

# জেতুকা

*Jetuka*

*Volume 3, 2010*



Annual Souvenir  
ASOM ASSOCIATION, KUWAIT



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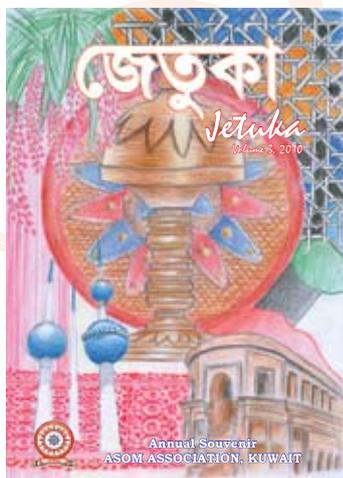
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# Jetuka

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Volume 3, 2010



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***H. H. Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah***  
***The Amir of the State of Kuwait***



***H. H. Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah***  
***The Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait***



***H. H. Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah***  
***The Crown Prince of the State of Kuwait***



AMBASSADOR OF INDIA  
KUWAIT

March 25, 2010

MESSAGE

I am pleased to learn that Asom Association, Kuwait, would be organising a cultural function in Kuwait on May 14, 2010, to celebrate 'Rongali Bihu'.

My greetings and good wishes for the New Year, as well as for the success of the celebrations on the occasion of 'Rongali Bihu', go out to all members of the Asom Association, Kuwait, as well as to their families!

  
(Ajai Malhotra)

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**Tarun Gogoi**



**Chief Minister, Assam  
Guwahati**

**Dated  
26.03.10**

**Message**

I am happy to know that Asom Association, Kuwait is going to celebrate Rongali Bihu on 14th May, 2010 and a souvenir is being published on the occasion.

Rongali Bihu heralding the Assamese New Year is a festival that has no sectarian bias. This festival is the lifeline of Assamese culture. Rongali Bihu transcends all barriers of caste, creed or religion.

I hope, the Bihu festivity will showcase the rich cultural and social heritage of Assamese society and thus create bonhomie and camaraderie among the people of Kuwait and the Assamese community living there.

I convey my best wishes for celebration of the Bihu festivity and wish you all a Happy New Year.

**(TARUN GOGOI)**



**G. M. Srivastava, IPS (Retd)**  
Security Adviser to Chief Minister,  
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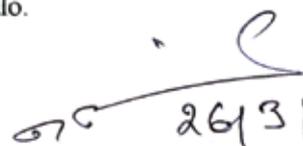
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I am very happy to learn that there is a very active Assamese Association in Kuwait, with almost over 100 members covering all segments of Assamese society. Even more inspiring is to learn that they have carried our rich culture and love for festivals with them and have been celebrating Bihu every year. With the spirit and strength of Brahmaputra, the teachings of Mahapurush Shankardev, the uniqueness of our Kaziranga, the heritage of Majuli and the blessings of Maa Kamakhya in your hearts all of you must have made an impact there as Ambassadors of rich culture and natural beauty of Assam and India. I am sure the association will continue to work hard to preserve our culture and values by training the next generation to be fully familiar with 'Dhol', 'Pepa' and 'Bahi' only then they will enjoy eating Pitha and Chira Dai.

Ahok ami sabe mili Bihu naso karon 'Bihu Bihu lagise gaat.'

Xakolo memberak mor rangali bihur antorik oolog jonalo.

  
26/3/10

**G. M. Srivastava, IPS(Retd.)**



## MESSAGE

First and foremost my Greetings and Good Wishes for a very Happy Bohag Bihu to all members of the Asom Association Kuwait and their families. May the New Year shower upon them good health, happiness and prosperity !

The Asom Association Kuwait has completed one whole year since its inception. I deem it a matter of pride and privilege to lead it through the formation stages. I take this opportunity to thank the Executive Committee and all the members for their selfless dedication and devotion to make this association a success.

Our professional careers have propelled us to seek for a more prosperous future for ourselves away from our homeland. Our vision has however also moved, along with us, our families and children away from their roots. The North East is a unique part of our country. The theme of the Jetuka this year is "Connecting People and Cultures". In keeping with the theme we as parents should take upon ourselves the responsibility to bring up our children as 'Brand Ambassadors' to promote the vivid and diverse cultures and traditions of our people to the outside world from the international platform on which they have now been placed. They will not realise the values if we as parents do not pass on the same to them. One is always recognised by what you achieve and succeed in doing and not by what you had planned to do. Our children could continue our efforts to promote our motherland.

Once again I wish the association all the success and may it grow from strength to strength and successfully pass on our cultures and traditions to our next generation.

**Bikash Jyoti Gogoi**  
**President**  
**Asom Association, Kuwait**



## Annual Report

The Asom Association, Kuwait is organizing its second Rongali Bihu celebrations on 14th May, 2010. On this happy occasion I wish everyone a Very Very Happy and Prosperous New Year filled with joy, happiness and good health. The various activities organized by our Association in the previous year is briefly summarized below.

The association organized 'Zubeen Nite', its inaugural 'Rongali Bihu' celebrations on 10th April, 2009 at the Royal Ballroom, Asia Asia Restaurant, Al-Watiya, Kuwait. His Excellency, Sri Ajai Malhotra, Ambassador, Embassy of India, Kuwait graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The members presented a number of cultural items that included Bihu dance, chorus and instrumental medley. The highlight of the evening was the performance by Zubeen Garg, a prominent singer from India.

The Assamese New Year starts from the 1st day of Baisakh ('Bohag' in Assamese). To welcome the New Year, Khel-Dhemali (fun & games) was organised on 24th April, 2009 at Fintas Park, Mahboula. Various games were organized for the children as well as couples. Traditional Assamese food like *doi-cira*, *bora saoul*, *kumol saoul* were enjoyed by all the members present.

An Autumn Festival was organized on 25th September, 2009 focusing mainly on children. The venue was Caesar's Restaurant, Fahaheel. Many children participated in the event and regaled the audience with their song and dance routines. A quiz competition was also organized. All the children who were present enthusiastically participated in it. During the festival our souvenir JETUKA for the year 2009 was also released.

Magh Bihu is the harvest festival celebrated in the 2nd week of January. It coincides with 'Lohri', the harvest festival of Punjab. To celebrate Magh Bihu, a picnic was organized on 15th January, 2010. It was held at Fintas Park, Mahboula.

I take this opportunity to thank all our members, once again, for their unstinted support and co-operation in organizing the various activities and making our Association a vibrant and lively one.

With Best regards,

**Jayanta Bardalaye**  
**General Secretary,**  
**Asom Association, Kuwait**



## Members of Executive Committee, Asom Association, Kuwait (2010-11)



First row (left to right): Mr. Rajib Lochan Rajkhowa (Member); Mr. Hirendranath Rajkhowa (Member); Dr. Debasish Sharma (Member); Mr. Bikash Jyoti Gogoi (President).  
Second row (left to right): Mr. Anup Bora (Member); Mr. Jayanta Bardalaye (General Secretary); Mr. Jayanta Madhab Saikia (Auditor); Mr. Anupam Rajkhowa (Treasurer).  
Members not seen in the picture: Mr. Mukut Narayan Debchoudhury (Vice President); Mrs. Bharati Sharma (Member).

## Members of Bihu Committee, 2010



First row (left to right): Mrs. Lata Pandey Kakoty (Sports Co-ordinator); Mrs. Pranami Bhattacharyya (Reception Committee)  
Second Row (left to right): Dr. Rifat Mannan, Mr. Dwaipayana Bora (Editors, Jetuka); Mr. Basab Sharma (Sponsorship Co-ordinator); Mr. Debasish Kakoty (Stage decoration Incharge); Mr. Abhijit Sharma (Cultural Secretary).  
Third Row (left to right): Mr. Jayanta Madhab Saikia (Sports Co-ordinator); Mr. Aghore Bhattacharyya (Reception Committee); Mr. Ramen Deka (Food-Co-ordinator).  
Members not seen in the picture: Mr. Prakash Rana (Sponsorship Co-ordinator); Mrs. Aruna Dutta (Gifts Co-ordinator); Mr. Probeen Borah (Stage Decoration Incharge).



## Editorial



*Some events in life are unforgettable, like a first love, a first job, or the birth of a first child. Similarly, for first generation expatriates like us, the experience of relocation and adjustment to a new culture is unforgettable. Experts opine that there are four stages of this state of disorientation known as 'culture shock', namely - Honeymoon, Irritation and hostility, Gradual adjustment and Biculturalism. The fourth stage of Biculturalism marks the quintessence of acculturation when one grows to accept and appreciate local people and practices, and is able to function effectively in two cultures. Though time is a major bonding factor, many people never reach this state and operate at the third stage only. The Assamese community in Kuwait has grown from strength to strength with over one hundred members at present. This community is a blend of members who have stayed here for less than a year to over twenty years, thus providing a good mix of people in various stages of this cultural progression process.*

*It is noteworthy that there is an intricate relationship between culture, history and literature. Literature is the medium that provides a heightened understanding of the culture within which it is produced. Throughout history, literature has served as the true reflection of thoughts and activities of any community in a particular period of time. This souvenir, which is in its third consecutive edition serves as a mirror of the dynamic and effervescent community of people from Assam - the 'land of red river and blue hills'*

*Living in a 'global village', we are striving to find an identity, which seems to get lost so often at times. We are Indians, hailing from the north eastern state of Assam, now earning our livelihood in Kuwait. These three identities have merged into our lives almost unknowingly and our current personality reflects an inseparable blend of all the three cultures. Sometimes, this leads to an identity crisis, when it seems that we have lost our roots. However, this brings in an added responsibility as well: to be able to appreciate the fact that we need to work for and contribute towards the development of the country we reside and earn our living. In this edition of *Jetuka*, a theme 'Connecting people and Cultures: being an Assamese Indian in Kuwait' was tried to be worked on to understand this link.*

*This 'identity imbroglio' is more pertinent to the younger generation, for whom Kuwait has become their actual home far away from their own home, making it difficult for them to appreciate their true identity. To epitomize this aspect, essay and drawing competitions were organized amongst our children to enable them to unleash their thoughts and imagination on this cultural fusion. It was heartwarming to see their overwhelming participation and quality of work. Our hearty congratulations to them. Through our punch line 'Let your writing get people talking' we wanted everyone to write in whatever form possible. The outcome of this was very pleasant as we received a number of contributions, rich in content. It was difficult for us as editors to choose one over the other and hence we decided to publish all of them. On our invitation, eminent guest authors put their thoughts into writing and thus contributed to the richness of this magazine. Our sincere thanks and appreciation to all.*

*We had great pleasure in putting up and presenting to you this edition of *Jetuka* and hope it is able to carry forward the legacy of the Assamese community in Kuwait well into the future. In this beautiful spring time of the Assamese New Year, when hopes abound in our thoughts, we aspire that prosperity and good times bring new dimensions to this celebration, which we call 'Life' and remind ourselves that 'Bohag maathu eti ritu nohoy, nohoy Bohag eti maah...Axomiya jaatir ei aayush rekha.....!!'*

**Dwaipayan Bora  
Dr. Rifat Mannan**



## A Home Away from Asom

Sanghamitra Gogoi

When you look into the mirror, what do you see? I see a pair of dark brown irises framed by eyes that behold a long forgotten Mongolian heritage. I see an olive-skinned face with high cheek bones and long, black curls. When in the lush fields of Assam, these features are a common sight. Once you step outside the boundaries of our beloved state, these unmistakable Assamese features are just a drop in a sea of faces. What brings out your individuality, then, are your experiences.

Living in Assam during the early years of my life, I couldn't particularly identify with what it meant to be Assamese, as I was surrounded by others like me. What I really yearned for then was to be different, to stand out like the different Indian cultures that we read about in our school textbooks. The population of Assam in the '90s was ethnically homogeneous, with only a few people from other states. Most non-Assamese residents too had lived there for generations – long enough to be practically considered Assamese themselves. And though everyone celebrated the major festivals of India, I knew even then that there was more to being Indian than lighting sparklers and smearing coloured powder on each other's faces. I wanted to be less Assamese and more Indian.

As a toddler, I saw the corners of the world sitting on my father's chopot – or lap. My small eyes saw an outside world that looked nothing like where I was from but what difference does it make to a toddler if she was in Australia or Singapore? It wasn't until I left India that I realised what it means to be an Assamese Indian. I reached Kuwait and realised that my Assamese world had shrunk to a community of approximately 15 Assamese families. Even though the population of Kuwait is nearly ten times smaller than that of Assam, the diversity that exists is far greater. As time went by, I started seeing my Assamese Indian identity

as a composition of two separate identities: one Assamese, one Indian. Within the small Assamese community that existed in Kuwait, we cherished and celebrated the many events and festivals (such as Bihu) in an elaborate manner, attempting to recreate a part of the electric atmosphere and euphoria that we associated them with in Assam. For all our efforts, my Assamese identity essentially formed around what I could glean from the precious little that was available to us. On the other hand, my Indian identity appeared as I was being integrated into the global scene of Kuwait, mostly due to the international presence in



my school. My Indian identity grew stronger as I found myself increasingly expected to represent my country, not just my state, and consequently doing so. I did this, of course, to the best of my abilities with my limited but ever-expanding awareness about India: its people, cultures, traditions and way of life.

Upon graduating from high school, there came the phase of my life that I had always eagerly looked forward to: studying in the United States, 'the land where dreams come true', and 'where the sky is the limit'. I was embarking on a journey of self-discovery and getting an experience at one of the best educational institutions in the nation. It's true what they say: You don't really know what you're made of until you've made it through college. Experienced the joy of completing homework at 4

am. Worked on four critical projects at once. Consecutive all-nighters. Here at Carnegie Mellon, I met people from all walks of life and here is where I ran into a problem. I was an Assamese by birth but that means little when interacting with someone from a completely different continent. And even if I said I was Indian, I wasn't being completely true to myself because somewhere in the time I spent living in Kuwait – a few years shy of a decade – I have absorbed the culture and become accustomed to the home that me and my family have made there. I think my status was very well summarised by one of my dear friends and also a fellow

member of the Arab Student Association here at Carnegie Mellon: "...an Arab by osmosis..". I was able to find communities where I fit in as an Indian and as an Arab; however, I was unable to connect to my own people. Perhaps it was because of this fact that I yearn to be home to celebrate the Assamese new year, to eat handmade sweetmeats made by my aunts and to eat the bora sawl delicacy prepared by my mother. In the 23 kilograms of my worldly possessions on my first journey to

the United States, I was glad I insisted on bringing a 'gamosa' to college. A simple bathroom accessory but at the same time something that is so deeply ingrained in my mind as part of our culture. At a time when I was alone and lost in the overflow of information and cultures, this was my anchor, reminding me of who I was and where I came from.

As you can see, I do not have a single identity. My identity changes depending on the part of the world I am in. When I go back to India, I am an NRI – essentially one of their own but still an outsider to the culture. When I go back to Kuwait, I am an Indian who is at home, but cannot call it home. When I am here in the United States, I am an 'Alien'. Who am I? I am the sum of all my experiences.



# RONGALI BIHU - Then and Now

Parimita Barooah Bora

**B**ihu is the heart of Assamese society. It is the symbol of Assamese culture and festival. The Assamese celebrate three different Bihu in a year and Rongali Bihu is celebrated to mark the beginning of the New Year. The new year of Assamese calendar usually falls on April 15 and starts with the month 'Bohag'. This is the reason why Rongali Bihu is also called 'Bohag Bihu'. The word 'Rongali' is derived from 'Rong' which means happiness and celebrations. So this festival represents happiness of the society. On the eve of the new year, i.e., a day before the new year 'Goru Bihu' is celebrated. On this day, the cattle are worshiped. On the day of New Year, 'Manuh Bihu' is celebrated. This day is the actual Rongali Bihu day and the celebrations start from the very early morning. There is a very important ritual on this day to gift 'Gamocha' or 'Bihuwan' to the elders. Every kitchen in the state cook various 'Peethas' (snacks and sweets) and also tasty 'Jolpan' is served.

When it comes to Assamese culture and society the first thing that strikes any Assamese is nothing but Bihu, and to be more specific, it is Rongali /Bohag Bihu. But there is a vast difference between how we celebrated Bihu as kids to how our children celebrate it today.

## **Bihu to me / us meant**

**School :** We used to get a week's holiday for Bihu. We planned and discussed with our friends what we would do, about the social visits we would make and the new dresses we would get as gifts.

**At Home / Uruka:** Ma had to do a massive work as she managed our household of four siblings. She used to participate

in the various Bihu competitions on snack preparations as well as make a lot of peetha's, laddoo's and various other snacks.

**Shopping :** We used to wait for Ma-Deuta to return from market with lot of enthusiasm. They would bring a car load of new dresses and shoes for the family, including uncle-aunty, cousins, grandparents and even for the maids. In addition to all these we will not forget the big bundle of gamochas or rather 'bihuwan'" for the aashirvaad ceremony on the day of Bihu.

**Goru Bihu :** Most of the times we would visit our parents family home at Jorhat. It was real fun there. Mama (uncle) and others prepared for the special occasion and we would take active part. The cattle were taken down to the ponds for a bath and before bath they were massaged with 'maah halodhi'. Cut pieces of vegetables like brinjal, snake gourd, bitter gourd, cucumber, etc were offered to them in a bamboo stick. While making them eat, we would sing "lau khaa bengenaa khaa bosore bosore baarhi jaa, maar khoru, baaper khoru toi hobi bor goru.' Their old ropes were cut and they were let

loose for the day. In the evening when they returned home, they were tied with new ropes, 'Pogha'. Along with Aita and Mami's we also used to light oil lamps and incense in the cowsheds to ward off mosquitoes and illness.

**Husori :** is the indomitable part of Rongali Bihu. As kids, I remember we used to make husori group with our friends and visit the locality singing Bihu songs and dancing. Also elders forming husori group came to our house to sing and dance. At the end of the performance Ma-Deuta ( if in Guwahati) or Koka-aita (if in Jorhat) used to give some borongoni (money) to the group in a 'sarai' and we all used to take blessings. The husori performances would go on for the entire month.

**Manuh Bihu:** Ma would make a paste of maah-halodhi for us to smear over our body before bath. Then we visited our elders, gift them gamochas and touch their feet and take blessings. Most of the time we had the lunch at "Aaimoni Jethai's" house who was an excellent cook. On the Bihu day, we prayed to God, to save us from any natural calamity and wrote on Nahor tree ('Masua Ferre tree') leaves: 'debo debo mahadebo nilogribo jotadharo baato bristi horongdebo mahadebo namastute' and put them on doors and windows. In the evening we would visit the "bihu toli's" (Bihu grounds) and watch the various competitions where Ma participated. On the 3rd day of Bihu we used to eat plain rice mixed with water, which is called 'poitaa bhat'and fan ourselves with handmade bamboo fans so that we could bear the hot summer. On the 7th day we ate sabzi (vegetable fry) made





with seven types of 'saak (vegetable leaves)'.

The bihu activities and celebrations in which I participated as a kid is missing today. When I think about my daughter Riddhima, I feel sad as she will never be able to enjoy the fun I had as a kid. Of course, Bihu still is celebrated today, but a lot has changed.

#### **Now Bihu to our Kids means**

**School Holidays :** If you are in Assam then our kids get holidays. But for people like us who stay outside the state or country, our kids don't know what Bihu holidays are, as there's no holiday for a regional festival. For them holidays means entertainment, fun, movies, not attending school or going for a vacation to some touristic place.

**At home / Uruka :** We elders have become lazy. With so much of peetha's,

laroos available in the market, why take the pain of making them at home. Or, we have silly reasons to excuse us. The reasons are like "it's difficult to make these snacks with kids around, or we don't get smooth mixture in the mixie". Of course some of us make one or two varieties at home, and buy cakes, mixtures and sweets from the market. Kids understand that a festival is there to be celebrated, so father has brought cakes and sweets from the market.

**Shopping:** They get gifts at anytime of the year. You go home and take lot of gifts, though it might not be Bihu time. So kids now don't understand that we gift each other at Bihu times or the emotion attached with a Bihu gift. Goru Bihu : What is it? We live in an urban neighborhood; there's hardly any place for people, who will keep cows?

**Husori :** Ya, they get to see it on TV but don't know the joy of being a part of such a group.

**Manuh Bihu :** When a variety of nice smelling soaps and gels are available in the market, why use maah-halodhi paste, though even for one day. In the evening attend cultural get-together organized by Assamese people of the area where a known artist from Assam will be invited. And one cannot think of visiting friends and relatives during the day, when you have school and lot of assignment works to complete. Whether hot or cold, they stay in airconditioned houses, so do they need to use the handmade bamboo fans? And have they seen one? Its pizza, burger and hotdogs they love eating rather than our dal-rice. «So, please mama don't give me this watery rice 'poitaa bhaat' and green leaves 'saak'!!' .

## **Kuwait - My Assam**

**Tanaya Devi Choudhury**

“Ah! You serious!!! How can you? You are missing out the best part!!!!”

These are the various feedbacks I get when I say I have never seen Bihu festival back home in Assam. But I guess, now I stopped regretting not only because it is less likely to happen but also because I have found my very own Assam here in Kuwait. You may be wondering how people here can create the same atmosphere as in Assam especially during festive season and claim it near impossible. But I will say that they have succeeded & more over gained much more than that.

Living here since birth I have in person witnessed the drastic changes and growth of the Assamese community. I have seen the youth being taught so much and encouraged in taking up cultural activities. I myself have been privileged to learn Indian dance forms of extreme parts of India which would have been quite hard even

living in any part of India. My parents' insistence in speaking in Assamese at home and being educated in an Indian school has played an important role in understanding the wide significance



of my culture and traditions. I still remember those days when only a few families lived here and we would grab every occasion to get together and have fun. Though my memories about those days are faint I still remember our families getting together at one place enjoying the New Year eve. The food would be brought from a restaurant

or it would be simply homemade and we would spend the rest of the night dancing and playing to the fullest to make the coming year a memorable one. Still, we had our hearts back in Assam.

Now that we have a large number of families, an atmosphere of unity, brotherhood and belongingness to our home state has grown, as we cherish our common traditions. It feels as if we are back there in the land of rhinos, watching damsels dance to the rhythmic beats of "dholes" (drums). I have tried to cherish every moment that I have lived here and feel very fortunate not to miss any part of Bihu celebrations, though living far away from Assam.

The most beautiful element of living here in Kuwait is to see everybody together as one, enjoy together, have fun together and most importantly share the joys of festivals with everyone.



# KUWAIT...Prosperity from Oil

Ranjit Barooah

June 10, 2009, 10 am. This was the day I first saw Kuwait and my impression about this desert country was that, how people here can beat the furnace like heat of summer months (June / July / August) when temperatures rise to around 50 degree C. It is noteworthy that, Kuwait enjoys short cool winters (December / January / February), when temperatures even drop to 3-4 degree C, with very little rain from January to March.

Kuwait is one of the five small and independent states along the coast of Persian Gulf, which owe their importance to oil. The other states are Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Oman and Qatar. Most of Kuwait is flat desert, reaching a maximum elevation of 306 m above sea level near the western border with Saudi Arabia. The area of the state is 17,818 sq km, which is less than one-fourth the size of our home state Assam.

