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Namasudra Culture in Assam

Mr. Dhanya Ram Roy

Introduction:

The Namasudra community belongs to one of the most backward ethnic groups of India. The Namasudras are the original inhabitants of West Bengal and erstwhile East Bengal (present Bangladesh). They are now scattered in West Bengal, Bangladesh, North Eastern States, Bihar, Orissa and other states of India. In Assam, the Namasudra people constitute a huge percentage of the total population. The Namasudra people are scattered in almost all the districts of Assam. They came to the Brahmaputra Valley of Assam mainly from erstwhile East Bengal during the British period. They came to this region in search of cultivable land. A large number of them also came to the North Eastern States after independence. Most of the Namasudras left their original homeland due to communal riots in East Bengal and also due to the Zamindari system prevalent there. The matter is different so far as Barak Valley is concerned as the Namasudras have been living in this part i.e., Barak Valley of Assam since time immemorial. The Namasudras belong to the peasant community. They are ploughmen. So they usually live in the village area where cultivable land is available. This community is the owner of a culture of their own.

Objectives:

- ♦ To analyze the culture of Namasudras of Assam in general and of Morigaon district in particular.
- ♦ To bring into light the main characteristics of Namasudra language, social divisions, religious beliefs, festivals, food habit, dress and ornaments and status of women.

Methodology:

As there is no sufficient written document on the life and culture of the Namasudra people of Assam, the researcher followed exclusively the interview and field investigation methods for collecting data. Interview and field investigation were done in Mayang, Pakaria, Bukani Mauzas of Morigaon district of Assam. The present study is based on