

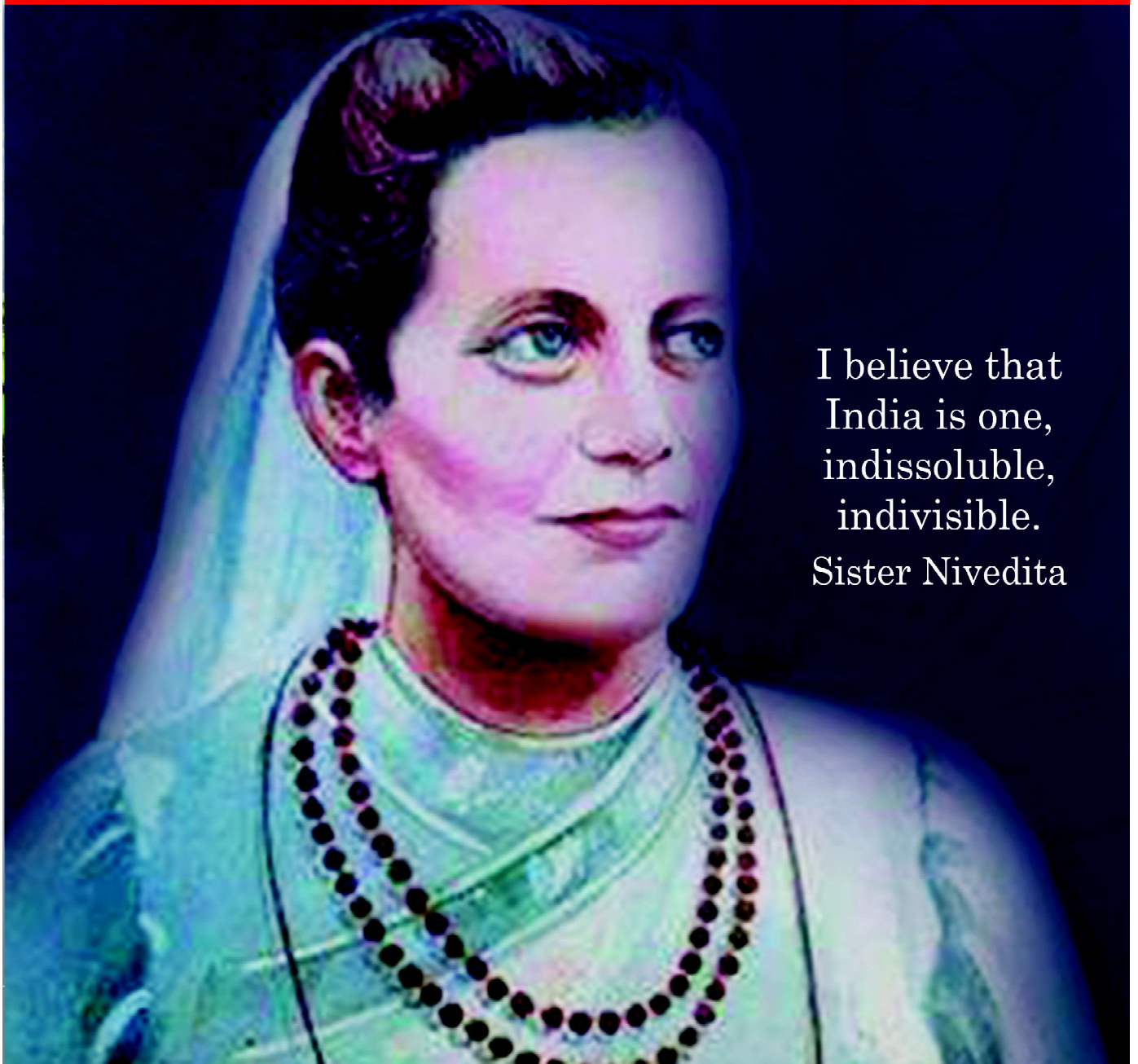
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# HERITAGE EXPLORER

"LET KNOWLEDGE COME FROM ALL THE SIDES"

*A Monthly News Bulletin*

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I believe that  
India is one,  
indissoluble,  
indivisible.  
Sister Nivedita

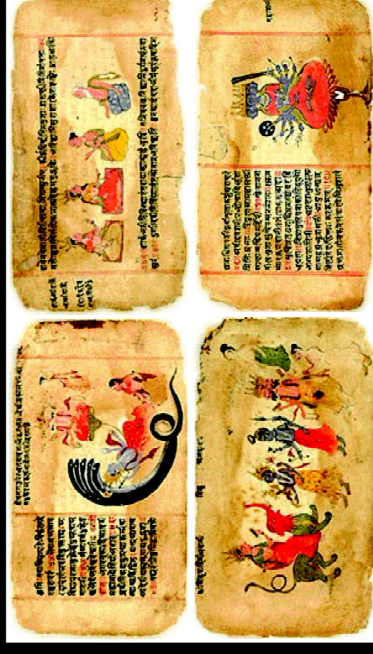


**India's**  
contribution  
to the rest of  
the world

## Unique features of Indian Culture

### 1. Freedom of thought

- Every thought is allowed to develop freely.
- Theist & Atheist
- Vedanta speaks of soul as image of the Supreme
- Everyone is free to imagine and accept God's form according to one's beliefs.
- Every thought school is part & parcel of Indian Culture.
- A garden has variety of flowers and plants. These differences increase the beauty of the garden



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

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## Combating Climate Change

When god created us the humans, He perhaps gave us only two options: live by nature or by desire. Our illiterate and uneducated but wise ancestors then opted to adopt the first option, because the nature was capable of giving them everything they needed; air, water and food of various kinds and there was no need for toiling to produce them. They therefore loved and respected the nature and considered it as the manifestation of the creator and the giver of everything. The all knowing almighty however gave us something without being asked for. It was intelligence, for He was sure that the intelligent human beings will not remain happy forever to live by nature, they will want more. And this never ending seeking for more will be their end.

Sadly, in a rush for seeking more and more, the intelligent human beings did not spare anything that were made available to them by the nature, which were actually intended to maintain the ecological balance essential for life and the living. This ruthless exploitation of Mother Nature hurt her very badly but she endured to the limit. She finally revolted by mildly rebuffing us so that we restrain ourselves. But her mild message fell on our deaf ears and in the name of progress and development we continued with our unrestrained milking of the nature. Consequently, growing population, industrialisation and urbanisation, the need for development of infrastructure, the new lifestyles of the middle class, growing energy needs and the transportation challenges – all these put a tremendous pressure on the scarce natural resources. To protect itself from these indiscriminate exploitations, the nature responded by causing changes in the climate – the mother of the eco system that balances the vital connections between plants and animals and the world around us. Without this balance, planet earth will be like any other barren planet of the solar system.

One of the worst effects of climate change is the rise in atmospheric temperature. Growing heat stress on workers in agriculture and other sectors is anticipated to cause productivity loss equal to 80 million full time jobs over the next decade. It is feared that by 2036 the temperature will go up by 7 degrees. This abnormal rise in atmospheric heat will induce ice in the hills and

polar Regions to melt and raise the sea levels to submerge many low lying countries around the world. Just think about the consequences. Bio-diversity will be the scapegoat of climate change. Nearly 500 species have already become extinct in last century and a million species are at the risk of extinction, many within coming decades. Extreme rainfall and drought will be the other side effects of climate change. Indiscriminate use of fossil fuel for transportation and industrial activities is contributing to air pollution and consequent climate imbalance. This is causing around one million deaths each year and around 9,80,000 pre-term deaths equivalent to an annual economic loss of Rs. 10.70 lakh crores. Not only human lives but the marine life is also at jeopardy due to the climate change.

We the commoners must therefore understand the effects of climate change on our lives. The modern scientists and technocrats very well understand the consequences but they are trying to play god and replace the unseen gods by becoming the visible ones. It must be understood that unless we the common people take up cudgels to save the nature right now then it will be too late. First we will vanish from the surface of the earth like Dinosaurs and then other living organisms, plants, flora and fauna will perish in want of adequate water and more carbon dioxide in the air. We do not definitely want to die like the fish out of water, so we must act now to save our planet earth.

To save our souls we must therefore rediscover how to do it because our wise ancestors, who opted the philosophy of ‘living by nature’ are no more there to guide us. Fortunately, we have our tribal brethren who are living in the hills and the forests, especially those in the north eastern region of our country, who can guide us in this matter because many of them are still following the path of living by nature followed by their ancestors. All of us must not only follow their footprints but also inspire those who have strayed, to revert back to their old ways. Nature does not want anything from us. Like a mother she only gives. Let us at least show our gratitude to her and refrain from hurting her any more.

**Chief Editor**



# Sister Nivedita : Agnishikha

Dr. Nivedita Raghunath Bhide

When Swami Vivekananda went to West, he was there without friends, without money and without recognition. Only the knowledge and experience of Hindu Dharma was with him. After his exposition of Hindu Dharma in the Parliament of Religions held in September 1893 at Chicago, he was revered in the West for his knowledge and help came from all quarters, the disciples gathered from all directions. Thus when he returned to India, he was a world-famous Swami Vivekananda; the western disciples were with him. This visual had a great psychological impact on people of India. They could feel and their confidence grew in the greatness and relevance of Hindu Dharma. An epitome of this efficacy and relevance of Hindu Dharma and of the work of Swami Vivekananda in the West was Sister Nivedita.

Margaret Noble as Nivedita was called before, was from the very race, which had robbed India of her wealth as well as of her confidence. But Nivedita came to India to live like us, to serve us and also to practice all that was higher and noble in our spiritual tradition. She could see beauty and wisdom in all walks of Indian life.

