

## **Historical and Socio-Economic Conditions in Assam before and after Srimanta Sankardeva: A Retrospect**

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### **Abstract:**

The paper speaks the historical, socio-economic and cultural conditions of Assam before and after Saint Srimanta Sankardeva. Before the emergence of Sankaradeva there were different religions like Saivism, Saktism, Tantrik Buddhism, Sun worship, Hindu Cults, Jainism, Vishnuism and various tribal religious beliefs in Assam. The significant aspect of Sri Surya Pahar of Goalpara in Assam is that, it was once a confluence of three religions as obvious from the countless sculptures and other relics belonging to Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. After the advent of Sankardeva, he launched an innovative faith called Neo-Vaishnavism, i.e. "Ek Sarana Nama Dharma".

The thought of local self direction was first begun in Assam by Sankaradeva through Satra, Namghar and Thana; as a result, he introduced the devolution by influence. Skilled weaving was trained during Sankaradeva. The making of "Vrindavani Vastra" is the finest model of his money-making reflection. He visited many places in Assam to organize the uniting of Vrindavani Vastra. The use of silk cloths Borkapur, Elephant teeth, Japi, is recovered in the hagiographies. The promotion of land was given in the name of different disciple staying at "Satras" by which they carried out their livelihood. He used different raw materials for his own resourceful and creative activities. The cultivation of Jaluk was practiced at that time.

The portrayal of lessons of education system of that time is there in the hagiographies. Sankaradeva passed through the understanding to the mass people by Plays. His Ankiya Nats were performed in every sections of the society where all people were allowed to participate.

The ancient innovative Indian music can be found in Sankaradeva's Borgeets. Borgeet has two key objectives- one, is for prayer and another is for entertainment.

Consequently, he did multitalented effort for the socio-economic and spiritual development of the society when the society was under deformation.

**Key Words:**

Historical, Socio-Economic, Conditions, Assam, Saint, Srimanta Sankardeva, Neo-Vaishnavism, Ek Sarana Nama Dharma.

**Introduction:**

A social change is a very necessary feature for the growth and development of any society. The strength of religion is often the strongest one in this development. A religious belief is connected deeply directly or indirectly within the minds of the people.

Sankardeva is a sacred man for every people of Assam. The literary and cultural developments by him still impact the present resourceful works. Sankardeva's fame had spread well in the contemporary Indian society when he was alive. Within years of its initiations Neo-Vaishnavism firmly established as the highest spiritual order of the Brahmaputra valley. The cultural and artistic feelings was proceed forward to the indigenous people with the help of Satras and Namgharas which have vital task to play in the perpetuation, preservation and enlargement of the indigenous culture of the province.<sup>1</sup>

Sankardeva transformed the entire Assamese society and introduced a new religion called Neo-Vaishnavism, the "Ek-Sarana Nama Dharma", which speaks shelter-in-one-religion, way judge in one God, i.e., Krishna. Eka-Sarana highlights absolute surrender i.e. psyche, body and personality to the feet of almighty God by chanting his name as "Hari, Rama". The first journey of Sankardeva in different places of India undoubtedly influenced him in instigating the Neo-Vaishnavite movement and bestowing all his life in highlighting the Vaishnava trust among the masses of Assam.<sup>2</sup>

Sankardeva educated people himself on his innovative and liberal views. At that time, the Shakti cult was well-liked in the valley and even human sacrifice was made very often. Sankardeva convinced the people to renounce those traditions and turn out to be Neo-Vaishnavites. He trained them that idol worship was untenable as the almighty God was not confined to a mere idol and is an omnipresent, which manifests itself in the form of different creatures. In view of the fact that all the creatures have the same God within them in the form of psyche, they are all equals. Thus, he began to advocate equality among the common people. He gave identical rank to all his disciples. It was a major departure from the prevalent system in the society, where caste hierarchy was observed very strictly. Earlier, only the upper caste people were offered right of entry to the knowledge of scriptures. Sankardeva opened the door of religion to all. The Shudras, the Muslims, the tribals-all were initiated by him in his extraordinary religious identity that came to be recognized as Eka Sarana Nama Dharma.

