



The Matak, Mayamara sect and Moamaria revolt: A brief revisit

Biswadip Gogoi

National Translation Mission, CIIL, Mysore, Karnataka, 570006

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ABSTRACT

The Mataks are probably best known in Assam history for the *Moamaria* revolt that put the Ahom dynastic rule to an end, and paved a way for colonial rule of the British. Led by the Morans of Upper Assam and architected by Mayamara Mahanta, the Moamaria revolt drew support from all kinds of disciples of Mayamara sattra. They were also joined by various other tribal groups, oppressed and exploited sections by the ruling class through *paik* and *khel* system. *Moamaria* revolt was instrumental in creating an autonomous territory *Matak Rajya* (Matak State) with present day Tinsukia (then known as Bengmora) as capital under the headship of Sarbananda Singha. In spite of being from different castes, tribes and communities such as, *Moran*, *Chutiya*, *Kachari*, *Ahom*, *Bihia*, *Kaivartas*, *Kalitas*, *Kayasthas* etc, the people of that territory developed a distinct identity as *Matak*. This article aims to deliberate upon nomenclature and ethno-religious roots of the *Matak* and related terms *Moamaria*, *Mayamara*, *Moran*, etc. It would further reflect upon the root causes of the revolt and the role of *Mayamara* sect of Neo-vaishnavism in the light of various studies and interpretations presented by scholars from different perspectives.

Keywords: *Matak*, *Mayamara*, *Moamaria revolt*, *Neo-vaishnavism*, *peasant upsurge*

Introduction

In the history of Assam, the term *Moamaria* holds a distinct and important place and the famous *Moamaria* revolt was responsible in bringing down the 600 years long dynastic rule of the Ahoms. In 1228, Sukaphaa, a prince of *Mung-Mao* or *Mung-Mao-Lung* in Yun-Nan, province of China¹ with approximately 9000 people crossed the Patkai hills and reached the Brahmaputra valley. Sukaphaa did not attack the local Morans² and Borahis³, instead established friendship with them and the followers who travelled with him established marital alliances with Morans and Borahis. Finally, Sukaphaa settled in Charaideo, a place near Sivasagar, and established his Ahom Kingdom. The Ahom dynasty ruled and expanded the kingdom for nearly six centuries. The Moamaria revolt, started in 1769 against the State weakened the structure of the state economically and politically. The rebels attacked the Ahom capital and were in seat for a short period. However, Ahoms recaptured the capital from the rebels. The neighbouring Burmese ruler invaded the Ahom Kingdom

thrice between 1817 and 1826 during which the Ahom Kingdom briefly came under the control of Burmese rulers. In an attempt to reclaim his lost kingdom, the Ahom king sought help from the British, who sent force to fight the Burmese Army. The First Anglo-Burmese War was fought in 1826, and the British forces won the war and gained control over this region. It is the Treaty of Yandabo signed in 1826, through which Ahom Kingdom was annexed into the British India.

This brief political history of the Assam region serves as a background to situate the *Moamaria* revolt that this paper intends to revisit. This paper is divided into three sections. The first deals with the nomenclature and ethno-religious roots of the *Matak* community which is a chief player in the *Moamaria* revolt against the Ahom Kingdom. This section will make an attempt to trace the different nomenclatures etymologically, carrying varied implications in the revolt discussed in the paper. The second section will provide an overview of the *Moamaria* revolt and a brief foray into the *Mayamara* Sect of Neo-vaishnavism which possibly had a huge impact on the revolt. The third and final section will discuss the *Moamaria* revolt in light of the different analysis and interpretations carried out by historians at different points of time.

Section I

Moamaria or *Mayamara* or *Matak* or *Moran* - these terminologies are often used synonymously in various contexts. But are they same? Or does this happen because of some crude generalizations? The paper will draw its etymological significance through different studies available.

