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HERITAGE EXPLORER

LET KNOWLEDGE COME FROM ALL THE SIDES

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India's
contribution
to the rest of
the world

This fascmle is from the Pancha-siddhantika (Five Principles) dated around the 5th century. This text graphically shows how eclipses are to be calculated. Thus this text foreshadows what Western Astronomers propounded nearly one thousand years later



Courtesy: <http://raadhikarilindias-contribution-to-the-world>

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An island of peace turns hotbed of turmoil

These days the most beautiful and scenic state of Arunachal Pradesh and an epitome of peaceful co-existence have earned a new epithet of a most disturbed state of India. The public frenzy and the turbulent expression of protest and opposition have alarmed not only the citizens of the state but are also evoking great concern amongst the nationalist intellectuals of our country. The question that is disturbing them is whether this agitation is really intended to protect the interests of the people of Arunachal Pradesh or is aimed at creating a destabilising situation for the benefit of some third party. It is a well known fact that there is no dearth of parties inimical to the interests of our country. The tag of a democratic state attached to our country has allowed a free hand to different individuals, groups of people, the political parties and sleeper cells of the enemy countries to work openly or surreptitiously for achieving their targeted objectives. The only regret is that our people who were being ruled with kid gloves so far by our successive governments fail to understand that the disturbed Arunachal Pradesh serves the interests of all these vested interest groups' and harms the prospects of a prosperous India.

The agitation in Arunachal Pradesh stemmed from the simple initiative of the ruling government to grant permanent resident status to Deuris, Kacharis, Sonowals, Morans, Gorkhas, Adivasis and Missings, who are living in the state for generations. Historically, the entire north east is a melting pot of various communities and races who came here from different directions at different point of time. Most of them cannot say for sure when their nomadic forefathers landed in this region and settled permanently. Today the offspring of those nomadic populace are claiming that the state belongs to them only and are opposing the right of other tribes and communities to live here without being discriminated on the basis of their racial or community nomenclature. They are also trying to deny the constitutional rights of Indian citizens to live in a place of their choice with ancestral linkage. This is not fair. Moreover the communities whom

the Government wanted to grant the permanent citizenship status are mostly tribal communities and are the sons of the soil of the area, which was later demarcated on political considerations or administrative convenience. Natural justice demands that lines etched on a political map by the politicians cannot deny the rights of a bona fide resident of that area.

It is saddening to note that despite the pointed declaration of the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Shri Pema Khandu that granting of permanent resident certificates to six non-Arunachal Pradesh Tribes was a closed chapter; the agitationists are resorting to indiscriminate destruction of private and government properties. The reason behind this upheaval cannot be the stated protection of the interests of the Arunachalis. Agitation always derails development and disrupts the life and livelihood of the common people. A developed Arunachal does not serve the interests of the trouble mongers, profit seeking black marketeers and politicians and political parties at the time of elections. A destabilised Arunachal also serves the interests of China which covets the state for its natural resources. Incited populace of the state may prove to be immensely helpful to their ulterior designs for taking the state under their control like they did in Tibet.

The scenario in Arunachal Pradesh needs to be carefully studied and acted upon. The Government machinery of Arunachal Pradesh including its intelligence set up has utterly failed to read the signs of the rebellion. It did not initiate any process beforehand for educating the people about the justification and necessity for its proposed action. Government also did not feel it necessary to obtain public opinion and study the mood of the people. The Government should have identified the agent provocateurs and the vested interest groups who may incite the volatile student community and the youth. Only good intention does not suffice, it must also appear to be for the good of the state. It is now time to heal and recuperate and patiently wait for another time.

Editor

Pulwama, Hinduphobia and Offensive

Partha Pratim Mazumder

It is very clear that Pulwama attack is a Islamist attack. Though Navajit Singh Sidhu said that terrorism has no religion, but terrorists of Pulwama flaunts their religion which is Islamic religion and they are following the flowchart of Pakistan. Question everything. Question the defence preparedness of India. Question the intelligence failure of the Government. Question our policy on Kashmir. But also question the ideology behind the dastardly terror attack in Pulwama. In the chilling Jaesh-e-Mohammad video released after the attack, the terrorist Aadil Ahmed Dar expects to attain "jannat" by killing "people who drink cow urine". Now, have we ever heard this type of language before? Who uses this language to insult Hindus and their beliefs? Who cracks beef jokes? Let's be clear, the terrorist attack in Pulwama on black thursday was a violent expression of Hinduphobia.

Calling Kashmir a political problem is possibly the biggest lie ever told. Along with other lies and obfuscations of the same vein: such as talking about self-determination or some plebiscite that nobody cares about. It's just a cover story, those who are using it and those who are spreading it know exactly what they are doing. The present day and erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir consisted of both Jammu and Kashmir. Now, why some people from Jammu are asking for Azaadi? Why does it happen only in Kashmir and not in Jammu? The reason could not be more obvious.

When a violent attack like this happens, it is absolutely necessary that we point fingers, accuse and expose institutions that promote and perpetuate Hinduphobia in our society. Like Ku Klux Klan rallies intimidating African Americans, angry Hinduphobic hate mobs chanting 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' and intimidate the Hindus.

There is absolutely no reason to forget that what we call the "Republic of India" is a truncated homeland of the Hindus, a leftover from Partition. It was leftover after Hindus were expelled from areas that were historically India. Literally, millions of people were massacred due to anti-Hindu hatred. This was no different from the Holocaust. And modern

Hinduphobia, as it exists both inside and outside India, is exactly like anti-Semitism. Those who are calling for 'Bharat ke tukde' are calling for another holocaust of the Hindus. And just like rabid anti-Semitism, this needs to be called out, marginalized and exposed. Beyond the violent Hinduphobia of someone like Aadil Ahmed Dar, or the hate mobs that chant 'Bharat ke tukde', there is also the deep rooted anti-Hindu feeling amongst large sections of muslim people. Worse, the 'pseudo-intellectuals' paid lobbyists are actually pushing the society, both in India and abroad, towards an even tighter embrace of prejudices against the Hindu communities.

Take, for instance, the rising tide of prejudice against the Hindus who wears a T-shirt with Hanuman on it. An Indian media website seeded the idea that anyone with this shirt should be seen as a potentially violent criminal. Global outlets picked up on the idea quickly. This has parallels with old racist prejudices against African Americans, whose men were shown as exceedingly lustful and a "threat" to white women. Like crimes that are related to race, gender or caste, Hinduphobic hate crime does not take place in a vacuum. And the buck does not stop with punishing the person who breaks the law. The wider societal prejudices must be addressed urgently.

When a woman becomes a victim of a dowry-related offence, or there is female foeticide or female infanticide, of course, we throw the criminal in jail. But we stop there. The crime hangs on the collective conscience of the society. The same goes for caste-based atrocities. We don't stop with punishing the person who committed the crime. We demand that society cleanse itself of its prejudices. Hinduphobia deserves to be tackled in much the same manner. We demand that the Govt of India take revenge for the terror attack in Pulwama. We also demand that those who promote anti-Hindu hatred be intellectually and culturally marginalized.

When it comes to terrorism, Punjab situation is worse than that of Kashmir. Attacks on security forces and civilians were almost a daily affair. India tackled

(Continued to Page 13)

Spirituality is no caste-based privilege

[Sant Ravidas Jayanti- 19th February]

Rajesh Pathak

Navdha-Bhakti, as expounded in Ramcharitramanas, originally recommended nine ways of devotion to God. But during medieval period there came to be added in this Navdha Bhakti one more cult of devotion by virtue of Ramanand Swami. Known as 'Madhurya Bhakti', in this tenth cult Bhakta [devotee], having no other desire, loves God only for the love's sake. Later when the devotees of the cult swelled to a sizeable number, they formed their own sect to be known as "Rasik-sampradaya". Born in 1399 A.D. near Mughalsarai, Ravidas, a cobbler by cast, was one of the great saints belonging to the Rasik-Sampradaya; others were Kabir, Dhanna, Sain, Pipa, Padmavati etc. - all from depressed class, and initiated by Ramanand Swami.

It is believed that since parents of Ravidas were in close touch with Ramananda Swami and held him on high esteem, he graced them with the child Ravidas by the power of his 'Tapa' [austerity]. As the time passed, the influence of Ramanand Swami on the family manifested more and more in Ravidas, who began to attach himself more and more with Bhakti, so much so that the parents grew concerned about the future of their son. They engaged him in the family business and even got him married thinking that it might divert his mind to material world. However these initiatives had little effect on Ravidas. He continued his search for knowledge in the Vedas, Upnishads and so on in the divine association of Ramananda despite continuing with his ancestral profession of a cobbler. Whenever he would get a chance he would accompany Swamiji to participate in religious discussions and pravachans (preachings) held at different locations. Slowly a time came when even the greatest of the contemporary sages began to surrender themselves before Ravidas in matters of spiritual interpretations and scriptural prescriptions.

The tales of Ravidasa's spiritual wisdom soon spread all around, and when they fell in the ears of

the king of Kashi, he invited him to his court. The king became so mesmerized with the splendor of Bhakti of Ravidas that he offered him the highest honor of Royal-Priest, one who is privileged with the task of performing the ceremonial worship of Lord Rama in the royal temple.

Ravidas by now had attained that divine state that the people of all the hues began to throng from far flung places to hear his religious discourses. Far ahead of his contemporaries in knowledge and outlook, he laid great emphasis on removing all kind of distinctions in religious and social affairs in his discourses. Rejecting the exclusivist approach to Dharma, he preached that Moksha could be attained through either of the paths— 'Sakara' or 'Nirakara'. Being spiritual, he was above the worldly bondage, yet he was not detached to the national exigencies of his time. Deeply hurt with the plight of Hindus then, he unequivocally condemned Mughals for treating the Hindus as 'Kafirs'. So also, adoring the value of freedom, he called the slavery a sin.

