

Chapter 5

Kalicharan Brahma, Reformation and Bodo society

This chapter is divided into three parts. First part depicts social condition of traditional Bodo society; second part highlights Kalicharan Brahma's philosophy and idea, and the third part talk about Kalicharan's contribution and Bodo society. Details of all these parts are given below:

Part I

Traditional Bodo Society

Origin and Migration

The Bodo (Kachari) are the descendents of the Mongoloid race. They are the plain tribe of the North East India, particularly of Assam. They are known by different name in different parts of country like Mech, Gaolpara and West Bengal, in Brahmaputra valley of Assam Bodo or Bodosa, in North Cachar hills Dimasa and in Barak valley by the name of Barman. The Bodos generally consist of large number of sub tribes including Bodo, Garo, Rabha, Tiwa, Sonowal, Karbi, Dimasa, Kokbodok, Mishing, Ahom, Chutiya, etc. The Bodos are the descendent of Mongoloid race and belongs to Tibeto-Burman linguistics family. It is believed that Bodos have migrated in Assam from China. With the passage of time, they spread all over Assam with main concentration in the north bank of the river Brahmaputra (Brahmaputra Valley) right up to the foothills along the northern boundary of Assam adjoining Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh.

So far as the origin of the Bodos is concerned, it is a matter of conjecture and inference, as there is no authentic history on it. However, it is believed that Central Asia must have been the original home of the Bodos. S.K. Chatterjee (1974) asserts that the places in the north of China in between the head-waters of the Huang-Ho and the Yang-tzse Kiyang rivers were the original home of the Mongoloid people from where they moved and dispersed in different directions (Khema Sonowal, 2013). One of the groups of the

Mongoloid families moved into Tibet and settled there for centuries. It may be noted that the old name of Tibet was 'Ti-bod'. The word 'Ti' means a group of people or tribe and 'bod' means land or country (S.K. Chatterjee 1974). It is presumed that the Mongoloids who lived in Ti-bod were known as Bod, which later came to be known as Bodo. In this context, Rev. Sidney Endle (1997) opines that the Mongoloid features and general appearance of the Bodo people seems to suggest Tibet and China as the two Trans-Himalayan countries to be the original homes of the race (S. Endle, 1997, p. 3). The Imperial Gazetteer of India states that the upper courses of the Yang-tzse kiyang and Huang-Ho River in the north-west China were the original homes of the Tibeto-Burman race (G.A. Grierson, 1908, p. 224). However, it is difficult to trace out any present remnant of their original stock in Tibet and so far no linguistic traces have been possible. In this context, Ajoy Roy (1995) writes that some physiognomical and temperamental similarity can be observed between the Bodos and the present Kham Tribes of Tibet. The Bodos were originally war-like and ferocious in nature as the Kham Tibetans are still so (Ajoy Roy, 1995, p.3). Thus depending on the above views it can be conclusively stated that Tibet and China were the original homes of the Bodos from where they had migrated to India.

The history about the migration of Bodos to Assam is not clear and the period of their migration from ancient China is also debatable. The Bodos are said to be the earliest settler of Assam. It is believed that they had migrated to India from their original habitat during the pre-historic era. Sir Edward Gait regarded them as the earliest known inhabitants of the Brahmaputra valley (Sir Edward Gait, 2008). They occupied the plains of Assam for a very long time and constituted the bulk of the population in Assam valley during the time of the Mahabharata war, or even earlier than it (K.L.Baruah, 1966, p. 14). S.K. Chaterjee (1974) is of the view that the Bodos migrated to Assam since 1000 B.C. whereas B. Narzi (1962) maintains that the migration of Bodos to Assam started during 2000 B.C. On the basis of this two authors view it can said that Bodos migrated and settled in Assam much before Aryan (Gait, 1981).

E.T. Dalton (1937) said that Bodo means great people; this may be examined in the light of the Bodo saying, '*Gidir Hari*' means great people. Even in Bodo language, the logical

meaning of the term 'Bodo' means man. It is therefore appropriate that the people of Bodo group be known by the name they have coined for themselves, but not by a theorized superimposed term which has no use whatsoever among the Bodo people. The Bodo culture is rich and multifaceted. It is a part and parcel of the Indo-Mongoloid or Kirata culture. The historian of culture and scholars are of the view that the Mongoloid Bodo culture has influenced the Aryan culture to a great extent, especially in the North-East and vice versa. In his monograph on Ao-Naga tribe, W.C. Smith talks about thirteen outstanding features of Mongoloid culture. Of these, the Bodos share along with the Naga or other Mongoloid tribes of North East region five characteristics of Mongoloid culture. These are-

1. The habit of betel-nut chewing.
2. The aversion to melle as an article of food.
3. The use of simple loom for weaving cloth.
4. The habits of using large type of shield in the warfare.
5. Change of residence in isolated regions with crude form of agriculture.

Village and Settlement Pattern

Bodos mainly settled in plain, fertile ground. Bodos built their houses on the northern side of the homestead. They mostly live in hut made with bamboo and leaf roof. The main house stretches from the west to east. There are three divisions of the main house with provision of a door facing to the south. The eastern most portion of the main house is meant for cooking and worshipping. Each and every Bodo households have their loom for making cloths.

Bodos are dexterous in using bamboo for different purposes, like house building and handicraft. Bodo women are expert in preparing Zou (rice beer) and weave their dreams in the loom. The cloth, dokhona woven by them is a superb example of artistic finish in

handloom. Besides these, the Bodos have a rich storehouse of songs and dances handed down from generation.

Clan System

Clan is an extensive form of lineage constituted of blood relations. D. N. Mazumdar and T.K. Madan (1965) said that clan is a combination of few lineages and decent who may be ultimately traced to a mythical ancestor, who may be human, human like, animal, plant or inanimate object. Clan is exogamous group as it believes to have common ancestor. Clan plays an important role among, most of the tribal society. A tribe has different clan and some clan may have large member who settle in different villages far from one another but even then they act as relatives, unites together during the time of need and help each other. Most of the Indian tribes are clan exogamous group. But this is not the case with Bodos. Bodos are tribe endogamous group; clan does not play any significant role in marriage. However, in contemporary Bodo Society, those clannish titles signify only the surname of a group of people. Each clan has its own professions since ancient times. Bodo society is based on totamistic clannish divisions. The clan system otherwise had no other implication on their inter tribe, tribe-non tribe marriage, inter-dining and other social activities. Bodos are divided into a number of clans such as Basumatary, Bodosa, Boro, Brahma, Bwiswmuthiary, Dwimary, Goyari, Ishlary, Ishwary, Khaklari, Mushahary, Narzary, Owary, Sargwary, Sibigri and Wary. Each clan has its own duty or story. Some of these are discussed below:

Swargiary

The member of this clan claims that they are directed descendent of the God Bathou Bwrai. Their main occupation is priesthood. Though there is no clan hierarchy among the Bodos but priest were always selected from this clan.

Basumatary

The word 'Basumatary' means the 'Mother Earth.' So, Basumatary is earth folk. The main occupation of this clan is cultivation and land holding. So, they are considered by

others as the landlord class. In the early period, it was customary that before cremation of a dead body, the diseased persons' relatives or family member have to offer some coin to an elderly person of Basumatary clan as revenue for using the plot of land for cremation. At present this custom is not followed by all.

Narzary

The term 'Narzary' derived from the word 'Narzee Gwran' means the dry leaf of jute plant. Narzary is the jute plant folk Bodo believes that the dry leaf of jute plants have strong magical value. There is custom among them that after returning from cremation ground, the person have to chew the narzee gwran before entering his home. The Bodos belief that by taking narjee gwran they cut off their relation permanently with the dead person. It is the duty of the member of Narzary clan to collect and supply 'narjee gwran' or dry leafs of jute plant during cremation and funeral ceremony.

Muchahary

This clan member relates their identity with tiger. In Bodo language, 'Mucha' means tiger and 'hary' means community. So, Muchahary means tiger folk. They never kill tiger. When they get information about the killing of a tiger, they have to take fast for a day and clean the house for purification. Because they believe it as one of their family members is died. They perform rituals called 'udrainai' and pray to 'obonglaory' (almighty) for departed soul. Some of them uses Baglary as their surname, instead of Muchahary. In Assamese language Bagh means tiger.

Goyary

In Bodo 'Goy' means areca nuts. So, Goyary is areca nut folk. The Bodos are very fond of areca nuts. According to Bishnu Prasad Rava, the Goyary clan or group originated from the people who were engaged to collect and distribute areca nuts in the convention which was held in connection with the illicit love affair between chikri- sikla (nymph).

Owary

The term 'Owary' originated from the word 'owa' (bamboo). So, owary clan is bamboo folk. It is said that since a large quantity of bamboos were require for conducting festivals like Kherai puja, garja puja etc. So, the persons who were engaged in collecting bamboos for such festivals came to be known as Owary.

Khaklary

Khaklary comes from the word 'khangkla' is a kind of plant which is used in 'Kherai' puja. It is believed that, the persons who were engaged in collecting Khangkla (branch) plant for Kherai puja are known by the name of Khaklary.

Daimary

In Bodo language 'daima' means a big river and the people living near big river are called Daimary. Bhaben Narzi (1966) describes the main occupation of Daimary is fishing. Endle (1989) also held the same opinion and described the group directly as the fisherman clan.

Lahary

This clan's identity is related to leaf supply. In Bodo language 'lai' means leafs. In different festivals of Bodo, banana leafs are required. So, the groups who supply leafs during different festivals are known as Lahary.

Hazowary

Among the Bodos those who settled in the hilly areas are known as Hazowary. The word 'Hazo' means 'hill' and the people who lived in the hills or foothills might have been called as Hazowary or hill dwellers.

Kherkatary

Bhaben Narzi (1966) describes the clan or group as 'jigab-nara'. On the other hand, Endle (1989) describes them as the squirrel Folk. But it is not clear as to why this clan or group should be associated with the squirrel. The people of this clan or group are generally found in the districts of Kamrup of Assam.

Mahilary

It is believed that the clan or group Mahilary originated from Mahal or lease.

Ramsiary

It is believed that the clan or group Ramsiary originated from the name of place called Ramsa. The place Ramsa is situated in the district of Khamrup on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra.

Family

The basic structural unit of a society is family. MacIver and Page (1987) is of the view that family is a group defined by sex relationship sufficiently precise and enduring to provide for the procreation and upbringing of children. It is one of the important agents of socialization. Family system varies according to nature of society. The Bodo society is patriarchal in nature. Patriarchal family is naturally became a patrilineal one. The eldest male member became the head of the family. The Bodo Descendent and property goes through male line, however, the mother and the other female members of the family are not neglected. In fact, the patriarchal Bodo Society is intrinsically inter-woven with matriarchal traits in it. In the family matter, all major decisions are taken by father or husband not the mother or wife. Some-times head of the family along with the Priest or Douri (male priest), takes the decisions of the family. Both the joint and nuclear family were found in traditional Bodo society too.

Marriage

Marriage is a social contact for the satisfaction of physical, mental, biological and spiritual needs of male and female. Marriage laid the foundation of family. Among the Hindus marriage is religious sacrament. For tribals the institution of marriage is not a sacrament, but a social contact with the purpose of reproduction, companionship and enjoyment of sex. In traditional Bodo society, marriage was considered nothing but a social contact. Originally Bodo's practices monogamy. Among the Bodos different rites and ceremonies are accompanied with the marriage ceremony. It includes various observances to protect the new couple from the evil spirit or the evil eyes to secure and enhance the safety and prosperity of new couple. Marriage ritual is considered to be sacred. It is performed after receiving social and religions sanction. After marriage, it is the responsibilities of the couple to maintain their social and family life.

Forms of Marriage

Normally Bodo male marries only one woman. A few case of polygamy are found. Polyandry is totally absent in the Bodo Society. On the basis of the form of mate selection Bodo marriage system may be divided into six (6) types. These are as follows:

- 1) Arranged marriage (*Habagwmwn arw Hinjao Swngnai haba*)
- 2) Obtaining the girl by rendering service to the parent and family (*Gwrjia Haba*)
- 3) Marriage by ritual consent and elopement (*Kharsonai Haba*)
- 4) Marriage by capturing (*Hinjao Bwnai Haba*)
- 5) Marriage by elopement (*Dwnkharnai Haba*)
- 6) Widow re-marriage (*Dongkha Habnai Haba*)

Details of these marriage systems are given bellow

1. Arranged marriage (Haba gwmwn or Hinjao Swngnai Haba)

The most prevalent form of marriage among the Bodos is Haba Gwmwn. It is solemnized according to the standard custom. In this form of marriage, the parents of both the boy and girl come forward and settled their children's marriage by negotiation. In earlier days such arranged marriage was solemnized at the house of the bridegroom only. But now a day it is held in the house of the bride. In this type of marriage bride price plays important role. But now it is not compulsory. This is equivalent to Asur marriage described in Hindu scripture.

