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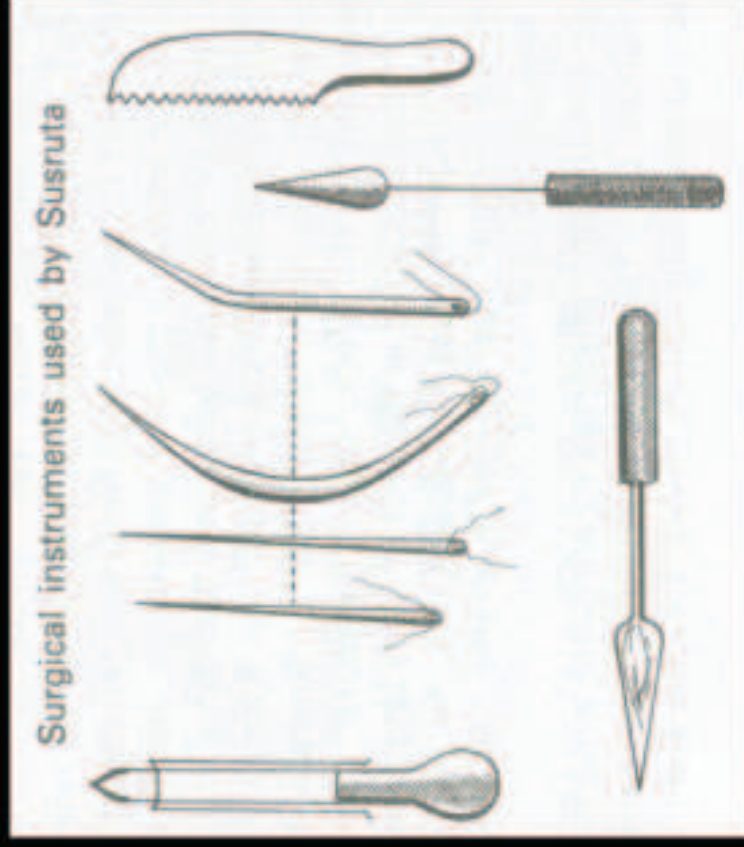
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Editor : Amarendra Brahma

## DEEPAVALI – The festival of lights

The early autumn festival of lights which is better known as Deepavali is one of the most popular festivals of Hinduism, was celebrated this year with all spontaneity and enthusiasm. It is very much a well known fact that Deepavali or Diwali is considered to symbolise the spiritual “victory of light over darkness, good over evil and knowledge over ignorance.” The question that torments me often in the context of the present situation in our country is whether the innumerable Deepavalis that we have observed over time immemorial could really remove our ignorance and led us to light.

The five-day festival of lights originated in the Indian subcontinent and is mentioned in several early Sanskrit texts such as the Padma Purana and the Skanda Purana both of which were completed in the second half of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium CE. The diyas (lamps) are mentioned in Skanda Purana as symbolising parts of the sun, describing it as the cosmic giver of light and energy to all life and which seasonally transitions in the Hindu calendar month of Kartik. It is interesting to note that some other faiths in India also celebrate their respective festivals alongside Diwali. The Jains observe their own Diwali, which marks the final liberation of Mahavira, the Sikhs celebrate Bandi Chhor Divas to mark the release of Guru Hargobind from the prison of the Mughal Empire, while Newar Buddhists, unlike other Buddhists, celebrate Diwali by worshipping Lakshmi. Although for each faith it marks different historical events and stories, but nonetheless the festival represents the same symbolic victory of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, and good over evil.

Many Hindus associate the festival of light with Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity. Some popular contemporary sources identify the day of Deepavali as the day Goddess

Lakshmi was born from Samudra manthan, the churning of the cosmic ocean of milk by the Devas (gods) and the Asuras (demons). Hindus from the Braj region in northern India, parts of Assam, as well as southern Tamil and Telugu communities view Diwali as the day the god Krishna overcame and destroyed the evil demon king Narakasura, in yet another symbolic victory of knowledge and good over ignorance and evil. A Vedic legend that is also found in several Puranas such as the *Padma Purana*, mentions Diwali as the night when Lakshmi chose and got married to Vishnu. Deepavali is also linked with the Goddess of Shakti, better known as Maha Kali, but the scriptural mention of this fact is very scanty. One most notable as well as most reasonable legend links Deepavali festival to Hindu epic Ramayana, where Diwali is the day Rama, Sita, Lakshman and Hanuman reached Ayodhya completing a 14 year long exile after Rama’s army of good defeated demon king Ravana’s army of evil. The festive arrangements and brilliantly illuminated capital city of Ayodhya that were decorated by the subjects of the kingdom of Ajodhya to ceremonially receive Sri Rama, who was dignity personified, is believed to be the precursor of Deewali or Deepavali.

The religious significance of Diwali varies regionally within India. The festival is associated with a diversity of deities, traditions, and symbolism. These variations perhaps reflect diverse local autumn harvest festivals that fused into one pan-Hindu festival with a shared spiritual significance and ritual grammar while retaining local traditions..

Every Deepavali is a reminder to all of us that we should get rid of untruth and embrace truth, remove the darkness around us and crave for immortality. Om Shanti.

**Editor**

# The Importance of Culture and Cultural Identity of the Karbis

Dhaneswar Engti

Karbi Anglong is a mosaic of culture, races, language and its religious inclination is close to Indo-Mongoloid (Tibeto Burmese) and Austric stock. According to some scholars, the stock reflects our ethnic and cultural plurality. From the remote past the indigenous tribal communities have come in contact with other civilizations, - Buddhism from Eastern India and Tibet, Islam and Christianity from the West.

It may be mentioned here that one of the second largest indigenous groups of this region are the Karbis, the first people who built up a small Kingdom known as Socheng which is located in the present West Karbi Anglong district of Assam. At present, Ronghang Rongbong (Rong Arak) in West Karbi Anglong is the capital of Karbi Traditional Kingdom. However, indigenous tribal groups like the Dimasa Kocharis, the Bodos Kacharis, the Rengma Nagas, the Mizos, the Kuki Chin, the Shyams, the Tiwas, the Mhars, and various groups remained sequestered before the advent of British colonialism and Christianity, which exposed them to western culture and religion. Despite the impact of Aryanisation and Sanskritization, and Christian proselytisms and other vicissitudes of their history, the indigenous people have sustained their distinctive way of life and preserved their rich cultural heritage. With the modernizing process in the tribal societies through modern education and economic development and democratic process, a strong sense of culture consciousness or cultural identity has been aroused. There is a realization of the beauty of their culture and the external threats to their faith and culture.

Today, the ethnic tribal cultural identity has become a volatile subject for every ethnic tribe of north-east India. It has made the ethnic Karbi tribe to feel always ineffable and neglected by the advanced community due to the advent of Aryanisation and Sanskritization including Christian proselytes.

Now let us try to distinguish what is Identity? According to some scholars; - "Identity is the state or fact of remaining the same one or ones under varying conditions and circumstances. Identity is the feeling that men as individuals are the same persons as they

were yesterday and last year. According to Erik H. Erikson, - "Identity is the feeling of sameness and continuity of an individual or group."

Today, the identity of tribal community has become a psycho-social experience, - and it has started to talk about loss of their cultural identity and ethnic uniqueness. The tribal's of the North-East are afraid of losing their cultural heritage and religious beliefs in the near future. According to some scholars, "Identity is a psycho-social phenomenon, a feeling of an individual or group that his or their past (history of folk memory), purposes and values, experiences and value in a future belong to him or to them. With this view, people talk of cultural identity, social identity, ethnic identity of people and nation. The cultural identity of an ethnic group includes their common past or common historical tradition, linguistic affinity, cultural heritage and religious beliefs and customs, their shared experiences, struggles and sufferings with a strong sense of belonging to each other and, or identification with the experience of an individual or groups where psycho-social phenomenon of identity crisis occurs, an inescapable turning point for better or worse. "Better" means 'a confluence of constructive energies of ideologies and a belief in the common future. Identity is the experience of an individual or group as recognizable, continuous and persistent entity. Identity is what one thinks about him as the real "me."

Scholars believe that - "Identity crisis means an acute anxiety experienced by a person or group who finds it difficult to clearly define personal or group identity. Whenever there occurs a phase or period seeking new set of definition amidst unclear role choices of an individual or group, there occurs psycho-social phenomenon of identity crisis." Erikson further observes, -"Crisis means a crucial time or an inescapable turning point for better or worse." "Better" means 'a confluence of constructive energies of an individual or society' and "Worse" means prolonged identity confusion.

Identity crisis is a recurring phenomenon in the social development of a group or a community. In every new generation, there is always a demand for

identity. A society has to respond to these demands and confirm positive identity to re-generate itself and preserve. Such a psycho-social phenomenon exists among the indigenous people of the northeast relating to their religion and culture. Modernization due to rapid economic transformation influences of alien culture and direct onslaught on the indigenous faiths have created a crisis in their cultural identity.

The Karbis during the 20<sup>th</sup> century had encountered the crisis and resolved their cultural identity crisis through the organization of their religion and culture, through a capable and enlightened social leadership. The present exercise to understand the indigenous faith and culture should not only aim at the preservation and protection of culture, but also in interpreting the significance of the religion and culture and their relevance in present times. Cultural identity should be asserted and preserved by the respective ethnic tribes themselves.

