CHAPTER III

DANCES OF THE TRIBES OF ASSAM

From the cultural point of view the whole population of North East India and Assam and India could be divided into three categories: (i) those tribal communities living in the hills and those who are more or less isolated and free from the impact of 'Sanskritic' or other organized cultures (except in the case of tribes with Buddhistis connections); (ii) those tribal groups living in the hills and plains, who have retained their tribal identity but who have been acculturated in various degrees as a result of their living close proximity of and contact with non-tribal Sanskritized majority or through the impact of Buddhism or Christianity or Islam; and (iii) those societies which are more or less Sanskritized, where the population is almost wholly (like the Meities) or partly as in the case of the Assamese society made up of earlier Mongoloid stocks. The indigenous (Assamese) Muslims or this region, although not Sanskritized from the religious point of view, are culturally part of this milieu (Datta 1985:18)

In this background heterogeneous Assamese socio-cultural life, dance as a form of visual and performing art grew and developed through ages among the various races and tribes in the hills and the plains. Female participation has always been very prominent in most of them. The chief among the tribes are the Karbis, the Dimasakharis, the Zemi Nagas and the Kukis in the hills; and the Bodo-Kacharis, the Mishings, the Rabhs, the Tiwas (Lalung), the Hajongs and the Deoris in the plains. Moreover, the tea garden community forms as integral part of the Assamese society, who has enriched the Assamese cultural entity by their significant contribution. Like its
counterparts in India, the folk dances of various tribal groups incorporate various aspects of their life which are related to agricultural activities and harvest rites, occupations, seasonal cycle and totem connected with life and death. Besides, a good number of them are ritualistic in nature (Borgohain 2011).

Some dances of some of the tribes are described here. The dances of both the study groups are also discussed here.

Both singing and dancing are integral parts of the cultural life of the Garos where both the male and female folks take part in dancing and singing with the accompanying musical instruments. There are various occasions like the installation of a new *Nokma* (village headman), ceremonies observed for the dead, annual worship at the sacrificial stone, entering into a newly constructed bachelor’s dormitory, etc. For each occasion the style of dances performed shows varieties. The most lively and popular dance performed by the Garo people are during the performance of their harvesting festival called *Wangla*, this festival is also known as the festival of hundred drums. It is, in fact a feast for the eyes. So the name of the dance form is also known as *Wangla*.

Some of the most important dance forms of the Karbis of the Karbi Anglong hill district are related to and performed on the occasion of the elaborate death ceremony *Chomagkan* where they performed *Banjarkekan* dance of merriment, performed by young boys. Specially decorated bamboo poles (*banjar*) displayed during the performance is a special attraction of this dance form. *Nimso Keruing* is another dance form where the young men hold a shield in one hand and a stick in other where the girls also join in the later part of the dance covering their heads with black scarves. The
accompanying Kapaer songs are clearly obscene in tone and content. Kansopadu and Ranker-kekan are two other dances associated with Chomangkan festival. The Jongra dance of the Karbis is performed to celebrate the mirth and grandeur of nature’s elements. Hachcha-kekan is a vigorous group dance associated with harvest festival, performed by young boys and girls.

The Dimasa-Kacharis of the North-Cachar hill district celebrate Busu, a post harvest festival by performing a group dance known as Dimasa. Young boys and girls in traditional costume dance in pairs in the open space, generally on moonlit nights. Occasionally they joined by elderly village men, women and children. These rhythmic dances are characterized by some interesting choreographic pattern and are accompanied by musical instruments like meri and kharam. The Baidima, Jaoba, Jaophinba, Dainsleiba and so on are the innumerable forms of this form. The movements and patterns change according to the indications given by the changes in the dance songs known as Moritais. A few ritualistic dances of the Dimasas associated with ceremonies like Rajni Gobra and Harni Gobra are noteworthy.

Alike the other tribes, singing and dancing are a part and parcel of the Zeme life. The vigorous with slow rhythmic movements dance forms of them depict their hunting activity of wild animals and also their previous warrior activity. A series of dances are associated with the activities of hunting as a sport. Bee-dance is another captivating dance prevalent among the Zemi Nagas. The Khama Lim dance is associated with the agricultural life of them.

The Kukis, on the other hand perform a war dance in imitation of a dance, which used to be performed by the tribe in the past in their war costume after their return from
a victorious war. *Lamgang* and *Anal* are the harvest festivals of the Kukis which are performed by dancing and singing. The bamboo dance of the Kukis, which is resembles the famous Mizo bamboo dance *Cherao*, involves a lot of care, caution and patience on the part of the dancers.

An important dance performed by the Jaintias is the *Laho* dance, which is performed annually and where young boys and girls in their traditional dresses and ornaments participate. In this dance one girl is positioned between two girls. But the girl must not belong to clans of either of the boys.

The Jaintias are also lovers of sports and they have many indigenous sports among them including archery. Hunting, Fishing, Wrestling and dancing are their favourite pastimes, which they use to portrait through their folk dance forms.

The *Ali-ai-lingang* (first sowing of seeds) is the prime festival of the Mishings, which is celebrated on the first Wednesday of the month *Fagun* (February-March) with pomp and grandeur. In the characteristic mimetic dance of *Ali-ai-lingang*, all people of the community including the married and the old dance in circles with hand in hand. Here they also enact various actions like hunting, fishing, arrow-shooting, rowing, weaving, transplanting and harvesting accompanied by songs and drum beats. *Porag* or *Nora-siga-Bihu* is a post-harvest festival which is another heart-appealing traditional heritage of the Mishing people. During the celebration, dances features prominently. Groups of male and female dancers and drummers also visit other villages to participate in drumming and dancing competition. They also performed *Bihu* by performing their distinctive style of *Bihu* dance accompanied by ishing *Oi-nitam* (love songs) and also Assamese *Bihu* songs.
The Tiwas celebrate *Pisu* (*Bihu*) at the advent of the spring season by dancing and singing. The *Boka nac* performed by young boys and girls on a muddy spot is an interesting and hilarious dance. They have some important dance forms including the ones performed in the *Barat Puja* ceremony. A distinctive kind of instrument called *Charailo* is particularly noteworthy. It is a clapping device, made of bamboo and wood and is decorated with animal motifs. Among other interesting dances are the ones where the dancers wear masks of different deities and animals, and some other are those where the dancers perform by holding pieces of burning firewood.

The celebration of *Bahagiya Bisu* (mid April) and *Magiya bisu* are the chief festival of the Deori tribe. Significantly for the Deori tribe, *Bisu* (*Bihu*) always begins on the first Wednesday of the month of *Bohag* or *Baisakh*. *Deodhani* dance is an integral part of this festival since *Deopuja* held on the first day of this festival. On the second day of the festival, the young male and female folks dance throughout the day and night.

