

ATOP JHUM HILLS



Barun Kumar Sahu

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*Annotated and translated
folksongs of Tripuri tribe of
North-eastern India*

Barun Kumar Sahu IAS

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by Barun Kumar Sahu IAS

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Contents

Foreword	Page No.
Preface	
1. Visit to a Typical Tribal Village Today.....	5
2. Folk and Folksong.....	13
3. 100 Folksongs Rendered in English with Transliteration of Original Folksongs in Devanagari Script and Notes.....	15
4. Jhum Cultivation — A Way of Life.....	177
5. Marriage, Divorce and Re-marriage.....	180
6. Beliefs.....	182
7. Weaving.....	185
8. Alcoholic Drinks.....	186
9. Village Administration.....	188
Bibliography	190



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Dated, March 7, 1998.

FOREWORD

I am pleased to learn that Shri B.K. Sahu, IAS, Managing Director, Tripura Jute Mills Limited has translated 100 Tripuri folksongs into English. I am hopeful that this translation would bring to focus the rich cultural heritage of the tribes in Tripura and give an insight into the ethos of a tribal society. I am sure that the reading would be found interesting by all those who are not familiar with Kokborok and are therefore handicapped in sharing this rich heritage.

Dasaratha Deb
(Dasaratha Deb)

PREFACE

This book is not on the kings, queens or royal families of Tripura. There were kings, queens and royal families in Tripura. They were preoccupied with defending their positions in the face of external aggressions and internal rebellions. They kept themselves precariously afloat on the waves of political upheavals. They resembled the waves on the ocean of common people. At times, waves seemed so powerful as to engulf the ocean itself. But waves came, and waves went away — nonetheless leaving behind permanent indentations.

This book is about the deep ocean of common tribal people of Tripura in yesteryears. It is about their common wisdom. It is about their common joys, — and common sorrows. The common people had small needs, — and fewer expectations. They did not live with the hope of becoming fabulously rich, — nor did they expect to lead a sinecure life. Destiny was unavoidable. Fate had already ordained whatever might come by them in their lives. In the eternal cycle of birth and death, coming face to face with destiny was life for them. Nonetheless, life was something to be enjoyed; and they did enjoy their lives to the fullest. Despite hardships, they were very content with their lives.

Tripura, which was never completely under the Muslim or British rule, is a tiny state of the Indian Union, bounded by Bangladesh from almost all sides. It is one of the states in the eastern fringe of the country.

(Strangely enough, the region is called "north-east", even though there is nothing "north" about it, and the region is to the east of the "eastern" India, and not to the north of it.) Because of its proximity to Bengal, the influence of Bengal is very evident. In the past, it was ruled by kings from tribal communities who generally patronized Hindu religion.

The compilation of the folksongs in this book is not my original work. The compilation was done by Shri Naresh Chandra Debbarma, and was published in the form of a book by Government of Tripura, titled "Prachin Tripuri Lok Sangit Sankalan." It contained the original folksongs in Bengali script with brief substance of the folksongs in Bengali.

When I read the folksongs with the help of my friends, I found them very appealing. Indian values and ethos were deeply ingrained in them. Belief in destiny, omen and superstition; hardships of life, exuberant enjoyment of life ; respect to elders and respect for traditional values — all these appeared so empathetic to me. Hence, I decided to translate the folksongs into English for the benefit of the people in other parts of the country.

The present compilation consists of the folksongs of the Tripuri tribe only. There are many other tribes in Tripura, such as the Reangs, the Jamatias, the Kukis, and the Chakmas etc. However, the Tripuris are the major tribe in Tripura —numerically, culturally and politically. The Tripuris were socially, culturally and politically much more advanced than many other tribes of the region.

The original Tripuri folksongs are in Kokborok (or, Kakbarak, ककबरक) language, a tribal languages. Like many other tribal languages, this language also does not appear to have its own script. Usually, it is written in Bengali script. Since Kokborok draws heavily from Bengali language, this script is very helpful.

In this book, I have given the original folksongs in Devanagari script. The folksongs in Devanagari script should be pronounced as one reads a text in Hindi (but not in Sanskrit). However, Kokborok language has intonations which are difficult to denote in Devanagari script, as in most other scripts. Kokborok language has a special vowel which is very much used. It has been denoted by অস (w), and its pronunciation is between उ (u) and इ (i).

All the folksongs have been translated into English. Of course, it is not a literal translation. Slight modifications have been done here and there, so that the connotations become evident to a non-native reader. In some folksongs, certain points have been emphasized to bring out the cultural distinctiveness and central point of emphasis. Indeed, when I had prepared the first draft of the translations, I had done literal translation. I had used footnotes and references generously. Even then, it was not comprehensible, and the connotations were nebulous.

Our culture, tradition and values are our treasure. We must enrich them with modern knowledge and concepts. We must not deprive them of the care and respect they rightfully deserve. It is disheartening that

we are even ignorant of them.

I hope that this book will help a large number of readers in better understanding of Tripuri culture and tradition.

It will be unfair if I do not mention the names of the persons who helped me in the present work. Quite a few persons have helped me very enthusiastically in interpreting the folksongs. Some of them were : Sarva Shri Mrinal Kanti Debbarma (Tripura Civil Service), Akhirai Debbarma, Pramod Debbarma and Rabindra Debbarma. I am very grateful to them for their help.

It will be unfair if I do not mention the contributions of my wife Sunita (Sonu) and my daughter Sangh Mitra (Twinkle). I have written this book in my leisure time that I should have dutifully devoted to them.

AGARTALA
FEBRUARY 22, 1998

Barun Kumar Sahu
(BARUN KUMAR SAHU)

VISIT TO A TYPICAL TRIBAL VILLAGE TODAY

(from imagination and illustrative only, around early 1990s)

The narrow valley between the two imposing hills bears an awesome look. After the strenuous walk, as I straighten my neck, all I can see is the dense forest on the hillocks. Some of the trees are very tall and old. In between the trees, wild shrubs and creepers are growing. Trudging my way in the lean footpath along the foot the hillock, I stumble over the wild creepers that have grown on the way. I also stumble over the stray roots of the big trees protruding on the path like a web. There are bushy growths all along which at places cover me upto the shoulder. The bushy growths are grassy and spiny, and pricks the uncovered parts of my body. I am walking cautiously lest I should fall off from the slant slope of the hillock into the valley. The path is undulating. Intermittently, the path slopes up and down.

It is summer now. The sky is almost clear, and the sun is shining brightly. The roads are very dusty. Motor vehicles plying on the road blows up copious dust in the air.

Ever though this place is hardly twenty kilometers from the town, it appears very different geographically. The soil is moist and damp. Water oozes out from the slopes of the hillock. It is relatively cold and pleasant.

I hear the gurgling sound of the stream (called "chharra") in the valley, nearby. The marshy stream is covered with vegetation. At one point, the stream crosses the path. I jump across it with all my might lest I should wet my shoes.

I have been walking for about two hours now, and have covered about seven kilometers on foot in this tortuous route. The security forces accompanying me in this insurgency ravaged area, curse me for making them take the strenuous walk. They keep on wondering why the tribal inhabitants sought to settle in such remote and inhospitable terrain when they were free to settle in the plains. .. Suddenly someone notices that I am bleeding from my ankle. One tiny leech resembling the dropping of hen, has entered inside my trousers and is sucking my blood. Leeches abound in the jungle, and their bite is painless. I pull out the leech, and throw it away. I resume my walk.

Instead of walking alongside the hill, now I shall have to climb up the hill. The tribal village which is our destination is on the flat peak of the hill. Lifting my neck upward, I look up to estimate the height I shall have to climb. The tribal boy who is our guide, is already on the top of the hillock. Taking a deep breath, I ready myself for the strenuous climb. As I take my first step, I realize that it is a dangerous venture. The soil of the hillock is very loose. I shall have to climb up an improvised stair. The soil is slippery and loose. It is very slant and dangerous. I take the support from bamboo and other weeds growing alongside, and climb up. Suddenly I make mistake and skid. In frantic effort to control myself, I get hurt. I stand up and resume walking, pretending nothing has happened.

Even though it is damp and cold, I feel warm due to the strenuous walk. I was sweating profusely, but now even the sweat seems to have exhausted. I am

extremely thirsty. I go to the stream nearby, and throwing the principles of hygiene to the wind, drink its cold and invigorating — albeit dirty — water with hollowed hands, just as the people in the area do.

The path suddenly ends. There is a deep gorge ahead. The chirp of the birds, and the squeal of insects and squirrels running around at the bottom reverberate in the gorge. The gorge is covered with thick vegetation. As I look down from the precipice, I realize the enormousness of the gorge. It is as though I am looking down from a sky-scraper. I am diffident if I shall be able to reach the bottom safely. The soil is slippery and moments earlier I have slipped. I start fantacizing how my deadbody will be carried from here, should I fall off to the rocky bottom. I begin climbing down very apprehensively.....I do not fall ! I reach the bottom of the gorge safely. I wash my face in the stream with the cheer of conquering a war.

As I again begin climbing up, bursts in succession are heard. I become circumspect. Is it enchange of fire between the insurgents and the security forces? The bursting sound does not subside. A little later I realize that it was because of the burning of hollow bamboos which burst as they burn. The shifting cultivators have set ablaze the cut and dried vegetation on the slopes of the jhum field. Cultivation will be done there in the rainy season.

I notice some short cattle grazing in the bush. Biggish wooden bells hang from their necks. As the cattle move, the bells clink which helps in locating them.... A reservoir has been created between two hill-

ocks by embanking the valley. There may be fish in the water area. In one corner of the embankment, there is a ghat for bathing.

We are in the village now. It is far from a flat area. There are about twenty houses in the village. The houses on different ridges of the hill. At the entrance of the village, there is a decorative arch of bamboo. The bamboo pieces in the arch have been scratched to give the deceptive look of dried flowers. Some fresh flowers and foliage are tied to the arch. One of the villagers greets me and welcomes me to his village. He proudly informs that the village is named after his father who was the village headman or "choudhuri."

They ask me if everything was well on the way. Noticing that I am pulverized, they tell that they face the hardships daily.

I move around in the village. There is a temple. It is made of bamboo and thatch of straw. It is about five feet in length, breadth and height. An earthen pot is kept upside down on the tip of the thatch. Inside the temple, there are three lumps of earth or stone, representing tribal deities.

One person takes me to a vantage point. From here it appears as if I am on the roof of the world or looking down from an airplane. He points with his finger to one direction in the plains and tells me that that is the town. It is not clear now. Maybe, in the night when the lights will be lit in the town, it will be visible. He then points to the local weekly market in the plains. The villagers attend the weekly market to sell their produce and buy goods.

The number of children in the village is discernibly more than that of the elders. The boys and girls run here and there. The boys have worn stitched shorts and banians, and girls either stitched frocks or "pachra" (home made cloth with designs, wrapped around in lower part of the body). Pigs, dogs and fowls are also running here and there, and appear to be integral part of the village community. Perched on the tree is a big cage of bamboo for the fowl. The pen for the pigs is in a corner and is very stingy.

One mentally deranged man is seated under the jackfruit tree. It is said that he is suffering because he had violated certain customary laws....A small creature, called "Kakraich" croaks, and people start wondering what the croaking at this hour of the day, means.

Now, I enter a tribal house. The house is made of bamboo. It is about four feet above the ground, propped up by thick bamboo and wooden stumps. A serrated log reclines slantingly. This serrated log is the improvised stair — a very uncomfortable stair indeed. Climbing up the stair, I land myself in the verandah. The floor of the house is made of bamboo pieces, which have been tied together to give the appearance of planks. As I step on the bamboo floor, it creaks. A dog whines in the verandah, and a hen which was in the verandah rushes inside the house. The thatch is made of dried and long grasses laid on a bamboo truss. The verandah is about ten meters in width and five meters in depth.

As I enter into the main room from the verandah, I realize that the entrance is a bit short and I have to

bow down lest I should hit my head. The door frame is very rudimentary. It is made of pleated bamboo strip tied to the wall with wire or rope. To shut the door, one has to lift the frame and place it at the entrance.

The room is spacious, and rather dark. There is no window. The bed, table, baskets and containers are made of bamboo or wood. A few note books and text books are lying on the table. The bed is neither clean nor dirty. On one table in the room, a basketful of paddy is kept besides the photograph of the deity of wealth and prosperity. A few sickles and arrows are tucked in the bamboo wall. Some clothings also hang from the wall, so does the mosquito net and the creels.

The owner of the house is bedridden, and has not eaten anything since the previous day. He has been suffering from gastroenteritis since some days back. One elderly man will perform some ritual the next day to ascertain if the problem is due to some evil spirit. Traditional medicines and treatment are popular.

There is no school in the village. Some of the children do, however, attend the Government-run school in the nearby village. The son of the erstwhile village headman goes to an English medium Christian missionary school, and may go to Shillong for further studies if he continues to be good in studies.

The other end of the main room of the house opens into the kitchen. There is an earthen hearth fixed to the floor. Wood is used as fuel. There are very few utensils. The kitchen opens into a small balcony where the utensils are washed. A few creepers of gourd have climbed to the roof, and two biggish gourds are promi-

nently visible. From the balcony, a small kitchen garden is visible where apart from creepers, there are papaya, arecanut, tapioca, drumstick and banana plants. In the yonder, there are pineapple and rubber plantations on the slopes of the hillocks. These plantations have the potential of bringing about a dramatic improvement in the economy of the region.

A middle aged lady is busy weaving "pachra" on the unpretensions and simple household loom.

As I come out from the house, I learn that the villagers have prepared lunch for me. People here eat in the morning, at noon and at dusk, but not in the night. Their food is very simple. They add a lot of chilli to the vegetable, but very little onion, salt or garnishings. They are not known for their culinary skills. They are non-vegetarian. Though some are "Baishnabs" who do not eat meat, and would not eat food cooked by those who are not "Baishnabs."

The popularity of matriarchy is on decline. Womenfolk are generally very conservative. They do not talk to me directly. They are not well versed with Bengali language like the menfolk. If they have to convey something to me, they do it through the menfolk, or discuss among themselves so loudly that I hear them. However, elderly women are less conservative.

Even though the younger generation has taken to the modern clothings, members of the older generation stick to their traditional dresses. Womenfolk wear silver ornaments in their neck, ear, nose, wrist, arm and ankle. There are coins, cowries and beads in ornaments. These are relatively big and heavy. The

ornaments are very conspicuous.

The villagers face a lot of hardships. They live in a difficult terrain. The population is scattered very sparsely. Civic amenities are very minimal. They are poor. Nonetheless they are cheerful and happy.

As I prepare to leave the village and bid adieu to the villagers, I realize that they are keeping alive a tradition, an ancient culture, an attitude to life. There has been a sea change in the last few decades. Rule by king has been replaced by democracy. The feudal hierarchy of yesteryears have withered away. Population has seen phenomenal growth. The plains, which were once infested with wild animals, are densely populated. There has been social awareness and social assertion. But the more we change, the more we remain the same.

Hope of a rosy future does not make life move here. Desire to continue a tradition does.

FOLK AND FOLKSONG

The tribal population of Tripura is divided in a number of tribes and sub-tribes. Some of the tribes and sub-tribes show similarities in language, beliefs or customs. A large population of such tribes, including Tripuris, live in different parts of Bangladesh also.

Tripuri tribe is the most important tribe in the state. In terms of population, they are the largest in number. Historically, they are more advanced than some other tribes — socially, culturally and politically. The royal families belonged to this tribe. However, in recent past, other tribes have also made significant progress.

"Rajmala", a book in verse form in Bengali language, is an important book on the state. It throws light on the history of Tripura and its rulers as well as on conflicts and struggles.

The original folksongs given in this book are in Kokborok language. Kokborok literally means "peoples' language". It is the lingua franca in the tribal areas in the state. It is a language of the Bodo group. Kokborok speaking tribes / sub-tribes are: (1) Tripuri, (2) Riyang, (3) Jamatiya, (4) Noatiya, (5) Rupini, (6) Koloi, (7) Ulsoi, and (8) Murasing. However, different tribes / sub-tribes speak different dialects of the language. It has been recognized as the second official language of the state.

Like many other tribal languages, Kokborok is a spoken language, and does not appear to have script of its own. It is usually written in Bengali script.

Tripuri folksongs are very old, and are popular in the community. Tripuri culture is rich with folksongs.

These are based on old traditions, love, shifting cultivation, festivals, season, belief and superstition etc. These are old songs which are still sung in their original form, or with slight variations. The themes of the songs appear anachronism now. Nevertheless, these songs provide scintillating glimpses of the past. People still sing the folksongs very enthusiastically.

The folksongs are classified according to their theme. Some of the important classifications are given below:

- (1) Jadukaliya or Sarbang : Based on love affairs.
- (2) Rese khagra : Based on plaintive mood
- (3) Chamaritunmani : Sung by the bride's party to the bridegroom on his arrival.
- (4) Hamjuk Rahamani : Sung at the time of brides departure for the house of her in-laws.
- (5) Hachwog Kamani : Sung while passing through hill tracts to fight fatigue.
- (6) Kuchung Ha Sikam: Sung to urge people to join the royal force.
- (7) Owaing Khilimani: It is a song of lullaby.
- (8) Mamita : It is sung during the harvest of the new crop.
- (9) Garia Rumani : It is sung during Garia festival.
- (10) Langai Chabmani : It is sung at the time of swinging.

॥ १ ॥

मासिंग साल कऽरा भादर अक्रा

भादर नी सिमी लेखऽई थांगखलाई

मासिंग ताई बऽसऽक तंगछी ?

गारिंग तखाकी कऽलाय मा समय

हापुंग सिग्ला ओंग मानी समय

खुपांग बग्ला बार मानी समय

सिपिंग बुबार बाई खुमजा बुबार नो

खलऽई काननानी समय

पाड़ा सिक्ला तंगथकमा समय

ताबुकनी समय रकले ।

(Note: Note the additional vowel अऽ with matra S, which is a special vowel in Kokborok. Its pronuciation is between इ and उ)

भावार्थ - हर्षोल्लास से भरपुर भाद्र महीना शीत से ठीक पूर्व का समय है । बाँस से बना झूमधर नष्ट हो रहा है । प्रकृति अपने पूरे सौन्दर्य पर है। नवयुवक और नवयुवतियाँ हर्षोल्लास में व्यस्त हैं ।

(1) JOY OF AUTUMN

September harbingers the onset of wintry days.

If counted from today —

Just how far is winter away ?

Jhum huts rot in these autumnal days—

*Jhum sites get back the youthful glaze.
 Cotton flowerbuds eagerly sways.
 Sesame and khumja flowers are plucked
 And worn in these days.
 Young folks indulge in merrymaking
 And are very gay.*

Note 1: The month of Bhadra (August - September) is the period of joy and merry-making. The rainy season is almost over, and the chilly winter is still a few weeks away. There is not much work in the jhum. It is also the season of marriage.

Note 2: The climate of the region has undergone some change. Earlier, rainy and winter were the main seasons. Now, the weather is generally hot, and there is no sign of winter until late in November.

Note 3: Jhum hut, called "garing" in Kokborok and "tongghar" in Bengali, is a temporary small hut. It is made of bamboo, and is located on the peak of the hillock at jhum site. The cultivators stay there, and look after the field. It is abandoned after the jhum cultivation.

॥ २ ॥

अ रांगचाक बा उतोर गालानी
 तकसा फाइमानी तकसाले राइबाई तांगबाई
 एरडई चानाबो याकुंग राकयाखो
 सुगई चानाबो बुखुक राकयाखो
 बिरई चानाबो कांगखंग राकयाखो
 अ अभांगी कऽपाल रक्ले
 बाबु थऽइफुरऽ मायनी बहक
 माय थऽइ फुरऽ आंग्ले खिचुमू

अभागी कपाल रकले
 चऽराई फांगछिनी मा बाई मा तंगया
 चऽराई फांगछिनी फा बाई मा तंगया
 माय बाबुनी महिमा छिया
 अभागी कपाल रकले
 अ बिखाता करम लेखा
 ताम न खचा जागखा ।

भावार्थ - छोटा - सा सलोना पक्षीशावक का पर, पैर और
 चोंच अभी भी नाजुक है । मेरी स्थिति कुछ ऐसी
 ही थी जब मेरे ऊपर से माता-पिता का साया उठ
 गया । शैशवकाल से मैं मातृ-पितृ प्रेम से वंचित
 हूँ और निष्ठुर भाग्य को झेल रहा हूँ । पता नहीं
 विधाता ने मेरे भाग्य में क्या-क्या लिखा है !

(2) AN UNFORTUNATE CHILD

*A nestling has come from yonder, cute and sweet.
 For it, survival is a difficult feat.
 Its claws are too tender to glean and eat.
 Its beaks are too soft to peck and eat.
 Its wings are too delicate to fly and eat.
 The poor nestling, unfortunate yet sweet.*

*I am a posthumous child.
 I was in nappies when mom died.*

*Fate has been so unkind !
I am orphan since when I was a child.*

*Since my infancy, I am without my dad.
Parental affection is unknown to me,
How sad !
In the fate written by Providence
Only misfortunes do I have ?*

A man laments at his misfortune. The condition of this wretched man is like that of an orphaned nestling which has to surving against all odds and has to face many hardships.

Note1: There is a strong belief in the inevitability of fate. It is believed that one is born with a fate, and must live through it. One blames the fate for the hardship and distress.

Note 2: Kokborok word for fate is : "Kwpal" which also means forehead. There seems to be a belief that the fate is written inside the forehead.

॥३॥

साबुरुम बुरुम वातऽई बाखाई बा
तुकुयाई तंगलऽइनादे ?
माय बाई वाजऽलाई खाइबा
माई चायाई तंगलांग नादे ?
बाबू बुड़ाछा तलिंग गुदाई तऽई
रितऽराक चुममा हानखा
माइय बऽरऽइचुग आमिंग गोजि तऽई
थापा सुकुमा हानखा
माय बाई बाबू चलिया खाइबा

तऽइयाई चऽंग तंगलाई नादे ?
 अ रांगचाक संगनो - खापांग खा दुखू
 नऽंग तऽमा मारि
 माय बाबुनि वाक्य माचाना
 खापांग खा दुखू बन ता रिदी ।

भावार्थ - यदि प्रतिदिन अविराम वृष्टि होती रही तो क्या नहीं नहाओगे ? यदि माता-पिता के साथ झगड़ा हो जाए तो भूखे रहोगे ? वृद्ध पिता चादर ओढ़े चील की तरह ठिठुर रहा है । वृद्धा माता बिल्ली की तरह चूल्हा किनारे लेटी है । अगर माता - पिता अकर्मण्य हो जाए तो उनकी देखभाल नहीं करोगे? माता-पिता की देखभाल करो और उनके अभिशाप से बचो ।

(3) DUTY TO PARENTS

*It has been raining for days together
 Just for of this shall we not take bath ?
 There has been an altercation with parents
 Just becuse of this shall we do fast ?
 Elderly father shivers like a kite bird,
 And keeps on donning the tattered shawl.
 Elderly mother snugs like a cat,
 And is drowsy by the fireside.
 It parents become infirm,
 Can we afford to desert them ?*

*Oh dear, why give them,
Pain in their hearts ?
Avoid their malevolence,
By not giving them pain in their hearts.*

We are duty bound to look after our parents when they are old and infirm. There may be occasional altercation with them, but that should not be treated as an excuse to absolve our responsibilities to them.

Note 1: An old and infirm man wears shawl to ward off the chill. Such a man looks ugly and unkempt, especially when the shawl is dirty. The old man looks bent and shivers in the cold. Such a man has been likened to an ugly looking kite or vulture.

Note 2: An old lady sleeps by the fireside in the comfort of its warmth. She has been likened to a cat taking a nap by the fireside.

॥ ४ ॥

माघनी पन्दर फागुन दागरिअ
तछकुमा ब पुंगअ
फालगुन पंदर चैतर दागरिअ
माधविलात बुबार सारिअ
बलंग खुममाके बऽखऽरऽय रिअ
गरिया मऽताई फाइय
चैतर थांखऽलाई बैसाख फाइयानो
बैसाख माई काइलाई नानी
सेना कऽचारबाई बुइस कऽचारअ
माइबा चऽंग बारकनानी

हारंग हा कऽचांग गुरिया काइदी
 बबो चऽराइनी चामुंग
 पुब चालिया हालाब हिनकाइबा
 मामी वातलक काइदी
 मायनी सागनी माइमुंग माइचऽलऽई
 गारू सुकिया माई बऽछा नाया
 काइदे हामनो हामया
 तकमा खाकऽलाप हापुंग सिररुक
 आंगबा गारिगबाई बनो
 नऽगबा बऽरऽइबा माई काइना खाइदी
 लामा गांदाअ गुंथू पिनदी
 गुंथू पिनमानी जराअ
 सतर बंग पिनदी ।

भावार्थ - माघ के पंद्रहिया में ही फाल्गुन -सा मौसम हो जाता है। फाल्गुन के पंद्रहिया में ही चैत-सा लगने लगता है । माघवीलता अब पुष्पित नहीं होता है और जंगली खुमाके में फूल की कलियाँ दिखने लगती है । इसी समय गरिया पर्व आता है । चैत्र के अंत एवं वैशाख के सातवें दिन के बीच झूम में धान के बीज बोओ । गुरिया प्रजाति के धान को, जिसका खीर बच्चों को पसंद है, ठंडी घाटी में बोओ। पूर्व की ढाल पर मामीवातलक धान बोओ। मुर्गी के सीने जैसी पहाड़ी पर मैं झूमधर बनाऊँगा। तुम स्त्री हो - धान बोओ और साथ में फूल भी ।

(4) ONSET OF JHUM

*By January - end, it is like February - March,
Even the parrot cooes, for sure.
By February -end it is like March - April,
Myrtle plant flowers no more.
Khumake tree blooms in the forest
And **garia** festival is at the door.
Vaisakha will come after **Chaitra** has gone.
Between the last day of Chaitra
And seventh day of **Vaisakha**
Paddy seeds will be sown.
Sow **guria paddy** in the cold valley.
Children find **guria** rice very lovely.
On the slope facing the east,
Sow **mami vatalak** paddy.
An unwise decision it may be
To sow the inherited **garu sukia** paddy
Because it does not give shoots in plenty.
On the hillock alike breast of hen
I shall set up the jhum hut.
You are a lady, keep sowing the paddy.
Sow balsam seeds alongside the path,
Also sow marigold seeds
Along with the balsam seeds.*

Note 1: Garia is a tribal deity which corresponds to Ganesha, and is worshipped before starting some important assignment. Garia festival is the most important festival among the tribal people. It is observed between the last day of Chaitra ("sena") and the seventh day of Vaisakha ("bwsar"). The jhum cultivators sow paddy in this period.

Note 2: A hillock which is not very high or steep is preferred for jhum cultivation.

The shape of such a hillock is likened to the breast of a hen held upside down.

Note 3: There are twelve months, in a year. Vaisakha (roughly mid-April to mid-May) is the first month of the year and Chaitra (roughly mid-March to mid-April) is the last month. The cultivators do different farming operation in different months. There is also a Tripura Era.

Note 4: Rice is the staple food in the region. There are different strains of paddy depending on the climatic conditions in which they grow well and the use of the grains for which these are suitable.

॥ ५ ॥

आगुन हुक नाइया हा काहाम मानइया

आगुन हुकनाइना नांगनाई

पौस हुक हकया वाथिपांग थऽइया

पौस हुक हकना नांगनाई

चैतर हुक छकया वारेंगछा खामया

चैतर हुक छकना नांगनाई

बैसाख माई काइया माई बाहान खाया

बैसाख माइ काइना नांगनाई

भावार्थ - अग्रहायण में झूम के लिए जगह ढूँढ़ लो वर्ना अच्छी जगह नहीं मिलेगी । पौष में जंगलात काट लो वर्ना बाँस आदि नहीं सूखेगा। चैत्र में झूम को जला लो वर्ना घासपात की समस्या बनी रहेगी । बैसाख में धान बो डालो वर्ना फसल नहीं आएगा।

(5) JHUM

*By mid-December, do the site selection;
Or, you won't find land suitable for cultivation.
By mid-January, clear vegetation at the site;
Or, the bamboo stems won't dry.
By mid-April, set the dried vegetation ablaze;
Or, the weeds will create problems always.
Do sow the paddy by middle of May;
Or, grains don't come well, people say.*

Different operations of jhum farming are to be completed in time. Jhum cultivation is done in the time-tested traditional manner by following a rigid time schedule of activities.

