the time of Sankaradeva.
- To study the initiatives taken by Sankaradeva to spread gender equality.

4.0: Methodology

In this study the descriptive method is used. To describe the facts both primary and secondary data were used. Here the primary source of information is the various compositions of Sankaradeva viz. the *Kīrttana*, *Bhāgavata*, *Bargīts*, *Aṅkiyā Nāṭa* and the *Kāvya*. Secondary information is collected from *carita puṭhis*, books and journals. Web materials are also used.

5.0: Discussion

5.0.1: Status of Women before the Time of Sankaradeva

Before Śaṅkaradeva started his reform, Saktism and Saivism were the dominant cults. A form of Tantric Vaishnavism (Vasudevism) existed, i.e. Viṣṇu was worshiped with tantric rituals by some people. Besides a few minor cults like Nathism, crypto-Buddhism and the cult of Manasā (the snake goddess) were also there (Sarma, 2016, p.6). Almost all the religious cults were practiced according to the tantric rites where liquor drinking, sacrifices of animals and free sexual unions were openly allowed (Gayan, 2014, p.45). In Saivism 'offerings (*upahāra*) of ducks and pigeons, wine and cooked rice and sacrifices of buffaloes and swine, cocks and he-goats were made' (Neog, 2008, p.80). Saktism was the worship of a goddess of many name and forms. The goddess was worshiped with sexual rites and sacrifice of animals or even of men in many cases. In such worships five M's (*pañca-makāra*) were indispensable. Those were—*madya* (wine), *māmsa* (meat), *matsya* (fish), *mudrā* (parched grain) and *maithuna* (sexual

union). In Tantric Vaishnavism, cow's milk, fish, venison, goats, porcupine and hare etc. were offered to Viṣṇu. Similarly, the Crypto-Buddhism also indispensably accepted the five M's and apprehended that the seekers of salvation should enjoy *Prajñāpāramitā* or perfect truth that resides in every woman (ibid, pp.83-88). The practice of open drinking of liquor and excessive sexual union in the name of god and goddess's worship tainted the morality of the people. It degraded the position of women in the society. Women had lost the security and self respect due to the practice of the *bhogī*. A handsome youth was selected to be sacrificed in front of goddesses and was given immense freedom for one year in which he can enter any house and have sexual intercourse with any women he desired. In some temples virgin girls (*Kumāri*) were worshiped. But the custom gradually got polluted and the priest started to sexually exploit the girls. The status of those girls (known as *Devadāsī*), was degraded to prostitutes (Gayan, 2014, p.46).

5.0.2: Sankaradeva's Initiative in Spreading Gender Equality

Śaṅkaradeva had a very positive view on women. He even compared women with the gems—

pāilā strī ratna sakhī kibā cāhā āra yujate bānija yena milila tohmāra
[You achieve the women gem, friend what else are you looking for: Like you acquired profit of trade while going to fight. *Kurukṣetra*, Verse No.234]

Similarly, he had not only recognized the strength of women but also compared

them with burning fire—

stīka durbbala kare koneno niṣkhale jwalanta bahnika bāndhe vastara āñcale
[Who fool, wants to weaken the women: Like wrapping the burning fire with cloth. *Haricandra Upākhyāna*, Verse No.75]

Śaṅkaradeva never hesitated to provide equal status to the women. He propagated that both man and woman are indispensable to perform household and social activities. In his literary works, Śaṅkaradeva raised various issues of women empowerment. For instance, in *Bhāgavata* he expressed that women are more courageous than men.

parama nirbhai bhāva purucatodhika nāhike nārīta pare mahā sāhasika
[Have absolute attitude of fearless than man: There is none other more courageous than woman. *Bhāgavata*, 12th Canto, Ve. 122]

Śaṅkaradeva also mentioned the multi-dimensional role played by woman. She supports her husband in every sphere of life. She works as friend, philosopher and guide to a man.

karma samayata toka mantrī hena lekhi raṅgara belāta yena tai prāṇa-sakhī snehara prastāve tai mātṛ hena thāna śayana belāta tai dāsira samāna
[During the time of work you play the role as adviser like a minister to a king: In the time of amusement you become a bosom friend: You are like a mother in need of care: In bed you become like a slave. *Haricandra Upākhyāna*, Verse No.432]

However, Śaṅkaradeva was also thoughtful about the security of woman. For women freely roaming at night is not out of danger.

*durghora rajanī prēta piśācara gati
aita nāthākibā torā sava tirīmati
tomāsāka nedekhiyā pitr mātṛcaya
tāsambāra mane mahā miliba saṁsaya*
[Deep night is the time of roaming for devils and ghosts: You should not stay here as you were women: Without seeing you by their sides your parents: Would get great fears in their minds. *Kīrtana, Rāsa Kṛidā, Verse No. 821*]
Similarly, for women making journey during war is not safe.

*"tuḥu strī jāti: yuddhaka samaye tohāri
gamana ucita nahe"*
[You belong to woman fraternity: During war time your journey is not good. *Pārijāta Haraṇa Nāta*]
Śaṅkaradeva also expressed his sorrow to a woman disserved by her merciless lover.

*nārīra manata natu hovante tṛpiti
teji yāi yena nidārūna upapati*
[Without giving satisfaction properly to the body and mind of woman: The merciless lover deserts her. *Bhāgavata, 10th Canto, Verse No. 2340*]

Śaṅkaradeva advocated that for empowerment of women initiative must be taken for providing education to women.

*stri śūdra antyajāti
tāko śikṣa dibā māti
dharibe sisave aho prāne*
[Take initiative to provide education to woman, *sudra* and outcastes: They would

absorb the knowledge whole heartedly. *Nimi-Nava Sidha Saṁvāda, Verse No. 333*]

Similarly, to shine outside, a woman's domestic life must be peaceful. If she got a favourable atmosphere of empowerment at home then she can easily grab the opportunity outside. The nature of her husband is a determining factor in this regard. So Śaṅkaradeva advised the women had to be selective in choosing her husband. Persons who are angry, greedy, heartless, lustful, weak, suspicious would never be able to give peace to his wife. Śaṅkaradeva describes in *Bhāgavata, 8th Canto, Verse No. 268-275*, about the demerits of choosing such persons as husband.

*sadāye nuguche tāna krodha ahaṅkāra
āṅka bari bhāla bolāibeka kāra bāpe
akāryato naṣṭa karibeka caṇḍa sāpe*
[One whose anger and proud never lessens: By marrying him, no woman could satisfy him: He keeps on rebuking the wife without any reason.]

*lubhīyāta pare sāṁsārata nāhi manda
yuti khāibe napāile lagāibe nite danda*
[There is none worst in this world than a greedy person: If he fails to eat deliciously, he regularly involves in quarrel with his wife.]

nirddaya puruṣa najānaya dukha bethā
[The heartless husband is unable to feel the sorrow and misery of wife.]

*ātapare āna āura nāhi kāmātura
nite kolāhale yāibe ihāṅka barile*
[There is none lustful than him: Would have

to spend the time in clash if married to him.]

*indraka bariḥo ente honta devarāja
tekhane palāya daitye kārhilanta rāja
kateka palāibo mañi ihāna lagata*
[*Indra* is the monarch of deity at the moment: But has to flee if his monarchy is snatched away by demons: If married to him, how many times I would flee with him.]

*dibya gr̥ha-bārī eri śmaśānata bāsa
ihāṅka barile eko nāhi sukha śānti*
[By giving up the luxurious residences he dwells in cemetery: If he is accepted as husband there would be no peace.]

*kāma krodha jiniya mukuta bheilā gāṇḍi
ihāṅka barile heibo jivantate rāṇḍi*
[By winning lust and anger, he becomes sanctimonious: If he is chosen as husband would have to be a prostitute.]

āti anācārī baribāka nohe yoga
[Very ill-disciplined persons are not appropriate to accept as husband.]

Although Śaṅkaradeva had such a positive outlook towards the power of woman, but he did not forgot to criticize the dark side of the character of women. He regarded among all illusions, woman's illusion is the most dangerous. A bad woman could easily misguide even a dedicated man. So, he warned to avoid the company of such ghastly woman.

*ghora nārīmāyā sarba māyāte kutsita
mahā siddha muniro kaṭākṣe harai citra*

*daraśane karai tapa japa yoga bhaṅga
jāni jñānigane erai kāmīnīra saṅga*
[Among all illusions the most awful is that of woman: Most accomplished sages too lose heart at their playful look: Her visit can destroy all penances, meditations and *yoga*: Knowing it, the wise man give up the company of damsels. *Bhāgavata, 8th Canto, Verse No. 659*]

Again he wrote, the beautiful women are always dangerous.
*yateka sundarī nārī parama anarthakārī
ātpare nāhikai nikāra*
[All the beautiful women are most dangerous: There is nothing precarious than them. *Bhāgavata, 8th Canto, Verse No. 128*]

Female characters were occupying major portion in his literary works. Among them he had special fond of the character Rukminī. Again, Śaṅkaradeva presented the character of Sītā bolder than the original Sītā of Valmiki. In Valmiki's version, in the final scene, Sītā does not speak a word to her husband and accepts all the miseries as destiny. But in Śaṅkaradeva's version of Rāmāyana, Sītā is an outspoken lady. 'She is humiliated and enraged at the unnecessary public test of her chastity. In her anger she turned her back to Rama and laying aside her shyness condemns him in front of the audience that by a ruse he had me abandoned in the forest... He wanted to kill the two boys in my womb' (Smith, 1994).

In his real life, Śaṅkaradeva had shown due respect to women and advocated for their freedom. He never forced his wife

Kālindī, to accept his *Eka Śaraṇa Nāma Dharma (EŚND)*. Kālindī was enjoying every freedom to worship the God *Ghara Deuty* in front of Śaṅkaradeva till Mādhavadeva's intervention to it (KGC, p.54). It is worth mentioning here that Śaṅkaradeva was very much strict in his principle of worshipping one and only one God, i.e. Lord Viṣṇu. Once he expelled two devotees, Vyaskalāi and Jairāma for worshipping other Goddess. Similarly, Śaṅkaradeva severely attacked the rituals where women were used as enjoyable commodity. To keep his *EŚND* free from this menace he even did not recognize the character of Rādhā. In practical life also he encouraged women empowerment as proved from the episode of *Satī Rādhika, Candarī Āi* etc. 'There are instances of Śaṅkaradeva giving initiation to women like Chandari and Banara, not to speak of wives of Bir Chilarai, the great Koch general. Woman also became Medhis during his period' (Pathak, 2005, p.237). Śaṅkaradeva was so optimistic about the growing power of women in future that he even predicted in *Kali Yuga* men will be subservient to women (*kalīta haibeka loka strī parādhīna*). In his religious order women were given due honour and were encouraged to acquire knowledge in scriptures. Once, his maid Candari defeated a group of scholars who came for arguments with Śaṅkaradeva. Candari was washing clothes on the bank of a river when she met the group and came to know about their purpose. Then she recited some verses explaining the main tenets of the *Gītā* in simple

Assamese. The scholars were amazed to listen to that and thought that if the maid had such knowledge what depth of knowledge the master would have. In fear of humiliate, they flew away (Deva Goswami, 2005, p.12). Similarly, due to Śaṅkaradeva's influence the immediate following leaders of his order provided a good amount of freedom to the women. Administrative responsibilities were given to some women devotees. For instance, the responsibility of *Medhi* was assigned to *Āi Dāyāla* (wife of *telī Kṛṣṇa Ātai*) (KGC, p.458). Not only that, Śaṅkaradeva's own granddaughter-in-law *Āi Kanaklata* took charge as the head of the order.

6.0: Conclusion

Thus, Śaṅkaradeva's Bhakti Movement not only put a check on the then prevailing derogatory situation of woman but gradually helps to enhance their socio-economic status. Although the women were not getting chances of formal education but they were well versed with the knowledge of the scriptures through informal mode. They also took part in the management and administrative task of the religious order. Therefore, it is clear that the discrimination against women which is available in the present Vaishnavite society is completely to the opposite of Śaṅkaradeva's ideology. So, efforts must be done to remove such discrimination for gender equality in Assam.

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Role of Woman in Eri-culture as an Agro Based Activities: A Study in Titabor Sub-division of Assam

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ABSTRACT

Eri-culture is the cultivation of eri-silk worms. It is an agro-based activity that has been playing an important role in the rural economy of Assam. In Assam three major varieties of silk namely eri, muga and mulberry are grown. But among this, eri-culture occupy a major position of the state. Eri-culture involves cultivation of food plant for eri-worms, rearing of worms for production of cocoons, reeling and spinning of cocoons for production of yarn etc. for value added benefit such as processing and weaving. It also includes many other practical aspects such as increasing productivity of cultivation as well as labour, improvement of cocoon production, generating profitable income, especially of rural people. In all these activities woman have shown their mettle and performed their tasks most skillfully. In the village under study, women are playing an important role in eri-culture activities. This paper seeks to show involvement of woman in 'eri-culture' an agro-based activity, which has brought about development of rural economy. This survey was carried out during 2016 in Titabor Sub-Division.

Key words : Eri-culture, Women, Eri-workers, Rural Economy, Assam.

Introduction:

Various studies have brought out the vital role that women have been playing in all form of activities related to various agro based industry like Sericulture, Apiculture and Pisciculture etc. Women contributes a higher portion of the labor force in the above mentioned industry than men. However, they

are generally not active in decision making in the community (Barman, 2001; Bose, Ahmed and Hussain, 2009; Rushi, 2000;). However, in the present study, it has been found that women are involved in decision making in their households as well as in the village. The study by Regmi and Weber (1997) has critically assessed the existing gender relations in

agricultural, in the cross-cultured, historical and contemporary perspectiveness lead to less involvement in income earning activities in far-off places. Women are involved in house work, crop production and livestock rearing.

Sericulture, as a crop enterprise, has emerged as one of the dominant fields in the theoretical and methodological understanding in the disciplines of sociology and social anthropology in India. Thus, sociological analysis of sericulture and its emergence in the development literature gives us an idea of the activity which would trigger further studies. Here an attempt has been made to understand the sociological view of sericulture and woman role in the development of the community. It has been seen that eri-culture activity brings income to the community without any bias of caste and gender. As woman has a crucial role in the activities of eri-culture, it equally create opportunities and make them independent socially and economically (Gutha and Indira, 2010, 2011, Goyal, 2007). In our

country the second largest producer of silk in the world, enjoy the unique distinction of producing all the four varieties of natural silk, namely eri, muga, mulberry and tosar. The silk industry, sericulture is an agro-based industry that involves cultivation of food plants for silkworm, reeling of silkworm for production of cocoons for production of yarn etc. for value added benefits such as processing and weaving. This culture also include many other practical aspect such as increasing productivity of cultivation as well as labor, improvement of cocoon production, silk yarn and provide employment to rural people specially the women. Assam is the third largest silk producing state in the country, having potential for production of 3 varieties of silk (mulberry, eri and muga) shaving around 15% of country's total raw silk production. Muga silk of Assam is the unique golden-yellow silk production only in India. The production of silk in Assam during last 3 year is as under –

Year	Mulberry	Eri (MT)	Muga (MT)	Total (MT)
2016-16	40	3143	142	3325
2016-17	52	3619	139	3810
2017-18	59	4045	157	4861

(Source – Govt. Silk Board)

Various schemes/plan are implemented by Government to encourage silk production and its manufacture in the country including Assam. Central Silk Board (CSB) has been implementing a central sector scheme "Silk Samagra" for development of sericulture

in the country. It has been playing an important role in the generation of employment and income in the slowly growing rural economy of Assam. In the absence of major economic progress, the silk-culture of Assam has opened up alternate avenues to a wider

section of poor villagers, especially the woman in rural Assam. Among these, silk, eri-culture has also played an important role in village economy especially in Upper Assam, because in the climate condition of Assam, temperature is between 20°C and 28°C with 90% of humidity suitable for eri-culture. Also plenty of wild grown food plant of eri-silk worm are available in Assam, that are suitable for the growth of eri-silk worm. Government Report shows that about 5.44 per cent of the total workforce and thus about 8 per cent of the primary sector people engaged in Sericulture (Government Report of Assam, 2005). Over all, sericulture is the activity of low investment agro based industry of Assam. Thousands of families in Assam (specially Upper Assam) have been engaged directly or indirectly in eri-culture activities like plantation and maintenance of food plant (primary and secondary food plant), collecting leaves, feeding and rearing of pupae up to cocoon stage, spinning and rearing activities.

The present study will mainly explore the role of women in Eri-culture and discuss their involvement in culture of eri-silkworm, host plant, feeding and so on.

METHODOLOGY:

Area of Study:-

Titabor Sub-Division is one of the three Civil Sub-Division of Jorhat district others being Majuli and Jorhat. This Sub-Division comprises of two Revenue Circle namely Titabor and Mariani and seven Mouza, Titabor, Amguri, Kharikatia, Borholla,

Thengal, Kakodunga, Nakachari and Katoni. The headquarter of Titabor Civil Sub-Division is at Titabor which is at a distance of 22 Km from the district headquarter. The economy of Titabor sub-division is based on agriculture. Major agricultural product of this sub-division is paddy. Establishment of a rice research station at Titabor has increased production of rice to a large extent in the entire region. Along with Rice Experimental Station, there is a Sericulture Training Institute and Research Station at Titabor town. Most of the women of Titabor Sub-Division are good weaver. They produce Eri, Muga and Silk clothing which are a good earning source to many of them.

For the analysis, data has been collected from the Census Report, Directorate of Sericulture, Government of Assam. Primary data have been collected from families chosen by multistage sampling procedure from Titabor sub-division under Jorhat district, where sericulture, especially eri-culture and its productivity have been growing noticeably during last few decades (De and Das, 2007). First of all total 6 villages were chosen under 64 No. Pub Thengal Panchayat under Jorhat Development Block, Baghchung of Jorhat, Assam. Total 120 families were selected on the basis of the proportion of families engaged in eri-culture activities. Table-1 displays the number of families chosen from respective villages under this block of Jorhat District.

Table-1 Profile of the study area

District	Block	Name of Village	No. of families
Jorhat	Jorhat Development Block	Thengal	30
		Naa-chungi	30
		Balijan	15
		Bojalbari	20
		Naa-Pam	10
		Mordholoi	15
Total			120

The primary data were collected through a structured household schedule, informal interviews, case studies and observation from all respondents in the villages. Qualitative information with regard to the technological development, land holding, demographic aspects, were collected by household schedule and the District Statistical handbook. Secondary data were collected from Annual Report of the Development of Sericulture, Assam.

Case study – Village Profile:-

Thengal, Na-chunghi, Balijan, Bojalbari, Naa-Pam and Mordholoi villages are situated in the 64 No Pub Thengal Panchayat and 13 Km away from district headquarter Jorhat. These villages are inhabited by ST, OBC, MOBC and general caste people. Among these communities ST (Thengal Kochari) are the dominant caste in these villages. They are dominant politically and economically, while MOBC (Chutia and Moran) community occupies 2nd dominant caste under these villages. They are economically backward in comparison to general caste. The total population of the villages is 6,700 formed by 1315 families. On

the basis of land holding pattern, the people of study area are classified into small, marginal farmers from the majority. The number of big farmer and landless are quite few in numbers. The basic crop cultivated by the people of these study areas are paddy and some commercial crops like tea and 'Sachi' plant are also grown in these villages as a source of secondary income. Eri-culture and Weaving are major income source in ST, OBC and MOBC caste woman. In general caste woman only involves in weaving majority of women except general caste are employed in a planting and nursing castor plant, which is the major food for eri-silk moth. Generally people of these areas are involved in eri-culture because food plant of eri-silk moth is grown vigorously in this area. Women are actively engaged in the plucking leaf of castor plant. The task of plucking leaf of castor plant has to be done in a skilled manner one must have full knowledge about which leaves to be plucked to suit different stages of eri-silk moth. Women go to the field for plucking the castor leaves and return to the rearing house before noon. Women are expert in carrying the moth, rearing method, with great deal of care and practice. Good harvest

depend on good rearing technique. Specially tribal women of this area are very expert in this culture. When the eri-worms matures and time is ripe for spinning the cocoons, it is again women who are employed for picking the matured worms and keeping it in bamboo bag which contain dry leaves (specially dry banana plant leaves). And inside the bamboo bag,

matured worms are ready for spinning the cocoons. The spinning is completed in 2-3 days. The cocoons are open mouthed, tapering at one end and flat rounded at the open end. Eri cocoons are stalkless, flussy white or brick red in color. The villages are very well connected by road and has good transport facilities.

Method and Data Analysis:-

The data collected was classified and put in tabular form for analysis purpose. Simple statistical tools like average, distribution has been used to analyze the data.

Result and Discussions:

Table-2 : Distribution of women according to sources of income in the study area

Sl.No.	Source of Income	No. of responds (%)
1	Agriculture	30%
2	Service Sector	5%
3	Sericulture	42%
4	Lives stock	20%
5	Others	3%
Total		100%

(Source – Primary Data Source)

Table-3 : Participation of women in various sericulture activities

Sl. No.	Sericulture Activities	Percentage of women participation (%)
1	Land preparation	2%
2	Collection of planting material	1%
3	Planting	10%
4	Pest and Disease Management	13%
5	Collecting of leaf	42%
6	Chowki rearing	35%
7	Maintenance of Hygienic condition	42%
8	Marketing	1%
9	Spinning	10%

(Source – Primary Data Source)

Table-2 shows the income structures of the respondents. Majority of women in the study area are involved in eri-culture activities. As has been mentioned earlier, ericulture has existed in Titabor Sub-Division almost as a practice amongst the people since time immemorial. Only 30% of the women derive their income from agriculture. The table also shows that 20% of the women in the study area derive their income from livestock rearing. Women engaged in the service sector are mostly school teacher in the nearby school of the locality and some are engaged in

working as ASHA worker and service given by the National Rural Health Mission. The contribution of women in Eri-culture, in different activities is shown in Table-3. Involvement of woman is high in all activities except those activities which involves going out from their home like collection of planting materials, land preparation and marketing. Activities like spinning, bed cleaning rearing, planting of food plant and maintenance of hygienic conditions are basically involves in women in the study area.

Table-4 : Amount of average income derived from different income source

Sl. No.	Source of Income	Average household income (Rs.)	Percentage
1	Agriculture Sector	40,200.00	35.48%
2	Service Sectors	25,000.00	22.07%
3	Wage Income	7,000.00	6.17%
4	Livestock	9,000.00	7.94%
5	Sericulture	15,200.00	13.42%
6	Hand loop and Handicraft	11,500.00	10.15%
7	Others	5,400.00	4.77%
Total		1,13,300.00	

(Source – Primary data source)

Table – 5: Distribution of respondents according to problem faced in sericulture activities

Sl. No.	Problem	No. of women in percent	Total no. of Respondent	Rank
1	Climatic disturbance	33	105	R ₄
2	Shortage of skill workers	20		R ₅
3	Fluctuation of cocoon prices	55		R ₂
4	Marketing problem	61		R ₁
5	Pest and disease	42		R ₃

(Source – Primary Data Source)

Table-4 shows the average household income of the sample household. From the table data it has been observed that agricultural sector contributes the highest percentage of (35.48%) household income, followed by sericulture contributing 13.42%. From this survey it is clear that tribal women (Thengal Kachari) are familiar with eri-culture and it has always been a subsidiary occupation of the tribal women. And it will help to improve their economic condition to some extent.

The problem faced by the women relating to ericulture, such as climatic disturbance, marketing problem, non-availability of good quality seed, fluctuation of cocoon prices and pest and disease are ranked in the table-5.

Summary and Conclusion:

The study report shows that Ericulture generates direct and indirect income for women in the study area. It is the agro-based industry and which does not require high education. Besides this, it requires very low investment and brings in high return. Most of the activities related to ericulture, particularly, rearing of eri, spinning activity can be done indoors.

The Sericulture respondents also cultivate other crops like paddy, tea, vegetables. Owing to continuous research and improvement in recent years, sericulture has established its superiority over other principal crops. Employment opportunities in Sericulture can be categorized under two heads. One opportunities related to eri cultivation and silkworm rearing which are

agricultural in nature and which are undertaken in rural areas. Other opportunities relating to silk reeling and marketing are mostly undertaken in semi-urban and urban areas. Thus the analysis clearly establishes the importance of sericulture over other crops in the generation of gainful employment for young and aged women at home at minimum risk. In the study, it emerged that there have been instance of women being actively involved in the decision making process, with special reference to sericulture practice and also community development.

As mentioned earlier, it was a woman who pioneered and initiated the sericulture in the study village. Being an agricultural region and non-existence of big and small industries development of agro-based sericulture industries (specially in Ericulture) can play major role for economic development and employment generation in Titabor Sub-Division area. Sericulture may be taken as full time activity among the respondents of study area it will help to increase the income as well as uplift their living standard.

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Role of Women in Family Health Through Traditional Practices

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ABSTRACT

Women are an integral part in every society. They are the nucleus of our families. Their contribution to the family and society is uncountable. Women's traditional roles within families have positioned them to directly impact the overall health and well being of their families. Women are central to the health of their families by contributing directly to the nutrition of their families through the production, processing and selection of foods for family consumption. Women generally prepare some traditional medicine for first time when their families members are suffering different kinds of disease. They have the knowledge about the plants which are available in the surrounding. The women thus have been innovative users of plants and plants products in the traditional medicine for several generations in close contact with nature.

Key words : Traditional, Medicine, Nutrition, Health

Introduction :

Women responsible for most health decisions in the home. Women's traditional roles within families have positioned them to directly impact the overall health and well being of their families. As food procurers and preparers, primary caretaker of family numbers and socializing agents, women ensure that their family members are healthy by providing appropriate diagnosing and treating illness and teaching and monitoring hygienic practices thus the roles that mothers play within the family are directly related to the health of the family, particularly that of

young children. When mothers are absent children's health and overall family health is negatively affected. So, women are central to the health of their families through the production, processing and selection of foods for family consumption.

India is gifted with enormous wealth of biodiversity. The local people who depend on plants for their day to day life. Medicinal plants played an important role in the history of human nutrition and medicine. Medicinal plant's provide raw materials for use in all the indigenous system of medicine in India namely Ayurveda. According to the world Health

organization (WHO), 80% of the population in developing countries including India relies on traditional medicine, mostly in the form of plant drugs for their health care needs. Additionally modern medicines contain plant derivatives to the extent of about 25%.

North East India is a defined destination for the traders of medicinal plant. A large number of plant species naturally grown in this region was identified as medico-chemically-potent materials in different forms of medicinal practices. North East India as a whole is a home for a large number of diverse medicinal plants including several rare, endangered and endemic plants species.

Objective :

1. To study the traditional use of medicinal plants both in urban and rural area.
2. To compare the use of medicinal plants both in urban and rural area.

Materials and Methods :

The survey was conducted in the rural and urban areas of both Jorhat and Majuli district by performing interviews, field studies and through structured questionnaires. 20 families were randomly selected from urban area and 20 families from rural area. The different study areas of Jorhat district were viz., Cholahora, Malow Ali, Dorangi Chuk and the different study areas of Majuli district were namely Adi-elengi Gaon, Balichapori, Alengi Gaon and Goal Gaon. The survey was conducted based on female of 30 to 70 years age, who traditionally uses plants as food and medicine. They are usually cultivator and service holders who are familiar about the traditional importance of plants.

Observation : During the survey period we found the following plants species are use locally in different types disease in family health by women.

1) Common Name : Tulsi

Scientific Name : *ocimum tenuiflorum*

Use : i) Tulsi is taken as herbal tea.

ii) It is very effective against indigestion, headache and insomnia.

iii) Tulsi help in curing malaria.

iv) Tulsi oil is used as the ear drop.

2) Common Name : Peppermint Scientific Name : *Mentha piperita*

Use : Peppermint is sometimes regarded as "the world's oldest medicine". Peppermint are naturally high in vitamin A and vitamin C. Crushed leaves rubbed on the skin help soothe and relax the muscle. Peppermints leaves are used to –

- 1) Reduce irritable bowel syndrome
- 2) Against upset stomachs
- 3) Treat fevers
- 4) Inhibit bacterial growth

3) Common Name : Dupor tenga

Scientific Name : *Bryophyllum pinnatum*

Use : 1) Leaf paste is applied in headache, cuts, fever, muscular pain

2) One leaf eaten raw with one pepper corn first time every morning for 3 to 7 days cures urinary stones.

3) The plants is tonic and stimulant.

4) Common Name : Garlic

Scientific Name : *Alium Sativum*

Use : 1) It is used for lowering cholesterol and blood pressure.

2) It has antimicrobial effects.

3) It is used widely as a flavor in cooking and helps in digestion.

5) **Common Name : Ginger**

Scientific Name : *Zingiber officinal*

Use : Rhizome is highly esteemed as a spice for its excellent odour and pungent taste. The Juice of the Rhizome mixed with honey and decoction of Basil leaves is taken orally to cure cough.

1) It is used in headaches, indigestion, blood pressure etc.

2) It is also used in treatment of cold, cough, flu, asthma.

3) It relieves menstrual pains and cramps.

6) **Common Name : Ponownuwa**

Scientific Name : *Boerhaavia diffusa*

Use : 1) The plants is useful in inflammations, asthma, cough, constipation.

2) Roots are effective in anaemia, heart disease, cough and intestinal colic.

7) **Common Name : Nephaphu**

Scientific Name : *Cleroden drum Colebrookianum*

Use : i) Leaves after boiling are eaten in high blood pressure and also as vegetable.

ii) It is also good for dysentery abdominal pain and heart diseases.

8) **Common Name : Amla**

Scientific Name : *phyllanthus emblica*

Use :

1) It has cooling, diuretic and laxative properties and help in detoxification.

2) It also aids in cleaning the mouth and strengthens teeth and bones.

3) It also helps to prevent respiratory disorders such as common cold, bronchitis and other respiratory tract.

9) **Common Name : Moha neem**

Scientific Name : *azadirachta indica*

Use :

i) The bark is used for malaria, stomach and intestinal ulcers, skin disease, pain and fever.

ii) Neem leaves have anti bacterial properties which is why it works wonders on infection, burns and any kind of skin problems.

10) **Common Name : Narasingha**

Scientific Name : *Murraya Koenigii*

Use :

1) Young leaves are cooked and eaten in stomach disorder.

2) Fresh leaves are rubbed on belly to cure stomach ache.

3) Root bark is soaked in water and this extract is taken orally in hepatitis, diarrhoea and vomiting.

4) Leaves and root barks are also useful in skin disease and colic.

11) **Common Name : Halodhi**

Scientific Name : *Curcuma longa*

Use :

1) Haldhi is considered as a multipurpose medicine in NE India

2) Rhizomes are used as stomach, tonic, blood purifier.

3) It is also used as antiparasitic and used in skin disease.

4) Fresh juice mixed with milk is considered as tonic and is beneficial in common cold and general debility.

12) **Common Name : Soru manimuni**

Scientific Name : *Hydrocotyle Sibthorpioides*

Use :

1) Whole plants is used in rheumatism, pulmonary and digestive troubles, syphilis and other skin diseases.

2) It is used as vermifuge and diuretic.

3) Roots are eaten to cure liver complaints.

13) **Common Name : Bor manimuni**

Scientific Name : *Centella asiatica*

Use :

1) Whole plants is used to cure dysentery and stomachache.

2) It is helpful in nerve diseases and epilepsy

3) Effective in high blood pressure.

4) Helps relieve depression

5) Juice of the plant is taken orally in the treatment of asthma, bronchitis and kidney troubles.

Result and discussion :

During the study 13 species were found to be consume mostly as a medicine both in urban and rural area. The overall result is shown in the table-1

Table - 1 Total Nos. family used the plants as a medicine both in urban and rural area.

Sl. No.	Medical Plants	Common disease	Nos. of families use in urban area (20 nos.)	Nos. of families use in rural area (20 nos.)
1	Tulsi	Common cold, asthma, headache, vomiting, cough	18 nos.	20 nos.
2	Peppermint	Stomachs, fevers, Indigestion	20 nos.	20 nos.
3	Dupor tenga	Urinary problem, muscular pain, headache	18 nos.	18 nos.
4	Garlic	Blood pressure, cough indigestion, fever	20 nos.	20 nos.
5	Ginger	Cough, headaches, indigestion, blood pressure	20 nos.	20 nos.
6	Ponownuwa	Anaemia, heart disease, cough, constipation	12 nos.	18 nos.
7	Nephaphu	High blood pressure, dysentery, abdominal pain, heart diseases	15 nos.	20 nos.
8	Amla	Common cold, bronchitis, Indigestion, cough	20 nos.	18 nos.
9	Moha Neem	Skin disease, pain, fever, stomachs	20 nos.	20 nos.

10 Narasingha	Stomach disorder, diarrhea, vomiting	20 nos.	20 nos.
11 Halodi	Stomachti, skin disease, common cold.	18 nos.	20 nos.
12 Soru manimoni	Digestive troubles skin disease, pulmonary problems, liver complains	15 nos.	20 nos.
13 Bor Manimoni	Dysentery, stomachs, asthma, blood pressure	15 nos.	20 nos.

From the study it was observed that the consumption and cultivation of medicinal plants are less in number in urban areas in comparison to rural area. It is due to ignorance of traditional knowledge and non-availability of medicinal plants. In rural area the medicinal plants are available and people have more knowledge about their importance. They are also interested to avail the knowledge from senior family member mostly from the mother. The mother plays a key role in the passing the traditional knowledge among the family.

Conclusion :

The study concluded that consumption of medicinal plants has remained undiminished over the years among the people. Medicinal plants has been utilized in Assam for a long time. Medicinal plants as an important natural resources needs to be further exploited and popularized and proper scientific investigation on the nutritional and medicinal values of medicinal plants and their impacts on human health have to be done. It also has become mandatory to undertake research and studies on the medicinal plants related to traditional conservation, cultivation and maintenance of plants diversity.

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Articulation of Social Injustices : Gender Discrimination and Patriarchy tradition in Bama's Autobiography "Sangati"

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ABSTRACT

Dalit literature, as a literary and cultural expression challenges existing literary structures through their articulations of cultural and caste discriminations and autobiography is the most potent and often exercised form of fiction produced in Dalit literature. A Dalit woman's autobiographies openly criticizes the patriarchal structure in their society and reflect on all kinds of exploitations and oppression these women endures both within and outside their society.

This research paper examines the well known autobiography 'Sangati' written by the first Dalit women writer Bama Faustine. In her text she documents the reality of all the people of her community particularly the Paraiya women who not only suffers from double discrimination but are also victim of the reigning patriarchal system. Bama's autobiography is a clarion call to all women of her community to work collectively to remove all traces of sorrow, miseries, servitude, sex exploitations and assaults that Dalit women have been facing over the years, just so that a new world order reigns and prevail.

Key words : Dalits, Autobiographies, Indian Society, Gender Discrimination, Patriarchy tradition

Introduction:

The Dalits, called by different names like Dasyu, Dasa, Atisudra, Panchame, Tirukutdba, Adikarnataka, Adi Dravida are actually the 'Depressed Classes' of Indian society. They are the people who are economically, socially, politically exploited

from centuries. They have been systematically pushed to the periphery by the traditional Brahmanical structure of oppression. This exploitation is due to the discrimination followed by age old caste hierarchical tradition in the Hindu society. It has subjected them to

a life of poverty and humiliation. Even after independence the Dalits have not been allowed to live a life of dignity and equality. It is this idea of 'equality' which sparked the beginning of the Dalit Movement in India, as a protest to the age old atrocities committed against them.

Jacques Ranciera (2011, p. 53) observes that rather than create works of art, contemporary artists want to get out of the museum and induce alterations in the space of everyday life, generating new forms of relations. If this is true of the most forms of contemporary art, it is even more so in the case of the artistic expressions of communities that have been historically subjected to all kinds of painful experiences due to political, social or cultural reasons, such as literature of the Indian Dalit women, the lowest rung in the hierarchy of the Hindu caste system. Narratives for them are spaces in which they can become "for the teller of his or her own story becomes, in the act of narration, both the observing subject and the end the object of investigation, remembrance and contemplation" (Watson, 1).

According to Ruman Sutradhar at a time when there was no means of communication to support the Dalits, pen was the only solution. The media, newspapers were all under the control of the powerful class – the Brahmin. The Brahmins never allowed the Dalit voice to be express; as they thought a threat for their own survival. Dalits began their own magazine and began to express their own experiences. Their pain wrote not with ink, but with blood, of their own cuts – the cuts being basically mental, with instincts of physical

in them.

Keeping this in view, this paper will examines "*Sangati*" autobiographical work of Indian Dalit writer Bama to see in what manner, her literary narrative articulates social injustice, gender discrimination, casteism and all other difference and serves as a social document that tries to counter attack the social-cultural hegemony of the upper castes.

Cielo Griselda Festino rightly opines that the literary narratives like all kinds of narratives are deeply intertwined with the life of the community where they originate. In the same way, that there are no communities that do not tell their stories in some way or another. Because these stories are either told or silenced, they reveal all. What the community does or refuses to do, what it believes in or considers a prejudice; its virtues and also its deep injustices. (<http://www.uem.br/acta>). In other words literature has the power, as Morris (1996) adds to validate or invalidate, human suffering by recognizing 'literariness' in some narratives and denying it to others.

Nevertheless, if literature expresses the values of the community within which the narrative exists, subjugated communities can also challenge established modes of literature by creating their own aesthetics and narrative traditions. This actually happens when, what is considered as having 'literary value' is reinvented in order to give visibility to what counts as other forms of suffering.

Within Dalit literature, autobiography as a literary and cultural expression has created a praxis, which has challenged existing literary structures through their articulations of cultural and caste discriminations, "It

focuses on the question of otherness, difference, marginality cannon and the categories of aesthetics. In order to voice the protest of the marginalized Dalit literature often follows the subversive historiographic paths of personalizing history. It is therefore, perhaps, that autobiography is the most potent and often exercised form of fiction produced in Dalit literature" (Devy, p. 272)

According to Shweta Singh, "Dalit woman's personal narratives not only challenged their absence in Dalit men's narratives, but also voice the concerns shared by women across all strata. These alternative accounts openly criticize the patriarchal structure in their society thus reflecting on women's problems with specific issues in a Dalit society. The hardships faced by these women under the patriarchal order are thus articulated. Dalit women's autobiographies are very candid about all kinds of exploitation and oppression that these women had to endure both within and outside their society. They also give lucid accounts of their contribution to the larger cause of the Dalit community.

Dalit men's autobiographies do not mention domestic violence. It is quite evident from Dalit women's autobiographies that this was a major issue among the women. Its complete dismissal in the men's narratives shows their apathy and the complete denial of violence at home. Dalit men like men of all classes and caste thus espouse the beating of wives and the general physical, mental and emotional trauma which the womenfolk have to bear within a household. In the narratives of Dalit women the everyday is a very

important theme. The day to day private life as depicted in the autobiographies reveals the dark side of a patriarchal structure. We get a women's perspective on things – what makes her world, her take on societal evils and her anguish, hopes and fears and also a remembrance of the past. The autobiographies are different not just because they reveal different experiences and different views but also because they unravel the bigger questions of memory, experience, general relations and familial structures which are the same across all societies and classes. Dalit autobiographies help us to think about the genre itself and its deployment by the two sexes. (DU Journals, 42-43)

The writer whose work is to be examined in this paper, Bama Faustine, Mary Fatima Rana is one of the first Dalit women writers to be widely recognized and translated. Born as Faustine Mary Fatima Rani in a village called Puthupathi in Tamil Nadu, South India, Bama is the leading voice of the suppressed class – Dalit. She has committed herself to impart the values of self respect and social consciousness among the Dalit section of the society. Her works include *Karukku* in 1992, a well known autobiography, "*Sangati*" an autobiography of her community and *Vanman*.

"*Sangati*" (1994) is the second work of Bama that is translated into English by Lakshmi Holmstrom nearly after a decade of its publication in Tamil. The title '*Sangati*' means incidents or events of daily life and the episodic plot covers a set of interconnected incidents that happen in the lives of the characters in the novel. The plot covers a span

of three generations starting from Vellaiyamma Kizhavi to that of the narrator. Lakshmi Holmstrom, in the introduction of his books, makes its theme clear, "*Sangati*" move from the story of the individual struggle to the perception of community of Paraiya women a neighborhood group of friends and relations and their joint struggle. In this sense "*Sangati*" is perhaps the autobiography of a community" (Page XV). M.S.S. Pandian argues that Bama verbalises her own life story, depletes the autobiographical "I", which he calls an "outcome of bourgeois individualism...and displaces it with the collectivity of the Dalit community." The story is not her own but that of others too.

In Bama's case nobody can interpret her story. It is something that is very personal. Her life is related to her people. What happened to her could have happened too many of her people. She had the opportunity to tell something that others in her community did not have. She documents the reality of the whole people of her community who were not allowed to voice their own story. In Karukku, the "absence of the self" and the presence of the "collective 'we'" is evident. Bama's text instead of privileging her own voice, functions as a site for the criss-crossing of multiple voices from within her community.

She places every detail in the context of Dalit life. She gives details generalized description of life in her village, the activities and jobs the men and women perform. The act of naming is considered as an exercise of power. So she deliberately does not name her village, the priests, schools and colleges, the nunnery, the Dalit headman etc. The lack of

distinctiveness harmonizes better understanding of the message. Bama's text is also marked by absence of adherence to grammatical rules. She conveys a sense of remorse and guilt when she talks about the material benefits she had enjoyed, an elusive dream for others in her community. Bama's shared testimonial typically unfolds her growing up story in episodes, and throughout she displays indomitable courage, conquering the dominant forces.

In the opinion of Nayar "*Sangati*" "is built around women's conversations events are narrated through women's stories and opinions delivered through them". Bama highlights the fact that in her work the female characters suffer from double discrimination; they are oppressed by both the high class people as well as the Dalit males. They constitute the majority of labourers doing hard manual labour and engage in agricultural activities. But they are paid much less than their male counterparts. This unequal division of labour becomes a major issue in "*Sangati*". The Dalit community is also under the reigning patriarchal system whereby Dalit men who themselves are marginalized by the upper class land owners, in turns marginalize Dalit women.

It is not the same for women of other castes and communities. Our women cannot bear the treatment of upper-caste masters in the fields, and at home, they cannot bear the violence of their husbands (65)

Invidious patriarchal distinctions are initially inculcated in children within the first ten years of their lives. Gender games act as effective tools to achieve this goal. Bama as a

young girl understands the crafting nature of gender games they play. Girls are not allowed to play the games of boys, while games like 'Kabadi; and 'marbles' are meant for boys, girls play it cooking, getting married and other domestic matters.

Even when we played 'mothers and fathers' we always had to serve the mud 'rice' to the boys first. They use to pull us by the hair and hit us saying, what sort of food is this, die without salt or anything!' in those days we used to accept those pretence blows and think it was all good fun. Now a days, for many of the girls, those have become real blows, and their entire lives are hell (31).

Dalit women are oppressed in multiple ways by upper caste men who have evil designs on them as Patti tells: "If upper caste fellows clape eye on you, you are finished. They will drag you off and rape you that's for sure. If you go on a little further, there will be escaped criminals lurking in the plantation" (8)

Again wife beating and cases of domestic violence are found scattered all over the novel. Two of the stories that Bama reminds is that of Mariamma and Thayi whose martial disharmonies are revealed in an attempt to stereotype the Dalit predicament. They are beaten up daily by their husbands. Mariamma is humiliated by her father; assaulted by the landlord and later tormented by her husband. She is a true representative of the entire community of the submissive Dalit women. Thayi is badly beaten with chappals and belts by her husband. When he was

interrupted by Karuthamuthu, he resorts aggressively: "Who are you to speak for this munde? She is my wife. I can beat her or kill her if I wish. You go and mind your own business" and then turns to his wife to abuse and beat her saying, "You common whore, you, any passing loafer will come in support of you, you mother fucker's daughter. You will go with ten men." (43) Bama also describes in "*Sangati*" how the female sex stripped off from self respect and deprived of all rights which can help them to uplift themselves. Bama's cry on the grounds of gender discrimination is audible in her autobiography "*Sangati*":

Why can't we be the same as boys? We are not allowed to talk loudly or laugh noisily; even when we sleep we can't stretch out on our backs nor lie faces down on our bellies. We always have to walk with our heads bowed down, gazing at our toes. You tell us all this rubbish and keep us under control. Even when our stomachs are screaming with hunger, we must not eat first. We are allowed to eat only after the men in the family have finished and gone. What, Patti aren't we also human beings?" (29).

In the novel, Bama's conversation with her Patti sheds light on the issue of economic exploitation by the superior people on the part of Dalit men and by both on the part of Dalit women. Their women are real wage earners but they do not get their due; do the hard work inside or outside the house but "whatever work they did, were paid less than the man. Even when they did the very

same work, they were paid less". Their plight is evident as Patti explains that, "We have to labour in the fields as hard as men do and then on the top of that, struggle to bear and raise our children. As for the men, their work ends when they've finished in the fields... We only toil in the fields and in the home until our vaginas shrivel."

