

## CHAPTER –VI

### ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY

In the preceding chapters, there is discussion about introduction, methods and methodology of the study, review of related literature, objectives of establishment of *Thān* and *Sattras* and its contribution to the value education of Assam with special reference to Bardowā *Thān*. Data collected from various sources are used by of various tools and techniques mentioned in the third chapter. In this chapter the investigator has described and analyzed the data, with objective wise findings.

#### 6.1 Analysis of Data

In research two types of data are recognized-qualitative and quantitative.<sup>1</sup> Quantitative data are obtained by applying various scales of measurement. But qualitative data are verbal or other symbolic materials. It describes events, persons and so forth scientifically without the use of numerical data.<sup>2</sup> The detailed description of observed behaviours, people, situations and events are some examples of qualitative data. The data collected by the researcher to fulfill the objectives were questionnaire, observation , interview schedule and from various' documents like visitors comments office documents etc.<sup>3</sup> The topic of this study “*Contribution of Thān and Sattras to the Value Education of Assam: With Special Reference to Bardowā Thān*” was a

---

1. Koul, Lokesh (1998) *Methodology of Educational Research*: P 185.

2. Best John.W and Kahn James.V (1996) *Research in education*: P 81.

3. Koul, Lokesh (1984) *Methodology of Educational Research*: P 88.

qualitative study. So the researcher collected both primary and secondary qualitative data.

### **6.1.1 General observation**

Data collected from general observation are discussed on the foregoing chapters. So in this chapter the researcher has analyzed the data collected from various sources through the use of various tools and techniques.

### **6.1.2 Divoin II**

#### **Interview**

In this division there are two parts : visitor's comments and case study

#### **6.1.2.1 Visitors' Comments**

A number of Indian and foreign tourists, educationists, pilgrims, devotees and general people visited Bardowā *Thān* on different occasions and offered prasad and other materials. Some of them put their valuable comments on Śaṅkaradeva and his successors, and about different sides of the Bardowā *Thān* which are given below.

1. In 1845, 6<sup>th</sup> February Dr Nathan Brown, the American Baptist Missionary, who was the editor of Assamese news paper *Arundai* and Mr. Miles Brownson, the editor of first *Anglo-Assamese Dictionary* and two assistants, Mr. Pitter and Mr. Nidhi Libai Farwell came to Bardowā on foot, a distance of 12 miles on road. Mrs. Eliza Brown, the wife of Dr. Nathan Brown described the spiritual experience of this journey in her book, *The whole world Kim*. They took holy water from the lake Ākāśhi Gangā for other missionary colleagues. In their rest camp at Bardowā they saw various arts of

Hindu culture on the roof of the house. They respected Śaṅkaradeva as an incarnation of God, and praised the art of Vaiṣṇavism.<sup>4</sup>

**2. Kakashaheb Kalelkar:** ( 1885-1981) Kakashaheb Kalelkar, a prominent follower of the Gandhian Philosophy, reputed writer and an advocator of untouchability, said that Bardowā is not famous only for Śaṅkaradeva but for his ideas of unity and as a propagator of an equalitarian society in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Śaṅkaradeva was not only a great man of east but all over India.<sup>5</sup>

**3. Ferly Richmond:** Ferly Richmond, an Associate Professor of Michigan State University, U.S.A came to Assam in 1970. He came to Bardowā with Dr. Maheswar Neog and commented on Śaṅkaradeva. He opined that Śaṅkaradeva was an innovator of open Opera and Stage. He also enjoyed the *Bhāonā* at Puranigudam, Kaliabor, Nagaon and Bardowā with Dr. M. Neog. He wrote an article – “The Vaiṣṇava Drama of Assam” and Assamese *Bhāonā* in 1794.<sup>6</sup>

**4. Jyotiprasad Agarwala:** The famous artist cum producer and director of first Assamese film “Joymati”, dramatist, singer and also a veteran patriot came to Bardowā after his foreign tour. According to him Bardowā, the birth place of Śaṅkaradeva is the heart of Assamese culture. The art and architecture of the *Nāmghar* of Bardowā is very simple. This can be compared with the Volkieshe Theatre of Berlin. The Assamese *Nāmdharma* is very simple as like as its art. The art of Śaṅkaradeva’s *Nāmghar* can be taken as future model. Because these arts were older than that of Belur Math and

---

4. Bora, K (2015): *Bardowa Smritigrantha*: P. 227-228.

5. *Ibids*: P. 225.

6. *Ibids*: P. 226.

Gandhiji's ideology is same as Śaṅkaradeva's ideology. Gandhiji's simple ideology and Śaṅkaradeva's ideology help to build an equalitarian society.<sup>7</sup>

**5. Dr Bhupen Hazarika:** Visited Bardowā for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time on 10<sup>th</sup> November, 1974.

In his comments it was found that –

1. The behavior of the Bhakats was very amiable.
2. The preservation system of *Thān* was admirable
3. The art of the *Kīrttanghar* was very beautiful and also neat and clean.
4. The Vaiṣṇava art *Citra – Bhāgavat* and other arts attracted him.
5. Śaṅkaradeva established *Sattrā* like a residential University before Robindra Nath Tagor's Viśwabhāratī.
6. Śaṅkaradeva was a man of multifaceted genius who reformed our society and gave social status to a schedule caste lady named Rādhikā.
7. To acquire knowledge he travelled all over India and reformed the Assamese society by his revolutionary Philosophy and ideology.
8. His moral, social and spiritual values are important to develop our present society.<sup>8</sup>

**6. Kakā Nilamani Phukan:** *Vagmi Kabi* (good orator and poet) Kakā Nilamani Phukan came to Bardowā on the 500th birth anniversary of Śaṅkaradeva on 6<sup>th</sup> May 1975. According to him Assamese people were disciplined. They always follow the hygienic rule that is neat and clean and always take bath, and chant the name of God. Śaṅkaradeva and his disciple Mādhavadeva translated the Sanskr̥t Books into

---

7. Agarwala, J.P. "Asamīyā sthāpatyar Navarūp" Sarma, S.N (ed) *Jyotiprasādar Rachanāwalī* (1996): P.484-485

8. Bora, K. (ed 2015) *Bardowā Smṛitigrantha*: P 223-224.

Assamese language to educate the Assamese people. Our young generation should follow Śaṅkaradeva and his ideology. He advised the Assamese young people to translate Sankaradeva's books into English to diffuse his ideology all over world. From Santijān one can memorize the name of Satī Rādhikā, an example of equalitarian society of Śaṅkaradeva which was the main moto of *Ek-Śaran-Nāma- Dharma*. According to *Kakā* Nilamani Phukan Bardowā's culture influenced the people since the time of Śaṅkaradeva.<sup>9</sup>

7. In his comments **Jain Muni Buddhamalji** said that there were many temples in India which are decorated with Gold and Silver. But Bardowā *Thān* was very simple, ostentation, solitary like a pious Ashram. (Source- Visitors coments Book)

8. **Dr. B.K.Gokak** Rtd. Vice cancellor of Bangalore University visited the Bardowā *Thān* on 1972, 25<sup>th</sup> September. He supported the work of Śaṅkaradeva and remarked Śaṅkaradeva as a revolutionary preacher and an incarnation of God.

9. **Mr. N. Kasturi** as associate of Satya Sāibābā, praised the *Bhakat* of Bardowā about their morality and non-greediness. (Source- Visitors' comnent Book)

10. **German Tourist Tulligh** who visited Bardowā on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept2016 and French Tourist Thomas L. Kelley who visited Bardowā on 20<sup>th</sup> Oct 2016, in their comments praised the artistic, calm and quite natural and social environment which fascinated them. (Source- Visitor's Comments)

11. Śrī Śrī Nilkāmul *Sattara's Sattrādhikār* and *Vaiṣṇava* writer **Gahan Ch. Goswami** visited Bardowā on 25<sup>th</sup> Sept on 1974, the 526 birth anniversary of Śaṅkaradeva. In his speech he said that Śaṅkaradeva united the Assamese society through his Philosophy

---

9. Bora, K. (ed 2015) *Bardowā Smritigrantha*: P. 217-219.

and ideology, Śaṅkaradeva gave us language, literature, culture and behavior to establish the Assamese society. Bhārat Varṣha is a spiritual country. Without spirituality man cannot live a peaceful life. So he wished to include spiritual education through Śaṅkaradeva religion.<sup>10</sup>

**12. Jagṇeswar Sarmah** former Principal of Nagaon College, when he visited Bardowā in 1977 opined that there are many valuable books on *Sattrā Saṁhati*, *Vaiṣṇava dharma*, *gīt* and objects in the Bardowā Vaiṣṇava Library. Again there are no publication of various *Sanchipatar Puthi* of Śaṅkaradeva and his followers. So he suggested that with the help of the Vaiṣṇava University these can be revived.<sup>11</sup>

**13. Dr Kalicharan Das**, the former head of the Department of philosophy of Gauhati University said that the religion propagated by Śaṅkaradeva was useful for mass people, because it was very simple. (Source- Visitors comment Book)

**14.** The establisher of Śrīmata Śaṅkara Saṅgha and Vaiṣṇava writer and educationist **Sonārām Chutia** in 25<sup>th</sup> Sept 1974 said that, *Nāmghar* established by Śaṅkaradeva at Bardowā is now spread all over Assam. It has played the role as adult education centre, stage, village organizer, selter for disaster affected people and centre of unity. So we should give importance on *Nāmghar* and inspire our present generation to *Nāmghar* culture.

**15.** Additional Chief Secretary Of Assam Government, **M.G.K Bhanu** came to Bardowā on 23<sup>rd</sup> Aug 2017 on the 448 death anniversary of Śaṅkaradeva and said that it is a place of egalitarian society, which was established by Śaṅkaradeva about five

---

10. Bora, K. (ed 2015) *Bardowā Smṛitigrantha*: P. 247.

11. Choudhuri, B. (2017) *Bardowā Itishās*, P.308.

hundred seventy years ago. So we should follow him for a peaceful society. (Source- Field study from his lecture)

**16.** American tourist **Johan.C.Herviz, Stiven Heriz** and **Hither Herviz** of South Bristol visited Bardowa on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2017 and they were astonished to see the art, architecture and culture of Bardowā *Thān*. They recognized Śaṅkaradeva as a humanistic philosopher. They also took the dry silikha with them. They suggested to develop the environment of *Thān* to attract the tourists and to diffuse the ideology of Śaṅkaradeva. (Source : visitors comments)

From the comments of various persons it was found that Bardowā *Thān* was not only the birth place of Śaṅkaradeva, it was a place of various Assamese and Vaiṣṇava culture such as art, architecture, literature and equalitarian society. Moral, social, spiritual, religious and hygienic values are seen from the various activities of the people of Bardowā.

