

CHAPTER III

THE RABHAS: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

The Rabhas are one of the nine Schedule Tribes in the plain districts of Assam, who are divided into several societal units with distinct cultural boundaries. It is presumed that, at least two of these units have assimilated with the Assamese and the rest follow the traditional mode of life.

Rabhas are widely scattered and concentrated in the undivided districts of Goalpara, Kamrup and Darrang. Besides Assam, their distribution spread over Meghalaya, Bangladesh, Nepal, West Bengal, Manipur etc. But their main concentration is found on the south bank of the Brahmaputra in the district of Gaolpara.

The census report of 1911, shows the distribution of the Rabhas in the various districts of Assam.

TABLE III 1 : DISTRIBUTION OF THE RABHAS IN THE DISTRICTS
OF ASSAM, 1911.

DISTRICTS	POPULATION
GOALPARA	32,415
KAMRUP	25,025
DARRANG	13,072
GARO HILLS	8,075
OTHER DISTRICTS	485

Source: Census Report of 1911

It appears that Goalpara district provides home for the maximum number of the Rabha population.

The census report of 1971 shows the distribution of the Rabhas in the states of Assam, Meghalaya and West Bengal.

TABLE III 2 : DISTRIBUTION OF THE RABHAS IN THE STATES OF
ASSAM, MEGHALAYA AND WEST BENGAL, 1971.

State	Population
Assam	1,38,630
Meghalaya	10,841 (Rabha speaking community)
West Bengal	2,466
Total	1,51,937

Source: Census Report of 1971.

As per 1971 census, they constitute 8.63% of the total plain tribal population of Assam and 0.63% of the total state population. Their rate of literacy is 22.24% according to the same census and rank fourth among the Scheduled Tribes of Assam plains.

According to the Census Report of India, 1951, the total population of the Rabhas is estimated at about eighty nine thousand. Many Rabhas abandoned their traditional religion and accepted Hinduism. The Hinduised Rabhas are known as Pati-Rabha.

Different scholars expressed different views regarding the ethnic individuality of the tribe, its original place of abode and the relationship with other tribal groups (Das, 1962). Major play fair had tried to trace the origin of the tribe as in the Tibetan region wherefrom migration had taken place to Garo Hills area now in Meghalaya and then distributed in Assam plains. He had also found out some linguistic and cultural similarities between the Garos and the Rabhas. Hodson's observations that the Rabhas constituted a major segment of the Bodo linguistic group further testify their affinities with other constituents of the Bodo groups like Garo, Kachari, Mech, Hajong, Koch etc., who belonged to the Mongoloid stock. According to Lt. Col Wadel the Rabhas were a branch of the Kocharis and had become almost Hinduised although the process of conversion (to Hinduism) was of lesser intensity than that of the Koches. Dr. Grierson also hold the view that Rabha was a Hindu name of the Kacharis and many of the Rabhas were actually Kocharis. But Gait (1891) on the

otherhand identified them as a distinct tribe and said that they were also known as Totlas and Datiyal Kocharis (Census Report, 1891).

Das (1962) in one of his works had scientifically established the fact that the Rabhas were more closely allied to the Garos rather than any other tribe of the Bodo group. Dr. Das supported the view expressed by Gait (1891) that the Rabhas were ethnically and culturally a distinct tribes. He said, "..... it seems probable that Mongoloid people came in successive waves from the north and north-eastern region. They have partly or wholly absorbed autochthonous Austroloid and later on formed various tribes like the Rabha, the Garo, etc."

The Rabha tribe is divided into several groups, such as 'Rangdaniya', 'Maitoriya', 'Pati', 'Koch', 'Bitliya', 'Dahuriya', 'Hana' and 'Sangha'. The first three groups are believed to enjoy a superior social status than the rest, according to Das (1962) the Pati section the most advanced section of the tribe, had adopted Hindu customs for all intents and purpose and due to loss of their mother tongue had taken to speak Assamese language. Maitori section on the other hand resembled the Garos in their habit and custom. But they had a status equal to that of the Rangdani and the Pati groups. Like the Rabha tribe, Pati Rabha is divided into twelve groups (Gotro or Mahari) such as Chwng, Chinal, Nafla, Nongdo, Diya, Dagam, Bantho, Rang-rang, Kachu, Daru, Nogba and Magar.

