

ISSN : 2581-9313

# HERITAGE EXPLORER

"LET KNOWLEDGE COME FROM ALL THE SIDES"

*A Monthly News Bulletin*

VOL.-XX, NO.-1, JANUARY 2021, RNI. REGD. NO. ASSENG/2002/06981, POSTAL REGD. NO. RNP/GH-094/2021-23



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

It is already becoming clearer that a chapter which has a western beginning will have an **Indian ending** if it is not to end in the self-destruction of the human race... At this supremely dangerous moment in history the only way of salvation for mankind is the Indian Way“

Dr. Arnold Toynbee *British Historian 1889-1975*

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

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Printed & Published by : Sri Rituparno Tamuli Phukan  
on behalf of Heritage Foundation, K.B.Road, Paltan  
Bazar, Guwahati-781008 and Printed at: Angik  
Prakashan, GNB Road, Guwahati - 781001 and  
Saraighat Offset Press, Bamunimaidan, Guwahati -  
781021, Published from: Heritage Foundation,  
K.B.Road, Paltan Bazar, Guwahati - 781008 (Assam).  
e-mail: [ourheritage123@gmail.com](mailto:ourheritage123@gmail.com), Website:  
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## New Year and our Post Covid resolutions

Like other parts of the world India also bade adieu to the distressing year 2020 and welcomed the New Year 2021 with the fond hope for a peaceful, happy and prosperous year ahead. This time the 2020 year end jubilations were subdued and less boisterous, partly because of the endemic related restrictions imposed by the government and more out of fear of contacting corona virus infection from afflicted as well as the asymptomatic people around us. The caution was the most right thing to adopt and most of our countrymen observed all the endemic related protocols in right earnest, the result of which is reflected in the nineteen lakh casualties out of about 9 crore people affected in our country of 130 crore population. This is an outstanding achievement if we compare ourselves with other less populated but highly developed countries of the world. This was possible only because of the calculated steps taken by our country under the outstanding leadership of PM Narendra Modi. Similarly, in Assam Covid infections dropped to mere 15, lowest in last six months. As of now the state has only 3210 active cases. This is a remarkable achievement and has been possible only because of the highly pro-active steps taken by the state government and the restraint as well as compliance of the Covid protocols shown by our people. In the year gone by our people, both rich and the poor, had to fight the Covid onslaught amidst great all round distress and difficulties and faced many hardships, but did not lose hope for a better tomorrow.

Today, this tomorrow has dawned on the first day of the first month of 2021. We have received the best news we can ever imagine. Our scientists have given us the best possible New Year gift of Covid vaccines, not one but two, that are destined to save many souls of our country yearning for a relief from the covid woe. We should rejoice at

this gift, celebrate the success of our scientists, offer our heartfelt gratitude to our Doctors, Nurses, Paramedics, the Police, cleaners and the scavengers who stood by us during the most testing times and looked after our well being. The merry making that we were used to in past years must wait for some more time, because we are not out of the woods as yet. The healing process has not yet taken off and may take some more months. We should therefore maintain the caution to safeguard ourselves as we have become used to during the long lockdown periods and beyond. The fruits of our patience will definitely be much sweeter than our expectation.

Many of us must have taken some New Year resolutions to achieve the avowed goals of our lives. However in addition to these goals we must add a few more for a more fruitful new year. These include shunning the fake news and half baked opinions of the pseudo experts. Being swayed by the opinions of the like of Rahul Gandhi and Akhilesh Yadav will do no good to us. We should go by the views and considered opinions of the real experts and the scientists who have toiled day and night over the health issues and have succeeded in developing the vaccines. We must be aware of the elements that are bent on jeopardizing our progress and destabilize our economy by creating confusion amongst our people and give them a befitting reply by bestowing our faith in our government and our own scientists. We should not allow our disgruntled politicians of the opposition to breach our faith in our scientists. We must also understand that our scientists and our government will never resort to something that may cause irreparable harm to our countrymen, because they are answerable in the long run. The scientifically most advanced countries of the world and the WHO have reposed faith in our vaccines, why should we not?

**Chief Editor**



# Rituals of Zeliang

## Mehenlu

The Zeliang is one of the tribes of the Naga Tribe in Nagaland. The term zeliang covers two groups of people, the Zeme and the Liangmai. They are the indigenous inhabitants of the present Peren District of Nagaland State.

**1. Birth Ceremony:-** On the day of birth the newly born baby is to be named. The elder of the family shall bring the newborn outside the house in the light and bless him/her in the name of Almighty God.

**2. Naming Ceremony (Nna maitu ka-aloubo):-** The only ceremony connected with childbirth is the naming ceremony of the newly born in the name of Almighty God. Naming ceremony is performed only on completion of five days of the birth of the Child. The reason for fifth day is based on the obligation given by Tingwang “Ring; Shai; Ring; Shai; Ring”(Life, Death ,Life Death,Life).On that very day the elder of the family shall offer a prayer for the longevity of the child.Then the newborn child’s hairs is shaved and his/her ear lobes are pierced .

**3. Calling one’s soul (Ahiu kubo):-** This rituals is performed only when a person falls sick and becomes lifeless. It has to be performed by healthy, strong and energetic men. Calling one’s soul back to the heart of the village and restore his/her soul.

**4. Marriage Ceremony:-** If a marriage is between people belonging two different villages then the grooms family will find for a home in the bride’s village in advance and vice-versa. This newly found home will become their guardian away from home. At nuptial night all the elders of the groom’s family shall assemble at the house of bridegroom and then leave for the bride’s place carrying a KECHAKUANG (Brass Plate) and Cheman (bride-price) The valedictory ritual began with the lifting up of the Chemeiput (Bride-cases) the bride will carry

the Chemeila (Bride-Wine) the bridegroom is accompanied by his best friend. It is obligatory for the groom to put on the shawl(Phaisua) woven by his bride. At the bridegroom’s abode, while stepping inside the main entrance they shall remove their shoes and step on the cold metal with right foot and walk inside the house consecutively headed by the “KAMEKANPUI” (One who lead the couple while leaving for the groom’s place) and then the bride, bride-maid, bridegroom and best-man. After entering the house everybody shall standup to put down the Chemeiput. Subsequently, the elder, at the court yard of groom’s abode, shall offer a prayer in the name of Almighty Tingwang for both the spouse and the Chemeila jau (Bride-wine) is offered and after that the wedding feast is served.

**5. Death Ceremony:-** At the time of death of a person the offer of sacrifices of animals is being practiced as a means of having the last supper together and to offer homage to the dead man’s Spirit by praying to almighty God( Tingwang) to bless upon the corps. The dead may be put on Zeliang costumes and buried.

**6. Banquet ritual (Keriudungbo/Jauhobo):** Banquet is offered to seek Almighty God’s (Tingwang) blessing for health prosperity and protection. Hence the ceremony is religious in nature. Banquet rituals is perform by anyone, whoever acquire an abundant harvest or paddy at the end of the year. Only a married man who is wealthy can perform such huge sacrifices. Its believed that by performing the sacrifices, the performer goes to Heaven after death. This banquet can be just for one day. Everyone should celebrate the event in full traditional costumes, with songs and dances. It generally begins with a Mithun Sacrifice. A huge lavish feast of meat, Rice, rice beer and rice brew is being arranged or prepared by the host family. ■

## Sister Nivedita: Embodiment of Shakti and Bhakti

Dr Syed Tanveer Nasreen

Like her, Guru Swami Vivekananda, Margaret Elizabeth Noble, or Sister Nivedita (1867-1911), reverently called the 'White flower of nobility', lived a very small span of mortal life. However, her contributions to Indian life and society can never be judged by the number of years she physically lived. Sister Nivedita continues to live in the heart of every nationalist and humanist Indian who looks forward to an equal world even more than hundred years after she passed away. Nivedita's father, Samuel Richmond Noble was a pastor. Service to mankind is the true service to God, is a lesson Nivedita learnt from him, early in life. Margaret lost her father when she was only ten years old and was brought up by her maternal grandfather who was one of the front ranking leaders of the freedom movement in Ireland. These two gentlemen had a deep imprint on Nivedita which led her to combine the quests for spirituality and nationalism in her own life. Margaret Noble had already started her school in Wimbledon and was preparing herself for the service to humanity, when she met Swami Vivekananda in November 1895, in London. She could soon hear the calling within herself. The tremendous energy and constructive spirit that had so long been dormant in her now found an outlet. In her own words, she always had a "burning voice within, but nothing to utter". The meeting changed her life; as she later estimated in a letter to a friend in 1904 that, "How often and often I sat down, pen in hand, to speak and there was no speech. And now there is no end to it! As surely I am fitted to my world, so surely is my world in need of me, waiting-ready. The arrow has found its place in the bow."