### **6.1.2.2 Case Study**

Contribution of Bardowā *Thān* to the value education was analyzed in detail through the following case studies. Researcher collected statements from the important and dedicated personalities related with Bardowā, *Thān* and *Sattras* and scholars to attain the objectives-

**Person Related with Bardowā *Thān*:** At first the researcher interviewed the persons related with Bardowā *Thān*.

**(1) Devananda Deva Goswami:** (Age 65 Years) Present *Sattrādhikār* of Narowā *Sattra* of Bardowā *Thān* Devananda Deva Goswami, also *Sattrādhikār* of Pāṭṭbausi

*Thān* Barpeta, the son of Purna Ch. Deva Goswami is a knowledgeable person of various subjects related with *Thān*, *Sattrā* and specially about Bardowā and Pāṭbausi *Thāns*. He told about the rules and regulations of the *Purush Samhati Sattras* and qualities of person to become a *Sattrādhikār*. In *Narowā Sattrā*, *Sattrādhikār* is appointed on hereditary basis. According to him, one must write an *Aṅkiyā Nāṭ* and enact that on the night of his *Abhiṣeka* (appointment). Before going to be a *Sattrādhikār* one must know his *Vamsawali* (family history), rules of *śaran* and *bhajan*, abstain from alcohol and having an amiable nature. Though Puruṣottam Thākur appointed his wife Āi Kanaklatā, yet since then there was no lady *Sattrādhikār* at *Narowā* or *Śalguri*.

**(2) Paramānanda Deva Mahanta (92 yrs)** Paramānanda Deva Mahanta belongs to *Śalguri Sattrā*. After the death of his brother Someswar Mahanta he became the *Sattrādhikār* of *Śalguri Sattrā*. According to him the *Sattrādhikār* is appointed in this *Sattrā* on the basis of *Jesthānukram*, i.e. the eldest male person of the family becomes the *sattrādhikār* of this *Sattrā*. He was a bachelor and highly energetic with good health, even at the age of 92 years. Behind his good health it was found that he followed the rules and regulation of *Śaraṇa* introduced by Śaṅkaradeva. Accordingly he maintained a simple living and high spiritual thinking throughout his life. He took the food cooked by himself or the family members who maintained the strict rules according to their *Sattrā*. Again he keeps fasting on *Ekādaśī*, *Amābaiśyā*, *Gurutīthī* etc and always feel happy. He gave an example of Śaṅkaradeva's ideology about this from *Nimi Nava Sidha Saṁbada*—



*pindhibā ānande śir bākali basana,  
jehi mile tāhāte santuṣṭa haibe mana//*<sup>12</sup>

(Wear simple cloth with delightfully and be satisfied on what is found)

**(3) Bhubaneswari Mahanta:** A 93 years old lady with young mind and sound health was the *Barnāmatī* (Head of the woman devotces) of Śalguri *Sattrā*. Wife of a *Sattrādhikār* (late *Someswar Deva Mahanta*) at an early age she had followed the strict customs and manners of the Vaiṣṇava *Sattrā*. After the death of her mother in-law she took the charge of the *Barnāmatī* of *Saruphāl*. She was well versed in various matters of *sattras* like - *caudhya prasāṅgas*, *Aṅkiyā nāṭ*, *Jhumurā* and *Bhāonā*. She also knows the process of making Sanchipāt and ink and to write on the sanchipat with locally available resources. She is a kind-hearted woman and her hospitality towards *all* section of people is well known. According to her she could rise to this position and acquired these qualities due to her marriage with a *sattriyā* cultured family of Bardowā. So she was very much grateful to the Bardowā *Thān* for her spiritual and social development.

**(4) Gajen Rajkhowa:** (56 years) Literary pensioner and Ambedkar fellowship awardee on culture and social work, Rajkhowa is a writer, singer of *sattriyā* song e.g- *Bargīt*, *Nām Prasāṅga*, actor of *Aṅkiyā nāṭ*, instrumentalist of various *sattriya* instrument – like– *Khol*, *Tāl*, *Negerā* etc.

His books are mainly related with Bardowā *Thān* and various vaiṣṇava cultures. He published nine (9) books which are very helpful to mainly tourists and

---

<sup>12</sup>. *Nimi Nava Sidha Sambad*. V. 144

young generation to know about the socio cultural, religious, spiritual and moral contribution of Bardowā *Thān* to the society. These are –

- (1) *Bardowā Ālipukhurīr saṅkṣipta parichay* (A Short Introduction of Bardowā
- (2) *Satī Rādhikā and śantijān* ( Chaste Rādhikā and Śantijān)
- (3) *Bardowā cautāre* (Four ways of Bardowā, *Guru, Dew, Nāma, Bhakata* )
- (4) *Bachartut Bardowā āru Āisakalar Dihānām* (whole year of Bardowa and *dihā nām* (advice) of women devotees)
- (5) *Bhakatar saṅga sadā Nugusak* (Always live with Devotees)
- (6) *Bardowā Thān Citraputhi* (Pictures of Bardowā *Thān*)
- (7) *Bhakatī Rasere Noī Galpa* (Nine stories with Devotion)
- (8) *Rābhā* (Life story of Bishnu Rabha)
- (9) *Bhakti rasane Galpa* (Devotional story)

Having very simple and amiable personality Rajkhowa is associard with Batadravā *Thān Parichalanā Samittee* for above 30 years as president or secretary and a dedicated devotee of Bardowā *Thān*.

He has full knowledge about the art and architecture of Bardowā mini museum and various art of *Kīrttanghar*. According to him contribution of Śaṅkaradeva should be diffused all over world as an icon of Assamese society. His spiritual, social and environmental development and good health is only because he is resident of Bardowā *Thān* and having up blessings of *Gurujan* (Śaṅkaradeva), his parents and environment of Bardowā *Thān*.

**(5) Dimbeswar Gayan (80 yrs):** Dimbeswar Gāyan was a *Pāthak* (reciter or reader of religious book). He has given training of *Jhumurā* and *Ankīyā nāṭ* to the children of

Bardowā. He was well versed about the different wealth of Bardowā *Thān* including the Śaṅkar silikha, saṅcitree, pātisonḍā and other belongings of Śaṅkaradeva. According to *Gāyan* the main purpose of *Jhumurā* is to build up the morality and unity of the children through dance drama on the life of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and his friends which is most enjoyable and also easy to learn the spiritual education. Again, with the help this *Bhāonā* and *Jhumurā* (drama) we can make our children aware about the aesthetic value of mind.

**(6) Harinarayan Kanwar (63years):** Saṅcipāt artist and an aesthetic minded, Harinarayan Kunwar is a retired office assistance of Bardowā Higher Secondary School. On 1972, 7th September he came to Bardowā from Nalbari to search for livelihood. But the environment of Bardowā attracted him so much that he took Śaraṇa from Narowā *sattrādhikār* and became a permanent inhabitant of Bardowā. His home is like a mini museum of *Vaiṣṇava* art.

He copied the *Guṇamālā* and some cantos from the *Kīrttan* on *saṅcipāt*. His painting of various *Vaiṣṇava* art and other art is very attractive. His son is a *Mukhā* artist and his wife and daughter were also expert in traditional ink making process. He and his family learned these techniques from Śalguri Late *sattrādhikār* and his wife Bhubaneswarī Āi. He was also a member of Bardowā *Thān parichalānā samittee* and an expert instrumentalist i.e. *Khol*, *Tāl* etc. According to him the people of Bardowā are socially, spiritually and above all they are aesthetically advanced. This is the result of Śaṅkaradeva's humanistic ideology and *Eka-Śaraṇa-Nāma-Dharma*.

**(7) Joges Ātai:** (Age 72 years) With bright personality Joges Ātai was a celebrate devotee of *Hātī*. He was the eldest of all 8 (eight) *bhakatas*. In his *Hātī* there was a

small Āsana (Alter) in which he bows down his head after bath and before morning *prasaṅga*. He cooked his own food himself. He maintained the all rules and regulations of the *Thān*. According to him the blessing of *Guru* is the main cause for his good health. According to him simple living and spiritual thinking early to bed and early to rise is main moto of the *Hātī Bhakat*. He offered the *Nirmālī* to the devotees and always takes part in the *Caidhya Prasaṅga*. He maintained the main *Guru Āsana* and *Simhasāna* and lit the *Akhanda Banti*. He stayed at *Hātī* for forty years. According to him there are three (3) celibate devotees and five (5) married devotees in their *Hātīs*. But the families of married devotees do not resided at *Hātī*. Religious works are distributed according to their seneority and scenciarity. To maintain *padaśilās* was another duty of *Hātī Bhakat*. They were conscious about their moral and spiritual character, they had no helper to do their personal works, so they themselves do their work. His father died when he was only eighteen months old. That is why he became self dependent since his childhood.

**(8) Cikunī Kalita:** (Age 70 years) Cikunī Kalita, a seventy (70) year old was the only female devotee who voluntarily offered her service to the Bardowā *Thān*. She swept the yard of *Kīrttanghar* and *Padaśilā* daily. She was very much happy with the service which she was thinks as service to the *Guru* and God. Her energetic and laughing face attracted all the visitors who came to her contact. Her service to the *Kīrttanghar* has great social and spiritual value.

**(9) Jogendra Narayan Deva Mahanta:** (Age 68 year) *Dekā Sattrādhikār* of Śalguri *Sattra* has all qualifications to be a religious leader as *Sattrādhikār*. He was an expert *Suttradhārī* dancer, *Gāyan*, *Bāyan* actor and a dramatist of *Bhāonā*. He was also

entagled with the *Daul* and the *Batadravā Thān parichalanā samittee*. He visited the disciples of far and wide and offered *Śaraṇa* to the new generation of *Śalguri sattra*. According to him *Śaraṇa* helps a person to become stable, patient, self reliance, self control and self dependent. These qualities are helpful to construct a morally and spiritually develop society.

**(10) Kandarpa Kalita: (Age 45 years)** A reporter of various papers and a cultured member of *Batadravā Thān Parichālanā Committee* was a young man with smiling face. He was conscious for the name and fame of *Bardowā Thān*. According to him many unseen faces came to *Bardowā* and encroached the land of *Bardowā Thān*. For the striving of *Thān* committee and local people, the government evicted them and so at present *Bardowā Thān* is free from encroachment of unknown infiltration of a particular religious community. His dedication to the *Thān* and helpful mind is example for next generation. Every visitor who visits the *Thān* cannot forget Kandarpa Kalita for his whole hearted guidance and help.

**(11) Jatin Baruah: (Age 64 years)** A retired teacher Jatin Barua was Assistant general secretary of the *Batadravā Thān Parichālanā Committee*. As a supporter of Vaiṣṇavism he said how tribal societies and downtrodden peoples were influenced and attracted by the *Eka-Śaraṇa-Nāma-Dharma* of Śaṅkaradeva. According to him there is no untouchability among the people of *Bardowā* for the sake of the teaching and writings of *Gurujanā* and for that people easily accept this *dharma*. This *dharma* gives importance on *Śravaṇa* (hearing) and *kīrtana* (chanting the name of god). So unity among the people of *Bardowā* is remarkable.

About the *Thān parichālanā committee* he said that all members of the committee are very sincere, dedicated and helpful. They are not money-minded or greedy, so as an assistant secretary he has not found any difficulties to maintain the fund and other activities.