Note 1: In this book cultivation invariably refers to jhum cultivation (also called shifting cultivation or slash-and burn cultivation). This is because they did only jhum cultivation. However, now the tribal cultivators also practice settled cultivation.

Note 2: The relationship between Tripuri and English months is roughly as follows:

Vaisakha	: mid-April to mid - May
Jyestha	: mid-May to mid-June
Asadha	: mid-June to mid-July
Shravan	: mid-July to mid-August
Bhadra	: mid-August to mid-October
Asvina	: mid-September to mid-November
Kartika	: mid-October to mid-November
Agrahayana	: mid-November to mid-December
Pausa	: mid-December to mid-January
Magha	: mid-January to mid-February
Phalgun	: mid-February to mid-March
Chaitra	: mid-March to mid-April.

॥ ६ ॥

हाबाई दुरुपा जरमी फुरु

आदि साक बाकसा नऽगबाई

हाचिंग माइरऽबाम हुगई थऽंगफुरु
 आदि साक बाकसा नऽंगबाई
 सरक पाकऽइन माइतऽक सऽनामई
 माला बखंगन माइतऽक सऽनामई
 आगी चेराई अ चऽंग थऽंगलाई फाइखा
 मानी खलंगअ तंगते तंगतेरई
 ताबुक सिकला सकखा
 नऽंगबो सिकला अंगबो सिकला
 तांगऽई चानानी नांगखा

भावार्थ - सृष्टि के आदिकाल से जब दूर्वाघास जनम लिया था और
 जब हम बालू में खेलते थे तब से हम दोनों में अंतरंगता है।
 मिट्टी के ढक्कन एवं नारियल की खोपड़ी से खेलते-खेलते
 हम वयस्क हो गये हैं । अब हमे काम करना चाहिए और
 जीविकोपार्जन करना चाहिए ।

(6) LOVE SINCE CHILDHOOD

*Since when grass had started to grow long ago
 Both of us have been living intimately.
 Since when we used to play with sand castle
 Both of us have been living intimately.
 Making toy pots from broken wares,
 Making toy pots from nutshells,
 In mother's benign closeness,
 We children have grown up playingly.
 Now we have attained adulthood*

*You are an adult, and I am too.
It behooves us to work for our livelihood.*

Note: A boy and a girl have been living together since childhood. Maybe they were married in their childhood under child marriage system.

॥ ७ ॥

मायनी सागनी मामी माई कऽरा
थुतरो काइयई राबअ राबाइया
थुबो थुमबाइया माइतांग चप्र बाइखा
बलंग आतका हुचंग गुरिअ
रऽगनानी समय मानया
हबा थाइचुमू कुमुन नुगऽइबो
खागनानी जरा मानया
आंगले चऽलाबा यागबेराई बरक
लगी रिसुगऽई मानया
कलिनी बुमा मुला ओंगनाफुन
साल काठाचा खायई
दयानी बुमा मुला ओंगनाफुन
साल खकबुई खायई ।

भावार्थ - पूर्वजों से प्राप्त मामी एवं बुतरो प्रजाति के धान की फसल इतनी अच्छी हुई है कि कटाई खतम ही नहीं हो रही है । काम

इतना ज्यादा है कि न धान खाते पक्षी को भगाने का समय है,
न ही पके हुए फलों को तोड़ने का । मुझ पुरुष को इधर-उधर
बहुत काम है इसलिए तुम्हारे साथ हाथ नहीं बटा पा रहा हूँ ।
कलि की माँ और दया की माँ मजदूरी करने को तैयार है, उन्हें
काम पर रख लो ।

(7) BUMPER CROP

*Paddy of Mami and thutro strains,
Which we inherited from parents,
Have yielded bumper crop.
It is hard to finish reaping it off.
It is hard to gather paddy grains,
Scattered on the ground which remain.
Wild parrot encircles the jhum,
But there is no time to scare it away.
I can see a ripe gourd,
But there is no time to pluck it anyway.
As man, I have to go here and there,
I cannot give you lady company.
Kali's mother will work as a laborer,
For a wage of seven kg paddy daily.
Daya's mother will work as a laborer,
For a wage of four rupees daily.*

Note 1: The reapers shear and collect only the ears of the paddy. The straw is left in the field. The paddy is husked in wooden mortar.

Note 2: **Katha** is a measure of grains, and equals about seven kilograms.

Note 3: In Kokborok, the number system is slightly complicated. While some

people use a system with ten as radix, others use twenty as the radix. That is in the first system, 65 becomes "six tens and five", but in the other system it becomes "three scores and five". Generally, a prefix is attached to the number depending on the object it is used to quantify. (It is also popular to use Bengali words for the numbers instead.)

॥८॥

आगी बाबू संग तांगडई चा फुरु

काइसा तांगमानी कऽनऽय चाबाइया

अ ताखुकरग खापांग भाबिअई नाइले

बेरेमा केपेक सेरअ गानाक नऽई

तऽमा चऽंग चाया तंगखा

नाइथक हिममाबाई तंगथक हिमानी

तऽमा चऽंग तंगया तंगखा

अ ताखुकरग ताबुकनी समय

तऽमा समयबो खापांग भाबि अई नाइले

भावार्थ - पहले के जमाने में बरकत इतनी थी कि एक व्यक्ति के परिश्रम करने पर दो व्यक्ति भी खा कर अघा जाते थे । सूखी मछली केवल दो आने सेर थी ! हमलोग उस जमाने में किस सुख और आनंद का उपभोग नहीं किये हैं ? अभी का समय कितना कष्टमय है, दिल से सोचो ।

(8) SWEET OLD DAYS

*In olden days, when our ancestors did cultivation,
If one man worked, it was enough for two persons.
Friends, it calls for an introspection.
Soft dryfish was only two annas a seer !*

What food we oldies did not enjoy !

Beauty, pleasure — anything you say,

What things we oldies did not enjoy !

Scarcity, underproductivity, hardships and inflation

Present hard time calls for an introspection.

Bygone days appear very happy days. Things were very cheap and affordable. Even the productivity of the land appears to be more then. But the present time is full of hardships.

Note 1: Earlier, land suitable for jhum cultivation was easily available. However, now with the increasing pressure of population on land, suitable land is hard to find. The land remain fallow for fewer years and cannot regain the fertility.

Note 2: Dryfish is used as an ingredient in preparation of delicacies, curries and chutneys.

॥६॥

मासिंग चाकऽरा भादर अकरा

भादर नि छिमी लेखई थांगखाइले

माछिंग ताई बऽसऽक तंगछी

भादर मासनी सातुंग हकितऽई

कऽनऽइल खा बाकसा चऽंग कऽनऽओंगऽई

सागनी कलमतऽई हाअ खिक्लाई

तांगऽइले नारऽक ना नांगनू

आरांगचाकबा तांग बिली जरा तांगरऽकया खाइले

नुखुंग बाहाइकेई चानाई

बिछी तऽंग कलक चाअई तांगनानी

खापांग नऽंग वानसुक नाइदी ।

भावार्थ - भाद्र महीना शीत से ठीक पूर्व का समय है । भाद्र की धूप अंगार-सी गर्म है । इस गर्मी में भी हम दोनों कड़ी मेहनत करेंगे वरना पूरा साल जीवन-यापन कैसे करेंगे ?

(9) RESOLVE TO WORK HARD

*September is followed by wintry days.
If counted from middle of September,
Just how far is winter away ?
The sun of September is scorching like ember.
But both of us will have to toil together.
Our sweat will drop on the earth.
But we will have to finish the work.
If we do not strive,
To finish the works in time
How can the family survive
In the ensuing year long time ?*

॥ १० ॥

तकसा पुंगमानी रांगिनी गिनी
माय बाबुनी बिधि
तांगडई चानानी जब्बई साग दुखु बांगअ
हापुंग सिरडरडक तकमा खाकडलाप रकबाई
यागनी दामरा तकचिंग खरबाई
खरगले पाकड़ी चांगअ पुदिरी
तांगडइ मातंगलाई नाइखा
माय बाबुनी तांगमुंगनी बिती

तांगुई चानानी जब्बई साग दुखू बांगू
 मायुतालिका दासानी खंताई
 चडंगले तांगडई न चाथाई
 बुफांग साकलाम हाबा लेंगला खाई
 सामुंग तांगफुरु लेंगसे लेंगयामा
 लेलेना फुरु लेंगसे लेंगयामा ना
 लेलेना फुरु लेंगअ
 तकसा पुंगमाब रांगिनी गिनी
 मायुंग तालिका दासानी खंताई
 अ खोलासा माया रगनी ।

भावार्थ - पक्षी अपने मधुर सुर में मानो हमारे पूर्वजों की रीतिरिवाज गा रहा है । झूम की खेती परिश्रम से भरा कष्ट-साध्य काम है । मुर्गी के सीने की तरह पहाड़ी भूमि झूम के लिए सर्वोत्तम है । हम हाथ में दाव लेकर और कमर में गमछा बाँधकर परिश्रम करते हैं । परिश्रम करते समय हम थाकान का अनुभव नहीं करते, लेकिन पेड़ की छाया में विश्राम करते ही क्लान्ति आ जाती है । यही जीवन का रहस्य है ।

(10) SWEET PAIN OF CULTIVATION

The bird makes melodious recitation

Of our forefather's tradition.

On hillock alike breast of a hen.

With old chopper sharp like bird's claw in hand,

With turban on head and towel round the loin,

In this fashion we have to do cultivation.

Mahdūt's spear hitting pachyderm gives sweetly pain-

ful sensation.

Likewise, its sweetly painful to do cultivation,

In our forefather's tradition.

We don't feel tired at all while working.

But in a shadow while relaxing,

We find that it is very tiring.

The bird makes melodious recitation

Of our forefather's tradition.

Mahout's spear hitting pachyderm gives sweetly painful sensation

Oh my dear, this is the revelation.

॥११॥

हारंग हा कऽचांग बादिया माइतांग

कऽनऽई रावइछे रा मऽचांगमानी

छाइचुंग रावइदे मऽचांग

अ रांगचाक - माइतांगले दोलिओई मुनुई तंगबाइखा

आकता तकछी चावई पाइनाइखा

माइतांग बाइखऽलऽई जरी ओंगबाइखा

रावई मा तिछा नाइखा

कलसा रांगचा मानमानी जरा

थुमुई नारऽगया खाइले

बाहाई खाई चावई दिन काटी नानी

खापांग न वानसुगुई ताइदी

अ रांगचाक - लोक हुयागा हिमांग हिमांग

गिस्ती कऽमा नाइखा

मायाम केंगाइरी माई तिछानाई
ग्रिस्थी तांगना नांगनाई ।

भावार्थ - झूम की फसल को संगी के साथ काटने का एक विशिष्ट आनंद है, अकेले तो बिल्कुल फीका लगता है । हमे स्वर्णिम धान की फसल को जल्द काटकर अच्छी तरह सँजोकर रखना चाहिए वरना हम खाएँगे क्या ? गृहस्थी का काम न कर इधर-उधर भटकने के कारण परिवार बर्बाद हो गया है । अच्छी फसल के लिए कड़ी मेहनत करो ।

(11) CULTIVATION AS SUSTENANCE

*With a bumper crop, the cold valley is replete.
It looks graceful when two persons reap.
Does it look good when a lonely person reaps ?
Oh dear:*

*The ears of paddy sway majestically.
Parrots are eating them freely.
Ears of paddy are falling droopingly.
We will have to finish reaping quickly.
After collecting the golden paddy grains,
It should be stored carefully.
Or else, what shall we eat in days ahead
We must ponder thoughtfully ?
Oh dear :*

*Because of your laziness and inaction.
The family is on the brink of doom.
In order to keep the barn full,
Heart and soul, you must do jhum*

Note : A lady urges her husband to work hard in jhum cultivation.

॥१२॥

रांचाक बा ताबुकनी समय रगअ
बैसाख माई काइका जैष्ठ हुग तांगखा
माइसकांग पाइखा पाकला तांगखा
हारंग मगदाम बुबार बारबाइखा
बारी खाकुलू बसलक रिखा
हुगनी थाइचुमू बसलक ओंखा
दखिन गालानी हापलक साका
बाला चऽंग कालाई तिरई
लांगा सऽकऽइताम चऽंगहरलाई तिरई
हाताल कऽतालनी मुइमुगंग कऽतालनअ
माय बाई बाबू कऽथांग तंखाइबा
तुनुई चालाइना समय
ताबुकनी समय रगो ।

भावार्थ - ओ प्यारे, बैसाख में धान रोपा गया और
ज्येष्ठ में निराई की गयी । झूम में मक्के के पौधे
पुष्पित हुए हैं और कोंहड़ा का फल बड़ाहुआ है ।
अब हम झूम की दक्षिणी पहाड़ी पर बाला पूजा करेंगे । जीवित
माता-पिता को नयी फसल भिजवाकर नयी फसल का रसास्वादन
करेंगे ।

(12) THE FIRST CROP

*Oh dear, in our jhum,
We have sown paddy in May,
Did first weeding in June.
We did second weeding later on.
In the valley, the corn in abloom.
In the kitchen garden, gourd has grown.
"Thaichumu" fruit in ripe in the jhum.
After performing "bala" worship,
Atop hillock on the southern tip,
We will fetch basketful of new crop
From the jhum strip.
If parents are alive
After sending some crop to them,
New crop of the new jhum will eaten.*

Note 1: The ritual of **Bala** worship is performed before eating the first crop of the new season.

Note 2: The pannier used by the jhum cultivators to carry fruit etc is called **langa**. It is carried on the back, and hangs from the forehead like the basket used by workers in tea gardens.

॥१३॥

तरकांगमा खाइबा हुचुंग गुरिअ
माइतांग बांगखार ना बागडई
माय हिन कडइबा वाथप सहर
आकडता रडगना बागडई

तकछी हिनकाइबा गारिंग गुरिअ
 बजारा चाना बागऽई
 बाबु हिनकाइबा गारिंग गेरेबो
 तकछी रऽगना बागऽई
 नन खिबी अई हुग थांग जागऽई
 हुचांग गुरिअई मुइया फाइफुरु
 मुक्तऽई से कऽलाई छिअ
 माइसिंग छियारी वारबक पानतऽई
 आसाढ़ मासनी वातऽई नो सलई
 आनि मकलनी मुक्तऽई ।

भावार्थ - धान चुराकर भागने के लिए तरकंगमा पक्षी झूम के ऊपर उड़ता है, तो पिताजी छड़ी बजाकर उसे भगाते हैं । मैं माता-पिता को छोड़कर अकेले जंगल आयी हूँ, बाँस की सब्जी इकट्ठा करने के वास्ते। उनकी विरह में आँखो से आँसू फूट पड़ते हैं ।

(13) WITH AND WITHOUT PARENTS

Tarkangma bird hovers over the jhum.

Crop in the field, it wants to consume.

Mother strikes the bamboo strip,

To scare away akwta parrot.

Taksi parrot hovers over the hut

And aims at eating the millet.

Father strikes the thatch

To scare away the parrot.

★★

*Alone, without parents, to the jhum I came.
So while plucking bamboo sprout and stem,
Tears drop down in yearning for them,
Like dewdrops abounding on the bud of bamboo stem.
Tears come to my eyes in profusion.*

A girl has gone to jhum field alone. She has gone there to collect some vegetables. However she feels helpless because she is alone.

Note 1: There are two types of parrots: **Atwka** and **taksi**. They differ slightly in the size of their necks and color of their beaks. They differ slightly in their eating habits also.

Note 2: "Vathap", which has been called "bamboo strip" in the third line, is a half split bamboo. A number of such bamboos are erected in the jhum field. These are connected with along rope, the other end being tied to a post of the jhum hut. When the rope is pulled, a fluttering sound is made which scares away the birds from the field.

Note 3: Bamboo is popularly eaten as vegetable. The sprouts of bamboo and the buds of its stem are eaten.

Note 4: In this densely forested region, it is foggy in the winter. There are plenty of dewdrops too.

॥१४॥

अ रांगचाक

आइचुक बाचादी गाती अ थांगदी

गाती तऽई कऽथार किचा तुबुवई

नकफांग नकसऽकांग सातराई सकदी

लक्ष्मी खा कऽचांग नानी
 माइतऽक तुखू बाई बकदी
 मसअ करवा मसदेग देंगदी
 आक्रान याफा खरपछा बऽतऽई
 लुसाई चऽंग चालाइनानी
 बछर घुरिअई वातऽई फाइनानी
 खुपांग ओंगऽइबो बेदेक नानानी
 माइफांग ओरगऽइबो माई कावानानी
 थानछा खा नांगऽई मा तांगलाइफुरु
 बाथेर बारलाइनानी
 मानी खेरपांग तांगऽई चानानी
 दुखू ता सेले जादी
 अ रांगचाक कितिग जऽकयऽई ।

भावार्थ - ओ प्यारे, तड़के उठकर घाट से जल लाओ, जल छीटो
 और धूना जलाओ ताकि लक्ष्मी खुश रहे । छोटी देगची में भात
 पकाओ, मिर्च की चटनी बानाओ और सूखी मछली का झोल बनाओ।
 नये वर्ष में पहली वर्षा के साथ हम झूम के काम में पूरी तरह जुट
 जाएँगे । उल्लास के साथ मेहनत करेंगे और आलस्य नहीं करेंगे ।

(14) JOY OF LIVING

Get up early

And go to the ghat, oh dear.

Get some sacred water from there.

Burn incense at the front door and at rear.

This will please goddess Lakshmi, my dear.

Cook rice in the small dixie.

Prepare chutney of hot chilli.

From dry fish, prepare gravy,

And let us eat it, shall we ?

*When the rain comes the next year round,
With branches the cotton plant will abound.*

Working together heart and soul,

We will dance with happiness.

While toiling for livelihood,

We won't show any laziness.

Oh dear - lady of magnetic looks !

Note 1: Ghat refers to a platform near the source of water, such as a pond. The platform may be made of stone, wood or bamboo. People bathe in the ghat, and also fetch water from there.

Note 2: Cooked rice is the staple food in the region. Curry of any vegetable, fish or meat is also taken. Very hot chutney of chilli, bamboo or dryfish is also taken.

॥ १५ ॥

उत्तर दुवारा नाकू नाइराबा

हाबा थानाइछे हाबा सिचिला

नगअ तंगनाइब जब्बई पाइलाइया

हावन भादर नी जरा

तकथू गुरजुंग ब माइतांगन लुब

तरकांगमा खाइबा माइतांगन थुम

हाबा माइकतक चबाई पाइखाइले

तकथु-न यागुल नानु

बलंग तबछी माइतांगनी छिमी
 थुम आकऽता माइकुमुन छिमी
 माइ याराम फुरु बुरुबुई चाअ
 सिपिंगन नाइसिंग फिरू
 बलंग फुदुदू तकथू कऽलाइअ
 तबछिनी साइले सिल नी साइले
 तकथुन जली कुग
 नगर बारिया जऽकनअ
 माइसिंग छियारी कऽलाइसाई फाइकाई
 हाबा साक सेले नाइखा
 तकफुवाल छा बअ थानती चकसाअ
 मासिंग छियारी कऽलाई साई फाइकाई
 साक सेले अंखर मान
 लक्ष्मी भंडारी जऽकनअ
 खुम कानयाई मतंग जऽकन' ।

भावार्थ - श्रावण-भाद्र महीना फसल काटने का समय है । जो झूम
 में काम करता है उसे फुरसत नहीं है और जो घर में काम सँभालता है
 उसे भी फुरसत नहीं है । पक्षी पकी हुई फसल को इस लगन से खा रहे
 है मानो उसे इसी काम के लिए नियुक्त किया गया हो । फसल नष्ट
 करने में पक्षियाँ एक से बढ़कर एक हैं । बाद में जब शीत आएगा
 और चारों ओर कुहासा छा जाएगा, हम आलस्य में पड़ जाएँगे । ओ
 सुंदर, सुरभित लक्ष्मी-सी स्त्री !

(15) **CHARM OF JHUM**

*Oh dear, standing at the northern door,
The work in jhum gets me bore.
But at home, there is an unending chore.
In the months of August-September:
Over the paddy crop, doves hover,
Paddy grains, **tarkangma** birds gather.
Dove eats up the paddy with such a charm,
As if it has been engaged for it in the farm.
Tobsi parrot goes for the ears of paddy.
Akwta parrot goes for the ripened paddy.
They wait for sesame to get ripe.
As they ferret out seeds of paddy,
The flock of doves makes the forest look hoary.
Even more than **tubsi** and **sil** birds,
Dove is naughty.
Oh sweet lady !
In the winter when it is foggy.
We feel very lazy.*

*Like the noise of the loom, **takfuval** bird twitters.
When it is foggy in the winter,
We may be overcome with languor.
Oh embodiment of goddess Lakshmi !
You are fragrant even without any flower !*

Note : A lady is endearingly likened to Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and

prosperity. She is also called "nagar baria" or dweller of the town, signifying sophistication and suavity. She is also called fragrant.

॥ १६ ॥

मायनी खेरपांग तांगऽई चामानी
अमसऽक काहाम कऽरऽई
लेखानी साइया पड़ानी साइया
तांगयाइबो माचा जाया
बाड़ी खुमतकया आइचुक कियकतऽई
हाताल कियगऽई फाइका
याकनी हमऽचांग थऽइयाछानिनो
पांथर पार ओंगमा हामबो
माय बाबू संग कऽथांग तंगसाकनो
नुथुंग थाक रममा हामबू
हरी बेरांगज बथप नाई नाखाई
दुगल सातराई फांगअ
चिनी तांगबिती करअ फुरुखाई
सऽंगई चऽंग मानो खुकया सऽराया
माय बाबुनी सागअ
माय लक्ष्मीतऽई सामानी ककनो
बाबू मऽताइतऽई फऽरंगमा ककनो
तऽइसा चेरेसा मुतुई
डंगर बखरक खुमतू
माय लक्ष्मीतऽई सामानी ककनो

खापांग नारऽकथाई मुइतू ।

भावार्थ - खेती जीविका का सर्वोत्तम साधन है । हम अनपढ़ लोग शिक्षितों की तरह बिना श्रम किये नहीं जी सकते हैं । नया झूम अपने यौवन में है । प्रज्वलित मशाल बुझने से पहले हमें समतल के जंगल को पार कर लेना चाहिए । तदनुरूप माता-पिता के जीवित रहते ही हमें अपने पैरों पर खड़ा हो जाना चाहिए । सांसारिक कार्य में त्रुटि निवारण के लिए हमें माता-पिता की सलाह मान कर चलना चाहिए । माता-पिता का उपदेश हमें हमेशा स्मरण रहना चाहिए ।

(16) SELF-RELIANCE

*There is no better occupation
Than cultivation.*

We are illiterate people

We won't get food without physical exertion.

The new jhum is abloom

*Like **Khumtakya** flower at daybreak which blooms.*

While the land-held flaming torch thrives

At crossing the plain we must strive.

While parents are still alive

At standing on our feet we must strive.

*For the nest of **hari berangja** bird*

We have to go to the camphor tree.

Likewise, when we make mistakes

Then for solution

We shall go to the parents, shan't we ?
Statements of goddess Lakshmi-like mother
And teachings of good like father.
We ought to always remember.
The gurgitating stream has a growth of leafy tubers.
*Bank of waterfall has a growth of **Khumtu** flowers.*
Teachings of parents we ought to remember.

Note 1: Cultivation is called "taangwi chaamaani" literally meaning "to eat by working hard."

Note2: In olden days, the plains and valleys were densely forested and infested with wild animals. People lived on the hills. Hence people tried to cross the plains and valleys very quickly. (However now plains are densely populated.)

॥ १७ ॥

सालतऽई करमई तालतऽई फुकुअई
 दसमास दसदंड बहगो तऽईअई
 माय बाखऽना चडंगन
 कऽरानअ मुथुई किसिअ थुअई
 मायअ संग पुसिओई तुबुखऽना
 खाजानी बऽथऽई कुसुब चारिअई
 माय संग पुसिओई तुबू खऽना
 साल साले गंगतऽई कऽलाई लुमखिना
 थऽई जाना किरी खऽना
 गंगला पुइथा ताहानी दंगरी
 बऽथाई चानानी बागऽई

बऽरऽई साक कुफुर ताहानी पुसी
 पुखू साक यगना बागऽई
 माय बऽरऽइचऽक अमिंग साकदुकतऽई
 गोजी से खारऽक खारऽक
 बाबू बुढ़ाछा सिकरुग तऽई
 रितऽराक चुमरऽग चुमरऽग
 बनदे पुसियाई हामन
 बलंग तकुला बलंगअ तेनताई
 माय नुखुंगो तेनताई
 वाथुई वारऽजा गुरिया बेजा
 बाबू नुखुंगनी राजा
 माय बऽरऽइचऽक तेनताई मानिनअ
 बनअ जलिना ककया
 बाबू बुढ़ाछा खराई मानिनअ
 बनअ जलिअई हामया
 माइअ बऽरऽइचऽक थऽइमा यागुलअ
 अगअ माई कऽरऽई ओंगजाक ना किरिई
 बुइन नुगतऽई बुइन सितऽई
 आखाई ओंगजाक ना किरिई
 माय बा तेन ताई लांगू
 आब बनो जलिना ककया ।

भावार्थ - माता-पिता ने बहुत कष्ट सहकर हमें जनम दिया है और

बऽरऽई साक कुफुर ताहानी पुसी
 पुखू साक यगना बागऽई
 माय बऽरऽइचऽक अमिंग साकदुकतऽई
 गोजी से खारऽक खारऽक
 बाबू बुढ़ाछा सिकरुग तऽई
 रितऽराक चुमरऽग चुमरऽग
 बनदे पुसियाई हामन
 बलंग तकुला बलंगअ तेनताई
 माय नुखुंगो तेनताई
 वाथुई वारऽजा गुरिया बेजा
 बाबू नुखुंगनी राजा
 माय बऽरऽइचऽक तेनताई मानिनअ
 बनअ जलिना ककया
 बाबू बुढ़ाछा खराई मानिनअ
 बनअ जलिअई हामया
 माइअ बऽरऽइचऽक थऽइमा यागुलअ
 अगअ माई कऽरऽई ओंगजाक ना किरिई
 बुइन नुगतऽई बुइन सितऽई
 आखाई ओंगजाक ना किरिई
 माय बा तेन ताई लांगू
 आब बनो जलिना ककया ।

भावार्थ - माता-पिता ने बहुत कष्ट सहकर हमें जनम दिया है और

पालन पोषण किया है । उनलोगों ने इतने कष्ट सहे ताकि हम उनकी देखभाल करें । परिवार में माता-पिता का स्थान सर्वोपरि है । अगर वे गुस्सा करें तो हमें चिढ़ना नहीं चाहिए । माता-पिता की मृत्यु के बाद अनाहार की स्थिति भी हो सकती है ।

(17) DUTY TO OUR PARENTS

*The dim sun of the dusk or the moon's bright rays.
After carrying us in wombs for ten months ten days
Our mothers have born us, people say.
They slept on the bed wetted by us.
Gave us dry bed; and looked after us thus.
Breastfeeding blood turned-milk to us
They have looked after us.
Occasionally, when we were rabid with fever.
They were by our side to take care.
Why are gourds grown on trellis
If not for us to eat ?
Why do parents rear fair girls
If not to reduce their hardships ?
Elderly mother's body is
Becoming bent like a cat.
Elderly father swoons like a vulture
In his tat.
Is it good that that we don't look after them ?
In the forest, **takula** bird howls
Likewise mother shouts in the home.
Bamboo frame provides strength to the thatch
Likewise, for the home, father is important.
Elderly mother may howl*

*But it should not make us angry.
 Elderly fater may harp
 But it should not make us angry.
 After the death of parents
 One may face the starvation gloom.
 Others have seen, others have known
 One may face starvation and gloom.
 So, parent is carping if you even find.
 Then do not lose the cool of your mind.*

Note 1: There is a belief that the human embryo remains in the womb for ten months and ten days.