The Bodo-Kacharis have a large variety of dances, which include ritualistic and shamnistic ones, performed on various occasions. They celebrate the springtime *Bwaisagu* festival and marriage ceremonies with dance and merriment. *Baguroumba* and *Bardwishikhla* are two very graceful and attractive dances of them. The Bodo-Kcahari female folks with their traditional colourful attires dance with rhythmic kind of hopping and swinging movements. Throughout the dance the girls keep holding the two ends of the scarves by the hands, creating the effect of the colourful wings of the butterflies. These dances are accompanied by traditional musical instruments like- *Kham*, *Serja* etc.
The tea garden labours in the tea gardens of Assam were recruited by the British planters in the later part of the 19th century, mostly from Bihar, Orissa, Tamilnadu etc. The most significant among them is the *Jhumur*, a rhythmic dance, associated with *Karam Puja*, which is celebrated three times in a year. It's songs and dance occupy a very prominent place in the life of tea labour community. This dance is performed by a row of female dancers, who interlock themselves by putting their hands at the back. This community also performs *Kathi* or *Danda* dance on the occasion of Holi or *Phagwara* festival. *Dom-koch, Jahar nach, Dasai nach* etc dances are also performed by them accompanied by *Madal, Nagara, Dhal, Kartal* etc.

It has been observed that *Bihu* is celebrated all over Assam by most of the tribal communities in their own individualistic ways. The *Bihu* dance is a source of unity among diversities of their folk dances belonging to different tribes, which is participated by both male and female dancers accompanied by *Dhol* (Drum), *Pepa* (Horn), *Bahi* (Flute) and so on.

**FOLK DANCE**

Folk dances are like the hidden languages of the souls through which the common people's life style along with its culture, tradition and so on are reflected. A Folk dance is a national dance of any country, or state. Folk dance, the form of dances of the multiple groups originated in medieval times when villagers gathered together to celebrate and participate in sacred ritual places, at social functions as well as in particular places like bank of river and performed the group dances. These traditional dances are passed down from generation to generation to a certain province or social
class, sometimes with no professional training, often to traditional music, and are still performed today and serve as a token of ancient times/society and civilizations.

1. Since the folk dances often originated generally in agricultural and rural areas hence dances were naturally associated with the passing seasons, when the crops were reaped and sowed and then only the Harvesting, planting dances were performed.

2. The indigenous dances are like the indication of the spontaneous growth of the religious, social and cultural life of that particular race.

3. In general, characterized by simple steps and repeated patterns of movements are one of the features of folk dances.

4. Although previously the folk dances were performed only for self enjoyment among the group but by degrees these dances are typically performed for the external audiences and hand out as a living carve of history of a specific culture.

5. Certainly the history of the folk dances says about the influential of its value on today's modern disciplines.

6. Folk dance had the influential aspect in the court of royalty as well.

7. Fundamentally, folk dances are recent movement that values the traditional dances of various peoples.

8. Folk dances usually have a story line to the dance.
At times it seen that the term ‘Folk Dance’ is applied to the dances of European cultural history while for other culture it is used as ‘Ethnic Dance’ or ‘Traditional Dance’. But not all the ethnic dances are folk dances, viz- the ritual dances are not considered as folk dances due to its purpose and these kind of dances are called as ‘Religious Dances’.

The people who are familiar with folk dances can find out what the country may be just seeing a dance even if they have not seen that particular dance before because the folk dances always have the unique feature.

Classical and modern dances are having classic figures and it is same everywhere. Classical and modern dances are highly stylized, specially planned for performance, and usually developed over a long period of time. In general it is understood that classical and modern dances are developed for the high society circles. Both the classical and modern dances are usually stricter with mainly technical phase.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE BODO-KACHARI AND RABHA FOLK DANCES IN GOALPARA DISTRICT

Indeed the folk dances play a vital role in the social lives of the people of both the tribes in Goalpara district which is like not only the entertainment, recreation but also like the psychological aspect of the people. Folk dances are like the cultural devices to understand the identities of the Bodo- Kacharis and the Rabhas of Goalpara district and of course this reflects their tradition, custom as well as the way of living style. These folk dances are the multiform cultural event that reflects the environmental,
spiritual and cultural concept of these two tribes, recounting its founding myths and strengthening its sense of self-worth. In order to ensure that it remains viable, the tribe’s priorities are to promote its transmission and to obtain its recognition beyond the geographical area in which it is practiced.

These Folk dances are basically conveying their colourful day to day life style like peasant life (planting, harvesting etc), expression of love, welcoming of seasonal festivals, worshipping and so on. These dances are highly evolved dance that enacts local folklore and abstract themes which are intimately connected to regional festivals, notably the spring festivals. Its origin is traceable to indigenous forms of dance. These dance are performed with colorful costumes in different occasions with full of fun.

Songs are an expression of the Bodo-Kachari and Rabha tribe’s traditional way of life growing in new and creative ways. The songs are circulating histories which also demonstrate the poetic acumen that is reputed to compose lyrics spontaneously and improvise songs during performances. Transmitted from generation to generation, the songs and dances form part of an oral tradition for which no texts or training manuals exist. Songs and dances are a matter of pride for both the Bodo-Kachari and Rabha tribe and a marker of their identity at a time when their traditional lifestyle and role in rural society are diminishing. They demonstrate their identity’s attempt to revitalize its culture, cultural heritage and adapt it to changing socioeconomic conditions.

The movement and gestures of these Folk dances are made up of some beautiful movements as well as gestures which indicate its purity of Folk. These are as simple as their life style. Its vocabulary of movement includes mock combat techniques, stylized gaits of birds and movements modeled on the chores of village. These folk
dances are not choreographed by taking some scales or measurements. These dances are touched by the sense of humor (in some dances).

These folk dances are the symbols of promoting the values of peace, solidarity within the families, between the generations as well as reconciliation and friendliness. In this manner these folk dance are contributing to cultural diversity and friendship among the individuals belong to different caste and creed.

The art of designing and arranging the steps and movements for dancers in the case of the study groups are simple. The folk dances among both of the study groups are always performed in groups. Both males and females together performed the groups dances and the males mostly play various kinds of musical instruments during the dance. From the point of view of Mudra or gesture language the movements are also very simple. They are sufficiently expressive of meaning. The performers act with hands. Sometimes the hands visually performed with countermand the musical words. It is to be noticed here that gestures are almost common for both tribal and non-tribal in the case of their dances and it is not limited to India, rather it is to be found all over Asia.

It may be noticed here that in the case of the folk dances of both the study groups the males and females dance together. Sometimes on the same venue the males make a line of their own as a counterpart of the line of females. Sometimes the males and females stand next to one another (1 male 1 female again male next female) in that order making a circle or line. In some dances war implements are also hold by the dancers. For example-in Ronosondi dance of the Bodo-Kachari groups the dancers dance holding war implements like-sword and shield. Likewise in Farkanti dance of the
Rabhsas the female folks dance holding shield and sword and on the other hand the male folks hold the *Manchelengka Thuka* (images of three birds carved in wood). In the agricultural folk dances of the Rabhathe females dance holding the basket in the left side portion of their body. In so far stepping is concerned one step forward and one step backward or one step right wise and one step left wise in tune with the beats of the instruments. In so far as body movement concerned the dancers take the postures of sitting and standing as and when necessary. In the Sathar dance of the Rabhas the male and females hold each other's hands in a particular situation.

