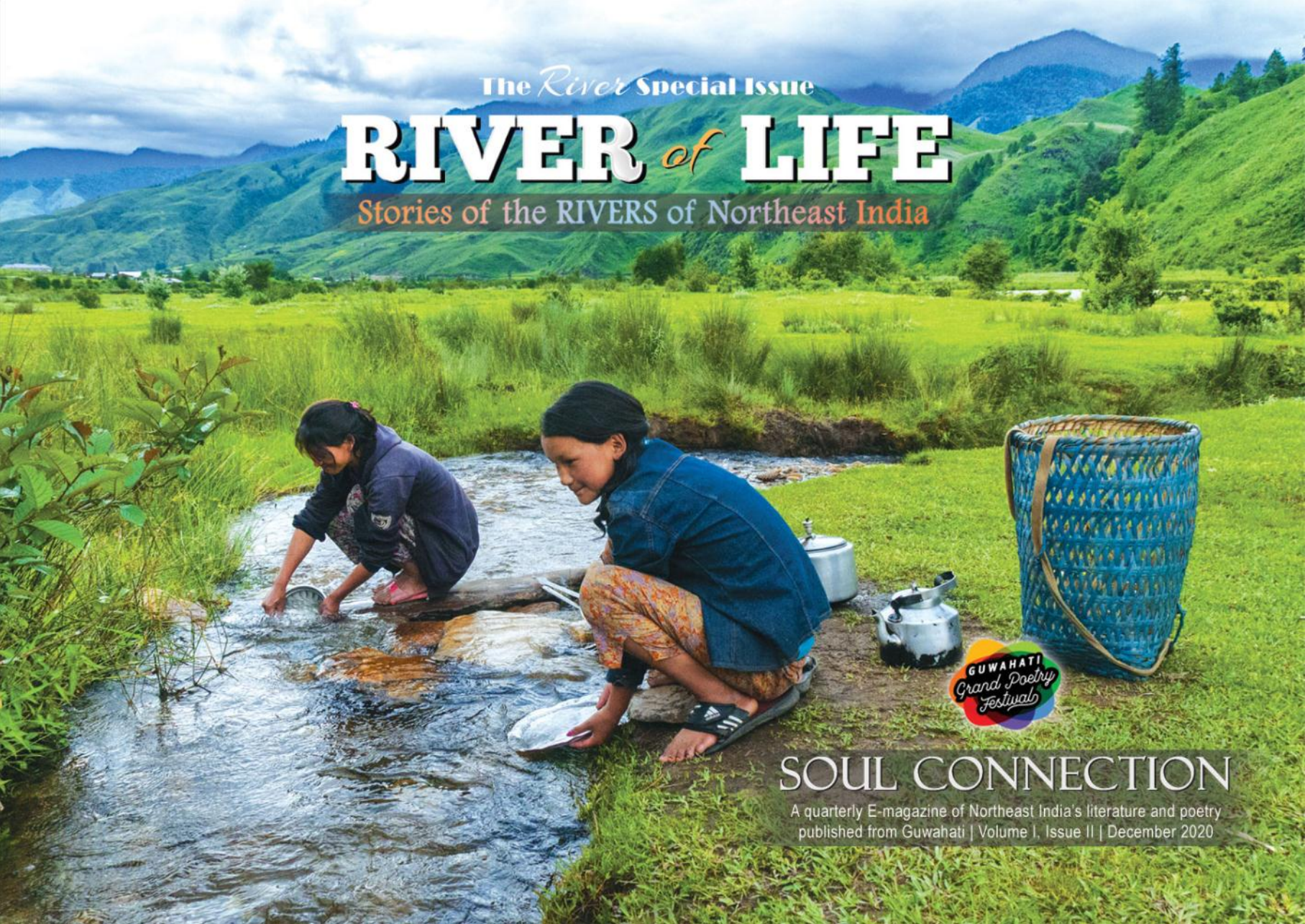
The River Special Issue
RIVER of LIFE
Stories of the RIVERS of Northeast India
GUWAHATI Grand Poetry Festival
SOUL CONNECTION
A quarterly E-magazine of Northeast India's literature and poetry
published from Guwahati | Volume I, Issue II | December 2020

Dark brown is the river,
Golden is the sand.
It flows along for ever
With trees on either hand.

Green leaves a-floating,
Castles of the foam,
Boats of mine a-boating,
Where will all come home?

On goes the river
And out past the mill,
Away down the valley,
Away down the hill.

Away down the river,
A hundred miles or more,
Other little children
Shall bring my boats ashore.

~ Robert Louis Stevenson

The Rivers of North East supports rich biodiversity since the region is uniquely placed in two biodiversity hotspot - the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot and the Eastern Himalayas Hotspot. The aboriginals and the indigenous communities living in this region too maintain a unique cultural and spiritual bond with these Rivers, other than depending on them for survival. 'River of Life – the stories of the Rivers of Northeast India' is an attempt to celebrate this unique bond between that exist between people and the Rivers and record the echo of the songs that they sing together...

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The *River* Special Issue

RIVER of LIFE

Stories of the RIVERS of Northeast India

Editor(s)

Manjit Kr. Sarma
Samsul Huda Patgiri

Guwahati Grand Poetry Festival
An event of
Nidus Associates & Consultants Pvt. Ltd.
Guwahati, Assam, India

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GUWAHATI Grand Poetry Festival

'Soul Connection', the quarterly, multi-lingual, magazine is published since July 2020 by Guwahati Grand Poetry Festival, the first and only of its kind poetry, literature and arts forum under the aegis of Nidus Associates & Consultants Private Limited.

Editor(s)
Manjit Kr. Sarma
Samsul Huda Patgiri

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For inquiries, please get in touch +91 78964 54751
https://www.guwahatigrandpoetryfestival.com
₹499/-

Cover

Two young tribal girls belonging to the Memba community washing utensils in a rivulet of the Siyom River in Mechuka, Arunachal Pradesh, India

Photography

All the photos in this issue except where specifically credited are works of Samsul Huda Patgiri, Sr. Photo Journalist and documentation photography specialist based in NE India who is also the joint editor of this publication

EDITORIAL

The River is a unique phenomenon of nature. With continuous flow of fresh water, the River retains its freshness. Similarly, human beings too continue to be born, generation after generation. With time, the earlier generation is replaced by a new one. This is the same occurrence, be it in the case of a River or in human beings.

Life should be like flowing water. Otherwise, confinement to a closed space and stagnation in the absence of replenishment, will lead to loss of life's beauty and freshness. Like water, life too will become stale, even harmful. The flowing river is a healthy message given by nature and the experience of many generations of people across continents and cultures would support this analogy.

Northeast India is home to numerous Rivers, big and small, but all flowing, dancing to the tunes of nature and finally reaching its destination in the Bay of Bengal. The region is also home to innumerable tribes, races, communities and classes of people. Yet, when put together, they present a beautiful cultural mosaic. Their lives are intrinsically linked with all those Rivers, Rivulets, streams and water bodies. It is the Rivers that have shaped their destiny, their culture and their life.

'Soul Connection' in its 'River of Life' special issue tries to portray this ancient relationship between man and nature. The beautiful poetry, thoughts, pangs and anguishes of human beings and their relationship with nature and the wild Rivers have been attempted to be documented in the form of some photographs and pieces of creative writings. We hope readers will like this poetic celebration of Rivers. Let the River of Life dance and flow to the magical tunes. Let literature too flow and celebrate the magic called life.

(Samsul Huda Patgiri)

(Manjit Kr. Sarma)

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I've known rivers:
I've known rivers ancient as the world and
older than the flow of human blood in
human veins.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

I bathed in the Euphrates when
dawns were young.
I built my hut near the Congo and
it lulled me to sleep.
I looked upon the Nile and raised the
pyramids above it.
I heard the singing of the Mississippi when
Abe Lincoln went down to New Orleans,
and I've seen its muddy bosom turn all
golden in the sunset.

I've known rivers:
Ancient, dusky rivers.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

Langston Hughes' "The Negro Speaks of River" traces black history from the beginning of human civilization mentioning both triumphs (like the construction of the Egyptian pyramids) and horrors, of slavery. The poem argues that the black "soul" has incorporated all of this historical experience, and in the process has become "deep." The old man in the poem suggests that black cultural identity is continuous and uses river symbols to reflect the African experience over ages.

Rivers as we know them

Drainage systems, also known as river systems, are the patterns formed by the streams, rivers, and lakes in a particular drainage basin. They are governed by the topography of the land, whether a particular region is dominated by hard or soft rocks, and the gradient of the land.

River is the biggest source of water.

Rivers provide water to drink, irrigation, electricity, cook, clean things and easy & cheap transportation.

It is also a source of fresh water that flowing naturally towards an ocean, lake, sea or another river.

Rivers flow in channels. The bottom of channel is called the bed and sides of the channel are called the banks. Sometimes a river flows into the ground and becomes dry at the end of its course without reaching another body of water.

Rivers begin at their source in higher ground such as mountains or hills, where rain water or melting snow collects and forms tiny streams. When one stream meets another and they merge together, the smaller stream is known as a tributary.

It takes many tributary streams to form a river.

Quiet flows the River Brahmaputra

~ Dr. Dipak Kumar Sarma
[Prof. of Surgery & HoD, Emergency Medicine, GMC&H

Brahmaputra and Barak are two main rivers flowing through Assam. Guwahati- the gateway to the north east, earlier known as 'Pragjyotishpur' is situated on the south bank of Brahmaputra. The river has a vital role in the geography of Assam and it has enriched the culture of the people on its banks.

Brahmaputra has a unique place in history. It has been mentioned in Vedas, Purana's and other ancient Hindu scriptures. According to Hindu mythology, Brahmaputra is one of the very few male rivers of India. Most of the rivers of India are considered as female and revered as mother. Hem Barua, famous Assamese litterateur and a socio-political legend wrote in one of his travelogues that while he was on his way home on train, at the time of crossing Brahmaputra, some people threw coins into the river with great respect hailing 'mother Brahmaputra' (Brahmaputra maiyya ki jai). That Brahmaputra is a male river is not known to many.

Birth of Brahmaputra:

According to 'Purana's', Brahmaputra is the son of Brahma - the Hindu God of Creation. His mother was 'Amogha', who was barren earlier. Brahmaputra was born to her as a boon from God Brahma. The baby at birth is described as watery, full of vigour. This watery body was adopted by Saint Shantanu, who gave him shelter in an area surrounded by mountains- Kailashnath in north, Gandhamadan in south, Sambartaka in east and Jarudhi in west. In course of time, the baby grew up and took the shape of a lake known as 'Kunda'. Parasurama came to this 'Kunda' to cleanse himself of his sins after he murdered his mother. According to legend, the axe with which he killed his mother stuck to his hands after the act. It was only after bathing in the 'Kunda', the axe slipped off his hands signifying his purification. Parasurama was so glad thereafter that he released all water from the Kunda by cutting its banks with his axe so that it might flow freely and bring purity to all mankind. The 'Kunda', which was thus transformed to a river, took the name of Brahmaputra

(Brahma- the God of creation, Putra-son). On the day of Ashokastami, people take bath in this holy river to shed away their sins. The devotees pray -

"Brahmaputra mahabahu, Shantanu Kulanandana, Amogha garbhasambhuta papong Louhitya me har."(Language- Sanskrit)

(Meaning: Mighty Brahmaputra, son of the dynasty of Shantanu, born to Amogha- wash away our sins.)

Devotees near Brahmaputra in *'Ashokastami' [Photo: Author]*

The story of birth of Brahmaputra is described differently in 'Dharmamangal'. An admixture of mythology and folklore is observed in this narration. Ghanaram Chakravarty (17th-18th centuries), a significant poet of 'Dharmamangal' described birth of Brahmaputra in his poetic literature (Kavya) as narrated by Hanuman. It is said that Parasurama could not remove his sins after killing his mother even after a long tour of different holy places. The axe with which he killed his mother stuck to his hand. Ultimately he came to 'Brahmakunda' where he took shelter in a cowshed. In the night he heard a discussion between a cow and an ox. Both of them were dissatisfied with their owner, a Brahmana who tortured them immensely. The ox told his plan to kill the Brahmana next day by goring. The cow however tried to dissuade the ox by saying that it would result in a great sin of killing a Brahmana. The ox replied that he could be relieved of the sin easily by simply taking a bath in the 'Kunda'. From this conversation Parasurama could know the power of the lake and took a bath in the 'Kunda'. To his surprise the axe slipped off from his hand.

A river with many names:

People of Assam like to call Brahmaputra as 'Luit'. The name expresses warmth of Assamese people for this river. Luit is a sweet name of a near and dear one whereas Brahmaputra signifies a respectable and high esteemed depiction of the river.

Luit is a derivative of 'Lohit' from the word "Louhitya'. In 'Bhismaparba' of Mahabharata, Sanjay gave a geographical description of the then India. He named many mountains, states and rivers. He mentioned river 'Louhitya' which is a Sanskritized version of 'Lohit'.

Geographically, the main stream of the river is known as Tsangpo in Tibet, Siang or Dihing in Arunachal Pradesh , Brahmaputra or Luit in Assam, Jamuna, Meghna and Padma in Bangaladesh. The river ultimately ends as Meghna in Bay of Bengal.

Geographical aspects:

Brahmaputra is the fourth longest river of the world. It is a river which starts from 'Manas Sarovara', a lake on the Himalayas which is at an elevation of 5300 kilometre from the sea level. It crosses about 2890 kilometres in its course through Tibet, India and Bangladesh. It is considered as one of the biggest river of the world. Considering its water flow it can be placed next to Amazon, Congo and Yangzi.

Brahmaputra is well known for its enormous water resource. The river carries about 20,000 cubic metre of water per second on an average. In times of flood, it increases up to 70,000 cubic meters per second. Even in dry season it comes up to 3,000 cubic meter of water per second. The width of the river is 5.46 kms on an average. The depth varies from time to time. In Guwahati, in the dry season depth of Brahmaputra is about 18 meters. It increases to 27 meters in the rainy season.

Brahmaputra is known for causing floods. Every year, acres of cultivated lands and scores and scores of villages are submerged in flood from this river. Brahmaputra has about 39 tributaries. The tributaries in the north bank are short and shallow but fast growing with steep gradient. They flow from north to south. They carry huge amount of rain water

River *Lohit* in Arunachal Pradesh

as well as water from melting ice of the mountains. The important northern tributaries are Suwansiri, Bharali, Dikrong, Ronganadi, Jiadhol, Puthimari, Pagladia, Beki, Manas, Aai, Sonkosh, Saralbhanga, Champabati and Teesta. The tributaries of the south follow a relatively long course and flow casually from east to west. They carry rain water and water from the springs in the hills. Some of the important southern tributaries are Noa-Dihing, Demou, Burhidihing, Dikhou, Disang, Dhansiri, Bhogdoi, Jaji, Kalang, Kapili, Digaru, Kulsi, Bharalu, Dudhnoi, Krishnai, Kakadonga, Jinjiram and Jinari.

And quiet flows the Brahmaputra:

The scenic beauty of Brahmaputra has given a unique dimension to its green valley which is surrounded by blue hills and intersected by sparkling rivulets. The river is closely associated with joys and sorrows of the inhabitants on its banks. Brahmaputra is a part of their soul. Representation of this river is seen in literature, language, culture and festivals of this region.

Brahmaputra is bestowed with an aura of purity in mythologies. He is son of 'Brahma', the God of creation. Through the ages, Brahmaputra is represented in numerous forms in folklores and literature. Sometimes it is described in the form of a youth full of virility and energy and sometimes in the form of an old man.

Brahmaputra becomes ferocious in times of flood. It seems as if it is taking the form of 'Kaal' (The God of death). In one of his song, famous Assamese singer Jayanta Hazarika is asking Brahmaputra about this nature -

"Luitor boliaa baan
Toi koloinu dhapoli meliso
Hir hir sobode Kaal rup dhori loi
Kaakno baare bare khediso" [Language- Assamese]

Translation:

O! the mad flood of Brahmaputra
Where to are you running
With the thunderous sounds
Taking the form of 'Kaal'
Whom that you
Chasing again and again

River *Brahmpautra* near Guwahati, Assam

Kaviguru Ravindranath has given a picturesque description of the indomitable form of 'Brahmaputra' in one of his poem as such-

"Jaydin Himaadree Shringe neme ase ochena aasaar
Mohanod Brahmaputra okosmaat durbar durbar"
[Language- Bangla]

Translation:
When comes to the Himalayas peaks the month of 'Aasaar'
Suddenly flows Brahmaputra
The big river – indomitable, irresistible]

This indomitable spirit of Brahmaputra is also seen among the inhabitants on its banks. They are ready to sacrifice their life for their motherland. Jyotiprasad Agarwala, an Assamese legend wrote in one of his poems –

"Luitor paarore aami dekaa loraa
Moribole bhoy naai" [Language- Assamese]

Translation:
We are the youth of the banks of Brahmaputra
Death, we fear not.