How could a proud and an accomplished British woman see the beauty of Indian life? She had to undergo a painful process of transformation. Margaret Noble came to India to serve Indians after she was totally convinced about the Vedantic Truth of Oneness. After the consecration ceremony, she was given the name 'Nivedita' – 'the dedicated'. But just a new name was not going to erase all the assumptions and biases that she had harboured till then as Margaret Noble. Swami Vivekananda, in his classes attacked mercilessly on her deep rooted perceptions and misconceptions. Imagine! Swamiji

was the only person who was known to her in this vast and strange land and he appeared so harsh. The anguish that Nivedita felt was very great. But not once a thought of returning back or doubting the wisdom of her decision of accepting Swami Vivekananda as her guru came to her mind. Her only concern was "whether I shall understand what my master is trying to tell me". Her sincerity of purpose and utmost efforts ultimately transformed her completely. She became one with India to serve in total surrender. It is said that to truly offer worship to Shiva you have to be Shiva. ShivoBhutvaShivamYajet. Nivedita so to say became one with Mother India. She understood India in all her dimensions and loved Indians with all their faults.

*In order to truly offer worship to Shiva you have to be Shiva. Shivo Bhutva ShivamYajet. Sister Nivedita, so to say, became one with Mother India. She understood India in all her dimensions.*

## Total Transformation

It is this total transformation of Nivedita which is a great example for Macaulay Educated Indians. If a proud and accomplished British woman can burn to ashes all her prejudices, misconceptions and her western mindset and if with total paradigm shift she could become a true Indian, a great admirer, worshiper and servant of Mother India, then why not we? We the Macaulay educated can also burn to ashes completely all our preconceptions and ignorance and become true Indians. When she could get insight into the depths of Indian wisdom why can't we? When one wants to serve Motherland one has to change oneself so as to become the right instrument in the hands of God. Sister Nivedita is thus an inspiration for all those who want to serve our society.

Nivedita was one with the people, their aspirations were her life, her actions, her words reflected that oneness which she experienced. She always said our

people, our country. We see many a times that those who go to 'serve' the people in villages and in tribal areas with the sense that they are going to 'civilise' and to 'develop' these people use words like 'this society', 'these people'. They force their ideas and world-views on those simple people. This is what Swami Vivekananda did not want to happen with his foreign disciples. He wanted them to accept India as she was; he wanted them to learn from India. Sister Nivedita internalised it so fully that Bipin Chandra Pal said, "Nivedita came to us not as a teacher but as a learner, not as an adept but as a novice and she loved India more than even we Indians love her."

She inculcated and internalised the Vedantic vision so well that she wrote, "If the many and the One be indeed the same Reality, then it is not all modes of worship alone, but equally all modes of work, all modes of struggle, all modes of creation, which are paths of realisation. No distinction, henceforth, between sacred and secular. To labour is to pray. To conquer is to renounce. Life is itself religion. To have and to hold is as stern a trust as to quit and to avoid."

That is what she imbibed from Swami Vivekananda. Thus she wrote about him, "This is the realisation which makes Vivekananda the great preacher of Karma, not as divorced from, but as expressing Jnana and Bhakti. To him, the workshop, the study, the farmyard, and the field are as true and fit scenes for the meeting of God with man as the cell of the monk or the door of the temple. To him, there is no difference between service of man and worship of God, between manliness and faith, between true righteousness and spirituality. All his words, from one point of view, read as a commentary upon this central conviction." "Art, science, and religion," he said once, "are but three different ways of expressing a single truth. But in order to understand this we must have the theory of Advaita." For Nivedita Vedanta became practical. Her spirituality thus expressed in her contributions to all walks of life.

It appears that the legacy of fire that was in Swami Vivekananda was given to Sister Nivedita. The flames of burning love for India in Sister Nivedita

were so great that Sri Aurobindo called her Agnishikha – the flames of fire! No field of national life was left untouched by her fire. Her top most concern was the well-being of India and the awakening of Indian national consciousness whatever may be the field of action.

### **New Education Vision**

In the field of Education, Nivedita wanted, "Indian educators to extend and fulfill the vision of Swami Vivekananda". How would it be done? She explained, "This thought that education is not only good for child himself but should be more so for Jana-Desh-Dharma should always be present in the minds of educators. There is no fear of weakness and selfishness for one whose whole training has been formed round this nucleus. Each day should begin with some conscious act of reference to it. Education in India today has to be not only national but Nation-making. We must surround our children with the thought of their nation and their country. ...The centre of gravity must lie for them outside the family. We must demand their sacrifices for India; Bhakti for India; learning for India. The ideal for its own sake! India for the sake of India! This must be as the breath of life to them.

...It is a mistake to think that heroes are born. Nothing of the sort. They are made not born; made by the pressure of heroic thought. All human beings long at bottom of their hearts for self sacrifice. No other thirst is so deep as this. Let us recognise this, direct this towards single thought i.e. love for the country. ...The universe is the creation of mind not matter. And can any force in the world resist a single thought held with intensity by 700 million of people? ...How to do that? A national education then must be made up of familiar elements. Our Imagination must be based upon our heroic literature. Geographical ideals must be built up first through the ideals of India. Same is for history. All other histories should run around the Indian History." The school that Nivedita run for the girls enshrined all these thoughts so well that when Rabindranath Tagore wanted to start Shantiniketan, most of the lady teachers were the former students of Nivedita's school.

## Womanhood of India

Sister Nivedita was so charmed by the womanhood of India among whom she lived in the lanes of Calcutta that her description about them are the best tribute. She says, "What differentiates the Indian training from others? I find one answer which outweighs all others in my estimate. It is this. The special greatness of Indian life and character depends more than on any other feature, on the place that is given to Woman in the social scheme. They say that Indian women are ignorant and oppressed. To all who make this statement we may answer that Indian women are certainly not oppressed. The crimes of ill-treating women is at once less common and less brutal in form here than in younger countries. And the happiness, the social importance, and may I say, the lofty character of Indian women are amongst the grandest possessions of the national life. When we come to the charge that Indian women are ignorant, we meet with a far deeper fallacy. They are ignorant in the modern form, that is to say, few can write, and not very many can read. Are they then illiterate? If so, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana and the Puranas and stories every mother and every grandmother tells to the babies, are no literature. But European novels and Strand Magazine by the same token are? Can any of us accept this paradox? The fact is, writing is not culture though it is an occasional result of culture. The greatest literature occurs at the beginning of a literary age and so, to those who know Indian life, it is easy to see that an Indian woman who has the education of the Indian home, the dignity, the gentleness, the cleanliness, the thrift, the religious training, the culture of mind and heart, which that home life entails, though she cannot perhaps read a word of her own language, much less sign her name, may be infinitely better educated in every true sense, and in the literary sense also, than her glib critic."

### Guide in the Task of Nation-building

Writings of Sister Nivedita were a symphony of her insight in Indian wisdom and tradition, her intense love for India, her sharp intellect and her mastery over language. So beautiful, deep and moving were her writings that it is really difficult to translate those

in other languages. May be that is the reason that most of her literature even today remains untranslated. Her literature has not only historical and literary value but are good guide in the task of nation-building too.

For example: while comparing with other nations she sums up in few words the journey and contribution of Hindu nation from antiquity to till now. She writes, "Let it be said that to every people who possess the elements of truly national existence, with the responsibility of facing the problems of a nation, this question sooner or later comes to be faced. Have we in the past dreamt dreams great enough, thought thoughts noble enough, willed with a will clear enough, to enable us to strike out new paths into the untried, without error and without defeat? And perhaps of all the peoples of the world only the Hindu people, to this searching enquiry can answer yes." She was a regular contributor to over 20 magazines and the topic was always 'India'. Therefore, not just because Sister Nivedita was a great example of transformation but we have to study her life and works also because, even today she can give insight to us i.e. the English educated about our own nation and its significance.

### Why Imitate Europeans?

While she helped the country bent under the burden of sorrow whether during plagues or floods or freedom struggle, she lived completely merged in the essence of its freedom one day to come. Thus, she wanted the cultural assertion, the national expression in all walks of life. She stated, "The birth of the National Art of India is my dearest dream." She disliked the art students imitating the European subjects in their art. When India has such rich culture and history of art she felt why should Indian artists imitate Europeans styles and subjects. She exhorted and inspired the young artists like Abanindranath Tagore and Nandalal Bose to choose India as their topic for expression. She would perceive the beauty of old houses of Bagh Bazar, and ruined temples but detested the modern utilitarian buildings built in India.

In the field of science, she felt Indians have great ability to contribute. When the British scientists tried

to sideline Dr Jagadish Chandra Bose, she realised that Indians were not incapable but were incapacitated by British to achieve great heights. She came forward to help Dr Jagadish Chandra Bose. To make his work known to the world she worked along with him on his six books. Even though, she herself would be suffering for want of money; she saw to it that the work of Dr Jagadish Chandra Bose would not suffer monetarily.

When the revolutionaries would go to jail or in exile to other countries, she would take care of their families. Not a field of national life was left untouched by her.

### **Bitterness Had no Place in Her Heart**

As it was required, Sister Nivedita resigned from Ramakrishna Mission and actively participated and promoted the freedom movement. Ramakrishna Mission—the fledgling organisation to propagate the message of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda was needed for India. And participation of Sister Nivedita in Freedom Movement and her active role in awakening national consciousness also was equally the need of the hour in the interest of India. Thus to protect Ramakrishna Mission and to promote the work of freedom of India, she resigned from Ramakrishna Mission. But, their relationships remained very cordial till end.

Nivedita considered herself as part of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda thought movement. Whenever she was sick, she was immediately attended to by Ramakrishna Math. In her work too the help was given by Ramakrishna Math and Mission in all possible ways. When she realised she would not live, in her will she donated all the money that she had got from Mrs. Bull just some time before her own death or from her books to Ramakrishna Mission as an endowment for the use of Sister Christine Greenstidel to run the school; though Christine had left her. Bitterness had no place in her heart. She associated with persons whom she thought would be useful in India's interest. But she would also disassociate herself from them if she found it otherwise. For anything and everything in her life, the deciding touchstone was India and her well-being.

