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HERITAGE EXPLORER

LET KNOWLEDGE COME FROM ALL THE SIDES

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1877-1962

Acclaimed German-born Swiss poet and novelist; awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1946. His best-known works include *Steppenwolf*, *Siddhartha*, and *The Glass Bead Game* each of which explores an individual's search for authenticity, self-knowledge and spirituality.

Herman Hesse

India is not only a country and something geographical, but **the home and the youth of the soul**, the everywhere and nowhere, **the oneness of all times.**

Source: *Hermann Hesse: A collection of criticism*

*

The marvel of the Gita is its truly **beautiful revelation of life's wisdom** which enables philosophy to blossom into religion.

Source: *Sacred Texts of Yoga: Wisdom from India's Beloved Scriptures*, *Teacher*, by Dave DeLuca



1939 -

Eminent American physicist and systems theorist, and a founding director of the Center for Ecoliteracy, USA. World famous for 'The Tao of Physics'; authored five international bestsellers.

Fritjof Capra

The two foundations of twentieth-century physics, **Quantum** theory and **Relativity theory** — both force us to see the world very much in the way a Hindu, Buddhist...sees it.

Source: *The Tao of Physics: An Exploration of the Parallels Between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism* - by Fritjof Capra

*

The scale of this ancient myth is indeed staggering; it has taken the human mind more than two thousand years to come up again **with a similar concept.**

Source: *The Tao of Physics* - by Fritjof Capra

Capra challenges much of conventional wisdom by demonstrating striking parallels between ancient mystical traditions of the East and the discoveries of 20th century physics.

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A necessary and sufficient condition for a Good Nation

The Article 44 of the Constitution of India stipulates that the State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code (UCC) throughout the territory of India. Article 44 is in Part IV (Directive Principles of State Policy) of the Constitution, which is not enforceable by any court, but the principles enunciated therein are fundamental to the governance of the country. This is the mandate under Article 37, which also stipulates : "It shall be the duty of the State to apply these principles in making laws". Three crucial words in Articles 37 and 44 are : "endeavour", "fundamental" and "duty". First, the Endeavour of the State shall be to secure UCC for citizens; second, the principles of the UCC are fundamental to the governance of India; and third, the duty of the State is to apply the principles of UCC in making laws. "Duty" of the State to make laws is the crux of the matter.

What does a Uniform Civil Code really mean? UCC is simply a national civil code applicable to all citizens, irrespective of his/her religion. In India, civil laws and criminal laws are common to all citizens. But in matters governing rights and duties/obligations pertaining to property, land, inheritance, succession, civil liberties, civil rights, marriage, divorce, maintenance, restitution of conjugal rights, desertion, adultery, cruelty, adoption and custody of children, guardianship, etc., different religions have different laws. This has been creating multifarious problems socially, culturally, administratively, economically and even judicially.

Socially and culturally, some citizens are feeling victimized/aggrieved, just because they practice a particular religion; their religious beliefs/faiths are being transmuted into the vicissitudes of personal law based on religion.

Administratively, the State is unable to enforce the law evenhandedly. For example, polygamy is permitted under the Muslim personal law but is a crime under Hindu law. In fact, we have seen in the past that non-Muslims started converting to Islam merely to indulge in polygamy while escaping its consequences. This practice was thwarted by the Supreme Court in the Sarla Mudgal case.

Economically, the State is unable to be consistent: through the device of the Hindu Undivided Family (HUF), Hindus are getting tax exemptions, while Muslims are exempt from paying stamp duty on gift deeds since such deeds are not required to be registered. These fiscal exemptions/incentives have not been extended to people of other religions. So, there is a sense of discrimination.

Judicially, courts are being clogged with multiple cases on the same set of facts, but different verdicts are being delivered on the touchstone of different personal laws, based only on religion. Politically, the situation is being exploited to the hilt by politicians and political parties to indulge in vote-bank politics.

This is a grim situation. Therefore, a common civil code is an imperative in the interest of equality, justice, and the unity of the nation.

But legislating such a code will be a Herculean task. The government has to be extra careful not to trample upon the constitutional rights of religious minorities. They will have to be convinced that the UCC is not being used to impose the will of the majority community upon them overtly or covertly.

A haste generally cause waste. In this matter government is to look before it leaps but at the same time can not *swaha* national interest and integrity. A year long public awakening is the best democratic and meaningful way to achieve the goal in the long run. People should be taught that it is impossible to eat the cake and have it too.

Editor

DONYI POLOISM AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER RELIGION

- Gyati Rana

Based on our oral tradition with my limited knowledge during interaction with peoples from different religions, I have built my own perception and understanding about my Donyi-Poloism and its relation with other religions. I do not agree with the propagator of conversion. I perceive the act of conversion as an act against the principle of creation. Therefore, I feel it is the right time and place to share and put forward my view before such august gathering of scholars and learned elders. Before that I will try to introduce you all in brief about the Donyi-Poloism according to my perception based on the revelations of elder.

DONYI-POLOISM

It is obvious that many people would be ignorant about the Donyi-Polo faith System like our resource person, as it is only in oral form undocumented. The secret behind its survival till date is because it is being weaved into the way of living of Tani Group of people, and eternal knowledge Miji-Migun was handed down to generation next orally. Not to say about the outsider but many of our own people who are accustomed to modern way of living are also ignorant about the Spirituality, Philosophy, concept, religious, ethos and values of Donyi-poloism.

It is somewhat akin to Hinduism and other religions and believes in existence of Greater Spirits; the creator, sustainer, and transformer. It is ancient, pure and a classic polytheism

with many gods and goddess. Yet it has strong inclined believe that the Physical Sun and Moon is the physical manifestation of the almighty Gods. It does not have concept of Hell and Heaven. They believe in the existence of two mirror world where they go after death, one who dies normal death due to age and sickness goes below to **Neli** and one who dies accidental and immature death goes up to **Talii**. Their morality is based on their strongly believe that you will reap what you sow in this world and beyond, your action is accounted there itself in each world. So one need to live an upright life and have love, care and compassion to fellow beings, animals and habitats. So our elder advises to live upright way following the **Danyi-shii lenda** (moral code of Donyi-poloism).

The concept of Donyi-polo has been misinterpreted and misconstrued by many scholars as the Physical sun and the Moon. Here is the hymns our **Nyibu** use to address the Donyi-Polo, its concept is very much akin to concept of Gods of Hindus and other religions: *Charun loma ka hulu pakhu, kanku loma ka siibi bhikhu, kolyun Anii ka nutii nuri, Kolo anii ka hatii hanyo liji kua ka gartii danyi, murta kua ka liitii piilo iiji duing ka duping danyi, gambii tatii bo, murta liitii ka liiping piilo, ganda tarho bo, jamping danyi, karping piilo*. If you translate the above hymns as almighty God- (*Sarb saktiman, sarb byapak, sarb gyata, palan*

har); the Omnipotent, omnipresence, omniscience, compassionate god you will not be wrong. Thus it is the same god described in three different languages and religions.

Do you know, what religion the humanity followed then before the birth of Gautama Buddha, Jesus Christ, Prophet Mohammed and other religious teachers? Even earlier than their birth before the evolution of Vedas and Upanishads etc.?

It was informal religion like our Donyi-Poloism without any Guru, Rabi or founder, which evolved spontaneously through living close to the nature (Kudrat) which later was weaved into their way of living. There was no Churches, Mandir or Masjids, every dwelling house was their prayer and meditation house (Still it is tradition in our Society). They had tremendous respect for the land and the life on this earth. They looked to the sky, Earth and its surrounding and felt humbled, and had reverence for something that is bigger than him, and the elements. They have freedom to explore their thoughts about who he was in relationship with the environment. It was not organized; they simply were living along with the nature. Their inner feeling of reverence they have for themselves, other fellow being, habitat, vegetation, animal and other elements is now known as spirituality. They have deep sense of their spirits and their place on this planet.

Similarly Donyi-Poloism has

no founder, guru etc nor any prayer centre like Church, Mandir, etc. every religious prayer and ritual is performed at their dwelling house; nor any religious scripture but has abundance of oral tradition known locally as Miji-Migun. According to philosophy enshrined in their oral tradition Miji-Migun, it has an animistic approach; they strongly believe the existence of a directive force combined with negative and positive attribute and energy in every being, spirit and elements known as Ui or Yazi Yalo. They look upon this Universe (Sky) as father and Earth as Mother.

Therefore, they believe in existence of many greater Spirit (Ui) and have broadly classified them into two groups i.e. Aarii/Gyunyang Ui, with their intense negative attribute. Tiigo/Lyanii-Gonii Ui with their mixture of malevolent and benevolent attribute. However, they practice and uphold the guiding principles and moral values known as "Danyi-Shii lenda". And uphold the Sun (Ayo Danyi) and Moon (Ato Piilo) as the physical manifestation of the Almighty God "Ui" with compassion, nourishing, and sustaining attribute. Nevertheless, they pray upon many other malevolent and benevolent Gods and spirits but have inclined belief that the Spiritual Danyi-Piilo is the Supreme authority.

THE SUBTLE RELATIONSHIP AMOUNGST VARIOUS CULTURE AND RELIGIONS

Once, someone asked me, "What is the relationship between Hinduism (formal and organized religion) and Donyi-poloism?" I

replied him, "Root is to Donyi-Poloism and the healthy Tree and its branches are to formal religion (Organized religions like Buddhism, Brahmanism, etc)".

Why I said so is because, every religious scholar agrees that the Upanishad is the most sublime religious philosophical concept. Hindu Myths says that Vedas and Upanishad were directly transmitted by God to the Sage Ved Vyasa who dictated it to Sri Ganesha, and he wrote it down. Myths are half true and I find it difficult to agree with.

What I agree with is another version I heard from a learned scholar. That the Ved Vyasa sent his ten disciples to ten direction of this earth and asked them to collect all the hymns and chanting of various faiths, and cultures of this world. From this collected data he compiled the Vedas and Upanishads. Many scholars say that various languages of this world have taken many Sanskrit words, e.g. 40% of Russian language is from Sanskrit. This statement is ambiguous for me, rather I think while compiling Vedas and Upanishads they might have taken 40% of Russian words into Sanskrit language(a most scientific language), as they have taken Rabi (Sun) from Egyptian word Ra means Sun God etc. etc.