It was the time when Rana Sangha was the king of Chittorgarh. Once, with his wife, Ratnakuwari Jhali, he visited Kashi to have holy dip of Ganga. When he came to know about Ravidasji from the folk there, they came to join the satsang [religious congregation] held by him. Divine bliss which they realized by virtue of the satsang left such a deep impression on them that then and there they accepted Ravidasji as their Guru, and invited him to Chittorgarha as a royal-guest. Later on, he visited Chittorgarh on several occasions. From these visits born Mirabai, the greaest devotee of Krishna, the daughter-in-law of Rani Jhali. It is said that Ravidas was the first to lay the seed of devotion in the heart and mind of Mirabai. Lastly, Ravidas made Chittoregarh his permanent home on the request of Rani Jhali. And from this blessed place one day this great soul left for his heavenly abode for ever.

Paradigms of an international conference

Dr Ranga Ranjan Das

The first week of last month (February), has been turn around into a landmark for the discipline of folklore studies in general and exploring intangible heritage of this region in particular. I am thankful to Karuna Kanta Kakati who intimidates the information with a request to send an abstract for presenting and participation even after the deadline is over during a brief meet on the book fair held at AEI playground during the last week of December. It is indeed blessed in a disguise when I have failed to do the same due my pre-designed assignments at official discretion. He was again kind enough to remind me to attend for the inaugural session of the same. This is all about of an International Conference on Belief Narratives in Folklore Studies: Narrating the Supernatural, organized jointly by North Guwahati based Anundoram Barooah Institute of Language, Art and Culture (ABILAC), Assam and Belief Narrative Network (BNN) of International Society for Folk Narrative Research (ISFNR), held in 6th to 8th February, 2019 at the conference hall of Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE), Lalmati, Guwahati. While Karuna Kanta Kakati, the Associate Professor of ABILAC, it is Prof. Dilip Kalita, the renowned folklorist and Director's, perseverance, hard work and vision made this dream into a reality. Organizing a conference of such participation crossing the boundaries of regional, national periphery at the global level with minimum resource needs great skill and leadership quality, reflected in the mindset and determination of Prof. Kalita as echoed in the inaugural speech and it is visible. Personally, I am in the midst of two opportunities: lost and gain. For the first time, it is a situation where my presence being count without any exercise. Precisely, it is blessed as I have made an attempt to understand the new realities developed across the globe in the folklore studies in general and north eastern region in particular. In this endeavor, keeping aside national and global perspectives, emphasis is laid on north eastern region. Focus will be made upon the various issues and concerns, areas related with belief

narratives as a part of intangible heritage of this region.

At the outset, it is pertinent to mention about three set ups, their function, role and perspectives: one institutional level and other organizational level. ABILAC, is one of the premier research institute excelling research activism in the north eastern region pertaining to language, art, culture and folklore since 1989 as reflected in diverse range of publications, activities and initiative of providing the Anundoram Barooah award to the scholars of repute of highest excellence in the fields of Sanskrit and allied indological, literary, linguistic and studies in art and culture as revealed. As asserted, scholars are awarded since 1991. Some of the recipients include: Rajanikanta Devsarma, Acharya Monoranjan Shastri, Biswanarayan Sastri, Birendra Kumar Phookan, Prafulladutta Goswami, Jogeswar Sarma, Herambakanta Barpujari, Satyandranath Sarma, Jogeswar Sarma, Mukunda Madhav Sarma, Goluk Chandra Goswami, Jogendra Narayan Bhuyan, Pramod Chandra Bhattacharyya, Nagen Sarma, Naren Kalita, Birendranath Datta, etc. This award is not only instrumental for recognizing the scholars of extraordinary pursuits rather help in creating scholastic dimensions and pursuits in this region. The scale and dimensions of the various publications specifically in relation to folklore studies, A handbook of Folklore materials of NE India (B. Datta, Nabin Sarma, Prabin Das); Festivals of Assam (P. Goswami); Folkloric Foraging in Indias' North East (B. Datta), The Hill Lalungs (BK Gohain), The Rabhas (Rajen Rabha) and compilation of various dictionaries of indigenous groups like Mishing, Rabha, Bodo, Karbi, Dimasa, Tiwa, Bishnupriya Manipuri, and recognition by Gauhati and Dibrugarh University as academic research institute, transform ABILAC, the most promising institute and centre for advance research in this region. On the other hand ISFNR, is an international level organizational setup that incorporate BNN (Belief Narrative Network) for specific narrative discourse. ISFNR is a scholarly and professional organization of international

specialists in the areas of folk narrative, popular literature, folklore, and related fields. The society's main objective is 'to develop scholarly work in the field of folk narrative research and to stimulate contacts and the exchange of views among its members. Acknowledging developments in the field, this goal has broadened in recent years covering all aspects of narrative as representing the pivotal category of human communication. It is revealed that 'the idea of the ISFNR emerged during the first international congress of folk-narrative scholars in Kiel and Copenhagen in 1959, and the Society's official foundation took place during the meeting in Antwerp (Belgium) in 1962. Since then the Society has convened for congresses and interim conferences, most recently in Ragusa (Italy) in 2015. Following founding president Kurt Ranke (1962–1974), professors Lauri Honko (1974–1989), Reimund Kvideland (1989–1998), Galit Hasan-Rokem (1998–2005), Ülo Valk (2005–2009) and Ulrich Marzolph (2009–2016) have presided over the ISFNR. In 2016, the Society elected Prof. (Dr.) Sadhana Naithani, Centre of German Studies, School of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies of Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India, as its current president. The Society is proud of its truly international membership which includes some 700 members from about 80 different countries' 1 . Mirjam Mencej of Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, who is also a member of the executive committee of ISFNR, is currently looking after the activities related to BBN. This international congregation in Guwahati, is for the first time, however, two major events of ISFNR is already organized in Meghalaya and Manipur respectively during the early part of this decade. The folklore programme of the department of cultural and creative studies of North Eastern Hills University under the supervision of Professor Desmond L. Kharmawphlang successfully organized the ISFNR Interim Conference 'Telling Identities: Individuals and Communities in Folk Narratives' in Shillong, during, February 22–25, 2011. In Manipur University, Prof. Moirangthem Mani Meitei and Prof. Sanatombi Soram were successful in organizing ISFNR symposium entitled 'Local legends in the global context' during February 6-8 in 2012. Prof Ulu Valk, from Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore, University of Tartu, Estonia, a

well known folklorists and former President of ISFNR revealing the objectives of ISFNR asserts, 'the main goal is to develop scholarly work on folk narratives and to stimulate contacts among researchers, although its regular forums, held on different continents and within different cultural contexts, always offer some extra values to the benefits of academic discussions' 2. So, the conference on Belief Narratives in Folklore Studies, organized in Guwahati is the continuation to accomplish its' mission. Ulrich Marzolph 3 observes, 'Folklore, as we all know, is a pivotal constituent of cultural identity, folk narrative-the main concern of our society-serves as the verbal expression of this identity at a narrative level. The specific characteristics of folk narrative traditions differ widely on an international scale. Yet all folk narrative traditions share a notion of condensing the highly complex worlds of their narrators and the surrounding societies into the nutshell of a narrative. The extent to which these narrative correspond to the world view, the ethical norms and the social circumstances of their surrounding cultures or societies eventually defines the degree of their reception and hence, their popularity.

Beliefs narrative associated with various tribal groups, areas and sacred places in divergent perspectives caught international attention through this international congregation. It is reflected while browsing through the book of abstract 4. M. Mani Meitei revealing 'Belief and disbelief: trajectory of Meitei faith demeaning the hegemony of the myth of Hinduism in Manipur' asserts, 'the incursion of Hinduism on Meitei culture of Manipur in the 18th century caused the first ever cultural dislocation with which the old belief system, myths, vernacular religion gave way. Such attacks were triggered by both the external and internal forces that adopted coercive and repressive measures and religious persecution such as physical intimidation, public flogging, death sentence, imprisonment, exile and social ostracism. Hinduism and Hindu religious practices were forced upon the masses by the king and the Brahmin pundits who brought and preached the new faith. Open protest was out of the question and willy-nilly the masses had to subscribe to the new faith. New myths and legends were recreated to counter the original myths by replacing the ancient gods and goddesses

in the Meitei pantheon and other religious practices one of which was the worship of Sanamahi ' (p. 19). In the same track but with a deviant trajectory, Soram Sanatombi and Pragma Moirangthem while explicitly focusing on the vernacular religion of Manipur pointed out how in Manipuri society Nongpok Ningthou and Panthoibi were believed to be divine entities. They observe, " believed by the Hindus to be an equivalent of Durga Panthoibi has from oral sources historical antecedent of being the wife of a prince of Khaba dynasty who ruled in Kanglei several hundred years before the Christian era. But unable to bear the torture and domestic violence in her in-law's family she left the royal house and made a runaway marriage with Nongpok who established a home on the Sheloi hill. With the disappearance of Panthoibi the Khaba dynasty suffered indignity and misfortune befell them. From her recollection of Panthoibi the cruel mother in-law believed after leaving their human domain the two became divine incarnates inhabiting in the air like light whirling round in the sky. She collected the old clothes of Panthoibi on an altar and worshipped her. She then ventured into meeting Panthoibi on the Sheloi hill and carved for her forgiveness, and further entreated to have the honour of being their guest along with Nongpok and witness the festivity to be dedicated to them. It is believed that the ceremonial prayer accorded to both Panthoibi and Nongpok was the genesis of Meitei Laiharaoba ritual festival (p. 39-40)". This belief narrative, of course, is integral to the worldview of Meitei community. Lai haraoba, festival, as revealed is recognized as most important festival among the Meities. Maibi plays an important role in this festival. Depicting the significance of maibi, Smiti Rajkumari opines, "lai haraoba, is a form of community worship with a series of activities that include rites, rituals, chants, dances, music, trance, prophesy and processions, main concept is about summoning and adoring the deities to visit the earthly realm to bestow the community with good health and prosperity. Rites and rituals are performed and led by maiba (priest), maibi (priestess) and penakhongba (pena-player). The maibis invoke the deities, make offerings, besides performing all the priestess duties, they also perform shamanistic roles and act as a medium to pass prophecy to the people. They are also expert singers and dancers (p. 35)". Shamanistic belief and practice

