

## **A Case Study on Barua Buddhist in Lucknow: “Culture, Belief and Practices”**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The advancement of scientific communication and technologies has led to being globalization. The globalization brought to people belonging to diverse cultures, beliefs and practices, civilizations, and religions together. Hence, it might be said that globalization has enriched society; it also led to clashes with respect to ethical, social, cultural, religious, and ethnic values. At present Buddhism is the fourth-largest religion in the world with more than 520 million followers and there are 7% of followers from the global population they known as Buddhists. The Barua Buddhist community is most familiar in all the Buddhist communities, which belongs to originally from Bangladesh at Mongoloid Chagatai as the ethnic community (Barua and Baruah) who have lived there for 5000 thousand years and this tribe is a follower of the Theravada Buddhist Religion. Among the Baruas community, most of the religious festival is common to other Buddhist countries. Most of the Barua community migrated from their ethnic place to India and other countries.

**Key Words :** Barua Buddhist, Culture, Beilef, Ghagatai community, Ethnic values

### **INTRODUCTION**

In this brief study, we have tried to show that, the development of human civilization at every stage and society the belief of society is inescapable. In every aspect of human life, such belief always played an important role. However, today in the modern world such belief seems to be problematic. Despite globalization and modernization people are coming together. Through the evolving technology of transportation and communication, people have familiar with various religions, cultures, beliefs and practices, civilizations, and the development of science and technologies. There is no doubt about such occurrences have supplemented their belief, but along they have also created various problems. The advancement of scientific communication and technologies has led to being globalization. The globalization brought to people belonging to diverse cultures, beliefs and practices, civilizations, and religions

together. These people have a belief in their own cultures, faith, civilizations, and religions. Consequently, globalization has made society multi-religious and multi-cultural, Most of the persons are proud of their race, culture, practices, and belief. Hence, it might be said that globalization has enriched society; it also led to clashes with respect to ethical, social, cultural, religious, and ethnic values. Consequently, the terrors came in the forms of the human war, holy war, and so on. The following questions arise here: What kind of belief is essential for the annihilation of suffering caused by such problems? What kind of belief is needed for promoting the inner peace of humans, self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-respect? What kind of belief is requisite for bringing unity among the people who are belonging to different cultures, races, practices, civilizations, economics, politics, and religions? Here, the concept of faith and belief in Buddhism gives satisfactory answers to these questions.

This research paper tries to make a descriptive study

about culture, Belief, and their practices of the “Barua Buddhist Community in India concerning Lucknow.

### **Concept of Buddhism:**

In recent times Buddhism is the fourth-largest religion in the world with more than 520 million followers and there are 7% of followers from the global population they known as Buddhists. Buddhism comprises a variety of tradition, spiritual, belief, and practices which are mainly based on original teaching and attribute, and philosophy of Buddha. In the ancient time of India, it was originated as Sramana tradition sometime between the 4th to 6th centuries BC. This speeding all over Asia, there are two main branches of Buddhism which recognize by the scholars: Theravada (Pali: “The school of elders”) and the second is Mahayana (Sanskrit: “The great vehicle”).

Most of the Buddhist traditions share the aims of overcoming the suffering and rebirth or the death cycle either to the attainment of the condition of Nirvana with the help of Buddhahood. In its interpretation of the path to liberation, the school of Buddhist is varied by the relative importance and canonicity assigned in the various texts of Buddhists, and their precise teachings and practices. Generally, observed practices contain taking refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma and Sangha, observation of moral precepts, Buddhist monasticism cultivation, and the meditation of the Paramitas (virtues or perfections).

In Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka, Theravada Buddhism has widely spread such as Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and Myanmar. The Mahayana, which comprises the traditions of Pure Land, Zen Nichiren Buddhism, Shingon, and Tiantai (Tendai), which are found all over East Asia. Vajrayana, a body of teachings recognized to Indian adepts, may be viewed as a separate branch or as an aspect of Mahayana Buddhism. From the eighth-century Tibetan Buddhism, which preserves the Vajrayana teachings in India, practiced in the countries of the Kalmykia and Magnolia.

