

The Bodo Community of Assam

¹Prasanta Saikia and ²Bipin Gogoi

¹Assistant Professor, ²Professor

¹Department of Statistics, Chaiduar College, Biswanath, Assam, India

²Department of Statistics, Dibrugarh University, Dibrugarh, Assam, India

Abstract:

Bodos are one of the oldest and major occupants of North-East India. The Bodos are the one of the biggest 18 ethnic sub-bunches inside the Bodo-Kachari gathering. They are found generally dissipated everywhere throughout the Assam, in certain pieces of Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and in certain pieces of North and East piece of Bengal and other neighboring outside nations of Nepal and Bangladesh. Despite the fact that Bodos are demographically isolated into sub-bunches they follow a similar culture, convention, religion and language. The goal of this inspection is to learn about culture and religion of Bodo-Kacharies of Assam. The current investigation targets having a profound look inside the Bodos inborn religion Bathouism, its five-point theory and how the Bodo people, group and society live their everyday lives under its standards and customs.

Keywords: *Bodo, Bodo-Kacharis, Ethnic, North East India, Culture, Religion, Bathouism etc.*

Corresponding Author e-mail: paasaikia@gmail.com

1. Introduction:

Among the ethnic gatherings in Assam, the Bodos are credited with having ownership of a rich legacy that goes back to thousands of years in history. It is on the grounds that nonattendance of the set up accounts of recorded advancements that the early history of the Bodos is to a great extent obscure. Inaccessibility of adequate information and satisfactory examination is one of the zones to be given due consideration. Based on the accessibility of materials, it is discovered that the Bodos form a huge gathering of Mongoloid individuals living in Mongolia. At that point, not surprisingly, migrations of Bodos began and they involved a few sections across China, Hwangho valley and Tibet in course of time. In course of time, they moved their home to various pieces of the North-East India. They drove their own life addressing their one of a kind language, customs, fantasies, legends and so on. Bodos are basic and agreeable naturally, the Bodos could without much of a stretch mix up with other ethnic gatherings in Assam. However, their normal self and confident personality experienced numerous changes as time passed on. Under, the Ahoms, the British and then all the more powerfully the purported standard Assamese society, checked changes in their example of life. History, being a living observer to happenings, discloses the image of the transition. It is the image which is without a moment's delay and genuine. In spite of acquiring a rich social and social inheritance, the Bodos discovered battling, especially in the post autonomy period, to free themselves from the grasp that have demonstrated negative to their general advancement. After their battle, the society has arrived at a stage which appears to carry a fast change to each circle in the lives of the Bodos.

2. Materials and methods:

The investigation is totally theoretical and descriptive. It depends on available information assortments from article, magazines, research papers, books, diaries, government productions and web and so on.

3. Discussion:

Bodo-Kachari is a nonexclusive term applied to various ethnic gatherings prevalently found in Assam communicating in Tibeto-Burman dialects or asserting a typical legendary lineage. They have conspicuous Mongoloid highlights with high cheek bones, cut eyes and a slight development of hair in the body and meager facial hair.

Origin:

They were first identified by S. Endle as the Kacharis. Here the word Bodo is derived from "Bod" which is Tibet and Kachari is derived from "Kassar" which means the lower regions of the Himalayas. They are considered to have arrived at the Brahmaputra valley by means of Tibet and settled in the lower regions of the eastern Himalayan range which incorporates the entire of Assam, Tripura, North Bengal and parts of Bangladesh. That the Bodo-Kacharis were early colonizers of the stream valleys is taken from the way that the vast majority of the waterways in the Brahmaputra valley today convey Tibeto-Burmese names like "Dibang", "Dihang", "Dikhou", "Dihing" and so on where "Di-" implies water in Tibeto-Burmese language.

The Bodo-Kachari:

The Bodos, historically known as Kacharis or Kirata had close liking and was connected by blood with the races named as Deori, Barman, Rabha, Dimasa, Tiwa, Mech, Lalung, Motok, Garo, Hojai, Chutiyas, Moran, Sonowal, Tippera, Mahaliya, Koch-Rajbonshi, Sarania Hajong, Thengal and so on. Men, commonly is daring and consistently makes progress toward a superior life than their current one. Consequently, in the past movement turned into a general propensity of men and it was particularly simple for men to search for bounteous soil. The Bodos, an enormous gathering of Mongoloid individuals who lived in Mongolia around 2000 B.C. came and settled in certain pieces of China and bit by bit broadened their abode in the Hwangho valley and Tibet for a long time. Once more, charged by their brave energy, some of them moved to the plain zones in Bhutan. In spite of the fact that they settled in a wide zone of Bhutan yet some of them were looking for fortune and left Bhutan to live in the Koach Behar, Rangpur, West Bengal, Nepal, Bangladesh and so forth. Along these lines, this Mongolian race isolated into various segments throughout time took diverse name and like to distinguish themselves contrastingly either by the procedure of assimilation with the individuals lived before their settlement or by their modification to the new condition. Streams, for the most part the Brahmaputra and Barak in the NE had an incredible job in influencing the life of these individuals. The vast majority of the gatherings hailing together received the name of their dwelling place after the name of the waterways and mountains, for example the Morans and the Borahis chose the banks of the stream Dikhou and Disang. Yet, it was in 1228 AD that Sukapha made his crusade to Assam from Burma. He vanquished and attacked on the wide region of the NE which was then connected with some parts of the more prominent Naga Hills. At that point he crushed the Morans and Borahis and invaded the land. Sukapha with his supporters attempted to acclimatize with these individuals to expand his control with a dream to prevail upon the Kachari lords who till then controlled almost all the people here including the the more noteworthy Bodo race. In the antiquated Indian Vedic writing and the Mahabharata, Pragjyotishpur was the capital of the more noteworthy unified Assam. The forceful Danava or Asuras or Mleches or Kiratas governed for quite a while. The antiquated powerful rulers like Mahiranga, Narakasura, Ghatakasura, Bhuluk belonged to Mleches. These rulers were connected with the places known as Guwahati, Shillong, Sonitpur, Bhulukpung, Sibsagar and so forth. Thus, right now the Great Bodo race has passed

numerous ages leaving their branches in various pieces of the NE. They have received new customs, religion, language, propensities in their procedure of assimilation with the individuals, they interacted with in different issues of their life and customs to modify and manage their life. Be that as it may, other who stayed back are long ways behind or as in reverse. Accordingly, the more noteworthy Bodo race, over the span of time isolated into certain factions and taking up the names as referenced above, they restricted themselves with few varieties. Subsequently, the present Bodo people group incorporates people, bearing the surname as- Basumatary, Bodosa, Boro, Bargary, Bhrama, Daimary, Goyary, Narzary and so forth. The Bodos were at one time an incredible race. They are said to have administered over the entire of Kamrup not long before the appearance of the Ahoms in the 13th Century. The Kacharis and the Chutias (counting Maran and Motak) two parts of the Bodos managed over an enormous piece of Eastern Assam. Also, the Bodos had imperial wonders and involved the royal positions of Koch Behar, Bijni, Darang and Beltola at Gauhati.

The Bodos of the eastern part settled a ground-breaking realm with its capital close to Sodia and furthermore at Dimapur, Maibong and Khaspur against the unrelenting attack of the Ahoms and neighboring realms till the hour of the British guideline in Assam. The historical backdrop of the Bodos at present is a past filled with struggles in social, political domain since the start of the twentieth century. It is presently evident that they were abused by disruption, transformation, division and sub-division so that some of them have just overlooked their fore-paternal culture, language and writing. The partition and rule approach of the British, was not a special case on account of Assam, which influenced the Bodos in the start of the twentieth century. English rule in Indian might be said to have begun from A.D. 1757 when the powers of East India Company crushed Sirij-ud-Daulah, the Nawab of Bengal at the Battle of Palassey. The British rule, in later years, made the Indian citizens to lead a remarkable freedom struggle against British Imperialism during the second part of the nineteenth century and first part of the twentieth century. The Bodo individuals couldn't grow a lot under the British principle. During this period, enormous quantities of the Bodo individuals changed over into Christianity. Their social, political, monetary and social sides stayed disregarded. This horrid picture proceeded with ever after Independence. Individuals taking the high ground in the supposed Assamese society didn't accord equivalent situation to various ethnic gatherings to which the Bodos were no exemption. Diverse issues and problems stayed unaddressed.

Religion:

(a) Bathouism:

The Bodos consider that 'Sijou' tree (Euphorbia Splenden) is the living image of Bathou. Bathou is the incomparable God of the Bodo pantheon and furthermore known as 'Jiu Bwrai', 'Siu Bwrai', or 'Sibrai' (father of life or soul). It may be likely that because of the contact with Hinduism, a few people elude Bathou as Lord Shiva. The forces of Creation, nourishment and disintegration of Brahma, Bishnu and Maheswara (of Hinduism) individually are found in this single god, 'Bathou Bwrai' or 'Sibrai'. Here, notice might be made that Bathou religion isn't a type of Hinduism (despite the fact that at the appropriate time, they have conveyed certain components of Hinduism).