On the 19th June, 1961, Kuwait became a fully independent state, thus losing its protectorate status under Great Britain. Today, although His Highness the Amir is the Head of the State of Kuwait, the country has a freely elected National Assembly which formulates the public policy. There is also council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister for execution of public policies. For administrative convenience, Kuwait is divided into six governorates- Al Asimah, Hawally, Farwaniya, Ahmadi, Mubarak Al Kabeer and Jahra. The Kuwait City is the capital.

In early days, Kuwait was a small village. Fishing and diving in sea for pearl were the primary activities initially. Overtime, Kuwait's rise as an important port led to the development of ship building as a significant industry. A worldwide recession led to decreased trade, which in turn resulted in a decline of Kuwait's importance as an international port. In 1921, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah became the Ruler of Kuwait. A brave and resourceful leader, a man of vision as well as a valiant warrior, Sheikh Ahmad was to steer his people through difficult times. As the 1920s was drawing to a close, the cultured pearl industry became a serious, and ultimately overwhelming competitor to Kuwait's main industry, pearl diving. In spite of this, and a subsequent



worldwide decline in trade as the thirties began, he kept his faith in the future. This was largely because of several strange black patches of a rough bituminous substance that had long been observed in different parts of the desert. The Ruler and his people were well aware of the activities of the oil prospectors in neighboring Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Iraq - and Iran. Their expectations raised by the Bahrain oil discoveries of 1932, the people of Kuwait were hopeful that these surface deposits were indications of underground reservoirs of a commodity, which could stimulate and revitalize their country's economy. The Kuwait Oil Company was formed in 1934 as a joint venture between the Gulf Oil Corporation (presently Chevron Oil) and the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (presently British Petroleum). The two partners had equal shares in KOC. On February 22nd, 1938, oil was discovered in the Burgan field of Kuwait. But the development of the oil industry began after the Second World War, and triggered a large influx of foreign investments into Kuwait. In June 1946 His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the late Amir of Kuwait, inaugurated the export of the first crude shipment. As oil exports increased, Ahmadi named after the H.H. Amir Sheikh Ahmed, was built up in 1948 near the oil fields as an integrated township comprising the head office, workshops, and residential complex for Oil Company personnel. The first refinery "Mina Al Ahmedi" was established at Ahmadi area in the year 1949. With discovery of new oil fields and enhance crude oil output by 1953, Kuwait became one of the largest oil producers in the Gulf. For refining its vast crude oil, "Mina Abdulla Refinery" (1958) and "Shuaiba Refinery" were established. The three refineries of Kuwait at present have the total refining capacity of 42.5 million metric tons per annum; whereas the

four refineries of Assam have a total capacity of 6.20 million metric tons per annum.

The Kuwait Oil Company has now become completely state owned concern. Due to rapid economic growth from oil sector, Kuwait during the period 1950 to 1970 underwent its transition from a small Emirate to an internationally influential modern and planned state with high living standards. A modern infrastructure rose from the arid desert as high ways and wide roads were built up in a scientific way, ports, factories, water towers, efficient waste management system, power generation stations and desalination plants came into being. The boom continued as new mosques, well designed government buildings, primary and secondary schools, colleges, university, multi specialty hospitals, modern hotels, markets, shopping malls, beautiful apartments, fantastic villas which looked like personal castles, western style international airport etc were built. Today Kuwait boasts of the first and biggest Water Park in the Arab Gulf Region. Again, the Scientific Center of Kuwait serves as a center for science and environmental education of the Gulf Region. The center also houses the largest aquarium in the Middle East.

I have observed that amidst the surge of modern development, Kuwait has managed to maintain its peace and remarkable heritage including a cultural identity for both present and future generations. Kuwait is thus well placed to scale new heights of development in the years to come.

*[Mr Ranjit Barooah, currently based in Guwahati, is the father of Parimita Barooah Bora. He retired as the Chief Electrical Inspector and Advisor to the Government of Assam.]*



# Assamese Diaspora in the Arabian Peninsula

There exists a sizeable Assamese community in the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) countries (Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, UAE and Qatar), who are working in various sectors of these economies. This article provides a brief overview of the Assamese community living in these countries, including their strength, group activities, presence of registered association/s, contact details, etc. In our opinion, this would serve as useful information for all concerned, particularly for aspiring Assamese emigrants to the Gulf region. It is heartening to note that Kuwait has one of the largest Assamese communities in the region.

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federation of seven emirates (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Quwain, Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah), situated in the southeast of the Arabian Peninsula. There is a small but very vibrant Assamese community residing in the UAE. Majority of the people from Assam live in Dubai. It is estimated that the total number of Assamese families living in the entire UAE is around 120 and total number of residents is 350 approximately. Probably, Dr. Habibur Rahman is the first Assamese who came to Dubai as early as in 1974. Dr. Rahman retired from Dubai Government Health Services and now does his practice privately.

The community regularly celebrates various social functions such as Magh Bihu, Rongali Bihu, Diwali Get-together, Summer Get-together, Picnics etc. They also organize occasional get-togethers in honour of visiting artistes / honoured guests from Assam. They publish a biennial magazine 'Probaxi Bihuwaan' during the Rongali Bihu celebrations. It contains lots of interesting stories, articles, poems written by the members in English and Assamese. A newsletter called 'Maru Darpan' was also published once a

while..

The Assamese community is known as 'Assam Society, UAE' (Oxom Xomaj, UAE), though there is no formal registered society yet.

Some useful contact information:

Web: [www.assamdubai.org](http://www.assamdubai.org)

Email: [info@assamdubai.org](mailto:info@assamdubai.org)

[assam.dubai@gmail.com](mailto:assam.dubai@gmail.com)

## BAHRAIN



Bahrain, the small island country in the Persian Gulf, is an archipelago of thirty-three islands. Bahrain has the richest culture in the Arabian Gulf dating back 4000 years. The island nation is globally appreciated for the tolerance, friendliness and multiculturalism.

Bahrain has a vibrant and happy group of Assamese people, fondly named as Luitporia Bahrainis. They love Bahrain, contribute significantly towards nation building and make their presence felt in all facets of life. At present, there are about fifty members presently residing in Bahrain. Among the first to reach Bahrain are Mr. Bimal Phukan (owner of Orion Supermarket, Guwahati) and Duwarah.

Assamese people in Bahrain are represented across various sectors. There are Assamese architects, designers, engineers, bankers, technicians, professors, engineers, and media personalities in Bahrain.

In addition to the geographical bonding amongst the members, the community is bound together through close interactions, get togethers, picnics, birthdays, meetings and socio-religious celebrations. Addressing the community is through a mouse click away through the group mail ID: [luitporia-bahraini@googlegroup.com](mailto:luitporia-bahraini@googlegroup.com). The website [www.moruddyan.com](http://www.moruddyan.com) contains details, activities, clippings and everything about the Luitporia Bahrainis. 'Morruddyan', the quarterly e-magazine, quenches the literary thirst of the Assamese community. Moruddyan provides a

platform to the members to hone their literary skill.

## OMAN



Oman, the land of 'ragged', 'barren' mountains (*Xukan Pahar*), is a unique country in

the middle-east, where mosques, temples, gurudwaras and churches stand side-by-side, representing a glaring example of religious tolerance and harmonious coexistence. Omani people are known for their warmth, friendliness and modesty. Here all communities are respected, family values are strong and people care for each-other's well-being. In Muscat there are two beautiful temples where all festivals like Durga Puja, Shivaratri, Janmastami are celebrated in a big way.

Assamese community in Oman comprises about 40 families, working in various sectors, though primarily in the oil industry. The history of the community dates back to the early 70's, when Dr. M. Medhi sailed through the Arabian Sea to reach Oman. Longest innings as yet has been from Dr. Dipali and Dr. Bipul Bhuyan followed by Dr. Ranjit and Monti Bhuyan.

This vibrant group of Assamese people in Oman is popularly known as 'Axom Xomaj'. However, they are not yet officially registered. Rongali Bihu is celebrated with much pomp and gaiety. Cultural programs are organized where artistes are invited from India, apart from giving a platform to the budding talents. Twice in recent years, Zubin Garg graced the occasion. Other festivals like Magh Bihu, Diwali, and New Year's eve are also celebrated together. In 2008, the first edition of a beautiful souvenir 'Gagana' was published. This small but happy Assamese community in Oman lives as one big family, with a zest for all good things in life. They exude the warmth and hospitality which the Assamese people are known for and proudly consider as having 'a piece of Assam in Oman'.

## SAUDI ARABIA (Al- Khobar)



Al Khobar is one of the twin cities (the other being Dammam) in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia. Being an oil city, Al Khobar is very cosmopolitan and a sizeable Indian population lives here. The Assamese community here is very close-knit and consists of approximately 25 families. Most people are working in the oil sector. There are a few doctors as well. The oldest residing Assamese in this region are Dr. Premananda Goswami, Shahjada Saleem and Md Nazrul Islam, who have been here for more than 10-

15 years. The community regularly celebrate get togethers, picnics, Magh Bihu, Rongali Bihu etc. Rongali Bihu is celebrated with much fervour and gaiety, either at someone's residence or in a Community Center. There is no registered association yet.

## QATAR



Qatar with the third largest gas reserves is said to have the highest GDP per capita in the world. This rich gulf state is home to about seventy-five Assamese residents. They are bound together in the name of Qatar Assam

Association (QASA). However, QASA is not yet registered. The Assamese community has been regularly celebrating Rongali Bihu. The surge in construction activities will result in growth in Assamese population in this country in the coming years.

[Prepared with inputs from Bikram M. Baruah (Abu Dhabi +971-50-3897942), Dilip Kr. Bora (Dubai +971-50-4538057); Sanjib Changkakati (Bahrain, sanjibck@yahoo.co.in); Rima Sarmah (Al-Khobar, rimasarmah@yahoo.co.in); Gayatri Borpujari (Oman, borpujar@omantel.net.om), Phani Jyoti Sarmah (Oman, sarma.pvhanijyoti@gmail.com); Kumud Sonowal (Qatar, kumud.sonowal@googlemail.com)]

## KUWAIT : few facts

Simran Bhattacharyya, Class VI

The National name of Kuwait is *Daulat al- Kuwait*.

The name Kuwait is derived from the Arabic 'akwat', the plural of 'kout', meaning 'fortress built near water'.

### The Emblem of Kuwait



The emblem of Kuwait is a falcon with outspread wings embracing a dhow (boom) sailing on blue and white waves. It is a symbol of Kuwait's maritime tradition.

### Kuwait National Flag



The colours of the National flag are derived from a poem by Safie Al-Deen Al-Hali.

The words of his poem denote:

- White for our work
- Black for our struggles
- Green for our spring homes
- Red for our past.

### Kuwait National Anthem

It is known as Al-Nasheed Al-Watani, written by the poet Ahmad Meshari Al-Adwani and was broadcast for the first time on February 25, 1978

### National animal of Kuwait : Camel

### National bird of Kuwait: Falcon (not official)



**National Flower of Kuwait:** *Rhanterum epapposum*, locally known as "Afraj"

### Kuwaiti music

Traditional Kuwaiti music is known as "Sawt". It is performed by instruments called "oud" (plucked lute) and "mirwas" (a drum), with a violin later supplementing the arrangement.



### Kuwaiti dance

"Ardah" is a unique traditional dance of Kuwait performed by men only, at feasts and weddings. Dancers carry swords while dancing, with music played on drums and tambourines. The Samiri, Fraisah, Al Zifan, Khamari and Tanboura are dances performed by women at social gatherings.





# My Existential Life in Kuwait

Rajen Barua

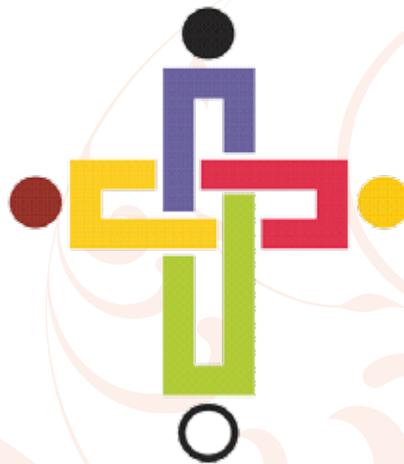
I was in Kuwait for a year on an engineering assignment in 1994 working for an American company. I lived in a three bedroom apartment of an eight storey building in Safat, with two other room mates: Ken from Wales and Bhaskar from Kerala. Being a forced bachelor, I was trying to enjoy the best of my existential life as an engineer in an Islamic country.

Our office was in Ahmadi, near the KOC office, and we used to car pool to the office which was a nice half an hour drive in modern highway. My main challenge was in getting used to the desert climate which was real hot in summer with occasional desert storm for weeks. I made some new friends with other engineer colleagues: particularly Vincent, a Chinese American, Dong Choi, a Korean American and Omar, an Egyptian American. We four used to venture out together. Omar, with his first hand knowledge of the Arabic culture, became our eyes and ears for everything we wanted to know about the Kuwaitis and other Arabs. However, there were not too many places to go out in Kuwait, and after work, we generally spent our time in the apartment which was well equipped with all the modern amenities. We played billiard, pool, table tennis, dart, card, chess or whatever games came our ways. We also had tennis courts, and of course, we had lot of fun practicing desert golf in sands and brown's.

Kuwait is a country which is practically run by foreigners. Sixty per cent of its population is foreigners working on annual work visas as engineers, doctors, managers, officers and skilled laborers. Those were the days when Kuwait was just recovering from Saddam Husain's occupation after being liberated by the allied army in 1991. Being an Islamic country, alcohol was prohibited. It is a big cultural problem for the foreigners. However if one insisted, drinks were available at a price. Moreover, there was certain unwritten leniency in the American complexes. Various wine

recipes were in free circulation, and residents used to brew their own wines in their rooms and used to have occasional wine parties. Till then I had no good idea how to make wine. So I decided to make my own wine, and tried on a recipe from grapes with guidance from everybody. After about 21 days of brewing on a huge glass container in my room, it came out real well

Besides brewing wine, we had lot of fun and adventure in cooking which we had to do all by ourselves. Ken liked my Assamese style Assam tea, and in return he taught me how to make Irish stew. He was happy to find that I was not a vegetarian like Bhaskar and most other Indians. He loved Indian food,



and I was glad to teach him chicken curry or whatever I knew of it. Later on, he even developed a taste for my Assamese style *Tita Kerela* fry. We also ventured into Chinese cooking. Vincent was a Cantonese Chinese, and he was good in cooking. Vincent told us that the Cantonese Chinese generally cook their food very little and always try to preserve the original taste of raw food. He also taught us how to cook Kung Pao Chicken, my favorite Chinese dish.

Working and living along with people from different cultures, it was nice to observe the characteristics of different cultures in the close community.

Generally, the Indians as well as the British liked to cling to their own folks. I observed that for a British, the best company was always another British. I read in a book about the British character described as: "One British> an Idiot; Two British> Happiness; Three British> Greatest Power on Earth". Working in close association with many Britishers, I could see that there was some truth to it. I think, it was their unity and their sharing of a common set of values, for which they could conquer a big country like India. The Americans have a different characteristic altogether which is described in the same book as: "One American> The mighty American Dollar; Two Americans> A Company; Three Americans> A Corporation." I am sure that many Americans will fit into this.

There was a big Indian community in Kuwait. It is interesting to note that the same book describes the Indian character as: "One Indian > A Philosopher; Two Indians> Arguments; Three Indians> Confusion" I think there may be some truth to it. We Indians are so good as individuals, but we fail so miserably as a group in comparison to others. In overseas countries for instance, talented Indians are doing great on individual levels, and in Kuwait and other Middle East countries, practically managing all the business. But why are we not being able to achieve anything great as a group? In Kuwait, there was a small but sizable Assamese community which was a great source of comfort during my existential life. On top of it, I met many of my old friends from Oil India, Duliajan. Most of them were engineers working for Kuwait Oil Company on assignments. Among them I met late Karuna Goswami, Gauranga Rajkhowa, KP Chandrashekhra, Dipak Bhattacharya, TK Sen, MK Dutta, Gaznavi, KZN Ahmed, M. Hooda, JR Singh, Chawla, Sidhartha Deb, VK Varma, HR Gupta and others. There were also others, engineers, officers and managers from Assam working in other companies: M. Idris,



Kathazarika, Manoranjan Baisya, Parbatia Barua and others. One does not have to be a chauvinist to say that the Assamese are different from the rest of the Indians, and this difference is seen mostly in our hospitality. The Assamese everywhere are always small in number, but I think this has always been compensated by our friendly close knit association. The Assamese are like the British, they like their own company. It was Mr. Khushwant Singh, the renowned writer journalist of India who openly proclaimed that the Assamese were the most hospitable people among the Indians. In Kuwait, I received my fare share of this Assamese hospitality

Whenever there was an Assamese party, all the Assamese, known or unknown, were invited. One day, my friend Bhaskar had to say, "How come Barua get invited by his Assamese friends almost every weekend, while I am not invited by any of my Keralites in Kuwait." Well, I did not have to explain.

I love books, and I tried to find a good bookstore in Kuwait. In the telephone book, I found a dozen bookstores, and I started to explore those one by one. However I was disappointed when I found that most of those were Arabic book stores. Later of course I found one or two good English book stores. Most of the signs in Kuwait were written in Arabic. So I decided to take a crash course in Arabic at least to read the street signs. I found out that Arabic was a very beautiful language at least the written form. It is written from right to left and written in a continuous form, like our *lota akhor*. For a stranger, Arabic is very difficult. But once you know the basics, it is quite fun. In order to learn some Arabic words, I also bought one good Arabic and one good Persian dictionary. While Persian is an Indo European language, Arabic is a Semitic language. It was interesting to note that a good many Assamese words such as *khobar*, *kitab*, *muskil*, *tarik*, *ohmok*, *mosgul* etc are of Arabic/Persian origin.

Playing golf was great fun in Kuwait.

First in a desert climate, grass is simply not there. So when they play golf, they prepare the 'green' by making the sand solid by using oil and other material, and call it 'brown' instead. I was not a regular golf player in America, but I thought to practice the game just for fun. The best time for practice was early in the morning before the sun came up. I used to go for such practice very early in the morning on the weekends. We used to carry a bag of say hundred balls and hit with a number 5 or 7 or 9 sticks and then go and find the balls in sand. It was a good fun and good exercise.

Well before long, my stay in Kuwait was over. The Assamese community gave me a farewell party which I would not forget ever.

*[Rajen Barua, a freelance writer, is an engineer by profession. Baruas have been living in Houston, Texas for the last 30 years. Barua's contact: email: barua25@hotmail.com - Ph. 713-677-9162 (M)/ 281-693-3133 (H)]*



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# HOME!

Siddharth Sharma

There was this rush. The feeling of it everywhere, even in the air. The rush, familiar to me, as I took my kids and my wife down the steps of the tarmac of Delhi International Airport in the wee hours of the morning. We made our way to the organic spiralling queue for the immigration check in. There was dirt, stench filled air, scornful faces of the indifferent officials, and the tired haggard faces of the fellow passengers. Patience was the clinger we held on till our passports were checked, and the Government of India was satisfied that we were bonafide citizens making an entry to our homeland for the annual vacation from working overseas.

We hurried to the domestic departure terminal to catch our next flight. We missed the shuttle bus. So I was desperately looking for a safe taxi even though the terminal was just around the corner. My new six month old was letting off his anger by screaming out in his full throttle. My older kid was stuck as if by glue to her mother. Four big luggage were forming a barricade for them to fend off the hostile surrounding they were faced with.

The fog was terrible. The visibility was awfully poor. I was hauling up the luggage with the help of the taxi driver on to the car while the rest of us got into the rickety rickety of something of a car. I could not take off my eyes from my watch even though I had two hours to board the plane. I knew we would have a long battle in front of us in the crowd to collect our boarding passes while also giving some time to my wife to change the diapers and feed the baby God –knows- where. I shot off a glaring keep-quiet glance to my whimpering and complaining girl who thought everything happening was her pa's doing.

We managed to reach where we wanted to. There was the same rush. The same dirt, air, the same indifferent officials and the tired haggard faces of all of us. My wife was feeding the baby in full public view with a scarf drawn over the shoulders. She had a baby to feed, dammed to all those who even dared to think otherwise. I was in the



middle of one of the queue that was in the making for the boarding pass for the myriad flights taking off that morning. When finally I made to my turn in the counter, the lady was telling me that the flight was delayed due to the fog, and she did it in such a way that shook her small tail of her hair sideways as if mocking my frustration. I managed to grumble out a helpless smile and resigned.

I took off the window lids of the jet plane that was finally taking us home. It was late afternoon then, and the sky was blue with brilliant sparkling white clouds beneath my view. Wow, I thought, and told myself how about singing 'Country Skies take me home'? I looked at my wife and at my kids all dozing being drained out completely by the harrowing journey back home. I was sure I was as tired as they were, my clothes smelled something of a kind with the help of the unworldly blend of baby food and saliva, body sweat and the deodorant I was so kind to myself from time to time by spraying it whenever I was alone along the way.

"Coffee?" the plastic smile stewardess asked. I nodded and thanked.

About an hour and a half after, we touched down at the airport of our town. It was raining heavily as if the Gods were offloading all the sewage off their Heaven City. The air was damp and everything was soggy. There was confusion everywhere but somehow we disembarked and reached the airport building. But all of us were drenched. When our entire luggage was done, we dragged our way to the exit.

Smiles and smiles greeted us. Happy

faces of all who was there waiting for us in this Godforsaken weather in the airport. Some were in rain coats while the rest of them in umbrellas. Among the tribe were my pa and ma, my uncle and the house caretaker. My wife's brothers were also present. They must have been waiting for a long time and yet so pleased and satisfied when they saw us. My wife, completely wet top to toe, and twigs of hair over her face clinching a baby, whose battery had drained off hours ago, was leaning on to me crying. My girl equally perplexed, wet and tired was giving out quizzing looks.

"Welcome to the freeway of emotions!" I said to myself.

As we made our way to the house where we lived, I could make out in between the windshield wipers, moving to and fro furiously, the dilapidated roads, the ramshackle houses on the side ways, and the chaos in the streets with the rickshaws, cycles, cars and carts all together.

I looked back and saw my girl by now in her granny lap with my ma's wrinkled hands fondling her face. I saw my wife hurriedly putting some clothes on to the baby with the help of her brother. All of them sat cramped up in the back seat of the car.

I saw my pa behind the wheel gleaming like a teenager who had just won the approval of a girl.

We stayed for a month. We visited our relatives and our friends. When both my boy and my girl fell sick, I was never alone. We had our parents and my wife's brothers and my brother-in-laws families. Not to speak of my friends and the nosy neighbours. Sometimes it became so surreal that my real world gut feeling was turned upside down. Why people care even for those who were no way connected, except for physical proximity or social courtesy, defied me. But 'the thing like magik' was there, and people seemed genuinely concerned for each other for no valid worldly reasons.



