CHAPTER I

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I) Land and the people of the study area:

The area is characterized by a composite demographic pattern with a rich store of folk material. The population pattern is quite interesting. Majority of the people speak the Assamese language while people belonging to different ethnic groups like the Boros, the Rabhas, the Mishings, the Dimachas, the Karbis speak their respective ethnic languages. The folktales are not popular only in Assam but all over the world. Some folktales are same almost everywhere with little variation. I have relied more on the people of lower Assam specially Nalbari and Darrang Districts. Both of them are adjacent districts and the people of the two districts are same, their dresses, food habits, language, styles of living are almost same. For material collection mostly I have depended on the woman class. All of them are of 60 age group and their education is mostly up to class VIII. The people of both the districts are communicative and their responses are positive and there is cultural homogeneity between
these two districts. The population of these two districts may be considered as an epitome of Indian population because the four main cultural families are found in these areas. They are the Mongoloid, the Astroloid, the Dravidan and the Nordic.

The physical boundaries of medieval Assam had undergone frequent changes and these changes are attributable mostly to the rise of the Ahom, the Koch and the Kamata powers resulting in setting up of separate kingdoms and to the repeated external invasion as well.

The territorial boundary of modern Assam has further contracted as a result of the separation of Bangladesh from India and attainment of full-fledged statehood of Indian union by Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunashal Pradesh, Manipur and Tripura. Assam is now located in North east India and bounded by Bhutan and Arunashal Pradesh on the north, Nagaland and Manipur on the east, Mizoram and Tripura on the south and Bangladesh and West Bengal on the west.¹

The process of assimilation through ‘give and take’ would superbly for enduring power of all races, the Aryans and the Non-Aryans, the Hindus and the Non-Hindus and thereby contributed towards weaving the

¹. P. Chaudhury, *The History of Civilization of the people of Assam to the 20th Century AD.* p.20
Assamese social fabric. In fact, Assam may be “looked upon as a federation hall, where the most ancient and most modern, the most antiquated and the most up to date are found to meet together upon terms of perfect cordiality” ². Although Hinduism is the dominant religion of Assam since remote past, Buddhism, Islamism and Christianism are also prevalent in late Medieval Assam in a smaller scale. However the most important feature of the religious history of ancient and medieval Assam was the process of conversion of various non-Aryan tribes of plains into Hinduism.³

The strong hold of Hinduism is still noticed in Assam. The followers are now broadly divided into ‘Saktas’ and ‘Vaisnavites’ and at the same time, there are pantheists who are seen to have followed both the cults. A notable feature of Hinduism in Assam is the prevalence of some folk beliefs among the followers. These popular beliefs invoke propitiation of some folk deities. Such folk deities are incorporated in the Hindu pantheism.⁴

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Weaving and spinning had been intimately connected with the womenfolk of Assam since the time of Kautilya's *Arthasastra*. The Assamese women excel in spinning yarn and weaving clothes from there. Although silk and pat fabrics were manufactured all over Assam in early periods, the manufacture of such fabrics is now confined to a few pockets like Sualkuchi and Titabor. In cotton fabrics woven by the Assamese women in handloom are seen colorful designs.

Cotton and Pat fabrics manufactured by women weavers in Assam are embellished with brilliant coloured geometrical and floral designs. Medieval literatures and chronicles point to the use of dhuti (lower garment) and cheleng (light wrapper used as upper garment) by the common man. *Gamocha* (cotton towel) was an indispensable feature of Assamese male dress that is still lasting. The use of Paguri (a head dress/gear) by the male was regarded as a symbol of distinctive status. The specific garments of the women are mekhela, riha and chadar.

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5. J.P. Vidyarthi, *Art and Culture of NE India*, p. 87.


It is seen that both vegetarian and non-vegetarian diets are accepted in the Assamese society and rice is the staple food here. The extensive cultivation of paddy of different varieties has met the day-to-day requirements of rice. Rice and milk are used for preparation of different varieties of cakes and sweets.

The non-vegetarian menu includes mutton, meat of duck, pork, pigeon, deer and different varieties of locally available fish. The most favourite curries of the Assamese are the sour and alkaline preparations. In many families it is observed that while taking meals, alkaline curries is taken first and then the other curries and at last the sour curry or the curd is eaten. Chewing of betel leaf and areca nut after taking meals is another favourite habit of the Assamese.