Brahmaputra becomes enraged when it is dissatisfied. In one of his song Dr. Bhupen Hazarika expressed this dissatisfaction of the river...

"Aaji Brahmaputra hol bohnimaan
Monor digantat dhowa ure
Aakaashat papiaa taraa ure
Pade pade kaak kare apamaan"
[Language- Assamese]

Translation:
Today Brahmaputra is ablaze
Smoke swirls in the mind's horizon
Comets fall from the sky
Who is being insulted again and again?

It seems that the river knows everything that is happening in its valley. But, it is cool and calm. Poet Jyotiprasad requests the river to narrate the history of Assam as it flows through different towns and cities....

"Luitare paani jaabi o boi

A 'Ghat' (Ferry port) of Brahmaputra in Bogeebil
[Photo: Author]

Sandhiaa Luitar paani sonowaali
Sahare nagare jaabi o boi
Jayaare kiriti, deshe bideshe
Sahare nagare jaabi o koi." [Language- Assamese]

Translation:

O! Water of Luit
Golden in evening hue
Flow through towns and cities
Narrate the glory of Joymati
Through all the places you flow

[Note: Joymati - A historical character, a queen in the erstwhile Ahom kingdom of Assam who sacrificed her life for a greater cause.]

In Assamese literature and folk culture Brahmaputra is cited again and again for various reasons. It is a known fact that from time immemorial civilizations flourish in the valleys of great rivers. Brahmaputra is no exception to it. Brahmaputra is the cause of happiness for the people living in its valley. At the same time during flood Brahmaputra is the cause of their sorrow. But, Brahmaputra is near and dear to everyone in its valley. In their life Brahmaputra plays a role and quiet flows the Brahmaputra in their souls.

हे ! ब्रह्मपुत्र

रवि कुमार गहतराज

मैं जब भी तुझे देखता हूँ ,
तेरी चंचलता, तेरी विशालता देख
मेरी नजरें तुझ पर टिकी रह जाती है।
तेरा बहने का जो स्वर है,
मेरे कानों में सैकड़ों अल्फाज कह जाती है।
तिब्बत के धमनियों में बहता
तू जीवन है , तू यरलुंग त्संगपो है॥

जहाँ का बीता कल,पूरा इतिहास
बिना तेरे जिक्र के अधूरा है।
जहाँ हर व्यक्ति का जीवन
तुझसे ही तो जुड़ा है।
अरुणाचल के हर संस्कृति का
तू मूल अंग है , तू देहांग है॥

बिना धर्म देखे, बिना जात देखे
तूने सभी की प्यास बुझाई है।
श्रीमंत शंकर - माधव और आजान के
संदेश की तू परछाई है।
लाचित के वीर गाथा की
तू प्रतिक है, तू लुइत है॥

तेरे लहरों का अपना ही स्वाभिमान है।
हमारे अस्तित्व का,
हे ! ब्रह्मपुत्र,
तू जागृत प्रमाण है॥

ৰাভা জনজাতীয় সম্প্রদায় আৰু ইয়াৰ জ্ঞানগর্ভ মৌলিকতাঃ প্রাচীন ধর্মীয় ৰীতি-নীতিৰ পৰম্পৰাত বৈদিক, যোগদর্শন আৰু সনাতন ধর্মীয় তত্ত্বৰ সমাহাৰ আৰু সাধনাৰ এটি গভীৰ আলোচনা

ডঃ অভিজিৎ ৰাভা, ভাৰতীয় বন সেৱা
ডিফু, কাৰবি আঙলং

ৰাভা জনজাতীয় সম্প্রদায়ৰ কথা বিস্তৃতভাৱে ইয়াত আলচা হোৱা নাই । আলোচনাটি ওপৰৰ শিৰোনামাৰ গণ্ডিৰ ভিতৰত সীমাবদ্ধ ৰখা হৈছে । ৰাভা সম্প্রদায়ৰ বিষয়ে বহু কথাই তাহানিতে আৰু সমসাময়িক লিখকবৃন্দই একেবোৰ কথাকে উনুকিয়াই গৈছে, তাত নতুন ভাৱধাৰা বা দিশৰ উন্মোচন কোনোদিনেই হোৱা নাই । তাৰে এটা হ'ল ৰাভাসকলৰ অতীতৰ মূল ঠাইখনৰ কথা য'ৰ পৰা তেখেতসকলৰ পূর্বপুৰুষসকলে বর্তমানৰ ৰাভা অধ্যুসিত অঞ্চলত বসতি কৰিলেহি । আৰু তাৰে লগৰে এটি কথা, ৰাভাসকলৰ মাজত থকা তাহানিৰ সভ্যতাৰ চিন কিনো থাকি গ'ল?

থোৰতে, এই সুগভীৰতাৰ মাজত বুৰ মাৰি কিছু বিশেষ কিছু ন দিশৰ অবতাৰনা কৰিবৰ স্থল আছে। আজিকোপতি কোনো লিখক, নৃতত্ত্ববিদ, পণ্ডিতসমাজৰ পৰা তেনে উৎকৃস্ট বাট কটা হোৱা নাই যেন লাগে।

প্রায়ভাগ লিখনিতে বা সকলোতে একেটা কথাকে প্রতিধ্বনিত হোৱাতো তেনেই সাধাৰণ কথা হৈ পৰিছে। ৰাভাসকলৰ আজিকোপতি বর্তি থকা মাতৃপ্রধানতা, কৃস্টি আৰু জ্ঞানভিত্তিক ধর্মীয় ৰিতি-নীতি সকলোটি একেটা সুৰতে গথা । পাহৰণিয়ে এই কথা প্রায় তললৈ নিচিলেহি। ভাগ্যক্রমে সময়তে ওপৰোক্ত কথাবোৰ লিপিবদ্ধ কৰিব পৰা গ'ল।

ৰাভা সম্প্রদায়ৰ মাজত প্রাকৃতিক শিলাখণ্ডবোৰ, পাহাৰৰ সমস্টিবোৰকে ধৰি বহু সৰু-বৰ নদ-নদীবোৰক বিশেষভাৱে প্রাধান্য প্রদান কৰা দেখা যায় । সেইফালৰ পৰা খাচী-জয়ন্তীয়াসকল সময়ৰেখাৰ কিছু পিচৰ যেন লাগে । কিয়নো, তেখেতসকলৰ মাজত মন'লিথিক সভ্যতাৰ চিন পোৱা যায় । নগাসকল হ'ল 'মেগালিথিক' বা বৰপ্রস্তৰ সভ্যতাৰ। ইয়াৰ পৰাই এইটোকে দেখ দেখকৈ ওলাই পৰে যে ৰাভা সম্প্রদায়ৰ মানুহসকলে ভাল সুস্থসৱল পাহাৰ ইক'চিস্টেমৰ পৰা হোৱা প্রকৃত লাভ বা ইক'চিস্টেম চার্ভিচবোৰৰ কথা আমাৰ সভ্যতাৰ বহু আগেয়ে জানিব পাৰিছিল। এক ৰহস্যবাদী কৌতুহলো ইয়াত জাগি উঠে।

ৰহস্যবাদমতে মানুহে পাহাৰ, গছ, সকলোৰে লগত ওতঃপ্রোতঃ ভাৱে শক্তি বা ভাৱ বা এধৰণৰ এনাজৰী গঢ়ি তুলিব পাৰে আৰু সেয়া সাধনাৰ দ্বাৰা সেয়াও সম্ভৱ। চীন সমৰকলা ট'আই চি হ'ল এধৰণৰ যোগ প্রক্রিয়া, যাৰ দ্বাৰা পাহাৰৰ পৰাও শক্তি আহৰণ কৰিব পাৰি, প্রাণায়াম আৰু কিছু সুন্দৰ ইটোৰ পৰা সিটোলৈ বৈ যোৱা দেহভঙ্গীমাৰ দ্বাৰা । গতিকে ৰাভাসকলৰো তেনেধৰণৰ কোনো বিশেষ জ্ঞান বা অসাধাৰণ ব্যুৎপত্তি নোহোৱা বুলি ক'ব নোৱাৰি।

এই সম্প্রদায়ৰ সকলোৱে লাঙাদেওক মানে। লাঙাদেওক সাধাৰণতে আমি শিৱ দেৱতা বুলি বুজোইঁক । কিন্তু গুঢ়ার্থ তেনেই সুকীয়া । দৰাচলতে সেয়াই হ'ল বৈদিক 'ৰূদ্রশিৱ'; যিজনৰ গাৰ ৰং উজ্জ্বল ৰৌপ্যবর্ণ বা জিলিকা শুকুলা ৰঙৰ গাৰে আদি দেৱতাজন । বহুতে ইয়াৰ ভিতৰলৈ আৰু নোসোমায় । ৰূদ্রশিৱ যেতিয়া আছেই, তাৰ তত্ত্বসমূহক কিছু আলচা ভাল হ'ব । প্রথমে আহোঁ শিৱৰ 'ডম্বৰু'ৰ ওচৰলৈ ! ডম্বৰু হ'ল 'নাদ' তত্ত্ব বা শব্দ-ব্রহ্মৰ প্রতীক । পূৰাণৰ কাহিনীমতে, যেতিয়া শিৱদেৱৰ হাতত প্রথমবাৰৰ বাবে বাজি উঠে, তেতিয়া আঠত্রিশটা শব্দ বাহিৰ হৈছিল হেনো । এই সংখ্যাই 'মনসৰা কাব্য'ৰ মতে যতবোৰ ডাইমেনশ্যন হ'ব পাৰে, তাৰে সমান।

The famous *Lewa Taana* (Tug of war) game of the Rabha community in Assam

GUWAHATI Grand Poetry Festival

ইফালে, ডম্বৰুটোৰ সৰলৰৈখিক আকৃতিয়ে দুটা ত্ৰিভুজে নিজৰ নিজৰ শীৰ্ষবিন্দু এটাকে নিজৰ বুলি ধৰি এটি বালিঘড়ীৰ ৰূপ লয়। ইয়েই হ'ল চৌদ্ধটা ভূৱন বা দৃশ্যমান জগতৰ এটি সংকেত মাত্ৰ। তাৰে সপ্তভুৱনৰ কথাৰেইটো বিখ্যাত গায়ত্ৰীমন্ত্ৰৰ অৱস্থিতি বিদ্যমান! লাঙাদেওৰ ত্ৰিশুলপাততে আছে এগাল লাগতীয়াল তথ্যসমুহঃ ৰজঃ, তমঃ আৰু সত্বঃ আদি তিনিটি গুণ। এইকেইটিয়ে যথাক্ৰমে, সৃস্টি, স্থিতি আৰু ক্ষয়ৰ কথা উনুকিয়ায়, সকলো সভ্যতাৰ কাৰণে। যোৱা শতিকাৰ পঞ্চাশৰ দশকলৈকে ৰাভা ডেকাসকলে মূৰত দীঘল টিকনী লৈ নিজৰ কাম কাজ কৰি ফুৰিছিল। টিকনীৰ উৎপত্তিস্থলটো হ'ল 'ব্ৰহ্মৰন্ধ্ৰ'ৰ জেগা যাৰ মাজেৰে যোগীসকলে নিজৰ কুণ্ডলিনী শক্তি উজাই ওপৰলৈ পঠিয়াব পাৰিছিল আৰু এতিয়াও পাৰে। গতিকে ৰাভাসকলৰ মাজৰে কোনোবাই হয়তো এই ওপৰত দিয়া তত্বসমূহ ভালদৰে জানিছিল। 'ফাৰকান্থি' পূজাৰ প্ৰাৰ্থনামূলক গানবোৰৰ মাজেৰে ৰাভাসকলৰ মাজত থকা আৰু এটি কথা সদৰি হৈ পৰেঃ- সেয়া হ'ল, জন্মান্তৰবাদ আৰু পুণৰ্জন্মৰ কথাবোৰ। যাতে এই জীৱন এৰি যোৱাৰ পিচত আত্মাই সাধাৰণ জীৱৰ ৰূপ ধাৰণ কৰিব নেলাগে তাৰে কামনা কৰা হয়।

দৰংগিৰি বা মুচকুলি পথাৰৰ ওচৰত বুঢ়া-বুঢ়ীৰ থান বিদ্যমান। এয়া হ'ল পুৰুষ আৰু প্ৰকৃতিৰ এটি অনন্তলৈ বৈ যোৱা তত্বৰ এক প্ৰতীকহে। পৰবৰ্তী কালত বৈ°ঞৱসকলৰ মাজত সেয়াই ৰাধা-কৃ°ঞৰ জোৰা। চীনৰ দৰ্শণত তাকেই য়িন-য়াঙৰ জোৰা বিশেষ বুলিব পাৰি। এতিয়া অহা যাওক কিছুমান বিশ্বাসযোগ্য নোহোৱা কথাকিছুমানলৈ। ৰাভা, গাৰো, মিকিৰ বা কাৰবি, বিশেষ এক নগা জনজাতীয় সম্প্ৰদায়ৰ মাজত মানুহে বাঘ ৰূপ ধৰি আকউ মানুহৰ ৰূপলৈ ওভতি আহিব পৰা কৌশল জনা মানুহৰ কথা কোৱা হয়। কিন্তু যোগৰ বলত অসমৰ মধ্যযুগত বহুত মানুহে 'মোট' সলোৱা কাৰবাৰ কৰাটো বৰ সৰু সুৰা প্ৰচলিত কথাই আছিল।

আগৰ বুঢ়া-মেথাৰ মুখত মানুহৰ গাত থকা পাঁচবিধ তত্বৰ কথা শুনিবলৈ পোৱা গৈছিল। এই তত্ববোৰৰ ওপৰত দখল সাব্যস্ত কৰিব পাৰিলে বহু অদ্ভুত কাম সাধন কৰিব পাৰে বুলি যোগশাস্ত্ৰত লিখাই আছে। আজিকোপতি ৰাভা সকলৰ মাজত 'টিক্কাৰ' বুলি এটি মুনিহ-তিৰোতাৰ গোপনীয় অনুস্থান বৰ্তি আছে। এখেতসকলৰ যৌগিক শক্তি তবধমানিব লগীয়া। বিশেষ নকওঁ আৰু নজনাওঁ। দুস্টৰ হাতত পৰি এখেতসকলৰ প্ৰাণ বিপন্ন হোৱাৰ পথত। আজিকালি আওবাটে যোৱাসকলে 'ডাইনী' শব্দটো যধে মধে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰি সমাজলৈ বদনাম কঢ়িয়াইছে।

আজিকালিৰ বহুতে ওপৰৰ হেৰাই যোৱা সেই ৰাভাসকলৰ মাজৰ সেই গৌৰৱময় জ্ঞানমুলক কথাবোৰ নেজানে বা কেৱল চালেবেৰেহে কোবায়। সকলোৰে মঙ্গল কামনা কৰি সামৰিছোঁ।

* * *

The greedy *Bornoi*

~ Dr. Neeta Lagachu Taye

On the edge of the *Bornoi* [1] river,
Near the pond full of *Karmi* [2] fish,
Early crops were sown,
Crops meant for keeping body and soul alive.
But oh heart! The rice field!
The beloved rice field!
The greedy river *Bornoi*
Is swiftly swallowing away
This very moment, clearly before our eyes.

[Translated from original Mising poem Bornoi Ane' Ragode' by Anjali Doley]

[1] *Bornoi:* River Brahmaputra or 'big river'
[2] *Karmi:* A type of small fish

Photograph: A boat at the Kokilamukh Ghat, Jorhat
Photographer: Dr. Neeta Lagachu Taye

Canvas of eternity

~ Anjali Saud Dutta

Every river is a gift.
It rises, flows silently and joins its destination.
Birth of a river through the hills is painful.
But living is pleasurable with its bounty.
Let us see the red sun, the sparkling waves, the flying heron, singing cuckoo,
Dancing willows, swimming fish, green and yellow field on its banks.
Let us feel the largeness of the sky above it
And the dream of the boatman and fisherman.
Let us listen to the music of the river
And taste the deep and shallow water to fill the heart.

Let us be familiar with the swollen river too
That inundates and destroys the banks.
Still again grows in abundance.
The mightier river with the streams and tributaries
Crosses every border bearing love and unity.
River is truth like beauty.
Season comes and season goes.
But river never leaves.
Witnessing every moment, every generation
It flows silently —
Being a dream, a life, a motion, a poem, a song
A pride, an inspiration
And a companion of pain and pleasure
Of the riverside dwellers.

