

# Bangladesh Culture: A Study of the South Para of Village 'Silimpur'

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Culture is called 'the total way of life of a people'.<sup>1</sup> **John H. Bodley** says, 'Culture involves at least three components: what people think, what they do, and the material products they produce.'<sup>2</sup> It includes traditional shared beliefs, values, customs, behavior, and artifacts of the members of a society, transmitted from generation to generation through socialization.<sup>3</sup> Also, these components will partly be changed in every age by adapting themselves with modern ideas and technology.

There is a smell of accordance in the culture of Bangladesh, especially of rural areas, while her most parts are villages. The same style of housing, clothing, food, ideas, values etc. are found there. Even folk tales, literature, puzzles, paradoxes, songs and dances of various areas are, though with a little difference, very close to each other. In most villages, thatched huts have either two or four slanting roofs. Construction materials are different, depending on what are locally available and on one's economic condition, but usually bamboo, wood, tin, jute sticks or mud for wall and straw, tile, tin or leaves for roofs.<sup>4</sup>

Usually men wear at home shirt and '*lungi*', an indigenous long dress from waist to the foot, but while going outside choose shirt and full-pant. The common dresses for girls are '*Salwar-Kamiz-Urna*' (trouser-long skirt and a covering for breast), but for women *Sari*-blouse-petticoat, all are Indian garments. Common foods for all are rice or bread, fish and vegetables. In occasions and ceremonies, people cook *polao*, *biriani* and various

preparations of meat etc. as well as various *pithas* (cake) in winter.<sup>5</sup> Villagers domesticate cows, goats, poultry <sup>6</sup>, if time and money allow.

In Bangladesh, there was once joint family, accrued from the necessity of agriculture.<sup>7</sup> Now not only in towns, but also in villages, nuclear family is taking place being resulted from the influence of industrialization and modernization. Generally father is the head of the family and children have to obey their parents and to carry out their orders.

While girls and boys get maturity, guardians negotiate on behalf of them and arrange marriage, which is called settled marriage in Bangladesh. This was and is prevalent and approved in society. Now-a-days, romantic love-marriage occurs in towns, yet social acceptance is not wide and still considered as an offence.

Songs are of many kinds as, marriage songs, rain songs, nursery rhymes and lullabies.<sup>8</sup> Besides the same social festivals and rites are celebrated, less or more in the similar way everywhere.

In spite of all these accordance in the culture of Bangladesh, every village has originality with some unique features and tradition, different from the others', as an individual's behaviors are, in many ways, different from those of a crowd. To search that originality or uniqueness, a village named Silimpur is selected. Today's discussion is about the culture of this village.

## **Methods**

Information is collected through face to face interviews of some people, who inhabit the south para of Silimpur. In this respect, questions with the request of independent answers are used to gather information. Also, observation and empirical methods are used too, since the author has come in close contact with the people of this area for 25 years.

With respect to secondary sources, relevant books and web-sites are also used to glean materials.

## **Objectives**

This study is based on some objectives —

1. To know how the material and non-material culture of the South Para of Silimpur was in 1950.
2. To know how the material and non-material culture of the South Para of Silimpur is in 2005.
3. To identify the changes through years.

## **Limitations**

This study has some limitations. Since Silimpur is a large village with five *paras* (neighborhoods), this is difficult to discuss on all the areas in this very short time of making an assignment. So, only one para named ‘the South Para’ is taken under the consideration and scrutinized to discover all things. Future research on other parts is left open for future researchers with warm welcome.

## **Silimpur**

Silimpur is a historical village near Bogra district town in Bangladesh. Many are either startled or simper or frown, even simply after hearing the name ‘Silimpur’. What the name is! They think or say. It’s not unusual to think so, since the name itself bears a magical touch. Imagine that there lived a king, either kind or cruel, who knows, with his all pomp and power. His name was **Selim Khan**. People say, in British Period, the English couldn’t utter Selim; they called him Silum. The area, he reigned, was called Silimpur. His palace is ruined, but people feel proud to say that once there was a palace here, though they have little knowledge about how it really looked like and what it symbolized for.