**(12) Dambarudhar Gāyan: (Age 59 Years)** *Borgāyan* (Main singer) of Śālguri *sattrā* Dambarudhar *Gāyan* was a dedicated person. There were seven (7) assistant *Gāyan* i.e. *Pāli Gāyans* under him. He trained young generation of Bardowā, about the music of Bardowā *Thul*(group) of *Gayeniyā śikshā*. He was expert in – *Bargīt, Aṅkargīt, Nāndī* and *Muktimāṅgal Bhatimā* of *Aṅkiyā nāṭ* and *Jhumurā*. The young boys and girls of neighboring villages also came to learn from him. There were no fees for that training. Only a *Bhojanī* (eatable vegetarian articles presented with a bettle nut in an earthen pot) is offered as a *Gurumānani* (honour for teacher). According to him the young generation has become interested gradually in this practice, because of the popularity of *sattriyā* culture in present society. After learning this *Gāyanīā śikshā* it was found that they automatically become polite, and also morally and spiritually develop themselves. According to *Gāyan* the basic knowledge of *Gāyan* and *Bāyan* were they had all-ready learned from the environment of Bardowā *Thān*.

**(13) Upen Ch. Kalita: (Age 54 years)** – Sincere teacher of Śrī Śrī Śāṅkaradeava Higher Secondary School, Upen Ch. Kalita was the *Borbāyan* of Śālguri *Sattrā* (*Saruhisā*). His grandfather Late Bhakatrām was a *Gāyan*, his father Late Bishnurām was also *Gāyan*. His nine year old child is also expert in both *Gāyan-Bāyan Vidyās*. According to him he learnt this education from his father and *sattrā*. He also received an 11 (eleven) month training from Sarat Mahanta. He is also a teacher of *Khol* (a

musical instrument like drum) to his young generation of *Saruhisā and Barhisā*, from 1985. There are no tuition fees for that reason. Only a *Bhojani* (eatable things) with a pair of bettlenut and leaf was sufficient for that. But sincerity of the student was compulsory. After completed five years one boy can be qualified to learn *Gāyeniān Vidyā*. According to him with the help of this education one can develop his concentration. It was related with Śaṅkaradeva's ideology. So it can help a person to become spiritual, moral and above all a responsible social human being, which can be said as a norm of our present society.

**(14) Gopaldeva Kakoty: (Age 50 years, visually impaired person)** Gopaldeva Kakoty a visually impaired person who came to Bardowā in 1997 from his native place Golaghat, Farkating and now stays at Bardowā *Thān*. He plays *Tokāri* (a string instrument) with *Tokāri Gīt*. *Ghoṣā* and *Bargīt* are also his favourite songs. According to him the social and religious environment attracted him for which he stayed at Bardowā to leave his native place. According to him people of Bardowā are very sympathetic. Cauddhya Prasaṅga was also learnt him by heart from listening to it every day.

**(15) Sanjib Bora (Age 19 years)** Sanjib Bora was an energetic, polite and talented student of Higher Secondary Commerce, of Dhing College, near Bardowā. He was born and brought up with sattriyā culture of Bardowā, because his house is in front of *Kīrttanghar* of Bardowā *Thān*. He with his nine friends in a group, was trained the *Bāyan vidyā* from Upen Kalita *Bor Bāyan* of Śalguri *sattrā*. According to him boys above five years old are eligible to take admission under a *Bāyan*. Maturity of finger is necessary for this training. Again they should follow some rules and regulations when

they touch the *Khol* (drum). If they have participated in the *prasaṅga* they are not allowed to take non-veg food. He also takes part in various *Bhāonā* and the role of various characters as Lakṣman, Prahallāda etc. He can sing *Bargīt*, *Kīrttan ghoṣā* or any religious song and also other modern song. They always respect their *Guru* and followed the rules and regulations of the *Thān*.

They should follow the dress code when they perform *Nām prasaṅga*. Sanjib and his co-learner also learned *Gayaniyā Śikshā* of Bardowā *thul* from Dambarudhar *Gāyan* of Śalguri *Sattra*.

According to him girls are not allowed to perform *Ankiyā nāt* inside the *Nātghar*. Girls can perform *Bhawanā* in the Khersutī stage near Ākāshī Gaṅgā.

**(16) Sarumai Bora (Age 55 years)** Care taker of Āi Kanaklatā *Thān* Sarumāi Borā was a sincere devotee of Śaṅkaradeva and his grand – daughter-in-law Āi Kanaklatā. According to her when Āi came to rediscover the Bardowā *Thān* then she took a rest in this place for some days. The environment of this *Thān* was very beautiful. She said that the hundred year big Mango and Pipal trees had been planted by Āi Kanaklatā herself. Very neat and clean Āi Kanaklatā *Thān* has maintained her self by gentle speaking Sarumāi Borā. Various *Tithis* (death or birth ceremonies are observed) in this *Thān*, mainly eleventh day of Black Moon there have been celebrated Āi Kanaklatā *Tithi* in the month of *Puh* (Dec/January) with *caiddhya prasaṅga* and *Bhoanā*. There was a *Thānghariā* (care taker) named by Bhabanga Bora (60) who also maintained the *Thān*. Both of them were related with various functions celebrated in the Bardowā *Thān* and Śalguri *sattra*.



**(17) Upen Saikia: (Age 58 years)** Librarian of Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva Gaveṣanā Pratistān was also a *pāli Gāyan* of Bardowā *Thān*. In that Research centre there are many manuscripts of *Sancipat* with number. These are kept serially and systematically. Some of these are – *Sanskrite Bhāgawat*, *Janma yātrā Nāt of Gopal Ātā*, *Śrīdhār Swāmi and Śrīdhār Kandālī's book* etc. Many other precious books and articles like *Dolā* (Palenquine) *Jāpi* (wicker hat) etc. have been preserved there. According to him there was no sufficient government fund to maintain these books and other materials. He also related with the Bardravā *Thān parichalana committee*. According to him the pond of *Doul Mandir* is known as *Sanjivani pukhuri* (life giving pond). He also said how a pious woman regained the life of her dead fish after sinking in that pond. About the library he said that nowa days there are no general readers in this library cum research centre .Occasionally some research scholars come to consult with these books. About the new generation of Bardowa he said that every young boy and girl are related with *Bhowanā*, *Rāsh*, *Doul Utsav* and *Tithis of Gurujanā*. They have tried to preserve Śaṅkaradeva through performing art and *nām prasaṅga*.

**(18) Naren Bhuyan: (Age 66 years)** Naren Bhuyan was an executive member of the *Batadravā Thān parichalanā committee*. He said about the Khersuti Saṅskrtic Mancha and artistic boundary wall near Akāshi Gangā. According to him at present Bardowā has become the religious and vaṣṇavite cultural centre of Assam.

However the glory of cultural and religious tradition of Bardowā *Thān* started to decline till Āi Kanaklatā rediscovered, and the initiatives of Kanklatā and Damodaratā, the Āhom King and Mikir King contributed for the development of the

*Than*. Before independence Nathan Brown, his wife Eliza Brown and their group went to Bardowā. They saw the *Nāmghar* and *Nām prasaṅga* at other places and were motivated by Śaṅkaradeva's religion and so they went to Bardowā to honour him. Only after independence the state govt and public have taken various steps for the upliftment of the *Thān* and preserved the cultural heritage of Bardowā which has become the cultural and religious heritage of the whole state. The artisan, craftman and general people of Bardowā have aesthetic and religious sense. Every person of the *Thān* tried to keep clean the *Thān*. According to him people of Bardowā are guest lovers. So they become happy when festivals are held. Bardowans follow the ideology of Śaṅkaradeva.

*yadi mahā śatru āhi howaya atithi/*

*deva hena māni tāka karibā bhakati//*<sup>13</sup>

(If enemy becomes as a guest then serve him as the God)

Bardowā *Thān* was the pioneer of social development and upliftment of the backwards. From the time of Śaṅkaradeva many backward and down trodden communities received equal place with other caste. Since then people of Bardowā have followed this principle.

**(19) Deben Hazarika; (Gāon Burāh of Borhisā (Village Headman), Age 50 Years)**

The village headman of Bardowā is also a member of *Thān parichālanā committee*. He informed about the total number of people of Bardowā, their religion, language and khel. According to him there was no man other than a Hindu with *Vaiṣṇava* faith at Bardowā either at Borhisā or Saruhisā. People of Bardowā are pious and laborious.

---

13 . Bhagavat VIII, V. 492.

They have various professions for their livelihood. From child to old they participated in the *prasaṅgas* or *Bhāṇā* and all are conscious about their village.

Every day many devotees come from various places. In the festival season, the number is going to double or triple. People of Bardowā and *Thān parichalana committee* always help the tourists and devotees when they need.

### **Person Related with other *Thān* and *Sattrā* and Scholars:**

Researcher interviewed various persons of different categories of other than, *Thāns* and *Sattras* and scholars to meet the objectives. They are-

**(1) Punyabrata Deva Goswami: (Age 76 years) *Sattrādhikār*** of Nikāmul *Sattrā* (*Purush Saṁhati*, Tezpur) Punyabrata Deva Goswami was a renowned classical artist and founder principal of Kalaguru Sangeet college of Tezpur which was established in the year 1977. He was the follower of his father *Dharma Ratna Gahan Ch. Goswami*. *Gahan Ch. Goswami* was the president of establishment committee of the Batadravā Vaiṣṇava Vishwavidyalaya and also a writer and social reformer. Punyabrata Goswami's boundless strive for the *Bargīt* of *Bardowā Thul* (school or group) is recognized as a classical music. In 1985 he recorded a double cassette album of twelve (12) *Bargīts* along with a handbook for its publication. He established a *sattriyā* music school after his father's name.

Goswami is also a well-versed man on *sattriyā* culture and Vaiṣṇava ideology. He prepared the syllabus of *Sattriyā saṅgīt*. Though he was a student of Lukhnow in classical music from 1960 to 1966 yet he was a devotee of Assamese *sattriyā* music, dance and Assamese culture. Government and various organizations honored him for

his contribution to the society. He explained about the nine *Rasas*, meaning of *siṃhāsana* and *Āmaḥi Ghar*. In his mini Library there are preserved many valuable books, manuscripts in *sancipāt* and also other valuable relics of *sattrīyā* culture. Various functions and *Aṅkiyā Nāṭs* are performed in this *sattra* related with Vaiṣṇava guru Śaṅkaradeva, Mādhavadeva and Satānanda.

To follow the philosophy and ideology of Śaṅkaradeva he initiated the Tea tribes of Rājbarī tea Estate and gave them the same place with other devotees. Their *Sattra* is a symbol of national integrity and unity. They initiated many Muslim People and recognized them as their disciples. He has followed the philosophy of Śaṅkaradeva—

*brāhmanara chāṇḍalara nibisāri kula*

*dātāta chorata yena dristi eka tula//*

He was a recipient of Ambedkar award on 2008 and also many other awards related with *sattrīyā* and Assamese culture. According to him to keep alive the ideology of Śaṅkaradeva we must strive sincerely.

