

**CHAO LUNG SUKAPHA :
REFORMER AND STATE BUILDER**



(Wich)

**A SURVEY OF THE HISTORICAL
MONUMENTS OF CHARAIDEO SUB-DIVISION**

(A Project by the Centre For Sukapha Studies and Research)



SONARI COLLEGE
SONARI, SIVASAGAR

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PRINCIPAL'S NOTE

The Centre for Sukapha Study and Research was set up in 2010 in Sonari College at the initiative of the Department of History. The establishment of the Centre was aided by the Departments of Political Science and Economics. The Study Centre was financially sanctioned by the UGC vide letter no. F.A-293/2010(NFE-II). This Centre was primarily established with a view to studying the ideas, thoughts and perspectives of the founder king of the Ahom dynasty and the great monarch Sukapha. The vision of the Centre is to disseminate the works of the great King Sukapha and carry out his message for maintaining peace and harmony amongst the different sections of people of Assam which is the need of hour through scholarly endeavors. The centre hopes to be able to enforce the importance of Sukapha as a nation-builder who laid the foundation of a strong empire which not ruled over the Brahmaputra Valley for six hundred years but also served to protect the indigenous tribes against foreign attacks thereby preserving the cultural heritage of the same and establishing a state of great importance.

This is the first attempt of the Centre to issue a published work about the research carried out by it so far. The Centre has attempted to carry out a survey of the historical monuments of the Charaideo Sub-division. The importance of Charaideo lies in the fact that it was the first capital of the Ahoms established by Sukapha. So due to this reason this area is of special historical importance and relevance to the Centre for Sukapha Studies and Research. I hope that the Centre will continue its efforts to further research about the Ahom kingdom in general and Sukapha in particular. I congratulate the Co-ordinator and the faculty of the Department of History for carrying out this painstaking work. I also extend my gratitude to all involved in this project. My best wishes are with the Study Centre for further studies and research related works.

Dr. Rajen Tamuli

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge and thank the many people who have helped us in different ways in completion of the survey and publication of this book. In the very beginning I extend my gratitude to the University Grants Commission for extending the financial support and permission necessary for establishment of the Center for Sukapha Study and Research.

I am extremely thankful and greatly indebted to our respected Principal, Dr. Rajen Tamuli for his unwavering support towards the Centre and his encouragement for carrying out this survey as well as publication of this book.

Next I acknowledge the honorable members of the Advisory Committee of the Center, Mr. Golap Borgohain (Founder Principal of the Sonari College), Mr. Manik Gogoi, (Ex. Head of the Department of History, Sonari College), Mr. Girin Gogoi (ex- professor of Department of History, Sonari College), Prof. Arpan Baruah (Vice-Principal, Sonari College) and Prof. Binud Rajkhanikar (Department of Political Science, Sonari College) for their valuable advice and guidance.

I owe thanks to a number of Individuals for their generous help during the field survey of the historical monuments. They are Lakhya Handique of Dhupabor, Tulshi Neog of Khariabhetta, Uttam Gogoi of Rahan, Rajen Borah of Borhat, Sarbeshwar Hatibaruah of Patsaku, Na Baruah of Patsaku, Kamal Baruah of Nahartali, Rohini Mohan of Bantung, Dr. Narahari Gogoi of Naphuk, Jai Borah of Charaideo, Moni Gogoi of Baghchuk, Sapakhati, Debajit Phukan of Borhat, Mridul Phukan, Munin Changmai, Noran Charingia, Chandan Phukan, Ripon Handique and Dilbahadur Chetry of Sonari.

I am also deeply thankful to Prof. Dambarudhar Nath (HOD, Department of History, Dibrugarh University and Holder of the prestigious Sri Sri Aniruddhadeva Chair of Dibrugarh University) and Prof. Jahnabi Gogoi Nath (Professor, Department of History, Dibrugarh University) for their valuable advice and suggestions towards the book.

I extend my sincere thanks to Mr. Jibeshwar Mohan (ex-principal of Tinkhong College) and Prof. Lindy Goodwin for contributing the articles included in the book and to Prof. Dibyajyoti Konwar for preparation of the project report. I also thank Pankaj Gogoi, our colleague from the department for his help in this project.

I extend gratitude to all the teaching and non-teaching staff of the college for extending their support towards the fulfilment of the project.

Last but not the least I offer my warm thanks and wishes to all the students of the Department of History who were involved in the field trips and various activities related to the project.

Prof. Sushil Kr. Suri
Coordinator/ Editor

Centre for Sukapha Studies and Research

P R E F A C E

Assam as well as the other states of the North East India has always occupied a unique position in Indian politics. It still remains one of the most sensitive and disturbed zones in the entire sub-continent. The problems of insurgency, armed clashes amongst revolutionary and seize-fire groups etc. are causes of constant tension in the region. Ethnic conflicts and violence result in trouble within the state in particular and the nation in general. As a matter of fact lakhs of people become homeless and are forced to live in rehabilitation camps in areas where ethnic clashes are most pronounced. Emergence and growth of ethnic consciousness based on ethnic identity has manifested itself through ethnic political assertion and ethnic movements. The ongoing issues of political rights, languages, cultural identities, tribal and non-tribal backward groups demanding autonomous state etc are causing the brotherhood and friendly relations among the various tribes and ethnic groups of Assam to deteriorate drastically. In such a situation we are being forced to consider the fate and future of this great state. In searching for remedies to this problem it would be wise to look back at the lessons which history has to offer. We must remember all that the efforts and contributions of all the leaders who have led this state to its position of greatness. In doing so we can take great pride in and also learn a lot from one of the greatest leaders of Assam, Chao Lung Sukapha. In this very land where ethnic strife has become a common occurrence, the mighty Sukapha once built a nation by assimilating all the tribes of the Brahmaputra Valley for the very first time . In 1228 A.D. when he arrived in the Brahmaputra Valley he initiated a number of new measures which helped in the process of state formation in Assam. Though he had his own religion and rites he organized the people of different sects and culture under one umbrella and laid the foundation of the Ahom kingdom in Assam. It is found that Sukapha left his homeland in about 1215 A.D. to seek his fortune elsewhere. He was accompanied by a few

nobles and a few hundred followers on the way from Hukong Valley to the valley of Brahmaputra. He subjugated many wild tribes who were yet to cross the primitive stage of civilization. He undoubtedly followed a suppression policy, but in the same way a policy of peace and conciliation also maintained by him. It is evident that Sukapha only brought a few women with him. Therefore establishing matrimonial relations with the local tribes or bodies became necessary for him or his followers. The matrimonial policy became one of the milestone of the Ahom kingdom. In this line it was comparable with the Hapsburg Dynasty of Austria and ancient Magadhan dynasty.

The conquest made by Sukapha and the Tai Ahoms was not an invasion but a gradual peaceful penetration without causing displacement of local inhabitants. He opened up new areas of settlement, formulated new land policies which organised habitation and agriculture. Homestead land was called 'bari mati' and paddy fields were called 'rupit mati'. And all these lands were opened up with the help of the local people. Further he treated them in a friendly manner and often invited them to dine together, more like a fellow tribesman rather than an overlord. The local tribal peoples were very happy with his behavior and extended every help to the Ahom prince as and when needed. As the agricultural methods carried out by the Ahoms were superior in nature than that of the local inhabitants. So they adopted the culture without much protest. Vis- a-vis, Sukapha also used the manpower of the subjugated population for the purpose and opened up three big 'khats' or farms initially adjutant to Charaideo namely 'Gosikola', 'Borakhowa', and 'Angera'. Later on innumerable rice fields sprung throughout the valley. In this process the subsistence economy was turned into a surplus one.

He used the local manpower in agriculture as well as military purposes. As his expansion policy was also in existence he needed a huge number of man folk. With the help of these men he defeated the wild primitive tribes such as the Nagas. Therefore, the agricultural production as well as defense preparation was necessary to sustain the new state. Consequently in his reign each individual had to perform dual duties. In the time of war they had to perform as a soldier and in the time of peace they had to perform as farmers.

Sukapha arrived in the Brahmaputra valley in 1228 AD. He settled in Tipam on the south bank of Buridihing river and stayed there for three years. But this place was not good enough for a permanent habitation. Frequent floods and other problems caused him to leave the place in search of a better one. Finally after twenty five years he settled permanently at Charaideo and established his first capital here in 1253 AD. In the latter part of the Ahom rule, though there were several other capitals such as Saraguwa, Gargaon, Rongpur & Jorhat, Charaideo always gets its importance as a holy and sacred place of the Ahoms. Its main importance lies in the fact that it is the site for the burial places of the royal family of the Ahoms. The burial graves known as Maidams are scattered all over Charaideo and the neighboring areas. Charaideo was also important due to other reasons. Because of the alluvial soil and strategic location, within a very short time Charaideo became an economically rich area, due to which several new towns came into being such as Gajpur, Abhoipur, Mathurapur, Towkok in the vicinity.

There are many historical monuments in the adjoining areas of Charaideo. Most of them are recorded in history. But some of these have lost their glory due to non-preservation by the present generation. So, the advisory committee of Sukapha Study & Research Centre Sonari College had put forward certain suggestion regarding unearthing of monuments and facts of historical importance and advised the Centre to carry out works and research relating to the same. In our survey we tried our best to unearth and study all the monuments. However due to various technical difficulties and time constraints, a comprehensive study was not possible. We hope to be able to carry out further study in this area and publish other works from the Centre. We also hope that the readers and others interested in this topic will contribute suggestion and facts related which may enrich the subject further.

Sonari
Date : 15-02-2012

S.K.Suri
Co-ordinator/ Editor
Centre for Sukapha Studies and Research

চাও লুঙ ছু-কা-ফা

জীৱেশ্বৰ মহন
প্ৰাক্তন অধ্যক্ষ,
টিংখাং মহাবিদ্যালয়

এখন দেশ আৰু এটা জাতিক দিব পৰা নেতা একেদিনাই সৃষ্টি নহয়। পৰিশীলিত সভ্যতা-সংস্কৃতি, শৃঙ্খলাবদ্ধ ৰাজনৈতিক পদ্ধতি আৰু সুস্থ জীৱন দৰ্শনেৰে সমৃদ্ধ উন্নত সমাজেহে তেনে এজন ব্যক্তিৰ জন্ম দিব পাৰে। সেইদৰে, এটা জাতিয়েও অতীতৰ ভেটি নোহোৱাকৈ নিজক শক্তিশালীৰূপত প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰিব নোৱাৰে। চিন্তা-চেতনাৰ সংঘাতে যুগ যুগ ধৰি গঢ় দিয়া সভ্যতা-সংস্কৃতিৰ উন্নত ভেটিতহে এটা জাতিয়ে নিজকে প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰিব পাৰে। আহোম ৰাজ্য প্ৰতিষ্ঠাতা আৰু বৰ অসমৰ ভেটি গঢ়োতা চাও লুঙ ছু-কা-ফাৰ দুঃসাহসীকতা, বুদ্ধিদীপ্ততা, ৰাজনৈতিক বিচক্ষণতা, অদম্য কৰ্মপ্ৰেৰণা, সততা আৰু প্ৰভাৱশালী মোহনীয় ব্যক্তিত্বৰ অন্তৰালত আছে তাই আহোমসকলৰ সমৃদ্ধিশালী ঐতিহ্য, কালচেতনাসম্ভূত উন্নত বলিষ্ঠ ৰাজনৈতিক পৰম্পৰা আৰু সংস্কৃতিৰ জীৱন দৰ্শন। চাও লুঙ ছু-কা-ফা কেৱল এজন ব্যক্তি বা ৰজাই নহয়, তেওঁ হ'ল তাই জাতিৰ প্ৰতিভা আৰু জীৱন্ত ইতিহাস। আমাৰ এই লিখনিত এইগৰাকী দিগ্বিজয়ী বীৰ, ৰাষ্ট্ৰ নিৰ্মাতাৰ ব্যক্তিত্বৰ বিকাশত তাই জাতিৰ সভ্যতা-সংস্কৃতি আৰু ৰাজনৈতিক ব্যৱস্থাই কেনেদৰে প্ৰভাৱ পেলাইছিল তাৰ ওপৰত আলোকপাত কৰিবলৈ বিচৰা হৈছে।

(১)

আহোমসকল ৰাজতন্ত্ৰত বিশ্বাসী। পুৰণিকালৰে পৰা তেওঁলোকৰ মাজত ৰাজতান্ত্ৰিক শাসন ব্যৱস্থা প্ৰচলন হৈ আহিছে। তেওঁলোকৰ প্ৰাচীন ধৰ্মীয় দৰ্শনতো ৰাজতন্ত্ৰৰ পোষকতা কৰিছে। তেওঁলোকৰ প্ৰচলিত আখ্যান মতে আহোমসকল স্বৰ্গৰ ৰজা লেঙদনৰ বংশধৰ। লেঙদনে তেওঁৰ নাতিদ্বয় খুন-লুঙ আৰু খুন-লাইক মিঙ-বানত (মুংৰি-মুং-ৰাম) শাসন কৰিবলৈ পঠোৱা দিনৰে পৰা ধাৰাবাহিকভাৱে তেওঁলোকৰ মাজত ৰাজতান্ত্ৰিক শাসন ব্যৱস্থা প্ৰচলন হৈ আহিছে। অন্যান্য ৰাজতন্ত্ৰৰ দৰে আহোমৰ ৰজায়ো উত্তৰাধিকাৰ সূত্ৰে ৰাজসিংহাসন লাভ কৰে। লেঙদনৰ পৰা আহোমৰ শেষৰজন ৰজালৈকে এই ৰাজবংশীয় ধাৰাবাহিকতা ৰক্ষা কৰি চলিছিল। প্ৰথমে উত্তৰাধিকাৰ সূত্ৰে ৰজা পতা হৈছিল যদিও পিচলৈ আহোমৰ ছটা ৰাজপৰিয়ালৰ পৰা যোগ্য কোঁৱৰক ৰাজপাটত বহুৱাৰ নিয়ম প্ৰবৰ্ত্তন হৈছিল।^১ এই ৰাজতন্ত্ৰ কেইটা হ'ল - দিহঙীয়া, চাৰিঙীয়া, তুংখুঙীয়া, নামৰুপীয়া, চামগুৰীয়া আৰু পৰ্বতীয়া। সেইদৰে, ডা-ডাঙৰীয়াকে ধৰি ৰাজ্যৰ গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ বিষয়বাব কেৱল সাতঘৰীয়া আহোমৰ মাজতহে বিতৰণ কৰা হৈছিল। বৰগোঁহাই, বুঢ়াগোঁহাই আৰু বৰপাত্ৰ গোঁহাই এই তিনিজন ডাঙৰীয়া সংশ্লিষ্ট বংশৰ পৰাহে হ'ব পাৰিছিল।

আহোমৰ ৰাজসিংহাসনৰ উত্তৰাধিকাৰ ব্যৱস্থাৰ এটা যোগাত্মক দিশ হ'ল এই যে, ৰাজকোঁৱৰসকলে সৰুৰে পৰা ৰাজকীয় কাম-কাজ নিৰীক্ষণ কৰিবলৈ সুবিধা পাইছিল। গতিকে, প্ৰশাসনীয় সকলো সমস্যাৰ সতে তেওঁলোকৰ সুন্দৰ পৰিচয় ঘটিছিল। তদুপৰি, সৰুৰেপৰা ডা-ডাঙৰীয়া আৰু অন্যনা বিষয়াৰ সান্নিধ্যলৈ আহি দেশ শাসন সম্বন্ধীয় অনেক কথা তেওঁলোকে আয়ত্ব কৰিব পাৰিছিল।