Dikhow – It's many hues

~ Shyamolima Saikia

A stillness embracing a mirror of the sky
And of trees and birds flying by,
A rage that meanders and marauds the land
With her deluge and inundates the bank;

A sensuousness enchanting with her sparkled waves,
Dappled with gemstones of sunrays,
A stoicism withstanding the tempests of time
Over eons carving its way along history's spool of twine;

A loyalty beholding many a clan arrive and go
From the reigns of *Sukaphaa* at Charaideo,
A devotion harbouring temples and mosques on her banks,
The *Shivadol, Bishnu Dol, Ajan Pir Dargah* et al.

A mystery channeling underneath secret tunnels
From *Talatal Ghar* to *Kareng* palace,
A resilience put up by many a courageous lot
Against the *Kacharis* to the Mughal onslaught;

A life-giver to many a human dwelling on its shore
Sustaining humble and meagre lives from days yore,
The *Dikhow* thus onwards wanders
With voices murmuring in its rippled waters,
Narrating stories, woven in its tapestry golden,
Of the lives of hundreds of mortals
Before being lost in time's sweep and long forgotten…

River *Dikhou* that flows through the Mokokchung and Longleng districts in Nagaland

The jolt of flood in Assam

~ Anmona Handique Mahanta

The jolt arrived again,
With the same uproar like tides in vain,
Something not anew in the land,
As it visits every year recklessly unplanned,
It regrets not to make the impoverished homeless again,
Who's faith survives by the rain,
For their agricultural fields sowed not to feel this disdain,
The jolt arrived again,
Yet not a National Issue despite being panned,
With debates aired with convictions yet failing to obtain,
For the urges do not reach to the Main Gate, with the route so bane,
With the same old embankments on the banks,
That needs to be reconstructed with more of reservoirs and storage tanks,
Yes, the jolt have arrived again,
Now it sincerely needs your call to amend,
Before the entire land submerges us to choke,
It is high time we stop plugging the urban drains to this havoc,
It's journey is breathless for the years ahead,
For the monsoons won't take your permission before it intrudes your land!

A common sight during the annual floods in Assam

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মহাবাহু

শান্তনু ঠাকুৰ

ধীৰ স্থিৰ শান্ত অশান্ত ক্লান্ত অক্লান্ত
বিস্তীর্ন বিশাল গভীৰ দুৰন্ত
প্রলয় বিনাশ ধ্বংস স্রোতস্রিনী
বিশেষ্য দোকোলটকা বিশেষণ বান
মই কঢ়িয়াও সহজাত...
আকোৱালো ত্যেজো গঢ়ো ভাঙোঁ
সাজো পাতো খান্দো তোলো
নিজ মর্য্যদাত নিজ ব্যাকৰণ
বওঁ নিজ মনে মই অবিৰত অবিৰাম
অমোঘাগর্ভসম্ভুত শান্তনু কুলনন্দন
লৌহিত্য মই
নিকা কৰো মানুহৰ পাপ
মই যে ব্রহ্মাৰ পুত্র
ব্রহ্মান্ড মোৰ সুত্র ব্রহ্মপুত্র মোৰ নাম।
কত সভ্যতা মোৰ সৃষ্টি
কত ইতিহাস কত সাম্রাজ্য অনাদি
সময়ো থমকে মোৰ হুংকাৰ শুনি

পিতৃও মই মাতৃও মই
ইচ্ছা হ'লে সমুদ্র মই ইচ্ছাত আকাশ
মোৰ সন্তানে দিছে মোক অনেক নাম
দিক বিদিক নাই মই সর্ববিদ্যমান
ঢাপলো বলয় ভেদি চুলি মেলি
তাহানিৰ বাউলী চামুন্ডা গোসানী
আছিলো আদিতে আছো বর্তমানে
থাকিম ভবিষ্যতে কালৰো শেষত
যাম বৈ মই লৈ সময় কোলাত...
মোৰে গর্ভতে উঠে বহে
মানুহৰ ইতিহাস নিয়তিৰ উপহাস
মোৰেই বুকুতে পাবা
হাঁহি আনন্দ কান্দোনৰ কৰুণ গাথা
ব্রহ্মাৰ পুত্র মই অনন্ত সত্তা
নিজ ব্যাকৰণ আছে নিজ মর্য্যদা
উত্তাল উন্মাদ আনন্দ উন্মুক্ত
মোৰেই লয় মোৰেই তাল মান
সকলো নদীয়েই মই...
অবিৰাম বওঁ মই নিৰন্তৰ মহাকাল
ব্রহ্মপুত্র মোৰ নাম...

Sela Lake, Arunachal Pradesh

THE RIVERS OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Arunachal Pradesh is a land of lush green forests, deep river valleys and beautiful plateaus. The land is mostly mountainous with Himalayan ranges along the northern borders criss-crossed with mountain ranges running north-south.

These divide the State into five river valleys: the Kameng, the Subansiri, the Siang, the Lohit and the Tirap. All these rivers are fed by snows from the Himalayas and countless rivers and rivulets except Tirap which is fed by Patkai Range.

The mightiest of these rivers is Siang, called Tsangpo in Tibet, which becomes Brahmaputra after it is joined by the Dibang and the Lohit in the plains of Assam.

High mountains and dense forests have prevented intercommunication between tribes living in different river valleys. Isolation imposed by geography has led different tribes with several dialects to live and flourish with their distinct identities.

Major Rivers of Arunachal Pradesh are: -

1. Siang River
2. Dibang River
3. Dihing River
4. Dri Streams
5. Kameng River
6. Lohit River
7. Namka Chu
8. Nyamjang Chu
9. Par River
10. Subansiri River
11. Sumdorong Chu
12. Tawang Chu
13. Noa Dihing
14. Siyom
15. Nyamjang Chu
16. Namka Chu
17. Sumdorong Chu
18. Bichom
19. Ronganodi
20. Tirap River
21. Yepak river
22. Drangme Chhu river
23. Sangti river
24. Dikrong river
25. Papumpare
26. Sisiri
28. Tissa

To *Rongmon*, my fellow Brahmaputra lover

~ Swati Baruah

As I lay awake
In the cold,
Listening to the burble of the Sangti river
Mixed with the whistling of the wind
And the rustling of the trees,
Among a few snores of my fellow companions.
I think of home.
Would my Brahmaputra have the same calming sounds?
Or would it only remind me of losses I won't want to think of?
I shudder at the thought of home,
Swept away in a blink of an eye.
I then hum Bhupen Haraika's *Porohi Puwale Tulunga Nawote*
Under my breathe.

I sing of *Rongmon*,
who never returned from fishing
In the heart of my Brahmaputra
I sing of *Rohdoi*,
who beat her chest and cried
At the loss of her beloved
I sing of Hazarika,
who lamented the loss
Of *Rongmon* and *Rohdoi*.
Then I slowly drift into sleep
Only to dream of my Brahmaputra;
Its vastness and majesty,
Which gives life and takes life
Which loves its people
But also,
Doesn't think twice before swallowing
any *Rongmon* into its heart.

The River *Siyom* at Along, Arunachal Pradesh

The Riverfarer

~ Dr. Abhijit Rabha, *IFS*

"Row, Row yer boat gently down the stream,
Merrily, merrily, merrily, life is just a Dream!"

I experienced my first ever boat ride in the life when I was about three years old. It was in Dighalipukhuri or the Long Tank of the somnolent township of Guwahati of the early sixties. My now departed father was with me with a beam of smile in his face while two men rowed the medium sized boat that took us from the museum end to the high-court end. I was fascinated by the boat ride and wanted to be boat borne again…. An opportunity that never came again till we boated in the placid waters of the Ward's Lake in Shillong a place with an apt sobriquet called 'The Scotland of the East.'

For many of my earlier generations, boating across rivers, whether large or small; turbulent or placid, off or on rough weathers, was an endless experience. The Brahmaputra and its tributaries were the ones, which gave rise to their riverbank settlements. Gradual flooding was quite the rule and people knew how to live with suck experiences. Flooding was never to a catastrophic scale.

The river-faring people of Assam had a lot of varieties of boats; from large to small for various purposes. There were large ones used for transportation of goods by traders by the waters of Brahmaputra known as the 'Dingora' commonly with white sails. Also there were 'Pansoi's which were small but capable for long distance travel and also good for fishing. For the small waterways and water-bodies, there were dugouts or the Tulunga boats. There were also the Bor-Nao's, which had to be towed while travelling upstream the river. The sturdy and muscular boatmen would get down to the bank of the river and with a long rope, tied to the mast, whether temporary or a fixed one would tow the boat along the bank. The puny or the clever towing man would manage to keep the rope straight as if to show that he was also in the business of the effort. This art was known as 'Gun Tana'.

The British colonial government found that steam power can expedite their governance and was quick to introduce the Steam engines for the railway carriages. The first train with few passengers made its maiden journey in 1853 in Bombay, The Mumbai of the yesteryears. Similarly, the Steam paddleboats came slapping and hooting up and down the Brahmaputra River. The Naga and the Assam were the first paddle streamers that were deployed by the Indian General Steamship Company in the province of Assam. It took a long nine days to reach Guwahati from Gowaland upstream the Brahmaputra during the days of monsoon flooding. These were the vessels which were introduced in response to tea-sectors which began a few decades of annexation of Assam by; the British East India Company in 1826. The article 2 of the Peace Treaty signed at Yandabo in Burma gave way to the British Rule in the Brahmaputra Valley, Manipur, Jayantiya Hills and Cachar.

The paddle steamers ferried up the indentured labourers from

Chotanagpur to the burgeoning tea gardens in the various locations of the Brahmaputra and the Barak valleys, sometime in excess of the total population of indigenous inhabitants of these areas at those days. This caused a spurt of population growth in both the Valleys.

If the first comers were the Gurkhali soldiers of the British East India Company who were settled in Shillong after its discovery in 1876; the grazier Nepalese community and the Kayas from Rajasthan followed immediately to take opportunities in the new areas in Assam. The Policy of liberalization was much to be attributed to this.

The journey by paddle steamers was arduous in the beginning till the passenger steamers were pressed into service. They had good first and second classes of travel facilities. There was onboard catering with butlers in hand. The common fares offered were the Fish Curry cooked in the Bengali Style and cooked rich. There used be a Captain or a 'Sareng' housed on the top of the steamers' corrugated iron roofing called the Pilot's House. There were 'sounder's who used to measure the depths of the river bed constantly:

According to the types of the Steamers, one could either boil under the sun or rather be quite comfortable in the first class cabin meant for passenger travel. If one liked the native style of fish dishes, one could enjoy the fare from the East Bengal to the to the typical Assamese ones. There was no dearth of fishes in the depth of the river Brahmaputra.

Recently, I came across a classified map of the British Assam, with military grids. It showed that the survey of the landscape took place in 1911 and was published during the wartime efforts in 1945. The ol' man river was shown flowing in almost through a single channel; well that was five years before the grand earth-tremor of the 1950, which registered about 8.5 in the Richter scale.

These steamers, as their type indicated, were steam powered, their way of stoking up the boilers was with either the firewood or the coal, ample in supply in the bosom of the jungles of the Assam. In one report, the depletion of the trees of the Singri Hills near the Tezpur Township was attributed to harvesting of the timber and the firewood trees were meant for the steamer boats. The water came directly from the River. They could hoot through their whistles too. The last hoots of a steamer near the Goalpara Circuit house sometime in 1964. In those times, when the silence was waiting for everyone; such hoots of the steamers could be heard over considerable distances. The Silghat and the Jogighopa 'Ghat's were the places where the steamers loaded the precious fuel i.e. Coal for onwards upriver or downriver journeys. Well, there were no propellers for these steamers. There were two wheelhouse housings that protected a series of paddles that caused the forward movements. They took on the racy currents

River rafting in *Manas* River in Assam

of the Brahmaputra even on those days to travel upstream, however by few days more than the downstream Journeys. What happened to them? Well, the time took 'em; I guess. The hostilities that brewed up between the East Pakistan and India blocked the Steamer movement through the enemy territory and had to remain stranded on the Guwahati River Front for a long period; right from the Uzan Bazaar Ghat to the Fancy Bazaar Ghat. By, 1970's all f them were broken up to pieces and sold as scrap metals. Only if they waited for one more year, for the liberation of the Bangladesh! It shows that it was a mistake of the century both for the river history and the steamer company as well.

They are still there in Bangladesh river ports till today in serviceable condition, but converted to diesel engines. Paddle Houses with the paddles are still there, but the souls are gone.

Going back to those times, we could only imagine that a lonely steamer hooting and paddling downstream was never alone. There were scores of fellow river vessels as mentioned earlier. They were scores of fellow river vessels as mentioned earlier. They were not mechanized. Sails and sturdy oars propelled them. River faring was our heritage. This Heritage was supported by the varieties of suitable timber trees from the endless stretch of jungles in our landscape.

To be a helmsman one needed quite a long time in the rivers with their changing moods through the seasons. Well, then there were those timber rafts, manned or unmanned. So were the bamboo rafts from the upper Assam to the markets of the lower Assam. What do so many that not know the Rani and the areas close to the East Khasi Hills and the Garo hills were the original sources of the Muga Silk moths. The Sadagars of the Sivasagar used to coast down to the Palasbari areas downstream Guwahati to get more and more of the wild variety of the eggs of this month to get the quality the Muga Silk going even in those years. The river faring boats men were sometimes terrified about the sudden whirlpools that were sometimes terrified about the sudden whirlpools that were sometimes terrified about the sudden whirlpools that were too powerful to contend with and sometimes of the storm that brewed. The river farers had their own kind of metrological experiences. If dark clouds were seen to the west of the river, it was better not to leave the banks of the river or the Ghat where one's boat lay moored. The word for an Anchor is now almost lost in our language. Here it is for the posterity: Gerapi. If I were the Brahmaputra, I would tell you sadly of so many things that make me lonely. The river you tell me sadly so many things that make me lonely. The river banks are devoid of the Gavails (Gavialis gangeticus) or the Gharials. I was told by my late father long ago that this species of fish eating reptile was found aplenty even in the inland ox-bow and the tectonic lake like the San-Dubi. The latter has been twisted to Chandubi these days. In the great shake of 1897, a part of the Reserve Forest by the River Kulashi, lost five hills that went underground by subsidence. The Khasi people nearby were quick to say that San (number five in Khasi) has gone under (Dubi Gol: Assamese).

Kalaguru late Bishnu Prasad Rabha and my father were in some mission upstream the Kulashi River when the Mustards were harvested in a particular year. When they entered the San Dubi Lake through an inlet from the river, it was quite a sight in the following morning. There were only whizzing Gharials and Gharials on the banks of the lake and on the Lake water surface. The last of the Gharials at San Dubi was hunted down by a rich man in 1972.

The Brahmaputra is also lonely today and shorn off its beauty by losing its sloping grassy banks and off course, the dwindling fresh water turtles and the Kuruwa eagles. Few river Otters area seen….

The following pages from the Gazetteer of Assam by William Allen Covering the Old Undivided Nagaon District will take you to another world, I presume.

Voyage as compared with the speedier travelling of the twentieth century. Freight on ordinary stores seems to have been charged at the rate of one rupee per cubic foot between Calcutta and Gauhati. But for some time longer a great part of the trade of the Province continued to go by country boat. The planters could never count of being able to dispatch their tea by steamer, and were thus compelled to keep up an establishment of country boats, and have got the boats, to use them ,and the same abjection held good in the case of native merchants. The cost of working the line was heavy, but in spite of this, it showed a fair profit, and it was evident, there would be great development of the traffic if only facilities were provided for it. In 1860, the Indian general Steam Navigation Company entered into a contract to run a pair of vessels every six weeks, provided that the Government boats were taken from the line, and, since that date, the steam navigation of the Assam Valley has been in the hands of this company and the River Steam Navigation Company, with whom they are associated. But, in spite of the existence of a regular service, and the quickening effects of private enterprise, travelling still continued to be very slow. The steamers did not profess to run to scheduled time, the delay at the larger ports for the loading and unloading of cargo was considerable, and the passenger no doubt often required his piano to beguile the tedium of the way. In 1861, the Commissioner, Colonel Hopkinson, was disposed to take a gloomy view of the condition of affairs, and, in a letter to Government, openly gave expression to the opinion that, it would be better to compensate the planters for any loss they might sustain, and abandon the Province, unless Government were prepared to enter upon a course of vigorous material improvement. In the same letter, be drew the following dreary picture of the isolation of Assam- "With the furious current of the Brahmaputra, still unconquered by steam, opposing a barrier to all access from without, and not a single road fit for wheeled carriage, or even passable at all for a great portion of the year, there is such an absence of the full tide of life running through Assam, such a want of intercourse between man and man, as does and must result in apathy, stagnation, and torpidity and a terrible sense of isolation, by which enterprise is chilled, and capital and adventurers scared

away. The profits of tea cultivation should attract hundreds where tens now come, but the capitalist is not always to be found who will venture his money in a country to which access is so difficult as it is to Assam, through which his correspondence travels at the rate of a mile and a half an hour, and in which it may take a month to accomplish a journey of two or three hundred miles; nor, on the other hands, is it every spirit, however bold, that cares to encounter so dreary a banishment, and to be so entirely cut off from his fellows in a place from which exit is only possible at rare intervals, and must be so literally a prison or tomb to him."

