



SONGS CONFLUENCE

Collection of
Dr Bhupen Hazarika's
lyrics in English

ASAM SAHITYA SABHA

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Compiled and edited by

Devajit Bhuyan and Kamal Ch. Katak

Asam Sahitya Sabha

Preface

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika born on 8th September 1926 was an internationally reputed genuine scholar, researcher and versatile cultural icon of India. He was an extraordinary talented one singer-music composers, lyricists, music director, film director, journalist, playwright, poet, script writer of film, and a divine spirit of Assamese nation and his songs reflect the soul of Assam while carrying a universal appeal. He had been shaped a new era of Assamese music of during his life span 1926 to 2011. Bhupen Hazarika's ornamental honeyed voice touched the heart of everyone from children to adults alike. His songs reflected the language of the heart of the weaker section of the society. His subtle analysis, tender feelings, strong social consciousness, intense political analysis, deep sense of life, humanity, genuine patriotism etc. are so strong and so outburst from his heart in form of songs and any other prose that those become a masterpiece of Assamese literature. The themes of Bhupen Hazarika's songs are very extensive that covers deep patriotism, love of mother land and mother tongue, humanity, natural beauty, pain and agony of the people of miserable section of the society and personal feelings of affection and adoration. Bhupen Hazarika was deeply inspired by folk traditions of North-East India and he intelligently blended indigenous tunes with his own musical creations. His songs are ultimately a brand of expression of humanity, peace, justice, equality, and compassion. More-over Bhupen Hazarika's songs portray the live-struggles, and dreams of ordinary people, where the hopes and desires of workers, farmers, and downgraded communities are reflected. The message of most of the songs of Bhupen Hazarika is that there should not be any barrier of language, caste, religion, and nationality in a society for a proper bonding among the people. Bhupen Hazarika fearlessly addressed social injustice, poverty, war, and exploitation through his songs and prose.

This year is celebrated in Assam as the centenary of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's birth. Therefore, in this prestigious year, Assam Sahitya Sabha initiated the translation of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's songs into four languages such as English, Hindi, Bodo and Bengali. The assignment to translate Dr. Hazarika's songs to English was given to author Devajit Bhuyan as the leader of the project and Kamal Ch. Kataki as co-translator. Subsequently they took help from others to complete the translation within the specified time. On behalf of Asam Sahitya Sabha we thank Bhuyan and Kataki for their sincere, dedicated, tireless efforts. We are also thankful to all the translators for their dedicated efforts in successfully completing this masterpiece work of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika.

It gives me immense pleasure to present *Songs of Confluence*, an English translation of Assamese songs of the legendary Dr. Bhupen Hazarika. This volume is more than a collection of translated lyrics; it is an earnest endeavour to carry the soul of Assamese music and literature beyond linguistic frontiers, allowing readers across the world to experience the timeless vision of one of India's greatest cultural icons. This book also opens the gate for translation of Dr. Hazarika's works to different languages of the world and promote his ideals, songs throughout the globe crossing the boundaries of language, religion, caste, creed and colours etc.

Dr. Basanta Kumar Goswami
President, Asam Sahitya Sabha

From the desk of General Secretary

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was a unique composer and musician whose songs transcended the conventional boundaries of music. He was a poet, composer, philosopher, filmmaker, and humanist whose creations inspired the people of Assam into universal expressions of love, justice, fraternity, and hope.

Translation is an art and connects people of the globe. No translation can wholly reproduce the lyrical cadence of the original language and Assamese also not an exception. However, in my opinion this work succeeds in conveying the spirit, philosophical richness, and emotional resonance of the Assamese songs to an English-speaking readership. The translator of this volume deserves appreciation for undertaking this challenging task with sensitivity and literary commitment.

On behalf of the Assam Sahitya Sabha, I congratulate the editors Kamal Ch. Kataki, Devajit Bhuyan, all the honourable translators, and people associated with the project for bringing this significant work to fruition. I am hopeful that **‘Songs of Confluence’** will find a cherished place in libraries, universities, and the hearts of readers across the globe.

Debojit Bora
General Secretary, Asam Sahitya Sabha

Editor's note

The songs of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika occupy a unique place in Indian music and literature. Dr. Hazarika was a legendary singer, lyricist, composer, poet, filmmaker, painter, journalist, politician, and social activist. He had transformed music into a powerful medium for social awareness, cultural identity, and human compassion. His songs transcend regional boundaries while remaining deeply rooted in the language, landscape, and spirit of Assam. One of the defining features of Hazarika's songs is its profound humanism. He sang mostly for the masses and had used his songs as an instrument for social change. Songs such as ***Manuhe Manuhor Babe*** convey the timeless message that humanity should rise above divisions of caste, religion, and nationality. His lyrics continue to inspire listeners to value compassion over conflict.

When Asam Sahitya Sabha given us the task of translating all the songs of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika into English, that too within a limited time frame, initially we thought it is an impossible task. However, where there is a will, there is a way and we took the assignment as a challenge and started our job. We contacted the people who had already translated some of the songs of Dr. Hazarika, all of them gladly consented to include their translations in this compilation. Without their support, this book would not have been possible. We thank all the honourable and distinguished translators for their help and guiding us in every stage of translation, editing and revisions. We must thank Ashok Kumar Senapati, Pradhan Sachiv of Asam Sahitya Sabha, who initiated the project and gave us the task of this compilation on behalf of Assam Sahitya Sabha. We are grateful to Dr. Basanta Kumar Goswami, President, Asam Sahitya Sabha for his continuous guidance and motivation to complete the translation job as planned. We also thank Asha Sarmah, singer associated with Dr. Hazarika for providing us logistical support throughout this journey. Both of us are engineers and so there may be unintentional mistakes or omissions for which we beg apology from the esteemed readers, admires and fan followers of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika.

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About Chief Editor cum Translator Devajit Bhuyan

Devajit Bhuyan, Bi-lingual poet and author from Assam was born in the historical town Tezpur, Assam, India on 1st August 1961. The story of Devajit Bhuyan cannot be separated from the land that shaped him. Assam—cradled by the mighty Brahmaputra, river Kolong and Kapili, flowing by the side of his ancestors' place Jungal Balahu Garh in central Assam, layered with centuries of Ahom governance, Vaishnavite reform by Sri Sankardeva, colonial disruption, and post-Independence transformation—forms not merely the backdrop but the living pulse of his intellectual journey.

Born into an Assamese family with DNA linkage to cultural and religious icon of Assam, Sri Sankardeva, Devajit Bhuyan is deeply aware of the region's cultural legacy, Bhuyan grew up amidst conversations about history, identity, language, and literature. The villages and towns of Assam, with their Naamghars, Bihu celebrations, and oral traditions, offered him an early education that extended beyond textbooks. The rhythm of rural life, the layered memory of Ahom valour, and the continuing negotiation between tradition and modernity became formative influences.

Even as a child, he showed unusual curiosity. While others memorized lessons, he questioned them. Why did Assam's history often appear as a footnote in national narratives? Why were regional voices underrepresented in mainstream discourse? These questions would later evolve into a lifelong intellectual pursuit. After completion of his bachelor's degree in electrical engineering, he joined the corporate life in Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) as an electrical engineer. Subsequently he acquired LL.B. degree and Diploma in Management and became a fellow of the Institution of Engineer (India). Bhuyan's formal education strengthened his natural curiosity. Immersed in the physics, mathematics, humanities and social sciences, he developed a disciplined approach to research and analysis. He studied not merely events, but structures—political systems, cultural transitions, linguistic evolution, and identity formation. Rather than adopting a purely academic tone, being an electrical engineer, Bhuyan gradually formed a distinctive voice—one that sought to communicate scholarship to ordinary readers. He believed that literature, poetry, history should not remain confined within university departments; it should circulate among the people whose lives it shapes.

At the core of Bhuyan's work lies a deep concern for cultural preservation and intellectual self-awareness. He believes that societies without historical literacy, poetry, science & technology and critical thinking are vulnerable to distortion and fragmentation.

His intellectual commitments include:

1. **Regional Self-Understanding**

Assam's identity, he argues, must be studied in its own context—geographical, cultural, and political.

2. **Bridging Scholarship and Society**

Academic research should not alienate common readers. Knowledge must circulate beyond institutions.

3. **Balanced Historiography**

Historical narratives must avoid ideological extremes and instead rely on evidence-based interpretation.

4. **Language as Cultural Memory**

Assamese language, literature, and folklore are not merely artistic expressions but repositories of collective experience.

Contribution to Assamese Intellectual Life

Bhuyan belongs to a contemporary generation of Assamese writers committed to rearticulating regional narratives in modern frameworks. His contribution lies in fostering historical awareness among youth and readers who may otherwise rely on fragmented or oversimplified accounts.

Through his writing, he reinforces:

- The continuity of Assam's Brahmaputra valley civilization
- The complexity of its socio-political evolution
- The resilience of its cultural institutions
- The importance of informed citizenship

As an author and thinker, Devajit Bhuyan continues to engage with questions of heritage, identity, and scholarship. His work reflects an ongoing commitment to knowledge dissemination and cultural preservation. In an age of rapid information flow and ideological polarization, Bhuyan's balanced approach offers steadiness. He represents a voice that values clarity over sensationalism and scholarship over speculation.

A Custodian of Memory

The life of Devajit Bhuyan illustrates how regional scholarship can contribute meaningfully to broader intellectual landscapes. Rooted in Assam yet aware of wider currents, he bridges locality and universality. His biography is ultimately the story of a writer shaped by land, language, and history—and in turn, shaping how that history is understood by others.

During the last 30 years, he has authored more than 80 books published by twelve different publishers in 45 languages, English and Assamese being the core languages of his writings. His total published books in all the languages counts to 281 and growing every year. ***He is the only Assamese writer whose books are translated to 45 important international languages of the world and books are available throughout the world.*** His writings are part of textbook for class-X in Assam under Board of Secondary Education. Out of his published books about 40 are Assamese poetry books, 30 are English poetry books and 4 are for children and about 10 are on different subjects. Devajit Bhuyan's poetry covers everything available in our planet earth and visible under the sun. He has composed poetry from human to animals to stars to galaxies to oceans to forests to humanity to war to technology to machines and every available material and abstract things, but his emphasis is always on Assam, Assamese people and its culture, heritage and value system. He was awarded poet of the year for 2022, 2023 at Kolkata Literary Carnival and best author for reference book of the year at Kolkata Literary Carnival 2026. He was also honoured at India International Centre for his efforts to preserve Kaziranga national park and Manas Tiger Park through animation film. He is the only poet in India, who released highest numbers of poetry books, 34 poetry books in a single day, single function. He had also composed one poetry book in one night and one poetry book during the day after great Assamese sage Sri Sankardeva. He has also published 5 poetry books in Assamese without using any Kar (vowels) following the style of famous poem Karatala Kamala, composed by Sri Sankardeva.

His books were displayed at Sharjah, Istanbul and Frankfurt book fairs in addition to different book fairs in India. His books are available globally in most of the important digital stores like Amazon, Flipkart, Walmart, E-bay, Google Books, Pustak Mahal, Story Mirror etc. Some of his bestselling books are: The Big Bang to Bill Gates, Kalpana Chawla, Bhupenda: Bard of the Brahmaputra, Howdy Modi, Multiple Career Choices, 21st Century Rhymes, A Complete Guide to Career Planning, Schrodinger's Cat, Coco and the Poachers of Manas Tiger Forest, Lotus on My Palm, A Brief History of Assam, Beloved Assam etc. To know more about him please visit www.devajitbhuyan.com or view his YouTube channel [@careergurudevajitbhuyan2024](https://www.youtube.com/@careergurudevajitbhuyan2024).

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208. O' shameless hill (Oi nilaj paahar)
209. O' we spirited villagers (O' ami tejal gawolia)
210. O' world's, O' India's (O' prithivire O' bharotire)
211. Of the city of Newcastle (Newcastle Sohoror)
212. Of the sweet Bohag (Mitha mitha Bohagor)
213. Of the being's own (Ghar ghar buli khawn habathuri)
214. Of the green woods (Sewjia bononir)
215. On a dark night of the Kati month (Endhar katir nixate)
216. On moonlit nights (Jonakore rati)
217. On the bridal night (Tumi biyar nishar)
218. On the first Bohag morning (Bohagore prothom puwa)
219. On the freedom-loving millions (Muktikami lakhaya jonor)
220. On the just moment of fight today (Songroma logne aaji)
221. On this Uruka night of Bihu (Eai bihure uruka nixa)
222. One drop, two drops (Ek bindu dui bindu)
223. One bud and two leaves (Eti kuhi duti paat)
224. Our beautiful Assam (Axom amaar rupahi)
225. Our home is the soil (Ghar amaar mati hoi)
226. Our little one is sleeping (Aamare moina xuisse)
227. Our little sister shall fall asleep (Aamare bhonti xubo)
228. Pakshiraj horse (Pakshiraj ghoora)
229. Passengers of the third class (Prothom nohoy dityo nohoy)
230. Pen a Tale (Kahini eti likha)
231. People are actors (Raaij aaji bhoworia)
232. Piyoli Piyoli (Piyoli Piyoli kotenu lukali)
233. Pretty-hued fresh petals (Dhuniya rangar natun pahir)
234. Protect me (Rakshya kora mook)
235. Rambha Menaka or perhaps Juthika (Rambha, Menaka kimba Juthika)
236. Ramadan fasts have passed (Romjanore rooja gol)
237. Rainbow on whose sky (Kaar akaxor ramdhenukhoni)
238. Raising wave upon wave lasting for eternity (Sirojugomiya dhou tuli)
239. Reaching out (Bhabisila tumi haat melilei)
240. Remembering whom seeking what (Kaknu suowri kinu bisari)
241. Renewed renewed pluck (Natun natun sah)
242. Reminiscences of a colourful life (Suworoni moor rangoli jiwonor)
243. Resplendent was Assam, my motherland (Romoke-jomoke)
244. Resound of the wail (Protidhoni xunu)

245. Ringing her anklets, Rhum Jhum (Rum jhum nepur bojai)
246. Rise again, my friend (Bhorir toluwar para jodi dhora khon)
247. Rongmon in a canoe (Poroxi puwate)
248. Rangpur your name (Rangpur tumare naam)
249. Salute to you, O' martyr. (Swahid pronamu tumak)
250. Seeking love (Moor morome morom bisari jai)
251. Seeing the shadow of an awakened person (Jagroto manuhor saa)
252. Seven seas and thirteen rivers (Satuti sagor aru teroti nodi)
253. Skinning knife to skin a goat (Sagor sal selabor dobua kotari)
254. Smile the smile I smiled (Jodi jiwone kande nai nai buli)
255. Someone eyes appear like twinkling stars (Karoobar dunoyon)
256. Song for fish farming (Meen paalonor geet)
257. Sorrow over grief my people (Dukhore upori dukh moor raij)
258. Submerged upstream (Ujai bure dile)
259. Sundown at Shillong (Shillongore godhuli)
260. Terror, sheer terror (Aatonka ghoor aatonka)
261. The aggrieved voice of the universe (Bikhubdha biswa konthoi)
262. The architecture of Agnigarh (Agnigarhor stahpaytya)
263. The charred year of 1983 (Juiye pura tiraxir)
264. The clouds rumble and roar (Meghe gir gir kore)
265. The cuckoo cries repeatedly (Kulituwe bare bare kande)
266. The hermitage of sage Kashyap (Kashyap rishir ashrom khoni)
267. The Dewali lamps burn and glitter (Jikmik dewalir bonti jole)
268. The flame of the noble sacrifice (Mohamaanowor tyag agoniye)
269. The forest fire (Bon jui bonothe jwale)
270. The Galongs from the Siang (Siangore Galong)
271. The garden-girl of Assam (Asom dexor bagisare)
272. The hues of Palash blossoms (Polaxore rong)
273. The matchless youth (Luitporiya deka bondhu)
274. The mighty Brahmaputra (Mahabahu Brahmaputra mohamilonor tirtha)
275. The ocean of life is made of countless drops (Jiwon-Sindhu bohu bindure hoi)
276. The river dolphin leaps in the Luit (Luitot bhutungai ulal xihu)
277. The soft drizzle (Rimjhim rimjhim boroxune)
278. The storm raging over the Padda blew away (Paddar dhumuhai)
279. The sunlight of dawn is the ornament for the head (Arun kiron xiror bhushan)
280. The tall areca nut tree (Kakini tamulor)
281. The Tirap frontier (Tirap simanta)
282. The two banks of the Brahmaputra (Brahmaputror duti paar)
283. The youthful youth (Natun purux, natun purux)
284. The vast sky (Aakaax vishal)
285. The vermilion glow of the morning sun (Sendur sendur probhati suruj)
286. The village crumbles away (Bhora barisar bane)
287. The vegetable garden (Pacholir bagisa)
288. The violent storm questioned (Prosono dhumuhai)
289. The weather is pubescent today (Aji botor gabharu hol)
290. The winding path (Akuwa-pokuwa baat)
291. The wise man says (Gyanijone koy)
292. The world is a playground (Eai prithibi ek kriyangan)
293. The world calls me wild (Mook jangli jangli duniai koy)

294. The fresh dewdrops of Autumn's Sewali (Xorotor xewalir natun niyore)
295. Thinking of arranging you (Toomak sojam buli manaspotot)
296. They say of the Modar blossom... (Moderore phul henu...)
297. Tihu is your name (Tihu hol tumar naam)
298. This beautiful twilight moment (Eai dhuniya godhuli logon)
299. This Bohag-a blazing sun (Eai Bohag jolonto arun)
300. This holy hour of our union (Milonore eai xubho khon)
301. This wet, wet night (Eai bhija bhija rati)
302. Through the great creations (Sankar-Madhavor moha moha sristire)
303. Timeless conqueror of death (Kaljoyi mrityunjoyi)
304. To my audience (Hey moor Asomor xruta jonota)
305. Tucking in a Radhasura bloom (Ei Radhasurar phul guji)
306. Thump thump, thump, thump (Dhak dhak dhak dhak dhakei bojali)
307. There in the distant horizon (Dur digantot riniki dekhisu)
308. Touched by a wand of gold (Soonor kathir porox powa)
309. Tu tu tu tu tupi (Tupi tumi negur kota Xial)
310. Victory to Assam's new generation (Joy joy asomir notun purus)
311. Water (Eai paani)
312. We Assamese aren't poor (Aami Asomiya nohou dukhiya)
313. We drive an autorickshaw (Autoricksha chalaou)
314. We're brothers and sisters (Aami bhaiti-bhonti)
315. We're not those who merely weep (Aami nohou mathu krondonroto)
316. Wealth of whose house (Kaar ghoror Lakhimi)
317. What a stroke of luck (Kinu kopal sadhi)
318. What did you get (Ki pali ki pali)
319. What do I do now (Ki koru ki koru upai)
320. What joy I behold today (Aaji ki aanonda pekhoo)
321. When Dorika Disang swells (Dorika Disange paani barhi gole)
322. When I'm gone (Moi jetiya eai jiwonor)
323. When Sunrise is the vision (Surjyo udai jodi lakshya aamar)
324. Which artist can draw such a picture? (Koon Chitralkhiye)
325. While the dusk was descending at Kopili (Phut godhulite kopili khutit)
326. With their tearful eyes (Proti netro ashrusikto)
327. Why do you weep? (Kandisonu kiyo?)
328. Why have I become a prisoner (Ki je chandot holu bondi)
329. Who is the lady (Koon eai lolona)
330. Who's this smart aleck? (Eaiti ba koon ulale)
331. Who lit up the darkness of the night? (Nixar endhar poohorale kune?)
332. Who'll buy colours? (Rong kiniba kune)
333. Whom would you call to bask in sunshine (Rod puwabor karone)
334. Why does the Taj Mahal tremble? (Kopi uthe kiyo Taj Mahal)
335. Why is it late Nayan (Polom kiyo hol Noyon)
336. Wild waves of the sea (Sagar songomot)
337. Work is worship (Kormoi aamar dharma)
338. Worshippers of beauty (Nami aaha sundorore)
339. Yearning of jasmine (Nabamallikare hepah)
340. You are the new youth (Tumi natun purus)
341. You are the new snake (Natun nagini tumi)
342. You are the one (Tumiye mur kalponare)

- 343. Your breath is soft as Kohua (Tumar uxah kohua-kumol)
- 344. Youth, restless youth (Jouwon togbog jouwon)
- 345. Young and tender adorable little hero (Aalphuliya kumoliya)
- 346. Zindabad, Mandela (Zindabad Mandela)

A bank of cirrus is floated by (Etukura aloxua megh)

A bank of cirrus is floated by
A wild goose also loses its way
At the window in an autumnal evening
For my sweetheart I'm waiting.

On those electric wires,
Dew drops are hanging
Know not what but they keep talking
One droplet reflects a face
Offers a shower of romance.

I'm a selfish man, indeed
Caged within a falsified love
Deluge will retain its reminiscence.

The Autumn city nights
Bedecked with winking neon lights,
Today, I'm writing this in a drink of love
Let the giddy clouds carry this post.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

A couple with a single mind (Eti monor duti manuh)

A couple with a single mind
Create a loving heaven.
In this earthly paradise, the beloved
Dances with waves of emotion
Th loving heaven begins to sway.

Don't look in that manner, my heart burns
The endearing drape slips away in abashment.
Warm breaths slowly adorn life
With varied colours
Creating a loving heaven.

Beloved, O' beloved, dearest of all
We'll stay beside each other forever.
In dreams and in wakefulness
Our lives pave a vermillion path
Creating a loving heaven.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

A few days ago, at dawn (Kisu din aagote puwati nishate)

[This song was composed on 10th August 1973,
the day of Assam Bandh observed against price-rise in Guwahati]

A few days ago, at dawn
I dreamt a dream
Saw in every street, bodies hanged on light-posts.
I asked: Whose bodies are these?
They said: They are black marketeers.
They amassed a lot of filthy lucre
Trading with the death of the people.

Suddenly my dream was broken
No dead body on the light-post
I realize, it's my head that has gone awry
Corruption has not been uprooted.

The mother has forgotten to sing lullabies
Seeing the dying child
Even the adulterated food is sold so dear
They give diluted medicine.

O thou, dost not thou see near your house
The ribs of the famished little one?
Why not lessen a little the suffering
Of thousands of unemployed people?

O thou, bring a little bit of joy
To all the suffering multitude
Only then I'll honour
Your faces that speak so tall.

There are as many light-post
As there are black marketeers
Then why are you not going to hang them?
But you promised to do so.

Translation: Upendra Nath Sarma

A new quiet dewy night (Notun nimati niyorore nixa)

Today vibrant is my youthfulness
In the glistening juice the lotus dances
A night with a life of urges fulfilled.

No glory, no beauty
No, nothing of virtue-nobility
Still I make my offerings
Moistened with love.

On my bosom full of honeyed warmth
You quiver in stupefaction
A night where even life is replenished.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

A playful folk duet (Alouguti Talouguti)

Both:

Alouguti*, talouguti,
Who's in the face of adversity
Mustard greens on a taro leaf
How does the hand without a ring
Ever get one?
O' Ram, how does that hand ever get one?

Man:

Rohu carp, Olive Barb, fatty belly of the humped featherback
With leafy greens all together—
Searching here and there frantically
Who goes on groping in the dark?
O' Ram, who gropes in the dark?

Man:

Who's this mermaid-like maiden—O' Ram?

Woman:

I've lost my ring—O' Ram.

Man:

While going to fetch water

Both:

O' Ram, while going to fetch water.

Man:

That glittering ring—O' Ram

Woman:

Belongs to a poor man—O' Ram

Man:

Yet it brightened the home

Both:

O' Ram, it brightened the home.

Woman:

Where are you
O' merchant of gold?

Man:

Come, let us bargain

Both:

Sitting in the goldsmith's workshop, rubbing it on a stone
Buy a golden ring
Or you may never find it again.

*Popular Assamese idiomatic phrase with a phonetic etymology that mimics the scattered situation of objects.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

A round I have made (Dihinge-dipange aajiwon ghurilu)

East and west
Hills and plains
A round I have made
All through the life
Playing my life-dotara.
At the century's end
Suddenly I have stopped
Seeing that
In death also nobody pays.

Life melted away, death too
Who knows when one has to leave?
The very truth of life has hidden
Man consumes man.

For the next century, about-to-come
No more time is left.
The country drowns in the waters of injustice
Not even a straw or twig to hold on.

O my land! My sweet land
Man consumes man
In death also nobody pays.

The concept of peace is now strange
It lurked in ancient caves.
Subconsciously they scream
And they are hacked by themselves.

A long time is over, -
A time of rainless weather
A love showing signs of wearing down.
Now, go to pour out blood and manure
In the seedbed
And in the roots of the banyan tree.

Let the red content of heart
Become cloud, dark cloud.
Let the eyes of the deceased young one brother
Become red, gold mohur-red.
Every man and every woman
Every entity and every group
Let us all come together
To let a cool stream of peace flow.

Should we dream away any more time?

Should we anymore?
When sunrise is the vision
Why do we march towards sunset?

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

A single dot of vermillion (Sendur sendur phootiye)

A single dot of vermillion
Gently resting on a maiden's brow
Etching a tender, sweet love
What secret delight it finds
I still do not understand
I still cannot comprehend.

On those rose-tinted cheeks
The dew-like beads of sweat
Tracing the meandering paths
What secret delight it finds
I still do not understand
I still cannot comprehend.

With shameless grace
The towering mountain peaks
Teasing the downward streams
What secret delight it finds
I still do not understand
I still cannot comprehend.

Under a cotton Mekhela*
With her toes beneath
Tracing pictures in the dust
What secret delight she finds
I still do not understand
I still cannot comprehend.

With its teary, glistening gaze
The kohl-hued river
Making the tender clouds weep
What secret delight it finds
Though I know, I still do not understand.
Though I know, I still cannot comprehend.

*Lower garment of the traditional attire worn by Assamese women.
Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

A Sojourner I'm (Moi eti jajabor)

A sojourner I'm
Sojourning in the east and west,
And the hills and plains,
Throughout the globe,
Never looking for me a home.

From the Luit through the Mississippi
I have seen the grace of the Volga
From Ottawa
Through Austria
I landed in Paris.
The ancient hues of Ellora
I offloaded in Chicago.
In the minarets of Dushanbe
I heard Ghalib's recital and its echo.
Sitting on the tomb of Mark Twain
I talked about Gorky,
In every stride a passing stranger
I found my nearer and dearer.
That's why I'm a sojourner.

Unlike many aimless gypsies I, of course, have a mind
To leave a fount of joy, where-so-ever I find,
For my brothers and sisters.
I've seen many rows of sky-high palaces
Seen in their shade all homeless people.
In the front of some dwellings
I've seen gardens in plenty
And seen early wilting and dropping of petals of the flowers
Mutual hatred worried me
I've seen in many a place
My dearer ones in their homes
Seen out of place.
That's why I'm a sojourner.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

A sweet feeling (Ki je toomar songo priya)

O my love!
What a sweet feeling!
Your touch, electrifying
What a deep pleasure in your closeness!
O my flame!
Your features are sharp and glowing
It's a burning fire
I'm but an insect.

More is the life-juice,
Deeper is the thirst.
Tonight, you are my bad need
Words will not feed.

Silent frequenting makes romance titillating.
Sky also plays a nectarine Jala Taranga*.

It's a new craze
To crash the social heritage
O my love, please don't go this night leaving me alone.

*A kind of Indian musical instrument akin to xylophone whose tonal adjustment is done by varying the amount of water taken in a series of China clay pots.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

A thousand voices question Me (Sahasrajone mook prosno kore)

A thousand voices question me
What might your beloved's name be
With a knowing, subtle smile, I respond
Not Malabika, Lipika or Hoimonti or Mallika.

A thousand voices question me
Why did our love, our affection
Flow into Phalgu stream?
Concealed from the world outside!
In response, I counter—
Why does the earth hoard within its core
So many unquenched, raging fires?
Though we never became a wedded couple
Through the sacred hymns of the Vedas
Still, we drink the nectar of life
From the same chalice.

A thousand voices question me
In my moments of quiet grace,
Does she pour the beacon of inspiration
Is her name Madhuchandrika?
In response, I counter—
Nurtured in secret with my heart's blood
She is Anamika—the nameless one.

A thousand voices question me
What might your beloved's name be
With a knowing, subtle smile, I respond—
She is Anamika
The nameless one.

Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

A village lassie a dreamy beauty (Gãore jiyori sopun sundori)

A village lassie a dreamy beauty
I weave a dream about my village
On earth I make a heaven
Even the gods gaze at me.
Tender is my lovely mind
Bonny are my growing arms
For whose embrace are they dying.

The tone of my body is like Champa flowers
The colour of my hair is dark as pitch
At my gait springs up a breeze.
I am the reaper of the paddy
I am the weaver of the Muga Riha
The country gives me a hug.

The ever-free brook of affections
Towards the Luit prances
Today hopes to defy all bounds.
Gurgling and burbling she dances
And brightly herself dresses
The sea holds me in her embraces.

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

Aho ho maho ho* (Aho ho, maho ho, dexor hoke moru O')

'Aho ho, maho ho'—let us die for the nation!

'Aho ho, maho ho'—let us die for the nation!

We don't have the slightest fear,

We set forth as travellers on the path of freedom—hey, hey!

O' Rang Ghar, crimson Rang Ghar,

Why has your colour faded today?

Great and small, all your people—

Why do they cry in grief today?

Do not weep, O' Motherland

We march as travellers on the path of freedom—hey, hey!

Sharpen the swords, O' mighty warriors

Offer counsel, O' wise ministers

Bestow us your blessings, O' Mother

We set forth as travellers on the path of freedom—hey, hey!

*First line of a traditional Assamese folk song

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

*Round smearing with vermilion

Translation: Upendra Nath Sarma

Along the banks of Pagladiya (Pagladiyar pare pare)

Oh... I am Lichu
Oh... I am Bokul
Oh... I am Moyna
And I am Alpona

Who is that beauty
Passing by banks of Pagladiya
Softly humming something.
Lost in her own thoughts.

Dressed in a modern attire
Without Dugdugi* and Riha**
Our friend found her way to the village left Leaving the city behind.
Seeing the beauty of the village,
Her heart and mind feel soothed.
Who is that beauty
Passing by banks of Pagladiya

If you ask
Why is our village Botjoha happy
Reply is
The river Pagladiya is the lifeline our village.
The cool waters of this river refresh our bodies
Who is that beauty
Passing by banks of Pagladiya

If you ask us,
Why is our village happy
Reply is
She has found Lord Krishna of Kali Yug at her home
With endless love and gaze
The Krishna fills her eyes
Who is that beauty
Passing by banks of Pagladiya

*Assamese necklace

**Assamese traditional wrap worn by women

Translation: Er. Devajit Bhuyan

An abstract night of mine (Bimurto mur nixati jen)

An abstract night of mine
Like a blue Sador*
Woven from silence-yarn.
Rhythmic breath and lively warmth
In its sweet fold.
Countless impacts of silent rains of love,
And blood-red lust in deep depth.

Tears drop
And it echoes
Like her tenderly voice
The quivering innocent lips
With unbound desire.

Breaking a rule
To make a rule is a new rule.
Pulpy strokes and counter strokes –
A blue scene of a blue night.

The crying river at a distance
And wailing from landing place
All I let go
And in an un-riveted attention
I'm absorbed in intimate pleasure.

***Sador:** long cotton or silk cloth draped in the body of an Assamese woman
Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

An autumn night (Xorot kaalor ratri)

An autumn night,
So wonderfully fair, dear friend!
Tonight Gopal revels in the Raas Krida.
Behold, dear friend, the full moon spanning the boundless heavens,
Its shimmering light rippling upon the waters of the Yamuna.
O Krishna, Damodar, Hari!
No sinner is more fallen than I;
None is more compassionate than you.
O Ram! O Ram!

With your serene lotus face
And lotus-petal eyes,
Your enchanting smile lights your face.
Your nose, as delicate as the sesame flower;
Your lips, crimson as dawn
In bliss, you play the flute.
The full moon lights the endless sky, O Hari;
Its crimson-golden rays
Turn every face into a blooming lotus.
Hari revels in the Raas Krida,
Amid the circle of the Gopis.
Hari! Hari! resounds without end,
In joyous celebration.

O Gopal Krishna, grant us your grace;
You are the very life-breath
Of every Gopi.
O enchanting bearer of the flute,
O wanderer of the forest groves,
You long to be with the Gopis.
On this autumn night,
Upon the banks of the Yamuna,
Gopal revels in the Raas Krida
In the sacred groves of Vrindavan.

Translation: Debashish Bezbaruah

Akon returned home (Akon ghoroloi aahile)

Speech: When my revolutionary son returns home
in the form of a dead body, then as a proud father,
I can only sing lullabies by his funeral pyre....
'When Akon comes home....'

Akon has returned home
Our Akon has returned home
Who decked the sleeping one
With blood-stained flowers?

Our Akon dreamt of being a hero
Even in his teens
He waited for the revolutionary moment
To become the leader of the struggle.
Akon soon grew up
He rushed to toil for the country
Someone beckoned him with one's hands
To rush to the frontier.

On that day I told Akon
Painting the Tilak* of victory on his forehead
Let not the remorse of defeat
Touch thee.
Our Akon came, he wore the garland of victory
He went to cool the heart
But returned to scorch.

When the pyre of Akon flame
With a rumbling sound
I had the feeling that I was
The proud father of a hundred soldiers.
The fire of pyre burns
Our Akon is in rest
A crowd of Akon will be awakened again
When the fire calls.

*Round smearing with vermilion
Translation: Upendra Nath Sarma

Always smiling (Soda hanhi mukh)

[An advertisement song]

Always with a smiling face,
With not a trace of sorrow,
The Monkey Boy bidi is in my hand
For more than half a century
This bidi is very popular in Assam's.

This bidi goes on and on—
The C. J. Patel's Monkey Boy bidi
A bidi loved by all.

Filled with a fine taste,
Made from carefully chosen
Kendu leaves of Gujrat

Skilfully prepared.

In moments of rest,
With eyes left open,
One may drift into dreams.
For labourers, workers, rich and poor alike,
This bidi is dearly loved
C. J. Patel's monkey Boy bidi.

From plains to hills,

Across the land of Assam,
This bidi gives satisfaction.
Whether the first puff
Or the very last,
Every draw feel satisfying.

During work or during rest,
It is something one can rely on.
Whether babu officers
Or humble cowherds,
This bidi is very popular
The C. J. Patel's Monkey Boy bidi
A bidi loved by all.

Translation: Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Are you Jon or Sikha (Tumi jon ne)

Voice: Male: Are you Jon or Sikha?

Female: My other name is desire of youth.

Tune: Male: Are you Jon or Sikha?

Female: Yes, my other name is desire of youth.

Voice: Male: Shore of sea.

Female: Yes, a path along the coast

Male: You and I sitting there at night

You are sweetheart, waves of the sea

Female: Here, take in embrace

Every part of the body becomes wild with emotion

Duet: Watching us to become united, counting the waves

Watching you to become united, counting the waves

Male: The sea lost its speech

Duet: Ooo

Female: Today is the dazzling moonlit night

Male: Did you not enhance the thirst for life

Female: Sign of love in both eyes

Male: Incomparable expression of love

Don't be afraid, there is no worry

There is only the hope for union.

Male: fragrant tresses, what a sweet sensation

Female: Your heart, appears as vast as the sky

Duet: In the body of the sky, a huge paper

In the body of the sky, a huge paper

Male: Writing history over it with love.

Translation:Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

As if I were a restless honeybee (Moi jen ajiwon uroniya mow)

As if I were a restless honeybee
Never find to rest
A tree or a grass
Throughout my life
Having seen a honeybee at rest
Sometimes, I think about
Why am I without any address?

Rich flowers I've sucked so much from
While the wild ones offer the stock of flavour
Even I garnered bitter for sweet
But the essence of your beauty is a true non-such.

Well, I'm but a restless honeybee
Don't I have the privilege for taking a break?
If I rest upon your grass
I do not know who suffers what loss.

Once you voiced that you'll be my last address
That was your dream and is still a dream.
So, scattering the accumulated honey all over the earth
Flying high and high, I will fade into the horizon.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Autumn queen (Xarodi rani toomar henu naam)

Autumn Queen is said to be your name
You're my heart's own
My freshly bathed beauty
A pre-dawn dream.

A milky-blue veil
Woven with yarns of mist
A filmy Riha*
The benumbed lake
Your comely mirror.

Perhaps you've ushered in
The sailing cotton clouds
The dew upon the green grass
The golden sunshine, the flocks of teals
With a jasmine-soft smile
You come and adorn.

*Narrow length of decorated cloth worn by Assamese women under the breast-cloth
Translation :Krishna Dulal Barua

Aye aye the sky will have a siesta (Aye aye Aakash xubo)

Aye-aye the sky will have a siesta
Aye-aye the wind will have a siesta.
On the horizon commotion will reign
Times seems to have become motionless and timid
The tear drops too will petrify.

If sin is so dreadful why was desire born, born, born?
If attachment is so awful, why was melody born, born, born?
If breakup is so unacceptable why was sorrow born, born, born?
Who will provide the panacea?
Who will?

In a night pregnant with riddles
My darling will sleep
Licit or illicit the question will arise
On the horizon commotion will reign.
Aye aye the sky will have a siesta.....

Translation: Nrripen Dutta Baruah

Beloved's torn Riha* (Senehir fota riha)

My beloved's torn Riha,
Adorned with floral designs,
Flutters in the wind
Yes, its ends flutters in the wind.

I could stay hungry through four meals,
In the name of celebrating Bohag Bihu
Moonlit curd, black pepper, and long pepper
Without kerosene, the wick will not burn,
But no feeling of weariness comes in between.

The bees built their hive on elephant-apple tree
But I did not climb it
Yes, never climbed it.
Leaving the honey stored up the tree
I sought its sweetness of my beloved's lips.
With rosy cheeks, she is tender and delicate,
Like ripe orange, with fennel like fragrance
Shall taste with rice.

Gagona** made out of bamboo tip
Played softly in a distant forest
Yes, in the forest.
We stayed bound together in each other's love,
In spring the year before.
The months rolled on
And finally, spring arrived again.

Now I am broke, without a penny
No yarn to weave Bihuan***.
The harvest was destroyed in the floods—
Yes, in the floods.
Yet my beloved and I survive through love
in such hopeless times.
Sharing sorrow with one another,
I fixed up battens to rebuild the house
Could not manage hay for the roof.

Like sugarcane crushed in the press,
We are getting crushed
With the power of wealth piled high
Yes, with money power.
Let this Bihu pass
Then they will deal with
Today I give you the word

O mighty sir, the weather is stormy
The tin roof is hot and singeing
sparks flying from it
Tomorrow you would be caught in the trap
Yes, tomorrow you would be caught in the trap.

*A wrapper on upper torso for Assamese woman worn
especially on ceremonial occasions.

**A bamboo musical instrument

***A handwoven item of Assamese people; symbol of Ove
and respect. Symbol of Assamese culture

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Beneath the sacred Tulsi (Tuloxir tole tole)

Beneath the sacred Tulsi plant,
How many earthen lamps have I lit!
From Namghar to Namghar,
How many offerings have I laid.
Yet still I couldn't reach the shore,
O my Lord,
Yet I couldn't reach the shore.

In the boundless sea of worldly life,
We have struggled, gasping for breath.
How fleeting this human birth has been,
O my Lord,
How vain has this mortal life been.
We are but humble, ordinary souls,
Born upon this earthly land.
Walking ever on the righteous path,
We journeyed on,
Renouncing many worldly joys.
O my Lord,
Still I couldn't reach the shore.

Serving my husband's home,
I raised our son and daughter
In the dark courtyard of my house,
I kept the little lamp alight.
But only tears were my reward,
O my Lord,
And I couldn't reach any shore.

You granted me this human birth,
I accepted it with gratitude.
You gave me your sacred laws,
I obeyed them with bowed head.
Yet happiness has never been ours,
O my Lord,
What judgment have you made?
Why do the sinful triumph,
O my Lord,
What judgment is this?

Translation: Debashish Bezbaruah

Behold this young man, bare-bodied (Udong udong gaa)

[Who is this Asamiya* youth who with strong hands
ploughs paddy fields on the bank of the Dikhow river?]

Who, if need be, is willing to flirt with death for his motherland,
Who is this is Asamiya youth?

Behold this young man bare-bodied
Who with strong hands
Ploughs paddy fields
Who with strong hands ploughs paddy fields.

He plays with colours
Plays hidden amongst the yellow of mustered plant
Behold, Krishnasura** bud in my heir.

He spends the night
Warming the cocoon of the Muga*** silkworm
Rises in the morning
To swim across the Dikhow
O swims across the Dikhow.

He plays with life
If need be, for the sake of his motherland
He flirts with death.
Behold, he decks my head
With the Sewali**** flower of autumn.

*Assamese

** Name of a flower

*** Type of Assamese silk

****Jasmine

Translation: Arup Kumar Dutta

Bestow me with such a paradise (Mok ene ekhan swarag diya)

Bestow me with such a paradise
That glitters upon earth
Bestow me with such an ambience
Where at ease remains the heart.

A Bedouin at the desert-edge of life
The voice squirms with thirst
I seem to have grasped the meaning
Of the verdant woods, the blue waters
Why do tears drop today ...

Bestow me with such an oasis
That soothes a seared soul
Bestow me with such an ambience
Where the heart remains calm and cool.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

Beyond the hill comely Rahdoi (Paharor sipare)

Beyond the hill comely Rahdoi
Sings the note of sorrow
Behind the song akin to a Bongeet*
For her darling she pines
It only wrings the heart.

The shapely eyes of the mountain deer
Tears roll down her cheeks
Her darling staying far away can't get it
Only the note gets crazy
It only wrings the heart.

The Chakoi** can't meet her life mate
A youthful river flows through
Between Rahdoi and her darling just a barrier
The society stands like the hill
It only wrings the heart.

In the dark courtyard the society is in session
With the Sarai*** of the customary trial
There is hardly any justice in it
But the ashen codes of yore
It only wrings the heart.

The fire flares up over the hill
Rahdoi runs away from home
Nothing our darling wants
She hugs the blazing fire
It only wrings the heart.

*A pastoral song

**Female ruddy shelduck, the male one is chakoa. They are famous for their lifelong mutual love and devotion

***A beautified round tray with a stand made of bell-metal or brass used in ceremonies or on social occasions

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

Bihu, do come every year (Bihuti bosori aahiba)

[Here the Bihu, the lifeline of the Assamese community is being earnestly requested with folded hands to visit every year. To wake up the mother Assam, to smear and rinse the nation with Mah-Halodhi* (black lentil & turmeric paste) even during the moment of crisis.]

Bihu do come every year, you must
To wake up Mother Assam
Bihu do come every year, you must
To wake up Mother Assam
To smear and rinse the nation with black lentil & turmeric paste
Even during the moment of crisis.

Let us keep the issue of the nation aside for now
Let me talk about the young lass of my heart
The young lass of my heart.

The sweetheart is called Mamani
She did not ever disturb
She gave the word long back
She'd sacrifice her life with me.

Now for some unknown reason she does not talk to me
Now for some unknown reason she does not talk to me
My heart is afire
My heart is afire
Hey dear Bihu
If you can
Make her sing a Bihu song
Make her sing a Bihu song.