It was obvious to all of us that here happiness had no price we had to pay; taking care for each other was blowing in the wind.

It was about time when the smart SpiceJet flight took us to Delhi for the return journey. We checked in to a nice hotel, and we went to the international airport the next night. Like clockwork, the Kuwait Airways flight took us to Kuwait from where this journey had all began. Upon arrival, everything went off like textbook regulations and after paying for an expensive limousine taxi service, we were back in to our

gadget filled, air conditioned, make-to-believe house we have been calling home. And it was late at night.

We slept, all of us, long and hard. Probably everybody of us dreamt too. The next morning I saw my wife doing all the chores as usual. I thought she was going about smiling for reasons she did not share. Her dreamy eyes were enough for me. My boy, in his usual self, was sleeping again like a log. My girl out to her favourite corner on the porch singing an Assamese song she learnt recently. I was content with all of us back in to groove. It was

comforting to be back in Kuwait where I had this wonderful opportunity to do what I do best and honestly earn my livelihood. We are happy here so long we pay the bill while caring comes first class if my bank account can support it.

As I was coming back from The Sultan Centre where I had to go to get the foodstuff, one of the building neighbour asked "You've been out to somewhere? Europe?" "Nah! Home" said I.

## The Story of Rains in Kuwait

*Akshata 'Dixa' Sharma, Class II*

Once upon a time there was a paradise called Assam. The days were happy, with mountains all around, birds in the sky, and flowers and trees on the ground. Between the sky and the ground below, upon a hill there was this castle where the King of Assam lived with his two queens. Their names were Borsha and Pani. They were not only beautiful but they could dance very well. When they danced, flowers bloomed, birds sang, people were happy and it rained. The rains used to bring joy and wealth to the people of Assam. The people fondly called them as 'BorshaPani'.

The news of their dancing travelled to far away places. Lord Indra of the Heavens came to know about it and he became very curious. How come, he thought, that the people of Assam was so joyous than those living in my kingdom. So He came down to Assam in his chariot of wings and requested the King of Assam for Borsha and Pani to have some of their dance performances in Heaven. Poor King of Assam, how could he ever refuse the wish of the Gods and so he reluctantly agreed but pleaded to Lord Indra to return both of them to him as soon as he could.

Time passed by yet Lord Indra did not return Borsha and Pani back to Assam. The king was worried and also all the



people and the animals and trees of Assam. There were no rains, and so there was no more joy.

So the King of Assam decided to go to

the Heaven himself. But there was this problem: he did not have anything that could take him up there. So he sent the news around asking everyone if they could provide anything that would make it possible for him to go to Heaven.

The King of Arabia, called by the name of Al-Grane, heard about it and conveyed the news to the King of Assam that he had a magic carpet which could fly and using this the King of Assam could go to the Heavens. So the king went to the Heavens and brought back Borsha and Pani to earth.

As they were coming back to earth, they went to the Kingdom of Al-Grane, now called Kuwait, and returned the magic carpet to the king. As a good will gesture, Borsha and Pani gave a dance performance to the joy of everybody. This is why it sometimes rains in Kuwait even today.

BorshaPani returned to Assam with their king and everything went back to normalcy. Rains kept on coming back to wonderful Assam again.



## Recollections

Ranita Dutta



Shopping in department stores like Sultan Centre and malls were a new experience as similar malls were not there in Delhi at that time. Before coming to Kuwait, I was not sure how women lifestyle would be in a Muslim country and therefore was delighted to see so many modern and stylish Arabic women. There were hardly any restrictions on women dress code, movement and driving.

When we came to Kuwait, we did not know any Indian family, let alone any Assamese family. We decided to explore and sent an email in Assam Net enquiring, "Any Khar khowa in Kuwait". We got immediate response from two Assamese families. This led us to get acquainted to all Assamese families (about 15) – mostly working in Oil Sector. We were thrilled to meet 'Apoon Manuh'. All the Assamese families used to celebrate and participate together in Bihu, Diwali and New Year Party. Almost every weekend there was Dinner invitations where a few Assamese families would get-together eat lovely food and have fun! I enjoyed those get-togethers a lot but was surprised seeing the number of items prepared for each meal – from snacks to sweet dishes. I was worried thinking what I would do on my turn to invite others. Well, here in Kuwait even unskilled cook like me picked up by inviting friends.

This peaceful existence was shaken after a few months. We were in Salmiya cooperatives (no city centre then!) for our weekly household shopping. The Co operative was over crowded and we were astonished to see everybody buying huge quantities of food items. We came to know that rumor was Iraq could attack Kuwait anytime. We also panicked. Seven years after the Gulf War, the crisis over U.N. weapons inspections in Iraq began to escalate. In the event that Iraq attacks with chemical or biological weapons, everybody in Kuwait started taking precautions like getting more bottled water, canned food and sealing their windows. Everyone was a bit nervous.

It was a relaxing Sunday afternoon of April 1997. Unexpectedly, a stranger called that afternoon wishing to meet my husband at Delhi Oberoi hotel. My husband was not keen but on my insistence he decided to drive down to Oberoi Hotel.

That evening I came to know the stranger offered him a job in the Middle East. Like most Indians for whom Middle East means only Dubai, I too asked "where, Dubai?" My husband told "no, Kuwait". I said "Oh Kuwait... where the Gulf war took place!" My knowledge about Kuwait was that much only. Since the offer came out of the blue, we were not sure of resigning from steady jobs and start an uncharted life. We went to Kuwait embassy to know more about Kuwait where we received a glossy brochure depicting a modern and vibrant country. There we met one Sardarji from Kuwait (an automobile parts businessman) who gave a positive feedback. We thought of taking a chance and decided to come to Kuwait on one year contract.

As a Hindi Movie buff, I watched movies (like 'Naam') which showed gulf as a place where unsuspecting workers from India are lured to big job prospect but instead, upon landing, they come under grip of anti social elements. Under such influence, I had

apprehension. My husband landed in Kuwait on a hot summer day in July 1997. I was in Delhi praying that there should not be any twist like police man or drug dealer catching him. That evening when my husband informed that everything was fine, I thanked God and heaved a sigh of relief. I immediately informed my parents and my mother-in-law, they were pleased (I did not know if they had similar apprehensions like me!). Next day, I resigned from my job and applied to my PhD professor for 1-year break.

After 3 months I arrived in Kuwait on a Friday morning. It was the Ramadan month. My husband instructed me not to eat or drink in public places (not even a chewing gum) when I come out of the aircraft. I thought where we have landed! However excitement of coming to a new place and seeing my husband after 3 months made me forget my hunger and thirst. On our way home from airport, I noticed hardly any traffic on the road, it gave a very peaceful feeling (if it were Friday evening, my impression could be different!). When I entered our Ras Salmiya flat and saw the blue Arabian Sea from drawing room, I immediately liked Kuwait.

We started a new beginning in Kuwait, a life which was more relaxed compared to hectic Delhi life.

Some started keeping US Dollar cash and planned to flee in case of attack. I thought why on earth we came to Kuwait, at least we were better off in Delhi -we were safe. We also piled up water, can foods, charcoal and tapes. Some of our friends even sealed their windows and A/C ducts, though we did not, hoping there would be no war!

This war tension continued for a week and then life was back to normal. This spurt of war panic would recur now and then. By February 2003, there was little doubt that Iraq war was inevitable. Many Multi National companies advised their employees to evacuate their families. Kuwait Government announced there was no need to panic – anti defense missile system was in place and 6 months food stock was available with the Government. On March 19, 2003, American and British forces began the 'Gulf War 2'.

When the first missile warning sirens started in Kuwait there was a fright, everybody ran to the nearest bomb shelter, but within days it was clear that Iraqi missiles were not powerful enough to penetrate US missile defense system. On April 9, 2003 U.S. troops helped Iraqi crowds topple a large statue of Saddam Hussein. Iraq war came to an end by May beginning. Everyone in Kuwait felt free – although there were few missile attacks from Iraq (one landed in Sharq Mall, no causality, partial damage), there was no chemical war fare.

We came to Kuwait thinking we would return after one year --- and now we have completed 12 years. One can hear similar stories from many. I think receiving tax free income is not the only reason for people to live in Kuwait; expat life style has its own charm. Sea view from the Gulf Road, neat and

clean streets, 24 hours open coffee shops and super markets, national and liberation day celebrations, sea-side picnics etc. are some of Kuwait's appeals. But the best part of living in Kuwait is always its Assamese Society. A special bonding is there among all Assamese families as if each is a part of an extended family. From 15 families in 1997, now there are around 50 Assamese families. To accommodate the growing members, Bihu functions and Birthday parties have shifted from homes to hotels. Assam Association is formed and registered with the Indian Embassy. From being the youngest housewife among the Assamese families in 1997, now I have become 'Bou and Baideu' of many. Kuwait may not be the best place on earth to live, but I have spent an unforgettable part of my life here. Kuwait will always remain special for me.

## Are You A Filipino...??

*Dr Ranjita Sharma*

Most of us at some point of our life in Kuwait must have encountered the question "Are you a Filipino?" In fact for me it has become a routine question and sometimes I really do feel like answering in the affirmative. And believe me; some Filipinos actually start conversing with me in their language. And when I stare blankly at them, they do realize that I am not one of them and are very apologetic. Today I wish to share with you a short anecdote, a very amusing and interesting one.

Once at work towards the fag end of the day when the blood donors were thinning out, I and my nursing staffs were a bit relaxed and were conversing among ourselves, when this jovial, good humored Arab guy entered to donate blood. During the whole process of donation he was very cheerful and talkative when all of a sudden he looked at me and told me he wanted to take up a quiz. I asked "what quiz?" To which he replied "I

want to guess your country of origin." I said "O.K."

"O.K., then I will guess three countries and you tell me if your country is one among them." He said.

"You belong to Malaysia, Indonesia



or India. Is your country among the three countries I just mentioned?" He asked.

I said "yes". I was happy that he did not mention Philippines and was overwhelmed with joy at the mention

of INDIA.

"You could be an Indonesian but you are more beautiful than an average Indonesian. So that leaves us with Malaysia and India. Is your country one of these?" He asked. I said "yes".

He continued, "Malaysians rarely come over to this part of the world to work. So in my opinion you must be an Indian and your state should be somewhere near Nepal. Am I right?" I was elated. This guy not only recognizes that I am an Indian but also guesses the location of my home state correctly. I was very happy.

I am an Assamese, but in a broader sense I am an Indian and I AM SO PROUD TO BE CALLED AN INDIAN.

**JOI AAI ASOM.....JAI HIND**



## Initial Days in Kuwait.....

Jayanta Bardalaye



It was early morning. As I looked out of the window of the Kuwait Airways flight, I could see some ships sailing through the Persian Gulf. Sometime later I could see offshore platforms. So here I was ..... flying over the energy basket of the world.

As the plane descended for landing in Kuwait International Airport, all I could see was sands all around. I thought to myself "Did I do the right thing coming to the desert?" All the doubts vanished as we drove towards Ahmadi with the two representatives who came to receive me at the airport. What struck me was the greenery on both sides of the 40 Motorway. «We are in the middle of the Arabian Desert and everything looks so green!» When we entered Ahmadi it was difficult to make out that I was actually in a desert country.

I was accommodated in the company Guest House for one day and then I shifted to the bachelors' accommodation. I had to settle some bills at the guest house by cash. For emergency, I converted some Indian rupees to Kuwaiti Dinar at the Mumbai

airport. Only these many notes for the bundle I gave?? The Bangladeshi boy at the counter returned some coins as change and I got my first lesson in learning the Arabic numerals from 0 to 9. Why do the 5 look like a zero and the zero like a dot?? Of course it took a lot longer to pronounce the numerals.

During the evening time I would invariably go to the Ahmadi Shopping Centre along with my fellow boarders. "How much for a cup of tea?" "100 fils". 100 fils means 14 rupees.....so much for a cup of black tea??!! Every purchase made in KD will invariably be converted to rupees. "This place is really expensive!" The icing on the cake came when I bought a "kumura" for 200 rupees equivalent!!! As time passed by the conversions to rupees also faded away.

"What's the best way to commute from Ahmadi to Fahaheel or Kuwait City?" I asked a guy who had been here for a few weeks. "You can take a taxi, but that's expensive. Why don't you take the city buses?" What a change from

the crowded city buses of Guwahati & Mumbai!!! A Volvo city bus!!! No rickshaws or autos, smooth and wide roads with no pot holes.....but excessive speed. My family joined me after 3 months. Once we were returning from Fahaheel to Mahboula in a taxi and as luck would have it, we ended up with a Formula 1 racer. He was driving through the coastal road at 140 – 150 km/hour!!! We thought ourselves lucky to reach home alive. The distances back home that we covered by walking, now gets covered in a taxi / city bus.

It took quite some time for all of us to get adjusted to "Tinned Air". Coming from Asom where fresh air used to blow in through the doors and windows all the time, it felt like being in a cage. But as time passed by we started liking it, specially during summer. The hot and humid summer months back home, sweating 24 hours a day along with the regular power cuts gave way to a pleasant and comfortable stay indoors.

Welcome to Kuwait!



## Initiatives

*New initiatives taken by Assamese youths are poised to bring a marked change to the Assamese society. We have great pleasure in presenting two such initiatives.*

-Editors

### XOBDO, the community dictionary with a mission!

**Bikram M. Baruah**

that is, it does not prescribe spelling and meanings of the words, rather it describes how people use these words. Therefore, the community magazines across the globe like Posoowa, Luitor Pora Mississippi, Prabaxi Bihuwan, Jetuka etc along with the regular newspapers, magazines etc have a very important role to play in this effort. What they print, along with

the writings of renowned writers and journalists will dictate what is included in XOBDO. To help in this effort, we would like to request the local language newspapers and magazines that have online presence to publish in UNICODE, so that XOBDO can analyze them and easily pick up new words from there.

*[Mr. Bikram M. Baruah is currently working as a consulting Reservoir Engineer based in Abu Dhabi, UAE. He is the founder of XOBDO ([www.xobdo.org](http://www.xobdo.org))]*



Assam is a multicultural, multi-linguistic state in north-east India. Apart from Assamese; Bodo, Mising, Rabha and Karbi are some of the languages spoken in Assam. Similarly Khasi, Ao, Mizo and Meeteilon are few of the languages spoken in the neighboring northeastern states.

Due to cultural diversity and lack of empathy, there is hardly any genuine effort to learn Assamese by the non-native-speakers residing in the state, let alone those in the neighbouring seven-sister states.

This man-made linguistic barrier is probably one of the main causes of the misunderstanding and the related unrest arising today among the different ethno-linguistic groups of the north-east.

Can we break this barrier and create a harmonious society of mutual understanding and respect in the entire north-east?

This is what we are trying to do at XOBDO in a small way! It is an informal

gathering of people living across the globe to collectively do something good for the region. The love for their mother tongue has generated more than 1300 selfless volunteers who are working day and night from different parts of the world to create this unique project – a multi-directional, multi-lingual, multi-media embedded, online dictionary of the languages of the North-East India. Apart from achieving 24000 Assamese words, it is already galloping ahead with a large corpus of Karbi, Dimasa, Mising and Meeteilon words.

XOBDO is an effort of the community. It is also a descriptive dictionary –

### Chalo Gaon Chale

**Karuna Kalita, Bijoy Shankar Baruah**

In the last few decades, India has been making rapid strides towards prosperity and entering a new era of growth. Its global image has enhanced considerably. However, the reality of rural India, is very different. Its villages lack the basic amenities like safe drinking water, elementary education, and basic health care. Through CHALO GAON CHALE, we want to contribute to the development of rural parts of Assam in our own way.

#### What is CHALO GAON CHALE?

It is a program which will give opportunities to the students of higher educational institutions such as Universities, IITs, NITs, Medical Colleges and professionals from different organisations, to spend some time in a village as guests of one or more villagers. These students and professionals will be called as 'Chalo Gaon Chale volunteers'. During their visits, these student volunteers will advise the villagers in some areas applying their knowledge and collect different problems that they think can be solved through projects as part of their undergraduate studies, or with the help of available expertise. The professionals will also involve in similar activities but they will have some

additional roles to perform. They will organise training sessions, seminars, and awareness programmes applying their professional skills at villages during their stay. The professionals can help the student volunteers to understand problems and identify solutions.

The mission will be based in educational institutions and in industrial organisations. Initially, the plan is to launch this programme from IIT Guwahati and to expand it to include other educational institutions and different organisations of the region.

The students and professionals will also be benefited from this programme. These visits can help the students and professionals in understanding the problems faced by the villagers in their day to day life.

Following are a few potential projects:

1. Guidance to improve the standard of education.
2. Advice on basic hygiene and safety (electricity, roads, healthcare etc).
3. Cheap solutions for drinking water purification.
4. Advice on improved agricultural means.
5. Cheap and affordable means for energy solutions, particularly

renewable energy.

6. Advice on basic legal systems.
7. Cheap solutions for rain water harvesting and water recycling.
8. A detailed chemical analysis of locally prepared rice beers.

#### How can you help?

At present, CHALO GAON CHALE is still in its infancy. We need your help to make it a big success. You can advise us how to improve and move the project forward and also inform us about the different funding opportunities. You can participate in the initiative by becoming a Chalo Gaon Chale volunteer and providing expertise from your field. You can also facilitate "Chalo Gaon Chale movement" to be a part of your organisation. You can promote this through discussion groups and workshops.

*[Dr. Karuna Kalita is currently working as Lecturer of Mechanical Engineering in the University of Nottingham, UK. He has initiated this programme.*

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*Mr Bijoy Shankar Baruah is presently working as Deputy Manager in AEGCL, ASEB, Jorhat. He is a freelance writer with interest in social work.*

*E-mail: [b\\_baruah03@yahoo.com](mailto:b_baruah03@yahoo.com)]*



## A Dictionary of Culture: Fusion of Assam and Kuwait

A drawing competition was organized on the above theme among the children of the Assamese community in Kuwait. The entries received are presented below – Editors.



**ANCHITA RAJKHOWA, Class IV**  
2nd Prize



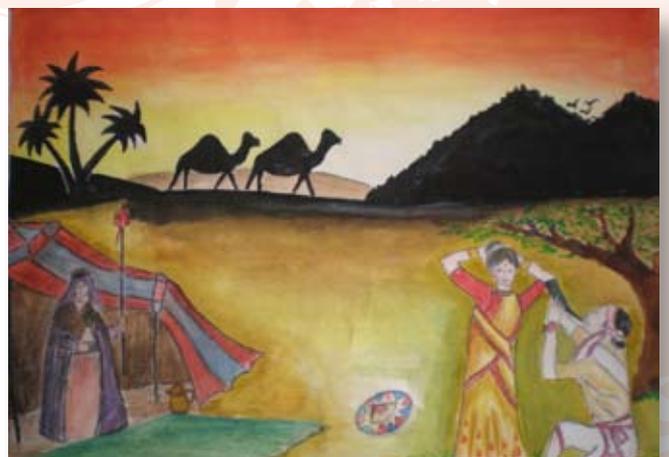
**SIMRAN BHATTACHARYYA, Class VI**  
3rd Prize



**DEVANSHI DUTTA, Class II**



**ANKIT DUTTA, Class VI**



**SWAREENA RAJKHOWA, Class VII**



**SHUBHANGI SHARMA, Class II**



**SHUBHANKAR SHARMA, Class II**



**TANAYA DEVI CHOUDHURY, Class XI**



**SANGHAMITRA NATH, Class VII**



## A journey less forgettable

*Raktimabha Adhyapak Borah*



the flight, I flexed my feet, rested my head on my hand bag & closed my eyes...

“Omita'r Khar, Posola, Dhekiya Bhaji, Khoru masor aanja... an elaborately laid out mouth watering Assamese meal welcomes me home. I finish my lunch & lie down on the couch to relax... & close my eyes...”

“Wake up Jaan, Get up!”, the sudden shrill of Probeen broke my comforting dream. “It's 6:50 AM. Let's run”, the words brought me to my feet. We overslept!! Grasping my handbag, both of us dashed to the Jet counter. “9W2153, to Guwahati?” Probeen yelled to the Jet attendant flashing the boarding passes. The guy glanced at the boarding passes & was prompt, “I'm so sorry Sir, but flight is already ready for takeoff, doors are closed now.” I felt a sudden rush of fear down the spine. He continued “We have been looking for you..., we announced your names a number of times”. Probeen pleaded with him for a while, but to no avail. He told us that our luggage will be offloaded & we could collect them from the Jet counter. He advised us to enquire about next possible flights at the Jet counter.

We slipped past the security check towards the Jet counter. “Don't worry, we will catch another flight” Probeen tried to cheer me up.

Luckily the next flight was only two hours later, but we had to change flights at Delhi airport. This time, we made it sure that we don't miss this flight. Though we were late, we enjoyed our time inside the Delhi airport with some nice foot massage (it's free!). Finally, we reached home at 3:00 PM, exhausted by the tiresome journey. But we had learnt a big lesson that day. The age old story of the tortoise and the hare should not be taken lightly.

Its 03:10 AM IST. We had just reached Mumbai International airport. I was very excited as we would be home very soon. After all, this was our first visit after marriage. Our next flight to Guwahati was at 6:50 am. “We should reach the domestic terminal by 5:50 AM. So, let's hurry.” Probeen, my husband, told me. He had earlier missed a flight at the Delhi airport because of delay in inter-terminal transfer. So, I could understand his anxiety.

After collecting our luggage, we zoomed past the customs officials towards the Jet airways counter. We had already through-checked-in our luggage to Guwahati. So, we deposited our luggage at the Jet counter & entered the Inter-terminal transfer room. However, the long queue for the bus worried me. But, Probeen had already managed to bypass the queue & moved to the front. I saw him telling something to the person manning the counter & we soon boarded the GVK\* bus. It was 3:40 AM.

The bus trip from the International terminal to the Domestic terminal took about 20 minutes. With our boarding

Passes in hand, we hurried to the security check area and were soon inside the waiting area. I saw my watch; it was 4:15 AM. We reached quite ahead of time. Now, we had plenty of time to ourselves.

The scenario inside the waiting hall was very tiresome. People looked exhausted and sleepy at this early hour & most of them were lying still. We looked for vacant seats & found one row near the gift shops. Probeen looked very tired from this hectic journey and soon fell asleep on the seat itself. However, I decided to utilize the time by exploring the shops nearby. These had some wonderful displays which would make great show pieces. After some window shopping, I came back to my seat.