What I observed now a days is that many religious leaders and scholars are obsessed with their own religion, they cannot look beyond their own scripture, nor think and act beyond it. They forgot this subtle and evolutionary relation between

human culture, knowledge and religion. We all are related like the different parts of a Tree.

Here what I want to say is sum total of the faith culture and religion of the world is like a Tree. The root being all the informal religions, the Upanishads are its trunk. Seed of this Tree is this Hymns of Upanishad, "*Isavasiya midam sarvam yat kinch jagatayam jagat, tena teyaktena bhunjeeta, ma gridha kasyasvid dhanam*" means : this universe is the dwelling place of Ish(the Lord), it is always in flux, yet unchanging and eternal truth resides herein. This world does not belong to you, it is gift from Ish; You are the care taker of this world and have the right to take out that much only from this world to sustain your life. Hoarding beyond your basic requirement is a theft."

As I have heard from the resource person on the concept and approach of Nirbhana, I think the half of this seed has been taken by the Buddhism, that is logical one and austerity- "**..This is not this, this is not mine ...**", denial and austerity approach. Other half by Brahmanism and other organized religions, with the attitude that almighty has gifted this world to me- "**..this is mine, with faith...**" enhancing the feeling of ownership of this world and blind faith. In view of the above seed Mantra, I perceive both the religion's is complimentary to each other like a dicotyledonous seed.

The Donyi-poloism though is in informal form, I personally feel is wholesome concept with both the side of the above seed

(Contd. to Page 23)

Rangfraa Movement in Arunachal Pradesh

- Kamjai Taism

Changlang district in Eastern part of Arunachal Pradesh which is sandwiched between the Myanmar and the Indian states of Nagaland and Assam have long been infested with many a problems like onslaught of Christianity over the indigenous faith and culture, drug and wine addiction, social evils, superstitions, separatist movement by underground forces, disunity and differences among the sub-tribes of the area. Darkness had pervaded in the society so deeply that no one could believe the changes that is prevalent in the society today.

The district is inhabited by communities like Tangsa and Tutsa who traditionally worship 'Rangfraa' as the supreme God and the creator. According to the mythology of the Rangfraites (followers of Rangfraa), once Rangfraa or God appeared on the earth in human form, for which they call Fraa, to ascertain the quantum of Paap and Punya and found that Paap was unbearable, hence He declared annihilation on the earth. This was the first coming of God on the earth in any form and is widely termed and believed as 'First Coming of Rangfraa'.

But due to the onslaught of the insurgent movements from the neighbouring states coupled with

conversion at gun point and in order to revive the indigenous culture and re-instil confidence among the people to follow their own indigenous faith the Rangfraa Faith Promotion Society (RFPS) was founded In 1995 by the local social leaders at Changlang to protect, preserve and promote the indigenous faith, beliefs, mythology and culture of the community. The society built a temple (Rangsowmhum) of



Rangfraa at New Changlang village near Changlang town and installed the first idol of Rangfraa on the *Kartik Purnima* (Full Moon day) on 4th November in 1997. This historic event of installation of idol in temple and starting of worship of Rangfraa in Rangsowmhums is termed as the Second Coming of Rangfraa. Thereafter, the full moon day of every November month is being celebrated as Rangfraa Day every year by the Rangfraa believers.

The temple and prayer movement started by the RFPS got widespread support from the people and Rangsowmhums were established in villages after

villages. The increasing number of devotees attending the prayers and worships necessitated the compilation of the hymns of Rangfraa for the reference of the common people.

The Holy Text on Rangfraaism was ultimately brought into book form in the year 2006. When the preaching chapter of the Text was written, the author realized that Rangfraa had already descended

on the earth for the third time in full form and forever, hence the name of the Holy Text was given as 'The Great Third Coming of Rangfraa. The reception or welcoming ceremony of the Holy Text on

30th March 2006 was a great event in the history of the Rangfraites where around 5000 devotees gathered. For the Rangfraites, this was not merely a reception of the Holy Text but Rangfraa Himself in the form of sound.

Rangfraa Peace Rally is organized on 30th March after every three or five years. This gathering is not only to commemorate the great third coming of Rangfraa but also to promote the universal peace and brotherhood.

The Rangfraa Peace Rally this year on 30th March was organised with much vigour and enthusiasm. A colourful

procession by devotees- mostly youth -attired in traditional dresses in Changlang town was the main attraction of the Peace Rally. More than 6000 believers from four districts participated in the Rally. The Rangfraites marched with banners of their prayer halls shouting the slogans ' Loss of Faith is loss of Culture, Loss of Culture is loss of Identity', ' Conversion is violence', ' Spiritual knowledge and moral values is the core of religion', 'Bharat Mata ki Jai', 'Desh-Dharma ki Raksha kaun karega, hum karenge hum karenge' etc. It was culminated in a public meeting at Festival ground.

The procession was followed by a public meeting which started with flag hoisting and mass prayer for universal peace. The guests of the programme planted the saplings in the area. In his welcome address Sh N.K. Longchang, President RFPS informed the people about the background of peace rally. Dr. J.S. Mungrey Spokesperson RFPS read out the synopsis and progress of Rangfraa movement citing some examples of social reformation and consolidation of faith among the people in last 19 years. He reported that presently thousands of people worship their own God through 87 weekly prayer halls in Changlang, Tirap and Longding districts of Arunachal Pradesh. It must be noticed that it is the most disturbed area of the state. RFPS succeeded completely in eradication of social evil practises and superstitions from the society. The practices of abandoning the house/agricultural fields due to thunderbolt; improper funeral/burial in case of unnatural

death; sacrifices for appeasement of spirits during ailments have been completely stopped. The impact of the social reform movement had brought positive changes socially and economically in the society.

Sh Latsam Khimun, Secretary General and guiding force behind the expansion and consolidation of RFPS gave the peace message saying that we are not against any religion or organisation, we are working as per the God's will. There may be hurdles in our movement, but we have to face it boldly and overcome the allurements as well as the other materialistic desires to attain the higher level in spiritual life. Sh Phosum Khimun, Hon. Parliamentary Secretary of Arunachal State government appealed all to march ahead as it is the movement for self protection and social harmony. Sh Tesam Pongte Hon. MLA Changlang stressed upon the awareness among the downtrodden people and appealed the workers to reach the unreached and give them real knowledge of Dharma to lead the prosperous and peaceful life.

The Chief Guest of the programme Sh Wanki Lowang, Hon. Speaker of Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly in his brief address appreciated the efforts of RFPS and listed out its positive results. He appealed the gathering to take active part in this noble cause and to bring the basic changes towards a united and vibrant Arunachal Pradesh. He said that RFPS should lead the society.

Sh J. Nandakumar, All India Joint Secretary, Information &

Publicity of RSS who attended the function as Guest of Honour called the movement as a Unique & Historic one. He appreciated the awareness, efforts and impact of the movement in such a small period. He said that the basic reason behind the clashes in between civilizations are occurred after the arrival of Semitic religions on the Diaspora of the world, as the Semitic religions propagate the philosophy of " Salvation through our way only" but the religions those originated from the Holy land of Bharat preaches the theory of "salvation through our way also". So it is the struggle between 'ALSOISM and ONLYISM' and world can exist on the theory of Alsoism. The Bharatiya philosophy believes in not merely Tolerance but respect for all. The Onlyism damaged the very fabric of peace and harmony in the world and movements like RFPS only can re-establish it.

The milestone programme concluded with vote of thanks given by Sh N. Changmi, Secretary of the Organising Committee of the programme. A musical night was also organised on the occasion which promotes the new promising artists of the locality and various communities.

The grand success of the programme is not the sign of the expansion and consolidation of the movement only, but it is indicating the rising graph of the assertiveness among the indigenous faith followers of the state and warning bell for the negative forces.

Rangfraa Ajong !

Dr. Ambedkar, Savarkar and social revolution

- Er.Rajesh Pathak

On 14th April, 1942 on the occasion of 50th birthday of Babasahab Bhim Rao Ambedkar, Veer Savarkar sent following message to him - "With his personality, learning, skill in organization and capability of giving leadership Ambedkar would have become a great mainstay of the country today, but the success he achieved in eradicating untouchability and infusing self-confidence and spirit among untouchables by that he did valuable service to India. His work is of eternal nature, humanitarian and that of imbued with pride in one's own country. The feeling that a great man like Ambedkar is born in so-called untouchable-caste will eliminate despair prevailed in the hearts of untouchables, and from the life of Ambedkar they will get energy to face the dominance of so-called touchable. Having full respect to the personality and works of Ambedkar I wish for his long and healthy life." Savarkar or be it Ambedkar both had one goal of removing the distinction of high and low based upon caste from the society. In the eyes of Savarkar the Hindu organization and its strength had more importance and for that he wanted to eliminate untouchability. Where on the other hand Ambedkar was of the creed that the caste based distinction is unscriptural and inhumane therefore needed to be destroyed— as a result of which Hindu organization will itself come into existence. In Amdekar's view how important

was the organisation of Hindus was could be seen from his statement that—"Organisation of Hindu is national work. It is more important than swaraj. More than that of swaraj the protection of Hindus is important. If Hindus are not strong enough swaraj will get degenerated into slavery."

On 23rd Jan, 1924 Hindu Mahasabha was formed by the inspiration of Savarkar.

