

CHAPTER-IV

ECONOMIC THOUGHTS OF ŚAṆKARADEVA

4.0: Introduction

Śaṅkaradeva wanted to establish a society which is free from all kinds of ills where everybody got the opportunity to empower him or herself. So attaining economic well being of the fellow people was one of the prime agendas of Śaṅkaradeva's movement. He did not keep religious life of a person in isolation from his economic life. Neither had he advised the people to stay away from economic activities. He believed that a person could grow spiritually only when he is able to fulfill his basic needs. It is difficult for a man remaining in starvation to justify what is good or what is bad. Similarly, poverty is the greatest hurdle in the path of assimilation of knowledge.

His views on different economic aspects had been recorded in his compositions and in the hagiographies. Those views have special significance. Śaṅkaradeva was an erudite writer. He composed as many as 240 songs later called *Bargīta* (only 34 are available now), ten plays (*Aṅkīyā Nāṭa*, six of them are available now), two prayer books (*Kīrttana*, *Guṇamālā*), six longer narrative episodes (*Haricandra- Upākhyāna*, *Rukminī-Haraṇa Kāvya*, *Amṛta-Manthana Kāvya*, *Ajāmilopākhyāna*, *Kurukṣetra Kāvya*, *Balicalana*), four theological and cosmological works (*Bhakti- Pradīpa*, *Nimi-Nava-Siddha-Saṁvāda*, *Anādi-Patana*, *Bhakti Ratnākara*). He also translated eight cantos (I, II, III, VI, VIII, X, XI and XII) of the *Bhāgavata* and the *Uttarā Kāṇḍa* of

Rāmāyana into Assamese. Instead of going line by line translation, Śaṅkaradeva made some innovations without deviating from the main content of the original source. Smith remarks “Śaṅkaradeva does make some alterations in the story-line and his personal innovations result in an approach that is unusual in Ramayana literature.”¹ Similarly, different hagiographies on Śaṅkaradeva provide vital information on his effort to economic empowerment.

4.1: Economic Philosophy of Śaṅkaradeva

The views of Śaṅkaradeva on some economic aspects are as follows—

4.1.1: Money and Wealth

Śaṅkaradeva understood it better that money is only the medium of exchange. Money is essential to fulfill the daily requirements. But money itself cannot satisfy the needs of the people. Money is the mean and not the end of life. Earning of money should not be the prime motive of a person. He warned the people not to run after unnecessary accumulation of money and wealth as it gives only sufferings, not peace.

viṣṇura caraṇa nicinti sadāye
ghanakese karai dhyāna
sito pātakika sudhibe nālāge
*yātanāka lāgi āna*²

[A person suffers untold miseries who only think of money without thinking about Lord Viṣṇu.]

karma kari sādahaya bittādi yata yata
nuhike sukhara hetu yānā swarupata
dhane puruṣaka dukha dei nirantara
āponāra mṛtyu dhana yānā sārattara

¹ Smith, W. L. (1994). *The Wrath of Sita: Sankaradeva's Uttarakanda*. in Journal of Vaisnava Studies, Vol.2, No.4, p.5

² *Kīrt.*, vs. 198

*kibā prīti sādhibeka gṛha putrādita
 yi hetu anitya nāthākaya kadācita
 pāve mahā dukha ati dhanaka arjjante
 moha haiyā dāna bhoga nakare thākante
 guci gaile dhana mahā tāpaka pāvaya
 kaita yānā dhane āra sukhaka diyaya³*

[The huge amount of wealth which is accumulated working very hard is not the source of happiness. It gives only sadness to a person or even it may become the cause of death. If a person does not consume or perform any charitable tasks by sticking only to money, if he got unhappy after spending money then he is bound to face sufferings. Money alone can never give happiness.]

*āponāra mṛtyu buli mānibeka dhana
 nānā pīḍā mile āsi ihāra kāraṇa
 yadi bolā dhana hante dharma upajaya
 sehi dhana hante swarga sukhaka pāvaya
 śuniyo swargata āse yata yata sukha
 samasta bināśī sadā pāve mātra dukha⁴*

[Accept that money is the root of one's own death. It causes lots of trouble. If you believe money gives sanctification; money brings all the happiness of haven then those happiness are temporary.]

*yi lakṣīta āśā kari sadāye ākula mana
 teho mahā cañcala sarbbathā⁵*

[One who spends all the time in thinking of money and wealth; that wealth is very unstable; the person is bound to lose stability in mind.]

4.1.2: Division of Income

Śaṅkaradeva did never want the unnecessary accumulation of wealth by a person. It would lead to concentration of wealth in few hands. He advocated that wealth earned by an individual should be equally divided for performing five types of duties—

³ *Bhakti Ratnākara*, vss. 1001-1003

⁴ *NNSS*, vs. 135

⁵ *Bhāg.*, 10th Canto, vs. 127

*śuniyoka bali yena śāstara bihita
pāca bhāga kari bighāgibe nija bitta
dharma artha kāma yaśa mahāputrara nidāne
tavesa thākibe pāi sukhe sarbakṣaṇe⁶*

[Listen Bali, what is prescribed in Holy Scriptures. Divide your money into five parts. For performing duties towards religion, wealth, basic requirements, knowledge and future generation. Then only you could live in peace always.]

It means a part of the income should be used for religious or social welfare purposes, a part should be reinvested for increasing wealth in future, a part for personal fulfillment of basic amenities, a part for acquiring knowledge or personality development and the remaining last part of the income should be saved for the future generation. Deviation from this rule means deviation from performing regular duties that lead a man towards decay. Accumulating wealth by depriving others invites lots of trouble to a man. He expressed this as follows:

*yateka bārḥaya dhana tateka mṛtyuse bārḥe
āpada nāhike āta para⁷*

[The amount by which the income increases, the trouble grows proportionately. There is nothing more trouble than this.]

4.1.3: Livelihood

For economic upliftment, Śaṅkaradeva wanted that everyone must get a job not only to earn his livelihood but also to perform his social-religious obligations:

*jīvikā thākile kare save sat karma
pratidine sije dāna tapa yajña dharma⁸*

[If livelihood exists people could do good deeds. Every day they can perform noble deeds like donation, worship etc.]

⁶ Ibid, 8th Canto, vs. 285

⁷ Ibid, 10th Canto, vs.128

⁸ Ibid, 8th Canto, vs. 284

However, the ideal of Śaṅkaradeva was that one should not employ deceitful tactics to earn his livelihood. He disapproved those livelihoods which are associated with the killing of animals and other living beings.

nājāne dakṣiṇā bidhi pūjāro nāhike siddhi
nugunai prāṇīra hiṁsā doṣa
āpuni jīvikā arthe paśugaṇa māre byarthe
*tāte mile manara santoṣa*⁹

[That worship or rituals are futile which does not discard violence to living beings. One who lives by killing animals are ultimately suffers by loosing peace in mind.]

Śaṅkaradeva disfavors the livelihood associated with cruelty, violence etc.

ānaka hiṁsiyā yito kuṭumbaka poṣe
*rourava narake gaiyā pare sehi doṣe*¹⁰

[One who feeds family from income earned by forcing others or on brutality is bound to drown into deep sins.]

Similarly, he advised the people to evade livelihood based on deceitful means.

michā māti sāude karibe kinā bikā
*jīveka sampada kari nindita jīvikā*¹¹

[The businessmen perform buying and selling with the help of fake publicity. The money earned from such livelihood is disgraceful.]

4.1.4: Consumption and Savings

Unselfish consumption and saving for the future generation are important for sustainable development. Śaṅkaradeva was well aware of this. He emphasized that one should think of others before feeding his own stomach. He believed that the best way of utilizing one's hard earned money is by sharing consumption with others and by donating. If people become unable to understand this he is bound to suffer. He wrote in *Bhāgavata*.—

⁹ NNSS, vs. 337

¹⁰ *Bhāg.*, 3rd Canto, vs. 270

¹¹ *Ibid*, 12th Canto, vs. 33

*nija bhāryyā putraka bañciyā yito nare
kare anna byañjana bhojana ekeśware
pare andhatā miśrata bhuñjavai yātanā
yamadute karai śāsti harāivai cetanā¹²*

[One who consumes everything himself even by depriving his own wife and son: he falls in the darkest place: he is bound to suffer lots of miseries in hail.]

Śaṅkaradeva termed the person as proud one who consumes alone depriving his family and the woman as dishonest who consumes depriving her husband—

*bhāryyā putra eri bhuñjai yito ahaṅkāri
swāmīka bañciyā khāya yito duṣṭā nārī¹³*

[The proud consumes everything by depriving wife and son. The dishonest woman consumes depriving her husband.]

Similarly, he wrote—

*trailokyara kara bhāra prānta yatamāna
sarbakṣaṇe dīna daridraka karai dāna
nāhike sañcaya kichu dāna pūṇya bine
pitṛ yena putraka pālaya rātri dine¹⁴*

[All the revenue that received; donate to the disadvantaged and poor people; sanctity earned by this is the best saving which has no comparison. Doing such holy task sincerely like a father takes care his son.]

*nedaya nākhāya dhanī huyā manda citta
yakṣe yena byaya bhaye puti rākhe bitta¹⁵*

[The person lost wisdom if he fears to consume and contributing after becoming rich. He becomes like a devil if he excavated his money in the soil in fear of expenditure.]

The same thing is also reflected in his *Nimi-Nava-Siddha- Saṁvāda* —

*bārṇe lobha jagataka dekhe dhanamaya
dharmmese dhanara phala ihāka nājāne
rātri dine sāñce bitta yata pāre māne
nedaya dāna dakṣiṇā narādhe mane hari
putra bhāryyā same mātra bhuñjai peṭa bhari
mṛtyuko nagane sito bhaila hata budhi¹⁶*

¹² Ibid, 3rd Canto, vs. 270

¹³ Ibid, 6th Canto, vs. 21

¹⁴ Ibid, 8th Canto, vs. 80

¹⁵ Ibid, 3rd Canto, vs. 296

¹⁶ NNSS, vs.345

[A greedy person sees the earth as only money. He become ignorant that money is only mean, good deeds is the end. He works hard day and night to accumulate wealth; he never donates anything; never think about God; he always remains busy in selfish consumption. Such person loses thinking capacity and becomes a fool.]