চাও লুঙ ছু-কা-ফা আছিল মাওলুঙ ৰাজপৰিয়ালৰ ফে-চাঙ-খাঙৰ তৃতীয় সন্তান। ৰাজকাৰ্য্যৰ সৈতে তেওঁৰ সৰুৰেপৰাই নিবিড় পৰিচয় ঘটিছিল। ৰাজকাৰেঙৰ বাস্তৱ অভিজ্ঞতাই ৰাজকোঁৱৰ গৰাকীক নিজৰ সপোনৰ এখন সোণালী ৰাজ্য প্ৰতিষ্ঠাৰ বাবে উদ্বুদ্ধ কৰি অগম্য গিৰি-কন্দৰ অতিক্ৰমি এই মুলুঙত ৰাজ্য প্ৰতিষ্ঠাৰ প্ৰেৰণা আৰু সাহস যোগাইছিল। দক্ষতাৰে আহোম ৰাজত্বৰ সুদৃঢ় ভেটি গঢ়িব পাৰিছিল আৰু কূটনৈতিক বিচক্ষণতাৰে 'সাত ৰাজ মাৰি এক ৰাজ' পাতিবলৈ শক্তি আৰু সাহস যোগাইছিল।

(২)

আহোম ৰাজকোঁৱৰ আৰু ডা-ডাঙৰীয়াৰ সন্তানসকলে সামৰিক শিক্ষা লোৱাতো বাধ্যতামূলক আছিল। আহোম ৰাজ্যত ৰজা, মন্ত্ৰী, বিষয়া, চমুৱা সকলোৱে প্ৰয়োজন সাপেক্ষে যুদ্ধ কৰিব লাগিছিল। সিংহাসনৰ দাবীদাৰ কোঁৱৰসকলে যুদ্ধত পৰাক্ৰম দেখুৱাব পৰাটো এটা বিশেষ যোগ্যতা হিচাবে গণ্য কৰা হৈছিল। ১৫-১৬ বছৰৰ পৰা ৫০-৬০ বছৰ বয়সলৈকে সকলো আহোমে ৰণৰ পালিত যোগ দিয়াতো প্ৰায় বাধ্যতামূলক আছিল আৰু পালিত যোগ্য দিয়া সকলো সৈন্যকে ভাগে ভাগে বিভিন্ন ধৰণৰ অস্ত্ৰ চালনাৰ শিক্ষা দিয়াতো নিয়ম। বজাই নিজৰ সামৰিক বাহিনীৰ প্ৰশিক্ষণৰ চোৱা-চিতা কৰি তদাৰক কৰিছিল। 'চোৰ বচা' বাহিনীৰ যোগে কৰা 'দগা যুদ্ধ' (এতিয়াৰ গৰিলা যুদ্ধৰ দৰে) আহোমৰ সামৰিক বাহিনীৰ এটা উন্নতমানৰ সমৰ কৌশল। বচা বচা সাহসী, দুৰ্ঘৰ অঘাইটং কাজুৱা সৈন্যৰে এই বাহিনী গঠন কৰা হৈছিল। এনে এক বলিষ্ঠ সামৰিক সংগঠনৰ বাবেই আহোম সেনাই মোগলক ১৭ বাৰকৈ পৰাস্ত কৰিব পাৰিছিল।

আহোমসকল স্ভাৱতেই কাজুৱা ৰণুৱা আছিল। দক্ষিণ চীনত বসবাস কৰা কালৰে পৰা তাইসকলে সঘনে সাম্ৰাজ্যবাদী চীনাৰসকলৰ আক্ৰমণৰ সন্মুখীন হ'ব লগ হৈছিল। চীনাৰসকলৰ হেঁচাত পিছত দক্ষিণলৈ প্ৰব্ৰজন কৰা কালছোৱাতো তেওঁলোকে সততে যুদ্ধ বিগ্ৰহত লিপ্ত হ'ব লগা হৈছিল। খৃঃ পূঃ দুহেজাৰৰ পৰা আৰম্ভ কৰি খ্ৰীঃ তেৰশ শতিকালৈকে তেওঁলোকৰ এই প্ৰব্ৰজন সম্ভৱত নদী উপত্যকাৰ সাৰুৱা অঞ্চলত বসতি কৰাৰ উদ্দেশ্যে।

ছু-কা-ফা নিজৰে এজন পাকৈতে দগা যুঁজাৰু আছিল। ১২১৫ খ্ৰীঃ পিতৃৰাজ্য পৰিত্যাগ কৰি প্ৰায় ১৩ বছৰ কাল পাটকাইৰ আশেপাশে পাহাৰীয়া অঞ্চলত ঘূৰি-পকি আহি ১২২৮ খ্ৰীঃত নামৰুপত প্ৰৱেশ কৰে। সেইদৰে, নামৰুপত পদাৰ্পণ কৰাৰ পৰা সুদীৰ্ঘ ২৫ বছৰ কাল দিহিং, দিবাং আৰু দিখৌ নদীৰ উপত্যকাৰ বিভিন্ন ঠাইত

অস্থায়ীভাৱে বসতি কৰি শেষত ১২৫৩ খ্ৰীঃত চৰাইদেউত ৰাজধানী পাতিছিল। ছু-কা-ফাৰ সৈন্য বাহিনীত ১০৮০ জনহে সৈন্য আছিল। এই সীমিত বাহিনীৰেই নিজৰ পৰাক্ৰম, সামৰিক কৌশল আৰু বিচক্ষণতাৰে 'ম্যুঙ-দ্যুন্-চুন্-খাম' প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছিল।

(৩)

'বু-ৰণ-জী' চৰ্চা তাইসকলৰ এক পুৰণি আৰু বলিষ্ঠ পৰম্পৰা। খৃঃ পূঃ প্ৰায় ২৫০০ বছৰৰ পৰাই তেওঁলোকৰ মাজত 'বু-ৰণ-জী' প্ৰণয়ন আৰু চৰ্চা সঞ্চালনিকৈ চলি আহিছিল। ছু-কা-ফায়ো অসমলৈ আহোতে লগত 'বু-ৰণ-জী' কে ধৰি অনেক পুথি লৈ আহিছিল। লগত অহা ম'লুঙ সকলক য'তে যি দেখে তাকে লিখি ৰাখিবলৈ নিৰ্দেশ দিছিল। ইয়াৰ পৰাই আহোম সকলৰ বুৰঞ্জী চৰ্চাৰ পৰম্পৰাৰ কথা অনুমান কৰিব পাৰি। তেওঁলোকে লগত অনা 'বু-ৰণ-জী' সমূহ হ'ল 'লাই-লিক' 'টু-কু-লাই', 'ৰু পুত', 'উ-কুট' ইত্যাদি। ইবিলাকৰ ভিতৰত 'লাই-লিক' বুৰঞ্জী হ'ল ৰাজনীতি সম্বন্ধীয় পুথি। ম্যুং-ৰি-ৰাম ৰাজ্য প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কালৰে পৰা আহোম শাসনৰ ধাৰাবাহিক আৰু বহুল বিৱৰণ ইয়াত উল্লেখ কৰা হৈছে। আহোমৰ বুৰঞ্জী চৰ্চাৰ সন্দৰ্ভত ড-লীলা গগৈয়ে কৈছে - 'আহোমসকলে বুৰঞ্জী চৰ্চা আৰু বুৰঞ্জী পঠন-পাঠন শিক্ষাৰ এটা অপৰিহাৰ্য্য অঙ্গ হিচাবে গ্ৰহণ কৰিছিল। বুৰঞ্জীৰ কাহিনীলৈ আঙুলিয়াই ৰাজনীতি আৰু নৈতিক শিক্ষা দিয়া হৈছিল। ৰাজকোঁৱৰ আৰু ড-ডাঙৰীয়াৰ সতি-সন্ততিক সৰুৰেপৰা কাহিনী কোৱাৰ কৌশলেৰে বুৰঞ্জীৰ শিক্ষা দিয়া হৈছিল। বংশানুক্ৰমিক ভাৱে তেওঁলোকে বিহেতু প্ৰশাসনিক দায়িত্ব গ্ৰহণ কৰিব লাগে, গতিকে বুৰঞ্জী চৰ্চাৰ যোগে তেওঁলোকক নিজৰ ঐতিহ্য, পৰম্পৰা, ধৰ্ম, দৰ্শন আদি সকলো শিক্ষা দিয়া হৈছিল। ৰাজ অভিষেক আৰু বিয়াত কোঁৱৰসকলক সাত পুৰুষৰ বুৰঞ্জী পঢ়ি শুনোৱা আহোমৰ এটা ধৰ্মীয় পৰম্পৰা আছিল।

উল্লেখযোগ্য যে আহোমসকলৰ বুৰঞ্জী তথ্যভিত্তিক বাস্তৱ ঘটনাৰ নিৰ্মোহ বিৱৰণ আৰু বিশ্লেষণ সম্ভূত। গতিকে বুৰঞ্জী অধ্যয়ণ আৰু চৰ্চাই তেওঁলোকক ঐতিহাসিক জ্ঞানেৰে সমৃদ্ধ কৰি যুক্তিবাদী আৰু সত্যনিষ্ঠ হ'বলৈ শিকাইছিল। তেওঁলোকৰ মাজত ধৰ্মনিৰপেক্ষ আৰু সহনশীল মনোভাৱ গঢ় দিয়াত বুৰঞ্জী অধ্যয়নে বিশেষ ভাৱে সহায় কৰিছিল। পুৰণি প্ৰজন্মৰ চিন্তা, কাম-কাজ, বিশ্বাস, নৈতিকতা আৰু জীৱনদৰ্শন আদি বিষয়ৰ জ্ঞান দিয়াৰ লগতে কালৰ বিবৰ্তনত ঘটা সমাজ তথা জাতীয় জীৱনৰ ক্ৰমবিকাশ, উত্থান-পতন আৰু সমসাময়িক বাস্তৱ পৰিস্থিতিৰ সম্পৰ্কে নিৰ্মোহ আৰু শুদ্ধ বিচাৰ কৰাত বিশেষভাৱে সহায় কৰিছিল। যথার্থতে, ঐতিহাসিক জ্ঞানে মানুহক যুক্তিবাদী আৰু দুৰদৃষ্টি সম্পন্ন কৰি যিকোনো পৰিস্থিতিৰ সন্মুখীন হ'বলৈ বুকুত সাহস যোগায়। এনে জ্ঞানবদ্ধক বিষয়ৰ চৰ্চাৰ পৰম্পৰা থকাৰ কাৰণেই আহোমসকলে বিচক্ষণতাৰে দেশ শাসন কৰিব পাৰিছিল আৰু প্ৰজাইতৈবী হোৱাৰ বাবে সকলোৰে বুকুৰ আপোন হ'ব পাৰিছিল। চাও লুঙ ছু কা ফাও তাৰ ব্যতিক্ৰম নাছিল। তেওঁৰ বুদ্ধিদীপ্ততাক বুৰঞ্জীৰ জ্ঞানে বৰং গভীৰতা প্ৰদান কৰি এখন নতুন

ৰাজ্যৰ সন্ধানত ব্ৰতী হ'বলৈ যেনেদৰে উদগনি দিছিল তেনেকৈ আত্মবিশ্বাসেৰে এখন সমৃদ্ধিশালী ৰাষ্ট্ৰ গঠনতো সহায় কৰিছিল।

(৪)

আহোমৰ শাসনতন্ত্ৰ, ৰাজতন্ত্ৰ আৰু অভিজাততন্ত্ৰৰ এক সুসংমিশ্ৰণ। থমাচ বেলছে ইয়াক 'ৰাজতান্ত্ৰিক অভিজাততন্ত্ৰ' (Monarchial Aristocracy) বুলি আখ্যা দিছে।^{১০} আহোমৰ ৰজা উত্তৰাধিকাৰ সূত্ৰে ৰাজপাটত বহে যদিও দেশ শাসনৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত তিনিজন ডাঙৰীয়া, বৰবৰুৱা আৰু বৰফুকনৰে গঠিত পাত্ৰ মন্ত্ৰী অৰ্থাৎ মন্ত্ৰী পৰিষদৰ সন্মতি আৰু পৰামৰ্শক্ৰমেহে শাসন চলাইছিল। লিখিত সংবিধান নাথাকিলেও 'সংবিধানিক ৰাজতন্ত্ৰ'ৰ এই পৰম্পৰা মিং-বানত শাসন কৰা কালৰে পৰা তেওঁলোকৰ মাজত প্ৰচলিত আছিল। আগতে উল্লেখ কৰা 'লাই লিক' বিধিৰ আধাৰতেই আহোমৰ শাসন পৰিচালিত হৈছিল। ৰজা আৰু ডা-ডাঙৰীয়া সকলোৱে নীতি নিষ্ঠতাৰে প্ৰশাসন চলোৱাত গুৰুত্ব আৰোপ কৰিছিল।

চাও-ফা ছু-কা-ফা-ই তেওঁৰ লগত চাও থাও লুঙ আৰু চাও ফ্ৰুং মুঙ এই দজনা ডাঙৰীয়া আৰু ম'লুঙ সকলক লগত আনিছিল আৰু অভিযান আৰু প্ৰশাসনৰ সকলো ক্ষেত্ৰতে তেওঁলোকৰ লগত আলোচনা কৰিহে পদক্ষেপ গ্ৰহণ কৰিছিল। উল্লেখযোগ্য যে তৃতীয়গৰাকী মন্ত্ৰী চাও-চেঙ-মুঙ চাও ফা চু-হুঙ মুঙৰ দিনতহে পত্ৰ হৈছিল।^{১০} নীতি নিষ্ঠতা আৰু প্ৰশাসনীয় দক্ষতা আহোম ৰাজতন্ত্ৰৰ দুটা অতি গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ দিশ। কথিত আছে যে খুন লুঙ খুন লাইক মিঙবানত ৰজা পাতি 'পু থাও' লেঙ দন আৰু আ-থাও জা-চাঙি-ফাই বহুমূল্য অনেক উপদেশৰ লগতে কিছুমান সনাতন শাসন নীতিও নিৰ্দ্ধাৰণ কৰি দি গৈছিল। এইবিলাকৰ কিছুমান হ'ল - কুকুৰাই পোৱালিক ডেউকাৰ তলত আৱৰি ৰখাৰ দৰে ৰজাইও প্ৰজাক নিৰাপত্তা দি ৰাখিব লাগে; বিচাৰ নকৰাকৈ কোনো দণ্ড বিহিব নেলাগে; দোষৰ অনুপাতেহে শাস্তি বিহিব লাগে; আৰু ৰজাৰ শক্তি বৃদ্ধিৰ বাবেই উপৰি পুৰুষক নিয়মিতভাৱে পূজা-পাতল কৰি স্মৰণ কৰিব লাগে। আহোম শাসনতন্ত্ৰত আদিৰে পৰাই এই নীতিসমূহ সততাৰে মানি আহিছিল আৰু সেইদৰে দক্ষ প্ৰশাসনৰ যোগে প্ৰজাকো নিৰাপত্তা দিব পাৰিছিল। এই নীতিসমূহৰ আধাৰতে পিছলৈ অনেক নতুন নীতিও গঢ় লৈ উঠিছিল।