One of the foremost revolutionary Freedom fighter, Shri Hemachandra Ghosh's reminiscence about Swami Vivekananda and Sister Nivedita narrated to Swami Purnatmananda were later translated from Bengali to English by Prof Kapila Chatterjee and brought out as a book titled as I am India. In that he says, "It is very true that it was Nivedita who captured the fire of patriotism set alight by Vivekananda. She not only caught that flame, she also scattered the sparks of Indian patriotism and nationalism far and wide, across the length and breadth of India. Wherever Nivedita went, in any city or province of India, her flaming speeches and heroic calls to the Indian people spread the message of Swamiji, his ideals, his patriotism. Side by side, she spread the ideals, the culture, the glory of India, too. To speak frankly, we got to know Swami Vivekananda better through coming in contact with Sister Nivedita. I was with Swamiji for a very short time. But, I have been with Nivedita for a much longer period. Through Nivedita, we got to know Swamiji better and through her India also better. ...What I feel about Nivedita is – Sister Nivedita played two important roles in spreading the message and deeds of Vivekananda – one was the role of Mahadeva, the other, that of Bhagiratha. She absorbed the terrific force and power of Vivekananda in her own person, and at the same time she carried the mighty current of that force and directed it along proper channels like Bhagiratha."

### **Deep Love for India**

Her deep love for India was expressed in all walks of life –politics, education, art, literature, sociology, spirituality etc. A spiritual person in all dimensional. That is how Sister Nivedita was. She was a revolutionary, she was a Yogini too. She was an educationist and she was an art critic too. She was a writer and she was involved in rendering service to the people also, be at flood time or plague time. She was at once a child at the feet of Holy Mother Sharada Devi and also a Lokmata to all as she was called by Rabindranath Tagore and above all she was Sister of all.

*(Contd. to Page 17)*



# INDO-CHINA Strategic Relations with Relevance to Arunachal Pradesh

Group Captain M Panging Pao, VM (Retd)

## Introduction

India & China shares 3488 km of land boundary and has an acrimonious relationship over last 60 Years. The major conflict was the Indo-China war of 1962 where Chinese forces entered almost 100 km inside India. There have been regular clashes at NathuLa in Sikkim in 1967, in 1987 at Sumdorong Chu in Arunachal, the 73 Day Doklam confrontation in 2017, Chinese incursions in Asaphila, Tuting and Chaklagam areas of Arunachal Pradesh in 2017-2018.

Recently Indo-China conflict flared up in the last few months at Pangong Tso lake in Ladakh, North Sikkim and violent clashes at Galwan Valley during night of 15/16 June 2020 which resulted in death of 20 Indians soldiers and 40 plus Chinese soldiers. Tense situation exists all along the Indo-China border.

China is a major world power with the largest military of the world and is the second largest economy in the world. China's defence budget is four times India's defence budget and military infrastructure is better developed in Chinese side. Both nations are major nuclear powers armed with many ballistic missiles. A major Indo-China conflict would be disastrous for both nations.

## History

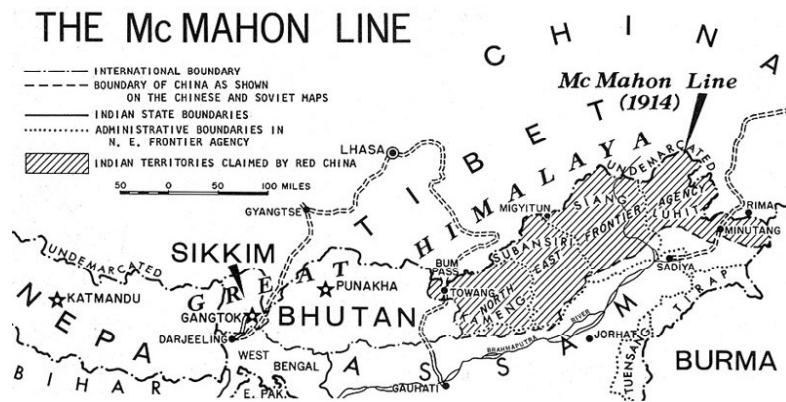
On gaining Independence, India shared land borders with Pakistan, Myanmar,

Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet. After the defeat of Tibetan forces by China in 1950, India was one of the first countries to officially recognise China in 1951 resulting in China becoming a neighbour of India.

**McMahon Line:** The McMahon Line demarcated the eastern border between India along Arunachal Pradesh and China. About 1030 km in length, the McMahon Line followed the watershed principle of map making and, to the extent possible, ran along the highest ridges of these eastern Himalayan ranges running from east of Bhutan to the tri-junction of India, China and Myanmar. The McMahon line was created during the Shimla Agreement of 1914. The British Indian representative was Sir Henry McMahon, then Secretary in the

Indian Foreign Department. The Tibetan representative was Lama Lonchen Shatra and China was represented by Chinese diplomat named Ivan Chen. After almost a year of negotiations, the Indian and Tibetan representatives signed the agreement.

*"He who is prepared for the future and he who deals cleverly with any situation that may arise are both happy; but the fatalistic man who wholly depends on luck is ruined."*  
- Chanakya



Sources: Atlas of the Northern Frontier of India, New Delhi: External Affairs Ministry, 1960.  
Atlas of Chinese People's Republic, Peking, 1953.  
Atlas of Mira, Moscow, 1954.  
Political Map of India, Survey of India, Dehra Dun, 1956.

The Chinese representative objected to certain issues between Inner and Outer Tibet and refused to sign the agreement. The McMahon line was first published in a Survey of India Map in 1937.

On 15 August 1947, when India became an independent nation, North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) became an integral part of India. It was administrated by the Ministry of External Affairs with the Governor of Assam acting as agent to the President of India.

In 1951, Major R Khathing, a civil servant, accompanied by some Assam Rifles troops overthrew the Tibetans from Tawang and annexed Tawang into India. In 1954, India and China signed the Panchsheel Agreement (Five Principles). The main points were:-

- (i) Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty.
- (ii) Mutual non-aggression.
- (iii) Mutual non-interference.
- (iv) Equality and mutual benefit.
- (v) Peaceful co-existence.

After the failure of the Tibetan Uprising, the Dalai Lama fled to India via Tawang-Bomdila in 1959 and was granted asylum in India.

The then Chinese Premier Zhou-en-Lai visited India many times and proposed that India drop its claim on Aksai Chin and China would withdraw its claim on NEFA. Prime Minister Nehru refused the proposals each time.

**1962 Indo-China War:** On 20 October 1962, the Chinese forces commenced their attack on India simultaneously in the Western and Eastern sectors. The Chinese army quickly penetrated Indian defences along five axes. In the Tawang sector, the Chinese forces quickly overran Tawang and reached Sela pass. Similarly the Chinese forces penetrated Indian defences along Taksing-Limeking, Mechukha-Tato, Manigong-Tato, Gelling-Tuting and Kibithoo-Walong sectors. In the Western sector, the Chinese forces quickly overran Chip Chap Valley, Galwan Valley and Pangong Tso Lake. On

24 October, there was a lull in the fighting and Chinese Premier Zhou-en-Lai offered a peace proposal which was refused by Prime Minister Nehru. After the refusal of the peace proposal, fighting resumed on 14 November with Chinese forces re-commencing attack. After reaching its claim lines, on 19 November, the Chinese Premier Zhou-en-Lai declared a unilateral cease fire starting midnight 21 November. By the ceasefire, the Chinese forces had penetrated almost 100 km into Indian Territory in Arunachal Pradesh near Tezpur in Assam. After the ceasefire, the Chinese forces withdrew behind the McMahon line in the Eastern sector. In the Western sector the Chinese forces withdrew 20 km behind the line of actual control.

### Present Situation

Presently, Arunachal Pradesh shares 160 km border with Bhutan in the East, 1030 km with China in the North and North-East and 440 km with Myanmar in the East and South. There are no major border disputes with Bhutan and Myanmar. However many disputes are still existing between India and China:-

- (a) The International Border in both Western and Eastern Sectors are yet to be finalised.
- (b) Due to non-signing by the Chinese representative during the 1914 Shimla Agreement, China still does not recognise the McMahon line
- (c) China still claims almost all of Arunachal Pradesh calling it 'Southern Tibet'.
- (d) Issue of stapled visa by China to people from Arunachal Pradesh.
- (e) Chinese objections to visits by senior Indian officials to Arunachal Pradesh.
- (f) Frequent skirmishes and violent clashes along the Indo-Chinese border.

### Chinese Infrastructure and Military Progress in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR)

In the last few decades, China has systematically gone about developing infrastructure and military preparedness in TAR.

**Infrastructure.** Despite the high altitudes of

7000 - 16000 ft and tough terrain, China has invested heavily to rapidly develop infrastructure in the region:-

**Air Fields.** Considering the high altitudes, China has constructed many air bases with longer runways along the Indo-China border. The major airfields facing Arunachal Pradesh are Kongka Dzong, Hoping, Linzhi, Bangda and Kunming. Out of these Linzhi is located south of the Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) river at about 15 km only from the Arunachal border. Many Chinese military aircraft and other systems are regularly deployed in these bases.

**Railways.** Some years back China inaugurated the Golmud to Lhasa railway line which is considered



as the highest railway line in the world. This railway line has been extended to Shigatse this year. There are plans to extend the railway line to Nyalam on the Nepal border and Dromo on the Sikkim border. Further the railway line is being extended to Linzhi and Kunming. On the Western sector the same railway line is being extended to Khotan opposite Ladakh.

**Roads.** China has also invested heavily in developing the road connectivity in TAR. There are all weather roads running all along the border with India.

**Dams.** China is in the process of constructing three dams on the Yarlung Tsangpo. The first run-of-the-river dam at Zangmu has been operationalised

in October 2015. The remaining dams are under construction. These would help in surplus power availability which in turn will lead to development in the area.

