

Manipur Celebrates its New Year "Cheiraoba"

Imphal, April 4 : Manipur's new year "Cheiraoba" was celebrated throughout the state today with people offering prayers and organising special feasts. Chief Minister O Ibobi Singh in his message to the people said, "Let us resolve to set new goals and strive for individual as well as collective wellbeing." The CM appealed to the people to work for unity and dedicate themselves to make Manipur a more peaceful and prosperous state.

Governor Gurbachan Jagat of the state also expressed hope that the New Year would usher in an era of peace, prosperity and progress and usher in peaceful co-existence among all sections of the people. Thousands thronged the Imphal market complex to buy food articles amidst heavy security deployment in the state to prevent any untoward incident, official sources said. Introduction To Cheiraoba Festival

On the lap of Himalaya lies a picturesque state named Manipur. This state is famous for its scenic beauty, silent hills and green vegetation. The state is an isolated land from the main land yet it bears a rich heritage and culture. Manipur, the small state in north eastern part of India is the store house natural resources. The solitary hills of Himalaya, the deep gorge and the innocent people make a perfect combination as a sacred spot. In Manipur you will surely get impressed with their traditional customs and heritage which still shows their individuality and uniqueness.

Description of Cheiraoba Festival:

Manipur is a small hilly state with a unique customs. Cheiraoba Festival is the celebration of New Year festival in Manipur. This is a sacred festival of Manipur when all the people welcome the new year grandly. The locals clean their houses and decorate them. The local deity is worshipped and relatives visit one another's place. Exchange of gifts and ideas take place. This festival is only celebrated by all people in Manipur and make the occasion a grand one. On the very day the local climb the nearest hill tops which signifies the rise of human civilization in greater heights in every sphere.



Time For Celebration of Cheiraoba Festival:

Cheiraoba Festival takes place in the month of April. The new year is received with great ideas and traditional customs. The unique tradition and customs are still exists in the society.

One of the major festivals of Manipur, Cheiraoba is celebrated with great enthusiasm and fervor to mark the beginning of a new year. Observed in the month of April, the local inhabitants of Manipur follow strict religious rituals and traditional cultures of the region during the festival of Cheiraoba. A grand feast, comprising of several local delicacies, is prepared to observe the special occasion. Representing the religious fervor of the place, the native population worships their local deities and seeks divine blessing and eternal happiness on the special festive occasion of Cheiraoba.

An integral part of the cultural ancestry and religious heritage of Manipur, the local inhabitants still follow the age old custom of climbing the nearby mountain ranges of the area with the belief that this would help them to reach the zenith of success in their daily affairs. A celebration of joy, mirth and merry making, the local population starts preparing for this grand religious festival on a large scale by white washing and cleaning their houses.

The Cheiraoba festival of Manipur offers the inhabitants of the state with a platform to meet their family members and renew ties with old friends. The festival of Cheiraoba fills the air with joy and mirth and relieves the local population from the stress and strains of daily life. A unique way to begin their New Year, Cheiraoba ushers in prosperity, and peace to the native population of Manipur.