### Move to Kolkata

A determined Elizabeth had travelled to

Kolkata in 1898 leaving behind all her material possessions, friends and relatives. She brought with her to India the vision to change, the resolution to execute and the dedication to serve humanity. Miss Noble was initiated to the vow of Brahmacharya on March 25, 1898. This Nivedita herself regarded as her rebirth and devoted her life to make her new name meaningful. Following a short probation in the Indian ways of life, Sarada Ma's "khuki and spiritual daughter of Swami Vivekananda, Nivedita soon started a school for girls in the Bosepara Lane of Bagbazar, Kolkata in November 1898. The school was opened on the auspicious day of Kali Puja. Sarada Ma blessed and prayed for the school. Goddess Kali, the embodiment of primordial feminine energy deeply impressed Nivedita. Consequently, her monograph, Kali -The Mother (1900), also had a deep impact on contemporary intellectuals, like Abanindranath Tagore who was the principal artist and creator of Indian Society of Oriental Art. He was also the first major exponent of Swadeshi values in Indian art, thereby founding the influential Bengal school of art, which led to the development of modern Indian painting. Along with the invocation of Shakti, the inauguration of the school on that particular day was also the first flicker of the lamp lit in the encircling gloom in Bengal at that time. The concept and theories of women empowerment as we understand today had not yet come into vogue. Whatever Sister Nivedita and her associates did, came directly from the heart, inspired by an ideal to serve humanity.

### A Devoted Missionary

A missionary to the core, a prolific writer and

mesmerising orator, Nivedita went from one house to another, requesting fathers to send their daughters to school. The pitiable condition of the Indian women pained her as she wanted every woman to have a voice of her own. Every woman, empowered by the divine grace of Shakti within herself, was to come forward and serve the society and the nation. It was never too late to start, she opined. There were thus many widows and adult women among her students. Along with the general curriculum, girls were trained in sewing, nursing and the elementary rules of hygiene in the school. In her services to those affected by the Plague epidemic in 1899, in her unflinching faith and conviction in the greatness of Indian culture and civilisation, in her support and inspiration to the nationalist movement, Nivedita implemented the call of her guru (Swami Vivekananda) to “Arise! Awake!” Most of all, in the thirteen years that Sister Nivedita spent in Kolkata, she wanted women to awake from the slumber of inactivity and participate in every phase of social and national life. For this, they primarily needed to be equipped with education. Sister Nivedita was thus the forerunner in implementing the discourses of women empowerment, even much before the theory came into vogue. In the course of the journey of the century after her, we have come to know about the theories and the possible ways they can be put into practice. We are also aware of the tremendous impediments in the process of women empowerment across the world. This has made Sister Nivedita all the more relevant in our lives, in the lives and realities of Indian women.

### **Satiating Experience**

The tremendous potential with which she carried on the work of empowering women has today reached every corner of the country. In continuation of her ideal and commitment to empowerment, the Bhagini Nivedita Sardha Satabarsha Udjapan Samiti (Committee for the Commemoration of the 150th Birth Anniversary

of Sister Nivedita) has taken up a year-long programme. The committee was jointly constituted with the women members of the Kolkata unit of Vivekananda Kendra Kanyakumari, Kolkata Nivedita Shakti, Sanskar Bharati and Vivekananda Vijnan Mission. The concluding ceremony of “Bhagini Nivedita: Indian Icon of Women Empowerment,” was recently held at the Sri Ramkrishna Institute of Culture, Golpark, Kolkata. On this occasion the committee organised district level competitions on recitation, quiz and painting in twenty places across the State of West Bengal. It was a very satiating experience to watch the auditorium thriving with the liveliness of the young girls, the enthusiasm and eagerness of their teachers and their guardians. This was the empowerment that Nivedita had envisioned for posterity. In a very colourful yet sombre programme in the packed auditorium of the Institute, Prabrajika Nirbhikprana Mataji of the Ramakrishna Sarada Mission and Smt Sujata Nayek of the Vivekananda Kendra Kanyakumari inspired the students of new generation with the ideals, life and works of Sister Nivedita. The committee felicitated swimmers Sayani Das and Teherana Nasreen, both English Channel winners. Sayani Das spoke in details about the hardships she had encountered and shared the story of her success amidst great applause from the audience. The achievements of the Indian swimmers greatly motivated the younger generation. Danseuse and Professor of Rabindra Bharati University, Amita Dutt and Sunanda Mukherjee, former Chairperson, State Women’s Commission, West Bengal, also graced the occasion. It was an afternoon in which the city of Nivedita’s activities, recalled her services with gratitude and reaffirmed its conviction in carrying it to the future. The event hosted by the committee was indeed a befitting tribute to Sister Nivedita who gave her all to India.

**(The author is a Professor of History in the University of Burdwan, West Bengal)**

## Changlang Calling ! Few moments in the midst of Tangsa society

Dr. Ranga Ranjan Das

On our recent trip to Changlang, we broke our journey at Roing and halted there for two nights. On the third day morning, we commenced our journey for enchanting Changlang to spend some time in the midst of Tangsa society for the purpose of mobilizing the members of the groups engaged in undertaking empirical studies of the Tangsa community. All the members were natives of the area, some of whom joined during the workshop at Roing. Dr Wangrao Taidong (from Changlang township), Kamjai Taism, Chenlang Tangha, Ningjong Tangha, Pusum Mgemu (from Khimiyang village), etc. are some of the members. We left Roing together at 4<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at around 3.40 pm. Our car reached Meka Tiniali at 4 pm in the process of approaching main road that leads to our destination. After fueling process, enjoying the beautiful evening we moved on crossing some of the villages like Jia, Pupyok, Erbuk, Bolung I, Baksek, Kaling, Bolik and Shantipur. We have already crosses 23 km and wait for a while at Shantipur area for mitigating issue of inner line permit. At around 5.15 we had reached Chapakhowa at Sadiya and proceed towards crossing Dhola-Sadiya bridge. It was dark in the evening but still reflected names of some villages like Mugulpur, Kundil Kimar, Dukani, Purani Lakhi and then touching Talap Bali market of Tinsukia, Makum Tinsukia by pass, Tingrai-Digboi, we are at the border of Changlang. Literally, it is said as one and half our journey from Margherita. It was around 7.30 pm we stop for a cup of tea at Margherita. We resumed journey with deteriorating road condition in the initial phase due to rain when we were approaching hilly terrain. Later on main road seemed better. We had to wait at Namdang check post for inner line issue and subsequent journey following in mountainous tracts leading to our destination. It was around 9 pm when it seems our ultimate destination was close at hands as fragments of Changlang township started

appearing. After crossing villages like Namtok, Rangrinkan, Longran, Khuchep and also Rran Frah vidyaniketan, old Changlang, we were at the midst of Changlang town and rested at the circuit house. The small township is nestled in the hilly slopes and in the next day morning I was quite amaze to see the white clouded hills and entire township as it like to embrace me folding two arms and it found Changlang calling!

Changlang is one of the important districts of Arunachal Pradesh and regarded as the home of Tangsa group of the state. It was created on 14<sup>th</sup> November 1987 splitting from Tirap district. Earlier, there was one district Tirap which is further divided into three: Tirap, Changlang and Longding. Changlang is the headquarters, the township as well. It is located to the south of Lohit and north of Tirap district, having international boundary with Myanmar. The district covers an area of 4,662 km<sup>2</sup> whose population is 1,48,226 according to 2011 census, with a population density of 32 inhabitants per square km. For the purpose of administration the district is divided into subdivisions like Changlang, Miao, Jairampur, Bordumsa, etc., under which there are several circles, namely Changlang, Yatdam, Namtok, Khimiyang, Kharsang, Miao, Jairampur, Nampong, Manmao, Diyun, Bordumsa, Vijoyagar, Rima-putak, etc. Further, district consists of legislative assembly constituencies like Bordumsa, Miao, Nampong, Changlang South and Changlang North. It is reported that the Tangsas are mostly settled in the circles like Changlang, Yatdam, Namtok, Khimiyang, Kharsang, Miao, Jairampur and Nampong.

