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www.heritagefoundation.org.in
ourheritage123@gmail.com

HERITAGE EXPLORER

LET KNOWLEDGE COME FROM ALL THE SIDES

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NOKPANTE OF A'CHIK



1770-1831

One of the greatest German philosophers and writers, his *Historicist and Idealist* account of the total reality as a whole revolutionized European philosophy. His philosophical works provided the theoretical frameworks and conceptual blueprints which were influential in the creation and formation of government structures.

Friedrich Hegel

India is the land of dreams. India had always dreamt – more of the Bliss that is man's final goal. And this has helped India to be more creative in history than any other nation. Hence the effervescence of myths and legends, religions, and philosophies, music, and dances and the different styles of architecture.

Source: *A Survey of Hinduism* - by Klaus K. Klostermaier

* * *

It strikes everyone, in beginning to form an acquaintance with the treasures of Indian literature, that a land so rich in intellectual products and those of the profoundest order of thought.

Source: *The Philosophy of History* - by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel



1911-2008

Eminent American physicist, who, besides number of science books, co-authored with Niels Bohr the paper 'The Mechanism of Nuclear Fission'. He was instrumental in the development of the Atomic bomb, and worked at Los Alamos Laboratories on the Hydrogen Bomb. He coined the terms 'Black Hole', 'Quantum foam' and 'Wormhole'. Wheeler later occupied the chair that had been previously held by Albert Einstein.

John Archibald Wheeler

One has the feeling that the thinkers of the East knew it all, and if we could only translate their answers into our language we would have the answers to all our questions.

Source: *Uncommon Wisdom* - by Ertlof Capra

* * *

It is curious that people like Schrödinger, Niels Bohr, Oppenheimer are Upanishad scholars.

Source: *Indian Conquests of the Mind* - by Saibal Gupta

* * *

I like to think that someone will trace how the deepest thinking of India made its way to Greece and from there to the philosophy of our times.

Source: *Indian Conquests of the Mind* - by Saibal Gupta

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

Heritage Foundation,

30, F.C.Road, Uzan Bazar

Guwahati-781001, Ph: 0361- 2636365

e-mail: ourheritage123@gmail.com, Website: www.heritagefoundation.org.in

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A Happy New Year so many ways

Rangali Bihu, Poila Baisakh, Baisagu, Baisagiu Bishu, AliAye Lrigang, Baishakhi, Bishu, Pungal are some of the variant and illustrious names given to the advent of Hindu New Year. These are the names related to the Natural Change and astronomical phenomenon rather than to historical point of time such as Shakaabda, Bhaskaraabda, Vikaramaabda etc., and invariably with a cultural colour of the particular class of people celebrating and enjoying it. Astronomically it is the day of equinox ie, Vernal equinox, when the duration of day time and night time are equal and from then onward the day time begins increasing. This day 21st March of Gregorian Calendar every year. The Nature makes its panage from dry and dusty days to greeneries, rain, blooming and most importantly period of cultivation and creation.

The Observance of the festival, quite naturally, differ from place to place, tradition to tradition but the intrinsic property remains as one and the same.

Diversities are rich and colourful by their own right. But inherent property binds us all by one thread of cultural unity and oneness.

We see our tradition pervades the geographical boundaries and gets assimilated where it flourishes. For example, we cite the new year celebrating at Bali island. The new year day (21st March) is called Nyepi in their language and the day is determined by the Indian Calendar (Shaka Lunar Calendar). Balinese observe the day (24 hours) as a day of Silence, from sunrise (6 AM) to the next sunrise (6 AM). In this period of silence no vehicle (except ambulance) and police Pecalang (roaming on foot) are seen on roads. The person remain indoors. Radio T.V. and even International Airport Ngurah Rai International Airport, and ferry terminals go off the day in honour of the Nyepi. According to Ida I Dewa Gede Ngurah Swasta (Devagowda?), The President of Bali Interfaith Communication Forum, the Hindus of the island specially, observe four abstentions. Amati geni (abstaining from lighting fires), Amati Karya (abstaining from work), Amati lelungan (abstaining from traveling outside family compounds) and Amati lelaguan (abstaining from worldly entertainment).

Balinese piously observe these Amatis to introspect themselves and prepare for the new year with determination and devotion to their work, faith and above all for the welfare of the country.

In contrast to our way of merriment, their (Balinese) is quite different and distinct. But the ultimate aim and purpose is the same. Though we worship God in different forms and ways, all go to One (Keshavam adhigaschati). So is the celebration of The New Year. It converges to make the world full of greeneries of corps, peace and progress (materially and spiritually).

Let us see a New Year usher in peace and peace, a Heritage time for the time to come.

Editor

A Write Up on Tamang Culture and Traditions

- NORBU TAMANG

Tamang are one of aboriginal tribes of Sikkim which consists of more than forty sub-tribes and all of them do have same culture, tradition, faith and language. Long before they adopted Buddhism, Tamang tribe was following the Bon religion. They believe and worship natural elements in the form of Dolma (Devi) and Loo (Nagg) and God & Goddesses of space.

While in Tibet, during the 7th century A.D. after reaching of Guru Padma Sambhawa the tribes of Tibet including Tamang began to follow Buddhism bringing change in Bonism. But there is no total eradication of Bonism. It is still in practice. The Buddhism that was propagated by Guru Padma Sambhawa is a 'Vajrayana' Buddhism with pure Gningma sect. This is also called 'Tantrayana' Buddhism. It is believed that from the very existence there were Gods and demons simultaneously. A super natural power was/is to be applied to subdue the demons. The lotus born Guru Padma Sambhawa was an enlightened being with highly super natural power. The Lamaism also took place with the inception of *Gningmapa Buddhism*. The practitioner of Bonism is called 'Bonpo' who was/is considered to be the priest. Tamang tribe believes in soul and its liberation or eternity. While performing death ritual, the

Bonpo called upon the soul of dead person on him and urged to rest in heaven. With the inception of Buddhism and practice of Lamaism, such ritual is performed by the Lama inter-mixing with the prevailed tradition. The Gningmapa Vajrayana Buddhism makes to believe that the soul is immortal and a subtle body, which can be present in voidness and also takes birth in any form of life



according to wheel of deed (KARMA) of past and present.

This tribe believes 'Hopameh' the supreme and ultimate God where the soul rests after death. Besides that they believe in several Gods, Goddesses and deities as stated earlier. They worship Dolma (Devi), Loo (Nagg), Chan (Deity of jungle) for worldly peace and prosperity. They also believe in the worship of guardian deity for the protection of 'Hyul' or

region. When anyone falls in bad deed, it leads to hell and believe that good deed leads to heaven. They also believe in vice and virtue. They believe that vice leads to birth in the hell i.e. full of suffering and virtue leads to peace and prosperous birth in human being. This tribe worships their ancestor for blessings and protection of the family from evils. The worship of lower deity by offering new corn and fruit of the year is performed during harvest time. Sonam Lhochhar is celebrated as New Year and festival of the tribe with great pomp and grandeur. It falls sometime in the last week of January and first week of February of the year. During the festival, the head of the family makes prayer to the Almighty for peace, prosperous and healthy life of his family members. The day is arranged with feast.

Following are the different customs, rituals and traditions which are observed during different occasions:

1. Birth ceremony: when a woman is ready to give birth to a baby, she is placed under the care of a maternity expert woman. When the baby is born the caretaker woman separates the baby and placenta. The baby is then cleaned and wrapped with clean & dry cloth and placed in the lap of the mother for breast-feeding. After three or seven days,

a ritualistic ceremony called 'Thapsang' is performed by the priest (Lama) which is the materials required for the ritual are, a small grass of saccarum family (*Narvapang* in Tamang language), grass of *Artimeasia (chyanjan)* and a few chips of hot marble stone (*sel yungba*) are placed in a tub made of copper. With the chanting of mantras by the priest, the newly born baby is bathed with holy water. The vapour arising out of that copper tub will bask the baby, which serves as medicine. Grandfather, mother and other elders are assembler during the ceremony and the priest is requested to name the baby. The holy water is sprinkled all around the house. The ritual or ends with the offering of food to the guests present and the priest (Lama). Gifts are also offered to the priest.

After six months, the baby is given solid food. Grandfather or mother will serve food to the baby with a new spoon in plate. Sometimes the parent of the baby invites relatives and offer them feast.

When the child (son) attends the age of three years, there comes a ceremony of hair cutting and wearing new clothes. While performing this ritual a Lama is called upon. The priest will chant some mantras asking blessing from the Almighty. The new clothes meant for the child is purified by sprinkling holy water by the priest. Maternal uncle is already invited to be present on the occasion. The Lama will first put scissor. Thereafter maternal uncle will dress the hair and are cleansed. Then the uncle will dress up the child with new traditional dress and the child is

fed with feast. The ritual comes to an end after having varieties of food and offering gift to the priest.