The racial composition of Assam exerted greater influence on its prevailing language. The diversified races attuned to distinctive dialects assembled here and in course of time contributed to the growth and development of a common speech called “Assamese”. Although the vocabulary of the Assamese language is largely derived from Sanskrit, a good number of Assamese words owe their origin to the Mon-Khmer-Family language and the Tibeto-Burman language. The Tibeto-Burman speaking Boros also had to digest some words amicably from the Aryan
dialect because of prolonged contact with the Aryans.\textsuperscript{8} Besides words from the other neo-Indo- Aryan languages, the vocabulary of the Assamese language has been enriched with the Arabic and the Persian words. However, the most outstanding features of the modern Assamese language are that a fairly large number of English words and expressions have percolated into it.\textsuperscript{9}

The specimens of ancient Assamese literature are found in the \textit{Charyapada} which was written in the last stage of the \textit{Magadhi apabhramsa}. The mystic songs known as \textit{Dohas} composed by Buddhist Siddhas the Charyas bear testimony to the earliest Assamese literature.\textsuperscript{10} The language of these songs shows certain affinities with the modern Assamese language.\textsuperscript{11} \textit{The Kalikapurana} and \textit{the Yogini- Tantra} are specimens of early Sanskrit literature which were written in ancient Assam.

The existence of a number of unwritten literary works in the form of \textit{Bihu} songs, Cowherd songs, pastoral ballads, incantations, riddles, proverbs, folktales etc., constitute a noteworthy features of ancient

\textsuperscript{8} B. Kakati, \textit{Assamese:Its Formation and Development}. p.48.

\textsuperscript{9} B.K. Barua, \textit{A Cultural History of Assam}, p.8

\textsuperscript{10} S.N. Sarma, \textit{A Socio-Economic and Cultural History of Medieval Assam}, p.177

\textsuperscript{11} K.L. Boruah , \textit{Early History of Kamarupa} Pp164,318
Assamese literature. These form of literature are orally transmitted to the present from unknown past and they have now been reduced to writing.  

The system of education before British Rule in Assam was more or less liberal and organized. Formal education in philosophy, grammar, literature, astrology and astronomy was given in the Tolas and the Pathsalas by well versed Gurus or Adhyapakas; informal education related to arts and crafts was either transmitted hereditarily or imparted through the professional guilds or khels.  

The Gurukula system in which the pupils were required to stay in the teacher's house or in the school campus, was prevalent in medieval Assam. Ambitious students proceeded to other centers of higher education situated outside Assam.

The advent of the British rule in Assam brought about drastic changes to the outlook of the people towards education. The British administrators supplemented the age-old curriculum of studies with Western pattern of curriculum. They established a number of educational institutions particularly in urban areas. But the western education of the British, which

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12. P. Chaudhuri, *op-cit*, p.369


ignored the welfare and progress of the indigenous people, was confined to the elite circle only and it served the economic and political interests of the British. The British system of education was subsequently replaced with the liberalized modern education policy introduced in independent India. This modern education could touch the mass people. Assam now shines in almost all branches of learning made available by the progressive modern education.

II) Topic of the proposed study:

Like other people of different society of different countries, the people of Assam are very prone to liking tales. Most of the rural people of Assam depends their livelihood on cultivation and they have different folk amusements, which chiefly depend on the folk and ritual culture of the society. Depending upon the awareness and interest of the people on listening to the folktales the topic has been selected to analyze the tales from Freudian Psychoanalytical point of view. Many folklorists’ scholars

like and enjoy Assamese folktales whose materials have already been analyzed by different schools like structural schools, Historical-Geographical or Finnish school ,Anthropological school etc. But they are yet to be analyzed from Freudian Psychological viewpoint. Assamese tales have different genres and sub-genres. Dealing with the subject matter of a tale we can classify the folktales in the following sub-genres:

I) Animal tales,

II) Magical or wondrous tales or romantic or supernatural tale,

III) Etiological or explanatory tale, Jokes and humorous tale,

IV) Trickster tale,

V) Cumulative tale or chain or Formula tale,

VI) Dilemma tale,

VII) Cante Fable,

VIII) Endless tale and Religious tale.