### **Review of Related Literature:**

To justify the statement of the problem the following literatures are directly or indirectly connected to our research.

- 1. Bhaskar Jyoti Das**, highlights in his M. Phil Thesis titled “Neo-Vaishnavism in Sixteenth Century Assam: A Historical Study” that Neo-Vaishnavism in Assam is popularly known as Ek-Sarana Nama Dharma, which means faith-in-one-religion. Neo-Vaishnavite movement was a pantheistic spiritual tradition. It was launched and propagated by Saint Sankaradeva in the sixteenth century. The Neo-Vaishnavism of Sankaradeva was special from the earlier patterns of Vishnu worship that was prevalent in ancient Assam. It is evident from the archeological and many literary accounts. Nevertheless, Sankaradeva popularized the Cult of Krishna, the form of Vishnu worship in a different form with the simplest way of devotion called ‘Bhakti’.
- 2. Bishwa Hazarika, Bhaskar Bhuyan and Bitu Borah**, highlight their paper titled “A Study on Namghar: The changing role from an orthodox religious prayer house to a Local-Self Governance Institution” that the impact of Namghar has been changing from a cultural and religious institution to a kind of Local-Self Governance institution. The Namghar is an inevitable cultural organ of the Assamese society, which can be identified as the key regulatory mechanism of the societal norms and behaviour.
- 3. Hari Charan Das**, studied that Srimanta Sankaradeva was not a professional researcher or teacher. However, he sacrificed his entire life for searching knowledge. Ultimately he was an enormous research scholar. The cleanliness and purity of his knowledge and elevated ambition to strengthen the society by using value oriented knowledge not only enriched the society spiritually, but also developed it culturally, artistically and socio economically.
- 4. HV Sreenivasa Murthy**, found that the Namgharas serve as panchayat-hall, where villagers meet to talk about and resolve many of their day-to-day troubles. These community centres have been found even to co-operate political and religious task. Indeed, these institutions performed the identical functions of the Panchyats of which we hear so much today.

5. **Muzahidul Ahmed**, in his paper titled “Socio- Economic Changes in Assam- “A study of the initiations of Srimanta Sankaradeva’ found that there was a huge influence in the fields of Socio- Economic aspects in Assam; but, Sankardeva initiated immense steps for its development. Earlier than the emergence of Sankardeva, there was a Vishnu tradition in Assam which was refined by Sankardeva.
6. **N. Tamna Singha’s**, paper titled “Sankardev: Livelihood and the Progress of Humankind” studies that Sankardeva’s efforts towards spiritual consciousness is of great value for a structured and noble life. The foundation of Sankardeva’s ideology was established to bring equality for all kinds of illiterate, poor and vulnerable people in the state.
7. **Rinku Barah’s**, paper titled “The Neo-Vaishnavism of Srimanta Sankaradeva: A Great Socio-Cultural Revolution in Assam” indicate that the Neo-Vaishnavite movement is a vast socio-cultural revolution to synchronize the people of Assam. It helps to broaden the thought as there was no any perception of caste, class and racial difference. The distinctiveness of the religion lay in the reality that the practice of Ek-Saran-Hari-Naam-Dharma brought an ethnic assimilation, integration and spiritual upliftment through a pioneering form of sacred manner based on indigenous basics of the region.
8. **Sanjib Kumar Borkakati**, in his Assamese book “Srimanta Sankardeva” highlights that Landabor was the inhabitant from Kannouj who was the ancestor of Srimanta Sankardeva.
9. **Satyajit Kalita**, in his paper titled “A Comparative Study between the Neo-Vaisnavism of Srimanta Sankardeva and the other Vaisnavite Saints of India” found that a social reform movement was sweep from corner to corner India between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The Bhakti movement was based on the liberal principles of Bhakti or Devotion. Bhakti implies keen love and attachment for God.
10. **Sahiyarathi Lakshminath Bezbarua**, in his book “Sri Sri Sankardev and Sri Sri Madhavdev” highlights that Srimanta Sankardeva was the grandson of Siromoni Bhuyan Chandibor from the famous Baro Bhuyan’s of Assam.
11. **Maheswar Neog**, in his book titled “Sankardeva and His Times” indicates that the doctrine of Bhakti or Love is traced back to enormous antiquity and is to be linked