It is worth noticing here that Bama has slotted in all those issues which are complimentary to each other, that is, one problem overlaps another, for instance, above discussed economic exploitation is the result of caste, class and patriarchy. Patriarchy (a society, system or country that is ruled or controlled by men) is the patron of gender discrimination or better to say, gender discrimination is the central feature of patriarchy. In "*Sangati*", from beginning to the end, Bama has dealt with gender issues at large so the term 'gender' needs to be conferred. The book "*Sangati*" encapsulates the author's experience of working within a heterogeneous and oppressed society and the series of several interconnected anecdotes, experiences, news, and events as narrated in the book, from an autobiography of a community. Bama clarifies her acknowledgement of the work:

My mind is crowded with many anecdotes: stories not only about the sorrows and tears of Dalit women, but also about lively, rebellious culture their eagerness not to let life crush or shatter them, but rather to swim vigorously against the tide... About their hard labor. I wanted to shout out these stories. (Limble 119)

There are various other instances scattered throughout the novel which reflects the psychological trauma, stresses and strain faced by all Dalits one way or the other. But the incorrigible optimist that she is the writer still believes that all is not lost. A time will come when the Dalits will no longer be victims of humiliation in the hands of the upper castes. They will be able to raise their voice against Caste, Class, Patriarchy in general and 'male' sex in particular. The very last line of the novel reveals her belief for a better future of her community: "I am hopeful that such a time will come soon" (123).

Bama suggest that it is the sharp tongue of a woman that can protect her against her oppressors. The characters often break into a song or a chant when the situation demanded and there is a song for every occasions. But what is thought provoking in Bama's sketching a positive identity for the Dalit women. An alternate to her story as opposed to the mainstream is drawn with vivid descriptions of a marriage ceremony, attaining of puberty ceremony, joy of happiness, singing songs, cooking and sharing food. In most rural homes the Dalit women is an earning member, widow re-marriages are possible and the sacred thread worm as a chain during the marriage is not this binding symbol as in other communities. It is interesting that the Dalit women cannot be suppresses in spite of caste and gender oppression. Anam Ragamallika rightly opines that by discussing narratives of many women from the Dalit community Bama places before us the rural Dalit women's identity. Though the struggle is much owing to the double oppression of caste and gender, we notice that

their strength is also revealed the women stand by each other to help each other where there is injustice meted out not only in society but in family circles as well. Bama does not shy away from describing violent, domestic or street quarrels. In "*Sangati*" we hear the voices of many women some in pain, some in anger, some in frustration and some out of courage. Sometimes the language is full of exploitive, with sexual undertones.

Conclusion:

To conclude it may be said that through her memorable heart-touching autobiography, "*Sangati*" Bama has given a clarion call to all women of her community to wake up from their work collectively so that they can live with dignity and self-respect which is their birth right. But to live with dignity, the only thing required is power. To attain power, the first thing required is knowledge. It was thus, Phule and Ambedkar gave the main emphasis on the education of the Dalits, which will not only bestow them with reason and judgment capacity, but also political power and lead to up gradation of their socio-economic status. If this turns into reality, the subalterns will speak and their voice will definitely be heard and they will go all out to remove all traces of sorrows, miseries, servitude, misfortunes, sexual exploitation and assaults of dalit women from the face of Indian society and a new world order will reign and prevail.

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Life in Death: A Reading of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* from Feminist's Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

Published in 1899, Kate Chopin's exemplary novel *The Awakening* is one of the earliest texts that voices against the patriarchal oppression of women. In this fiction, she presents a general overview of the 17th century English society that was overwhelmingly male oriented and left no choice to the other gender. Women were rather considered as 'property' of the patriarch. As J.S. Mill observed that 'the fair sex' are the property of their parents, husband, and children, and this bond were so rigorous that women had no options left for self-realization or assertion. If any women attempted to go for the quest of their self then they were labelled as 'outcastes' or with other worse terms. Kate Chopin, in this fiction, explores this issue of self-realization through the character of Edna Pontellier, whose life was more like a bonded labour rather than a living being. She, by all her means tried for self gratification and live a life of her own but that never became possible in her lifetime. In this paper, an attempt has been made to look at the 'death' of the character as a means of 'life'. Her suicidal attempt was the only means to defy the society, and to be her- The Edna. The paper has been entitled as- **LIFE IN DEATH: A READING OF KATE CHOPIN'S THE AWAKENING FROM FEMINIST'S PERSPECTIVES.**

Key words: Feminism, Patriarchy, Male Domination, Death, Self-assertion.

Kate Chopin engages in feminist reading of society and culture in her novel *The Awakening* through an intense exploration of the notions of motherhood, wifehood, and womanhood in general. In the novel, the protagonist, Edna Pontellier is shown towards the closure as drowning herself- an act that may be called rather abrupt and controversial.

Critical opinions regarding Edna Pontellier's final awakening is one of mental clarity and that her act of drowning is a triumphant act. By doing this, Edna is finally freeing herself from the social constraints and possessions. While others believe that Edna's awakening is a decline into insanity. Instead of triumphing against the society and men who oppress her,

Edna gives herself to the ocean in a symbolic return to the womb, allowing the ocean to possess her. This paper shall make an attempt to look at Edna's final act of drowning as an action leading to the assertion of "self" in the context of the socio-cultural landscape in which she was situated.

Edna's act of drowning may be viewed on one hand as an inevitable death of a woman vainly striving for autonomy and self-agency within a patriarchal society. Conversely, Edna's death can be seen as her triumphant escape from an oppressive world, asserting herself as an individual self. Edna is treated as an object, rather than a person. Her father, too, believes in patriarchy and advises Mr. Pontellier that, "authority, coercion are what is needed. Put your foot down good and hard; the only way to manage a wife" (84). Her father represents the patriarchal society where men always have the power and authority over women. Edna has been married for six years to Leonce Pontellier, who is certainly neither a villain nor a brute, but merely an ordinary husband, a little selfish, a little insensitive, and greatly conventional. While Edna is enjoying a mid-day plunge in the gulf with Robert Lebrun, who had gone bathing at daybreak, the husband's very first words to his wife criticise her arrangement of activities. He remarks that it is "folly" to go bathing at that hour and in that heat. Leonce's attitude towards Edna is essentially proprietary: "You are burnt beyond recognition, he added, looking at his wife as one looks at a valuable piece of personal property which has suffered some damage"

(2). One of Leonce's early complaints about Edna is that she is not sufficiently dedicated to the care of their children, Raoul and Etienne. Certainly Edna recognises that she is not one of the "mother-women", those creatures at Grand Isle like Adele Ratignolle, who "idolized their children, worshipped their husbands, and esteemed it a holy privilege to efface themselves as individuals and grow wings as ministering angels" (9). She has a vague sense of having drifted into the role of motherhood without any particular talent for it. Once again, Chopin focuses on the significance of motherhood as Edna attends Adele's delivery. In a conversation the two women once had at Grand Isle, Edna had attempted to define to her friend the difference between them. She had explained: "I would give up the unessential; I would give my money, I would give my life for my children; but I wouldn't give myself" (56). Adele never seems to understand that Edna is unwilling to live her days stifling her own will and identity in order to be the kind of person needed by her children. She has never known the urgent and overpowering emotions experienced by Edna. Thus, through the act of drowning Edna gives up everything and leaves nothing that could be destroyed or possessed.

Edna, step by step relieves herself from the obligations of her surroundings and undergoes a development that leads to new strength and independence. The novel gives several hints that lead to the conclusion that Edna's act of drowning is an act of liberation- the growth of her sense of identity, her physical and spiritual awakening to passion and self-

knowledge. Edna is surrounded by a society she cannot identify with and does not want to be a part of. The role of women in the nineteenth century was clearly limited to being a mother and wife. Edna does not feel satisfied with this life as she desires to make her own rules and decisions. During her awakening, she breaks free from the social conventions and tries to lead an independent life.

For six years since marriage with Leonce Pontellier, Edna accepts her role in society as a mother and wife. However, in the summer vacation at Grand Isle, Edna begins to understand that she does not want to be oppressed any longer. Slowly, she frees herself from all the duties and refuses the world she has been living in. She lets go of everything around her and she breaks free from the financial as well as domestic domination and even leaves her children to seek for her desires. Edna does not want to give up selfhood as for her a woman's identity as a human being is far more important and essential than the role as a mother or a wife.

Edna's process of self-discovery takes place in a series of three significant stages that eventually lead to the death of Edna at the end. Before Edna begins to discover herself, she is caught between her desires to explore herself and her desires more fully and the realities of Victorian womanhood and life. It is not until the first major event in her awakening; the combination of music and a baptismal swim in the ocean that she finally awakens to a much deeper form of self-awareness. At this point, in the plot after the magical night she is reborn and begins to shed

her identity as a typical "mother-woman" and begins to develop her interests and desires more fully. She rashly gives up her home and husband and in a second major contribution to her awakening, she moves into a small home of her own and engages in an affair through which she can explore herself in relation to her physical as well as creative needs. Her awakening occurs rapidly and she falls so deeply into the process that her third and final awakening- the realisation that she cannot attain her desires completely with the responsibilities and the demands of society into account which is too much for her to handle. She re-enters the sea, the original place of her baptism into self-understanding in an attempt to cleanse herself of her frustrated desires. Like a child, Edna gives into her desires to live according to the new thoughts spurred by her awakening. Thus, Cynthia Griffin Wolff believes that Edna's act of drowning is the ultimate regression to childhood: "And with her final act Edna completes the regression, back beyond childhood, back into time eternal" (241).

When Robert shows up in her life, Edna behaves much like the mythical phoenix. She has risen to such great heights, carried on the wings of her new found creativity and hopes about Robert, with whom she falls in love. When it turns out, however, that he is unwilling to abandon the pressures of society, Edna is crushed- she has flown too close to the sun and is now irreversibly burnt and damaged. For the first time in the haze of her awakening she realises that it is impossible for her to live outside the society completely,

to be herself and have what she dreams of, and it is this that eventually leads Edna to her end. Robert also reminds Edna that despite how free she might feel, but "you were not free; you were Leonce Pontellier's wife" (127). Thus begins the cycle of thought that haunts her that no matter how much she may want to be free and live the life of her dreams, there is no escaping reality. It was not actually the physical happiness that she was searching for, but taking assertion of her body irresponsible of the convention of the society. In the end, as she steps into the water, she sheds her obligations, "Like Venus returning to her originary scene, Edna descends into the sea, re-experiencing for the last time, her childhood motherlessness, adolescent infatuation, the terrors and exhaustion of womanhood" (Papke, 87).

After she has lost Robert Lebrun, Edna unflinchingly faces a vision of her future as it stretches before her: "To-day it is Arobin; tomorrow it will be someone else. It makes no difference to me, it doesn't matter about Leonce Pontellier- but Raoul and Etienne!" (136). Prizing her freedom above all else, disdaining to trample on the "little lives" she loves, Edna gives back her life to the waters that had awakened it.

However, it is important to note that Kate Chopin was not necessarily advocating for suicide as the means of liberation, and self realization. She on the other hand, was in fact, critiquing the society that caged women in such a way that there was no escape from it. The only option that is left with the lonely characters like Edna Pontellier was death.

Such big was their obstacles and possibilities were so limited for them that they had to adopt the path of suicide. And this fact can even be related in today's society especially in India. Suicide by Indian women is a pretty common factor where 37% of the global suicide rates are committed by Indian women, where the same for men stands much lesser. And as the study suggests most of suicides are committed by married women who are mostly victim of dowry, physical torture and all that of which Edna Pontellier is symbolic representation.

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Golden Ratio: The Secret of Perfect Body

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ABSTRACT

The Golden ratio has been used as an -indicator of beauty or perfection in many fields, such as architecture, design and even art like painting and sculpture. Something about it creates beauty that human find ideal and aesthetically pleasing. The idea of perfection has caused a lot of mayhem in our world and in our minds. People, especially young women, experience the pressure to be and look perfect when perfection is often not attainable for us humans. However, there is something that exists in the world of mathematics, and therefore in the world of nature, that suggest that perfection is out there. Our perceptions of beauty are very definitely related to mathematical proportions found in the human form that are related to the Golden ratio. People whose facial dimensions vary significantly from this ratio will be perceived by most to be unattractive or even deformed and grotesque.

Aim of Study: This study aims to find out how the Golden Ratio applies to women body

Key words: Golden ratio, Phi, Body shape

Introduction:

The Golden ratio is a special number found by dividing a line into two parts so that the longer part divided by the smaller part is also equal to the whole length divided by the longer part. It is generally denoted by Greek alphabet 'phi' (ϕ).

In mathematics two quantities are in the Golden ratio if their ratio is the same as the ratio of their sum to the larger of the two quantities. Expressed algebraically, for two quantities a and b with $a > b > 0$

$$\frac{a+b}{a} = \frac{a}{b} = \phi$$

One method for finding the value of ϕ is to start with the left fraction. Through simplifying the fraction and substituting in

$$\frac{b}{a} = \frac{1}{\phi}$$

$$\frac{a+b}{a} = 1 + \frac{b}{a} = 1 + \frac{1}{\phi}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Therefore, } 1 + \frac{1}{\phi} &= \phi \\ \Rightarrow \phi + 1 &= \phi^2 \\ \Rightarrow \phi^2 - \phi - 1 &= 0 \\ \therefore \phi &= \frac{1 \pm \sqrt{1+4}}{2} \\ &= \frac{1 \pm \sqrt{5}}{2} \end{aligned}$$

$\therefore$ The two solutions are

$$\phi = \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} = 1.6180339887...$$

$$\text{and } \phi = \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} = -0.6180339888$$

But ϕ is the ratio between two positive quantities. So ϕ is necessarily positive.

Therefore,

$$\Phi = \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} = 1.6180339887...$$

The Golden ratio is a number that shows up all over the human body, from the length of the arms and legs compared to the torso, and it seems to define what proportions look best; that is most attractive. In fact, artists and sculptors have known about the golden ratio for a long time and have used it to create sculptures and artwork of the ideal human figure. Even plastic surgeons and dental surgeons use it to restructure the human face.

As with 'phi', the digits go on and on, theoretically into infinity. 'Phi' is usually rounded off to 1.618. This number has been discovered and rediscovered many times, which is why it has so many names. The Golden mean, the Golden section, divine proportion etc.

Phidias (500 B.C. – 432 B.C) was a Greek sculptor and mathematician who is

thought to have applied phi to the design of sculptures for the Parthenon. Plato (428 B.C. – 347 B.C.) considered the Golden ratio to be the most universally binding of mathematical relationships. Later, Euclid (365 B.C. – 300 B.C.) linked the Golden ratio to the construction of a pentagram.

Around 1200, mathematician Leonardo Fibonacci discovered the unique properties of the Fibonacci sequence. This sequence ties directly into the Golden ratio because if for any two successive Fibonacci numbers, their ratio is very close to Golden ratio. As the numbers get higher, the ratio becomes closer to 1.618. For example, the ratio of 3 to 5 is 1.666. But the ratio of 13 to 21 is 1.625. Also ratio of 144 to 232 is 1.618. These numbers are all successive numbers in the Fibonacci sequence. These numbers can be applied to the proportions of a rectangle called the Golden rectangle.

The term 'phi' was coined by American mathematician Mark Barr in the 1900. 'Phi' has continued to appear in Mathematics and Physics. It appears around us in our daily lives, even in our aesthetic views. Studies have shown that when test subjects view random faces, the ones they deem most attractive are those with solid parallels to the Golden ratio. Faces judged as the most attractive show golden ratio proportions between the width of the face and the width of the eyes, nose and eyebrows. The test subjects weren't mathematicians or physicists familiar with phi – they were just average people, and the golden ratio elicited an instinctual reaction. The golden ratio also appears in all forms of nature and science.

Objective:

The objective of the study is how the Golden ratio applies to women body.

Methodology:

Data Collection:

The paper is prepared on the basis of the secondary sources of data. The data has been collected from different books, journals and from web link.

Discussion and Analysis:

Female body shape or female figure is the cumulative product of a woman's skeleton structure and the quantity and distribution of muscle and fat on the body.

As with most physical traits, there is a wide range of normality of female body shapes. Attention has been focused on the female body as a source of aesthetic pleasure, sexual attraction, fertility and reproduction in most human societies. There are, and have been, wide differences in what should be considered an ideal or preferred body shape, both for attractiveness and for health reasons.

Woman's bodies occur in a range of shapes. Female figures are typically narrower at the waist than at the bust and hips. The bust, waist and hips are called inflection points and the ratios of their circumferences are used to define basic body shapes.

Estrogens have a significant impact on a female's body shape. They are produced in both male and female, but their levels are significantly higher in women, especially in those of reproductive age. Besides other functions, estrogens promote the development of female secondary sexual characteristics, such as breasts and hips. As a result of

estrogens, during puberty, girls develop breasts and their hips widen. Estrogens can also affect the female body shape in a number of other ways, including increasing fat stores, accelerating metabolism, reducing muscle mass, and increasing bone formation. Estrogens cause higher levels of fat to be stored in a female body than in a male body. They also affect body fat distribution, causing fat to be stored in the buttocks, thighs, and hips in women. Body fat distribution may change from time to time, depending on food habits, activity levels and hormone levels. When women reach menopause and the estrogens produced by ovaries declines, fat migrates from their buttocks, hips and thighs to their waists; later fat is stored at the abdomen.

Change in Body Shape:

The aging process has an inevitable impact on a person's body shape. A woman's sex hormone levels will affect the fat distribution on her body. According to Devendra Singh, *Body shape is determined by the nature of body fat distribution that in turn is significantly correlated with women's sex hormone, profile, risk for disease, and reproductive capability.* Concentration of estrogens will influence where body fat is stored. Before puberty both male and females have a similar waist-hip ratio. At puberty, a girl's sex hormone mainly estrogens, will promote breast development and a wider pelvis tilted forward for child bearing, and menopause a woman's estrogens levels will cause her body to store excess fat in the buttocks, hips and thighs,

but generally not around her waist, which will remain about the same size as it was before puberty. These factors result in women's waist-hip ratio being lower than for male, although males tend to have a greater upper body to waist-hip ratio giving them a V shape look because of their greater muscle mass.

A woman's dimensions are often expressed by the circumference around the three inflection points. For example "36-29-38" in imperial units would mean a 36 inch bust, 29 inch waist and 38 inch hips. A woman who is 36-24-36 at 5ft 2 inch height will look different from a woman who is 36-24-36 at 5ft 8 inch height. Since the taller woman's figure has greater distance between measuring points. She will likely appear thinner or less curvaceous than her shorter counterpart, again, through they both have the same BWH ratio. This is because the taller woman is actually thinner as expressed by her lower BWH or body mass index, used to measure body weight in relation to height. BMH is an indicator of fat distribution, not fat percentage.

Most common female body shapers are

Apple (triangle downwards):

This body shape describes a person who has broader shoulders and bust than they do hips.

Banana or straight (rectangular):

This body shape describes a person who typically has waist measurements that are less than 9 inches smaller than the hips or bust measurements.

Pear, spoon or bell (triangle upwards):

This body shape describes a person who has hip measurements greater than their bust measurements.

Hourglass (triangle opposing, facing inwards):

This body shape describes a person with hip and bust measurements nearly equal in size, with a narrower waist measurement.

The mathematical ideal golden ratio number is 1.618. In men this is considered the most attractive ratio between waist and chest, i.e. the chest measurement is 1.618 times the waist measurement. But in women, if we divide the hip measurement by the waist measurement, the women came up with an average figure of 1.43. If we then divide the chest by the waist measurement, the women came up with an average figure of 1.67. Thus, the women actually finding narrower waist is more attractive. This indicates a woman with curvy hourglass shape is considered more attractive.

To calculate own ratio, we first calculate -

1. Measure hips, waist and chest
2. Divide chest measurement by waist measurement
3. Divide hips by waist

Now compare both of these figures to the ideal of 1.618. But bear in mind that in practice real people tend to prefer a figure slightly less than this. So the golden ratio for a woman's body measurements are probably somewhere in the range 1.3 to 1.5.

Conclusion:

The golden ratio is a number that shows up all over the human body. Golden ratio is truly the most aesthetically pleasing side length ratio. In as simple term as possible, we are evolutionarily hardwired to love the look of the golden ratio. It represents perfect symmetry, virility, and strength. The golden ratio is a mathematical way to ensure that the physique has the most evolutionarily attractive look imaginable. Most importantly, the application of the golden ratio to beauty refers only to physical beauty. In a nutshell it may be said that physical beauty is fleeting and passes with time. Other qualities of the mind and soul are the substance of true beauty. These include love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.

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Study of Health and Hygienic condition among female Tea Garden Workers of Meleng Tea Estate

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ABSTRACT

Assam is the highest tea producer state in the country. Tea garden community plays an important role in tea industry. There is scarcity of reliable information on health and hygienic condition among female tea garden workers of Assam. The present paper tries to find out the hygienic practices and their health-related impacts on the female tea garden workers of Meleng Tea Estate in Jorhat District. Due to ignorance or unavailability of resources they are unaware about the health and hygienic condition which not only affect the health but also affect the states' economy.

Key words: Health, Hygiene, Meleng, Tea garden.

Introduction :

Tea is consumed in about 100 countries and India is the largest producer and consumer of tea in the world (Baroowah, 2006). Assam is the largest tea producing state in India and contributes about 60 per cent of the total production of India (Sen, 2008). Tea is an important agro-industry of Assam, which contributes immensely to the state's economy (Griffiths, 1967). Tea garden community play an important role in States' tea economy. The tea community people came to Assam during British rule from various parts of country including Jharkhand, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu etc. Now they are a part of our society as well as culture.

Health is wealth, but due to some ignorance or unavailability of resources people suffer from various diseases, especially tea community people. Their health and hygiene plays a major role in states' economy. The importance of hygiene practices cannot be denied for a healthy life. Using hygienic toilets, sanitary pads, washing hands after defecation or before meal, safe drinking water, household waste disposal, regular bathing are some of the most important hygiene practices that are needed for a sound life. In many countries around the world, especially undeveloped and developing countries, hygiene practices are not satisfactory. Ignorance as well as lack of proper

understanding about healthy life style, illness is very prone to the female ones. Unawareness about health and hygiene makes them more susceptible to various health hazards. Their awareness on health and healthy lifestyle was superficial, knowledge on common illnesses and their prevention pattern and treatment-seeking behavior not conducive to the maintenance of health. The present paper tries to find out the hygienic practices and their health-related impacts on the female tea garden workers of Meleng Tea Estate in Jorhat District.

Objectives :

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To find out the health and hygienic condition of female tea garden workers.
- To suggest measures for improving the health and hygienic condition of female tea garden workers.

Materials and Methods :

Study Area :

Meleng tea estate got its name from "Meleng" river. Tea is planted on both banks of the river. It was founded by Mr. J. E. Jood in 1852 and it was later on managed by M/S. Balmer Lawrie & Co Ltd. as the managing agent till 1969. The M/s. Jayashree Tea & Industries Limited bought this property from them in 1969 and improved it manifold in terms of quality and quantity. The estate consists of 742.43 hectare area divided into four divisions with best possible medical facility at the estate level. The estate now employs 1,700 permanent workers. During the harvesting season additional casual

workers are employed. The garden provides free housing, fuel and water along with subsidized cereals and education. Free medical treatment is provided to its workers and their dependants.

Methods :

The study was conducted from April 2016 to March 2017 for 12 months. For collection of data following methodology were employed....

The study has been mainly conducted with the help of interview method. The services of a medical practitioner were utilized to assess the queries relevant to the theme like health problems of the workers of Meleng tea estates. Altogether 133 workers from Meleng Tea Estate were selected by Random Sampling Method. Data has also been collected by conducting group discussion with field officials and supervisors and by interacting with the management of the estate. Secondary information on the subject has been collected from sources such as books, journals and the Internet. Graphical representation of collected data has been prepared with the help of Microsoft Excel.

Results and discussion :

From the study it was found that the people of the selected tea garden suffers from mainly fever, loose motion, weakness, leg pain, hypertension, headache, abdominal pain, vomiting, injury, neck pain, giddiness, acidity etc. Total 133 cases were recorded from the study. Some other diseases were also reported in small amount like jaundice, pregnancy related problems, epilepsy, anaemia, respiratory disorders etc.

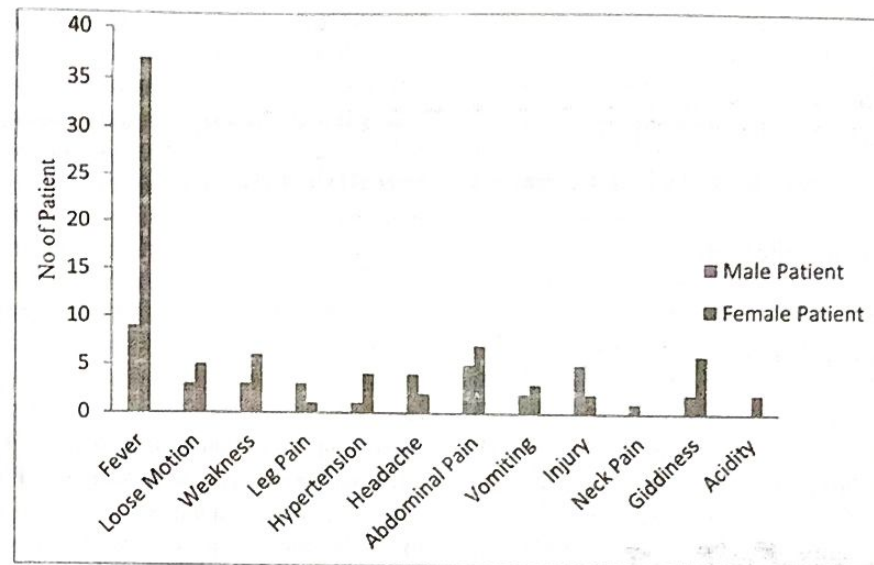


Fig 1: Diseases among tea garden workers in Meleng Tea Estate

From the study it was observed that in most of the cases females suffered more than males (Fig1). They have to work hard in comparison to their diet. They are quite unaware of their hygiene which may be the root cause of their various diseases. These diseases occurred allegedly because of lack of proper drinking water and sanitation facilities. Fever was recorded highest while leg pain was recorded lowest in the study. There is also no maternity benefit scheme for the tea garden workers. It has been observed that during pregnancy and post-natal period, women continue to engage in hard works. Most of the female were using clothes during their menstrual cycle instead of sanitary pads, which make them susceptible to various

diseases. Because they dried them in shadowy places hiding from others and never spread them in direct sunlight. This makes them very prone to certain gynaecological problems. Water-borne diseases during the summer months may be the cause of unhygienic living of workers. The outbreak of water-borne diseases is common in the tea estates of Assam during summer with several labourer deaths reported every year. In 2008, over 100 labourers died in the Upper Assam gardens, especially in Golaghat and Jorhat districts, following the outbreak of these diseases (The Telegraph, 2010). The state government had warned the tea garden authority of legal action if there were reports of worker deaths because of lack of proper drinking water and sanitation facilities.

The hygienic practices among female tea garden workers were very unsatisfactory. One good hygienic practice is using proper toilet facility, but this study finds that some of the female workers goes outside for defecation or use unhygienic latrines. Walking barefoot may be another cause of helminthes infection. Washing of hands after defecation and before cooking, eating are extremely important to maintain hygiene and to resist diseases, as unclean hands can cause many diseases like helmintheasis which maybe the root cause of anaemia among female workers. Most of the female workers were quite unaware or ignore this practice; they used soil as soap after defecation to clean their hands. As they are not facilitated, thus they are not habituated in using safe toilet, rather majority use open place for defecation (Khan, 1991), even they are quite unaware or ignore their rights regarding safe sanitation. They have restricted living space and home and wages were too low to meet their minimum requirement. As permanent workers get house from the authority with water and sanitation facilities but these are not adequate and satisfactory. They have to accommodate themselves in a small dilapidated house, sometime with their pet animals (Das and Islam; 2006; Majumder and Roy, 2012). Some female workers were hypertensive; intake of black tea with salt may be the causative agent of it. As most of them uses poorly aerated kitchen so this may be the another cause of respiratory disorders found among the female workers.

Disposal of household waste was another important concern to maintain

household hygiene. As they didn't have proper disposal site so they discard their daily waste their nearby areas. Water logging in nearby their neighbourhood could be the breeding ground for mosquitoes where there was a probability of spreading of malaria. It affects the children and the women mostly.

Govt. of Assam had submitted a proposal for sanitation and potable water projects to the Centre, which subsequently approached the UNICEF to fund these schemes.

Conclusion:

Unhygienic and unhealthy conditions make the female tea garden workers susceptible to various diseases as well as make them vulnerable in economic perspective too, as they cannot go to work and also compelled to spend money for the treatment. Specially health and sanitation coverage and facilities are still far from the minimum requirements. As they are less facilitated, thus they do not get necessary services regarding health and sanitation. Their limited income does not allow them to meet satisfactory and scientific healthy life. Moreover, their level of understanding and awareness are very poor due to ignorance, illiteracy and barriers in getting information. In addition to the unhygienic practices like open defecation also a matter of social opprobrium for the workers. Awareness campaign on various health and hygienic programme could be organised, female health officials could be appointed by hospital authority, diet related programme should be arranged, techniques of using pesticides and

its harmful effects could be taught than only the health condition could be improved.

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The status of women in Assamese Society in Pre-independence Era: A Study of Tilottama Mishra's Novel 'Swarnalata'

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ABSTRACT

Literature is one of the best mediums of portraying the social changes of a nation. Literature consists of poetry, drama, novels, history, biography and essays. Among them novel is the most popular source which beautifully depict social issues of the contemporary societies, it deals with. The women in Assamese society has passed several phases from ancient time to 21st century. In Assamese society excluding the tribal societies, the status of women is not equal to man. 'Swarnalata' a biographical-historical novel by Tilottama Mishra, narrates the life of Swarnalata from childhood upto motherhood. The novelist vividly narrates the status of women in conservative Assamese society then, where women's education and widow marriage are taboos, where a widow is forced into a life of austerity, and where a man can marry several times. It is a society where woman is nothing less than a commodity. The story of the novel, however, gives an indication that an orthodox society like Assam's is undergoing some changes. The introduction of western education, influence of Brahmo Samaj somehow brought limited but revolutionary changes reflected in the empowered women characters of the novel namely Swarnalata and her childhood friends Lakhi and Tora. This paper is going to study the social changes coming to Assamese society regarding women as well as the prevailing traditional shackles which made the lives of women unbearable in the mid-and late 19th century Assam, on the basis of the novel *Swarnalata*.

Key words: Women, Assamese society, Swarnalata, Western-education, Missionary.

Introduction :

Women are an indispensable part of a society, yet they are deprived of equal status with their male counterpart in the society. In Assamese society excluding the tribal society,

the status of woman is not at par with man. Since ancient time Assamese womenfolk have been going through several phases and accordingly their status in society also changing accordingly. Though in independent

India constitution has given equal rights to both men and women still the condition of Indian as well as Assamese women in general have been suffering from social discrimination. Assamese society in the later part of 19th century was touched slightly by the wave of Bengal Renaissance as well as the activities of the Christian Missionaries. The enlightened and educated Assamese people though extremely limited in number imbibed with the liberal ideologies of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidya Sagar, Keshab Chandra Sen etc tried to reform the Assamese society and raised their voices for women liberalization. Likewise in the 19th century Assam under colonial rule the missionary activities of various Christian Missionary personalities like Mile Bronson, geared the work of introducing education for both boys and girls of Assam, shaking the very foundation of age old orthodox Assamese Hindu Society. Thus such environment in the later part of 19th century Assam had brought some changes in the mentality of the women folk but the patriarchal society of Assam was not ready to accept those changes and tried to keep the womenfolk under male domination. Literary works presents the apparent as well as hidden truth of society. Assamese literature also has been documenting the culture, customs, and traditions of own society in pages. The happiness and grief, the pain and pleasure, the desire and despair of women are well depicted by many Assamese writers. Among them one renowned name is Tilottama Mishra. For this study, her famous Assamese novel "Swarnalata" is taken to analyze the

condition of Assamese women in the later part of 19th century, Pre Independent Assam.

Significance of the study:

In every society women have contributing a lot in every sphere of life but their activities have not been given proper place in history. Same situation has been noticed in the histories of Assam also, except for one or two significant woman figures, very little information can be found regarding the condition of women in general in the pages of history. In this case, literature throws light on some amount of reliable sources regarding the past of Assamese women. Tilottama Mishra's *Swarnalata* is a historical and biographical novel depicting the intellectual and social environment of the later part of 19th century Assam and Calcutta, therefore it is very important to analyze the work which can provide valuable information of the status of Assamese women in society during that period.

Objective of the study:

The objective of the paper is to study how the changing social and intellectual environment in the late 19th century Assam influenced the lives of the womenfolk by analyzing the female characters of the novel namely *Bishnupriya*, *Swarnalata*, *Lakhi* and *Tora*.

Presentation of the social status of women in Swarnalata:

The author presents a picture of Assamese society of Pre-independence era which reflects the social restrains as well as male dominance over women. The novel centers round the wealthy, educated and cultured Barua family of Nagaon. Gunabhiram Barua the head of the Barua

family, English educated man and a senior government official, influenced by the *Brahmo* movement and a staunch follower of *Iswarchandra Vidyasagar* advocated widow-remarriage and women's education. *Gunabhiram Barua* had embraced *Brahmo* faith which was considered by the conservative Hindu families as debased as Christianity. *Barua*'s another revolutionary step, not acceptable to the Assamese society of that time was his marriage with *Bishnupriya* a Brahmin widow.

Bishnupriya, a Brahmin widow got remarried to her late husband's friend *Gunabhiram*. She coming into contact with the enlightened and liberal minded personality like *Barua*, was able to break the prevailing barriers on women and restart her journey with *Gunabhiram Barua*. She boldly faced all the injustices done by the society to her yet sometime she felt helpless and guilty. Because mentally except her husband, she did not receive any one's support from the society so thinking about the future of her little daughter *Swarna*, she silently used to pray 'Oh God let *Swarna* be not suffered in life' (*Swarnalata*, 1991, p-8) *Mr Barua* expressed his willingness to educate *Swarna* in a missionary school and explaining the necessity of women education, he praised the works of the Christian Missionaries in this regard. But unfortunately *Bishnupriya*, coming from an orthodox Brahmin family was not able to make herself completely free from certain deep rooted superstitious beliefs of the society. Therefore she replied in response to her husband's willingness "Nowadays in Calcutta a number of educated Hindus are working for women

education, cannot we send our daughter to the schools established by our people rather than admitting her in Mission School?" (pp. 8-9)

Swarnalata the title character is the daughter of *Gunabhiram Barua*. There was no formal education for women in Assam, except the Mission schools at that time. *Swarna* when five or six years of age used to see the Christian girls of her age, going to school wearing *Sadar-Mekhala* and the girls also stared back at her because she wore frocks in European style. *Swarna*'s innocent mind longing for education like those girls one day said to her mother "Mother, I too will go to school, it is so pleasing to see the Christian girls going to school...could not we too become Christian?" In response to his daughter's question *Mr Barua* assured her "Dear, without being a Christian you will be able to get education, from tomorrow your education will start". (ibid, p-7) *Mr Barua* was religiously liberal person yet he hesitated to send his daughter to a missionary school as it propagates a particular religion. *Barua* appointed *Panchanan Sarma* a private tutor for his daughter. But the Assamese society was far behind from the Bengali society of Calcutta. The Bengal renaissance of 19th century created an environment in Calcutta, which supported equal rights and education for both men and women. *Swarnalata*'s parents wanted to shape her as an ideal of the new age against all odds, so they sent her to the boarding of Bethune School, Calcutta. *Swarnalata* despite her misfortunes faced the life with patience and determination. Towards the end of the novel she came across as a progressive girl who could take decision on her life according to her own wish.

Swarna's childhood friend *Lakhipriya*, the daughter of her tutor *Sarma* had to suffer a lot, being the victim of the evil customs and superstitions of the Brahmin society in Assam. Even an educated person like *Panchanan Sarma* had to struggle to break free the prevailing evil customs of society. When *Sarma*'s family came to know that he wanted his daughter *Lakhi* to join *Swarnalata* in her lessons, *Sarma*'s elder brother *Bholanath* started his lecture on women education: "The true meaning of women's education lay in their doing their household duties well and in providing satisfaction to the husbands at all times. Educated women are by and large thought to be women of ill-repute" (p-22). After a great debate *Lakhi* was allowed to study with *Swarna* but a load of restrictions were imposed on *Lakhi* and those rules followed by *Lakhi* while going to *Bilva Kutir*, *Barua*'s house, well illustrated the situation *Barua* faced for marrying a widow and embracing *Brahmo* religion. But innocent *Lakhi* put a pertinent question to the male dominated society on widow marriage when she asked her relative *Lakheswar*: "If there is no harm in a man marrying a second time, what is wrong if a woman does the same?" (p-70). Bowing down to the prevailing customs *Sarma* gave off *Lakhi* in marriage when she was a child. Her early marriage brought disaster for her and she became a child widow. *Panchanan Sarma* then realized the true meaning of *Gunabhiram Barua*'s ideology in support of women rights and education. He admitted *Lakhi* first in Bengali Girl's school for primary education and then enrolled

her in Govt Boy's school which was a revolutionary step for a woman in that conservative society of Assam. Education enlightened *Lakhi* and she strongly fought for her rights in future and acquired them.

Swarna's another childhood friend *Tora*, was the daughter of a converted Christian widow called *Gulapi*. Under the guardianship of Miles Bronson Saheb, *Tora* received education in Mission school and she gathered lots of knowledge which made her the center of attraction among her friends *Swarna* and *Lakhi*. Missionary education made *Tora* different from rest of the girls of the society. She learnt to sing beautifully in the church, she wore neat and tidy dresses and her deep faith in Jesus gave an extra empowerment to her personality. She dreamt of going to America and see the different parts of the world and accordingly her dream came true. She went to America with Bronson *Sahab* and came back as an expert nurse and started her career in serving the patients in the hospital of *Nagaon*.

Observation and conclusion:

The novel *Swarnalata* reflects the 19th century Assamese society, where patriarchy was the rule of the time. The condition of the women folk was nothing different from that of the medieval society of Assam. The novel reveals the vast difference of the Bengali society of Calcutta in comparison to Assamese society regarding the position of women. While Bengali girl *Kadambari Ganguly* came out as the first Indian women doctor, at the same time *Swarnalata* had to leave Assam for Calcutta to receive education as there was no provision

for formal education of women in Assam. Being away from the limitation of the social life of Assam, *Swarnalata* moved ahead in life by benefiting a lot from the intellectual and liberal environment prevailing in Calcutta. The conversation she had with her friends *Tora* and *Lakhi* while working for Assam Bandhu journal at *Bilva Kutir* reveals her maturity. As *Tora* and *Lakhi* observed "those girls who stay at indoors with their heads covered are considered as the good ones and girls like us are termed shameless" *Swarnalata* then replied "our people think that way because they have not learnt the true meaning of women's liberty." (ibid, p-157) *Gunabhiram Barua*, the father of *Swarnalata* one of the forerunners of modernity in Assam had to give off his daughter in marriage to a Bengali Groom as no Assamese young man came forward to marry his daughter only because he embraced Brahmo faith and married a widow. Thus the novel reflects beautifully the very important phase of women in Assamese society where women folk suffered from different kinds of social evils like child marriage, austere life for widows etc. The missionaries and a few enlightened persons like *Gunabhiram Barua* tried to change the status of women by giving them equal rights with their male counterparts. Thus started in Assam an undeclared war for women's liberty between the enlightened group and the orthodox Assamese society, the former used women education as their main weapon. Undoubtedly the empowerment developed in *Swarna*, *Tora* and *Lakhi* was the gift of education. Though that intellectual war was not able to bring total change to the existing status of the Assamese women yet

like the three characters of the novel, a little but revolutionary changes were noticed in the late 19th century Assamese society. That was the beginning but it was expected that 20th century would bring total change, what was expressed in the words of *Swarnalata* when her husband mentioned about approaching of 20th century. She exclaimed "20th century! Feeling so happy to think about it, father used to say that in 20th century the world would change all together.....and all the superstitions and evil customs of our society would be vanished, can we live up to that time to see the change?" (ibid, p-233)

As a biographical novel *Swarnalata* has special characteristics as it focuses on the psychological development of women. So analysis of this novel provides a lot of hidden facts regarding the conditions of women of that period on which the plot is based. From this study we may conclude that in Assamese society education contributed a lot towards improvement of social status of women. But even now in 21st century things a lot of changes is yet to take place for realization of that kind of society which *Swarna* envisioned in the 20th century Assamese society.

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Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain: Forerunner of Muslim Women in India

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ABSTRACT

Woman is recognised as half part of the world. From time immemorial women of the world has been playing a significant role in the society. Without women a family can never be created in the society. Woman plays the role of daughter, sister, wife and mother in the society. Women also play a vital role in the social transformation. In ancient India, the position and status of women was very high. Each and every person in the society respected womenfolk. But during the Muslim rule in India, the position of Indian women, especially Muslim women, became deplorable. The Muslim women had no right to raise a voice against the decision of a man; women were not able to travel according to their own will. Muslim women always kept them under their traditional garment i.e. *Burkha* during Medieval period. In 18th – 19th century, though the British government tried to develop the condition of the Muslim women, but all the efforts were in vain. Yet, some Muslim women of 18th – 19th century were able to establish their voice in the society. Among them Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, who was the forerunner for the Muslim women of India was prominent. She adopted some strong steps for the development of the condition of the women. In this paper an attempt has been made to reveal how Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain fought against the male dominated society. Was she successful in her mission?

Key words: Muslim Women, Emancipation, Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain

Introduction:

"A Woman caring for her children; a woman striving to excel in the private sector; a woman partnering with her neighbours to make their street safer; a woman running for office to improve her

country – they all have something to offer, and the more our societies empower women, the more we receive in returns" – **Queen Rania of Jordan.**

Growth of civilization, social changes and the division of labour in society have

discriminated men and women purely on gender basis ignoring the physical and mental capacity. Today's human society of 21st century has achieved, *par excellence*, a peak in social and scientific fields. In fact, no chromosomal deficit is derived from analysis of genetic configuration of woman. Rather it is more stable than the male gene. The acceptance of the low profile by woman for centuries is really a strange social phenomenon. It has led some workers to think that women are not born with such a fate, rather the human society is waiting with all its traditional and cultural parameters to put her into a trap with so many limitations in her social activity. So, they have proved that a woman is made as a result of social interaction.

In ancient India, women enjoyed equal status with men in all fields of life. Patanjali and Katyayana suggest that women were educated in the early Vedic period. Rigvedic verses suggest that the women married at a mature age and were probably free to select their husband. Scriptures such as Rig Veda and Upanishads mention several women sages and seers, notably Gargi and Maitreyi. The Indian woman's position in the society further deteriorated during the medieval period when Sati, child marriages and a ban on widow remarriages became part of social life in India. The Muslim conquest in the Indian subcontinent brought the *purdah* practice in the Indian society. Among the Rajputs of Rajasthan, the Jauhar was practised. In some parts of India, the Devadasi or the temple women were sexually exploited. Polygamy was widely practised especially

among Hindu Kshatriya rulers. In many Muslim families, women were restricted to Zenana areas.

In spite of these conditions, some women, especially Muslim women, played significant role in the fields of politics, literature, education and religion. Razia Sultana became the only woman monarch to have ever ruled Delhi. Jahangir's wife Nur Jahan effectively wielded imperial power and was recognized as the real force behind the Mughal throne. The Mughal princesses Jahanara and Zebunnissa were well known poets and also influenced the ruling administration. During the British period the condition of the Muslim women again became deplorable. All the Muslim women were compelled to live within the area of their house. The British government tried to develop the condition of the Muslim women. But they were not able to develop the condition of the women of Muslim society. Of course, some educated and courageous Muslim women tried to improve the condition of Muslim women. Among them Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain played a significant role. Today's Muslim women actively participate in the politics and other government and non government job in different sectors. This has happened in India only for some positive attitude of the educated women of 19th century.

Importance of the Study:

The present study is important not only from historical perspective but also from present day's social condition and status of Muslim women. Today, lots of Muslim women are free, independent, and highly educated

only for the legacy left behind by Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain in the 19th century. Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain knew that education is the only way for the development of the condition of the women of Muslim community. So, it is highly essential to study the works of Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain.

Objectives:

The objectives of the study are as follows—

- (1) To study about the early life of Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain
- (2) To study about the work of Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain for emancipating Muslim women from the chain of bondage.

