CHAPTER- 4
4.0 Introduction

Like other tribes of India, the Bodos of Assam also observe several traditional festival and ceremonies based on their folk custom. The Bodos observe so many festivals round the year. In this chapter discussion will be made only on the seasonal and agricultural festival of the Bodos of the study area.

4.1 Agricultural festival

The Bodo communities are basically an agricultural community and usually they do not have any other occupation besides agriculture. Their crops are paddy (winter and summer), jute, mustard and pulses. They cultivate their land with a plough and a pair of bullocks which is common all over Eastern India. Planting harvesting and thrashing procedures are the same as in other parts of Assam. The duty to the male members is to plough the field while in all other agricultural activities, female work side by side with the male. Basically plantation is their main job of the female members.

Most of the household possess land for cultivation. Usually the elderly male of the family maintain the job of cultivation. Those who possess huge land or cannot engaged themselves, cultivate their land by contract agricultural labours who are called dahuna or haluai (man) and ruwathi or ‘Ruwani’ (women). They work for a stipulated amount of paddy or money for the season. Landless families cultivate others’ land on share crop basis. This is known as adia maonai among the Bodos of Goalpara district. As they always depend on agriculture they observe and celebrate festivals and ceremonies related to agriculture for the welfare
of the crops. Following are the festival and ceremonies observed by the Bodos of Goalpara district which are directly related to agriculture.

4.1.1 Khuthia Phwnai

Khuthia Phwnai is the first step of paddy cultivation. The owner of the house offer a pair of areca nuts and betel leaves to the Goddess Mainao (Goddess of wealth) after the field ploughing. The offering is specially given towards the east of the field and the owner worship and salutes towards the east. After saluting he starts sowing the seeds of paddy. This is called khuthia phwnai.

4.1.2 Gosa Hwnai

The first day of the sali paddy plantation is called gosa hwnai among the Bodos of Goalpara district. This is mostly known as Mai gainay among the Bodos of other area. Gosa honai is performed with some rites. Village women usually the neighbours are invited by the family to help in gosa hwnai ceremony. The male labours make the field ready by ploughing. The elderly female goes to the field with the other women who were invited for paddy plantation. She then plants the shoots of the bamboo plant towards the east on the field. Then she offers a pair of areca nuts and betel leaves, a small quantity of rice, an egg, one or two coins and Prasad (mixer of chicken pea, green gram, coconut, banana, ginger etc) on a plantain leaf under the bamboo shoot. An earthen lamp is also lit in front of the bamboo shoot. Then she salute the Goddess Mainao (goddess of wealth) for the welfare of the paddy. First the family member starts then the others start the plantation activity. After completion of plantation they enjoy the ceremony spreading and throwing mud on each other and joking which is known as ‘Habru Gelenai’ among the Bodos of Goalpara district. This means playing with mud. Then all enjoy with maibra jou.
(made of sticky rice), pork, chicken and different kind of *phitha* (cake) etc. This ceremony is observed during the month of *Asar* (June-July).

4.1.3 Nangal Jangkhra

This ceremony is observed after the completion of paddy plantation. *nangal* means plough in Bodo and *Jangkhra* means to clean. Then *nangal Jangkhra* means to clean the plough or concluding ceremony of paddy plantation. Plough and other implements of ploughing are cleansed and hanged behind their houses or *gali* (cowshed) to keep the plough in a good condition for the next year. This occasion is very jovial and pleasant as their work is completed for the season for the time being and takes rest. In the evening they lit *Alari bathi* (earthen lamp) under the *siju* or *thulunsi* plant in their family yard and *Bathou Brai* is worshipped for the welfare of agriculture and humanity.

Then in the evening the family members and sometime relatives and neighbours are entertained with rice beer and delicious dishes including fish, chicken, pork, curd and sweets etc.