### **Origin of Barua Buddhist Community:**

Originally the Barua Buddhist Community belong from Bangladesh at Mongoloid Chagatai as the ethnic community (Barua and Baruah) who have lived there for 5000 thousand years is Mongoloid Chagatai as the ethnic community (Barua and Baruah) and this is closely related with the Tancangyas, Chakmas, Marmas, Chagatai, Mugal and Mogs tribes. All these tribes are a

follower of the Theravada Buddhist Religion.

When some Barua’s were the British colonial period and in the East, Pakistan are migrated to India and abroad. Today they are occupied highly concentrated in the Chittagong district of Bangladesh and Southern part of Bangladesh and some family of Barua’s living in large districts of Noakhali and Comilla at Kolkata in India and these are in its surrounding district like Jalpaiguri Siliguri District, Bihar, Durgapura, Koch, etc. and in another part of the country like West Bengal, Lucknow in UP, Ranchi, Jharkhand Shillong in Meghalaya, Guwahati, Bongaigaon, Tinsukia and Assam, Tripura, Delhi. Based on its occupation and social and economic status some Barua Buddhists use titles like ‘Mutsuddi, Talukdar, Sikdar, Hajari, Sinha, etc.

### **Meaning of ‘Barua’:**

The surname of Barua has been derived from two words, ‘Bara’ means ‘renowned’; and ‘Ua’ mean ‘Ruler’. The king of Arakan was a man ‘Barua’. It was the most highly ranked of the military ruler of Chattagram in ancient times.

### **Historic Background of Barua Buddhist society:**

The past period in the history of Buddhism known as the dark days in India, This was the time when the Muslim invaders came to India whose name was Ikhtiyar Uddin Muhammad Bin Bakhtiyar Khilji. Bakhtyarkhilji has plundered the throne of India, this time many Buddhist Vihars were destroyed by him. and many monks fled to place to escape, and later Brahmins brutally attacked Buddhists and again destroyed their Vihars.

By the nineteenth century, Buddhism approximated extinct in the land of birth save some Buddhist tribes survived from Myanmar, Chittagong (now in Bangladesh), and Thailand. Barua community shreds various divisions which were known as Thanas. These various thanas in Chittagaoan have a distinct difference in their languages. But they all are families follow the same pattern of religious ceremonies, According to the history of Buddhism in Bangladesh the festival New Year celebration once deformation of the religious system.

For the religious and cultural ceremonies of festivals were incorporated with the Hindu system there was no government support like Hindus but among themselves, they retained significance mainly by names as Buddhist Identity. The priests set of people known as ‘rangoli purohiths’. The term ‘Purohit’ is still used by Hindus which

refers to a class of their priests.

According to Burmese Buddhism played a significant role in the early 19th century for the revival of this religion and establish in the original form of Buddhism. However, even today, including the form of dresses and cultural aspects they maintain Hindu influence, According to Theravâda tradition the form of Buddhism. They believe that every Buddhist male should be designed like a Buddhist monk at least for the weak. Otherwise, he will never be born-again as a human and hence no possibility of his liberation from samsâra.

Among the Baruas community, most of the religious festival is common to other Buddhist countries. However, the New Year festival grew religious importance. After three months of the rainy season (The Kathin Festival) is celebrated and regarded as a joyful event. From the Barua community, many great Buddhist Scholars and monks played responsible roles for the propagation of Buddhism outside the country.

#### **History of Barua Buddhism in Lucknow:**

About the history of Buddhism, many statues and symbols were found by the archaeologists through the excavation. This happened mainly by the colonial period excavation which tells itself about the glory history in India. The many Bhikkhus came to India, mainly Bhikkhu Dhammpal, Bodhanand, and Pragyand who came from Sri Lanka during the first quarter of the 20th and 21st century, They immensely contributed to the revival of Buddhist history and their culture, belief, and practices in the northern part of the country. Kirpasaran has much credited to spreading the Buddha- Dhamma in Lucknow. Thus the role of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar and is duly credited for both: Ambedkar- Buddhist and as well as Barua Buddhist.

#### **Buddhist Folklores Ancient History of Lucknow:**

Lord Gautam Buddha has spent 24 monsoons major part of his life, which is now in Uttar Pradesh. Many people known about the Buddha have also spent some time of his life in Shravasti, Kushinagar, and Sarnath; but Buddhists strongly believe and argue about Buddha has visited many other palaces of Uttar Pradesh and as well modern Lucknow.

