Folk literature mirrors the natural beauty of culture. It is a vibrant record of a nation’s traditions, customs, beliefs, rites and rituals, moral values spirituals realizations etc. Folk literature comprises of folk songs, folk tales, folk drama, Riddles, proverbs, lokokti and such like things. There are three cardinal elements of folk literature.

1) The remnants or primitive men are found in it.

2) It is developed orally and therefore, it can be enjoyed only through eloquent narrations.

3) No credit is paid is its creator or composer.

Hindi and Assamese have occupied an important place in Modern Indian Aryan Language. The importance of Hindi as the language of the nation is quite significant and covers a vast area in the country. Therefore, the parameter of the study is confined to the dialects and languages of some specific provinces of specific Hindi speaking states only. In the course of survey and investigation under Hindi speaking provinces some parts of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Rajasthan have been selected. The wel-spoken Hindi is mostly considered for which I have taken instances mainly from Bhojpuri, Awadhi and Rajasthani dialects. During my survey and investigation, I have visited Gangapur area of Balia district in Uttarakhand. Where I met Sri Bhagwan Varma (P.O.- Suraiman) who helped me to meet several local laureates and experts of Riddle and collected research materials available there.

With the help of Sri Baijulall Singh of Enayatpur in Bihar, I have visited several
villages, like – Kohra, Nareera, Chapra and discoursed on local Riddles with different persons of the locality.

In my second phase of the visit, I met Sri Ram kumar Singh (P.O. – Solapur, District – Bhojpur, Bihar) who accompanied me to Allahabad town, Gahmar, Baxar, Varanasi etc. places where I met following locally popular persons of Riddles and folk literature – Sri Saryulal Singh, Sri Dashrath Prasad, Sri Nandal Konwar, Sri Bhai Hiteswar jee, Sri Sriram Acharya.

In addition to the above, I have visited Gorokhpur district of U.P. and met Sri Subhas ch. Singh and discussed on Riddles. There, I have got some important information and collected materials for the study.

With reference to the National language, Assamese language is treated as our regional language as well as the official language of the state with nation importance. I have adopted prevalent and written form of Assamese language for the study.

For the collection of materials related to my study area I had to visit various places across the state of Assam. Quite a handsome number of people helped me much in compiling various common and uncommon Riddles in Assamese language. Sri Hari Prasad Das of Bezgaon in Sivsagar district, Sri Jatin Das of Meleng Gaon, Jorhat district, Sri Kushal Saikia of Kampur, Nagaon district, Sri Uday Deka of Kaithalkuchi in Nalbari district – came of a great help to me in searching, researching and bringing the heard and unheard Riddles to light. On the top of this by visited various organizations and institutions of the state also I collected many of the interesting Riddles enlisted in my research work. Again, the encounter with many specialists and experts on the subject unearthed multifarious information regarding Riddles known and practiced by the people in various parts of Assam.

A few names must be mentions in this connection. Sri Promod Bora, Sri Anil
Saikia, Sri Dhiren Paul, Sri Rabin Bhagawati, Sri Manik Chakraborty etc. The whole study disclosed the fact that the Riddles played a vital role in enriching and enlivening Assamese folk culture and literature at large.

Some books of references have not been mentioned in two chapters as the subject of the work is based on oral literature and the content of my research work has been capitalized more on the practical knowledge of the well-informed respondents of the subject rather than on printed books. I therefore, met different experiences persons of different areas mentioned above and listened to various kinds of Riddles of and compiled them, list of those respondents who narrated the Riddles has been mentioned in the bibliography separately.

It is needless to recount that the history of Riddles crossed millions of years in the world. It is an interesting and effective medium to develop memory power as well as investigation and analysis of complicated aspects. Not only the above, it works as a weapon to endeavour our recreation, knowledge and intelligence, smartness as well. Riddles, even help people to understand and assimilate a serious subject of knowledge. The never forget it in their life.

Riddles are composed in verses and therefore, these are very easy to learn and memorise. Now a days the education is gradually being made complicated and untested where as Riddles make our language effective, simple and pleasing.