An excellent historical story or myth is wrapped with the name of King Selim. It is said that the king once dreamt of a dream, which he considered as an omen going to happen after his mother's death. He saw that a fox was snatching his mother's dead body digging the grave. While his mother really died, he remembered it and made a special grave on a small hillock in the jungle, around which a canal was dug, so that either a fox or a dog couldn't reach the grave. But unfortunately, on that night, a cunning fox came on that hillock by swimming water and went away taking the dead body in the same way he dreamt. Whether the story is true or false has not been proven, but a grave is found surrounded by a canal in the Taher Ali Munsii Para of Silimpur. The place is called by the locals as *Berar Bari* (the house in the enclosure). The jungle, once abounded with foxes, is now clear by cutting wood indiscriminately.



Picture of “Berar Bari” (The House in the Enclosure), in which the graveyard of the mother of King Selim lies. (Photo taken by the writer)

This historical village now consists of five *Paras*, viz., the North, the South, the West, the Middle and Taher Ali Munsii Para. This discussion relates to the South Para exclusively.

## The South

People have tendency to regroup in factions. So, the South has been divided by an imaginary line into two parts –*Talukdar* and *Gara Paras*. Gara is a slang dialect, descended from the word *Gari*, which means marsh.



Picture of South Para in Silimpur (photo taken by the writer)

### Talukdars and their ancestors

The historical hero of this area, whose name was Shah Mamud Mondol, along with his brother, came at first in Silimpur from where people exactly don't know, but from a place not so near or so far from Bogra, and settled his habitation in *Uchubari* of *Gara Para*. Information has not been found about right when he came to this area. But analyzing various sources, it can be sure that he came in the Mughal Period, i.e., at the end of 1700 A.D. and the title of his name proves that either he or his forefather was a foreign Muslim. He made his new house, some yards away from *Uchubari*, where started to live permanently and gave birth to 5 sons, namely,

1. Gul Mamud
2. Ash Mamud
3. Het Mamud
4. Lepu Mondol
5. Khepu Mondol (died in 1886)

Who, when and how at first became the owner of *taluks* (landed estates), information on these is not certainly found. So, this is an assumption that Gul Mamud and Khepu mondol became the permanent owner of many *Taluks* under the East India Company to collect revenue and taxes. From then, they and their descendants were and are called Talukdars, and the particular area, they lived in the south zone of Silimpur, is still called Talukdar Para. Their huge lands stood in the villages of Silimpur, Malgram, Koigari, Kanar, Durgapur, Shitolai, Joysara etc. Their other brothers remained economically backward, and later unfortunately their descendants worked as laborers in the land of the rich.

## **Material Culture**

### **Housing**

Like in other areas of Bangladesh, the most houses in Silimpur were of two or four slanting roofs of tin before. But walls were constructed with loamy soil, which were locally available. Many rooms belonged to each house, which proved that joint family system was prevalent in those days. There were two big yards inside and outside, as far as we know, for the convenience of paddy processing and an enclosure, made of mud. Also, every house had a cattle-shed outside and an adherent garden, full of fruit trees, such as mango, jack-fruit, black berry, litchi, guava, date, palm, *Boroi*, *Sofeda* (a kind of melon), the rose-apple, *kamranga* (a sour fruit), olive etc.

The present picture is different though. Many brick-built houses, which are the same style as between a hut and a flat, are standing now, because still the roofs are of tin. Yards have become smaller inside and no yard outside. Those flourishing gardens have already gone, though a few are still alive with under-nourishment and thought to be occupied by new buildings in the future.

## Utensils

In 1950, people used earthen and aluminium vessels as well as bell-metallic dishes and pots. Earthen pitchers were used in almost every house to keep water cool. When guests came, they served with porcelains.

Now utensils of mainly aluminium, glass and melamine is favorite to all.

## Clothing

In 1950, wealthy men put on *Lungi* and guernsey at home, but the poor sauntered here and there in the village without any dress for the upper body. While going outside, they chose either shirt or *Punjabi* and either *Lungi* or *Dhuti*. Once *dhuti* was very popular among the villagers. Sometimes they preferred trousers, but were not used to full-pant.

Married women generally wore Sari without blouse and petticoat at home. Neither wore they *Burqua* for covering. But while going outside their own village, they certainly rode on the bullock-cart, which they enclosed with a Sari, so that no other unknown man could peep inside.

At present, girls, even women too, choose *Salwar Kamij-Urna* of the latest fashions, prevalent in the near town; yet the older ones still cling to Sari. Men haven't changed much about their home dresses, but full-pant is a must for going to office or any other place. But *dhuti* is no more in use now.