are of paramount significance in this part of India. During manasa worship in Assam, I have seen 'jokis' in Gerua village, near Hajo in Kamrup (R), who act as medium between god and masses, and also reported from Kamakhya temple as well as evident from deodha dance during mare puja among the Pati Rabhas residing in my neighbourhood at Guwahati. Sikkim offer tremendous exposure in narrative discourse in recent times. Reep Pandi Lepcha while revealing the metaphysical in the belief narratives of the indigenous Mutanchis also known as Lepchas, 'the natural in the supernatural', extrapolate on a few cases which highlight a correlation between the ontological and legendary strain of beliefs while displaying peculiar supernatural consistency. It reveals that "the legend of Gebu Achok speaks of macabre feats of the hero. Following a treacherous murder of Achok during a war between Sikkim and Bhutan, there exists an unfaltering belief that the Bhutanese cannot approach the fort site without suffering illness of some kind. This belief resultantly fueled the identity establishment of the Mutanchis (p. 31-32)". The underlying significance of folklore and belief narratives is also associated in identity discourse as asserted by many folklorists since the beginning. Under such circumstances such observations related to Lepcha identity has lots of relevance. Kikee Doma Bhutia, who is a young emerging scholar also awarded for her best paper during the conference, personal experience sharing through possession narratives and the role of ritual healers in the everyday life in North Sikkim is quite amazing. Her experience and assertion is quite reflexive as a scholar and understandings its' own society in the context of own village. Her expression is quite prominent so far as belief narrative is concerned. In her words, " when I visited Tingchim, my natal village in North-Sikkim, in 2017 after an absence of several months, I felt a sense of anxiety and fear thicken the air....In the days following I noticed that no villager was venturing into the forest. I then learned that the pawo (shaman) had warned about an sde (deity/spirit) lurking in the forest and waiting to appropriate a human soul as company". She argues that 'the cosmic polity is best approach as a hierarchical space in which deities compete and contest over power and influence within and outside their cosmic jurisdiction. Ritual specialists are aware of these hierarchies and distinctions and variously

apply invocation as a means of showing their power over the deities and to subjugate them in the pursuit of overcoming human illnesses and misfortunes and establishing themselves as the powerful figure in the village as well". She successfully explores the cosmic tension in the village, the roles and powers of ritual healers and specialists by reflecting complexities and fluidity of belief narratives and understandings of the supernatural realm that surrounds (p. 24-25)'. In the same line, belief narrative on supernatural entity around riverine environment in the context of Assam is explored by Mridusmita Mahanta. She finds, 'it is difficult to have a concrete knowledge of the overall physical features of a river as many of its parts remain virgin from human eye. Those unknown parts instill an argue to form imagination about the presence of supernatural entity in the surroundings of rivers. Such thought views the interaction of natural and supernatural as symbolic, implying that in their reality, there are, in fact, not two separate worlds, but one world in which the natural and the supernatural exist interdependently (p.47-48). Sometimes belief narratives are deeply embedded to the ethnic worldview that cannot be influenced by impinging factors. The house-site deity is known as kimong tsungrem among the Ao Nagas. Advent of Christianity brings lots of changes pertinent to indigenous beliefs and practices among the Nagas in general Ao Naga in particular as revealed. Talilula Longchar in his attempt on prayer centers, arasentsurs and strange potions: contemporary beliefs and practices of exorcizing the Kimong Tsungrem explore the nature of beliefs and spirituality within the community and how indigenous practices like healers (arasentsur or arasenur) reveal the seemingly innocuous but complicated ways in which Christian as well as indigenous beliefs co-exist in contemporary Ao society and their worldview that find 'kimong Tsungrem, as egregiously demonized, distorted into malevolent harbingers of mysterious illnesses, misfortune and in extreme cases even death (p. 58-59). There are many belief narratives among diverse groups. Lalfani Durpui elucidates certain belief narratives associated with Baite community in Meghalaya. Narrating the Baite culture, she reveals, 'in Baite culture, when a women gets pregnant out of wedlock, she is asked to reveal the name of the father of the child that she is bearing. The man she mentions

as the father of the child is called to a meeting in the presence of the elders of the family and community to enquire about it. On denial, it undergoes public repudiation and folk belief asserts that curses would fall on that person if it made false witness sworn on the name of the god and other supernatural entities". She further reveals that there are many such stories prevalent in the form of unstructured personal narratives dealing with life experiences as understood through the lens of the shared beliefs of the community that sheds light on the attitude, worldview, social organization, gender roles and how the people navigate the realms of the sublime and the mundane that still persists (p. 110). The hallmark of this north eastern region is the presence of indigenous beliefs and practices. Belief narratives are the expressive genre through which this intangible heritage transmits orally across the generations. However, scholars have come forward to explore the diverse facets of belief narratives for interpretation as academic and folkloristic studies. These beliefs narratives often cut across the boundaries of typological categories of oral literature such as myth, legend and tale. No doubt the studies and research perspectives of belief narratives open up new areas for series folklore activism across the world, and the same time this international conference under the aegis of ABILAC and BNN of ISFNR at Guwahati, will expedite and motivate tracing new dimensions of intangible heritage of this region in general and folklore research in particular.

END NOTES

Please visit, <http://www.isfnr.org/About-the-ISFNR.php> for further details

See editorial by Ulu Valk of the ISFNR newsletter, Sixth issue, February 2012

Presidential Address at the opening of the ISFNR interim conference held at Shillong, published in ISFNR newsletter, Sixth issue, February 2012, p. 5

See book of 'Programme and Abstracts' International Conference on Belief Narratives in Folklore Studies: Narrating the Supernatural', 6-8 February, 2019, published by Dilip Kumar Kalita, ABILAC, ISBN: 978-93-82912-01-9, and also find sources at different pages as mentioned.

Culture of Assam - Genesis and Impact of Demographic incursion

Shrutikar Abhijit

Genesis:

A true aphorism of innumerable nefarious incidents that occurred in the pre and post independent India that unsettled the social fabric of India will lead us to a time when All India Muhammadan Educational conference was first formulated. The progenitor of Aligarh Muslim University, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan founded the AIMEC in 1886 under the Aegis of sparking an educational renaissance among the Muslim fraternity of India. For the subsequent decades, the All India Muhammadan Educational Conference kept organising various meetings across the country that gave them a necessary platform to seed and deliberate the Muslim population with the incongruous theory of two Nations and garner support for their cause. This continued for next two decades until 1906, when during the Dhaka conference the AIMEC formally chartered the All India Muslim league with a motto to establish separate political self-determination of Muslims. It was under this tutelage of political empowerment that the Muslim league prepared their schematics for realising the division of Bharat on religious lines. Salimullah, the Nawab of Dhaka and the Chief Patron of AIMEC was a major force behind rallying the elite Muslims to the cause of a separate Islamic nation as he succeeded in lobbying with the Britishers to realise his nefarious intentions of dividing the province of Bengal. This Illicit proposition of dividing the province of Bengal was mutually beneficial for the Britishers, as it would have secured the loyalty of Muslim Elites on the one hand, and would have secured an important ally to curb the Anushilan Samitee, predominantly comprised of Hindus on the other hand. Succinctly, with the formation of East Bengal with a majority Muslim population was perhaps the Nawabs' allegory of ulterior motives being achieved for the first time.

After the partition of Bengal province, the Muslim politics of Bengal primarily remained under the influence of the Nawab. In the meantime, the Nawab along with his religious and political cohorts, comprising of Muhammad Yusuf of Rajshahi, Ali Nawab Chowdhary of Comilla, Fazlul Haq of Barisal

founded an association, namely the Provincial Mohammedan Union on 16 October 1905 with a motive to consolidate and strengthen the Muslim lobby in the province. The elite Muslim despotism of Bengal, guided by their propensities for anathema against the "rival communities" opted for an effective strategy to politically organize the entire Muslim community across the country. Accurately the Nawab built a consensus that realised the need of a Muslim political organization and along with the previous efforts of AIMEC the formation of the All-India Muslim League was finally realised in 1906 conference of Dhaka. In the very conference, Nawab Salimullah openly exhorted the delegates to facilitate migration of Muslim peasants into the valley of Assam, so as, the necessary numerical strength can be achieved. Moreover he also founded East Bengal and Assam Provincial Muslim League. The affect of this Clarion call to facilitate migration can be best understood through the Census report of 1931, where the then Census superintendent, S.C Mullan penned his observations as, "Probably the most important event in the province during the last twenty five years - an event, moreover, which seems lively to alter permanently the whole future of Assam and to destroy more surely than did the Burmese invaders of 1829, the whole structure of Assamese culture and civilisation - has been the invasion of a vast horde of land hungry Bengali immigrants; mostly Muslims, from the districts of Eastern Bengal sometime before 1911 and the census report of that is the first report which makes mention of the advancing host. The All India Muslim league made serious efforts for the inclusion of Assam in East-Pakistan and the significance that Assam had for the cause of a separate Muslim country can be best understood from the book named, "Eastern Pakistan: Its Population and Economics", written by a Pro-Indian Sheikh Mujibur where he deliberated his observations as,