Three resolutions were passed then, and one of them was to initiate a movement to eradicate untouchability. Mass singing of bhajanas [devotional songs]; all-caste community feast; building of Patitpavan mandir; agitation for the right of entrance to untouchables inside Bitthal temple of Ratnagiri all these works done under the guidance of Savarkar greatly impressed the low-caste people. In Savarkar they began to see one who was truly concerned to their plight. So as to express their gratitude in return to this once on 13th August, 1924 the untouchable community of Bhagur, the birthplace of Savarkar, invited him on the day of Rakshabandhan utsav. In the honor of the guest women living there performed his aarti [a religious rite], and tied rakhi 'on the Savarkar's arm. So did the people of different castes who came to attend the ceremony, tying rakhis on each other arms. Later they together took oath of not observing casteism in social and religious activities. If it is to be seen that how deep Savarkar

felt about the necessity of eradication of untouchability then what he said on the occasion of Ganeshotsav in a Valmiki basti [locality of sweepers] of Nasik must be looked into. He said—"I wish I would see untouchability removed. After my death may those giving shoulder to my coffin be comprised of businessmen, of Dhed and Dome [the so-called low-castes], apart from Brahmins! Only on being consigned to flame by them all will my soul rest to peace." So that the sense of brotherhood nurtured among Hindus he considered it necessary to get public-tap and temple to be freed from caste-barrier. Not only this even all the activities concerning inter-caste harmony had his support. Therefore on 7th Oct, 1945 in Maharashtra when an inter-caste marriage between Navle and Karpe castes was organized then among those prominent personalities who blessed married couple was also Savarkar; others were Mahatma Gandhi, Jagadguru Shri Shankracharya, Dr Kurtkoti and Guruji Golwalkar Sar Sanghachalak of RSS.

For social harmony how seriously Savarkar was engaged in making his efforts that Ambedkar knew too well, which he even expressed on different occasions. One such occasion occurred when a temple in Peth killa in Ratnagiri was built by Bhagoji seth Keer ,

(Contd. to Page 20)

Letter to Kashmiri Youth

Even if you don't like India, here's why your best bet is to integrate J&K with it

- Chetan Bhagat

Dear Kashmiri friends (the ones who don't like India),

I write in this open forum because something terrible is happening in the Kashmir Valley. The recent events at NIT Srinagar only brought the situation to national attention. Some students burst crackers when India lost the T20 semi-final. Many students were beaten for raising the Indian flag. Thereafter, bloody clashes have broken out in north Kashmir.

I understand that there is little pro-India sentiment amongst locals in the Kashmir Valley. Many would hope rather the Valley be on its own, some wouldn't even mind being with Pakistan. I will not judge you. Despite being a patriotic Indian, I won't hold it against you if you hate India. You must and do have your reasons for it.

However, allow me to present another point of view. Allow me to tell you how your future will be best, on a practical basis, if the Kashmir Valley integrates and assimilates with India. This is not an emotional, political or historical argument. It is simply more rational for people in the Kashmir Valley who seek a better future to do it with India.

Sure, the experts will jump on me now. Experts who have made the Kashmir problem their fiefdom. However, if the problem were indeed solved, how will these people stay relevant? Hence, they always attack any solution with their elitist 'this is too

complicated an issue' stance. They love complicated. It gives them another conference to attend. You suffer with complicated, as the problem never gets solved.

The issue is complicated for sure. For those who don't know the Kashmir issue, here it is in a nutshell. India became independent. Princely states were assimilated. Jammu & Kashmir didn't accede. Pakistan attacked Kashmir, took half of it (and still controls it). Kashmir's ruler called India for help. In return for help J&K became part of India, but with riders.

J&K would have its own constitution; have more political independence than other states, while the Centre would handle defence, foreign affairs and communications. In theory, it was a good solution, a sort of one country two systems approach. In reality, it never worked.

Instead of two parents as planned, J&K became nobody's child and an orphan. Pakistan took advantage and used the common factor of Islam to start a militant movement. The Indian army tried to control it. However, it is difficult to control terrorism that co-exists with a civilian population (case in point: even the world's superpowers appear unable to control Islamic State).

Hence the Indian army, and India, only got a bad name in the Valley. Thus the 'we hate India' slogans and perennially unsolved Kashmir problem.

The question is, what is a Kashmiri youth to do now? First, it is important for everyone, not just Kashmiris, to understand the area and people involved. The J&K map we see in Indian textbooks is far from what exists on the ground. Half of what we see in the map is taken over by Pakistan and China. Even though India may claim it, unless we are okay with heavy civilian casualties (which we are not), we will never get it.

Hence, let's just focus on the half under Indian control, which can be divided into three areas: Ladakh, Jammu and the Valley. Most of the trouble is in the Kashmir Valley. This is only around 7% of the area Indians see on the J&K map and approximates the size of Manipur. In terms of people it is 7million, roughly the population of Chennai.

The terrain is rugged and the area is completely landlocked. Even if we were to indulge the argument that India is a terrible country and so Kashmir Valley should be on its own, can you really build a sustainable country out of it? It will be a tiny stub in a troubled area, abused by both India and Pakistan. With no real economy and extreme dependence on its giantneighbours, it risks becoming a cesspool of terrorism, drugs and smuggling.

There is also a risk of its being taken over by fundamentalist

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Technical Education: Prospects in Northeast

- S.P. Bhattacharya

With the completion of this year's Higher Secondary examinations, young boys and girls of our state aspiring for higher studies are now at the door-step of joining one or the other professional course or 'line', be it engineering, medical or any other branch of technology. For those interested in a career in engineering, some awareness of the prospect of degree level technical education in the Northeast is desirable before taking a decision regarding admission to any technical institute either here or outside the NE. The first degree level engineering college Assam Engineering College (AEC) in NE came up in 1955 at Guwahati which was followed by Jorhat Engineering College (JEC) at Jorhat in 1960 and Regional Engineering College (now NIT) at Silchar in 1967. However, at present we have a good number of engineering colleges (govt. & private combined) as well as some universities spread over the NE states, which have made it possible for young aspirants even in remote corners of the region to fulfil their dream of becoming engineering /technologists while remaining near home instead of having to go to far places like Bengaluru, Chennai, Pune etc., which in many cases are beyond the financial means of their guardians, A common entrance examination (CEE) is held around the month of May every year for admission into the government engineering colleges of Assam. Over the years it has been seen that those who are placed in higher position in the merit list

usually take admission in the state government colleges where the fees are much lower than those in private institutions. (Of course for reasons to be mentioned later, quite a few from amongst this category go to institutions outside NE also.) From the remaining category a good number of students take admission in the private institutions of the state while some also go to places outside the NE, more often influenced by peer pressure and glamour of big cities than for any consideration of better education facilities available there. For them, as the old saying goes, - 'the grass looks greener on the other side of the fence' Usually they come from economically well-to-do families. This migration of students from NE to more industrially developed northern and southern parts of the country will continue (and a vested interest group will try to perpetuate it) as long as this region remains backward in respect of trade, industry and commerce. But here is a word of caution. In these days of aggressive salesmanship and all-pervasive marketing strategies, it is quite possible that a prospective customer (admission seeker) may be misled into making a wrong selection of institute, Particularly if these are located in far off places outside the region It is always advisable that students and their guardians should ascertain the following points before setting out in search of the so-called greener pastures elsewhere 1. Whether the institute is AICTE recognized and affiliated to a good University. 2.

What is the available infrastructure in respect of buildings, classrooms, teaching faculty, laboratories, libraries, hostels (boys & girls) etc.

What is the teacher-student ratio which should be 1: 10 or even better. 1. Whether there is a Training and Placement department to ensure proper placement of students. 2. Campus security is also an important criterion. 3. Whether there are provisions of scholarships and free-studentships for meritorious and poor students. 4. Last but not the least, the expenses to be incurred in completing the course. About 50-60 years ago, engineering courses generally meant a degree or diploma in Civil/Electrical / Mechanical Engineering. Then came Chemical /Electronics/ Telecom Engineering and a few other branches of engineering. However, now there is a wide range of technical streams including Computer Science and Information Technology to choose from Quite a few of these newer streams are also offered in some of the institutions of the Northeast where one can obtain an engineering degree (including postgraduate degree in some of the institutions) at almost half the expenses needed for studying outside. Therefore, the parents and guardians should welcome such opportunities and get relief from tension and anxiety associated with sending their young children to far off places. Moreover, getting higher education in one's own social

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A Glimpse of The Deities of The Rabhas

- Dipankar Rabha

The Rabhas are considered a scheduled tribe of Assam and West Bengal in the Constitution of India. Anthropologically they belong to the Mongoloid stock and linguistically, the Rabhas belong to the Sino-Tibetan group. They are scattered in various places, especially in Assam, Meghalaya, West Bengal, Bhutan, and in Bangladesh, too. Like other tribal groups and sub-groups of North-East India, this group has a distinct language, diverse art and culture, traditional attire, socio-cultural rites and rituals, fairs and festivals. The Rabhas have similarity in culture and language with the other members of the Koch group such as Kacharis, Mech, Koch Hajongs and others.

In the present times, their religion may be considered a combination of Hinduism and animism. But in the erstwhile times, they had many spiritual beliefs. A movement was then led

by some eminent Rabha and Hindu leaders. The Rabhas had keen interest in accepting Hinduism. They organised a huge yajna, and through this act, the Hindu society agreed to include the Rabhas into their society. Rishi is the main God among the Rabhas; most Rabha households will have a place of worship where the Rishi is represented by a pot of rice on a bamboo platform, to which offerings of fowls and pigs are made. This place of worship is located in the northern corner of the northern room.

The Rabha community worships various deities; some of the major ones are as follows:

Baykho deity: The Baykho is the principal deity of the Rabhas, and is associated with crops; worshipped only once a year with great ceremony during the month of April or May. Bay means 'deity' and Kho means 'great'. Hence, the name indicates a great deity.

In the Baykho festival, four goddesses are worshipped – *Susari, Nakati, Tamai* and *Daduri*. Originally, the festival continued for seven days and nights. But nowadays, the festival is celebrated only for three days or three nights. The first day of the festival is called *Narrhitarayk*, which may rightly be termed as the Purification rite. The Maregan (a form of Oja-pali associated with the worship of Snake Goddess Bisahari) performers are appointed for this festival, rice-powder is sprinkled on the rooftops of the houses of each family in the community. This act is called *Nakjunkay*. Another rite is *Killa-dibikay* (fort construction).