2. Obtaining the Girl by rendering Service to the Parent and Family (Gwrjia Haba)

This special type of marriage prevails among the Bodos. In this form of marriage youth render service in the house of bride before marriage. It is practiced by the people due to certain reason. Firstly, because of excessive bride price, secondly, if a person does not have a son then he always looks for orphan or poor youth with an intention to bring the youth in his house as a son in-law. In this regard, the youth have to render service to his future father in-law to prove himself. If the youth is successful in impressing the father in-law then marriage will settled after discussion with youth's relative and villagers.

3. Marriage by Ritual Consent and Elopement (Kharsonai Haba)

This type of marriage generally takes place between lovers. In this form of marriage girl elopes with the boy by her own consent and goes to the boy's house before marriage. The girl does not return to her parents' home till they give the consent of marriage. The formal marriage takes place after the bride price is settled through discussion between the parents of boys and girls.

4. Marriage by Capturing (Hinjao Bwnai Haba)

This is another form of marriage that prevails among the Bodos. This form of marriage is practiced by the people due to different reason like excessive bride price, one sided love

etc. In ancient Bodo society it was recognized practice that a girl was forcibly taken away from her parent's home or from work place or streets and get married. But contemporary Bodo society strongly condemned and discarded this type of marriage. It is almost similar with Raksasa marriage of the Aryans.

5. Marriage by Elopement (Dwnkharnai Haba)

In these types of marriages the boy and the girl run away to a distant place without the concern of parents and they lead a conjugal life. This type of marriage does not get social recognition.

6. Widow re-marriage (Dongkha Habnai Haba)

Widow re-marriage is recognized by Bodo society. Generally young and issueless widows are preferred for remarriage. There are Two-three methods of Bodo society for widow remarriage practices namely (i) Widow can bring a new groom to her house and lead a conjugal life. (ii) If a man wants to marry a widow then he has to take concern of her and if she agrees then as a token of love the man has to give her a silver coin. It is called "Gongkhon Hwnai" in Bodo. In this case after marriage the man has to leave his home, parents and came to his wife's house. Before leaving parents home some mendatory religious rituals is performed and a sumptuous meal and wine is served to the villagers. After marrying widow, he loses right over his parental property. However, he can enjoy the property of his wife and later their children can inherit their property.

It is also notable that after remarriage the widow will lose rights over her deceased husband's property. The male child is entitled to get the property of his deceased father. Sometimes it is found that the widow is allowed to take female child of her deceased husband along with her when she remarry's with a person. Though widow remarriage is approved by the society, but some restrictions are imposed on it. A widow may remarry the younger brother of her deceased husband but cannot marry the elder brother. Similarly widower can remarry the younger sister of his deceased wife but not the elder one.

Bodos strictly follow endogamy and inter tribe marriage was forbidden even with cognate tribes. But such restriction might have been discarded long back. Nowadays the Bodo society approves inter tribe or tribe caste marriage on condition that they would accept the Bodo social norms and customs. Though monogamy is socially recognized practice in Bodo society, but in certain circumstances polygamy is recognized like, (i) when a man has no children by his first wife, (ii) if first wife is suffering from persistent incurable disease and there is none to look after the house hold work.

Religious Belief and Practices

Traditional religion of Bodo is known as 'Bathou', which has been practiced since time immemorial in South East Asia. The term Bathou consists of two words 'Ba' means five and 'thou' means deep philosophical thought. So Bathouism represent five deep philosophical thought. Whereas some other said that Bathouism represent five basic element of nature like, bar (air), dwi (water), ha (earth), or (fire) and ukrank (sky). The supreme deity of Bathouism is Bathou Bwrai which is the creator and controller of all five elements. The word 'Bwrai' means old man. The follower of Bathouism believes that Bathou Bwrai is the illuminator of all earthly objects; source of all knowledge's and lights. Bodos believes that the Bathou Bwrai after creating the physical form of a man with the composite elements, he confers his spirit to the inanimate body which displays as the totality of living being's body. So, Bathou is a religion and the philosophy that explain the embodiment of the spirituality of the creator or the God. Faguna Barmahalia (2012) is of the view that Bodos in the name of Bathouism worship nature. Because Bodos believes that the hidden power of nature strongly dominates the social life and it is the causes of peace and sorrow in this world.

Bathouism is based on five moral and spiritual messages, five holy sermons and five principles which the Bodo have to follow. The five spirituals message are namely (i) messages on holy realization, (ii) messages on holy practice (iii) messages on love (iv) messages on truth and (v) messages on hatred. The message of holy realization includes Bathou as the supreme God. The realization of one's own soul is the part of Bathou and realization of the need of good in this world. The message on holy practice emphasis's on

meditation for God, conversation on religion and spiritual matters charitable donations to the poor. The message on love includes love for God, love for fellow being, love for family and love for all living beings. The messages on truth emphasizes on leading a truthful life and the messages on hatred urges one to abstain from committing sins like stealing, telling lies, adultery, murder and association with bad company (Ramdas Basumatary, 1980).

The Bathou philosophy in itself is unique. The five holy sermons of the Bathou Bwrai or the five prayers to God, conversing religious and spiritual matters, being charitable to the poor, love the community people and be united. The five holy realizations of Bathouism are-Realization of Sijau the supreme soul, merger of atma (human soul) with the supreme soul (Sijau); Realization of Mainao (Laskmi); Realization of the Panch Mahabhutas corresponding to the five main gods: Ailong, Agrang, Khoila, Sanja-Borli, and Raj Khungri; and Realization of the need of worldly affairs.

So, these five principles, sermons of must be followed by every devout member of the race. They worship Bathou bwrai and other gods and along with goddesses during their religious functions and festivals like Kerrai puja and Garza puja. Bathouism does not have fixed place of worship like temple, the church, the mosque.

Bodo are not animistic. Philosophy of Bathou religion centres round the super power of “Bathou Bwrai” or “*Khoria Bara Maharaja*” which is analogous to Siva of Hindu Trinity. Sizou Plant (*Euphorbia and splendens*) is regarded as the “Bathou” supreme deity of adoration. Therefore every Bodo-Kochari households have planted a Sizou tree in the northern corner of their courtyard as a custom. Bathou Mainao also called Buli Buri (Laskmi) is worshiped as the goddess of wealth. Besides these two primary deities, Bodo-Kochari worship many other gods and goddess namely Agrang, Khoila, Khaji, Rajkhandra, Rajputhur, Bura Ali, Ali Bura, AsuMainao, Sali Mainao, Bagraj-a Basumati and Choudri. Some of these deities (better known as Mwdai) are benevolent and some are malevolent (Sekhar Brahma, 2006).

There is no place for ideal worship in Bathou religion. Sydney Endle (1911) writes; in the typical Kachari village as a rule neither idol nor place of worship is to be found; but to

the Kachari mind and imagination earth, air and sky are like people with a vast number of invisible spiritual beings, known usually as Mwdai, all possessing powers and faculties for greater than those of men and almost invariably inclined to use these powers for malignant and malevolent purposes.

Sizou Plant

In Bathou religion, Sizou plant (*Euphorbia splendens*) has an important place because Bodos considered it as a sacred plant. The Sizou has been widely accepted as the symbol of life or soul by the Bodo people since time immemorial. Sizou plant is the living symbol of Bathou Bwrai, the supreme God. It needs to be mentioned that the plant does not have flowers and seeds. From branch of the Sizou, plant can emerge. This plant can survive any soil and climatic condition.

Bathou Altar (Bathousali)

The follower of Bathouism does not worship any idols but made an altar in the place of Bathou worship and in the midst of the altar they planted Sizou plant. All the family who followed Bathouism must make a Bathousali in the North Eastern corner of the courtyard and plant a Sizou plant in the midst of the altar. The Bathou followers believe that they had eighteen supreme god and goddess as guru and mahaguru.



Plate 5.01 Bathou Altar and Sijou Plant of Banshijora village

The Bathou altar is the main place of worship. Apart from this, each village has to set up a Bathou altar in their community land. The altar is surrounded by bamboo fenced with 18 pairs of small bamboo strips folded with five fastening which symbolizes and signifies the religious and spiritual principles of Bathouism as well as the eighteen gurus and deities. The first round of fastening from the bottom signifies the three *Bando* (bindings) of human beings: *birth*, *sorrows* and *pains* or trouble, distress and death which compulsorily faced by every human being. No one can escape from these things. Remaining two rounds of fastening signify the two other bindings marriage and peace and pleasure from which one can escape. In the name of the god and goddesses, every evening people lightened earthen lamp (*Alari Bathi*) on the bathousali at their home.

Worship and Rituals

The follower of Bathouism performs number of rituals. Some of the important rituals are discussed below:

Garja Puja

‘Garja mw dai hwnai’ is an important traditional socio-religious festival which is celebrated outdoor at a place permanently earmarked for the purpose. The fixed place for ‘Garja’ festival is called Garja Sali. The festival is celebrated once a year in the month of Magh (midst January and midst February) by villagers. It is a purification ceremony dedicated to the village deities to purify the uncleanness of the entire villagers. It is also considered as a preparatory ceremony for the performance of the Kherai (Puja) festival.

Bodos believes that people may become unclean due to contact with unclean things and people may commit sin consciously or unconsciously through their activities like participating mass gathering such a marriage ceremonies, festivals, day to day business transactions involving act of omission and commission etc. These activities of people may dissatisfy village deities and her cruse may come in the form of flood, drought etc. So for removing uncleanness and sin what people have committed or done throughout the year, this ritual is performed once in a year. The ceremony concludes with sprinkling of holy water around the village and the households. The people thereafter, proceed with Kherai festival celebration.

Kherai Puja

Kherai is the important traditional festivals of Bodos. The festival is more religious rather than social. But it took the shape of festival because large number of people participate it with a festive mood. This ritual mainly performs for protecting themselves and village from all misfortune. It is performed in the month of ‘Kartik’ (middle of October to middle of November) and Aghan (last part of November to middle of December). In the Kherai puja along with Shiva and Parbhathi some other deities also worshipped.

This puja is performed at night where the villager along with the people of neighboring villages participates in it. The Douri (male priest) and Doudhini (female priest) perform all the rituals. Scarifies of animal or bird and dance of Doudhini are the essential part of Kherai puja without which the puja will remain incomplete. They also offer fruits and sweets as oblation to the god and goddesses. Then Douri explain the history and glory Kherai puja. Dance and drama is also part of the puja because they tried to propitiated gods through dance. Doudhini is the main dancer who dances rhythmically with the traditional musical instruments like big drum 'kham', flute 'sifung' and cymbal 'zotha'.



Plate 5.02 Preparation of Kherai Puja in Banshijora village

Doudhini moves in a circular motion round the Bathou altar where deities are positioned. The oja and the deouri and the elderly members of the village follow her dancing and making hand gestures. There are 18 (eighteen) varieties of dances performed by the

doudini, viz: *Dahal sibnay, bathou gididingnay, Cha gwlaow bwnay, khwijema fonai, dahal thungri sibnay, thungri sayao ganay, mwisw gelenai, gorai dabrainay, etc.*

Marriage Rituals

In traditional marriage system first the boy's parents gives marriage proposal to girl's parents. If the girl's family agrees then boy's family member visit girl's house for negotiation along with village headman and relatives. After considering all if the boy's parents select the girl then they leave a pair of silver bangles and couple of wine (Zou) bottles in girl's house. If girl's family did not return these within a week then it will be considered that they have agreed for marriage negotiation. If both the parents give their concern for marriage then the girl and boy are permitted to talk with each other. During the meeting, if girl bows before the boy and give him traditional dress and handkerchief as a gift, it indicates that the girl has given her concern for marriage (Hanjaswring Brahma, 2015). Marriage ritual is performed by the male priest (Douri) with the concern of bride and groom's parents and village headman. Marriage ceremony is held at bridegroom's residence.