Methodology:

Data:

The present paper is prepared with the help of secondary sources of data. Data was collected from Books, Journals and Website.

Early Life of Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain:

Rokeya Khatun alias Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain was born in 1880 in the village of Pairabond, Mithapukur in the district of Rongpur (now in Bangladesh) in a Zamindar family. Her father, Jahiruddin Muhammad Abu Ali Haidar Saber, was a highly educated but orthodox zamindar (landlord). The women in his family had to observe strict *purdah*. Even little girls had to run and hide themselves when anybody including women came to visit their place. Girls in the family were not allowed to study books other than the Holy Quran. But Jahiruddin Muhammad Abu Ali Haidar

Saber's two daughter Karimunnesa and Rokeya wanted to study books. Karimunnesa wanted to study Bengali, the language of the majority in Bengal. But the family disliked this because many Muslims of the time preferred to use Arabic and Persian as the medium of education instead of their native language, Bengali. Ibrahim Saber, the elder brothers of Karimunnesa and Rokeya knew about their urge to study books. Ibrahim Saber started to teach English and Bengali to Karimunnesa and Rokeya at midnight in the candle light while other members of the family had retired to bed. Rokeya's first biographer Shamsunnahar Mahmud describes, "*They had to wait for the dead of the night to be able to conduct their clandestine studies since the family objected to such untraditional learning for girls*". (The Essential Rukeya, 2013)

In 1896, at the age of sixteen, Rokeya was married to Sayed Sakhawat Hossain, a deputy magistrate of Bhagalpur in Bihar and she became Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain. Educated from the west, Sakhawat Hossain was a man of liberal and progressive ideas and helped Rokeya in her pursuit of knowledge by giving opportunities to study. With his help and encouragement within a short period of time she became proficient in English. Urdu speaking Sakhawat also had the pleasure of learning Bengali language from his young wife. However, it was important that Rokeya's literary output was published in the Indian periodicals during her husband's life time which brought her into the limelight as a daring writer—Mrs. R. S. Hossain. Rokeya

acknowledges her husband's positive contributions to her writing career, "*If my dear husband had not been so supportive, I might never have written or published anything*". (Hossain, R. S., 1988)

Rokeya's happy life did not last long. Sakhawat Hossain's health began deteriorating and he died in 1909. After thirteen years of married life there was total emptiness. Two children born to her died when they were infants. Rokeya's step daughter forced her out of home in Bhagalpur after Sakhawat Hossain's death. Being an educated woman, Rokeya did not lead an idle life. She devoted her whole life from 1909 for the cause of Bengali Muslim women's emancipation. Sakhawat Hossain was aware of Rokeya's aspiration for doing something for the education of the Muslim women. So he left ten thousand rupees for her wish fulfilment. In her later life she founded a school and a ladies' association to translate her feminist ideas into reality.

Works of Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain:

Rokeya was a self educated woman with progressive thought and ideas. Through her insightful eyes she not only observed the miseries of woman but also saw how they were deprived of education. As she was an intelligent woman, these aspects helped her to define her future activities. She understood that awakening of woman was a must to set them free from their miseries. Thereby, she took vow of female education and held pen to write against the inhuman position of women in the society. These two aspects were

both complementary to each other, because, the prior condition of female education is women's self awareness, and self awareness persuades women for education. With that vision in mind she set up school (Sakhawat Memorial Girls' School) and organization for women (Anjuman-e-Khawatin-e-Islam). She composed several books in both Bangla and English. In her writings she depicted the wretched condition of women in the family and in the society as well. And side by side she showed how acute the suppression of women was at that time. Her speech at "Bengal Women's Educational Conference" can be worth mentioning in this respect, "*I have been crying for the lowliest creature in India for the last twenty years. Do you know who that lowliest creature in India is? It is the Indian woman... There are people also who feel for animals, so we see animals' rights groups everywhere. If a dog is hit by a car, we hear an outcry in the Anglo-Indian media. But there is not a single soul in the whole of the subcontinent to mourn for incarcerated women like us*". (qtd. In Quayum).

In 1909, five months after death of her husband, Rokeya established a high school in his memory, naming it *Sakhawat Memorial Girls' High School* in Bhagalpur with only five students. In 1910, a feud over family property with her step daughter's husband caused her to close down the school in Bhagalpur. She then moved to Calcutta, a Bengali speaking area where she re-opened the *Sakhawat Memorial Girls' School* on March 16, 1911 in a house at 13, Waliullah

Lane with eight students. The number rose to 84 in 1915. In 1917, the school was inspected by Lady Chelmsford, wife of the Governor General and Viceroy of India and was upgraded to Middle English Girls' School. In 1931 it was upgraded to High English Girls' School. The school got its permanent address in 1968 when it was finally shifted to its own house at 17, Lord Sinha Road. Rokeya ran the school for twenty-four years, braving harsh criticism and various social obstacles, and made it the best seat of learning for Muslim girls.

Rokeya's organization *Anjuman-e-Khawatin-e-Islam* or the Muslim women's society tried to aware women about their right. Her *Anjuman-e-Khawatin-e-Islam* organized many events for social reforms based on the original teachings of Islam that according to her view were lost. The society was in the forefront of the fight for women's education, employment and their legal and political rights. Begum Rokeya stands against the conservative society where she laments for her birth. She expresses her torments in a disappointing tone seeing the deplorable condition of women in the society. Rokeya also expresses her strong grievance against men who deprived them from receiving and learning education, discriminated them to show their "efficiency", considered them as "weak", "incompetent" and "inferior" and extend their helping hand to "become slaves of indolence and, by extension, of men".

Rokeya wanted to improve the condition of women through education. She knew that due to lack of education women

lose their "ability to differentiate between freedom and captivity, progress and stagnation, slowly from being landlords and master of the house, men, in stages, have ended up being our lord and proprietor". Rokeya deliberately declares that men and women should have equal status and opportunity for social development where women's education is a must. In order to spread and stable women's education, Rokeya also advises for establishing separate schools and universities for female.

Rokeya emphasised on physical education because she believed that it was important to make women physically stronger, fit and confident. Rokeya also recognised the importance of women's economic independence. Her curriculum therefore, included vocational training in crafts and sewing. Rokeya wrote, "*Many people think that since women live on the income of men, they must therefore accept their authority.... Perhaps woman, first being incapacitated of physical work, was obliged to subsist on the wealth of another*". (Istijatir Abanati, 13) Rokeya perceived that in a society where a woman is dependent on man for mere food, clothing and shelter, in that society the dream of women's liberation is complete imagination. The society where financially women are completely dependent on men, it is useless to speak of women's liberation in that society. Therefore, Rokeya ran a slum literacy programme in Calcutta by forming work teams to visit women in the slums to teach them reading, writing, personal hygiene and child care. Even

though Rokeya made important contributions through her organizational effort, her writing remains her most significant gift to Bengali Muslim women.

Being a Muslim woman, Rokeya had profound faith in the message and ideals of Islam. But she did not see Islam through the eyes of men. Through bitter experiences of her life Rokeya observed that men have established themselves in the place of the Lord. She said that men have subjugated woman manipulating the message of Islam. To keep control over women they have wrongly interpreted and corrupted the teaching of Islam. Imposing their fabricated interpretation they have dominated, exploited and suppressed women. Rokeya addressed the audience of Bengal Women's Educational Conference, "The opponents of female education say that women will be unruly....fie! They call themselves Muslims and yet to go against the basic tenet of Islam which gives equal right to education. If men are not led astray once educated, why should women?"

Conclusion:

From the above discussion we come to know that Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain was a great voice in the form of a saviour to the unfortunate, helpless and disadvantaged women of India. She is relevant today when we see the deplorable condition of women in the society. When we see that girl is married off in her early stage of life, we remember Rokeya. Actually Rokeya dreamt about the very basic human rights for women. Rokeya always believed that leaving half of

the population uneducated and secluded, the development of the country or the nation is not possible. Therefore, she dedicated herself for the cause of women's liberation. She believed that education is the means which can eradicate women's ignorance and make them aware of their subjugation. Rokeya's dream for the emancipation of women from the outmoded patriarchal contention of men is the dream of every woman. This dream will come true if traditional outlook and approach of men towards women is changed and the women are taken into consideration as not the "other" but rather as the friends of men and contributors to society. Therefore, she wrote stories, novels, poems, essays and also composed in English. The theme of her writings was neglected woman of the society. So she had brought the criticizing style in her writing. Because she felt that if she would write in a natural way the problem could not be solved, because her aim was to awaken the society and to awaken it she must have to cane it. At last we may call that all through her life Rokeya wrote impassioned, highly intelligent polemics about the oppression, discrimination, pain and obstacles to development faced by women, both within her own community, and by women belonging to all communities in general.

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Biodiversity Management and Role of Rural and Ethnic Women of India : A Review

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ABSTRACT

Biodiversity refers to all the types of life forms around us. People depend on biodiversity to sustain their livelihood in all respects. Indigenous people living in biodiversity rich area possess a wealth of knowledge about biodiversity in their localities. Rural and ethnic women play a significant role in sustainable management of biodiversity. This study revealed that rural and ethnic women of India play a significant role in sustainable management of biodiversity through their daily house hold activities and passed on their traditional knowledge from mother to daughter and through daughter to their grand children and so on

Key words : Biodiversity, Management, Rural and Ethnic Women.

Introduction :

The environment around us consists of diverse types of plants, animals and microbes. Biodiversity or biological diversity refers to the total no. of species (plant, animal and microbes) and ecosystem in a region. Since time immemorial human beings depends on biodiversity to fulfill the necessities for sustaining their livelihood. Biodiversity is an important property of ecosystems for sustained production of services and resources (Costanza & Folke, 1996). Indigenous people inhabiting in biodiversity rich areas possess a great wealth of knowledge of biodiversity which are beneficial for them in various aspects. Traditional knowledge is unique local knowledge existing and expanded within and around the specific

conditions of people indigenous to a particular geographical area (Warren, 1992). This traditional knowledge, the indigenous people acquired, as a result of years of observation and through trial and error are passed on generation after generation orally through their culture. As the indigenous peoples are very close to nature, they possess a vast knowledge about the biodiversity around them and are able to use and share the natural resources judiciously. Sacred groves are the life example of the spiritual aspects in the biodiversity and its use are connected to traditional, cultural, spiritual practices of a large number of people (Natarajan, 2012). Through their deep understanding, the indigenous people play a very important role in biodiversity conservation in various fields like agro-

biodiversity, medicinal diversity, and socio-cultural or spiritual aspects. As women are associated with all of these aspects, their contribution in biodiversity conservation is very significant (Gupta *et al.* 2014). Women has also registered their strong candidature in biodiversity protection as the Indian women guarded the trees during the well known Chipko movement and 80,000 Kenyan women have planted trees during Green Belt Movement (Natarajan, 2012). Biodiversity management of South India exhibited clearly how tradition and culture can be applied in cultivation and protection of diversity (Gupta *et al.* 2014). In India rural and ethnic women have to perform many fold activities to manage their households. They have to take care of food and nutritional needs of the family, to provide primary health care through traditional knowledge and have to spend most of the time in crop field during the cultivation and harvesting period. For all these purposes they have to depend on nature. For instance they have to fetch fire wood for cooking, water, fodder, wild edible plants etc. As a result they become more close to nature and possess a great insight about the biodiversity around them and perform the role of a caretaker of natural resources. In the developing countries the industrial revolution contributes to the growth of the poverty, an increase in economic and gender inequalities and degradation of environment. Nowadays women and environment has been a topic in all development debates because, mostly women are affected due to adverse social, economic and ecological changes (Pillai & Suchintha, 2006). Knowledge held by men

and women is different and varies according to their age, ethnicity, geographical location and roles in the household and society. As primary users and managers of subsistence resources, and playing a crucial role in food production and caring for the well being of household members, women have tremendous knowledge about medicines, food and other uses of diverse plant species (Byers and Sainju, 1994). During a survey in Sierra Leone, women could name 31 uses of trees on fallow land and forests while men could name only eight (Domoto, 1994). Though women play such a significant role in the sustainable management of biodiversity in the society, knowledge acquired by women regarding the biodiversity are often neglected and not given importance they deserve.

Hence, the main objective of the present study is to review the role of rural and ethnic women of India in management of biodiversity.

Methodology :

The data was purely secondary in nature and obtained from manual Google search. Six research papers were selected for the purpose. Research work done on role of Indian women in biodiversity management or conservation and research papers in general, mentioning the role of Indian women in biodiversity management were included in the study.

Result and discussion :

Role of Indian rural and ethnic women in management of biodiversity are discussed under five heads : i) Food and nutrition, ii) Traditional health care, iii) Agro-biodiversity, iv) Religious belief and v) Biodiversity conservation and women.

Food and nutrition and women : As far as

food is concerned, cooking is a major part that a woman has to do for her family. Dr. Tanusree Sarkar (2017), in her study on "Biodiversity and Role of Women of North East India", found that the women of different states of North East India prepared varieties of ethnic foods from local soybean, bamboo shoots, lai patta etc. which were nutritious and healthy too. In Mizoram, the Mizo women prepared a soya bean based fermented food called "Bekang" and they marketed this product. Tribal women of all the states of this region prepared fermented food with soybean along with leafy vegetables. The process of preparation of food was almost same for all the tribal groups but they named it differently. The tribal women of most of the states in North East India prepared delicious and nutritious food from bamboo shoots and plants available in the forest. In Kolli hills, people recognized the use of a variety of plant species for food and primary health care. A number of tree species served these purposes. Women knew which wild tubers are edible and men were aware of the utility of these plant resources. Women were more familiar with plant species that are useful in primary healthcare, edible greens and tubers. Women and men went together for tuber collection (Rengalakshmi *et al.*, 2016)

Traditional healthcare and women :

Women often play a mediator role in passing on traditional knowledge which is locally much known as "grandmother's cures" which includes many curative plant uses (Anonymous, 2012; GRAIN, 2000). According to Gupta *et al.* (2014), Indian indigenous women from the state of Madhya

Pradesh used a combination of plants as birth control agents. Women of Bodo tribe of Assam, have the knowledge of herbal medicines out of wild plants for healing and caring of ailments (Sarkar, 2017). Rekha Singhal (2005) studied the role of gender in utilization and management of medicinal plants for primary health care and community well being. A total number of 237 men and 242 women from 27 villages with a high concentration of indigenous people from Central India were included in the study, where she found that both rural men and women have a wealth of traditional knowledge relating to medicinal uses of plants. They were also aware of interconnections between their wellbeing and the sustainable use of medicinal plants. Gender role analysis in relation to medicinal plants revealed that the collection, processing, storage and utilization of medicinal plants were largely assigned to women. Similarly, responsibility of transfer of this knowledge to the future generation was women's domain.

Agro-biodiversity and women :

Since the Rio Convention on Biological Diversity, the concept of biodiversity in agriculture has been referred to as agro-biodiversity. Agro-biodiversity includes all crops and livestock and their wild relations, all interacting species of pollinators, symbionts, pests, parasites, predators and competitors (Qualset *et al.*, 1995). Since the advent of domestication some 12,000 years ago, women have performed a major role in plant selection, domestication, enhancement and conservation. In the process of agricultural evolution, women played a distinct role in planting, weeding, and in post

harvest operations such as harvesting, threshing, seed selection and storage. However, gender roles are changing as a consequence of farm mechanization and changing cropping patterns in many societies. Nonetheless, even in shifting cropping patterns, women maintain their traditional role in seed management (Swaminathan, 2000). A global survey conducted by FAO shows that women account for 50 percent of overall food production in Asia. An FAO study on the role of rural women and food security in South Asian countries recognizes the women's key role in post-harvest operations, seed management and maintenance of biodiversity. In addition, women are keen to transmit their complex knowledge to the youngsters in the family by involving them in the process (Choudhuri & Begum, 2000). Rengalakshmi *et al.*, 2002, studied the role played by rural and tribal women in agrobiodiversity conservation covering three ecologically distinct regions Jeypore and Kolli hills of Eastern Ghats and Wayanad of Western Ghats. Their study revealed that in all three studied areas, even though agriculture was a household enterprise, social norms demarcated the division of labour based on sex and age. Usually preparation of land and ploughing are done by man in every society of rural India, but in Kolli hills along with men, women also took part in land preparation where there were not enough hands. The other activities like transplanting and weeding were done by women only. Harvesting and post harvesting activities were jointly performed by men and women. Women of Jeypore and Kolli hills played an important role in conserving,

enhancing and utilizing the agrobiodiversity. They also played a significant role in seed management. Malayali women were very skilled and expert in seed selection, enhancement, storage and management. Knowingly or unknowingly, women were responsible for widening the genetic base by their innovative practice of cropping systems. They were careful in mixing various kinds of land races, with different quantitative characters in a single field, as a strategy against risk. Moreover, this type of practice allowed introgression of genes into the crop which might give rise to new valuable genotype (MSSRF, Kolli hills and Jeypore). In Wayanad, though selection of paddy fields and land preparation for seed production were men's job, occasionally elderly women are also involved in the selection of paddy seeds. There were 18 traditional rice variety having medicinal property in Wayanad. Among them the variety "Najarava" had high medicinal qualities. Women were more responsible in cultivation and use of medicinal Najarava rice (MSSRF, Wayanad). Dhakal and Leduc (2010), studied the women's role in Biodiversity management and found that in Himalayan mountain communities, 80% - 90% of seed requirements of all farm-households crops are met through traditional seed management and exchange systems, where the role of women is very significant. They also found that Mizo women in North East India were primarily responsible for seed storage within the households. According to UNDP/ FAO (2001) women's role in conservation - particularly in preserving high quality seeds was noticeable among Apatani, Mizo, Naga and Garwali communities in the

North Eastern and Western Indian Himalayas. Here women were the major food producers and both men and women shared responsibility.

Religious belief and women :

Women are always more religious and actively take part in all kinds of religious ceremonies or festivals that were performed or celebrated in their society. Many plants and leaves are used for religious purposes and during festivals. In Pune city, 45 different types of both wild and cultivated plants were used in different religious ceremonies (Gupta *et al.*, 2014). Dr. T. Sarkar (2017) reported that in Assam the tribal women belonging to Bodo, Rabha, Dinasa, and many other communities contributed a lot to conserve biodiversity in their own localities. According to her Bodo women had traditional beliefs and knowledge about plants and forests. They were influenced by the plants in their socio-cultural and religious life. Bodo women conserved about 48 different plants to use for socio-cultural and religious purposes in BTC area. They used "Bel" leaves to worship lord Siva. Thus, conservation and using of different plants in the name of socio-cultural and religion have significance in today's crisis of biodiversity conservation.

Biodiversity conservation and women :

K.R.Pillai and B.Suchintha (2006) studied women empowerment through Self Help Groups in Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala. The study revealed that enormous changes has been observed after initiation of Self Help Groups (SHG). The most remarkable thing was that the SHGs formed a separate women's group for patrolling in the forest. This

special group was called "Vasantha Sena" (Green Force). A group of six to eight women patrolled every day from 11am to 5pm in forest voluntarily, without claiming any form of remuneration. Their presence in the forest during daytime not only discouraged illegal entry but also controlled biomass extraction. Periyar was emerging as a role model of women empowerment for biodiversity conservation.

Conclusion :

From this review it can be concluded that directly or indirectly rural and ethnic women play a significant role in conservation and management of biodiversity through various socio cultural and traditional practices. Hence the knowledge of different ethnic and rural women regarding the use of biodiversity must be recognized and they should be appreciated for the role they play in conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity.

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A Study on Medicinal Plants for the Treatment of Women Diseases in Dihingia Kalita Gaon of Teok Circle of Jorhat District, Assam

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ABSTRACT

Medicinal plants, also called medicinal herbs, have been discovered and used in traditional medicine practices since prehistoric times. Plant kingdom is a blessing as well as a boon from God to living being on this planet. Primitive men had great love towards green plants and started to examine the properties of useful plants. Later he became enriched with the knowledge of many useful and harmful plants. Many medicinal plants have been used in different diseases of women. The aim of the study is to identify medicinal plants used by the local people of the study area for the treatment of different diseases related to women. During this study a sample of 20 different medicinal plants was taken, out of which 14 plants are used by the local people in different diseases of women such as menstruation problem, abortion, uterus diseases etc. The remaining 6 plants are used in the treatment of various diseases of men and women.

Key words : Medicinal plants, Menstruation

Introduction:

Plants have been used for medicinal purposes long before recorded history. Primitive man observed and appreciated the great diversity of plants available to them. Plants provide food clothing, shelter and medicine. Much of the medicinal use of plants seems to have developed through observations of wild animals and by trial and error. As time went on, each tribe added to medicinal power of herbs in their area to its knowledge base.

A medicinal plant is a plant that has similar properties as conventional pharmaceutical drugs. Humans have used them throughout history to either cure or lessen symptoms from an illness. Herbalism (also herbal medicine) is the study of botany and use of plants intended for medicinal purposes. Plants have been the basis for medicinal treatment through much of human history and such traditional medicine is still widely practiced today. Medicinal plants play

a central role not only as traditional medicine but also as trade commodities, meeting the demand of distant markets.

Importance of the Study:

North East India is referred to as the treasure house of medicinal plants. The area under my survey is Dihingia Kalita Gaon, Teok. This study of exploration for medicinal plants used in women disease, will help and contribute to the finding of different medicinal plants to be used for women diseases.

Objectives:

The study has been done by taking the following objectives -

1. To explore the medicinal flora of Dihingia Kalita Gaon area with special reference to women diseases.
2. To identify the specimens with the help of floras.
3. To prepare the herbarium sheets of the specimens for identification as well as to find out the medicinal importance of the specimens.

Materials and Methods:

1) Location of the study area:

The study area, Dihingia Kalita Gaon is located in Teok Tehsil of Jorhat district in Assam, India. It is situated 2km away from sub district headquarter Jorhat. As per constitution and Panchayati Raaj, Dihingia Kalita Gaon village is administrated by Sarpanch (Head of village) who is elected representative of village. Teok area is situated between 26°45'N latitude and 94°13'E longitude.

2) Climate:

The climate is classified as warm and temperate. The summers are hot and rainy

than the winters in Teok. The average annual temperature is 23.9°C. The average annual rainfall is 2378mm.

3) Survey and collection:

The survey was conducted in the entire area of Dihingia Kalita Gaon, Teok. The exploration of the study area was conducted with the help of local people. First of all the different medicinal plants were collected which were used in different diseases of human being specially woman. Thereafter the plant specimens were dried and pressed for herbarium preparation by following the methods of Radford (1986) and Raju (1994). The herbaria are prepared by following the techniques as follows in the Botanical Survey of India (B.S.I.). plants specimens were collected at flowering or at least fruiting condition. Perennial herbaceous plants were collected with underground parts as far as possible. Emphasis was given to collect at least four specimens against its field number. After collection the specimens were pressed on the pressing board keeping inside the folds of old newspapers (blotting paper). Larger specimens which do not fit easily on the sheet were bent into V, N, W shaped. The press was opened after 24 hours, the specimens were rearranged and placed between the fresh blotters and then again tightly bound in the press. Pressing and changing of blotters were continued for at least one month to ensure proper drying of the specimens. After drying the specimens were mounted on the herbarium sheets of standards size (42x28 cm). After mounting a label was glued on the lower right hand corner of the sheet. The label provides information taken from the field note book, along with botanical

name of the species and the name of its family. After preparing the herbarium sheet the plants specimens were identified with the help of local floras, monographs etc.

Result and Discussion:

The result of my work showed that there are many different medicinal plants in different plant families:

1) Assamese name - Chotiana

Scientific Name - *Alstonia scholaris* (L) R. Br.

Family - Apocynaceae

Uses - The milky juice of the plant is used in enhancing fertility in both male and female.

2) Assamese name - Dubori bon

Scientific name - *Cynodon dactylon* (L) Pers.

Family - Gramineae

Uses - Fresh grass is crushed and the juice is used in Menstrual problems, vaginal problems and gynecological problems. It also gives good relief for prolonged menstrual duration and excessive bleeding.

3) Assamese name - Jutulipoka

Scientific name - *Rubus moluccanus* Linn.

Family - Rosaceae

Uses - Fruits and young shoots are used in enhancing fertility in female.

4) Assamese name - Joba

Scientific name - *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* L.

Family - Malvaceae

Uses - Flower juice is used to cure various gynecological disorders, asthmatic bronchitis, cough and contraception etc.

5) Assamese name - Bhim kol

Scientific name - *Musa balbisiana* Colla.

Family - Musaceae

Uses - Roots are crushed with local rice beer

and given orally in the abortion case of women.

6) Assamese name - Tengesi

Scientific name - *Oxalis corniculata* L.

Family - Oxalidaceae

Uses - Powder of the plant is taken with wine on an empty stomach to treat red and white vaginal discharged. A decoction of the plant can be taken orally to treat prolapse of uterus after birth.

7) Assamese name - Era

Scientific name - *Ricinus communis* L.

Family - Euphorbiaceae

Uses - Seed oil is given to relieve constipation during pregnancy. Warm leaves are applied on hypogastria.

8) Assamese name - Masundori

Scientific name - *Houttuynia cordata* Thunb

Family - Saururaceae

Uses - The extract of the plant are used to treat Surgical disorder, gynecological disorders, infectious diseases etc.

9) Assamese name - Manimuni

Scientific name - *Centella asiatica* (L) urban

Family - Apiaceae

Uses - Plant juice is mixed with milk and given orally to increase the fertility of both male and female.

10) Assamese name - Saru manimuni

Scientific name - *Hydrocotyle rotundifolia* Roxb.

Family - Apiaceae

Uses - Leaf is used orally to help in menstrual problem.

11) Assamese name - Tulsi

Scientific name - *Ocimum sanctum*.

Family - Lamiaceae

Uses - Leaf juice is taken with "gur" and cow milk to relieve pain after delivery.

12) Assamese name - Teteli

Scientific name - *Tamarindas indica* L.

Family - Caesalpiniaceae

Uses - Seed juice is used to cure menstrual pain.

13) Assamese name - Mati Kanduri

Scientific name - *Alternanthera sessilis* Linn.

Family - Amaranthaceae

Uses - It is used to treat mensural disorders.

14) Assamese name - Vedai lota

Scientific name - *Paederia foetida* L.

Family - Rubiaceae

Uses - The leaves are used to treat infertility and paralysis. It is also used in expulsion of the placenta caused after miscarriage.

15) Assamese name - Kosu

Scientific name - *Colocasia esculenta*.

Family - Araceae

Uses - It is used for the treatment of asthma, arthritis, diarrhea, internal hemorrhage and skin disorders. It is also used to increase the percentage of haemoglobin in the blood.

16) Assamese name - Doron bon

Scientific name - *Leuca saspera* (Willd) Link.

Family - Lamiaceae

Uses - It is used in the treatment of coughs, fevers, malarial fever and urinary complaints.

17) Assamese name - Narasingha

Scientific name - *Murraya koenigii*

Family - Rutaceae

Uses - It is used for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease, gastrointestinal disorders etc.

18) Assamese name - Modar

Scientific name - *Erythrina indica*

Family - Leguminosae

Uses - Roots are grinded and taken along with milk, this help in conceiving and provides stamina.

19) Assamese name - Satomul

Scientific name - *Asparagus racemosus*.

Family - Liliaceae

Uses - Root juice taken along with milk and sugar in the empty stomach in the morning, it provides stamina, enhance fertility in both male and female.

20) Assamese name - Dupor tenga

Scientific name - *Bryophyllum pinnatum*

Family - Crassulaceae

Uses - It is used in the natural treatment of kidney and gall bladder stones.

Conclusion:

From the above study, it was found that there were 20 different medicinal plants in the Dihingia Kalita Gaon area. Out of these 20 plants, 14 different plants are used in different women diseases such as menstruation problem, abortion, uterus diseases and to boost the percentage of fertility. The remaining 6 different plants are used in treatment of various diseases in men and women.

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A Study on Some Medicinal Plants Used by the People of Kakojan Area of Jorhat District With Special Reference to Women Diseases

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ABSTRACT

The present study deals with medicinal herbs which are used in various human diseases specially in gynaecological disorders of women by the people of Kakojan area of Jorhat District. The gynaecological problems includes irregular menstruation, abortion, different uterus diseases and pregnancy related issues. Total 20 different plants are recorded, of which 14 plants are widely used by the female population of the study area. The members of the families like Graminae, Rosaceae, Leguminosae, Labiatae, Malvaceae, Oxailidaceae, Euphorbiaceae etc are used by the people of Kakojan area which are distributed in different parts of study area.

Key words : Medicinal plants, Family, Gynaecological disorders.

Introduction :

Since time immemorial mankind have used plant extracts from different plants to cure many diseases and thus sought relief from physical agony. In our country, the traditional system of medicine plays an important role in health care of rural people. India has about 45,000 plant species and more than 35,000 plant species have been claimed to process medicinal properties and are being used in various human cultures around the world for medicinal purposes. Now a days people are aware of side effect of synthetic and chemical drugs and as a result herbal medicine finds way into wide use side by side with modern

medicine. Nearly 80% of the world populations rely on traditional medicines for primary health care, most of which involve the use of plant extracts. India is a country inhabited by a large number of people having diverse ethnic groups. There are over 300 different tribes and other ethnic groups residing mostly in rural areas in India and most of them are still living in the remote forest areas, who depend to a great extent on the indigenous system of medicines. The knowledge of traditional medicine has been continuing for long years and has been transmitted orally from generation to generation.

Regarding medicinal plants, North East India is one of the richest repositories of medicinal and aromatic plants in the world. A study revealed that different communities of Cachar District use different plants for cut and wounds, digestive disorders, diarrhoea, dysentery, skin diseases etc. 19 species are used for cuts and wounds, 13 species for dysentery, 11 species for skin diseases, 10 species for stomach trouble, 8 species for menstrual trouble, gastric trouble, ulcers, diarrhea and worms, 4 species for bone fracture, cough and as tonic, 3 species each for piles and small pox, 2 species each for body ache, hair growth, swelling, and as blood purifier and promoter, 1 species each for cough and fever and urinary trouble (Das et. al. 2008.)

An Ethno Botanical study carried out among the ethnic communities of Tinsukia district of upper Assam, a total of 175 plant species belonging to 76 families were described which have been used in the treatment of about 56 diseases. Herbs, shrubs and trees were the dominant category of the plants. Most frequent medicated claims were stomach ailments, gynecological problems, lung and respiratory diseases, cut and wounds, skin diseases, urinary troubles and as well as their use as blood purifier. (Buragohain, 2011). According to a survey a large number of medicinal plants particularly herbs are used in the treatment of gynecological disorders among rural people of Tinsukia (Buragohain J., 2008).

Importance of the study :

As the medicinal flora of entire NE

India is under explored and as the Kakojan area of Jorhat district is an ideal site for studying the medicinal vegetation, the study report will contribute significantly to the flora of this biodiversity hot spot as a whole. The report will provide the scientific name, family, and medicinal importance of the specimens which will be a great help to the user in recognizing and identifying the medicinal flora of this region.

This study will also help the people in finding the different medicinal plants which are used in different diseases of human beings specially in woman.

Objectives :

The study has been done by taking the following objectives :

1. To explore some medicinal flora of Kakojan area with special reference to women diseases.
2. To identify the specimens with the help of floras along with their important plant parts.
3. To find out the medicinal importance of the specimens.

Material and Method :

(1) Area of the Study : The study area, Kakojan is situated between 26°75'N latitude and 94°22'E longitude in the Southern valley of the river Brahmaputra. The total area of Kakojan is 700 hectares. 37 No. National Highway is transverse through the Kakojan area. The study area is 16 Km away from District Headquarter Jorhat. Kakojan is bounded by Khatuwal gaon in its North and Kukurachowa in its South, Teok is in the East and Lahdoigarh in the west.

(2) Climate : The climate of the study area

experiences monsoon type of climate which is subtropical with about 200 cm average annual rainfalls and above 80% relative humidity about the year.

(3) Survey and Collection : The survey was conducted in the entire study area. During January 2017 to April 2017 exploration of the study area was conducted with the help of local guides.

The method of collecting information was

(1) Direct personal interview

(2) Observation

Sources of Information was –

(1) Persons involved in local healing practices.

(2) Local old village person.

(3) House wives etc.

Routine methods of collection of plant materials were done in the entire study. The medicinally important plant or plant parts was collected, dried and maintained in a herbarium. The herbarium sheet was prepared by following the method of Rad Ford (1986) and Raju (1994). Collected plants were identified by using different floras and by matching the specimens with the standard pre-identified specimens.

Result and Discussion :

From the above study, the researcher collected the following medicinally important plants which are arranged with local name, scientific name, family and uses –

(1) Assamese name - Chotiana

Scientific name – *Altonia scholaris* (L) R. Br.

Family – Apocynaceae

Uses – The milky juice of the plant is used in enhances fertility to both male and female

(2) Assamese name – Dubaribon

Scientific name – *Cynodon dactylon* (L) Pers.

Family – Gramineae

Uses – Fresh grass is crushed and the juice is used in Menstrual bleeding problem, it also enhances fertility in male, use in quick healing of wounds.

(3) Assamese name – Jutulipoka

Scientific name – *Rubus moluecanus* Linn

Family – Rosaceae

Uses – Fruits and young shoots are used in enhancing fertility in female.

(4) Assamese name – Jestomodhu

Scientific name – *Glycyrrhiza glabra* Linn

Family – Leguminosae

Uses – Fresh or dried root are used to provides energy, enhance fertility in male.

(5) Assamese name – Mithi Gooti

Scientific name – *Trigonella foenumgraecum* Linn

Family – Leguminosae

Uses – Seed is grinded and taken along with milk to reduce uterus infaction, it also provide stamina.

(6) Assamese name – Modar

Scientific name – *Erythrina indica* Linn

Family – Leguminosae

Uses – Root to be grinded and taken along with milk to help in conceiving and it also provides stamina.

(7) Assamese name – Satomol

Scientific name – *Asparagus racemoses*

Family – Liliaceae

Uses – Root juice is taken along with milk and sugar in empty stomach in the morning it gives stamina, enhance fertility in both male

and female.

(8) Assamese name – Sookloti

Scientific name – *Perilla ocimoides* Linn

Family – Labiatae

Uses – Leaves and stems are cooked along with pepper against uterus infection, also use to treat menstruation irregularity

(9) Assamese name – Chal Kumura

Scientific name – *Beninsea hispida* (Thumb)

Cong.

Family – Fabaceae

Uses – Fruit is taken along with honey and ghee to enhance fertility

(10) Assamese name – Bandor Kekura

Scientific name – *Mucuna prurita* Hock

Family – Fabaceae

Uses – Root is mixed with honey and milk for the treatment of all sorts of ovary problems and to enhance the fertility of male

(11) Assamese name – Joba

Scientific name – *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*

Family – Malvaceae

Uses – Flower juice is used to cure the irregular menstruation.

(12) Assamese name – Bhimkol

Scientific name – *Musa balbisiana*

Family – Musaceae

Uses – Roots are crushed with local rice beer and given orally in the abortion cases.

(13) Assamese name : Tengesi

Scientific name – *Oxalis Corniculata* L

Family – Oxalidaceae

Uses – Leaf paste is taken orally in curing burning menstruation.

(14) Assamese name – Era

Scientific name – *Ricinus Communis* L.

Family – Euphorbiaceae

Uses – Young leaf paste is taken orally to cure the painful menstruation.

(15) Assamese name – Masendury

Scientific name – *Houttuynia cordata* Thumb

Family – Saururaceae

Uses – Root juice is given orally to cure the swelling of uterus

(16) Assamese name – Lajjabori

Scientific name – *Drymaria cordata* wild

Family – Caryophyllaceae

Uses – Plant juice is mixed with milk and given orally in abortion cases.

(17) Assamese name – Manimuni

Scientific name – *Centella asiatica* (L) urban

Family – Apiaceae

Uses – plant juice is mixed with milk and given orally to increase the fertility of both male and female

(18) Assamese name – Saru Manimuni

Scientific name – *Hydrocotyle rotundifolia* Roxb

Family – Apiaceae

Uses – Leaf is used orally to treat Menstrual problems.

(19) Assamese name – Tulsi

Scientific name – *Ocimum sanctum*

Family – Lamiaceae

Uses – Leaf juice is taken orally to cure the pain which occur during Menstruation period.

(20) Assamese name – Teteli

Scientific name – *Tamarindas indica* L.

Family – Caesalpinaceae

Uses – Seed juice is used to cure the pain which occur during menstruation period.

Conclusion :

From the above study the researchers found 20 different medicinal plants in the

Kakojan area. Out of these 20 plants, 14 different plants are used in different women diseases such as menstruation problem, abortion, uterus diseases etc. The remaining 6 different plants are used in both male and female diseases such as increase in the percentage of fertility etc. It can be thus be concluded that the study area is rich in medicinal flora which needs conservation. The information provided in this study is limited and more scientific floristic studies are required to identify the threatened plants.

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Gender Division of Labour in Society and its reality: A Sociological Study

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ABSTRACT

The issue of gender division of labour in household level depends on the education and employment of its members. Though there are some changes in terms of gender division of labour, still it is dependent on the status of women. It is seen that gender division of labour at household level is still rigid among the non working women and their husbands. But at present women are not confined in household activity only. Although the participation is less as compared to the male, the encouraging scenario regarding this cannot be ignored.

Key word : gender, Division of labour, role.

Introduction:

Though men and women both are the inseparable part of society, women are always deprived or discriminated in all the spheres of society. Gender inequalities are noticed in health, education, economics, politics etc (Sain, Kaware, 2013). Women are considered subordinate to men according to the culture of the society. It is accepted that there is a feeling of physical superiority in men and a general feeling prevails that something is lacking in females, but they adopt the most satisfying experience of life having maternal pleasure. This is to say that the biological facts are not irrelevant or that men and women are not different, but the facts and differences creates superiority/inferiority between men

and women with the framework of culturally defined value system. Feeling of women body and its functions more involved in 'species of life', seem to place her closer to nature, in contrast to men's psychology which frees them completely to take up the projects of culture (Ortner, p.g:74). So most of the time men are associated with social, political, cultural, economic activities against women who are associated with child birth, breast feeding, menstruation which is considered as associated with nature although menstruation is stigmatized in society according to the cultural value of the society. However it comes from the biological nature of female. Women's association with children may compound her potential for being seen as closer to nature.

Biological differences between men and women forms the basis of the sexual division of labour in society.

To established equality of women in all spheres of life, specially in labbour market, women should be educated. Involvement in labour market will help to reduce the sexual division of labour, the removal of distinction between men's job and women's job. With education as a tool women can contribute tramendously to the society. They should not be overly influenced by feelings that they are only object of men pleasure. Women should have rational thinking .Due to the lack of education among men and women men starts to think female like women rather than a human creature.

In changing scenario due to various factors women' role has been changed. Many years ago, women' role was limited and controlled by men. But at present womens' role is changing at an accelerating rate in different areas mainly social, economical and political. There should be many provisions for women including SHG through which they can contribute constructively and not remain confined in domestic works only.

In India, if it is noticed in broader perspective, women have attained the highest position in politics being President of India, Speaker of Loka Sabha, and Minister of Security etc. Female fighter pilots have been recently appointed in Indian Air force and Indian women have shown outstanding performance in game also. In workplace, every fourth worker in India is a woman. Participation of women in politics is also very

encouraging in India. It means women start to come out from the stereotyped gender role or from the domestic works which is specified to women. So in this paper an attempt has been made to study firstly whether the role of women is changing in the present scenario or not and secondly whether women is related to nature or culture.

Objectives of the study:

1. To study about the sexual division of labour among men and women at domestic level.
2. To study whether women have come out from the domestic sphere or not.

Universe:

The universe of the study is Midhakhat, Teok situated in the East of the Jorhat district. It is a semi urban area and it is not so far from the NH37.

Methodology:

Sources of data: Both primary and secondary data are used for data collection.

Sample: Purposive sampling is used for the study.

Techniques of data collection: The method of 'Interview schedule' is used for data collection.

Findings and Analysis:

In the area of Midhakhat, at present the total number of household is 150. Among the 150 household 50 married women are selected for the study.

The age structure of the respondent women lies between 30 to 50.

Educational qualification of respondent women

Qualification	No. of women
Below H.S.I.C	06 (12%)
H.S.L.C	10 (20%)
H.S	12 (24%)
B.A.	15 (30%)
M.A.	07 (14%)

The employment category of the women is

Types of work-	Govt. Service	Private job	Self employed	Housewife only
No. of women-	16 (32%)	06 (12%)	08 (16%)	20 (40%)

From the study it is found that 32% women are engaged in Govt. service, 12% women is associated with private job whereas 15% women are self employed and 40%

women are housewife. But a few of them are associated with SHG.

The participation in works in the households by men and women is seen as mentioned below-

Activities	Govt. Working women	Participa- tion of husband	Private working women	Participa- tion of husband	Self em- ployed women	Participa- tion of husband	House- wives	Participa- tion of husband
Preparation of food (maximum time)	16(100%)	01 (6%)	6, 100%	0	8, 100%	0, 0%	20,100%	0,0%
Washing cloth	16(100%)	14(87.5%)	6, 100%	4, 66%	8, 100%	3, 38%	20,100%	5, 25%
Cleaning house	16(100%)	04(25%)	6, 100%	1, 16%	8,100%	1,12%	20(100%)	2,10%
Child rearing	16(100%)	16(100%)	6,100%	6, 100%	8, 100%	5, 62%	20(100%)	12,60%
gardening	7(44%)	3 (19%)	2,33%	-	3,38%	1, 12%	8, 40%	0,0%
Teaching children	10(63%)	7(44%)	3	3, 50%	4,50%	4, 50%	14,70%	10,50%
marketing	16(100%)	16(100%)	466 %	466%	5,62%	5, 62%	8,40%	15, 75%
Prepation of tiffin for children	10(63%)	3(19%)	6(100%)	116%	6, 75%	0, 0%	14,70%	0, 0%

From the table it is observed that 100% women irrespective of their status as employed or unemployed are associated with the domestic works specially in preparation of food, cleaning home, washing clothes, child rearing etc. However the participation of husbands in the domestic works varies in terms of employed and unemployed women. Table shows that the percentage of participation of husband in above mentioned domestic tasks is gradually lessening from the working women to non working women. In terms of children's teaching participation is almost same among men and women. In terms of marketing, except house wives, other women have more chances to go to market. But in food preparation, the participation of husband is very less whereas only 1 (6%) use to do it more or less regularly as he is compelled due to his wife's service. From the table it is noticed that sexual division of labour is still alive in our society. It is more rigid among the 'non working women and their husbands' because the participation of husbands is comparatively less than the others. So education, employment etc has some impact on the divisions of labour among men and women in household activity.

But it should be mentioned that women are more associated with nature, more with domestic works even after engagement in various jobs. So, some of them mentioned about the double burden problem faced by the working women. Among the 22 women, working in the organized sector, some of them mention that they become tired as they have to maintain two sides equally.

Face double burden problem	don't face double burden problem
14 (66%)	08 (36%)

Women have faced this problem because of the Patriarchy nature of our society and traditional value of our society regarding 'the domestic works and women' through which it is institutionalized that domestic works should be done by women only.

From the study it was found that though women are highly associated with domestic works, but they are engaging in some other activities also. Except the working women in organized sector, others are also associated with SHGs and so many social and cultural activities. In the study, 28 women are not working in any Govt. or private organized sector. Among these women, the involvement in SHG is seen as below-

No. of women	Name of SHG
8 (28%)	Kanaklata Self help group
6 (21%)	Aradhana Self Help Group
6(21%)	Usha Self help Group

In the study it was found that total 70% women (among 28 no. of women) are associated with different activities under various Self Help Groups.

From the study it is found that though they are associated with such type of activities like Naam Prasanga, Vauna, attending meeting etc, but the percentage of participating women is seen less as compared to men. But there is the encouraging scenario in the participation of *Nam Prasanga* and *Vauna* which is traditionally dominated by men only.

So from this study it may be concluded that women have started bread earning activities, and as these are related to culture also, women have come forward from the domestic works or from their limited boundary.

Conclusion:

Women are still highly associated with domestic activities more than men. Husband's participation is less in this regards. However in terms of educated and regularly employed women, husband provides more support and takes caring of various activities. At present women are not only related to the nature, e.g., child birth, feeding, cleaning etc, but also they are associated with culture such as earning money, social, cultural activities. Though the participation is comparatively low, but it can be increased by changing the patriarchal attitude, providing more

educational facilities and entering into the labour market etc.