সেইদৰে, উত্তৰাধিকাৰ ব্যৱস্থাৰ প্ৰচলন থাকিলেও আহোম শাসনতন্ত্ৰত যোগ্যতাক সদাই অগ্ৰাধিকাৰ দিয়া হৈছিল। ৰাজ্যৰ প্ৰশাসনীয় বিষয়া নিৰ্বাচনত যোগ্যতাক সদাই প্ৰাধান্য দিয়া হৈছিল। আনকি ৰজা নিৰ্বাচনৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো যোগ্য বিবেচিত কোঁৱৰজনকহে ৰজা পতা হৈছিল। প্ৰথমে যদিও সাতঘৰীয়া আহোমৰ মাজতহে ৰাজকীয় বিষয়বাব বিতৰণ কৰা হৈছিল, পিছলৈ খেলত তুলি লোৱা বিশ্বাসভাজন যোগ্যজনকো গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ বিষয়বাব দিয়া হৈছিল। এই পৰম্পৰা তেওঁলোকৰ মাজত অতীতৰে পৰা চলি আহিছিল আৰু ই আহোমৰ ৰাজনীতিৰ এক উন্নত সংস্কৃতি আছিল। এনে সংস্কৃতিৰ আধাৰতেই ছু কা ফাই এটা দক্ষ প্ৰশাসন প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰিব পাৰিছিল আৰু খিলঞ্জীয়া সৰু বৰ ৰজাসকলৰ এক কৰি বৰ অসমৰ ভেটি গঢ়িবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছিল।

(৫)

আহোমৰ ৰাজনীতিৰ সৈতে কূটনীতি জড়িত আছিল। সীমতি জনবল লৈ অহা যুৱৰাজজনে আহোম ৰাজ্য প্ৰতিষ্ঠা আৰু তাৰ বিস্তাৰত অতি সফলভাৱে কূটনীতি প্ৰয়োগ কৰিছিল। খিলঞ্জীয়া ৰজাসকলৰ লগত তেওঁ যুদ্ধতকৈ মিত্ৰতা স্থাপনৰ ওপৰতহে গুৰুত্ব আৰোপ কৰিছিল। ৰাজ্যজয়ৰ অভিযানত তেওঁ প্ৰয়োজন সাপেক্ষে কঠোৰ আৰু কোমল দুয়োটা নীতিয়েই গ্ৰহণ কৰিছিল। পাটকাইৰ দাতিকামৰীয়া নগাসকলৰ ওপৰত তেওঁ যেনে কঠোৰ নীতি পালন কৰিছিল তাৰ বিপৰীতে ভৈয়ামৰ ৰজাসকলৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত মিত্ৰতাৰ নীতি গ্ৰহণ কৰিছিল।^{১১} মৰাণ, বৰাহী, কছাৰী, চুতীয়া ৰজাসকলক 'থানগিৰি' মৰ্যদা দি তেওঁলোকৰ লগত কূটনৈতিক সম্বন্ধ স্থাপন কৰিছিল। ১২২৮ খ্ৰীঃত নামৰুপত ভৰি দিয়াৰে পৰা ১২৫৩ খ্ৰীঃলৈ চৰাইদেউত ৰাজধানী পতালৈকে ছু কাফাই দিহিং আৰু দিখৌ উপত্যকাৰ কেইবা ঠাইতো অস্থায়ীভাৱে বসতি স্থাপন কৰিছিল। সেই সময়ছোৱাত তেওঁ গোটেই অঞ্চলটোৰ জনবায়ু আৰু মাটি-পানীৰ পৰীক্ষা-নিৰীক্ষা কৰাৰ উপৰিও চোৰাংচোৱাৰ যোগে স্থানীয় ৰজাসকলৰ লগত কূটনৈতিক সম্পৰ্ক স্থাপন কৰিছিল। ঢেকীয়াল ফুকনৰ মতে মৰাণৰ চাৰিগৰাকী জীয়ৰী বিয়া কৰাই কুঁৱৰী পাতিছিল।^{১২} ছু কা ফাই দেখুৱাই যোৱা নীতিৰে পিছলৈ আহোমে দাতিকামৰীয়া ৰাজ্যসমূহৰ সৈতে কূটনৈতিক সম্বন্ধ স্থাপন কৰি ৰাজ্য বিস্তাৰ কৰিছিল। আনকি যুদ্ধৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো, শত্ৰু পক্ষক প্ৰতারণা কৰাৰ কৌশল হিচাবে কটকীৰ যোগে বাৰ্তালাপ আদি নীতি সফলভাৱে প্ৰয়োগ কৰিছিল। আহোমৰ কূটনীতিত দক্ষ চোৰাংচোৱাৰ ভূমিকা এটা উল্লেখনীয় দিশ।

(৬)

আহোমসকলৰ জাতীয় চৰিত্ৰ গঠনত তাওবাদ, কনফুচিয়ান মতবাদ আৰু বৌদ্ধ ধৰ্ম বিশেষ প্ৰভাৱ পৰিছে। এই তিনিটা মতবাদৰ মূল অৱধাৰণা কিছুমানৰ সংমিশ্ৰণ ঘটাই আহোমসকলে নিজৰ সমাজনীতি, ৰাজনীতি আৰু জীৱন দৰ্শন গঢ় দি লৈছে। আদিতে আহোমসকল তাওবাদী আছিল।^{১৩} ইয়াৰ পৰা তেওঁলোকে গ্ৰহণ কৰা অৱধাৰণাসমূহ হ'ল - মানুহ আৰু প্ৰকৃতিৰ মাজত নিবিড় সম্বন্ধ আছে, কালৰ গতি বিৱৰ্ত্তমান আৰু ইয়াৰ জাগতিক ছন্দ আৰু প্ৰত্যগমন নীতি আছে, উপৰিপুৰুষৰ অৱস্থিতি আছে আৰু তেওঁলোকক স্মৰণ কৰি পূজা পাতল কৰা মানুহৰ পৰম ধৰ্ম, শাসক সকল ঐশ্বৰিক প্ৰকৃতিৰ আৰত স্বৰ্গৰ অৱস্থিতি আছে।^{১৪} এই মতবাদৰ আধাৰতে আহোমসকলে তেওঁলোকৰ উপৰিপুৰুষক নিয়মিতভাৱে স্মৰণ-তৰ্পণ কৰি আহিছে, প্ৰকৃতিৰ অনুকূলে কৃষিজীৱি জীৱন পদ্ধতি বাছি লৈছে, কাল চেতনাৰে সকলো কথা সময়সাপেক্ষ বুলি পৰিৱৰ্ত্তনক সহজে গ্ৰহণ কৰিছে আৰু ধাৰাবাহিকভাৱে বুৰঞ্জী চৰ্চা কৰি আহিছে, ৰজাক সৰগীয় মৰ্যদাৰে 'চাও ফা' বুলি তেওঁৰ প্ৰতি অনুগত্য প্ৰকাশ কৰি আহিছে।

সেইদৰে বৌদ্ধ ধৰ্মৰ অষ্টমৰ্গ অৱধাৰাৰ আধাৰত তেওঁলোকে উদাৰ আৰু সততাৰ্ণ জীৱনচৰ্যা গঢ়ি লৈছে। এই অষ্টমৰ্গ হ'ল - সৎ দৃষ্টিভঙ্গী, সৎ অভিপ্ৰায়,

সদালাপ, সংকৰ্ম, সংজীৱিকা, সংপ্ৰচেষ্টা, সুচেতনা আৰু সং মনোনিবেশ।^{১৫} একেদৰে, কনফুচিয়ান মতবাদৰ আধাৰত তেওঁলোকে মানবীয় নৈতিক মূল্যবোধৰ বিকাশ ঘটাইছে। প্ৰশাসনত দাৰ্শনিক ৰজাৰ (Sagely King) গুৰুত্ব আৰু মন্ত্ৰণাৰ যোগে দেশৰ শাসন চলোৱা আদি অৱধাৰণা কনফুচিয়ান মতবাদৰ আধাৰতে আহোম ৰাজতন্ত্ৰত বিকাশ ঘটাইছে।^{১৬} ডা-ডাঙৰীয়াৰ সমন্বিতে মন্ত্ৰী পৰিষদৰ পৰামৰ্শ মতে শাসন চলোৱা নীতি সম্ভৱত এই মতবাদৰ আধাৰতে গঢ় লৈ উঠিছিল।

এই মতবাদ কেইটাৰ সনাতন প্ৰমূল্যসমূহে সামগ্ৰিকভাৱে গোটেই তাই জাতিটোকে প্ৰভাৱান্বিত কৰি আহিছে। আজি তেওঁলোকৰ বহুলাংশে বৌদ্ধ ধৰ্মত দীক্ষিত হলেও তাওবাদ আৰু কনফুচিয়ান মতবাদৰ অনেক বিশ্বাস তেওঁলোকৰ মাজত জীয়াই ৰাখিছে। উপৰিপুৰুষৰ বিশ্বাস, ৰাজতন্ত্ৰত বিশ্বাস, প্ৰকৃতিৰ অনুকূলে সহজ-সৰল সততাৰ্পূৰ্ণ জীৱন যাপন, কালৰ বিৰুদ্ধে লগত খাপ খাব পৰা গুণ, উন্নত নৈতিকতা আৰু গুণগ্ৰাহিতা আদি গুণসমূহ একালত আহোমৰ চাৰিত্ৰিক বৈশিষ্ট্য আছিল। এই গুণসমূহ থকাৰ কাৰণেই তাইসকল সম্ভৱত বিশ্বৰ ভিতৰতে শান্তিপ্ৰিয় জাতি হিচাবে সকলোৰে আদৰৰ পাত্ৰ হ'ব পাৰিছে। চাও ফা ছু কা ফাও এই সভ্যতা আৰু সংস্কৃতিৰেই সম্ভৱ। আমাৰ সকলোৰে মনস্য পু-লিন, পু-মন্।

সহায়ক গ্ৰন্থপঞ্জী

- ১। Tai Ahom System of Government - A. C. Sarma. p-72
- ২। উপৰোক্ত পুথি পৃ- ৭৩
- ৩। জাতীয় বীৰ লাচিত বৰফুকন, নগেন কুমাৰ বৰুৱা পৃ- ৭৩
- ৪। সংস্কৃতিক অধ্যয়ন, লীলা গগৈ পৃ- ১৪
- ৫। উপৰোক্ত পুথি পৃ- ১৪
- ৬। উপৰোক্ত পুথি পৃ- ১৪
- ৭। উপৰোক্ত পুথি পৃ- ৪
- ৮। উপৰোক্ত পুথি পৃ- ১১৩
- ৯। An account of Assam - Thomas Welsh. - 377
- ১০। Tai Ahom System of Government - A.C. Sarma. -35
- ১১। History of Assam, Gait. - 80
- ১২। অসম বুৰঞ্জী (বেঙলা ২য় সংস্কৰণ), ডেকীয়াল ফুকন, পৃ- ২৯
- ১৩। সংস্কৃতি অধ্যয়ন, লীলা গগৈ, পৃ- ৪৩
- ১৪। Encyclopaedia Britannica p-28:394:16.1
- ১৫। Ibid. p-28:394:16.1
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SUKAPHA: FOUNDER AND STATESMAN

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Assam is a land steeped in mythology and history. It is a land known throughout the country and worldwide for many features which are unique to it alone. Amongst these are the various tribes residing in the state, its cuisine, its music and culture, its beautiful silk, fragrant tea, the one horned rhino, ancient and medieval architectural relics and last but not the least the strong yet simple Neo-Vaishnavite religion and its institutions which binds the diverse elements of the people of Assam into a single unified body known as the Assamese. Assam in the present is the most developed and progressive state in the North-East. It is from Assam that most of its other sister states have seceded and acquired the status of separate independent states. So naturally Assam not only has a rich history but also a cultural heritage which is the product of a long process of intermingling of various castes and tribes with different cultural beliefs and practices. However it must be remembered and has been proven through various happenings in history throughout the world, that a developed or composite culture is impossible without a proper state or a strong and stable government. Many great dynasties had ruled over Assam or in different parts of it throughout history. Mention worthy are the Varmanas, Salasthambas and Palas who ruled over Assam in the ancient period, the Chutiyas, Marans, Barahis, Koches, Kacharis, Bhuyans and Jayantias who had their own areas of control and have all contributed to the genesis of Assam as a state and the Assamese as a people and a composite culture. However in consideration of any aspect of the history of Assam it has always been the Ahom Empire which has dominated the scene. In fact it can be said that after the rule of the Varmana and Pala Empire in the ancient age the Ahoms were the only dynasty which could form an empire while all the other dynasties were limited within kingdoms. Ruling for around six hundred years the Ahoms or the Tai-shans were not

only the longest ruling but also the strongest dynasty in Assam. An empire boasting of many great kings, the Ahoms were rulers whose policies initiated and helped in the process of state formation in Assam. The assimilation which was brought about amongst the local tribal population led to formation of not only the culture of Assam but also the formation of greater Assamese society. However the major credit of the formation of the Ahom state and Assamese society goes to the founder king of the Ahom dynasty Chau-Lung Sukapha. It was Sukapha who had envisaged the formation of an Ahom empire in the Brahmaputra Valley and him who laid the foundation not only of an empire but also of a great state of the future. This paper is an attempt to study and illuminate the contributions of this great monarch as not only founder of the great Ahom kingdom but also as an able statesman, shrewd politician, warrior, social worker, experienced cultivator and above all one of the most competent leaders of the Assamese people.

I
Sukapha was the son of Chao Chang Ngeo who belonged to the royal family of Mong Ri Mong Ram. His mother Nang Mong Blok Kham Seng was a princess of the Mong Mao royal lineage. It is estimated that Sukapha was born around 1189 AD. Sukapha had been brought up in his mother's kingdom by his grandparents. Sukapha's maternal uncle Pameopong was the ruler of Mong Mao. Since Pameopong had no male issue, Sukapha had been nominated to the throne of Mong Mao kingdom. However after nineteen years Pameopong was blessed with a son named Sukhanpha who automatically replaced Sukapha as nominee to the throne of Mong Mao. This development had brought great disappointment to Sukapha, and he decided to leave his country to found a new state. Accordingly he left Chieng-Sen the capital of Mong Mao in the year 1215 AD with some 9000 people including a number of officials 300 horses and two elephants. He carried with him the idol of tutelary deity called Chum Pha Rung Seng Mong also known as Som-Deo with two families of priests to perform religious functions. (Padmeshwar Gogoi, 1968)

According to Ahom traditional belief, Sukapha was a de-

scendant of the god Khunlung, who had come down from the heavens and had ruled Mong-Ri-Mong-Ram. During the reign of Suhungmung, which saw the composition of the first Assamese chronicles and an increased of Hindu influence, Sukapha's origin was traced to the union of god Indra (identified with Khunlung) and Syama (a low-caste woman), and he was declared the progenitor of the Indravamsa kshatriyas, a lineage created for the Ahoms by the Hindu Brahmins.

