



**VOL. XVI, NO. 2**  
**FEBRUARY 2017**

[www.heritagefoundation.org.in](http://www.heritagefoundation.org.in)  
[ourheritage123@gmail.com](mailto:ourheritage123@gmail.com)

# HERITAGE EXPLORER

LET KNOWLEDGE COME FROM ALL THE SIDES

*A Monthly News Bulletin*

Pages 28, Size A4 RNI.Regd.No.ASSENG/2002/6981 Postal Regd.No.RNP/GH-094/2015-17



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

**"India was the motherland of our race**  
and Sanskrit the mother of Europe's languages.  
India was the mother of our philosophy,  
of much of our mathematics, of the ideals embodied in  
christianity... of self-government and democracy.  
In many ways, Mother India is the mother of us all."



- Will Durant  
- American Historian 1885-1981

Contents

Editorial	P-4	Remote Garo Hills Village Observes Geeta Utsav	P-17
Protecting Indigenous Heritage: The Empirical Reality	P-5	Constitutional Safeguards for 'Assamese People'	P-18
Monoliths, Mawbynna or Hinges of Nartiang, Wonder of India	P-6	Kalyan Ashram Assam Shine at the National Level Sports Meet	P-19
Holistic Empowerment of Women	P-9	Prof. Gangmumei Kamei No More	P-20
Sexual Perversion – A Modern-day Menace	P-10	Xattria Dance Institute in Mexico!	P-21
Muslim Orthodoxy vs Unwavering Commitment	P-11	Assam Governor, CM Felicitate Kid Footballer for Selection in	P-21
Cultivating Rural Technology for Development	P-12	Celebration of Nulding Kut, the Festival of Renewal of Life	P-22
<b>Pentecostal Christianity and the Need for Urgent Reforms</b>	<b>P-13</b>	India Successfully Test-fires Nuclear Capable Agni-V	P-25
The Chinese Dams on Brahmaputra: The Real Issues (Part II)	P-15	Chinese Media Warns India	P-25
		The Brahmin and the Crooks	P-26

**Subscription may be sent by M.O./ Cheque / Demand Draft to :**

**Heritage Foundation,**

# 30, F.C.Road, Uzan Bazar

Guwahati-781001, Ph: 0361- 2636365

e-mail: [ourheritage123@gmail.com](mailto:ourheritage123@gmail.com), Website: [www.heritagefoundation.org.in](http://www.heritagefoundation.org.in)

(Please Mention Pin Code No. along with your full postal address in BLOCK Letters)

*DDs/Cheques may please be drawn in favour of*

**Heritage Foundation.**

**Bank A/c** with PNB, Guwahati,

**A/c No.** 3213 0001 0009 3631

**IFSC :** PUNB0321300

**Or**

**Heritage Foundation.**

**Bank A/c** with SBI, Chenikuthi, Guwahati

**A/c No.** 3598 1047 410

**IFSC :** SBIN0007976

**Annual  
Subscription  
`100/-**

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@gmail.com](mailto:ourheritage123@gmail.com), Website: [www.heritagefoundation.org.in](http://www.heritagefoundation.org.in), Printed at: Arindam Offset & Imaging Systems, Rajgarh, Guwahati - 781003 and Angik Press, GNB Road, Guwahati - 781001 and Saraighat Offset Press, Bamunimaidan, Guwahati - 781021



## **Our Pledge for a Shining India**

The Gregorian calendar has added one more year to its two thousand year old exalted existence and the New Year 2017 was duly greeted by our urban brethren by remaining awake the year-ending night of the year gone by to celebrate it in a manner befitting the denizens of the western hemisphere.

There is nothing wrong in ceremoniously bidding adieu to the year gone by or welcoming the New Year. It is natural for all human being to invent occasions which can be celebrated and enjoyed in a collective manner. New Year is such an occasion although it is a universally accepted fact that the New Year eve and the New Year are a part of Christian religious calendar and does not have any practical implication for our daily life except emotional attachment and overtones.

If at all the New Year has any relevance to us Indians, it is because we follow the Gregorian calendar for all our official activities, while our own almanac serves only a limited function as our spiritual pathfinder. Now that we have already adopted this Christian occasion as our own, let us give it a new face and use it as a stock taking day for the year left behind and try to find the right direction for a happy and prosperous new year. This effort on our par will help restore our pride in our national excellence.

The year 2016 was a momentous year in many respects. In the elite field of Science and Technology, we had successfully established our credentials as a space explorer through launching of the Chandrayan Mission to Moon and the Mission to Mars. We successfully conceptualized and executed our own Integrated Guided Missile Development Programmes. Our BrahMos missile, a supersonic cruise missile is now an envy of the world. We were also able to conceptualize and begin creating our own Regional Satellite system including launching of multi-function satellites. We are proud to have completed a Nuclear Triad which helped us achieve the military capacity to conduct a retaliatory nuclear strike from land air and sea. We have also entered the hallowed domain of aircraft manufacturers through our indigenously developed export worthy Tejas and Dhruv aircrafts. Our financial inclusion campaign exemplified by Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana was recognized for opening the most bank accounts—about 1.80 crores in one week, a feat commended by the Guinness Book of World Records for being accomplished in such a short span of time. In the field of education and literacy we have successfully brought out over 200 million people out of illiteracy raising our literacy rate to 73 per cent. The most innovative cleanliness drive aptly named Swachh Bharat Abhiyan was a great success and over 31.83 lakh toilets were built in schools and other educational institutions. So far as foreign relations are concerned we have succeeded in reestablishing our stature as a mature and developed nation in the comity of nations. Our soft power diplomacy by using aids especially in Afghanistan has been hailed by all and sundry. At national level Indian Government move against black money through Demonetization was acclaimed universally as historical and brave one. Above all, Democracy in our country was kept alive through more-or-less disciplined elections and conduct of the people of our country.

To conclude we must remember that our past successes and achievements will not help us maintain our superiority forever. We must build on it; we must go on adding more successes and achievements. We must try hard to bring excellence in the fields we have not been successful so far. Let us pledge that in this New Year we will rededicate ourselves to build a Shining India.

**Editor**

## Protecting Indigenous Heritage: The Empirical Reality

- Dr Ranga Ranjan Das

One of my senior friends comes to visit me in my office. He is HOD and Associated Professor of reputed college in Assam. We discussed many issues on indigenous heritage of the north east. He was narrating his recent trip to Miami, USA where he presented a paper in International Conference on indigenous heritage. To sum up his observation, 'I am highly surprised to see how they are advanced in all aspects. They are dedicated effort to preserve all aspects of indigenous heritage of the world. The reports, journals, books, collections, museums and all will glorify the rich socio-cultural heritage of the world. The collection of book in the American Library Congress and their respect of indigenous culture are unexplainable. I have taken a few Assamese gamosas (traditional towel) to present a few reputed scholars. They feel highly honoured and provided me precious time to speak about gamosa. Their overwhelming response to my narration has provided me lot of confidence to work in the field of society and culture'. He added America has no folklore or indigenous ways of its own. They are highly modernized. There is dearth of presence of indigenous heritage except in the museums. Most of indigenous heritage belong to those who have migrated there over the centuries. They possess soft corner about the indigenous heritage of the developing, under developing countries, countries like Asia, Africa, South America, Australia and many others countries.

Rapid changes are visible in indigenous way of life, expression due the advent of Christianity, modernity, industrialization, better connectivity through road network and cyber space. The present generation misses the opportunity to listen grandmas' story. No one can locate Indigenous housing pattern, traditional dwellings in the cities and so called 'rural America'. Tall buildings, sky scrapers, industries, sophisticated modern amenities, expansion of road have replaced all the traditional architecture. It is not just the case of USA. All the developed and developing countries have the same story. However, there are alternatives. The present generation has witnessed such indigenous heritage in the museum. The museums are large and spread out and keep space

more and more. The authorities are aware of contemporary phenomena. But people are aware of the differences between the empirical reality and confined reality. They are in search of empirical reality, vibrant culture. Where? They selected the places where serene indigenous culture is still practiced. They want to taste such experiences.

Indigenous heritage glorifies a particular community or group. In the midst of onslaught of indigenous culture, there are a number of groups who maintain their distinct identity through their rich socio-cultural heritage. They are still very much conscious about their heritage. India is one such place that houses many traditional communities. Their indigenous way of life, beliefs and practices, indigenous religion, intangible and non intangible heritage, indigenous knowledge about medicinal properties of plant and animal remains, ethnic fabric and attire, songs and dances, rites and rituals, fair and festivals are part and parcel of glorious heritage and 'Incredible India'. Why it is need to protect indigenous heritage? There are many implications. Is it necessary to remain in the same situation or condition where our forefather or ancestors survived? Of course not. My father comes from a village. He has to settle in the city due to priority in jobs. During my childhood, I see him preparing side wall by splitting bamboo, our new thatched house with the help of his own fellow village man. He was excited in making house in a new urban settlement where our family had to adjust in the early period. He is well adept in making indigenous handicraft items need for day to life. There was a pond in our house hold campus with lots of indigenous fish varieties. My father had prepared indigenous casting net to catch fish from the pond when required for. This is real narratives that happened 34 years back. Now there is no pond, no thatch roofed house, instead a large concrete building!

Time has changes rapidly. It is visible in our surroundings everywhere: rural and urban. It is visible among the indigenous groups. When we talk about indigenous heritage, indigenous life style, to whom we refer to. Is it same for all the people?

(Contd. to Page 23)

## Monoliths, Mawbynna or Hinges of Nartiang, Wonder of India

- Prabhat Kanti Paul

Each and every time I reach Nartiang I feel something new, something supernatural. It was March 1980; I first reached Nartiang on a Government Job, transferred from Cherrapunjee and posted as Sectional Officer, in charge of construction and maintenance of Jowai Nartiang Kdiap Khanduli Road including reconnaissance, survey and investigation of new roads etc. Originally the jurisdiction was extended up to Baithalangu after division of Assam into seven states Baithalangu fell in Assam, Karbianglong District in the year 1971.