with early Vishnusim. The monistic and ideologist presumption of Sankaracarya's Vedanta appears to have come as a challenge to the metaphysical base of Bhakti.

**12. Joykanta Gandhia**, in his Assamese book "Sankardevar Natya–Kala Aru Ankiya Natar Saundarya" focuses that Sankardeva was the father of Assamese dramatic literature and dramatic Arts.

**13. Mrinal Chandra Kalita**, in his Assamese book "Brindabani Bastra" indicate that the unique Brindabani Bastra is connected to Lord Krishna and his life where in the first part the depiction of Krishna's birth place beautifully highlighted.

**14. Sanjib Kumar Borkakati**, in his Assamese book "Srimanta Sankardeva Kirti Aru Darshan" signify that Sankardeva was a man who established a combined form of Assamese culture in the Bhramaputra Valley.

### **Statement of the Problem:**

The Neo-Vaishnavite movement had played a very significant role in building the medieval Assam. The influence of this mass movement can be traced from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries till the present time. The movement played a key part in the framework of the Assamese society and transcending all obstacles of castes and tribes.

As a result, it is extremely necessary to study the impact of the Neo-Vaishnavite movement in all phases of the life of people and at the same time, the thoughts and viewpoints of Sankardeva needed a methodical investigation and research, which consecutively change the society from an unbalanced and disorganized to a highly established one. The religious institutions like Namghars (prayer hall) and Satras (monasteries), Than (sthana) which are the outcome of the movement, had a very influencing position in the socio-political as well as cultural life of the people in the medieval period. Hence, there is a great need to study the impact of Srimanta Sankardeva towards the historical, socio-economic conditions in Assam.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

The present study is analytical in nature and the main objectives of the study are as follows –

1. To study the historical, socio-economic and cultural conditions prevailing in Assam before and after Srimanta Sankardeva.
2. To study the religious aspects in Sankardeva's teachings for spiritual and human development.
3. To focus the socio cultural dimensions activated by Sankardeva to reinforce the society and to congregate understanding among the common people for the cause of unity in diversity.

### **Research Questions:**

1. Is there any historical, socio-economic and cultural conditions prevailing in Assam before and after Srimanta Sankardeva?
2. Is there any religious aspect in Sankardeva's teachings for spiritual and human development?
3. Are there any socio-cultural contexts which were activated by Sankardeva to strengthen the Assamese society?

### **Importance of the Study:**

Study about the life and works of Srimanta Sankardeva is of great academic and social significance in Assam. The Neo-Vaishnavite movement, led by Sankardeva is a great socio cultural and economic revolution in Assam. It took a vital task to create social harmony among the people of Assam. Satra, Namghar and Than are the Neo-Vaishnavite monasteries in Assam which was pioneered by Sankardeva. Namghar is a significant socio-cultural dimension. The Namghars are the basic social-cultural foundations which approached into existence as an upshot of Vaishnavite Bhakti movement, which commenced after discrimination, unfairness, repression of lower class and mal-practices in Hinduism reached its climax in 15<sup>th</sup> Century. <sup>3</sup> While the society was in bewilderment, split, at that moment, Sankardeva extended his ideas and ushered an epoch of socio-cultural revival in Assam who indisputably established different religious institutions and foundations, which are the powerful instruments to reform the common people of Assam. The very

influence of this movement entered into the formation of the Assamese society eliminating all obstacles of caste and tribe who gave people the way of self-reliance, capability and competence. It can widen the range to analyse Sankaradeva as an economist who tried to remove all obstructions in the background of socio-economic interface. Therefore, the idea and viewpoints of Sankaradeva gradually became a major part of the life Assamese people. As a result, it is very indispensable to study Sankaradeva's ideas and values from socio-economic viewpoints.

