



Bengali Little Magazines of Tripura in the 19th and 20th Centuries: A Field Study

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DOI : [https://doi.org/ 10.5281/zenodo.19500002](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19500002)

ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

Accepted: 22-03-2026

Published: 10-04-2026

Keywords:

Little Megazine, Tripura, 19th Century, 20th Century, Bengali Literature, publishing.

ABSTRACT

Magazine is a special part of literature. In Bengal, the term 'little magazine' was first used by Buddhadev Bose in his article 'Sahitya Patra' published in the May issue of 'Desh' paper. Maharaja Birchandra Manikya (1862-1896) reformed the administrative Bengali language and created a conducive environment for literary practice. Birchandra Manikya himself was a prominent poet and lover of literature. 19th century Tripura's Bengali little magazine name 'Rabi', 'Barshiki', etc. Bengali Little Magazines added a new dimension to the literature of the 20th century. The Bengali little magazines published in the 20th century are 'Dhumketu' edited by Maharaj Kumar Mahendra Debbarma, 'Arun' by Pandit Chandradaya Bhattacharya, 'Ravi' edited by Satya Ranjan Bose, 'Sarathi' edited by Harendra Kishore Debbarman, 'Jonaki' by Pijush Raut, 'Gandhar' by Kalyanbrata Chakraborty, 'Nandimukh' by Swapan Sengupta, 'Anirban' by Dulal Chakraborty, 'Pounami' by Nilip Podder, 'Ahuti' by Nakul Roy, 'Jhinuk' by Bimalendra Chakraborty, 'Nandanik' by Shuvesh Chowdhury, 'Saikat' by Manas Pal, 'Srote' by Govinda Dhar, etc. Although it is time-consuming in terms of time, it can be said that the more the little magazine opens the open window, the more our Bengali literature will be awakened.

Full Analysis:-

Magazine is a special part of literature. According to historical sources, the first person to identify 'periodical paper' as a magazine is Edward Kay, whose editorship 'Gentleman's Magazine' was published



in London in 1731. The term 'little magazine' was first used in Europe in the last decade of the eighteenth century. Basically, the dignity and inspiration of the individual are the main conditions of this literature. This new literary consciousness later created a chapter of little magazines. Little magazines are closely related to the literature and culture of the Bengali language. In Bengal, the term 'little magazine' was first used by Buddhadev Bose in his article 'Sahitya Patra' published in the May issue of 'Desh' paper.

19th century Tripura's Bengali little magazine:-

The modernity of the state of Tripura began during the reign of Maharaja Birchandra Manikya (1862-1896). He reformed the administrative Bengali language and created a conducive environment for literary practice. He was the first to treat Rabindranath Tagore with the title of 'poet'. Birchandra Manikya himself was a prominent poet and lover of literature. I can assume that when magazines were started all over the country, some literary papers were published in this state in the form of magazines. Due to the lack of authentic information from the royal period, I could not reach a correct conclusion. In 1876, 'Barshiki' edited by Radharaman Ghosh was probably the first literary magazine published from Tripura. Later, in 1890, during the reign of Radhakishore Manikya, a handwritten magazine called 'Panchapandit' was published under his own efforts.

At that time, the literary practice of Tripura was mainly centered on the kingdom. And the medium of this literary practice was small literary magazines. At that time, poet Birchandra Manikya's poems like 'Akash Kusum' (1886), 'Uchhas' (1886), 'Sri Sri Jhulan Geeti' (1892), 'Hori' (1892) etc. were published. On the one hand, the expression of Vaishnavism can be seen in his poems, on the other hand, the deep sorrow of love can also be identified. It can be said that as a result of Tripura's close contact with Rabindranath Tagore, the poets of Tripura gained the mentality to come out of the circle of Vaishnavism devotional songs and enter the world of modern lyric poetry. The journey of little magazines started in Europe and America from the first half of the 19th century. And in the Western model, little magazines in the true sense emerged in Bengal with the publication of the magazine 'Sabujpatra' (1914) edited by Pramath Chowdhury. At that time, little magazines in the true sense also started to be published in Tripura. But before that, little magazines were published in Tripura only as literary magazines. Since then, magazines have been published in the state of Tripura for a long time.