2. Customary marriage:

When the son or daughter attends the age of 18 and above, the parents will think about their marriage. There are two types of marriages. Arranged marriage and marriage through introduction of girl and boy by a middle man. In arranged marriage in case of son, the parent will enquire about the details of the girl's family background. The parent of the boy arranges to send a middle man (especially a relative or village elder) to the house of the girl with one pair of karjel pong. The middle man will start the talk by placing the Pong in front of the girl's parent. Girl's parent also enquires about the family background of the person who would be the groom. If found everything nice, then the parent will okay the proposal. The intermediary comes to the boy's home and reports to the guardian as responded from the bride side. In the mean time, the parent will make their daughter agree of the marriage proposal. In the second step the parent of the boy sends the middle man with a pair of Pong for the 'Rem' to be submitted to the bride's parent.

The particulars of 'Rem' are as follows:

a) Parent's share:

- (i) Mama Geng (a type of bread made of rice flour) – 240 Nos.
- (ii) Sangala bab (fermented millet) - pham 12.
- (iii) Airag (liquor) - pham 12.
- (iv) Hwaba (cock) - 1 No.
- (v) Ra (He goat) - 1 No.

(vi) Thotka (coin) - Rs.12.50.

(vii) For mother - one bottle milk.

b) Maternal uncle's share:

(i) Mama Geng (bread) - 60 Nos.

(ii) Airag (liquor) - 1 bottle.

(iii) Hwaba (cock) -1 No.

The parent of the girl will fix the date and time to submit the above 'Rem' and the intermediary will report to the boy's parent accordingly. The parents also fix the date for the ceremony. The parents of the boy arranges all the items of 'Rem', and make ready for ceremony. The spokesperson (Tamba) will purify the clothes of bride & groom, Barja, Boompa etc. by reciting the names of God and Goddesses. The middlemen, guardian of groom with groomsmen and a team of 15-20 members will go with already fixed 'Rem' to the house of the bride on the stipulated date and time with musicians and headmen of society. Two persons from among the team will be sent in advance as informer. Sometimes they have to face ill treatment which is in custom. There will be one night's halt at the bride's house. The groom and his team (*bre/mhi*) will be served with feast. In the meantime, the intermediary will submit the 'Rem' to the bride's parent.

More often, at night, there will be final ceremony of handing over of bride to the groom. Tamang, spokespersons from both the side take their place face to face along with guardians. From both the sides they will place pair of 'Syalkar' (liqour bottle) in front of them and first spokesperson (tamba) of the groom side

speaks. Then Tamba from bride's side speaks on the matter. Lastly, father or brother of bride speaks on the matter and exchange the Syalkar. The guardian of both sides sprinkle the Syalkar to their respective ancestor God and finally distribute among those assembled there. The musicians from groom side shall ask the musician of bride side to hand over the bride to the groom. Then after the bride who has already been adorned with ornaments and new dresses shall be brought to the groom by carrying on back by her brother. The whole night goes with singing and dancing.

Marriage through short introduction of girl and boy by a middleman:

In this process, the girl and boy shall be made to meet each other informally at any place like market or in a fair. When they come close together and share their views between each other, the middleman also shares his views and information of the boy and later on enquires about the detail of the family back-ground of the girl. If the guys are found to be agreeing, the middleman fixes the date, time and venue to extricate the would-be bride. They do so on the stipulated date and time without the notice of the girl's guardian. The girl shall be brought to the boy's home and after three days, two persons with Pong are first sent to the home of the girl as informer. Sometimes the headman or guardian of the girl abuses them. However, they have to face that and come back to boy's home with information. Next time the two persons are deputed as middlemen with 'Pong' to the house of the girl with a view to ask about the 'Rem' in the form of

punishment.

This punishment is as follows:

1. Mama geng (bread):120 Nos.
2. Bab (fermented millet):pham 6
3. He goat:1 No.
4. Airag (liquor) pham 6.
5. Hwaba (cock):1 No.

They fix the day for submitting the above items. Next time the date is fixed by them, the bride and groom, the middle men and five-six other members along with the above items proceed to the house of the bride. After submitting all the items they are served with food and seen off. After few weeks those two middlemen are sent with 'Pong' to confirm the final 'Rem'. The final 'Rem' is as equal as in the arranged marriage and settles the things in the same process. The customary marriage is performed only when the couple is from within the Tamang tribe. When the son of Tamang community brings the girl from other caste, she shall be given Tamang sub-caste by the headman of the society; and Lama or priest will rename her by performing a simple ceremony if she is acceptable. In case of daughter, the parent and headmen of the society will fix the community punishment in cash and kind if the boy is acceptable.

3. Death ceremony: Death may come normal or accidental. In accidental death, sometime the dead body is traced out and sometimes it may not be. But ceremony is performed in all the circumstances, be it a normal death or an accidental. In Buddhist tradition dead bodies are cremated as soon as the Lama is called for performing 'Phowa' of the dead person. Thereafter

there will be prayer to the 'Chengreji' the Lord of compassion. In Buddhist philosophy, it takes seventy two hours to complete the death ceremony. So normally, the corpse is to be cremated after seventy-two hours. After cremation, a piece of burnt bone of the forehead is separated and brought home and kept aloof until the final rite. The final rite is performed within 21 days or 49 days of the death. During performing such rite, a team of four pivotal persons viz. *Tamba, Ganba, Kathowkey and Bonbo* is formed and beside that, a team of young group is formed with the name *Lhaiba, Chhyangba* and *Chhuma* to carry out the work of food arrangement. The daughter-in-law of the deceased family shall be present as she does have an important role to play on the occasion. There will be a minimum of 5-8 Lamas (Buddhist priests) including one chief priest (*dorjey loben*) to perform the rite. Among the above four pivotal persons Tamba has important role to begin and conclude the rite. On the last day of the rite, the piece of bone already brought shall be held by Tamba through the brother of the deceased and finally Tamba will hand over the same to the *Chawai* Lama (religious head) and he will merge it in the earth along with '*Minjyang*' and send to keep in the cave. On the day of conclusion, well-wishers and neighbours are invited to condole the bereaved family and served with refreshment and food. The Lamas are honoured with token of gift. There is a system of lighting butter lamp annually at least for three consecutive years in the name of the deceased.

Nokpante or Bachelor's House of A'chik

- Mihir N. Sangma

The **Garos** are an indigenous people in Meghalaya, India and neighboring areas of Bangladesh, who call themselves **A'chik Mande** (literally "hill people," from a·chik "hill" + mande "people") or simply **A'chik** or **Mande**. They are the second-largest tribe in Meghalaya after the Khasi and comprise about a third of the local population.

Nokpante or Bachelor's House:

The other important house of the Achik people other than the dwelling house is "Nokpante" or Bachelor's House. Nok= house, Pante= Bachelor or unmarried man. This house is specially constructed to sleep or to stay of the Bachelors and known as "Nokpante" or Bachelor's House. In olden days there could be seen Nokpantes in each and every A'chik village, even more than one where the Bachelors are more in numbers in the village. Nokpantes or Bachelor's House are rarely could be seen this days in the interior villages of Achik people in A'chik land. Nokpantes are often of greater in sizes but much shorter in length than the dwelling houses. This house is constructed like dwelling house with a durable and strong round posts and piles on a considerable incline nature of the soil. So, the sizes and the materials used, like posts and piles are not of the same length. It differs from the construction of dwelling house as arranged in position. The main entrance starts from the ground level as with the case of dwelling house, whereas Nokpante front side is on the higher from the ground level. Up to the flooring of the house, noched a long wood, served as a staircase and on the top end, provided a hole where a long piece of cane known as "Regla" tied with it and suspended to the ground, close to the staircase which helps to

climb up and down. This is locally known as "*Kalkame Kime*." The two main front posts of the house and the other two supported posts are known as "*Bangpak*" and the front cross beam which supported the staircase is called "*Jangbatra*", and on the top another tie beam fixed from one post to the other is called "Bilbang" and the ridge post longitudinal timber is known as "*Bolgro*". On all these posts, cross beam, on the top and on the house floor on the front side of Nokpante are decorated with various forms of curbing like male and female of humankind and various animals and birds and the colours they used of their own. Curbing with the fine arts are locally known as "Do sateka." Over and above the Nokpante house is exceptionally specialised with a skilled hand curbing of the king posts are known as "Do kaku" which represents some of the traditional designs and decorations which is methodologically very important one.

The most of these kinds could be seen among the villages of Garos, Gan chings and Atong sub-tribes like Eman A sak, Eman Gatabilgre, Eman Songmagre, Eman Rompagre, Gitinggre and Siju at the southern villages of the South Garo Hills district. In spite of that, these villages are well known for special hands of dressing timbers, curbing, of woods, cane and bamboo works. They inherited such qualities from the cultures of the passed

forefathers from generation to generation.