Note 2: There is a reference to **chamari kaimani** system of marriage in which the bridegroom comes to the house of the bride, lives there, and looks after the bride and her parents. Parents rear a daughter so that she may bring a laborious husband who will help them.

॥ १८ ॥

मामी वातलक बाबू हामजाकमा माइमुंग
 माइचिकन खाइबा माइकतय यादे
 मायअ हामजाकमा माइमुंग
 मायअ हामजाकमा माइमुंग काई खाबा
 माय दागिखा बाबुखाई तांगखा
 गारिंग खाकबुई खायई
 बाबू दागिखा माय खाई काइखा
 गारिंग मऽचांगना बागऽई
 झिंगा मामला रकनो
 बुबार बो कानखा बऽथाइब चाखा

भादर माइकतर रासाई पाइखाइले
 हुगअ सकपाइमा तुक नाई
 हुगअ फाइजाकया लेरई तंगखाइले
 कुयांग करमअ हुग हाबचकनाई
 खुताई करमअ बाइनाई
 मऽसऽई चाखऽला हुग छाबसेरुकनाई
 सबाइखाई चाबाई नाइता

गंगाबाई तऽइछा तऽई रानछी रानछी
 असा मुई भोजन मेराबाई खारची
 सालसा दिबाछा मालाइया बाइबा
 तऽमा खापांगो रिसी
 यागनी यासिताम यासिनअ काया
 थऽइबो आंग ननअ कागया
 नऽगल थांगानु राजानी सेबुक
 आंगबा थांगानु राजानी दाइजऽक
 निनी कतकनी थऽइकऽलाइथानी
 आनी बो कऽलाइनानी
 ननो नाइसिगऽई तंगना हिममानी
 मकल फिलिक ना नांगू
 साग बाई साक नांगऽई थुना हिनमानी
 दगा केबेंगऽई तंगू
 केबेंग मांगकेरेंग बकजाकया साले

बुवा खुरामबुई रिजाकया साले
 बाता सबंग न कवंग या साले
 माया कागऽलाक ननअ ।

भावार्थ - माता और पिता में अगाढ़ प्रेम है । दोनों ने एक दूसरे की रुचि का ख्याल रखते हुए फसल बोये हैं । झूम के झींग के फूलों को हम पहनेंगे और इसका फल खाएँगे । भादों में मुख्य फसल काटने के बाद किसान कई दिनों के बाद ही वापस आएँगे । लेकिन यदि किसान वापसी में ज्यादा देर कर दे तो हिरण और रोग फसल को नष्ट कर देगा।

(माँ पिता को संबोधित करने हुए -) जीवन भर मैं आपसे अलग नहीं होऊँगी । आप राजा का दास बनिये, मैं उनकी दासी बनूँगी । आपका रक्त जहाँ जहाँ गिरेगा, मेरा रक्त भी वहीं -वहीं गिरेगा । मैं आपसे कभी अलग नहीं होऊँगी - श्मशान में चिता पर लेटने तक !

(18) LOVE IN JHUM FIELD

Mami vatalak is father's favorite rice.

Mai chikan which is so nice

Is mother's favorite rice.

All around the hut

As per mother's advice

Father has sown her favorite rice.

In the garden mom has sown

Vegetables as per father's advice.

Regarding gourds growing in the jhum,

*Flowers will be worn, fruits will be consumed.
After the major harvest of September
Cultivators will be back only several days after.
But if coming back is delayed too much
Yellow disease will have attacked the plants as
such.
Cotton will have developed yellow patch
And young dears will have
Eaten the entire jhum stretch.*

*The Ganges and other rivers are getting dry.
During Durga festival, we eat mutton gravy and fry.
You are angry with me, but why ?*

*I could not be with you for a while, that's why ?
Rings look graceful in the finger.
I won't leave you until my death.
You should become the king's servant;
I shall become his maid.
Wherever the blood of your throat drops.
Mine will drop too.
My eyes do wink
But I have a desire to keep staring at you.
Clothes do become barrier
But I have a desire to lie alongside you.
Until the final day when I am dead,
Until on my pyre the final logs have been laid,
Until the crematory rituals have been completed,
Darling, I shall not leave you.*

The first half of the song seems to have been addressed by the son to his parents who are very much in love with each other.

However, the second half is addressed by the wife to her husband.

Note 1: The festival of Durga, called "asaani mwtaï" in Kokborok, was not a popular festival among the people. However, the festival was observed since long ago by the royal family and the chieftains.

Note 2: Dead bodies are disposed either by cremation or by burial. There are rituals associated with cremation.

Note 3: Probably, the word "Kharachi" refers to castrated goat whose meat is eaten. There is a festival called "Kharachi puja", in which the fourteen gods drank blood. Earlier humans were also sacrificed, now only birds and animals are sacrificed.

(१६)

जैष्ठ मासनी मुया हाकऽतऽई

मायअ खुल लुबमो खऽतऽई

अ जादु - बाबुले राई सऽइमअ राइतऽई

तकमा कसमनी तकनऽई

अ जादु - नखाले कसमानी वातऽय

माय बाबुबाई मा तंखा हिनकाई

बैकुंठपुरी तंगतऽई

अ जादु - माय बाबू बाई तंगमा याकारई

प्राण जादुबाई मा तंखा हिनकाई

आग्निनी दिनअ तऽइबाई आ तंगऽतऽई

अ जादू - ताबुकले जानबाई तंगतऽई ।

भावार्थ - माँ - पिताजी एवं स्वजनों के साथ जीवन-यापन करने पर यह दुनिया बैकुंठ-सा मनोरम प्रतीत होता है । विवाहोपरांत यदि मैं अपने पति के साथ भलीभाँति रह पाऊँ तो जीवन धन्य हो जाए ।

(19) BLISSFUL LIFE

Bamboo sprouts in April.

Mother spins thread in a reel.

Oh dear :

Father smoothens the cane ;

Egg is laid by the black hen.

Oh dear :

The cloud has blackened the sky ;

Living with near and dear ones

Is such a blissful life.

Oh dear :

Thereafter if I adjust with my partner;

It will be a blissful life.

We shall be inseparable like fish from water.

Oh dear :

Living with my life partner.

॥ २० ॥

आसिन मासनी साल जरा जरा

तलिंग चिरिक मा जरा

कातिक मासनी हरवा चारा

माय ककरिमा जरा

राजा नक सऽकांग धरम घड़ी

रहदी कक गड़ी गड़ी

माय सयाइबा बाबुदा सयन

बाबू बा काइठर यादा

बाबू सयाइबा सायछे सयनअ

माय बा लारिमा यादा ।

भावार्थ - आश्विन का मनोरम महीना विवाह तय करने का समय है। माँ या पिता में से कोई-न-कोई अपनी संतान की शादी के लिए तैयार हो ही जाएगा ।

(20) NUPTIAL TIME

*In October or round about,
When the kite makes wistful shout,
And mustard seeds sprout,
It is time for parent to send out,
Proposal for his son's marriage
As Dharma clock near the palace strikes aloud.*

*For the marriage, if mother is unwilling
Approach god-like father who may be willing.
But if, for it the father is unwilling
Approach goddess-like mother who may be willing.*

The month of Asvina or September-October is the month of marriage.

Note : Father has been likened to Kaithar, or god of fortune and creation. Mother has been likened to Prajapati, or goddess of fortune and creation.

॥ २१ ॥

मुइया बांगदरंग बिरछाई थांगबाइखा
तकछा तऽमान चान ?
हापिंग मुईसासिंग सिलअ चाबाइखा
खाली तऽमानअ काइनअ ?

हापिंग खुमचाकसा चामऽरअ मारा
 मऽसऽई चा नादे नासिंग ?
 बुमा नुखुंगनी बऽसाजऽलारक
 बऽरऽई रानदी दे नाइसिंग ?
 निनी साकबाकछा नकनाई थांगबाइखा
 खापिंग भाबिअई नाइले ।

भावार्थ - बाँस का कीड़ा उड़ गया है, तो फिर चिड़िया किसके इंतजार में बैठी है ? अरहर के बीज को पक्षी ने चुग लिया है, तो फिर अगले ऋतु में क्या बोएँगे ? झूम में सुंदर-सा लाल फूल क्या हिरण द्वारा चरे जाने के इंतजार में सीना ताने खड़ा है ? माँ के परिवार का अविवाहित वयस्क शादी क्यों नहीं कर रहा है - क्या उसे किसी विधवा का इंतजार है ?

(21) WAITING FOR WHAT ?

Bangdrag insects of bamboo sprouts have flown away.
 For what is then, the bird of prey waiting there ?
Sil bird has devoured the cowpea of the *jhum*
 In the next year, what will be sown ?
Red khumchak flower of *jhum* blooming here;
 Is it waiting to get grazed by the deer ?
 Unmarried adult of the mother's family;
 Is he waiting to marry a widowed lady ?
 His contemporaries have set up their families.
 Think over it deeply.

Note : Young ladies do not prefer to marry an aged man. Such a man, even though unmarried, has to marry a widow or a divorcee.

॥ २२ ॥

मऽसऽई रांगचाकनी बुकुर मानयासा
ताकऽलाई सबाम खाया
बामन छाकमांगतऽई लेंगदाराई देराई साकतऽई
साक मानया साले
नासे न ग्लाक नक नो
मऽसऽई छाकुर तऽई पुन मानयासाले
रिसे रिग्लाक पुन न
तमसा तऽई तक मानया साले
रिसे रिग्लाक तकनो ।

भावार्थ - यदि मुझे करघे के लिए सुनहरे हिरण का चमड़ा नहीं मिलता है तो मैं कपड़ा नहीं बुनूँगी । यदि मुझे ब्राह्मण की तरह हृष्ट-पुष्ट लड़का नहीं मिलता है तो मैं शादी नहीं करूँगी । यदि हिरणमय बकरियाँ नहीं मिलती है तो बकरी नहीं पालूँगी । अगर तमसा जैसा अच्छा पक्षी नहीं मिला तो मैं पक्षी नहीं पालूँगी ।

(22) DESIRE TO GET THE BEST

*I must get the hide of a beautiful deer ;
I won't use anyother hide in the loom this year.
I must marry a healthy man,
Looking beautiful like a brahman;
Or, I shall simply marry none.
I must get deer-like goodly goats;
Or, I won't rear goat at all.
Unless I get tasty Tamsa-like fowl,
I won't rear fowl at all.*

Hide of animal is used in the backstrap of the light handloom used by the people.

Note : Brahman possibly refers to a Bengali man belonging to Brahman caste. The tribal people had a great regard for Bengalis. Bengali was the official language of the royal court. Bengalis were considered culturally and intellectually advanced. A Bengali was thought to be fair complexioned, beautiful, tall, strong and healthy person. (Now, however, the ethnic divide between Bengalis and tribal people is an important socio-political factor in the state.)

॥ २३ ॥

जैष्ठ थांगुई आसाढ़ फाय लाहा
हापुंग गऽनांगऽई माय दुमुई दुमुई
नखा गऽनांगऽई उरिअ चुमुई
खापांग ले खा कुरूक थारो
माइसऽकांग पायई पाकला तांखा
माइफांग तलाअ थाइचुमू मुनखा
जादुले नग कऽऽई बुफुर फायनअ
जादुबाई चालाई नानी
खापांगले खा कुबुकथारो
हापुंग हाताइसा गारिंग साकाअ
दक्षिन बयार सिपफाइसिंग पाइसिंग
वातऽई पेनिया वाअ
जादुले नककऽऽई खातांगना बांगखा
खाअ ककतऽमा साअ ।

भावार्थ - ज्येष्ठ के बाद अब आषाढ़ आ गया है । झूम की निराई भी खतम हो गयी है । झूम के पौधे हरेभरे एवं मनोरम हैं । आसमान में बादल छाये हैं । लेकिन मैं भीतर-ही भीतर विरह से तड़प रही हूँ क्योंकि प्रिय घर पर नहीं है । न जाने प्रिय कब आएँगे ? वे आते हम साथ-साथ भोजन करते । मन-ही-मन मैं किससे बतिया रही हूँ ?

(23) WAITING FOR THE DEAR

After May, now it is June.

Tender paddy plants are fluffy in the jhum.

In the sky, flying clouds can be seen.

But I am anxious from within.

We have finished the second weeding.

Under paddy plants, gourd is ripening.

My darling has gone away, when will he be returning,

So that I may eat together with my darling ?

I am anxious from within.

Over the jhum hut on the hill,

Mild southern wind is blowing.

It is raining pitapat.

He is not at home, I am anxious for that.

With whom am I conversing in my heart ?

The month of Ashadha, roughly mid-June to mid-July, is the month of rain. It is also the month when amorous feelings run high in the heart of the lovers.

Note that the lady is waiting for her husband to return. Then only she will eat with her husband.

॥ २४ ॥

वातऽई वमानी वाखारे खेरे

चिनी गातिलाम सिपेरे

बाहाय काई गाती थांगनअ ?
 बाबुजान लगी रिदी
 हातऽंग कामिनी दुंगुर गातिलाम
 दालान रेकेअई हलंग याकऽलाम
 कासले ओइदे थांगन ?
 बाबुजान लगी रिदी
 मायुंग कऽथऽंगरग फाइअ खऽनाअ
 मऽसा गाबू घा फाइअ खऽनाअ
 साइचुंग थानानी खासऽरऽक सऽरऽक
 बाबुजान लगी रिदी ।

भावार्थ - वर्षाकाल में घाट का रास्ता कीचड़ से भरा है । रास्ता बहुत ऊबड़-खाबड़ है । रास्ते में वन्यप्राणी हैं । चाचा आप भी मेरे साथ चलिए न !

(24) TO DEAR UNCLE

*It has been drizzling continuously.
 So, the path to the ghat is slippery.
 How can I fetch water alone ?
 Dear uncle, please give me company.
 Way to the ghat on the hill
 Passes through terrains steep and scary.
 What if I skid from there ?
 Dear uncle, please give me company.
 Even wild elephants and big tigers
 Are there reportedly.*

I feel scared in going alone.

Dear uncle, please give me company.

Note : A youngster addresses his uncle as "baabubujan" in informal conversation. In reply, the uncle also addresses the youngster as : "baabujaan." Similarly, a young girl addresses her aunt as "maaijaan" and vice versa. In Begal also, the words "maa" (mother) and "baabaa" (father) are used informally to address a young girl and a young boy respectively.

॥ २५ ॥

नखा पिनाला साइचंग बेराअई
चेराइफुरुनी ककनो वानसुगई
मकलनी मुक तऽई इयरई
साबअ रिहिनज्जखरांग कऽचांगऽई
मकलनी मुकतऽई बांगमानी बागऽई
नाइरऽगऽ मानरऽक लिया
गानाअ फाइदी आचुक ककसादी
फाइदी चऽग कऽनऽय तंगनो ।

भावार्थ - चाँदनी रात में अकेले टहलते हुए पुरानी यादें ताजा हो गयी । आँखों में आँसू आ पड़े और मैं तुम्हें देख न सका । आओ हमलोग दिल खोलकर बात करें ।

(25) RECOLLECTION OF AN OLD LOVE

*It is a moonlit night, and I stroll alone
Reminiscing the memories of days bygone.
Tears trickle down my eyes.*

*As I hear your sweet voice,
The flow of tear intensifies.
May be that is why I could not see you.
Come closer, my sweetheart
Let us open up our hearts.*

॥ २६ ॥

खुमनी दे खुमतऽरांग कानया कायाई बा
दुदराई माला मा कान ?
कानमअ कान जरिप खिबी कऽलांगऽई
राजानी पुरी कारई कऽलांगऽई
तऽमाले गदिसी नांगमानी बागऽई
राम संगबा बलंगअ बासा मा खाई ?
तऽमाले असती नांगमानी बागऽई
मऽसऽई रांगचाक नो ककना थांगतिनी
आसऽक बिरिमान मान बा ?
तऽमाले गदिसी नांगमानी बागऽई
सीता बा खकजाक लांगबा ?
इकले यम काइथर वाक्यरिमाबाई
थऽइया अमरनी बरनअ मानऽइबअ
रावण बा थाइजा लांगबा ?

भावार्थ - मर्यादा पुरुषोत्तम राम को फूलों की माला के बजाय रुद्राक्ष की माला क्यों पहनना पड़ा ? उन्हें वनवास क्यों सहना पड़ा ? सीता का अपहरण क्यों हुआ ? राम को कष्ट क्यों झेलना पड़ा ? रावण क्यों मारा गया ?

(26) QUESTIONS ON THE RAMAYANA

*Discarding the lavish floral wreath,
Why did Lord Rama put on ascetic rudraksha wreath ?
Discarding the resplendent royal dress,
Giving up the comforts of the palace,
For what misfortune, I pray,
In the forest, Rama had to stay ?
For what misfortune, I pray,
While giving the golden deer a chase,
Such a grief Rama had to face ?
For what misfortune had
Sita to be kidnapped ?
Even after the boon of being safe,
From the god of death,
Why did Ravana meet with death ?*

॥ २७ ॥

खुमनी खुमतऽरांग तामअ खाइनानी
दुदुराय माला तरअ
आमाले कुसुनी खापेंगना बागऽई
रामसंगन बलंग हरअ
पितानी बाक्य नारऽकना बागऽई
कानमाले कानजरीप खिबी कऽलांगऽई
बुफांगनी बुकुर काननअ
सती सीतानी खा पेंगना बागऽई
मऽसऽई रागचाक नो ककनानी बागऽई
बलंग बांगमिसंग रऽकथाय रऽकथारई

आसऽक बिरिमान मानन
 लखन कुनदिरी बारमानी बागऽई
 सीता बा खकजाक लांगो
 सतीले सीतानो खकमानी बागऽई
 हाय हाय रावण बा थुइजा लांगअ ।

भावार्थ - रुद्राक्ष की माला फूलों की माला से महत्तर है । माँ कैकेयी की खुशी के लिए राम को वनवास हुआ । लक्ष्मण-रेखा पार करने से सीता का अपहरण हुआ । सुंदर हिरण के शिकार के कारण राम को कष्ट झेलना पड़ा । सीता जैसी पत्नी को अपहरण करने के पाप से रावण की मृत्यु हुई ।

(27) ANSWERS ON THE RAMAYANA

*Floral wreath is of what significance,
 When rudraksha wreath has more importance ?
 For happiness of Kaikeyi, younger mother,
 In the forest Lord Rama had to wander.
 In order to fulfill the commands of his dad,
 The royal dress he discarded,
 And clothes of bark he embraced.
 In order to satisfy Sita, the ideal wife,
 During the hunting strife,
 While chasing the deer in the vast jungle,
 Rama got into the trouble.
 Sita was kidnapped for the reason,
 Of crossing the contour drawn by Lakshman.
 For the crime of kidnapping Sita, ideal wife
 Ravana had to die.*

॥ २८ ॥

मिया सारिगअ नकबार पाइकऽना
नखालाअ फारजाक नुगअ
तिनी आइचुगअ प्राण जादू संग फाइखऽना नादो
दगा खुम बेरजाक नुग
हाममानी बारा रगनो अ रांगचाक संग
थकफुलयाई मिलिक नाइरग
खुम कानयऽई मतम नाइरग
असानी मऽताइ खाकचासे नाइथक
रांगचाक संगघुरी ई नाइथक
आचुक तंखाइबो बाक्सो बेड़ातंगतऽई
बाचातर खाइबा सिलाई संगचातऽई
अ रांगचाक संग
हाममानी बारा रगनो
मकलनो नाइदे खाफुरया तंगनो
मकल मुकवानजऽई रकनो
यासी न नाइदे खाफुरया तंगनो
यासी सबाइथाइरगन ।

भावार्थ - घर-द्वार सजा है । दरवाजे पर फूल लगा है । लगता है मेरे प्रिय हमारे यहाँ आये हैं । मेरे प्रिय हर तरफ से सुंदर दिखते हैं । उनका अंग-प्रत्यंग सुंदर है ।

(28) MY DEAR IS BEAUTIFUL

Last night, maybe there was a gusty wind.

That is why the portico looks broom-cleaned.

Wreaths and bouquets adorn the door

Darling has come home this dawn, for sure !

My darling is the most fascinating man.

Even without applying oil, his skin looks smooth.

Even without wearing flower, he smells so good.

Idol of Durga looks good from front side.

But my darling looks good from all sides.

While sitting, he looks like a trunk lying flat;

While standing he looks like a gun standing slant.

My darling -

He is the most fascinating man.

Look at his eyes; aren't they beautiful,

Eyes like that of a Bengali, non-tribal ?

Look at his finger, isn't it sheen,

Finger like pod of a bean ?

Note 1 : Possibly the boy has come to his would be in-law's house for the mandatory probation before marriage under *chamarl kaimani* system of marriage. The girl feels very thrilled about it.

Note 2: In this song and some other songs, it is found that beauty and charm of one's appearance from sideways and even from behind are also appreciated.

॥ २६ ॥

अ-ताखुक रकनो-ताबुकनी समय रकले

खापांग भाबिअई नाइले

गारिंग तखाखी कऽलाइमा समय

लामा बेंगसऽनाल सऽंगमानी समय
 ताबुकनी समय रकले
 अ ताखुक रग खापांग भाबिअई नाइले
 कार्तिक मासअ नखा गोरोमखाई
 खापांग सुनदुरो मानी
 मासिंग छियारी लर साया नुकखाई
 बुमा नुखुंगनी बऽसा सिकला
 खापांग खा गुरुम मानी
 आ ताखुकरग कुचुक तलिंगसा चिरिगमाखऽनाई
 खापांग खा इमांग चाअ
 बरक सिनिया नुका काफाइखाय
 थानतिन खिबऽई खारअ
 कुथांग करमअ खुताय कऽलाअई
 खुताई जरिमा समय
 दंगर बखरक तऽइसेंग बैराअई
 रानदिजऽक मकया समय
 वानदाल बऽलाइब कियकतऽई कियकतऽई
 बऽरऽई रानदिब मुकतुरबाई कुंगतुई
 ताबुकनी समय रकले
 माय माइकऽरान मायानी समय
 वाइसा गरवो वाइसाकियागो
 सातुनमा दुमुइअ दुमुइअ
 बऽरऽई सिकला खापांग

पुरुषपई

वानमा दुमुइअ दुमुइअ ।

भावार्थ - कार्तिक का महीना मन में प्रेम की भावना को जगा देता है। यह शादी-विवाह का समय है । नवयुवक-नवयुवतियाँ प्रेमविहवल हो उठते हैं । जब कुछ अतिथि द्वार पर आते हैं तो नवयुवती शर्म के मारे करघा आदि आँगन में ही छोड़कर अंदर की ओर भाग जाती है।

(29) SEASON OF LOVE

This is October, friends, ladies and gentlemen.

Ponder over the current season.

Now the jhum huts get fungal attack.

Cobwebs crowd the bushy path.

Ponder over it, ladies and gentlemen.

Such is the current season.

On hearing the thunderclap

We become anxious in our hearts.

Amorous mist of the winter

Makes young ones of the family

Yearn for their sweethearts.

Shrill cry of the kite up in the sky

Makes one anxious from inside.

When the guests enter the portico,

The girl flees inside, leaving the loom there, lo !

The yellow insects swarm the cotton.

It is time for it to ripen.

Keeping the pitcher on the bank of the stream,

The widow is lost in daydream.

Now, the bamboo buds bloom

*As tear and snot drop down.
 Such is the current season.
 While paddy is getting sunned,
 Occasionally the clouds
 Cover the sun.
 Young girl's bosom
 Is full of
 Fluffy emotion.*

Note : The guests have come with the marriage proposal for the girl. They are representing the bridegroom's side. The girl feels shy and enters the house hurriedly, leaving the loom outside.

॥ ३० ॥

कसम बुदलबाई थडंगमानी नुगुई
 मऽनाइनअ कसम नुगअ
 कऽचाक बुदुबाई थडंगमानी नुगुई
 मऽनाइनअ कऽचाक नुगअ
 कुफुर बुदुलबाई थडंगमानी नुगुई
 मऽनाइनअ कुफुर नुगअ
 कुफुर हिमानी तऽमानी जली
 लबइसे कुफुर नुगअ
 कऽचाक हिनमान नऽंग तऽमान जली
 लबइसे कऽचाक हिन
 कसम हिमानी नऽंग तऽमा जली
 लबइसे कसम हिन
 कऽथांग तंगसाक से भयाब पिरिती

उफिल लांगखाइन कऽरऽई
सिया ना जानी लामथाई बजागऽई
सियाय निद्रा थांगका ।

भावार्थ - मेरे प्रिय, तुम कितने सुंदर हो ! जब मैं प्यार से तुम्हारे बारे में कुछ कहती हूँ तो क्यों चिढ़ते हो ? प्रेम-प्रीति तो इस जीवन तक ही है । मृत्योपरांत तो हम अलग-अलग रास्ते में चल पड़ते हैं ।

(30) MILD LOVE

*Playing with the cop which is black,
My darling, you look dark.
Playing with the cop which is red,
My darling, you look red.
Playing with the cop which is white,
My darling, you look bright.
Why do you mind if I call you fair ?
Endearingly I call you fair,
Why do you mind if I call you red ?
Endearingly I call you red.
Why do you mind if I call you dark ?
Endearingly I call you dark.
Love and affection are till we are alive.
After we pass away, it will be all gone.
Lying flat like the grinding stone,
We go to sleep, unknown.*

॥ ३१ ॥

मासिंग ब थांगखा साचऽलांग फाइखा
मासिंग नि बाइदाअ चऽंग खिबई रिअई
साचऽलांग बाइदाअ रमदी
तस्कुमाबा तकमऽताई यादा
मासिंग कऽचांगखा मासिंग कलमखा
तसकू मासे सिनाई
तकसा तग्ला पुंगई फाइबाइखा
खापांग सऽरांगऽई फाइका
गाती खामानी मुई बाली फांगअ
तकसा जनिजंग पुंगो
बिछिसे किफिल फाइखा ।

भावार्थ - शीतकाल समाप्त हो गया है और ग्रीष्मकाल आ गया है ।
सारा वातावरण इस ऋतु परिवर्तन के साथ-साथ बदल गया है । नये
ऋतु के आगमन की नयी उमंग चोरों ओर स्पष्ट है ।

(31) THE YEAR COMES ROUND

Winter is over — now it is summer.

Leaving behind the lifestyle of winter,

We adopt that of the summer.

Taskuma bird has started to twitter.

By taskuma bird's twitter

You can say if it is winter

Or it is already over.