### **Research Methodology:**

To study these two major objectives, a historical and analytical method has been used. The data have been collected from the primary and secondary sources. Secondary sources were in the form of different books written by different scholars, articles published in indifferent journals, internet, website etc. All of data or sources have been critically analyzed.

The study highlights the impact of Srimanta Sankaradeva on historical, socio-economic condition in Assam also Neo-Vaishnavite movement of Assam in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It uses the historical methodology and critically studies the different literatures on socio-religious, cultural and human developments, which was brought by the mass movement along with the political history of that time.

The research carries archival source including the secondary data as well. Historians had to focus on different sources to build the history of Assam. There are many references about the region of Assam that were observed in Sanskrit and Buddhist literatures and some accounts of foreign travelers. Archaeological resources like monuments, numismatics, epigraphy, pottery and visual arts have also contributed to our perceptive of the history and culture of Assam till the thirteenth century. The State Archives of Assam and Srimanta Sankaradeva Sangha provide much information of the medieval period and the Vaishnava saints of Assam.

### **Why Socio-historical Study is so Significant?**

Social history is an important component of education capable of producing the sort of citizens who can revive and sustain our democracy. Learning to think historically and to see ourselves as responsible, democratic citizens with a stake in society and a role to play are crucial skills for active democracy.

## **Results and Discussion:**

### **1. Historical, Socio- Economic and Religious Conditions of Assam before Sankardeva:**

A superficial glimpse of the well-known stupas of Suryapahar, Goalpara gives an obvious thought that Buddhism in Assam is as old as the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B. C. Previous to Buddhism, Saivism, Sanktism, nature and Sun-Worship were the popular structure of religious faith of the people in present Kamrup and Goalpara area. Facts are there of the survival of significant Sun temples in Tezpur, Goalpara and Kamrup region.

The backdrop of Buddhism was said to have taken place with Thera Dhitika, a follower of Thera Upagupta during the reign of Ashoka, being accountable for conversion of a priest Sidha, a Sun-worshipper of Kamrupa. Subsequently, Buddhism became well-liked in the Kamrupa and nearby regions. It is extremely probable that Buddhism had picked up some local Tantric fundamentals in its strides, as the religion was accepted by the masses in the centuries that followed. Unluckily, most of the people in Assam once had the incorrect idea that Buddhism is a tantric religion.

By and large, the history of Assam has passed several stages of development to reach its present social formation. The proto-historic Assam is reconstructed from epics and literature such as Ramayana, Mahabharata, Kalika Purana and Yogini Tantra. The historical account of Assam began with the establishment of PushyaVarman's dynasty in the fourth century in the Kamarupa Kingdom (ancient name of Assam), which marked the beginning of the Ancient history of Assam. Nevertheless, the influential kingdom of Kamarupa disintegrated after the decline of the Palas in the twelfth century and there had been emergence of number of independent or semi-independent Kingdoms.

Geographically, the entire Brahmaputra valley and the modern districts of Koch Behar and Jalpaiguri of West Bengal came under the periphery regions of the medieval Assam.



During this period, there were many independent tribes such as the Chutiyas, the Morans, the Barahis and the Kacharis ruled the eastern part of the Brahmaputra Valley. In the western part, a line of Hindu kings were ruling with their capital at Kamatapur. Further, on both sides of the Brahmaputra valley, there was a class of landlords called Bhuyans, who exercised independent or autonomous supremacy in their respective areas. One more powerful tribe called Koch established their Kingdom in the western Brahmaputra valley.

The Hindu royal families of Assam worshipped Shiva, which was based on Brahmanical rites. Nonetheless, they honored tribal rites as well. The most dominant cult of medieval Assam was Shaktism and it was associated with the worship of the mother Goddess or Devi.

