CHAPTER – V

ORAL FOLKLORE

Oral folklore is commonly known as the verbal lore of the people. The people may be a caste or a class or any group formed by a class of people who have common identity. The common factor as Dandes says, 'may be a common occupation or language or religion but what is important is that a group forms for whatever reason will have some traditions which it calls its own. An individual or a group can be simultaneously member of many folk groups' (1965:2). The traditional fishermen community of the Namasudras of Dhubri district of Assam are one of the caste group who have been bearing an identical folklore materials from the time immemorial. Both the quantity and quality of the oral folklore of the Namasudra fishermen of Dhubri district are very impressive.

Strewn over the different villages of this district, the Namasudra fishermen have oral folklore of an almost bewildering variety. A large number of myths, legends, folktales, jokes, proverbs, riddles, charms, blessing, curses, oaths, insults, retorts, tauns, teases, greetings, fare-well, leave taking formula, toasts and tongue-twister are scattered in to the fabric of village life. Thanks to the local Goalparia folkcultural organisations, the regional mass media and Ministry of Cultural Affairs, who have been preserved these cultural wealth as a Goalparia folkculture. But it is a matter of regret that till today nobody has been able to collect and preserve these vast variety of folk cultural affairs of fishermen community of this district as a separate entity. In addition to sharing certain common elements of oral traditions of the people
of erstwhile Goalpara district, the Namasudra fishermen people practise their own folklore culture.

The Namasudra caste group have their own caste based folk-culture. Moreover the Namasudras of Assam are known as fishermen community and differ from other Namasudras who came from East and West Bengal specially those engaged in non-fishing sector in respect of their profession, though the rites of passage of all the groups of Namasudras are to a great extent similar.

A brief description of oral folklore of the Namasudra fishermen of Dhubri district is presented in this chapter. It is to be noted that this fishermen group of Namasudras identified themselves as a part of the Goalparia community. Because the Namasudra fishermen of Dhubri district bears some folklore materials, both verbal and non-verbal, which are almost similar with Goalparia folk-culture and only a few cultural traits differ. The Goalparia Namasudra fishermen are also very conscious of their regional identity like other Goalparia folk.

FOLK NARRATIVES

Dhubri district is one of the store houses of vast body of folk-narratives in both prose and verse-song forms. The distinction between the prose and verse-song forms is not always strictly maintained among the Namasudra fishermen of this region. The folktales proper, the legends as well as some ritualistic myth like stories are almost always narrated in the prose form: though there are some cases where the some narrative contents may be given expression either in prose or in the verse song form. Besides ballads, the purely sung form is represented by cult-song with myth like narratives contents. Over and above some stories are also narrated through dramatic and semi-dramatic devices.
(i) Prose-Narratives

The prose narratives are of various classes and types, such as, (a) ordinary folk-tales, (b) tales of ritual, (c) humorous tales, (d) tales of cleverness and cheating and (e) etiological tales which may sometimes bear similarity to myths and myths proper. There are also legends connected with place and personalities.

(a) Folk tales

The most popular terms for oral tales or folk tales are locally known as *kischa* or *sadhukatha* by the Namasudra fishermen of Dhubri district. The *kischas* are usually told during the time of leisure, when both the teller and the listeners can afford a little recreation. Occasions like Katipuja, Subachani puja and Karakari puja too provide ample scope for the practice of the art of *kischa* telling by the women folk. The telling of *kischa* is continued for the whole night during Katipuja after the main puja is finished. But in Subachani puja and in Karakari puja, *kischa* is told during the day time in the vicinity of the worshipping spot. The fishermen of this region possess a good repertory of oral literature like *kischa* tales. In some of the tales a fatalistic and gloomy attitude towards life is reflected. Some of the collected tales from the fishermen villages are reproduced below:

The Seven Jola (Numskulls)

'There were seven *Jolas* in a village. One day, they went out in search of employment. On the way, they found a ploughed field full of white clods. They assumed that the field is a sea and so they started swimming. After crossing the field they counted themselves and found one missing, the counter being out of the queue. So, after counting all of them, they found only six *Jola*. 

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At that moment a Brahman passing by that way and seeing the foolishness, he found for them the missing one and as a mark of gratitude for this help they are agreed to serve in his house for whole of the lives against his gratefulness. One day, when the Brahman asked them to plough the land of *aambari* (The land, which is covered by mango trees) being fools they tried to pull the plough and bullocks up the tree. But all their effort proved vary, when as result their foolishness all the bullocks died. Another day, when the harvest was over they came and asked the Brahman's wife where to put the shocks of paddy. At that time, the wife of Brahman was very busy with her domestic work. So, out of vexation she says, "keep the shocks of paddy on my head". They took her words literally and put the shocks of paddy on her head as a result of which she died. Brahman was very shocked and immediately drove away the Jolas from his house.

**The Story of Louse**

'There was a Louse, when her mother died, her father married another Louse. After her father's second marriage, she could no longer stay at home due to the tortures of her step mother and so, one day she went away from her father's house. She decided that she would not return to her house again.

On her way, a crow saw her and said 'Louse, Louse, "where do you go?" The Louse replied that she had no destination. The crow asked her if she would stay in house, Louse raised query, "what curry do you cook in your house?" The crow replied that he cooked the curry of crow in his house. After hearing this the louse said that she would not be able to stay there and she went away. When she went to some distance, a vulture saw her and called Louse, Louse "where do you go?" As was the reply to the crow in the first case, the Louse informed it of her aimless journey. The vulture also asked if she would stay in his house. Then the Louse asked, 'what curry did he cook'. He said that he usually cooked the curry of vulture. The Louse expressed her unwillingness to eat his curry. In the next time, she come across a crane. He to stay at his home. She asked him (the Crane) about the item of curry he used
to cook. The Crane told that he cooked the curry of fish. This information pleased the Louse very much and she decided to stay at his home. Every day the crane would bring some fish from fishery and the Louse would cook it and than they ate together.

One day the Crane went to catch fish in a fishery which was at some distances. On the other hand, the Louse was ready to cook a delicious item of fish curry from past stock. When she kept the iron pan on the oven and climbed the post to bring the bottle of mustard oil, accidentally she fell on the iron pan on the oven. But nobody hears her sound and she died on the iron pan.

The crane returned home being hungry and thirsty. He called the Louse. But there was no reply. He became angry and entered the house and found the louse already lying dead upon the hot iron pan. The bereaved Crane performed the funeral ceremony of the Louse.'

Marriage of a Toad

'Many years ago, there was a couple of an old man and old woman in a village. They were childless. The old man caught fish every day and brought rice by begging and took their meal cheerfully. One evening he went to catch some fishes but he could not find any fish and instead of fish he found some toad.