Along with Tangsa, other sizeable numbers from Tutsa, Nocte, Chakma, Singpho, are also found in the district. Coming to Tangsa groups, it has trans-border existence and also found in Myanmar



(erstwhile Burma) and also regarded under the Naga groups but later on discarded. Etymologically, *tang* means hills and *sa* means people. There has been many works<sup>1</sup> that documents the Tangsa exclusively. Excerpts of the documentation of Anthropological Survey of India (1994: 1099-1128):

“Tangsa is an umbrella term for a number of communities living in the mountainous terrain of the Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh. The communities studied under the generic term Tangsa include the Yongkuk, Tikhak, Lungchang, Muklom, Mosang, Morang, Lungphi, Lungri, Kimsing, Jugli, Ronrang, Sanke, Sangwal, Havi and Tonglim. The first four communities together, are known as Tangwa, and are considered the earliest migrants from the south, who settled down on the northern slopes of the Patkai range (mostly in Changlang circle). Later on they have moved into the plains of the Noa-Dihing river in the Miao and Bordumsa circles. According to the 1981 census, the total population of the Tangsa is 16,475, grouped into 32 communities. Only 15 are identified. Each group speaks a separate dialect belonging to ‘Tibeto-Burman family’ (p. 1099)

The thing is that the ‘communities’ as stated by the Anthropological Survey of India, is mere sub-groups or sub-tribes of the Tangas who can understand each others’ dialect. There is some basic information that brings forth about these sub-groups: ‘Havi group’ like to refer themselves as Hawai- *ba* means land and *wai*- forest- forest people. Their original habitat is Tikhang Tong Lang. According to 1981 census, their population was 383, of whom 173 are males and 210 are females. They are divided into several exogamous phratries (*saphowa*). Each phratry subsumes a number of clans (*ruming*). The chief’s clan is Mandok. Moh, Ronghon, Kongtum and Lianglok are some of their festivals (p. 1100-1101). Jugli group is another important sub-tribe. It means human being. They can be easily identified by their tri-colour shawl known as tangting worn by man and woman. They are divided into two moieties: Khanglim and Khanham that also comprises several clans like

Tainas, Taikha, Taikin, Koral, Korah, Janjok, Taili, Menta and Khanga (p, 1102). Lungchang another group’s means ‘people who originated from rock’. There are fifteen exogamous clans among them, namely Kenglang, Jonglam, Taiyong, Taiju, Khomrang, Mamai, Taidong, Lulin, Taisim, Tailong, Nyungja, Changwang, Wapai, Haisa and Kamba (p. 1106). Kimsing group also call themselves as Chamchang and Khemsing. They are divided into a number of exogamous clans (*aphan*) such as Sina, Langtim, Maipok, Chhojam, Chaso and Cholam (p. 1104). Etymological meaning of Lungri group- *lung* means stone or rock or hill, *ri* means water. There are a few phratries and fifteen clans amongst the Lungri. Some of the clans are Kimkhak, Raiwang, Hangkhowa, Gaptok, Lobia, Lisai, Sidya, Lamkhang, Bamliao, Kimiya, Jakkao, Songlai and Wakhat (p. 1110). Lungphi group is also divided into clans (*aphans*) like Yongkhung, Tairing and Khoipang (p. 1108). Similarly Morang group is also divided into exogamous clans like Nyamran, Nihap, Sangrang, Moje, Lomon, Tapsang, Kimsha, Chokhio, Chhore, Palkat, Kathong, Sana, Kaipin, Hairat, Haile, Kenya, Ranlot and Waingo (p. 1113). Mosang group is settled in Tirap, Namchik and Dihing river valleys. Their clans include: Kengdap, Rangkhaw, Kelum, Hipon, Chithang, Wakpat, Lungtu, Yoka, Wangrai, Rangsum, Samhang, Thamte, Kethung, Rangurang, Jonkhung, Rangka, Thampong and Teekhaon (p. 1115-1116). Yongkuk group are divided into several phratries and some exogamous clans: Ngokhom, Tailong, Taihu, Taichu, Kamba and Taitha (p.1126). There are exogamous clans like Wellyo, Khangyak, Dewe, Chokhang, Khapwing, Kunsing, Koje, Jankhe, Wyosang, Khangla and Chunga in Tonglim group (p.1125). Tikhak group is proficient basket makers. They are characterized by their distinctive dual organization (*poetu*) represented by the Tangkhu and Simai moieties. The Tangkhu subsumes seven exogamous clans (*aphan*) and the Simai includes ten exogamous clans: Tailong, Hanglung, Tanching, Tairing, Longjung, Mokhom, Wangkhang, Momai, Jangshong, Taimak, Taidang, Tailu, Kamba, Taichu, Taitha, Mungkhom and Mowan (p. 1123-1124).

Sankey group have a moiety organization, represented by the Chungtuk and the Choshey. Chungtuk subsumes seven exogamous clans or nak groups and Choshey includes eight exogamous clans: Tiboi, Lanrum, Chosa, Keykap, Kongrang, Kianoo, Taorah, Nangkong, Khokhong, Lawey, Allon, Chuwrah, Wanpi, Sintak and Shongrey (p. 1121-1122). Sangwal group is divided into seven exogamous clans: Sangkhu, Taipon, Taiwai, Sangrang, Taiboi, Taichai and Telung. Sangwal means expert forest travelers (p. 1120). The social organization of the Ronrang group is characterized by its phratries like Longti, Woety, Chumtu, Lisey, Chummut and Gahja, and divided into several exogamous clans (*haru*) like Nokwi, Jangloo, Shesu, Matwa, Pechong, Kewa, Kubu, Shama, Rgang, Nori, Nalago, Langhe, Jeoboe, Rewey, Diwa, Tamkok, Morang, Kuchit, Lomme, Nagu, Kisha, Shosa and Lomko (p. 1118-1119). It is observed that more or less all the groups have clan specific unit where they follow clan exogamy in terms of marital union. Agriculture, mainly shifting cultivation is their mainstay.

During the visit, we had very little scope to stay at one place for prolonged period. However our aim was to spend quality time wherever we visited. We started our journey on the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 2020. It was a wonderful morning and bright sunshine in the hilly terrain. Patches of pure white cloud is accumulated in some patches in the hills. Wangrao Taidong joined us with his motorbike along with another team member. The unique traditional lower garment worn by Taidong is really eye catching. We started the proceedings by visiting the Rang Fra temple at New Changlang village located adjacent to township. Earlier, it is mentioned about the name of a school. Now the thing is what is Rangfraa? How it is related to Tangsa society? Those who are associated with traditional religion or revival process of indigenous belief and practices in the north eastern region know the fact. We have seen the impacts of Christianity among the different groups of this region. Church under different sects has been established in the nook and corner of the region. It

expedites the rates of conversion. Scholars pointed out that change of religion is the threat of cultural loss and also lose of identity. To withstand such process, various groups have made some attempt to revive their religion by a kind of movement. Among the Zeme Nagas, we have seen Heraka movement, among Bodos Brahma movement, Donyi-Polo movements, establishment of Gangging among Adi groups, are some of such attempts. Among the Tangsas, the emergence of Rang Fra temple is part of Rangfraa movement <sup>2</sup> which is nicely going on. Reshma Rekhung (2020: 81) asserted that Rangfraism is one of the important indigenous religion which started its' movement around the laste 90's in Changlang. Rangfraa means 'God', i.e the supreme spirit of being. *Rang* means divine power, and *fraa* means subjective aspects such as love, compassion, wisdom, peace, tolerance, forgiveness, sacrifice, etc. Their holy text book *The Great Third Coming of Rangfraa*, says that Rangfraism is theistic but very different from other theistic religions due to the concept of 'eternal gap', the gap between the known and the unknown, satisfaction and dissatisfaction, perfection and imperfection and ultimately man and god. The space of worship as found in many traditional religion is mitigated by establishing sophisticated temples like Rang Fra. With the help of their mythology they has make shape of Rang Fra god which is established in the temple. The idol is unique in the sense that both ear is perforated and inserted earth worm in one side while paddy straw in the other. The construction of temple is arranged with modern amenities. Follower maintained some rules and guidelines according to sect. Luhap Taiju, at New Changlang who looks after the temple elaborates different facts associated with temples. In the temple premises, woman seat right and man in left. Impacts of Hinduism are also found when they use insenstick, earthen lamp, flowers to tribute their god. On a fool moon night, sometimes, on 30 November, they celebrate Rang Fra day along with prayer in Sunday. There is custom of lit earthen lamp clan wise. They also assemble in Wednesday and Saturday. The temple is of recent origin. Foundation stone is laid on 1997 by Raisam Jongsam head

gaonbura of New Changlang and Longri village. After staying there, we restarted our journey towards another temple. The process of building village wise temple is on. It has positive impacts. Fifty percent of around 26,000 Tangsa populations have started following the religion. At around 10.30 pm we have reached another temple at Ajung village. It was inaugurated by then Parliamentary Secretary, Thinghaap Taiju. Along with a concrete structure and idol, the striking feature is articulated programme schedule as 'Proceedings for God's Service at Rangsombum' hanging in the wall for the followers. Such arrangements also depict the impacts of Christianity where church proceedings are maintained. It is wonderful to witness such time table starting with 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> April during summer; 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> March during winter. From the arrangements it is found that Sunday, Wednesday and Saturday is considered as service day. Some activities includes cleaning of alter, performing or ritual, lighting, mass prayer, individual prayer and offerings and mass prayer (*keborongngut*) in Sunday. There are *Raamva* and *Tamva* for the temple who acts a caretaker and priest for the temple. There is individual prayer and offering of Rangfraits under fasting, lighting of sixth lamp by preceptor (*kayechu*) and singing of prayer song for invocation of divine spirit in the Kayechu Sammals thereof and healing during Wednesday and Saturday service. There is also schedule of fasting: first Sunday for the wellbeing of the Secretary General, second for Rang Samaal, third for Kayechu Samaals, Mingkayechus and RFPS (Rangfraa Faith Promotion Society) executive bodies, fourth Sunday for entire humanity unless there is any special instruction, Wednesday and Saturday for individual and on extreme cases in any day of a week. It is nicely regulated by RFPS. Our third destination to a Tangsa village was accompanied by Kamjai Taism where Wangrao Taidong left and engages for a surprise at the night.