Death Ritual

There is a custom among the Bodos that dead body should be kept outside the house. Half portion of the middle of courtyard of house is cleaned with water and laid the body on mate (dharha) and covered by the white cloth. Then the cotton is put in the nose and ears of the dead body so that no odour (gajree mwnamnai) comes out from the body. The family member of the deceased person gives some water and rice on his mouth with a believed that the soul will be happy. Before burning the dead body the family members cleans and dressed, combs the hair, because they believe that his/her soul is going to visit another world. They also believe that if the body is not cleaned properly in next birth he or she will look ugly. It is customary among the Bodos that a dead body should be carried to the burial ground by either his or her sons or relatives on bamboo made stretcher. After returning from cremation ground, all those who participate it, have to take bath and chew narji gwan (dry leafs of jute plant) because they believe that by taking narji gwan they cut off their relation with dead person. The family member of deceased person follow some restrict of food and dress till shraddha (funeral ceremony). Normally ten days after the death, funeral ceremony is held. They believe that if shraddha is not done properly then the soul will not get

salvation. The unsatisfactory soul may enter in the body of other living person and cause trouble like sudden death of relative, illness of family member and relatives, poor agriculture product etc. At the day of shraddha the family members of the deceased person invite all relatives, neighbors and persons who participate in funeral for feast. In this feast they offer small quantity of narji gwan especially to those who goes for cremation with the belief that by consuming narji gwan second time they cutoff their relationship with departed soul permanently. The shraddha marks the closing of the family's mourning period (Kameswar Brahma, 1989).

Economy

The economy of traditional Bodo society was based on agriculture and allied activity like cultivation, fishing, animal husbandry while some other adopted occupation like hilling, witch doctor, priest or 'ojha' etc. The Bodos are mainly concerned with producing those things which can meet their daily need and requirement. Traditional Bodo society has struggled very hard to meet their economic need. As Bodos are plain tribe and settled near river of Brahmaputra, so they adopt settle cultivation. The following are the details of some traditional occupations.

(a) Cultivation

The majority people of traditional Bodo society adopt cultivation as their main occupation. For this they use simple technology like plough for tilling the field. Both man and woman work hard in paddy field for producing grain.

(b) Fishing

The Bodo people who live near river bank usually adopt fishing for maintaining their livelihood. They catch fishes with fishing net and sell in their own or nearby villages or local market.

(c) Witch doctor

It is also a kind of traditional occupation of Bodos. Bodos have strong believed on witch and witchcraft. They also believed that behind all mishap or illness witch plays important

role. So, for removing witch's effect from family and society they approach witch doctor or ojha, who through his magical power reduced the impact of witch and charges fee for his work. Client may pay the pay the fee either in cash or in kind.

(d) Healer

Healer or medicine man among the Bodo maintain their livelihood by giving treatment to the ill people. Healer or medicine men have knowledge of medicinal value of local herbs and he applies it on his patient for which he gets the fee.

They also adopt some other occupation like collecting and selling forest resources like bamboo, firewood etc.

Traditional Bodo societies also have the concept of personal property. The people claim his right over the land and things produced by him or his family member. The person also has the right to transfer property to his son. But forest, river, natural, lake etc. were considered as group property.

So, it can be said that the economy of traditional Bodo society was backward. They were ignorant about new implementation in different field of production. Above all the Bodos were reluctant to adopt any new occupation because they were happy with their own condition. But things started to change in the last part of 19th century with the advance of British in Assam.

Village Administrative system

The village administration of Bodo tribe mainly revolves round the office chieftain which is known by the name of 'Gamini Afad'. The Gamini Afad consists by headman (Gami Gwra), Secretary (Nehatary), Cashier (Rang Kubir) and Public Relation Officer (Halmaji). The office is responsible for running the administration of village, security as well as protects the economy interest of the villagers. It basically settled property disputes, divorce, domestic violence, maintenance of social practices and customary laws etc. Gamini Gwra is assisted by the Nehatary or secretary, Rangkubir or Cashier and Halmaji public relation officer for performing these function. Irrespective of sex

everybody have equal right to attend the meeting of Gamini Afad. Only the post of Halmaji is paid who is given responsibility for informing and inviting the people of the village for council's meeting. In the village council-Gamini Gwra's decision is final and obeyed by all.



Plate 5.03 A Meeting of Gamini Afad held in Gambirkata Village

Part II

Kalicharan Brahma and His Philosophy

Kalicharan Brahma was great figure of Bodo society who made considerable efforts to reform the society. He is known as the founder of modern Bodo society. Kalicharan Brahma was aware of country's awakening and also conscious about renaissance and reform movement that took place in different parts of the country. At the same time he also knew well about the strength and weakness of Bodo society.

Kalicharan had great honor for traditional social system of the Bodos but at the same time he firmly believe that unless some reformative work was undertaken, Bodo community would soon meet its downfall. Because during his time Bodo society was plagued by

different kinds of social evil like illiteracy, superstition, poverty, ill health, alcoholism, witch hunting, forcefully marriage etc. Due to these, they were looked down upon by the upper caste Assamese Hindus. The Bodo called by the non Bodo as 'Mlech' that is inferior people. They were not allowed to mix with people belonging to upper castes. They were considered as untouchables. They had to face discrimination in offices, market, hotels and other public places. Because of this attitude of others towards Bodos many of them got converted themselves into different religions such as Christianity, Islam, etc (Satyendra Mondal Nath, 2011).

Kalicharan therefore, stood for the reformation of Bodo society by introducing new religion called 'Brahma' Dharma. Kalicharan was against the conversion of Bodo into Christianity, Islamism and others. Therefore, he was in quest for new religious idea and philosophy which will be able to rescue Bodos from humiliating existence and enable them to live with dignity and honor. For this Kalicharan made extensive study of different religious texts and realized that liberal religious faith based on Western philosophy can regenerate Bodo society. During this period he got a book from his friend Charan Mandal's name 'Saranritya Kriya' written by Swami Shiv Narayan Paramahamsa. This book was written on the philosophy related to Lord Brahma the creator and theory of the universe. It also talked about the fundamental of Brahma religion and the doctrine of oneness of God. Kalicharan read the book thoroughly and got satisfied with this. He found the contents of the book very logical and felt that he had got what he searched for a long time. Kalicharan got influenced by this reading and converted himself in 'Brahma Dharma'. Kalicharan along with his friend Suren Karta went to meet with Swami Shiv Narayan Paramahamsa in Kolkata. After a long discussion with him Kalicharan was satisfied and become a disciple of Sawmiji. After adopting Brahma religion he started to propagate this religion with a view to reform the society. His purpose was to establish monotheistic worship of one Supreme Being. He propagates for simplification of rituals and scarification of evil idea of self not the animal. Like other reformer of India, Kalicharan too realized the need of reformation of Bodo society in the light of western values and ideas of rationalism (Asom Sahitya Sabha, 1983). So, he wanted Bodos should learn from the west, but this learning was not an imposition of western value. Kalicharan believed on fusion of eastern and western cultural values and ideas. He realized the fact that Bodo society could be regenerated only inculcating western

ideologies of human equality, dignity and reason through the spread of western education (Satyendra Mondal Nath, 2011).

Kalicharan was not a utopia dreamer. He believed on accomplishment of ideas. For this he declared crusade against all social evils like liquor consumption, child marriage, forceful marriage, witch hunting. Kalicharan drafted Bodo customary law which contains 126 points with a view to modify existing laws and introducing new laws for over all development of Bodo society. He also made lots of effort for introduction of western education because he dreamed to see an enlightened Bodo society. Kalicharan Brahma wanted to create an enlightened Bodo society by imparting quality education. For this, he encouraged Bodo children and youth to take education. But there were no sufficient schools in Bodo areas. So, he submitted a memorandum to the then D.C. of Goalpara district to set up schools in Bodo areas. Later on, his memorandum got approval of the Chief Commissioner of Assam. Consequently, an M.E. School and a Vocational Training Centre was established at Tipkai in the year 1912 (Manik Kr. Brahma, 2001).

Kalicharan Brahma also established two hostels, namely, “Brahma Boarding” and “Mes Boarding” at Dhubri for the Bodo students for perusing higher education. These hostels were constructed by the contributions of the landlords of the area. These hostels, particularly, the “Brahma Boarding”, produced quite a good number of progressive Bodo intellectuals, who became faithful associates of Kalicharan Brahma, in his struggle for reforms and regeneration of the Bodo society. In the later years, many of them emerged as prominent social workers and successful politicians.

Kalicharan Brahma was a socio-religious reformer with political wisdom. Besides, the programmes for socio-religious reformations, he also undertook policies for awakening political consciousness among Bodos. The “Assam Plains Tribal League”, one of the earliest tribal political parties of Assam, was formed in 1930 due to Kalicharan’s effort and inspiration. This party demanded reservation of seats for the tribals in Assam assembly. However, Kalicharan Brahma’s great political wisdom is revealed in his famous memorandum to the Simon Commission led by Sir John A. Simon in Shillong. The

memorandum submitted by Kalicharan Brahma acted as Panacea to the problems that inflicted the Bodos and other tribes (Satyendra Mondal Nath, 2011).

Kalicharan Brahma always dreamt for a self-reliant and financially sound Bodo society. Besides he wants Bodo people to join in different government and private jobs, he also encouraged them to start their own business or enterprises. In this regard he established 'Brahma Company' to help poor Bodo people to uplift their economy.

Kalicharan's reformative and rational views have great effect on Bodo society. Large numbers of people followed him and adopt Brahma religion. But he also faces resistance from orthodox people of the society. Kalicharan spend long (1905-1938) thirty three (33) years of his life for Brahma religion among the Bodos and had been primarily responsible in ushering development, introducing reformation and fostering a sense of unity among the Bodos. It was due to his efforts that today the Bodo tribe has a distinctive identity of their own, for which Kalicharan had resurrected their culture and heritage at a time. After the death of Kalicharan's the ideals and beliefs are still practiced and followed by the Bodos. Contemporary Bodo society considered him as their social reformer and spiritual guru. Philosophy of Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma is like: a) Love all equally b) Think progressively c) Do something for the upliftment of society to succeed in life we need education d) Be a truth seeker and f) God is one. In his philosophy there lies the ingredient of Upanishads and Geeta. His work pattern and thinking style as a social reformer reminded the mane of great social reformar Raja Ram Mohan Roy. There is a touch of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy too in his concept of work culture, self employment (self engagement) to improve home economy. He was against rearing pigs and preparing and drinking wines or rice beers. In Sanskrit language there is a saying, 'Modotmodeyom peyom nirgraha' its meaning is, "DON'T GIVE WINE TO ANYBODY, DON'T DRINK AND DON'T ACCEPT."

Part III

Kalicharan's contribution and Bodo Society

Contemporary Bodo society is different from traditional one. Lots of changes, reformation and development took place in Bodo society. It cannot be said that these changes and

development took place only due to Government policy and programme. But the reformation of Kalicharan Brahma and his effort laid the foundation that people can able to accept the various Government policies and programme. At the same time Kalicharan Brahma and his works are not accepted by the entire Bodo society. He also faces resistance for some orthodox and superstitious groups. Even then his contribution in the formation of modern Bodo society cannot be denied.

(a) Kalicharan Brahma and his Acceptance in Bodo Society

Kalicharan Brahma is well known person of Bodo society. Each and every people whether he lives in rural or urban areas, whether he or she is literate or illiterate are aware about him. Though some of them may not know details about his work and philosophy but by name he is popular. The people of all the six villagers are aware about him. Following table depicts the picture.

Table No. 5.01: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of their awareness about Kalicharan Brahma and his works and Contributions

Awareness about Kalicharan Brahma	Villages						Grand Total
	Respondents						
	Kazigao n	Gombira —ghat	Maliaghoi	Gombrik —hata	Harjhora	Bongsh -ijhora	
Fully Awareness	21 (42%)	19 (38%)	19 (38%)	21 (42%)	20 (40%)	20 (40%)	120 (40%)
Familiar with his name	12 (24%)	17 (34%)	16 (32%)	16 (32%)	17 (34%)	17 (34%)	95 (31.67%)
Familiar with his name but partial aware about his work	09 (18%)	09 (18%)	08 (16%)	08 (16%)	07 (14%)	06 (12%)	47 (15.67%)
Familiar with him and Fully aware about his works and contributions	08 (16%)	05 (10%)	06 (12%)	07 (14%)	06 (12%)	07 (14%)	39 (13%)
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	300 (100%)

Source: Field study conducted during on May 2012 - January 2015

The above table shows that 40% of respondents are fully aware about Kalicharan Brahma, 31.67% of respondents are familiar with his name, 15.67% of respondents are familiar with his name but partially aware about his work, 13% of respondents are familiar with him and fully aware about his works and contribution. Village wise 42% respondents of each Kazigaon and Gombrikhata, 40% respondents of each Harjhora and Bongshijhora and 38% respondents of each Maliaghoi and Gombiraghat are fully aware about Kalicharan Brahma. 34% respondents of each Gombiraghat, Harjhora and Bongshijhora, 32% respondents of each Maliaghoi and Gombrikhata and 24% respondents of Kazigaon are familiar with his name. 18% respondents of each Kazigaon and Gombiraghat, 16% respondents of Maliahgoi and Gombrikhata, 14% respondents of Harjhora and 12% respondents of Bongshijhora familiar with his name but partially aware about his works and contributions. Whereas 16% respondents of each Kazigaon, 14% respondents of each Gombrikhata and Bongshijhora, 12% respondents of each Maliaghoi and Harjhora and 10% respondents of Gombiraghat are familiar with him and fully aware about his works and contributions.