According to philosophical understanding, 'Ba' signifies 'five' and 'thou' signifies 'profound'. Henceforth, 'Bathou' signifies five profound otherworldly substances. It is essential that the Bodo religion or reasoning is mainly concerned about 'theory of five' or the 'rule of five' (mwnbasanhou).

In Bathou religion, the numerical 'five' has profound philosophical ramifications. Sailen Debnath in his 'Expositions on Cultural History of North Bengal' stated, "As indicated by Bathou, this world is made out of five components. These are Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Sky" i.e Ong, Hring, Khling, Fwt and Che separately which are like 'Panchabhuta' in Hinduism. This shows the Bodos are essentially nature admirers. They are not idolater. Five is a critical number in Bathou religion. A few components of Bathou religion have association with this 'five'. For example, the 'Out' fruit (Dillenisindica) which is utilized in worshipping Bathou has five edges; the Siphung (the long bamboo woodwind) which is utilized as instrument in supplication has five openings. The special stepped area of the Bathou has likewise five bunches (of bamboo strips); the 'Boro Borai' (the Bodo older folks) have five good lecturing. Their social traditions are likewise founded on five standards viz. (I) Agarbad, (ii) Phongalothbad, (iii) Daokhibad, (iv) Khoulobad, (v) Khaoalibad. These are the laws or Bads through which blameworthy people are rebuffed and refined. It very well may be said that in old occasions the Bodos had confidence in five primary divine beings, viz. (I) Ailong (the God of earth), (ii) Agrang (the God of water), (iii) Khoila (the God of air), (iv) Sanja-Borli (the Goddess of fire), (v) Raj-khungri (the Goddess of sky) which consolidates polytheism among the natives. The first numbers were likewise found in five, viz. (I) Se (one), (ii) Nwi (two), (iii) Thom (three), (iv) Brwi (four), (v) Ba (five).

(b) Brahma Dharma:

In the early long stretches of twentieth century, the Brahma dharma proliferated by Kalicharan Brahma achieved economical ceremonies and balance among its followers. Kalicharan Brahma started the reforms and development of Brahma dharma in the Bodo society. These reforms incredibly influenced on the deep rooted convictions, strict practices and customary culture of the Bodos which were generally connected with the Bathou religion. In spite of the fact that there was no sorted out stage by which the devotees of Bathou religion could oppose this development drove by Kalicharan Brahma yet there was a reference of a counter development which Joynarayan Basumatary and Satish Chandra Basumatary propelled against the Brahma movement. The ancestors of this development were the supporters of Guru Kalicharan Brahma, however later wandered from it and rather attempted to rejuvenate the customary Bathou religion by improving certain components in its ceremonies and getting rid of the majority of the insidious practices incidentally crawled into it. The Bodo individuals were urged by them to worship the Bathou without the penances of creatures, fowls, goats, and offering of Zumai, and so forth. It was in this way that the reformation in the religious worship of traditional Bathou began first among the Bodos. It was in this way that the reformation in the religious worship of traditional Bathou began first among the Bodos. The coming up of the Boro Chatra Sanmilan in 1919 at Kokrajhar was another defining moment in the expansion of the Bathou religion in the Bodo society. It realized social cognizance among the Bodos and in this way contributed a great deal to the advancement of writing and language other than the religion. The Boro Chatra Sanmilan embraced various willful measures alongside the Boro Mahasanmilan to realize the changes in the well-established convictions and practices in the general public. In any case, the assessment of Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma in the Boro Mahasanmilan to give up the conventional Bodo instruments, for example, Kham (drum), Sifung (woodwind) and Jotha (cymbal) at the religious services got a hardened opposition from one of his pupils, Nepal Chandra Brahmachari famously known as Fwrlang Babaji and a few supporters like Satish Chandra Basumatary, Rupnath Brahma and others. Understanding the significance of rich social legacy of the Bodos, Babaji unequivocally held the view that the special personality and culture of the Bodos are vested in these three instruments. The preservation of rich cultural heritage thus sprang up in the minds of a section of the educated Bodo Brahma converts. Thusly, a segment of the Bodo erudite people who were staunch Bathou admirers made an endeavor to change the conventional Bathou revere with certain adjustments so as to protect their customary religion and culture.