After division of Bengal and there were further division of the country in the year 1947. This region and Jaintia Elaka was divided and detached socially, culturally and politically from its other part- Jaintiapur plains. This caused great disaster in every sphere of life except some political gain for few. The people lost their written documents, script and scriptures. The myth, hymn and songs the people of Nartiang used to sing with divine rhythm, beating sacred instruments khool and kartal, lost its words and lyric. The rites and rituals remained the same which were part of spiritual practice of the people since time immemorial. Thus the past history, script and scriptures related to monoliths at Nartiang were lost.

During Kingship, the Kings from plains used to come here on the hills during summer and lived here till Autumn Festival. During this period the monolith premises used to be cleaned well since celebration of Durga Puja or Autumn Festival starts from here more than two fortnights before the Puja Days.

The 'Biryampa Masi, pond for swimming or bathing of cows; 'Monkoi Tok', and 'Umtisong' water ponds and also the 'iew Mulong', religious and ancient bazaar close to Mawbynna are the testimony of the ancient history since barter system.

The relics of temples and stone sculpture at Syndai which are assessed to be curbed during 700 – 1200 A.D., which has spiritual relation with Nartiang linked with bridle path or footpath are testimony of civilization since time immemorial. The period of erecting monoliths at Nartiang are much

before than the stone sculpture at Syndai which is carved by Chiseling.

Smelting of iron and making instrument was known by the people of Nartiang. The remains of slag iron etc are the testimony. The age of this is not known. This is much later than Stone Age. Some iron gun barrels are preserved in the Shiva (Bhairab Kramadhiswar) temple on the peak of the village.

The eight metalled or alloy idols of Goddess and other idols are testimony of idol worship at Nartiang. This period is before Mughals. They came here time and again and looted, at last damaged and destroyed the places of worship.

The age of installation of 'Silas' or stone images of God and Goddess in the temples are before the installation of metalled images and are much later to erection of monoliths.

Monoliths at Nartiang are testimony of Stone Age and early civilized society of Nartiang. Such monolith is spread from these foot hills to the Brahmaputra river bank on the North. Orientation of monolith at Nartiang is unique and are erected on a lone high land surrounded by high hills all round. The orientation is in rows and in groups. High and low upright stones of different sizes are erected crumbling partially the flat stone, circular or oval set on stone supports like table, one or more in number. Some says that vertical stones are male stone and flat stones are female stone. This is known as Megalithic culture of pre historic age.

The monoliths at Nartiang are like "dolmens and menhirs, having relevance of the matrilineal system of society. The tallest member in the middle representing the primordial maternal uncle, two accompanying male stones on each sides and the table or dolmen stone, tying at the feet of the upright stones, representing female progenitress of the clan associated mainly of cremation rites and keeping the bones in a cyst" (u Sumar Singh Sawian).

People of Nartiang believe in the sanctity of the monoliths. They maintained it undisturbed. Without any cause they do not go through these. Only on market day they prefer to go through it. The local

market is close to it. The market functioned once in eight days i.e. Market cycle. The day is named Mulong and the market is New Mulong. Mulong is first day of the cycle or week; the other days are Musiang, Muhsai, Pyngkat, Hat, Thymbling and Mukso, which is rare in the world. On market day the Dan and officials of Doloiship collect 'dan' or 'bestowal' from the seller or trader. After collection of 'dan' all gather on a particular flat stone, discuss on important matter related to doloiship. After the meeting all go to their respective works. The 'Dan' then carries the collected materials to the temple and keeps those in the temple. The priest of the temple receive these with due sanctity with these the Goddess is served throughout the market cycle till next market day. In Jaintia Hills including Khasi Hills, this is the only market where the bestowals from the traders are used for divine service to the Mother.

From these monoliths, on a market day starts Autumn Festival Durga Puja 30 – 40 days before Puja Day. On this day Doloi, Pator, Dan, and all other gather here and perform rites and rituals, pray to the forefathers and the almighty for performance of the auspicious occasion. Then the Mother is welcomed beating drums etc. The beating of drums starts after blank firing from the gun. Firing gun is done to drive away the evils and evil spirits before performance of the divine rites and rituals.

The stone garden of Nartiang has similarity with the stone garden on 'Hinges' at Scotland. Many research Scholars has worked on the Hinges of Scotland. No remarkable study has yet been done on Hinges of Nartiang. It is in the book of Archeological Department of India. After a gap of centuries now people from far and near come here to visit as tourist.

5000 years old step pyramid bears the then socio cultural history of Egypt. It was built by King Djoser or Zoser in 27 B.C. surrounding this, Imhotep built a building of 24 compartments in which marble stone idols and other sculptures are made. It symbolized the image of the Kingdom, rites and rituals of life and life hereafter. This is the first monument of the world built up with marble stone. The monument is one of the Seven Wonders of the World better known as "Giza Pyramid". It was build around 4500 years ago by King Khuphu or Riospher. His mummified mortal body was kept

inside the pyramid. Plenty of vegetables, corn, gold, silver, utensils, and throne etc. everything were kept inside for his use, because, death is merely a leisure period between the present and the subsequent life. Kings, as soon as they sat on the throne started establishing his final shelter.

That's why in the ancient history of eight there is so much arrangement concerning the death. Arrangements for the Kings were elaborate, because they become equipotent to God after death. The duty of the subjects was to ease the last journey of the King and see that he achieves Godhead to maintain the continuity of life of the subjects was the duty of the dead King. Pyramid means 'house of eternity' that is shelter for the eternal soul. (Ref. Udbodhan Agrahyan 1423 BE, Neel Noder Pare, Lipika Dey)

There are many dolmen and menhir such as Mawbyinna, Mawkit, Mawpud, Mawsing etc. spread all over Khasi Hills and Jaintia Hills. These are also seen in some other parts where other tribes of similar origin lived in the past. Mawsing or Dolmen is set on stone supports like table under which the bone of the deceased after funeral is kept in a cistern. Death anniversary of the deceased is observed here in remembrance and honour of the deceased's soul and eatables are offered observing rituals.

The monolith on stone garden at Nartiang is similar to dolmen and menhir. One or more menhir erected by the side of one or more dolmens comprising a cluster. The biggest erected stone is of size 27 ft long 6 ft wide and 2ft thick. It is a lone stone and the flat stone is set in front of it is approximately 24 ft in diameter 1ft 3inches thick.. Others are erected and set close to it maintaining distinct difference in rows and groups. This stone garden is prominent than any other stone garden in the vicinity at Nongbah, Jowai, Jarain, Reliang and elsewhere in this region.

Since creation of this stone garden it has remained as it was. No modification, beautification or improvement is done. Deformation due to earthquake or erosion etc did not also occur. This is considered to be a vast united effort of the people of the area. Nothing is known about the name of the King during whose rule these were erected or the age of erection, only the clan of the strongman "Phlangki" is known. Except on market day meeting,



rites and rituals before Sri Durga Puja no other rites are observed here. The sanctity is strictly maintained.

As people moves now a day from one place to the other, in the past too man used to travel from place to place of the world. Civilization and culture too moved along with them and improved step by step. The age of creation of the stone garden at Nartiang is very old. These were done by cutting or breaking the stone in required sizes. These are not only monuments but also a place of performing crematorial rites for all within a confined place, a sign of equanimity; variation was only in size and shape. The biggest pair is most probably for the King and the Queen. The Egyptian Pyramids are built by setting stones one above the other with the technique considering transmission of load and stability etc. These are improved technology used for building the external abode for the King by the people. They go there to pray for their welfare. There is no pyramid for common people. The technique of erection of these monuments or structure is earliest and erected close to the human habitation. But the pyramids are built away from human habitation, on the sandy desert. People from all over the world go there to see the wonder, where Egyptians use to go to offer Puja, for the preparation of the unknown life beyond death. In front of the pyramid of King Kiospher his son King Kephrin built a temple and an artist curbed a sculpture on a big stone the image of half man and half lion, which has a resemblance of Narasingha, an incarnation of the Lord Vishnu.

Monoliths of Nartiang is the earliest stone sculpture million years old bearing the history of the then civilized society of this region where the memory and eternity of none is excluded. The name and age nothing is inscribed and it will bear the honour of the mass for all the time to come. Only a legendary story prevails narrating the divine power of the people of bringing the heavy stones pulled by pumkin creeper to erect and set them, is amazing.

On the approach road to the stone garden from the village, there is a stone slab culvert of 10 spans which is used to cross while going to perform rites and rituals on either bank of the stream. Such stone culverts are seen on Jowai Jarain Syndai Muktapur Jaintiapur bridle path. This bridle path is contemporary to the stone sculptures of earlier

period. Civilization moved through this bridle path from hills to plains and vice versa but is now disrupted by division of the country.

The faith and belief of the people of Nartiang is eternal, traditional and Vedic. The influence of Islam is very faint. Innumerable Churches are built of different denomination throughout the area. Hence the people are reluctant to come to the temple any more to take part in the rites and rituals during special occasions. However the members of the governing body of the sacred place are very sincere in their efforts to maintain the purity and holiness of the place.

The eternal faith and beliefs of the people of Nartiang is million years old. The legend of the "Lumsopet Bneng", Golden Ladder connecting heaven and earth, sixteen clan, disruption of the 'Ladder' forcing 'Nine' clan to remain in the heaven and 'Seven' clan remained on the earth, the story of creation of mankind and its evolution, conception of God, heaven and earth is amazing. All these are testimony of faith and belief of the people. The annual rites and rituals observed here are – rearranging the pieces of stone on the altar or platform, sanctification of the place, washing and cleaning by pouring water, offering and sprinkling sanctified water from different sources, pouring of rice wine, spreading of husked rice grain, Puja and prayer by the priest for peace, prosperity and affluence of the land and people including peace for the spirits of the fore fathers wherever they are or in whatever form they are. All these are done with due sanctity, community prayer and oblation is done by the devotees. After oblation some grain is taken home as grace of the Almighty for other members in the family.