All of these tales that fall on these aforementioned genres invoke purely with the reflection of the human psyche. The hunger of food and sexual activities are universal phenomena and depending upon these phenomena folktales were composed in different languages of the world.

Freud tried to analyze these tales on the basis of sexual symbols. The Assamese folktales are also not poor in this regard. As such attempt has been made to analyze a few such tales through the viewpoint of Freudian Psychoanalysis.

III) Objectives:

Sex symbolism is one of the important problems of the Society. Folktales are the reflections of this kind of symbolism. But it is very sad that nobody tries to analyze these tales from the viewpoint of Freudian analysis. The Present Study attempts to analyze a few Assamese tales from the Freudian viewpoints and which can be supposed to be categorically helpful in solving various Social Problems.

This kind of tales gives us a chance to know the individual and the social norms particularly the dissatisfaction and displeasure of a particular group of a society by which they occasionally try to commit some unsocial deeds or crimes and these may hurt the social equilibrium and which may lead to various social problems. But if we can collect oral tales from the lips of the people both male and female and caste and tribe, touchable and untouchable and can analyze these through the Freudian interpretation, it
would be easy to know the inner problem of the people of that area or region.

But it is generally seen that in this respect the researchers are not very enthusiastic. Viewing these problems the present study has given emphasis on the psychoanalytical interpretation of a few oral tales of Assam keeping it in line with the views expressed by Sigmund Freud.

(IV) Importance and significance:

Assamese folk narratives have been intractably linked with Freudian Psychoanalysis. The tales have been honoured from the very old age till date and although the modern age is full of scientific and technological development in various aspects, tale-telling event is still in vogue in Assamese society. These tales evoke the oral history of Assam, which displays the people's socio-economic condition of life with scientific maturity. What is unsaid is more important than what is said particularly in folklore. People are suffering from hunger of heart as well as hunger of stomach. More or less hunger of stomach is liable to fulfillment but hunger of heart is fire, which is the root of all kinds of abnormalities and neurosis and social imbalance and inequality. The folktales of Assam reflect this
kind of human suffering, which have been kept in a veil or mask.

The Assamese folktales are also significant for the cultural contributions of diverse races that had been to Assam in pre-historic times and settled down in cultivation. Of late this composite section is shared by different ethnic groups as common thing and is representative of the heterogeneous Assamese society.

Moreover, the tale-telling event or situation has been surviving with changing trends of time since inception. Despite this the past still vibrates in various rites and rituals observed by the agricultural community or the common people of Assam. For example, 'Sathabaratar Sadhu', the tales used by the 'Oja Pali' etc. This tradition also has assumed immense importance in recent times in different audiovisual monitor especially on T.V. Screen. There are appreciation and discontentment among the native people. All these aspects naturally arouse a lot of interest to undertake a study of the subject.

The Assamese people are interested in tales and they spend a lot of time in listening and telling tales which relate their own self and sufferings and when the hero wins over the circumstance they get inspiration unknowingly and they feel as if they were won. On the other hand with the hero's failure they feel to have been tortured to themselves.
Thus the tales stand as the part and parcel of the race. Sometimes they get fulfillment through the tales which they cannot fulfill in their real life. Thus their problems seem to stand in a crucial importance, which necessitates systematic study, and a thorough investigation. The present study is designed to explain the tales with proper investigation through Freudian Psychoanalysis. The study also aims at bringing into focus the unsaid aspects, the root of burning of the heart and so called the unfulfilled desire with a penetrating observation of Psychoanalysis.