Matters, however, gradually improved and in 1884, a daily service of mail steamers was started between Dibrugarh and Dhubri, connecting with a steamer which piled between the latter place and Jatrapur. Here the traveler who was pressed for time could take the train to Calcutta though the line was not of the most comfortable , as more than one river had to be crossed in boas before the capital of Bengal was reached.

The introduction of a daily steamer service represented an enormous advance in the facilities for communication between Assam and the outer world. The large steamers were not uncomfortable, but progress was slow, and not only the hour but the date on which they left any given port was far from certain. The would-be traveler could not choose his own time for starting on his journey, but had to select a date on which a steamer was expected at the nearest ghat, and even then he not infrequently had to endure a weary period of waiting by the river bank. The daily service changed all that, and combined the advantages of regularity with a speed, which, in comparison with that attained by the large cargo boars, was most commendable. During the rains Dibrugarh was reached on the fifth day after leaving Dhubri, while the downward journey was performed in three days. The navigation of the river is not entirely free from difficulty, the companies were not incited to further efforts by competition, and some years elapsed before any attempt was made to reduce the duration of the voyage. On the completion of the Assam-Bengal Railway, the companies realized that it was necessary to accelerate their timing if they were to retain their traffic, and steamers now reach Dibrugrah on the fourth day from Dhubri, while the voyage from Dibrugrah to Goalundo only occupies three days. This, however, is the rains timing and in the cold weather it is a voyage of five days from Dhubri to Dibrugarh and four days from Dibrugarh to Goalundo.

Prior to the construction of the Assam Bengal Railway, the daily passenger steamers and the large cargo boats were practically the only means of communication between Nowgong and the outside word. Silghat which is 32 miles by road from Nowgong is the port of call and in the rains the passenger steamers are timed to reach Dibrugarh about 34 hours, and Dhubri, which is 19 hours by rail from Calcutta, about 26 hours after leaving Silghat.

The south of Nowgong is, however, now served by the railway.

The Gauhati branch of the Assam Bengal Railway enters the district a little to the west of Nakhola, and passes through the Gobha mauza and the Raha tahsil. At Chaparmukh it turns to the south-east and runs up the valley of the Kapili, and finally leaves the district 3 miles west of Dimapur. The stations going from west to east are Jagi road, Dharamtul, Chaparmukh, Kampur, Jammunamukh, Lanka, Lumding and Diphu. At Lumding the Gauhati branch joins the main line which makes its way through the North Cachar Hills and down the Surma Valley to the sea at Chittagong. While eastward it connects with the Dibru-Sadiya Railway at Tinsukia.

I returned to the river-boating experiences again in my late twenties in the Monas National Park. About seven of the forty rapids gave us the fright of the lifetime as our boatmen maneuvered the country boats over and past them, .But we would long for more such rides. Boating is an outback experience and not meant for an office man.

One has to wet his feet, legs and bit of his or clothes to be on a safe passage. He must be ready to drink the river water and not be dependent on the sealed 'Mineral water' bottle. Rivers like the Brahmaputra, gave us a martial experience of the lifetime during the river battle of the Sariaghar (Sirighaat?). Warfare by river routes was our heritage. In those eras of the history, when Ahoms rules, if one could prevent the entry of the boats of the enemies through the Kajamukh (near Chandrapur), one was assured of not having a war in the upper Assam. Sure, the rivers must have changed their courses and have gone quite 'dead or dying' in categories.

One day, with four of my friends, I wasted to rapidly survey the river named the Kopili during its full spate in September, 2010. We used an inflatable Hypalon fabric made rescue boat with 15HP Out Board Motor. Apart from the dry fruit ration and camping equipment; there were some scientific ones too. To our horror, the pH of the river water measured 3.8; indicating a strong acidic content. The condition did not correct itself till we went past the Jagi Bridge two days later. AT the confluence of the Killing till the Kajolimukh the pH returned to normal at the value of 7.2.

The ingenuity of the Bangladesh has given two gifts to its neighbor Assam: The Dheki pump and the Bhoot Bhooti mechanized boats.

It is the Bhoot Bhooti river crafts powered by the shallow water pumps of various horsepower's, which rule the Brahmaputra landscape today. Whiter day or night, they are on the move, ferrying men, rations and fuel.

One morning, few were pleasantly surprised to see a long range Bhoot Bhooti passenger service form the Mondiya to Guwahati. It too nine hours of upriver travel with all the comforts available. There was a loo that was positioned precariously at the edge of the vessel. Also for the listening pleasure of the on board

passengers, there was a loud speaker that belted Hindi film songs out. For a moment, I remembered the departmental river vessel of the same kind, named the 'Manomati' that served the Monas National Park in keeping the river clean of the timber stealers. We had procured that for about half a lakh Indian Rupees on second hand basis.

When the river retreats to the middle in the winter, one has to trend the fine sand to reach the ferry to take on across the Brahmaputra. Otherwise, during the floods, there always were and still is the flotilla of sturdy boats fitted with the truck engines to transport passengers and/ or the trucks and other territorial vehicles. The new bridges coming up to join both the banks of the Brahmaputra play spoil sport to such a heritage. It began with the Sirighat (Xarighat), continued through the Bhomoraguri and the Pancharatna Bridges. Now may be already we lost the Dhola-Xaadiya the analogue watches and the rivers have something in common: they never run without winding! There is a river named the Palla in the east while Barpeta District. The boat journey can be maddening by this river when one has to negotiate the turns and turns within a nautical mile. So goes the local saying: The convolutions of the Palla River are worse than that of an intricately designed and faring went down as the Assam-Bengal Railway started connecting its Guwahati with Kolkata. And to meet and greet someone from Chittangong was so easy through the services of these railways. Surely, boating must have been a dream; an enduring one, for all the times to come.

* * *

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সুদূৰৰ সেউজ পাহাৰ
ভূটান নাম যাৰ
বুকু ফালি তাৰ
আহিছিল নামি
হৈ এটি
বোৱতী সুঁতি,
বৰ্তমানৰ বাক্সা
আৰু নলবাৰী জিলাৰ
শষ্যময় পথাৰৰ
হৃদয়ত স্পন্দন তুলি,
নাচি নাচি
বিশাল ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰৰ বুকুত
মিলনৰ আকাংক্ষাৰ
ৰামধেনু আঁকিবলৈ
আছে বৈ
ই পিছে বৰ্তমান
এখনি নৈ।
লম্ভে যেন
ইয়াৰ শৰীৰত
ঋষি দূর্বাসা,
ক্ষণে তুষ্ট
ক্ষণে ৰুষ্ট
মেলি দিয়ে সহস্ৰ ফনা ;
বন্ধু কওঁ শুনা
কিয় পালে
এই নাম
নদী পাগলাদিয়া।
কথিত আছে যে--
ধৰ্মী , সদাচাৰী
এক ব্ৰাহ্মণৰ
জন্মিল তিনিপুত্ৰ,
সৰ্ব বিদ্যাত পাৰ্গত
এই তিনি জাতক
কণ্ঠস্হ বেদ-বেদান্ত
নানা পূজাৰ মন্ত্ৰ ;
নিচেই কুমলীয়া
তিনি কিশোৰ চেঙেলীয়া
পিছে মন্ত্ৰ সাধনাত
সৰ্ব সিদ্ধ৷
এক, দুই, তিনি বুলি
মন্ত্ৰ আওৰাই
সন্মুখত উপস্থিত
হোৱা জনৰ ওপৰত
মন্ত্ৰৰ সিদ্ধি
পৰীক্ষা কৰি চায়।
ক্ষন্তেকতে কোনোজনক
ভেড়া বনায় ,
কোনোজনক হয়তো
চৰাই হৈ
উৰিবলৈ শিকায়।
কোনোজনে আকৌ
নাচি নাচি
হাঁহি হাঁহি পাগল হায়!
এনেকৈ তিনি ভাইয়ে
মন্ত্ৰত সিদ্ধ হৈ
মনতে ৰং চায়।
সেয়েহে গাওঁবাসীয়ে
ভয়তে,
এই তিনি চেঙেলীয়াৰ পৰা
পলায় দূৰতে।
এদিন তিনি ভাইয়ে
দূৰৈৰ গাওঁ এখনলৈ
যজমানী কৰিবলৈ ওলালে ,
যজমানী কৰি
মণি-মুক্তা, টকা-পইছা
বহু দান-দক্ষিণা
মোনা ভৰাই ল'লে।
কৰ্ম কৰি
আহোতে ঘুৰি
বেলি মূৰৰ ওপৰ পালেহি,
খোজ কাঢ়ি
সুঁতি পাৰ হ'ল
কেকোঁজেকোকৈ মোনা
কেইখন ডাঙি।
তিনি ব্ৰাহ্মণে আলচ কৰিলে
ক্ষন্তেক জিৰোৱাহে কথা,
ভাগৰত, গৰমত দেখোন
নচলে দেহা।
এইবুলি হাত-মুখ
চৰণ পখালি ,
তিনি চেঙেলীয়াই
বোৱতী সুঁতিৰ পাৰত
মাৰিলে এঘুমটি;
মাজে-পৰে কিন্তু
মন-মগজুত কিলবিলাই
বয়সৰ ধিতিঙালি।
জানৰ চেঁচা পানী
হেঁপাহ পলুৱাই পিলে ,
জুৰ মলয়াৰ শীতল স্পৰ্শত
কুম্ভকর্ণ শোৱাদি শুলে৷
মন তৃপ্ত
দেহ তৃপ্ত
শীতল পানীৰ স্পৰ্শত,
এক বুদ্ধি খেলালে
তিনি ভাইৰ মনত।
এই সুঁতি যদি
গাঁৱৰ মাজেদি
বৈ যায় ,
গ্ৰীষ্মৰ গৰমক নেওচিব
জুৰ মলয়াই।
জুৰিৰ পাৰে পাৰে
নাচিব ধাননি পথাৰে,
শষ্য-শ্যামলা সেউজীয়া
আঘোণ আহিব বাৰে বাৰে।
গাওঁবাসীয়ে পাব ৰং মনত,
পিতা-মাতাই আশীষ দিব
হৰিষত।
এইবুলি তিনি সিদ্ধ ব্ৰাহ্মণে
দুচকু মুদি ধ্যানত বহি
জলদেৱতাক আহ্বান কৰিলে,
মন্ত্ৰৰ লগে লগে
সুঁতিৰ পানী ওফন্দি উঠিল
চাওঁতে চাওঁতে।
মন্ত্ৰৰ বলত সৰু জানটিয়ে
এখন নৈৰ ৰূপ ল'লে ,
সমগ্ৰ গাওঁ চকুৰ পচাৰতে
পানীয়ে বুৰাই পেলালে।
বস্তু-বাহানি , গৰু-ছাগলী
সকলো উটাই নিলে,
তেতিয়াহে ধ্যানমগ্ন তিনিভাইয়ে
চেতনা ঘুৰাই পালে।
হায়! হায়!গোঁসাই
কিনো গতি হ'ল,
দুষ্ট তিনি ভাই
কেনিনো গ'ল ?
কালৰো কাল

বিপৰীত কাল,
হৰিণাই চেলেকে
বাঘৰ গাল।
ৰাতিৰ ভিতৰতে সৰু
জানটিয়ে
নৈৰ ৰূপ পালে,
জলদেৱতাক বিতুষ্ট
কোনেনো কৰিলে?
তিনি চেঙেলীয়াৰ ওপৰত
সন্দেহ হ'ল সকলোৰে,
তিনি ভাইয়ে কিন্তু
আঁসে মাতিলে।
পিতৃ-মাতৃৰ ধমকত
অৱশেষত স্বীকাৰ কৰিলে,
আমাৰ মন্ত্ৰৰ বলত
গাঁৱৰ জানটিয়ে বাঢ়নী পানীৰ
ৰূপ ল'লে।
হৰি হৰি
কি কাম কৰিলি
যি কৰিলি কৰিলি,
মন্ত্ৰৰ বলত
পানী শুকুৱাই
নদীখনক পুনৰ সুঁতি কৰি দি।
তিনি চেঙেলীয়া ব্ৰাহ্মণ পুত্ৰ
আকৌ বহিল ধ্যানত,
গাওঁবাসীয়ে বুট-মুগ
নানা ফল-ফুল সজালে
আগলতি কলপাতত।
তিনি ভাইয়ে মুখৰ ভিতৰত
মন্ত্ৰ বিৰবিৰালে,
কিম্ আশ্চৰ্য্যম্
বাঢ়নী পানীয়ে পুনৰ সুঁতিৰ
ৰূপ ল'লে।
এয়াই হ'ল-
পাগলাদিয়া আখ্যান,
ক্ষণে ৰুষ্ট
ক্ষণে তুষ্ট এই নদীখন।
যায় যেনি-তেনি
মন যেন পাগলা,
সলনি কৰে দিশা (দিশ)
জনশ্রুতিত হ'ল দিয়া।
স্রোতস্বিনী প্ৰৱাহিনী
নিৰৱধি নৈ পাগলাদিয়া,
মন গ'লে খৰালিতো
বাঢ়নী পানীৰ ৰূপ লোৱা।
সেয়েহে হ'বলা
গাওঁবাসীয়ে পূজে বছৰে
এই প্ৰৱাহিনীক,
কৰে প্ৰাৰ্থনা
নিজ গুণে সন্তুষ্ট হোৱা
কৰা ৰক্ষা আমাৰ
গাওঁখনিক।

People using boats to cross a River in *Majuli,* Assam

Deepor Beel, a wetland near Guwahati and the only *Ramsar* site of Assam

THE RIVERS OF ASSAM

The State of Assam comprise of two valleys namely the Brahmaputra and Barak Valley and it is situated in between 90° to 96° North Latitude and 24° to 28° East Longitude. The geographical area of Assam is 78,438.00 Sq. Km out of which 56,194.00 Sq. Km and 22,244.00 Sq. Km fall under the Brahmaputra and Barak Valley including 2 (Two) hill districts respectively.

There are several tributaries of the River Brahmaputra on both north and south sides having different characteristics. The North bank tributaries have very steep slopes and shallow braided channels for a considerable distance from the foot hills and in some cases right up to the outfall. They have boulder, pebble and coarse sandy beds and carry a heavy silt charge and they generally have flashy floods. The South bank tributaries have comparatively flatter grades and deep meandering channels almost from the foot hills, have comparatively low silt charge. The tributaries of the Barak River are mainly rain fed and cause flood problems when precipitation occurs.

Besides these tributaries of the two mighty rivers, there are several other small stream and rivulets which drain directly to the Brahmaputra. This is aside of numerous wetlands commonly known as *beels.*

Some of the prominent Rivers of Assam are: -

1. Dihang / Siyang
2. Seseri
3. Dibang
4. Lohit
5. Brahmakunda
6. Balijan
7. Kundil
8. Na Dihing
9. Laikajan
10. Dibru
11. Burhi Dihing
12. Disang
13. Dorika
14. Dikhou
15. Namdang
16. Janji
17. Tiok
18. Mudoijan
19. Kakojan
20. Bhogdoi
21. Dholi
22. Kakodonga
23. Gelabil
24. Dhansiri
25. Doyang
26. Kolioni
27. Difalu
28. Mora Difalu
29. Kolong
30. Misa
31. Diju
32. Nonoi / Haria
33. Jamuna
34. Kopili
35. Doyang / Diyung
36. Borpani
37. Kiling
38. Digaru
39. Mora Sonai
40. Sonai
41. Bharalu
42. Basistha
43. Rani
44. Kulsi
45. Boko
46. Singara
47. Deoshila
48. Hari
49. Dudhnoi
50. Krishnai
51. Jinari
52. Sikintadhara
53. Jinjiram
54. Debing
55. Depi
56. Dikari
57. Burhi Suti
58. Simen
59. Sisi
60. Moridhal
61. Jiadhal
62. Sarikoria
63. Subansiri
64. Ghagor
65. Ronganodi
66. Dikrong
67. Pisola
68. Kharoi
69. Brahmajan
70. Buroi
71. Bihali
72. Bargang
73. Burhigang
74. Ghiladhari
75. Jia Bharali
76. Dipota
77. Gabharu
78. Chatrang
79. Belsiri
80. Pasnoi
81. Dhansiri
82. Galandi
83. Mangaldoi
84. Noanodi
85. Nonoi
86. Bornodi
87. Sesa
88. Puthimari
89. Borolia
90. Pagladia
91. Burhadia
92. Tihu
93. Kaldia
94. Pohumara
95. Beki
96. Manah
97. Ai
98. Kujia
99. Champawati
100. Saralbhanga
101. Sonkosh
102. Gadadhar
103. Gangadhar
104. Kherkotia Suti
105. Tuni
106. Simleng
107. Barak
108. Jiri
109. Siri
110. Madhura
111. Jatinga
112. Labang
113. Sonai
114. Ghagra
115. Katakhal
116. Dhaleswari
117. Singla
118. Langai
119. Sonai
120. Juri
121. Surama
122. Bagalia / Kusiara
123. Silonijan
124. Garampani

The flowing Lesson

~ **Sandeep Roy**

We have flowed from different location,
You have accepted us as yours.
You have called us by different name,
Barak, Manas and Brahmaputra.