Similarly, he wrote in *Haricandra Upākhyāna*, that the best way of saving the hard earned money is only by donating or giving up—

*upārjita dhanara tyāgeṣe rakṣā hui*¹⁷

Again,

yata sāñcā dhana dhāna yāibe yetikṣaṇe praṇa
*saṅge eka ratiyo nāyāya*¹⁸

[The huge amount of money and wealth accumulated by a person; would not go with him, even a single penny, when he dies.]

asāra saṁsāra jñānī loke hena kahe
*yibā dei yibā khāya sehi mātra rahe*¹⁹

[The human life is only temporary. He cannot bring with him the earthly belongings. Whatever he donates or whatever he consumes is only meant for him.]

4.1.5: Sustainable Development

The Brundland Report, 1987, defines sustainable development as ‘the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet their own needs’. Sustainable development recognizes that growth must be both inclusive and environmentally sound. The concept sustainable development emphasizes on: improving the quality of human life; principle of inter-generational equity; a change in consumption and investment patterns; sustainable level of population; better job opportunities; preservation of

¹⁷ *HU*, vs.20

¹⁸ *NNSS*, vs. 68

¹⁹ *HU*, vs.97

biodiversity; reducing pollution, poverty, poor housing and sanitation; social progress and equality.

In his writings, Śaṅkaradeva mentioned about different aspects of sustainable development. For instance,

Religion relevant to Sustainability:

Śaṅkaradeva believed that religion must comply with the principle of sustainability. People should practice those rituals which are friendly to the environment. For this purpose he advised the people not to go for animal sacrifice and other kind of expensive rituals in the name of religion. He said that only by chanting the name of God one could attain salvation. He wrote in *Bhāgavata*—

*satya yuge yena phala pāvai dhyāna kari
mahā mahā yajñe tretā yuge yaji hari
yena phala pāvai pūjā kari dwāparata
pāvai save phala kaliyuge kīrttanata*²⁰

[The benefit which is attained by meditation in *Satya Yuga*; the benefit which is attained by performing *Yajña* in *Tretā Yuga*; the benefit which is attained by performing *Pujā* in *Dwapara Yuga*; the same benefit could be attained only by chanting the name of God in *Kali Yuga*.]

*karai kaliyuge yito śravaṇa kīrttana
sehise mahante sukhe taribe saṁsāra
karibeka koṭi koṭi puruṣa uddhāra*²¹

[The person who chants and listen the name of God is called noble man. He could snatch happiness in life. Not only that, he could salvage crores of his future generations.]

In *Bhakti- Pradīpa* also, he mentioned—

*parara dharmmaka nihiṁsibā kadācīta
karibā bhūtaka dāyā sakaruṇa citta
huibā śānta citta sarbba dharmmata batsala
ehi bhāgavata dharma jānā mahābala*²²

²⁰ *Bhāg.*, 10th Canto, vs. 413

²¹ *Ibid*, 11th Canto, vs. 86

[Never do hostility to other's religion. Be kindness and soft hearten to all living beings. Remain calm to all religions. All these attributes are the composite of *Bhāgavata Dharmma* which is a great force.]

Principle of Inter-generational Equity:

Śaṅkaradeva advocated for inter-generational equity. He emphasized that productive resources must be preserved so that the future generation got the opportunity to fulfill their needs. He advocated that one-fifth of the income should be saved for the future generation. Similarly, he wanted consumption must continue for future. So he advised one fifth of one's earned income should be reinvested for increasing wealth in future.

Improving the Quality of Human Life:

Through his writings, Śaṅkaradeva tried to inspire the people to lead a life based on love, affection and respect to others. He emphasized that people should lead a selfish less life and should always try to live for others. He writes in *Bhāgavata*—

*lobhe mohe kāme krodhe biṣaya ākrośe
nochovaya mora bhakataka eko doṣe*²³

[Bad attributes like greed, attachment, lust, anger and power hungry etc. cannot touch my devotees.]

*pararese arthe jīvai ito br̥kṣacaya
thāakai sahi rahi mahā roudra br̥ṣṭi bāta
āmi sukhe bañco rahi ihāra chāyāta
para upakārī taru janama sārthaka
santara bimukha yena nuhike pārthaka
bākali pallava mūla patra puṣpa phala
yei yibā cāve pāvai br̥kṣata sakala
jīvanara sāphala dehīra ehimāne
jīvai para upakāra kari arthe prāṇe*²⁴

²² BP, vs. 141

²³ Bhāg., 11th Canto, vs. 158

²⁴ Ibid, 10th Canto, vss. 926-928

[Trees always live for others. They stand firm by bearing the heat of sun, rain, thunder, storm to give shadow to others. They never deprive anybody. That's why their lives are successful. Everybody gets what they want from trees like bark, leave, fruit, root, and flower. Similarly, the lives of those human being are successful who live for others without thinking for self.]

*yito upakārīkese karai upakāra
suhṛdo nuhikai tāra nāhi eko dharma
āpunāra arthe mātra karai sito karma
upakara nacāi yito karai upakāra
sise sādhujana mahā dharma sijai tāra*²⁵

[A person who only helps others for help's sake can never acquire any sacred. On the contrary, persons who help others without hoping returns are real noble men and they are bestowed with blessings from God.]

*dhana jana putra dārā buli marai āti
sehito adhama anīśwara ātmaghāṭi*²⁶

[One who lives only for money, power and family is like a fool who commits suicide.]

Preservation of Biodiversity:

Human beings alone cannot survive on the earth. Animal and plant kingdom must be protected for the survival of human being. There is interrelationship among them and each one depends on others in many ways. Śaṅkaradeva believed that everything in the universe is the creation of God and all are equally important. He composed a *Bargīta* on it—

*yata jīva jaṅgama kṛta pataṅgama
aga naga jaga teri kāyā
savakahu māri pūrata ohi udara
nāhi karatu bhuta dāyā*

[All movable living beings, creatures, insects, unmovable things, mountains and the earth are the parts of God's body. Filling the stomach by destroying everything! Don't you have any love for the living beings?]

²⁵ Ibid, vs. 1446

²⁶ *Bhāg.*, 11th Canto, vs. 232

³⁰ Ibid, 8th *Canto*, vs. 651

*kukura cāṇḍāla gaddarbharo ātmārāma
jāniyā savāko pari karibā praṇāma*³¹

[Dog, donkey, outcastes all are part of God. So, pay respect to all of them.]

*samasta bhūtate ātmā buddhi nuhi yāve
kāya bākya mane abhyāsibā ehi bhāve
samasta prāṇika dekhibeke ātmasama
upāya madhyata ito āti mokṣatama*³²

[See all creatures equal to one-self. This is the best way of all means.]

*raṅge paśu māri yito parama niskhale
nija putra bhārjyā same bhuñje koutūhale
mahā rouravata parai nāhike nistāra*³³

[A person who kills animals for pleasure or fun would immerge into deep sins.]

*yitojane phurai yāthī kāndhe paśu māri
prāṇa nirodhata parai sito ahaṅkāri
tāmasika karma kari kāṭe haṅsa chāga*

*baisaya narake pare dūte kare daṇḍa
jñānī huiyā yito nare hiṅsaya prāṇika*

*lobhe diyā mārāi yito pakṣī phānda pāti
yito mahā durjjane prāṇika deya bhaya
prāṇika nirodhai yito khāndi poṭe gāta*³⁴

[The person, who kills the animals and birds; who cuts the throat of duck and goat; who captures birds; who terrorified the animals, will be punished by the angels in the hell after death.]

*yito mandamati āti ekove nubujai
byārthe paśu pakṣī māri sakuṭumbe bhuñjai
yito jīyā paśu pakṣī dhari āni bāndhe
nākāṭā nāmārā kari jīvantate rāndhe*³⁵

[He is the most fool person who unnecessarily kills animal and birds and eat their meat.]

In one drama, he wrote, there is no glamour in killing of insects—

*tohāri āgu ohi khudra pataṅga: āheka māri kona jaśa sādharma*³⁶

³¹ Ibid, 11th Canto, vs.260

³² Ibid, vs.261

³³ Ibid, 3rd Canto, vs.272

³⁴ Ibid, vss.284-294

³⁵ Ibid, 6th Canto, vs.24

[Before you, he is small insect: what kind of glamour you do seek by killing him.]

Pollution:

Śaṅkaradeva composed a drama named *Kāliyadamana yātrā* on the theme water pollution. Here he put on dialogue on the mouth of Lord Kṛṣṇa, “I will make the polluted water of *Kālindika* potable.”—

*uhi kāliyaka hrada: ihāka biṣa pānī khāi torā savaka bipatti bhela: āju torā save
koutuke dekhaha: uhi kālindika jala swastha karaba*³⁷

4.1.6: Consumer Awareness

Śaṅkaradeva believed that people must be think full in buying and selling. There may be lots of shopkeepers in the markets. If one do purchase without identifying the quality of the products, it may cause distress. Unnecessary buying and selling should be avoided as it leads to wastage of money. If people sale their commodities or properties without thinking or without knowing the actual value of their products, it would affect their economic condition. He tried to create awareness among the people in this respect through his compositions.

*bhārata hātata āche aneka dokānī
nicini kinile punu milibe bighini*³⁸

[In *Bhārata* there are many religious ways, so take the correct way, otherwise it will lead to hardship or miseries.]