The departure gates for Jet flights were just a few metres away. Jet ground staff stood there guiding the people to board the shuttle bus. It was 5:30 AM now. Wary about the time, I patted Probeen to wake him up. He opened his eyes & saw his watch, “We still have 1 hour more”, saying this, he went back to his slumber. By this time, I was feeling dizzy from the exhaustion. Still anxious not to miss



## A Journey to Discover My Identity

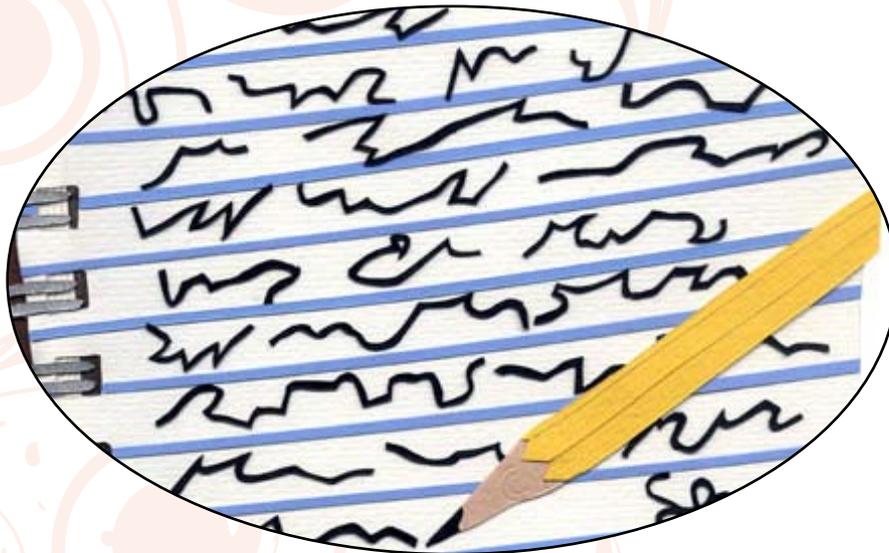
*Tanaya Devi Choudhury  
Class XI*

I am  
 Lot more than just a name  
 I say  
 And to those who oppose  
 I shall prove to them  
 I shall make myself  
 too big  
 That I can't be  
 made unseen  
 Hence  
 Across the oceans  
 Across the seas  
 Along the  
 boundaries of life  
 I bleed upon the  
 thorns of life  
 I walk  
 I am in search  
 Search for truth  
 Truth you may ask  
 Why only this  
 There is much  
 more in life  
 To explore than this  
 I would say  
 I don't want to hide behind any mask  
 And hence to reveal  
 My true self, I search  
 My own identity or just simply to  
 make one  
 And  
 I need to search in urgency for  
 I fear I may soon lose an opportunity  
 A golden one I say,  
 And that I ask you to accompany  
 Me as you never know along the road  
 Yourself shall you meet.

## Orange

*Niloy Bhattacharyya  
Class I*

I am orange  
 My name is my colour  
 With a very nice flavour  
 Take out my pips  
 Have a juicy sip.



## In my Soup

*Antarip Kashyap (Jeil)  
Class III*

When I was small I used to take ABC  
 in my soup  
 Now I use the number in my soup.  
 Now I see animal crackers in my  
 soup.  
 I see lion , bear, tiger and monkey in  
 my soup.  
 And then I see words  
 in my soup.  
 After so many years  
 when I was 7 years  
 old  
 I saw sentences in  
 my soup.  
 that's when I started  
 my school  
 In my school there  
 was no soup  
 so I learnt from the  
 board  
 I learned words and  
 sentences.  
 I learned numbers ,  
 addition , subtraction  
 division and  
 multiplication.  
 And when exams  
 came I never be scared  
 I got full marks and made my mom  
 and dad happy.  
 That's how I became big.  
 When I became big I had a sports car  
 I was very powerful like my father  
 I had a wife and 3 sons  
 who all were very intelligent like my  
 father.

## Our Festivals..... Our Roots

*Ankit Dutta  
Class V*

We celebrate Bhogali  
 In January;  
 With lots of eatables  
 And festivity.  
 Next follows Rongali ,  
 Colourful, pomp and gaiety.  
 That is in April,  
 And we dance with zeal.  
 Kaati Bihu is much behind,  
 With less of activity and fun.  
 Celebrating these festivals in these  
 sands,  
 We are still home .... away from  
 home.

## Party Time

*Devanshi Dutta  
Class II*

Let's have a Party  
 It makes us happy  
 Play, play, play  
 All the day  
 We can sing and dance  
 Have lots of fun  
 Eat tasty food  
 And feel very good



## My Unfound Premonitions about Q8

Ananya Kashyap, Class IX

The moment I came back from school mom told, "Jeiry, xunkale kor. Aji Monika Aunty-ye matise, dance rehearsals koriboloi. Xunkale homework kori lo. Rati ke akou ami Monty auntir ghoroloi jabo lagibo". ("Jeiry make it fast. Today Monika aunty has called for the dance rehearsal. Complete your homework fast. In evening we will be going to Monty aunty's place for dinner"). That was sometime in July in the year 2007. That was a scenario of a typical day as we had to spend a very busy period during the Children Meet time of Zaloni club. Our group (myself, Megha, Riya, Rishika, Akanksha, Lisa, Priya, Sona....) used to take part in the group dance completion, the most prestigious and glamorous event of the Children Meet. In fact we had been the best troupe for three consecutive years from 2005 to 2007.

That's Duliajan, a place where I had spent my infancy. Duliajan, a small town in the eastern part of Assam but a mini-India in itself. A really busy place, full of vibrance!!

In the morning rush to school, then sports, dance, homework, tuition and what not.... But amongst all these I had great fun even though at the end of the day I hardly had time for myself. But there was something special in the place which made it dearest to me.

But on one fine day sometime in October in 2007 my parents dropped a bombshell on me... That father had got a job in Kuwait and he is contemplating leaving Oil India to join KOC. That meant I shall have to leave my dearest place Duliajan. The moment this thought came to my mind my heart filled with deep grief. I protested vehemently. But my parents consoled me that they have thought about the different options and felt that it would be only to my best interest to come out of a small pond and out into



to a shoreless sea. Ultimately I had to give in to their wishes in spite of my great reservations. I was very sad that I shall have to leave Duliajan.

Soon my father left for Kuwait in December 2007. I was very apprehensive about going to Kuwait and worried how I shall adjust to a completely alien place. I didn't know what life would offer me there. In Duliajan I was having the time of my life. Even the thought of leaving Duliajan and going to a place which I had no clue about brought tears to my eyes. It's really surprising how time passes by so fast when you never want it to. That's exactly what happened and came the day that is the 28th of March 2008 when I finally had to leave Duliajan for the unknown Kuwait. With moist eyes and a very heavy heart I left from my dearest Duliajan on my way to the airport on my journey to Kuwait. All the way I could not utter a single word and any time I tried to speak, I felt a strange choked feeling of my throat. Any way finally I landed in Kuwait. My initial days in Kuwait were really very boring and at times were even depressing. When initially I didn't have friends in Kuwait my mind wandered back to Duliajan fantasizing about how I spent my days with friends in school during the day and in the evening while playing, the Zaloni club and what not... But slowly things started to fall into place in Kuwait also. I made lots of friends. I could feel that where as

my friends in Duliajan were all from the same place, out here in Kuwait my friends were from different parts of India and even different parts of the world. I could feel the difference of cultures and thoughts of my friends who were from different societies .... backgrounds ... and it really enlightened me.

Then one day when my mom shouted when I came back from school "Jeiry, xunkale kor. Aji Mamoni Aunty-ye matise, dance rehearsal koriboloi. Tar agote Basketball practice ase. Xunkale homework kori lo. Rati ke akou ami Masum auntir ghoroloi jabo lagibo". I became nostalgic again ..... bringing back sweet memories of my days in Duliajan!!!

Life, for me, has really become very fast here in Kuwait. Again I hardly have time for myself ... after representing the school in Basketball, tuition, homework, taking part in dance programs with Kim Kim, Prachi, Sneha, Juhi, Jubi, Oshin..... meeting and chatting with friends Nirosha, Supraja, Shaurya.... and so on.

As time has gone by the once unknown Kuwait has become very close to my heart and I can never ever think of going away from this place. So when I retrospect I still can't decide .....which is the most memorable day of my life ..... the day when my parents had announced to me that we will be leaving Duliajan for Kuwait ..... or ..... the day when I left Duliajan on my journey to my then alien and now dearest Kuwait. But which so ever is the day it surely has changed the spectrum of my life and I am really very happy about it .....

*[This essay was adjudged the winner in the essay competition on the topic 'My most memorable day in Kuwait / Assam'.  
- Editors]*



# Masala Dosa

*Probeen Borah*

I am very fond of dosas. But so far, I have savoured this fabulous dish either at hotels or at South Indian friends' places. At both these places, I could never devour them to my heart's content. Before marriage, I had tried various recipes myself, which I believe turned out to be satisfactory. But I never tried dosas. Luckily, after marriage, I had the chance to taste a variety of delicious items in my home itself, thanks to my culinary skilled wife. And one day, we decided to try out dosas in our kitchen. What turned out is captured in the conversation between me & my brother-in-law on a Friday morning.

(Snippets of my Google talk conversation)

**Sachin:** Gd morning bhaiyya

R u there?

**Me:** GM Sachin

**Sachin:** 2day is Friday ...aaj u hav OFF na.. aaj to fir aaram kariye bhaiya

**Me:** ya...

**Sachin:** aur sunaiye.. brkfast kar liye?

**Me:** dosa is in making

**Sachin:** ayt.. dosa.. aha.. gr8

**Me:** yes,... & u know

**Sachin:** waa?

**Me:** Ur bhabi made dosa the day before

**Sachin:** ohh.. really.. dats nice.. u knw.. dosa is one of FEWEST things i eat in the southy menu

**Me:** 😞 .. don't tell Me.. its 1 of my

favorite!!

though it tasted grt dat day, i bragged that i can make better

u know male ego.. 😊

**Sachin:** hahaha .. lolz

**Me:** ... so, 2day i bought readymade dosa batter,.....

& 1st thing i did in the morning was heat the TAWA

...& set off my challenge ..

man,.. it's really difficult

**Sachin:** hahah.. great great..

btw.. i think u get loads of south food items there cuz of lots of south people residing thr.. isn it?

**Me:** ya,.. u r true.

..u know d dosa just does not get off the TAWA!! 😞

it got stuck

ultimately i had to scrap it off with a knife

**Sachin:** haha.. is it non-stick.

awwww mayyn

**Me:** then i checked d net

but no,.. it did not help

& i gave up

**Sachin:** gawd!

**Me:** & ur bhabi was very happy...

**Sachin:** lolsss

**Me:** she's enjoying every moment

**Sachin:** lmao!!!

LMAO!! HAHA

**Me:** now that she's won the game!!

**Sachin:** the prize distribution ceremony gotta start 😊

**Me:** 😞

**Sachin:** lols 😊

but losing is fun sometimes.. hehe

**Me:** yes.. it is...now i am preparing Sambar

**Sachin:** hahahahaa.. buckle up boy!!  
anothr victory is waitin to go away 😊

**Me:** no, no ..this tme ,.. its wont b a disaster hopefully..  
coz i had made it b4

**Sachin:** hahaha.. ohh then shdnt be..  
rock the kitchen soldier! 😊

**Me:** yes,... .. way to go man... nahin to ye bhi disaster ho jayega  
will join u soon

**Sachin:** haha,, ayt.. tc.

**Sachin:** have a 'cook' time! 😊

Later that day, we had a decent breakfast. My wife made some really good Masala Dosas accompanied with coconut chutneys. The sambar was also good ...I had just forgotten to add "Sambar Masala"... .. but it tasted great, though a little different from your usual sambar!

**Moral of the Story:** *One (Husband) should not encroach into another's (wife's) territory (kitchen)*





# KUWAITI CUISINE.....tantalizing the tastebuds!!

**Sharmistha Bhattacharyya**

Kuwait is known around the world as “the food lovers” paradise”. The culture of Kuwait remains incomplete till one discusses about the rich aromas, flavors and delicacies that comprise the “incomparable Kuwait cuisine.” One can look forward to experience a wide range of mouthwatering food in Kuwait. Kuwaiti cuisine is an infusion of Arab, Indian, Persian, Mediterranean and Najdi (the center of the Arabian Peninsula) styles of cooking, reflecting the poly-ethnic diversity of its population. The native Kuwaiti cuisine reflects the region’s history and cultural traditions. Indian influence is very much evident in various local dishes.

*Tabeeekh* or the Badouin style of cooking, represents one of the most ancient and traditional ways of cooking in Kuwait. The specialty of this dish is that the whole meal is cooked in a single large pot kept over charcoal. Meat or fish, vegetables and various spices are first primarily browned at the bottom of the pot and then rice or wheat are added with water and the pot is left to simmer for sometime. Many of the Kuwaiti homes still follow this traditional cooking to prepare



Hommos

meat porridges and some traditional prawn or vegetable dishes.

*Marag* is a more elaborate and popular method of cooking various mouthwatering Kuwaiti delicacies, introduced under Indian and Persian

influences. In this method too the meal is cooked in a large pot, but the meat or vegetables are first fried or boiled and kept separately before being combined and steamed with rice or wheat. Many different types of meat and fish marags are quite popular in Kuwaiti homes.

Spices are an integral part of Kuwaiti cuisine. Kuwaiti dishes are often flavoured with sophisticatedly blended spices in a local art form. Commonly used spice mix in Kuwait include the blend of cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, coriander, cumin, ginger, black pepper and paprika.

Kuwaiti families being large and extended, the traditional custom of dining is to be sitting together for a large meal. Food is almost always prepared and served in large amounts, and it is common for Kuwaiti households to invite guests over to share meals.

A proper and ceremonial Kuwaiti meal includes dishes like Mezza which consists of hommos, m`tabbal (aubergine), ful (beans), tabooleh (salad), khubus, along with stuffed pastries. The Shaurba soups, Mahashee (stuffed vegetables), Aish (rice), garnished with almonds, raisins and saffron, Kharoof (grilled lamb) or Samak (grilled or stewed fish) are also common ingredients of the Kuwaiti meal. The cuisines are truly traditionally prepared and most of them are not difficult to cook either. These are extremely delicious and mouthwatering.

Popular Kuwaiti dishes include kouzi, machboos, jireesh, lugaimat, balaleet, zalabia and so on. Kouzi is the Kuwaiti national dish. Machboos is similar to the Indian biriyani, with fragrant rice cooked with mutton and spices. Laban is a popular refreshing drink in Kuwait that relieves the stress of the summer heat.

Seafood dishes are also quite popular. Mumawwash is a seafood dish made of rice and black lentils along with dried shrimp. Another seafood dish is mutabbaq samak which is made of rice cooked along with fish from the Arabian Gulf.



Mumawwash

Here is a glossary of a few popular Kuwaiti delicacies:

- *Kouzi*, roasted lamb stuffed with rice, chicken, eggs, and other ingredients.
- *Machboos*, a dish made with mutton, chicken or fish accompanied over fragrant rice; somewhat akin to Indian Biryani.
- *Gers Ogaily*, a traditional cake made with eggs, flour, sugar, cardamom, and saffron.
- *Harees*, barley cooked with meat and topped with cinnamon sugar.
- *Gabout*, stuffed flour dumplings in a thick meat stew.
- *Mutabbaq samak*, a fish served over rice from the Persian Gulf region.
- *Ghuraiba*, brittle cookies usually served with Arabic Coffee.
- *Mumawwash*, rice cooked with black lentils and topped with dry shrimp.
- *Zalabia* (similar to our “desi” jelebi), fried dough soaked in syrup (sugar, lemon, and saffron).
- *Lugaimat*, fried dough balls soaked in syrup (sugar, lemon, and saffron).



## Food Corner

### SAVOUR THE MOUTH-WATERING APPETIZERS

Mamoni Nath

#### BEETROOT CROQUETTES WITH DIP



##### Ingredients:

- 8 slices of brown bread
- 2 cups milk
- 1 beetroot
- 2 carrot
- 4cauliflower florets
- 1 potato
- 1 onion chopped
- 1tbs ginger paste
- 1tbs lemon juice
- 1tbs red chilli powder
- 1tbs garam masala powder
- salt to taste
- oil to fry

##### For the dip:

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1tbsp tomato sauce
- 1tsp chilli flakes

1/2tsp herbs

##### Method:

Boil the vegetables and grind them to a fine paste except potato. Boil the potato and smash. Heat oil in a pan, saute the onion and ginger paste. Mix the vegetable paste and stir fry until the mixture dries up then add the smashed potato, red chilli powder, lemon juice, salt garam masala powder and fry for a few minutes. Cool the mixture and keep aside.

Cut the bread corners and soak each bread in milk, keep on your palm, press a little and put little stuffing and roll into a oblong chop or any desired shape. Prepare all the chops in this way. Heat enough oil for frying and fry the chops until brown and crispy. Serve with the dip or green chutney as a starter.

#### CHICKEN LAB-A-LAB

##### Ingredients:

- 10-12 chicken legs
- 2tbs ginger garlic paste

- 1tbs lemon juice
- 1tps zeera powder
- 2tps dhaniya powder
- 2tps red chilli powder
- 1tps garam masala powder
- 1/2 cup curd
- tandoori color as required
- Salt to taste
- 4tbs butter or oil

##### Method:

Marinate the chicken legs with all the above ingredients except butter a night before. Place the chicken legs on the grill of a gas oven and bake for 10mins or until the leg pieces changes color. Turn them again and bake for another 10mins brushing them with oil or melted butter. Serve with french fries and ketchup or hot sauce.



### ARABIC DELICACIES

Masum Rajkhwa

#### UMM ALI

Umm Ali is a delicious traditional Egyptian dessert equivalent to bread pudding.



pudding.

##### Ingredients:

- 4 croissants (broken into pieces)
- 1/3 cup of sugar
- 1 1/2 cup of milk
- 1 packet of thick cream
- 1 table spoon of vanilla extract
- 1 cup of mixed nuts (of your choice or a mixture of raisins, almonds, pistachios, walnuts, flaked coconut)

##### Method:

- Combine croissants (broken into pieces) and nuts and place in a baking dish
- In a saucepan heat milk, sugar, vanilla extract and cream (don't boil it)

- Now pour the mixture over the croissants
- Bake for 15 to 30 minutes or until it turns golden
- Remove from the oven and let it stand for 5 minutes
- serve warm with a scoop of ice-cream (any flavor) and some nuts sprinkled on the top

#### FALAFEL



##### Ingredients:

- 1 cup chick peas
- 1 bunch of fresh coriander leaves (chopped)
- 1 bunch of fresh parsley (chopped)
- 3 cloves of garlic (crushed)
- 2 medium sized onions
- 1/4 teaspoon of ground chili
- 1/2 teaspoon of cumin powder
- 2 teaspoons of ground coriander
- 1/2 teaspoon of bicarbonate soda
- Salt and pepper
- 3 tablespoons of wheat flour
- 4 tablespoons of bread crumbs
- Oil to deep fry

##### Method:

- Soak the chick peas in water for 12 hours. Then make a paste of soaked chick peas in a blender / a food processor. Put the paste in a bowl, then make another paste of coriander leaves and parsley with garlic and onion. Add the paste to the bowl of chick peas (paste) and mix it well. Now add the chili, cumin and coriander powder, salt, pepper, bicarbonate soda, wheat flour and bread crumbs. Mix all the above ingredients well. Now make small balls of the paste. Deep fry them until they turn golden brown. Drain well and serve hot or lay the Falafel balls on pita bread / chappati garnished with Tarator\* sauce, pickles (in vinegar), parsley and tomato slices.
- Wrap and enjoy (both the way!)

##### \* Tarator sauce preparation:

Combine 1/2 cup sesame paste, 1 crushed garlic clove, 1/4 cup lemon juice and 1/2 tsp salt in a blender. Blend till smooth. Gradually add 1/2 cup of water till it forms a sauce. Adjust seasoning to taste.



## Khel Dhemali 2009



## Autumn Festival 2009





## Magh Bihu 2010



## DOCFEST 2010



## Annual General Meeting 2010



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## অসম সংঘ, কুৱেইট - এটি আলোক পাত

### অনুপম ৰাজখোৱা

কিছু দিনৰ পৰা ভাবি থকা কথা এটা শেষত সিদ্ধান্তত পৰিণত হল। ডুলিয়াজান অইল ইন্ডিয়াৰ চাকৰী এৰি কুৱেইটলৈ অহাতো ঠিক কৰিলো। পৰিয়ালৰ সকলোতকৈ সৰু ছোৱা বাবে সিদ্ধান্তটোৱে পৰিয়ালৰ সকলোকে যথেষ্ট চিন্তাত পেলালে, বিশেষকৈ মোৰ বয়সীয়া মাক (মা পিছে ২০০৮ চনৰ জুলাই মাহত স্বৰ্গগামী হল) কিন্তু বহুতো মানসিক শক্তি গোটাই লোৱা এই সিদ্ধান্তটো সলনি নকৰিলো।

অহাৰ আগতে তেলৰ দেশ কুৱেইটৰ সামাজিক জীৱন যাত্ৰাৰ বিষয়ে বিশেষ একো জনা নাছিলো বা কিয় জানো বিশেষ জানিবলৈ চেষ্টাও কৰা নাছিলো। কেৱল মোতকৈ প্ৰায় এমাহমান আগতে অহা মোৰ বন্ধু চান প্ৰসাদ প্ৰধানৰ পৰা দুই এটা খবৰ পালো- যেনে চাকৰী কৰি ভালেই লাগিব, পৰিয়ালে অসুবিধা

চনৰ জানুৱাৰীৰ প্ৰথম সপ্তাহত কুৱেইট পালোহি।

কেইদিন পাছতে মাঘ বিহু। ঘৰত মা, নিজৰ পৰিয়াল বৰ্গক এৰি বিহুত আতৰত থাকিব লগা ছোৱাত মনটো বেয়া। কিন্তু আহিয়ে গম পালো আমাতকৈ কিছুদিনৰ আগতে অহা ৰাজীৱ, দ্বৈপায়ন, অভিজিৎ হতৰ পৰিয়ালৰ বাদেও আৰু কেইটামান ex Oil Indian পৰিয়াল আছে। এনেকৈয়ে চাওতে চাওতে উৰুকা পালেহি। কিন্তু সেইদিনা চান প্ৰসাদে হঠাতে খবৰ দিলে, আমাক আসিস গৌহাইৰ (ex Oil Indian) ঘৰলৈ উৰুকা খাবলৈ মাতিছে। কুৱেইটত মাঘ বিহু, মনতো কেনে লাগিছিল আজি বুজাব নোৱাৰিম। গধূলি ইকবালে নিবলৈ আহিল, লগত আৰু দুটামান পৰিয়াল। বস্তী, মামনি হৈতে লাগি ভাগি বিহুৰ পিঠা পনা খুৱালে, বাহিৰত সৰু মৰুকে

