

Swami Kamalananda Giri Sevashram: A Brief Study

Chandan Barman
Independent Researcher.

Abstract:

The present district of Kuchbehar was part of ancient Pragjyotish Kamrupa. Later, the kingdom of Kamata-Kuchbehar was established on the Geographical region of Kamrupa. In 1947, Kuchbehar became an autonomous region and on 1st January 1950, Kuchbehar became a marginal district of West Bengal. Although there was considerable practice in the medieval and early medieval temples and goddesses of Kuchbehar, in 1964 the village of Dhulia baldia hati of Mekliganj sub division during the independence period, no research has been done about the work of the Swami Kamalananda Giri Sevashram. It is probably the first attempt on writing this history centred on this temple. The founder of the temple was Bhuvan mohan Devsharma. This temple is not just a common temple, but this temple has a significant role in increasing the awareness of education and health of the backward Rajbanshi society in this region. Along with the worship of the deity there is a doubt that any temple may have significant contribution in the development of education and health, perhaps there are other temples.

Keywords: *Kamata-Kuchbehar, Swami Kamalananda Giri Sevashram, Rajbanshi Society, Temple Architecture, Education, Health and Religious Affairs.*

Introduction:

Swami Kamalananda Giri Sevashram is located in Dhulia baldia hati village of Mekliganj sub division of Kuchbehar district. Swami Kamalananda Giri Sevashram is situated 26 k.m. to the South from Dhupguri town. On the other hand, it is 7 k.m. north of Jamaladah bazar on the northern side. There was not much work in the research's about this temple. Perhaps, this is the first work. The founder of the temple is Bhuvan mohan Devsharma. Note that in this region, the temple is known as "Joramandir". It is a Vaishnav temple .

Pragjyotishpur is very ancient country. Later times this Pragjyotishpur became known as Kamrupa. Kamrupa is divided into four pithas -Ratnapith, Kampith, Soumarpith and Swarnapith¹. Among these places Kamata region became under Ratnapith. Sixty century Since the beginning this state has emerged as a special force in the eastern India. Before, this region was known as Pragjyotish, Lohitya, Kamrupa and Kamata². The earlist mentioned of Kamrupa is found in 'Allahabad pillar inscription'³ of Samudragupta, Chinese traveler Hiuen Tsang's work 'Si-Yu-Ki'⁴ and 'Harshacharita'⁵ of Banabhatta. Leter, in the autonomous region of Kuchbehar, on the geographical region of Kamrupa in 1947. And the agreement of the first January 1950 Kuchbehar became a district of West Bengal.

Kamrupa is the pioneer of Vaishnav religion, the absolute sage of Assamese Mahapurush Srimanta Shankardev (1449-1568). He was a great saint scholar, poet, playwright, social reformer and founder of Vaishnavism in Assam. He inspired the Bhakti movement in Assam and united people through his “Neo-Vaishnavite movement—“*Ekasona naam Dharma*”⁶. He was also father of Assamese classical dance Sattriya dance. He fought against anti-social elements like caste system. But the time torture of Assamese tantric Brahmins, he fled to Kuchbehari. At the time, Shiva king Naranarayan (1554-1587) was ruler of Koch dynasty. When Shankardev was in his asylum, Maharaj Naranarayan was initially hesitant, but later he became devotee of Shankardev's scholarship and became his follower and allowed to live in the state of Kuchbehari. Then slowly Shankardev and his chief disciple Madhav Dev and Damodar Dev continued to preach the Vaishnav religion of Shankardev throughout Kuchbehari which are most notable examples 10 km. west far away from the city of Kuchbehari, Madhupur Dham is still on its way to Pundibari. Due to which Vaishnav religion which was propagated by Shri Shri Mahaprabhu Chaitanya in Kuchbehari could not have been of great families. However, there is no barrier between Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Shankardev followers. So a wonderful atmosphere has been created. The mixed effects of which are influenced in Swami Kamalananda Giri Sevashram .