In the Census Report of 1911, J.E. Friend - Pereira, in his ethnographic note on the Rabhas, had given a very poetic description about the physical features of this tribe in the words that follow: "In general appearance, the Rabhas show all the characteristics of the Mongolian stock: a round face, flat nose, prominent cheek bones, obliquely set eyes, sallow complexion, coarse hair, scanty beard and well developed lower extremities". The physical characteristics as mentioned above may not be found in the same degree more particularly in regard to the Pati section of the tribe.

The Pati Rabhas, however, restrict themselves on the plains, and do not extent up the small ranges, which is occupied by the Garo. They are quite numerous in the southern bank in the belt stretching from Guwahati to Dudhnoi Das (1962). The Rangdaniees are well represented in Western Goalpara (south bank). The Maitories are concentrated in western Meghalaya followed by Pancharatna area of Goalpara. Although both the sections communicate with the same mother tongue the Rangdaniees appear to be less conservative in outlook than the Maitories. Some other lesser represented subgroups of the tribe are-Dahuri and Totla in Assam plains. The Dahuri group is to be seen in north Goalpara and the Totlas in North Kamrup area and in the northern belt of Darrang district particularly around Rowta, Udalguri and Hugrajuli.

HABITATION AND LIVELIHOOD PATTERN

The Rabhas like to live in compact blocks comprising of 50 to 100 families in each block. Usually the dwellings of a Rabha household consist of four houses - one main house where the head of the family resides, is constructed in the northern side of the courtyard maintaining its length in east - west direction. Facing immediately this, is the *Batghar* or the guest house - the courtyard being in between the two. The other two houses are also constructed usually facing each other.

The Rangdani villages of the plains, especially, towards the eastern part of south Goalpara, are similar to Pati villages. They build their huts on small hillocks also in a compact manner which collectively form a complete village. In some Rangdani villages only one living house stretching often from 13 to 15 metres in length is constructed which however is divided into three compartments known as *Noksrab Tograb* and *Rosinok* in order from east to west. The first compartment is used as the bed room of the head of the family, the second compartment as the bed room for other family members including guests and the last one is used as the cook-shed.

The Maitari lives both on the plains and the hills and are concentrated in a very compact manner. In a typical Maitori village

the houses are usually arranged in rows on both the sides of a common road.

There is some difference in the environment of the three groups. The Pati Rabha is essentially a plain people while the Rangdani and the Maitori are found both on the small hillocks and the plains.

The Rabha language is a branch of the Bodo group of languages. The Pati Rabhas have already accepted the Assamese language. While the other groups still speak their own language, the menfolk of such groups can understand and speak the Assamese language. Rabha language can not be found in written literature but it is rich in folk literature, many of which are in the local Assamese dialect. Most of the Rabha people in this area use Rabhamis (*lemakatha*) as their mother tongue. The oral literature or the verbal art of the Rabhas can be classified into the following genres; e.g.

Songs

- (a) Songs associated with festivals and public ceremonies,
- (b) Songs of religious and ritualistic association,
- (c) Songs connected with the rites of passage,
- (d) Songs associated with worships,
- (e) Songs of love and yearning,
- (f) Work songs,

- (g) Songs associated with merriment,
- (h) Songs associated with children
 - (i) Lullabies and nursery rhymes
 - (ii) Children's game-songs

Prose Narratives

- a) Myths,
- b) Legends,
- c) Tales

Ballads

- a) Supernatural or magical ballads
- b) Mythological ballads
- c) Historical ballads
- d) Legendary ballads

Provers and Riddles

OCCUPATION

Agriculture is the main occupation of the Rabha. During the off-seasons, some serve as day-labourer also. They undertake cultivation of both *Ahu* and *Sali* rice along with some amount of pulses, mustard seeds and jute. Vegetable gardens are raised by both the Pati and the Rangdani, but it is very rare among the Maitori. Those who reside on the bordering areas with Meghalaya resort to shifting cultivation to a certain extent. The Rabhas though basically agriculturist and practice wet paddy cultivation, only a few numbers

of cultivators have taken to improved methods of cultivation leaving a large majority with their traditional system.

Goats, cattle, pigs, dogs etc. are the major domestic animals. Economic hardship has compelled many Rabhas to earn their livelihood by different professions other than agriculture.