খন হাজৰীকা, নৃপেন শৰ্মা আদিৰো পৰিয়াল আছে। বাসব শৰ্মা থাকে, অকলে, পিছে এতিয়া তেওঁৰ পৰিয়াল থাকে। পাছত গম পালো কেইটামান অসমৰ ডাক্তৰ পৰিয়ালো আছে ডাঃ অনিল ভৰালী, ডাঃ অনুপম দাস, ডাঃ ৰিফাত মান্নান। ইতিমধ্যে এপ্ৰিল মাহৰ শেষৰ ফালে মোৰ পৰিয়ালো আহি পালেহি ইঘৰ সিঘৰলৈ মাজে মাজে যোৱা হয়, তেনেকৈয়ে লগ পোৱা হয় ইজনে সিজনক। মাজে মাজে ল'ৰা ছোৱালীৰ জন্মদিন হয়, তাতো বহুতকৈ লগ পোৱা হয়। এই মৰু প্ৰান্তৰত এনেকুৱা party বোৰে সকলোকে যথেষ্ট আনন্দ দিয়ে। আনহাতে এনেকুৱা party বোৰৰ পৰাই গম নোপোৱাকৈ থকা আৰু দুই এটা পৰিয়ালৰ বিষয়ে গম পোৱাহলো। এটা গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ আৰু ভাল লগা কথা হলযে, ২০০৭ চনৰ শেষৰ ফালৰ পৰা লাহে লাহে ভালে সংখ্যক



পাব পৰা একো বিশেষ দেখা নাই, মোৰ লৰা সূমনে (প্ৰায় দুমাহমান পাছতে CBSE class X ৰ Final exam দিব লগা) পঢ়িব পৰাকৈ DPS Society ৰ under ত থকা স্কুল আছে ইত্যাদি। সেই বোৰকে সাৰথি কৰি ঘৰৰ সকলোকে চিন্তা নকৰিবলৈ কৈ ২০০৭

উৰুকাৰ জুই জ্বলিল। কুৱেইটৰ সেই দিনটো সদায়েই মনত থাকিব। লাহে লাহে গম পালো ইয়াত আমাৰ ex Oil Indian কেইঘৰৰ বাদেও বহুত দিনৰ আগতে অহা বিকাশ গগৈৰ পৰিয়াল, বঙাইগাও BRPL ৰ পৰা প্ৰায় ৮০ ৰ দশকত অহা হীৰেন ৰাজখোৱা, মুকুট দেব চৌধুৰী আবজল হোছেইন, ডেনিছ আহমেদ,

অসমীয়া/অসমত বাস কৰি অহা পৰিয়াল কুৱেইটলৈ আহিল, এতিয়াও আহি আছে। গতিকে party বোৰত অসমৰ মানুহৰ সংখ্যা বাঢ়ি গল।

এইখিনিতে এটা কথা উল্লেখ কৰিব খুজিছো যে কুৱেইটলৈ অহাৰ আগতে আমাৰ পৰম্পৰা অনুষ্ঠান বোৰ পালন কৰিব পাৰিম



বুলি ভাবিবলৈ অসুবিধা হৈছিল। কিন্তু ইয়াৰ পৰিবেশে এই সকলো বোৰ সম্ভৱ কৰি তুলিলে। ২০০৮ চনত আমি ৰঙৰ উৎসৱ ফাগুৱাও খেলিলো ইয়াৰ এখন park ত। নানা ৰঙৰ ফাগুৱাই বহুতো সৰুসৰু কুৱেইট ল'ৰা ছোৱালীক যথেষ্ট আকৰ্ষিত কৰিছিল। লৰাছোৱালী বোৰে বৰ উপভোগ কৰা যেন লাগিছিল। মনত থকা কথা। ৰঙালী বিহু আহিল। আমি সকলোৱে মিলি বিহুও পাতিলো। আমাৰ বিহুৰ কথা শুনি আমি গম নোপোৱাকৈ কুৱেইটতে থকা পিঙ্ক চৰকাৰ, অমলেশ চৰকাৰ, নবজিৎ ৰয়কে আদি কৰি ভালেকেইজন ল'ৰা ওলালহি। কুৱেইটৰ ৰঙালী বিহুৱে অসমীয়া সমাজক আকৰ্ষিত কৰা দেখি খুবেই ভাল লাগিল।

আৰু এটা কথা উল্লেখ কৰিব খুজিছো। ডুলিয়াজানৰ Oil তে চাকৰী কৰা অনিল শৰ্মাৰ ডাঙৰ লৰা অভিজিৎৰ লগত তেওঁৰ মাক ভাৰতী বাইদেউ থাকে। ভাৰতী বাইদেৱে প্ৰায়বোৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতে দিহা পৰামৰ্শ দিয়াৰ লগতে আমাক সকলোকে যেন এডাল এনাজৰীৰে বান্ধি ৰাখিছে- বিশেষকৈ মহিলা সকলক। তেখেতৰ অনুপ্ৰেৰণাতে আমাৰ ইয়াত এতিয়া ভজন, নাম প্ৰসঙ্গ বোৰ হয়। ভাদ মাহৰ নাম, জন্মাষ্টমী, বিশ্বকৰ্মা পূজা আদিও ইয়াত পতা হ'ল। Party বোৰত সববোৰ গোটখালে আলোচনা হয় এইবাৰ অসমৰ কোনোবা এজন গায়ক আনিব লাগিব, বা বিশেষ কিবা এটা অসমৰ বাসিন্দা হিচাবে কৰিব লাগিব। এই কথাটোৱে ২০০৯ চনৰ বহাগ বিহুৰ আগে আগে বেছি গুৰুত্ব পাবলৈ ধৰিলে। শেষত ঠিক হল জুবিন গাৰ্গকে অনা যাওক। কিন্তু বিশেষ সূত্ৰৰ পৰা খবৰ লৈ জনা গল যে, এনেদৰে কাৰোবাক নিমন্ত্ৰণ কৰি program কৰিবলৈ হ'লে কুৱেইট চৰকাৰৰ নিয়ম অনুসাৰে যিকোনো পঞ্জিয়ন ভুক্ত সংঘইহে এই অনুমতি পায়। এইবাবে আকৌ কমেও এটা সংখ্যক সদস্যৰ প্ৰয়োজন। ইয়াত তেনেকুৱা বহুতো সংঘ আছে আৰু তেওঁলোকে এনেকুৱা program কৰিছে। গতিকে আলোচনা হল আমাৰো এটা সংঘ কৰা যাওক। বেলেগ সংঘৰ আধাৰলৈ এখন সংবিধান বনোৱা হল। এইক্ষেত্ৰত জয়ন্ত বৰদলৈৰ অৱদান যথেষ্ট। সেই সংবিধানকে গ্ৰহণ কৰি ২০০৯ চনৰ ১২ মাৰ্চত চিন্ময় দণ্ডৰ ঘৰত হোৱা সভাত আলোচনা মৰ্মে কুৱেইটত থকা অসমবাসী/অসমত বসবাস কৰি অহা জন সাধাৰণৰ শিক্ষা, সংস্কৃতি, খেলাধুলা বহুল প্ৰসাৰৰ বাবে অসম সংঘ, কুৱেইট (Asom Association, Kuwait) ৰ জন্ম হ'ল। সেই সভাতে সংবিধানৰ ৫নং দফা অনুসৰি সংঘৰ কাম কাজ চলাই নিবলৈ ৯ জনীয়া এখন

কমিটি গঠন কৰা হল। কিন্তু আৰু এটা প্ৰধান কাম হল যে সংঘ খন কুৱেইটত থকা ভাৰতীয় দূতাবাসত পঞ্জিয়ন কৰাটো। তাৰবাবে যাৱতীয় কাগজ পত্ৰ, গোটোৱা হ'ল। সকলোৱেই যি যিমান পাৰে সহায়ৰ বাবে আগবাঢ়ি আহিল। এই সকলোবোৰ দূতাবাসত জমা দিয়াৰ পাছত ২০০৯ চনৰ মাৰ্চ মাহৰ ২৯ তাৰিখে, আমাৰ অসম সংঘ ভাৰতীয় দূতাবাসত পঞ্জিয়ন ভুক্ত হল। এই ক্ষেত্ৰত ভাৰতীয় ৰাষ্ট্ৰদূত মাননীয় অজয় মালহোটা দেবৰ সহায় আছিল অন্যতম। অভিজিতে অসম সংঘৰ এটা Logo আৰু Letter head বনালে। আৰু তাকেই গ্ৰহণ কৰা হ'ল। সংঘৰ স্মৰনীকা জেতুকাৰ কাম লগতে আৰম্ভ হল - সম্পাদক দেৱাশীষ আৰু অভিজিত।

অসম সংঘ, কুৱেইটৰ ফালৰ পৰা পতা প্ৰথম অনুষ্ঠান হ'ল ১০ এপ্ৰিল, ২০০৯ ৰ জুবিন গাৰ্গ সন্ধিয়া। যথেষ্ট সফল এটা অনুষ্ঠান। সুদূৰ কুৱেইটত সকলোৱে জুবিনৰ মধুৰ কণ্ঠ উপভোগ কৰিলে। ভাৰতীয় ৰাষ্ট্ৰদূত মাননীয় অজয় মালহোটা দেবৰ উপস্থিতিয়ে অনুষ্ঠানটোৰ শুভাবৰ্দ্ধন কৰিলে।

তাৰ পাছত ঠিক হ'ল যে ল'ৰা-ছোৱালীৰ বাবে খেল ধেমালীৰ এটা অনুষ্ঠান পতা হওক। ২৪ এপ্ৰিল, ২০০৯ ত খেল ধেমালীৰ অনুষ্ঠানটোও সকলোৱে উপভোগ কৰিলে। তাৰ পাছৰ অনুষ্ঠান হল ২৫ চেপ্টেম্বৰ ২০০৯ ৰ Autumn Festival- লৰা-ছোৱালীৰ গান, নাছ, কুইজ অনুষ্ঠান আছিল বেছ উপভোগ্য। এই অনুষ্ঠানতেই অসম সংঘৰ প্ৰথম স্মৰনীকা 'জেতুকা' উন্মোচন হল।

১৫ জানুৱাৰী ২০১০-এটা বনভোজৰ আয়োজনেৰে মাঘবিহু পতা হল। কুৱেইটত দৈ চিৰা, পিঠা, বৰাচাউলৰ জলপানেৰে সকলোৱে মাঘ বিহুৰ সোৱাদ ললে।

এনেকৈয়ে অসম সংঘ, কুৱেইটৰ এবছৰীয়া কাৰ্যকাল প্ৰায় সম্পূৰ্ণ হ'ল। যোৱা ১২ ফেব্ৰুৱাৰী ২০১০ ৰ বাৰ্ষিক সভাখনত সকলোৰে সন্মতিক্ৰমে যোৱাবছৰৰ কমিটি খনকে এই বছৰটোৰ কাৰ্য্যক্ৰম চলাই যাবলৈ ৰখা হল।

আৰু এটা কথা উল্লেখ কৰিব খুজিছো। অলপতে হৈ যোৱা Indian Doctors Forum DOCFEST 2010, অনুষ্ঠানত অসম সংঘৰ কেইবা গৰাকী সদস্যই অসমীয়া সাজপাৰ অনুষ্ঠান পৰিবেশন কৰি প্ৰশংসা লাভ কৰাৰ লগতে অসম সংঘৰ নাম উজ্জলাই তুলিছে। আশা কৰিছো ভৱিষ্যতে অসম সংঘ, কুৱেইটে আৰু আগবাঢ়িব পাৰিব।

এইখিনিতে আৰু এটা কথা উল্লেখ কৰিব খুজিছো অসম সংঘ, কুৱেইট যিহেতু ভাৰতীয় দূতাবাসত পঞ্জিভূত এটা সংঘ, ইয়াৰ ভাৰতীয় বাসিন্দা হিচাবে জানিব লগিয়া কথা, ভাৰত কুৱেইট চৰকাৰৰ সহযোগত হোৱা অনুষ্ঠানৰ বিষয়ে দূতাবাসৰ পৰা সময়ে সময়ে অসম সংঘলৈ প্ৰেৰণ কৰে। এই বোৰৰ বিষয়ে আমাৰ সদস্য সকলে ইতিমধ্যে গম পাইছেই মই ভাবো আমাৰ বাবে এইটো এটা ভাল খবৰ।

ইতিমধ্যে এইবাৰো ৰঙালী বিহু পতাৰ আয়োজন আৰম্ভ হৈছে। এইবাৰ অসমৰ সকলোৰে পৰিচিত মানস ৰবিন অহাৰ কথা। 'জেতুকা' সম্পাদনাৰ দায়িত্ব দিয়া হৈছে দ্বৈপায়ন আৰু ডাঃ ৰিফাতক। দুয়োৰে এই ক্ষেত্ৰত যথেষ্ট পাৰদৰ্শিতা আছে। দেখিছো যথেষ্ট উৎসাহেৰে হাতত লৈছে দায়িত্বটো। সকলোকে আহ্বান জনাইছে 'জেতুকা'ত লিখিবৰ বাবে। মোৰ পিছে এইবোৰত লিখাৰ বিশেষ অভিজ্ঞতা নাই। কিন্তু অসম সংঘ, কুৱেইটৰ বিষয়ে কিবা এটা লিখিবলৈ মন গল। তাৰেই প্ৰচেষ্টাৰে দ্বৈপায়ন আৰু ৰিফাতৰ অনুৰোধ ৰাখিবৰ চেষ্টা কৰিলো।

## এটি উপলব্ধি

ভাৰতী শৰ্মা

সময় আৰু পৰিস্থিতিৰ চাকনৈয়াত পৰি ল'ৰা, বোৱাৰী নাতি-নাতিনীৰে সৈতে আহি যিদিনা কুৱেইটত পদাৰ্পণ কৰিছিলোঁহি ভাবিছিলো কিমানযে নিজস্বতা চাগৈ ত্যাগ কৰিব লাগিব ইয়াত তাৰ ঠিকনা নাই। জীৱনৰ বেচি ভাগ সময় কটোৱা নিজৰ দেশখনৰ লগত সম্বন্ধ প্ৰায় ছিঙি যোৱাৰ দৰে হোৱাৰ কথা ভাবিলে বুকুখন এক বিষাদেৰে ভৰি পৰে। পিচে আজি প্ৰায় চাৰিটি বছৰ ইয়াত পাৰ কৰাৰ পাচত কি পালোঁ, কি নাপালোঁ তাৰ ক্ষতিয়ানখন মনৰ মাজত জুকিয়াই চাই কেনে লাগিছে তাকেহে আজি ব্যক্ত কৰিব বিচাৰিছোঁ আমেৰিকালৈ অস্থায়ী ভাবে অহা সৰু পুত্ৰ বোৱাৰীৰ বাসগৃহত বহি। বৰ সুন্দৰ এই দেশ, যথেষ্ট সা-সুবিধা ইয়াত। ধুনীয়া ধুনীয়া ঘৰ, ধুনীয়া ৰাস্তা পদূলি, সুন্দৰ জলবায়ু, সুন্দৰ প্ৰাকৃতিক পৰিবেশ। তথাপি আমাৰ বাবে কিবা যেন নাই নাই, কিবা এটাৰ যেন ডাঙৰ অভাৱ। এইবোৰৰ বিশদ বৰ্ণনা দিবলৈ যোৱাটো সমীচীন নহ'ব বুলিয়েই ভাবিছোঁ। কাৰণ মানুহটোৱে প্ৰতি মনটো, ধানটোৱে প্ৰতি কনটো।

আমি কুৱেইটত কি পালো ? উত্তৰত অন্ততঃ ক'ব লাগিব-একো হেৰুওৱা নাই। ধৰ্মৰ প্ৰতি যথেষ্ট গোড়া এই দেশখন কিন্তু আন কিছুমান কথাত যথেষ্ট উদাৰ বুলিয়েই ক'ব লাগিব। FAIPS- নামটো শুনিলেই মোৰ আজিকালি মনটো ভাল লাগিছে যায়। Fahaheel Al-Wataniya Indian Private School বুলি যেতিয়া মোৰ নাতি-নাতিনীহঁতে বৰ কষ্টেৰে কৈ উঠে বৰ মৰম লগি যায় সিহঁতক। এই বিদ্যালয়খনে সিহঁতক আধুনিক যুগত পাবলগীয়া শিক্ষা দীক্ষা খিনিৰ লগত পৰিচয় কৰি দিয়াৰ লগতে নিজ দেশৰ ভাষা, সংস্কৃতি, কলাকৃষ্টিৰ লগতো সুন্দৰ ভাৱে পৰিচয় কৰাই দি আহিছে। এই বিদ্যালয়ৰ শিক্ষক শিক্ষয়িত্ৰী সকলে কতযে আহোপুৰুষাৰ্থ চেষ্টা কৰি আপ্ৰাণ পৰিশ্ৰম কৰি ভাৰতীয় নৃত্য-গীত, উৎসৱ-পাৰ্বন বোৰৰ লগত ছাত্ৰ ছাত্ৰী হঁতৰ সম্বন্ধ জোৰাই ৰাখিছে তাৰ বৰ্ণনা দি শেষ কৰিব নোৱাৰি। তাৰ বাবে তেওঁলোক সঁচাকৈ ধন্যবাদৰ প্ৰাত্ৰ। সেই বিদ্যালয় খনিৰ বহুৰেফীয়া অনুষ্ঠানবোৰ চাবলৈ গ'লে মনটো ভাল লাগি যায়, হিয়ামন গৌৰৱ আৰু আনন্দেৰে উপচি পৰে। ভাৰতৰ প্ৰত্যেকখনি প্ৰদেশৰ সাজ পোচাক, নৃত্য-গীতৰ লগত ছাত্ৰ ছাত্ৰী সকলক বৰ সুন্দৰকৈ পৰিচয় কৰাই

দিয়ে তেওঁলোকৰ দ্বাৰা সেইবোৰ পৰিবেশন কৰোৱাৰ মাধ্যমেৰে।



প্ৰায় প্ৰতিটি লৰা-ছোৱালীক ইমান শৃংখলাবদ্ধ ভাৱে এইবোৰ সফলভাৱে কৰোৱাটো যে কিমান কষ্টকৰ এই কথা নেদেখিলে কল্পনা কৰিব নোৱাৰি। ইংৰাজী ভাষা সলসলীয়াকৈ কোৱাৰ লগতে নিজ নিজ অঞ্চলৰ ভাষাও কৈ থাকিব পৰাটোও কিয় এক আনন্দৰ বিষয় সেই কথা মই আজি আমেৰিকাৰ পৰিবেশ দেখি গভীৰভাবে অনুভৱ কৰিছোঁ। ইয়াৰ উপৰিও ধৰ্মীয় অনুষ্ঠান বোৰোতো আমি ঘৰৰ ভিতৰতে হলেওতো একো নোপোৱাকৈ থকা নাই। কোনোৱে সুন্দৰাকাণ্ড ৰামায়ণ পাঠ কৰাইছে, কোনোৱে গীতা পাঠ কৰাইছে, কোনোৱে সত্যনাৰায়ণ পূজা পাতিছে। কোনোৱে সৰস্বতী পূজা, দুৰ্গা পূজা, গণেশ পূজা পাতিছে, দেৱীস্তুতি কৰিছে। উৎসৱ পাৰ্বন বোৰতো অনুষ্ঠিত কৰিয়েই আছে। নিজৰ নিজৰ খোৱাবোৱা সম্পূৰ্ণৰূপে উপভোগ কৰিছোঁ। মন গ'লেই নিজদেশীয় সাজপোচাক পিন্ধি ঘূৰি ফুৰিব পাৰিছোঁ। প্ৰত্যেক অঞ্চলৰ মানুহে নিজ নিজ অঞ্চলৰ মানুহখিনিৰ লগত সৌহাৰ্দ্যপূৰ্ণ সম্বন্ধ বজাই ৰাখি একোখন সুন্দৰ সমাজ গঢ়ি বাস কৰি আহিছে। লগতে আমাৰ সন্তানহঁতে বিদ্যালয়ৰ জৰিয়তে এই দেশৰ ভাষাও কিছু আয়ত্ব কৰিছে আৰু ইয়াৰ উৎসৱ পাৰ্বনবোৰো ভাগ কিছু কিছু লাভ কৰিব পাৰিছে সেয়াওতো এক সন্তোষজনক বিষয়। কোনো কোনো লৰা-ছোৱালীয়ে বৃটিছ স্কুলত পঢ়িও শিক্ষা গ্ৰহণ কৰিছে। কিন্তু তেওঁলোকে নিজৰ খিনিও পাহৰা নাই বা হেৰুৱাব লগীয়া হোৱা নাই। খেলা ধূলাৰ দিশতো সমানে সকলো সুবিধা

ইয়াত সন্তানহঁতে লাভ কৰিব পাৰিছে। স্কুলৰ বাহিৰতো ভাৰতীয় নৃত্য-গীত, গান-বাজনাৰ শিক্ষা লাভ কৰাৰ সুবিধা থকাৰ উপৰিও গীতাৰ, পিয়ানোকে আদি কৰি আন আন বাদ্য যন্ত্ৰৰো শিক্ষা সমানে পাব পাৰিছে। গতিকে এই দেশৰ মানুহ খিনিৰ অনুভূতিত কোনো আঘাত নকৰাকৈ শৃংখলাবদ্ধ ভাবে থাকি আমি আমাৰ নিজ সুবিধাবোৰ ধৈৰ্য সহকাৰে, উদাৰ দৃষ্টিভঙ্গীৰে গ্ৰহণ কৰাটো উচিত। নিজৰ দেশখনো বৰ বেচি দূৰৈ নহয় মন গলেই উৰা মাৰিগৈ চাই আহিছোঁ। যি দেশৰ বতাহ আমি সেৱণ কৰিছোঁ সেই দেশৰ প্ৰতি শ্ৰদ্ধা প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰাটোও আমাৰ কৰ্তব্য।

FAIPS অৰ সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান এটিলৈ গৈ যেতিয়া দেখিছিলো যে ইয়াৰ আকাশ বতাহ ৰজন জনাই গুঞ্জৰি উঠিছে ভাৰতৰ ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় সংগীত “জনগণমন অধিনায়ক জয়হে” তেতিয়া মোৰ দুচকুৰে দুখাৰি আনন্দৰ অশ্ৰু বৈ আহিছিল।

ভাষা, সংস্কৃতি সকলোফালৰ পৰা সম্পূৰ্ণ এখনি পৃথক দেশত আহি নিজৰ সংস্কৃতিৰ এনে চৰ্চা, এনে এখনি উচ্চ স্থান দেখি এটি স্বস্তিৰ নিশ্বাস পেলাব পাৰিছিলোঁ। আমাৰ সন্তানহঁতে জন্মভূমিৰ উমাল পৰশ ইয়াতো পাবলৈ সক্ষম হোৱাত গৌৰৱ বোধ কৰিছিলোঁ। আমি সদায় মনত ৰাখিব লাগিব যে এই বোৰৰ অভাৱৰ যেতিয়া সন্মুখীন হ'ব লাগিব তেতিয়াহে তাৰ মূল্য আমি গভীৰ ভাবে উপলব্ধি কৰিব পাৰিম।



## মই দেখা কুৱেইটী সমাজখন

### আভা বৰা

ক'নো দেখিলো কুৱেইটী সমাজ? তথাপি তিনিমাহ কাল কুৱেইটত কটাই অহাৰ অভিজ্ঞতাৰে কুৱেইট আৰু কুৱেইটী সমাজৰ বিষয়ে কিছু হলেও কথা জানিলো, বুজিলো, দেখিলো। তাকে ক'ব খুজিছোঁ।