INTRODUCING THE PREVALENT DANCES AMONG THESE TWO GROUPS IN GOALPARA DISTRICT

BODO-KACHARI *MWCHANAI* (Dance)

1. **BAGUROUMBA**

   It is the most beautiful and attractive dance of the Bodo-Kacharis associated with merry making gossips. It is performed only by the female folks wearing the *rege-regang* spread around their neck and the holding the ends with both hands. In every occasion, festival *Baguroumba* dance is performed. The *Baguroumba* dance was acknowledged as a national dance of India in 1957, when it was presented on the Republic day of that year under the leadership of Kamini Kr. Narzary. This word is also written and pronounced as *Bagurungba* and *Bagurumba*.
The word Baguroumba consists of four sub words: Ba+Ega+Rou+mba, which mean to carry, to come out, heaven and five respectively. Hence, Baguroumba means to carry out the Bathou puja of the supreme God who is the ruler of the five spiritual elements of heaven.

The female folks dance taking the alternate steps with the foot, folding the lower-back and the knees raced backward keeping the rhythm of the song. Begins with horizontal lines, this dancers take a circular pattern with rising tempo and ends with the beautiful wave like sea.

The story behind the Baguroumba dance

Previously for the sake of the young female folk's security, the village chiefs of the Bodo-Kachari societies decided to build a particular house at their own households so that the young girls can spend the nights safely along with their mates with full security protectors (some village boys) assigned by the chiefs. There was another reason for this that the girls while staying together the girls could learn more things seeing each other, they could share/exchange their knowledge. The female folks spent the time with dancing, singing, that they made the ambience very joyful. They used to sew clothes, used to make bamboo made goods etc. Even some girls learned there how to cook. During the free time to make fun they danced, sung, played various traditional games. It is believed among the Bodo-Kacharis of Goalpara that this beautiful dance 'Baguroumba evolved from that period only and still this dance is popular and practicing/performing by them.
Another story of Baguroumba dance:

During the time of ‘Bathou Puja’, the Bodo-Kachari people performed only this dance to welcome the lord Shiva from the Kailash Parvat (Mountain). All the villagers used to gather in a particular place and worshipped and with the believe that lord Shiva would come to them from the Kailash Parvat hence they performed the Baguroumba dance as the welcoming dance. Till now if there is any auspicious occasion they performed only the Baguroumba as the welcoming dance.

Baguroumba oi Baguroumba

Jaat Nangabla Khol Nangabla

Thamburu Homnanai bannai

Lagumunkha

(Theme of the song: come friends come out, we will welcome our lord Shiva, we don’t have any precious stuff to give you but we want you to come for us)

2. BWISAGU

The Bwisagu Mwchanai is a part of springtime celebration of the Bodo-Kacharis. The word Bwisag means the first month of the Bodo-Kachari calendar, which comes off in April. The dance symbolizes the close ties of the Bodo-Kacharis with the nature of Bwisag month. In this month every one’s minds is fresh like how the season brought new changes, refreshment in the nature. In short this dance form represents the
relation of human beings with the beautiful nature. This dance form is just like *Bihu* dance of Assam which is celebrated with merrymaking.

3. **BARDWISHIKHLA** (the Butterfly dance)

Since the ancient times the Bodo-Kacharis are dependent on nature for their livelihood. Even the day to day used elements & materials are collected from the nature and surroundings. In that, they try to assimilate with the ever changeable season, environment and so on. Spring brings a very charming picture with a new colour of nature during the month of April to May. The Bodo-Kachari people also accept the new changes of the nature and try to assimilate with it. Just unlike the new charming spring the heart of the Bodo-Kachari female folks also changes with the joyous and festive moods as this spring brings the most merrymaking festival i.e. 'Bwisagu' ('Bihu' in Assamese) and there ultimately evolved the most attractive, colorful, a classic folk dance - 'Bardwishikhla: The Butterfly Dance'. It is a limelight dance where every performer feels themselves like a butterfly.

When the wind blows as thunder storm, when new green leafs grow on the branches of plants then the Bodo girls dance by following the natural music produced during thunder storming rain and movements of the plants with the joyous moods, with *Mwinijwiritfwn* (smiling face) without which the beauty and the charm of this dance will vanish and this dance is known as *Bardwoishikhla*.

Through this dance, the activities of nature in the month of *Bwisag* (April-May), considered as the beginning of Bodo New Year is depicted. The term *Bardwishikla* can be broken into bar- wing, *dwii* -water and *shikla* meaning a young girl. In other words,
the term suggests a young girl that personifies the wind coming to the earth once in a
year and under her impact the trees and other objects of the Nature get a new lease of
life. This dance is performed during Kherai Puja, Bwisagu, marriage ceremonies and in
every joyous occasions and functions.

The most significant characteristics of this folk is it is without any songs only
following the rhythm of the Kham (Drum) and the Siphung (flute) which is only of five
holes. And the other one is -the female folk dance holding Zabkhreng or Zabkhring, (in
their right hand).

In the year 1987 at the 19th Annual Conference of ‘All Bodo Students Union’
(ABSU) held at Dudhnoi, Goalpara district, the then President of ABSU Late U.N.
Brahma, Father of Bodos declared the Bardwoishikhla Dance as the ‘Butterfly Dance’
seeing the performance of more than hundred female folks wearing their colourful
costumes holding a pair of Zabkhreng. Sometimes the word Bardwishikhla is also
written and pronounced as Bardwoichikhla and also as Bardoichikhla or Bardoichiala.

4. KHERAI

There are eighteen types of Kherai dances coinciding with the eighteen deities of
the Bodos and the 18 divisions related to Kherai puja. In all the dances there is a
Deodhoni or head dancer which is a woman or a girl and a group of accompanying
dancers.