4.1.4 Dainy or Akash Dainy Puja

There are several ceremonies related to agriculture which is unique to Goalpara district only. One of them is *Dainy* or *Akash dainy puja*. *Dainy* usually means witch who brings ill omen. Most of the Bodo people believe in witches. They believe that certain individuals are thought to have supernatural powers, which may be used to do harm. The word *dainy* bears the meaning of witch and sorcerer in Assamese society. Here in this puja, *dainy* is a deity of an evil goddess who can destroy the crops by sending insects, grass hopper, caterpillar etc. For healthy growth of crops the Bodos worship goddess *Dainy*. They believe that if they can appease the goddess their crops will be protected from pests and other agents of destruction.
This ceremony is held in the evening on any day 10th to 15th of Kati month as per the convenience of the villagers who take part in it. In some Bodo villages where the villagers cannot get together, the puja is performed in individual household. Women do not take part in this ceremony. Only men folk and children are involved in this puja. A small area in the paddy field is cleared and the shoot of the bamboo plant is planted towards the east of the area. A small bamboo platform (chang) is made to place the offerings to the goddess. An earthen pot wrapped in white cloth is placed and worshipped facing the east. The offerings usually contain a mixer of chicken pea, green gram, coconut, ginger (Prasad). There is also popped Maibra Akhai (sticky rice) and rice beer. A white chicken is sacrificed in the honor of the goddess. All rites of the puja are performed by the village douri (priest) and the villagers help side by side. After the puja the offerings are distributed among the people present in the puja. A special meal Khaji is prepared. Khaji is made of powdered rice and chicken boiled in water.1

4.1.5 Agulanai

Agulanai is another ceremony of the Bodos related to agriculture. It is performed on the first day of the sali harvest. When the paddy become ripe and suitable for reaping the guardian generally the head male member of the family bring a handful paddy cut with a sickle early in the morning preferably before the sunrise and after sprinkling gwrthar dwi (holy water) on it the bundle of paddy is kept inside the bakhri (granary). Then the elderly female member lit a sacred lamp in front of the goddess Mainao and all the family members worship the goddess as mark of gratefulness for the successful harvest. The harvesting in their fields starts from that day onwards.
4.1.6 Ongkham Gwdan Janai

This ceremony is held within the Aghun (Nov-Dec) month after harvesting of the major rice crop (Sali crop) of the year. Especially it is seen in some area, that this ceremony is observed in the 9th day of the Assamese month Aghuna. This ceremony is performed individually. Neighbours are invited to take part and celebrate new rice eating ceremony. Before worshiping the god and goddesses the female members of the family cleans the houses and the yard with mud and cow dung. After cleaning, the head male member of the family starts to worship. Bathou brai and other gods and goddesses are worshiped facing the east. Gods and goddesses are offered new rice, Prasad and different kind of fruits. The same are offered to the dead ancestors of the family facing the north which is known as gwthwi baonay among the Bodos.\(^2\) Especially offerings are made by the left hand. Chicken is also sacrificed in front of the gods and goddesses. After these rites the invited neighbours and the family members take the new rice with pork, fish, chicken and other delicious traditional curry. Rice beer is also supplied in abundance. The poor families observed this ceremony by giving new rice to the cattle of their houses.

4.2 Seasonal festival

The most important seasonal festival of the Assamese people is the bihu festival. The word bihu is derived from bishub which means the ‘equador’. It is regarded as sangkranti or the middle day in the Indian astronomy and it is the time of spring festival. There are three Bihu observed by the Assamese people such as bohag bihu or Rongali bihu, Magh bihu and the kati or Kongali bihu. The bohag bihu is observed at the mid day of the Chaitra and Baisakh month of Indian Calendar. Similarly the magh bihu and the kati bihu is observed at the Magh sangkranti and Kartik sangkranti. So, origin of bihu is greatly related to astronomy
and nature. All the three bihus are also observed by the Bodos. The three Bihus are known among the Bodos as Baisagu (Bohag Bihu), Magou domasi (Magh Bihu) and Khatri gasa (Kati Bihu). "The Bodos of Kamrup and Darrang district of Assam also call this Bwisagu as bihu like their neighbouring non Boro Assamese people. According to Mr. Dhuparam Basumataiy the word Bihu is of Bodo origin bi mean to beg something like alms and hu means to give or donate, hence Bi+hu=Bihu or to give the begged one. On the other hand Bishnu Prasad Rabha derived Bihu as bi+hu Bi means to beg and Hu means to collect. Thus according to Bishnu Prasad Rabha bihu means to collect or to preserve what is begged".3 "During the Bwisagu festival, the young boys and girls or the juniors beg their blessings from the seniors i.e., from father, mother, brother, sisters etc. and thus the seniors grace their blessings to their juniors. Therefore it is called bihu i.e. to beg and to take up".4

