Appendix-2

Short Life Sketches of the Key Narrators of Nizsilabandha

Tuluma Das

Around 50 years of age, Tuluma Das belongs to a comparatively well off family, with her husband working in the Military Engineering Service at a clerical level at the nearby cantonment at Misa. They have a reasonably well appointed house with electricity and the family possess a motorcycle. She herself had attended school till the Xth standard, but could not clear the board examination. Her parental home was at Bihaguri around 35 kilometres away beyond Tezpur, and she was in true sense of the term, a daughter-in-law of the village. She has two college going daughters and a son who attended graduate classes at the nearby Kaliabor College, but did not complete the course. He is at the moment trying for a sepoy’s job at the Central Reserve Police Force, and has qualified for training. Around 22 years old, he has already brought home a girl who had eloped with him, but their marriage has not yet been formally solemnised. But the girl stays with him and his parents. Unlike the other women from the village, Tuluma does not go to the paddy fields; however she does maintain a kitchen garden and take care of the cows and goats in the family.

Biruhi Saikia

The wife of the village headman or ‘gaon burha’, Biruhi Saikia is famous as the ‘Gaon Burhi’ of the village, and is around 70 years old. She had no formal
education and is by and large unlettered. Unlike the family of Tuluma Das, whose house is on the opposite side, Biruhi Saikia's family is economically under privileged and lives in a poor thatched house, with the estranged wife of her son, two granddaughters and a grand son. Her son visits them occasionally, but generally stays with his mistress. Their economic status is contrary to their social status of being the head family of the village. She hailed from the village prior to her marriage. Her daughter-in-law helps her out in the household chores, and both the Biruhi Saikia and her husband has to do with the little sum that the Assam Government pays to the gaon burhas, and the occasional support of their son.

**Chitra Bharali**

Around 60 years old, Chitra Bharali is the wife of Ratneswar Bharali, a farmer around 70 years old. She hailed from a nearby township named Puranigudam on the outskirts of Nagaon town and had attended primary school, before she was married at the age of 16. Mother of three married daughters, she has three sons. Two of them are dealers in the fish market at Nagaon, while the youngest helps out his father in farming, and lives with his wife in his parental home. They are reasonably well to do in the village, with livestock and a decent agricultural holding, with the children earning their own livelihood.

**Dipali Das**

Nearing 40 years, Dipali Das is married to a farmer around 50 years old. They don't own land, and basically farms on the agricultural land of other people, getting a share of the produce in return. They have three sons and two daughters.
The elder two sons stay at Hyderabad where they work as security guards with an agency. One of the daughters stays with her uncles while the other attends school sporadically, as she has to help out her parents in the field. Her parental home was at a village named Haryamukh, near the Raha township at Nagaon, and she had attended primary school. She helps out her husband in the field and maintains the kitchen garden as well as the livestock.