



# WOODEN MATERIAL USED IN BODO SOCIETY: A BRIEF DISCUSSION

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## **Abstract:**

Bodo people are one of the major ethnic community living in North East region of Assam and other parts of India. They belong to the Indo Mongoloid Origin living near the banks of the Brahmaputra River since ages. They have their own language, custom, tradition, religion and rich culture. Their traditional method of living includes various household materials, agriculture equipments, social customs, musical instruments which of all are the products of natural plants and surrounding. Through this paper the explanation and discussion will primely focus on the various uses of the wooden materials used in Bodo Society.

**Keywords:** Ethnic Community, Indo Mongoloid, Brahmaputra River, Musical Instrument.

## **1.0 Introduction:**

The Bodo is the tribe belonging to the Indo-Mongolian living together alongside nature solely depending upon all the resources available in nature. From culture, religion, language, rituals to their household materials everything the gift given by their ancestor and most importantly the Mother Nature. They have skillfully trained themselves to make their own tools and equipments necessary for their survival and livelihood. These tribal people (The Bodo) would use wood to carved out various thing such as agricultural tools, musical instruments, household materials and many other thing used in social customs and religious rituals.

## **1.1 Objective:**

1. Discussion on the various used of wooden material in Bodo household.
2. Usage of wood & wooden items on various social activities & customs.
3. Wood used in Musical instruments.

## **1.2 Methodology:**

Present study depends on both primary and secondary source of information. Secondary data are gathered from various sources like books, journals etc. Primary data are collected through the personal interview.

## 2. Discussion:

### 2.1 Wooden tools use in agricultural purpose:

For sustenance, certain necessities are required. These tribal people have been cultivating their own food products independently for centuries. Among the mostly use things carved out of wood are the agriculture tools used in agriculture purposes such as Nangal (plough), Jungal, Beda, Hashini, Roina etc. without these Agro tools traditional cultivation in nearly impossible especially without Nangal and Jungal. Thus, Bodo people specially takes utmost care of these tools. Though its quite common for the Bodo cultivators to have the skill for carving their own agricultural equipments in rural areas.

### 2.2 Wood used in marriage:

Marriage is one of the traditional customs necessary in order to gain acceptance in society allowing one to bare a family. Such marriage ceremony in Bodo community is known as 'Hata-Suni'. Though nowadays the marriage is done through the ritual called 'Jaygoh Ahuti' (Hawan Kund/Yagya which is done in front of sacred fire) however, 'Hota-Suni' is the oldest form of marriage ritual.

Some of the important wooden items required in this marriage are Hata and Gambari Khamplai (a flat platform usually made from wood or white teak, used for low level seating). Both of these items are the main in this ritual as the bride takes two Hata's and carry onla curry on one of those hata and rice on the another and put it onto the banana leaves which is placed in front of holy place called 'Bathou Sali'. Meanwhile the bride and groom stand in front of Bathou Sali while the priest chant his mantras. After completing priest mantra, the bride serve the meal to the groom & guest. This is called the traditional Boro marriage "Hata-suni".

The 'Hata' is treated as the sacred tool for its occasional use in marriage and religious practices it is also very important in Ne-own puja (Religion ritual) as well.

Just like 'Hata' Gambari Kamplai also has an equal importance. Even today Gambari Kamplai is necessary in the marriage ceremony as both bride and groom are welcomed through these Kamplai. They stand on it while the sister-in-law washes the feet. Along with all these ritual Gambari-Kamplai is also required in other activities like Nirit- Bosonai and Mamai-Mara Janai (part of marriage ceremony).

### 2.3 Wood use in Handloom & Textile:

Since the time of human civilization people have evolved themselves to wrap up their naked bodies in clothes. In the same way, Bodo people have also skillfully designed certain traditional patters called 'Agor' taking inspiration from nature and surrounding weaving on their own. The price of cloth wrap around by this tribal people are made of tools and equipments carved out of wood. Some of the major items include Sal-Khuntha, Gandwi, Maku, Ban-Gwja (red thread), Danga-Natta, Jwntwr (Spinning wheel), Khadini, Ji-Swngra Khuntia.

The village women (sister-in-law) would sing a folk song their brother-in-laws cheering them to bring the Woods & Bamboos (Handloom tools) on their way back to home from forest. The song goes like this-

फरबदजरा फरबदजरा

दंफां दान्ने थाडोब्ला

साल जरा, माखु जरा

The song indicates the value importance of these tools song by the women's beautifully making it a folk song of the Bodos.

#### 2.4 Musical Instruments:

Kham, Jotha, Siphung, Gangana, Serja, Jabkhring and Thorkha etc. are the main musical instruments of Bodos. Mainly Kham and Serja are made of wood. It may be really difficult to shape these instruments still they would invest their time pouring out their heart precisely in carving these instruments.

#### 2.5 Household Items:

The people of Bodo Community use several tools in their livelihood among of which mostly used wood items are Uwal-Gaihan, Khadau, Kamplai, Chair-Table, Bisina (bed), Batha, Toushi etc.

Specially Uwal-Gaihan are considered as the most important thing in every Bodo household used in milling the rice grains. Sometimes, it is carried along in which ever place these tribal people would travel for its difficulty to carved it for its time & energy consumption. Khadau is also one of the sole tool in stiring the rice.

Another important household item is known as Kamplai. It has three different types – Gambari Kamplai, small & large Kamplai. Each Kamplai has its own different purposes. Small Kamplai's are for regular use for sitting. While the Gambari and large Kamplai's are used specifically on the occasions & events and are offered to the special and respected guests.

The Bodo's also have an inseperable connection with the pig and are domesticated by the Bodos. These pig's meal (i.e. pork)are served on the special container called 'Noudra' carved out of wood shaped like a boat in 3-4 feet in length and 1 feet or 1½ feet on width and 1 feet in depth approximately depending on the size of the pig.

#### Conclusion:

Besides the mentioned wooden materials discussed in the paper several usages of the wood are there but it is difficult to illustrate every tiny details on the tools and equipments that are made of the wood. In this article, the utmost used tools are discussed in order to show the value and the importance of the wood in Bodo Community.

However, these wooden tools and equipment are substituted by rubber, steal etc. which became common in every Bodo household.

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