**Underground Tunnels.** Over the last few decades, China has built a vast network of tunnels. These tunnels are used to park/store Ballistic Missiles, Aircraft, Submarines/ships, armoured vehicles, ammunition dumps etc. It would not be wrong to say that China has built a 'Great Underground Wall'. These tunnels would offer protection from direct attack from the air.

### Indian Infrastructure and Military Progress in the Eastern Sector

In the last few decades, India has also attempted to develop the infrastructure along the Indo-China border. However, even 58 years after the Chinese attack in 1962, adequate emphasis to develop infrastructure and military capabilities in the region is lacking.

**Infrastructure.** Though attempts are on to develop the infrastructure, the attention and urgency are inadequate:-

**Air Fields.** Almost all major airfields are located in the plains of Assam and West Bengal. Recently 7 Advanced Landing Grounds (ALG) has been re-laid/developed in Arunachal Pradesh at Pasighat, Tawang, Ziro, Mechukha, Alo, Tuting and Walong. Except for Pasighat where the runway length is about 2 km, rest runway lengths are below 1.5 km. These runway lengths will not support rapid deployment of troops and equipment on medium/heavy aircraft.

**Railways** Arunachal Pradesh is connected by railways to Bhalukpong and Naharlagun only, both of which are in the foothills. The Murkong Selek to Pasighat railway has been sanctioned but work has not yet commenced.

**Roads.** The Trans Arunachal road is planned and under construction. However, the vital Tezpur-Tawang, Likabali-Daporijo-Taksing, Likabali-Aalo, Pasighat-Tuting, Aalo-Mechukha-Manigong and

Tezu-Kibithu roads are in poor condition.

**Dams.** India is still struggling to complete major dams over Siang, Subansiri and other rivers due to public opposition and environmental studies.

**Blast Protection/ Underground Structures.** There are minimal blast protection to aircraft, key

installations at Indian bases along the Eastern sector. Underground structures for protection from aerial attacks and nuclear radiation are also negligible. Lack of blast protection and underground shelters will render Indian aircraft and key installations vulnerable to aerial attacks.

### Comparison of Military Capabilities

A brief comparison of military capabilities of both the countries is tabulated below:-

	CHINA	INDIA
MILITARY BUDGET	US\$166.107 billion (2.0% of GDP)	US\$45.785 billion (2.5% of GDP)
MILITARY PERSONNEL	Active troops: 2,285,000 (800,000 reserve personnel)	Active troops: 1,325,000 (2,142,821 reserve personnel)
AIRCRAFT (ALL TYPES)	9500	3500
FIGHTER AIRCRAFT	2066	629
HELICOPTERS	1104	604
MAIN BATTLE TANKS	3000	600
BATTLE SHIPS	670	200
SUBMARINES	67 (Nuclear Submarines Included)	15
NUCLEAR WARHEADS	250	110

### Surface to Surface Missiles (SSM).

There is a major difference in the capabilities and numbers of SSMs of both countries. The Chinese SSM inventory includes the DF-5, DF-31A, DF-31, DF-4, DF-3A, DF-21 etc. The DF-5 has a range of 13000 km plus and the DF-31A with a range of 11000 km plus. The submarine launched missiles include the JL-2 with range of 7000 km plus. This implies that Chinese SSM coverage is up to middle of South America, Australia and full India.

Indian SSMs include the Agni-I, Agni-II, Agni-III, Prithvi-I, Prithvi-II and Prithvi-III. Agni-III has range of 3000 km. Recently India has successfully test fired the Agni-V with range of 5000 km, but is yet to be inducted. With the Agni-V Indian SSM coverage will include full China. India is yet to develop a Submarine launched missile.

### Lessons for India

In order to match China, India needs to implement some concrete steps towards development of



infrastructure along the Eastern border. These have been divided into Immediate and Long Term measures:-

**Immediate Measures** - These measures need to be expedited and completed in the next few years.

(a) Construct/Expedite the following important roads (All weather two lane roads):-

- (i) Tezpur-Tawang Road.
- (ii) Likabali-Daporijo-Taksing Road.
- (iii) Likabali-Aalo-Menchukha-Manigong Road.
- (iv) Pasighat-Tuting Road.
- (v) Tezu-Kibithu Road.
- (vi) Trans-Arunachal Highway.

(b) Construct airfield with adequate runway length at the following places:-

- (i) Tawang Area.
- (ii) Daporijo Area.
- (iii) Aalo Area.
- (iv) Hayuliang/Hawai Area.

(c) Build adequate Blast Protection Shelters for aircraft and other critical assets at military/Air Force bases.

(d) Build adequate underground structures for Command & Control Centres for nuclear protection.

(e) Build few ammunition/fuel storage centres north of the Brahmaputra.

**Long Term Measures.** One big step initiated by central govt is Atmanirbhar Bharat. Atmanirbhar Bharat is envisaged to boost domestic production and reduce dependence on other nations including the vital defense manufacturing sector. In addition there is a country wide movement to boycott Chinese

products. The measures require strategic policy decisions at the national level and time bound implementation strategy as listed below..

(a) Indigenise production of military equipment (Aircraft, Warships, Tanks, etc).

(b) Involve Private Sector in military production.

(c) Invest more in Research and Development.

(d) Finalise Border Delineation with China.

(e) Sign a water sharing treaty with China.

### **Conclusion**

India is an emerging world power aiming for a permanent membership of the Security Council. India is almost matching China in economic growth and is poised to grow into a major economic power. For India to sustain the growing economy, India requires a stable and peaceful neighbourhood. Stable and peaceful neighbourhood can be ensured and supported only through economic and military power. In order to match China, the only alternative for India is to expedite the development of military/strategic infrastructure along the Indo-China border at the earliest. Development of infrastructure will allow rapid mobilisation of military personnel and equipment. Blast protection shelters and underground infrastructure will provide survivability of key personnel and military assets. Immediate measures should be accompanied by long term national policies leading to indigenisation of defence production. Unless India produces her own high quality military aircraft, warships, weapons she cannot aspire to be a world leader. To emphasise on this critical importance of developing military/strategic infrastructure along the Indo-China border, a quote by Chinese strategist Sun Tzu would be relevant.

*“Victorious warriors win first and then go to war,  
while defeated warriors go to war first and then seek to win”*

# Om Chanting by Dwij (Druid) Gurus of Europe

Major Surendra Mathur (Sena Medal), Retd

It is universally accepted that there was Sanatan culture throughout Europe. We are also aware that there is a special sect amongst the major sects of Europe, called the Celts. Celts are the people who migrated during time of Lord Parshuram. Lord Parshuram is called Dagda by Celts. They describe Lord Parashurama as the god with “battle axe and cauldron”. Lord Parashuram had conquered the world twenty-one times, which is mentioned in our religious texts. The details of the lands conquered by Parashuram and their locations are not available anywhere. Poets of Europe have written poems related to the victories of Lord Parshuram, where there is mention of Ireland. This day of victory is described as an auspicious day in Sanatan culture and is called Akshaya Tritiya. Lord Parshuram’s birthday also falls on this day. This victory must have been a great victory for the Aryans. The Aryans inhabited that country and perhaps that would be the reason for naming that country as Arya-land (Ireland).

When we consider the social structure of Celtic society, there are three main groups in it. They are called Bards, Ovats and Druids. This social structure system still exists. The three varna system is also prevalent in India. Due to many changes, we have never tried to focus on the analysis of the system of that time. They are known by the same names in India. Bard is known as Baradh (Barad) or Charan, or Bhat etc. These people used to be historians and poets of the king in the royal court. I would like to mention that Chandbardai (there is Bard in the word Bardai) was the royal poet of King Prithviraj Chauhan of Ajmer. It has always been a respected category in India and Europe. The second category

is Ovats, pronounced as Vats. They have been in India and Europe and used to perform god worship and religious rituals. They were acknowledged as a class similar to Brahmins in India. The third category known as Druids were considered as scholars in India and Europe. In India they are called Dwij (द्विज). In Europe, they have been advisors, judges, physicians and administrative officers of the king. The names and responsibilities of each category matches with India and Europe. Lots of changes in the society have occurred with the passage of time.

We may therefore conclude that the social structures of Bharat and Europe were same in ancient times.

Now, I come to the method of worship, performed by the Dwij (Druids) in Europe. I have had the privilege of attending these religious rituals many times. Performing religious rituals publicly by the Dwij (Druids) is not a simple matter. There are

many restrictions on them, which are practiced even today. In this article, I am going to explain the process of worship followed by them. It perfectly matches with Sanatan culture. The location used to be chosen at the faith centers, which were located in the forests from the mythological times, preferably in the clumps of Oak trees. Their ashrams had always been, in the clumps of oak trees. The most important worship days of Dwij (Druids) are Purnima (Full Moon) or Amavasya (Dark Moon). Firstly, special attention is given to the cleanliness of the place of worship. Arrangements of worship are made. A fire pot is placed in the middle of the place of worship. At some places, crossed Stone are placed in the middle and a fire pot is placed over them. Material of worship is placed on stones.



Lamps or candles are placed in eight directions at a distance of about ten feet from the fire vessel. These represent eight directions. Havan material in which herbs, wood, incense lights, matchsticks, fruits and flowers, water, wine bottle, beet juice, daggers etc. were kept near the fire vessel. Wine, drinking cups, bird wings, ashram flag, Dhapli (Tambourine) on which the insignia of the ashram was inscribed, animal horn, reindeer horn, tiger etc. were placed. Among the Gods and Goddesses, the local deity, the Sun God and the Kachhap Devta (Kurma Avatar) symbolisms were placed.