Kalicharan Brahma and Bodo Maha Sanmilan

In order to organized Bodo of entire Assam Kalicharan thought to create on social organization. He discusses the matter with his followers like Rupnath Brahma, Birnayan Brahma, Satish Chandra Basumatary, Malising Brahma and others. His followers agreed with his proposal and decided to establish it. The dream of Kalicharan came true in 1921 when an organization named 'Bodo Maha Sanmilan' was formed with Kalicharan Brahma as chief organizer, Rupnath Brahma as secretary, Satish Chandra Basumatary and others educated youth became the member of it. Their organization for the first time a platform where all positives and negatives side of Bodo society was taken up for discussion. The Bodo Maha Sanmilan mostly emerged with a view to (i) remove social evils, (ii) upliftment women's position and (iii) spread of education etc. The first conference of Bodo Maha Sanmilan was held in 1921. In this conference some resolutions were taken, these are:

1. Bodo Maha Sanmilan will conduct state level conference annually

2. Executive Committee of the Sanmilian will be reformed in every annual conference.
3. Steps should be taken for upliftment women's condition in society.
4. Publication of annual magazine in Bodo language for spread of knowledge and encouraged creative writing among the people.
5. To establish Primary and Middle school in the Bodo dominated area.
6. Tabbos were imposed on liquor consumption in socio-religious festivals and ceremonies.
7. It also takes the resolution to fixed bride price of Rs.51.

With the formation of this organization, especially after first conference of Bodo Maha Sanmilian, Bodo hitherto consider them degraded and lower section of society realized that they also have their own identity. They can improve their condition by giving up of evil practices instead of converting themselves to other religion. These organizations create a hope among the Bodos in general and Brahma follower in particular for improving their socio-economic, educational condition. Practically Bodo Maha Sanmilian act as an agency of implementing Kalicharan's idea and belief, plans. After two-three years of its emergence Bodo Maha Sanmilian became popularized among the people. Educated Bodo's of different district supported the organization and also become the member of it.

The second conference of Bodo Maha Sanmilian was held in 1925 at Rangia of Kamrup district. In this conference the previous executive committee's member of the Sanmilian were changed. Kalicharan Brahma was replaced by Mr. Madhab Sharma of Tezpur and others member of this organization were also replaced. In this conference number of eminent personalities of the Bodos like- Sabharam Brahma, Jadav Ch. Kahlary, Ravi Kachary, Yogendra Kachary, Saha Uzir, Gopal Uzir, Durga Mauzumdar along with thousands of people from different parts of Assam and Bengal. The second Maha Sanmilian endorsed the resolution adopted in the first Maha Sanmilian in presence of Kalicharan Brahma. In addition to these they have taken three new resolutions. These are:

1. Pig should not be reared because it is an unhygienic, spoils the surrounding and cause disease.

2. Both boys and girls must be provided education equally then only the Bodo society can progress.
3. The Brahma religion should be the only religion for entire Bodo community.

The Third Bodo Maha Sanmilian was held at Roumari near Bongaigaon in 1929 and was presided over by Yadav Ch. Kaklary. This conference was attended by famous Assamese writer Ambikagiri Roy Choudhuri and Nilomani Phukan. The main objective of third conference to Maha Sabha finds out the ways for extension of Brahma Dharma amongst the Bodos. Some resolutions taken by third Bodo Maha Sanmilian are:

1. The consumption of liquor should be stopped and volunteer would move village to village and break the utensils used for making the liquor.
2. Restriction was imposed on Bodo women from going public place with unclean dress.
3. Animal sacrifices should be banned.

According to resolution of third conference the committee number and voluntaries started making from one village to another to protest against liquor making, rearing pig, animal sacrifices and to give up the outdated customs and social practices.

In spite of conference of Bodo Maha Sanmilian, Kalicharan Brahma discusses different matters related to Bodo society with the members regularly. While discussing with other people the idea of unique customary laws came in the mind of Kalicharan Brahma.

(b) Kalicharan Brahma, Customary law and Bodo Society

Custom of a society plays significant role in controlling its people's behavior since ancient time. Gradually these customs became unwritten laws and implemented by the head of society on its people for stability of society. It can be said that customary law is a society's habitual course of conduct which contains do and do not on the basis of its norms, practices and usages. For controlling and retaining the pattern of behavior of its individual it apply mechanism such taboos, sanctions, social rituals, culture etc. Customary law is a part and parcel of tribal society. Each and every tribe has its own customary law, so as to Bodo also. A set of mandatory and enforceable norms and rule of

conduct for in individual, regulate the socio- cultural and religious life of Bodos since time immemorial. Most of the members of society follow these norms, code and conduct out of fear of punishment or respect.

The customary laws of Bodo society implemented through village council (Gamini Afad) because it is the vibrant village administrative system which look after economic, political, religious and judicial matter of the village. The head of Gamini Afad or village council is Gamini Gwra or village headmen. He is the sole authority in deciding matters related to crime, misbehavior, property dispute etc.

Traditional Bodo society put taboos on some activities like social promiscuity, adultery, theft, scolding, killing of cow and dog, touching accusatory body of damsels, taking beef, meat of vulture, dog and cow beating anybody with broom etc. If anyone violates any of the above mentioned taboos then he/she will be punished. The punishment includes physical assault, fine as well as social boycott (Kokrajhar Jilla Bodo Samaj, 2005).

Bodo customary law divided misconduct or deviant behaviors into five 'Baad'. The word baad represents the act of unholiness and baadua that is sinner. The five baad of Bodo customary laws are namely-(1), Ogor baad (2), Fongslod baad (3), Daoki baad (4) Kawali baad and (5) Khoulabwr baad. Details of these are given below:

1. Ogor Baad

It is one of the major baad among the five categories of baad. Generally the activities like (a) maintaining sex relation with close kin for example cross cousin relation etc. (b) beating or killing one's father, mother, grandfather or grandmother (c) maintaining sex relation with any one (male or female) who converted to Christianity or Islamism are fall under this baad.

Bodos consider sex relation between male and female of close kin group as heinous crime. So for this crime serious punishment were imposed upon criminals. For punishing, Gamini Gwra (village headman) calls a meeting of Gamini Afad (village council). In this meeting, the headman of the village along with other elderly and influential villagers set

to decide the matter. They will listen the version of accused person and examine prove given by him. After considering all these facts, if the council found the person is guilty then village headman declare the punishment like- the acquiesced have to be naked in front of all the villagers and he was forced to drink water mixed with human's excrements, pigs and cows dung etc. Finally the man has to cross fire to make them realize their heinous crime and imprudence (Rameswar Boro, 1972).

2. Fongslod Baad

Fongslod baad means 'to stop' it is said that Bodos shut down their odious misdeed through fongslod baad in society. The activities like (a) maintaining sex relation without formal marriage, (b) if a person touches any accusatory body of a damsel and (c) if a person cuts the tail, ear, leg etc. of a cow or injuries by any means, came under fongslod baad.

Punishments for above mention crime are almost same as punishment given for the crime that fall under ogor baad except consume cow dung etc. mixed water and set on fire. In this, sometimes case may be solved by imposing fine on both the parties after considering the nature of offence and way it was committed (Premananda Moshahary, 2011).

3. Daoki Baad

In Bodo language 'dao' means bird and 'khi' means dung so daoki means birds dropping or birds dung. This baad deals with taboo related to eating. The behavior or activities fall under daoki baad are:

- (a) If a person who eats the remains of the meat eaten by vulture, dog, tiger etc.
- (b) If a person who takes food in the house of other caste or tribe which is considered lower than his/ her position.
- (c) If a person touches the breast of his younger brother's wife or the remnant of any things taken by his younger brother's wife.
- (d) If a husband sucks his wife's breast and take any food already taken by his wife.
- (e) If a person is beaten or slapped by his wife or younger brother's wife.

For these deeds Gamini Afad may impose fine on the accused person.

4. Khawali Baad

The word 'khaw' means to steal. Stealing things is a kind of offence and Bodos tried to control it by implementing 'khawali baad'. Because they believe that khawali (stealing) create disorder and disturb the entire environment of the society. This baad not only deals with theft but also some other cases. These are as follows-

- (a) If a person steals things like grave-clothes, utensils etc. offer to deceased person in burial ground or other places.
- (b) If a person beaten by broom, shoes etc. must be expedited. The person who did this if belongs to Bodo community must also expedite with fine and have to beg apology from the persons concerned.
- (c) If a person raises his/her foot to kick or hand to stick outrageous, but does not actually slap or kick has to expedite.

For the above mention crime, after judgment Gamini Afad declare punishment in the form of fine and suggest for purification. The purification of accuse persons were done in his home. A portion towards the east courtyard of the accused house are clean and four pieces of a banana leaf is place on which some rice, pair of betel-nut and 'jeowari' earthen lamp are kept. Three bows and arrow are also placed on the leaf. A water pot was brought in the place of worship and after that the headmen starts purification rituals. These purification rituals were done by three elderly villagers with the help of Douri (Premananda Moshahary, 2011).

In the meantime, after taking bath the accused kneel down in front of council to confess his or her fault and also promised not to repeat such activity again in future. Then the Douri starts to chant mantras and sprinkles water with basil. After the completion of rituals Douri takes away the oblation along with three bows and arrows to 'lamatakha' (a junction of village path) where he throws three bows and arrows. In this way purification of accused were completed.

5. Khoulbwbr Baad

The term Khoulbwbr consists of two words 'Khouga' or Khuga means mouth and 'lwbwr' means loose or light. This baad is related to people's speech. Among the Bodos telling lie talking loosely, talking recklessly against any person etc. are considered inauspicious and punishable act (Premananda Moshahary, 2011).

There is no hard and fast rule regarding punishment of these acts. In a meeting of Gamini Afad the accused confess his wrong deed and council impose fine on him. Fine amount varies according to gravity of the crime.

These are major taboos put by customary laws on Bodo people for controlling and smooth functioning of the society. Bodos believe that these five baad are imposed on them by Mwnmwn Sing Bwrai (God of Heaven). There is song related to five baad. It is like-

Thaigirni Khonga Khong Ba

Sizouni Siria Seri Ba

Bodoni Assar Khantia Fong Ba

Translation

Elephant apple has five rinds

Euphorbia splendens has five ribs

Bodos have five Baad

Among Bodos rule breaker and sinner were punished according to the nature and seriousness of their misdeeds. Along with punishment Gamini Afad also shows them the path of expiate in order to get rid of their sin. They also believe that if a person hides his sin or get involve wrong activities surreptitiously, the village deities were dissatisfied and curse the whole villagers. As a result due to misdeed of one whole innocent member of society will suffer.

In spite of all these Baad, Bodos also have number of custom related to birth, death, marriage, property, rituals and beliefs etc. Some of their customary practices and punishment system were barbaric in nature. In the name of protecting ethnic identity or protecting society from misdeed the influential person of society became dictator and exploit poor innocent people. For example practice of forcible marriage by abduction of a girl was recognized by the society. Again the customary laws and nature of punishment varies from village to village. These things made Kalicharan to think about modification and implementation of unique customary laws for all the Bodos living in Assam. Being a social reformer, he realized that some of their customary practices stood in the way of the progress of society. He also realized that one of the major hurdles in the path of development of the Bodos was their disunity. He felt that this could be reproved to a great extent, if common social laws were formed and equally implement on them. This thought leads him to work for compilation of Bodo customary law and bring it in written form. So, for consulting the matter he called general meeting of renowned Bodo persons and leaders in 1930. Several renowned persons of Bodo community participated in the meeting and elaborately discussed the matter. In the meeting a compilation committee was formed with Kalicharan Brahma as the president, Baidyanath Brahma as the secretary and Rabiram Brahma as the assistant secretary. Not only the Baidyanath Brahma, Rabiram Brahma and Jamadar Brahma but many other friends and follower also helped and supported Kalicharan Brahma for the successful completion of the task. (Kameswar Brahma, 1992)

Kalicharan Brahma devoted much of his time and energy for the compilation of customary laws. After writing first draft of the compilation, it was placed before the special conventions of the compilation committee which was held on 1931 at Simbwrgaon where the members discussed in details on the draft and gave their suggestion for modification. Accordingly second draft was prepared and again placed in front of the committee members for approval but some of the members disagreed with certain points. So, third and final draft were prepared and placed in the third convention which was held on 1932. In this meeting discussion was held on each and every topic of the draft. Kalicharan adopted a very democratic approach while preparing the draft of customary law because it would affect the entire Bodo society. Finally after a pro-long

discussion and correction of the draft it was accepted by the people present in the meeting.