The 18 divisions of Kherai dance are as follows:
i. *BATHOU DUMNAI*

In this dance, the female dancers depict how they construct the *Boihou* altar with beautiful dance movements. This altar consists of 5 pairs of bamboo horizontal strips and 18 vertical strips.

ii. *BATHOU THARNAY EBA FOTHARNAY*

This dance is based on the actions of the purification of the altar. The altar is purified by sprinkling sanctified water. In this dance the actions of the dancers also symbolise the overall purification of the souls of the devotees.

iii. *PALJAM BOUNAI*

After the sprinkling of pure water, the devotees take their knees and pray to the Almighty. This is what the dancers show in this form of dance.

iv. *BATHOU GIDINGNAY AROU ULTHA BATHOU GIDINGNAY*

This dance depicts the life cycle of human beings. A baby is born, attains adolescence, then youth hood, attains maturity and then becomes old and weak. In the last stage of life a human being again behaves like a child needs constant attention. The dancers depict this cycle of life in this dance.

v. *KHERAI GOULAU*

Life is short but Earth is long. No one knows about the creation and the end of the Universe. Although life is short, human beings are mortal, their emotions, devotion to God would remain till the annihilation of the Universe since the Universe is very long. This is what the dancers try to depict through their dance.
vi. **KHERAI GUSUNG**

This dance depicts that human lives are short lived. And that we should lead a righteous
life. And if we do this our soul will be immortal.

vii. **GANDULA BOUNNAI**

In this dance, the dancers show the how they try to trap a dragon fly. Through
this beautiful dance the dancers depict the pride, arrogance, haughtiness etc of human
being which should be controlled because these kind of attitude only bring destruction
of a beautiful life. Here in this dance the dragon fly is considered as these attitudes and
the trap is considered as the controlling power of the human beings.

viii. **KHOIZOMA PHONAI**

In this dance, the dancers act like they are trying to get rid of the ants as the ants
are infested their body like enemies. Here the ants try to overpower the human minds
into bad deeds. Here in this dance form represent the enemies of the human minds.

ix. **DAHAL THUGRI SIBNAYI**

This dance is performed with sword and shield in the hands of the dancers. Here
the dancers depict the sword as the religion through which the human beings can fight
with the sins (in the form of enemies). On the other hand through the shield the human
being can protect themselves from evil indulgences.

x. **GOBOU THUNGRIOU GANA**

In this dance, the Doudini or the main dancer holds one sword in each hand and
another in the mouth and matches steps admirably. The blade of the sword has the
power to annihilate all. The expert *Deodhoni* even walks over the edge of a sword with the accompanying music and it symbolise that if we have the courage, we can overcome even our worst and deadliest enemies.

xi. *ORKHALA JANAI*

Anger is the deadliest enemy of human beings. In this dance fire represents the anger which is consumed by the dancers to symbolise its control over anger.

xii. *DOUTHE LOUNGNAI*

Through this dance, the dancers depict how we should try to triumph over our wild thoughts and evil deeds so that the humankinds live peacefully.

xiii. *GARAIDABRAINAI*

The dancers through this dance show the steps of controlling a horse. Here the horse represents humankind’s mind, which has control over the sensory organs of the human body.

xiv. *SAT HENGRA SIFAI NAI*

In this dance the dancers show about the unlimited desires of human lives forgetting that life is very short.

xv. *NAO BOUNAY*

Like the waves of a river/a sea the human lives are also face such ups and downs in their lives and sometimes reached in some hither and thither situation as the human lives can be compared with a river as the life, body as a boat and the mind as the boat man. Here in this dance the dancers show that how one day a boat touches the other
bank and then only the human lives come to an end. And as the boat touches the other bank, our life comes to an end. In this dance the Deodhoni or the head dancer uses the sword like an oar while showing the step of rowing a boat.

xvi. RAIGUNG SIBNAY

The good deeds/things are always triumphs over evil. And this dance shows how the human minds sometimes get attracted towards bad things and eventually overcome with the good will power.

xvii. KHAMAO BARKHOUNA

This dance form is the primary chore of Kherai puja where the Deodhoni holds cane made stick in the right hand and one or two live chicken in the left hand and dances around the altar. The Deodhoni then moves close to a kham (traditional drum) and stands straight on a wooden block laid there and after that bows the head to the drum and wrings the neck of the chickens and again bows to the drum and drinks the blood of the chickens. In this dance the drum is considered as their God and belief that everyone should bow down before the drum, even if he/she one of the powerful persons though and then only they could lead a happy life ahead.

xviii. RANASONDRI

The forefathers of the Bodo-Kachari tribe were warriors like the others. This dance signifies their skilled art in this warrior field. Here both the males and females act as enemies and attack their opponent with sword and shield. Ranasondri is also written and pronounced as Ranachandi.
5. **MWCHAGLANGNAI**

It is believed that while worshipping Bathou, and of course side by side in the middle the 18 primary kherai dances the *Mwchaglangnai* dance is performed to relax the people present there either by the same artists of that primary kherai dances or by the another artists. This is one of the fun making dances. Having no fix colour in the dress pattern (sometimes the women folks wear green *Dokhma* or sometimes yellow) the women folks dance following the rhythm of drum and flute as there is no song in this dance form blissfully with smiling faces. *Mwchaglangnai* word is also written and pronounced as *Mwchaglangnai*.

6. **HABAJANAI DANCE**

The word 'haba' in Bodo means marriage, while 'janai' means to eat. Hence *Habajanai* dance is said as eating, merry making, and joyous dance form, performed in marriages ceremony. This dance consists of five parts namely *Habajani, Bwirathi Dorkhengnai, Bwirathi Daojrunchanai, Barlampha Mwchanai and Bangsial or Sifung Dariya Mwchanai*. The *dokhma* used is usually red in colour. It is to be noted that in this dance only the *sifung* (flute) is played as accompanying musical instrument.

7. **RAIWJ JANAI DANCE**

The *Raijw Janai* dance represents the daily lives of the where the word *Raijw* means society or, state or, country or people while the word *janai* means to eat or to be. The dance steps involve daily activities like *maigainai* (planting of paddy saplings), *hindani* (weaving), *chethla chibnai* (sweeping), *goi khaonai* (cutting betelnut) etc.
8. NA GURNAI

This dance represents the community fishing culture of the Bodos. The dance is participated mostly by females. The traditional fishing implements made from bamboo are used in this dance. The accompanying music of this dance is very rhythmic. They wear the yellow coloured dokhona.

The song of this dance is:

_Fui Hai Lugu Dubli Khonayo_

_Jugui Jugui na gurni_

_Aayoi na guri buri nakshengkhleng jalengboi_

_Jinjirini jakhong jinjirini khabay_

_Haigafa khobaifa_

_Lao dobani nasingi haoigafa khobaija_

_Haai lugu haaigufa khobaija_

_Jugar Jugar gur haai lugu_

_Lao dobani_

(meaning- Please come my friends, let’s go for fishing, see I am getting old and ugly as I go for fishing often, the heat makes my skin black, in one time we will get full Khaloi, fishes. Zaodobani pond’s fishes are singi fishes, lets enjoy and play with clay and enjoy the fishing moments.)
9. *JARA PAGLA*

This dance is performed without any permanent steps and all, just one has to follow the rhythms of the drums and flute. Originally the male folks were seen to perform this dance with very sad moods, drunk and roaming hither and thither. But now the male and female folk together performed this dance in some gathering places with joyous moods drinking, teasing and merrymaking.