Khokchi: Khokchi is a popular deity of the Rabhas. Present times, Khokchi is worshipped by the Rabhas at the Bamundang Hill in a three-foot deep hole. On this occasion, 32 deities are worshipped, some of these deities are *Dharam Thakur, Rupchand Thakur, Jagannath Thakur, Rangbudi, Ghai Rangdan, Champay*, etc.

Langa: Langa is another deity and is worshipped generally among the three sub-groups of the Rabhas (Pati, Dahari, Bitalia) on the sacred bank of the river in the month April or May. The Pati Rabhas worship Langa as the major deity, along

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What one man can accomplish

How many odds can a man face, how much work can he do? Again and again, there comes an intrepid soul to show others the limitless possibilities of human achievement. The latest is a godman from Punjab who is also a warrior against environmental degradation. Without any help from the government, he has brought back to life an entire river over 100 miles long. At the turn of the millennium in 2000, Sant Balbir Singh Seechewal embarked on a mission to clean up the Kali Bein, a tributary of the Beas river in Doaba region. The outlook was bleak — what was once considered a sacred river had been nearly done to death by industrial effluents, domestic sewage, garbage and silt. Parts of the river had gone dry for many years, while other parts frequently overflowed into surrounding areas and caused extensive water-logging. Resolving to take matters into his own hands, Sant Seechewal mobilized a team of volunteers and kick-started an awareness drive. Local people were told how rampant pollution had been choking their holy river to death, and what had to be done to revive it. They were taught not to dump their waste into the river, but to dispose it elsewhere where it could be treated. Money for the campaign was raised from villages along the river. The volunteers then waded into the filthy waters, clearing out

tonnes of rubbish along with silt and water hyacinth. Once the natural springs were restored, the river filled up again along its entire length.

Meanwhile, a beautification phase was undertaken — brick roads were laid along the river bank, fruit and flowering trees were planted, bathing ghats were built. After 15 years, Kali Bein is now teeming with life. Thanks to the cleanliness drive, thousands of hectares of land have been reclaimed from water-logging in Hoshiarpur district and desertification in Kapurthala district. The threat of flash floods has receded in the confluence of Beas and Satluj rivers. Sant Seechewal, also known as 'Eco Baba', is now a leading environmentalist feted in the country and abroad. He has been broad-basing his campaign along several fronts — developing an underground sewerage system with the Punjab government to treat sewage water naturally and use it for irrigation; fabricating a machine to separately treat polythene, glass and metals from garbage; and setting up nurseries to distribute free of cost over one lakh saplings among the local people. Even the Central government has reportedly sought his inputs in its efforts to begin cleaning up the Ganges. Appreciating Sant Seechewal's mission helps us put in perspective the herculean efforts of environmental

crusader Jadav 'Molai' Payeng, the country's Forest Man. If Eco Baba Seechewal has brought back to life a river, Forest Man Payeng has single-handedly grown a 550 hectare forest on the sand bars of the Brahmaputra at Kokilamukh.

Beginning with some bamboo saplings in 1979, Payeng planted thousands of valuable local trees over the decades to build up a thriving ecosystem. Even Royal Bengal tigers, rhinos, elephants and large apes have been known to make Molai's Forest their home. Jadav Payeng has lived to earn the worldwide acclaim that is rightfully his. But the country has only lately woken up to the single-minded exploits of its Mountain Man, Bihar's Dashrath Manjhi who passed away in 2007. The film 'Manjhi - The Mountain Man' released last year brought to screen the story of a landless laborer of the lowly Musahar caste, who cut a path right through a rocky hill with only chisel, hammer and crowbar. It took 22 years for Manjhi to carve the path that on completion would be 360 feet long, 30 feet wide and 25 feet high. Thanks to it, villagers from the remote Atri block of Gaya can pass through the Gehlour hills to Wazirganj with its hospitals, schools and government offices. A once arduous journey of around 75

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Illegal influx and Plight of indigenous tribals of Assam

- Ractim Goswami

Immigration has always been a reality for Assam since long. The composite population of Assam was the result of the migration of various ethnic groups to the soil. These groups were not large in number and therefore subsequently assimilated with the existing population and culture of the soil in order to sustain their existence. In the long run, this process eventually led to the growth of the common Assamese culture with the contribution from these ethnic groups who lost their separate identity in the process. However, the migration of the large mass of population from erstwhile East Pakistan has a different story to share. The massive influx from East Pakistan, later Bangladesh, and the continuous annexation of the arable land of the soil of Assam, has been a major source of turbulence in the State almost since the time of their entry.

The major socio-ethnic conflicts in the State so far between the Bangladeshi Muslim migrants and the local ethnic groups are supplemented by the reason of economic insecurity caused by the rapidly decreasing arable land also to protect the right over land, language and culture of the local ethnic groups. The large-scale immigration of Muslim agricultural immigrants from the then East Bengal was initiated under the patronage of the British rulers in the pretext of enhancement of agricultural outputs and land revenue. However, after the independence of India the flow of the illegal

Bangladeshi migrants was massive and strong enough to change the demography of the State in a quick span of time. The condition remains unchanged up till now and the influx continues resulting in conflict between the two because of fear and deeper social and economic insecurity of the local ethnic groups of losing their very economic ground in their own land. A large number of ethnic groups have been displaced so far from their traditional cultivable land because of this massive influx and it is undoubtedly a serious setback as it triggers the quickest possible search of the answer to the question: "How will this nationality, the Assamese, be able to keep its numerical position as the majority in Assam in the face of uncontrolled and inassimilable immigration?"

The displacement of local ethnic groups caused by this massive influx of East Bengal Muslim helped these migrants to continue their annexation to gain as much land as possible that once belonged to the indigenous ethnic groups of Assam. Loss of large areas of traditional tribal cultivation land in the hands of the land-hungry East Bengal farmers turned out to be a serious setback for the tribal peasantry section in Assam. To a large extent, it was also the tendency of the tribal population to live in isolation that contributed to this setback. Many of them then settled down in the forest areas leaving behind their traditional cultivable land. Today these tribal

people are facing eviction threat from the government and intense conflict is taking place between the two over the right over the land. On the other hand, the annexation of the land reserved for the tribal people by the illegal Bengal Muslim peasants continues.

At the time of national independence, the then Chief Minister of Assam Gopinath Bordoloi tried to redress this problem through implementing the 'Line System' and creating tribal belts and blocks in 1946. Under this system, villages with 50% or more population of the tribal and backward communities were brought under the jurisdiction of tribal belts and blocks. But such measures failed because of the gradual encroachment of the Muslim agricultural immigrants into the protected territories meant for the tribal people. In fact, after Independence the State had the requirement of a well-planned socio-economic policy for securing the rights and aspirations of various ethnic groups living over the territory for ages. But the reality is that it is the government itself which instead of protecting, is contributing to tribal displacement in Assam by installing industrial and irrigational complexes in the reserved tribal areas. The Bodo peasantry section is the worst sufferers of the displacement in this context. In the last four to five decades, a huge number of Bodo

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An Islamic cleric's call to kill Hindus – highly condemnable

- Maulana MA Rahman (Rtd IPS)

Mar 21, 2016 : I draw your kind attention to the news item with the headline "Allah has bestowed Pakistanis the honour to destroy India, kill Hindus", appearing on 5th page, 7th column of your esteem paper dated the 4th January 2016. This is claimed to have been said in a lecture delivered by a prominent Islamic cleric namely Irfan-ul-Haq according to the news. There was a big earthquake of 6.8 magnitudes in the early morning on this day and the news item on the same day has jolted our conscience with more magnitudes. An Islamic cleric means a Muslim religious leader.

First of all, the alleged statement of the cleric is out of the precincts of Islamic Jurisprudence or tenets (Islamic Laws) and hence is his own ill-conceived concoction. It is nothing but only a hate speech. It is therefore a 'bidaat' (an Arabic word meaning fresh innovation/distortion in Islamic religion) and cannot be acted upon. He is trying to invoke the common illiterate Muslims including minor children to back up his argument or statement so as to create an anti-India feeling through such calls. There is nothing like Pakistan or Bangladesh or any other 57 Muslim countries for fighting the infidels or idol worshippers. There is no such Islamic law as freedom of religion is enjoined in the Qur'aan. Islam is also free from extreme views as it is purely a religion of moderation according to Muhammad, the Holy Prophet of Allaah (peace be upon him).

The cleric may be a citizen of India or Pakistan. But patriotism (hubb-e-watan) is both a universal dictum and a religious duty. It is a duty to all citizens of India irrespective of castes and creeds and more so to the Muslims. Disloyalty/disobedience to the legitimate government/authority amounts to disloyalty to the Holy Prophet and further to God according to the Qur'aan (Chapter 4 verse 59). Thus his call is purely un-Islamic and a misguidance. Misguidance angers God (Qur'aan-1:7). God-fearing, peace-loving, tolerance and understanding, helping the poor through Zakat (a wealth tax) and charity, brotherhood, religious advice etc are the unforshakable essences of fundamental Islamic spirits and no one can flout it. The call by the cleric contravenes these spirits.

According to Islamic Law killing people on any excuse without providing reasonable opportunity of hearing in a fair trial amounts to inexcusable major sin liable to be punished both in this world and the world thereafter, no matter person killed is Muslim, or non-Muslim.

The fundamentals of Islamic religion remain the same and do not change with age and we don't require; any intervention by such radical cleric who goes beyond his limits. Today world is witnessing many bleedings in the Indian sub-continent, the Middle East countries, the North Africa and the spillover in Europe and elsewhere among the innocents caused by such clerics of extreme

radicalism who have a very low level of education (absence of general, modern and scientific and legal educations) and who are indulging in extreme religious teachings in complete perversion of Islam. The illiterate people cannot command their minds rather are commanded by literate people or even by illiterate people. Here an illiterate cleric is commanding other illiterates. His call, therefore, is highly uncalled for. He has dogmatized Islam to the levels of local cults/beliefs/Gods. Islam is a universal religion with 1.7 billion followers spread all over the globe. The cleric can bluff few of his blind and emotional followers in wrong beliefs but he cannot bluff all. Prophets, Muhammad and Ibrahim (peace be upon both), broke the idols in their times of Prophethoods but never killed the idol worshippers. Then why the said cleric calls to kill Hindus for worshipping idols.