E.B. Tylor's classic definition of culture in his famous treatise "Primitive culture" (1871) as the complex whole, which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits as acquired by a man as a member of a society still holds the ground despite promulgation of various definitions of culture. Culture has both material and non-material expressions. Sanskrit word "Sanskriti" has been used to define culture as "refined". So it is the non-materialistic aspect of culture, which has been emphasized in Tylor's working definition. This non-material culture covers thought pattern, institutions, the behaviour, love of beauty expressed in dress, costumes and ornaments, system of the festivals, dance, song and music, the aesthetic expression. This concept is subsumed in Tylor's thesis that culture is possessed by man alone and not by any primates.

Robert H. Lowie, more or less agree with Tylor when he describes the components and facets of culture. He observes, - "Culture is the sum total of what an individual acquires from his society- those beliefs, custom, artistic norms, food habits and crafts, not by his own creative activity but as a legacy from the past conveyed by formal or informal education". The whole culture including the material and non-material aspects includes technology, economic beliefs and model of worship of God, language and literature and the arts, the aesthetic expression and visual arts. Such holistic description of culture sounds like the amalgamation of culture and civilization. We

are reminded by T.S. Eliot in his Notes on Culture (1946) by pointing out the distinction between culture and civilization. He says, - "Culture is what we are and civilization is what we possess." Archaeologist, historian and anthropologists use the two terms almost synonymously.

Leslie A. White, in his "Concept of Culture" (1959) and Encyclopaedia Britannica writes, - "Culture may be defined as behaviour peculiar to Homo Sapiens together with material objects used as an integral part of his behaviour; specially, culture consists of language, ideals, beliefs, customs, codes, institutions, techniques, work of art, rituals, ceremonies and so on". It is the supplementing of material aspects to Tylor's complex whole. A.L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, summarizing the components of culture opine that they are, -

1. Behaviour acquired and transmitted through symbols.
2. Distinctive achievement of human society including the embodiment in artefacts.
3. Traditional ideas and values (historically derived and selected) on the essential case of culture.
4. Culture system is a product of social action of men.

Culture in practical term is reflected in the profession and organization of religion, promotion of behaviour of the individuals and community, aesthetic expression in the forms of festivals and performing arts, dance music and arts, co-existence or confrontation with other culture and imbibing the righteous moral values among the individuals and the community.

As a consequence, Karbis are culturally very rich and they are proud of their firmly established colourful cultural heritage. Its lands, people, and tribal culture occupy a unique position in the ethnographic map of Assam and in India, too. The folklore, folk tales, myth, legend, riddles, proverbs, folk speech, folk art, carving and engraving, clay modelling, paintings, weaving, tattooing, - are the main attractions of Karbi tribe. Other enchanting parts of Karbi culture are folk song and folk dance carnivals participated by the young Karbi artists, who are beautifully dressed in their colourful traditional dresses like, - 'pini', 'pekok', 'jir-ik', 'lekhiki' by the young girls and 'choi-ik', 'choi-ang' with Karbi traditional 'poho', attired with the beautiful tails of Drango (Vojaru) bird by the Karbi youths. Some of the

mirthful Karbi folk dances to be mentioned are – ‘Nimso Kerung’, ‘Chong Kedam’, ‘Banjar kekan’, ‘Kengtir Kekan’, ‘Hacha Kekan’, ‘Ritnong Chindi Kekan’, ‘Lingpum Sokchon Kekan’, ‘Hen-up Ahi Kekan’, etc. We are looking forward for the preservations and documentations of those valuable ethnic dances and traditional dresses by adopting scientific method for future testimony of our Karbi culture.

Karbi Anglong is a sweet meeting place of multi-racial ethnic cultures. It is a land of ballet and melody. From a very popular talk, it could be learnt that the most ordained Guru Rangina Sarpo came down from the Heaven and got seated on the bank of a beautiful Telehor river in the present West Karbi Anglong district and he started singing the Karbi folk music, folk songs and other ancient Karbi folk tunes to his beloved disciples – Sing Mirjeng and Long Mirjeng and these two faithful disciples taught Longbi and Chidu, the art of singing, and these two faithful disciples in return taught the art of singing to the ignorant Karbi people in the olden days. The prosody of olden musical instruments is still echoing in the hearts of every Karbi man and woman. We strongly believe that Guru Rangina Sarpo was the architect of Karbi folk songs, Karbi folk tune and folk music, etc. He had planted the Tree of Karbi Folk Music in the Karbi society. Some of the important ethnic dances of Karbi Community are mentioned and illustrated below for better understanding and knowledge:-

1. Nimso Kerung: - Nimso Kerung dance is a traditional dance form of Karbi tribe. It is a mirthful dance recital presented during the Karbi Chomkan Festival held in honour of family members who had already expired. It is a final farewell to the departed souls. So, prior to their departure from this earthly world to their permanent abode of rest in “Chom-Arong” or “Chom-rongme & Chom-rongso”, Chomkan festival is held by the family members. It is a fun-loving and festive celebration of young boys and girls, and participated by men and women of the same locality as well. The word ‘Nimso’ means maiden and ‘Kerung’ means picking up the maiden for the dance. Two young men flank a young woman and thus it goes on interlocking each other, crafting ‘Nimso Kerung’ dances according to the tune of drum beatings, which is called – “Cheng Kepalodok”. During the ‘Nimso Kerung’ dance the ‘Duhuidi- Duhuijang’ beats the drum starting from

slow to fast rhythms.

2. Banjar Kekan:- Banjar Kekan dance is a traditional Karbi dance form. This dance form is an indispensable part of Chomkan, which is demonstrated during the Chomkan festival. This dance is held in the outer courtyard of the house and only the youngsters can take part in it. The word ‘Banjar’ means a kind of bamboo pole, while ‘Kekan’ means dance. In this dance, small bamboo sticks, skillfully carved Banjar poles are displayed. The Karbi folk artists get enough scope to display their skills in preparing Banjar poles and thus they never vacillate to decorate variety of designs over the Banjar poles.

3. Chong Kedam:- Chong Kedam is a traditional combat dance form of the Karbis. The people belonging to other communities enjoy this form with much appreciation. This dance form of Chong Kedam is performed by a group of male dancers, who are beautifully attired with their traditional dresses and ornaments during ‘Chomkan’ Festival. A fighter dance is performed by keeping in perfect rhythm with the



drumbeat. Such dancers are generally equipped with ‘Nok’ i.e. wooden decorated sword in his right hand and a ‘Chong’ i.e. wooden shield in his left hand. This particular dance is performed in order to disperse the evil spirit from the place of Chomkan festivals according to some experts. Actually it represents the fight against the evil spirits to clean the place of Chomkam festivals, so that, the evils cannot harm the souls of the departed persons and the guests who participated in the Chomkan festivals on that day.

4. Kengtir Kekan:- Kengtir Kekan dance is a traditional dance form of the Karbis. This dance form is performed inside the room where the straw

(Contd. to Page 15)

# Place and Heritage

Dr Ranga Ranjan Das

Toponymy and place lore asserts that there is an intrinsic co-relation between place and heritage across the globe. Not all the places but some of the places in this earth that has been defined by existences of glorious heritage in one way or the other. Besides, UNESCOs' list which keep extra-ordinary places, monuments, landscapes under its' categorical chronology, there are so many others places that provides new meaning and definition of heritage in one way or the other. The term heritage has its' own penetrations and insights, it cannot be confined within limited demarcation; rather it is wide according to the perception and interpretation of the people. It is the people who decide and provide heritage tag towards a place from etic perspectives. Empirically, it is found that in Indian context heritage has multiple implications as revealed by various scholars. However, there is no such classification pertaining to heritage in association with place. Nevertheless there is lots of discussion on intangible, tangible within the purview of cultural, indigenous, archaeological, religious, historical, and monumental, temple, mythological heritages within and abroad as observed. If we penetrate such discussions and deliberations, certain names appear that is conclusive. One will find mythological relevance towards naming a place across the country. That is another aspect which has its' own dimension relating to a genre in legend discourse. The various characters from our two great epics Ramayana and Mahabharata, who made a positive impact and occupy a special space in the heart of the people, has reflected in the names of the various places. They believe them not only as their gods and goddess rather incorporated in their great heritages. Various mythological places have real existence in this country, Kasi, Mathura, Brindaban, a few among them. Every place has its own name, and there is something behind for naming as such. Besides, some places caught attention due to existence of certain specific significance in various dimensions. Delhi, Agra, Bombay, Chennai, Kolkata, Puri, Rameswaram, Goa, Tirupati, Amarnath, Kashmir, Hyderabad, Allahabad are some of the places of India

which attracted many and provide the avenue to exemplify the place within own definition of heritage. Places of north east are not the exception. This unexplored territory has provided added dimension pertaining to place and heritage. Place like Tawang of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram and Assam are vibrant and provide new meaning of heritage.

