A. PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

No other traditional festival of Assam is now so significant and popular as the Bihu festival is. However, there have been persistent discontentments among some people with regard to the new changes in its tradition ever-since the Bihu festival has received public exposure. But no comprehensive and systematic study has been made so far to arrive at a logical conclusion on this public issue. I have also been keenly observing the nature of the recent changes in the tradition of the Bihu festival for the last few years. This makes me curious also about the changes in the past traditions of the Bihu festival.

The stimulus which prompted me to undertake the present work as a doctoral project at Gauhati University is entirely ascribable to the above circumstances. Although I had my post graduation in Economics, I have got a keen interest in this sociological topic; evidently because the root of Bihu lies with the economic problems of the earliest agrarian society of Assam and the changes in its traditions have also been influenced by the changes in the methods of production and production relations. Economic factors are also involved, directly or indirectly, with the modern changes.

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