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HERITAGE EXPLORER

"LET KNOWLEDGE COME FROM ALL THE SIDES"

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India's Unsung Heroes



Tikendrajit Singh was a prince of the Northeastern Indian state of Manipur, which later became a protectorate of the British Raj. He was the commander of the Manipuri army who engineered a palace revolution that led to the events known as the Anglo-Manipur War of 1891 or the 'Manipur Expedition'. On 31 March 1891, the British Government sent a military force consisted of three army columns from Kohima (under the command of Major General H. Collet), Silchar (under the command of Colonel R.H.F. Rennick) and Tamu (under the command of Brigadier General T. Graham) to fight against Manipuri Army, which was led by Tikendrajit. The British army finally took possession of the Kangla Palace on 27 April 1891. Major Maxwell took over as the chief political agent. Thus, Manipur became a princely state and Churachand Singh, a minor was placed on the throne of Manipur. Tikendrajit and other leaders of Manipur subsequently went underground. Tikendrajit was arrested in the evening of 23rd May. Ethel Grimwood was consulted by Queen Victoria, who was concerned that a Prince would be hung when the British appeared treacherous. Tikendrajit and Thangal General were publicly hanged at 5 pm on 13th August 1891 at Pheida-pung (Polo ground) in Imphal. Pheida-pung is also known for its purpose of serving as court for market matter. After independence, this ground is named after him as Bir Tikendrajit Park.

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Fight Climate Change or Perish

Those of us who are above 50 years of age today are sure to remember their younger days, especially the soothing freshness of air, the rejuvenating and thirst quenching spring water and the eye caching greeneries all around our homes. Today these bounties of nature are seldom to be seen or experienced, because the nature has failed to adjust its ways with the humanity, whose greed induced indiscriminate exploitation of everything that is natural, has robbed much of nature's splendour.

Sadly, in an unprecedented rush for more and more, the human race did not spare anything that was naturally available. They forgot that these were actually intended to maintain the ecological balance essential for life and the living. This ruthless exploitation of Mother Nature hurt Mother Nature very badly but she endured to the limit. She finally expressed her displeasure by mildly rebuffing our overtures 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 planets of the solar system.

Though there have been previous periods of climatic changes, but since the mid-20th century humans have had an unprecedented impact on Earth's climate system and caused change on a global scale. One of the worst effects of climate change is the rise in atmospheric temperature and the consequent heat stress on workers in agriculture and other sectors, which 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. 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. Climate change threatens people with food insecurity, water scarcity, flooding, infectious diseases, extreme heat, economic losses, and displacement. These impacts have led the World Health Organization to call climate change the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century. Even if efforts to minimize future warming are successful, some effects will continue for centuries, including rising sea levels, rising ocean temperatures and ocean acidification.

We must therefore understand the effects of climate change on our lives. The modern scientists and technocrats very well understand the consequences but they have only started to find ways to correct the situation. It must be understood that unless we 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 prevent this catastrophe because our wise ancestors, who happily 'lived by nature' are no more there to guide us. Fortunately, we have now the knowledge about the reasons behind the climate change and each of us can contribute to redeem the future of our coming generations. Let us respect mother nature and refrain from hurting her any more.

Romen Chakraborty

Chief Editor

The Eternal Religion in perspective of Malsom Janajati of Tripura

Chandra Krishna Malsom
(continued from February issue)

(5) Besu (Buisu):-

The word Buisu (Besu in Malsom language) is derived from the Tripuri root word Bisi meaning year. Buisu literally means New Year eve. It is the junction of end of the old year and beginning of the New Year. In one word it means New Year celebration.

In the past Tripuri people used to do jhum or huk cultivation, almost all their need used to be produced from huk and jungle. Naturally they would then depend on huk and huk used to be their life. That is why Tripuri would have to observe, when the year would begin and when it would end, as any change in timing in any part of jhum activity would result a bad consequence and ultimately be disastrous for the family. For example, if one was not sure of the time when to search jungle for jhum field in time, then naturally he would not find a good piece of forest, as other would take all the best and most suitable jungle.

Similarly, if one is not aware of time to cut the selected jungle for jhum, he will not be able to finish it in time and it would not dry up for burning to make it a jhum field. For the same reason, if a man is not sure when to burn the cut jungle he will not be able to clean it in time for sowing seeds. And if one is not sure when the new year has come then he will not be able to sow seeds of paddy, cotton and all other agricultural products of jhum and ultimately he will be left poor and have to beg. So they would have to know exactly when the New Year begins. They would all celebrate with pomp and show, the beginning of New Year, that is Buisu.

Buisu falls on the last day of chaitra of Indian calendar, which falls on 13th of April in Gregorian

and on 14th in the leap year. The festival of Buisu is celebrated in two days, first day is Hari Buisu meaning Buisu for animals, and second day is Maha Buisu or grand Buisu.

Hari Buisu:

On the Hari Buisu, before the day break, young children would go to the jungle, to collect wild flowers for the domestic animals. Tripuri considers domestic animals as representative of gods, because by whom they are able to do all the house hold and agricultural work.

After collecting various wild flowers from jungle, they will make a garland as much is required. Then they will bathe all the domestic animals, in the pond or any other streams. Then they will put a tilak on their forehead, put the garland on the neck of cows, goats etc. if they had horn, they would decorate the horn also with garlands, and do salutation. They would also put garland on the dogs, cats etc. this day the domestic animals are given good food and they are let loose to go to the jungle.

Maha Buisu:

The preparation for Buisu starts day before actual Buisu. The women folk are the main initiator of Buisu. They would weave Rignai, Risa and Rituku for them as well as any other female member of the family and dhuti of male members and son-in-law. It would take months together, to weave large number of clothes for the family. They do white wash and clean the house, all the broken and non-useable article of house would be thrown away. They would husk guria paddy into rice for making various kind of cake. The women will grind the rice to flour for cakes. They would go to near by jungle

to collect special kind of leaves called lairu to prepare Awan Bangwi. They would also have to prepare Chuwan and Bwtwk, a kind of rice beer for the festivals.

On the Buisu day, mothers will wake up early in the morning even before the cock crow, prepare various kinds of cakes and delicious dishes and get ready well before the lunch time to dine with all family members.

Some would do the Lampra puja in the early morning for the welfare of the family. They invite various friends, relatives, near and dear ones. The woman who had been married off this year are specially invited to come and attend this day. The son-in-laws are treated like VIP guest in the home. The brothers and sisters-in-law would make fun and demand from their brother-in-law. In the noon time they will gather in a particular home, bring their own contribution of cakes, sweets, bwtwk, and dishes.

They will have a grand feast, dine, drink, dance and sing all through the day and night. For them Buisu comes once in a year, who knows whether they will see again this day or not, so just enjoy the day. They want to forget last year's odds, they would say good-bye to it. They wait till the dawn to welcome new Tripuri year, so that the year ahead brings all the happiness, success and good jhum yield. The very next day is the beginning of Lord Gorias seven days long festival. So the Buisu is very much important in the life of Tripura people since the ancient times.

(6) Buthar-Anthar Hwr (Mamita):

Mamita dance is performed on the occasion of MAMITA (Buthar-Anthar Hwr) festival, which is harvest festival of Tripuri People. In the past when Tripuri people used to do largely huk agriculture, the harvesting season was in the month of October & November. People were in happy mood to see months of hard works resulting in tons of paddy, cotton, vegetable and oil seeds. Their face used to be filled with smile and heart filled with hope and confidence. This time around, young men and

women would gather in the evening after coming back from daily work, would carry with them a kham, sarinda and sumui. Then they go from house to house in the village and sing aloud, dance in arhythmic steps which would continue upto midnight. They would force the head of the family to come out of his home and give them a token gift. This dancing troupe used to dance for 10-15 minutes in a house on this Mamita festival and so it is named as Mamita dance.

The Mamita festival is held during the time of Durgapuja or Osa Mutai. The king would celebrate Durga puja and sacrifice buffalo, yak etc. At that time common man also would perform Mamita festivals and sacrifice cock, duck and pigeon. This festival would continue for 7 days and used to be most enjoying.

11. Culture and Religion are inseparable:

Culture is defined as the system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviours and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another and they are transmitted from generation to generation. On the other hand, Religion is defined as a system of beliefs based on humanity's attempt to explain the universe and natural phenomena, often involving one or more deities or other supernatural forces and also requiring or binding adherents to follow prescribed rituals. Two identifying features of religions are they, to some extent (a) require faith and (b) seek to organize and influence the thoughts and actions of their adherents. Because of this, some contend that all religions are, to some degree, both unempirical and dogmatic and are therefore to be distrusted. In view of the above, it is worth mentioning here that culture and religion is part and parcel of any civilized human life. For example, it may be stated that as the Janajati communities who adhered to their forefather's faith, culture and tradition are undoubtedly the part and parcel of greater Hindu Samaj, their culture and religion are just like either side of the same coin. Because, traditional faith, moral value, sincerity, unique social

(Contd. to Page 9)

Reconstruction of Limbu Alphabet and Sirijunga Script

Sandhya Subba (Singzango)

In 1952, Mr. B.B. Muringla met known Limbu literary figure, Mr. Iman Singh Chemjong at his residence in Linchom, West Sikkim. He was studying in class II during Mr. Chemjong's visit. The first Limbu books he read and influenced his curiosity towards Limbu literature were TUM YAKTHUNG NINGWAPHU SAPLA and TUM YAKTHUNG NISSHIGEK SAPLA written collectively by three Limbu writers named Mr. Iman Singh Chemjong, Mr. Padam Singh Muringla (Apatan) and Mr. Man Bahadur Khamdhak. The aforementioned books were brought by his father, Mr. Lal Man Nugo who were one amongst the economic contributor for the publishing.