Our identity we want to reveal today,
You may call us Tibetan.
The difference between Manipur and Bhutan,
Our difference you may not find much.

We have paved the way for civilization to grow,
Where you took the first breath in our arms.
From your birth to death- everything happens in front of us,
There is nothing you can hide from our eyes.

We have accepted everyone as our,
Where ever we have passed through.
When we have never differentiated between your and ours,
Who are you to do so?

We are calling your so-called leaders,
Asking them to get their head straight.
We want them to come out of their hidden self-interest,
And let them accept everyone as their own.

Accidentally whenever we have crossed our bank,
The destruction everybody has seen.
Please pray that we don't cross it intentionally,
Else we will never be forgiven.

Starting from a foreign land,
We have travelled through you.
Someday we will sit together to narrate our journey,
When we all meet in the Bay of Bengal.

You have always treated us as yours,
Why can you not let them be your part?
The essence of life is in our water,
Please learn your lesson before we dry up.

Khowai River, Tripura

জীৱন এটি নৈ

কুনাল দেৱবর্মন, আগৰতলা

আমিবোৰ জীৱনৰ আধবুৰা নৈ
পাৰ কৰিবলৈ কিমান যে টান
কেনেকৈ বাবু দিম নিজৰ এটি শিতান?
আহিছোঁ বহু দূৰণিৰ পৰা
এই মনোৰম পৃথিৱীৰ ছা'লৈ।
কুলি কেতেকীৰ দৰে গাব খুজিছিলো
বসন্তৰ ৰন্ধ্রে ৰন্ধ্রে।
সেইয়া কিনো অনুভৱ
প্রকাশ কৰিব নোৱাৰা বিচলিত, উৰুঙা মন।
আছে আটাইয়ে মোৰ লগত
আছে অলেখ কিবাকিবি
তথাপিও, হিয়াখন কিয় উপচি পৰে?
মই মাথোঁ ব্যক্তহীন জীৱনত ব্যক্তিত্ব বিছাৰোঁ
মই হব খোজো বিশাল নৈ -
তাতেই যেন হৃদয়ৰ হব বিস্তাৰ।
নৈ'ৰ নিচিনা হোৱাটো সহজ ধহয়
ইমান তেজস্বি-শালীনতা-অমৰ
ক'ত পাম বাবু?
যুগ যুগ বছৰৰ অত্যাচাৰ যাতনা সহিওঁ;
সেই কোমল স্নিগ্ধতা ক'তো পোৱা যায় নে?
নম্রতা দেখিব লগা হ'লে কেৱল
নৈ'হে জানো শত-সহশ্র ক্ষমতাৰ অধিকাৰী
তথাপিও, শান্ত স্বভাৱৰ সপ্রতিভ।
আমিবোৰ যেন অলপ বতাহৰ ছেঁৱতেই;
সৰি পৰো তললৈ।
কিন্তু নৈ নহয় এনেকুৱা
হেজাৰ হেজাৰ বাৰিষাত বৰষুণ সহিব লগা
হয়
আছে উজনি নামনি, আছে দয়াহীন শ্রোত,
তথাপিও, নৈ তুমি কিয় মনে মনে?
এষাৰ মাত কিয় নামাতা মুখেৰে -
তোমাৰ মৌনতাই তোমাক কৰি তুলিছে
অনন্য-অপৰূপ-চিৰঞ্জীৱী ৰচয়িতা।
তুমিহে জীৱনৰ জলন্ত সমাস
তুমিহে কৰিছা জীৱনৰ প্রকাশ।
তোমাক কৰেহি হৃদয়াঘাত, নিত্য ব্যৱহাৰ
তথাপিও তুমি কাকোকে নকৰা প্রহাৰ,
হৈ ৰোৱা পৱিত্র, চিৰ প্রৱাহমান
এইয়াই তোমাৰ জীৱনৰ প্রাণধাৰা।
আৰু, জানানে নৈ এটা কথা
আমি জগতৰ উৎকৃষ্ট প্রজাতি
আমিবোৰহে এই বিশ্বৰ স্রজোতা,
ভগৱানৰ পিছতে যেন মানৱৰহে স্থান
তথাপিও আমিবোৰ 'তুমি' নহয়!
সহণশীলতা ক'ত আমাৰ মাজত?
কিঞ্চিৎ বেজাৰতে বাগৰি পৰোগৈ
তথাপিও, আমি মানৱ!
জীৱনৰ হাহাকাৰ, ব্যর্থতাৰ উন্মোচন
কৰিবলৈ;
পাৰ হ'ব লাগে নৈ'ৰে মাজেৰে।
জীৱনৰ সংগ্রাম যেন এক নৈ'হে
জীৱন নৈ'ৰ এই মধ্যস্থল
সাতুৰি গৈ আজুৰি ল'ব লাগে প্রাপ্য
গঢ়িব লাগছ নিজৰ মান
পাহৰিব লাগিব সকলো অভিমান।
এদিন হেনো নিশ্চয় হ'ব
নতুন বেলিৰ নতুন জীৱনৰ অনুসন্ধান।
য'ত থাকিব এজাক মুকলি বতাহ
চৌপাশে থাকিব মাথোঁ জীৱন জয়ৰ ধুমুহা।

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The *Ego* River in *Lepa Rada* distric of
Arunachal Pradesh_

A Date with Brahmaputra

~ Dr. Smriti Rekha Borah

I marched on towards Maijan ghat-
A local place close to my heart
Through tea gardens and flower beds
With the bright sun over my head
(What a great time for a noon siesta,
sniffing on the earthly aroma!)

On reaching a wide clearing
The cool breeze came as a warning
of the mighty river's presence
Our Brahmaputra in all its essence
He seemed to be standing still today
A quiet mood he had settled in
Like a child sleeping on his mother's lap,
His wildness hidden deep within.

I stood beside the river bank
Blue skies, blue water and my neon-blue scarf
Wide eyed,
with shaky limbs
I stepped onto an anchored raft.
I watched few boys in the distance
With fishing rods and worms in pitchers
I assumed they'll catch a fish or two,
All they caught were sunny pictures
And sunburn to last a week through.

Time ticked on
My thoughts drifted on and on,
The river soon began to engulf
the setting sun in slow gulps.
A fisherman returned on his wooden vessel
back with the day's earning
A calmness was set over his face
Reflecting the river's feeling.

I hopped back onto the river bank
and picked up my knapsack
To begin my return journey
through the mist-sodden track.
On a rainy day, I shall be here again
To witness the river's wrath
For now, I will take back the serenity
Secured in my wholesome breath.

The famous *Loktak* Lake, the only *Ramsar* designated site of Manipur

THE RIVERS OF MANIPUR

Manipur has two major river basins, viz. the Barak River Basin and the Manipur River Basin. The total water resources of the two basins have been estimated to be 1.8487 million hectare metre in the form of annual yield.

The Barak river originates from the northern hills and is joined by a number of tributaries such as Irang, Maku, Tuivai, etc. and thereafter enters Cachar District of Assam. The Manipur river basin has eight major rivers such as Imphal, Iril, Nambul, Sekmai, Chakpi, Thoubal and Khuga. All these rivers originate from the surrounding hills. Almost all the rivers in the valley area are in the mature stage and, therefore, deposit the load in the Loktak lake.

The rivers draining the Manipur Hill Area are comparatively young due to the hilly terrain through which they flow. These rivers are corrosive in nature and assume turbulent form in rainy season. Important rivers draining the western area include Maku, Barak, Jiri, Irang and Leimatak. Rivers draining the eastern part of the State include Chamu, Khunou and other short streams.

Major Rivers of Manipur are: -

1. Barak River
2. Imphal River
3. Iril River
4. Khuga River
5. Manipur River
6. Nambul River
7. Barak
8. Surma
9. Meghna
10. Tiau River
11. Tuitha River
12. Tuivai River

In search of Mubarak

~ Jnanesh Roy Choudhury

Mubarak worked as an assistant to a mason in our home and was hardly seventeen years old. He would arrive early in the morning like the little chirping birds and help us in the garden. He planted new saplings- saplings of mangoes, guavas, jamuns and water them to see them grow. He was dark in complexion and willowy in physique but a smile always radiated from his face. The way he could climb trees had no parallel and he would often boast, "Even the monkeys cannot compete with me." He dreamt of owning a pickup van for which he needed to save eight lakhs rupees and he was doing that by saving from his meagre income. After the completion of the work in our house, he decided to go home in the village Falimari on the banks of the river Brahmaputra in the Dhubri district but promised to return within a month.

On the day he came to bid us goodbye, he said, "I will bring more saplings from my village and wherever I go in the world, I shall come back when you call me." And then he left, with that radiating smile that expresses a self-contained happiness.

The trees wore new leaves and a year passed but Mubarak did not return. Even his mobile number no longer worked. So, one fine day, I decided to go to Falimari, one of the islets of the river Brahmaputra in search of Mubarak. It was at a 74 km distance from the Dhubri town and I took a ferry to reach his village where the river flows through the land like the veins of our body. Most of the densely built houses were made of tin and one can see the green paddy fields presenting a panoramic view. It started to rain heavily when I landed there and finally could locate Mubarak's house, a small thatched house where the creepers of pumpkin climbed luxuriantly. After calling Mubarak's name several times when there was no response, I entered the house and after some time, a young woman clad in a wet saree, entered the house. She looked like that dry earth, freshly kissed by the rain and her saree clung to her body like a betel vine to a tree. She looked a little startled and said, "Who are you?"

"I have come from Guwahati. Mubarak worked in our house and he is to get five thousand from us. Where is he?"

"Mubarak is not at home. Sit." And she went inside and brought a cup of tea after some time.

She sat on a murha and said, "Mubarak and my husband have not returned home since last nine months."

"What happened to them?"

"They went to the NRC office and after that, they did not return. They are in a detention camp."

I paused and asked, "Are you immigrants from Bangladesh?"

"Saheb, my husband, my father-in-law and his father have been living in these lands and fishing in these waters for years. Only

The River *Godadhar* near Dhuburi, Assam

when the river submerges our land, we move to the piece of land that the river creates."

"Didn't they have the documents, then?"

"They had, Saheb. But last year, during the monsoon, the flood came suddenly and took away everything in its course. We could somehow save our lives but we were rendered homeless. My husband, Moinul could not save those pieces of paper that he holds dearer than any other treasure in our home."

As I sipped my tea, I felt at a loss for words. I said to Amina, "Are you not from here? Did you have your documents?"

"No, I am from Nellie and luckily my documents were safe with my brother."

She ruminated for a moment and said, "Do you know, Saheb? I heard from my father that when our people were butchered, the river carried so many bodies that people lost count. The river is the carrier of our stories. It understands our pain and suffering. And so, we cannot live away from the river. Wherever the river flows, is our home."

I went to meet Mubarak and his brother Moinul in the detention camp. In the face of all the suffering and hopelessness, Mubarak greeted me with a smile that radiated his face, where now, the marks of worry were writ large. I gave him the money I owed him and added a little more. The same marks of worry and helplessness were also clearly visible in Moinul's face. When we parted, Moinul said, "Saheb, help Amina."

I brought Amina along with me to Guwahati though I was aware of the consequences I have to face and what happened after that is a different story.

* * *

The River *Kolohi* in South Kamrup, Assam

On new normal life

~ Reema Das

Durga Puja is spent silently
Masking face and mind...
That blue bird has made a place
In our bungalow and in my mind too.
Mind wanders yet physically,
So conscious not to unmask in open wind,
Where there is people unmasking and unwary about pandemic.
That day, that yellow bird Visited me and
the Little parrot Perched up in our guava tree.
I live with them.
While walking in our lawn a large snake had his majestic feast,
a frog forced to leap inside it's mouth.
Sometimes, the butterflies and
The magpies Occupy our balcony
They are fearless and friendly.

The other day I walked through the lane,
Where the tea bushes bubble under the sparkling Sun.
I reach the Guijan river...
Took the water in my palm and Kissed it, there
It is in good mood after six consecutive floods.
It flows without noticing anything,
Yet touches our life with a hope for tomorrow.
It flows for our growth, and we relish our dream Alive with its every flow.
This river reminds me that of Luit, it was near our house
That blue water is
Still inseparable from my childhood.

মাতৃত্ব

অনিন্দিতা শর্মা

গল্পের মূলচরিত্র মামন সুন্দরী ,পড়ালেখায় এতটাও খারাপ নয়। ১১ ক্লাসে থাকতেই রাহুলের প্রেমে পরে। দিব্যি চলছিল ওদের প্রেম ।সম্পর্কে তৃতীয় ব্যক্তির আগমন ,এবং ভুল বোঝাবোঝির জন্যই চার বছরের সম্পর্ক নিমিষেই শেষ হয়ে যায়। প্রথম দিকে মনমরা হয়ে থাকলেও নিজেকে সামলে নিয়েছিল মামন।

এবার সাত বছর পরে বিধাতার বিধানে ওদের পুনর্মিলন ।মামন তখন শিক্ষিকা সাথে সৌধ কার্জ চালিয়ে যাচ্ছে। আর রাহুল মহকুমা আধিকারিক,প্রমোশনের জন্য বিভিন্ন পরিক্ষার তৈয়ারি করছে। ওরা বিবাহ বন্ধনে বন্ধিত হল দুজনেই। ওদের পড়াশুনা, পেশাগত দায়িত্ব পালনের পাশাপাশি খুব মন দিয়ে সংসার করছে দুজনেই একে অপরের প্রতি ভালোবাসা যেন বেড়েই চলেছে। বিয়ের দু মাস হলো,এবার নব দম্পতি একটু আয়াস করে সময় কাটাবে বলে এবার তারা কুয়াটারে চলে গেল। সেখান থেকে মামনের স্কুল ও কাছে ।ওরা সিদ্ধান্ত নিল মামনের সৌধকার্য পূর্ণ না হওয়া পর্যন্ত কোন সন্তান নেবে না।

একদিন বিকেলবেলা মামন উঠোনের শুকনো কাপড় গুলো তুলে রাখছে। হঠাত্ই দের/দু বছরের ফুটফুটে শিশু তাকে আধোআধো কথায় মাম্মাম্ বলে পেছন থেকে জড়িয়ে ধরে, মুখ খানা স্পর্শ করে। শিশুটি আবেগে যেন কিছু বলতে চাইছে তার মাকে জড়িয়ে। মামন কেমন যেন হতবাক হয়ে শিশুটিকে আদর করে চুমু দিল ।পেছন থেকে একজন ভদ্রলোক কাপাকণ্ঠে বলে উঠল - "সরি ম্যাডাম জি একচুয়েলি বচ্চি কি মাম্মি কুচদিন পহেলে অ্যাক্সিডেন্ট মে গুজর চুকি হ্যে তবসে বচ্চি মম্মি কি পিয়াস মে রো-রোকে হালত্ খারাপ কর দি হ্যে ।উসকি মম্মি বিলকুল আপকি তরহা, লম্বি বাল খুলা রখতি থি, বড়ি বালি বিন্দি পেহেনতি থি।"

মামন: 'ও আচ্ছা কয়ি বাত নেহি' বলে সেখান থেকে চলে আসল।
রাহুল ও দাড়িয়ে দাড়িয়ে দেখল এই দৃশ্যটা। এই ঘটনার পর কেমন যেন চুপচাপ হয়ে গেল মামন। রাহুল ওকে মজা করেই মামন কে বলল
"কি গো বিয়ের দুই মাস পরেই মা ডাক শুনলে"
মামন কিছু বলল না
এরি মধ্যে ভদ্রলোকটি দরজার বাইরে দাড়িয়ে হাত জোর করে মামনের কাছে বলতে লাগল
"ম্যাডাম জি মেরি বচ্চি কুচ নেহি খা রেহি হ্যে মাম্মি কি পিয়াস মে রো-রো কে আপনা হালত্ খারাপ কর দি হ্যে, আপ প্লিস মেরি নন্হিসি যান কো আপনে হাতসে কুচ খিলা দিজিয়ে
বচ্চি রো-রো কে মর যায়েগি।"
মামন কিছু না ভেবেই শিশুটির কাছে চলে গেল।
মামন কে দেখে জড়িয়ে ধরে মাম্মম! মাম্মম! বলে মুখে মুখ রেখে সে যেন আবেগে অভিমানে
কিছু বলতে চাইছে "মাম্মম তুমি আমাকে ছেড়ে আর কোথাও যাবেনা"
মামন শিশুটিকে মাতৃস্নেহে খাইয়ে দিল
শিশুটির বাবার চোখে জল.....।
এই দৃশ্যটি দেখে রাহুল তার আবেগ কে ধরে রাখত পারল না।
সে প্রকাশ্যে দেখতে পেল তার স্ত্রীর মাতৃস্নেহ।
এভাবেই শিশুটির প্রতি মামনের স্নেহ দিনদিন যেন বাড়তে শুরু করল ।শিশুটিকে খাইয়ে দেওয়া, ঘুম পারিয়ে দেওয়া, রাইমস শেখানো,কথা বলতে