**(2) Jatin Mahanta: (Age 72 years)** An energetic man with various knowledge about *sattra* and *Thān*, Jatin Mahanta was the *Dekā Sattrādhikār* (Junior *sattrādhikār*) of Samasguri *sattra* (Puruṣa saṁhati) of Kaliabor. Many valuable monuments related with Śaṅkaradeva, such as – Artistic footwear with a golden top and ivory which was given by Cilarāi's wife Bhuvaneswari, *Dabar*, *Cariā* (bath tub), *Japā* (basket for keeping cloth), *Kakālor Batia* (waist belt), *Bhuni* (cloth) etc. are preserved in this *Sattra*. In 1670 the *sattra* was established. The *sattra* is famous for *Mukhā Śilpa* (Mask

art). Late Devakanta Mahanta and Bishnukanta Mahanta were expert *mukhā* artists and Gopal Goswami was a famous artisan of this *Sattra*.

They follow the rules and regulations of Bardowā *Thān*. Inside the *Kīrttanghar* only *Aṅkiyā Nāṭ* and *Jhumurā* are held. Only four *prasaṅgas* were held in this *Sattra*. According to him present youths are not interested in *Sattrīyā* culture. Jatin Mahanta was a *Sūtradhārī* and Kṛṣṇa dancer but his differentially able son Ujjal Mahanta is expert in *Khol* and *Bargīt*. According to him religion propagated by Śaṅkaradeva was nothing but a system of education which reformed our society to bring unity among Assamese people.

**(3) Naren Kalita: (Age 78 Years)** Naren Kalita is a famous scholar of Bardowā Art. His book *Bardowār Śilpa Vastu* (Art of Bardowā) is the first research book on Bardowa's art and architecture. Another important book related with various art and paintings of Ancient Assam *Asomar Puthi Chitra*. He has total ten (10) research books on various subjects. According to him the beautiful wooden art of Bardowā can be said as *Carāikhuliā Kalā* i.e like a woodkeeper bird makes hole in a wood. *Phali Chitra* (wall art), *Stambha Citra* (Pillar art) and other art of *Garuṇḍa Pakhī*, *Hanumān* etc. not only have religious value, but they have great aesthetic value. To attract the mind of mass people this medium of art was taken by our Vaiṣṇava genius. Another important art is on the *Sāncipāt*, where Śaṅkaradeva and his followers wrote by making ink and preserving it by various methods. They had knowledge on making ink, dyes and preservatives and this was the result of *Bhakti* or *Śhraddhā* (devotion). In the *Sāncipāt* it is found that there is also various art of flower which can be named as *Lata Kata Phul* (creeper flower) and human pictures are side views. According to him our new

generation should give importance to revive the culture of Bardowā, which has both aesthetic and spiritual value with other religious and social value.

**(4) Saradananda Deva Goswami: (Age 69 years)** Retired Prof of Assamese Department, Hojai College, Goswami is a family member of Narowā Balisatra. He is a writer and scholar of various books and research papers about Śaṅkaradeva, *Sattrā* and other socio-cultural topics. According to him contribution of *Sattras* to the socio – cultural development of Assam was remarkable. *Satrādhikār* of every *Sattras* must write a *Nāṭ* (drama) at the time of his *Abhiṣeka* (appointment). There are 700 small and big *sattras*. If all of *Satrādhikārs* write a drama each then there will be minimum 700 (seven hundred) *Nāṭs* to be contributed to our society. The appointment of *Satrādhikār* can be said as convocation and appointment of *Sūtradhārī*, *Gāyan-Bāyan*, *Medhi* etc. can be said as degree. Because the appointment of such *bāb* (dignitaries) are held in the *Sabhā* (meeting) of various knowledgeable persons on *Vaiṣṇava* rules and regulations. There are two types of *mālābastu* – *sarubhag* 25 beads and *barbhag* 105 beads. With the help of these *mālā* one can develop his spiritual and moral values. *Satrādhikār* can be said as religious leader according to him. In the time of medieval Assam there was no good leader to unite our society. So with the help of *Eka-Śaraṇa-Nāma-Dharma Satrādhikār* united the society at that time. According to him in the school syllabus there should be given education system of Śaṅkaradeva to develop the moral and spiritual value of our new generation.

**(5) Benu Bora: (Age 62 years)** *Thān* ghariā (care taker) of *Gāngmou Thān* Benu Bora told about various contributions of Śaṅkaradeva at that place. According to him Śaṅkaradeva stayed there for seven years and six months with his family and friends.

Jagadish Mishra explained the *Bhāgavata* at that place. In the eyes of God all are equal. So Śaṅkaradeva appointed Missing devotee Paramānanda Atai to maintain the *Thān* and the *Akṣay Banti* (light that continuous lit)

*nāhi bhakatita jāti ajāti bicāra*

*hari bhakatita samasta lokara adhikāra//*

(There is no difference in the *Bhakti* (devotion). All persons have right to prayer the God)

Śaṅkaradeva followed this ideology and now this Gāṅgmou *Thān* also followed the ideology of Śaṅkaradeva. *Bāṅshabāri sattra of Jadumonideva* tried to keep the *Thān* neat and clean and also tried to make it evergreen. Śaṅkaradeva wrote the famous *Borgīt-*

*pāwe pari hāri karuhu kātori*

*prāṇa rākhabi mora//*

(O God keep me alive, I bow down your feet),

when his first son Ramānanda was born at Gāṅgmou. Śaṅkaradeva wrote many *Kīrttans* of the *Kīrttanghoṣhā* at Gāṅgmou *Thān*.

Raghubir Chetri a Nepalee Devotee renovated the *Gāṅgmou Thān*, according to Bora. Gāṅgmou *Thān* is a centre of unity because various castes and creeds, e.g – Missing, Nepālī, Kaivatra, Brāhmin etc. are the devotees of Gāṅgmou *Thān* and all are seated on the mat inside the *Nāmghar*. There was no *Hāti Bhakat*. There are various relics related with Śaṅkaradeva. An idol of Viṣṇu and *sāncipāt* are preserved in this *Thān*. Members of *Thān* committee were-

Swaraj Hazarika president – (President)

Pawan Saikia (Secretary Finance)

Koseswar Das (Secretary)

Biswajit Goswami (Adviser)

Benu Bora (Than gharia)

**(6) Prabhat Chandra Burhā Bhakat: (Age 85 Years)** Prabhat Ch Burhā Bhakat (Head Devotee Bāp) was the only *kewalia Hāti Bhakat* (unmarried Residential Devotee) of Sundarīdiyā *Sattrā*. An experienced person of various Vaiṣṇava culture *Burahā Bhakat* said that Mādhavadeva stayed at Sundarīdiyā for fourteen years and six months, getting the permission of Śaṅkaradeva's second wife Āi Kālindī. Mādhavadeva and his Nephew Rāmcharan Thākura both stayed at Sundarīdiyā and wrote *Nāmghoṣā*, *Rantāwali* and other valuable books and preserved various books. This was the first library of Assam. According to Bhākat various festivals are observed in this *sattrā* such as *Pālnām*, *Doul Utsav* etc. There are always held *caidhya prasaṅga*.

*Guru Tithi* is also held for 7 days and there are performed *Aṅkiyā Nāṭ*, *Kalayā Kīrttan Kulupia nam* etc. According to Bāp there are three *Guru Āsanās* inside the *Kīrttanghar* with seven steps with *Kasa* (Tortoise), *hātī* (elephant), *siṅgha* (lion) and *Guruṇḍa Pakhī*, where tortoise is the symbol of *ayush (age)* elephant for *dhīr-sthir* (calm and steady nature) and *satya* (truth), lion for *śaurya – virya* (strength and courage) and *Garuḍa* for *Bhagavantar Bāhan* (Gods vehicle). He gave a detailed description of the *Guru Āsan* and relics which are preserved in the *sattrā*. There are total *tinikuri ekhan* (61) *sancipāt puthi*, Āi Kālindī's valuable relics and *padaśilā* (foot print), brass bell, and idol of God etc. There are many *phalli chitra* (wall art) art by



artisan Late Kālikānta Das. The temple (*Moth*) inside the *Kīrttanghar* was constructed by Āhom King Pramatta Singha, where *bicārs* (judgement or decision) was held.

Women are prohibited inside the *Kīrttanghar*, so they chant the name of God in the corridor of *Kīrttanghar*. According to him there is a committee to maintain the *Sattrā* as follows:

- 1) Jaganath Dev Adhikari – *Sattrādhikār*
- 2) Nirmal Adhikari – Junior *Sattrādhikār*
- 3) Om Prakash Das Mojumdar –(Finance Secretary)
- 4) Prasanna Kr Das –(Member of the *Sundaridiyā Sattrā committee*)
- 5) Bhubaneswar Pathak -Pāthak (veader)
- 6) Prabhat Burah Bhakat –(*Hātī Bhakat*)

And there are other members and persons to maintain the *sattrā*. According to him the main problem faced by the *sattrā* was *hātī Bhakat* because parents do not wish to offer their child to the *sattrā* as a *Bhakat*. So gradually this culture will be declined. Now the new generations are interested to learn *sattrīyā* culture such as *Nām Prasāṅga*, *Bhāonā*, *sattrīyā* art architecture, which have both religious and aesthetic value. They are also related with making *Singhāsana*, wall art, pillar art, *Daul Utsava*, etc. (Photo)

**(7) Nārāyan Ātai Burāh Bhakat (Age 70 Years)** Nārāyan Ātai Burāh Bhakāt was a *Bohā* (residential) *Kewaliā Bhakat* (celebrate devotee) of Barpetā *sattrā*. He was a writer and also a man of various knowledge about the Barpetā *sattrā*, Śaṅkaradeva, Mādhābadeva and other *Gurus* of Vaiṣṇava, related with *Thān* and *sattras* of Assam. According to him there are thirteen (13) open rooms inside the *kīrttanghar*

representing the thirteen parts of the *Vṛndāvaṇī Vastra*. The name of the thirteen rooms related with twelve (12) name of *Vṛndāavan* and remaining one is the *Bhakatar pālee*. From 1947 *Kīrttanghar* was opened for Harijan to follow the ideology of Śaṅkaradeva. Śaṅkaradeva said in the *Bhāgavat* that,

*kṛṣṇara bhakati ati                      nācāwai acār jāti*  
*jagatare mahā hitakara*

(to devote the Lord Kṛṣṇa there is no caste and creed)

There are three *Guru Āsanas* inside the *Kīrttanghar* with seven steps. *Burhā Bhakat* explained the different meaning of seven steps with tortoise, elephant, lion and Garunda Pakhi. Name of the *sattriya* was Basistha Deva Sarmah.

