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HERITAGE EXPLORER

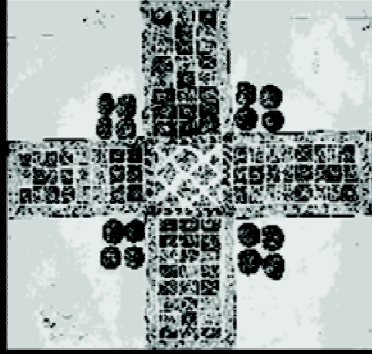
LET KNOWLEDGE COME FROM ALL THE SIDES

A Monthly News Bulletin

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India's
contribution
to the rest of
the world



Chess (Shataranjan or AshtaPada) was invented
in India



Courtesy : <http://www.slideshare.net/jitendraadhikari/indias-contribution-to-the-world>

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International Mother Language Day

On last 21st February, 2018, I had the privilege of attending a function organised to celebrate the International Mother Language Day. I had an idea of the purport and relevance of the day but lacked the in-depth knowledge as to why the UNESCO decided to dedicate this day to mother's language. I learnt that the day is dedicated to the memory of four students of Dhaka University in erstwhile East Pakistan who were killed during a protest rally aimed at upholding the right to use Bengali against the imposition of Urdu by West Pakistan.

Love for ones mother tongue is a universal phenomenon. A child's first communication with its mother is always in a language that is spoken by its mother. The richness of the language or the number of its users is of no consequence. Slowly when the child grows up and takes to mixing with its brethren in the community, its attachment to his mother's language solidifies. Then, when the time comes to take up learning things for the life ahead, the mother tongue comes to its aid, for it feels more comfortable to transact in its mothers tongue. Today, it is universally accepted that to foster holistic development of an individual, learners must have access to education in their mother tongue to begin with. It is through the mastery of the first language or mother tongue that the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy are acquired. Local languages, especially minority and indigenous, transmit cultures, values and traditional knowledge, which play an important role in promoting sustainable futures.

We all know that Languages are the most powerful instruments of preserving and developing tangible and intangible heritage of a community. When languages fade, the rich tapestry of cultural diversity also fades. So long

as the languages are alive and kicking, the culture and tradition of that community remain vibrant. Today many of our minor languages are dying, not because the community does not like them anymore but because their language does not help them in their economic upliftment. It is a well known fact that in order to survive, cultures gravitate toward the language of power, especially when it represents economic opportunities. There is another reason why the languages of minor groups of people are fading and dying. As a matter of political strategy, the dominant communities always try to squeeze out small languages to erase the linguistic identity of the people they wish to subjugate and rule. There is another reason why some of the languages and dialects practiced by small communities are being suffocated to extinction. The most plausible reason is perhaps the number game, an integral part of democratic system of politics. The dominant community wants to establish themselves as a majority community to maintain their hold on power. For them their mother tongue should be the uncontested and unrivalled language, others may go to hell.

We must understand that the languages never divide people. It rather unites people by helping them understand each other, inspiring them to work together for a common goal. Our policy should be of admiration for other's language. We may take the case of North East. Here hundreds of communities are living together for centuries, each practicing their own languages and dialects. The tribal communities of North East are living example of linguistic co-existence, understanding and tolerance. None can cite a single example of fight over language amongst them. Let us emulate them and help other languages to grow unhindered.

Editor

Savitribai Phule – The Pioneer of Woman Emancipation

E. Rajesh Pathak

Born on 3rd January 1831 and married to a great social revolutionary Jyotiba Phule, Savitribai Phule was the first Indian lady of British India to initiate different activities for social emancipation of women in Maharashtra. Among the most pioneering works she did with her husband was the establishment of a school in Pune for the low-caste girls in 1848. She also discharged the role of lady teacher for the girls in the school ignoring the caste restriction then followed by the traditional Indian society. In course of time Savitribai succeeded in setting up altogether 18 such schools.

With the active cooperation of Vishnu Shastri Bapat, a renowned personality of contemporary Maharashtra, Jyotiba launched first ever movement for widow-remarriage. Finally on 25th July 1856 the remarriage of widows was made legal. The Phule couple then started touring the countryside to generate public support in favor of the practice of widow-remarriage. At the same time Savitribai and Jyotiba started campaigning for condemning the practice of infanticide and as a proof of their commitment to the cause started a child-care home in their own house. They even adopted the son of a Brahmin widow and named him Yashwant. They brought him up like their own son. The couple also took another unprecedentedly bold step of persuading the barbers to boycott tonsuring the heads of widows, the ill conceived practice imposed then especially on the Brahmin women.

In those days the practice of using Haldi-kumkum by married women was common amongst the upper caste women only. She felt that the practice is a good one to be followed by all for the sake of restoring the dignity of married women as well as to help maintain the social harmony and domestic happiness. Savitribai therefore started organizing “Get-together”s of the women folk to popularize the custom of using Haldi-kumkum by all married women as a mark of their happy and long married life. Her unique effort brought a sea change in the society and a big number of women of all denominations from so called lower castes, who were invited to these “Get-togethers” for the first time, started adopting the practice with a

gusto. In this revolutionary initiative of Savitribai, mother of “Sarvjanik kaka” [Ganesh Vasudev Joshi] worked shoulder to shoulder with her.

Savitribai also raised her voice of protest against the restriction imposed on the untouchables to consume water from the public source. To mitigate the injustice, she and her supporters and followers therefore made necessary arrangements of water for them through the water tanks of their own houses.

Many of the glorious initiatives of Savitribai and her associates attracted the attention of the enlightened people of the society. Taking inspiration from her, many of the friends and other enlightened personalities of upper-castes like Sakharam Yashwant Pranjay, Sadashiv Govind Sathe, Sadashiv Gowanday, to name a few, extended their contributions and full hearted support to their works. The local Brahmins provided the place for the schools to be run by them in Budhwar Peth in Pune. The Brahmins also took up the responsibility of teaching the students there.

Wherever Savitribai noticed exploitation or injustice, she acted unflinchingly for its rectification. She was a crusader and fought relentlessly against child-marriage to Sati-system, abortion, prostitution, participation of women in obscene dance programmes, discrimination against women in regard to inheritance and all other social evils that came to her notice. She continued her mission of social-emancipation for long forty years.

After her husband Jyotiba’s demise, on the persuasion of Bhai Parmanand—one of the founders of Hindu Mahasabha— Baroda king made the arrangement from the Baroda Govt. to provide monetary-relief to Savitribai and her son, Yashwant. When grown up Yashwant became a doctor, he opened a hospital in Pune in 1897 to treat the needy and the poor. Savitribai herself would lovingly attend each patient. So deeply she engaged herself in serving the patients of the hospital that one day she herself became a patient and left for her heavenly above on 10th March 1897 leaving her legacy of self sacrifice and service to humanity. ■

Oral Traditions of North-East

Prof Sujit K Ghosh

There are two very strong arguments that there is no seamless, uninterrupted Indian tradition and if there is one, who inherits it as we are divided on language, caste, community and religious lines. Such arguments are advanced by most of the liberal thinkers as they follow the way the West has constructed India and its cultural tradition. The West applies in its inquiries a binary approach and compares all through the western eye. India as we know is a diverse country and plural in cultural practices. However, these diversities come to some alliance to be called as Indian culture/Indian tradition. It is not a religion but a culture that is Bharatiyata and its mainstay is Hinduism. S. N. Balgangadhar, a Professor of Comparative Science of Religions at Ghent University, Belgium puts the same idea in his article 'To Follow Our Forefathers: Nature of Tradition'. He says that Hinduism is the only religion that teaches you to 'keep faith with your fathers, who kept faith with their forefathers, and were blessed in so doing... The only reason to practise a tradition is the fact that what is practised is a tradition, and that is what it means to be a Hindu'. He then goes on to give an account of his growing up years learning from his mother, visiting temples, reading Puranas but how he never felt that all those things that he internalized or studied have made him spiritual or religious.

The account that Balgangadhar gives is clear that tradition in its form and formation gets internalized and in Hinduism, there is nothing doctrinaire like Christianity or Islam so that one follows a path as given by a holy book. Without access to institutional agency in the form of a priest and a maulana to interpret the holy book, one does not qualify as a faithful. On the contrary, in Hinduism, there is not a single holy book. One need not go to a priest yet follow one's traditional practices. Faith therefore is not the prerogative of a single person or a group. Any Indian/Hindu oral cultural traditions receive continuity as they are passed on from the older to the younger generations. We know that culture is dynamic and change is inevitable. However, the core of any culture that is

tradition may get modified in its practice but does not essentially change. Most of our traditions are orally transmitted and their practices are guided by our elders. Same goes for tribal societies anywhere in the country. Each aspect of their being and becoming comes from orally transmitted tradition.

The Semitic religions overemphasize words of the Lord as inscribed in the holy books. The faithful should follow them or else they would invite the wrath of the priests/maulavis. The point here is the difference between the written and the oral culture. The Indian great books have originated orally and continued to be retold over and over for millennia, before they were scripted and reproduced in different languages. This tradition is strongly rooted in a memory culture putting the highest premium on human mind and its capacity to remember. Swami Vivekananda has defined the words *Risias mantradrastha*, meaning the one who sees thoughts. The thoughts of the composers of the Vedas have created a strong oral tradition which is connected to memory called *Smruti*. *Smruti* is essentially *sruti*, what is heard is remembered. Therefore, the oral culture in India is undisputedly a very refined mechanism that aligns thought, memory and reproduction in which all apparatuses of the whole human mind come to play. Pronunciation, grammar and other generic principles have enunciated this oral culture. Even today, all our rituals are orally performed, and there is hardly any use of written texts except in special occasions. Therefore, to follow our forefathers means that in India, culture is both embodied and embedded.