A crying baby with her mother near Goalpara, Assam *(Photo: M. K. Sarma)*

শেখানো,স্নান করিয়ে দেয়া ইত্যাদি। সারাদিন যেন পুচকির পেছনেই সময় দিতে লাগল।
এদিকে রাহুলের মনে ভয়-অভিমান ,সবকিছু নিয়ে ভাবতে লাগলো।
মুহুর্তে মুহূর্তে সন্তানের সাথে কাটানো।

সময়গুলো ক্যামেরা বন্দি করে হোয়াটস্যাপ স্ট্যাটাস দিতে লাগল সে ।এই ঘটনার সবার জানাজানি হয়ে গেলে কেউ ওকে জিজ্ঞেস করলে বলে 'পুচকি আমার সন্তান'।

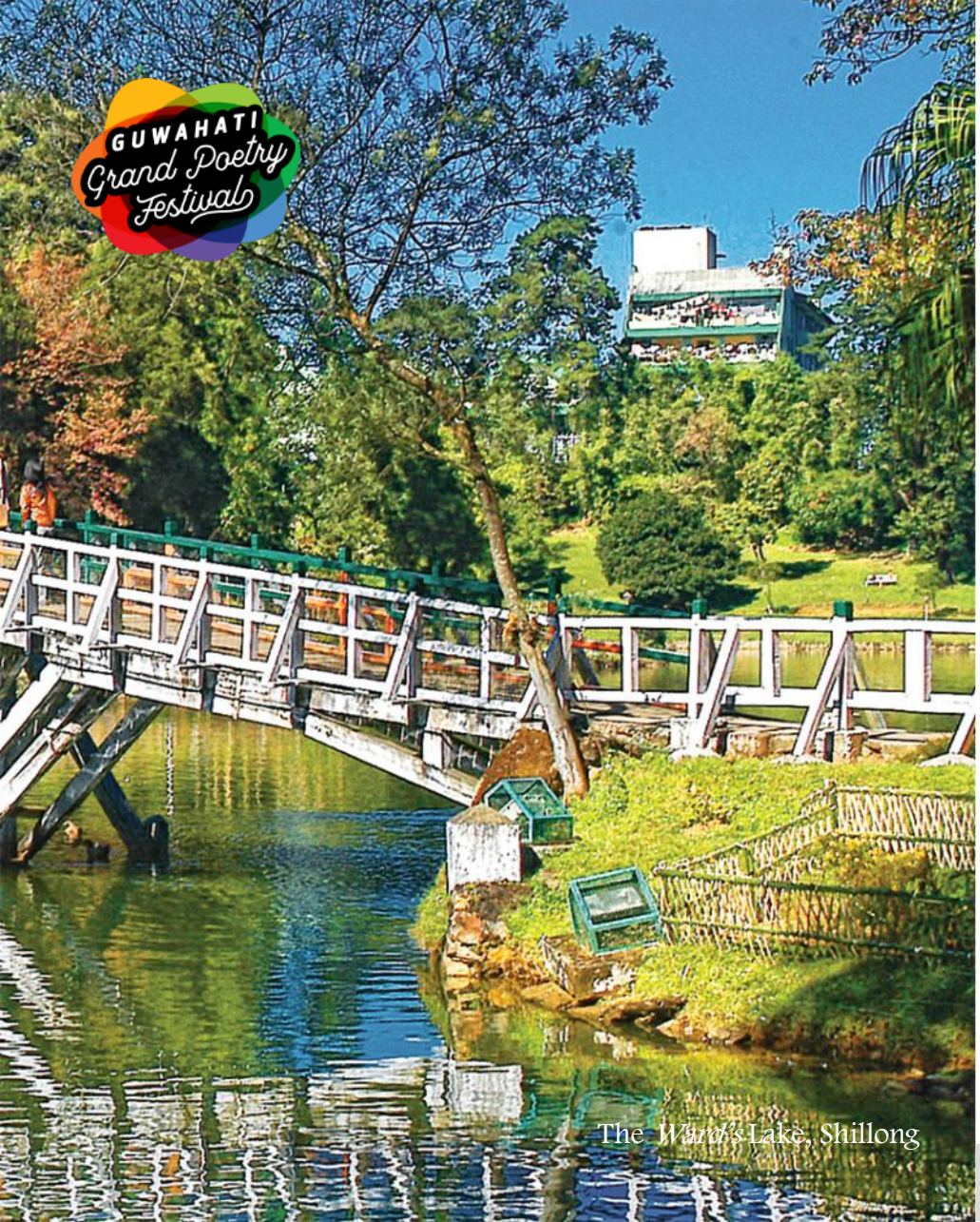
একদিন রাহুল মামন কে বলল -

'দেখো মামন আমি প্রথম থেকেই বলেছিলাম ওর প্রতি এত আকৃষ্ঠ হয় না, বড় মুখ করে তোমার মা বাবাকে কথা দিয়েছিলাম আমি তোমার কেরিয়ারে কোন বাধা আসতে দেবনা। তুমি আজকাল পুচকির পেছনেই সময় দিতে চাইছ, আজকাল তুমি স্কুলেও যেতে চাইছ না।পড়াশুনা তো দুরের কথা, থিসিসগুলো কমপ্লিট করেছ? মনে রেখো তোমার PhD র জন্য আমরা কোন সন্তান নিচ্ছি না'।

তাছারা পুচকি আমাদের সন্তান না , এ কথা তুমি বোঝতে চাইছ না কেন ?ওর বাবা যখন চাইবে তখন নিয়ে যাবে।

পুচকি কে নিয়েই এক অশান্তি শুরু নব দম্পতির মাঝে। রাহুল বলেই ফেলল "শনির দশা এসে চেপেছে আমাদের মাঝে"

মামন কিছু না বলেই একা একা ভাবতে লাগল।দিন দিন নীরবতা যেন ওকে আকরে ধরছে।এদিকে রাহুলের চিন্তা বেড়েই চলল, কি করে সামলাবে ও মামন কে।
এমন চলতে চলতে একদিন শিশুটির বাবা শিশুটিকে নিয়ে চলে যাবার প্রস্তুতি নিচ্ছে, এ কথা শুনে মামন কেমন যেন আরো ভেঙে পরছে।
সে যেন কান্না চাপিয়ে রাখছে।
রাহুল তার মনের অবস্থা বুঝে ওকে শান্তনা দিলে ও চিত্কার করে কান্নার স্বরে বলে উঠল
"পুচকি কে যেতে দিয় না গো, আমি মা হয়ে কি করে থাকব ওকে ছাড়া"
রাহুল আবারো বলল পুচকি আমাদের সন্তান না, ওকে যেতেই হবে তোমাকে ছেড়ে।
এই দিনটারি ভয় ছিল আমার। এবার নিজেকে সামলানোর দায়িত্ব তোমার যাও পুচকি কে বিদায় দিয়ে আস.....।
কিছুক্ষন পর পুচকির বাবা এসে বলল
"ম্যাডাম জি ম্যাডাম জি হাম লোগ যা রেহে হ্যে আপনি বচ্চি কো ইজাজত দিজিয়ে, মে কভি কভার আপকে পাস লে আউঙ্গা বচ্চি কো ,ওর মে আপকি বহত্ আভারি হু, ওর রহুঙ্গা আপনে ইস বিন মা কি বচ্চি কো ইতনা পিয়ার দিয়া, মা কি কমি সমঝনে না দিয়া, মে আপকি ইস মহানতা কো কভি ভুলুঙ্গা নেহি।"
ততক্ষনি অভাগি মা পুচকি কে জড়িয়ে কাদতে কাদতে অজ্ঞান হয়ে গেল।
উপস্থিত কম্পার্টমেন্টের লোকজন এই দৃশ্য দেখে আবেগকে ধরে রাখতে পারল না।
সবার চোখে জল।
হায়রে অভাগী মায়ের মাতৃত্ব....। মেয়েরা মায়ের জাতি, মাতৃত্ব মেয়েদের স্বভাব স্বরূপ। মাতৃত্বের জন্য গর্ভজাত সন্তান হতে হয় না।
পুচকি তার গর্ভজাত সন্তান না হয়েও মাতৃস্নেহে আগলে রেখেছিল মামন।



The *Ward's* Lake, Shillong

THE RIVERS OF MEGHALAYA

Home to one of the World's wettest regions, Meghalaya's Rivers are rainfed. Physiographically, Meghalaya represents a remnant of an ancient plateau of Pre-Cambrian peninsular shield, block lifted to its present heightand is referred as Meghalaya plateau. The important rivers of Meghalaya that shape the northern region and course from west to east are: -

1. Ajagar	5. Dudnai	9. Bhogai
2. Chagua	6. Krishnai	10. Sanda
3. Kalu	7. Ringgi	11. Dareng
4. Didram	8. Daring	12. Bandra

The important rivers of the central and eastern regions of Meghalaya that course towards the north are Umkhri, Umiam, Digaru, Barapani, Kynchiang, Mawpa, Myngot, Ganol and Myntdu. Some other important rivers of Meghalaya are:

Someswari or Simsang which is the biggest and second largest river in Meghalaya that originates from the hills of Nokrek and progresses east towards through the towns of Williamnagar, Baghmara and Rewak.

Jinjiram River originates from Urpad Beel Lake, Kalu or Ganol River originates from Tura peak and Myntdu River originates at Mihmyntdu, near Jowai.

I am *Dehing Patkai*

~ Madhu Raghavendra

says every activist, artist, and anarch in the region.
The state may say there is illegal mining already
but know that there is nothing such as illegal mining
there is only 'the state is aware but it's getting its share' mining.

Tell me, those who never cared for a plant
will care for the number of species going extinct?
Tell me that there is a token wildlife expert
in the standing committee that approves the mining.
Tell me that the minutes of the meeting state
they will 'cautiously approach' the choking
of the future generations
hang the forest by its treeless neck, till death.

In the free prison we live in
the capital-state-media is the only conflict
that power cares to avert;
human-animal, human-nature conflicts
may be dragged till the state treasury
swells with last block of coal and ivory
from the last living elephant.

CONSERVATION HAS NO BOUNDARIES

ELEPHANT

The Asian Elephant is protected in India under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, which prohibits hunting, trade (both domestic and international), or any other form of utilization and exploitation. Violation of the Act can lead to seven years of imprisonment, a heavy fine or both.

International trade regulations are enforced through the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

सत्यमेव जयते

A heartiest Happy New Year to all

Office of the Special Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council, Govt. of Assam
Department of Environment & Forests, Diphu
Karbi Anglong, Assam

ভাইটি মোৰ গাৱঁলৈ আহিবি দেই

অনন্ত কুমাৰ ভুঞা

ততা ভুকুতা কৰি উধাতু খাই
দৌৰি নাহিবি মোৰ গাওঁ খনিলৈ
দুষ্কার্য্য হোৱা নাই,
আমাৰ এই নির্ম্মল সৰু গাওঁত।

ডিঙিলৈকে মদ এসোপা গিলি,
চিঞৰ বাখৰ নকৰিবি দেই,
গাৱঁৰ ৰাইজে দণ্ড বিহিব,
কঠোৰ নিয়ম আছে এই নির্ম্মল গাওঁৰ।

মাদক দ্রব্যৰ ব্যৱহাৰ
একেবাৰে নিষেধ আমাৰ গাওঁত,
ব্যতিক্রম হলেই ৰাইজে দণ্ড বিহে,
সৰু বৰ বিচাৰ নকৰাকৈ।

ঘৰৰ সন্মুখৰ বাট পথাৰোৰ
বাঢ়নীৰে নিকা কৰে প্রতি দিনে,
গাওঁৰ ৰাইজ একেলগ হৈ
জাৱঁৰ গোটাই যায় এক নির্দ্দিষ্ট স্থানত।

Rural women fishing in a village pond, Assam
(Photo: M. K. Sarma)

ডেকা গাভৰুৱে জৈৱিক সাৰ দি
নিজৰ বাৰীতে কৰে
ফল মুল শাক পাচলিৰ খেতি,
ৰাহি হোৱা খিনি বজাৰত বেচে।

ককাইঁতে বাহৰ সজুলি সাজে
আইতাই বাৰীৰ চুকৰ শাক বুটলি আনে,
হাহ কুকুৰা ছাগলী গৰু গাই
ডেকা গাভৰুৱে প্ৰতিপালন কৰে।

জীয়ৰী বোৱাৰীয়ে
তাত শালত বৈ লয় মেখেলা চাদৰ,
পাহুৰাল ডেকাই বাৰী চিকুনাই
শাক পাচলিৰ গুটি পচাই।

সোনালী ৰঙৰ গোট গোট আখৰেৰে
সতৰ্কতাৰ এখনি ফলক
ওলমি আছে প্ৰতি ঘৰৰ পদুলি মুখত,
সকলো নিয়ম লিখা থাকে তাত।

সম্প্ৰীতিৰ মেলা বহে
সম্ভাৱনাৰ জন জাগৰণ সৃষ্টি হয়,
সকলো কাম নিয়াৰিকৈ চলে
ইচ্ছাৰে দিয়ে দান বৰঙনিত।

ঋতু আহে ঋতু যায়,
ভাদ মাহত বৰ সবাহ পাতে
শাৰদীয় উৎসৱত মন প্ৰাণ নাচে
এই খন আমাৰ আপোন গাঁও।

গাওঁ ৰক্ষী বাহিনী আছে ,
ৰাতি পহৰা দি চোৰ ডকাইতি ধৰে ,
খাকী পোচাক ধাৰি পুলিচ
এই গাৱঁলৈ এদিনো অহা নাই।

লক্ষীমি চপোৱা উৎসৱ
আমাৰ গাওঁত প্ৰতি বছৰে হয় ,
মিলি জুলি ন-খোৱা পথাৰত পাতে
ঐক্যতাৰ সুৰ ইয়াতে বাজে।

ন-খোৱা উৎসৱৰ দিনা
ভোজ মেলতে নীতি শিক্ষাৰ পাঠ দিয়ে
নিয়ম অভ্যাসত পৰিণত হয়
সামাজিক নিয়ম কঠোৰ আমাৰ গাওঁত।

বহাগৰ ৰঙালী বিহু
সৌ বৰ গছ জোপাৰ তলতে পাতে
জেং বিহু টকা বিহু গাভৰু বিহুত
সকলোৱে ঢোলৰ চেওত নাচে।

বাৰিষা জকাই জুলুকি ,
চেপা খোকা পাতি ধৰে গৰৈ চেঙেলী,
খৰালি জাল বাই ধৰে
ৰৌ বৰালি গাওঁৰ সৰু বিল খনত।

ঘৰমুৱা পক্ষীৰ কাকলিত
প্ৰতি সন্ধ্যা গীতৰ সমাৰোহ চৰাইৰ বাহত ,
প্ৰবাসলৈ উৰি যায় প্ৰতি পুৱা,
পশ্চিম দিগন্তৰ মুৱা হৈ ।

ভাইটি ! তই আহিবি এদিন
মোৰ গাওঁ খন চাবিহি দেই ,
ইয়াতে ভোজ ভাত খাবি,
বহাগত নাচিবি,
বৰ সবাহৰ দিনা ভাওঁনা চাবিহি দেই।

***

Tai Phake elderly women of *Tipam Phake* village worshipping the River *Burhi-Dihing* in Assam