## Food Habit

*Talukdars* were the owners of all land around, where so much rice was produced that it overflowed the barn. Trees were overburdened with so much fruits that excessive ones weltered in the ground, but none thought to steal those. Many ponds and a famous canal called '*Barshi*', which was dug probably near 1870 and fell in the river Karatoa in the east, abounded with fishes of many kinds. In Every house, people domesticated cows, goats and poultry.

Because of all those food available, most of the villagers liked rice and fish, when meat was rarely cooked. Milk was also included in every day life. Women made various Pithas (cakes) in winter, namely, *dudh-pitha*, *vapa*, *puli*, *kusli*, *pati-sapta*, *mutha*, *tal-pitha*, *jhal pitha* etc.

In Sab-I-Barat, women prepared bread from corn and distributed to every house. Also, *Khichuri* was prepared in the Muharam and distributed in the same way. Sweetmeats like *Khira*, *Payesh*, vermicelli, etc. were cooked in various ceremonies.

At present, many cultivable lands are divided peace-meal into nuclear families, and also ownership has gone to the others, who live in towns. Ponds have been filled up deliberately with soil and the canal is dying losing its flow and depth. Gardens are going to be extinct. All these have brought changes greatly in food habit. People rather like to buy beef than fish, since it is less cheap. Women still like to make pithas, but not so many as did before, since they don't get rice abundantly. Niggardliness of trees in their production of fruits deprives new generation. Yet, people try to keep the tradition in making bread and *khichuri* in religious ceremonies.

## **Non-material Culture**

### **Marriage**

In the past, while children became juvenile, parents selected their partners through negotiation with other families. Generally, age range for girls in marriage was 13-14 and for boys 15-16. The appearance and age of males did get less importance than their economic condition, but for females their beauty and tenderness were under the first consideration. This is why it was seen that a 13 years old girl was married to a man of 35 years, which occurred usually. One man generally kept 2-3 wives at a time, before which society never made any hindrance.

Now it is noticeable, since the rate of education has increased enough, the attitudes of people have dramatically changed. Both males and females get married between 25 and 30 ages. Even some men take life-partners after being too much aged. Romantic love is still thought to be an offence, though there are exceptions too.

### **Marriage Ceremonies**

In the past, marriage ceremonies had last long for seven days. Those days, earthen walls and floor were decorated with artistic designs. Women sang various native songs and danced through whole day. Guests coming from around and far, who took part also in the revelry, were served with various home-made foods. In the day of fetching bride from her father's house to the father-in-law's, the bridegroom, escorted by the following, ridden on many bullock-carts, went on with pomp and grandeur. It was known that Md. Nojibor Rahman Talukdar, descendant of Md. Khepu Mahmud, went to marry his bride riding on the elephant and behind him was a series of 100 bullock-carts, the biggest and pompous wedding show in his time.

Now all those revelries are limited within three days. Before the day of marriage ceremony, both the guardians of bride and groom arrange another ceremony named *Gaye Halood* separately in their own houses. On that day, men and women of the family and the village surround the bride or groom, who sits on a seat. They one by one besmear him or her, particularly in the face, hands and feet, with pasted turmeric, mixed with grass, mustard seed and henna. In this time, women sing many songs all regarding marriage and dance haphazardly. Later all, who are present, sprinkle over one another red color to rejoice the marriage. This custom has been wholly taken from Hindu's Holi Festival. At last, he/she has to take a bath to wash turmeric. It is believed that this turmeric will make him or her fairer to attract each other at the first night of their living together.

Next day, groom wears trouser, *sherwani* (a long coat) and turban. Then he, along with his people, goes to the bride's house by a rented bus with a suitcase full of cosmetics, clothes, mainly beautiful saris and ornaments. Bride adorns herself as brightly as possible usually with a red sari and gold ornaments. At the end of all casual customs, parents give the hands of their daughter to their son-in-law.

Immediately after that day, another festival is arranged in the husband's house named Bou-vat. Guests are invited to join the feast as well as to see bride and groom with a presentation as a mark of blessing.

### **Family and Social Relations**

In joint family, grand-father, father, uncles and elder son took all important decision. They dominated women in every sphere of life. Women didn't know what freedom really meant. Though they worked hard at home all day long, husbands beat them for trifle matters. Since most girls were illiterate or little literate, they thought it right to obey husbands blindly as the society taught them for men's benefit.