People of Nartiang and India believe in two distinct forms of a human being, 'Body' and 'Soul'. After death the body remains on the earth, mingle with five basic elements from which the body was formed and the soul leaves the body for its eternal journey or mingle with the super soul.

The tale, story and belief, existence and look of 'Mabsein Barwai' at Shangpung, Jaintia Hills is like Ananta Nag or Sesha Nag as depicted in Sri Sri Chandi, Couch of Lord Vishnu appeared during creation of this earth is undoubtedly the oldest and have a relevance with Lum Sohpet Bneng.

(Contd. to Page 23)



## Holistic Empowerment of Women

- Charu Bahri

Latest figures show that at 914, India's child sex ratio - a better marker of son preference than the overall sex ratio - is at its lowest since 1951. This is despite the fact that female literacy in India has soared to 65.46 per cent as per Census 2011 and should have resulted in greater gender parity in the child sex ratio.

This implies that female literacy alone is not enough to improve the sex ratio as is commonly assumed and the nation needs to heed the slogan coined by Prime Minister Narendra Modi - Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (save daughter, educate daughter).

It has been observed that in India, as income rises, fewer girls are born and the educated are more likely to afford sex-selective abortions.

The bias against daughters can only end if women's education is accompanied by social and economic empowerment, concluded a study conducted over a period of 30 years in Gove, Maharashtra, by Carol Vlassoff, a Professor at the University of Ottawa.



### Education is not changing gender norms:

"Not only is it impossible to achieve gender equality without education, expanding education opportunities for all can help stimulate productivity and reduce the economic vulnerability of poor households," the UN said about the role of education in achieving gender equality, in its 2013 report, Making Education a Priority in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

But statistics in India do not bear out the UN's assumptions. Young graduate mothers gave birth to 899 girls per 1,000 boys, lower than the national average of 943, India Spend reported in May 2016.

In Haryana, the female literacy rate has risen 25 percentage points over 20 years, to touch 65 per

cent in 2011, but it is still known for its low sex ratio, India Spend reported in November 2015.

"Education of women is clearly not enough to change preference for sons, a pervasive deep-seated social expectation," said Priya Nanda, group director, Social and Economic Development, International Center for Research on Women, Asia Regional Office. "While education does give women abilities, changing gender norms requires other complementary efforts."

### The right to choose is as important as a degree:

Netra Jangam, 24, from Gove village in Satara district, in western Maharashtra, holds a postgraduate degree in commerce. Her mother had studied only up to seventh grade.

Jangam did more than arm herself with a degree: She made the most of the freedom to travel - something her parents agreed to - and make independent decisions. "I pursued my higher studies in nearby Satara, living with relatives, visiting my parents at the weekends. Living away

from home taught me to manage myself and broadened my thinking. My mother hardly ever travelled out of the village before marriage," she said.

Her mother earned some money from taking on small tailoring jobs and this had helped her realize the value of financial independence. "So she supported my decisions. I made it clear to my husband that I would always work after marriage. I always want to be financially independent," said Jangam.

Given the high cost of living, she wants only one child - "it doesn't matter if it is a girl or a boy"-and is confident her husband will support her decision. "I am not having a child to depend on in my old age; we will invest for our future."

(Contd. to Page 24)

## Sexual Perversion – A Modern-day Menace

- Salil Gewali, Shillong

The glitter of modernity is not without a taint of depravity. What are too upsetting lately is a new breed of perverts who are wreaking havoc with the society and the modesty of womanhood. They prey upon any females, even kids, anywhere any time. How disgusting, the instances of roadside molestation hardly raise the eye-brows of the pedestrians. To rub salt on the wound come the sermons from the political leaders hinting that cases of such molestation are not unexpected when females go around at night without fathers, brothers and so on. This is how the womenfolk are round-the-clock under threat.

Again, pornography — in which females are mercilessly humiliated, is doubtlessly another dreadful nuisance which has blotted the pristine landscape of the society now. Though it is never shown in the media as one of the main causes of the increasing menace in the society many sensible NGOs and dispassionate analysts have come up with conclusive findings that reveal — ‘The rise in pornography viewing is directly proportional to the rise in the number of rape cases, sexual violence and the social degeneration’ — as also claimed by a noted gynaecologist Dr. Shaibya Saldanha of Bangalore.

There are various kinds of rape cases in the country now. Very horrendous news we have heard from Inchauli, Meerut a few months back. A 10 year’s boy allegedly raped a six years old girl. Where did so young boy get to learn about the indecent acts? What has brought him to like such outrageous stuffs and what finally drove him to walk along the forbidden path? He might have initially become acutely inquisitive for several reasons which we — one-sided sensible lot, just tend to shrug aside.

Yes, if we are truly honest the causes are not

too indistinct to be noticed. Well, is it not for an easy accessibility of the pornography on the internet that can be accessed with your android phones? A series of obscene movie footages which repeatedly boom in our drawing rooms could easily get the tender minds to think what they should not. Again, regular news of fathers/step-fathers stalking upon their own daughters, and school teachers eyeing their students for sexual fulfillment (Kendriya Vidyalaya incident of Meghalaya) have sent chill down our spine about a month back. This kind of shocking story greets us every morning through our local dailies.

Here a serious question, let’s not ignore. Why is there a sharp rise in the viewing of the pornography in INDIA in the past few years? What is so much hot that is sizzling in the country now which never fails to kindle the curiosity of even the teenage to open up the filthy pages on the net? Let’s not bury our head in the sand in the face of this d a n g e r o u s development — at least for the sake of our descendants, for the sake of the humanity. Or else, we will be equally

culpable sinners. Well, will our willful silence against the rise of pornography viewing bring forth the days of bestiality in which our own children and grandchildren will be living and growing? Will their lives not get devastated by the endless debaucheries, rapes, sexual atrocities, family discords and mental chaos — already a major distress pulling the society down? In such environment, the millions of poor “single” mothers will be forced to lead traumatic lives as in the West.

Well, our mere saying “sick minded rapists”, or arresting and hanging the perverts will not at all solve the problem permanently. We all have to adopt,

(Contd. to Page 14)



## Muslim Orthodoxy vs Unwavering Commitment

- Mohd Asim Khan

Are divine decrees more sacrosanct than the man-made laws? Do the “personal laws” of a community always have precedence over the Constitution? The questions came back to haunt India’s collective conscience through a string of cases in 2016 — three decades after it was “settled” in what can be called a high-handed way.

The year-that-was saw the Muslim orthodoxy pitted against the courts of law on more occasions than one with the courts, as well as the liberal opinion, repeatedly questioning the Muslim clergy’s contention that personal laws were above all scrutiny.

The not-so-happy memories of the Shah Bano case of 1985-86 — where the Rajiv Gandhi government, riding on a brute majority in Parliament, upturned the Supreme Court’s ruling in the divorcee’s favour through legislation — came haunting back with Shayara Bano’s case.

Shayara Bano, a 38-year-old woman from Uttarakhand, filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the Supreme Court to ban the practice of triple talaq. Her move came after she suffered for 14 years in a marriage with an Allahabad man.

Shayara Bano, a mother of two, said that she was made to undergo at least half a dozen abortions which wrecked her emotionally and physically. She was not allowed to meet her close relatives. Notably, the husband did not deny this. But she still lived on, trying to somehow save her marriage. What she got instead was a talaqnama through a telegram. The Supreme Court is hearing the case.

In yet another jolt to the champions of conservatism, the Allahabad High Court in December dubbed triple talaq as “cruelty against Muslim women” while hearing petitions filed by Hina and Umarbee, two residents of Bulandshahr in Uttar Pradesh.

The court observed that the Islamic law was being wrongly interpreted.

The women’s rights brigade got a shot in the arm when after five years of legal battle; the Bombay High Court ruled in August that women had equal

right as men to pray at the Hajji Ali shrine. The Supreme Court upheld the decision and a group of 250 women finally entered the shrine on November 29.

Meanwhile, the Union government told the Supreme Court that ‘triple talaq’, ‘nikaah halala’ and polygamy were not integral to the practice of Islam or essential religious practices.

Clerics and several Muslim organizations, cutting across sects and schools of jurisprudence, decried the government’s stand as well the courts’ verdicts as “uncalled for interference” in the personal laws of the community.

The courts are, however, not convinced.

In October, the Law Commission posted on its website 16 questions to seek public opinion on the uniform civil code (UCC) issue. A number of prominent Muslim organizations, led by the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB), erupted in protest and dubbed the questionnaire as “misleading and divisive”. Cutting across schools of jurisprudence, the Sunni, Shia, Barelvi and Ahle Hadith, all called this an “unacceptable attack” on their identity and accused the Narendra Modi government of politicizing the issue ahead of the assembly elections in five states, including Uttar Pradesh and Punjab.

However, unlike the Rajiv Gandhi government that buckled under pressure from the practitioners of patriarchy in the 1980s, the Narendra Modi government has been unwavering in its “commitment” to women’s right to equality. And senior government functionaries are openly advocating a uniform civil (UCC) code for all. While no major political party is against the UCC in principle, they feel it should be done with “consensus” and not imposed unilaterally.

Finally, with both the Muslim orthodoxy and the government unwilling to cede their space, the year 2017 may see some sparks flying on the Shayara Bano front.

*(The Sentinel 27/12/2016)*



## Cultivating Rural Technology for Development

- Ratnadeep Banerji

Simple ideas make lofty technology. Rural traditions of life and workmanship need a scientific revamp without diluting its rural identity. The second annual event of India International Science Festival (IISF) this year towed along several such instances of profound ideas.