In Bodo language
'Bar' means wind, 'Doi' means water
And Sikhla means the goddess of wind.

Let me keep aside the things about the girl of my heart
Let me speak of the glory of the Bordoichila**
Glory of the Bordoichila
When the mind gets singed
She comes smashing everything on the way
When the mind gets singed
She comes smashing everything on the way
But showering blessings wetting the earth
But showering blessings wetting the earth
She does not arrive in the form of a deity
My darling
She does not arrive in the form of a deity
She does not arrive in the form of a deity.

Buffaloes fight
The reeds get crushed
Buffaloes fight
The reeds get crushed
The tiny cliffs of the river of the mind
The tiny cliffs of the river of the mind
Appear to get eroded in anger
O dear Bihu
I pray you with folded hands
Please arrange for the minimum subsistence of the nation
Please arrange for the minimum subsistence of the Assamese nation.

Putting the lengthwise yarn of love
The breath of longings
Weave the Gamosa*** of unity.
Putting the lengthwise yarn of love
The breath of longings
Weave the Gamosa of unity.
Putting the lengthwise yarn of love
The breath of longings
Weave the Gamosa of unity.

* Black lentil & turmeric paste

**Wind goddess who visits her maternal home for the Bihu festival.

***A traditional handwoven Assamese cotton towel or ceremonial cloth.

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Bihu of the meadow reeds, when the British left (Bihurenu birina British roja)

Bihu of the meadow Reeds*!
After the British left...
The new paise came into use.
Bihu of the meadow reeds!
After the British left...
The old sixteen annas disappeared.
Bihu of the meadow reeds!
After the British left...
A hundred paise became one rupee.

You've gone away, my beloved,
O heart of mine,
My little bundle of love, my heart's delight.

O my beloved, because of your sorrow...
I'll cast myself into the Jhanji River.
Its current will carry me away.
My flesh will melt away.
Even my bones will decay.
And the fishes will nibble them, bit by bit.

O Kuli, O Keteki, O little sister,
To your home
I could come every day,
If only you would call me with affection.
Whenever they see me coming,
Your parents throw up their hands in despair!

Beyond the garden fence,
Like the flowering Azar, my beloved...
Across the garden fence...
In our carefree youthful days,
You abandoned our love,
Leaving only sorrow in my heart.

The Sotai hills, wrapped in mist,
Who cooks and takes rice for a meal?
An orphan without his mother, a bachelor,
Yet off he goes to catch an elephant!

My body has become restless and wild.
I fell madly in love
The moment I came to know you.
Kosu* tenga, Khutora, Bilahi, Dhekia
Have them all with delight.

From sunset onwards I will keep my door open;
You will move in like a stealthy feline.
Just as we feel thirsty at the sight of a river,
I too felt compassion for you.
The betel nut that was cut for me
Remained in my palm.
You couldn't become part of my village folk.

Bending, O mother,
I picked up Babori** and black Kosu.
O my poor little sweetheart,
This business of love
Is the treasured wealth of youth.
Whomever I long to behold, I fail to see.
I don't know what fire has singed my eyes.

Beloved, who made you so beautiful?
Who named you Heera*?
Rise, my love, slowly rise.
When will the dawn break?
The buzzing sound,
The swaying around your waist,
The anklets tinkle whenever you sit.
How astonishing!
On both banks stand two thatched roofs,
Through which the Yamuna River flows.

O girl, trust me, I was only teasing you.
If your heart doesn't agree,
Then do not greet me.
But if your heart truly desires,
Then I can give you, my heart.
Dear, the minds of young men are playful,
And perhaps your young heart is playful too!

*The sour taro, the khutora green leaves, tomatoes, and edible fern

**An edible leafy green

Translation: Debashish Bezbaruah

Birthday Birthday (Jonmodin jonmodin)

Birthday wishes happy birthday!
May every day become bright and colourful.

May our darling study and learn,
Then ride upon the railway train,
And go forth to serve humanity.
Even the dolls dance today
To the rhythm of Tak Dhina Dhin-Dhin.

Fingers gently play upon the holes
As melodies flow through the flute of time.
May you grow each day with blessings and goodwill,
And may every moment be filled with colour and joy.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Black drongo called cho-wee (Phesue korile chew)

Black drongo called cho-wee my lord
 Black drongo called cho-wee
Maniran Dewan was hanged
 The soul escaped to the sky
Maniram was killed, the curtain dropped
 The kite climbed above
If you wish to continue his efforts
 Everyone please join hands today.
Hey the moon is running the sun is moving
 The mother earth is also moving
Look, squads of warriors continue chasing
 What a misery for Maniram.
What is the day today its Thursday
 Tomorrow it is Friday
Maniran Dewan's doom was sealed
 Ill omen loomed all over
Brindavali lass cried and wailed
 Gazing at the roof of the copper home
The copper home is there, master is not
 Who carried Maniram away?
The vermilion on the forehead of Champawati Aideo got wiped
 The right hand is shaking
Crow crows menacingly owl hoots at daytime
 The frontal tooth falls down in dream.

Champawati aideo – wife of Maniram Dewan
Involuntary shaking of right part of a woman is considered as a sign of bad omen
A falling tooth in dream signifies death of a near and dear one
Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Blazing Brahmaputra (Aji Brahmaputra hol bohniman)

Today, Brahmaputra is in a blaze of anger
Smokes fly up in mental horizon
A shooting star moves around in the sky
In every step who stands betrayed!
Today, Brahmaputra is in a blaze today.

This is not a forest fire
It's a volcanic outburst of the fury of million minds
For the accumulated pangs of deprivation

Sounds there the footfall of procession
Of man and woman, all old
Goal is self-protection and letting others live.
Seeing the valour of the spirited multitude
The earth is trembling.

There echoes and re-echoes rumble of thunder
It sounds in the hills and mountains.
It's a sound display of struggling fervour
With a strong but controlled passion.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Blessed be all in the new century (Mongol howk na-xotikat)

Blessed be all in the new century
Blessed be all
Let peace come to every household
And boundless prosperity too.

The golden sunrise of the dawn
Lingers in the courtyard, making it full
Let even the blind see once more
The new sunrise.

Let the golden paddy crops
Dance, swaying
Let the boat man ply the oars
And sing Bhatiyali*

Let the moor-hens cry on the side of the Beels**
Cuckoos in the branches
Let the dove of peace sit again
On the roof of every household.

See, the half-dead values
Regain a new life
And sing a song of awakening
Breaking the deep, idle sleep.
Blessed be all in the new century
May you be blessed!

*Folk song of western part of Assam

**Wetland

Translation: Upendra Nath Sarma

Bohag isn't just a season (Bohag mathu eti ritu nohoi)

Bohag isn't just a season
Neither Bohag is just a month
It's the life-line of the Assamese
The mettle of mass-life.

Bohag isn't just a carnival
Neither is it any nightly bloom
It's Bohag that instils a mass-motion
Blowing off disparities of class or clan
It slays discrimination.

Bohag isn't just a shuttle
Neither is it any cuckoo's cry
Bohag is a page from an old scripture
Laden with fresh new thoughts
It illuminates the sky of life.

Bohag isn't just a Bihu song
Sung in lamentation
Bohag is a document of creation
Bestowed by the rays of the sun
Bohag is the terror of darkness.

The nation bathes in Bohag
Changes its soiled attire
The Bordoichila* inspires all
To face the struggles of life
Thwarting all constrictions of woe.

* Hailstorm occurring during the month of Bohag
Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

Bordoichila or Sarudoichila or (Bordoichila ne sorudoichila ne)

O Big Brother

Hmm

In the skies of Assam what are these

Paper kites or Bordoichila

Bordoichila or Sarudoichila or

Big-winged kites in the skies of Assam

The kites of Chilarai or paper kites or

The false plannings found in the newspapers

Kites or hawks or colourful kites made of paper

Or the lazybones, the laughingstock

As if those beaks are smeared with blood

Beyond the sight they seem to be hawks

To mull over these things by the Assamese

Bohag may be the perfect weather

We agree yes, yes, yes, yes, oh, isn't it?

We agree yes, yes, yes, yes.

In the Keteki* patch lovely under the bamboo grove

Somewhere the cobra has made a burrow

Ketekis are in bloom Tagors** too in bloom

The cobra has gobbled them all

Them all

Sesame is up for grabs, yet no sesame cakes

Sugar canes are there, but none is there to press

In the floor of the main house of mother Asoomee

The main posts are ruined by wood borers of indolence

Having built a road by the lazybones and doing nothing

The warriors of Assam are making fun of them

The embroidered Gamosa wrapped around the head

The hawk swooping down from somewhere has snatched

It's gone, it's gone, gone, gone

Hey, it's gone, gone – they just yelled out

The hawks have made fun of it

To mull over these things by the Assamese

Bohag may be the perfect weather

We agree yes, yes, yes, yes, oh, isn't it?

We agree yes, yes, yes, yes.

For the time being let me wind up the matter.

I will tell you about Bordoichila.

Bordoichila? What do you mean by it?

In the Bodo tongue

'Bor' means the wind

'Doi' means water

And 'Chikhla' means the goddess

Carrying on her piggyback such a gutsy rain

The kite flew over being a storm
Earlier she used to fly over Assam
And set a mind bent on breaking down all barriers
And united various ethnic groups tribes and clans
Nowadays she pops up and flies away once in a year
And never settles in the mind of the Assamese folks
As I notice all these things, it comes to my mind
What comes to your mind
Grabbing her by the forelock I will bring
Bordoichila down to the earth
Hey, to put her into the mind of the Assamese folks
Bohag may be the perfect weather
Oh, isn't it?
We agree yes, yes, yes, yes.
Oh, isn't it?
We agree yes, yes, yes, yes.

Time has its own pace
We know we know
The have-nots have their refuge
That too we know
Coming from the tillage of Assam
Bihu has reached the pandals of cities and towns
With the beats of drums, plain rice you get to eat
Get cursed, you are bound for a bumpy ride
And year by year you folks are dwindling away
Going through all the desperate plight
I feel like speaking out to shake the earth
New generations must take up some work
Bohag may be the perfect weather
Oh, isn't it?
We agree yes, yes, yes, yes.
Oh, isn't it?
We agree yes, yes, yes, yes.

*Screw pine and its fragrant yellowish flowers
**A variety of jasmine and its fragrant white flowers

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

Both banks of the river Luit (Luitor paar duti)

Both banks of the river Luit
In a night will glitter
Hundreds of Diwali*
Lamps will glimmer
The month of Kati** will come hither
The Diwali lamps in the distance will flicker.

O son of the Luit
Out there on the big river
Our own Bhadiya
All alone on his tiny boat
As the darkness grows deeper
The heart does shiver.

On such an occasion
Last year
A death-dealing flood
Destroyed with a bang
The little thatched hut.

Fields are in water
His beloved too swept away
The Dugdugi*** is mortgaged.
The people will build a dam on the mighty river
The spirit of courage dances
Bhadiya will kill the black fiend
With both his arms strong
The month of Kati will come hither
In the distance Diwali lamps will flicker.

*Festival of light

**A month (October-November) of the Assamese Calander

***An Assamese ornament

Translation: Divya Ranjan Sharma Khataniar

Bow to the multitude (Moor geetor hejar xruta)

Bow to my audience multitude
You are the main ornament
In my performance.

I attempt to light up your face with a smile
And bear your cross all the while.

Sometimes,
A flood of your anger makes me furious
With that ire I compose songs.
I offer tunes to my songs for the multitude,
Today, the blossom of songs makes my life splendid.

You get worried if I'm wrong in my creation
Kindle me in critic-fire to attain perfection.

While as a child, on few occasions
I sang up with all my heart
That's how you nestled me in your bosom.
Your arm's ardour has been inspiring
Even at my noon, I keep on singing.

And, in my performance
It was you and only you, who discovered me.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Break up the stone (Bhang xil bhang)

Break up
Break up the stone, break up.

Under the scorching sun
Your exposed back reeks with sweat,
Heat of reddened earth burns your tender sole.
Yet, none comes out to sing your praise.

The sky-high black rocks,
Long since standing upright.
For pulling down the mighty rock
Felt, the small men have no might.

You dig up the bone-dry earth with your hands,
And metal the road with broken stones.
The new civilization continues to continue
The march ahead on the road you built.

With stones, you are the man to frame history
You dream of a heaven of equality.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Breaching the banks of waters Srimanta Sankara (Paar bhangi dile)

Breaching the banks of waters Srimanta Sankara
Let it flow all the world over
Dying of thirst people are looking for a river
Flowing with the peace and nectar.

Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra
The everlasting shrine of arts
Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra
By it the Brahmaputra flows past.

Manuscripts of yore have spoken up
Siphung has brought hope to us
The Rongghar has opened its door
With open arms the society
Has hugged great humanity
Science has brought about a high tide
The Luit banks have been lit up.

Defying the divide between
The touchable and the untouchable
And raising an army of artistes
Srimanta Sankara
Has done away with vileness
Binding all with the bond of unity
– Govinda, a Garo
Narottam, a Naga
Radhika, a Koivarta
Parama, a Mising
Narahari, an Ahom
O my Guru
Ramai was a Kachari.

On the just moment of fight today
Shedding doubt and dread, heroes you've come
To do away with vileness.

You have come with the fiery resolve
To slay all the sinners today
Taking lessons of justice, you've come
To curb all beastliness today
Let us adore our mother
Prostrating at her feet.

On the just moment of fight today
Oh, Asoomee our dear Mother
Do not cry, do not cry
Why cry like a wretched woman
You have your sons you have your daughters
Day and night they all think of you
They will hold a festive gathering in your house

Why cry like a wretched woman
In your looks and virtues none can
Match you all over the world
Why cry like a wretched woman.

Asoomee, my mother
Do not get scared do not get scared
By the terrible demons
We too have our Sri Sankara
Do not get scared, do not get scared
By the cruel deadly venomous snakes
Bhakti too has its great power.

Lightning is flickering in our eyes
Lightning is flashing, flames are dancing
Do not get scared do not get scared
By sheer darkness and ignorance
The gong of peace is resonating
The gong of peace is resonating.

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

Bright are the faces (Mukh ujjal jowbon uchhal)

Bright are the faces, youth running wild
Green are the fields, and the mind soaring high
Igniting the blaze of the earth
With beckoning hands, they call us
They call us, they call us.

The vast open sky, the sweet loving breeze,
Unfettered and free, we breathe at ease
To share a feast in the wilderness deep
With beckoning hands, they call us
They call us, they call us.

Toss them aside
My sweet little sister
Assamese, English, Math, Geometry,
Come, dear brothers, let's relish this feast
Once we are done, let's craft banquet history.

On one shore stand I
On the other stand you
Between us, a stream of love flows through.
Lend me your hand
Guide me across the strand
Lest we lose our footing
On one shore stand I
On the other stand you
Between us, a stream of love flows through.
For life is no moonlit night
Nor its pathway soft and light
The journey of life has its bumps and bends
Watch your steps with vigilance.

If we bend our voices to a sweet single strain
And pour out the love that our bosoms contain
Who can ever halt this union
If we ever keep marching on?

Exams were the tests for bookish knowledge
But today we become life's soldiers
Each day a new battle blocks our path
Will conquer the storms with our own strength
We stand as the voice of generation anew
Today we become life's soldiers.

Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

But my body (Moor gatu dekhoon)

Oh Makan, but my body
Dances in a sweet unrest
With *Bihu*'s crimson joy
You turned into a woman, Makan, oh boy!

Saw you yesterday, oh Makan
At the bank of Bharali
In the supple grace
Of your gentle curves.
Bathing in the river, oh Makan
Blushing with shy desire, oh Makan
When we unite amidst the river's fold
What a precious golden moment we hold
You turned into a woman, oh Makan.

When the floodwaters swept through, oh Makan
Carrying everything away, oh Makan
Became beggars in the camp, oh Makan
But I swear, oh Makan
To tame this unruly river, oh Makan
To build this society, oh Makan
Will plant the rice before the floods arise
And watch our fields put on a smile.

Come next Bihu, oh Makan
Will make you my bride, oh Makan
The hurdles of society, oh Makan
Pushing away with stride, oh Makan
Once we marry, hand in hand
Will till the soil and plough the land
Filling the granary with harvest to the brim
Our home will shine bright and gleam
You turned into a woman, oh Makan.

Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

By the Sky-Craft (Aakaxi janere uroniya monore)

On a sky-craft
With the mind a flutter
At the break of day
From the West, from Bengal
I took flight.
My destination was Tezpur
On a sky-craft.

Slowly, gently, I left the earth
Flying high I swam in the clouds;
Today the heron of my mind feels like an aircraft
My aircraft seems like pure imagination
Whose sweet voice enchants me
I hear a familiar, melodious tune.
My destination is Tezpur
On a sky-craft.

O' Padma River, O' Padma River,
Where have you gone?
Over the Padma our aircraft doesn't fly
Suddenly rises the peak of Gaurishankar;
On the white, gleaming mountain-tops
The morning sunlight falls
Beside Kanchenjunga
Our aircraft circles today.
When shall I hear again the familiar tune mine
My destination is Tezpur
On a sky-craft.

Below I saw the Garo Hills
As a vast green ocean
With countless rising and falling waves.
A little ahead, a little descent
I saw a familiar sight
What is a beautiful Alakapuri*!
It's the great city of Guwahati
The ancient Pragjyotishpur
Spreading lustre since creation.
However my destination is Tezpur
On a sky-craft.

Like a wavy Gamocha
Spread upon the sands
There lies the Brahmaputra
Basking in the winter sun.
I'll leap and feast upon the sands

I'll sing today's Bihu songs
My mind and eyes were soothed.
However my destination is Tezpur
On a sky-craft.

Slowly I saw the tea gardens
Perched on the tip of a bamboo twig
The beauty of a pair of doves
Where's the fort of fire?
Where's my city of Usha?
It feels as if I about to reach it
My city of Usha.
The bewitching aircraft transforms into Chitralkha
Carrying me to Usha's land;
I feel like Prince Aniruddha
With magic shall I open the closed doors
The charming prince of Jyoti's* play.

There—Princess Usha, freshly bathed
With cloud-like cascading hair
Waiting eagerly for me.
I'll surely steal Usha away
My aircraft has reached Tezpur.
On a sky-craft
With the mind a flutter
I've reached my endearing Tezpur.

*The mythical capital city of Kuber, the god of wealth

**Jyoti Prasad Agarwala, celebrated poet, lyricist, play wright, film maker and cultural icon of Assam

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Chayanika, O' Chayanika (Chayanika Chayanika)

Chayanika, Chayanika
Lo! Twenty-first century has arrived
The new century is at our doorstep
Get ready to embrace, Chayanika.

The one you are in love with now
Tell that young friend too.
Wash away and cleanse
The filth and stains of the twentieth century.

Cleanse your thoughts
For upon the stage of the twentieth century
The curtain is about to fall, Chayanika
You are going to leave behind the adolescence.

You'd jump into the Luit
With full vigour of youth
Defying the odds of twenty first century
You'd carve out a fresh path.
You would not flee
You would not be a deserter, Chayanika.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Chasing the forms (Xotikar roop khedu)

I seek the shape of the century
I advance my steps everyday
Looking uncertainly for something
Falls darkness strains my eyes
The heart's wick glows untiring

Down the horizon the egret of the mind
Flies through the thickening mist
The light of the sun and the sea's roll
Lug my chariot forward.

The drops of verse
Glisten around
Lighting the path of life
Thinking of life, disdaining death
My steps move forward
Down the crimson path.

Translation: Pradip Acharya

Chitrlekha*, please do a painting (Chitrlekha, Chitrlekha)

Chitrlekha, please take a piece of canvas
And do a painting, theme - a pensive philosopher.

Colour of public life is white
And inner mind is deep blue
Arrange both the colour pots
Make a blend of the two
Please take up your brush.

In one or two careful strokes
Draw a pair of visionary eyes.

In the novel morning of an unborn day,
Draw a heart
That knows the border of limit and infinity,
And inspire the millions in reaching their goals.
Please take a piece of canvas.

*A great Assamese lady painter of Hindu mythology
Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Clack-clack, clack-clack (Jhok jhok rail chole)

Clack-Clack, Clack-Clack

My train moves

Whistling peace,

Calling out equality

My train moves forward.

In the blazing firebox

The glowing crimson chunks of coal

I grip them tightly

And, fire the boiler twice as hard

My body is consumed by fire.

I'm the signal-man

With the might of my arms,

Blackish with black coal-dust,

I brush aside the dark tracks of exploitation,

And, I raise the flag on the track of time.

My train cleaves through the air on the either side

That's full of pollution and exploitation.

I'm the driver

I'm the lines man

I'm the labourer

I'm the clerk.

I do everything myself.

No night, no day

No sleep in my eyes.

Ah, coal dusts fall into my eyes reddened with rage.

I doubly burn my inflamed eyes.

Working unbrokenly, I become dead tired

A furnace burns inside my belly.

Climbing to the peak of the lofty hill (Xu-ucha paharor sringle)

Climbing to the peak of the lofty hill
I am a lover a horse man
Going crazy at the hooves' clatter of a feisty steed
I am an eternal rebel.

Tick, tick, tick, tick at the rhythm of time
Love's rhythm of my heart beats
Throb, throb in my every vein
The irresistible rhythm of desire.

On the peak of that yonder hill
There seems to dwell an unseen lovely damsel
Oozing out tender youth and ravishing beauty
She's creator of all new rhythms.

Speech: So close is she the queen of rhythm yet she is so far.
In the unrhythmical abyss She guffaws erecting a barrier.

Song: Yet she does beckon to me
In the rhythm of her body
Play the waves of the sea
The waves of the sea

In the rhythm of the storm
She seems to be looking for
A dashing man who gives away his great soul
In the rhythm of the cosmos.

In the cosmos, the motion of teeming stars
The Nagara* plays with the eternal rhythm
The rhythm I rehearse with
The clatter of the mind's steed

Speech: The rhythm I rehearse.

*A membraned musical instrument of two pieces, one bigger
Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

Coal accumulated for thousand ages (Saharashra jugor sanchito koilai)

Coal accumulated for thousand ages
Has kept the machine running
Holding onto that ultimate truth
With the objective of progress of the nation
I set free in my inner mind
It's a gold retrieved from earths bosom
One of that is dark hues.

Tying up electric lamp on the head
Digging up with the hands of deft warriors
We always fill up our vehicles
With black power
It's a gold retrieved from earths bosom
One of that is dark hues.

The destination of coal mine is dark
The onus of security lies on us
With such conscience and tact
Restraint and eagerness
Would complete the task
It's a gold retrieved from earths bosom
One of that is dark hues.
The core of the mine is wealth of the nation
Don't invite disaster smoking here
If the fear of inferno becomes a reality
Dream would be shattered.

Please guard the black hues
Work with all the caution
A little neglect
Will keep our plans incomplete
It's a gold retrieved from earths bosom
One of that is dark hues.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Colours, oh colours of every hue (Rong rong nana rong)

Colours, oh colours of every hue, off to buy we go
Towards Rangpur, we march ahead along the way
Whatever shades we find along, in our laps we gather high
And scatter all those hues back to the wide world.

Look at the hills aligned, draped in green
Look at the hills aligned, draped in green
How lovely the wings of a river-gull glow
See mustard fields bloom in a sweet golden show
Look how kaleidoscopic our journey has become
How we hold a world of colours in our palm.

Look at the caged birds, see how they are free
Into the unending sky, their wings flap in a hurry.
Likewise let us break away from barriers small and narrow
And march with open hearts towards the unbound breeze.

From the earth we gather colours from everywhere we roam
And scatter all those hues back to the wide world
Singing songs of colours with a smiling face
And scatter all those tunes back to the wide world.
Colours, oh colours of every hue, off to buy we go
Towards Rangpur, we march ahead along the way
Whatever shades we find along, in our laps we gather high
And scatter all those hues back to the wide world.

Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

Come, let's harvest the summer paddy (Aahu dhan daboloi)

To harvest the summer paddy, it takes time
But harvesting the deep-water paddy is hard—
Oh, so hard
In our village, we reap gold
The fields brim with paddy
The fields brim with paddy, O' beloved
Preserve the honour of our village, O' beloved
The fields brim with paddy.

We catch fish in the Dichang
We drink water from the Kolong
Rowing cockle boats
In the Luit of life, I search for you, dear
Don't turn your back on us, O' beloved
Pen letters to us, now and then.

Use a fishing-rod, O' dear ones
To bait little fish with the hook
Oh, when you see a young maiden, smile gently
She'll come at the wink of the eye.
Oh, but little fish with the hook
Your eyes twinkle dear
My heart can't bear it, dear
Look at the flock of whistling ducks
They don't look at us, they gaze at the sky
As the kites' glide and swim through the air.
Oh, I don't know how to spin the Sea Bean
It rolls and falls again and again
Oh, I'll bring those slender-waisted maidens
Who spin like whirling spools.

Oh! Aren't you ashamed of teasing girls?
I'll weave my own cloth with my own hands-
You take pride in wearing bazaar-made trousers
Oh! How disgusting, I feel like dying of shame.

Your clothes are stained, dear
Oh dear, so fancy and delicate
You chose the finest threads for your attire.
Bi-hu has arrived; I ask the blink of an eye
With what charm have you adorned yourself?

Golden-yellow mustard blooms!
Its beauty dazzles the eyes.
Oh, in such joy, why are you rushing off?
What good news have you received?

Community feasts and gatherings—O' Lord
In every village they are being arranged—O' Lord
The heart dances with joy—O' Lord
Let us save our village—O' Lord
All together in unitedly—O Lord.

Translation: Krishna Dula Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Come on, hurry, come out (Aah aah ulai aah)

Come on, hurry, come out
O' wary citizens
Come on, hurry, come out
O' bearers of light
To slay the Ravana in Rama's land
If need be let's forsake our lives !

The leader in front pauses awhile
Pondering over the outcome of the surge
Come, let's crush the black locusts.

Listen to the screams of a starving child
That portend the sapping throes of death
Why are your ears still deaf to this message ?
Why wouldn't you make a last remonstrance ?
Strife is another name of life
"People's Victory" is the slogan of history
Come, let's quell our panic and slay the demons !

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

Come out today (Aaji jiwon butolibi)

Have life today
Come out smiling
Today never think of death
Come out smiling
Come with your flute
And come with your smile
Today come out
And aim for the new light of the day.

How long more will you cage the mind-bird?
How long will you cry for the dark past?
Today, why don't you break open the cage and come out?
Come out today
And aim for the new light of the day.

(Today) In the ledger of time
I haven't seen any entry in debit
People, carrying the joy of freedom,
Enliven the life-field.

How much did you earn by withholding so much
How much more you will count your foul takings?
Multiplying the surplus how much will you save?
(Today) Why don't you share
Whatever have you earned?

Today letting everything go
Let us come out towards the horizon of sacrifice
Heading for the horizon of life
In search of a new skyline.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Cotton College (Cotton college aamar Cotton college)

Nineteen hundred one and two thousand one
These glorious hundred years
Henry Cotton College
Our Cotton College
is shining as a bright star
On the forehead of Mother Assam
Cotton College our Cotton College.

Cotton College
Is not a fleeting glitter that fades at dawn
Cotton College is the source of knowledge and stimulus.

On twenty seventh May of nineteen hundred one
The inaugural song composed by
Bird poet Raghunath Choudhary reverberated through
The Karma-veer Nabin Bordoloi
Adorned the same with music.

Accreditation obtained in nineteen seventeen
Recognised by university
Only at seventeen years the world appreciated
The quality and characteristic, specialty.

Bhuban Das and Henry Cotton
Sweet sahib, Sudmersen
And where all those teachers had been
Everyone together at Cotton College
Makes the thirst for learning full of zip.

Deep in knowledge, deep in science
Steady in sports impatient in arts
We move forward as Cottonian!
With the heritage of last century
Forge ahead turning ever strong
We're Cottonian, we're Cottonian
The world has turned into a global village today
Zindabad Cotton College.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Dearer than the vast endearing world (Oतिकोि सenehor boholkoi prithivi)

Dearer than the vast endearing world
Is my brother,
Dearer still is my friend from the Volga
There's no limit to our joy.

Come, see the swiftness of the Russian team,
What skill—
On the very field of society
What a brilliant game you have played!
As if there's glue smeared on your feet
And with that adhesive
Your heart and mine have become one
In joy we dance in frantic delight.

How beautiful it feels my friend
How wonderful it feels
Why look at the Volga River?
It feels just like our own Luit*.

How wonderful it feels
Why look at the Don River?
It seems like our own lively Bharali.

How wonderful it feels
Why look at Bukhara?
It seems like our own Kashmir.

How wonderful it feels
Look at Moscow!
There peace resides.

How wonderful it feels
Look at science!
It works for human welfare,

How wonderful it feels
Look at politics?
It follows the principles of the Panchsheel**.

How wonderful it feels
Our distant-hearted friend
Is warmly welcomed by Assam.

How beautiful it feels my friend
How wonderful it feels...

*Another name of the Brahmaputra

**Five-point treaty between India and China to govern bilateral relations

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Dham dhama dham (Dham dhama jiwon-madol baja)

Dham dhama dham dham dhama dham
The Maadal* of life gets played
Today people with fresh minds
Gets decked up afresh.

Jigija gijao Jigija gijao
Red hibiscus bloom
No differentiation of caste and creed
Neither between rich nor poor.

No conflict between
Upper echelon and lower echelon
Whoever residing in Assam
Everyone is like family.

Green gold nuggets lay strewn
In the tea gardens
In the heart of similar thoughts
Love is cultivated.

One sky, one world
Everyone's blood is red
Everyone should join hands
To titivate the world.

*Drum used by tea garden communities in dance festival
Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Died many a soldier (Koto juwanor mritu hol)

Died many a soldier
Many youths, many lives;
This death is invincible.
Why didn't I die such a death?

Heard in the old legends
That the Himalaya stands as our sentry.
But the dead soldiers have cried out
“We need a Defence Force Ever Alert”

Been to Kameng frontier,
Saw the inhumanity of the foe.
To the hundreds, all silent and dead
Offered oblation of tears.

Many a father lost their son,
Many mothers with empty hearts,
Many a wife got widowed
With all dreams unfulfilled.

With every drop of soldiers' blood
There flows a never-ending stream of courage.
The wave of that indomitable spirit
Promised to carry the day.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Diphu is your name (Diphu hol toomar naam)

[A historical song composed by Dr. Hazarika especially for the 1982
Asam Sahitya Sabha session held at Diphu]

Diphu is your name—may you be blessed with prosperity,
Accept the salutations of your brothers and sisters from the banks of the Luit*.

In the sweet Karbi language—*Karbi* means hill,
Arleng means people and our own community.

“Kar” means light, and “Bi” means work,
The ideology of the Karbi people is work itself is religion.

A customary Xorai** is offered at the altar of the deities,
This custom is known as “Thekar Kibi.”

With time, parts of the word faded away—
Leaving behind only the name “Karbi.”

Self-governance started in the year 1951,
And this region became a separate district from 1970.

Speech:

On the 14th of October 1976,
The district came to be known as Karbi Anglong.

A sculptor Samson Sing emerged on such a day
Spreading his influence far and wide.

During the Chamangkan festival, dances are performed,
Young men and women dance, making the earth tremble.

Rongbong Terang and many like Rongpis
Welcome us with warmth heart.

Song:

Haimu tale of Brother Chemsing
Is now known to thousands along the bank of Luit.

Rongbong reminds us of the Karbi legacy,
The book ‘Rongmilir Hahi’ shines eternal.

The town of Rangsina stands illuminated today
Salutations offered by lyricist Bhupen Hazarika.

*Another name of Brahmaputra

**A religious offering to God’s with fruits, nuts and pulses etc.

Translation: Devajit Bhuyan

Doves of Charaipung (Sarai pungor kopow sarai)

Doves of Charaipung, flies in flocks
People with fresh minds, takes new forms
Doves of Charaipung, flies in flocks.

Jigija gijao*, Jigija gijao, red hibiscus
Who is so restless for fresh blood.

Today, in the fight between two buffaloes,
The tender reeds and meadow get destroyed.
Who cares to listen
To the crying of these helpless reeds?

Upon the green fields, golden grain lay shining;
And within the heart
Innocent green yield of love sprouts and grows.

At the horizon of the sky,
A new peace makes its golden pledge;
The moon and the sun perform Arati**
Every dawn and dusk.

*Song recited during Jhumur dance of the tea tribes' people

**Sacred prayer of with fire

Translation:Er. Bibekananda Choudhury, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Do you still remember (Guwahati kunuba eti mitha godhuli)

[Lovers of the third-fourth decades of this century
will surely recall sharing one another's thoughts while

reading the love poems of Ganesh Gogoi. Do you remember
one such mellow evening of old Guwahati?
Of the bank of the flowing Luit? The fading reflections of the
setting sun on the horizon?]

Do you still remember
Some such mellow evening in Guwahati
When you read out to me
Ganesh Gogoi's love poems?
Do you still remember
Embracing me with your loving gaze
You had said with honeyed passion
You would decorate our bed
With petals of your soul?
The Luit has flowed on, flowed on,
Evening has descended on Bharalumukh
Upon the dusk- darkened horizon
Promises have dissolved
Do you still remember?

Translation: Arup Kumar Dutta

Dreamy hues of the setting sun (Osto aakxore)

With dreamy hues of the setting sun
The tired river turned crimson;
It's flowing, it's flowing, it's flowing down.

In a lotus-boat who's that artist
Sprinkling down hues of peacock feathers.

On both banks
Many a man, many a past
Percolated down through ages
The breaths of hopes and lapses.

O artist!
If the goal is your horizon
Steer the lotus-boat once to the bank.
You'll discover the unending horizon of life
The about-to-set Sun is sinking down.
It's sinking, it's sinking, it's sinking down.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Durga Puja in autumn (Aswshin maase durga puja)

Durga Puja in autumn season
How the drums rumble
In between sparkles
My beloved beauty.

Wearing a red sari, she dances
To the rhythm of the Madal and the Jhumur music
A nose-ring on her nose, an amulet on her arm
Her ornaments jingle sweetly.

On other days you look dark
With bur flowers in your ears
But why today, my dark one
Does your face look so dull?

You gave me a betel leaf
Gave me hope and then went away—
Why did you deceive me, my beloved, why didn't you come?
My night passed in vain—you kept me awake.

When the flower was still a bud
The bee came and went
Now it delights in a new flower
Leaving the old love behind
It's absorbed in the new.

If this was in your mind,
Why didn't you tell me earlier?
My youth remained in your hands.
You're the tree, I'm the creeper
Let me see where you go
The smiling moon has risen in the sky.

Countless trees all around
The bamboo sways and rises
Wearing Kewra flowers in the hair-bun
They dance the Jhumur dance
Ah, they dance the Jhumur dance.
With a small fish worth two paise
And oil from a grocery shop
Holding tenderly, everyone plays
The game of love and affection.

Translation: Krishna Dula Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Each moment of life's clock (Jibwon ghorir protitu pol)

Each moment of life's clock
As if melts away
All that remains there
Is a lonely ant.

Why has the blood count dwindled-
Enticing a horde of gnawing parasites
To become only my companion?

Delayed rhythm, doleful tunes
My remembrance lies crowded with commotion.
The days have become
Homeless birds of seashore
As light fades out
On the horizon of darkness.

Translation: Nripen Dutta Baruah

English Jackson and African Mary (Juwoti Anamika Goswami)

English Jackson and African Mary
Both had a mind to get marry.
Facing some hindrance
Defying a social lock
Nonchalantly, they entered into wedlock.

Today, both the bright faces are with immense happiness
That day, when both of them came to me seeking blessings,
I said,
“Today, it’s the time
For running mass communication
Through space stationed satellite.
And it’s the time
To take away nuclear power from the monsters
For employing it for the service of humanity

For the two souls--
It’s the time to say goodbye to apartheid.
It’s the time to acquire wisdom
It’s the time to understand
It’s the nuclear age
It’s the time to break all bounds.

Broadening the field of mind
Moistened with essence of love
It’s the time to sow the seeds of humanity.

Seed of every new attempt of this century
Will become a flowery plant in the next,
My wait is to see
The first daybreak of twenty-first century,

Thoughts and ideas of nineteenth century
Do not fit in the twentieth
Not too far is the twenty-first century.

O my Jackson and Mary!
You are no Black and no White.
You are all bright.
You will get your road flooded with light in your life-sky.
Let my blessings fly like a kite”

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Even if the storm rages (Hu hu dhumuha aahileou)

Even if the storm rages
Even if dark clouds shroud the sky
Even if the drizzles drift down
Do remain by my side.
Even if the storm rages --

In my life's first boat
You're my first commuter
Offering your heart's warmth,
Even if you behold a horrid vortex
Do remain by my side.
Even if the storm rages --

Childhood passed, I reached my teens
My teenage passed, I reached my youth
Rowing across my adolescent tide
I found you as a sail of hope.

On the ocean of my dream
You put your bold imprint
Wiping off the tears of despair
Even if you're besieged by unbearable pain
Do remain by my side.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

Face to face, happy in each other's joy (Duyu mukhamukhi)

[**Speech:** When the outside world falls silent, the lovers stand face to face, transforming a few tender moments into a sacred cascade of love. Maybe in this fashion.]

She: Face to face, happy in each other's joy,
The world beyond has fallen silent.

Both: This moment is truly sacred,
A radiant waterfall of love.

She: Come closer... closer still,
Leaving death behind.
Let Nature and Man become one

Both: Let us welcome
The dawn of a new tomorrow.
We seek no strife.

She: This moment is truly sacred,
A radiant waterfall of love.

He: The flowing length of your dark tresses
Veils the distant horizon.
Through their silken strands
My eyes pour drops of nectar.

She: Come closer... closer still,
Breaking every wall.
Let us churn the ocean of nectar,
A boundless fountain of melody.
We seek no strife.

Both: This moment is truly sacred,
A radiant waterfall of love.

She: Face to face, happy in each other's joy
The world beyond has fallen silent.

Both: This moment is truly sacred,
A radiant waterfall of love.

Translation: Debashish Bezbaruah

First quarter of night (Prothomo prohororatri)

Magnolia was blooming in the first quarter of night
Dear buddy Sakuntala* you must tie up your tresses into a bun.

Cape jasmine was blooming in the second quarter of night
Dear beautiful buddy doesn't be cross with me.

Jasmine was blooming in the third quarter
Screw pine poured nectar in your heart.

One cannot look at the body of our lady
One cannot say if it is diamond or pearl glittering
In the sixth quarter of night jasmine was blooming
Extol your spouse Dushyanta* today.

*Characters of Great poet Kalidas's novel Sakuntala
Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

For a Man, a Human (Manuhe manuhor babe)

For a man, a human
If never thinks for a while
With a little compassion
Who'll, tell my friend?

If a man willing to sell a man
If a man willing to buy a man
Repeats the custom of the past
Won't that be wrong, tell my friend?

In the rapids of life
If you catch the raised hand of a drowning man
What will you then lose, tell my friend?

If a man is not a human
Never a demon can become human.
If a demon ever becomes a human,
Then who will feel ashamed, tell my friend?

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

For ages and eras (Jug jug dhor)

For ages and eras, how much longer
Will the select few oppress?
For how much longer the dark clouds will
Shroud the new sun's brightness?
Wearing masks of clever wit,
How much longer will they deceive?
To strip away those masks of guile,
Who will now a pledge conceive?
You! You!! You!!!

The handful of tyrants of our land
Forever seeks to cheat the working hand
(If) the idle rich who feast on ease
Never grasp the honest sweat
Who will then raise a fierce dissent?
You! You!! You!!!

Why in the same society do two hearths dwell
One blessed with radiance, the other a shadowed cell
One hoards food in mountains high
(And) the other echoes with a starving cry
This great disparity, who will now undo?
You! You!! You!!!

Tilling the fields of the minds long-barren,
Sharing the fruits of labour even
Roaring in rage for the many who died,
Embracing the math of a brand-new tide
Who will now build a world where equality shines?
You! You!! You!!!

Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

Forcing prison doors (Rudha kara duwar bhangi)

Forcing prison doors
I venture out to where light dances
There will I offer oblations
In adorned numbers.

The shackles of effete society
Emit but poisonous vapour
The invincible urge to force prisons
Promises total humanity.

Abundant free air is my due
At the fount where collective life begins
Where hope writes poems
On the tomb of defeat and despair.

Translation: Pradip Acharya

Fragile glasshouse (O' thunuka kachghar)

O fragile glasshouse
How long will you keep caging
The bird of my mind limiting the bounds?
The boundless sky waits for me alone
Smeared in colour with erotic desire

I know death and life are like two jetties
On either side of the same river
Death, I hear is like Shyam*
Who daily plays the flute there
Why do I then persist to paint lust for life?
In spite of that in my mind's mirror
Why does the river rush by in a shimmer?

O glasshouse
I am your guest for a moment
In a static world
My mind's pace accelerates double quick.
You cannot tie the bird in buoyed up seashore
With a chain of glass.

*Shyam: Lord Krishna
Translation: Nrripen Dutta Baruah

Fly, fly, bird of peace (Ur, ur, santir pokhiti)

Fly, fly, bird of peace
Fly, fly, bird of peace.

Do not turn this sky, this earth
Into deserts
Nor darken the air with toxic smoke.

Those people, this state
This nation, this motherland
Free them from oppression.

Listen, Rangmon, Rangilee
You're endowed with many talents
You hold many rights within your fists.
Do not turn towns into prisons
Ensure villages are not razed to ashes
Keep open the door of hope.

The young, the aged, the helpless woman
Fling to them a rope of hope
So, they can reach the bank.
Build the impregnable embankments
On the sides of the river of life.

Put an end to fear of death
Infuse life with empathy
Beat triumphant drums of peace
Tear down prisons of anger.

Translation: Arup Kumar Dutta

From the banks of the Godavari (Godabori noire parore pora)

From the banks of the Godavari River
I offer my obeisance to Mother Assam.
That is a faraway land to me,
Yet the lovely name feels so familiar—
I offer my obeisance to Mother Assam.

Perhaps on a moonlit night at Agnigarh,
Lady Usha continues to wail
And even in Maharashtra, hearing Sita's lament,
The forest of Panchavati sheds tears.

Sankardev preached the religion of humanity?
It was brave Lachit who provided with unmatched courage
And Lokapriya Gopinath bestowed
Mighty stream of freedom.

In Maharashtra the heroic Shivaji even
Dedicated his life to the service of the nation Renounced the royal luxuries;
Guru was Ramdas.
Great Tilak and brave Savarkar fought untiringly—
I am a daughter of that very land,
And I bow to Mother Assam.

I am a daughter of a Marathi village,
With shy glances filling my eyes;
Yet I sing daring Powada songs in the battlefield,
Yes, upon the battlefield I sing Powada,
And in joy I sing Lavani songs.
Before the sun rises, I sing Ovi hymns,
Remembering the Lord
Just as the daughters of Assam sing
Borgeet, Bihu, and Husori songs.

Along the banks of the Brahmaputra, they say,
There are countless beautiful sacred places.
That land of yours is far away from mine,
Yet its lovely name feels so familiar
I offer my obeisance to Mother Assam.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Feel restless even at home buddy (Ghorotu nobohe mon)

Fell restless even at home buddy
Not even in the field
Fell like flying around
The way the cotton fluffs wafts around.

In the forest of the mind, o buddy
In the brook of love
We take a sip to drink
The house you build
Over the burnt-out old foundation
We hand you the bamboo and cane wires.

