



The Garos of Meghalaya

The Garos are the janajati of Meghalaya and also residing in the neighboring areas of Bangladesh, who call themselves A'chik Mande (literally "hill people," from a'chik "hill" + mande "people") or simply A'chik or Mande. They are the second-largest tribe in Meghalaya after the Khasi and comprise about a third of the total population. The religion of the Garo people is popularly known as "Sangsarik".



Heritage Explorer

LET KNOWLEDGE COME FROM ALL THE SIDES
VOL. XI, NO. 01, January 2012

A Monthly News Bulletin



Chief Military Scientist V.K. Saraswat and Programme Director, AGNI missile, Avinash Chander pose with a model of the Agni missile during a press conference in New Delhi



The Krishna Chandra Gandhi Award, 2011, was given away to Arnab Hajong



With Best Wishes to the all readers of Heritage Explorer for the coming Bhogali Bihu



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Subscription may be sent by M.O. to :

Circulation Manager
Heritage Explorer

Near Barowari Mandir
H.No.30, F.C.Road
Uzan Bazar, Guwahati-781001

(Mention Pin Code No. along with full postal address)

**Bank A/c : Heritage Foundation,
No. 3213 0001 0009 3631 at PNB, Guwahati**

₹ 60/- For 1 Year
₹ 120/- For 2 Year
₹ 300/- For 5 Year

Edited by : Amarendra Brahma, C/o. Heritage Foundation, K.B.Road, Paltan Bazar, Guwahati-781008, Published & Printed by : Narayan Dev Sarma on behalf of Heritage Foundation, K.B.Road, Paltan Bazar, Guwahati-781008, Published at: Heritage Foundation, K.B. Road, Paltan Bazar, Guwahati - 781008 (Assam). e-mail: ourheritage123@yahoo.com, Printed at: Arindam Offset & Imaging Systems, Rajgarh, Guwahati- 781 003 (Assam)

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

568 UPDS Cadres Lay Down Arms

- Sanjoy Ray

DIPHU (KARBI ANGLONG), Dec 14 - Marking an end to its arms movement, the United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS) today laid down arms, vowing to contribute towards the development and peace of Karbi Anglong through political activism.

Having already made its political pursuits clear, a total of 568 members of the outfit, including 14 from the central executive committee, took part in the arms laying ceremony organised at the KASA Stadium here in the presence of Assam DGP Sankar Barua, General Officer Commanding, 4 Corps, Shakti Gurung, ADGP Khagen Sarma and Deputy Commissioner of Karbi Anglong Rakesh Kumar, among others.

The ceremony was also attended by a cross-section of people from the hill district, which turned up at the venue in large numbers.

The militant outfit, which inked the ceasefire pact with the Government of India in August 2002, declared itself disbanded taking off the camouflage fatigues later in the day to be replaced by a civil outfit.

The cache of arms and ammunition that was laid down included 85 rifles of AK series, 40 MM UBGL and five M 16 rifles, beside others.

Addressing the people of Karbi Anglong after formally pledging to abjure violence, Longsodar Senar, chairperson, UPDS, said, "It is a beginning of a new era for the people of Karbi Anglong. We are now part of a process that seeks peace and social harmony. We had our share of achievements and disappointments during our armed struggle and there is no denying that people had suffered directly or indirectly during the course of our movement. I, on behalf of the outfit, apologise for that."

"I also want to say that the supreme sacrifice made by our cadres will not go in vain. Let us also vow that we will never allow petty ambitions and vested interests to be a stumbling block in the process of peace and development. Let us all make Karbi Anglong and our movement a success story," Senar said.

Earlier, general secretary, of UPDS, Haren Singh Bey, while talking to reporters, said that if things went as planned, Karbi Anglong would stand at par with other districts of the State in terms of development.

"Early implementation of the clauses of the Memorandum of Settlement by the Centre and the State will be a key," Bey asserted, adding the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council election scheduled for January next year would mark the beginning of their entry in the political arena.

Shakti Gurung, GOC, 4 Corps, terming the day as historic, expressed his gratitude to the UPDS for joining the mainstream.