This puja was performed after the sun set. This decision was taken keeping in mind the current circumstances there. Some prominent people and chief priests were in their traditional costumes. We and others were in normal costumes. Before reaching, the disciples had made all the arrangements. On arrival, a disciple welcomed us and purified everyone with the smoke of incense. All lamps were lit. Havan material was placed in the fire vessel. Everyone was introduced first, especially those Hindus who had gone with me for the rituals. After purification, all the people stood around the fire vessel in a circular formation. Some of the disciples had a drum in their hands and started playing them. The Chief Dwij (Druid) Guru started preparing for the Havan. He offered some herbs to the fire. He took water vessel and sprinkled water in all directions. He then took the lit candle in four directions and chanted mantras. He returned back in the middle and asked everyone to invite their gods to come. He then asked everyone, the name of their deity. After that, he requested everyone to invite their ancestors. The Dwij (Druid) Guru offered wine to the gods on stones from a bottle placed there. Then, in turn, urged everyone to come and offer wine or beet juice. I asked what the process was. I was told that animal sacrifice was practiced during the mythological period. In the present circumstances only beet juice or wine can

be offered. I remember Sheela Mata in Amer Fort in Jaipur, my city, offering Rum on Navratri Foundation Day and animal sacrifice practices in many places. After this process, everyone was called upon to take the orbit of fire. People started playing Dhapli (Drum) again. The Dwij (Druid) Guru was at the forefront with the flag of his grove. After going around twice, they stopped and we all stood in a circular formation. He asked everyone to pronounce the letter “A” loudly. We all did the same. The circuit started again and all stopped after two more rounds. This time he asked to pronounce the “U” letter out loudly. We all did the same. Now revolved once again twice and stopped. This time he asked all to pronounce the letter “M”. Everyone did the same. After taking another round of the fire, the ritual of the Circumambulation was completed seven times.

It was an amazing process. Everything was meeting the Sanatan culture. If you think carefully, mixing the three letters makes  $A + U + M = Om$ . No one knows how old this practice is. Would this have been the practice in mythological times? What is the process and importance of pronouncing the three letters differently? Today we pronounce Om by adding all three letters. All this is a subject of in-depth study and research. In our Yantra also, it is customary to write all three letters separately. The entire religious ceremony was in sync with Sanatan culture. Offering pooja material, havan kunda in the center and lamps in eight directions, and worshiping the deities of the ten directions, including the sky, showing similarities to the Sanatan culture as a whole. Kachchap (Kurma Avtar), by placing emblem, as well as of other deities, shows worship to all of them. \* Symbol of Tridev and Trilokya: The word ॐ is composed of three sounds A, U, M. The meaning of these three sounds also comes in the Upanishads. It is also a symbol of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwar and it is a symbol of bhooloka, bhuva-loka and heaven-loka. ■

# MASSACRE ON THE NORTH

## Jallianwala Bagh of Assam

Manash K. Das

The following account is about unsung Assamese heroes and martyrs of the Indian freedom movement.

It was during a drive in the beautiful Darrang district countryside with the Superintendent of Police, Darrang, Mr. Amrit Bhuyan, who reverently pointed to a monument and said that it was in memory of the slain brave hearts of Pothorughat (also known as “Patharighat”). The name stirred a long dormant memory in my mind. Thereafter, Mr. Bhargab Kr. Das, a senior journalist and a native of Darrang, took me to Pothorughat to interact with the locals, so that they could narrate their version of what transpired on that fateful day of 28<sup>th</sup> of January 1894 and the events that led up to it.

This is the story of Pothorughat, a name that would echo little with very few Assamese, let alone the rest of India, for very little has been written about or taught about it.

After the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 the British Government took over the reins of control of India from The East India Company. However, the regressive high taxation that had brought many a peasant to penury, continued unabated. The deficit in the post Sepoy Mutiny budget of 1859-59 was phenomenal and so was the public debt of the Raj.

Therefore, the already high land revenue was further enhanced, much to the distress of the farmers who were already battling penury and starvation. Furthermore, other coercive levies such as Stamp Duties, License Tax, etc. were also implemented by the colonialists. This was in stark contrast to the nearly six hundred years of benevolent Ahom rule, during which the subjects didn't have to pay taxes. Besides this, the Ahoms also granted “Lakhiraj” (rent free land for the maintenance of temples and for the setting up of “Satras” to promote Vaishnavism). It

was but natural for the people to compare these atrocious days with those while under the Ahom rulers.

It was left to the peasants/farmers to fight against these atrocious levies that were gradually pushing them toward starvation. They would discuss their grievances in “Raiz-mels” (public assemblies). These assemblies were severely frowned upon by the colonialists, who perceived them as a threat to their imperialism.

From 1890 onwards the collective mood of the farmers of Assam turned sour, thanks to rampant exploitation. This was again further compounded by another round of indiscriminate increase in taxes in 1892. The seething resentment of the people had reached boiling point. It was a powder keg that just needed a spark to explode. The powers that be just did not bother to fathom the anger. No lesson from the Phulaguri incident of 18<sup>th</sup> October, 1861 which was the result of similar policies of the British Raj. On that day Lieutenant Singer, Junior Assistant Commissioner and a few policemen were beaten to death by an irate crowd. In retaliation General Henry Hopkinson arrived in Phulaguri with a detail of 100 sepoy and shot 39 people to death, besides injuring scores. It seemed tyrants refused to learn from history.

“Raiz-mels” (public assemblies) had since been banned but the people of Pothorughat defied the same and in one such gathering on January 26<sup>th</sup> 1894, resolved not to pay the enhanced taxes. The “tahsildar” of the area Bhabani Bhattacharya, a British crony, assured the naïve farmers that the administration would do its best to assuage their problems. The following day, i.e. on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January, 1894 a large contingent of armed police personnel were surreptitiously deployed to



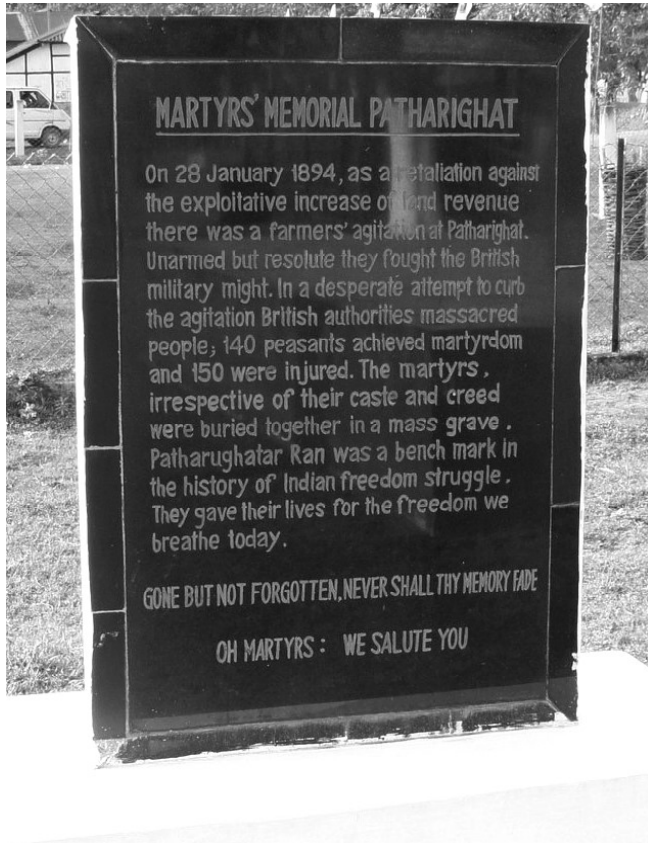
Pothorughat. Reassured by the words of the “tahsildar” a large number of farmers gathered in front of the “dak-bungalow” on 28<sup>th</sup> January 1894, hoping that the order of tax enhancement would be revoked. What the farmers received instead was aggression, humiliation, betrayal and blatant provocation in the form of armed policemen. And then the dam of patience finally broke! The people rushed at their tormentors, armed with sticks and

clods of earth. Yes, clods of earth! And the policemen were ordered to open fire. What followed was a brutal carnage that left **140 people dead** and countless maimed and injured.

J.D. Anderson, The Deputy Commissioner of Darrang, in his report to The Commissioner of Assam Valley Districts dated 30<sup>th</sup> January, 1894 wrote “...**The lesson inflicted was a very severe one and I can only hope and believe that it has been effectual.**”

The farmer gathering Pothorughat was not a rebellion; it was a protest against gross injustice. What happened in Pothorughat was not a “battle”; it was mass murder, fuelled by power and arrogance, almost identical to that of Jalianwala Bagh. It is time the whole of India learned of their Assamese brethren who sacrificed themselves for the motherland. It is also time that the great Assamese warriors, such as the mighty Lachit Borphukan, found their true and rightful place in our history books.

The Krishak Swahids (Farmer Martyrs) of Pothorughat were honoured in 2000 by the Indian Army by erecting a martyrs column at the very spot where they were martyred, at the Krishak Swahid Memorial Park at Patharighat, 20 km from Mangaldai. Furthermore, the Red Horns Division of the Indian Army headed by the GOC pay homage to the Krishak Swahids on the 29<sup>th</sup> of January every year, reportedly the only such honour accorded by the gallant Indian Army to civilian martyrs. ■



(Contd. from Page 8 )

## Sister Nivedita : Agnishikha

Swami Vivekananda had said, “O you of great fortune! I too believe that India will awake again if anyone could love with all his heart the people of the country—bereft of the grace of affluence, of blasted fortune, their discretion totally lost, downtrodden, ever—starved, quarrelsome, and envious.” Sister Nivedita was a person of that great fortune! She loved India and Indians with all their faults. 150th Birth Anniversary of Sister Nivedita is

a good occasion to study and understand her life and work. May her life make us love our motherland and our people. May her life give us an insight in our own country and inspiration to work for Mother India.