But in this age of a modern civilisation, due to the impact of a modern cultures and many factors, the old age cultures and many heritages can be seen on disappearing from the society very fast.

The main object of construction: Under any circumstances, the Achik people were much particular and conscious about good moral characters and such maintenance was known even by many other cultured people of the world as mentioned by many scholars. It is specially, among boys and the girls in particular, one's virginity was always counted. As we know that there is no separate rooms for sleeping in Nokachik or dwelling house. It was constructed and only provided in a type of dormitory. For such a reason behind, the young boys do not sleep at the house with the parents and other female members of the family. It was improper and obscene to them at any how. The young boys from a village sleep together at separate house and there they spend most of the time and thus keep the sanctity of their youth and this house is known as "Nokpante" or Bachelor's house. Nokpante or Bachelor's house is only for the unmarried young men. Nokpante rule does not allow any female member to enter into it, What ever

Contd. to Page 11

How to file a Public Interest Litigation (PIL)

What is a PIL?

Public Interest Litigation (PIL) - litigation for public interest. PIL was started to protect the fundamental rights of people who are poor, ignorant or in socially/economically disadvantaged position. It is different from ordinary litigation, in that it is not filed by one private person against another for the enforcement of a personal right. The presence of 'public interest' is important to file a PIL.

A PIL can be filed when the following conditions are fulfilled:

- There must be a public injury and public wrong caused by the wrongful act or omission of the state or public authority.

- It is for the enforcement of basic human rights of weaker sections of the community who are downtrodden, ignorant and whose fundamental and constitutional rights have been infringed.

- It must not be frivolous litigation by persons having vested interests.

Who can file a PIL?

The Supreme Court (SC), through its successive judgements has relaxed the strict rule of 'locus standi' applicable to private litigation.

Any person can file a PIL provided:

He is a member of the public acting bona fide and having sufficient interest in instituting an action for redressal of public wrong or public injury.

He is not a mere busy body or a meddlesome interloper.

His action is not motivated by personal gain or any other oblique consideration.

How to file?

A PIL may be filed like a write petition. However, in the past the SC has treated even letters addressed to the court as PIL. In *People's Democratic Union v Union of India*, a letter addressed by the petitioner

organization seeking a direction against the respondents for ensuring observance of the provisions of famous labour laws in relation to workmen employed in the construction work of projects connected with the Asian Games was entertained as a PIL.

The SC has encouraged the filing of PIL for tackling issues related to environment, human rights etc

In High Court:

If a Public Interest Litigation is filed in a High court, then two (2) copies of the petition have to be filed. Also, an advance copy of the petition has to be served on the each respondent, i.e. opposite party, and this proof of service has to be affixed on the petition.

In Supreme Court:

If a Public Interest Litigation is filed in the Supreme court, then (4)+(1) (i.e. 5) sets of petition has to be filed

opposite party is served, the copy only when notice is issued.

Court Fees:

A court fee of RS. 50, per respondent (i.e. for each number of opposite party, court fees of RS. 50) has to be affixed on the petition.

Procedure:

Proceedings, in the PIL commence and carry on in the same manner, as other cases.

However, in between the proceedings if the judge feels he may appoint a commissioner, to inspect allegations like pollution being caused, trees being cut, sewer problems, etc.

After filing of replies, by opposite party, and rejoinder by the petitioner, final hearing takes place, and the judge gives his final decision.

(<http://sentinelassam.com>)

US Court Says School Yoga Does Not Violate Religious Freedom



LOS ANGELES, USA, April 4, 2015 : A California court said Friday that yoga classes taught at an elementary school do not violate students' right to religious freedom, after parents complained Hindu and Buddhist doctrines were being promoted. The parents of two students at an Encinitas district school near San Diego said the yoga classes, which were taught as part of the school's physical education curriculum, infringed on their children's constitutional rights.

The First Amendment bans school-sponsored religious promotion and prayer. But after a years-long court battle, the Fourth District Court of Appeal in San Diego ruled the courses are not faith-based. "We conclude that the program is secular in purpose, does not have the primary effect of advancing or inhibiting religion and does not excessively entangle the school district in religion," justice Cynthia Aaron wrote. "The district's yoga program does not violate our state constitution," the justice wrote. The decision upholds an earlier ruling of a lower court, which the parents had sought to appeal.

Yoga, an exercise that promotes stretching and breathing, often incorporates spiritual elements from eastern faiths. It has become popular in the West, and many practices in North America do not incorporate the religious aspects of the practice. (Source: Internet)

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana **A New Direction Towards Empowerment of Youth**

-Archana Datta

Skill and knowledge are the two driving forces of economic growth and social development for any country. Countries with higher level of skills fare better to cope with the challenges of emerging economies in the present day world.

In any country, youth is primarily the focus for any program for skill development. Our country is better placed in this regard. We have a vast majority of population in the productive age group. This provides a great opportunity to India. It also poses a great challenge. Benefits will flow to our economy only if our population, particularly the youth, is healthy, educated and properly skilled.

India with its an unrivalled youth demographic, is definitely poised for a big boost in terms of socio-economic development. We have 605 million people below the age of 25. They can act as agents of change, by being empowered with various employable skills which will enable them to make impact not only on their lives but also on the lives of other individuals.

The recently approved Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), is a flagship scheme for imparting skill training to youth, focussing on improved curricula, better pedagogy and trained instructors. The training includes soft skills, personal grooming, behavioural change et al.

The scheme is being

implemented by the newly created Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship through the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). It will cover 24 lakh youths. The Skill training would be based on the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) and industry led standards. Under the scheme, a monetary reward is given to trainees on assessment and certification by third party assessment bodies. The average monetary reward is around Rs.8,000 per trainee.

The skill training will be on the basis of demand assessed by the recently conducted skill gap studies by the NSDC for the period 2013-17. The central and state governments, industry and business houses will be consulted for assessment of further demands. For this, a demand aggregator platform is also being launched. The target for skill development will also take into account the demands from various other flagship programs launched in recent times such as Make in India, Digital India, National Solar Mission and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

The PMKVY, will primarily focus on the first time entrants to the labour market and target mainly drop outs from Class 10 and Class 12. The scheme will be implemented through NSDC training partners. At present, NSDC has 187 training partners in around 2,300 centres. In addition, central and state

government affiliated training providers are also to be roped in for imparting training under the scheme. All training providers will have to undergo a due diligence process, for being eligible under the scheme. Sector Skill Councils and the state governments are also to monitor skill training program under PMKVY.

Under the scheme, a Skill Development Management System (SDMS), will be put in place to verify and record details of all training centres, quality of training and courses. Biometric system and video recording of the training process will also be ensured wherever possible. Trainees will also be required to give feedback which will be the key element for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the PMKVY scheme. A robust grievance redressal system will also be made operational to address grievances. Further, an online citizen portal will be put in place to disseminate information about the program.

Out of the total outlay of Rs.1120 crore, on skill training of 14 lakh youth, special emphasis is being given to recognition of prior learning. An amount of Rs.220 crore is being provided for this purpose. Rs.67 crore has been earmarked for awareness generation and youth mobilisation. Mobilisation of youth is to be done through Skill Melas at the local level with the help of state governments, municipal bodies, pachayati raj institutions and community based organisations.

Another Rs.67 crore has been provided, under the scheme on mentorship support and placement facilitation. An allocation of Rs.150 crores has been made for training of the youth from the North-East region.

Skill and entrepreneurship development is one of the high priority areas of the present Government. The newly formed Ministry of Skill and Entrepreneurship Development, is to play a critical role in fulfilling the objectives of the 'Make in India' campaign, a major initiative to turn India into a major manufacturing hub. The Ministry is to play a pivotal role in creating a skilled workforce to meet the demands of growing economy in different sectors including the manufacturing sector.

A new National Policy for Skill and Entrepreneurship Development has also emerged to cover the entire gamut of initiatives in this direction. The Policy is to lay a roadmap for

boosting growth creating quality manpower. It has set a target for skilling 500 million persons by the year 2022.

The efforts in this direction, is being carried on a mission mode. The National Skill Development Mission, an umbrella body, has three institutions under it. The National Council on Skill Development-under the chairmanship of Prime Minister, is to give policy direction and review skill development efforts. The National Skill Development Coordination Board, under the chairmanship of Vice Chairman NITI Aayog is to enumerate strategies to implement the decisions of PM's council. The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), a non-profit company, is to meet the skill training requirements of the labour market including the unorganised sector.

India has marked its presence as one of the fastest growing economies of the world. It is

expected to rank amongst the world's top three growth economies and amongst the top three manufacturing destinations by 2020. With the help of favourable demographic factors and sustained availability of quality workforce, our country is poised to make its imprint on global economy.

The newly announced scheme, PMKVY, with its thrust on skill development to build human capital for future markets is sure to reap benefits for our economy. The new Policy and a Mission mode approach to deliver results will usher in a new era in the development of human resources and industry.

