

PROGRESS REPORT

**For the Project Sanctioned under the scheme of Safeguarding
the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India,
Year: 2014 -15**

1. Title of the Project:

Bhari Gan: The folk theatrical art form and The unique Ramayana tradition of the Rabha tribes of Assam.

2. Name of the Grantee:

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3. Date of Commencement of the Project:

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4. Introduction:

Among the variety of traditional dramatic art forms found in the state of Assam, the Bhari Gan holds a distinctive place. This folk drama is prevalent mainly among the Rabha tribes that are the inhabitant of the Goalpara district and its adjoining areas bordering Meghalaya in South West Assam. Some Bhari Gan groups are also found in areas bordering South Kamrup and in the North Garo Hills of Meghalaya. The striking features of the Bhari Gan are the use of heavy wooden masks, narration of story mainly from Ramayana, depiction of story basically through songs, transmit through both oral and written means, presence of a chief performer, distinctive folk way of presentation, ritualistic association, presence of secondary farce performance in between the primary play and so on that distinguished it as a significant folk art form.

About the Rabhas:

The Rabhas are racially an Indo-Mongoloid group and belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family. The main concentrations of the Rabhas are found in the districts of Goalpara, Kamrup and Darrang of Assam and the Garo Hills of Meghalaya. The Rabhas are a scheduled tribes of Assam plains and are divided into some sub-groups like Rangdani, Maitory, Pati, Dahuri and so on, which are based on language and other distinctiveness of cultural traits. The Rabhas are basically agrarian people and depends mainly on agriculture. Economically they seem to be very marginalised and are also lagging behind in education and other aspects of

development. Although the basis of their religious philosophy is based on animism, under the influence of Hinduism the Pati Rabhas have adopted Hindu culture and observe religious occasions like Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Shiva Puja, Bhagawati puja and others. However, the characteristics of their traditional religious practices are still prominent among them. They worship some of their traditional deities even now.

Brief Description on Bhari Gan:

The Bhari Gan mainly comprises of a chorus singing by a group, intersperse with dramatic representations by characters wearing heavy wooden masks. The main constituent of the folk play is the *Mul* who lead the whole course of the performance reciting songs in intricate steps and body movements. The *Mul* is also known as *Ojah* in some localities. The choral group constitutes of the *Ojah* in the lead role along with the *Palies*, the associates of the *Ojah*, and the players of musical instruments- *Khols* (drum) and *Tals* (cymbal), the only two instruments used in the play. A Bhari Gan group generally comprises of around 35 members. The story progresses mainly through the singing of songs by the *Mul* and the *Palies*. During the course of narration the dramatic representations are being portrayed as per the sequences of the play with characters in masks dancing to the tune of the music. There are characters like Ram, Lakhsman and Sita that do not wear masks. In certain scenes, particularly the episodes with humours, have even dialogues.

The Bhari Gan is actually a ritual play and is associated with a variety of festivals and ceremonies of the Rabhas like- *Durga Puja*, *Thakurani Puja* (*Bhagawati Puja*), *Kali Puja*(*Chama Puja*), *Banabasi Thakurani Puja*, *Rasmela*, *Sibaratri*, *Douljatra* etc. In all these occasions the Bhari Gan has to perform as a part of rituals. The Bhari Gan is mostly found among the Pati- Rabha section of the tribe. The themes for Bhari Gan are drawn from the epic Ramayana, and *Raban Badh*, i.e. the vanquishing of demon Ravana, is the most favourite episode. Interestingly, the masks in use are century old and are considered highly sacred.

Copping with the ravages of time, this unique folk performing art is now on the brink of extinction. Once a popular art form which was adhered to the identity of the Rabha community is now surviving only with a few groups that too are with limited numbers of plays. There are only a few elderly exponents of the genre that still practicing the art form which can be called the last generation experts of the tradition. And ironically, there is no single comprehensive research or documentation work carried out systematically on this pristine theatrical genre.