Drinking water often remains contaminated with microbes and particles. Who has thought of making an earthen pot by subjecting it to a compression that minimizes its pores that let in contamination? A simple strategy with profound effect costing barely Rs. 350 to 450! A baked clay technology for microbial filtration as well as for turbidity removal in drinking water at point-of use was on display at the Unnat Bharat Abhyan pavilion at IISF 2016.

The contaminated drinking water is filled in the frustum (upper-half of inverted cone) shaped filtering container made of baked salty clay, having micro-pores of nano size through which water percolates due to gravity. An average of 8 liters percolates in 10 hours. The percolated water filtrate remains free from contaminants of sizes larger than 10-6m to 10-9m. 'The microbial test of E.Coli strains of MC4100 and W3110 showed 99.99% removal efficiency conforming to the required standards of drinking water set by the World Health Organization. Approximately 90% reduction in turbidity and 50% reduction of total dissolved salts and electrical conductivity is also achieved.' asserts Prof A.K. Plappally from IIT Jodhpur. It has also been tested by National Test House, Jaipur.

This technology is the outcome of doctoral research performed by mechanical engineering students of IIT Jodhpur, Sandeep Gupta, Amrita Kaurwar and Raj Kumar Satankar under the guidance of Prof. A.K. Plappally. The research was supported by a seed grant from IIT Jodhpur. A Jodhpur based NGO called Rupayan Sansthan is enabling the technology transfer and dissemination to the individual potters by conducting small workshops.

Clay pots compatible for microwave ovens is an intriguing thing. Dr Lalithambika is a retired scientist from CSIR with expertise in Clay Science and Technology. 'Clay has a lot of metal presence,

mostly iron and lead. We use density separation and particle separation to get rid of their presence. And then the baked pot can withstand heating in a microwave oven.' explains Dr Lalithambika about her heat-resistant pots.

"We are providing training to potters on how to apply France's 'decoupage' technique to decorate finished products, mainly those in terracotta category. Customer-specific decorations can be made on clay products using the technique" informs Dr Lalithambika who has been working with potters for over three decades. "We have already trained over 200 potters in Palakkad and they all feel that the value addition is beneficial. It helps them regain lost markets," she says.

The state of Kerala has a sizeable potter population of over 650 colonies who were practicing traditional methods impinging upon efficacious production. The Department of Science and Technology of Government of India has been sponsoring the core support program of, 'revamping of traditional pottery'. Integrated Rural Technology Centre (IRTC) under the Kerala Sasthra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP) has launched a major value-addition initiative by blending traditional Kerala pottery with French aesthetics, to ensure livelihood security for potters sponsored by Khadi and Village Industries Commission of Government of India. The value-added products are helping the potters find newer markets and earn better revenue. IRTC is also sending the products to retail networks in Delhi, Mumbai, and other major cities. The Department of Science and Technology of Government of India has also been sponsoring the initiative of, 'value-addition of terracotta materials by modernization of techniques and introduction of innovative products' and also the initiative of, 'decorative pottery as an income generating activity for the weaker sections of the society'.

In the hilly regions above 6000 feet in the Himalayas, domestic fuel wood consumption tantamount to 10 metric tons per household of 5 to 6 members. 70% of this fuel is used up solely for heating house space and water. Dr Lal Singh

(Contd. to Page 24)

## Pentecostal Christianity and the Need for Urgent Reforms

- Joseph Edgar

Religion has been tribalized in today's Nigeria especially Christianity. This has come to the fore with the recent retirement of the General Overseer and spiritual leader of the Redeemed Christian Church, Pastor Adebayo.

Following the new regulation enacted by Government, nobody is expected to hold on to power in our charities or non profits which these churches fall into for more than 20 years or at an age above 70. This has led to the leadership change in the church with the Leader appointing a successor and moving to become overseas leader. This in itself threw up something which was hitherto hidden.

The tribalization of big religion.

The new leadership in RCCG shows the top three positions being held by people from the south west region of the country, Yoruba people to be precise. This in itself should not be a problem but if you look at it from the angle that the church today is the largest controller of collective wealth aside the federal government then you will begin to understand the magnitude of the problem.

Religion today is so wealthy that if care is not taken they can compete with the federal government naira for naira in some areas. The biggest churches are ruled by individuals from a particular section of the country. That is the Pentecostal fold and from the pulpits they wield enormous power and influence and this could be better illustrated in the role they played in the last administration where the President Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces regularly went to bow in the temples of these lords.

They also played a significant role in the election that brought this same government into power with the current vice president being one of its major adherents ensuring that the influence and power seeps into the corridors of power. Remember that our president in his last lost election also had a pastor controlling enormous wealth and influence as his running mate.

The churches have been shared amongst the major tribes of the country. The south easterners have cornered the Catholic Church which is another

bastion of unbridled wealth and power. You see people like Father Mbaka controlling so much power and influence up to the point of declaring a sitting President unfit and throwing his cassock weight on the candidacy of another and ensuring he wins with a flurry of prophecies and incantations.

So what we are seeing today is the bigger tribe of Nigeria going beyond the political space to continue with their hegemonic control of the nation but this time with religion which is very powerful and numbing as a veritable tool of cohesion. The northerners have annexed Islam and have continued to use it to herd the people into continuing enslavement.

Today's article is really about the behemoth Christian Pentecostal financial empires and how they have annexed so much wealth, corralled this wealth for themselves, their families and their cronies and then how they continue to use this should I say "ill gotten wealth" and affluence to execute already predetermined outcomes.

These churches control a large swath of the population especially in south western Nigeria although membership cuts across the whole southern Nigeria. From their congregations, they preach the sermons of wealth acquisition, pushing for all sort of tithes, levies and donations into charity - not for profit based accounts and from there they are diversified into real business activities which are well run with the highest levels of corporate governance thereby churning out huge non taxed profits that coral themselves back into the accounts of the charity controlled by a few.

From airlines, schools, hospitals, banks, factories, agriculture these churches own and control these businesses with the efficiency of an Italian mafia lord. All stakeholders apart from the church promoters and their closest disciples loose out of these great business activities.

The government do not get paid taxes; the members still have to cough out from their lean pockets to access these services even though it is their tithes and donations that birth them in the first place. So you see it is just a round trip of carnivorous

excesses perpetuated under the name of the lord.

Apart from maybe the Catholic Church you never see a well structured system of succession. You never see separation of powers. The spiritual head is also the chairman of the bank or the proprietor of the school and the chancellor of the university. So you get very wealthy promoters flying in private jets and living the life of affluence in the midst of increasing poverty.

The monthly prayer sessions along the Lagos-Ibadan stretch witnesses a huge concentration of very poor people looking for salvation from the lord. They spend days on the whole witnessing large scale personal suffering, clogging the road and blocking a major road artery to the rest of the nation thereby paralyze economic activities only for the promoters to either fly in by helicopter or build amazing mansions within the compound where they are already relaxed and comfortable days before the event awaiting the flock.

Government's attempt to regulate at least the business part of the enterprise is welcome. Like the government spokesperson says, if you have

been called by the Holy Spirit, that does not mean that he has called you to be the accountant and lawyer also. There must be a division of labour and the business side must be tenured and also operate along the lines of real business otherwise, you would be getting an undue advantage over your competition.

Finally, the democratization of its leadership must be pursued vigorously simply because of the amount of wealth and influence they chorale. You can almost divide all the big churches according to the concentration of tribes and this is really unfair as the minority tribes will also continue their enslavement even in their place of worship.

How can the Overseas GO, the Local GO and the Church Secretary all come from one tribe in a church that has its tentacles in all the nook and crannies of the country? Should we wait until government also steps in to force reforms?

Time is now.

*(<https://www.naij.com/1081543-opinion-pentecostal-christianity-urgent-reforms-joseph-edgar.html>)*

(Contd. from Page 10)

## Sexual Perversion – A Modern-day Menace

with all sensibility and sincerity, the comprehensive measures as well that will be helpful to keep the society in a good stead.

Let me beg for your considerate attention here. When an epidemic "dengue" strikes our town, what do we do? Do we not clean our surrounding? This is what the medical doctors suggest first. Apart from vaccinating the sick person, we immediately take all prescribed preventive measures. We exercise extreme caution as to their food intake. We install screens not to let a single mosquito in, and stop leaving the stagnant water in the open such that it never becomes a breeding hotbed and so on and so forth.

Exactly in the same manner, let's honestly ask ourselves if we have really been doing anything to prevent the evil of "porny-dengue" and the like entering into our society, more precisely, into the mindset of our tender kids and the general masses? Who knows yesterday's good boy has

become pervert today? Has the Government initiated anything that will help prevent us from the sharp stings of "porn-bugs" which might have injected many with the carnal virus? Have we ever put pressure upon the entertainment houses not to immorally sexualize and objectify the womanhood? Some right-thinking lot — never mincing words, remark that it is entertainment industries which have first outraged the modesty of womanhood with the cheery charm of glamour, fame and money. How, where and when is all as clear as daylight if one's eyes are not blurred by the baggage of modernity.

Yes, apart from the rigorous punishment to the sex perverts, the government should consider to initiate the movement to detox the mindset of the masses. "Healthy attitude and healthy acts for healthy society" should be the prime slogan. No sexual predators should strangulate the sacred womanhood and take the society hostage.

*(Writer may be contacted as: [sgewali@gmail.com](mailto:sgewali@gmail.com))*



## The Chinese Dams on Brahmaputra: The Real Issues (Part II)

- Pradip Kr. Bhuyan

The issues related to Chinese dams on Yarlung Tsampo including its tributaries and some related matters were dealt with in Part I of this article. In this Part II of the article, the issues of the proposed Arunachal dams are being discussed.

The most vital aspect of all the Arunachal Dams is the water release mechanism from these dams and this vital aspect has been cloaked in secrecy under the guise as Run of the River (RoR) schemes, giving the impression that whatever is flowing in any river in the lean months is also flowing out through the turbines with no ecological damage to the downstream of the dam. Nothing is further from the truth. In reality, the 150+ dams of Arunachal as planned are all Peaking Hydro power projects that holds up water for 20 hours or so to a trickle or some amount of environmental flow (20% of the winter flow as fixed now), and shall create a tsunami every night when all the turbines will be run to produce maximum electricity in the peak hour demand period of evening / night.