*Ms. Archana Datta is currently Freelance writer and former DG, DD News and DG, NSD (AIR). (PIB Features) Email: - featuresunit@gmail.com, himalaya@nic.in

(<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/efeatures.aspx>)

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NOKPANTE OR BACHELOR'S...

the case may be, the female members even touching of clothes belonging to the unmarried young man feels improper and thereby may spoil the chastity of one's life. There are oral rules and regulations of Nokpante with which Nokpante was maintained and accordingly exercised by the senior most unmarried man at Nokpan.

Various usages of Nokpante or Bachelor's House

Nokpante or Bachelor's House is mainly for sleeping of unmarried men and the boys of the village.

In spite of that it is using for more purposes. In Olden days there were no school colleges and other institutions and training centres to the young boys in A chik A'song. We are to accept that our forefathers were well cultured people and had vast knowledges in all respect traditionally. The young generations had such c trainings on the field as well as at Nokpante only. After all, the Nokpante of Bachelor's house is a large institution to the young people. Some of them are as follows:

1. Nokpante as a training centre or a school.
2. Nokpante as a technical or Engineering Institution,
3. Nokpante as a Music School,
4. Nokpante as an Agricultural Institute,
5. Nokpante as a Training centre of Defence
6. Nokpante as a Club-house and Physical Training Centre,
7. Nokpante as an Industrial Training Centre
8. Nokpanate as a Medical Institute,
9. Nokpante as a Rest House and
10. Nokpante as Court House.

Indianisation of Churches

Many things are common in Hindus and this sect of Christians.

- Sarvadnya Puneekar

Conversion and Gharwapasi are the most discussed words in Media now days. Sarsanghachalak of R.S.S. Dr. Mohan Bhagwat's recent statement about Mother Teresa added fuel to media reporting. Personally I don't think there is anything wrong in his statement. Unfortunately most of the media (especially electronic media) is presenting only one side of the issue or one side of Mother Teresa. In the background of all that debate, discussion and controversies I came across some wonderful experiences. These experiences were associated with the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, also known as the Indian Orthodox Church-'Malankara' is another name for Kerala, 'Orthodox' is the category of Christian faith and tradition it follows (distinguishes it from the Roman Catholic and Protestant faiths). The Church traces its origins to St. Thomas the Apostle, who came to India in AD 52.

Few days back I met one of the teachers (not wanting to disclose his identity) of Indian Orthodox Church. We discussed many things regarding Christianity, Christianity in Kerala, Catholic Church, Indian Orthodox Church and many more things regarding current situation.

Father, who teaches, completed his graduation in Sacred Theology and Bachelor in Divinity Degree. He did his masters in Theology. I began the conversation by asking him what

the Indian Orthodox Church signifies. The Father replied-I think we can surely say that Indian Orthodox Church is what we can call-the Indianisation of Church or Christianity. This church has its headquarter in Kottayam, Kerala, unlike the Catholic Church that has its headquarters in Rome. One sect of Syrian Christians has their presiding head in Syria, but the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church's Head of Society is located in Kerala only; whereas the Catholics head is Pope Francis from Rome. Similarly, Head of Orthodox Church community is Catholics of the East. Currently Baselios Mar Thoma Paulose II is heading the community. This is the most important difference in these two communities.

Similarity between Orthodox Church and Temple

Few years back the writer visited Kerala and visited Cheriapally Church of Kottayam. The Church was built in 1578 AD and belongs to the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church or Indian Orthodox Church. Many things are common in Hindus and this sect of Christians—Their *Dhwajastambha* (Pole for the Flag) is similar to *Dhwajastambha* outside Hindu Temples. As we remove shoes before entering temples, followers of Orthodox Church remove shoes or chappals outside the Church. And unlike other Churches, teachings in the Church are in Malayalam and not in English.

The Church never lightens the

lamp or samai in the Church in front of Holy Cross or Statue of Jesus. This is a unique scenario in the churches of Kerala. In Cheriapally Church in Kerala one can observe places specially created for lightening the lamp in the walls of the Church. This is also practised in Hindu Temples of Kerala. Care taker at Cheriapally told the writer that as Hindu Kings were rulers when churches were being constructed, to get more money and help from them, Christians kept similar things in Church and Temples. Hanging lamps, lamps in the walls, removing shoes outside the Church are some of them. Women from Indian Orthodox Church are allowed to wear Mangalsutra (Marriage Thread), which is again a Hindu tradition accepted by Christians. While discussing various things the Father told that his community i.e. Indian Orthodox Church is against conversions. Neither the Church nor the Fathers believe in Conversion. Not only Indian Orthodox but all the Syrian Christians never encourage the Conversion activity. It is claimed that in the past also Syrian Christians did not cooperate conversion activity or foreign missionaries and didn't allow new converts to join their activity.

Father also accepted the fact that once upon a time, may be many generations back we were also Hindus. Someone came here and converted us to Christianity and we practised the

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India to have Largest Number of Muslims by 2050

WASHINGTON, April 3 – India will overtake Indonesia as the country with the largest number of Muslims in 2050, while Hindus will become the world's third largest population by that time, according to a new study by a US think-tank.

According to the Pew Research Center's religious profile data released yesterday, Muslims are projected to grow faster than the world's overall population and that Hindus and Christians are to roughly keep pace with worldwide population growth.

"India will retain a Hindu majority but also will have the largest Muslim population of any country in the world, surpassing Indonesia," the Pew report said.

According to Pew, Indonesia in 2011 had a Muslim population of about 205 million as against India's 177 million.

"Over the next four decades, Christians will remain the largest religious group, but Islam will grow faster than any other major religion," it said.

The report predicted that by 2050 there will be near parity

between Muslims (2.8 billion, or 30 per cent of the population) and Christians (2.9 billion, or 31 per cent), possibly for the first time in history.

There were 1.6 billion Muslims in 2010, compared to 2.17 billion Christians.

"The number of Muslims will nearly equal the number of Christians around the world," the report said.

If the trend continues, Islam will be the most popular faith in the world after 2070, it said.

By 2050, Muslims will make up about 10 per cent of Europe's population, up from 5.9 per cent in 2010.

The Hindu population is projected to rise by 34 per cent worldwide, from a little over 1 billion to nearly 1.4 billion by 2050.

By that time, Hindus will be third, making up 14.9 per cent of the world's total population, followed by people who do not affiliate with any religion, accounting for 13.2 per cent, the report said.

The people with no religious affiliation currently have the third

largest share of the world's total population.

Over the same period, the number of Hindus in Europe is expected to roughly double, from a little under 1.4 million (0.2 per cent of Europe's population) to nearly 2.7 million (0.4 per cent), mainly as a result of immigration, the report said.

In North America, the Hindu share of the population is expected to nearly double in the decades ahead, from 0.7 per cent in 2010 to 1.3 per cent in 2050, when migration is included in the projection models. Without migration, the Hindu share of the region's population would remain the same.

Buddhism is the only faith that is not expected to increase its followers, due to an ageing population and stable fertility rates in Buddhist countries, such as China, Japan and Thailand.

The projections considered fertility rates, trends in youth population growth and religious conversion statistics. – PTI

(<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr0415/at050>)

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Indianisation of Churches

same till today. But we have to accept that culturally we are Hindus. Our traditions, culture and many other things are just like Hindus. And therefore by religion we may be Christians, but culturally we are like Hindus.

Few years back in 2002 or 2003, then Sirsanghachalak K. S. Sudarshan had presented the idea of Indianisation of Church. He might be expecting same thing from the Christians. If everyone from Christian community accepts the idea of Indianisation of Church then there would not be fights and clashes.

(The writer is a Pune based senior journalist) (Organiser 15.03.2015)

Muslim and Christian Minorities in Indian Must Change

- Upananda Brahmachari

HENB, March 24, 2015:: To challenge majority Hindu concepts in every walks of life in each and every footstep, is a chronic disease of the Muslim and Christian (a little less) minorities in India. The strong viruses of 'Anti Majoritism', 'Pseudo Secularism' and 'Appeasement for Vote Bank' have been attacked the body of Indian democracy in such a way, the manifestations are now ugly and condition is critical.

The infamous All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) for its 'impunity of Saha Bano Case' and 'return of Babri Structure' hoax; again challenged the traditional Indian concept of Yoga and Surya Namaskar; criticized the biggest majority organisation RSS and invoked a bare communalism by using a concocted violation of safety and security of the minority people in India.

In its 24th session (21-22 March, 2015) at Jaipur in Rajasthan, the All India Muslim Personal Law Board strongly objected to Rajasthan government's move to make Surya Namaskar and Yoga compulsory in schools and demanded its withdrawal from the government policy. Not only that, 'the All India Muslim Personal Board (AIMPLB) has appealed to the Muslims of the country to cling steadfastly to their **un-doubtful faith in Islam and Shariah** with all their might so as to ground the mischievous elements who are hell bent to put to shreds the secular fabric of the country, enshrined in the Constitution. The

Muslims should maintain their religious identity at all costs without compromising on any tenets of Islam', the Board said.