Therefore, with the support received from SNA, documentation and research work are being carried out systematically to achieve the objectives of the project. The documentation and research work are well in progress. The Progresses of the work have been stated in this report and the same have been substantiated with documentation materials such as video footage and still photography submitted along with the report in DVD.

5. Methodology:

A detailed work plane has been prepared for execution of the project immediately after its selection. Field works for the research and documentation have been carried out as per the work plan for achieving the objectives of the project. The contact persons, resource persons, events, locations, etc have been indentified and communication and other pre- field related works have been carried out systematically for smooth execution of the research and documentation.

The sources of data for the study are basically the primary sources. There are a very few secondary sources such as published book, article or research paper on the topic. Information have been collected mainly from the field after discussion with the villagers as well as with firsthand observations. The most widely used methods during the field-study were the interview and observation methods for research, documentation and data collection. In most of the times the non-directive interview method has been adopted to overcome the possible barrier due to lack of understanding on the part of informants on specific questions. The observation method was strictly no-participatory one.

For the authenticity of the information as well as for additions and rectification of data, some special aspects of the study have been crossed discussed with different village elders accompanying by the contact persons.

The research and documentation project is being carried out with the following tools and means –

- a) Textual Documentation
- b) Still Photography
- c) Video Photography

All the information received from the field work has been recorded in the textual format apart from audio visual format for record and analysis. However

some elements such as songs and music, performances, beliefs, etc has been recorded separately in audio visual format depending upon their subject of study.

This Progress Report has been prepared on the basis of the findings of the research and documentation work that contain the textual information of the study substantiated with documentation materials such as video footage and still photography enclosed herewith in DVD.

6. Progress of the work:

Bhari Gan performance are organised by the community in certain occasions of the year such as festivals, worships, ceremonies, etc. The Post-harvesting time till the onset of monsoon is the period of the Bhari Gan performance. More particularly the spring is the peak seasons for this theatrical art form and during April most of the occasions are organised for Bhari Gan Performances. Therefore documentation and research have been done as per the ground situation befitting the actual context. More documentation work is being expected during April month and same would be included in the Final Report. However, studies have been made on the art form during extensive field work and on the basis of discussion, interview, etc during study and field work the following report has been prepared.

i) Locations of Bhari Gan Groups:

During survey and fieldwork following Bhari Gan troupes have been identified in and around Goalpara District of Assam. The locations of the groups and their status, whether active, dormant or extinct are as given bellow:-

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|----|---|--------|
| a) | Khamari Nayapara Bhari Gan Dal
P.O.: Chotomatia, Dudhnoi,
District Goalpara, Assam | Active |
| b) | Ghuraputa Dadhimathan Party
Village-Ghuraputa, PO: Sotomatia, Dudhnoi,
District- Goalpara, Assam | Active |
| c) | Baijuri Bhari Gan Dal
Village-Baijuri (Hatigaon), Balbala,
District- Goalpara (Assam) | Active |
| d) | Bardag Bhari Gan Dal
Village- Bardag, P O: Suwanrmari (Meghalaya),
Badahpur Panchayat, District- Goalpara (Assam) | Active |

e)	Bhari Gan group of Dangar Bhita Village Basingdaba, Suwarmari, District –North Garo Hills (Meghalaya)	Active
f)	Bhari Gan group of Suwarmari Village Suwarmari, PS-Mendipathar District –North Garo Hills (Meghalaya)	Active
g)	Bhari Gan group of Jetdaba Village P.S.: Basingdaba, PO:Suwarmari District –North Garo Hills (Meghalaya)	Active
h)	Bhari Gan group of Belpara Village P.S.: Krishnai, PO: Khardang District – Goalpara (Assam)	Active
i)	Deuripara Bhari Gan Party Upper Deuripara Village, PO: Bandarshi, Dodhnoi Goalpara (Assam)	Dormant
j)	Bhari Gan group of Bondapara Bondapara, District –Kamrup Assam	Active
k)	Bhari Gan group of Khardang District – Goalpara (Assam)	Active
l)	Bhari Gan group of Sechapani District – Goalpara (Assam)	Dormant
m)	Bhari Gan group of Harinkata District –North Garo Hills (Meghalaya)	Extinct

ii) Themes of the Bhari Gan Plays:

The themes of the Bhari Gan are mainly from the episodes of the great epic Ramayana. *Raban Badh*, *Lakhmanrar Saktisel*, *Mahi Raban Badhr*, *Sitapuri Raban Badh*, *Patal Kamda*, *Meghnath Badh* are the plays performed by Bhari Gan troupes. *Dadhi Mathan* is a play performed by almost all the groups that delineate the childhood story of Gopal, another name of Lord Krishna, based on one of the episodes of Mahabharata. The plays based on Ramayana are performed at night, and the *Dadhi Mathan* is always enacted in the day time. In a full-fledged occasion of traditional worship of the Rabhas, the *Dadhi Mathan* play is performed during the day, and the plays based on the Ramayana staged in the night continue until dawn.

ii) The Style and Characteristics of Presentation:

The Bhari Gan is a ritual play, and the devotional characteristics are prominent throughout the performance. The entire affair of the performance is considered a matter of great reverence by the bearers of the tradition. The performers always start by offering a prayer to the deity. All performers offer gestural prayer spontaneously during entry to the stage and at the end of their performance. Prayer is offered to the deity for the worship of whom the play is being organised. If there is no occasion as such, the play is organised dedicating to Goddess Saraswati. The play starts with an initial recitation of musical instruments called *Jhurun Bazi* or *Jhurani Bazi*. Although very short in duration, this instrumental can be compared to the preliminaries or *Dhemali (Purvaranga)* of the *Ankiya Bhaona*, the classical based theatre introduced by great Vaishnavite saint Sri Sankaradeva in 15th /16th century. The *Jhurani Bazi* is followed by a session of song recital called *Bandana*. *Bandana* means prayer, and the couple of songs performed here are in veneration of Lord Rama and Narayana.

This is followed by the recitation of entering song of Lord Rama by *Mul* accompanied by his co-performers. Ram and Lakhsman perform a brief dance performance after the appearance. The roles of Ram and Lakhsman are generally enacted by two young men, and it is interesting to see their entry on the shoulders of two other persons. The appearance of a clown-like character called *Bharua* along with Ram and Lakshman, and his role as a co-dancer in the dance performance of the divine characters, is a distinctive feature of the art form. The story progresses with the recitation of songs by *Mul* along with the group. Most of the narrations of the story advance through the songs of the art form. Although the Bhari Gan is basically a musical, it is not totally devoid of dialogue. Conversations between characters are sometimes lyrical, and are sung by the *Mul* on behalf of the characters. However, one also finds dialogues that are not lyrical but spoken words; totally conversational in nature and are uttered by the character itself. Most such dramatic representations are guided by humorous zeal. The humorous antics in such pure dramatic scenes are distinctive in nature with excessive frolicking actions. With the progress of the story, different characters enter the play as per the narration of the song. The scene of war between Raban and Ram and Lakhsman along with their associates, performed with rhythmic movements, constitutes an important and attractive portion of the play. The play that starts in the late evening comes to an end at dawn after the performance through the night. At the end, the performers of the play offer a prayer to the deity along with the organisers and audience. Repeated cheers of victory to the deity (*Haridhani*) mark the end of the play.