After the retirement from the army service, Mr. Ujjalman Subba (Mangyung) had returned back to his home at Linchom. Hence, on the request of Mr. Muringla's mother, Mr. Ujjalman agreed to school her kids. Gradually more children's from the village were gathered for learning. This development paved the way for the idea of the Committee School.

Mr. Lal Man Nugo and Mr. Pem Dorjee Bhutia, then Mondal of the village took highly proactive interest in development of the Committee School. Soon a meeting was held at Mr. Pem Dorjee Bhutia's house attended by almost twenty where Mr. R.B Phago was present too. The attendees were from in and around Linchom, Salley till Sordung. The result of the meeting was seen in the construction of Committee School with single teacher, Mr. Ujjalman Subba. The enrollment were 25 to 30 students from the age group of 10 to 30 years old. The President of the Committee School was Mr. Pem Dorjee Mondal while Mr. Lal Man Nugo was the Treasurer.

Mr. Muringla studied till class IV in the Committee School then went to Tashi Namgyal

High school in Gangtok from class V till VII. The love towards Limbu Language and Literature stayed alive via writing letters in Limbu Language to his brothers and parents. Those letters became the continuation of learning Limbu Language among them.

In 1959, Mr. Muringla left for Darjeeling to study class VIII till Class X. One day, when he was studying in Class IX, he met a new teacher named Mr. Hem Chandra Pradhan. This meet brought a turning point in his life. To his surprise, Mr. Hem Chandra became a source of connection once again between Mr. Muringla and Mr. Iman Singh Chemjong. After getting the address of Mr. Chemjong, he didn't delay in writing letters to Mr. Chemjong. Slowly, the flow and exchange of letters begun between them. One day, Mr. Chemjong sent him the bundle of newly printed book in Nepal named, TUM YAKTHUNG NIWAPHUNG SAPLA (reprinted edition of the earlier book with some editing).

The new book soon put him in a state of confusion because the books he read in childhood and new one did not match due to some changes in vowels and consonants. Immediately, after meeting Mr. Chemjong, he queried his doubts. Mr. Chemjong justified those changes were due to his incomplete knowledge in the Limbu alphabets which he realised after reaching Nepal. Hence, Mr. Muringla started restudying them.

In December 21st, 1966, Sikkim Darbar appointed two seats in existing Sikkim Council i.e., one Sangha seat and one Tsong seat. Gradually, Mondal Bharandhoj Limbu (Tamling) suggested the inclusion of Limbu Language teaching in the schools of Sikkim. He along with Mr. Lal Man Nugo went to meet Chogyal Palden Thondup Namgyal to request

for the said demand. After many visits and untiring efforts of Mr. Bharandhoj Tamling Mondal, in 1968, the decision regarding the teaching of formal Limbu Language (as Tsong Language) in the government schools of Sikkim was agreed by the Sikkim Council. The council asked Mr. Harkadhoj Tsong (Mangyung) to produce the textbooks written in Limbu Language and its script. He managed to produce only two books, "TUM YAKTHUNG NINGWAPHUNG SAPLA" written by Mr. BAJBIR THOLONG in 1928, "TUM YAKTHUNG THIKSIGEK SAPLA and YAKTHUNG NISSHIGEK SAPLA" written collectively by Mr. Iman Singh Chemjong, Mr. Padam Singh Nugo and Mr. Man Bahadur Khamdhak in 1951.

On May 10, 1968, a meeting was held at Samdong School under the Chairmanship of the Sikkim Councilor, Mr. HARKADHOJ TSONG. Hence, Tsong teachers began to be appointed for teaching Limbu Language. The first teacher was Mr. ITCHA PURNA DAS MANGYUNG from Samdong. Others were gradually appointed such as, Mr. Karna Singh Limbu from Sidibung, Mr. Maha Bir Nembang from Thambong, Mr. Tej Man Limbu from Timburbung, Mr. Jaharman Limbu from Bering, Mr. Lal Bahadur Limbu from Gerythang, Mr. Harka Bir Limbu from Thambong, Mr. Dhan Raj Pandhak from Rumbuk and finally Mr. Chandra Mangyung for Samdong school after the retirement of Ichha Purna Das before the merger of the Sikkim.

In 1975, Mr. Muringla was appointed as Manuscript Writer for Limbu Language on honorarium basis. On 24th April, 1976, he was appointed as Manuscript Writer for Limbu Language in the Department of Education. He started to study Sirijunga script and re-fixed the number of vowels and consonants as education in Limbu was at its infancy. Hence, he is known as the Modern Architect of Limbu script, Language and Literature. Within one year, he provided hand written books for class 1 till class 5, "SIRIJUNGA SOKSOK". The absence of technology during those days did not stop him from

producing books. He made hand-written books from class 1 till class 12.

In 1979, Mr. Muringla was promoted as Text Book Officer (TBO) in the Department of Education. Professionally, he has spent his thirteen years of government service as a TBO for Limbu Language from Primary level up to the college level then retired as Joint Director, Department of Education in the year of 2005.

In 1982, he designed the Limbu Script for Letter press with untiring efforts. In 1992, he also designed Limbu script for computers. He had done a historic work by writing Limbu Comic adaptation from a story plucked from Amar Chitra Katha in 1987, 40th edition of Independence Day celebration.

According, to Mr. George van Driem, Mr. B.B Muringla have made subsequent attempts to revive the Limbu script in Sikkim in the late '70s.

Mr. Muringla designed the Limbu script Font for letter press in 1982. While, the appreciated award was given to Mr. Sancha Man Limbu "Tamra Patra" in 1984 as "First Award of printing and Designing Sirijunga Script."

Mr. B.B. Muringla also designed Limbu script Font for computers in 1992. On 02/01/2000, the same was burrowed by Mr. J.R. Subba from his residence at Linchom, West Sikkim. Based on it, Mr. Karun Thapa developed computer "Sirijunga fonts" and his associates (J.R Subba, Y.P. Subba, Yehang Laoti and Delendra Subba) further improved the Sirijunga fonts.

Remarkable contributions:

1. Hand written books for primary till secondary level.
2. Reconstructing the grammar and making easier for readers and learners of Limbu Language.
3. Comic in Limbu based on the story of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, Chandra Sekhar Azad and Deshbandu Chittaranjan Dad.
4. Writing of Limboo-Nepali- English Dictionary part 1 and part 2.

5. Designing the Limbu Flag (Nissa), and Pagha.
6. He made hand-made MIKEKWA (self-made post card letter) designed by him in early 1980s for sending informal letters.
7. He wrote many poems, and short stories for Nepali literature too. He also wrote songs.
8. He was conferred the Padma Shri by the Government of India in 2017 for his contribution to Limbu Language and Literature.

Mr. Muringla had received many awards and Felicitations from International, National and local organization.

P.S.: It is the pain, struggle, dedication and enthusiasm of Mr. Muringla for keeping Limbu language in the flow and reviving the Sirijunga script through his continuous effort. Today, Limbu

Language is studied till PhD level due to the efforts and contribution of great personalities such as Mahatma Sirijunga Teyongsi, Mr. Lalsor Sendang, Mr. Iman Singh Chemjong, Mr. Man Bahadur Khamdhak, Mr. Lal Man Nugo, Mr. Bharan Dhoj Mandol, Mr. Padam Singh Nugo, Mr. Harka Dhoj Mandol, and first appointed Tsong Teachers in Sikkim. Let us not forget their sweat, pain and effort to shape Limbu language and develop till date.

Also Sources:

1. Interview with TuTu Tumyechang, Mr. B.B Muringla.
2. J.R.Subba, Mahatma Sirijunga Singthebe , The Great Social Awakener, page 23.
3. Emeytnasung: 38th issue, 2017, by Harka Khamdhak, Darap, West Sikkim. Page 308-310.

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The Eternal Religion in perspective of Malsom Janajati of Tripura

system, good manners, courtesy etc. are outcome of the religion and culture. To say in short, religion and culture are interwoven with each other in the sense that, where there is no culture, existence of religion cannot be there. Because, in every walk of life, right from birth of a baby to its death; a lot of rites & rituals are performed like naming, purification, puberty, marriage, death and so on, which are regulated on the basis of faith, religion and culture. As a result, it is true that culture and religion is inseparable from each other.