"Yoga and Surya Namaskar are anti-Islam and the government should immediately withdraw the decision. Islam does not permit for such practise.

"This is absolutely wrong to impose such things on Muslims," Board' assistant general secretary Abdul Rahim Qureshi said at a press conference after the board's 24th meeting in Jaipur.

"Internal stability is necessary for the peace and development in the country and the governments, both Central and states, should work in this direction instead of announcing such decision which affects our religious freedom," he said.

Qureshi said that the government should not try to include chapters of "a religion's book" (indicating the introduction of chapters from Shrimad Bhagavad Gita in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Haryana in educational curriculum) in school syllabus.

"The government should develop a sense of confidence among the people of the minority communities that they can practise their religion without any problem but it is seen that **Hindutva forces are carrying out their agenda against minorities after Narendra Modi became Prime Minister,**" Qureshi said.

When asked what he has to say about the hate-speeches of Hyderabad MP Akbaruddin Owaisi, he while protecting him said, "I do not see anything provocative in his speeches." To AIMPLB, Akbaruddin Owaisi, Ahmed Bukhari or Azam Khan are not provocative, but Dr Pravin Togadia, Yogi Adityanath, Dr Surendra Jain, Shakshi Maharaj and Sadvi Prachis are most communal.

The whole session of AIMPLB at Jaipur had an rigorous process to attack the BJP run state Govts in India over the issues of Banning Beef, introduction of Gita in school syllabus, promotion of Yoga and Surya Namaskar or the curtailment in minority quota in jobs and education. This AIMPLB has its strong objection to pronounce 'Vande Mataram' as well. Not only that this subversive organization 'against Indian constitution and Judiciary' indulged its major efforts in slandering Modi Govt. by criticizing RSS as well.

Accusing RSS and other Hindu outfits as alleged in trying to force their agenda on Muslims, the AIMPLB indicated that it was not the right time for the board to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The issue of meeting with the Prime Minister is not a part of the agenda. The board will take a decision on it but I feel that its not the right time to meet him. There is no need as of now and when a need arises, a meeting might take place accordingly," Kamal

Faruqui, the board member said.

“We are not desperate that the Board should have a meeting with Modi and this is also not an issue of debate now,” Faruqui said.

The exclusion of Modi and majority Hindu sentiments in their lookout, it certainly exposes AIMPLB’s strong motivation to contradict and conflict with the majority Indian in each and every footstep obviously. Not only that this Muslim subversive group tried to tie up with the Christians by shouting for the insecurity of Muslim and Christian under Modi Govt.

The AIMPLB hit out at the Modi government saying both Muslims and Christians were insecure under the BJP-led dispensation, and passed a resolution to launch a parallel campaign to counter ‘ghar wapsi’ and ‘love jihad’ propaganda of the RSS and its affiliates. Over the tune, the AIMPLB advanced upto seeing a RSS which has already hijacked Modi’s development agenda!

“We’re concerned about the situation in the country which has worsened after Narendra Modi became PM. Not only Muslims, but Christians are also feeling uncomfortable,” the AIMPLB assistant general secretary Abdul Rahim Qureshi said at a press conference at the end of its two-day convention in Jaipur.

To make this concert alive, Christian MPs from different parties have also planned to form joint front against Modi and Hindus to run their Christianity agenda against majority people of India. 19 Christian members of

Parliament met at New Delhi on 17th March to decide over a meeting every quarter. The next meeting is scheduled for the first week of May.

To the liberal media and secular politicians in India, such type of conglomeration of Muslims and Christians cutting the edge of the party affiliation for setting their Islamic or Christian agenda are so great and unique. But, if the Hindu MP and MLAs from different party affiliations come together for any Hindu agenda, that will be a disaster for democracy and Catastrophe for Communal situation in India.

But, the growing communalism instigated by Muslims and Christians in India is widening the space for a larger Hindu consolidation in Hindu politics. In some days, Hindus from different party politics have to be united under a single saffron flag of unity to cover up their existential crisis caused by the same Muslim, Christian and Secular.

But, what should be the endpoints of this discourses about the mentality of minorities to oppose the majority and mainstream India?

At least Muslims and Christians in India do not live in any Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq or Libya. Nor in the Nigeria. If the Muslims and Christians try to understand the Al-Qaeda, Taliban, ISIS or Boko Haram reality, they should not prop up any exaggeration of Malegaon, Samjhota, Church attack or Nun rape. They should keep in mind that every action has its equal and opposite reaction. Must not indulge the culpability in

any sides, if the minorities in India find any better facilities in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria or Nigeria models to live with more happiness, they have the liberty to leave this place of Hindu majority. But, don’t try to change the demography and democracy of India, have been protected here by the Hindus and the Majority Hindus here through the ages. Believe in Hindu Bharat. That is also safe for all.

The manifestation of the chronic ailment of Muslim and Christian minorities in India must be treated with seriousness.

There is the provisions of isolation wards for the dangerous infectious and contagious patients. For some medicinally incurable diseases we take the help of surgery. All provisions must be kept amply open as this is the question of the healthy existence of near 1 billion (100 crores) Hindus in India, not the fabricated safety and security of 200 million (20 crores) minorities in India.

200 million minorities in India? Yes, it is the roots of all communal absurdity here cropping up in divisive politics. If the minorities think that they are also the part of the vast majority in India, the problems come down to the untraceable sediment. Who can deny the success story of Indian minorities getting berth in every sphere of life. **Minorities in India have grown six times higher since independence**, which is unique in Indian subcontinent. Majority-Minority complex in India must come to an end for the perpetual amity and fraternity in Indian subcontinent.

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Hindu Youth Brutally Killed for Marrying A Muslim Girl in Bihar

HENB | Vaishali | 23 March 2015:: The body of a Hindu youth who had eloped with a girl of Muslim community about three months back was found in a Vaishali village named Senduari on Sunday, bringing back the memory of Azizpur incident in Muzaffarpur district.

According to Vaishali SP Chandrika Prasad, a Hindu youth, Sanjeev Patel alias Putul, had eloped with a girl from Muslim community of the same village in December last. However, his body was found lying beside a ditch near a school about two km away from his residence at village Senduari under Sadar police station in Vaishali district (erstwhile Hazipur District) on Sunday. The SP said 10 persons identified as accused have been arrested and sent to jail. Sources said situation in the village is tense but normal. However, police headquarters has sent reinforcement to the district to ward off any trouble following the death of the boy.

As per report published in Dainik Bhaskar dt. On 23 March 2015, a case of abduction and murder due to inter-religious marriage in Hajipur, Bihar. The deceased (Sanjeev) married a Muslim girl four months ago. It is alleged that angry relatives of the bride, along with some villagers, abducted the bride and bridegroom and plotted the "honor killing".

The incident was reported from Senduari village of Hajipur block of Vaishali District. According to the police, the deceased Sanjeev Patel alias Putul married the daughter of Mohammed Ejajul four months ago. After the love marriage through an elopement, Mohammed Ejajul registered a case of kidnapping

against Sanjeev, but the bride, Chandni, confirmed in the Hazipur court that she wanted to stay with her Husband. After Court's decision Sanjeeb and Chandni started to stay in the village together since last 15 days.

Last Saturday, around 100 Muslim people attacked the house of Sanjeev. After brutally thrashing Sanjeev and his brother, they abducted (took Islamic jimma) Sanjeev and his wife Chandni. On Sunday afternoon, people found the body of Sanjeev close to the village of the bride.

Though People have found the body of Sanjeev, but the bride was still missing for hours. The incident has created tensions in both the villages, and the boy's side is preparing to take revenge.

While the police and administration are trying hard to avoid major communal riots, many similar incidences have been occurred in the past unfortunately, rumours spread many types.

As per latest news, Chandni, the Muslim wife of the murdered Hindu youth was rescued by Police from

Gayghat from Mujaffarpur District. Police is investing any involvement of Chandni with this Murder as her dopatta (chest scurf) was recovered from the site of dead body, stained with blood.

Police has issued warrant against another 27 miscreants apart from 10 arrested so far. There was also an FIR against 40 other unidentified persons, as reports came into media.

Indian media has been very selective in picking and debating moral policing cases from Khaps or random Hindu organizations. But, they don't highlight cases in which inter-religious killings, when Hindu youths-men are killed due to marriage with Muslim girls and women. If these cases of Hindu victims are not highlighted by the so called liberal and secular media and the rights activists, the fight against religious bigotry and moral policing will smack of hypocrisy and selective propaganda in favour of Radical Islam.

(<http://hinduexistence.org/2015/03/23>)

Buddha can Improve Bilateral Ties: Chinese Guru

A group of Chinese Buddhist Mandala painters led by Vijay Master is in Delhi under a Chinese government initiative to commemorate the 65th year of diplomatic relations between India and China.