In the north east there are so many places which has its' own heritage but yet to come to limelight. In Assam, some places have attracted people but there is still some unexplored area which is yet to come in north eastern perspectives. In one of the popular book written by Maheswar Neog entitled '*Pabitra Axom*' is itself a testimony of glorifying temple heritage of Assam. This blessed territory of Assam is the home multiple religions seen in the architecture located in the nook and corner of Assam. Many places are known by the existence of various temples, shrines relating to various gods and goddesses. In Guwahati, temples like Bashisthashram, Nabagraha, Ugratara, Kamakhya, Biswakarma, Balaji in recent times, Umananda in the river island of Brahmaputra, Doulgovinda and Aswakranta in Uttar Guwahati are situated. The Aswaklanta has also some mythological connections as revealed by many scholars. As asserted by scholar like Maheswar Neog regarding this place, in ancient time, Kamrupa was ruled by ashura. Among them Narakasura was powerful and everybody was unhappy. His capital was Pragjyotishpura. It was said that his cruelty even reached Dwarka, the kingdom of Lord Krishna. Listening his nature Krishna came here along with his soldier to kill him. A fierce battle had taken place in the same place where the present temple is located. The horses of the chariot of Krishna had to encounter a rough resistance here. *Aswa* means horse and *akranta* is to face resistant or getting attacked. That is why the place is named accordingly. Mythology reveals that Lord Krishna killed Narakasura here. This narrative is a wonderful example how a place has a mythological interpretations. If we make an attempt to analyse



various places, we will find various such narratives that glorifies heritage of such places. In Chhaygaon also we found the narratives of Beula Lakhinar where act of serpent goddess come into action. Similarly, the Tezpur also signifies the battle of hari-hara over Usha and Annirudha and the role played by Chitrlekha. The places like Hajo, Majuli, Baihata-Charilai, Saraideu, Sibsagar, Suwalkuchi needs specific mention due to its role for exhibiting rare heritage in one way or the other. Hajo, which is located a few km away from the Guwahati city, is regarded as sacred place due to existence of temples like Sri Sri Haigrib Madhab temple, Kameswar, Kedar, Ganesh and others, signified by other monuments like *Bhime Poita Khuwa charia* ( giant disc where Bhima, one of the member of Panchapandaba used to take water rice), *Netai dhubuni ghat* with mythological relevance. In Guwahati, there is famous Ambari excavation site that has relevance

of archaeological heritage. Suwalkuchi, better known as silk village has global attention due to its unique manufacturing of indigenous silk garments that has commercial significance. The ruins of Madan Kamdeva and its archaeological importance are found in the place like Baihata Chariali. The place like Sibsagar needs no elaboration where one will find the glorious heritage of history of Ahom Kingdom. The Maidam culture of Ahoms as like Egyptian pyramid and also found among the Khasis, has make the place Charaideu a new dimension.

It is observed that every place bears certain specific significance and often create testimony of a heritage for a community or the inhabitants. There are many places in north east which yet to explore in terms heritage dichotomy. Such exploration will provide an extra space not only in Indian context rather at the global level.

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### Mera Hou Chongba Observed

On 24 October, 2018 ACOAM Lup organised 18th Mera Houba Chongba on the motto, “Dignified Integrity” at Kiyamba Memorial Hall, Bishnupur to promote the bond of brotherhood between the hill and valley people even stronger.

Bishnupur Assembly Constituency MLA Shri Govindas Konthoujam, ACOAM Lup Kangleipak President-in-charge Shri Sanjit Soraisam, UCM Vice President Ksh Somorendro Singh, former Minister, Shri N Mangi Singh, former MLA Shri Oinam AC, Dr. I Ibohalbi Singh, Tamenglong Autonomous District Council Member, Shri Alar Thoitak, Shri Keirung Ahal Bishnupur Chothe, Shri Y Saidon, Chairman UPC (Nangaijang) Bishnupur Ward no 7, Th Ashun and

President Aimol Tribe Union Manipur, Rt Akhel Aimol attended the event as presidium members. Leaders of various CSOs and Ima Lups also attended the event. During the event, dias members representing hills and valley exchanged gifts in the spirit of brotherhood. Various traditional and cultural events were also presented as a part of the event.

MLA Govindas Konthoujam, in his brief address stressed that though religion and politics have become a bone of contention among various groups and communities but unity is the only means to bring lasting peace and prosperity to the State. Rt Akhel Aimol representing Aimol Tribe Union of Manipur also spoke on the occasion.

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### AVP Organised Health Camps for General Public & Health Workers

Hundreds of patients benefited from a series of health camps organised by the Tirap District Unit of Arunachal Vikas Parishad at various villages including Lazu, Baraf, Laho, Chasa and Noksa from 24<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> October’2018. And at least 18 HEALTH WORKERS from six villages were trained to deliver basic life saving

drugs to the needy persons in the villages.

The camps were attended by Dr (Mrs.) Sonali Abhyankar, from Nasik Maharashtra as resource person assisted by Dr. B. S. Mishra and staff nurse from District Medical Office and AVP Karyakartas.

# Traditional Life of the Kalai Tribe in Tripura

Sunil Kalai

## Introduction:

Kalai is one of the oldest tribes of Tripura belonging to the Halam Community and their mother tongue is Kokborok (Tipperah). They are scattered in almost all the eight different districts of the state and their total population is around ten thousand. There are seven different sub-clans, they are – a) Wabur, b) Waplom, c) Roijoigoi, d) Bukang, e) Chorai, f) Abel and g) Kusu. Women belonging to the Kalai tribe are considered to be extremely laborious. They have a flourishing tradition of music that is associated with their everyday life from the birth till the death. Some of the worth-mentioning songs for the Kalais include Hoi, Maimita, Oyayeng Khilima, Aya-Biday, Koithoi Khum-Kanrima, Tormari Panda, Rai-Balma Panda, Huk Haumani, Mai Kaimani, Mai Nagmoni, Goriya etc. Hoi is generally considered to be their principal social song. They organize Gorja dance every year at village hamlets during their traditional festival also known as Gorja Mwtai.

The Kalais have a patriarchal society. The lineage is carried from the father to his wards and the offspring carries forward the surname of the father. Customs also compel the wife to adopt her husband's surname. It is also for the sons to carry out the responsibility of conducting the last rites for their parents. The daughters can't take up the responsibility for the same. The daughters eat complete vegetarian food for three (3) nights and give Maikhoilai in the name of their parents. The relationship carried by the family's men is known as Sandai and that by the women is known as OaKjwk. If a relative dies under any circumstances, the Sandais have to eat vegetarian food for thirteen (13) days and the OaKjwk have to eat the same for three (3) nights. This tradition is valid for seven (7) generations for the Sandais and three (3) generations for the OaKjwk.

## Livelihood:

Traditionally their primary source of livelihood depends on the practice of Jhum cultivation but with the passage of time, they started to move to the plains for normal agriculture. Presently, a majority of them lead their lives through agriculture. They also indulge

in farming, gardening etc. as alternate sources of income. Like other indigenous community of the country, the educated section amongst the Kalais are also taking up government jobs and businesses. However each family of the Kalai are still closely related to the nature for their everyday life. There still exist the closest of symbiotic relationship between the Kalai and the nature. Forest and bamboos that we see are beyond what one can see. Bamboo for the Kalai is everything: It is food, house, ornaments, rituals, economy, identity, and god himself. They produce their own cotton using Jhum Cultivation and make their own clothes. But as the production of cotton has dwindled over the past few years, the Kalai has started buying cotton from the market to make their clothes. Although the village-dwelling Kalais are still in the habit of using the traditional clothing, the Kalai in the cities and towns have moved on to wearing western clothing to keep in tune with the changing demands of time.

## Housing:

Traditionally they lived in bamboo huts with the living house and separate kitchen. With the progress of civilization and the corresponding changes in the economy and educational status of the Kalai, they have started living in thatched huts subject to their shifting to traditional modes of agriculture. Consequently, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to note that there are hardly any lifted huts in the plains. Notwithstanding, people who still practice Jhum cultivation still live in lifted huts. Members of the community who dwell in the plains have thatched walls and wooden or tin-roofs for their huts. Additionally, the Kalai have also started shifting to concrete houses generally seen in cities and towns.

## Food:

The Kalai traditionally harp on rice. Fish, meat and vegetables constitute the principal diet for all the members of the concerned community. Among meats, Kalai have a particular affinity for chicken, pork and mutton as they do their own farming and rear these animals. Amongst the traditional dishes, the most prominent are Chakhoi, Godok, Mosdeng and baked

vegetables. Chakhoi is the principal dish for the entire Kalai community. According to local traditions, Kalai need to cook this dish for every social festivity and the item is presented first on the right side of the dish to accord the maximum importance.

#### **Religion:**

Kalai never subscribed to any established religious practices including Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism, Islam etc. They had always maintained their distinct socio-cultural identity very zealously. Local customs have been such that the Kalais have always worshipped nature as their primary deity. The manifestations of natural deity for the Kalais have been in the form of Ha (Earth), Tui (water), Bolong (Forest), Bufang (Trees), Lama or Lampra (road/path) etc.

#### **Luku or social administrative council:**

The Kalai society had been running their state of affairs by forming social administration council (Loku) according to orders given by the kings of Tripura since 1420 AD. During the period Tripura was under the monarchs, there were no written norms to adhere to and the council was run more or less in an informal manner. But with the inclusion of the princely state of Tripura into the Union of India, the council is being managed according to written instructions for the advancement of social cohesion and education.

Since the Kalai society is composed of seven (7) Hodas or Panjis, hence including one representative from each of the Hodas or Panjis forms the council. The posts adopted by the representatives are respectively – (1) Senga, (2) Khuksum, (3) Jaksum, (4) Gabur, (5) Kamchhikau, (6) Gailim and (7) Rai . The Rai is bestowed with the highest power in the society. Their respective Hoda committees again elect each of these representatives. This system of running the councils has been there in place since 1869 AD. Prior to the introduction of this system, the kings used to select the members of the council according to their whims. The members were promoted after every five (5) years up until the reign of Indra Rai in 1944 AD. The system has been modified such that the members are promoted after every three (3) years. In addition to the members, there is an advisory board comprising of the Mudi and Muila. From every region, at least four persons are appointed as Kaithar and Birising. Also, every committee has a Chokodri and for every Ray, Gailim and Kamchhikau, there are at least two (2) Khangdols.