The printed form of Bodo customary law with the name of 'Bodoni Pandulipi' (Bodos code of conduct) released in the fourth Bodo Mahasanmillan which was held on November 1934 in Kazigaon village (Kalicharan Brahma, 1982). After it's released, the Bodoni Pandulipi's code and conduct was implemented on the Bodos especially on the Kalicharan's followers but gradually it was accepted by the entire Bodo society irrespective of their religious faith. Bodoni Pandulipi consists of 126 code and conduct. Some of the important points are discuss below:

1. Every Bodo households have to deposit two annas (approx. twelve paisa) per annum for preaching of Brahma religion.
2. Follower of Brahma religion or the village headmen or a member of the Gamini Afad have to collect the money from every household of the village or any individual who love and respected by the villagers can also collect this fund.
3. The money collected for the religious fund should be handed over to the Secretary of the Brahma fund of the village.
4. For performing religious rituals people should take help of Brahma religious preachers. So, that ritual can be done properly and smoothly.
5. The religious preacher should try to convert the people into Brahma religion. For the same he should visit them. Additionally he should also visit those who have already accepted the Brahma religion and, by showing them the merits of this religion, should try to ensure that they are not converted into other religious faiths. Religious sermons should regularly impart to all the followers of this new faith by visiting them from time to time.
6. During the hot summer or in rainy days or on any other days, if it becomes impossible for the preacher to visit the followers then, he should not remain idle, but to keep himself busy with useful or other religious works.
7. Only an appointed Douri (a priest) has the authority to conduct marriage ceremony. He will be paid Rs. 1 for performing the task. The newly married couple will have to equally share the expenditure by paying fifty paisa each.

8. For preventing forced marriage the new customary law made present of bride's close relative in the marriage ceremony mandatory. In the absent of close relative, if Douri perform the rituals of marriage then Gamini Afad imposed fine on both the bridegroom party and Douri. They have to pay Rs. 25 and Rs.10 respectively for their conduct.
9. The followers of Brahma religion are prohibited from fermenting and consuming rice bear, in violation the accused have to pay Rs. 5 as fine.
10. Consumption of forbidden meat like beef, meat of buffalo, rat, frog, and mongoose and jungle cat is considered as a serious offence. If someone violate this he/she have to pay fine of Rs. 5.
11. There is a taboo of inter religious marriage especially marriage between Brahma and Bathou follower. However, if a bride or bridegrooms agreed to follow Brahma rituals, after marriage, on that condition marriage between Brahma and non Brahma can be solemnized.
12. Bodoni Pandulipi strictly prohibited cross cousin, parallel cousin marriage. Not only this, it also declares marriage between son and step mother, between brother in law and sister in law (marriage with wife's elder or younger sister, with brother's wife), marriage with maternal aunts and uncle is illegal. If marriage between close relative takes place then the couple must be separated and society imposed Rs. 50 as fine, at the sometime they may asked to leave the village forever. If a Douri involved with such marriage then he also considered guilty and fine imposed on him.
13. Illicit physical or sexual relationship between a boy and a girl is not permissible. For indulging in such relationship both of them will be fined equally. If boy forces the girl to commit such an act, then fine will impose on him only. He must pay a fine of Rs. 25 for ruining the girls' honor.
14. Maintaining illegitimate sex relation with relative is also declares punishable offence by Bodoni Pandulipi.
15. Category of fines for violating social rules are:
 - (a) Crime/ unexpected behavior which fall in the category of Fongslod baad have to pay fine of Rs. 10.30.

- (b) Activities fall in the category of Daoki baad then the accuse have to pay fine of Rs.13.50.
- (c) Conducts which come under the category of Ogor baad have to pay fine of Rs.25.50
16. After attending cremation ceremonies a person have subsequently purify himself by taking bath, touching rise, chewing nurzy gwran (leaf of jute plant) etc. before entering home.
 17. The obsequies rites of a deceased person should be perform after ten days of his death.
 18. Utensils or personal belongings of the deceased person have to be burnt or destroyed. The Bodoni Pandulipi also prohibit of using death persons belonging. In case of violation the accused have to purify him by performing rituals of Yajauhuti (life oblation). He also has to give fine according to the Ogor baad or Khawali baad rule.
 19. Followers of Brahma religion are not allowed to worship numerous gods and goddesses, violation of which will lead to pay fine of Rs.5. Instead they can perform ahutis, invite the preachers to deliver sermons and perform ceremonial prayer, or worship or seek blessing of god.
 20. Taking meat and wine is strictly prohibited in ceremony which is performing after harvesting. Rather prefer to distribute vegetable dish, fruits, milk, etc. In the case of violation, the organizer of festival has to pay Rs. 25 as fine.
 21. If a Brahma adopts other religion and later if he wants to come back to Brahma religion then he has to ceremonially purify himself and also pays a fine of Rs. 5. The amount of fine was deposited to the Brahma fund. After that he will accept by the Brahma follower.
 22. If society put banned on any individual because of his misconduct after consulting the matter with fellow and neighboring villagers than the particular person will not get any support from his own as well as neighboring villages too.
 23. A new preacher of Brahma religion must be select in the formal meeting of Douri's of three Mouza, educated Bodo people and other senior's preacher. The newly selected preacher should follow the instruction given him in the meeting.

24. Every Bodo village must have a common religious place that is temple or mandir, where all religious activities can perform.
25. A woman of other community or faith can marry a Brahma follower, if she too converts herself into Brahma religion. Her parents and elder brothers must hold her hands during conversion and give her away. If conversion is not possible before marriage, then her parents should give written concern for her future conversion after that the Douri perform rituals for marriage.
26. If a husband divorces his wife, he will have to pay her Rs. 100 as hangma-hangsa on the contrary, the wife divorces her husband, she also has to give him Rs. 100 as hangma-hangsa. But if society forces them to divorce each other and then both the husband and the wife have to pay a fine of Rs. 50 each.
27. If a girl is orphan then during her marriage, any relative or foster-father, or a person who employed her in his house handed over her ceremonially to bridegroom.
28. It is mandatory that a person's marriage should be conduct by his own village's Douri, in violation, a fine of Rs. 15 will be imposed on him.
29. A person is not permitted to marry a woman before her divorce. But if the person violate this rule and married a woman before her divorce then he have to pay Rs. 120 to her first husband as a fine. The woman also has to return all the money spends by her first husband during marriage. Moreover, she will have to pay an additional fine of Rs. 10 to the villagers.
30. If a Douri marriage thrice consciously, then he will have to pay a fine of Rs. 25 as because this goes against the rules of society. Henceforth, he will be banned for lifetime from performing the duties assigned to Douri.
31. In a negotiation marriage, the process of selecting bride is carried out by groom's mother along with two/three elderly women of the village. If bride is selected than grooms mother give her a pair of bangles or Rs. 2 as a sign of giving concern for marriage. But if bride's family is not agreed for the marriage then they return the bangles before finalizing the date of marriage.

32. After fixing the date of marriage, if groom refused to marry and breakup negotiation then his family has to pay fine of Rs. 10, as well as refund all other expenditures incurred by the bride's family during the negotiation process.
33. A widow is not permitted to participate any rituals and ceremonies of marriage.
34. For service marriage (gwrja haba) the youth have to render service for one year. During this period his personality, behavior and character will be examined. At the same time concern of both the boys and girls also taken whether they like each other or want to spend life together. But during initial three months of youth's service, if he fails to satisfy girl then he can leave the girls home.
35. Another provision related to service marriage is that during rendering service in the house of future father in law, if false charge or blame were imposed on youth related to his character and force him to leave the house, then girls parent have to give him Rs. 5 per month for his service as well as Rs.10 extra for breaking negotiation and Rs. 15 to Gamini Afad as fine.
36. Bodoni Pandulipi also instructed that every village must have one primary committee for conducting meeting, collection fine, donation etc. which will assist by one sub-committee. Main committee basically form by elderly people of the village. The purpose of main committee is to discuss and ensures the division of duties and responsibilities in the matter of conducting and organizing meeting. Primary level committee form under the guidance of religious leaders, Gamini Gwra, preachers and other in convene meeting which held from time to time in the village. There is no fixed tenure of primary level committee. The main duty of the committee is to collect donation and fine, organized congregation for selecting Douri. Primary level committee of each village are permitted to send maximum 15 delegate to District level or state level congregation.
37. If a person wants to adopt Brahmaism as his religious faith then he have to approach religion preacher and pay four annas (twenty five approx). This amount will be divided into two parts and one half of amount will go to the religious preacher and the other will be deposited to primary level committee fund.
38. Yojnahuti (fire oblations) should be performed on the occasion of birth, funeral ceremony or sraddh and when an individual makes atonement or penance.

39. Although there are different types of marriages among the Bodos, only three types of marriages are recognized by Bodoni Pandulipi. These three types of marriages are: through negotiations, gwrja (service marriage) and giving away by holding the hands of both the bride and groom.
40. An issueless widow can live with her in-laws and enjoy her deceased husband's property. She can transfer her husband's property in her name. But if she remarries, then she will lose her right over her deceased husband's property. In that circumstance, property will be divided into three parts and the widow will get only one part of it after remarriage.
41. After the death of a person, his children will get 50% of his property and the rest will go to his relative.
42. An issueless couple can adopt a child after performing prescribed rituals along with fire oblation (Yojnahuti). In this ceremony, the villagers also participate to bless the child.
43. In a complete joint family, if one brother died, then his share of property will be equally distributed among his son and daughter.
44. If married brothers living separately wanted to form a new joint family, then they can do so.
45. If a woman died issueless after marriage, then her husband has full rights on her property and whatever she brought during the time of marriage.
46. A. After marriage, a widow can take all the materials (ornaments, cloths, utensils, etc.) from her deceased husband's home which she got during the time of marriage. But only the children of the deceased husband can claim these materials, not else one.
- B. If an issueless widow remarries, then she has to leave all the materials in her deceased husband's house which she got from her parents during the time of marriage.
47. If a husband divorces his wife without any reason, then he has to pay Rs. 3 per month to his wife for maintenance, till she gets remarried.

48. During menstruation and the post-delivery phases, a woman should get relief from household work, till she has completely recovered.
49. A woman will be considered impure for fifteen days in the post delivery phase. In sixteenth day purification rituals should done with fire oblations (Yojnahuti).
50. If a person touches the dead body of an animal which is socially not allowed to eat like cow, dog etc. then he has to take bath to purify himself.
51. Killing cow is a serious crime. If a person did it then he should expiate himself by performing Yojnahuti and has to pay a fine of Rs. 25.50 as per the ogor baad rule.
52. Rearing of pigs, hens etc. are banded for Brahma follower. Violation will lead of fine a Rs. 5.
53. If a domestic animal die, while tied with a rope in the grazing field then owner of the animal should expiate himself by performing Yojnahuti.
54. Girls of more than fifteen years are not permitted to go market. Elderly woman and little girl are permitted.
55. Bodoni Pandulipi declares Bwisagu or the Bodo New Year, Mahalaya, Maghw Purnima and Dull Purnima are important festivals of the year.
56. If a person has illicit relation with an unmarried woman and they get a child, the person has to take the responsibility of the baby. Even if the couple claims to be get married secretly and living as husband-wife, they will not be treated as a legally married couple by the society.
57. If a couple live separately more than five years and if the woman wishes to remarry then she can approach Gamini Afad and seek permission for remarry. In this circumstance her second husband has to take the responsibility of children of her previous marriage.
58. A little portion of the daily meal has to be offered three times to the fireplace just after finishing the cooking. But before taking food people have to cheat the word 'Om Swaha' (a kind of montra). This has to be followed by the sprinkling of water using one's fingers with '*Om Shanti*' thrice. However if the meal is non-veg, no such rituals will be followed, but water collected from washing the rice

before cooking will be sprinkled over the fireplace thrice by chanting ‘*Om Swaha*’.

59. Bodoni Pandulipi declares the marriage between a boy and a girl before attaining age of 14 and twenty (20) years respectively is illegal.
60. Dead bodies of a person’s should be burned or buried. But if a child expires before attaining the age of two, then he/she should be buried and not burnt.
61. Marriage should be conducted at night in the auspicious hour according to Bengali calendar and sacred book. Marriages should not be performed during the day time.
62. The Pandulipi also directed that very children after attaining age of nine and above should be taught to recite the ‘Gayatri Mantra’ in the mornings, noons and evenings regularly.
63. In arrange marriage, except widow other woman can act as Bwirathi (perform the ritual of welcoming the bride and groom). For welcoming bridegroom it is customary that married woman by using vermilion on her forehead and wearing nose ring, new dokhwana (Bodo traditional dress) perform welcome rituals.
64. The marriage expenditure is mutually discussed between the family members of the bride and groom. Generally, the bride’s parents are not entitled to claim any money from groom’s family for wedding ceremony.
65. A person suffering from leprosy, TB, epilepsy or any other incurable diseases should refrain from marriage. But after the negotiation of a marriage, either the bride or the groom is found to suffer from any such incurable diseases then the negotiations will stand as null and void. For breaking-off the negotiations at this stage, the concerned parties will not be liable to pay any fine.
66. Religious preacher directed to maintain register for newly converted Brahmas and collect their thumb impression.
67. A person can remarry if his wife suffers from some incurable disease like TB, leprosy, etc.
68. During a Sraddh or a funeral ceremony, Gamchas are generally distributed among the poor and needy, for the peace of the departed soul.