The Indian oral tradition was threatened by the colonialists as they were in favour of everything written and documented following the Christian practice. From this emerged a new trend in which written documents became the standard evidence for truth. New institutions were created and technologies adopted to empower the written/print culture over the oral. It was possible because of the

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The God of all Souls

Dr Maina Sarma

Shiva, the ultimate benefactor, is known as the dispeller of darkness, because, as the point of light he is the ultimate source of knowledge, and is also called Swayambhu meaning, one who manifests on his own. He is the incorporeal supreme, self-luminous, radiant, conscientious point of blissful light.

Shiva lingam is the only symbol on earth, which is universally accepted and recognised. If we go through the facts that are available to us from the historical excavations, ancient religious literature, tradition and folklore, we can find that Shiva is the supreme soul being above and beyond the boundaries of caste, creed and religion. Relics of Shiva worship have been found in Egypt, Greece, Rome and many other countries. All ancient and modern faiths in the world believe in the form of god as light. Christians believe that Moses had a divine vision of a flame-like image of god. They call him 'Jehovah'. Christ as well as Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, said that god is one and he is light. Earthen lamp in temples and wax candles in the churches are lighted to symbolize god's form. In Japan, there is a sect, the members of which concentrate on an ovalshaped stone called Chinkon Seki which means the peace-giver. Ruins in Cambodia show that the worship of Shiva linga prevailed in the ancient time also. There is ample archaeological evidence to show that the ancient Egyptians, Phoenicians, Arabs, Greeks, American Indians, and Indonesians worshipped the oval stone. Shiva's worship is the oldest worship known to man and the concept of god as the form of light is universal in character.

Many people confuse the deity Shankar with Shiva. But the depiction and the attributes of the two make it clear that they are different entities. Shankar is a deity having a human form and he is always shown sitting in a meditative state often before a Shivling. It is clear that he is meditating on an entity higher than him. Shankar is one of the creations of the creator Shiva. He is bestowed with the task of destruction of the world when it reaches a stage of extreme degradation at the end of the Kaliyuga. It is because

Shiva and Shankar are two different entities that it is called Shivaratri, not Shankar-ratri.

Shiva is known as the Trikaldarsi or the one who knows the three aspects of time. Since he has knowledge of the three worlds – the corporeal, the subtle, and the incorporeal world – the abode of all souls, and the supreme soul himself, he is called Triloknath. He is called the Trimurti because he is the creator of the three subtle deities – Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswar through whom he performs the three tasks of creation of a new world, its sustenance and destruction of the vicious old world.

The celebration of Shivaratri marks the incarnation of god Shiva in this world. This implies that he is not omnipresent. The word 'yoga' means union, link or connection between two distinct entities namely, the soul and the supreme soul. Yoga would become meaningless if god were to be omnipresent. Most people do consider that god is the supreme father and yet it is simultaneously believed that he is present everywhere.

God Shiva performs the triple functions of creation, sustenance and destruction at the confluence or the end of Kaliyuga and beginning of Satyayuga because this is the period of rejuvenation or renewal of the old world in the whole time cycle. This is the time when god incarnates in a human whom he names Brahma. Brahma is the corporeal medium of the incorporeal Shiva through whom he imparts spiritual knowledge to the souls to conquer the vices. The fasting by devotees on Shivaratri is a commemoration of this forsaking of vices.

Today, when unrighteousness and immorality have spread all over the world, the supreme soul Shiva who is known also as Yogeswar (the lord of meditation) is imparting the godly message of 'Be yogi and be pure' by teaching true spiritual knowledge and Raj Yoga through the spiritual children of Brahma. It is his promise recorded in the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita and there are prophesies recorded in other scriptures, that when there is utter irreligiousness,

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Youthquake in Tribal Context

Dr Ranga Ranjan Das

Few month backs, the term 'youthquake', came to my notice for the first time. It was utilized as an important tool for an election rally of a foreign country. The term is quite recent and one wonders whether it is included in the latest edition of the New Oxford Dictionary. The contextual utility of the term asserts new perspectives relating to youth being decisive factor in this era. Power, energy, motivation, assertion of youth can be compared with 'earthquake', vibration of earth surface as well as vibration in youth in terms of reasonable, energetic thought. The present global scenario witnesses the emergence of youth power in multidimensional perspectives. Not only in sports, but technology, creative literature, print or electronic media, entrepreneurship, trade and commerce, economy, international relations, entertainment and fashion industries, social networking, law, health, education, defence, politics and leadership in every field, the presence of youth power is immensely felt. The planners and policy makers have already started framing plans, programmes and policies keeping the 'youth' across the world in their minds. In Indian perspectives, there is good news for all concerned. The population census of 2011 has projected an interesting statistics. India is the second largest populous country across the globe. Out of the total population, the representation of the age group that covers the youth group is the dominant one, as one of important key aspect of the census. This pool of youth group is the asset of a country, if properly utilized and channelized, providing adequate scope and space to transform into human resource. The government has greater duties and responsibilities to nurture and guide them not only for a better future of their individual pursuits, rather, to realise the dream of skilled and developed India. It is happy to note that the present government both at the center and state, have left no stone unturned to utilize the power of youth in appropriate direction by planning and implementing a large number of schemes for youth empowerment.

In the present circumstances, our prime concern is to focus on the youth of the tribal society of north

east. They are exposed to the modern situation, modern trends and changing perspectives. Their function and role is relatively of more significance and are not limited to microscopic dimensions at individual and family level, rather, at a macro level that has an overwhelming effect to the entire society. They have to act as a key player, motivator, guiding factor and lead their societies from the front. The tribal societies of this region have a glorious socio-cultural heritage passed orally across the generations. Oral transmission, perhaps, suffers from the possibility of losing many of the significant cultural traits of intangible nature, as revealed in many of the studies. Traditional knowledge that is in the domain of traditional knowledge holders has the chance of losing its significance after one's departure. Language also becomes extinct at the death of the last survivor of a particular community. There are so many languages & dialects that have become extinct from the earth due to death of the last speaker. Even in north east region, the central institute of Indian languages have identified so many languages that are considered as endangered languages through their empirical efforts. The dialect of Pati Rabha tribe is lost due to prolonged contact with the neighbouring Assamese community. Few days back, a young boy, pursuing integrated B.A LL.B course in Jaipur came to me for exposure in research work as internship under my institute. He belongs to a Deuri community, a scheduled tribe of Assam. The interaction with him revealed certain important information in the changing circumstances and the role of youth in the upliftment process of tribal society. His father is a central government employee and is frequently transferred from one place to another. He was educated in convent run boarding schools. He never got a chance to be exposed to his own dialect in the family environment. He had to interact with me in English, as he can speak neither Deuri nor Assamese. I, bring this example as I have seen representatives of new generation of tribal communities, born and brought up in the urban areas, is adept in speaking in the language and dialect of the locality or area of his

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Arunachal Pradesh Seeks World Heritage Tag

The Arunachal Pradesh government has raised the pitch for inclusion of the Thembang Dzong, a fortified village in West Kameng district and Apatani cultural landscape in Ziro Valley under Lower Subansiri district of the state in UNESCO's World Heritage list. These two sites have already made it to the tentative list of UNESCO and are now vying for a place in the final list of world heritage sites. Extensive repair and conservation works in the two sites have already been taken up by the Arunachal Government to ensure that they meet all criteria for inclusion in the final list

The fortified village of Thembang Dzong in West Kameng district is spread across 3.2 acres and has two gates - one at the north and one at the south. "The department has repaired the dilapidated exit gate and the staircases." The Dzong (fort), surrounding an ancient and historical structures, is a traditional settlement of the Monpa tribe. None of the settlers individually own any property inside the village, which is run in a Panchayati system. The Research Department report informed that the Ornamental features, including traditional wood carvings, paintings and manuscripts, have been etched on the walls of the Dzong.

The Apatani cultural landscape of Ziro Valley has also made it to the tentative list for the Unique Agricultural Techniques practiced by members of the community. The farmers here rear fish in paddy fields and grow millet on the bunds (partitions) between the rice plots. "There is efficient conservation of crucial watersheds, ensuring perennial streams flowing into the valley to meet the needs of the people." The tribe has elected a village council, called Bulyan, for maintenance of law and order.

In April 2014, 22 sites in the country, including the ones in Arunachal Pradesh were included in the tentative heritage list of UNESCO. The sites made it to the list after extensive competition

among the states. However, the final list is yet to be notified by the UN agency charged with the responsibility of screening of the heritage sites.

As per standards, every decade, the UN member nations are supposed to suggest revisions to the heritage list. Research Director Mr. Batem Pertin said that to ensure that the two Arunachal site finds a place in the Heritage list, the department had been preparing dossiers for the two sites with due care. He further confirmed that "The dossiers are almost complete and we are taking utmost care to make them error free so that the proposal does not get rejected."

Former Research Director Mr. Tage Tada, who was also a consultant in the project, said the dossiers are nearing completion and mapping of the sites is underway. He said that "The state Government had in 2011 declared Thembang Dzong as a living archaeological site in the state," He further added that the state assembly had also passed an Act last year for protection and preservation of all the archaeological sites and monuments in the state.

The Assistant Director of the Research Department of Arunachal Pradesh, Mr. Bulton Dutta, said the UNESCO has prescribed 10 criteria for inclusion in its heritage list out of which a site must fulfill at least two norms.

The Nodal Officer of the site, Mr. Pura Koji informed that the Thembang site fulfills three of the criteria prescribed for the purpose. It exhibits unique cultural integration, bears an exceptional testimony to the living cultural traditions of the Monpa tribe and follows ancient rites, rituals and a vernacular knowledge building system.