"Because Eastern Pakistan must have sufficient land for its expansion and because Assam has abundant forests and mineral resources, coal, petroleum etc, Eastern Pakistan must include Assam to be financially and economically strong". The

feelings expressed by Sheikh Mujibur were not isolated, but were reciprocated across the geopolitical fraternity by elite Muslims. The deep rooted desire to include Assam in East Pakistan found a significant boost when Sir Syed Muhammad Saadulla became the first Prime Minister for the province of Assam on 1st April 1937. The Muhammad Saadulla led Assam Provincial Muslim league government ruled over the province of Assam for a brief period of six years until 11th February 1946, with only a small exception of three months when the Assam provincial congress succeeded to rule for a diminutive period. This particular period under Muhammad Saadulla was strategically important for realizing their agenda, as for the first time since 1906; AIML had the necessary political and executive leverage to institutionalize influx of Muslim migrants into Assam to achieve their desired numerical strength for legitimizing their claim of Assam. This wicked propaganda laid down by the AIML government can be further verified through the accounts provided by the then Viceroy of India, Lord Wavell in the viceroys journal, where he stated that "The chief political problem is the desire of Muslim Ministers of Assam to increase the immigrations into uncultivated Government lands in Assam under the slogan of 'Grow more food' but what they are really after is to 'Grow more Muslims'. The footfall of this Modus-operandi was such that Jinnah confidently declared at Guwahati that Assam was in his pocket and that the province of Assam would form a part of East-Pakistan. Subsequently, the Cabinet Mission Plan placed Assam in Group C with Bengal. Both the Congress High Command and the Muslim League accepted the grouping plan but Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi vehemently opposed it and it was for this single-handed effort of Gopinath Bordoloi that people of Assam were saved from sharing the fate of Hindu Bengalis or that of Hindu and Sikh brethren from the Punjabi community during and after the partition of Bharat. The clandestine propaganda of AIML didn't halted with partition, but the momentary failure of AIML only motivated them further to improvise and devise a master game plan to systematically engulf Assam. Subsequently, Moinul Haque Chowdhary, the then private secretary to Jinnah, and a staunch advocate of partition, suddenly had a change of heart and joined congress with a large number of his followers. Later Moinul Haque Chowdhary went on to become a minister in Assam and Delhi. The fifth column of AIML that stayed back to carry on with their propaganda exploited the loop

holes and formed cohorts based on common vested interest of political leaders and political parties. This new found fraternity of political cohorts ensured unabated influx of migrants from East Pakistan, and the consequent systematic infiltration was so severe that in June 1962 Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, had to introduce the Project PIP (Prevention of infiltration into India of Pakistani Nationals). The primary objective of this scheme was to establish a security screen in depth to exercise a physical check and control over the number, identity and movement of existing inhabitants in the immigrant settlements near the border making it impossible for any new entrants to go untraced or unnoticed. The PIP Project was one of the major attempts by Government of India post-Independence to deal with this menace and stands testimony in the failure of its implementation that sympathisers of AIML within the government ensured that the PIP project couldn't be implemented functionally and rest that followed is well known in the socio-political discourse. The Government of Pakistan's political leadership kept themselves ardently devoted to destabilise India, and that they continued to preserve their deep dark desire to overwhelm Assam in some distant future can be well understood from the book written by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Named Myths of Independence, where he claimed that "It would be wrong to think that Kashmir is the only dispute that divides India and Pakistan, though undoubtedly the most significant. One at least is nearly as important as the Kashmir dispute, that of Assam and some districts of India adjacent to East Pakistan. To these Pakistan has very good claims." The Radicalisation of youths in Assam over the years and the systematic influx of illegal migrants had permanently altered the entire demography of Assam, Districts after Districts in the present state of Assam have fallen prey to this horde of infiltrators, even the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in its judgement of 2005 had stated that "there can be no manner of doubt that the State of Assam is facing external aggression and internal disturbance on account of large-scale illegal migration of Bangladeshi nationals," -Justice Mathur". The Assamese society at large has traversed a long road and has to travel a few more miles before arriving at an amicable solution that can constructively address the real threat at hand, and while doing that the vanguards must ensure that the society doesn't get carried away by a synthetic sense of apologetic secularism.

Conclusion: The Advent of 2019 is clearly a clarion call for some decisive action for preserving the Demographic fabric of Assam to maintain the geographical integrity of India. Suffering from the delusion of a Synthetic harmony, the left-leaning intelligentsia of Assam had for long kept the Assamese society divided and deluded from identifying their real enemy. This Systematic engraftment of Marxist ideology has cost us our ability to rationally identify the situation at hand and critically analyze our future prospects. The Approach for a potent solution might differ from one group to another, but there is no doubt as of today that, if Assam has to survive the next decade while avoiding the dilemma of a probable partition, Assam must

preserve its Hindu numerical strength. The recently announced decision of GOI to form a high-level committee for implementing the 6 & 7th clause of the Assam Accord is definitely a constructive way forward for preserving the Ethnic identity of Assam, this is a high time that people of Assam must participate in every capacity to ensure its functional implementation. Lastly, the society must answer a tough call though a definitive mechanism that might at times take us out of our common understanding of socio-cultural and political comfort zones.

JOI AI AXOM!!

JOI MAA BHARATI !!

(Continued from Page 5)

Pulwama, Hinduphobia and Offensive

Punjab issue with Iron hand. Led by KPS Gill, it took few years to wipe out terrorism from the face of Punjab. Indeed, methods adopted by Gill didn't please human rights activists and few countries but if you look at the long term peace that followed, it was the right thing to do.

Similar methods were adopted by Russians in Chechnya, Sri Lanka against LTTE and Israel against Hamas. Needless to say, they achieved long term peace. However, when it comes to Kashmir, we become soft. We are too much concerned about human rights activists and sanctions and allow the situation to drag on for years instead of looking for a definite solution. Operation Sadhavana was launched in 1998 aimed at winning the hearts and minds of the people in the region.

20 years down the line, have we won any hearts or minds? Kashmiris have become even more radical with more and more terrorists becoming active in the valley rather than those coming from the other side the border. We have been losing our jawans on an everyday basis. Stone pelters obstructing operations, attacking forces and their vehicles happens almost all the time. I am sure we are not heading for any solution with this approach. So, what we should have been done? Biggest mistake India did was its failure to act at the time of Kashmiri Pandits exodus. To claim a land as ours, a state needs to have a population there who identifies themselves with us the Hindus.

Kashmiri Pandits were such people. But they were killed, raped and driven out from a part of their own country and we did very little to stop it.

India needed a strong political will backed by decisive military action but we failed as a state to protect the lives of our own people on a land claimed and occupied by us. Appeasement, politics and soft approach costed us. Let's face the truth; a substantial number in the valley refuses to identify themselves as Indians. Kashmir is now a problem much bigger than what it was in the late 80s. What should we do now? Why are we letting the blood of our soldiers flow on Kashmiri streets when we have been able to win neither hearts nor minds despite 20 years of the soft approach called Operation Sadbhavana? If soft is the only approach we have, it's better that we let go Kashmir instead of wasting our lives and resources over thankless people who reside there. If letting go Kashmir isn't an option, which I am sure 99% of Indians will say, aggression is the only way for a definite solution.

Do what we did in Punjab. Kashmir is our land, our problem; we shouldn't look for validation from the world for our methods. Yes, there will be criticism, sanctions and human rights cases but India is mighty enough to face it. Indians will stand together to face them. Let there be no mercy on terror and anyone who supports it directly or indirectly. Let there be fear. Lord Rama didn't say "bhay bin preet na ho" for no reason.

The Old System of 200 Point Roster In Reservation Vs New

In April, 2017 the Allahabad High Court gave a verdict of far reaching negative impact on constitutional scheme of reservation for Scheduled Caste (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in teaching posts and vacancies in the central higher educational institutions (Universities and the Colleges affiliated to them) of the country. Last year this judgment has been approved by the Supreme Court of India. Somewhere in the middle of previous year the Ministry of Human Resource Development and University Grants Commission had preferred Special Leave Petition against this judgment before the Supreme Court of India. On 22nd of January this year the Supreme Court has dismissed these 2 petitions also. The reservation prescribed for these two classes in recruitment and promotion is 15% and 7.5% respectively. For Other Backward Class (OBC) 27% reservation is prescribed only in initial recruitment, not in promotion.

Now according to this decision in place of earlier provision of treating the entire institution as one unit to apply 200 point roster system of treating different departments of the institution as separate unit, 13 point roster system has been applied. These three grades of Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor will also be treated separate unit. To say in simple terms, in filling vacancies in first 13 recruitments whereas 1 OBC candidate shall be recruited on 4th vacancy and 1 SC candidate on 7th vacancy, ST candidate will not get any post and will get reservation only on 14th vacancy; whereas under old formula carving out half of 13 i.e. 7 for the unreserved category 3 posts to OBC, 2 to SC and 1 post to ST used to be allotted. This was social justice distributive system of all-inclusive approach. Because of not treating the institution as one unit now entry of ST candidates in teaching class of institution of higher education will be totally closed.

Presently 5,000-6,000 posts are lying vacant in higher educational institutions. Under old provisions 350-400 posts were surely to go to the tribals but under new provisions they would not get even 25-30 posts and future prospect would also be marred. In same proposition loss would be caused to OBC, SC and

Divyangs (Physically Challenged) also.

This situation-system is oppressive to the tribal community of our country and completely against the equality oriented spirit behind the reservation provisions in the constitution of India. It is very natural that against this system the tribal community which is already lagging behind in the march of development, and specially youth among them, are agitated.

We have learnt that a proposal/draft/bill paving way for resolution of difficult situation caused by the irrational judgment has been pending consideration before the Central Government for few months. We demand to the Central Government that considering sensitivity of the issue and its possible socio-political consequences the Government should immediately bring an ordinance and restoring earlier 200 point roster system in institutions of higher education it should fulfill its constitutional obligation of bringing justice to tribal community on this matter of great injustice.