Cackling of the fowl

*Fills the heart with joyous sound.
On muibali tree by the ghat
Janijarg bird's chirps resound.
The year has come round.*

॥ ३२ ॥

माझिबिलात बारछानी सिमी
फागुन ता थांगजा बाथुन
बलंगअ थागडई तऽमा खुम मतम

माझि बिलात बुबार
खुमंग मतमया बलंग मतमबो
बलंग सिकलाचाअ
थंगर फायई तऽमा थक मतम
लांगी थक मतम बाहाई
माझिबिलात बाहाई मानखाइनअ
खापांग खा सऽरांग फाइअ ।

भावार्थ - माधवीलता में पुष्प रहते-रहते फाल्गुन का महीना तुम चले मत जाना । फूलों की सुरभि ऐसी है मानो पूरा वन ही सुरभि बिखेर रहा हो । इस सुरभि से मन आनंदित हो उठता है ।

(32) FRAGRANT PHALGUNA

*Till the myrtle flower is still there,
Phalguna month, please don't go away.
In the forest, there is a waft of fragrance
From the myrtle inflorescence.*

*The entire forest which is in youthfulness
 Appear to be emitting the fragrance.
 Scented oil kept in the bedroom
 Fills the entire room with perfume.
 The fragrance of myrtle inflorescence
 Fills my heart with ebullience.*

॥ ३३ ॥

बासिया नागर संगनो
 सऽइनाई काइथरसा ताम सऽइहरखा
 कऽपालअ तामअ नांगखा
 फियग मानमतऽई फियग नाइखामुन
 भारतअ लेखा रगनअ
 भारत पुथी पडिई नाई खामुन
 पडिई मानमातऽई हिनकाई
 माय माय संगमा तुखुदे तुखू
 ताइबदे तंगख दुखू
 खुरी सा कऽनऽई हिनई बाममानी
 काइसा लगिअ कऽरऽई
 अ खालिचा करम लेखा
 बऽतऽई कऽपाल न तुबुजाक लांगऽई
 सागबाई मा तंगया ओंगखा
 माय बो खाइया बाबू बो खाइया
 बाइथांग करमअ दोषी
 खालिचा करमअ हामयानी बागऽई
 ककमुंगसे बांगलांग छिदो ।

भावार्थ - विधाता में मेरे भाग्य / कपाल में कितना अधिक कष्ट लिखा है ! अगर मैं अपने जीवन की महाभारत गणना पढ़ पाता तो अवश्य पढ़ता । मेरे जीवन में कष्ट-ही-कष्ट है । भाग्य ने मर-सहोदर भाई भी मुझसे छीन लिया है ।

(33) BAD LUCK

*Oh dear,
What has the providence
Written as fate in my forehead ?
If I could break it open,
I would have opened.
If my lifestory could be read
I would have read.
How do I know if there are
More hardships in my fate ?
At birth we were two of us.
But one is already dead.
Oh my unlucky fate !
How bad luck it is that
We got separated !
It is not fault of either of my parents.
It is the fault of my fate.
Only insults I have to pocket.*

Note : The world is pre-determinate. One's lifestory has been likened to the epic of the Mahabharata. Just as the Mahabharata can be read, so can be the fate.

हापिंग मुइमाइसिंग खऽरऽइचाफुरु
 हापिंग मुइमाइसिंग सिलनअ खातांग
 नागर सा बनो खातांग
 सागनी सामपिली सागबाई काकयातऽई
 माय बाई बाबू सागबाई काकयाबा
 केन चऽंग खातांगयाता
 नागर खातांगमा कऽरऽई ओंगयाना
 मासिंग जरा बाई साचऽलांग जरा
 नागर खातांगमा तंगना
 कुचुग तलिंगनी खरांग खऽनाअई
 मान खातांगया फान खातांगया
 उदिसी खातांग मानी ।

भावार्थ - ग्रीष्मकाल के अंत एवं शीतकाल के आरंभ के बीच के
 इस समय में पुराने झूम को देखकर पुरानी यादें ताजा हो उठती हैं ।
 इस समय में यदि माता-पिता की याद न आए तो प्रिया की याद
 निश्चित ही सतायेगी ।

(34) SEASON TO YEARN

*When the cowpea of the jhum is abloom,
 One yearns for the lovely **sil** bird of the jhum;
 One yearns for the sweet darling.
 While living with parents intimately,
 Like shadow inseparable from the body,*

*We never yearn for anybody.
 But between the summer and the winter,
 We cannot help yearning.
 Stimulating shrill of the kite above
 Will compel you into yearning
 Even if it is not for your parents you are yearning
 You cannot help longing for the darling.*

॥ ३५ ॥

चैतर पंदर बैसाख दाग रिखा
 बिछी किफिलई फाइका
 वातऽई हा कऽलाई बऽलाई रतमखा
 बऽखऽरऽय कियग बाइखा
 बुबार फुल ललक बाहाई तऽई लऽलऽक
 खुमतकसा बुबार यादे
 बुबार नाइथकतऽई बकंग तंगतऽलाई
 खुनजुअ बने खामुन
 बुकले मऽताइनी सऽराइमुंग नांगऽई
 बकंग कऽरऽई खा निनी
 नासिक मामांगदे बाबाऽराय चानअ
 याग तऽई मांगदे माहाई बा काकनअ
 बाहाई काननानी खुमतकसा बुबार रकन अ
 बुबार नाइथकतऽई बकंग तंगतऽलाई
 शरीर साग काइसा ओंगऽई मानखामुन
 खुमतकसा बुबार नऽगबाई ।

भावार्थ - नये साल का पैगाम लिये बैसाख बस आ ही गया । नये साल की वृष्टि से चारों ओर हरियाली छायी है । खुमतकसा फूल में यदि डंठल होता तो मैं इसे कानो में पहनता । कहीं मेरे छूते ही यह फूल मुझी न जाए या इसकी सुरभि समाप्त न हो जाए ।

(35) FRESHNESS OF THE NEW YEAR

*By the end of April, May is around
The year has come round.
In the fresh rain of the new season,
Fleshy buds open up in profusion.
The flower which is whitish and smells sweet
Is Khumtaksa flower, is not it ?
If there were stalk in this flower so dear
I would have worn it in my ear.
Because of curse of which god
Stalk you have not got?
As we watch it, will it get seared ?
As we pluck it, will its scent have disappeared ?
If this beautiful flower
Had the stalks
I would have worn it
And enjoyed the togetherness.*

॥ ३६ ॥

ताबुकनी जरा रगअ
भादर हा कऽरा मासिंग चाकऽरा
छियारी कऽलाइमानी
मामी हालाबअ तपछी कऽलाइअ

बुफुरु रा सा बाइनाई
 माइजान मारे नअ यागुल तुइबाइदी
 हाबानी सामुंग पाइदी
 भादर थांगकऽलाई अस्विन फाइयानू
 असानी मऽताई फाइते फाइते खाई
 मामिता मऽताई रिनु ।

भावार्थ - भाद्र मास में हल्का कुहासा पड़ना शुरू हो जाता है । यह व्यस्तता का समय है क्योंकि फसल जल्दी -जल्दी काटना है । भाद्र के बाद अश्विन आएगा जब हम दुर्गापूजा मनाएँगे । दुर्गापूजा शेष होते-न होते लक्ष्मी पूजा आ जाएगा ।

(36) HARVEST SEASON

*It is August- end
 After which it gets chilly.
 All around, it is misty.
 It is time for a lot of activities,
Tabsi bird devours **mami halab** paddy;
 When shall we reap it ?
 Oh sister, let us cooperate
 To finish reaping quickly.
 After August, September will come.
 Then as soon as Durga festival ends
 Lakshmi festival will have begun.*

Note : There is a reference to cooperative farming involving community-based labor but individual ownership.

॥ ३७ ॥

बरक हिमानी लामा दोयारी
हिममाले लाम चअई मानया
सागनी सागफला सागसऽलाई फाइअई
आचायई थुयई आचायई
फलामांग सालऽई फिर
बरक हिममानी लमा दुयारी
तामुंग नऽंग हिमना किरी ।

भावार्थ - जनम, मृत्यु और पुनर्जन्म - यह शाश्वत चक्र है । मृत्यु शरीर परिवर्तन मात्र है । फिर मृत्यु से भय क्यों ?

(37) DEATH AND RE-BIRTH

*The cycle of birth and death
Is eternal and endless.
Through death, birth and death
Its body, the soul changes
And forward it surges.
The cycle of birth and death
Why does it make you afraid ?*

Note : This song re-iterates the theory of life and death as enunciated in the Gita.

॥ ३८ ॥

अ जान - थाकनिले दामरा थुनता चाबाइखा
काइथर नक लामा बियांग ?

सागनी ले रितुकू तेना चाबाइखा
 दपा नक लामा बियांग ?
 खरखले चेंखारु राबऽई तंगबाइखा
 तेली नक लामा बियांग ?

भावार्थ - इस संसार में लौकिक जीवन जीते-जीते जीवन रूपी चदरिया मैली हो गयी है । अब मुझे इश्वर का दिव्य शरण चाहिए ।

(38) **SANNYASI**

*The chopper in hand has got worn out:
 Tell me the path to the temple.
 The shawl on the body has got soiled:
 Where does the washerman live ?
 The hair on the head has got scruffy
 Where does the oilman live ?*

Note : After leading a mundane life, one seeks solace in divine grace in the twilight years of one's life.

॥ ३६ ॥

नखा रांगचाकनी तऽइबाई
 सिरी युगिनी हाबाई
 बाबू साग नांखाई आमा अगतऽई अ
 अगो तऽइमांगनअ आगो तऽइमांगनअ
 गानाक नऽई तालनऽई कासुक फाइकाइनो
 अग तंगमानी खुरी कऽलाइखा
 लाचिमा रगन लाचिया खाइअई

आमा बा खाजा करमअ आबुक खगतुगई
 आमा बा पुषी मानी
 किसिअ थुअई कऽरानअ मुथुई
 चाया तत्रा छिलऽई चारिअई
 आमा बा पुषी मानी
 हादुक दुग कलक लुबिया तकबुक
 नगनी कुतुलया बाबू
 सालसा गंगतऽई कऽलऽई लुमफुरु
 बाबू बा थऽइजाक ना की रिमानी
 नाइदी बाबुनी माया नाइदी आमानी माया
 बाबू बुड़ाछा आगी तांखऽतऽई तांगऽई मानलिया
 बाबू चालिया ओंगसाई फाँइलौहा
 आमा चलिया ओंगसाई फाँइलौहा
 आमा बाबू संग पुषिअई तुबतऽई
 चऽंगब पुषिना बारी
 आमा बाबुन पुषी ना खाइबा
 आइचुक बाचादी भाती बक सादी
 बाबुन पुषी नानी
 लाइरु हइकऽराग बाबू कई कऽराग
 बाबू बुड़ाछा कइअई तंगफुरु ।
 चुवाक याकखुरी मानजाखा खऽलाई
 बाबू कइमानी हाम नऽ
 आमा बऽरऽइचऽक कइअई तंगफुरु

बनअ सेपेंगना नांगनू
 सारिक पांग बऽतऽक संगदी
 बऽलाई कलकली बऽतऽक मा नऽगथाई
 आमा बा पेंगजा वानू ।

भावार्थ - माता-पिता ने बड़ी मेहनत से हमारा लालन - पोषण किया है । अतएव हमारा भी उनके प्रति कर्त्तव्य बनता है । हमे माता-पिता को हमेशा खुश रखना चाहिए । वृद्धावस्था में उनका विशेष ध्यान रखना चाहिए ।

(39) DUTY TO AGED PARENTS

*Just like the golden raindrops
 Lash mother earth,
 Love between the parents
 Has created us.
 After being in the womb for ten months
 We came into the world, thus.
 In a manner unabashed,
 With their lovely breasts, mothers breastfed us.
 Mothers have nurtured us thus.
 They slept on the wetted bed, gave dry bed to us.
 Eating less themselves, they fed us.
 Mothers have nurtured us thus.
 Ignoring the work of the jhum,
 To look after me, father was at home.
 Attacked with fever, when we shivered like bear
 That we may die was father's fear.*

Look, how much concerned they were.
 Oh lucky lady,
 Aged father cannot work like in his youthful days.
 Father is becoming senescent day by day.
 Mother is becoming senescent day by day.
 Just as parents looked after us,
 We shall look after them thus.
 In order to placate the two,
 Put **bhati** pot on stove to brew.
 Father goes in tantrums like leaves of **lairu**.
 In such a situation you should
 Offer him beer which is so good.
 When mother is in angry mood,
 Get fermentation of rice done,
 And let her drink as much as she would.
 This will make her cool.

Note 1: Lairu leaf curls after it is plucked. This leaf is used in cooking. Rice etc are tied in this leaf, and then cooked by boiling.

Note 2: Alcohol is consumed openly in most social occasions. It is offered to guests and seniors. It is even used in worship.

॥ ४० ॥

मागुराम हारुंग रोया बाई थामपुई
 रासू हारुंग नी खुमपुई
 मायनी बिती तांगना चडंग हिनकाई
 वानामा दुबुई दुबुई
 फाइदी चडंग बिती रमनुअ
 तिरिंग तारानी लांप्रा वाथप

बिछी बिछिनी खाली खलिनी
 सुबराई काइलांग मानी
 फाइदी चडंग बिती रमनऽ
 सुबराई राजा बिती काइमाननअ
 कामी कासुक तंगुई थांगमुंगनअ
 नग कुड़िदक नग दक
 चालाई कुड़िदक चालाई दक
 अ चालाई रग फाइदी चडंग बिती रमनू ।

भावार्थ - हमे परंपरा को बनाए रखना चाहिए एवं इसका उल्लंघन नहीं करना चाहिए । सुबराई राजा ने हमारे लिए कुछ परंपराओं की प्रवृत्ति की है । कामीकुसुक राजा ने छह कुड़ी छह (१२६) घरों की एक विशाल नगरी की स्थापना की थी ।

(40) TRADITIONAL APPROACH

*Leeches and mosquitoes infest **Manguram** valley*
*Beautiful **khumpui** flowers decorate **Rasu** valley.*
If we follow the age-old tradition,
We have to ponder at every twist and turn.
Come, let us follow the age old tradition.
Year after year,
***Lampra vathap** worship has been done,*
*The way legendary **Subrai Raja** had had it begun.*
Come let us follow that age-old tradition.
*On the basis of **Subrai Raja's** proposition,*
*Regional head **Kami Kusun** set up a habitation.*
There were six score and six houses

*And as many children.
Come, let us follow the age-old tradition.*

Note1: In this hot and humid region, mosquitoes and leeches swarm the valley.

Note2: A habitation with 126 families is considered a very big and populous habitation. Ordinarily, a habitation has much fewer families.

Note 3: **Subrai Raja** is a legendary figure. It is believed that Subrai and **Hangrai** were two brothers. Subrai was a simple and straightforward man but was epicurean in nature. **Hangrai** on the other hand, was a teetotaler but sophisticated. There was a fight between **Subrai** and **Hangrai** over control of territory. Subrai created the hills by throwing the shuttles of the loom. Thereafter, Subrai ruled the hills and **Hangrai** the plains. **Subrai** is considered the founder of Tripuri tribe and Tripuri culture. He is also credited with the discovery of 108 medicinal herbs.

Note 4: Kami Kujuk is the regional head among Tripuris. The region comprises a number of villages.

Note 5: Lampra means junction of paths, which is supposed to be haunted by spirits. Vathap means bamboo. In Lampra Vathap the two deities viz Akhatra and Bikhatra are worshipped in the form of bamboo at the junction of paths. Lampra Vathap worship is done on many occasions.

॥ ४१ ॥

अ जादु हापलक गऽतऽई केरांग बखंगतऽई
हाताल बा मऽचांग मानी
हापुंग कऽलऽलऽक नऽगब यालऽलऽक
हिमतानी मऽचांग मानी
अ जादु बिशी पुइलानी वतऽई वामानी
पाताल पेखागऽई खुमबअ बारसानाई
हान सिलई बार बारी खुमतगया
बिछी पुइलाअ बारअ

बारी खुमतकया ओ खुनजुअ कानखाई
 ओकलक मतम थारु
 अ जादु कसमयालऽलऽक हाताल समलऽलऽक
 हाताल बाई मऽचांग मानी
 अ जादु इक नाहादी इक नाहादी
 तप्रेंग सानी बाइद्
 तप्रेंग साले खेवला बांगबी
 तखा कसमनो खेचुथा खऽलाई
 रजंग बाई मऽचांग मानी
 अ जादू हाताल कियगऽई माई काइया सानी
 गारिंग नऽंग तांगदी हिनबा
 दक्षिण चालिया पचिम आलिया
 हाताल कियगऽई गारिंग तांगऽइबा
 नारऽक दे मानन मानया ।

भावार्थ - हे प्रिया, तुम कच्छप की पीठ -सी झूम से बहुत मिलती-
 जुलती हो । तुम्हारे कानों पर शोभायमान फूल कितना सुगंधित है ।
 जली हुई झूम में कौवा और तेप्रेंग खेल रहे हैं । यदि मैं दक्षिणी किनारे
 पर झूमघर बनाऊँ तो क्या यह आँधी और बरसात बर्दाश्त कर पाएगा ?

(41) BEAUTY OF NATURE

The jhum slope resembles tortoise's back.

The resemblance is so exact.

The slope of the hill is medium and undulating

It bears a close resemblance to your walking.

Khuntakya flower blooms, oh dear,

*Kissing the earth from so near,
 After the first rain of the new year.
 You have the flower in your ear,
 Which smells so good from the rear.
 Oh dear, you are wheatish like the soil
 It resembles the color of jhum so well.
 Oh dear, **tepreng** bird resembles burned stumps of
 bamboo.
 The activities of **tepreng**
 You must know.
 In a playful manner
 It disturbs the crow.
 Oh dear, you ask me to construct the hut,
 Before sowing the paddy seeds.
 If I set up the jhum hut
 Facing west on the southern terrain,
 Will it withstand storm and rain ?*

॥ ४२ ॥

अ जादु चैतर वार्चेग सकचाई हरमानी
 रजंग पाकुड़ी सरई खामकादो
 खऽना फुंग आइखाई हाताल नाइनानी
 सेमान पिनमा मुइमुंग बऽचऽलऽय
 खाती ओई तऽइना खाइदी
 बिछी कऽतालनी वातऽई वामानी
 हाताल वो मतम मानी
 बलंग तमऽसा कचिक मा खऽनाई

खापांग खा सऽरांग मानी
 अ जादु हाताल कऽखामबो
 आगी बगला तंगऽई फाइमानी
 तांगऽई से खातांग सिदो
 तंगखू चेराइनी बऽखा अ जादू
 आनी नुखुंगो छिक्ला बुरा
 निनी नुखुंगो चामारी काउई
 तंगखऽ चेराइनी बऽखऽ ।

भावार्थ - हे प्रिया, चैत्र में झूम को जलाया गया था जिसमें जंगलात
 अच्छी तरह जलकर राख हो गये हैं । वर्ष की प्रथम वृष्टि में झूम से
 सोंधी-सी खुशबू आ रही है । मैं तुम्हारे यहाँ घर-जमाई हूँ । मैं यौवन
 की मस्ती के साथ खूब मन लगाकर काम करूँगा ।

(42) JHUM BY A GROOM

*Oh dear, dried vegetation of jhum was burned in March.
 The stumps have burned completely into ash.
 Next day, to the jhum site, I shall dash.
 I shall gather the seeds
 Of last year which we had stashed.
 In the first rain of the year,
 The new burned jhum site smells so fresh.
 I hear the crow of wildfowl
 Which makes me refresh.
 Oh dear, while working in the jhum
 I recall the carefree days of childhood.
 Dear, I have a youth's bosom*

In my family, I am a man grown.

In your family, I am a groom.

I have a youth's bosom.

Note : This song is sung by a prospective bridegroom still on probation in **chamari kaimani** system of marriage.

When the raindrops fall in the newly burned jhum site, it emits a smell of freshness.

॥ ४३ ॥

बिछी कऽताल नी वातऽई वामानी
हाताल हा नरम खऽना
अ जादू आगी माया संग तांगऽई थांगतऽई
चऽगबो तांगनानी नांगनो
अ तिनी नी दिनतऽई रगो
खऽनाफुंग आइअई हाबा थानानी
तऽमा मुइमुंगनअ नो काइनो ?
अ जादू माइमुंगले माइकऽरा माइग्रासाले
माइमुंग अक्र बननअ काइनो
माइग्रासानो काइअई पाइखाइले
तऽमा माइमुंग न काइनो
अ जादू आगी मायसंग काइअई चामानी
माय बाबुनी तांगबिती रगनो
चऽगबा नारऽग ना नांगानू
खापांगअ वानसुक नाइदी
अ जादू नऽगबा चऽलाबा हुचुंग बजादी

आंगबो बऽरऽइबा कासेलेंग खानो
हुकनी हुक हुचुंग बअई पाइखऽलाई
कामी हुक लामा बदी ।

भावार्थ - नये साल के साथ-साथ नयी वृष्टि एवं खेती का नया मौसम भी आ गया है । झूम में हमलोग किसके बाद क्या बोएँगे ? हमलोग परंपरा के मुताबिक खेती करेंगे । मैं स्त्री हूँ, बाँस की टोकारियाँ बनाऊँगी । आप पुरुष हैं, झूम में सफाई और मिट्टी का काम करेंगे ।

(43) WHAT TO DO IN JHUM

*Here is the new year and the new rain.
Maybe it has softened the terrain.
Oh dear, we shall have to work,
In our forefather's tradition.
In these days —
The next day, after getting up to the jhum
I shall head.
What shall be sown there ?
Oh dear ! At first, we shall sow **maigrasa** paddy
Which grows early.
After sowing **maigrasa** paddy
Next, what it should be ?
Oh dear, we shall do cultivation
In our forefather's tradition.
Do the introspection.
You are male, broom firebreak on jhum contour.
I am female, I shall make tiny baskets from bam-
boo.*

*After brooming the jhum contour
Demarcate path to the village from the jhum.*

Note : The jhum field is divided into a few domains. There are clean strips between the domains. These strips work like firebreak and save the crop from possible damage due to fire in one of the domains.

॥ ४४ ॥

सारिक साल थांगका लुबिया खाकदी
ननसे मा हिन तऽलाई
दिबर ओंखादो मुई खऽलाई दिबा
ननसे माहिन तऽलाई
सारिक साल थांखा नऽंग सऽकांग हिमदी
ननसे मा हिन तऽलाई
आलिया कोना नखा सम फाइखा
साजऽक सिकाला बुमा मानजाया
बियांग माइकऽरा काइनाब सिया
बियांग माइकतर काइनाब रऽगया
खुमपांग बऽचलऽई लांगाअ दाअई
थांगतऽतऽई पिनसा लांगखा
छाजुक सिकाला हाताल थांगअ
तकुला तेनताई सगअ ।

भावार्थ - हे प्रिया, काश मैं तुमसे फली तोड़ने, दोपहर का खाना पकाने या फिर गोधुलि को मेरे आगे - आगे चलने का अनुरोध कर पाता ! तुम नवयुवती हो, तुम्हें खेती का ज्ञान नहीं है । यहाँ तक कि पक्षी भी तुम्हारी अज्ञानता पर मजाक उड़ाता है ।

(44) **TO MY YOUNG LADY**

At the sunset

*If I could give you trouble
Of plucking the vegetables
In the afternoon*

If I could

Urge you to cook me food.

At the sunset

*If I could make a request
To you from jhum to lead me back.
The south-eastern sky is
Dark and cloudy.*

The young lady

*Does not know where not to
And where to sow paddy.*

*The fledgling lady walks and scatters floral seeds,
From her tiny basket full of seeds.*

***Takula** bird tries to chirp at her
And tries to tease.*

॥ ४५ ॥

हानी साईं कतर आमा

नखानी कुचुक आफा

आमाले माइफांग आफाले खुलमांग

आमा खाई लक्ष्मी आफा खाई मऽताई

याखिलिक खुपांग तुलसी बुफांग

आमा आफा न नक फांग

माय मा लक्ष्मी मा ले

रांगचाकनी लक्ष्मी सूर्य नी मुखी
हर बाई हर नांगया लक्ष्मी
माय मा लक्ष्मी माले ।

भावार्थ - माँ पृथ्वी से भी महान और पिता आसमान से भी ऊँचा है। माँ धान और पिता कपास की तरह संपदा के प्रतीक हैं । माता-पिता ही इस घर में सर्वोपरि हैं ।

(45) IN PRAISE OF PARENTS

*Mother is bigger than the earth,
Father higher than the sky.
Mother is paddy plant, father cotton plant nigh.
Mother is goddess Lakshmi, father god.
Basil grows near the hut's stairs.
In this house parents are masters.
My goddess Lakshmi mother,
Golden Lakshmi with face glowing and bright.
My goddess Lakshmi like mother,
She does not need light at night.*

॥ ४६ ॥

अकचाक बखरक थापाताई कयअई
चादी माय बाई बाबू
माय बा हाअ आंगबा दुली अ
माय हाममानी बागडई
मडइतुक तलानी बेरेमा बुसू

आब साजऽकनी बानता
 माइतऽक तलानी माइरूंगखू कऽखाम
 आब साजऽक नी बानता
 आंगबाई तंगऽइसे यासी मऽचांगया
 यासी मऽचांगऽई तंगदी
 आंगबाई तंगऽइसे मऽइतऽक आलुनी
 समबऽतऽई नऽगई तंगदी ।

भावार्थ - (विदाई के समय में वधू-) आज मेरे माता-पिता जमीन पर खड़े हैं और मैं पालकी पर सवार हूँ । मेरे सीधे-सादे माता-पिता मेरे प्रति कितने अच्छे हैं ! (माता-पिता वधू से -) हमारे यहाँ तुमने बहुत कष्ट से और गरीबी में जीवन बिताया है । ससुराल में तुम्हें सुखी और धन-धान्य मिले ।

(46) SEND OFF TO BRIDE

(Bride speaks to parents)

Improvising stove from the fish skull
Parents have led lives so simple and humble.
Parents are on the ground, I am on the palanquin
It is because the parents have been so kind.

(Mother speaks to the bride)

Left over boney pieces in the pan
Will that be the food of the bride ?
Burned rice at the bottom in the utensil
Will that be the food of the bride ?
While living with us

*You had no ring in the finger, right ?
 At the in-law's place, you will wear gold.
 At our place, you ate vegetable spiceless insipid
 At the in-law's place, may you have sumptuous food.*

॥ ४७ ॥

नाइसऽका नखा बरलांगखा तखा
 चिनी करमअ लेखा
 मुइतू बकंगनी बादुखुंग थनऽई
 खापांखा थनऽई तंखा
 नांगऽई थांगफुरू सालाइना हिनई
 खापांग खा भाबिई तंखा ।

भावार्थ - भाग्य को कोई नहीं बदल सकता है ।
 मैं भाग्य का सामना करने को तैयार हूँ ।

(47) **READY TO FACE INEVITABLE**

*Looking upward, the crow has flown
 Fate is inevitable, it is known.
 With bow of tender brittle stalk
 To face the inevitable,
 I am ready in my heart.
 I have thought over it in my heart.*

Note : There appears to be a strong belief that heart is associated with the thought process. One is supposed to think in one's heart, or think from one's heart.