Bhuban mohan Devsharma was the founder of Swami Kamalananda Giri Sevashram. He was born in Nalbari district of Assam. At that time, many Brahmins came from different places of Assam for the priestly work and they were living in different places of Kuchbehari district. They are celebrated priestly with the Brahmin in the village Dhulia baldia hati of Kuchbehari, from the time of Bhuban Mohan grandfather. From early childhood Bhuban Mohan had a spiritual mind. Bhuban Mohan Devasharma came to the village of Dhulia baldia hati for the protection of paternal property and from here, he used to travel from different places of pilgrimage in whole India to the pains of his inquisitive mind. Bhuban Mohan Devasharma with Brahmashi Krishna Tagore met in Mayapur of Nadia district. Such as, a happy juncture⁷. Brahmashi Krishna Tagore given Bhuban Mohan Devasharma initiated into the basic practice of initiation sacrifice. To understand this, especially in connection with the work of Swami Kamalananda Giri Sevashram. It is important to know about Brahmashi Krishna Tagore and Kamalananda Giri .

Brahmashi Krishna Tagore's Ashram was established in the ancient Mayapur of Nabdhip Dham in Nadia district, “Arya Rishikul Shree Sadhu Ashram”⁸. Brahmashi Krishna Tagore was followers of Srimannityananda Chaitanyagana Shree Sadhu Maharaj. Brahmashi Krishna Tagore established the monastery in the name of his teacher. Finally Krishna Tagore leaving the ashram and came to Dhulia baldia hati with his disciple Bhuban mohan Devasharma and then he made total four yajna in the Dhulia baldia hati of Kuchbehari district. These sacrifices are Yajna, Vedic Yajna, Ambadi Yajna and Vishnu Yajna etc. Among the largest sacrifice of the Ambadi Yajna⁹.

Tagore's Kula guru in the country was Yajneswar Tagore. According to Krishna Tagore order Yajneswar gave the name of Tagore and was initiated by Brahmashi Krishna Tagore, Brahmashi Krishna Tagore given Bhuban Tagore to his rocks, wearing a tiger cloth, trishul and copper chakra etc. And with it imported self-power in the knowledge and gave him the title of Brahmashi with Ekalbajna¹⁰. Before Krishna

Tagore desire of the body guarding in the Dhulia baldia hati, he introduced Brahmashi Bhuban Mohan Devsharma to Swami Kamalananda Giri Maharaj under Dasnami Giri Community. Brahmashi Krishna Tagore handed Bhuban Mohan Tagore to the Giri Maharaj. Kamalananda Giri Maharaj said that he would be given a gift to him¹¹. According to Brahmashi Krishna Tagore, the disciple of Bhuban Tagore was attained by Swami Kamalananda Giri Maharaj .

Prior to accepting monks, Kamalananda Giri Maharaj was the principal of Sanskrit toll¹² of the Beatra Joypur hat. After taking the monastery Kamalananda Giri Maharaj and Bhuban Mohan Tagore without any communication more than four years. And after the wishes of Bhuban Tagore, he came to the full circle of Dhulia baldia hati village and performed some sacrifices like Brahmashi Krishna Tagore and also made some disciple in the region. Among them, his edited sacrifices are seven days during the festival of Astagraha Milana¹³. Such as, the great sacrifice people of this region did not visual in the past. This yajna was spent 85 k.g. rice every day and cooking used to 32 taka marihuna¹⁴. Later, Kamalananda Giri primary school was established (1973 AD) in the place of the sacred yajna. Swami Kamalananda Giri Maharaj also built a monastery in the heart of Santal pargana in Baidyanath Dham near Jashidi¹⁵. This monastery was established in 1960 A.D. There were a Kali temple in this ashram and Kamalananda Giri worshiped himself daily. This temple was various idol such as Radha Krishna, Shaiv linga and Shalgram¹⁶.

