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Rio Urges Nagas to Preserve Identity Through Culture

Kohima, Nov 14: Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio has urged the Naga tribes to preserve their traditional culture, which can safeguard their ethnic identity in the world.

Official sources here today said, Rio attended the Ahuna festival-cum-road show of the Sumi tribe at Zunheboto as the chief guest and said the State Government has organized the road shows for the people of the grass-root level, the Self-Help Groups (SHG) to witness the government's developmental activities.

He said Nagas have very rich and strong culture, which should not be wear away by other influences and should be well preserved for the identity of the tribes. In view of the rich culture, the Nagaland Cabinet of Ministers have declared Nagaland as the "Land of Festivals" and the Hornbill festival as the "Festival of the Festivals."

He also appreciated the Tribal Hohos, civil societies, church leaders and militants for their commitment in maintaining peace and said, "If there is peace, people can harvest the fruit of developments. We all have to come together and preserve peace." Rajya Sabha member from Nagaland Khekiho Zhimomi and host of Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, bureaucrats were also present in the function. A grand cultural show of the Sumi and other tribes were also exhibited during the day. (*The Sentinel – 15.11.09*)

Jehadi Activity in NE at Nascent Stage: I B

Shillong, Oct 31 - The Jehadi 'footprint' in the Northeast was in the elementary stage, but it could mature in future, a top IB official said today, reports PTI.

"There are no major footprints of jehadi terrorism in the north-eastern region," Additional Director of Intelligence Bureau, RN Ravi said. "You have radical elements in the neighborhood. Again, you have some people in the North-East who are disgruntled against the state and the system. There is a convergence between the two," Ravi told reporters after the conclusion of the North-East DGPs' conference here.

The convergence, he said, was at an elementary level, but it could mature soon.

"The security apparatus focusing its resources to preempt any situation which is pregnant with such possibility," the IB official said.

Meghalaya DGP, SB Kakati said though only some parts of Assam, Manipur and Nagaland were insurgency-affected, States like Meghalaya, which has an international border, were being used by militants as corridors.

He admitted that there were inputs of frequent movement of militants from Bangladesh through the porous Indo-Bangla border.

“We discussed the difficulties in deporting illegal migrants and devised some recommendations to be made to the Centre to remove the constraints,” Kakati said.

The two-day meet on NE’s internal security, which was attended by top officials from Army, Assam Rifles, CRPF, BSF, intelligence agencies and police chiefs of North Eastern states and West Bengal, also asked the Centre to channelise fast delivery of weapons to forces.

Stress was laid on better coordination among different security agencies and less deployment of paramilitary and central security forces.

(The Assam Tribune – 01.11.09)

Artisan Wants to Keep Alive Art of Sikkim’s Lepcha Tribe

Gangtok, Nov 1: Woven with bamboo, Sumuk Thyaptuk or the Lepcha hat, creates a fabulous piece of art that is laced with history and a deep cultural heritage associated with the indigenous Lepcha tribe.

An artisan Tengay Lepcha is using his expertise to keep this traditional art form alive. Only a few like Tengay have been able to master the art of weaving the Lepcha hat, which requires both hard work and patience.

The hat is adorned with a peacock feather and a replica of the Nambong Ong, a Sikkimese male bird known for its leadership qualities. It is held by a stick with a symbol of the sun and the moon, which bestows a sense of authority to the one wearing the hat. It is worn by all Lepcha males and the Boomthing or the Lepcha high priest during religious gatherings and festivals.

“I am trying my best to preserve this art which I learnt from my guru. This is an effort to save the old tradition of making a Lepcha hat. I want to keep the art of making the hat alive so that it does not die out,” said Tengay Lepcha.

To add beauty to the hat, a granite stone is also placed that shines on a sunny day. It is held up by a local Totala flower, a medicinal plant and used with Kawai leaves to protect it from rain. It is mainly woven out of ‘Payoung’ or ‘Gopey’ bamboo sliced into fine strings to weave the design.

The hat comes in single and double size, and usually takes a month and half to make. Working with the Directorate of Handloom and Handicraft in North Sikkim, Tengay Lepcha teaches Lepcha youth.

“I sell a single design cap for Rs.3,000 to 3,500 and the double cap for Rs.5,000, as it takes a lot of hard work and takes many days to complete. I tell my village people that we should learn our art and as long as I am alive I will try and teach the art form so that Lepcha art survives with the passage of time,” said Tengay Lepcha. The modern day Lepcha hat is made of pre-dyed bamboo with added colours like maroon and green. Tengay’s effort is indeed praiseworthy.