These Peaking Hydro Power Projects of Arunachal are the product of "Power at any Cost" policy of the GoI through various ministries like MoEFCC, MOP, MoWR etc. and which philosophy is reflected in the Hydro Power Policy 2008 which in its 'objective' has no place for ecology, environment, benefits for riparian people, as envisaged in the National Water Policies like irrigation, flood control, demographic and social aspects etc. The 'objective' of the policy as per Sec 2.1 is basically to harness the hydroelectric power potential of the state (Arunachal Pradesh) and to accelerate the pace of this development.

The most disturbing factor of these peaking dams, is extreme variation of flow in 24 hours in the winter lean months which is an inherent built-in aspect of all the 'Peaking Hydro Power Projects' because of its nature of operation, – holding up water to a trickle for 20 hours, and releasing in 4 hours or so in peak demand period.

### Death of Brahmaputra:

For Subansiri Lower Hydro Electric Project, the environmental flow (e Flow) as per the Environmental Clearance (EC) by MoEFCC is a

mere 6 Cubic Meter per second (cumec) and that for Dibang Multipurpose Dam (DMD) only 20 cumec ! If we even assume, that 20% of winter flow will be released as e Flow of Lohit, Dibang, Siang Lower dams as is being proclaimed now, then at the starting point of river Brahmaputra, after confluence of these 3 constituents of Brahmaputra, the mighty river Brahmaputra will have a flow of only 20% or so of its natural flow for 20 hours and a tsunami for 4 hours or so every day in the non-monsoon period. The variation in flow of Brahmaputra will be extreme like, 500 – 600 cumec for 20 hours to 8600 cumec for 4 hours as per design release of water from all the turbines. Even if 50% e Flow, (as recommended by the IIT consortium as an interim measure for Uttarakhand Peaking HE Projects after the 2013 disaster), is released as e flow, the diurnal variation of flow will then be 1110 – 1200 cumec or so to 8600 cumec, - a huge variation in 24 hours, each day of the non-monsoon period.

Similar is the fate of all the individual rivers – Lohit, Dibang, Siang, and Subansiri & Kameng. They will be subject to severe flow variations in their respective valleys in winter lean seasons and ecology and environment of the pristine valleys of Arunachal will be destroyed forever.

This daily extreme variation of flow will annihilate the dolphins, fishes, turtles and other biota, increase erosion and severely impact the riparian people.

### No flood control component in the Arunachal Peaking Dams:

All the proposed HEPs are peaking hydro electric projects which include the Dibang Multipurpose Dam (DMD), billed as the world's tallest gravity dam at 288 m height. It is claimed by NHPC, the project proponent, that some provision in the storage reservoir is earmarked for flood control in the DMD. But in reality, it is totally insignificant for any effective flood control measure.

Brahmaputra Board (BB) planned a flood control and power generation dam in Subansiri at Gerukamukh of 257 m height where the capacity of the reservoir was planned at 14,000 Mecum for effective flood control. The Dibang Multipurpose Dam (DMD) is planned as the tallest gravity dam of

the world at 288 m but has a storage capacity of poultry 3850 Mecum primarily for power generation. All hydro power dams of Arunachal have no effective flood control component and in the inkling of a major flood coming, operators will open all the sluice gates for safety of the dam itself as else, the flood water will overtop the dam. Such sudden opening of the 'sluice gates' is happening all the time from the Ranganadi Hydro Electric Project located in a sub basin of Subansiri in Lakhimpur district. Bhutan peaking dams regularly creates severe floods suddenly in lower Assam, through release from these peaking dams.

### **Sustainable Dams:**

Sustainable dams are base load generation dams that produce electricity continuously with a free flowing river where the water of the river flows through turbine(s) and/or over the dam, - i.e. the river flows naturally uninterrupted and unhindered as true Run of the River dams. The power house is located in the toe of the dam and (not kilometers away as proposed in many of the peaking dams of Arunachal totally killing the river for long stretches).

Once the Peaking HEPs which are on paper only as of now (except Subansiri Lower HEP), are converted to Base load HEPs, these HEPs will generate sustainable power continuously as true Run of the river projects. There will be no sluice gates. These type of HEPs, completely eliminate all the downstream ecological disasters associated with the Peaking HEPs as the river will flow freely downstream of the project without any hold up of water. There will be no cause of 'Panic release' of the reservoir water, creating sudden disastrous floods, as the dams will not have any sluice gates! The reservoirs will be small, the height of the dams reduced, - making them safer to seismological disasters. These projects will generate sustainable Base load power for the country's growing Base load demand.

The proposed 150+ plus dams of Arunachal can easily be converted to sustainable true Run of River (RoR) projects including Subansiri Lower Hydro Electric Project: The present peaking dams of Arunachal are easily convertible to free flowing run of the river (RoR) hydro electric projects like the Zangmu Dam of China on Yarlung Tsampo, because no actual construction has started in any of the four major basin of Arunachal – Lohit, Dibang,

Siang, Kameng. In Kameng a project is under construction by NEEPCO on two tributaries of Kameng, - Bichom and Tenga. It is a small project and need not be disturbed. Only major project that is under construction is the Subansiri Lower Hydro Electric Project (SLHEP) by NHPC Ltd., in the Subansiri basin. But since the dam is at a low level of construction, - 72m of the dam is yet to be constructed, it can easily be converted to a base load project even utilizing the present powerhouse as constructed – i.e. the river flows either through turbines and/or over the dam. There will no sluice gates. This changeover will ensure a reduced height of the dam and a free flowing river at all times.

It is pertinent to point out that in 2010, a GOM (Jairam Ramesh, Pranab Mukherjee, Sushil Shinde) decided to scrap the under construction Loharing Pala Dam on Bhagirathi (Ganga) by NHPC who by then had completed 20% of the project work, because of spiritual and environmental issues. This goes to show environment, ecology and right of other stakeholders in a river cannot be brushed aside.

### **Effect of Yarlung Tsampo:**

In winter lean months, the water of Yarlung Tsampo may constitute around 50% - 57% of the Brahmaputra's flow at its starting point near Dibru Saikhowa National Park (DSNP) after the confluence of Lohit, Dibang & Siang. It means, if China diverts 30% or so of its water in Tibet, for irrigation, water supply and other usage (HEPs do not hold up water), it will mean reduction of flow in Brahmaputra at its initial starting phase near Dibru Saikhowa National Park (DSNP) by about 15% - 20% based on data available as a kind of indicative figures. But the situation will improve as the river flows downstream and major tributaries like Buridihing, Subansiri, Kameng etc. join the river. Also, in monsoon period, because of the heavy rainfall in the Arunachal valleys, the above non-monsoon situation of dependence on Tsampo water on Brahmaputra for its integrity will reduce significantly.

### **A landmark development for Ganga:**

In a landmark development, Gol, through the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, has submitted an Affidavit in the Hon'ble Supreme Court in 1A No. 6 of 2013

on 31st May 2016 concerning peaking HE Uttarakhand Projects in which it is submitted that, "The Ganga Himalayan basin is inclusive of Bhagirathi Basin, Alakananda Basin and Mandakini Basin and form the origin path of Ganga and in order to secure / rejuvenate the rivers, her conservation all along the origin path of the river is most required step in Ganga Rejuvenation. Unfettered/uninterrupted flow of river in all the three river basins i.e. Alakananda, Bhagirathi and Mandakini is, therefore, crucial to the conservation of Ganga". This is a quantum jump forward to remove the gasping environmental scenario of the Ganga basins and the river Ganga itself.

#### **The Real Issue – The peaking dams of Arunachal:**

These dams are a life and death issue for Assam and the Arunachal valleys as the extreme variation of flow per day from these dams, will annihilate the total ecology of the river Brahmaputra - dolphins, fishes and other biota. The riparian people's lives will be become topsy turvy - the Luit as we know will be lost forever. The pristine valleys of Lohit, Dibang, Siang, and Subansiri & Kameng will also die ecologically. This threat looms over our head and will happen suddenly one day after a decade or two if these peaking dams of Arunachal are commissioned as planned now. It will be a fait

accompli then, too late to do anything but to die along with Brahmaputra!

#### **Ganga and Brahmaputra:**

What is applicable to the Ganga cannot be different from Brahmaputra and must be adhered to Brahmaputra as well. As there cannot be two yardsticks – one for Ganga, another for Brahmaputra. Read in the context of the Brahmaputra, it means unfettered / uninterrupted flow of the three rivers – Lohit, Dibang & Siang, the constituent tributaries of Brahmaputra, along with Subansiri and Kameng which augment the Brahmaputra flow in its initial formative stage of flow and this must be a guiding principle for the HEPs of Arunachal. This can be met only by scrapping the Peaking format of these HEPs which are basically on paper at this moment to be replaced by Base load HEPs for 24x7 continuous generation for power and naturally flowing rivers – unfettered and unhindered.

We have the opportunity to make the above changes now for all the 150+ proposed hydroelectric projects in Arunachal as no work has started in any of the projects, including in the Subansiri Lower Hydro Electric Project, work of which is stalled since Dec 2011 due to people's protests and 72 m of the dam is yet to be constructed. *(The Sentinel 15/12/2016)*

---

## **Remote Garo Hills Village Observes Geeta Utsav**

---

On 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26 December 2016, Geeta Utsav was observed by the villagers of Bhuirakupi, Zikzak village of Garo Hills in Meghalaya and was attended by more than 500 people from all walks of life.

Shri Jibananda Das, a Brahmachari of ISKCON assisted by 3 other disciples of the organization delivered his Pravachan on Geeta after a long chanting session of 'Hare Ram - Hare Krishna' - the Mahamantra for all.