12. Concept of Soul:

The soul is a sign of God, a heavenly gem. The soul not only continues to live after the physical death of the human body, but is, in fact, immortal. Heaven

can be seen partly as the soul's state of nearness to God; and hell as a state of remoteness from God. Each state follows as a natural consequence of individual efforts, or the lack thereof, to develop spiritually. It is said that soul's evolution is always towards God and away from the material world.

In Hinduism, the Sanskrit words most closely corresponding to soul are "Jiva", "Atma" and "Purusha", meaning the individual Self. The term "soul" is misleading as it implies an object possessed, whereas Self signifies the subject which perceives all objects. This Self is held to be distinct from the various mental faculties such as desires, thinking, understanding, reasoning and self-image (ego), all of which are considered to be part of Prakriti (nature).

Chasing the History of Kamakhya Temple

Dhiren Saikia

Not only the people of North-East, but almost all the people of India knows about the Kamakhya temple, one of the holiest shaktipith within our country. From the ancient time, the Kamakhya temple has been playing an important role in political and religious history of Assam.

There are total 51 active holy places like Kamakhya temple in all over India. This historical holy place spurs me to quote my own poem, where I wrote-

“The dream beauty of Narakasur
You are the better half of Lord Shiva,
By sacrificing in the humiliation
of Father Jaksha
You are living in the Nilachala,
Paying tribute to the devotions of Biswasingha
flowing peace in the devotion door of East
The sage Basistha cursed Narakasur not having
your vision
Increased the annihilation of the demons
Yadunandan came with the Chakra
O’ Katyayani Devi Mahirsamardini
Manasa of all the misdeeds
Devi Chamunda Kali
You have been worshipped by natives for eras
Today, dangers are surrounding us
it is not the salvation of Ambubachi
Still give us tha chantings of bravery
We will advance a red cloth.

Kamakhya Temple was established by Narakasur: There is no clear information about the previous times of Narakasura in the history of Kamakhya. It is assumed that Kamakhya Devi was worshipped by the natives during the 6th and 7th centuries if we assume that Narakasura ruled this region in 8th century. Narak only established the holy place for the extensively worshipped Devi at that time. Many people claim that Narak brought the vaginal holy

place from a historical cave named Nir and established in top of the hill. There were only a few families of Koch, Mech, Bodo, Khasia, Garo etc near by the holy place during the reign of Narak. Therefore, it can be said that those few people worshipped in the holy place. According to Astrich, Kamakhya Devi is known as the Goddess of Crematory. Khasi people calls Her as ‘Kameikha’. According to another current story, after Devi killed the demon Keshi, the remains and the ashes of the dead body of the Keshi demon created the Nilachala hill. Dr. Banikanta Kakati called Kamakhya as the Devi holy place of Ashtrich and Mongoloid tribes. Dr. Surya Kumar Bhuyan mentioned it as the holyplace of Non-aryan castes. Later, Kamakhya came to Aryan culture from the non-aryan culture. Many people also claim that there was no Kamakhya temple during the visit of the Chinese tourist Hiuen Tsang to India in 630-644 AD, because there was no mention of Kamakhya temple in his description. But it is hard to believe that.

Contribution of Koch King Biswasingha to Kamakhya temple : It is mentioned in the book ‘ Koch-Kamatar Itikotha’ by Dipendra Narayan Konwar from page no 61 to 64 that the Koch king Biswasingha, who married 14 queens on the same day, had a lot of contributions to the Kamakhya temple.

Once the Koch king Biswasingha (1515-1540) and his younger brother Sisyasingha were separated from their armies while returning from Ahom kingdom. They knew about the holy place a little far away from them from an old man who was worshipping under a tree after arriving in Nilachala. The king promised in the holyplace by praying that if he would meet his younger brother and the armies, he would generate Kamakhya temple more beautifully. But it worked. Within three days, the king Biswasingha found his

younger brother and the armies. After that, he kept his promise and he made a temple in the Kamakhya holy place. From then the king Biswasingha became the devotee of Devi Kamakhya. The time of arrival of Biswasingha should be before the 1540 AD, because he died in the year 1540 AD.

There was no Devi worshipping for some years: The general of the king Gourha, Kalapahar destroyed the Kamakhya temple and other temples in 1553 AD and after that in 1565 AD the Koch king Naranarayana reconstructed the Kamakhya temple. That means, there was no worshipping of Devi for 11 years from 1553 to 1565 AD.

Reconstruction of Kamakhya temple by Naranarayana: There was a weakness of Koch Royal family on the Kamakhya from the days of Biswasingha. Naranarayana became the king of Koch in 1540 AD. In 1563 AD, Naranarayana conquered Gargaon attacking the Ahom kingdom after winning many countries. After that he extended his kingdom by winning the states of Tripura, Kachari, Jayantia etc. The General Chilaray was arrested while invading the Gaurha. At that time the general of the Gaurha Kalapahar destroyed the Kamakhya very easily. According to the command of Naranarayana, Chilaray took attempt to reconstruct the temple by releasing the land destroyed by Kalapahar. Chilaray Dewan, the younger brother of Naranarayana, reconstructed the temple by Meghamukdum, a royal sculpture artist. Actually, the responsibility of reconstructing the temple was given to a royal employee named Mahatram Baishya, but later seeing his negativities, Meghamukdum was selected in place of Mahatram Baishya. Later, he reconstructed the Kamakhya temple.

The Story connecting Kendukalai of Darrang Royal family: It is said Devi being satisfied with the devotion of a priest named Kendukalai visited the royal temple of Darang royalty and danced naked inside the temple. One day, Kendukalai tried to plot to show this dance to Naranarayana and Devi became angry and slapped him. After that his head was separated from the body and his head was thrown nearby Kalaigaon, Odalguri. Later, a temple was

established there. At present, the temple of Muradev is located there.

Kamakhya temple: From Narakasura to Present: Kamrup is also known as Devikshetra in Kujikatantra, Yoginitantra, Kalikapuran, Devi Bhagavat etc. There is a vagina holy place of Goddess Kamakhya inside the cave of Nil. From that side, Narakasura might established that holy place in the top of the hill by bringing out from the cave. It is said that due to the curse of the Sage Basistha to Narakasura for his ego (returning the sage with his rude behavior) while visiting Kamakhya for the vision, Narakasura was declined. Meanwhile, one of the reason of the decline of Narakasura was over tendency for women and his mercantile behaviour. The sage Basistha stayed in Sandhyachala by opening Basisthashrama there saying that he would not look at the face of the Goddess until Narakasura lived nearby the Goddess Kamakhya. According to Kalika Puran, the Lord Krishna with Satyabhama came to Pragjyotishpur and killed Naraka for his uncontrollable behaviour. After that his son Bhagadutta was sent to throne by lord Krishna. The holy place was changed after the death of Naraka. It is mysterious that there is no mention of Kamakhya holy place during the visit of the China tourist, but Nirmalprava Bordoloi mentioned about the visit of the Bedantavist Sankaracharya to this holy place of Kamrup in probably 8th century in her book 'Devi' and this proves that this holy place was active at that time. Bordoloi also clearly mentioned that there were few families of Mech, Koch etc in Nilachala. Later, in 1565 AD, this Kamakhya temple was reconstructed under the leadership of Chilaray. The special thing is that- it is mentioned in 'Apon Dekhor Kotha' (Class Vi) published by Assam Jatiya Bidyalay that Chilaray reconstructed this temple by appointing a sculptor named Meghamukdum.

There are different facts about the Goddess Kamakhya in different Purans. In Kalika Puran, Mahamaya is also called Kamakhya. If we turn the pages of the history, the dignity of the Goddess Kamakhya was more publicised by the Ahom royal kingdom after the patronage of the Koch kings. The

Koch king Naranarayana brought the artists who knew how to make Durga idols from Kochbihar to Ahom kingdom. In this way, after the Koch kings, the Ahom kings also took the patronage of Goddess Kamakhya. In Yoginitantra, Kali is called as Kamakhya.

According to Astrich, Kamakhya is the Goddess of Crematory. According to another story, after Devi killing the demon Keshi, one hill was created from the ashes in the crematory of Keshi. That hill is the present Nilachala. Nilachala was formed by generating various trees, stones, caves on the ashes. But, these are traditional folk tales. Dr. Banikanta Kakoti also mentioned Kamakhya as the holy place of Astrich and Mongolia tribes in his writings. He wrote- Kamakhya was the temple of worshipping the Mother of both the tribes Astrich and Mangoliya. The word Kamoi is related with the crematory. The writings of the archaeologist Rajmohan also says the same thing. Dr. Surya Kumar Bhuyan also wrote that the natives of Kamrup were non-Aryan castes. The Khasia people wants to call Goddess Kamakhya as their ancient Devathal. Ka- is a word from female gender. Maikha- grandmother. It means that Kamakhya was an active holy place for the Bodos,



Kacharis and Khasias. Later, many cultures including worshipping of Kamakhya Devi changed from non-Aryan to Aryan cultures.