The very name of Islam is associated with peace and tolerance (sabar). Any call by any cleric without these fundamental foundations deems to have said for his personal ends or political reasons. We reject it outright. The religious discourse needs to be made more relevant to the basic fundamentals of Islam and world peace. Peace should start from one's inner-self. That is a major Jihad. The said cleric should first preach peace and become a peaceful person then we are ready to listen to him. We shall never listen a jihadist like him with guns in his hand. Without peace or non-violence, any religion or

worship is meaningless and unacceptable to God. We do not pray under the shadow of guns or showers of bullets or any other coercion.

Allaah, the Almighty, says in the Qur'aan (1) to you be your religion and to me my religion (chapter 109/verse 6) and (2) there is no compulsion in religion (chapter 2/verse 256). The end result is inter-religion peace, understanding and tolerance as adduced from these contexts. Then why should we create ill feeling and intolerance against others' religions such as Hinduism, Christianity, and Buddhism etc. Extra judicial killings or killings without trial in the name of any religion, whether of Muslims or non-Muslims are illegal and highly sinful acts. The said cleric's call for killing the Hindus is null and void and we reject it outright. A legal action should be started against him.

The Holy Prophet of Islam is totally against extremism/terrorism as evident from his sayings – halaka mutanattauna – meaning – ruins are the extremists/terrorists (Muslim Sharif). When a terrorist commits a crime the whole society is intimidated and disturbed like an earthquake is felt and causes havoc far and wide. There is a tone of extremism in what the cleric said. He should seek or encourage peaceful means for settling and resolving differences and problems and should not ignite Islamic tenets. Islamic tenets consist of both words and deeds.

A great responsibility sits on the shoulder of a cleric that he should not misuse it. He seems to be communalist or a jihadist suspect. Jihad, during the spread of Islam by the Holy Prophet, was

justified on the principal of right of self defence against the invaders for the sake of preservation of Islam and for protection – of lives and properties but he never misused it by invading other countries rather he adopted peaceful and persuasive means all through. In Kazakhstan, a central Asian secular Muslim country, the beards of about 13,000 clerics got saved by an order of the country's Supreme Court, and women's burkhas have also been banned in the public to prevent the influence of foreign extreme radical clerics as well as what is going on in Afghanistan, a neighbouring war torn Muslim country where the clerics/Taliban are enforcing their strict Islamic terms and want to take over the country's administration. (The United States and Pakistan are accountable for the Creation of Islamic extremist Group called 'Taliban' or the madrassa students in 1979 to oust the then Soviet Union, during the cold war, from Afghanistan in the eighties. After the eviction of Soviet Union from Afghanistan, the Taliban took over and turned their guns towards USA who invaded Afghanistan, routed the Taliban and installed a democratic government that is ruling with all commitments from the USA). In Pakistan, an Islamic State, 181 Madrassas have very recently been closed by the government to prevent the country's clerics from delivering hate speeches as well as idolizing extreme Islamic radicalism. What the two countries have done is for the protection of their countries against the Muslim fanatics and anarchists inspired by radical clerics and not against the religion of Islam. This may follow suit by other countries both Islamic and

non-Islamic in the days ahead. Islam does not protect Muslims but it is the other way. If the protector does not protect Islam, Allaah's anger may fall on them because He is the overall Protector.

Islam and its followers are safe and not discriminated against in all the countries and religions of the world and no country has declared war/crusade/jihad against it for which jihad can be called in. Many Westerners and Easterners, more of whom females, have been converting voluntarily to Islam oft and on. There are more than five million American Muslims in the USA alone and 4.4 million in Europe. Some are migrants also. Even, Husain Barack Obama, the President of the United States of America, the most powerful nation in the world, was born to an American mother by an African Muslim father. He used to visit mosques during his tour of the countries. He even visited mosques in his own country to demonstrate religious freedom. There are also 13 Muslim MPs in the UK Parliament, eight of whom are women. Muslims in India are no exceptions. In the Indian Parliament there are 23 Muslim MPs as of now, one of them also is India's Cice President for two terms. Of about 250 million Muslims in India today only handful of them came from outside the country but majority of them were converts from the Hindus mostly belonging to low caste Harijans, Dalits and other unaffiliated racial groups who were once marginalized outcasts in the Hindu society. The Dalit community facing the caste discrimination even in these days is still a scar in the Indian democracy. So, overwhelming

majority of Muslims in India are not only descendants of these aborigines by blood and birth but also are the ones affiliated to the country as mainstream citizens as the Hindus are. Muslim and Hindus, therefore, are very close to one another in our country by blood and race. The Indian Muslims therefore are minority community by religion only but our citizenship is unquestionable. With reference to the religion of Islam, therefore, JIHAD today in any country against idol-worshippers seems to be irrelevant, unjustified and highly debatable. Even if such thing surfaces anywhere we should first resort to the proper forums like the UNO, the International Court of Justice, the supreme courts of the sovereign countries and the likes, instead of starting an undeclared war. Fighting the evils under the laws of the land is also a Jihad. The present blood-letting or bloodshed worldwide in the name of Islam causing untold deaths under the leaderships like Taliban or self-proclaimed caliphates or any Islamic cleric is totally uncalled for. The Qur'aan also approves of 'democracy'. According to the Islamic History, caliphates were never inherited nor assumed rather elected according to the words of Allaah "the voice of the people is the voice of Allaah" (al-Qur'aan). The third world war seems to be very near at the present level of international tensions and instabilities of which armed revolution resorted to under the radical Muslim caliphates/clerics may be one. Their movements are purely political and nothing to do with the religion of Islam. This will not bring any solution except bringing bad names to Islam

which is the newest religion with a complete code of conduct and belief enshrined in the Qur'aan – the words of God and the Hadths – the words of His last prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

In this living world all are equal in the eyes of God as the Holy Prophet of Allaah said that the non-believers are also the servants of Allaah. Therefore, humanism is enough for all purposes among the intra-religious people. All the fair transactions among the Hindus and the Muslims according to the rule of law are valid. Religion or righteousness is a personal matter. Whom to be punished and whom rewarded rest only with God not with clerics or anybody. Muhammad, the Holy Prophet of Islam (pbuh-peace be upon him) said – "If a Muslim/believer commits a crime against a non-believer in full knowledge, then on the Day of Judgment, I shall be the first to give testimony against the believer" (Hadith). So it's understandable where the cleric(s) stand.

Last but not the least; we may raise a question as to why the Muslim clerics are spewing such types of hate speeches against the Hindus in respect of this country. The reasons are not far to seek. Besides the communal politics of the BJP government in the centre and its overt Hindutva agenda, it is believed that from time to time the Hindu nationalists like, Shri Ram Sena, RSS, Siva Sena, Bajrang Dal, Biswa Hindu Parisad, the Hindu Sena, Purvanchal Sena etc keep on doing communal activities or politics directed against the Indian Muslims on many occasions culminating many communal riots

from time to time on mere excuses. On the contrary, crimes committed by the Hindus against the Hindus or against the country are far worst such as Maoist/Naxal movements, Freedom Movements in Assam, Manipur, Tripura, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh. We cannot also ignore freedom movement by the Christian Nagas in the North East (Nagaland for the Christ). To curb their activities draconian Acts like AFSPA have been enforced in many states of the North-East India for years resulting in the deaths of thousands of civilians and security forces – without any visible conviction(s) of the perpetrators so far to mention. The Hindu nationalists should also include in their agenda to curb or solve some of these movements as a priority because they belong to the same racial and religious community, On the other hand they are beating into the bush and seek soft targets like Muslims, Christians, Dalits and other low caste Hindus. It is nothing but one law for one and others for others.

May, Allaah the Almighty, grant sane to these self-style blind Muslim clerics and caliphates who are up in arms or resort to Jihad and the Hindu nationalists who indulge in communal politics including Hindutva. Islam is also a religion of advice/ correction/ reformation/ improvement/ warning for human beings. My aim of writing in reaction to the misinformation of the said cleric will go towards this direction and nothing else. It was delayed as it took time in the collection of the relevant materials.

(<http://www.thesangaiexpress.com/an-islamic-clerics-call-to-kill-hindus-highly-condemnable/>)

Uniform Civil Code: SC seeks Centre's reply in 6 weeks

No Hindu Code Bill, No Muslim Personal Law, India should be governed under Common Civil Code.....
Supreme Court asks Centre to file committee report on personal laws in a view to introducing Common Civil code.

New Delhi, Mar 28, 2016: The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Centre to file before it the report of a committee which was constituted earlier to look into the aspects of personal laws relating to marriage, divorce and custody prevalent in various religious minorities, including Muslims.

A bench comprising Chief justice T S Thakur and Justice U U Lalit asked additional solicitor general Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, to submit the report within six weeks in the court.

The bench also asked the ministry of minority affairs to file its response to the petition filed by one Shayara Bano challenging the constitutionality of Muslim practices of polygamy, triple talaq (talaq-e-bidat) and nikah halala.

Talaq-e-bidat is a Muslim man divorcing his wife by pronouncing more than one talaq in a single tuhr (the period between two menstruations), or in a tuhr after coitus, or pronouncing an irrevocable instantaneous divorce at one go (unilateral triple-talaq).

Meanwhile, the bench directed the apex court registry to make available within six weeks the

copy of judicial records of a petition on the issue which was taken note of as a separate petition by it.

The Supreme Court had earlier this month sought response of the Centre on Bano's plea challenging constitutionality of Section 2 of the Civil Code in so far as it seeks to recognise and validate polygamy, triple talaq and nikah halala, and had tagged the matter with a similar suo motu petition.

Bano has said she was subjected to cruelty and dowry demands from her husband and in-laws and was administered drugs that "that caused her memory to fade, kept her unconscious" and made her "critically ill" at which point her husband divorced her by triple talaq.