Modern college and school education is another factor directing many Rabha to leave their home. The educated sections do not like to go back to village to till the soil. They prefer jobs rather than ploughing. The well qualified persons get good job in Government establishment as well as in private concerns. Some have become school teachers in their own localities. A few become college teachers. Others, earn their bread by motor driving, or by working as military man, policeman, chowkidars or by doing similar menial work.

FOOD HABIT

Rice form the staple food of the Rabha with an inherent liking for dried and powdered fish, pork and rice-beer (*Jhonga*) is their favourite drink and is prepared on festive occasions. Vegetables, pulses etc. are also taken as an important part of diet. Feasting and drinking play an important role in their social and religious life. But the traditional likes and dislikes have now tended to disappear under economic pressure brought about by many factors. The consumption

of rice-beer is also gradually coming down due to strict enforcement of the excise law which is a healthy sign for the socio-economic growth of the society. Further, those members of the Pati-Rabhas who got themselves initiated into the Mahapurusiya sect of the Vaishnavite school no longer indulge in eating pork and drinking rice-beer.

CLAN ORGANIZATION

Each of the Rabha group, namely, Pati, Rangdani and Maitori, consists of several clans termed as *Bar* or *Barai* (means title). Two or more bars might unite to form a lineage called *Hur* or *Huri*. Marriage within a *bar* is strictly prohibited.

The bar names are common to all the three groups. There are mainly three bars, viz. - Churchung, Hato and Raidung. Raidung is restricted only to the Rangdani and is not to be found either among the Pati or the Maitori.

There is reason to believe that the Rabhas were once a matriarchal tribe. The belief is based on the prevailing custom of reckoning descent from the female line and the practice of inducting the children of a marriage into the *Barai* of the mother. The recognition of the *Mahari* system under which nearest Maharies may claim the movable and immovable properties in certain circumstances may also be cited as an instance for this. A *Mahari* consists of all the female members emerging from a *Barai* also called *Housug* - an

exogamous sept whose permission is invariably to be procured before solemnizing a second marriage necessitated by death or childlessness of one's wife. The prevalence of the type of marriage known as *Nok Dhankay*, which implies that the groom must come to stay in his father-in-laws house with no option to go back forever amongst certain sections of the tribe is yet another instance of the traditional social relic. J.E. Friend-Pereira in his ethnographic notes on the Rabhas (incorporated in the Census Report of 1911) also said - "It is an interesting fact that the Rabhas seem to be in a state of transition from the matriarchal to the patriarchal form of family life. Descent is always traced in the female line and the children of a marriage always belong to the mother *Barai*. That at some remote period of time the matriarchate was in full vigour appears from the story of Dadan in the sections of traditional and history where Dadan the leader of the people is really the maternal uncle and natural guardian of Toba Rani the Chieftainess or Queen of the tribe".

Friend-Preira pointed out the customary laws of inheritance prevelant at present, which are as follows:

- (i) All sons are entitled to get equal share of a father's property. A daughter inherits no property unless the father makes arrangement for her share before his death. Of course, if the Bhagi agree, she may be allotted a share even after the death of her father.

(ii) A widow is not entitled to inherit property of her husband even though she is encumbered with issues. Of course, her male children will automatically come to inherit their father's property on attaining majority.

(iii) Till a minor male child attains majority the Daidies (Bhagi) only will hold the minor's interest as custodian. The Daidies generally include the paternal uncles of the father's Barai.

(iv) If a widow enters into a fresh marriage alliance, she loses all claim of her former husband's property if enjoyed earlier with the consent of the Daidies.

(v) The customary laws allow adoption and an adopted child may inherit the entire property of his foster father. In the event of not having even an adopted son the property will automatically pass on to the Daidies in exclusion to all others.

In regard to succession matters also, a son's claim is socially recognised for his ascendancy to the position of his father either on his death or incapacity.

SOCIAL LIFE AND INSTITUTIONS

The basic structure of the Rabha tribe is governed by the ethnologic ideas contained in the *Pandulipis* or the local customary laws. These *Pandulipis* have been framed by the consensus of the

village people on the basis of customs, usages, traditions and religious beliefs, covering such subjects like juridical power of the society, mode of inheritance succession to office of socio-religious nature, type of marriage and principles of marital relationship and degree of prohibition, birth and death rites etc. *Pandulipis* have sought to synthesise the diversities of customary practices prevalent in different localities although region-wise they may differ in contents and application as they are not co-ordinated homogenous sets of laws. In the southern belt of the river Brahmaputra covered by the districts of Goalpara and Kamrup, there are two such sets of *Pandulipis*, one is called "Mespara Purbanchal Rabha Samaj Bidhi" and the other "Dudhnoi Purbanchal Rabha Samaj Bidhi".