Furthermore, Tantricism was prevalent in Assam from its ancient times but it turns to be very powerful during the medieval period. The complexities in the religious belief of the people during the medieval period were taken as an opportunity by the tantric priests to influence the religious life of the people to a great extent.

On the whole, the religion divided the people on the grounds of their faith, beliefs and culture. The fifteenth century of Assam presented varied pictures of diverse shades and culture. The society presented a period of social degeneration and religious bigotry. At the same time, it was under political turmoil, cultural stagnation and economic uncertainty. In the meantime, the entire India was in the throes of a religious upheaval.

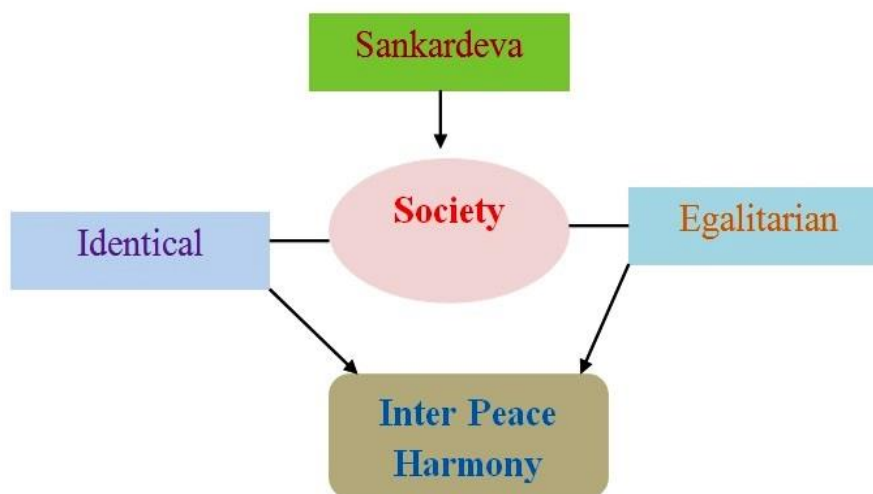
Ramanuja started the immense Vaishnava renaissance in the eleventh century of medieval India. His philosophy was based on the earlier devotional cult of Alvars of Tamil land. It steadily reached out to the other parts of India under the efforts of Nimbarka in the eleventh century.

Madhavacharya in the thirteenth century, Vallabhacharya in the fifteenth century, Ramananda of Allahabad in the fourteenth century, Kabir and Namdeva in the fifteenth and Chaitanya of Bengal in the fifteenth and the sixteenth century along with many others.

The schools of Vaishnavism may differ somehow in rational, trust-seeking ideas and religious discourses. Though, the fundamental basis of the school of thoughts did not differentiate much. The religious leaders and social reformers from different parts of the country were striving to put an end to the traditional religious ceremonies, rites and rituals and discrimination on the basis of castes. They tried to encourage a sensation of oneness among the people through a religious movement that came to be known as Bhakti movement. The spirit of religious upheaval was at work in all parts of the country and the easternmost part of it i.e. Assam was also not left out.

## **2. Historical, Socio-Economic and Religious Status of Assam after Sankardeva:**

### **a. Philosophy of Neo-Vaishnavism:**



Sankardeva was a man of humanism, because his kind hearted consciousness attracted all categories of people. His emotional attraction and feelings directly and indirectly connected to people's mindset. All together, Sankardeva realised the reality, significance and objective of life which are very important for spiritual development. Sankardeva was a personality who unified and integrated the entire Assamese society and culture and was the maker of Assamese language and culture.<sup>4</sup> The teachings of Sankardeva are directly and indirectly connected to human development. The principles launched by Sankardeva are the

basis of humanism. It is mentioned that, in Kritan Ghosa, Srimanta Sankaradeva highlighted all living beings as the basis of one God:

“Kukura srigala gardhabaru atma Ram janiya sabako pari kariba pranam”

There is no division or difference on the basis of caste concerning the prayer of God:

Kirata Kachari Khasi Garo Miri

Yavana Kanka Goala

Asama maluka rajaka turuka

Kuvacha melechcha chandala

Ano jati nara Krishna sevakara

Sangata pavitra haya

Sankaradeva portrayed an identical and egalitarian society, where all the members from each sections of the society, irrespective of caste, tribe and community will be able to meet collectively for the prayer of God and feast together. As a result, the great thought of the saint really reveals itself when converted members from Bodo, Khasi, Naga, Mishing, Garo and many other tribal communities of the valley to form the origin of an identical society. Studies of Sankaradeva's life highlight the study of Assam's social life and its existence.

**b. Idea of Sankaradeva's Ek-Sarana Nama Dharma:**

The four principles of Sankaradeva's Ek-Sarana-Naam-Dharma are:

- ✓ Naam: The chanting of the name of the ultimate being and singing his praises.
- ✓ Deva: Worship of a single God, i.e., Lord Krishna.
- ✓ Guru: Veneration of a Guru or preceptor.
- ✓ Bhakat: The connection or the assembly of followers.

**c. Satra and Assamese Identity:**

The identity of the Neo-Vaishnavite movement in Assam is the evolution of two distinctively unique institutions, viz., The Satra and the Namghar, both of which began to serve not only as the gadget spreading faith but also intimately linked with the social, economic and the cultural life of the Assamese society. The Satras of Assam are the most

distinguished and influential socio-cultural institution of the state. Satras propagated Neo-Vaishnavite Movement and can be traced to the time when the movement initiated by Sankaradeva was still in its embryonic juncture.

Today the Satras are the base of Assamese culture and heritage. The cultural history of Assam in respect of visual arts, craft, education, literature and heritage since the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century till the arrival of the British developed centering on the Neo-Vaishnavite Movement which in turn found expressions in the course of the foundation of Satra. The attractive objects, beautification, Satra interiors, Satriya Architecture highlight the value of the Satras.



Wooden Plate makes use of Mah-Prasad during Sankardeva's time: Preserved at Sankardeva Than

[Photograph taken from Sankardev Than, Barpeta, Assam]

#### **d. Namghar and Assamese Culture:**

Namghar system provided a well-organized method and decentralized the religious structure which is an exclusive mark of Assam's Neo-Vaishnavism. In 1503 A.D., Sankaradeva constructed the first Namghar with the assist of the initial followers. He composed the prayers himself. It is very important that the recitations from the Bhagavata and spiritual discussions were held in this Namghar.

Saint Sankaradeva was familiar with the raga-based music and composed his devotional songs- the Borgeets based on different ragas. Basically, he popularized his bhakti cult with the help of a pantomime where he developed a genre of beliefs, rationality, art and music in the form of Borgeets, Anikya Nats or Baonas.

The Namghar served as the ideal platform. It is the basic philosophy of Neo-Vaishnavism. The Namgharas are the socio-cultural, religious and artistic institutions which came into survival as a result of Vaishnava Bhakti movement.

**e. Than and Assamese Identity:**

In Sanskrit “Than” means Sthana where people live for long time for socio-cultural and artistic activities. Many of the larger Satras house hundreds of celibate and non-celibate bhakats (monks), hold vast lands and are repositories of religious and cultural relics and artifacts. The Satras extend control over their lay disciples via village Namghars. Satras in which the principal preceptors lived, or which preserve some of their relics are also called Thanas. For a long time Sankardeva stayed at Patbausi for Socio-economic, cultural, spiritual and human development. Here he focused the spiritual knowledge system for holistic human development. The long time in this holy place highlighted Sankardeva’s socio-artistic glory with its ideological and spiritual aspects.