The Rongali bihu is also known as Bohag Bihu among the Assamese people. Because it is observed in the month of Bohag (mid April) the first month of the Assamese calendar. This bihu is popularly known as Baisagu among the Bodos. 

"According to Kamini Narzary, Baisagu is a Boro word which originated from the Boro word 'Balsa' means year or age and 'agu' means 'start or starting'. Hence Baisa+Agu='Baisagu' the starting time of the year or age".5 Merry making, dancing, singing to the accompaniment of traditional musical instrument is the main characteristics of this Baisagu festival.

*Among the Darrang Kacharis, this festival lasts for seven days, during which little or no work is done, the whole period being given up to merry-making, dancing, feasting etc.*6

Still the people of Assam observe the Baisagu festival for seven days.

The second seasonal festival or the bihu is the Kati Bihu. Observed in the Kartik Sangkranti or the mid day of the month of November. It is a one-day affair, performed certain rituals for the well being of paddy field. There is no feasting and merry making program in it. The main feature of the Kati bihu is the lighting of
earthen lamp at the courtyard, at the granary, in the garden and in the paddy field. It is the poor bihu because in this time the farmer’s granaries are almost to be empty and days of crisis for the villagers have nothing to eat during this bihu that’s why this bihu is also popularly known as Kongali bihu among the Assamese People.

Magh bihu is the last seasonal festival of the year observed by the people of Assam. It is the harvest festival, has many parallels among the agricultural people. It is popular as Magu domashi among the Bodo people. “The word domashi or domahi means the junction of two months.”7 The main characteristics of this festival are to enjoy with different types of food, like cira or sourai, laru, phitha, makhrai etc. and to entertain the friends and relatives with food and drinks, and to enjoy singing and dancing. For this reason this bihu is also called Bhogali bihu.

The Bodos have seasonal festivals akin to the three main seasonal festivals of Assam the Bohag bihu, Magh bihu and the Kati bihu.

4.2.1 Bwisagu

The most popular seasonal festival of the Bodos is known as Bwisagu among them. But the Bodos of Goalpara district pronounced it as Bwikhagu. The festival starts from the last day of the month Chaitra(mid day of the month of April) and lasts to the 6th day of the month of Baisag. The first day is called Mwswnisaan known as Garu bihu in Assamese (the day for cattle), the second day is Mansini Saan or Manuh bihu (the day for men), and the third day is called Gosaini saan or the day for God. And the other days are for singing and dancing which starts from the second day or from the Mansini saan. But it is seen that the people prepare them for the baikhagu from a long time. They repair their houses and clean the surroundings of their home, buy and waves new clothes etc. The domestic animals
and birds contribute to every side of economy to the rural people of Assam. So the Bodo People dedicate their Bihu days to the domestic animals and birds also.