#### **Tormari Panda:**

When any member of the social administration council

is promoted to take up a new role, then a social feast used to be organized known as Tormari Panda. At that time, the Ochai (Priest) conducts Toikarmani in two (2) Boitoig (Chuoak) vessels. After that, the Senga or the Khuksum buries the King-awarded Chongi and makes the organizer wear jewelries awarded by the King. After Tai-Karmani Boitoig is eaten twice (2) (Khopnoi), two Boitoigs (Chuoak) need to be given to Chukubau and at that time, the Ochai picks up the King-awarded Chongi from the Senga or Khusum Toikarmani Boitoig and buries it in the Chukubau Boitoig. After that, Mui or feast (meat or Chartang) is presented on that. All the members need to be presented their food with Laisok leaves and everyone needs to be given Jakheb. If the feast is a meat-feast, then the dishes of Ray, Gailim, Kamchhikau, Ray Bura, Mudi, Muila, Gabur and Rayjuk (Senga) need to be presented covered with leaves. After the presentation, the Senga or Khuksum removes the leaves and inspects if the meat-parts from the bodies of pig or goat have been presented properly or not. Later, the Ochay gives permission to everyone to eat. After the feast gets over, the Chuoak Boitoig is again fed once (1) (along with Toikarmani). Subsequently, the Senga or Khuksum removes the jewelry from the concerned member. At the end of the festivity, all the members of the council are escorted to their respective homes or Nogthag through Moinak Homchang. Only then, the newly promoted member gets his social due.

If a feast needs to be organized, permission has to be sought from Ray through a written application. After the permission is granted, the Ray instructs the Senga or Khuksum to go and conduct the festivity. There can be two (2) different kinds of social feasts – (a) Meat feast and (b) Chakhoi-Chartang feast. The members of the social administration council need to be presented their food with Laisok leaves and the other invited guests with ordinary leaves. Everyone present should also be given Jakheb. Social feasts can be conducted anytime but it is mandatory to do so after a person gets promoted in the council before the Rai Balmoni. Rai conducts the feast at the end and all the members of the council need to be present during the said fest. The Mudi and Muila conducts feast every year before the Rai Balmoni.

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## Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram holds National Conference

National conference of Akhil Bharatiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram was held at Shirdi on 30th September, 1st and 2nd October, 2018. Delegates from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and Andaman to Gujarat took part in the conference. The meet was attended by more than 2500 representatives from Janjati communities living in both plains and hill areas of our country.

Shri. Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister, Maharashtra was the Chief Guest during inaugural session on 30th September, where in Poojya Sant Shri. Ramgiri Maharaj blessed the occasion. Shri. Ranjit Shekhar Mushahary, former Governor of Meghalaya was Guest of honour.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis assured in his own style that patta will be issued to all Janjatis living in forest by the end of 2019 and the state Government will implement all the welfare programmes. He said that Janjati societies have taken up the responsibility of protecting the Bharateeya culture and Kalyan Ashram is trying to ensure unity amongst the tribal communities, which is praise worthy.

Workers who were engaged in service activities got an opportunity to spend time in the presence of Shri Jagdeoram Uraon, National President of Kalyan Ashram. Padmashri Lakshmi Kutty Amma (Kerala), Raja Shriman Kamal Chandra Bhanjdev (Bastar), Dasari Sreenivasalu (Telangana) and Shri Maras kolhe (Nagpur), who were present through the entire three days of the conference as Special Guests. Shri Lakshman Tople, President of Kalyan Ashram Maharashtra, was also present.

A pictorial Exhibition was inaugurated prior to the conference, which comprised of colourful pictures of Janjati tradition, culture, way of life as well as photographs of prominent Janjati leaders and freedom fighters. The exhibition was great crowd puller. The visitors to the exhibition could also gather information on various activities carried out by Kalyan Ashram in the field of education, health and sports through audio and visual media.

In the course of the conference a resolution on the demand for separate religion code for the Janjati communities was taken after thread bare discussion. The resolution noted that the number of Hindus amongst the Janajatis has reduced to 80% in 2011 against that of 90-95% during 1931 to 1951. The resolution further observed that in this period

Christian population amongst the Janjati communities have risen from 2% to 10%. It has been, further, said in the resolution that the demand for religion code is confusing, arbitrary and illogical and this demand is destined to weaken the Janjati society. Resolution, further cautioned the Janjatis about the hidden agenda of religious conversion. It has also appealed that those who have been recording their name under Hindu category since time immemorial should continue to do so in future also.

Report on various service activities undertaken by the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram was placed in the conference. Members discussed and reviewed the service activities related to ownership of land, forest right and faith & culture for all round development of Janjatis. An appeal was also made to speed up the activities related to village development. All delegates resolved to protect Janjati Faith, culture



and tradition. In the meeting held on 1st October, 2018, the intellectuals amongst the Janjati delegates presented their views in this direction. Smt. Amruta Solanki, in her aggressive style exhorted that those who are spreading confusion among Janjati should be asked about their intent.

A novel program aptly named "Celebrate Diversity and Experience Unity" was arranged on 1st October, 2018 at 5.00 p.m. in which worshipping systems of various Janjati communities were displayed. Everyone could experience the blend of nature worship and worshipping of various deities at one place. Cultural Programmes were also arranged as a part of the conference in the evening hours with colourful demonstration of cultural presentations.

# National Forest Policy and Tribal Development

Nabin Chandra Joshi

As per latest Indian Forest Survey Report, 7,08,273 Sq. K.M. area of our country is forested, which is about 21.54 percent of the total geographic land mass of our country. The state of Madhya Pradesh has 77,414 Sq.KM under forest cover, area-wise which is the highest in our country and is 25.11 per cent of the total geographic area of the state. The state of Mizoram comes next and boasts of 86.27% of the total land area of the state under forest cover. Amongst the centrally administered Union Territories, Andaman and Nikobar islands have more than 6742 Sq. km of its land areas under forest cover. The question that arises now is, against the backdrop of continuously growing population is it possible to realize the target of creating forest cover on one third land area of the country while fulfilling the needs of the forest dwelling tribal communities of our country? How to maintain the material stability of the states where the forest cover is sufficiently higher than the national average? Which type of land utilization technique should be adopted in the states and areas where developing forests is not possible due to inclement weather condition (viz. West Rajasthan, Gujarat and cold deserts)? How to synergize the states having developed agriculture and those with large forest cover, so that national objective can be achieved as also food for all can be assured? How to bring a balance between National Forest policy, Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and National Forest Dependent Safety Act (2006) so that the future generation of India can always systematically derive the benefits of nature's bounty? This article tries to find answers to a few of such questions.

Govt. of India is very much firm about protection and all round development of the forests, environment and ecology. For the purpose of forestation, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Government of India run several schemes of which the activities under the National Forestation and Desert Rejuvenation scheme are most prominent. As a result of these initiatives the national level figure between 2015 to 2017 shows a growth of 6778 Sq. K.M. in forest area. As an extension to these efforts the present Government enacted Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and

Planning Authority (CAMPA) in 2016 to ensure expeditious utilization of accumulated unspent amounts available with the ad hoc CAMPA in an efficient and transparent manner. By a Press Release issued on 14 August, 2018, the Central Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister, Dr. Harshvardhan made it clear that annual project report for economic development (APO) prepared by the representatives of country's forest villages through inter village discussion and common consent may also be funded from CAMPA so that the tribal areas can also be protected. Dr. Harshvardhan also stressed that for the purpose of restoration of the forest resources, rejuvenation of wildlife and protection of water bodies, the Government of India will provide appropriate assistance. It is estimated that by the year 2030, these efforts will result in considerable increase in the forest areas, which in turn will help in creating sufficient carbon sink capable of absorbing 2.5 to 3.0 Million tons of carbon dioxide.

About 1.05 crore Tribal and forest dependent communities, which is 8.6% of the total population of India, live in 15% of the total land mass of the country. For generations these tribal communities have maintained an intimate social, economic and cultural affinity with the forests.

Other than their daily needs Forests provide many other essential services to the forest dwelling tribal communities such as homestead, shelter, firewood, timber for house building, small plants which is used as raw materials for agricultural activities and for fencing of the house and farming plots. Central Government always keeps the welfare of the Scheduled tribes and other traditional forest dwellers in mind. The first claim on the forest lies with the tribal communities who dwell there, for which the Government tries to protect the forests by increasing the involvement of the public. With this purpose in view the ministry has constituted National Aforestation & Environment Protection Board, the main objective of which is to protect and manage the forests by involving forest dwellers, tribal communities and those who live in the fringe areas of the forest to ensure effective partnership and to

encourage afforestation. In some states Mahatmas Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act has been linked with economic protection which is not only an effort to provide straightforward reservation but also to provide lifelong livelihood. In addition to these, under National project on Climate Change eight missions were put in place out of which one was started with the objective of protecting the climatic condition of the Himalayan region so that the probable benefits to be derived from the traditional knowledge of the entire Himalayan region is recorded in black and white with a view to synchronize them with the knowledge of the inhabitants of the area. Stress has been given on preparing an almanac of the bio diversity amongst the human and animal resources in all the rural areas of the entire country and how to manage the available local biological resources, their medicinal and other utility or traditional knowledge associated with them.