Sukapha left Mong Mao in 1215 AD. He was accompanied by three queens, two sons and a daughter, five other dependent Mong chiefs, priests and soldiers; a total of 9000 followers in all. Sukapha also had with him 300 horses fitted with saddles and bridles and two elephants. It is said that he brought arms and weapons along with him which however were transported along a different route. Sukapha followed an older known route from Yunnan to Assam that passed through Myitkyina, Mogaung and the upper Irrawaddy river valley. On his way he stopped at various places and crossed the Khamjang river to reach the Nangyang lake in 1227 AD. Here he subjugated the Nagas very ferociously and established his control. He left an officer in charge and proceeded to cross the Patkai hills at the Pangsau pass and reached Namrup (in the Brahmaputra valley) in December 1228 AD. The journey, from Mong Mao to Namrup thus took Sukapha about thirteen years and the year he reached Namrup is considered as the year the Ahom kingdom was established (Padmeshwar Gogoi, 1968). The route which was taken by Sukapha from Mong Mao to Patkai to communicate with his home land was used regularly in the Ahom period and after. In the second World War this route was named after the name of General Joseph W. Stilwell as the Stilwell Road. (See map, page No. 71)

II
Sukapha had been accepted by the Tai-Shans as their leader and king. He had come to the Brahmaputra valley with the specific objective of carving out a kingdom for himself. Not only did he establish a kingdom but also laid the foundation of the state of Assam. Sukapha being a shrewd politician and able diplomat used

many methods which helped him to achieve his aim of subjugating the local people and establish himself as their ruler. However Sukapha's policy towards the indigenous people of the Brahmaputra Valley was largely conciliatory. It is seen that Sukapha did not have to battle any established kingdom to assert his right over the area he occupied. He very shrewdly avoided regions which were densely populated. He occupied a depopulated region on the south bank with the Burhidihing river in the north, the Dikhau river in the south and the Patkai mountains in the east. For years the community went on moving from place to place as a self-governed body of armed peasants in search of a suitable site. In course of their journey they left behind some small colonies at strategic places like Khamjang and Tipam. But after their temporary experimental stays at several sites, the main body finally settled by 1253 in the fertile Dikhau valley, now forming the Sibsagar district. Sukapha chose this tract primarily because he found the hill streams there extremely rich with silt. Its proximity to the Naga Hills Range forming a natural rampart was another decisive factor. This facilitated not only defence and gravitational irrigation but also raids for slaves into those hills. Easy access to sites of salt-wells and iron ores was yet another advantage of the locality. The first Ahom capital was established on a low hillock, Charaideo, though abandoned in 1397 for a new capital at Chargua and later at Garhgaon in the mid-16th century, Charaideo remained a sacred place for the Ahoms till the end of their regime. (Amalendu Guha, 1983). The capital of the Ahom kingdom changed many times after this, but Charaideo remained the symbolic center of Ahom rule. The Ahoms continued to perform their religious rites and ceremonies in the new land of their adoption i.e. at Charaideo. In course of time Charaideo became the sanctorum sanctorium of the Ahom culture (J.N. Phukan, 1982).

III

The importance of Sukapha in the history of Assam is not limited to the founding of the Ahom Empire alone. The emperor Babur too founded one of the most powerful empires of the world, however he could not contribute any way to the the creation of

the Mughal state or a composite culture. If it had not been for his capable descendants the Mughal state would not have become a reality. Sukapha on the other hand came to Assam, established and organised his people into a kingdom and laid the foundation of such social and economic systems which later came to form not only the Ahom state but also a composite Assamese society.

Sukapha accomplished many feats during his reign of forty years. One of his most important achievements was gaining acceptance for himself and his followers from the indigenous people. Sukapha was a statesman in the true sense of the term. Moreover he was a benevolent ruler. He came to Assam with utmost respect in his heart for the local people. All he asked was simple acceptance of his rule as leader of a more powerful and organised race. He followed a conciliatory policy which met with success in most cases. In random cases however he was compelled to apply force like in case of the Nagas. Sukapha was always in favour of peaceful agreements and used force only as a last resort. He extended peace proposals to all the tribes he came across when he entered the Brahmaputra Valley. When his proposals were accepted he allowed the people to continue with their traditional systems, beliefs and practices at the price of a nominal tribute. But Sukapha realised that simple acceptance of his superiority would not secure the Ahoms a firm foothold here. So as a measure of mingling with the tribes in order to be accepted not only as their ruler but as a part of themselves, he started the system of inter-marriage amongst the Ahoms and the indigenous tribes. The people that took to the Ahom way of life and polity were incorporated into their fold through the process of Ahomization. As a result of this process the Barahi people, for instance, were completely subdued, and some of other groups like some Nagas and the Maran peoples became members. This process of Ahomization was particularly significant till the 16th century, when under Suhungmung, the kingdom made large territorial expansions at the cost of the Chutiya and the Kachari kingdoms. (Jahnabi Gogoi, 2002) The form of government that Sukapha introduced in the new State was monarchy but was qualified by a hereditary aristocracy. The royal family was called the Chaopha. His two chief counsellors, Burhagohain

(Chao'Frongmung) and Bargohain (Chao-Thaomung), were then chosen by him from two customarily important clans. Along with these three main families there were three lineages of priests, namely, Bailung, Deodhai and Mohan. All these lineages together with four more Dihingiya, Sandiqui, Lahan and Duara constituted the Ahom nobility since Sukapha's times. Office was linked to lineage. Members of the relevant lineages alone could be admitted to the royal or other important offices reserved for them, subject to the approval of the chief counsellors. Normal succession followed the father-to-son principle, but the choice could fall on any other qualified lineage member as well. Thus, partly hereditary and partly elected, the king and his two chief counsellors together constituted the highest executive. They were supposed to hold each other in check and balance. Thus they managed a type of military democracy, in which the elders of other respectable and free commoners' lineages had also a chance to take part. This simple constitution continued to be in existence well until the end of the 14th century. The chief counsellors elected a new king, and they themselves were in turn confirmed or newly nominated by the latter with support from the other nobles. Property rights in agricultural and waste lands were vested in the collective, i.e., the clans. The king was thus initially a tribal chief. He shared leadership with his two great counsellors and, to a lesser extent, also with the heads of the four privileged lineages. Traditionally, they together represented the seven notable houses (satghar) (Amalendu Guha, 1983). From this description forwarded by Guha we can see that Sukapha had a clear and well managed administrative system. The system was more commendable for the way in which it acted as a check and balance for both the king and his ministers. Moreover by giving the elders of the commoners a chance to take part in the official meetings and a chance to air their views kept all sections content. Sukapha's able leadership was reflected clearly through this modern yet traditional form of administration.

IV

An important factor in the process of Ahomization was the

introduction of wet-rice cultivation in Brahmaputra Valley. The Ahoms brought with them the technology of wet rice cultivation that they shared with other groups. The people that took to the Ahom way of life and polity were incorporated into their fold in a process of Ahomization. (Amalendu Guha, 1983). With the help of local recruits, Sukapha established large farms for Sali rice cultivation called Barakhowakhat, Engerakhat and Gachikalakhat (Jahnabi Gogoi, 2002). The Ahoms appear to have carried on their rice cultivation from the very outset apparently on an individual household basis, with a larger measure of mutual cooperation. Probably, there were also some community plots worked collectively by all, as one found in 19th century Khamti villages. In any case, the over-all land control remained vested in the clans. Since the king represented the totality of the clans, in due course this control passed into his hands. Tai mythology says that the founding fathers of the Tai rule on earth "made villages in a valley near a hill" and divided the lands between their subjects and returned to the capital. Historical data suggest that, during the Ahom rule, collectively reclaimed wet rice lands used to be divided into family-sized plots and distributed for usufruct among individual households. This distribution was made according to the number of adult males in each such household and was subject to a redistribution after their deaths or superannuation. Any other category of land, when reclaimed by private efforts for permanent cultivation, and homestead land in general, remained obligation-free private property, subject to a degree of clan control. (Amalendu Guha, 1983) These legends and myths hint at the superiority of the plough-using Tai agriculturists over their non-Tai neighbours who practised jhum (slash-and-burn). Their own ancestors, the Ahom chroniclers believed, were sent down from Heaven so that "large fields lying fallow" could be brought under the plough and stateless people, locked in constant warfares in the hills and plains, could be brought under a stable rule. The Ahoms thus believed that they were divinely ordained, firstly, to extend their permanent wet rice culture to areas dominated by large-scale fallowing and shifting cultivation and, secondly, to absorb stateless shifting cultivators into a common polity with themselves. These two aspects of the

Ahom thrust in Upper Assam determined, by and large, the course of the medieval state-formation process there. (Amalendu Guha, 1983). The introduction of the Sali Kheti agricultural system was possibly the greatest role the Ahoms played in the social formation of the state which gave a distant character to the the society that still specializes it from any other society of the north-eastern region of the country. Creation of a uniform economy for a greater part of the sciety is always a precondition to the formation oa a lasting nationality in any part of the world. (D. Nath, 2005)

V

A kingdom which is based on agriculture as its main financial source of revenue, no doubt has to be well organised. The land under cultivation as well as the cultivators have to be kept account of or else their might be a lapse in revenue collection which in turn might cause the King's power to be undermined. Sukapha had brought with him the knowledge of wet-rice cultivation which he spread amongst the local tribes and increased the production of agricultural crops fourfold. He had also brought with him fighting men to serve as soldiers if the need arose. However as his kingdom gradually grew and as more tribes came under his control, a need for a better system of control was felt. Sukapha devised such a system which proved to be most fruitful. He organised the male population of the state under such a system that cultivators for the fields, soldiers in time of war and a stable and consistent system of revenue all were made possible. This system was the Paik system. Though this system was given its full and organised form during the reign of Pratap Singha by his able minister Momai Tamuli Barbaruah, however it is undeniable that the base was laid by Sukapha himself. Sukapha introduced a system of exacting personal service from the members of the tribal communities, who were to serve the ruling tribe. (S.L.Baruah, 2003) The Ahom kingdom was based on the Paik system, a type of corvee labor that is neither feudal nor Asiatic. The Ahoms introduced wet rice cultivation in upper Assam that was largely a marshy and thinly populated land. With a superior technology of rice cultivation, as well as reclamation of land using dykes, embankments and irrigation

systems, the Ahoms established the initial state structures. (Amalendu Guha, 1983)The paik system also caused the administrative structure of the kingdom to become more organised as more posts of officers to supervise the groups of paiks or bondsmen were created.

VI

Sukapha laid the foundation of the state of Assam, he also made sure that the history of his great kingdom remained alive forever through the medium of the Ahom chronicles called Buranjis. Sukapha had brought with him a few chroniclers and instructed them to keep an account of all the events which took place during his reign. Thus started the tradition of Buranji writing, upon which much of what is known about medieval Assam history is based. The buranjis illustrate the political, social, diplomatic, economic and religious conditions and events of the Ahom period. This tradition started by the Ahoms spread to the neighbouring states and led to the enriching of the history of the region.

It can be concluded that Sukapha was not only the founder of the Ahom kingdom he was also a statesman par excellence. With his ingenuity and his vision he not only established a kingdom for his followers he also laid down such sytems which were to be the makings of the great Ahom state and which would rule of the Brahmaputra Valley for a full six centuries. He laid the foundation of not only a state, he also contributed to formation of a culture, of an identity by bringing about the process of Ahomisation. Sukapha was prepared to risk the integrity of the Ahom identity to form a greater Assamese society. And it was not only his social activities like intermarriage which made this possible, this feat was achieved also by a well planned economy based on wet-rice cultivation and the Paik system. Another system which enabled more peaceful relation with the hill-tribes and related with the paik system is the system of posa. Granting of the facility of posa to hill tribes which included service of paiks and use of farms and fisheries made these tribes more amenable to their valley overlords. Whenever the subject of state-formation is dis-

cussed it is found by analyzing various significant states that there are certain prerequisites or conditions necessary for a state to be formed. Some of these conditions are : a certain geographical area with favorable conditions for settlement and expansion, an indigenous egalitarian society, a stable and productive mode of sustenance, surplus production favoring not only development of other trades but also different strata of society, a strongly centralized, hierarchical government and last but not the least charismatic and powerful leaders. When the Tais entered the Brahmaputra Valley all these conditions were in their favor.(Amalendu Guha, 1983) Sukapha being such a leader was well able to exploit all these other available conditions to the fullest and in the process laid the foundation of the Ahom state.

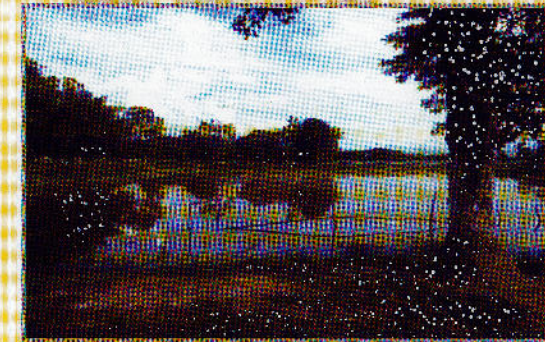
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HISTORICAL MONUMENTS OF CHARAIDEO SUB-DIVISION

BORHAT

i) **Nahor Pukhuri**- This pond is situated in the Nahor Pukhuri village of Borhat at the side of the historic Nahor-Ali. It measures 78 meters from East to West and 71 meters from North to South. It is said that the Ahom king Sukhapha (1552-1603) had a step child named Nahor who dug this pond and a road was built from Gargaon to Jaipur. It is said that some officials being jealous, conspired and killed him. The pond and the road are known as Nahor Pukhuri and Nahor Ali thereafter. There are also some folk songs (Nahor Geet) which are based on this legendary personality.



Nahor Pukhuri, Borhat

ii) **Maidams of Borhat**- Three maidams are seen in the Chaurak Chuk of Nahor Pukhuri village near Nahor Pukhuri of which only two are distinct while the third in the middle has been inundated.



Maidams, Chaurak Chuk, Borhat

iii) **Neog Phukan Pukhuri**- This pond measures 52 meters from East to West and 52 meters from North to South. It is located on the side of Dhodar Ali near the Borhat Tea Factory.



Neog Phukan Pukhuri, Borhat

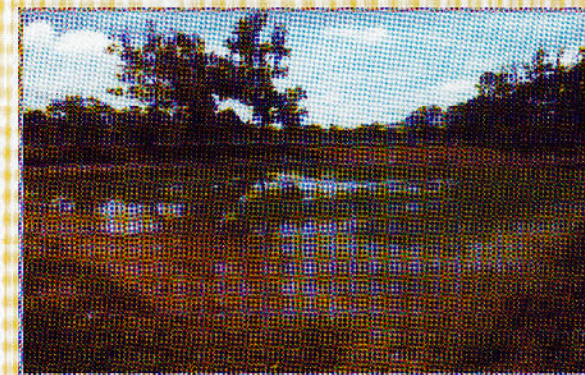
BORPATRA

i) **Siyalgarh**- This is a rampart measuring 4 kms in length approximately. This rampart connects Lahdoigarh with the Disang river. It passes through the Borpatra Tea Estate, the Hilloni Naga Village and the Uttar Sumdar village. This rampart is in a rapidly decaying condition and immediate measures should be taken to preserve its remains which are now limited only to the Borpatra Tea Estate.



Siyal Garh, Borpatra

i) **Konseng Borpatra Gohain Pukhuri**- It measures 30.48 meters from North to South and 28.52 meters from East to West. It is located within the Borpatra Tea Estate which belongs to the Goodrick Tea Company presently but formerly was owned by Stuart Hall India Tea Company. In 1981 when Kamal Singh was the General manager of the company, he had undertaken a general clearing of the area around the pond. It was during this clearing up that a copper plate inscription was unearthed about which no information is available since it was lost in the ensuing years. It is believed that the pond was dug by first Borpatra Gohain Konseng during the reign of king Suhungmung Dihingiya Raja (1497-1539AD).