There are two idols of Koch king Naranarayan and his younger brother Chilaray of stone inside the temple. There are so many temples nearby Kamakhya temple. They are- Bhubaneswari, Kali, Bhasha, Chinnamasta, Bogola, Bhairabi, Dhumabati, Kameshwar, Siddheswar, Kotilinga, Matangi, Kamala etc. The Bhubaneswari temple is located in Brahma hill, at the topmost peak of the Nilachala. The tourists are fascinated by having the aesthetic view of Guwahati from the Brahma hill.

Many people also wants to say that the Kamakhya, whom Naraka brought from Mithila, is an non-Assamese Goddess. Because- it is not frivolous for the Naraka, the son of Earth, to bring the worshipping of Goddess Katyayani or Kamakhya. Because Mithila was also a historical place of Shakti puja one upon a time. People should research these things.

Kamakhya affected by Buddhism: Many researchers also want to say Kamakhya was influenced by Buddhism. This is because of having more tortoises in the ponds of Kamakhya and in the Haygriba Madhaba Temple of Hajo. Many people claim itt as an affect of Buddhism. Many archaeologists say that the sculptures of Kamakhya temple have affects of Buddhism from Buddhagaya like the mention of releasing many people by Buddha by taking forms of tortoises or trees in Buddhajataka. But these things are far away from the actual research.

There is an information about having many Kamakhya temples in various places of Assam, including Nilachala. There are small Kamakhya temples in Odalguri district, Silghat of Nagaon district, Sonapur of Guwahati etc.

Kamakhya Temple in the book of Dr. Banikanta Kakati, in 'Devipithor Tez' of Mamani Raisom Goswami, in the book of late Mohan Chandra Sarma, in books of Kamakhya Mahatyam and 'Anyatra Birla Devi' of Ruplekha Devi : Kamakhyadham is not only a holyplace in India, it is a beehive of different

colourful cultures also. It is said that, the old residents can understand Begali, Nepali, Khasia languages and some of them can speak also. The Bordeuri Community and many members of Temple Management Committee traditionally knows about the heritage of the Kamakhya temple. There are many believes, many folk tales running orally amongst the Pandas. Some of them are scientifically information based, but many of them are not. A novel written on Kamakhya came to our hand while searching about the books related to Kamakhya. Every page of the novel is full of histories, folk tales, and the characters of manners and behaviours. A description of getting properties in donation from the Ahom kings by the Bordeori families is also there in the novel. He writes- "The Rayats came to see the people of Bordeori family with sugarcane molasses, white gourds, gourds and other foods whenever they got the news of the Bordeori family's visit to village. Now the days are changed. Last year, many rayats hesitated to give paddy. The old youths does not fear now due to lack of Burha Rayats. In ancient time, people used to packet their own rice, curds, foods of their own forests etc. People arrived in the courtyard of Sarpanch with their paddy." With this, Ruplekha Devi gave a description in her novel about the donations to Bordeori family for the management of the temple by Assamese society of Kamakhya in middle era. Though it is a novel, the characters are imaginary, Ruplekha Devi decorated this vook with perfect historical information. She writes - "The powerful General of Mughals, Man Singh prayed the Goddess for forgiveness, repentent in the crime of attacking Kamrupa. This holy place had deep relation with many royal families. The king of Kashi, king of Nepal, Mayur Bhanjan- the king of Orissa, the king of Dhyankanolo etc often used to come here." (Page no 53)

The Goddess killed Kolasur by taking form of girl child. Kolasur was so dangerous that he ate all the foods of the state alone and it confused the people. Then the Goddess Kali killed Kolasur in her own form. The another auspicious function held in Kamakhya temple every year is Ambubachi Mela. There is a tradition of closing all the temples in

Devidham with the Kamakhya temple for three days. A big fair is organised in the complex of the temple in these days. According to folk belief, the Mother Earth goes around the menstruation cycle in Ahar month, in between the 4th stage of Mriga Shira star and the first stage of Adya Star. Many people also calls Ambubachi as Sath, Amoti, Ameti etc. Many devotees from countries and foreigners attend this Ambubachi Mela. Auspicious functions are organised in Guwahati in these days. The saints and sages, who keep themselves far away from the people, takes shelter in caves, secret places, crematory of Kamakhya etc in these days. On the fourth day, the doors of the temple are opened for the devotees only after cleaning the pandal, all the places of the temple etc and worshipping the Goddess. Kumari Puja is also held in this temple during Durga Puja.

*(To be continued in
April, 2022 issue)*

AN APPEAL TO WRITERS

Contribution of original articles on Education, Religion, Philosophy, Culture & Traditions, History and other interesting but enlightening subjects are invited from Authors and readers for publication in its forthcoming issues.

The articles submitted should not be too lengthy and should be written or typed on one side of A4 size paper. Carbon copies or Photostatted articles will not be considered for publication. A separate sheet of paper containing a brief bio-data of the author, his full name and address, Telephone/ Mobile number and E-Mail ID should be attached for future correspondence.

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Invitation for contribution of articles for
HERITAGE EXPLORER Special Issue, 2022

on the theme of

“The Unsung Janajati Heroes from North East in Indian Freedom Struggle”

Adarneeeya Mahoday/ Mahodaya,

Sadar Pranam,

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

I am sure that you are well aware of the fact that **HERITAGE EXPLORER** publishes a specific theme based Special Issue every year and releases it on 15th August, the national Independence Day of our country for the benefit of our readers, heritage scientists, research scholars and students of tribal history and culture.

We are glad to inform you that this year we have chosen the topic - ‘**The Unsung Janajati Heroes from North East in Indian Freedom Struggle**’ as the theme for our Special Issue, 2022, to celebrate the completion of the glorious 75 years of our independence.

The reason behind the selection of the topic mentioned above is perhaps apparent. It is an acknowledged fact that though the contribution of numerous freedom fighters from mainland of our country got amply highlighted in the history of our freedom struggle, very few names of janajati freedom fighters from North Eastern region of our country could obtain appropriate and deserved mention anywhere. This is mainly because most of the janajati communities of north east had no written scripts of their own and others did not feel the importance of recording their feats. Also their skirmishes with the British hegemony were mostly unorganised and limited to areas that were badly incommunicable in those days. In addition to the above, even after independence and formation of geographically distinct state units no conscious efforts were taken up to chronicle the deeds and achievements of the heroes of fiercely independence minded janajati communities of north east. The Special Issue, 2022 of HERITAGE EXPLORER wishes to address the inadequacies of the past as best as possible by relying on the oral history of different janajati communities of north east with a view to open up the gates for further research in a scientific manner.

We at Heritage Foundation earnestly hope that the respected scholars from janajatis areas, researchers, community leaders and the knowledgeable elites of different Janajati communities will come forward to extend their intellectual support by contributing articles in line with the theme mentioned above and thus help us achieve our lofty goal of bringing into focus the heroism and dedication of janajatis patriots for freeing our motherland from the bondage of British colonialism.

The authors are requested kindly to submit their articles strictly abiding by the following points of reference.

POINTS OF REFERENCE

1. Anti-colonial movements in the NE Hill states from 1826 to 1900 CE
2. Unsung Janajati heroes of the North East in the 1826-1900 CE era
3. Unsung Janajati heroes of the North East in the 20th century in chronological order
4. Landmark places of the freedom movement in North East
5. Ballads, Songs related to freedom movement in Janajati Language
6. Role of Janajati Women in the Freedom Movement in chronological order.
7. Role of Janajati students in the Freedom Movement in chronological order.

In this connection I may add that for the purpose of timely publication of the Special Issue containing your paper, following guidelines may kindly be positively adhered to.

- The Paper must reach Heritage Foundation, Guwahati by 30th May, 2022
- The paper should be typed on one side of an A-4 size paper, distinctly page marked and signed by you at the bottom of each page.
- Kindly enclose your brief Bio-Data and a copy of your recent passport size photograph with the article. Sign the full name on the backside of the photograph.
- The paper submitted should be original in all respect and should not have been published earlier in any media.
- The names and addresses of the persons whom you may have consulted for writing this paper should be mentioned at the bottom of last page.
- Kindly mention the names of the Books/Papers/Magazines'/ historic Records that were relied upon to write your paper at the bottom of your article under the caption of Bibliography.
- Some photographs relevant to the contents of your paper should be enclosed with the article.
- Hard copy of the paper should be sent to the **Chief Editor, Heritage Foundation, Bhuvan Road, Near GMC Office, Uzan Bazar, Post Box No. 73, Guwahati- 781001** by speed post/ Courier/ By hand.
- A soft copy of the paper should be sent by E-mail to *heritageexplorer19@gmail.com* on or before 30th May, 2022 to facilitate error free printing of the issue.

I hope and pray that you will spare your valuable time and intellect to pen the Paper as prayed above, which, we are sure will serve as an authentic and reliable source of information about the Janajati contribution to Indian Freedom Movement.