The Rabhas are a simple-hearted, hospitable and co-operating people. They consider themselves superior to the Garo, they also claim a higher status than the Kachari though inter marriage is allowed on payment of some fine. The children born of such union belong to the father's tribe.

The Rabha women are expert both in spinning and weaving. They prepare their own dress including those used by the males. The women's dress consist mainly of *Rifan*, *Kambung* and *Khodabang* which are invariably needed for attiring a bride at the time of her marriage. The male dress consist of *Pajal*, *Khanse*, *Fali*, *Buksil Passra* etc. Among these male dress, the *Passra* is made out of endi yarn while the rest are made out of fine cotton.

The weaving excellence of the Rabha women is further testified by their intensive knowledge in dying yarn purely by indigenous process. It appears that weaving is not only a secondary source of livelihood to a Rabha woman but a part and parcel of her material culture. The *Bahurangi* songs of the Rabha tribe contain sufficient references as to the competence of the Rabha woman in spinning and weaving magical apparels with flower designs that can help in winning civil and criminal cases. In their own terminology these designs are known as *Mokdamma Ful*.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

Mr. Friend-Pereira in his ethnographic notes on the Rabhas (as incorporated in 1911 Census Report) has termed the Rabhas as animists in their religious philosophy is mainly based on animism can not be denied even today, though under the influence of Hinduism a considerable number of the Pati Rabhas have already assimilated with the neighboring Hindu culture and have begun to take part in all religious festivals like the Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Ganesh Puja, Siva Puja etc. They are the followers of both saktism and saivism, but in very recent years a major group of this tribe have become the followers of the Vaishnavite school of the Mahapurusha Sect. They now resort to "Ak-saran Nam Dharma" of the Vaishnavite cult as the sole guiding principle of their socio-religious life.

Another development in the field of religion has come to notice-the adoption of Christianity by a section of the tribe. This process of conversion to Christianity is visible in some area of Kamrup and Goalpara district.

MARRIAGE, FAMILY AND KINSHIP

Before detailing the Rabha marriage system it is essential to discuss some basic customary rules governing the marital relationship among the Rabhas. Some of these rules are as follows:

1. No marriage can take place between the same *Barai* (Gotra). Amongst the Pati and Bitlia Rabha some laxity in these restriction do often occur but no deviation has been noticed amongst the Rangdanie and the Maitories.
2. A younger brother can marry the widow of his elder brother, one can marry the younger sister of one's wife if contingency so requires but not the elder sister if unmarried still.
3. Cross-cousin marriage is permissible, but it is limited only to marrying daughter of one's maternal uncle.
4. Parallel a cousins are not allowed to marry, but a person may marry his father's sister's daughter or mother's brother's daughter. There is no bar to inter-marriage among the Pati, Rangdani and Maitori.

An important aspect of a Pati Rabha marriage is that it is solemnised in a very simple way though it requires to pass through several preliminary stages before the actual marriage rites are performed. The first stage is locally known as *Pan-tamul kata*. Another significant part of the entire proceeding is *gota-tamul khuoya*. Here the groom party is to offer betel-nuts and leaves with utmost care and accordingly to the norms observable in such an assembly. The next step which is known as *Pan-cheni* (bettel leaf and sugar) also called *Joron*. On this day a large party from the groom's side accompanied by drummers and musicians arrive at the bride's house laden with bags of pounded rice and banana. Members of both the parties then begin to feed themselves on the betel-nuts and leaves to prepare the ground for talks concerning bride price. Other claims on the bride, the clothes of honour required to be presented to the girls' parents etc. etc. The stage appears to be now ready for the marriage except formal payment of the bride-price and this is done on an appointed date the day being known as *malancha*.

The actual marriage takes place on an auspicious day ascertained on the verdict of the village priest or as per dictum of the Assamese calendar. To perform the traditional marriage system amongst the Pati-Rabhas there are many stages to overcome and the rituals having come to an end all the members present in the occasion are entertained in a big feast. This feasting continues for the second day also when the *Nok-Swamies* (bride party) prepare to return back to their destination.