On the island of Luit ruddy shelduck shrieks
Seeing the approaching boat
People will drown in people's folly
No sense in playing the blame game.

Even without understanding the language
People are drawn to each other through ages
Alphabet is no barrier in love
In a heart-to-heart connection.

Under layers of the sandbar of Ganges
You'd notice silt of the Luit too
It is same tears to wipe
When yours and my mother cry.

If we sweat, it out
As you and I build the country
Would see that history is created
By the union of our sweats.

Feel so grief-stricken, buddy
Feel so sorrowful
Feel so fine, buddy
Feel so good.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuya

Freedom of man (Otitor buronji likhoke likhisil)

Concerned were the past historians
With the bygone kings.

Historians of this day
Speak on the freedom of human race.

In Egypt the Nilotic fellaheen lament
Detailing their pains of heart.

From the cotton field by the Mississippi
John, a Black wails
Speaking on apartheid.

In my village graveyard
Rongmon ululates on the bank of Luit
Speaking on the flowing mind.

What history says about the feudal days
Now, it's in (my) oblivion.

With the spirit of the day
I'll go on speaking
On the freedom of human race.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Fresh youth of the bank of Luit (Luitporiya tejal deka)

Fresh youth of the bank of Luit
Today, you have become immortal
You have become a martyr

In the very Bedi* you had made
With your own hands
Only yesterday
You are dissolved
In the form of a corpse
You have become a martyr.

Your body is speechless today
You disappeared into the light
Later you became a shriek
You became a shriek
Becoming a volcano of expression
You have become immortal today.

You had entered the struggle
For peace of all on the banks of Luit
Seemingly, you have gone away today
Becoming a victim of the deceivers.

You've become a beckon light
In the sea of the time for the sailors of the society
You have become a martyr.
You had many schemes
You saw them unfulfilled
You've inspired thousands
To make good that unfulfillment
A martyr, you have become today.

*A martyr's column
Translation: Upendra Nath Sarma

From the tender bamboo-tip (Aagoli baahore lahari gogona)

Why has the cute Jew's herp
From the tender bamboo-tip resonated
Why has a tender leaf
From the tip of the banana tree quivered
Hearing the ululation of freedom?

Why has the proud king's city
Turned skeletal?
Why have the shackles of the prison
Broke and fallen apart?

Who has come defying the red-eyed glare of the royal court?
It's this young Barua—my own dear son
Who has come out defying the thunder-hard politics?
It's my beautiful princess the moon of my sky.

We raised the main pillar of the grand Namghar
Twined around it gold and silver leaves of affection
We broke the old customs and rules,
We trampled upon the wealth that impeded the mind's frontiers.

We're the Bordoichila that enlivens the lifeless
We're also the judges of the scales of justice.
We cleanse the shoot and dirt of centuries,
We purify with the touch of equality.

An open sky,
Free breath
Today we both seem to be
A free expression.
Two persons with two bodies,
But only a single heart
Ahead of us lies our path
Filled with the vermilion of love.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Gauhati Medical College (Guwahati medical college)

Gauhati Medical College
It not just a house of instruments
Moribund people come here
Leaving behind all worries
Humanity serves people winning over death.

With our knowledge and science
With our sacrifice and hard work
To develop a healthy nation
We try to keep our identity – in every step.

The greatness of Pragjyotisha*
The vastness of flowing Luit
Curing each and every patient of the ailment
We would make them smile, providing relief
Gauhati Medical College.

*Ancient name of Guwahati

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Gandhi smiled and said (Mahatmai haxi bule)

Gandhi smiled and said,
Befriend, Ram and Rahim
Go, arm in arm.

We will be together, we will be friends
Alas, Ram and Rahim!

Gandhi smiled and said,
Krishna, Karim and Shiv, Ibrahim
It's all one to everyone
The Lord or the God,
Alas, Ram and Rahim!

Gandhi smiled and said,
I'll listen to Gita and Veda
And I'll learn from Qur'an.
I'll worship my Lord in temples
And will keep the mosques intact
Alas, Ram and Rahim!

Gandhi smiled and said,
I'll hate violence
And I'll die in love.
No one is above humans
So, whom do I blame?
Alas, Ram and Rahim!

Gandhi wailed and said,
Gory incidents I can't see any more
I'm afraid, I'll be no more.
Befriend Ram and Rahim."

Gandhi lamented,
What shall I do?
And what more I do?
And what else I do?
I'll abandon this world
And will cry in the unseen world.
Befriend, Ram and Rahim.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Gave blood gave up life (Tej dila pran dila)

You gave blood you gave up life
You sacrificed my young friend
You'd come again, fight again
You win surely my young friend.

Sun would rise, the moon would stay
Ray of Hope will glow
Your paeans
You'd hear again young friend.

Look at the procession with a mass turnout
War cry uproar flushed bright
Luit* would stay
Pledge would be there
Public ferry would run daily
Friend for the tomorrow of the masses
You sacrificed your today.

*Brahmaputra River

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Glimmering soft sands (Jilmilya kumol bali)

Female: Glimmering, soft sands

Male: Why did you speak of those bygone days?

Female: Ah ha!

Male: Was it wrong to mention it?

Female: Why did you tell the tale of the yore?

Male: Oh—you poured sweet melodies in my soul,

Female: Oh no—you poured sweet poison into my bosom.

Male: Ah, I had forgotten!

Female: Glimmering soft sands,

Why did you revive those old stories?

You filled my heart with sweet poison

O glimmering, soft sands.

Wagtail o white wagtail

Today you speak with a smiling face

But the river of time never flows backward,

Nor do fallen petals can bloom again.

Male: When the thorns of prickly plants

Pierce the feet and make blood ooze

Female: Someone's footprints upon the sands of time

Get erased by the smallest of mistakes.

Male: With longing we can only build houses of sand

Female: Yet we cannot remain there even for a moment.

Then why do we keep erecting in despair?

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Go, go away (Jah ja goi jowonor)

Go, go away --
All the bygone days of life
Go, don't annoy me !

Go, go away --
All the songs sung before
Go, don't ignite a fire !

The lyrics of forgotten songs
Turn into sweet memories,
Yet when I recall, I fail to recognise
So much of a familiar face !

Why do I tread upon the grass left behind ?
I won't cloud the red hues of hope
No, I won't mull over or keep in mind
No, I won't anymore !

These moments of the blank night
Keep on lingering woozily
Forgetting all these past melodies
I cuddle the new.

Translation : Krishna Dulal Barua

Go to sleep dear (Ghumoti jawore)

Woman:

Go to sleep my darling baby
O' fox don't visit tonight
I'd cut your ears to make a diya
O' fox don't visit tonight
Our dear sways with the breeze
The leaves of Chinese mallow sways too
Our little darling is sways and rocks
In the ramshackle hut of the poor

Man:

You have brightened this dark life
O' little divine child
Like the first ray of the morning sun,
You have bathed me with light.

Woman:

The little one seems to ask
Whose affection is this
That touches me so familiarly?
The one who loves so deeply
Find no words to explain it.

Man:

Someone seems to wonder silently today,
Gazing into the blue eyes of our dearest
Who is this darling baby
Whose bond ties this little one?
Yet there is no answer.

Woman:

Our sweetheart seems to ask with its little mind,
Who is the one that loves me so?
Why do you call me sweetheart
With such warmth and hopeful gaze.

Man:

The loving heart often wonders
What destiny this child was born with.
The child entered our hearts
Without waiting for permission
We must protect with all our affection.

We cannot decipher
The mystery of birth;
Nor do we possess such power.
But should anyone impede
Who is destined to be born?

New dreams unfurl with every dawn
Crimson rays wafts in

The moon believes those dreams are its own,
The sun just smiles.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Graceful among the birds O Sofia Olivia (Soraie sikune O' lila rohila)

Is the black neck stork 'Sofia Olivia
Graceful among the fish is the Molly O Sofia Olivia
You came once again
And then left so soon
You just offered a betel nut
Chewed a betel nut
Parted with such affection and sweet words.

Lo lo lati lati til, lo lo lati lati til,
Lo lo lati til, lati til,
Lati til, lo-lo-lo-lo, lo-lo-lo-lo lo-lo lo-lo.

Who created so nicely
With hues of gold and silver.
And here
We are formed by a blind creator
From a dough of cow dung and mud
I beat Shuffle boom bap let us go for a round of Bihu dance
I beat Shuffle boom bap let us go to Mathura bazar
Spreading mats and playing the four-stringed fiddle,
Breaking and rejoicing, laughing and singing
We enjoy a sip from the Kiling River.

As the dancers move rhythmically in rows
Oh my! enthralled by smooth chiselled calves
I get goosebumps all over
Shall I get you, shall I ever
Tender love like a cool river,
Sweet thick curd upon the lips,
Sweet sesame cakes
My beloved one!
The Assamese Bihu festival
Our most cherished treasure,
So deeply our own.
Teteyou*, teyou, teteyou teyou, teteyou teteyou,
Teteyou teyou teyou.

Oh, Bihu so dear to heart,
So warmly welcomed,
So dearly cherished
Bihu is the wealth of Assam.
Oh, if ever this Bihu
Had to be forgotten, abandoned
Assam would lose its honour and pride.

*Sound of gogona, a bamboo musical instrument

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Grace the hapless (Abhaginik kripa kora)

Grace the hapless O' Madhusudan*
Protect your brother O' Janardan*
Suffering of my dear ones' singes body and soul
Can't swim across the ocean of sorrow
You are the ultimate God - the last resort
I wash your feet with my tears
We are simple human beings
Our hearts are unbridled
Our minds are not pure
We commit sins unknowingly
My incarcerated brother is awaiting liberation
O Lord
Please liberate us in an auspicious instant.

*Names of Lord Vishnu

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Green Majuli on the heart of Dikhow (Dikhowr bukute seuji Majuli)

Green Majuli on the heart of Dikhow
Smiles basking in the sunshine – O' darling!
His hut beautiful tiny
Rahdoi frolics there – O' my sweetheart.

Wild sugarcane of Majuli dances breaking its waist
Smearing the gulal of sunshine
Soul's darling dancing-prancing
Decks up the heart – O' my sweetheart.

Beckoning softly
Who calls me up from a distance
Calling me precious gold of heart
How do I cross over there is no boat
The sun even is about to set – O' my sweetheart.

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Hail! Hail! Bangladesh (Joy joy nobojato Bangladesh)

Hail! The nascent Bangladesh
Hail! The Liberation Army.
You have built a treaty of amity with the Indian army.

Against religious bigotry
Came into being Secularism,
Against disruptive forces
The unity of the Ganges and Padma,
Against feudalism
A new democracy,
Against militarism
A unique socialism.

Based on these ethos
You have written in blood
The message of Sheikh Muzibur.

Our India is not just a land mass,
It's neither a map
Nor some rules of some specific scripture.

Our India is a mighty power
With her eyes open and alert,
She is always for just-friendship
And never craves for foreign lands.
Eroding their banks,
The mighty Volga, Padma and the Ganges have merged
Together into a single body of water.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Hail! Mahatma Gandhi (Dolito bharotor axar protik)

You are the symbol of hope in the downtrodden India.
Your charming personality has captivated the human sea
With the bond of love.
Hail! Mahatma Gandhi

In the appearance of scantily dressed,
A half-starved peasant,
Owning a serene and placid mind,
With a slender figure like Dadhichi*
Hail! Mahatma Gandhi

Churning universal love
You have understood the truths of all the religions
You have propagated the divine message
Of the great illumination of humanity
Hail! Mahatma Gandhi

Renouncing lust, anger and voracity,
Crushing the dark grip of distress,
You light the lamp all alone.
Hail! Mahatma Gandhi

*Saint of Indian mythology, known for his ultimate self-sacrifice offering
his bones to Lord Indra (the king of Gods) to kill a demon.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

With the novel culture of the machine age
We'll build a stairway for the liberation of the human race.
Questioning for the new lights,
Move forward one and all, hand in hand,
With the bond of oneness that touches the sky,
Who can hold them back?
The storm of equality gains momentum.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Heading for a new Horizon (Somoyor agrogoti)

With the passing of time --

On the back of a winged horse
Heading for a new horizon
I'm out smilingly.

With the blessing of kindly light --

Pass winters
Rings guitar
No despair.
Distanced I'm from all possessions
Almighty lights up my all front.

Taking truth as the guide --
Days are rolling on
With no interruption
My flying mind braves many a barrier
They in turn become incentives to my career.

Worshipping the illuminating Sun --
In a dance-filled joy I'm in
Fear and doubt are nowhere to be seen
A lively melody stirs my inner
It happens to be a source of inspiration
For this singer.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Hey! Hey! Hey! with the rhythm of drum (Hey hey hey dhule-dogore)

Hey! Hey! Hey! With the rhythm of drum
Hey! Hey! Hey! With the heart's warm
With the unseen thread, tender and strong
We bind our highest peaks
Our great Syiem*!

Hey! Hey! Hey! the pouring skies
Hey! Hey! Hey! of Cherapunjee
Just as the generous clouds
Greets our Luit
In a monsoon embrace!

The Krishna shepherd plays Banhi*****
The Khasi shepherd plays Sharati*****
Two flutes from the same bamboo
The same tune they do show.

The leaves of the lofty pines are green
On our Ahot**** the same hue is seen
Whether Blei***** or Jon*****, the same moon
Bathes our valley and hills with lunar bliss alike
In autumnal night.
Tilling the red soil of the mountain crest
The Khasi farmer labours without rest
While down in the plains, with thousand cheers
The same field cradles the farmer here.

The golden Muga** from Sualkuchi's loom
Khasi maidens draped in Jainsem***
While the fragrant scent of the pine branch
Drives us into a trance.

The great U Blei***** – the Khasi's Lord
While serpent-crowned Shiva – our deity adored
Erasing all divides between Khasi and us
Assam's grand harmony we enhance thus.

* A traditional tribal chief or king who holds administrative, judicial, and cultural authority in Khasi culture of Meghalaya.

** A variety of golden wild silk geographically tagged to Assam.

*** A traditional, unstitched wraparound garment worn by Khasi women in Meghalaya.

**** Ficus Religiosa tree in Assamese.

***** Moon in Khasi.

***** Moon in Assamese.

***** God in Khasi.

***** Flute in Assamese.

*****A traditional bamboo flute of the Khasi people in Meghalaya.

Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

He is no more (Nai nai nai henu)

[A tribute to Lal Bahadur Shastri on his demise]
It is said our dear Shastri is no more
He took the eternal path of peace in Tashkent.

His deprived childhood made him a struggler
Struggle in his youth Made him a Satvik*.

He understood the deep-rooted sense of Indian heritage
Described the true nature of restraint of the east.

As if he was the brother of each and every poor
He took the eternal path of peace in a distant land.

Expressed greatness though appearing tiny
Did now cower in front of demonic rage.

A student topper from Hindu Kasi-peeth
He went into the eternal sleep in the land of Hafiz
Captivated the world with a respectful treaty
He took the eternal path of peace in the land of Omar.

Wrapped every Indian with steel
Silently made everyone one's own leader
Finishing the task, he sat on the lap of death
An inert Shastri returned home.
As if our father returned to motherland
He took the eternal path of peace in Tashkent.

He played in the short drama on the stage of global society
Penned the one act play with only three scenes.
In the first act he smeared simplicity
In the second act he smeared Rudra rasa**
In the third act he finished the fearsome battle-night
He took the eternal path of peace in Tashkent.
He took the eternal path of peace in the land of Omar.
He took the eternal path of peace in a distant land.

*One of the three qualities in Hindu philosophy

**The expression of anger in a drama

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Hi lady hi woman (O' Jiori O' Buwari))

Woman: Hi lady hi woman

Man: Hi Nadai* hi Bhadai*

Woman: Let's go to the wharf

Chorus: Come, come out together

Hi Kontilou* hi Nadai hi Bhadai

Come, come out fast

Man: Let's go fishing

Man: Lasim**, Bhargon**, Bahu**, Barali**

Rou**, Chital** and Mali**

Magur** Goroi** Sal** and Sol**

Chorus: You'd relish the savoury dish.

Man: Take the net, take jokai***

Belt up firmly

Woman: Tie up the methoni***** firmly

Chorus: Come let's go fishing together, come out

Man: Rivers, beels*****, streams and ponds

Chorus: All filled up with multihued fish

Man: We relish in functions big and small

Chorus: Will make energy flow to the nation

Today everyone will come out to catch fish

Man: You all to come to the front

Chorus: Come let's go fishing together.

*Names of Assamese rural folk

**Names of fishes in Assam

***Fishing tool

****A knee length dress wrapped over bosom

*****Wetland

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Hot iron (Topto tikhare agni xoti)

Hot iron turns blood-red in fire.
Silent mankind in quest of freedom
Burns their heart with the ire within,
And it melts like metal.

With might of the people of the land
Made my weapon
For bringing freedom back.
To put an end to a cry of the distressed thousands,
All exploited and anguished.

An unseen river of cold blood runs in my land.
Row the boat forward in life-Luit.
Shed small interest, and
Come to the reality of life.
Come, O my men!

No tears, O my men!
Get ready.
Our journey is about to meet its end,
Come prepared to die for the country.
My men of the land,
Who fight against unjust act,
See, truth will win and win forever.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

How long will you burn (Aanor karone jibwon xolita)

How long will you burn
The wick of your life for others
How much is left?
How long will you pour
The blood of your heart
How much is left?

You have no time
To think for own self
I have reminded you
A hundred times.

Every morning
You draw many a picture
With your own blood
Destroying your own self
These pictures dance on it.

How long will you pour
The hue of your heart
How much is left?

Translation: Dibya Ranjan Sharma Khataniar

How long shall we play (Gupute gupute kimaan khelim)

How long shall we play
This game of loving hug on the sly?
Let us splash the colour of ours
On the wind and the sky.

O dear, let's not hide
Our hearts as vast as oceans.
O dear let's show them
To the society and our custom.
Is there any sin in youth?
Does it go unexpressed?
Does the ocean ever slight
The rolling waves of the tide?

The pair of your eyes
The petals of your bosom
Each glance is sweet
Each touch so warm
O honey, open, do open today
The doors and windows of your closed room
No need to show decency of restraint today
Is there any law in love
Any bounds to the raising storm
Can the dawn be hidden
Placing a garland of shyness on it?

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

How many children (Ghoneg ghone koto xixuk)

How many children
Would you beget at such a frequency?
You'd beget into this selfless world.

If you are thyself a stockroom of disease
Your love would be turbid like that of the Luit*
So become aware right now
Make your child strong-healthy
Only then your smiles' will brighten the house.

The burden of poverty is worldwide
How can you support countless children
So, think in advance take precaution
Limit your family for a happy family
Only then you can smile from your heart
How many children
Would you beget at such a frequency

*Luit the river Brahmaputra

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Hurrah (Kirili kirili marili)

Whrrrr

Hurrah Hurrah Hurrah Hurrah Hurrah Hurrah

Hurrah Hurrah Hurrah

Why did you indulge so deeply in love?

You cried in joy

You got lost in love.

You lost your way in the woods of the beauty

You had been struggling hard to find the beauty

You kissed a caterpillar in the delusion of being the lips

You kissed a caterpillar in the delusion of being the lips

Got hooked to a serpent in the delusion of it being the matsyakanya*

You hooted and screamed

Why did you get lost in love?

Hurrah Hurrah

Why did you get lost in love?

You got immersed in love without bothering of consequences

Which village lad you are what a mistake you did commit

Which village lad you are what a mistake you did commit

You just saw a mekhela of light glitter

You embraced fire in the delusion of being Chitralkha**

You hooted and screamed

Why did you get lost in love?

Hurrah Hurrah

Why did you get lost in love?

If you ever saw her

Smiled back too responding to the sweet smile

Smiled back too responding to the sweet smile

You were driven mad by her physical beauty

You were driven mad by her physical beauty

Embraced fire in the delusion of being cold water

You hooted and screamed

Why did you get lost in love?

Hurrah Hurrah

Why did you get lost in love?

*Daughter of fish. In Mahabharata, it is described that a large fish swallowed the semen of a great sage, conceived and gave birth to a human child that grew up to beautiful damsel.

**A mythical character described in the puranas. A girl, friend of Usha, daughter of king Bana of Sonitpur, Assam with an extraordinary power of drawing the face of any human being listening to description. First known example of image profiling. H

Translation: Bibekananda Choudhury

I am in fathomless water (Moi othai jolodhir majoloi)

I came swimming
Into the fathomless water
Has been struggling
Leaving the banks far away.

Arrogance selfishness
over this side
Everywhere there is readiness for inviting death
Rays shower down
On the horizon of the other bank.

Love life is like play of waves, blends in nothingness
No dream only worries, without peace.
Along the coast of sea of mind
I build the dyke
Who lights the diya of hope
The traveller returns
I know yet act unfamiliar
Am fully tired.

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

I am the modern Dalimi of Kohima (Moi Kohimare adunika Dalimi)

Young girl : I am the young Dalimi of Kohima.
Young boy : I am the Godapani of the modern valley.
Both : Both of us are co-passengers of the night-train
bound for Guwahati.
Young boy : May be often you recall
The childhood days of your Jekhama village
How you'd awed like the butterfly
Wearing red and blue feathers on sweet, festive occasions.
Young girl : I have no misgivings, because the land is aligned
Now that you are mine, so close to me
'But after reaching Guwahati, you should ne'er forget
The love of my Naga Hills.
Young boy : Do you remember the blast of Lumding and Diphu
That occurred a few years ago?
Young girl : It's background of the laments of many
That we had sweet meeting
Today I'm a new daughter-in-law of Assam.
Young boy : I have become a son-in-law of Tuensang.
Both : We are the living symbols
Unity of northeast India.
Young girl : That Dalimi of Lakshminath* is no more.
Young boy : Nor am I Godapani of older days.
Both : Yet the union of both of us
Again, and again remind us of what happened in the past.

*Legend of Assamese literature

Translation: Dibya Ranjan Sharma Khatania

I am the beauty queen of dreamland (Moi sopunpurir rupkunwori)

I am the beauty queen of dreamland
Bangles of lotus-stem on my hand
Lotus earrings in the ears
I float on the breeze with red wings
Along with butterfly.

Bangles of lotus stem on my hand
Lotus earrings in the ears
With the hues of rainbow with the Aanchal of the Riha
I fetch pearl from the sea
Taking the red sunshine of the morning sun
I paint the dawn with colour.

Prince of the beautiful world
Arriving with the sun
Whispers in my ears
'You're mine you're mine you're mine'
Holding the flute of Lord Krishna.

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

I'm a spark (Agni jugor phiringoti moi)

I'm a spark
I'm a spark of the fire age
I'll bring all that back to the down-trodden
What they have lost so far
I'll build a new homeland.

I'll make weapons from human skeleton
For killing the social leech
I'll build a new homeland.

There will be no trading in the name of religion
Caste pride will die out.
I'll fight against the devil of untouchability
With my own hands.
I'll build a new homeland.

Hindu, tribal, all suppressed
Muslim, backward, all oppressed
I'll make love flow through the hearts of all.

A barrier of discrimination, I'll break
A heaven of equality, I'll make.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

I'm sleeping alone (Mritu saboti somadhi tolit)

I'm sleeping alone
In the graveyard
Embracing death.
Now, why have you surfaced
To put my heart in flames?

You, I was longing for
In my last moments too
But a visit you could not spare then!

My lifeless body
Someone covered with white
Someone else sprinkled holy water
Then you must had been with somebody in lovemaking!
Planting a tree of hope
I was passing moments.

Now, I'm in the lap of eternal peace
The place I sought for.
Why haven't you left off teasing even now?

Winding up those stories of life
Why haven't you left yet?
As I've broken all worldly ties and bonds
Falling in love with death.

Don't tease me
With a derisive smile
Saying 'still I dote for you'
For now, I can never cross the endless river of death.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

I embraced the sky (Aakaas sawati)

I embraced the sky and dove into the sea
Carrying a volcano in my heart

The rain of words embraced
Endless trills of melody in my voice

Driven by endless desire,
I travelled and roamed
Unlocking my life-chest

I don't know
I cried how much and I laughed how much.
Now, everything is a rivulet of memory.

O my dear analyst,
I bathed you in the very deluge of affection.

I have seen you in the afternoon of my life
You are the one who listens to the longings of my life.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

I dreamt a dream (Kisudin agote puwoti nixate)

I dreamt a dream
In the wee hours some days back
Saw on every street
corpses dangling down from lampposts
Asked: Whose dead bodies are these?
Said: They are hoarders
Earned huge amount of black money
Turning into merchant of death for the people
Suddenly my dream broke
There were no corpses on the lampposts
(understood) my head has gone crazy
Corruption was not uprooted.
Mother forgot to sing lullaby
Looking at a dying baby
Even adulterated food costs skyrocketing
Dilute medicine gets prescribed.
[Hey] have you noticed near your house
The jutting ribs of frail scrawny Akoni
Why don't you strive a little
to ameliorate the sufferings of hundreds of unemployed
[Hey] bring along a little bit of joy
To every sorrowful people
Only then I'd honour and respect
Your big-mouthed speeches.
The count of black marketeers
Match that of lampposts
Then won't you hang them up?
You gave your word the other day.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

I don't have any address (Toomar dekhu naam potrolekha)

O my treasure!
You have stopped your pen,
Maybe my old address
Your memory has failed to trace.

The passionate feelings in confines of your heart
Maybe you have stored in secret for someone.
In which I don't have any share.
Or my old address is out of your memory.

Passed many seasons,
Many a letter with my words of heart
To be written yet.
That, of course, has no excuse.
Perhaps, that's why
Your resentment has no bounds.

If you have a look on
My paintings, plays, songs or poems
You may find my old address.
But you have never searched
Or, for that you may not have leisure, of course.

O my treasure!
Today if you ask for my address
In reply to you will get only silence.
For I've become a restless Bed-uin
In the desert of my life
I don't have any address.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

I don't shine like flashing lightning (Bijulir pohar moor nai)

I don't shine like flashing lightning
Yet the darkness stares at me!

The playhouse stands in silence
Wrapped in curtains of darkness
Until my beauty turns the lights
And fills the house so bright!

Who will write my story, tell me when?
No one seems to have the time or ears
To listen to my words written in tears!

When they see my beauty glow
Masks they wear begin to crumble
Revealing truths, they never show!

Translation: Er.Rabin Goswami, USA

I love you Mizoram (Kah mongaih ceh Mizoram)

Kah mongaih che Mizoram
I love you Mizoram
With the rhythmic beat of Serow*
The Koladyne river flows with the tune of guitar
The tall blue Phawngpui hills
Roars something silently.
Leaving behind the Jhum fields at the peaks
The fighting people waited for us
And bid us adieu with a smiling face
They waved and said Chibai**, Chibai, Chibai
What a picturesque sight
It is a fighter country, whose name is Mizoram.

A girl with a smiling face
Ardently welcomed us
Carrying the charm of green mind
In her handwoven Gowan wrap around skirt
Multihued patterns of hope were crafted
On the Kawrchei blouse covering her bosom
White cloud crafted some flowery patterns
Her flowery ornaments of Pangkpar sways
Keeping with the beat of dance.
What a soothing sight
It is a country of damsels, name is Mizoram.
Kah mongaih che Mizoram.

Bilkhawthlir or Lungdai
Vairengte or Lunnlei
Thingsulthliah or Serchhip
Hnahthial or Kolasib
Everywhere the people appear vigilant
Creation is preferred over destruction
There is no respite from duty
It is a place of vow, name Mizoram.
Kah mongaih che Mizoram.

As per proverb long forgotten
Tearing through the primitive gloom of yesteryears
Coming out of Sinlung hole
You poured out the light
Pathian is the radiant child of God
Come let us work together to build a radiant spot.

Through Mizo and Hmar poi Lakh
Here countless nation of varied hues
Sweet voices of Kukis and Chakmas
Feather in the cap of Eastern India
Hiding tears with Lumphum caps

I say a word at the moment I bid adieu
Thanks, or Kalaume
No conflict but lovingly
Let today's day be recorded in history
Let our bonding turn stronger
It's a country of love called Mizoram
Kah mongaih che Mizoram.

*Official state animal of Mizoram. Shy elusive medium-sized mammal.

**Hello in Mizo language

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

I won't be battle-weary (Ronoklanto nohow)

I won't be battle-weary till the moment
Till the moment the last enemy-demon
Is slayed at our frontier
I won't be battle-weary.

The firearms of our countless soldiers
Clatter, clatter today
With cries of the victory-pledge
My country resounds, resounds today
I vow
To pierce the hearts
Of the spineless demons
I won't be battle-weary.

I won't be led astray
No plot can lead me astray
Any plot that by savage assault
Abruptly brings down my nation's flag
I won't be battle-weary.

You've trampled upon the Buddha and Gandhi !
Mocked the very Panchsheel to be a menace !
Shattered the amity of the vast Asia !
Your vanity shall crumble
Pride fall
Today a leonine India is awake
In each drop of the martyrs' blood
Glows the heritage of valour.

Blood-thirsty vermin
Greedy encroachers
Beware, retreat at once
As the great Shiva, as mighty truth
My liberation forces advance
With the imprints
Of our hearts' blood
We'll lay down our lives
On our country's soil
I won't be battle-weary.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

I hear distant warble (Riniki riniki xunisu duronit)

I hear distant warble
Of the birds of the morning
Why do the birds of the morning warble?

I see silent night, all around me;
The sun is now nowhere visible
Yet the birds of the morning warble
Why do the birds of the morning warble?

Crossing the bounds of a sun that has set
I went alone across the path
Chasing the dawn in this darkness, darkness
Will there be a dawn without the sun
How long must I wait?
The birds of the morning warble
Why do the birds of the morning warble?

Have you already embarrassed death
Else why are you late, O sun?
Come and light up the darkened path
I have run out of patience
Yet why do you not respond?
The birds of the morning warble
Why do the birds of the morning warble?

Translation: Arup Kumar Dutta

I set on Gauripur's damsel fair (Gauripuria gabharu dekhilu)

I set on Gauripur's Damsel fair
On my visit as an elephant-catcher there.
I captured the elephant, also captivated her
Swimming across the Gadadhar River.
On the riverbank by the Mahal*
She was waiting away from all.

Mahouts from diverse places in Goalpara's mahal
I was the only one from a Sivasagar village among them all
So, in the deep forest I sang a Bihu** song that would enthrall.
Speech: What did I sing? "I can climb hill after hill
Climbing creepers is not so cushy
With a rogue elephant I can deal
Managing you is not so easy."

I managed the damsel, climbed the creeper
The unknown beauty
I charmed by just singing a Bihu number
The lesson I learnt, of success industry is the pillar.

I sweated out blood to capture the elephant
After catching her I was paid by the Mahaldar***
So, I would show my bride the banks of the Dikhow River.

*A forest area demarcated for capturing wild elephant

**A major cultural festival of the people of Assam

***A lessee who is permitted to employ Mahouts to capture elephants from his mahal

Translation: Dibya Ranjan Sharma Khataniar

I shed many tears (Jiwonture kandoonkhini)

I saved myself
Tears of my life,
I shared out
Cheers of my life.
O my audience-friend,
You too take a little.

I shed many tears to win cheers
While crying, at times I laughed myself.
With many tears and little cheers is the game of life
So, I have shared out the cheers of my life.

My Friend, perhaps you have received
No attention and care.
So, out of my little cheers
You too got your share.

I have dreamt of thousands faces with smiles
But seeing the sorrow of another multitude
I'll arrange the game of life with many cheers
And little tears
So, I have shared out the cheers of my life.
O my audience friend!
You too have a little.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

If life-long fame (Jiwanjura khyatie jodi)

If life-long fame eats into life's vitality
If greed of money makes us forget humanity
If man becomes a foe of human fraternity
(Then) let fame and such falls trade be in no proximity.

If the mind is traded for money
If dowry is embraced a crony
(Then) even if two bodies unite the soul is never contended
Both wear masks to cheat each other
(So) let fame and such false trade be in no proximity.

Loves seems to be divine, not found on earth
Dignity is lost if one loves the mud
(Then) let the amaranth bloom in heaven
I'll feel obliged to accept of lotus blooming in the mud
(So) let fame and such false trade be in no proximity.

Translation: Dibya Ranjan Sharma Khataniar

If the candle burns bright (Swomma thakile)

Song:

If the candle burns bright, surely, oh surely
The moth is bound to arrive.

Speech:

Bravo, bravo, bravo, bravo, uncle!
I am just a tailor, what else can I sing?

Song:

When the lightning strikes, even the vast sky
Is bound to awaken, radiant and bright.
Even if the fabric of heart rips apart
Love is bound to sew it back again.

Speech:

What's that? Say that once more, uncle!

Song:

Even if the fabric of heart rips apart
Love is bound to sew it back again.
Two hearts, two souls, two human beings
Nikah* is bound to weave them into one.

Speech:

Yes, Bravo, bravo, bravo, uncle!

Song:

This match, a match made in heaven
This is no ordinary pair.

Speech:

Yes

Song:

This is the sacred union of Ali and Fatima
Splendid! This bond is bound to last forever!

Speech:

It will last, bravo, bravo, bravo, uncle

Song:

This is the sacred union of Ali and Fatima
This bond is bound to last forever.

Speech:

Bravo, bravo, bravo

Song:

I offer my prayers to the Almighty Lord above
Life is bound to become beautiful

Speech:

Ah, yes, surely, surely, Uncle, surely

Song:

When the lightning strikes, the heart of the sky
Is bound to flutter and leap in wild delight.
Bound to leap, oh, marvellous, bravo, bravo, bravo.

* The Islamic marriage contract and ceremony.

Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

If the life were just acting (Jiwontu jodi abhinoy hoi)

If the life were just acting
And love also, lay in that acting
Then how much worth is that love?
If the sky were a piece of paper
And the moon too is unreal
Then, how much colour is in that moon light?

Why do we pick up error
Thinking it to be the good?
Why welcome Kowabhaturi*
Dazzled by outward glitter?
So, I sob at heart
From moment to moment
Who is there to fondle me?

Why do we swim in the pool of false love
Making jokers of ourselves?
Why run after false mirage
In the heat of the desert?

That's why does many a man
Count its day
The number of people who are happy on the earth.

*Fruit of creeper, reddish outside when ripe but black inside
Translation: Upendra Nath Sarma

If the first love does not get the response (Prothom morome jodi)

If the first love does not get the response
The feeling of love somehow gets withered.
When one heart meets another heart
Only then love attains fulfillment.

At the dawn of my youth
I suddenly noticed you
What happened at the first sight
Didn't you ever sense.

Adolescence came after childhood
Youth came following adolescence
Had my youthful feelings didn't pester me
I wouldn't have looked at you at all.

This is not just lust
You are my life's pursuit
You and I would always be happy together
Haven't you understood yet.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

If you aren't here (Maghot dekhu uruka nohoi)

No night-feast on the Magh Bihu* eve
If you aren't here!
No drum beatings in the Bohag Bihu **
If you aren't here!

No flowers bloom on time
If you aren't here!
No light in the hut can be seen
If you aren't here!

Progress tends to regress
If you aren't here!
My songs become tuneless
If you aren't here!

A cloudless sky during the rains,
If you aren't here!
Life-river comes to halt
If you aren't here!

I can't get into science and wisdom,
If you aren't here!
The struggle for getting or not getting is not known
If you aren't here!
No peace of mind shall get in life,
If you aren't here!
Maybe, in death shall get relief,
If you aren't here!

*A major festival of Assam celebrated in the Assamese month of Magh
(mid Jan –mid Feb)

**A major festival of Assam celebrated in the Assamese month of Bohag
(mid-April – mid May)

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Indian Institute of Technology (Bharotiyo prodougiki sangsthan)

Indian Institute of Technology

Physics

Chemistry

Engineering knowledge.

Electricity gathered in the fist

Like new rain we spread across the world

We scatter in Pragjyotish*

New scientists and many cultures.

We meditate

Gazing toward the stars

We send a volley of questions

Toward planets and constellations.

This institute gives us many hopes

We pursue with enthusiasm and endless curiosity.

*Historical kingdom of Assam's Kamrup district.

Translation: Er. Devajit Bhuyan

In a zigzag lane (Dola hein dola)

Dola, hey Dola, hey Dola, hey Dola
In a zigzag lane
I carry my sedan*
Where sit Lords and Barons.
I have taken up a life of toil and strife,
It's all rough and tough.
Ho zhak, Ho zhak, Ho zhak, Ho.*

The sheen of the silk turban
It shines inside the sedan.
The white end of the flywhisk waving to-and-fro
It's for me a frequent show.
I, on this New Year, let my child go without,
A cotton shirt
Tears may come
But I never break down,
I go on carrying the sedan.
Ho zhak, Ho zhak, Ho zhak, Ho.

It's a practice, long standing,
Its load, shoulder breaking.
Nobles doze off in the sedan
We build up a sweat by then.
We must toil up the steep hill
Carefully, step in line.
From our shoulders, if it slips
The sedan will tumble down.
The sedan of the nobles,
The sedan of the Lords and Barons.
Ho zhak, Ho zhak, Ho zhak, Ho.

*The phrase, Ho zhak, was introduced by Dr.hazarika. According to him,
in those days in Latin America, whenever labourers had to lift or push
a very heavy load, they chanted tis phrase to raise their spirits.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

In every part of the body (Proti onge onge)

In every part of the body leaps a flame
In every part of the body desire is etched
A flame is burning as if
The mirror dazzles with your beauty
In the vision I'm lost as if
It's white-hot – a steely beauty.

Crazy youth fragrant youth
Unmindful of your self
Today by the tidal waves of youth
You seem to be carried away
After a fresh bath, you're an Abhisarika*.

Youth uninvited honeyed rhythms
A bit tipsier the whole body pulsates
At the sea beach with your sheer beauty
Who are you dazzling Sagarika!

*A woman going out to meet her lover at a secret place
Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

In the bosom of your home (Bhabisila ebuku bhorai)

[This song was composed by Dr. Bhupen Hazarika
in memory of his brother Jayanta Hazarika who died in 1977]

You thought you would live in the bosom of your home
And you would rest in its lap when you didn't roam.

You thought home you had but attachment was missing
For the companionless the companion was missing
Flowers bloomed, the fragrance seemed missing
The lamp burned, the light was missing
In whose loving embraces would you rest?
No response would you get.

Fatigued weather wearied air
Melody too is a prisoner
Hope's boat gets stuck in sands of despair.

In spite of having everything something is missing,
There is life, its nectar is missing
There is dawn, the sun is missing
In nothingness everything is missing
Where will you go, what are you looking for
No response would you get.

Translation: Dibya Ranjan Sharma Khataniar

In the evening sky of twentieth century (Bingxo xotikar astakaxot)

In the evening sky of twentieth century
Shall I see the light of a new day?
Will the new dawn of twenty first century
Light up the horizon far away?
Yes, it will light up, it will light up!

At the crossroad of two centuries
We count the ledger of hope and despair
Death plays its game of hide and seek
With the deception of universal love!

Can they play a game of principles
By spreading seeds of divisiveness?
The world is now a small village
Space itself has become a battlefield!

In the roar of mass communication
Value dissolves into the noise of connection
At the crossroad of two centuries
Shall we see the light of truth?
Shall we see, shall we see?

The cold war seems to have ended
A peace dove rising in the sky
Yet behind the painted calm
We see old rancor not yet dry
Will this rancor ever die down?
Will the current of peace flow again?

Translation: Er.Rabin Goswami, USA

In the confluence of hills and dales (Pahar bhayamor xongomtholite)

In the confluence of hills and dales
I had once a friend
Fine golden days those were
Full of sunshine
Walking and playing together, from morn till evening,
Those quiet hills
That flowing music, when
Together we played on the flute
Fine, golden days, when gold was scattered
Those fine, golden days, full of sunshine.
In the land of the shades of tall, tall Saal* trees
In the land of magic, of the soft palanquin of the clouds and the fog
The odour is of ammunition
I see the earth now reddened with the fresh blood of the killed
Whither have flown away, those fine, golden days!

Under the sky of the hills, of the river Luit
Let you and I share
The echo of the Sipfung** flute played on by you and
Let's bring back those fine, golden days
Those fine, golden days, full of sunshine.

*Sal-tree (*Shorea robusta*)

** An indigenous flute of the Bodo community

Translation: Upendra Nath Sarma

In the light of fireflies (Joonaki poruwar poohore poohore)

In the light of fireflies
Pratibha Barua walks alone.

One hesitant step at a time
Why does she stop and scan
Like a deer?

Look Diganta emerged
from that side
Pratibha hugged him
in deep emotion
they blush ashamedly.

Pratibha Barua
Do not care to look at us
Buddy let us go
To our own abode
What is the use playing the guitar?

Yes, in the light of firefly
Diganta-Pratibha
Moves along happily.

Translation: Bibekananda Choudhury

In the splendid attire (Biraje ki saje)

In the splendid attire you are glowing
You are the daughter with a native gesture

Having seen the shining moon
The would-be hubby rejoices in irrepressible joy.

The end has come to
The story of pain, warmth and sorrow
Plentiful of multiple colours flooded their mental horizon.

Today, *Dushyanta** and *Shakuntala** are in immense joy
As after the name of their son, Bharata
Our country is christened as *Bharatvarsha***

* Shakuntala, the daughter of the sage Vishamitra and celestial Menaka,
is the title-role in *Abhigyanam Shakuntalam*, the famous Sanskrit play,
by Kalidasa.

** The ancient name of India
Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

In the world of sound and melody (Xobdo aru xuror prithibit)

In the world of sound and melody
I've frolicked with different gestures
And have analysed truth with life's wisdom
Cheerlessly and joyfully.

I survived ahead of time
For self-confidence.
I will live ordinarily
Yet I will remain extraordinary.

The sound of my lyrics is very simple-
The tune of mellow earth
Free sky, free world
And free waves of the sea.

At present the world is very sick
With conflict everywhere
Come let each of us sing
The song of peace and
Usher in the glorious light
Into our lives.

Translation: Nripen Dutta Baruah

In the quest of what my entire life (Ki bisari oore jiwon)

In the quest of what my entire life
Which way did I proceed to
In the greed of high interest
I lost my capital
I lost my capital too.

Moved to darkness with a smiling face as I left
Today I am ensnared in sin driven by sheer greed.
I am ensnared in sin

I did business by selling people to other people
Found pleasure by snatching the happiness of others
Found pleasure.
The mud of disgrace that I smeared on lotus
Please embrace after washing, I entrust you.
I entrust you.

The one entrusted by others appears like a lotus bud
The one entrusted by others appears like a lotus bud
Though branded as tainted I accepted as my sister
I accepted as my sister

The lotus from mud I placed on my head
I vowed to protect your entire life.
Vowed to protect your entire life.

You can't be an item to ravish for the lusty
I would protect fearlessly putting my life in peril
Putting my life in peril

Translation: Bibekananda Choudhury

In this wordy world (Bhasabhora prithibir)

In this wordy world
To hearken to the revolutionary songs
You are hard of hearing.
Suppressed internal feelings of life
To give vent to the earth
You are tongue-tied.

No point to submit or to fear either
As signals and symbols are without number.
Science foots ahead
With the march of the new civilization
Deaf and dumb will find no hurdles.

Vanquishing silent death,
Many a dumb sings paeon.
Deafness and dumbness won't face darkness
All will go forward with light of the collegiate life.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Intoxicated the dreadful night (Surat mogon bhayal rati)

Intoxicated the dreadful night
Quiet is the din
As if I were a wail of sunshine
A cortege of words.