³⁶ *Kāliyadamana Yātrā*

³⁷ *ibid*

³⁸ *Bargīta*

4.1.7: Philanthropy or Donation

Śaṅkaradeva always gave emphasis on donations. Everybody should spend a part of his income for the betterment of others. But to whom donate? Whether to rich or poor and needy? He opined that just like filling water in an already full jar means spoil of water similarly donation to rich or affluent people means nothing. Hooking fish in the sea attract response very slowly. In the same way voluntary feeding or donation to rich people only attract consecrated little by little. On the contrary feeding or endowing very poor and needy people would provide the donor double blessed. However, he denied the donation which may destroy one's own occupation. He cautioned that there is a limit up to which a person could donate his income. If a person donate his entire amount of income, it may cause only trouble nothing sanctity.

He wrote in *Bhāgavata*—

*yito dāna karante bṛttira huibe cheda
kichu punya nāhi michā mātra pāve kheda*³⁹

[That donation which demolish one's own occupation could bring nothing sanctity but only regrets.]

4.1.8: Commodity Production and Profit

In the view of Śaṅkaradeva earning profit is not bad until and unless it harms somebody. He acknowledged the need of commodity production and surplus value. It is proved from his support to Haridāsa Baniā, a merchant who often helped financially the disciples of Śaṅkaradeva in stress. Śaṅkaradeva realized it better that only through the emphasis on commodity production and surplus value, the income of the people

³⁹ *Bhāg.*, 8th Canto, vs.284

would rise. More surplus value would lead to increased revenue to the government and the later could undertake development activities for the welfare of the society. It is due to the recognition of Śaṅkaradeva on commodity production, in the later period the *Satra* and the *Nāmghars* become the hub of cottage industries which contributed a lot to the economic development of rural Assam.

4.1.9: Division of Labour or Collaboration of Works

Division of labour means a process of splitting a work into a number of tasks. Each task is assigned to separate persons or separate group of persons. It means that a labour is doing only a part of the work instead of performing the whole work. If a person is repeatedly doing the same task he would become expert on that which ultimately increases his productivity. Therefore, Śaṅkaradeva gave emphasis on sharing of responsibility. In the case of translating Rāmāyana from Sanskrit to Assamese, he composed the *Uttarā Kāṇḍa* part and asked Mādhhabdeva to compose the part *Ādi Kāṇḍa*. Similarly, “in the management task of EŚND, Śaṅkaradeva adopted Decentralized Leadership Management system. He delegated different responsibilities to his disciples. He empowered to prominent disciples—Madhavadeva and Damodardeva, to initiate others. He entrusted the duty of initiating Bramin devotees to Damodardeva.”⁴⁰

4.1.10: Taxation

On taxation Śaṅkaradeva opined that it should be equal to one-third of total income of a person. This was applicable to affluent persons in the society.

⁴⁰ Borkakoti, S. K. (2017). *Srimanta Sankaradeva as an Innovator*. p.4

Interestingly, this concept resembles today's taxation system. At present in India the individual with annual taxable income above 10 lakhs attracts 30 percent tax plus surcharge. Once Śaṅkaradeva advised Nārāyana Dāsa Ṭhākur to divide his wealth (silver, gold, bell metal, cloth, cow, buffalo etc.) into three equal parts and deposit one part of wealth to the king.⁴¹ Śaṅkaradeva also opined that during natural calamities government should either charge lower taxes or should provide rebate on it.

4.1.11: Welfare

The ultimate purpose of the economic activities is to promote the welfare of the society in a sustainable manner, and not the growth for growth's sake. Higher rate of economic growth is meaningless if it fails to translate the standard of living of the majority of the people in the society. Śaṅkaradeva undertook massive reformatory activities for the well being of his fellow people. His main objective was to increase the standard of living in the society. By advising to divide one's income into five equal parts he assigned the duties to be performed by a person to increase the welfare in the society. It means a person is obliged to the society for its betterment at the same time while fulfilling his needs and performing the family's responsibility. Śaṅkaradeva used religion only to confine the people within a domain of welfare activities.

*suhṛda nuhi nāhi tāra dharma
āpuna arthe mātra karai karma
yijane bhajai nācāi upakāra
suhṛda sehi dharma sijai tāra⁴²*

[A person who works only for himself is not a good man nor can he earn any sanctity. One who works for others without any expectation of return is a noble man who attains sanctity in life.]

⁴¹ KGC, p.170

⁴² *Kīrti.*, vs.928

Śaṅkaradeva tried to teach the people that money is essential for living but earning of money by any means should not be the ultimate aim of the people. If people are running only after money it may cause undesired consequences. Through his writings he tried to teach the instability of money and physical strength. Only good deeds lasts long, not the wealth and other earthly amenities. He warned the people—

athira dhana jana jīvana jouvana
athira ehu saṁsāra
putra paribāra savahi asāra
karabo kāheri sāra
kamala dala jala citta cañcala
thira nohe tila eka⁴³

[Money, physical strength, life, youth etc. are instable; worldly bindings' are instable; family bonding is instable like the instability of water on the leaves of lotus.]

4.2: Economic Practices of Śaṅkaradeva

By literary surveying Śaṅkaradeva's life, it can be seen that he practiced or gave emphasis on different aspects of economic development. He took a number of initiatives to improve the economic condition of his disciples in particular and the society as a whole.

4.2.1: Emphasis on Economic Activities

Śaṅkaradeva became distinct from other Vaishnavite leaders in economic front. He never preached an ascetic life. There is no *sanyās* in his order. He advised people to work while chanting God's name. He himself married twice and led a happy family life. He taught his disciples that one could attain salvation even by performing his family life. Śaṅkaradeva even insisted Mādhavadeva to get married. He also asked

⁴³ *Bargīta*

Dāmodardeva to remarry after the demise of latter's wife and even assured that he would bear all the expenditure of the marriage including ornaments. He argued that real growth of the society largely depended on individual's economic health. He was an expert in economic planning which could be seen from his design of *Thān*. He planned the *Thān* or *Satra* as a self-sufficient economic unit. Due to his far-sighted economic planning, the *Satras* were all self-sustaining economic units, besides being centres of religious, educational, cultural and spiritual activities in the following periods. The *bhakats* of the *Satras* produced all the requirements themselves. People of several professions were living together within the premises, thereby supplementing each other.

Śaṅkaradeva himself engaged in income earning activities and encouraged others to do so. To feed his family, he never depended on his disciples. Śaṅkaradeva involved in cultivation where ever he stayed. He collected the required food-grains from his own field. He engaged labours to cultivate. In the hagiographies some name of labours like Dhvajā, Godā, Gokulā, Ubanā, Baṇarā, Bakarā etc. are found. They only worked for him but were not direct disciple of Śaṅkaradeva. They had never involved in religious activities. Those labours left Śaṅkaradeva's family after his death as it was impossible for his wife, Kālindī, to pay them. Similarly, Śaṅkaradeva worked as supervising officer (*dalai*) in the *karkhānā* of Cilārāi at Tatikuchi for six years. In that *karkhānā* one hundred weaver families worked. During the time of work Śaṅkaradeva often told about different activities of Lord Kṛṣṇa in front of the weavers so that their mind got refreshed and concentration in work enhanced. In spite of that

positive effort, if some weaver neglected his work then Śaṅkaradeva gave him punishment in the form of only censure.⁴⁴

4.2.2: Emphasis on Secondary and Tertiary Sectors

Increased production leads to increase in consumption. Satisfaction comes from higher level of consumption which is the basis of welfare. To increase production Śaṅkaradeva gave importance on the development of cottage industries. He linked cottage industry to religious activities.

During Śaṅkaradeva's time service sector was quite tiny. In fact during the medieval feudal period service sector had very little scope to expand. Śaṅkaradeva himself was a feudal lord in his younger years. Still he could rightly realize that the tertiary sector could be a growth force for the economy. It is already found that in *Ureṣā-Varṇana*, Śaṅkaradeva mentioned about thirty-four professions out of which several professions directly related to services like painters (*citrakāra*), medicine men (*baidya*), actor (*naṭa-bhāṭa*), dancers (*nartakī*) singers (*gāyana*), Brāhmaṇa or *vipra* etc. He took some efforts to the extension of service sector. He encouraged his disciples to involve in acting, singing, dancing, painting, writing etc. Śaṅkaradeva showed in many occasions that service too could be bought and sold. At Belaguri, Śaṅkaradeva invited one Brahmana named Brahmānanda Bhattachāryya to recite the *Gītā* for a month and paid him money for the service.⁴⁵ Similarly, he engaged the *karmakāṇḍī* Brahmins at Pāṭbāusī to read the *Bhāgavata* and the *Gītā* and paid them in terms of gold. "The gold was not offered as donation, but given as payment for the

⁴⁴ PKGC, p.272

⁴⁵ Ibid, p.151

service rendered.”⁴⁶ Witnessing this many devotees exclaimed, “The Brahmins sale the name of God?”⁴⁷ He emphasized on spread of business. Śaṅkaradeva helped Nārāyana Dāsa Ṭhākura Ātā who was a rich merchant, many times by providing man power. He also extended helping hand to Govinda Garmali by providing man power to commence trade.⁴⁸ Similarly, he supported the professional attitude of Haridāsa Baniā, a rich goldsmith who never compromised a single penny due to him but provided monetary help in distress to the *Bhakats*. Śaṅkaradeva never looked down upon the business of money lending. He protected Haridāsa Baniā who also lends money, from criticism by the *Bhakats* several times. Due to Śaṅkaradeva’s recognition of money lending business, in later period the *Thāns*, *Satras* and *Nāmghars* raised corpus fund and provided money to the local artisans or cottage industrialists like the modern banks. For instance in the Barpeta *Satra*

The establishment of Hatipuji took place before 1640s. This was a monetary fund, to which all members of the Hati contributed, in lieu of paying taxes to Government. The money from this fund could then be used to provide loans to the Hati members, at relatively attractive rates for business or other purposes. In effect this was a rudimentary banking or co-operative system, which allowed this particular Sattrā to prosper in the new monetary era.⁴⁹

Similarly, “In most of Assam’s Namghar banking operations have been going on for four or five centuries.”⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Borkakoti, 2015, p.96

⁴⁷ KGC: 149

⁴⁸ Ibid, p.72

⁴⁹ Mazumder, quoted by Rhodes, N. G & S. K. Bose. (2004). *The Coinage of Assam, Vol-II, Ahom Period*. p.41

⁵⁰ Ojah, R. (2008). *Śaṅkaradeva– Epitome of Virtues*.