The old woman saw the toads in the fish pot and she prepared the toads for the meal of the night. Among the toads there was a big and fat toad. He hide behind the door as he was very frightened. The old woman cut the toad and she thought that a toad was missing. She saw the big toad near the door. She wanted to cut the toad, but the toad requested her not to cut him. He said, "Dear mother, please do not kill me", you have no child. I am your son from today and you are my parents". He also expressed his thought that he will do everything for her, even he will help in their cultivation. The oldman was surprised to hear the voice of the toad and said, "you are a toad, so what sort of work can you do?" The toad requested her again and again and after that the old woman sympathised with him. She told the fact to her husband.
After hearing it the oldman told her not to kill the toad. From that day the old woman brought up the toad and gave him food.

Many days later the toad said to the old man, "Father, I will do cultivation in the land which is surrounding our house. You will bring two bullocks for ploughing." The oldman brought two bullocks from the nearest village. Then, the toad went to the field to plough with the bullocks. He ploughed the land for many days. After that he sowed the seeds in the paddy field and naturally abundant paddy grew in the field.

One day the toad was watching in the paddy field. At that time, the king of that country went for hunting with his servants. The toad saw that they were going through the paddy field. Then he said 'Dhan bari dia hassar-hussur, panbari dia bat, thapere phelam mathar paguri, choare dekham bat.' That means hoity-toity types of jumping in the midst of paddy field donot indicates the road. The road is in the midst of pungent leaves garden. I shall throw your turban from the head by slap and show the road. The king heard the voice of the toad and he felt very sad. He orderd his servants to look whose voice was that. The servants searched here and there in the paddy field but could not find any one. The toad already hidden in the pond. They did not find any one and began to go. The toad came out from the pond and said as before. After hearing that voice, the followers of the king looked here and there. But they could not find the toad. Thus the men were treading the paddy field again and again and the paddy started falling on the ground. The toad brought many paddy to their house. After seeing the paddy, the old couple was very glad.

In this way two years elapsed. The old parents decided to arrange the marriage of their loving son, the toad. They found a bride nearby. The old parents invited all the kith and kins and they came accordingly to the wedding of the toad. That day the toad jumped to the roof of the kitchen to bring pumpkin. Unfortunately, there was a damaged part of it. The toad did not see that part and he fell down through the damaged part into the hot mustard oil in a iron pan and died. After knowing the news of the toad death, the old couple cried sorrowfully for their loving son.'
(b) Myths

It has been found that some of the cult songs like Maraipuja songs, Bas puja songs, Subachani puja songs are based on some popular myths. Apart from the mythological narratives connected with the various cult figures, some very interesting myths are current among the fishermen Namasudras of this district. The following are two specimen with charming quality of fantasy.

The myth of the Chanderdinga hill

Noonmati is an important village under Chapar-Salkocha Development Block of Dhubri district, where a good number of Namasudra fishermen have been inhabiting from time immemorial. There is a hill named Chandordinga which is associated with the mythological episode of Beula and Lakhindar. Lakhindar was the son of a very rich merchant named Chando Sadagar. He was the ardent disciple of Siva and he obeyed none of the Gods and Goddesses except him. His sister preached before Chando to worship the Manasa, the Goddess of snake but Chando Sadagar vehemently rejected to worship the Manosa. Thus Manosa got angry and she planned to take revenge on the merchant Chando. As a result Chando's seven dingas (vessels merchandise) were caused to be drowned and destroyed at this place by Manosa. After that Lakhindar was killed by Manosa. But the wife of Lakhindar Sati Beula were adamant not to bury him. So she went with the dead body of her husband which was taken upon a raft (bhura) on Brahmaputra river.

After that, Lord Siva came to know the activity of Manosa and rescued his disciple's family.
The place where the incident took place is still known as Chanordinga, a stone hill on the north bank of Brahmaputra. That is - Chando means the merchant Chando Sadagar and *dinga* means the boat.

**The myth of Kati god**

Another myth was found among the fishermen of this district which is narrated below:

According to popular myth, Kati was the son of Siva and Bhagoboti. He was a beautiful youth. He used peacock as the means of transport and carried bows and arrows with him.

The marriage of Kati was fixed with a beautiful bride named Usha Boti and Kati went to marry her. But unfortunately he left his *dorpan*, an essential ritualistic item for performing the marriage. So, after knowing the necessity of *dorpan* he again went back to his house to bring the *dorpan*. When he reached house and knocked at the door, his mother Bhagoboti did not went to open the door and wanted to handover his *dorpan* through above the door or through under the door. But Kati has not agreed to take this dorpan by this way and he began to shout at his mother to opening the door.

Mother Bhagoboti, ultimately was compelled to open the door and after that Kati saw a horrible scene in this room -that his mother Bhagoboti cooked a huge quantity of flesh of animals and was ready to eat. In this situation, mother Bhagoboti replied shamefully that this was her last meal because after his marriage she would not take such kind of food in front of his wife.

After knowing the desire of his mother, Kati had to cancel the marriage with Usha Bati and remained a bachelor for ever for the sake of his mothers food habit.
But his mother requested him again and again to marry with Usha Bati or any other bride but Kati was adament not to marry any girl.

Therefore, Bhagobati gave him bor (blessing) that he would be worshipped by the women every year on the day of Sankranti at night which is last day of the Kati month for desiring child with sexual method by which Kati will fulfil his sexual excitement. That is why, the unmarried girls desiring good husbands, the childless women desiring children and for good harvesting worship Kati puja at night every year on the above day.

(c) Legends

Many legends are associated with fish, fisheries and the fishermen of these villages of fishermen of Dhubri district. Some of them are enumerated below : 

Legend associated with fish

Generally the Namasudra fishermen do not take Singi fish (saccabrancus fossilis) because they believe that in the womb of singi fish, there is a thread which looks like the sacred threads of the Brahmans. The resopondents told that some hundred years ago the Namasudra fishermen were known as Parashab Bipra. But due to non-acceptance of the invitation of king Ballal Sen of Bengal in his illicit marriage with a dom girl, they were banished from the kingdom of king Ballal Sen and they had to take shelter in the jungal and for their livelihood they engaged themselves in agriculture, carpentry and fishing. After they started their fishing in the nearby beels, when once they kept their sacred threads on the edge of beel, as catching of fish was considered an unclean job for them as they considered themselves as Brahman folk.
But after fishing they found that their sacred thread had been caught by a *singi* fish. From this point of view and from that time they do not take *singi* fish in their meals.