Presently the proportionate forest area per head in our country is 0.08 Hectare, whereas the world average is 0.68 Hectare. The statistical data collected under Indian Forest Survey reveals that In the north eastern states of our country the forest cover had considerable reduced due to Jhum cultivation and other pressures created mainly by developmental activities. Due to indiscriminate felling of trees, many aggressive foreign origin plants have started mushrooming. In addition to the north eastern states Jhum cultivation is also practiced by the Maria tribes of Bastar and Khond tribes of Odisha. Some experts opine that Jhum cultivation may increase bio diversity because it creates a new habitat, whereas others look at the system as a highly destructive procedure. Research is necessary as to how to maintain the fertility of the soil in areas where jhum cultivation is practiced. This system of cultivation is often looked upon as an antidevelopment practice and is believed to cause great harm to the natural forests. At the same time it is also true that we have no other viable alternative which is acceptable to all and acknowledged by a major section of the concerned tribal communities. It is therefore necessary to search for a new alternative which can increase the yield, preserve the soil fertility at an agreeable level, stabilize the inclines of the hills and refine the present practice of protecting the agricultural diversity in a systematic manner. Other alternatives may also be explored, for an example we can take the case of Biliangrong tribes and Sholga tribes of south Karnataka hill ranges who practice Podu cultivation, in which trees are not

uprooted, only the creepers and bushes are cleared. This practice causes least harm to the forests and helps in maintaining the forest area. For some tribal communities Jhum cultivation is the symbol of their survival, for which the Government is trying to bring them to the mainstream by devising alternative means of livelihood for them.

The changing times have also brought changes in the living style of several, we see in central India some tribal communities such as Santhal, Munda, Orawon, Bheel, Gond, Baiga and others, have adopted agriculture as their livelihood and are economically better placed in comparison to the tribals living in eastern and central part of India. Globalization demands that we take them forward along with us. Their uplift will not only reduce indiscriminate exploitation of our biological resources but also ensure long term preservation of forest and ecology.

Under National Forest Policy (1927), every state has devised rules and regulations in regard to cutting of trees. If a tree is located in a public place, then cutting down of the same without prior permission of the Forest Department or local development authorities will be considered as unlawful. As per provisions laid down in the environment protection rules if a tree is located where a road or building construction is proposed, attempt should first be made to replant it in some suitable location and if no suitable location could be found then 5 new saplings should be planted nearby. Few states have however exempted certain varieties of trees on private properties from the above restrictions. In addition to the above, in 2016, the Central Government has classified bamboo plants growing on lands outside reserved forests and other forested areas as grass with a view to extend benefits to the local tribal communities. At the same time the Government is also trying to frame policies to focus on the circumstantial and financial valuation of these plants.

For the sake of Increase in forest cover, preservation and growth of forests it becomes essential to bring synergy between the forest departments of the centre and the state. From time to time the central government offers technical advice to the forest departments of the states about the problems related to man animal conflict and forest fire. Now a day's man animal conflict has assumed a major proportion and to alleviate this problem Central Forest and Environment Ministry has issued

*(Contd. to Page 16)*

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## The Importance of Culture and Cultural Identity of the Karbis

effigies, representing the dead bodies of the deceased persons, are kept during 'Chomkan' festival. A few boys take part in this particular dance by the side of the old man keeping at the rhythms of the drum beats and has to shout frequently, - shrieking like - "Hei hei-hei-hei."

Besides the above, dances viz. Mi Vei-voi Kekan, Kachethui Kekan, etc. are also performed during the Chomkan festival.

5. Hacha Kekan:- Hacha Kekan is a traditional harvesting dance form of the Karbis. This beautiful dance form is performed during the harvesting festival. It is very lively and entertaining one to be witnessed. It is an eye-catching dance form of the Karbis. The Karbi community celebrates 'Sok- Keroi' festival after the paddy is harvested from the field. During this festival - 'Hacha Kekan' dance is performed with traditional gaiety and enthusiasm.



The dance is performed at the beautiful tune of a song of 'Hacha Kekan Alun' sung by a singer called - 'Lunsepo'. Thus the youths get started dancing by accompanying the tune of Lunsepo remembering the great Karbi social reformer, Rukasen. The Lunsepo starts singing the song of 'Lokhi Keplang' (the origin of wealth). Young boys use to participate dancing by standing each other's back, stretching their hands in the form of wings of birds, tilting this way and that way with movement of their feet. The dance would continue for the whole night, - by putting one after another-dancing pair. Thus the festival's ambience is best expressed through songs and dances.

6. Ritnong Chingdi Kekan:- Ritnong Chingdi dance is an attractive dance form of the Karbi tribe. This is a traditional dance form of the Karbis related with one of their seed sowing festivals celebrated in the first part of the month of April. This dance form is performed with great enthusiasm and traditional gaiety. This dance form demonstrates various stages of the process of cultivation right from the sowing of seeds to the harvesting of crops.

7. Lengpum Sokchon Kekan:- Lengpum Sokchon Kekan dance is a traditional dance form of the Karbi tribe. This dance form is called bamboo dance. It is generally performed during the harvesting festival. The dancing folks move by stepping alternately in and out across the pairs of horizontal bamboos.

8. Hen up Ahi Kekan: - Hen-up Ahi Kekan dance is an enthralling traditional dance form of the Karbi community. It is one of the most fascinating forms of folk dances of the Karbis. 'Hen-up' means bamboo shoots; 'Ahi' means residue of bamboo shoots from its specific period of preservation and 'Kekan' means dance. In late summer, boys and girls from villages go to the jungle to collect the bamboo shoots and gather them in a place of village or at the house of village headman (Rong Asarthe) of their villages. After storing it for one or two months they fix a day to distribute the bamboo shoots among themselves with much pomp and gaiety. Merry making is an essential part of this festival. On that very occasion this 'Hen-up Ahi Kekan) dance is performed which is accompanied by beating of traditional 'Chengburup', a pair of small drums.

Thus, in every outline of the blue hills and their frozen and resilient rocks has a hidden history of very interesting cultural accounts of the Karbis in Karbi Anglong and outside Karbi Anglong of Assam to acquaint with. Its shady and bottomless caves and fast running red rivers are the manifestations of the Karbis history of the past. Let us try to delve deep into the empathy of the blue hills and brave to swim in the red rivers of the plain to unearth the true history of the past; while doing so, we would be able to rediscover the most tangible roots of the sentient culture and religious histories of the Karbis in the near future.

## “Change Education System, Gain Nation’s Fame”

Jatwang Wangsa

It seems everything is all right when we see wonderful progress reports of students from in cities, towns and those boarded in fatly paid private institutions. The academic progress reports from rural and remote schools are still very poor and stagnant. The reason behind it may rest in our education system about which every elite citizen must think seriously. Our system prefers to attach more importance to higher studies than the primary stage of education in terms of funding and development of infrastructure. Well, it is like, “taking care of grown-up trees and ignoring beautiful saplings”. At present everyone is applauding excellence in scoring high marks by students of private schools like RKM, RKSM, VKV, DON BOSCO etc. So, parents every year rush to get their children enrolled in these schools. However, the interesting point is that the teachers of these schools are well skilled in teaching, serving with true dedication, though they may not posses higher level degree certificates Even then parents of all sections prefer such schools for their kids. At least, it shows many parents are after quality of work rather than fancy certificates. If so, where does the lacuna lie? Are we still in theoretical world far removed from ground reality while confronting the bitter realities of life? Whereas, our system thinks that only the teachers possessing fancy degrees are the most eligible teachers. In today’s competitive world it is necessary to study the success stories of other countries. It is well known fact in some advanced countries the most highly paid job is none other than that of primary teacher because they have to take the responsibility not only imparting basic education to their children but also nurture them with all necessary life skills and qualities for challenging struggles of

life. In these countries, the government assigns two teachers for a single student at primary stage and keep only one for hundreds as mentor at higher studies. “Make the foundation strong and rest will follow” is their qualified belief. Another significant point they subscribe to is that the person with best skill in any field has option to be appointed as goodwill teacher in that particular subject. Contrary to the above, in our country, many Government Schools in the rural areas are run by single teacher with a heavy workload to handle more than hundred students, often burdened by extra official works like BLO, Census, and population updates etc. Today if the progress reports of rural schools look poor, then it is not only because of poor teacher strength but also due to the weak system. In most cases, some teachers can’t think living without the luxury of modern life so they deny going to their rural posting and if necessary they are ready to give up their jobs. How can we expect quality education from rural schools without teachers and text books? Anyway, it can be done if we think ‘yes we can.’ We need little bit of change in system like establishment of smart classes in every school to replace textbook shortages, primary teachers must be handsomely paid with a view that “let all types of educated experts fill up rural schools leaving out crowded cities and towns”. Research based education should be implemented through play method right from lower classes. A bit of change in thought can bring the dawn of new era. The day is not perhaps far off when every rural school will offer quality education which in turn will help the students belonging to weaker section can avail quality education and help the nation surge forward.

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(Contd. from Page 14)

## National Forest Policy and Tribal Development

several directives which include correction in the style of living with nature, better protection and preservation related publicity and propagation. A satellite based technique developed to issue advance warning on forest fire has also been put into operation

since 2016. In 2017 alone, 35888 advanced warning on forest fire was issued.