Snatching the moon and stars
I feel like smashing them all
When will the sunflowers deck
The graveyard of sorrows.

The law-abiding children
Are getting unruly
Mother's eyes turn into caves
Filled with dense fog.

Vultures always gather in session
Speeches remain unmade
Our days seem crooked antlers
Of a dead deer.

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

In the month of Magha* (Teroxo chouannor maghore maghote)

[A tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his demise]

In the month of Magha in the year thirteen fifty-four
On the afternoon of sixteenth
A lightning struck on the head of the earth
Where have you gone, Bapuji?

You arrived through the gloom carrying a torch
Overcoming boundless agony
Broke the sword with the smile of love
Chasing away untruth.

When the earth becomes stained
With the blood of violence
You washed and rinsed with the message of non-violence
Enemy was stunned.

Shouldered your duties all alone
Shattered the archaic system
Spread the world praying with naam
Allah-Rama is the same word.

Touched with loving hands
The bottommost layer of dust and cobweb
Embraced Harijans and Dalits
Personal interest was put to rest.

On the seventeenth of Magha arose to the sky
Smoke emanating from burning sandalwood
Embracing the smoke wails uncontrollably
Look, it's the wind
Look, it's the wind.

*Assamese Calander month (Jan-Feb)
Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

In wanton frolics (Xoixobote dhemalite)

In wanton frolics our romping together
In Luit, our swimming together
In the month of Bohag
All stand fresh in my memory.

That bashful embrace of our teens
carries me back to my sixteen.
That you would hang yourself on my parting
My memory recalls that sayings.

In the month of Bohag
Came a blinding storm
During the storm
Jilting me, you have eloped with someone.

Leaving your beloved aside,
You have reached the opulent beside.
You have exposed yourself
That wealth is your ultimate love.

Went sometime and of late
I remember that date.
From afar I saw your bejewelled body
That riveted all my attention.
If you feel that I'll hang myself in your absence
It's your fallacy.
My love, you're mistaken
You're in a complete illusion.

I'll not die
For I've a wish and will
To build a society
Where human is, even if a little, costlier than gold.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

It'll enlighten the bank of Luit (Jilikabo Luitore paar)

It'll enlighten the bank of Luit
Breaking the barrier of darkness
In my land flows a rivulet of light.
Hundreds of lamps
In the festival of light of knowledge
Will enlighten the bank of Luit. *

Books will give us words,
Music hopes,
Doors of the house of joy will open.
The society will embrace the great humanity
Science will bring novelty.

With quest for new thoughts and ideas,
We are the live wires of the twentieth century.
Keeping aside the whirlpool of ignorance
Let us pull a good oar of life forward.
It'll enlighten the bank of Luit.

*Another name of Brahmaputra
Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

It's a damp winter night (Xitore semeka raati)

It's a damp winter night
Let me be the red warmth of
The smouldering fire of cinders
In the staggering hut
Of some unclad farmer.

It's a chill winter night
Let me be a wonderful power of
A sudden outburst of
The flared-up fire of hunger
Hidden in the deep inner
Of some starved labourer.

It's a biting winter night
Inarticulate clamour of the frightened minds
Of some minorities
Let me express myself and become a sweet security.

It's a stone-cold winter night
Mellifluous voice of the singer is strangled
Let me render my sweet deep voice
For an epoch-making and an everlasting song
That is never ever sung.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

It is the year thirteen seventy-one*. (Jethore terore budhor duporia)

It is the year thirteen seventy-one.
A Wednesday morning of thirteen Jeth**
The news came that Jawahar is no more.
You can't just accept to believe.

Wafting along the flame of sandalwood
Jawahar left us that day.
As we did not find his human body anymore
We were finally convinced.

Can Jawahar leave us for an unknown world
Such words are just a blatant lie
That day Jawahar himself said
There's lot left in lifetime.

Didn't Mother India say repeatedly
Just rest a while
You did not lend an ear restless Jawahar
Pushed away your own rest aside.

We celebrate the coronation
Adorning you with crown of love
You had enriched us with your advice the entire life.
For us you sacrificed comfort lying on a bed of thorns.

You created such an image of a world
So that tiger and lamb
May drink at the same spot
And explained its grace.

Reed gets uprooted
In the fight between a pair of buffaloes
So, you went near the reed
You became the support of the people.

That got trampled like reeds between two fighting buffaloes.
You held onto the horns of the warmonger irate buffaloes
Even shouted at the Mahisasur*** to say
This world is a land of peace.

Thinking of distributing
the wealth and product of the society
equally among all people small and big
As you vowed you were swept away to the lap of God.

You took a holy dip in darshan-Prayag
sprinkled water on us
We give our word with all the earnest
we'd move forward obeying you.

On whose chest would Hiralal
pin the red rose bud now
to whom the conscience of the world would make a dash
whenever it felt helpless.

What to do, cry or laugh
Or pluck our own hair
Or make the Jawahar era of fifty years
An everlasting era.

*This song is a tribute to late Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru who died on 27th May 1964.

**Jeth – second month of Assamese calendar: mid-May to mid-June

***Mahisasur is a powerful asura (demon) in Hindu mythology

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Jonai appeared to take bath in moonlight (Jonai jen jonakot)

Jonai appeared to take bath in moonlight
The river current appeared to carry her away
She gave up to the swift flowing river
Got stuck in an unknown sandbar
She appeared like a mud doll.

Getting a upstream bound boat somewhere
She returned slowly again
Losing her own dress
She took the stigma on herself
Not finding cloth to cover her bare body
She smeared dirt and mud all over herself

(Suddenly) She had a feel as if she saw something
Stops with a restless mind
She moved near to see blooming in the mud
A lotus bud sprouting alone silently
She plucked the flower very tenderly
And felt inundated with peace.

Carrying that she moves along seeking identity
The lotus bud but remains silent.
She thinks flowers find peace only in blooming
So, no need for any identity card.
Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Janoki from Janakpur (Jonokpuror janokiye)

Janoki from Janakpur simpers
Today Budhu from Ratanpur nears her

A red hanky tied round Budhu's neck
A copper amulet round his arm
Hair with varied curls
A colourful shirt
The collyrium-lined eyes grin
Today Budhu from Ratanpur nears her.

Janoki's slender waist sway in the wind
Lightning playing on her doe-like eyes
Seem to drift upon the waves of the seven seas
A pair of silver earrings
Swing from the ears
Anklets jingle with each step
What weight makes her hair-knot slip
Today Budhu from Ratanpur nears her.

A pair of soft red lips
Akin to sprouting tea-leaves
The cuckoo's call
Akin to a Jhumur* tune
Burn Budhu's heart
Today Budhu from Ratanpur nears her.

Between the tea plants
A path runs to the distance
At its end sits a fine mart
Every Saturday
From here Budhu returns
What he may bring, what he may not
Janoki is unaware
Only the dream swims in her eyes
Today Budhu from Ratanpur nears her.

*Traditional dance of the tea community of Assam
Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

Jigija gijao (Jigija gijao)

Girl:

Jigija gijao O' gijao jigija gijao
Daughters and daughters-in-law of ordinary people
They have long tresses
In the yard of their youth the marigold blooms.
Basil among the plants, betel leaf among the leaves
Remember among the womenfolk
Chameli is wary of menfolk
Look, fair skinned she ties the tresses into a bun so modestly
With bangles making jingling sounds in her hands
She the fair skinned moves with the gait of a swan.

Chorus:

Can a flower bloom in dew without rain
Can only words attract one, without meeting.

Boy:

Red, flowers of red water lily
Oh, it blooms only at night dear
Which one is more sweet
Is difficult to decide
The pomegranate ripened and split
People feast on it happily
Hell, there is no pundit
That can placate my sweetheart
The bur flower dazzles at night
And my heart longs
Water from your pitcher of youth spills out
And I feel attracted to you.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Ka* Kha Gg Gha (Ka-kha-ga-gha)

Ka-kha-ga-gha, cha sha-ja-jha
Two and two makes it four, dear
Learning A-B-C-D in school
You'd become learned dear.

Our little dears
Would study in schools
Completing studies
They would ride on big cars
Coming to Assam here
We have received so much love dear
Raw gold dangling from the branches
Are tender leaves of money dear.

Plucking leaves grafting toiling heavily
Everything is useless
Going to school
We'd get courage
And revive our nation.

On the dark sky you know
Moons and stars shine
Teacher is a nice person
Will show us the path of light dear
Will give us knowledge dear
Will lead us to good lighting the path dear.

*First eight consonants of Assamese alphabet (same with Sanskrit – Hindi – Bengali)

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Kopili Kopili (Kopili kopili rangdhali soowali)

Kapili* Kopili
Frolicsome maiden
Your intent is never known
Kopili Kopili
In a fit of frenzy
You ruin the crops during monsoon

Kopili Kopili
Young maiden
You're fickle and unconcerned
Kopili Kopili
The curves of your body resonate
With the sweet melodies of youth

Kopili Kopili
You know not the power within you
You know not therein lies hidden
The lustre of a thousand suns

The young scientist comes out all set
Accompanied by a thousand
The workers too come out daring death
Embracing both your banks

Kopili Kopili
Crazy maiden
Provide refuge to the distressed
Umrangshu too would join you
And turn eternally luminous

*Kopili : a tributary of the Brahmaputra with a strong current
Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

Kaziranga is not menacing (Kaziranga bhyaboho nohoi)

Kaziranga, Kaziranga is not a menace
Nor a dark jungle
More menacing than it
Are the teeming masses of the world.

The forest has through the ages
Been the cradle of meditative sages and saints
Who have proffered hundreds of pearls of wisdom and
Brought forth a multitude of philosophers
That is why India is blessed.

Kaziranga is my dream's greenery
My own Kohora, Bagari
The Luit's boundary and my own Difalu
My beloved Kuthari
My Kaziranga is unique.

Kaziranga's evergreen habitat
Is home to the elephant and tiger
And the one-horned rhino which the world gazes
As birds sing melodiously
My Kaziranga is not a jungle.

In Kaziranga together frolics
The Rhino and the bevy of deer
But in the human world
The savage one
When will he learn?
The civilized man one believes
Is praiseworthy.

Kaziranga, Kaziranga
Our Kaziranga is different
Playing in nature's charming lap
Our mind has been cleansed

Translation: Nrripen Dutta Baruah

Krishna* of Kali era (Kolib Krishna)**

Don't tease me as Krishna of Kali
Don't tease me calling Krishna Krishna
I hadn't called you today as Radha***
Don't tease me calling Krishna Krishna
As Krishna of Kali.

There is no sixteen hundred Gopis, **** this is Kali era
I just found you out
Thinking I am extremely lucky
Don't tease me as Krishna of Kali
As Krishna of Kali.

Luit is flowing by Yamuna is quite far
Don't play the flute either, don't know the tune of Krishna
No Raspuṇima****, it is electric lamp
Don't be conceited
Only a little of the night remains
Open your eyes and see
Don't tease me as Krishna of Kali
As Krishna of Kali.

*A Hindu God (Vishnu) in human form. Mentioned here for his Cupid character

**The last of the four eras of Hindu mythology, started in 18th Feb, 3102 BCE.

***The main consort of Krishna

****The other consorts of Krishna

*****Full moon November night When Krishna frolicked with the gopis known as Raasleela

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Leaving behind her father's home my girl (Pitri griho tyagi aai)

Leaving behind her father's home my girl
Walks to her husband's
If two steps go forward
One step retraces backward.

My darling, the little fawn
Does not let you go
How can your father and two friends
Say goodbye to you.

A sea of wealth she'll get at the king's palace
Yet how could she leave the Malini River today.

Oh peacock-crafted boat
Where do you take my girl away
Why don't you reply to
This old tree bereft of leaves.

It ends when the Hindu entity covers the horizon
The Tapovan's lyricist also loses his expression.

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

Let me spread the mat wide (Boholaye paaroon paati)

Lad: Let me spread the mat wide

Do you wish to my dear

Would you stay with me dear

Do you long to be with me sweetheart

Do you wish to join the playful game of love?

Lass: Yes, my dear beloved,

I do wish to play that playful game of love

Lad: Superb!

Lass: Would you truly stay tonight

My dear beloved, I long for it

Lad: Superb!

Lass: Don't deceive me at the final moment

Don't stab my heart

Lad: O darling, my sweetheart

Come to our house as daughter-in-law

My sister-in-law will deck you up

How fun will it be

Would have breakfast together

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Let my songs be (Mur gaan howk)

Let my songs be
A profound assurance
Against pervading lack of trust.

Let my songs be
A hymn to truth
Against falls imaginings
Let my craft reveal some soothing speciality
Let in that song strive
The great life of some committed warrior.

Let my songs hail the struggle of the time
The cascading light of life
Where numerous artists throng.
My song harbours no destructive vision
Nor any disruption
It seeks instead peace unprecedented.

Let the past and the present
Come alive in my symphony
Where even the ever-bright future
Comes for the daily dip.
Let my songs be
Against adamant walls
A force invincible.

Translation: Pradip Acharya

Lienmakau (Lienmakau koon pahar xikhorte)

Lienmakau
Lienmakau
Atop which hill
Are you biding your time ?
Why should I keep
My melodies' lodge vacant
How long shall I keep shedding tears
All alone
Are you lost in thought.

Your long tresses
Your long tresses
Dyed with the diyengsiye* leaves
The touch of the hues of which
Cheers up the swarati** flute to tune
Has it reached your ears ?

O' sky
O' sky
Have you seen my sweetheart ?
Her jeinsem*** is woven with lightning
Her red lips are dabbed with honey
Have you noticed ?

O' dewdrops
O' dewdrops
You're whistling
Khublei Shibun****
Thank you so much
Round the curves of my dream-love
You're smearing your tenderness.

* Khasi name of a tree in Meghalaya
**Bamboo flute of the Khasis
*** A dress commonly worn by Khasi women
**** 'Thank you' in the Khasi language
Translation : Krishna Dulal Barua

Listen people (Xuna xuna hey)

Listen people
please lend your ears
contribution of scientific forests.

The sun is visible
in the distant forests
The forest is nourished
with the rays of sunlight.

Forest is a factory of shower of light
Rains down oxygen vapour relentlessly
The forest extracts scientific elements
From nature by churning.

Thus, the plants and trees
Create carbohydrate
The creatures find the food
For life in that food.

The forest is the medium for service
For human welfare
Let the forest preservation
Be the thought of society.

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Looking at myself (. Nijoke dekhi aajikali)

These days looking at myself
A strange feeling has developed
Seeing myself on the mirror reflection of mine
I feel, it's all a dream.
Today, I no more play the bride- groom game with dolls.
Only until recently, I had been building dollhouses
Why do the dolls seem so human to me.

Why the loving glances tease me
I feel as if, I have understood what the glance trying to say.

A touch of the loved one's finger in the golden daybreak
In the sweet warmth of that touch
The body burns away.

The rain stretched itself and gave a warning
Maybe I've become a young woman,
No childhood anymore.
Know not why I feel shy these days.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Love Brings (Snehei Amaar)

Love brings with the teeming rains
The deluge of a hundred monsoons
The impetuous flood fills
The empty shores of adolescent urges.

Spilling over the line benumbed shores of darkness
It ushers in the tides of vibrant life
The ripples of the charming monsoon
Dance as the songs of new creation.

Your flashing eyes smear the passion
Of silent words
My breath defies the limits of satiety
On the assurance of my hopes.

On love's horizon I sing spirited songs
Humbling the rumble of thunder
The rain's thirst runs after the monsoon
Our eyes too are aware of the goal.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

Love is a four-letter word (Piriti namore tiniti aakhore)

Love is a four-letter word
Into the rock who cut it
That doesn't decay melt nor rust
In the bosom-deep waters it glistens.

The sands of the Luit won't get drenched
Until the stream runs over it
The lovely damsels of the Bhutia stilt huts
Time and again come to my mind
I'll tell who cut it
When into the rock.

In the afternoons in rain or in torrent
The rays of sun over the seven seas
And I can't say
Say any more
I offered a flower bowing to the sea
I fell into the lure of the flower
Who cut it into the rock.

My mind is a dry silk-cotton tree
I'm looking up at the sky
The soft cotton fluff of my heart
Drifts to somewhere else
No smile in my cheerless mind
Who cut it into the rock.

The stubble plain cried also did the stars
The river left its banks
What's the uproar in hills and plains
No praise the loving union finds
No breeze now no wind
The garden withers
Blunders I picked up taking them for blossoms
The petals keep falling
On the twigs no cuckoo is calling
Who cut it into the rock.

Fitfully the mountain cicada wailed
Flitting from one to another castor plant
Correcting myself when will I
Rejoin the tender bond that snapped
Who yells in the clouds
Who cut it into the rock.

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

Look up once again (Bhalke punor suwa ebaar)

Look up once again carefully
Speak, can you recognize me?
Tell me, looking up eye to eye
Has any string of the veena in your mind twang?

In a golden afternoon under the shade of the tree
Sitting face to face on a blue evening
So many song you sang for me
Say, do you still remember?
Tell me, looking up eye to eye
Has any string of the veena in your mind twang?

With the backdrop of blue hills
The citizen gives a beaming smile
Who would sing the love song
I am without you today
Tell me, looking up eye to eye
Has any string of the veena in your mind twang?

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Luit is my home (Luitote moor ghor)

The Luit is my home
Yet the Luit is not my own
The Luit makes and breaks
My lovable dream world.

One day in the sand bar of my hopes
You became mine
And in a boat
You and I merged.
Why have you left me today
Why don't you respond?

Both shores have eluded me
I am stranded in mid-stream
Weeping in anguish at mid night
Like a bird which has lost his lover
I lost you in the last deluge.

The venomous serpent of death
Has bitten you
Ignorant of black magic rituals
I know not how to propitiate the gods
I'll meet you in the after world
And there talk about the present world
The Luit makes and breaks
My lovable dream world

Translation: Nripen Dutta Baruah

Many years ago (Bohu dinor aagote)

Many years ago
Just before the sun set
I caught the flames of your beauty
Still, I recall it.

You came up and knocked
At the closed window
Of my small hut
On that lovely night.

Dark clouds of storm
And countless perils
Harrowed the dreams
Cherished by you and me.

Having seen the plucky tide
In our sea of love
In haste the raging storm
Blew itself out.

Today under the canopy
In the peal of bridal songs
Oy Ram*, you and me are bound
Together in the nuptial tide

*A refrain in Assamese bridal songs
Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

Matsya Kurma Narasinha (Matsya Kurma Narasinha)

Matsya Kurma Narasimha Vamana Parasurama
Haliram Varaha Srirama Buddha Kalki-these ten avataras
You have manifested yourselves lord Krishna
I bow to thee.

Let my darling be safe
We have nothing to offer him for birthday
Let myself be not called a sinner.

In the beautiful hut with an earthen diya
My darling is its wick
Coming into my barren life this darling
wiped my tears.
Your mother cannot make out the way in the mist
Please bless me.

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Mayuri Mayuri (Mayuri Mayuri)

Hero: Mayuri Mayuri

Heroine: Sudarshan Sudarshan

Hero: Mayuri of my heart

You are like the Bon*-Mayuri of my heart

You are like the Mon**-Mayuri of my heart

I am delicate cloud

You are very agile and restless wild stream

Have touched my love –sea.

Heroine: Sudarshan Sudarshan

I beg you with folded hands

Don't steal my heart with passionate love

Am afraid someday the mistake of yesteryears

If visits secretly on slithering legs

I am a wayward Man-Mayuri

Hero: Mayuri, Mayuri

After so many births of struggle

I appear to search you always

Please come to me in a sacred moment

Filling up an empty mind

The Mon-Mayuri I have been seeking ever.

Heroine: (Speech) What to do, what not

Should I proceed or not

Is it fear or some feeling of ashamedness

What a get up in the morning!

Compassion or indulgence or trustful shelter?

You are taking the form of fire in rain

Have driven the trembling Mayuri insane

You have taken away my heart and soul.

Hero : Mayuri, Mayuri

Héroïne : Rain drop dance Joy Fully

Love is coming down in shower

Hero: The clouds make sounds battle drums

Man-Mayuri plays in the heart.

Hero: Mayuri

Heroine: Sudarshan

Hero: Mayuri

Heroine: Sudarshan

Hero: Mayuri

Heroine: Sudarshan

*Jungle

**Mind/heart

Translation: Bibekananda Choudhury

Moinajan Moinajan (Moinajan Moinajan Luit pare holoo)

Moinajan Moinajan I crossed over the Luit
Moinajan Moinajan I crossed over Dikrong river
Moinajan Moinajan I halted at Naoboicha
Moinajan Moinajan searching for a job
Moinajan Moinajan I leave my house and family
Moinajan Moinajan I won't stay at Lakhimpur.

Moinajan Moinajan Tezpur's catfish
Moinajan Moinajan Laluk's knifefish
Moinajan Moinajan how did they get mixed up
Moinajan Moinajan you are from Negheri
Moinajan Moinajan we are from Jorhat
Moinajan Moinajan how we two met.

Moinajan Moinajan moved around Guwahati
Moinajan Moinajan had a round in Duliajan
Moinajan Moinajan no job in Duliajan either
Moinajan Moinajan oil-gas companies
Moinajan Moinajan railways company
Moinajan Moinajan there also no one talks nice.

Moinajan Moinajan in a wet cloth
Moinajan Moinajan body curves are revealed
Moinajan Moinajan none is as good as you
Moinajan Moinajan you must stay well
Moinajan Moinajan keep love for me
Moinajan Moinajan till I return with a job
Moinajan Moinajan treading city paths
Moinajan Moinajan I see so many beauties
Moinajan Moinajan no one as ebullient as you.

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Melody town's melody prince (Sur-nagorir suror kumare)

Melody town's melody prince
Has lost the dream-laced rainbow's lustre.
Listening sweet death's humble prayer
While moving forward to the funeral pyre
The lustre was lost, lustre was lost

On the snow-white trail
Of the fallen Sewali* flowers
Melody forms into an image
And the soft melody's caress
Defeats the image
Defeats the image.

On the night westerly wind arrived
And swept away the image.
Melody, melody the plaintive cry near
And the lustre was lost, lustre was lost.

Out of love the flame offered
A deathly embrace to the moth
Alas when the night ended
In the moth's memory
The flame too has gone out
And the lustre was lost, lustre was lost.

*Jasmine

Translation: Nripen Dutta Baruah

Mist, what prank did you play? (Kuwali, ki rogor korili)

Mist, what prank did you play?
Whose jingling anklet did you hear
From the bygone days?

Forgotten mist
On the silent opposite bank
I have lain for centuries.
Foggy mist what dream have you broken
Whose jingling anklet did you hear
From the bygone days?

From a blind age
In ancient cobwebs I am a prisoner
Unseen forsaken formless.
I've lain
Weeping, I have lain.
Why have you now suddenly
Awakened the thirsty bygone days?

Translation: Nripen Dutta Baruah

Mist-like memory (Suworoni kuwoliye)

Mist-like memory tells us shouting
The past has no bounds
Looking ahead we see the old tumble
As the call of the new resounds.

The footprints left behind on the way of life
Which storm daily wipes them out?
Looking back in vain singing the forgotten song
I only feel worn out.

As if I lost identity looking for something
Even the known one slips away
Moving along today's trends dreaming of tomorrow
My hopes swell day by day.

Translation: Dibya Ranjan Sharma Khataniar

Mangaldai, may your name be auspicious (Mangaldai toomar naam)

(A historical song composed by Dr. Hazarika especially for the 1974 Asam Sahitya Sabha session held at Mangaldoi)

May your name Mangaldai itself bring auspiciousness to all.
If we look back into the history, you'll find an immense heritage.

This land was once named after Mangala, the daughter of a Koch king
Thus the name of this sacred place Mangaldai,.

Here the battle of Hari-Hara, Hari played the war Bugle
That place named Harisinga, still echoes its glory.

“Dau-rang” became “Darrang,” where divine joy was said to have played,
Aryan settlements existed here from the Vedic times itself.

This land popularly known as the city of the king Shah
Traditionally it has been said that he was the father of Sati Beula, as tradition.

This land was once ruled over by the king King Arimatta
The Buri Nagar Lake still stands as a proof.

Son of Chilarai, Parikshit Narayan
Left Koch Bihar and established the rule in Darrang.

Balinarayan came from Parikshit's lineage
And Mangaldai's history shines like a golden chapter.

Enchanting the divine vision of the goddess,
Kendu Kalai was born in Kalaigaon.

Before the Koch kingdom, who ruled this land?
The Bhuyans showed their greatness here.

A British captain named Welsh Sahib
Secretly captured the King Krishnanarayan.

Under the treaty of Yandaboo in 1826,
Freedom was taken away through deception.

Bipra Harihar composed the epic *Lava-Kusha* before the Sankari age,
And became immortal.

Poets like Ram Saraswati,
Dwijda Damodar, and Jayaram Surjyakhori made Mangaldai their home.

Songs of Sarbananda Byaas of Kalai forms clouds,
And Narayandeu's *Suknani* was revered by the world.

Lac art once flourished here in Tangla
Even today many works of fine art continue.

The people of Mangaldai have known revolution
They sought to drive away British oppression.

The farmers' revolution took place In 1894
Many people became martyr in Patharughat .

Shakta and Vaishnava shaped Mangaldai together
Hindus and Muslims sing *Suknani* there.

Different castes, tribes, and communities
Live here together in harmony and unity.

Dhonoti Mujammil, a young martyr of Mangaldai,
The Assamese language still illuminates with his blood.

The blood of martyr Mujammil protects the Assamese language—
Because of him Mangaldai becomes a sacred land.

How many praises can I convey through this song about Mangaldai?
Except countless salutations from the singer Bhupendra.

Translation: Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Monalisa Lyngdoh from Shillong (Shillongore Monalisa Lyngdoh)

Monalisa Lyngdoh from Shillong
You go on playing
Hilly billy music on your guitar.

Monalisa, Monalisa, Monalisa
Which Leonardo has created you
How could you be so beautiful?

Do you remember that Sunday morning
On the Shillong peak
Both of us getting wet in the drizzle
Listening to the shepherd's flute melody?

You are today somewhere in Laban
And after the transfer of the capital
I am now in Dispur.
Your...our...memory, Monalisa, is
As red as the chrysanthemum
Please come to Nongpoh once
If I am granted leave, I too will go there
Our minds again we will barter
To the tune of the guitar
On some pleasant not-too-far-away morning there.

Translation: Dibya Ranjan Sharma Khataniar

My breath soft like reed grass (Kohuwa koomol uxah moor)

My breath soft like reed grass
Is getting choked
The closed sky is melting down
And came in the form of a captive.

What is the breath made of
Sweet affection
What is the sky made of
Sweet amour
Effort to explain is sweet
But union of amour between two lives.
Is far sweeter
The uncovered sky appears to have melted down
And transformed into an embrace.

The yearning for union through the eons
Has titillated me sweetly
Some hopes some despair
Becomes expressionless.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

My heart thumps (Buku hom hom kore)

My heart thumps in anguish, mother
Who robs me of my sleep, mother
As your son how do I retrieve you
Mother, I'd embrace death for your sake.

Engulfed is the nation's moon by a doomy darkness
Each bodily pore brims with vile fire.

Mother, the encircling forts are firm as thunder-bolts
I'll break the ramparts in no time.

With the dawn of freedom
I'll console you, mother
With my sacrificed blood
Mother, I'll erect an altar.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

My mind's tiger (Moor mon bagh)

If mind's tiger were a bird today
And a hawk from somewhere gives it chase
Marvelling at its lack of guts
What ever could I say?

If my land lies fallow today
And my mother comes wailing to me to say
Why didn't give me a patch of green
What ever could I say?

If my heart were a sail today
Lashed only too often by the storm
Would I hide my face and yell
Rendering the blue sky asunder?

If my land were mother today
And wailing, she repeatedly says
What is that you've done for me
What could I possibly say?

Translation: Pradip Acharya

My mind is in a frenzy (Oliya-boliya mon)

My mind is in a frenzy
Frenzied is my mind
As a creator of beauty I crush the sordid
On novelty rests my pledge.

I adorn the elegant earth
Into which you instil life
With the seven-hued rainbow
I make the sky pallid.

You'll be my companion
A life-force along my path
We'll shape the old world anew
Yoking our minds together.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

My flighty mind, a Nodding Reed (Kohuwa bon moor axonta mon)

My flighty mind, a nodding reed
Hold it gently with tender hands
Every point of time, a costly pearl
Never returns if whiled away.

On a sudden fall from the azure sky
A single star caresses the earth
In the silent night, all murky dark
Let every bit of time fill with a will
Never rebounds if frittered away.

Dreaming in the small hours
I saw the flash that escaped fast.
Wandering dins ruffle up
Sleep of sea of endless time.
O crazy mind
Why so wild?
Let the Sun bring next dawn.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

My every neuron (Dehor rondhre rondhre)

Speech: My life chariot once came to a sudden halt.

Then,
The touch of your lips moved my every neuron,
Fragrance of love is now on rhythmic rise.
My mind is dancing
In what an unbound pleasure!

With a winning spirit
I had a way-faring mind
Street was my only company.
Under a tree, the chariot wheels stopped for a while.
All on a sudden there itself
My joyful tears showered on your bosom.

My entire being is now blessed
For the sweet shelter that you have offered
I shall not exploit your simplicity
The pleasure of love will remain only in memory.
Does a gypsy have ever a home?
It seems our union, of course, has no sanction.

Let this union be a symbol of eternal separation
In longing for an infinite union.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

My shadow and me (Koone koi moi okolxoria)

Who says I'm in isolation
Me and my shadow
Both are not apart
No one ever departs.

Don't say O Earth that I'm lonely,
For keeping solitude as my company
Why do you then sneer at me?
My shadow and me
Me and my shadow

A distant friend is only a shadow
All that real is the nearest shadow

Edifice of hopes
When I make on the sands
It's my shadow that gathers sand.
Rolling out a carpet of light
My shadow makes my darkened lane bright.
Me and my shadow.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

My silent ailing mother (Mouna moor rugia mai)

My silent ailing mother counts her moments of release
Seeing me beside her today, a pale smile she displays.

Mother's body holds no strength, her voice did disappear
Yet seeing her eldest child brings her hope more and more.
Through silent tears, she reaches out to me today—

A lover of peace was my mother, yet peace she could not find
The radiant glow of her face from the past withered and slipped away
Why the dark death begins its cruel dance between mother and I—

She who bore me, gave me life, my mother sweet and dear
Yet helplessly we stand and watch, unable to do anything here
It seems, with death, her life is fighting its final fray—

Today, my mother, seems like my child, and I—her guardian
Two spirits, mother and son, seek to merge as one.
In my arms, it feels as though her gentle peace has begun—

Silent night, silent hour, silent aching cry
Silent am I, silent my mother, melancholy fills the sky.
As if the soul seeks to blend into the Divine Supreme—

How many lovers came and went, how many flatterers' schemes
How many enemies clad as friends shook the pillars of my home.
Is there a true friend like a mother in this wide world—

I sing a verse of a song that she taught me as a child
I watch her face up close as she drifts off to sleep
In this lifetime, for the very last time, she hears the song I weave—

Coming from afar, I gently stroke mother's hand
With my tears upon her brow, I etch love's tender strand
Her weeping blessings are now resting upon my face.

Forsaking every earthly bond, she prays for final peace—
My silent ailing mother counts her moments of release
Seeing me beside her today, a pale smile she displays.

Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

My sweetheart (Senai moor Oi.)

My sweetheart you came along
With a sweet humming, you winked
Shivers run down my body.
On a sweet evening
Why did you taunt me
Touch me and take an oath
Not to repeat so ever.

Asian Koel and Indian Cuckoos croon intermittently
I the habitual dancer too dance intermittently
Darling, you appeared in this sweet spring
The Kapou* flutters in joy in the knot of my tresses
And with the Kapou bloom
On my calves
The waves are dancing so endearingly.

My sweet darling – your eyes glitter
My sweet darling – you smile naughtily
My sweet darling – stay here tonight
My sweet darling – beehive of love
My sweet darling – the old folks would forgive us
The red river is flowing babbling gurgling
Speaking of you even creeper dances at your command
You really singed a young lady's heart
What pleasure do you get by roasting you close ones
My mind is open and flowering.

You should melt in love
Under the open sky
In the embrace of my arms
On the night of Bihu.

*An orchid (*Rhynchostylis retusa*) the state flower of Assam.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

New generation (Naba naba purusor)

One cannot trample under foot
The expression of deprivation of new generation
One can continue tyranny only temporarily
With the aid of oppression of police.

Current issues would make today's students ponder
If one expresses with peace
Tyrant, don't send
Your atrocious force.

Why don't you hold responsible
The so-called masked intellectuals
And the forged writers
writing indigestible textbooks?

Speech:

We understand
This demonic forces
Are maintained by public money
Then why don't you send them
To crush the hoarders of food items?

The baby that is born today
Is only an icon of tomorrow.

A twenty-year* youth today
Will be a citizen of India tomorrow.

This revolutionary century will definitely struggle
Shouting at the top of their voice
So don't ever try to put a barrage of falsehood
With the demonic ways of old school of thought.

The powerful youthhood of today's youth
Would make their planning now
In the forthcoming twenty-first century
That would become a new reality.

Twenty-first century would light up soon
The diya of new culture
To cross over the twentieth century
Just a couple of decades is left.

The cause of anger of today's youth
Can be analysed with patience
So don't spill even a drop of blood unnecessarily
Biting demonic bytes.
Beware miscreants

The clock of life's time
Cannot be made to run
in opposite direction.

*At the time of writing the song, the voting age was twenty-one
Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Never looked for heavenly body (Akaxi gonga bisora nai)

I never looked for a heavenly body
I never ever craved for a bejewelled body.
In the relentless struggle of life
I could do with some sweet words.

In the ocean, I've counted many a wave
In the cities I've lost my ways many a time.
Searching for the light of love
I have flowed down my tears in secret.
In the relentless struggle of life
I seek sweet words from a soft heart.

Maybe everyday I'm crowned
With garlands by thousands,
Why do I then still long for
Endearment from a special one!
My voice-blood I have flowed over
In many a great theatre
The audience I've enthralled all the while
And I lit up their faces with a smile.
In these silent and lonely moments
Who'll lighten the burden of my grief?
In the relentless struggle of life
I could do with some sweet words.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

No joy, no sorrow (Sukh nai dukh nai)

[What is this time? Time or time of distress? It is the time which throttles the world of thoughts. I wrote this song on 27th May 1989 seeing the condition of Assam at the time of distress-with my feeling.]

No joy, no sorrow
As if there is nothing
No laughter; even tears in eyes have dried.

The river is there but no water
No ripples big or small
Not the slightest life-yearning flow.

The clock has no hands
Time has no pace
Time cannot pull down obstacles
Today even time breaks into pieces.

At this terrifying moment
Each dead
Gazes at faces on a dissolving mirror.

Whose principles go where
There is no outcome
Only death, night and day,
Continues to play a game of dice;
Today beauty flees in terror.

Translation: Arup Kumar Dutta

No need, no need of society (Nelage somaj, nelage nelage)

No need, no need of society, no need of
The clock showing time
Making us the lookers-on for a while
Let time pause with its chime.

Snatching the golden-hour rainbow
Tearing it into pieces
I'll throw them to your body
On your bed deck the pieces.

Taking a few strands of lightning's forelock
Hued in the west the hearty bond
We'll wind around our bodies
The sky also will give us a nod.

Breaking into pieces time and again
The history of hindrance
I'll throw the pieces into darkness
Somewhere they will drift.
I turned into the heavens of the storm
Having ignited the sea waves
No need of dawn, be it night eternal sleepless.

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

No wind no breeze (Hawa nai batas nai)

No wind no breeze
Everything gone, no joy
How do I stay alive without you
How do I cross the sea.

My abode is like a bird nest
My soul bird has flown away
My hopes were shattered
Death is boundless.
How do I stay alive without you
How do I cross the sea.

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Nurtured by Mother Assam (Asomi aaire lalita-palita)

Nurtured and raised by Mother Assam
I'm her foster daughter
I'll always uphold Assam's honour
What more need I say?

All my life I've heard Mother Assam's charming voice
All my life I've learned Mother Assam's charming voice;
With reverence I've embraced the melodies of Bihu
Honoured the Borgeet and Jikir with betel offerings
Spun the rich Muga yarn;
From the cool well of the Brahmaputra banks
Drinking its sweetened water
I'll always uphold Assam's honour
What more need I say?

Let the world say what it may
I'll not seek the company of unknown birds
Mother Assam has nurtured and raised me
How can I ever become a knave?
Never forsaking her love
I'll always uphold Assam's honour
What more need I say?

In the fragrant with screw pine blossoms,
Breathing the evening breeze fragrant with screw pines
I grew up into a maiden
I'll never poison the air of Assam
This is my heartfelt pledge
With the loving oath
Of benevolent- Mother Assam
I'll always uphold Assam's honour
What more need I say?

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' aunt, O' uncle (Pehi O' peha)

Governance can't rely solely on preaching.
Only when the people and the rulers work together
The nation can be saved.

O' aunt, O' uncle, come this way—
Rongmon, Usman, please sit aside,
Let me place the Gamocha of service on my shoulder,
And tell you the story of a handful of rice.

You may see the freedom and politics,
But everything rests beneath a handful of food;
If people do not get the nectar of rice,
All policies turn to poison.

Today, there is such scarcity of rice in ration shops,
Only the open market has it;
But there, prices burn like fire—
Only the wealthy can eat four times a day.

You sweat and plant paddy
You deserve a fair price for your labour;
Those whoever exploits you
Even hell would deny him a place.

What could the poor peasant do?
The paddy is sold where there is money
Taking huge profits, thieving demons
And send it off to distant lands.

O' aunt, O' uncle,
Look around—
Masked thieves
Carry on their trade today.

No rice, no paddy
Where has it all gone?
The people grow weaker day by day.

So now your government
Has taken control of the paddy trade,
Thinking that farmers
Must get a fair price.

Taking control of the trade by the government
Means the trade is in the hands of the people.

After all this government was formed by you
Praising its new policy
Now, your cooperatives will distribute the grain
At affordable prices
In towns, cities, and villages
So the everyone can eat two meals a day.

The old policy was harsh,
Unfair to the peasants;
They received poor prices
When the poor sold raw paddy out of hunger.

Under the old system—
If you sold in Agrahayan*, you got less;
In Paush*, even less;
In Magh*, the price dropped further;
In Phagun*, it fell again—
Such unjust rules gave no value to raw paddy.
But now, even raw paddy fair price
Equal to dried grain.

How can distribution be possible without collection?
If peasants do not sell paddy,
How will the cooperatives survive?
With hope for the people, cooperatives are formed—
They must be protected;
Only if run honestly by the people
Will remove suffering.

Earlier, farmers had to wait long
To receive payment;
Now, under the new system,
They receive cash immediately in hand.
Rice will be stocked in different regions according to need
Only then can shortages
Be removed.

Let me tell you about another flaw
Earlier, collected paddy was milled centrally
And only rice was distributed;
But now, under the new policy,
Where paddy is needed, only the paddy will be sent,
Rice will be supplied where rice is needed.

Though the government has taken the wholesale control,
Small traders still have some freedom
They can also buy and sell a limited quantity.
Earlier, private individuals dominated procurement;
Their power was immense;
But now, the cooperatives alone
Will handle collection
So that the peasants' labour is valued
And remains in the hands of the people.

If this new policy fails,
Hundreds of capitalists will rise again
And exploit the people immediately
With their exploitative ways.

Those who steal grain mock this policy
The people will starve
If such forces are not destroyed,
Revolution can be shouted aloud
But it can also happen in silence;
O' my farmer brothers and sisters, think deeply—
So speaks Bhupendra.

*Months of Assamese Calander

Translation: Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' Ayub Khan (O' Ayub Khan aaru Bhuttujan)

O' Ayub Khan and Bhutto too—
Who is the fox and who is the lion?
Intoxicated with arrogance

Crying out, we won't listen, we won't listen!
At least hear a few naked truths.

That day I saw in the sky
A long-tailed star bouncing off
I heard that in Jammu
The minarets of a mosque had collapsed.

You do not bother about others, not even your own religion;
You yourself have threatened it with death.
What will you teach the Kashmiris
Who prays for peace, about the Quran?

In my secular sky
Thousands of 'net' aircraft are flying;
If they overturn how many of your 'Sabre jets'
Gifted by your compassionate Americans, will remain?

Perhaps the merchant of falsehood, Zhou Enlai
Has given you some affection and pain;
What you had never understood before, you down upon now-
The greed of a white jackal in disguise!

Ghaffar Khan Azad ushered in freedom
Accepting lifelong imprisonment;
Only later did you sprout, Ayub and Bhutto—
You cannot even match his stature.

Zakir, Sadiq, Chagla, Mir Qasim—
Heroes of progress and humanity;
Wearing the mask of religion in the twentieth century
Will not break the church of Ambala.

You dream of marching across Delhi
With your batons and Patton tanks;
But along the banks of Lahore's Ichhogil Canal
Our soldiers stand guard.

You have no elections, no republic—
You are the ruins of colonialism;
With impure logic, you have destroyed
Even the freedom of Pakistan's people.

With dictatorship rule for a few days
You have snatched away Pakistan's independence;
The Baluch Pashtun, Pathan, Wazir,
Afridi and Khattak do not seek your refuge.

Calling our land a “Kafir-stan”
How long will you provoke us?
With representative chosen by crores of Muslim brothers
India keeps moving on.

This age belongs to humanity alone;
Shame on the frogs in narrow wells.
Stand firm over the chest of raging injustice—
Victory to eternal principles!

Listen, listen—these final word, Ayub Khan:
Abandon your dreams of conquering India;
Among us are thousands and thousands
Of fearless heroes like Abdul Hamid.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Baruah and Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O beautiful one (Sundori chaow kinu Kalpana)

Boy: O beautiful one, I long to behold your lovely imagination.
What graceful designs can you create?

Girl: Dreams and designs—
Every vision my heart can paint.
Tell me, why should I reveal them to you?

Boy: Why don't you paint me instead?
Am I not as handsome as
Dwaraka's Aniruddha? Tell me!

Girl: You'd better go and look at yourself in the mirror first—
And I'm no Chitralekha either. Haven't you heard? Tell me!

Boy: Very well, perhaps you're no one's Chitralekha,
Nor anyone's Princess Usha.

Girl: I am like the sweet moon in the sky—
Forever beyond anyone's reach.

Boy: If you are the moon,
Then I too am the sun;
Upon your silver face
I'll paint a loving kiss.

Girl: Ah, radiant Sun!
Why such dazzling splendour?
How shall I ever bear
Your sweet, burning warmth?

Boy: You're a restless river,
With playful, dancing waters;
You sweep away my very soul.
A hundred times I'd gladly bathe
In the cool, liberating waters
Of your river. I invite you
Into the deepest chambers of my heart.

Girl: At the thought of you,
My heart beats ever faster.
Body and soul have become
An Alpana of my love.
Whose brush has painted these colours?

Boy: Your Alpana is so smooth, so tender,
Even Kamadev would lose his footing!
Now tell me -
How can I ever embrace you?

Girl: Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

Translation: Debashish Bezbaruah

O' beauty! O' peerless beauty! (Aparupa Aparupa)

O' beauty! O' peerless beauty!
In the azure sky of infinity
You're a point of eternity.