The Rabha follow the patrilocal rule of residence. The wife, after marriage, goes to live with the husband in the father's house of the latter. The tribal traditions, moral teachings are also handed down by the father to the children. Among the Rabha the position of women cannot be called low, and at the same time they do not occupy a very high influential position like that of the Khasi.

The Rabhas irrespective of their clannish differentiation propitiate a household deity known as *Bai-ma-ba* for assuaging labour pains and other complicacies that may come with the birth of a baby. The mother is treated as unclean till the date on which the umbilical cord of the baby falls. On the day of purification, the mother is to give her child a name and on this occasion the lady attending is specially invited to bless the new born.

DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD AND DEATH RITES

In a normal death, the dead body is washed with *Santi-Jal* (sanctified water) and after that the body is dressed with new garments and kept in an outer house for a night for enabling the distant relatives to arrive for the last rites. It is buried or creamated the next morning. In an unnatural death caused either by epidemic or suicide, the death body is however buried and not burnt. It is customary for the whole village not to take food till the dead body is taken to the cremation ground. The members attending the cremation come back to the house of the dead and on their way they are required

to take bath in the nearest river and receive some amount of smoke produced jointly by burning cotton and dried leaves of jute which is kept ready by other members not attending the cremation. This is done to scare away any evil effect that might harm them while returning from the cremation ground. It is customary not to take fish and meat till the completion of all the death rites. The practice of offering *mysake* (an offering of boiled rice with meat, egg, fish, rice-beer etc.) to the dead is also prevalent amongst the Pati-Rabhas (Rabha, 1974).

The funeral ceremony of the Pati Rabhas is marked by recitation from the Mahabharat and the Ramayana and from other sacred scriptures of the Hindus. The funeral ceremony of the Pati-Rabhas is less expensive and shorter when compared with the Rangdannies and the Maitories.

FESTIVALS

Rabha community does not have any national festival of their own. The different groups celebrate their ritualistic festivals, which relate more or less to their own religious concepts and beliefs. Rangali Bihu and Bhogali Bihu are celebrated only by the Pati group. The Rangdani and Maitori groups celebrate *Baikho* or *Khoksi* Puja festival with the intention of wealth and prosperity. It is celebrated in the month of *Baisakh* (mid April to mid May) just before the starting of agricultural activities. Pati Rabhas celebrates *Langapuja*, the word

Langa literally means *Mahadeva*, one of the Trinity of the Hindu mythology. In the *Langapuja*, *Mahadeva* is the primary deity of propitiation though other deities such as *Dhan-Kuber*, *Thakurani*, *Dudh-Kumar*, *Phul Kumar* and goddess *Baiko* or *Khoksi* also find place in the altar of worship. The deities are represented with different pieces of stones for each of them. Generally this Puja is done in the month of *Baisakh* or *Jeth* (mid April to mid June) either in the forest area or on the bank of a nearby river. *Langa* is pleased with two fold objects-crop and to get rid of all the influences that might be looming large over man and animals in the year just beginning, *Langapuja* is instituted by the Rangdaniies also, but deities are different from the Patias.

Now a days *Baikho* festival is not to be seen and in most of the villages this festival has been substituted by *Hachangpuja*, which is organised at the specified place called *Hachang Than*. All the Rangdani villages have now opted for the institution of *Hachangpuja* though the folksongs known as *Sathargeet* or *Khokshigeet* are still sung during this festival by the youths to convey feelings of love and affection to their beloved ones.

Another religious festival of the tribe is connected with the propitiation of *Kechai-khaiti* - the deity presumed to be the protector of all humanity, some Pati Rabhas hold this puja simultaneously with the *Langapuja*. This puja is known as *Dingapuja* because a proto type of a *Dinga* (boat) is made out from the trunk of

a plantain tree and all items of offering are put in this boat and carried ultimately to the bank of a river for actual performance of the *puja*. The symbols of some deities such as *Biswakarma*, *Chandidevi* and *Mahadeva* also find place in this *Dinga*. All items of offering are in the raw form, duck or a goat is put inside the *Dinga* and is allowed to float as a symbol of sacrifice. When the *Dinga* goes on floating, all the members are to move homewards without looking to it as this may entail disaster to the families.