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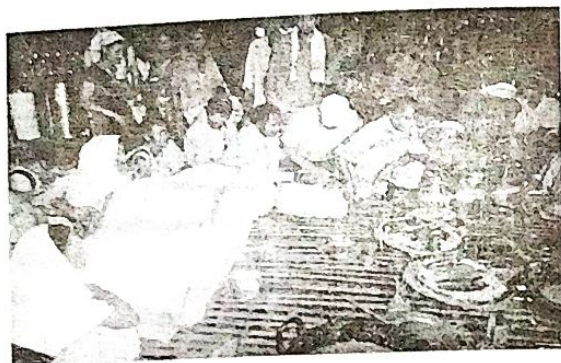
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Marriage System of Mishing Tribe in Assam: Changes and Continuity (A Study on Two Mishing Villages of Teok, Jorhat District of Assam)

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ABSTRACT

Marriage is an important institution of our society. It is one of the universal social institutions establish to control and regulate the life of mankind. Marriage system is different in different societies. Mishing tribe is second largest tribe among the other tribes of North- East India. The culture and life style of Mishing tribe reflect their belief in age old values and traditions. The marriage system of Mishing community is like Hindu marriage system. But some part of their marriage system is found to be different. Marriage among the Mishing is still a socio-religious ceremony. The Mishing marriage system is endogamy in nature. Traditional Mishing wedding is replete with dance and songs. The impact of urbanisation and modernisation has brought a major economic and socio-cultural transformation among the Mishing tribe of Assam. The objective of the paper is to study about the marriage system and its changes among the Mishing tribe of Assam.

Key words : Marriage, Institution, Mishing, Tribe, Endogamy.

Introduction :

Assam is a land of various tribes and communities located over the entire span of the state. These tribes bear huge cultural and linguistic differences and at the same times similarities too. One of the prominent tribes in the upper Assam is the Mishing tribe. The Mishing tribe is the second largest tribe among the other tribes of North-east India. The exact origin of the Mishing people hasn't been confirmed. They were originally hills tribes of the Arunachal Pradesh migrated down to the plains of Assam in search of a peaceful and better economic life in comparatively early times. It is believed that the first group of mishings landed in the upper region of the valley some times between 13th and 14th century A. D. when the area around Sadiya was ruled by the Chutiya kings. Mishing people are still living in flood affected and isolated areas following age old tradition. Mishing tribe comprises of ethnic people inhabiting mainly Dhemaji, North Lakhimpur, Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Sibsagar, Jorhat and Golaghat districts of Assam. Many of them are settled in various districts of Arunachal Pradesh. Agriculture is the main occupation of Mishing tribe.

The culture and lifestyle of Mishing tribe reflect their belief in age old values and traditions. Monogamy type of marriage is famous among the Mishing society. This colourful ethnic group living amidst the fellow non-tribal Assamese people for many centuries has been able to maintain its traditional socio-cultural traits un-impaired in spite of the changes that have taken place in

the socio-politico-religious life of Assam.

Keeping the above scenario in mind, the present study was taken on "Marriage system of Mishing tribe of Assam: A study on two Mishing villages of Teok, Jorhat district of Assam."

Marriage is one of the universal social institutions established to control and regulate the life of mankind. Marriage ceremonies, rules and roles may differ from one society to another. In most societies, it serves to socially identify children by defining kinship ties to a mother, father and extended relatives. It also serves to regulate sexual behaviours to transfer, preserve or consolidate property, prestige and power and most importantly, it is the basis for the institution of the family.

According to Malinowski, a legal marriage is one which gives a woman a socially recognized husband and her children a socially recognized father.

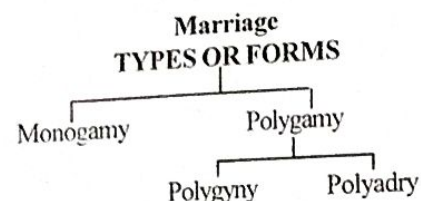
According to Redcliffe Brown, Marriage is a social arrangement by which a child is given a legitimate position in the society determined by parenthood in the social sense.

Definitions clarify that it is only through the establishment of culturally controlled and sanctioned marital relations that a family comes into being. The institutionalized form of these relations is called marriage.

Westermarck stated in his famous book "A Short History of Human's Marriage", stated that Marriage is a relation of one or more men and women which is recognized by the custom or law and involves certain rights and duties both in the case of parties entering the union and in the case of

children born in it.

Marriage permits sex relations both husband and wife and these sex relations are legitimized by the society. It is because of this legitimization that marriage undergoes certain relations which are performed publicly.



Major objectives of the present study are:

1. To study about the marriage system of Mishing tribe.
2. To analyse the marriage ritual practices among the Mishing Tribe of Assam.
3. To understand the prevailing trend of cultural practices among the Mishing Tribe of Assam.

Discussion:

The Mishings are divided into some groups. The reasons for such division are not known. Moreover, such a division is undistinguishable on many occasions. The groups are Pagro, Dalu, Sayang, Dambuk, oyan, samuguria, Moying, Tamar, Somua, Bihia, Bongkuall.

Mishings are divided into two sections namely, Barogam and Dahgam. There are forty two clans. The marriage system usually preferred within the sub group. The Doley clan prefer to marry with Pegu girls because Pegu and Doley clan belong to Pagro sub group.

A few clans are created during the reign of the Ahoms, Chutia and Bhuyari. Some says that Mishings who come down through the Ahom, Chutia kingdom of Sadia were known as Sadia Miri or Chutia Miri. The Ahom kings selected some eligible Mishing members and offered them administration post like Miri Baruah, Miri Sandikai etc. The Baruah Pegu of Dhemaji, Samua of Namsai Patgiri of Luhitmuks areas have similarly historical connection and maintain these title offered by Ahom king with much pride.

Mishing Tribe is divided into three

gotras:-

1. Sabo (Doley)
2. Kondar (Pegu)
3. Sami (Mili, Kaman, Payeng)

The Mishing are divided into 8 khels. Those are Sayingia, Mayingia, Dal, Pagar, Dambak, Samuguria and Tamar. A few clans are found to be created due to the contact with the Ahoms Mirichutia and Bhuyan community in the past.

Marriage system of Mishing tribe:

The Mishing marriage system is celebrated in 3 different ways depending on the acquiring matter. These different ways are:-

DA: RU Midang, DUGLALA: NAM, KUMNASOLALA: NAM

1. DA:RU Midang is settled by the parent or guardians according to the social system.
2. Dugla-la-nam, is a type of marriage which is settled by elopement at the consent of the bride.
3. Kumna-sola-la-nam, it is performed

only after receiving consent from both the parents and guardians of the bridegroom.

Methodology:

The study is based on both Primary and Secondary data. The Primary data was collected by using well prepared interview schedule, unstructured interview. The Secondary data was collected from existing literature available in various journals, books and magazines etc. The data obtained from both Primary and Secondary sources have been processed and analysed using some simple but meaningful statistical techniques for

objective and logical interpretations.

The present study was undertaken in two villages of Teok, Jorhat District namely Teok Sonari Mishing Gaon and Teok Siram Mishing Gaon. Both of the villages are nearby Assamese society. Moreover, the both villages have got one lower primary school and more than 100 household. Sample villages are rich in culture. Socio-economic conditions of the villagers is not bad. In comparison to earlier times now they are able to continue their life without any hassles.

Population of the sample villages:

Name of sample village	Total population	No. of Male	No. of Female
Teok Sonari Mishing Gaon	425	225	200
Teok Siram Mishing Gaon	416	191	225

Educational qualification of the sample village:

Name of sample village	Percentage of		Graduation	H.S Passed	Others
	Male	Female			
Teok Sonari Mishing Gaon	40%	60%	40%	30 %	30%
Teok Siram Mishing Gaon	50%	50%	60%	20 %	20%

Socio-economic condition of the sample village:

Name of sample village	Govt. Employees		Business and others		Depend on	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Agriculture	Weaving Female counterpart
Teok Sonari Mishing Gaon	35 %	6 %	16 %	2 %	40%	3%
Teok Siram Mishing Gaon	32 %	12 %	15%	2 %	35%	4%

Selected villages are belongs to Hindu religion. Above tables clarifies that they are educated and the socio-economic status of the selected villages are not so bad. Mili, Tai, Morang, Regon, Narah clans are lives in these two villages. They are nearby Assamese cultured society. Now-a-days they are adopting the culture of their neighbourhood villages. In these selected areas dwellers are influenced by 'Krishna Dharma' and 'Shankari Dharma' also. But some of them practices their traditional rituals such as beliefs in 'Donyi-Polo', God of Sun and Moon. There are two separate Namghar both for the Shankar Dharma and another is for them who follows traditional practices. 40% of the villagers of Sonari Mishing Gaon are the follower of Shankar Dharma.

DUGLA LA: NAM, KUMNASOLALA :NAM is mostly famous among the Mishing people. Mishing Tribe is rich in their traditional clothes. Women are expert in weaving. In marriage ceremony *Yambo* (groom) wear *Gonro ugon* in generally Dhoti or *Jinrek.Ribigaseng* (Mishing traditional chadar). *Tongali Dumor* (Mishing Gamosa) covered on his head as *Epo* (in general turban), wear *Dogne* ornament in their neck. This ornament is wear for their safety from bad luck as they beliefs. They also wear *Pator Shirt* and their traditional Mishing shirt known as *Mibu-Galuk*. *Erpop*, maflar hand around the shoulder.

'Yamne' (bride) wears 'Gero' is used to tie around the waist and chest on top of their traditional 'ege' (Mekhela) and 'ribigasor' (traditional mishing sador) 'epo' on

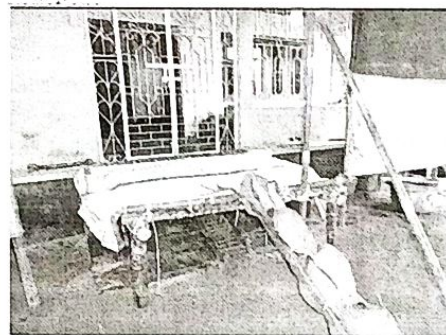
their head. 'Yambo a special king stripped piece of cloth. It is used as wedding sheet to welcome the bridegroom. In marriage ceremony, bride wear various traditional ornaments also such as 'Kongge' (Bengles), Ga: Mkaru (Bangles made of Silver), Neck ornament 'Dogne', 'Mukong a: Be': (a type of necklace made of Silver with red coloured stones), 'Turi' (earring) etc.

The marriage system of Mishing community is like Hindu marriage system, but some part of their marriage system have some differences. One of the major findings of these selected areas is that among the Mishing society inter- caste marriage is given important. At present traditional Mishing marriage practices are slowly vanishing from the society. Due to the impact of education and adjustment with the other society they are coming out from their traditional practices of marriage rituals. It is not that they are completely out of their rituals. *Dugla-Lanam* marriage system is most famous among them which is not so expensive. *Kumna-sola-lanam* is also famous at a time. Above 80 years old aged respondents stated that earlier *Dugla-la-nam* marriage is mostly held in their society. Now- a- day, some of the factors have brought changes in their society. Old aged respondents from the study area stated that education, television and influence of other society have had impact on their traditional system of marriage practices.

It is seen to be seen that now-a-days with contact of Assamese society both of the selected areas are trying to follow up the 'Hoomagni' and 'Bidhi Path' rituals of

Assamese society.

Most of the Mishings are practices their traditional rituals at their 'Chang Ghar' generally used as kitchen. With the passing of time they have built up a chang ghar at the back side of their home. When groom come to brides home then the bride party welcome the groom's party. They cover up the 'kobang' (wooden ladder of Mishing ghar) with the *Alpinia allughas* (torapat in Assamese society) in marriage ceremony. In marriage ceremony women sing folk song. This song is known as 'Midong Nitom'. The dowry and bride price are not popular among Mishing society. The 'apong' (Mishing's traditional rice bear) and 'eg adin' (pork) are famous dish in the marriage party. In early days a pig or its equivalent rupees 100 or 50 was charged as bride price payable to the parents of the bride. But later the amount has come to many



The Mishing marriage system is influenced by the other Assamese marriage system. Of late the marriages of Mishing community have been modernized. Inter-community, inter-relation, inter-Tribes, widow

remarriage is found to be seen among the Mishing society.

It is held for two days. On first day, groom goes to bride's house known as 'Duktad'. On that day grooms relatives come with gifts as demanded by bride's party. Pork, Fish, Milk, Apong (Rice bear) etc are their demanding item. Dowry is strictly prohibited in their society. On the second day the bride's party warmly welcome groom's party and they perform so many religious rituals with remember of their forefather's.

It is also observed that about 10% of the marriages among the Mishings is inter-community (with non-tribal community), inter tribe and inter-religions. Now-a-days Cross Cousin Marriage is not found to be seen among these two selected Mishing village.

The Mishings are undergoing the process of modernisation, acculturation, and urbanisation and the impact of these factors on them is resulting in erosion of their traditional life and folk culture.

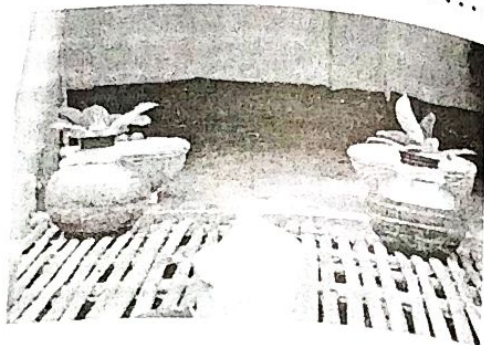
Conclusion:

Marriage is not a personal affair. It is not just an institution for the fulfilment of biological needs. It is a social alliance par excellence. Whatever may be the kind of society, it has same inbuilt mechanism for providing legitimacy to the sexual needs. However, the functions that marriage institution performs have different priorities in different society. Without marriage we cannot imagine a civilized society. The spread of modern education, science and technology, media etc has also brought about drastic changes in the religious beliefs and socio-

economic life of the Mishings. Various socio-economic and demographic factors also affect the pattern of inter community marriage among them. There is however significant spatial variations in the pattern of inter community, inter tribe and inter religion marriage.

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Witch-hunting: A Major Social Evil of Assam

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ABSTRACT

Witch hunting is one of the most dangerous social evil which is prevailing all over India. In India it dates back hundreds of years and it is one of the most dangerous superstitions in our country. It is one of the burning problems in the society of Assam. Assam is a state where the problem of witch hunting is very sensitive. It can be considered as a social evil for Assam. Witch doctors (Oja, deodhai, bej) are people who are indicted as witch. It is a matter of serious concern that witch hunting is still practiced in post modern times throughout the world. In the entire North Eastern states, Assam is the worst hit by this superstitious evil in the present decade. There are a number of factors as well as causes that led to witch hunting in our state. It is opined that the perpetrators of this crime are motivated and propelled by greed for land, property and also revenge. In this paper, an attempt has been made to witch-hunting in proper perspective and provides some remedial measures at this juncture.

Introduction:

Witch-Hunting is a superstitious evil and a social menace. It is a horrendous superstitious practice prevalent in rural India. It is a matter of serious concern that Witch-Hunting is still practiced in postmodern time throughout the world. In India, it dates back hundreds of years and it is one of the dangerous superstition in our country. A 'Witch' or its assamese vocabulary 'daini' in Assam is used to identify a male or female is alleged to have magical powers that is used to bring evil to the community. In most cases those women are singled out as 'witches' who

are alleged to use their evil to harm others. In the entire Northeastern states Assam is the worst hit by this superstitions evil in the present decade. Meanwhile, Assam has witnessed hundreds of cases of witch-hunting. A 'witch' or 'daini' in local dialect is believed to cause ailment to people, destroy crops and other livestock etc. She is generally identified by an 'ojha' or 'bez' and then is banished from the community or killed. This ugliest form of superstition has been continuing for thousands of years. It is a shame on our civilization. Enacting law at this juncture is a real welcome step, but we can not eliminate witch-hunting

only by legal method because it is so deep rooted. People must be given education and government must launch a massive awareness drive. There are a number of factors as well as causes that has led to witch-hunting in our State. It is opined that the perpetrators of this crime are motivated and propelled by the greed for land, property and also revenge.

Objectives :

The main objectives of the present study may be summed up as follows:

- a. To find out the various issues of witch-hunting in Assam and trace out the result of this social menace.
- b. To examine the witch-hunting in proper perspective and also provide some suggestive measures in this juncture.

Methodology :

The present study is based on secondary sources. These include books, newspapers, magazines, journals, internet etc. Besides making a study of these existing materials, the researcher has used own observation in analysing this problem in proper perspective.

Findings and Discussion :

Witch-Hunting is such a social evil which ruin the victim's property, reputation, family and life. It is a matter of great surprise that in the 21st century, when we talk about women empowerment, the practice of witch-hunting still exists. In the recent years various studies have been undertaken to understand the practice of Witch-Hunting worldwide. It has been agreed at various platforms that there are number of reasons which lead to Witch-Hunting beyond mere superstition.

❖ Firstly, the belief in the practice of witchcraft has a deeper connection with Assam's spiritual history. Even Mayong, known to be the land of witchery is situated in Assam and people of this area believed to worship the planet of 'Maya' or 'Byadhi'. They believed that planet bestowed its devotees the art of black magic. Various folklores describe its connection with astrology and practice of witchcraft. According to folklore, the Oja or medicine man learns his skill which include identifying and curing a witch, but witches are said to be born with their powers.

❖ Secondly, illiteracy is another factor which also halts the overall progress and generate unsafe conditions. Such unsafe conditions combined with some external threats mainly superstitions, which causes different problems to the rural community specially tea tribes and tribal community in which practice of witch-hunt is prevalent.

❖ Thirdly, it is seen that a number of people die of contagious diseases in the tribal dominated area of our state. Due to the ignorance of administration, lack of proper education among there people and they are unaware of modern ways of life, various diseases break out easily among them without their knowledge. This is later linked to strange way of treatment and finally leading to witchcraft and hunt.

❖ Fourthly, poverty and violence go hand in hand among the communities where witch hunting is prevalent. It has been seen that extreme rainfall, flood, epidemic leads to a large increase in the murder of "witches" – typically elderly women killed by relatives.

❖ Lastly, it has been witnessed that in many cases in our state, there is a third party which leads the hunts in order to grab property, mainly of the victim. In such cases, the perpetrators of this crime are motivated by the greed for land, property and also revenge.

Some vignettes of witch-hunting in Assam during the present decade may be summed up as below :

❖ As per records available, more than 400 persons have been killed in Assam during the period from 2007 to 2014 in cases of witch-hunting. In 2015, it was disclosed in the State Assembly that 93 cases of witch-hunting were reported and 77 persons, including 35 women were killed during 2010 to 2015.

❖ Police have registered 202 cases during the period from 2001 to 2017. The worst is Kokrajhar district, where 56 cases were reported, followed by Chirag with 24, Udalguri with 15 and Baksa with 11 cases. 931 arrests have been made between 2001 to 2017.

❖ Witch-Hunting is quite different from other murder cases. A majority of the villagers participate in the crime, and so it becomes difficult to find witnesses. Many murders do not get recorded as cases of witch-hunting in government files, but going as per incidents reported in the press, the figures of cases related to witch-hunting are normally four times more than what has been recorded by the government machinery.

❖ Most causes of witch-hunt murders are based on superstitious belief that witches have magical powers that lead to death and

disease in the community. However, a deeper study in most cases reveal that they are usually means to settle personal scores such as jealousy, property conflicts, family strife in the name of superstitions.

❖ Witch-Hunting or killing of 'witches' cannot be attributed to a single community or geographical location of the state. Even the Kamrup (Metropolitan) district, of which Guwahati city constitutes a major part, has also witnessed such incidents. Besides, there are instances of witch-hunting being used against families who have newly emerged as powerful, challenging the existing power structure of villages.

Result of practice of witch-hunting in Assam may be summed up as follows :

➤ Witch-hunting leads the accused women and her family to physical and social isolation.

➤ It has resulted in the loss of livelihood of accused women. She is forced to struggle hard for livelihood as she is not offered any works.

➤ The victim who is branded as witch often loses her psychological balance and is treated as mad after the accusation.

➤ Most of the times, the victims of Witch-Hunting are compelled to leave the village and to take refuge in other places.

➤ Besides, the education of the children of the women branded as witch, is hampered as they find themselves being isolated in the school, so these children end up as drop outs.

Suggestive Measures as well as Conclusion:

Witch-Hunting is a barbaric act of superstition, one of the social crimes accepted and committed by many communities in our state. The practice of Witch-Hunting is prevalent in some parts of Assam in the present decade and this social evil need to be controlled and eliminated from the society. The following suggestive measures may be adopted to curb this social menace.

➤ Law will surely go a long way in curbing the practice of Witch-hunting. It is a matter of relief to a considerable extent that President Ram Nath Kovind has given his assent to the Assam Witch-Hunting Act, 2015.

➤ The new Act is of course a positive step for society to tackle the witch-hunting menace. But the solution of this problem lies in the active participation of all stakeholders of society. The law must be backed by social awareness.

➤ Providing basic infrastructure in remote area where witch-hunting is prevalent is essential to eliminate this social menace.

➤ Practical education to all members of the vulnerable community including women is necessary to curb this social evil.

➤ Apart from making facilities of education as well as health available to the vulnerable communities, measures should be taken so that the people may achieve stability in economic and financial terms.

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An Analysis on Role and Achievement of Girl Players in the field of Badminton in the District of Jorhat, Assam – An Analytical Study

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ABSTRACT

"You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women."

Women are the key agents for development. Development cannot bring peace and prosperity unless social justice and gender equality are ensured. All round development and harmonious growth of partners in progress with men, women empowerment covers social, political, economic aspect of a society. The concept of women empowerment is absolutely essential for the social, national and international development and progress. Women need to be empowered so that they can work and think independently, prove their talents, cope with oppression and injustice and become capable of taking part in public affairs in the Indian context.

The representation of women in sports reflects the empowerment of women. Sport is more powerful force than any other force in the world. The force is love, affection, knowing each other, international brotherhood, personally makes a man perfect and self sufficient and brings good will and message of belongingness to one country. Sports cannot be minimized in any sphere of life. Involvement and achievement in sports is an important aspect in determining the status of a person. In this paper an attempt has been made to study the roles, achievement and participation of girl players especially in Badminton in the District of Jorhat, Assam. The paper is based on primary and secondary sources of data.

Key words: Women Empowerment, Sports, Equality

Introduction:

Women Empowerment is an active, multi-dimensional process which should enable women to realize their identity and

powers in all spheres of life, in order for them to make decisions on their own or resist decisions that are made by others which affect them. In a general sense, it means empowering

women to be self dependent by providing them access to all the freedom and opportunities which they were denied in the past only because of their being 'women'. In a specific sense, women empowerment refers to the power or capacity a woman possesses to regulate their day to day lives in the social sphere.

Forebel remarked, "If we wish to develop the whole human being, we must exercise the whole human being." Swami Vivekananda said, "What India needs today is not the Bhagwat Gita, but the football field."

The importance of sports and games cannot be ignored. Its importance is growing day by day. Without co-curricular activities in the academic curriculum, real education cannot be possible. Formerly education was only to impart bookish knowledge to the students but in modern times this concept of education is considered very narrow. Knowledge acquired only from books fails to bring about all round development of a child. Importance is given to the development of personality and citizenship. Play is natural instinct of human being. It develops from childhood. It changes the bad habits to good habits. Sports and Games play a very important role in building up personality especially amongst the upcoming children. Only healthy persons can build up a healthy and prosperous state. Sports activities inculcate the virtues of honesty, perseverance, discipline and self-confidence amongst its practitioners. In today's context of the rapid changing world scenario our state requires physically and mentally strong persons to meet

the challenges ahead.

Badminton, as an indoor game is a very popular form of sports discipline in our state. Any championship helps in popularizing the game of Badminton in the state and also encourages our young Badminton players to prove their talent. It requires systematic thinking, proper planning, effective line of action, proper judgment, co-ordination, intelligence, presence of mind of players etc. Sound mind and body with fitness and flexibility are very much essential to a badminton player with perfect action.

As men and women are the integral parts of the society, the progress of a society can be measured through the development both men and women. Empowerment of women folk may be studied from various angles.

Keeping in view the above factors the investigator makes an attempt to study the role and achievement of girl players in the field of Badminton in the District of Jorhat, Assam.

Objectives:

The objectives of this paper are-

1. To study the existing facilities of Badminton in Jorhat stadium of Assam.
2. To study the interest and participation of girl players in the field of Badminton of Jorhat District in different championship and tournament in Assam.
3. To study the achievement of girl badminton players playing in different categories in Jorhat city in the field of Badminton in Assam.

Field and methodology:

The field of the study is the District of Jorhat, Assam. The study is based on primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data has been collected through direct personal interview with the players and parents of the players of Jorhat stadium. The secondary data has been collected from various published sources.

Discussion and Findings:

Jorhat is the heart centre of sports activities just after independence of the country, games like Table Tennis, Swimming and Badminton can also share of the glory. There are two Badminton stadiums in Jorhat city. One is Kushal Konwar Memorial Indoor Stadium and another is Binato Indoor Stadium. Jorhat is now proud of having a big and beautiful indoor stadium which is Kushal Konwar Memorial Indoor Stadium and it was opened in July, 1988. It is considered as canopy of sports of the Jorhat town. It is also recognized as one of the best infrastructure of the state. Apart from Indoor games a Health Club is also started in the portion which was donated by ABITA where many of the health conscious young and senior citizens attend regularly. There are about 120 player girl includes with adequate lighting arrangements and constant coaching have been given a wide range of opportunities are given to the players.

Facilities imply the different items, equipments, concerned teacher-in-charge, financial provision, buildings, for the total provisions of the stadium. The players are fortunate enough to enjoy the facilities provided by the stadium. At present the

players are regularly coached by three prominent coaches namely Sri Dhrubajyoti Kalita (NIS), Ashinta Saikia (NIS- State level Champion representing Assam Team in the mini national Badminton Championship at Vishakhapatnam in 1988) and Sri Sandhan Jyoti Baruah (State level champion).

Financial help is also offered from various sources for improving the condition of the stadium. With the availability of the infrastructure, it has been possible to play throughout the whole year, undertake training and coaching camps, make plans and programmes by the organizers. There is a provision for Sports Literary Forum in the stadium. It was started on 1st September, 2002.

For the development of Badminton, another stadium was constructed in Jorhat, which is known as Binato Indoor Stadium. It is situated in the beautiful green locality at Seujnagar in Lichubari, Jorhat. The courts were made ready for playing; about 40 youngsters have been undergoing training under experienced coaches, one among them being Abhijit Dutta, a former senior state level champion. Liyana Dutta is also a budding player of the stadium and was the State champion (in the U-9 category) and Sudarsini Gogoi (U-9) was the Runner-up in the year 2016. And Pahi Borah was the 2nd runner-up in the year 2018 in all Assam Ranking badminton tournament at Nowgong. Hansikha Kashyap was the champion (U-13) Doubles in the 2018 under Don Bosco Board of Upper Assam at Dergaon Don Bosco school and Sonali Gogoi was the 2nd Runner-

up in that event The stadium was started in early 2017 with two courts and adequate facilities.

Regarding interest and participation of girl players it was found that the girls are coming up gradually to participate in various events. In this connection the awareness of parents are also important. Most of the parents of the girls are found to be very

conscious. It can be considered as remarkable change in the context of gender equality.

The girl players of Jorhat District are able to participate in District, State, Regional badminton championship and tournaments in different levels in girls category. The following table shows the participation of girl players in various events from 2016 to 2018.

Sl.No.	Events	Date and Venue	No. of players
01	4 th All Assam Ranking Badminton Tournament at Tinsukia Stadium, Assam	18 th – 21 st July, 2016,	6 (U-10)
02	6 th All Assam Ranking Badminton Tournament at Kushal Konwar Indoor Stadium, Jorhat, Assam	28 th – 31 st July, 2016,	5 (U-10) 2 (U-13)
03	64 th YONEX SUNRISE All Assam Interdistrict and Open Badminton Championship at Golaghat Indoor Stadium Golaghat, Assam	17 th –22 nd August, 2016	3 (U-10)
04	1 st All Assam Ranking Badminton Tournament at Lakhimpur Stadium, Lakhimpur, Assam	9 th –12 th April, 2017	01 (U-11)
05	6 th All Assam Major Ranking Badminton Championship at Don Bosco School Campus, Panbazar, Guwahati, Assam	22 nd – 25 th July, 2017	04 (U-11)
06	65 th YONEX SUNRISE All Assam Interdistrict 20 th Ranking Open Badminton Championship at Kanaklata Indoor Stadium, Guwahati, Assam	4 th -9 th August, 2017	4 (U-11) 01 (U-13)
07	Interclub Badminton Championship at Forkating Indoor Stadium, Golaghat, Assam	17 th Dec, 2017	3 (U-11)

08	Dr Mukunda Madhab Dutta Memorial Upper Assam Sub Junior Championship at Golaghat Stadium, Golaghat, Assam	10 th -11 th Feb, 2018	2 (U-11) 01 (U-9)
09	KVS Regional sports Meet, (Badminton), Guwahati, Assam at Lakshmi Bai National Institute of Physical Education, Sonapur, Guwahati	2 nd May-5 th May, 2018	02 (U-14)
10	1 st All Assam Ranking Badminton Tinsukia Indoor Stadium, Tinsukia, Assam	12 th – 15 th May, 2018,	5 (U-11) 01 (U-13) 01 (U-15)
11	All Assam Ranking Badminton Tournament at Dibrugarh University Campus, Dibrugarh, Assam	May, 2018	3 (U-11)
12	All Assam Ranking Badminton Tournament Nowgong Stadium, Nowgong, Assam	4 th -7 th , July 2018	01 (U-11) 01 (U-13)
13	All Assam Ranking Badminton Tournament at Kanaklata Indoor Stadium, Guwahati, Assam	9 th -12 th July, 2018	03 (U-11) 01 (U-13)
14	PNB Met Life Junior Badminton Championship (East Zone, Guwahati) at Kanaklata Indoor Stadium, Guwahati, Assam	14 th -16 th July, 2018	01 (U-11)
15	All Assam Ranking Badminton Tournament at Don Bosco School Campus, Panbazar, Guwahati, Assam	18 th -21 st July, 2018 01 (U-15)	04 (U-11) 04 (U-13)
16	66 th YONEX SUNRISE All Assam Interdistrict and Open Badminton Championship at Jorhat Indoor Stadium, Jorhat, Assam	17 th -22 nd August, 2018	9 (U-11) 6 (U-13)
17	DON BOSCO Board of Upper Assam, (DBBUA) Badminton at Dergaon DONBOSCO School, Golaghat, Assam	19 th August, 2018	03 (U-13)

Besides the above, the investigator also enquired about the previous records. Atrayee Barua (U-13 girls singles) participated in Assam, Mini National and Junior National in the year 1990, 1991 and 1997. Sushmita Bora (U-17 and U-19 girl's event) participated in the national level in the year 2002 and 2005. Meghna Bharadwaj (U-13, U-16 girl's singles event) participated in All Assam Badminton Championship in the year 2003, 2004 and 2005 and Suman Phukan (U-13 girls singles) also participated in the Assam in the year 2003, 2004 and 2005. Akanshya Sonowal (U-10) and Nikita Phukan (U-10) singles participated in Assam

in the year 2016 and 2012. Susmita Puzari (women's singles) also participated in All Assam Championship in the year 2005.

From the above data, it can be said that all players do not participate in the Assam Championship, but Jorhat Stadium has huge pool of sports talent and the championships provide a good platform for the upcoming players. Jorhat District Badminton Association is always very much keen to offer its efforts for the development of Badminton in Jorhat.

On the basis of collected data, the researchers analyzed the achievement of the girl players of Jorhat Stadium in various events from 1990 to 2018 and mentioned below –

Year	Name of player	Achievement
1990	Atrayee Barua	Assam Champion U-13 Girls Singles
1991	Atrayee Barua	Assam Champion U-13 Girls Singles
1997	Atrayee Barua	Represented Assam in Junior National Championship U-13 Girl Singles
2002	Susmita Bora	Gold medal in the National School Games in the U-17 Girls event
2003	Meghna Bharadwaj	2 times champion U-13 girls event
2003	Sumona Phukan	Assam Champion U-13 girls event singles and doubles
2004	Meghna Bharadwaj	Assam champion U-19 girls event in the All India Kendriya Vidyalaya Sports Meet held at New Delhi
2004	Sumona Phukan	Assam champion U-13 girl singles and doubles
2005	Meghna Bharadwaj	Assam champion U-16 girls singles 2 times Assam champion U-19 girls singles
2005	Susmita Puzari	Runner up (women categories) doubles
2005	Sumona Phukan	Assam champion (U-13 girls singles)
2005	Susmita Bora	Runner up U-19 girls singles

Year	Name of player	Achievement
2006	Meghna Bharadwaj	Assam champion U-16 girls doubles
2006	Akanshya Sonowal	Assam champion U-10 girls singles
2010	Nikita Phukan	3 times Assam champion (U-10 girls singles and one time champion in Interdistrict Tournament held in Sivsagar
2017	Avika Buragohain	2 times Assam champion U-11 girls singles and one time champion in the year 2018 and semifinalist in Interdistrict Badminton Champion in Jorhat, Assam
2018	Sumorita Gogoi	Assam champion U-11 girls singles, 2 times Runner up U-11 girls singles and semifinalist in Interdistrict Badminton Champion in Jorhat, Assam

From the above facts it can be said that the girl players are coming up gradually. The achievement of players is also noticeable. In the sphere of empowerment of women, achievement in sports category is an important aspect now days. From the investigation it has been found that changes are coming gradually in this particular aspects, the attitude mindset of people specially the parents has been changing. Previously girls were not involved in various types of sports. But today some changes are taking place due to the spread of education, globalization, modernization process and various factors related to changing the attitude and role of the people. As a result girl players are coming up and they are able to show their performances in sports. It can be considered as empowerment of women through sports activity.

Conclusion:

Badminton provides training of living in the society. It teaches the "Art of living".

Players can develop the qualities of team work, fellow-feeling, discipline, virtues of honesty, power of thinking, reasoning, tolerance etc. these are the essential qualities of a player. But it should always be remembered that game should not be only for game sake. Competition should be there, but winning the trophy should not be the end of games and sports. The sports department should come forward to implement the coaching scheme. Public should help the young talents. It is also found that girls are starting to occupy a prominent place in the field of badminton. They contribute significantly not only in the district level but also in the national field of badminton. A coach should know the nature of development of the girl player. He should understand the needs, interest, variety of emotions etc. New methods and techniques of badminton should be used. He should take proper guidance in this connection so that girl players can be guided in a right way.

This study is an analysis especially of the role and achievement of girl players in the district of Jorhat, Assam. This study cannot be generalized for all the districts of Assam. So, more studies in this area is needed to verify the findings.

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Role of Women in the Freedom Struggle Movement in Assam : An Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Women of Assam played an important role in the freedom movement. They came forward and participated in the Non-co-operation, Civil Disobedience and Quit India movement. Mahatma Gandhi visited Assam in the month of August 1921 during the Non-Co-operation movement. This tour of Mahatma Gandhi besides enhancing the power of the movement strengthened the organizational foundation of the Congress in Assam. After the visit of Mahatma Gandhi thousands of women joined the movement. Boycotting the British goods they prepared cloths by hand. The Non-co-operation and Civil-Disobedience movement had great impact on the women of remote areas of the village. The emergence of "Gandhi Raja" and the message of "Swaraj" turned some housewives to Anti-British movement. Being under the notion of "British Rule has come to an end" thousands of girl students joined along with the Congress leaders like Nabin Chandra Bordoloi, Siddhinath Sarma and others. The role played by the girl students of Cotton College were worth mentioning. Prominent women those who spearheaded the movement there were Chandraprabha Saikiani, Kironbala Agarwala, Puspallata Das, Tileswari Mahanta. Kanaklata Baruah in Gohpur and Bhugaeswari Phukanani in Dehakiajuli laid their lives while going to unfurl the Congress flag atop the *thana* (police station) building there. In this paper an attempt has been made to focus on the active role played by Assamese women in the freedom struggle of Assam.

Key words : Women, Movement, Freedom, British, Assam

The state of Assam has seen women enjoying equal rights with men since the ancient times. In this part of the country women have proved to be a symbol of strength. Women's participation during the freedom struggle movement in Assam was certainly note-worthy.

Women power exhibited by the likes of Kanaklata Deka, Bhogeswari Phukanani and Khahuli Nath are the best examples in the history of Assam. The active participation of Mahatma Gandhi in the arena of Indian politics to fight India's battle for freedom with new

methods and techniques turned a new leaf in the history of India's struggle for freedom. Till the year 1904, not a single women organisation was formed in Assam. Therefore, the women participated in the meetings of 'Assam Association', 'Assam Students' Conference', 'Assam Sahitya Sabha', etc.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to highlight a few women freedom fighters as well as some women organisation and their active role in the activities during the freedom movement of Assam. Their equal and bold role had minimized the grip of patriarchy and made these women admired in the framework of whole India.

Methodology:

This paper is based only on secondary sources. Methodology of the paper is both descriptive and analytical. To achieve the objectives of the paper, different books, journals, periodicals and articles have been studied.

Discussion:

As a consequence of the Indian Renaissance and national consciousness, women education spread in Assam during the last part of the 19th century and the first part of the 20th century. Assamese women came forward and took active part in the freedom movement. They could not participate in politics and social activities as there were no women organisation till the year 1904. The women appeared in the scenario of political affairs after the formation of organisations such as 'Bharat Mahila Parishad' in 1904 and 'Bharat Stri Mahamandal' in 1910. "Women's Indian Association" which was

formed in the year 1917 gave a new direction by organising the Indian women. In the year 1914, 'Assam Women Committee' was formed in Dibrugarh. During this time 'Joymoti Day' was observed to spread patriotism amongst the women to fight against the Britishers. In the district of Nagaon, in the year 1917, 'Women Committee' was formed and gradually women awareness began all over Assam against the British rule.

In 1918, Lakhipriya Chaliha and Chandraprabha Das attended the annual meeting of "Assam Students' Association" which was held in Tezpur. Chandraprabha Saikiani, a freedom fighter, delivered a valuable speech in this meeting regarding the prohibition of opium.

The actual and the active part of women in the freedom movement in Assam as well as in India began when Gandhiji entered in the Indian politics. Under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, the non co-operation movement began all over India in the year 1920. Women's participation in the non co-operation movement in Assam was note worthy. Amongst the women, the wife of N. C. Bordoloi (Hemanta Kumari Debi) and his widowed sister Dharmada Sundari Devi themselves showed the way by coming out to the open arena after the arrest of the top ranking leaders and advising the women folk to contribute their mite to the success of the movement. Women held meetings in various places to keep up the tempo of the movement. Women were hardly arrested during the non co-operation movement in Assam but there is no doubt that a new awakening came amongst them and made

them alive to new responsibilities which were to be shared by them with the men for winning the freedom of India.

The visit of Mahatma Gandhi to Assam accompanied by the Ali brothers in August 1921, gave a fillip to the movement which was already gathering momentum in both the valleys of Assam. The meetings he addressed at Gauhati, Tezpur, Nowgong, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Silchar, Sylhet and other places drew the crowd of thousands of people. Huge bonfires were raised in these meetings for burning large heaps of foreign clothes by both the men and the women. Gandhiji's visit was a tremendous success for the non co-operation movement in Assam. Gandhiji was highly pleased to note that women in Assam considered spinning and weaving to be accomplishments which everyone should practice. Gandhiji wrote "Every women of Assam is a born weaver. No Assamese girl who cannot weave can expect to be a good wife. And she weaves fairy tales in the clothes" (*Contemporary Political Leadership in India: Sharad Pawar, the Maratha legacy*, p. 11) Gandhiji expressed the hope that with a loom in every house Assam could take to 'Swadeshi' earlier than the other provinces in India.

When Mahatma Gandhi began his Salt Satyagraha in April 1930 (the historic Dandi march), the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee was also ready to launch a mass Civil Disobedience movement in Assam. Women also joined the movement. Chandraprabha Saikiani and Durgaprabha Bora came forward to resort to picketing

before the well known Cotton College. With the commencement of the Civil Disobedience movement, a considerable number of boys and girls took part in the hartals, strikes, picketing, etc. The Students' movement merged with the civil disobedience movement and hundreds of students courted arrest as well as imprisonment both in the year 1930 and 1932.

The people followed the usual methods of struggle but on a far larger scale than before. Police resistance grew as people's power of resistance increased. Women as well as students took active part in the movement, in processions, demonstrations and picketing. A day in the year 1943 was celebrated as the day of independence in many places by the women and the students. Chandraprabha Saikiani was arrested at Pathsala on 26th January, 1943. While presiding over the Independence Day meeting, a number of women were arrested. Puspallata Das, Chandraprabha Saikiani, Guneswari Nath and other women leaders and workers suffered arrest and imprisonment.

During the period of the Quit Indian movement 'a council of action' was formed in the Bajali area in the Kamrup district to lead and conduct the movement. Chandraprabha was prominent amongst those who spearheaded the movement.

In Behali the flag atop the thana building was hoisted by Tileswari Mahanta. In Nowgong, Bhogeswari Phukonani was injured by police bullet and died on 20th September 1942.

Sankar Chandra Barua was a prominent leader of the freedom movement in Golaghat. Srimati Anna Barua, wife of Sankar Barua was often harassed like Joimati Kunwari (she was accorded the honorific 'Soti' or 'Sati' on account of her heroic endurance of torture until the end, dying at the hands of royalists under Suklipha Lora Roja without disclosing her exiled husband Prince Gadapani's whereabouts, thereby enabling her husband to rise in revolt and assume kingship) by the police to extract from her the news of her husband whereabouts.

The 1942 Revolution found the women of Assam in a state preparedness to march with the men to places where bullets awaited them. In Gohpur, Kanaklata Barua, a young girl, with a flag in her hand, fell to police bullets while proceeding towards the thana building. The way Kanaklata braved the police bullets to hoist the national flag on the Gohpur police station makes an immortal story of martyrdom for the cause of freedom.

Khahuli Nath, another freedom fighter, cheerfully embraced death by facing bullets in encounters at Dhekiajuli in course of the struggle. Thousands of women hold meetings and made processions against the British imperialism.

Conclusion:

To conclude, after decades of struggles, revolutions, bloodsheds, sathyagrahas and sacrifices, India finally achieved independence on August 15, 1947. Despite being oppressed by the societal pressures, women too shouldered several critical responsibilities in the independence

struggle. They bravely faced the baton of the police and even went behind bars. Hundreds and thousands of Indian women dedicated their lives for obtaining freedom of their motherland. Around 500 women freedom fighters had to bear the brunt of British atrocities in Assam in the country's freedom movement. They will always be remembered by the people of the country.

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Portrayal of Women in Mass Media: A Study

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ABSTRACT

Gender discrimination is an important factor of human society. In this discrimination, women become the victim. Many aspects build the platform of gender inequality. Mass media is one of the most important aspects among them. Through its natural and character, it can spread some information in the society very easily and within a very short period of time. Now a days, it is noticed that, different kinds of mass media, by their various programmes are influencing human attitudes regarding woman status. Of course, mass media have many positive effects. But, unfortunately, society is accepting the negative aspects easily. Due to the undesired influence of mass media, the status of woman, is deteriorating. Through this paper an attempt has been made to depict a small picture of this social scenario.

Keywords: Gender, Human Attitude, Mass Media,

Introduction :

When media is used to communicate to a large number of people at the same time, it is called mass communication or mass media. Media is the full form of the word "medium" which means a channel, an intervening instrument or a means for doing something. Unlike a dance or a drama performance or a music recital programmes or messages communicated through these media can reach a large number of people in spite of the barriers of space and time. Name and comments printed in news papers and magazines can be communicated to every literate person in the society within a single day. An earthquake in Spain can be reported to people living far away in a village

in Bihar, over the Radio few hours after the incident. A story or news coverage on film can be sent around the world and shown to millions. Likewise, television can bring news, views entertainment and education to the homes of all those who possess a set. As a matter of fact, media can make it possible to communicate to a large mass of people at one and the same time and in an easy and effective way.

The mass (Communication) media are of recent origin. The printing press was invented in 1456. One hundred years after that invention, newspapers were still almost unknown. The cinema came into existence in 1895 and popularized in 1920s and 30s with

the advent of the talkies. Radio was invented in 1911 and Television in 1945. That means, communication did not exist two centuries ago. People did communicate though less extensively.

Objectives:

The objectives of this study can be mentioned as follows:

- 1) To study the role of mass media regarding women.
- 2) To study how different media depict the picture of women through its different programs.
- 3) To examine whether, different programs of mass media devalue the dignity and identity of woman.
- 4) To study the overall impact of mass media on women status.

Methodology :

The present paper is a descriptive paper. The paper is entirely based on secondary method of data collection. The sources which are adopted for the present work are books, research articles and personal view.