Borpatra Pukhuri, Borpatra

ii) **Xukan Pukhuri**- This pond is also located within the Borpatra Tea Estate. It measures 30 meters from East to West and 46 meters from North to South. There is no water in this pond and hence its name is Xukan which means dry.



Xukan Pukhuri, Borpatra

iii) **Rani Pukhuri**- It is also known as the Raja Pukhuri and is situated on the eastern side of the factory of the Borpatra Tea- Estate. The pond is now dry and overgrown with weeds and trees.



Rani Pukhuri, Borpatra

BARUA NAGAR

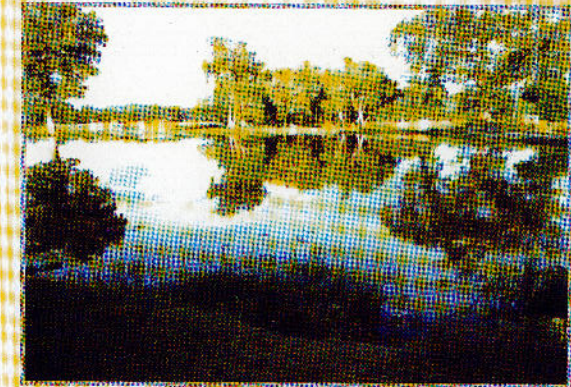
i) **Maidam at Raidang**- This burial place now lies within the private property of one Nippu Thapa. The place now lies under tea cultivation. There is also a pond seen near this maidam. History tells us that this maidam is named after an important official of the Ahom Kingdom named Raidang Baruah. It is located near Muktabari Tea Garden Factory, Barua Nagar.



Raidang Baruah Maidam, Barua Nagar

BANTUNG

i) **Bailung Pukhuri**- This pond measures 50 meters from East to West and 56 meters from North to South. It is located in the Bailungbari village of Bantung area located in Nimaigarh Habigaon. It is believed that the Bailungs were established in this area during the reign of Sukapha (1228-1268 AD). There is also the Bailung Maidam located near it.



Bailung Pukhuri, Bantung

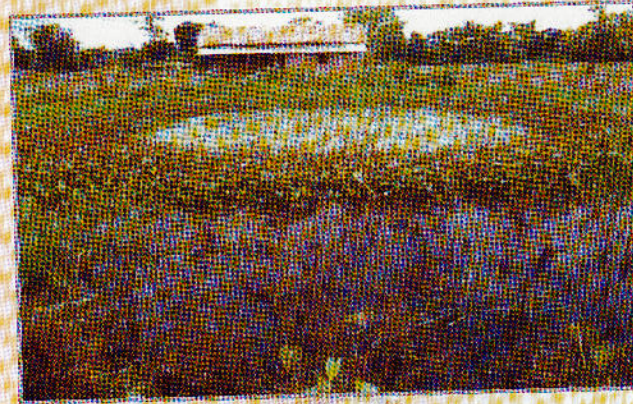
ii) **Bailung Maidam**- It is located at Garchuk Habigaon, Bantung. A family of the priestly class of the Ahom community, the Bailung's were settled in this area. The presence of the maidam testifies to this fact.



Bailung Maidam, Bantung

BHOJU

i) **Bhoju Pukhuri**- This pond measures 23 meters from East to West and 23 meters from North to South. This pond was dug by an Ahom officer known as Bhoju Chetia Phukan. This pond is located near the Bhoju Railway Station by the Nahor-Ali.



The Bhoju Pukhuri, Bhoju

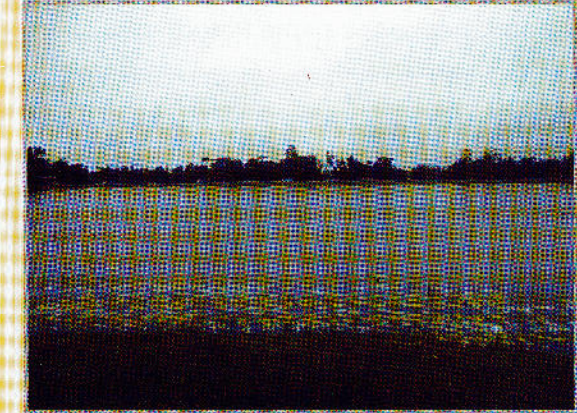
ii) **Bhoju Maidam**- This maidam is located at the back of the Tiok Padumoni L.P.School, Bhoju Bongali Gaon, near the railway line. The condition of the maidam is deplorable. No attempt has been taken for the preservation of the the maidam.



Bhoju Maidam, Bhoju

CHARAIDEO

i) **Sa-dhuwa Pukhuri**- This pond measures 167 meters from East to West and 220 meters from North to South. This big pond is located at Sukapha nagar near Dhodar Ali.



Sa-dhuwa Pukhuri, Charaideo

ii) **Charaideo Maidams**- Apart from being the one time capital of the Ahom kingdom, Charaideo is also the main location of the burial sites of the Ahom kings and their families. This historical location is now maintained by the Central and the State Government. It is a major tourist attraction in the Sivasagar district.



Charaideo Maidams, Sukafa Nagar

DHUPABOR

iii) **Petudhuwa Pukhuri-** This pond measures 290 feet from East to West and 280 feet from North to South. It is also called the Chiring Pukhuri. It is located near the Charaideo maidam area, Sukafa nagar. Petudhuwa which literally translates into washing of the internal organs of the belly. There is a legend that an officer ordained with divine powers had extracted his intestines and washed them at this pond, hence the name Petudhuwa.



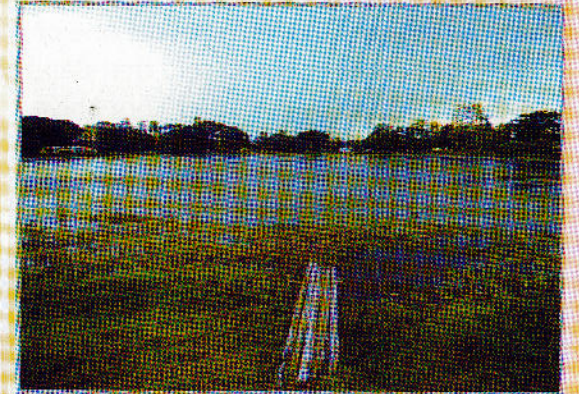
Petudhuwa Pukhuri, Charaideo

iv) **Putra Pukhuri-** There is a legend behind the name of the pond. According to the legend the pond was used by the people to bath after carrying out burial ceremonies. The condition of the pond is not good at present.



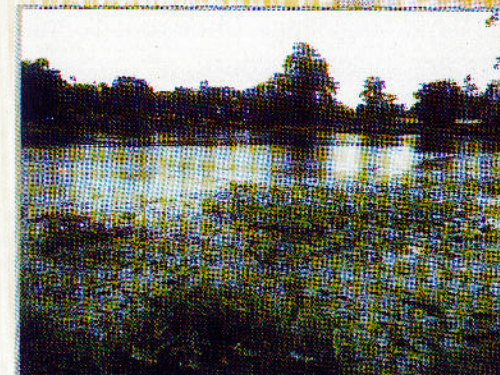
Putra Pukhuri, Charaideo

i) **Rohdoi Pukhuri-** This pond measures 236 meters from East to West and 120 meters from North to South. It is popularly believed that when Gadadhar Singha (1681-1696 AD) was in exile he was saved by three women from the imprisonment of the 'chaodangs' of Laluk Sula Barphukan during the reign of Sulikapha Lora Raja (1679-1681 AD). When he succeeded in becoming king, Gadadhar Singha showed his gratitude towards these women by issuing land grants to them and also having ponds dug to commemorate them. One of these women was named Rohdoi and the Rohdoi pond had been dug in her name.



The Rohdoi Pukhuri, Dhupabor

i) **Chetia Pukhuri-** This pond measures 90 meters from East to West and 180 meters from North to South. This pond is also known as the Chetia Phukanor Pukhuri. Chetia Phukan later was given the title of Borphukan. He belonged to the Lam-Laharu Chetia family. (Source: Hem Buragohain). Another view regarding the pond is that it was dug by one Piksai Chetia Phukan who was related to the Holou Phukan friend of Gadadhar Singha. There



The Chetia Pukhuri, Dhupabor

is also a road named after the Holou Phukan in the area. The pond is located near the Nimaigarh primary school near the Rohdoi Ali.

ii) **Bauli Pukhuri**- This pond measures 60 meters from East to West and 76 meters from North to South. This pond is located near the Bantung Panchayat office and the Bantung Primary School. It is believed that Bauli was the elder sister of Gadadhar Singha and was also known as Bamuni. She was the wife of Bandar Barphukan and her maidam or burial place is located in Guwahati (Source : Hem Buragohain) and is known as Bamunimaidam (view of Bhuban Chandra Handique). Bauli Pukhuri was dug to commemorate her. There are many another myths related to the character of Bauli. According to local beliefs she was one of the first Bihu dancers in the Ahom period. It is also said that Bauli alias Rongili was one of the daughters of Lang- Kuri or Lord Shiva.



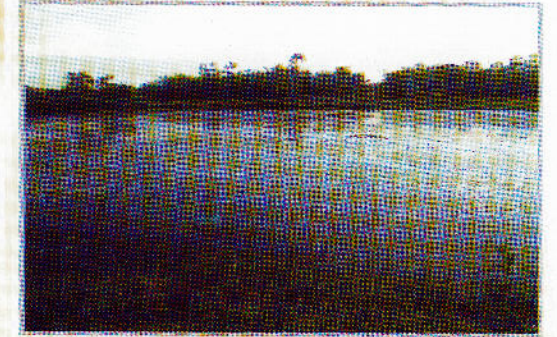
The Bauli Pukhuri, Dhupabor

iii) **Gela Pukhuri**- This pond measures 37 meters from East to West and 37 meters from North to South. It is located near the Kuta Borphukan Maidam in Adabari Handique Village, Dhupabor. So this pond is also known as the Kuta Borphukan Pukhuri.



The Gela Pukhuri, Dhupabor

iv) **Bor Pukhuri**- This pond measures 44 meters from East to West and 52 meters from North to South. The Bor Pukhuri is located in Adabari Handique Village near the Phukan Ali in Dhupabor.



The Bor Pukhuri, Dhupabor

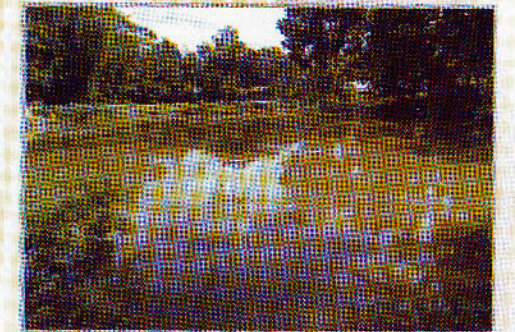
v) **Petudhuwa Pukhuri**- This pond measures 23 meters from East to West and 23 meters from North to South. The name Petudhuwa has been derived from the Petuwa Gohain, an officer of the Ahom



period and whose maidam is also located near the pond. There is also another Petudhuwa Pukhuri at Charaideo. The pond is presently in an extremely neglected condition and is overgrown with weeds.

The Petudhuwa Pukhuri, Dhupabor

vi) **Gogoi - Rajkhowa Pukhuri**- This pond measures 22 meters from East to West and 22 meters from North to South. This pond too is located in the Adabari Handique village and is also known as Bor Pukhuri. The Gogoi-Rajkhowa maidam is located near this pond. The pond is in a neglected condition.



Gogoi- Rajkhowa Pukhuri, Dhupabor



Bamun Pukhuri, Dhupabor

vii) Bamun Pukhuri- This pond measures 73 meters from East to West and 50 meters from North to South. It is located near the stone bridge constructed by King Gadadhar Singha (1681-1696 AD) at Rohdoi Ali and also near the Dhodar Ali.

viii) Veseli Pukhuri- Located near Bauli Pukhuri. There is a legend regarding the name of Veseli. According to it, Veseli was the sister of Bauli. Both were famous for performers of the Bihu dance in ancient times. Veseli was also known as 'Pomili'. However this historic pond is now under in a neglected condition.



Veseli Pukhuri, Dhupabor

ix) Harputa Moidam- The Harputa Moidam is located at Dhupabor Lahan gaon. There is an interesting myth regarding the moidam. Local people say that this is the moidam where the 'Har' i.e. bones of five brothers who died fighting the foreigners during the time of Mirjumillah's invasion were buried.

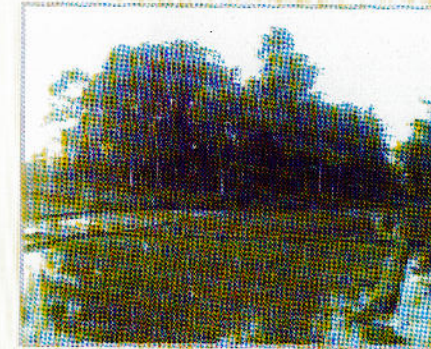


Harputa Moidam, Dhupabor

x) Konwari Maidam- This small but beautiful maidam is located at Lahon gaon, Dhupabor. Near the maidam there is a historic pond named Konwari Pukhuri which is gradually disappearing.



Konwari Moidam, Dhupabor



Gogoi - Rajkhowa Maidam, Dhupabor

xi) Gogoi - Rajkhowa Maidam- This big maidam is located at Adabari village, Dhupabor. No steps are being taken for the preservation of the maidam.

xii) Maidams near the Gogoi- Rajkhowa Pukhuri- Three maidams are seen near the Gogoi-Rajkhowa Pukhuri. However these maidams are in a severely neglected condition



Maidams near Gogoi-Rajkhowa Pukhuri



Petua Gohain Maidam, Dhupabor

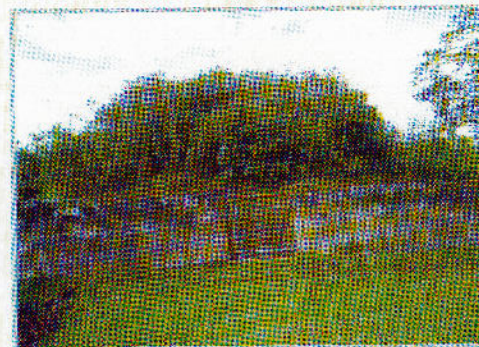
xiii) Petua Gohain Maidam - This is a very big maidam located at Dhupabor area. The interesting thing is that this maidam is now used by the local Christian people as a cemetery.

xiv) Maidam near Petua Gohain Maidam- This unidentified maidam is situated near the Petua Gohain Maidam. It is now covered by jungle.



Maidam near Petua Gohain Maidam, Dhupabor

xv) Kuta Borphukan Maidam- It is located at Adabari Handique Village, Dhupabor. Today the Patar family of the Dhupabor area worship this maidam as the burial place of one of their ancestors.



Kuta Borphukan Maidam, Dhupabor

xvi) Konwar Maut Maidam- Three maidams are seen on the side of the historic Rohdoi Ali. There is a myth regarding these maidams. According to it, one day two Ahom princes came to this place for hunting with their elephants. However while hunting a quarrel arose among them which resulted in the death of the two brothers along with their 'Maut' (caretaker of the elephants). After that their dead bodies were buried here to mark this event.



Konwar Maut Maidam, Dhupabor

xvii) Maidam opposite to the Konwar Maut Maidam- An inundated maidam is seen just opposite the Konwar Maut Maidam in Dhupabor area on the side of the Rohdoi Ali.



