

### **Love across the 'Brohmaputra Nodi'**

Mishing is a marginalised riverine population of River Brahmaputra. They believe themselves to be the descendent of Donyi Polo – Mother Sun and Father Moon respectively. Mishing practices a patriarchal system. After the marriage a girl lives with her husband's family. Generally formal marriage called – Da : roMidang is a formal marriage where social norms are followed. Parents of both boys and girls negotiate for this union. Dugla la nam i.e marriage by elopement is a common practice form of marriage. Formal marriages are very expensive and if the Mishing community is unable to sustain the cost of formal marriage then Mishing village heads and society encourages this practice. Otherwise, the boys and girl choose such type of marriage system if family's oppose to the marriage. And Kumna sola La:nam i.e a marriage through a simple ceremony does not have a heavy cost. Usually the less affluent section of the people due to poverty or inconvenience practise such system of marriage. Marriage is celebrated by inviting elders and offering Apong (rice beer) to them.

Soon to be Mishing bridegroom waits with his family for the boat with gifts for the bride's family to cross the River Brahmaputra and get his bride from Majuli island. They are crossing the river with Apong (local drink), Tamul (beetle nut) and fish for the bride's family. Dressed in traditional hand woven Mekhla Chador (pronounced Sador) which takes month to make the two-piece set and Gomcha (scarf for men), the bridegroom's family wait for the boat eagerly.

The bride's happiness is just across the River Brahmaputra.