4.2.3: Śaṅkaradeva as a Management Expert

Śaṅkaradeva adopted different techniques of management to put forward his movement successfully. Due to his innovative techniques he was able to mobilize large scale of people to his religious faith; could motivate the people for improving their way of living; could establish *EŚHND* as a major cult in Assam from zero point.

In the words of Borkakoti,

He evolved a new management style through his socio-cultural-religious innovations. His handling of people led to the development of a new approach in Human Resource Management. Heterogeneous people came together and stayed together under his banner because of his Team Management and Feedback Management. He evolved his own style of Project Management. He showed the world about how to do Conflict Management. He trained a group of dedicated disciples and made them future leaders by his Decentralised Leadership Management. He imparted his unmatched knowledge among the teeming masses through his innovative Knowledge Management.⁵¹

Propagation for *Eka Śaraṇa Hari Nāma Dharma*:

To propagate his cult *EŚHND*, Śaṅkaradeva extensively used literature and performing arts. “The people, attracted by the simple composition, sweet melody and easily intelligible high philosophic ideas, joined his mission in large numbers.”⁵²

Since Śaṅkaradeva had targeted the common illiterate masses, he avoided the deep philosophical parts in his compositions but expressed only their essence in very simple ways which are easily understandable.⁵³ Śaṅkaradeva himself mentioned in the *Bhāgavata* that he undertook the task of composition to propagate a certain ideology. To achieve his goals he diverted from the original source. He only adopted the relevant portion of the scriptures and rejected the contents which were against his ideology of *Eka Śaraṇa*.

⁵¹ Borkakoti, 2017, p.1

⁵² Nath, 2013, p.203

⁵³ Rajkhowa, 2012, p.165

yena laila mati racilo samprati
pada ādarśaka cāi
buji abhiprāya dilo thāya thāya
kichu kābyarasa yibā
abicāri tāka haṭhāte āhmāka
nindābāñī nubulibā⁵⁴

[With an intentional path of ideology, adopts the task of composition: To fulfill the needs poetic tastes are given in certain places: Don't blame me without considering the reality.]

To establish that Vaishnavism is superior to other cults, Śaṅkaradeva left no stone unturned in his compositions. It was essential to attract new people to his cult as well as to boost the morale of the people already initiated to him.

jāni śunā kṛṣṇakathā janmaka nakarā br̥thā
samasta śāstrara ise sāra
kṛṣṇakathā parihari phure āna karma kari
sito cintai āponāra mārā⁵⁵

[Try to realize the fact and listen to the attributes of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Don't spoil your life: this is the zest of all sacred books. Avoiding Lord Kṛṣṇa those who worship other deity invite the destruction of self.]

dharma artha kāma mokṣa kīrttanate pāya
kali sama śreṣṭha yuga nāi nāi⁵⁶

[Holiness, wealth, lust, salvation all are achieved with *kīrttana*. There is no superior *Yuga* to *Kali*.]

mūrukh paṇḍita hove yāra nāma
henaya kṛṣṇaka karo pariyā praṇāma⁵⁷

[The fool could become wise with chanting the divine Name. I surrender to such powerful Lord Kṛṣṇa.]

durācāra yadi harināma lave
sio śuddha hove āti
harita śaraṇe hovaya tekhane
antyajo uttama jāti⁵⁸

⁵⁴ *Bhāg.*, 8th Canto, vs.312

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 1st Canto, vs.88

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, vs.239

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 3rd Canto, vs.2

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 11th Canto, vs.192

[By chanting the name of Hari, ghastly man can become purified. Similarly taking the shelter in the feet of Hari the lower caste people could become upper caste.]

śunā sarbbajana eri ānamana
sthira kari eka mati
kṛṣṇa nāma binā ito kaliyuge
nāhi nāhi āna gati
jāniyā kṛṣṇara caraṇe śaraṇa
paśiyo sudr̥ḥa mati
bolā rāma rāma chāḍi āna kāma
*labhibā parama gati*⁵⁹

[Listen everybody, avoid other paths of devotion and fix your mind to Kṛṣṇa. In the *Kali Yuga* there is no alternative way other than chanting the name of Kṛṣṇa. So, take refuge in the feet of Kṛṣṇa. Say Rama, evade other worship and you would got salvation.

namo namo kṛṣṇa anādi īśwara
tumi devatāro deva
tohmāk nājāni pūjai āna deva
*yata mahā mūḥa loka*⁶⁰

[Greeting to Kṛṣṇa, the mightiest God: You are the God of the Gods: Unknowing you, the fool people adore other gods.]

kṛṣṇara carita parama amṛta
ātapare nāhi āna
kouṭi kouṭi tīrtha yajña japa tapa
*saveyo nuhi samāna*⁶¹

[The character of Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate bliss, There is no comparison to it. Crores of pilgrimage, *yajñas*, meditation etc. are nothing equal to it.]

He glorified the Vaishnavism through his compositions.

yāhāra baṅsata hove baiṣṇava eguṭi
*hove tāra puruṣa uddhāra koṭi koṭi*⁶²

[If a *Vaishnava* takes birth in a family then he could rescue crores of their previous generations from sins.]

⁵⁹ *Kīrt.*, vs.1636

⁶⁰ *Bhāg.*, 3rd Canto, vss.156-157

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, vs.230

⁶² *Ibid.*, 8th Canto, vs.526

najānai gurura māna nāhi tapa japa jñāna
nāhi śouca ācāra saṅskāra
tathāpi kṛṣṇata kino sudṛṣṭa bhakati bhaila
*ki kahibo bhāgya āsambāra*⁶³

[Don't know how to admire the Guru: No knowledge of meditation and worship:
 Don't know the rituals: Only has the devotion to Kṛṣṇa: Still got the mercy of God.]

yata mahā yajñadāna koṭi śata tīrtha snāna
harināma sabāto adhika
ebho nasampaje mati kalita nāmesa gati
*hena jāni erā āna kāmā*⁶⁴

[The name of Hari is superior to all the magnificent *yajñas* and donations, crores of
 baths in holy pilgrimage. In the *Kali Yuga* nothing can give sanctity, only the chanting
 the names of Hari do the same. So restrain from other paths of worship.]

swabhāvate kalira malina bhaila buddhi
duṣṭacitasavaka nakare tīrthe śuddhi
śatabāra jalata pakhālai yadi gātra
apavitra tathāpi surāra yena pātra
hena duṣṭacito yadi harika sumarai
havai śuddha samasta pātaka tāra harai
aniccāto cuile yena dahavai agani
*harira smarāṇe hena dharma śiromani*⁶⁵

[Naturally in the *Kali Yuga*, the minds of people would be impure. The tainted people
 would not be pure even if they undertake pilgrimage or take bath for hundred times.
 But such adulterated people could become pure only by memorizing Lord Hari. Just
 like the fire burns a person even if he touches it unwillingly, the memorizing of Lord
 Hari has such the power.]

Strictness in Religious Order:

To bind the *bhakats* in his faith Śaṅkaradeva was very strict in the principle of
Eka Śaraṇa. He strictly prohibited the worship of other gods. Once he disqualified two
 devotees, Vyaskalāi and Jairāma for worshiping other Goddess when their families
 were in trouble. Instead of their repeated requests he never accepted them as disciple
 so that others would not follow them. The same thing is reflected in his writings.

⁶³ 10th Canto, vs.987

⁶⁴ Ibid, vs.1480

⁶⁵ Ibid, vss. 2120- 2121

*kṛṣṇaka nabhaji yito pūje āna deva
kare balidāna tāka sama nāhi keva⁶⁶*

[He is the poorest of the poor who worship other deity and offer sacrifice of animal to them without worshipping Lord Kṛṣṇa.]

*kṛṣṇaka bhakati eri ānaka biswāsa kari
marai ghora yātanā tāpata⁶⁷*

[Avoiding the devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa, one who trusts other god suffers from immeasurable hardships.]

*anya devī deva nakaribā seva
nākhāibā prasāda tāra
mūrttiko nācāibā gr̥ho napaśibā
bhakti haiba byabhicāra⁶⁸*

[Don't worship other gods and goddesses: Don't take their *Prasāda*: Don't see their image: Neither enters their home: Otherwise your devotion would be polluted.]

*nājāni loke ānadeva pūjai
siyo bidhihīne tohmāka yajai
yehena nada nadī samudāya
aneka pathe sāgaraka yāya⁶⁹*

[Without knowing, the people worship other gods: But that also worship you: Like the rivers in many ways immerse into the sea.]

*henaya kṛṣṇaka eri kino loka andha
āna deva dharmmakese karaya pravandha
amṛtaka teji yena marai biṣapāne
teji sonā saniyāta gāṇṭhi mārāi tāne
cakravartī pada eri marai hāla bāi
gaṅgājala eri kādovānī pānī khāi⁷⁰*

[Avoiding such Lord Kṛṣṇa the blind people: Worship other deity: Giving up *amrita* people die by drinking poison: Like holding iron tightly in lieu of gold: Take the pain of tilling soil by giving up monarchy: Like drinking dirty water avoiding water of *Ganga*.]

