INTRODUCTION
The nineteenth century witnessed the Renaissance dawn in Indian life and thought. Flowering of the Renaissance revealed itself in many aspects, in various ways. If it influenced the socio-political life intensely, its effects on literature were also profound variegated, and deep-rooted. It is worthy of mention that in the panorama of literature, culture and socio-economic terrain, the nineteenth century played a monumental role. If effected transactions of the Bengali mind with Europe. The Bengali mind saw efflorescence of the Renaissance spirit thereby blazing a trail of enlightening ideas and thought.

The nineteenth century upheaval of the Renaissance not only exerted influence on Bengali literature, society or culture, but it also caste its light on the frontiers, notably Assam. Without doubt the Bengali writings in Assam grew on the Renaissance in Bengal and the cultural dynamics of the nineteenth century. These writings assumed a different dimension in terms of quality and excellence in contact with the spirit which seized Bengal.

Before the nineteenth century in the pre-colonial period, predominantly, Bengali writings were under patronage of the monarchical rulers. Naturally most of the writings captured the monarchical spirit and highlighted the dynamics of monarchical life. Subsequently in the colonial period Bengali writings in Assam proved two dimensions:

a. The state patronage and

b. Cultivation of Bengali writings act individual, group, forum etc. levels.

Needless to say in course of the Renaissance, medieval thoughts found adequate expressions in Bengali writings. In a large measure Bengali formed a bridge and bond between different monarchical families. Patronage to poetry and poets in the courts by the monarchs was conspicuous.
Diplomatic communications through letters and communiqués between the Ahom King and his counterpart in Coachbehar or, for that matter, between the Ahom King and the Royal family of Tripura— is sufficient evidence of the importance of Bengali as a medium of inter-monarchical communication. Towards the end of the medieval period such illustrious works as ‘Shri Brihaddyanāradia Puran’ by Bhubaneshwar Bachaspati came out.

These works amply point to the tradition of Bengali prose and verse which grow rapidly in the pre-colonial period. It is in this context that we will centre our study on the colonial period drawing on the threads from the period before. Our aim is to highlight— ‘The Bengali writings of Assam in the nineteenth century: A critical study.’

It is necessary to be aware of the prevailing socio-political setting of the time before undertaking a discussion on the history and development of Bengali writings in Assam in the nineteenth century. It is also significant to be aware of the geographical formation of Assam in that period conveniently shaped by the colonial rulers for administrative advantages.

Assam had very close communication with Bengal. There were educational and cultural relation between these states, simultaneously they had political and communicable tie-up too. In this context Assamese society was influenced by the renaissance. This influence of Bengal renaissance expanded over three periods. These are: Raja Rammohan period, Vidyasagar-Bankimchandra period and Rabindranath period. The first two periods had very important role in terms of the Bengali writings of Assam in the nineteenth century.

But there were very few authors and write ups in the first part or Raja Rammohan period. Haliram Dhekial Phookan’s ‘Assam Buranji’ (1829) and works of Yagnaram Khargharia Phookan, Maniram Dewan, Jaduram Deka Barua and others were written in this period.

Most of the works were written in second part. Ramkumar Nandi Mazumdar had written reply verse of Michael Madhusudan Datta’s ‘Vīrāṅgana Kāvyā’. Ramkumar’s verse was titled ‘Vīrāṅgana Patrottar Kāvyā’. He had written
'Malinir Upākhyān'. It is recognized as the first Bengali prose tale of this region. Besides these, he was proficient in yatrapala also.

Pyaricharan Das was known as poet and editor. He had edited the journal 'Shrihatta Prākāsh', which had a significant role in this region. Influence of Ishwarchandra Gupta is seen in his work.

Anandaram Dhekial Phookan, author of 'Āin O Byabasthā Sangraha'(1855) sought to produce a clear and simple version of the legal codes and laws prevailing in Bengal.

The book 'Bijni Rājbangsha’ (1876) is the most significant contribution to the earliest phases of historical literature to have come out in Bengali prose. But this book has not received much acclaimed as a notable historical book.

Needless to say that, Bengali books and write ups published in large numbers than earlier period in this second part. Journals and magazines were published too. Kolkata was the prime centre of Bengali culture. In the second half of nineteenth century educational and literary activities expanded from Kolkata to the suburbs. In this terms Assam was no exception.

The first Bengali newspaper ‘Digdarshan’ published in 1818 AD by Shirampur Missionaries. But it took so many years to publish a newspaper from then East Bengal. It was ‘Rangpur Bārtābaha’(1847). Then after so many years ‘Āssām Mihir’ was published in 1872 AD from Assam.

Not only newspaper publishing same thing happened in terms of the establishment of organization also.

Raja Rammohan Ray’s ‘Ātmiya Sabhā’ (1815) was the first organization established by a Bengali. These things happened in then East Bengal in the 40’s of nineteenth century. And in Assam this region was enlightened by renaissance of every means after fifty years. Therefore modern thoughts were developed in Bengali write ups of Assam in the second half of nineteenth century that means 1870 to 1900 AD.
Before the nineteenth century conscience of literature had one single tone—mediaeval concept and idea. But direct influence of Renaissance was seen in nineteenth century, after the mediaeval era. In Kolkata this influence was seen in the early part of nineteenth century. And it has been spread in the mid-nineteenth century in Dhaka and its neighbour region.

The Bengali literature and writings of Assam in the nineteenth century was enlightened with this renaissance.