*(The author of this article is an executive of Indian Forest Animal Organisation, Chandrabani, Deradun and Translated from into english by Ramen Chakraborty)*



# Comparative Socio-Cultural Study of Tribal Communities in India

(with Special Reference to Tribal Communities of Himachal and Arunachal Pradesh)

Dr Satish Kr. Ganjoo & Reshma Rekhung

## ABSTRACT :

Since time immemorial Tribal communities are autochthonous to India which is evident from various Vedic texts such as Yajurveda and Epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata, tribal folklore, legends, Historical and Geographical texts, biographies, inscriptions and sculptures and also from numerous other sources. On the other hand different scholars have also claimed and tried to present their theory of migration of some of these Tribal communities from outside especially from the neighbouring South East Asian Countries. For the sake of convenience and study the tribal people of India have been broadly classified on different bases. Geographical or regional distribution can be attributed to five regions; (1) North-Eastern Region (2) The Sub-Himalayan Region (3) The Central and East India (4) South India and (5) Western India. Tribal communities have always been distinguished from the non-tribal communities on the basis of certain distinctive cultural traits, religious, socio-economic, political and linguistic features. But whether the tribal communities themselves are more akin to one another or distinct, in respect to their culture, customs, rituals and belief systems, that is the concern of this study. The paper endeavours to explore the similarities and the differences between some of the tribes of the two different geographical region viz. North-Eastern Region especially 'Arunachal Pradesh' and The Sub-Himalayan region especially 'Himachal Pradesh'. The comparative study of all the tribes of Arunachal and Himachal Pradesh and presenting it in a single article would be nearly impossible as it will require much effort, time, energy and financial assistance because of the need of covering large population and going through more than hundreds of literary sources. Therefore in this paper the authors have attempted to study at least three tribes each of Arunachal Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh. Especially tribal communities inhabiting the district of Lahaul and Spiti known as 'Lahaula', 'Bodh' or 'Bhot' and 'Swangla' of Himachal Pradesh whereas

'Tangsa', 'Nyishi' or 'Nishing' and 'Adi' tribal communities of Arunachal Pradesh have been taken into consideration for understanding their culture, Customs, rituals and traditional faith in depth.

**Methodology:** The present study is based on both primary and secondary data sources. For primary data, field surveys and interviews were conducted in some of the Tangsa villages of Arunachal Pradesh such as New Chingsa Village, Kharsang, Miao, New Khimjong Village and Tinali village. Some of the data related to Nyishi and Adi communities have been collected few years back through participant observations and also personal conversation with the locals of Pasighat, Yingkiong, Oyan, Itanagar, Naharlagun and Nirjuli. The data on Lahaula, Bodh and Swangla of Himachal Pradesh are mostly based on Secondary sources of data. Secondary sources of data are taken from books, journals and internet. The study is qualitative study so the participants were asked open-ended questions where he/she could answer freely.

**Objectives:** The main purpose behind conducting this study is:

- ◆ To explore the similarities and differences between the tribal communities of Himachal Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh with respect to their culture, customs, rituals and belief systems.
- ◆ To enable the researcher to delve deep into the subject matters for better understanding of Tribal Communities.

## Introduction:

India has a total 104.3 million Scheduled Tribe population according to 2011 Census. In terms of proportion, the Scheduled Tribe population constitutes 8.6 % of the total population. Some of these communities have inhabited the land for an extremely long period and some of them are believed to have migrated from South East Asian countries few centuries ago. The concept of Tribal communities existed since Vedic period but the nomenclature

“tribe” is new. The Vedic text Yajurveda, Epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata had mentioned such ethnic groups or groups of people those who dwelt in forest, hills, in plains skirting the forests, in relative isolation from the caste-based peasant villages as unstratified endogamous groups. Many of them also practiced slash and burn form of primitive farming and a few lived substantially on hunting and gathering. The groups which were apparently outside the threshold of Brahmanic hierarchic Civilization were labelled as “Tribes”. Gradually tribes came to be recognized as a social category for the purpose of census and administration. In ancient texts we get terms like *Jana*, meaning ethnic group, and *Janapada*, an ethnic territory. Some outlying Janapadas were labelled as Atabika Rajyas ( Forest Kingdoms) and Pratyanta Deshas (Frontier regions). The Janas like Kiratas, Savara, Bhila, Nishada, Abhira belong to the Atabika Rajyas and Pratyanta Deshas.<sup>1</sup> According to Verma<sup>2</sup>, The tribes are “the autochthonous people of the land who are believed to be the earliest settlers in Indian Peninsula. They are called Adivasis, meaning the first settlers. Prior to the caste system, people were divided into different tribes. At that time, each tribe was a homogenous and self-contained unit without any hierarchical discrimination. Each tribe had a chief for its protection. Gradually, the chief assumed political and military power and was recognized as the ruler. Thus, there emerged the republics and monarchies. Tribes were associated with large kingdoms. Each tribe had its own system of administration. There was decentralization of authority among the tribes. The traditional tribal

institutions were vested with legislative, judicial and executive powers.

Scholars<sup>3</sup> have classified Tribal Population in India on different basis. On this basis of Geographical or regional distribution five regions are considered: (1) North-Eastern Region: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura. (2) The Sub-Himalayan Region: North and Northwest India; Himachal Pradesh (3) The Central and East India: West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. (4) South India: Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka (5) Western India: Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Another classification based on the group of languages spoken are: 1. Austric Language Group: Kol, Munda, Khasi, Nicobari, Korku, Santals, and Gadaba etc. 2. Tibeto-Chinese Language Group: the Naga, Khasi, Kuki, Mismi, Mizo etc. 3. The Dravidian Language Group: The Gond, Toda, Koya, Pradhan, Uraon etc. 4. The Indo-European Language Group: The Bhils, Warlis, Thakurs, Koli etc. One more classification is based on the ethnic roots of the tribes. 1. The Mongoloid Origin: The Nagas, Mizo, Serna, Jaunsari, Apa-Tanis, Tharu etc. 2. Proto-Austroloid: This group usually speaks the so-called Kherwarian or Kaularian languages and includes the Munda, Ho, Bhils, Paradia, Korku, Korwa, Baiga, Gonds etc. 3. The Negrito: Whom we usually recognize as being of Dravidian origin and include Toda, Kola etc. According to another usage the tribes from the south like the Gonds, Kolam, Toda, and Koya etc. are called Dravidian in origin though they are considered a part of the Austroloid group.

<sup>1</sup> Census data of 2011 given by Ministry of Tribal affairs department shows the number of population in Tangsa tribe as 15295 and Any Naga Tribes as 12,338. There is a problem here because in Scheduled Tribe list enlisted under constitution of India, the list has only tribe called as ‘Any Naga Tribes’ where Tangsa Tribes too is included. And again the Ministry of Tribal Affairs data has shown various sub-tribes such as Longchang, Havi, Longri, Longphi, Ronrang, Mossang, Tikhak, Moglum et al. Population counting separately other than in Tangsa Tribe. Every sub tribe of Tangsa Tribes as mention above should come under Tangsa Tribe. Not only that it has included it has given one sub-tribe i.e. Jugli in two different countings such as Jugli(294) and Yougli(1026), it shud have been in one counting as both of them are same sub tribe except for the reason the term is pronounced differently by different people. And not only about the sub tribes but it has shown even a title(Ngimong) which should have been included under Moglum sub tribe. In this way there are various confusions and misplacement regarding the Tangsa Tribal community in the data. But inspite of these confusions if we add all the population of Tangsa in addition with Any Naga Tribes it is total 45,251 according to this 2011 census data.

<sup>2</sup>. Census data of 2011 given by Ministry of Tribal Affairs shows Adi and Abhor as two separate tribes but scholars claim that Adi tribe was only known as Abhor(exonym in Assamese meaning independent, therefore British has given this name to Adi people. But Adi refer themselves as Adi only). Gallong was already enlisted as another separate tribe in the Scheduled list of Constitution but here it is added in Adi tribe only as Adi Gallong. Some of the sub-tribes such as Bori, Minyong, Padam and Pasi are also counted twice each; one sub-tribe by adding Adi as prefix and one without prefix.

The Tribal communities are classified on the basis of various traits. Some of them were incorporated as Scheduled Tribes in the Constitution of India under article 342 in 1949<sup>3</sup>. The following are the characteristics based on which they have been classified as Tribes and distinct from the rest of the non-tribal population:

- (i) Indication of primitive traits
- (ii) Distinctive culture,
- (iii) Geographical isolation,
- (iv) Shyness of contact with the community at large, and
- (v) Backwardness.

This criteria is not written in the Constitution but has been derived from the definition of 1931 census, report of the Backward Class Commission (Kelelkar) 1955, the Advisory Committee on Revision of SC/ST list (Lokur Committee) 1965, the Joint Committee of Parliament on the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Bill 1967, and Chanda Committee 1969.<sup>4</sup>

As we have already tried to clear the concept, context and criteria on the basis of which the different tribal groups are classified and also on the basis of which distinctive characteristic traits they are incorporated in the Constitution of India. According to different scholars Tribal community have their own distinct culture, religion, dialects, geographical boundaries, and their own social structure, lifestyle patterns and are base too much on kinship or blood ties. In this paper the attempt is made to show a comparative study of Lahaula, Bodh, and Swangla of Himachal Pradesh to Tangsa, Nyishi and Adi Tribes of Arunachal with respect to their culture, customs, rituals and belief systems and practices. The expected result from this study is to find whether these tribal communities of different geographical region are more similar to one another or many differences prevail.

### LAHAULA, BODH AND SWANGLA

The Lahaula, Bodh and Swangla are the three dominant groups residing in the district of Lahaul and Spiti. Out of total 25,707 Scheduled Tribes population in the district, the population of Bodh or Bhot Tribes is counted at 17,843 (all religions) plus 8 (stated no

religion) persons. Lahaula tribes were 363 and Swangla was the second highest population counting to 6,856 according to 2011 census. Throughout the State Bodh were 27,191, Lahaula 2886 and Swangla 9,630 out of total 3, 92,126 Scheduled Tribes Population of Himachal Pradesh.<sup>5</sup>

The Lahaula simply means the inhabitants of Lahaul. In appearance they are very similar to Kanet of Kullu, but women mostly have Mongolian features



with round broad faces and short squat figure. Generally they are of “medium stature; of medium weight and a short fore-limbed individual. The head is generally mesocephalic in shape. Men are stout, well-built, and women also very strongly framed. The character of the people is solid and conservative; their power of united action is considerable; they seem to be not quick witted but eminently shrewd and sensible. They are sharp traders and good in bargaining. There can be no doubt that a Lahuli is far more honest, though he may be sharp in business matters...”, writes Mr Lyall.<sup>6</sup>

According to T.S Negi,<sup>7</sup> “The name Bodh has been arrived from Tibetan origin. Tibetans themselves called their country Bod-Yul. Bod is believed to be the name of their race. In ancient literature Tibet was known as ‘Bhotadesha’. Thus many communities in some of the Himalayan region are known as Bodh or Bhot or Bhatta or Bhutwal. So Bhot are also of Mongolian stock of races. They speak Bhoti language and are medium-statured, medium weight and also short fore-limbed like Lahaula. They have almost same facial and body features like Lahaula. The majority population of Bodh resides in Spiti Valley.