The petitioner has also challenged the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939, saying that it fails to provide Indian Muslim women with protection from bigamy.

Bano has stated in her petition that the issue of gender discrimination against Muslim women under Muslim personal

laws, specifically the lack of safeguards against arbitrary divorce and second marriage by a Muslim husband during currency of first marriage notwithstanding the guarantees of the Constitution, needs to be examined by the Supreme Court.

"Muslim women have their hands tied while the guillotine of divorce dangles, perpetually ready to drop at the whims of their husbands who enjoy undisputed power. Such discrimination and inequality hoarsely expressed in the form of unilateral triple-talaq is abominable when seen in light of progressive times of the 21st century.

"Further, once a woman has been divorced, her husband is not permitted take her back as his wife even if he had pronounced talaq under influence of any intoxicant, unless the woman undergoes nikah halala which involves her marriage with another man who subsequently divorces her so that her previous husband can re-marry her," her plea has said.

(<http://hinduexistence.org/2016/03/28/uniform-civil-code-sc-seeks-centres-reply-in-6-weeks/>)

Assam Polls: Muslim Man Divorces Wife After She Votes For BJP

Guwahati, Apr 15, 2016: In a bizarre incident, a Muslim man reportedly divorced his wife in an Assam village as she voted for BJP during the state Assembly elections.

According to Assam's regional newspapers, the

incident happened in a village named Donam Addahati in Sonitpur district, where villagers have strong inclination towards the Congress.

However, one Dilwara Begum, wife of Ainuddin,

decided to cast her vote to BJP candidate Pramod Borathakur and when she informed the same to her husband, he decided to end their marriage of 10 years.

(<http://www.nelive.in/assam/news/assam-polls-muslim-man-divorces-wife-after-she-votes-bjp>)

Tripura Celebrates *Garia Puja*

Agartala, Apr 16, 2016: Garia Puja, the biggest festival of the tribals in Tripura is being celebrated with pomp and gaiety across the state. Thousands of people are thronging in to the pandals made with uniquely crafted bamboos to offer their puja and also to participate in the mela and cultural programmes being organised.

The state level Garia Puja festival was organised at Manikyabari of Atharabholo ADC village under Killa block of Udaipur. Inaugurating the festival, Governor Tathagata Roy highlighted the high spirit of everybody's welfare involved with Baba Garia. He said Garia puja is

the cementing factor for bringing amity and harmony among different section of the society cutting across tribal, non-tribal and religious differences. Chief Guest of the occasion, the rural development minister Naresh Jamatia said the apple of the Garia Puja is not confined within any community. The annual number of the Jamatia Hoda's mouthpiece 'Baisu' was released on the occasion.

The state level festival was organised by the Jamatia Hoda, the highest body of the Jamatia community which has a tradition of its existence for long 425 years. This community is the custodian of the images of Garia and every

year the high priest of the community presides over the annual event. The seven day long procession with the two images of Baba Garia is the main attraction of the festival where thousands of people participate.

Rampada Jamatia, president of the Baba Garia Mission, said the main aim of the festival and puja is to pray peace for all. He also recalled the glorious role the Jamatia Hoda played in the state in containing insurgency and its contribution for bringing peace in other insurgency ravaged states of the region.

(<http://www.nelive.in/tripura/art-culture/tripura-celebrates-garia-puja>)

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Shad Suk Mynsiem comes to a colourful end

Shillong, Apr 12, 2016: The Shad Suk Mynsiem (Dance of the happy heart), showcasing the cultural heritage and rituals of the Khasis came to a close at Weiking ground, Jaiaw here on Monday in the presence of hundreds who turned up to witness the festivities.

The sweltering heat during the day did not deter the crowd and the followers of Seng Khasi from turning out in large numbers to participate in the annual celebration which began on Saturday.

The three-day annual festivity formerly known as the 'Shad Phur' is a thanks giving dance which symbolizes offering of salutations to God, homage to their ancestors and proclamation of unity of the Khasi people.

People present at the venue were thankful for a beautiful day as dancers made merry and matched steps rhythmically with the shrill sound of the pipe (*tangmuri*) and the inviting beats of the drum.

Even as daylight drew to a close, people thronged the venue in large numbers to have a glance of the cultural performance preserved by the Seng Khasi since ages.

Maidens decked in traditional attire danced in the inner circle while the men swayed with whips and swords enthusiastically to the music round the women symbolizing that the dignity and honor of women are protected by men.

Speaking to The Shillong Times, spokesperson of Seng Khasi, Dapbiang Kharmih, said,



"The dance is our offering to God, the Almighty who has bestowed upon us blessings of good health and wealth."

She narrated that the festival was originally held at Mawkhar from 1902. However, to accommodate the increasing number of adherents of the traditional religion, it was later shifted to Weiking ground in 1911.

"There was a time when there was a case relating to the land at Weiking ground where people who no longer adhered to the traditional religion fought over the land. However, the Seng Khasi

won the case," Kharmih said.

'Increasing number of people coming back to the Seng Khasi fold'

She further said, "In the very early days of its existence, there were very few devotees but currently there is an increasing number of people who are coming back to the Seng Khasi fold."

Commenting on the significance of the dance, she said, "Shad Suk Mynsiem characterizes the cultural and religious aspects of the practices of the Seng Khasi, thereby adding essence to the dance."

"Even after offering our prayers at Mawkhar, all the dancers ought to offer prayers before dancing at the Weiking ground," she added.

On being asked about the degrading morals witnessed in the society, R. Rynjah, secretary, culture, Seng Khasi said people these days have lost conscience and are not practicing the valuable tenets of what one preaches.

"Religion is personal as it is up to the individual. If we dig deep, the festivals and merriment are the fruits of religion," Rynjah said.

(<http://www.nelive.in/meghalaya/art-culture/shad-suk-mynsiem-comes-colourful-end>)

(Contd. from Page 9)

Ambedkar, Savarkar and social revolution

and Savarkar sent an invitation to Ambedkar to inaugurate it. In response to the invitation Ambedkar wrote a letter to him—"Due to my engagement in previously scheduled programme I am unable to join the function; but as you are in social field this has lent an occasion to draw a favorable conclusion in this matter. Destruction of untouchability alone will not make untouchables an inseparable part of Hindu community. Chaturvarnya [fourfold varnas] itself should be abolished. I am extremely delighted to say that you are among those few who felt the necessity of this."

Cheiraoba Festival Of Manipur (A Report on New Year of Manipur)

Manipur is one fascinating hilly state located in north eastern fringes of India. Every year thousands of tourists visit the state to explore its awesome natural splendor. However, the attraction of Manipur is not really limited to its forests, hills, amazing wildlife or lakes. The state is also home to various tribes that cling to their traditional ways of life. Exposure to modern life or religious conversion has not led the tribes to forget their festivals or rituals. On the contrary, they celebrate their ancient festivals with much vigor and love. One such example is the Cheiraoba Festival.

Nuances of Cheiraoba Festival

The tribes in Manipur celebrate a number of festivals all over the year. While some of these are



related with harvest, there are a few religious ones. Cheiraoba Festival is associated with celebrating New Year.

This is a major and sacred festival for the people of Manipur. The residents clean up their households and adorn them. It is the time when they visit friends and relatives and exchange gifts. On this day, the locals climb adjacent hill tops since they believe the act symbolizes rise of human civilization.

The rites and rituals

Cheiraoba also called Sajibu Cheiraoba is an annual and religious festival which is held in April. The Meitei tribes are particular about celebrating this festival. They worship the deity called 'Sidaba Mapu'. They believe this festival is auspicious because this is held at the joining of two years. So, it is their duty to pay respect to the deity for good fortune.

Apart from cleaning the houses for 'Cheiraoba', the locals also discard old kitchen utensils and clothes. On the day of the festival, the elderly member in each house reform a ritual for prosperity and



long life at the gate. They worship deity Lainingthou Sanamahi in the early morning.

The locals make offerings of rice, vegetables and other foods to the deities like *Iram Shenba Tushemba, Kum Sana Kumliklai and Lamaba Tumaba*. Cheiraoba is associated with another festival called 'Saroi Khangba'. Both men and women take part in preparing the dishes for offering to the deities. The dishes are offered to the deity in banana leaves as per their ancient traditions. The places of home where the foods are offered are decorated with mud and flowers.

After the offering to the deities are over, the dishes made for feast are exchanged with neighbors and relatives. This is known as *Mathel Laanba*. At the evening, the hill climbing part takes place.

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What one man can accomplish

kms over or round the hill was reduced to only a few kilometers. And Manjhi did this because he did not want other villagers to suffer as he had, when his wife died due to lack of medical care too far away in Wazirganj. The country's

political masters never tire of exhorting the people during election time how 'every vote matters'. But it is for the people to realize, at all times, that each and every one of them matters. Whether it is battling climate change, cleaning up our habitat,

working for the betterment of an entire people or any great purpose — what one man or woman can do will keep surprising us.

(<http://www.sentinelassam.com/editorial/story.php?sec=3&subsec=0&id=263404&dlP=2016-04-11&ppr=1#.Vx79JeZslaY>)

**Request for an ARTICLE on the topic
'Traditional Administrative Systems & Youth Institutions among the
Janajatis of Northeast Bharat'**

Adarneeeya Mahoday/ Mahodaya,

Sadar Panam.

Hope, you are in good health and spirit with the grace of Almighty.

You must be aware that **Heritage Explorer** is being published regularly on monthly intervals with a Special Issue every year on the occasion of Independence Day. Each of its Special Issues use to concentrate upon a particular topic to depict its overall views and its socio-cultural impact of this region.

This time, on the occasion of Independence Day 2016, we have planned to publish it on the topic- **'Traditional Administrative Systems & Youth Institutions among the Janajatis of Northeast Bharat'**.

A number of Janajati communities use to dwell here in this region, may they have a small or big population, but each of them have their own social administrative systems which is rooted in their village and family life too. All such systems are inherited by them through generations from their ancestors. All of them were learned people who had developed such systems keeping in mind the impact of all such systems in the community life for all times to come. Such people are rare who can see into the very essence of all such systems- why and how they were evolved in the society, their impact; what new systems can be evolved and what modifications/ reforms should be done to the existing ones, etc. etc.