He further stated that Thembang is also an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement and and man-nature relationship in the mighty Himalayas, where the Monpa tribe has been preserving their natural and cultural resources for posterity. ■

“North East Tribal Youth Leadership Orientation Camp” – A Report

The first ever “North East Level Youth Orientation Camp” organized under the aegis of the Heritage Foundation was inaugurated today, the 1st February, 2018 at Scholar’s Institute of Technology & Management, Garchuk, Guwahati, by Sri Sarbananda Sonowal, the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Assam in the august presence of several dignitaries and more than 250 male and female youths representing 100 tribal communities inhabiting the North Eastern region of our motherland.

The camp was organised with the sole purpose of promoting social leadership by bringing to the fore the latent man-management talents of the tribal youths of N.E. Region and to empower them to be able to protect their age-old traditions and culture from the onslaught of alien influence as well as to inspire them to propagate the uniqueness of their culture and tradition.

The inaugural session, which commenced at 3.00 P.M., was graced by Sri Jaleswar Brahma, Chairman of Heritage Foundation, Sri Atul Jog, Assistant Organising Secretary of Akhil Bharatiya Vanabashi Kalyan Ashram, Sri Binod Kumar Jain, Secretary, Heritage Foundation, Sri Sudip Lodh, Chairman of Scholar’s Institute of Technology & Management, Sri Phuleswar Basumatary, Camp In-charge and Dr. Rahul Deuri, Joint Camp In-charge on the dais and Sri Mahabir Prasad Mundra, Sri Lanki Phangso, Sri Sushil Saraf, Sri Jiten Borgiary, Sri Shrikrishna Bhide and Sri Romen Chakraborty amongst the audience.

The inaugural ceremony commenced with lighting of the ceremonial lamp by Sri Sarbananda Sonowal, the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Assam assisted by other dignitaries present on the dais followed by a traditional prayer sung by the delegates from Arunachal Pradesh. After introduction of the dignitaries on the dais, Sri Jaleswar Brahma felicitated the Hon’ble Chief Minister and other dignitaries.

Sri Jaleswar Brahma, Chairman of the Heritage Foundation welcomed the Chief Minister and other dignitaries including the Camp participants and expressed his hope that the camp will achieve its objectives with their blessings, help and support. After

the Welcome Address, Sri Atul Jog, Assistant Organizing Secretary of Akhil Bharatiya Vanabashi Kalyan Ashram addressed the gathering to enlighten them about the aims and objectives of the camp. He stated that there are more than 150 tribal communities in the North East who speak different languages, observe different festivals but are always united and live together peacefully. He congratulated the Heritage foundation for the timely effort of organizing the camp aimed at motivating the tribal youths to protect their traditions, customs and beliefs. A patriotic song sung by Kumari Rakhi Kathar, which followed Sri Jog’s speech, was very enchanting and created an ambiance of patriotic fervor amongst the audience.

In his inaugural address the Hon’ble Chief Minister expressed his satisfaction for the initiatives taken by the Heritage Foundation and stressed that our Prime Minister Modiji has, from the day he assumed power, given top priority for the development of NE, which he termed as a new engine for development. Modiji has initiated the skill development initiative for our youth and given top priority on infrastructure building to promote employment. The Chief Minister urged the youth taking part in the Camp to take advantage of the initiatives of the Prime Minister. Closing his address the Chief Minister advised them to educate themselves, be honest and sincere, take active part in sports and cultural activities to project the colorful culture of the tribal communities of the North East.

The highlight of the camp that continued for next three days, and concluded on 5th February, 2018, was the sessions encompassing various subjects and unique topics. They were Pearls of Wisdom- Deshbhakti (Patriotism), Yog , Pranayam, Mudra, Concept of - Dharma, Faith, Religion & Culture, The inherent unifying threads of diverse cultures, Contribution of Janjatis of N.E. in Freedom fight and Dharma Raksha, North East- Glory, Aggression and solutions, Aggressions on Janjatis of North East, Indigenous Faith Movement, Basic Leadership Qualities, How to analyze social clashes, How to run a Registered social organization or NGO, Media management and relations etc. The resource persons

who conducted these sessions should be complemented for their success in attracting the undivided attention of the participants which was amply proved by 0% drop-out of youths from the camp. It is necessary to mention the names of the following most notable and learned resource persons who contributed immensely for the success of the camp. They are - Swami Debu Maharaj, RKM, Guwahati, Shri K.S.P.V. Pawan Kumar IFS, Shri Hridesh Mishra, IFS, Shri Vinay Joshi, Director ICRR, Shri Jarpum Gamlin, Editor of The Eastern Sentinel, Shri Atulji Jog, Shri Ulhasji Kulkarni, Zonal Org. Secy. RSS, NE, Shri Ramesh Babu, Akhil Bharatiya Shradha Jagaran Pramukh,, Shri Shrikrishna Bhide, Brahmacharini Ananya Chaitanya,

Acharya, Chinmay Mission , Guwahati Centre, Shri Latsam Khimun, Secretary General, Rangfraa Faith Promotion Society , Arunachal Pradesh, Shri Praveen Dabholkar, Joint General Secretary, Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari, Shri Kedarji Kulkarni, State Organising Secretary Kalyan Ashram Manipur, Shri Tajom Tasung, Shri Sandeep Kavishwar, Shri Ruzing Bellai, Amik Matai Foundation, Arunachal Pradesh, Yog a Teachers Shri Parashmoni Borah & Kumari Mrudula Lahakar, ABVKA, Shri Ruzing Bellai, Amik Matai Foundation, Arunachal Pradesh etc. All in all, it must be admitted that the camp was grand success and the organisers deserve to be praised. ■

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Youthquake in Tribal Context

residence. Consequently, they cannot speak in their native dialect at all. The situation is different for those who are residing at their native places throughout. They are fluent in their own dialect. But their role in the context of their society might be different in the present scenario. They should take the responsibility to look after the traditional assets of their society, their proper documentation, preservation, dissemination at the global context. The outer world should have a right conception about the facts and circumstances associated with origin, history, migration, settlement, components of tangible and intangible heritage. Unique customs with a sense of proper and adequate dimensions should be encouraged to retain, or discouraged if not suitable in the scientific thought. Factors and forces causing changes in fruitful and utilitarian perspectives should be identified and channelized in appropriate dimensions.

However, a kind of enthusiasm is observed among the youth of the region. A kind of positive energy and vibration is found among them. It can be guided and directed through value based education. There are possibilities of misguiding them due to tense socio-politico scenario. The guiding principles of spirituality, leadership, morality, loyalty, duties and responsibilities towards own society, community, native land, positive thinking, fostering respect, love, peace, amity and brotherhood for each other, perhaps the key motivating factor. Keeping these factors in

mind, the Heritage Foundation has organized a camp in last February in Guwahati for the tribal youth of the region to inculcate leadership and social responsibility among them. That was a nice platform to bring together the youth from different tribal background to learn the skills of leadership and qualities of a responsible citizen of the country. Home is the primary learning centre where one gone through the entire process of enculturation, however, it the process of socialization where one can get the perfection. Quality and value based education, is not only effective to learn the survival strategies, rather, it guide to develop logical and rational thinking to find out the ways of upliftment and development of your immediate society. We believe for the best. The youth of tribal society of this region, like others, has also make a close nexus of the recent development of technologies. They are updating themselves. The youth quake, that is emerging aspects in the globalized world, has an applicability in its' real sense among the tribes of this region. Their parents and forefather are looking at them not only as bearer of traditions rather to lead the entire society in a positive frame of mind. The region demands their contribution in one way or the other. Earth quake always brings devastation, destruction, ruins, chaos, youth quake in the positive direction, in tribal society of the north east may bring, fete, upliftment, direction, motivation, prosperity, growth, development, unity, peace, prosperity, transforming and defining the space as heavenly abode. ■

Tribe: Derogatory Appellations

Dr Satish Kr Ganjoo* & Reshma Rekhung**

(Continued from previous issue)

It is apparent that “the list is simply absurd; and the criteria do not simply match those enlisted. Sri Jaganath Pathy’s lamentation is most appropriate. “Not only that over 90 percent of the enlisted groups do not subscribe to these features, but also the criteria [itself] convey the blatant prejudice of the dominant people.” There is no alternative but to agree with the point which they argued regarding the definition or criteria listed in the Constitution. People belonging to the Tribal communities themselves feel revulsion to associate or claim that they belong to the community. In India when somebody says, “I belong to a tribal community”, then you know what the reaction of the other person will be, “OMG! So people in your tribe must be wearing leaves... Or they must be naked... Or they must be head-hunters? Such type of expression from the one who has hardly heard or known about the tribal communities is really obnoxious. Other instances can be seen when somebody asks a person who comes from a tribal community, “Do you belong to a Tribe?” “No, no, I belong to a ‘Tribal community’, not exactly to a tribe.” This is how people with less knowledge about tribe react in India. But it is not the fault of our people because when we trace the origin of negative concept of the term ‘Tribe’, it was the British who had instilled the negative connotation to this word. They wanted to rule us, convert us, and also wanted to divide us in the name of “Tribe”. The discourse created by the Westerners regarding the social group whom they categorized as “Tribe” was the policy to rule us by telling rest of the world that these groups were “uncivilized”, “barbarians” and “primitive”. The government too accepted their definition of tribe in India. That’s the reason why the government has published the list of the tribes in such an absurd way. The British has stunned our calibre ‘to think’, ‘to analyse’, and ‘to view the world with our own insight’. Why cannot we think, view and speak in positive way? The nomenclature “Tribe” itself is not a problem but the criteria listed to define the terms are derogatory.