_Boisagu_ as observed by Kacharis indicates the pattern which the festival follows over the several days. The first day is _Mwswu_, meant for the cattle; the second day is _mansoi domahi_, meant for men, but starting with worship of their gods; the third day is _saima_, meant for dogs, the forth day is _ama_, meant for swine; the fifth day is _daoni_, meant for fowl; the sixth day is meant for ducks and other birds; the seventh is meant for receiving relatives and friends. As it seems, their Hinduism allows them to pay respects to dogs, swine and fowl. But nowadays, though _bihu_ lasts for seven days and on the seventh day they even clean the house ceremonially, take a purifying bath and seek apology from their elders for any omissions and commissions that may have been committed during the period, rituals meant for the propitiation of dogs’ swine or fowls are hardly seen. House cleaning, cattle rites, worship of _Bathou_ and offering of eatable to their ancestors, putting on of new or washed clothes, receiving or visiting etc. may be said to constitute the formal part of the festival.⁸

_Bwisagu_ is the most popular springtime festival of the Bodos. The _bihu_ in Assam as the one which is observed by most of the people or which really stirs them to their depts. The festivals enjoyed widely in this part of India are those associated with the beginning and the end of the planting season. The festival associated with beginning of the season is _Bwisagu_ or springtime Bihu and that associated with the end is the _Magw domasi_ or winter _bihu_. The springtime _bihu_ is the _Rangjali bwisagu_ or the Bihu that cheers, while the _Magw domasi_ is the Bihu that one enjoys with food and drink. In between is of course _Khatri gasa_ observed on the last day of _Aswin_. It the _Kongali_ or the beggar’s Bihu for there is nothing much to eat at this time.

_Rongjali Bwisagu_ starts on the last day of _Chaitra_ and it begins with a sort of cattle rite. This day is known as _Mwswni bihu_ or _saan_ among the Bodos.
4.2.1.1 *Mwswuni Bihu* (cattle rite)

In Bodo language *mwswu* means cow. In the economy of rural people of Assam, cow contributes a lot from every side in their life. Without cow rural people cannot imagine about their agriculture. Besides helping in agriculture it provides food for the people and fertilizer for cultivators. In Indian culture cow is worshiped as like mother *Lakshmi* or goddess of wealth. So cow is a great wealth for the Indian people as well as for the Bodo people who mostly depend upon their life in agriculture. That is why the Bodo people express their love and respect to the cow in the first day before merry making at the time of *Ranjali bwisagw*.

Various traditional rituals are observed during the time of *Mwswu bihu*. Early in the morning the head and the children prepare pieces of bottle guard, brinjal and turmeric and keep them fixed on a bamboo stick. Before the day of *Mwsw Bihu* the men folk or the boys collect leaves of the cane, *dighloti* and *makhioti*. The womenfolk prepare a paste of turmeric and *Sobai* pulse and black gram and mustard oil separately, and it is rubbed on foreheads, trunks and horns of the cattle and the left over is used to rub on the posts of cowshed and walls of the houses. Then the cattle are taken to the neighboring river or pond or if this are not provide then water is bring to the cowshed. They strike the cattle with the *makhioti*, *dighloti* and cane leaves before bathed them. This ritual is followed by collective bath of the cattle and propitiation of cattle throwing bottle gourd, turmeric and brinjal out of bamboo strip. In course of which a rhyme like the following is recited.

*Lao ja phanthao ja*
*Bwswr bwswr er hanja hanja*
*Bimaya undoi, biphaya undoi*
*Nwng ja halua geder*

(Eat gourd, eat brinjal, grow up year to year, your mother is small, your father is small, may you be a large one).
After the cattle bath is over, old ropes are cast away from the legs and neck of the cattle and set them free then the men and children throw the pieces to each other and enjoy for sometime. Then they back to home with left over pieces of bottle gourd, brinjal, turmeric and leave of cane, _makhioti_ and _dighloti_ and keep these on the walls and roofs of the cowshed and house and on the fencing of the gate. At the evening after the return of the cattle at home some green leaves or green grass are lighted with paddy staffs near the cowshed and smoke are fanned with hand fans so that the mosquito and other insect can not attack the cattle. It is believed that the members of the family can use hand fans only after the cattle have been fanned on this day. The cattle are then tied up with new ropes made from jute. On the days of _Rangjali bwisagu_, the bulls are not used to plough. They are given rest. It is like a big sin if somebody beat or harms cattle in the _Bihu_ days.