*rāndhai garumāṇsa cāṇḍālinī surā diyā
manuṣyara muṇḍe āchai tāhāka dhākiyā
puchilanta indre āti dekhi biparīta*

⁶⁶ Ibid, 11th Canto, vs.754

⁶⁷ 10th Canto, vs.130

⁶⁸ Ibid, 2nd Canto, vs.124

⁶⁹ Kīrt., vs.1095

⁷⁰ Bhāg., 10th Canto, vs.1033-1034

*āto kari kona bastu āchai apavitra
cāṇḍālinī bolai indra kathā natu bujā
hari bine kare yito āna deva pūjā
tāra caraṇa dhūlā paribāka dare
jāni āni dilo āmi dhākana upare⁷¹*

[The outcaste woman prepares beef with wine: Cover that with the human skull: Indra asked seeing strange: Is there anything impure than this: she replied Indra, you don't understand: One who worship god other than Lord Hari: Afraid of getting dust of his feet: I cover the prepared beef.]

However, Śaṅkaradeva showed liberal attitude towards the *bhakats* who were illiterate and beginner (*prākṛta bhakat*) to his order. He did not take their minor mistakes seriously. For instance, in one occasion of Holi festival in the year 1552 A.D. some ordinary devotees prepared an icon of Viṣṇu. Śaṅkaradeva did not discourage them in spite he discarded idol worship.⁷² Another incidence also reflects Śaṅkaradeva's liberal attitude. Once, Mādhavadeva had gone for propagating *EŚHND* in a Kachari village. When Mādhavadeva advised the people to give up the habit of eating wine and pork, and adopt the new religion, the villagers got enraged and threw him away. Then Śaṅkaradeva himself met the people and requested them only to chant the name of Hari once by their mouth without discontinuing their age-old food habit. He said, "You continue to drink wine, eat the meat of pig. You just pronounce the name of Hari once. You would be got purified." Listening to that the people embraced *EŚHND* immediately and latter they were known as *Śaraṇīyā Kachārī*.⁷³

⁷¹ Ibid, vss.2382-2383

⁷² Borkakoti, S. (1995). *Sri Sri Sankaradeva*. p.143

⁷³ Medhi, 1997, pp.355-357

Conflict Management:

Conflict management is a practice to identify and handle conflicts or disputes in a rational and effective way. Śaṅkaradeva had to face lots of conflict while bringing forward his *Bhakti* Movement from within and outside. He had to guide a large group comprising heterogeneous people. They were coming from different socio-economic background, most of them being ordinary and illiterate. They involved in conflicts or disputes among themselves occasionally. Śaṅkaradeva controls them effectively with his managerial skills. He encouraged his disciples to come forward to provide helping hand if anybody face any kind of distress. It increased the feeling of bond among them which kept them away from conflicts. If any disciple become dissatisfy, Śaṅkaradeva immediately tried to control it. Once the three brothers of Puṇḍurāgiri, created problem while *Prasāda* was distributed after *Nāma-Kīrttana*. They demanded that they should be provided *Prasāda* at first. When the distributor refused they used to involve in arguments and rebuked the distributors. Listening to that Śaṅkaradeva at once ordered to provide *Prasāda* to them at first. In spite of that, when Puṇḍurāgiri brothers were not satisfied then Śaṅkaradeva passed injunction that the *Bhakats* should not go to households where the brothers were invited. Remaining isolated the three brothers realized their faults, came back after six months and never did the mistake.⁷⁴ On another occasion, when Śaṅkaradeva provided food regularly along with accommodation to Dāmodardeva after his initiation, some other disciples became disappointed. They moaned that Dāmodardeva being a new entrant why should he get privilege over them from Śaṅkaradeva. When Śaṅkaradeva came to know about

⁷⁴ PKGC, p.160

disciples' dissatisfaction he immediately stopped supplying food items to Dāmodardeva so that their grumble would not spread.⁷⁵ Similarly, seeing that Śaṅkaradeva always preserved equal amount of *Prasāda* to Haridāsa Baniā even if the later was absent, the disciples began to criticize. To calm down the criticism Śaṅkaradeva one day pretended to be worried over a debt of rupees four hundreds during his pilgrimage. When the disciples came near him, he asked them whether they could help him in repaying the debt. But they revealed much less amount than they actually had. When the matter was being reported to Haridāsa, he at once sent the message that Śaṅkaradeva should not worry about the loan. He would repay the loan by selling all his properties. Even then if the amount falls short he along with his family would become bondage labour to make up the shortage. After that the disciples stopped criticizing Haridāsa Baniā.⁷⁶

Śaṅkaradeva had to face stiff conflicts from the Brahmin priests very frequently. They not only opposed his *EŚHND* but also involved in many conspiracies against him to suppress his movement. The Brahmin priests and their agents used to misbehave the devotees of *EŚHND*, often rebuked and threatened them to kill. At Dhuwahata, some Brahmin priests even snatched away the rosaries from the *bhakats* and hang them onto dog's tail several times. At the court of the Ahom Kingdom and Koch Behar, the Brahmin priests lodged complaints against Śaṅkaradeva. To cool down Brahmin priests' atrocity Śaṅkaradeva adopted some methods. He used to involve in arguments in religious matters with scholar Brahmins, showed extra honour

⁷⁵ KGC, p.111

⁷⁶ Ibid, p.161

to Brahmin disciples by offering *Prasāda* at first, invited the leader of such quarrelsome priests to read the *Bhāgavata* and the *Gītā* in return of gold and other gifts etc. At the same time, Śaṅkaradeva also tried to control ethnic conflicts among different tribes of Brahmaputra valley who were frequently fighting among themselves. He tried to bring them together spiritually. In the words of Borkakoti,

Srimanta Śaṅkaradeva brought the conflicting tribes of Brahmaputra valley together by working on their positive qualities. This was how he worked in the area of conflict management. People of the Kachari tribe, who considered the Bhuyans as arch-enemies turned to the religious order founded by the saint within a few decades. While Assam history is replete with recurrence of many inter-ethnic conflicts in later periods, there is no instance of any Bhuyan-Kachari conflict in the later period. So the conflict management model pursued by Srimanta Śaṅkaradeva was a successful one.⁷⁷

In Śaṅkaradeva's writings also, views of conflict management are reflected.

*kapaṭika kapaṭa karile nāhi hāni*⁷⁸

[There is no harm if you become unkind to the ruthless people.]

*mitrabhāve yenamate śatru kari kṣaya
kandale nāpari tāka jānibā niścaya*⁷⁹

[You can lower enemy by becoming friendly to them: Know it, the cruelty can't do so.]

Financial Management: Time Value of Money:

The concept of time value of money is that money available today is worth more than the same amount of money in some future date due to its potential earning capacity. Money earns interest, therefore, sooner it is received more would be its worth. Since, over time period money has the potential to add its value, so a rational investor always prefers to receive money today rather than the same amount of money

⁷⁷ Borkakoti, 2017, p.3

⁷⁸ *Bhāg.*, 8th Canto, vs.288

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, vs.444

in future.⁸⁰ Two concepts that are used to evaluate the value of money are—discounting and present value. “The present value of a future payment is the amount received today that would be equivalent in value to the future payment. Similarly, discounting is the act of converting a future value of money into a present value. The discount rate is the rate of interest used in converting a future payment to its present value.”⁸¹

Śaṅkaradeva had shown his deep knowledge in financial matters particularly in the time value of money. This is evident from his advice to Mādhavadeva how to settle down financial transactions quickly. After taking initiation in *EŚHND*, Mādhavadeva want to stay permanently near Śaṅkaradeva and therefore seek his permission. At that time he was staying at Bharārīdubi with his mother Manoramā and Śaṅkaradeva was at Belaguri. Listening to that Śaṅkaradeva became very pleased and asked Mādhavadeva to come immediately. Then Mādhavadeva informed that he had financial transactions with many people as he was a businessman. He had to make payments to many people and had to receive money from different sources. To settle all the transactions he would require at least four to five months. Then Śaṅkaradeva replied that if Mādhavadeva wish he could settle the transactions within two days. He advised Mādhavadeva to pay some extra money than the due amount to whom he had to make payments. Then they would take the money before due date. Again, from whom he had to receive money, if he asked them to repay less amounts than the agreed amount then they would not hesitate to repay the money. Accordingly, Mādhavadeva

⁸⁰ <https://www.investopedia.com>

⁸¹ Maddala, G. S. & E. Miller. (1989). *Microeconomics: Theory and Applications*. p. 565

materialized the financial transactions. To whom he lends money, gave the rebate of interest payment and took back only the principal amount. Even then if anybody denied repayment he was offered to pay only half of the principal amount.⁸²

Alternative Way:

Śaṅkaradeva had expressed that there is less chance of failure if one proceeds with alternative plans.

*saṅkalpa bikalpa karma karaya niścaya
buddhimāna buli tāka jānibā nirṇaya*⁸³

[He is the clever man who performs tasks always with back up means.]

Family Management:

A good family life helps one's creativity to expand. Good family results from the ability of the family members to create an environment based on love, mutual respect and mentality to serve one another. Śaṅkaradeva had expressed his views on family management. According to him the elder members of a family should be more patient and should not lose temper even if junior members do commit faults.

*putra nidāruṇa yadi hovai kadācita
nuhio dāruṇa pitṛ henase bihita*⁸⁴

[If the son becomes merciless sometimes: It is not advisable that father should become hardhearted.]

Crisis Management:

Śaṅkaradeva had faced several severe crises in his life. It was inevitable as he was moving against the current wave. With patience and capacity he managed those

⁸² PKGC, p.122

⁸³ *Bhāg.*, 3rd Canto, vs.63

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 8th Canto, vs.116

crises successfully. Śaṅkaradeva always tried to overcome a crisis before it became serious. For instance, when Śaṅkaradeva was informed about the matter of killing hundreds of Kachari people by conspiracy after arranging a feast near Deora Beel, he at once ordered the Bhuyans to leave Bardowa and move to the north bank of the Brahmaputra. Śaṅkaradeva did not want to continue the conflict with the Kacharies because the fight would result a disruption in his reformatory movement. So he decided to move back. Due to his initiative the lives of Bhuyans remained safe. Not a single member of the Bhuyans could be physically tortured by the Kacharies. He also decided to leave Rowta and moved to Ahom Kingdom after the news of advancing the Koch army had broken out. Similarly, to avoid unnecessary conflicts with the Daflas he along with the Bhuyans left Gangmow.