20th century Tripura's Bengali little magazine:-

With time, society and literature changed. Although the Bengali Little Magazine originated in Tripura in the 19th century, it spread in the 20th century. New writers chose Little Magazines as a medium to



express their talent. And so in the 20th century, Little Magazines with different names and diverse tastes were published from different parts of Tripura. These magazines published the social, political, and cultural thoughts of the time. New writers did not get the opportunity to publish themselves in any major literary magazine. Some, through individual efforts and some through joint efforts, tried to bring their literature to the public through Little Magazines. In this way, Bengali Little Magazines added a new dimension to the literature of the 20th century.

The Bengali little magazines published in the 20th century are 'Dhumketu' edited by Maharaj Kumar Mahendra Debbarma, 'Arun' by Pandit Chandradaya Bhattacharya, 'Ravi' edited by Satya Ranjan Bose, 'Sarathi' edited by Harendra Kishore Debbarman, 'Jonaki' by Pijush Raut, 'Gandhar' by Kalyanbrata Chakraborty, 'Nandimukh' by Swapan Sengupta, 'Anirban' by Dulal Chakraborty, 'Pounami' by Nilip Podder, 'Ahuti' by Nakul Roy, 'Jhinuk' by Bimalendra Chakraborty, 'Nandanik' by Shuvesh Chowdhury, 'Saikat' by Manas Pal, 'Srote' by Govinda Dhar, etc.

Rabi Patrika = An unforgettable event in the history of Bengali literary practice in Tripura in the early 20th century. The magazine is 'Rabi Patrika'. Outside the royal circle, a meeting was held in the hall of Umakanta Academy in the year 1329, under the chairmanship of Maharaj Kumar Brajendra Kishore Debbarma, at which the 'Kishore Sahitya Samaj' was established. The purpose of this literary society was to practice and improve the Bengali language and literature. And to achieve this purpose, 'Rabi' magazine was published in the year 1924. The editor was Satya Ranjan Bose. Although it was initially decided to publish it as a monthly magazine, 'Rabi' later emerged as a quarterly magazine. Those whose writings enriched 'Rabi' are - Vishwakabi Rabindranath Tagore, Dwijendranath Tagore, Buddhadev Bose, Shital Chandra Chakraborty, Kaliprasanna Sen, Priyangvada Devi, Satya Ranjan Bose, Narendra Kishore Debbarma, Nabadwip Chandra Debbarma and others. But once upon a time, due to financial difficulties, the literary magazine 'Rabi' was closed after six years of publication due to the loss of Raj Anukulla. Nevertheless, the importance of 'Rabi' in creating an environment for the practice of Bengali literature in Tripura and in inspiring new writers is undeniable.

Jonaki = Pijush Raut came to Kailashahar from Barak for his studies. After coming to Kailashahar, Pijush Raut and a few of his friends started a weekly literary chat, which resulted in the debut of 'Jonaki' in May 1963. 'Jonaki' edited by Pijush Raut was Tripura's first poetry magazine. Other contributors were Manik Chakraborty, Bimal Dev, Sudhirendra Narayan Chakraborty and Arvind Bhattacharya. One of the main objectives of publishing 'Jonaki' was to harmonize Tripura and Barak with the mainstream of Bengali literature, Kolkata literature. 'Jonaki' published the writings of Shakti Chatterjee, Sunil



Gangopadhyay, Sarat Mukherjee, Tarapad Roy, among many poets of Kolkata. The poems of many poets of Tripura at that time 'Jonaki' was published in the magazine. 'Jonaki' was published regularly at first, but later it was published irregularly according to the characteristics of a little magazine. The magazine was closed after publishing a total of 16 issues. The main reason for the closure of the magazine was financial crisis. Although it was only a short time ago, 'Jonaki' has immense importance in the little magazine world of Tripura.