Swanglas are of Aryan race and they have

embraced both Upper Castes Hindu Rajputs and also called themselves Brahmans. According to local Folklore recited by the bhats, the priestly class, Brahmans since time immemorial used to come from far and wide to perform obsequies for their clients in the confluence of Chandra and Bhaga. Once a father and son came on such a mission and on the way when they felt hungry they were offered a non-vegetarian food which the son ate and the father denied. Therefore the son could not return back to his own place and later stayed there forever by marrying a local girl. In this way there are many more folklore on the origin and settlement of this tribe. According to some scholars they are indigenous to the land. They are called *Mon* or *Muntsi*, or inhabitants of *Manchadpas*, another local name of the region. They profess the Shaivite faith and worship both *nag* and *ling*.

### TANGSA, NYISHI AND ADI

Tangsa, Nyishi and Adi are three of the major tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. All these three tribes belong to Mongoloid race and speak Tibeto-Burman Languages Group of Language. Tangsa Tribe is classified under the Naga Ethnic Group by many of the anthropologists and Social scientists. They have been enlisted under the Scheduled tribes list of Arunachal Pradesh under the generic term "Any Naga Tibes"<sup>8</sup> in the Constitution of India. The later two tribal Communities claim themselves as belonging to Tani



Group as they trace their root to one common ancestor known as Abo Tani from their mythology.

Tangsa Tribal community inhabit the eastern most district of Arunachal Pradesh called as Changlang. Tangsa is an umbrella term which consists of 19 sub

tribes known as Muklom, Tikhak and Yungkuk, Mossang, Kimsing, Longchang, Ponthai, Havi, Tonglim, Hahcheng, Hahlang, Hakhun, Ronrang (Rera), Jugli (Yougdi/Yogdi), Hangsik, Lungri, Lungphi (Longphi), Shangwal (Shawvel/Shangval) ,Sanke (Shaekjeng/Shanke), Mungrey. These sub-tribes are again sub categorized into groups of various clans and sub clans.<sup>9</sup> In spite of several confusions<sup>1</sup> in census data



the Tangsa tribes totalled at 45,251 in Arunachal Pradesh.

Adi or Bangni-Bokar Lhoba or Abhor is a generic term which again consists of several sub-tribes and sub-divisions. Adi means "hill or mountain top". Two main divisions are Bogums and Bomis. Further sub divisions of these two groups lead to various sub tribe such as Minyong, Karkos, Shimongs, Bombo, Janbos, Pangis, Palibos, Bogums, Padams, Milangs, Pasi, Asing, Bori, Bokar, and Ramo.<sup>10</sup> It is predominant in a region of the Southern Himalayas which falls within the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh and the Mainling, Lhunze, Zayu, Medog, and Nyingchi counties of the Tibet Autonomous Region, China. The present habitat of the Adi people is heavily influenced by the historic location of the ancient Lhoyu.<sup>11</sup> They are found in the temperate and sub-tropical regions within the districts of East Siang, Upper Siang, West Siang, Lower Dibang Valley, Lohit, and Namsai within Arunachal Pradesh. They too are of Mongoloid stock and possess Mongolian features and speak Adi language with very slight regional variations belonging to Tibeto-Burman group of languages. They are 1,56,467 persons if all the subtribes are added including Adi, Abhor and Adi Gallong. This seems disputed<sup>2</sup> too. In proportion to the population of the

state they stand second largest, Nyishi being the largest.

The Term 'Nishi' or 'Nyishi' is derived from two words i.e 'Nyi' or 'Nyia' and 'Shi' or 'Shing'. The word 'nyi' means 'Human', descendants of Aathu/Aatoh Nyia, the son of the Aabhu/Abho Thanyi, while 'shi' or 'shing' means 'Being'. Accordingly, Nyishi stands for 'Human Being'. They were earlier known as chung



or daflas in Ahom and Assam Buranji. Later British used these words to dub the Tribe as 'unruly hills men', dwelling in the 'unadministered frontiers' and ultimately legitimized them to be the name for the new subjugated subjects by the imperial power of British India.<sup>12</sup> But later they were re-enlisted as Nyishi/Nyishing in the Scheduled Tribes list of Constitution due to their proposal to re-enlist as the name was derogatory. The Nyishi inhabits as many as five districts viz-Upper Subansiri, Lower Subansiri, Kurung Kumey, Papum Pare, East Kameng and in some parts of west Kameng of Arunachal Pradesh including Sonitpur and North Lakhimpur districts of Assam. As per census-2011, they are about 2,49,824 out of 951,821 Schedule Tribe Population in the state (approximately one third of the total ST population) Therefore, Nyishi is the single largest tribe of the state. They belong to Paleo-Mongoloid stock and speak Tibeto-Burmese group of languages. It is believed that they migrated from, the north via present autonomy state of Tibet in the beginning of the Christian era. Historically, culturally and even in terms of language the Nyishis have a close affinity with the neighbouring tribes such as Galos, Adis, Apatanis, Tagins, and the Mishings of adjoining Assam.

*Culture, traditions, custom, rituals and belief systems*, these aspects of human society have always

been essential in the functioning of society since time immemorial. Without these aspects human society would have been equivalent to world of animals and birds or any other creatures on this earth. Human society has certain codes of conduct, codes of behaviour, social mores, and various religious and superstitious beliefs. Every different sects, groups and classes of society have different or similar traditional customs, belief systems, culture and life style which evolved through centuries of years. In every stage of life human society has to observe different types of rituals and customs in order to observe a change from one phenomenon to another. The driving force behind performing or observing certain rituals and customs are either individual or collective faith. According to the Cambridge Dictionary "Custom" is a way of behaving or a belief that has been established for a long time.<sup>13</sup> Tradition means passing customs, rituals and belief systems from generation to generation orally without any written laws or rules. What the father practices will be passed down through oral tradition, to his son after his death and the same will be passed down to his grandson and also great grandsons and so on. Google dictionary defines Tradition as "the transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation, or the fact of being passed on in this way." According to one of the resource person<sup>14</sup> *rituals* link faith and culture. And culture consists of all the ceremonial rites performed and observed during one's birth, naming, marriage, death, festivals and so on. In order to manifest one's faith ritual is essential to perform, which altogether becomes one's culture. Therefore every person has different culture which can be acknowledged only through the way he performs ceremonial rituals. Thus people coming from different communities have different culture which identifies him as belonging to that particular community. That is the reason why we say One's identity is one's culture. Faith and belief system shows our respect to God or supernatural power or the Supreme Being who is the driving force behind the whole creation in this cosmos. To convey our respect and faith for this supreme power we manifest it through certain sets of rituals which differ from religion to religion.

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## Roars of #MeToo MAY douse the flame of lust

SALIL GEWALI

It is no more going to be a bed of roses for sexual predators. Now they can scarcely hide the wrong acts with the cover of their power and influence. Even the powerfully naughty and haughty Harvey Weinstein had to give in to the thunder of #MeToo some months back. Thanks to the bold roars in unison by over 80 victims who could finally corner this lecherous filmmaker. What of Weinstein's castle of his opulence and social influence now? They all have fallen virtually down like a house of cards! Yes, the formidable jaws of MeToo have already devoured a good many Weinsteins across the world.



Big uproars in media and Bollywood have already put the integrity of the entertainment houses into question. Many film actresses are now determined to fight against the sexual advances by their past bosses. But what is too shocking is that we now get to see the skeletons tumbling out from the unsuspected holy cupboards too. This 19th October was another new dawn for the Northeast. A humble lady from our Meghalaya could gather enough courage yet again. She ventured to articulate through social media the evil acts of the devil under the garb of holiness. Too disgusting, ones who sermonized and lectured about the "hell of eternity" in fact had

allegedly given the lady hell since she was a 5-year old kid. I don't think any jail sentence or material punishment will ever appease God in heaven for such heartless pedophilic acts. It is an unpardonable sin.

Well, it's too difficult to analyze the ordeal the said lady had experienced all through. But the pain of anxieties and trauma has driven her to cry for the "justice". True, with the "Weinstein effect" worldwide now, the aggrieved victims of sexual abuses can stand up and call out the perpetrators. Yes, I am quite sure, what we see now is just the tip of the iceberg. Frankly speaking, MeToo is a frightfully sharp dagger that will slay the evil within perverts. Not just that, it will frighten away the males from committing any sexual crimes. Let's pray, the more new cases, albeit genuine, come to light and the more sanity will descend upon the society.

I think the stern laws and various kind of punishments existing to prevent sexual misconducts have been quite dwarfed by the worldwide #Metoo movement. One considers this movement as truly "successful" when males habitually "fear to touch" females as they fear to touch fire. Indeed, as noticed, the fear "symptom" has already started to run deep into the veins of the males. Is it not a very healthy development? Hope this will help douse their raging fire of lust.