The story behind the *Jara pagla* dance and it’s song:

The dance ‘*Jara Pagla*’ is said as ‘*Jara Fagla*’ by the Bodo-Kacharis of Goalpara district. There is an interesting story related with the song of this particular dance. The name of this song is ‘*Jara Faglani*’ which is based on an oral myth of a father -in-law and whom daughter -in-law was vanished. The father-in-law was none than ‘*Jara Pagla*’ own self. Here in this song there is depicts about the good manners or characters of the daughter-in-law. *Jara Pagla* (the father-in-law) was proud and said that his daughter-in-law was full of twelve numbers (12) of good natures i.e. ‘*Baro Mongoli*’. She (daughter-in-law) was kidnapped by somebody who was a *Ronda Faglaya* (mad) person. Then she was lonely and cleaning their household cowshed. While following the footsteps *Jara Pagla* was lucky enough to get the footsteps of his dearly *Mongoli* daughter-in-law but that was unfortunately only till a little sandy place as after that the area was full of *Ulubon* (wild plants) so he could not find the steps ever after. Thus this dance was come into being among the Bodo-Kachari.

*Shalthiloi shalthi
Oi shalthiK
Khama BukhlaloI*
Oi Shalthi
Oi Shalthi
Aangni Bihamojou Bar Mongli
Goli Khonayao Goubour Gardoungmoun
Ronda Faglaya Lankhar Bay
Bala Bariyao Aagan Nudoungmoun
Bala Bariyao Aagan Nudoungmoun
Thuri Bariyao Goumabay
Thuri Bariyao Goumabay ii

(short meaning- Oh, dear where you are you, are you fine, who took you from us, you were like my child, I am searching you but cant not find anywhere,)

10. SATRALI

This dance shows the war-techniques. With the help of such techniques and practical knowledge one can apply for the sake of self defense. Holding the sword in each hands the female folks dance with the rhythm of drums and flutes.

RABHA FUSAKAY (Dance)

1. FARKANTI

This word Farkanti also pronounced and written as Pharkanti. Farkanti dance is related to ritualistic death ceremony. There is a popular belief regarding the performance of this dance. In the past, when human beings led nomadic lives, they constantly had to wage wars against members of other groups and also animals. In the
process, a large number of people lose their lives in the wars. The Rabhas, one of the earliest known habitants of Assam used to perform a community prayer ceremony to pay tribute to the souls who gave up their lives for their group. This ritualistic ceremony continues till today as a tribute to their brave ancestors. But nowadays, this is celebrated only by individual families with a few acquaintances from neighbouring areas. And Farkanti dance is performed during these ceremonies.

According to a legend, in the past, the mass cremation of these men who died in war was performed in the vicinity of a river or pond. And the place was locally known as Mangkhramdam. The Rabha women used to weave a special cloth called Dotari to collect the ashes of their loved one. It is to be mentioned that the Dotari is weaved in one night and is used only for the above-mentioned purpose. The next morning the ladies used to go to the Mangkhramdam dressed in their best attires and carrying the swords and shield of their men. On reaching the appointed place the people saw a simalu (silk cotton tree) tree that has lost all its leaves due to the cremation fire that kept burning throughout the night. But, they saw 4 birds sitting on the three branches of the naked tree. The four birds were kingfisher, woodpecker, and fishing eagles locally called manchelengka, tandalenka, batikotika and kuruwa respectively. When the birds saw the human beings, they spoke to themselves in birds’ language and then left the place. As soon as the birds left the place, the tree revived, and leaves began to appear and it became its former self. The people were amazed and stared at the tree in disbelief. The people understood that the souls of the dead were yet to take rebirth and for that they have to perform the death ceremonies of the departed. The ladies at once collected the ashes in their respective dotaries and put them in their backs. The men stood behind them with swords in hand, so that no evil spirits may snatch the ashes away. They then,
positioned themselves in a line and bowed to the tree and came back to their village. They walked together matching their steps putting forth their left leg first and then looking back into the Mangkhramdam with heavy hearts, remembering their loved ones.

They moved towards their villages in the same manner in hurried steps sometimes stopping at regular intervals. The rhythmic steps of these people destroyed all the vegetation that came on their way. And their rhythmic steps took the form of a dance, with the inclusion of musical instruments. And hence the beautiful Farkanti Dance was born. This is how originally the Farkanti dance was observed performing in some isolated places like-jungle, river side.

The Rabhas use the Manchelengka Thuka, symbolising the four birds of their popular legend as a dancing prop during the performance of Farkanti Dance. There is also an interesting story behind the Manchelenka Thuka.

According to Prakash Rabha (64), the story behind the Farkanti dance is somewhat like this so far as he remembers from his grandfather.

Kingba Dada and Dagba Dada, the two brothers once went for hunting into the jungle. They were very close to each other that did not leave any single words to share. They were just like friends. These two brothers had one weakness and that was their beloved dog. On that particular day they went to hunt Mutha (Gui Snake) leaving their dear dog back at home. After finishing hunting they were coming back to home happily hoping to see their dog waiting for them, totally unaware that a shocking moment was awaited for them as they already lost their beloved dog. Someone may take him or may lost himself in the jungle. They cried like anything blaming themselves that they could have took him with them too. They searched him here and there, into the jungle. But all
were in vain as they could not find him anywhere. The dog was too adorable like one of their own brother that they arranged Shraddha (funeral ceremony for the deceased person) for him. On the Shraddha date of the dog all the villagers/ nearby villagers came to be the part of the grief. All the people knew their love for the dog. On that day they came sang, danced and tried to cheer up the two brothers, all were in sad moods though. In this manner from that Shraddha date the Farkanti dance came into being among the Rabha people of Goalpara district.

The songs of the Farkanti Dance deal with the subject of death and rebirth. The first paragraph of the song is:

O aaya baba sime

Khapeta khapeta nago sunn kiya

Mon tima jangsare nango nukshiana

(The theme of the song: oh our dear, where are you, why you left us, we are crying like anything, we can’t see you)

2. KHOKSHI

According to the Rabha legendary, Krimbichung was the first deity who came into being in human form. Krimbichung brought another deity from the heaven to look after the Rabhas and that deity was kept sacrely in a Lunkhi (A bamboo and Cane made Basket). The name of that deity was Sibung-Sisura and in the month of Jeth’ (April-May) this deity is worshipped along with sacrifices as well as chants placing it in a particular altar. Besides these many additional activities like dancing and singing are performed to appease this deity. The hymn or the prayer during the worshipping is different from the other worship.
The Rabhas worshipped this deity for the well-being of the people on earth. *Sibung* is the male deity and the ‘*Sisura*’ is the birth giving goddess of the Rabhas and both of them together are called ‘*Khokshi*’ (Khok: Body & Shi: Life and soul). In this auspicious day all the priests worshipped whole day in the particular worshipping patch i.e. ‘*Thaan*’ till the night. While returning from the ‘*Thaan*’ all the priests gathered in front of the house of the chief priest and lights a fire in the ‘*Sita*’ (a funeral pile which is 20/30 ft height) built with dry bamboo leaf and danced till the fire turns into charcoal. The priests bathed their bodies with this charcoal by sprinkling them on their bodies and some rub their legs in these coils and spread them in their surroundings. As the priests worshipped their ‘*Khokshi*’ deity in a holy state, people believe that these burning coils can produce no harm to their bodies. It is very hard to find any other communities in this world practicing such types of activities. But this ‘*Khokshi*’ dance is still practiced by the Rabha tribes existing in Assam and other places of North-East where it was performed earlier.