Nandimukh = In the 70s, some notable poetry collections such as 'Jonaki', 'Gandhar', 'Prantik' etc. were published in literary magazines. These literary magazines inspired student Swapan Sengupta to publish a magazine, and from that inspiration, he published the poetry collection 'Nandimukh'. The magazine 'Nandimukh' was named by the advisor and predecessor of this magazine, Dr. Kartik Lahiri. The first issue of the magazine was published in April 1966. The writers of Tripura who wrote in this magazine were Pradeep Chowdhury, Shankha Pallab Aditya Pijush Raut, Salil Krishna Debbarmann, Anil kumar Nath etc. 'Nandimukh' was a reliable representative of Bengali poetry of that time. Due to the disinterest in any kind of movement, the poems of the established poets of the Hungry, Anti-Enemy, and Destruction Poetry Movements and 'Nandimukh' were also published. 'Nandimukh' regularly published articles by Nakul Roy, Shankha Pallab Aditya, Pijush Raut, etc. After 27 years of continuous publication, 'Nandimukh' became irregular and eventually closed. The main reason behind the closure of this magazine was the jealousy and contempt of a section of readers. Moreover, when the editor Swapan Sengupta became busy with his career, the magazine was no longer published.

Pounami = In the early 80s of the 20th century, Nilip Podder, a literary enthusiast, and his friends Ratul, Partha, Dilip, Jhutan, Anjan, and Rabi started discussing about the literary magazine 'Patranu' in Kolkata. The discussion lasted until late afternoon. Suddenly, in the middle of the night, the discussion meeting stopped and they decided to publish a magazine called 'Pounami'. To implement that decision, the magazine 'Pounami' was published on May 1, 1970. Their main condition was 'Bhalo Lekha Chhai' for the magazine. This magazine was born in the 70s when the Naxalite movement was in full swing in the state of Tripura. The economic problem was so severe that it was not possible to distribute this magazine with money. They chose handwritten posters as the medium of promotion. They had to face various difficulties while distributing the posters in different places in Agartala city. Thus began the first journey of the magazine. After its publication, the price of the magazine was four annas. The magazine was continuously published by Rambabu's 'Santan' press. Since the selling price of the magazine was low, everyone used to buy it with interest. After a year, the magazine was transformed from a mini magazine into a full-fledged literary magazine in a meeting. In this way, 'Pounami' has gradually become unique in



the literary world of Tripura. The writers of the magazine are - Manas Debbarman, Kalipada Chakraborty, Kalyanbrata Chakraborty, Salilkrishna Debbarman, Siraj Uddin Ahmed, Shankhapallab Aditta, Bijankrishna Chowdhury and others. The publication, which started in May, started to be regular and irregular, towards the end not a single issue was published in the year. The magazine, once known as Pounami, is now known as 'Pounami Prakashna'.

Shabdik = The first issue was published in 1976. The magazine was edited by Sanjit Banik and Pulak Das. Initially, it was a quarterly magazine. After Pulak Das left, Sanjit Banik and Partha Pratim Chakraborty edited it together. Initially, the magazine was published continuously for 7-8 years. Then, for various reasons, it has been published in two issues a year. The magazine was first published from Udaipur. Sanjit Banik had a desire to publish a magazine since his college days, for which he published the magazine 'Shabdik' after completing his college studies. The name was chosen from this idea that those who study words are Shabdik. 'Shabdik' magazine has been published for forty years. Initially, it was published in four issues a year, then gradually it is now published in two issues a year. Some of the notable writers of 'Shabdik' magazine are - Nakul Roy, Rabindra Sarkar, Sanjit Banik, Sutapa Roy, Pijush Raut, etc. This magazine started its journey in the 80s and is still published today. It is equally appreciated by lovers.

Jhinuk = In the eighties of the 20th century, 'Jhinuk' (1977 Baishakh) was first published under the editorship of Bimalendra Chakraborty. The purpose of writing the magazine was that at that time, there was no space for writing by children in various literary magazines, only writing by adults was published in one or two magazines. The main purpose of the editor was to give more importance to children in the world of literature and to give space to the writing of those who write at the school level today in this literary magazine. If children start writing from a young age, their interest and love for writing will increase as they grow up. With this purpose in mind, the editor started publishing 'Jhinuk' magazine. When the magazine was started, the press was not as advanced as it is now. At that time, pictures on linocards were printed along with the texts. Those who helped in this regard were Prashanta Sengupta, Apresh Pal, Krishnadhan Acharya, Nirmal Chakraborty, etc. When the magazine was started, there were writings by children as well as writings by friends. At that time, adults did not write much about children, very rarely. As a result, the development of children's literature was not as expected. At that time, letters were written to outside writers to write in this literary magazine, among them were Khagendranath Mitra, Manindra Roy, Subhash Mukherjee, Mahasweta Devi, Leela Majumdar, Nalini Das, Saral Dey and other's.