॥ ४८ ॥

खुमुंग मुंगसिनी बदल दलसिनी
सऽबानअ भजी नानी ?
बारी काइमानी सूर्यमुखी थाई
सूर्यनो भजी मानी
सानजा बारनाई संध्यामलती
चंद्र भजी नानी
तऽइनी सामपाला पद्य बुबार खाई
लक्ष्मी न भजिमानी
बारी काइमानी करबी बुबार
माय ल भजिमानी
बारी काइमानी कृष्ण चूड़ा
कृष्ण भजिमानी ।

भावार्थ - सूर्य भगवान को सूर्यमुखी फूल पसंद है । चंद्र भगवान को संध्यामालती फूल पसंद है । लक्ष्मी भगवती को कमल फूल पसंद है। माँ की पूजा के लिए करबी का फूल उपयुक्त है । कृष्ण भगवान को कृष्णचूड़ा फूल पसंद है ।

(48) FLORAL INCLINATION OF GODS

*Seven types of flowers are there in seven bunches
Which one is for which god or goddess ?*

*Sunflower growing in the garden
 Is for the worship of god sun.
Sandhya malati in the evening which bloom
 Is to be offered to god moon.
 Whitish lotus in the pond which is grown
 With this goddess Lakshmi will be adorned.
 In the garden grows **Karabi** flower
 This is for the worship of mother.
 In the garden grows **krishnachura**
 This is for the worship of Lord Krishna.*

॥ ४६ ॥

अ जादू सेमान तंगतऽई ताकऽलाई तंखाई
 सेलेसे हिनजा गानू
 तांगमुंग पांगारा चऽंग तांगलाई खऽलाई
 नुखुंगसे कऽलऽक गानू
 पारा चऽलारक हुक आचुकबाइखा
 जादू नऽंग बियांग नाइखा ?
 अजादू पोषनी पाकला हुग कितिंग बाइसे
 माग नक थामक नानी
 अ जादू तऽई वाखाक तऽइसा
 तऽइनी बुपऽरा
 याइकसी यागरा दंगर छिकऽला
 हापुंग सिरूरुक तकमा खाकऽलाप
 माय हामया हामतक हामतक ।

भावार्थ - हमे पिछले साल की तरह आलस्य से काम नहीं करना चाहिए । आलस्य करेंगे तो परिवार बर्बाद हो जाएगा । हमलोग झूम के काम के बाद ही घर की मरम्मत का काम करेंगे । मुर्गी के सीने की तरह पहाड़ी - जिसके किनारे नदी एवं जलप्रपात हैं - झूम के लिए उपयुक्त है ।

(49) URGING HUSBAND TO WORK HARDER

*If we work sluggishly like last year,
We shall be called lazy, oh dear.
If we work only perfunctorily
Doomed will be our family.
Others have selected the new jhum sites,
Have you selected the site ?
Only after second weeding of December,
Will we take up the work of hut repair.
Oh dear.
The hillock alike breast of a hen
To which the river adjoin
And nearby has a confluence point.
With waterfalls on both the sides
For paddy, it is the suitable site.*

॥ ५० ॥

अ जादू फागुन नी ताल चऽइतर दागरिअ
बसंत बयार छिबो
बसंत बयार नकबार मानतिरई
माझिबिलात बार
माझिबिलातअ खुम बाहाई मा नऽई

खापांग बिखात नांगअ
 चैतर हुगवाचेंग सकचाई हरनानी
 फागुन ताल कंडरई खादे
 चैतर ताल हाप फाइखादो
 अ जादू बिछी पाइराग थानती सङ्गमानी
 दागती रासुना खाइदी
 मासुया तकनो सलनाई चैथुक
 चैतर बो हाबू वातई बो बीर बीरू
 बदे ककबाजी सानाई
 वातई से फाइथक फाइथक
 माय तांग बिती तांगई चानाइरग
 हाताल से नुकथक नुकथक ।

भावार्थ - चैत्र मास आ गया है । बसतो बयार बहने लगा है । बसंती
 बयार से माधवलीत फूल खिल उठा है । करघा में कपड़ा बुनना
 छोड़कर अब हम झूम की खेती में व्यस्त हो जाएँगे । बरसात भी आने
 ही वाला है ।

(50) JOY OF SPRING

Oh dear !

As February ends. March follows.

And vernal wind blows.

The whiff of vernal wind

Makes myrtle unwind.

*Myrtle is so fragrant:
 It gives joy to my heart.
 Only a few days are left in February;
 Setting jhum jungle afire, busy we shall be.
 Lo, March has come leaping !
 Quickly finish the domestic loom weaving
 Of the cloth since year-end which you are doing.
Chaatak resembles **masuya** bird.
 In March, it is looking for drops of rain.
 Does not chaatak signify that it is March again ?
 It is already rainy season.
 Those living as per tradition
 Will be found busy with jhum cultivation.*

Note : It is believed that chaatak (or, papiha, pied cuckoo) bird looks upward in hope of drops of rain, and lives on rain-drops of autumn asterism *svaati*. Weaving is done in leisure time. It should not be done during busy agricultural season.

॥ ५१ ॥

बिछी तऽगकलक नुखुंग खानाब
 साई काइसा तंगना नांगू
 मा फा तांगलामा तांगबिती रगनअ
 बन बअ तांगना नांगअ
 मा फानी बितक नुखुंग नारऽकना
 कऽनऽई खा बाकसा नांगअ
 नुखुंग संगनानी ककनो वानसुकया
 बिछी से थांगनाई खादो

आनी कऽपाल तऽमा तंगजानी
साइचे मान लियादो ।

भावार्थ - घर बसाने के लिए पति का होना जरूरी है । मैं अभी तक
घर नहीं बसा पायी हूँ । पता नहीं भाग्य में क्या है?

(51) LOOKING FOR A HUSBAND

*To maintain the family for the long year,
A husband is essential, my dear.
We shall have to follow
Tradition and footprints of our parents.
There has to be a husband
To maintain the family like our parents.
I could not set up my family.
But the year is flying away.
What is there in my fate ?
I cannot say.*

॥ ५२ ॥

दंगर बखरग खुमपुई बारमानी
तामसऽक मतम जानी
साइचूंग साग काइसा खलुइना खाइब
ताम सऽक किरी जानी
दंगर बखरग खुमपुई मतमनो
साब बाई खलुई चानो
कामिनी बायाप साकचालाइरगनो

लगी दे सानई नाइन
 दंगर कुपुलुंग मतम साई तंखा
 साब बाई खलना अंगखा ?

भावार्थ - जलप्रपात के किनारे खुमपुई फूल अपनी सुरभि बिखेर रहा है ।
 इस फूल को तोड़ने के लिए मैं किसके साथ जाऊँ ?

(52) JOY WITH FRIEND

*The flower blooming on the waterfall banks
 Emits so much of fragrance !
 To pluck the flower all alone,
 I develop reluctance
 With whom should I
 Pluck the flower blooming on the banks ?
 Should I try someone contemporary
 Of the village to accompany me ?
 The entire stream is imbued with its perfume.
 To pluck the flower, I should go with whom ?*

॥ ५३ ॥

अ नाकुती वारिंग खिलिते वारिंग खिलिते
 थाइचाले रऽचाब जागू
 वारऽई माइतुकते वारऽई माइतुकते
 खबचाले मनक जागू
 तऽइनी सिकामबूक हाकुंगनी दालअ
 फाइचा फुइचा बा चागऽलाक सऽलाई
 तऽमा नऽंग बनो खानांग ?

तकसा पुंगमाब अबऽनांग बऽनांग
 तऽमा नऽग बन खानांग ?
 नगनी ककनो बा दगाअ बेरदी
 हाबानी ककनो रजंग रो बेरदी
 थापानी हरनअ थापा बुथारदी
 तंगुई थाना से नाइदी
 मुइनी बेरबअ मुई रिसी गऽनांग
 पुइथा मुई ककय यादे ?
 झिंगा काइयाअई पुइथा काइखऽलाय
 धरमअ नाइथक गऽलाक
 सारिग साल थांगमा छिया हिनकऽलाई
 झिंगा बुबार न नाइदी
 बऽथाई बो चादी बुबार बो कानदी
 सारिग साल थांगमा नाइदी
 दुखू फियक नाई ब-से
 खुमनी बेरबो खुमरिसी गऽनांग
 हेंगऽरा बुबार यादा ?
 सारिक थंगबो बऽखऽरऽय नुगअ
 आइचुक बाचाइब हाकऽराई नुगअ
 हेंग्रा बाजी यादे ।

भावार्थ - हमें जीवन में छोटी-मोटी असुविधाओं को बर्दाश्त करना चाहिए। हमें अनावश्यक चिंता नहीं करना चाहिए। खेती की चिंता को घर नहीं लाना चाहिए ।

(53) LIVING WITHOUT WORRIES

*Oh little one ! To lull you to sleep as I hum,
Songs come to my tongue.
As I feed you cooked rice, lo !
Down my throat of few morsels go.
Occasionally we have to eat
Meat of snail and green leaves.
Why do you mind these ?
If the chirps appear to tease,
Why do you mind these ?
Leave behind domestic worries at the doorstep.
Let worries of jhum hang by stumps on jhum step.
Put out the hearth's flame in the hearth.
We have to lead life thus.
Among vegetables
Puitha gourd is extremely wicked.
Growing puitha instead of jhinga gourd
Is never preferred.
Whether it is dusk, if you have doubt ever
Look at the jhinga flower.
Its fruit is eaten, flower worn;
And can be used in judging when the dusk is gone.
As a good source of nutrition jhinga is known.
Among the flowers
Hangra is extremely wicked.
At the dusk only buds are there.
By the dawn, they are on ground scattered.
Is not hangra extremely wicked ?*

अ नाकुती
 माजिबिलात बार सारी नाइखा
 बलंग खुममाके बार रचंग बाइखा
 बछर फिरगई फाइखा
 आइचुग तकुला तेनताई फाइलाहा
 चिनी तांगबिली फाइखा
 आइचुग बाचादी माइतुखू बगदी
 हिमदी हाताल हिमदी
 मायनी सागनी मुइमुंग बऽचुलुई
 नऽगबा पिननाइदे पिनया ?
 चैतर मासनी हाताल हा कऽखाम
 नुगई खा सऽरांग यादा ?
 बाबू तांगमानी तांग बारा रगन'
 तांगयाई चऽग खिबी नाई दा ?
 तऽइबुक आ गऽनांग सारुई चानाब
 कऽनऽई खा बाकसा नांगअ
 याकनी दामऽरा तकचिंग खरबाई
 मांगनी खेरपांग तांगऽई चानाबअ
 कऽनऽई खा बकसा नांगअ
 सारिपांग दिरांग ओंगमा याकारदी
 आइचुक खूंग गऽरांग ओंगमा खिबिदी
 मायनो पुषी नाइखे बाबुनअ पुषी नाइखेअ ।

भावार्थ - नया साल आ गया है और इसके साथ ही कृषि का नया मौसम भी आ गया है । हमें सुबह जल्द उठकर, खाना पकाकर झूम में जाना चाहिए । झूम में हम सामूहिक रूप से तन-मन से मेहनत करेंगे । हम आलस्य नहीं करेंगे ।

(54) READY FOR NEW SEASON

*Oh dear,
Myrtle has stopped blooming.
Wild Khumake flowers abound.
The year has come round.
Cackle of the wildfowl is audible at dawn.
The season for jhum is around.
Get up early, cook rice and curry
And to the new jhum let us hurry.
Seeds of vegetables
Inherited from mother won't you sow ?
Look of beautifully burned jhum in March
Doesn't it fill us with joy and take away sorrow ?
The works left unfinished by father
To remain half-done, shall we allow ?
It takes two persons to work in tandem
To catch fish by draining off a pool.
With old chopper in hand sharp like claw
We shall do cultivation for livelihood.
Do not go to bed when it is hardly evening.
Let us work together.
Don't while away the mornings.
Let us look after mother. let's look after father.*

अ ताखुकरग मानी अधिना
 फानी संगदारी
 मनुष्यपुरी हिनऽई फाइमानी
 हामलांग गऽलाक खा नादु
 तंगमा तंगकऽचांग मा तंगलांगलिया
 तखलाय साखा तंगतऽय
 चाना चाकऽचांग माचा लांगलिया
 ताखुम माइचऽलाम चातऽई
 चांगनी पुदिरी खरग दुगिरी
 देशनी सुयांग हानी बिरिमान
 चऽंग हाई ताई कऽरऽई खऽना
 खेरांगअ नाइब' खुंगचा कऽरऽई
 बाकाअ नाइब' तऽक थाइचा कऽरऽई
 बाहाइले का सऽरांग सिनाई ?
 बऽखा तंगुइब याक चुकलांगलिया
 मकल कलनऽई बाई राइज्य न नुगुई
 खापांग खा गेले दरब
 साल वाइसिनी बाजार थांगऽइब
 थांगहाहाई मातांग लिया
 वातऽई हिनइब तंगुई मानलिया
 सातुंग हिनइब कातर मानलिया
 तखुसुनता सानी कऽपाल मानखऽना
 दुखू काकलिया चिनी ।

भावार्थ - अपने माँ-बाप की एकमात्र अधम संतान, मैं इस दुनिया में
व्यर्थ साबित हुआ हूँ । मुझे सुख-शांति नहीं मिली है । मुझे
केवल परिश्रम करना पड़ता है । फिर भी मैं गरीब हूँ । मेरा
जीवन बहुत ही दुखदायी है ।

(55) A WRETCHED MAN

*Friends, I am my mother's humble child.
I am my father's only child.
With only misfortune
I have come to this world.
Here, I could never be comfortable.
As if being roasted in the hearth
I could never eat with comfort.
Distressing like a swan having to feed on paddy,
With only a little cloth on loin and hair scruffy,
Looking like a rustic clown and devil of the country,
Perhaps the most unfortunate are we.
There is not a single sickle on the wall.
Utensil rack has no pot at all.
I feel languid, though desirous of a good start.
On looking at the world with the two eyes
I feel painful in my heart.
It was useless going to the market many times a day,
As I had no money to make the purchase.
I cannot malingering because it is raining.
I cannot malingering because the sun is hard.
Maybe I have got fate of the taksunta bird
Misfortune I cannot discard.*

॥ ५६ ॥

नङ्गब' तंगऽइखा हाचालनी नगर
आंगब' च तांगफाइखा हहाचालनी सागर
मालाई गऽलऽक खा नङ्गबाई
नन' सऽइफुरु आन सऽइयाबाई
लाम जड़सा ओंगलाइलिया
नन' सऽइफुरु आन सुइयानी
काइथर छा बधी नांग थुन
गाती खामनी मुइतुछे मुइतू
आंगले ननमांग मुइतू
तकसा तगऽला ओंगऽई मानखऽलाई
बीरई नाई खऽलाई खामुन ।

भावार्थ - मैं सागर किनारे रहता हूँ । तुम दूर शहर में रहती हो । एक साथ रहना हमारे भाग्य में नहीं है । अगर मेरे पर होते तो मैं तुम्हारे पास उड़कर चला आता ।

(56) SEPARATION

*You live in a town far away.
I live by the ocean far away.
We cannot meet again anyway.
We could not live together
Because your fate was not written with me.
May god be cursed
For not writing your fate with me.
The ghat on the west has leafy tuberous plants a-plenty*

*Likewise I remember you endlessly.
If I could fly like a bird;
I would have flown and seen you closely.*

Note : The ocean probably refers to either the Bay of Bengal or a big pond. The southern part of the region, particularly the present day Chittagong (now in Bangladesh), was close to the Bay of Bengal. The kings of Tripura loved creating big ponds or artificial lakes. A large number of such ponds dot Tripura. Some of such ponds have the word "sagar" as suffix in their names, e.g., Kamalaasagar, Amarsagar, Kalyansagar, Dhanisagar etc.

॥ ५७ ॥

चेराई फांगसिनी अग माई कऽरऽई
अग तऽई कऽरऽई आनी
बुइन नुगुतऽई बुइन सितऽई
ओंगुई मानलिया आंगले
मनुष्यपुरी हिनई फाइमानी
बुइनी तंगथक नो बुइनी नाइथकनो
नाइलांग नानिसे नादो
आंग तऽई अभागी कऽपाल पुराले
देश ताई कऽरऽई खऽना
चेराई फांगसिनी बुइनी अधिना
ताखुक अकरा आनी तंगुइबअ
बुगुक अकरा कऽथांग तंगलांगबअ
अधिना कागलांग लिया ।

भावार्थ - इस मानवलोक में मैं सबसे अभागा हूँ । बचपन से ही अभाव ने मुझे घेर रखा है । मैं अपना पेट पालने के लिए दूसरों पर निर्भर हूँ ।

(57) UNLUCKY

Since my childhood

I am without water, without food.

Unlike others

I could not be smart and good.

In this world of human beings,

I have to console myself with

Vicarious pleasures, other's good things.

Perhaps in this country

I am the one who is the most unlucky.

Since my childhood, I am dependent on others.

To take my care I have elder sister.

But my problem does not end there.

॥ ५८ ॥

आनी नगगाना साब हुक हुकपाई

वासक कऽलाइअ राइराई

आनी लगिनअ साब कक सुंगफाई

मुकतऽई कऽलाइअ राइराई

मायनी पियासा सारी थांगलाबअ

माया ता सारी लांगदी

गाती थानसा तुकुलाइफुरु

सऽमाई तांगमानी सऽमाय नऽगबर खिबी

निनी मुंग रियई बालिक ताकमानी

नऽगबा कानाइदे कानया

नन वानसुगुई आंगले माइचाया

नन वानसुगुई आंगले तऽई नऽगया
कसम संपिलिक जऽकनअ
खुम कानयाई मतम जऽकनअ ।

भावार्थ - लगता है कोई नया लड़का घरजामाई बनने आया है जो मेरे घर के सामने की पहाड़ी पर झूम की जंगल को काट रहा है । यह कौन लड़का है जो मेरी प्रेमिका से विवाह करना चाहता है? हे प्रिया, तुम मेरे प्रेम का खयाल करो । मैं तुम्हें नथनी उपहार में दूँगा । तुम्हारे विरह में मैंने खाना-पीना छोड़ दिया है ।

(58) WHO HAS COME TO PROPOSE TO MY DEAR ?

*The sound of jungle clearing is loud:
Who has come to do jhum in front of my house ?
To propose to my lover, who has come ?
With grief, I am overcome.
Oh dear, do never discard
Passionate feelings for me in your heart.
Have you forgotten the oath we took
While bathing in the same ghat ?
I have got a nosering made for you
Won't you wear that ?
Worrying about you, I have stopped eating.
Worrying about you, I have stopped drinking.
Oh wheatish lady !
Even without flowers, you are sweet-smelling.*

Note : A prospective bridegroom has come to the house of the in-law's for the mandatory probation period in Chamari Kaimani system of marriage. This has disturbed another boy who loved the girl.

॥ ५६ ॥

हापुंग थाइसिनी बाखगऽई नाइबो
केनजुवा मुड़ा मानया
देश सुरबुरऽई बेड़ाई नाइबअ
नऽंगतऽई नाइथक ले नुगया
कसम समपिलिक जऽकनअ
आचुक थानिब रसनाई गऽनांग
मऽनऽई थानिब रसनाई गऽनांग
कसम समपिलिक जऽकनअ
रकई तंगऽइबो नखऽरऽई गऽनांग
कसम सागमिलिक जऽकले
तरबू तरथाया लग बो लग थाया
कसम समपिलिक जऽकले
कलक नी दलअ नाहार नाइखाइबो
किसा साग बारा नुगो
बारानी दलअ नाहार नाइखाईब'
किचा सागकलक नुगगो
मतम बारिया जऽगनअ
बुइले हामजाकया खाकुलुबुबार
आनी थानिले रांगचाकनी खुमबार
आशिनी कारई नबबई से थांगतुन
थांगतुन लक्ष्मी नी बागऽइ ।

भावार्थ - चारों तरफ दूर-दूर तक तुम्हारी जैसी कोई सुंदरी नहीं है । तुम मुझे न देखने का बहाना करके सोयी हुई हो । सुंदरी, तुम्हारी उच्चता सम्यक है । मैं तुम्हें पाने के लिए अस्सी रुपये ही क्या, नब्बे रुपये दहेज में देने को तैयार हूँ ।

(59) THINKING ABOUT DEAR

*I have searched across several hills.
But could not find the vermal ant-hill.
I have searched throughout the country.
But could not find one as beautiful as thee.
Oh wheatish lady !
You sit with a magnanimous grace.
You smile with a magnanimous grace.
Oh wheatish lady !
You sleep gracefully, pretending to ignore me.
Oh beautiful lady !
You are neither fat nor tall.
Oh wheatish lady.
You look dwarf
Among the talls.
But among the dwarfs,
You look tall.
Oh fragrant lady
Others may not consider you that good.
But to me you are golden flower so good.
Why pay only eighty rupees ?
I shall pay ninety rupees as dowry.
For you Lakshmi.*

Note : A prospective bridegroom under probation is fascinated by the charm of

the girl. He is willing to pay Rs 90 as the bride-price to marry her. (Note that it is a "reverse dowry" inasmuch as the bridegroom's side has to pay it.)

॥ ६० ॥

अ बारिया बागर संगनो
इमांगअ नुकतऽई मुकथांग नुक खऽलाई
आचुक कक सालाई खामुन
आइयई बाचाअई मऽखांग नुकनाबो
मरा सिमानग कतन
गातिनी फाइयई मऽखांग नुगनाबो
मरा थाइचुक फांग कतन
दिपरनी पाइयई मऽखांग नुकनाबअ
मरा थाइपुंग फांग कतन
लुता हुफुरू छाया नुकनाबो
साइकाती नुगजाक फाइदी
सारिगनी फाइयई मऽखांग नुकनानी
नखला बेराई सकदी
गुरिया माइराम खडम कातिरई
नखला बेराई सकदी
बारा कातिया सीता पारिअई
करबी बुबार बारसा कानतिरई
नखला बेराई सकदी
वानी दाबा बाई दुमानऽंग तिरई
नखला बेराई सकदी

खापांग खा कऽचाग नानी
अ बारिया नागर संगनो ।

भावार्थ - प्रिया, ख्वाबों में मैं तुम्हें देखता हूँ । यदि वास्तव में भी तुम मेरे पास होती तो कितना अच्छा होता । मैं हर प्रहर तुम्हें निहारने की कोशिश करता हूँ लेकिन कोई-न-कोई बाधा आ खड़ी होती है । तुम सजधजकर हाथों में हुक्का लिये मेरा इंतजार करो ताकि मैं तुम्हें निहार सकूँ ।

(60) GLIMPSE OF MY SWEETHEART

*I gossip with you in dream, oh sweet lady !
I would gossip with you, if I could see you in reality.
On getting up, I desire to have a glimpse of you
But the morgue-like house obstructs the view
On returning from ghat, I desire to have a glimpse of you
But the mango tree obstructs the view.
On returning in afternoon, I desire to have a glimpse of you
But the jackfruit tree obstructs the view.
While clearing the creepers, I can see only your shadow.
Come, let me have a glimpse of you.
Stroll in the porch, so as I return at dusk,
I can have a glimpse of you.
Putting on* wooden clogs,
With parting of hair on one side,
Sporting karabi flower in the ear,
Stroll in the yard.
With hookah in hand
Stroll in the yard.*

*For the pleasure of my heart,
Oh my sweetheart !*

Note : The prospective bridegroom is desirous to have a glimpse of the girl. The groom is still under probation, and works hard in the jhum and in the house. He lives in a separate hut.

॥ ६१ ॥

मऽसा सामपारी यापाई तऽइकागया
ता थांगदी हुग साइचुंग
ताबुकनी जरा रगो
हुक बऽलाम लामा तुकमानी समय
ता थांगदी हुग साइचुंग
खरग री कऽचाक सरई फाइनाइरग
याग चेंबुकसा तऽयऽई फाइनाइरग
खुताई बुखरई फाइपो
ता थांगदी साइचुंग
ताबुकनी जरा रगो ।

भावार्थ - प्रिय, तुम अकेले झूम में मत जाओ । रास्ते में जंगली जानवर हैं।
सिर पर लाल पगड़ी बाँधे रहस्यमय लोग कपास को चाबुक से
झाड़ रहे हैं । तुम अकेले मत जाओ ।

(61) APPREHENSIVE

*The path is full of fresh pugmarks.
Dear, do not go to the jhum alone.
In this season,*

*The path is full of bushy growths.
 Dear, do not go to the jhum alone.
 Mysterious people in red turbans
 With whips in their hands
 Hail cotton from the plants.
 Dear, do not go to the jhum alone.
 In this season.*

॥ ६२ ॥

हाताल समलऽलऽक किर्तिंग यालऽलऽक
 सऽकांग ले हिम फाइदी यालऽक
 निनी मुंगरिअई बाचाई कुसुन'
 रिगिनाई तागरी मानी
 कुवाई चुग बलब मऽथाल
 बाइले कुसुन रिसा तागरिमअ
 बऽथाई साई रूंगखू साइजाग
 मोहनपुरिया रिगऽनाई साड़ी
 गाना कृष्ण पुरी
 कानया चुमयाई नो आसऽक मऽचांग
 कान खलाई बुइनी बारा ।

भावार्थ - हे प्रिया, तुम झूम की तरह सुंदर और सुडौल हो । मैंने तुम्हारे लिए तरह-तरह के परिधान जुगाड़े हैं । इन परिधानों में तुम अत्यंत सुंदर लगोगी ।

(62) COURTING

*Come dear, walk ahead of me with a graceful gait.
You resemble the new jhum in color, and shape.
I have a lady's loincloth with kuaichug design for you.
It has been woven by my brother's wife for you.
I have a breast clothing with sairungkhu design for you.
It has been woven by my sister for you.
I have brought for you sari called Mohanpuri.
It has border design called Krishnapuri.
Even in ordinary clothes you look magnanimous
On wearing good dress, you will look simply gorgeous.*

॥ ६३ ॥

एमांग नुगमाबअ कथर कऽलाइअ
अ मऽनाई ताकालाई तऽमा ओंगनो
आगी आइदनी बऽरऽइचुक बुड़ानो
सामा खऽनाअ
सिंदुक गअ रांगकाअ हिनऽई
दगा नाइसनई तखा मरगो
ताकऽलाई तऽमा ओंगनो
बुड़ा बुड़ी नो सामा खऽनाअ
नुखुंग जन्म बारिअ हिनई
अ मऽनाई ताकऽलाई तऽमा ओंगनो ।

भावार्थ - इस वर्ष के क्या शकुन हैं ? मैने स्वप्न में शिलावृष्टि देखी है ।
लोगों के अनुसार इसका अर्थ धन की प्राप्ति है । कौवा घर की
ओर झाँककर काँव-काँव कर रहा है । लोगों के अनुसार इसका
अर्थ घर में शिशु का जन्म है ।

(63) OMENS

*Oh dear, I have seen hailstorm in the dream.
For this year, what does this omen mean ?
I have heard
Elderly people speak
Accumulation of weal is meaning of such dream.
Peeping inside, .
The crow makes scream
For this year, what does this omen mean ?
I have heard elderly people speak,
Birth of a baby is meaning of the scream.
For this year, what does the omens mean ?*

॥ ६४ ॥

आइचुक बाचादी माइतऽक बकसादी
हापिंग थानानी फाइदी
अ मनाई हापिंग न खातांगयादे
खुमचाक बऽचालऽई राबाइसक खऽना
फाइदी हापिंगअ थानू
हापिंगअ थांगऽई किफिल फाइपुरू
छतर बंगअ खाजुअ बेरखाई
खुमचाक नो खुनजू कानखाई
सऽकांग तलालाई मा हिमलाई खाइले
तऽमा जानी बा तंगथक
अशानी मऽताई बऽसकांग नाइथक
मऽनाई ओकलक नाइथक

अशानी मऽताई तागमा याकथागऽई
मऽनाई नो ताकजाक खऽना ।

भावार्थ - जल्दी उठो, खाना पकाओ और झूम को चलो । क्या तुम्हें पुराने
झूम को देखने की लालसा नहीं है ? वहाँ से लौटते वक्त तुम
अपने जूड़े में गेंदा फूल गूँथ लेना । भगवान ने तुम्हें सचमुच
बहुत सुंदर बनाया है ।

(64) BEAUTY OF JHUM AND YOU

*Get up early, cook rice and curry
And to the jhum, let us hurry.
Dear, do not you yearn for the old jhum ?
Maybe seeds of red khumchak flower have grown.
While returning from there
In your bun if marigold you wear
And red khumchak in your ear
And walk ahead together
It looks so charming, my dear.
Idol of Durga look good from front, dear.
But you look fascinating even from the rear.
Maybe, god sculptor kept aside the Durga idol
And put all his skills in making you beautiful.*

॥ ६५ ॥

अ मऽनाई तबिशा रकनी तबला रगनअ
तामयाई तनछी वानू
तामखऽलाई बुई खऽना नाइखा

बिखाता बिरिमान करमअ लेखा
 साकाई बुई खऽना नाइखा
 सायाई नअ तंगछी वानू
 आंगतऽई अधिना बरक मानखाइसे
 आचुक कक सालाई नानी
 बुइले छाबायू केरांग कथमा
 चऽंगले छावानू कपाल कथमा
 माय बो हिन हामदी
 बाबू बो हिनअ हामदी
 चऽंगसे हामजाना मानया
 चऽंगसे चाजाना मानया
 बूइले चातऽई आचुक चानाब
 आनिले कऽपाल कऽरऽई
 अ बिखाता करम लेखा
 ताइदे चालांगसी बा ।

भावार्थ - मैं अपने भाग्य का ढोल नहीं पीटूँगा वरना सभी सुनेंगे । मैं अपने
 भाग्य की पोथी नहीं पढ़ूँगा वरना सभी सुनेंगे । मैं अभागा हूँ ।
 अगर मुझ-सा अभागा बंधु मिल जाए तो हमलोग एक अपर
 की व्यथा कथा सुनेंगे । मैं अभागा हूँ, असफल रहा हूँ ।

(65) WHAT FATE HAS IN STORE

Oh little one !