At around 11.30 am, we were on the way towards third and final destination of the day. It was comparatively long journey in hilly tracts. At around 12.50 pm, we crossed Hydel Tiniali village, followed

by Saching village, crossing Tisue river, Langchuk village, and finally reached Bubang III, and Bubang II village. We are impressed at the hospitality and greetings of a fellow kinsman of one of the team members. We are allowed to sit in a platform house (*chang ghar*). It is still there and they really prefer it with the concept of kitchen at the middle. The roof is prepared with dried kara leaves (tokou). I have narrated the team regarding entire documentation process along with the objectives. We have been offered with traditional Tangsa meal in the lunch. It was vegetarian but we never forget the unique taste of jhum products. The picturesque landscape around the village and the journey was quite remarkable. Another interesting facet is their simplicity and communication ability in Assamese. After returning back to our camp, I felt tired. But the entire crew members were present. I have to elaborate in details about our mission and enlighten them their duties and responsibilities. Taidong was there and arranged a wonderful non-vegetarian traditional dinner for us. Brief stay among the Tangsas taught me a lot regarding their glorious heritage as one group in spite of existence of several subgroups. Literate individual of new generations like Wangrao Taidong, Kamjai Taism, Pusum Mgemu, Samklul Hallang, have shown enthusiasm and zeal for working on community's behalf and for the community. The community has a bright future. ■

### End Notes

1. Baveja, JD 1961, *Across the Golden Heights of Assam and North-East Frontier Agency*, Calcutta: Modern Book Depot, pp 76-80; Dutta, Parul, 1959, *The Tangsas of the Namchik and Tirap valley*, Shillong: Research Department, North-East Frontier Agency; Elwin, Verrier (1958), *Myths of the North-East Frontier of India*, Shillong, Singh, K.S. 1994. *The Scheduled Tribes*, People of India, National Series Volume III, Anthropological Survey of India, Oxford University Press

2. Reshma Rekhung, 2020, 'Rangfraa movement in Tangsa community of Arunachal Pradesh', *Heritage Explorer*, Special Issue, pp 81-91

## A Brief History of Jadonang

Chaoba Kamson

### A Brief History of Jadonang's Early Life –

Jadonang was born on 10th June, 1905 at PUILON (Kambiron) village, Nungba Sub Division of Tamenglong District, Manipur. The names of his father and mother were Thuidai of Malangmei clan and that of his mother as Chunlunglu of Dangmei clan respectively. Thuidai had five siblings by his two wives. The first wife Chunlunglu gave birth to Mudunang (1st son), Shunglunglu (2nd daughter) and Jadonang (5th son); while his second wife, Tabonliu gave birth to Tiningam (3rd son) and Jalimlu (4th daughter), Jadonang was the youngest of all the five children of Thuidai. His father died when he was just a little boy and he was brought up by his mother. He was born in a poor peasant family.

### Extra Ordinary Childhood

Jadonang did many unprecedented works when he was a child that worried his mother. When Jadonang was about four or five years old, one day a fierce tornado came and carried away Jadonang in the air. After a vigorous search, he was found unharmed on a bush of shrubs nearby his house. The worried mother was very happy when her little son was found. The people of Kambiron looked towards him as a Mhu, a spiritual guide, healer and preacher. On one occasion, he slept for five to seven days continuously in a trance-like condition. So, his villagers advised him for treatment of epilepsy. His mother was weeping all the time thinking that he would not rise up again. But his family members awoke him. Rousing from sleep Jadonang said, "Mother, why do you wake me up from sleep?" He consoled his mother "I am in communion with Tingkao Ragwang in heaven and He is giving a good number of hymns, prayer songs, dances, rites and rituals of which I have learnt from Tingkao

Ragwang," "If you weep, there is disturbance in communion with God". On hearing his words, his mother felt in her mind that one day her son would become famous. From time to time, he disclosed or predicted to the villagers about the future. His predictions always came true. Whenever he went to the jungle it seemed as if he talked with someone and was found him murmuring and sometimes he was found thoughtful. One day his mother plucked the overripe red chillies which might fall soon and got rot. While coming on the way, she also collected gingers left for drying and plucked pumpkin from somebody else's garden. When she reached home, she kept all vegetables in a basket. Jadonang singled out some red chillies, gingers and pumpkin which she collected from other's garden. He asked, "Mother, why do you pluck vegetable which do not belong to you?" Further, he told his mother, "Don't take any vegetable without informing owner in future. On hearing her son's words, she felt ashamed. At last, she appreciated her son for his honesty and righteousness.

One day, Jadonang and his cousin brother, Ninggongpou went to collect bamboo shoots from the jungle. Jadonang saw a deity with strange appearance but his cousin did not see so they returned home. On another occasion, while Jadonang was playing near their village pond, a large number of snakes and pythons came and were crawling around Jadonang having no escape route to run away. His cousin ran and brought their parents, but when they reached the spot, the snakes and pythons could not be seen anywhere.

When Jadonang was about four or five years old, one day in the day time he told family members to let him go out house because their house in that the village is going to catch fire. As soon as he was brought out the house, their house started



burning and the entire village was burnt to ashes. The members of his family asked him, “How did you know that the village is going to be on fire since you were inside the house. Did somebody told you about it?” He replied that he came to know about it just before it actually happened.

### **Marriage of Jadonang**

Jadonang married Khunjinliu of Gangmei clan and had no issue. So, he married a second woman. Kusinglu of Dangmei clan who gave birth to a son called Guidamang who died early at the age of four.

### **The uprising of Jadonang**

The Political Agent, J.C. Higgins introduced a house tax of Rs. 2 per household annually in the hill areas of Manipur. Further, he also introduced a new system of Pothang Bekery which means carrying of luggage of the touring British Officials. The imposition of house-tax and Pothang Bekery added heavy burden on the people. In 1931, a strong protest was carried out against this burden in Manipur valley thus causing serious disturbances to the administration. As such the Pothang Bekery was abolished for the valley people from 09/06/1931 which relieved them but the said system continued to be imposed on the hill people. The host villages raised subscription of money called Pothang Senkhai from among them to face the touring officials during their stay in that village. Witnessing the sufferings of the hill people under the British rule, Jadonang organised to unite his people to stop the burden of house-tax and forced labour.

The movement of Jadonang attracted the attention to the British administration in 1928. The SDO of Tamenglong got information about Jadonang telling the people that the British Raj was coming to an end and that of Kabui Naga Raj was to be established in its place. Some miscreants gave wrong information to the British authorities that Jadonang had no respect for the British Officers that he rode on the horse back with a hat on his head like the Sahib and he did not dismount from

the horseback even if he came across British officials. On one occasion, Jadonang wrote a letter in his scripts to S J Dunken, SDO of Tamenglong which angered the SDO who issued a warrant to arrest Jadonang on 22-11-1928. Jilakpou Kabui, a Road Muhorir was entrusted the job to bring Jadonang and produce before the SDO at Tamenglong on 06-12-1928. Accordingly, Jadonang was arrested and produced before the SDO on the date fixed for the purpose. The SDO sentenced him with a rigorous imprisonment for seven days and put him in Tamenglong jail. On the third night (08-12-1928) the Tamenglong Jail was blown away by a violent storm and Jadonang was released immediately.

### **Magical Slogan of Jadonang**

Before Jadonang was born, the practice of head-hunting was common in Kabui (Rongmei) areas. People thought that one who killed the weak and innocent persons were heroes. This belief led to the cult of might is right and survival of the fittest. Makammei people did neither think of the adverse effect of the practice nor did anything to abolish it to promote prosperity of their community. They thought for their own villages. There was disunity, head-hunting, inter village dispute, no peace in the society. Jadonang’s strong magical slogan, “Makammeirui Gwang Tupuni” meaning Makammei people would be the rulers one day. Thereafter, Jadonang had brought the bond of unity among Makammei people. He advised, “Stop killing and don’t take revenge on your comrades.” Thus, the act of head-hunting was stopped by Jadonang. All Kabui (Rongmei) villages also agreed to end the inter-village feud, fighting and killing. Peace prevailed in the region and a good day came for Makammei.

### **Religion Activities**

**(i) Devotional Songs** – He himself composed a number of devotional songs and taught many songs of worship of Tingkao Ragwang and Anbaan Ragwang seeking their blessing songs like Jug-Neimei Luh (welfare of mankind song), song for recovery

from sickness, songs to ward off evil spirits. He also taught songs of war, songs of big ritual ceremony of Maku Banru, festivals, hymns of learning, funeral songs etc.