With respectful regards.

Thanking you.

Romen Chakraborty

Yours faithfully,

(Romen Chakraborty)

Chief Editor, Heritage Explorer

The First Chapter of the Hajongs

Pompy Hajong

India is the home to many races, tribes-sub-castes and communities. Every community wants to identify themselves distinctly different. Each caste or tribe has their own history. It is not possible to be a caste or community without having its own culture or history. But there are some caste, tribes or communities in Assam, India and all over the world, which seem to be very negligible due the lack of their own history. The Hajong tribe is one of them. It is said that the settlement of the Hajong tribe was limited in the land of Kona, which is included in Maimansingh district of Bangladesh in the west and Suwar Kona, Lakhipur in the district of South Goalpara in the east. But nowadays the Hajong tribe has pread all over the district. Different people asks different questions about the Hajong tribe. For example- Who are the Hajongs? Where did they originate? What was their language? How was their dresses? It is very difficult to find out the answers of these questions. Even myself is a living example of a confused Hajon who is unaware of the Hajong community as a whole. Today I am going to present some answers to the commonly asked questions.

In the Mahabharata era, Karttya-Biryajurn was a sovereign, invincible and prosperous emperor of Avanti Nagar. But, one day, unfortunately, he had to stay in the hermitage of sage Jamadagni after returning from hunting with his armies. The sage was confused to care so many people in his hermitage. Atlast, being helpless, he prayed his dearest the Kamdhenu cow. Being satisfied in his prayer, the Kamdhenu fulfilled the desire of the sage. The sage nursed all the people in the hermitage happily. The minister of the king came to know about this through his spies and secretly complained this to king. An idea came to the king's mind and during that night the watchman escaped with the

Kamdhenu cow. Being angry with this, the sage Jamadagni fought with the Karttyabirjya very bravely, but unfortunately lost his life in this battle. At last, Sri Parasurama, the son of the sage fought with the king. Though Parasurama was a fighter, he had to lose with the Kshatriya. Because there was a 'Akshyay Kabach' of endless power of the Kshatriyas. The Kabach was such powerful that no one kill them until the kabach is with them. Atlast, one day, Parasurama kidnapped the kabach in disguise and started to kill the Kshatriyas by axe. At that time Swarupadevi, the daughter of Kharbaraj was of five months pregnant. Being helpless, Swarupadevi came to the sage Kamdutta, who was living in the forest of the Kamrupa, in disguise by leaving the capital. After knowing the truth in meditation, the sage took the responsibility of nursing and look after her. Swarupadevi delivered a beautiful boy at the right moment. The sage named the child Pradanshu. Pradangshu grew with time and the sage made him expert in education of battle and got married him to an adopted daughter, Suthama. Pradangshu and Suthama had 19 sons- Subansha, Samancha, Samakya etc and they occupied the Hajo temple and Hajo town made by the sage Urba. The lower descendents of Sudhangshudev were of 9th or 10th generations like Mahabir Kumar Bhaskar Barma, Bharat Barman etc ruled the state very smoothly. After Bharat Barman, the Hajo town was destroyed. From then, that dynasty or the people of Rajbangshi spread in different places. At that time, 10 thousand people escaped from the Hajo town to Garo hills with a hero named Kashyap. That place is also available today. With time, the people of Rajbangshi has been spreading in different places like Garo hills, Goalpara and also in different places of today's Bangladesh. These escaping Rajbangshis either

cannot give the real identity to themselves or in the fear of Parashurama throwing the 'Lagun', the symbol of Kshatriyas, identifies themselves as a kshatriyas and creates a new caste after writing "Hajo" after the name. It seems that the word "Hajo" comes from the name of the Hajo town. In time, the word Hajo changes to Hajong.

The Khasi and Jaintia districts were with Assam before the birth of Garo hills and Meghalaya. Then, the Hajong tribes of the district of Garo hills were proud of identifying themselves as Assamese. They were very happy to learn Assamese language. After the reigning of Mahabir Kumar Bhaskar Barma and Bharat Barman, the Hajo town was destroyed. From then the dynasty or the Rajbangshis spread in different places. At that time twelve thousand armies under the leadership of a hero named Kashyap started to live in Garo hills by leaving the Hajo town. The place where they at first started to live, is known as 'Bara Hajari', today also, the Hajong people are living there. And with time, the Rajbangshis spread in Garo hills, Goalpara and different places of Bangladesh. These escaped Rajbangshis hiding their real identities identified themselves as Hajong due to arrival from the Hajo town.

According to another legend, the Hajongs came to Garo hills at first and in the lower places of the hills they started to do their cultivation. The Garos called them as Hajong comparing them with the insects in soil due to their cultivation by plough. In Garo language, 'ha' means soil and 'jong' means insects. It means insects in soil, man who eats by ploughing soils. Every insect in soil can loop soil. The Hajongs call it 'haloa' insect. That means the Hajongs are 'haloa' or 'farmers'. According to some scholars, the Hajongs are a branch of Bodo Kasari or Dimasa Kachari. Because, in the language of the Hajongs 'anuswar' (Ñ) is main like that of the Kachari language. In Kachari language, 'ha' means soil and 'jong' means high. It means the high hillock of soil or land. There are two villages of Dimasa tribes as 'Old Hajong' and 'New Hajong' in the two high hillocks nearby Maibong

of North Kachar Hills District. Therefore, the name Hajong is said to be created from the Kachari language.

Generally, every Assamese people is seemed to be not known about the Hajongs. Because, the history of Assam is silent about the Hajongs. It is not clear that at first the Hajongs were the indigenous people of Assam. But nowadays, there are Assamese medium schools in Meghalaya and many Hajong villages of Assam. They like to learn Assamese language. They feel that there are little difference between the Hajong and the Assamese languages. It can be said that every Hajong people of North-East India is Assamese from heart.

Hajong Nikhil Rai has forwarded another new exceptional opinion about the beginning of the word Hajong. According to him, the Hajong people have to face difficult situations many times. Therefore, they had to be conscious and ready at any time. And the word Hajo is formed from 'Sajo-Sajo' or 'Saju ho saju ho'. The letter 'Sa' in the first of the words of the Hajong language is pronounced as 'ha'. For example- sagol-hagol, kathol-kahol etc. According to the description of Sydney Andel, the Hajongs are the representatives of the ancient Koch dynasty and they were expelled by the Muslims to the residential areas of the lower of the present Garo hills during 1600-1700 AD. The Hajongs are mentioned as Koch or Rajbangshis in the book of Bookanan Hemiltan.

The Hajongs are said to be the residents of ancient Kamrupa. Because, they have bottomless respect for Haygriha-Madhava of Hajo and Goddess Kamakhya of Nilachala. Like other tribes, they use alkalis, they also use betel-nut and leaves in marriages and other social occasions, they use 'tat xal', they pray to Goddess Manasa. Due to these features or reasons, the Hajong people are included in the ancient communities of Kamrupa.

(Translated into English from original Assamese by Deepsikha Das)

Golden Jubilee Nyokum Yullo celebrated

Deputy Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Shri Chowna Mein graced the grand Celebration of Golden Jubilee Nyokum Yullo 2022 along with Namsai MLA, Chau Zingnu Namchoom at Palin today.

While extending his greetings to the Nyishi community on the attainment of 50th year of Nyokum Yullo Celebration at Palin, Shri Mein lauded the Celebration committee for remembering the pioneers who had contributed in preserving the beautiful and rich cultures and traditions of the tribe and successfully passed on the rich cultural heritage to the present generations. He stressed that we must maintain this legacy to keep our culture and traditions alive.

Shri Mein further stated that Nyokum Festival will come every year but the Golden Jubilee celebration will come only once in a lifetime and “we must strive to make such occasion a meaningful and memorable one for the society”, he added. He further said that many young talents are emerging in the State and our Govt is committed to support and promote them in every possible way and advocated for initiating an Achievers’ Award by the Govt to recognize and encourage them. He further said to construct a Theatre Hall for the performing arts in the State capital. The Dy. CM also stated that Team Arunachal is committed to set a good legacy for all round development of the State and including the District Headquarter of Kra-Daadi, Palin.

While informing various developmental schemes sanctioned by the Govt for the Kra-Dadi District Headquarter, Mein said that Rs 29 Crore has been sanctioned for road connectivity for Palin under Chief Minister Comprehensive Road Plan, Rs 17 Crore for the road construction of Palin town to ADC Headquarter at Pania and Rs 14 crore for District Secretariat for Kra-Daadi District for which the Tender process has been completed and construction

work will begin soon. He also informed that fund for District Hospital Infrastructure, Internal road for Nangbia Model College, Palin, new Circuit House for Palin, road from main road to Palin Helipad and approach road to Donyi-Polo colony at Palin has been sanctioned.

Responding to a memorandum submitted to him by the Celebration Committee, he assured to look into construction of a Community Hall at Palin and also said that fund for the construction of a power sub-station at Palin will be provided to improve the power scenario in the District Headquarter.