The drum of my fate

I won't beat.

*If it is beaten, others will hear it.
 If writings of my fate
 Are loudly read out.
 Others will hear ;
 So it won't be read aloud.
 If a man humble like me there were,
 We would have conversed together.
 As mythological stories are told by others
 About our misfortune, we will chatter.
 Despite parents wishing us all the best
 I could not meet with any success.
 It is not in our fate
 To eat without toiling like others.
 It is all bad luck.
 Does it have any bright prospect ?*

॥ ६६ ॥

हावन बो थांगू भादर हाबफायू
 भादर ले मायकतक चओ
 माइतांग चेखारा कतक नांखाइनू
 हापिंगसे खासा रऽरऽग
 नऽगबा छियादा बनो अ जादू
 तापांग तानखिने अराई मालाइखाई
 तानया गुरिअई फाइता
 हापिंग गांदारऽ हाममानी नुगय
 तऽइनी आथुक सा मगो
 बारिनी मांदाय हाममानी नुगय
 ताखुम मातारा मगो ।

भावार्थ - भाद्र मास में फसल कटने के बाद झूम बूढ़ा लगने लगता है ।
 “गंदारी” कंद को बढ़ते देख झींगा मछली भयभीत हो उठती है
 क्योंकि झींगा मछली को “गंदारी” के साथ पकाया जाएगा ।
 तदनुरूप मेंदाई कंद को बढ़ते देख बत्तख भी भयभीत हो उठता है।

(66) A BIT OF LIFE

*After August, the next month will onset.
 September is the time of the harvest.
 As the sickles shears off the paddy
 The jhum starts looking old.
 Dear, does it have to be told ?
 Other trees will be felled
 But arai with edible leaves we shall hold.
 As gandari tuber in old jhum develops,
 The prawn of rivulet gets anxious.
 As mendai tuber of the garden develops,
 The duck becomes anxious.*

Note : The curry of prawn is prepared mixed with gandari tubers.
 Hence the prawn becomes anxious on seeing the gandari
 tuber grow.

The meat of duck is cooked with mendai tubers.
 Hence the duck becomes anxious on seeing the mendai
 tuber grow.

॥ ६७ ॥

मासिंगा खऽलाय बुचुग तऽइया
 मऽखरा किरी जागऽई

कुरूक हिनकऽलाई याफांगअ तऽइया
 उरिनअ किरी जागऽई
 ना जादू
 माइअ माइलक्ष्मी नाइना थांगफुरू
 मासिंगा नखे लाठा सऽनामऽई
 लांगा हर कऽलाई फाइअ
 नगअ सकपाइखाई लांगा बेराअई
 चेराइनअ बांदी फाइअ ।

भावार्थ - बाजरा का सिरा मीठा नहीं होता है ताकि इसे बंदर न खा जाए ।
 गन्ना का जड़ मिठा नहीं होता है ताकि इसे दीमक न खा जाए ।
 पीठ पर टोकरी लटकाए झूम से लौटते वक्त साथ में बाजरा की
 छड़ी भी लाते हैं ताकि घर में बच्चों को खुश कर सकें ।

(67) A BIT OF JHUM LIFE

*The top of millet plant is not sweet
 Lest the monkey should eat it.
 The bottom of sugarcane is not sweet
 Lest the termite should eat it.
 Oh dear !
 While returning from jhum with paddy
 Which in her lenga basket she carries,
 The lady picks a stick of millet.
 At home she puts down lenga basket
 And placates children with millet.*

॥ ६८ ॥

तऽइसा तऽइ कलक दंगर बखरक
वातऽई कानाबो वाखऽलाई रिखा
दंगर तर खऽलाई फाइखा
मरा वाकच कचकमा बागऽई
हिमकऽराई मानलांग लिया
चांगनी धुती बो रमसाई कुल पाइया
तऽइसा कइरिरी तऽइसा कइथाथांग
हिमऽई कुलअ मानलांग लिया ।

भावार्थ - अतिवृष्टि के कारण पहाड़ी नाला में बाढ़ आया है । नाला में बाँस आदि भी बह रहा है । मैं अपनी धोती को नाला के जल से भीगने से बचाने में असमर्थ हूँ।

(68) WALKING IN RAINY SEASON

*From the hill the stream emanates.
It has rained heavily there,
So the stream is in spate.
Damned bamboo pieces are floating down.
So, it is difficult to walk around.
In this stream so zigzag,
I am protecting my dhoti from getting wet.
Walking so long, I have not reached the end yet.*

Note : In a hilly region, it is convenient to walk along a stream. A stream usually flows along a gentle slope. Thus one will have to do less of climbing up and down the hillocks.

॥ ६६ ॥

कुचुगतऽई बीरनाई तकसा तकपुथी
बाबू पड़िमा भारत पुथी
पले परिखा बुइनी सऽरऽंगऽई
आंगसे पड़िसऽक मानया
नक खामा साका आचुक तंगनाइरग
बाबुनी समाजी रग मायनी समाजरग
सिया ना जानी साअई थांगफुरू
नरकसे बुझी नाइरग
बबुतऽई तंगमुंग तंखा हिनखाइबा
दुखू साल काटिनानी
बबतऽई ककमुंग साखा हिनकाइबा
लोको कक नारऽक नानी
बिशी तंगकलक तंगऽई थांगनानी
तंगतुतुई वाना मानी ।

भावार्थ - मैं महाभारत ग्रंथ का पाठ कर रहा हूँ, जिसे आप बड़े-छोटे सभी ध्यानपूर्वक सुनें । अगर मुझसे कोई त्रुटि हो जाए तो सुधारें । इस ग्रंथ में लिखा है कि हम कठिनाइयों का सामना कैसे कर सकते हैं और हमें कैसे जीना चाहिए ।

(69) **THE MAHABHARATA**

*The bird of learning flies up in the sky ;
The epic of Mahabharata I am going to recite.
All others are listening to it.*

*I am reciting well, am not I ?
 People sitting on the east and west !
 Gentlemen like my father, ladies like my mother !
 Reading out, inadvertently I make mistake;
 Yourself, please correct.
 How should we live
 To overcome hard days ?
 How should we speak
 To be acceptable, say ?
 We have to live for long many days
 We ought to ponder over these, nay ?*

Note : A man is reading out the holy scriptures to an assembly of men, women and children. In such an assembly, the senior people generally sit on the eastern side and the junior people on the western side.

॥ ७० ॥

चडइतर थांखाइन बैशाख फाइयानू
 बिछी बा किरिंग गानू
 बिछी ताई बडसडक तंगसी
 खापांग नुंग भाबिई नाइले
 आहाई सामांगबो तंगडई गथकया
 खापांग नडंग भाबिअई नाइले
 लालांग बो थांखा लिलिंग बो थांखा
 चडइतर थांखाइन बैशाख फाइयानू
 अ जादू खापांग नडंग वानसुक नाइले ।

भावार्थ - पिछला साल तो जैसे-तैसे कट गया है । नया साल बस आने ही वाला है । इस साल आलस्य करने से हम बर्बाद हो जाएँगे ।

(70) NEW YEAR, NEW ZEST

*As March goes, April will be around
The year will have come round.
Only a few days are left in the year.
Have you thought about it, my dear ?
Whiling away the days will cost us dear.
Have you thought about it, my dear ?
The current year has somehow passed.
As March goes, April will start.
Have you thought about it in your heart ?*

॥ ७१ ॥

बिशी याफांगनी बुद्धि खलनाखाई
मायनी खेरे पांग तांगऽई चानाखाई
ताबुक तामनी जरा
आगुन हुक साइअ पौषअ हुग हुगअ
ताबुकनी जरा यादे
चेराई कऽथार नो नकहुक रिनाखाई
बाबू काम चऽलऽई चुमबुय
माय सरलाखुक सरई
कक जरा रिना थांगअ
चेराई कऽथार नी कक हरमा नुगय
वाहानक माला मगो

वाहनक माला तरमानी तुगय
बारिनी लेइफांग मगो ।

भावार्थ - वर्ष के प्रारंभ से ही हमें योजनाबद्ध तरीके से काम करना चाहिए।
झूम में कब क्या करना है हमें जानना चाहिए । माता-पिता नये
कपड़े पहनकर शादी की बात पक्की करने गये हैं । शादी पक्की होते
देख सुअर और केला का पौधा चिंतित है क्योंकि उन्हें विवाह में
भोज के लिए काटा जाएगा ।

(71) DO IT IN TIME

In order to do jhum intelligently

Right from start of the year

You should know what to do when exactly.

Select site by December, do jungle clearing by January

We have to do it, agree ?

Father and mother put on their new apparel.

They go out to finalize their son's betrothal.

As the marriage proposal takes shape

The castrated pig of pen gets anxious.

As the pig grows up

The banana plant gets anxious.

Note : The pig is anxious because it may be slaughtered for the feast in the marriage ceremony. The banana plant is anxious because it may be felled for preparation of curry of pork. (The stem of banana is used as vegetable.)

॥ ७२ ॥

चैतर मासनी सातुंग फुरूअ

माइनअ नुंग लामरोग यादअ

आषाढ मासनी वातऽई वाफुरू
 तऽइन नऽंग खकरऽक यादो
 बाका माई हालांग बकसा फुरूसे
 सातुंग न खातांग हरो
 तऽइसा तऽई कऽरऽई बेराफुरूसे
 वातऽई नो खातांग हरो
 नखा गुरूमू खुताय कऽराय
 खाअ वानसुग मा फाइअ ।

भावार्थ - चैत्र मास में धान नहीं सुखाने से बरसात में पछताना पड़ेगा ।
 बरसात में जल जमा कर नहीं रखने से गर्मी में पश्चाताप करना पड़ेगा ।

(72) LOST OPPORTUNITY

*You have not sunned the paddy dry
 In the scorching sun of the summer.
 In season when it pours
 You have not stocked water.
 When ypu have to dry the paddy on hearth
 For the sun you will yearn.
 When you wander for water for water in dry
 stream
 For the rain you will yearn.
 The cloud thunderclaps, cotton seeds fall
 Think of it in your heart.*

॥ ७३ ॥

तऽइनी आगुनथू बाथेरेंग बारअ
लातिया जली जाग फुन
तऽइनी आथुकछा जगा लुते फुन
आबार बा मऽसा तिफुन
तऽइनी आरांग बा सुमुई तामतिरफुन
खुइचा बा बारसातिफुन
आतका राजा भारत पड़िखाय
मनाई शास्त्र साफून
तक थुनता खाइबा
कुआय तानतिर फुन
खामअन तकपेपे तामफुन
हाताल बिलिनी तखेर पुंगमानी
तखेर खाभुअई पुंगअ
हाचेअ वाइसा कुचुग वाइसा
बिरछा बिखलाई ओंगो
हाताल कऽतालअ माइकाई लाई नाइरग
हापुंग वाइसा हारूंग वाइसा
नाइथक मानी से नाइदी ।

भावार्थ - “गुनथु” मछली कूदती है । लातिया मछली गुस्सा से लाल है ।
झींगा मछली सीटी बजाती है । “बार” मछली भागती है । तोता
धर्मग्रंथ का पाठ कर रहा है । झूम कृषकों की टोली बीज बोते-

बोते पहाड़ी से नीचे उतरता है और फिर ऊपर चढ़ता है । -
प्रकृति का यह दृश्य कितना लुभावना है ।

(73) BEAUTY OF NATURE

*As gunthu fish leaps in water
Latia fish is red with anger.
As the prawn whistles in the river
Bar fish does scamper.
Khuicha fish jumps
As arang fish plays flute in the river.
The Mahabharata is recited by king parrot
And mynah recites holy scriptures.
Arecaplam is pecked by
The hanging woodpecker.
Takpepe bird beats the drum.
As if beating its chest
Chameleon makes plaintive scream.
People climb up and down
In this undulating terrain.
The farmers of the new jhum
Climb up and down the terrain.
Do not these appear to entertain ?*

Note: In jhum cultivation, a group of farmers arrange themselves around the hillock on the jhum slope. Performing various operations such as tilling, sowing, weeding etc, they move down the hillock in a row. On reaching the bottom, they again climb up and repeat the operation. Songs are sung and musical instruments are also played to enthuse the farmers.

अचिकन हादुक दुक कलक साइचुंग हिमप्रू नन' वासुगई हिम
 हिमतुई हिमयातुई याप्री सेओ अचिकन नन वानसुगई हिम
 खापांग खा बिछी नन वानसुग बऽखा कक साअ नुंगबाई
 मायबा रिंगअ माई खुरका बाबू माइखलाई आचुग फाइदी
 मायबा रिंगअ तुई सिरका बाबू माइखलाई आचुग फाइदी
 मायरिंगमान खुंजअ कानया अचिकन नन वानसुग मा बागई
 खापांग खा बिछिंग नन' वानसुग अचिकन बऽखा कक साअ नुंगबाई
 तुइबुक तुई दुरमा लोकोरग नुग अचिकन खापांग खा दुरमा नुगया
 खापांग खा बिछिंग नन वानसुग बऽखा कक साअ नुंगबाई
 बाबुबा रिंगअ दा हुलई तुई दी लगी हुग हकना फाइदी
 तुई कांगमा जरा तुई नुंगलाइनानी लगी तुई दामा तुइदी
 बाबू रिंगमाब खुंजू अ कानया अचिकन नन वानसुगमा बागई
 खापांग खा बिछिंग नन' वानसुग अ चिकन बऽखा कक साअ नुंगबाई
 नखा गुमसा लोको खऽनाअ खापांग गुममा लोको खऽनया
 खापांग खा बिछिंग नन' वानसुग बऽखा कक साअ नुंगबाई
 सत्यमा चादी समत्यमा तंगदी थानाग चुंग मालाई नानी
 माय बर मानी खाजुअ छुरी नन' तामुंगई सुरी
 खापांग खा बिछिंग नन' वानसुग बऽखा कक साअ नुगबाई ।

भावार्थ - हे प्रिया ! पहाड़ी रास्ते पर चलते-चलते तुम मुझे याद आती हो ।
 माँ भोजन परोसकर मुझे बुलाती है लेकिन मैं माँ को सुन नहीं
 पाता हूँ क्योंकि मैं तुम्हारे बारे में सोच रहा होता हूँ । आसमान में

बिजली का गरजना सुनाई देता है, नदी में उठा तुफान दिखाई देता है; लेकिन मन में उमड़ती भावनाएँ अदृश्य हैं ।

(74) ALL FOR YOU

*As I walk in the path long, hilly; I think of you, cute lady
As I take step after step slowly, I think of you, cute lady.
I think of you in my heart in the soliloquy.
Mother calls out the food is ready and I should go and eat.
Mother calls out the water is ready and I should go and drink.
I cannot hear her, I am thinking about thee.
I think of you in my heart in the soliloquy.
Overflow of water in dam can be seen, but not feeling in the heart.
In the soliloquy, I think of you in my heart.
Father calls out that with sharp sickle to the jhum I should go
Father calls out that with pitcherful of water to the jhum I go.
I cannot hear him, I am thinking about thee.
I think of you in my heart in the soliloquy.
Thunderclap can be heard, but not the one in my heart.
In the soliloquy, I think of you in my heart.
If in my love you have faith, our love will surely consummate.
Mother wears bobbypin in her bun, I just cannot forget you.
Thinking about you in the heart, I soliloquize with you.*

॥ ७५ ॥

कसम सागमिलिक वानजुइनी वर्ण
यागअ मतममाअ कागया
बिछाना थानसा बिड़ी याफारई कक सालाइनानी
खापांग नडंग वानसुक यादे

मकल नो नाइदे खा फुरया तंगनो
 मकल मुकरुमुई रकनो
 यासिन नाइदे खा फुरया तंगनो
 यासी सबाई थाई जऽकनो
 फिकुंगन' नाइदे खा हाबया तंगनो
 फिकुंग बेकिकुंग जुगन
 कसम समपिलिक जऽकनो
 याकराई थानछा हिमलाई तंगनानी
 छिनी ब बऽखा तंगू
 कऽनऽइखा बाकसा तांगलाई चानानी
 चिनिखा बकसा तंगू ।

भावार्थ - हे प्रिया ! तुम बहुत ही सुंदर हो । तुम्हारे साथ अंतरंगता की यादें
 ताजा हो उठती हैं । मैं तुम्हारे साथ जीवन निर्वाह करने की तमन्ना
 रखता हूँ ।

(75) INTIMACY

*Oh wheatish bright lady,
 Beautiful like a Bengali !
 Your hand smells so sweetly.
 Do not you recall wistfully,
 We gossiped on same bed and shared the beedi ?
 Glimpse of your charming eyes
 Makes my heart bloom.
 Glimpse of your legume like fingers*

Makes my heart bloom.
Glimpse of your fascinating back
Makes my heart bloom.
Oh wheatish lady !
We are desirous
To cross the wooden bridge together.
Both of us have desire
To earn the livelihood together.

॥ ७६ ॥

हापुंग जुदानी माई चाअई खऽलाई
 आनअ पगनू नुंगले
 तऽइबुक जुदानी तऽइनुंगऽई खऽलाई
 नऽंगले पगगानू आनअ
 हाजार खातांगऽई नाइरऽक फाइससिंगब
 घाती वाखिलंग जरा
 माय बुझिया माई खुरई रिबअ
 चाया अगसाअ हिनदी
 माय बुफिया तऽई सिरई रिब
 नुंगया अगसाअ हिनदी

मा फानी जबान नारऽकद्रपसे
 आंगबा थांगनानी नांगअ
 दारून माइसंगमा माइखरक कुतुंग
 दारून माइसंगमा चाया

दारून ताइखकमा कुवा ताइमूपू

दारून ताइखकमअ नउंगया ।

भावार्थ - (घरजमाई प्रथा में वर से -) दूसरे पहाड़ का अन्न खाकर और दूसरी नदियों का जल पीकर तुम हमें भूल ही जाओगे । यदि हम तुम्हारे ससुराल आये तो तुम हमें दूर से ही विदा करोगे । पेटदर्द का बहाना बनाकर खाना-पीना बंद कर दो ।

(वर -) मैं माता-पिता के दिए हुए वायदों को पूरा करने जा रहा हूँ । मेरे मता-पिता अच्छे हैं । अब मैं उनके गरमा-गरम खाना और ठंडा पानी का सेवन नहीं करूँगा ।

(76) CEREMONIAL SEND OFF TO GROOM

(Spoken by acquaintances to the groom)

On eating the rice of a different hill,

You will forget me, surely, you will.

On drinking water of another watercourse

You will forget me, of course.

Even if you do not forget

When a visit to you we undertake

From the courtyard of your new home

You will bid bye, at best.

If mother serves you food

Show your anger by feigning stomachache

If mother gives you water to drink

Do not drink it, feigning stomachache.

(spoken by the groom)

I am going there just to keep

*The words that parents had to give.
 Eager mother serves me food so good.
 But I won't eat.
 Eager mother serves me water so cold
 But I won't have it.*

॥ ७७ ॥

आषाढ़ मासनी वातऽई वामानी
 वातऽई वाखरअ खर
 वातऽई नी तऽई बाई तऽइसा तरमानी
 तऽइसा तर मर मरअ
 अ तऽइछाअ छिचिंग चाकमानी
 छिचिंग तमर मर
 अ छिचिंग आबार हाबमानी
 आबार तमर मरअ
 नऽंग माछा चादी
 आंग मासा चानू
 जन आ मासा चानू
 अ बायारग ताबुकनी समय यादे
 आषाढ़ मासनी ।

भावार्थ - आषाढ़ की वृष्टि में पहाड़ी नाले उमड़ पड़े हैं । नाले में मैंने जाल
 से बड़ी-बड़ी मछलियाँ पकड़ी है । आओ हमलोग मछलियाँ
 साथ-साथ खाएँगे ।

(77) **ASHADH MONTH**

In this June

It has been raining incessantly.

Upto the brink,

The rivulet is flowing swellingy.

A biggish mesh

Has been pitched across the rivulet

Some biggish fish

Have got trapped in the mesh.

You will eat one fish, I shall eat the other

We shall eat one fish each.

Oh friends, is not it

The month of June, please ?

॥ ७८ ॥

गाथी खामानी खऽरऽइपांग फांगअ

निल बाई मांदार युद्ध

निलदे पाइनअ मांदार दे चेननअ

खुमुक निनांगऽई तंखा

मांदार पाइयाअई निल पाइखाइले

हाअ पाड़ा बिरिमान नांगनू

निल पाइयाअई मांदार पाइखाइले

कामी हामरऽबाई बांगनू

सऽकांग नी लामनअ नाहार हिमया खाई

तानऽय मान गलाक दशा

मऽसादे तंखा मायुंग दे तंखा
काटी लांगलाक दशा ।

भावार्थ - गिलहरी लट्ठा में फँस गया है और लट्ठा से छुटकारा पाने के लिए संघर्ष कर रहा है । यदि गिलहरी छुटकारा पा लेता है तो यह इस ग्राम के लिए मंगल शकुन है । लेकिन यदि गिलहरी छूट नहीं पाता है तो यह ग्राम के लिए अपशकुन का द्योतक है । - जीवन में हमें शकुन-अपशकुन का खयाल रखना चाहिए ।

(78) OMEN

*In the thwrwipang tree, to the west of the ghat,
A squirrel struggles to extricate itself from latex trap.
The twigs rustle due to the struggle
Will victory be on the side of the squirrel ?
If the squirrel fails to extricate,
It omens bad for the village.
But if it is able to extricate,
It omens propitious for the village.
If we do not march ahead with foresight
Hardships will always strike.
We ought to be circumspect always;
A tiger or wild animal may waylay.*

Note : The belief in omens is widespread. It is deeply embedded in the psyche of the people. Almost every phenomenon which is not voluntarily done by man is supposed to omen something either good or bad. Latex of various trees are used by the bird catchers to catch birds. A squirrel may get stuck in it if it is not circumspect.

॥ ७६ ॥

हरी चेथुक सा बऽसा ता रिदी
कऽपाल बिरिमान मानफुन
तखा साक कसम बऽसा तारिदी
ताखुकनी तकतऽई पाइनू
कालांगसी तला कुवा ताखुरदी
बऽलाई कऽलाइमा हानो
कामिचांग तला हुगनअ ताचादी
जाबरा हुगमांग लेंगनू
रांधा कऽतालनी संऽराइमुंग चाखाई
सिकरूक दंगी खा फुन
रानदी कऽतालनी गाइल्ल ता चादी
यंगलग गोजा कुन ।

भावार्थ - हरि चेथुक पक्षी पालने से अमंगल होता है । डोम कौवा पालने से अंडा नष्ट करता है । बाँस की झाड़ी के किनारे कुआँ खोदने से इसमें पत्ते सड़ते हैं । ग्राम के निकट झूम करने से खरपतवार ज्यादा होता है । नया विधुर या नयी विधवा के अभिशाप का भयानक परिणाम होता है ।

(79) A LIST OF DON'TS

Do not pet chick of swallow

It omens bad luck.

Do not pet chick of a raven,

*The eggs in the cage it eats up.
 Do not dig well by kalangsi bamboo stump,
 The leaves falling in it become muck.
 Do not do jhum near the habitation,
 Because plenty of weeds grow up.
 Avoid the curse of a newly widower,
 Because it can make even a vulture lame.
 Avoid the curse of a newly widow,
 Because it makes even a frog hunchbacked,
 Don't blame.*

॥ ८० ॥

अ नाकुती आइचुक बाचाअई यागुल खिलमानी
 बुफुरू कऽलाइनानी
 ताइसानी बागऽई बछर तंगसानी
 तांगऽई चऽंग नारऽक नानी
 आषाढ़ पाकला तांगरऽकया खेइब
 माइतांग अंखरना मानया
 भादर माइकतक चारऽइया खाइब
 तकसा माई सिनिलिया
 माय बऽरऽइचुग नगनअ तंगथुन
 मायाम तगरऽगऽई तंगथुन
 सुकनअ बाइनाअई तंगथुन ।

भावार्थ - झूम की खेती करने की विधि है । इसे सामूहिक रूप से करना चाहिए । निराई और फसल काटने का समय होता है । वृद्ध माता-पिता घर में हलका-फुलका काम करते हैं ।

(80) AN ASPECT OF JHUMIA LIFE

*Since the daybreak, I had toiled in your jhum.
When will you requite it by working in my jhum ?
The work of cultivation ought to be completed
When, for it, time is still there.
If weeding is not done by July
The paddy plants will die.
By September, if reaping is not done
The crop will have rotten.
Let the elderly mother be at home
Scare away birds from paddy being sunned.
Let the elderly father be at home,
And entertain the young ones.*

Note : Among the jhum cultivators, there is a system of individual ownership but communal labor. A group of families work together in the fields of all the members of the group. Thus one requites others for working in one's field by working in their fields.

॥ ८१ ॥

सेलेकुंग हापंग हुगन' ताचादी
सेलेर मा कबल वानू
गारिंगनी नुगुल सातांग रापजाकया
राप फाइदी खानी बरक
बुइनी थानी बा खाकलुबुबार
आनी खानिबा खुमबार
खुनजू कानखाइबो खुनजू बाइरगो
खाजू बरखाइबो खाजू कबलो
बरअ तनिनाई ओंखा ।

भावार्थ - दूसरो की नजर में तुम जैसा भी हो, मेरी नजर में तुम “खूम” फूल की तरह लुभावने हो । घर का छज्जा टूट गया है, मरम्मत कर दीजिए न । उस भद्दी-सी जगह में झूम मत कीजिए ।

(81) A FEW WORDS FOR DEAR

*Do not do jhum on the hillock looking lousy.
Or, you will feel very much drowsy,
The thatch is loose at the eaves.
Fix it, dear, won't you please ?
To others you may be disgusting like khaklu flower,
But to me you are darling like khum flower,
If the flower is worn on ear, the ear gets lowered
And if it is worn on bun, the bun gets covered.
Where should I wear ?*

॥ ८२ ॥

तकसा तियारी पानतऽई काकयाखो
जान संगबो लाइफाई याखो
गारिंग लामाअ गुनथू पिनजागऽई
याकराई नुगऽरऽक लिया
गरिंग लामाअ माइसऽई पिजागऽई
पाकुड़ी नुगरऽक लिया
बुफांगनी खाइचिंग कुचुकतिलिंग चिंग
यांगतऽई ताखुकनऽई लाइफाइनार्इ रगनो
नुगरऽगऽई खाचिंग खाचिंग
नुगया खाई नुगया बाबाइसा
नुकखलाई खा कुबुग छाअ ।

भावार्थ - जल प्रपात के किनारे पौधों पर ओस की बूँदे अभी भी विराजमान हैं। इसका अर्थ हुआ कि सुंदर मुडौल लोग अभी तक इधर से नहीं गुजरे हैं। मुझे उन्हें देखने की कितनी लालसा रहती है ! उन्हें देखने पर देखने की चाह और भी बढ़ जाती है। अच्छा होता जो उन्हें देखती ही नहीं !