Copper Plate window used when first time Sankardev Than was established: Preserved at Sankardeva Than

[Photograph taken from Sankardev Than, Barpeta, Assam]

#### **f. Socio-Economic Activities**

Sankaradeva was a very strong personality for the development in the form of weaving and figured cloth. Handloom weaving occupied his exceptional personal interest. He wonderfully designed and guided the weaving effort of the well-known Vrindavani Vastra. At the appeal of the Koch king's brother Chilirai, Sankaradeva took up the mission of embroidery weaving for which he engaged the weavers of Tantikuchi or Barpeta.

Sankardeva activated for the betterment of cottage industries in the Satras, Namagharas and Thanas. The wonderful handicrafts and the handloom industries were encouraged by him and pioneered many musical tools which were prepared in the institutions. Costume designing was a significant art of Sankardeva's identity. Training of traditional Asomiya ornaments was started by him. In this regard, the work of Mukhas is of great value.

Resources like hengul, haital, engar, gerua-mati, neel popular for ages, were produced during Sankaradeva's era. Artisans were trained to produce traditional objects similar to mayurasana, thaga, garudasana, xarai. Materials made of bamboo like dala, kula, pachi, kharahi, bisoni, japi, kath, chaloni, etc and that of wood like pira, safura, wooden chests, bar-pira, etc were produced by the bhakats of the saints. Handloom goods similar to gamocha, dhoti, eri, muga, chador, pat, and so on were produced independently.

Sankardeva's economic involvement may not be identified by some of the scholars, researchers, however, management of vast land and property of Satra and Namghars highlights that economic administration was also a part of his knowledge management system.



Srimanta Sankardeva's Padasila (Foot Step): Preserved at Sankardeva Than  
[Photograph taken from Sankardev Than, Barpeta, Assam]

**g. Educational Activities:**

Sankaradeva's teachings are connected to humanism and hence, it is exceptional in many aspects. The disciples of Sankaradeva who were enlightened and collectively aware were very few in numbers towards illiterate masses. However, yet Sankaradeva and his disciples work hard in proliferating knowledge in their own method. He composed numerous songs, plays, prayers and rational writings. These contained main sections of the lessons material prevalent during the residential schools. The teachers of these schools taught generally the religious scriptures like Puranas, Vedas, Srimad Bhagavat Geeta, the two epics etc. Sankaradeva's idea and Knowledge Management System is still relevant in contemporary society.

**h. Cultural Implications:**

Sankaradeva's Neo-Vaisnavism is the part and parcel of Assamese social life who was the first person in Assam to launch mass-education, introduced the Tol system of education in the Namghars, Satras and Thanas where students were provided with sachi pat, tula pat, pen, ink, etc.

**Conclusions:**

In conclusion, Sankaradeva is a man of socio-cultural and cultural identity. His notions of economic development have enormous significance. The impact of Sankaradeva recalls to our psyche which is connected to the contemporary all round development. Here, the adult education and Panchayati Raj are the great examples. He propagated his teachings of Bhakti based on the codes of universal brotherhood and inter-peace harmony. Sankaradeva

carried a unique socio-cultural reform by highlighting social, spiritual, mental and economic appreciation of the common people and there by strengthened the society for which he will be remembered forever.

### **Word Meaning:**

Satra :	The Vaishnavite Monastery in Assam
Namghar :	The Community prayer hall in Assam
Than :	Than means Sthana where people live for long time towards socio-cultural activity.
Borkapur:	Eri-chadar
Bhakat :	The devotee under the Satra.
Ankiya Nat :	The Drama organised by the Vaishnava cult of Assam.
Borgeet :	The devotional songs of Assam
Neo-Vaishnavism:	A Philosophy of enlightenment of the human conscience through Universal love.
Ek-Sarana-Nama-Dharma:	The name of the ultimate entity i.e. lord Krishna
Thera Dhitika :	A follower of Thera Upagupta during the reign of Ashoka,
Vrindavani Vastra:	The cloth of Vrindavan was produced in Assam by the Assamese Weavers.
Padasila :	Foot Step
Mah-Prasad :	Ingredients as Prayer
Mukha :	Mask
Sachi Pat :	Tree Bark
Tula Pat :	Cotton-made paper

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