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# HERITAGE EXPLORER

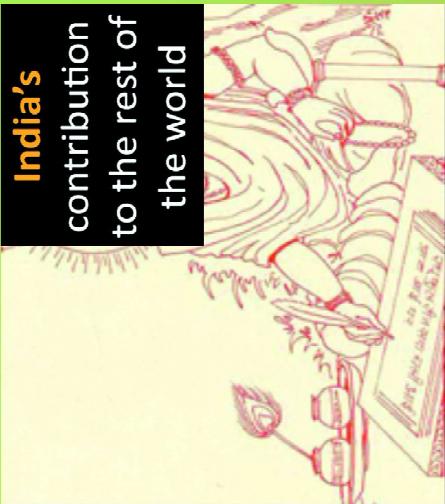
"LET KNOWLEDGE COME FROM ALL THE SIDES"

*A Monthly News Bulletin*

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



2. Theory of Karmaphal  
- Rebirth

3. Idealistic families

4. Abundance of saints & reformers.

5. Division of society order (based on personal choice, interest, capabilities) & personal life for personal development, for development of society



Courtesy : <http://www.slideshare.net/jitendraadhikari/indiass-contribution-to-the-world>

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## What happened to God's own people

People often refer Kerala as God's own country, but they seldom refer the people of north eastern region of our country as God's own people, which truly they are. This is perhaps due to lackluster projection of the region by media and tourism promoters of our country. Northeast India has over 220 ethnic groups and an equal number of dialects. The hill states in the region like Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland are predominantly inhabited by tribal people with a degree of diversity even within the tribal groups. However, despite the diversity of their origin the tribal groups have assimilated with the earlier settlers and formed distinct groups of tribal populace as we know them today. Post independence, different states were formed on the basis of their cultural definition. Today north India has eight distinct states with their distinct culture, tradition and heritage but the one unifying thread that binds them all into one garland of unparalleled excellence is their animistic beliefs, closeness to and dependence on nature, and the god gifted natural bliss of flora and fauna.

Almost all the tribal communities of north east, despite living in very remote areas far from the so called civilized society, but none the less they were self-sufficient in food, healthcare, and other day to day needs. They developed their own agricultural systems, hunting and fishing skills, gathering food and medicines from the naturally grown herbs and plants, trained their youths to boldly face the adversities of life. They were pure in mind, god believing, intelligent but unadulterated by the modernity.

Unfortunately, this simpleminded god's children today have almost abandoned their age old faiths and beliefs of their forefathers and do not care about following in the footprints of their ancestors. This is mainly because of the present day anglicized education offered by missionary educational institutions, lure of fake modernity; worldwide culture of consumerism and above all, the inferiority complex that the tribal faiths are taboo ridden hocus pocus and no match for the organized religions. The proof of this degeneration due to loss of faith can be found in the abnormally higher growth of HIV infection amongst the tribal youths of north east. HIV/AIDS cases have been steadily going

up in Arunachal Pradesh over the past five years, with 223 cases being recorded till last March. Mizoram recently reported that at least 17,897 people are infected with HIV/AIDS, the highest in the country, with nine persons testing positive every day. Officials said 2,557 fresh HIV cases were detected in 2018-19, which was "extremely high" as the state has a merely ten lakh population. Manipur has the highest HIV prevalence rate among adults in the country at 1.06%. In Nagaland, which has a population of around 20 lakh, 10,16,700 blood samples were screened between 1999 to 2018. Of that 22,878 have reported positive. In 91% of the cases the route of virus transmission is repeated use single needle for injecting drugs, unsafe sex, especially between the age group of 25 to 34 years. In other tribal majority states the situation is no better.

Now the question arises as to why the youths of the tribal communities, especially those of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim are becoming victims of HIV, the root cause of which is drug addiction. Since these north eastern states are not financially impoverished and there are no cause for frustration due to unemployment, the reason behind drug abuse lies elsewhere. The apparent cause is affluence and too much money in the pockets of the youth. The next visible reason is easy availability of drugs and government failure to control it. The unseen reason behind this upsurge appears to be international conspiracy hatched by China. They are upto destroying our youths and thus destroy our nation. The way Punjab was half destroyed by Pakistan by making the drugs easily available in the province, the Chinese and other anti India elements are using the same route. Thirdly the innumerable extremist groups in this region are using drugs as a commercial commodity and are making sizeable income. Laundering money from foreign sources is difficult but exchanging drugs for money is much easier. The Government, the parents, conscious public must understand the situation and foresee the dark future. The task of restraining the drug cartels is impossible for the Government without the support of public. We must not be idle spectators of this nasty game rather join it as active warriors.

**Chief Editor**

# Janjati Gaurav Divas

## Birth Anniversary of a Great Freedom Fighter and Martyr:

### Bhagwan Birsa Munda

The Birth Anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda is celebrated as a day of pride by every nation loving person particularly janjatis for special significance of his life mission that has brought seminal changes in their lives. The entire nation reveres him and looks up in admiration to his 14 feet tall statue in Parliament and a portrait in Parliament Museum that herald loudly and clearly the resolve for the development of janjatis by enlivening their values and ethos. The formation of Jharkhand State on his birth anniversary emphasizes the commitment of the country to the spirit and values he fought for. The War Cry “Birsa Munda ki Jay” of the Bihar Regiment of the Army emboldens everyone to fight for the security and protection of the great nation. Bhagwan Birsa Munda emphasized comprehensive concept of change and progress underscoring janjati customs and character.

Bhagwan Birsa Munda was a visionary person. Rajya Sabha picture gallery pays tribute to this great leader as a peerless protagonist of tribal rights. He was a constructive genius, who made pioneering efforts to unite janjati (tribal) people for their political and cultural emancipation from the British and Christian missionary supremacy. He inspired simple and honest janjatis with the supreme spirit of nationalism. He was a great patriot and made the ultimate sacrifice infusing hope and aspirations in millions of people and became a martyr. His struggle was a role model for the development of janjatis.

The janjatis have a valorous history of continuous armed struggle to overthrow the British colonial administration since 18th century. In 1784-85 Mahadev Koli tribe in Maharashtra and Tilka Manjhi of Santhal tribe raised the sword; Kurchiyas under the leadership of Talakkal Chandu attacked British in 1802 and then led organized struggle against the British invasion in Wayanad in 1812; in the North

East Singphos attacked British forces in Sadiya in 1830; Kol tribe in Chotanagpur area heralded the armed struggle in 1832; the Khonds in Orissa fought in 1850; the Great Freedom Struggle by Sidho-Kanho in Santhal region was in 1855; Nilambar-Pitambar of Kharwar tribe have made immense contribution in the freedom struggle of 1857 in Jharkhand, Bhagoji Naik led the struggle of Bhils in 1857-58; Raghunath Shah and Shankar Shah's sang revolutionary songs before being torn asunder into tiny pieces by cannon balls for leading Gondwana's battle against the British; the Lushai janjati people of Mizoram attacked British forces in 1860; the Sentinelese janjati of Andaman and Nicobar island attacked British in 1883; Shambudhan Phonglo from Dimasa janjati fought in 1883 against the British in Dimasa areas of Assam; the Angami Nagas revolted against British around 1880s; the British government was afraid of Tantya Bhil's revolutionary activities in late 1890s, Bhagwan Birsa Munda embodied this energy in his armed struggle in 1895.

Bhagwan Birsa Munda was born on November 15, 1875 in Ulihatu village of Kunti district in Jharkhand in Chotanagpur plateau. He experienced, as he grew up, that the British were attracted to that region for its vast natural resources, forest wealth and minerals. He realized that this led to the rise of various ugly and terrible changes not only in the traditional janjati agrarian system but also in janjati ancient faith and culture. These ugly changes such as first Forest Policy of 1894 were conclusively introduced for reinforcing and sustaining an exploitative British colonial system making the life of janjatis inhabiting this region extremely difficult. He also realized that the Christian missionary activities in the garb of school education were annihilating the vigor and vitality of janjatis by

tearing apart their beliefs and customs for proselytization. He was intimidated and bullied to eat cow meat. He realized their deception and deceit for altering their ancient janjati faith into Christianity thereby making the future of tribes very bleak.

In such circumstances prevailing during the last quarter of the nineteenth century Bhagwan Birsa Munda rose like a phoenix. He asserted that progress and change, whether in land and agriculture or in faith and culture will be possible only if it is rooted in values and ethos of janjati tradition.

During his lifetime of 25 years the flame of social and cultural revolution ignited by him brought seminal changes in the life of the tribes of the country. He energized youths to fight armed struggle against the oppressive British colonial system which he believed was the mother of all evils. The youths with tremendous trust and confidence formed a strong organization to bring in social reforms as well. These social reforms were meant to make life of common janjatis more and more healthy as well as happy. The reforms that Bhagwan Birsa urged for were encompassing every aspect of janjati life such as to live human life free from any addiction so as to keep the precious soul and body healthier for dedication to the almighty God; every house should be kept neat and clean and should have a Tulsi plant in its courtyard; every household should diligently care for cow; the mother earth should not be tilled on Thursday, and many such simple and universal principles

The armed freedom struggle against the British oppression highlighted the spirit of nationalism reminding the British colonial system that the spirit of 1857 was alive even in remote interior mountainous areas of the country. He proclaimed the slogan “Maharani rajtundujanaoroabua raj seterjana”. (Let the kingdom of the British queen be ended and our kingdom be established) During his intense armed struggle he realized that the missionary network informs about their activities to the British authorities to annul the janjati spirit of freedom. The

people understood that the missionaries were in collaboration with the British and even spying for them. Bhagwan Birsa raised the alert in a simple slogan “Sahab, Sahab, EkTopi.” Gradually everyone realized that church activities were never striving for justice to the janjatis as they always claimed to be so. It ultimately resulted in an incident on Dombari Hill which was a precursor to Jalianwala Bag massacre of 1919 in Punjab in cruelty and savagery of the British when they opened fire on the janjatis gathered under the leadership of Bhagwan Birsa.