**Legend associated with fisheries**

There is an important beel in Chapar circle under Dhubri district named Dhir beel. The legend is that during the invasion of Assam by Moghal Emperor, a group of soldier came near the bank of Dhir beel. They went to take bath in the water of beel. At the time of bathing one of the soldier, named Dhirkha was drowned in water. But after repeated search, he could not be found. That is why, from that time, this beel is known as Dhirbeel after the name of Dhirkha.

**Legend associated with fishermen**

There is another interesting legend is found from the fishermen of Chapar area of this district, which is furnished below.

The nature of fishing compel the fishermen to catch fishes at different places and sometimes they have to cross forests and jungle to reach the beels or rivers. In ancient time, some of the fishermen went for fishing crossing a jungle. But in that jungle, there was a tiger looking for match to burn something to warm up her child. When the tiger saw the fishermen, she took a match from the fishermen and told them that they should not fear her when they come to the jungle. They should keep their oars with them so that she could recognise them by seeing their oars.

Therefore, the fishermen, started keeping their oars whenever they go for fishing through a jungle in and around this region.
(ii) Ballads

'The rediscovery of the ballad was part of the movement known as modern nationalism which grew up as a world phenomenon after the American and French revolutions and it was nationalism which actually brought attention back on the customs, songs and tales of the people' (Goswami : 1970:7). Some ballads, sung by singers and minstrels are, however, to be found occasionally in and every society of this region.

Ballads are songs with a story elements seem to have once formed an important genre of Assamese and also in Goalparia oral folklore. These kinds of ballads or cult songs with story elements abound among the Namasudra fishermen of this district. Two of them are enumerated below:

(a) The ballad of the mad elephant

Gauripur was a famous historical place in the district of Dhubri. The Zamindars of this region were residing here. When Lalji was the Zaminder of Gauripur Estate, an elephant became mad. The elephant was kept tied in a garden of mangos on the bank of Chandakhal beel which was situated in between Dharmasala that is Haturhat (a place) and Dhubri town. Most of the people who used to live near this beel belonged to the Namasudra fishing community.

When this elephant became more and more mad it broke free insane of the chain with which it was tied and started plundering the villages of Namsudra fishermen who used to lived on the bank of the beel. As a result of this plundering, the poor fishermen of this village fled away from here. After that these grief-stick people started reciting the following ballad composed by their kulogunu, named 'Adhar Karta'. This balled is still in vogue in the fishermen society of this area.
'Sono sobe purna bhave kari nibe dan,
Haturhat ar fesarhatot ghatilo aghatom
Bolejai bhai prokash kore,
Bole jai bhai prokasdh kore.
Dosher kashe chadakholer kura,
Tar pube ambogane dilo hatir dhura.

Maharaj Gauripur er
Ki bolbore ki bolbore ki ghote galo,
Jom bahadurer boro hatiar bhati khule gelo.
Bahadur khepia gailo, pagol hailo, Jomero saman,
Tanger ghora doarai jamon proboto saman
Mare tar ashmani jhap, bapre bap,
Prothom baishakhato gharbari bhangi karil sarbonash.

Dekho bhai kher milena, bash milena paisarobhap tate,
Ghar bari bhangi karil Sarbonash, ki kari andhar raite
Andhar raite ki bolbore jom bhadur ailo,
Chawa chari topola dhari amon dour marilo.
Toplai chawa naire hater thite keojolaina bati,
Bati dekhe daori ashe jom bahadurer hati,
Ki kari andhar rati, ki kari andhar rati,
Ki durgati dhari swamir hot.
Swamia koy tue barai sha jhit karia thak,
Sonek hatir dak, Sonek hatir dak.
Anyar karo hati haito haino keno nari,
Natir dange bair karitam Jam bahadurer bhuri,
Oi rup darpa kari'.

The rendition of above ballad is:

Please listen, all of you, I am expressing the grief of my inner mind;
Something mishappened in Haturhat (Dharmasala) and Fesarhat.
Telling this sorrowful tale,
Telling this sorrowful tale.
The beel of Chandakhol is near the village.
The elephant is tied in the garden of mango
Which was in the east.
This mad elephant belonged to the
Maharaj of Gauripur,
What should we say such incident happened.
The Jam bahadur (the regret of death).
The big elephant became united
The Bahadur (elephant) became mad
And got irritated like anything
The elephant started running like the speedy horse,
Sometimes it jumps higher and higher Bapre Bap,
The elephant domolished the house in the first part of baishakh (April).
Look brothers! No straw, no bamboo and no money to rebuilt the houses,
Nothing to do in the dark in the midst of demolished houses.
This lunatic elephant (Jam bahadur) came under the cover of darkness,
People fled away leaving aside their luggages and children.
No children was with them and they were unable to lightup the lamp in the dark,
If light is seen the elephant comes running,
What to do in the dark.
The women started holding the hands of their husbands
The husband said not to come out of the house but to remain aside
Just listen the trumpets of the elephant,
Listen the trumpets of the elephant.
Though I am a woman, I would have beaten the elephant to death,
Had it been the elephant of some one
Else except the Maharaj
I take pride in doing this'.
During the reign of the Zaminders, the people of erstwhile Goalpara district used sophisticated words which was the assimilation of Bengali language and Goalparia language. The language of the ballad is also a specimen of such mixed language.

Moreover, these people had a great regard for the Maharaja (Zaminder) that is why, they hesitated to kill that mad elephant. Had the elephant belonged to some one else, they could have easily killed it.

(b) Ballads associated with various worships

Among the fishermen villages, there are number of pujas (worships) which are performed around the year with singing songs and narrating story with this song. These kinds of pujas are known as Marai puja, Katipuja, Madankam puja, Subachani puja and Karakari puja. In these pujas stories are told through songs. Some of the cult song with story elements are similar to those of non-fishermen Goalparia folk. Since most of the songs are narrative based these songs are sung in simple melodies. It can be said that they all have a ballad like character, but in most of them, the ritualistic and cult character is much more dominating then the narrative. One of them is enumerated below:

Padmapuraner gan (song)

Padmapuraner gan is based on the well known story of Goddess Manasa and her encounter with the merchant Chando which is one of the most popular and current institution of folksong. The core of the Padmapuran story in a nutshell is this:

Chando Sadagar was a very famous merchant and devotee of Siva. But he refused to worship Manasa (Padma), the serpent Goddess. As a result Chando faced horrible adversity one after another. All his merchant ships are sank and six of his
seven sons lost their lives. The last son, Lakhindar also died of snake-bite on the marriage night, in spite of all the precautionary measures taken by Chando. The grief-stricken Beula got a raft made, on which she placed the body of Lakhindar. Beula sat on the raft and the rafts floated down the Brahmaputra. After going through many painful experiences she at last arrived at Siva and Padma.

The above story is narrated by the following ballad like cult song which was found in the fishermen villages.