Inside the *Bhājghar* there are kept the idols of *Shyāmrāi* and *Doul Govinda*. There are permanent priests to offer puja to the idols. The *nirmālī* (offerings of God) of the *sattrā* is given from the *Rangiwal* flower and leaf, planted by Mādhavadeva, where the aesthetic sense and spirituality are related. He also explained the glory of the Barpetā *sattrā*. The books written by Burhā Bhakat were related with Barpetā *sattrā* and rules and regulation of Vaiṣṇavism. These are-

- 1) *Prasaṅga Praṇālī* ( prayer System)
- 2) *Śrīmanta Śaṅkara-Mādhavadeva Guru Dujanar updeś* (Advice of Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva and Mādhavadeva)
- 3) *Sādāsār*( Moral behavior)
- 4) *Guṇanidhi dhām* (virtuous holy place)
- 5) *Auśash Padhati* (clean system)
- 6) *Sattrā Parichit* (Introduction of *Sattrā* )

According to him Mathurā *Das Burhā Āta* was the first *Sattrādhikār* appointed by *Mādhavadeva* at Barpetā *Sattra*. Festivals observed in the Barpetā *sattra* are *Jagat Guru Śaṅkaradeva Kīrttan Utsav* for seven days, *Mahāpurush Kīrttan Utsav* for ten days in the *Bhada Māh*, *Śrī Śrī Mathurā Das Burāh Āta Kīrttan Utsav* for five days, *Doul- Utsav* , *Pāl nām*, *Janamāstami*, *pācāti*, *Domāhi* (Bihu) etc. There was only seven *Kewaliā Bhakat* (celibate Devotee) at the *Bhakat's Bāhā* according to Ātai. This is the major problem of *sattras*. Woman can enter the *Kīrttanghar* only at the time of *Śaran*. So they participate in the *prasaṅga* outside the *Kīrttanghar*, i.e at corridor. The name of the *Bārnāmāti* was Bhaim pāthak. To maintain dress code and manner was compulsory at the time of *prasaṅga*. With the help of *Nāmkirtan*, *Bargīt*, *Bhāonā*, *utsav* –Parva (festivals) and *citra* (art) both Śaṅkaradeva and Mādhavadeva tried to reform the society and gave the people to enjoy their leisure time fruitfully, according to Ātai.

**(8) Gunadhar Pathak: (Age 68 years)** *Nāmgharīā* of Pāṭbāusi *Thān* Gunadhar Pathak said that Śaṅkaradeva stayed at Kumarkuchi for one year. But the area was not clean and hygienic and the people were quarrelsome. His daughter Rukmini also died at Kumārkuichi. So Śaṅkaradeva went to Pāṭbāusi on 1549 from Kumarkuchi and stayed there for eighteen years and six months and there he established a *Harigrha*. *Sattrādhikār* of Narowā *sattra* of Bardowā Debananda Deva Goswami was the *Sattrādhikār* of Pāṭbāusi *Thān*. He said that *Daul Utsava*, *Gurutithi*, *Janamāstami*, *Pālnam* etc. are observed at Pāṭbāusi *Thān* like at Bardowā *Thān*. In the *Āi Kālindī Bhithā* (Residence) the bed of Āi, well, and manuscript of *Sancipāt* and other valuable

relics of the *Sattrā* have been preserved. He explained the various things related with Śaṅkaradeva, *Guru-Āshan*, *cauddhya prasaṅga* and also their aesthetic, moral and spiritual values. According to him people of Pāṭbāusī *Thān* spiritually and morally developed for the preaching the teaching of Śaṅkaradeva during his stay at Pāṭbaushī. From his description it is found that people related with *Thān* and *sattras* are generally like to live in a calm and quiet and hygienic environment. Again he said that Pāṭbāusī *Thān* of Śaṅkaradeva's situated on the western bank of the spring Dhanukhandā and on the eastern bank the Pāṭbāusī *sattrā* of Dāmodaradeva is situated. He explained the life history of Śaṅkaradeva from birth to death non stop with year very clearly. Kamalākānta Dās is the main Pāthak of this *Thān*. According to him *Daul Utsav*, *Guru tithis*, *Janmāstamī* and pālnām are the main festivals that are observed at the *Thān* and they maintain the rules and regulations of *Bārdowā Thul*. (Group)

**(9) Jibeswar Goswami: (Age 67 Years)** was an educationist and ex-secretary of Assam *sattrā Mahāsabha*. According to him there are 752 *sattras* in Assam of which, 99 are in Nagaon district. He said that *Thān and sattras* have faced many problems mainly due to the encroachment and problem of *Hāti Bhakat*. He was also a *sattrādhikār* of *Dimow Mahara sattrā*. Again some *sattras* faced the dearth of *sattrādhikār*. Because after receiving modern education system most of the present generations do not want to be a *sattrādhikār* with stringent of rules and regulations. The original *Nāmghar* of their *sattrā* had to be shifted to another place due to acquisition of land for the four lane National Highway.

### 6.1.3 Division III (Questionnaire)

In this division data are collected through Questionnaire: from 200 households.

#### 1. Questionnaire 1 (B):

There were six sets of Questionnaire, 1<sup>st</sup> set (1A) was only for the personal enquiry of the respondent. From this it was found that all are Hindu and Assamese speaking people. They have a hobby of “*Nāmakirtan*” with other hobby. They are the apostoles of either *Narowā Sattra* or *Śalguri Sattra*.

#### 2. Questionnaire 1 (B)

Questionnaire 1B was about Bardowā *Thān*. There were 17 items in this questionnaire .Only item no 5. i.e. who was Satī Rādhikā was answered correctly by 55% respondent other 16 items received 100% correct response. When researcher asked them then they said that they know Satī Rādhikā as Santisati.

#### 3. Questionnaire 1(C)

The questionnaire 1C was about the spiritual and religious value. In this questionnaire there were 22 items and except item no 15 all received positive response. Item no 15 had only 65% who responded responded ‘yes’ and others ‘no’. When researcher asked about this then they said that though *Guru Śaṅkaradeva* advised to control the anger yet as a human being sometimes they could not controll anger. But after when they remembered their *Guru* then they become repentant.

#### 4. Questionnaire III (D)

Questionnaire III (D) was on social and moral value. There are total 21 items.

According to respondents to maintain discipline and cultural tradition some rules and regulations are there in the Bardowā *Thān*. There are particular positions and

particular duties for particular persons inside the *kīrttanghar* according to status of *Bhakat* and *sattrādhikārs*. To avoid gathering and maintain discipline only specified residential devotee can maintain the *akhanda pradip* (continuous light).

People of Bardowā are guest lovers. According to them guests are like God. Satī Rādhikā said-

*satya śoucea kṣama dayā*

*atīthi satkāra*

*kadāchito nakarohu kāko tirskār//*<sup>14</sup>

(Kindness, mercy excuse, truth, cleanliness, hospitality and donot insult others are the qualities of people.)

Again Śaṅkaradeva said in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* XI part *Uddhava sambad* that—

*atithik nidi kimbā karili bhojana/*

*sijile pātak kibā agamya gamāna//*<sup>15</sup> (748)

(One who has eaten depriving the guest then he will be sinner like a perverted)

## 5. Questionnaire IV (E)

There were total 21 items related with aesthetic value. Here it was found that 96% male can know the instrument related with *Bhāonā Nām prasaṅga*, *Bargīt etc.*

They acquired this skill from their friends, family or *Gāyan* or *Bāyan* of the *Thān*. They played these instruments on various occasions of the *Thān*.

14. Dwija, Dwarika (ed 2008) *Santa wally*: P. 85.

15. *Bhagavat X Udhava Sambad*, V. 748.

All females can know the *Nām-Kīrttan* (prayer) because some of them frequently take part in the *Nām Prasāṅga* at the *Thān*.

In the item No 15 it was found that males took part in the *Bhāonās* which were held on the *kīrttanghar*. But females could not take part in the *Bhāonā*, they can only be audience. But when *Bhāonā* is held at outside or under temporary stage or pandel then they could take part on *Bhāonā*. In the *Rāslīlā* females take part as *Gopī* or *Rādhā*.

In item no '19' it was found that only male could participate in the *Gāyan-Bāyan*. Females could not perform as *Gāyan-Bāyan* or *Suttradhar*. Outside the *kīrttanghar* or 'Āi Khersuti Sanskriti Mancha' they can take part as such character according to Bor Bayan Upen Kalita.

## 6. Questionnaire V (F)

Questionnaire V (F) was on hygienic and environmental value. In this Questionnaire there were 26 items. Only for last item 55% respondents responded 'yes'. Other 45% said that they used soap, not soil. At the time of initiation *Guru* said them to take soil for cleanliness, so soap is the substitute of soil according to their reason.

In the item no 6 it was found that before marriage *Śaraṇa* (initiation) was compulsory for boys. But for girls after marriage it was compulsory. Without *Śaraṇa* they were not permitted to cook or *bhakat* did not take any boiled food from them. According to respondents *Guru* played an important role in their life. Vaiṣṇava's four *Vastu Guru*, *Nām*, *Deva*, *Bhakat* are main principles. Without *Guru* one cannot become pure.

Raw food e.g- fruits, pulses etc. with ginger and salt, is offered in the *nāmghar*. *Ladoo* of raw grinding rice is offered in the *kīrtanghar* with other *Prasāda*. From the respondents it was found that all the families at Bardowā cook or eat food only after bath-

*gadhulite gā dhuwā kuno dese nāi*  
*asam deśat Śaṅkarese pravartai//*  
*sarva deśe sidha kari naivedya diwaya*  
*kesā māh-cāul dibe śaṅkare bulay//*<sup>16</sup>

(There was no custom to take that bath at dusk. In Assam Śaṅkaradeva started this customs. Again raw *Prasāda* system is only in Assam since Śaṅkaradeva and no boiled *Prasāda* was prevailed here).

According to them cleanliness is the Godliness. They always use bamboo basket for serving *Prasāda*. This system also helps the local and rural business keep alive. They used *Kalpāt* (Banana leaf) to distribute the *Prasāda* because of availability, degradable quality and cleanliness.

Some Indian priests wear saffron colour dress. But the *Bhakat* of *sattrā* or *Thān* wear white dress according to respondent. They also fasten their mouth with *gāmocā* when they distribute the *Prasād* for hygienic reason.

#### 6.1.4 DIVISION IV ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

##### 1. *Nām* (Prayer)

As a life member of Batdravā *Thān parichālanā committee* researcher took part in various religious and social observances, marketplace and went to the houses of

---

16. Dwija, Dwarika (ed 2008) *Santawalī* P. 70.



*sattrādhikārs, Gāyan, Bāyan*. Villagers and *Bhakat*'s *Hāti, cauddhya prasaṅga* (the daily *nām prasaṅga*) In the *coudhya prasaṅga* time is maintained strictly for prayers (*nām*). *Sattrādhikār, Burhā Bhakat, Hāti Bhakat* and other *mālā luwā* (Rosery) *bhakat* sat according to their rank and near the *Guru āsana* in vertical way. Other devotees including tourist and ladies sat in horizontal way after them, in front of the *Guru āsan*, after Garunda pakhī and Hanuman idol. Inside the *Kīrttanghar* all devotees either *sattrādhikār* or *bhakat* or tourist all sit on the mat which is called *kath*. Same system is also found in the *Padaśilā* house because there was no difference among the *Bhakat* (devotees). They followed the ideology of Śaṅkaradeva-i.e-

*samasta prāṇika dekhe īśwar kṛṣṇata*

*harika dekhaya jitu prān samastat//*<sup>17</sup>

(All creatures are the creation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, so all are perceived as God)

## **(2) Pācati Utsava:**

Five days after the birthday of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*Janamāstamī*) there is held the *pācati utsava* at *Gakul*, in the house of king Nanda. Like that the woman of Bardowā *Thān* observed the *pachati utsava* after *janamāstami* and after the birth *tithi* of Śaṅkaradeva. In that day children were decorated as *Gopī* (women at the time of Kṛṣṇa) and chanted the nam of Lord Kṛṣṇa with the *gupini* (woman) of Bardowā.