Analysis :

Communication has played a significant role in formation, organization, growth and development of community, and society. In pre-history, humans transferred information and knowledge from one another through gestures, signals, sounds and simple drawing. The primary functions traditionally assigned to the mass media are informing, educating and entertaining the public. Besides, the media is expected to promote culture, mobilize public opinion, and campaign for social objectives and set the agenda for

debates and discussion. The media can and should expose social evils and bring about the desirable social changes. Since mass media can reach immensely large, widely scattered heterogeneous audiences with great rapidity mass media can be used as a powerful tool for social changes.

If the potentialities of mass media- news papers, magazines, books, radio, films, T.V, Internet etc. could be used for socially desirable ends, the media becomes a blessing for humanity. But unfortunately, the present day mass media outlets are mostly used in such a way that, it could misinform, and mislead the public. The section of the society which is most affected by the media is 'women'. The media directly affected the attitudes and behavior of people. It reflects the attitudes of society at large towards women. It is interesting to note that how the dress patterns and hair styles of the 'HERO' or 'HEROINE' of T.V. serials and films are imitated by the youngsters. The indirect influence of the media is too strong in gradually shaping policy-making, public opinion, "I read it in the papers" or "I saw it on T.V." This potential of the media in establishing attitudes towards women is very strong. They have helped to perpetuate inequalities in the house, creating a distorted self-image among women themselves reinforcing biases in plans and programmes for social development and have even reinforced biases in international development.

At the UNESCO sponsored Media Workshop for journalists and Broadcasters held in Mexico City in 1975, the participants

recognized that the media tends to project a 'stereotyped' image of women thus reinforcing the traditional concepts of the roles of women, prejudicial to their aspirations for improved status, rights and participation in society. They also found that "the images of women projected by the media constituted a major obstacle in eliminating discrimination against women throughout the world and factor in preserving traditional sexist attitudes towards women."

This concern has found expression in the various recommendations made at such meetings. It was resolved in UNESCO symposium on women in cinema, held in St. Vincent, Italy in July, 1975 that:

"We (participants and observers of the symposium) denounce the existing sexist images of women in the mass media, and appeal to women all over the world to carefully examine and analyze these images and to realize that they are literally living in a world of man-made images which do not resemble real women or deal fairly with the realities of the women's experience." The World Conference of the International Women's year held in Mexico City from 19th June to 2nd July, 1975 passed the most detailed resolutions on women and communication media.

The mass media, by and large portray women in stereotyped roles. Earlier when the radio and television were under the complete control of the government of India, there was less obscene portrayal of women as compared to the present transborder satellite communication era. But even the different

genres in Doordarshan and All India Radio seem to be maintaining the social status quo, where women are given prominence in family planning. Women are treated not as individuals or subjects but as targets where all contraceptive have to be shot and objects of family planning messages and programmes planned by men. The content of these family planning programs also perpetuate sex stereotypes.

Woman is someone's daughter, wife or mother. Even when the ideal of 'Pativrata' which she is taught to nurture since childhood expects her to treat service to the husband as the only duty of the wife and her main purpose in life. The most striking feature of the ideals of womanhood held up to girls is their devotion to their husband's welfare before their own and their unquestioned obedience to their husband's spoken and unspoken desire. The wife is thus from childhood indoctrinated in her subservient role. The mass media reinforce the same image of women by portraying them as passive wives, mothers and daughters-in-law confined to their homes with no other interests in life but the welfare of their husband and children.

One noteworthy image of women in mass media is that of sex objects and this is the image that is exploited to a very large extent with the explicit objective of conveying message in an attractive manner. It may be emphatically stated that 'the images of women projected by the media constitute a main obstacle to eliminating discrimination against women throughout the world and a main factor in preserving traditional attitudes

towards them' (women in media, UNESCO, 1980). A study conducted in U.S arrived at the conclusion that, such programming reinforces the stereotype of women as passive, non-intellectual consumers who are not supported to think or act beyond the confines of their homes. Television may thus influence young female children against seeking recognition in society, since they see few women working in 'male occupations'. It may well influence young males who will expect to see women only in the role portrayed on the screen. The same concern is expressed in a review of research in American T.V., where the author concludes, "Women are portrayed on television in a very stereotyping manner. Therefore, we may infer that this stereotyping role portrayal is observed, and therefore learned and may influenced the sex role perceptions of self and other".

Doordarshan's portrayal of women in its various programmes has been subjected to closed critical analysis by a number of researchers. Two major studies are, 'Affirmation and Denial: Construction of Faminity on Indian Television' by Prabha Krishnan and Anita Dighe (1990) and 'Vision Unveiled' by Nandini Prasad (1994). The first study was conducted in 1986. Programmes over a period of 15 days (a sample of 30 news programmes, 30 special interest group programmes, 55 general enrichment programmes 33 act and entertainment programmes, 27 fiction oriented and cinema programmes, 186 commercials and two audience contact-programmes-a

total samples of 363 items) were scrutinized for women-related self references.

Radio is another example of mass media which plays an important role in society. Specially, before the advent of other modern means of communication, Radio played vital role in society. Less than two percent of broadcasting time on radio is devoted to programmes on or for women, yet over 25 percent of radio advertisements, on cosmetics, food products, beverages and fabrics. The songs selected for broadcast in all India Radio and VividhBharati are by and large on religious themes or depicting themes of coy young women waiting to be married. The plays convey the message of the ideal women who is a house wife and mother. If she is employed, and then surely she must be neglecting her home and children. Stereotypes of women are reinforced in songs, plays and commercial jungles.

An exhaustive study of the portrayal of the women in Hindi and Gujarati films was conducted in 1976 by Ila Pathak. The analysis of 12 Hindi and Gujarati film showed that the films emphasized young beautiful and sexually attractive women, portrayed women in terms of their relationship with men; depicted women in traditional female occupations and as overwhelmingly emotional, dependent, superstitious and irrational beings. Beside they stressed marriage as the goal for women, and offered a double standard of morality.

Studies of the print media have focused on the reporting of rape cases in the press, the presentation of women in women's

sections of news papers, general interest magazines and women's magazines. Ammu Joseph and Kalpana Sarma criticized the News Medias' presentation of women's issues in their studies, "Whose News"?

Ila Pathak's study of women selection in the Gujarati dailies of Ahmedabad, for instance, found that there were hardly any articles developed to a serious discussion of women's problems at home or in society.

An analysis of fiction in three women's magazines and two general interest magazines concluded that they contained images and norms which should discourage female employment, particularly in higher status occupations.

Women magazines have come in for a lot of criticism. Often they are not more than a mixed bag of recipes, tips and beauty aids, romantic stories, featuring on women issues and discussions. On gender problems and of course women oriented advertisement, Aminu Amin's in 1982 study of commercial Advertisements, and the Great Health Robbery of Women and Children" showed how advertisers and manufacturers play on susceptibility and vulnerability of women consumers and cheat them into buying food products, cosmetics, sanitary napkins, soaps and detergents that are positively harmful to the health of their families. The study also revealed that men in advertisement are fully clothed; appear confident and dignified while the women are presented as glamorous but traditional in roles. Further, wares for men were sold for durability and economy; those for women for beauty and glamour. N.N

Kailas in her, "Women and Sexism, Language of Indian School Text Books" also concluded that it was clearly 'Sexist'.

Indian commercial advertisements propagate the patriarchal ideology that marriage and domesticity is the ultimate goal for a woman. They idealize the women's role as a house wife. Some advertisements on T.V. like household clearing product conveys the message that it is the wife's responsibility to do the household duties while the husband enjoys the fruits of her labour. In all such types of advertisement, the woman wears gorgeous saree and elaborate jewellery, singing and looking pleased with the respective use of the product. It means that, with the right product, household clearing is so effortless that a woman can wear her best clothes and look attractive for her husband's pleasure. As for example, in the Super Nirma Detergent advertisement, the housewife does the washing happily and in an excited mood wearing a nice saree and jewellery.

Some other commercials show how the products mediate the relationship of the wives and their husbands. Examples are those of 'Surf' and 'Ezee' detergent. Further, Indian commercials glorify the ideology of motherhood by making the maternal a frequently invoked balance of the women. By identifying Indian women predominantly as home makers and mothers and by valorizing their two roles, Indian commercials perpetuated the myth that domesticity and motherhood come 'naturally' for women.

In addition to depicting women as wife/mother, a large number of commercials

portray them as a commodity. The process of commoditization in advertising underlines the tautological nature of the women's role as a consumer. She is the subject of a transaction in which her own commoditization is ultimately the object. A close analysis of commercials, revealed that women are commoditized in four basic ways—

- 1) As an object to be viewed.
- 2) Women as signifier for the product and thus exchangeable with it.
- 3) Women as a won thinking decorative object.
- 4) Women as a fragmented object.

Mass media has the unique capacity to reach mass audience covering a vast area at the same time. So ideas propagated through mass media reach the people with no bar of culture, age language etc. This becomes much easier with the advent of satellite communication and Direct to Home facilities.

People have the tendency to accept and imitate what they read and see for a long time. Thus the mass media portrayals of women have many impacts on the study.

- 1) It reinforces the secondary status of women in society.
- 2) It causes cultural imperialism. The Trans border communication through satellite channels bring into the Indian scenario, the dress patterns, life-styles and other habits of western culture.
- 3) The portrayals through different genres of mass media devalue the dignity and identity of women.
- 4) The younger and new generation girls and boys internalize the lines propagated

through the mass media and behave accordingly. This is a severe negative impact which will affect the future of our society.

The analysis of messages and images sent by all mass media organization will reveal that most of the genres in print and electronic media project women in a distorted way, not giving importance to the identity of women. It is high time to think and plan for development of society, in which the women and men get equal share of respect and growth. For this, a change in the media prospective of women is essential.

Positive portrayal of women should be an integral part of media programs. It should act as a catalyst of social change. The desired attention needs to be paid to the alarming degradation of the image of womanhood. Mass media policy makers, programming and production staff should be given regular orientation to the needs of this segment of the population. The programs which exploit womanhood and portray vulgarity should be dropped. There should be a systematic crusade against these atrocities on woman and this can be done by telecasting meaningful and effective T.V. programme through a change in philosophy, organization and methodology. The television should be made a genuine development tool for serving the interest of women.

Educational programmes will have to be restructured to remove the stereotyped image of women and high priority will have to be given to the spread of knowledge about social legislation.

A special committee should be

constituted in each media to scrutinize all advertisements carefully, to ensure that they do not portray women in derogatory and stereotyped ways. The programmes should be made more participatory and to draw in women and men, who are knowledgeable about women's issues to develop the programmes.

More women should be involved at all levels of communication, programming, production, distribution, reception and consumer levels as well so that women's point of view gets reflected and find place in the developmental perspective. A committee should be set up comprising enlightened men and women to monitor regularly the Mass Media programmes and the programmes should also be reviewed periodically to find out how best they could be improved.

The mass media people should devise programmes which will make the media an instrument for improvement of status of women and of equality between men and women. Moreover, women should be involved in the process of making women's programmes, but the programmes should be reality-based and should highlight the problems of the majority of women as well as socially relevant.

Conclusion :

The emerging mass media scenario in India has witnessed a dramatic change over the past few years. The change is summed up in the liberation of Indian economy, the deregulation and privatization of telecommunication systems, the commercialization of broadcasting, the entry

of multinational financial services of Reuters and Knight-Ridder of financial institutions like Morgan Stanley and Jardine Fleming, and the imminent entry of foreign publications like, "The Financial Times", "The Economist", "Time" magazine etc.

Pre-censorship has not been imposed on cable, but it continues to be the norm for feature films and documentary films exhibited in India. But the same feature films and documentaries can be screened and watched freely on the satellite T.V networks without any regulation. Indeed, all the fare (News and Entertainment) on the satellite channels is beyond the control of the Indian and other Asian Government.

In these situations, where the media organizations compete with profit motives, the development of societies and empowerment of women through the mass media seems to be under threat. There is urgent need, therefore, to re-examine the nature and impact of communication planning, to review both media and message, in the context of empowerment of women.

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Dilemma of Successful Women : A Study of the Women Characters of Caryl Churchill's Drama Top Girls (Act I)

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ABSTRACT

Top Girls is one of Caryl Churchill's most popular plays, describes the lives of six female characters coming from different centuries. With an entirely female cast, Top Girls won the prestigious Obie Award and was hailed as one of the most successful feminist plays. It was first performed in 1982 when Margaret Thatcher was the Prime Minister of England. Each of the women in the play either employ roles that are traditionally reserved for men or they employ archetypically feminine qualities. Despite their resistance and success, they find themselves unhappy and unsatisfied over their achievements. The play inquires about woman's success in a patriarchal and capitalist society. The other central topic is the sacrifices made by women not only in contemporary western societies but throughout diverse cultures and history.

Key words : patriarchal society, womanhood, motherhood, success, sacrifice

Caryl Churchill's Top Girls, one of her most popular plays and included by Guardian critic Michael Bellington in his list of ten best British plays of the twentieth century, explores the superficial success and liberation of women, along with their underlying exploitation in a patriarchal system. The play questions the very adoption of patriarchal values by women to achieve success. In a way Top Girls turns out to be a critique of the feminist movement, or to be more precise, of liberal or bourgeois feminism and its principles and values.

The play is primarily concerned with silenced women, the apparently successful and famous women from history who have made

many sacrifices in their lives and silenced their voices and their female experiences to gain success in a patriarchal society. In this paper, the researcher has studied the life of these six women and discussed their journey of success in a patriarchal society.

Caryl Churchill's play "Top Girls" is a drama based on various women from history, fiction, art and mythology. These characters are seen together in the Act I of the play, in a restaurant to celebrate the promotion of Marlene, the protagonist of the play. Each of these women is a part of a different society, and differs in terms of nationality, race, education and historical moment, from the ninth to twentieth century.

But one thing connects them all. All these women have gone through the oppression of men, which is the main topic of the dinner discussion. The conversation turns around to each one's in life under a male world and their experiment with the various forms of oppression they had to deal with.

A close reading of the play takes us far beyond the facade of a purely feminist drama and presents a critical examination and a reassessment of the women's movement and its implications. Churchill's Top Girls not only draws our attention to the feminist struggle for individual autonomy but also opens our eyes to its serious limitations as many feminist theorists have begun to do. Mary Wollstonecraft in her book *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) deplored the position of women with limited education and their dependence on their husbands. She strongly advocated that women must work outside the home. Betty Friedan, a liberal feminist too spoke in favour of women working outside the home and create their identity other than that of a wife and mother. Simone de Beauvoir in the chapter, "The Independent Women" in *The Second Sex* also suggests the same: 'It is through gainful employment that woman has traversed most of the distance that separated her from the male; and nothing else can guarantee her liberty in practice' (173). Liberal feminism demanded for women equal access to education, equal rights in family and law but instead of opposing and dismantling the male-oriented social system it was encouraging the women to enter it and become a part of it. The unwillingness of liberal feminists to question and transform the capitalist basis of

western society also implied an unwillingness to confront the patriarchal bias of capitalism itself. Caryl Churchill wrote, "Top Girls to question the extent to which second wave feminists were buying into Thatcher ideology to the detriment of a variety of real women. Combining the issues of class and feminism, the play presents the 'Top girls' who accept capitalistic structures to succeed in a patriarchal system and establish a female hierarchy just like male hierarchy so much deplored by feminists."

The women Churchill chose to be part of the dinner scene are Isabella Bird, a Scottish lady of Victorian time who has travelled extensively around the world, Lady Nijo, a concubine of the Japanese Emperor and later Buddhist nun of the Kamakuran period, Dull Gret, a character of Brueghel's painting "Dull Griet" in which she leads a crowd of women through the gates of hell to fight against Satan. Another woman is the mythological figure of Pope Joan, who is supposed to be have been the Pope between 854 to 856 until her male disguise was revealed, Griselda is another woman who is a literary figure of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* characterized by her blind obedience towards her father and husband. And finally, there is the protagonist and host of the evening, Marlene. She is a London business woman celebrating her promotion in the "Top Girls" employment agency.

Although, the characters' live strongly differ as they lived in different centuries, different countries, and different classes with different social and educational backgrounds, the similarity among them is that they have all undergone some kind of oppression, suffering and have to make certain compromises to fulfill their ambitions in life.

Pope Joan lived in the ninth century, an age where women were considered as second-class citizens. Despite of strict patriarchal norms of the society, Joan decided to educate herself. She also disguised herself as a man and entered the Church, which enabled her to occupy the top most position in the system. And now by becoming a Pope, she got the power to defeat the patriarchal system, as now she can have the control over the male sex of the society which could never be possible being a woman. But unfortunately, she got pregnant with one of her chamberlains, and her identity as a woman is revealed. It is as if even nature protested against a woman masquerading—as a Pope. Her desire for a physical relationship and its consequences had resulted in her fatal end. The society would allow a Pope to have children but they themselves must not have given birth to them. This is a kind of discrimination where women are considered inferior to men because of their physical form and their ability to give birth.

Lady Nijo, the Japanese courtesan of the thirteen century was born in Japan's Kamakura period - a religious period in Japan when Buddhism and Zen were flourishing. She led her life like an object owned by the Emperor. She has been brought up in a way where she knew that the male domination is unchallenged and even if a woman is victimized, she regarded it something supposed to be. She thought in order to survive in the court she must have the favour of the Emperor. Lady Nijo is oppressed by the men in her life and she is not aware of the oppression, taking it for granted that it is the nature of the world. She took two lovers when she is out of the Emperor's favour but for this

retaliation she had to pay her maternal feelings. She lost or she knowingly abandoned all her four children born from the Emperor and her lovers. Not only this, because by cheating the Emperor she challenged and protested against the male supremacy and had to live the rest of her life as a nun.

Griselda is a character of the thirteenth century who embraces the archetypal feminine quality. She was born to a farmer but married to Marquis, after which she was bestowed with wealth and higher status. She blindly obeys her husband which she thinks a wife is entitled to do. She obeyed her husband without any question and as a prove of her love she gave away her six week old baby and a two year old baby boy, when her husband asked her to do so. The children, who are the most precious and dear to a mother is used a tool to show male supremacy. She even prepared herself without any protest when Marquis wanted to marry a girl from the aristocracy. Griselda tells Marlene that being so obedient to her husband, she is able to get back her two children, and is bestowed with love and clothed with gold. Through her it is shown that marriage is an institution where male power governs. To be happy and loved, a woman need to endure psychological battering and personal deprivation.

The next character is Isabella Bird who a Victorian traveller. Being a daughter of a clergyman, she has spent half of her life doing domestic work. She did these work when her father was still alive under the Victorian doctrine of womanhood. But as soon as her father died, she finds herself free and fulfilled her desire to travel the world. Although, like a Victorian woman, Isabella got married and

tried to settle down but found it very difficult to cope up with the drudgery of life. And when her husband died, she again started travelling. But instead of leading a life of freedom, Isabella had the feeling of guilt. She thinks that she had broken the cult and the doctrine that are constructed for a female.

The last guest of the dinner party is Dull Great - the subject in Brueghel's painting entitled Dull Grey Griete. Although, Dull Grey spoke very less during the conversation, she is the only one who takes revenge against all those 'devils' who have taken away her children. The painting in which she was drawn demonstrates how all the women along with Dull Gret have united together to fight for the rights and their children from whom they are deprived. Through her speech in the conversation it is clear that she knows the fight is not going to be easy and even they are not sure of their victory. But still they will continue.

Finally, the host of the party Marlene, was born and brought up in a society where she witnessed her mother been ill-treated by her husband and her mother's passive acceptance of this abuse suggested that this is quite obvious. Marlene found this passive behaviour of her mother offended so she doesn't allow herself to fall prey of the system in the same way. Marlene sees her father as representing men in general while domesticity does not suit her at all, as she does not intent to be in a position where she has to be submissive to a man. Thus, since she was thirteen, Marlene has taught herself to find ways to escape her fate as a working class woman. She resists the male power and control in the family, her fathers, and the society's power and control over her class

position, by running away from all that bind her to the will of others.

Despite her efforts, she needs men to fulfill her biological needs so she has a lover but her body betrays her when she finds herself pregnant at the age of seventeen. It seems unavoidable that she has to get married and settle down like the other girls of her class, or like her sister, Joyce, who is married but childless. But for the successful Marlene who has gone to defeat the world, she feels regret over what she has gone through. The longing she feels to have a child is detected by Joyce when she tells Marlene to have a child again. Marlene might also feel a bit of guilt that she has given her baby away and not taken care of it when it is her and her responsibility so she offers to take Angie, her child, back if Joyce does not want Angie. Despite her determination to be independent, successful and in control, Marlene cannot escape the trap of 'the myth of maternal instinct', a concept which believes that "the nurturing behaviors of mother toward their children are determined by biological factors" (Brannon, 1996, p. 200). This myth has been instilled in her that as a woman who has given birth to a child, she should feel maternal and her not having it might be considered as her being unnatural and a freak.

Her outburst about her real feeling about a baby also reveals how she hates getting pregnant and has to abort it. This is not only about the baby, but more of her protest against the unfairness of the whole system, which puts the woman in the 'messy' business after a sexual relationship. Women have to bear the consequence of a sexual relationship by getting pregnant, whereas men do not have

to deal with it. Women also have to deal with guilt and regret whereas men are free from these feelings. Marlene's protest can be interpreted as a cry of protest against the creation of a woman's body, which she feels to be a weakness for women in general; yet, it is something that she cannot run away from. In a sense then, even nature seems to take side with men.

All these six female characters analyzed above, share several similarities. First of all, all of the characters live in a patriarchal society and all of them, consciously or unconsciously, have the awareness of their rights and they fully realize that they do not deserve to be treated badly. As a result of this awareness, all of them demonstrate resistance to win and survive the patriarchal system by using different strategies. All of them gain success in a sense that they can achieve what they want—Marlene gets a successful career, Joan becomes a Pope, Griselda wins the respect from her society, both Nijo and Isabella have their freedom and Gret has her revenge. Yet, all of them have to pay a price for their success. Marlene has to pay with abortions and giving away her daughter so that she can pursue her career. Joan has to pay with her life. Nijo and Griselda have to sacrifice their children for their social status. Isabella pays with her constant feeling of guilt and Dull Gret loses all her children.

By indicting the patriarchal values and ideology in the play, Churchill criticises the adoption of the 'masculine' values by women who blindly pursue their dream of successful career, little realizing that they themselves are following the same values against which they

wish to prove themselves. Churchill also highlights in her play gender oppression in the institution of marriage and motherhood. In a patriarchal system, as Churchill shows through experiences of different characters in the play, these firmly established institutions are more in favour of men than women and often cause sufferings and misery to them.

However, if one interprets the play, the experience of these six women exemplifies how male domination in the patriarchal system has occurred since centuries ago and is supported by the most sacred institutions of the Church and flourishes in the marriage institution. Individual fights of these women will never bring about any achievements, because the system is too well rooted to beat. Women should rethink and reshape their way of struggling against the patriarchal system. Eliminating the well-established patriarchal system needs more than imitating male's roles and forgetting women's own nature and identity.

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The Position of Women in the African Tribal Societies: An Overview

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ABSTRACT

Disagreement exists concerning the nature of relations between the sexes in the foraging societies (hunting and gathering societies). The crucial issue concerns the quality of interactions across rather than within the sexual boundaries. The belief in the innate dominance of men over women has increasingly been called in to question over the past few years. However, the assumption of women's low status in the foraging societies has been challenged more directly by the conceptualization of these societies as basically egalitarian in nature. If human beings could be conceived stripped of culture, it is not unreasonable to suppose that innate male dominance could give men a commanding position. If, in addition to native dominance, however, the position of the males is strengthened by his greater economic importance, as in a hunting culture, or even if women are given greater economic importance than men, it is extremely probable that post marital residence will be patrilocal. The aim of this paper is basically to understand the nature of the relations between the sexes in the so called egalitarian societies in the case of Africa. For this purpose, the nature of relation is being discussed in four of the African societies, namely, the 'Mabuti' of Zaire, 'Lovedu' and 'Pondo' of South Africa and 'Ganda' of Uganda.

Key words : *Women, Societies, Position, Men, Social, Sexual.*

Introduction:

Women's capacity to have children or men's inability to have children distinguishes them from each other. The persisting distinctions in gender categories depend on reproductive technologies. This conflation of female identity with reproduction and female

sexual biology mimics a similarly narrow view of the contemporary female. As Collier and Rosaldo have argued, themes of motherhood and sexual reproduction hold various degrees of centrality to the conceptions of women. Reluctance within our society to allow women's reproductive rights reflects the

prevailing women as reproducer models which is assumed from the past as well.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to highlight a few tribes in Africa ('Mabuti' of Zaire, 'Lovedu' and 'Pondo' of South Africa, and 'Ganda' of Uganda) and the position of women in their respective societies. This paper is based only on secondary sources of data.

The African Tribal Societies:

Karen Sacks has given an illustration which is a reconstruction, mainly from ethnographies of women's position in four African societies prior to the imposition of effective imperialist dominations. The ethnographic reconstruction allows to look at some of the variety in women's status in non-capitalist societies - non-class as well as class - and to use the comparisons to illuminate Engel's ideas. Engels presents a historical dynamic by which women are transformed from free and equal productive members of society to subordinate and dependent wives and wards.

The 'Mabuti' of Zaire can be characterized as a band society, with subsistence based on communal net hunting and gathering of vegetable food. In South Africa, the 'Lovedu' were principally hoe agriculturalists, whereas the 'Pondo' combined agriculture with livestock. 'Ganda', a class society in Uganda, is also based on subsistence on hoe agriculture.

Karen Sacks states that if these societies are placed on a continuum from egalitarian society to class society, the rankings can be seen to hold in three principal respects.

First, the 'Mabuti' and 'Lovedu' have economies of production for use: the 'Pondo' have the beginnings of production for exchange centered around cattle; and in 'Ganda', production for exchange bulks quite large. Second, in 'Mabuti' and 'Lovedu', both sexes perform social labour in a user economy, and in case of 'Pondo', women are performing social labour. 'Pondo' men perform social labour at least in part in an exchange economy whereas in 'Ganda', women's work is individual domestic production for household use, while men work in groups, almost totally in production for exchange. Third, 'Mabuti' band owns the productive resources, whereas these are largely patrilineal family estates in 'Lovedu' and 'Pondo'. In 'Ganda', the productive resources are in male hands, and less enmeshed in family obligations.

Status of Women (Women as Social Adults and Wives)

Among 'Mabuti', 'Lovedu' and 'Pondo', women's productive activities are social, and women have an adult social status. But in 'Ganda', where women's productive activities are domestic, the status of women is that of wife and ward only - despite the fact that women produce the bulk of the food. This suggests that Engels is right in seeing public or social labour as the basis for social adulthood.

Self-representation in legal proceedings indicates that a woman is regarded as able to be wronged or to do wrong in the eyes of the society and is practiced among the 'Mabuti', 'Lovedu' and

'Pondo'. A 'Ganda' woman, by contrast, requires a male guardian (generally husband or father) to bring her case to the court; the guardian is held responsible for her acts and receives compensation for wrongs done to her.

Though 'Mabuti', 'Lovedu' and 'Pondo' men and women both participated in most of the same social activities, in the later the two societies young wives are kept busy at domestic work, which significantly restricts their ability to enjoy these event. But as older wives, as sisters visiting their own kinsmen, and as diviners, women attend social events as freely as do men. In 'Ganda', many of the social activities are patron or state-oriented; women are excluded from these.

In the context of sexual mores, 'Mabuti' and 'Lovedu' have a single standard regarding extramarital sexual affairs. 'Pondo' women view their extramarital affairs as right and proper, but the men do not. A 'Ganda' husband may kill his wife for real or suspected adultery, but a wife has little resources against her husband. Men may use the courts to deal out severe punishment to their wives lovers. In general, 'Ganda' restricts extramarital sexual activity much more than do the other societies. Exceptions are made for high-ranking men who have affairs with peasant women, but men and women in the reverse situation are punished severely.

Being able to give and receive food and items of social exchange is the material basis for exercising political power. Engels suggests that real power develops only with production for exchange and private property.

In societies without these - that is, in societies based on production for use - the performance of social labour gives a person the right to join with other adults in making political decisions and settling disputes. This is because political decision making and dispute settlement are responsibilities of adult members of an egalitarian society. Among 'Mabuti' and 'Lovedu' both sexes give and receive food. 'Lovedu' women give and receive cattle and may marry a wife with them; they become, in effect, husbands. But 'Pondo' women, though they are social producers, cannot dispose of the most important exchange item: livestock. These livestock are the chief's to allocate. They are the most important item of exchange (in bride wealth, loans and feasts) and of establishing long-term relationships (marriage and service). Because 'Pondo' women do not participate in production for exchange (raiding), they cannot dispose of the property that establishes power relationships. Thus they do not hold over political power. On the other hand, 'Ganda' is a class stratified society and hence holds no significance in the context of power of patronage.

The 'Mabuti' and 'Pondo' women exercised political authority. 'Lovedu' women hold political office, enter the decision making arena of the society and predominantly in officiating in religious rituals on behalf of their lineages. 'Ganda' peasant women are barred from even the minimal access to political positions available to peasant men.

'Lovedu', 'Pondo' and 'Ganda' wives labour for their husband and his patrikin

but do not belong to the group that appropriates the product of their labour. Wives provide heirs, raise children, and do the bulk of the domestic work under the authority of the husband and his kin. They do not represent the household to outsiders. By contrast, 'Mabuti' marriage carries no restrictions on a woman's authority over her work, children or socializing. Her fertility cannot be said to be private, since her husband receives no compensation for her extramarital sexual relationships.

Menstrual and pregnancy restrictions on women's activities among 'Lovedu', 'Pondo' and 'Ganda' seem to operate to separate women's reproductive functions from contact with the social production of exchange goods; that is, from contact with warriors, cattle, craft and some medical practices. In these three societies, children are potential heirs; they inherit property and continue the family line. Regardless of how women's productive activities are organised, their reproductive potential is private. But among the 'Mabuti', where children are social members rather than private heirs, menstruation and pregnancy are not surrounded by any such restrictions.

Conclusion:

To conclude, essentially, 'Mabuti' and 'Lovedu' women are the equals to their new

folk, whereas 'Ganda' women are considered subordinates and 'Pondo' women fall somewhere in between.

Eleanor Leacock criticizes the statement "Men as armed hunters and women as emasculated beings" by saying that in the hunting-gathering society women also hunt. She also criticizes the notion of hunting as a prestige activity.

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Role of Women in Rural Development under aegis of NGO: A Sociological study

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ABSTRACT:

This study has made an attempt to examine the role of women in rural development under the aegis of NEADS, an NGO. Also, an effort is being made to measure the empowerment levels of rural women by constructing a composite index called Women's Empowerment Index (WEI).

Women are backbone of the development of rural as well as national economy. They constitute nearly half of the population and are considered metamorphic of the society. The prosperity and growth of a nation depends on the status of women in a society. The idea of women empowerment was first discussed at the World Women's Conference held in Beijing 1985. Empowered women can contribute towards the development of civil society through household and community level. Without cooperation of women, development of any society in terms of social, economic and political is unimaginable. Nowadays women not only perform their duties within four walls of the house but they are equally capable of performing their duties outside the house also. In rural household, women perform a large part of total household works. Other than the household works they are mainly engaged in poultry farming, cattle rearing, pig rearing, vermin - composting, etc. Thus, there is a erudite effort of study where involvement of women ensures effective utilization of labor, generation of income and hence improvement in quality of life. Now the question is "Does the involvement of rural women really leads to their empowerment"? If yes, to what extent they are empowered?

Key Words: Rural Women, Women Empowerment, NGO, Composite Index

Introduction:

Concept of Women Empowerment
"When a woman moves forward, the family moves, the society moves and the nation moves".

— Swami Vivekananda

Mahatma Gandhi says "Women is the companion of man, gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in the minutest details of the activities of man and she has same right of freedom and liberty as he. She is entitled to a supreme place in her own sphere of activity as man in his."

The meaning of the term **empowerment** is *becoming powerful*. Empowerment means individuals acquiring the power to think freely, exercise choice and fulfil their potential as full and equal members of society.

Empowerment means a psychological sense of personal control or influences and a concern with actual social influence, political power and legal rights. It is a multi-level construct referring to individuals, organizations and community.

According to Sahay (1998), the actual definitions for "empower" are (i) to give power or authority to; (ii) give ability to; enable; permit. Empowerment emphasizes not only increasing the power of the individual but also the quality of life for individual, the efficiency and autonomy of the individual (Lowe, 1966).

The idea of women empowerment was first discussed at the World Women's Conference held in Beijing 1985. Empowered women can contribute towards the development of civil society through household and community level. Without cooperation of women, development of any society in terms of social, economic and political is unimaginable.

As per United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the term women's empowerment means "acquiring knowledge and understanding of gender relations and ways in which these relations may be changed, developing a sense of self-worth, a belief in one's ability to secure desired changes and the right to control one's life, gaining the ability to generate choices and exercise bargaining power, developing the ability to organize and influence the direction of social change, to create more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally".

Sharma (1993) defines women empowerment as a process aimed at changing the nature and direction of systemic forces which marginalize women. Batliwala (1995) has also defined women empowerment as the process of challenging existing power relations, and of gaining control over the sources of power.

The concept of empowerment can be understood in multiple ways. There are four major categories or parameters of change, viz. social, economic, political and environmental (Jonpal and Acharya, 1995).

Social Indicators are used to measure the change in the social relationship of people. Economic indicators are used to measure the changes in the economic status of the family. Political indicators are used in measuring the political change in the power structure. Environmental indicators are used to measure environmental changes.

Hence, it can be said that women's empowerment is an increase in women's capacities and willingness to support other women and to work towards strengthening women in their efforts to gain equality.

Empowerment can be viewed as means of creating a social environment in which one take decisions and make choices either individually or collectively for social transformation.

NGO and Women Empowerment

The objective of NGOs covers a wide spectrum of subjects like socio-economic development of women, empowerment of women, environmental protection, literacy rates, awareness programs, poverty alleviation, leadership training, and consumer protection so on.

The prime activities of NGOs in Assam for rural women are development of woman socially, economically, politically through income generating activities, educational programs and awareness camps etc.; encouraging women to participate actively in cultural, arts, sports and science activities, protecting the environment, rehabilitating the deprived sections like the handicapped, mentally retarded and orphans; initiating self-employment ventures for women;

reducing poverty through income generating activities, providing skill based training, imparting new technology in agriculture etc.; organizing mother and child care programs and value based education sessions to decrease child death, malnutrition of women at the time of pregnancy, children health and hygiene; to empower rural women, women's participation in the decision making process.

Measuring Women Empowerment

Empowerment is a planned process and its quality of relationship over time can be assessed. Changes in power relations were a definite part of the empowerment processes. The GEM (Gender Empowerment Measure) used variables constructed to measure the relative empowerment of women and men in political and economic spheres of activities namely, participation, decision-making and power over resources.

An indicator is a quantitative or a qualitative measure derived from a series of observed facts that can reveal relative positions (e.g. of a country) in a given area. A composite indicator is formed when individual indicators are compiled into a single index on the basis of an underlying model. The composite indicator should ideally measure multidimensional concepts which cannot be captured by a single indicator, e.g. competitiveness, industrialization, sustainability, single market integration, knowledge-based society, etc.

Composite indicators are much like mathematical or computational models. As such, their construction owes more to the craftsmanship of the modeler than to universally accepted scientific rules for encoding.

With regard to models, the justification for a composite indicator lies in its fitness for the intended purpose and in peer acceptance (Rosen, 1991).

Booyesen (2002) stated that composite index should offer flexibility as tools which can be shaped to meet the needs of decision makers and stakeholders. Similar statement was made by Balica (2012) that composite index has the potential to capture the bigger picture and to provide summary statistics that communicate system status and trends to a variety of relevant audience.

Maggino and Zumben (2012) claimed that a potential advantage of developing composite indices is to overcome problems concerning precision, reliability, accuracy and validity that are associated with using individual indicators (i.e. a variable which is not directly observable through an individual indicator).

On the basis of above review literature, it can be justified that developing a composite index for measuring empowerment of a rural women should be multidimensional aspect. Women often bear the responsibility for meeting the needs of their family; yet they are frequently denied the resources, information and freedom of action to fulfill this responsibility. Studies show that when women are empowered, all of society benefits. As such, women's empowerment is an essential component in studying the development of a society.

Therefore, the researcher has considered the three different dimensions viz. *Social Empowerment, Economic*

Empowerment and Political Empowerment to quantify the rural women empowerment by developing a composite index. The *Women's Empowerment Index (WEI)* is a composite index designed to measure progress in the multi-dimensional aspects of women's empowerment.

This index is developed on the above mentioned dimensions of empowerment taken into consideration for study. The details of which can be seen in the sub-section of the field and methodology discussed below:

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are

1. To examine the role of NEADS, a NGO in the development of rural women in three dimensions viz., social, economic and political.
2. To measure the empowerment levels of rural women by construction of composite index called Women Empowerment Index (WEI).

Field of study

The field of study is four (04) villages in the Golaghat District of upper Assam. Before going to discuss about the field of study in detail, we wish to provide an account of the state of Assam and then the district of Golaghat as the villages selected for the study fall in the district of Golaghat.

Assam is the biggest state of Northeast India. It is comprised of 33 districts with total population of 31.2 million as per census of 2011. According to census 2011, the state has the highest population density (i.e. 397 per square km) amongst the northeastern states. The geographical area

selected for the study is in the district of Golaghat located in the central part of the state. The Golaghat district covers an area of 3502 sq. km, out of which 3465.66 sq. km is rural and 36.45 km is urban area (Source: Statistical Hand Book Assam 2011).

The 4 villages selected by the investigator for study were Nikori, Na-Nikori, Bhalukaguri and Ujoni Bongkuwal are under Bokakhat subdivision in the district of Golaghat.

For this study the investigator has selected one NGO - 'North East Affected Area Development Society' (NEADS) located at the fringe of Jorhat town in upper Assam. NEADS since its formation is trying to promote equitable social structures, connecting people to resources and services within social environment which can offer people security and development.

Role of NEADS in Women Empowerment

Among the different activities carried out by NEADS, empowerment of women founds an eminent place in major districts of upper Assam, such as Tinsukia, Majuli, Jorhat and Mohuramukh area of Golaghat. NEADS is actively engaged in developing the skill of preparing handloom items of different women groups, in promoting the Goat Farming by Women Livelihood Group, guiding the women groups and forums to take up different income generating activities among themselves to get economic sustainability. The 'Sanmita Nari Adikar Suraksha Manch' was promoted and financially supported by NEADS among women groups to build up capital for their own forum by supporting the women members

under goatery scheme and now they are becoming experts in goat rearing.

Research Methodology

In the study both descriptive and exploratory research design was adopted. Both primary and secondary data was collected for study. Data for the study were collected by the interviewing the respondents selected for the study. Respondents were selected on sample basis.

The total of 192 households as respondents (out of total 359) using "Proportionate Stratified Sampling" method were selected and the relevant data was collected by administering a structured schedule. The required optimum sample size can be calculated by using the following statistical formula
$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N e^2}$$

Where *n* is the required sample size, *N* is the population size and *e* is the acceptable error taken as .05 (at 5% level of significance). Taking *N* = 359 we get *n* = 189.

It can also be calculated by "Sample Size Calculator" by developed by Raosoft (www.raosoft.com). The sample size calculator calculates the critical value of normal distribution. In addition to the above calculate sample size we have added 3 more households in our study. The total number of households has come 192. It may be stated here that while selecting the villages for study the researcher have been kept in mind the number of households in villages. More the number of households in the village, more were included in the sample. In brief, we wish to state that the "Proportionate Stratified Sampling" method was used to select

households.

Development of Women Empowerment Index

Women's empowerment, according to Bhasin (1985), involved transformation of power relations at six different levels: Individual, family, group, organization, village community and society. In order to empower the rural poor especially the women, female development workers must first empower themselves. (M.P. Boraian, "Empower of rural women", p 30)

Social empowerment of rural women is measured by taking five different components, viz. *decisions regarding education of children, marriage of the girl, welfare of family, equality in peers (e.g. sisters, friends, relatives etc.) and personal participation in community group activities.*

The **economic empowerment** of rural women is measured by taking five different components viz. *Financial decisions, sharing in family income, equal partnership in family assets, decisions making in business matters and decisions with property dealing.*

Similarly, the **political empowerment** is measured in willingly to participation related with voting in *Panchayat election, Assembly elections, Lok Sabha elections, contesting in gram Panchayat elections and individual decision to vote in any election*

Each of the components information under each dimension of classified empowerments was collected from the

respondents using 5 point Likert scale. After getting the scores of the respondents through structured schedule, the investigator merely add them to get the total score of economic, social and political empowerment of rural women. Now if the total scores of three dimensions are added then the total score of economic empowerment shall dominate the other two dimensions. It is the maximum total score of economic empowerment which is calculated through five components. However, the total score of social and political empowerment if calculated using five dimensions respectively. More specifically it can be said that these three dimensions are incompatible in terms of scale. Thus, to overcome this limitation, use of normalization is essential. The normalization process helps to bring all these three dimensions within a similar range between 0 and 1. As normalization makes the three dimensions also unit free, so they can be combined through addition.

Since all the 3 (three) rural women empowerment dimensions [i.e., j = economic (1), social (2) and political (3)] are having positive magnitude (higher the total score value better is the dimension), they are normalized

$$Y_{ij} = \frac{x_{ij} - \min(X_{ij})}{\max(X_{ij}) - \min(X_{ij})}, i = 1, 2, 3 \dots 192$$

$$\text{and } j = 1, 2, 3 \dots [1]$$

where Y_{ij} is the normalized value of the i^{th} respondent in the j^{th} dimension and X_{ij} is the observed total score of the i^{th} respondent in the j^{th} dimension.

Now the *women empowerment index (WEI)* is computed as

$$WEI_j = \sum w_j Y_{ij}, \text{ summing over } j = 1, 2, 3 \dots [2]$$

Where w_j represents the weight of the j^{th} dimension and it is calculated by

$$w_j = \frac{c}{\sqrt{cv(Y_{ij})}} \text{ where } \sum w_j = 1, j = 1, 2, 3$$

$cv(Y_{ij}) = \frac{sd(Y_{ij})}{\text{Average}(Y_{ij})}$, Sd means standard deviation and C is a normalizing constant that is computed by

$$C = \left(\sum \frac{1}{\sqrt{cv(Y_{ij})}} \right)^{-1} \dots [4]$$

The choice of weights in this manner will ensure that the large variation in any one of the dimension shall not unjustifiably dominate the contribution of rest of the dimensions. (Iyenger and Sudersan, 1982) The women empowerment index (WEI) value is always between 0 and 1. (i.e., $0 < WEI < 1$). Higher the value of WEI better is the empowerment of rural women.

Based on the computed values of WEI, the percentile value from WEI 33% and 66% is calculated. These calculated percentile values can be observed from the following table:

Table No: 1
Levels of Women Empowerment Index with range

Levels of WEI	Range
Low empowerment	Less than 0.508
Medium empowerment	0.505 to 0.548
High empowerment	Greater than 0.548

Tabulation and Analysis of the study Response of the rural Women

The status of rural women, was studied through a sample of 192 respondents in the rural belts of Golaghat district, along with the indicators of women empowerment, are analyzed in the following two sections – A and B.

Section A constitutes their overall socio profile. Details of the dimensions of women empowerment are provided in the section B.

Section A: This deals with the data on the social profile of sample respondents in the area of study. Broadly they include: Religion and community; Family type; Marital Status; Education of the respondents; Age of the respondents; Availability of basic amenities. Religion and community play an important role in the lives of both men and women, especially in the case of rural women. The social and cultural life of women spins around their religion and community, which would heavily impinge on their empowerment.

Table 2 below throws the light on the social composition of the respondents and Table 3 shows the distribution of basic amenities available in the respondent households.