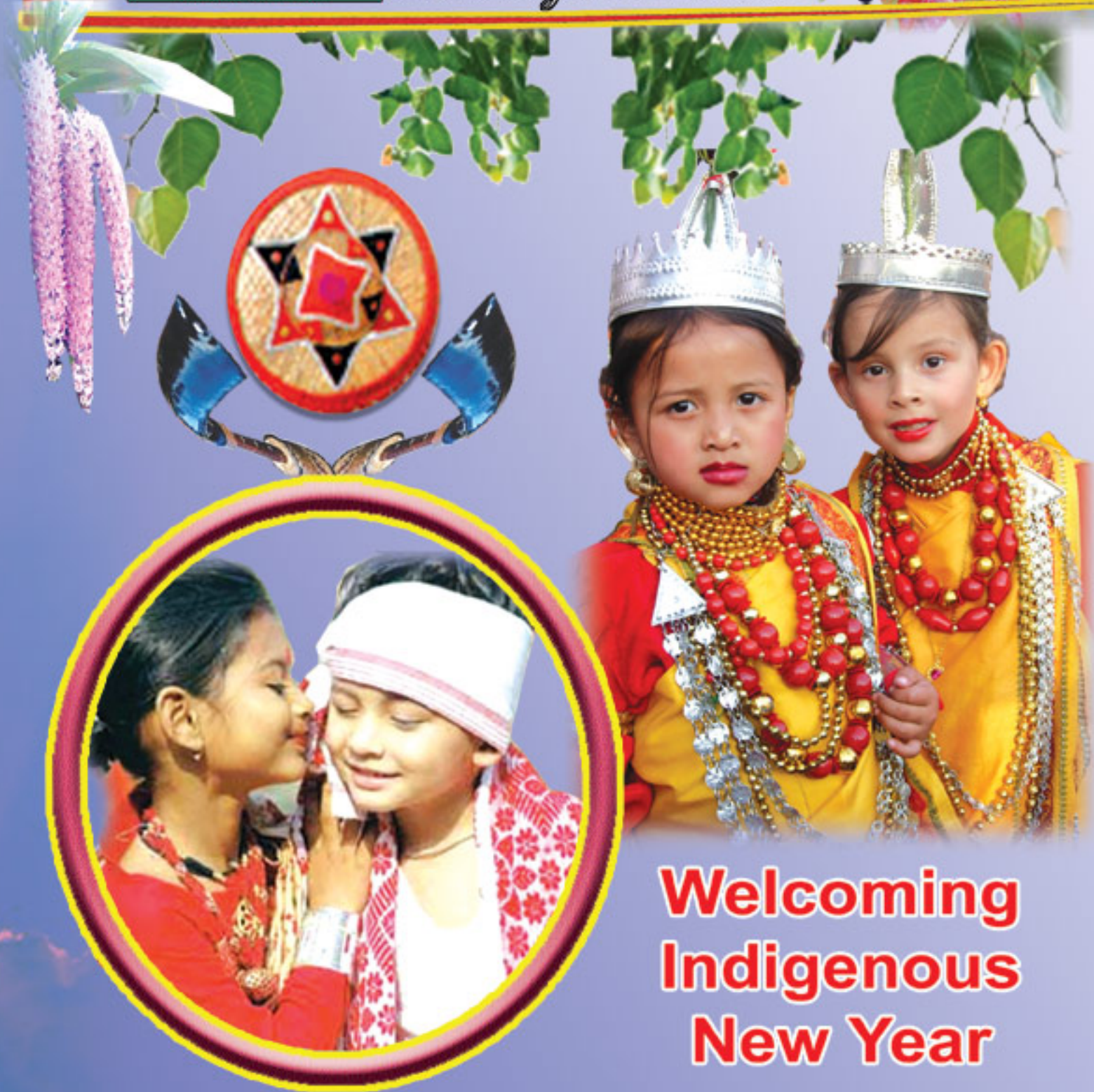
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Articles on Eternal Faith and Culture and different Socio-Cultural movements in Northeast are invited for publication.

The Shad Suk Mynsiem in Meghalaya

Gladdening the hearts of countless inhabitants, the traditional thanksgiving dance of the Khasi community is going to celebrate its 100th year at the Weiking ground, Shillong.

The state of Meghalaya is endowed with many spectacular festivals which are characterized by entertaining dance performances, multi-colored robes that are enriched with the charms of a rainbow and soul-stirring music. Among these, Shad Suk Mynsiem is one of the most desired and sought-after events and important festivals of the Khasis.

It is an annual thanks giving dance festival, when people of the Khasis tribes offer prayer to God for the bumper harvest. Men and women, dressed in traditional fineries dance along with the beats of drums and pipes called tangmuri, the queen of musical instruments. The festival lasts for three days.

Shad Suk Mynsiem literally means 'The Dance of Joyful Heart' if roughly translated. The Khasis situated in Meghalaya constitute the main community of people who take part in this delectable festival. Shad Suk Mynsiem of Meghalaya is principally celebrated in the months of April every year. The magniloquent knoll infested locale of Shillong hosts this so-called "Dance of Contentment". Shad Suk Mynsiem in Meghalaya is characterized by the locals who perform a dance of gratitude to mark the onset of the sowing season and bid farewell to the harvest season.