According to Mackenzie (1884) "The Moamariahs were a tribe of proselytes to Hinduism as preached by the Sudras sectarians, Sankni and Madhit, who denied the supremacy of Brahmins and rejected the worship of Siva. For long years

Address:

Biswadip Gogoi
National Translation Mission, CIIL, Manasgangotri,
Mysore, Karnataka, 570006
Tel: 9886134251
Email: gogoib2002@gmail.com

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they were treated with tolerance, and so gathered numbers and strength, until they nearly occupied the whole tract of Upper Assam known as Muttuck (presently known as *matak*) in Luckimpore (presently known as Lakhimpur), while they had also many adherents in other part of the province, especially about Jorhath (presently known as Jorhat)."⁴

The sect started by Aniruddhadev (1553-1626) under *Kala samhati*⁵ of Neo-vaishnavism is called *Mayamara* Sect. It is said that Aniruddhadev first preached his doctrines among the members of fisherman community living on the bank of a lake where a small variety of fish called *Moa* (Indian carplet) was found. People of this community used to kill or catch (*mara*) the *Moa* fish and sustain on this. It was due to this reason that Aniruddhadev's sect was finally termed by the non-believers as *Moamara* i.e. a sect of the killer of the *Moa* fish. It could be noted that the *Moamara* is a derogatory remark used to ridicule the *Kala samhati* sect and its preachers who were drawing people from lower sections of the society (Nath, 2008)⁶. This story about *Moa* fish is found in poetic form in the writings *Mayamara* guru Utshabananda Goswami, ex-sattradhikar of Puranipaam Sattrā.⁷

Further according to Hannay, an Assistant to the commissioner of Assam, "This residence of the first priest of this sect is said to have been on the Majoilee (presently known as Majuli), on the banks of a small lake, which is now carried away by Burhumpooter (presently known as Brahmaputra). The name of this lake, from the circumstance of its abounding in a description of small fish, called *Moa*, was named in the usual style of Assamese phraseology *Moa Morah*, from whence arose the name of the sect, but which has been turned by those of the Brahmanical faith through a spirit of contempt to *Moa Mureeah*." (Hannay, 1838)⁸

An interesting and attention-grabbing account of the origin of the term *Mayamara* is found in Sri Sri Aniruddhadev Charita compiled by Sri Sri Hridayananda Chandra Adhikar Goswami. It mentions that in order to test the power of Aniruddhadev, the Ahom king Su-kham-pha (reign 1552-1603) or Khoraraja placed a cloth into a pot and requested Guru to tell what was in the pot. To demonstrate his power Aniruddhadev told that there is a big snake in the pot. The Ahom king opened the pot and saw that the cloth turned into a big snake. Then he requested Aniruddhadev to eliminate the power of magic and the guru made the magical snake to disappear through his power. Because of the killing (*mara*) of the magical (*maya*) snake, the king had termed him as *Mayamara Mahanta* and subsequently the followers of the *Mayamara Mahanta* came to be known as *Mayamara*.

Locating a logic behind the transformation of *Moamara* into *Mayamara* through the above mentioned myth, historian D. Nath (2008) points out that, "there is no doubt that the name *Mayamara* was thus created to erase the name *Moamara*, which was not only ridiculous but was also one of contempt towards a supposedly heretic religious community. The discovery of a myth to defend the sect from being ridiculed is a clear example to show that there was an element of continued dislike of the *Mayamara* pontiffs against the orthodox Brahmanical section of the society represented by the other *samhatis*. The distinction is clearly recorded in the *Tungkhungiya Buranji* by mentioning the two factions as *Moamariya* and *Bamuniya*. (Nath, 2008)⁹

Therefore, it is evident that the term *Mayamara* or *Mayamaria* was created to replace the otherwise considered derogatory terms *Moamara* or *Moamaria*. The *Mayamaria*

word is not found in any of the Ahom chronicles or Vaishnava literatures of that period. But the present day followers of *Mayamara* sect often introduce themselves as *Matak*. While *Mayamara* is used to indicate the religious sect, *Matak* is used to denote the people who follow the *Mayamara* sect of Neo-vaishnavism. The popular explanation of the meaning of *Matak* is very interesting – i.e., people of one (*ek*) opinion or principle (*mat*), and gradually *Matek* word has evolved into *Matak*. However, Tai scholar, P. Gogoi argues that the conjugal form of these words, i. e. *Mat* and *ek*, should have been *Matoik* not *Matak*.

Sir E. A. Gait, although emphasizing the distinctiveness of the three terms *Moran*, *Matak* and *Moamaria*, presented a view of their meaning which is contrastive to the popular belief. He wrote, "The terms *Moran*, *Matak* and *Moamaria* are often used indiscriminately, but they are quite distinct. *Moran* is a name of a tribe and *Mayamaria* that sect, while *Matak* refers to the country once ruled by the *Bar-Senapati*. The *Matak* is a Shingpho¹⁰ word" (Gait, 1906)¹¹. Famous Tai-linguist Rai-shahab Golap Chandra Baruah wrote, contradicting both popular belief and Sir E. A. Gait that the word *Matak* is found in the *Buranjis*¹² of Ahom period. It is used from 1228 AD to 16th Century. Further, he argues that in Tai language the word *Matak* means an experimented, tested scholar. *Ma* means *pandit* (scholar) and *tak* means measured, experimented etc. Adam White differs from both Gait and Baruah and mentions that the *Matak* were originally a rude tribe in a district called 'Muran' or 'Muttack'. The term *Moamaria* comes from the name of the place where they established their *sattrā*¹³. Nonetheless, Gait is supported by the view of Mackenzie (1884) as the latter mentioned about a 'Muttuck territory'.