An attempt has been made in this research work to study the prose narratives of Assam and to analyze them from Freudian psychoanalysis. By analyzing the narratives the inner aspect of human psyche has been analyzed. All human displeasure is created from the hunger only- the hunger of food and the hunger of sex. Both these are equally important to develop a human personality. But from different perspectives it has been seen that the hunger of sex is kept dominated resulting different mental diseases in the society. Many people suffer from the hunger of the latter which affects the psychology of the people- the unsaid aspect of the mind. The narratives of Assam divulge the reflection of sorrows and sufferings dwelling in the inner mind and they function as the oral history of Assam. The folk literature is as old as the human race.
No community or no society can be known without having the knowledge of the narratives of that society. Likewise, the folktales of Assam indicate inner psyche of the Assamese people. From the hunger of sex only people’s mind is defiled. They suffer from jealousy, hatred, wickedness etc. that lead to the miserable downfall. For example, in the prose narratives entitled *Tejimala* found both in verbal and formal or written traditions, the wicked stepmother tortured Tejimala in the absence of the Sadagar in such a way that ultimately she died. The prose narrator makes his narration interesting by using different symbols and metaphors. In *Champabati* too what we are exposed to is that the snake married the girl and dressed her with precious clothes and ornaments, the snake indicating the male’s genital organ. In the same way fire indicates danger, red-youth and vigour of life, cucumber-youth etc.

The study will also focus on the universal consciousness of psyches of human being in respect of geographical, cultural and ethnic surrounding and is trying to expose the inner psyche of human mind, which is concealed in the folktales. It is because of the fact that all human minds everywhere in the world are similar or alike. This study will try to explain the psychotic determination of human mind, which will definitely reduce the quantum of social chaotic condition because these tales will show that
human mind is same, so far as our mind, passions, desires and wish and willingness are concerned.

V) Scope of the study:

The Districts of Nalbari and Darrang in general being inhabited by various groups of people whose dialects and way of life vary from place to place, the scope of the study is immense. This systematic study will certainly provide an overall picture of folklore material scattered over the area thus helping to portray the socio-cultural heritage of the people. Both these districts being a rich storehouse of a variety of folklore items, there has been a lot of cultural assimilation with the passing of time and a folklore item of one group of people has passed on to the other group in some form or the other. These are changes and worth to be taken note of. The study will open the minds of scholars towards the positive effect of such assimilation, which could fruitfully be utilized in relation to Freudian Psychoanalytical Analysis. Obviously, there are so many schools or theories for the study of folklore. But to me, the Freudian school is one of the important schools or theories, which gives emphasis on the sexual symbols, which are the motivating force of the tales. The scope of the
present study confines only to the Assamese folk tales – classification of the Assamese folk tales and their analysis on the basis of the Freudian interpretation.

VI) Methodology:

The present study is confined only to (1) Library works and (2) Field works. And my research materials mainly depend both on published data and oral data collected in the field by me. Relevant books including books published in Assamese and English where references to the primitive cults, social behaviour, changing trends of culture, social changes in Assam etc. have been portrayed. Moreover, for the theory that has been applied to analyze folktales, the original writings of Sigmund Freud and other relevant books, thesis, journals of the past and present have been gone through which have been collected from different libraries like the K.K. Handique Library, Gauhati University, the Library of ABILAC, the Library of Assam Administrative Staff College, Guwahati, the Library of the Department of Folklore Research, the CIIL library, Mysore, Dhanayak library, Mysore, the District Library, Guwahati etc. and they have been visited in search of the relevant materials.
The field works include observations, interviews and questionnaire methods. Close observations have been made through participation on the occasions both in rural and urban areas. The questionnaires have been prepared with important questions relating to the proposed study. Active bearers and exponents of the subjects have been supplied with questionnaire by mailing or meeting personally. At places I met some native people who assisted me in getting informer. It is because of the fact that being a new attendant of a new place it is difficult to know who can tell tales. But those assistants who are native people know it and can show the way to pursue on the informer. Some of the informer doesn’t agree to tell tales at first request. But later on they agree to tell tales following tackling of the situation with tactful hands. Thus different tales have been extracted from the mouths of the taletellers either from real situation or from the induced one.

The performers seemed to be reluctant in telling tales because some were found to be motivated by T.V. programmes. And some other let me know that they were horribly busy with their school going grandchildren who had, or were to appear at the Unit Test Examinations or Annual Examinations. Moreover, they thought it to be a time killing
process. Sometimes they were found to be hurt emotionally, as they have picked up a quarrel with their daughter-in-law or son a little earlier. Anyway, when they were told that their tales and their names would be referred to an unknown place just like university or folklore society or institution, they agreed. These hurdles were found mostly in towns or urban areas. In this context I would like to refer one speech of a performer, which is given below.