Table 2
Distribution of Religion, Community, Family Type, Martial Status, Education and Age of Respondents

No.	Particulars	Number of Respondents (n=192)	Percentage (%)
1	Religion	190	98.96
	• Hinduism	1	0.52
	• Islam	1	0.52
	• Buddhism		
2	Community	188	97.92
	• Scheduled Tribes(ST)	4	2.08
	• Other Backward Class (OBC)		
3	Family Type	37	19.27
	• Joint	155	80.73
	• Nuclear		
4	Marital Status	7	3.65
	• Unmarried	167	86.98
	• Married	17	8.85
	• Widow	1	0.52
	• Separated		
5	Education	76	39.58
	• Illiterate	75	39.06
	• Primary and middle level	34	17.71
	• Matriculation	6	3.13
	• Higher Secondary	1	0.52
	• Graduate		
6	Age	84	43.75
	• Below 35 years	108	56.25
	• 35 years and above		
Total		192	100

Table 3
Basic Amenities available in the Respondent Households

No.	Particulars	Number of Respondents (n=192)	Percentage (%)
1	Sources of Drinking Water		
	• Natural Source - River	4	2.08
	• Natural Source - Well	65	33.85
	• Own Sources - Hand Pump	122	63.54
	• Other Sources	1	0.52
2	Toilet	139	72.40
	• Not Available	53	27.60
	• Available		
3	Type of Fuel	145	75.52
	• Gas	34	17.71
	• Fuel Wood	10	5.21
	• Kerosene	3	1.56
	• Others (Straw leaves, Cow dung)		
4	Domestic Lighting	189	98.44
	• Electrified	3	1.56
	• Not Electrified		
5	Type of House	16	8.33
	• Pucca	38	19.79
	• Semi- Pucca	138	71.88
	• Kucha		
Total		192	100

Section B: Dimensions of Empowerment

In this section, data specially related to women empowerment have been presented with analysis and interpretation. Respondents highlighted the major components of each one of the three dimensions of women empowerment. They are summarized in the

following table number 4. An effort is made to measure the empowerment levels of a rural woman (taken in 3 dimensions viz. social, economic and political) by constructing a composite index called **Women's Empowerment Index (WEI)**.

Table 4
Distribution of Normalized Scores of 3 dimensions in Empowerment (S_Social, E_Economic, P_Political)

	Norm S	Norm E	Norm P
Average	0.605729	0.620697	0.215774
Std. Dev.(SD)	0.154406	0.161899	0.179628
Coefficient of Variation (CV)	0.25491	0.260834	0.832482
Sqrt(CV)	0.504886	0.510719	0.912405
1/Sqrt(cv)	1.980644	1.958022	1.096005
C (normalizing constant)	0.198623		
W (weight of dimension)	0.393401	0.388908	0.217691
Average WEI (Women empowerment index)			0.5267

The table 4 above presents the sampled average scores of three dimensions of women empowerment studied. Respondents highlighted the major components of each one of the three dimensions of women empowerment. The individual impacts of the respective dimensions are found to have positive outlook with lower value.

Findings of the study:

Section A: The findings constituting the overall socio profile of women and the availability of basic amenities in the respondent households represented in table 2 and 3 are as follows:

- Respondents largely comprised Hindus (98.86%). Among the respondents 97.92 % of the belonged to ST and only 2.08 % belonged to other backward classes (OBC).
- Eighty one per cent of the respondents hailed from nuclear families, and the rest belonged to joint families.
- 43.75 % of the respondents were

aged below 35 years while the remaining 56.25% were aged 35 years or more.

- Nearly 40% of the respondents were illiterate and almost same level of respondents had studied only up to primary and middle levels. About 21 % of the respondents were up to higher secondary level of education. The graduate respondents are found to be only 0.52 %. (It is inferred from above that illiteracy among majority of the respondents and a lower level of education among those literate may hinder women's empowerment.)
- The 63.54 % respondents' uses hand pump as source of drinking water whereas 33.85 % of the respondents uses natural source (well) as source of drinking water.
- 98.44 per cent of the respondent households are electrified and rest 1.56 per cent is still to have electricity.
- 75.52 per cent of the respondent households had gas connection and 17.71 % are utilizing firewood as source of domestic fuel. Rests 6.77 per cent of respondents are using other sources of domestic fuel.

- Only 27.60 per cent respondent households had toilet facilities and 72.40 per cent of did not have toilet facility.

- 100% of the respondents household have own houses but majority of them did not have Pucca house and are residing in Kucca house. Only 8.33 per cent of the respondents have Pucca house

Section B: The findings with regard to different dimensions of women empowerment in the table 4 having positive outlook are as below:

- Positive societal outlook and acceptance of women as equal partners in the society (39.34%) were reported by the respondents as constituents of social empowerment. This calculated index is found to be far below the average WEI 52.67 %
 - The study reflects the low positive response i.e. 38.89 % among the respondents to take decision in economic dimension of empowerment. This computed index is less than the required average WEI (52.67%).
 - Participation of women in election and performance of political participation were expressed by the respondents as the major planks of political empowerment. The weight calculated for this dimension is found to be only 21.77 %. The calculated index is almost less than half of the average WEI (52.67%).
- It is found that the calculated value of standard deviation for political dimension is quite high in comparison with other two dimensions. The high value(83.42%) for coefficient of variation (CV) indicates that there is much variation within the political

dimension of empowerment among the respondents. The WEI is found to be only 21.77 % which is very low when compared to other two indicators, i.e. social (39.34%) and economic (38.89 %).

The overall average index was found to be **0.5267 (or 52.67 %)**. This WEI shows the *medium empowerment* among the respondents.

Conclusion:

Women living in the rural belts of Mohuramukh Blockunder Bokakhat in the district of Golaghat, Assam, largely represent poor, illiterate and tribal communities. Majority of respondents are from Hindu by religion. Most of these women continue to perform their traditional roles in maintaining the house, cleaning the vessels, caring the sick, fetching water, and washing clothes. Apart from the household works they are mainly engaged in poultry farming, cattle rearing, pig rearing, vermin - composting, etc. Respondents with their spouses jointly decided about the number of children, their education, borrowing and lending and spending women's income.

The study reveals that the majority of women hailed from nuclear families. Emergences of more nuclear families fosters the gradually shift of nuclearisation, in favor of empowering women.

Highlighting the three dimensions of women empowerment, namely, social, economic and political, a composite index called Women Empowerment Index (WEI) was computed to measure these dimensions. It may be concluded that the respondents have

medium level of empowerment on the three dimensions.

The findings of the study revealed that a rigid base had been formed in the rural belts of the selected area, through NGO which provides congenial atmosphere for enlightening and empowering the rural women. Rural women, who were since long time mounting on the traditional patriarchal path, have slowly and steadily shifting towards female – partnered empowerment track. The pace is slow, since of their poor knowledge, illiteracy, economic and political base which had been substantiated through the carried research.

Therefore, it may be inferred that there is a need of mass level campaigning and awareness among the population to achieve high empowerment. However, the pace of empowering rural women could be constantly accelerated and achieved through programs driven by the Government, SHG, NGOs, corporate sectors and other educational institutions.

Limitations of the study:

1. This study is purely based on the data collected by the researchers.
2. The time and resources were constraints while broadening the size and area of the research.

This study cannot be generalized. More studies in this aspect is needed to verify the findings.

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মামণি ৰয়ছম গোস্বামীৰ উপন্যাসত নাৰী শ্ৰমিক (চেনাবৰ সোঁত, অহিৰণ আৰু মামৰে ধৰা তৰোৱাল উপন্যাসৰ আধাৰত)

ড° ৰাজু বৰুৱা

উপাধ্যক্ষ

কাকজান মহাবিদ্যালয়

০.০০ প্ৰস্তাৱনা:

মামণি ৰয়ছম গোস্বামীয়ে অসমীয়া সাহিত্যলৈ আগবঢ়োৱা উল্লেখযোগ্য অৱদান হ'ল উপন্যাস আৰু চুটিগল্প। প্ৰায় তেৰ বছৰ বয়সতে শিশুৰ বাবে লেখা ৰচনাৰে গোস্বামীয়ে লেখিকাৰ জীৱন আৰম্ভ হয়। পৰৱৰ্তী সময়ত চুটিগল্পৰে অসমীয়া সাহিত্য জগতত আত্মপ্ৰকাশ কৰা এই গৰাকী সাহিত্যিকৰ সৃষ্টিশীল প্ৰতিভাৰ উত্তৰণ ঘটে বিশেষকৈ উপন্যাসৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত। গৱেষণামূলক প্ৰৱন্ধ, অনুবাদ কৰ্ম আৰু ভিন্নমুখী পটভূমিৰে সাহিত্য ৰচনা কৰা গোস্বামীৰ সাহিত্যৰ এক নিজস্ব বৈশিষ্ট্য আছে। গোস্বামীৰ প্ৰতিখন ৰচনাত আছে বাস্তৱ জীৱনৰ বহুৰঙী অভিজ্ঞতাৰ অকৃত্ৰিম স্বাক্ষৰ। 'চেনাবৰ সোঁত' নামৰ উপন্যাসেৰে উপন্যাস জগতত প্ৰৱেশ কৰা গোস্বামীয়ে ইয়াৰ পাছত 'মামৰে ধৰা তৰোৱাল', 'নীলকণ্ঠী ব্ৰজ', 'অহিৰণ', 'দঁতাল হাতীৰ উঁয়ে খোৱা হাওদা', 'আধালেখা দস্তাবেজ'কে ধৰি ভালেখিনি উপন্যাস ৰচনা কৰি গৈছে। এই উপন্যাসমূহৰ জৰিয়তে লেখিকাই কেৱল অসমীয়া সাহিত্যতে নহয় সমগ্ৰ ভাৰতীয় সাহিত্যলৈ এক নতুন বাৰ্তা কঢ়িয়াই আনিলে। উপন্যাসৰ কাহিনী হিচাবে লেখিকাই কেতিয়াবা বাছি লৈছে শোষিত শ্ৰমিকৰ দুখভৰা জীৱন, কেতিয়াবা

নৰ-নাৰীৰ বিচিত্ৰ জীৱন কাহিনী, কেতিয়াবা সমাজৰ সংৰক্ষণশীল পৰম্পৰাত ক্ষত বিক্ষত হোৱা নাৰী জীৱন আৰু কেতিয়াবা ৰাজনৈতিক জীৱন। তেওঁৰ সমস্ত ৰচনাৱলীত প্ৰতিভাত হৈছে প্ৰেম আৰু মানৱতা। কদৰ্য্য জীৱনৰ মাজত প্ৰেম আৰু মানৱতাৰ সন্ধান কৰাই তেওঁৰ সাহিত্যিক জীৱনৰ লক্ষ্য। ব্যক্তিগত জীৱনত লাভ কৰা শোক আৰু সংঘাতে ৰক্ষণশীল সমাজ ব্যৱস্থাক প্ৰত্যাহ্বান জনাই, সমস্ত শক্তি আৰু প্ৰতিভাক সৃষ্টিশীল কৰ্মত খটুৱাই এক নতুন জীৱন দৰ্শনেৰে উপন্যাসবোৰৰ যোগেদি তেওঁ সমাজলৈ এক বাৰ্তা প্ৰেৰণ কৰিলে।

১.০১ শ্ৰমিক সমাজৰ ইতিহাস:

১৯৪৭ চনত ভাৰতে স্বাধীনতা লাভ কৰাত নতুন চৰকাৰে দেশখন নতুনকৈ নিৰ্মাণ কৰিবলৈ আগবাঢ়িল। ৰাষ্ট্ৰখনত কৃষি, শিল্প, উদ্যোগৰ প্ৰয়োজন হ'ল। উন্নত কৃষিৰ বাবে পানী যোগান আঁচনি ল'বলগীয়া হ'ল। বাট, পথ পকীকৰণ, দলং নিৰ্মাণৰ লগতে শিল্প উদ্যোগৰো প্ৰয়োজনীয়তা আহি পৰিল। এনে এক পটভূমিত দেশবাসীলৈ আনন্দৰ জোৰাৰ আহিল। কৃষি কৰ্মৰ পৰা আঁতৰি আহি বহুতে কোম্পানীৰ লগত কাম কৰিবলৈ ল'লে। জীৱন জীৱিকাৰ বাবে মানুহে বিভিন্ন ঠাইৰ পৰা আহি

কোম্পানীৰ কামৰ প্ৰতি আকৰ্ষিত হ'ল। এনেদৰেই শ্ৰমিক সমাজৰ জন্ম হ'ল। কিন্তু আশা কৰা মতে শ্ৰমিক সকলে সুফল নাপালে। তেওঁলোকে পালে বঞ্চনা আৰু লাঞ্ছনা। এচাম লোকে দুৰ্বল বনুৱা শ্ৰেণীটোক পাৰ্থ্যমানে শোষণ কৰি থাকিল। স্বাধীনতাৰ অৰ্থ বনুৱা সকলে বুজি নাপায়। তাৰেই সুযোগ লৈ একাংশ স্বাৰ্থান্ধ লোকে বনুৱা সকলক নিষ্পেষণ কৰিবলৈ ধৰিলে। এনে শোষণ, নিষ্পেষণ সমাজৰ ধৰ্ম, আৰ্থ-সামাজিক দিশ, শিক্ষা, ৰাজনৈতিক সকলো দিশলৈকে বিয়পি পৰিল। বনুৱা সকল আজিও স্বাৰ্থান্ধ লোকৰ ক্ৰীতদাস। শিক্ষা, আৰ্থিক দিশ সকলোতে তেওঁলোক দুৰ্বল। প্ৰতিবাদী কণ্ঠও তেওঁলোকৰ নাছিল। পিছলৈ এই বিলাকৰ জন্ম হ'ল যদিও শ্ৰমিক সকল একেই থাকিল। স্বৰাজ্যোত্তৰ কালৰ এনে দুৰ্দশাগ্ৰস্ত ছবিখন মামনি ৰয়ছম গোস্বামীয়ে তেওঁৰ উপন্যাসত অতি সুন্দৰভাৱে চিত্ৰিত কৰিছে। বিশেষকৈ বনুৱা শ্ৰেণীটোৰ প্ৰতি লেখিকাৰ দৰদ আৰু সহৃদয়তা মন কৰিবলগীয়া।

১.০০ বিষয়বস্তুৰ পৰিচয়ঃ

আলোচনা পত্ৰখনৰ বিষয়বস্তু হ'ল মামনি ৰয়ছম গোস্বামীয়ে ৰচনা কৰা তিনিখন উপন্যাসত শ্ৰমিক জীৱনৰ চিত্ৰ কেনেকৈ অঙ্কন কৰিছে সেই সম্পৰ্কে বিশ্লেষণ কৰা।

(ক) চেনাবৰ সোঁত (১৯৭২)

(খ) অহিৰণ (১৯৮০)

(গ) মামৰে ধৰা তৰোৱাল (১৯৮০)

এই তিনিখন উপন্যাসেই অসমৰ বাহিৰৰ পটভূমিত ৰচিত। চেনাবৰ সোঁত ৰচনা কৰা হৈছে কাশীৰৰ চেনাব নদীৰ ওপৰত নিৰ্মাণ কৰা দলং এখনত নিযুক্ত শ্ৰমিকক লৈ। অহিৰণ ৰচনা কৰা হৈছে মধ্যপ্ৰদেশৰ অহিৰণ নদীৰ একুৱাডাক্ট (Aqueduct) নিৰ্মাণত লগোৱা শ্ৰমিকক লৈ। মামৰে ধৰা তৰোৱালৰ

বিষয় উত্তৰ প্ৰদেশৰ ৰায়বেৰেলী জিলাৰ সাই নদীৰ একুৱাডাক্ট নিৰ্মাণ কাৰ্য্যত জড়িত শ্ৰমিক সকলৰ এটি ধৰ্মঘট। শ্ৰমিক সকলৰ শোষিত নিষ্পেষিত আৰু দৰিদ্ৰ জীৱনৰ লগত জড়িত কিছুমান ঘটনাৰ আধাৰত উপন্যাসৰ কাহিনী গঢ়ি তোলা হৈছে।

একুৱাডাক্ট নিৰ্মাণৰ দায়িত্বত থকা কোম্পানীৰ মালিক সকলে শ্ৰমিক সকলৰ দৰিদ্ৰতা আৰু দুৰ্বলতাৰ সুযোগ কিদৰে গ্ৰহণ কৰিছিল, নিৰ্মাণৰ কামত দুৰ্ঘটনা ঘটি নদীৰ বুকুত শ্ৰমিকৰ মৃত্যু হ'লে সিহঁতৰ মুখ কিদৰে বন্ধ কৰিছিল, ন্যায্য প্ৰাপ্তিৰ বাবে প্ৰতিবাদ কৰিব খুজিলে অনেক কুট কৌশলেৰে সিহঁতৰ মাজত কিদৰে বিভাজন আনি দিছিল, ধৰ্মঘট আন্দোলন আদি কৰিব খুজিলে মালিক সকলে ষড়যন্ত্ৰ কৰি কেনেকৈ নিৰ্মূল কৰিছিল, শ্ৰমিক সকল সংঘবদ্ধ হোৱাৰ পৰা বিৰত থাকিবলৈ কিদৰে ফুলুৱোৱা হৈছিল, মালিকৰ স্বাৰ্থ পূৰণ হোৱাৰ লগে লগে কিদৰে শ্ৰমিকক 'ফটা'জোতা'ব দৰে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হৈছিল, মহিলা শ্ৰমিক সকলক কেনেকৈ ভোগৰ সামগ্ৰী বুলি ধৰা হৈছিল, তাৰ এক বিচিত্ৰ ৰূপ উপন্যাস কেইখনত দাঙি ধৰা হৈছে। প্ৰেম, মানৱতা আৰু মহানুভৱতাৰ ছবি বনুৱা সকলৰ মাজত লেখিকাই আৱিষ্কাৰ কৰিছে।

উল্লেখযোগ্য কথা হ'ল মামনি ৰয়ছমে "শ্ৰমিকৰ পৃথিৱীখন প্ৰত্যক্ষ কৰিছে পোনপটীয়াকৈ, তেনেই সন্মুখৰ পৰা, তেওঁৰ দৃষ্টি oblique নহয়। সম্পূৰ্ণ স্বচ্ছ আইনাৰ মাজেৰে তেওঁ চৰিত্ৰসমূহক চাইছে। প্ৰত্যক্ষদৰ্শীৰ বিন্ময় তেওঁৰ লেখনিত সুস্পষ্ট। তেওঁ তেনেই ওচৰৰ পৰা ঘটনাৰ ক্ৰম পৰ্যবেক্ষণ কৰিছে, কিন্তু objective onlooker ৰ দূৰত্বত থাকি ধাৰাবিৰৰণীৰ লগতে বিশ্লেষণ আৰু সবলীকৰণৰ নৈতিক দায়িত্বও তেওঁ পালন কৰিছে বাবেই মামনি ৰয়ছম লিখনি কেৱল disturbing য়েই নহয় — "বাস্তৱৰ নতুন শিক নিৰে আগলৈ খোজকঢ়াৰ আহ্বানো"।

১.০১ উপন্যাসত নাৰী শ্ৰমিকৰ চিত্ৰ :

১.০২ চেনাবৰ সোঁত :

মামনি ৰয়ছম গোস্বামীৰ প্ৰথমখন উপন্যাস চেনাবৰ সোঁত। এইখন উপন্যাসত চেনাব নৈৰ ওপৰত দলং সজা কামত নিয়োজিত পুৰুষ নাৰী সকলৰ জীৱনক লৈ ৰচনা কৰা হৈছে। দুৰ্ভিক্ষ পীড়িত কালাহাণ্ডিৰ ছবি এই মানুহ মখাৰ মাজেদি ফুটি উঠিছে। উপন্যাসখনত ভালেমান নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ আছে। সোণী, সৰ্বমতী, পাৰ্বতী, ৰাঘামা, ধনমাই, কৃষ্ণবাই, চান্তি, পাৰ্বতী বাঈচাহেবা ইত্যাদি। এই চৰিত্ৰবোৰৰ শ্ৰম, প্ৰেম, যৌনতা, শোষণ, বঞ্চনা আৰু দাসত্বৰে জৰ্জৰিত জীৱনৰ ছবি উপন্যাসখনত পোৱা যায়। উপন্যাসত শ্ৰমিক সকলৰ ভোকাতুৰ ৰূপৰ বৰ্ণনা অতি বাস্তৱ ৰূপত লেখিকাই বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে। "চান্দ আৰু চাতু বোলা ৰাঘামাৰ নাঙঠ ল'ৰা দুটাই একোটা ৰাফসৰ মুৰ্তি লৈ ৰাঘামাৰ মুখৰ ওচৰলৈ নিব খোজা কটি আজুৰিবলৈ লাগি গ'ল। আনকি ৰাঘামাৰ চোবাই থকা মোকোৰাৰ পৰাও সিহঁত দুটাই আজুৰিবলৈ ধৰিলে — তাই অধৈৰ্য হৈ খেচখেচাই উঠিল, — ছাফ্ৰা জানোৱাৰ ৰুটি কিয় খাৱ — মোকে খা"।

পেট ভৰাই খাবলৈ নোপোৱা আন এটি নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ নীৰ আশ্ৰাৰ যোগেদি দুৰ্ভিক্ষৰ আন এটি ছবি লেখিকাই এনেদৰে দাঙি ধৰিছে — "খুৰপীৰে মাটি খান্দি খান্দি নীৰ আশ্ৰাৰ ককাঁল, লাহে লাহে হাউলি আহিল, শুকাই কৰকৰীয়া মৰা বুকুখন আঁঠুৰ ওচৰলৈ নামি আহিল, মানুহজনী ছাল বাকলি নথকা হাড়গিলা এটাৰ দৰে দেখা গ'ল — সিৰান্নাৰ বেচ মনত আছে — ৰাচন বেছি আহি সি এমুঠি গম নীৰ আশ্ৰাৰ হাতত দিছিল। তাৰে অলপ গুৰি মাটিত পৰিছিল। নীৰ আশ্ৰাই উবুৰি হৈ পৰি সেইখিনি চেলেকি খাইছিল"।

বানপানীৰ আতঙ্কত আতঙ্কিত হোৱা শ্ৰমজীৱি নাৰীসকলে অন্ধবিশ্বাসৰ বলি হৈছিল —

হঠাৎ চেনাব নদীৰ দোকোল-টকা বান আহিলত সকলোৰে ভাবে — বনদুৰ্গহি কিবা কথাত অসন্তোষ্ট হৈ চেনাবৰ বানে তলোৱাৰলৈকে জিভা মেলে — গৰু মহ উটি যায় — সেয়ে কলা পঠাছাগলী দেৱীক উদ্দেশ্য কৰি চেনাবৰ সোঁতত এৰি দিয়ে আৰু বিশ্বাস কৰে — ৰাতি চেনাবৰ গছৰ তলত থাকিব নাপায়, শুব নাপায় — তেজ নাইকিয়া হয়। আনকি কনক্ৰিট ঢলাৰ সময়ত খুপ্তান চাহাবেও দেৱীৰ চৰণক উদ্দেশ্য কৰি হালধি কুমকুম পিন্ধোৱা ৰঙা কাপোৰেৰে বান্ধি অনা নাৰিকল ভাঙে।

দলং নিৰ্মাণৰ কামত পুৰুষৰ লগতে নাৰীয়েও সমানে সমানে শ্ৰম কৰে। মদ আৰু নাৰীলিপ্সা মানুহবোৰৰ ছবি উপন্যাসখনত দেখুওৱা হৈছে। লাইনৰ নাৰীবোৰৰ ওচৰলৈ বৈধ অবৈধ ৰূপত পুৰুষ শ্ৰমিকৰ প্ৰবজন ঘটে। নাৰী কেলেঙ্কাৰী, অবৈধ সন্তান ধাৰণ, বহু বিবাহ, প্ৰেম, যৌনতা, বৈধ, অবৈধ, নৈতিক, অনৈতিক আদি দিশবোৰ লেখিকাই অনন্য ৰূপত দাঙি ধৰিছে। প্ৰতি গৰাকী নাৰীৰ যে আত্মমৰ্য্যদা আছে সেই কথা সিহঁতৰ পাৰিবাৰিক কথোপকথনৰ পৰা বুজা যায়। সোণীৰ ভাষাৰে — "মনৰ উপৰি ভাগতহে তাইৰ চেনাবৰ ফটফটীয়া পানীৰ দৰে নিৰ্মূল পানী আছে। ইয়াৰ তলিত জমা হোৱা বোকা মাটিৰ ময়লাৰ কথা তাই যেন গমে পোৱাই নাছিল। অযথা সন্দেহ, কৌতুহল, লাওপাত কচুপাত মুখবোৰে, অশ্লীল কথা বাৰ্তাবোৰে নাৰীসকলৰ সমাজৰ এক বাস্তৱ চিত্ৰ পঢ়ুৱৈয়ে লাভ কৰে। আনহাতে সৰু বৰ অনেক অজস্ৰ চৰিত্ৰৰ ভিতৰত এক বিপৰীত ধৰ্ম্মী চৰিত্ৰ হ'ল বাঈচাহেবা। তাইৰ চৰিত্ৰত আছে কেৱল ভোগবাদৰ লিপ্সা — তলতীয়া কৰ্মচাৰী সকলোকে চাকৰিৰ প্ৰমোচনৰ প্ৰলোভন দি তাই দুস্কাৰ্যত লিপ্ত হয় — ফলস্বৰূপে নাৰীসকলৰ মাজত অযথা সন্দেহে পৰিয়ালবোৰলৈ বিপদ মাতি আনে। বাঈচাহেবা

চৰিত্ৰটো বিৰিঞ্চি কুমাৰ বৰুৱাৰ “সেউজী পাতৰ কাহিনী” উপন্যাসৰ এলি টেইমুৰৰ লগত বিজ্ঞাপি। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে সোণীয়ে পাৰ্ৱৰ্তীক কয় — “তই পিকেই ধৰিছ, বান্ধিচাহেবাই প্ৰেম কৰিব নাজানে মাথো দেহৰ জুই নুমাৰ চেষ্টা কৰে। দেহৰ এই জুই নুমাৰৰ চেষ্টা কৰি ইহঁতে বহু বেয়া কাম কৰে, বিকাম আমাৰ দৰে গৰীৱৰ স্বপ্নতো ভাবিব নোৱাৰে।”^{১০} কোম্পানীত কাম কৰাৰ উপৰিও সৰহভাগ মহিলাই হাণ্ডি তৈয়াৰ কৰে। দুই এপদ লাগতিয়াল বস্ত্ৰৰ দোকানো দিয়ে — তাতে মহিলাসকলক নিকৃষ্ট দৃষ্টিৰে পুৰুষ শ্ৰমিকে বুটীয়াবলৈ চায়। তাতেওঁকে ডাঙৰ কথা চাইবেগ নিদিৱাকৈ প্লাষ্টিংগৰ সময়ৰ চাইটৰ ঘৰবোৰ কঁপা, ভয়হৰ শব্দ কৰি টিন, হাণ্ডি আৰু খৰিৰ বোকাবোৰ তললৈ পৰা, ঘৰৰ টিনৰ চাল ফুটাই প্ৰকাণ্ড শিল উফৰি পৰি দুৰ্ঘটনাত মানুহ মৰা আদি ঘটনাবোৰে নাৰীসকলক অকলশৰীয়া কৰে। কোম্পানীয়ে পৰিৱালৰ ভৰণপাৰণৰ দায়িত্ব লোৱাৰ ঠাইত সামান্য কেইটামান টকা দি শ্ৰমিকৰ মুখবোৰ বন্ধ কৰে। ক’ত মানুহ মৰিল, ক’ত নাৰী বিধবা হ’ল, ইহঁতৰ তেজৰেই মালিক লাখপতি হৈছে, অথচ দহ ভাগৰ এভাগ শ্ৰমিকে বনাচ নাপায়, চিকিৎসালয়লৈ নিবলৈ কোম্পানীৰ গাড়ী নাপায় — আদি অনেক সমস্ত প্ৰতিবাদ নোহোৱাকৈ থাকে। সহজ সৰল শ্ৰমিকে প্ৰতিবাদতকৈ পেটৰ তাড়নাকহে বেছি দৰকাৰী বুলি ভাবে। মুঠতে শ্ৰমিক সকলৰ সৰ্বস্বৰূপৰ ৰূপটো লেখিকাই নাৰী পুৰুষ উভয়ৰ মাজেৰে ফুটাই তুলিছে। কোম্পানীৰ শোষণ কিমান ভয়হৰ তাৰ নমুনা উপন্যাসখনত এনেদৰে পোৱা যায় — “সময়ে অসময়ে ইহঁতে শ্ৰমিকক ফটা জোতাৰ দৰে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছে”। উপন্যাসখনৰ উল্লেখযোগ্য নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ বান্ধিচাহেবৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো লেখিকাই ফটা জোতাৰ চিত্ৰ আৰোপ কৰি কৈছে — বান্ধিচাহেবো এঘোৰ ফটা জোতা। উপন্যাসখনত গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ নাৰী

চৰিত্ৰ সোণীৰ বেদনা থাকিলেও তাই প্ৰাণবন্ত — আন আন নাৰী চৰিত্ৰবোৰ নিজস্ব বৈশিষ্ট্যৰে ধাৰমান। বান্ধিচাহেবা সুন্দৰী অপৰূপা যদিও যেন এগৰাকী উপেক্ষিতা নাৰী। খলনায়িকা বান্ধিচাহেবা, ৰাঘানা, সোণীৰ মনলৈ হিংসা সন্দেহ দ্বন্দ্ব কঢ়িয়াই অনা এক প্ৰতিদ্বন্দী নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ। পোৱা, নোপোৱা, হেৰুওৱা, দ্বন্দ্ব সংঘাতো বিশেষকৈ আৰ্থিক সঙ্কটে নাৰী শ্ৰমিক সকলক জুৰুলা কৰা অৱস্থাটো খুউব সুন্দৰকৈ লেখিকাই চিত্ৰিত কৰিছে। কোম্পানীৰ দলং মুকলি হ’বৰ দিনা সকলো শ্ৰমিকক একেবাৰে স্মৰণ নকৰাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো নাৰী শ্ৰমিকসকলে কোলাৰ কেচুৱাবোৰৰ সৰু সৰু হাতবোৰ কপালত যোৱা লগাই তেওঁক প্ৰণাম কৰিবলৈ শিকালে। মানৱতাৰ ভূ-লুপ্তিত ৰূপটোক লেখিকাই এই অসাধাৰণ অথচ সাধাৰণ মহিলা সকলৰ মাজেদি প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে। শ্ৰমিক সকলৰ সুখ দুখ চাবলৈ বুজিবলৈ আহি এখন মস্ত মিটিং কৰি এজন আদহীয়া মানুহে কৈছিল, “যেতিয়া এই ঘোঁৰাত উঠা চাহাবজক অহা শেষ হ’ব ঠিক তেতিয়াই কালাহাণ্ডি শস্যৰে পৰিপূৰ্ণ হ’ব, আলিবাট হ’ব, ফুলঘৰ হ’ব, পথাৰে পথাৰে অজস্ৰ কুঁৱা হ’ব, পানীৰ ব্যৱস্থা হ’ব ঠিক তেতিয়াই কালাহাণ্ডিৰ মানুহৰ সকলো অভাৱ শেষ হ’ব। কিন্তু নদীৰ তীৰেৰে চাহাব অহা কেতিয়াবাই বন্ধ হ’ল, কিন্তু কালাহাণ্ডি একেই থাকিল। অৱশেষত এটি আশাবাদেৰে চৰিত্ৰ সমূহৰ পৰিকল্পনা দাঙি ধৰা হৈছে এনেদৰে — “অলপতে তাই এটা নতুন শিশুৰ জন্ম দিব। কিন্তু সি সেই শিশুটিৰ কুসুমকোমল ছালখনক কোম্পানীৰ মালিকক ফটা জোতা কৰি পিন্ধিবলৈ দিব নোৱাৰে।”

১.০৩ অহিৰণঃ

অহিৰণ উপন্যাসখন চেনাৰৰ সোঁত খনৰ সমগোষ্ঠীয় বুলিব পাৰি। ইয়াৰ কাহিনীভাগ মধ্যপ্ৰদেশৰ অহিৰণ নামৰ ঠাইত হিন্দুস্থান কনষ্ট্ৰাকচন

কোম্পানীয়ে দলং নিৰ্মাণ কৰা ঘটনা এটিৰ পটভূমিত গঢ় লৈ উঠিছে। উপন্যাসখনিত বৰ্ক ছাইটত কাম কৰা শ্ৰমিক সকলৰ উপৰিও ওচৰ পাজৰ গ্ৰামাঞ্চলৰ জীৱনধাৰাবো এখন ছবি অঁকা হৈছে। মৰম, হিংসা, ঈৰ্ষা, প্ৰেম, নাৰী কেলেঙ্কাৰী, মদ্যপান, নৈশ পাৰ্টি আদি অসংলগ্ন ঘটনাবোৰকে লেখিকাই উপন্যাসখনত বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে। এই ঘটনাবোৰৰ জড়িততে শ্ৰমিকক কৰা বঞ্চনা, দুৰ্নীতি, অবিচাৰ, কৰ্মৰত অৱস্থাত থলুৱাৰ জীৱন আৰ্হতি, সুবন্ধাৰ অভাৱ, শিক্ষাৰ অভাৱ, শ্ৰমিক সকলৰ প্ৰতিবাদ, ইউনিয়নৰ প্ৰতি সজাগতা অহা ইত্যাদি কথাবোৰেই অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত কৰা হৈছে। উপন্যাসখনত শ্ৰমিকসকলৰ ভোকাটুৰ ৰূপটোক অতি কাৰুণ্যৰে লেখিকাই চিত্ৰিত কৰিছে — “চাৰপাৰাৰ খাব নোৱাৰা প্ৰেতহঁতক এসাজ ভাত আৰু এটা পিয়াজ দলিমাৰি দিয়া সিহঁতে চব কৰি দিব।”^{১১} ননীবাঈ, শশীবাঈ, ছোফিয়া, নিৰ্মলা ইয়াৰ নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ। ওচৰ পাজৰৰ একেঘৰতে চাৰিজনী ছোৱালীৰ জৰজৰ সন্তান আছে, ওচৰৰ এখন গাঁৱৰ প্ৰায়বিলাক ছোৱালীৰ চিফিলিচ্ ৰোগ থকাৰ কথাটোৱে নাৰী সমাজ আৰু পুৰুষ সমাজৰ ব্যতিচাৰৰ ৰূপটোকে উদঙাই দেখুৱাই। কোম্পানীৰ শ্ৰমিক সকলৰ সৰহ ভাগৰে পেটৰ তাড়না, আৰু সৰহ ভাগৰে দেহৰ তাড়না সেই সংবাদটো এই উপন্যাসখনত দেখুৱাব খোজা হৈছে। তাৰোপৰি শ্ৰমিক সকলৰ শিক্ষাহীনতাৰ বাবেও বিভিন্ন সমস্যা মূৰ দাঙি উঠিছে। শ্ৰমিকসকলক শিক্ষা দান কৰা কোম্পানীৰ ইচ্ছা নাই। সেই বাবেই উপন্যাসখনৰ প্ৰধান নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ নিৰ্মলাই মহেশ ঠাকুৰক লগত লৈ চাৰাপাৰাৰ গাঁৱৰ ঘৰবোৰ জৰীপ কৰিলে। সেই গাঁৱৰ অনাহাৰ, অশিক্ষিত ল’ৰাবোৰে অহিৰণ নৈত মাছ ধৰে, বনমূৰ্গী ধৰি বজাৰত বিক্ৰী কৰে, গৰু চৰাই। নিৰ্মলাই এই ল’ৰা-ছোৱালীবোৰক স্কুললৈ যাবলৈ এজন বৃদ্ধক প্ৰশ্ন কৰাত বৃদ্ধই ক’লে — “তোমালোকৰ ল’ৰা

ছোৱালীবোৰক কোম্পানীৰ স্কুললৈ যাবলৈ দিবানে? আমাৰ গৰুবোৰ কোনে চৰাব? অহিৰণৰ বাকৰিত গৰু মেলি সিহঁতে স্কুলত বহিব পাৰিব — কি শিকাৰা তোমালোকে? সিহঁতে প্ৰথমে নিজৰ নামকেইটাকে লেখিবলৈ শিকিব?”^{১২} এইদৰে অলেখ প্ৰশ্নৰ মুখামুখি হৈ নিৰ্মলাই এখন আঁচনি প্ৰস্তুত কৰিলে। মানুহৰ মাজত অজ্ঞানতাৰ বাবেই যে এনেধৰণৰ সমস্যা হৈছে সেই কথা হৰ্ণল চাহাবৰ লগত নিৰ্মলাই আলোচনা কৰিছে। কোম্পানীৰ পৰা সেই মানুহবোৰক কেনেকৈ কাপোৰ দিব পাৰি, বেমাৰী মানুহক কেনেকৈ হস্পিতেললৈ নিব পাৰি, গেণ্ট হাউছৰ ওচৰত চালি এখন দি নিজেই ব্যৱস্থা কৰা আদি কামৰে অহিৰণ নৈৰ পাৰৰ মানুহনিক নিৰ্মলাই উৎসাহিত কৰিবলৈ ধৰিলে — এইদৰে লেখিকাই কোম্পানীৰ শ্ৰমিকসকলৰ কৰ্মৰূপৰ মাজতেই মানৱতাৰ সন্ধান কৰিছে। আঁচলতে উপন্যাসখনত কেন্দ্ৰীয় ভাৱটো হ’ল নিঃস্ব মানুহৰ প্ৰতি সহমৰ্মিতা। শ্ৰমিক সকলৰ মাজৰ কৰুণ ছবিখন নিৰ্মলা চৰিত্ৰটোৰ মাজেদি প্ৰকাশ হৈছে। অন্যান্য সৰু বৰ নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ সমূহেও শ্ৰম আৰু বিনিময় কাৰ্যতে সীমাবদ্ধ থাকিল।

১.০৪ মামৰে ধৰা তৰোৱালঃ

মামণি ৰয়ছম গোস্বামীৰ শ্ৰমিক জীৱনৰ পটভূমিত ৰচিত আন এখন উপন্যাস হৈছে ‘মামৰে ধৰা তৰোৱাল’। উত্তৰ প্ৰদেশৰ ৰায়বেৰেলি জিলাৰ সাই নদীৰ একুৱেডাক্ট (Aqueduct) নিৰ্মাণৰ লগত জড়িত শ্ৰমিকসকলৰ এটি ধৰ্মঘট, শ্ৰমিক সংগঠনৰ নেতা আৰু সদস্য সকলৰ লগত হোৱা মতৰ পাৰ্থক্য, ধৰ্মঘটত বিফলতা আদিৰ এখন জীৱন্ত ছবি উপন্যাসখনত বৰ্ণিত হৈছে। লগতে সাই নদীৰ ওপৰত দলং আৰু একুৱেডাক্ট নিৰ্মাণৰ দায়িত্ব থকা ডানকাণ কনষ্ট্ৰাকচন কোম্পানীৰ মালিক সকলে হৰিজন আৰু শ্ৰমিকসকলক কৰা অত্যাচাৰ আৰু অবিচাৰৰ ফলত

তেওঁলোকৰ জীৱনলৈ নামি অহা দুৰ্যোগৰ ছবিখনো লেখিকাই সজীৱ ৰূপত অঙ্কন কৰিছে। আন দুখন উপন্যাসৰ দৰে এইখন উপন্যাসতো শ্ৰমিক নাৰীৰ দুখ যাতনা, ভোকাভুৰ ৰূপ, পেটৰ তাড়নাত অবৈধ সম্পৰ্ক গ্ৰহণ কৰা, জৰাজ সন্তান জন্ম দিয়া, অৱশেষত অতীষ্ঠ হৈ বিদ্ৰোহিনী ৰূপ ধাৰণ কৰি হত্যাকাৰী হোৱা আদি কৰুণ গাথা লেখিকাই ৰচনা কৰিছে — উপন্যাসখনত নাৰী চৰিত্ৰবোৰ হৈছে নৰায়ণী, বসুমতী, পাৰ্বতী আদি। প্ৰত্যেকজনী নাৰী শ্ৰমিকেই যেন দুৰ্ভাগীয়া। নৰায়ণী আছিল শিবু লেঙেৰাৰ পত্নী। কনক্ৰিটৰ বাকেট পৰি হোৱা এক দুৰ্ঘটনাত এখন ভৰি হেৰুৱাব লগীয়া হোৱা নিৰক্ষৰ শিবু লেঙেৰা আছিল চাহাবৰ লাইনৰ পায়খানা চাফা কৰা শ্ৰমিক। পিছলৈ শিবু লেঙেৰা যক্ষ্মাৰোগটো আক্ৰান্ত হোৱাত তিনিমহীয়া সন্তান আৰু গিৰিয়েকৰ ভৰণ-পোষণৰ বাবে নৰায়ণীয়ে অবাটে বাট বুলিছিল। নৰায়ণীয়ে অৰ্থনৈতিক তাড়নাৰ বাবেই চাহাবৰ লগত অবৈধ কাৰ্য্যত লিপ্ত হ'বলৈ বাধ্য হৈছিল আৰু ইয়াতে গইনা লৈ যৌন লিপ্সা পূৰণৰ বাবে এডল লম্পট যুৱকৰ লালসাৰ চিকাৰ হৈ লেলাট ভূঞ্জিব লগীয়া হৈছিল। চাৰেংখোৱাত কাম কৰি থাকোঁতে এজন ডেকা ইঞ্জিনিয়াৰৰ সান্নিধ্যলৈ আহি — “ভগ্ন ভূপুৰীৰ পৰা ৰাজপ্ৰাসাদলৈ যোৱা, আন্ধাৰৰ পৰা পোহৰলৈ যোৱাৰ সপোন দেখা” — ৰোমাণ্টিক মনৰ নৰায়ণীয়ে অৱস্থাৰ চাকনৈয়াত পৰি হৈ পৰিছিল “কুঁহিয়াৰ খাই চোবা পেলাই দিয়াৰ দৰে এক অনাদৃত চৰিত্ৰ”। অনাহাৰী জীৱন আৰু অনিশ্চিত ভৱিষ্যতৰ চাকনৈয়াত পৰি শ্ৰমিক নাৰী নৰায়ণীয়ে ঠাকুৰ চাহাবৰ ওচৰত আত্ম সমৰ্পন কৰিছে আৰু পুনৰবাৰ অগ্নীল ইন্দিত দিয়াত পুনৰ তাই বিদ্ৰোহিনী হৈ উঠিছে। ধনৰ টোপোলা উভোটাই তাই ঘৰলৈ আহিছে আৰু উপন্যাসখনৰ শেষৰ ফাললৈ নৰায়ণীয়ে অগ্নিপুতলিকাৰ ৰূপ ধাৰণ কৰি তাইৰ দেহ উপভোগ

কৰা চাহাব এজনক কুঠাৰেৰে ঘপিয়াই হত্যা কৰি প্ৰতিশোধ লৈছে। শ্ৰমিক মহিলাৰ এই যন্ত্ৰণাভৰা কাহিনী কেৱল নৰায়ণীৰে কাহিনী নহয়, ই যেন এচাম শ্ৰমিক মহিলাৰ সমূহীয়া জীৱন সংগ্ৰামৰ ছবি। উপন্যাসখনত শিশু শ্ৰমিক সকলৰ এক পুতৌ লগা দৃশ্য লেখিকাই অঙ্কন কৰিছে। ছুইপাৰৰ ল'ৰা ১২ বছৰীয়া ২১ বছৰীয়া সলাইচলাই কৰা কামত সুমুৱাই দিছিল — কেনেকৈ বিপদাপন্ন জীৱন কটাই শিশু শ্ৰমিকসকলে সেই কথাও উপন্যাসখনত বৰ্ণিত হৈছে। বসুমতীৰ পুত্ৰ ভুঙয়ে ওঠৰ বছৰ বয়সতে শেলুৰৈয়ে ধৰা ফাটোৰ ওপৰত ওজন থকা গামলা লৈ কাম কৰি থাকোঁতে বসুমতীৰ মাতৃ হৃদয় দুখত ভাগি পৰিছিল — “ভাব হ'ল মোৰ এই পেটৰ পোৱালিটি এই হেৰাল — এই হেৰাল। ডেৰকুৰি হাত ওপৰত বৰষুণ পৰি পিচল হৈ থকা চালিয়া আৰু তলত সোৱা লোহা শিকলিৰ নৰক — পৰিব লাগিলে নেফানেফ হৈ যাব...। পিছত ৱাৰ্কাৰৰ দালাল ৰাফ্‌স। সপ্তাহৰ মুৰত বুঢ়া আঙুলিৰ টিপত কুৰি টকাৰ চহী দিয়াই মাত্ৰ দহ টকা গালৈ দলিয়াই দিয়া ৰাফ্‌স”।^১ ‘দৰিদ্ৰতাৰ লগত যুঁজ’ — এই শিশু শ্ৰমিকবোৰৰ ছবি খন অতি কৰুণভাৱে লেখিকাই চিত্ৰিত কৰিছে। বসুমতী হৰিজন মহিলা — এই মহিলা শ্ৰমিক সকলক কোম্পানীৰ মালিক শ্ৰেণীৰ এক তাচ্ছিল্য কৰা দেখা যায়। একালত মহাত্মা গান্ধী আহোঁতে বসুমতীৰ হাতৰ পৰা পানী খোৱা লোটাটো ককাঁলত বান্ধি ছুইপাৰ বেৰেকৰ পৰা ওলাই আহি ধৰ্ম্মঘট কৰা ইউনিয়নৰ লিডাৰ কেইটাৰ পিনে আঙুলি টোৱাই হুঙ্কাৰি উঠিছে এনেদৰে — “আজি আমাৰ ঘৰৰ ছোৱালীয়ে পেটৰ ভোকতে পেছেঞ্জাৰ ট্ৰেইনত উঠিবলগীয়া হ'ল ... তেজৰ নদী ব'ব — তহঁতে একো কৰিব নোৱাৰিব। তহঁতৰ গাত বীৰ ভগত সিঙৰ তেজ নাই। তহঁতে এই ভয়ঙ্কৰ দিনতো গৈ মুন্সীগঞ্জৰ চেৰাবখানাত চেৰাব খাৱ”।^২ বসুমতীৰ দৰে নাৰীৰ