Kalyan Ashram demands to State Governments also that in the State funded institutions of higher education they should not only restore the earlier roster system of reservation but acting according to spirit of the constitution reservation should be applied in all Government or private institution of higher education according to proportion of tribal population in the State.

Kalyan Ashram calls upon all the State funded minority educational institutions also that if they are really in favor of social justice to the OBC, SC and ST class of this country then they should ensure reservation for these classes in their institutions. The tribal community of this country is watching and understanding everything.

For above mentioned justified demands delegation of Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram will meet Hon'ble President of India, Home Minister, Minister of Tribal Affairs & Chairman of National Commission for ST.

The dichotomy of Aryan invasion

B.S. Harishankar

In an article, 'How genetics is settling the Aryan migration debate', Tony Joseph, former editor of Business World, argued that the population of the Caspian, Central Asian and Indian regions share a common DNA (The Hindu, June 16, 2017). Endorsing the Aryan Migration Theory, Joseph contended that Indo-European language speakers, who called themselves Aryans (actually the British designated them as such), streamed into India sometime around 2,000 – 1,500 B.C. when the Indus Valley civilisation came to an end. They brought with them the Sanskrit language and a distinctive set of cultural practices.

Joseph insisted that India is a multi-source civilisation, not a single-source one, and draws its cultural impulses, tradition and practices from a variety of lineages and migration histories. While the Left historians remained silent, the Left parties were exuberant. CPI (M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury gleefully tweeted: "the historical evidence of Aryan migration and the confluence that India is. Brilliant piece by @tjoseph0010".

Then, once again eulogizing Tony Joseph's article, Yechury observed: "akin to the proverbial last straw that broke the camel's back, some recent findings based on scientific investigations on the genetic data suggest that there was, indeed, an Aryan migration into India around 3,500 to 4,000 years ago" ('Battle against post-truth', Frontline, June 21, 2017). Yechury argued that the latest scientific study suggests that Aryans came into India from somewhere near the Caspian Sea in Central Asia/Europe, which has shattered the fascist agenda in India.

Sitaram Yechury is one of the principal architects of the Muziris Heritage Project in Kerala whereby JNU historians and Euro-American scholars excavated Pattanam to 'prove' West Asian / Fertile Crescent contacts with India and search for the bones of Apostle Thomas. That the said Apostle

never came to India at all is incidental.

Sunil Menon and Siddhartha Mishra, in a cover story titled, 'We are all Harappans' present the same theory of Aryan migration into India, and claim that the Harappan site of Rakhigarhi at Sarasvati Valley in Haryana has more affinity with Ancestral South Indian Tribal Population than with North Indians (Outlook, August 2, 2018). The story claims that Rakhigarhi samples have Iranian farmer ancestry, which can be claimed only by present day south Indians. It identifies the Fertile Crescent as one of the core areas of agriculture and domestication of animals. The authors assert that this shows that the Harappans and Rig Vedics were two distinct lines, one replacing or subsuming the other and the Ancestral South Indian is everybody's ancestor in South Asia.

Rakhigarhi sparked global controversy in 2014, when eminent South Asian archaeologists criticised the intervention of foreign lobbies and funding by an opulent NGO for this crucial archaeological site. The foreign funding at Rakhigarhi and current media propaganda call for a clearer understanding of the problem.

The Aryan migration theory currently picked up by Outlook, was repackaged in the early 1990s. Marxist historian Romila Thapar in an article in Journal of Asiatic Society of Bombay (1988-91) contended that, "if invasion is discarded then the mechanism of migration and occasional contacts come into sharper focus. These migrations appear to have been of pastoral cattle breeders who are prominent in the Avesta and Rigveda". Interestingly, Thapar is one of the top patrons from JNU for KCHR's Rs 200 crore Muziris Project that seeks to establish India's Fertile Crescent links and the arrival of Apostle Thomas. Marxist historian Irfan Habib earlier vindicated the migration and Dravidian theories, in 'The Rewriting of History' (Outlook, February 13, 2002). Habib

accused archaeologists and historians were up in arms against Dravidian links to any great non-Aryan past: “presence of Dravidians in Indus Civilisation makes it so much more ours.”

It all began with church missionaries in India who positioned themselves as Indologists. John Wilson, President, Royal Asiatic Society of Bombay and Moderator of Church of Scotland, was one of the pioneers of the Aryan theory. Wilson used the Aryan Invasion Theory to highlight Aryan Dravidian conflict in his work, *India: Three Thousand Years Ago*. Another Scottish missionary, John Stevenson, who later became President of the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic Society contended that pre-Aryan aborigines consisting of Dravidian and Munda language families were a single people. Stevenson argued that the Dravidian element was less in the north which was first invaded by Aryans, greater in the Deccan and maximum in the Tamil region where the invasion of the Aryan Brahminical race extended in the Age of Ramayana. Then, Brian Houghton Hodgson propagated a unitary aboriginal language and people in India, prior to the Aryan invasion. John Baldwin presented the invading Aryans as fanatical religious enthusiasts. Max Muller and Monier Williams also ardently propagated the Aryan Invasion Theory.

In affiliating Dravidian languages to the Scythian group in the Steppes of southern Russia and Ukraine, Bishop Robert Caldwell, member, Royal Asiatic Society, pointed out how F. Max Muller was supported by Bishop John Coleridge Patteson. Caldwell was assisted in his Dravidian studies by an array of missionaries such as Rev. J. Brigel, Rev. J. Clay, Rev. J. Dawson, Rev. E. Diez, Rev. F. Kittel, Rev. F. Metz, Rev. G. U. Pope, Rev. A. Graeter, Rev. C. Graul, and Rev. H. Gundert. Alexander Cunningham, first director of the Archaeological Survey of India, supported the Aryan invasion theory. Anglican priest Issac Taylor in his *The Origin of the Aryans*, outlined the Aryan invasion and subjugation of aborigines in India.

T.E. Slater, missionary and member of Christian Literature Society, Madras, contended that Dravidians in India possessed a superior civilisation prior to the Aryan invasion. John Barton of the

Church Missionary Society propagated themes such as Aryan invasion, suppression of original inhabitants, and slavery. Herbert H. Risley, a colonial officer, discovered 2,378 castes belonging to 43 “races, on the basis of a “nasal index.” The main racial groups included Indo-Aryan, Turko-Iranian, Scytho-Dravidian, Aryo-Dravidian, Mongoloid and Mongolo-Dravidian.

Stuart Piggot and Mortimer Wheeler set the seal with their archaeological works and Aryan invasion became the hallmark of ancient Indian history. In the post-colonial period, Aryan invasion and later migration theory were aggressively defended in Indian academia by Left historians such as Romila Thapar, R.S. Sharma, Irfan Habib and D.N. Jha. There are western lobbies who still share similar ideas. American anthropologist David Anthony’s *The Horse, the Wheel and the Language. How Bronze Age Riders from the Eurasian Steppes shaped the Modern World* (2007) is a typical example.

Prof. Dilip Chakrabarti, one of the foremost authorities in South Asian Archaeology, in his recent work, *Nation First*, observes that apart from historical and racial issues, the Aryan invasion has been given socio-political dimensions primarily by Christian missionaries. The role of missionaries in propagating the Aryan theory has also been discussed by Prof. Rosalind O’ Hanlon. The Delhi-based Indian Society for Promotion of Christian Knowledge and Chennai-based Gurukul Lutheran Theological College are frontline missionary institutions articulating the Aryan Invasion Theory and subjugation of Dravidians and Scheduled Castes in India. The Dalit Christian Forum of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India is another body which propagates Aryan invasion and migration theory. Similarly, the World Council of Churches aggressively promulgates the Aryan Invasion Theory in the context of subalterns.

Eminent archaeologists and anthropologists such as B.B. Lal, George F. Dales, A. Ghosh, Kenneth Kennedy, J.P. Joshi, S.R. Rao, B.K. Thapar, R.S. Bisht and V.N. Misra have discarded these Aryan invasion and migration theories. Jim G. Shaffer and Dianne Lichtenstein trace Euro ethno-centrism, colonialism and racism in the allegations of

mythical invasions and migrations. Indologists Michel Danino and Nicholas Kazanas have brilliantly exposed the major issues underlying the Aryan debate. For the Indian Left, these scholars of global reputation are fascists with a communal agenda.

The Bronze Age civilisation which attained its maturity in the third millennium BCE had its formative stages at Kunal and Bhirrana in the Sarasvati Valley, beginning fifth-sixth millennium BCE.

Eminent physical anthropologists such as Kenneth A.R. Kennedy, John Lukacs and Brian Hemphill believe there is no evidence of “demographic disruption” in North-West India between 4500 and 800 BCE. This junks the possibility of any intrusion by so-called Indo-Aryans or other people during that period. Prof. Kenneth A.R. Kennedy has extensively used recent developments in osteobiographical analyses, taphonomical sciences and forensic anthropology in establishing trauma and violent death in skeletal assemblages and has rejected outright the hypothetical theory of invasion and massacre by Aryans. These scholars are a permanent eyesore for Indian leftists and journalists who hardly refer them in their cover stories or bibliographies.

In 1999, US biological anthropologist Todd R. Disotell worked with the early migration of modern man from Africa towards Asia, and found that migrations into India “did occur, but rarely from western Eurasian populations”. The same year, Estonian biologist Toomas Kivisild, with fourteen co-authors from various nationalities, suggested a connection between Indian and Western-Eurasian populations but opted for a very remote separation of the two branches, rather than a population movement towards India.

In 2000, thirteen Indian scientists led by Susanta Roychoudhury studied 644 samples of mtDNA from ten Indian ethnic groups, especially from the East and South. In a paper, Fundamental genomic unity of ethnic India, they identified a fundamental unity of mtDNA lineages in India, in spite of the extensive cultural and linguistic diversity.