According to the Hindu description, the modern Lucknow is said to be established by Lakshman, as the mythical character of the epic, Ramayana. But there is another version about the original name which says that

Lucknow which was earlier known as Nucklow (still used by old people) and the history after this is that the nails (Nakh) of Buddha were carried here and placed in a Stupa. Thus it placing of Buddha's nails (Nakh) at this place gave it the name later which changed from Nucklow to Lucknow. The talks about another story of Buddheshwar Chowraha where there once was a Buddhist shrine which was arrested by Hindus and later changed into a temple for Lord Shiva. There is one more myth among Buddhists about a Baudh Vihara called Amavasi Baudh Vihar in Lucknow, where Buddhists used together on the day of the new moon (Amavasya). The name of the situated contemporary airport as 'Amousi airport' stands there now and the name Amousi which came from that Vihara. Among the Buddhists thus, there is a strong belief that the history of Lucknow claims of a very rich Buddhist cultural heritage and hence invites sincere attention of excavations and archaeologists.

#### **Buddhists Demography in Lucknow:**

Under the census of 1951; the 73 number of Buddhists in the Lucknow district. The Lucknow district reached 216, 322, 347, 2816, 4327 in 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, and 2001 censuses, respectively. In the senses of 1951; there were only 73 Buddhists before Dr. Ambedkar's full-fledged movement for Buddhism for ex-untouchables, were mainly the Bengali Barua Buddhist families who came here from Chittagong after the partition of Bengal in 1905. As a servant these Bengali Buddhists worked for the Britishers and cooks and also looked after their horses and stables. Now, this number of these Buddhists has been reached about 300-400 people. In the senses of 1991 and 2001; the biggest jump has observed in the number of Buddhist populations. As per our observation, one of the feasible reasons appears to be the arrival plethora literature on Ambedkar, Ashoka, and Buddha largely written by the govt. employees after 1990; and their active participation activities of Dhamma. For the first time, the census office of India the history also shown that around 70% of the population in Uttar Pradesh which they almost coming Schedule castes and remain near 30% from other backgrounds. The observation of many Buddhist activists and interviewees other backward classes come to join and be interested in Buddhist activities. Buddhism in Lucknow mainly belongs to the diverse social backgrounds like Barua Bengalis, Backward Castes, and Scheduled Castes.

### **20th and 21th Century Architecture and Facts of Buddhism in Lucknow:**

The foundation of Buddhism in the 20th century was laid down by Barua Bangali Buddhist Dr. Ambedkar much before took Deeksha. Bhikkhu Kirpasaran constructed the Bodhisatva Vihar at Lotus Road Lucknow in (1865-1926); which was affiliated by the Bengal Buddhist Association, in 1907. By keeping a close relationship with the Education Secretary in the Govt. of India, latter Harcourt Butler was appointed as Governor of Agra in (1869-1938); this time Kirpasaran manage for acquiring the land where existing Buddha Bihar was situated. The Risaldar Park has it second oldest Buddha Vihar at Lucknow, which is affiliated to the Mahabodhi Society of India, it was constructed by Bhikkhu Bodhanand, when he came back to India from Sri Lanka to revive the Buddhism in India and became closely connected with Bhikkhu Kripasaran & Bodhisattva Bihar. And Bhikkhu Praganand was his disciple in (1928), who was that time the head of the Vihara is one of the Bhikkhu (led by Bhikkhu Chandramani) who gave Deeksha to Dr. Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar in 1956. This Vihara had conducted an important meeting place for Dalit, Bahujan, and Buddhist activities. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar also stayed two times here, once in 1932 and later in 1948.

The Gautama Buddha Park which is located near the Rumi gate is also one of the important developments as far as Buddhism is concerned in Lucknow. This park is constructed in 1980; around 10 acres by LDA, with a huge Buddha statue in the position of sitting. This is the biggest statue of Buddha we come across in Lucknow. Every year many people gather here on various occasions which are important in Buddhist traditions and calendars.