Dr. Ravi Shanker Prasad and Dr. Pramod Kumar Sinha argued that the “terms, “Tribe” and “Tribal” are pejorative terms denoting the primitive stage - therefore, a temporary stage-in human evolution or development.” It will be perhaps justified to support the above arguments that the list in the “Scheduled Tribe” defining criteria is misleading as Tribals can be called as ethnic group who is “backward” economically, but not culturally. The Tribals are not in “a temporary stage-in human evolution or development” rather in a stage of social development. (state’s infrastructure, digitalization, strong economic source, industrialization, urbanization etc). The opposite term for primitive, uncivilized, and barbarians are evolved, civilized and cultured. When we define the “civilized” or “civilization”, the westerners define it in terms of more material progression. But in India “Sanskriti” .i.e. culture itself is the result of an individual’s civilization. “Samskara” (the impressions and dispositions that develop and accumulate deep inside a person, from perception, inference, choices, preparation, practice, interactions with others, thoughts, intent, willful actions and such karma. These manifests as habits, behaviour, tendencies, psychological predispositions and dispositions) of an individual leads to the creation of “Sanskriti” of a society. The culture itself explains the progress of human being. The tribal people in India inherit the richest culture and heritage even though they are economically backward. They possess high Traditional knowledge ever found in the world. Research has proved their high intelligence and skill of “Traditional knowledge” in certain fields of life. For examples, the Ziro valley, one of the valleys located at lower Subansiri district inhabited by Apatani tribe of Arunachal Pradesh, was declared by UNESCO as the World Heritage Site for its extremely high productivity by using Traditional knowledge of Wet Rice Land Cultivation along with fish harvesting from the same cultivated land. “Almost every household in the Apatani valley maintains a kitchen

garden where beans, chillies, tobacco, cucumber, taro, ginger, potato, tomato and coarse type of spinach are grown. The Apatani households also rear semi-domesticated mithun, pigs and fowls, which provide them with an essential protein supplement.” In tribal communities there are herbalists who have high knowledge to recognize some herbs and composition of the herbal medicine to cure various ailments. The so called civilized society has to study medical courses for several years in order to cure the disease of patient. But the same disease can be cured through traditional knowledge of herbs by the “Amchis” of Ladakh, who acquire the skill of healing through oral tradition, observation and practice within a very short time. Various Researches have shown that many diseases in the remote areas like Ladakh are cured by the traditional medical practitioners as the area lacks modern medical facilities. 68 medicinal plants used for the treatment of Kidney and Urinary disorders could be officially identified through the Amchis of the Tribal communities of Ladakh. These herbs are combined with some exotic species such as *Bergenia ligulata*, *Cinnamomum Zeylanicum*, *Crocus Sativus*, *Elettaria Cardamomum* etc. 51 plant species belonging to 25 families and 43 genera were found to be useful against different gynaecological disorders of women. 12 common categories of gynaecological disorder were found to be treated by traditional herbalist by total of eight formulations in Leh and Kargil Districts by using cold desert herbs. The exotic plants such as *Crocus Sativus* L, *Embllica Officinalis* Gaerntn *Opunica granatum* L, *Santalum Album* L, *Terminalia belerica* Roxb, *Terminalia chebula* Retz and *Zingiber Officinale* Roscoe are used for the composition of the herbal medicine. Tribal people in North East have a well established Village council and Administrative system with Chief or Village Head. Some of the councils are the best example of ‘Democratic system’. Each of the tribes has rich and colourful festivals with worship of the Harvest Goddesses. They weave their own traditional dress. They have a hierarchical social system. They make beautiful and refined handicrafts out of bamboos and cane such as baskets, carpets, round umbrella like hat without handle, huge cylinder shaped storage baskets which can hold at least 10 quintals of grains are made by fine weaving without any hole and bottom closed to keep the grains safe. They can curve cups and

spoons out of bamboos in a unique way. Only pine leaves, bamboo and wood are used to build their dwelling houses in different patterns, mostly in North East India. Such an advanced traditional knowledge is in possession of the so called tribal people. It will very difficult to find any other societies which possesses such varieties of skill and talents to meet their day to day requirements. They are self sufficient and strictly adhere to the system of sustainable development.

Now let’s try to analyse the “Tribe” or “Tribal” communities according to the meaning or definition of being “civilized” as per western philosophy. The civilization of a society means fulfilling the following criteria:

1. Sedentism - Staying at one place instead of moving from one place to another.
2. Urban development - State’s infrastructure such as health, amenities, proper housing, highways, transportation, communication, electricity.
3. Social stratification - Social class: Upper, Middle and Lower (Social differentiation – Socio-Economic strata based upon occupation, income, with, social status, power etc of a group people in a society; moreover the social stratum can be divided on the basis of kinship, clan, tribe or caste or all the four).
4. Writing system - not necessarily script rather it may be hieroglyphs.
5. Domination over the natural environment.
6. Societal dependence upon farming and expansionism.
7. Domestication of both humans and other organisms
8. Hierarchical social class-Ruling elites and subordinate urban and rural population
9. Civilization concentrates power, extending human control over the rest of the nature including other human beings
10. State formation- territorially bounded political unit with centralized institutions.
11. Historically a civilization was a so called “advance” culture in contrast to more primitive cultures.

As the majority population of the tribes live in eight states of North East, citing example from North

Eastern states of India will most appropriately serve the purpose. Since Mahabharata period (200 B.C.E) tribal people finds a mention in Vedic literature, tantric, Puranas and epics known as Kiratas (Bodos, Kacharias and Chutiyas). After the arrival of Ahom in 12th century A.D along with some Tai groups such as Tangsa, Tutsa, Nocte, Singphos and Khamtis, TRIBAL people of Assam and some population of Arunachal has never moved to new places for settlement. They have settled there and till now migration to another place has never been recorded in the history of the tribes. Meitei people in Manipur settled in the valley during the reign of Meidingu Khagemba since 1606 they are the majority tribal community in Manipur till date. Garo, according to oral tradition first migrated to Garo hills from Tibet around 400 BC under the leadership of Jappa Jalimpa, crossing the Brahmaputra River and tentatively settling in the valley. Latter they finally settled in Garo Hills (East-West Garo Hills). Since then they are the major tribal group of Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura and Assam. Scholarly research recorded Khasi migration into India in the first millennium BCE. The Monpas of Arunachal Pradesh is known to have existed in the present habitation since 500 BC - 600 AD under the kingdom known as Lhomon or Monyul which was latter divided into 32 districts of which Tawang, Kameng and Southern Tibet are also included. Monpa Tribe is the major tribe found in Western Arunachal Pradesh now. Almost all the tribal communities have settled since ancient times. Other than urban development, social stratification is also found in tribal groups of North East India on the basis of kinship, clans and Tribe. More than 26 major tribes of Arunachal Pradesh are subdivided into more than 110 sub tribes. Tangsa tribe is sub divided into more than 17 sub tribes. One sub tribe for example Muklom, which is a sub-tribe of Tangsa tribe is further sub divided into more than 15 clans. Ahom kingdom that ruled for around 600 years used to have their Tai script, Manipuri tribe Meitei (Manipuri) script is the official language of Manipur until Bengali script replaced it. Rest of the states have also their own dialects of Sino-Tibetan language group recognized as dialects with respective language codes by UNESCO categorized under endangered Languages. Regarding the point 5,6,7,8, and 11, it has already been discussed about the

Traditional knowledge of the tribes. As it is explained that civilizations concentrates power, in ancient times most of the tribes used to conduct warfare for the conquest of region and to extend power. Most of the tribal history shows the warfare between different tribes which popularly came to be known as “headhunting”. Till pre-colonial times all the seven states of North East region was called as NEFA with its headquarter in Assam but later on 26th January 1954 it was divided into six frontier divisions. Later in the year 1963 ‘Nagaland’, in 1975 ‘Sikkim’, in 1972 ‘Meghalaya’ and ‘Tripura’, in 1987 Arunachal and Mizoram attained statehood. At present they have their own legislative assemblies and also M.Ps in Parliament. In this way all these Tribal population of North East which consist more than 55% of Tribal population of India fulfils the criteria of the definition of the acronyms “civilized” and “civilization” by western philosophy. Only two criteria i.e. writing system and urban development are not completely established. Therefore the acronym “uncivilized”, “primitive” and “savage” is not at all appropriate to Tribes living in India, mostly North Eastern Tribes. Regarding the criteria “hunting and food gathering” enlisted as criteria of tribe can not necessarily be criteria for identifying a tribe. British in colonial India used to hunt wild animals. It was their favorite pastime. But we do not call them as “tribe”.

Tribes are not a specific or separate identity from the rest of the people but they are also a part and parcel of Indian population. Their specific identities were created by British to rule over them by portraying them as less civilized. They are neither uncivilized or less civilized but are socially, economically and politically backward than rest of the people living in urban areas. They were unable to avail the facilities of education and civic lifestyle due to which they adopted their own traditional ways of sustenance and agrarian way of life. They were innocent due to lack of access to the outside world of fraud and corruption. Thus they became the perfect class of humanity for the British to be portrayed as a separate community. ■

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Different Session on NE Tribal Youth Leadership Orientation Camp

रुडयार्ड किपलिंग ने
उन्हें अपनी कल्पनाओं
में बसाया और अब हम
उन्हें बसा रहे हैं,
एक नए परिवेश में।



“ओएनजीसी बारासिंघा (ईस्टर्न स्वैम्प डीअर) संरक्षण परियोजना”
एक दुर्लभ प्रजाति को विलुप्त होने से बचाने के लिए
ओएनजीसी की सीएसआर पहल।

असम में पाये जाने वाले बारासिंघा या ईस्टर्न स्वैम्प डीअर (*Rucervus duvaucelii ranjitsinhi*) आज विलुप्त होने की कगार पर है। प्रसिद्ध लेखक रुडयार्ड किपलिंग ने जिस से मंत्रमुग्ध हो कर उसकी सुन्दरता को अपनी दूसरी किताब 'द सेकंड जंगल बुक' में कैद किया हो, उस जीव के लिये यह काफी दुखद स्थिति है।

ओएनजीसी ने इस प्रजाति को विलुप्त होने से बचाने के लिये अपने कदम बढ़ाये, और वो भी बिल्कुल सही समय पर।

