



The Creative Launcher

An International & Refereed E-Journal in English

<https://doi.org/10.53032/tcl.2016.1.3.14>

EBAKU BISU The Spring Festival of the Deori Tribal Community of Assam

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Abstract

The Deori tribe is one of the foremost ethnic tribes in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh in North-East India. They have their Society, culture and traditions which are unknown treasures for the Anthropologies, sociologists and the Researchers. The Deoris were originally priests and worshippers and depended mostly on agriculture for their livelihood. They have their own language to converse amongst themselves. The present study Ebaku Bisu-The Spring Festival of the Deori Community of Assam is comparable to the Rongali Bihu of the greater Assamese community. Here lies the rationalization of the study of the particular topic.

Keywords: Ebaku Bisu, Spring festival, Deori community, Assam, Rongali Bihu, Tribe

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Introduction:

The Deoris living peacefully with the other tribes in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh have been observing their festival in spring since the time immemorial. The Festival they observe in spring is called “Ebaku Bisu”, which is equivalent to our Rongali Bihu. It is found that the word “Bis” is derived from the Deori’s “Bisu”. “Bi” means extreme and “Chu” means mirth or merriment. The word itself means the festival observed in extreme joy.

The beginning of the festival happens from the last Wednesday of the month “Fagun” and is observed for the entire following month.

Statement of the Research Problem:

The Deori community is one of the important ethnic tribes. They have been highlighting socio-cultural aspects. The present study will cover hitherto uncovered areas such as Ebaku Bisu-The Spring Festival of the Deori Community of Assam.

Justification of the Study:

The Deori tribe has some cultural identities. The present study Ebaku Bisu is a spring festival of the particular community. Here, lies the justification of the study of the particular topic.

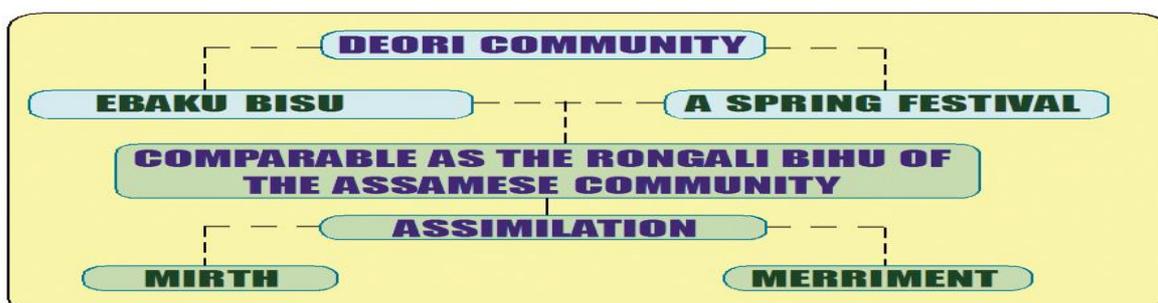
Aims and Objectives of the Study:

- 1) The paper highlights Ebaku Bisu, the spring festival of the Deori community of Assam and its relevance.
- 2) To focus the role of the Deori community in the festival and how the festival is associated with the Assamese Rongali Bihu.

Research Methodology:

The Socio-Cultural approaches need to construct different aspects of Deori community. It traces out environmental life way. The Research Paper need descriptive and analytical would be used depending upon the context related to Deori community. The component related to Deori festival will be analyzed with the primary and secondary sources. The Primary Sources such as government orders, interviews, field survey, questionnaires, manuals, photographs etc. Secondary data will be based on various published sources like books, magazines, newspapers, periodicals, paper-clips, journals, published works made by the scholars, official circulars, different statistical reports, internet, website etc.

Rationale



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The Ebaku Bisu Spring Festival:

On the last Wednesday of observing the festival the Deori community organizes a program named “Rais Bokot Mok Hareba” and from that day the Deori youths at the centre of the village or on the courtyard of the Chief of the Village or on the courtyard of the Chief of the village perform “Bisu” at night. As a rule the Deoris perform “Bisu” of their respective groups. The place where the “Bisu” is performed is called “Bisukula”. The group of youths first performs the ritual of having prayed in “Deoghar” to take the permission and then they start Bisu.

They give proper respect to the head of the family from where the start Bisu. The Bisu is performed to midnight. On the “Bisu Uruka” day the young people spend the whole night singing and dancing. The aged people also take part in “Bisu”. The place becomes muddy on the dancing girl’s steps and that mud is meant for “Boka Bisu”. The next day on the formal starting day of the festival there is performed the ritual of animal sacrifice. There the Dibongiya group of Deori on the occasion of the Puja provides three goats and a number of sixteen poultry. Furthermore, there are provided Bananas, Rice, incense sticks, wick, flowers etc. All the ritualistic things are managed by the Devotees.

The Main Bisu Starts from Thursday:

The First Day of Ebaku is called Muchu Jikureba Bisu.

On this day the cattle are washed with the items such as turmeric, oil etc and are protected from mosquitoes, flies etc. After that, the cattle are provided with a variety of food items. People pray them and wish them live longer. On the same day another ritual named “Iku Genema” is performed. As a rule, in this part of festival an adolescent boy is declared to become young by wearing him a “Suriya” worn by a man relatively brother-in-law to him. Egg fight is another eye-catching part of enjoyment held in Deori Society which in their language is called – “Duza Ssuzuwaba”.

Egg is considered to be a symbol of reproduction in the Deori Society. Its magnitude never gets sluggish and thereafter the Deoris Still play the game as amusement and as a part of faith. An additional vital characteristic of the day is that the day is considered to be the best day for the rituals to perform as a sign of respect to the dead. The women in the family in this day give wine to the village elders to drink. On all the seventh days the young people pray at “De Gal” in the evening. The last day of Bisu is called “Bisu Uparuwaba” in the public place of De Gal on the day of Bisu Uruwaba gather all the village people to Dance.

The Bohdeori order to take Bisu out of De Gal and at the same time the people taking part in Bisu also come out and dance at the houses of the village chiefs. Recently after that, the Bisu dancers go to the west direction and they dance for the last time in an open field to say Adieu to the Bisu. At the time of saying goodbye to the Bisu the village elders sing sad song. In the festival of Bisu, the Deoris use the musical instruments namely – “Durum”,



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“Kokili”, “Dentou”, “Tokamari”, “Taal” etc and the dances they perform are “Abarab”, “Hurai Rangoli”, “Lohoria”, “Chilum Chilum” and “Out Chapari Dema”.

One of the imperative features of Ebaku Bisu is “Midikaba”. Not anyone can be the “Midi”. In the dance “Midikaba” he must be influenced by Midi to do so.

Another spring festival observed by the Deoris is “Rajkema”, which is also known as “Midi Deruba” and is observed on the last Wednesday of the month of Bohag. It is known as a part of Ebaku Bisu. In this festival, the Bisu Song or Bisu dance is not performed.

Photographs



Photograph highlights Ebaku Bisu Midi Jama & Dance of Ebaku Bisu Festival

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