*Moihi sadhu jana manuh asona? Sadai sadai mor tate sadhu niba aha.*

*Aru kata ashe sadhu jana manuh. Ajir parai mor tate nahibi.*

(Am I the only person to know a folktale? You are always coming to me to collect folktales? There are so many other people who know them too. Don't come to me again).

In village areas the tal tellers agreed to tell tales willingly and spontaneously. In fact they felt happy to tell tales to the new visitors. At first request some of them were found to be ashamed of telling tales. They too offered tea to us and treated with pleasant and hospitality. When the tape recorder was used they feel happy to tell tales in front of the tape recorders and of course sometimes some of them seemed to feel reluctant.
VII) Statistics of Field data:

In the fieldwork done in connection with this study, I offered questions to almost sixty people who belonged to different parts of Assam. Out of them thirty people were willing to give information in favour of my fieldwork by giving answers to my questions. Some statistical data on this account have been given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Village/Town</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Social status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Bhuban ch. Sarma</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Haribhanga</td>
<td>Nalbari</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Chandraprava Das</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Kachari Gaon</td>
<td>Sonitpur</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Hemlata Devi</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Duni</td>
<td>Darrang</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Kanaklata Deka</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Chamarkuchi</td>
<td>Nalbari</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Kushum Kalita</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Aminpatty</td>
<td>Nagaon</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Premoda Talukdar</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Pashim Chamata</td>
<td>Nalbari</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Sorojini Deka</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Belsor</td>
<td>Nalbari</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Politician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Tararani Boro</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Hajarapa</td>
<td>Sonitpur</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Mrs. Tarulata Deka</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Bongaon</td>
<td>Nalbari</td>
<td>House Wife</td>
<td>Social worker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A specimen of Questionnaire:

1. Would you kindly say your name?
2. What is your present age?
3. What is your sex?
4. Are you married or unmarried?
5. What is the name of your birthplace, Post-Office, Sub-Division, and District?
6. What is your Educational Qualification?
7. What is your Profession?
8. How do you learn these tales?
9. Have you attended tale-telling event regularly?
10. How many tales did you learn from your parents?
11. Do you think that tales carry any social message?

VI) Hypothesis:

Assamese tales are not meant only for amusement. This genre of verbal art like other arts reflect or can express the universal psyche of human being with the mental and social norms of the society.
That is why all arts are called expressive arts. The dynamics of human society depends on the human libido that is thirst and hunger of an individual being. These psychological behaviours are reflected in different creation of human being in respect of caste, creed and religion. Folktale or prose narrative is an important genre of verbal art which reflects the human mental behaviour, which are handed down from generation to generation and which may survive as social phenomenon through ages. Desire of human heart and hunger of human stomach are universal and the former is mainly concerned with the sexual urges. Formal or informal, i.e., written or verbal art may depict the sexual urges of human beings since these are the creations of human beings. The primitive people reflected their hunger and thirst with some special symptoms and symbols. As the Freudian Psycho-analysis is mainly based on these sexual complexes, therefore, the Freudian interpretation is quite reasonable on the basis of these masked symptoms and symbols. The genre of expressive art found prevalent in various cultures may be interpreted with the help of the Freudian Psychoanalysis. As such Assamese folktale is a sub genre of the expressive art, so to say the Assamese folk tales can be analyzed properly and reasonably with the
help of Freudian psychoanalytical interpretation. Such interpretations may help in various mental and physical ailments and other social problems.

IX) Works so far done in this context:

It has been found that much work has not been done on the application of Freudian Psychoanalytical Theory on Assamese folklore. There still remains much work to be done in the entire field of Assamese folklore. As the Assamese-speaking people are touched on all sides by Mongoloid tribes, some Aryanized and some still retaining their tribal affiliation, the folklore of the former raises many interesting problem of borrowing or lending of synthesis too.

Most of the folklore material is rich academically no doubt. But some of them need to be rewritten to simpler forms for actual use. These days' people seem to be much interested in the area of psychoanalysis and many projects have been taken on this area. Among those the following works can be pointed out.