69. In order to provide recognition and respect to the mother tongue, books should be written in Bodo language. Additionally, the said language should be taught in the schools and everybody should speak in Bodo language to ensure its development and enrichment.
70. Bodoni Pandulipi also instructed that all religious song, hymns etc. should be sung in Bodo language.
71. Every Douri must maintain a formal register. In which he has to note down details of marriage conducted by him like date of marriage, name and address of bride and groom etc.

These are some important code and conducts of Bodoni Pandulipi. It was implemented with a great hope in 1934 for improvement of the condition of Bodos. The Pandulipi was implemented for the Brahma follower only but later with certain modification Bodos belonging to other religion started to follow it. Though it was not legally codified but it prescribed do's and do not which traditionally followed by the Bodos. It is interesting that though Brahma religion is not universally accepted by the Bodos but irrespective of religion faith code and conduct of Bodoni Pandulipi are followed by them.

The Pandulipi is no doubt an important piece of legal instrument to maintain discipline and order in Bodo society which is beyond the reach of normal judiciary of the state. Then after independence however, the Pandulipi was in conflict with certain provisions of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) and therefore, on the enforcement of IPC and CrPC in the Bodo areas, the Pandulipi became redundant and it faded away silently. Still it acted as a customary law and a piece of judicial instrument in Bodo society for a long time before the judicial system of the British Government was enforced in the Bodo inhabited areas (Bidyasagar Narzary & Malabika Mitra, 2005).

The Bodoni Pandulipi implemented near seventy-five years ago according to the need of then Bodo society especially Brahma followers. But with the passes of time lots of change occurs in the country's socio-economic, political sphere which effect all the communities and ethnic groups. So, lots of change came in Bodo society also. With this changing environment number of code and conduct of Bodoni Pandulipi appeared

meaningless. Like restriction on young girls for visiting markets, raring pig, taking wine, fine imposed for various misconduct is too less in present time. Practically, large numbers of people of contemporary Bodo society are not following number of code and conduct which was written in ‘Bodoni Pandulipi.’

Though major modification of Pandulipi is not done yet but practically change came in the implementation of code and conduct, for example amount fine. Now, different village charge different amount of fine for violating social rules. For understanding the impact of Bodoni Pandulipi, the responds are asked several questions. These are discuss bellow-

Knowledge about Bodoni Pandulipi

As Pandulipi was implemented in 1934 at that time most of the respondents were not born. So, they were asked whether they are aware about it or not.

Table No. 5.02: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of their awareness about Bodoni Pandulipi.

Awareness	Villages						Grand Total
	Respondents						
	Kazigaon	Gombiraghat	Malighoi	Gombrikhata	Harjhora	Bongshijhora	
Yes	45 (90%)	37 (74%)	42 (84%)	39 (78%)	34 (68%)	41 (82%)	238 (79.33%)
No	05 (10%)	13 (26%)	08 (16%)	11 (22%)	16 (32%)	09 (18%)	62 (20.67%)
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	300 (100%)

Source: Field study conducted during on May 2012 - January 2015.

The above table shows that 79.33% respondents are awareness about Bodoni Pandulipi and 20.67% are not aware. Village wise 90% respondents of Kazigaon, 84% of Malighoi, 82% of Bongshijhora, 78% of Gombrikhata, 74% of Gombiraghat and 68% of Harjhora are aware about Bodo Pandulipi, whereas 32% respondents Harjhora, 26% of Gombiraghat, 22% of Gombrikhata, 18% of Bongshijhora, 16% and 10% respondents Malighoi and Kazigaon are not aware of Bodoni Pandulipi. Though they not aware

Pandulipi by name but they have full knowledge about rules and regulation of their society. Some of the respondents are of the view that certain rules and regulation too strict or have no meaning. They said that according to requirement of contemporary society there is a need to bring change on the code and conduct of their customary laws. Their views are more clearly express in following table:

Table No. 5.03: Distribution of respondents on the basis of their view regarding modification of customary law or Bodoni Pandulipi.

Modification	Villages Respondents						Grand Total
	Kazigaon	Gombiraghat	Maliaghoi	Gombrikhata	Harjhora	Bongshijhora	
	No Modification	40 (80%)	37 (74%)	42 (84%)	39 (78%)	34 (68%)	
Partially Modification	05 (10%)	10 (20%)	04 (8%)	7 (14%)	10 (20%)	07 (14%)	43 (14.33%)
Total Modification	05 (10%)	03 (6%)	04 (8%)	4 (8%)	6 (12%)	02 (4%)	24 (8%)
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	300 (100%)

Source: Field study conducted during on May 2012 - January 2015.

From above data it appears that a 77.67% respondent does not want any modification to customary law, 14.33% respondents want partial modification and 8% want total modification of customary law. Village wise, fourth fifth respondents of Kazigaon, Malighoi, Bongshijhora, Gombrikhata, Gombiraghat and three fifth respondents of Harjhora does not want any modification in Bodoni Pandulipi, whereas nearly one fifth respondents of these six villages want partial modification and a negligible percent of respondents of these villages want total modification of Bodoni Pandulipi. This rise further interest to know what code and conduct they want to modify. The following table makes it clear:

Table No. 5.04: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of the nature of Modification they want in Pandulipi.

Code and conduct to modify	Villages						Grand Total
	Respondents						
	Kazigao n	Gombiragh at	Maliagh oi	Gombrikhata	Harjhora	Bongshijh ora	
Fine Amount	01 (9.09%)	02 (18.18%)	01 (9.09%)	01 (9.09%)	01 (9.09%)	01 (8.33%)	07 (10.44%)
Laws related drinking wine and food	04 (36.36%)	03 (27.27%)	04 (36.36%)	04 (36.36%)	03 (27.27%)	05 (41.67%)	23 (34.32%)
Laws related inter caste marriage	03 (27.27%)	04 (36.36%)	03 (27.27%)	04 (36.36%)	05 (45.45%)	05 (41.67%)	24 (35.82%)
Fine amount and fee of Douri	03 (27.27%)	03 (27.27%)	03 (27.27%)	02 (18.18%)	02 (18.18%)	01 (8.33%)	14 (20.90%)
Total	11 (100%)	11 (100%)	11 (100%)	11 (100%)	11 (100%)	12 (100%)	67 (100%)

Source: Field study conducted during on May 2012 - January 2015.

The above data shows that people want modification of various codes and conduct of Bodoni Pandulipi. 35.82% respondents want modification of tabbos imposed on caste-tribe and inter-tribe marriage, 34.32% respondents want modification of code and conduct related to foods and drinks, 20.90% respondents want modification of laws related to fine and fee of Douris and 10.44% respondents want modification of fine amount only.

The respondents is of the view that fine amount is too less which will make no difference on the conduct of offender. Mr. Bijay Brahma, fifty four (54) years old of Harjhora said that it became impossible for the youth of contemporary society to follow the food restriction imposed by Bodoni Pandulipi. He also said that the restriction on drinking wine can be imposed for especial occasion like birth, death and marriage rituals, for festival etc. But it is impossible for them to follow it in day to day life.

Regarding laws related to marriage Mr. Haita Brahma 62 of Kazigaon argued that though it is not good to marry outside the community but at the same time it is impossible to control young people. Now a day they are going outside the village, for study and job, so possibility increase for inter community marriage. Instead of bond inter community marriage there is a need to find out the solution how to accept inter-community married couple in the society. He also said that with the change of society certain change also needed in Pandulipi. Though they want modification but they do not want to reject it completely.

(c) Kalicharan Brahma: A Champion of Bodo Education

Kalicharan Brahma was not only a social and religious reformer but also a great educational reformer. He believed that without education, upliftment of Bodo society is not possible. So, he advocated the introduction of Western ideology based education system in Bodo society. He also realized that the main hurdle for educating Bodos is the paucity of schools in the Bodo dominated areas on the one hand and parents reluctance of sending their children to school on the other. But, some Christian missionaries took initiative to improve educational condition of Bodos in Darang district. By watching all this Kalicharan devoted himself with unfailing zeal and determination to spread education among the Bodos. In this regard he communicated and met with Deputy Commissioner of Goalpara district, Mr. A.J. Laine in 1912 and discussed in details about the possibility of establishing school in Bodo dominated areas of the district (M.K. Brahma, 2001). Mr. A.J. Laine informed chief commissioner of Assam Mr. Archdale Earle while he visited Dubri in 1912 (R. Muchahary, 1997). Later Kalicharan met with Mr. Archdale Earle and explained the need of school in his locality. Mr. Archdale Earle at last convinced by the explanation of Kalicharan and he had also interested in imparting education, so he grant Rs. 30,000 (thirty thousand) for construction of Middle English School at Tipkai with two vocational course. The School, established in 1912, but weaving class started at the house of Mr. Chaburam Brahma of Malitijhora. After the completion of school building Mr. A.J. Laine formally inaugurated it on 1913 (Narzary and Mitra, 2004)

As a result educational process began in Kazigaon areas. But Kalicharan’s dream was much broader than establishing one school. So, he planned to work for opening more school as well as convinced the people to send their children to school for education. Not only this, he was convinced that Bodo villages situated in remote part, so far educating them there is a need to establish hostel for student. To facilitate school going Bodo students, Kalicharan established two hostel namely Brahma Boarding in Dubhri in 1896 and Mes Boarding. These hostels were constructed by the contributions of the landlords of the area. These hostels, particularly, the “Brahma Boarding”, produced quite a good number of progressive Bodo intellectuals, who became faithful associates of Kalicharan Brahma, in his struggle for reforms and regeneration of the Bodo society. In the later years, many of them emerged as prominent social workers and successful politicians. (Ajit Boro, 2010).

Gradually Kalicharan’s effort brought result as contemporary Bodo society produced large number highly qualified youths and they hold number of responsible posts in government and non government sectors. Though overall literacy level of Bodos is lower than national average but in comparison to pre-independence period it is much better.

Table No. 5.05 Distribution for the Respondents on the basis of their Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	Villages												Grand Total
	Respondents												
	Kazigaon		Gombiraghat		Maliaghoi		Gombrikhat		Harjhora		Bongshijhora		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Illiterate	01(2%)	03(6%)	01(2%)	02(4%)	01(2%)	02(4%)	01(2%)	03(6%)	02(4%)	01(2%)	02(4%)	02(4%)	21 (7%)
Primary	03(6%)	01(2%)	03(6%)	02(4%)	04(8%)	02(4%)	03(6%)	01(2%)	02(4%)	02(4%)	02(4%)	02(4%)	27 (9%)
Middle School	05(10%)	03(6%)	06(12%)	02(4%)	05(10%)	03(6%)	05(10%)	03(6%)	05(10%)	03(6%)	06(12%)	02(4%)	48 (16%)
High School	06(12%)	05(10%)	06(12%)	04(8%)	06(12%)	03(6%)	05(10%)	05(10%)	07(14%)	04(8%)	06(12%)	04(8%)	61 (20.33%)

I	%)	%)	%))	%))	%)	%)	%))	%)))
HSLC	05 (10)	02 (4%)	04 (8%)	02 (4%)	05 (10)	02 (4%)	04 (8%)	02 (4%)	03 (6%)	03 (6%)	03 (6%)	03 (6%)	38 (12.67%)
HS	05 (10)	03 (6%)	05 (10)	03 (6%)	05 (10)	02 (4%)	05 (10)	04 (8%)	04 (8%)	02 (4%)	06 (12)	03 (6%)	47 (15.67%)
Gradu ate	03 (6%)	01 (2%)	04 (8%)	02 (4%)	04 (8%)	02 (4%)	03 (6%)	02 (4%)	05 (10)	03 (6%)	04 (8%)	01 (2%)	34 (11.33%)
Post- Gradu ate	03 (6%)	01 (2%)	03 (6%)	01 (2%)	03 (6%)	01 (2%)	02 (4%)	02 (4%)	02 (4%)	02 (4%)	03 (6%)	01 (2%)	24 (8%)
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	300 (100%)

Source- Field study during May, 2012 - December 2015

The above data give a very clear picture about the educational qualification of male and female population of these villages. 17% respondents educated up to high school level out of which 8.33% male and 9.33% female, followed by 14.33% and 14.67% are educated up to High school leaving certificate and higher secondary level respectively, out of which 10% male and 4.33% female educated up to high school leaving certificate level and 8.33% male 6.33% female up to higher secondary level. 13.67% educated up to middle school level out of which 8.67% male and 5% one female, 10% respondents educated up to graduate level out of which 7% male and 3% female, 9.67% are educated up to Primary level out of which 6% male and 3.67% are female, 4% respondent educated up to post graduate level out of which 2.67% male and 1.33% female and 16% respondents of these villages are illiterate out of which 7.33% male 8.67 are female.