Maidams opposite to the Konwar Maut Maidams, Dhupabor

xviii) **Maidams near Chetia Pukhuri-** Near the Chetia Pukhuri, Dhupabor we find two maidams which are now covered by the bamboo trees.



Maidams near Chetia Pukhuri, Dhupabor



xix) **Maidams at Adabari-** These maidams located at Adabari village are in a very poor condition.

Maidams at Adabari, Dhupabor

xx) **Maidams at Nagaon-** In Nagaon village of Dhupabor area we found two large maidams. However, nothing is known about this maidam.



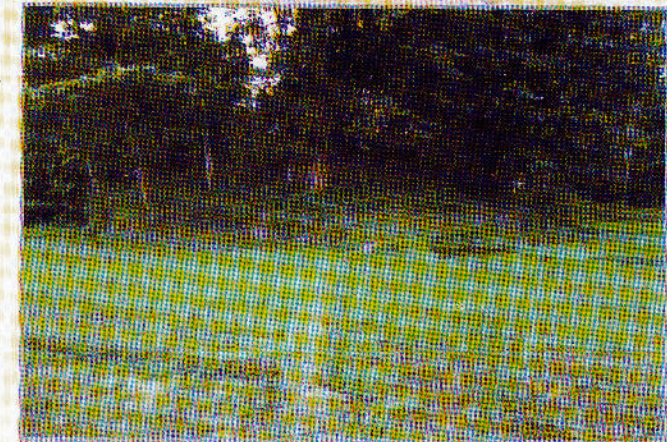
Maidams at Nagaon, Dhupabor

xxi) **Maidams near Bauli Pukhuri -** Two small unidentified maidams are seen near the Bauli Pukhuri of Dhupabor.



Maidams near Bauli Pukhuri, Dhupabor

xxii) **Maidam near Bauli Pukhuri- (no-2)-** A large unidentified maidam is seen near the Bauli maidam about which nothing is known.



Maidam near Bauli Pukhuri, Dhupabor

DOBA

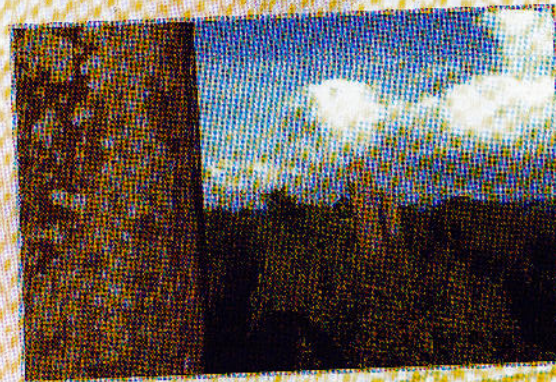
i) **Khargahria Pukhuri**- This pond measures 90 meters from East to West and 86 meters from North to South. An officer's house of the Ahom period was nearby this pond who stored Khar (gun powder). Hence the pond is so named ('Ghar' means house).



Khargahria Pukhuri, Doba

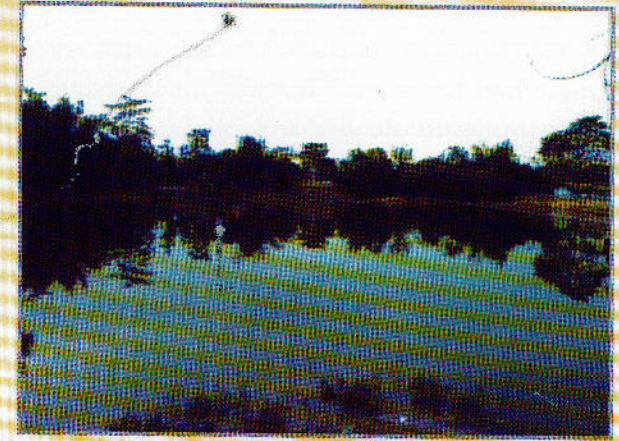
DOLBAGAN

i) **Deo-sal** - Located on a hillock at Dolbagan this is a place of worship. It can be seen from the back side of Dolbagan H.S. School near Dhodar Ali. When Sukapha (1228-1268 AD) built his capital city at Charaideo (1253 AD), he established this Deo-sal. Three stone pillars around seven feet high above the surface and a concrete well are seen there. It is a promising tourist place however the road leading to this place is yet to be constructed.



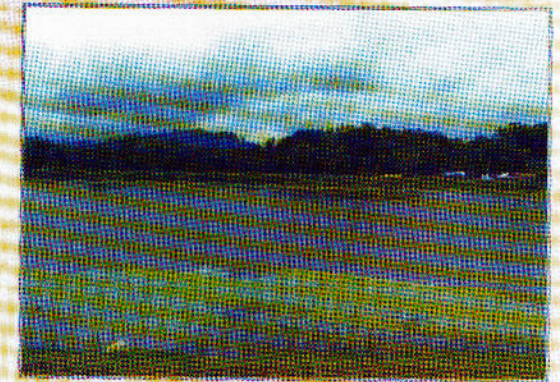
Charaideo Deo-sal, Dolbagan

ii) **Changmai Pukhuri**- The area of this pond is 20 Nol (approximately 120 sq ft). It is believed that the cooks of the royal family or Changmais were settled in this area and the pond was dug for their use.



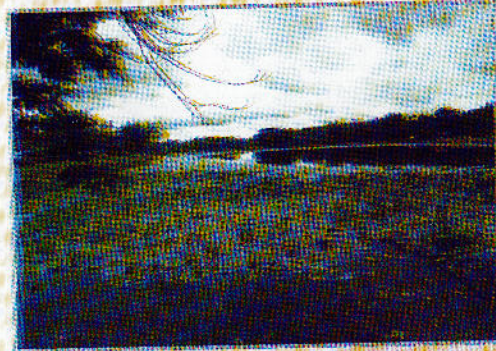
Changmai Pukhuri, Dolbagan

iii) **Lengi Bor Pukhuri**- This pond measures 150 meters from East to West and 256 meters from North to South. This significant pond of Charaideo is located on the Dolbagan Santak road. The pond was dug for establishing the idol of Phee-Pheng or Dhon Koliya who is the prominent God of the Bihu festival. Banyan trees known traditionally as Bor were planted all around the banks of the pond to signify the occasion. So the pond was named as Lengi- Bor meaning surrounded by Banyan trees (Hem Buragohain in Souvenir of Charaideo 2003). This pond is also known as the Roja Pukhuri and Noga Pukhuri.



Lengi Bor Pukhuri, Dolbagan

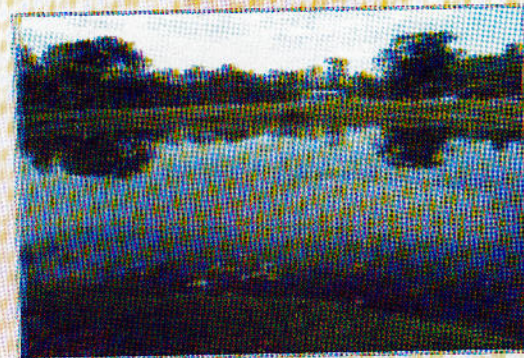
iv) **Mitha Pukhuri**- This pond measures 173 meters from East to West and 120 meters from North to South, which is located at Dolbagan. This pond is also known as the Asubuliya Pukhuri. According to Hem Buragohain this pond was dug by a chaodang officer named Asu during the reign of Supatpha Gadadhar Singha (1681-1696 AD). However, there is a belief that a member of the Deodhai family had been appointed as Buragohain and had the pond dug to commemorate himself. So it is believed that inter-marriage is not permitted between Deodhai and Buragohain families traditionally. This pond is also known as the Bancheng Pukhuri.



Mitha Pukhuri, Dolbagan

The name Mitha Pukhuri is said to be derived from a belief that the Nagas had eaten a kind of berry which caused the water of the pond drunk by them to taste sweet. Mitha meaning sweet in Assamese.

v) **Baku Pukhuri**- This pond measures 53 meters from East to West and 53 meters from North to South. It is located on the side of the Dolbagan Santak road.



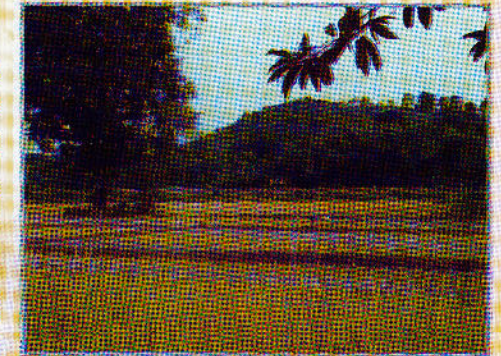
Baku Pukhuri, Lengibor, Dolbagan



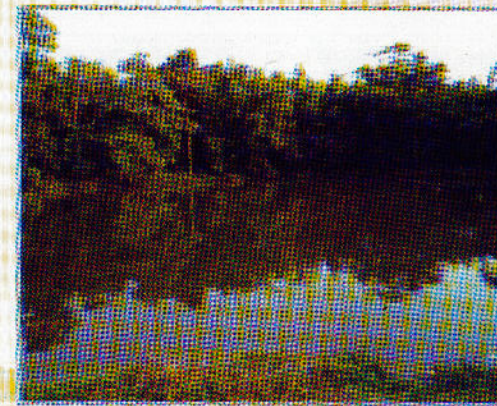
Khunduna Sil, Lengibor, Dolbagan

vi) **Khunduna Sil**- A part of a stone pillar is located at a hillock in front of Lengibor Pukhuri, Charaideo.

iv) **Rajgarh, Dolbagan**- A rampart is seen at the back of the Dolbagan H.S. School near the hillock where the 'Deo-sal' is located. It is a general belief that the rampart was constructed by Sukapha when he established his capital city.



Rajgarh, Dolbagan



Roja Pukhuri, Belengbari

v) **Rojapukhuri**- Located at Rajabari of Belengbari near Dolbagan, this pond measures 44 meters from East to West and 45 meters from North to South. The pond now lies within the premises of the private property of Mr. Leela Kurmi and Mr. Durga Kurmi.

iv) **Deo-sal** - This 'deo-sal' is located at Belengbari, Dolbagan. There is a legend that a shepherd was sacrificed here by decapitating him with a blade of grass. Since then people started worshipping here after setting up a makeshift temple which is now known a 'deo-sal', 'deo' meaning god and 'sal' meaning temple or abode. Literally translated, 'deo-sal' stands for the abode of god.



Deo-sal, Belengbari



Rajgarh, Belengbari

vi) **Rajgarh, Belengbari**- It is located at Belengbari near Dolbagan. It is said that Sukapha established his first home stead in this area and the rampart indicates the fact..

KANUBARI

(i) **Dalimi Maidam**- A maidam is seen at Kanubari, near the borders of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. However this maidam is located in Longdin district of Arunachal Pradesh. According to local belief, Ahom king Gadadhar Singha (1681-1696 AD) married a princess of the Wancho Naga tribe, whose name was Nape (alias Cheukham or Julumi) when he was



Dalimi Maidam, Kanubari

in exile. After her death, according to her will, her body was buried in this place where her relatives, the Wancho people lived.

LAKUWA

i) **Borbaruah Maidam (1)**- It is located at Lakuwa. According to local folk belief one Borbaruah had this maidam constructed while he was alive. Since he had entered this maidam before death he was isolated by the others, removed from his post and was sent into exile to a place near Borhat which is now known as Baruachali.



Borbaruah Maidam, Lakuwa



Maidam near the Borbaruah Maidam, Lakuwa

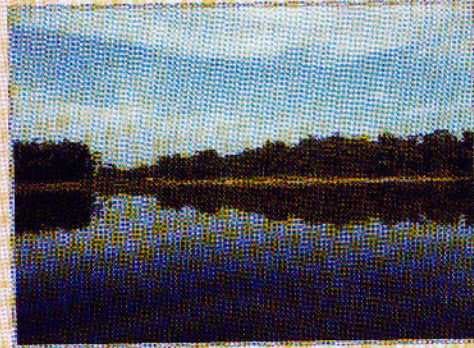
ii) **Maidam(No. 2)**- It is located near the Borbaruah Maidam (1), Lakuwa. Presently a 'namghar' has been constructed at the top of the maidam.

iii) **Rangagora Amlakhi Deo-sal** - This is an ancient place of worship. It covers an area of around ten bighas of land. Every twelve years a worship ceremony known as Umpha Puja is conducted at this place.



Rangagora Amlakhi Deo-sal, Lakuwa

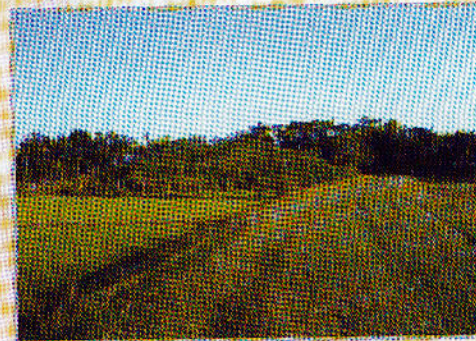
LONGPOTIA



Pehi Pukhuri, Longpotia

i) **Pehi Pukhuri**- This pond measures 119 meters from East to West and 33 meters from North to South. It was dug by king Gadadhar Singha (1681-1696 AD) in memory of a paternal aunt of him.

ii) **Brajwa Phukan Maidam**: It is located at the Raidongia Village of Bhoju. It is said that Brajwa Phukan was an important Ahom officer who was appointed to fight against the Moamorias. His brother Dhajwa Phukan's maidam also seen near his maidam.



Brajwa Phukan Maidam, Longpotia



Dhajwa Phukan Maidam, Longpotia

iii) **Dhajwa Phukan Maidam**: It is located at Raidongia Village which is between the railway station of Bhoju and Longpotia. Dhajwa Phukan was the brother of Brajwa Phukan who was an important officer of the Ahom reign during the first quarter of the 19th century. He was

contemporary of Punananda Buragohain and he like his elder brother Brajwa Phukan tried to check the aggression of the Moamoria rebellion in this area. However the present condition of the maidam is lamentable.

MAHMORA

i) **Bhorali Pukhuri**- This pond measures 84 meters from East to West and 67 meters from North to South. It is located at Mahmora. During the reign of Ahoms an officer named Bhorali Baruah collected and threshed the grains and lentils produced on the bank of the river Disang and stored in a go-down near this pond. The pond was named after him. It is said that the pond was dug during the reign of Pratap Singha (1603-1641 AD), who also had constructed a road called Mahmora Ali from Garhgaon to Jaipur. The pond is located at the sides of this Mahmora Ali.



Bhorali Pukhuri, Mahmora

MATHURAPUR

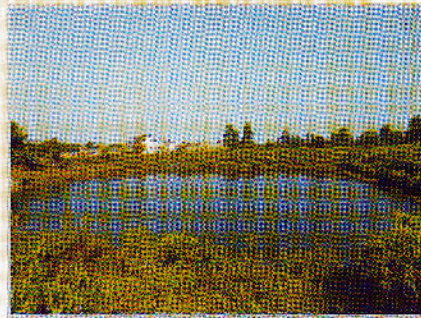


Bauli Pukhuri, Mathurapur

i) **Bauli Pukhuri**- This pond measures 348 feet from East to West and 340 feet from North to South. It is located near the Dhodar Ali at Mathurapur. The Bauli Pukhuri L.P. School lies on the south bank of this pond. An Anganwadi Centre also lies on the banks of the pond.