On the occasion, Golden Jubilee Nyokum Yullo Celebration Committee, Tassar Taro while narrating the Nyokum Mythology said that during Nyokum, offering is made to Abu Tani and his descendent for the welfare of entire human race and for economically self-reliance, surplus produce of food grains and for well-being and prosperity of all human race.

MLA Namsai and Guest of Honour, Chau Zingnu Namchoom, Advisor to Power Minister, Balo Raja, GJNYCC General Secretary, Byabang Rocket and Vice Chairman, Techai Tai also spoke on the occasion.

The Deputy Chief Minister also released a Nyokum Souvenir ‘Kumchum’ while Namsai MLA released a book titled, ‘Healthcare Status and Human Development: an Empirical Analysis in Eastern Himalayas’ authored by Dr Chokio Taku, Asst Professor in Economics, Dera Natung Govt College, Itanagar.

Among others, MLA 20th Tali ST A/C, Jikke Tako, Former Ministers, Takam Sanjay & Takam Pario, Secretary General, Arunachal Chamber of Commerce, Toko Tatung, ZPC Kamle Dist, Nyido Shanti, ZPC Kra-Daadi District, Charu Menia, DC, and SP, of Kra Dadi were also present in the festival.

Arunachal CM lauds culture of the Wanchos

While attending the Oriah festival of the Wancho community at Longding recently, Chief Minister Pema Khandu lauded the rich, colorful and vibrant culture that is exuded during one of the most joyous festivals of the State. Khandu also praised the Wanchos for preserving their indigenous culture in its true form since time immemorial. The thunderous beating of log-drums and piercing war cries of the participants added a different kind of joyous vibrations around

In his inaugural address the Chief Minister stated that - "Yes we need development and modern way of life, but in the race for development, we should not lose our culture committedly followed and practiced by our forefathers," Citing the presence of Indian Army and Central armed paramilitary forces (CAPF) in the district, Khandu suggested that they along with the district administration should join together to celebrate local festivals, which he said, will add to the festival's color and create bonhomie between the people and the forces.

"Next Oriah I hope to see people thronging Army and CAPF stalls," he said. He also lauded the Wanchos for displaying supreme patriotism by serving in the armed forces in large numbers. Paying rich tributes to Rifleman Longdon Wangsu of 16 Assam Rifles, who was martyred in Imphal recently, Khandu announced that permanent Group C jobs would be given to next of kin of all indigenous martyrs henceforth.

He reinforced 'unity in diversity' as the foundation of the State's peace and development and said that despite cultural and linguistic differences the indigenous tribes have existed peacefully in close proximity. Khandu said this unity has driven the concept of 'Team Arunachal' and expressed gratitude to all past leaders for taking the state on the right path of peace and development. "Each and every community ought to work as one Team

Arunachal. Once we work as a team, with the rich potential of resources bestowed on us by nature, we will soon become self-reliant and prosperous," he said.

Reminiscing about one of his visits to Longding in 2012 as Minister of Tourism and RWD, Khandu expressed satisfaction that the Kanubari-Longding highway has come up well, easing travel for commuters. He informed that the other important road connecting Longding with Khonsa is also coming up fast. "This morning I spoke to the contractor of the Longding-Khonsa road, who informed that 30 per cent work on the road is complete and assured that the rest will be completed as per schedule," Khandu said. He asserted that once the connectivity issue in the State is sorted out, Arunachal Pradesh will witness accelerated growth as never seen before. Referring to the forthcoming Budget session, the Chief Minister assured 'Budget 22-23' will be a game changer. "There is no dearth of funds by the blessings of the Central leadership. Our focus is on empowering the youths, who are the future of our State. This Budget will be different and inclusive," he claimed. Khandu, meanwhile, expressed regret that one of the most important projects in the district - water supply system to Longding township - still remained incomplete. "I seek apology from the people of Longding for the delay. In fact I had expected to inaugurate the project but got dejected when I couldn't find it on the list of projects to be inaugurated today. I promise today that immediately after my return to the State capital, I will hold an urgent meeting with all the authorities concerned, including the PHE Minister, and chalk out a clear-cut road map to complete it soon. I also promise to return to inaugurate it," the Chief Minister announced. Earlier in the day, Khandu dedicated 13 projects to the people of the district, including the Circuit House at Longding, Circle Office at

(Contd. to Page 20)

Minister Tage Taki urges for preserving Tribal identity

Shri Tage Taki Minister for Agriculture & Horticulture, along with MLA Zingnu Namchoom recently attended the agricultural festival of Wancho tribe 'Oriah', celebrated at Senki-park near Itanagar. The festival was organized by the Oriah Festival Celebration Committee-Itanagar (OFCCI). Addressing the gathering, Shri Taki said that the identity of every tribe is closely linked with the tradition and culture they follow. Likewise, the traditional dress, foods and dialect also plays a pivotal role in identifying the respective tribe.

He said the efforts to preserve the respective tradition and culture of a tribe rests upon the shoulders of present youths. He said, "loss of culture is loss of identity, so once we forget our roots, we lose our identity." Taki also urged the youth to follow the dignity of labour to reduce unemployment in the State. "There are lots of job opportunities and ways of employment in the State for self-employment. Instead of running for Government jobs, youths should focus on self-employment and other private jobs," he said, adding that Government jobs are limited and everybody cannot get it.

MLA Zingnu Namchoom said that the State is blessed with numerous tribes with different respective

festivals, which are extremely beautiful and rich in tradition. He said that despite different traditions and culture, the people of the State still believe in unity in diversity. He said the 'vocal for local' campaign is the mantra to carry forward the ethnicity of the tribes. "I also appeal to the youths of the community to maintain the culture and tradition and preserve it for the future generation. Likewise, encourage and take forward the traditional games of the tribe," he said.

He said the Wancho youths are involved in various sports and games activities in the State. They are capable of bringing laurels to the State in various sports. "Therefore, immerse in the depth of the sports and make the community proud," he added. Speaking to the reporters, Wancho Welfare Society (WWS) president Chakfa Wangsu said that the festival is celebrated every year by the Wancho community from the State and also in the State of Nagaland.

He said even the populace from the across the border of neighboring Myanmar celebrate the festival with pomp and gaiety. "On this day, we offer prayers to the Almighty God for bumper harvest and thank Him for the blessing upon the community. Even we offer prayers and offerings on the day for better harvest in the coming years too," he said.

(Contd. from Page 19)

Arunachal CM lauds culture of the Wanchos

Longchan, Police Station at Tissa, Police Station at Pongchau, Police Station at Wakka, Police Station at Lawnu, Primary Health Center at Lawnu, Model Anganwadi Center at Kanubari, District Hospital Longding, Upgraded Police Station Longding, Auditorium of Govt H S School Longding, Tribal Cultural Center Longding and a BJP Party office at Longding. Present on the

occasion were Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein, Lok Sabha MP Tapir Gao, Education Minister Taba Tedir, host and RWD Minister Hunchum Ngandam, State BJP president Biyuram Wahge, local legislator Tanpho Wangnow, Kanubari legislator Gabriel D Wangsu, DGP Satish Golcha and others.

Meghalaya's Republic Day tableau bags third prize

In the Republic Day parade 2022, which is a traditional display of the best of our nation, Meghalaya secured the distinguished third best position amongst the contestant states of our country. It is a great achievement for a small state of north east.

Meghalaya's tableau, an initiative of the Directorate of Information and Public Relations, Government of Meghalaya, was based on 50 years on Statehood and a tribute to women-led cooperative societies and self-help groups (SHGs).

Through its tableau, Meghalaya had showcased bamboo and cane handicrafts as well as Lakadong turmeric to honour women-led cooperative societies and SHGs, which revived the popularity and demand of these products with their relentless efforts.

The front part of the tableau depicts a woman weaving a bamboo basket, and several bamboo and cane products of Meghalaya.

The rear portion of the tableau, on the other hand, depicts the traditional farming and processing of Lakadong turmeric. It also shows the commemorative logo of Meghalaya's 50 years of statehood.

According to the Defence Ministry on Friday, Uttar Pradesh's tableau — based on the theme 'one district one product and Kashi Vishwanath Dham' — was adjudged the best while the second place went to Karnataka for its tableau based on 'cradle of traditional handicrafts'.

The tableaux of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Civil Aviation have been declared as joint winners in the category of central ministries and departments.