As a part of the celebration Shri Debdas Sarkar, President of the local Sanatan Satsang Samiti also delivered his day long pravachan on Geeta on the 24th Dec. 2016.

Shri Manoj Bhatt of Kalyan Ashram narrated about the philanthropic activities of Kalyan Ashram that are being carried out throughout our country.

Shri Dipankar Dutta Choudhary of Tura and Shri

Bharat Kumar from Guwahati conducted an interactive session on different social problems that the people of this region are facing on daily basis. They advocated for reformation and stressed for positive change in their mindset to deal with the situation.

Shri Atul Deshpande, a Pracharak of Rashtriya Swayamasevak Sangha delivered his speech on our duties towards the nation and the Sanatan Dharma.

Shri Arnab Hajong, Secretary of the Sanatan Satsang Samiti and Shri Bhupendra Hajong, Executive Member of the Garo Hills District Council along with members of the reception committee worked very hard to organise such a pioneering event successfully at such a remote and interior location of the Garo hills.



## Constitutional Safeguards for 'Assamese People'

- Akhil Ranjan Dutta

The political discourses in Assam are changing very fast. These discourses, of course, are steered primarily by the political dispensations at the Centre. The 2016 Assembly elections in the State invented the discourse of Jati, Mati, Bheti (nation, land and hearth), which helped the BJP to sweep the elections in Assam. The discourse was projected as one which was unquestionable. After the BJP led Government had assumed power in the State and the BJP led Union Government introduced the Amendment Bill 2016 to the Citizenship Act, 1955 proposing to grant citizenship to religious minorities from undivided India, a major chunk of which are Bangladeshi Hindus, the people of Assam realized that the discourse of Jati, Mati, Bheti is nothing but an electoral maneuvering. Suddenly, political dissent surfaced in the State. It is against this backdrop that the new discourse of 'constitutional safeguards' had sprung up. It will also be important to point out that this discourse on 'constitutional safeguards' is drawn from the Assam Accord, 1985. The contradiction around this is that the forces for whom the Assam Accord is nothing more than an ordinary piece of paper having no constitutional sanctity have also been patronizing the new discourse of 'constitutional safeguards'.

Therefore, one has to be critical on the new discourse on constitutional safeguards. However, there is a positive dimension in the current discourse for it brings the State and the civil society forces into a direct interface. While the dominant political forces pursuing the present discourse on constitutional safeguards appear to have a vested communal agenda – that of fighting the growing political assertions of the East Bengal origin Muslim settlers in Assam – the civil society forces, which is indeed diverse in nature, appears not to have completely allied to the vested agenda of those forces.

The secular credentials of the civil society forces will be tested by its strength and ability to counter the proposed Amendment Bill 2016 to the Citizenship Act, 1955. The first issue of contention is definitely to decide for whom these constitutional safeguards are meant. The expression of 'Assamese people' as incorporated in the Assam

Accord through Clause 6 is indicative of the fact that it is not meant for entire citizenry of the State. There is a sixth category of citizenship in Assam, i.e., those who have been granted citizenship by the 1985 Amendment to the Citizenship Act, 1955. They are the migrants from East Pakistan during 1951-1971. Clause 6 in the Assam Accord was incorporated to bring in a distinction between the sixth category of citizenship and that of others. Whether the 'Assamese people' accommodates all the tribal indigenous groups, the Bengali-speaking population and also the colonialism induced migrants before 1951 are yet to be clearly defined. However, a consensus among a section of civil society forces in the Brahmaputra Valley was arrived at through the initiative of Pronob Gogoi, the former Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly towards such a definition which states that "the year 1951 be taken as the cut-off period and the National Register of Citizens (NRC), 1951, be taken as the basis for the definition of the 'Assamese people' for the purpose of reservation of seats and constitutional safeguards as required by the Assam Accord". The distinction made here is very clear, one is the 'Assamese people' and the other is migrants-turned-citizens of the period 1951-71. 'Assamese people', in this context, does not imply Assamese-speaking people. Now the proposition is that the second category of citizens stay deprived of the right to representation and this right be preserved exclusively for the first category.

The exclusive right to representation will require comprehensive amendments to the Representation of People's Act, 1951. In this Act, there is exclusive reservation of seats for representation only for certain categories of Sikkimese people as envisaged through Article 371-F (f). Assamese people will be the second instance, if such an amendment can be brought in. Now, this proposition has a lot of challenges. Is the NRC 1951 available which enumerated all inhabitants in the State during that period? The unusual political situation in the country during that period might have had excluded certain sections of the people who were forced to migrate out and in-between India and Pakistan from getting themselves registered in the NRC 1951 but had finally settled in Assam. How these challenges

will be addressed? A hurried attempt with vested communal agenda in this regard may create more problems than an enduring solution. It only suggests that the NRC 1951 cannot be the only reference point; it will require other authentic documents to verify and facilitate the identification of settlements in Assam till 1951. The more challenging task will be to ensure the constitutional rights of the sixth category of citizens, who are proposed to be deprived of the right to representation. The recent eviction drives in Kaziranga and Sipajhar on the pretext of driving out Bangladeshis unveil the bad taste of the incumbent government which is driven more by whims than objective facts.

The exclusive right to representation alone will not ensure constitutional safeguards. Therefore, what has been proposed is to extend the benefits of Articles 371A to the State of Assam, which has already been guaranteed to the State of Nagaland. Article 371 ensures constitutional safeguards to different States including Assam through different sub-clauses. However, it is Article 371A, which is the most comprehensive one. Apart from many other provisions, what Article 371A guarantees to Nagaland is that no Act of Parliament shall apply to

the State of Nagaland 'unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution so decides' in respect of 'religious and social practices of Nagas'; 'Naga customary law and procedure' and 'ownership and transfer of land and its resources', etc. These benefits have also been guaranteed to Mizoram through Article 371G. In case of Assam, there are no uniform social and religious practices as well as customary laws, which are community specific and, therefore, those cannot be guaranteed to the State as such. Those have been guaranteed to an extent through the Sixth Schedule. However, the land and its resources is an issue of crucial concern. The KMSS in its draft land Bill 2015 submitted to the Congress-led former State Government of Assam has indeed provided a comprehensive blueprint on preserving and protecting the rights of people of Assam over land and its resources. Consideration of this Bill by the wider civil society forces may be a beginning towards constitutional safeguards for the 'Assamese people'. Constitutional safe-guards, if can be attained at all, have to be meant for the 'Assamese people', and not an exclusive right for the political class. *(The Assam Tribune, 26/12/2016)*

## **Kalyan Ashram Assam Shine at the National Level Sports Meet**

The Archery team of Kalyan Ashram Assam won 03 Gold, 06 Silver and 07 Bronze and 04 trophies in 19<sup>th</sup> National Level Archery Competition for the Janjatis of India held from 29<sup>th</sup> December 2016 to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 at Mumbai. The national level event was organized by Akhil Bharatiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram (ABVKA).

ABVKA is a Philanthropic organization working for the all round development of the tribal communities of India since its inception in 1952. It is serving the people through various service mission projects in the field of education, health, women empowerment, youth awareness, sports and culture etc.

All of us know that the tribal youths are born players, artists, dancers and singers with extraordinary qualities as living close to nature. Their life is very tough in hilly terrain or dense forests but God has bestowed numerous skills to them. Rock climbing, archery, swimming, hunting are part of

their daily life, but in course of time and modern age, the new generation are getting distant from the rural areas; even though all those skills are in their blood. By exploring these qualities, provide them platform to exhibit their inborn talent in sports field, Kalyan Ashram has done a tremendous job from last 30 years.

This time in above said Archery competition at Mumbai, the team of Assam led by Shri Biru Sanwara, Shri Ajit Rabha and Smt Niyati Rabha performed excellently and brought pride for the state by winning 20 medals. Kumari Sania Boro bagged 03 Gold, Kumari Anita Khaklari hits 03 Silver, Shri Derachar Boro, Maniram Narzari and Shri Sukrajit Kachari bagged one silver each where Shri Malondra Rabha and Shri Priyabrat Rabha both won two Bronze and Kumari Junmani Kachari, Shri Dulan Tanti and Shri Maniram Narzari bagged one Bronze each. Besides that Kumari Saniya Boro declared as the Best Archer in Sub Junior Group

(Contd. to Page 20)

## Prof. Gangmumei Kamei No More

- Jagdamba Mall

Prof. Gangmumei Kamei (76) expired on January 5, 2017 at 8.10 am at his residence at Majorkhul, Imphal. He was admitted in Govt. Medical College Imphal for some times where his youngest son Dr. Ram Kamei is serving as govt. doctor. He was suffering from some old age diseases and finally he breathed his last in presence of wife and family members. He is survived by wife, three sons, one daughter, and daughters in law, grand children and brother. To many he was a teacher, a mentor, a guide and at a time evens a friend. A professor of history at Manipur University Gangmumei Kameiji was well known not only for what he taught inside classrooms but also for his keen sense of observation, ability to strike a chord with almost anyone and perhaps here lies the most likeable aspect of the man which made him "Guruji" in true sense. What set apart the professor for the man in him was ability to get his ideas across to young people outside the classroom. A quality which cannot be attributed to all teachers and professors. He was an outstanding nationalist historian, renowned scholar, a brilliant author, an honest politician, a committed patriot, sweet and soft spoken kind hearted social worker and a promoter of eternal religion and culture of janjati communities. He was educated at Imphal and Guwahati and worked as an Associate Professor of history in Jawaharlal Nehru University, Centre for Post Graduate Studies and Manipur University. He was National Fellow at Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Shimla where he produced a remarkable book- History of Manipur (3 vols). He has authored over a dozen books and presented over a hundred research papers. He was the founder President of Federal Party of Manipur (1993) and has