Śaṅkaradeva expressed that ensuring security of life is more important than acquiring wealth. When the charges against him lodged by Brahmin priests were proved to be false, the Ahom king Chuhungmung offered gift including gold, silver, cloth and utensils to Śaṅkaradeva. Then he politely refused to accept the gifts by saying that he only wanted the permission of the monarch to freely propagate his religious faith. By doing so Śaṅkaradeva wanted to ensure a permanent solution to get rid of the hostile Brahmin priests.⁸⁵ But Śaṅkaradeva faced death threat from king Chuklengmung after the Bhuyans failed to protect wild elephants. When the soldiers came to arrest Śaṅkaradeva, he had escaped and remained underground for twenty seven days in the farm house of Pātkatiā Rāma Ātai. After that he fled from Āhom kingdom to Koch kingdom. First he ordered the boatmen to sail upstream for some

⁸⁵ PKGC, p.176

time to get rid of the secret agents of Āhom king, and then asked them to take turn to sail down to Koch kingdom.

In Koch kingdom also, when king Naranārāyana ordered to arrest Śaṅkaradeva after the allegation by Bramin priests, he agreed to accompany Cilārāi's soldiers and took shelter in the latter's palace so that he could prove his innocence. But sensing the deteriorating relationship between Naranārāyana and Cilārāi, Śaṅkaradeva willingly offered himself to go to the royal court. After entering into the court, while going near to the king Śaṅkaradeva started to sing the Sanskrit *Toṭaya*, a *Bargīta* and a *rāja-bhaṭimā*. Since, Śaṅkaradeva knew that Naranārāyana was also a highly scholar person, so he applied the music to cool down the anger of the king as well as to impress him. Śaṅkaradeva refrained to apply the same technique to the Ahom king as he was not well educated person.

Śaṅkaradeva had also expressed in his composition that during the time of crisis people should think of him at first. If he can save his life first then he would be able to think for others. Die for unreasonable cause does not mean bravery.

*milila duranta kāla parila bipāka
ānaka nicinti rājā cintā āpunāka*⁸⁶

[If bad time comes and circumstances become adverse: Think of yourself without thinking of others.]

Future:

Śaṅkaradeva expressed that one should not be too much worried about the future.

*nuśunibā rāmacandra pāchara kathāka
śuniyā lokara utpata haibe citra*⁸⁷

[Rāma, don't listen about the future: If future is known it made the mind unrest.]

⁸⁶ *Bhāg.*, 11th Canto, vs.704

⁸⁷ *Ramayana: Uttarakanda*, vs.448

4.2.4: Śaṅkaradeva as an Innovator

To attract the people to his faith, Śaṅkaradeva had invented many things and innovated some techniques. Taking ingredients from different tribes of Assam Śaṅkaradeva had innovated new song, musical instrument, dance, drama, dress etc. For instance, “adopting the tunes of folk songs of Tiwa tribe, Śaṅkaradeva made fusion with classical rāgas and developed his bargīta. It was done in such a fine manner that the folk components were elevated to classical level.”⁸⁸ He invented the musical instrument *Khol*. He also introduced *bhortāl* as well as *dobā* in the community prayers. *Bhortāl* was an improvement over the cymbals made of brass metal used by the Bhutias. In his plays, Śaṅkaradeva used new form of dance created by him. In the creation he borrowed ingredients from Indian classical dance and from indigenous sources like *Ojāpālī* and *Putalā-nāc* as well as other folk dances of different tribes like Bodo, Mising and others. His dramas itself was innovative work in many respects, namely, use of drop screen, representing the subject-matter with scenery, use of *Brajāwali* language, use of scenes of eating, wedding, war, killing etc. and introduction of child character. He made innovation in health sector by introducing the system of distributing *Prasāda* which contains a balanced food with components of protein, digestion and anti-oxidant. He also developed a unique style of prayer (*nāma-kīrttana*) to maintain good health of the devotees. In the community prayer, the devotees are required to clap with both hands in rhythm which made their nerve system remain active and healthy. Śaṅkaradeva designed the costumes for his plays himself. He innovated new art of weaving in making *Vṛndāvani Vastra*. He innovated

⁸⁸ Borkakoti, 2017, p.3

the institutions of *Nāmghars* and *Thān*. The *Nāmghar* is unique in respect of its architecture and multi-dimensional function. Śaṅkaradeva had kept three sides of the *Nāmghar* open so that whatever cultural and academic activities going on inside could be viewed or heard by all common masses. Similarly, he developed the *Thān* as an economic unit of self-dependent. Regarding the innovative quality of Śaṅkaradeva, Borkakoti remarks,

He contributed so many things to the society, or to be more precise to the humanity. He created many new things, new type of building structure, new social structure, new type of social management, new educational system, new food, new health care, new musical instrument, new music, new dance form, new form of play, new form of textile art, new form of painting and so on. There was innovation in almost all his activities.⁸⁹

4.2.5: Prediction

By observing the time series data before him he made predictions for the society. If one checks the present scenario in the society his accuracy in prediction could be seen.

kalita haibeka āve yata yata rājā
eribe ācāra dharma pīḍibeka prajā

āti anācāra byabhicārī akulīna
mahāmlecchasave dharibeka rāja cihna

*dhana lobhe prajāra cintibe mahāmāra*⁹⁰

[In *Kali Yuga* those who become kings: Would give up honesty and exploit the subjects: The worst persons and those who involves in fetid activities would take charge of royal duties: In greed of money they do everything against the common people.]

āna eko jīvikāka rājāye nājāne
prajākese khāba chiṇḍi dhanara nidāne
eribeka dwije jāti dharma nirantara
*strī dhana duita matra huiba tatapara*⁹¹

⁸⁹ Borkakoti, 2017, p.1

⁹⁰ *Bhāg.*, 12th Canto, vss.13-19

⁹¹ *Ibid*, vs.119

[The kings would not know other sources of revenue: They only exploit the subjects to raise revenue: The *brahmanas* also part with their noble professions: They become greedy and think of money and woman anytime.]

anābṛṣṭi durbhikṣata kato huibe kṣaya
*tāto kara sādhibe durjjana rājācaya*⁹²

[People would suffer from drought and endemic scarcity: But the merciless rulers don't refrain from collecting taxes.]

ghora kaliyuge yitojana dhanavanta
sehise kulīna sadācārī gunavanta
baṣṭha janara sijibeka pāpacaya
*anyāyato baṣṭha janara huibe jaya*⁹³

[In the *Kali Yuga*, one who is affluent: Would be the greatest person in the society: The powerful person could easily win even by committing misdeeds.]

dhana jana bibhava nāthāke yāra āti
sehijana asādhu lokara asaṅjāti
parama dāmbhika yito dhanara garbbata
*sehijana mahāsādhu bolāibe lokata*⁹⁴

[The person who doesn't have money and power sufficiently: Would be the untruthful and not respected by people: One who is very arrogant of money: Would become dignified person in the society.]

karibe durjjana loke dhanatese gaya
*khātidhana dile huibe anyāyato jaya*⁹⁵

[The people would adore money and wealth. One could win even if he is wrong by paying money.]

karibe kandala pāñca gaṇḍāra nimitte
*suhṛdaka bāndhibeka dhanara nidāne*⁹⁶

[People would quarrel for five *paisa*: They won't hesitate to fight with friend for money.]

sadāye buliba michā kapaṭa ācāra
*kraya bikrayato hove māyā byavahāra*⁹⁷

⁹² Ibid, vs.38

⁹³ Ibid, vs.21

⁹⁴ Ibid, vs.29

⁹⁵ Ibid, vs.27

⁹⁶ Ibid, vs.129

⁹⁷ Ibid, vs.23

[Always people would follow brutal behavior: Adopt unfair means in selling and purchasing.]

*kalita yateka dwije eriba ācāra
brahmacārī sannāsiyo haibe jñānahīna
kahibe napāre eko beda śāstra tattwa
mahā jñānaśūnya paramārtha bicārata
ekove najāne kicho napāre khaṇḍita
bahubalgi bhaile tāke bulibe paṇḍita*⁹⁸

[In the *Kali Yuga*, the *brahmanas* give up rituals: The *brahmachari* and *sanyasis* become unknowledgeable: They would be unable to explain the meaning of *Veda*: Completely becomes failure in exploring the ultimate knowledge: Know nothing and unable to make argument: Only the good orator becomes intellectual.]

*dāna pūnya karile mohora huibe khyāti
hena dambha bhāve dharma ācaribe āti*⁹⁹

[People would make donations and good deeds only to earn fame: They also perform religious rituals in the same purpose.]

*dhenuka tejibe jeve bhaile dugdhahīna
kalita haibeka loka strī parādhīna
pitṛ mātṛ jñāti yata tejibe sodara
bhāryyāra bhātṛta mātra karibe biśwāsa*¹⁰⁰

[Cows would not be taken care if they don't provide milk: The male would become dependent to women in *Kali Yuga*: The man would not care his own parents, brothers and relatives: But he would trust only to his in-laws.]

*kāmātura huyā nābāchibe jāti kula
paradārā gamana pātake huibe bhraṣṭa
āti khudra āyu alpa kāle yāibe naṣṭa*¹⁰¹

[The people having addicted to sex would not consider caste and Creed: They would spoil in the sins of having illicit sexual intercourse: Their life would be shortened and die immature.]