Culture:

The way of life of the Bodos is affected by the land where they live in. They have been working on cultivating with traditional custom of angling, keeping poultry, piggery, doing rice and jute development. They additionally develop betel nut, corn and mustard. Serja, Siphung, Kham, Jotha, Gongwna, Gorkha and so on are the primary instruments of the Bodos. They play the instruments in the 'Kherai', 'Garja' and 'Baisagu' especially in praising their diverse celebrations. In their disposition of dress the Bodo don't vary from their Hindu neighbors, yet they show certain affection for the hued article of clothing and know about characteristic craft of dyeing, the materials for setting up the dye (typically blue and different shades of the red) are derived for the most part from the leaves or foundations of trees. The male, both youthful and the old put on 'Gamocha' when they are at home, which hangs down to the knees from the midriff. The ladies for the most part tie a fabric round the chest simply howl the arm pit that hangs to the toe. It is known as the 'Dokhona'. What's more, in the event that it is plain, it is called 'Salamath' and whenever ornamented it is called 'Dokhona Thawshi'. The Bodo ladies likewise wear 'Pasra' or 'Jwmbaigra' alongside Dokhona. The ladies utilize not many decorations made of silver and gold but in use 'Khera or Kheru, Jabkring, Putty, Nak-Phul for the nose. For the neck, Chandrahar, Thanka-Siri, Jibou-Zinjiri. For the hands Ashen, Mutha and so on are worn.

In the past, Bodos worshipped their progenitors. As of late, Bodos practice Bathouism, Hinduism and Christianity. In November of 2006 the Bodo Religious group worshipping Bathou, ejected seven Christian families from Haldibari and surrounding villages. Among Christian groups that some Bodo belong to is the Bodo Evangelical Lutheran Church. Bathouism is a structure venerating progenitors called Obonglaoree. The sijuplant (having a place with the Euphorbia variety), is taken as the image of Bathou and worshipped. A clean region close to home or yard could be a perfect spot for offering prayers. Generally, one sets of Betelnut called 'goi' and betel leaf called 'pathwi' could be utilized as offering. On some event, venerate offering could incorporate rice, milk, and sugar. For the Kherai Puja, the most significant celebration of the Bodos, the raised area is set in the rice field. Other significant celebrations of the Bodos incorporate Hapsa Hatarnai, Awnkham Gwrlwi Janai, Bwisaguand Domashi.

Language and Literature:

Bodo language, a part of the Sino-Tibetan group of dialects, is the language of the Bodo bunch under the Assam-Burmese gathering of dialects. It is firmly identified with the Dimasa language of Assam and the Garo language of Meghalaya. It is additionally firmly identified with Kokborok language spoken in Tripura. In the repercussions of socio-political arousing and development propelled by the Bodo organisations since 1913, the language was presented as the mode of guidance (1963) in the grade schools in Bodo dominated zones. Presently, the Bodo language fills in as a vehicle of guidance up to the secondary level and an associated official language in the territory of Assam. The language has achieved a place of pride with the opening of the Post-Graduate course in Bodo language and writing in the University of Gauhati since 1996. The language is authoritatively composed utilizing the Devanagari content, despite the fact that it likewise has a long history of utilizing the Roman content. A few analysts have proposed that the language initially utilized a content called Deodhai, presently lost. Be that as it may, there is a distinction in utilizing the letters in Bodo than the Devanagari. The Bodo language, perceived naturally in 2003, has now received recognition as national and worldwide language.

Melodic Instruments:

Serja, Siphung, Kham, Jotha, Gongwna, Gorkha and so on are the principle instruments of the Bodos. They play the instruments in the 'Kherai', 'Garja' and 'Baisagu' especially in praising their diverse celebrations.

4. Conclusion:

From the above discussion, it very well may be said that the Bodos after the assimilation with the bigger standard Assamese society, they needed to spent the life of estrangement and isolation. As society and religion are interrelated, religion will in general change when social changes happen. Again social changes will happen when changes in religion occur. The Bodos of the Brahmaputra valley, most likely, are a native clan of Assam. Their conventional religion and its inborn thoughts are one of a kind. It is basically monotheistic in nature (albeit raised through polytheism). It talks about just a single God whom they called Bathou. He is endless, the maker everything being equal. They are the admirers of Bathou, the incomparable God. Bathou religion isn't just a religion, however a way of existence for the Bodo people and group. It is relevant to make reference to that more research works are to be done on this society with the goal that its rich legacy is saved unblemished for the future and furthermore new areas will be uncovered for additional examination and investigation.

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