Their artworks are on display at India Habitat Centre's art gallery here.

Vijay said: "Their works on Ganesha, Buddha, (Mahatma) Gandhi and Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi show a deep sense of understanding of the Indian psyche which is a result of age-old interaction nurtured by Buddhist scholars and travellers."

(<http://pluznews.com/19053/buddha-can-improve-bilateral-ties-chinese-guru.htm>)

NIA booked Isak Muivah and others for waging a war against the Country

NSCN-IM representatives walked out from the meeting with the Cease Fire Monitoring Group (CFMG), Government of India today at Police Complex, Chumukedima in Dimapur.

It was the 72nd meeting between the CFMG and the NSCN-IM's Cease Fire Monitoring Cell (CFMC). Briefing media persons later, NSCN-IM Cease Fire Monitoring Cell (CFMC) convenor Kraibo Chawang alleged that while imposing 'law of the land', the Government of India through the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has 'booked' its leaders Isak Chishi Swu, Thuingalang Muivah and V.S.Atem and 20 or so NSCN-IM leaders accusing them of waging a war against Indian Union. Kraibo alleged that a Deputy Superintendent of NIA had summoned Isak, Muivah, Atem and others to a court recently accusing them of waging war against the Union of India.

"They (GOI) should create conducive atmosphere for solution but it is difficult for us when the CFMG chairman himself said that the ceasefire does not extend beyond Nagaland. This is an insult to the whole Naga people and our collective leaders," said Chawang.

Disappointed over CFMG chairman's statement which said there is no ceasefire beyond Nagaland, the Kraibo Chawang remarked that when the NSCN-IM has arms possession and fighting for Naga solution, the Government of India knows of it and because of the arms there is ceasefire.

"If we are waging war we will be fighting with arms and why will there be a ceasefire. We do not need to have ceasefire if NSCN does not

have arms. But with the allegations of waging war against Government of India, they are trying to impose law of the land on us which is unacceptable to us," decried Chawang. He further added that there was no point sitting for the meeting when the ceasefire does not extend beyond Nagaland, "which agitated us and so we walked out from the meeting."

CFMG Chairman Lt. General (Retd) N.K.Singh when queried on the disappointment of NSCN-IM stated that as "far as his jurisdiction is concern it is only within Nagaland." N K Singh then said during the meeting, the issues of NSCN-IM's illegal detention camps discovered in recent months were also brought out in today's meeting, he said.

Besides Kraibo Chawang, John Anal, David Chisiite, G Tokishe Swu, Lt. Col. Ayo, Kiyezhe Sumi, Zeneituo Angami, Qhetoyi A Swu, Yangmi Muinao and Aduan Pamei represented the NSCN-IM in today's meeting.

GPRN/ NSCN (Khole and Kitovi group) GPRN/NSCN (Khole and Kitovi group) has remarked that today's meeting was 'fruitful' which was a marathon one where they were able to discuss various agendas. The outfit requested the CFMG to provide more designated camps for the outfit, urged upon them through chairman of CFMG to revise and review the contents of ceasefire ground rules. "We have placed the suggestions to the Ministry of Home Affairs last year and we have to debate in detail", said Jack Jimomi. The members of the GPRN/NSCN have raised certain points "since we found many contents very ambiguous," said Jack while adding that with no proper

definitions, the security forces even act beyond their limit taking advantage of that context.

With the NSCN-K vacating the Suruhoto camp on March 24 night, the GPRN/NSCN (KK) has said that it is within their right to claim the camp as it was allotted to them. "Therefore, we have asked the CFMG to re-allot them the Suruhoto camp. The GPRN/NSCN presently has four designated camps -Kehoi, Hokhiye camp, Sungpur and newly relocated Aopao near Aboi.

The members also raised the 'lackadaisical attitude' of the state pertaining to Intangki Reserve Forest. The State government has forcibly removed certain villages but on the other hand a village is still under Intangki Reserve Forest, said Jack Jimomi. So, while requesting the state to exercise their power judiciously, the members have also requested that no human habitats be allowed beyond Monlomok river. If the state fails to protect Intangki Reserve Forest, GPRN/NSCN will be compelled to take its own course of action, it cautioned.

Regarding the summoning of GPRN/NSCN by High Powered Committee, government of Nagaland the GPRN/NSCN leaders said that the Government has no authority because "summoning us (GPRN/NSCN is not in their power". It has also made clear that they will not participate in the meeting which is scheduled to be held at Chumukedima. The HPC, if so willing to meet us (NSCN KK), we are ready to arrange an appointment and will invite them to come to the outfit's council headquarters for discussions, they added.

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Hints of Underground Structures Found

- AJIT PATOWARY

GUWAHATI, April 3 – Everywhere on the Rangpur (Joysagar) Talatal Ghar campus in Sivasagar district, barring the Talatal Ghar itself, indications of existence of some structures below the surface have been found during the preliminary round of the Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) Survey conducted by Kanpur IIT experts on the campus of this Ahom-era archaeological monument. Talatal Ghar is an Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) conserved monument of fame.

Speaking to this correspondent, ASI Guwahati Circle Superintending Archaeologist Dr Milan Chauley said that during the preliminary round of the GPR Survey, conducted to ascertain whether there exists any underground structure of the Talatal Ghar or not, signals of existence of some solid structures starting from 1.9 metre and continuing to 4 metres below the surface were received. This is to the left side of the main

entrance of the monument campus and it is running towards the toilet complex set up by the ASI.

However, it is believed that the main structure of the Talatal Ghar spreads up to two metres below the surface, said the ASI Superintending Archaeologist.

He further informed that the duration of the GPR Survey project is one year and during this period the Kanpur IIT team will visit the Talatal Ghar and the Gargaon Kareng Ghar, another ASI conserved archaeological monument of fame in the same district, on two to three occasions to confirm the findings.

At present, the survey is undertaken in parts in the Talatal Ghar campus. For getting a comprehensive picture of the entire campus vis-à-vis the underground structures, the findings of such piecemeal surveys would be joined up. The findings would be analysed at the laboratory of Kanpur IIT and after

full analysis of the findings, a comprehensive picture regarding the underground structures would come up, added Dr Chauley.

It is worth mentioning here that popular beliefs indicate that there are underground structures below the Talatal Ghar and the Gargaon Kareng Ghar (king's palace). It is also believed by many that the Talatal Ghar and the Kareng Ghar were linked by an underground tunnel during the reign of the Ahom Swargadeos (Ahom kings were called Swargadeos).

In the face of such popular beliefs, the ASI Guwahati Circle has undertaken the GPR Survey to ascertain the genuineness of those beliefs. The ASI is taking the help of the experts of Kanpur IIT to conduct the GPR Survey. Today the experts are conducting survey at the Gargaon Kareng Ghar, added Dr Chauley.

(<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr0415/at057>)

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Muslim and Christian minorities...

Taking the shield of minority, if anybody wants to stab the status of majority, that is bad both in law and ethics. Global conscience should consider restrict the control of Islam in Arabic zone only. Europe has its exclusiveness for Europeans, America for American. French in France, Chinese in China, Germans in Germany. Therefore Israel for Jews and Hindusthan (India) for Hindus. Islamic aggression should be checked globally and we should not cross our limits to others accordingly. This may be a genuine proclamation for establishing the global peace in its positive end.

Ignoring this truth may be a suicidal measure for the minorities in India. They **should find the path of co-existence and should not demand separation any more.** Muslim and Christian minorities in Indian must change their mind to challenge majority Hindu concepts in each and every foot step.

(<http://hinduexistence.org/2015/03/24/minorities-in-indian-must-change-their-mentality-to-challenge-majority-concepts-at-random/>)

The Hindu Grand Narrative

Without the Hindu grand narrative as the anchor and foundation, it is difficult to develop a viable narrative for India as a unified country.

- Rajiv Malhotra

Most major countries have a well-defined grand narrative that projects who they are as a collective identity. This is invariably a positive self-image based on carefully selected historical facts, mixed with exaggerations and even outright falsehoods. For examples, US students learn with great pride of their founding fathers – but Thomas Jefferson’s lifelong practice as a slave owner is not mentioned. Similar narratives of pride are the staple of education and media portrayals in France, Britain, China, Japan and Russia, to name a few. Besides modern countries, the Abrahamic religions each have their own clear-cut grand narratives, each premised on a singular historical event recorded in the corresponding holy book.

Such narratives serve an important function in establishing collective identities, the ideals worth aspiring, and a broad trajectory—both for interpreting the past and guiding the future.

Unfortunately, I find Indians, especially Hindus, confused about this matter, often in denial about its significance, and even outright hostile to the very idea of having such a narrative. Many elites in Delhi have criticised my suggestion for narrative debates and discussions, calling such an activity divisive. They see India through the lens of fragments, with separate and conflicting narratives, and Hinduism as the scourge inflicting our society’s health and viability.

