

Srimanta Sankaradeva and the Tribes of North East India

*Dr Sanjib Kumar Borkakoti**

The North East India was known for different ethnic conflicts when Srimanta Sankaradeva was born here in the fifteenth century. Those ethnic groups were Karbi, Ahom, Kachari, Chutiya, Naga, Manipuri Meitei, Koch, Mising, Jaintia, Tipra, Khasi, Barahi, Moran, Matak, Deuri, Rabha, Tiwa, Kalita, Kayastha, Bodo, Hajang, Garo, Dimasa, Brahmin, Kaivarta, Daivajnya, Kumar, Bonia, Adi, Khamti, Luchai, Kuki, Dafala, Serdukpen, Mech, Misimi, Monpa etc. Among these tribes and castes, Bodo, Koch, Mech, Garo, Rabha, Tiwa, Dimasa, Tipra and Kachari have anthropological and linguistic similarities. So these nine Tibeto-Mongolean tribes are called the Bodo group.¹

Among the above ethnic groups, Daivajnya, Kumar, Bonia, Kalita, Kayastha, Brahmin, and Kaivarta are called castes. All other social groups in the above list are called tribes. So we can surmise that generally the Tibeto- Mongolean groups are called tribes. But this general definition of tribe is not correct. In our view, the ethnic groups which live in pristine conditions and which maintain a similar production condition should be called tribe.²

The tribal people, who were recognized as backward even by definition, were considered as people of lower class in the medieval society.³ Some castes like Kaivarta were also included in that category. The *Eka Sharana Nâma Dharma* preached by SrimantaSankaradeva had immense compassion for all these people. The saint advised his disciples to consider all creatures as manifestations of God.....

To read full Paper, subscribe the journal.
[Link Of Subscription...](#)

* Asst. Prof. & Researcher