Bhagwan Birsa was imprisoned by the British on 3rd February, 1900. He took his last breath in Ranchi Jail on June 9, 1900, at the age of 25. Even though he had no symptoms of the disease, the British authorities claimed that he died of cholera. Several tribal leaders speculated that jail authorities might have poisoned him. Even his death highlighted the British cruelty and crookedness.

Bharat Mata ki Jay



# Kiang Nangbah, The Freedom Fighter of JAITIA People

Heibormi Sungoh

Kiang Nangbah was a gifted son to the Jaintia People during the British rule in our Land, that is Jaintia and Khasi Hills. He was born to Smt Rimai Nangbah from the Sookpoh (Four Clans). The four Clans are, Wet, Tein, Bon, and Doh, settling in particular village known as Jwai, near Tpep Pale. His naming ceremony was performed in his birthplace according to Niamtre religion (the traditional religion of Jaintia people) derived his name after long chanting to the creator. Kiang Nangbah was a child who really loved his lovely Jaintia Hills since his childhood. He used to sing a country patriotic song, listened the story narrated by the elders about the valour of his maternal uncle and his colleagues for defending our Jaintia Kingdom. The best story he had ever listened around the hearth, was about Sajar Nangli, the Army Chief of Jaintia Raja.

Kiang Nangbah, in his childhood days was very interested in traditional sports and Games , like Dat Mooñiaw,(counting point by overlapping stones), Iahai (Kabaddi), Archery, Pamwyrngain (swords fighting by using hands), Rah mookhra (weight lifting), Yaslait (wresling), Dainphlir ( resemble like Cricket). During his young days he was very much interested in playing the flute, traditional drums, Chakudiah (bamboo musical instrument) and many others traditional musical instruments. He was very fond of running with high speed, running up and down the pines hills in vicinity of Jowai village. He used to take part in social carrying of paddy from the paddy fields to the village organized by his kith and kin. Sometimes there was a competition known as Phetnangsiang, literally means the carrying of paddy from distant paddy fields to the house of the organiser with equal weighing load; and Kiang Nangbah always became the champion of the arena. His father was a blacksmith who made spades, traditional swords, sickles , knives, Axes, swords and

shields. Most of his products were exported to Jaintiapur and to different parts of neighboring countries. His father was popularly known as woh Wania.

Jaintia kingdom was owned by the British force in the year 1835 where all the powers of Jaintia Raja came to an end and fell in the cruel hands of British Government. In the early stage of its rule the British did not malign the social fabric of Jaintia people; they respected the Administration of the traditional heads, traditional customs and religion. They solely relied on the traditional rules of 12 Daloi (Daloi = traditional head) ruling in their respective Elaka. As the years passed, the administration of British turned from bad. There were many reasons which provoked the Jaintias to stand against the British forces; some of which included,

(i) The house tax imposed by the British on the Jaintias in 1860.

(ii) The interference by the British in the religion and rituals of the Jaintias, such as the cremating of the dead, Behdienkhlam Festival, Pastieh Festival and many others.

While the rest of Bharat were wobbling under the shadow of the first war of Independence, popularly known as Sepoy Mutiny 1857, the same bitter experience was also being felt in our Jaintia Hills.

In 1860 a house tax was imposed and within a few months, the people were in open rebellion. Unfortunately a large force of troops was sent there before the revolt could make any headway. In Jaintia Hills 310 persons were taxed on whom the whole amount assessed was Rs1259. The highest amount levied was Rs 9 per head, and the rest Rs 5 per head.

The most burning issue of the war was the interference of the British at Pastieh of Yalong on Saturday the 21st April 1860 (Muchai market day)

in a particular dance platform known as Khliehmyntang, where shields and swords were destroyed and some shields and swords were taken away by the British. The Shad Pastieh is a religious festival performed during late March or early in the month of April. It is performed at different altars located in Raj Yalong such as (1) Kaikso (2) Myntang (3) Kupli (4) Thanglipdang (5) Knein rapati (6) Musko Daloi (7) Blailakroh (8) Moomulang (9) Ha iung u Lyngdoh (in the Priest house) etc. The people could not resist the might of the British Empire equipped with sophisticated arms. The people were irked by the ghastly behavior of the British Army and were totally helpless.

In Jwai the people under the leadership of U Kiang Nangbah, were actively motivating people of the different Kingdoms/Elakas particularly Shangpung Elaka and motivated Kiri Daloi to take initiative for a rebellion against the British Empire. Kiri Daloi convened a meeting of the neighboring Daloi at Iawmucha (Shangpung market) during Kupli Puja festival, late in the year 1861 where the Daloi of Elaka Mynsoo, Daloi of Elaka Raliang, Daloi of Elaka Nangphyllud and Elders of Khonchnong village under the leadership of Long Suiai and others discussed the suppression by the British. Jwai people played a very active role in convening different regional Durbars to mobilize and revolt against the mighty British force.

The Jaintias held a General meeting at Madiah Kmai Blai, Syntu Ksiar on 15th January 1862 and unanimously elected Kiang Nangbah as the leader of Jaintia force and Kiri Daloi as the spokes person of the Jaintia Durbar, to fight against the British force for their own rights. After the General meeting was over, the Jaintias with their brave hearts began a fierce rebellion and attacked the Jowai Thana where some of the British soldiers were killed and few of them had a narrow escape.

On Monday 20th January 1862 Jaintia people rose in fierce rebellion. This war is popularly known as Thma Jaintia in local Pnar language (which literally means Jaintia rebellion). The wife of Kiri

Daloi, Mrs Chyndon Papang narrated the consequences of agitation to Lakhma Sungoh (my grandmother), who told that after exactly two weeks, "The British came here and invaded us at Raliang market day". The Jaintia people burnt the houses of the native Christian in Jowai on the 23rd January 1862 because they were suspected as the informers of the British and also they didn't join the struggle against the British troops.

In Shangpung sector British troops were led by Lieutenant Colonel W. Richardson with the help of Pator of Nangbah and Shangpung people were lead by Kiri Daloi himself on 5th February 1862. Shangpung people fought bravely against the British force with their bows, arrows and muskets to resist the British force. British made their stockade in the western part of Pynthor Umiurem just opposite to the stockade of Shangpung located on the hillock known as Lummukut. The location of the wyrchakor (stockade) is along the banks of river Umiurem, a steep sloping landscape divided by this River, which flows through Shangpung village and joins Kupli River at Testar. Some of the soldiers from both the parties were wounded and even lost their lives during the battle. As per information from Mr Subor Tkoh Suchiang, the right hand man of Kiri Daloi, eleven persons from Shangpung who were killed during the encounter and Kiri Daloi was among them. Shangpung village was burnt down and the fire raged all through the night. During the incident some old aged and sick persons were burnt alive inside their houses which in-turn traumatised the people of Shangpung. The villagers along with the family of Kiri Daloi were chased out and they fled and hid themselves in the eastern part of the village known as Thlumynchong and Chahong. During their narrow escape many crying babies were thrown away, and some of them died of starvation.

Taxation is another burden added to the tension of people which troubled them and their daily life. The poor people had to pay their taxes using their

utensils, ear rings and other domestic items such rice, clothes, etc.

During the cold night of the Thursday 25th December 1862 (Thymblein market day) at 6.30 P.M British force under the leadership of Lieutenant T.R Saddlier and Lieutenant E.W Walcott from Nartiang led an army to Umpara village where Kiang Nangbah and his followers had escaped. They traveled through the night which was a full moon night without using torchlight except in extreme cases and rested during the day.

Umpara is a small village of 12 houses inhabited by Pnar language speaking people locally known as Khyrwang, which is within 8 hrs to 10 hours of walking distance from Mynser. It is located near a small village known as Rymphum village. The British force were given information by Mon Daloi of Nartiang (Bordaloi or the chief of Daloi) and his right hand man Mr Long Sutnga from Nartiang village itself. The route for dynamic operation to Umpara village was guided by Mr Long Sutnga. The British troop and Long Sutnga reached Umpara at 6 A.M early in the morning when almost all the people were still asleep.

The British troop found it a very difficult task to locate the exact house where Kiang Nangbah and his followers are hiding. So the two Lieutenants sent with Long Sutnga to spy out each and every house. Umpara is a small village divided by a road in the middle so; it is easy for Long Sutnga to perform the task of spying. At last Long Sutnga reached in one hut with a snoring sound of many men. Long Sutnga is a Pnar native speaker, and shouted and called the name of Kiang Nangbah and his followers. Kiang Nangbah and his followers awoke on hearing the Pnar language with a sense that it might be their own supportive people.

People inside the house responded to the request of Long Sutnga and opened the door to see him, with an exhausted mood and shivering from cold. Long Sutnga on seeing Kiang Nangbah screamed and called the British and suddenly grasped Kiang Nangbah, but he was thrown away by physically very strong

Kiang Nangbah.

The Troop rushed to the spot and Kiang Nangbah quickly took his gun and aimed at the head of Lieutenant T.R Saddlier from a very close range but the gun didn't discharge the flames and bullets. The Lieutenant had a narrow escape in this fraction of a second and he promptly ordered his troop to fire while Kiang was picking up his sword. Kiang was shot in his hand and the British captured and forcefully tied his hands behind his back. The beloved wife of Kiang Nangbah from Challam clan and his two children also were taken along with her.