**(ii) Construction of the House of worship of Tingkao Ragwang** Jadonang prayed to Tingkao Ragwang frequently how to save, preserve and protect the traditional religion of Kabui/Rongmei (now Tingkao Ragwang Chapriak in short TRC) as they converted into Christianity gradually on a large scale. In response to his request, Tingkao Ragwang ordained Jadonang in his dream that Jadonang must construct places of worship of Tingkao Ragwang in Zeliangrong inhabited areas of NE India so that the indigenous religion could be saved. Accordingly, he started worshipping of Tingkao Ragwang deeply so as to enable him to construct the house of worship of Tingkao Ragwang and other gods. As such he fell into trance for seven days continuously for day and night seeking Tingkao Ragwang's guidance. So, he constructed four temples in different places at (i) Kambiron (ii) Tazeikaiphun (Kekru) (iii) Longkao and (iv) Binnakandi. In the temple, he installed three gods made of



cement namely (i) Tingkao Ragwang (ii) Dampapui and (iii) Na-Ragwang and prayed to them. The name of the house of worship was called KAOKAI.

**Abolition of Taboos and Gennas** After performance of his Taraang Kai sacrifice, Jadonang reformed the traditional religion suitable to the modern world including taboos and gennas. He had successfully introduced the worship of Tingkao Ragwang in the spiritual system. At the peak of his popularity and influence, the people had started deifying him as the Messiah deliverer. He abolished irrational and obscurantist religious practices and social taboos. Holding an iron-hoe in the name of

God he debarred that the following should not be considered as gennas or taboos any more.

- (i) Birth of chicken, piglet, puppy and child in the individual house or in the village
- (ii) Climbing of roof of a house by a dog or sitting over its roofs by a cow or a kite.
- (iii) Birth of still born child.
- (iv) Death of a woman five days after delivery.
- (v) Earthquake.
- (vi) Falling from trees and landslides.
- (vii) Injury from dao or spear.

(viii) The first rains of the year.

(ix) The first hailstorm of the year.

He classified the following gennas to continue for observation by the people.

(i) Genna for good paddy (Napchang Lingpui Nei)

(ii) Genna by offering of eggs (Roidui Boumei Nei) for good crops.

(iii) Genna for safety from rats and rodents (Pu-pok Mong Thingmei Nei)

(iv) Genna for safety from pests and birds (Thao-Roi-Mun Thingpui Nei)

(v) Genna for safety from animals and beasts (Suzou Mun Thingpui Nei)

(vi) Genna for good harvest (Nap-Thuipui Nei).

The abolition of the harmful and unjust gennas and liberalization of some ritual greatly reduced the burden on the common people.

**Last pilgrimage to Bhuvan Hills** Jadonang and Rani Gaidinliu decided to go to the Bhuvan cave in January, 1931. Jadonang did not come timely as there was the Chaga festival at Kambiron, Gaidinliu went

earlier. When Jadonang arrived at the cave, Guidinliu was already there. He was annoyed that she entered without him. A mithun was sacrificed and a series of conversation between God Bisnu and Jadonang was carried out inside the cave.

Jadonang never told anybody of what transpired there. He came out in dejected mood. Jadonang was told that he would not live to eat the new crops as his days were numbered.

**Non-eating of new crops** After returning from the last pilgrimage of Bhuvan cave, Jadonang rested and slept at the house of Takhennang of Binnakandi village. He saw a huge quantity of paddy growing profusely in a paddy field in his dream. He was told, "Jadonang, you will not eat this new crops. He awoke from his sleep and said, "Esh! what is this dream?" He took out his Exercise Book placed under his pillow and opened its pages for prayer but astonishingly found that the following lines were written there: "Jadonang, your time ends; you will not avail of eating new year's paddy." He was shocked at the sight of the writing and cried. Hearing the voice of crying in the mid-night, neighbours came and asked what had happened. Early in the morning, a ritual worship of Tingkao Ragwang for Jadonang at the courtyard of Takhennang was performed by a priest.

**Second arrest of Jadonang** On 19th February, 1931, Jadonang was arrested on the charge of murder of four Manipuri betal leaf traders by Md. Imtiaz Ali, a police officer of the Lakhipur Police Station and was lodged in the police custody there. The D.C. of Cachar, C. Gimson informed the political Agent of Manipur that Jadonang was arrested and told him to extradite Jadonang and to receive him at Jirighat. Jadonang was lodged in Silchar Jail. The DC of Cachar rejected bail application of Jadonang on the ground that Jadonang was a subject of Manipur and not of Assam. On March 8, 1931, Higgins took over Jadonang from the Cachar authorities. From Cachar

the demonstration march was heading a return journey to Manipur showing the captured rebel leader, Jadonang was in chain. The British forces were passing through many Kabui villages of the Taosem range and Kalanaga including Goinanglong and reached Longkao on March 13. Kangchup down to Imphal and passed through Khwairamband Bazar, Imphal displaying Jadonang to have a full public view for challenging against the British empire. He was jailed at Imphal from March to till execution in August 1931. Jadonang was implicated in a murder case of four Manipuri betal leaf traders by the British administration though Jadonang was not present at Kambiron at the time of murder. Their intention was to suppress the movement of rebellion. Higgins was the Political Agent acting as a magistrate and issued order to arrest Jadonang. As a result of it, the court of Political Agent convicted Jadonang to death sentence. The execution of Jadonang was earlier fixed on 19-08-1931 but postponed due to Appeal of Jadonang pending with the Governor General of India who rejected the appeal of Jadonang on 18-08-1931 so the Political Agent of Manipur refixed the date of hanging of Jadonang on 29-08-1931. The gallows was built at the Imphal Jail Compound on the east of Nambul river. The British authority engaged a Kabui from Sangaiprou village as executioner and a Kabui from Keishamthong supervised the tying of Jadonang hands for the hanging. The execution of Jadonang was delayed by two hours from the schedule of 6 A.M. due to longer time taken in preparation or waiting for bigger public gathering to view it. So, he was hanged to death at about 8 A.M. on 29-08-1931. It took three days for the corpse of Jadonang to reach his native village of Kambiron by travelling more than 100 kilometers on foot. His dead body was ultimately buried on 1st September, 1931. ■

**(Chaoba Kamson, General Secretary Tingkao Ragwang Chapriak Phom Assam, Manipur and Nagaland)**

## India on the path of being Centre for Global-wellness

Rajesh Pathak

That, after the 'Pharmacy of world', India's recognition as the Centre for 'Global-wellness' is no longer something to be in the realm of imagination, but a declared truth. And this declaration of India being chosen as the global centre for traditional medicines came from none other than Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO's Director General, when he sent his message through the video on the occasion of 5th Ayurveda Day, on which day PM Narendra Modi inaugurated through video-conferencing the two future Ayurveda institutions to come up in Jaipur and Jamnagar. In comparison to the last year, this year in September, 2020 the export of Ayurveda products worldwide increased to 45%, which is enough to understand that to what extent world showed its trust in Ayurveda. This is the reason why WHO's response came in such a form.

India accounts for more than half of the herbs grown in the world. Attention in real sense toward this was paid for the first time when in the year 2000 a separate national policy was drafted under Atal Bihari Bajpai led NDA govt for the Indian medical therapies. Under this regime unprecedented work of bringing Ayurveda and Unani therapy under the category of *Harit uddhyog* (Green organic-industry) was taken up. The National Medicinal Plant Board then became active in chalking out specific policy for the conservation and growth of amla, chandan (sandalwood), ashwagandha and such other herbs and plants to be used in Ayurvedic medicine. It is only during Atalji's govt that the First 'Global Ayurveda and Herbal Mela' was organised, which made the World medical fraternity know what an unique asset of its own India has to offer them. In the event 2500 representatives of 50 countries including USA, Switzerland, South Africa, Denmark, Canada took the participation.

In this time of Corona crisis, Ayurveda brought a new hope for the humanity facing extreme distress. So much so that having crossed the boundary of country it has even begun to gain the limelight in the

foreign lands. 'Corona virus spreads fast from the tonsils to the lungs. Turmeric and lime when mixed become anti-poisonous. And when the mixture is used free radicals and uric acid can not form in the body, owing to which lungs and other organs don't become prone to swelling. Both the drugs (turmeric and lime) increases immunity, which has even been proved by giving it to the Corona patients. A research-work on it was published in the Medical journal of America. It is the treatment for diabetes, including many other ailments.' says Dr Devdutt Bhadlikar, Ayurveda professor, and specialist in the method of treating the ailments with turmeric and lime. In Ayurveda balanced consideration for both physical and spiritual aspect of human life is made. With the healthy body, the control over the mind and spiritual consciousness is, therefore, taken care of. That is why Yogasanas are seen to be a part of Ayurveda. This is actually the integrated approach to the wellness that Ayurveda is known for. Vegetarianism has great role to play in gaining immunity, which Ayurveda integrated in its way of treatment prominently. On the other hand the world is no longer unaware of the property of enhancing immunity ingredient in giloy, shatavari, ashwagandha, tulsi, kali mirch and such other herbs to be used in Ayurveda, hence such a boost in the export of Ayurveda medicines is there to see. The market of Chayavanprash, for instance, registered 700% increase during the period of April to June, 2020. Today in around 90 countries there are considerable numbers of people preferring Ayurveda medicines for their health-care.