The *Ural* (also known as *Cham* in their local parlance), a mortar for graining of rice, is used as the seat of Ravan. Generally, the Bhari Gan performance are

organized in *Than*(shrine)s which are considered very sacred, and therefore other new articles are generally not used in the play.

iii) The Farces Plays of Bhari Gan:

Farces, known as '*Nakal*', are an integral and interesting constituent of the Bhari Gan performance. These humorous performances are presented in between the primary play, and they have an important role in the entertainment of the audience. These comic dramas or scenes are known as '*Nakal*'. There may be more than one such comic scene in a single play depending upon the response of the audience and the availability of time. The themes of such scenes are also varied in nature. Some of such humorous plays are the 'Dui Satini' (the two co-wives), 'Maach Mara' (fishing), Bapar Beta (Father's son) among others. In the farce, the conversations are made in local parlance. There is no written script for such comedy scenes and hence there are no fixed dialogues for the conversations which the characters create impromptu during the performance. Songs and dances are also not uncommon in such humorous plays. Some of the *Nakal* performances consist of single satiric songs that are performed with humorous gestures by clown-like performers. Themes of immediate present, current happenings, social injustice, etc. form the subject matter of the farce, and the artistes may improvise depending on the situation. A farce based on the most recent situations like missed calls and wrong numbers has also been encountered during a performance by a troupe from Ghoraputa village. This interesting comic play has portrayed the vulnerable situation faced by the youth due to the use of mobile phones that exposed them to multiple relationships in their personal life. The audience and performer relation in such farce is closer than in the primary play.

iv) The Masks of Bhari Gan Plays:

The use of heavy wooden masks is a distinctive characteristic of the Bhari Gan that bestows a prominent identity to the art form. The masks are so heavy that the performers have to cushion a roll of cloth around their face for protection. The masks generally do not have eyeholes and hence the artistes cannot see after donning them. As a result, a person often has to lead the masked performers to the stage, and even has to correct the position and direction of the dancing artistes on the stage during performance. This unusual happening adds an amusing flavour to the art form. The masks in use are considered highly sacred. In most of the cases, the masks are found to be quite old, not less than a century. However, the masks of recent origin are also not uncommon. The masks belonging to the Baijuri village troupe are more than 100 years old, and they are not aware who had prepared them and the time of their preparation. They possessed a few masks

which are not used in their plays and could not be identified. Presently, no one from this village crafts masks. The masks belonging to the Bardak village group are just seven or eight years old. The masks of the Khamari Nayapara village are also not older than ten years. On the other hand, the troupe from Suwarmari village (North Garo Hills) possesses both old and new masks. Among the masks of Hanuman, Sugrib, Jambabanta, Bibhisana, Sarathi, Ketuwa and others characters, the figure of the Raban with its ten heads is the most eye-catching one. The colours that are used to paint the wooden mask are *Hartal* for yellow, *Nil* (indigo) for blue, *Khoyar* (chalk powder) for white, *Sendur* (vermilion) for red. While most of the troupes use the above material, the group from Khamari Nayapara village use synthetic enamel paints to colour their masks. In villages like Jetdoba, Suwarmari and Belpara, the masks are painted anew on the day of the event just before the performance. The troupe from Jetdoba paints the masks before each performance. It is a practice to store the mask in a separate house or shed in an isolated location of the village, usually near a road. It may be due to the fear to keep them in their household campus. However, this practice is not found in the Khamari Nayapara village. Names of the respective characters are written on the back side of the masks for easy identification.

Although the heavy wooden masks are the striking feature of the art form, it is found that the *dramatis personae* do not wear them throughout the play. After the initial performance, the artistes put off the mask and keep it near the middle post in the front side of the shrine. As the masks are very heavy, it is not possible to wear them throughout the play; it is a practice to take the masks off after the initial appearance.