I have written extensively about the Hindu grand narrative as an open architecture. It is adaptive and

fluid, accommodating to fresh ideas and new members. It is based on the discoveries made by rishis in their inner laboratories through *adhyatma-vidya* (inner sciences). The Hindu inner sciences are now at the cutting edge of research in neurosciences in the West, where the Hindu sources tend to be erased as part of the frenzy for appropriation. The fields of medicine, self-improvement and management are each benefiting in major ways from the goldmine of Hindu ideas. Sanskrit is a language of the future, not a museum relic from the past.

Such a profound narrative is more like science (of the inner domain) than like a typical “religion” in the Abrahamic sense. It is free from aggressive mandates by an angry God demanding violence against non-believers. It is free from claims of exclusivity that have caused much of the world’s violence for several millennia. Rather, the open architecture is a network that hosts a multitude of smaller narratives introduced by diverse communities.

For instance, the notion of *ishta-devata* (“my deity”) is a powerful foundation that supports Hinduism’s broad spectrum of deities and paths in a harmonious manner. I can worship the ultimate reality through my *ishta-devata*, and I have no issue with someone else worshipping through their different choice of deity. However, such respect must be mutual: the other party must also respect people’s right to choose different deities and paths. This means that exclusivity claims of religions are to be rejected as dangerous devices

that invariably bring tensions, and eventually turn violent.

The open-architecture of Hinduism is an example of Hinduism’s unique and valuable contributions to the modern world. It is not only the fabric for India’s pluralism, but is also exportable as a model for harmonising various other world religions and ideologies.

For instance, neither Christianity nor Islam has the internal resources to reconcile their theological conflicts with one another, without one side defeating the other. Only through an open architecture could they ever expect to achieve the much needed harmony between them. Of course, this would necessitate reinterpreting their holy books without dependence upon exclusivity claims or hostility towards infidels.

Another vital quality of Hinduism is its openness to critiques and change. New *smritis* are to be developed for each epoch, and old ones reinterpreted and adapted to different contexts. Unlike other major religions, Hinduism has never had a conflict with scientific discoveries. It has not fossilised into fixed dogmas of the kind that enslave the members of many other faiths. Hindus have been able to get out of dilemmas and predicaments by creatively applying their own internal resources.

It is a common misunderstanding that Hinduism does not engage the external world in a positive way. It is alleged to be “world negating” and a form of escapism from the challenges

facing society. Hence, the criticism goes, Hindus neglect their poor, sick and other suffering fellow humans, because they are only interested in pursuing an escape from empirical reality. Such interpretations are false. Prominent Hindus have always been deeply concerned about alleviating suffering, and have pursued the development of society in practical ways. That is why there was so much advancement in medicine, sophisticated architecture and civil engineering, as well as in social and political thought. Artha (material prosperity), kama (legitimate desires) and dharma (engagement at various levels) are all included as parts of Hinduism. Moksha is only of the legitimate pursuits.

The name "Hindu" might be relatively modern, but the entity it represents is very ancient and has a long history of continuity. I am writing a book on how Hinduism has already impacted other major faiths profoundly, even though these appropriations tend to get disguised.

We need to introduce texts like Mahabharata, dharma-shastras, artha-shastras and raj dharma discourses into mainstream teaching and debates. Sadly, Hindu leaders have limited themselves too much in what they teach. Much of the vast repertoire of resource material is being neglected.

Without the Hindu grand narrative, it's difficult to build a viable narrative for India as a unified country. There are many divisive narratives at work in the opposite direction. My book, *Breaking India*, explains the dangerous nexus between internal fragments and certain foreign

entities, which are operating as centrifugal forces pulling India apart.

Meanwhile, the West, China and Islam each have their own powerful grand narratives that are competing for global market share. India is a prime target for each of these nexuses competing to export its own grand narrative worldwide. In fact, India is the largest soft target available to them for expansion. Because India lacks a sufficient consensus on what its grand narrative is, it is highly vulnerable to these forces. Though aspiring to be a global power, India has not invested in the development and public discourse of its core narratives. In fact, there is not enough appreciation among its elites on the importance of this issue.

While China controls the discourse on its civilisation, India has largely abandoned the fields of India Studies and Hinduism Studies to outsiders. The British Orientalists dominated such research in the colonial era. Now it is American Orientalists who have taken over this role. Indian scholars have been bought off as junior partners in this enterprise, supplying their foreign sponsors with data that fits into American theories and agendas. The most prestigious journals and university degrees on Indian civilisation are located outside India, and are under the control of Westerners. The Indians involved tend to be appointed and supervised by Westerners. Many Indian universities take great pride in importing Western models into the humanities and social sciences. This is not a recipe for becoming a superpower, but a recipe for the mental re-colonisation of India. It will produce a nation of mental coolies looking to impress others

as a way to feel legitimate.

Far too many Indian intellectuals are basically regurgitating and parroting Western thought which they have been trained to disseminate. Suffering from inferiority complexes, some Indians are uncomfortable articulating publicly what bothers them privately. Those who raise such issues and call for open debates typically get branded in Indian mainstream forums.

I see this as a crisis of Hindu leadership. Many of our leaders lack the intellectual sophistication that comes from purva-paksha (reversing the gaze) of the West, China and Islam, and from years of encounters. They thrive in cocoons with "like minded" people. They fail to get out of their comfort zones to get the required experience in the intellectual kurukshetra. As a result, there is shoddiness and lack of rigor in research on civilisations. Such leaders tend to be bombastic and dismissive of opponents, rather than studying them seriously. I find our youth searching for mentors and leaders, and becoming restless about the present state of affairs. Such youth are our hope, provided we can upgrade the caliber of our leaders.

The Hindu grand narrative must become a major topic for forums, such as conclaves, literary festivals and television discussions. It is a serious discipline and not a matter of chasing the latest sensational news item. It requires competent intellectuals and think tanks with a long-term commitment to pursue the issues professionally.

(The writer lives in Princeton, USA, and is an internationally acclaimed author. For more information you can visit www.RajivMalhotra.com)
(Organiser 22.03.2015)

Exhibition Showcases Torture by Pakistani Army During 1971 War

Agartala, Mar 24, 2015: Pictures of mounds of rotten human bodies in the villages, thousands of refugees entering into Indian bordering states in from now Bangladesh in 1971 will showcase the barbaric torture perpetrated by the Pakistani army on lakhs of people during a three-day exhibition here. The exhibition, "1971: Genocide and Torture" opened here last evening and was being organised by the 1971: Genocide and mTorture archive Trust, Bangladesh, Tripura government and Sanskriti Samannay Kendra, a cultural organisation of Tripura.

"We have organised the exhibition ahead of Bangladesh's Independence Day on March 26

in Tripura, because the people of the state had immense contribution in our freedom movement. They sheltered us in 1971 and let use their soil to launch bush war against the Pakistani armies. We cannot forget their contribution," said Muntasir Mamun, President of the Archive trust and Professor of history of Dhaka University.

Following launching of bush war against the Pakistan army after Bangabandhu Mujibur Rehman gave a clarion call for fight against Pakistani rulers, thousands of refugees entered into Tripura for shelter. Tripura accommodated 16 lakh people, which was more than its own population that time. Tripura was

also the war headquarters of the Bangladesh liberation war 1971.

Later, Indian army also joined the liberation forces and fought against Pakistani army leading to surrender of 93,000 Pakistani soldiers in Dhaka on December 16, 1971. "Pakistani Army massacred more than 30 lakh Bangladeshis and raped six lakh women during the liberation war which is an instance of barbaric acts by the Pakistani army and we are showcasing these facts to make aware about the history to the people, particularly the young generation," Mamun claimed.

(<http://www.freepressjournal.in/exhibition-showcases-torture-by-pakistani-army-during-1971-war/>)

Govt Decides to Oppose 'Dalit' Status for Converts

New Delhi, 30.03.2015: The Centre has decided to oppose the demand for 'Dalit' status for "converts" to Christianity and Islam.

According to Centre, only Hinduism recognized 'caste system' and 'untouchability' that led to the creation of a special category called Scheduled Castes.

Strongly objecting to the demand, the BJP government argues that "untouchability" was a peculiar aspect of Hindu religion that "denied to disadvantaged castes the fundamentals of human dignity, human self-respect and even some of the

attributes of human personality".

The government argues that dalit converts form part of OBCs in states and at the Centre, benefitting from job reservations and welfare schemes catering to backwards as also religious minorities, adding it would be "iniquitous" to grant "converts" the benefits targeting SCs.

Linking this "evil practice" exclusively to Hinduism, the government says mere social "backwardness" cannot put converts at par with dalits whose backwardness arises from the traditional practice of "untouchability".

The unambiguous opposition

from the BJP government is a sharp departure from the UPA regime's strategy to buy time - in 2005, entrusting a national commission to study the issue and in 2011, deciding to wait for 'socio-economic caste census' for data to commission further studies.