Behind the making of Ayurveda globally popular the role of NDA government will always be remembered. When Narendra Modi became PM, Ayurveda got the separate Ayush ministry. Wherever Modi went in the world he struck deal for the promotion of Indian traditional medicines. In addition to that he initiated Ayush call centres in Indian embassies. ■



## Religious Solidarity Meet at Dolamara in Karbi Anglong

A spectacular program was organized on 23rd December 2020 at Dolamara by Lokhimon Sangha - a religious organization working for the spiritual, cultural and social upliftment of Karbi society in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

The program started with prayers, offerings and spiritual discourse by Guru Madan Engti, Spiritual Head of the organization in front of thousands of disciplines.

The organization has more than 113 worship centres and 4 main ashrams called as Lokhimon Adovan in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh inculcating the spiritual and moral values among 80000 disciples through weekly get together.

Dr Himanta Biswa Sarmah, Hon. Minister for Finance, Education and Health Govt of Assam graced the function as Chief Guest, Shri Horen Sing Bey, Hon M. P. Shri Tuliram Ronghang, Hon Chief Executive Member of Karbi Anglong Autonomous District Council, Dr Numil Momin, Hon MLA, Shri Sandeep Kavishwar, Kshetra Sangathan Mantri,

Kalyan Ashram attended the function.

Shri Balaram Phangcho, President of the organization gave a brief introduction on the life and work of Guru Lokhimon and activities of the organization.

Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarmah appreciated the efforts and works of Lokhimon Sangha saying that spiritual and moral upgradation of every human being is essential along with materialistic development and the organization is achieving heights in this field. He assured to cooperate in fulfilling the aims and targets of the organization for the betterment of the state.

Shri Sandeep Kavishwar emphasized on dedicating time for the noble work and to expand the activities in all the Karbi villages.

The attraction of the program was Yogasan display and various cultural events by the students of Lokhimon Sangha school. The discipline shown by around 10000 disciples from Assam and Arunachal Pradesh was outstanding.



## 1000-yrs Old Monpa Handmade Paper Industry Revived

The 1000-year old heritage art – the Monpa Handmade Paper of Arunachal Pradesh – which was driven to the extinction, has come to life once again, with the committed efforts of Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC).

The art of making Monpa handmade paper originated over 1000 years ago. Gradually the art became an integral part of local custom and culture in Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh. Once produced in every household in Tawang, this handmade paper was a major source of livelihood for the locals. However, the handmade paper industry almost disappeared in the last 100 years; prompting KVIC to plan revival of this ancient art.

KVIC on Friday commissioned a Monpa handmade paper making unit in Tawang which not only aims at reviving the art but also engaging the local youths with this art professionally and earn. The unit was inaugurated by KVIC Chairman Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena in presence of local people and officials. Inauguration of the paper unit is a historic event for the locals.

The fine-textured handmade paper, which is called

Mon Shugu in the local dialect, is integral to the vibrant culture of the local tribes in Tawang. The paper has great historic and religious significance as it is the paper used for writing Buddhist scriptures and hymns in monasteries. The Monpa handmade paper, will be made from the bark of a local tree called Shugu Sheng, which has medicinal values too. Hence availability of raw material will not be a problem.

Back then, such was the scale of production that Monpas used to sell these papers to countries like Tibet, Bhutan, Thailand and Japan as no paper making industry existed in these countries at that time. However, the local industry gradually began declining and the indigenous handmade paper was taken over by inferior Chinese paper.

An attempt for the revival of the this handmade paper industry was made in 1994 but failed as it was a mountainous task owing to various geographical challenges in Tawang. However, with the strong resolve of higher management of KVIC, the unit was successfully established despite many challenges. On the instruction of KVIC Chairman, a team of scientists and officials of Kumarappa National

Handmade Paper Institute, (KNHPI) Jaipur, was deputed at Tawang to set up the unit and training the locals. Over six months of rigorous efforts bore fruits and a unit has been commissioned at Tawang.

Initially, the paper unit has engaged 9 artisans who can produce 500 to 600 sheets of Monpa handmade paper per day. The artisans will be earning wages of per day Rs 400 per day. To begin with, 12 women and 2 men from local



villages have been trained to make Monpa handmade paper. KNHPI is a unit of KVIC.

The most challenging task for KVIC officials was to transport the machines to Tawang owing to its difficult mountainous terrains and inclement weather conditions. The Arunachal Pradesh Government lent full support to the project and offered a building on a nominal rent to set up the unit.

The KVIC Chairman said reviving the Monpa handmade paper industry and increasing its commercial production was the key objective of KVIC. “Owing to its peculiarity, this handmade paper has high commercial value that can be harnessed to create local employment in Arunachal Pradesh. By increasing production of Monpa handmade paper, it can again be exported to other countries and regain the space occupied by China in the last few decades. This is a local product with great global potential, which is aligned with the Mantra of “Local to Global” given by the Prime Minister,” Saxena said.

“The fatigue from the 15 hours of road journey from Guwahati to Tawang in this difficult terrain just

vanished on witnessing this paper unit coming to life again. It is, indeed, a privilege to have inaugurated the unit that will revive this local art,” Saxena said while lauding the KVIC- KNHPI officials for their hard work and Arunachal Pradesh Government for their support to the project.

Apart from handmade paper, Tawang is known for two other local crafts – handmade pottery and handmade furniture – that are also getting extinct with passage of time. KVIC Chairman announced that within six months plans will be rolled out for revival of these two local arts. “Revival of handmade pottery will be taken up on priority under Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana very soon,” Saxena said.

The Monpa handmade paper unit will also serve as a training center for the local youths. KVIC will provide marketing support and explore markets for the locally manufactured handmade paper. KVIC plans to set up more such units in different parts of the country. Saxena said KVIC will also begin production of innovative plastic-mixed handmade paper in Tawang that will be crucial for reducing plastic waste in the region. ■

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## **Jahnu Barua to Direct Hindi Film on Ahom General Lachit Borphukan**

National Award-winning filmmaker Jahnu Barua announced that he will direct a Hindi film on the legendary Ahom General Lachit Borphukan.

The work on the project is already underway and the feature film is expected to be released by late 2022, the directors told media. The film will be produced by the Guwahati-based Dream House Productionz and other production houses of the country will also be part of the movie. The lead character’s role of the Ahom general will be played by a leading actor of the country, Barua said.

“For well over 20 years, I have been living with this dream of doing a film on my favourite war-hero Lachit. There were a number of government

initiatives to this effect, including proposal from two former governors, but because of budgetary constraints the production of such a mega project could not be taken up,” the director, known for Assamese films like “Ajeyo” and “Hkhagoroloi Bohu Door”, said. The 12-time National Award winner said it will be after more than seven decades of Independence that Assam’s war hero and the pride of India will get his due limelight.

Research on the project has already begun under the guidance of scholar and Gauhati University’s former head of the Department of History professor J N Phukan to depict with accuracy the events leading

*(Contd. to Page 20)*

## India's arts and culture is incomplete without Assam's arts and culture: Amit Shah

Union Home Minister Amit Shah speaking at a rally on Saturday said that India's arts and culture is incomplete without Assam's arts and culture. Home Minister Amit Shah said BJP-led central government has given priority to Assam and the northeast in the last six years ensuring that the benefits of each scheme reach the people in the state. There was a period of movements in Assam when numerous agitations were launched on various issues in which hundreds of people have been killed. The peace of Assam has been disrupted and progress was halted," Shah said.

There was a time when separatists used to give arms in the hands of the youth in these states. Almost all armed groups have joined the mainstream and the startups launched by youth are competing with other startups globally. What is the way forward? Development is the only way forward. And development is happening and will happen further but ideological but there is also, a need for ideological change, and that can't happen only by development," he added

Referring to the Bodo agreement signed earlier this year, he said the Modi government had begun the process of establishing peace in Assam. "Bodo youths who had taken up arms have now joined the mainstream." The senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader said that in the last six years Prime Minister Narendra Modi has visited northeast over 30 times and during his visit he dedicated development projects.

Invoking 16th-century saint Sreemanta Sankardev, Shah said, "Congress didn't do anything for the birthplace of Sreemanta Sankardev whose contributions gave recognition to Assam's history, drama writing, arts and poetry." "But BJP believes in strengthening of language, culture, arts of the states. BJP believes that India cannot achieve

greatness until the culture and language of the states are strengthened. India's culture and arts are incomplete without Assamese culture and arts," he added.

Invoking the sixteenth-century saint Acharya Sankardev, Shah said that Congress has done nothing for the birthplace of Acharya Sankardev whose contributions gave recognition to Assam's history, drama writing, arts and poetry. But the BJP believes in strengthening the language, culture, and arts of the states. BJP believes that until the culture and language of states are strengthened India cannot achieve greatness. Without Assamese culture and arts India's culture and art are incomplete, he Shah added. ■

*(Contd. from Page 19 )*

### **Jahnu Barua to Direct Hindi Film on Ahom General Lachit Borphukan**

to the Battle of Saraighat, which catapulted the Ahom general to the status of a legend, Barua added.