You are hereby requested to kindly concentrate over the subject, the elders and knowledgeable persons of your community may also be consulted, and prepare a write-up on the subject. A few points are being given below for your reference:

1. Family and Clan administration – Who is the head of the family and a Clan and how it is being administered? How the family or clan property is inherited?

2. Village and Area administration :It is found among the different communities of the NE Region that there are village heads as '**Gaon Burha**' and even regional heads i.e. **Sardar** etc. Govts. Comes and goes but our village and area administration remain untouched which is a unique thing! Such a system is in practice since time immemorial. How they are appointed and how they function? What are the benefits of this system?

3. Youth Institutions : From the books of history we came to know that 'YOUTH DORMITORIES' were existing in almost every villages among the different janajatis of Northeast. Such dormitories were in practice in other parts of country too which had played an important role to train the youths and in inculcating good morals among them. Also they were served as a ready youth force for cultivation as well as for the security of the village.

In this way there may be several other good and useful systems too among several communities which should be concentrated for the knowledge of our countrymen. Such writings will also serve as important records for all time to come. Thanking you.

Yours,

(Amarendra Brahma)
Editor, Heritage Explorer

Note:

1. We expect to have this write-up from you by 15th June 2016.
2. Kindly send a copy of your photograph with the article along with a short bio-data.
3. Some photographs should be sent, if possible, in relation to your article.
4. An original write-up of your own will be appreciated. For this, elders, knowledgeable persons and priests should be consulted and their names and village must be mentioned in the article. It will carry more value for the write-up.
5. Kindly mention name of the Janajati/Community about which the article is written, their population and name of districts and states in which they dwell should also be mentioned as introduction.

6. Article send to The Editor, Heritage Foundation, 30 F.C. Road, Uzan Bazar, Post Box No.164, Guwahati-781001 or e-mail to: ourheritage123@gmail.com

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DONYI POLOISM AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER RELIGION

Mantra with Polytheist approaches. It strongly believes in the existence of owner and care taker spirits for every things including both living and non living thing. My mother used to tell me that even each house hold articles has a care taker God, so we should never handle them rudely least we may annoy the care taker spirit. We worship the spirit of Paddy field, River, jungle, and other element to bless us with their resources and never harvest them covetously beyond one's requirement.

Further, it is also evident from their two way (in and out) approaches of oral tradition, one *lyego Koa nii*, with denial approach and goes to *jimi-jama* in a state of complete emptiness. Other is *lyego kolin nii*, it sings *Ayyu* from complete emptiness by relating the creation of elements, matter, animal, humans, and their progression and come back to today's age.

Holding it to be true that Ved Vyasa has compiled Upanishad and Veda from all the hymns and chanting of informal religion of those days, I consider Donyi-Poloism an informal ancient and pristine religion as the root of all religions, Upanishad and the Vedas are the Trunk, Buddhism, Janism, Hinduism, even the Judaism Islam etc. are the branches of this spiritual knowledge's evolutionary Tree.

Rightly expressed by a friend, if the Donyi-Poloism is Milk and formal organized religions would be Butter.

CONVERSION

The question of honorable Ex-CM, P.K.Thongun sir, is related to conversion. I know almighty likes unity in diversity; not uniformity. It is expressed in her Creation, the composition of Universe itself. As it is composed of different elements, matters etc on the principle of Unity in diversity. If God wished uniformity she could have created this universe and world only with a single element.

Asking to get converted is ambiguous for me. Imagine my Heart asking my other organs of body, be like me and get converted, I would not be standing here like this, but would be just a lump of pulsating meat. It is complete ignorance and intolerant act obsessed with only own religious concept one who propagates conversion. According to me is an act against the desire and likeness of Almighty, the Creator.

Regarding the egoistic attitude amongst the organized religions, it reminds me of a childhood story, "Quarrel between the Parts of the Body"- Stomach claimed, I nourish the whole body I am the most important part of body. Then mouth said that if I don't chew and swallow the food how you

will nourish the body, you are nothing without me. So I am the most important part of the body. Then Hand retorted, if I don't put food into you, what will you chew and swallow? Likewise legs, other body part emphasized their own importance forgetting that they all are parts of a body and cannot exist separately. Similarly, this cultural Tree also has such parts the roots being the informal Religions like Donyi-poloism, trunk being the Upanishad and Vedas; other religion and its scripts being the branches; where leaves of compassion and flower and fruit of love and care blooms, ensuring the peace and progression upon this Earth.

CONCLUSION

It is universal truth that in textures, forms and colours etc., we may be different like root, trunk, branches and leaves, yet we are different part of a Tree; a wholesome Cultural Tree of this world created and nurtured by Almighty herself. A Healthy Tree bears sweet and healthy fruits. To make a Tree healthy one has to nourish the roots with manures and water. Don't forget that the Root is Donyi-Poloism. Let us nourish this concept of cultural Tree together to reap peace and progress in this entire world.

Thank You, May Donyi-Polo lead us and enlighten our path towards universal Truth, love, peace and progression.

(Contd. from Page 10)

Letter to Kashmiri Youth

Islamic forces. It is unlikely anybody from outside would invest money in such a dangerous place. There would be no jobs and no safety. Would you want to live there? Ditto if it joins Pakistan. India is seen as a major emerging market economy. Pakistan is not even seen as a real economy.

Another issue is women's rights. Half of the Valley's people are women. Given the hold of fundamentalist Islam, their rights would be curbed under both the independence and Pakistan options. This half of the population would be better off with India. Or do what women want not matter?

If you are Kashmiri and care for Kashmiri, the best thing you can do is to integrate with India. Your populations size is small, only 7 million. It is not unthinkable to unite them and create a group of people that talks real business with the Indian government. Your

local politician won't talk assimilation, as he or she would rather hold more power than a typical state government in India. However, for you, the youth, the best bet is to make the Valley truly part of India.

The rest of India should not ask for the removal of Article 370. The 7 million people in the Valley should. Article 370 is not empowering Kashmir. It is only empowering local politicians.

The rest of India should not ask for the removal of Article 370. The 7 million people in the Valley should. Kashmiri Pandits who were made to leave the Valley need to be brought back. Terrorism is no solution, nor revenge and retribution for Indian atrocities. Terrorism is only going to harm people in the Valley most.

So, it is youth in the Valley who have to now start a movement to really solve this problem. Get rid of Article 370. It is not empowering Kashmir. It is only empowering your local

politicians, who frankly can do nothing for you without Indian integration.

Don't blame the Indian army. It has the tough job of weeding out terrorists from, a civilian population which is almost impossible without collateral damage, terrible as that might be. However, blame those truly responsible, the Pakistani army, the local leaders who exploited the situation and the experts who did nothing for you.

Don't burst crackers when India loses. Don't feel good when India fails.

Because if India fails, you will fail too. Jai Hind. Jai Kashmir.

The rest of India should not ask for the removal of Article 370. The 7 million people in the Valley should. Article 370 is not empowering Kashmir. It is only empowering local politicians.

(The Times of India 16-04-16)

(Contd. from Page 12)

The Rabhas Deities

with four other minor deities. Such as Dhan Kuber (Owner of wealth), Thakurani (a Goddess, especially Durga, a Hindu deity), Dhuh Kumar, Phul Kumar (a Fulfiller of a desired object), Khoksi (powerful deity, Owner of water). On the auspicious day, the appointed chief priest and his attendants, along with the men, go to the holy place for offerings to the deity. There is a restriction on woman's participation in this function. The form of every deity

is stone, and all the stones are arranged serially. The stones of Thakurani and Khoksi are smeared with vermilion. In every stone, a wick-lamp is lighted with mustard oil. Moreover, an earthen alter is prepared, as well as a plate of banana bark is placed in front of every deity. At the time of worship, a few articles are offered- bananas, fragrant rice. Gram, seasonal fruits like jackfruit, mango, cucumber, etc. According to the Rabhas,

Thakurani is the most powerful deity among all; it can bring strength and sincerity in one's daily work. Therefore, the Thakurani is worshipped first; thereafter, it is the Phul Kumar, Langa, Dhan Kuber and Khoksi, respectively. Besides the worship of these major deities, some other deities are also worshipped once a year and others are worshipped occasionally.

(The Assam Tribune 16.04.2016)

(Contd. from Page 11)

Technical Education: Prospects in Northeast

environment in not only rewarding for self but also immensely beneficial for the development of the society and the family one belongs to. The above discussion will remain incomplete unless the most pertinent question in the mind of students and their guardians is answered, namely, are these institutions, in the NE capable of producing employable engineer? Everybody will agree that mere parading of a degree or diploma without Possessing the basic knowledge and skill in engineering is meaningless and will hardly do anything more than just increase the number of jobless degree/diploma holders in today's competitive jobmarket. Also, there is no gainsaying the fact that the facilities available here are not always at par with some of the well known technical institutes outside NE. But in the same breath it must be said that there are institutions here which are even better than many

outside institutions where students of this region make a bee-line for admission every year. No doubt, the prospect of employment underemployment is much more outside the northeast which is by far main reason for this student exodus from NE. This can be halted only if due importance is given to economic and industrial growth of the region by the Powers that be. The problem has been further aggravated by the fact that the country is presently passing through a phase of jobless growth of the economy. Perhaps, it is urgently necessary to reassess the present and future needs of an emerging industrial society like ours and balance the demand and supply of technical manpower of different categories, viz. Degree holders/ diploma holders/ skilled technicians etc. in right proportions from an all-India point of view to which the needs of the Northeast should be suitably

tailored. Lastly, any academic pursuit should be directed towards achieving a successful career. The success of a professional institute depends upon good training and placement of the students. It is encouraging to note that quite a few well known firms have been showing interest in recruiting engineers through campus interviews and quite a few final year students from these institutes get jobs through these interviews. With more and more emphasis being given to Look East/Act East policies by the government, one can reasonably hope that there will be a marked improvement in the job opportunities of the locally bred engineers when they pass out in 4-5 years time from now the brain-drain and cash-drain from the NE will come down to a trickle in course of time.