At the end Kamalananda Giri Maharaj also expressed his desire to leave the village. According to previous decision Kamalananda Giri Maharaj invited all the disciples to death on 1964 when the chief disciple of Bhuban Mohan Devsharma was given a complete description of how to do his grave in same place. Before death Kamalananda Giri said to *“Bhuban jadi parish tahale amar samadhi sthane ekti samadhi mandir ebang pas pasi ekti Vishnu mandir sthapan karbi, na parish to kharer Chala tairi Kare jyap dhyan karish”*¹⁷. (i.e., if you get Bhuban, then you will build a shrine in my place of burial and beside set up a Vishnu temple, do not make a temple, then you will build chaff house and meditation on Chanting). According to the last wish of Swami Kamalananda Giri Maharaj about that established two temples and a ashram in 1964 A.D. Those who played a prominent role in establishing these temple like – Narendra nath Barman, Karkaria Barman, Sataru Barman, Kripanath Barman, Manmohan Barman, Kaleswar Chandra Barman, Magur Barman, Brajendra Nath Roy Pradhan , Lalit Roy Prodhan, Naradev Barman, Ramnagina Sau and Bhimhari Majhi etc .

Presently there are four temples in Swami Kamalananda Giri Sevashram. The structure of each temple, length-width,height is the same. In front of the temples there are pavilion standing on to pillars, mandap are rectangles with flat roofs and the other side of the temple little flat roof. The height of the temple 32feet and 12feet in width. The temple is dome-shaped and three pitcher on the head. On the top of the Vishnu temple, have Sudarshan Chakra and the other three temples have a trishul. Temples are mainly made of bricks and the front porch is made of sand stone and cement. The porch pillar consists of 10 bits of whites stone and texture made brown stones.

The first temple from the left side of Swami Kamalananda Giri Sevashram is Vishnu temple. Inside the temple, the middle-crowned in the seated envelops on the throne of wooden crafts in this temple. This temple statue are in the middle Vishnu statue of white stone (1inch), Radha Krishna statue of silver on the left

of Vishnu statue (8 inchi),Radha Gobinda statue of brass (5 inchi), idol of Shaiv and Shaiva Linga of brass and on the right side there are Shalgram. The idol of Jagannathdev is engraved on the head of the throne of the tik wood.

The second temple on the left side is Swami Kamalananda Giri Maharaj. In the middle of this temple, the statue Kamalananda Giri Maharaj (2.5 feet). Side by side the temple was made of Brahmashi Bhuban Mohan Devsharma and his wife Ghanakanti Devi. These temples have been replaced by their own idols (2.5 feet). Without the Vishnu temple another three temples has decorated sofa behind the statue and the footwear used in the glass box. Each temple received kashi, conch,bell and lamps as always part of workship. The daily prayers are performed in the morning and evening with arati. Every thursday there are various festival culture, singing and reading Bhagabat Geeta. All the events that are held throught the year are on the occasion of the anniversary of Kamalananda Giri Sevashram. Such as, presently one day every year a Vishnu yajna, Durgapuja, Shaiva ratri, Janmasthami, Radhasthami and Rashjatra etc .

Brahmashi Bhuban mohan Devasharma built a tidal shade an eights pillars for the purpose of Vishnu yajna in front of the temples of Swami Kamalanada Giri Sevashram. The floor of this altar is made a white stone. This sacrifice place surrounded by the iron grill. Every year it was held in Vishnu sacrifice. The entire monastery is surrounded by walls. The main gate of the monastery, the two four-cornered pillars are combined with the peak style. At the top point there is a pitcher. In this gate the middle position of the little ceiling, there is some information related to the ashram. During the establishment of the ashram, a large guest house was built to accommodate many of the disciples. It's length is 56 feet and width is 55 feet. Also beside the temple a large pond was excavated.

Most of the people of the village were in Rajbanshi society. As a profession, they are mostly depent on agriculture. With the help of Bhuban mohan Devsharma, to prvide for the education and health. In this area communication system was very bad. There are no electricity and paved roads. Therefore, he was established firstly Kamalananda Giri primary school(1973A.D.)and then Kamalananda Giri junior high school(1980A.D.). Bhuban mohan named the two schools as his Guru. It is possible in the Rajbanshi Semaj of Karkaria Barman, Madhushudhan Barman, Panchanan Roy Pakhadhara, Kartik Chandra Barman, Sataru Barman,Narendra nath Barman, Sushil Barman, Manmohan Barman,Kaleshwar Chandra Barman and Kripanath Barman etc. After some years, The Kamalananda Giri junior high school is closed. But Kamalanada Giri primary school was approved by the government. Due to this contribution of these two educational institution to the people of the backward Rajbanshi Community is immense, while the teach of Kamalananda Giri primary school were Dinabandhu Barman (Head teacher), Sudhir Roy and Harendranath Barman. Teacher of Kamalananda Giri junior high School were Subhash Chakrabarty (Head teacher), Ajit Kumar Roy, Dwijen Barman, Rajen Barman and Ekramul Haque etc .