A major study in 2006 by Indian biologist Sanghamitra Sengupta and fourteen co-authors, was based on 728 samples covering 36 Indian populations. They published their paper, Polarity and Temporality of High-Resolution Y-Chromosome Distributions in India Identify Both Indigenous and Exogenous Expansions and Reveal Minor Genetic Influence of Central Asian Pastoralists. The authors emphasize how their findings revealed a minor genetic influence of central Asian pastoralists in India. This study indirectly rejected a Dravidian authorship of the Indus-Sarasvati civilisation since it observed that the data are more consistent with a peninsular origin of Dravidian speakers than a source with proximity to the Indus-Sarasvati Valleys.

Another study in the same year, by Sanghamitra Sahoo and eleven colleagues, covered the Y-DNA of 936 samples covering 77 Indian populations, 32 of them hunting gathering communities. The sharing of some Y-chromosomal haplogroups between Indian and Central Asian populations is most parsimoniously explained by a deep, common ancestry between the two regions, with diffusion of some India-specific lineages northward. So the migration was not into India; it was out of India.

Sanghamitra Sahoo and her colleagues also found no evidence in the genetic record claimed by Colin Renfrew in late 1980s. In his work, Archaeology and Language: the Puzzle of Indo-European Origins, Renfrew attributed Indo-European origins to the beginning of agriculture in Anatolia, and identified Indo-Europeans entering India around 9000 BP, along with agriculture.

Stephen Oppenheimer in *The Real Eve: Modern Man’s Journey out of Africa* (2003) noted that we find the highest rates and greatest diversity of the M17 line in Pakistan, India, and eastern Iran. Oppenheimer discards the Aryan invasion and suggests that M17 could have found his way initially from India or Pakistan, through Kashmir, through Central Asia and Russia, before finally arriving in Europe.

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Anshu extols beautiful North East

Dr. Anshu Jamsenpa, famed Indian mountaineer, promoting North East India tourism in different forums within India and abroad, has invited people of Thailand and ASEAN countries to visit and explore eight.

She was addressing at a function in Bangkok recently after she was felicitated for unparalleled feat as lone woman in the world to scale Mount Everest for five times.

Pointing out that 'seeing is believing', she exhorted 400 plus delegates from NE India who had converged at Thai capital to promote bilateral trade, tourism & cultural exchange, to visit to see for themselves the unique cultures and traditions of NE people. The events were organised during North East Festival held at Bangkok during Feb 8 to 10 last. It was initiated by TM Trends chief functionary Shyam Kanu Mahanta and

supported by Indian Embassy & North Eastern Council.

Dr. Anshu, who hails from Bomdila and mother of two daughters, sashayed down the ramp as a celebrity Show Stopper. Her costume was designed by famous fashion designer Milan-based Sanghamitra, who had earlier showcased her creations in prestigious fashion circuits in London & Paris.

Several ambassadors of ASEAN nations, including Indian Ambassador Suchitra Durai, Thailand Commerce Minister Chutima Bunyapraphasara, NEC adviser R Lalrodingi, Former Union MoS (Tourism) Omak Apang, adviser to Manipur chief minister, Meghalaya & Nagaland additional chief secretaries, presidents of NEITC & AMASA, among others, attended the event.

Arunachal celebrates Donggin festival of the Adis

Donggin, the agricultural festival of the Adi community, was celebrated on February 17, 2019, Saturday at Solung-Mopin Ground of Itanagar with traditional fervour and gaiety. Shri Nabam Rebia, Minister of Land Management, Environment and Forest of Arunachal Pradesh extended his best wishes for the occasion and said that "Our society is now in a crucial transition period. We should come forward and preserve our culture for the future generation."

While appreciating the Adi community for preserving its rich culture, the minister said the culture of Adis is deep rooted and very strong and every community needs to learn and inculcate the good things from them. Shri Rebia also said that the State government is promoting the rich culture and languages of indigenous tribes through the Department of Indigenous Affairs. Itanagar MLA Shri Techi Kaso exhorted the intellectuals, especially the working class to work unitedly for the development of culture and society as well. Shri Kaso further said the community has played a vital role in shaping the State and every person needs to imbibe the sense of responsibility for state's overall development. He also

requested all the bigger communities to help in uplifting the smaller communities for the State's development and pan-Arunachal concept. Terming culture as identity of every individual, ABK President Shri Getom Borang urged everyone to continue and preserve the culture for younger generation. Terming religion and culture as different, Shri Borang asked every religious group to celebrate their festivals and maintain the culture. The ABK president also discouraged wanton killing of wild animals and birds during festivals and urged everyone to shun hunting.

Shri Tabang Bodung of Donggin Festival Celebration Committee Itanagar said that Donggin is an agricultural festival that marks the beginning of the new agricultural season and inspires all to sow and cultivate with zeal. He added that the festival is also celebrated to appease all deities and urge them to shower blessings on all humankind.

DFCCI general secretary Shri Apir Tabang and Chief Patron Shri Tashor Pali also spoke on the occasion. Ponung dance, folk dance and mega dance were performed by the various Ponung Rashengs.

The Three Truths

Pandit Gambhir Rai Agni Hotri Kolakham

There are three truths in this universe. The truth about the imperishable one who is ever existent.

The 1st of these truth is the Supreme Lord, who is formless, invisible and conscious. HE is all bliss and omnipresent and a creature of the universe.

The 2nd is the Soul. The soul is conscious but knowing little, bliss less and take rebirth.

The 3rd is Nature. The Nature is unconscious and lifeless. It is changeable. It changes its form but the atomic portion exists forever.

The Supreme Lord is the creature of the world. But he creates the world with the nature as one potter can make pots with the mud. Without mud the potter cannot make a single pot.

The crown Jewel of Vedic transcendental knowledge the “Srimad Bhagavad Gita” in its 2.20 verse proclaims that the soul never takes birth nor does it die. It is unborn, eternal, ever existing, undying and primeval.

The Soul cannot be slain when the body can be slain. “Geeta” says in Verse 2.23 that the soul can never be cut into pieces by any weapon nor can it be burned by fire, nor moistened by water, nor withered by the wind. The soul takes rebirth again and again to enjoy and suffer with the bodies that committed the bad and good deeds in the previous life. The three truths follow the geometrical principle of three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles.

Manipuri Women Entrepreneur Honoured

Manipur’s woman entrepreneur Ms. Kshetrimayum Indira Devi has recently been honoured with the ‘Woman Transforming India (WTI) Award 2018’ at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra, Chanakyapuri in New Delhi. The award presentation ceremony was organized by the NITI Aayog.

Ms. Devi who Hails from Thangmeiband Lairenhanjaba Leikai, Imphal, was presented with the prestigious award by Hon’ble Vice President Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu on the occasion of the third edition of Women Transforming India Awards. Along with Ms. Kshetrimayum Indira Devi, 14 other women Entrepreneurs from across the country were honoured. The Award is a NITI’ Aayog’s flagship event, which it organises in partnership with the United Nations. The winners were selected through an extensive six month long process. Hon’ble Vice President of India Shri Naidu also launched the Women Entrepreneurship Platform 2.0 on the occasion.

According to media reports, the nominations for

the third edition of the Women Transforming India Awards were opened on March 8, 2018 on the occasion of the International Women’s Day by Shri Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog and Mr. Yuri Afanasiev, UN Resident Coordinator in India.

The Awards this year focus on ‘Women and Entrepreneurship’, a concept which has seldom taken root in the national discourse. Concomitant with the launch of NITI’s Women Entrepreneurship Platform, the WTI Awards this year aims to go beyond recognizing women who are catalyzing change in their communities.

The Women Transforming India Awards invites stories of exceptional women entrepreneurs, who are breaking the glass ceiling and challenging stereotypes through businesses, enterprises, and initiatives that provide innovative solutions to address key development challenges and, Impact communities

The eldest of six siblings, Ms. Kshetrimayum Indira Devi is a graduate in Political Science and has a

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Reh-Tamladu celebrated at Itanagar capital complex

Reh-Tamladu festival of the Mishmi community was celebrated on 10 February, 2019, Sunday at the Mishmi Culture Heritage Centre located in the capital complex of Itanagar by the Mishmi community residing in the capital complex. Prominent figures of the Mishmi community, including former MP Laeta Umbrey, Sports Minister Dr Mohesh Chai, MLA Dasanglu Pul, Arunachal Pradesh State Commission for Women Chairperson Radhelu Chai Tech, Joint SSB Secretary Tamune Miso, Gazeteers Director Sokhep Kri, and others. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Chai and Umbrey stressed the importance of speaking one's mother tongue and the relevance of implementing Mishmi as third language in the schools in Mishmi majority areas. Pul praised the hardworking Mishmi women, particularly in the field of handicrafts, and encouraged them to continue to practice it. Mishmi Welfare Society chairman Dr Mika Umpo highlighted the rich culture and traditions of the Mishmi community, and recollected historical records dating back to the reign of Ahom king Siu-ting-pha or Naria

Raja (1644-1648), and the Ahom-Mishmi Peace Treaty of 1687 which has been memorialized in the form of the Sadiya snake pillar. He called upon the members of the community to stand united and uphold their rich cultural heritage. Various cultural programmes and sports events were organized as part of the celebration.

The 49th Tamla-Du festival of the Mishmi Community (Digaru-Miju) was also celebrated centrally at Medo Village recently by the Mishmi community in the auspicious presence of Shri Chowna Mein, Deputy Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh. Besides gracing the festival as chief guest, Mein also laid the foundation stones of the Eklavya Model Residential School in Medo area of Wakro Circle and the Open Tamla-Du Hall at the Tamla-Du ground, Medo, in the presence of MLA 46-Chowkham Assembly Constituency CT Mein.

Addressing the people, Mein said the eastern part

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Nyokum Yullo festival celebrated in Itanagar

39th Nyokum Yullo festival which promotes Games and sports and co-curricular activities, was inaugurated on Sunday the 17th February, 2019 by Shri Tech, the local MLA at Nyokum Lapang ground of Itanagar. He also inaugurated the food stall on the occasion.