(82) CHARMING BROTHERS

*Dewdrops adorn the bush by the waterfall, yet,
So, the fascinating men have not yet left.
Balsam herbs grow on the path to the jhum hut,
So I could not see their feet as they hurried past.
Sesame shrubs grow on the path to the jhum hut
So I could not see their turbans as they hurried past.
Red ant in the forest, kite up in the sky.
On seeing the two charming brothers pass by,
I feel lost in wistful thought, don't I ?
I had better not seen them
On seeing them, I feel so wishful from inside.*

॥ ८३ ॥

करम बुधुल संगनअ
होगले तांगनाब नडंगबाई सा बाकसा
तांगमा तांग बाकसा चडंगले
नडंगमा चडंग कडनडय बायाप साक बाकसा
तंगमा तंगनाइथक चडंगले
भादर थांगखाइले आश्विन फाइयानू
आश्विन सारिना जरा फाइयानू

अ करम बुधुल संगनो
 चऽंग बाहाई नऽंगबाई कागनाई
 ताकऽलाई बिछी बाराखऽनादो
 तामसऽक दाकती थांखा
 अ करमअ बुधुल संगबाई
 ताइसा ले मा तंगमातऽलाई
 नग तंगऽइबो साइचुंग तंगथकया
 कऽनऽई तंगमा तऽई ओंगया
 अ मरा बिशी बा तामसऽक दागतिथांगखा
 साइचुंगले तंगऽई नऽंगले बनिया
 कऽनय से बनिवानू
 कऽनऽय कऽनऽय से चऽंग बनी नानी
 अ करम बुधू संगबाई
 खाबाइअ खा मिलि ई फाइदी
 साक बाकसा अंगऽई खा काइसा ओंखाई
 चिनी किरिना कऽरऽई
 अ नाइथक करमअ संगबाई
 माय बाबुनी खान चऽंग नाअई
 तंगसुक मानगलाक नादो
 हरबो हपुंग इमांगअ तुगअ
 करम बुधुल संगनो ।

भावार्थ - तुम्हारे संग झूम की खेती करने में बहुत मजा आया । लेकिन

खेती का मौसम तुरंत ही खत्म हो गया है । अकेले में क्या हमलोगों
को अच्छा लगेगा ? तुम मेरे साथ रहने क्यों नहीं चली आती हो
- इससे हम दोनों आनंदित होंगे ।

(83) INTIMACY IN JHUM

*Oh embodiment of beauty !
By working together in jhum
Companions at work have been we.
In your intimate company
The days have been so happy.
After September, October will commence,
Then October will also come to an end.
Oh embodiment of beauty !
We may get separated.
For the year we had heard would be long
Has so swiftly departed.
Oh embodiment of beauty !
Had the year been a little longer
I would have enjoyed your company a bit longer.
At home, I am alone and do not feel good
Alone there, you also feel bored.
Why has the damned year so quickly gone ?
When you are not alone, you feel good.
When we are together, we do not get bored.
Oh embodiment of beauty !
Come for the union of our hearts.
We shall be one soul, one body just that.
And we won't be afraid.
Oh embodiment of beauty !*

*Should we leave our marriage proposal
To our parents to decide ?
You keep coming in my dreams throughout the night.
Oh embodiment of beauty would be bride !*

॥ ८४ ॥

नाइसिकमामांगसे तंगना मुचुंगअ
नाइथक बारिया रगनअ
बऽबतऽई मऽताइरग बऽबतऽई काइथर रग
ननले सऽई अई ताकखा
नाइसिक नाइथाया दुलगऽनांग रकले
अ साजगऽई ताकजाक नाइरग
अवानसुगऽई सऽइजाक नाइरक
नन से आशमांग आसऽक दिनथांखा
अ प्राननी जादू संगनो
सऽकांग यालऽलऽक तलऽई हिमनानी
सऽकांग हिमपाइदी यालूक ।

भावार्थ - तुम बहुत ही सुंदर हो । भगवान ने तुम्हें बहुत सलीके से गढ़ा है ।
उसने तुम्हारी रचना में अपनी समस्त निपुणता का उपयोग किया
है ।

(84) IMPECCABLE BEAUTY

*Your beauty is so impeccable
That it is delightful at you to stare.*

*Gods and goddesses have shaped you with due care.
 With many attempts, he has made you charmingly slim.
 With an imaginative drawing,
 Meticulously, he has made you beautifully prim.
 Oh my sweetheart,
 I have been waiting for you all the while.
 Please stroll ahead of me
 I shall follow you from behind, for mile.*

॥ ८५ ॥

आइचुक बाचाबो तकगऽला खरांग
 सारिग साल थांगबो यंखाजी खरांग
 बायाप सागबाकसा हाबा नंखरई
 खापांग सऽरांगमा जरा
 सालबा साल थांगरऽक थांगरऽक
 हाबा आइ मानरऽक मानरऽक
 सारिग साल थानग थानग फुरूखाई
 तऽमा यंखाजी मा पुंग
 खुमुक यंखाजी पुंगमा खऽनाअई
 खापांग गुरूमबो चिनी
 हरपुंग हरकलक वानसुक वानसुगई
 मुकतऽई यरो चिनी ।

भावार्थ - दिनभर झूम के काम में व्यस्त हम आनंदित रहते हैं । शाम को कीट-पतंगों की भनभनाहट मुझे बेचैन कर देती है । रात भर तुम्हारी याद में रोते रहता हूँ ।

(85) **NOSTALGIA IN JHUM**

*At the dawn, cackle of fowl can be heard.
At the dusk, buzz of insects can be heard.
As we friends go to the jhum for work
Our heart is full of mirth.
Engrossed we become in jhum work,
As the days moves forth.
As the sun sets,
What disturbs the insects ?
On hearing their buzz, I become restless.
I think about you throughout the long nights.
Tears drop down from my eyes.*

॥ ८६ ॥

मतमले सामपारी बुबार बारमानी
तऽमानी आसऽक मतम
तऽमानी आसऽक नाइथक
मतम सांपारी रगन'
मबो मतमबो नाब नाइथगो
अ मतम सांपारी रगन'
अ करम बुधुल संगबा
मतम सांपारी ओंगऽई मानखऽलाई
खाजुअ बनी खामुन
कतग दुगमाला ओंगऽई मानखऽलाई
कतगो बनी खामुन
रांगचाक यासिताम ओंगई मानखऽलाई
याछिअ बनी खामुन

रूफाईनी बाला ओंगई मानखऽलाई
 यागतऽगो बनी खामुन
 अ करमअ बुधुल संगबा
 नऽगबाई तंगऽइसे खातांगमा पगया
 नुगया चऽग बाहाई तंगन' ?

भावार्थ - यदि मैं सुंदर और सुरभित चंपा फूल होता तो तुम्हारे केश को
 सजाता । यदि मैं फूलों की माला होता तो तुम्हारी गर्दन की
 शोभा बढ़ता । यदि मैं सोने की अँगूठी होता तो तुम्हारी अँगुलियों
 में शोभायमान होता ।

(86) INTENSE LOVE

*The champak flower that blooms
 With fragrance why is it full ?
 Why is it so beautiful ?
 The champak flower that blooms
 Is both fragrant and beautiful.
 Oh lady of magnetic look !
 Had I been fragrant like champak flower
 I would have adorned your bun of hair.
 Had I been attractive like floral wreath,
 I would have adorned your neck so sweet.
 Had I been a ring of gold,
 You finger I would have adorned.
 Had I been a silver bangle
 I would have adorned your hand.
 Oh lady of magnetic look !*

*I feel impatient even when you are there.
How shall I live when you are elsewhere ?*

॥ ८७ ॥

अ नाकुती आगी चेराइअ चडंग थडंगलाइफुरू
कऽनुई साक बाकसा नडंगबाई
अ नाकुती नुंगबाई हुक यागुल
मा तांगरऽक लिया
आगी साकबागछा चडंग तंगमाफनअ
तरमानी साअई मानया
अ नाकुती गाती वाथाब नी वकेबेंग सुरतुई
माय कक सुरमा बांखा
बाबू कक सुरमा बांखा
अ नाकुती आदी मायानो सारिया हिन खाई
राइबा चडंग रिहरानू
अ नाकुती साजिया छिनी बाइदछे नाईअ
हाफुंग रूंग चले नानी
निनी बाइदले नायई तंगअ
राइबा चडंग रिहर नानी ।

तकसा रांगऽचाक बऽमऽखांग कऽचाक
राइबा कक कऽरऽंग चडंग रिहर नानी
अ नाकुती नडंगसे ब दिन अ हामजाक

दंगअ कुबुलनाई सबाई
 वासक कुबलनाई कलिनी बांगफाई
 खुमक बांगमिसिंग कुबुलुई थाइनाई
 बलंग मऽखरा थाई बाई
 अ नाकुती बऽखा खुलगऽई ककथाइस सादी
 ब दिनअ हरनाई राइबा

भावार्थ - हम दोनों समवयस्क हैं । बचपन में हमलोग संगी थे । मेरे माता-
 पिता मेरी शादी के लिए प्रस्ताव भेज रहे हैं । यदि तुम मुझसे शादी
 करने को तैयार हो तो बताओ, मैं तुम्हारे यहाँ घटक भिजवाने की
 व्यवस्था करूँगा । बताओ मैं घटक कब भेजूँ ?

(87) CHILDHOOD LOVER

*Oh dear, both of us are contemporaries,
 Since childhood days of playful intimacy.
 To do cultivation together
 We have not got the opportunity.
 We have grown up to adulthood
 Quickly without our realizing it.
 In the platform on the ghat
 As many bamboo pieces are there,
 So many proposals for my marriage
 Have been sent by my parent.
 We shall send the marriage-broker
 If your love for me is still alive.
 I shall do everything for you ;
 Even rowing a boat on sand, I shall strive.*

*If you are agreeable,
Then it will be possible.*

(Second part)

*Oh, like cute bird, red-faced !
To you which day will be convenient
When cogent matchmaker may be sent.
The trellis is coiled by bean creeper,
Bamboo by Kaliyuga's bangfai creeper.
Monkey plays with marshy tubers.
Oh dear, be frank,
When should we send the marriage-broker.*

॥ ८८ ॥

अ नाकुती आगी चेराइअ
नङ्गबाई चङ्ग कऽनऽय कक सालाइमानी
जागा कक सातक सातक
अ नाकुती नङ्गबाई चङ्गकऽनऽई हिममानी लमा
तंखू यापिरी मारी
नङ्गबाई हिममानी मुइतू मानखऽलाई
मकलअ कऽफाई तंख'
अ नाकुती नङ्गबाई चङ्ग कऽनऽय कक सामा जागा
जागा कक सातक सातक
अ नाकुती नङ्गबाई खोलासा तंगमानी जागा
बैखंत बानक जाग थुन
अ नाकुती नङ्गबाई चङ्ग कऽनऽई तुकुमाजागा
कलिनी तिरथ अंगथुन ।

भावार्थ - बचपन में हम जहाँ खेलते थे वहाँ हमारा पदचिह्न अभी भी मौजूद है । बचपन की यादें ताजा हो गयी हैं । बचपन में हम जहाँ खेलते थे वह स्थान वैकुण्ठ बन जाए ! जिस घाट में हम स्नान करते थे वह घाट कलियुग का तीर्थस्थान बन जाए !

(88) **CHILDHOOD LOVE**

*Oh dear, the place where
We used to talk together
Conjures up old memories.
Oh dear, the path where
We used to walk together
Still has our footprints, see !
My intimacy with you as I recall
Old memories crop up, everything, all !
Oh dear, the place where
We used to talk together
Conjures up old memories.
Where we played together that place divine
Blissful like heaven, may it become.
Where we bathed together that place divine
Pilgrim center of Kaliyuga, may it become.*

॥ ८६ ॥

अ नाकुती राइसक राइखेपनी बऽखा चागऽनाई
बलंग माफला बऽसा
खाजानी कोवाई खोलक चारिनाई
चिनी मामला काइसा

अ नाकुती माइसई बऽतांग बाइचागऽनाई
 मयना तकसा मासा
 हाबा थाइचुमू रूतुग चारिनाई
 बासिया नागर काइसा
 अ नाकुती थराइलुंग तऽइसा बेराई चागऽनाई
 माथाम शिकारी मासा
 खाजानी कोवाई खोलक चारिनाई
 चिनी मामला काइसा ।

भावार्थ - स्तन के पास खोंस कर रखी हुई सुपारी आम आदमी के लिए नहीं
 है । ऐसी सुपारी तो सिर्फ प्रियजनों के लिए सुरक्षित है ।

89) SPECIAL PRIVILEGES FOR DEAR ONES

*Only a young maffa bird can
 Eat the tender shoots of cane, oh dear.
 Likewise only the dear one can
 Chew betel-nut tucked under breast-cloth, oh dear.
 Only a young mynah can
 Eat maiswi sesame, oh dear.
 Likewise only my dear can
 Have thaichumu gourd of jhum, oh dear.
 Only an otter can
 Eat the fish of marsh, oh dear.
 Likewise only a dear one can
 Chew betel-nut tucked under breast-cloth, oh dear.*

॥ ६० ॥

अ बासिया नागर रगनो
नऽगबाई खलमानी कुंचुक सामपारी
तंखो यासिनी मारी
नऽगबाई हिममानी लामा लामपिरी
तंखअ यापाइनी मारी
रऽछाम खिकरग कोवाई तकलाइअई
नऽगबाई चऽग चालाइमानी
तंखू दासानी मारी
गाति नी हलंग याकऽलाम कागया
नऽगबाई चऽग कऽनऽई कुचुक सांपारी
चऽग खल लाइमानी
ताइले पग लांग लिया
वानजऽई बा हिनअ मुइतू न कचू
सिकाम तऽई तऽइमा तऽइचू
जालाई बखरग खुमपुई
चिनी ककबिती चऽगसालाईमानी
तंखूबऽखाअ मुइतू ।

भावार्थ - जिस चंपा वृक्ष में हम खेलते थे उसमें हमारी उँगुलियों के निशान अभी भी मौजूद हैं । जहाँ हम चलते-फिरते थे वहाँ हमारे पदचिह्न अभी भी मौजूद हैं । जिस पत्थर पर हम सुपारी फोड़ते थे उसमें दरार अभी भी मौजूद हैं । ये स्मृतियाँ अविस्मरणीय हैं ।

(90) UNFORGETTABLE MOMENTS

Oh dear,

*The tall champak tree from which we plucked flower,
Still has our fingerprints.*

*The path where we walked around,
Still bears our footprints.*

*The grind-stone where we slit betel-nut with knife,
Still has the scar prints.*

*The boulder on the ghat where we took bath
Still has those imprints.*

I can never forget those memories.

Our plucking flower from the tall trees !

Esculent roots are called "kachu" by Bengalis.

Backward tribes carry water in bucket which is leafy.

Khumpui flower blooms atop the bushy valley.

I shall always remember

The words I had given to you, and you to me.

Note 1: Tripuris used to call certain tribes "sikaam" or backward tribe. Kuki, Halam etc tribes were called sikaam. It appears that the members of these tribes wore very scanty or no clothes at all. They used primitive instruments and utensils. They had lower status in the society. They lived on top of steeper hills.

Tripuris were in continuous strife with the backward tribes. There is even a type of ballad called "kuchuk ha sikaam kamani" urging people to join in the fight against the backward tribes.

(These backward tribes have made significant social and economic progress since then.)

Note 2: Tripuri word for Bengali is "vanjui" which has perhaps evolved from two words, "avan", meaning a type of pastry of rice, and "chui", meaning wrapped in cloth. Bengalis used to visit the tribal areas for trade and other purposes and would go back after the work. They carried their food tied in their towels or other pieces of cloth. Hence, Bengalis were "the people who carried their food tied in a piece of cloth."

॥ ६१ ॥

हारुंग हाकऽचांग तकबुई एरकऽचांग
तकबुइबो एरफाइलिया लिया
आगी नखऽला गुटी थऽंगफाइनाई
गुटी बो थऽंग पाई लिया
बुकू तेनेसा कुटना सऽकखा
गुटिबो थऽंगफाइलिया
अ बासिया नागर रगनो
सिलुंग तखा बीरमानी नुगअ
आधा चा मानी नुगया
बाइनी नखला बेराइमा नुगगअ
चिनी नखला नुकया
तऽई गुरूम गुरूम तऽइखरक देना
बरअ नऽंग नांखा चऽंगन खाकेना
चिनी नखला गुटी थऽंगनानी
सऽबा खऽलाइका माना ?
बाबू वातानमा वाफकनो बालाई
दुखू सेप्ले फाइदी
दुती मुइखनचक कानना मुचुंखाई
चामारी कासा फाइदी
हरी बेरांगजअ बऽसा रिनाखाई
हरअ कोक दो वादी
यदी मायानअ सारिया हिनकाई

सारिग तुकुना फाईदी ।

भावार्थ - प्रिय ! तुम्हे किसने भड़का दिया है कि अब तुम मेरे यहाँ नहीं आते हो ? क्या हमने तुम्हे चोट पहुँचाया है ? तुम मेरे यहाँ घरजमाई बनोगे मैं तुम्हें अच्छे-अच्छे वस्त्र दूँगी और तुम्हारे साथ घाट पर नहाऊँगी ।

(91) WHO HAS INSTIGATED HIM AGAINST ME

*Takbui birds used to throng this cold valley,
But they do not come here any more.
My lover used to come to play marble to our porch,
But he does not come here any more.
Who has instigated him against me,
That he does not come any more ?
Silung bird is seen when it flies,
It is never seen eating, how much one tries.
You are seen in other's porch
But never in our vicinity.
Is something gushing in your head,
Have we hurt your sensibilities ?
Who has forbidden you from
Playing marble in our vicinity, I pray ?
Please assist my father in bringing
Head loads of bamboo from far away.
For a loincloth with muikhanchak design so decent
To staying with us as groom you must assent.
Make a cage
For hari berangja bird, soon.*

If you still love me

Come to the bathing ghat in the afternoon.

Note : Generally it is the girl who has a major say in deciding whether the marriage will come through. However, in this song it appears that it is the boy who appears reluctant to marry the girl. Instead of the boy cajoling the girl to marry him, here the girl urges the boy to marry her.

॥ ६२ ॥

इमांग नुगमाबो बजरा खामचऽई
रांगनी फलादे छिदो
माइनी फलादे छिदो
मस हुलमानी पाताबाई पोता
इमांग नुग मानी जुदा
बाबू संग तांगमा गरिंग खाकरूई
आर कातऽतऽई तऽमानी भाबिहरका
मिया सारिंग गरिंग तऽई खगऽई
काबुई फाइमानी
लाखुया सारंग नऽखा
खऽनाई खालपुरू आइना नाइगऽतऽई
नाइना मुचुंगखाई
निनी माय बाई आनी मायनअ
आचऽक कक सालाइरिदी
ताकऽलाई बिछी रगो
माय थुमानी थंगार जराअ
तागदुक खाजागऽई
ताकखराई मानसऽकलिया ।

भावार्थ - मैंने स्वप्न में भुना हुआ बाजरा देखा है जिसका अर्थ धन की प्राप्ति है । मैंने स्वप्न में स्त्री-पुरुष को संभोग करते देखा है । - मेरे मन में क्या-क्या खयाल आ रहे हैं ! यदि तुम मुझे पाना चाहते हो तो माता-पिता से शादी की बात पक्की करवा डालो ।

(92) AMOROUS FEELINGS

*In the dream, I have seen parched millet.
Does it mean riches I will get ?
Does it omen a bumper harvest ?
In one of the dreams I have seen
Like pestle on grind-stone, a couple doing sex.
Lying in my father's hut
In my mind what thoughts beget !
Yesterday to your jhum water I had fetched.
May be it was drunk by the cowherds.
If you want to look at my face
As you look in the mirror,
Then let the marriage proposal be
Settled by our mothers.
This year I am unable to end
Weaving the cloth I had commenced.
On the loom tied to mother's bed-end.*

॥ ६३ ॥

पुरुष - नुखुंग खुंगचिली सिमिलकअ बुतुई
दांगदालअ फैरांग कक तऽई
बाबू राई सऽइमा राइतऽई

मायअ खुल लुमा खऽतऽई
 सिसिमालती मऽखांगो फुलई
 खांगा थऽइकक थऽई ककतऽई
 स्त्री - माइसिंग छियारी बांगमानी बऽगऽई
 नाइरऽगऽई नुगरूगलिया
 पुरुष - साइचऽंग कइनेने नऽंग तऽमा मा तंग
 तंगफाई ग्रादी आंगबाई
 कऽनऽई तंगऽइसे तंगमऽचांग मऽचांग
 माइचुंग तंगऽई दे मऽचांग
 स्त्री. - हारुंग आमिचांग बऽलाई कुवावांग
 साइचुंग खलऽई दे मऽचांग
 पुरुष- लामा गानानी वांदाल कालांगसी
 बदे कक कऽलाई लांगसी
 महामायानी जालानी ककनो साइदे नाइना सऽलाई ।

भावार्थ - पुरुष:- तुम सुंदर और सुरभित हो, फिर अकेले क्यों बैठी हो ?
 मेरे साथ आओ, आनंद आएगा ।

स्त्री :- शीत के इस मौसम में कुहासा था । मैं तुम्हें देख नहीं पायी।

(93) COME TO ME

Male : Lizard lays egg in the thatch,
 Bamboo clothesline makes thunderous clap.
 Father sharpens the cane,
 Mother spins the yarn.

*Your face annointed with sisimalati scented oil
Is full of beauty and charm.*

*Female : In the winter it was misty,
That is why, you, I could not see.*

*Male : Alone, why do you vegetate ?
Together, why cannot we share ?
Together, we feel good.
It is good to look at too !*

*Female : The plains are full of dense jungle.
How is it felt to work lone and single ?*

*Male : The path is full of bamboo and weeds.
To remain alone, what is the need ?
Oh charming beauty, won't you please !*

॥ ६४ ॥

प्राननी जादू संगबाई
कऽनऽय सा बाकसा कऽनऽय तंगबाक सा
खापांग खा बाकसा नऽगबाई
हुचुंगले गुरिअई तबथाई पुंगमानी
जादू नो लब फाई खऽना
निनी गारिंगले चेंग गेरेंग गेरेंग
थामपुई मा पेरेंग पेरेंग
आनी गारिंग ले चुक सर सरअ
नकबार नांग सरअ सरअ
आनी गारिंगअ फाईदी
अ प्राननी जादू संगयुई

निनी गारिंगअ फाइनाले मान
तखा मगदाम चानो ।

भावार्थ - हमलोग हर तरह से एक जैसे हैं । तुम्हारा छोटा-सा घर पुराना हो गया है और वहाँ कीट-पतंग का उत्पात है । मेरा घर बड़ा और सुहाना है । मेरे यहाँ चली आओ न ।

(94) **DEAR COME TO ME**

Oh dear !

We are alike in all manners.

Even our thoughts are similar.

Tabthai bird chirps playfully.

Maybe it is enthralled by your beauty.

Your small hut looks oldish,

Insects are there aplenty,

My hut is biggish

And the breeze blows soothingly.

So come to my hut.

Oh my sweetheart.

To your hut, I don't mind to go,

But the corn will be eaten by the crow.

॥ ६५ ॥

प्राननी जादू सगंबाई

तंगडले तंगथथक नडंगबाई

नुगयाखाई नुगया नुगया बाबाइसा

नुगखाई भाबी मा बांगअ
 कक साना मुचुंग हरो
 अ ननले हामजागऽई जादू हिनमाया
 लब साअई नुंगया मानी
 अ प्राननी जादू संगनो
 नन ले वान सुगई आंगले माइचाया
 माइचू याग तऽइमअ तऽइम
 ननले वान सुगऽई आंगले तऽइनऽगया
 तऽई तिलक तऽइमअ तऽइम
 अ जादू कलिजा संगनो ।

भावार्थ - तुम कितनी सुहानी हो ! तुम मुझे पल-पल याद आती हो ।
 तुम्हारी याद में मैं झूम में खाना-पीना भी भूल गया हूँ ।

(95) THINKING ABOUT DARLING

*Oh my sweetheart !
 It is so blissful to be with you.
 When out of sight, you are out of mind.
 But when you are around I find,
 I feel like being with you for every moment,
 I feel like keep talking to you every second.
 I call you darling not just because I love you.
 But because I have high regards for you.
 I skip lunch as I think about you,
 Tied in the cloth the food remains as it were.
 I do not drink water as I think about you*

*Water remains in the gourd shell pitcher as it were.
Oh darling to my heart !*

॥ ६६ ॥

अ ताखुक रगन'
कामी बादवा बांगमानी बागऽई
ताबुक मा तंगथाई मगऽई
कामी खुंगचानी ककबिती रगबा
बाहाई बुई खऽना लांगबा
कामी बुबाग्रा चिनी अकरा
तामुंगऽई वाना जागबा
केबेंग कछंग छिली नांग मानअ
तामुंगऽई छिया ओंगबा
मिछिब मथना चागऽई नाइखादो
तबसे पेंगलांग लिया
पुनजर चागऽई मऽताई रऽई नाइखा
छेमासे चालांग लिया
छाइचुंग छागकाइछा कऽपाल यांग सुंगऽई
ताइबऽसऽक तंगनाई मगई
कामी खुंगचाअ छिली नांगमानी
तामबाई मऽतऽई रिनअ ।

भावार्थ - इस गाँव में दुष्टों का बोलबाला हो गया है । गाँव में कोई भी बुरी नजर का शिकार हो सकता है । हमारे प्रधान इस बात से चिंतित हैं । गाँव से

दुरात्मा को भगाने के लिए कई अनुष्ठान किये गये हैं, देवी-देवताओं को बहुत कुछ गछा गया है । लेकिन फिर भी शुभ लक्षण नहीं मिल रहा है ।

(96) EVIL STRIKES THE VILLAGE

*Oh brotheren, in this village,
Mischief- makers have gained an upperhand.
We have reason to apprehend.
How does the internal matters of the village,
Come to outsider's knowledge ?
Over these developments, our chieftain,
Is very much under mental strain.
Why does not one understand the message,
That one may be affected by evil eyes in the village ?
To exorcise the village
To the spirits, sacrifice of buffaloes has been promised.
Even then, the evil spirit does not look pleased.
A pair of goats have been promised and worship done.
Still we do not get propitious omen.
How long shall we brood over the problem
With heads heavy with strain ?
The village has been affected by evil eyes,
What kind of worship will exorcise ?*

Note : After making a promise to the spirits, or after performing certain ritual, it is customary to see if it omens good. For example, a pair of leaves are thrown upwards. If one leaf falls on the ground obverse and the other reverse, it omens good. However, if both the leaves fall on the ground either obverse or reverse, it does not omen good, and further promise or ritual is necessary.