इसके पहले चरण के अन्तर्गत इनकी अनुमानित आबादी, अनुकूल पर्यावरण, पशु-चिकित्सा अंतःक्षेप एवं सामान्य अध्ययन और जागरूकता अभियान किया गया। इनके स्थानांतरण के लिये मानस राष्ट्रीय उद्यान को चुना गया, जो इनके रहने के लिये बिल्कुल उपयुक्त स्थान था।

काज़ीरंगा राष्ट्रीय उद्यान से 19 बारासिंघो को मानस में स्थानांतरित करना बहुत ही कठिन काम था। योजना के इस अत्यंत कठिन दूसरे चरण को दक्षिण अफ्रीका से बुलाये गये वन्यजीव विशेषज्ञों ने बहुत खास तरीके से अंजाम दिया। 19 बारासिंघो का स्थानांतरण खास तंबुओ में किया गया, जिनको अन्दर से उनके प्राकृतिक आवास जैसा ही बनाया गया था। कुछ ही महीनों में 6 नवजात बारासिंघो ने झुण्ड में जुड़कर, स्थानांतरण की खुशी को दुगना कर दिया।

इस योजना के विस्तार के तीसरे चरण के अन्तर्गत 20 अतिरिक्त बारासिंघो का स्थानांतरण किया जा रहा है।

यह परियोजना संतुलित पर्यावरण की ओर ओएनजीसी की एक शुरुआत है। लुप्तप्राय प्रजातियों का संरक्षण करने के लिये प्रेरित, हमारा संगठन प्रकृति की असली सुंदरता को बनाये रखने के लिये प्रतिबद्ध है।



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Participants In Traditional Dress on NE Tribal Youth Leadership Orientation Camp

North East India & It's Tribal Culture

The Tribes of North East India were termed as 'primitive', 'savages', and 'uncivilized', 'God-less' by the British. Due to the influence of Western thought, since the advent of British rule, we Indians who belong to 'Eastern Culture' have begun to see ourselves through the 'Western Lens'. The British generally labeled Indians as uncivilized people or rather barbarians, like the way they tagged all non-white races. Even now, in the media, tribes are tagged as 'primitive', 'pre-modern', 'untouched by any version of civilization whatsoever' etc.

Swami Vivekananda said "No society is wholly good or wholly bad. No culture is wholly good or wholly bad. Do not judge a society by the standard of your culture, but judge a society by the standards of their own culture".

So, what does the word 'Tribal' mean? As per a dictionary that I read a few years ago, it means 'A person who belongs to a close knit community, where the whole community is considered as one single family. Every person of the community lives and even dies if required, for the welfare of the Tribe'.

As per Indic philosophy, civilization isn't measured in terms of skyscrapers, expressways, bullet trains, its M.N.Cs or by the level of opulence that exists in it. A society in which the majority of people are truthful, honest, kind and compassionate is a civilized society. Swami Vivekananda said, 'Education has yet to be in the world and civilization-civilization has begun nowhere yet.'

I happened to read an almost 800 page book on the Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. This book was written in 1910 by a Bengali gentleman who was employed as a clerk in the British administration in Changlang district. He had written that these tribes of N. E India, who were untouched by 'modern civilization', were most innocent people. Their culture was Truthfulness, Honesty, Non-stealing, Humanism, and Egalitarianism.

These people never told lies because they did not have any idea as to what telling a lie is! All of

them were honest; the concept of dishonesty did not exist. There was never any theft, houses had no doors! They were humanists; they had no concept of enmity based on race, religion, culture, language, etc. All were seen as fellow human beings. It was an egalitarian society, with no concept of high and low, rich and poor. They had absolutely no need for money.

Nature provided them with everything in abundance- food, shelter, and clothing. They obtained everything from their surroundings and were self sufficient societies. The only item that they were short of being salt, which they obtained by barter trade with the people of the plains. It was a self sufficient, self-regulating, self-governing, self-reliant society. They worshiped and respected God immanent in creation and lived in perfect harmony with nature.

Most of the North East people were illiterate, but not uneducated. They were well educated in life-skills & livelihood-skills. There was no concept of unemployment! Every person was gainfully self – employed.

The indigenous tribal societies of North East India had attained a state of equilibrium within their society, with other tribal communities living in and around their place of living and with nature. Their lives were Eco-friendly and self-sustaining. They practiced organic farming. Their houses were Eco-friendly, temperature regulated & also earthquake proof! They lived in Joint Families – the mainstay of the Indian Culture.

Mahatma Gandhi has mentioned in his book 'India of My Dreams' about 'Self-Sufficient villages'; Self-sufficient for everything including own defense! He wrote this because he had a deep understanding of Indian civilization and culture. All villages used to be self-sufficient self-governing 'Republics'. This is what Alexander encountered when he tried to invade Indian landmass. Even Fa-Hien, Hiuen-Tsang, Megasthenes and Herodotus, who visited India have mentioned in their writings. But these inherent

strengths weakened and vanished with repeated invasions and resultant subjugation. However, most of these positive characteristics survived only in North East India. Unfortunately these qualities are fast eroding due to our blind fascination and attachment to the Western Civilization & thought. It is the so called 'Modern Civilization' which has disturbed this state of equilibrium and created chaos

and turmoil all over the world, leading to religious terrorism, wars, conflicts, global warming and climate change etc.

We, the western 'educated' modern generation need to learn from the 'wisdom' of the wise tribal people, if we have to save the world from devastation. ■

(Contd. from Page 6)

Oral Traditions of North-East

printing press, publication of books, libraries for storing books, etc. The truth of the oral word was lost and a person such as Balganaghar's mother who was hardly middle school pass certainly would be unfit to teach her children what she taught orally from her cultural training and faith. Along with colonialism, the Christianity in India gave a terrible blow to the cultures and traditions of tribal societies of the North-east in particular. The tribal oral cultural practice and traditions, either good or bad, had no place under the new religious order. A tribal is considered a heathen who needs to be cleansed of his impurities to become the faithful. It is the cleanliness, both material and cultural, that has erased the whole oral tradition once they become the follower of the new faith. This is tragic because absence of a living oral tradition means cultural death.

Most of the north-eastern societies are primarily oral societies. The missionaries and ethnographers construed them as primitives and endeavoured to civilize them. The keywords such as education, civilizing, cleaning or purifying in this case are not symbolic but wholesale materials of cultural transformation. For instance, traditionally, kitchen is the place where everybody is welcomed in a traditional Mizo or Naga household. With the onset of new culture, kitchen is replaced with drawing room, a place which does not represent the warm and intimate space like a kitchen. There are many examples of how traditions have changed without any trace of the past practices. Another powerful example is the expression 'head hunting' coined by the colonial administrators to prove the Naga

primitiveness. Interestingly, in none of the Naga languages there is a word for head hunting; it was, instead, head taking. The changes in the word from hunting to taking, changes the meaning in its entirety as taking is a ritual act, and not a barbaric act. Head taking was a ritual killing to increase the fertility of the fields and women. Although any kind of killing is abhorrent what is taken out of context is the ritual aspect of the practice. All cultures are ritualistic, so are the tribal cultures of the North-east. Similarly the folk tales and folk poems that narrate myths, legends, powerful proverbs and wise sayings, etc., of a given community are lost including which tells us of their migration and past including present place of habitations.

Our oral cultural practices and our traditions are very important as they make the past continuously relevant to our present. We need to undertake serious research in oral traditions and cultural practices in order to make the past relevant to the present at the institutional level. In particular, serious research has to be undertaken on cultural traditions and oral cultures of the North-east.

As India is primarily a memory culture, we need to further our study on memory and mnemonic cultural practices. Efforts should be made to collect, compile and interpret folk cultural materials. The oral performing arts need to be documented and compiled including rituals, ritual chants, folk performances and musical practices. The same could be extended to document the material cultures such as textiles, weaving, food, etc. ■

Manipur excels in 1st Khelo India School Games

Manipur finished fifth with a total of 34 medals including 13 gold, 13 silver and 8 bronze medals in the 1st Khelo India School Games held at New Delhi under the aegis of Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The State team was led by Mr. T Thouba, Assistant Director, Youth Affairs and Sports as Chef de Mission and Mr. Tomba, District Youth Affairs and Sports Officer, Tamenglong District as Deputy Chef de Mission.

The last day saw Meiraba Luwang beat Akash Yadav of Uttar Pradesh to fetch a gold medal in the badminton event for boys. Meiraba lost the first set before fighting back to win 18-21, 21-16, 21-18.

Th. Tababi won the second gold medal for the State in the 44 Kg girls Judo event today. Ch. Rebina fetched a gold for Manipur yesterday in the 57 kg category. M Bidyashwari won another silver medal in the 44 kg category for girls. Th Abungcha won a silver in the 66 kg category for boys. Th Joyshree Devi (52 kg), Ch Julia (70 kg) and L Sanathoi (70) bagged bronze medals for the State in Judo discipline.

The Football team representing Manipur had to settle for silver with a narrow 4-5 loss in the hands of Haryana today in a high scoring final match. Manipur started the game with a positive note opening the account in the very first minute through Th Babysana who scored another in the 23rd minute. Samiksha of Haryana was the first to score for her team and equalized the score in the 15th minute. Three minutes later Th Babysana of Manipur scored her second goal. Renu of Haryana struck her first goal to level the score at 2-2. The latter part of the first half was dominated by Haryana and it were Samiksha and Renu who took their turns to score one each in

the 40th and 45th minute and went into the half with a 4-2 lead. After the restart, Manipur resumed their onslaught and it was L Babydolly who struck the third goal for the State. Y Luxmi then took charge of the team and she found the back of the net in the 55th minute equalising the score at 4-4. Manipur gained confidence after the equaliser and they were consistently trying to break into Haryana's defence. They got a couple of chances but could not create an impression as their shots were too feeble or went off target. Haryana concentrated more on counter attacks and finally turned the table when Mona

scored a superb goal in the 84th minute. With few minutes to go Manipur tried hard to restore parity but their efforts went abegging in front of Haryana's defence set up to finish the game 4-5.