After the British force had accomplished their goal they ordered the villagers to prepare food for them, supervised by the British people. At first instant the local people rejected the order but they had to do it at the gun point. After they had eaten their lunch at Umpara the British force returned back to Nartiang along with the hostages

In the afternoon of the same day (ie 27/12/1862) the British returned back and halted at a Pnar village known as Nonglaket for a night which situated on the way to Nartiang. In the next day ie on (28/12/62) early in the morning they left Nonglaket and reached Nartiang at 8 P.M in the evening and halted at Nartiang with Mon Daloi and Long Sutnga for further work and benefit of the British. The British handed over the wife of Kiang Nangbah and his two children (one male and one female) to Daloi Mon for care taking, but these family of Kiang Nangbah vanished away from the hand of Mon Daloi and Long Sutnga. And early in the morning of the next day (i.e. 29th December 1862), they left Nartiang and reached Jwai at 2 PM in the Evening. U Kiang Nangbah was brought in front of Colonel Dunford and he convicted Kiang Nangbah a final trial with death sentence.

Jaintia Hills was betrayed by Manik Daloi Pakyntein of Jowai, Mon Daloi of Nartiang and Long Sutnga. The British Government had informed that anyone who could give information about Kiang Nangbah would receive a reward of Rs1000/- and

(Contd. to Page 13)

## **Chakaan Gaan-Ngai, the festival of the Kabuis**

**Chaoba Kamson**

Like other community in the world, the Kabui (Rongmei) people, particularly the followers of Tingkao Ragwang Chapriak (TRC), an indigenous religion, celebrate nine to ten festivals in a year. Of these, the Gaan-Ngai is the biggest religious and cultural festival. This festival signifies a distinct and unique identity of TRC people. The whole culture, religion and social life are interwoven in its observance. Meaning of Chakaan Gaan-Ngai

(a) The Chakaan Gaan-Ngai popularly known as the Gaan-Ngai is the festival of winter season. Chakaan means season, Gaan means winter and Ngai means festival.

(b) This festival is also known as a New Year based on Gregorian calendar as it marks the end of the year and beginning of a New Year.

(c) In fact, all the festivals of Kabui (Rongmei) are based on agricultural operation, preoperation and post harvest. So, the Gaan-Ngai is also described as a post harvest festival. The timing of the celebration is when farmers have stored enough food grains in the granaries, they are free from agricultural works, their attention is drawn to festive mood. The sky looks clear and high, winter season sets in and cold wind blows, spirits of the dead ancestors wait at the graves for the coming GaanNgai, the hornbills flies out once in a year, this festival is also celebrated once in a year by the followers of TRC on the 13th day of Manipuri Lunar month of Wakching which falls commonly in the month of January every year. Celebration of this festival by the TRC people of Assam, Manipur and Nagaland is observed widely with religious sacrifices before and after the seed sowing. They have a set of festivals in a year associated with a number of rituals. The reason of celebration of Gaan-Ngai Tingkao Ragwang the Supreme God who created man to execute some important works in this world is that they should not

always confine to works only. They need some rest after hard work and observe festivals of merriment, revelry and abstention from work to honour the gods. They perform the rites and rituals and engage themselves in cultural, customary, social and sports activities. People worship and pray to the God almighty for well-being and prosperity in days to come. The purpose for observance is to sustain cultural activities like singing of folk songs, beating of traditional drums, perform dances, worship Tingkao Ragwang and gods of the lower realm, shouting of huai, filling up the vacant posts of village authority, males dormitory, the house of married women, admission of newly married woman to women's institution, boys and girls to their dormitories etc. Tribute to departed souls (Ngaidongmei) are paid to those who died in the previous year are given ritual farewell during the festival. The graves are beautified and decorated in order to offer the tributes. Farewell dances are also presented in honour of the departed souls. Feast is served to the community in his/her name. It is believed that those souls are with the living people till the end of festival. The family of the deceased offers foods, chutney, drink, fruits on the graves both in morning and evening before the people attending the ceremony are offered food and drink. On the first day of the festival, the males' dormitory gives a big pig's rear thigh as a farewell gift to the family. In reciprocation, the bereaved family also presents farewell gift to male dormitory and parting dance is performed in honour of the departed souls by boys and girls. Both the dormitories of boys and girls offer curry to the dead family in his/ her name till the festival is over. That is why, the Gaan-Ngai festival is regarded important for both the living and the dead. The first day of the festival is called Ngaigangmei. In the early hours of the first day morning, a ritual called Gucheng Phaimei which means offering of a

piece of fresh ginger and an egg to the northern and southern presiding deities (Kaipi Bambu and Kaiba Bambu) is offered to forestall any kind of disturbances and untoward incidents during the festival followed by offering of holy wine to Tingkao Ragwang and other deities for prosperity, well-being and longevity in the coming year. A big pig is sacrificed as offering to Tingkao Ragwang and the priest will examine its spleen and find out the omen. A ritual of culling of paddy at individual family with a big cock is performed for abundant harvest in the coming year accompanied by observation of its legs to know the omen and offering of holy wine to Tingkao Ragwang and other lower realm gods is made. The cooked liver of the cock will be offered by the house wife to Kambuipui (goddess of wealth), Charaipui (goddess of paddy) and Kairao (Ancestors) who live at the hearth stones for good fortune, richness etc. Huai procession and sports activities In the evening at males dormitory, an old man offers holy wine to Tingkao Ragwang and other lower realm gods. Every members of male dormitory, village elders attired in their best colourful costumes, shawl, headgear holding spears in their hands will march up and down of the village shouting huai. After concluding the huai procession the people will move to the jumping ground. Shouting of huai means worship of Tingkao Ragwang. Then, an elder will introduce stone throwing chanting hymns and after conclusion of shot put programme, the same old man will again introduce the long-jump chanting a hymn, "Let us jump like grasshopper." A group of village elders divided into two or three will visit at every household greeting the members of the family to enjoy the festival with love and warn them not to quarrel nor speak ill words against each other during festival. If any fighting or quarrel occurs, the village authority will take a stern action against the offenders. That is called Shaopak Thetmei in the local dialect. At the end, oblation of wine to Tingkao Ragwang and other lower realm gods is offered at the house of village elder. Thereafter, boys and girls will enjoy dining together, singing festival songs, indulging merry-making, dancing, joking etc. led by two male heads of girls

(Tunamunshinmei). The second day of the great festival (Ngaidai) is called Ngaidai and also known as Tamchan-Ngai. All the admitted members of males and girls dormitories bring their respective Tamcha which means gift or subscription in the form of dry meat, vegetable, fruits, eatables etc. to their respective dormitories. The deceased family also brings last Tamcha called Thei-Tamcha to the respective dormitories in the name of persons who died earlier before the celebration of Gaan-Ngai. In the evening, only girls perform a dance known as Tamchan Laam singing songs and beating dance instruments. Tam means chutney of vegetables, Chanmei means offering and Laam means dance. This dance is presented to (i) the house of village Authority (Peikai) (ii) the house of old women (Kengjampui Kaibang) (iii) the house of elders (Gaanchang Kaibang) and (iv) the house of married women (Mathenmei Kaibang). The third day is called Tuna Gaan-Ngai (festival of the youth). In the morning two Khangbons (heads of boys dormitory) will bring their Tamcha to males' dormitory which is known as Khangbon Tamcha. A priest will chant Tamsuan zousuan. Then, the males' dormitory shares some quantity of Tamcha to the house owner of boys dormitory and to the house of village elders. After having cooked, ho-hoing (Huai for Lunch) will be carried out and accompanied by oblation of holy wine and then lunch. After lunch, members of boys dormitory will shout Rilai Huai holding a stick of firewood each in their hands and proceed to the houses of Khangbons. In the evening, boys and girls perform a farewell dance in honour of both Khangbons on being promoted to a higher status as Gaanchang. On this day, if no such dance is there, a farewell dance may be presented to girl(s) if any, who is going to be married after the Gaan-Ngai festival. Again, if there is no farewell dance for the girl, a rotation dance according to seniority will be performed. Longkumei means hill trekking. Boys and girls climb a nearly hill for sight-seeing. They select a king among the boys and a queen among the girls who stood 1st position in singing competition/drum beating/playing of harp/dance etc. by showing their

talents. After performing the above activities, pork meat chutney, wine, boil of vegetables, tea etc. will be served to all participants followed by presentation of a dance there and conclude it by shouting of a long huai. Then, they return home and perform a dance programme in honour of them. This dance is known as Phakgang Laam. The families of the king and queen will offer Laam Baan in the form of money, drink, chutney of vegetables and other eatables for good performance of their dance. On Day Five – the day of ritual offering (Napchanmei), a bamboo pipe known as Khupot is distributed to every household by the boys dormitory. The objective of pipe hanging at every house is to store virus/germs of epidemic disease inside the pipe. In case of absence of pipe hanging in front of any house, a stern action will be taken against the males' dormitory by the village authority. In the evening, a ritual of calling of paddy will be performed by a priest with a cock at their respective dormitories to restore wasted rice during the festival invoking Napsinmei, god in charge of food and goddess, Kangdailu for fruitful harvest in the coming year. The cooked liver along with rice, crushed ginger, salt and wine is offered to Kambuipui, Charaipui and Ancestors. After dinner, all the members of boys dormitory will assemble setting fire at the courtyard of boys dormitory and start singing the songs of Napsin Gansin Raomei which means criticism to Khangbon (Napsin Gansin Raomei) of the two Khangbons and two senior most ganpis jokingly for not being served delicious dishes during the festival. Their dissatisfactions are expressed through songs. These songs are known as Napchan Luh. They also sing songs criticizing the matriarch of the boys dormitory for her activities. These songs are meant to ensure welfare and prosperity in coming year. Singing Competition at Girls' Dormitory - Boys will proceed to Girls' Dormitory singing Luchu Kailong Ronluh for singing competition there with the girls. On reaching at Girls' Dormitory, the boys sing about three songs and another three songs inside the house will also be sung which is known as Luchu Kaihut Luh. The boys take their seats and a village elder will offer holy wine to