(The Sentinel – 02.11.09)

Cultural Troupe from Myanmar to Perform in NE

Imphal, Nov 12: A 20- member cultural troupe from Myanmar will arrive in Kolkata from Yangon on November 27 to present their programmes at Kohima, Imphal and Guwahati in the Northeastern region under the sponsorship of the DoNER. Ministry and the Embassy of Union of Myanmar, New Delhi.

Manipur Information centre (MIC) officials said the cultural troupe will reach Kohima on November 28 and stay for three days in Nagaland. During their visit to the State, they will perform in the inaugural function of Hornbill Festival at Kohima on December 1.

The Myanmarese troupe will reach Imphal the next day and exhibit their performance on December 3. The following day they will leave for Guwahati and present their dance items at the Assam capital on December 5. The cultural troupe will leave Kolkata for Yangon on December 7.

To work out the logistics for successful visit and performances of the cultural troupe from Myanmar to North-eastern States of Nagaland, Manipur and Assam, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of DoNER Jayashree Mukherjee yesterday convened a meeting at the Vigyan Bhavan Annexe, Maulana Azad Road in the national capital, MIC officials said. The meeting was attended by the representatives from Assam, Nagaland and Manipur, Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) and the Embassy of the Union of Myanmar, New Delhi. P Bharat Singh, Commissioner (Culture) from Manipur, also attended the meeting.

The meeting decided to appoint an interpreter for the Myanmar Cultural Troupe as standby by the respective State Governments. The States will also appoint one Liaison Officer for receiving them. The Chief Minister or Culture Minister of the States concerned will inaugurate the performance. The State in consultation with the Ministry of DoNER and North Eastern Council, will arrange transport, accommodation and security of the visiting troupe.

(The Sentinel – 13.11.09)

Tripura Wants Heritage Status for Unokoti Sculptures

Agartala, Nov 6: Soon after newly-appointed Tripura Governor Kamala expressed displeasure over poor maintenance of Unokoti sculptures in North Tripura, the State Government has sought intervention of Parliamentary Standing Committee (PSC) on to declare it as a National Heritage Site (NHS).

Tripura Tourism Development Corporation Ltd (TTDCL) officials here to- day said the State Government had sent the proposal to the Union Tourism Ministry as well as to PSC early this year but no response had come yet and they renewed the demand.

TTDCL has planned to go for further excavation to discover unexplored stone sculptures, rare rock-cut carved images of various Hindu gods and goddesses and scenes depicting the life of Lord Shiva but if the Archeological Survey of India(ASI) got involved the project it would get more importance.

“We received an out-lay of Rs.12 crore from the Union Ministry of Tourism to implement three projects to turn it into a major tourist destination,” the officials added.

ULFA Using China as Base ULFA Using China as Base

Guwahati, Nov 19: The outlawed United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) has set up bases in China and other foreign countries with the help of money extorted in the State, two senior ULFA leaders have told police interrogators.

This is the first time the ULFA, which is fighting to secede the oil rich Assam from India, has accepted setting up bases in China.

ULFA “foreign secretary” Sasha Choudhury and “finance secretary” Chitran Hazarika, now in police remand since November 6, told interrogations that apart from Bangladesh they have bases in China and other foreign countries.

“Crores of rupees have been extorted from (Assam) and transferred to (ULFA) leaders in Bangladesh, China and other countries where they have established hideouts,” the Special Operations Unit (SOU) of Assam Police quoted the two leaders as confessing. The interrogation report was submitted to the Chief Judicial Magistrate’s court in Guwahati on Tuesday, a copy of which is available with IANS.

“Several foreign agencies and NGOs provided logistic assistance to the ULFA leaders in foreign countries. They are trying to muster support from China, Bangladesh and other foreign countries for ULFA,” the interrogation report quoted the arrested men as saying.

(The Sentinel – 20.11.09)

Who Practices Yoga ?

1. Abdul Kareem Jabbar – Intl famous Basket ball Player – He now runs a Yoga institute
2. Dan Marino – American Footballer
3. Roy Keane and Ryan Giggs – players for Manchester United and Celtic
4. Evander Holyfield – Heavyweight Boxing Champion
5. Pete Sampras – Grand slam Tennis Champion
6. Venus and Serena Williams – Women’s tennis Champions
7. Ian Thorpe – Australian Olympic gold medalist in Swimming
8. New Zealand All Blacks
9. Indian National Cricket team
10. Quincy John – world famous Music composer (winner of maximum Grammy Award and Oscar Award for a Black American)
11. John Nash – Noble Prize winner
12. Madonna – Actress and Singer

13. Ricky Martin – Actor

14. Meg Ryan – Actor

(Courtesy: <http://www.vinyasaflovyoga.net/athletes.php>)