In some areas of Goalpara district sports and pastimes are found to be associated with the tradition of _Rangjali bwisagu_ especially on the first and second day of _Bwisagu_. The young boys arrange for games and sports in the village playground. Both the traditional local and new games are organized by the boys. It is observed that the young generation is found unfamiliar with the local traditional events but the old generation enjoy so much with this games and pastimes. All the people of the village gathered in the village field and enjoy whole the day. Basically the women folk come out from their houses and take part in various games. They enjoyed very much because of that, they rarely get chance to play in other days of the year.

In Amjonga and Darranggiri area, on the day of _Mwsw bihu_, the women folk gather in a place and collect _Khethari alu_ (wild turmeric) and Gokhay flower and branches in the evening. Then they make ornaments like _khera, asan, nakbali_ and _har_ with the wild turmeric and _gokhay_ flower and preserve it for the next day.
4.4.1.2 Mansi Bihu

The second day of the Rangjali bwisagu or the first day of the month is observed as mansi bihu by the Bodos which is known as manuh bihu among the Assamese speaking population. This day is significant as the day of the first month of the New Year. The rites and rituals observed on the mansi bihu day are meant for wellbeing of the members of agricultural household for the New Year which commences from this day. The people get up early in the morning and do their household duties specially they clean and plaster the houses and wash clothes and then take bath. The douri (village priest) of the village also come to the Langamara (village temple) and clean and plaster with gwbwr haa(mixer of mud and cow dung) and sprinkle thulunsi water. Then he offer worship to the Bathou bwrai and other god and goddesses. He sacrifices fowl and offer boot maah, fruits and specially rice-beer to the god and goddesses. Sometime villagers also come to the Langamara and sacrifice fowl or set free pigeon, fowl or goat in the name of god. In every household of the village offer worship to the Bathou and other god and goddesses. They also sacrifice fowl and offer boot maah in front of Bathou bwrai. Rice-beer is compulsory among the offerings given to the gods which are done at the east of the yard. After that they offering food and drinks to their ancestors and dead relatives, being placed the food in the north corner of the yard. It is notable that the offering given to the ancestors and dead relatives are done by the left hand. All the people wear new cloths specially take new fali on their neck. Sisters or the women folk offer new fali to their brother, father, uncle and others as their symbol of love to them. The juniors reverentially bow down to their parents, grant father, mother and elders. In the same day after completing their household duties the head man and woman of the family and the children gathered at the hadungura’s (village headman) home. Then the people both the men and women consume jukhai jou (rice beer) and dance together to the accompaniment of folk songs and folk musical instruments like kham, siphung, jotha, thorkha and serenja. After some hours they proceed to
the Dourí’s (village priest) home and do the same. The children also enjoy by dancing and singing with them whole the day. Childless couples take blessings from the elderly villagers and offer them *jonga* (big mud container with rice beer) and meat like pork or chicken etc. people like suffering from disease, parents losing child and suffering from other problems are also bow down to the villagers to get rid from the problems.

It is notable that the Bodo women folk of the Dárrangíri and Amjonga area wear special kind of ornaments which are made of *khethari alu* (wild turmeric) and *gokhai* flower and branch when use to dance. It is a special feature of this area which is not found among the Bodos of other parts of the district. The men folk wear garlands of *gokhai* flower on their head and rubs *abir* on each other face and head is common in every part of the district. People enjoy all the day in these way.9

From the next day or from the third day of the *bwisagu*, people come out from their houses and gather to dance and sing folk songs from house to house for begging alms. People of every house hold take blessing from them and offer them rice beer, rice money etc. in some areas it is compulsory to provide egg. Then the *bwisagu* lasts till the seventh day with merry making and enjoyment. They consume rice beer roaming from house to house. Then they arrange feasts with the articles they receive by singing and dancing. The songs sung by the people are mostly the songs of love and merriment. The young girls express their happiness by singing like these

*Haimw lwgw bese mwjang nay*

*Honoy bardoi sikhla saphwidwng*

*Boibw gwdan fajwbdwng*

*Baidi baidi biphang bilai rwdw’m khangdwng*

*Baidi dao gabdwng*

*Dinwi saphwidwng*
People get ready for the **bwisagu**, from the entrance of the month of the **Chaitra**. The women folk specially the girls start weaving **gamsa**, **fali**, **dokhona** etc.