Kechai Khaiti is the competent deity, who keep under control the evil spirits and witches that might be haunting the village. For this purpose the villagers organize the occasion, which is called *Hawal-kheda*. Here, the youths of the village go on striking the wall of each and every household under the belief that by that process all the evils could be driven out and be sacrificed before the *Kechai-khaiti*.

The most important festive occasion of Pati Rabhas is *Marepuja* or *Maraipuja* to propitiate goddess *Monasa* or *Bishahari*. The occasion is celebrated through the institution of *Dadhani* and *Ojapali* dances accompanied by traditional folk songs based on the legendary quarrel between *Monasa* and *Chando-Sadagar* and the fate that befell on *Sati Beula*. The *Puja* continues for three days and it is called *Gota Marai* but in some other occasion it is completed with in one day and is known as *Ful-Marai*. On both the occasions the deity is propitiated by sacrificing either a buffalo or a he-goat.

A folk dance known as *Hanaghora* is yet another occasion much popular among the Pati-Rabhas living in the south-western part of Kamrup district. The dance programme is instituted with the Rangali Bihu festival that commences from mid April for a week every year.

Since 1971, the Rabha tribes has been organising a *Mela* at the foot of the Dadan hills near Baida village in the sub-division of Goalpara, which has come to be known as *Dadan Mela*. The *Mela* is organised with the two fold objects of paying *Sri Sri Risi* who is described to be the Creator and Protector of all the lives of the Universe and also to pay homage to the valour and courage of Dadan - the first hero of the Rabha tribe.

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

The Rabha language is now confined among the Rangdani and the Maitory groups. The Koch group also speak the same language but their word structure and phonetics differ slightly. Minor groups like the Dahuries, Songhas, Tintekias and the Chapras speak their own dialects. Groups like the Patis, Hanas and Totlas have already lost their mother tongue and now speak the Assamese language.

The Bibek Rabha Kraurang Runchume and Rabha Bhasa Parisad of Dudhnai are literary organisations who have taken up

some scientific steps towards standardisation process of this language with all available materials. The grammatical works of local grammarians like Sri Jogendra Bantho and Sri Moni Rabha have also been given sufficient weightage. *The Rabha Sahitaya Gosthi* of Bondapara has been supplementing the creative works of the above organisation.

The cultural revival brought about by the *Sodou Rabha Kristi Sangha* paved the way and in fact became the forerunner of literary work in Rabha Language. The pioneering effort of a few literary persons like Late Rajen Pam, Late Rajen Rabha, Late Harinmohan Sarkar, Late Sarat Rabha, Sri Abinash Rabha and the Rabha Sahitya Sabha the Rabha language was experimented.

It may be stated that the Rabha society appears to be multi-dimensional in character in terms of their socio-religious, socio-cultural and socio-economic life. The Rabha villages has to an identifiable extent, been wiped out by the expansion of education, improvement of communication and social mobility of the people. The young generation now feels more inclined to self employment by resorting to activities associated with trade and commerce and such other works. People falling under Tribal-Sub-Plan areas now get ample opportunities to develop themselves in this sector.

SOCIAL CHANGE

The social change occurring to the Rabha society appears to be multi-dimensional in character as we see them through their social-religions, social cultural and socio-economic perspectives. The adaptation to the Hindu ways of life and assimilation to its culture more particularly by the Pati section of the tribe is a distinct phenomenon of social change noticed during the recent past.

The conversion of a sizable section of the tribe to Christianity is another phenomenon reacting sharply to the continuation of old traditional socio-religious rituals or the socio-cultural traits of much ethnic importance. Even what have been left out have undergone curtailment with the passing of times due to various factors including economic factor. '*Farkranti*' - the death ceremony of the Rabhas is now very rarely celebrated with its full quota of ritualistic details as it was done in the earlier days. The *Langa Puja* in the Pati villages or the *Baikho* (alternatively of *Khoksi*) puja in the Rangdani villages have lost much of their former glory. The loss of the indigenous technology of manufacturing *Buburenga* - an intricate musical instrument by the women section of the Rabha society and virtual disappearance of *Dighalpeti Kham* another musical instrument of much traditional importance remind us about the gradual erosion of the cultural heritage of the tribe.