The analysis shows that literary is predominant of these villages. Education of these villages ranges from primary to post graduate level and gender gap are found is regards to educational qualification.

(d) Contribution to Language and Literature

Kalicharan's contribution to literature is very highly valuable. Though initially he was interested in introducing Assamese as a medium of instruction in all school of Bodo dominated areas instead of Bengali. Because he thought that in Assam, the language of instruction should be Assamese. It will facilitate Bodo, because they are much familiar

with Assamese language than Bengali. He also pleaded for the teaching of the Bodo student in English language (R. N. Moshahary, 1997).

For introducing Assamese as a medium of instruction in Tipkai M. E school. Kalicharan visited Goalpara district and approached district authority. Finally authority agreed and in 1917, Assamese was introduced as medium of instruction in Tipkai Middle English School. Later part of his life Kalicharan realized the important of mother tongue and he advocated for the development and implemented Bodo language in literature and writing. He first tried to create awareness among the people about writing culture. Though Bodos has long tradition of oral literature but history of written literature is not so old. Mainly due to the effort of Christian Missionary in the 19th century written literature of Bodo language emerge. Sidney Endle is the pioneer of Bodo literature. His book '**An outline Grammar of Kochari Language**' published in 1884 is considered the earliest work on Bodo language. Apart from this, effort had been made by Kalicharan Brahma to revive the traditional Bodo folk lore. His song "*Honwi Sanjaha Swrang Jabai.....*" (Look the sun has risen in the East...) is one of the pioneering work Bodo language and literature. Apart from his socio-religious reform movement, he made immense contribution of developing and regenerating Bodo literature. From this noble work, Kalicharan was helped and supported by number of people like Charan Mandal, Jamadar Brahma, Karan Mandal, Dhwijendra Nath Brahma Chowdhury, Kumar Brahma, Malsing Brahma Chowdhury, Satish Chandra Basumatary and others.

The South Goalpara was the place where educated sections of Bodo society contributed more for the development of Bodo literature. Kalicharan Brahma also visited South Goalpara for propagation of Brahma faith where he could influence some of the educated youths to carry forward his ideas. First Bodo literary organization 'Dakshinkul Bodo Sahtya Sanmillan' was formed in 1918 South Goalpara and made immense contribution to the Bodo literature.

'Howraghat Bodo Sanmilani' which was founded in 1912 in South Goal para was the first Bodo organization. Ganga Charan Patgiri's '*Baroni Fisa o Ayen*' (1915) was the first published booklet of the Bodos written under the guidance of Howraghat Bodo

Sanmilani. Prasanna Kumar Khakhlary's written dramas were very popular among the Bodos like Daokha Rajani Jaan, Hirimdwi, Baroni Rajafwr, Bardwi Sihla, and Ahom-Baroni Daoha. Ananda Brahma's publications include Hiranyasksha, Madhum, Raha Daoha and lyrical compositions. Writers of this period used Assamese script.

The history of Bodo literature can be divided into three (3) phases. First phase from 1906-1919, second phase from 1920-1951 and third phase from 1952 to present period. The 19th century of Bodo literature was the handiwork of Christian Missionaries. The first phase 1906-1919, the Bodo literature was influenced by Kalicharan Brahma's reform movement and its section of South Goalpara writer. The second phase lead by 'Bodo Chattra Sanmillani' and the third phase or contemporary phase of Bodo literature began with the birth of Bodo Sahitya Sabha in 1952. It was Kalicharan Brahma who took initiative step and went to Goalpara t for introducing Assamese language as medium of instruction in all schools. Before that Bodos have to study in Bengali instruction till 1916 (M.R. Lahary, 1984).

The formation of the '**Bodo Sahitya Sabha**' on November 16, 1952, which was an offshoot of the '**Bodo Club**', may be considered as a significant achievement of the Bodo intellectuals. Its formation heralded a new era in the history of Bodo literature. In fact, with the formation of the Sahitya Sabha, the Bodo awakening transformed itself into a movement for linguistic identity. It formulated programmes which were primarily guided by their search for a separate identity or often in response to the challenges posed by the Assamese counter.

The post 1952 Bodo search for linguistic identity was invariably accompanied by Bodo intellectuals fear for Assamese domination. For instance, Bodo Sahitya Sabha's move for the introduction of Bodo as the medium of instruction in the schools of Bodo dominated areas and ultimately, Bodo language was introduced as the medium of instruction in the Bodo majority areas in 1963 (M.R. Lahary, 1984).

Likewise, the Sahitya Sabha responded to the Assamese language movement of 1972, launching agitation for Roman script for Bodo medium schools. Though the movement ended in acceptance of the Devanagari script, Bodo intellectuals appeared to have been

more consoled rather than falling back on Assamese script, which had hitherto been in use in Bodo medium schools (M.R. Lahary, 1984).

With this sentiment in their minds, the Bodo intellectuals continued their language movement. In 1977, after prolonged agitation, Bodo was declared as one of the major Indian Languages, to be taught in the colleges under Gauhati University. Then in 1985, the much awaited declaration from the State Government recognizing Bodo as an Associate Official Language of the State. Yet another achievement was made in February 10, 2003, when by the terms of the Bodoland Territorial Council Accord, Bodo language was included in the Eight Schedule of Indian Constitution (Binay Kr. Brahma, 2008).

In the chronology of Bodo literature, the poetry appears to have preceded the prose. For instance, the *Khonthai Methai*, which is a collection of poems, published in 1923, appears to be the first printed Bodo literature. The poems compiled in there were contributed by Modaram Brahma, Rupnath Brahma, Satish Chandra Basumatari, Ratiram Brahma and Suren Brahma. Close to the heel of the *Khonthai Methai* was another book of poems *Gudi Sibsa Aro Aroj*, which was composed by Modaram Brahma and published in 1926. Edited by P. C. Brahma and published in 1924, the *Hathorkhi-Hala* was another great collection of poems, contributed by Iswan Mosahari, Anandaram Mosahari, Kali Kumar Lahari, Munindra Champramari and P. C. Brahma himself (M.R. Lahary, 1984).

The poems compiled therein are the examples of great poetic creations of that time. Particularly, the poems composed by Iswan Chandra Muchahary, who, with all his romanticism, is often regarded as the John Keats of Bodo literature, gave the best of his poetic imagination. His poems compiled in *Phami*, are the greatest Bodo poems of that time and they stand out as romantic poems par excellence even this day. The *Gudi Sibsa Aro Aroj* was followed by the publication of the popular Bodo journal *Bibar* published in 1924, the *Bibar* becomes the second in the chronology of Bodo literature.

The First literary magazine ‘Bibar’ (The Flower) emerge under the patronize of Kalicharan Brahma in 1919. The first issue of *Bibar* came out in hand written form but from second issue it started to come out in printed form. Basically those who associated Kalicharan during compilation of Bodoni Pandulipi, Kalicharan insisted them for writing

some prose, poetry in Bodo language and also told them to make it habit for enriching Bodo literature. The founder editor of *Bibar* was Satish Chandra Basumatary was also one of the active members of the formation of Tribal League in 1933 (Brahma, 1992).

But the *Bibar*, with its varieties in content, became popular among the literate circles of the community. The *Bibar*, with all its popularity, became the mouth-piece of the emerging Bodo intellectuals. Besides giving vent to the creative talents of the Bodo intellectuals, this journal became instrumental in voicing the sentiments of the Bodos who were increasingly becoming more conscious of their socio-political condition. The *Bibar* through its writing tried to raise the sentiment of reviving the ancient glory of Bodo society (M.R. Lahary, 1984).

The critics of Bodo literature argued that *Bibar* is the first mile-stone of Bodo literature. This journal was followed by a large number of literary works in the forms of both prose and poetry. The important magazines of this period were *Jenthokha*, edited by Satish Chandra Basumatari, *Olongbar*, edited by Promod Chandra Brahma and *Nayak* (1942), edited by M K Brahma and Jogen Hazarika (M.R. Lahary, 1984).

Though most of the Bodo authors and contributors were the beginners at that time, their writings appear to have had great value in so far as the situation and sentiment of the community were concerned. They were the expressions of the emerging subjective self-consciousness, goaded by the prevailing objective conditions rooted in the socio-economic and political situations of the community.

The literary works of this period, acted as a two edged sword for the Bodo community. The creative talents of the Bodo writers contributed the growth of the Bodo language and literature on the one hand and it became instrumental for inculcation of socio-economic and political consciousness among the members of this community on the other hand.

The emerging Bodo intellectuals expressed themselves in the literatures of their times. Though scanty in the beginning, they grew out of sheer necessity and with spontaneity, unaided by any previous literary citadel. They were the products of historical, social, political and cultural necessities, coupled with the urge of Bodo intellectuals to give vent

to their creative talents. The literature of this period consisted of journals, periodicals and souvenirs which were published to commemorate different occasions. The major theme of the early literary works was the exposition of the backwardness of this community as well as eradication of the social evils prevailing in Bodo society, together with inculcation of self-consciousness by highlighting the ancient glory of this nationality.

Not only first phase of Bodo literature influence by Kalicharan Brahma but other phase also directly or indirectly enrich by Kalicharan's idea and thought. Kalicharan Brahma's compilation of 'Bodoni Pandulipi' in Bodo language not only contributes to social reformation but also developed the prose writing in Bodo language. In his compilation he made it is customary to respect and recognition of mother tongue. He also instructed that book should be written in Bodo language and medium of instruction of school should be Bodo in nature. Pandulipi also made the rule that all religious song, hymns etc. should be sung in Bodo language.

Today Bodo literature started to flourish like any other advance society's literature. Contemporary Bodo society has number of periodicals and journals like: Boro Lirtum Bilai (1950), Arangni Lajjam (1957), Drama and Prose collection, Poetry collection, novels etc. A large number of Bodo whether he lives in rural or urban area contributed for enriching the literature till today. Some people of studied village also developed writings skill which serves two purposes like-it enrich Bodo literature on the one hand and encourage the creativity of the people. Following table make it clear:

Table No. 5.06 Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of contribution to Literature.

Contribution	Villages						Grand Total (%)
	Respondents						
	Kazigaon	Gombiraghat	Maliaghoi	Gombrikhata	Harjhora	Bongshihjora	
Writing Prose	02 (4%)	-	01 (2%)	01 (2%)	-	-	04 (1.33%)
Writing Poetry	02 (4%)	01 (2%)	01 (2%)	01 (2%)	-	01 (2%)	06 (2%)

Writing Short Story	03 (6%)	02 (4%)	-	01 (2%)	-	01 (2%)	07 (2.33%)
Not writing	43 (86%)	47 (94%)	48 (96%)	47 (94%)	50 (100%)	48 (96%)	283 (94.33%)
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	300 (100%)

Source: Field study conducted during May 2012-January 2015

The table reveals that 94.33% respondents are not written any literature, 2.33% respondents has written short story, 2% respondents has written poetry and 1.33% respondents has written prose to contribute to literature. Village wise 4% respondents of Kazigaon, 2% respondents of each Maliaghoi and Gombrikhata has written some prose and publish little magazine,, 4% respondents of Kazigaon, 2% respondents of each Gombiraghat, Maliaghoi, Gombrikhata and Bongshijhora has written poetry and also published it, 6% respondents of Kazigaon, 4% respondents of Gombiraghat, 2% respondents of each Gombrikhata and Bongshijhora has written short story whereas 100% respondents of Harjhora, 96% respondents of each Maliaghoi, Bongshijhora, 94% respondents of each Gombiraghat and Gombrikhata and 86% respondents of Kazigaon does not have any writing skill to contribute.

For enriching Bodo literature All Bodo Students Union annually published magazine. This union works at Central, District and Anchalik level. The Anchalik level committee is formed mainly 15-20 villages. Along with other work Anchalik Committee also published yearly magazine with the contribution of the people of its villages. The entire studied villages came under Kazigaon Anchalik committee ABSU. So, it gives the opportunity to the villagers for publishing their work.