The Shad Suk Mynsiem festival of Meghalaya is celebrated over a period of three days. The female performers draped in traditional attire accompanied by the men equally well-dressed execute the Shad Suk Mynsiem dance with utmost sincerity and dedication. To add a distinctive flavor of jubilation and elation, drums, flutes and pipes known as 'Tangmuri' are also played.

The Shad Suk Mynsiem in Meghalaya has another significance in terms of tradition. The eternal fertility cult is represented through this celebration. The women play the part of dual carriers of seed and fruits whereas the men act as the harvesters. All in all, this festival is marked by the contending feeling of thankfulness and appreciation and holds a special position in the hearts of the Khasis of Meghalaya.

Church's Struggle in Presenting Christ as the "Unique and only Savior"

- Francis Rodrigues,

Mangalore, January 26, 2011: Indian theologians and bishops have told a Vatican-sponsored colloquium about the Church's struggle in presenting Christ as the "unique and only savior" in a multi-religious context.

A team from the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith led by its prefect Cardinal William Levada met with a group of theologians and bishops of India Jan. 16-19 in Bangalore.

Cardinal Oswald Gracias, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI), apprised about the struggles of the Indian Church in a paper.

Twenty-six theologians attended the program where 29 Indian bishops and the six-member CDF team were present.

Cardinal Gracias explained the religious, social, cultural and economic situation of India where Christians form only 2.3 percent of 1.2 billion Indians.

It is a "struggle" to proclaim Christ meaningfully before followers of other religions and tribal religions so that they "understand, accept and follow Jesus," the Indian Church leader said.

Cardinal Gracias urged the Vatican to appreciate and encourage the work of theologians to communicate Christ to those "who have a different world-view, religious and philosophical convictions from that of the traditional Christian world-view."

Jesuit theologian Father Errol D'Lima, in his paper, explained there could not be universal understanding of doing theology because of the challenge of pluralism.

He stressed the need to appreciate Christian traditions, proclaiming the Christian message in the civic life and the need for accelerating dialogue as understood by Vatican II.

Another Jesuit theologian Father Michael Amaladoss in his paper said since "the Church is not bound to any particular culture it can draw from cultures elements compatible with its faith."

His paper pointed out that all theology is

contextual and "this is also true of Indian Christian theology."

Carmelite of Mary Immaculate Father Sebastian Athappilly emphasized the need of proclaiming Jesus Christ as the unique and universal savior.

He noted that some seemed to have watered down this "uniqueness of Jesus Christ" in the context of religious pluralism. However, he did not explain how this uniqueness of Christ could be communicated in situations that question this position.

Salesian Father Dominic Veliath, a theologian, suggested the Church's attitude and lifestyle must reflect the teachings of Christ to communicate Christ.

Bishop Thomas Dabre of Pune, who heads the CBCI's Doctrine and Theology Commission, wants theologians to consider the "faith of the entire people of God" in doing theology.

Archbishop Luis Ladaria, CDF secretary, in his paper asked theologians to "affirm the faith of the Church rather than personal opinions."

However, mere repetition of what the Church teaches does not offer a service to the Church, he explained. The theologian, according to him, is called to have "a humble audacity at the same time openness to objective discussion, fraternal dialogue and readiness to modify one's own opinions."

A paper also was presented reflecting on a 1989 CDF letter: On Some Aspect of Christian Meditation (Orationis Formas)

While asserting aspects of Christian meditation, the CDF had criticized some eastern forms of meditations as "erroneous ways of praying."

Father Mathew Vellanickal in his paper, "Orationis Formas in an Indian Context" said the self-redemption theories propounded by some types of Eastern meditation techniques were incompatible with the Catholic faith.

Indian Theologian Association president Father Jacob Parappally told ucanews.com that "lively exchange of views and opinions" followed presentation of each paper.

"There was an atmosphere of cordiality, openness and mutual respect in seeking the truth together," he added.

<http://www.ucanews.com/2011/01/26/indian-theologians-discuss-uniqueness-of-christ/>