In his report Mackenzie wrote, "The district known as Muttuck in Luckimpore (presently known as Lakhimpur), inhabited by the Moamaria, Moran or Morah tribe, was bounded, according to Pemberton, on the west and north by the Brahmaputra, on the south by Booree Dehing (presently known as Buri-dihing) and on the east by a line extending from Dehing to a point nearly opposite the mouth of Kondil Nullah. The area of this tract was about 1800 square miles."¹⁴

Hannay's view is somewhat similar to that of Gait and Mackenzie's. Hannay observed that *Matak* was a common name of the Mayamarias living in the northern bank of the river Buri-dihing in the Brahmaputra valley. He also mentioned about 'Muttuck country' and added that it is a name given to the Morans by the Khantis.¹⁵ "The Morans are quite a distinct class of Moa Mureeah sect, and occupy the same section of the country, as they did in former days. This tract is situated between the Dangooree, and Debroo River; they also inhabit a portion of the south bank of the Debroo..." (Hannay, 1838)¹⁶

The above foray into the diverse significations that *Moamaria*, *Mayamara*, *Matak* and *Moran* have received at the hands of different people over a period of time indicates the diverse socio-cultural ambience prevalent at that particular time. An etymological analysis of these terms could possibly throw light on some larger issues underlying in the then society.

Section II

The *Moamaria* revolt was one of the important incidents that have changed the history of Assam. It jeopardized the stronghold of Ahom dynasty greatly, and even some Ahoms

who were part of the *Mayamara* sect joined this revolt against the ruling class.

The *Moamaria* revolt started in 1769 AD. In 1769, Ragh Neog, a Moran leader was flogged by the royal official Kirtichandra Borbarua. The Morans, under the leadership of Ragha Neog and Naharkhora Saikia, launched their revolt against the ruling class. The 'Moran revolt', as termed by some historians, swelled into various parts of upper Assam in no time. They were immediately joined by the people from various caste, tribe and communities. With the help of the ordinary *paiks*¹⁷ the rebels captured Rongpur, the Ahom capital, in November, 1769. But, the royal force successfully dominated the revolt and reclaimed the capital.

The second phase of *Moamaria* revolt started in 1782 AD. In April, at the time of *Bohag Bihu* the spring time festival of Assam, an armed group of the *Moamaria* rebels suddenly attacked a convoy of the Ahom king. The king, however, managed to escape. The rebels entered the capital and captured several important royal officials. "The second *Moamaria* revolt demonstrated that without the active and extensive support of the masses, it is not possible to stage a successful upsurge against the ruler class. With a handful of men, a chaotic situation can be created, even political power may be attained, but it is very difficult to sustain" (Bora, 1983).¹⁸

Between 1786 to 1794, the rebels again started the revolt again. This was the third phase of *Moamaria* revolt. The rebels organized themselves through festivals, *kirtanas* and other religious occasions, and attacked the capital city of Rongpur. They captured the capital and a large part of the eastern Ahom Kingdom. The success of rebel forces encouraged many others from different communities such as Bodos¹⁹ and Kacharies²⁰ also to join the rebels. In 1788, Ahom king Suhitpangphaa (reign 1780–1795) or Gaurinath Singha along with some Ahom royals fled from the capital. He first camped in Nagaon and later moved to Guwahati in 1792.

Finally, the Ahom king and royal officers decided to seek help of the British. Upon their request, the British Governor General Cornwallis sent a force under Capt. Welsh in September, 1792. This force overwhelmed the *Moamaria* forces and recaptured capital Rongpur in March, 1794. Subsequently, the Ahom royal capital was shifted to Jorhat as Rongpur seemed very vulnerable for the repeated *Moamaria* attack.