When the Bahujan Samaj Party, came into power in UP, from the last decades it constructed roads, chowks, Parks, Hostels, etc. on the name of Buddha. The Baudh Vihar Shanti Upvan one of the important projects was constructed on VIP road which is 1.2 km long and it is spread in 32.5 acres containing an 18 feet tall four-sided marble statue of Gautam Buddha at the main entrance. In this statue, there are two fountains from both the sides (each 28 feet tall and 24 feet diameter). Almost 10-12 Bhikkhus exist in this Vihara and there is a dining hall that can accommodate approx. 60 people. This premise also comprises a library and a meditation hall and dormitories for Bhikkhus and guest scholars.

### **Language and Culture of Barua in the Prehistoric Period:**

Barua had their own culture and language from the prehistoric period and traditional customs, etc. and later it was destroyed gradually in the ruling period of Hindu and Muslim. Today the Barua's have its Buddhist religion and culture which link with Buddhist temples and whereas Buddha Purnima is the most popular festival in the Barua community and new generation participate in Hindu Festivals also in spite many other celebrations Arahant Sivali Puja, Madhu Purnima, Kothin Chivar Dana, Sangha Dana & Athaparikhara Dana, Fanos-Bazi, Chhadang, and Dikkha or Pabbajja or shooting, etc. On the occasion of a newly born child, the following ceremonies are undertaken: Anno Prason. (Bhath-Suani). Hulu Dhani only female members. Panchaila Prarthana (prayer to Lord Buddha) and do Vandana (Prayer to Monk) to the present Bhikkhu Sangha, on marriage occasion the following ceremonies are undertaken Ashirbad Bostra-Alonkar Chorani Pan-Mita, Jorani Bhat, Pan-Salla, Tele-Chorani, Boron Khula, tel-loai", Panchailaparthana (prayer to Lord Buddha) and do Vandana (Prayer to Monk) to the present Bhikkhu Sangha. Hulu Dhani only female members, Borjatri, Ferajatra for Funeral Offering of cloth on behalf of the dead (mataka-vastra-puja) burning the dead body. "Preaching for the benefit of the dead (mataka-bana) "Offering in the name of the dead" (mataka-dana) (Pindidan) etc.

### **Modern Barua Language and Culture:**

Presently the Barua tribes speak Chittagongi Bengali, Hindi, and English also other local languages. Barua's are adapted in India with local Indian culture and equally maintain their old traditional religion. It is nothing that can be denied; Hinduism has been influenced intensely by Barua's social life with the passing of time and the value of Buddhism is misplacing among in new generation, particularly in India.

### **Migrated Baruas in India:**

Most of the Barua community migrated from their ethnic place to India and other countries of the world during the British colonial period and East Pakistan. Searching for jobs and freedom of religion was the main purpose of the migration of Baruas.

### **The economic condition of Barua's in Lucknow:**

Most of the Barua communities belong to the middle-

class families they are considering as a minority community in India. In India, most of Barua's are engaged in a retail business, motor mechanics works, and some are servicing in govt. Sector jobs on group 'D' and group 'C' post jobs.

**The objective of the study :**

There are following two important objectives of this research paper this study is based on.

1. To study the history of the Barua Buddhist community concerning Lucknow.
2. To study the Socio-cultural, Beliefs, and practices of the Barua Buddhist Community.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study of this research paper based on secondary data, and primary interaction with reference persons like old age person from the Buddhist community, Barua Buddhist monk, who belongs to Lucknow, the related review of literature methodology has been used. This paper-based on historic records and archaeological evidence. The descriptive research methodology has applied to envisage the given title of this study to find out the conclusion through these two objectives.

**FINDING AND CONCLUSION**

The Barua Buddhist community has very old belief and cultural history and it is a most familiar community in all the Buddhists communities, which belongs to originally from Bangladesh at Mongoloid Chagatai as the ethnic community (Barua and Baruah) who have lived there for 5000 thousand years and this tribe are a follower of the Theravada Buddhist Religion. Today is the modern time of globalization where the people belonging to diverse cultures, beliefs and practices, civilizations, and religions together. The history of Barua Buddhism of Lucknow also very ancient at the time of Lord Budha has spent 24 monsoons major part of his life, which is now in Uttar Pradesh. Thus, Barua's are adapted in India with local

Indian culture and equally maintain their old traditional religion today. The study of Barua Buddhism in Lucknow has much significant role as another place in the world.

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