The ballad covered the entire episode of the death of Lakhindar and his rebirth. Some of the specimen are furnished below:

'Chando bole suno Lengha amaro bachan,
Mora bhashaia deo Gunjuri sagar.

Beula, bole –
Choi mash bashim mui jolero opore,
Bhalo mote bhela bandideo satore.'

**  **  **
Showkero karone balar mukhe nashe rao
Monder bahir kore Lokhaik dhari choi jao.
Keho munde keho Lokhair dhoriche charon
Bairer palonge Lokhaik koraiche Sayan
Krondonero role paril Champoko Nagore,
Sonekar Sashuri Kande bridhya Kalaboti,
Galadhari Kande jato daso dasi itadi
Krondeho suni ashil Lokhair Shakhigan
Chairo pashe beria dharia kariche kronon.
Kheno ote kheno bose Soneka murcha jae
Hasto dharia tani tole bodhu choi jao
Katokhone isthir haata putra lailo kole,
Ha putra bolia sonai lagilo kandibare.
Bidhi kore sharbonash, micheo more grihabas
Karlagi ghorote bashati,
Tumi bine dhanjan sobe dekhong okarono,
Sorbonash karil more Padmaboti.

* * * * *

'Lakhindar balish lailo tulia,
Kalinager negut lailo koutat bhorea
Taratari gelo bela Sagorero par,
Jotona Champoker lok hailo bahir.
Tan dia bhura bala Chapailo ghate,
Bichitra bichana thuilo bhuraro opore
Lokhair mastak balas bam urut thua.
Swamir panjare bala bashilo chapia
Bala bole dekhuk lok more Satyaro proman,
Apne bhura ujaia jae dekho sarbojan
Putro ar bodhuk bhashaia sagorero jole,
Ha putra bolia soneka lagilo kandihare.'

The rendition of the portions of the above ballad:

'Chando says, listen to my speech O– Lengha,
Set the corpse afloat in the Gunjuri Sea
Beula says, I will survive for six months on the water,
Make the raft strongly and quickly.'

* * * * *

'Not a word is uttered by the women out of grief,
The six sister-in-law bring out the body of Lakhai from the dead house
Some one holds by his head while some one holds by the leg,
Lays down Lakhai on an outdoor bed,
The city of Champak was over shadowed with lamentations,
People lamented in every house it was heart to bear.
Kalaboti, the old mother-in-law of Soneka weeps.
All the slaves both man and maids weep holdings each other necks,
All the friends of Lakhai came hearing them cry.
They two, week encircling Lakhai, Soneka swoon as again and again.
The six sister-in-law lift her holding by her hand.
After some time being steady sonai took the son in his lap.
Started weeping crying 'O' my son.'

** ** ** **

The fate as played a havoc my living is in vain,
For whom I shall live in the house without you riches and people
All are useless,

Padmaboti does they ruin

They took up the pillow of Lakhai,

Took the tail of Kalia in a container

Beula went hurriedly towards the sea-shore

All the people of Champak gather there

Beula then pull the raft ashore,
And kept the peculiar bed on the raft.
She kept Lakhais head upon her left thigh
And sat near her husband.

Beula says let the people see the proof of my chastity.
The raft floated ups stream to the dismay of all the people.
Drifting a float the raft in the sea,
"O my son" Lamented the mother Soneka'.

After that the raft reached the bank of a fishermen village and a fisherman, named, Goda was attracted at the beauty of Beula.

So the ballad is sung in following way:

'Jal-dari laiwa maisha mare Godagan,
Beular bhura ghato dilo daroshan.
Jal-barosi felaiwa Godar mon horoshit,
Moner horoshite Goda gai git.
Kamar bole Goda bhai more bachan dhar,
Borshi mara charia kichu-Nitya-gito kar.
Kamarer bachane Goda jurilo nachan,
The rendition of the portion of the above ballad:

'Goda and his party fishes with their nets,
Beula's raft appears in the ghat.
Happily Goda was casting his nets,
Out of joy he was singing nice song
Black smith said brother Goda,
Listen to me, forget about fishing
And do some singing and dancing.
At the words of black smith,
Goda begin dancing,
All the girls and women came to
Enjoy his dancing.'
RHYMES

The cradle songs and rhymes associated with the children's world constitute an important part of the oral literature. One of the most important features of this type of literature is that these songs and rhymes move in a world of fantasy where logic and coherence are conveniently dispensed with. So Goswami says, 'they reveal a delicacy of sentiment which is beyond the reach of literary poetry' (1965:50).

Various types of rhymes were current in the fishermen villages of Dhubri district. Among the rhymes current in this district, nursery rhymes and rhymes connected with children games constitute the most important group both from the point of number and variety.

It may be pointed here that many of the rhymes have several different versions which are popular in a particular area. As per nature of the rhymes, it can be divided into three heads, namely, Lullabies (nindali or chawa bhurka song), nursery rhymes and children games song.

(i) Lullabies

Babies of all communities are lulled to sleep and young children comforted with the help of lullabies and nursery rhymes. So are fishermen babies and young children. Some of these rhymes are pure lullabies which is locally known as *nindali* by the fishermen and other native persons are meant for amusing or humouring the child that is known as *chawa bhurkani*. Some of the example are given below.

'Aire nindali aie,
*Amar bapor nind ashe;*
*Bichnat Sutia.*
*Rat puale otia dekhe,*
*Sara bichanat diche mutia!'
The rendition of the above stanza is that:

'Come, O sleep maiden come,
Our baby sleep on the bed
In the morning it is seen that
The baby urine in the entire bed.'

Another lullaby is given below where sleep is addressed as sleep maiden (nindo-bali).

'\textit{Aishore nindo-bali,}
Baisore kache,
\textit{Amar maio bichnate ache}
Ghater nind
Bater nind,
Bichnat poria kande;
\textit{Amar maior chok}
\textit{Munjia ashe ninde:}

The rendition of the above stanza is:

'Come O sleep maiden,
Sit close by,
Our baby is on the bed.
Sleep from the river bank,
Sleep from the road
Cry on the bed.
The eyes of our baby
Grow heavy with sleep'.

Moreover, some of the rhymes are used by the fishermen for amusing the child. These kinds of rhymes are known as Chawa bhurkani. Few examples are given below:

'\textit{Amar bapai bhal}
Pinde phara jai,'
Ghore ghore ghuria barai  
Kon bouts bhal'.

The rendition of the above stanza is  
'Our baby is a good boy  
wear tear net,  
Moving house to house  
In search of which wife is  
Beautiful'.

(ii) Nursery Rhymes

Another important group of rhymes are furnished below:

'Bairagi tui ghultung  
Bajaishna,  
Ninder chowa chatki otile  
Bikhaya pabina.