Sanathoi Hemam and Ashalata Chanu outclassed their opponents in the Boxing final bouts of 54 kg and 57 kg categories to win one gold medal each. Tinmila Doungel (48 kg), Babyrosisana Chanu (52 kg), Alena Devi (60 kg), Menaka Devi (63 kg), Sanamacha Chanu (70 kg) and Ambeshwari Huidrom finished second to settle with silver medals. M Puja of the State settled for a bronze yesterday. Nongdamkhomba (60 kg) and N Bobosana (63 kg) were two boys who finished second to claim the silver medals.

Weightlifter Arambam Anita Devi bagged another gold medal for Manipur in the above 69 kg category. She lifted a total of 175 kg (Snatch-75 kg, Clean and Jerk- 100 kg) to lay her hand on the gold medal.

Archer Suchitra Tourangbam added a bronze medal in the State's tally in the compound individual for girls by striking a total of 142 points. ■



Manipur State Kala Akademi Awards

Manipur State Kala Akademi Awards 2014 - the most prestigious award of the Manipur state was presented to the awardees at a function held at Maharaja Chandrakirti Auditorium, Palace Compound, and Imphal recently by Dr Najma Heptulla, the Hon'ble Governor of Manipur and Chairperson of the Manipur State Kala Akademi, the organiser of the awards.

The Akademi Award 2014 including 2 Fellowships and 6 Young Talent Award were presented to 27 (Twenty-Seven) Awardees by the Hon'ble Governor in a glittering function presided over by Sri L Jayentakumar Singh, Minister, Art & Culture & Vice Chairman, Manipur State Kala Akademi.

The awards are conferred on the persons who had made outstanding contribution in the fields of Dance, Music, Theatre, Shumang Leela, Thang Ta, Tribal culture, other art forms such as Traditional, Theatre, Literature, Mime and Fine Arts.

While speaking as the Chief Guest of the Award ceremony, the Hon'ble Governor congratulated the awardees and said that the state of Manipur is renowned for its rich art and cultural heritage. The classical Manipuri dance - Raas Leela has put Manipur on the cultural map of the world. The Manipuri Nata Sankirtana, the ritual singing, dancing and drumming has been included in the representative list of UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage, of humanity, she said.

The Hon'ble Governor also said that the cultural mosaic of the State is extremely colourful owing to the large number of communities in the State with their distinctive form of dance, music and dress.

She stated that the Manipur State Kala Akademi was established by the Government of Manipur in 1972 as an autonomous body and is the only cultural agency of the Government charged with the responsibility of promoting and coordinating all the activities relating to Dance, Drama, Music, Literature, Fine Arts and all other fields of arts and culture. The Akademi has been making sustained efforts for promotion, preservation and propagation of Manipur's rich cultural tradition within and outside the State since its inception.

The Hon'ble Governor further added that besides organizing various cultural festivals pertaining to different art forms of folk and classical of both the hills and the valley, the Akademi also holds several promotional activities such as conferences, seminars, workshops as well as literary programs, memorial lectures and exhibitions etc. She said that the awards symbolize not only the highest standard of excellence in respective fields but are also recognition of the highest professional accomplishments achieved by individuals blessed with artistic talent. She also expressed her confidence that the efforts of the Manipur State Kala Akademi will make a substantial impact on the preservation, promotion and propagation of the rich cultural traditions of the State and will continue to provide necessary encouragement to the scholars and artistes. She concluded her speech by urging that "we must try to make Manipur known to the world by showing our rich cultural Heritage."

In his presidential speech Sri L Jayentakumar Singh, Minister, Art & Culture & Vice Chairman, Manipur State Kala Akademi stated that "Manipur is a fertile land for Sports and Arts and instead of depending on organizations like UNESCO for recognition, we must put in our sincere efforts to present our own art and culture and try to promote it to the rest of the country and the world." He added that despite facing many challenges, the people of the State excel in their chosen path of career whether it is arts or sports, due to hard work and determination. He urged that the public should come forward to support the Government which is trying hard to overcome the handicaps and obstacles.

The Minister further said that a synchronized vision is needed to promote the Art and Culture of Manipur and deliberate on the vision to compete with other parts of the world. He requested the Awardees to give creative suggestions and help in scouting the young talents having dedication, determination, honesty and sincerity, to complement the Government efforts.

Noted artistes and art luminaries of the State attended the function where the awardees exhibited their talents in the cultural show that followed. ■

Silk Industry – The Pride of Assam

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam Sri Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated the Muga Fair, 2018 and a Workshop on Silk Industry organised under the banner of the Directorate of Sericulture in Guwahati on Saturday, the 24th February, 2018.

The inaugural ceremony of the mega event was also graced by CM's Legal Adviser Sri Santanu Bharali, MLAs Sri Atul Bora and Sri Chakra Gogoi, Member Secretary of Assam State Level Advisory Committee for Students and Youth Welfare Sri Lakhya Konwar, Commissioner and Secretary of Handloom and Textile Department Sri Mukti Gogoi and a host of other dignitaries and public.

In his inaugural address, the Chief Minister said that muga silk is a symbol of pride and prestige of the people of Assam and the silk industry plays an important role in strengthening the rural economy of the State. He added that it can also play a great role in transforming Assam into an organic hub. The sector has also enabled the farmers to hone their skills and get themselves acclimatised with the competitive environment of the modern day trade and industry. He acknowledged that the people associated with the sector has lent a new lease of life to this industry in Assam which has all the potential for playing an important role in strengthening the rural economy of the State. He praised the new generation

entrepreneurs of this sector for their successful initiatives aimed at attracting and motivating the present-day youths to be associated with the industry. He further added that the people, who are intrinsically associated with silk industry and have achieved success in their chosen field and earned distinction, must work as a role model for others to follow suit.

The Chief Minister conceded that in order to take this industry forward, there are a lots of challenges to be met. However, the State government is steadfast in overcoming these challenges and the take the industry to a position where it can effectively contribute to the growth of the State. Terming 'golden' as the colour of progress which generally attracts many eyeballs, Sonowal said that the colour is synonymous to economic prosperity. Considering the high demand of muga silk in the global market, people associated with it must work passionately to fulfill the fast growing demand for Muga silk in the markets like Japan, Europe, Africa and America. He added that with a view to attract bigger number of quality loving cliental, the State government has engaged Bollywood actress Priyanka Chopra as the brand ambassador to actively promote Muga silk of Assam in the global market.

Assam Minister for Handloom, Textile and Sericulture Ranjit Dutta also spoke on the occasion.

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The God of all Souls

unrighteousness and viciousness, then he would come to reveal again the original and true godly knowledge and yoga.

It is at midnight that worshippers mark the divine descent of god Shiva, because he comes to this world when it is enveloped in the darkness of ignorance whereby everyone has forgotten their true spiritual identity. Shivaratri is not about one night but the entire period of unrighteousness, i.e., the latter half of the cycle of time. This black period is referred to as the night of Brahma in some Hindu texts. In the Dharma Samhita of Shiva Puran, it is stated that at the end of Kaliyug, a magnificent light would reveal itself,

blindingly luminous and radiant.

Today, when the world is witnessing growing violence and sufferings, it would be apt to take our Shivaratri celebrations beyond mere rituals. The true fasting on Shivaratri is that we link our intellect with Lord Shiva and stay in his company. Fasting is meant to stay close to him. The true awakening means to awaken from the slumber of ignorance and protect the self from the evil influence of vices such as lust, anger, greed, attachment, ego and the myriads subtle forms of these vices. A befitting way to celebrate the Shivaratri is to surrender all our vices to Shiva. ■

Padmavati and the Modern Playboys

Salil Gewali

Every community has its own viewpoint on a social issues. That usually varies with the time. What was considered too outrageous some thirty years ago is pretty normal today. Why? The answer calls for a serious introspection vis-a-vis the social changes and our acceptance of lot many things. Well, we love to consume now anything which is seemingly mouth-watering, even though they may cause social indigestion and spiritual anemia.

No wonder the almost entire educated world condemned the 'Karni Sena' or Rajput community because they vehemently resisted a Bollywood film on Padmaavat. These puritan Rajput folks felt sorely upset because they consider their beloved queen Padmavati in the cinematic screen very sacrilegious. For ages, the queen of Mewar has been held in high esteem, more precisely, as the "paramount pride" of the Rajput, apart from others in the country. What rubbed salt in their wound was when the Supreme Court finally upheld the 'freedom of expression' and issued a decree that all state governments should ensure the screening of the Sanjay Bhansali's film in the cinema halls of their states. It seems the judiciary did not consider it appropriate to take into account the human perspective and thus paved the way for the evil to rear its ugly head. As expected, this triggered a series of backlashes. The Rajputs lost their sanity as they were later incited by political parties. The Karni Sena went on a rampage. They vandalized the public properties, burnt vehicles, pelted stones at a school bus, which was very unfortunate and inhumane too. Yes, historical records also caution us – 'the fury of inferno and fury of crowds could always be disastrous.' Nobody will perhaps disagree that when the cherished "pride" is hurt the crowds go crazy!

Phew, freedom of expression and flagrant entertainment at the cost of the social chaos? Is a "fleeting sense pleasure" of Bollywood more important than the social harmony and peace? This is perhaps the height of foolishness.

Needless to say that our advanced folks are often heedless to the hostile consequences that could arise due to the clashes of opinions, the contradictory belief systems, basic human values and ethics. Should the educated and the so-called leaders in power not strive to create an atmosphere to strengthen the bond of brotherhood with those we have been living together for centuries?