The traditional Rabha Attires for Khokshi dance are *Kumbai* - full sleeve shirt, *Khambai* (like a long skirt), *Parjar* - flowery long towel, *Bashek* - stole hanged in shoulder, *Dodo, Khopong*- turban cap, and *Konor* - bow and an arrow is hold by the dancers during performance.

There’s a specific song and music for this Khokshi dance and mainly Kham (Dhol) and Flute are used as the musical instruments.

The song of the *Khokshi* dance:

```
Aarihong arihong laisuk
Rengetong rengani rengetongse arihong
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3. **HASONG**

The Hasong dance is mainly related to the hasong puja. But today, bowing to popular demands, it has become an important stage performance. The dance performed in Hasong Puja is Khangcha Nakcha or Boromahi Fusakay. Since it is only performed in Hasong Puja so this dance is known as Hasong dance. Only the 12 artists perform this dance form.

The puja is celebrated to appease the deity *darmang deo*. In this puja, various offerings are made to the deity that includes animals like swine, goat, fowls etc. The puja ends with the presentation of the Hasong dance. The Hasong puja is observed to
prevent various ailments and other misfortunes during the agricultural season that begins after the onset of spring i.e. the month of Bohag (April-May).

4. GIRKA1

The Girkai dance is part of the celebrations of the springtime festival of the Rabhas. In this dance, the young boys visit every household in the village and receive the offerings from the members of the individual households and celebrate a community feast with great fanfare.

There are no fixed costumes worn during this dance but the boys have to wear a red coloured cloth called pajar on their waists and a green cloth is used as a turban. The boys also carry two sticks of 1-1½ feet in their hands. This dance has the similarities with the Bihhu Husuri performed by the Assamese male folks. Since first of all the group of the male folks visit the households singing and dancing the husuri songs and then the female folks enter and performed bihu dance.

_Fusa Khayo Sisong siong_

_May rakhu rakhu song rakhu song_

(Theme of the song: Come lets go to field and dance together, let’s make joyful moments.)

5. HAMJAR

The Hamjar dance of the Rabhas celebrates the agricultural season. In the past, the Rabhas practiced jhum cultivation and after the hard days labour of clearing the forests and making it suitable for cultivation, the people relax by singing, dancing and making
merry. This is the *Hamjar* Dance. The meaning of the word *ha* is soil and *majar* means jungle or forests area hence the word *Hamjar*.

The implements used in this dance are axe and spade in the hands of males and *harebakhu* and *lungkhi* (traditional items made of bamboo to keep paddy).

6. **BAGEJARI**

The songs of this dance form deal with various subjects like love, joys and sorrows of separation between lovers, teasing between boys and girls etc. wearing their traditional costumes the womenfolk dance to the tunes of the bagejari songs and make merry. During this dance, the perspective boys and girls select their respective life partners.

7. **SATHAR**

*Sathar* dance is performed by both the male and female folk. This is also one of the joyous dances. The songs are implicit love and romance. With this dance they express their love to each other. It was in 1960, Shri Moni Rabha composed or invented the lyric of the Sathar dance’ song. There are vast similarities with the Assamese *Bihu* dance and *Sathar* dance songs.

8. **BAHURANGI**

The peculiar aspect of *Bahurangi* dance is, the songs of this dance are based on their day to day life’s activities. The women folk danced with immense pleasure. They make some witty gestures teasing each other.

The story behind the *Bahurangi* dance/song:
Bahurangi and Khoprangi were two very beautiful sisters. They were in their young stage and that stage already made them crazy for nature, romance etc. Once while going for fishing they met a king named Debadi Dharma. The king fell in love with them seeing their mesmerizing beauties and brought them to his palace. But unfortunately both of their raahi jura were unmatched with the king’s so the king could not marry Bahurangi and khoprangi. Feeling sad and taking the order of Narad Muni the sisters started living in the Baykho and Khokshi Puja celebration places. They were always too drunk that sung happily whatever they wanted to and sing and those lines became as the songs of Bahurangi geet. Although the songs sung by these two sisters are now no longer exist in the Rabha society but they were the first to bring these songs.

Based on this story a part of the Bahurangisong has come, that is:

_Duror porai dekha palung boga tinor ghor_

_Hay hay boga tinor ghor_

_Nasibake mon jay borolokor ghor_

_Hay hay borolokor ghor_

(Meaning- we are seeing from far away beautiful RCC houses, may be that house is belong to a rich person, we have the desire to dance in the courtyard of that house, )

_Oi buini aasili ba kot_

_Oi buini nasili ba kot_

_Aah dui buini mash marong mukoli potharot_

(The theme of the song: we sisters don’t know from where we have come/born in this life, but now we will be happy; we go for fishing together in the open air/field.)
9. **SHIVA DARMANG**

This dance form is performed in the name of the Lord *Shiva* while worshipping Shiva. The female folks danced holding *Saki* (earthen light) leaving their hairs open. This dance is performed wearing the clean clothes. Although this dance form was performed in some sacred places like temple but now it is arranged for the stage performances.

10. **DEODHANI**

The peculiarity of Deodhani dance is it is performed only in the ‘*Mare Puja*’ (Maa Kali puja). During the worshipping of Goddesses *Maa Kali* along with a very sacred and clean process this dance is performed in front of the idol of *Maa Kali*. It is believed with an impure mind, heart and body one cannot perform this dance, one has to have divine dreams.

Before one day of ‘*Maa Kali*’ Puja arrives all the villagers get themselves engaged to clean up their households, nearby areas and all. This particular day is called “*Nokhithar Kay*”.

11. **BHARI GAAN**

The *Bhari Gaan* is very popular, basically a folk drama where dance drama and song all are included. *Bhari Gaan* is a part of *Ramayana*. First of all the *Ojaha* (priest) takes the lead of singing with his supporting singers with the accompanying instruments. After the Ojah’s singing part is finished the Bhaoriyas (actors) come wearing the wooden masks made by its members itself. The costume of *Bhari Gaan* is very simple. Apart from the Goalpara district Bhari Gaan is popular in South Kamrup...
district of Assam and East & West Garo Hills of Meghalaya among the Rabha societies present there.

*Manchelengka Thuka*, as an important dancing implement of the Rabha folk dance

*Manchelengka* is the indispensible part of the Rabha folk dance. The other name is Machoroka. This beautiful bamboo made implement is named after the *Manchelengka* or *Machoroka* bird. According to believe of the Rabha people the *Machoroka* bird carries the ill news in advance by crying.

In most of the Rabha folk songs there is depicted about this implement. For instance the following is one of the *Pati* Rabha songs where the *Manchelengka* is depicted.

Boys’-

*Manchelenka Chiluk Chiluk*

*Guk Fakara*

*O’ Aangi Nachikay*

*Nang Aata Khara*

(*Meaning: Seeing the Cricket insect the Machoroka sings like this-Tiu Tiu...O’ my sweet heart what are you doing?)

Girls’-

*Manchenka Tiu Tiu*

*Hindol Gosor Dalot*

*Toke Dekhi Mass Marong*

*Mukoli Potharot*
(Meaning: Manchelengka sings like Tiu Tiu on the branch of Hindol tree, seeing you fishing in the open field).

Diagram No. 1: - Image of Manchelengka Thuka (Not in scale)

It is the Farkanti dance's song where the impact of the Manchelengka is seen more than that of the other folk songs. For instance:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Manchelenka Momo Tiu Tiu Khara} \\
\text{Badatika Momo Hulupuchuk Khara} \\
\text{Naang Chango Nuke Tikam Joton Khara} & \ldots \ldots \\
\end{align*}
\]

(Meaning: Sisters, the wood cutter birds are playing like hide & seek, the Machoroka is crying Tiu Tiu then why are you combing your hair?)
There is an interesting story behind this Manchelengka or Machoroka that how this implement came into being in the Rabha folk songs and dance.

This story behind this-