এটি প্রার্থনা : নদীলৈ

টুনুমাই বৰা ৰাজখোৱা

শৈলশিখৰৰ বেষ্টনি ভাঙি
নামি আহা তুমি শৈবলিনী
গতি তোমাৰ নিৰৱধি
তুলনাহীন বহনশক্তি
তোমাৰ সাগৰ অভিমুখী বর্ণিল যাত্রাৰ
সাক্ষী হৈ ৰয় দুয়ো পাৰ
নৈসর্গিক শোভাৰ অপূর্ব সমাহাৰ।
তোমাৰ পাৰতেই সৃষ্টি হয় সভ্যতাৰ
তুমি জীৱনী শক্তি জীৱ জগতৰ।
হে নদী, চিৰ প্রৱাহিনী
স্ব-মহিমাৰে মহিমামণ্ডিতা তুমি
তোমালৈ আছে আমাৰ বিনম্র প্রার্থনা এটি,
"মেঘৰ মাদল বাজিলে,
বর্ষাই উত্তাল নৃত্য কৰিলে
তুমি নহবা উন্মাদিনী,
তোমাৰ উন্মাদনাত শত-সহস্রজনৰ ভগ্ন হয় আশাৰ স্বপ্ন
হেঁপাহৰ ঘৰখন হয় জলমগ্ন।
সুখৰ আলয় সেউজ উপত্যকা
হৈ পৰে যন্ত্রণাৰ অধিত্যকা
সেয়েহে, হে জগতী জীয়ৰী
তুমি কেতিয়াও নোহোৱা যেন প্রলয়ংকাৰী
সদায়েই হৈ থাকিবা মাতৃ মমতাময়ী।

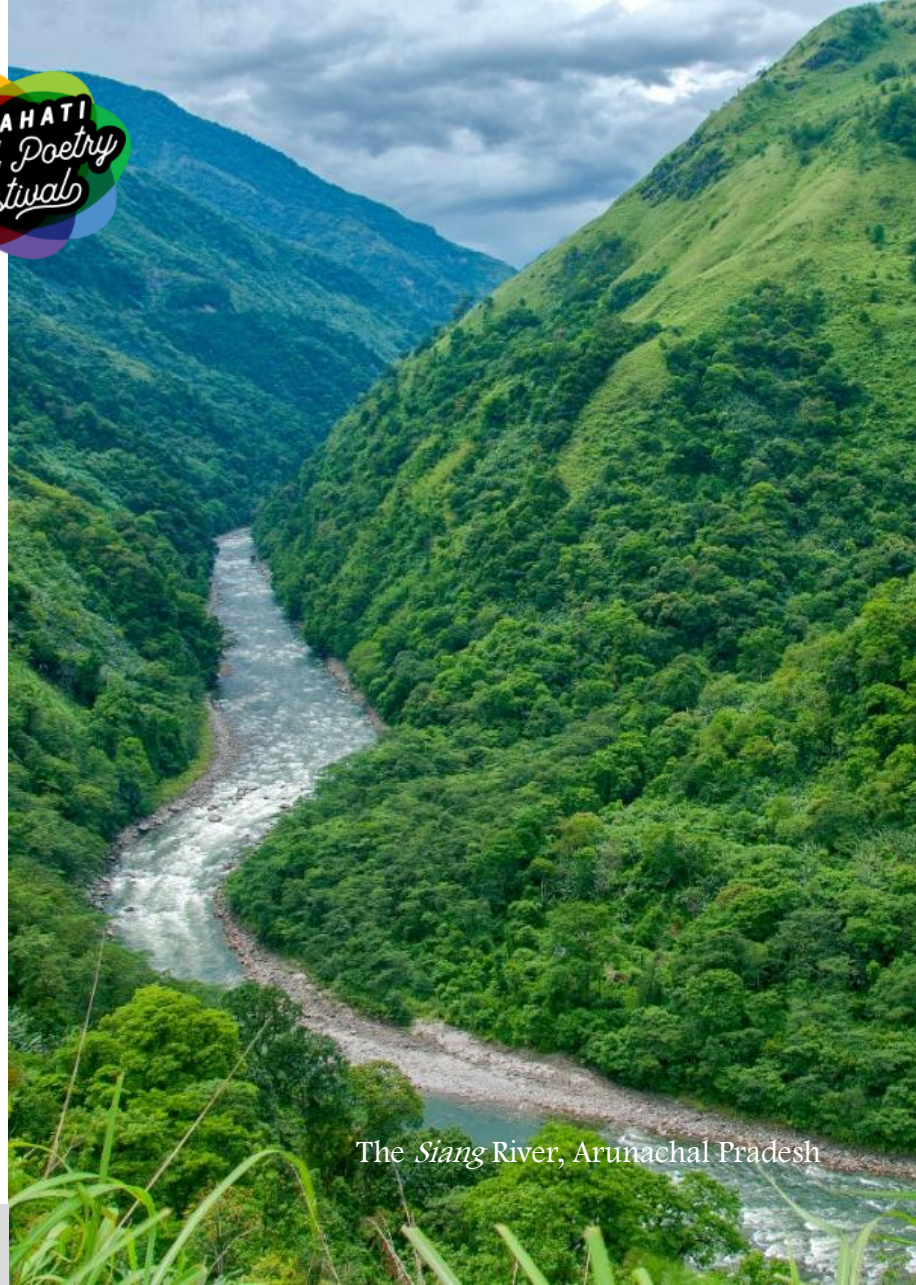
मानसरोवर से निकले धारा

सैनी बाबू

मानसरोवर से निकले धारा तिब्बत हिन्द बंगला की प्यास बुझाये।
तिब्बत की यारलुंग हिन्द में ब्रह्मपुत्र बंगला में जमुना कहलाये।

ब्रह्मा जी का पुत्र कहलाये ये जन जन को प्यारा है।
मृदंग संग करे नृत्य लोहित की ये बहती धारा है।
प्यास बुझए धरती की असम को इसीने सवांरा है।
मुग़लो को लाचित ने येही घाट मौत के उतारा है।
भारत मे दिहांग सियांग लुइत बन कल कल बहती जाए।
मानसरोवर से निकले धारा तिब्बत हिन्द बंगला की प्यास बुझाये।

दिखौ, धनशिरी, भोगदोई, झांजी दिहिंग मिलकर द्वीप एक बनाये।
जिसे दक्षिण में लुइत संभाले उतर में दिहिंग वो माजुली कहलाये।
सांस्कृतिक गन्ध समेटे सत्र की मिट्टी हिंदुत्व की खुशबू फैलाये।
होरागुरी अज़ान फ़क़ीर की माजुली गुरु शंकरदेव नमन कराये।
बैसाख महीने का बिहू नृत्य को देखने स्वर्गदेव भी ललचाये।
जमना पदमा से मिल मेघना बने बंगला खाड़ी की शान बढ़ाये।
मानसरोवर से निकले धारा तिब्बत हिन्द बंगला की प्यास बुझाये।


The *Siang* River, Arunachal Pradesh

The *Rih Dil* Lake in *Champhai* district, Mizoram

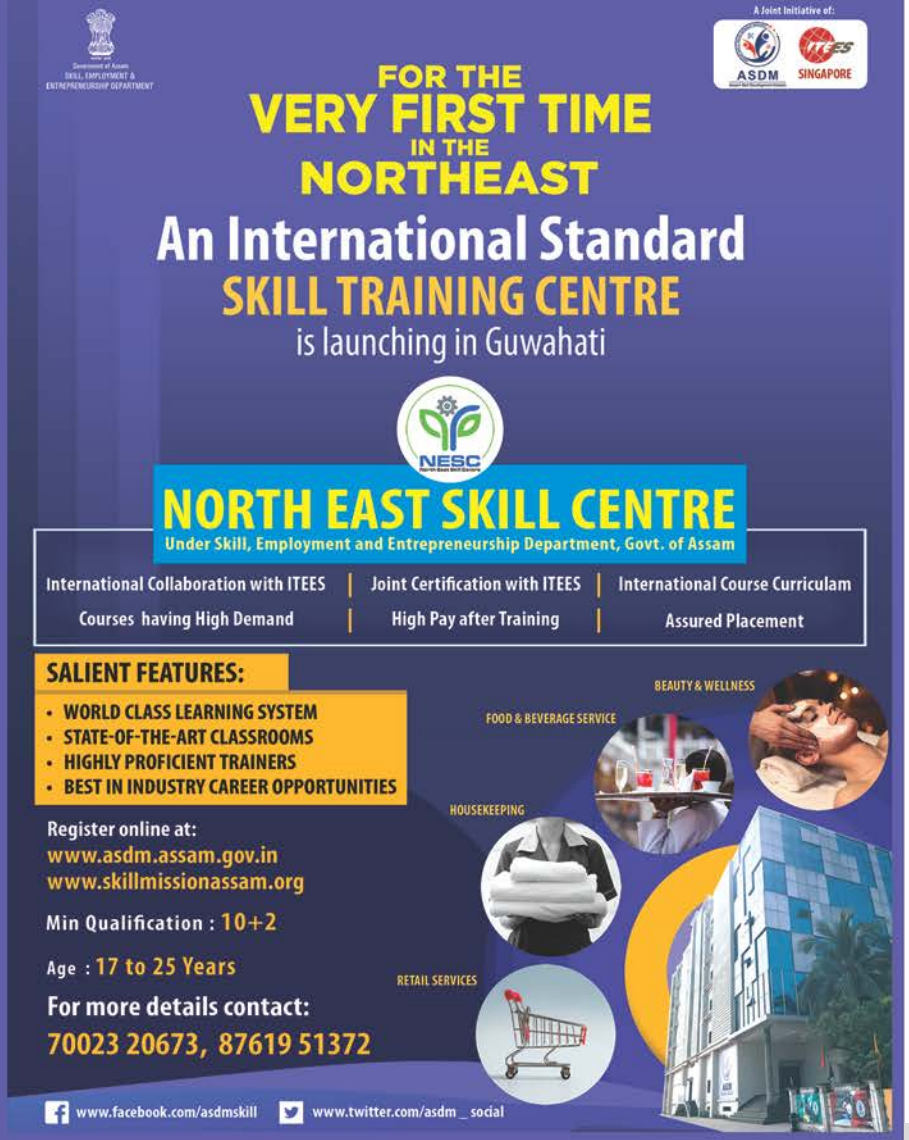
THE RIVERS OF MIZORAM

Mizoram is a land of rolling hills, valleys, rivers and lakes in Northeast India. Some of the prominent Rivers of Mizoram are -

1. Chimtuipui River, known as Kaladan originates in Chin State in Burma
2. Tlawng also known as river Dhaleswari in Assam, and joins Barak river
3. Tut, a tributary of the Tlawng River
4. Tuirial impounded by the Tuirial Dam
5. Tuivawl that joins the Barak River in Cachar District
6. Tiau that forms an international boundary river
7. Khawthlangtuipui River
8. Tuichang with length of 120.75
9. Tuichawng with length of 107.87
10. Mat River with length of 90.16
11. Tuipui with length of 86.94
12. Teirei with length of 70.84
13. Tuirini that originates from Hmangkawn Village in Aizawl District.
14. Serlui with length of 56.33 impounded by the Serlui B Dam.

Soothing view of the *Tuirial* River
in Aizawl district, Mizoram

GUWAHATI
Grand Poetry
Festival



Nikori Ghat

~ Suman Sarma

On the full fathomed river
Two boats anchored to the banks
Shining and shimmering in it
Is it a star-studded boat full of fish?
On the other lay,
bagful of cereals and mustard.
Mouth and legs tightly fastened with bamboo strips,
pigmy hogs kept snorting.
Tora's heart starts pounding;
From the market will come twisted yarn,
Colourful trinkets from the stationary shop too.
The river bank eroded
The plains submerged
The banks shifted
Plains emerged *Nikori Ghat*[(1)]*s!*
Till today you are Koneng -Tora's bank of dreams.
Tora's
Koneng -Tora's

[Translated from original Assamese poem of same title *by* Rajeeb Kr. Phukan]

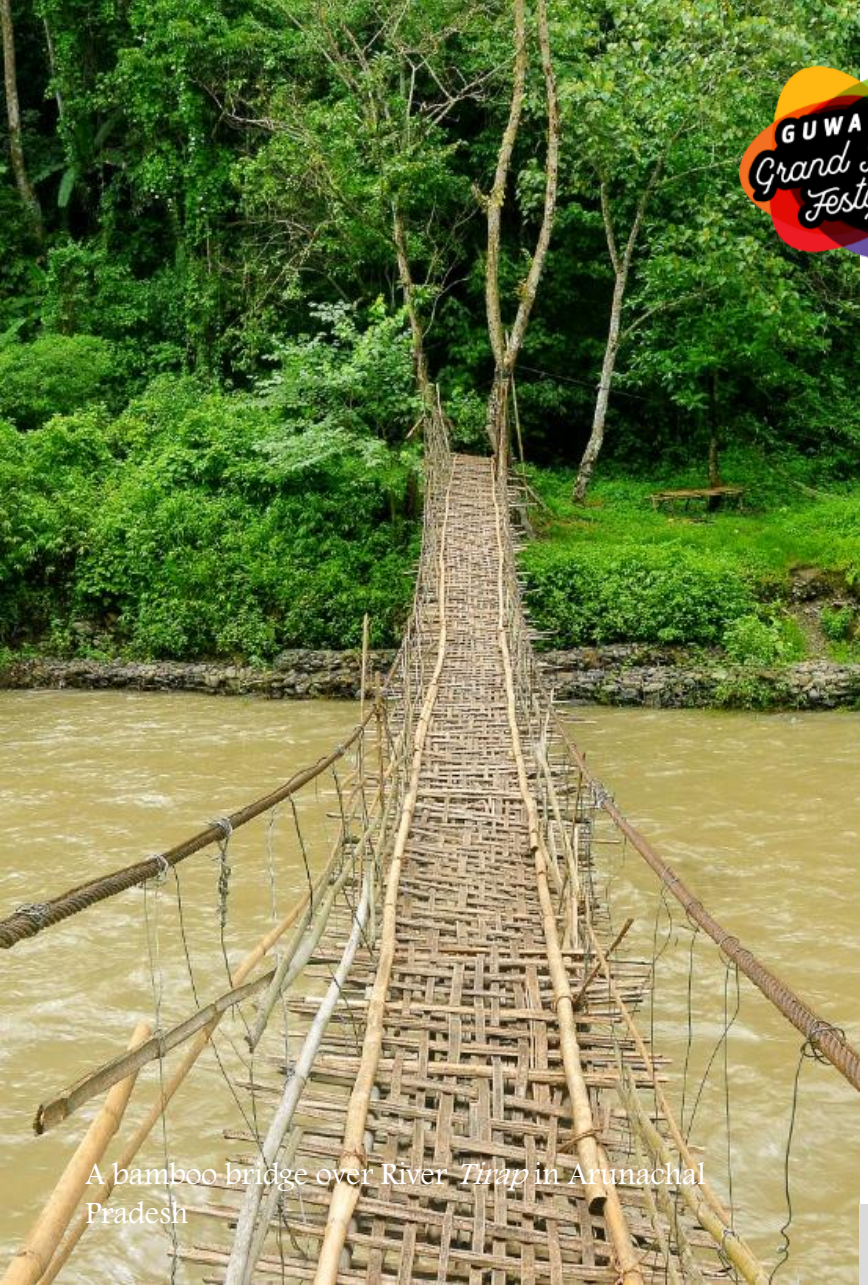
[(1)]*A Dhansiri bank called Nikori Ghat near Bokakhat, Assam*

অস্তিত্ব

আৰাধনা চেতিয়া

আই অ', মই তোৰ কথা ৰাখিব নোৱাৰিলো অ' আই!
যুগে যুগে চলি অহা আমাৰ বংশৰ 'নাৱৰীয়া'ৰ জীৱিকাৰ পৰম্পৰাটোক মই ধৰি ৰাখিব নোৱাৰিলো!
আই তই শুনিছ ন', মোৰ কথা।
তোৰ কথাবোৰে আজিও মোক বৰকৈ আমনি কৰে।
নদীখনৰ কোঁবাল সোঁতে বাৰে, বাৰে মোক ৰিঙিয়াই মাতে···
দৌৰি যাওঁ নদীৰ পাৰলৈ,
দূৰ-দিগন্তলৈ চাওঁ অপলক নেত্ৰেৰে, ইটো মূৰৰপৰা সিটো মূৰলৈ, মনত পেলাওঁ
নিশাৰ আন্ধাৰতো বঠা মাৰি যোৱা দিনবোৰলৈ।
শৰতৰ নিৰ্মল আকাশৰ জোনাকৰ পোহৰত গীত জুৰি জুৰি বঠা মাৰি যোৱা দিনবোৰ কিমান যে, মনোমোহা আছিল।
আজি সেই জীৱিকাও নাই আৰু সেই আমাৰ শ্ৰদ্ধাৰ ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰ নদীখন।
নদীখন কিমানটা হাতুৰীৰ কোবেৰে আঘাতপ্ৰাপ্ত তাৰ চিন-চাব নাই।
কিছুমান নাৱৰীয়াই ধৰ্ষিত, লুণ্ঠিত কাৰ্য্যত লিপ্ত হৈ আমাৰ চিৰকালৰ বৃত্তিৰ সন্মান নাইকীয়া কৰিলে অ' আই !
নৰখাদক এইবোৰ, নৰখাদক !
ছিঃ! কবলৈ ঘিণ লাগে মোৰ।
একো কৰিব নোৱাৰা বেদনাই বুকুখনক দহি, দহি মাৰে অ' আই !
বাৰিষাৰ বানপানীৰ কৱলৰপৰা ৰক্ষা পাবৰ বাবে বঠাখন বৰ সুকলমে ৰাখিছোঁ আই ! কিন্তু বৃত্তিৰ বাবে বঠাখনৰ প্ৰয়োজন নাইকীয়া হ'ল আজিকালি।