He also renewed his appeal to the KLNLF and the KPLT to abjure violence and contribute towards restoration of peace and development in the hill district.

Assam DGP Sankar Barua, too, reiterated the appeal and urged the other active militant outfits of the State to come to the negotiation table.

"Mizoram could be an example to follow. Come to the mainstream and be a part of the social, political and economic leadership," said Barua.

ADGP (Special Branch) Khagen Sarma also addressed the gathering.

A SARDARJI Story with a Difference and Meaning

It's easy to joke on a Sardar, but It's too difficult to be a Sardar" I was standing at Jalandhar station when my attention went towards a Sikh youth standing near me wearing a Black turban having a long beard and wearing a kirpan over his shirt looking similar to a terrorist. After a while, one local train arrived, which was totally packed. The Sikh youth tried to alight the train but failed to do so. Just then a voice was heard from the back coach 'Sardarji Barah Baj gaye' (Sir it's 12 o'clock!) The Sikh youth looked over at that voice maker who was a young Mischievous type of person and instead of showing any anger smiled at him. The smile was so enigmatic that it seemed as if there was some truth behind it. Not able to resist my temptation, I walked towards him and asked him why he smiled at the person who teased him. The Sikh youth replied, 'He was not teasing me but was asking for my Help' . I was surprised with these words and he told me that there was a big history behind that which one should know. I was eager to know the History and the Sikh youth narrated: During 17th Century, when Hindustan was ruled by Mughals, all the Hindu people were humiliated and were treated like animals. Mughals treated the Hindu women as their own property and were forcing all Hindus to accept Islam and even used to kill the people if they were refusing to accept. That time, our ninth Guru, Sri Guru Teg Bahadarji came forward, in response to a request of some Kashmir Pandits to fight against all these cruel activities. Guruji told the Mughal emperor that if he could succeed in converting him to Islam, all the Hindus would accept the same.

But, if he failed, he should stop all those activities . The Mughal emperor happily agreed to that but even after lots of torture to Guruji and his fellow members he failed to convert him to Islam and Guruji along with his other four fellow members, were tortured and sacrificed their lives in Chandni Chowk. Since the Mughals were unable to convert them to Islam they were assassinated. Thus Guruji sacrificed his life for the protection of Hindu religion. Can anybody lay down his life and that too for the protection of another religion? This

is the reason he is still remembered as "Hind Ki Chaddar", shield of India . For the sake of whom he had sacrificed his life; none of the them came forward to lift his body, fearing that they would also be assassinated. Seeing this incident our 10th Gurujil , Sri Guru Gobind Singhji (Son of Guru Teg Bahadarji) founder of khalsa made a resolution that he would convert his followers to such human beings who would not be able to hide themselves and could be easily located in thousands.

At the start, the Sikhs were very few in numbers as they were fighting against the Mughal emperors. At that time, Nadir Shah raided Delhi in the year 1739 and looted Hindustan and was carrying lot of Hindustan treasures and nearly 2200 Hindu women along with him. The news spread like a fire and was heard by Sardar Jassa Singh who was the Commander of the Sikh army at that time. He decided to attack Nadir Shah's Kafila on the same midnight. He did so and rescued all the Hindu women and they were safely sent to their homes.

It didn't happen only once but thereafter whenever any Abdaalis or Iranis had attacked and looted Hindustan and were trying to carry the treasures and Hindu women along with them for selling them in Abdal markets, the Sikh army although fewer in numbers but were brave hearted and attacked them at midnight, 12 O'clock and rescued women. After that time when there occurred a similar incidence, people started to contact the Sikh army for their help and Sikhs used to attack the raider's at Midnight, 12 O'clock. Nowadays, these "smart people" have spread these words that at 12 O'clock, the Sikhs go out of their senses. This historic fact was the reason which made me smile at that person as I thought that his Mother or Sister would be in trouble! And wants my help and was reminding me by saying 'Sardarji Barah Baj Gaye' Plz do forward this mail to all ur friends so they can know about sikh history & its a humble appeal.

And next time you remind a sardar it's 12 - remember it's distress call to rescue your mom n sis' ??