Riddles occupy a specific place in Indian cultural tradition. Now a days, it is given more importance for comparative study of language and literature. It is the utmost requirement to underline whatever pervaded the folk life. The aim of present research is to introduce the Assamese and Hindi culture through the study of Riddles. Maximum of Riddles in Assamese and Hindi languages are based on useful activities of our daily life.
A humble attempt has been ventured forth to make a comparative study Hindi and Assamese Riddles in this research work. To facilitate the study further, the present research work has been divided into ten chapters. Which is going to be furnished next.

I am very grateful to my guide Dr. Dilip Kumar Medhi, Head of Deptt. Of Hindi, Gauhati University who encouraged me to undertake the project which has been accomplished successfully. Without his co-operation and dedication in guiding the task was impossible for me. I am grateful to my other teachers (Gurus) of the Department of Hindi whose blessings are my assets for this work. I tender my salute to the Academic Registrar of Gauhati University along with his subordinates who all the time helped me to make the work progress and complete.

I acknowledge my gratitude to my brother in law Mr. Dhiraj Baishya for accompanying me in my trip to Andhra University in connection with collection and compilation of relevant materials. I shall keep his associateship in my heart till my last breath. Dr. K. Sitalakshmi Kidambi, Head of Department of Hindi, Andhra University permitted me to collect relevant materials for the study. I am very proud of her accompany and would like to tender my regards.

My associate Sri Askok Kumar Nandy, Head of Department English, Lanka College, helped me in my tough time of this study and encouraged me to go forward with the task. I pay my heartiest good wishes to him which will remain forever. I also thank my student Sri Hitler Singh (Now my associate in the Department of Hindi) in connection with his help in this work.

Dr. Debashis Sikdar, Principal, Lanka College is also in the line of acknowledgement who permitted me to undertake the project and encouraged me to go forward, otherwise it could not have been possible today.
I cannot forget Mr. Jahar Lai Chaudhuri, (Rtd. Prof. Haflong Govt. College), Sri Rajaram Singh (Rtd. Asstt. Prof. Lanka Mahavidyalaya), Sri Sambhuram Sarma (HoD, Hindi, Lanka Mahavidyalaya), Sri Partha Sarathi Kar (Associate Prof., Deptt of English, Lanka Mahavidyalaya), Mrs. Anuradha Chaudhuri (Asstt. Prof., Deptt. of English, Lanka Mahavidyalaya), Dr. Dilip Sarma (HoD, Hindi, Nowgong College), Dr. Deepa Deka (Associate Prof. Deptt. of Hindi, Nowgong College) and Sri Gopal Sonar (A.T. Good Samaritan English School, Lanka) for their kind co-operation, assistance and help in various forms.

I would like to pay my sincerest thanks to all associates and friends of research course for their valuable suggestions and advice.

How can I forget my lifelong partner- wife and my daughters who have done a lot to me in the process of the completion of this Herculean task. They co-operated me in all juncture, releasing from all my family burdens to carry on the study in a true spirit. In fact, their contribution is worth-remembering for me, I express my affection and best wishes to them all.

I offer my special thanks to the Librarians and staff of Gauhati University Library, Cotton College Library, Nowgong College Library, Nagaon District Library, Raha College Library, Lanka Mahavidyalaya Library, Hojai College Library, Lumding College Library, Kampur College Library, Library of History and Antiquity Department, G.U. and Library of Folklore Department, MIL Department and Assamese Department of G.U. etc. for extending their helping hand in the collection and compilation of my research work.

I cannot close this prefatory note without expressing my gratitude to Sri Mohan Koirala, Secretary, Shaba Bharati and his team for extending full co-operation to me in completing this project. I also tender thanks to Sri Lachit Das for doing entire D.T.P
work of the Thesis in a very short time. I am grateful to M/S Rainbow Printers of Ganeshguri, Guwahati for the binding works of the Thesis.

To end, my sincere thanks are also due to the authors, writers and composers of those published and unpublished works which have been genuine sources of my study materials all through.

(Guneswar Saikia)