There is a large pond adjacent to the temple, on the side of Dhulia-Kesarhat road, beside of the field, one day fair was held at the temple ground. It is edited every years in the month of Phalgun (in Bengali calendar) of Sukladashami tithi which was attended by disciples and devotees from various places in India. From the place where the devotees came Assam, Odisa, Bihar, Jharkhand, Kolkata, Alipurduar, Falakata, Maynaguri, Jalpaiguri, Dhupguri and Mathabhanga¹⁸.

Brahmashi Bhuban Mohan Devasharma was devout and kind person. Back to this region, the communication system was not good because the village was remote. The people of this region had to rely on the far flowing Jalpaiguri and Mathabhanga to get a little health care. As a result, the people of this region became the victims of distress for the people of this service. Kamalananda Giri Maharaj and Bhuban mohan Devsharma knew their spiritual treatment by ayurvedic or plantations¹⁹. As a result, not only benefited from the people of this region, it became a land of great importance for the treatment of people coming from many distances, and many people have very difficult by the medical system of ayurvedic medicine and they have become the devotees of this temple by getting sick from disease. It is a burning example beneficial devotee's discipleship. Since the sixties, this temple has become the primary health center for the people of the region. One of the most prominent Brahmashi Bhuban mohan Devsharma's advices was in the opinion of the people. There was no trial in the race for him, the man was the first receive him. So, the people of the region Bhuban Tagore was always known "Barothakur"²⁰ of the love of devotees .

Conclusion

In the view of the afore mentioned discourse it is said that this temple has contributed not only to the promotion of Vaishnavism but also as a center of worship of the people of this region and also education and health. This temple was not limited to Dhulia baldia hati, especially for the propagation of religion and health. Although not all over India from several states of India came running in the crowds the love of Swami Kamalananda Giri and Bhuban mohan Devsharma's love affairs, brotherhood, good health draws and equals. So that Bhuban mohan Devsharma made Kamalananda Giri Sevashram is still alive today to provide relief to all the poor, oppressed and fallen peoples.

References

1. Binay Barman (ed.), *History and Culture of North Bengal*, Vol-II, Kolkata, 2012, p.92.
2. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *History of Cooch Behar*, The state press and Published under Cooch Behar, 1936, p.1.
3. *Ibid*, p.2.
4. *Ibid*, p.2.
5. *Ibid*, p.2.
6. Dameshwar Neog, *Jagat Guru Shankara Dev, Srimanata Sankardeva Sangha*, Nagaon, 1963, pp.29-35.
7. Interview: Mistu Nanda, The temple Priest, 08/09/2018.
8. Dipali Devi: *Swami Kamalananda Giri Sevashramer Itibritto*, Goalpara, 1987, p.29.
9. Interview : Dinabandhu Barman , Former head teacher of Kamalananda Giri Primary School , on 10/09/2018.
10. Dipali Devi, p.30.
11. *Ibid*, p.31.
12. *Ibid*, p.32.
13. Interview: Manmohan Barman, on 22/09/2018.
14. Dipali Devi, p.34.
15. *Ibid*, p.33.
16. *Ibid*, p.34.
17. *Ibid*, p.9.
18. Interview : Bhimhari Majhi, follower of temple, Former Govt. engineer of Orissa , on 10/10/2018.

19. Interview : Ramesh Chandra Devsharma Former principal, the only son of Bhuban Mohan Devsharma, on 11/11/2018.
20. Interview : Dineshwar Barman, Chief Mason and follower of temple, on 10/12/2018.