Among the beliefs associated with the art form, there is a strong belief that the masks may engaged in scuffle if kept together during storage. Therefore, masks of opponent groups are to be kept separately. Thus masks of Hanuman and his allied group are never kept with Raban, Mahiravan and others.

v) Costumes:

The costumes of the *dramatis personae* of Bhari Gan are simple. They use clothes of day to day use as costumes. The only character that wears royal attires is Raban. However, the royalty in dress is extended to other members of the family of the demon king among some troupes. There is no use of elaborate ornaments. The traditional striped *Gamucha* of the Rabhas is used as the lower garment, and shirts of regular use are worn during the performance for the male characters. Generally the clothes of the *Mul* are found to be a little distinctive with a long *Gamucha* (usually white) used as lower garment, a traditional long shirt as

upper gear, a *Gamocha* leaning on the shoulder and rattling anklet *Nupur* on the legs. Bhari Gan is performed only by the male folk; even women characters are enacted by male members. The female characters of lower strata of the society in the play wear the regular dress of the women folk of the locality. The royal characters like Sita and Mandedori (Mandodari) wear *Sari* and *Kiriti* (crown) on their head. The weaponries and accessories used in the art form are *Dhanu Kar* (bows and arrows), *Bandug* (wooden guns), *Gada* (club), *Taruwal* (sword), *Lathi* (stick), *Nakalia Lathi* (stick used by characters of farce), *Mala* (wooden wreath), and others. As mentioned earlier, in the case of *Patala Raban Badh*, the costumes and ornaments are quite lavish. The colour materials used by the performers for makeup are *Khoyar* (chalk powder), talcum powder, *Kajal*, *Sendur* (vermilion), *Phakuwa* among others.

vi) Script and Language:

The Bhari Gan groups follow a written script. The scripts used by the performing groups are handwritten, and are preserved only in their custody. Although one finds written scripts of the play of Bhari Gan, the scripts are usually not found in totality. Different portions of the play (script) are found with the respective performers who deal with the particular character or the portion of the play. As the *Mul* perform the main role, the major portion of the script is always found with lead artistes. The name of the author of the play is never found in the script, which implies the possibility of transformation of the orally transmitted tradition to a written one.

During the study of the written script of the play and its role in enactment of the drama, it is found that the *Mul* has to take help from the script to memorize the songs. Sri Ushini Rabha, the chief performer of Khamari, Nayapara village Bhari Gan group, has stated that although most of the verses of the play were already in his memory, as he was associated with the art form since his young age, yet for perfection, he had to take help from the script when he had assumed the responsibility of *Mul*.

The language of the play is apparently a mixture of the local dialects of the area and the language of the neighbouring state of Bengal. Although it seems to be more akin to the language of the neighbouring state, a few local scholars do not agree to denominate it solely to that language. They hold the view that the language of the Bhari Gan is a specific language – a mixture of dialects like *Brajabuli*, the artificial language used in the *Ankia Nat*. In the dialogues, the influence of Hindi language is more prominent. For instance a dialogue by the Chipahi, an official of Ravan is like that-

Charkari Admi Dag Denese Bhai Karega... Gaawania aadmi Dag Denese Ayega

(They will be afraid if official would call them, they will come if the singers called them)

vii) Stage and Rehearsal :

No formal and organized rehearsal is arranged for the practice of the play. However, to attain a level of perfection, a few sessions of informal rehearsal are organized just before the beginning of the season of the performance. Artistes memorize the verses just by hearing and participating in the performance. No rehearsal is organized for the farce plays.

The Bhari Gan can be performed in any open space. There is no need of a raised platform or a specified stage to organize the performance. In their actual context, the Bhari Gan performances are organized in the shrines called *Than* of various deities. The troupe sits on the ground and performs facing the deity in the shrine. Although, the audience can assemble surrounding the entire performance, they are generally seated on the right and left side of the performance. Usually the male and female audience are seated separately. Adaptation for modern proscenium theatre is not difficult for this traditional art form. A temporary shed or hut is erected near the performance area, and this is used as a green room. This shed is known by various names in different localities like *Badha Sali*, *Basa Sali* or *Basa*. The dramatis personae make their entry to the stage from this *Basa Sali*.