Thus, with the strategic intervention of the British forces, the *Moamaria* revolt of the commoners was put to an abrupt end. However, in 1805, an autonomous territory was carved out for Morans, called *Matak Rajya* in Tinsukia region of the Ahom Kingdom with Sarbananda Signha as chief or *Bor-senapati*.²¹

Despite its suppression, the *Moamaria* revolt had tremendous impact on the future of Ahom dynasty, as well as the political future of the entire Assam region. Scholars have interpreted the revolt in varied ways, and as stated in the introduction, this paper will make an attempt to retrace some of those. Before it sets on do that, below is a brief note on the parallel growth and spread of Vaishnavism in the region which had an immense impact on the way momentum was gradually gathered for the *Moamaria* revolt.

After Sankardev (1449–1568) and Madhavdev (1489–1596), Aniruddhadev was one of the Neo-vaishnavite gurus, whose works were significant in popularizing Neo-vaishnavism among the common people. This Neo-

vaishnavism was divided into four independent divisions: *Samhati- Brahma samhati, Purush samhati, Nika samhati and Kala samhati*.

One among the above mentioned four main divisions, *Kala samhati* consisted of twelve *sattras* which were established by Gopaldev (1540-1611). Among them, *sattradhikars* of six *sattras* were from the Brahmin sect and others from the Sudras. It is said that because Gopaldev established his first *sattra* in Kalagjhar, this *samhati* came to be called as *Kala samhati*.

The *Kala samhati* stood for bringing about equality among its followers. This *samhati* started by Gopaldev later had a sub-sect initiated by Aniruddhadev called *Mayamara* in 1601 AD. The *Mayamara* sect thus started was more revolutionary and radical in nature. "To attract the backward classes and tribes, Aniruddhadev and the other gurus of *Mayamara* sub-*samhati* had to reconstruct or change some rules and regulations. In most of the cases, it can be said that Aniruddhadev was more revolutionary or bolder than Sankardev. Economic reform, social equality or spreading Neo-vaishnavism, the contribution of Aniruddhadev was very significant" (Dutta, 2004).²² As stated earlier, the revolutionist potential that this sect of *Kala samhati* possessed within contributed immensely to the *Moamaria* revolt against the Ahom dynasty.

Section III

There have been different opinions about the causes that led to the crucial *Moamaria* revolt. One group of scholars, especially mainstream historians believe that suppression by the Ahom king on the basis of religious ideology is the main reason for the revolt. Analyzing various hypothesis, D. Nath wrote, "...here occurred a series of events of suppression of the *Mayamara* pontiffs by the state since the beginning of the Hinduisation of the Ahom kings. There is no doubt that the Ahom kings had no concrete religious affiliation to a particular sect. But, they were more attracted to the Brahmanical and *Sakta* practices than to the puritan form of Vaishnavism of *Mayamara* order." (Nath, 2008)²³

This is a widely-known fact that the Neo-vaishnavism started by Sankardev was against idol-worshipping. And idol-worshipping was an inseparable practice of the Brahminical and *Sakta* ritual form of worship. Thus, the Brahmins became rivals with the Vaishnavas in terms of religious belief and practices. They successfully used the state machinery against the Vaishnavas, especially the *Mayamaras*. *Mayamara* guru Nityanandadev (1609?-1650) was killed at the order of the Ahom king Surampha (reign 1644-1648) or Bhogaraja. Another *Mayamara* guru Vaikunthanathdev (?-1691), also known as Saptabhujdev, was killed during the regime of king Supaatpha (reign 1681-1696) or Gadadhar Singha. From the middle of the sixteenth century to the time of the revolt, the conflict between Ahom throne and the *Mayamara* sect continued and a lot of disciples of *Mayamara* gurus were punished or killed. On several occasions, *Mayamara Mahantas* were insulted publically by the Ahom kings and royal officials. These prolonged atrocities against the *Mayamara* sect outraged the followers to revolt against the oppressing state forces in due course of time, leading to the *Moamaria* revolt of eighteenth century.

Another group of scholars argue that the revolt is a 'peasant upsurge.' Dhrubajyoti Bora argues that according to many mainstream historians, the main cause of the *Moamaria* revolt

was the persecution of the followers of *Mayamaria* sect by the Ahom royals. Writings of some mainstream historians not only praise the ruling class, but also try to cover the story of the persecution and oppression of the Ahom ruler. But the social conflict of that time, the root of which was economic oppression and inequality chiefly based on the *paik* system, was the main cause of the *Moamaria* revolt. The *Moamaria* revolt was an explosion against the continued oppression and persecution of the ruling class of the Ahom State.