O' peerless beauty
A pearl you are, a pearl
Haven't you realised!

You've broken the cage of cobwebs
You've lightened the weight of woes
Being a fugitive all along
Why do you now seek to be a bird
Haven't you seen the honey of the soil.

Within your very clasp lies
The chariot of your life
You can break or pave
Your self-chosen path
You haven't lost any point of sanity.
O' beauty' peerless beauty !

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

O' Bihu's Birina* (O' Bihurenu birina-O' Aaita)

O' Bihu's Birina,-O' granny,
The dancer's calf muscles sways
O' Bihu's Birina,-O' granny,
Kerumoni-Thuria**,
Our companion above all, O' granny you're our peer-
In Bohag, let us marry O' granny
O' Kerumoni-Gejera***, do not take umbrage
I just want to keep looking O' granny,
To gaze and gaze forever.

In the Solguri tea-estate amidst the woods
There, oh there, I wish to lounge.
At Sumola's weaving loom, in the town of Sonapur,
Only there, only there do I wish to lounge, O' granny
Why are you so silent, why have you
Why, have you, why have you
Why have you set foot on the bloom of youth?

I do not want a garden job,
Nor do I desire fleeting wealth.
You'll sow the paddy
I'll plough the fields
That'll be the true wealth of our life.

O' my dear, your home is across the river
And mine is on this side;
And again dear, when you go to the riverbank
I will keep waiting, watching the path, just for you.

How I enjoy, granny- really do I enjoy
Beholding your face that's akin too full moon?
Beholding your eyes akin to the stars of heaven.
Beholding your nose akin to a Sesame flower.
How I enjoy granny-really do I enjoy
Beholding your teeth akin to pomegranate seeds.
Oh, how I enjoy beholding you granny!

*Vetiver grass

**Traditional Assamese gold earring

***Traditional Assamese gold necklace

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

O' buddy, keep rowing (Gum gum gum gum meghe gorojile)

O' buddy, keep rowing the boat of life
The clouds rumble
The storm rages
There are crocs in the deep waters
Yes friend, there are
Crocs too meet their end
Yes friend, they do
Brawny are your arms
You've the guts of a thousand elephants
O' buddy, free yourself from fear and hesitation.

Eh, a heart-rocking maelstrom
So what ?
See, a boat sinks in the mid-waters
So what ?
Eh, the oar is broken
Hey, where are the hands gone ?
The sail is torn
Hey, where's the chest gone ?
O' friend, wipe away your tears and smile.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

O familiar one, beloved of my heart (Chinaki chinaki)

O familiar one, beloved of my heart,
It is for you alone that I was born;
Across opposite your mooring point
I have tethered my little boat.
Whether you have recognized me or not, I could not know.

The evening hours seem so drenched and heavy,
Life has turned into something like floating water hyacinth.
Whether you have noticed it or not, I do not know.

Mistaking a black serpent for a precious jewel,
I wore it around my neck;
Mistaking thorns for flowers,
I tucked them into my hair knot.
Whether you have seen this or not, I could not know.

You remain on the other bank, while I am on this side
And between us flows the river of memories
Whether you have seen a bridge across it
I could not know.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

O' Kokaiti O' (O' kokaiti O' ki hol..)

Younger Brother:

O' Kokaiti... O'!

Elder Brother:

What has happened?

Tell me, what's it?

Younger Brother:

Why does this Dipali keep staring at me

Coyly and hesitantly?

Elder Brother:

Bhaiti**, you don't seem to understand—

I think she has fallen in love with you.

Younger Brother:

And why does Karabi

Stand by the window

And look at me so endearingly?

Elder Brother:

Bhaiti, this is the sign of first love,

This is the time of peeking up love.

Younger Brother:

But when I see Dipali and Karabi

With Dipak Baruah,

I feel something fishy...

Elder Brother:

Oh, that's serious, brother!

I have no advice in such matters.

Your age is colourful and lively—

You understand, yet don't understand anything.

Both:

Wherever the eyes are cast, they pause therein—

There is no wish to avoid anyone.

Younger Brother:

And why does Lipika Devi

Send me blue letters

Filled with lots of sweet words?

Elder Brother:

Bhaiti, there's no one as naïve as you!

I've heard she writes letters to many.

Younger Brother:

And look—That Anjana,

With swan-like gait,

Coming towards me...

Elder Brother:

Bhaiti, why aren't you careful?
People say she is in love with many.

Elder Brother (warning):

I'm warning you—

Younger Brother:

And there Champa, with her gentle smile,
Why does she sing so sweetly?

Younger Brother:

Kokaiti, you too don't seem to understand.

Elder Brother:

I do understand—she is singing for you.

Younger Brother:

You too don't understand the language of the song at all.

Elder Brother:

I understand—there's nothing beyond the song itself.

*Elder brother in Assamese

**Younger brother in Assamese

Translation: Krishna Dulal Baruah and Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' Malati, listen (O' Malati kotha eti)

O' Malati, listen
O' Malati, I need to tell you something,
O' Malati, listen carefully
My marriage is supposed to take place during this Bohag itself,
My heart flutters
With a new thrill.

The well-built young man whom I saw once
During last Magh singing Bihu songs
He stole my heart;
He said right there
“That he'd die if he didn't get me,”
Why does my heart tremble now
With an unknown fear?

Under the wedding canopy—Oi-Ram*
They will bath us —Oi-Ram,
The very thought of it makes my body tingle.
The sacred fire of the ritual—Oi-Ram,
The long veil—Oi-Ram,
The very thought of it makes my mind throb.

I had thought after marriage he would take me to the town
But he openly said he wouldn't go in search of a job there
In happiness and sorrow we he wished to live
Tilling the fellow village land
Together we'll build our heaven
In our own village.

*Assamese expression for 'Oh, my God!'

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' Mother Saraswati (Aai Saraswati O')

Young Maiden:

O' Mother Saraswati, O' Colourful medlar,
What shall I offer you?

Man:

What shall I offer?

Young Maiden:

I'll offer you a white goat
Sacred grams, rice-pudding
Shashi Milondoi,
Shashi Milondoi, Bakhar Kolidoi,
Bakhar Kolidoi and Mangaldoi
with sacred gram, rice-pudding.

Man:

I've four storehouses of black shirts and kurtas

All four are filled—

Ah, one cannot even look into her eyes,
They burn like black pepper, Milondoi
Sahi Milondoi
Shashi Milondoi, Bakhar Kalidoi,
Bakhar Kalidoi and Mangaldoi
They burn like black pepper.

Young Maiden:

Go away! Don't come near me,
Stay far away
Don't even look at me!
You clumsy and filthy one
Your waist will bend in one blow!

Man:

Oh, what's love? I can't understand
Is it some divine illusion?
If you don't accept me, who will?
I wish to marry you even in my tur light years.

Young Maiden:

Don't bring betel leaves from the trader
Nor curd from the cowherd
Even if you bring me ornaments,
An oldster like you
I'll never call you my husband!

Man:

O' my dear, my dear, if I can't marry you,
I 'll elope with you!
No need for the sacred fire

If I don't take a dancer as you away
I'll die a bachelor!

Young Maiden:

What did you say? You'll take me away?
Do you have that much of guts?
Only if you do so, I'll think you're a real man—
Then I'll run after you!

Man:

In the forests of Rajgarh I own no land,
Yet a deed bears my name
I must take you away
Or my life will be in vain Milondoi,

Shashi Milondoi,
Shashi Milondoi, Bakhar Kalidoi
Bakhar Kalidoi and Mangaldoi
Or else, life will be meaningless.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' mortal, you must go (A' naro-monish jaboi lagibo toi)

O' mortal
You must go
Wipe away your tears
Leaving behind everyone's trust, O' mortal.

The golden ornaments have gathered rust
No one values those rusts anymore
What's the use of wandering aimlessly, O' mortal?

Always recognize the shopkeeper
Always recognize the trader
Always recognize your dear mate
The buyer who truly recognizes human beings
The mart of life will come to an end, O' mortal.

With aspirations
You swept the floor
You filled a glossy bowl
With nectar
Laying low stool joyfully

On the floor of the grand house,
Rats are scurrying
In the bowl of nectar,
Poison overflows
O' Lord the stool has been taken away.

In a fake ocean you've taken away dips
Swimming and struggling until exhaustion
Hoping to find pearls, O' mortal

But in the ocean, there's no trace of pearls
No water even to drink in fatigue
There exists only the web of illusion, O' mortal.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' moonlit dipanwita* (O' jonali dipanwita)

O' moonlit Dipanwita,
Dipanwita, Dipanwita.
O' moonlit Dipanwita,
Dipanwita, Dipanwita.
In the dim flickering darkness of the autumn night
Tiny lamps begin to sparkle and glow
And the golden earth is illuminated.

Lamps are lit in every home
With auspicious chants and offerings;
Divine children frolic
Spreading a carpet of light.

O' moonlit Dipanwita,
Dipanwita, Dipanwita.
Dipanwita is but for a few days—
A gust breeze shall come
And usher into the world
A darkness again.

Yet to dispel the darkness of sorrow
From the lives of countless people on this earth
O' worshipper of beauty, light the lamp
With the blood of your own heart
And spread Dipanwita the festival of equality.

*Festival of light

Translation: Krishna Dulal Baruah and Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O My Guru* (Kusshumboro putro Sri Snakar)

O' my Guru,
The son of Kusumbar, Srimanta Sankardev,
Chanted the hymns
With the tune of those hymns
In bliss danced the sacred Bordowa** shrine.
O' my Guru, at the sacred Bordowa shrine.

Endless sufferings have you endured, O' Sri Sankar,
In the name of Dharma***.
You turned your back on all worldly sorrows, O' Guru—
Blessed is the land of Assam
O' my Guru, blessed is the land of Assam.

You built the Naamghars**** and united the people
Bringing them together on the seat of unity.
Through Bhaonas***** and the golden Borgeets*****
You spread the divine message
O' my Guru, you spread the divine message.

Drop by drop tears fall from my eyes
As I bow at your sacred feet
Waves of sorrow rises in the sky of Assam—
Today, Sri Sankar is no more
O' my Guru, today Sri Sankar is no more.

*Spiritual guide

**Birthplace of Sankardev

****Religion

****Congregational prayer-house

*****Five hundreds year performing art combining drama, music and dance

***** Devotional songs of Assam

Translation: Krishna Dulal Baruah and Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' my sweet darling (Haire praner basa moor)

O' my sweet darling
You are not in my lap
Wherever I look there is darkness.

The baby is not there in my embrace
I am not happy
My heart cries.

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

O' my sweetheart (Senai moor O')

Young Girl: My sweetheart
I had been something
In my youth
Did not call a bloom a bloom
My hands overflowed with Thuriya Tamol*
My hair bun brimmed with flowers.

Young Boy: O Navami
The oily bridge over Rangajaan
Slippery like an oil spilled one
Where there is no foothold
I can't stay in peace without meeting you during the day
How do I bear through the night.

Young Girl: My dear young man
Whimpering for Hasati**
Have woven Hasati young lad
You'll get Hasati but not me
You'll get the Gamosa*** but not my heart
O you'll go downstream
Will reach Banana Garden
Don't cut the leaves from the base
Take the meal
Like a guest
But don't dare to touch me.

Young Boy: O dear damsel
The oil has gone stale in the bowl
Body is stinking with sweat.
Blow a whistle
At the entrance
Will both go out together

Young Girl: You yearn for me young man
I don't feel like going with you
Don't look at me coyly
A dwarf cannot reach the moon ever
You must take a dip in the Ganges
To get someone like me
Lie at the feet of creator
Don't hold my hand
I beg you
I'd die of shame
My darling sweetheart
My darling sweetheart.

*Combination of peeled areca nut and betel leaf –
an offering of love and respect in Assamese society

**A narrow hand-woven cloth tied around the waist

***A hand-woven cloth; A symbol of love and utmost respect of Assamese society.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

O' you, unruly mind (O' toi obuj mon)

O' you, unruly mind
You have not recognized the way of love
Make sure that in quest of the true path
You do not slip upon the false one.

Love involves two individuals
Two people of one mind
One melody of two minds
One's emptiness is filled by another
You have forgotten this.

Upon the seedling
You planted in the garden of youth
You grew a flower
Yet, without knowing it, with your own hands
You've plucked the petals off that flower.

In the world of love
There's no place for self-pride, of obduracy or repentance
The two are burnt for their own fault
The two cannot be together at every moment
You did not keep this in mind.

Translation: Arup Kumar Dutta

O dear weaver girl at the handloom (O bandhoi tator salor sipini)

O dear! Weaver girl at the handloom
O dear! Is she Radha or Rukmini?
O dear! Her glances like the lightening
My heart flutters to see.

O dear! I'm a simple village youth
I toil and sweat in the sun
O dear! I plough and make the field shine
My heart yearns for a bride.

O dear! I cannot offer you
O dear! A drum-shaped pendent set in gold
O dear! Nor a moon shaped enamelled pendent
My heart is heavy

O dear! I've but a Katha* of land
O dear! I'll preserve and cling to it
O dear! I'll stake my life on it
Let none seize it from me.

O I say, the weaver girl sets her eyes on me
O I say, she smiles in a coy manner
O I say, she'll accept me as her groom
She signs with a glance of her eyes.

*A measure of land
Translation: Upendra Nath Sarma

O' dear wild bird (Bonore pokhiti)

O' dear wild bird
Can you play with the little buddy, our Jonti*
Can you play with our cute lotus bud, our Sonti*?
The cute little boy in the garden, our Dhonti*!

You are Shakuntala's** jewel in the heart
You glitter and sparkle day and night
You are the lodestar of mother's delight
You light up her little cottage bright!

You drink your honey from the lotus
Your milk from the Divine cow
You wear your Tilak*** of sandalwood
And the colors of the rainbow!

You have our love beyond all measures
May you grow like an endless treasure
You make the world a greater place
You soothe the sorrows of mankind
May you live long through history
You are our sweetest Dhonti
Our cute little lotus bud, Jonti!

*Colloquial pet names to call a little boy in Assam

** A mythological character, wife of King Dushyanta

***a symbolic mark applied to forehead of a Hindu man or woman

Translation: Er.Rabin Goswami, USA

O' friend, O friend of the other bank (O' bandho, O' siparor bandho)

O' friend, O' friend of the other bank, listen—
This bank lies in darkness
A severe has covered the sky
Do ferry me across

Defying clouds and rain
Shall I ferry you to the other side
But for leaving that bank behind
With what hope have you accepted defeat?
Defying clouds and rain
Shall I ferry you across.

The oar breaks, the wood being rotted,
A boat made of weak silk-cotton
I don't understand the current of life
Nor the nature of these waters—
Still, ferry me across.

I've somehow brought myself to this bank
Leaving the other side behind;
If you reminisce about that abandoned bank
In despondence!
Yes, I've come to this side
Leaving the other bank behind.

I want not
Any attachment with this bank;
I seek the enchanting form
Of the other side—
Ferry me across.

When one reaches the other bank,
This side beckons again and again
An endless thirst remains;
Going back and forth between the banks
Is a cycle of desire.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

O' Friend from abroad (O' bidexi bondhu)

O' friend from abroad, so unfortunate
My friend, why are you today all alone
I hear echoes of your sobbing.

You set sail upon the ocean of love
But found no harbour
In a tiny whirlpool you were trapped
And lost your anchor.

Amidst the evergreen you saw Chameli
So charming and captivating;
But as you stroked it and took its fragrance,
Chameli withered and fell.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' God, you created this (O' hari ikhon srojilla)

O' God, thou hast created this—what a peaceful abode!
Like a serene sanctuary,
Where sage Valmiki* seems to be seated like the Himalayas.
O' Hari**...

Seated upon the altar of knowledge is the great Valmiki
Holding a swan-feather pen, he composes the Ramayana.
O' Hari...
The disciples bring flowers, their cloths filled to the brim,
Young deer dance alongside in joy.
O' Hari...

The sandalwood forest sways spreading its fragrance all around
The Parijat***flowers smile enchanting the bees
O' Hari....

The disciples bring flowers, wrapped in their cloths filled to the brim
Fawns dance alongside in joy.
O' Hari...

*Author/composer of the epic Ramayana

**God

***Heavenly flower

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' huffy friend (O' abhimani bondhu)

O' huffy friend
O' huffy friend,
Do not misunderstand me
Do not forget me
Do not drift away.

O' huffy friend,
Do not misunderstand me,
Do not forget me
Do not drift away.

You accused me of being unrestrained,
Perhaps you are right
I have no right over others
And thus my path is impeded.

So, I bid farewell, I accept defeat
Yes, I bid farewell and accept defeat
After fighting against fate.
Do not forget me
Do not drift away.

O' huffy friend,
Do not misunderstand me,
Do not forget me
Do not drift away.

I set up my tent at your assemblage,
I played my hidden games
A vagrant life—I find no home
My world remains empty.

O' huffy friend,
Do not misunderstand me,
Do not forget me
Do not drift away.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Baruah and Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O Luit, why? (Bistrinor paarore)

On the vast expanse of the either side
When the multitude cries
O Luit, why
Silently
You keep flowing; but why?

Seeing the erosion in morality and
The degradation of humanity
O Luit, why
Brazenly and shamelessly
You keep flowing; but why?

Starved subjects
Unenlightened and unlettered
All without grace and guidance
Still, you enjoy your silence; but why?

With the power and frenzy of countless monsoons
Why don't you awaken the crippled humanity
And build them more advanced and robust.

An individual, if self-centred,
And a stratum without identity,
Why don't you stamp out that limping society?

If you happen to be a divine boon
Why don't you awaken the masses?

Why don't you rouse the befitting heroes
Who fought to the last
To revive their glorious past
O Luit! Why?
Why don't you?

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

O' little cuckoo, what are you singing? (O' kuliti ki gaisa)

O' little cuckoo, what are you singing?

“Piya, Piya, Piya”

No, it is “hiya diya niya” *

Not “Piya, Piya, Piya”—

It is “hiya diya niya.”

The ancient woods are endless

With a thousand tremors of the streams_

Oh dear, are you mine or someone else's?

I promise, I am always yours.

Amid this hope, this joy, something goes wrong—

Aa the blooming of Crape Myrtles on a Coral tree.

I move ahead day and night,

A traveller of endless melodies

May mournful nights never come,

Let there always be new creations

You keep singing,

I penned the songs

That you sing

Let golden sunshine

Trickle with

Overflowing green

As sweet poetry.

*Exchange of hearts

Translation: Krishna Dulal Baruah and Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' in the hovels in India (O' bharotore pojaghorot)

O', in the hovel in India,
By the riverbanks
In the golden fields
Let the flute of joy resound,
Let the flute of joy resound.

Let it drift in the current
Of the five rivers-the Godavari,
The Mahanadi and the Kaveri
Roam around the world,
Wandering far and wide
And return again and again
To kiss the feet of India.

Let the distant call of the Azaan
The songs of the Bauls
Sweet melodies
Gentle rhythms and tunes
Fill the sky,
Let them cling on to the white feathers
Of the soft-hearted cranes amidst the kens grass
By the banks of the Luit

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' Mising youngster (Booloo O' Mising dekati)

I say ...

O' Mising lad

By playing the pipe

You've adorned the night of Disangmukh

With melodies

Why have you put on the Mibugaluk*shirt

The Pererumbong** Chadar_

You've fixed a Dumer*** like a Gamosa****as your headscarf

And in your masculine frame resonates

The thriving green-hued Oinitom.*****

I say ...

O' Mising damsel

You've daubed the Ege Mekhela with darkness

You've embroidered your Riha with Tamulitaka*****stars

You accompany the lad's golden flute with the Gung-gang*****

Wrapping round your bosom the Ribi Gacheng*****

Akin to mustard blooms

And the sweet ripple of the Disang

Begins to quiver.

O' I say ... years before

On the banks of the Ghunaxuti

My Panei, the endearing Miri daughter, passed away

However, Jongki's scream was immortalized

By Rajanikanta in Assamese

Does it come to your mind

O' youngster of Disangmukh.

Today's Panei doesn't die in this way

And Jongki too doesn't need to shed tears

The Mising society of Jongki-Panei

In the form of the Disang Abung

Shall bolster the Borluit's current

In the present age of love and affinity.

*Shirt worn during Mising festivals

** Breast-cloth worn by Mising women

*** Mising headscarf

**** Traditional Assamese cloth used as a symbol of love, respect and honour

***** Traditional folk song of the Misings expressing love and affection

***** Skirt-like garment worn by Mising women

***** Coin-like design with the colour of red areca-nuts

***** Jew's harp

***** Length of cloth wrapped tightly round the body beneath the shoulders by Mising women

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

O' my life's (O' moor jiwonor priyalogori)

O' my life's beloved companion
Today let me tell you something.

Forget the failures of the past
Don't look back if you're pulled behind.

The dark clouds of despair are transient,
Our hopes are eternal.

Don't forget the green colour of youth
Move forth with noble plans.

Our love is creative
Look at the hints of that radiant light.

Don't be scared at the sight of the distance,
Take me beside you and move ahead.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

O' My brother (O' moor bhoiai)

O' my brother, O' my little sister,
In the skies of old Assam,
The light of glory once shone in splendour—
Golden stars, big and small, sparkled brightly,
Graceful smiles flickered with beauty—
Alas, alas, today they are no more.

In that very sky, dark clouds
Engulfed everything
They wiped away the glitter of light—
Alas, alas, today it's no more!

The valour of Mula Gabharu* is gone,
The noble virtues of Radhika and Joya—
What has made them disappear?
At Saraighat, where the enemy was once driven away
The sword of Lachit** has slipped and fallen—
There's no one left to hold it, O' my brother,
No one remains to hold it.

*Legendary woman warrior of Ahom Kingdom.

**Lachit Barphukan was famous Ahom army general who defeated
the Mughals in the battle of Saraighat.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' my mother earth (O' moor dhoritri Aai)

Speech:

Even today there are some forces in the world
that try to disrupt the age-old bondage
between peasants and the land.
Then the helpless peasant sings—
“O' my Mother Earth—”

Song:

O' my Mother Earth
Give us a place at your feet
There is no respite for the peasants,
Without land, we're helpless—
Have mercy, O' compassionate Mother.

Under the scorching sun and torrential rain
We shed our sweat and cultivate
Gather the gold from your bosom
Yet others come wrest them away.
O' my Mother Earth,
Don't abandon us
Without your affection, Mother
We're helpless.

Clinging to the soil
Making the land our companion
We pour our blood into your bosom
Forgetting rest and comfort.
O' my Mother Earth,
Don't abandon us
Without your affection, Mother
We're helpless.

I'm like an orphaned child
I've no mother
I pray to you, my Earth
You become my mother.
The bond between the land and peasants
Is enduring and age-old
Yet there are those
Who try to break this sacred union.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' my new bride (Nekandiba nekandiba)

O my new bride,
Please don't cry
Climbing up the hill
I'll catch and bring that Myna* you ask for.

My father did not teach me about
Hiding someone's gold.
My mother did not teach me about
To misappropriate the society's fund.
To offer you some gold jewellery
I never happen to be a son of a Kuber**
Yet, climbing up the hill
I'll catch and bring a living Myna you ask for.
O my love, don't cry please.

O my bride,
Had you been married into a wealthy household
A full chest of ornaments you would have received.

(Today) If you wish to forget
The pain of hunger of your belly,
I can show you the Bhaona***, Kansha Bodh****.

My master did not teach about
Hoarding of rice without letting others live.
My master did not teach about
Pouring poison into mustered oil.

O my beloved,
If you wish to listen to the music of the lovely Gagana*****
I'll certainly play it for you.
O my dear bride, don't cry please.

* A kind of bird known for its ability to mimic human speech

** The God of wealth

*** Traditional Assamese mythological drama

**** Slaying of Kansha (Kansha, the tyrant of Mathura was killed by Lord Krishna)

***** A kind of Assamese wind instrument made from the tip of a tender bamboo.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

O' sister! (O' bhonti, deka ejon paalu)

Brother: O' sister!

Sister: What's wrong?

Brother: Sister, O' sister, I've found a young lad
I've chosen him for you
I thought I'd arrange everything and give you away as a bride
However what do you say, sister? What do you say?

Sister: Marriage?

Brother: Yes, marriage! Tell me, what do you have to say?

Sister: (silent)

Brother: Why are you silent, sister?
Why have you turned your face away?
Why have you blushed and grown frigid?

Sister: O' dear brother, my loving brother,
For what offence are you driving me away from home?
Perhaps my youth itself has become a burden, do you consider me a burden?

Brother: No, no sister, you crazy girl! You are really silly
A woman needs a life partner after all, dear sister

Sister: I don't know him, I've never seen him before
Before arranging my marriage, you didn't even bother to ask me?

Brother: Yes, sister, yes—please forgive me this time
Perhaps you've owned the heart of someone else
Or have you already given your word to someone? Tell me frankly,

Sister: My dear brother, since you ask—
There's a handsome boy from Jagiroad town
He works as a mechanic in the paper mill
Last year, we got to know each other on a bus
I won't say more—now you think about it

Brother: Oh! From Jagiroad?
He's from Jagiroad?
Don't be afraid, tell me his name
I won't tell father

Sister: Then listen, his name is Hemanta Saikia
From the depth of my heart, I have pledge to offer myself to him

Brother: What, sister? Hemanta Saikia?
Fate works in strange ways; it's him that I've chosen for you.
I never knew that I've found the man of your heart.

Sister: My loving brother, my dear brother,
I'll sing in praise of you all my life

It takes ages of devotion to get a brother like you
Who understands his sister's heart with such love.

Brother: Then let's arrange the wedding, sister
Accept my blessings
But I'm struck by grief
You'll leave for your husband's home
If ever there has been any mistake on our part
Forgive us with your benevolence.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' youths with a fresh mindset (O' notun monor torun-toruni)

Song:

O' youths with a fresh mindset
I can understand the language of your eyes;
Standing face to face,
Something you wish to express
Though the heart urges, the words remain unexpressed—
You pass your moments in stillness.

Speech:

Silent periods, silent moments,
Liking turns into affection,
Affection turns into love
Known and unknown experiences
Blending together
Become a vast ocean of love.

Song:

Between adolescence and youth
The bridge trembles again and again;
Standing upon it, both of you
Stretch out arms
As if to bailout the ocean.
There is shyness in the eyelids
Yet there's a longing for union;
Seeing the policy of social prejudice
You feel deeply anguished,

Speech:

O youths, radiant as the morning sun
For thousands of years there has been class struggle
Between ruler and oppressed, rich and poor
Between those who have and those deprived
You are the new humans,
You're the new poems,
The new lyrical verses

Here melody is secondary, thought is primary
Even today there are forces like Aurangzeb
Trying to bury the music of hope in this very society;
Yet there are also great artists like Akbar
Who honour the music of human love, in this very society;
The social artist Sankardev still exists,
Crushing the enemies of harmony.

Hundreds of dreams of Mohandas' Ram Rajya*
Have been shattered
You've seen it, I too have seen it—
The distorted rhythm
Of Ravana's wearing masks—bring it to an end.

Behold the arrival of countless sons of the sun
With blood-red courage.

The earth is heated up, so are the veins
The night will turn into dawn
Ignite, ignite
The fire of equality.
O' sun like youths

O' sun-like youths,
I understand the language of your eyes;
So, fearlessly go on,
Transforming this society
With your own hands.
O' sun-like youths.

*Ideal utopian society

Translation: Krishna Dulal Baruah and Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' woman, where have you come to? (Eai mohila mohila koloinu aahila)

O' woman, where have you come to?
You've trampled grass all over
O' woman, what a mistake you've made
You don't understand the mind of men.
You adorn the neck with ornaments, the body for clothes
You part your hair to adorn your head
But have you any clue
About the little brain inside your head.

Bottle gourd vendors, ridge gourd vendors
With gourds blooming on their heads
Look more beautiful than you
I seek not their caste or lineage.
O' woman of how deep water, are you a fish?
I know that well enough.
With the slit head of a fly, if you play a victory-drum
Men wouldn't dance to its rhythm.

Don't rush ahead with the speed of a wind chariot
Dust still lies upon the road
No matter what, O' woman, never forget
Woman is inferior to man.
Can one pluck and break an elephant's tusk
Just by wishing to do so?
If the race of men doesn't exist in this world
With whom would women remain?

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' the lightening dances zig zag (Eai bijuli nase chikmik chikmik)

Speech: By the bank of the Brahmaputra there are lots of ponds.
There is the tiny Puthi* fishes have become so bold that these days
they even want to swallow the lightening in the sky.

O' the lightening dances zig zag
O' the Dambaru** beats tom, tom, tom, tom
Tom, tom, tom, tom Dambaru
The clouds play the Dambaru
O the lightening dances zig zag
Hey zig zag lightening!

In tiny, tiny villages
The tiny, tiny homes of Sarukan and others tremble
O' zig zag lightening.
In tiny, tiny ponds
The tiny, tiny Puthi fish
Wants to swallow the lightening
O' zig zag lightening!

What has happened to lady Sarudoi?
Yes, what happened?
She desires to marry Sorukon
And it raises a problem.
The society does not allow
As their castes do not match.
So Sorudoi and Sorukon
Leave the bigoted society
In the light of the lightening
O' zig zag lightening!

The forest lit the ritualistic fire
The lightening provided canopy
The cricket serenaded the wedding song
While the storm played the Gagana***
Spreading the news of courage.

The bigoted society's
Narrow-minded judgement
Puts to shame even the frog
O' zig zag lightening!

*Swamp barb

**A small membraned musical instrument

***A small stringed musical instrument

Translation: Nrripen Dutta Baruah

O' the mad torrents of the Luit (Luitor boliya baan)

O' the mad torrents of the Luit
Where are rushing to?
With a thunderous roar
In a deathly grab repeatedly
Whom are you chasing?

Your depth they believe
Measure only twain
That is why you run amok
On either side of your banks.

O' torrents, don't taunt and torment
And sweep away the sprouting hopes
Don't stage a mock drama of infanticide
And do not allow the vulture to preside
Over the funeral rites.

On the bank of the Luit, we are born
The water of the Luit is our parental bond, our force
That force we shall garner to restrain the torrents
And re-build both the banks with thousands of hands.
Over and over, shall we wrest your strength
Compelling you to become subservient.

Translation: Nripen Dutta Baruah

O' shameless hill (Oi nilaj paahar)

Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

(Spit)-have audacious of you to laugh- (Spit...)

O' shameless hill

O' barren hill

Die, die, die...

With your heartlessness

Die of shame.

What did you sought?

What have you attained?

Had you been dreaming?

Gently, softly, a stream shall flow

A sweet stream shall flow across your bosom

Embracing love, shall stream flow

By receiving her, your heart shall grow fertile

You've attained nothing—hah!

Has your pride been shattered?

You'd dreamt a lot—

That your heart was a trove of silver

That if your bosom were dug deep, gold would appear

But by digging for gold, you lost even the silver

And gathered only the useless mica.

What have you attained—hah!

Have your ribs been broken?

O' barren hill,

O shameless hill,

Cling to it and die, die, die, screaming

Die of shame.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' we spirited villagers (O' ami tejal gawolia)

O'... O'...

O' we are spirited villagers
We shall uphold the honour of our village
With ploughs and yoke we adorn the earth,

The streams glitter under the sun
We shall uphold the honour of our village.

Luxuriant and golden-hued
The paddy sways gently in the breeze
We shall uphold the honour of our village.

O' we are pretty village damsels

At the right time we shall reap the paddy
The village herdsman plays the flute

Our hearts are lost in its melody
At the right time we shall reap the paddy
We shall uphold the honour of our village.

O' the sky is overcast

Floods that water surges down
The Brahmaputra
With pitchers by our sides we fetch nectar
And carry honour upon our heads
We shall uphold the honour of our village.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Baruah and Er. Devajit Bhuyan

O' world's, O' India's (O' prithivire O' bharotire)

O' world's, O' India's,
O' world's, O' India's, freedom-loving people—
India has become free.

The dense darkness, the skeletal past
Has come to an end.
Effacing the past a new light
Sparkles and shines.

We pioneers shall move forward
Murmuring as waves in resonance,
For the progress of the world
Drinking the poison of misery.

We must churn equality
Crushing the fire of exploitation
Let the dying masses, in new consciousness,
Raise a joyous uproar.

India's vision, India's culture
Have all become glorious.
Noble message of the great souls
Bestows immense power

The revolutionary path of the Glittering Milky Way
Lies ahead
Undertake the mission, the great mission,
Creating light endlessly.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Baruah and Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Of the city of Newcastle (Newcastle Sohoror)

In the city of Newcastle,
On the banks of the River Tyne, you have set a fair of affection.

May the blessings of distant Assam
Be showered on this evening today.

Nripen, Bhupen, Prashanta, Dwijen,
Geetika, Neelu, Julie—
Meera and Ira, Bhawani and Mamata,
Are taking open heartedly.

The migrant hearts, tinged with quiet longing,
Let's throw it away today
Joli, Rita, Ilu, Satish, Sahida
Songs of unity rise and resound.

Tanmay, Pratim, Tapan, Ranjit,
Lahari, Manorama—
You dance along to the rhythm of the world
Humming the glory of Assam.

Tapas, Ashraf, Manju, Jayanta,
Junu, Bhelery, Pranjit—
The loving bond between Tyne and Luit
Has made this evening immortal.

Translation: Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Of the sweet Bohag* (Mitha mitha Bohagor)

I'm thinking of
Composing a song presently
Of sweet Bohag,
Then you come up hesitatingly
As if I found suddenly
The language of sweet Bohag.

With you by my side
Your body bathed in the river Luit
Bearing the fragrance of pulse and turmeric all over
As if I found suddenly
The melody of sweet Bohag.

As if my Bohag were
A little Bihu** song
Lost somewhere till this day
Found all of a sudden today
A bevy of young ladies bursting into laughter gay
A flight of herons going mad in the fray
Bihu related emotions tease me today
As if I became a storm suddenly.

*The first month of Assamese year in the middle of April

** folk festival of Assam

Translation: Dibya Ranjan Sharma Khatania

Of the being's own (Ghar ghar buli khawn habathuri)

Anxious and weary I crave for a home
Though my plans have gone awry
Yet do I persist in building those sandcastles?
Empty is this life
Though no frets and fusses
No love no care
Yet why do I always heed
The call to live and be?

Despairing sea and silence sky
Even the waves too are dead
Yet in the distant horizon
Do I hear, the call of the new.

Infinite desert charred thoughts
Mirages runt asunder
Yet there do I see the glimmer
Of life aglow
May be that is why I build these castles in the sand!

Translation: Pradip Acharya

Of the green woods (Sewjia bononir)

As a roving minstrel of the green woods
I wandered through the woodlands
Singing pastoral songs
White herons fanned their white feathers
Stroking their white whiskers
While warbling in the woods.

I wandered in the wilds
Playing the lute
Removing seeds of spear-grass
Stuck to my clothes
As Lord Krishna
With a garland of wild blooms
I mounted the bur flower tree
Piping the flute.

There's no flow of any fresh air today
In the woods there's no grass, no birds
Blissful is the forest with *Sanchi leaves
Would you adorn one
Beside my thatch
I'll wander again
Singing pastoral songs.

*Agarwood, eaglewood or Indian aloe wood tree
the bark of which was used in early days to write on.
Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

On a dark night of the Kati* month (Endhar katir nixate)

On a dark night of the Kati month
By the bank of a river
In a tumbledown shack
Clutching on to Panei's ribs her child sobs—
“Mother, I'm hungry—give me rice
Mother, I'm thirsty—give me milk
Mother, my throat is drying up
Mother, I see darkness...”

Placing her hand on its forehead, Panei feels
The child's raising fever.
No medicine, no milk, no fruits, no vegetables—
An utterly empty home.
“Early morn I'll go out for begging and bring something
Have a little patience, my child
For this night, our home is empty...”
After crying and crying and calling out “Mother” repeatedly
The child falls asleep.
Then the mother kisses it
And softly sings a lullaby—
“Our little one will now be sleeping
It will reap and harvest golden paddy
I'll fry fresh rice flakes for you
You'll eat bowl after bowl...
Sleep now, my child...”

At midnight with the barking of dogs
With her heart pounding
Panei is startled
She moves aside the torn cloth, looks at its face,
And cuddling it tenderly she sings—
“My golden doll, my child, lift your head
There's no grain in this empty shack—
Drink a few drops of water...
Why don't you speak, my child? What has happened?
Why is your body cold? Open your eyes...
Why have you become so stiff?
Why don't you call me ‘Mother’?
O' moon of my heart, O' my heart's treasure
At the very dawn of your life
Look at the image of death.
You were crying for pan cakes, my dear child
I couldn't even give you a drop rice starch
Now sleep gently in the funeral fire
Sleep, my child...”

Panei's eyes turned into red embers,
Her steaming tears dried out
She wiped away her tears
Then taking a vow she rose for battle-
Lifting her dead child in her arms
The rebellious Panei, with new hope,
Took the path of countless mothers
The world began to tremble.
Thousands of mothers cried out
The sun painted in the sky
A red picture of a new society.

“My child, the day you return,
You'll see new images of life
From the storehouses of the rich
I'll fetch fruits, medicines,
Milk and jaggery, I'll setup schools,
Put smiles on lips, give toys
All newly adorned.
You'll light up Panei's hut
Ministers and kings will starve
And all the remaining big thieves too.
In the blithe sky of our village filled with paddy
I'll raise the flag of your life...
Sleep, my child...”

“Our little one will sleep,
Embracing by the pyre
Through death, you'll awaken
The spirit of a dead society
Sleep, my child...
In the funeral flames
Sleep gently...”

*Kati: This Assamese month ushers in dire poverty and scarcity of food items to many Assamese families.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

On moonlit nights (Jonakore rati)

On moonlight nights
The land surface of Assam glitters alive
Cuddling a gust of breeze with both hands
The lovely Malatis* fall.

Most endearing to me is this land of mine
That ushers in new dreams every day
In the little stream of our village
Stars frolic
Lamps of hope burn
In every house of the needy
Forcing darkness out of our hamlet.

Who can impede the flow of our village waterways
The tips of banana leaves sway
The bird of my mind takes flight
To the tune of some Siphung.**

* Clove-scented echites

** Indigenous flute of the Bodos

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

On the bridal night (Tumi biyar nishar)

On the bridal night on the wedding bed
You are a Rajanigandha*
You are valued just for a night
Next day after the sunshine
In the crumpled bed
You are only a refuse.

You bloomed with lots of hopes
Bubbling over with plans
To spread fragrance in the room
Not graced by scent
Why, oh why do you cry out
Being plucked by the gardener.

The damsels deck the bridal bed with you
So tenderly the bride and the groom touch you
But in the morn, you are swept away
Not even sought for once
O Rajanigandha, your worth lasts out a night.

*Tuberose

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

On the first Bohag* morning (Bohagore Prothom puwa)

On the first Bohag* morning
Having just reached the bloom of life
A Kapou** seems to have whispered
To the black bee 'I've the mind of a young lady
Being tended I know nothing, don't suck my honey!

Please go to other flowers
They bloomed earlier
Suck the nectar of Gulmohar
The Ajar*** too has opened her bosom
They are blooming
Haven't you seen the beautiful garden there?

See the rhythmic movement of the dancer
Dancing to the tune of the drum
See the shyness of the young lady
Going crazy in Boghag's arms
"I am like the young lady
Only a Kapou flower-don't pester me
Being tender I know nothing, don't suck my honey".

*First month (April-May) of the Assamese Calander
**A kind of orchid dear to the young ladies in Bohag
***Queen cape myrtle

Translation: Dibya Ranjan Sharma Khataniar

On the freedom-loving millions (Muktikami lakhaya jonor)

[In 1975, the Emergency brought to a cruel end to people's right to freedom of expression. But there is a thunderous sound even in the silence of the millions that is hard only in the mind's year.]

Have you not heard the mute expressions
Of the freedom-loving millions?
Have you not seen the effulgence
Of new- found courage
That has lit up firmament?
It matters little that you didn't make a tally
Of what you got and what you didn't.
But before you stretch the days of reckoning-
Days when you can speak without fear

Have you not sensed
How the downing, lies hidden in the bosom
Of lies in the hidden bosom
In the most dreaded night?
Have you not seen
How the closed door
Most fears the boundless winds

In every droplet of the river of life
There is now a tide that breaks the banks
Have you not heard the rumble of hope
In every corner of the vast space?

Extend your forward march as far as you can
Without the least futile tarry.
Our peaceful strife against the wrecker
Never needs respite.

Have you not sensed
How the downing, lies hidden in the bosom
Of lies in the hidden bosom
In the most dreaded night?
Have you not seen how the fox known as order
Even fears the lion
That is the people's might?
Have you not heard the mute expressions
Of the freedom-loving millions?

Translation: Dharendra Nath Bezboruah

On the just moment of fight today (Songroma logne aaji)

On the just moment of fight today
Shedding doubt and dread
Heroes you've come to do away with vileness.

You have come with the fiery resolve
To kill all the demons today
Taking lessons of justice, you've come
To curb all beastliness today
Prostrating at Mother's feet let us adore her.

Oh Asoomee, our dear Mother, do not cry
Why cry like a wretched woman
You have your sons you have daughters
Day and night they all think of you
They will hold a festive gathering in your house
Why cry like a wretched woman.
In your looks and virtues none can
Match you all over the world
Why cry like a wretched woman

Asoomee, my mother
Do not get scared
By the terrible demons
Do not get scared
We too have our Hangdangs*

Asoomee, my mother
Do not get scared
By the cruel deadly venomous snakes
Do not get scared
We too have our magic charms
In our eyes too, the fire is raging
The battle flames are dancing
Oh, the battle flames are dancing

*A kind of sword used by the Ahom kings and their officers
Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

On this Uruka* night of Bihu (Eai bihure uruka nixa)

On this Uruka night of Bihu
My heart has blackened
You promised to send me a letter—but you haven't
You've become a stranger in some distant land.

On the last Uruka night, you'd promised
You'd be the groom of my heart
But just after a month when you went away
I've been thrust into dejection.
Why did you go so far away?

You went to the city seeking job
Did you find one or not?
Perhaps you've forgotten me
After meeting the ravishing beauties of the city.

I swear by my life—send me at least a letter
Do send it by the next post
Even if I can't see you
I'll meet you through
The warmth of your written words.
Why haven't you written to me?

What are you saying?
Listen, my dear—
I haven't forgotten you
Nowhere have I come across
Someone as beautiful as you
Let me tell you something
Listen, my dear—
I confide in you
If I don't get a job
I'll strive unto death
To reform the society,

*Bihu eve

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

One drop, two drops (Ek bindu dui bindu)

Speech:

One drop, two drops
The ambrosia of life
A thousand drops, millions of drops
Water, nothing but water.
Water, all around and everywhere
In the north, south, east and west.

Song:

Water in the north, south, east and west
This is the ruthless dance of death
A terrifying, creepy flood.

This water is not of joy
This is the dreadful water of terror
This water is not cool
It only burns
This water is not pure
It burns away hope
It burns hope, it burns life
It burns youth, it burns existence
How ghostly this water is!

This water devours life
In its furious strikes
The tall embankments of dreams collapse.
Water, all around and everywhere
In the north, south, east and west.
A terrible creepy flood,
A terrifying, creepy flood.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

One bud and two leaves (Eti kuhi duti paat)

One bud and two leaves
In the estate of Ratanpur
With bonny hands
Who plugged, O who plugged?