The audience mostly consists of the villagers of the locality in which the play is being organized. Both young and elderly persons come to watch the play. Audiences enjoy the humorous performances more than the narration of the mythological story.

viii) The Social Context :

The performance of Bhari Gan is indispensably associated with the Rabha society. In many Rabha villages, certain worships have to be organized annually where Bhari Gan has to be performed as a part of the ritual. No other performance can replace Bhari Gan for such events. These worships are mostly organized in between the month of *Kati* (October-November) to *Jeth* (April-May) of the Assamese year. This is the time period from the harvesting of paddy to the starting of a new season for cultivation. Thus Bhari Gan performances are quite frequent in this phase of the year. The annual worships are organized as *Bhar* (full-grown or major) and *Sukhila* (general) in alternate years. In a *Bhar Puja*, the *Dadhi Mathan* play is performed in the day time and the play based on the episodes of Ramayana is organized during night. In *Sukhila* arrangement of worship, only

Dadhi Mathan play is organized in the day time. Bhari Gan performance has to be organized in the Baijuri village after every three years on the occasion of worship of Goddess *Ma Kali*. On this occasion, Bhari Gan performances are organized in two *Thans* (shrines) - one is Burha Burhi Than (also called Bhangura Bhanguri Than) and another is Ma Kali Bhagawati Than. In Lower Manikganj village, Bhari Gan performance is organized in the annual worship at Lakhar Thakur Than (Shrine) on the onset of Holi festival. In Deuripara Village, a three-day annual fair called *Aithan Mela* is organized from 21st day of the *Puh* Month of Assamese calendar and Bhari Gan performance is an integral part of the occasion. Likewise, Bhari Gan performance is organized on the occasion of *Thakurani Puja* (*Bhagawati Puja*), *Kali Puja*, *Banabasi Thakurani Puja*, *Hamnang Puja*, *Durga Puja*, *Rasmela*, *Sibaratri*, *Douljatra* etc.

ix) Connotation of the name and Time of Origin:

Regarding the connotation of the name of the art form 'Bhari Gan', it can be presumed that the term *Bhari* might have come from the term *Bhau* (means acting) or *Bhauria* (means actor). Although term *Gan* simply means song, it has an extended meaning in the locality which denotes the dramas that are based on songs. As per another interesting account prevalent among the bearer of the tradition, the troupes had to move to different places for performance in earlier days. And during their movements, they had to carry the heavy masks and other ancillaries in a typical carrying system called '*Bhaar*' which accorded its name 'Bhari Gan'.

The carriers of the tradition of Bhari Gan do not have much knowledge about the specific time of origin of the art form. The tradition is being handed down from one generation to the next, and it is difficult to know the actual time of origin due to lack of records. Further research and study has to be made to give more details in this regards.

7. Details of Documentation Materials:

- i) **Khamari Nayapara Bhari Gan Dal** : Documentation of the various Masks of the Bhari Gan troupe of Khamari Nayapara village has been done with still photography. The various masks of the have been identified and names of the masks are stated along with the photographs. The name of the Bhari Gan performing group is Khamari Nayapara Bharigan Dal and comprising of around 33 members where the Sri Ushini Rabha is the chief performer called Mul. The various masks have been identified and names

of the masks are given along with the photographs. This group perform two plays, one is Dadhi Mathan and the another is Sitapuri Ravan Badh. The Dadhi Mothon is the depiction of the childhood story of Lord Krishna and the Sitapuri Ravan Badh is the story of killing of demon king by lord Ram and the test of sanctity of Sita. While the Dodhi Mathan play is generally enacted in day hours, the Sita Puri Ravan Badh Nat is performed in the night. No mask is used in the Dadhi Mathan play. The Mask that have been documented are used in the Sitapuri Ravan Badh play. The masks of the Khamari Nayapara village are not older than ten years. Names of the respective characters are written on the back side of the masks for easy identification. This group from Khamari Nayapara village use synthetic enamel paints to colour their masks unlike the other groups that use natural colours.