Now, since people have been educated enough and nuclear families are rising irresistibly, the situation has somewhat changed, but not so much changed as expected to be. Still man, the head of the family, dominates all, even his sons too. Though men have given importance to women to some extent, their attitudes to dominate them are still present like before. Wives are still the toys of men's wish. Their major duties are bound by men in cooking and rearing children.

In the society, the wealthy and the aristocrat families influence upon the lower class. The older ones think that their orders are inviolable, that the juniors have to carry out without any question, and the juniors use to obey them. However, in these days, the older are beginning to give importance to the opinions of the junior too.

### **Class and profession**

In 1950, three classes in the society of the south para existed on the basis of land, as —

1. Land owners or the village aristocrats.
2. Tenant farmers.
3. Landless laborers.<sup>9</sup>

In that time, the above two classes exceeded the third, but presently the third is increasing, which is a reason of growing anxiety.

Also, now the village society is stratified on the basis of land-ownership, wealth, education, job and life-style.<sup>10</sup> According to these bases, the society of the south para of Silimpur can be divided into two classes, as,

1. The middle class
2. The lower class

The middle class includes various professionals, such as, businessmen, bank managers and other officers, agricultural officers, school and college teachers, press-owners, etc. The lower class covers petty shopkeepers, small businessmen, landless laborers working in mills and factories of the towns, and in others' land etc. This change has been possible for growing number of educated people. Further great changes will come, since some of the new generations are studying in engineering and general universities.

### **Social and Religious Ceremonies and Festivals**

Once, *Nobanno* was a joyous festival in Bengali month '*agrahayan*' in autumn. In this month, the first harvest of paddy-crop assured the supply of main food 'rice' for the whole year for those people, fully dependent on agriculture. So, they used to celebrate this new harvest by cooking a sweet food named *Khir*, mixed of new rice, milk, molasses, and spices. Before taking this food, it was prohibited to start eating new rice, which was considered as an inauspicious doing.

Now-a-days, harvest seasons are no more limited only to two months and have increased its frequency in 3 to 4 times with the invention of new type of rice named 'Iri'. This is why, people don't care for this festival of their ancestors strictly.

*Bhadro masher tera* was a very popular ceremony among the villagers. A newly married girl shifted from his husband's house to the father's for 13 days from 1<sup>st</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> Bhadro of Bengali month in autumn. Then her father gave Sari to his daughter and guernsey, *lungi*, *gamchha* (a napkin), shirt, pant etc. to his son-in-law. A basket full of 13 kinds of fruits and other foods, such as milk, meat fish, *payesh*, *pithas* (cakes) etc. were sent from her father's house to the father-in-law's. Also, her husband, along with his close relatives, was invited for a feast. Now this is going to be abolished because of the rarity of locally available fruits and degrading economic condition of people.

Other ceremonies, like *Mukhe Bhat*, *Akika*, *Khatna*, were in custom in the past and are still celebrated with as grandiosely as one's economic condition allows. While a baby reaches in the age of six months, it becomes able to eat solid food like rice. Parents help it start eating this food through a celebration called, '*mukhe bhat*'. On this day, parents feed their baby the first rice in the presence of the invited in a happy environment. When this baby gets five or six years old, they arrange another ceremony known as '*Akika*'. They sacrifice two goats for a boy and one goat for a girl, by which they give him or her a good Islamic name. While this boy grows up to 5-6 years old, they expend for another ceremony '*Khatna*'. On this day, a *maulabi* cuts the extended large skin of the boy's sexual organ and after that there is a feast for the guests.

Also new ones, by imitating those of towns, are being introduced in the society of village, for example, the marriage anniversary.

The inhabitants give importance to religious festivals the way their forefathers did and are transmitting those beliefs into the new generation through socialization. In Muharram and Shab-I-Meraj, they arrange for an Islamic gathering named '*Milad*', led by the religious teacher called mawlana. He delivers speech about the ideal life of Hazrat Mummad (sm.) and recites verses from the Quran and others listen silently sitting on the ground before him. At the end, he, with all the present, prays to God for the wellbeing of all. Then they distribute among the participators a special dish '*jhal polao*', a mixer of rice and beef, which some men prepare in the day, but all bear and share the expense of it thinking that it is purely a divine task. Next to Shab-I-Barat, women cook bread of corn and *halua* (a kind of porridge), which they distribute among their relatives in the day and pray the whole night to Allah. In Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Ajha, *polao*, *Kurma*, beef and vermicelli are prepared, with which guests are served heartily.