The rendition of the above stanza is that  
'O' monk, you do not play  
your monochord,  
If the sleeping baby rises from sleep  
you will not get alms.'

More other important group of rhymes are those which are connected with some seasons and agricultural rituals and ceremonies. After performing the fishing season of the beel fisheries. Some of the young fishermen youth collectively collect paddy or rice or cash money from the villagers to go house to house by reciting rhymes which is locally known as ori or Euri manga. Although these types of rhymes are popularly known as songs, but these are not so much songs and should more appropriately be treated as rhymes. Reproduce here, one of the verses.
'Ashlungre oranat,
Mao lakhi choronat.
Mao lakhi dile bhor,
Dhaner kulata bair kar
Ashlungre grihasther bari,
Dhan kula deo tara-tari.
Katia an kolar pat,
Baria de amak agur bhat.
Agur bhat hail hua dua,
Bhatot paril satkuri kawa.
Satkuri kawar lakri pet,
Kon bodmaisher haria pet.
Haria petot marlung guri,
Chowa hail tar attaro kuri.
Sok chowa gail bhita- bhiti,
Ek chawa roel mor kati.
Chawak dhari marlung pak,
Chowa koare bapre bap.'

The rendition of the above rhymes is as follows.

'On the feet of mother Laksmi,
Mother Maha Laksmi possess.
Bring out the paddy,
We have arrive at the host house,
Give us the paddy immediately.
Bring a plantain leaf,
Lay us first plats of hot rice.
The hot rice is too hot to eat
Seven score of crows have little stomachs
Which scounderel is pot- bellied,
I kicked on the pot- belly.
It brought forth eighteen scores of young ones,
All the young ones weat helter-skelter.
One remain along with me,
Cought hold of it nad thrashed it down,
The young one said *bapre bap* (an exclamation).

(iii) **Games Rhymes**

Some of the rhymes are recited by the older children while playing some particulars games. The fun of the games consists as much in following procedures as in reciting the rhymes.

During their leisure times, the children of fishermen villages of this district place their hands on the floor. As the rhymes are recited, one of them strike the hands one by one in a rhythmic motion. The hand on which the last stroke falls is removed and the process is repeated until all hands are removed.

*Ekri mikri chawul dukri*
*Rajar mai dile pati,*
*Shai pati khan lore chore*
*Rajar mak monot pore.*

The rendition of the above line are:

'Row rice is eaten by teeth,
Mother of king gives a mat
That mother of king remind again and again!'

**PROVERBS**

'Proverbs are the shortest expressions of the experience acquired in a long life. They deal with the fundamental behaviour of people' (Das, P: 1999:131).

Proverbs and aphorisms are traditionally handed down from generation to generation not only for pleasure of the villagers but also sets before them standard of value and
codes of conduct. The Goalparia fishermen like Namasudras of Dhubri district also possess the tradition of a mass saying which are known as probat bachan or phakara-jojona.

Some proverbs and aphorisms are cited here:

(i) 'Achlung magur hailung kai
Aro dine dine kiben hai'.

The rendition of above line is

'Once we were magur fish (Chlarias assamensis)
But now we become kai fish (Anabas scandents)
What will be the position day by day?

Above proverbs indicates the down fall of the fishermen society and a tune of fatalism.

(ii) 'Angina nasta kore Jhir-jhira jhari
Ghor nasta kore Kutila buri.'

The rendition of above stanza is

'Courtyard is spoiled drizzling rain,
Family peace is spoiled by Wicked old women'.

(iii) 'Ojanate karile pap, Songe Sange hore
Jania Karile pap, Sango na chare.

The rendition of above stanza is:

'Sin committed through ignorance
can be expiated after drawing of sense,
But sin consciously committed is too heavy to be lifted'.

(iv) 'Takai kore kam
Hog morder nam.'
The rendition of the above lines are:

'I
Work is done by money
But the name is earned
By the male folk.'

Some proverbs are used in the context of vanity shown by some people. For example –

(v) 'Chatanir betar futani beshi'
The rendition of the above line is
'The pauper's son
has more vanity'.

(vi) 'Bal nai morder,
Banduk gharot'.
The rendition of the above lines are:
'Has no strength
But a gun on the shoulder'.

RIDDLES

Riddles are known as Chillok in the fishermen villages. People in some villages called it Solok or sloka. These riddles are extremely popular among the fishermen Namasudras of this district and they play a considerable part in the social life and even constitute a game. When a bridegroom comes to bride house for marriage, it was customary to pose riddles and the bridegroom's ability to answer, these was regarded as a measure of mental ability and social qualification for the role of husband. Children and oldmen, particularly in leisure time, sit together where posing and answering of riddles are gone through with great joy. Of the big numbers of riddles current throughout the villages, we have mentioned here only the most popular ones.

(i) 'Bhuibarit bandhling gai
Bare bare dobar jai'. --- Bhair
The rendition of the above stanza is:

'I have tied a cow in the field
and milk it again and again'
--- Fishing trap

(ii) 'Ekta khere
Ghorta ghire'.
--- Chaki

The rendition of the above stanza is:

'A single thatch
covers the entire house'.
--- A Lamp

(iii) 'Ek gache ek phol
Paki ache dol-mal'
--- Anarash

The rendition of the above stanza is:

'There is a single fruit on a tree
staying like a ripe and juicy'.
--- The pineapple

(iv) 'Ekna buri pitha bhaje
mui gele tar duar dhake'
--- Samuk

The rendition of the above stanza is:

'Aii old, woman makes cake
If I go to him, she closes the door.'
--- Crab

(v) 'Ghinkichi ghinkichi naichos naibichi'
--- Lobon

The rendition of the above line is:

'Small particles neither reeds nor seeds.'
--- Salt

(vi) 'Kher barir thaki biral sap
Saper nagut dhari marlungkd pak'.
--- Singan
The rendition of the above line is
'Snake came out from the grassland
I caught hold of the tail and flung.'
--- Caugh

MAGIC AND CHARMS

Assam is a land of magic and charms called by non-Assamese people of India. 'The very name Kamarupa by which Assam was known in the mediaval period signifies a land of necromancy and magic' (Kakati, B.: 1941:54). In the account of the mediaeval travellers and writers, magic and charms appear to be a noticeable feature of Assam. The name of Dhubri is also associated with magical legend of Guru Teg Bahadur (see, Chapter II).