*nakaribe kulaśīla bicāra yuvatī
yāke abhiruci tāke mānibeka pati
puruṣe nācāibe bhāla manda samudāya
karibeka bhāryā āni yāke bāñcā yāya
ratita kuśala yitojana anācārī*

⁹⁸ Ibid, vss.25-28

⁹⁹ Ibid, vs.34

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, vs.125

¹⁰¹ Ibid, vs.15

*tākeṣe puruṣa bulibeka duṣṭā nārī
 rati suśikṣitā yito duṣṭā mane pūre
 strī buli tāke mānibeka kāmāture
 kulastrīko eri tāte karibeka rati
 nijapati teji tāke mānibeka pati¹⁰²*

[The young lady would not seek the identity of the boys: They select anybody as their husband whom they like: The man also won't consider what is good or bad: They made any women as their wife to whom they fond of: The naughty women admit his as a man: Who is expert in sex: Woman who is well trained in sexuality satisfies the man: The lustful man accepts only her as wife: He avoids his own wife to go near that prostitute: Woman by evading her husband go close to that dodger.]

*bākye bulibeka mātra ehi strī mora
 eteke bivāh haibe nalāge bicāra¹⁰³*

[The man declares one woman as his wife: Marriage would not be a matter of concern.]

*kalita lokara mahā milibe bipatti
 haibe paramāyu triṅśa bariṣa biṅśati¹⁰⁴*

[In the *Kaliyuga*, people would face lots of trouble: Their life span would shrink only to thirty years.]

4.2.6: Skill Development

Building skills in the individuals of a society is an important instrument to increase their employability, efficiency and productivity which is again crucial for sustainable development. Skill development facilitates a cycle of high productivity, increased employment opportunities, income growth and development. The weaker and marginalized sections of a society could be brought into the fold of growth by raising their skills. Śaṅkaradeva appreciated different professions and the people associated with those professions. At that time most of those professions were looked down upon in the society. But Śaṅkaradeva not only embraced them in his *EŚHND* but

¹⁰² Ibid, vss.22-24

¹⁰³ Ibid, vs.30

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, vs.39

also encouraged them to continue their professions. He shaped his religious practice in such a way that the demand for the products and services rendered by those professions sustained. Similarly, Śaṅkaradeva put effort to develop skill among the fellow people. From the common illiterate masses he selected singers, musicians, actors, make-up artists and trained them to be an expert. By providing training and supervising ordinary weavers of Tatikuchi he prepared the extraordinary *Vṛndāvani Vastra*. Similarly, he designed *guru-āsana*, *maṇikūṭ* and other accessories by guiding ordinary carpenters. At the same time he invented *khol* with the help of unknown potters.

4.2.7: Prohibiting Begging and Slavery

Slavery and begging were widely prevailed during his time. Śaṅkaradeva discouraged the practice of begging. He not only debarred the people from begging but also made necessary adjustment of alternative means of living. It is already mentioned that disciples like Madhāi Ātai, Udāra Ātai, Srirāma Ātā, Jaihari and Srihari were previously beggars. Similarly, Śaṅkaradeva and his followers rescued bonded labour and slave people whenever they came to know about them. Śaṅkaradeva, his associates like Mādhavadeva, Ṭhākura Ātā etc. spent their own money to free many slaves from their masters. Not only that, such slaves could acquire higher social status with the support from Śaṅkaradeva. For example, Balorāma of Topā became a *Ātai* who was earlier a *bandhā* (slave) for rupees five.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ GKC, p.225

4.2.8: Eradication of Poverty

During the time of Śaṅkaradeva a significant portion of the society had to live amidst poverty. Frequent occurrence of famines forced many people to be either beggar or slave. Besides “elaborate religious practices broke the back bones of the poor people, who could not afford them. Many of them had to sell their lifelong savings to do justice to these practices.”¹⁰⁶ Not only poor people but affluent people were also became the victim expensive rituals. For example, Gobinda Garmali had to face extreme poverty by losing everything including live stocks, ornaments, utensils, slaves etc. one by one in the worship of goddess. He was a govt. employee and was a very rich person. After spending entire properties he lost his mental balance and was laid sick in the market place from where he was rescued by Narāyana Dāsa and asked to go near Śaṅkaradeva. The latter gave him initiation in *EŚHND*. Remaining under the guidance of Śaṅkaradeva, Gobinda was able to reclaim his self confidence and started doing business of mustard with the help of manpower provided by Śaṅkaradeva.¹⁰⁷ Śaṅkaradeva realized that an ideal society is not possible if major portion of the population lived in economic misery. Each individual must get adequate means for his physical well being. If he can feed his stomach first then only he would be able to think for the society. For Śaṅkaradeva “parity between income and expenditure is the essence of proper economic policy.”¹⁰⁸ Since, at the prevailing economic situation it was hard for a person to raise his income, so he urged the people to live a simple life within their means. To eradicate poverty from the society he

¹⁰⁶ Pathak, D. (2012). *Beautiful Mind of Srimanta Sankaradeva*. p.72

¹⁰⁷ KGC, p.72

¹⁰⁸ Roychoudhury, 1985, p.229

fought against the causes of poverty. He understood it better that poverty was the cumulative result of age-old ignorance. The ignorant people felt prey easily to the greedy priestly class. He directly fought against ignorance. He had opened up the process of learning to common masses by translating scriptures into vernacular language and offering deep philosophical knowledge through performing arts. He also raised his voice against expensive and elaborate rituals and tried to awake the people about the futility of those rituals. Instead of observing extensive rituals, Śaṅkaradeva asked the people to devote themselves to the God. He said that without the help of a third person the people could satisfy the God through devotion. Thus by propagating a simple religious faith Śaṅkaradeva bestowed relief to the poor people.

4.2.9: Sanitation

Śaṅkaradeva strictly maintained cleanliness. He taught the people how to live neat and clean. He appointed few devotees to clean the premise of the *Thān* at Pāṭbāusī. “Śaṅkaradeva taught the people to lead a polish life both inwardly and outwardly. Some code of conduct and rules for cleanliness were prescribed for that.”¹⁰⁹ He always advised his disciples to be very cautious in eating food. During pilgrimage, he guided his disciples to proper places. Similarly, during different boat travels he took care of the hygiene matter in preparing food. He even refused several times the unclean food offered in the court of Koch king Naranārāyana.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Deva Goswami, K. (2005). *Snakaradeva's Contribution Towards Socio-Economic Regeneration*. in B. Kalita and H. D. Mazumdar (ed.). *Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva Bhārata Bariṣe*. p.10

¹¹⁰ KGC, pp.147-148

4.2.10: Population Control

The KGC also referred Śaṅkaradeva's initiation in family planning. He once rebuked Narāyana Dāsa and his wife for having large number of children.¹¹¹ Through his writings, he appealed the people to be disciplined in sexuality.

*yadi kalā jarā kaṇā kujā hovai pati
tathāpi neribā hena śāstara sanmatī
upapati same krīḍā karma garahita¹¹²*

[Although the husband is a deaf, blind or physically handicapped: The scriptures not suggest averting him: Having extra marital affairs is condemnable work.]

*dekhāilanta dukha kāmātura puruṣara
nāhi sukha śānti nalavaya bārīghara
rātri-dine strīra mātra pāli phurai āśa
strī bhaila rājā kāmātura bhaila dāsa
aneka lāñchanā āchai kāmī puruṣare¹¹³*

[There are lots of sufferings for lustful person: He doesn't have peace in mind, nor could concentrate in his household: Spend his day and night in thinking of impious woman's companion: That woman become master and the lustful person her slave: That sex passionate person is bound to face enough difficulty.]

4.2.11: Spreading Universal Brotherhood

Śaṅkaradeva did not address the people of Assam or India alone. Rather he addressed the entire mankind. Śaṅkaradeva propagated that serving human being is superior to worshipping God. He showed this to his disciples with example by serving others himself. For instance he once cleaned old Sarbajay Ātai's urinated wet clothes with his own hands. Seeing that when Mādhavadeva said it was a task of servants then Śaṅkaradeva told the former that if the higher ranked person could serve ordinary

¹¹¹ Ibid, p.169

¹¹² Bhāg., 10th Canto, vs.1245

¹¹³ Ibid, vs.1372

people then only his life become successful.¹¹⁴ This had great impact on his disciples. They ultimately believed and behaved like that serving the human is superior to serving God. The impact could be seen from the incidence of the attendant of Mādhavadeva. One day the attendant named Kālīrāma was praying. Then Mādhavadeva reached home. Kālīrāma without completing his prayer went out taking a pot of water to offer Mādhavadeva. When inquired by Mādhavadeva, Kālīrāma replied that he had done so because he had heard that serving the disciple was more important than serving the God.¹¹⁵

In one day Śaṅkaradeva had noticed that a noted devotee was absent in the congregation. When inquired, it came to be known that he was attending an ailing friend. The other devotees present were remarked how he dared to neglect the prayer. Then Śaṅkaradeva expressed his satisfaction and said “The devotee has done well. To serve a man is to serve God. He has done the real act of service. My dear children follow his example and do social service.”¹¹⁶

4.2.12: Reducing Social Inequality

During Śaṅkaradeva’s time, caste system had a very bad impact on the society. The lower caste people had no social position. Some people were regarded as sinful due to their birth in lower caste. Śaṅkaradeva had showed deep sympathy for those people and tried to redeem them. However, he never directly fought against the caste

¹¹⁴ KGC, p.58

¹¹⁵ Dutta, P. P. (2014). *Srimanta Sankaradev Jeevanamrit*. p.78

¹¹⁶ Murthy, H.V. S. (1961). *Vaisnavism of Śaṅkaradeva and Ramanuja: A Comparative Study*. p.220

system. He only tried to slacken its grip over the masses.¹¹⁷ For this he insistently worked to upgrade the status of so-called ‘low caste’ people. He did not differentiate the devotees in respect of caste. All people irrespective of high and low birth, were admitted to his faith. All were treated equally and were given equal right to take part in devotional matters. His liberal outlook resulted that many devotees came from lower caste could attain higher rank of his religion. Śaṅkaradeva shattered the caste bar in selecting a person to lead the congregational prayer, to distribute *Prasāda*, to impart training in song, dance and music as well as in taking part in dramatic performances. Due to his teaching of equality, the lower caste people could regain recognition in the society. Similarly, Śaṅkaradeva also spread the feeling of harmony among various rivalry ethnic groups. He accepted disciples from various ethnic tribes who were sitting on the same line and worked together as a team. Nath observed “Mohammedans, Garos, Bhutias, Mikirs, and the so-called low-caste Hindus also found equal position with others in his prayer house, and some of them were appointed high priests in his mission.”¹¹⁸

Through his enormous writings Śaṅkaradeva tried to nurture in the minds of people that all are equal. In devotion irrespective caste, creed and deeds all are the same.

jāti kula kṛiyā eko nābāche
*tohmāra ito bhakati*¹¹⁹

[Caste, creed, deeds all are irrelevant: In the devotion of Thou.]

