

Name of the Element: Dhāmail (ধামাইল)

Name of Inventory: Test Inventory 1

Serial No: D2-0006

#### Brief Description

Dhamail Gan is mainly a genre of ritual dance and songs by women. Hindu women of Sylhet and Mymensingh districts perform Dhamail or dhamali dance and songs with pomp and grandeur on the occasions of certain religious rites, different religious festivals and birth and marriage ceremonies. Twenty to twenty-five women stand in circle in the yard and perform this rite.

Although it has similarity with Bhatiali (another genre of performance) in tone, it does not have the stretched-out intonation or the sweet or pleasant rolling from one note to another. And the musical measure is maintained by the clapping of the hands; hence, no musical instruments are needed. There is a speciality in the step and pace of the dance - women clap their hands successively by bending down and lifting their head to the front. In Sylhet, hand clapping is called thapri in the local vernacular. They have to dance moving forward and backward alternatively and in circle, keeping pace with the hand clapping.

The toes of the back leg touch the ground and the heels remain high; thus they have to alternate the right and left legs. Dhamali is erotic music relating to Radha and Krishna.

Social Dhamail song narrating events of north Bengal, conversations between brides and bridegrooms and containing proverbs are still prevalent. Dhamail is folk song of the ancient tradition. Scholars believe that fourteenth-century poet Chandi Das wrote Srikrishvakirton (Songs in Glorification of Krishna) after being inspired by Dhamail and jhumur songs. The word dhamali is there in Srikrishnakirton in the sense of jokes. ' 'dhamali bulite kanhe diholi ash. / Basali shire bondi gailo Chandidash. (Dankhondo). In sixteenth-century poet Daulat Wazir Bahram Khan's Laili-Mojnu, the word dhamal is used in the sense of dance and music ' 'balemu shubdoni / donho mili nirojoni / khelot robge dhamal. In Satimayana-Lor-Chandrani, seventeenth-century poet Daulat Kazi uses dhamari in the same sense ' 'Khelai bondhur sone premer dhamari. These quotations indicate the antiquity and popularity of dhamali gan (song) and dance.

Dhamail song and Dhamail dance is also a kind of story dance which is a part of the folklore of Sylhet region. Although this song-dance performance is common in any

mangolik (auspicious) ceremony, it is now more commonly used in traditional religious wedding ceremonies. Radharman Dutt is considered to be the creator of this genre of performance. However, Dhamail songs composed by Prataparanjan Talukdar have also gained a lot of popularity in Haoranchal. His Dhamail is best known as 'Pratap-Bandha'.

Region: Sreemangal, Moulvibazar, Sylhet

---

Photographs: Video: Consent:

Submitted by: Joyeta Banik  
Member of Nrityashaily, Sylhet  
Email: nandinitisha49@gmail.com