### **Social Values and Religious Beliefs**

Though men married 2-3 women at a time in the past, they thought it an offence to be involved in illegal sexual relation with girls other than their wives. Married women had religious restriction on appearing before men, with whom they had no blood relation. People tried to abide by Islamic rules and regulations. Generally they didn't lie. Stealing or any kind of economic corruption was out of sense, since most of the people were economically solvent and their demands of life were also very limited.

With the changing society of near towns and by the influence of western culture, social values and ethics of this area are not only changing fast, but also degrading with a great tension. Though women have still social restrictions on making love before marriage, men are being involved in illegal sexual thrills under or before the eyes of the society; yet none censures them orally, but whispering goes on behind. People don't mind to

be rich by corruption, rather the society bows to him since his pocket is heavy with money.

Strangely they are very sensitive to religious matters. None can tolerate any sarcastic remark or question on any religious beliefs or customs. They consider the disobedience to religious ceremonies as a greater offence than the deviation from ethics. Even if a debauchee prays his five times prayers, people think, whatever he is in his individual life, after all a pious and better than a skeptic or idol-worshiper.

They believe in fate blindly, since religion says, man's fortune is pre-determined by Allah and he can't change his lot. This belief has made them idle and they make their fate responsible for all their sufferings, even regarding economic condition.

Once, the surroundings and soiled ways were full of jungles and thickets. People were intimidated and quivered with the imaginable presence of jins and evil spirits. Everyone claimed that he had seen someone in the shape of shadow or anything else. They thought every shadow as spiritual beings. They also believed that a spiritual being could incarnate not only any human body, but also any other inferior animal like black cat, dog, crow, owl and so on.

There is a banyan tree of about 200 years old in the middle of some cultivable land in the south-west corner of Talukdar para and. This tree has less leaves and branches on the top, because of which it is called '*nera bot gas*' (shaved banyan tree), and the area it occupies is called as '*nera bot tola*'. There are many superstitious beliefs connecting this tree because of its unique shape. All have a firm belief about the living of some old jins on the top, who should not be disturbed and if disturbed, it will be harmful for anyone. So, none cut the tree or never imagine of doing it. Some claim that

they have seen fire to be kindled on the top and very soon vanished, which are the evidences of their presence.

According to Islam, Jin, made of fire, is another kind of creature. Like human beings, some of them are good and try to help people to come out from troubles. Some are bad ones, who always take chance to knock down people in the pits of dangers. Inhabitants of the south para believe that jin inhabits on the top of tamarind, joist, *boroi*, banyan trees etc. If someone goes under these trees at noon, dusk, and the midnight, he will be attacked by that invisible creature, which man has less power to cope with. Especially if a female then goes there with unkempt hair, or if the end of her slovenly worn Sari swings or welters in the ground carelessly, and if a male either urinates or leaves stool at the log of those trees, jin living there will be disturbed. Then he will attack the man or woman by entering his/her body like a ray. Actually, jin incarnates that person's body and the person losing sense is directed wholly by that spiritual body. In the beginning of the attack, he/she will fall in an incurable disease or behaves like a lunatic. As much as time goes on, he/she will be nearer to death. No specialist doctor can postpone his inevitable death. In the past, people in their every disease tried to run to *pir*, *fakir* and mawlana. Now though they are somewhat conscious about going to doctors, they still try to hang with *pir*, *fakir* and mawlana and are still very sure about the inhabitation of jins on trees.

### **Beliefs regarding Dreams**

Villagers believe that the dreams dreamt at the end of night will come true in future <sup>11</sup>

There are some dreams, which have special and similar meanings to all. Some examples are here----

\*If one dreams that one of his teeth has fallen, it indicates the coming death of either father or mother.

\*If someone sees that his dead parents have come to take him with them to their divine habitation, it will be a sign of his/her coming death in the near future.

\*If a pregnant woman dreams of the full moon, it will mean that she is going to have a son with bright color and a beautiful appearance.

### **Prejudices**

People of this area were and are very prejudiced. Some of their old ideas have now changed too.