Shri Kaso said that since time immemorial, the Nyishi community has been celebrating the Nyokum festival which is the symbol of identity of Nyishi community. He urged upon the public to take part in a grand way for peace and prosperity for all. He also prayed to the almighty for peace, progress and prosperity of one and all.

Chairman of the Sports Association of Arunachal (SAA) Shri Bamang Tago was the Chief Guest during the flag-off ceremony of the Marathon Race early in the morning from KV-II to Nyokum Lapang ground. Shri Tago said that games and sport nowadays is being

given lots of encouragement by the state government and supporting all types of games' and sports and even fully sponsoring for national and international levels. He urged upon all to avail the opportunity of the State Government reservation for promotion of games and sports. He assured all support in promoting games and sports.

Organising Chairman Er. Tassar Taro informed the media that there shall be several games and sports events including traditional games and sports, cultural activities, literary activities, food stall, cultural competition, Miss Nyokum and Ane Nyokum-2019 among others. He appealed to all to come and enjoy the activities of the 'Nyokum Yullo' festival celebration which shall continue till February 26, 2019. Organising Secretary Shri Gora Takio and other eminent personalities and Government officials and public leaders were present on the occasion

Hill of Tara Complex, Ireland, An Ancient Vedic Solar Observatory

Major S.N.Mathur, SM (Retd)

Many Megalithic structures, especially in Europe and Asia, are ancient astronomical instruments. These include Carnac and Gavrinis in Brittany, Stonehenge in Britain, and the Hill of Tara and Newgrange in Ireland. The Hill of Tara and the Newgrange in Meath County, Ireland are ancient architectural complexes of megaliths with astronomical alignments.

In this paper we shall exclusively deal with the Hill of Tara, an archeological complex which includes Newgrange, a world heritage site. If we take the entire complex, it can be claimed as one of the most ancient Solar Observatories to observe the Eightfold Solar Year of The Tuatha De Dana (the children of the goddess Dana). The Eightfold Solar Celtic calendar is also like Hindu Vedic Lunar Calendar and so are the related festivals and their celebrations. Therefore, this complex is of significance to the people of Celtic countries of Europe and the migrants and people influenced by Vedic culture. The Hill of Tara even today a sacred site for modern-day pilgrims and they perform ceremonies and rituals on the hill top.

The most important discovery of this study would be, establishing the ancient link between the Celts and Hindus, based on the Eightfold Calendar, beliefs and related festivals. We would like to understand the importance of the Hill of Tara and the Eightfold Celtic Calendar.

The Hill of Tara:

- i. The Hill of Tara is a legendary sacred site, and ancient capital of Ireland.
- ii. It contains several ancient monuments and, according to tradition, was the seat of the High King of Ireland.
- iii. Tara was also the sacred city of Druids. Proto-druids developed the megalith building culture and this period saw the rise of great mounds like Newgrange and circles of stone like Stonehenge.

Eightfold Solar Calendar of Celts

- b. Samhain (2 Nov) (Celtic New Year) –

Deepawali(Hindu New Year)

c. Winter Solstice (21 Dec) – Uttrayana

d. Imbolc (2 Feb) – Rath Saptami

e. Spring Equinox (21 Mar) – Chaity Chand / Holi

f. Beltane (1 May) – Akshya Tritiya

g. Summer Solstice (21 Jun) – Dakshiyana

h. Lughnasadh (1 Aug) – Hariyali Amawasya

i. Autumn Equinox (21 Sep) –

The Hill of Tara as a Solar Observatory:

The observations are made through the alignments of various objects which are in and around the Hill of Tara. The alignment of the rising Sun with the Lambay Island, an ancient volcano, near Dublin Bay and Megalithic object or Mound or a Hill top, on or near the Hill of Tara, gives the Solar Festival day. This was very ancient method but coincides with the festivals. Druids even today celebrate these festivals on Hill of Tara. Some Megalithic objects have been disturbed or destroyed but the festival celebration is planned and celebrated as per the ancient Lunar Celtic Calendar.

Alignments for Eightfold Solar festivals

- i. Samhain: (Sun -Lambay Volcano- **Hill of the Veiled One**)
- ii. Winter Solstice: (Sun – Lambay Volcano – **Newgrange**)
- iii. Imbog: (Sun – Lambay Volcano – **Hill of the Witches**)
- iv. Spring Equinox: (Sun – Lambay Volcano – **Summer Hill** -Knockaistia)
- v. Beltine: (Sun – Lambay Volcano – **Lyons Hill** – Kildare)
- vi. Summer Solstice: (Sun – Lambay Volcano – **Fair Gods Hill**)
- vii. Lughnasa: (Sun – Lambay Volcano – **Lyons Hill** –

Kildare)

viii. Autumn Equinox: (Sun – Lambay Volcano – **Summer Hill** – Knockaistia)

Festival celebration days: Although the dates for the festivals have been fixed, in practice the Druids and Celts celebrate these festivals as per their Lunar Calendar. The dates do vary but the Lunar calendar is accurate, and the festival dates coincides with the Hindu Lunar Calendar.

Samhain Celebrations by Celts and Hindus: last year in 2018 the Hindus celebrated the Deepawali, one of the most popular festival and New Year on 7 Nov 2018. This had been the ancient Hindu festival and a New Year. In earlier times the accounts were closed by all Hindus and new account books were prepared. New clothes for all family members were made. Houses were cleaned and white washed. People visited friends and relatives to meet and greet on this festival. In Ireland and other parts of the world also Celts celebrated their festival of Samhain on the same date.

The Celtic and Hindu festivals and celebrations similarities:

- a. The days of the Eightfold calendar are almost same
- b. The theme of the festivals is also almost similar
- c. The sequence of the festivals is also similar
- d. These festivals are widely celebrated in European and Asian countries. There are possibilities of similar beliefs and celebrations in other parts of the world.
- e. Celts and Hindus had considerable knowledge of astronomy and mathematics and were accurate to understand, calculate and celebrate these astronomical events.
- f. These events were then transformed into cultural events and the methods of celebration appear almost similar.
- g. During ancient times, the High Kings of Tara were accepted as King of Ireland and were titled Lu' in Ireland. The word Lu' means Hindu God Indra, the Lord of Pantheons in Sanskrit.
- h. The Tuatha De Danna (the children of the

goddess Dana): The Goddess Danu is a Hindu goddess too. She is a goddess of rivers and ponds. There is a beautiful temple of the goddess in Bali, Indonesia.

The celebrations of the Celtic festival Samhain and Deepawali of the Hindus signify the importance of these festivals and cultural similarities between them. Similar explanation can be given for all the other Eightfold Solar festivals of Celts and they are equally importance for the Hindus. These similarities certainly give rise to an important question: was there an ancient link between Celts and the Hindus? The Eightfold Solar Calendar is derived from astrological events, which have been identified and then transformed into festivals and now are part of Celtic and Hindu cultures. The sequence of the events is logical and common for both Celts and Hindus. Such ancient sites and observations made from them by identifying the important critical astronomical events and transforming them to festivals and culture was a great work done by our ancestors and is now a binding factor for these societies.

The Hill of Tara complex is a very important ancient capital and sacred seat of the High Kings of Ireland and at the same time also a Solar Observatory which was used by the Druids to monitor the astronomical events. Transforming these events to festivals and thereby evolving a culture has been a milestone in development of society. These festivals are also the festivals of Hindus and therefore the Hill of Tara is one the most important astronomical and archeological sites for many societies and cultures. Newgrange is a world heritage site, but we must view the entire Hill of Tara Complex with a larger prospective, a place of cultural evolution. Scholars may like to suggest and campaign to identify and recommend Hill of Tara Complex as world heritage site. There are many such important Megalithic and archeological sites which need to be identified and studied to know the remarkable work done by our ancestors.

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Identities of Minor abusing Clergies disclosed by Catholic Church

Jacqui Briddell

Catholic leaders say they regret not protecting “the most vulnerable souls” and that the ongoing sexual misconduct scandal involving priests is “tearing the church apart.”

Saying the nation’s ongoing scandal of priests involved in sexual misconduct is tearing the church apart, Catholic officials in Texas began releasing a long-promised report detailing credible allegations of sexual misconduct involving children against priests dating back to 1940. The state’s fifteen dioceses were expected to release the names and details of priests, deacons, and other clergy members. The release began with a 23-page report by the Archdiocese of San Antonio. There has been some expectation that this list might be the largest of its kind released so far. Pennsylvania released a list of over 300 priests last year. With more than 4.6 million Catholics in Texas, it is the largest religious denomination in the state. By day’s end, the details of sexual misconduct involving more than 303 members of the clergy came out in fifteen separate reports.

“As I write these words I am deeply aware of, piercing my body and to the depth of my soul, the bitter wind that has been sweeping through the church, causing turmoil, confusion, and anger,” Archbishop Gustavo Garcia Siller, of San Antonio, the largest in the state, said in the report released Thursday afternoon. “Allegations of clerical sexual misconduct and mishandling of some of these cases by bishops are tearing the church apart, and the challenge for us as a church is to renew our commitment to holiness and justice.”

Moments later, the second largest archdiocese, that of the Houston-Galveston region, released a list of forty members of the clergy as well as two under investigation currently. “This list is being presented to the faithful of the church in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston as part of an effort to bring around the restoration of trust,” the report said. “As archbishop of this local church, I extend my deepest regret for the harm that has been done,” said Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, archbishop of Galveston-Houston. “In multiple incidents over the years, the church and her

ministers failed to protect the most vulnerable souls entrusted to our care. There is no excuse for the actions of those credibly accused of such sins against the human person.”