The *paik* system was a state-organized system of compulsory labour exploitation. The *paik* and *khel*²⁴ systems were the primary organizational basis of the Ahom State. All active people of the state in the age group of 16-50 years came under the purview of the *paik* system. Each individual was called a *paik*. The *paiks* had to serve the royals for a couple of months. The *paiks*, especially during their service period, had no individual liberty. They were given only 2.66 acres²⁵ of wet rice land, the yield from which enabled them merely to have a substandard living. Instead of selling their labour, the *paiks* became instruments of the ruling class which was the real appropriator of the agricultural surplus. (Sharma, 1996)²⁶

Sharma has further identified the different levels of conflict that existed in the society which fuelled the chief combat given rise by the feudal system. "The Ahom socio-economic and political structure has brought to light the existence of several contradictions in it simultaneously. The more significant of contradictions are between the half-peasant, half-slave, ordinary *paik* population and the ruling class consisting of the Ahom aristocrats, the ecclesiastics and the bureaucracy; the vassal ruling class and the Ahom ruling class and the peasants; the Neo-vaishnavism and the Brahminism; radical Vaishnavite *sattras* and the royalist *sattras*; vaishnavite abbots and the ruling nobility; etc... However, among them the most dominant one was between the half-peasant, half-slave masses of *paik* and the ruling class of the Ahom State, reflecting the contradiction between the semi-tribal peasant economy and the emerging feudal relations of production. Indeed, the operation of other, contradictions augmented the process of polarization between the above two classes." (Sharma, 1996)²⁷

An instance of the way different socio-cultural factors intermingled in augmenting the feudal conflict under *paik* system could be noted here. In that period *Vaishnava bhakats* (devotees or monk of Vaishnavism) benefited from a special facility that they did not have to work as a *paik*. This led to a decrease in the number of *paiks* and with the decreasing of the number of *paiks*, the production of the state started decreasing. As a result, the Ahom royals found it hard to retain their lavish life and aristocracy. Gradually, the Ahom royals started to dislike and neglect the *Mayamaras*. The ideological basis of equality and liberty present in Vaishnavism helped to turn it as a platform of the common people. As the representative of the system, *Moamaria Mahanta* led this movement and slowly this movement was able to loosen the whole economic system of the Ahom Kingdom.

It may be argued that the socio-religious or socio-economic reasons were alone not responsible for the *Moamaria* revolt. No doubt that the displeasure of *Mayamara sattras* towards the Ahom rulers for patronizing Brahminical Sect and continual oppression of the followers of those *sattras* ignited the commoners and worked as a launchpad for the revolt. The feudal *paik* system exploiting the labourers was a reason enough to raise a revolt against the ruling class as well. Further, disputes prevalent among the Ahom princes for the

throne also led some of the princes and royal officials to join the revolt secretly or openly.²⁸ These multiple reasons together, influencing each other internally, could provide a glimpse into the way commoners' anguish was expressed through *Moamaria* revolt, also complicating it for a historian to analyze and arrive at a conclusion.

References and notes

1. Rungkarn Duangthip, Ph.D. Dissertation, Tai-Ahom and standard Thai: a descriptive-comparative study, Deccan College Post Graduate And Research Institute, 2012.
2. The Moran people of Assam are Bodo origin who has been concentrated in easternmost part of Assam. Once, they have an independent state known as Bengmara, present Tinsukia District of Assam (Arun Chandra Dutta, *The Socio-Economic Problems of Moran of Assam, IJCAES, Volume II, July, 2012*)
3. The Barahis are a semi-Hinduised Chutiya tribe lives in Upper part of the Brahmaputra Valley. Chutiyas are generally alleged to be of Shan origin though Delton believed them from their languages to be closely related to Kacharies. (L. A Waddell, *Tribes Of The Brahmaputra Valley: A Contribution Of Their Physical Types And Affinities, 1999*)
4. Sir Alexander Mackenzie, On the relations of the Government with the hill tribes of the North-east Frontier of Bengal, (Reprinted in History of the Frontier Areas Bordering on Assam, The Assam Government Press, Shillong. 1942) Home Department Press, Calcutta, 1884.
5. The neo-vaishnavism is divided into four parts; each part is termed as *Samhati*. The four *samhatas* are –*Brahma samhati, Purush samhati, Nika samhati* and *Kala samhati*.
6. Dambarudhar Nath, The Mataks and their Revolt against the State in 18th Century Assam - Searching for Ethno-Religious Roots, Jayanta Kumar Ray, Arpita Basu Roy, Ed., Political Roles of Religious Communities in India, Kolkata, 2008.
7. *Uttar hatir shamipat asse bill*
Tat shabae moa mas bonche abikol
Hahi hradae kole voila sattras bichaykhayan
Atekeke Moa mara buloya bachan
Aru jito ane loile sarana-bhajan
Maya pakha bhakatara huye nibaron
Hikarane mayamara bule nripagon