MAIBELLA

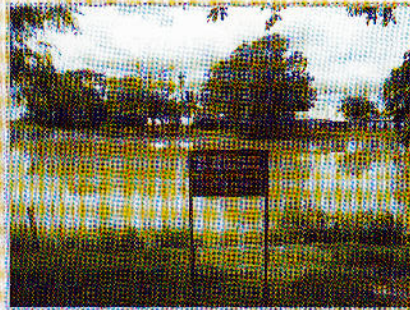
i) **Maibella Pukhuri**- This pond is located near the Lakwa Thermal Power Project (Maibella) near the Dhodar Ali. This pond was dug during the reign of Gadadhar Singha (1681-1696 AD). It is mentioned in various historical sources that a Shiva temple had been constructed on the banks of this pond. However presently there is no evidence which testifies to this fact.



Maibella Pukhuri, Maibella

NAHORTOLI

i) **Shyamoni Pukhari**- This pond measures 58 meters from East to West and 76 meters from North to South. It is found that this pond is named after a prominent lady from the Lemai Deodhai Phukon family of this area.



Shyamoni Pukhuri, Nahortoli



Hokora Pukhuri, Nahortoli

ii) **Hakora Pukhuri**- This pond measures 64 meters from East to West and 83 meters from North to South. Hokora was the husband of Shyamoni after whom the Shyamoni pond has been named.

iii) **Madam Pukhuri**- This pond measures 45 meters from East to West and 53 meters from North to South. This pond is situated near Madam Phukon Maidam of Nahortali.



Madam Pukhuri, Nahortoli

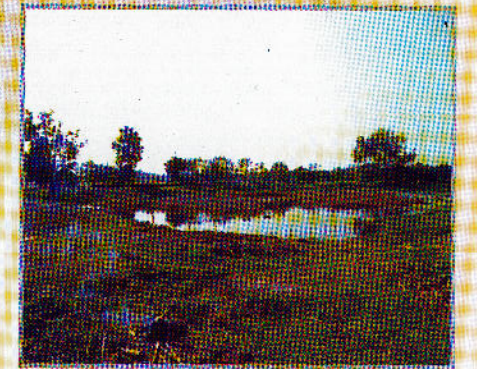
iv) **Madam Phukan Maidam**- Located at Nahortali. Madam Phukon is also known as Laksi Phukon. Local source says that he was an influential person and the crop fields of the area were known as Lakhimi Pathar after his name (presently known as Niz Khaloi Ghugura). Significantly he was also known as Udong Goru alias Jotori.



Madam Phukan Maidam, Nahortoli

NAPHUK

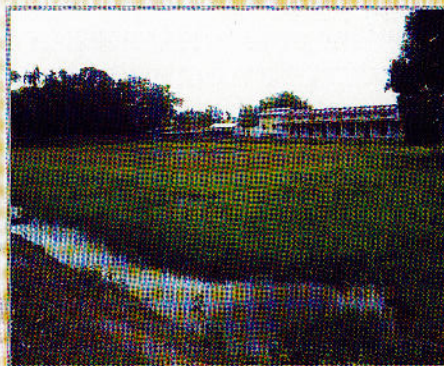
i) **Doloi Sonari Pukhuri**- This pond measures 240 feet from East to West and 290 feet from North to South. It was dug during the days of King Sukhampha (1552-1603 AD). It is said that a temple had also been constructed on the banks of this pond which is not seen in present times.



Doloi Pukhuri, Naphuk

NIMONAGARH

i) **Chiring Pukhuri**- This pond measures 72 meters from East to West and 61 meters from North to South. It is located at Nimonagarh near the Dhodar Ali. The officers-in-charge of official documents and writing of the Buranjis were known as Chiring Phukan. These officers were settled in this area and the pond was used by them.



The Chiring Pukhuri,
Nimonagarh

PATSAKU

i) **Doga Phukan Maidam**- Located at Hati Baruah Gaon of Patsaku, this maidam is being slowly inundated and may soon disappear completely.



Doga Phukan Maidam, Patsaku

ii) **Mo-Ching Hatibaruah Maidam**- This maidam is located at Sagarbera, Patsaku. It belongs to one Mo-Ching who was the leader of the Ahom priests. It is said that king Gadadhar Singha (1681-1696 AD) gave one of his daughters in marriage as well as five 'Khats' or farms to this priest. (Lapung, Liplang, Tunsai, Bbarakhat, Jahakhat). The Hati Baruah Deo-sal and some other large maidams are also located near this.



Mo-Ching Hatibaruah Maidam, Patsaku

ROJAPUKHURI

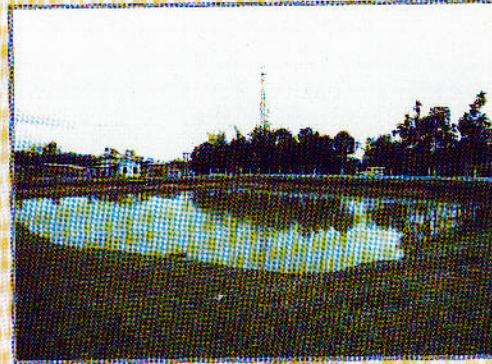
i) **Roja Pukhuri**- This pond measures 360 feet from East to West and 304 feet from North to South. It is also called Borpatra Pukhuri and Nawab Pukhuri. It is located around 3 kms east of Sonari town near the Dhodar Ali. According to historian Gunaviram Baruah king Rudra Singha settled few Musalmans in this area and dug a pond. As the Musalmans addressed the king as Nawab, the pond dug by him was called Nawab Pukhuri.



The Roja Pukhuri, Rojapukhuri

SAPEKHATI

i) Bhorali Pukhuri- This pond is located at the side of Nahar Ali at Sapekhati Rohan Village. It measures 49 meters from East to West and 45 meters from North to South. There are a few public institutions located on the banks of this pond. They are the Rohan Pukhuri L.P. School, the Gaon Panchayat office, Namghar, Public auditorium, office of Mahila Samiti, etc. located on the opposite side of the road lies the embankment which is supposed to be the homestead of the Bhorali Baruah, an prominent official of the Ahom administration whose duty was to collect crops for the royal treasury.



Bhorali Pukhuri, Sapekhati

ii) Maidam near Godam Chariali- This maidam is located near the Godam Chariali M.E.School. It has been partially destroyed or inundated and is being treated as private property by one Bokul Das who is using this place as the foundation of his house. However this land falls under the protected forest division of Sapekhati which does not allow the area for residential purpose.



Maidam, Gudam Chariali, Sapekhati

iii) Atal Pukhuri- It is located in a place called Atal within Sapekhati which lies near the Nahar Ali. It measures 76 meters from East to West and 68 Metres from North to South. There are a few public institutions on its banks. They are- Sonapur L.P. School, a Namghar and a



Atal Pukhuri, Atal Pothar, Sapekhati

Public Health Centre. It is believed that this pond was excavated by an Ahom noble named Atal Hatibaruah during the reign of Suhungmung Dihingiya Raja (1497-1539 AD). It is said that he supplied trained elephants to the Ahom monarch. A rampart was also present in this area which is said to have been used for trapping and catching of wild elephants. (source : Naobosiya Phukan Buranji)

iv) Atal Hatibaruah Maidam: It is located at Baghchuk, Atal Pothar, Sapekhati. The maidam is the burial place of one Atal Hatibaruah who was an important Ahom official during the reign of Suhungmung Dihingia Raja (1497-1539 AD).



Atal Baruah Maidam, Atalpothar, Sapekhati

SILASAKU

i) **Stone Bridge-** This stone bridge was constructed by king Gadadhar Singha (1681-1696 AD). It is the oldest stone bridge constructed during the Ahom reign.



Stone Bridge, Silasaku

ii) **Choladhara Khaninkar Borpukuhri-** This pond measures 284 feet from East to West and 386 feet from North to South. The Khanikar Pukhuri L.P.School lies to the West of it. To the South lies a Namghar. The pond is located in Silasaku Khanikar Gaon. It is said that this pond was dug by an important officer of the Khanikars, who were craftsmen in the Ahom period.



Khonikar Pukhuri, Silasaku

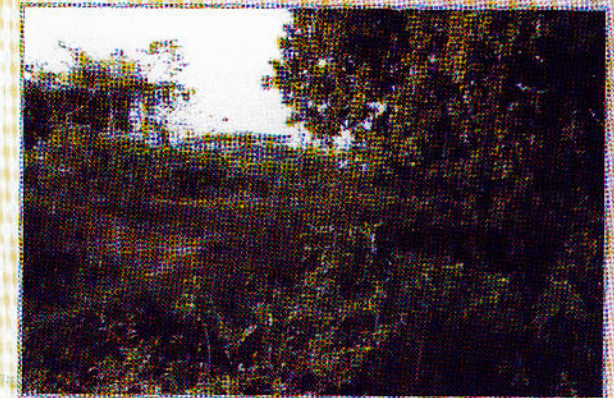
SONARI

i) **Sonari Pukhuri-** This pond measures 840 feet from East to West and 581 feet from North to South. It was dug during the reign of King Sukhampha (1552-1603 AD). It is said that the king had established a 'Sonari' (goldsmith) in this area and thus this pond was named after him.



Sonari Pukhuri, Sonari

ii) **Rojadhap-** It is located near the Charaideo Civil Court, Sonari. It is said that this rampart was constructed by the Barahi King Mahamanikya. A large part of this rampart has come under occupation and only a very small area can be said to be in its original condition.



Rojadhap, Sonari

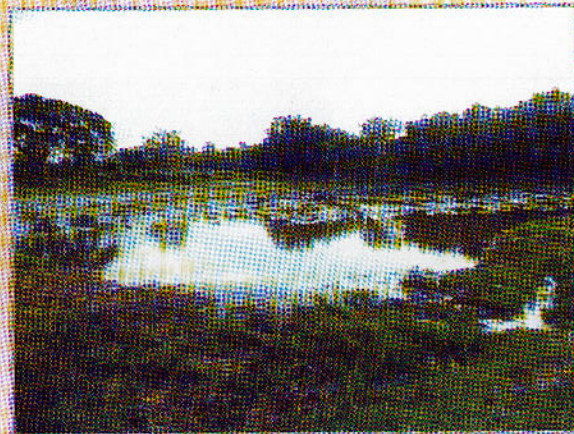
iii) **Meslou Pukhuri**- This pond is located at Sonari town. It was dug in the days of King Sukhampha (1552-1603 AD). It is believed that this pond was dug in the memory of his two wives Bor Meslou and Saru Meslou. Presently this pond is in a very bad condition. Originally this pond covered a large area, a portion of which is now filled up and is included in the premises of Kalibari temple near the public bus station of Sonari.



Meslou Pukhuri, Sonari

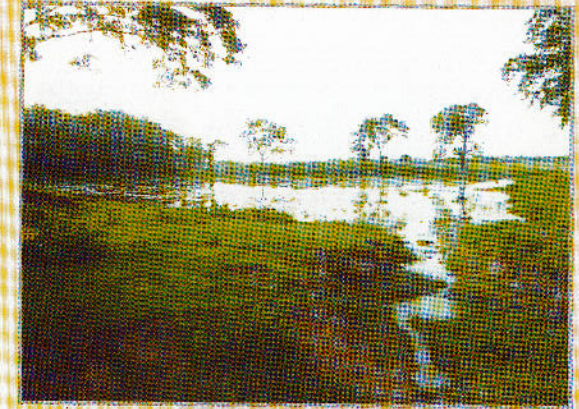
SANTAK

i) **Hunadoi Pukhuri (Ahom Period)**- This pond measures 90 meters from East to West and 73 meters from North to South. According to local people this pond was dug during the reign of king Gadadhar Singha (1681-1696 AD).



Hunadoi Pukhuri (Ahom Period), Santak

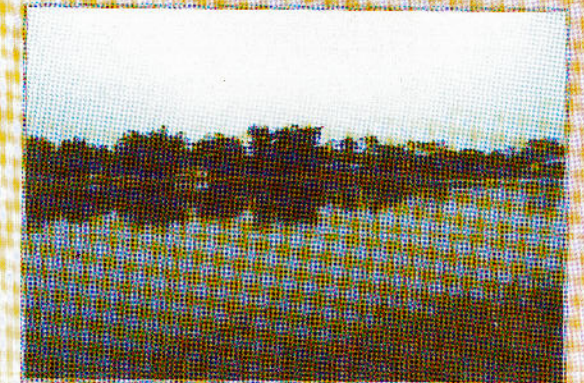
ii) **Hunadoi Pukhuri (British period)**- This pond measures 90 metres from East to West and 76 metres from North to South.



Hunadoi Pukhuri (British period),
Santak

TENGA PUKHURI

i) **Tenga Pukhuri**- This pond measures 382 feet from East to West and 425 feet from North to South. To the west lies the Dhapabor Mouzadar Office. To the East lies Tengapukhuri M.V.School. To the South lies the sericulture office and Namghar. To the North lies Dhodor Ali. According to Hem Buragohain during the reign of Jayadhvaj Singha (1648-1663 AD) a garden of limes or lemons was established in this area. Hence the name Tengapukhuri. Another popular local belief is that during the reign of the king Jayadhvaj Singha the pond was dug to commemorate the name of a Tai scholar named Tengai Mohan Phukan. It is said that the first Assamese dictionary was compiled by him.



The Tenga Pukhuri, Tenga Pukhuri

ii) **Ghorasuwa Pukhuri** - This pond measures 296 feet from East to West and 276 feet from North to South. To the North lies a Namghar. The pond is located in Tenga Pukhuri area. It is believed that the area where the pond is located was actually the home-stead of an officer-in-charge of the equestrian department known as the Ghorasuwa Baruah.



The Ghorasuwa Pukhuri, Tenganapukhuri

TINGALIBAM

i) **Dighali Pukhuri**- This pond measures 28 meters from East to West and 112 meters from North to South. It is located near the Dighali Pukhuri High School, Tingalibam. It is believed that the pond was dug by one Raidongia Phukan for his daughter for the purpose of pleasure boating. However the condition of the pond is deplorable.



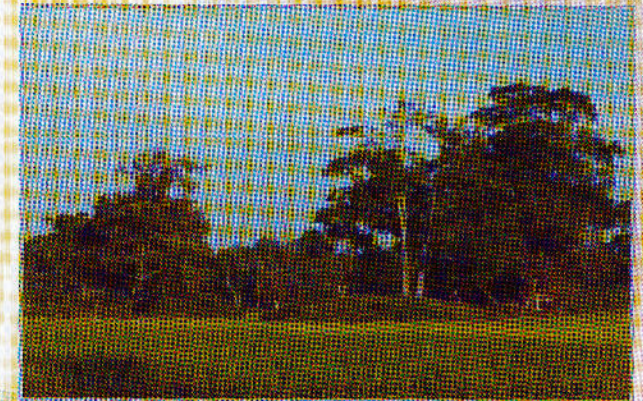
Dighali Pukhuri, Tingalibam

ii) **Gotonga Pukhuri**- This pond measures 68 meters from East to West and 60 meters from North to South. It is located near the Dighali Pukhuri High School, Tingalibam. It is believed that the pond was used by the Raidang Phukan family for drinking water.