The belief in charms and magic locally known as Jadu-Mantra is particularly strong also in Dhubri district. A large body of such materials are known to be current in the fishermen villages from the time immemorial. Even today charms are practised in many villages of this district and are resorted to for various purposes, to avert ill luck, to cure snake bite, to introduce sleep in others, to persuade a woman to follow man. The serious disease and sudden death are believed to be handi-work of bhut (spirit). The popular names of these spirits in this district and also in the Namasudra fishermen society are bhut, preta, pichas, daitya, jakhai-jakhini and dakini. Some of the spirit are considered to benevolent and occasionally render help to the people in an unseen way. The fishermen told that Kali is the head of all the spirit. So at the time of fishing, they worship all the spirit headed with Kali Goddess. Some of the fishermen recite fishing spell over nets and angling apparatus for a plentiful catch.

Certain charms are recited to avert evil eyes and protect the child and mother from the evil spirit. Charms are used to stop menstruation in woman and for safe
delivery of child. There are also spells which are believed to have the power of rendering the persons who use them invulnerable and make them successful in all the activities of life. Some times hysteria like diseases which are locally assumed as bhute-dhora are cured by reciting charms. This sort of practice is generally performed at night. Sometimes whole night long and sometimes two or three nights in succession while the ojha or Kabiraj announces the departure of the spirit. The Kabiraj chants the mantras and enquires of the ghost what offerings man. Sometimes, the questions put to the 'Bhut' are answered by the sick person. Then the Kabiraj asks the spirit to leave the body of the sick person and directs him to exhibit some signs of his departure like, for example, the sound of a cyclone or the sound of ring etc. This is believed to be complied by sudden raising of a sound or widely opening the door of the house or tearing off the branch of a nearby tree. Mantras are sometimes used for creating diseases of the enemy or put to death the enemy which is known as banmara. Bites of snakes, stings of scorpions are also cured by mantras.

Most of the charms are in verse, their rhythm are however, irregular. The language is extremely puzzling type and it is very difficult to make out sense out of these charms, one of these is furnished below.

**Charm used for Curing Paralysis**

'Basuli basuli kon kon jati,
Upajil basuli nisha bhag rati.
Upojia desh deshantra jae,
Baper Vijoy jania mar matha khae.
Shon basuli mor katha halbu-pelbu,
Kartik Gonesher puja baotange telhu
Barogachi narical terogachi tal,
Tar tollot Kamar bhai jharche akorshal.
Padma, Padma, Padmar petot janmia
Binnar pat dia nar shodhon Karia.'

The rendition of the above charm is:
'Paralysis, paralysis of whatever types
paralysis was born in the middle of the night
After birth it roams around countries,
Knowing about its fathers victory,
Pesters its mother.
Listen O paralysis to my words,
Not to disobey my words.
Push aside the worship of Kartik
And Gonesh with the left leg.
Twelve bucket coconut,
Thirteen bucket of oil,
Under you the blacksmith
Has open his smithy.
Take birth on a lotus leaf
And sever the umbilical cord
With a leaf of a reed.'

FOLK COUNTING

(i) Folk Counting Associated with Net Making

Net making is a common art of the fishermen community of Dhubri district
and counting of small square shaped part of nets is essential for completing the
structure of net. The counting of square of net is locally known as jaller fash gona
and it is a time consuming and monotonious job.
Therefore, for making the work easier, the fishermen apply a method by which they can count 400 by remembering 100. The folk counting device is that they recite:

Tor ek more ek, jai ek shai ek.
Tor dui mor dui, jai dui shai du.
Tor tin mor tin, jai tin shai tin!

The rendition of the above lines are

'Your one mine one, this one that one.
Your two mine two, this two that two.
Your three mine three, this three that three.'

Like this your hundred mine hundred this hundred that hundred. This way they simplify the net counting.

(ii) Folk Counting Associated with Construction of House

The fishermen Namasudras are always conscious about their construction work like construction of new house, marriage, business and fishing. So at the time of starting a new venture, they invite the nearest priest or a well known caste member for the ethical rules for starting the concerned aspect.

One of the example of this method of work is that at the time of the beginning of construction of a new house, the following counting is obeyed by some of the fisher folk in this district.

'Noi agharo tero pandarah, anupat nia ghar karoh.
Shaman ashaman surajar, bandilek bari khati karah.
Jani bujhi grihasthar beta, din dekhi putek ghorer khuta'.

The rendition of the above lines are that

'House should construct in proportion of nine, eleven, thirteen and fifteen.
If the heat of the sun is not equal then it will harm.
So, the head of the family should start
the house after finding a favourable day'.

FOLK-SONGS

There is a large numbers of folksongs which are available in the different occasions of the fishermen society of this district. Keeping different considerations in view, these folksong have been classified into some broad categories, such as, songs of religious and devotional content, songs of ceremonies and festivals and the songs of love and yearning. Few songs are cited with these broad categories.

(i) Songs of Religious and Devotional Content

(a) Padmapuran song

Padmapuran songs are locally known as Maraipujar gan. This performance is held in connection with a Manasa puja where a specialist group of singer (gidal) are singing song based on the well known story of Goddess Manasa and her encounter with merchant Chando. One of the song of Manasa puja is produced here.

The following song is sung by the specialised male group.

'O priya more Chando muri,
Kato nidra jaisre sundori,
Otto otto poriya more, ottia karek $ao
Bap-mao janibe more soriler bedona,
Bap hail more Mahadever Shishya,
Jhari namaibe nagurer bish
Kamrailo more Kani naikhe
Hai bish ojhaia ashe booke'

The rendition of the above lines are :

'O my beloved
Why do you remain in long sleep;
Wake up soon and listen to me
Call my parents,
They will notice the pain in my body
My father being the disciple of
Lord Siva,
Would be able to remove my
Pain through chanting,
A venomous serpent has stung
On the tips of my little finger.

(b) Bishohari song

Bishohari songs belong to exclusively to the women affair and they sing the song in the vicinity of worshiping place.

One of the specimen of such song is given below-
'Bishohari bishamjala Beula hail ari,
Beula jaire bhelat chari
Beular dukhaya dekhia amar prano jaire ori

The rendition of the above song is:
'Bishohari, the venomous, Beula become widow.
Floated Beula seated on raft, our soul flies away,
On seeing the pity ful fate of Beula.'

(c) Kati puja songs

Singing and dancing are the most essential part of Kati puja ritual. The singing commence with song of prayer to mother Basumati, seeking her permission for the installation of the articles and the performe of the puja. The song narrate the birth story, marriage story and different miraculous fact of kati.

Two of the specimen of Kati puja songs are furnished below:
'Ma Basumati, amak de alpo mati.
Tor matit amora, bosaim Katir ghati.
Ma Basumati, deo khanik mati.
Tor matit amora, karlm maer puja:
The redition of the above song is:
'Mother Basumati, give us a plot of land.
We want to instal the ghat of Kati on it.
Mother Basumati, give us a plot of land.
We want to perform the puja, on your land.'

