

Narrative of Symbolic, Ironic Language, Phrases and Idioms Prevailing in Rural Barak Valley in Assam

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Abstract:

Rural Barak Valley in Assam registers Hadu-du-du as locally termed for Kabaddi, provides a vibrant arena for symbolic and ironical language, embedding local phrases and idioms chants into everyday colloquialism. Symbolic phrases metaphorically suggest predatory prowess, reinforcing community bonds through ancestral folklore. Ironic expressions highlight resilience amid scarcity, turning defeat into humorous critique. These linguistic tools are drawn from dialectal slang to magnify match-side narratives in villages. Boundary-crossing idioms symbolise social hierarchies, while ironic taunt foster playful rivalry. Overall, such language collapses formal speech, preserving oral traditions and enhancing socio-cultural identity in rural festivities.

Key words- Hadu-du-du, Symbolic phrases, Ironic expressions, Phrases and Idioms

The language of hadu-du-du in rural Barak Valley carries an ancient legacy, woven into the soil of generational play and survival. It mirrors the rural psyche—resilient, rhythmic, and rooted in collective memory—passed down as oral literature through chants, taunts, and breath-held defiance. Each syllable echoes not just sport, but ancestral identity, binding community across time. Boundary-crossing idioms in hadu-du-du use metaphors that blur self/other divide, slipping past foes, echoing rural psyche's fluid identities. Their obscurity demands depth study to get the hidden layers of ancestral lore, caste taunts, and survival wit, incomprehensible without cultural immersion. Rooted in Barak Valley's oral legacy, these phrases via rhythmic breaths capture relational bonds and rivalries. Now on extinction's verge, urbanization and fading dialects threaten this vibrant linguistic heritage, urging urgent preservation.

Ha-du-du (popularly Kabadi) has been prevailing since ancient time, of which today's youths are ignorant now; indeed they get amusement listening to the name of the sport.

However the older are held to such sporting activities carrying border-crossing command to other opponent side with a single breath to win sporting rivalry by touching body part of opposition players and arriving at own court. Narratives of some border-crossing commands involve the following e.g.

*“Uri patta keraiya
Beta oste dhoraiiya
Beti oste
Dharishna dharishna dharishna”*

The first line in command “*Uri patta keraiya*” carries symbolic essence of which meaning are difficult to extract. The remaining lines are provocative portraying masculine prowess as a challenge to the opponent’s physical worth otherwise to go back. The command highlights gender differences reflecting female as weaker sex and appeals to make a bodily distance with the female.

Some border-crossing commands express doubts and mystery making listeners bewildered to the situation narrated by the player.

*“Amar shyan ke marile
Kothay niye garile
Srigal shokune khay
Ranga mati dekha zai”*

The first two lines “*Amar shyan ke marile- Kothay niye garile*” portray an inquiry about a friend gone missing and doubted him as engraved somewhere. His disappearance is mysterious and bears a doubt; therefore the player seeks answers to justify his death. The last lines “*Srigal shokune khay- Ranga mati dekha zai*” exposes anticipation that his friend may be eaten by vultures and foxes and evidently a spot is reddened by his blood where he was flat on the land. It carries a serious tone of oppression and a situation of intolerance, and the meaning of the line is not clear remaining obscure or ambiguous for listeners.

There are phrases of which meanings are difficult to infer or understand an implied meaning from something uttered as command of border-crossing.

*“Hadu-dudu leng theng
Kodale katilo theng
Tor Bapor Guza theng
Guza theng Guza theng Guza theng”*

The first two lines “*Hadu-dudu leng theng- Kodale katilo theng*” are ambiguous and difficult to get meaning however certain amount of meaning can be inferred from the last two lines. These raise question why the legs have been cut by Kodale (Spade) or why the legs are deformed or banned? It makes the listeners to think depth of the answer.