[Translation (by the author): There is a lake near North-Guwahati with lots of *Moa* fish. A *sattras* was situated in the bank of the lake, and therefore, the follower of the *sattras* called *Moa mara*. Through *Sarana-Bhajana*, devotees of the *sattras*, can get rid of elusion. Therefore, devotees are called *Mayamara* by others.]
8. S O Hannay, A short account of the Moa Morah sect, and of the country at present occupied by the Bor Senaputtee, Journal of The Asiatic Society, No. 80 August, Kolkata, 1838.
9. Same as 6
10. Shingpho is a tribe inhabits in Arunachal Pradesh of India, Kachin State of Burma and Dehong of Yunnan Province. They are also known as Jingpho.
11. Edward Albert Gait, A History of Assam, Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta, 1906.
12. Buranjis are historical chronicles written initially in Tai language and later in Assamese. The first Buranji was written on the instructions of the first Ahom king Sukaphaa (reign 1228–1268) who established the Ahom Kingdom in 1228. Assamese Buranjis can be traced back to 16th century. Buranji means "a store that teaches the ignorant" (in the Tai language- bu ignorant person; ran teach; ji store)
13. *Sattras* are basically monasteries set up to propagate Vaishnavism. Vaishnava guru Sankaradev is said to have established his first *Sattras* at Bardowa, his birthplace, and then in different places of Assam.
14. Same as 4
15. The Khamtis of Assam come from a country known to the Assamese as Bor Khamti, or the great Khamti land. It lies high on the Irrawaddy, eastward from the frontier of Lakhimpur...The original seat of the Khamties, as the Ahoms was the ancient Shan Kingdom of Pong, with the city now called Mongoung for its capital. (Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the Relations of the Government with the Hill Tribes of the North-East Frontier of Bengal, 1884*)

16. Same as 8
17. The *Paik* system is implemented in 1609 AD by Momai Tamuli Barbarua, a ahom official, under the patronage of king Susenghphaa (reign 1603–1641) or Pratap Singha. Under this system, excluding nobles, priests, high castes or slaves, each and every adult male of the state, between the ages of 16 to 50 was registered as a *paik* for state service. The smallest unit of the *paik*, called *got*, consisted of four *paiks*. When one or two *paiks* of the *got* goes to serve the state, the remaining three or two, had to look after the household affairs of the others.
18. Dhrubajyoti Bora, Moamaria Gana Abhyutthan: Asomor Samaj Bikasar Itihas, Banalata, Guwahati, **1998**. (*translated from the Assamese original by the author*)
19. Bodos are a group of peoples speaking Tibeto-Burman languages in the northeastern Indian states of Assam and Meghalaya and in Bangladesh. The Bodos consist of a large number of tribes. Their western tribes include the Chutiya, Plains Kacharis, Rahba, Garo, Mech, Koch, Dhimal, and Jaijong; the eastern tribes include the Dimasa (or Hill Kacharis), Galong (or Gallong), Hojai, Lalung, Tippera, and Moran. (*Encyclopedia Britannica*)
20. The Kacharies are believed to be the earliest known inhabitant of Assam and they are part of the Bodo groups.
21. A designation of Ahom commander.
22. Sristidhar Dutta, Matak Ahom Samparka, Dayananda Borgohain, Ed. Kham-rup, Sivasagar **2004**. (*translated from the Assamese original by the author*).
23. Same as 6
24. The *Khel* system organized some of the *paiks* into professional groups, rendering a specific kind of productive work ranging from boat building to arrow-making for the state.
25. 2.66 acres is equal to 2 *Puras* or 8 *Bighas*. These lands are called *Gaa-Mati* and suitable for wet-rice cultivation and neither hereditary nor transferable.
26. Chandan Kumar Sharma, Socio-economic Structure and Peasant Revolt: The Case of Moamaria Upsurge in the Eighteenth Century Assam, Indian Anthropologist, Vol - 26, No-2, December, **1996**.
27. Same as 26
28. Mohanmala Gohain, elder brother of the king Suremphaa (reign 1751–1769) or Rajeswar Singha, was deprived of the throne. He wanted to put forth his claim to become king and, therefore, approached *Mayamara Mahanta* for support.