(The author is a Padma Shri Awardee and is currently the Vice President of Vivekananda Kendra Kanyakumari)

# Watershed Development Projects in Nagaland

Dr. Simhachalam. A

Nagaland is a hill state located in the extreme northeastern region of India with Kohima as its Capital. The state shares common boundaries with Myanmar in the East, state of Assam in the West; Arunachal Pradesh and a part of Assam in the north with Manipur in the south. Nagaland became the 16th state of the union of India on 1 December 1963 occupying a total geographical area of 16,579 sq. Km. According to 2011 census, the state has a total population of 1,978,502 of which male and female are 1,024,649 and 953,853 respectively. The Literacy rate of the district is 79.55 %. The state has 12 districts. The state is inhabited by 17 tribes — Angami, Ao, Chakhesang, Chang, Khiamniungan, Konyak, Lotha, Phom, Pochury, Rengma, Sangtam, Sumi, Yimchunger, Zeme-Liangmai (Zeliang), Dimasa Kachari, Kuki and Rongme. The language of Nagaland is Nagamese, a creole language based on Assamese, is widely and English is the official language. The location of the state is 26.1584° N latitude and 94.5624° E Longitude.

The watershed projects are implementing in Nagaland state by the Department of Land Resources, Govt. of Nagaland is the State Level Nodal Agency (SLNA) for implementation of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana-Watershed Component (PMSKY-WDC), erstwhile Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), a flagship programme of the Ministry of Rural Development, Department of Land Resources, Government of India. The activities taken up in PMKSY-WDC are afforestation, plantation crops, soil & moisture conservation, livelihood activities and production system. These activities will help to rural people particularly, the hill area people in will get benefit by different ways like improving the life style by establishing the various livelihood activities, production system and micro-enterprises activities and also conservation of natural resources.

The Common Guidelines for watershed projects, 2008 / 2011 has been followed to implement the

watershed projects in Nagaland. The implementation of the watershed projects are in three phases namely; preparatory phase, work phase and consolidation phase. The status of the activities of the project will be measured using scoring and grading system designed by the Department of Land resources (DoLR), GoI.

The formal institution/agency involved in the implementation of PMKSY project in the state is the SLNA, IWMP/PMKSY, Nagaland at the apex level and Watershed Cell cum Data Centers(WCDCs) at district level and Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) at the project level. Each PIA has a team of Watershed Development Team(WDT) member. The nodal department is the department of Land Resource Department, of respective four districts of Nagaland. The WCDCs and the PIA share headed by the Land Resource Department, of Nagaland, of all districts of the state. The watershed projects are implemented in three phases namely; i. Preparatory phase, ii. Work phase and Consolidation phase.

## Preparatory phase

The main focus of the Preparatory phase is to implement the Entry Point Activities (EPAs), Capacity Building & Training and prepare the Detail Project Report (DPR) of the watershed projects.

During the preparatory phase, the PIAs of all Micro Watersheds(MWS) executed Entry Point Activities (EPAs) in all MWSs. There are many types of EPAs have been constructed among all MWS. By type, the EPAs executed includes namely: Construction of Culvert, Construction of Approach Road, Construction of Water Harvesting Structure, Construction of Community Guest House, Construction of Rostrum, Construction of Toilet/ Community toilet, Installation of Solar Street Light & Street Light, Construction of Water Reservoir Tank and Pipe, renovation of Community Hall, Construction of Drainage, Construction of Dustbin, Construction of Rain water Reservoirs, Construction of Foot Steps/ Community footsteps, Resting shed/

Rest house/ waiting shed, Revival of traditional pond, Community Marketing shed, Village Gate, Construction of Link road and Renovation of Community hall etc.

All the PIAs during the preparatory phase will be completed the institutional building activities. The project management is to conduct large number of awareness camps and capacity building training of different types for WDTs, PIAs, WCs, SHGs and UGs. Most of the capacity building activities were completed during preparatory phase. Another important activity which PIAs has to be completed during preparatory phase is the task of preparation of DPRs of all projects.

### **Work phase**

During the work phase, PIAs will initiate the implementation of activities comprising Natural Resource Management (NRM), livelihoods for asset and production system & micro enterprises.

Among the NRM activities to be implemented, the highest focus is found on land development activity in watershed area. There are number of NRM works / activities are used to implement in Nagaland. Under Land Development the following activities are used to implement: Afforestation (on wasteland), Afforestation (on total land including wastelands), Horticulture (on wasteland), Horticulture (on total land including wastelands), Agriculture (on wasteland), Agriculture (on total land including wastelands), Pasture (on wasteland), Pasture (on total land including wastelands) and others (on wasteland).

The second important activity under NRM is found Soil & Moisture Conservation. Soil and Moisture Conservation activities are Staggered trenching, Contour Bunding, Graded Bunding, Bench terracing, Vegetative and Engineering Structures, Earthen check dams, Brushwood check dams (Phy. in RM), Gully plugs, Loose boulder, Gabion structures and Others are used to implement in the watershed area.

The Water Harvesting Structure (WHS) emerged as the third important activity in the work phase. Considerable number of activity related to Water Harvesting Structure viz; farm ponds, check dams, nallahbunds, percolation tanks and ground water recharge structure (wells / bore wells) under NRM are used to implement in all projects. By implementing

Farm Production and Micro-enterprises activities, there are nos./unit beneficiaries are assisted through various activities like Fishery, Backyard poultry Livestock, Bee keeping, Duckery, Goatery, Assist for Rice Mill, Estt. of Retail Shop, Seed Production, Tailoring, Sericulture, Agro forestry, Weaving, Food Processing, Carpentry, Blacksmithy, Handicraft, Haircutting Saloon and Others.

Under livelihood support activities, No. of Individual beneficiaries will be provided with RF, No. of SHGs will be provided with RF and also Individual beneficiaries are benefited for taking up some activities i.e. Carpentry Tailoring / Handicraft / Weaving / Piggery / Poultry / Goatery / Vegetable garden / Cardamom Plantation / Nursery etc in watershed area of Nagaland state.

### **Consolidation phase**

As per the stipulation of the common guidelines of watershed projects 2008 / 2011, each PIA is to prepare a work plan for consolidation phase. The process to be followed in the preparation of such a plan has also been indicated in the guidelines. In the light of the above, the status of preparation of consolidation plan and also the process followed in the preparation have been examined using the certain parameters.

The examination of the above parameters was made at PIA level for each project. The PIAs are used to prepare the consolidation phase plan after taking into account the shortfall / gaps and also replication possibilities of all works executed by it till the work phase. These considerations PIA is used to make through different meetings held and discussed in the presence of the members of WC, SHG and UGs. Every meeting at the end has to be identified and enlisted activities that require filling of the shortfall / gaps and replication. Based on such list each PIA worked out a plan for consolidation phase. The verification reveals that the adoption of the process of preparation of consolidation plan must match with the stipulation made in the common guidelines, 2008/2011.

Broad area level Indicators are seen in consolidation phase is Project Management during Consolidation Phase, Management of Developed Natural Resource, Intensification of farm production system / off-farm livelihood, Post Project

Management (Exit Policy) and Project completion report and documentation.

### Conclusion

The implementation of watershed projects are very important in hill area like Nagaland as many people depends on natural resources for their livelihoods. The watershed projects mainly helps in conserving the natural resources and provide sustainable livelihood to rural people of Nagaland state. These watershed projects save the soil fertility by stopping the erosion using various soil and water conservation measures. Also, reduces the pressure on shifting cultivation and promote permanent cultivation as it's provides water conservation measures and livelihood options to the rural people. The watershed development programme has been focused towards the promotion of overall economic development and improvement of the socio-economic conditions of the resource poor sections of people inhabiting the watershed programme areas

through natural resource conservation. Over the years there is much visible impact of watershed development programmes among different communities across the Nagaland state.

The attempt for making convergent implementation of PMKSY/IWMP work/activities with other programmes/schemes is less in Nagaland hence the introduction of the practice of convergent implementation as suggested in the guidelines is recommended. The Up-scaling of Marketing Infrastructure and support activities for agri-based products, Up-of off-farm/informal enterprise scaling, marketing arrangement for other off-farm products/informal activities are to be improved. The Promotion of the organic farming and marketing among the villagers is very important in Nagaland state and also, Up-scaling of livelihoods through promotion of the institution of SHGs, Promotion of Agro Processing activities and Documentation of success stories which are has to be promoted. ■

### Watershed Projects Activity Photographs, Nagaland



Beneficiaries (User Group) of watershed area, Wokha district, Nagaland



Black smith (Beneficiary) of Mohungvillage, under Mon district, Nagaland



Resting Shade Construction under EPA at Tuensang Village under Tuensang district



Piggery of Individual beneficiary as livelihood activity of Chenmoho village, Mon district, Nagaland

# The Bodo Community and Their Language

Dr. Uzzal Sharma

## The Bodos

The Bodos are one of the ethnic and linguistic communities and early settlers of Assam in North-East India. The speciality about the BODO word is that it represents both the language as well as the community. The Bodos belong to a larger group of ethnicity called the Bodo-Kachari. Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, a well known historian, expressed that mythologically they are “The offspring of son of the Lord Vishnu and mother earth”. During the epic period, they were known as ‘Kiratas’. Though they are Mongolian people, the Bodos come to North-East India in 2000 BC.

## 3.3 Bodo Language

Bodo (Devnagari : बोडो, (pronounced [boro]) is a language that belongs to the branch of Barish section under Baric division of the Tibeto-Burman language and spoken by the Bodo people of north-eastern India and some parts of Nepal. In the year 2003, the Bodo language was given a special constitutional status and is one of the 22 scheduled official languages of the Indian state of Assam. The language is very much similar to the Dimasa language of Assam, the Garo language of Meghalaya and the Kokborok language spoken in Tripura.

The Bodo is the second major language of Assam, and official language in the Bodo dominated areas. Many rivers like Dihing, Dibru, Dihong, Dikrai etc. in the North-East region were named after some Bodo words which reveals the spatial distribution pattern of related ethno-cultural groups with their cultural traits and phenomenon.