A fisherman fishing with his net in River *Kopili* near Rajbari, Hojai, Assam



A bamboo bridge over River *Tirap* in Arunachal Pradesh

আই, জাননে ! ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰৰ ওপৰত আৰু এখন দলং হ'ল, নাম যাৰ বগীবিল৷
এতিয়া আৰু ডিব্ৰুগড় যাবলৈ তোৰ পোনাকনক বিচাৰি কোনো নহা হ'ল
অ' আই !
এতিয়া সেই বাট বাছেৰে আধাঘন্টাতে পোৱা হ'ল৷
পোনাকনৰ জীৱিকাৰ পৰিসমাপ্তি ঘটিল৷
যুগৰ পৰিৱৰ্তন আই ! যুগৰ পৰিৱৰ্তন৷
পুৰণিক আঁতৰাই নতুনত্বক আদৰিবৰ হ'ল৷
চীন দেশৰ আক্ৰমণৰ কৱলৰপৰা ৰক্ষা পাবলৈ ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰৰ বুকুত বোলে কিবা সুৰংগ বনাব৷
দেশখন ৰক্ষা পৰক আই !
দেশখন ৰক্ষা পৰক৷
তই চিন্তা নকৰিবি আই !
তাঁহানিৰ আমাৰ বংশৰ নাৱৰীয়া ককাদেউতা নোমল মিৰি, দেউতা
জগত মিৰিৰ ত্যাগৰ কথা আমাৰ ভজো গাঁৱৰ সকলোৰে মুখে মুখে.....
ভৰ বাৰিষাতো শিল ডোল ভাঙি ধেমাজিৰপৰা ডিব্ৰুগড়লৈ বঠা মাৰি যোৱাৰ কথা গাঁৱৰ
মানুহে ক'লে, সাধুকথাৰ দৰেই লাগে, মনতো আনন্দৰে উপচি পৰে৷
যুগৰ লগততো খোজ মিলাই চলিবই লাগিব, এয়েই জীৱন আই !
মোৰ বিশ্বাস ! আমাৰ বংশৰ জীৱিকাৰ কথা ভজো গাঁৱত অটুট থাকিব৷
বুৰঞ্জীৰ পাতত জিলিকি ৰ'ব সদায়, ককাদেউতা নোমল মিৰি, দেউতা জগত মিৰিৰ
নাৱৰীয়া জীৱনৰ ত্যাগৰ অস্তিত্বৰ কথা৷ তই চিন্তা নকৰিবি অ' আই !
তই চিন্তা নকৰিবি৷

* * *

Bewitchingly enchanting…

~ Rashmi Sarkar

The Infinite horizon…
The incomparable expanse…
The confluence of the vast azure blue sky above
And the rambling blue waters below.
From the sparkling ripples to the meandering stream,
To the lush green hills atop…
A pristine and picturesque masterpiece,
Created and embellished by mother earth
With her magical masterstrokes.
The bewitching aura of the sunbeams,
Adding further touches…
With its spectrum of hues
Conjuring up a dreamy paradise!

Awestruck and amazed, am I,
A spellbound beholder.
Watching the mighty whimsical river
Peaceful, calm and sinuous at places,
While gushing with wrath,
anger and revenge elsewhere.
Ravaging, annihilating all and sundry
Settlements, civilizations, flora and fauna- everything!
Nevertheless, our life giver,
The lifeline of our motherland.
Taking care of multitudes,
Who shower immense love and reverence in return,
Offering their tributes and obeisance.
Hail - Namami Brahmaputra!

Nourishing and quenching
The hunger and thirst…
Of the savage and the civilized.
Helping establish industries,
Giving birth to townships,
Along with its innumerable under flowing harmonies
Keeping the music of life and activities playing.

Vessels plying regularly,
With travelers and vendors,
Sightseers and river cruisers,
Somewhere, fishermen and fisherwomen…
Plunging into the water for their day's catch.
Elsewhere, couples set out daintily
For their clandestine meets

Hiking up to the peaks
In search of the seclusion they seek.

I take a flight of fantasy too
To this dreamy paradise.
My beloved and me, hand in hand
Beholding the magnificent panorama!
The glittering sand banks,
Fringing the embezzling waters
Rocky cliffs with cascading waterfalls
So breathtakingly exotic!

The enveloping clouds and misty air,
The intermittent showers and aromatic freshness,
Driving me wild, intoxicated.
I gather a handful of the fragrant frangipanis
Fresh and tender, in white and yellow shades.
Those caressing hands tucks one such blossom into my braided plate.
Exuberantly ecstatic…
I dance with glee
I can smell the aroma of freshness in the air
Freshness of love and warmth
I feel blessed, bountifully blessed!

অসমৰ শিপিনী আৰু হস্তশিল্পীসকলক
আর্থিকভাৱে স্বাৱলম্বী তথা
শক্তিশালী কৰি তোলাৰ লক্ষ্যৰে
বয়ন আৰু হস্তশিল্পৰ সেৱাত
উজ্জীৱিত ৰূপত

আৰ্টফেড

আমাৰ স্থায়ী বিপণীঃ-
'জাগৰণ' ত
পদার্পক কৰক

মুখ্য কার্যালয় ঃ এ. কে. আজাদ. ৰোড বিহাবাৰী, গুৱাহাটী-৮ ৰ দ্বাৰা প্রচাৰিত ।

THE RIVERS OF NAGALAND

The Rivers of Nagaland are dendritic in nature. The state is dissected by a number of seasonal and perennial rivers and rivulets. Of the rivers, Dhansiri, Doyang and Dikhu flow westward into the Brahmaputra. The Tizu River, on the other hand, flows towards east and joins the Chindwin River in Burma. Major Rivers of Nagaland are: -

1. Doyang
2. Dhansiri
3. Tizu
4. Milak
5. Miki
6. Sidzu
7. Dzu U
8. Langlong
9. Zungki
10. Likimro
11. Lanye
12. Dzuza
13. Manglu
14. Tsurong
15. Nanung
16. Tsurang / Disai
17. Tsumok
18. Menung
19. Tapi Chathe etc.

Sunset over the *Doyang* Lake in *Wokha* district, Nagaland

River worship

~ Nilakshi Dutta

When the night descends
The man weary of breathe goes out
to the river to immerse his fate.
The inviting gesture of the unpeopled *ghat*
tantalizes.

Opening its dark petals, the night grows darker
In quietness a nightjar counts the way for the moths
And the lone owl hoots on a dried branch
Flapping its wings an old hawk flies out searching for preys
tilling his heart into pieces
an unknown seed germinates .

life and death dwindle like a pendulum
everything seemed trivial to his existence.

The thickening clouds wobble the dancing waves
A fierce blow of wind floods his eyelids
Waves unbound inundate the banks
In the vortex the man loses him nowhere.

Far across the river the fisherman's boat floats like an ant
The glinting light of the hurricane lamp
Seduces the river for night errand
And to pass an illicit night

The river of the night is silent and mysterious.

the enthralled man falls in love of the river;
as the river chants him hymns of life
Planting a deep kiss on his bosom
And with mortal assurance
The river roars- no vice, only virtues persists in love.
Winding the river the man returns.

Old Album

~ Jyoti Doley

Your photograph speaks so many stories.
Stories of the warring lords
fighting over salt.
Those captivating eyes draw me towards you
that once enchanted the heroes
of wars, trades and sails.
As I flip through the old album
I see your tiny hands holding a bouquet
of colours. Colours of life, love, birth and death.
The stream behind your pliable little body
forks just before it is sluiced to
the mighty river.

The river
knows your stories too.
Stories of how you have travelled from the *adi* hills to
the banks of Obonori[1]
Stories that echo roar of the swelling river
gorging villages after village.
As I turn a few more pages,
I see a young girl, clad in an *ege-gasor*[2].
In the sepia-toned photograph,
the lively colourful motifs on the ege
become reddish-brown.
The spotless face now
carry countless lines.
Each line tells tales of love, wars, and trades.

[1] *Obonori- River Subansiri in Mising Dialect*
[2] *Mekhela-sador in Mising dialect*

The *Tsongmo* Lake in Sikkim

THE RIVERS OF SIKKIM

In the Himalayan state of Sikkim, Teesta is the major river system that originates as Chhombo Chhu from a glacial lake Khangchung Chho at an elevation of 5,280 m in the northeastern corner of the state. The glacial lake lies at the snout of the Teesta Khangse glacier descending from Pauhunri peak (7,056 m) in north western direction. Teesta Khangse glacier and Chho Lhamo are also considered as the source of Teesta river by many authors. Along its traverse from its origin to the plains, the river receives drainage from a number of tributaries on either side of its course. The tributaries on the eastern flank are shorter in course but larger in number whereas the tributaries on the western flank are much longer with larger drainage areas, consequently contributing much more amount of discharge to the main Teesta river. Furthermore, right-bank tributaries drain heavily glaciated areas with large snow-fields. The left bank tributaries, on the other hand, originate from semi-permanent and much smaller snow-fields as compared to right bank tributaries.

Major Rivers of Sikkim are: -

1. Dharla River
2. Jaldhaka River
3. Jorethang Loop Hydroelectric project
4. Lachen River
5. Lachung River
6. Lhonak River
7. Takchang
8. Rangeet River
9. Rangit Dam
10. Rangpo chu
11. Rangpo River
12. Ranikhola
13. Ratey Chu
14. Relli River
15. Roro Chu
16. Template:Hydrography of Sikkim
17. Talung River
18. Teesta River

Forever River…

~ Jeuty Thakur

And then, she met him. It was a serendipitous encounter and like in most love stories, they were distinctly different individuals. Yet she found a sense of familiarity within him, a feeling of comfort that made her think of the idea of soulmates. Or perhaps, it was all in her head!

Anandini was your quintessential city girl, who called Guwahati home. From being a toddler in kindergarten to a young woman managing her academic life and career in Guwahati, with its always pacing and at times aloof and impersonal nature, life in her city moved swiftly.

The Secretariat, the schools and universities, the rapidly growing corporate sector and the shiny malls, the coffee houses around every corner, the traffic jammed GS Road or the NH-27, and the newly built flyovers - it was as if the city's trajectories were imprinted in her sinews. Guwahati, with its rigmarole of competitive drive and everyday frenzy, kept her on her toes, quite literally! And that is perhaps what she loved the most about the city. There is always something to do, somewhere to be, she would quip excitedly!

One of the first things he shared with her was his intense love for rivers. Can you imagine an evening in Paris without visualising the Seine River? - Rivers are an integral part of human civilisations, he remarked thoughtfully. He told her how deeply connected he felt with the Brahmaputra, his beloved Luit! Hailing from the historic Tezpur, he proudly called himself a Luitporia!

And hence began a liaison built on tea, coffee, books, music, poetry, laughter, longing, vulnerability, passion, pain, learning and, of course, unlearning together. He spoke to her about ancient stories and tales of mythology. From Kant and Nietzsche to Amrita Pritam and Bhupen Hazarika, their philosophies intrigued him in different ways.

Over the course of their relationship, two realisations dawned on her. She began to perceive how he himself

mirrored some of the intrinsic qualities of a river. He was always calm and soft-spoken, and honoured the art of being still - in pain and joy alike. Yet, there was also a sense of relentless force in the pursuit of his passions. *'Moi nodi, Moi nirobodhi'*, he would say cheekily! In his quiet dignity, his seething pain and his restrained celebrations, she felt a river flowing within him, sometimes calm, sometimes tumultuous. He was kind, creative and child-like, but could at times sulk for days, holding on to a petty grudge. You are a paradox, she would sigh! I am an enigma, he would retort!

He had a sense of easy tranquillity yet stagnancy and attachments seemed to make him restless and uneasy. Like a river that rests on its banks yet belongs to none, he seemed to want to flow uninterrupted and free.

More fundamentally, it was via him that she began to visit unexplored spaces of her own soul. Rivers have this magical quality; sometimes it takes only an evening in its company to rediscover one's inner moorings, embedded in the monotony and rigour of everyday life. Being with him was like having an engrossing conversation with a river; he provided her a new window to view life and to look inwards at one's self. It is interesting how a person can introduce you to dimensions of life hitherto unknown. He taught the city girl how important it is to sometimes 'stand and stare', just like W.H. Davies had opined!

Today, he is no longer with her. Yet ironically, she doesn't feel lonely. Through him, she found a lifelong companion in the river. On days when she misses him terribly, she goes to her favourite spot on the Uzan Bazar *ghat* and spends time, listening to the songs he would hum while driving, lost in musings. Today, amidst a heavy shower in the evening, she found herself headed to the *ghats* for an intimate conversation with her Luit. As she bought her usual tea from the shack nearby, the lady curiously asked her what brought her to the *ghats* amidst such a torrential downpour. She smiled, breathed in the petrichor emanating from the soil, and replied: *Moi nodi, moi nirobodhi!*

* * *

THE RIVERS OF TRIPURA

The north-eastern state of Tripura has many rivers. And all of them originate from the hill ranges of Tripura and are totally rain fed. Truly speaking all rivers of Tripura is ephemeral. They are not comfortable for boats. They generate an annual flow of almost 793 million cubic meter of water.

Major Rivers of Tripura are –

1. Dhalai River
2. Feni River
3. Gumti River (Tripura)
4. Haora River
5. Juri River
6. Khowai River
7. Longai River
8. Manu River, Tripura
9. Muhuri River
10. Sumli
11. Titas River

The *Rudrasagar* Lake with the historic *Neermahal* ~ a *Ramsar* designated site

Thy Allegiance

~ Polly Handique

The blues, thee have created
Known to be consecrated
The magic, thou named
Happily, it vegetated.

Thine sublime operations
Conferred to the world
The stigma of dearth
Thou have catharised for the blue ball.

The confidant thee emerged
The endearment, thee have showed
To shield the power of amity
The precious lives, thou have bestowed.

Rain

~ Dr. Binod Pokhrel

Not exactly a pluviophile
Can't help either
Acknowledge love towards it,
Wit blended here to recognise
How indispensable it in my sight!
Observe minutely a child
Else a pair of doomed couple,
Both show similar manifestations
When drenched by drops of showered rain.
Never it has been admonished,
Though deluge surfaces time and again;
Pain delivered is accepted by any ways,
Like the slap of parents
When affections not reckoned
And thought it to be cays.
Importance being realised
Having seen converted fertile lands to deserts,
Least concerned still to recollect
How clouds get gravitated down
And dry lands quenches.
Common phenomenon it might be at our disposal, rain is!
Not could be fixed either If not, on time, paid a heed.
Water cycle being balanced
And lives assured of!

Journey of the Brahmaputra

~ Pawn Kr. Singh

'O' Mighty Brahmaputra, a humble salute to you,
The mighty of the mightiest of all the rivers,
Which has ever crossed this sacred land?
You come from the land of the yaks,
Born out of the glaciers near the abode of the gods,
'Mansarovar'
There you are called the Yearlong Tsangpo, 'the purifier'.

After traveling through mountains and many dells,
Through glades and bowers, you enter India, in Arunachal,
People call you 'Dihang' or' Siang', then your journey takes,
You to Assam, the land of Rhinos, here people lovingly,
Call you 'The Brahmaputra',' the son of Brahma'
You are the only manly name among all the feminine rivers.

In Assam you take a gigantic form, one of the largest,
River Island in the world, 'Majuli' is situated here,
Your width is very great , it varies from 10 kms to 18 kms ,
The average depth of your bosom is about 124 ft. to 380 ft.,
You are indeed some of the few rivers in the world,
Which has a 'tidal bore'.

River *Subansiri,* Arunachal Pradesh

Many folklore has been composed and sung by the people here,
You are an integral part of their life, you are uncontrollable ,
When you display your devastating form, there is destruction,
And devastation everywhere, people and animals lose their life,
But you are also a life saver, many people earn their livelihood from you.

Then you enter Bangladesh, here you are called the Jamuna (not the Yamuna),
After travelling through the heart of Bangladesh, you are joined by 'The Ganges'
You are called by the name of Padma, ultimately after travelling,
Through three countries, completing a journey of 2900 kms,
You reach your ultimate goal , The Bay of Bengal,
Flowing through the famous Sunderbans, you fall into the sea,
A journey which had started from the snowy glaciers,
has ultimately come to an end , passing through,
diverse people, races, cultures, many towns and cities,
'O' Mighty Brahmaputra, a humble salute to you,
may you flow for ever for many many generations to come...

* * *

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