Suresh Sharma, managing director of Satyam Group of Industries, who is also involved with DH Productionz, said that he is proud to be associated with the venture. The movie will be the costliest film ever made in Assam, Sharma added. "Working with Jahnu sir was something that was always in my mind. When I thought of a film on Lachit a year back, he was my first choice."

Barua said he hopes the government will support their initiative to make the mega project a reality. ■

## Statues of 1962 India-China War Heroes Unveiled

The Army has installed statues of the “Kumaoni Soldier” at the Hut of Remembrance at Kibithu and at Walong War Memorial in Arunachal Pradesh to remember the sacrifice and valour of the soldiers who fought in the India-China war in 1962. Lieutenant General R.P. Kalita, general officer commanding Spear Corps, Colonel of the Kumaon and Naga Regiments and the Kumaon Scouts, unveiled the statues of the “Kumaoni Soldier” on Friday.

Defence spokesman Lt. Col P. Khongsai said that Walong, the easternmost valley in Arunachal Pradesh, witnessed the bloodiest battle better known as the “Battle of Walong” during the 1962 war. “The battle is remembered for the steely resolve, valour and unparalleled bravery displayed by the soldiers of the Indian Army despite numerous challenges,” the PRO said. The event was made memorable by the presence of 79-year-old Subedar (Honorary Captain) K.S. Takuli (Retired),

a braveheart of 6 Kumaon Regiment, who gallantly fought at this very location 58 years ago. PRO Khongsai said that the presence of the war veteran along with dignitaries from civil administration, local headmen of Meyor and Mishmi villages, veterans of the Kumaon Regiment and a number of senior Army officers and Jawans was a befitting tribute to the valiant soldiers of 6 Kumaon regiment.

Lieutenant General Kalita while interacting with the media brought out the significance of the event and said that 6 Kumaon Regiment was one of the five Infantry battalions which played a major role during that battle.

“These statues symbolize the daredevilry of the brave hearts of 6 Kumaon who surpassed all limits of human endurance and soldierly valour while facing a formidable enemy in treacherous terrain and hostile weather conditions,” he added.



# The SI-DONYI Festival of Arunachal Pradesh

K. L. Nayam

The land of the Downlit Mountaint is one of the most beautiful place on this earth. It is a bit of paradise that nestles in the north-eastern corner of India. The state acquired an independent political status on 20th January 1972, when it was declare as a union territory, under the name of 'Arunachal Pradesh.

The Si-Donyi is celebrated every year since time immemorial. The mythology of this religious festival as in case of most of the tribal belief carried no written record. Nevertheless, the belief, faith, cultural fabric and the philosophy of the life of the Tagin community has been expressed in this religious festival and handed down from generation through folk lores, hymns and oral traditions.

The mythology of the Si-Donyi festival proceeds as such- the Tagins believe that in the nothingness and emptiness of this universe, the process of evolution of various mysterious forms began along with this evolution, a male form known as KURYUM and a female form known as KUKU came into being, both were in liquid form. They in turn bore three beings known as RIUMCHINGJERIN, RIUMSI AND RIUMDO. Riumchinjerin the eldest of the three also known as DORICHIHI was endowed with the highest degree of wisdom and knowledge. Within days of creation, the other two i.e RIUMSI and RIUMDO began expanding creating crisis for space. A bitter conflict ensued between the two for want of space. The eldest i.e.DORICHIJI was alarmed and decided to preside over the conflict. After a great deal of thought and deliberation DORICHIJI evolved a solution wherein RIUMSI and RIUMDO were to be separated. The separation of the two was effected through a ritual ceremony known as 'SICHI-DONYI KAMBE DENAM". The ritual ceremony imposed both RIUMSI and RIUMDO to observe 10 days of religious restriction in which both had to remain in virtual confinement and total inactivity

known as IRIRINAM. On the 5th day of restriction imposed, ICHI PINCHI, the bat known for his art of lying and mischief, instigated RIUMSI that RIUMDO was not observing the religious restriction and as such it would be a mockery for RIUMSI to observe the same. On hearing this RIUMSI felt cheated and ceased to observe the restriction forthwith whereas RIUMDO infect was observing the restriction religiously. In ceasing to observe the restriction imposed, RIUMDI violated and defied the religious piousness of the ritual restriction thereby incurring wrath of DORICHIJI. As a result the cursed RIUMSI underwent tremendous turbulence within, in the form of terrible cyclones, eruptions and gigantic floods taking the shape of mountains valleys and rivers and became undulated. Hence RIUMSI became SECHI' the EARTH. RIUMDO on the other hand dutifully observed the restriction and peace and stability thus becoming the vast and peaceful "NEDO-KOLO' the sky. So, the concept of formation of the earth and sky goes in the mythology of the TAGIN community. So too the myth goes that the physical phenomena like 'DOGUM' the thunder' DORIK' the lightning, MUMI HEKNAM, the earthquake would not have come into existence but for the breach of the restriction by RIUMSI.

With the formation of SECHI the earth, a need for light, water and a measure time arose, the basic ingredients required water and a measure to tie arose the basic ingredients required for life force to begin. KORIAM-KOLU created DONYI the sun, POLO the moon and " Hai the Sea. Donyi the sun spread light. POLO the moon gave a means to measure tie and Hai the sea provided water to the world of like from that was to take shape on SECHI the earth. So came the stars as daughter of Nido Kolo the sky, to decorate the setting. Donyi with its light is considered a female form and Polo the Moon with its measure of tike is considered a male form. Hence the name

AYO DONY(AYO-GRANDMA) and ATO-POLO (ATO-GRANDPA) for sun and moon in the TAGIN MYTHOLOGY.

### **ABO-TANI The Ancestor of Human Race:**

To launch the drama and cycle of life into action “Ato-Si” the sprital form of Sechi the earth created a female form called’ Situ, situ in turn bore three children’s in human form viz two sons called Tuni and Tuki and a daughter called Tune so was the arrival of human form heralded.

Tuni the eldest consorted with various other life forms to fulfill the desire to continue the human generation but no offspring in human was forthcoming. Exhausted with his attempts and adventures, Tuni finally approached Dorichiji larn the art of decision making. Dorichiji provided and answered to Tunis dilemma. Tuni was to throw an egg on the abdomen of Tune(ANE YAPI) his sister. If the egg did not break no further step was to be taken and accordingly the continuation of human race was to be doomed. If the egg broke, the consequent step would dictate the continuation of the human race. Tuni carried out the action with sudden pre Vision without the knowledge of Tune. Tune surprised and shocked at the hang of the broken egg being thrown at her abdomen, jumped and embraced her brother Tuni instinctively with this embrace, arose the instinctive sexual urge and desire for love. Thereafter, both began their life as husband and wife. So began the human race with Tuni as ABU (father) and TUNE as ANE (mother) with the advent of time in the quagmire of life cycle on this earth. Tuni the ABO (father) emerged as ABO-TA NI and Tune the Ane (mother) as ANE-YAPI as the ancestors of mankind.

On the other hand Tuki the younger brother without a female partner began a separate lineage of evil race known as Kibu-Ruabyu or Kibo-Romlo to counter and punish the irresponsible action of human beings so as to maintain the balance and flow of life.

A festival is day or a period of celebration and an essential part of the socio-cultural life of the people. Festival reflects the customs, traditions and lifestyles of the people. Like other parts of the country, in Arunachal Pradesh also celebrated with great joy,

enthusiasm and most importantly, with a feeling of togetherness. The festival of Arunachal Pradesh serves a two folk purposes – as thanksgiving ceremonies in homage to God and for His gift of good crops and freedom.

1. It is the one of the major festivals celebrated in Arunachal Pradesh, which is celebrated by TAGIN TRIBE. Si-Donyi festival of the Tagins is celebrated from 3rd of January to 6th January in every year, for welfare & prosperity of the people. It is a festival for prosperity, peace, brotherhood which brings people closer, Rituals are performed to appear Si( Earth) and Donyi mean (sun) gods. By seeing in this fact the Tagin tribe is belief that, The Earth & the Sun is their first & foremost God in this universe. And the festival was founded by our great fore father Lt.POPAK BAGE, who is lost his life in the field of social activities & for the society.

2. The festival lasts for 4 days and during these days people paint with each other with a powder made from rice smearing.

3. There are 5 (five) permanent traditional folk dance say Punung group which performs every years in the festival, that is, 1)Donyi- Ane group (2)Takar Gene, (3)Achi-Riabu (4) Si-Ome & (5) Ani-Chune and more then 35 (thirty five) difference other groups perform their folk dance.

During the Si-Donyi festival colourful cultural programmers, Games & Sports in connection with our forefather say Abo-Tani & Ane Yaphi is conducted. Specially games are played as a tradition such as competition of target by the use of Bow & arrow , Tug of war in between officer and Head GB, Student and Public leader etc.

Si-Donyi festival is also celebrated in all parts of Arunachal Pradesh, where the Tagin tribe reside. Not only that, this festival heralds the Lovely New Years for all the living things which is existing on the earth. So, people celebrate this festival without fail.