*Ek din gelam uttare
Dolu basher vitore
Dolure bom bom
Madarer chhola
Bhai bondhu kotoi gela
kotoi gela kotoi gela kotoi gela*

This hudu-dudu command carries an important comic essence telling about a person going to northern side and got dolu bamboo and its searching for the inner asset is unknown. The line “*Dolure bom bom-Madarer chhola*” is more opaque to get a meaning having a contrast with the reality of his associates such as friend and brother. The meaning of such command could not be traced and it would remain unanswered in long future too.

*“Chal kabadi tara
Nitai amar sala
Bonshi amar guner bhai
Tiki zalaya tamak khai”*

The interlocks of the meaning is fluid having no link of last two lines with the preceding lines telling about a proposal for playing kabadi with Nitai who happens to be the speakers’ brother in-law. However the last two lines “*Bonshi amar guner bhai - Tiki zalaya tamak khai*” have contrasting meaning critiquing habit of brother ironically appreciating its habit of taking tobacco.

Slangs have a deep connection to the discourse in rural communication reflective to the daily lives. Such slangs aren’t registered in the elite class while it manifests the psycho-realism of the rural people using it in their daily lives in symbolic, ironical language, phrases and idioms.

*“Ekdin gelam uttore
Pailam ek dari
Dari vitore pel haraiya
Bolo hari hari”*

Tendency of going to north side is evident that may have an important signs in rural agrarian lives. A person “got dori”- a fish catching instrument made of bamboo, and he has lost his Schlong having no significant direct meaning of its going to north side.

*“ Ekdin gelam uttore
Pailam ek bel
Bel fataiye dekhi
Bura betar pel”*

The raider narrates that a person moves to the north side searching something unknown by his own; after mile walk it finds a wood apple. Ironically cracking the wood apple, he discovers a Schlong of an old person. The narrative needs an in-depth research study to extract the structural meaning of the command that apparently carries amusement to listeners in lighter tone reflecting rural psyche. It may unveil socio-economic conditions of people in rural Barak valley in Assam.

The following is a reference of a royal story representing oral literature to satire a prince for its dullness.

*“Rajar putro ghaduar beng
Doridra brahmaner hate
Theiklayre bulacheng
Chaliye let pet dui kan kata
Tribhuban dekhaila sila hen beta
Ze zanena taper bhou tare kene tap dekhao.”*

A prince is compared to a golden frog in the first line “*Rajar putro ghaduar beng*”- portraying his laziness or tediousness. The prince considers him as intelligent but his cunningness is caught red-handed by a poor Brahmin that is vivified with an metaphor of fish and it is narrated in the lines “*Doridra brahmaner hate- Theiklayre bulacheng*”. The lines “*Chaliye let pet dui kan kata- Tribhuban dekhaila sila hen beta*” highlight about the cunning prince that is exposed by the people attributing corporeal punishment by cutting both ears. The raider command ends with a caution in the line “*Ze zanena taper bhou tare kene tap dekhao*” that person who doesn’t have comic sense; none should make a joke of him.

*“Aore bhai paore zai
Paore giya lembu khai
Lembu khaiya falailam biss
Oilo ek gas
Gasor nat patta massor nai matha”*

Conclusion:

In Hadu du-du (kabaddi), the command of the raider refers to the iconic raid tactic where a player crosses the midline into the opponent's half, shouting different colloquial command in rural Barak valley in a non-stop to claim a touch on defenders without being tackled. This breathless, continuous vocalization rooted in the sport's in ancient rural areas in Barak valley. It serves as a rhythmic "command" to signal the raid's legitimacy, while the raider aims to tag opponents and return across the border without pausing for breath. However, the global evolution, has made the commands to extinct contrary to the modern raiders increasingly adopt silent or minimal vocalization styles, influenced by tactical shifts toward stealth and speed over traditional chants. The ancient Hadu du-du command prevailed in rural Barak valley, requires an in-depth research-study to find answers of questions reaming unanswered since long time for a proper meaning.

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