I am afraid, these days most of the educated believe that it's no big deal even if the sharp edge of "mutual antagonism" punctures the social fabric. When we are faced with any controversial issue, we take recourse to justify it legally. Our motive is so narrow; our desires are so self-centered that we forget to think about the consequences. We brutally claim that no one has any right to disturb our enjoyment of fun and frolic, be it at the cost the values and belief system of our fellow brothers. This is how we refuse to forgo any short-lived entertainment. In order to meet this 'demand and supply', we have a swarm of our skillfully crafty people who churn out a whole lot of titillating cinemas, even by inviting the voluptuous stars from Canada and USA, and serve them to us hot. The endless smutty acts of Sunny Leone have long pushed hundreds of millions into the gutter of pornography. Its adverse effect will be more visible after five to ten years from now. It is very unfortunate that we are silent against such depravity. If there are protests from any quarter our democratic, secular and human rights conscious public will cry to the hilt to defend them. Who else can defeat us? Our defensive vocabulary has been well enriched by the 'freedom of expression'. We have at our disposal the invincible media and techno academia to bang the table!

Look at how we have come out victorious. The film 'Padmaavat' got released. And, we all have enjoyed the despotic invader being glamorized and many of us have now been applauding this "brutal playboy" through our write-ups. This is how we justify anything

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44th Karbi Youth Festival – A Report

The 44th edition of the largest and the oldest ethnic festival of the Karbi community, better known as Karbi Youth Festival, was held at Karbi People's Hall Taralungso near Diphu, the headquarter of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC). The Festival, which was organized by the Karbi Cultural Society (KCS) joyously concluded on Monday, the 19th February, 2018. The closing ceremony was addressed by Tuliram Ronghang, Chief Executive Member (CEM) of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC). All EMs of KAAC and many prominent citizens took part in the closing ceremony.

The highlight of the festival this year was many traditional performances and enjoyable events. Various folk traditional dances, folk traditional songs and Karbi modern songs competitions, contested by young Karbi artists were held in Long Mirjeng achatai (stages), Sing Mirjeng achatai, Longbi Chidu Achatai and Semson Sing Engti achatai simultaneously. The most mention-worthy aspect of this year's festival was the participation of a number of artistes from Thailand who presented their traditional dance recitals. Several foreigners from USA, Great Britain,

Latvia and Thailand also attended the 44th Karbi Youth Festival. The festival concluded with a fashion show organised by well-known Fashion Designer Ms. Garima Saikia Garg.

The Karbi Youth Festival was first held in 1974 and since then it is being held every year from February 15 to February 19. The President of the Reception Committee and the Chairman of Karbi Autonomous Council, Sri Haren Sing Bey said that "We are very happy that we were able to organize this festival in a peaceful way. Tourists from other parts of the world had come to the festival which is a positive sign. We want that the festival should get recognition of international standard. Karbi Anglong is the largest district of Assam as well as of India. We are rich in culture and we have various tourist places which are totally unexplored. We want that people should explore these places and enjoy the charm and beauty of Karbi Anglong." The Karbi Cultural Society (KCS), the organizers of the Karbi Youth Festival assured that they are planning to host similar festivals in future to promote Karbi Anglong and its tribal culture and heritage. ■

Manipur, Nagaland Celebrate Seed Sowing Festival

'Lui-Ngai-Ni', one of the biggest and very ancient three day long seed sowing festival of spring, was celebrated with great fervour and gaiety in the tribal inhabited areas of Manipur and Nagaland. Village headman of Ukhrul Mr. H A Sarimaya inaugurated the festival by 'Awungashi Kharuk', the traditional ritual of seed sowing and hoisted the village flag at the VA Court Awungtang, Ukhrul in the presence of elders and the locals of Hunphun & Ukhrul villages.

As a part of the festival, traditional games, folk dances and folk songs were organized where locals took part with much enthusiasm. On the last day of the festival, a Beauty Contest was held which was contested by young damsels of the area for the coveted title of 'Miss Hunphun Luira'.

'Luira Phanit', the seed sowing festival of the Tangkhul community was celebrated at Diphupar village in Nagaland's Dimapur. The festival was organized by Dimapur Tangkhul Hoho, and was graced by Mr. HK Zhimomi, the Vice President of Naga Hoho, as Chief Guest. Hundreds of locals from the Tangkhul community, both young and the old attended the celebration in their traditional attire. The programme was also attended by residents and organisations of Diphupar village.

The celebrations were also held at Tribal Research Institute in Imphal centered around the theme of 'Sowing on the good soil, reaping in abundance'. ■

To Save Arunachal – Save its Culture

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu was on Thursday accorded warm welcome when he was at Roing to attend the Golden Jubilee Celebration of the traditional festival of Mishimi community in Arunachal Pradesh. He was clothed with Mishmi traditional men's wear – 'Aptolo Zuhi' (traditional cane hat), 'Etondre' (war coat), 'Etozo' (Mishmi jacket) and 'Era-aa' (Mishmi machete). Hundreds of people clad in colourful traditional Mishmi dresses queued up at the Kera-aa Jubilee ground to welcome the Chief Minister in a very cheerful ambience shouting 'Mey-ebo' signalling that guests have arrived. The welcome parade was led by Rajya Sabha MP Sri Mukut Mithi, Sri Rajesh Tacho, former Minister and present Anini MLA, Roing MLA Sri Mutchu Mithi, former Roing MLA Smt Laeta Umbrey and others.

Traditional welcome was also accorded to Speaker of the Arunachal Pradesh Assekbly Mr. TN Thongdok, Art & Culture Minister Dr Mohesh Chai, State BJP President Sri Tapir Gao, Lok Sabha (East) MP Sri Ninong Ering and Parliamentary Secretary Sri Gum Tayeng, Sri Zingnu Namchoom and Sri Tesam Pongte and Anjaw MLA Sri Dasanglu Pul.

The Chief Minister Khandu first unveiled the commemoration stone commemorating the Golden Jubilee Central Reh Celebration 2018 and was subsequently led to the traditional Mishmi hut where he danced on the traditional footsteps with members holding hands and waving together. Later he was shown around the traditional system of kitchen, bedrooms, fireplace and place for pounding grains. He then gave away the 'Mashelo Zinu Award' – the highest community award to late Ita Pulu and Sri Dishu Mihu Mallo for their selfless service to the Mishmi society.

While addressing the gathering the Chief Minister urged for preservation of local culture and traditions no matter the intensity of modernization affecting our lives. He expressed concern over the fast eroding attachment to the local dialects.

Emphasizing that preservation of culture begins from home, he requested the parents to speak to their children in their local dialect.

Reverting to the objectives of the Golden Jubilee Celebration 2018, Sri Khandu requested the community members to take full part in the festivals and follow the traditional rituals as well. He said that rituals and traditions that have been practiced by the forefathers since time immemorial should not be disconnected from festivals. He said that when it comes to culture, religion is secondary and emphasized that preservation of culture means preservation of identity of the community. He informed that sensing the intensity with which the local cultures are eroding, the state government has created the Department of Indigenous Affairs (DIA) to help local community with funds to preserve their indigenous culture. Emphasizing on tourism and hydro-power potentials of Roing and Anini, the Chief Minister said these potentials are being unleashed as connectivity is fast improving with new highways and railway lines coming up in the area. Assuring that development of these two constituencies are his responsibility, he promised that the state government will never let them down on their aspirations.

In his address Sri Tapir Gao urged the community members to work for preservation of local dialect and culture asserting that only wearing traditional dresses won't save culture from becoming extinct.

Speaker Sri Thongdok asserted that originality must always be preserved because once we lose our indigenous cultures and traditions that have developed over period of time, cannot ever be retrieved back.

He also presented 'Ponge Dele Award' to Sri Everster Tine Mena, International Karate Champion Sri Sine Mikhu, International Archer Sri Mashelo Mihu and Social Worker Sri Vijay Swami for their contributions to the Mishmi society. ■

Ali Aye Ligang and Solung Festival in Arunachal

To promote solidarity and brotherhood with the people of Arunachal Pradesh, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Chief Minister of Assam arrived at Mebo, East Siang District in Arunachal Pradesh to attend the Ali Aye Ligang festival celebrations of the Mishings along with the Solung Festival of the Adi community on Saturday, the 17 February, 2018.

In the course of his speech on the occasion he said that "Assam and Arunachal Pradesh both must work together while keeping the age-old ties between the two states intact to achieve all round development. Both these states are rich in bio diversity and they must harness this potential for achieving rapid development of the region."

He urged the youth of Arunachal Pradesh to work towards harnessing the state's agriculture, horticulture, hydrology and tourism potential for rapid development of Northeast region. He also called for united effort for achieving growth and prosperity of both Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. He further said that only through active cooperation and joint initiatives, the region can bring development in all sectors and become the 'Astalaxmi' of the nation as Prime Minister Modi has envisioned. Saying that to realise the dream of Prime Minister Narendra Modi of northeast becoming the new engine of growth for the nation there is greater need of unity among the states, Sonowal stated that the region must strive towards taking advantage of central government's Act East policy to take NE into the high growth trajectory.

In addition to the large number of general public, the most prominent persons, who graced the programme included Lakhimpur MP Sri Pradan Baruah, Several MLAs of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, Major Gen Bhaskar Kalita, GOC of 56 Infantry Division at Likabali, Sri Paramananda Chayengia, CEM of Mishing Autonomous Council and Sri Dipuranjan Markari, CEM of Sonowal Kachari Autonomous Council.