With heir as black as the night
Who scatters the petals of the Jaba* flower
And laughed, O who laughed?

On Jugnu and Lasmi's wedding day
In the estate of Ratanpur
The Zhumur** dance evoked rapture
O evoked rapture.

The union of love
Between Jugnu and Lasmi
Begot a little baby
And brightened their cottage
O brighten their cottage.

Jugnu today is one leaf
Lasmi another
The baby a little bud
Grows weary, O grows weary.

To those people a bud and two leaves
In the estate of Ratanpur
The demon came to snatch untimely
O the demon came.

In the melee between the two leaves
Covering the tender baby's flame of hope
Which demon laughed?
O the demon laughed.

With a copper-hued body
And robust and lovely arms
To the rhythm of the beating drum
Who danced, O thousands danced.

A new tempest broke out
And a thousand drums boomed
On seeing the valour of the drums
The demon fled, O the demon fled.

*China rose

**** A dance of the tea community**

Translation: Nrripen Dutta Baruah

Our beautiful Assam (Axom amaar rupahi)

Our Assam is idyllic, infinite is her splendour
A land of eastern India from where the sun rises
Mother Assam is idyllic, infinite is her splendour
A land of eastern India from where the sun rises

Even if I scour all through life, through countless days and nights
Never would I find so rich a soil as that of Assam
Oh ever-charming is your green ambience
A land of eastern India from where the sun rises

During _*Bohag_ our mother spins, gyrates as a spool
With golden hands during _*Magh_ she greets the rich harvest
With stars the autumnal nights bedeck her hair
A land of eastern India from where the sun rises

As the vibrant rainbow yoking hills and plains
The love in your tongue builds bridges of unity
Before the wide expanse of the _*Lohit_ I bow
Here I was born, may I have my last breath here
Where else would I find such a congregation of beauty
A land of eastern India from where the sun rises

*Bohag : month of the Assamese calendar between April and May

*Magh: month of the Assamese calendar between January and February

*Lohit: another name of the Brahmaputra River

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

Our home is the soil (Ghar amaar mati hoi)

Our home is the soil
The soil is our home
The road becomes so dear to us
The dear ones get detached.

Days pass by while scouring and haggling
Over a sweet life, a path of livelihood
A soothing voice on the highway or forsaken path.

In shady black markets you'll find
Loads of tainted wealth
In dark warehouses you'll find
The wealth of Mammon
With such knaves never shall we hobnob
A dry but pure morsel earned with sweat
A plain set of clothes covering the body
Provide immense boost to the mind.

In the dark sky you'll find
Lumps of dark clouds
If you search even there you'll find
Streaks of lightning
Devotees we'll be of such lustre.
If we're caged in a cell gilded with gold
By someone craftily
We'll break free to sing
Songs of the sky gaily.

Translation : Krishna Dulal Barua

Our little one is sleeping (Aamare moina xuisse)

Our little one is sleeping
In the courtyard the jujube has been planted.
Yet its fruits have not ripened and fallen
Storms have crushed the trees and grass.

I don't seek chunks of gold,
The greedy may take those away
But the kindness you've shown to the poor
May that never be taken away.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Our little sister shall fall asleep (Aamare bhonti xubo)

Our little sister shall fall asleep
She'll go to the land of dreams
The sweet dreams of pure white hue
Shall be shaped by her into reality.

Our little sister will grow into a noble woman
She'll build a home of healing
With the help of science
She'll make the sick strong and healthy
Life will become sweet.

In a spacious and shining white house
With a white staircase
Rows and rows of white beds lie
So neat and orderly.

So many patients wait in hope
When would our little sister arrive?
She'd bring nectar to the despairing sick
She'd give them medicine and care
And life will bloom like a lotus.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Pakshiraj* Horse (Pakshiraj ghoola)

Pakshiraj Horse,
Clap, clap run on clap, clap
I am out of luck
My pair of wings too are clipped
I do not feel like flying
As people are on earth.

I'm no Aniruddha, Romeo, Lakshindar
Neither Majnu nor Julius Caesar
Hey, hey giddy up giddy up
Hibernating like Kumbhakarna
The masses I do awake
Seeking humans in the society of demons
I took refuge in the business hub
I'm a handsome man, an adorer of masses
Pakshiraj Horse,
Clap, clap run on clap, clap
I'm the means of the poor
I do away with vileness
Coming from heaven I'm a dazzling beauty
Looking for love I've come to earth
In heaven Indra cheated me like anything
For me Varun too shed crocodile tears so much
Coming from heaven I'm a dazzling beauty
Looking for love I've come to mart.

I am Monarch of Darkness
Yes, yes
I am fond of darkness
Be off Monarch, eat toothy snacks to get sweetness
I beat radiance making it fade out in ruin
Fine minds good works gives me much pain
The handsome prince and the charming princess
And their loving union I hate
I will thrash and cut them both into pieces
Beware, beware all beware
Into the black market
All the time I let darkness come
I keep supplying darkness
For that some commission I get
Come on, pick a fight
Beware
Guard against
With radiance, darkness picks up a duel
Darkness gets tired out
The king of darkness, disdainful of people
Goes away creeping and crawling

A handsome prince, I don the matted locks of Siva.

When society gets engulfed with darkness
What happens to it? What happens to it?
When Bijuli will smile in every age
It augurs well, it augurs well
Two lovely minds who have left heaven
United in aim two minds serve the masses

At Devalok**, Menaka and Rambha cheat
By design Urvashi too cheats the earthly bond
I will not cheat on you, handsome prince
In every age I will remain your intimate
I'm no Aniruddha, Romeo, Lakshindar
Neither Majnu nor Julius Caesar.

*Winged horse

**Heaven

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

Passengers of the third class (Prothom nohoy dwityo nohoy)

In the train
In the life train
Not in the first class, not in the second,
We are the passengers of the third class.

The train screams off and on,
Pangs of deprivation flares up.
With the fire of our inner
The train steams up.

Our luggage is heavy with the tears of the past.
All our tears have turned into steam
With that steam is the train's thrust
And, we are moving fast.

We, all the hundred co-passengers of the third class
Will witness the light of a new dawn
All the passengers of either class
We will reach all at a time.
Not in the first class, not in the second
We are the passengers of the third class.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Pen a Tale (Kahini eti likha)

I'd asked you a number of times
To pen a tale on charity
Writer friend, you wouldn't listen
You only showed your vanity.

Years ago you'd come rushing to me
In frantic quest of a real hero
I, too, had spoken a lot of human history
Forgetting myself totally
You'd then kept on extolling
Falsehoods of pseudo-heroes
Writer friend, your writings were nothing
But figments of false fancies !

The tale you hadn't penned
Was inscribed by time in history
You couldn't behold within me
The battle-tide of thousands !
With the trickling and dripping of your pen
Your words have run out of breath
I, too, won't waste a moment today
Wandering in search of you.

With a hundred pleas again
I won't make a single approach
Writer friend, your writings are nothing
But figments of fake fancies !

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

People are actors (Raaij aaji bhoworia)

The people are the actors
While the country, a theatre hall.
Take a role as you like
Time has its shortfall.

Rehearsal has nothing to do
And costumes too
With a napkin fastened hungry belly
Rush about wildly, bare bodied.
Only then the play will get momentum.
Come out, you all
Be ready to take up your roles
Time has its shortfall.

Time has come to question the Director
How long will you cheat the audience
From behind the mask
How long will you stage this high-tech show?
On the theme - a story of starvation.

No need of sweet dialogues
Clamour will do.
Fight the evils with wisdom
And be a deserving hero.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Piyoli* Piyoli (Piyoli Piyoli kotenu lukali)

O' Piyoli
Piyoli Piyoli where are you hiding
Captain of the fight for freedom.

At the peak of the hill, at the deeper ground of plains
Children and old alike are weeping day and night.

The accursed sleep of our dear Piyoli
did not break
He got embraced by death.

He etched with fire
in the sky of the country
the milky way of freedom
The Dikhow river halts its flow
shedding tears
in fond memory of Piyoli.
People would burn the flame of freedom
raising an altar for Piyoli
the captain of the fight for freedom.

*In memory of Piyoli Phukan, a freedom fighter of Ahom Kingdom against British rule.
Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Pretty-hued fresh petals (Dhuniya rangar natun pahir)

Lad : With pretty-hued fresh petals
You're a screw pine flower at my gateway
The sight of which enraptures me.

Maiden : Not screw pine, I'm a sunflower
You're the morning sun crowned by colours
A hope that lets me pass the night.

Lad : Beholding the beacon in your eyes
The moth of my mind takes wing.

Maiden : I light my wick
Only to cuddle your moth.

Lad : The ocean of my mind swells
Billowing in your waves.

Maiden : The rainbow of my mind's sky
Gleams with your lustre.

Lad : The mind's ocean asks the rainbow
When can I have you in my arms ?

Both : Together we let bloom in our life's floral park
The night-blooming jasmine of love.

Translation : Krishna Dulal Barua

Protect me (Rakshya kora mook)

In every alley and lane, thousands keep pleading.
Protect me, give me protection.
Tuberculosis, like the demon of Time,
Turns the dying into mere shadows of themselves;
The Luit within the chest dries up like a river in drought.

In heaps of darkness,
The lamp of a fading life flickers and dies.
Death smiles cruelly like a slow poison
And watches its merciless sport.

Today, the afflicted receive
The fresh breeze of science's sheltering veil.
May a society of beautiful health arise;
Let the death suffer defeat.

Where the free air
Bestows the springtime of life
Upon the people of the soil.

Translation: Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Rambha Menaka or perhaps Juthika (Rambha, Menaka kimba Juthika)

Rambha, Menaka, or perhaps Juthika
Brother, I know not who they are
Countless maidens gliding away like swans
Setting my beating heart ajar.

Do you boys have no shame!
Teasing young maidens is no way to behave!

They act like Lord Rama, as if we are Ravana
Stealing Sita away.
Go wash your faces in a bowl of milk
You two Hanumans
Go look at a mirror now
To check how handsome you are.

You have Lord Kartikeya right here at your hands
Lose him now and he is gone for good!
But perhaps to climb the ladder of love
The beautiful maiden is in no mood.
Looking at these two Kartikeyas here
Rambha just turns up her nose in sneer.

While my eyes catch a hold of you
Around the folds of your Riha*
My heart is set ablaze
The angry scowl only makes you more fair
While a tender smile sits on your lips there.
We do not wish for a wedding hymn
But will a single hello cost you so dear?

Forgive them, young maidens, do not hold any grudge
These hooligans simply have no brain.
Lay down your Hulabari** sticks
And bid us farewell without any pain.

Come, let us flee with haste
The motor fuel is running low
Save our skin while we can
Check if the tires are good to go!
Pull your ears, brother, and swear an oath
May we never cross paths with a Rambha again.

* A traditional, narrow, breast-band style piece of cloth worn by
Assamese women, primarily as part of formal, festive, or bridal attire.

** A bamboo tool used on the shoulder to carry sheaves of paddy or saplings.
Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

Ramadan fasts have passed (Romjanore rooja gol)

Ramadan fasts have passed, Eid crescent is in sight
In this hearth of affection, who takes their seat tonight?

In today's Eid mehfil*
Sitting side by side,
In today's Eid mehfil
Rahim uncle resides
In today's Eid mehfil
Sri Ram Kumar shows his face
In today's Eid mehfil
Fatema aunty brings her grace
In today's Eid mehfil
Taiyab uncle is here
In today's Eid mehfil
Jacob uncle sits near
Bearing the torch of humanity, let us join the mehfil too
Let us join them too.

Aatajaan** of our village, ancient tales he knows
Umar Khayam from Samarkhan Bukhara—he knows.
Of Emperor Akbar's generousness—he knows,
Of tales of Mughal and Rajput weaving unified art—he knows.
Tipu and Siraj-ud-Daulah's fight for freedom—he knows.
The bullet that pierced Gandhi's chest—he knows.
The whole world's grandson: Uncle Jawahar—he knows.
Today, across India, a golden love we sow.

Why do memories from Assam stir my mind today?
Where in our Hajo, Poa Mecca echoes Mecca's way.
While right beside it, Madhab's temple holds its grace
Ram and Rahim wiped their brows to build a united race.
Shakar bestowed his deep respect for Islam
Azan composed Zikir, enriching the tongue of Assam.
Fakir*** offers salaam**** to bhakat***** through his songs
Dilbar-Dosai drew the manuscript of elephants.
Lakhidhar sang praises of Uncle Siraj's name
And Mafiz wrote Gyanmalini, fanning wisdom's fame.
Both Quran and Gita teach: let humans be humane
Farmud Ali, turned a Baul, singing freedom's refrain.
Bahadur Gaonburha gave his life serving Maniram's side
Who is the enemy that dares to break such a sacred tie?

Whose qawwali***** enchants the young and the old of the mehfil
This qawwal***** offers his thanks to the mehfil tonight
Bhupendra, the qawwal, before this grand affair
Before this hearth of affection
Humbly takes his leave.

*An Urdu word that describes a shared space for connection and art.

** An Assamese word for Grandfather.

*** A Muslim or a Hindu religious ascetic.

**** An Arabic word for greeting.

***** A person who is devoted to a belief (to Vaishnavism in this context).

***** A style of Sufi devotional music.

***** A singer or performer of Qawwali.

Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

Rainbow on whose sky (Kaar akaxor ramdhenukhoni)

Rainbow on whose sky
Where did it hide, where it lay out of sight
Whose dream garden it was
That withered and dried away.

The boat was set off on the Luit* of life
Sail of hope was raised
Did not get anything
Lost what was achieved
Entangled eternally in the net of passion.

Alas! Alas!
The pair of ruddy shelduck
Residing on the riverbank flew away
How long would they wait
Igniting the lone flame!
Shouting for the moth
In the dark of night
The flame burned wild
The moth even forgot the flame
Enchanted by the smile of the moon.

The cacophony carried on for life
Rose in the morning in the sea of humanity
Mist appeared in the silent evening
The eternal moment of death, eternal moment of death!

*River Brahmaputra

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Raising wave upon wave lasting for eternity (Sirojugomiya dhou tuli)

Raising wave upon wave lasting for eternity,
The ever-new boat of song sails on.
Shimmering waves rise and ripple,
Painting patterns upon the river of time.
Whose pollens of hope
Wafts through the air today
Turning into atoms and molecules.

Hey, hey, hey, my poet-lyricist
Look, please see
Who is it that goes by
Doling out one's heart.

Raising shimmering waves upon waves,
The boat of lotus-melodies drifts onward.
Whose pollens of hope
Wafts through the air today
Turning into atoms and molecules.

In the upstream waters, in the current of love
The artist of eternal beauty
Writes history with the wings of swans.
Hey, hey, hey, my new composer,
Sing on, sing on
Melody has no boundaries today.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Reaching out (Bhabisila tumi haat melilei)

You thought that by reaching out with your hands
You would touch the vast sky.
Perhaps you'd lay at the juncture of
Have and have not.

Preserve in the heart the feelings of
Things lost after getting
Embrace whatever memories of me you have got
You'd conserve those memories secretly in your heart.

The plants and herbs, where they laughed, danced
Adorned with green dresses
That herb would again change side in sleep
With bare twigs
Hearing the wailings of a dry river
Cloud will burst with thunder.
Tears will flow in moist eyes
Playing the tune of the past.
That sweet tune, with silence
Must lay preserved in your heart.

Life is just a riddle
Tough to crack the meaning.
If you try to laugh something appears
to shake the heart in terror.
So much unexpected
There is deluge of sorrow.
The tide of flood tears apart
All the respect and pride
You'd hide the pride with a good act.

Whether you accept or not
Some things use to happen suddenly
You can't say won't accept
You appear to be left with no choice
So many things happen every day
Unknown things hurt.

Time has its own virtues
It heals wounds.
Please save the patience
in your bosom valiantly.

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Remembering whom seeking what (Kaknu suowri kinu bisari)

Remembering whom seeking what
You search frantically
You sigh now and then
Your heart screams and squeals.

Under whose curse, for what repentance
The mind fills with grief
Whom you failed to understand, whom you threw out
Where did they go away?

Which storm carry away what
What did it snatch from you?
You got what you didn't have, lost what you acquired
Where'd you find them out?

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Renewed, renewed pluck (Natun natun sah)

Renewed, renewed pluck
With renewed pluck
Are infused our big hearts
In the sky are shining
The white wings of herons
With our own hands we clear
All waste and sweepings.

We make the dead stream surge
Over our dry barren land
Gladly we fill with soil
The swamp of society
With great zeal we've kindled
The lamps of learning
We paint our dreams in green
In the flickering light.

With our own hands we will
Lift the darkness of ages
The sun frolics around
In the sunny courtyard
With glee the NEW dances
On the body of the old.

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

Reminiscences of a colourful life (Suworoni moor rangoli jiwonor)

The colours of reminiscences
Of my radiant life are gone
Buried alive are the fond old days
In the amnesiac darkness.

Where have I lost my mind's trails
Where have I flown my winged words
They are gone far away
They turn no more for a look.

The Milky Way crumbles and falls
The sky is ablaze
The sun sheds tears
Buried alive are the fond old days
In the amnesiac darkness.

I roved for trails of the forgotten past
I immersed myself in the Luit of despair
I was all out of breath
The melodies strayed to the unknown.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

Resplendent was Assam, my motherland (Romoke-jomoke)

Resplendent was Assam, my motherland
Adorned with golden orchids
Wearing a silk robe and colouring her palms with Henna*
But what sorry plight are we in today?

Where have all the colours gone
And the robes and the pearls
Badan and Purnanada turned traitors
To call the Burmese in
What sorry days are we in now?

On the floor of our home the vulture feeds
On Jaya's shrine the owl hoots
Seeing Assam's plight
What sorry days are we seeing now!

The Company** came with a wide grin
To sit and sojourn for a while
Finding a seat, they forged into the house
Piercing our hear through
What sorry days are we seeing now?

They put irons shackles round her neck
Where are you all, come forth and break her shackles
Free Assam, our motherland
What sorry days are we seeing now?

Tears stream down my eyes
A fire smoulders in the heart
Stoked the fire with blood, let Assam smile
What sorry days are we seeing now?

*Lawsonia inermis

**East India Company

Translation: Pradip Acharya

Resound of the wail (Protidhoni xunu)

Resound of the wail reaches me
That howls in the night
Across the hill on the border of my village.

Strain my ears to catch the noise
But I never can.
See with my eyes open
But I hardly can.
Think with my eyes shut
But I rarely can.

Maybe it's the woeful tale from a certain damsel
Maybe it's the night-tale from a certain grandma
Maybe it's the pain of Rongmon in the seedbed.

It's a common piece
But then I miss.

The bemoaning of the damsel came to an end
Grandma's night-tale came to an end
The end has come to Rongmon's pain in the seedbed.
My memory has faded
I fail to catch the tune
And resound of a new cry reaches me

A morning beam of crimson
Touches my black hair
A veil of mist from my eyes before
Flies off in fear
The cacophonic cry of the awakened mass
Shook many hills and broke them down.
And, it's a din of human sea
That reaches me.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Ringling her anklets, Rhum Jhum (Rum jhum nepur bojai)

Ringling her anklets Rhum Jhum
Swaying her earrings Jhum, Jhum
Which Saontali* damsel passes
By the river Rupsi?

Beauty flickers in every limb of hers
Her beauty strikes the mind
Love goes dropping
From its of her glances.

A youth named Krishnai
Of the garden Krishnakoli
Promised to meet her
At the ferry station of Rangamati.

She gazes at the distance
Biting the Ansal**
Of the yellow saree
With that red, red hem.

Jumping into the river
Why did she swim
Murmuring Jhir Jhir Jhir
Embracing her own shadow

Lightening flash
From her eyes smeared with collyrium
Appeared all of a sudden
Krishnai of Krishnakoli.

Whither will she swim away now
She dies of shame
She hid her beauty
With a coy smile.

Krishnai of Krishnakoli
Conveyed his love
In the flickering water
Jil Mil Jil Mil
He folded her in his bosom.

*A tea community of Assam

**End part of a saree

Translation: Upendra Nath Sarma

Rise again, my friend (Bhorir toluwar para jodi dhora khon)

If the ground gives way beneath you
And the world you knew is gone
If the walls you built with devotion
Are broken by another's wrong
Then rise again, my friend, rise again.

If the ones you love abandon you
And silence fills your days
If every good deed you have offered
Returns to you as blame
Then rise again, my friend, rise again.

Make peace your faithful companion
And patience your guiding father
Let kindness be your gentle sister
and forgiveness help you stand
Let hope become your steadfast brother
And struggle be your selfless mother.

If you spend the night beneath the stars
With no bed on which to sleep
If the colorful time is your only clothes
Wear it like a beautiful robe
And carry on with a smiling face time and again.

Translation: Er.Rabin Goswami, USA

Rongmon in a canoe (Poroxi puwate)

A few days back in the morning
Rongmon, in a canoe was out for fishing.
He was warned,
Not to go for fishing as a storm was about to come.

Somewhere, there in the water
He might fall to a gavial,
And there would be rills of blood.
In the gloaming, Rongmon remained viewless
In the heart of the Brahmaputra.

Looking skywards with a tortured heart,
Rohdoi became wild and she blubbered out,
O wave, go away,
Uncaring to the deep of night,
It was the time for Rongmon to be taken back.

The waves, embracing the body of Rongmon,
Came and left sleeping right on the bank of Brahmaputra.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Rangpur your name (Rangpur tumare naam)

[A historical song composed by Dr. Hazarika especially for the 1993 Asam Sahitya Sabha session held at Sivasagar, where he was the President]

Rangpur may your name be blessed,
You will find the boundless heritage if you look into your past.

Chaolung Sukaphaa left behind immortal glory,
Tenderly shaping the Assamese nation.

On the fourteenth day of Phagun, in the year sixteen-seventeen
Rudra Singha ascended the royal throne.

This Swargadeo, in the year sixteen-twenty,
Founded Rangpur as the new capital city.

To the north flows the Dikhow River, to the south lies Namdang,
Banhgarh to the east, and the remaining Dikhow to the west.

Rangpur, adorned with chronicles, traditions, and ornaments of history,
Even today overflows with color, culture, and life.

The Asam Sahitya Sabha was born in this very place in 1917
With Padmanath Gohain Baruah as the president.

During the Awahan era, in the year 1931,
This place hosted again its second grand session.

Story writer from Goalpara, Nagendra Narayan Choudhury,
As president, strengthened the foundations of the language.

In 1944, the great orator Nilamani Phukan
Wrote a golden chapter in Assamese language and literature.

About the evolution of this language
Let me explain the contributions of the tribal languages.

The Bodo, Tiwa, Hajong, Rabha, Deori, Manipuri and Tai
All have strengthened the Assamese language.

The Neo-Assamese of the chars, and the language of the tea gardens,
Bring the rays hopes into Assamese literature.

Arunachali Assamese, bound for eternity
May politics never destroy that age old friendship.

Though Gadapani's and Dalimi speaks Nagamese
They sowed the seeds of love between Nagas and Assamese.

Lummer Dai wrote the novel Prithivir hanhi*
Rongbong Terang plays the flute of unity.

Rajmohan Nath from the Barak Valley
Hemanga Biswas build bridges of integration.

Tabu Taid, Bhriyumuni, and Nahendra Padun
Bring the fragrance of "Ainitam" into Assamese literature.

So many intellectuals from tribal language communities
Serve literature while nurturing their own mother tongues.

No one's language should be forced upon another;
Only then age-old harmony brings true beauty.

Our Assamese language builds the bridge of mind
Only by remaining connected, our hopes will be fulfilled.

The water of conflict flows heavily through the Dikhow today
Yet in nineteen-ninety-three we awakened once more.

Rangpur has become a sacred literary field,
A mutually respectful sea of humanity.

The shared development of many races and tribes
This mantra brightens today's literary sky.

Khushwant Singh of Punjab and Shankha Ghosh of Bengal
Please accept the affection of Assamese without finding fault.

May the forum of linguistic harmony remain alive
May all communities and tribes stand united.

Let young writers build an army of harmony
To create new stories of meaningful relationships.

The contribution of Gobinda Paira to our language is immense;
May this tradition live forever.

India recognised the Nepali language,
And this congress offers hundreds of congratulations.

In dusk and dawn at Saraguri of Dikhowmukh
Hazrat Shahiran smiles there eternally.

The Zikir and Zari traditions of Assamese literature
Raise the banner of harmony and proclaim victory.

Harmony, harmony, nothing but harmony
Harmony only makes progress radiant.

Today the whole world looks towards Rangpur,
And even Bhupen Hazarika comes to offer his salute.

*Smile of the world

Translation: Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Salute to you, O martyr. (Swahid pronamu tumak)

Speech: My respectful salute to those who wrote history
with their blood in the struggle to protect Assamese nationality.

O martyr, my salute to you,
O martyr, my salute to you,
You are the youth of the bank of the Luit
It's you who bared his breast
It's you whose spoused death
To save the youngest daughter of Mother India
My salute to you O martyr
My salute to you.

Innumerable new generations
Of the eighth decade of the twentieth century
Non-violently fought to preserve
The identity of the nationality.
It's who taught the demonic forces
The core of reasoning
I It's you whose spoused death
To save the youngest daughter of Mother India
My salute to you...

You became a martyr, you became a sun
That will bring dawn to Assam
You became a martyr, you became the tempest
That will remain as the Bordoisila*
You've become the instrument
For the schemes of the struggling soldiers yet to be
It's you whose spoused death
To save the youngest daughter of Mother India
My salute to you...

You're the glory of each mother, each sister
And each father, you're Arjuna, the wielder of Gandiva** of justice
All those fled away are the Kauravas.
You've all the more maddened
The flowing waters of Luit with your blood
It's you whose spoused death
To save the youngest daughter of Mother India
My salute to you...

It's our good fortune
That you were born in our midst
It's our misfortune
That too keep us alive
You had to spouse untimely death
You protected our mother

Even riding the wheels of the world's progress
My salute to you...

Those who want to vilify
The sacrifice and red blood of martyrs
Will be opposed always by the whole country
With the incantation of the fiery mantras.
They will say,
You established the doctrine of man
In the flower-soft hearts
It's you whose spoused death
To save the youngest daughter of Mother India
My salute to you...

*Hailstorm

**The bow of Arjuna

Translation: Upendra Nath Sarma

Seeking love (Moor morome morom bisari jai)

Speech: Summer floods and tidings of the age sometimes also make one romantic. Then one sings- 'My love seeks love'.

My love seeks love
As the fresh summer floods
Bring for me alone
The river in spate
With tiding of the age.

I trudge down the lonely path
Breaking umpteen barriers
With a pledge to turn the dusty bowl
Into a heaven with a purple glow

Only the ease of plenty
In my sky
Never the pangs of want
What storm gathers
And rages today
With the tidings of the new?

Translation: Pradip Acharya

Seeing the shadow of an awakened person (Jagroto manuhor saa)

Seeing the shadow of an awakened person
Why do you tremble day and night?
Wearing mask of mist in the tender sky
Why do you chase after rainbows?

The life of heaven takes birth
In the dusty earth
Watch the people move with careful steps
On the path built with a fresh hue.

Look, the shower of a first monsoon
Has quenched the parched earth
Embrace the seedlings of time
That is dancing on the earth.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Seven seas and thirteen rivers (Satuti sagor aru teroti nodi)

Crossing over Seven seas and thirteen rivers
The merchant arrived as guests.
Our country with warm hearts
Welcomed them with great honour
Why do the guests kick the host today?
Turning a wealthy country into a mortuary
Transformed the living ones into skeletons
Building weapon from that skeleton
Why shouldn't we finish the perpetrators
Why shouldn't we?
Fiery era yes its fiery era
Am a spark of the fiery era
Would build a new India, a new Assam
Would build a new Assam
Would bring back all the possessions
of the landless
Fiery era yes, its fiery era
Why shouldn't we be your spark
Why shouldn't we kill
The venomous serpent
Making our abode its home
Why shouldn't we?

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Skinning knife to skin a goat (Sagor sal selabor dobua kotari)

Skinning knife to skin a goat
A bigger chopper for the deer
My elders in the countryside
Please don't punish me
Let me sing a song of today.

A river dolphin surfaced suddenly
Today it feels like Rongali* Bihu
Enjoy the sports enjoy the fun.
As if a bunch of Burmese grapes
Everywhere it is all agog
Which player in the arena of society
Has made a kicking ball out of whom
All these village folk
Are kicking ball of liars
Hey enjoy the sports enjoy the fun.

You cried for one year Our dear to heart loom shuttle
We design new pattern in the Gamosa** of society dear
Build a bridge over the Luit dear.

We stop these words now
Let us talk about the farmer-labourers
You are kicked from this side Najitora
You are kicked from that side
Najitora you are kicked from this side
The Rongali Bihu is made Kongali***
But hunger is not satisfied
Najitora hunger is not satisfied
Observing Bihu for a couple of days
You cry for a year.

Now swallow gulps of sorrow.
All these village folk
Are kicking balls for the Mahajan****
Hey enjoy the sports enjoy the fun.

On the entrance of father there is sweet smell
It is time for flowering screw pine
While sweeping the yard of Mouzadar***** sir
My dear, my waist has turned sour.

Speech:

But the sickle is very sharp today
The female cutters of the village picked up
A couple of bunches of sticky paddies

There these pests landed.

The blank shuttle moves fast to-and-fro
The woman weaver took a sample eagerly
Seeing the price of yarn in black market
The poor woman feels sorrowful
So many persons of the people
Turned someone's kicking ball
Enjoy the sports enjoy the fun
As if a bunch of Burmese grapes
Everywhere it is all agog
Enjoy the sports enjoy the fun.

Someone or two have built a mill
Cloths churn out in bundles in a jiffy
Silk has arrived in aeroplanes
Our Bihu cloth has gone missing.
Don't sing Bongeet***** lamenting about no Bihu cloth
Telling the blatant truth
You will be punished direly for such a song
By the dhoti clad sahibs
Speaking the truth
Is considered a very severe disease
Did I not warn you before
Enjoy the sports enjoy the fun.

Somewhere in some distant sea
Someone blasted a bomb
Somewhere the ashes fall
Just half a dozen bomb can finish the world
By some insane warmonger
Don't tell me anything
Praising the hydrogen bomb.
Hello if a war break there
What will we have to eat
What would be left for us to sing
It would just invite death for our countrymen
If the stream of peace does not ooze and flow
We'd become the angler's feed
The dearest Bihu of Spring
And the drum would also perish
The land that was snatched, the meagre ornaments
If returned to people
Only then we shall feel relief
The Bihu ground would ricochet
Country people would dance in true spirit
And you'd see new facets.

The flowing stream O' grandma

Cannot be stopped O' Randma
The bund breaks every often
The revolting people O' grandma
Carry along O' grandma
Who'd stop time?

*Festival in mid-April

**Assamese handmade specially designed cloth used to greet people

***Austere festival in mid-November

****Merchant

*****Royal officer collecting revenue

*****Kind of traditional Assamese folk song

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Smile the smile I smiled (Jodi jiwone kande nai nai buli)

If life draws a blank and cries
If the dust of the earth flies off in grief
When misfortune crumbles hope to dust
Sing the song I sang.

If you see a solitary egret flying seaward,
And when many a little moment make a muckle
Read the song I composed.

If you never get that which you searched for,
Yet, many a time you receive that which
You did not want.
When search fails and you feel like crying
Smile the smile I smiled.

I see many a man with many a broken heart
That's why lyrics of my songs are full of hopes.
Mistakenly, if you negotiate darkness
And touch thorns for jasmine petals,
When the road becomes reddened with your blood
Wipe off with the tune I gave.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Someone eyes appear like twinkling stars (Karooobar dunoyon)

Someone eyes appear like twinkling stars in the sky
I don't know what has befallen me!
I feel the yearning to swim in the sea of love
Which Goddess turned restless.

In the longing of the moon, the moonlight dropped
In the longing of the bloom, bumble bee got airborne
My heart burns in the longing for union
I don't know what has befallen me!

The loving look of some beauty
Beautiful like blushing touch me not
The heart searches craving for a partner
Don't know what happened to whom
Can a lyricist flee from melody
Don't know what has befallen me!

Translation: Bibekananda Choudhury

Song for fish farming (Meen paalonor geet)

[This song was composed and sung for Fisheries Development Department, Government of Assam]

Text: If there be any breach on the bank of the tank, please take care to repair it properly, my dear conscious citizen, so that dirty water from outside cannot enter and spoil the tank water. If there be some drains to irrigate excess water, then it should be properly covered with net of correct size so that fish cannot escape.

Song: Take care so that the predator fish cannot enter the tank.

Question: Which are the predator fish?

Reply: Oh, predator fish, my boy?

Well known predator fish are

Climbing fish, spotted snakehead, Gojar fish Shol fish and wallago catfish

These fish in no time gobbles up

The fingerlings of reared selected fish

So, get these species removed from the tank

Only then you would get a tank full of good fish

Song: All those aquatic plants growing in the pond

Clean up those to make it neat

After that the weeds growing on the bank

Uproot them to clear the area.

But if you happen to rear grass carp in the pond

Keep some aquatic plant for it to survive.

Text: But aquatic plant.

To enhance the fertility of the water in the tank, apply fertilizer

Song: Every month put urea three kilograms

And super phosphate three kilograms

Put two-kilogram muriate of potash per month

Only then you'd get hordes of fish in the tank.

If you notice, there is excess growth

If you notice, there is excess growth of green moss

Stop applying fertilizer in the tank

If you cultivate fish in this manner

You'd earn many times over your investment

You'd earn many times over your investment

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Sorrow over grief my people (Dukhore upori dukh moor raij)

Sorrow over grief my people
The debris has floated down the river
Our country has turned into a graveyard
No water in the field now.
Oh, what days have befallen
What days have befallen now.

Rahdoi* whimpers
Bhogai** cries out the Pepa*** do not blow today
The Doba**** is also not there in Siva Doul*****
Doba-Kanh***** do not play today
Oh, what days have befallen
What days have befallen now.

Snake made its nest on the floor of the living room
It is covered by thick undergrowth
On the bosom of the Karengghar*****
The sorrowful tune is played.

Company came to the door of the living room
Asking for a moments rest
Entered the bedroom from the living
Piercing the chest with spear.

No frolicking in front of the Rangghar*****
Where has the colour vanished my father
The gold is missing from the Talatal Ghar*****
It is enveloped in darkness.

My teardrops fall in drops
The silent fire on my bosom burns
The silent fire is laced with blood
Assam will flare up.
Oh, what days have befallen
What days have befallen now.

*Represent a village girl
**A village lad
***A musical wind instrument made out of buffalo horn
****A drum like percussion instrument played at religious function
***** An ancient Siva temple at Sivasagar
*****cymbal
*****The ancient royal abode of Ahom king at Gargaon, Sivasagar
*****The ancient royal podium of Ahom king at Sivasagar to watch sports and cultural activities
*****The ancient royal abode of Ahom king at Gargaon, Sivasagar with underground facilities

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Submerged upstream (Ujai bure dile)

When porpoises and crocodiles were submerged upstream,
O' friend, the fishes submerged downstream
There's no smile on the face mother Assam.
O friend she's only wiping away her tears.

The weaver's cloth covers the whole world
Yet the weaver's own body remains bare
The powerful and wealthy have deceived the nation
With endless crafty ploys.

The milk they were to look after blanched
Even the Champa bananas withered away
Some build thrones of gold
While others languish in hunger and misery.

They intoxicated an elephant
And drove it towards the people
But even a rogue elephant can be controlled
If the people unite as one.

With folded hands, I plead to the mighty
Look at the sufferings of the people
Why do you forget that you survived
On the strength of the masses!
How long will you hold back the Luit* with embankments?
Even the embankments will one day break open.
The dark soot of distant past
The storm shall wrap up everything
Who can truly restrain the Luit?

*Another name of Brahmaputra

Translation: Krishna Dula Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Sundown at Shillong (Shillongore godhuli)

Sundown at Shillong
Glowing memories of lovely Autumn
In the town of my dreams.
Walking past the motely marts
Treading barefoot across the greens
Beside the gurgling brook
You and I cracking up
Slipped and nearly tumbled that day!
Slowly it was getting dark
Over the far-off Khasi hamlet
In rapt intimacy
You and I.

Two Surging streams of hearts
Flooded the lofty pinewoods
Fireflies flitting around
As if teased us
We were a pair of Sewalis*
Of lovely autumn-drifting off.

*Night jasmine

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

17. Why have I become a prisoner (Ki je chandot holu bondi)

Speech: I've proceeded by making disregard for rules a rule.

Now I want to ask myself why, gifted this life,
have I become a prisoner to rhythm?

Why gifted this life,
Have I become a prisoner to rhythm?
I do not know across how many jungles
I shall have to wander-there is no companion.

Rules that must not be broken
Oh, I've transgressed
Having made disregard for rules a rule
Will I reach my destination?

I've heard that unless one wades into the mud
One cannot obtain the lustrous lotus
Then why those who churn muddy waters
Are mocked at?

Endless sky, deep sea
Even here there is no companion
That is why I dance the dance of destruction
Playing upon my Dunduvi*.

*A small, drum-shaped musical instrument

Translation: Arup Kumar Dutta

Terror, sheer terror (Aatonka ghoor aatonka)

Terror, sheer terror—
O' terrorism, beware!
In the sunlight glows
The Coalition of peace.

Countless lives have been slayed
So many daughters-in-law have lost their dear ones;
For ages have we been afflicted
Yet we do not grow weary of the struggle.

We know—the evil force
That supports you covertly
Hundreds of millions of resolute Indians
Shall render you powerless.

Suicide, untimely death, self-destruction are your intents
With brutal hearts causing the death of others
You laugh aloud.

Satyam Shivam Sundaram*,
Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**
This is our Indian mantra
Terrorism can never suppress
Humanity and democracy.

*Truth, auspiciousness and beauty
** The whole world is one family
Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

The aggrieved voice of the universe (Bikhubdha biswa konthoi)

The aggrieved voice of the universe
Screams all day and night
Fiery fireballs erupt and fly
Why do the flames fly ?

The earth is no aspirant of devastation
The mass-mind never seeks destruction
Still the flames fly
Fiery fireballs erupt and fly
Why do the flames fly ?

The booting of the resistance of infinite pledges
Spells the early doom of brutality's pride
The far-reaching expanse of human civilization
The volcanic spirit in every man
Stir up each day a new revolution
Fiery fireballs erupt and fly
Hence the flames fly

English translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

The architecture of Agnigarh (Agnigarhor stahpaytya)

The architecture of Agnigarh,
The engineering brilliance of Koliabhomora's bridge
Radiant with knowledge and wisdom
Here stands
Tezpur University.

From the depths of the earth up to the stars and planets
We explore through calculations
We shape the progress of the tide of science
With dedication
Mastering skills and techniques
We continue to chart new directions—
A symbol of humanistic vision and thought,
Tezpur University.

The mighty Brahmaputra flows by our side
With its strength we illuminate both the banks
We climb the stairs with intense speed
Fearless through the power of technology
In the struggle of life, science is our guide
Tezpur University.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

The charred year of 1983 (Juiye pura tiraxir)

[The year 1983 shall remain etched in Assam history as an utmost gruesome year. May it recur not -- may those charred days of 1983 never return]

The charred year of 1983
The year of elections
My younger brother disappeared
Nothing is known about him
Have you any clue ?

There's none in any village of the district
Who can equal you in any way
After losing you
Our village-folks bewail in utter rage
The library has turned into a graveyard
Even after repeated assurances he hasn't returned
Have you any clue ?
(And) if you get to know about his whereabouts
Would you convey him the news ?

I know he'd pledged
To build the nation anew
He sought to bestow upon the people of Assam
A life of bliss in the days to come
He raised his voice upon his own soil
How can he be disowned !
My younger brother disappeared
Have you any clue ?
Have you any clue about him ?

One day monsters and demons
Barged in from all sides
With guns blazing on the banks of the Luit
A good many departed afloat with the flowing waters
With them were Rongpi Pegu
Gogoi Basumatary
Rahim Kurmi Joseph were there
Chettri Tiwari
Harvansh was Guru Tegh Bahadur's disciple
All were snatched away by the butchers
Are you aware ?
Are you aware about it ?

Mother shrinks from going near
Any dish of repast
Students peep into the buses
Day and night
Each day my sister lights an earthen lamp
In my brother's room
My old father looks earnestly
At the trains in the station
Crowded by passengers unknown

Only my brother remains missing
There's no trace of his address
The house has become empty
My younger brother disappeared
Have you any clue ?
Do you know anything about him ?

In an ambience of constitutional obligation
Rivers in Assam flow with the blood of thousands
May the killings of 1983 happen no more
Its recurrence shall only spell disaster to the nation
The separatists shall be burnt on the pyre or buried alive
If perchance you come across my brother
Would you convey him the news ?

The charred year of 1983
The year of elections
My younger brother disappeared
Have you any clue ?
Do you know anything about him ?

Translation : Krishna Dulal Barua

The clouds rumble and roar (Meghe gir gir kore)

The clouds rumble and roar
Aha, the clouds roar and roar
In the gust banana fronds sway
A rain is close to coming.

Laid fallow for years
In the village my plot of land
I'll till to make it green
My joy will brim over.

No paddy no loan I'll take
No interest any more
How can I put up with
The nasty trick of the usurer.

I have slaved away
I let my heart bleed
I have honed my sickle
I've found my nerve.

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

The cuckoo cries repeatedly (Kulituwe bare bare kande)

[A tribute to great performing artist Moghai Ojha,
who popularized Dohi of Assam]

The cuckoo cries repeatedly
The weaver freezes in the loom
The Raas* do not swing fast
The shuttle of the loom too stalls with foot pressure
Madhoimalati** stops from blooming fully
The dhenki stops beating
Moghai Ojha is no more.
The buffalo fight ends
Someone weeps with the twangs of gogona
No one beats the drum
Moghai Ojha is no more.
Empty feeling in the mind
Heavy and heady
This time the bihutoli appear to be shorn of gaiety
Moghai Ojha is no more.

*A comb like implement of loom that pushes the string tightly
after every swing of the shuttle

**A flower of liana species; Stixis suaveolens

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

The hermitage of sage Kashyap (Kashyap rishir ashrom khoni)

The hermitage of sage Kashyap
Has turned radiant today
Menaka has handed baby Sakuntala
To mother Earth
Let's go and play
Hi little Sakuntala.

Play the conch ululate
The heart is full of ecstasy
The little delicate baby
Is engrossed in the lap of nature
Sakuntala brought in the wild.

Forest animals and birds for company
Grows up together with a fawn
She, the mascot for the forest
Dazzles like a lotus
The beauty of Sakuntala.

The little bud of jasmine
Blossoms slowly
Sakuntala blossomed into youth
Crossing her teens
Come let us take a dip in Malini River
Dear sweet Sakuntala

Translation: Bibekananda Choudhury

The Dewali* lamps burn and glitter (Jikmik dewalir bonti jole)

Diwali lamps burn and glitter
Who cries alone in the dark
Two houses close by
One a hut the other a mansion
The mansion rings with laughter
But no lights burn in the hut.