As it seems, weaving had also religious section, it was incumbent on people to put on new clothes at Bihu and it was customary for the mother and sisters to offer Gamasa (towel) **fali** among the Kacharis to members and close relatives.¹¹

On the day of **mansi bihu** the Bodo women and girls offer new **gamsa** and **fali** to their male family members. After bath they wear the new clothes. Girls also offer **fali** and **gamsa** to their dear one to indicate love to them. The **fali** is also offered to the relatives and others to indicate respect on the days of **bwisagu**.

The **Rongjali bwisagu** lasts for seven days. In these seven days the Bodo people enjoy so much. But it is seen that the young boys and girls do not involve themselves in village merriments. Now the tradition has since changed and they perform in public platforms organized by the committees.
4.2.2 Khatri Gasa

Kati bihu is popularly known as 'Khatri gasa' among the Bodos. This bihu is observed on the day of Aswin samkranti, the last day of the 6th Assamese month when the green shoots of sali variety of paddy put forth the initial blossoms in the fields. The time of observance of the 'Kati bihu' suggest that it is a period of scarcity as the food grains of the peasants are almost exhausted leaving little scope for enjoyment. That is why the term 'Kangali bihu' is used to signify the poor state of the peasants at this time when feasting and merriment are rather irrelevant. In the evening of the 'Kati bihu' day, earthen lamp fuelled by mustard oil is placed at the foot of the sacred thulunsi or siju tree of the family yard. Earthen lamp is also light on the entrance of the granary, entrance of the home and cowshed.

To light earthen lamp in the paddy fields, this earthen lamp is put on the top of stand made with pieces of split bamboo which is known as sewari among the Bodos. This earthen lamp is the symbol of ancient bonfire kindled by the cultivators to destroy pest and insects of the paddy field. We have reason to believe that this ancient fire was reduced to earthen lamp in subsequent ages and got linked up with propitiation of corn-mother. Besides the Bodos this folk custom and practice are noticed mostly among the entire tribal and non tribal Hindus of Goalpara district.

It is clear that the rites and rituals associated with Khatri gasa of Aswin samkranti are exclusively confined to peasant class.

4.2.3 Magw Domasi

Magh Bihu is known as Magw domasi among the Bodos. It is observed on the samkranti day or on the mid day of the month of Push and Magh (mid day of the month of January). "The word Domashi or Domahi means the junction of two months."12. The characteristics of this festival are to enjoy with different types of
foods, like cakes or pithas and drinks and singing and dancing. This is special for eating that is why this festival is also known as ‘Bhogali Bihu’ among the Assamese people. The bihu eve or Uruka has its particular importance. The womenfolk prepare sourai, phitha, laru and makhrai at the night and get ready for the next day. Male folk go to the lakes and rivers and catch fish. The village people arrange communal feast on the uruka day. In this day it is customary to take fish or meat at both meals. In some villages the custom of communal feasting has been break down due to some clashes. In such the family bhagi or the relatives and the neighbour arrange the feast together.

The Magw domasi is a post harvesting festival of the Bodos because it is observed in winter after the harvest of sali paddy is gathered. This festival is also known as Bhogali bihu since the time of its observance abounds in peasant’s relish of eatable items made out of agricultural produce. Thus the Magh bihu and Bhogali bihu are the two generalized terms of post harvesting winter festival of Assam. The people of lower Assam observed the Magh bihu popularly as Magh bihu and the Bodos of Goalpara district call it Magw domasi. The burning of ‘Bhelagur’ is most important feature of the Magw domashi. The ‘Bhelagur’ is made with green bamboo, stables of paddy (nara) and dried banana leaves. It looks like a temple in its structure. In upper Assam, it is raised by placing stacks of wood vertically one on another. The materials required for its construction are gathered by the young boys and children either from free sources or from every household.