Prior to the holding of the festival of Ali Aye Ligang at Mebo, East Siang District, the Mising community residing in the Capital Complex of Itanagar celebrated

the festival, their main agriculture festival, with traditional fervor and gaiety on Wednesday the 14 February, 2018 in the august presence of PWD Parliamentary Secretary and local MLA Mr. Techu Kaso. In his address to the people Mr. Kesho said that every festival gives us a message to live in unity and harmony while preserving own culture and tradition. Highlighting the developmental activities he had taken up in his constituency, he stressed that the Festivals of different tribes and communities need to be celebrated and passed on to the younger generation for preservation of our identity and culture. IMC Councillor Mrs Yumlam Minu also spoke on the occasion and said that 'Mising community being the descendent of Abo-Tani are our brothers. Festival like Ali Aye Ligang needs to be carried forward for unity and communal harmony as well as for better future of our younger generation. She also assured all help for any community development works. President of the festival Celebration Committee Sri B C Doley and General Secretary Sri Debojit Pegu also spoke on the occasion. Mising people living at Ruksin in Arunachal Pradesh bordering Assam also celebrated Ali Aye Ligang, their main agriculture festival with traditional fervour and gaiety.

The inaugural programme of the week-long festive started with paying tribute to pioneer of Mising culture, Babu Oiram Bori and sowing of Sali seeds by Sri Mirii Abus (priest), which was followed by the Gumrag dance and discussion on Ligang mythology. A cultural procession was also taken out along the National Highway-15 from Oyan to Sille-Teromile to mark the occasion. Attending the celebration at Oyan village in East Siang district on Wednesday, former Pasighat West MLA Sri Yadap Apang urged the people of the community to continue their traditional practices to preserve their identity. Stating that celebration of festival promotes unity among the community members He suggested Mising youths to shoulder the responsibility of preserving their traditions and cultural heritage for the younger generation. Ali Aye Ligang was also celebrated at different Mising dominated villages bordering Assam with pomp and gaiety.

Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal also attended the Ali Aye Ligang festival organised by Cultural Directorate, Government of Assam in association with Majuli District Administration at Jengraimukh College and Higher Secondary School playground at Majuli on 14 February, 2018, Wednesday. As is well known that the Mising tribe is one of the most colourful and culturally-rich tribes of the state and they have enhanced the Assamese society with their unique dance forms, songs, handicrafts, etc. They are inspired by nature and they incorporate vivid hues of nature into all of their creations. The Chief Minister said that the members of Mising community had risen above the challenges posed by flood and erosion through grit, determination and hard work to achieve success in different fields. Reiterating the state government's commitment to equally develop all sections of society where all communities have been given uniform importance irrespective of their size, the Chief Minister highlighted the initiatives taken by the government to preserve and protect culture and heritage of all communities. The Chief Minister further added that Majuli is the epicenter of the Vaishnavite culture which has made tremendous contribution to Assam's cultural identity and his

government is taking a lot of steps to develop the Majuli as a tourism hotspot and increase the flow of tourists into the river island. He added that the recently concluded Advantage Assam Global Investors' Summit was an effort to highlight the state's potential as an investment destination and create a conducive environment for trade and business, and that it could attract the attention of investors towards the state's agriculture, tourism, Muga silk, etc. The Chief Minister ceremonially laid the foundation stone of the Rs 284-crore integrated office and residential complex at Majuli and inaugurated the service of a new sophisticated boat ambulance equipped with night navigation facility and GPS trekking for the people of Majuli district in the same programme. Cultural Affairs Minister Sri Naba Kumar Doley, and CEM of Mising Autonomous Council Sri Paramananda Chayengia also spoke in the programme which was attended by Media Adviser to the Chief Minister Sri Hrishikesh Goswami, MP Sri Pradan Baruah, CEM of Thengal Kachari Autonomous Council Sri Kumud Saikia, MLAs Sri Ramakanta Deuri, Sri Ranoj Pegu, Sri Bimal Bora, Commissioner and Secretary of Cultural Affairs Department Sri Pritam Saikia, eminent environmentalist Sri Jadab Payeng among others. ■

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Padmavati and the Modern Playboys

outrageous and feel like we are the modern day Khilji!

Now let's get down to the reality of the matter. At least with a little humane sensibility! Do any of our elites like to be "reminded" about anything ugly concerning their parents/ancestors or ones they hold in high esteem? Does it not upset any children if they would be "reminded" that their father was once very boisterous drunkard and gambler and the mother was slyly chased after by a number of next door neighbors? Do these children then appreciate if any opportunistic person wants to make a film on that? I don't think the children will ever tolerate something that will "remind" them of "past sleaze" of their parents.

Then how could we expect the Rajputs or others to tolerate to be "reminded", most particularly, through the big-screen, that their "mother of pride"

Padmavati was once "madly lusted after" by a lecherous Khilji. How could they endure to be haunted again that their "paragon of virtue and pride" was once about to be amorously desecrated by the over sensual invader from a far off land? Could we forget the film PK in which Lord Shiva was literally insulted? Should a film director promote denigration of those who are adored and respected?

Yes, one's prudence says that our minds have been heavily "invaded" now by a whole lot of brutally lustful khiljis. We are therefore becoming less accommodating, and more hurtful to others.

Lastly, one wishes - may the sacrificial Jauhar of brave Padmavati never fail to inspire the Rajputs and us, at least to uphold the spirit of righteous courage and values and save us from the evil of the modern day playboys. ■

Oriah Celebrated in Itanagar

On Friday the February 16, 2018, Oriah festival of the Wancho tribe was celebrated with full traditional gaiety and fervour at the Senki Park, Itanagar.

Sri Jarkar Gamlin, Minister of Tourism, Arunachal Pradesh, who attended the festival as Chief Guest, in his inaugural address said that “the need of the hour is to protect tradition and culture as they are the identity of the tribal society.” He said every tribal festival sends out the message of unity. Sri Gamlin appealed to the people to use traditional attires and local dialects to encourage the younger generation to carry forward their legacy. Special

Secretary to CM, Sri Himanshu Gupta said that “The traditional attires and colourful dresses of different tribes of the state show the rich diversity of the state.” Sri Laisam Simai, Parliamentary Secretary of Parliamentary Secretary Department urged the people to uphold the culture and traditional values of the tribes. Sri Abom Ngoan, General Secretary of the Celebration Community also spoke on the occasion.

The daylong celebration concluded with Bamboo Dance, War Dance, different cultural presentations and distribution of prizes to the winners of sports events. ■

Manipur tops NE in Forest Conservation

At a time when the forest cover in different parts of our country is fast depleting, Manipur has set an example by adding 263 sq km of forest cover since 2015, according to the 2017 report which was released recently. By virtue of this unique achievement as well as for protecting its Reserve Forest areas successfully, Manipur State was declared as award of First position holder among all the Northeastern States in protecting its Reserve Forest (RF) areas. While quoting India’s State of Forest Report 2017 during discussion on Forest and Environment issues in the ongoing Assembly session on Friday, the 17 February, 2018, Manipur Forest and Environment Minister Sri Thounaojam Shyamkumar disclosed that there are about 37 Reserve Forests in the State of Manipur covering an area of 984.25 sq km.

In response to a question raised by opposition Congress MLAs Kh Joykishan, K Meghachandra and Th Lokeshwar, Minister Sri Shyamkumar said that the department is planning to urge the Centre to raise Forest Protection Force in order to conserve State’s forest areas in view of the constant threat of encroachment. He further added that despite

the lack of manpower, the department has taken steps against 85 encroachers including 53 in Heingang and 32 in Langol hill areas, he said. Around 25 lakh saplings were distributed for plantation during 2017-18 against the 12 lakh in 2016-17 besides taking up plantation on the road median measuring around 25 km in and around Imphal.

Responding to another observation made by the opposition Congress MLA Surjakumar Okram who sought attention of the House over the reports of contamination of Thoubal river due to washing of gravels quarried from the hill slopes in the upstream, Sri Shyamkumar stated that the department has taken necessary steps to prevent any unwanted activities in view of the fact that the Thoubal River passes through several Assembly constituencies, particularly Andro, Wang hem and Thoubal. He further informed the houses that the concerned district authorities have also been alerted and were asked to ensure that the water remains fit for human consumption. The Minister appealed to the public to help in conserving the State’s forests. ■

The Brahmin's Dream

Swabhavakripna was a poor Brahmin who lived alone in a small village. He had no friends or relatives, and used to beg for alms for his living. He was also a miser, and kept whatever little food he received as alms in an earthen pot that he hung beside his bed. The Brahmin's Dream - Panchatantra Story Picture He kept a watch on the pot, and ate from the pot only when he was very hungry.



One day, he received a large quantity of rice gruel (porridge). He filled his pot with the rice gruel, and ate the remaining. He was so happy to have his pot full; he could not take his eyes off the pot as he lay awake in his bed.

After a long time, he fell asleep and started dreaming about the pot full of rice gruel.

The Brahmin's Dream - Panchatantra Story Picture He dreamt that there was a famine in his village. He sold his pot full of rice gruel for hundred silver coins. With this money he bought a pair of goats. His goats gave kids in months and he traded all goats for some buffaloes and cows.

Soon, even the buffaloes and cows gave kids, and they gave a lot of milk. The Brahmin's Dream - Panchatantra Story Picture

He started trading milk and milk products like butter and curd in the market. This way, he became a very rich and popular man.

He kept dreaming that he then bought some horses and a large rectangular house with four buildings.

He became popular, and another wealthy Brahmin was so impressed that he offered his beautiful daughter for marriage. Soon after, they got married in a lavish ceremony.

The Brahmin's Dream - Panchatantra Story Picture His wife gave birth to a son, who was named Soma Sharma. But his son was very naughty. He would play and make noise all day.

One day, the Brahmin asked him to stop but he would not listen. Even his mother could not hear him shout as she was busy with her chores. Swabhavakripna became very angry, he kicked his wife.



As he was in a dream, he kicked in air and his leg hit his earthen pot. The pot broke and all the rice gruel spilled down. This woke him up.

The Brahmin's Dream - Panchatantra Story Picture At once, he realized that he had been dreaming. He also realized that all the rice gruel he had saved and was happily dreaming about was lost. He was shattered.

The wise indeed say:

One should not build castles in the air.