*“āhā sakhī āhā mai nandar ghare jāw/*

*yośodāra putra haise nayan bhari cāo//*

(Come all friends and mothers to see the son of king Nanda in his house)

---

17 . Medhi, Kaliram, (Ed. 2017) *Bhakti Ratnakar*, trans 556, *Śrī Śaṅkaradevar vāni* :P 192.

All women and children enjoyed it and by the way children of Bardowā indirectly learned the religious, spiritual and social value.

### **(3) *Daul Utsava:***

It is commonly known as *phākuā* or *Doul Yatrā*, and is observed in the month of full moon day of *phālguna* (February/March). It was started by Śaṅkaradeva. Since then *phakua* was observed at Bardowā, which was explained in the chapter 5<sup>th</sup> i.e. there was certain fixed agenda which was followed by the people of Bardowā. Many people came from various places to Bardowā to enjoy this festival, without any discrimination of caste, gender or religion. Equality and fraternity is the main moto of this festival with spirituality and delightfulness.

### **(4) *Tithi:***

At Bardowa *Guru Tithi* i.e, the *tithi* of Śaṅkaradeva, Mādhavadeva and former *sattrādhikārs* are observed where *Jhumurā* and *Bhāonā* are enacted with regular *Nām-Kirtan*. *Bhojan Behār* and *Dadhi Manthan* are enacted by the children of both *sattras* of Bardowā. On the day time children enjoyed by participating in those festivals and also automatically are motivated to the Vaiṣṇava culture. They learn it by heart, which has aesthetic value with social and religious value. They follow the *Upavāsa* (religious fast) in that day which help them to learn about Śaṅkaradeva, Mādhavadeva and other religious and *vaiṣṇava* leaders of Assam and their creativities and culture.

Former *sattrādhikārs'* *tithis* are also observed according to their death *tithi* (death anniversary) which helps to keep alive the ancestors and follow their path of morality and spirituality.

(5) The researcher enjoyed the *Dadhi manthan Jumurā, Gāyan-Bāyan* activities, *Rās Utsava* at the spot. *Rās Utsava* was held outside the *Kīrttanghar* at the rasfield. But the nam-kirtan of *Rās* was held at *Kīrttanghar*. Love and devotion related with aesthetic sense is in the *Rās utsava*.

(6) At Bardowā an ATM booth was opened on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2017 the fithi of Śaṅkaradeva It was found that of the birthday or death *tithi* (anniversary) of Śaṅkaradeva Bardowā people kept an agenda with other functions like *Bhāonā* or nam *prasaṅga* .They followed the rules of Bardowā *Thān* i.e. with *Gāyan-Bāyan* and lit the light, at the time of inaguration. From this it was found that people of Bardowā always followed the customs and manners of Bardowā *Thān* which have spiritual and religious value with aesthetic sense.

(7) In the market place researcher found that people of Bardowā were morally good; with good behavior and helpful mind. They helped the tourist and other devotees by hook or by crook that came from outside. Tea stalls were neat and clean, but no sufficient hotels or tea stalls were there according to the necessity of the tourist. According to shopkeeper there are some rules and regulations to establish a shop. To keep clean the environment is the main cause of it. They said that the number of devotees and tourist increased gradually.

In the book stall there are found various books related with Bardowā, Śaṅkaradeva and other religious books mainly in Assamese medium. There was no sufficient Hindi or English medium books for the tourist or devotees from other places.

(8) *Akhanda Bhāgavat Pāth* was held for three days near the market place in every year in the month of *Phālgun* (Feb/March). The people believe that to fulfill their wish one can offer the light (*chāki*) in those observances.

## 6.2 Objective wise Findings

From above discussion and analysis the following findings are found. There are total four objectives with four research questions. According to that findings are given below:

### 6.2.1 Objective No 1

“To find out the objective behind establishment of *Thān and sattra*” was the first objective of the study.

**6.2.1.1** The main objective behind establishment of *Thān* and *Sattra* was to reform and reconstruct the society with the help of *Eka-Śaraṇa-Nāma-Dharma*, because society at the time of Śaṅkaradeva was not socially and politically sound. Superstition, slavery system, Śaktism blood sacrifice, caste division etc. were dominant the society.

**6.2.1.2** There was no efficient leader to integrate the society at that time. So *Thān and Sattras* were such type of institutions by which people can stand united. *Sattrādhikār* or *sattrīyā* as a vaiṣṇava leader of *sattra* tried to unite our society with the help of Śaṅkaradeva’s *Eka-Śaraṇa-Nāma-Dharma*.

**6.2.1.3** To educate the people was another objective in establishing the *Thān and Sattra*. Education is an important means for the day to day life of an individual.<sup>18</sup> With

---

18. *Śrīmad Bhagawata* XI *Nimi-Nava-Sidha-Sambād*, V. 330.

the help of *Nām Kīrttan*, *Aṅkiyā nāṭ*, *Jhumurā*, *Bargīt*, i.e. performs art, where there is a story or legend behind these, by which people can learn hygienic, moral, social, or environmental value. There are some visual art inside the *Kīrttanghar* /*Nāmghar* or on the wall or pillar of a *Thān* or *Sattra* in which there are pictures of *Lord Kṛṣṇa's Lilā* (play and work) and some other valuable art by which one can develop his aesthetic, moral, spiritual, religious and social value with work culture.

**6.2.1.4** In Śaṅkaradeva's time mass people spent their time by gossiping or spending time leisurely. With the help of various media such as *Nām* (prayer) *Bhāonā* etc. Śaṅkaradeva tried to engage them. After *nām* there is a system of offering *Prasāda*. The *Prasāda* is related with agricultural and horticultural activities. Again the musical instrument, *mukhā* and utensils were made for these reasons. So people engaged with such work to fulfill the necessities and needs of their day to day life.<sup>19</sup>

**6.2.1.5** Another objective to establish the *Thān* and *sattra* was to develop nationality and spirit of harmony among the different caste and creed.<sup>20</sup> Love, humanity, universal brotherhood, non-violence are some qualities which are followed by *Thān* and *sattra* to establish a casteless society.<sup>21</sup>

**6.2.1.6** To develop healthy physical and mental health was another objective to establish the *Thān* and *Satta*. Music i.e. *Nām prasāṅga*, *Bargīt*, *Totay* etc and *Jap* (Meditation) help to develop the mental health and exercise i.e. *Nṛya* (Dance) *Cāpari* (clapping) etc. help to develop the physical health.

---

19. Dwija, Dwarika, Santawali, Stanza 383: P. 70, Bhuyan S.K (1956), *Studies in The Literature of Assam*: P 12.

20. *Kīrttanghoṣā*, *Ajamil Upakhyāna*, V. 214.

21. *Nāmghoṣā*, *Mādhavadeva*, V. 804.

**6.2.1.7** To develop the value education was the main objective of *Thān* and *Sattrā*. With the help of community prayer inside the *Nāmghar* help the mass people to develop their spiritual, religious, moral, Soeial and value cnvironmental.

### **6.2.2 Objective No 2:**

Objective no. two of the study was “Contribution of *Thān* and *Sattrā* to the Value Education of Assam.” From the analysis of data it was found that *Thān* and *Sattrā* contributed to the value education in many ways. These were-

**6.2.2.1** Every *Thān* and *Sattrā* have their own library with valuable books, manuscripts of *Sānchipāt*, *Panjikās* (almanac) religious books, *Vaṅśāwalī* (Family history), *Jyotiṣa* (astrology) and many other valuable books, by which one can know the socio-cultural condition of that time. In 1570 Mādhavdeva established the first Library at *Sundaridiyā Sattrā*, which became the model for others.

**6.2.2.2** Every *Thān* and *Sattrā* preserve many relics used by Śaṅkaradeva and his followers and the ancestors of the family, documents and gifts offered by the kings, which have socio-cultural, spiritual and religious value.

**6.2.2.3** *Thān* and *Sattrā* can be compared with a music school or theatrical stage for the contribution of performing arts in the society. With the help of *Nāmkirtan*, *Bargūt* or *Bhāonā* etc. *Thān* and *Sattrā* contributed various values to the society, by which common people spend their leisure time properly and enjoy a stress free life.

**6.2.2.4** *Thān*, *Sattrā*, and *Nāmghar* played the role as a judicial court. There petty cases are settled without any fees or harassment. People obey the village head, (Gaonburha) *Sattrādhikār* or *Nāmghorā*’s judgment. Only a pair of bettle nut and leaves is sufficient for that.

**6.2.2.5** Each *Thān* and *Sattrā* can be said as a yoga or health and hygienic centre. *Śarana* (initiation) was compulsory for every person in which hygienic rules and regulations are given with moral and spiritual value. Again clapping, *māṭī ākhorā*, *Rāmdhemali*, *Bordhemali* etc. are related with physical exercise.

**6.2.2.6** Every *Thān* and *Sattrā* observed various festivals e.g. *Bihu*, *Nām Prasāṅga*, *Daul Utsava* which developed the unity, fraternity and brotherhood with socio-cultural value.

**6.2.2.7** *Thān* and *Sattrā* can be compared with an educational centre for the educational contribution to the society. It was found that every reputed *Thān* and *Sattrā* has a *ṭol* or primary school for their *Śiṣyas* and neighbouring villagers. Many *Thān* and *Sattrā* translated and transcreated *Sanskrite* texts into Assamese to make it easy for mass people.

**6.2.2.8** Śaṅkaradeva's creed is popularly known as *Mahāpuruṣyā dharma*, where *brāhmaṇa* also accepted *Śūdra* as his spiritual *guru* and vice-versa. *Thān* and *Sattrā* thus unify different people into one spiritual fraternity and also achieve a cultural synthesis.<sup>22</sup>

### 6.2.3 Objective No 3

Objective no three was, "To find out the contribution of Bardowā *Thān* to the value education." Findings were-

**6.2.3.1** From the foregoing analysis of the data it was found that environment of Bardowā is very calm and quite. According to the visitors' comments and researcher's

---

22. Neog, M (2004) *Cultural Heritage of Assam*: 127-128.

own observation and from the interviewers' response it was found that the people of Bardowā promoted the quality of value like aesthetic, moral, spiritual etc. Every family members of Bardowā know how to sing Bargīt or chant the *Nāma-kīrttan*, play religious instrument like *Dobā*, *Khol*, *Tāl*, *Negārā* etc. Every family member was familiar with performing arts like *Bhāona*, *Jhumura* or *Rāsalilā* etc.

**6.2.3.2** Parental knowledge or hereditary knowledge and understandings were continuously updated through various practices. The young generation is also related with various religious and spiritual activities-e.g. participated in the *Nām-prasaṅga* in the *Gurutithi*, *Doul Utsav*, *Bhāonā Bārgīt* etc. They maintain discipline like an adult by which they can live a moral and peaceful life in their future society. From the analysis of data it was found that each and every person from young to old knows how to observe various festivals at Bardowā *Thān*.