been a minister in the govt. of Manipur several times. He was preceptor founder of Tingkao Raguang Chapriak (TRC) - the eternal religion of Rongmei Nagas. He was President of Zeliangrong Peoples Convention (ZPC) and worked hard for Zeliangrong integration under guidance of Padma Bhushan Rani Gaidinliu. He was closely associated with Bharatiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram, RSS, VHP and a host of other socio-cultural organizations in NE region and at national level. He was Patron of Janjati Dharm Sanskriti Suraksha Manch (Janjati Faith and Culture Protection Forum, Northeast region. Padma Bhushan Rani Gaidinliu blessed him as son and he fulfilled her aspirations by successfully leading TRC, Zeliangrong Heraka Organization and ZPC which worked for Zeliangrong integration. He joined BJP in 2012 and fought elections. He was nominated for two very important and prestigious assignments: 1. Member of Indian Council for Historical Research (ICHR) and 2. Member of Regional Planning Body, North Eastern Council (NEC) under doner Ministry in July 2015 which he held till his last breath. He was a bed rock of nationalist movements in insurgency ridden Naga society and Northeast region and a strong link of the chain of patriotic people and nationalist socio-cultural movements. As close associate of Pou NC Zeliang, President of Zeliangrong Heraka Organization, Northeast Bharatvarsh, Prof. Gangmumei Kamei was a personal friend of Vasant Rao Bhatta and Bhaskar Rao of Kalyan Ashram, HV Sheshadri and KS Sudarshanji of RSS, LK Advaniji of BJP. In his demise, Nation has lost a great son of Bharatmata. Bharatvarsh pays a tribute and heat felt condolence to this great man from Manipur.

(Contd. from Page 19)

## Kalyan Ashram Assam Achieved the Target at National Level

and the Assam team declared as the best team in Sub Junior and Senior and overall performance in the tournament.

The Nagar Samiti of Kalyan Ashram Guwahati organized a grand reception and felicitation programme for the winner team of Assam on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2017. Shri Madanmohan Mall, Treasurer of Kalyan Ashram Assam, Shri Babulal Shrimal, Shri Premji Khajanchi, Shri Ghanshyam Ladiya and others congratulate the players and appreciated the

efforts of Kalyan Ashram in bringing out the hidden talent of tribal youths in sports field.

Players like Limbaram (Archery), Kavita Raut (Athlete) have performed in many national and International competitions and brought laurel for the nation, they are the products of Kalyan Ashram.

Around 500 tribal players of Kalyan Ashram are regularly participating and winning medals in national level Tribal Sports Festival organized by ABVKA in every four years.

## Xattria Dance Institute in Mexico!

It is a pleasant and proud moment for the Assamese community that a Xattria Dance Institute has been set up in Mexico. This apart, the institute has been set up by a 'proud' Mexican national out of her own efforts.

Ms Betzabel Falfan has a master's in Xattria Dance form and is pursuing her PHD degree on the same subject from Paris University. She first came to Assam in 2013 in the course of her travel to India.

"The Xattria dance institute in Mexico is named as 'Teatro-Danza clasica de India' evolved out of the knowledge and essence of my visits in different Xattras of Assam. I am proud in the venture of setting up one. Currently I have eight regular students, six children and two adults, in the institute. The very first time I came to Assam I had to be accustomed with the tradition, religion, culture and language of the Assamese community, and became fond of it. I first performed Xattria Dance at the Uttar-Kamalabari Xattra," Falfan Said.

Falfan, on a satisfying note, said that she felt



that the Xattria Dance form helped to transform herself into a vehicle in the life's journey to find happiness in the world. In course of her learning the dance form she has found the earth to be in the path of sociality and got an opportunity to look into her inner being.

When asked apart from culture and dance forms that Srimanta Sankardev propagated what other faculties of the great Saint attracted her, Falfan pointed out that she is an ardent admirer of the great Saint.

"The culture and the dance forms are at their respective footings. This apart, the simple way of living in the 'ek-xoron-naam-dharma' attracts me the most. In short, I am attracted to the great Saint. Sankardev taught the mass about humility, brotherhood and cleanliness, among others, Falfan added.

When asked on the response from Mexicans to Xattriya Dance and culture, she said: "Children are enthusiastic as they are attracted to Lord Krishna."

*(The Sentinel 10/01/2017)*

---

## Assam Governor, CM Felicitate Kid Footballer for Selection in

---

Assam Governor Banwarilal Purohit and Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on 12<sup>th</sup> January felicitated nine-year old footballer Chandan Boro, who has been selected for a six-year-long residential coaching in Germany.

"I congratulate you on your achievement and hope you will go a long way," the Governor said while congratulating Chandan and handing him an appreciation certificate and a memento at the Raj Bhavan here.

He hoped that Boro would overcome all hurdles and reach the zenith of success to add many feathers of success through hard work and

dedication.

Boro and his family members also called on the Chief Minister who assured him of all support and necessary help by the state government.

It may be mentioned that the young footballer from Harisinga was selected in a selection camp organized at Kokrajhar by the Tata Trust, Mumbai under the Football Development Programme in partnership with U Sports Mumbai and Germany under U Dream Football for selection of football talents under 15 years of age.

*(<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/assam-guv-cm-felicitate-kid-footballer-for-selection-in/1/855992.html>)*



## Celebration of Nulding Kut, the Festival of Renewal of Life



The people belonging to Biate community of Dima Hasao celebrated Nulding Kut, the festival of renewal of life, throughout the district with traditional fervour and gaiety on Wednesday, the 11th January, 2017...

At Fiangpui near Haflong, the Biate Cultural Organization organized a day-long programme at Fiangpui playground, where T. Ngamlai, Primary Education Officer, NC Hills Autonomous Council, attended as the Chief Guest while LC Nampui, a retired government official, was the 'Kut Pa'.

Nulding Kut is one of the many festivals of the Biate tribe which is being celebrated since time immemorial. The important and significant aspect of this festival is that it is regarded as the 'Festivals of Renewal of Life' by the Biate people. In the olden days the ancestors used to celebrate this prestigious festival during the early part of January every year on different dates in different villages. The ancient people considered this festival to symbolize the beginning of a new year. The people observed this remarkable day by performing religious rites followed by social function like performance of cultural dances, singing of folk songs, drinking of liquor (Zu) and merry-making.

People of all ages, especially the women, dress themselves in their colorful customary attire (Nampuan). People also indulge in playing games and sports all day long. People are supposed to forgive and forget their shortcomings, sorrows and discontentment arising out of their past deeds. Hence, the occasion is also regarded as a day of forgiveness (Ngaidamnani).

Another important feature of this festival is that it is celebrated as a day of prayer led by the village priest (Thiampu). People assemble in one place and pray to God (Puihitm) for forgiveness of their past sins and errors (Siia! neh sin ichai). They also seek blessings from God for prosperity in the coming year. In this way people renew their faith and commitment before God on that day.

Another interesting feature of this festival is that the elderly people meet together in the house of the village chief (Siar Kalim) and hold a village durbar meeting (Devan). They sit around a pitcher full of homemade liquor (Zu). They drink the liquor one after another sharing a single bamboo pipe (Thlongthli) while they discuss about their agricultural activities, fishing, art of hunting and the administration of the village. Similarly, the youth of the village also had a field day during this festival. Young men and women are sent outdoors by their parents to participate in various programmes and as a result the youths are able to mix-up together and avail a rare opportunity to choose their life partners (Nupui/Pasal).



The day's programme also include traditional dance, ramp show and showcasing traditional art & craft of the Biate community and is followed by a grand feast where all the people, irrespective of caste, creed and status, take part. Preservation, conservation and development of tradition and culture are also stressed in the programme.

*(The Sentinel 12/01/2017)*

(Contd. from Page 5)

## Protecting Indigenous Heritage...

Weaving ethnic dresses, basketry, fishing, jhum cultivation, and wet rice cultivation, indigenous knowledge about plants and biodiversity, indigenous faith, indigenous religious practices are part of indigenous heritage. Who is the custodian? Who are the practitioners? Are all the people of the group? The question of class differences make it easy to understand. It is seen that most of the people who are still maintaining indigenous life styles are real custodian for preserving the indigenous heritage. In the changing circumstances, it is essential to think by every people to lay emphasis our own heritage. Globally, it is observed that Christianity has a major impact on indigenous beliefs and practices. Now, a group of people has emerged to lay emphasis on their indigenous practices. People are serious about own identity. Likewise, it is essential to put emphasis on our tangible and intangible heritage. In north eastern context, we are rich in indigenous heritage. We have to preserve and protect from onslaught due various factors and forces. Why is it essential? It is due restore our own ethnic identity and to prepare protective mechanism so that cream of our heritage cannot be taken away by outsiders for commercial benefit. What is required to do? It essential to find out the

component that is part of indigenous heritage of a particular community. It is pertinent to mention here that they must recognized such practices, indigenous items, arts and crafts items, ethnic designs, knowledge of indigenous herbs utilized in curing various diseases and ailments and other things is of their own. It is found that some of the indigenous products have aesthetic appeal and market value. Those products has always caught eye of unscrupulous traders and businessmen. There is dearth of strong legal instruments to protect such items. However, for your concern the World Intellectual Property Right Organization has provided some guidelines in order to protect traditional expressions of indigenous heritage. In Indian context, there are IPR laws like Patent, Copyright and Geographical Indications Act, but it is not sufficient so far as protecting indigenous heritage is concerned. It needs other alternatives. We are trying to document various items of indigenous heritage of various groups of NER. I will focus in the next issue. If somebody interested to provide necessary feedback, suggestions, opinions, it is very much encouraging.

(Email: [ranga\\_das@rediffmail.com](mailto:ranga_das@rediffmail.com))

(Contd. from Page 8)

## Monoliths, Mawbyinna or Hinges of Nartiang...

Pronoy Roy, Director NDTV, reading the book 'Heritage and Tradition' related to Nartiang, uploaded in internet the uniqueness of Nartiang and invited votes for Nartiang by logging on [www.com7wonderofindia.com](http://www.com7wonderofindia.com) North Eastern State Category, (Shillong Times 10.01.2009).