There's an earthen lamp in the hut
The wick is burnt out-nothing left
No lamp there will glow tonight.
The pampered in the mansion frolic and laugh
The child in the hut finds no sleep
The sad mother softly croons a lullaby
The lamp won't light tonight either.
Crackers burst in the mansion's yard
The rise and roll of bursting sounds
Seeing that the hut sobs alone-
Alone in the encircling gloom.

It will perforce dawn tomorrow
Bringing light and joy to the hut
Bringing back the fun of lost days
The hut does no longer cry alone
Light will burn and glow there too.

*A festival of light

Translation: Pradip Acharya

The flame of the noble sacrifice (Mohamaanowor* tyag agoniye)

[The sacrificial fire of the noble soul shall eradicate selfishness and ego,
and the masses shall reverse the peace messenger's message of peace.
Today, guided by the peaceful ideals of that noble soul, we must march
forward to forge a beautiful world of equality.]

March ahead, oh march forth
You, vanguard of the young.

The passing of the masses, a sudden gale
Shakes the sky above
A restless tumult.

March ahead, you, vanguard of the young
Look upon the pyre of narrow minds,
The rushing tide of progress wakes
Amidst the spectre of blackened clouds
A dazzling splendour unveils.

Behold the past, a skeleton dark
The crimson tides rise.
Oh, vanguard of the young
Paint across this peaceful world
With hues of equality, yet unknown.

*Mahatma Gandhi

Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

The forest fire (Bon jui bonothe jwale)

The forest fire can be seen only in the forest
The fire of the heart cannot be seen.

The sound of Hitler's heavy boots and crushing footsteps
Massacred of the Jews.

In the fourth decade the twentieth century
The world war spread across the globe setting the earth ablaze.

Gandhiji of India and the Frontier Gandhi stood firm
To uproot the British without any compromise.

Out of the two weapons violence and nonviolence
Gandhiji choses nonviolence instead if violence.

In the world war, people died in double numbers;
After the war, children were born in triple numbers.

There lived a couple in Bor Padumoni village
Seeing them childless we became painful.

The restless winds of the world war reached even Assam
Netaji's freedom fighters waited in Kahima.

The British police became oppressive in Bor Padumoni village,
And seized chickens and ducks from the locals.

Warplanes from Japan flew over Assam;
Cities and towns sank into darkness in great fear.

By closing schools and colleges hospitals were set up;
Amidst the world war, the struggle for India's freedom continued.

The rehearsal halls of Sankardev and Madhavdev stood silent and empty;
No drums resounded, no holy lamps were lit in the Namghars.

In the hearts of that couple too, another silent war continues
They two wept all alone being childless

They sowed seeds together and tilled the land;
The paddy of Lakshmi's* field was harvested in Aghon**.

Golden Aghon month arrived once again
But their barren hearts burned in sorrow.

*Hindu goddess of wealth

** Assamese month of harvesting

Translation: Er. Devajit Bhuyan

The Galongs from the Siang (Siangore Galong)

The Galongs from the Siang
The Khamtis from the Lohit,
And the Wanchos from Tirap
Why are they all calling me?
Assam's welcoming doorway is all agog
A fair of love and affection has gathered.

I hugged my Apatani sister;
As a return gift she ushered me with great warmth and said:
"Why has the colourful tear of emotion is flowing today?"
Oh, beneath the hills, at the edge of the plains
What familiar gatherings are taking place?

I hugged my Monpa elder brother;
He gifted me a statue of Buddha in exchange, said:
"The flag of friendship through the ages is flying high."
Oh, Padam, Idu, and Nocte
That I had been missing for so long
Are calling me and offering rice beer endearingly.

After trading in unity and harmony, I thought of returning,
But glancing back, I saw they too were coming.
Calling out to me, they said:
"Stay a little longer,
And when you return, tell Mother Assam
Today the hills and the plains
Have recognized each other's hearts."
That the Sherdukpens and Tangsas
The Adis and the Boris,
Are carving pathways
With the bonds of affection.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

The garden-girl of Assam (Asom dexor bagisare)

Girl:

The garden-girl of Assam,
I dance playfully the jhumur
Hey, Lakshmi is not my name, it's Chameli.

Under the Siris tree, you'll find blossoms,
Long leaves hanging down
Wearing a nose-ring, enchanting the youths
Hey, not Champa—my name is Chameli.

Twelve months bring twelve flowers
But in the month of Bhadra
Somehow my unfortunate beloved
Left me behind
O' my unfortunate beloved.

Little girls with bigger baskets on shoulders
Carry soft green leaves that sway beneath
Young and old alike cast eager glances
Eyes flickering with longing;
Young hearts beat fast with excitement.
What are you thinking, my friend?
Remember, my name is Chameli.

Our forefathers came from some distant land,
Yet we know how to sing Bihu—
Like a swan I'll glide, O' dear
In your pond
As a pigeon I'll perch on your roof-top
As sweat, I'll enter your body
Yes, your body
As a fly I will kiss your cheeks.

In the month of Bhadra—
Dham Dhama Dham!
In the Karam festival—
Dham Dhama Dham!
We play the rhythm—
Dham Dhama Dham!
On the Madal drum.

Boy:

Hey, you masked one—who are you, girl?
Are you Birbal's daughter, the hunter-woman,
Or are you the one who carries a pistol? Oh, crazy one!

Girl:

Oh no, I'm not crazy—my name is Chameli
Daughter of Birbal—my name is Chameli.
The garden girl of Assam
I dance playfully the Jhumur
Hey, it is not Lakshmi, my name is Chameli
Daughter of Birbal, my name is Chameli.
In the land of Assam, we frolic freely and joyfully.

The overseer says, "Work, work!"
The babu says, "Bring them here!"
The sahib says, "Take the load on your back"
O' foreign masters
You deceived us and brought us to Assam.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

The hues of Palash blossoms (Polaxore rong)

The hues of Palash* blossoms
Who has smeared all over
These lovely green leafy woods
And in your soft look.

The colours of life
The palash has smeared the colours of life
Over the soft tender meadow
And on your bosom.

In the crazy freshet of your youth
Let us swim you and I
With the tender bond of love
Let us bind each other
If the dam is breached heaven will fall
The storm will break over the earth.

Anything I mull over remains no secret
And a lot more is left out
If I keep mum about the things unsaid
They are caught in your eye
Leaning against the azure sky
The Palash blossoms are swaying
These are not flowers but flames of love
Love does not abide by caste and clan
One day human love will overcome
The demonic divide.

*Flame of the forest

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

The matchless youth (Luitporiya deka bondhu)

Speech:

You are the matchless young friends

Song:

You are the matchless young friends

By the bank of Luit

In battling the battle of your life, you are on

Pledging your death.

The past generations were idle

And they were deprived of a great many,

But the exploiters took their generosity for weakness.

Today, roaring like rumble of thunder

You have stamped out the enemy.

You are battling the battle of your life

Pledging your death.

Those who are there to scratch your spotless image,

Look! They have dug their grave by themselves

One by one in shame.

Today, the Luit is rising at high speed with foam and froth

Seeing the high tide of your courage

It bowed its head in deep respect.

The world today cranes its neck

To see the battling the battle of your life

Pledging your death

Gross neglect, this time shall be checked

In a fight to the finish.

Brahmaputra is in a blaze today.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

The mighty Brahmaputra (Mahabahu Brahmaputra mohamilonor tirtha)

Recitation:

Where does Bohag come with its unique splendour?

Isn't it to both the banks of the Brahmaputra?

What could be the noble heritage of this river?

Song:

The mighty Brahmaputra, a pilgrimage of grand confluence

For years and ages has it manifested

The essence of harmony.

From far-off Kanauj came the Barobhuyans**

The clan that bore here the great Sankardeva.

Ajan Fakir*** from the desert lands

Composed here the soothing Jikirs****

Dilawar arrived from Delhi to paint manuscripts

Tegh Bahadur from the Punjab built here the bridge of faith

All unveiled the many facets of harmony.

Brave Lachit held back the foes at Saraighat

With patriotism bound all races, faiths and dialects together

The Kirata***** scion Bishnu Rava revived the native lores

All unveiled the many facets of harmony.

The Padma river !

Shaken by the stormy Padma, hundreds rushed to this place

The banks of the Luit received everyone as guests

Giving a little, taking a little leads to intermingling

Rabindranath too urged upon assimilating

Here Jyoti Agarwal let flow the cascades of light

With which he foiled all schemes of treachery.

*Month between April and May heralding the Assamese new year

**Union of twelve clans who ruled a part of Assam during the middle ages

***Sufi poet named Shah Miran (Milan) who came to Assam from Baghdad around 1630 and settled in Sivasagar. He composed the Assamese devotional songs called Jikir and Zari

****Assamese devotional song

*****Mountainous tribe of Sino-Tibetan origin dwelling in the Himalayan foothills and north-eastern India

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

The ocean of life is made of countless drops (Jiwon-Sindhu bohu bindure hoi)

Speech: In order to build society today shallow schemes
and lazy thoughts are of no avail. The ocean of life is made of
countless drops, but those drops must be filled with action.

The ocean of life is made of countless drops
If the drops are filled with action
Lazy thoughts and shallow schemes
Destroy the hope of victory.

A handful of people, the Assamese
If there crop up all kinds of differences
The collective well-being is set at naught
If anger and grudge
Smoulder in low heat
Come all, deliberate in peace
Make full the empty heart.

No ism is possible outside society
Our aim is socialism
For a person, deaf to the call of life
His own room is his orbit
The selfish and machine-like view
Make the ruling narrow.

Assam, the great limb of greater India
Should ignore the negligence of all
Thousands awaken against the exploitation of the neo-colonists
The exploited split the breasts of the exploiters
With the incantation of courage.

Translation: Upendra Nath Sarma

The river dolphin leaps in the Luit (Luitot bhutungai ulal xihu)

Speech:

Just as the river dolphin leaps in the Luit,
Bihu, too, returns every year.

The river dolphin leaps in the Luit,
And proclaims, "Rongali Bihu is here again!"
Like clusters of ripe Leteku fruit,
People are swaying, jostling in restless throng
Come, behold the merry spectacle, come and see the fun!

Across the fields of society,
Who is outwitting whom in this game?
Who is dressing whom up as a fool?
Look at the crowds of people
Swaying and jostling,
Come, behold the grand spectacle,
Come and see the fun!

From this side they kick Rangmon-Bhodiya,
From that side they kick at you, O Nazitora
From this side they kick at you, too.
They have turned Rongali Bihu into Kangali,
Yet the hunger in the belly never dies.
O Nazitora, the stomach still knows no relief.
Ah! Celebrate Bihu for two fleeting days,
Then spend the whole year weeping,
Swallowing only the sighs of sorrow.
Look at these crowds of people
Swaying and jostling,
Come, behold the merry spectacle,
Come and see the fun!

Searching for Bihu clothes,
I wandered everywhere in vain;
Even a length of thread has become too costly.
O Govindai Ram!
At the grand homes
Of the wealthy and the powerful,
Sweeping their courtyards,
My back is nearly broken.
O Govindai Ram!
Before we even realised,
When last year's Bihu came,
Even our cattle had been mortgaged.
O Govindai Ram!

Bombs exploded somewhere across the sea
Elsewhere, ashes rained down from above
One monstrous bomb
Could burn the whole earth
At the whim of war-mongering powers.
Do not praise, my sister,
These Hydrogen-bombs to me
Tell me - if war comes, what shall we eat?
If war comes, what songs shall we sing?
It is the ordinary people who will die.

If the streams of peace ever cease to flow,
We shall turn into fishing baits.
Even the cherished melodies
Of Bohag Bihu itself
May one day fall silent.
These countless people—
Swaying, bobbing and rolling as one—
Come and watch the spectacle,
Come and watch the farce!

O flowing current, O grandma,
No embankment can truly hold you;
Its barriers break again and again.
O flowing current, O grandma,
No dyke can ever restrain you;
Its banks give way again after again.
People of the land, O grandma,
You carry everything onward -
But who can ever hold back time itself?

Translation: Debashish Bezbaruah

The soft drizzle (Rimjhim rimjhim boroxune)

[On a particular rainy day at Jorhat, I had written 'Rimjhim rimjhim boroxune ...' (The soft drizzle). I completed the last lines of the song in 1980 at Guwahati when a number of budding youths of my motherland became martyrs ...]

Recitation:

On the surface of which country do my mother's tears and my father's sweat of the brow drop?

Song:

Where do the soft drizzles jingle their anklets ?

Where do the rumbling clouds rattle the drums ?

It's in Assam

In this land of Assam.

Eh, who offers and where

The soothing water in Maihang* bowls ?

In whose gateway does the screwpine bloom to spread its fragrance ?

It's in Assam

In this land of Assam.

Where do the little brooks mingle with the sea ?

Who doesn't fear the sea and where ?

It's in Assam

In this land of Assam.

Where do my mother's eyes drop their pearls ?

Putting on those pearl-beads where do I find my guts ?

Where do the sweat of my father's brow drop ?

Where do I yearn to die seeing the sweat ?

O' it's in Assam

In this land of Assam.

Who perceives the melodies of my heart and where ?

Where do the youths offer their blood for the nation ?

Where are the taunts of others flung aside ?

O' O' it's in Assam

In this land of Assam.

* Traditional elevated bowl made of bell-metal in Assam

Translation : Krishna Dulal Barua

The storm raging over the Padda blew away (Paddar dhumuhai)

The storm raging over the Padda blew away
Hey, our dear home and hearth
Swimming upstream we arrived at
The low-lying lands in the mighty Luit
We'll build huts and sing again the song
With our hands we'll build Assam, it'll soothe our heart.

In the stream of love flowing through the bosom woods
Hey, a drink of water we do have
On the burnt floor, oh darling, build a hut
Hey the binding bamboo strips we too make.

Age by age people come close to each other
Not even knowing the others' tongue
The idiom of love has no alphabet
At will one can pick it up yet.

Love and love, love and love
Love is sweet jiggery and curd
Love and love, love and love
Love is a river flowing for ever
Love and love, love and love
Throughout the life it keeps flowing ever.

In the building up a land you and I
Hey, if we sweat over working
When our drops of sweat get mingled
Watch, it is history in the making.

Ganga Padda Krishna Godavari
Brahmaputra Kaveri
All the rivers to the Indian Ocean flow
All rolling and rolling in glee.

Ganga Padda Krishna Subansiri
Brahmaputra Kaveri
All the rivers to the Indian Ocean flow
All rolling and rolling in glee.

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

The sunlight of dawn is the ornament for the head (Arun kiron xiror bhushan)

The sunlight of dawn is the ornament for the head
The avalanche melts
Our Arunachal is the land
Kissed by the morning sun.

Kameng, Siang, Lohit and
Tirap, Sowanshiree
Like blossoms of eternal light
Adorned the Himalayas.

Bubbling with ecstatic joy
Making a bunch of five flowers
Our Arunachal is the land
Kissed by the morning sun.

Translation: Upendra Nath Sarma

The tall areca nut tree (Kakini tamulor)

A betel leaf plant beautifying a tall areca nut tree
You are waiting at the entrance, dear
You had laughed, we laughed too
In the squeal of laughter
A flock of startled whistling duck flew away.

Arranging Tamol*, mixed with affection
What do I take today – can't make out.
You'd take one, we'd take one
In that sweet taste
The Riha** of Gunaphool*** was blown away.

What Tamol we gave you sweetheart
It appears to have intoxicated me
My chest pounds, heart flutters
In that warm glowing gaze
The burning in my heart only grew stronger.

*A combination of betel leaf and areca nut with a dash of lime used to greet guests in Assam. It is also a symbol of respect in the Assamese community. People use to take after meal as a tradition.

** A long cloth to cover upper body. Used on special occasion and generally made of Assam silk.

*** Embroidery made on clothes with fine coloured threads

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

The Tirap frontier (Titap simanta)

The Tirap frontier
There's no end to its splendour
I behold the green horizon
In the minds of
Nocte Wancho, Tangsa Yugli

There I see Wancho, the teenager of Tirap
In his grip is the pointed spear -- the Pakmu
The Likmoni round his neck, the Kachawan on his head
Chowan dances tying a little Fanat
With sweetness wrapped short round the waist
What rhythm in the maidens' dance as they bend and sway their waists !
Embracing the fiery hills
Behind the kissing clouds
The sun is blurred !

(There) faintly from the distance
I see the Khonsa hamlet
There the sturdy Nocte youngster
Wearing the Jeimseng shirt
A cute cane Khopok on his head
And a colourful Khatori round his waist
Fully busy in the fountain of salt.

In the Changlang hamlet of Tirap
Dwells the simple-minded Lungsang tribe
There across the Tirap river's bosom
Over the suspended bamboo-bridge
The Tangsa peasants move across
There I see them descending in groups
With deer on their backs
O' brothers, where're you going ?
To the Margherita mart, they reply
Or else our toil shall go in vain.

During the Ahom kings' reign
The Noctes descended from the hills with salt
Sri-Sri Ram Ata, years before
Accepted the Nocte king as his disciple
Named him Narottam, the best among humans
Said, if humanity is truly retained by man
Embraces one another
Never can a nation fall apart.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

The two banks of the Brahmaputra (Brahmaputror duti paar)

A bridge joints the two banks of the Brahmaputra
And man is going to land on the moon.
To build bridges in the human minds
We, the young ones, will come out
Come out, surely, in groups
If the elders fail somewhere, somehow.

If darkness of distrust and envelops
The enlighten society of the elders
We the young ones, will be fireflies
And come out, surely, in groups
To spread light if the elders fail somewhere, somehow.

If water needed is huge
To transform the society
Into an ocean of love
We, the young ones, will be particles of love
And come out surely in groups
To fill the ocean to the brim
If the elders fail somewhere somehow.

Translation: Kiran Deka

The youthful youth (Natun purux, natun purux)

The youthful youth
You are never spineless cowards.
Today, if you don't prove yourselves to be active ones
Tomorrow, you will become backward ones.

Bright and mindful countless youths
And the faces of the maidens with eyes of hopes
Come alive in my mind's eye
So, you're my dearer rising ones.
O my dear youths!

Time carries the demands of every age
Emerg'd a new generation
A cry -
That shook the earth.
A promise -
To end the pangs of deprivation

Some of the youths set foot
On the footsteps of the great
But this track also changed its track at last.
Bright and mindful countless youths
And faces of the young women with eyes of hopes
In their track, some of the youths might have stumbled,
Wiping blood from the wounds
They resumed smilingly.
May it be wrong or may it be good
The youths learnt by themselves from their experience.
For the cowards and the worthless
It was all a surprise show.

When the thought of freedom is encompassed
By the cobweb of old thoughts and ideas,
Today's generation propel the social progress
Towards new and diverse path,
The youthful youth.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

The vast sky (Aakaax vishal)

The sky is vast, the ocean is vast
Vaster still is a mother's heart
Whether of beasts, birds or human beings
A mother's love is forever sweet.

For a mother, whether rich or poor,
Her affection remains the same
What may differ is only its expression
But is always selfless.

If a mother is without a child,
Her life feels incomplete
The golden gems of the earth
Turn to mere dust.

For their children, some poor mothers
Silently shed tears
In the struggle to protect them
They even let their heart's blood flow.

A mother who receives no recognition
From her own child
In the desert of life
Such a child loses the ocean of peace.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

The Vermilion Glow of the Morning Sun (Sendur sendur probhati suruj)

The vermilion glow of the morning sun
Gently brushes against my face
Tearing through the mist of oblivion
As memories quicken their pace.

I recall the setting sun's gaze
Laden with a parting sigh
And instantly, once again
That butter-soft face seen nigh.

Across the green fields of my heart
The zephyrs gently move.
Evoking memories of youth
Their attires of tender love.

My sweet village in golden sunshine
The pitch-black clouds of Xawon*
Remembering the pitter-patter of shower
The countless whistling ducks that remain.

This is no mere village to me
This is my mother— loving and blest
A homeward bird— I return
Seeking a place in her lap to rest.

Lush and green the village gleams
Boundless in its radiant grace
Yet it demands our heart and toil
To nurture and adorn this soil.
To the village, so many travellers tread,
Only to wither away, their spirits dead.
And so, the village stands as a skeleton bare,
Staring into the face of death and despair.

* The fourth month of the Assamese calendar.

Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

The village crumbles away (Bhora barisar bane)

[There is no end to floods. Every monsoon the fields of
thousands of peasants get submerged in Assam.
Horned owls make all kinds of eerie sounds at midnight,
and the lonely boat man then sings-
'The village crumbles away with the monsoon in full flow.']

The village crumbles away
With the monsoon flood in full flow
The poor child weeps in dismay
As floodwaters by him flow
In full monsoon, in full monsoon.

The flood waters hold sway
Crossing the roof's edge on their way
Embankments on the paddy field
Under their impact dwindle away
In full monsoon, in full monsoon.

Grandmother looks on weeping
Embracing her grandchildren dear
On the tree-top sits a horned-owl hooting
Making ominous sound all can hear
In full monsoon, in full monsoon.

The thatched roofs move
Along the water there
Sitting on them the kite
Croons her hymns rare
In full monsoon, in full monsoon.

Fields of countless peasants
Submersed in the floodwaters
Dreams woven into their seeding beds
Are also now in tatters
In full monsoon, in full monsoon.

Translation: Dibya Ranjan Sharma Khataniar

The vegetable garden (Pacholir bagisa)

A vegetable garden,
A little garden
Have you seen
My little garden?

I have planted
So many vegetables there
How beautifully
The mustard flowers bloom?

With a tiny hoe
I dig the soil myself,
With a little spade
I tend it on my own.
In the afternoon, I water the plants,
And pluck fresh peas to eat.

The vegetables cabbage, radish, beans, greens
Ceylon-spinach, and leaf mustered
Early in the morning, I gather them, filling my basket.
Vegetables are sold in plenty in the market,
But none taste as good as those from my garden.

Translation: Er. Devajit Bhuyan

The violent storm questioned (Prosono dhumuhai)

The violent storm questioned me
“Tell me, what is your due?”

Opening the mind-door, I said boldly,
“Empower me with all your strength.”

Having emptied its heart, the crack of thunder said,
“What do you pray for?”

I said, “O Thunder,
Give me your sonorous and forceful voice.”

The sky uttered one day,
“A certain lyricist prayed for a bit of the sky,
Why then today in a quivering voice
You crave for the sky in entirety?”

I said,
“You did say in the morning –
The more you share, the nobler you become;
That’s what is called true munificence.
So, the sky, if at all you wish
Setting aside narrowness,
Offer the gift of your vastness entirely.
If you give, give it today itself.”

The sky gave me a long-ranged vision,
The storm might,
The thunder gave me the sonorous voice
And also, spirit.

With the thunder’s voice and the storm’s might
I’ll sing and sing and it’ll rock the horizon.
Even in the dungeons I’ll sing for human being
With the songs moistened with heartfelt tune.

To revivify
Even if I can infuse a tiny spark of life-current
Into the dying human being
I bow to the sky, the thunder and the storm
hundred times.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

The weather is pubescent today (Aji botor gabharu hol)

The weather is pubescent today
Nature shan't be in slumber
I knew not before, only now am I aware
In my body there's a fire.

My body titillates, my heart pounds
My mind is a gushing river --
To bloom or not
Restless is the lotus bud
Let me have a touch --
I knew not before, only now am I aware
In my body there's a fire.

The heavenly moon blooms in the sky
The bumble-bee sun kisses it tenderly --
My body too is being kissed by the wind
Coily the moon peers.
The crape jasmine smiles abashed --
I knew not before, only now am I aware
In my body there's a fire.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

The winding path (Akuwa-pokuwa baat)

The winding path, this hilly trail,
Chugs on like a millipede,
The twisting path called “Patachia”
Chugs on like a little millipede,
Jhik jhik jhik jhik jhik jhik jhik jhik
The “Patachia” train goes *thak thak* along.

You ate two bananas, didn’t leave any for us
You ate another one, didn’t give us any.
When you share and eat, all requirements are met
If you eat in secret, friend, it only chokes you inside.

A fat boy says:

“I’m not selfish,
Look at my body—
If I eat less, friend, I’ll die!
When I reach home, mommy will say
When I reach home, daddy will say—
‘Oh dear, my child, you’ve grown so thin and half-fed!’”

Eating alone while others go without
That’s not a good thing, brother.
Don’t empty the store of food
Remember, others have stomachs too.
Don’t take a seat meant for two
Later you may find none for yourself.
Home, home, sweet home
Take me there, O’ hill train
Millipede train, don’t fail,
Home, home, sweet home.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

The wise man says (Gyanijone koy)

Speech:

The wise man says-what?

Song:

The wise man says
Packs of jackal is no match for a single lion
Thinking of that
O newly wed
Limit your family.
Family planning is
Not just stopping pregnancy
It is providing security
To the baby and the mother too.

Speech:

The wise man says-what?

Song:

The wise man says
Packs of jackal is no match for a single lion
Thinking of that
O newly wed
Limit your family.
Every child brought to earth
Would get the right of a human
If you cannot afford to provide that little right
Why make such wrong claim.

Speech:

The child that you brought forth today
Or maybe the next day – think of it once.

Song:

The child that you brought forth today
Respect its very entity
Provide it due security
Physical mental and wisdom
Self-security
The unwanted child that you gave birth
You have the right to copulate

Speech:

Perhaps there is right.

Song:

But the family of a sweet child
Would you get any benefit if a plan is put into place?
The scriptures of Hindu Christian Sikh Buddhist
Repeats a thousand truths
Every couple has the right
For a planned child.
In the name of Abu Sayd Ayub
Hazarat Muhammad in his lifetime

Sermon the Moslem community
In favour of planned family
Family planning
Whom you gave birth today or will do the coming days
Think once about it
If you take the vow to groom it
Into a person fit for the world forum.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

The world is a playground (Eai prithibi ek kriyangan)

The world is a playground
Sports is the arena of peace
Where youth shines victorious
Where the speed of life
Actively shuns unhealthy laziness.

We don't encourage any separation
Our sole desire is integration
A true sportsman is not involved
In any activity other than togetherness.
He meditates in the single purpose
Of creating oneness and unity.

Sports is not only fun and games
Nor is it only a competition,
Sports contributes in building
A healthy, upright, strong nation.

Where all around the forces of destruction are brewing
Where in the world today there is an erosion of value structure.

A disciplined sportsman
Vanquishes all existing forces of darkness and hopelessness
With the eternal flame of Hope and Unity.

Translation : Dr Bhupen Hazarika

The world calls me wild (Mook jangli jangli duniai koy)

The world calls me wild
The jungle is my home;
The free wind is my friend,
A fake life, unknown.
The jungle is my home.

Open sky and open light,
Open, open is my soul;
In the jungle I labour on,
Singing freedom's song untold.
My jungle is sacred,
The jungle is my home.

You citizens of towering heights,
So proud in urban glory,
These concrete houses are not homes,
But slums of suave society
Where the human heart turns stone,
The jungle is my home.

The city is a savage crowd,
A forest of human throngs
Where man himself becomes a machine
While beasts still teach love's song.
By comparison, the jungle is beautiful,
The jungle is my home.

The rogue elephant I can bring
Under gentle discipline
And once it becomes a friend,
It guards a friend's very life.
He is no untrustworthy man,
The jungle is my home.

Translation: Debashish Bezbaruah

The fresh dewdrops of Autumn's Sewali* (Xorotor xewalir natun niyore)

The fresh dewdrops of Autumn's Sewali
Draw snowy, snowy white pictures
The flocks of Sarali** sing the song of freedom
Fluttering flags fashioned by grey clouds.

The dew drops are life's mirror
Their only I glimpse dreams of hopes
If you seek infinity in a spec, you will fathom an ocean in the dot.

Why should I gather autumnal leaves?
Why should I greet the empty, empty mind?
The confined, confined frontier how long can I endure?
Contended, contended am I observing the sky
Spotless, spotless flowers do I count
The leisurely, leisurely dances of Kahua***
Bring joy in between the interlude of pessimism.

*Jasmine

**Cotton teal

***Pampas grass

Translation: Nripen Dutta Baruah

Thinking of arranging you (Toomak sojam buli manaspotot)

Thinking of arranging you in the canvas of mind
Thought many times at many moments.

But the stain remained in the canvas of mind
I lost you Malati
Once you gave me a rose
And there lay a thorn attached
With the high tide of a pierced heart
It makes me remember your promise.

Breaking barrier of the horizon, of your hope
It shatters my dreams
Do you still remember
But the stain remained in the canvas of mind
The moment I lost you.

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

They say of the Modar* blossom (Moderore phul henu)

[Different people belonging to different strata have
their own valuable contribution to make the society.
Only the person who realizes that with full consciousness
in the reality a socially conscious person. When one finds
lacunae in such consciousness it is then that one feels like screaming out...]

For worship, they say, the Modar blossom can't be used
For prayer, they say, Modar blossom can't be used
But it is used to imbue Bohag** with colour
And it is used to set the sky afire.
Seems, some likened me to the Modar
Seems, folks like us are of no use at all
But we are still used to imbue society colour
But we are still used to set the sky afire.

The betel leaf that climbed the Modar taste good, really good
The oath the up-climbing betel leaf vine took is good, really good
To be like a betel leaf and climb the Modar is good, really good
The pour the bosom's blood on thorns is good, really good
Today on Bohag I shall set out to worship
One who seeks the aflame Modar.

If the small, tiny fox become the red Modar
If they hold in their hands the flame of the Modar
It is then that the social skies will be a filled with light
Light that is used to vanquish the dark.

Modar isn't used for worship-whose worship is it?
Such worship is not good-we shan't watch such worship
What's used in those prayers are paper -flowers fake
What's sold in those places- it's humanity at stake

Worship wherein human flesh is bought by the weight
And is sprinkled with the fragrance of roses
Worship where poison arise by the pound
Gets drawn away from the soil's life-nectar
For such folks, make a bed of thorns and, setting
Them afire with Modar, make men out of them
Seems, some likened me to the Modar
Seems, folks like us are of no use at all

*a local flower (crown flower)

**the first month of Assamese year in the middle of April

Translation: Dr. Suranjana Baruah

Tihu is your name (Tihu hol tumar naam)

(A historical song composed by Dr. Hazarika especially for the 1976 Asam Sahitya Sabha session held at Tihu)

Tihu is your name—may you be blessed with joy,
I offer you my salutations from this field named Lakshmi

Bishnu Rabha interpreted about the word “*Dihu*” in the Bodo language,
“Di” means water, and “Hu” means to flow.
“Dihu” gradually became “Tihu,” situated on the banks of the Tihu River,
As Banikanta Kakati often explained.
There was a waterbody at the foothills of Bhutan,
From which the stream of Bhalukdonga flowed.

Taking the name River Singra, it flowed some distance,
And after traversing this region, merged at N-Khanda.
The Tihu River is small—so what!
A great culture exists on its banks
On both sides of the Tihu River, life-giving fertility abounds,
Golden paddy fields and endless mustard crops flourish.
To the north shines the Bhutan foothill region,
And to the south flows the mighty Brahmaputra.
Barama Akhara lies to the east,
And parts of Bajali exist in the west.

There are seven mouzas under Tihu town
Where various tribes and communities live in harmony.
The word “Bagcha” in the Bhutanese language means a doorway,
Hence the northern region is called “Baska.”
In the 14th–15th centuries, conflicts occurred between the Bhots and Bodos,
The place was named “Barbari” as evidence
There are monasteries, temples, satras, and shrines of many beliefs
Shakta, Vaishnava, and Shaiva devotees all find a home here.
Guru Madhavdeva commanded Gandharva Ray to act,
And by the blessing of Damodardev, Manohar carried it out
Thus the Singra Satra was established.

Santadeva founded the Sandhela village Satra,
He was the third son of Madhav Kandali.
Basudev Choudhury Established the Satsangi Satra
During the time of Sankardev, with devotion.
He installed the idol of Basudev there,
With the support of Ahom kings.
King Naranarayana granted 200 puras of land,
And Siva Singha accepted it with joy.

The British later granted tax-free religious land,
And even today, the service to the Guru continues in that Satra.

Once, Queen Phuleswari fell ill after childbirth,
And Bhavakanta Bhattacharya cured her.
Pleased, King Siva Singha granted land and copper plates in reward.
In Khanar Maj lies the sacred Damodari Satra,
Where the Vaishnavite faith of Shyam Ray is propagated.
Shakta traditions are seen in many Kali temples
At Kathalmura, Patikar, and Mathurapur villages.
There is the Haribhanga Kamakhya shrine,
Where Shakti worship is performed,
And at Helchapara's Bishahari temple, devotees seek blessings.

Shaiva traditions too are visible across the land
Evidence of taking Paramannam is still in Bhadrakuchi.
Many ponds were created during Ahom rule,
To relieve the thirst and beautifying Tihu
Once the Burmese stole a wooden idol from the Satra,
But realizing it was wood, they broke the hands of the idol
That same idol still adorns the Satra today.
Many more histories remain hidden in Tihu,
Perhaps scholars today's gathering will uncover them in future.

Today Sahitya Sabha celebrates its forty-three years
And the lyricist Bhupen Hazarika feel honoured here.
The silent scholar, the eminent Sri Yogeshwar Sarma,
Guides Assamese literature even today.
Our revered dramatist Sarada Bardoloi is also present
And Ramdas leads the storytellers.
Today Sayed Malik, Padma Bhushan Nabakanta Baruah
And Nirmal Prabha Bordoloi graces the occasion joyfully
Hindus, Muslims, Bodos, Rabhas—all sitting together.

Subhash Mukhopadhyay is among us today,
Through his poetry building bridge between Bengal and Assam.
The worthy son of Assam, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed,
Arrived in Tihu town by a helicopter.
Though President of India, he still bows in respect to Tihu.

Translation: Er. Devajit Bhuyan

This beautiful twilight moment (Eai dhuniya godhuli logon)

Young Man:

Janaki...

Young Woman:

Hmm?

Young Man:

Why this unrestrained behaviour?

Young Woman:

Why?

Young Woman:

In this beautiful twilight hour,
Such unrestrained behaviour
Breaking society's rules covertly
Why are we so lost in each other?

Young Man:

Why is it?

Young Woman:

This beautiful twilight moment.

Young Man:

What is love?

Young Woman:

Love is like a game of many daggers
Sharp blades strike
With a swishing sound when they pierce the heart
How can one stop it?

Young Man:

Why this attraction?

Young Woman:

This beautiful twilight moment...

Young Woman:

Life is dark, the world is dark
You're after all a lightning;
If your light can brighten my heart
Let it shine even if it be with a little deceit.
A homeless life, all alone
If it's a sin, then I'm offender
In my trembling heart pining
Are two arms obsessed with affection.

Young Woman:

Give me a sweet embrace.

Young Man:

Hmm...

Young Woman:

This beautiful twilight moment...

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

This Bohag-a blazing sun (Eai Bohag jolonto arun)

This Bohag is a blazing sun
This Bohag is a restless youth.

From the worn-out, decaying values
Of countless bygone months Bohag
Digging up the ancient burial mounds
Cleaning the bones and
Forging them into weapons
Taking deep breaths
Who's it crushing the armies of oppression
Smiling joyfully?

The old Bohag was weary
The old Bohag wasn't restless
Today's Bohag is like a wild spring
Standing tall as a daring youth.

Making friendship with death, it coloured Phagun*
In this very Bohag it has driven away the cruel vultures.

Its feet stand firm on the country's soil
Its dark hair touches the sky
Stretching out its arms, it gathers the stars
Its voice has the free expression of reason.
The sky pours new rains of hope
Beating the drum
The spirited youth dances.

*The Assamese month between mid-February and mid-March
Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

This holy hour of our union (Milonore eai xubho khon)

This holy hour of our union
Our hearts soar high like a butterfly
Love extends its tender invitation
In life's sweetest hour.

The chains of shyness springs open
As heart finds its echo
This nectar-sweet embrace
Like the grandest union of Hara-Gauri*.

O merciful Mother Parvati, divine
Pardon the flaws that in us lie
We seek the blessed grace of thine
Dancing upon your peaks so high
In boundless freedom that we find.

For love knows no borders
It crosses the edge of the infinite sky
Satyam Shivam Sundaram**
You and I, lost in each other, as ages drift by.

* A Hindu term referring to the combined, divine form of
Lord Shiva (Hara) and Goddess Parvati (Gauri).

** A profound Sanskrit phrase that translates to "Truth, Godliness, and Beauty".

Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

This wet, wet night (Eai bhija bhija rati)

This wet, wet night
This life-fathoming night
I've oven the garland of sorrow
To measure with my own hands.

Life doesn't mean joy
Life doesn't mimicry
I've cleared the thorny path
With my struggle.

Every moment is a fearful battle
Which I've welcomed
With all my heart
Learning from hard experience
I've quaffed the cup of poison.

I had sought the blossom of life
But picked up the costly mistake
Showing loss in reckoning.

Translation: Upendra Nath Sarma

Through the great creations (Sankar-Madhavor moha moha sristit)

The Prologue:

Through the great creations of Sankar-Madhav
Shines the land beside the Brahmaputra,
So many have praised the Assamese writings
Of Padmanath Gohain Barua.

Filled with the beauty and spirit
Of the Bodo, Rabha and Mising folks
Living and vibrant is our language,
Why haven't you read, and read again,
The writings of Pamegam and Bishnu Rabha?

The language of Ananda, Chandra,
Hem, Rajanikanta and Ambikagiri
Tell me, didn't Mofiz Hazarika's flower
Bloom together in the same garden?

Ajan Fakir and Lakshminath
Shared the same vision and dream;
Muzammil and Anil too became
Two flowers of one language
In the same autumn.

Upadhyay, Tripathi, Afaz Tamiz,
And Karmakar of tea garden
Embracing Assam have they spoken
In the language of Neo Assamese
The feelings of their hearts.

Finding a home many a brother
Upon the banks of the Luit River
Became friends of Assamese life;
Assam too bared its soul and poured out
The honeyed streams of love.

Even a new bride longs with her heart and soul
To make her husband's home her own;
Then why, in some who have lived here for ages,
Do I still behold glances filled with hatred?

Why some, coming from far away and
Living here for generations,
Still refuse to call Assamese their mother -
Hearing such things,
What would the noble soul

Of Jyoti Prasad says?

Rabindra, Kabindra and Acharya Ray,
Annada Shankar and Suniti Kumar -
They too, it seems, recognised
Of our mother tongue
The great heritage and splendour.

Discourse on Death:

O my mother Assam,
Why are your sweet lips and
Tongue-stained red today?
Who came with sharpened steel,
Striking again and again,
Until seven streams of blood ran free?

Those seven red trails
I know them,
I know them well --
Each one burns
With the face of someone dear:
One is Ranjit, another, Surjya,
And one, Anil Bora.

Gentle Mozammil,
Tender as a budding flower,
And beloved Dhan.
Why smear the Quran with blood
And cry aloud in its name?
What language speaks through such a deed?
Two blood-soaked bodies
Lay silent on the earth—
Balin and Pramod Bora.
Then I heard another cry of protest,
Mahanta collapsing,
Struck down in defiance.

To raise our eyes toward the sun
And struggle for justice—
Assam, too, has that right.
Yet you dismiss that yearning
As reckless extremism,
While hiding your own betrayal.

My mother tongue
Is the chariot of thought—
Never a weapon
For the hunger of power.

Masked moralists,
Do not twist its meaning;
Your sermons have lost all worth.

The feudal arrogance of language
Has grown old and stale—
How long will you keep roaring threats?
How many webs will you weave
In the name of false journalism,
With your deceitful pride?

Assamese people are peace-loving,
Open-hearted, and true to India.
And you, pseudo-scholars,
Pinch yourselves awake
Before judging others.

The Reasoning:

(Hey!) Show me, if you can,
Anywhere in this vast India,
A single patch of land
That hasn't borne, time and again,
The footprints of many a language.

Then why, from region unto region,
Should one lone tongue rule the roost?
(Where) the history of assimilation was written by minorities
Who came from afar.

In the name of reconstruction,
Some conspire to create new fissures.
Play not with fire,
Nor give me a red-eyed stare,
This is my final warning to you.

When Sheikh Mujib of Bangladesh
Sings the song of Shonar Bangla,
Does that, tell me, at all insult
Any language of the world?

I argue no more,
The arguments are over.
This song alone now sounds the alarm.
Bring not to Assam an air of fear,
Nor kindle the fire of ruin.

Too many cowards closed around
To behead the gentle Anil Bora.
But, lo and behold,

How Anil now glows in the sky
Like the steadfast Pole Star.

Epilogue:

Who have the Assamese people
Ever forced to speak Assamese?
(Hey!) Has not the Assamese language
The right to its own place
In Assam itself?

When, across this vast India,
The corrupt, the schemers, and the faithless abound,
(Hey!) Is Assam your ancestral lab?

Should anyone, in lofty arrogance,
Mock the Assamese even once,
A million sons and daughters
Will bravely shed their blood.

We bear no hatred towards any people,
Nor do we scorn another language,
That has never been our goal.
If this one song you fail to understand,
A hundred more I'll yet compose,
Awakening the Brahmaputra's banks.

Since the time of 'Jonaki',
We have struggled on,
Yet never have we wearied.
Today the Assamese are aflame
With the fire of determination,
Bearing a new message for mankind.

Today the Assamese have assumed
A new and fiery form at last,
A people's blazing, living force,
Forged in an invincible new consciousness,
A people's blazing, living force.

In 1979 and '80,
The people by the Luit proclaimed:
"With non-violence as our weapon,
We shall fight on, even if we die."

The oppressor's sharpened steel
Pierced Khargeswar's tender breast;
The young man's streaming blood
Turned his white attire red.

When that grim news reached Assam,
The people trembled with intense rage;
Countless multitudes marched as one,
Ready to lay down their lives.

At Duliajan fell Ajit Neog,
Nagen Deka and Kumud Gogoi;
From Baganpara, Dilip Huzuri too
Smiled as he walked into eternity.

And how many more have defied death,
Renewing still their solemn vow?
In the flame that yearns for dawn,
How many radiant souls still burn!

By staking life itself,
We must carve a path
By which our people may survive.
This is the struggle of all struggles,
Our final battle of Saraighat
Where we must all prevail.

Translation: Debashish Bezbaruah

Timeless conqueror of death (Kaljoyi mrityunjoyi)

Timeless conqueror of death
Conqueror of time, *Maniram
Your death today invokes in every household
The struggle for liberation
It shall sketch flowers of light
Darkness shall meet its end.

You're the spark of Assam's past
The lifeblood of today's fire
Unveil the people's valour
Let creation bloom forever
Conqueror of time, Maniram Dewan.

*Maniram Dutta Baruah (1806--1853),
popularly known as Maniram Dewan was an Assamese
nobleman during British rule who was hanged for conspiring
against the British in the 1857 uprising

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

To my audience (Hey moor Asomor xruta jonota)

[Written on draught situation of Bihar]

To my audience in Assam
How do we explain
[today] Millions of people from Bihar
Is watching a Death Valley.

With the heat of blazing sunlight
Some cruel demon appears to
Scorch hundreds of standing paddy fields
In the Chotanagpur plateau.
The fear of eighteen-seventy-six
Appeared to have returned once more
In thousands of bags of Hazaribag
Green saplings were scorched.

The heart sinks as you look around
No cloud hovers in the sky of Palamou
For thousands of dying children
Helpless mothers shed tears.

Rahim cries: Allah send some cloud
Rasia snivels: God pour down little water
The dry earth says tearing its bosom apart
Embrace eternal peace on my bosom
Nalanda silent, sky is quiet
The heritage of Pataliputra listless
No auspicious sound or chimes in Munger
People of Chapra, Ara have given up hope.