In the ancient time when even the history could not touch that period there two sisters namely Rondona and Chondona were lived in a village. They were very beautiful. The husbands of both these sisters were brothers too. Their names were Nirmon and Nirchon. But just after a few days of their marriages both the husbands (Nirmon and Nirchon) had to leave for then war as they were selected as 'commander-in-chief' of that war. The days were passing and finally both their husbands reached their home after twelve (12yrs) years. But after reaching home Rondona and Chondona could not identify them as they had totally changed due to growing ages. Both their wives did not agree to accept them as their husbands. Failed to counsel their wives Nirmon and Nirchon left that place with the very sad moods. They sailed their boats in the sea and disappeared. On the way Nirmon and Nirchon met Manchelengka and for the last time they asked Nirmon and Nirchon to inform their wives that they (Rondona and Chondona) have destroyed their luck themselves by rejecting them as they were their husbands. Rondona and Chondona were very keen to know about the truth, but it was too late. They were only crying and committed suicide themselves by hurting their heads in the tree. From then onwards the Rabhas believes Manchelengka as the faithful bird. They also believes that Manchelengka bird their friends when they are in danger.

So according to the Rabhas the Manchelengka is the bird who carries the ill news. At present also when this bird cries nearby places of a household the members of that household thinks that there must be coming some ill news for them.
These folk dances, festivals are the integral part of the culture of both these tribes. It binds together people from different social strata and ethnic background with diverse social practices, beliefs, professions and languages.

Among the Rabhas there are some folk dance forms which were previously performed group or clan wise. Even the groups were the founder of their respective folk dance forms (performed by them). By degrees the other artists and the people belong to the other clans of the Rabhas in Goalpara accept and achieved to learn these folk dances and used to perform in many occasions. Now there is nothing barriers in the performing of these folk dances. Anyone belong to any clan or group can learn and show their talents anywhere.

But while talking about the Bodo-Kacharis, there are no any single folk dance forms that performed group or clan wise.

From the afore mentioned folk dance forms of both the groups it is observed that there are some dance form which are performed only by Female folks and some are performed only by the male folks. Among the Rabhas, apart from serving the Jonga (Rice-beer) before the performance, not a single woman can step the foot during the Khokhshi dance as side by side the Baikho puja is goes on.
Table no: - 1

This table shows the Rabha folk dance forms which were previously performed clan wise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF THE RABHA CLAN</th>
<th>NAME OF THE DANCE FORMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rongdani Rabha</td>
<td>Farkanti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maitori group</td>
<td>Sathar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pati Rabha</td>
<td>Bahurangi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pati Rabha</td>
<td>Bagejari</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although previously the above mentioned (shown in table no.1) dance forms were performed only clan wise but this is no longer exist among the Rabhas of Goalpara district.

Table no:- 2

The table shows the dance forms performed only by the female folks among the Bodo-Kacharis and the Rabhas of Goalpara.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BODO-KACHARI DANCE FORMS</th>
<th>RABHA DANCE FORMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baguromba</td>
<td>Bahurangi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bardwishikhla</td>
<td>Shiva Darmang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Na gur nai mwachanai</td>
<td>Deodhani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satrali</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table no:-3

The table shows the dance forms performed only by the male folks among the Bodo-Kacharis and the Rabhas of Goalpara.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BODO-KACHARI DANCE FORMS</th>
<th>RABHA DANCE FORMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jara Fagla</td>
<td>Khokhchi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bharigaan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DRESS AND ORNAMENTS OF THE ARTISTS DURING PERFORMANCES

During the performances of the folk dances the artists wear the following, very colorful, floral designed attires. Generally the dresses for both the male as well as female folks weaved by the Bodo-Kachari and Rabha women at their household's weaves. But by degrees it is now seen that not only these attires but also the other traditional dresses are weaved in the weaving Mills running by the non-Tribal peoples as well.

The performers use to wear these attires according to the dance to be performed since these are differs dance wise. These dress and ornaments are also used in their day to day lives.
Table no:- 4

This table shows the dresses and its descriptions of the Bodo-Kachari artists:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF THE DRESSES</th>
<th>ARTISTS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF THE DRESSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dokhna</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>This is a piece of colourful cloth which is worn by the female folks. It is tied round the chest portion that hangs to toe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaronai</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>It is just like a muffler.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regeregang Or Phali</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>It is just like a stall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosola</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>This is the shirt the male folks wear. It is adorned with traditional floral design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamocha</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>The male folks wear this piece of cloth in the bottom portion i.e. from waist to the knee. It's colour varies, green to yellow, orange.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khor Khawinai Khanai</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>It is head gear</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table no:- 5

This table shows the Ornaments and its descriptions of the Bodo-Kachari artists:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF THE ORNAMENTS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF THE ORNAMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Khera Or Kheru</td>
<td>This is gold or silver made earring worn by the women folks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talinglura Or Dul</td>
<td>This is also one kind of earring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boula</td>
<td>Boula is worn on the upper portion of the ear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puti</td>
<td>Puti is a small earring which is attached to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME OF THE DRESSES</td>
<td>ARTISTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Riphan Or Ruphan</strong></td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Patani Or Lemphota</strong></td>
<td>female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kambang Or Kambung</strong></td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Khadabang Or Khakha</strong></td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pajar Or Gamsa Or Kalai</strong></td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Khachne Or Khapang</strong></td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Buk-Chil Or Bak-Chali</strong></td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kumbai</strong></td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table no:- 6

This table shows the dresses and its descriptions of the Rabha artists:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF THE ORNAMENTS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF THE ORNAMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nambri</td>
<td><em>Nambri</em> is a gold or silver made earrings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bala-Nambri</td>
<td><em>Bala-Nambri</em> is also gold or a silver made earring which is wore on the upper parts of the ears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naka-Pati</td>
<td>It is a nose ring and also made of gold or silver.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chan</td>
<td>It is a gold or silver or copper made solid bracelet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandra-Har</td>
<td>It is a necklace which is made of silver only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siki Or Suki</td>
<td><em>Siki</em> i.e. four ana coins are stringed as a garland and put on in the neck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhari-Chela</td>