¹¹⁷ Barman, S. (2005). *SANKARADEV-The Apostle of Equality*, in B. C. Kalita and H. D. Mazumdar (ed.), *Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva Bhārata Bariṣe*. p.50

¹¹⁸ Nath, 2013, p.203

¹¹⁹ *Bhāg.*, 1st Canto, vs.170

Śaṅkaradeva taught the people that it is possible for the lower caste people to upgrade themselves through good deeds. And those good deeds are nothing but the listening and chanting the attributes of Lord Viṣṇu.

yāhār smaraṇe āti śudha havai antyajāti
*yār nāme pāpīyo nistār*¹²⁰

[By remembering him, the humble births could become purified: By chanting his name the sinful persons got sanctity.]

Similarly, in the companion of a Kṛṣṇa devotee lower caste as well as sinful persons got purified.

kirāta kachārī khāci gāro miri
yavana kaṅka govāla
asama muluka dhobā ye turuka
kubāca mleccha caṇḍāla
āno pāpī nara kṛṣṇa sevakara
*saṁgata pavitta haya*¹²¹

[In the land of Assam, all the out castes, lower castes people as well as the sinful people by birth could got purified simply by taking the companion of a Kṛṣṇa worshipper.]

To be a best person in the society, it not necessary that he must belongs to *Brāhmaṇa* clan. Any person with humble birth could do so if he has faith to Kṛṣṇa.

yānilā brāhmaṇ janma haibāk nālāge tār
yito kṛṣṇa kathāta rasika
yaite taite hoka janma sise jana narottama
*yāra śraddhā hari bhakatita*¹²²

[Know it, for him it is not necessary to take birth in *Brāhmaṇa* family: Who is sweet in the words of Kṛṣṇa: Any where he could take birth: Still he could become best person: If he has respect in the devotion of Lord Hari.]

¹²⁰ Ibid, 10th Canto, vs.2212

¹²¹ Ibid, 2nd Canto, vs.53

¹²² Ibid, 10th Canto, vs.2449

4.2.13: Love and Preservation of Flora and Fauna

To protect the local flora and fauna, Śaṅkaradeva adopted the strategy to imbibe love towards nature in the minds of people. Śaṅkaradeva used description of nature as a medium to express the religious ideas of his faith so that the common people find them attractive and easily understandable. Through his poetic quality he was able to bring the nature into the hearts of people. That increased the bond among nature and the people. Rajkhowa remarks, “He had great love and appreciation for the indigenous flora and fauna of Asama as well. This is clearly evident from his poetical creation, Haro-mohan. Here he mentions about 44 flowers, most of which are found in Assam, not elsewhere in the country.”¹²³

He depicted the interrelationship between man and nature beautifully in various compositions.

*cāru sarovara nirmala jala
sugandhi padma sobhe utpala
āchai rajahaṁsa sumūhe rañji
līlāye mṛṇāla bhuñjai ubhañji
pāre pārijāta malayā bāva
caṭake tyaje sulalita rāva
bhramaragaṇe gāvai hari gīta
vaiṣṇavagaṇa śuni ānandita*¹²⁴

[The beautiful lake fills with transparent water: Scented lotus and lilies blooms beautifully: The swans are playing there: They eat the roots of lotus: A lovely breeze is blowing on the bank: The birds are singing sweet songs: Bees are beautifully singing song of lord Hari: The devotees of Viṣṇu derive immense pleasure by hearing the songs.]

*garu gopikā paśu brkṣavana
nāhi janmāntare kichu sādhana
ehi janme mānta kari bhakati
pāileka sakale mohora gati*¹²⁵

¹²³ Rajkhowa, 2012, p.264

¹²⁴ *Kīrt.*, vss. 147-149

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, vs.138

[The cows, cowherd's wives, animals, trees and creepers had done nothing in the past lives for salvation. But only resorting to devotion in this life they have achieved grace of Me.]

*śāla tāla tamāla mandāra pārijāta
campaka aśoka āno puṣpa asaṅkhyāta
āma jāma lebu jarā-jāmīra khājura
bela nārikala tāla tāmbūla pākāḍi
agaru candana padma sarala sonāru*¹²⁶

[Trees like *śāla*, *tāla*, *tamāla*, *mandāra* exist there: Innumerable flowers like *pārijāta*, *campaka*, *aśoka* and others: Fruit trees—*āma*, *jāma*, *lebu*, *jarā*, *jāmīra*, *khājura*: Besides there are *bela*, *nārikala*, *tāla*, *tāmbūla*: There are also trees like *pākāḍi*, *agaru*, *candana*, *padma*, *sarala*, *sonāru*.¹²⁷]

*banara sito bitopana nāma
kahite yāhāra nāhi upāma
tāhāra māje sarovara eka
sāgara saṅkāśa dekhi pratyeka
suvarṇamaya padma āche juḍi
bhramare madhu piyai tāte pari
rājhaṅsa ādi yateka pakṣī
pari pari thākai nāyāya upekṣi
kumud indu utpala phula
phuli āche gandhe nāhike tula
coubhiti beḥi āchai upabane
kahibe nāma tāra konajane
kadamba raghu nāgeśwara gāche
phule jhakamaka beḥiyā āche
mālati madhai jai yūti yata
pārijāta mūkya brkṣa samasta
bahvai basabnta malayā bāva
kokile teje sulalita rāva*¹²⁸

[The forest is named Bitopana: Nothing is there for comparison: A lake exists there amidst: As if a sea there it is: Golden lotuses are spreading over: Black bees suck honey alighting there: Swans and all other birds: Perch there with all interests: Flowers like *kumuda*, *indu*, *utpala*: Are blooming with fragrance incomparable: Surrounding it are many groves: None's there to speak the names: On *kadamba*, *raghu*, *nāgeśwara* trees: Are blooming bright all flowers: *mālati*, *madhāi*, *jai*, *yūti*, *pārijāta*: Are chief flower-trees there to count: Fragrant breeze of the spring blows: Cuckoos sing in melodious notes.¹²⁹]

¹²⁶ Ibid, vs.479

¹²⁷ Saikia, 2005, p.239

¹²⁸ *Kīrt.*, vss.482-486

¹²⁹ Saikia, 2005, pp.240-242

phala phula dhari jakamaka kari
āche yata vrkṣamāna
śiriṣa seuti tamāla mālati
lavaṅga bāgī gulāla
karabīra baka kāñcana campaka
phulabhare bhāṅge dāla
śevālī nevālī palāśa pārālī
pārijāta yūti yāi
bakula banduli āche phuli phuli
tāro sīmā saṅkhyā nāi
kanoura kānārī kadamba bābari
nāgeśwara sinhacampā
aśoka apāra devanā mandāra
mañirāja rājacampā
kunda kurubaka ketekī tagara
gandhe mohe bahudūra
guṭimālī bhenṭi rāṅgala revatī
maruvā madhāi dhusttūra
candana agaru dībya kalpataru
devadāru padmabaci
prati gāche gāche bhiṇḍā bāndhi āche
suvarṇa māṇike khaki¹³⁰

[All trees there with fruits and flowers: Are glittering to the eye: *śiriṣa, seuti, tamāla, mālati, lavaṅga, bāgī, gulāla* and others: *karabī, baka, kāñcana, campaka*: All are bending with flowers: *śevālī, nevālī, palāśa, pārālī, pārijāta, yūti, yāi*: *bakula, banduli* are blooming endlessly: Countless if one does try: *kanoura kānārī, kadamba, bābari, nāgeśwara, sinhacampā*: Countless *aśoka, devanā, mandāra, mañirāja, rājacampā*: *kunda, kurubaka, ketekī, tagara*: Their fragrance spreads afar: *guṭimālī bhenṭi, rāṅgala, revatī, maruvā, madhāi, dhusttūra, candana, agaru*, Divine *kalpataru*: *devadāru, padmabaci*: On every tree are bunches clustered: With gold and gems fully.¹³¹]

4.3: Relevance of Śaṅkaradeva's Economic Thoughts in Present Time

Śaṅkaradeva's thinking for future generation and his advice to preserve one-fifth of the wealth for future generation resembles with the concept of sustainable development which is most important issue of development now a days. His belief 'Every human being and every living creature are a part of the God and therefore pay

¹³⁰ *Kīrt.*, vss. 534-536

¹³¹ *Ibid*, pp.263-265

respect to them' is relevant to preserve biodiversity. At present, income inequality is growing across the globe at uncontrolled rate. People are in a race to accumulate wealth without thinking how much they need in their life. They even do not hesitate to involve in unlawful activities to earn money. But all these activities lead to lose of peace of mind of the people. To avoid such circumstances Śaṅkaradeva's advice is relevant. Similarly, Śaṅkaradeva's views on taxation, commodity production, profit, consumer awareness etc. are very much relevant at present time. The socio-ethical thoughts of Śaṅkaradeva for management and upliftment of economic condition of the people is very much important in present day society.