The uruka day is very important and day of hectic activity and preparation for the agricultural people of the village. On this day the women folk clean the household clothes and keep themselves busy in baking various types of phitha, pounding sourai, making laru preparing other things for the Magw domasi. The dishes are kept ready for the members of the family and guests from the next day. These preparations are made from coconut, Maibra mairong(sticky rice), Matha mairong(plain rice), sbing(sesame) Gur etc. are important. Makhrai is
another special preparation of the *Magw domasi*. It is same to the *Mah korai* of the Assamese people a combination of black gram, unboiled sticky rice and sesame and pieces of ginger roasted in fire. But in some areas it is made by sticky rice only. The women folk use clean sand along with the sticky rice to roast. Rice beer and *sofry* is also special thing to this *Magw domasi* festival. All these eatables are domestically prepared in this festival. “Predominance of *pitha* is noticed all over Assam in the *Magh bihu*; some people are therefore accustomed to calling this *Bihu* as *Pitha Parvan.*”

Community feast is another important feature of the *Magw domasi*. The feast is held by the villagers in some open ground specially the paddy field or play ground of the village. The time of the feast is different from place to place. In some areas it is held in the day time instead of night. The villagers cook meat specially pork, chicken, fish and different types of vegetables and eat together. If some member of any family could not come for any problem then his or is send by the family her chair is send by the family member. And in the evening the young boy constructs Bhelagur. After feasting the children, women and the old one leave for the home and the young boys spend the whole night together in someone’s jigab phunji.

Next day is the *Magw domasi* day, the last day of the month of *Pous*. This day is traditionally observed by the Hindus as *Makara samkranti* in other parts of India. The people wake up early in the morning of this day. Then the men folk and the children have a purifying bath and proceed to the *Bhelagur*. Then before sunrise they set fire to the *Bhelagur* just pronouncing the name of god. Simultaneously the womenfolk of each family clean and plaster the floors mixing mud and cow dung of dwelling houses and family yard. Then the cattle are given *Phitha* to eat and left loose from the *Magw domasi* Day after rubbing mustered oil in horns and putting marks on the forehead and other parts of the body with the ashes. After rubbing oil and ashes, cows are bathed in the river or lake. From that day cattle are left free for whole the days till *Bwisagu* month. After that all the members
People consuming rice beer

Rongjali bwisagu
Daini puja

Children taking blessings from their elders
Womenfolk preparing rice beer for Bwisagu festival

Preparing swrai in the occasion of Magw domasi
of the family have a breakfast of the cakes and the other eatables made on the previous day. After breakfast the male member and children of the family lies *thengol* (strips of bamboo) around trees of the family garden.

*The Bodos believe that the fruit-bearing trees would bear more and more fruits if the trees are tied with cords of straw during the Domashi.*

The *Laokhar* (cowboy) visit every home who had given him charge of their cattle for whole of the year, and formally returns their cows to them. The family offer rice, vegetables, cakes and other eatables to him.

The Garos coming down from hills of Meghalaya border to the Bodo villages with various kinds of potatoes, bamboo shoot and other thing grown in their places. They spend three days to one week in the village. Then they back back with *phitha, sourai, makhrai* etc. given by the villagers. Specially they take lots of puppies because at that time the dogs give birth lot of puppies. Except some family, in every household we see dogs.

Next day is the *mansini saan*. The village *douri* (priest) cleans the village *Langamara* early in the morning and scarifies a fowl in front of the deity. The head men and women of the family of the village gather in the yard of the *hadungura* (village headman). Then they consume rice beer, followed by dancing and singing with folk musical instrument. The young boys and girls are rarely seen in this merriment. No special ritual is followed in *magw domashi*. 
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7. Brahma, Kameswar, op-cit, p.147
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9. Informant, Ananda Daimari (Male), Age-58
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