Tingkao Ragwang and other gods praying them not to cause any troubles in the course of singing competition. Boys will first sing and girls will respond by rotation. At the end of competition, the boys will return to Boys Dormitory shouting a short huai. On Day Six – all gods are worshipped (Raren Loumei. It is believed that all gods of TRC pantheon also participate in the celebration of Gaan– Ngai festival. It is performed at the upper village gate by a priest. TRC people worship seven brother gods namely, 1. Ragwang – the king of gods of earth 2. Bisnu – looks after the affairs of man, nature, animals etc. 3. Napsinmei – in charge of paddy 4. Karangong – healer of men suffering from dizziness and a teaser of misbehaved youth 5. Chonchai – looks after health, energy and strength and is adverse to wine 6. Charakilongmei – in charge of keeping peace, avoiding quarrelling among man 7. Koklu – owner of office of the god's court The objective of Raren Loumei is to ward off any disease, hardship, illness, misfortune death etc. and evil spirits are not worshipped but they are propitiated not to give trouble, to go away and keep distance from mankind. During the performance of this ritual both the upper and lower village gates are closed and nobody is allowed to go beyond the gates. Violation of this restriction may cause bad consequences. Another reason of closure of the village gates is to stop the evil spirits from entering the village. For this ritual, every household will give a fowl, a piece of fresh ginger and a bundle of banana leaves to the village authority. The cooked chickens are distributed to old men, old women and children who are not admitted as members of males' and girls dormitories. Adults are prohibited from eating this food in the belief that they are not successful in earning of money, wealth etc. After lunch, the priest performs the ceremony of Ragai Kaomei meaning invoking to Tingkao Ragwang for giving welfare and prosperity in bringing peace to the village and people present in the ritual will respond as "Owe" which means "Yes" in unison. This ritual is an act of send-off to all the gods (Raginsonmei) upto the northern village gate. All the Banjas will bring their Raangpat Tamcha in the form

of eatables, salt-cake, things/ materials which are to be distributed to all Banjas equally but Gaanchangs are not entitled to enjoy it. Raangpat Puan (Giving money to village elders) Both the dormitories of males and girls will hand over coin (Puan) as a scapegoat (Pumlin) of boys and girls to the members of village authority. An elder of the village will declare to all the villagers to come and collect the Maru Zou. It is believed, if drunken, it is good for health and longevity of life. After doing the above activities, the village old men will return to the village peikai

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(Contd. from Page 9 )

## Kiang Nangbah, The Freedom Fighter of JAITIA People

for his follower would be Rs 500/-. This reward of Rs1000/- increased the ambition of Long Sutnga which lead to the incarceration of Kiang Nangbah. For a week, Kiang requested Colonel H.F Dunsford to allow him to meet his wife, children, family, and other important friends, but sir Dunsford rejected his request and hanged him to death on 30th December 1862 (Musiang market day) at 5 P.M in the evening at Úawmusiang, Jwai, Jaintia Hills, Hynniewtrepland, India. Before being hanging he uttered the last words, "If my face turns towards the East- my country will be free within a hundred years and if it turns to the West - we will be slaves forever".

In the present context of modern society, Kiri Daloi and Kiang Nangbah are examples of strong aith in the divine and strong will to fight corruption and exploitation of the under-privileged. Their strong commitment and dedication to the Pnar people are examples of love for the motherland and its people. They will forever remain a source of inspiration, determination for the generations to come.

### Sources::

(a) From Smt Lakhma Sungoh the granddaughter

shouting a Rilai Huai where another ritual of calling of soul of the villagers known as Bukaomei will be performed to return the outgoing souls to their respective bodies by a priest with a cock chanting the hymns of calling of souls which escape from the body because of startling news or actions caused by accident. The cooked chickens will be distributed to every household and every member must eat a little quantity of it for good health. Thus, the Gaan-Ngai festival comes to an end.

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of Kiri Daloi, Shangpung Jaintia Hills collected in 1986.

(b) From Shri Tokin Rymbai an IAS officer Government of India collected in 1989.

(c) From Shri Jopthiaw Pariat an independent researcher, Jowai Meghalaya 2012.

(d) From local people from Umpara when i and my friends from Thoohtre cultural and film Society, Jaintia Hills in guidance of Mr Jopthiaw Pariat visited the site on March 2008.

(e) From Don mulieh collected in the year 2000 a Harmuid (traditional drummer) of Raij Yalong and from Mr Lomy Pale.

(f) From the travelling Diary of the Commissioner and Governor General'S Agent, North East Fontier, on special duty in the Cossyah and Jynteeah Hills, from Saturday, 21st March, to Saturday, 4th April 1863, inclusive.

(g) From the North East frontier of India by Alexander Mackenzie published in 1884.

(h) from shri Wellington Pakyntein a noble elder person from Jowai.

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## Festival of “Deepawali” outside India

Major Surendra Mathur (Sena Medal), Retd

I have been saying ever since, that there was Sanatan culture all over Europe. I have studied this subject in great depth. People who believe in mythological religion and culture have started accepting it. Among the sects that have had a special influence throughout Europe are the Celts. They have had influence in many countries such as France, Ireland, United Kingdom, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Austria, etc. Because of the Holocaust invasion of Rome, they had to face thousands of years of slavery. Attempts were made to completely destroy their religion and culture. They are now, beginning to reemerge again. Their Gurus, so called Druids (द्रुज), had played a very important role for the revival of their religion and cultural. The culture of the Celts perfectly matches with the Sanatan culture. Their main deity is Lord Parshuram Ji and is called Dagda. This culture of Europe is widely known as “Danube” culture. Danube is the second longest river in Europe after the Volga River and flows through many countries. The river passes through Germany, Romania, Hungary, Austria, Serbia, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Croatia and Slovakia. The Danube flows southeast for 2,730 km and passes through four capital cities of Europe (Vienna, Bratislava, Budapest, and Belgrade). Danube culture, is a culture associated with the Hindu goddess Danu. This goddess is of water, river and lakes, such as Ganga-Yamuna culture, Indus Valley culture. Goddess Danu at Bali (Indonesia) is the water goddess of Hindus. She is one of the two supreme deities in the Balinese tradition. The temple built in Lake Bratan -Bali is dedicated to Goddess Danu. In Europe, the culture is known as “Tuath (a) Dé Danann”, which means “the folks of the Goddess Danu” and also (“tribe of gods”). Hindus address Lord Hari as, “Hari Om Tatasat”, similarly Goddess Danu is called “Tatasat Danu Or Tuath (a) Dé Danann “, by the Celts. It is certainly clear from this that, the major mythological

culture of Europe is connected with Hindu Gods and Goddess. Let me come to the point and the reason for writing this article. Along with the Gods and Goddesses in Europe, according to our study, the major festivals are associated with the Sanatan culture. These people make almanac (फंचंग) similar to the one by Indians and celebrate the festivals accordingly. The present dominant religion there, had to adopt these ancient mythological festivals and they could not change them. People there have always believed in the lunar calendar. With so many similarities, why we are unable to recognize these festivals? There are two reasons for this. Firstly, forcing people to write their local language in Roman Alphabets and secondly, imposing Gregorian Calendar and fixing a date for each festival. Over the time, people have forgotten the matter and is no more an issue. These festivals though associated with Sanatan culture, are now difficult to identify. In order to confuse people further, the names of these festivals, were associated with the names of the saints of the present dominant sect. To prove my point of view, I am going to present an argument to you about an important festival.

I am going to present the example of Deepavali, the most popular festival of Hindu. Different sects in India celebrate their new year even though they are strongly associated with the Sanatan culture. Deepawali is the most legendary and popular in it. This festival is celebrated all over India. As a child, I have seen my father sending auspicious messages for New Year during Deepawali festival. Then there were changes and people started sending “Season’s Greetings” and New Year disappeared. Now only Diwali greetings are sent. There was mythological practice of closing accounts and opening new accounts, on this auspicious day for centuries. It was a process of closing the financial year and the beginning of New Year. This has long been stopped. Now a days the financial year is from Apr-Mar. The

impact of Indian culture and economy had certainly been on Asian countries. Do you know that Deepawali has been the most mythological and popular festival of Europe? This festival is known as Samhain in Europe. Présent Conditions : It is also important to understand the circumstances, related to this festival in Europe. As I have said, the dates of the festivals were imposed on the society there, so were the dates of this festival. Some festivals were forced to be combined. Which are the festivals, that were combined? They need to be identified. First is Shraddha (श्राद्ध), which was forced to be limited to one-day on October 31. The books written by Celtic elders, clearly mentions that during the mythological period there was a season of Shraddha (श्राद्ध). It is now known as Halloween. Sarvapritri Shraddha (सर्वपितृश्राद्ध) was forced to be celebrated on November 01 in the named as "All Saints Day". Deepawali began to be celebrated on 02 November in the name of Samhain. Thus, it became a three-day festival. If you analyze, the festival of Deepawali usually falls within about ten to twelve days before or after November 02. The dates of festivals have continued to change, even today. We will limit this article to Deepavali (Samhain). The festival of Deepawali is celebrated for five days in India. You will be surprised to know that Samhain is still a five-day festival in the Welsh province of United Kingdom. We will try to analyze this topic by dividing it into four parts. The name of the festival, the dates of the festival, the way festival is celebrated and lastly, similarities of the festival in different countries of Europe. Name Similarities: In India, this festival is known as Deepawali. On this day Lord Rama returned to Ayodhya with Mata Sita after became victorious. Ayodhya residents started celebrating this day as a festival with great joy and then it became a major festival of Indians. This festival is celebrated by lighting lamps at home. Diwali festival usually lasts for five days and is celebrated during the Hindu lunisolar month Kartika. One of the most popular festivals of Hinduism, Diwali signifies spiritual "victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and wisdom over ignorance". We will see whether the European festival Samhain matches the purpose and beliefs of Deepawali. Its most popular name is Samhain in