The fertile soil of Bihar
Once trodden by Lord Buddha
Is now facing death in hunger and thirst
An arid quiet desert.

Perhaps listening to the story of Ranchi
No one would agree to be true
The host cooks meat of domestic dog
As they could not manage a few grains of rice.

No pity no compassion
This is not a colourful exhibition
This is a pronouncement human voice
Driven by sense of duty.

The Maithili tune of the city of Mithila of Vidyapati
Appears to turn silent

The village cowherds in the Bhojpur field
Do not sing the songs of Birha-chaiti today.

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

Tucking in a Radhasura bloom (Ei Radhasurar phul guji)

Tucking in the bun a Radhasura*bloom
Radhika from Radhapur
While dancing the jhumur** at a tea-estate
Offers liquor to Jugnu.

Her liquor is the drink of love
With no mix of impurity therein
It sprinkles true colours as the Krishnachura***
On a Sirish****called Jugnu
Radha seems to be a creeper.

Bunches of yellow Xonaru***** blooms
Knotting the bun with the mirror in front
Radha is distraught
Jugnu's body is shaped in lathe
Hued wooden brown
It makes Radha's face flash a smile
With a flurry of poses
With no Jugnu around, each moment for Radha
Seems to be a hundred years
While dancing the jhumur at a tea-estate
She offers liquor to Jugnu.

* Peacock flower

** Traditional dance of the tea community of Assam

*** Royal poinciana or Gul mohar

**** Albizia Lebeck

***** Golden shower

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua

Thump thump, thump, thump (Dhak dhak dhak dhak dhakei bojali)

Thump, thump, thump, thump
Played thump only
Though you numbered hundreds of thousands
You received nothing at all in return.

Befriending you labour class
Through dirty manipulation
Demons suck your blood.
Despite being cheated
Age after age
You failed to learn
Though you numbered hundreds of thousands
You received nothing at all in return.

The word of mouth your heart's hope you pound
Thereby you bartered your tender youth in the dark of the night.
(Hey) losing your courage where have you run off to?
Though you numbered hundreds of thousands
You received nothing at all in return.

Why do you continue living like a flock of sheep?
In the dark, dark lanes you bid your time
Instead of sheep why did you not become robust horses?
Though you numbered hundreds of thousands
You received nothing at all in return.

Humanity is a jungle
The lazy despicable
The rich thankful.
Labourer is merchandised
Society is honourable unique.
You have paid obeisance to these
Masked honourable people
No, no, no you have sold your honour.

Thump is not merely is an instrument
Thump is your weapon, strip naked your exploiters
By snatching their clothes
To build a new society is your pledge
Awake, awake, neigh like robust horses.

Translation: Nripen Dutta Baruah

There in the distant horizon (Dur digantot riniki dekhisu)

There in the distant horizon, the egret of memory soars
Only perhaps to spite and tease this my dying of the day.

Have churned glistening seas of love
That sea now pours but stream of poison.

In the full noon of life, the night sheathes the earth
Keeping the sun in covers, falling stars shoot.

I made the hive in your heart, shaped by your hands
You let it all go dry, with your negligence.

I do up as a palace what I build in sand
You shatter at will my house of joy filled with myriad hopes.

The wick of life burnt out, you put out my light
Close by your smile glows to turn the world mad.

The darkening sky sings bridal songs
I sit under the canopy of death, the groom of fancy.

Fresh blood streams down my heart
Let that adorn your forehead like vermillion stars.

I have no complaints today, let my overflowing hate
Cascade down as a stream of joy.

I give you my blessings and the stream of love
You be happy, while I embrace the bonds of defeat.

Build a rainbow with your beauty, let the earth glow
I see in the distant horizon the egret of memory soar.

Translation: Pradip Acharya

Touched by a wand of gold (Soonor kathir porox powa)

Whose tender hands
Touched by a wand of gold
Now stoop to clasp the dust?
The tale of two under one roof bound
Two different lives— listen how they sound.
Two little buds upon a single vine
Listen to the story of lives twain.

Two little buds upon a single vine
One frolics and laughs in the morning dew
While the other denied a single drop
Only left to stew.

For one, life brings a joyful gleam
Blessed by someone with a golden dream
For the other the only companion left
Is the weary counting of days bereft.
The tale of two under one roof bound
Two different lives— listen how they sound.

One's wheel of fortune spins so bright
Adorned in coats of shimmering light;
The other's hopes are crushed to dust
Without a single spark of trust.
The tale of two under one roof bound.

One holds the heavens in their palm
The taste of paradise turns wearisome.
Today who will bring back to restore
The long-lost smile that another once wore
That sweet, heavenly nectar.

The tale of two under one roof bound
Two different lives— listen how they sound.
Two little buds upon a single vine
Listen to the story of lives twain.

Translation: Bhaswati Goswami

Tu tu tu tu tupi (Tupi tumi negur kota Xial)

Tu tu tu tu tu tu tupi, hey tupi
(You're a) a clever rogue
Alligator of the society
Donning a cap
You create nuisance everywhere.
Donning this very cap you
Make the day appear night
Donning the cap
Kill an innocent step by step.

Donning the cap
Make people appear dumb like sheep
With the power of the cap
You turn into
A meditating cat.

You can afford
To don the cap
So today I won't hand you
The cap again.

You are a checkered keelback
The cap is your fang
Using the power of the fang
You indulge in pickpocketing
Snatching the wealth the people
You turn rich.

You have lost the right
To don the cap
Won't hand it any more
Even if you lick our feet and wail
Go away don't ask for again this cap
You may die weeping
Our so-called guardian.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Victory to Assam's new generation (Joy joy asomir notun purus)

[This song records the power takeover by Assam Gana Parishad the political party formed by All Assam Students Union and its supporter constituents of 6 yearlong Assam Movement after winning 1985 Assembly election]

Hail Assam's new generation!
Victory to the martyrs'!
In eighty-five, through your sacrifice,
You wrote the story of liberation.

A great limb of the great Bharat,
Our Mother Assam
The blood spilled by so many of her children
Has no equal in sacrifice.

You wiped the tears
Of this blazing Brahmaputra River
Its rivers and tributaries
The hills and plains
In eighty-five, through your courage
You wrote the story of freedom.

Beyond caste, religion, and language
For all lawful citizens alike
You envisioned a socio-economic order
Built upon the great mantra
Of freedom from exploitation.
The people unitedly
Choose their representatives to run the state
In the halls of governance
The student council took its place.
Proclaiming a message of generosity,
In eighty-five, through your courage,
You wrote the story of liberation.

Against narrow-mindedness,
Read the living history of life;
Fulfill the dreams of
Srimanta Sankardeva,
Ajan Fakir,
Jyoti Prasad Agarwala,
And Bishnu Prasad Rabha.
The twenty-first century is approaching
Accelerate the march of progress!
With the thunderous call
"That work itself is religion,"
Illuminate the banks of the Luit.

Adorn my Mother Assam
Make her the queen of peace and harmony
In eighty-five, with your blood,
You wrote the story of liberation.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Water (Eai paani)

The entire north is submersed in water...
This water!
What quality of water is this?
Unbearable
It's not the water
For the thirsty.

This is not the tearful form
Of an arid earth
This is floodwater.
These waters are of terror
These waters are of sorrow
These waters bring tidings of death.

These waters
Snatch away infants
From their mother's breasts
These waters drag the farmer
From his fields
And turns him into a lifeless body.
The entire north is submersed in water...

These waters
Shatter banks
Of thousands of villages
Mocking human wisdom and reason.
These waters are horrifying
The heart-rending scream
Of toxic death
The entire north is submersed in water...

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

We Assamese aren't poor (Aami Asomiya nohou dukhiya)

Speech: Sahitya Samrat Bezbaruah once said-

“We Assamese aren't poor
Why should I consider myself poor?”

Song:

Right, but-
Merely being content with the thought-
“We Assamese aren't poor”, wouldn't do.
If today's Assamese fail to recognize themselves
Assam will sink into ruin.

Embracing varied tribes and sub-tribes
With colourful cultures
This land of Assam
Was created.
If we don't cast aside divisions
And build the nation toiling with our own hands
This land will perish
And minds will break apart.
If today's Assamese don't wake up
They will become beggars in their own land.

What every Assamese should do—
There's no Lachit for advice-
'My feeble-hearted uncles
Aren't superior to the nation!'
Even if the sword-wielding Lachit is no more
We must move forward.
Otherwise, in the very land of Assam
The Assamese themselves will become refugees.

Speech:

'If Assam dies, we too shall die'—
Who's there today to say this aloud?
Who'll proclaim?

Song:

To turn cowards into brave men
There're many like Jyotiprasad.
To declare, 'If Assam dies, we too shall die',
There are still many martyrs.
Today, the cry of Ambikagiri
Shall be reshaped anew actively
If today's Assamese don't struggle
They'll be refugees in their own land.

If the Assamese can't survive in Assam itself
Then where else would they do?
If we say we love our mother
Does it mean we hate mothers of others?
Every Assamese is a good Indian
And those who come from afar
And call the land by the Brahmaputra their mother
Become Assamese in a new form.
If we remain united in this spirit, it's enough;
Or else, the world will mock us
Saying we haven't any spine at all.

Every Assamese who feels the beauty of universal love—
You too are aware about one truth:
If you can't wipe away your own mother's tears
Your love for the world goes in vain.
If you become a crippled limb of the world
Would the world truly love you?
If you're born on this earth and remain unaware
Even your rightful place will be lost.

Offering my obeisance to both indigenous and new Assamese
I wish to remind:
If the people of Assam forget themselves
Even festivals will turn into sufferings
And the beloved Rongali Bihu
Will turn into poverty and despair.
If today's Assamese don't awaken themselves,
Assam shall sink into ruin.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

We drive an autorickshaw (Autoricksha chalaou)

Younger Brother:

We drive an autorickshaw
We two brothers—
Making Guwahati a flower garden

Elder Brother:

I failed my B.E.
My younger brother is an M.A.

Both:

And we're heavily indebted to the bank.

Elder Brother:

The permit is in my brother's name
But I too drive in midst.

Both:

For being educated unemployed youths
We haven't any complex.

Elder Brother:

My brother has just one flaw
He's infatuated by Jalukbari
Sometimes snatching the auto from me he says—

Both:

"Today Priya shall be my passenger!"

Elder Brother:

I ask him, "Would she ever marry you
after you couldn't be a professor?"
He replies—
"My beloved understands, brother
The dignity of labour."

Both:

The dignity of labour

Younger Brother:

Economics is our subject,
My beloved is in the fifth year
Last time, after passing my M.A.
I took the permit for the autorickshaw

Elder Brother:

You did well, brother, very well
Blessings for your future wife.
At least you didn't become
Unemployed forever running after government jobs

Both:

Come on, it's very late now

Younger Brother:

There are no passengers

Elder Brother:

The damp weather feels very cold

Younger Brother:

No passengers

Elder Brother:

Our ailing mother is perhaps waiting at home

With rice and lentils served for us

Both:

No passengers

Both:

Come on, it's very late

Younger Brother:

No passengers

Elder Brother:

We cruised along passing the refinery, Jalukbari,

Lachit Nagar and Uzan Bazaar,

Bharalumukh and water's edge

Lachit Nagar and Fancy Bazaar

Both:

We've pledged,

By the sweat of our brow

We'll repay all our bank loan.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

We're brothers and sisters (Aami bhaiti-bhonti)

We're brothers and sisters
There's no count
So many of us are here
So much of joy there is
Truly joy abounds.

Oh, sister of Diphu and brother of Sadiya
With the Rabhas of Kokrajhar and the children of Lohitmukh
So many of us are here
So much joy there is.

Dhong, Dhong, Dhong—hear the gong
Towards the night jasmine flowers
Everyone rushes.
Only now I notice,
The Puja holidays have come.
Oh yes, the Puja holidays have come.
So much of joy,
Truly joy abounds.

Look at the autumn moon
On the blue Gamocha spread out
As a rice cake
Over the Kans-grass
Flies a flock of ducks
Are the ducks higher than the sky?
Come, take a flight and see sister.

This is our land
The price of vegetables is rising
Take the trowel in your hand
Don't waste time
Fill the garden
With the mastered greens, spinach, and coriander.

If we tear
A map of geography
Sister Devyani gets puffed up with anger
But when the elders
Split the country into pieces
They don't utter a word.

If the elders break the country,
We'll do one thing—
Together we'll play
Adorning the country like a home.

From the house we'll inflate many balloons
Tie them together with strings
And send them flying up to the clouds.
The sight would make even people of distant lands
Exclaimed aloud-
"Ah! Who's going to create a new the rainbow of Assam?"
Like sweet rice-cakes
Going towards the moon
Those colourful balloons
Are the pictures
Of the minds of our brothers and sisters.

Sister of Dhubri
And brother of Tezpur
With Gohain brother of Sivasagar
And the Khamti brother of Luitmukh
So many brothers and sisters
Yet with the same mind.
Truly joy abounds.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

We're not those who merely weep (Aami nohou mathu krondonroto)

We're not those who merely weep,
United, we'll summon up the power,
Together, man to man,
Building mega-embankments
Shaped like monstrous pythons
We'll subdue the uncontrollable water.

We'll tame
This insane Deodhani's* naked dance.
With the aid of science
Transforming this mighty flow into energy
It is we who will bring
Well-being to the people of the land.
Together, man to man,
Building mega-embankments
Shaped like monstrous pythons
We'll subdue the uncontrollable water.
It is we who will bring
Prosperity to the people of the land.

Water to the north
Water to the south
Water to the east
Water to the west.

*A type of dancer
Translation: Arup Kumar Dutta

Wealth of whose house (Kaar ghoror Lakhimi)

Wealth of whose house has returned home
Who is waiting decking up whose house
In whose house heaps of black money lay stashed
In some house poverty is shaking up life
In some house there is shameless exhibition of opulence
In some house tears of missing out is dripping.

Someone has built palaces for house of learning
Opulent sons are playing game of colours there
Someone's school structure is crumbling
Child of poor is learning subtraction arithmetic there.
God lay incarcerated in someone's golden cage
The flame of the wick is flickering at poor man's prayer house.

As if we are all a wild goose each
Searching for our entity in flight
Food, peace and security
We're flying to north-south corner
We're flying to east-west corner
We are flying over to Siberia
We are flying over to Tibet
We fly to return to Pragjyotish*

As if we are a wild goose each
We are not seeking anyone's ruin
We are just seeking a little portion of peace
Wild goose! Wild goose! Wild goose.

*Ancient name of Assam

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

What a stroke of luck (Kinu kopal sadhi)

What a terrible of luck you had buddy
The house lay ruined and lifeless.
You raised a vibrant flower garden
But they all wilted soon.

Embraced the moon with a heart as wide as the sky
Could not perceive the deceit of the Moon
The Moon hid the moonlight vanished
Teardrops are streaming down.

Cows are orphans, doves are orphans
The handloom appears desolate
The bank of the pond appears barren and empty
Memories only remain

Why did the woman of the heart disappear
From the mirror of the heart?
The citadel of dreams of the illusive world
Has disintegrated and lay scattered

Matsya, Kurma Narasimha Bamana Praturama
Haliram Varaha Sriram
Buddha Kalki are the ten incarnations
You have taken lord Krishna
I bow and lay at your feet

The gate is opened of my empty home
By the homebound Lakshmi
She has swept herself my unclean courtyard
Made the wilted flowers bloom
In the dark sky
I appear to watch
Deluge of lovely moonlight
Getting the lost Lakshmi
Back at my place
The house turned into home again.

Translation: Bibekananda Choudhury

What did you get (Ki pali ki pali)

What did you get
What did you
Just nothing
The much you flew
A piece of Moon
A piece of gold
How precious gold is?

Millions of
Stars glimmer
On the bosom of the great sky
They revolve
Without your knowledge
In their own orbits.

Kalpana you
Are a young lady
Prestige of India
The Chawla clan
Has been waiting
Must bring back the spaceship

Calculations and calculations
So many calculations
How much do you have to do
Just one calculation, correct calculation
You upheld the prestige of the womankind

Chawla Kalpana
You made the floor art
Daughter of mathematical science
The space is vast
Thousands of milky ways
You flew out in search of what

The mantra of Panchanadi*
So many scientific instruments
You flew out carrying along
You swam out
What did you get
What did you?

* Five rivers of Punjab-Ravi, Beas, Sutlej, Chenab, Jhelum.

Translation: Bibekananda Choudhury

What do I do now (Ki koru ki koru upai)

I am helpless, buddy....

What do I do now
Please Tell me what to do
Love is a cruel devil
Always comes and ties up
I am helpless
What do I do now.

It is extremely painful buddy, like a cobra bite
More painful buddy you know is the beauty of woman
In the embrace of the arms of sweetheart
The fire of dear ones loving embrace never douses.

There is no doctor for love fever
We stumble again and again as we try to flee
We stumble again and again as we try to flee

Tie up with chain the koel of the mind in the spring season
If you don't give your heart to the woman of your heart
The knot will loosen of the doe eyed beloved
The loving gaze of the doe eyed beloved
Makes my bloodstream rush
What do I do now, what do I do now
I am helpless

Translation: Bibekananda Choudhury

What joy I behold today (Aaji ki aanonda pekhoo)

What Joy I Behold today in the rhythm of the world!
A full century is complete on the stage of the Baan Theatre.

In eighteen ninety-six, at Lakshmikanta's home
With sacred offerings performed the play Hari Chandra.

In nineteen hundred three an amateur party was formed
And with Bhramaranga and Joymoti theatre took shape.

A play named Mahari was staged one day
And at Bhavani's house Sitar Bonobash was performed.

In nineteen thirty, a grand stage was built,
And it was named after Srimanta Sankardev.

For years on end there was no electric power
With flambeaux the plays were illuminated.

Thus was the theatre in Tezpur established,
Where Jyoti, Bishnu, and Phani Sarma created a heaven.

Local and foreign musical instruments were brought together
In front of the stage, an orchestra pit was created.

Year after year, golden years passed
May the Baan Theatre live on through the ages.

Through experiments of varied plays
May our Baan Theatre have a long life.

Let new play wrights emerge on their own
And glitter on the international stage.

In this composition, many faults may have remained
Today, the writer Bhupendra humbly begs forgiveness.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

When Dorika Disang swells (Dorika Disange paani barhi gole)

The Dorika Desang has swelled
I am becoming a big one too
As I were swimming with you
I got so much scolded from my elder sister.
Do you remember
Yes, do you remember dear?

Dreamt the entire night
Thinking you as the groom
I said to you at the call of the rooster
The dream right from the beginning
Do you remember
Yes, do you remember dear?

I rolled up Tamol* after nicely peeling
Slipped a clove inside too
Thinking of coming to you I washed the clothes
Felt very deeply happy.
Do you remember
Yes, do you remember dear?

Where did you leave departing the village
There was no reply even
If I don't get to marry you in Bihu
I vowed to embrace death
Do you remember
Yes, do you remember dear?

*A combination of areca nut and betel leaf with a dash of lime.
An integral part of Assamese culture. Offering it to someone
means a symbol of love and respect.

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury

When I'm gone (Moi jetya eai jiwonor)

Leaving all ties and knots
When I'm gone,
Your parting words
Hope I shall hear by my pyre.

No need of any memorial meeting
To earn some false fame,
If I get a drop of your tears
I'll get back my dues.

Singing for the multitude
I've forgotten you,
And that's probably why
In the full pride of my life
I've lost you.
That regret has pained me
It's still killing me.
Shall I get relief?
Shall I?
If I get a drop of your tears
I'll get back my dues.

If I look into the struggles of my life
I'll find in the love you denied was the heaven.
And, in your heart I'll find that heaven.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

When Sunrise is the vision (Surjyo udai jodi lakshya aamar)

When sunrise is the vision
Why do we march towards sunset?
When a pleasant shower is the wish
Why are we running after drought?

Sometimes,
A burning sensation in the father's eye
And the grandmother drinks her tears
The whole body of people seeks their dues
At the cost of their lives.

What I thought
That never came out
The equation remained unsolved.

The prosperous dream shattered to pieces
The earth has become speechless
Today, the society-clock has stopped ticking.
But why?
We are running after drought. Then why?

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Which artist can draw such a picture? (Koon Chitraklekhiye)

Hero: Which artist can draw such a picture?
Let me see which prince gets portrayed here
(pray it be me!)

Heroine: (Oh! Look here is Prince charming!)
Why do you get desperate to win me over
I am moon in the sky beyond reach

Hero: If you're the moon, I'm the Sun
O moon-faced beauty, you're like moonlight
I'd plant a kiss on your cheek turning into sunlight

Heroine: my life gets washed away
By the eroding river, restless gushing stream of water.

Hero: In your very river, I take a sweet bathe umpteenth time;
You are invited to the core of my heart.

Heroine: My heart throbs in the intensity of emotion
My mind turned into an intricate pattern
Who strokes the brush over it.

Hero: Your pattern design is smooth soothing
Even Cupid would slip over it.

Translation: Er. Bibekananda Choudhury, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

While the dusk was descending at Kopili (Phut godhulite kopili khutit)

While the dusk was descending at Kopili* Khuti**
A Gorkhali*** teen was searching for her wandering cow
No cow in the village could match her worth
She was the finest milker in the sheds around.

Kanchi's**** voice echoed over the plains
O' white cow, O' my dear cow
Upon your milk, my business thrives
O' white cow, O' my dear cow
Her sweet voice echoed through Kopili.

A face she secretly cherished came into view
From Khetri***** came young Nol Bahadur Chhetri*****
As love awakened beneath the open sky
Upon her cheeks bloomed a deep and shy blush!

He then searched through grass and reed
Following every track and lead
The white cow at last came into view
He then led her to Kanchi with love and care
And the white cow ran home kicking dust in the air.

*Name of a place
**A big cattle barn
***Gorkha (Nepali) community feminine
****A young girl from Nepali community
*****A place;
***** Name of a boy from Nepali community:

Translation: Er.Rabin Goswami, USA

With their tearful eyes (Proti netro ashrusikto)

With their tearful eyes every deer wails
To her husband's home as Shakuntala goes.

The parting with his daughter
Breaks the father's heart
The jolly skies of her friends
The darkness does cover
In the mind's bower at Tapovan
No bud of hope is there.

The creeper's life goes in vain
If no mango tree for climbing finds
The wife's lot with her husband's
Forever the custom binds.

Keep on walking in your path
Don't look back, my darling
Let the dust in your path
Be the pollens of lotus
Go safely my darling
To your husband's home
Wipe your tears or else
You won't see your path.

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

Why do you weep? (Kandisonu kiyo?)

Why do you weep?
If struggle is another name of life itself
Let that struggle be your heart's desire
Covering both eyes with your hands
Why do you weep all by yourself?

If heartbreaks are your constant companion
On the way of life
If agony cruelly brings you untimely defeat
(Then) why don't you keep fighting
Standing and fixing eyes on the sun?
Why do you weep?

Haven't you seen processions
Shouting like you shaking the earth
On the roads and fields of cities-villages-towns?
Why haven't you snatched away what you have not got.
You've turned yourself into one
Who can't understand hints!

Translation: Dibya Ranjan Sharma Khataniar

Why have I become a prisoner (Ki je chandot holu bondi)

Speech: I've proceeded by making disregard for rules a rule.
Now I want to ask myself why, gifted this life,
have I become a prisoner to rhythm?

Why gifted this life,
Have I become a prisoner to rhythm?
I do not know across how many jungles
I shall have to wander-there is no companion.

Rules that must not be broken
Oh, I've transgressed
Having made disregard for rules a rule
Will I reach my destination?

I've heard that unless one wades into the mud
One cannot obtain the lustrous lotus
Then why those who churn muddy waters
Are mocked at?

Endless sky, deep sea
Even here there is no companion
That is why I dance the dance of destruction
Playing upon my Dunduvi*.

*A small, drum-shaped musical instrument

Translation: Arup Kumar Dutta

Who is the lady (Koon eai lolona)

Who is the elusive lass
Only deceives
Never comes to be grasped
Never lets.

Is she some shadow of the past
Or manifestation of the present
Or an illusion full of riddle
Of the forthcoming future.
It's beyond comprehension.

She comes tearing through
The mist of the yore
Appears so familiar
Yet memory do not arouse.

Listening to her breath
I get reassured
Why is the beckoning of the past
Turn plausible?

Is she a melody drifting away in flight
Or the very form of transformation?
Or the unanswered essence
Of eternal questions
Since creation
Is beyond comprehension.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury, Er.Devajit Bhuyan

Who's this smart aleck? (Eaiti ba koon ulale)

Who's this smart aleck
Where are the lions hiding?
A tailless jackal today
Walks into the royal court.
The meteor has risen
Where has the sun disappeared?
An ascetic cat today
Goes to the prayer-house.

When donkeys become kings
It's only donkeys that shine.
Forsaking justice, the ruler
Perishes in greed.
If we adorn a crow with elephant pearls
If we make its beak glitter with gold and jams
Still, then could a crow ever become a swan?

If it's the masses who are holding the power,
Who else could be a tyrant?
Who's this Badan*
Ready to sell the nation?
Can a blood-sucking leech ever become a noble soul?

*Badan Chandra Borphukan was the chief of Ahom
forces in lower Assam who betrayed the kingdom by
initiating the entry of the Burmese to Assam in 1817.

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Who lit up the darkness of the night? (Nixar endhar poohorale kine?)

Who lit up the darkness of the night?
It is the silvery moon in the distant sky.
Who came and filled my empty lap?
It is the loving moon from afar.

My unfulfilled desires
Have been filled with light
Who else could understand my longing?
It is tender moon in the distant sky.

Translation: Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Who'll buy colours? (Rong kiniba kune)

Who'll buy colours?

Who'll?

I've with me bagful of colours

Buy in mounds.

The golden oriole of the grown-up paddy field

And yellow petals of mustard flower

Very often sell me yellow.

Who'll buy colours?

Who'll?

A flying crane has disappeared

At the meeting point of

The welkin's blue and the thriving crops' green.

I have got tired of

Looking for the whites of the white wings;

But it stayed out of sight.

Hiding in green shades, dense and light

The crane has smiled, and said,

'Have the whites of my wings
that you won't get too often,'

Pursuing the crimson hue

I took the Indian red lane,

To meet the Sun, my brother.

The Sun says: 'rainbow is the colour monger'.

Measuring in bolls,

The rainbow has poured the dreamy hues into my Bag for a small price.

Who'll buy colours?

O little ones!

I'm a colour seller.

But I shall not wait

For I've my business all over the globe.

Call one and all

Here's colour for you all,

Buy it up for nothing at all.

Come running and come laughing,

Just take up colours.

Mirthfully, paint the globe and make it colourful.

Come one by one

Who'll buy colours?

Who'll?

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Whom would you call to bask in sunshine (Rod puwabor karone)

Female voice : Whom would you call to bask in sunshine?
Whom would you call to bask in sunshine?
The group of Rahdoi has come out
mothers of Seuti and her company
immediately came running
The group of Dalimi climbed down the hill
Beautifying the Assamese culture,
The threads of unity have
beautifully wrapped themselves
around the spindle

Chorus : O grandma, dear grandma
Our ebullient aita
Now it is the marriage of her granddaughter
The sky of Assam is lit up, ululate together.

Female voice: Who is Tejimola*?
Second male voice: Gold of Suwansiri.
First male voice: Planting nuggets of gold in soil
Female voice: Wiping the yard at dawn
First male voice: Today they were seen in the village Kathiatoli
Soft smile of bright children
Beautiful smile of new days
Second male voice: Grandmas energy level is breathtaking.
Chorus: Grandmas energy level is breathtaking
Whom would you call to bask in sunshine?
Second male voice: Today's Mulagabharu** comes out stomping
The Hengdang hid itself seeing the loom shuttle
First male voice: Mula in the society-loom
Has weaved the cloth of love
To deck up whom?
Second male voice : Whom would you call to bask in sunshine?
Chorus : Whom would you call to bask in sunshine?
First male voice: A whiff of wind came to sweep away
The age-old cobwebs
Female voice : Ooo
Second male voice : There hovers a huge flock of thousand doves
Female voice : Ooo
Chorus : The white cloud of Earth's sky
Has embraced it warmly
Second male voice : Sitting in the sunshine on the courtyard of Assam
People are carrying out their designated roles
First male voice : The Cheleng of our country gets a fresh tinge
To bedeck thousands of people
Female voice : Ooo
Chorus : A flock of thousand doves took flight
Joyfully in the morning
Female voice: Chasing only the
Lifelong warmth the crimson sun

* A central character in a story by Lakshminath Bezbarua of the same caption. She was killed very painfully by her stepmother, but she manifested as different plants one after another to convey her father on return from a voyage after a commercial trip.

**An Ahom woman whose husband commander Frasengmung got killed by Turko-Afghan invaders from Bengal. Then she took up the traditional fighting sword 'Hengdang' fought valiantly.

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Why does the Taj Mahal tremble? (Kopi uthe kiyo Taj Mahal)

Why does the Taj Mahal tremble?

Taj Mahal, Taj Mahal.

With the pre-dawn Ajan echoing together

Raising the tumult of a hundred storms over the Yamuna

Taj Mahal! Taj Mahal!

It's the call from Shah Jahan's heart

O' Mumtaz, my beloved

Alone alas-

My Shah Jahan weeps.

Taj Mahal, Taj Mahal.

How many drops of workers' sweat

What pools of tears overflowed out of exhaustion

Mumtaz bows her head and salutes them.

What kind of a poem have you composed, O' Taj Mahal?

Taj Mahal! Taj Mahal!

Mumtaz speaks weeping

Mumtaz speaks from her tomb:

"My beloved Shah Jahan

Sorrow has come to an end

Hope has borne fruit

We've built the Taj Mahal."

Taj Mahal! Taj Mahal!

Translation: Krishna Dulal Barua, Er. Devajit Bhuyan

Why is it late Nayan (Polom kiyo hol Noyon)

Tagar: Why do your forlorn O' Nayan
Why are you silent
Where does your mind fly?

Nayan: Oh! My dear Tagar my mind
Keeps on flying to whose cheeks
As if you are searching for Radhika
Kaliya Krishna Gosain*

Tagar: It appears you are looking for Radhika
Kaliya Krishna Gosain

Nayan: Tagar, just think I am senorita Usha
The daughter of Bana of the past
Like Chitralkha you go to Dwaraka
And fetch Aniruddha

Tagar: Dwarka is too far I don't have wings
There are so many youths in the village
If the grandson of Krishna is brought
The epic battle of Hari-Hara would breakout.

Nayan: You'd bring Aniruddha?

Tagar: I won't. leave it.

Nayan: How'd I keep my love a secret?
Won't get back the love earned so easily
How'd I keep my love a secret?

Tagar: How'd you keep my love a secret?

Nayan: You need a bird if you have a cage
Yes, a cage for a bird

Tagar: If it is Sita, you need king Rama

Nayan: How'd I keep my love a secret?

Tagar: You need a company in youth
And lustre for the eyes

Nayan: If there is no one in your heart
How can there be love
How'd I keep my love a secret?

Tagar: How'd you keep my love a secret?

*Kaliya Krishna Gosain – Dark skinned Lord Krishna

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Wild waves of the sea (Sagar songomot)

Never have I knocked off
Swimming so much
In the confluence of sea.
Still, in the ocean of my placid mind
Wild waves of the sea.

The ceaseless tides on the heart of the ocean
Of the placid mind
Countless waves with renewed strides
bring boundless hope.
That's why in the ocean of my placid mind
Wild waves of the sea.

On the quiet shore
Peace of life of the nobles is now shattered.
In an incessant rain of attack
Demons inflict cruel blows by novel means.
That's why in the ocean of my placid mind
Restless waves of the sea.

Now, there's a counterstrike
The creative force has stood against destruction
There're countless soldiers with creative souls.
This conflict has opened a new horizon of hope
In my placid mind.
That's why in the ocean of my placid mind
Restless waves of the sea.

The might of the deep sea
Keep destruction at bay
Countless men on the march of peace,
All creative and alive.
That's why in the ocean of my placid mind
Wild waves of the sea.

Translated by: Dr. Susanta Khound

Work is worship (Kormoi aamar dharma)

Work is worship for us,
Work is worship for us
We must win in the battle of life
Donning the armour of valour.

We would thwart the lust of selfish yearning
Taking the words of visionaries
As the gospel truth
We would crush false pride.

Tune of creation of fertile soil
Would sing paeans for my country
Embracing the suffering people
Would create heaven in village itself.

Krishna* in Dwapara era told,
Don't ignore your work
Bapuji** says in twentieth century
Work is substance.

We are new people of new era
Would usher in a new heaven
For the neglected and oppressed
We'd create heaven here on earth.

*Human incarnation of Lord Vishnu

**Mahatma Gandhi

Translation: Er.Bibekananda Choudhury

Worshippers of beauty (Nami aaha sundorore)

Alight,
You, the worshippers of beauty,
Desist from daydreaming.
If you don't check the satanic gloom
The world will have a bloodbath.

Look, there on the road, the movement
of scores of human skeletons, all gasping.
Sing for them hopefully
With hues make their life colourful.
Today, conquering death
Illuminate the earth with the light of life.

Sankardev, the great
Fought the foe with the gun of tune
And, as many as demons made tracks.
Today, show a scene from the play of life,
Today, quench the battle-fire with your tune.
Else, sharp nails of theirs will tear up
And consume hearts of the infants.

(Today) Decorate the theatre of the society
With the hues of equality and harmony.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

Yearning of jasmine (Nabamallikare hepah)

O'...O'...O'

Would the yearning be satiated with jasmine
Watching the beauty in the Malini River
Would Sakuntala's body feel at ease
Getting caressed by lotus?

How do I describe with physical postures?
My words are lost as I get a glimpse
Doe-eyed she walk with the gait of a swan
As if lotus blooms at her every step

The hues of dreams in the form of Mayurpankhi
Jasmine blooms in the smile
If you happen to listen the humming of the bumblebees
Don't flee running like hell.
Would Sakuntala's body feel at ease
Getting caressed by lotus?

Translation: Bibekananda Choudhury

You are the new youth (Tumi natun purus)

You are the next generation
Young men and women
Alert custodians of coming days
Strengthening the stream of fresh life
Mould a new society with your hands
Making bright rains of life
Pour down on dark lanes.

You've conquered death
And will check the stings of oppression
That will not abide
Your pledge will be fruitful
The path of dauntless is forever bright.

You're the new dream, new pledge
Daring the warring swords
And all hurdles on the road
Build new vistas with your hands
Play on the harp of hope
Drowning the wails of want.

Translation: Pradip Acharya

You are the new snake (Natun nagini tumi)

You are the new snake
The black (cobra) snake
How long will it be before
You are subdued?
I'm the blue-necked Shiva
Who drinks the blue venom
I'm accomplished magician.

I've cleared so many forests,
Explored so many caves
Untouched by the sun's rays
Where the heart trembles
As the darkness of centuries sways
I've subdued so many snakes
From countries far and wide
How long will it be before
You are subdued?
I'm the blue-necked Shiva
Who drinks the blue venom
I'm the crazy magician.

Don't come, don't come
Don't come near me
There is magic in my music, don't come
I've the enchanting power of magic, don't come
I've vanity too, don't come
I've keen vision, don't come
Don't come, don't come
You have come-

I've chanted, my mantra learned in a dream
I've uprooted the poison cells fed by the venomous stream
Being the conqueror of death, I subdued you
Today as an ornament
Round my neck I wear you
How long will it be before
You are subdued?
I'm the blue-necked Shiva
Who drinks the blue venom
I'm the crazy magician.

Translation: Divya Ranjan Sharma Khataniar

You are the one (Tumiye mur kalponare)

You're doe-eyed one of my fancies
The sweet sacred painting of my life
It's for you my music trills
Do you know that yet?

You're the pilgrimage of pluck
In the battlefield of life
Even in the desolation of defeat.
You're the sole consolation
Do you know that yet?

You're the source of the sprouting green
In the deep dense woods of life
Rendered beautiful by your smile
You're the glow of the new sun
Without your light all plants are vain
Do you know that yet?

Translation: Pradip Acharya

Your breath is soft as Kohua* (Tumar uxah kohua-kumol)

Your breath is soft as Kohua
Tender as Sewali** is your smile
The melody of some flute
Has gluttoned my heart with smiles
Such a slim waist
My autumn flame has got.

Today I've burst into
A song soaked in love
Listening to it all agog
Is my sweetheart.
On the sands a small wagtail
Teases us gagging its tail.

Drops of dew pitter-patter
On fallen leaves
Smearing the face with dew
My love frolics.
In the bed of Sewali
We both have slept
Supine, we've counted teals
Flying past the clouds
A pair of teals greeted us
With a sudden landing.

*A medium size soft grass

**Jasmine

Translation: Nirendra Nath Thakuria

Youth, restless youth (Jouwon togbog jouwon)

Youth, restless youth,
Youth refuses to lose
Who has the power to halt
The endless tides of youthful desire?

The fields of vibrant life are vast,
Youth play there freely.
This is a game of wondrous hues,
A fair of countless colours,
A rainbow of many shades,
Life adorned in radiant colours.
Youth will go on playing this game.

Our youth isn't a doll
Just to be made and then broken.
Our youth is in our hands.
Youth shall carry us across.
Our boat of hope,
With sails filled with promise,
Youth shall see us safely across.
The endless tides of youthful desire
Who has the power to halt?

Translation: Debashish Bezbaruah

Young and tender adorable little hero (Aalphuliya kumoliya)

Young and tender adorable little hero
O my adorable little hero
Valiant Lachit from realm
Ripped the enemy apart and
Preserved the glow of the crown
Of plenteous eastern India.

India revered young star Sankar's tender poems
You too compose with a letter or two
The little thoughts that your tiny mind recalls.

O my adorable little hero.

Unable to bear the brunt of subjugation
Young Kushal shed scalding blood
And true to his mettle for the country
He tore open and offered his bleeding heart.

O my adorable little hero.

You are the pristine generation
Of the early morning sun,
That brightens the world
Fashioned as a nemesis
You must obliterate
The injustice of the oppressors.

O my adorable little hero.

Unshackling the yoke of subjugation
Preserve the glow of the crown
Of eastern India.

O my adorable little hero.

Translation: Nrripen Dutta Baruah

Zindabad, Mandela (Zindabad Mandela)

Zindabad, Mandela
Hail! Hail! Mandela

Of twenty-seven years and seven months
From a darksome cell you broke free.
Emerged as a youth in Africa
Like the bright sun, resplendent.

The apartheid wall is thinning down
For you have hammered down
Wide-open to the sky over head
Clenched fist you have raised.

To keep up the Blacks and all about
You dedicated all throughout.
In spite of your whole life in prison
You never ever compromised.

All egalitarian, confined souls,
Their camp you have pulled down.

Translation: Dr. Susanta Khound

The translators

Arup Kumar Dutta:

Arup Kumar Dutta is a full-time internationally acclaimed author who pioneered writings in English in the northeast India. Dutta has written 14 longer works of fiction and non-fiction, including 'The Roving Minstrel' on Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, The Kaziranga Trails etc. His books have been translated into German, Japanese, Russian, Italian, Hungarian and Czech. Etc while 3 have been made into feature films. He was awarded Padma Shree by the Government of India.

Bhaswati Goswami:

Bhaswati Goswami was born in 1996 in Chandmari, Guwahati. She completed her M.A. in English from Tezpur University and M.Phil. in English from Dibrugarh University. She is currently working as a Translator in Gauhati High Court.

Bibekananda Choudhury:

Bibekananda Choudhury, BE(Electrical), MS (BITS, Pilani) has got published works in Assamese, Bengali & English in popular periodicals and newspapers. His translated poems and stories have been published in 'Indian Literature', the bi-monthly journal of Sahitya Academy on several occasions. His translated poem is being taught in the undergraduate Courses of Bangalore University and Post graduate Courses of Cotton University.

Debashish Bezbaruah:

Debashish Bezbaruah, a senior journalist, artist, art critic, translator and writer, has so far translated two poetry collections into English. He has also staged a solo art exhibition, besides taking part in numerous groups shows. The Chief Sub-Editor of the Assam Tribune, he has been associated with the daily for the last 24 years.

Dhirendra Nath Bezbaruah:

Dhirendra Nath Bezbaruah became the founder editor of English daily 'The Sentinel' and was the president of Editor's Guild of India. His famous published works include an 'Anthology of English Prose', 'An Anthology of English Poetry', 'Three score Assamese Poems', and 'A game of chess' etc. Bezbaruah was awarded the Padma Shri by the Government of India.

Dibya Ranjan Sharma Khataniar

Dibya Ranjan Sharma Khataniar's translations of Assamese poetry into English have appeared in different journals and anthologies. He teaches English literature in Guwahati College.

Dr. Suranjana Barua:

Suranjana Barua is a writer from Assam and her poems, stories, drama-reviews, travel columns have appeared in many newspapers and magazines. She has also translated Arun Sarma's epochal play 'Shri Nibaron Bhattacharya' in English with J.P. Sakia.

Dr. Sushanta Khound:

When Dr. Khound was in the ninth grade, his English translation of a song of Bhupen Hazarika impressed the legendary artist and it was published in the school magazine. This marked the beginning of a long relationship with Dr. Hazarika. On one of his public event, Dr. Hazarika read out the translated version of Manuhe Manuhar Babe (For a man, a man), which remained as a highest recognition to Dr. Khound for his work of translation. Dr. Hazarika used to say, "The translation of Dr. Khound has depth and beauty and has not gone away from my original spirit of thinking".

Kiran Deka

A master's degree holder in Economics from Gauhati University, Kiran Deka, works for a bank. Contributes life-sketch related articles to newspapers and magazines. Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's songs have enchanted from her very childhood.

Krishna Dulal Barua:

Krishna Dulal Barua has been consistently translating poetry, fiction and non-fiction from Assamese to English. His publications include modern poetry in English translation (UK), Blossoms of Harmony, a lyric of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika published by Sahitya Academy and other translation works of NBT. He was recipient of Katha Award in the year 2005.

Nirendra Nath Thakuria:

Nirendra Nath Thakuria, a retired associate professor of English, translates Assamese poetry into English. He has, to his credit, five collections of English translations. Some of his literary contributions have been included in *The Oxford Anthology Writings from Northeast India – Poetry and Essays*.

Nripen Dutta Baruah

Nripen Dutta Baruah obtained master's degree in history from Delhi University after graduating from the St. Stephen's College, Delhi. A free-lance writer and homoeopath of repute.

Pradip Acharya:

Pradip Acharya retired as HOD, Department of English, Cotton College has translated several volumes of poetry and fiction. He has received Sahitya Academy award and Katha award. His translations appeared in Poetry (Chicago) and verse (Oxford).

Rabin Goswami

Mr. Rabin Goswami is an IT Engineer by profession and a singer by passion. A devoted admirer of the legendary Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, he has been performing the maestro's songs since his childhood days. He graduated from Assam Engineering College, Gauhati and later obtained his master's degree from the University of Maryland University College, USA.

Upendra Nath Sarma:

Upendra Nath Sarma is a retired professor and HOD, English, Cotton College. He is a critic, essayist and translator in poetry and prose. Professor Sarma has translated Rabindra Nath Tagor's Geetanjali and Bertrand Russel's Marriage and Morals into Assamese.

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