

Assamese Dictionary : A lexicon of 1 lakh entries



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GUWAHATI: After years of toil, this would be a dictionary with a sweeping range. The Asomiya Jatiya Abhidhan, which is being compiled and edited by a 25-member team of lexicographers, would see the light of the day on January 1, 2010. The dictionary was first conceptualized at a workshop held in Jorhat under the aegis of the Assam Jatiya Siksha Samanway Parishad on July 7, 2002.

The seminar papers presented at the workshop by noted scholars Dr Dilip Kumar Dutta, Dr Kabindra Nath Phukan, Dr Madan Mohan Sharma, Dr Bhimkanta Barua, Dr Benu Gogoi and Dr Debabrata Sharma, who is the chief editor of the Asomiya Jatiya Abhidhan, were brought out in a book-form exactly a year later.

Now the first phase of the work relating to the compilation of the ambitious dictionary has been completed. Dr Sharma, the Head of the Department of English at Jorhat College, claimed that the dictionary would have an original outlook and be a comprehensive work of its kind in all aspects. He also pointed out that after Miles Bronson and Hem Chandra Barua, nobody has made any substantial contribution towards the task of compiling an Assamese dictionary in terms of originality and comprehensiveness.

However, these two pioneering initiatives were not emulated in the 20th century, Dr Sharma maintained. Whatever was produced during the last century amounted to a mere addition or a little amendment to Bronson's dictionary and the Barua-edited Hem Kosha.

The progress made by the Assamese language during the last 1,000 years will be encompassed in the Asomiya Jatiya Abhidhan. From the Assamese prevalent in the times of Madhav Kandali, Ram Saraswati and Sankaradeva to the diverse forms of art and culture peculiar to different ethnic tribes, no efforts will be spared to give representation to and acknowledge the roots of every spoken and written word which has passed into the language, Dr Sharma stressed.

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