The festival is celebrated in Upper Subansiri District, Head Quarter Daporijo (A.P), Irrespective of the age, sex and sects every one participate in the celebration. A community feast is also organized at the end of the festival. ■



## Mask gallery adorns Sivasagar's Barna Kutir Artists' Village

Sivasagar's famous Barna Kutir Artists' Village, an institution known for promoting and showcasing local art and handicrafts, has recently added a mask gallery to mark the celebration of its 18th anniversary. The new mask gallery was inaugurated by Sangeet Natak Akademi Deputy Secretary Rajiv Das. While talking about the gallery, Sujit Baruah, an artist and founder of Barna Kutir Artists' Village said, "The traditional masks in a variety of sizes and shapes would be an additional draw for tourists who could buy them if they wanted." He also said that the masks showcased in the gallery will have decorative value and are small enough for tourists to be carried inside purses or suitcases.

Sujit Baruah, who is also assisted in his ventures by his wife Sikhasmita, further revealed that the Artists' Village authorities are going to organise a 20-day project starting January 21 for product development of masks under the development Commissioner of handicraft. The project which will train ten artisans in the art of making masks is believed to be a boost and add value to the recently added gallery.

As narrated by Baruah himself, the project will deal with teaching how to design a mask, make it a miniature and add other infusions while retaining its traditional look. The masks would then be exhibited in the gallery and sold. Baruah further informed that two officers from Majuli and Sivasagar tourism departments who attended the

ceremony affirmed that Barna Kutir would be included in the tourist map of Sivasagar district.

Notably, the Artists' Village was inaugurated by Jnanpith Awardee and Assam's famous litterateur late Mamoni Raisom Goswami. Speaking of the impact of the Covid pandemic on the footfall and activities of Barna Kutir, Baruah expressed that this year had been less eventful as compared to other years. However, the addition of the mask gallery can be considered as an important highlight of the year.

The Artists' Village is located at Gohain Ali which is about 1.5 km off NH 37 and about 7 km away from Sivasagar town. The two-storeyed complex built in the eight-bigha paternal lands of



Sujit Baruah now has an art gallery, a library, artists' residence, an academy centre, an open-air theatre, a traditional mask-making and training centre and gallery, and northeast region cultural traditional centre and a museum. Every year, Barna Kutir organizes several exhibitions, art competitions and workshops for students and amateurs seeking to learn different arts. ■

## Lummer Dai Award 2020 conferred on Assam's Chandra Borpatra Gohain

Noted educationist from Assam, Shri Chandra Borpatra Gohain has been awarded with the prestigious Luminous Lummer Dai Award 2020. The award was conferred upon the writer cum educationist at his Guwahati residence on Wednesday. A delegation of Arunachal Pradesh Literary Society (APLS) led by President Yeshe Dorjee Thangchi awarded Gohain with a citation, a plaque, a shawl, a collection of books and Rs 10,000.

Gohain was honoured with the award for his contributions and efforts to spread the light of education in the state for several decades from the 1950s. Stating that Gohain's literary contributions had brought meaningful changes to the lives of Arunachal's people, President Thangchi said that he is still remembered with love and respect. Focusing on the fact that the educationist's efforts came at a time before even roads were developed in the state, Thangchi said, "Even the sun failed to illuminate the state with a rugged forested terrain in those days but Borpatra Gohain's efforts radiated our lives with the light of education."

Notably, Assam's Gohain is a retired APCS officer who has written many short stories on the lives of

several tribes living in the interior villages of the Arunachal Pradesh. The award comes in relation to the 81st birth anniversary of Arunachal Pradesh's pioneer litterateur Lummer Dai, one of the first educated people of the state. The celebrations were held in Naharlagun in Arunachal Pradesh where President Thangchi declared the names of the awardees of the year 2020: Chandra Borpatra Gohain and Arunachal Pradesh's R N Koley.

In his acceptance speech, Gohain recalled his times spent in Arunachal Pradesh between 1953 and 1980. He said that his soul still remains in Arunachal even if he was physically separated from the state. "I spent a good part of my life in Arunachal, closely interacting with the local people and was fascinated by their vibrant multi-cultural mosaic. Spreading education in the remote areas was extremely challenging in those days and quite dangerous, as well. The award is a recognition of my endeavour and I feel inspired," he said.

Notably, Assam Sahitya Sabha's publication convenor, Debojit Borah and editor of Swarnalipi, Hridayananda Gogoi, were also present in the awarding ceremony. ■

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## Donyi Polo day celebrated in Arunachal Pradesh

The 27th Donyi Polo day was celebrated at a newly constructed Namlo here at Pachin in Naharlagun on Dec 31, with rituals and prayers were done for wellbeing of humanity.

Addressing the gathering, Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister's Advisor Tai Tagak exhorted the people of Donyi polo believers to work for unity, integrity, protection and preservation of tribal culture and identity. "Our tradition is our culture" and to preserve it the Donyi polo is a belief and faith which has been practice by the people but need to taken up as a moment for protection of tribal culture, identity and tradition, language and script" Tagak said.

The festival was also celebrated at the Donyi Polo

Gangging of Central Donyi Polo Yelam Kebang Pasighat by followers with traditional zest and religious zeal in East Siang district where traditional prayers to appease the natural God 'Sun & Moon' were offered followed by traditional cultural items including releasing of a first ever short film on Donyi Polo by renown singer of the state Delong Padung.

Speaking on the occasion, Ajem Tayeng, President, Central Donyi Polo Yelam Kebang, Pasighat said that the day is of immense important for the believers of indigenous believers of Donyi Polism who prays Donyi and Polo (Sun and Moon) as God for Donyi Polo is the natural power that sustain the entire globe and the natural beings. ■

## The Story of the Lazy Boy

Once upon a time, there was a very lazy boy who lived in a village. He used to keep all his work pending. Once during a harvesting season, when all the other villagers had planted out their paddy, he was only preparing to plough.

Watching this, a wise old man of the village said to him, “The season has gone my boy; what are you ploughing for now? The paddy is all planted out by all, and it is too late now.” But the boy did not listen to him, and ploughed sturdily ahead, beating his cattle soundly as he went on. By seeing his activity, the old man of the season questioned him about his foolish deed. Finally, he got annoyed and shouted at the old man of the season - “What sort of an old man are you? Can you not see that I am busy? I know very well what I am doing.”

But the old man of the season said gently “Nay, my son: but it is for your good that I would speak to you.” And the boy said, “Speak quickly then, and have done with it.”

And the old man of the season said “My son, the season is gone, what avails it to plough now?” And then the boy shouted “Where has it gone? And when has it gone? And why has it gone? And how shall I find it?” But the old man of the season said “You should have ploughed when others did. The season has gone already, and no man can bring it back.” But the boy was adamant and said “I must bring it back, else, how shall I eat, and how shall I live? Do tell me where it is gone.”

And finally, losing patience, the old man of the season said “You go over there, and you will find an old man with a snow-white head ploughing in a field. You get hold of him and do as he tells you.” So saying, he made his escape. Then the boy hurriedly went back to his home and asked his mother to cook supper quickly, and tie him up some rice to take with him on the next day, as he was

going to bring back the departed season for ploughing.

When his mother asked him, what has happened my son? Where are you going? Then he said- “When I was ploughing today, an old man told me that the season was gone, and that if I went after him and pursued him I would find him, and that I must do as he would tell me.” Hearing this his mother rose very early in the morning in the next day and giving him to eat and drink, set him on his way.

On his way, he asked all he met “Can you tell me where the old man of the season has gone?” But they said, “Everyone knows that the season is gone, but where it has gone, or why it has gone, who can say?” At last, when he was nearly in despair, he saw an old man ploughing afar off, and shouted to him. “Wait a moment, father, stay; I want to ask you a question.” But the old man was busy and went his way. But the lad pursued him and never ceased calling after him till at last the old man, losing patience, turned upon him, and said “What pertinacious noisy lad is this, who won’t leave me alone?” But the lad said, “Be not angry, my father, I am fallen into great trouble, and it behoves you to help me.” The old man said - “Speak quickly, then,”

And the boy said - “I take you to be the old man of the season, and I pray you not to slay me. All the others have planted out their paddy, and I have fallen behind, and have planted nothing. Therefore, unless you turn back, I cannot hope to get any harvest.” But the old man said “It is too late for me to return. Go you back, and plant your paddy as best as you can.” With great sorrow in his mind, the boy came back and planted out his seedlings in a neglectful way. And that’s all!

**Moral: Do the right work at the right time.**





RELIGIOUS-SOLIDARITY MEET AT DOLAMARA IN KARBI ANGLONG



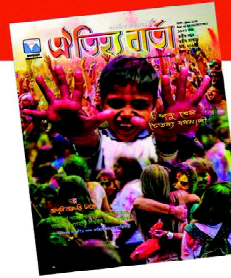
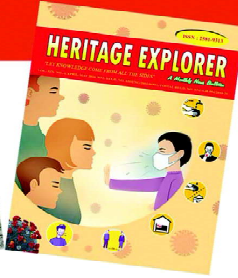
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