In the fiftieth decade of twentieth century, people split trees with knives or choppers in the night of the new moon. They believed that by this act, the main branch of trees would be strong and wide.

In the night of worship of Hindu Goddess Kali, people in every house beat by a stick on the *Kula*, a winnowing platter, and said, 'Hey mosquitoes! Go to the grazing ground of buffaloes.' They thought that hearing this word, mosquitoes would leave the area forever.

They thought, one should go for a journey outside only on Wednesday and all other days of the week were considered as dangerous. There was a verse regarding this matter.

Going to the east is prohibited on Monday and Saturday.

Tuesday will kill you by throwing to the ground.

Stepping your foot on the head of Wednesday

You may go wherever you wish.

In the night of lunar eclipse, one stalk of the jute-plant was entered into the ground and let stand still. By the side of it, the pregnant woman of the family stood without bending her body at all and keeping her backbone as straight

as the stalk, as long as the eclipse passed away. It was undertaken in mind that it would keep the woman and her baby healthy and help safe delivery.

The above prejudices are not maintained now. But there are some still in vogue, which are as follows-----

If a crow flies over one's head by cawing harshly, it is assumed that the death news of any close relative will come soon.

If the owl or a dog screeches or howls with melancholy sound, it is presumed that the animal is crying foreseeing the coming death of someone living in that area.

### **Recreation**

Boys of the old period played mainly *ha-du-du*, *dang-guli*, marble and football in the afternoon for sole amusement. Girls, whose age was up to 12, could participate with boys in plays like *ga-dol*, *chi-buri*, *kanamachi* etc. Women went to each other's house and gossiped. Older women liked to tell stories of spiritual beings and fairy tales with the tenders when got leisure time and sang folksongs too.

Now, the young play cricket in lieu of football and the sad thing is that the coming generation will forget the old popular game. Still women have no other way to find recreation than futile gossip on petty housekeeping. Men have made a *machan* (a platform) under a mango tree in the west of this para. Some of them gather there daily in the afternoon after coming from offices or other working places. Sometimes, if the platform is found uncomfortable for more people's sitting, they sit on the clear plot in the harvested land near the *machan*. Men then chat mainly on religious and political issues of national and international spheres.

Almost every year an annual sporting is arranged chiefly for the school-going boys and girls. Also, reservation for men and women are kept in some particular games.

Another interesting and remarkable progress is that, people unanimously take decision on going for a trip in various significant places of the country in winter every year. They rent a bus, by which all, irrespective of age and sex, go for taking the new experience of life. This has become the major source of amusement for all. This unique endeavor is still not seen in any village of the country, though common in towns and cities. The villagers of Silimpur have been testing the experiences of trips for 20 years. The endeavor was first undertaken by the young of that time 20 years back.

### **At The End**

The society of the south para is identified as a mixture of closed and open society. Human beings learn culture by living in the society, since culture is a matter of learning.<sup>12</sup>

The old people transfer to the young the old beliefs, ideas, rules and regulations, customs, ceremonies etc. by socialization. Since the village is very near to Bogra town, its society is absorbing new and modern ideas, beliefs, customs and all others the culture contains. So, the culture of this area has much changed today since 1950 and is changing with the modern world, though slowly.

**(Date: 2 September 2006)**

\*About the author: **Kamrun Nahar** is doing her M.Phil research in “Political Violence in Bangladesh”. She’s also a published author of two Bangla novels.

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\*\* Face to face interviews are taken with Md. Abul Bashar Ferdous (45), Akhtar Ferdousi Jahan (58), Mrs. Akhtar Nur Jahan Begum Hena (65), Mrs. Khayrun Nesa (55) and Md. Atikur Rahman (25), etc., all are descendants of Talukdars.

\* Talukdar Khepu Mondol died in 1886. His descendents have found this information and written down. Information of other Talukdars regarding their time of birth or death can't be found.

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Biriani = Scented rice cooked with meat and spices.

Dang-guli = A game played with a stick and smallest balls.

Dhuti = A long white cloth, used by men for the lower body.

Kurma = Mutton cooked with sweet, curd and spices.

Maulabi = A Mohammedan scholar or teacher.

Payesh = A sweetmeat cooked with rice, milk and spices.

Pir, Fakir = Islamic sage

Polao = Scented rice cooked with spices.

Punjabi = A long shirt up to the knee.

Sari = Generally 6 yards long cloth, women wear wrapping the body.