The San Antonio report said it was laying out all known reports of clergy sexual abuse of minors dating back to 1940 for the San Antonio archdiocese. In cases where the allegations were found “not to be credible,” the report lays out the details but does not name the cleric. Over the past 79 years, the report said, the archdiocese has had more than 3,000 priests minister to the Catholic faithful. Of those, the names of 56 priests and other clergy were listed.

Last August, a Pennsylvania grand jury report revealed that over three hundred priests have been credibly accused of sexually assaulting over one thousand children in Pennsylvania over the past seven decades. It was then declared one of the broadest inquiries into church sex abuse in U.S. history. Hundreds of pages of graphic details described children being molested, assaulted, abused, and neglected by priests and other church leaders covering it all up. “Priests were raping little boys and girls, and the men of God who were responsible for them not only did nothing; they hid it all,” the grand jury wrote in its report.

As a result of the decades of cover-ups by the Catholic church, most instances of abuse were too old to prosecute, the statewide investigation in Pennsylvania found. According to the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, victims who were minors at the time of the crime have twelve years after they turn eighteen to file charges. Victims over the age of eighteen have two years. In Texas, adults have five years and child sexual abuse victims have fifteen years after their eighteenth birthday before the statute of limitations kicks in.

In contrast to Pennsylvania’s report, which was done under the auspices of the Pennsylvania attorney

general, the Texas release is being done by the Catholic church itself, raising concerns about its reliability. "We cannot rely on the church to tell the truth," said Tim Lennon, the president of the board of directors of the Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests (SNAP). "The church could have released the names a year ago, five years ago, or ten years ago. The only reason that they're releasing names is they're compelled to do so because they have been exposed."

But some clerics in Pennsylvania said they took steps to avoid the appearance of a cover-up. Bishop Lawrence Persico was the first in Pennsylvania to release names of sex offenders in his own diocese last April, four months before the grand jury report. The investigation was led by external investigators hired by the church who identified 21 laypeople and 13 priests at the time. "I don't investigate allegations," Bishop Persico told Texas Monthly. "I turn it over to our investigation team. They're professionals. Some of them were federal prosecutors. I'm not an investigator. I'm a priest, a pastor. I don't have all of the resources to do that. And besides, then it's in-house. Whereas this is someone who's outside [doing] the investigating."

The updated public disclosure on Bishop Persico's diocese website now has more than 70 names. The grand jury report, which only included the names of priests, listed 41 names for the Diocese of Erie later that fall. However, actions like these have not eased the minds of many Catholics parishioners when cover-ups by church leaders have been exposed even after the steps to release more names. For example, Cardinal DiNardo of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston faced scrutiny last year after being accused of knowing, and covering up, the sexual abuse "episodes" of a priest who stayed in the ministry for years, the New York Times reported.

Jennifer Graber, an associate professor of religious studies at the University of Texas at Austin, explains that the cover-ups and ongoing withholding of information by the church regarding abuse can be tied back to the long history of extreme anti-clericalism in the United States as well as in other parts of the world. Catholics who saw priests as "the ultimate spiritual authority" felt they needed to defend their clergy to anti-priest narratives, sometimes leading to the protection of abusers as well. "Religious institutions, and all kinds of [other] institutions across

the board, have histories of abuse," she said. "But one thing that developed [in the Catholic community] was a particularly strong institutional and hierarchical culture [of] not only defending all priests but sometimes defending priests who abused. It really kind of laid the groundwork for an environment in which that strong, very elaborate hierarchy made for a setting in which abusers could be easily protected, and they were."

Since the case in Pennsylvania, attorneys general in fifteen states have launched criminal investigations, turning the heads of Texas Catholics awaiting a similar response from their own attorney general. Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton received hundreds of letters pleading for a statewide investigation, but state laws restrict him from doing so, he told KXAN. Because the investigating of clergy is up to local law enforcement, the attorney general can step in only when those agencies ask for assistance.

At times like these, when the faithful are questioning whether they should choose to stay or to leave the church indefinitely and when fingers are being pointed in every direction, everyone agrees that, at the end of the day, the most important actions must be to support the victims. "It's not enough just to release names," Lennon said. "Without action to follow, it's kind of hollow. When people have been harmed, it's the responsibility of those in charge to provide comfort, care, support."

SNAP provides support in the form of counseling and support groups as well as hotlines and other resources for reporting abuse to authorities. Carol Midboe, a Texas organizer and advocate for SNAP, hosted a candlelight vigil at St. Williams Church in Round Rock on Wednesday, the eve of the scheduled release of the list for survivors of sexual abuse. She encouraged attendees to bring photographs of themselves or their loved ones who were victims at the age of the abuse or other objects remembering those who were lost to drugs, alcohol, or suicide.

"According to the Centers for Disease Control, there are one in four girls and one in six boys in the United States who will be sexually abused before their eighteenth birthday. I pray the Texas diocese will release all names of those known and accused of indecency with a child or misconduct with a vulnerable adult," one person who spoke at the vigil said. That's a sentiment shared and felt by many

others around the state who anxiously await the release of the names that could change their lives and the lives of those around them forever.

“We are going to name their names, and describe

what they did—both the sex offenders and those who concealed them,” the grand jury wrote in the Pennsylvania report. “We are going to shine a light on their conduct, because that is what the victims deserve.”

Srl. No.	Diocese	Number of Clergy credibly accused
1	San Antonio (archdiocese)	56
2	Galveston-Houston (archdiocese)	42
3	Dallas	31
4	El Paso	30
5	Amarillo	30
6	Tyler	1
7	Lubbock	5
8	Austin	22
9	Fort Worth	17
10	Victoria	3
11	Corpus Christi	26
12	Beaumont	13
13	Laredo	0
14	Brownsville	14
15	San Angelo	13

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Reh-Tamladu celebrated at Itanagar capital complex

of our State is far developed than the western part. He congratulated the people of the Eastern Zone for facilitating development without putting hindrances and giving their support in all spheres of developmental activities. He said that being the representative of Namsai district, it is his responsibility to speed up the development of Wakro –Medo Circle, which falls under 46-Chowkham AC.

Mein assured that police infrastructure at Wakro will be created at the earliest. Parshuram Kund will soon be developed as a world class tourist hub; he said. He also informed that the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh is keen in developing a world class pilgrimage

centre at Parshuram Kund.

Brig (ret'd) Dr BD Mishra, the Hon'ble Governor of Arunachal Pradesh and Shri Pema Khandu, Chief Minister extended their warm greetings to the people of the State on the occasion of 'Tamladu', the festival of the Mishmi community. The Governor expressed his hope that the festivity would continue to facilitate the preservation of the age-old indigenous beliefs and cultural ethos of the Mishmi community. Shri Khandu in his festival message stated that "On the auspicious occasion of Tamladu, I convey my warm greetings and good wishes to all my Mishmi brothers and sisters."

Assam's heritage depiction impresses Kumbh Mela visitors

Sivasish Thakur

Visitors on spiritual quest at the ongoing Kumbh Mela, 2019 at Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh are savouring the famed natural heritage of Assam, thanks to its poignant depiction by Jaya Thadani, a Guwahati-based artist, who has done a number of murals at public places at Allahabad, painting Assam's pride, the one-horned rhinoceros, among others. The rhino, the State animal of Assam now adorns large spaces in the Allahabad City railway station – also known as Rambagh Railway Station – one of the busiest railway hubs of Uttar Pradesh. Smti Thadani has extensively painted another 10,000-sq ft space on the boundary walls of the CMP Degree College, Allahabad, where the theme is river and fish.

Jaya was invited to paint murals as part of the 'Paint My City Campaign' to assist the Uttar Pradesh government's city beautification and renovation efforts ahead of the Kumbh Mela, also called Aardh Kumbh Mela which is held every six years. The auspicious occasion attracts tourists and devotees in their hordes, making it one of the largest human congregations of the world. A footfall of nearly 12 crore from India and abroad is expected during the ongoing celebrations which will conclude in March.

"It has been a great experience to do murals for the Kumbh Mela. I am all the more happy because I have been able to showcase my home State's celebrated natural heritage before a large global audience," she told The Assam Tribune. Jaya added

that wildlife had been an enduring theme in her artwork and she loved paying homage to nature through her paintings.

The street art project involves painting of murals at numerous publicly visible strategic locations across Allahabad to mark the Kumbh Mela celebrations.

Jaya, who incidentally is the first street lady artist from Assam to paint murals in a Kumbh Mela, has painted a massive water tank in the railway station. Her artwork on the water tank located 110 feet above the ground features a rhinoceros together with a saurus crane, the State bird of Uttar Pradesh. "Here at Kumbh Mela, my paintings are on the amalgamation of the two state's wildlife. One side of the water tank at the railway station features a rhino with her calf, and on the other side is a saurus crane," she said.

Jaya was helped by three assistants – Pradeep, Amit and Deep who hail from Bulandshahr in Uttar Pradesh – in her street art at Allahabad. Her work has been widely appreciated by both visitors and officials at Allahabad.

Kumbh Mela is one of the world's largest religious gatherings and is held on a rotational basis in any of the four riverside towns of Haridwar, Allahabad, Nasik and Ujjain. The Maha Kumbh is held every 12 years at Prayag (Allahabad), with the Aardh Kumbh Mela being organised every six years.

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Manipuri Women Entrepreneur Honoured

professional Diploma in Handloom Technology from IIHT, Guwahati. She started her career with Goenka Woolen Mills in Guwahati in 1994. Development of a diversified Manipuri Handloom product "TALIT" was established by her in 2004 with the help of Weavers Service Centre (WSC), Imphal, Ministry of Textiles for an Israel based Buyer, became a game

changer for her as it opened up the path for international reach of a humble product, said the report. Ms. Indira's organization 'Chanu Creations' has been successful in reviving the ancient handlooms of Manipur with the help of modern weaving technology and trained weavers.



Reh-Tamladu Festival of Mishimi Tribe



Donggin Festival of Adis in Arunachal Pradesh