Gotonga Pukhuri, Tingalibam

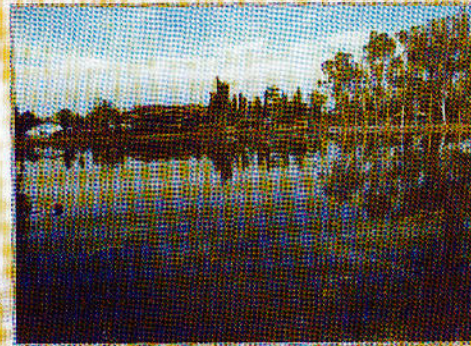
iii) **Maidams at Dighali Pukhuri**- About fifteen maidams are seen in and around the area of Dighali Pukhuri. Among these three are big in size. These maidams belong to the Raidongia Phukan family. The Dighali Pukhuri High School is located nearby. No proper measures are taken for the preservation of these valuable historic maidams. The home estate of the Raidongia Phukan was located here and is still seen some parts of it in some places.



Maidams at Dighali Pukhuri, Tingalibam

TIOKGHAT

i) **Aideo Pukhuri-** This pond measures 87metres from East to West and 70 meters from North to South. It was dug by the Ahom King Gaurinath Singha (1780-1795 AD)in memory of his step mother. It now falls within the area of the Aideobari Tea Estate, Tiokghat.



Aideo Pukhuri, Tiokghat



Aideo Maidam, Tiokghat

ii) **Aideo Maidam-** It is located at Aideobari Tea Estate, near Tiokghat. According to some Ahom historical sources Aideo was the step mother of King Gaurinath Singha.

TOWKAK

i) **Towkak Pukhuri-** This pond measures 160 feet from East to West and 232 feet from North to South. This pond is dug during the reign of King Pratap Singha (1603-1641 AD). It is now falls under the Towkak Tea Estate, near Sonari Town.



Towkak Pukhuri, Towkak

PROJECT REPORT AND CONCLUSION

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Charaideo, one of the three sub-divisions of the district of Sivasagar is of great historical significance. The other two sub-divisions- Nazira and Sivasagar are also very rich in heritage of architecture and sculpture of the Ahom rule. In simple words, it is the district of Sivasagar which bears the testimony of the glorious rule of the Ahoms. Various examples of the glory of architecture and sculpture such as, the Rang Ghar, Tolatal Ghar, Kareng Ghar, Joydol, Sivadol, the Tanks of Sivasagar and Joysagar, the Maidams (i.e. graves) of Charaideo etc are all these glorious examples of sculpture, architecture and archaeology which tend to inspire us with a sense of historical consciousness. But out of more than a hundred historical monuments situated in the district of Sivasagar only a very few of them have been chosen for preservation either by the government or by the certain non government organisations.

Consequently many ancient monuments of historical importance are on the verge of gradual destruction. It has been alleged that the few monuments that ought to be preserved are not done in the proper manner. To speak the truth, all sorts of monuments and other buildings, tanks and other articles of historical importance to be found in the district of Sivasagar have been not accurately preserved. Under such circumstances it is almost certain that ancient memorials of historical significance of Sivasagar district as mentioned above are on the verge of extinction in days to come. At a time when in other parts of the world we perceive a tendency on the part of the people to protect their culture and economy relying on the ancient monuments and other memorials found in their respective countries, our unmindful attitudes and backwardness in this regard can never be regarded as a good and healthy sign. As things stand, it becomes imperative on our part to come forward to preserve our ancient monuments and other articles of historical importance by arousing sense of historical consciousness. We should not allow ourselves to forget that a nation

without an ancient sense of historical consciousness is like one almost 'dead', although physically 'living'.

It is in the light of such a view point that under the 'Centre for Sukapha Studies and Research' of Sonari College was instituted and recognised by the UGC Grants Commission, realizing the importance of the preservation of the innumerable ancient monuments and other articles of the days of the Ahom rule lying scattered in different place of the Charaideo sub-division. We have decided to undertake a project to carry on a field investigation/survey in order to identify and study the various aspects of these monuments and other articles mentioned above. As such, during the last year a field survey of the places of historical importance was conducted. Along with the members of the teaching staff of the department of History, a good many persons with a sense of history and other organisations interested in this field have got themselves involved in the act. This field study has been able to include almost all the sources of history to be found in the sub-division. Besides, going beyond the geographical boundary of the sub-division particularly, a survey of the some of the historically important places under the adjacent sub-division (Nazira) has been also made. The details of the survey are being mentioned in the report concerned.

In this regard, we would like to bring a reference to certain things. Archaeologically, a remarkable difference can be seen between Charaideo and the other two sub-divisions of the district of Sivasagar. The exception or difference mentioned above is that unlike in the other two sub-divisions we do not find any 'dol' (temple), 'devalaya' or any building made of bricks anywhere in the Charaideo sub-division of course, in Lakwa one unfinished 'maidam' (grave) is found. Also the erection of a 'namghar' over the 'maidam', has created a controversy.

As mentioned in history, Swargadeo Gadadhar Singha dug a tank at Maibella and erected a 'Sivadol' on its bank. The afore-said tank is seen there but we do not find any trace of the 'Sivadol'.

All the ancient monuments and other articles of historical importance to be found in Charaideo sub-division can be divided into four categories, they are- tanks, maidams, roads and ramparts. In different parts of the entire sub-division, one can see many tanks,

maidams, roads and ramparts in the entire sub-division. Unfortunately, most of these are at present in a pitiable condition. They are not preserved in proper manner. In respect a few of them are insignificant relic of their glorious past.

Among all the ancient articles of historical importance we find a large number of tanks scattered in different parts of the sub-division. Compared to the numbers of tanks the number of monuments and other buildings of historical significance is insignificant. Some of the tanks are very big, covering a huge area. On the other hand, small tanks are also found in the sub-division. Name of the tanks such as, 'Asubulia', 'Sa-dhowa', 'Kharghoria' and many others indicate that there are historical references behind these names.

Besides tanks, there are also a good number of 'maidam's scattered in the entire sub-division. Many of them have already become extinct leaving no trace of their existence. Some of them are on the verge of becoming extinct. It has not been possible as yet to identify and name the maidams which no longer exist. Under such circumstances, parts of many maidams are being encroached by certain people with questionable motives, and such other maidams are being destroyed to facilitate tea plantation. Similarly, some roads mentioned above have been improved and made 'pucca' while the state of many others is very deplorable. Roads of historical significance, such as 'Dhodar Ali', 'Nahor Ali' cannot be regarded as convenient means of communication. Along with the tanks, during the reign of the Ahom period, many 'Garh' (roads with a great height) such as Rajgarh, Nimonagarh are also found in the sub-division. Their condition is quite deplorable. For example only a small part of the 'Sialgarh' can be traced in Borpatra Tea Estate near Borhat in easternmost part of Charaideo sub-division.

A considerable number of roads as well as ramparts of the Ahom period are found in the area. Some of these are- Nahor Ali, Dhudar Ali, Mahmora Ali, Lligiri Ali, Holow Phukan Ali etc. Even though there are many ramparts at Lahdoigarh, Nimonagarh, Rajgarh etc. However, we were not able to catalogue them in this work. It is hoped that these historical relics may be studied and recorded in the future.

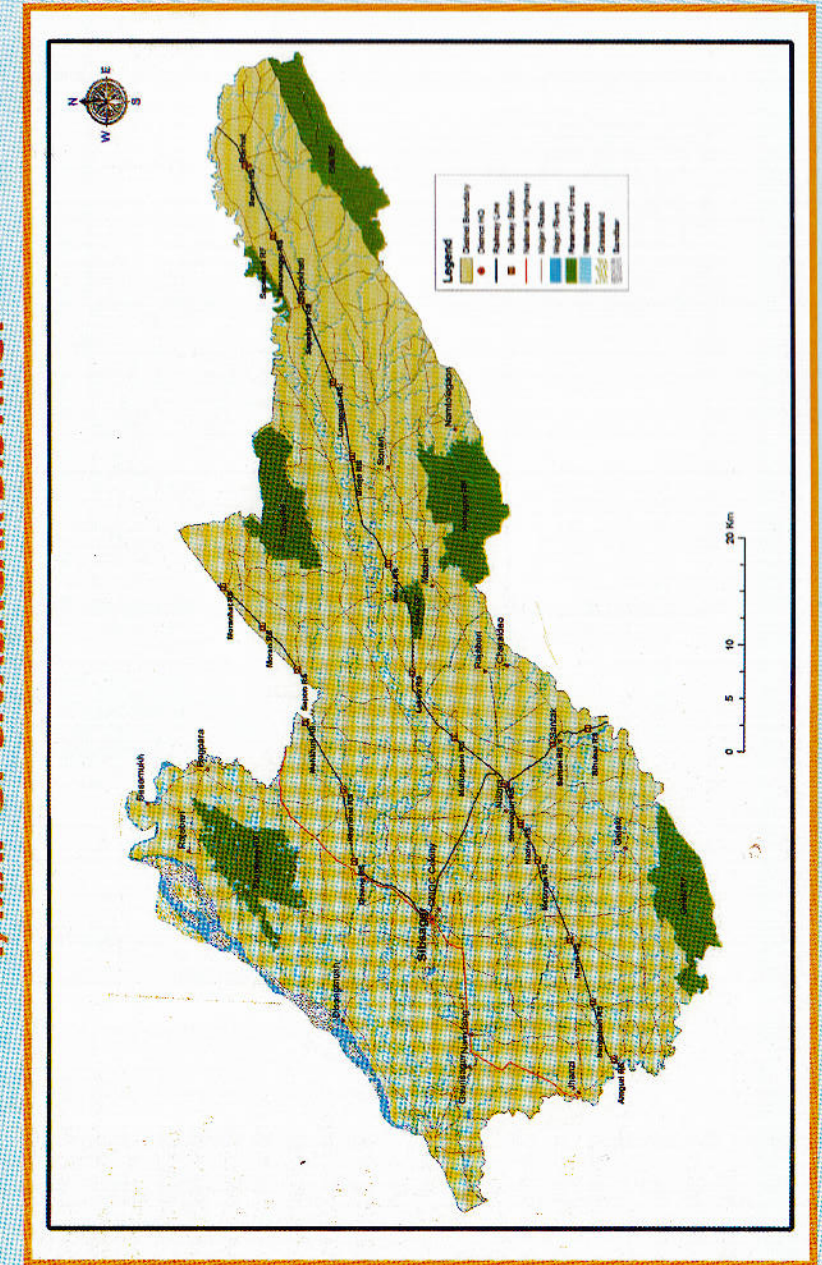
While conducting the research on the historical monuments of Charaideo sub-division a number of problems were faced by us. These included lack of proper information, many imaginary legends which may not have any historical significance were linked to the antiquity of these monuments, no concrete structures or walls were seen around the historical sites which may have helped in judging the time period and other details related with the ponds, roads, and embankments, and also due to time restraints some areas were not covered especially in the Patsaku area. These problems proved to be great barriers in the way of complete study of these monuments.

The findings of this survey and the initiative of the Centre for Sukapha Study and Research is purely a preliminary work in this area. We sincerely hope that others might contribute any information regarding this area of study so that it may be published later on in a consecutive edition. It is regretted that complete details could not be furnished due to obvious problems. However, it is hoped that this basic study of the historical monuments of Charaideo sub-division may prove to be of help to researchers and others interested in the history of the medieval period, specifically the Ahom kingdom.

The main aim of photographing all the monuments was to preserve a concrete evidence of the existence of these monuments. This is necessary since we noticed that many of the ponds, embankments and maidams are gradually disappearing due to inundation, overgrowing with forests, and encroachment by local people. It is seen that many schools and other public offices, clubs etc have sprung up on the banks of the ponds and it thus increases their value and significance.

A plea for preservation of these historical monuments is put forward from our side to not only the local people but also the government and other organizations to contribute and take steps towards the preservation of these historical relics. We also pledge on our part to do all that is possible to help in the preservation of the same. All the people who very kindly forwarded their help and valuable information as well as suggestions to this work are regarded with much gratitude and have been duly acknowledged in the Acknowledgment Section of this book.

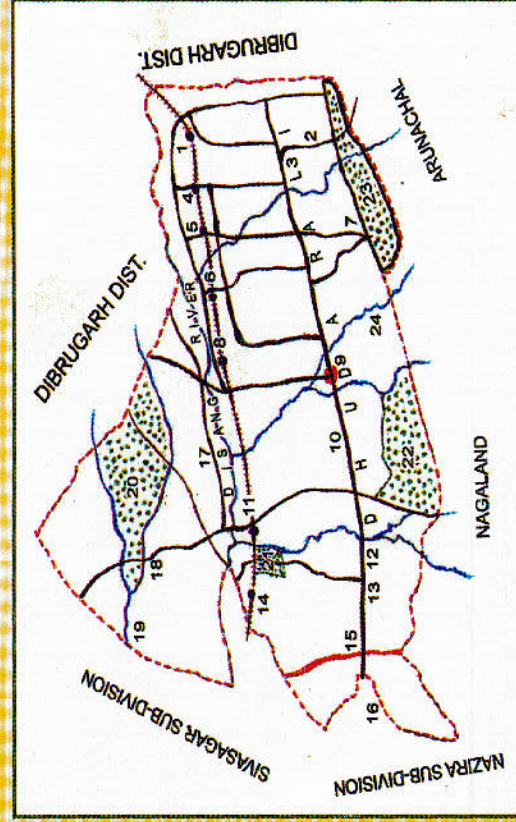
I) MAP OF SIVASAGAR DISTRICT



II) HISTORICAL PLACES OF CHARAIDEO SUBDIVISION

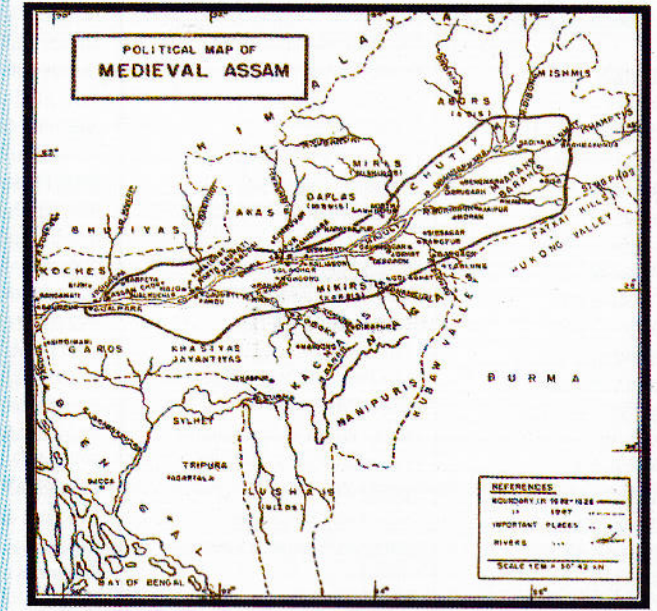
MAP OF CHARAIDEO SUB-DIVISION

Places of Historical Importance
Charaideo Sub-Division
(Not to Scale)



1. Borhat
2. Borpatra
3. Baruchali
4. Baruaingar
5. Sapekhati
6. Longpotia
7. Kanubari
8. Bhoju
9. Sonari
10. Naphuk
11. Suffrai
12. Maibellia
13. Mathurapur
14. Lakowa
15. Nimongarh
16. Charaideo
17. Mahimora
18. Nahartali
19. Patsaku
20. Dirol Researve
21. Sola Researve
22. Abhoypur Researve
23. Dilhi Researve
24. Digholipukhuri

III) MAP OF MEDIEVAL ASSAM



Source : A Comprehensive History of Assam - S.L. Baruah

IV) MAP OF STILLWELL ROAD



Source : Internet

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