The Bodo language was introduced as a medium of instruction in the primary school in Bodo dominated areas in 1963, which was the result of an intense socio-political movement carried out by different Bodo organizations since 1913. At present,

the Bodo language is used as a medium of instruction upto the secondary level. The Bodo language has, to its credit, large number of Books, Books of poetry, drama, short stories, novels, biography, Travelogues, Children’s literature and Literary criticism.

The Bodo language originated from the **SINO-TIBETAN** or **TIBETO-CHINESE** family. The Sino-Tibetan family has various sub branches like “**Tibeto –Burmese**”, “**Siamese - Chinese**”, etc. of which “**Tibeto –Barman**” have been living in the North – East India. The “**Tibeto –Barman**” has four sub-branches called – “**Himalayan**”, “**North - Assam**”, “**Assam - Burmese**” and “**Tibetan**”. The section “**Bodo - Naga**” and “**Burmese – Kuki - Chin**” is derived from “**Assam - Burmese**”. The “**Bodo - Naga**” has two sub-sections viz. “**Bodo**” and “**Naga**”. From the Bodo Section which includes “**Dimasa**”, “**Garó**”, “**Rabha**”, “**Hajong**”, “**Mech**”, “**Lalung**”, “**Tipra**”, “**Chutia**”, “**Moran**” came out as a separate language. Within the Bodo group mentioned above, the Bodo is most prominent among all the languages. The diagrammatic representation of The Bodo Language Hierarchy, clearly explains the above relation.

Till the end of 19th century, Bodo language did not have a script and it was mainly a spoken language. There is some evidence of using a kind of **Deodhai Script** by the Bodo – **Kachari Kings** in ancient times. The first book of Bodo was published in 1915. This book was written in Bodo with Assamese Script.

After the Government of Assam has given recognition to Bodo Language as a medium of instruction up to the primary level in 1962, it gradually marched ahead in getting the status of a written language. Initially, **Roman Script** and a kind of modified Assamese script known as **Purbalipi** were used to write the Bodo text books and literary works by Christian and non-Christian Bodos. In 1976,

Bodo Sahitya Sabha, an apex body of Bodo literary forum, decided to take **Devnagari** script instead of Purbalipi for Bodo Language.

Bodo is bilingual because of various socio-economic, political and geographical reason. They use their native language to communicate with their own linguistic community and use other languages like Assamese, Hindi, Bengali to communicate with other communities. Bodo phonemes consists of the following phoneme classes: Segmental phonemes which consists of vowels and consonants, and Supra-segmental phonemes which consists of tone and juncture that co-occurs with vowels and consonants as extra sound features used in the language. ■

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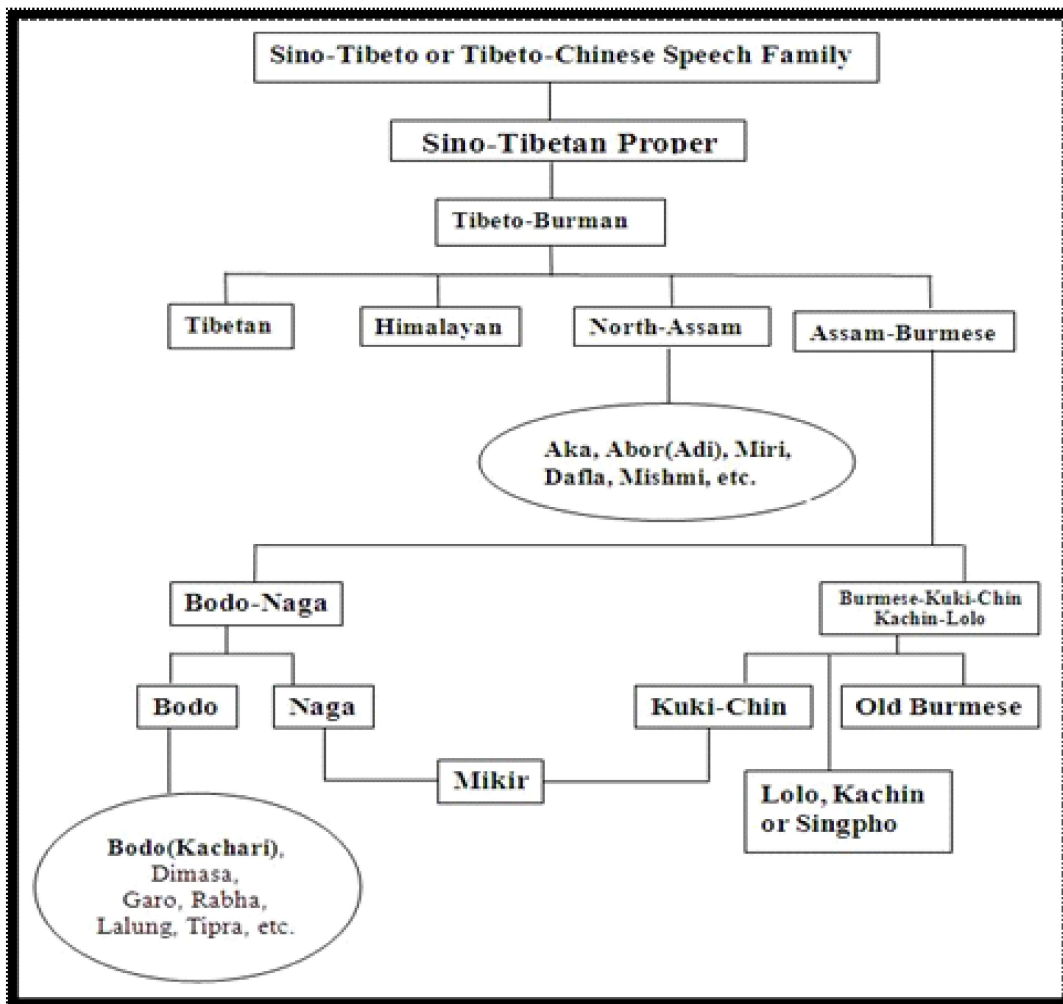
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(The author of this article is serving as an Asstt. Professor (Senior) in the Dept. of Computer Applications under School of Technology, Assam Don Bosco University and can be reached at Cell: +919707020618 / +917002374780)



# The Jhum Cultivation: The Livelihood of Karbi Hills Tribe

Dhaneswar Engti

Jhum cultivation is a kind of slash and burn method of agriculture. It is a process of growing crops in the hill slope by clearing the land of trees and other vegetations. Jhum cultivation has a long history that every tribal family of the hills is aware of it. The hill slope is thereafter cleared by slash and burn method before starting the jhum cultivation, and thus it has made the area cultivable of paddy and other important crops in the entire jhum field. Jhum cultivation is an arduous form of cultivation; hence all the members of the family have to participate during clearing and burning of the jhum field. They also work together during the sowing and harvesting occasions in the jhum field. The hill slopes are selected for jhum cultivation temporarily and then abandon it for a period of one to two decades to recuperate the soil's fertility and reverts to its natural state. Thus, the Karbi people of the hills cultivate jhum cultivation together in large patches in the hill slopes every year during the days of old. We all know that burnt soil contains potash which increases the nutrient content of the soil and it contributes a speedy growth of crops in the jhum fields. But, jhum cultivation involves the felling of large number of trees and bamboos for temporary cultivation, and thus jhum cultivation is blamed for deforestation, soil erosion and loss of biodiversity which automatically affects drastic climate change to the mother earth.

Jhum cultivation is one of the most widely practiced systems of cultivation applied by the Karbis living in the hills. The jhum cultivation is called '*Inglong Arit Katiki*' in Karbi language. The jhum cultivation is carried out by the hills Karbis for earning their livelihood. The jhum cultivation is one of the main sources of earning livelihood during the days of old. The Karbis have learnt this very art of jhum cultivation from their ancestors since time immemorial. These forest friendly people

of the Karbi hills consider the jhum cultivation as one of the most trusted and dependable methods of earning livelihood. They consider forest as their deity who provides them food and shelter for a pleasant and healthy living. Hence, they like to worship the natural world (Forest) every year, so that, they are blessed with good quality of crops and heavy harvesting from their jhum fields.

The Karbis are animism by faith, - the belief that natural objects, natural phenomenon, and the universe itself possess souls. Therefore, the Karbis worship forest, river, hills and other natural objects as their gods and goddesses, and they like to take in the natural world as "*Than Arnam*". This kind of annual ritual is called "*Rongker Karkli*" or "*Than Arnam Kachipame*" in Karbi. And because of these reasons the Karbis are very friendly with the natural world. Hence, they like to call the nature as the main feeder and only hired hand of all living and nonliving things of this world. The belief that natural objects have souls that may exist apart from their material bodies is the main credence of Karbi's philosophy of life behind the nature worship.

The socio-cultural conditions of the Karbis are closely interconnected with the culmination of jhum cultivation. It is associated with the development of its culture and literature. The jhum cultivation is the breeding ground of Karbi folk songs and Karbi folk dances during the olden days. The rich culture and folk literature of the Karbi tribe is interconnected with the beautiful natural world. It is the result of great assimilations with the ethereal environment of nature. The thick jungle, the habitat of wild animals, and verities of colourful wild birds have made the Karbi's lifestyle more colourful and vibrant. The beautiful butterflies dancing in the pasture has added the Karbi culture more effervescent and aerated to take pleasure in.

The beautiful rivulets of the hill slopes keep the Karbi hills evermore enchanting and delightful to see at all time.

The culmination of Karbi culture and literature could be noticed during the reign of great Karbi king, *Rengbonghom*. But the very structure of economy could not last long due to constant fights between the tribal communities. There was lack of mutual coexistence and loyalty among the tribal people of the hills during those days. Thus, the rural economy of the hills started to decline drastically due to constant warfare between the tribal people for claiming the supremacy over the other. As a result, it was beyond the proximity for the tribal people to achieve self-sufficiency both economically and politically. The tribal people of the hills had to suffer from poverty and diseases on a regular basis. During those days, jhum cultivation was the only means of livelihood of the Tribal people. Other than jhum cultivation, there was no other sustainable source of livelihood in the hills.