Europe. In Brittany (France), it is known as Samonios. Samhain has no direct meaning in English. Luckily, we got an extremely legendary calendar of Celts. It featured the month of November as "An t-Samhain". I mentioned earlier that Sanskrit language has had a great influence on all the languages of Europe. We started analyzing the term "An t-Samhain". We got amazing and thrilling success in this work. Believing that it could be a Sanskrit word, we wrote it in Sanskrit. This word came out as (अन्तस्मै). I remembered a verse on the Guru, which makes it clear. An (अन्) in Sanskrit means Eternal (अनन्त) and (तस्मै) Tasmai means Greeting (नमन्). Therefore, An t-Samhain means "Greeting Eternal Gods and Goddesses", a day to bow down to them. How old is this Celtic culture, is really unimaginable and surprising? They consider Lord Parashurama as the main deity. Certainly, this festival should be equally mythological. This meaning is still valid today and matches the objectives of this festival. Due to time and conflicting circumstances, its name (An t-Samhain) became popular by the name "Samhain". People kept forgetting the basic belief. It is also a matter to ponder whether this festival was celebrated before Lord Rama returned to Ayodhya. His arrival in Ayodhya on the same day could be a coincidence. The mythical New Year of the Celts begins with Samhain

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुविष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः । गुरु साक्षात परंब्रह्म  
तस्मै श्रीगुरुवै नमः । शाब्दिक अर्थ – गुरु ब्रह्म हैं, गुरु विष्णु हैं,  
गुरु देव महेश्वर शिव हैं, गुरु ही वस्तुतः परब्रह्म परमेश्वर हैं, ऐसे  
श्रीगुरु के प्रति मेरा नमन हैं।

We will now analyze Brittany's calendar. Samonios is the name of this festival in Brittney. This festival is also celebrated on Amavasya (Dark Moon Day). Analyzed an old 2004 Brittany calendar. The main features of this calendar are, that the month starts on Gyaras (ग्यारस), the eleventh day from Full Moon. Gyaras (ग्यारस) have importance for Hindus. As Diwali used to be the New Year in India in the mythological period, this five-day festival of theirs also starts from Gyaras (ग्यारस) and Deepawali is celebrated on the fourth day. When analyzing the name in Sanskrit, Samonios came out to be (तमसाशः),

meaning “destruction of darkness”. The festival symbolizes “the victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and wisdom over ignorance”. It is the same belief and meaning

Festival celebration dates:

Ireland	Brittney (France)	India
25 Oct 2003		25 Oct 2003
11 Nov 2004		12 Nov 2004
02 Nov 2005	01 Nov 2005	01 Nov 2005
23 Oct 2006		21 Oct 2006
09 Nov 2007		09 Nov 2007

[Note: The dates of Samhain celebration in Ireland were obtained from Celtic Druid Temple [www.celticdruidtemple.com](http://www.celticdruidtemple.com) & the date for Brittney of 2005 from the calendar attached below]

**How the festival is celebrated:** First, we are presenting the information about the five-day celebrations in India. On the first day, Dhanteras is celebrated in which Lord Dhanvantari (God of Ayurveda) is also worshiped. The second day, we celebrate Naraka Chaturdashi. On the third day, we celebrate Deepawali. On the fourth day, we have a program of social interaction, meeting people and relatives. In villages, farmers worship oxen. On the fifth day, the festival of brother and sister meeting is of “Bhai Dooj”. A similar fiveday festival is also celebrated in the Welsh province of the United Kingdom. We also saw that this five-day festival is celebrated in Brittany, France. Their month starts with Gyaras (ग्यारस) which is also an auspicious day for Hindus. People also keep fast on this day. These are all amazing similarities.

**Similarities in festivals in European countries:** It has been found that the Celts in Europe, call this festival “Samhain”. In France it is called Samonios which means (तमसाशः) in Sanskrit: that is, the “destruction of darkness”. Celts are inhabited throughout Europe. In the Baltic countries also, it is called Samhain and generally celebrates on 1 or 2 November under the present circumstances. People of many sects still celebrate according to the mythological almanac (पंचांग).

**Conclusion:** It is clear that Deepawali has been the most important, and most popular festival in India, Asian countries and Europe for centuries. It has also been the New Year of many sects of the world. This New Year has been changed due to adverse circumstances. In India too, it was considered the beginning of a new financial year. It is the most mythical New Year festival in the heart of all societies and sects despite fierce opposition, all over the world. There are common dates to celebrate the festival. It is a festival that can help re-emerge, the mythological cultures of the world. India should take initiative for this. India has emerged as cultural and spiritual Guru to the world. We have also contributed significantly in Yoga and Ayurveda etc. Can we take this pledge to bring the whole world together in one thread to survive the mythological traditions? It has to be resolved that Deepawali will be our new year again. The whole world will consider India as the World Guru. India can.

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# The Jhum Cultivation: The Livelihood of Karbi Hills Tribe

Dhaneswar Engti

(Contd. from previous Issue)

During the '*Sok Keroi*', the frame of minds of young boys and girls become highly hilarious and mirthful to look. They try to exchange sights to each other with much hope and desire to make friendship. The jhum field becomes a romantic place for the young boys and girls. Many young boys and girls do not hesitate to select his/ her future partner during the harvesting season. Hence, the jhum field can be described as a place of joy and delight for the young boys and girls of the village. Thus, the jhum field becomes automatically a place of love and friendship among the young boys and girls of the village. It is a moment of enjoyment and a beginning of carnival of Karbi cultural activities during the harvesting season.

During the '*Rit Kenong*', '*Sok Karlu*', '*Sok Kerot*', and '*Sok Keroi*', these entire periods of jhum cultivations, become starry-eyed for the young boys and girls, but they have go after strict discipline of '*Sarthe*' or '*Rong Asar*' of the village. During the entire period of '*Jir Kedam*', all the young boys and girls of the village are under the strick control of *Klengdun* and *Klengsarpa*. The *Klangdun* and *Klengsarpa* are leaders of the youths of the village; they must follow the commands of '*Klengdun*' and '*Klengsarpa*' during the entire period of '*Jir Kedam*'.

It is mandatory that, during the entire period of '*Jir Kedam*', marriage among the boys and girls is prohibited. It is not allowed to get married during the '*Jir Kedam*'. In this regard the pronouncement of '*Sarthe*' or '*Rong Asar*' of the village is supreme. it is against the Karbi Customary Law. While paddy and other crops are being collected from the jhum field and they start stockpiling it at the '*Jimtim*', a place which is prepared in front of '*Mandu*'. During these awesome moments, many love songs and passionate folk songs creep in automatically in the trusty wits

of young boys and girls of the village. It is the outcome of having long friendship between young boys and girls during the entire period of the jhum cultivations in the jhum fields. As a consequence, the stories of '*Dengjirso Alun*', '*A Tragic Story of Cheleng Athepai*', '*Jir Kedam Atomo*', etc. are also originated from the jhum fields most hauntingly. Due to jhum cultivation the necessity of '*Jir Kedam*', '*Jirsong*', and '*Riso Aterank*' are also originated in the Karbi society. The posts of '*Klengdun – Klengsarpa*' also required to have created for smooth administration of '*Jir Kedam*' under the strong administrative control of *Rong Asar* or *Sarthe*, the headman of the village. *Sarthe* or *Rong Asar* is like a monarch of the Karbi village.

After collecting the crops from the jhum field, the young boys and girls carry the crops to '*Ingkro*' which means a safe place of storing the paddy at the owner's house. It is a suitably prepared place for keeping the crops safely for the consumption of the family for whole year to come. It is worth mentioning that before carrying paddy to '*Ingkro*', the paddy or grains are put into small bags, made of a thick Karbi traditional cotton cloth known as '*Sok Mantung*' in Karbi. '*Sok Mantung*' is made ready for carrying paddy from '*Jimtim*' to '*Ingkro*'. It is especially arranged from a Karbi traditional cloth called – '*Pelu*'.

During the olden days, harvesting festival is organised at the night of '*Sok Keroi*'. After the completion of harvesting of crops, '*Hacha Kekan*' dance form is performed by adult and young boys only at night; girls are not allowed to participate in the '*Hacha Kekan*'. Girls are however allowed to arrange and supply necessary food items required for '*Hacha Kekan*'.

In '*Hacha Kekan*', the role of '*Lunsepo*' is indispensable, without '*Lunsepo*', it is impossible to perform '*Hacha Kekan*' dance. It is incomplete to

perform '*Hacha Kekan*' without '*Lunsepo*', the folk singer. In order to perform '*Hacha Kekan*' dance, the role of '*Lunsepo*' is indispensable. He should be formally invited with due respect by the *Klengdun* and *Klengsarpo* under the due permission of the *Rong Asar* or *Sarthe* of the village. He should be invited by offering him with '*Banta*' and '*Bongkrok*'. During *Hacha Kekan*, '*Lunsepo*' begins to sing the song '*Rongkim Alun*', the song relating to the establishment of first Karbi settlement, after that he goes on to singing the most sacred verse of '*Kathi Keplang Alun*' or '*Sok Keplang Alun*', the song relating to the origin of paddy, showing with much reverence to the goddess of *Kathi* (paddy).