(e) Kalicharan Brahma's Contribution to Economic Development

Poverty was the predominant feature of Bodo society during the time of Kalicharan Brahma. It was mainly due to excessive dependency on traditional occupation like agriculture and hunting. Hardly any people engaged in business and other occupation because fear of insecurity they were reluctant to adopt any new occupation. As a result,

Bodos were not socially but economically backward. Being a successful business man, Kalicharan also wanted more and more Bodo should come forward and start business. But when he practically tried to implements the idea, he found that shortage of capital was the main hurdles for starting business by the Bodos. So he decided provide financial aid to those who want to start timber business. For this, he established 'Brahma Company' in 1912 with an object to provide financial assistance to the Bodo timber merchant. The company was formed by three (3) members, one president, one secretary and one cashier. Kalicharan made the rules and regulation that if someone want to be a member of the company then he have to buy a share of Rs. 50 of the company, so that fund can be generated for providing loan to those timber merchant who are in financial crisis.

Birnarayan Brahma was appointed as the first manager of Brahma Company. Kalicharan was so busy with preaching and spreading Brahma religion and not taken any pot-polio of the company. But due to anomalies and corruption along with misappropriation of money by the employee soon bring the end of the company.

After the failure of Brahma Company, Kalicharan made another organization in 1925 name 'Gram Hiteisi Samiti' (village welfare society). The aims of this organization were:

- (i) Spiritual and social reformation
- (ii) Economic progress

The Gram Hiteishi Samiti decided to provide monetary help to poor farmers, so that they can purchase agricultural equipments, livestock, seeds etc. This programme was more effective and helped the poor farmers of Kazigaon and nearby villages and soon gets popularity. The office bearers of that samiti travelled one village to another village and educate the farmers about modern agricultural method, rotation of crops, etc. The Gram Hiteishi Samiti opens their branches in several Bodo villages.

Kalichran established another organization by the name of 'Ryot Sabhas' in Kazigaon village. He was the President of this sabha and members were drowning from poor section of farmer of the village. The aims and objectives of the organization were similar

with 'Gram Hiteisi Samiti'. Only difference is that the Ryot Sabha called the meeting where its member cognate together and discuss various problem faced by them and try to find out the solution. Besides improving the condition of poor farmer, the sabha started to develop mutual fund on the donation of member for proving learn to them in their need.

(f) Kalicharan Brahmas Contribution to Political Development

Kalicharan realized that all his effort for socio-economic and religious development of Bodos would not bring fruitful result unless it mobilized politically on the one hand and participating Bodo people in decision making process on the other hand. In this regard he also undertook programs for creating political consciousness among Bodos. However, Kalicharan Brahma's vision for development was not confined to Bodos only. He also encouraged other tribes to move towards the path of development. The "Assam Plains Tribal League", one of the earliest tribal political parties of Assam, was formed in 1930 in his inspiration. This party demanded reservation of seats for the tribals in Assam assembly. However, Kalicharan Brahma's great political wisdom is revealed in his famous memorandum submitted to the Simon Commission in Shillong. Simon Commission, group appointed in November 1927 by the British Conservative government under Stanley Baldwin to report on the working of the Indian constitution established by the Government of India Act of 1919. The commission consisted of seven members four Conservatives, two Labourites, and one Liberal under the joint chairmanship of the distinguished Liberal lawyer, Sir John Simon, and Clement Attlee, the future prime minister. Its composition met with a storm of criticism in India because Indians were excluded from it. (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Simon-Commission> Accessed on 11 April, 2015).

The Royal Notification served throughout the Indian Domain in March 6, 1928 called for memoranda to be submitted to the Commission. The Bodos too submitted memoranda through different organizations of their community. A delegation of six members lead by Kalicharan Brahma met the commission on 4th January 1929 and submitted a memorandum containing twelve (12) point of demand on behalf of entire Bodo community. While submitting memorandum Jadab Kaklary of Assam Kochari Yuba

Sanmellan, act as a communicator between the team and commission because he was the only person who knew English. The memorandum urged the Government to grant a separate electorate for the Bodo-Kachari community both in the Assembly and local board elections, to provide compulsory free primary education to the students of this community. Special representation of Bodo and other tribes in Assam Legislative Council and local bodies, retention of Goalpara district as part and parcel of Assam, creation of a sub-division of Dhubri district either at Kokrajhar or at Haltugaon, inclusion of Bodos in schedule tribe category, providing special employment and educational opportunities to Bodos, providing Bodo children with free and compulsory pre-primary education and scholarship, creation of Bodo regiment in Indian Army etc. The memorandum submitted by Kalicharan Brahma acted as Panacea to the problems that inflicted the Bodos and other tribes (Ajit Boro, 2005).

The memoranda also appealed the Government not to transfer Assam to Bengal province and recommended for a single chamber ministry for Assam. The memoranda submitted by the Bodo-Kachari organizations however did not receive due response from the Government. Intellectuals, who have gone through the original report of the Commission, sense foul-play by an Assamese member, who was entrusted with the responsibility of receiving the memoranda from the organizations. However, the memorandum submitted by the Provincial Government redressed Bodo grievances to some extent.

Despite initial disappointment, the visit of the Simon Commission opened up a new vista of political venture for the Bodo intelligentsia. Submission of the memoranda had already shown the degree of their political consciousness. Their political aspirations grew even more when the Government of India announced its decision to reorganize the administration of India on the principle of self-government and provincial autonomy (Manik Kr. Brahma, 2001).

A group of Bodo intellectuals prepared themselves to share the outcome of the recommendations of the Simon Commission. Kalichran Brahma together with other plains tribal leaders formed a political organization known as the Tribal League in 1933 to participate in the forth-coming election. The Tribal League remained the only political

platform of the plains tribals till its transformation into a socio-cultural organization after the Independence.

Meanwhile the Indian Act of 1935 announced 5 (five) reserved seats in the State Assembly for the plains tribals. After the 1937 election, the Tribal League formed coalition Government along with the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee in 1939, and the other with the Assam Muslim League in 1940. The prime objectives of the League leaders, majority were Bodos, they have to secure constitutional safeguard of the economic and political interests of the plains tribal communities through the continuance of the separate electorate for them, to form reserved constituencies and to treat all the tribals, irrespective of their religions, as one separate class (Roopnarayan Muchahary, 1997).

After the Independence, the League leaders transformed the Tribal League into a socio-cultural organization known as the “**Tribal Sangha**”, thinking that the Independences government would address their grievances without having to go for political movements; Bodo leaders like Rupnath Brahma, Dharanidhar Basumatari, Rabindra Kachari and others joined Congress, and were able to come in political forefront of the State.

Now, the Bodo community has their own political party i.e. Bodoland Progressive Front (B.P.F), Bodoland Progressive People Front (BP.P.F) and newly form United Peoples Party (U.P.P). The plain tribal people have reserve seat for Member of Parliament (M.P.) and Member of Legislative Assembly (M.L.A.). This was happened only for kalicharan Brahma’s hard work and initiative taken by him and also their fellow workers.

The Bodos are more politically conscious now than ever. Large number of them participate political activities either by casting of vote, contesting election and work for political party during the election. This can be more clearly explained with the help of following tables:

Table No. 5.07 Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of Vote casting in Council, Assembly or Parliament election.

Vote Caste d	Villages						Grand Total And Percenta ge
	Respondents						
	Kaziga on	Gombirag hat	Maliagh oi	Gombrikh ata	Harjho ra	Bongshijho ra	
Yes	39 (78%)	41 (82%)	38 (76%)	37 (74%)	42 (84%)	40 (80%)	237 (79%)
No	11 (22%)	09 (18%)	12 (24%)	13 (26%)	08 (16%)	10 (20%)	63 (21%)
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	300 (100%)

Source- Field study during May, 2012 - December 2015

The above table shows that 79% respondents are cast their vote in Council, Assembly and Parliament election and 21% respondents are not cast their vote in any election process. Village wise forth fifth respondents of Harjhora, Gombiraghat, Bongshijhora, Kazigaon and Maliaghoi and three fourth respondents of Gombrikhata are cast their vote in Council, Assembly and Parliament election whereas near one fifth respondents of Gombrikhata, 24% Maliaghoi, 22% Kazigaon, 20% Bongshijhora, 18% Gombiraghat and 16% respondents of Harjhora are not cast their vote in any election process. So, it is found that a large number of people from these villages participate in political process by implementing their right to vote. So, it creates further interest to know the motivating factor behind participation in election process. This will be cleared from following table:

Table No. 5.08 Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of motivattion for vote casting.

Motivat ed by	Villages						Grand Total (%)
	Respondents						
	Kaziga on	Gombirag hat	Maliagh oi	Gombrikh ata	Harjho ra	Bongshijh ora	
Self	16 (32%)	19 (38%)	15 (30%)	17 (34%)	19 (38%)	17 (34%)	103 (43.45 %)
Husban d, father and son	11 (22%)	11 (22%)	09 (18%)	08 (16%)	13 (26%)	11 (22%)	63 (26.58 %)
Political	07	04	08	04	05	06	34

Party	(14%)	(8%)	(16%)	(8%)	(10%)	(12%)	(14.34%)
Village Head	05 (10%)	07 (14%)	06 (12%)	08 (16%)	05 (10%)	06 (12%)	37 (15.61%)
Total	39 (100%)	41 (100%)	38 (100%)	37 (100%)	42 (100%)	40 (100%)	237 (100%)

Source- Field study during May, 2012 - December 2015

The above table shows that 43.45% respondents are self motivated, 26.58% respondents are motivated by their husband, father, and son, 15.61% respondents are motivated by village headmen 14.34% respondents are motivated by political party. 38% respondent of each Gombiraghat and Harjhora, 34% respondent of each Gombrikhata and Bongshijhora, 32% respondent of Kazigaon and 30% respondent of Maliaghoi are self motivated, 26% respondents of Harjhora, 22% respondent of each Kazigaon, Gombiraghat and Bongshijhora, 18% respondent of Maliaghoi and 16% respondent of Gombiraghat are motivated by husband, father, and son. 16% respondents of Maliaghoi, 14% respondents of Kazigaon, 12% respondents of Bongshijhora, 10% respondents of Harjhora and 8% respondents of each Gombiraghat, and Gombrikhata are motivated by political party leaders and finally 16% respondents of Gombrikhata, 14% respondents of Gombiraghat, 12% respondents of each Maliaghoi and Bongshijhora and 1% each Kazigaon and Harjhora are motivated by village headmen. So, it appears that behind their huge participation in election process some motivational factor plays significant role. Political consciousness of the people can be better understood from their tendency of canting local, state and national level election. It is shown in following table:

Table No. 5.09 Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of contesting election

Contest election	Villages						Grand Total (%)
	Respondents						
	Kazigaon	Gombiraghat	Maliaghoi	Gombrikhata	Harjhora	Bongshijhora	
Yes	2 (4%)	-	-	-	-	-	2 (4%)
No	48 (96%)	50	50	50	50	50	298
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	300 (100%)

Source- Field study during May, 2012 - December 2015

The above data indicates that though large numbers of people casted their vote in election process but very less are actively participate in political process. Only two respondents of Kazigaon contest for the membership of VCDC (Village Council Development Committee) and none of the respondents of other five village contest election.

Membership of Political Party

When the villagers are asked whether they are member of any political party then most of them are not ready to disclose the name of party. Only they said whether they are formal member or not.

Table No. 5.10 Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of Membership in Political Parties.

Member of Political Party	Villages Respondents						Grand Total (%)
	Kazigaon	Gombiraghat	Maliaghoi	Gombrikhata	Harjhora	Bongshijhora	
Yes	03 (6%)	-	01 (2%)	01 (2%)	-	01 (2%)	6 (2%)
No	47 (94%)	50 (100%)	49 (98%)	49 (98%)	50 (100%)	49 (98%)	294 (98%)
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	300 (100%)

Source: Field study conducted during on May 2012 - January 2015

The above table reveals that 98% respondents are not formal member of any political party and 6% respondents are the member of political party. Village wise 6% respondents of Kazigaon, 2% respondents each of Malighoi, Gombrikhata and Bongshijhora are the member of political party whereas 100% respondent of Gombiraghat and Harjhora, 98% respondents of each Maliaghoi, Gombrikhata and Bongshijhora and 94% respondents of Kazigaon is not a member of any political party.

In summary, it can be said that traditional Bodo society was characterized by poverty, illiteracy, superstitious believes and practices but due to timely intervention of Kalicharan Brahma saved the Bodo society from grave extinction. It was due to his efforts religious

conversions were checked, the identity of this community was rescued and revived as well as directed towards the path of progress by escorting in the much-needed reformation. The changes introduced by him are varied and wide ranging covering all aspects of live and living of the Bodo people. He extended his works ranging from spirituality to education, village welfare to the well being of women and farmers development. His compilation of Bodoni Pandulipi is a landmark work for Bodo society. In indeed his contributions are of tremendous significance that it has changed the Bodo society.