Jhum cultivation is also called as shifting cultivation. It is an agricultural system in which plots of land are cultivated temporarily, then abandoned while post-disturbance fallow vegetation is allowed to freely grow while the cultivator moves on to another suitable plot. The period of cultivations is usually terminated when the soil shows signs of exhaustion or when the jhum field is overrun by wild plants.

Now, let us come to the following important stages of jhum cultivation usually performed by the Karbi tribe since the age of old in the Karbi hills. The jhum cultivation as practiced by the hills Karbis can be broadly divided into 7 (seven) stages. The names of those seven stages are as follows:

1. RIT KECHAM
2. RIT KEPAN
3. ME KEKAI
4. ARHEK KARHI
5. RIT KENONG

## 6. BAP KARLU

## 7. SOK KEROT LAPEN KEROI

Now, let me expertise an effort to put in plain words about the seven stages of the jhum cultivation one by one in details. There are certain stages of jhum cultivation which are required to be performed diligently by the jhum cultivators.

**1. RIT KECHAM:-** *Rit Kecham* is the selection of jhum sites. It is the primary stage of jhum cultivation to be carried out by the Karbis in the Karbi hills. It is a well preserved tradition which is strictly followed by every faithful Karbi people of the hills. *Rit Kecham* means selection of a suitable site for doing the jhum cultivation by the hills Karbis. This initial stage of jhum cultivation is called '*Rit Kecham*'. The headman of the family or any adult member of the family goes to the forest for identifying the area and selection of site for performing the jhum cultivation for the calendar year is finalised. A suitable plot of land in the hill slope is generally selected for jhum cultivation by the farmer, where a significant mark is given by erecting with bamboos signifying that the plot of land is reserved for jhum cultivation by him and nobody would occupy that plot of land for that year. Thus, the practice of jhum cultivation starts in the hill slopes without inviting bigotry among the tribal people.

**2. RIT KEPAN:-** *Rit Kepan* is the clearance of forest for undertaking the jhum cultivation in hill slopes. After selection of site for jhum cultivation, the most gruelling stage of its cultivation starts. At this stage, land is cleared by slash-and burn methods. All the trees, bushes and wild plants are cleared by the method of slash-and burn, and the left over and other lingering vegetations on the jhum field are desiccated completely before sowing the crops. Later than that, the seeds are sown after arrival of rain to the jhum field. Here, at this stage, the farmers have to lacerate all the bamboos, trees and other unwanted plants entirely at a time, and then allows to dry up lacerates under the scorching heat of sunlight. The clearance of jungle is another



important stage of jhum cultivation. It has to be done in such a way that none of the trees or wild plants can breed the area and destroy the crops any more. Hence, one has to do through slash and burn method to clear all the trees and wild plants at a time properly, so that, the sunlight can plunge directly into the jhum field at all time, and the crops can grow uninterruptedly to make possible of a good harvesting of crops from the jhum field.

**3. RIT ME KEKAI:-** *Rit Me' kekai* is a process of burning of cut trees, dry bamboos and other unwanted dry plants at the jhum field. *Rit Me Kekai*, (Burning of fire), is the third stage of jhum cultivation. All dry bamboos, trees and other unwanted wild plants are burnt to ashes in the third stage of the jhum cultivation. At this stage the farmer starts burning all the dry objects in the jhum field, and it is one of the most exciting stages of jhum cultivation. When the dried bamboos, trees and other wild vegetations are burnt into ashes and a huge fire starts burning in the jhum field. Thus, the burnt soil starts containing potash which increases the nutrient content of the soil and it contributes a speedy growth of crops in the jhum fields

By burning trees, bamboos and other wild vegetations in the jhum field, it enhances potash component of the soil tremendously. Thus the jhum field becomes a rich and arable soil for jhum cultivation. It also increases the nutrient content of the soil. After burning out of all desiccated bamboos, trees and other unwanted wild plants of the jhum field, the soil becomes red and loamy, and thus increases the soil more loamy and fertile which is very helpful for producing good crops and heavy production.. Hence, the jhum site is nicely cleared and all the unwanted wild plants and redundant objects are burn into ashes first, so that, the sunlight can fall directly on the jhum field for helping the speedy growth and heavy harvesting of crops from the jhum field. It is a well-known fact that, burnt soil contains maximum potash which increases the nutrient content of the soil and it can contribute a speedy growth of various

crops in the jhum fields

**4. ARHEK KARHI:-** *Arbek Karhi* is a collection of unburned bamboos, trees and other materials and again burning them to ashes in the jhum field. *Arbek Karhi* is the fourth stage of jhum cultivation. At this stage, burning of unwanted trees, weeds and other wild vegetations of the jhum field are carried out. It is another important stage of slash and burn method of jhum cultivation in the jhum field. This is a stage when all residual plants and trees and other unwanted materials are uprooted and burn into ashes again in the jhum field. Here, at this stage, all the dried bamboos, trees and other unwanted objects are collected properly and assembled at one place in total and then burn them to ashes completely, so that, these unwanted objects cannot prevent the crops from growing and the paddy and other essential crops are harvested from the jhum field nicely.

**5. RIT KENONG:-** *Rit Kenong* is the sowing seeds in the jhum field. 'Rit Kenong' is the fifth stage of jhum cultivation. After clearance of the jhum field, the crops are sown by the farmers. The preparation of the jhum field for cultivation is a major task to get good production of crops. Therefore, the soil is beautifully prepared with the help of small spades by the young boys and girls. The seeds of paddy and other crops are sown in the jhum field by the farmers. During this stage of jhum cultivation, the seeds of crops are sown in the field by the members of the family and other young boys and girls of the village, which is called '*Ajir Kachebui*'. It is one of the most popular exercises of jhum cultivation. '*Ajir Kachebui*' means exchange of work between the working peasants, through manual labour, they can help to each other, for that, no monetary payment or exchange of money against the manual labour is mandatory.

The existence of '*Jirkedam*' also originated from '*Ajir Kachibui*'. It is also known as *Jir kedam*, which is a modern form of cooperative society, and it is the oldest form of a well-organized traditional education cum training system of various

household works including jhum cultivation in Karbi society. The very institution of *Jir Kedam* is the breeding ground of various Karbi folk stories, folk dances, folk songs and many other Karbi love stories of the olden days. These customary exercises are still in vogue in the Karbi society. Thus, we can take it for granted that, all the Karbi folk narratives are closely interconnected and originated from the '*Riso Aterank*', '*Jir Kedam*' and the epicentre of those folk narratives is the Karbi Jhum fields.

**6. BAP KARLU:-** *Bap Karlu* is the most unavoidable but tedious act of uprooting the unwanted plants and weeds in the jhum field. *Bap Karlu* is another important stage of jhum cultivation. Because, without doing proper weeding or cutting the unwanted plant or wild grass from the jhum field, the paddy and other important crops cannot grow properly. Without performing '*Bap Karlu*', one cannot expect a good harvesting from his jhum field. It may prevent the paddy and other crops from growing and good harvesting. The jhum field is a process of cultivation which allows paddy and other crops are allowed to grow freely while the farmer moves on to another plot of land for jhum cultivation the next year. At this stage all crops emerge full-grown crop and the entire jhum field becomes emerald green with paddy leaves and other delectable crops. The emerald green leaves of paddy start dancing at the gentle waves of breeze throughout the day, and it captivates a farmer while looking from his small hut called – '*Mandu*' or '*Hemtap*', called it a dovecote, erected in the middle of the jhum field. At this stage the farmer tries to remove the weeds and other unwanted plants from his jhum field very gently and thus the paddy and other essential crops are allowed to grow up freely without any interruption from them. By taking these kinds of precautions, a farmer can expect a good harvesting of crops from his jhum field, and it is a healthy process of crop-growing farming activity generally practiced by the Karbi tribe during the olden days.

**7. SOK KEROT LAPEN KEROI:-** *Sok Kerot* is harvesting of crops and *Sok Keroi* is last act of

collection and storing of crops or paddy from the jhum field. '*Sok Kerot Lapen Keroi*' is another most important stage of jhum cultivation. For a farmer, this stage is the testing stage of his luck and how much paddy he has accumulated in that very year is the most important matter to be decided. For a jhum farmer, this is one of the most important periods of jhum cultivation. It is the time to assess himself how much wealth he has accumulated in terms of paddy and other crops for that particular year. People are excited to see the heavy collection of paddy and other crops of a farmer. If there is a heavy collection of paddy from his jhum field, then it can be said that, his dream has come true, he will have enough foodstuff to eat for that year. He does not need to worry for that year's livelihood. It is true for a farmer that, his whole year's labour and sacrifice has rewarded him sufficient crops by the blessings of *Hemphu Arnam*, the almighty God. Hence, they worship '*Hemphu Arnam*' to get more blessings from Him. The fruit of his hard labour is abundance now; his store house is full of paddy and other essential crops which are enough for the yearlong consumption of his family. It gives him enough satisfaction to live a good and satisfying life with his wife and other members of his family. It gives him complete food security for that particular year. It provides him more confidence to work harder the next year to earn additional wealth from the jhum field.

Further, during the harvesting season, all the young boys and girls participate in the collection of paddy with marry making. In the jhum field, every single stalk of grains is collected properly and to be kept at a place called '*Jimtim*', which is nicely prepared in front of the '*Mandu*'. *Mandu*. It is erected in the middle of the Jhum field for the night's stay of the farmer. After that, they make a good threshing of paddy with the sticks to separate the grains from the straws, and this is called - '*Sok Kepam*' in Karbi language. Singing and dancing is another important entertaining scene to be viewed during the harvesting period.

(Contd. to Next Issue)



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