The artists who have appeared on the cover of this literary magazine are Nirmal Chakraborty, Purnendu Karti, Prakash Karmakar, Chandi Lahiri, Bimalendra Chakraborty, Subhashish Talapatra and others. Every year, an issue was published which was given free of cost. One issue was only about children, written by children only. This literary magazine had issues on various topics. Such as Charlie Chaplin, Book Fair, Satyajit Ray, Rabindranath Tagore, Environment, Children, Bengali and Kokbarak, many old writings etc. Even now, a few special issues are printed, Child's Rain, Child's School etc. The West Bengal government has honored 'Jhinuk' magazine for its public reputation, that is, for good paper, from the 'Shishu Academy'. Those whose writings have enriched 'Jhinuk', among them are - Nakul Roy, Bimal Chowdhury, Kalipada Chakraborty, Deepak Dev, Santosh Roy. Kishore Ranjan Dey, Debabrata Dev, Meenakshi Sen, Aparajit Roy, Chuni Das, Bhabani Prasad Majumdar, Sunirmal Chakraborty, Nabanita Debsen, Bimalendra Chakraborty, Swapan Sengupta, Sanchita Bhattacharya and others. This magazine is published two or three issues every year. The magazine was first published in 1984. The magazine is still being published continuously.

Nandanik = 'Nandanik' is an important magazine edited by 20th century poet Shuvesh Chowdhury. Among those who published magazines in the 90s were Nakul Roy, Rameshwar Bhattacharya, Ajita Chowdhury, Santosh Roy, Kritivas Chakraborty, etc. Their published papers moved Shuvesh Chowdhury. Finally, at the end of 1986, the 'Nandanik' magazine was created under the inspiration of writer Santosh Roy, and the first issue was published in January 1987. This issue published Kalyanbrata Chakraborty's 'Pipasa Firiye Dao', Nakul Roy's 'Koed Ghare', Swapan Sengupta's 'Bela Bhoomi', etc. A special issue of the 'Nandanik' magazine was published in July 1992. This special issue is a document of Bengali poetry in Tripura from 1950-1990 and the poems and essays of those who were associated with the poetry practice of Tripura during that period were printed. After a few days of publication, the magazine 'Nandanik' was closed due to various adversities. Although a total of 6 issues were published, its importance as a little magazine in Tripura cannot be denied.

Saikat = A notable Bengali little magazine by literature-hungry Manas Pal is 'Saikat'. Its first issue was published in January 1976. Due to financial difficulties, Saikat was printed on the reverse side of the English newspaper printed at the Agartala P. T. I office. The name 'Saikat' was written by the writer Nakul Roy. After the publication of 'Saikat' magazine, Manas Pal himself took the responsibility of delivering it to the homes of famous people of that time, accompanied by Nakul Roy. Bijan Krishna Chowdhury gave the magazine a penny as its first price. The one-year anniversary issue of Saikat contained a supplement on 'Literary Disappointment', after which 'Saikat' magazine was gradually published. In 1978, Saikat was published as the Sundarya issue, bearing the imprint of conflict. Nakul



Roy drew the cover in linocut for this issue. In 1980, on the birthday of Jibananda Das, another issue of 'Saikat' was published. After that, it went into a coma for 22 long years. 'Saikat', however, remained in the minds of the readers, and so finally, in the courtyard of Shaheed Govinda Teli's house in Batashwara village in Dharmanagar, the mantra uttered by the heart-wrenching soul of martyred father Hari Charan Teli was recited. 'Saikat' was republished in February 2003. The shape has changed, there is no more cover. The last issue commemorating the three late poets Jaya Goala, Meenakshi Sen and Haribhushan Paul was published in January 2015. The latest issue received so far is the forty-year anniversary issue in January 2016. Starting in the 20th century, Saikat has created a stir in the Tripura Little Magazine world till now. 'Saikat' is still equally appreciated by the readers today.