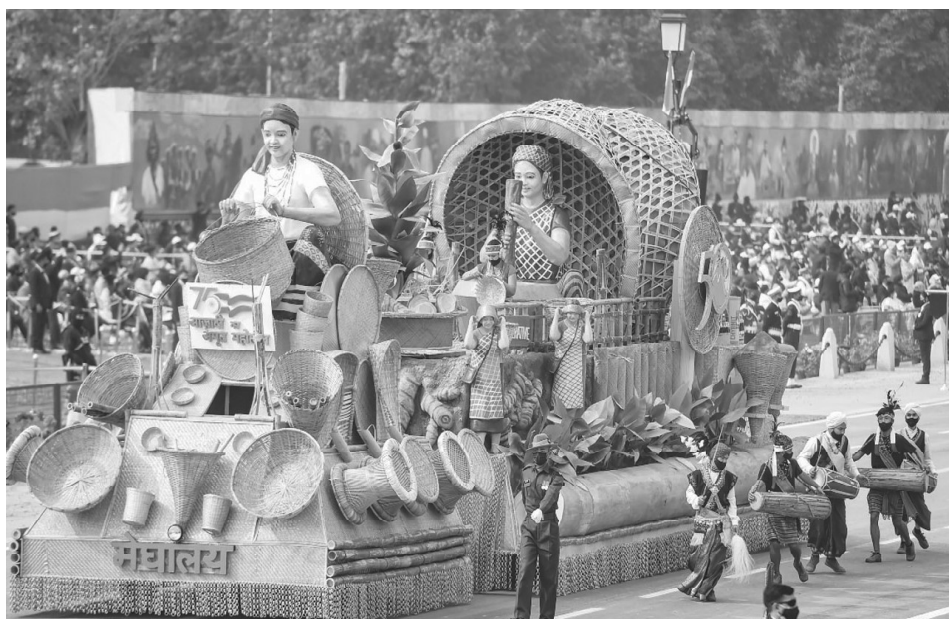
The theme of the tableau of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship was 'National Education Policy'.

The tableau of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, on the other hand, was based on the theme 'Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik'.

"The Indian Navy marching contingent has been adjudged as the best marching contingent among the three services," the defence ministry said.

It may be mentioned that a total of 12 states and union territories had participated in the Republic Day parade on January 26.

For the first time, the general public was invited to vote for the best marching contingents and best tableaux in the popular choice category through the MyGov platform. The online poll was conducted between January 25 and 31.



Nalanda University

Prasanta Kumar kalita

(Translated into English from original Assamese by Arunabh Barman)

(Contd. from Previous Issue)

Library System:

The authorities at Nalanda University felt that there was no difference between a monastery without a library and a fort without weapons. There is no difference between a fort without weapons and an University without a library meant to teach thousands of monks and students studying in different disciplines. The university authorities set up a state-of-the-art library for thousands of Bhikkhu students and hundreds of teachers studying in various disciplines. The main reason behind Chinese scholars spending months in Nalanda was to get education as well as to copy the Holy Scriptures and other Buddhist texts. During his stay in Nalanda, I-tsing produced five hundred copies of Sanskrit texts containing five lakh verses. The area where the book was kept was called Dharma-ganj or the King of Religions (Mart of Religion). There were three furnished Library buildings called Ratnasagar, Ratnadadhi and Ratnaranjika. It had a Nine-mansion building where the most valuable books were preserved. The number of preserved books is said to have been more than nine million.

Education system:

It has already been said that out of more than five thousand Bhikkhu students, about one thousand were able to explain thirty different sutras and ten were able to explain fifty sutras. From this it can be estimated that one thousand teachers took charge of more than five thousand students. For whatever reason, the number of students was not likely to exceed ten thousand.

In other words, for about ten thousand monk students, it was certain that there would have been ten thousand or less students under one thousand

teachers. This is why it was possible for each teacher to pay personal attention to each student and this is said to have greatly improved the quality of education. At least 100 lectures were held daily in eight large auditoriums and 30 lectures halls. Scholarly teachers were treated with the utmost respect and separate seats were provided for them. The teachers were skilled in the art of teaching and by doing so they gained the highest esteem in the contemporary society. I-Shing gratefully admits, "I have been very glad that I had an opportunity of acquiring knowledge personally from them, which I would otherwise have never possible." (Page No.185, A Record of the Buddhist Religion, I-tsing, 1896)".

"The worship can only take place separately, as most convenient to each member. Thus, it is customary to send out, every day, one presenter (one teacher who takes the lead in chanting) to go round from place to place chanting hymns, being preceded by monastic lay servant and children carrying with them incense and flowers." (Page No.154, A Record of the Buddhist Religion as practiced in India and the Malay Archipelago by I-tsing, 1896)"

"A pure man carries a chair and utensils when a priest goes to a reception; he carries away the remnant of the food eaten by a priest; he cultivates the field for the church; the time-drum is beaten by him, but he is not allowed to strike the going announcing the beginning of a service." (Page No.154-155, A Record of the Buddhist Religion as practiced in India and the Malay Archipelago by I-tsing, 1896)".

Curriculum:

The curriculum of Nalanda University was very comprehensive and liberal. Although the entire administrative apparatus was in the hands of the

Mahayana sects of Buddhism, it became imperative to study the Pali language as all the writings of the rival Hinayana sects were written in Pali. The writings of famous Mahayana scholars like Nagarjuna, Basubandhu, Asanga and Dharmakriti were of special importance. However, it should not be inferred from the above that the university curriculum was communal or neglected the study of Hindu literature. This is because the first thing to note is that the grammar, logic and literature of Hindus and Buddhists were universal. Secondly, the religions and philosophies of Buddhism and Hinduism are so closely intertwined that it is not only impossible for aspiring logicians to look at it differently, but also for those who do not like it sincerely. This has been said about, “Buddhists themselves inform us that the three Vedas, Vedanta and Samkhya Philosophy were taught at the University along with ‘miscellaneous works’. The later expression probably included the study of subjects like Dharmasatra (sacred law), Puranas, Astronomy, Astrology etc, which were very important for the lay Hindu and Buddhist students.” (Page No.121, Education in Ancient India by A.S. Altekar, 1896)”. In addition to this, the study of medicine mentioned in the sacred scriptures of Buddhism was prevalent here.

University Administration:

The abbot was the head of the general administration. Abbots are usually selected by the members of the association on the basis of character, erudition and seniority. A monk who had traveled from Jalalabad to Bihar in the 9th century was selected as the abbot. From this, it is evident that whether he was a local or not, whether he was on duty at the educational institution or not was not a matter to be considered. The abbot was assisted by two Councils, one academic and the other administrative. The Academic Council oversaw the enrollment, curriculum development and teacher assignment.

This council oversaw the work of Library also. Prior to the invention of the printing press, Libraries had to oversee the publication of books. Requests for copies of texts from outsiders who want to

republish damaged ancient texts were also under the responsibility of Libraries. Teachers and students, sometimes office assistants, were also responsible for the transcripts. Teachers and students, sometimes office assistants, were also responsible for the transcripts.

Responsibilities of the Governing Body were to overseeing the administration and finance departments of the entire university. Construction and repair of buildings, supply and distribution of food, clothing and medicine, allotment of dormitory rooms, monastery related activities from its own premises were under the jurisdiction of this council. The main responsibility was to strengthen the finance department by collecting taxes from donations or property bonds. Administrative transaction documents of the donated villages were recovered during the excavation. It was not easy for a university like Nalanda to strength the finance department with the help of donations from almost two hundred villages. Farming fields required a large number of workers to be provided to individuals through contracts, to harvest and store the produce, and to distribute them on time. The task of providing free meals to more than five thousand monk students was extremely complicated. Such a task would have been impossible without royal patronage.

Foreign aid

Nalanda was famous as an educational center till the end of the twelfth century. Eighth-century inscriptions mention that the scholarly work of all Nalanda scholars was highly praised. The university gained international fame in the ninth century. Balaputra, the king of Java and Sumatra, was so impressed by its success that he not only built a monastery here but also inspired his friend King Devpalak of Bengal, who donated five villages to support it. A portion of this donation was reserved for the work of transcribing texts in the library of the University (Dharmaratnasya lekhanartham).

Extension of work in Tibet

Nalanda scholars have played an active role in the propagation of Buddhism and culture in Tibet

since the 8th century. For this, a program to teach Tibetan language was taken in Nalanda. Monk Chandragomin, who rose to prominence through Nalanda University in the 8th century, was a pioneer in this field. Many of his works were translated into Tibetan; in fact many top students were employed in this work.

In 649 AD, another monk and scholar from Nalanda, Shantarakshit, was invited to Tibet to preach Buddhism by a king named Khri-Sron-Deutsan. In Tibet, he was given a royal reception and the first monastery in Tibet was built under his supervision. He was the abbot of the monastery at the time of his death in 62 AD, and was involved in the propagation of Buddhism. He got a lot of help in this field from a Kashmiri monk named Padmasambhava who was educated in Nalanda. Nalanda's contribution to the field of intellectuals and literature has been continuous and there is evidence of preservation and copying of texts till the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Repression by Vikramshila University

The rulers of the Pala dynasty often appointed all the professors of Bikramshila University to look after the affairs of Nalanda. The newly established Vikramshila University has been reserved for the lion's share of royal patronage since the eleventh century. This led to the decline of Nalanda University during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. According to Tibetan sources, Tantric thought was introduced in Buddhism at that time, which gradually slowed down the study of serious thought. Clear evidence of this is certainly not possible.