বক্তব্যত প্ৰকাশ হৈছে এসোপা সোপাটিলা নেতাৰ কাৰ্যকলাপ। পায়খানা চাফা কৰা আৰু নৰ্দমা চাফা কৰা বসুমতীক যেতিয়া নঙলাৰ বাহিৰতহে খাবলৈ দিয়ে — তেতিয়া বসুমতীয়ে কয় — আমি যেন জন্তু জানোৱাবহে — সেই পুৰণি কালৰে পৰা কষ্ট সহ্য কৰি কৰি আমি আমাৰ হাড়ক চিমেন্টৰ গম্বুজ কৰি পেলালোঁ। গান্ধী মহাত্মাই এদিন কৈছিল — তেওঁ যদি আকৌ জনম ল'ব লগা হয়, তেতিয়াহেনো ঈশ্বৰত প্ৰাৰ্থনা জনাব তেওঁক যেন হৰিজনৰ ঘৰত জন্ম দিয়ে — সমাজৰ উচ্চ নীচ অস্পৃশ্যৰ ধাৰণাবোৰ বসুমতীৰ চৰিত্ৰৰ মাজেদি ফটফটীয়াকৈ প্ৰকাশ হৈছে।

৩.০০ সামৰণিঃ

মামণি ৰয়ছম গোস্বামীৰ উল্লিখিত তিনিওখন উপন্যাসত নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ সমূহ বিশ্লেষণ কৰি এটা সিদ্ধান্তত উপনীত হ'ব পাৰি যে, অভাৱগ্ৰস্ততা আৰু নিৰক্ষৰতাই নাৰী শ্ৰমিক সকলৰ দুখৰ কাৰণ। তাৰোপৰি শ্ৰম দান দি দেশৰ ভৱিষ্যত উজ্জ্বলাই তোলাৰ অন্তৰালত যিসকলে নিজৰ জীৱন উছৰ্গা কৰে তেওঁলোকেই সমাজৰ একাংশ নেতৃত্বই অৱহেলাৰ চকুৰে চায় আৰু নিষ্পেষণ কৰে। ফলস্বৰূপে শ্ৰমিক সকল ক্ৰমাৎ দৰিদ্ৰ হৈ পৰে। এনে অৰ্থনৈতিক সমস্যাই দেশৰ সামাজিক সমস্যাৰ মূল কাৰণ। এই সমস্যা দূৰীকৰণৰ বাবে শ্ৰমিক সকলক উপযুক্ত শিক্ষাৰে শিক্ষিত কৰি তেওঁলোকৰ আত্মসচেতন মনোভাৱ জগাই তোলা, অন্ততঃ অন্ন বস্ত্ৰ বাসস্থান এই তিনিওটা মৌলিক প্ৰয়োজন পূৰণ কৰিবৰ বাবে সুবিধা প্ৰদান কৰাটো সমাজৰ প্ৰত্যেক সচেতন ব্যক্তিৰ নৈতিক দায়িত্ব আৰু কৰ্তব্য। যুগ যুগ ধৰি ঘৰৰ বাহিৰে ভিতৰে মহিলাসকলে শোষণ নিষ্পেষণৰ বলি হৈ আহিছে। প্ৰকৃততে এই সমস্যা সমাধান হ'লেহে সমাজত এক সুস্থ বাতাবৰণ গঢ়ি উঠিব।

গ্ৰন্থ ঋণঃ

পাদটিকাঃ

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- (২) মামণি ৰয়ছম গোস্বামীৰ উপন্যাস সমগ্ৰ, পৃঃ ৮৭২
- (৩) উল্লিখিত গ্ৰন্থ, পৃঃ ৮৬৪
- (৪) উল্লিখিত গ্ৰন্থ, পৃঃ ৮৬৯
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- (৬) মামণি ৰয়ছম গোস্বামীৰ অহিৰণ, পৃঃ ১১২
- (৭) মামণি ৰয়ছম গোস্বামীৰ মামৰে ধৰা তৰোৱাল, পৃঃ ৪৬
- (৮) মামণি ৰয়ছম গোস্বামীৰ মামৰে ধৰা তৰোৱাল, পৃঃ ৭১
- (৯) উল্লিখিত গ্ৰন্থ, পৃঃ ৮৩

মূলগ্ৰন্থঃ

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লক্ষ্মীনাথ বেজবৰুৱাৰ চুটিগল্পত প্ৰতিফলিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ : এটি বিশ্লেষণ (নিৰ্বাচিত গল্পৰ আধাৰত)

পৰিস্থিতি দাস
অসমীয়া বিভাগ
ডিব্ৰুগড় বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

সংক্ষিপ্ত সাৰঃ

লক্ষ্মীনাথ বেজবৰুৱাই অসমীয়া সাহিত্যত পোন প্ৰথমবাৰৰ বাবে চুটিগল্পৰ পৰম্পৰা আৰম্ভ কৰে। বেজবৰুৱা অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ প্ৰথম গল্পকাৰেই নহয়, অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ কবিতা, নাটক, উপন্যাস, প্ৰবন্ধ আদি বহুকেইটা দিশৰো বাটকটীয়া। বেজবৰুৱাৰ গল্পত পৰিলক্ষিত হোৱা বিষয়বস্তু সমূহৰ ভিতৰত মনঃস্তব্ধ অন্যতম। মনঃস্তব্ধই মানৱ মনৰ সূক্ষ্ম অনুভূতিবোৰৰ বিশ্লেষণ কৰে। বেজবৰুৱাৰ চুটিগল্পৰ মন কবিতালগীয়া দিশটো হ'ল চৰিত্ৰ সৃষ্টি। তেওঁ গল্পৰ চৰিত্ৰসমূহ আপোন বৈশিষ্ট্যৰে উজ্জ্বল। বেজবৰুৱাৰ গল্পত পুৰুষ-নাৰী সম্পৰ্কৰ বিভিন্ন দিশৰ চিত্ৰায়নৰ যোগেদি বেজবৰুৱাই নাৰীৰ মানসিকতাৰ বিভিন্ন বৈচিত্ৰ্যময় দিশ দাঙি ধৰিছে। নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধই নাৰী-মনৰ ভাৱ-অনুভূতি, আশা-আকাংক্ষা স্বভাৱ আদিক বুজায়। বেজবৰুৱাৰ গল্পৰ নাৰী চৰিত্ৰসমূহে তেওঁৰ গল্পসমূহ সমৃদ্ধিশালী কৰাত বিশেষভাৱে সহায় কৰিছে। নাৰী চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ মাজেৰে বেজবৰুৱাৰ উদাৰ, যুক্তিবাদী আৰু সমাজ সংস্কাৰক মনটো প্ৰতিফলিত হৈ উঠিছে। তেওঁৰ ভদৰী, ৰতনমুগা, পাতমুগী, কন্যা, সেউতী আদি গল্পৰ নাৰী চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ মানসিকতাক বেজবৰুৱাই সুন্দৰভাৱে প্ৰতিফলিত কৰিছে। এনেদৰে প্ৰত্যেকটো নাৰী চৰিত্ৰই এক সুকীয়া স্থান লাভ কৰিছে। গতিকে নিৰ্বাচিত গল্পসমূহত চিত্ৰিত নাৰীৰ মনঃস্তব্ধিক দিশসমূহৰ সম্পৰ্কে এক বিশ্লেষণাত্মক অধ্যয়নৰ প্ৰয়াস কৰা হৈছে।

বীজ শব্দ : নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ, বেজবৰুৱাৰ চুটিগল্প, চৰিত্ৰ সৃষ্টি ইত্যাদি

০.০০ অৱতৰণিকা

লক্ষ্মীনাথ বেজবৰুৱাৰ গল্পত পৰিলক্ষিত হোৱা বিষয়বস্তুসমূহৰ ভিতৰত মনঃস্তব্ধ অন্যতম। মনঃস্তব্ধই মানৱ মনৰ সূক্ষ্ম অনুভূতিবোৰৰ বিশ্লেষণ কৰে। হেমকোষৰ মতে মনঃস্তব্ধ হৈছে “মনৰ গুণ আৰু স্বভাৱ বুজোৱা বিদ্যা”। নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধই নাৰী মনৰ ভাৱ অনুভূতি, আশা-আকাংক্ষা স্বভাৱ আদিক বুজায়। বেজবৰুৱাৰ কেইবাটাও

গল্পত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধই প্ৰকাশ লাভ কৰা পৰিলক্ষিত হয়।

০.০১ অধ্যয়নৰ উদ্দেশ্য আৰু গুৰুত্ব :

বেজবৰুৱাৰ চুটিগল্পত প্ৰতিফলিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধৰ উদ্দেশ্য :

- (ক) বেজবৰুৱাৰ গল্পসমূহত প্ৰতিফলিত নাৰীৰ মনঃস্তব্ধিক দিশসমূহ অধ্যয়ন আৰু বিশ্লেষণ কৰা হ'ব।
(খ) নাৰীৰ মানসিক চিন্তা-চেতনাসমূহ অধ্যয়ন কৰি

নাৰী মনৰ সমস্যাসমূহ বিচাৰি উলিওৱাৰ প্ৰচেষ্টা কৰা হ'ব।

(গ) বেজবৰুৱাৰ সময়ৰ সমাজত নাৰীৰ স্থিতি সম্পৰ্কে অধ্যয়ন কৰা।

(ঘ) নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ ইতিবাচক দিশবোৰ বিচাৰি উলিওৱাৰ প্ৰচেষ্টা।

সাম্প্ৰতিক সময়ত বহুল চৰ্চিত নাৰীমুক্তি তথা নাৰীবাদৰ গৱেষণা তথা প্ৰচেষ্টাৰ বাবে নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধৰ বিষয়ে আলোচনা কৰাটো এটা প্ৰয়োজনীয় বিষয়। বেজবৰুৱাৰ চুটিগল্পত প্ৰতিফলিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধৰ বিষয়ে আলোচনা কৰাৰ গুৰুত্ব আছে।

০.০২ অধ্যয়নৰ পদ্ধতি আৰু পৰিসৰ

গৱেষণা পত্ৰখনত প্ৰধানকৈ বিশ্লেষণাত্মক আৰু বৰ্ণনাত্মক পদ্ধতিৰ সহায় লোৱা হৈছে। বেজবৰুৱাৰ নিৰ্বাচিত গল্পসমূহৰ নাৰী চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ মনঃস্তব্ধিক দিশৰ বিষয়ে আলোচনা কৰোঁতে বিশ্লেষণাত্মক পদ্ধতিৰ সহায় লোৱা হ'ব।

বেজবৰুৱাৰ গল্পত প্ৰতিফলিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ সম্পৰ্কে আলোচনা কৰিবলৈ লওঁতে বেজবৰুৱাৰ কেইটামান নিৰ্বাচিত গল্পক সামৰি লোৱা হৈছে। গল্পকেইটা হৈছে- (ক) ভদৰী (খ) পাটমুগী (গ) ললিতী কাকতী (ঘ) সেউতী (ঙ) কন্যা (চ) জলকুঁৱৰী (ছ) ভোকেদ্র বৰুৱা (জ) জগৰামমণ্ডলৰ প্ৰেমাভিনয়, (ঝ) ৰতনমুগা
১.০০ বিষয়ৰ বিশ্লেষণ

১.০১ বেজবৰুৱাৰ নিৰ্বাচিত চুটিগল্পসমূহৰ মূল নাৰী চৰিত্ৰসমূহ

বেজবৰুৱাৰ চুটিগল্পসমূহত মন কবিতালগীয়া দিশটো হ'ল চৰিত্ৰ সৃষ্টি। তেওঁ গল্পৰ চৰিত্ৰসমূহ আপোন বৈশিষ্ট্যৰে উজ্জ্বল। বেজবৰুৱাৰ গল্পত পুৰুষ-নাৰী সম্পৰ্কৰ বিভিন্ন দিশ সামৰি লৈছে। পুৰুষ-নাৰী সম্পৰ্কৰ এই বিভিন্ন দিশৰ চিত্ৰায়নৰ যোগেদি বেজবৰুৱাই নাৰীৰ মানসিকতাৰ বিভিন্ন বৈচিত্ৰ্যময় দিশ দাঙি ধৰিছে।

বেজবৰুৱাৰ নিৰ্বাচিত চুটিগল্পসমূহত নাৰী

চৰিত্ৰসমূহে এক বিশেষ স্থান অধিকাৰ কৰিছে। এই গল্পসমূহৰ একাংশত একো একোটি নাৰী চৰিত্ৰই বিশেষভাৱে দেখা দিছে। গল্পসমূহত নাৰী চৰিত্ৰক লৈও নামকৰণ কৰিছে আৰু সেই চৰিত্ৰটোক আগবঢ়াই নিছে। সেই চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ ভিতৰত ‘ভদৰী’ গল্পত ভদৰী চৰিত্ৰ, ‘পাতমুগী’ গল্পত পাতমুগী চৰিত্ৰ, ‘ললিতী কাকতী’ গল্পত ললিতী চৰিত্ৰ, ‘সেউতী’ গল্পত সেউতী চৰিত্ৰ, ‘কন্যা’ গল্পত কন্যা বৰ্ণৰ কোল গাভৰু, ‘জগৰামমণ্ডলৰ প্ৰেমাভিনয়’ গল্পত জগৰাম, ‘ভোকেদ্র বৰুৱা’ গল্পত জেতুকী, ‘জলকুঁৱৰী’ গল্পত ৰূপহী নৈৰ পাৰত বহি সময় কটোৱা ছোৱালীজনী, ‘ৰতনমুগা’ গল্পত ৰুমুৰী আদি চৰিত্ৰই প্ৰধান। এই নাৰী চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ মনঃস্তব্ধিক দিশবোৰ বেজবৰুৱাই তেওঁৰ গল্পত সুন্দৰভাৱে ফুটাই তুলিছে।

১.০২ কাহিনীৰ বিকাশত নাৰী চৰিত্ৰৰ ভূমিকা

বেজবৰুৱাৰ গল্পৰ নাৰী চৰিত্ৰসমূহে তেওঁৰ গল্পসমূহ সমৃদ্ধিশালী কৰাত বিশেষভাৱে সহায় কৰিছে। বেজবৰুৱাৰ গল্পসমূহ আলোচনা কৰিলে দেখা যায় যে তেওঁৰ একাংশ গল্পই নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ প্ৰধান।

তেওঁৰ গল্পৰ নাৰী চৰিত্ৰসমূহক ঘাইকৈ দুটা ভাগত ভাগ কৰিব পাৰি -

- (ক) গাঁৱৰ সাধাৰণ নাৰী
(খ) অভিজাত শ্ৰেণীৰ নাৰী

বেজবৰুৱাৰ গল্পসমূহত চিত্ৰিত এইদুয়ো শ্ৰেণীৰ নাৰী চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ মাজত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ সুন্দৰকৈ প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। সামগ্ৰিকভাৱে বেজবৰুৱাৰ গল্পসমূহত চৰিত্ৰবোৰ দুই প্ৰকাৰৰ মনোভাৱ প্ৰতিফলিত হয়। সেইকেইটা হৈছে দীৰ্ঘকালীন মনোভাৱ আৰু ক্ষণস্থায়ী মনোভাৱ। বেজবৰুৱাৰ নিৰ্বাচিত গল্পকেইটাৰ নাৰী চৰিত্ৰসমূহত ঘাইকৈ দীৰ্ঘকালীন মনোভাৱটোহে প্ৰকাশ পাইছে। নাৰী চৰিত্ৰসমূহত প্ৰতিফলিত মনঃস্তব্ধিক দিশবোৰ সমাজত নাৰীৰ স্থানকে ধৰি নাৰীৰ সহজ-সৰল মন, পৰম্পৰাগত আৰু প্ৰতিবাদী নাৰীৰ মনক সমাজৰ আগত দাঙি ধৰিবলৈ সক্ষম হোৱাৰ লগতে গল্পসমূহৰ

কাহিনীৰ বিকাশতো মুখ্য ভূমিকা লৈছে।

১.০৩.০১ নিৰ্বাচিত গল্পকেইটাত প্ৰতিফলিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ

বেজবৰুৱাৰ নিৰ্বাচিত গল্পসমূহত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধৰ প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। নাৰীৰ মনঃস্তব্ধৰ প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। নাৰীৰ মনঃস্তব্ধৰ প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। নাৰীৰ মনঃস্তব্ধৰ প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে।

১.০৩.০১ 'ভদৰী' গল্পত প্ৰতিফলিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ

'ভদৰী' বেজবৰুৱাৰ 'সাধুকথাৰ কুঁকি'ৰ অন্তৰ্গত এটি উল্লেখযোগ্য গল্প। গল্পটোৰ মুখ্য চৰিত্ৰ ভদৰীয়ে সহজ-সৰল পতিপ্ৰাণা ভাৰতীয় নাৰীৰ মনঃস্তব্ধকে দাঙি ধৰিছে। ভদৰীৰ চৰিত্ৰাংকন কৰোঁতে বেজবৰুৱাই নাৰী হৃদয়ৰ গভীৰতম ভাগলৈ অৰ্জুদৃষ্টি নিক্ষেপ কৰিছে আৰু অৱিস্কাৰ কৰিছে নাৰীৰ মহীয়সী ৰূপ। নাৰীৰ এই ৰূপ কষ্টাৰ্জিত ৰূপ নহয়, ই নাৰীৰ সহজাত গুণ, যিয়ে নাৰীক সকলো যন্ত্ৰণা হেলাৰঙে অতিক্ৰম কৰিবলৈ প্ৰেৰণা যোগায়।

ক্ষমশীলতা নাৰীৰ সহজাত গুণ। ভদৰী চৰিত্ৰত নাৰীৰ এই মানসিকতা প্ৰকাশ পাইছে। ভদৰীৰ স্বামী শিশুৰামে সময়ত ভাত নাপাই ভদৰীক কৰা শাৰীৰিক অত্যাচাৰৰ পিছতো ভদৰীয়ে সেইবোৰ পাহৰি হাস্পাতালৰ বিছনাত থাকিও স্বামীৰ খোৱা-লোৱাৰ খবৰ লৈছে। সেই কথাক প্ৰকাশ পাইছে নিম্ন সলোপটিৰ পৰা -

"ভদৰীঃ (শিশুৰামৰ ফালে চাই) তোমাৰ গা কেনে আছে? অৰ্জি ভাত খালানে? তোমাৰ ভাত-পানী খোৱাত মহা দুখ হৈছে চাইগে?"

ইয়াৰ দ্বাৰা গাঁৱৰ সহজ-সৰল মনৰ ভদৰীৰ ক্ষমশীল মানসিকতাৰ লগতে পতি প্ৰেমো প্ৰকাশ পাইছে।

ভাৰতীয় নাৰীৰ মানসিকতাত স্বামীৰ দোষৰ বাবে শাস্তি দিয়া বা প্ৰতিশোধ লোৱাৰ প্ৰৱণতা দেখা নাযায়। বেজবৰুৱাই ভদৰীৰ মাজেৰে এই মানসিকতাৰ প্ৰতিফলন ঘটাইছে।

১.০৩.০২ 'পাতমুগী' গল্পত প্ৰতিফলিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ

'পাতমুগী' গল্পৰ প্ৰধান নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ পাতমুগীয়ে নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধৰ এক উজ্জ্বল দিশ বহন কৰিছে। পাতমুগী চৰিত্ৰটোত বহুসাময় নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধৰ দিশটো প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। নাৰীৰ নিদিষ্ট একোটা শাৰীৰিক ভংগীয়ে যিকোনো পুৰুষৰ মতিভ্ৰম ঘটাব পাৰে। তাৰে এক জলন্ত উদাহৰণ পাতমুগী। অন্যহাতে শিক্ষিত হওঁক বা অশিক্ষিত হওঁক নাৰী যি পুৰুষৰ মানসিক আৰু চাৰিত্ৰিক দুৰ্বলতা অনুভৱ কৰিব পৰা অনন্য সংবেদনশীলতাৰ অধিকাৰী, তাৰ এক কলাত্মক প্ৰকাশ হ'ল পাতমুগী। পাতমুগী নিজৰ কথাই ইয়াৰ প্ৰমাণ -

"(উকীলৰ কথাক প্ৰত্যুত্তৰত) :

- 'তেন্তে কিয় আহিছিল?'

- 'গোটাডিয়েক কথাক প্ৰমাণ চাবলৈ।'

- 'কি কথাক?'

- পুৰুষজাতিৰ প্ৰবঞ্চনা, নিষ্ঠুৰতা আৰু দুৰ্বলতাৰ - প্ৰমাণ পালিনে?

- পালোঁ

- ক'ত

- আগেয়েও পাইছিলোঁ, এতিয়াও পালোঁ।"

পাতমুগীৰ মাজেৰে লিখক বেজবৰুৱাই নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধৰ এক অতি বৈচিত্ৰপূৰ্ণ দিশ সুন্দৰকৈ দাঙি ধৰিছে এনেদৰে - "পুৰুষক জয় কৰাৰ আনন্দ তিৰোতাই লুকুৱাব নোৱাৰে। তেহেঁলে পুৰুষজন যেনেই নহওক।"

১.০৩.০৩ 'ললিতী কাকতী' গল্পত প্ৰকাশিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ

লক্ষ্মীনাথ বেজবৰুৱাৰ নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধৰ দলিল স্বৰূপ আন এটা গল্প হৈছে 'ললিতী কাকতী'। বিবাহিত নাৰীৰ এক বিশেষ মনঃস্তব্ধ এই গল্পৰ মূল চৰিত্ৰ ললিতী কাকতীৰ মাজেৰে স্পষ্টকৈ দাঙি ধৰা হৈছে। নাৰীয়ে পত্নী হিচাপে স্বামীৰ শাৰীৰিক শাস্তি তথা গালি-গালাজ হয়তো নিৰ্বিবাদে সহ্য কৰিব পাৰে; কিন্তু স্বামীয়ে অন্য তিৰোতাক পত্নী কৰি অনাটো আত্মসন্মানবোধ থকা কোনো নাৰীয়ে

সহ্য কৰিব নোৱাৰে। কাৰণ সেয়া তেওঁৰ নাৰীত্বৰ অপমান আৰু পত্নীত্বৰ অমৰ্যদা। নাৰীত্বৰ অপমানে এগৰাকী নাৰীৰ মাজত এক প্ৰতিবাদী কণ্ঠৰ জন্ম দিয়ে। যিয়ে তথাকথিত সমাজৰ নীতি-নৈতিকতাক প্ৰত্যাহ্বান জনাব পাৰে। তেতিয়াই যিকোনো নাৰীয়ে পুৰুষসৃষ্ট নীতি-নিয়ম, পৰম্পৰা তথা আইনৰ যথার্থতা সম্পৰ্কে প্ৰশ্ন উত্থাপন কৰে। বেজবৰুৱাই ললিতী কাকতীৰ মাজত নাৰীৰ এই প্ৰতিবাদী মানসিকতাৰ এক সফলস্বৰূপ ঘটাইছে এনেদৰে -

"পুৰুষে তিৰোতাক স্বভাৱ চৰিত্ৰ নিৰ্মল

হৈ থাকিবৰ নিমিত্তে দেখোন বৰ কটকটীয়া বিধি বিধান দিয়ে। কিন্তু তেওঁলোকৰ নিজৰ ফালে তেনে বিধি বিধানবোৰ টিলা, সোলোকা কৰি লয় নেকি? তেওঁলোকে তিৰোতাক পৰা যেনে নিৰ্মল শুদ্ধ চৰিত্ৰ বিচাৰে, তিৰোতাইও তেওঁলোকৰ পৰা তেনে বিচাৰিব নোৱাৰে কিয়?"

এনেদৰে 'ললিতী কাকতী' গল্পটোত নাৰী মানসিকতাৰ বিশেষকৈ প্ৰতিবাদী মনঃস্তব্ধ প্ৰকাশ পাইছে।

১.০৩.০৪ 'সেউতী' গল্পত প্ৰকাশিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ

বৈচিত্ৰময় নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধৰ প্ৰতিফলন ঘটাইছে বেজবৰুৱাৰ আন এটা উল্লেখযোগ্য গল্প 'সেউতী'ত। গল্পটোত এজনী ৯ বছৰীয়া কিশোৰীক সমাজত প্ৰচলিত নিয়ম পালনৰ অৰ্থে বিয়া দি কিদৰে এক মানসিক যন্ত্ৰণাৰ দিশলৈ ঠেলি দিয়া হৈছিল তাৰ স্পষ্ট আভাস পোৱা গৈছে। বেজবৰুৱাৰ এই গল্পত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধৰ সহনশীলতা গুণ প্ৰকাশ পাইছে, লগতে বাল্যবিবাহৰ ফলত ভৱিষ্যত কালত নাৰী গৰাকীয়ে কেনেকুৱা মানসিক অৱস্থাৰ সন্মুখীন হয় তাৰ প্ৰকাশ ঘটাইছে। সেউতীয়ে স্বামীৰ দ্বিতীয় বিবাহৰ পাছতো স্বামীগৃহলৈ পুনৰ উভতি যাবলৈ বিচাৰোতে সেউতীৰ মানসিক দিশটো প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। সেউতীয়ে স্বামী গৃহত লাঞ্ছনা-বঞ্চনা সহ্য কৰি থকাৰ পৰাই তেওঁৰ সহনশীলতাৰ মনোভাৱ ফুটি উঠিছে। গল্পটোত এফালে

ভাৰতীয় নাৰীৰ পতিৰ প্ৰতি থকা আন্তৰিক প্ৰেম আৰু আনফালে ভাগ্যক ধিয়াই সকলো দুখ কষ্ট স্বীকাৰ কৰিবলৈ প্ৰস্তুত থকাৰ পৰা এগৰাকী পৰম্পৰাগত নাৰীৰ মনঃস্তব্ধ ফুটি উঠিছে। তদুপৰি শেষত স্বামীৰ সৈতে গোপন মিলন আৰু সুখ-দুখৰ আদান প্ৰদানে সেউতীৰ নৰকো স্বৰ্গ হোৱা বুলি থকা উল্লেখৰ পৰা সেউতীৰ পতিপ্ৰাণা মনৰ লগতে প্ৰেম ব্যাকুল মনটোৰ উমান পোৱা যায়।

সেউতী গল্পটোত প্ৰধান নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ সেউতীৰ বাহিৰেও আৰু দুটা নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ আছে - সেউতীৰ শাখৰেক আৰু বাইশাখৰেক। গল্পকাৰে এই দুটা নাৰী চৰিত্ৰৰ মনঃস্তব্ধক দিশবোৰ প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে। এই চৰিত্ৰ দুটাই সেউতীক ভাতৰ লগত বিহ মিহলাই হত্যা কৰাৰ পৰা তেওঁলোকৰ ঘৃণনীয় মানসিক দিশটো প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। হিংসা আৰু ঘৃণাৰ বাবেই যে হত্যাৰ দৰে চৰম অপৰাধ কৰিবলৈকো তেওঁলোকে কৃষ্ঠাবোধ কৰা নাই, ই নাৰী মনৰ এক ব্যতিক্ৰম মনঃস্তব্ধৰ পৰিচয় দিয়ে।

১.০৩.০৫ 'কন্যা' গল্পত প্ৰতিফলিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ

বেজবৰুৱাৰ গল্পত জনজাতীয় নাৰীয়ে এক গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ ভূমিকা পালন কৰিছিল। তেখেতৰ 'কন্যা' গল্পৰ মুখ্য নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ হ'ল জনজাতীয় গাভৰু। বেজবৰুৱাৰ জনজাতীয় সমাজ জীৱনৰ লগত থকা প্ৰত্যয় সংযোগে এই চৰিত্ৰটোৰ মানসিক অৱস্থা উপলব্ধি কৰাত বিশেষ সুবিধা প্ৰদান কৰিছে। গল্পটোত কৃষকৰ কোল গাভৰু গৰাকীৰ মাজেদি জনজাতীয় নাৰীৰ নিৰ্ভাঁজ প্ৰেমৰ মানসিকতাৰ প্ৰতিফলন ঘটোৱা হৈছে। গল্পকাৰৰ মতে তাই কন্যা নৈৰ পাৰলৈ অহা সেই ল'ৰাটোৰ সৈতে প্ৰেম বিনিময় বা প্ৰেমালাপ কৰি পোৱা নাই। অথচ পানী আনিবলৈ যোৱাৰ চলেৰে আবেলিৰ পৰা সন্ধ্যা ভাঙি যোৱালৈকে তাই মাটিৰ কলহটোকে ধুই ধুই ল'ৰাটোৰ চকুত চকু থয়। কন্যা নৈৰ সিপাৰে বৰশী বাই থকা প্ৰেমাস্পদৰো একেই দশা। কিন্তু প্ৰেমাস্পদৰ আকস্মিক মৃত্যুৰ পাছত কোল গাভৰুৱে শোক সহিব নোৱাৰি আত্মহননৰ পথ বাছি লয়। ইয়াৰ দ্বাৰা নাৰী গৰাকীৰ সৰল মনৰ নিৰ্ভাঁজ প্ৰেমৰ লগতে

আত্মহননৰ দৰে চৰম পথ বাছি লোৱাৰ কথাই নাৰীৰ দুৰ্বল মানসিকতাও প্ৰতিফলিত কৰিছে।

১.০৩.০৬ 'জলকুঁৱৰী' গল্পত প্ৰতিফলিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ কাব্যিকতাৰ খাতিৰত নদী আৰু নাৰীক বহু সময়ত একে শাৰীতে ধৰা হয়। হয়তো নদীৰ যেনেদৰে সকলো জেং জাবৰ ধাৰণ আৰু বহনৰ ক্ষমতা আছে, ঠিক তেনেদৰে নাৰীৰো বহন ক্ষমতাৰ তুলনা নাই। নদী যেনেদৰে ৰোমান্টিক, নাৰীও তেনেদৰে ৰোমান্টিক; নদীয়ে যিদৰে প্ৰকৃতিৰ কোলাত নাচি-বাগি আপোন মনে বৈ যায়, ঠিক সেইদৰে প্ৰকৃতিৰ অনন্য সন্তান নাৰীয়েও প্ৰকৃতিৰ সৈতে এক গভীৰ একাত্মতা অনুভৱ কৰে যাক বিছিন্ন কৰিবলৈ নাৰীৰ বৰ কষ্ট হয়। 'জলকুঁৱৰী' গল্পত বেজবৰুৱাই নদী-নাৰীৰ এই একাত্মতাক বৰ ইংগিতপূৰ্ণভাৱে প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে, লগতে নাৰীৰ সৌন্দৰ্য পিপাসী মনৰ সতে প্ৰাত্যাহিকতাৰ সংঘাতৰ প্ৰতিফলন ঘটাইছে এনেদৰে -

“এই চাকনৈয়াত এজনী ছোৱালী এতিয়াই বুৰি মৰিল। মই মইনা চৰাই: মোক সজাত সুমাই থোৱাওঁ, লৈ ব'লা।”

প্ৰতিগৰাকী নাৰীৰ মাজত যে এটা সৌন্দৰ্য-পিপাসী মুক্ত মন থাকে, যিয়ে সংসাৰ বান্ধনত বান্ধ খোৱাৰ আগতে এবাৰ থমকি বয়; তাৰেই ইংগিত বহন কৰে কপাহী নৈৰ পাৰত আপোন পাহৰা হোৱা সেই গাভৰু গৰাকীয়ে।

১.০৩.০৭ 'ভোকেন্দ্র বৰুৱা' গল্পত প্ৰতিফলিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ

নাৰী মনৰ মমতাময়ী মনঃস্তব্ধ প্ৰতিফলিত হোৱা বেজবৰুৱাৰ এটা উল্লেখযোগ্য গল্প হৈছে 'ভোকেন্দ্র বৰুৱা'। সহজ-সৰল মনৰ আৰু কোনো ধৰণৰ জটিলতাৰ আও-ভাও নোপোৱা নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ জেতুকীৰ মনঃস্তব্ধ দিশটো গল্পটোত সুন্দৰকৈ প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। মাতৃৰূপে নাৰীৰ সৰল মন সন্তানৰ স্নেহেৰে ভৰা। ভোকেন্দ্রৰ উচ্চাকাংক্ষাৰ প্ৰকৃতি দেখি পিতৃৰ খং উঠিছে যদিও মাতৃৰ

সৰল মনে তাতো ইতিবাচক অৰ্থ বিচাৰি পাই মৰমত পমি গৈছে।

নাৰী মনৰ এটা উল্লেখযোগ্য মনঃস্তব্ধ দিশ হৈছে ঈশ্বৰৰ প্ৰতি থকা অগাধ ভক্তি আৰু বিশ্বাস। জেতুকী চৰিত্ৰৰ উক্ত মনঃস্তব্ধ গল্পটোত তলৰ বাক্যটোৰ দ্বাৰা প্ৰকাশ পাইছে -

“মই দিনো-গোসাঁইক খাটি আছোঁ, সেইদেখি তাৰ ভাল হৈছে। তাৰ হকে আমাৰ আতাৰ থানত মই পাল নাম এভাগি গোৱাবলৈকো আগ কৰি থৈছোঁ।”

ইয়াৰ দ্বাৰা 'ভোকেন্দ্র বৰুৱা' গল্পত জেতুকীয়ে সমগ্ৰ অশিক্ষিতা গাঁৱলীয়া তথা মমতাময়ী মাতৃৰ মনঃস্তব্ধক প্ৰতিনিধিত্ব কৰিছে, লগতে নাৰী মনৰ সহজাত লক্ষণ ভক্তিপৰায়ণতা ফুটাই তুলিছে।

১.০৩.০৮ 'জগৰামগুৰুৰ প্ৰেমাভিনয়' গল্পত প্ৰকাশিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ

'জগৰামগুৰুৰ প্ৰেমাভিনয়' গল্পটোত বেজবৰুৱাৰ দৃষ্টিত সহজ-সৰল গ্ৰাম্য তিৰোতাৰ প্ৰকৃতি ধৰা পৰিছে। এই হাস্যমধুৰ গল্পত জগৰামগুৰুৰ পত্নী হিচাপে জগৰামগুৰুৰ সাংসাৰিক বুদ্ধি বৃত্তিৰে পৰিচালিত হোৱা শিল্প-সাহিত্যৰ আও-ভাও নোপোৱা সাধাৰণ পতিপ্ৰাণা গ্ৰাম্য তিৰোতাৰ মানসিকতা ফুটি উঠিছে।

১.০৩.০৯ 'বতন মুণ্ডা' গল্পত প্ৰতিফলিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধ

সম্বলপুৰৰ জনজাতীয় সমাজৰ পটভূমিত ৰচিত 'বতন মুণ্ডা' বেজবৰুৱাৰ এটা উল্লেখযোগ্য গল্প। এগৰাকী জনজাতীয় গাভৰু 'ঝুমুৰী' চৰিত্ৰটোৰ মাজেদি বেজবৰুৱাই নাৰীৰ অলংকাৰ প্ৰীতি আৰু প্ৰেমৰ সৰলতাৰ প্ৰতীক ৰূপায়ন কৰিছে। ঝুমুৰীৰ বাহিৰেও কোলজাতিৰ অন্যান্য নাৰীসকলৰ মনঃস্তব্ধও গল্পটোত কিছু পৰিমাণে প্ৰকাশ পাইছে এনেদৰে -

“কোল তিৰোতাবিলাক ৰঙীয়াল আৰু মুকলিমুৰীয়া। সিহঁতৰ গাত হিতাহিত আৰু কৰ্তব্য-অকৰ্তব্য

বিবেচনা কৰিব পৰা এটা জ্ঞান সদায় থাকে। ইহঁতে পৰব চান মাত অলপো সহিব নোৱাৰে আৰু লোককো তেনে মাত নিদিয়৷”

ইয়াৰ দ্বাৰাই 'বতন মুণ্ডা' গল্পৰ কোল নাৰীৰ মনঃস্তব্ধ দিশৰ এটা ক্ষীণ আভাৱ পোৱা যায়।

২.০০ উপসংহাৰ

উল্লিখিত আলোচনাত লক্ষ্মীনাথ বেজবৰুৱাৰ নিৰ্বাচিত গল্পকেইটাৰ নাৰী চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ মাজত প্ৰতিফলিত মনঃস্তব্ধ অধ্যয়নৰ এক প্ৰয়াস কৰা হ'ল। বেজবৰুৱাৰ চিন্তাধাৰা সময়তকৈ যে আগবাঢ়া তাৰ প্ৰমাণ গল্পসমূহৰ মাজত প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। বেজবৰুৱাই যুগে যুগে পুৰুষে নাৰীক কৰি অহা বঞ্চনা, অন্যান্য, অত্যাচাৰৰ বিপৰীতে নাৰীৰ সহনশীলতা, ত্যাগ আৰু দুৰ্বলতাৰ চিত্ৰখন গল্পসমূহৰ মাজত সাৰ্থকভাৱে অংকন কৰিছে। বেজবৰুৱাৰ ওপৰত উল্লেখ কৰা প্ৰতিটো নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ বিশ্লেষণ কৰিলে এটা কথা দেখা যায় যে প্ৰত্যেকটো নাৰী চৰিত্ৰই সুকীয়া। কোনোবা সমাজৰ নিষ্পেষণৰ বলি হৈছে, কোনোবাই নিজৰ ত্যাগ আৰু অদৰ্শৰে নিজক উজ্জ্বল কৰি তুলিছে, কোনোবাই সাহসেৰে সমাজত চলি থকা নিষ্পেষণ, অত্যাচাৰ আৰু অন্যায়ৰ বিৰুদ্ধে বিদ্ৰোহ ঘোষণা কৰিছে আৰু কাৰোবাৰ মাজেৰে নাৰীৰ দোষ, দুৰ্বলতা প্ৰতিফলিত হৈ উঠিছে। বেজবৰুৱাৰ প্ৰতিটো নাৰী চৰিত্ৰই নাৰীৰ একোখন উজ্জ্বল চিত্ৰ। নাৰী চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ মাজেৰে বেজবৰুৱাৰ উদাৰ, যুক্তিবাদী আৰু সমাজ সংস্কাৰক মনটো প্ৰতিফলিত হৈ উঠিছে। তদুপৰি নাৰীক ইতিবাচক দৃষ্টিৰে নাৰীৰ মনৰ মমতাময়ী, সহনশীলতা, পতিব্ৰতা, অলংকাৰ প্ৰীতি আৰু নিঃস্বার্থ প্ৰেমৰ প্ৰতিফলন ঘটাইছে।

এই আলোচনাত বেজবৰুৱাৰ নিৰ্বাচিত চুটিগল্পসমূহত প্ৰতিফলিত নাৰী মনঃস্তব্ধৰ বিষয়ে অধ্যয়ন কৰা হৈছে যদিও বিষয়ৰ প্ৰয়োজনীয়তাৰ প্ৰতি লক্ষ্য ৰাখি ভৱিষ্যতে আৰু গভীৰভাৱে অধ্যয়ন কৰাৰ থল আছে।

প্ৰসঙ্গ-টোকাঃ

- (১) 'ভদৰী' গল্প, *বেজবৰুৱাৰ ৰচনাৱলী*, তৃতীয় খণ্ড, প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ, ২০১০, সম্পাদনা : নগেন শইকীয়া
- (২) 'পাতমুগী' গল্প, উল্লিখিত
- (৩) 'পাতমুগী' গল্প, উল্লিখিত
- (৪) 'ললিতী কাকতী' গল্প, উল্লিখিত
- (৫) 'জলকুঁৱৰী' গল্প, উল্লিখিত
- (৬) 'ভোকেন্দ্র বৰুৱা' গল্প, উল্লিখিত
- (৭) 'বতন মুণ্ডা' গল্প, উল্লিখিত

সহায়ক গ্ৰন্থপঞ্জীঃ

- (১) শইকীয়া, অপূৰ্ব (সম্পা.), *যুগজষ্টা বেজবৰুৱা, মনন আৰু চিন্তন*, প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ, ২০১৪
- (২) শইকীয়া, নগেন (সম্পা.), *বেজবৰুৱাৰ ৰচনাৱলী (তৃতীয় খণ্ড)*, প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ, ২০১০
- (৩) বৰুৱা, প্ৰহ্লাদ কুমাৰ, *অসমীয়া চুটিগল্পৰ অধ্যয়ন*, পুনৰ মুদ্ৰণ, ২০১৫ চন।

ভিত্তোৰীয়া নৈতিকতা, জোনাকী আলোচনী আৰু ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ শিক্ষিত মধ্যবিত্তৰ জাতীয় লজ্জা

ড° পাণবি বৰা

ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ অসমৰ ইতিহাস বিশ্লেষণ কৰিলে দেখা যায় যে বিভিন্ন ঘটনালীয়ে সেই সময়ৰ অসমৰ ৰাজনৈতিক-সামাজিক আৰু বৌদ্ধিক জীৱন অস্থিৰ কৰি ৰাখিছিল। ১৮২৬ চনত হোৱা ইয়াণ্ডাবু সন্ধিৰ চৰ্ত অনুসৰি অসমত বছৰ-বছৰ ধৰি চলি থকা সামন্তীয় ব্যৱস্থাৰ অৱসান ঘটে আৰু গণতন্ত্ৰৰ দুৱাৰ মুকলি হোৱাৰ ইংগিত দেখা পোৱা যায়। আনহাতে এই সময়তে অসমীয়া ভাষায়ে নিজৰ স্থান আৰু মৰ্যাদা হেৰুৱাবলগীয়া অৱস্থা হয়। ১৮৩৬ চনত অসমৰ স্কুল আৰু আইন-আদালত সংক্ৰান্তীয় কামৰ ক্ষেত্ৰটো অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ স্থান বাংলা ভাষা দখল কৰে। ইতিমধ্যেই অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ প্ৰৱাহৰ ধাৰাতো স্থবিৰতা আহি পৰিছিল। পূৰ্বৰ বৈষ্ণৱ সাহিত্যৰ শক্তিশালী পৰম্পৰা ধাৰক-বাহকৰ অভাৱত পৰি স্তব্ধ হৈ পৰিছিল। আনহাতে নতুনকৈ শিক্ষিত হোৱা অসমীয়া মানুহে নিজ ভাষাৰ পৰিৱৰ্তে বাংলা ভাষা ব্যৱহাৰ কৰাটোহে সন্মানৰ কথা বুলি ভাবিছিল। অসমত ইংৰাজৰ আগমনৰ আগলৈকে পৰম্পৰাগত শিক্ষা ব্যৱস্থাৰ প্ৰচলন আছিল। সেয়া হ'ল হিন্দুসকলৰ বাবে পাঠশালা, মুছলমানসকলৰ বাবে মাদ্ৰাছা, ব্ৰাহ্মণসকলৰ বাবে টোল আৰু বৈষ্ণৱসকলৰ বাবে সত্ৰ। ইংৰাজে অসম অধিকাৰ কৰাৰ পিছত ইংৰাজ গৱৰ্ণৰৰ প্ৰতিনিধি ৰূপে অসমলৈ অহা ডেভিড স্কটে অসমত শিক্ষা বিস্তাৰৰ বিষয়টো গুৰুত্ব সহকাৰে