Srote = At present, the notable Bengali little magazine of Tripura is 'Srote'. It was launched as a quarterly magazine from Ratachhara, North Tripura, under the editorship of Govinda Dhar on the birthday of Vidyasagar in September 1995. At the time of its launch, the magazine was named 'Srotaswini', but in 1998 its name was changed to Srot and it is still being published. Currently, the magazine is in its 28th year and its 68th-69th issue has been published. So far, notable issues of the magazine are 'Himadri Dev Sammanna Sonkhya', 'Ujjwal udhhar Sonkhya', 'Manipuri Sahityer Bangla Anubaad Sonkhya', 'Tripurar pratham kabitapatra : Jonaki Samagra' etc. In 2003, it was published irregularly from Kailashahar for a few days, then regularly from Halaimura in Kumarghat, the price from the first issue to the 9th issue was five rupees. Among the works published in the first issue were Bhanulal Dutt's essay 'Bidrohikabi Nazrul', Govinda Dhar's poem 'Ek Mutho Bhat', Utsha Das' poem 'Chalar Pothe', Mohammad Alal Uddin's poem 'Ekti Taka' etc. In this way, poems, stories, articles, novels were published in each issue of the stream. The magazine's first cover was published in the tenth issue of its sixth year, i.e. in October-December 1999, and an index was added to this issue. The price changed from five rupees to twenty rupees. Basically, the magazine's direction changed from this issue. It has been following a completely modern trend since then. Govinda Dhar published the magazine on his own initiative. He compared 'Srote' with Parijat and called it a cloning of khumpui. Many could not accept the name 'Srote' changed from 'Srotaswini'. But still he maintained his own identity.

The 20th century is a glorious chapter in the history of Tripura's Bengali Little Magazine. Basically, it was in this century that a new spirit of literary practice could be observed in Tripura. As a result, various literary magazines and little magazines were published. And through all these magazines and magazines, Bengali literature in Tripura has progressed a lot on the path of prosperity. Literary awards are now given in the names of all the writers who wrote in various little magazines in Tripura in in this century.



Therefore, the discussion of Bengali literature in Tripura is not possible without little magazines and the 20th century.

Little magazines are an indispensable part of Bengali literature. Through them, new groups of writers are associated with literature. Magazines die, but a new writer is born from them. Just as light-hearted writings are published in these magazines, excellent literature is also published, and the magazines of Tripura are also included in this stage. The journey of magazines in this state has been since the middle of the nineteenth century, that is, since the Rajya period. Although writers were not associated with little magazines in the beginning, little magazines later attracted the minds of writers. Little magazines dominated the literary world of Tripura mainly in the twentieth century. While doing the project, we found many literary magazines, through these literary magazines we also came to know about the works of writers, poets, and essayists of that time. Due to financial difficulties and management problems, many magazines stopped their operations. Even today, little magazines are published from different parts of Tripura. These magazines have different sections, such as institution-centered, worship-centered, women-centered, children-centered, etc. Literary magazines are published. Basically, they are considered as a mirror of the real society. In this way, the new flag that the little magazine raises. Although it is time-consuming in terms of time, it can be said that the more the little magazine opens the open window, the more our Bengali literature will be awakened.

Acknowledgement of gratitude:-

1. Banik Sanjit, Editor of 'Shabdik', Madhyabanmalipur, Agartala.
2. Chakraborty Bimalendra, Editor 'Jhinuk': Ramnagar 7, Agartala.
3. Chowdhury Shuvesh, Editor 'Anthakaran', G. B. 79 Tila, Agartala.
4. Dhar Govinda, Editor, 'Srot', Halai Mura, Kumar Ghat.
5. Pal Manas, Editor 'Saikat', Jail Ashram Road, Agartala.
6. Poddar Nilip, Editor 'Pounami', Paradise Chowmuhoni, Agartala.
7. Raut Pijush, Editor of 'Jonaki', Kailashahar.
8. Sengupta Swapan, Editor of 'Nandanika', Agartala.

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