The stone garden or Kper Mawbyinna finds mention in the book published by Archeological Department of the Government of India. It is also acknowledged as a place of attraction for visitors and tourists. Initiatives have already been taken to improve and upgrade this tourist site.

Nartiang is not only a place of attraction for tourists for its historical background but also a holy place of pilgrimage to pay obeisance to 'Devi Jayantee', one of the 51 sacred sites spread over from Himalayas to Srilanka, Meghalaya to Pakistan. Here one can also have a glimpse of the ancient socio-cultural life of the people of North Eastern region.

The author visited this holy place on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2016, the auspicious day of Bijoya Dasami or Dassera. Many dignitaries and commoners from the villages located around the place, all well dressed in their traditional attires, and also gathered there. Honourable V. Sahnmuganathan, Governor of Meghalaya, Swami Anuragananda, Secretary Ramakrishna Mission, Cherrapunjee, Shri Vincent H Pala, Member of Parliament, Shri Sngewbhalang Dhar, Local MLA and many others paid their obeisance to the Goddess. The local authorities thanked the gathering for their assemblage at the sacred temple of "Maa Jayantee Mandir Nartiang", and requested them to help them in redeeming its lost identity. Honourable Governor, Local Member of Parliament and Legislative Assembly, all expressed their willingness to improve and upgrade the holy place Nartiang like other holy places in the region and the country.

(Contd. from Page 12)

## Cultivating Rural Technology for Development

surveyed this fact in Himachal Pradesh while running his NGO called Himalayan Research Group, a core group under the Department of Science & Technology of Government of India. According to him, solar water and space heating collectively mitigates around 5 metric tons of carbon emission per household per annum. Besides, indoor pollution is cut down and there is remarkable amount of forest conservation.

‘These areas have sunny days for most of the period in a year. We went on to install 200 solar water heating panel and 100 space heating panels in Shimla, Manali and Kullu districts of Himachal Pradesh. Now installing of 160 such panels is underway in remote and tribal valley of Zaskar in Jammu & Kashmir under DST-TIME-LEARN programme’, declares Dr Lal Singh. About the efficiency he says, ‘Solar water heating panel achieves 90 C water temperature in full sun initially in 35-45 minutes and successively in 20-25

minutes. It can provide 100-200 litres of water per day on sunny days. Space heating panel blows air maximum at 65°C and improve 100-150 C temperature of living space inside house and some warmth remains far beyond sunset lasting up to 10 pm. The entire installation can be made by a local carpenter and its cost hovers around Rs. 35,000 and after subsidy it comes down to below Rs. 20,000.

The Ministry of Human Resources and Development has been goading scientific transformation through Unnat Bharat Abhiyan. Rural Technology Action Group (RuTAG) is located in eight IITs and coordinated by the Office of the Principle Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Govt. of India. The National Innovation Foundation has also been giving fillip to innovative ideas at the inception level and has success stories appreciated worldwide.

*(The Sentinel, 28/12/2016)*

(Contd. from Page 9)

## Holistic Empowerment of Women

### Gender perceptions linked to empowerment:

Education, travel, the freedom to grow and make decisions, and the opportunity to use education just like men are the key ingredients for changing gender perceptions, not education or economic development alone or jointly, Vlassoff and others concluded in their 2014 Asian Population Journal study, Economic Development, Women’s Social and Economic Empowerment and Reproductive Health in Rural India.

“Social empowerment- an outcome of education, mobility (travel related) and the freedom to make decisions- and economic empowerment- symbolised by a woman’s employment status- have a greater impact on a woman’s reproductive health- including the number of daughters she is prepared to have in the hope of having a son- than economic development- quantified by family asset ownership,” said Vlassoff.

In her study, Vlassoff saw great changes in Gove’s social empowerment indicators: 58 per cent of women had eight or more years of schooling in 2008, compared to only 8 per cent of the 1975 respondents; 65 per cent of respondents travelled to the district capital at least once a month in 2008, compared to only 25 per cent in 1975.

The impact of all this: 86 per cent women were willing to stop trying for a son after three daughters in 2008 versus only 24 per cent in 1975.

“The more socially empowered respondents were, the more likely they were willing to stop at fewer children,” said Vlassoff. To trigger social change, she added, “it is important for more women to take up formal employment to gain confidence and independence, start thinking for themselves and standing up for their beliefs”.

*(The Sentinel 22/12/2016)*

## India Successfully Test-fires Nuclear Capable Agni-V

India tested its Agni-V intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in its final operational configuration from Wheeler Island off Odisha on Monday, paving the way for its eventual induction into the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) after user-trials.

The nuclear-capable Agni-V, which can even reach the northernmost parts of China with its strike range of over 5,000-km, was test-fired from its canister on a launcher truck just after 11 am. “All the test parameters of the missile, which was tested for its full range, were successfully achieved. The missile splashed down near Australian waters,” said an official.

Successful test firing of Agni V makes every Indian very proud. It will add tremendous strength to our strategic defence.

This fourth and final experimental test of the three-stage Agni-V comes after a gap of two years due to minor technical tweaking required in the ballistic missile as well as the need for India to exercise some strategic restraint when it was seeking entry into the 48-country Nuclear Suppliers Group (which was thwarted by China) and the 34-nation Missile Technology Control Regime (which India joined earlier this year).

The tri-Service SFC, established in 2003 to manage India’s nuclear arsenal, will have to conduct at least two user-trials before the 50-tonne missile is produced in adequate numbers for induction.

While the 17-metre tall Agni-V was tested in an “open configuration” in April 2012 and September 2013, the third test in January 2015 saw it being



fired from a hermetically sealed canister mounted on a Tatra launcher truck. The missile’s canister-launch version makes it even deadlier since it gives the armed forces requisite flexibility to swiftly transport and fire the missile from anywhere they want.

Once the Agni-V is inducted, India will join the super exclusive club of countries with ICBMs (missiles with a range of over 5,000-5,500km) alongside the US, Russia, China, France and the UK.

Apart from the shorter-range Prithvi and Dhanush missiles, the SFC has inducted the Agni-I, Agni-II and Agni-III missiles. While these missiles are mainly geared towards Pakistan, the Agni-IV and Agni-V are specifically meant for deterrence against China. Beijing, of course, is leagues ahead in terms of its missile and nuclear arsenals.

*(<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-successfully-test-fire-nuclear-capable-agni-5/articleshow/56177457.cms>)*

## Chinese Media Warns India

China will not sit quietly if India boosts military ties with Vietnam to counter Beijing, a Chinese newspaper warned on Wednesday. An op-ed in Global Times also told New Delhi not to “stir up troubles” in Southeast Asia. “If the Indian government genuinely treats its enhancement of military relations with Vietnam as a strategic arrangement or even revenge against Beijing, it will only create disturbances in the region and China will hardly sit with its arms crossed,” said the daily which is said to represent the views of the Chinese

leadership. According to reports, India is in talks with Vietnam to sell indigenous surface-to-air missile system. “This was supposed to be a normal arms sale, yet was portrayed by the Indian media as a response ‘to counter the Chinese threat.’” the daily said. It said it was natural for New Delhi to deepen its ties with Hanoi, which is a pillar of India’s Act East Policy. It, however, cautioned that “such ties should be built for the sake of peace and stability in the region, rather than stirring up troubles or anxiety for others.”

*(The Sentinel 12/01/2017)*



## The Brahmin and the Crooks



In a small village, there lived a Brahmin, by the name of Mitra Sharma. He was a worshipper of Fire-God. One day, during monsoons, when the sky was overcast with cloud, he decided to conduct a certain sacrificial ritual.

The Brahmin travelled to a nearby village, to visit a devotee, to request for a goat that he will offer it as a sacrifice to the Gods.

On his arrival, he requested the devotee, "Son, I want to perform a sacrificial ritual on this auspicious time. Please offer me with a well-fed goat."

The devotee agreed and offered him with one of his best goats.

The Brahmin started his journey homewards. He carried the goat on his shoulders, so that he did not have problems in controlling the animal on the way home.

On his way home, three crooks watched him from a distance. They were almost starving, and the Brahmin had a goat and he was all alone.

They discussed, "We will be saved from the fangs of hunger in this cold monsoon, if we can lay our hands on this goat that the Brahmin is carrying."

They decided to trick the Brahmin, in order to gain the goat for themselves.

As planned, the first of the crooks stood in the Brahmin's path, by taking a shorter road.

When the Brahmin, with the goat on his shoulders, approached him, he queried, "Ho Brahmin, Why is it that you behave so ridiculously?"



"Why on earth are you carrying a profane dog on your shoulders?"

On hearing this, the Brahmin got angry, he replied, "How can you not

see any difference between a goat and a dog? Are you blind? Can't you see I am carrying a sacrificial goat?"

The crook had played his part, and replied, "Please don't get angry on me. You may have it anyway you want. Please carry on with your journey".

A little further, he was approached by the second crook, who said, "Ho Brahmin, shame on you! How can you carry this dead calf on your shoulders like that? Shame on you!"



The Brahmin got even angrier, "Are you blind? Can't you see it is a goat and not a dead calf?"

To this the second crook replied, "Have it anyway you want it to be, please don't get angry on me."

When the Brahmin had gone a little further, the third crook accosted him, "Ho Brahmin. This is highly improper for you do something like this.



Why do you carry a donkey on your shoulders? Put him down, before anyone sees you doing this!"

Now, the Brahmin started thinking how can three different persons not see that was carrying a goat? He thought that he must be carrying a goblin, which is changing shape all the while.

Fearing so, he put the goat down on the ground and ran home terrified.

The crooks had succeeded in their plan. The crooks caught the goat at once, and feasted on the goat to their heart's content.

The wise indeed say: **Untruth spoken repeatedly appears to be truth.**