Due to the feeling of loneliness Siva had wished to marry. So with the help of
his newphew, Narod, Siva married Chandi who gives birth Kati. So this birth rites are
duly performed and narrated by the fisher women, reciting the following song during
the puja day.

Jae Jae Narod bhagin, Panditero bari.
Sivero biar din dekhibaro lagi
Kiba karone pandit thakur, nitchinte bosia.
Purano panjika dekhe notuno thua.
Kiba Karish mama tui nitchinte bosia,
Tomar biar din jaeje chutia.
Eikatha Sunia Siva, mathat nil monirajer paguri.
Hatot hemlotar lati,
Kandhot nil bura siva, Meghnather chati.
Ghorote Sondea Siva, sanduko khulia,
Takar beg nilo kakote gunjia.
Hatot jaia bura siva, kine Sandur Suta.
Satot kine nakero sona!

Katire tor mundo banniche konjone.
Choi mas dongoriar toposha karia, mundo banaiche Basudeve.
Katire tor chok banaiche konjone,
Choi mas dongoriar toposha karia, chaik banaiche Basudeva.
Katire tor noik banaiche kon jone,
Choi mas toposha karia naik banaiche Basudeve.
Katire tor Kan banaiche konjone
Chaimas toposha karia kan banaiche basudeve

Katire tor hat banaiche kon jone,
Chaimas toposha karia hat banaiche Basudeve

Katire tor pet banaiche kon jone,
Chaimas toposha karia pet banaiche Basudeve!

The rendition of the above songs are:

'Nephew Narod goes to the house of the pundit,
To fix the date of Siva's marriage.
For some reasons the Pundit,
Sit down and consult the old almanace, Keeping aside the new.
What are doing uncle sitting tight.
The date of your marriage passes by.
Hearing this, Siva wore a moniraj turban on the head.
Old Siva carried on his soilder the umberala of Megnath.
Entering his house Siva open his locker,
Carried with money beg under his arms.
Going to the market old Siva buys vermillion and thread,
Along with it he buys golden nose ring.'

'O' Kati who has made your head.
Worshiping Dongria for six months, Basudev made the head
O'Kati who has made your eyes,
Worshiping Dongria for six months, Basudev made the eyes.
O'Kati who has made your nose,
Worshiping Dongria for six months, Basudev made the nose.
O'kati who has made your ear,
Worshiping six months, Basudev made my ear.
O'Kati who has made your hands,
Worshiping Dongria six months, Basudev made my hands.
O' Kati who has made your stomach
Worshiping Dongoria for six months, Basudev made the stomach.
(d) Bas Puja Song

Bas puja is one of the most important puja in the mind of Namasudra fishermen of Dhubri district and which is celebrated in the fishermen village every year with singing of different song and narrating different pieces of story on Madan Kam Puja, namely, the story of birth of Madan kam, the finding of different species of bamboo, the story of birth of cotton and the preparation of cloth and the creation of hemp.

Two of the specimen of the Bas puja songs are enumerated below:

Bas srijan (Making of the baboo)

'Ram bole suno Lakhano bhai,
Bhara-toko rajya dia bono base jai.
Chait mase asha parilo Madan kamer khela,
Lal kapore meria dhor chowaer meli.
Madan Kame dombrur mala golai dharon Kari,
Puja Khower ashajai ek grithashter bari.
Sharadin Madan Kam Puja maga tat,
Shaidin grithashter ghore nai bhat.
Heno Suni Madan Kam jai pathare,
Puja Khabar lagi barai bahire bahire.
Agia aire Malgiri tok deng bor,
Acchohorer majhe bas puja Kar.
Dhanjan sob bretha hobe tor,
Puja na Karile Kintu jiban hobe charkhar.
Sapan pai Malgiri bas bichiri jae,
Horek rokomer bas tokhan Dekhibore pae.
EK hate dharia more ghao.
Baro bash Kae Kotha hasia hasia,
Mok Katibi bura Sobodhan haia.'
The rendition of the above song is:

Ram says Listen o brother Laxman,
Let's handover the kingdom to the Bharat and go to for exile.
On the month of Chatra arrived the game of MadanKam,
Catches the choir wrapped in red cloth, wearing garland in the neck,
To eat the offering to households.
That the Madan Kam asks for worship there,
That day the host have nothing to eat.
At this Madan Kam goes to the field.
Roams about to eat the offering else where.
Come forward Malgiri I give you blessing, begin bas puja in this city.
You will get riches, servant and offsprings,
If you do not worship then your life will be destroyed.
Dreaming this Malgiri goes out in search of bamboo,
Then he sees many varieties of bamboo.
An axe in one hand and chopper in the other,
Strikes a blow with the axe by both the hands,
The big bamboo says laughing, chop me old fellow with care!

Phool srijan (Making of flower)

Madan Kame bole bacha Malgiri bar,
Gokul nogore tui phool srijan kar.
Ae katha sunia bacha nathakil roa,
Ekta balod ania haloke jurila
Ek chash hal bowai tini pot .mai,
Tobuto tuliba napae kena dua bon
Eta khani bhangia mati karilol jhurjhor,
Jabra gotaia phaliala bohudur.
Tar pachot Malgiri ruilo bahut phool,
Kato gula dalpat kato gula mul.
Lao, kumura, jik, bhol ruilo chario pashe,
Thol padma jal padma lagailo jole thole
Champa, nageswar, kengwa, jok godhuli gopal,
Tara, toger, malati, veet aro onek bhal bhal.
Saraswati pujite phool lagailo kanghisha,
Nanan phool lagaia napai ar disha.
Phool ruia chawa khini chupe chupe roy,
Harir name phool futia jalomelo hoy.
Phooler basheasia bhomorai kore gun gun,
Phooler bashe ashe shorger devegon.
Ram bolo Hari bolo Mukundo Murari,
Phool srijan hailo bolo Hari Hari.

The rendition of the above song is:

'Madan Kam says, O Malgiri bar, creat flower in the city of Gokul.
Hearing this he did not wait,
Brought a pair of bullocks and started ploughing.
Ploughed one round and plain three rounds,
Yet could not remove all the grass, broke the clods and powder it.
Collected waste grass etc. and threw it far away.
After that Malgiri planted many flowers,
A lot of twigs and leaves and the lot of roofs
Planted pumpkins, gourds, ridged gourds on all sides,
Planted land flower and water flowers on land and water
Champa, Nageswar, Kewa, Jok, Godhuli gopal,
Tara, Tagor Maloti, Bhet and many more good flowers.
Planted Kansisha to worship Saraswati, planted,
Many flowers and lost his limits.
After planting the flowers, he remain silent,
Planting flower in the name of Hari.
It became full of moon light.
The bumble bee hums at the scent of flowers,
All the gods and goddesses of heaven
Come at fragrence of flowers, say Ram, say Hari (God)
Mukunda Murari (Krishna).
Flowers were created

Say Hari Hari.