*Lunsepo* leads the dance form of '*Hacha Kekan*' and all necessary directions are given through the singing of '*Hacha Kekan Alun*'. *Lunsepo* is the dance director of '*Hacha Kekan*'. It is a kind of welcoming song of the goddess *Lakshmi* or *Kathi*'. *Kathi* is also known as *Lokhimi Kungripi*. The *Lunsepo* invites the *Kathi* or *Lakhi Kungripi*, the goddess of wealth to reside peacefully inside '*Ingkro*' and bless the family with riches and many good assets. Before *Hacha Kekan* dance commences, a ritual is performed by the *Kurusar* to bless the family at his house, and wished them to give sufficient foodstuff to eat without shortage throughout the year. During the '*Hacha Kekan*', only male members are allowed to perform the *Hacha Kekan* dance according to the progression of song sung by the *Lunsepo*, while girls are allowed to serve the gatherings, and moreover, they have to keep ready all the materials needed for the celebration of *Hacha Kekan* that night.

Now a day, this particular dance form of '*Hacha Kekan*' is almost a forgotten chapter in the Karbi society. It can be seen only in certain places and on special occasions to showcase for public entertainment only. It is performed for exhibition purpose only as Karbi folk dance to showcase during the Karbi Youth Festivals. It is a forgotten cultural item of the Karbis at present. This dance drama of the Karbi tribe can be noticed during the '*Karbi Youth Festival*' only. It is demonstrated by young boys and girls during the '*Karbi Youth Festivals*' every year. The

young boys and girls participate in this beautiful folk dance competitions every year during the Zonal Karbi youth festival and during the main Karbi Youth Festival held at Taralangso, Diphu, Karbi Anglong in the month of February every year.

In fact, the jhum cultivation has a great role to play in the making of the Karbi culture and literature more flourishing and prosperous during the days of old. The socio-economic conditions of the Karbis are still interconnected with the age old jhum cultivation. But, at the present context, it is not advisable to encourage jhum cultivation in the Karbi hills. The time has come for all of us how to protect and preserve our green forest. Our friendly natural balance gives us the opportunity to live longer with a healthy life. Therefore, the tribal people living in the hills must reconsider their thinking seriously about the inadvertent costs of jhum cultivation such as erosion of land, the adverse impacts of global climate changes and seeking to reduce the risk its poses to humanity so seriously.

The jhum cultivation or shifting cultivation is more than a means of livelihood of the tribal people of the hills. On the other hand, such transformative changes, such as the increase dominance of settled agriculture, for example, could have unintended consequences, such as, the erosion of the age old rich culture and traditions of the tribal people also required to be protected lastingly. Jhum cultivation is considered today as a curse to ecosystem, hence, the government has been discouraging the practice of jhum cultivation and multipronged efforts have been made to wean the indigenous communities of the hills away from practicing the jhum cultivation in the hills. According to geologists, the jhum cultivation can destroy our ecosystem which is highly detrimental to our mental health and human race, too. Thus, multiple efforts have been started by the government to discourage jhum cultivation in the hills to sustain humanity in the region.

According to Aimee Gabay, "the found attachment takes three forms: traditional or

(Contd. to Page 26)

## Sister Nivedita: A daughter of Bharat

Sister Nivedita met Swami Vivekananda in 1895 in London and travelled to Calcutta in 1898. Vivekananda initiated her into the vow of Brahmacharya on March 25, 1898. Swamiji wanted that under her care, the women of India, especially in Calcutta be looked after to improve upon their health and education. She did keep her Guru's wishes.

To introduce Sister Nivedita to the local people, in his speech Swami Vivekananda said – “England has sent us another gift in Miss Margaret Noble.”

### Her missions

She organised and opened a girls' school in Bagbazar area of Calcutta, with a desire in mind to educate girls. Her dedication was so much for a cause that she used to visit the houses to pursue the girls to join her school. Sister Nivedita always tried to educate her students with the nationalist spirit. She introduced singing of ‘VandeMàtaram’ in her school as a prayer.

She was very close to Sarada Devi, wife of Thakur Ramakrishna and one of the major influences behind Ramakrishna Mission.

### Dedicated social worker

Nivedita played a pivotal role during the plague epidemic in Calcutta. She nursed and took care of poor patients and helped in clearing garbage from the streets. She inspired and motivated youths to

render voluntary service.

She was a social worker, teacher and author. In fact she was inspired from her father and college teachers that service to mankind is the true service to God.

### Association with Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose

She is known for her unwavering support for Indian scientist Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose and his work. She helped him in carrying on his work and provided the necessary financial aid.

Rabindranath Tagore said: “In the day of his success, Jagadish gained an invaluable energiser and helper in Sister Nivedita, and in any record of his life's work, her name must be given a place of honor.” Nivedita took active interest on Jagadish Chandra Bose's scientific activities.

### Life dedicated to people

During the plague outbreak in Calcutta in 1899 and the great East Bengal famine of 1906 she risked her own life to treat patients. After treating people during the famine, Sister Nivedita contracted a severe form of malaria that eventually took her life. She died in Darjeeling on 13 October 1911 at the age of 44.

On her memorial these words are mentioned, “Here reposes Sister Nivedita who gave her all to India”.

“You have to grow from the inside out. None can teach you, none can make you spiritual. There is no other teacher but your own soul.”

- Swami Vivekananda

## Watching Riwat

Dr Ranga Ranjan Das

In this materialistic world most of the people are guided by self interest and acquiring material assets for better living and also keep themselves busy in exploring better options and creating spaces for self. But there are also some who work for the greater interest beyond the self. The narrative drawn here is about a documentation project, a journey to an institution at Roing, Lower Dibang Valley District of Arunachal Pradesh, where one can meet the architect and the visionary behind the institution, understand the mission of the institution and see for himself the arduous execution for realisation of a dream.

In the early part of the current year, the newly formed Department of Indigenous Affairs of the Government of Arunachal Pradesh initiated a project for documentation of the tangible and intangible heritage of a few selected tribes of Arunachal Pradesh.

The state of Arunachal Pradesh needs no introduction. Erstwhile NEFA attained a full-fledged statehood through a long drawn constitutional process. Ascribing it as the land of the rising sun, and down lit mountains, the entire territory is an amalgam of hills except a few segments of plain land. Apart from some north eastern states, Arunachal Pradesh also shares border with some other Asian countries. The cold war between India and China over Arunachal Pradesh has drawn international attention for several decades and has to a great extent prevented its real progress and development. However, after the formation of the present Government the pace of development in the state has accelerated considerably. Surface communication has become better. New areas are being explored to assess the strength and weakness of every region or territory and remedied. Some of the basic needs of human survival like food, cloth and shelter are being

addressed. Although the state is self-sufficient in many ways but basic parameters of development like road connectivity, health, education, employment opportunities, etc. did not reach the common people for various reasons. Steps are being taken by the state government in recent times to remedy the situation. The most mentionable strength of this state is the presence of diverse and colourful ethnic groups having own language or dialect, indigenous knowledge, oral literature, social folk customs and art form- collectively known as cultural heritage.

Since colonial times, the area and the populace have been a subject of keen interest for innumerable scholars and researchers. Their documentation work which we find in book form today, are generally limited to studies of various aspects of traditional societies of the state. There is a work by Furer Haimendorf on Apatani society titled *Cattle to Cash*. He writes about the society that were at that time cashless, their traditional system of administration and the role of Buliyang and including some other aspects with elaborate narratives. Verrier Elwin has wonderfully depicted the state in his work *A Philosophy of NEFA*, *Art of NEFA*, *Myths of NEFA*, *A New book of Tribal Fiction*, *Democracy in NEFA*. After the establishment of Directorate of Research in 1951, various empirical works on ethnic diversities covering various areas of culture and folklore were also written. The works include *Aspects of Padam Minyong Culture* by Sachin Roy, P.C Dutta's work on the *Noctes*, the *Tangtas*, the *Wangchos*, the *Singphos*, *Mopin* and *Solung festival*, joint efforts with DK Duarah provides *Aspects of Customary Laws of Arunachal Pradesh*, *Aspects of culture and customs of Arunachal Pradesh*, *Handicrafts of Arunachal Pradesh*; DK Duarah's *The Monpas of Arunachal Pradesh*, TK Bhattacharjee's *The Myths of the Simongs of the Upper Siang*, *The Tangams*, *The Idus of Dri and Mathun valley* and *Myths*

of Shimongs, J.N Chowdhury's *Arunachal Panorama*, LRN Srivastava's *The Gallongs, Social Organization of the Minyongs and Among the Wanchos*, Niren Sarkar's *Dances of Arunachal Pradesh, Buddhism among the Monpas and Sherdukpens, Tawang Monastery and the Tagins*, K. Kumar's *the Boris, the Pailibos*, T.K.M. Boruah's *the Singphos and their Religion, Wancho love songs and the Idu Mishmis*, B.B. Pandey's *the Hill Miris, Festivals of Subansiri and Musical Instruments of Arunachal Pradesh (Adi)*, R.K. Deori's *The Sulungs and Festivals of Kameng*, R.R.P. Sharma's *The Sherdukpens*, R.Sinha's *The Akas*, A. Tayeng's *Adi Proverbs and Sayings, Adi Folk Songs*, M. Pough's *Games of NEFA*, DR Singh's *the People and Festivals of Arunachal Pradesh*, DK Bora's *Myths and Tales of Nyisis*, H. Borgohain's *Handloom and Handicrafts of the Adis*, BB Pandey's *Folk Songs of Adis*, B. Banerjee's *the Bokars*, BB Pandey's *Oral literature of Arunachal Pradesh, A Tale to Tell*, J. Pulu's *Idu Mishimi Proverbs and Sayings*, DK Dutta's *the Membas and the Miju Mishmis*, BK Bora's *the Nah of A.P*, N. Mitkong's *Oral Literature of Tagins*, T. Norbu's *the Monpas of Tawang*, Radhe Yampi's *Religion and Syncretism of Apatani society* and others. Besides these, the Directorate of Research has brought out various publications covering linguistic aspects among the groups like Tangsa, Tagin, Milang, Padam, Nyishi, Sulung, Moklum, Miju, Idu, Taron, Apatani, Bori, Bokar, Bugun, Brokeh, Yigli, Lungchang, Tutsa, Aka, Karkos, Nah, Pailibo, Sherdukpen, Hill Miri, Miji, Singphos, Miju, Munglang, Khampti, Idu-Mishimi, Memba, Aashing, Tangam, Ramo, Meyors, Monpa of different region, Apatani, Nocte, Gallong and others. This innumerable publication shows the ethnic diversity of the state. Apart from publications from the Directorate of Research, there are others who had shown keen interest on traditional groups. Some groups have been covered extensively from different perspectives. It is worthy of mention that traditional societies of the north eastern region who are at the different phases of transition and transformation due impinging factors like cultural contact, spread of monetary economy, modern education, spread of classified religion and choice and preference of new generation.