(Professor SP Bhattacharyya is Retd. Principal, AEC Guwahati)

(The Sentinel 20.04.2016)

(Contd. from Page 14)

Illegal influx and Plight of indigenous tribals of Assam

peasantry population migrated to the areas like the eastern part of the river Subansiri, Gohpur in the Sontipur district, Lakhimpur district, Daiyang forest reserve of the Golaghat district, Karbi Anglong district, etc., falling prey to the poor government land policy.

Therefore, neither any effective socio-economic plan have been created by the government for resolving the basic areas of ethnic conflict even now nor any adequate step taken to protect the state boundary to stop illegal influx. For this reason alone, The illegal immigration from Bangladesh continues unabated even today stimulating fears over the loss of indigenous identity, land grabbing, demographic swamping, loss of political representation and religious domination. The ethnic conflicts of Assam as well as the socio-economic frustration of the multi-ethnic State are being considered as a socio-political gimmick of both the State and Central governments. Only time will tell what else is in store for these tribal communities of Assam.

(The Assam Tribune 16.04.2016)

Right-Mind and Wrong-Mind

Once upon a time there were two friends in a small village named Dharmabuddhi (Virtuous-Mind or Right-Mind) and Papabuddhi (Wicked-Mind or Wrong-Mind). One day, the wicked of the two, Papabuddhi, thought to himself that he was poor and lacked the knowledge to earn for himself. He thought of taking Dharmabuddhi to another kingdom and use his skills to make money.

He thought, "If I can deprive him of all the earnings, I can have all the money for myself and live happily"

After some time, he met Dharmabuddhi, "My friend, we need to earn money to provide for ourselves when we grow old. Let us travel to some other kingdom to earn money. Besides, unless we travel to far-off kingdoms, we will not have any stories to tell our grand children!"

Dharmabuddhi agreed to his plan, and took the blessings of his parents and teachers to travel to a distant kingdom.

On an auspicious day, they began their journey.

The two of them made a lot of money due to Dharmabuddhi's skills and knowledge. After some time, pleased with their earnings, they planned to return home.

On their way to their home, as they approached their village, Papabuddhi said to Dharmabuddhi, "Friend, It will be improper for us to carry so much money home as all our friends and relatives will start requesting us money. Besides, there is danger of theft."

He said, "Let us bury the money in the jungle, where nobody will find it, after taking only a nominal amount for our needs. Whenever we need some money, we can come back together and dig it out".

Without doubting his intentions, Dharmabuddhi agreed. They buried most of the money beneath a tree and returned home with only a handful of money.

Few days later, Papabuddhi, wrong-minded as he was, went to the jungle alone in the dead of the night. He uncovered all the money they had buried together, took out all the money, and closed the pit as it was before. He returned back home with all the money, and hid it.

After a few days, pretending that

nothing has happened, he went to meet Dharmabuddhi, "Friend, I have a large family and the money I had come with - have been spent already. Let us go together to the place we have buried our money to fetch some more."

Dharmabuddhi agreed and together they went to the place they had buried their money, and dug up the pit. But they found the money was not there.

Papabuddhi started beating his head, and blamed Dharmabuddhi, "It is you no doubt. Nobody else knew where we have buried the money. You have stolen all the money for yourself. If you do not give me my half of the money, I shall go and complain to the village elders for justice."

Taken aback, Dharmabuddhi protested, "I have committed no such theft. Don't put the blame on me, as I am a virtuous man".

And so, they started quarrelling, and visited the village elders for justice. The elders asked them to pledge before the Fire-God to find the truth.

Papabuddhi suggested, "Before pledging before the Fire-God, we can request the spirit of the tree to stand witness. It was in front of a big tree that we had buried all the money; and it may be able to reveal to us who the thief is".

The judges agreed, "We shall go the jungle together, and request the spirit of the tree to reveal the truth to us. If that fails, we will take pledge before the Fire-God."

Papabuddhi immediately went home to his father, "I have stolen a huge amount of money from Dharmabuddhi, and we have taken the matter to the village elders. Your co-operation will save me and put the blame on Dharmabuddhi. Otherwise, I shall not only lose the money but face the risk of losing my life for stealing".

His father said, "My son, tell me how I can help you so you don't have to part from the money".

Papabuddhi explained, "There is a huge hollow inside the big tree where we had buried the money. You have to get inside the hollow before morning. When all of us go to the jungle as request the spirit of the tree to reveal the truth, you have to shout from inside that Dharmabuddhi is the real thief. I can handle the rest."

As agreed, his father went to the jungle and hid himself in the hollow of the tree early next morning.

After some time, accompanied by the elders of the village, both Dharmabuddhi and Papabuddhi led themselves to the huge tree where they had buried their money.

Papabuddhi asked in a loud voice, "O spirit of the tree. Please tell us who the thief is, as we have a confrontation and the village elders have come to seek the truth."

Immediately, Papabuddhi's father replied from inside the hollow of the tree, "Listen all who seek the truth. Dharmabuddhi is the thief, who has stolen all the money."

The village elders were wonderstruck. They could not deny that the spirit of the tree had indeed revealed the truth. They immediately started discussing amongst themselves how they should punish for Dharmabuddhi's guilt.

Meanwhile, when Dharmabuddhi heard the spirit of tree speak such, he became sure that there must be something wrong. The spirit of the tree, if it was so, is telling untruth. That is not possible. Having seen the hollow of the tree, he put a heap of dried leaves and grass in front of the hollow of the tree and set fire to it.

When the fire started flaring up, Papabuddhi's father could not bear the heat and the smoke inside the hollow any longer. He came out, with burns in his body, crying for pity.

The village elders were surprised to find him coming outside from the hollow of the tree, "What were you doing here? And what has happened to you?"

He at once confessed his part, and explained the village elders what his son had done.

Thus, the village elders came to know of the truth, and decided to punish Papabuddhi for his guilt for theft, to blame it on Dharmabuddhi and misleading the village elders.

They decided to hang Papabuddhi on the very same tree, and praised Dharmabuddhi for his wit.

The wise indeed say:

Avoid the company of the wicked or you will pay a heavy price for it.



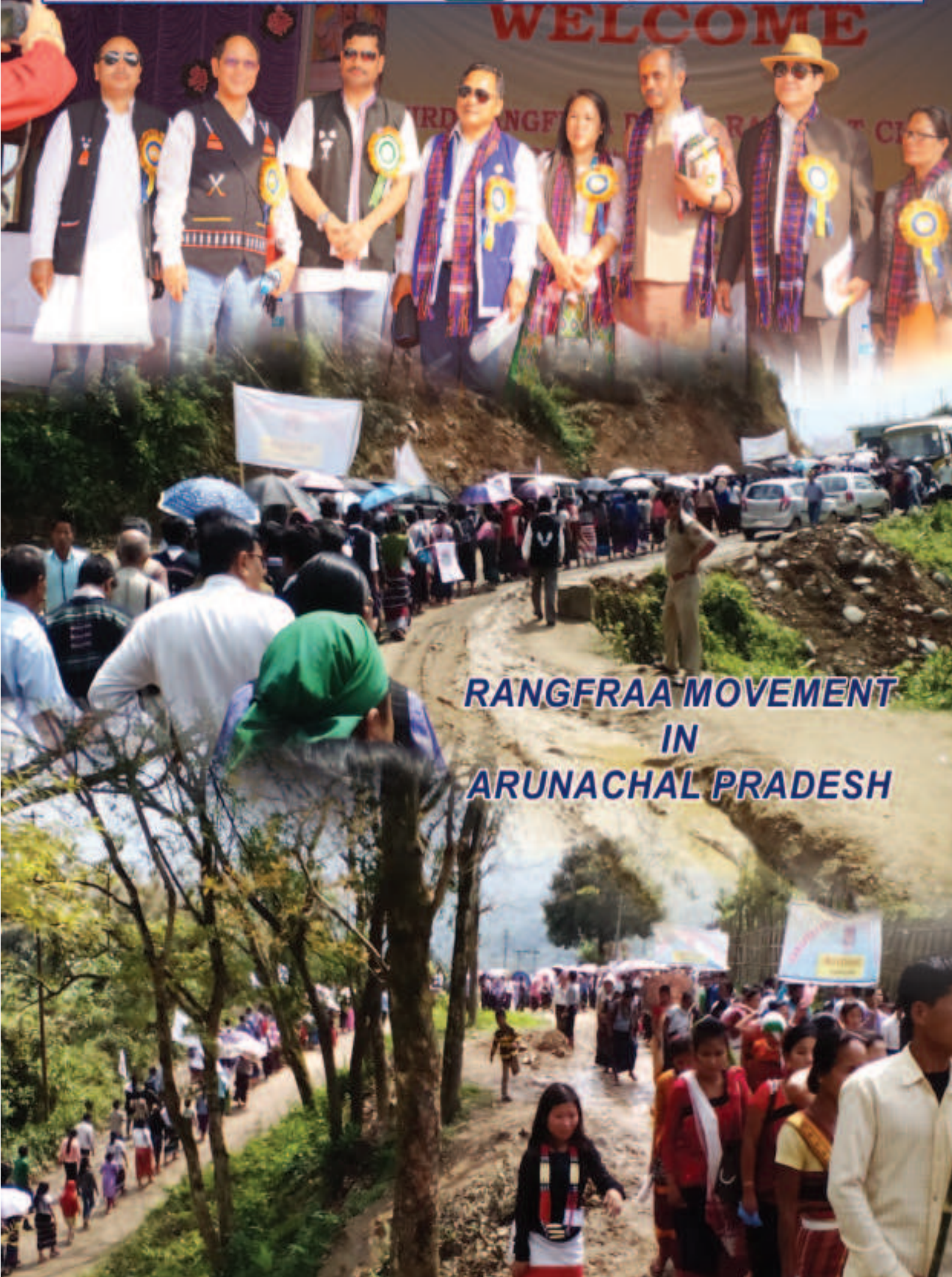
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