- ii) **Deuripara Bhari Gan Party:** The Deuripara Bhari Gan Party of Upper Deuripara Village, PO: Bandarshi, Dodhnoi, Goalpara ,Assam is presently a dormant group. They were active group but remain inactive for last two years or so. However, they have their masks and costume of the play. The masks, costumes and other accessories of the group have been documented through both still photography and video clips. This group had also performed two plays, one is Dadhi Mathan and the another is Sitapuri Ravan Badh. They have around 18 masks which were used in the Sitapuri Ravan Badh play. The chief performer that is the Mul of the groups are Sri Dahan Rabha and Sri Dilip Rabha. During documentation they have shown and demonstrated the costumes of Ravana and the use of mask. The Masks have been identified and names have been stated along with the photographs.
- iii) **Bhari Gan group of Risu Belpara Village:** The Belpara Bhari Gan Dal of Risu Belpara Village P.S.: Krishnai, PO: Khardang District Goalpara (Assam) has two plays- Dadhi Mathan and Saktishel. The play Saktishel is also known as Lakhsmanar Saktishel which deal about the episode of Lakhsman, the younger brother of Lord Ram, being injured with Saktishel, a kind of weapon, during war. The masked used in the Saktishel play are documented through still photography. The group paints the masks on the day of the performance with natural colours. They have their handwritten script of the play and some of the pages of the play have also been documented.
- iv) **Bhari Gan group of Suwarmari Village:** The performance and masks of Bhari Gan group of Suwarmari Village, PS-Mendipathar, District North Garo Hills (Meghalaya) have been documented through both still and video photography. They performed the play Saktishel, the story of Lakhsman

being injured with Saktishel, a kind of mythological weapon, during war. This story from Ramayana was depicted in the play that was performed overnight. It is their tradition to colour their masks on the day of the performance. The occasion of the performance was worship of Banabasi Thakurani. The sequence of the play is like - Starting of the Saktishel play at the Banabasi Thakurani Shrine with performance of Jhurun Bazi or Jhurani Bazi (initial recital of musical instruments) followed by four Bandana (prayers) dedicated to Ram and Narayan. Then enters Ram and Lakshman on the solders and Ram, Lakshman dance with the head of the cowherds. The Mul (chief performer) and Bayin (drum player) along with Palies (associate performers) recites songs narrating the marching of Ram Raghmani towards Lanka crossing the sea with his force comprising of apes. The Chipahi (security) of Raban give instruction to the villagers to clear the roads and clean up villages as demon king Ravan is arriving for preparation of the Battle with Ram since the latter has reached Lanka for rescue of his wife. Entry of *Ketuwas*, the two associates of Ravan. The duo comes to take stalk of the preparation of war as instructed by Ravan. They instructed the villagers to keep the way clear; there should be no cattle, etc in the Road as king Ravan is arriving. After exit of *Ketuwas* the troupe sings song that gives depiction of Ravan and his arrival. Then enter Ravan. Ravan asked *Ketuwa* and *Bhetuwa* to arrange seat for him. The Gang Rang Patgiri (the village head man of the Bodo community) was called upon to arrange the seat for Ravan. *Ketuwas* verified the strength of the seat being arranged by the village Headman. Ravan asked the village headman to arrange food etc. for his troupe. Tarai and Hutu, the two men of Gang Rang Patgiri, fetch foodstuff for the forces. Ravan, *Ketuwa* and *Bhetuwa* take off their masks and left those (masks) in the stage.

- v) **Performance at Lella Pukhuri ParaVillage:** In Lelaa Pukhuri Para village of Goalpara Asaam Bhari Gan performance is organised during Durga Puja. Idol of Goddess Durga is not installed in the shrine, instead the altar with hillock like structure is worship during the Puja. The Bhari Gan group of Khamari Nayapara village was invited to performed on the occasion of Durga Puja. During the day time the play Dadhi Mothan was performed by the group along with two farce plays of humorous theme. Parts of the play and the farces were documented through video photography.

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