People are migrating to towns and cities from the rural areas to avail better economic pursuits. There were quite an impact of Christianity over indigenous beliefs and practices. People were at the threshold of an era of technological revolution, globalization and were compelled to live in a global village where there is overwhelming threat on their own cultural heritage. Under the changing scenario, it became necessary to protect their intangible assets, components and traits of cultures so that they can restore and preserve them for the future generation by creating cultural data bank. It is observed that smaller cultural groups are more under threat due to socio cultural isolation. The indigenous cultural commodities started being replaced by commercial market products. Bamboo and wood utensils were replaced by steel and plastic products. New generation are unaware of their oral literature that incorporates wisdom of their forefathers. In this context the step of documentation of heritage taken up by the Department of Indigenous Affairs, is a laudable initiative.

Those who were involved with the documentation work mentioned above, were invited to an orientation program for two days (3-4 October 2020) at Riwatch, Roing to make them aware about the initiative of the Department of Indigenous Affairs, Government of Arunachal Pradesh. The purpose of the orientation programme was to explain the objectives and modus operandi of the documentation work for which local youths having appropriate bent of mind for research work were engaged as Research Assistant and Field Workers. To guide and supervise the Research Assistants and the Field Workers for systematic collection of data, community-wise Project In-charges were also appointed. In the first phase five groups were taken up for consideration. They are Adi, Tangsa, Nocte, Nyishi and Wanchos. The present orientation programme is associated with researchers termed as data miners related to Tangsa, Nocte and Adis. While Changlang district is the home of Tangsa, Noctes are mostly confined in areas like Khonsa, Deomali of Tirap districts of Arunachal Pradesh. Adis are segregated into different sub-tribes

distributed in various parts of Arunachal Pradesh including Lower Dibang Valley district especially in the adjoining areas of Roing. I, had the opportunity to participate in the event with Sri Surya Narayanan, Secretary Heritage Foundation and Sri Romen Chakraborty. Arunav Burman and Varun Dey were the other members.

It is necessary to mention here that I heard about Riwatch for the first time when Mr Vijay Swami. Executive Director sent a mail requesting me to participate and deliver a talk on 'Creating a Data Bank for future generation'. After careful preparation we started our journey on October 1, 2020. It was a bright sunny day and first long trip after the prolonged lockdown period due to Covid-19 outbreak. The nature was an admixture of green and dark green leaves of plants and creepers on both sides of our road to our destination. It felt as if the nature was eager to embrace us. Assam was already badly mauled by two bouts of flood prior to our journey. Submerged open fields, half submerged village dwellings, rushing overflows and roadside makeshift tents of displaced families due to third wave of flood in middle Assam could be seen whenever we looked outside our car. People living in areas less effected by floods seemed to be at ease due to partial slackening of Covid-19 restrictions. We had a light breakfast at Jagiroad and were eager to continue our journey until lunch but were delayed due to some technical snag. After more than one hours delay, we never looked back until we reached Bokakhhat where we had our lunch, followed by tea at Moran and reached Tinsukia at the late evening after covering 438 kms from Jagiroad. We night halted at Tinsukia amidst the warm hospitality of Subham, Reba Kanta Nath and G.Kannan at Durgabari Guest house of a likeminded organisation at Tinsukia. It was a wonderful privilege when I had an opportunity to locate a number of migratory birds resting on five or six trees in a confined reserved area adjacent to our guest house as pointed out by G.Kannan. We were treated with a sumptuous breakfast by the family of Raghunandanji, a very prominent businessman of Prakash Bazar area at his own house at Tinsukia.

With these two overwhelming memories of true Indian hospitality we headed towards Sadiya on October 2, where we had the opportunity to cross the longest river bridge of Asia: Dhola-Sadiya bridge (11.8km) for the first time. The beauty of fragmented cloud covered green mountains and blue skies visible from the bridge are indescribable. Roing is a few km away from Sadiya. We had some interaction with some of the local people of Saidya at Sankardev Sishu Niketan. The Pradhan Acharya briefed us about the emerging issues and challenges for the inhabitants of Sadiya. Permanent land right is their core issue. Receiving the hospitality from school fraternity, we headed towards Lower Dibang Valley district. We have crossed the Chapakhowa area at the extreme border of Arunachal Pradesh. While we were nearing our neighbouring state, the dwelling houses on piles started appearing on both side of the roads. Check post for verifying inner line permits appeared at Shantipur. Roing is just 23 km away. We were right on track passing different villages like Bolik, Kaling, Baksek, Bolung, Erbuk, Pupyok, Bolum, Jia, Arsang and finally Meka tiniali (connecting point of three roads). On our way, we have noticed three churches and one gangging sirin. It asserted that the Christianity has impacted the area to some extant although side by side the traditional belief following has also flourished. We came to know later that the Indu-Mishimi, Adi-Padam and Miniyongs are the main inhabitants of Roing area.

The Riwatch centre is located at 6 km away from Meka tiniali. There is a banner of Riwatch Museum at the entry point. The adjoining areas are covered with rich wild vegetation of different species of plants including wild bananas, traditional cultivable plots of land and a few villages like Angali, Abeli 1, Abeli 2 and New Abeli villages before reaching RIWATCH. We reached the gates of REWATCH when the sun was in the final stage of setting. We found a new world which was really beyond our imagination. It is a huge campus covering a large area with several Assam type buildings meant for various purposes. The master of the campus Sri Vijay Swami was waiting to receive us. Looking at him for the first

time, I came face to face with a person with a most simple looking person with a great vision and wisdom. His zeal for accomplishing something great for a larger interest, dedication, hard work, and untiring efforts is affirmed after we stayed in the Guest Houses of RIWATCH for two days. Reaching the centre we had also the privilege of meeting Sri Satyanarayanan Mundayoor who is a Padmashree award recipient for the year 2020 for his exemplary work on rural education in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. He was a living example of simple living and high thinking. He was also a great personality with wide spectrum of knowledge about the tradition and culture of the communities inhabiting the area. He is also one of the members of the Governing Body of RIWATCH. After relaxing, I made an attempt to watch the RIWATCH. It was a magnificent piece of foresight turned into a reality! It felt as if I am little late in arriving at RIWATCH and felt that people who love culture, heritage and like to understand the rich heritage of Arunachal must visit RIWATCH. The centre has a global world view to undertake research work on world's ancient traditions, cultures and heritage in a broader framework using advanced tools and technology. RIWATCH signifies Research Institute of World's Ancient Traditions, Cultures and Heritage, an affiliate unit of ICCS US, a centre which attempts to link culture with development. Basically it is a non-profit, community research oriented organization emphasizing cultural empowerment of ethnic groups for sustainable development and prosperity by strengthening their age old value systems. It has undertaken works with the local communities for nurturing, preserving and promoting the rich cultural heritage cherished by the indigenous people across the generations. The centre has some research priorities like community, public health, cross-cultural studies, Himalayan herbs and ethnic medicine, bio-diversity conservation and also provide platform for studying abroad. The centre has its' own documentation centre where all the facilities of audio-visual documentation are there with sound-proof recording room, archives and an well equipped library in the process of development. The centre has nicely

constructed a number of cottages where guests can stay comfortably. There is a kitchen and a spacious dining hall. It has nicely utilized the surrounding area of the centre for cultivating seasonal vegetables and developed an herbal garden where different varieties of plants used for medicinal purposes are being nurtured. It was nice to see the different species of plants and herbs in one place. Ethnic people of Aruanchal Pradesh have wide knowledge on biodiversity specifically on medicinal plants which they are utilizing for different diseases and ailments across the generations. It is interesting to mention here that during the event, a local gentleman offered all of us some dry fruits to chew which he claimed to be an important medicine that safeguards one from corona infection. I chewed the small dry fruit which tasted bitter but otherwise it gave me a sense of well being. During the entire trip, I met and interacted with lots of people but thankfully I remained safe from any infection. Perhaps, that was the power of indigenous herbs. Another important achievement of the centre is that of developing an ethnographic museum of its' own which was inaugurated on July 2017. Visiting such a museum in a remote corner of India's north east, is something of an unique experience. Somewhere I have read that 'museum' is the ultimate destination for the lost cultural artifacts. Vijay Swami during the event mentioned about his experience of Dakota where he had taken part in a conference: "A person stands up for delivering a lecture. He said nothing. Blow a conch shell. Tears coming up from both the eyes. Everybody is looking at him. He says that he has lost his culture". Swami has many such global experiences with the natives of America". In the entrance of the museum, he keeps a comment of Jaiaiak Alfred, a Native American, 1999 that reveals, "The path to self determination is uphill. And strewn with obstacles, but we must take it, the threat to our existence as indigenous people is so immediate that we cannot afford not to. The only way we can survive is to recover our strength, our wisdom and our solidarity by honouring and revitalizing the core of our traditional teachings". The photo gallery of Assam