The destruction of the university

Nalanda is said to have been completely destroyed by the Muslim invaders Bakhtiar Khilji towards the end of the twelfth century. The buildings were set on fire and all the Monks were killed. The invaluable library of the university was on fire. "The Muslim chronicler tells us that the onslaught of Bakhtiyar Khilji was so severe and so thorough that the monks (Grahmanas with shaven heads) were killed, one and all, so much so, that there was no one left to explain

the content of books that the victor found at the place." (Page No.207, The University of Nalanda by H.S. Sankalia,1934)"

The myth of the destruction of Nalanda is actually the mythology of Buddhism in its birthplace. In addition to the destruction of Nalanda University by Muslim invaders, many other factors contributed to the fall of Nalanda.

King Ashoka's son and heir was a devout Jain. Pusyamitra, who overthrew the Mauryan Empire, was the first person to assassinate a believer in Gautama Buddha. Buddhism was re-established in Kanishka's hands as a monarchy, although he was more attached to his old beliefs. Although the Guptas paid close attention to Buddhism, they never drew attention to it. Instead, they preferred to refer themselves as 'Parama Bhagavatas', meaning devotees of Basudev. Buddhism, which suffered heavy losses at the hands of Mihirkul, flourished during the reign of Harshavardhana. However, in some cases, Harshavardhana's patronage was similar to that of Kanishka. Buddhism has never been able to establish its own monopoly. In addition, Buddhism did not receive royal patronage for long days in a serial manner.

2. It is not clear how and what kind of religious trend really prevailed during the rise of the Pala dynasty in Bengal after the political vacuum was created for the departure of Harshavardhana. The decline that had already begun was deepening in the hands of the Islamic invaders.

3. The decline of royal patronage is not the only reason for the decline of Buddhism. Other reasons for this include (Sarvam Dukkham, Sarvam Anityam, Sarvam Anatmyam). There were primary and fundamental inconsistencies, such as the utterly depressing outlook on life and the inability to establish any form of the Buddha, as in the case of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The general public was more concerned with Tantric beliefs than with spiritual ones. In other words, when a person standing on the roof of a house is told that life is full of unadulterated filth and that nirvana or liberation

is not an object to be gained in single day, rather it is a life-long pursuit. At that time, the interest of people seeking for Buddhism became less. At a time when other religions were strongly preaching against Buddhism and 'Selfishness' was a matter of fact that could be easily accepted for human life. At that point, it was not possible for the wise to try to attract the masses to Buddhism through the difficult subject of despair

From birth, though divided into different philosophies, the commentators of Buddhism have been fighting for a long time to remove its faults and shortcomings. Whether educated or uneducated, they resorted to various methods to attract everyone. This has led to the emergence of new, somewhat different ideologies, such as nihilism, algebraism, and other philosophies.

4. When it was seen that such efforts did not work, Tantricism was introduced. Vajrayana, Sahajayana, etc. played a role as the children of Tantricism. The creators of this religion have been able to quench the thirst of the people for idolatry, mysticism, superstition, intimidation and bizarre ideas, but they had not been able to control it. There was a terrible exaggeration in the rules and regulations. All of this led to the destruction of Buddhism's courage, power and vitality. For the above reasons, Buddhism has to lose its moral dignity in the intellectual arena though it has become a universal religion.

5. From the 7th century onwards, the decline of Buddhism began slowly. Buddhism faced a terrible philosophical onslaught as moral decay led to internal strife. Kumarilai (Kumarila Bhatt) in the 8th century and Sankara (Sankaracharya) in the 9th century, smashed the gigantic and impenetrable fortress of the omnipotent, the scientist and all others. They have shown and proved the futility and meaninglessness of the contradictory statements about the ephemerality of Buddhism.

Attacks by foreign enemies:

The story of the destruction of Nalanda is narrated by archaeologists as follows- "it is related

that this Muhammad Bakhtiyar was a Khilji, of Ghor, of the province of Garmsir. He was a very smart, enterprising, bold, courageous, wise, and experienced man. He left his tribe and came to the Court of Sultan Mu'izzu-d din, at Ghaznin, and was placed in the diwan-I'arz (office for petitions), but as the chief of that department was not satisfied with him he was dismissed; and proceeded from Ghaznin to Hindustan. Being a bold and enterprising man, he used to make incursions into the districts of Munir (Monghir), and Behar, and bring away much plunder, until in this manner he obtained plenty of horses, arms, and men. The fame of his bravery and of his plundering raids spread abroad, and a body of Khiljis joined him from Hindustan. His exploits were reported to sultan Kutu-d din, and he sent him a dress and showed him great honour. Being thus encouraged, he led his army to Behar and ravaged it. In this manner he continued for a year or two to plunder the neighborhood, and at last prepared to invade the country.

It is said by credible persons that he went to the gate of the fort of Behar (Vihar) with only two hundred horses, and began the war by taking the enemy unawares. In the service of Bakhtiyar there were two brothers of great intelligence. One of them was named Nizamu-d din at Lakhnauti in the year 641 H. (1243 A.D) and heard the following story from him. When Bakhtiyar reached the gate of the fort, and the fighting began, these two wise brothers were active in that army of heroes. Muhammad Bakhtiyar with great vigour and audacity rushed in at the gate of the fort and gained possession of the place. Great plunder fell into the hands of the victors. Most of the inhabitants of the place were Brahmins with shaven heads. They were put to death. Large numbers of books were found there, and when the Muhammadans saw them, they called for some persons to explain their contents, but all the men had been killed. It was discovered that the whole fort and city was a place of study (Madrasa). In the Hindi language the word Behar (Vihar) means a college. (Page No.305-306, The History of India as told by its own Historians, Vol. II, Edited by H.M.

Elliot, 1869)

“Needless to say, the description of the so called fort of Bihar refers to the capture and destruction of a Buddhist monastery.”(Page No.212, The University of Nalanda by H.D. Sankalia,1934)

There is no conclusive evidence that Mohammad Bakhtiyar Khilji destroyed Nalanda in 1199 AD. But the details of the ravage suggest that Nalanda bears a striking resemblance to the Bihar mentioned by Muslim historians. Some historians have suggested that the ruined monastery of Khilji was the Odantapuri monastery established at Rampal. but for the reasons mentioned below, it can be called Nalanda.

(1) According to the account of Hiuen Chang, Nalanda was fortified for its large oak wall, which was in front of the fort, like Bikramshila and Odantapuri.

(2) Nalanda had a rich library with innumerable books.

(3) Moreover, from the side of antiquity and because of its large size, there is every reason to think that it is rich and should be chosen as a target of attack.

The Nalanda Destruction Period:

Different historians have different views on Nalanda's destruction Period, According to Samaddar, Nalanda was destroyed in 1199 AD. “Magadha was attacked after the eightieth year of Laksmana Sen regime. As the Laksmana era had its commencement in 1119, the date of the conquest falls in 1199. That was the year of the destruction of all the Buddhistic places of learning in Bihar, Nalanda, Vikramasiia and Odandapura. The colophan of Panchakara in the library of the University of Cambridge contains the fact that Odandapura was destroyed in the thirty-eighth regnal year of Govindapaladeva. As Govindaparladeva's accession dates from 1161 A.D.),the date of the destruction of these monasteries comes to 1199 (A.D).”(Page No.132, The Glories of Magadha by J.N. Samaddar,1922)

(2) According to Sankaliya, the destruction of Nalanda took place in 1205 or 1206 AD.

“From the study of Tabakat-I Nasari, we find that Bakhtiyar went to Sultan kutbuddin to pay him his respects after the conquest of Bihar. And Kutbuddin was made a Sultan after the death of Sultan Ghazi by Sultan Ghiyasuddin. And after becoming a Sultan, in 1205 A.D, he marched to Lahore, while Bakhtiyar seems to have visited him after Kutbuddin was well-established as a Sultan on the throne of Delhi. Secondly, we learn that kutbuddin died in 607 H, i.e.1210 (A.D.), and the chronicler further tells us that he wore the crown for more than 4 Years, that is, from about A.D. 1205, which exactly synchrones with his march upon Lahore in 1205 A.D. as a Sultan. Kutbuddin thus seems to have had the Sultanate in or about 1205 A.D.,” (Page No.213-214, The University of Nalanda by H.D. Sankalia, 1934)

From all the above mentioned facts it can be deduced that the invasion of all the Muslims was the main reason for the destruction of Nalanda. The fire at Nalanda Library was said to have been burning for three months after the attack. That Nalanda University, with its thirty-three classrooms, nine million books and other valuable resources, was wiped out and a long line of knowledge of Indians came to an end.

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Oriah festival of Wancho Community

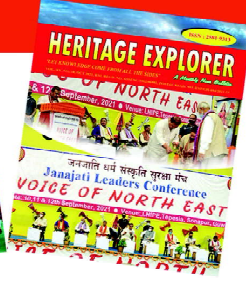
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