বিবেচনা কৰে আৰু ভাৰত চৰকাৰৰ অনুমতি সাপেক্ষে তেওঁ অসমত এঘাৰখন স্কুল স্থাপন কৰে। আনহাতে চৰকাৰী সাহায্যত স্কুল স্থাপন কৰি নিম্ন শ্ৰেণীৰ লোকৰ মাজত শিক্ষা বিস্তাৰ কৰিবলৈ চৰকাৰী পৰামৰ্শ আগবঢ়োৱা হয় উদৰ ঘোষণা পত্ৰৰ যোগেদি। ইয়াৰ মাজতে অসমত কলেজ প্ৰতিষ্ঠাৰ চেষ্টা অব্যাহত থাকে যদিও ১৯০১ চনতহে গুৱাহাটীত কটন কলেজ প্ৰতিষ্ঠা হয়। ইয়াৰ আগলৈকে উচ্চ শিক্ষা লাভৰ বাবে অসমৰ ছাত্ৰসকল কলিকতালৈ যোৱাৰ বাহিৰে উপায় নাছিল। যি সময়ত ছাত্ৰসকল কলিকতাত পঢ়িবলৈ গৈছিল সেই সময় আছিল কলিকতাবাসীৰ বৌদ্ধিক আৰু সামাজিক জাগৰণৰ সময়। সেই সময়ত বংগত বিভিন্ন কলেজ-বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় আৰু আন বহু সামাজিক অনুষ্ঠান-প্ৰতিষ্ঠানে এক অভূতপূৰ্ব শৈক্ষিক-বৌদ্ধিক আৰু সামাজিক জাগৰণৰ জন্ম দিছিল। সেইবোৰ আছিল ১৮০০ খ্ৰীষ্টাব্দত আৰম্ভ হোৱা ফ'ৰ্ট উইলিয়াম কলেজ, ১৮৫৭ খ্ৰীষ্টাব্দত আৰম্ভ হোৱা কলিকতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় ১৮৭৪ খ্ৰীষ্টাব্দত আৰম্ভ হোৱা এছিয়াটিক ছোচাইটি অব বেংগল, বংগ হিতসভা, বংগ ভাষা প্ৰকাশিকা সভা আদি ভাষা সাহিত্য সমাজ বিষয়ক অনুষ্ঠান। প্ৰবাসী অসমীয়া ছাত্ৰসকলে যিমানে এই বংগীয় নৱজাগৰণৰ বেহুৰপ আৰু ইয়াৰ সুফলসমূহ প্ৰত্যক্ষ কৰিছিল সিমানে নিজৰ মাতৃভূমি, মাতৃভাষা আৰু সামাজিক দুৰৱস্থাৰ কথা উপলব্ধি কৰি ইয়াক

জাঁতৰ কৰিবৰ বাবে অনুপ্রাণিত হৈছিল। ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ অন্তিম দশকত কলিকতাত পঢ়িবলৈ যোৱা ছাত্ৰৰ সংখ্যা বৃদ্ধি পাইছিল। কলিকতাৰ বিভিন্ন ঠাইত মেছ কৰি থকা ছাত্ৰসকল আছিল হেমচন্দ্ৰ গোস্বামী, কনকলাল বৰুৱা, বমাকান্ত বৰকাকতি, বেনুধৰ ৰাজখোৱা, গুঞ্জানন বৰুৱা, পদ্মনাথ গোহাঞি বৰুৱা, আনন্দ চন্দ্ৰ আগৰৱালা, দুৰ্গা প্ৰসাদ মজিন্দাৰ বৰুৱা, সত্যনাথ বৰা, লম্বোদৰ বৰা, সোণাৰাম চৌধুৰী, চন্দ্ৰধৰ বৰুৱা, বাধানাথ ফুকন, বজ্জীকান্ত বৰদলৈ, দেৱেশ্বৰ চলিহা, কমলচন্দ্ৰ শৰ্মা, আব্দুল মজিদ, ৰাধাকান্ত সন্দিকৈ, লক্ষ্মীনাথ বেজবৰুৱা, চন্দ্ৰ কুমাৰ আগৰৱালা (এওঁ ব্যৱসায় সূত্ৰে ১০ নং আৰ্মেনিয়ান ষ্ট্ৰীটত থকা তেওঁলোকৰ নিজা ঘৰত থাকিছিল) আদি। ড° নগেন শইকীয়াই *জোনাকী* আলোচনীৰ একত্ৰ সংকলনৰ ভূমিকাত উল্লেখ কৰা 'আধুনিক অসমীয়া ভাষা আৰু সাহিত্যৰ নৱজাগৰণক এটা বিশিষ্ট চৰিত্ৰ দান কৰি ইয়াক দ্ৰুততৰ কৰি তোলা শৰাইঘটিয়া সকল' এই সকলোই। এওঁলোকৰ উদ্যোগতে মাতৃভাষাৰ উন্নতি সাধনৰ জৰিয়তে মাতৃভূমিৰ কল্যাণৰ পথ প্ৰশস্ত কৰিব বিচৰা অসমীয়া ভাষা উন্নতি সাধিনী সভা (১৮৮৮) আৰু এই সভাৰ মুখপত্ৰ স্বৰূপ *জোনাকী* আলোচনী (১৮৮৯ চনৰ ৯ ফেব্ৰুৱাৰী)ৰ জন্ম। এইখিনি পটভূমি অৱতাৰণাৰ কাৰণ মূল বিষয়ৰ প্ৰসংগ সংগতি প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰাহে।

জোনাকী যুগীয় লেখকসকলৰ জাতীয়তাবাদ, জাতীয় চেতনা সম্পৰ্কে আৰু এই চেতনাৰ স্বৰূপ সম্পৰ্কে সততে প্ৰশ্নৰ সন্মুখীন হোৱা যায়। ভাষিক চেতনা আৰু জাতীয়তাবাদ একে নহয়। মোৰ মতে অতি সৰলকৈ ক'লে ভাষিক জাতীয় চেতনাৰ সম্পৰ্ক মাতৃভাষা প্ৰীতিৰ সৈতে আৰু জাতীয়তাবাদৰ সম্পৰ্ক সমাজ-সংস্কৃতিৰ সৈতে যাক আমি জাতি-মাটি-ভেটি বুলি সৰলীকৰণ কৰি

লৈছেহক। এতিয়া কথা হ'ল অসমীয়াৰ মনত ভাষিক জাতীয় চেতনা গঢ়ি তুলিলে 'অৰুণোদই' কাকতে। জাতীয় চেতনা বা জাতীয়তাবাদ কোনে আনিলে? *জোনাকী* আলোচনীয়ে নেকি? ভাষিক জাতীয়তাবাদ অন্তঃসলিলা হৈ *জোনাকী*ৰ মাজেৰেও বৈ আছিল। ভাষা-সাহিত্যৰ উন্নতি বিষয়ক অনেক প্ৰবন্ধ *জোনাকী*ৰ পাতত প্ৰকাশ হৈছিল। কিন্তু কবিতা, গল্প, সাহিত্য সমালোচনা, উপন্যাস, নাটক, ব্যংগ ৰচনা আদি নতুন নতুন সাহিত্যিক বিধা সৃষ্টিৰ জৰিয়তে অসমীয়া সাহিত্যক সমৃদ্ধিৰ দিশেৰে আগুৱাই নিয়াহে তেওঁলোকৰ মূল লক্ষ্য আছিল। জাতি-মাটি-ভেটিৰ প্ৰতি তেওঁলোকৰ দৃষ্টি সেয়েহে দুৰণিবটীয়া বুলি কৈছোঁ। হয়, কলিকতাত ওলোৱা *জোনাকী* অসমতে পঢ়িছিল। অসমৰ মানুহেই ক্ৰয় কৰিছিল। কিন্তু কি ক্ৰয় কৰিছিল? এক - ৰোমান্টিচিজম দুই- ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ অসমীয়া লেখকৰ জাতীয় লজ্জা। তাত *জোনাকী*ৰ লেখকসকলৰ দোষ নিচেই তাকৰ। কাৰণ তেওঁলোকে আৰম্ভণিতে ৰাজনীতি আমাৰ ৰাজ্যৰ বাহিৰ, এই পৰাধীন দেশত প্ৰজানীতিহে ধৰিবলগীয়া বুলি নিষ্কটক হৈ লৈছে। কাজেই পৰিৱৰ্তিত ৰাজনৈতিক অৰ্থনৈতিক গাঁঠনিতে সমাজত সৃষ্টি কৰা সমস্যা, সংঘাত, কৃষকৰ আন্দোলন, গণবিপ্লৱ, বৃটিছৰ আগ্ৰাসী মনোভাৱে অসমীয়া মানুহৰ মনৰ মাজত দৃঢ় কৰি অনা বিপ্লৱী চেতনাৰ কোনো উমঘামেই জোনাকীযুগীয় শিক্ষিত অসমীয়া লেখকৰ কলমত দেখা নগ'ল। ইংৰাজ গবৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ দুৰাৰত মুৰ খুন্দিয়াইহে অসম আৰু অসমীয়াৰ সমস্যাসমূহ সমাধান কৰিব পাৰি বুলি এক দৃঢ় বিশ্বাস তেওঁলোকে পোষণ কৰিছিল। ৰমাকান্ত বৰকাকতিয়ে অঃ ভাঃ উঃ সাঃ সভাৰ অন্তিম বছৰৰ কাৰ্য বিৱৰণীত লিখিছে— ইংৰাজ গবৰ্ণমেণ্ট সুসভ্য খ্ৰীষ্টিয়ান, দয়ালু আৰু তেওঁবিলাক দুৰাৰত খুন্দিয়াবা দুৱাৰ মুকলি হ'ব। (knock at the

door and it will open) এই মহামন্ত্ৰৰ বশ। আমি দুৱাৰ মুকলি নহয় মানে খুন্দিয়াবলৈ এবিধ নালাগে।^২

ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ শিক্ষিত মধ্যবিত্তৰ জাতীয় লজ্জাৰ দুটা ঘাই কাৰক আছিল অসমীয়াৰ বুকুৰ আগমণ্ডহ যেন বিহু আৰু অসমীয়া জাতিৰ শ্ৰেষ্ঠ পথ প্ৰদৰ্শক মহাপুৰুষ শ্ৰীমন্ত শংকৰদেৱ। বিহুক গৰিহনা দি আৰু শংকৰদেৱৰ সৃষ্টিৰাজিক সমালোচনা কৰি লিখা কেইবাখনো বচনা জোনাকীৰ পাতত প্ৰকাশ হোৱা দেখা যায়। সেই সময়ত বংগ দেশত গা কৰি উঠা ভিক্টোৰিয়া নৈতিকতাৰ প্ৰভাৱৰ ফলতে কিছু সংখ্যক নব্যশিক্ষিত অসমীয়াৰ এনে ধাৰণা গঢ় লৈ উঠে। সেই সময়ত মহাৰাণী ভিক্টোৰিয়াৰ আদেশত শৃংগাৰ বসাত্মক ছবি থকা কিতাপ প্ৰকাশ কৰাটো দণ্ডনীয় অপৰাধ বুলি ভাৰতত আইন প্ৰণয়ন কৰা হৈছিল।^৩

অসমীয়া সাহিত্যিকৰ কলমত মহাৰাণী ভিক্টোৰিয়া আছিল ভাৰত ঈশ্বৰী আৰু তেওঁলোকে খোদ নিজে প্ৰিন্স এলবাৰ্ট ভিক্টৰৰ দাসী। কমলাকান্ত ভট্টাচাৰ্যৰ ভিক্টোৰিয়া ভক্তি আৰু বৃটিছ প্ৰেম আছিল অধিক চকুত পৰা। উদাহৰণ স্বৰূপে প্ৰিন্স এলবাৰ্ট ভিক্টৰৰ আদৰ্শ কবিতাটি পঢ়ি চাব পাৰি—

মনুমেন্ট ওপৰৰ চাৰিপিনে মেৰে
ব্ৰিটেনিয়া মুকুটটি হেন শোভা কৰে।
হৰষ চিত্তেৰে যেন সদয় ভাৱত
ভাৰত ঈশ্বৰী থিয় আছেহি সাক্ষাৎ

....

আহাঁ যুৱৰাজ আহাঁ দাসীৰ কোলালৈ
মন চোঁচা কৰোঁ চাই এবাৰ মুখলৈ^৪

মহাৰাণীৰ প্ৰতি এনে অচলাভক্তি থকা কমলাকান্ত ভট্টাচাৰ্যই সেয়ে ভিক্টোৰিয়া নৈতিকতাৰ

কটুৰ সমৰ্থক হিচাবে বিহুক লৈ নাক কটাৰ সমান লাজ পাইছিল। তেওঁ লিখিছে—

বিহু এটা আমাৰ বৰ
বেয়া সংস্কাৰ আছে। পৈত্ৰিক
সংস্কাৰ বুলি বেয়া বিলাকক বখা
কোনোমতে বিধি নহয়। যিবোৰ
সংস্কাৰ বা অভ্যাসে আমাৰ
জাতীয় চৰিত্ৰ বা জীৱনক
কলংকিত কৰে সেইবিলাক বৰ
অপকাৰী, তাক ওচাবলৈ
শিক্ষিতসকলে প্ৰাণ পৰিশ্ৰমে যত্ন
কৰে। বিহুৰ ছবিটো আঁকি এবাৰ
চকুৰ আগত উলিয়ালে কেনে
নাক কটাৰ সমান লাজে ধৰে,
শিক্ষিত ডেকাসকল এবাৰ ভাবি
চোৱাচোন, বিদেশী বিলাকে বিহু
দেখি আমাক বৰ নিন্দা কৰে।
আৰু অসমৰ তিবোতাৰ সতীত্বৰ
বিষয়ে সজাত নেমানে।^৫

কমলাকান্ত ভট্টাচাৰ্যৰ প্ৰবন্ধটোৰ পৰা এটা
কথা স্পষ্ট হয় যে পুৰণিচামৰ বুকুৰ আপোন বাপতি
সাহোন বিহুৰ নাচ-গীতৰ পৰম্পৰাক তেওঁ অসমীয়াৰ
চৰিত্ৰৰ দুৰ্বলতা বুলি ধৰিছিল।

সভ্য জাতিৰ নাচ-গান
আৰু অসমৰ বিহুকো কল্পনাৰে
দুজনী ছোৱালী সাজি চকুৰ
আগত থিয় কৰিলে দেখা যায়
আগৰজনীয়ে যেনে সুন্দৰ
কাপোৰ কানি আৰু অলংকাৰ
পিন্ধি কাণত মিঠা লগা গীত গাই
থিৰ ভাৱেৰে নাচিছে, শেষৰ জনী

(বিহু) কুৰুপা আৰু নাস্ততহৈ
দেওদি ফুৰিছে। সঁচাকৈয়ে বিহুত
যেনে নিলাজ কথাবোৰ বকে,
শুনিলেই কাণত হাত শ্ৰীবিষুও
সুঁৱৰি পলাব লাগে।^৬

মন কৰিবলগীয়া যে ভট্টাচাৰ্যই কোৱাৰ দৰে
সেই সময়ৰ অসমীয়া যুৱতী নাঙঠ আৰু কুৰুপা
বেশেৰে বিহুলৈ যোৱাৰ কোনো সাক্ষ্য নাই। আ-
অলংকাৰ, মুগাৰ সাজেৰে সজ্জিতা অসমীয়া গাভৰুক
'নাঙঠ' বোলাটো তেওঁৰ নিজৰটো হীন আৰু আনৰটো
শ্ৰেষ্ঠ বুলি ভবা জাতীয় লজ্জাৰেই চিন। গুণাভিৰাম
বৰুৱাৰো বিহু বিৱাগ আছিল যদিও 'সৌমাৰ ভ্ৰমণ'ত
তেওঁ প্ৰাসংগিক ভাৱে গছ তল বা নদীৰ পাৰত গোৱা
বিহুৰ বিষয়ে নিৰপেক্ষ মন্তব্য আগবঢ়াইছে।

পাঠকসকলে নগাঁৱৰ
বিহুৰ কথা শুনিব পায়। এই
পুৰণিওদাম আৰু খাগৰীজানৰ
মাজতে বাগদীয়া আৰু
পটীয়াবালি নামে কলেঙ্গৰ
দাঁতিত দুখন ঠাই আছে, তাতেই
বহাগৰ বিহুৰ সময়ত ডেকা-
ডেকেৰী সকলে গৈ ঢোল আৰু
টকা বজাই নাচে। এই আমোদ
পূৰ্বে অতি প্ৰবল আছিল—
ইমানয়ে গুৱাহাটী গৰগাঁৱৰ পৰা
মানুহ আহি বিহু চাইছিল।^৭

গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱাই ইয়াৰ পূৰ্বে কিন্তু তেওঁৰ
'আসাম বুৰঞ্জী' গ্ৰন্থত বিহু সম্পৰ্কে বিৰূপ মন্তব্য দাঙি
ধৰিছিল— চৈত্ৰৰ বিহুত সংক্ৰান্তিৰ সাত দিন কোনো
ঠাইৰ ইতৰ লোকসকলে স্ত্ৰী-পুৰুষ কোনো প্ৰকাশ্য
স্থানলৈ গৈ নৃত্য কৰে। সেই সময়ত অবাচ্য আৰু

অশ্লীল গীত গোৱা আৰু নিৰ্জজ ভাৱ-ভঙ্গী দেখুৱা
হয়। এইটো নিয়ম ওচিলে বৰ উপকাৰ আৰু সুনীতি
সংস্থাপন হয়।^৮

ন-শিক্ষিত ডেকাচামৰ বিহু বিৱাগত
গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱাৰ প্ৰভাৱ থকাৰ কথাও নুই কৰিব
নোৱাৰি। প্ৰৱন্ধতে ক্ষান্ত নাথাকি কমলাকান্ত ভট্টাচাৰ্যই
কবিতাও লিখিছিল—

বিহুৰ গীতবোৰ বৰ লাজ-অভাঙ্গ,
ভয় হয় সতীৰোবা কৰে মতিভ্ৰম।^৯

গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱাৰ সাহিত্যিক প্ৰভাৱৰ দ্বাৰা
ৰত্নেশ্বৰ মহন্ত, হেমচন্দ্ৰ গোস্বামী আদি ডেকা সাহিত্যিক
সকল প্ৰভাৱিত হোৱাৰ কথা যজ্ঞেশ্বৰ শৰ্মাই উল্লেখ
কৰিছে—

সেই সময়ত নগাঁৱত স্বৰ্গীয় গুণাভিৰাম
বৰুৱাৰ সাহিত্যিক প্ৰভাৱৰ ফলত এদল ডেকা
সাহিত্যিক সৃষ্টি হৈছিল। তাৰ ভিতৰত হেম গোঁসাই
আৰু ৰত্নেশ্বৰ মহন্ত এই দুজন অসমৰ ডেকা সাহিত্যিক
সমাজত চকুত লগা হৈ পৰিছিল।^{১০}

মন কৰিবলগীয়া যে কেৱল অসমতে নহয়
সেই সময়ত সমগ্ৰ ভাৰততে বৃটিছ অনুগত শ্ৰেণী এটা
গঢ়লৈ উঠিছিল। কিন্তু আনন্দৰাম ঢেকিয়াল ফুকনকে
ধৰি এচাম লোকৰ ঔপনিৱেশিক শাসনৰ প্ৰতি সমৰ্থন
যোগোৱা কথাই তেওঁৰ বৃটিছ আনুগত্যক নহয়,
আধুনিক ঐতিহ্যৰ প্ৰতি তেওঁৰ আনুগত্যকহে বুজাই
বুলি বহু সমালোচকে ক'ব খোজে।

শংকৰদেৱ আৰু তেওঁৰ সৃষ্টিৰাজি তথা এক
শক্তিশালী সাংস্কৃতিক পৰম্পৰাকো ঊনৈশ শতকীয়া
শিক্ষিত অসমীয়া সাহিত্যিকে যুক্তিৰ তুলাচনীত
তুলিছিল। ৰত্নেশ্বৰ মহন্তই জোনাকীৰ পাতত 'ভাৱনা'
শীৰ্ষক এক সুদীৰ্ঘ বচনাত ভাওনাৰ কেইবাটাও দিশৰ
প্ৰতি স্পষ্ট আপত্তি তুলিছে।

শংকৰদেৱৰ অনুগ্রহত আমাৰ দেশত বহুত নাটক আছে। গতিকেই ভাৱনাবোৰে প্ৰচাৰ বেচি। কিন্তু সেই নাটকবিলাক এনে ভাষাত ৰচিত যে বহুত ঠাইত গ্ৰন্থকৰ্তাৰ মনৰ ভাৱ বুজি উঠাই টান আৰু তাৰ কাৰ্যবিলাকো বৰ অসঙ্গত।^{১১}

ভাষা আৰু কাৰ্যৰ পিছত আহিল ভাওনাৰ অবিচ্ছেদ্য অংগ গীত-নৃত্যৰ কথা। লেখকৰ মতে ভাওনাত সূত্ৰধাৰীৰ নাচোনৰো দৰকাৰ নাই বা কৃষ্ণ বা ৰামৰ নাচোন-বাগোনৰো দৰকাৰ নাই—

আমাৰ অসমীয়া ভাৱনাত পৰি ৰামচন্দ্ৰৰ জগত অনুকৰণীয় আলোক-সামান্য সহন গুণ, প্ৰশান্ত মূৰ্তি, সোম এহিবিলাকো নাচোনতহে পৰিছে।^{১২}

একেটা প্ৰবন্ধতে তেওঁ ভাওনাত বহু চৰিত্ৰৰ উপস্থাপনক অমৃতত গৰল মিলোৱাৰ লগত তুলনা কৰি বহুবাৰ বহুৱালিত জাত যোৱা হেন অনুভৱ কৰা বুলি উল্লেখ কৰিছে। উল্লেখযোগ্য যে ভাওনাঘৰত পুৰুষ আৰু মহিলাৰ বহাৰ স্থান বেলেগ বেলেগ কৰিব লাগে বুলিও তেওঁ যুক্তি দিছে।^{১৩}

অনহাতে ‘জোনাকী’ৰ তৃতীয়ভাগ পঞ্চম সংখ্যাত হেমচন্দ্ৰ গোস্বামীয়েও ‘অসমীয়া ভাষা’ শীৰ্ষক প্ৰবন্ধত শংকৰদেৱৰ সাহিত্যৰাজিক সমালোচনা কৰিছে। শংকৰদেৱে ৰচনা কৰা কীৰ্তন পুথিৰ দুটা অধ্যায়ক তেওঁ কীৰ্তনৰ গাত দুডোখৰ চেকা বুলিহে উল্লেখ কৰিছে। গোস্বামীয়ে লিখিছে— তেওঁৰ (শংকৰদেৱৰ) কীৰ্তন জোনত “হৰমোহন” আৰু “ৰাসলীলা” এই দুডোখৰ বৰ ডাঙৰ চেকা।^{১৪}

গোস্বামীৰ এই আক্ষেপৰ মূলতেও আছিল ভিজোৰীয়া নৈতিকতাৰ প্ৰভাৱ। অৱশ্যে শিক্ষা-দীক্ষাত পিছপৰা আৰু প্ৰেমময় ভকতিৰ অৰ্থ নুবুজা অসমীয়াক প্ৰেমেৰে ভক্তি শিকাবলৈ যোৱা অনুচিত বুলি তেওঁ যুক্তি দিছে।

যি জাতিয়ে প্ৰেম খাইনে কাণত পিন্ধে নাজানিছিল, সেই জাতিক প্ৰেমেৰে ভক্তি শিকাবলৈ যোৱা, আমাৰ মনেৰে হ’লে বান্দবৰ ডিঙিত মুকুতাৰ হাৰ পিন্ধোৱাৰ নিচিনা কথা।^{১৫}

শ্যেকচপিয়েৰৰ নাটকৰ চাকচিক্যই চকুত চমক লগোৱা অসমীয়া সাহিত্যিকে শংকৰদেৱক নিচেই দুখীয়া নাট ৰচোতা^{১৬} বুলিও বিদ্ৰূপ কৰিছে। দুখীয়া বুলি কোৱাৰ আঁৰৰ যুক্তি এনে ধৰণৰ—

শংকৰদেৱে অৱশ্যে পুৰণি সমাজৰ উজ্জ্বল চৰিত্ৰৰ চিত্ৰবিলাক মানুহৰ আগত ফটফটীয়াকৈ ধৰিবলৈকে নাট লেখিছিল, তাত অকনো সংশয় নাই। কিন্তু তেওঁ তাক একো শলাগ পাবলগীয়াকৈ কৰি থৈ যাব নোৱাৰিলে। তেওঁ নিজে ক’তো চৰিত্ৰ আঁকিবলৈ কাৰবাৰকে কৰা নাই, লোকে আঁকি থোৱা চিত্ৰকো তেওঁ লেপথেপ নোহোৱাকৈ তুলিব নোৱাৰিলে। তেওঁৰ সীতা সয়ম্বৰ ৰাম-সীতা ৰামায়ণৰ ৰাম-সীতাতকৈ বহুগুণে দুখীয়া, ৰুক্মিণী হৰণৰ কৃষ্ণও ভাগৱত বা মহাভাৰতৰ কৃষ্ণৰ ওচৰ চাপিব নোৱাৰে।^{১৭}

হেমচন্দ্ৰ গোস্বামী, বক্তেশ্বৰ মহন্ত, কমলাকান্ত ভট্টাচাৰ্য আদিৰ লগতে সেই সময়ৰ অনেক সাহিত্যিকৰ মনত নিজৰ কৃষ্টি সংস্কৃতিৰ প্ৰতি বিৰাগৰ ভাৱ জন্ম হোৱাৰ মূলতে ভিজোৰীয়া নৈতিকতাৰ গভীৰ প্ৰভাৱ আছিল। বৃটিছ আনুগত্যই বহুকেইগৰাকী লেখকক মুহি ৰাখিছিল যদিও সময়ৰ লগে লগে বহু শিক্ষিত অসমীয়া লেখকৰ দৃষ্টিভংগীৰ পৰিৱৰ্তন হোৱাও দেখা গৈছিল।

প্ৰসংগটীকা :

১. নগেন শইকীয়া (সম্পা.) জোনাকী (একত্ৰ সংকলন) পৃ. ৪
২. উল্লিখিত, পৃ. ৭৮৪
৩. ১৮৫৬ সালে ভাৰতে আইন কৰে শৃংগাৰ ৰস ঘটত পুস্তক প্ৰকাশ দণ্ডনীয় অপৰাধ বলে গণ্য হল। উল্লেখযোগ্য এৰ ঠিক এক বছৰ পৰেই খোদ ইংলেণ্ডে Obscene Publication Act পাশ কৰা হল। সুদেৱৰ চন্দ্ৰবৰ্তী : ঊনবিংশ শতাব্দীৰ বাঙালী জীৱনে ভিজোৰীয়ান প্ৰভাৱ স্বপন বসু, ইন্দ্ৰজিৎ চৌধুৰী (সম্পা.) ঊনিশ শতকৰ বাঙালী জীৱন ও সংস্কৃতি (অধ্যাপক বিজিত কুমাৰ দত্ত স্মাৰক গ্ৰন্থ পৃ. ১২১)
৪. নগেন শইকীয়া (সম্পা.) পূৰ্বোল্লিখিত, পৃ. ১২৬
৫. উল্লিখিত, পৃ. ১৪৩
৬. উল্লিখিত, পৃ. ১৪৪
৭. উল্লিখিত, পৃ. ১৯০
৮. গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱা, আসাম বুৰঞ্জী, পৃ. ২০২, ২০৩
৯. নগেন শইকীয়া (সম্পা.) পূৰ্বোল্লিখিত, পৃ. ১৫০
১০. বসন্ত কুমাৰ গোস্বামী (সম্পা.) সাহিত্যচাৰ্য যজ্ঞেশ্বৰ শৰ্মা ৰচনাৱলী, পৃ. ১৫
১১. নগেন শইকীয়া (সম্পা.) পূৰ্বোল্লিখিত, পৃ. ৪৬
১২. উল্লিখিত, পৃ. ৪৭
১৩. উল্লিখিত, পৃ. ৪৮
১৪. উল্লিখিত, পৃ. ৩১০
১৫. উল্লিখিত
১৬. উল্লিখিত
১৭. উল্লিখিত

স্বাধীনতা সংগ্রামত নাৰী : যোৰহাট জিলাৰ প্ৰসঙ্গৰে

মানৱজ্যোতি শইকীয়া
তৃতীয় বাৰ্ষিক
ৰাজনীতি বিজ্ঞান বিভাগ
কৃষ্ণগুৰু আধ্যাত্মিক বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ন-সত্ৰ

সাৰাংশ :

মানৱ সভ্যতাৰ বিকাশৰ পৰা বৰ্তমানলৈকে নাৰীৰ ভূমিকা লক্ষ্যণীয়। দেশৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্রামত নাৰীয়ে অংশ ল'ব লাগে বুলি জনোৱা আহ্বানৰ প্ৰতি সহঁৰি জনাই অসমৰ লগতে যোৰহাট জিলাৰ নাৰীয়েও 'আখল ঘৰ' এৰি ৰাজপথত সংগ্ৰামৰ বাবে ওলাই আহিছিল। এই আলোচনা পত্ৰত যোৰহাটৰ নাৰীৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত অংশগ্ৰহণৰ পৰিচয় দিবলৈ প্ৰয়াস কৰা হৈছে। বিশ্লেষণাত্মক আৰু বৰ্ণনাত্মক পদ্ধতিৰ দ্বাৰা প্ৰস্তুত কৰা আলোচনা পত্ৰৰ জৰিয়তে যোৰহাটৰ নাৰীৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত ভূমিকা প্ৰকাশ কৰিবলৈ যত্ন কৰা হৈছে।

বীজ শব্দ: স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰাম, নাৰী, যোৰহাট, ইয়াণ্ডাবু সন্ধি

প্ৰস্তাৱনা:

যোৰহাট জিলা অসমৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ কেন্দ্ৰ বিন্দু বুলিব পাৰি। ১৮২৬ চনত ইষ্ট ইণ্ডিয়া কোম্পানীয়ে চক্ৰান্ত কৰি অসমখন তেওঁলোকৰ ক্ৰমবৰ্ধমান সাম্ৰাজ্যৰ অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত কৰিলে। দুবছৰৰ পাছতে ১৮২৮ চনত দেশ পুনৰ উদ্ধাৰৰ বাবে ধনঞ্জয় বুঢ়াগোঁহাইৰ নেতৃত্বত গোমধৰ কোঁৱৰক আহোম পদ্ধতি অনুসৰি শাসনত অধিষ্ঠিত কৰি যোৰহাটৰ ফালে সৈন্য বাহিনীলৈ আগবাঢ়ি আহিল। মৰিয়নিৰ ওচৰত বৃটিছ সৈন্যৰ লগত যুদ্ধ সংঘটিত হৈছিল। যুদ্ধত পৰাস্ত হোৱা গোমধৰ কোঁৱৰ, ধনঞ্জয় বুঢ়াগোঁহাইকে প্ৰমুখ্য কৰি ভালেমানক ইংৰাজে আটক কৰিছিল। তাৰ পিছৰে পৰা যোৰহাটত বৃটিছক খেদোৱাৰ বিদ্ৰোহৰ আঁচনি তৈয়াৰ হৈছিল। মূলত ১৯২১ চনত মহাত্মা গান্ধীৰ নেতৃত্বত যি অহিংস অসহযোগ আন্দোলন আৰম্ভ হৈছিল, সেই সংগ্ৰামত যোৰহাট আছিল

প্ৰাণকেন্দ্ৰ। ১৯৪২ চনত ভাৰত ত্যাগ আন্দোলনত যোৰহাট হৈ পৰিছিল উজনি অসমৰ কেন্দ্ৰস্থল। গণ আন্দোলনৰ প্ৰকৃতিৰূপ পৰিগ্ৰহ কৰিছিল যোৰহাট জিলাৰ সকলো অঞ্চলৰ, সকলো গাঁওত। এই সংগ্ৰামত পুৰুষ সমানে নাৰীৰ অংশগ্ৰহণ আছিল মন কৰিবলগীয়া।

আলোচনাৰ বিষয়:

স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত নাৰীৰ স্থান আছিল তাৎপৰ্যপূৰ্ণ। বিশেষতঃ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনত অসমৰ অৱদান আছিল লেখত ল'বলগীয়া। সেই দিশৰ ভিত্তিত উজনি অসমৰ এক তাৎপৰ্যপূৰ্ণ ক্ষেত্ৰ যোৰহাট জিলাৰ নাৰীসকলৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনত অংশগ্ৰহণ - আলোচনাই এই পত্ৰৰ মূল বিষয়বস্তু।

উদ্দেশ্য, পদ্ধতি আৰু পৰিসৰ:

ইতিহাস যদি বিশ্লেষণ কৰি চাওঁ তেন্তে 'যোৰহাট

আৰু স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰাম' অধ্যয়নৰ এক বিষয়বস্তু হ'ব পাৰে। তাৰ ভিত্তিত স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনত যে নাৰীৰ ভূমিকা থাকিব পাৰে তাক ব্যাখ্যা কৰাই এই আলোচনা পত্ৰৰ মূল উদ্দেশ্য।

এই আলোচনা পত্ৰ ঐতিহাসিক তথ্যৰ ভিত্তিত গৌণ উৎসৰ সহায়ত বিশ্লেষণাত্মক পদ্ধতি আৰু বৰ্ণনামূলক পদ্ধতিৰ দ্বাৰা প্ৰস্তুত কৰা হৈছে।

'ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰাম' এক বহল বিষয়। ইয়াৰ পৰিসৰও অতি ব্যাপক। এই আলোচনা পত্ৰত স্পষ্ট ৰূপ ব্যাখ্যা হোৱাকৈ আৰু অধ্যয়নৰ সুবিধাৰ প্ৰতি লক্ষ্য ৰাখি অসমৰ যোৰহাট জিলাক মূল পৰিসৰ হিচাপে ইচ্ছাকৃতভাৱে বাছনি কৰা হৈছে।

স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰাম আৰু অসমৰ নাৰী:

১৮২৬ চনত ইয়াণ্ডাবু সন্ধি অনুসৰি অসমখন বৃটিছৰ অধীনলৈ যায়। মহাত্মা গান্ধীৰ নেতৃত্বত অসমীয়া সকলো ইংৰাজৰ বিৰুদ্ধে বিপ্লৱ কৰিবলৈ উদ্যত হৈছিল। সেই সময়ৰ অসমীয়া নাৰীয়েও পুৰুষৰ সমানে সংগ্ৰামত ভাগ লৈছিল। অসমৰ ইতিহাস যদি খুচৰি চাওঁ তেন্তে কনকলতা বৰুৱা, ভোগেশ্বৰী ফুকননী, অমলপ্ৰভা দাস, পুষ্পলতা দাস, চন্দ্ৰপ্ৰভা শইকীয়ানী, খহলী নাথ আদিৰ নাম উল্লেখ কৰিব পাৰি।

স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত যোৰহাটৰ নাৰী:

মানৱ সভ্যতাৰ বিকাশৰ পৰা বৰ্তমানলৈকে নাৰীৰ ভূমিকা লক্ষ্যণীয়। দেশৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত নাৰী শক্তিয়ে ভাগ ল'ব লাগে বুলি জনোৱা আহ্বানৰ প্ৰতি সহঁৰি জনাই অসমৰ যোৰহাট জিলাৰ নাৰীয়েও পুৰুষৰ সমানে স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনত বিশেষ ভূমিকা পালন কৰিছিল। যোৰহাট জিলাৰ নাৰীসকলে ২১ ৰ বিপ্লৱ, ৪১ ৰ ব্যক্তিগত সত্যাগ্ৰহ, ৪২ ৰ গণ বিপ্লৱত প্ৰচাৰ কাৰ্য, মহিলা সংগঠন আৰু সজাগতা, পেকেটিং, সত্যাগ্ৰহ, আন্দোলন আদি কাৰ্যসূচীত অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰি সক্ৰিয় ভূমিকা আৰু দায়িত্ব পালন কৰিছিল, যাৰ ফলত তেওঁলোকে কাৰাবাসৰ লগতে বিভিন্ন সময়ত গ্ৰেপ্তাৰ হ'ব লগীয়া হৈছিল। যোৰহাট

জিলাৰ শিমলুগুৰি মৌজা, টীয়ক মৌজা, গাখীৰখোৱা মৌজা, লাহিং মৌজা, নকছাৰী মৌজা, তিতাবৰ আদি মৌজাৰ অন্তৰ্গত বহু গৰাকী সাহসী নাৰীয়ে স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত আগভাগ লৈছিল। এই মৌজাৰ অন্তৰ্গত নাৰী সকলৰ ভিতৰত উমাকান্তি ৰায় বৰুৱা, বিমলা ভূঞা, সেন্দূৰী বৰা, পূৰ্বেশ্বৰী দলৈ, তুলসী দেৱী, ভোগদা দেৱী, বাসন্তী বৰদলৈ, সেউতী চাংমাই, বাসন্তী মলিয়া বৰুৱা, আইদেউ ৰাজখোৱা, জাপৰী দেৱী, সৰোজনী দেৱী (গোস্বামী), শশীপ্ৰভা দত্ত, শ্ৰীমতী গুণদা হাজৰিকা, আইদেউ বৰুৱা, দেৱযানী বৰুৱা, শ্ৰীমতী পুষ্পলতা বৰা, বিমলী গগৈ আদি। এই কেইগৰাকীৰ উপৰিও পঞ্চাশতকৈও অধিক নাৰীয়েও যোৰহাট জিলাৰ পৰা স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত সক্ৰিয়ভাৱে অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰিছিল। 'স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত যোৰহাট' শীৰ্ষক দেৱেশ্বৰ দলৈ আৰু তিলেশ্বৰ বৰদলৈৰ দ্বাৰা সম্পাদিত গ্ৰন্থত যোৰহাটৰ বহুকেইগৰাকী মুক্তিযুগ্মীক (জীৱিত আৰু প্ৰয়াত) ৰ সংক্ষিপ্ত জীৱন চৰিত প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে। সেই তথ্যৰ ভিত্তিত সংক্ষেপে কেইগৰাকীমান যোৰহাটৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ নেত্ৰীৰ পৰিচয় আৰু ভূমিকা দাঙি ধৰা হ'ল।

স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত যোৰহাটনগৰৰ বজামৈদামৰ নিবাসী শশীপ্ৰভা দত্তই সক্ৰিয় ভূমিকা পালন কৰিছিল। ১৯১১ চনত শিৱসাগৰৰ শুকান পুখুৰী অঞ্চলত জন্ম গ্ৰহণ কৰা শশীপ্ৰভা দত্তৰ পিতৃ আছিল যশস্বী সাহিত্যিক, খ্যাতনামা নাট্যকাৰ দুৰ্গাপ্ৰসাদ মজিন্দাৰ বৰুৱা। শিৱসাগৰৰ পিতৃ পৰিয়াল আৰু প্ৰাক্তন মুখ্যমন্ত্ৰী বিমলা প্ৰসাদ চলিহাৰ সান্নিধ্যলৈ আহি স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত ১৯৩০ চনৰ পৰাই অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰিছিল। কেইবাবাৰো পুলিচে গ্ৰেপ্তাৰ কৰিছিল যদিও কমবয়সীয়া মহিলা বুলি খালাচ পাইছিল। যোৰহাটৰ ৰাজহুৱা আৰু মহিলা অনুষ্ঠানৰ সক্ৰিয় কৰ্মী আছিল। ১৯৮৬ চনত এওঁৰ মৃত্যু হৈছিল।

স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ সৈতে জড়িত অন্য এগৰাকী সাহসী নাৰী আছিল চাওখাট মৌজাৰ দলৈ গাঁওৰ তুলসী দেৱী। এইগৰাকী অগ্ৰণী মহিলাই ঘৰে ঘৰে গৈ মহিলা

সকলৰ মাজত স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰাম আৰু মহাত্মা গান্ধীৰ ভূমিকা সম্পৰ্কে বুজনি দি নাৰী সমাজক আন্দোলনৰ প্ৰতি আগ্ৰহশীল কৰি তুলিবলৈ যত্ন কৰিছিল।

স্বৰ্গীয়া চেনেহী ভূঞা চাওখাট মৌজাৰ তিনিকুৰীয়া গাঁৱৰ এগৰাকী অন্যতম সংগ্ৰামী নেত্ৰী। যোৰহাটৰ কছাৰী পথাৰত ১৯২১ চনত মহাত্মা গান্ধীৰ সান্নিধ্যলৈ আহি নিজকে ধন্য মানিছিল আৰু তেতিয়াৰ পৰাই অসহযোগ আন্দোলনৰ কাৰ্যসূচীত অংশলৈ গাঁৱৰ মহিলাসকলক স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ বতৰা দি সজাগ কৰিছিল।

যোৰহাটৰ সেউতী চাংমাই স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ অন্য এগৰাকী সেনানী। তিতাবৰ ঠেঙ্গাল মৌজাৰ বতনপুৰৰ প্ৰবীন মুক্তি যুজ্জ্বল তিলেশ্বৰ চাংমাইৰ সহধৰ্মীণী। কাটনি মৌজাৰ কাটনি গাঁৱৰ ১৯২১ চনৰ মুক্তিযোদ্ধা বগাবাম গগৈৰ বৰ জীয়ৰী। ১৯৪২ ব গণ বিপ্লৱত সংগ্ৰামৰ সমগ্ৰ সময় আত্মগোপন কৰা স্বামীৰ অবিহনে বৰখনত আৰক্ষীৰ অত্যাচাৰ সাহসেৰে সন্মুখীন হৈ অবিচলিত আছিল।

যোৰহাট জিলাৰ টীয়ক মৌজাৰ এখন পিছপৰা গাঁৱৰ এগৰাকী স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ সেনানী হ'ল পূৰ্বেশ্বৰী দলৈ। ১৯৩৯ চনত সত্যাগ্ৰহ আন্দোলনৰ শান্তিসেনা গঠনত মহিলা সংগঠনত আৰু সক্ৰিয় অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰি সেই চনৰে ৫ নবেম্বৰত কেইবা হাজাৰো মহিলাৰ শোভাযাত্ৰা পৰিচালনা কৰি আগত জাতীয় পতাকা লৈ থানালৈ আগবাঢ়ি যাওঁতে পুলিচ-মিলেটেৰীৰ সন্মুখীন হৈছিল। পূৰ্বেশ্বৰী দলৈ ১৯৮৩ চনত ৯০ বছৰ বয়সত মৃত্যু হয়।

যোৰহাটৰ প্ৰখ্যাত মুক্তিযোদ্ধা স্বৰ্গীয় হীৰানাথ বৰুৱাৰ পত্নী দেৱবানী বৰুৱা এগৰাকী স্বাধীনতা সেনানী। ১৯৪১ চনত ব্যক্তিগত সত্যাগ্ৰহ আন্দোলনত যোৰহাট জিলাৰ ১ম চাৰিগৰাকী মহিলাৰ অন্যতম সত্যাগ্ৰহী আছিল দেৱবানী বৰুৱা। সত্যাগ্ৰহ কৰি কাৰাবাসও খাটিছিল। সেই ৪১ ব ব্যক্তিগত সত্যাগ্ৰহৰ অন্য এগৰাকী সত্যাগ্ৰহী হ'ল

যোৰহাটৰ টীয়ক মৌজাৰ আইদেউ বৰুৱা। আইদেউ বৰুৱাই ৪২ ব গণ বিপ্লৱত সক্ৰিয়ভাৱে অংশ গ্ৰহণ কৰিছিল আৰু ৪১ সত্যাগ্ৰহত গ্ৰেপ্তাৰ হৈছিল।

শ্ৰীমতী পুষ্পলতা বৰা, টীয়ক মৌজাৰ কমাৰখাটোৱাল গাঁৱৰ এগৰাকী স্বাধীন মুক্তি যুজ্জ্বল। ৪২ ব আন্দোলনত সভা, শোভাযাত্ৰা আদিত যোগ দিয়াৰ লগতে পিকেটিং আদি কাৰ্যসূচীত অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰি কেইবাবাৰো গ্ৰেপ্তাৰ হৈছিল।

ওপৰোক্ত তথ্যৰ ভিত্তিত ক'ব পাৰি যে যোৰহাটৰ নাৰীৰ স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত বিশেষ অৱদান আছিল। 'কৰিম কিস্মা মৰিম' - এই ঐতিহাসিক সিদ্ধান্তৰ দ্বাৰা সমগ্ৰ দেশবাসী বৃটিছৰ বিপক্ষে থিয় দিছিল আৰু সেই সিদ্ধান্তই যোৰহাটৰ নাৰীৰ মন-মানসিকতাত জোৱাৰৰ সূচনা কৰিছিল আৰু স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামত সক্ৰিয়ভাৱে অংশ লৈছিল।

উপসংহাৰঃ

বৃটিছ শাসন আৰম্ভৰ লগে লগে মানুহৰ মনবোৰ অসন্তোষ্ট হৈছিল। ইয়াৰ ফলস্বৰূপে অসমত স্বাধীনতা উদ্ধাৰৰ বাবে বিদ্ৰোহৰ সূত্ৰপাত হৈছিল। আখলঘৰ এৰি ৰাজপথলৈ ওলাই অহা যোৰহাটৰ নাৰী আমাৰ বাবে প্ৰেৰণাৰ উৎস। এই নাৰীৰ সক্ৰিয় ভূমিকাই স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামক যে অধিক উৰ্ধমুখী কৰিছিল সেয়া স্পষ্ট।

সহায়ক গ্ৰন্থঃ

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