<td><em>Bhari-chela</em> is made of silver strings and is used in the ankles of both feet.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Musical instruments comprises the three basic elements - Rhythmic, Melodious and harmonious. The combination of different musical instruments provides a lively, joyous, delightful aspect to the music.

Having a rich and numerous in variety the musical instruments of both the groups may be classified into four kinds based on the Indian Classical Musical tradition.

Table: - 8

This table shows the Musical instruments and its description of the Bodo-Kacharis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF THE INSTRUMENTS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF THE INSTRUMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kham</td>
<td>Kham, a Drum which is made from the trunk of such trees as Sama, odla, etc. The two sides are covered with goat or deer skin while the other braces are made of buffalo skin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sifung or Siphung</td>
<td>Siphung means Flute which is made of species of bamboo called 'Ouajlau' in Bodo. It has five holes for playing and one for blowing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serja</td>
<td>It is a harp like instrument, the body of which is made of Chitauna or Kanthal wood. The lower part of the body is hollow and a part of it is covered with the skin of Maphou. It has four strings made of Muga silk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jotha</td>
<td>Cymbals, made of bell-metal used to keep time with the music played on the different occasions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zab-Khring or Zab-Shring</td>
<td>It is a kind of castanets which have wooden frames on which are fitted small round pieces of sheet metal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME OF THE INSTRUMENTS</td>
<td>DESCRIPTION OF THE INSTRUMENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kham or Dhak</strong></td>
<td>A drum made of Gamari wood is called a <em>Kham or Dhak</em>. The two sides of a <em>Kham or Dhak</em> are covered with Deer or Goat skin. The 'Doans' (Rope) of the drum are made of leather.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singa</strong></td>
<td><em>Singa</em> is a kind of horn. It is of two kinds Big and Small which are made of buffalo horn whereas the Small <em>Singa</em> can also be made by bamboo tube.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Muk-Brangsi</strong></td>
<td><em>Muk-Brangsi</em> is a kind of flute made of Nal-Bamboo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kara or Karha</strong></td>
<td>A peculiar kind of flute made of Nal-Bamboo only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Daidi</strong></td>
<td><em>Daidi</em> is a metal made bell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tal</strong></td>
<td>A pair of cymbals made of metal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Badung-duppa</strong></td>
<td>An approximately two (2) feet long <em>Kako</em> bamboo tube sliced off from a long full piece of bamboo keeping the bamboo notches at either end intact. The instrument is lacquered with locally available resin for protection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gamana or Gamena</strong></td>
<td>A kind of jew’s harp, made of bamboo and sometimes any kind of metal, having a small string for producing sound by the tongue played inside the mouth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nara-Pepa</strong></td>
<td>Made of stubble of paddy is restricted to play in the paddy field, if it plays the household deity, Lakshmi Maa would vanishes from the household of the owner of that paddy field where Nara-Pepa played.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Among the Rabhas there are different taboos which are associated with the musical instruments played in their performing arts like-music & dance. There are some instruments which are prohibited to play on some occasions as well as all time as there is a particular or fixed time to play some of the instruments. For instances-

- Playing Bransi during night time is a sign of ill-luck.

- Daidi, Kara and Badungduppa are only played during the worshipping time of the traditional deities. Apart from this time if it plays some ill news may come as misfortune for the people of that particular village.

Table no: - 10. Annual calendar of Folk Dance performances of the Bodo-Kacharis and the Rabhas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONTHS</th>
<th>FOLK DANCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BODO-KACHARI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December-January (Puh-Magh)</td>
<td>Baguroumba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January-February Magh-Fagun</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February-March (Fagun-Chot)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March-April (Chot-Bohag)</td>
<td>Bardwishikhla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bwisagu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April-May (Bogah-Jeth)</td>
<td>Bardwishikhla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bwisagu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-June (Jeth-Ahar)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June-July (Ahar-Saun)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July-August (Saun-Bhador)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August-September (Bhador-Ahin)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September-October</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ahin-Kati)</td>
<td>October-November (Kati-Aghon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November-December (Aghon-Puh)</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December January (Puh-Magh)</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are some dances for which there is no any fixed day or month. Those dances are performed at any time, months and so on.

The 5th Dudhnoi *Rongjali Bwisagu* Fwubw (Festival)

It was the 5th Bwisagu festival held at Dudhnoi, Goalpara on 1st, 2nd and 3rd May, 2014. From the year 2010 this festival is being celebrated by ABSU. One and all belonging to different caste and creed gathered participate and enjoy this 3 days festival and make it a grand success every year.

Under the guidance of the Chief patrons Sri Shibcharan Basumatary, MLA, Dudhnoi constituency and Sri Tankeshwar Rabha, CEC (Rabha Hasong Autonomous Council), the 2014 Bwisagu Fwubw (festival) was splendid. For the year 2014, Sri Surjya Kr. Swargiary was the President and Sri Santosh Hazowary was the general secretary. All the assigned members for the respective responsibilities worked with spirit and enthusiasm.

The competitions – Art competition, Bwisagu group dance competition, Group dance competition (folk dances of different tribes) and Best Kham, Serja and Sifung musician award competition were organized. The cultural nights were one of the attractions.
Along with the participants for the competition there was an invited guest dance troupe consisting of 45 female members apart from the 4 male accompanying musicians, including the singers Smt Jeuti Hazowary and Smt Kaushilya Boro. Every year for this festival they have been performing as the guest troupe. Even they go to perform outside of Goalpara district to keep the invitation as guest dance troupe. The peculiarity of this troupe is that all most of the female members are teachers and service holders.

**Baykho Festival of the Rabhas:**

It's been 15 years that the Baykho festival is celebrated at Dudhnoi by the Dudhnoi Rabha Student Union. In 2012, it was a grand festival celebrated by the Rabhas of Goalpara district. The people of different caste and creed were gathered to witness those two days festival. *Khokhshi* puja along with its dance were celebrated and performed in both those two days.

Every year the Baykho puja committee invited the *Khokhshi* team from Hatigaon and Nadiyapar villages of Goalpara district. In 2012 the team was from Hatigaon, P.O- Bolbola, Goalpara. It was a huge team of 45 members including female folks (6-8 female members) under the team leaders of Sri Harakanta Rabha, Arup Rabha and Parbanta Rabha. They performed the *Khokhshi* puja and its dance and mesmerized the spectators. It was really thrilling when they step on the burning ashes of the fire. This Hatigaon Khokhshi troupe has been visiting many places of Assam to perform *Khokhshi* puja and dance.

From last three years the committee has been organizing a beauty contest - 'Rasong Sini Doray' (The lucky one). Even they heir the models from the capital of
Assam, Guwahati for the prior cat walk training for the participants of this beauty event.

The non-Rabha girls also can participate in this contest. This contest is not only measured by someone’s beauty but also included the dress patterns as well.