**6.2.3.3** People of Bardowā are actively involved in developing the value education introduced by Śaṅkaradeva, Mādhavadeva and their followers such as neat and clean (hygienic value) calm and quite (moral value) art and craft (aesthetic value) *Nām prasaṅga* and *Bhāonā* (religious and spiritual value) etc. Baṭadravā *Thān parichālanā committee*, *Sattrādhikār* and *Deka sattrādhikār*, *Gāyan-Bāyan* and conscious citizens of Bardowā always try to diffuse the name and fame of Bardowā. In various functions such as *Daul Utsav*, *Pālnām*, *Bhoanā* and other festivals, youth of Bardowā voluntarily monitor the activities of *Thān*. Older people and *sattra*'s dignitaries also played positive role to maintain the *Thān*'s rules and regulations.

**6.2.3.4** People of Bardowā are proud of their place and activities. They have a positive attitude towards the Assamese culture. Young generations are also very conscious



about their culture. They follow the rules and regulations of the *Thān*. They maintain the dress code when they visit the *Thān* and participate in various religious, cultural and spiritual activities.

**6.2.3.5** Visitors also honour the importance of value education of Bardowā *Thān*. They maintain the rules and regulations when they visit the *Thān* on different occasions.

**6.2.3.6** It was found that more than twenty devotees with residential devotees performed religious activities inside Bardowā *Thān*. Not only male but female also performed always two *prasaṅgas*. Members of the Batdravā *Thān* committee, more than 150 people were directly associated with *Thān* and *Doul Mandir*. They regularly visited the *Thān* and related with spiritually, socially and religiously. Spiritual awareness is important for people to awakening the humanistic value.

**6.2.3.7** Various religious and social festivals are observed every year in the Bardowā *Thān*. Many tourists and devotees come to attend this sacred complex to enjoy these festivals and offer the votive to the *Thān* from various places from Assam, India and also from foreign countries. It helps strengthen the unity and brotherhood which have great social value.

**6.2.3.8** Performing art that is observed at Bardowā like *Bhāonā*, *coudhya prasaṅgas*, *sattriyā* dance and visual art like *phalichitra* (slate or wall art) *stambha chitra* (pillar art) of the *Kīrttanghar* and *padaśilā* house and statue of the various vaiṣṇava things help to develop the aesthetic value of different pilgrimage and devotees.

**6.2.3.9** Calm and quite environment with various valuable and beautiful trees, water bodies, art and architecture bring a peaceful and delightful image to the minds which help to discard the stress and anxiety of the present society. The people of Bardowā are

morally good and spiritually conscious.( From visitors’ comments and analysis the data) Āhom King Godā Dhar Singh said that as a result of vaiṣṇavism, the *Bhakats* and the people of Assam became very humble and tolerant. This is really found at Bardowā.<sup>23</sup>

**6.2.3.10** Bardowā *Thān* is a place where the people always think for the welfare of the society. *Pālnām* is an example of that ideology. For the welfare of all creatures *pālnām* is observed every year which was started by Śaṅkaradeva for welfare of Mādhavadeva and his son-in law Hari.

*kṛṣṇa śaraṇa cintibek hṛdayata*  
*ashante iswara hari samaste bhūtata*  
*hen jāni prāṇika kārībā satakār*  
*tebese kṛṣṇata rati haibeka tomār//* <sup>24</sup>

(God is omnipotent and omnipresent and so there are no difference between caste and creed and to worship the God and always help to other creatures)

**6.2.3.11** Older people i.e, *sattrādhikārs* of two *Sattras*, *Bhakatas* and other dignitaries play positive role and monitor the activities of the *Thān* regularly to keep environment clean, beautiful and hygienic. There was always offered and distributed hygienic *prasāda* after *Nām Prasaṅga*. Some volunteers also serve daily to keep the *Thān* neat and clean and they follow the ideology of “service to mankind is service to God” which is followed by people of Assam, in the *Thān*, *Sattras* or *Nāmghars* and known as *hoj korā*. (Source: Field study)

23. Barpujari (Ed. 2007) *Comprehensive History of Assam* Vol III: P. 252.

24. *Kirttan ghoṣā : Prahlād charitra*, V. 377.

**6.2.3.12** For future planning they collect the feedback from tourists and different devotees and try to solve the problems faced by visitors and also accept their constructive advice, for the development of the *Thān*. It was found from the field study and interview that people of Bardowā honoured their place as a heaven.

**6.2.3.13** At first *Daul Utsav* started at Bardowā by Śaṅkaradeva as a festival of colour and unity. The devotees travel with idol of Viṣṇu on the *Āsana* for that festival. Since then *Doul Utsava* is celebrating in Assam to follow the example of Bardowā *Thān* as a religious performance.

*karile śaṅkare doul Batdrawā grāme*

*mādhave karil etu barpeta dhāme*

*guru vākye dhari ātā daulok karilā*

*burhā ātā ritimate ajiu salil*

(source : Paramananda Mahanta, Śalguri *Sattrādhikār*)

(Śaṅkaradeva started *Doul Utsav* at Bardowā and Mādhavadeva at Barpetā and after that *Doul Utsava* continued at present also) *Doul Utsava* helps to unite the people and bring peace and enjoyment to the society.

**6.2.3.14** *Thān* and *Sattra* as social institutions are given importance on friendship. Generally *Śaraṇa* is given to two or more persons simultaneously. They address each other as *Hari Bhakat*. The friendship of *Hāri bhakat* is friend forever. Śaṅkaradeva first introduced this system at Bardowā. Śaṅkaradeva gave importance on friendship irrespective of status of a person in the society-

*mitrak dekhiyā      bhārjyāk ariā*

*uthi āshi āthe bethe*

*duhāte sābati      dharilā ānande*

*tiniu lokare nathe//<sup>25</sup>*

(To see his friend Dāmodar, Lord Kṛṣṇa left his consort and hugged him with very gracefully)

So he kept *Udhava Saṁvād* on the *Thāpanā* (altar) at the time of *Śaraṇa* because Udhava was the friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa. In Assamese society it is found that a friend always respects his friend and also respects his friend's parents like his own parents and follows the rituals when their family bserve some rituals.

**6.2.3.15** It was found that every village, town or city in Assam has a *Nāmghar* with *Moṇikūṭ* which is the contribution of Bardowā *Thān*. Śaṅkaradeva established a *Kīrttanghar / Harigrha* at Bardowā which is known as the first *Nāmghar* of Assam.<sup>26</sup> Now many countries in the world, Assamese society have established a *Nāmghar* which is the centre of unity, spirituality and community.

**6.2.3.16** Śaṅkaradeva was the pioneer of social development and upliftment of the downtrodden people. (as fore example Rādhikāsatī) For his endeavour many backward people received the same place with other high caste people. So Bardowā initiated the establishment of a greater Assamese society and made it caste free and above all eradicated untouchablity society from which new generation can learn the unity among

---

25. *Kīrttanghoṣā, Damodar Vipra Akhyan*, V. 1585.

26. Ramcharan Thakur, *Gurucharit*, V.1606, 1616.

diversity. So it was found that Assamese people are more liberal than some other parts of the country. After independence our Indian Constitution provided some articles for eradication of untouchability and castism, which Śaṅkaradeva introduced five hundred years ago.

**6.2.3.17** *Hāti Bhakats* (Residential Devotee) were very simple and they maintained the *sattriya* dress code, consisting of neat and clean white *dhutī*, *chadar*(wrapper) and a *gāmocā* (towel). Their language was also very soft. Their behavior was very gentle to the visitors. They have done devotional works inside the *Maṇikūt* and *Kīrttanghar* with smiling face. They were not greedy or money minded. When some one offered the money to them they put it into the offering box. Now a days each and every *Nāmghar*, *Sattrā* or *Thān* follows this dress code in Assam and all over world. (source: field study)

**6.2.3.18** *Hāti Bhakats* followed the principle of simple living and high thinking and also dignity of labour .Their moral and spiritual thinkings are very high. Houses of *Hāthi bhakats* are very simple where a small *Thāpanā* [Altar] was there. They always bow down their head to that *Thāpanā* morning and evening after bath. There is a *Dhekī* (rice mortar] for grinding the rice for laddo.

**6.2.3.19** “*Vidyā dān mahāt dān*” according to Vaiṣṇava”. Śaṅkaradeva and his followers visited various places and established *Thān/Sattrā/ Nāmghar* and preached his *Eka-Śaraṇa-Nāma-Dharma*. These *Thān* and *Sattras/kīrttanghars* have gradually become the centre of moral, spiritual, social, aesthetic and religious education.

**6.2.3.20** There are two *Sattras* inside the Bardowā *Thān* Narowā and Śalguri. To develop a society education is essential. There is a Sanskrit *tol* named by Mahendra Kandoli tol, a Library, a museum inside the *Thān* and nearby there are school and college and also a Vaiṣṇava Research centre. It is found that many *Thāns and Sattras* have their own *Tol*, Library, Museum etc.

**6.2.3.21** The hospitality of the every family of Bardowā towards their guest particularly during festival period is unforgettable and appreciable. It is because they followed the suggestion of Śaṅkaradeva-

*atithika nedi kika karili bhojana*

*sijila pateka kibā agamya gamana/*<sup>27</sup>

(One who has eaten depriving the guest then he will be sinner like a perverted)

The main objective of Śaṅkaradeva's philosophy was to serve humanity and to develop virtuous practices. In his *Borgīt* he said that-

*yata jīva jaṅgama kīta patṅama*

*aga-naga yaga teri kāyā (Borgīt 4)*<sup>28</sup>

(God is in every creature either it insect or bird or other animals)

All are equal in the eyes of God. Without this value a society cannot survive.

**6.2.3.22** There are definite time and space in the *Thān* and *sattras* for definite performance or work, specially in the Bardowā *Thān*. It is found that the *caudhya prasaṅgas* are held at fixed time from dawn to dusk. Again it was also found from personal observation that morning prayer or *prasaṅga* is always for morning and not

---

27. *Srimad Bhāgawat* XI part *udhava sambad*, V. 748.

28. Dutta Barua, H (Reprint 1999) *Bargīt* 4, P.5

for evening or noon. Like that there are some rules and regulation of enacting the *Bhoanā*. Some *Bhāonā* or *Aṅkiyā nāt* e.g-*Rukmiṇī Harāṇa*, *Kaligopāla* etc. are always enacted at night and *jhumurā* or children *Bhāonā* e.g- *Arjun Bhanjan*, *Dadhi Manthan* etc. are always enacted in day time. *Bargīt* is also sung to follow some rules –e.g- *Jagāran gīt* for morning time etc.

(From personal observation, interview with *Gāyan*, *Bāyan* and *sattrādhikār*)

**6.2.3.23** *Gāyan*, *Bāyan*, *Mukhā*, *Khole* etc.were first found in the *Cihnayatrā*, which was enacted at Bardowā. Ketekhā Rām was the first *Bāyan* at that time.<sup>29</sup> Nityānanda was the *Gāyan* and there used mask in various character. At present mask is used in the *Bhāonā* or *nāt* to attract the audience which has aesthetic moral and spiritual value.