আৰম্ভ উপসাগৰে পাৰ ধুৱাই থকা কুৱেইটৰ সাগৰ তীৰত থিয় হৈ ভাব হৈছিল এইখনেই আমাৰ দেশৰ দক্ষিণ পশ্চিম প্ৰান্ত ধুৱাই থকা শান্ত বিস্তীৰ্ণ আৰব সাগৰ। আমাৰ চিনাকি সাগৰ। ইয়াৰো একেই ৰূপ। একেখন সাগৰেই ইৰাণৰ পাৰ ধুৱাই থাকোতে নাম পাইছে পাৰস্য উপসাগৰ। কুৱেইট এখন নিচেই সৰু দেশ। যদিও মাটি পানী জলবায়ু সকলোতে এই দেশ আমাৰ অসমৰ লগত কোনোফালে নিমিলে তথাপিও এটা কথাত কিছু অসম আৰু কুৱেইটৰ এটি প্ৰকৃতি প্ৰদত্ত মিল আছে। সেয়া হৈছে দুয়োখন ঠাইৰে ভূগৰ্ভত আছে খাৰুৱা তেলৰ সম্ভাৰ। খাৰুৱা তেলৰ বাবেই কুৱেইট এতিয়া পৃথিৱীৰ এখন ধনী দেশ।

গধূলি হ'লেই কুৱেইটৰ য'তে ত'তে উজ্বল জ্বলমল পোহৰেৰে যেন প্ৰতিটো ৰাতিতে উৎসৱ। আনকি ঘৰবাৰীহীন বিস্তীৰ্ণ প্ৰান্তৰ মাজেদি যোৱা ডাঙৰ ডাঙৰ পথবোৰৰ দুয়োকাষেও শাৰী শাৰী বিজুলী বাতি। সুদীৰ্ঘ সুন্দৰ পথবোৰত দিন ৰাতি সমানে অবিৰাম গতিত গাড়ী চলে। কিন্তু দিন আৰু ৰাতিৰ কুৱেইটৰ মাজত আকাশ পাতাল প্ৰভেদ। দিনত গাড়ীবোৰ নিঃশব্দে চলি যাব। ভিতৰৰ ড্ৰাইভিং চীটত বেচিভাগেই ক'লা বোৰ্খা পৰিহিতা মহিলা। হৰ্ণ নাই। শব্দৰ কোনো প্ৰদূষণ নাই, যেন এখন নিঃশব্দ মহানগৰী। নিঃশব্দ প্ৰাণহীন। গধূলি হ'লেই তাৰ চেহেৰা হৈ পৰে অন্যধৰণৰ। গাড়ীৰ লাইটৰ পোহৰত এনে লাগে যেন শাৰী শাৰী চলি থকা বস্তিৰ দেৱালী। অহাযোৱাৰ পথত একেলগে চাৰি শাৰী ছয়শাৰী আঠশাৰী গাড়ীয়ে পোহৰৰ উৎসৱ পাতে। তাৰ লগতে ষ্ট্ৰীট লাইটৰ দুই তিনি শাৰী পোহৰ মালা। কিন্তু আমাৰ দেশৰ লগত ইয়াৰ এটা চকুত পৰা প্ৰধান পাৰ্থক্য হ'ল আমাৰ দুখীয়া দেশৰ নগৰ চহৰ মানুহৰ অহা যোৱা কথা বতৰা হাঁহি কান্দোন চিঞৰ বাখৰেৰে প্ৰাণৱন্ত। অতিশয় পৰিমাৰ্জিত কুৱেইটত এইটো পাবলৈকে বৰ কঠিন। মলবিলাক বজাৰ কৰা লোকেৰে উপচি থাকে। কিন্তু অনৰ্থক কোলাহল ইয়াতো নাই। হয়তোবা মৰুভূমিৰ অতিপাত গৰম বা অতিপাত ঠাণ্ডাৰ বাবেই প্ৰাণোচছলতা নাই। কিন্তু ইয়াৰ মানুহ বৰ সমাজপ্ৰিয়। প্ৰতি সমৰ্থ

ব্যক্তিৰ ঘৰতে ডাঙৰ ডাঙৰ বৈঠকখানা। বৈঠকখানাক এওঁলোকে দীৱানীয়া বোলে। গাছৰ দুৱাৰ খিৰিকীৰ মাজেদি আলিবাটৰ পৰা দেখি থকাকৈ ওলমি থকা বিভিন্ন প্ৰকাৰৰ লঠন আৰু সুন্দৰ চকী মেজেৰে সুসজ্জিত দীৱানীয়াবোৰত কুৱেইটী লোকে বহি প্ৰায়ে সন্ধিয়া আলাপ আলোচনা কৰে, হোকাৰ আমেজ লয়। একলগে টি.ভি চায়। এই কথাই অসমীয়া মানুহৰ এসময়ৰ জাৰকালিৰ গধূলিৰ জুহলিখন বা গ্ৰীষ্মৰ জোনাকৰ চোতালখনত ওচৰ চুবুৰীয়াৰ কথা বাৰ্তাৰে মুখৰিত পৰিবেশটোলৈ মনত পেলায়।

হোকাৰ কথা কওঁতেই কথা এটা মনত পৰিল। কুৱেইটৰ বজাৰত ঘূৰি ফুৰোতে হঠাতে এঠাইত দেখিলো লিখা আছে “শীষা বাৰ”, অৰ্থাৎ হোকা খোৱা পাৰ্লাৰ। ইয়াত বহি মানুহে হোকা হোপে।



দেখিলো দোকানখনৰ দুৱাৰত দুটা নলীচা লগোৱা হোকাৰ ছবি আঁকি খোৱা আছে। তাৰ পিছৰ পৰাহে মন কৰিলো কিছুমান শীষা বাৰত এয়াৰ কন্ডিচনড ৰুমত বহি, কিছুমানত আকৌ মুকলিত টেবুল চকী দি হোকা হোপাৰ সুবিধা কৰি খোৱা আছে। এই মুকলিত থকা টেবুল চকীৰ ওপৰত পানীৰ পাইপেৰে গুড়ি চালনীৰে চলাৰ দৰে পানী চটিয়াই আছে। তাৰ ওপৰেদি বৈ যাব পৰাকৈ দুমুৰে দুখন ডাঙৰ ফেনৰ বতাহে সেই পানীখিনি ঘূৰাই ঘূৰাই চটিয়াই ঠাইখন শীতল কৰি ৰাখিছে। তাৰমাজতে মাজত সৰু সৰু টেবুল লৈ দুজন বা তিনি চাৰিজন লোকে বহি আৰামেৰে হোকা ছপিছপি নানা কথাৰ মেল মাৰিছে। হোকাটো মাজত লৈ বহাটো তেওঁলোকে পুৰুষৰ মৰ্যদাৰ কথা বুলি ভাবে।

অসমতো দূৰ অতীতত হোকাৰ ব্যৱহাৰ কেৱল ৰীতি বুলিয়েই নহয় মৰ্যদাৰ প্ৰতীক হিচাপেও ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হৈছিল। ধনী লোক সকলে দামী হোকা ছপিছলি। গ্রামাঞ্চলত সাধাৰণ হোকাত বা চিলিমত লৈ

ধঁপাত খোৱাটো যুগে যুগে চলি অহা নিয়ম আছিল।

সৰুতে আমাৰ ওচৰৰে এগৰাকী আইতাই টুৰুক টুৰুক কৈ পুৱা গধূলি হোকা খোৱাৰ শব্দই আমাক মোহাবিষ্ট কৰি তুলিছিল। কিচকিচীয়া ক'লা নিমজ নাৰিকলৰ খোলাটোৰ মাজেৰে ওলাই অহা নলীচাডাল মুখত দি আইতাই অপূৰ্ব সংগীতৰ সৃষ্টি কৰি হোকা ছপিছলি।

আমাৰ মনত আছে পঞ্চাশ ষাঠীৰ দশকলৈকে ঘৰুৱা সকাম নিকামত ভকতক মাটিৰ চিলিমত পকা অঙঠা ভৰাই মলাধঁপাত দি লগাই যোগান ধৰা হৈছিল। কোনোবাই চিলিমৰ মুখত বগা কাগজৰ চূড়া এটা লগাই, কোনোবাই বা শুদা হাতেৰেই চূড়াৰ দৰে কৰি চিলিমত দুহোপামান মাৰি কাষৰ ভকতজনলৈ আগবঢ়াই দিয়াৰ দৃশ্য এতিয়াও চকুৰ আগত ভাহি উঠে। এনেকৈয়ে প্ৰায় সকলো ভকতৰ হাতে হাতে চিলিমকেইটা দুপাকমান ঘূৰে। ভকতৰ পাছৰ শাৰীত বহা ভকতনী সকলৰো দুই এগৰাকীয়ে হাতৰ টিপতে চিলিমটো লৈ ওৰণিৰে মুখখন ঢাকি পাছফালে মুখ কৰি লৈ দুহোপামান টানে। আজিকালি অৱশ্যে মহিলাই হোকা হোপা দৃশ্য দেখা নাযায়।

যিহেতুকে আমি বিদেশী, তাতে নতুনকৈ গৈছোঁ, গতিকে কুৱেইটৰ স্থানীয় লোকৰ লগত আদান প্ৰদান কৰাৰ কোনো সুবিধাই আমাৰ নাই। দোকান বজাৰত সৰহভাগেই বাংলাদেশী, পাকিস্তানী, শ্ৰীলংকান আৰু ভাৰতীয় লোকে কাম কৰে। হোজাইৰ আতৰৰ ব্যৱসায়ী আজমলৰ দোকানত হোজাইৰ বাংলাভাষী মুছলমান লোককো লগ পালো। গতিকে তাত বজাৰ সমাৰ কৰিবলৈ ভাষাটো বিশেষ সমস্যা নহয়। হিন্দী আৰু ইংৰাজী এই দুটা ভাষাৰেই কাম চলে। মলবিলাকত কথা কোৱাৰ কোনো প্ৰয়োজন নাই। সকলোতে দাম লিখা থাকে। দৰদাম কৰাৰ প্ৰশ্নই নুঠে। গতিকে কথা খৰচ কৰাৰ কথা নাহে। পছন্দৰ বস্ত্ৰ ট্ৰলীত উঠোৱা আৰু কাউন্টাৰত বিল লৈ টকা জমা দিয়া। কাম শেষ। কিন্তু কুৱেইটী ব্যক্তিয়ে উচ্চস্বৰত কথা পাতি ভালপায় বুলি গম পালো। তাৰিক ৰাজাব মিউজিয়াম চাবলৈ যাওঁতে মাত্ৰ দুজনমান দৰ্শকহে লগ পাইছিলো। তেওঁলোকেও আমাতকৈ আগতেই মিউজিয়ামৰ পৰা গুচি গৈছিল। আমি লাহে লাহে প্ৰদৰ্শিত বস্ত্ৰবোৰ চাই চাই আহি থাকোতে সন্মুখৰ কোঠাটোৰ পৰা বৰ উচ্চ স্বৰত মাত কথা ভাহি অহা শুনিলো। ভাৱ হ'ল যেন কোনোবাই কাজিয়াহে কৰিছে। মোৰ পেটে পেটে ভয় লাগি গ'ল। পাছতহে গম পালো যে কুৱেইটী সকলে তেনেকৈ উচ্চস্বৰত কথা



পাতে। অসমীয়া লোকেও ডাঙৰকৈ কথা পাতে, খোলা হাঁহিৰে বজনজনাই যায়। কিন্তু তাৰে সুৰটো সুন্দৰ। কাজিয়া কৰাৰ দৰে নহয়। কুৱেইটী লোকৰ মুখত হাঁহি দেখাৰ সৌভাগ্য নহ'ল। হয়তোবা মৰুভূমিত বৰষুণৰ দৰে হাঁহি আনন্দ দুখ বেজাৰৰো সীমাবদ্ধ প্ৰকাশ। ই চাগে মাটিৰে গুণ।

মনত পৰিছে আমাৰ ঘৰত কাম কৰা শান্তি নামৰ দক্ষিণ ভাৰতীয় ছোৱালীজনীৰ কথা। তাই এঘৰ ধনী কুৱেইটী লোকৰ ঘৰত কাম কৰে। আমিও কুৱেইটীলোকক নিজে লগ পাব নোৱাৰাৰ, মিলা মিচা কবিলে নোপোৱাৰ আক্ষেপটো আতৰাওঁ শান্তিৰ মুখতে তেওঁলোকৰ বিষয়ে শুনি, পাখীৰ খায়ে যোলৰ আশ্বাদ লোৱাৰ দৰে। শান্তিয়ে দেখুৱাইছিল তাইৰ মালিকৰ বিশাল বৈঠকখানাৰ ছবি তাই মোবাইলত মনে মনে ফটো তুলি আমাক দেখুৱাবলৈ লৈ আহিছিল। প্ৰকাণ্ড ডাইনিংৰুম। আকৌ মহিলাৰ বাবে ঘৰৰ অন্দৰমহলত আচুতীয়া বৈঠকখানা। নিজৰ ঘৰৰ নিজৰ এলেকাত মহিলা সকলে বোৰ্খাবিহীন ভাবে ফুৰে। তেতিয়াহে তেওঁলোকৰ দেহৰ সাজ পোছাক বা আ-অলংকাৰ দেখা যায়। মই মল বা ঢোক আদিলে যাওঁতে ভাবিছিলো যে দেশখনত মণিহাৰী মালৰ দোকানতকৈও বেচি যেন লগা শাৰী শাৰী গহনাৰ দোকান, দেহ বলৱী প্ৰদৰ্শিত আধুনিক সাজ পোচাকৰ দোকান এই বোৰ কোনে পিন্ধে? কোনে দেখে? কাৰণ বাহিৰলৈ ওলালে মহিলাই নিজেকে বোৰ্খাৰে আবৃত কৰি লয়। পুৰুষ সকলেও বাহিৰত সম্পূৰ্ণ শৰীৰ ঢকা পোছাক পিন্ধে।

শান্তিৰ পৰা জানিলো মহিলাই অন্দৰ মহলত চিনেমাৰ দৰে কাপোৰ পিন্ধে, গহনাৰে গা ভৰি থাকে। বাহিৰলৈ যাওঁতেও পিন্ধি যায়

বোৰ্খাৰ অন্তৰালত। ঘৰবোৰৰ ভিতৰভাগত অৰ্থাৎ মহিলাৰ এলেকাত ঘৰৰ পুৰুষে আগজাননী দিহে প্ৰৱেশ কৰে। মহিলাসকলে কেৱল নিজৰ গৃহস্থ আৰু সন্তানৰ আগতহে বোৰ্খাবিহীন ভাবে থাকে বুলি শান্তিয়ে ক'লে। ফুৰিবলৈ গ'লেও মহিলাথকা এলেকাটো পোৱাৰ পিছতহে বোৰ্খা খুলি পেলায়।

এইখিনিতে এটা অভিজ্ঞতা উল্লেখযোগ্য। আমি আমাৰ নবজাত নাতিনীজনী চাবলৈ গৈ আহমেদী হচপিটেলৰ নবজাতকক চাবলৈ থকা গ্ৰাচৰ খিৰিকী খনৰ মুখত থিয় হৈ আছোঁ। সেই সময়ত তাত কোনো পুৰুষ নাছিল। এনেতে এজনী ৫/৬ বছৰীয়া ছোৱালীয়ে উষাৰ কাপোৰৰ আঁৰেদি অকণমান ওলাই থকা পেটত হাতফুৰাই দি আঁচলটোৰে সেই অংশ ঢাকি দিলে। মাক গৰাকীয়ে ইংৰাজীতে ক'লে “তাই পেট ওলাই থকা কথাটো ভাল পোৱা নাই।” সৰুৰে পৰা আবুৰত থাকি আবুৰতাৰ শিক্ষা নিজে নিজেই পাইছে তাৰ কণমানিহঁতেও।

কুৱেইটীৰ পুৰুষসমাজৰ এক সাধাৰণ সম্ভৱবোধ চকুত পৰিল। বাটত যদি কোনোবা মহিলাৰ মুখামুখি হয় তেন্তে তলমুৰ কৰি পাৰহৈ যায়। অনাত্মীয় মহিলাক বাটে পথে চিনাকি হ'লেও নামাতে।

আমি থকা ঘৰটোৰ কাষৰ অন্য এটা বিস্তৃত কুৱেইটী পৰিয়ালে বাস কৰে। ঈদৰ দিনা দেখিছিলো পুৱাই সুন্দৰ সাজপাৰ কৰি কণমানি কেইটামানে ঘৰৰ চৌহদত দৌৰি চাপৰি ফুৰিছিল। চৌহদৰ সীমাৰ পকাত কিছুপৰ বহিছিল। কিন্তু সেইদিনাৰ বাহিৰে ল'ৰা ছোৱালীকেইটাকে অনাহকতে বাহিৰত দেখা নাছিলো। হয়তোবা তীব্ৰ গৰম বা তীব্ৰ ঠাণ্ডাই তেওঁলোকক তেনেকৈ বাহিৰত ওলাই সোমাই ফুৰিবলৈ শিকোৱা নাই।

আমি খিৰিকীৰে ঘৰটো দেখি থাকো, মাজে মাজে পৰিয়ালটো ফুৰিবলৈ ওলাই যায়। কিন্তু বোৰ্খা থাকে বাবে মহিলা কেইগৰাকীৰ চেহেৰাটো দেখিবলৈ সুবিধা নাই। মই ভাবিছিলো আমাৰ আনৰ লগত পৰিচয় হ'বলৈ মন যায়। তেওঁলোকৰ বা আনৰ লগত পৰিচয় হ'বলৈ মন যায়নে? আমি লোকৰ সাজ পোছাক চাই ভাল পাওঁ। তেওঁ লোকৰো বা ভাল লাগেনে? ক'তা মল আদিততো ইমান কুৱেইটী মহিলা লগ পাইছোঁ। তেওঁলোক বেচিভগেই উচ্চ শিক্ষিতো। কোনেওতো অনাহকতে আমাৰ প্ৰতি, আমাৰ সাজ-পোছাকৰ প্ৰতি কোনো কৌতুহল প্ৰকাশ নকৰিলে। অথচ ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰে বিভিন্ন প্ৰদেশত মেখেলা চাদৰ পিন্ধি ঘূৰি ফুৰিলে দেশী-বিদেশী নানা পৰ্যটকে আমাৰ পোছাকযোৰৰ সম্পৰ্কে জানিব খোজে। কুৱেইটীতো এখন মলত অসমীয়া সাজপাৰ দেখি এজন দক্ষিণ ভাৰতীয় লোক পাৰ হৈ গৈ আকৌ উভতি আহি সুধিছিল- এক্সকিউজ মি, আৰ ইউ ফ্ৰম আচাম?

এটা কথা গম পালো যে কুৱেইটীলোক বৰ পৰিয়াল কেন্দ্ৰিক। পিতৃ মাতৃ ককাই ভাই সকলো একেলগে থকা তেওঁ লোকৰ সংস্কৃতি। সময় সলনি হ'ল। নাও বাই বাই সাগৰ তলীৰ মুক্তা বুটলি জীৱন নিৰ্বাহ কৰা কুৱেইটী লোকে দেশখনত খনিজ তেল উৎপাদন হোৱাৰ পিছত মুক্তা আহৰণ কৰাৰ কঠিন বৃত্তিটো এৰি দি অন্য ব্যৱসায় বাণিজ্যত লিপ্ত হৈ পৰিল। তাৰ ফলত তেওঁলোকৰ যৌথ পৰিয়ালটোও ক্ৰমান্বয়ে সৰু পৰিয়াললৈ পৰ্যবসিত হ'ল। অসমীয়া সমাজখনো বৰ পৰিয়াল কেন্দ্ৰিক। একালৰ খেতিবাতি কৰি সংসাৰ চলোৱা অসমীয়া লোকেও এতিয়া সৰহ সংখ্যকেই খেতি পথাৰত কাম কৰিবলৈ এৰি অন্যান্য জীৱিকা গ্ৰহণ কৰিবলৈ ল'লে। সেই বাবে নিজৰ কৰ্মজীৱনৰ তাগিদাতে অসমীয়া মানুহেও এতিয়া যৌথ পৰিয়ালত বসবাস কৰাটো এৰিব লগা হৈছে। আৰু হয়তো এই বাধ্যতামূলক ব্যৱস্থাটোৱেই পাছৰ কালত এটা অভ্যাসত পৰিণত হৈ গাইগুটীয়া পৰিয়াল বোৰৰ বিস্তৃতি ঘটাইছে। কিন্তু মূলতে অসমীয়া মনবোৰ নিজ নিজ পৰিয়ালৰ আশে পাশেই ঘূৰি ফুৰে আৰু সময় সুবিধা পালেই ইজনে সিজনৰ সান্নিধ্য লাভ কৰিবলৈ কাষ চাপি আহে।

*(নগাঁৱত স্থিত অধিবক্তা শ্ৰীমতী আভা বৰা অসমৰ এগৰাকী বিশিষ্ট সাহিত্যিক। সম্প্ৰতি তেখেতে সদৌ অসম লেখিকা সমাৰোহ সমিটিৰ উপসভাপতি ৰূপে কাৰ্যনিৰ্বাহ কৰি আছে।)*



## আকৌ এবাৰ আহিবা বসন্ত.....

ঋতু উৎসৱ। সৰ্বকালৰ সৰ্বদেশৰ সৰ্বজাতিৰ ই এক সৰ্বসমাহত জন সমাৰোহ। গ্ৰীষ্ম, বৰ্ষা, শৰৎ, হেমন্ত আদি ঋতু সমূহৰ

কলকাকলিত। অসমীয়াৰ জাতীয় জীৱনলৈ যেন মাদকতা আনে। ছন্দ জাগে। চিৰি লুইতৰ পাৰ চিৰ সজীৱ চিৰ সেউজীয়া হৈ পৰে, ঢোল-টকা-পেঁপা-গগনাসহ ৰজনজনাই

**ড. মলয়া খাওন্দ**  
যৌৱনৰ নাচ নাচে, সৃষ্টিৰ অংকুৰ সিঁচে।' ডঃ সত্যেন্দ্ৰ নাথ শৰ্মাৰ উক্ত মন্তব্যৰ সত্যতা পৃথিৱীৰ প্ৰায় বোৰ লোক-নৃত্যতে লক্ষণীয়। সেয়ে হয়তো বহাগ-বিহুৰ 'উৰ্বৰতা বা প্ৰজননৰ উৎসৱ' (Fertility rite) বুলিও কোৱা হয়। 'ছচৰি. এ'চ'ত, আমি বহি মাৰোঁ য'ত দুবৰি নগজে ত'ত 'ঘৰতো নবহে মন সমনীয়া পথাৰতো নবহে মন', 'বহৌ তাত-শালত চকু আলিবাটত, 'বিহু থাকে মানে বিহুকে বিনাবা, বিহু গ'লে বিনাবা কাক' এই ৰঙৰ ৰহঘৰা ৰঙালী বিহুৰ মাজতে যেন অসমীয়া কৃষিজীৱীকে মুখ্যকৰি সমগ্ৰ জাতীয় জীৱনৰ মোকোঁহ সোমাই আছে।