(ii) Songs of Ceremonies and Festivals

(a) Marriage songs

The study of marriages is not complete without enumerate the marriage song of that society. In the fishermen society's also a very rich harvest of marriage songs lying scattered all over the district. Therefore, in addition the analysis of marriage in Chapter IV, some of the marriage songs are mentioned below:

Various types of songs are sung at almost every stage of the marriage starting from the subachani puja (which is performed for the welfare of marriage) till the atmongla day (eight day from the day of main marriage). The singing of the songs are basically connected with the various customs and rites. All these songs have much in common in the matter of sentiments expressed and technique adopted in making them effective. Songs are sung by the women folk. Songs are generally known as git or gan and the active bearer of this songs are known as gidali. The parts of singing of songs start soon after the negotiation for a match are completed and this comes to an end on the eight day after the main ceremony of marriage. The following song is sung by the bridal party on the day of negotiation of marriage.

'Amar maior biare, amar maior bia
Bar ashibe palkit chori, mukut mathat dia'.

The rendition of the above lines are:

'The marriage of our sister, the marriage of our sister
The groom will come on a palanquia, having a crown on his head'.

The following song is sung on the day of gua-pan-kata (ring ceremony) by the women folk of the bridal party.
'O Bali tor atoi phutani,
Mathar thaki tang pojjanto tok
Pindhia karibe Rani.'
The rendition of the above lines are:
'O maiden, you are so stylist, from head to toe,
You will be the queen, by wearing ornaments'.

The following song is sung before the day of main marriage.

'Aji Golaper* adibash, Kali Golaper bia
Amar Golapok nia jaibe, ghor khali karia'.
The rendition of the above lines are:
'To-day is Golap's turmeric using ceremony
To-morrow her marriage, they will take my Golap away
Making our house empty'.

Another most interesting variety of songs are sung by both the parties (bride and groom) which is known as jora nam or kicha git. A specimen is given below:

'Boter pata lakia dilung, jae bahudur.
Archere kainar baba, barshali kukur'.
The rendition of the above lines are:
'We wrote on the leaf of a, banyan tree,
It goes far away, the father of the bride is coming,
Like a drenched dog'.

* Literally Golap means rose, the name issued to praise her beauty.
Teasing songs are sung specially in the marriage pendal when the bride is seated amidst the relatives and society.

At the day of *atmongla*, the neighbour women sings a song in front of bridal group.

*'Atia Kola pakamu, naior jabar napamu.  
Dada O moko nia Ja.'*

The rendition of the above lines are:

'I ripened the *atia* banana, yet I could not go to my parents house.  
O' elders brothers take me along with you.'

There are various songs are sung at different occasions of life-cycle. We have mentioned here only the marriage song.

Moreover, there are other songs sung at Kati Bihu, Bhogali Bihu and at the time of Bisua and in the festival of *fakua* or *Doiljatra* or *Holi* festival.

One of the specimen of holisong cited here.

**(b) Holisong**

*'Bondeng ma, Kamola Bharoti,  
Bag devi amar kante karothiti  
Moner isha Karang sadai tomarcharan dharung  
Diba nishiashia ma kar bosoti.'*

The rendition of the above song is:

'Bonde Mother Kamal Bharoti  
The Godess of speech, please stay in our throat  
I wish always to give my head to your feet.  
Please reside here, mother, day and night.'

**(iii) Songs of Love and Yearning**

In the fishermen Namasudra villages of Dhubri district, there is another classes of love songs which compositions are of a lyrical nature, characterised by a
kind of controlled turbulence of passion and set to a musical structure. Not only in the fishermen Namasudra villages but also the greatest store of these kind of songs are to be found in the entire erstwhile Goalpara district and in North Bengal. These kinds of songs are popularly known as bhawaiya and Chatka gan.

Bhawaiya and Chatka songs are the two types of songs extremely popular amongst the Namasudra fishermen villages. These songs have no religious or ritualistic association and are sung and listened to with great relish among the fishermen and also among the Goalparia people throughout the year and is essential character is lyrical. These songs are sung in the presence of a company of people on formal or non-formal occasions to provide entertainment or sometimes to one self while working or relaxing. Love is the principal motif of most of these compositions. The Chatka song is mostly light hearted songs. Doira is the main musical instrument which is used for singing both the songs that is bhawaiya and chatka.

Two examples of the above songs are given below:

(a) Chatka gan (song)

'Hutuk dada arche barit, sut Karia kong,
Dada arche naior nibar, sut Karia jang.
Ore monger dinot arche dada, jodioba najang.
Gosa haia jabe dada, jadioba najang!'

The rendition of the above song is:

'Brother Hutuk has come home, I say in whispers.
Brother has come to take (me) the sister,
To her (my) parents home.
I stealthily go in this days penury
Brother has come if I do not go,
Brother will be angry, if I do not go.'
(b) Bhawaiya gan (song)

'Oki patidhan pran bachena jawban jalai mori,
Ore okashote naire chandra tara ki kam kore
Jaiba narir swami naire rupe ki gun kore
Oki patidhan......
Akashote naire chandra tara ki kam kare
Jaiba narir bandhu naire rupe ki kam kare
Nodiro basanto kale bhangia namai mati,
Nariro basanto kale purush golar kati.
Machero basanto kale kore ujan bhati'.

The rendition of the above song is:

'O, my dear husband,
I die of passions of my youth
There is no moon in the sky,
What can stars do,
The women who have no husband
What is beauty for her
There is no moon.
The women who have no friends
What is beauty for her
In spring of the river
Erodes the land.
In the spring of women,
A man is a garland of her neck
In the spring season of fish
They moves ups stream
In the spring of a woman
A man is a Lord Krishna's flute.

With far reaching changes in the socio-economic, cultural and technological shape of the society, many folksongs have lost their original and traditional form. As a result, the original songs are rarely in vogue in the society. In the Goalparia and
also in the fishermen society, the vast majority of songs have been traditionally born by ordinary men and women. Yet, the folk mind of the general Namasudra fishermen society is reflected in the popular oral folklore more intimately than in the elite culture. It is seen that people of different ethnic groups from various walk of life assembled in this district and carried with them the multi-coloured popular folk-culture of this district.

Therefore, the study of folklore materials have a significant value from this point of view. Because it is found that, the district of Dhubri has a rich heritage of popular folklore materials.