**6.2.3.24** Every Assamese people chant the *Kīrttan ghoṣā* or *Nāmghoṣā* at any function such as birth to death. So the poet says-

*janamat harinām*                      *vivāhat harinarn*

*harinām bihu utsavat/*<sup>30</sup>

(Name of the God at the time of birth marriage or death or in any festival)

**6.2.3.25** Nowadays most of the functions start with a *Borgīt* and it was observed that *sattriyanṛitya* is also a part and parcel of cultural functions (photo) not only in Assam but also in various inaugural or validictory functions in India which was the contribution of Śaṅkaradeva and his followers to the value education, Every *Thān* and

29. Ramcharan Thakur, *Gurucarit*. V.1460.

30. Ambikagiri Ray Chaudhury, *Ambikasin* “Barpeta”.

*Sattra* cultivates the *Bhāonā*, *Bargīt* and *Vaṣṇava* culture. *Bardowā Thān* also cultivates the *Bardowā Thul* which was originally innovated by Śaṅkaradeva.

### 6.2.3 Objective No 4

Objective no four was, “To find out the the impact of *Bardowā Thān* on the socio-cultural upliftment of the People of *Bardowā*.” Findings were-

Impact of *Bardowā Thān* on the people of *Bardowā* and its neighbouring villages are very significant. The life style of the people of *Bardowā* on their day to day life, e.g.-food and dress habits, on their speech, behavior and above all in their socio-cultural, moral and spiritual life can be noted on that respect. These are-

**6.2.4.1** It was found that every family of *Borhisā* and *Saruhisā* before using the new food grain (*Na-khowā*) ownself they offered it to the *Than* in the name of God, *Guru* and *hāti bhakats*.

**6.2.4.2** Every family of *Bardowā* had a prayer house or prayer room (*Gosāighar*) in their house where they kept *Gunamālā* and *kīrttanghoṣā* in the *Thāpanā* (Altar). In the morning after bath each and every member of the family bowed down their head in the *Thāpanā* and adults chanted at least one stanza of “*ghoṣā*” everyday in the morning and evening and lit the eathen light in front of the *Thāpanā*. In the evening they wash their hand and feet or become neat and clean they chant the evening prayer. (Source : Field study)

**6.2.4.3** In the evening time the sound of the beating *dobā* (drum) from *kīrttanghar* keeps the atmosphere calm and quite. People of *Bardowā* even do not use their T.V, mobile phone or other electronic media in high volume at that time. (source :Field study)



**6.2.4.4** People can not take alcohol inside the *Bardowā Thān* and public places. Smoking and take alcohol are totally prohibited inside the *Bardowā Thān* campus. There are prevailed the system of fine for disobeying person. The rule is compulsory for visitors also. (Source : *Bor Bāyan*)

**6.2.4.5** There are observed some cultural and spiritual programmes in the whole year. Performance of *Bhāonā* in some occasion's e.g- the *tithis* of two *gurus*, *janamāṣṭami*, *Tithis* of demise *sattradhikars* of *Narowā* and *Salguri Sattras* etc are compulsory. Again *Daul Utsava*, *pālnām*, *sati Radhikā utsava* are observed according the time table from time to time. *Caiddhya prasaṅgs* are observed every day.

**6.2.4.6** Each and every *Nāmghar*, *Thān* and *Sattras* had a band of *Gāyan-Bāyan* or orchestral party organized by the people of that villages. They trained up the new generations also without any fees. Like that in *Bardowā Thān* there is two band of *gāyan* and *bāyan*. Upen Kalita (*Bāyan*) and Hem *gāyan* are the example of such dedicated persons.

**6.2.4.7** Bardowā was the centre of religion for Assamese society. It was the birth place of *Eka-saran nāma dharma's* preacher Śaṅkaradeva and *Nava Vaiṣṇava dharma* of Assam. Assamese people honoured Śaṅkaradeva as their *Guru* and as their cultural identity. *Bardowā Thān* has preserved the both concrete and abstract culture or material or non material culture, e.g-

Non-material – *Nām prasaṅga*, *saran*, etc

Material- *Padasīlā*, *Simhāsana* etc.

**6.2.4.8** Children of Bardowā did not lag behind in the spiritual and religious sides. In the evening before going to their study table they did not forgot to chant the name of God which is known as evening prayer.

**6.2.4.9** It was a custom of the Assamese people that whenever a person meets a known person, the first words of greetings are- “How are you ?” or “ where do you came from?”<sup>31</sup> It is the custom of every *Thāns and Sattras* of Assam. According to Narowā *Sattrādhikārs* Debananda Goswami, this system is known as *Bārtāsodhā Prathā* (to ask information system). This system prevailed at the time of Śaṅkaradeva. When Śaṅkaradeva returned from pilgrimage then his friends and relatives asked about various questions along with his health.<sup>32</sup> When Śaṅkaradeva first met Mādhadeva then Śaṅkaradeva asked about him and his family.<sup>33</sup>

A group of *Bardowā Thān's* people with *sattrādhikār* and other dignitaries went to Barpetā, Pātbourshi, Rāmraī-Kuthi, Mādhupur to follow this system on 26<sup>th</sup> September to 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

**6.2.4.10** It was found that every family of Bardowā either Saruhisā or Borhisā offers money or goods to the *Thān and Daul mandir* on their various rituals. After marriage the newly married bride has offered *Gamosā* to the *Bardowā Thān* and visit the *Kīrttanghar* and *Doul Mandir* is a custom of villagers. (source: Field study)

**6.2.4.11** *Śaraṇa* was compulsory for every person. Before marriage *Śaraṇa* was compulsory for every male person. People do not take food from them who is *Asaranīa*. (not initiated) and so after marriage *Śaraṇa* is compulsory for a bride also.

---

31. Rajguru, S (1988) *Medieval Assamese Society* :P. 214.

32. Lekharu, U.(1952): *katha Guru carit*, P. 33.

33. Ibid :P 67.

**6.2.4.12** Impact of *Bardowā Thān* in the socio-economic development of the people of Bardowa can not be denied. At the time of festival such as *Daul Utsava*, *Pālnām* etc. stall of various goods are the source of income for some families.

**6.2.4.13** Influence of *Bardowā Thān* helped some people to develop their cultural and artistic quality – e.g *Harinarayan Konowar* an artist of *Sānchipāt* and actor, Ranji Bora, a *Mukhā* (Mask) artist, Dulu Kalita, a *Kuhilā* artist, Nirmal Ch. Mahanta an artist of Vaiṣṇava art etc.

### **6.3 Findings of Research Questions**

There were four research Questions:-

#### **Research Question No. 1**

“Was there any objective behind establishment of *Thān* and *Sattars*?” After analysis of the data it was found that, there are many objectives behind establishment of *Thān and Sattras*, These are – to reform and reconstruct the society, no castism, superstition etc., to educate the people, to inculcate the value education, to develop nationality and established an utilitarian and peaceful society.

#### **Research Question No. 2**

“What are the contributions of *Thān* and *Sattra* to the value education?” After analysis the data it was found that, every *Thān and Sattra* contributed to the value education in many ways. Through various activities, performing arts and visual arts *Thān* and *Sattra* contributed to the value education of Assam, i.e. moral, spiritual, religious social, aesthetic or environmental value. *Eka-Śanraṇa-Nāma-Dharma* is the main carrier and part and parcel of *Thān* and *Sattra* to diffuse the message of value education among the mass people.

### Research Question No. 3

“What are the contributions of Bardowā *Thān* to the value education?”

Bardowā *Thān* contributed to the value education in many ways. This is the first *Vaiṣṇava Thān* of Assam, where Śaṅkardeva developed and uplifted the downtrodden people with the help of *Eka-Śaṅraṇa-Nāma-Dharma* and established *Kīrttan Ghar*, enacted cihnayatra, introduced sarana, contributed literary works, and mainly reformed and organized the Assamese Society of medieval period. This is the model *Thān* for various *Thāns and Sattras* of Assam.

### Research Question No. 4

“Is there any impact of Bardowā *Thān* on the socio-cultural upliftment of the People of Bardowā?” After analysis of the data it was found that the people of Bardowā follow the rules and regulations of Bardowā *Thān*. The impact of Bardowā *Thān* on socio-cultural life is very significant.

## 6.4: Problems that Faced By Bardowā *Thān* and Suggestions for Remedies

There are some problems that faced by the Bardowā *Thān*. These are-

(1) Problems of *Hāti Bhakat*-The major problem that was faced by the Bardowā *Thān* is that, there gradually decreased the numbers of *Hāti Bhakat*. In that connection both *Sattrādhikārs* of *Narowā* and *Śalguri* said that parents did not want to turn their boys to be a *Bhakat*. Because modern education system has debarred them to be a *Bhakata*. Again nowadays each and every family has only one or two children, for some government policies and personal problems. This problem is found in other

*sattras* also. To solve this problem modern education system should be provided at every *Thān and Sattras* too.

(2) *Sattriyā Nr̥tyā*, or art was not a compulsory subject either in schools and colleges.. So some students learned it privately in their early stage. But when their pressure of schools curriculum increased then their other extra-curricular activities are gradually decreased, according to *Barbāyan* of Śālaguri *sattra*. So when the boys are promoted to class IX then they left to learn *Bāyaniā* or *Gāyaniā vidyā* or various *Sattrīyā* learnings such as *Mukhā silpa*, *Sachipāt* art, *Carai khulia* art etc. Again these art have no good market for future livelihood. So to popularise these arts government should take some initiatives.

(3) There was no good hotel or a restaurant for tourists at Bardowā. Guest houses for tourists are not properly accommodated. Toilets or washrooms are not sufficient for tourists and devotees. So sufficient facilities should be provided to solve these problems.

(4) It was found that some unknown people encroach the land and reducing the area of the Bardowā *Thān*. Fortunately government had taken steps to evict the encroachers and freed some portion of land from the illegal occupants. The government should be continued eviction operation and drastic action should be taken against the encroachers. Local people should also be conscious and united to protect the heritage property of the *Thān*.

(5) There was no direct transport system from Guwahati, neither railway nor road from Bardowā to Guwahati. So for the convenience of tourists transport facilities should be arranged.

There was no tourist guide or electronic guide system like other states of India. So electronic guide or tourist guide system should be provided to the tourist know about the contribution of Śaṅkaradeva and Bardowā *Thān* to the aesthetic, spiritual and other values to the society.

(6) Researchers, Educationists and political leaders should give importance on the *Thān* and *Sattras*, Śaṅkaradeva and his followers to develop the ideology of *Than* and *Sattras* and foster the value education of *Thān/Sattra* and Bardowā all over the world.

(7) The heritage articles and books of the Bardowā mini museum and library were not properly and scientifically preserved. Some of these articles and books of Library are going to be declined. So government and people shared jointly strive to protect and preserve these heritage properties scientifically and digitalized the system maintaining its originality intake. Therefore sufficient staff should be appointed in the meuseum and library.