কেৱল ৰং ৰহইচেনে? চ'ত আৰু বহাগৰ সংক্ৰান্তিত হোৱা গৰু বিহুলৈ চাওক.....। কৃষি আৰু গো-সম্পদ গ্ৰাম্য গৃহ-স্থালী- এখনৰ পৰম বৈভৱ। গৰু বিহুৰ দিনা মাহ হালধিৰে নৈত গৰুক গা ধুৱায়-লাও, কেৰেলা, বেঙেনা আৰু কেঁচা হালধিৰ টুকুৰা সী লোৱা বাহৰ শলা বা চাটেৰে-  
'লাও খা বেঙেনা খা  
বহৰে বহৰে বাঢ়ি যা  
মাৰ সৰু বাপেৰ সৰু  
তই হ'বি বৰ গৰু'।

লৌকিকতা হ'লেও এই প্ৰচলিত প্ৰবচন শাৰী গৃহস্থৰ অন্তস্থলীৰ পৰাই আহে। কাৰণ গৰু-গাই বা মানুহ-যিয়েই নহওক সুস্বাস্থ্যহে উন্নতিৰ সোপান। তদুপৰি, গৰুৰ চাটত সী লোৱা বতৰৰ পাচলি কেইবিধ বসন্তকালৰ ৰোগ প্ৰতিষেধক বুলিও ভৱাৰ খল আছে। গৰু বিহুৰ দিনা গধূলিৰ সাজত নিম পাত আৰু গৰুৰ চাট উপকৰণ থকা বিধেয় বুলি অনেক বুঢ়া-মেথাই কয়। জেতুকা গৰু বৰ্হমথুৰিৰে হাত-মুখ ৰঙাই তোলাও এক স্বাস্থ্য সন্মত বিধান। .....কৈয়ে থাকো মানে ওৰকে নপৰে ৰঙালী বিহুটিৰ কথা'- 'চেনাই মই যাওঁগৈ, বিহুতে আহিমগৈ' .... 'ম'হৰ শিঙৰ পেঁপাটি নবজাবি ককাইটি, মনে মোৰনো কেনেবা কৰে'- এই সকলোবোৰেই অসমীয়াৰ বিহু-প্ৰীতিৰ পৰম পৰিচায়ক। আহোম স্বৰ্গদেও সকলৰ ছশ বছৰীয়া ৰাজত্ব কালত অসমীয়া জাতীয় জীৱনলৈ আগবঢ়োৱা অনেক অৰিহণাৰ ভিতৰত জাতীয় উৎসৱ হিচাপে বিহুক দিয়া আনুষ্ঠানিক স্বীকৃতিও এক উল্লেখনীয় অভিলেখ। 'স্বৰ্গদেউ' ওলালে বাটচৰাৰ মুখলৈ দুলীয়াই পাতিলে দোলা' ছচৰিত এনে পংক্তিৰ উল্লেখ ডেখাৰ। সমাজৰ বিজ্ঞ লোক সকলৰ সমাবেশত হোৱা ছচৰিত বিহুৰ গীত নৃত্যৰ বিকল্প ৰূপ এটি পৰিলক্ষিত হয় 'কৃষ্ণাইৰ মূৰে বকুল ফুল এপাহি নিয়ঁৰ পাই মুকলি হ'ল হে গোবিন্দাই ৰাম'।

যোৱা বিহুৰ নৃত্য-গীত মতেৰে।

সময়ানুযায়ী হোৱা বিভিন্ন পৰিৱৰ্তনে প্ৰকৃতিৰ লগত চিৰন্তন যোগসূত্ৰ স্থাপন কৰি অহা মানুহৰ ওপৰত যি সুদূৰ প্ৰসাৰী প্ৰভাৱ বিস্তাৰ কৰি আহিছে সি দৰাচলতেই বিস্ময়কৰ। পঞ্চভূতেৰে গঠিত মানুহ প্ৰকৃতিৰেই সন্তান। ক্ষণস্থায়ী, মানৱ-জীবন। 'মাটিৰ মানুহ ইটো মাটিতে মিলিব।' আনহাতে 'ক'ৰ কোন কিবা হ'ল, চিন-স্মৃতি পমি গ'ল প্ৰকৃতিয়ে তেনেকৈয়ে ৰ'ল। 'প্ৰকৃতিৰ সৈতে হোৱা মানুহৰ সংগ্ৰাম অক্ষয় হ'লেও প্ৰকৃতি অজেয়, অভগন। ইতিহাসে ঢুকি নোপোৱা কালৰে পৰা প্ৰকৃতি-পালিত কৃষিজীৱী মানুহ নিৰ্ভৰশীল প্ৰকৃতি-প্ৰদত্ত শস্য পথাৰ খনিৰ ওপৰত, চৌদিশে আৱৰি থকা বন-চিটপী নৈ-নিজৰা, 'কুলিকেতেকীৰ ঋতু-অনুযায়ী হোৱা সুৰীয়া

অসমৰ ৰঙালী বিহু বা বসন্তোৎসৱ অতি আদৰৰ, অতি চেনেহৰ। 'বসন্ত আহিলে, কুলীটি বিনালে বিহু বিহু লাগিছে গাত'.... 'নাহৰ ফুল ফুলিবৰ বতৰত গছকত যতৰেই যেন ভাঙিব। 'চ'তে 'চ'তে গৈয়ে বহাগে পালেহি, ফুলিলে ভেবেলি লতা, কৈয়ে থাকোঁ মানে ওৰকে নপৰে বহাগৰ বিহুটিৰ কথা'। সঁচা কথা, 'অতি চেনেহৰে ৰঙালী বিহুটি'ও প্ৰকৃতিৰ লগত গভীৰ সঙ্গতি ৰাখি পতা এক বহু আকাজ্কিত জনপ্ৰিয় ঋতু উৎসৱ। শীতৰ লঠাঙা প্ৰকৃতি বৰষুণৰ সংস্পৰ্শত সৰস হৈ পৰে। পৃথিৱী শস্য সম্ভৱা হয়। এই 'প্ৰকৃতিগত বাস্তৱ সত্যই পথাৰৰ বা বিহুতলীৰ ডেকা-গাভৰুৰ নৃত্য-গীতৰ জৰিয়তে প্ৰতীকৰ ৰূপ লয়,উদং পথাৰৰ বুকুত ডেকা-গাভৰুৱে



‘দেউতাৰ পদুলিত গোন্ধাইছে মাধুৰী’ কেতেকী আমোল-মোলায়এ গোবিন্দাই ৰাম’। ছচৰিৰ অন্তত গৃহস্থই তামোল পাণ আৰু অৰিহণা ফুলাম গামোছাৰে শৰাইত সজাই লৈ ৰাইজৰ সমুখত নতশিৰ হৈ আশীৰ্বাদ লয় নতুন বছৰটো যাতে সৰ্বতোপ্ৰকাৰে মঙ্গলময় হৈ পৰে। আঢ়াৰস্তু সকলে সমূহ ৰাইজক চিৰা পিঠা-লাড়ু-মিষ্টান্ন আদিৰে আপ্যায়িতো কৰে। ছচৰিৰ পৰ্ব শেষ হৈ যোৱাৰ পিছতহে আচল বিহুৰ ৰগৰ মুকলি ভাবে আৰম্ভ কৰে। ডেকা সকলে ৰাইজ আৰু গৃহস্থক সম্বোধি গীত জোৰে-

ছাগৰ ছাল চেলাবৰ ডবুৱা কটাৰি  
বায়ৰ ছাল চেলাবৰ মিত  
গাঁৱৰ বুঢ়া-মেথা, দায়-দোষ নধৰিবা  
গাই যাওঁ বতৰৰ গীত।’

সেই ‘বতৰৰ গীত’ তেই লগে লগে আহি পৰিল- ডেকা-গাভৰুৰ পৰস্পৰ প্ৰেম-পিৰীতি’ৰ কথা, জীৱন-গঢ়াৰ পৰিকল্পনা, মনৰ দাপোনত ভাহি উঠা অলেখ সুখ-স্বপ্ন। ‘বিহু মাৰি থাকোঁতে পলুৱাই নিনিবি ভৰিব লগিব ধন’ ..... ‘লোককে দেখুৱাই কেটেৰাই মাতিবি, ভিতৰি নেৰিবি বেথা’।

এনে ধৰণৰ অন্তহীন হাঁহি-গীত নাচোনৰ এদিন অন্তপৰে। বহাগীয়ে বিদায় লোৱাৰ ক্ষণ চমু চাপি আহে। ডেকা-গাভৰুৰ হিয়া আমঠু ক’লা পৰে। আনন্দৰ অন্তত বিষাদ আহে। বিহুবলীয়া ৰাইজে হৰ্ষ-বিষাদৰ মাজতে মহা ধুমধামেৰে আয়োজন কৰে ‘বহাগী বিদায়’ উৎসৱ। প্ৰত্যেকেই যেন মনে-প্ৰাণে আহ্বান কৰে আগন্তুক হেঁপাহৰ মাধৱী মাহক ‘আকৌ এবাৰ আহিবা বসন্ত’। নতুবা ‘বহাগী বাসন্তী আহক ন সাজ লৈ-ৰঙালী বিহুলৈ - ৰঙালী বিহুলৈ - ৰঙালী বিহুলৈ’।

এটা কথা মন কৰিব লগীয়া-এই সদ্য চলিত ‘বহাগী বিদায়’ উৎসৱ যেন মঞ্চত উদযাপিত নগৰীয়া বিহুৰে এক বিশেষ ফলশ্ৰুতি, তেনে ভাব হয়।

‘বহাগৰ দুপৰীয়া’ৰ মিঠা ৰ’দ কাঁচলি অতৰ্কিতে এদিন অন্তৰ্হিত হয়। আগমন হয় জেঠমাহৰ ‘বাৰ খৰ’ৰ প্ৰচণ্ড উত্তাপ। দেহা-মন চাটি-ফুটি কৰি থাকোঁতেই আহিল এদিন বৰ্ষা ঋতু ‘বৰষা ঋতু ভাল পাওঁ মই, প্ৰতিশ্ৰুতি আছে তাত’ এনেদৰেই আহে- শীত, হেমন্ত, মধুময় মনোমোহা শৰৎ ঋতু। আকাশত নীলা ৰং চটিয়াই, দুবৰিবনত শেৱালিৰ দলিচা পাৰি আকৌ আহিল শৰৎ-

‘জীৱেম শৰদং শতং  
পাশ্যেম শৰদং শতং  
শনুয়াম শৰদং শতম।

এশটা মধুময় শৰতৰ স্বপ্ন বুকুত লৈ জীয়াই থকা মানুহে বছৰৰ প্ৰতিটো ঋতুতে অহা ‘উছবৰ মধু আলোড়ণ’ক উপেক্ষা কৰিব নোৱাৰে।

গতিকে ঋতু উৎসৱ সদায় আহে আৰু যায়গৈ। হে বসন্তোৎসৱ ৰঙালী বিহু। তুমি সদায় আহিবা। লগত আনিবা ৰং আনন্দৰ সফুৰা আৰু প্ৰাচুৰ্য।

‘চ’ততে চকৰি, বহাগত বগৰী জেঠতে অমনাধান’ - সময়ৰ চকৰিও কালচক্ৰৰ আৱৰ্তত ঘূৰি ঘূৰি আহে আৰু যায়। এৰি থৈ যায় আমাৰ মনৰ নিভৃত কোণত উৎসৱানন্দৰ মধুৰ স্মৃতি।

ৰঙালী বিহু আৰু নতুন বছৰে যেন সকলোৰে জীৱনলৈ সুখ-শান্তি আৰু সন্তোষ কঢ়িয়াই আনে।

(দিল্লীত স্থিত ডঃ মলয়া খাওন্দ এগৰাকী যশস্বী লেখিকা ও দিল্লী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ৰ অৱসৰ প্ৰাপ্ত অধ্যাপিকা। তেখেতে ২০০৬-০৭ চনৰ সাহিত্য একাডেমীৰ অনুবাদ বঁটা লাভ কৰিছে।)

## কবিতা

আলোক কুমাৰ দাস

মোক এটা কবিতাই খেদি ফুৰে অহৰহ

এই যেন লগ পালেই  
গোজ পুতি বহি লব  
ঠিক মোৰ বুকুৰ সোঁমাজত  
ত্ৰমাশ্বয়ে নিজৰ ঘৰ কৰি লব  
মোৰ শৰীৰ।

মই নুশুনো বুলিলেও  
যেন শুনাইছে এৰিব  
দিনান্তৰ শেহত  
আহত পখীৰ গান।

আৰু এয়াচোন কবিতাই  
মোক ধৰিলেই লগ।  
মোৰোতো আৰু অন্য গতি নাই  
লাহে লাহে মিলি গ’লো  
কবিতাৰ সতে  
নিৰহ নিপানীকৈ।





## সহযাত্রী

### দেব্রাশীষ কাকতী

ডিব্ৰুগড়ৰ এয়াৰপৰ্টলৈ আজি তিনি বছৰ মানৰ পিছত আহিছো। ঘৰৰ পৰা ওলাওতে দেৰিয়েই হল। কৰ্মস্থল কুৱেইটলৈ বুলি ওভতনি যাত্ৰা, এইবাৰ অকলেই। শ্ৰীমতীয়ে বিছ খাইহে ওভতিব। কেনিবা যাবলৈ ওলালে মই পৰাপক্ষত হাতত অলপ সময় লৈ ওলাও, মূৰা-মূৰি হলে মোৰ টেনশন হৈ যায়। আজি কিন্তু সছাকৈয়ে বৰ খপজপ হল, যেনে তেনে বস্তুখিনি চেক-ইন কৰি কে'বিন বেগ আৰু বডিং পাছ হাতত লৈ বিমানলৈ বুলি দৌৰ দিলো। ডিব্ৰুগড় সৰু এয়াৰপৰ্ট, দিলী-মুম্বাইৰ নিচিনাকৈ ইয়াত আভ্যন্তৰীণ যাত্ৰাৰ বাবে বাছৰ ব্যৱস্থা নাই, বিমানলৈ বুলি খোজ কাঢ়িয়েই যাব লাগে। আজি মোৰ কুকুৰ লৰ দেখি দুটামানে মুখ টিপি হাঁহিলে, কেয়াৰ কৰিবলৈ নাই আৰু এইবাৰলৈ ফ্লাইট যে মিছ নহ'লে এয়াই বহুত।

বহুদিনৰ পিছত এইবাৰ অকলে ট্ৰেভেল কৰিছো, এনেয়ে হ'লে শ্ৰীমতী আৰু পুত্ৰৰ কৃপাত শান্তিৰে অলপদেৰি বহিবলৈকে নাপাও। আজি কিন্তু মিছ কৰিছো তাহাঁত দুটাক। ভাবিলো হাতৰ আধা পঢ়া উপন্যাস খনেই পঢ়ি লম, নহ'লে সময় পাৰ কৰাই দিগদাৰি হ'ব। এয়াৰ হোস্টেছ গৰাকীয়ে দেখুৱাই দিয়া ছিটটোত বহি অলপ সকাহ লালো। 2 x 2 ছিটৰ বিমানখনত মোৰ কাষৰ ছিট এতিয়াও খালি। মই কেবিন বেগটো ৰখাৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰি থাকোতেই মোৰ সহযাত্রী গৰাকীও আহি পালেহি। সহযাত্রী এক অত্যাধুনিকা মহিলা। চকুত দামী ছানগাছ, কাষত বহাৰ লগে লগে এটি মধুৰ সুবাসে ছুই গ'লহি। কথা এটা ভাবি বৰ আমোদ পালো। মই নাগপুৰত ইঞ্জিনিয়াৰিং পঢ়ি থাকোতে বৰ দীঘলীয়া যাত্ৰা কৰিব লগীয়া হৈছিলে। কলিকতাত ৰে'ল বদলি কৰা আৰু মাজত ৰ'ব লগীয়া সময় খিনিক মিলাই মুঠ ৭২ ঘণ্টা। আমাৰ কলেজত ময়ে আছিলো অসমৰ একমাত্ৰ ছাত্ৰ, সাধাৰণতে আহোঁতে যাওতে কোনো লগ নাথাকে। এনে যাত্ৰাত সময় পাৰ কৰাটো খুবাই দিগদাৰ। নিজে আগবাঢ়ি সেয়ে নিজৰ কম্পাৰ্টমেণ্টৰ সকলোৰে লগত চিনাকি হৈ লওঁ টাইম পাছ হওক বুলি। নিজৰ ভবাটোত উঠাৰ আগতে মনত সদায় প্ৰাৰ্থনা-এইবাৰ যেন কম্পাৰ্টমেণ্টত ধুনীয়া ছোৱালী এজনীও থাকে, ছাত্ৰ জীৱণৰ অকালপক্ক মনৰ এটা নিষ্পাপ কামনা-DDLJ চিনেমা খনৰে পৰাই প্ৰেৰণা পাইছিলো হ'ব পায়। কলেজৰ চাৰিবছৰৰ যাত্ৰা বোৰত মোৰ সেই ফেণ্টাছী কেতিয়াও বাস্তৱত পৰিণত হৈ নুঠিলে।

কলেজৰ দিনত আজিৰ নিচিনা সহযাত্রী পোৱা হেঁতেন। মনে মনে কৌতুক পালো যদিও এনে পাতলীয়া কথা কিছুমান ভবাৰ বাবে অলপ লাজো পালো। প্লেণ খনে ইতিমধ্যে টেক-অফ কৰিবলৈ লৈছে, ছিট বেণ্ট ডাল এনেয়ে এবাৰ ছে'ক কৰি চকু দুটা মুদি দিলো। টুইত-টুইত-হঠাৎ এছ.এম.এছৰ শব্দটো শুনি সচকিত হৈ উঠিলো।



মবাইলটো পুনৰ ছেক কৰি চালো, বন্ধইতো আছে। চকু ফুৰাই দেখিলো এয়া মোৰ কাষৰ গৰাকীৰে কাৰবাৰ। প্লেণ উৰাৰ পাছতো এছ.এম.এছ পঢ়ি তাৰ উত্তৰ লিখাত লাগিছে। কিছুমান মানুহ একেবাৰে ডিছিপিন্ড নহয়। পঢ়া-শুনা মানুহ এগৰাকীয়েও যদি নিয়ম বোৰৰ এনে উলংঘন কৰে, বাকী বোৰৰ পৰা কি আশা কৰিব পাৰি বাৰু? মোৰ মনৰ বিতৃষ্ণা খিনি ধৰিব পাৰিলে হ'ব পায়, মেছেজ টো টাইপ কৰি পাঠিয়াই দিয়ে মানুহ গৰাকীয়ে ফনটো বন্ধ কৰিলে আৰু খিৰিকীয়েদি বাহিৰলৈ চাবলৈ ধৰিলে। তেখেত মোৰ প্ৰায় সম বয়সীয়াই হ'ব, সুন্দৰ ভাবে নিজক মেইনটেইন কৰিছে কিন্তু। জিনছ, টি ছাৰ্ট আৰু স্পৰ্টছ ছুৰে সৈতে এজনী কলেজীয়া ছোৱালীৰ নিচিনা কেজুৱেল লুক। আজিকালি আঢ়াৱন্ত মানুহ খিনি যথেষ্ট স্বাস্থ্য সচেতন। এনেদৰে নিজক মেইনটেইন কৰিলে বয়সৰো আচোৰ অলপ দেৰিকৈ পৰে। মোৰ শ্ৰীমতীৰ কিন্তু জিম-ছিমত বৰ ৰাপ নাই। ট্ৰেডমিল এটাও লৈ দিছিলো, তাত অলপ খোজকে কাঢ়ি লোৱা বুলি ক'লেই গেণ্ডেৰি মাৰি উঠে, সদায় একেটাই ডাইলগ- “শকত হৈ গ'লে এৰি দিবা নেকি?” আজিকালি সেয়ে কোৱাই বাদ দিছো।

ইটো সিটো কথাবোৰ ভাবি থাকোঁতেই মানুহ গৰাকীৰ লগত চকুৱে চকুৱে পৰিল। স্বভাববসত: এটা হাঁহিৰে মই অভিবাদন জনালো। কিন্তু ভদ্ৰমহিলাই একো প্ৰতিক্ৰিয়া নেদেখুৱালে। গহীন ভাবে মূৰটো

তললৈহে কৰি ললে। লাজো পালো আৰু নিজৰ ওপৰতে খঙো উঠিল- কি যে দৰকাৰ পৰিছিল। মোৰ মানুহজনীৰ প্ৰতি থকা আগৰ বিতৃষ্ণা খিনি অকৌ সতেজ হৈ উঠিল। মুখত একো ভাব প্ৰকাশ নকৰি হাতৰ উপন্যাস খনকে মেলি ল'লো। কেইটামান পেজ পঢ়াৰ পাছতেই শুই পৰিলো হ'ব পায়। লেণ্ডিংৰ সময় এয়াৰ হোস্টেছ জনীয়ে ছিট বেণ্ট লগাবলৈ হেঁচুক দিয়াতহে সাৰ পালো। মোৰ সহযাত্রীয়ে এতিয়াও গহীন ভাবে তললৈ মূৰ কৰি আছে। মই এনে ব'ৰিং মানুহ প্ৰথম লগ পাইছো, হ'ব ছাগে অইল-অ'এনজিছৰ বিগশ্বত এটাৰ ঘেনীয়েক - সেয়ে ইমান এটিটিউড।

প্লেণ খনে লেণ্ডিং কৰাৰ লগে-লগে মানুহবোৰো যেন হঠাৎ ৰেপ্টলেছ হৈ পৰিল। প্লেণখন বানৱেত চলিয়েই আছে, কিন্তু কোনো কোনোৱে ওপৰৰ কেবিনৰ পৰা বস্তু নমোৱাও আৰম্ভ কৰিলে।

“এক্কিকিউজ মি”-কাষৰ মানুহ গৰাকীয়ে মোকে মাতিছে দেখোন। “মোক ওলাই যাবলৈ অকনমান ৰাস্তাটো দিব নেকি? কি ধৰণৰ মানুহ এইজনী? প্লেণ ৰোৱাই নাই, এওঁৰ আকৌ নামিবলৈ লৰা লৰি হ'লেই।

“পিজ” এইবাৰ মানুহ জনীয়ে একেবাৰে অনুনয়ৰ সুৰত ক'লে, মাতটো তেনেই সেমেকা, এইমাত্ৰ যেন মানুহজনী ভাগি পৰিব। মই অলপ আচৰিত হ'লো, তথাপিও ৰাস্তা এৰি তেওঁক যাবলৈ দিলো। খপজপকৈ ওলাই যাওতে দিলে মোৰ ভৱিত গছক এটা। বিৰক্তিতে মোৰ মুখ খন বেঁকা হৈ গ'ল। কিবা এটা কওঁ বুলি ভাবোতেই মানুহ জনীয়ে ক'লে “ছৰি, আপোনাক অসুবিধা দিলো। পিজ বেয়া নাপাব। মোৰ হাজবেণ্ড দিনলীলৈ আহিছিল অফিছৰ কামত। কিন্তু আজি ৰাতিপুৱা কাৰ এক্সিডেণ্ট এটাত তেওঁ এক্সপায়াৰ কৰিলে। ডেডবদী হস্পিতেলতে আছে। মই সোনকালে গৈ ফৰমেলিতি কিছুমান কমপ্লিট কৰিব লাগিব।”

মই যেন বোবা হৈ পৰিলো। এজনী ভৰ-যৌৱনা মহিলাই নিজৰ হাজবেণ্ডৰ ডেডবদী লবলৈ আহিছে। কেনে এটা মানসিক অৱস্থাত আছে চাইগৈ-কিন্তু প্লেণত এবাৰলৈও কন্দা-কটা কৰি এটা ছিন ক্ৰিয়েট কৰা নাই। এটা গভীৰ সমবেদনাত মোৰ মনতো ভৰি পৰিল-ময়ো যেন নিজৰ আপোন মানুহ এজনক হেৰুৱালো !!