However, there is a fair chance of this movement being "misused" for the wrong end too. Its consequence could be very bad for both males and females, and society at large. Such false #MeToo is sure to "upset" the system God created. So, no innocent males should ever be harassed and tormented by females for vengeance. "WeTwo" should not at all turn into MeToo, else the "sharpness" of MeToo movement itself goes blunt too early. Let the evil in man be slain, not his gentlemanliness!

## The Spectacle of 6th Tawang Festival 2018

On 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2018, Friday, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Shri Pema Khandu declared open the 6th Tawang Festival, themed 'Environment and nature', amid much fanfare.

The festival began with Drekar, a monologue wishing wellbeing to the sentient beings, which was followed by Tashi Choepa, the offering of songs to the gods. The objective of the festival is to showcase the rich cultural heritage of Tawang and boost tourism in the district.

In the morning, more than 200 dancers from various villages participated in a street show for two hours. Dances included Yak Pantomime, Baa Chham (mask dance), Showa Chham (stag dance), Lion dance, Gyep-gyem (the king and queen dance), Buchung Chham (the dancer with phallus in hand), and Nngabro (the monkey masked dance). Cultural troupes from Meghalaya and Uttar Pradesh also presented cultural dances under the 'Ek Bharat Shresth Bharat' initiative.

The Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Shri Kiren Rijiju inaugurated the exhibition and food stalls at the Men-tsem-tse festival ground.

Addressing the revellers in the evening, the Hon'ble Shri Pema Khandu said that the state government has under his initiative started various cultural, adventure, and music festivals. He said the government would soon launch a policy to boost tourism in the state. Among others, news anchor of India Today, Rahul Kanwal, singer Mohit Chauhan, and Bollywood director Imtiaz Ali were present at the inaugural function.

Arunachal Pradesh Tourism Minister Shri Jarkar Gamlin, MLAs Shri P. D. Sona and Shri Tsering Tashi, and other dignitaries also attended the cultural events. Earlier, the Hon'ble Chief Minister visited Bhekhar village, home to the 6th Dalai Lama's maternal uncle. The 6th Dalai Lama – Gyalwa Tsangyang Gyatso – was born in Tawang. The Hon'ble Chief Minister also visited Kushang Nang, which

means 'maternal uncle's place'. The place houses a monastery, and a museum displaying ancient Buddhist artefacts.

The second day of the of the sixth Tawang festival on Saturday at picturesque Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh bordering China was marked by street carnival showcasing the famous Arpuchham (war dace) by various villages. The street carnival was followed by Aji Lhamu, Ngagchham (the tantric dance), Phan Chham (the flag dance) and Yapchenapayumchhen Ama dance which mesmerized the thousands of visitors who thronged the festival venue. Tawang MLA Shri Tsering Tashi along with Dy.



Commissioner Shri Sang Phuntso besides other senior officers, hundreds of tourists and general public witnessed the event with great enthusiasm. The local MLA and the Dy. Commissioner also flagged in the MTB Tawang challenge which was flagged off on October 22 last from Itanagar.

After the street carnival in an old market area which started from Masang Dung rhuemay, there were traditional games and sports organized at Men-Tsem-Tse festival ground which included Theipay and Lei competition for women, Pungor or Shotput, Lemgor (discus throw) and Thekpatengreeie (Tug of war and arrow shooting) for tourists. The festival was a grand success both in terms of attendance and participation.

## Extraordinary way of recognising service to society

There are several organisations and institutions that confer awards for various efforts in the field of social service and human welfare. In spite of the good intentions of these institutions, they always do not succeed in finding the right persons or individuals who truly deserve to be conferred the award of recognition because true workers are normally silent workers who prefer to keep themselves away from

NITTE University was probably the first University in South India to recognise the important work silently done by the social activists outside the academic world.

The case in point is the recent conferment of Honoris Causa (Honorary Doctorate Degree) by Nitte University, Mangaluru to Er Latsam Khimun of Arunachal Pradesh and Ramkui Jeme from Assam for their unstinted and tireless efforts over a long period of time in the field of social works in the North East. The Chancellor, NITTE University, N Vinay Hegde conferred the Degree to the two awardees at a function held at the University auditorium on October 26, 2018 in Mangaluru.



The Award ceremony was attended by Hon'ble Governor of Nagaland, Shri P. B. Acharya as the Chief Guest. He opined that people from all walks of life must be recognized by the Universities for their selfless

limelight and publicity. Finding them is very difficult because people normally focus on the benefits they receive out of their work without least concern about the individual who facilitated these benefits. The NITTE University of Mangaluru has done this impossible work very simply. Speaking about the exemplary initiative of the NITTE University the Hon'ble Governor of Nagaland has aptly stated that

and unique services to the society and the Nation. Such conferment will encourage the dedicated and extraordinary individuals and also motivate many others to work towards sustaining cultural heritage, preservation of fragile environment and overall prosperity and empowerment of every section of the society and gender.

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## AVP Organized Circle Level Sports Meet

Dozens of aspiring sportsperson gathered to participate in the Circle level sports meet Organized by Arunachal Vikash Parishad, Lower Subansiri Unit from 14th – 16th October, 2018 at the Play Ground of Government Higher Secondary School, Yazali. The programme was attended by the Principal Shri. J. K. Addo and conducted by Physical Education Teacher, G.H.S.S, Yazali.

Similar to Yajali, more than 120 aspiring sportsperson turned up to participate in circle level sports meet held at the playground of Government Higher Secondary School, Seppa from 17th – 19th October '2018. The programme was led by Shri. Shawa Sonam, AVP Vice President State Unit assisted by the district level Karyakartas. The programme was attended by Shri. Jorjo Sono Yangfo, Principal I/c G.H.S.S. Seppa, as Chief Guest.



## The Four Learned Fools

Four naive Brahmins, who were great friends, lived in a certain town.

One day, they decided to study hard and acquire knowledge. They would then be able to make money. It was decided that they would require going to a different town to do that.

So, they travelled to a new city, and joined a hermitage to further their study. For twelve years they studied very hard, and mastered many fields of knowledge.

One day, they discussed, "Now that we have finally acquired sufficient knowledge in many branches of science, let us ask our Guru's permission to depart from this hermitage. We are finally prepared to earn money by applying our knowledge."

They asked their Guru's permission, who blessed them for success. They then started to travel, with all the shastras (holy books of knowledge). After travelling for a while, they came across an intersection, where the path was divided into two different directions.

They started pondering on which path they should take to further their travel.

Meanwhile, a merchant's son had died in a nearby town. As they stood pondering, a huge funeral procession headed their way. The procession included several prominent people, and they were going to the cremation ground.

Consulting the scriptures of the shastras, one of the Brahmins declared, "The right path to follow is the path taken by great men!" Thus, they decided to take the same path as that of the funeral procession.

On reaching the cremation ground, the people in the funeral procession stopped, and initiated the funeral proceedings. Now, they started pondering what course of action they should take next.

While pondering such, they saw a donkey nearby. Consulting the scriptures of the shastras, a Brahmin declared, "A true friend is one who stands by you on all occasions. Be the occasion joyous or sad!"

Thus, they accepted the donkey as their true friend. They put their arms around the donkey's neck, adored and kissed him, after washing his hoofs with water.

At this time, they observed a camel running towards them, from a distance. Quickly consulting their scriptures of the shastras, one of the Brahmins declared, "Righteousness marches rapidly!". Thus, they agreed that the camel marching quickly towards them must be



righteousness incarnate, and nothing else.

Another Brahmin, on consulting his scriptures declared, "A good man should always lead his friend to righteousness!"

Thus, they stopped the approaching camel and introduced it with the donkey. Then, they tied the donkey to the camel in order to lead their friend to righteousness. The camel dragged the donkey,

while continuing his journey.

The donkey's master was a washerman, who saw the four Brahmins tie his donkey to the camel. He was angered by this, and ran after the Brahmins with a stick.

On being chased, the four learned fools, ran for their lives and reached a river. They observed that a leaf of a holy tree was floating on the water of the river.



One of the Brahmins declared, "Holiness carries one across the river of life!" He jumped at once, on the holy leaf to cross the river. Unable to swim, he immediately began to drown.

When another Brahmin saw him being dragged by the river, he got into the river at once and caught him by the neck. But the currents of the river were very strong and he was not able to drag his friend to the bank of the river. He remembered from the scriptures, "When a wise man knows that total destruction is imminent, he would sacrifice half and work with the rest!"

He immediately took out his sword, and cut

his friend into half. He was then, able to drag him to the bank of the river. But, by that time he had already died.

They regretted their friend's loss, and later the three remaining Brahmins continued their journey.

After they wandered for some time, they reached a village. The villagers welcomed them in a very hospitable fashion, and offered them different houses to stay. They villagers decided that three different families will serve them with their dinner.

One Brahmin was served with sweet noodles. He remembered from scriptures, "Long tactics will surely take a man to destruction!" Thus, he did not eat the food, and remained hungry throughout the night.

Another Brahmin was served with a bowl of frothy soup, He remembered from scriptures, "Whatever is frothy and distended, does not last long!" Thus, he did not eat the food, and remained hungry throughout the night, too.

The third Brahmin was served a tasty food with a hole in the middle. He remembered, "Defects are an imminent sign of approaching danger!" Thus, he did not eat the food, and remained hungry throughout the night, either.

When the villagers came to know in the morning, that they did not have the dinners served for them, they laughed and ridiculed them.

Angrily, the three remaining learned fools started to depart from the village. As they started their journey, the villagers went a long distance with them - all the time, ridiculing, laughing and mocking them on their way.

**The wise indeed say:**

**Empty knowledge brings ridicule.**

**We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one's own feet.**

**Swami Vivekananda**



**Mera Houchongba Festival**



Tawang Festival