8) Ritamoni Das: *A Psychoanalytical study of Assamese Tricksters*


X) **Problems faced on the proposed study:**

The initial stage of inquiry, problems statement, cannot be sloughed off arbitrarily if we are to treat folklore as a science. Usually little attention is paid by the folklore collector to determine what problem is expected to be solved by fieldwork. This is often the case with amateur collectors or those who spend their vacations in the field. Collecting for them is a pleasurable pursuit. The fact that the materials collected may later be useful to themselves or others remains at best a secondary consideration. Part of the reason for this may be that frequently “the most difficult portion of any inquiry is its initiation”. 17

Many field problems involve simply discovering and recording the traditions, which exists among the folk of a specific region or area. Closely related to such problems are those, which a collector chooses to

Re survey an area in which no collection has been done for sometime and in which he hopes to discover what changes have taken place in the interim. Richard Dorson has suggested that the American Folklorist, like Anthropologist should "base his field expeditions on a hypothesis and test it in the field with tough empirical data".¹⁸

In terms of cost, energy and time, the interview approach poses a heavy demand. The transportation cost and the time is required to cover addresses in a large area. The efficacy of interviewers as also depends on a rigorous supervision over them. Failing this data recorded may be inaccurate and incomplete. Sometimes data has been collected by inducing artificial situation. In this case the respondent might not be able to supply the proper information. Many actions human being carry out are not easily verbalized, but easily observed. One of the major limitations of the Questionnaire is that it can be administered only on subjects with a considerable amount of education. Complex questionnaire requires elaborate written replies. If the respondent misinterprets a question or writes his reply unintelligibly, there is very little that can be done to correct this. The following is a questionnaire session that I took during my

fieldwork:

Name of Informer: Mrs. Kanaklata Deka. Age: 70

VIII - Chamarkuchi
P.O. Sanekuchi

District: Nalbari (Assam)

Sex: Female

Profession: Housewife

(The questionnaire was initiated by an informal discussion and thereby she has been induced to answer the relevant questions with normal ease and gaiety. At first, questions were asked in English but it seems that the informer is quite ignorant about the English language, henceforth I had to ask the questions in Assamese and the performer too answered in Assamese, which have been translated into English.)

1. Do you have the habit of telling tales at night to your grand children?

Ans. Yes! The grandchildren always wait for me to sleep, so long they don't listen to a tale, they cannot sleep.

2. What kinds of tale do you use to tell them?

Ans. Different types, but they prefer mainly the tales where they find hero wins and Satan suffers. Moreover, most of them like animal tales. The climax of the tale, as the cheating happens to one animal by the other, which is followed by a chaotic state to the cheater animal. As for example, "The Fox and the Elephant", "The tale of the blue Fox" etc.

3. Do you have a habit of attending any tale telling events?
Ans. Yes, when I take my grand children for an evening walk many of us assemble together in anybody's house and spend sometime by telling tales.

4. In which class do your grandchildren read?

Ans. One is in Class I and the other is in class II.

5. Did you study at school before marriage?

Ans. Yes! I went to school for some days.

6. Where is your parent’s house?

Ans. At Sonkuriha.

7. Did you have any tale telling event at home?

Ans. Yes! We had. Our father called some professional taleteller whom we addressed as uncle; he always came and told tales to all of our brothers and sisters in the evening.

8. Your name please.

Ans. Mrs. Kanaklata Deka.

9. What is your age now?

Ans. 70 years.

10. How many children do you have?

Ans. Eight children.

11. When did you get married?

Ans. When I was at the age of twelve.

12. Did you tell tales to your children too?

Ans: Yes! I did.

13. At what time did you use to tell tales?

Ans. When the children were at their table and was reading, I was cooking. And in between I checked them, when found any of them
uninterested in study or feeling sleepy I brought them to the kitchen and with my cooking, equally paid attention to them by telling tales and thus kept them awake till dinner. (Assamese dinner time is at 10 p.m.) The children were found happy with the tales and got overcome sleep and comeback to studies.

13. What kinds of tale did they like?

**Ans.** I have six daughters. Mostly the daughters of the pubic age liked tales like 'Tejimala', 'Panesai', 'Dalim Konwar', 'The Kite's daughter's tale', 'Champavati' etc.

12. Do you think that the tales carry a social message?

**Ans.** Yes! With the help of these tales the daughters have been taught different lessons. As they are to make their own families after they get married, this makes a fruitful way to teach them how to obey the elder, how to be the favorite wife and favorite daughter-in-law and thereby to make a socially improved character with reformation and soundness on it.