Rifles reflecting evolutionary trend in dresses since its' inception, photos of archaeological Bhismak Nagar (10-12<sup>th</sup> century AD) undertaken by Department of Research, Lower Dibang Valley, stone artifacts like polished red sand stone, polished stone, stone slab, bricks of different sizes, terracotta idol (10,000 years old), worship idol, bricks of Tai-Ahom period, Ahom Script (12 to 15<sup>th</sup> century), broken trident, household articles such as Tawang lock and key, 400 years old metal kettle, butter tea maker, Idu-Mishimi plate aroko, food preparing metal utensil like suruphu, Kirton Ghosa written in Sanchipat, different varieties of Headgears like greyendo (Idu-Mishimi), apotolo, juhi, podum used by Wancho and Nocte group, different types of ornaments like wuhi and tegdin (waist ornament of Nyishi women), bimpu tassing (Apatani), dok pun/pisi kiring (Adi necklace), santar labyu (necklace with blue beads used by Apatani), liknu (Nocte necklace), likcham (Wangchi, Nocte chest belt), khamn lik (necklace of Wancho and Nocte), Aami aawrulo and lekepo (Idu Mishimi), sampo (young boy necklace), dudap (Adi gent necklace), aathabra (Idu-Mishimi bead necklace), warfare instruments like sang, Naga and paa (Wancho dao and Javellin), reka (Idu-Mishimi cross bow), illipra (bow of Idu-Mishimi), ella-aa ( arrow container of Idu-Mishimi), aali (shield, used in Lower Dibang valley), also village life of Idu-Mishimi, Kundil valley civilization, photos of victory dance of Adis, material items of Adis such as epum, eguk (ricebeer container), jekling (distilled rice beer container among Monpa), pitiphu (stone vessel for preparing food among Idu-Mishimi), various items associated with socio-religious rites, different masks used on various occasions such as khi-ba (to drive evil spirit), mlengchung ba (yak dance), kheng ba (harvesting festivals), holy scriptures of Geluka sect of Buddism such as Kangyurs and Tangyurs; and many other valuable ethnic items are nicely arranged in the museum. It is informed that the museum will be transformed into global standard by enriching objects from the ethnic groups across the world. I have the rare opportunity to watch Riwatch closel.

The centre has published several books such as Folktales of Idu-Mishimi, People's Bio-diversity Registrars, Revelations from Idu-Mishimi Hymns, Documentation of Textiles of Arunachal Pradesh. It has academic collaborations with various universities of USA such as South Florida, Tampa, Stanford, besides Indian Universities. During the workshop, emphasis was made on documentation by collecting data from primary sources. The young and dynamic Tai Taggu, Director of Indigenous Affairs elaborated the entire objectives and significance of the work from his heart citing his own experiences. The vast experience and scholarly inputs of Vijay Swami, the vision and expectations of Sri Tai Taggu pertaining to documentation of cultural heritage, Tarak Mize's experience pertaining to research work, Dr Razzezo Dele's (author of *Ya-Idu Mishimi Shamanic Funeral Ritual*) observation pertaining to methods of data collection, Romen Chakraborty's view really provided me with the much needed momentum for the entire work. Interacting with such experienced and learned people was an exceptional opportunity for expanding my knowledge horizon and I promised myself to revisit RIWATCH very soon. We bade adieu to RIWATCH and Roing at 4pm on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 and headed towards another destination to experience an empirical reality.

## How the rivers were made

(A Kachari Folk Tale)

Dr. Uzzal Sharma

Once upon a time there lived an old man and an old woman. When they were quite old, one day the old woman said to her husband "How shall our children get food when we are gone?" Contemplating over the future, the old man decided to visit the Great God Kuvera, the god of riches. So he travelled afar to the great god Kuvera's place and succeeded to obtain from him the seedlings of paddy, pulse, mustard, and gourds. After travelling for 8 days, he returned back to his home. After resting for a couple of days, he set forth to cultivate, taking dry food with him. First he marked out a piece of fertile plot of land by placing boundaries on all four sides of it and returned back to his home. On another day he set out with hoe and axe, cut and burned the jungle and cleaned the plot. Then after worshipping the four sides of his field—on the east and on the west, on the north and on the south—he struck one blow with his hoe on each side.

All done, the old man planted his seedlings of various plants brought from Kuber. As time went by, the old woman passionately craved to see how the crops were getting on. But the old man said "There is no water on the road, and if you get thirsty, you will get no relief." But she persisted and prevailed upon the old man to take her along. Finally as they went, and were now quite close to her husband's plot of land, the old woman started feeling very thirsty. The old man, being enraged, cried out and shouted "What did I tell you? There is no water, and yet you would come." But she, being a woman started weeping and said "If you do not give me some water to drink, I will die. So, water you must bring in any way you can manage." So the old man, seeing no other way, went to seek for water. After long search, seeing a tank, he blindfolded the old woman with a cloth and dragged her to the water's edge and said to

her "Drink if you will, but look not upon the tank." Now the ducks and other water fowls were playing in the water, and were making a merry noise, clacking and quacking. And, the old woman, being curious like all women, could not stop herself from peeping at them. And, seeing them at their play, she too desired to be happy in her husband's company, and, though he was very old he surrendered to his wife's will. And so in due course many sons and daughters were born to them. In order to provide for their food, he journeyed to the Himalayas and dug a great tank, stocked with many kinds of fishes.

Now, one day the god Sri, the god of good luck, came that way with his white dog, hunting for deer and hares and tortoises. When he came to the bank of the tank, behold he was very thirsty. But when he stooped to drink, the fishes said to him eagerly that he must grant them a boon in return for their water, to which he readily agreed. After he had satisfied his thirst, the fishes said "Take us to the great river, the Brahmaputra (or Lohit)." So the god Sri tied them to his staff, and drew them after him, making runnels of water. And that is how the rivers were made. And the fishes in return gave him a pumpkin and a gourd. Sri took these gifts to a friend's house, who regaled him with rice beer and pig's meat. In the morning Sri gave his friend the pumpkin. But when his friend cut open the pumpkin, it contained nothing but pure silver. So his friend bade the god Sri to stay for another day, and brewed fresh beer and killed another pig. When Sri left for his onward journey next day his friend gave him a slice of bacon to take with him. So the god Sri gave him the gourd given to him by the fishes. When his friend cut open the gourd, it contained nothing but pure gold. The god Sri thereafter journeyed back to his home. When he got there, he found that his little daughter was very ill.

That was because he had given away the presents which the fishes had given him. But the fishes took pity on him, and came to him in the guise of physicians, and told him that if he would worship and do sacrifice on the banks of rivers, then his daughter would be healed, which he did and his daughter became well again..

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(Contd. from Page 18 )

## The Jhum Cultivation: The Livelihood of Karbi Hills Tribe

institutional social bonding (attachment to the local community and traditions), economic bonding (attachment to the form of livelihood and the place) and nature bonding (attachment to the natural landscape). The fourth dimension analysed was the lack of any worthwhile alternative.”

As we are aware of the fact that, each and every hill slope and cultivated patch has a very long history of ethnic tribal culture and folk literature to enlighten us very entertainingly. Forests are sacred to every ethnic tribal people of the north-east, India, and they consider the dense forests supply the tribal people of the hills with food and everything they need to survive. Forests supply the hills people timber to build homes, food and medicines, and thus the people of the hills are able to earn livelihoods and survive with happiness. The shifting cultivation is not only a land-use system but a way of life for the tribal people of the hills. Hence, every tribal people of the north-east always cling on to jhum cultivation for earning a viable livelihood forever and a day.

However, in order to improve the staggering economy of the tribal people, it is necessary to encourage our educated young boys and girls to adopt modern way of scientific cultivation in order to earn their apposite livelihood adequately. In order to protect conservation of green forest in our region, the practice of jhum cultivation should be shunned immediately. The age old methods of jhum

And that is why we the Kacharis worship rivers.

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cultivations in the hills slopes must be stopped and new scientific methods of highly developed cultivation must be started to recompense the trouncing loss of our ecology. A new mechanism of cultivation must be evolved to improve the underprivileged sections of our tribal farmers, so that, they could earn a better livelihood in the future. It is required to do for the benefits of our toiling masses who are still struggling to survive for a better tomorrow.

Let us save our forests to ensure positive outcome and wellbeing of our ethnic tribal people of the hills. In other words, planning for better adaptation needs to satisfy the less tangible needs and aspirations of these sections of poor people of the hills. Let us allow them to sustain their rich cultural traditions in the days to come. Let us extend our helping hand to improve the fragile economic conditions of the poor and backward tribal people of the hills. Let us give them the opportunity to go hand in hand along with other advanced communities of our country, India.

According to Aimee Gabay, “Social bonding was found to be the most important factor, and understandably so given it is a collective exercise that requires cooperative behaviour. It also allows them to sustain their rich cultural traditions. It is strengthened through culturally imbibed practices such as festivals that are observed throughout the agricultural cycle.”

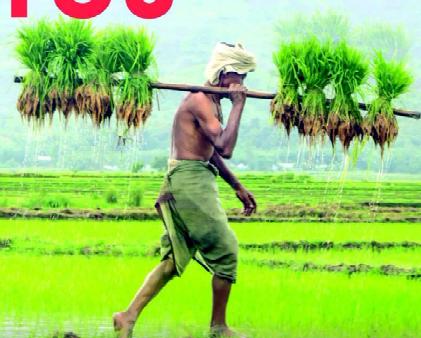


**U Kiang Nangbah** was a freedom fighter from Meghalaya who led an uprising against the British. He was hanged by the British publicly at Lawmisiang in Jowai town in West Jaintia Hills district on 30 December 1862. A postage stamp was issued by Government of India to commemorate him in 2001.



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