## মোৰ নাম নিমখ

### অঞ্জলি ৰাজখোৱা

নিমখ, লমক, ملح (milh), Salt অসমীয়া, হিন্দী, আৰবিকত তিনিটা বৰ্ণৰ আৰু ইংৰাজীৰ চাৰিটা বৰ্ণৰ মই এটা সৰু শব্দ। তাকে লৈ মই এই পৃথিৱী খনত কিমান তোলপাৰ লগাই থাকো চাওক চোন, ৰব শুনি যাওক মুখ বেকা কৰিব নালাগে, মই মোৰ সুখ দুখৰ কথা আপোনালোকৰ আগত পাতিবলৈহে ওলাইছো। মুখেৰে কৈ থাকিলে কোনোও নুশুনে বাবে আজি লিখি লিখি আপোনালোকৰ আগত ডাঙি ধৰিম।

প্ৰথম কথা হল মোৰ বোলে taxfree। মাহাত্মা গান্ধীয়েও আন্দোলন কৰিবলৈ মোকে বিচাৰি পালে। শুনিছে নহয় আপোনালোকে 'দাণ্ডিমার্চ' ধনীৰ পৰা দুখীয়ালৈকে সকলো ধৰণৰ মানুহে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে বাবে বোলে মোক ললে ভাল হব বুলি ভাবিলে। কথাটো সচাঁ, পৃথিৱীৰ সকলো মানুহে, কি ধনী কি দুখীয়া সকলোৱে মোক ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে। পৰিমাণ কম বেছি হব পাৰে জলবায়ু চাই। যেনে ব্ৰাজিলত মানুহে মোক অলপ কম খায় গৰম বাবে, গৰমত কিয় কম খাব লাগে সেইবোৰ পিছে মোৰ মগজে ধুকি নোপোৱা কথা, বৈজ্ঞানিক সকললৈ থলো। তাৰোপৰি ইৰান-ইৰাকৰ যুদ্ধৰ সময়ত বোলে আমেৰিকান সৈন্য সকলে পানীৰ লগত একোটাকৈ নিমখৰ টেবলেট খাইছিল। এই ডাঙৰ ডাঙৰ কথাবোৰ আপোনালোকে বুজিপোৱা নাই মই গম পাইছো, সেই বাবে মই সাধাৰণ কথালৈ আহো।

ৰাতিপুৱাৰ পৰা গধূলিলৈকে মানে শোৱাৰ আগলৈকে মই সোমাই থকা পাত্ৰ (container) টোত চাবচোন গৃহীনি গৰাকীৰ হাতখন অনবৰতে সোমায়ৈ থাকে। দিনৰ দিনটোত মোক ঘুকুটি ঘুকুটি মাৰে। কেনেকৈ চাওকচোন, আগৰ দিনতও আজিও। আগৰ দিনত শুই উঠিয়ে নিমখ আৰু মিঠাতেল মিহলাই দাঁত মাজিছিল। আজিকালি আকৌ Colgate Active Salt য'তনেকি নিমখ আছে। মুখখন ধোৱাৰ পাছত আহিল ৰাতিপুৱাৰ জলপান (breakfast)। তাতো নিমখীয়া বস্ত্ৰবোৰ খাই যে মানুহে পেটতো ভৰাব লাগে সেইবোৰ বহলাই নকলেও আপোনালোকে ধৰিব পাৰিছে নহয়। তাৰ পাছত চাওক দুপৰীয়াৰ আহাৰৰ কথা। দুপৰীয়াটোত মইহে মই-যিফালে হাত মেলিবা সেই ফালেই মই। আটাইতকৈ ভাল লাগে ঘৰত যেতিয়া কাৰোবাক ভাত খাবলৈ নিমন্ত্ৰণ কৰে। যিমানেই মছলা যিমানেই তেল কিন্তু মানুহে মোৰ কথাটোহে আগতে সোধে, সৰু

বাটি এটা লৈ গৃহীনি গৰাকীয়ে সোধে-চাচোন চা নিমখ হৈছেনে নাই। মই মুখ বেকা কৰি তাৰ মাজতে বাকীবোৰলৈ চাই হাঁহো, মোক হিচাবত ৰাখিব নোবাৰিলে যে সকলো বৰবাদ হব। সেইদৰে বিয়া সৰাহ ইত্যাদী বোৰত মোৰ স্থান সকলোৰে ওপৰত। আবেলি চাহ কাপলৈ আহো, বহুতৰে মাজত আকৌ মই, মই অহালৈকে সকলোৱে বাট চাই থাকে, ডায়েবেটিচ থকা সকলৰতো কথাই নাই, মই নহলে তেঁওলোকৰ দিনতে আন্ধাৰ। মই আহি পালে লৰাছোৱালীৰ পৰা বুঢ়ালৈকে সকলোবোৰ খোচ। কিয়নো আজিকালি লৰা ছোৱালী বোৰও মোক লৈয়ে ব্যস্ত। কোম্পানী বোৰেও মোক লৈ লৈ কিমানযে খাদ্য তাহাতৰ আগত ডাঙি ধৰিছে। Thanks to our great companies।



তাৰ পাছত আহো ৰাতিৰ আহাৰ টোলৈ মইহে মই, বেলেগ সময়ত বেলেগে ঠাই পালেও ৰাতিৰ সাজত মানে বিচনাত নুঠালৈকে মই হে মই।

নিশাৰ সাজটোৰ পাছত কেনেকৈ থাকো চাওক, কাৰোবাৰ যদি ডিঙিৰ বিষ আছে গৰম পানী আৰু মই। কোনোবা যদি বাহিৰত ঘূৰি ঘূৰি ভাগৰি আহিছে তেতিয়াও মই, মানে গৰম পানীৰ গামলা আৰু মই। আকৌ যদি পানীলগা জ্বৰ হৈ আছে তেতিয়াওতো গৰম পানী, ভৰি দুখন, গামলা আৰু মই লগ লাগিহে আৰাম। চাওকচোন ৰাতিপুৱাৰ পৰা গধূলী লৈকে মইহে মই নহয় জানো? আকৌ কোনোবাই যদি ঘোচা খাই মুখ ফুলি আহে প্ৰাথমিক চিকিৎসাতো মই, মোকেই ভাজি কাপোৰত টোপোলা কৰি গৰম সেক দিয়ে। মানুহক শুশ্ৰূষা কৰি কৰি মই ভাগৰি যাও। তথাপিও আকৌ মোৰ বদনামৰ শেষ নাই।

কেনেকৈ জানে? মানুহক কৈ লাভ নাই মানুহৰ সেইটো স্বভাৱেই, বেয়াটো কৈহে ভাল পায়, ভালটো নেদেখে। ৰাতিপুৱাৰ পৰা ৰাতি হোৱালৈকে মোতে ব্যস্ত থকাৰ পাছত কয় মই বোলে বেমাৰৰ বাহ কেনেকৈ শুনকচোন, মোৰ পৰা হাই ব্লাডপ্ৰেচাৰ, গইটাৰ ইত্যাদি

বেমাৰ বোৰ হয় বোলে, সেইবোৰ মই কিয় হয় নেজানো ডাক্তৰক কোৱাহে শুনিছো। পিছে কি হ'ব মোক এৰি থাকিব নোৱাৰে বাবে ডাঙৰ ডাঙৰ কোম্পানী বোৰে তাৰো সুন্দৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰি দিছে। যেনে হাইপ্ৰেচাৰৰ বাবে LoNa Salt, গইটাৰৰ বাবে iodized salt ইত্যাদি। Thank God, বদনাম গায়ও মোৰ পিছে পিছে। তথাপি মানুহৰ কথা নকব' মোৰ নাম উচ্ছাৰণ কৰি হিন্দীৰ গালি 'নমক হাৰাম'। তেনেকৈ হিন্দী চিনেমা জগতৰ মানুহে মোৰ নামত চিনেমা বনাইছে যেনে 'নমক হালাল'। ৰূপৰ বৰ্ণনা কৰি গানও গাইছে। যেনে 'সমুন্দৰ পে নহা কে নমকিন হোগয়া', 'যৌৱন পে লাগা, লাগাৰে নমক ইক্ষকা' অসমীয়াত আকৌ কিছুমান ফকৰা যোজনা- 'কটা ঘাহত নিমখ দিয়া'। ক'ত ব্যৱহাৰ নকৰে মোক। পোক পৰুৱা মাৰিবলৈ মোক কেনেকৈ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে চাওক, জোক এটা বিছা এটা ওলালে চিধা নিমখ অকনমান আনি দিয়ে, গৰম পানীও তো দিব পাৰে। মনে মনে ভাল ও লাগে মই যে কিমান কামৰ বস্ত। ডাক্তৰৰ মতে ছালৰ যি কোনো অসুখত গৰম পানী আৰু নিমখৰ সেক দিব পাৰে। উশাহ নিশাহ লোৱাত কষ্ট হলেও নিমখ গৰম পানীত মিলাই নাকেৰে Inhale কৰিলেও বহুত আৰাম পোৱা যায়। তাৰোপৰি সৌন্দৰ্য্যৰ প্ৰতি সজাগ নাৰী সকলে ক্ৰিম, মৌ আৰু নিমখ মিলাই লাহে লাহে মুখত মালিচ কৰিলেও বোলে ভাল বুলি কোৱা শুনিছো। কিমান যে গুণ মোৰ ভাবিলেও ভাল লাগে।

আৰুনো কিমান কম নিজৰ সুখ দুখৰ কথা, আপোনা লোকৰো ছাগৈ আমনি লাগিছে শুনি শুনি। এতিয়া পিছে এটা দৰকাৰী কথা কম মনদি শুনিব আৰু যিমান পাৰে কামত খটাব।

মোক খাদ্যত গ্ৰহণ কৰা পৰিমাণ বোৰ এদিনত কিমান হব লাগে চাওক-

১ৰ পৰা ৩ বছৰ বয়স : ২ গ্ৰাম (০.৮ গ্ৰাম চডিয়াম)

৪ৰ পৰা ৬ বছৰ বয়স : ৩ গ্ৰাম (১.২ গ্ৰাম চডিয়াম)

৭ৰ পৰা ১০ বছৰ বয়স : ৫ গ্ৰাম (২ গ্ৰাম চডিয়াম)

১১ৰ পৰা ওপৰ বয়সৰ : ৬ গ্ৰাম (২.৮ গ্ৰাম চডিয়াম)

এই মাত্ৰা বোৰ সৰ্বোচ্চ। ইয়াতকৈ কমাই খাব পাৰিলে ভাল। বেছিহে খাই বেমাৰ হলে মোক আক' নোদাষিব।

শেষত আপোনালোক সকলোকে সুস্বাস্থ্যৰ কামনা কৰিলো যাতে মই বদনামৰ পৰা হাত সাৰি শান্তিৰে থাকিব পাৰো।



## আকৌ এবাৰ মাত

মৌচুমি শৰ্মা

অজানিতে আকাশীলতাৰ মনটো সেমেকি উঠিল। চকুৰ আগত ভাহি উঠিল TD<sup>+</sup> ৰ তৃতীয় মহলাৰ পিছফালৰ বাৰান্দাৰ পৰা দেখা পোৱা সেই কপৌফুলৰ পাহি কেইটা সতেজ আৰু উজ্জ্বল, লগে লগে কাণত ভাহি উঠিল দুপৰীয়াৰ নিজানত বাৰীৰ কোনোবা কোণৰ পৰা গছৰ আঁৰত লুকাই মতা সেই আমিয়া সুৰৰ কুলিৰ মাত। বৰ আপোন পাহৰা হৈ পৰিল তাইৰ মনটো। সৰুকালত দেউতাকৰ মুখত শুনা সেই অসমীয়া পদ্যটোৱে বাৰে বাৰে মনৰ মাজত হেন্দোলনি তুলিবলৈ ধৰিলে-----

‘অ’ কুলি অ’ কুলি  
কু কু কু বুলি,  
আকৌ এবাৰ মাত কুলি  
আকৌ এবাৰ মাত।  
নাকত যদি ধৰে লাজে,  
নাচাও মই পাতৰ মাজে।  
আকৌ এবাৰ মাত কুলি  
আকৌ এবাৰ মাত।।

আকাশীলতাৰ মনটো হঠাতে গধূৰ লাগিল। এতিয়া আৰু ক’ত সেই কপৌফুল, ক’ত সেই কুলিৰ আমিয়াসুৰ। অনুৰাগৰ চাকৰিৰ সংক্ৰান্তত সিহঁত বৰ্তমান অসমৰ পৰা হাজাৰ হাজাৰ মাইল আতঁৰৰ তৈলক্ষেত্ৰ আৰব দেশৰ কুৱেইটত নিগাজীকৈ থাকিবৰ আজি প্ৰায় চাৰি বছৰ হবলৈ আৰু মাত্ৰ চাৰিমাহ হে বাকী আছে। হঠাতে এদিন অনুৰাগে কুৱেইটত চাকৰিৰ কাৰণে দিয়া ইন্টাৰভিউৰ কথা আকাশীক কৈছিল আৰু চাকৰিটো পোৱাত সিহঁতে অনুৰাগৰ মাক আৰু সিহঁতৰ তিনিবছৰীয়া যঁজা সন্তান বাবু-মামুক লৈ কুৱেইট পালেহি।

সেয়েই আৰম্ভণি। অসমৰ বতৰৰ লগত পৰিবৰ্তিত সেই প্ৰকৃতি আৰু প্ৰকৃতিৰ পৰিবৰ্তনৰ লগত সাজ সলোৱা অসমী আইৰ সৌন্দৰ্য্য ভোগৰ পৰা সিহঁত বঞ্চিত। চাকৰিৰ চুটিৰ কথা নহয়, ল’ৰা-ছোৱালীৰ পঢ়া-শুনাৰ ব্যস্ততাতহে সিহঁত বৰ্তমান যিকোনো সময়ত অসমলৈ যাব নোৱাৰে। বাবু-মামুৱে এইবাৰ দ্বিতীয় শ্ৰেণীলৈ প্ৰমোচন পালে। গতিকে জুলাই আগষ্টমাহৰ গৰমৰ বন্ধ মিলাইহে সিহঁতে অসমলৈ যাব পাৰে।

কথাবোৰ ভাবি ভাবি তাই যোৱা তিনিটা বহাগ সিহঁতে কেনেকৈ কুৱেইটত পাৰ কৰিলে তাৰ এখন প্ৰতিচ্ছবি মনৰমাজেদি পাৰ কৰি নিলে। মনটো অলপ মুকলি হ’ল। বাকী যি কি নহওক অসমীয়া হিচাপে সিহঁত ইয়ালৈ অহাৰে পৰা অন্তত: অসমৰ বিছকেইটা একো

নকৰাকৈ পাৰ হৈ যাবলৈ দিয়া নাই। নিজৰ দেশৰ মাটিৰ গোক্ৰ নাথাকিলেও এইখন বিদেশী ৰাজ্যত নিজৰ আপোন-আপোন লগা মাত-কথা, গান-বাজনা, কৌতুক-কোলাহলৰ লগতে প্ৰত্যেকটো অসমীয়া জুহালৰ পৰা ওলোৱা সেই পিঠা-পনা, জা-জলপানৰ সোৱাদ সিহঁতে বাৰুকৈয়ে লৈ আছে। সিহঁততকৈ আগতে আৰু সিহঁতৰ পিছত কুৱেইটলৈ অহা সকলো অসমীয়া মানুহৰ মাজৰ মিলাপীতিৰ জৰী এই বাপতি সাহোন বিছটোক যোৱা তিনিটা বছৰে ভালকৈয়ে পালন কৰিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছে। নকৈ নোৱাৰি যে ইয়াত সেই বহাগৰ দুপৰীয়া, ঢোল-পেঁপা গগনাৰ মাত আৰু ডেকা গাভৰুৰ খিল-খিলনিৰে ভৰা অসমী আইৰ প্ৰকৃতিৰ কোলাত মূৰ খবলৈ সিহঁতৰ সৌভাগ্য হোৱা নাই। সেইখন পৃথিৱীত আকাশীয়ে তাইৰ মনৰ মাজতে বিচৰণ কৰি তাৰ অভাৱ পুৰাবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰিছে।

আজি মাৰ্চ মাহৰ ৩১ তাৰিখ। কাইলৈ এপ্ৰিলমাহৰ এক তাৰিখ সোমাব। আনকেইবাৰৰ দৰে এইবাৰো আকাশীহঁতে বিছৰ কাৰণে প্ৰস্তুতি চলাইছে। যোৱা বাৰ বিছৰ মধ্যলৈ সিহঁতে অসমৰ সঙ্গীতৰ জগতত



তোল-পাৰ লগোৱা ভাৰতখ্যাত জুবিন গাঁগ আৰু তেওৰ পৰিবাৰ গৰিমা গাৰ্গক আমন্ত্ৰণ কৰি আনিছিল। সেই খাতিৰতে সিহঁতৰ সকলোৰে বহুদিনীয়া প্ৰয়োজন ‘অসম সংঘ’ ও প্ৰতিস্থা হ’ল। গতিকে এইবাৰ এই অসম সংঘৰ ফালৰ পৰা যোৱামাহত বিছৰবাবে প্ৰস্তুতি কৰণৰ মিটিং দুখন মানো দিয়া হ’ল। হয়তো বহাগৰ এক দুই তাৰিখৰ ভিতৰতে সিহঁতে সমূহীয়া জা-জলপান, পিঠাপনা খোৱা,

আৰু ল’ৰা ছোৱালী বোৰৰ মাজত সৰু সৰু খেল-ধেমালীৰ আয়োজন কৰিবৰ কাৰণে ওচৰৰে সেই ফিনটাছ পাৰ্কত লগ হ’বলৈ বুলি ঠিক কৰা হৈছে।

আকাশীলতাৰ মনটো উণ্ডল খুণ্ডল লাগিল। তাৰমানে বিছলৈ আৰু বেছিদিন নায়েই দেখোন। পিঠা-পনা, খুৰমা-নিমকিৰ কথা ভাবিবলৈ হ’লেই দেখোন। লগতে মে’ মাহত পাতিবলৈ আয়োজন কৰা বিছৰ সাংস্কৃতিক সন্ধিয়াখন। তাৰবাবেওতো কিবা এটা কৰিবলৈ এতিয়াৰ পৰাই ভাবিব লাগিব। এইবাৰ তাই মামু আৰু ৰিমঝিমৰ (সিহঁতৰ লগতে কুৱেইটলৈ একেলগে অহা আৰু একেবাৰে সমুখৰ ফ্লেটতে থকা অদিতিৰ ছোৱালী) লগতে সিহঁতৰ লগৰ কেইজনীক এটা ভূপেন্দ্র সংগীতৰ লগত নচুৱাব বুলিও ভাবি থৈছে। তাৰোপৰি কোৱাচ এটাও ঠিক কৰিব লাখিব আৰু আৰম্ভণি গীতটো (শ্ৰী ময়ী অসমীৰ-----) লগে লগে আকাশীৰ অনুৰাগৰ মা, তাইৰ শাহু আৰু বাকী সকলোৰে মৰম আৰু আদৰৰ ‘বাইদেউ’ নিৰ্মালীলৈ মনত পৰিল। তেওঁ প্ৰত্যেক বাৰেই প্ৰতিটো অসমীয়া উৎসৱৰেই গুৰি ধৰি আহিছে-ইয়াত আহি আকাশী অনুৰাগৰ লগত থকাহিৰে পৰা। ‘ওমলাঘৰ’ৰ ‘অআ’- ‘কথ’ৰ লগতে গল্প-কবিতাৰে সমৃদ্ধ তেওঁৰ মনৰ জগতখন ইয়াত থকা অসমীয়া অকণি খিনিৰ মাজত বিলাই দি সিহঁতৰ লগতে নিজেও আপুত হৈছেহি, সকলো অকণিৰে মৰমৰ আইতাজনীৰ অভাৱ বাৰুকৈ অনুভব কৰিব। কিয়নো তেওঁ এইবাৰ কেইমাহ মানৰ কাৰণে সৰুপুত্ৰ অভিনবৰ লগত থাকিবলৈ আমৰিকালৈ গল। আকাশী অনুৰাগৰ মাকৰ অসমীয়া সাহিত্য-সাংস্কৃতিক জগতখনৰ প্ৰতি থকা শ্ৰদ্ধা-অনুৰাগৰ বাবেই হয়তো সিহঁতেও নিজৰ দেশত নথকা সত্ত্বেও নিজকে এই জগত খনৰ সৈতে জড়িত ৰাখিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছে। মাক নথকাৰ কথা ভাবি আকাশীৰ মনটো বেয়া লাগিল যদিও বিছবুলি কৰিব লগীয়া কামবোৰ আৰু সাংস্কৃতিক সম্পাদক হিচাপে অনুৰাগৰ দায়িত্ব বোৰৰ কথা মনতে এবাৰ যুকীয়াই ল’লে।

শোৱণিকোঠাৰ খিৰিকেকেৰে তাই তাৰ পৰা দেখা পোৱা সাগৰৰ সীমনালৈ চাই পাঠিয়ালে। আজি বতৰটো ফৰকাল-সাগৰৰ নীলা ৰঙটোৰ পৰা দুপৰীয়াৰ বেলিৰ কিৰণে সাগৰ আৰু আকাশৰ ভেদা ভেদ নাইকীয়া কৰি পেলাইছে। তাইৰ মনৰ মাজত কিন্তু এতিয়াও সেই TD<sup>+</sup> ৰ ঘৰৰ বাৰীৰ কপৌজোপাৰ সতেজ পাহি আৰু কুলিৰ মৌ মিঠা আমিয়া সুৰে লুকা ভাকু খেলি আছে।

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97	Sarma Madhusmita		23730812	
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99	Sharma Abhijit	abyjit@gmail.com		66189656
100	Sharma Mouchumi			66806715
101	Sonowal Kumud	kumud.sonowal@googlemail.com		60067325
102	Talukdar Sauman	saumantalukdar@gmail.com	23728711	65145864
103	Thakuria Abhijit	abhijit_thakuria@yahoo.com	23710218/9-241	97280924
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