॥ ६७ ॥

जालाइअ थांगबअ तानथक कुगमा खाई
याकराई कऽचाक थराई
हापिंगअ थांगबअ खलतक कुकमाखाई
याफा खरपचा अराई
तऽइनी खांग्राई बुमुंग बुइशिराई आनी
तंगजामा जागा हिनकाइबा आनी
बाबुनी मुंगता गगनचंद्र पाड़ा
माइअ ताग मानी रऽतऽराक बरक
आंगनअ बगऽला बरग

चेराई अंगऽइबो मुंग खुतक जागो
अकरा ओंगबो मुंगकऽलाइ मानो
आमा मुंग कऽलाई फारलांगमा बागऽई
फुंगनी दिपर बुमुंग ताखुदी
याकुंग वस्ता चानू
दिपर जराअ बुमुंग ताखुदी
चाथानी मिथिक गानू
आनी बुमुंगन खुनानी हिनकाई
हरनी दिबरअ खुदी
हरनी दिबरअ बुमुंग खू कऽलाई
एमांगो नुगजाग गानो ।

भावार्थ - मेरा नाम बुइशीराय है । मेरे गाँव गगनचंद्रपाड़ा का नामकरण मेरे पिताजी के नाम पर हुआ है । मेरा नाम बहुत-ही सरल है । लेकिन मेरा नाम सुबह मत लीजिए वरना मैं ठोकर खा सकता हूँ । मेरा नाम दोपहर में मत लीजिए वरना खाना खाते-खाते नोटी में खाना अटक जाएगा । मेरा नाम मध्य रात्रि में लीजिए ताकि हम स्वप्न में मिल सकें ।

(97) ABOUT MYSELF

*In the marshy land, it is exciting,
To pluck tharai sapling.
Likewise, it make my heart bloom,
To pluck arai leaves in the jhum.
My name is Buishirai.
It rhymes with word for crab: "khangrai".
Gaganchandra's hamlet of which I am resident,
Is named after my parent.
Mother weaves loin cloth in loom
And I am itinerant.
Even among kids, I have fame.
Even elders remember my name.
For, my mother gave me an easy name.
Do not take my name in the morning,
Or I shall stumble over something.
Do not take my name in the afternoon.
Or I shall suffer from choking while having food.
If you want to take my name
Take it in the dead of the night.
Maybe then we shall meet
In the dream with delight.*

॥ ६८ ॥

आठारमुड़ा दामड़ाछड़ा
नयन ताड़ानी पाड़ा
नयनताड़ानी पाड़ा दे पाड़ा
बार घरिया पाड़ा
बार घरिया पाड़ा दे पाड़ा
नक कुड़िदक नगदक
चालाई बांगमाबो मा कुड़िदक मादक
बाबू हिनकाइबो अचाई थांगतिरू
काका कतर बो बारूया ओंगो
मंगलिया बुमा जगा लुतेरो
हापुंग बो काअ पाड़ा नुहुरो
नयनतारानी पाड़ा ।

भावार्थ - “नयनतारापाड़ा” या “बारहघरियापाड़ा” - मेरा यह गाँव
अठारहमुड़ा पर्वत के पाद पर दामरा नदी के तीर पर बसा है । इस गाँव में छह
कुड़ी छह (१२६) परिवार थे । मेरे पिताजी पुजारी और चाचा उनके सहायक
थे ।

(98) MY VILLAGE

*At the foothills of the imposing Atharamura,
On the bank of the rivulet Damra,
There is the Hamlet of Nayantara.
It is also called the Hamlet of Baragharia.
Six score and six huts
Were there in Baragharia Hamlet.*

[170]

*Six score and six children
 Were there in the hamlet.
 My father was the village priest,
 And my uncle used to assist.
 Mangalia's mother used to make
 The proclamatory festive shrill.
 From the top of this hill,
 Nayantara's Hamlet is visible.*

Note 1: Atharamura, literally meaning "eighteen peaks", is one of the hill ranges in Tripura.

Note 2: It customary to name a hamlet after the important persons of the hamlet. Thus, the name Nayantara's Hamlet signify that Nayantara was an influential leader of the hamlet.

Note 3: A hamlet with 126 houses is considered a very big hamlet. A hamlet usually has fewer houses.

Note 4: During worships, festivities or rituals, womenfolk make a shrill cry by yelling and vibrating tongue in the mouth. This also popular in Bengal.

Note 5: Worship is performed either by Ochai who is a priest from the tribal community, or by a Brahman who is usually a Bengali.

॥ ६६॥

अ जादू
 मायनी अगअ जनम नाजागई
 राग चाक बिथी संगनो
 जनम बो काटेलिया
 अ बांधू छंगनो
 वाकमानी अग जनम नाजाकखाई
 जनम बा काटे खामू

तिनी आचाइअ खऽना राठारू
 अ रांगचाक संग चिनी
 जनम काटे खामू
 तकमानी अगअ जनम नाजाकखाई
 अ रांगचाक संग
 जनमअ काटे खामू
 जादू तिनी खुम पाइअ
 खऽना राथारअ
 जनम काटे खामू
 जादू फाइले फाइखाखा
 बबे बाजारअ
 बाजार मा खालाई लांगया
 पयसा गानाछा याग मानबुया
 बानथू छंगनो
 बाजार मा खाइलांग लिया
 जादू मनुष्य जनम
 उत्तम जनम
 बानथू ताइले नालिया जनम
 अ रांगचाक संगनो
 मायनी अगअ जनम ना जऽगऽई
 जनम ब काटे लिया

भावार्थ - मानव जीवन को सर्वोत्तम जीवन माना जाता है, लेकिन मैं इस
 व्यर्थ मानव जीवन से ऊब चुका हूँ। यदि मैं शूकर या पक्षी योनि

में जन्म लेता तो जल्द ही मर जाता और जीवन से छुटकारा मिल जाता ।

(99) **FED UP WITH LIFE**

Oh dear !

From my mother's womb

I have been born in the human race.

But I find it difficult to pass my days.

Oh dear !

Had I been born in the porcine race,

I would have passed my days.

Because if I were born today,

I would have been slaughtered the next day.

Life would have ended at an early age.

Oh dear !

Had I been born in the avian race,

I would have passed my days.

Because if I were hatched today,

I would have been slaughtered the next day.

Life would have ended at an early age.

Oh beloved !

This world is like a market place

Where I have come for shopping.

But I have got no money

I could not do shopping.

Oh beloved !

Human form is the

Supreme form of life.

But I want to die.

Oh dear !

*From my mother's womb
I have been born in the human race.
But I find it difficult to pass my days.*

Note : Acute poverty and widespread backwardness are endemic problems of the people. People have to face a lot of hardships. Disillusionment with life and insensitivity to death are salient features of life.

॥ १०० ॥

मनुष्यपुरी हिनई फाइमानी
तामखाई तंगलांग नानी
तामखाई चालांग नानी
केबेंग फा कऽलाई बगऽई
बेड़ा लाब बऽरऽई संगऽई थांगनानी
बबा किचानी ककदा
बबा एरेंग नी ककदा
चिकन सारिंदा नगर ता ताम दी
फानअ पुषी ना खाइले
दांगदू सिकला नागर ता तामदी
मानअ पुषी ना खाइले
बुइनी तंगमुंग नो ता सऽरऽंग जादी
बलंग मऽखरा लऽइतकतऽई ललांग
माई कऽताल चायऽई बहक पिलालांग
मऽइतऽक सम कऽरऽई मुई हाइलांग हाइलांग
बुइनी तनमुंग सऽरऽंगलाई खाइले

नुखुंग थानाइसे निलाम
 याक तऽक याक घड़ी कानऽई चानाबो
 चिनी कपालअ कऽरऽई
 सानजा गेरेबो सियाल हुलगो
 वाकमा कुंगतागो रूखुंग बेदगना खाइदी
 सानजा कऽलाईखाई तकमा कतगो
 ताखुक बेदकना खाइदी
 मनअ अ मायअनी बिती
 मनअ बाबुनी बिती
 राजा रांग कऽरऽई सिया
 बऽसा खासिया कऽरऽई बुझिया
 बनअ नुंग वानाया दा
 लक्ष्मी भंडारी जुकनो
 खाजा करमअ जुकनो ।

भावार्थ - मानव जीवन कठिनाइयों से भारा है । जीवन में आलस्य करने
 से हम तबाह हो जाएँगे । हमें मन लगाकर काम करना चाहिए
 और परिवार को उत्थान के रास्ते पर ल जाना चाहिए।

(100) HUMBLE HUMAN LIFE

I have been born in the human race.
How shall I pass my days ?
This life, how shall I face ?
Constructing a hut
With logs and straw, say,
And surrounding it with fences:

Is it a child's play ?
 If you have to look after the elderly father,
 Playing the tiny sarangi, do not wander.
 If you have to look after the elderly mother
 Playing dangdu instrument, do not wander.
 Do not ape the life style of others.
 Lazy monkey is naked, displaying private parts.
 With paddy its tummy swells good.
 If you follow monkey's lifestyle,
 You will have to survive on insipid subsistent food,
 And even your house will auctioned, understood ?
 It is not in our fate to live happily,
 Sporting watch on the wrist with aristocracy.
 As the evening descends, jackals will howl.
 Sows will search for food, feed them all.
 By the evening, cackling will be done by the fowl;
 Put them in the cage, all.
 These are in the tradition which is age-old.
 The King knows not there is pauper incapable of paying tax.
 Rain knows not there is homeless who does not own a shack.
 Children do not understand that monetary strength we lack.
 Have you pondered over these ?
 Oh lady of riches !
 Oh lady of magnetic breast !

Note 1: Monkey is considered a lazy animal. It is supposed to construct house only when the rainy season has already begun.

Note 2: Sporting wrist-watch is a symbol of status and luxury.

Note 3: Dangdu is a simple musical instrument consisting of iron strips in the shape of "E". One end of it is held from the mouth, and the middle strip is vibrated. The resonating air column produces musical notes. The length of the air column is changed by covering the instrument with the palm.

Dangdu is played by a girl to entice her lover. A girl also uses dangdu as bobby-pin in her bun.

JHUM CULTIVATION. A WAY OF LIFE

Jhum cultivation or shifting cultivation or slash-and-burn cultivation, is the integral part of the socio-economic life of the tribal societies in Tripura. The tribes were almost entirely agriculturists. Their life depended on cultivation. They sustained themselves by growing their requirements in their farms. Cultivation invariably meant jhum cultivation, as settled cultivation was rarely practiced by them.

It is said that except for the salt which cannot be produced in the region, the tribes were almost entirely self-sufficient. They led very simple lives, and had small needs. They fulfilled all their needs themselves. They met the demand for food by jhum cultivation, food gathering in forest, hunting and domestication of animals and birds. They met the demand for clothes by growing cotton in jhum cultivation and weaving.

Jhum cultivation is done on the slopes of the hills. Both men and women, boys and girls participate in the operations. Major activities like cutting jungles and weeding are done communally. Jhum operations include site selection, cutting jungles, setting ablaze, clearing the debris, sowing, weeding, watching and harvesting along with certain rituals. The tools needed in jhum cultivation are few and simple: chopper, sickle and baskets.

The process of jhum cultivation for a year starts with the selection of the site in Agradayana or November-December. In selecting the site, preference is given to a deep forest area or a bamboo forest which yields rich harvest. The slope should not be very steep. Preference is given to south-ward slope as it receives more sun. The place should preferably be close to a rivulet or some other source of water. In selecting a site, some interesting magical practices are performed. Early in the morning of an auspicious day, a very small patch of the tentatively selected site is cleared. A piece of bamboo is split into two parts and are dropped from a height. It is auspicious if one half falls obversely and the other reversely. A lump of the soil is taken to the home for revelation through dreams. The cultivator wears clean clothes at night, sleeps alone and places the soil below his pillow. Cultivation is

likely to be profitable if he dreams of buffalo, cattle, marriage ceremony, clear water, fishing etc. It is bad if a naked woman, fire, police or beggar is seen. Besides, places with deep and narrow holes, or where a langur or python has died or where witches and spirits are supposed to live are dreaded and left.

The vegetation at the selected site is cut down, and are allowed to dry in the sun for about a month. After that fire is set to it, usually in the evening. After a few days, the unburned logs are collected and set to fire. The ashes remain there and serve as fertilizers. Certain rituals are observed while fire is set to the vegetation. Prior to the setting of fire, certain seeds, a hand-fan, sesamum oil and a small basket are taken to the field and thrown into the dry debris. Immediately after setting of fire, a few malignant deities are worshipped. In this ritual a few pigs, chickens etc are needed. Even the housewife is required to perform a ritual simultaneously. In the courtyard, she is to place a quantity of sesamum oil, cotton, certain seeds and a small basket. This is to relieve mother earth from the burning sensation.

Digging and sowing are done simultaneously in Chaitra-Vaishkha or March-May. All the workers stand in a line. Everybody has a small basket tied to the left of their waist containing seeds and a chopper. While digging a small hole with the chopper, putting a mixture of seeds, and covering the hole, each batch of workers goes down from top to bottom, and again climbs up the hill. The process continues until the entire field is covered. Certain other seeds are sown through broadcast. Monday, Wednesday and Thursday are supposed to be auspicious days for starting the operation of sowing. A piece of green turmeric charged with some spells is dug in the south-east corner of the field so as to prevent the evil spirits from entering and doing harm to the crops.

The seedlings grow within three weeks. After a few showers of the monsoon, creepers and grasses grow abundantly. They require weeding twice, thrice or even four times after some intervals.

Weeding is not enough. Protective measures, both magical and physical, are also taken against wild animals, birds, evil eyes and evil spirits. A watch house is built on a peak in the field. This

rectangular shaped and two roofed hut with raised platform is quite airy and convenient for looking around. Sacrecrows are put up. A number of half split bamboos are erected hither and thither and connected with a long rope, one end of which is tied to a post of the watch house. From time to time the watchman, by pulling the rope makes fluttering sound to scare birds and animals. Deities of wealth and prosperity are also propitiated with spells, offerings and sacrifices. In case of drought, the rain god is worshipped and rituals are performed to induce rain.

A variety of crop is raised in the jhum field, including paddy, vegetables, oilseeds, jute, cotton, millet etc. Different crops mature at different times. So, the harvesting continues in phases from Ashadha (June-July) to Ashvina (September-October). No crop is eaten unless it is first offered to the deities. Pardon is also sought for animals, insects and birds etc which got killed during the cultivation. Fruits like cucumber etc ripe first. So the first offering is made of these fruits. Then again the new rice is offered to the deities. The offering of new rice to the deities and eating it assumes the character of a festival. New crop is also sent to the elders and others.

Harvesting of paddy begins in September-October. The stalks of paddy, about two inches below the grains are cut with a sickle and put into thickly woven baskets slung from the forehead on the back. These are temporarily stored in the watch house and then removed and stored in the granary. The granary is usually constructed away from the living quarters to protect against fire.

Seeds for the next year are stored with religious sanctity. In the next year, some other site will be chosen for the jhum cultivation.

Though operations like cutting plants, sowing and weeding are generally done communally on exchange of labor basis the crops are not divided among the participants. The products belong to the individual families. The participants are neither served food nor paid money. Everybody brings his lunch from the house tied in leaves. Work is, however, mixed with recreation. The tedious operations are lightened through songs, jokes and tales which provide rhythm to the work.

MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND RE-MARRIAGE

The marriage system in the tribal society has undergone a sea change. Now the marriage system resembles that of the mainstream Indian society. The bride brings dowry to here in law's house, and the bride has to live in her in-law's house after marriage. However things were different in olden days. The bridegroom side had to pay something in cash or kind or both to the parents of the bride as bride price. The bride had more say in choice of her husband. Very often, the bridegroom would live with the bride in his in-law's house.

Even though there were many types of marriages prevalent in Tripuri society, the two types of marriages were most popular:

(1) **Chamari Kamani**. This is also known as **ghar jamai** system, in which the bridegroom would live in the in-law's house after marriage. Poor families preferred this system of marriage for their sons. Rich families or families having no son or fewer sons preferred this system of marriage for their daughters. This system of marriage was very popular.

(2) **Hamjuk Tabui Kaimani**. In this system, the bride would live in her in-law's place after marriage. Rich families preferred this system of marriage for their sons.

Chamari Kamani system of marriage was very popular and has some interesting peculiarities. The would be bridegroom would remain on probation in the in-law's house for a period between one year and five years. The period of probation depended on the qualities of the girl. If the girl was beautiful, the period of probation would be longer. In the probation period the would be groom had to lead a very tough and unpleasant life. He was the first to get up in the morning. He would do all the household works. He would work hard in the jhum cultivation. He would slog like a slave. The in-laws used to treat him very shabbily. He was not given good food or good clothes. All this was to ensure that the boy was very hard working and diligent.

The boy would slog hard and work heart and soul to prove that he was worthy of marrying the girl. The boy would feel mentally and physically tormented with heavy workload, and no enjoyment at all.

If the girls family did not like him, he would be treated even more shabbily. He would be given very insipid food, such as the ash from the hearth etc. The boy would thus be forced to leave the house and flee away, and the marriage would not take place .

The girl played a pivotal role. It was the girl who decided if the boy was suitable or not. If she considered him unsuitable, he would be forced to flee. However, if she considered him suitable then only the marriage would take place. If the girl started liking the boy during the probation, she expressed it by giving him good foods such as boiled egg or fish fry etc. Nonetheless, until the marriage was solemnized, the boy and girl were not allowed to develop much intimacy.

In both chamari kamani and hamjuk tubui kaimani types of marriages, the marriage-broker used to play an important role in bringing the two parties together, negotiation on bride price, dates of marriages and other details. The period of September to November was considered the season for marriage. During these months, there was little work in the jhum and nature was in its most beautiful form.

The marriage ceremony was very ritualistic. Many deities were worshipped, various rituals were observed, feast was given and alcoholic drinks offered.

Divorce: Divorce is permissible. Among Tripuris, divorce is known as "kaklaimani". The husband or wife who seeks divorce stays away from the other. Thereafter, on a prefixed day, the guardians of both the sides and the village choudhuri assemble to decide on the divorce. The husband or the wife who seeks the divorce has to pay back the marriage expenses to his or her spouse as penalty. The divorce can be annulled by the estranged couple worshipping "vathap" together with the priest.

Re-marriage: A widow, widower, divorcee or a deserted woman is allowed to re-marry. Generally, a divorcee lady or a widow has to marry a divorced man or a widower only. However, marriage with a divorcee or widow / widower is not preferred.

BELIEFS

The religious belief of the people is centered around ceremonies and worships of the gods, goddesses and spirits. Righteousness, rituals, rites, faith, superstition and belief in omens are very much interwoven in the tribal culture. In the tribal religion, there are elements from animism, animatism, totemism, shamanism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, rationalism, superstition, and epicureanism.

Priest or Ochai: The priest or **Ochai** is selected by the villagers, and the profession is not hereditary. A woman is not permitted to become a priest. In some religious occasions the priest needs one or more helpers. (Members of Brahman caste also act as priests.)

Generally, there is no specific form or shape of the deities. In most cases, the structure of the deities are made with bamboo poles, stones or mound of soil. The altar of the deity is made with a structure of bamboo poles erected on the ground. The deities are worshipped by offerings of wine, water, flower, paddy, rice, cotton, incense etc. Deities are worshipped with earthen lamp. Fruit etc. are also offered. Sacrifice of fowl, pig and goat etc is also performed.

Some deities are benevolent while others are malevolent. There is some relationship between the tribal deities and deities of the mainstream Hinduism.

Some of the benevolent duties are :

- (1) **Matai Katar and Matai Katarma**: Matai Katar is the supreme deity and Matai Katarma is his consort. These deities are worshipped for prosperity and security. They are worshipped household wise or community-wise.
- (2) **Akhatra and Bikhatra**: They are sons of Matai Katar and Matai Katarma. The two deities are jointly called Lampra, and are worshipped in the beginning of all social and religious ceremonies.
- (3) **Tuima**: It is goddess of water. It is worshipped to pre-

vent waterborne diseases like cholera etc.

- (4) **Sangram**: It is husband of Tuima, and is a god of wealth and prosperity. If a member of the family suffers very frequently from diseases and illness, then it is worshipped.
- (5) **Mailuma**: It is goddess of paddy and is worshipped for prosperity.
- (6) **Khuluma**: It is goddess of cotton, and is worshipped for prosperity.
- (7) **Nakchumatai** : This goddess guards homestead.
- (8) **Kalia and Garia**: These are gods of success and worshipped during Garia festival.
- (9) **Saklakmatai** : It is a god of health.
- (10) **Longtharai**: This male god is worshipped for protection.

Some of the malevolent duties are :

- (1) **Thumnairok and Banirok**: These deities are messengers of death news, and are worshipped to keep them in good humor.
- (2) **Chhakaljuk**: This is the guardian deity of witches. It is worshipped outside the village.
- (3) **Burasa**: This male deity stands for disease. When a family member, especially a child, cries incessantly from severe pain or fever, it is believed that Burasa god has caused the disease and is worshipped.
- (4) **Haichukma** : She is wife of Burasa, and rules over animals and forests. When a domesticated animal is lost, this deity is worshipped to get the animal back.
- (5) **Siri Jamdu and Siri Jadu**: These deities make a woman barren. These two deities are not worshipped separately, but along with other malevolent deities.

There is a famous temple of goddess Tripura Sundari (corresponding to goddess Kali) near Udaipur, erstwhile capital of Tripura.

A Temple of Chaturdash Devata or fourteen gods has always been near the house of the king. The fourteen gods are: Shiva, Durga, Vishnu, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Kartikeya, Ganesh, Brahma, the Earth, the Ocean, the Ganges, the Fire, Kama and Himadri. The tribal names of the fourteen gods are : Matai Katar, Matai Katarma, Mailuma, Khuluma, Akhatra, Bikhatra, Tuima, Sangrang, Kalia, Garia, Nakchu Matai, Bichukma, Sirijemdu, and Thounnairag.

It is believed that soul is eternal and indestructible. The body is thought to be a temporary abode of the soul. After natural death, the soul is supposed to assume a new form of life depending on the good and bad deeds. Human life is thought to be the supreme form of life. However, after unnatural death, one takes the form to spirit.

Witch (Chhakal): It is believed that a female who has a control of magic spell is a witch, and she can cause harm to any human being or animal. The guardian deity or spirit forces the witch to offer the deity human life or animal's blood. The witch can assume the form of any living being. Whenever, a man suffers from severe disease or dies suddenly, or the crop fails, it is supposed to be due to the witch.

Spirit: Spirits are supposed to be the souls which could not take the form of living bodies. It is believed the spirits abound in deserted house, old ponds, crossing of paths etc. Land haunted by spirits is not selected for cultivation.

Evil Eye: It is believed that if a person with evil eye casts his look on anything good, then problems befall on it.

The village priest acts as the tantric and exorcises the effect of a witch, spirit or evil eye.

Omen: The people are very superstitious so far as belief in omens is considered. Whatever one sees in a dream is supposed to omen future events: size of the egg laid, cackling of the fowl, howl of beasts, sight of animals, birds or snakes, cracks in the granary, style of sitting of animals and many more all these are supposed to omen future events.

WEAVING

The tribal families used to fulfill the need of clothes exclusively by domestic weaving. Now, clothes manufactured in mills are also used.

Weaving is done exclusively by womenfolk, Men are not allowed. There is a superstitious belief that if a man does weaving, some bodily harm will befall on him.

Materials and tools necessary for weaving consists of cotton, spindle, spinning machine, bow and a simple tension loom which includes sword, shuttle, backstrap, shed-stick, heddle, beams, posts, breast-rods, and lease rods. Cotton is grown in the jhum field. Cotton flowers are collected, sundried and stored in October-November. At convenient times, shells and skins are peeled off, and the flowers are put to a ginning machine for separating the cotton from the seeds. The machine consists of two wooden rollers horizontally inserted into two posts which are erected on a short but heavy wooden plank. The rollers are geared in opposite directions with a crank.

After ginning, cotton is carded with a bow and a striker. The bow is made of a fine bamboo split which tapers towards the ends. The split is bent and its two ends tied with a rope or hide.

Cotton is then rubbed against the thigh and made into several wicks as a preparatory process to spinning which is followed by dyeing. Dyeing is done with herbal colors. Actual weaving starts after dyeing. It is done with a loom which is light and mobile. For weaving, the warp elements are first mounted length-wise and rolled round two rods kept at a distance in parallel. The weaver sits behind one of the rods which is the breast rod. The weft element is made to pass, through a shuttle, over and below each alternate thread. For shedding, the warp elements are divided into two alternate sets, each set being tied to a heddle. By drawing the heddles upward and downward, the shuttle is made to pass in between. With a sword, the weft is compressed.

Weaving is generally done near the bed or in the verandah.

ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

Alcoholic drink plays a very important role in the life of the people. It is closely associated with their socio-religious life. Alcoholic drink is prepared by many of the people in their houses.

Alcohol plays an important role in the religious life of the people. Generally gods and goddesses are offered alcoholic drinks. Such drinks are also taken after worship. Alcoholic drinks are offered by the priest or the tantric to the angry spirits in order to appease them. Besides, alcohol is taken on many social occasions like marriage etc. If one has to make a complaint to the headman against some and seek justice, he many have to offer alcoholic drink. An accused may be punished to provide the village council with alcoholic drinks. Guests are also entertained with drinks. Besides, alcohol is also used in medical treatment.

There are various types of alcoholic drinks. The two main types of alcoholic drinks are: (i) Chok or arak (distilled) and (2) Panchwa (brewed).

Chuan is an essential ingredient in preparation of alcohol. It is the main fermenting agency. It is prepared from different portions of trees, herbs etc, such as leaf, bark etc. All these ingredients are pounded into powder and kneaded with water. Tablets are made from these and are sundried.

Panchwa: It is generally prepared in an earthen pot called **bwtwk**. Certain types of rice are preferred for the preparation. After cooling the cooked rice, it is mixed with **chuan** tablets and kept in a **bwtwk**. The opening of the pot is covered with banana leaf. Generally, the rice ferments in two days and two nights. After fermentation, drinking water is added to it. The liquid is the alcohol and is imbibed with a bamboo tube, called **chungi**.

During social drinking, the alcohol is taken by one person after another from a common pot by means of pipes. To ensure that one does not drink more than ones share, an indicator called "bwlai" is used. **Bwlai** is a bamboo strip in the shape of 'T', hanging by its two "arms" over the mouth of the pot with its "leg" dipped into the alcohol. One stops drinking as soon as the level of liquid falls below the end of the indicator. People tease a drinker who

drinks beyond his share. After one has had one's share, water is added to the pot to bring the level of the liquid at its original level. Everybody drinks one by one according to the seniority of age. When both men and women drink at a gathering, men first take the drink one by one according to the seniority of age. When the men have had drink, the women begin.

Chok / Arok: For preparation of chok / arak, cooked rice and **chuwan** is put in an earthen pot called **bhati**. Another earthen pot is placed upside down over **bhati** in airtight manner. A bamboo tube is fitted into the inverted pot in airtight manner, which opens into a container where the alcohol is to be collected. Then the rice is brewed and the vapor comes out through the bamboo tube through distillation, and is collected in the container.

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION

Before the present democratic form of constitutional government was adopted, there were different administrative units which exercised the functions of governance on the community. Different tribes generally lived in different hamlets or habitations. Even though there were many similarities in administrative set-ups of various tribes, they differed in nitty-gritty of the set up.

Different tribes had different administrative set-ups. Generally there were three levels in the set up: (i) village-level, (ii) regional level and (iii) community level. The village level set-up would report to the regional-level set-up and the regional -level set -up to the community level set up.

The village level council was very powerful and exercised direct control over the people. The village council consisted of a few members chosen or selected by the villagers. Among Tripuri tribe, the chief of the village council was called "Sardar" or "Choudhuri". The council had its chief ("Sardar" or "Choudhuri"), secretary to the chief ("karban"), messenger ("khandal") and members. Women were debarred from participating in the council, though they could be an audience in the proceedings.

It was customary to form the council every year in a gathering just before the onset of jhum cultivation. Through discussion, an old and efficient man of good reputation and dynamic personality was selected for the powerful post of chief. The other members were similarly selected through discussion. The tenure of the council was for a period of one year. If the council functioned smoothly and satisfactorily, the term of the council could be extended to any number of years. In case of any irregularity or misconduct, the council could be dissolved at any moment, or expel any of its members. When a member was expelled, a new member was recruited to fill up the vacant post.

The assignments of the council members were as given below: (a) **Choudhuri**: He was empowered to make norms and rules in consultation with the members and controlled the activities of the council. His residence was treated as the office of the council. (b) **Karbari**: He maintained records and collected infor-

mation to brief the Choudhuri. (c) **Khandal**: He was the messenger who circulated the councils judgment or decision among the villagers.

Despite the allegation of feudalism, the system appears to be based on consensual approach rather than coercion.

With the introduction of the new system of governance after annexation of the state to the Indian Union, these administrative set ups have relegated to the background. Many of the tribal people have little knowledge of these set-ups.

Now the elections are conducted on political lines, and the members are committed to certain section. Because of this, vindictiveness and partiality motivates the judgment. As a result there is confusion and dissatisfaction. But in earlier days, the villagers were not dissatisfied with the decision of the village council. If there was any, it was of a very low degree and never put them in any position to defy the decision.

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Discussion:

- (1) Sri Mrinal Kanti Debbarma, Tripura Civil Service.
- (2) Sri Akhirai Debbarma, Section Officer
- (3) Sri Promod Debbarma, Head Security Guard,
- (4) Sri Rabindra Debbarma, worker.

Field visits: Extensive field visits to interior tribal areas in North Tripura, Dhalai and South Tripura districts of Tripura.