The Centre argues that recognizing SC among followers of Islam and Christianity would amount to violation of the basic tenets of these religions since they do not recognize the caste system.

(<http://www.indiatvnews.com/news/india/indian-government-decides-to-oppose-dalut-status-for-converts-49135.html>)

Muslim Girl Wins Gita Contest in Mumbai

A 12-year-old Muslim girl has emerged topper at a contest on the Bhagavad Gita. Mariyam Asif Siddiqui who studies in Class 6 in a school at Mira Road near Mumbai won the contest from among 4,500 students who appeared for the competition.

She received the first prize in an inter-school competition for explaining the teachings of the holy book. "We are delighted. She prepared a whole month for the contest," her father Mr. Asif told PTI.

Mariyam studies in Cosmopolitan High School at Mira Road and participated in "Shrimad Bhagavad Gita

Champion League" organised by ISKCON International Society last month with an objective to spread teachings of the holy book. Around 195 schools had participated in this competition.

Of them 105 were private and 90 were municipal schools. Mariyam said she learned from Bhagavad Gita that humanity is the biggest religion in this world.

"It was very interesting to read Bhagavad Gita as I have got a lot of information about life from it. The holy book has taught me the golden rules of life. It says that though there are many religions but humanity is the biggest religion among all," Mariyam said.

The English version of the holy book was given to students for a month for preparation purpose. A teacher was also appointed to help students understand the book in detail.

After a month, a written examination was held with 100 questions. Mr. Asif said he is happy and a proud father as his daughter has shown a keen interest in reading a holy book of another religion.

"I have told children to respect every religion as they show us the right path," he said.

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/mumbai/muslim-girl-wins-gita-contest-in-mumbai/article7065442.ece>)

Buddhism Binding Force Between India and China: Minister

Describing Buddhism as the common thread between India and China, union Tourism and Culture Minister Mahesh Sharma on Wednesday said this cultural history binds the two neighbours together.

"Buddhism is the binding force between the two countries and India values the common cultural relations with China, especially those based on Buddhist links," said Sharma.

"India is keen to take forward its relationship with China and it is in this background that India is keenly exploring the possibility of extending the facility of tourist visa on arrival to China," he added.

He made the comments when a six-member delegation

led by China's Religious Affairs Minister Wang Zuoan met him.

During the meeting, both sides agreed to work towards holding a jointly curated exhibition on Xuang Zang (Hsuan Tsang) - a Chinese Buddhist monk and scholar - in India and China.

Wang said: "The purpose of this visit is to take the cooperation between the two countries further especially in the area of Buddhist studies and exchange."

India also proposed hosting of virtual museums on Indian culture on Chinese platforms.

(http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/buddhism-binding-force-between-india-china-minister-115040101229_1.html)

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NIA booked Isak Muivah and others for ...

CFMG chairman NK Singh briefing on the minutes of the meeting held with the GPRN/NSCN said they were keen to have review the contents of ceasefire ground rules, which he said, has already been forwarded to the Ministry of Home Affairs in Delhi. One issue discussed was the prevailing situation between the Chang and Yimchunger tribes in Tuensang, he said. The other issue discussed with the group was stopping of extortion as per the ceasefire agreement, which, he said, the group has agreed not to carry out 'forcibly.' The GPRN/NSCN has also been asked to bring out points to discuss in the upcoming meeting about the ceasefire extension, which is going to be held in Delhi on April 27.

(<http://www.easternmirrornagaland.com/2015/03/nscn-im-walks-out-from-cease-fire-meeting-with-government/>)

Manipur Merger Agreement Waiting for the State's High Court verdict !

-Dr Th Suresh

4-Apr-2015 : A lot of water has drained to the Loktak lake during this period. Many of our world - famous Siroy Lily must have blossomed during this period. However, the argument continues with no end result in sight.

Though not included in its verdict, the Hon'ble Supreme court of India verbally directed your petitioner while disposing PIL 1001 of 2013 through its lawyer, Sr. Advocate Mrs. Pincky Anand (LL.M. Harvard and now Additional Solicitor General) to seek State High Court's opinion first and then to come again, if necessary. This is regarding the controversial Manipur Merger Agreement signed on 21st September 1949 at Shillong. The clause under the writ is regarding **"the Government of India also undertake to make suitable provisions for the employment of Manipuris in the various branches of the Public Services, and in every way encourage Manipuris to join them"** as contained in sub-clause (3) of Article VIII of the said Merger Agreement. This is a unique clause and did not find in any of the other 19 merger agreements signed between the erstwhile Native States and the Dominion of India. **This is Manipur specific and should be valued to the highest point.**

During one of his visit to Imphal while he was BJP President, I and my colleagues met present union Minister Nitin

Gadkari and requested him free legal help from among the pool of BJP layers for the intended PIL. He readily agreed. That this is apolitical and I did not approach the Congress Party as they are the ruling one at the centre has been emphasised in various press conferences and releases. My thanks to Gadkari and both state and central BJP units had also been highlighted on many occasions.

Accordingly, I filed another PIL (no. 7 of 2014) to our State High Court on 13/2/2014. The Hon'ble High Court was kind enough to grant hearing for the said writ petition. The 1st hearing was held on 17/2/2014. Till now, 7 such hearings took place. In every hearing, the state advocate and the central advocate took time to file their reply, but subsequently did not file their reply. On every subsequent hearing, both the counsels did not file their counter-affidavit and requested to grant further time for the same. 4 weeks, 6 weeks etc. etc. had been granted to file the counter affidavit so far by the Hon'ble court. But, unfortunately, both the counsels failed to file their counter affidavits so far.

The latest hearing took place on 21/1/2015. Both the central as well the state government counsels again sought further extension for the counter affidavit. The State High Court was again kind enough to grant a further time of 6 weeks on the latest hearing mentioned above. 6/7 hearings continued for this

PIL during the last 1 yr., but opposing counsels failed to furnish their respective counter affidavit again and again. It looks like to the petitioner that the opposing counsels do not intend to file their counter affidavits and their intention seems to be that of the delaying tactic. Hence, it is becoming burdensome for the petitioner to wait for such a long time. One year is quite a long time. A lot of water has drained to the Loktak lake during this period. Many of our world-famous Siroy Lily must have blossomed during this period. However, the argument continued with no end result in sight. I occasionally wondered how often a high court can give liberty to the opposite party for counter affidavit.

It is worth remembering that the petitioner went to India's Chief Information Commission and sought status of the said Merger Agreement. He even represented himself to the Commission during its hearing at New Delhi on 15/4/2013 to get the needed information. While the process took 1yr. i.e. May 2012 to April 2013 with final order delivered on 25/4/2013 giving direction to furnish the needed information. In spite of that, the central Govt. could not give proper reply. The Union Home Ministry gave the vague reply of "the information sought by the applicant is not available with the CPIO". That means the Home Ministry has no idea of what

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For the Mizo Concord

- Robert L Sungte

4-Apr-2015 : Opportunities must be created for the most deprived to have their say in issues affecting them.

The game: 'Building Mizo Society'. At first, at the creation of Mizoram, a large number of closely related ethnic linguistic groups came to form what is now called a 'Mizo state'. The idea of 'independent Mizoram' gave the Mizo National Front and the Mizo nationalists the necessary claim to represent the unity of the several Mizo tribes. But, the creation of Mizoram marked a certain shift away from building a united Mizo society as leaders began to focus on building power base through petty politics.

'Building Mizo Society', also called Mizonisation, soon became something to engage with, in moments of elections or moments of danger. However, in case of many Mizo tribes their relationship to the collective unity, Mizo, remained problematic, incomplete and they began to express separatist movements of varying scales and volume — the most glaring example being the Hmar Mizos' quest for their share in Mizoram political setup. For the State faced by successive 'threats' to Mizo unity, Mizonisation was gradually interpreted as the task of controlling or eliminating such movements in order to force their compliance to the authority of the majority Mizo pundits and political class. Thus, Mizonisation arrogated a coercive path rather than a

positive, affirmative emblazon.

In this process, the ethic of Mizonisation which was laboriously constructed by the founding fathers of modern Mizoram during the Mizo Union movement is lost sight of. In this process the Mizos somewhat become fragmented as the claims of 'distinctive language' became more aggressive. Successive governments at Aizawl instead of addressing this issue in an upright face-to-face dialogue pushed the issue under the carpet. Besides, any person championing the diversity that exists within the various ethnic Mizo tribes were scorn as a bad hat.

This is not to understate the difficult task of building a State with diverse Mizo tribes having specific sub-tribe interests. Several efforts have been made by the State government but many in the political circles failed to see the urgency for the need to preserve domestic harmony and diversity. This only strengthens the legitimacy of rising discontent among minority Mizo tribes like the Hmars, Reangs and others. The callous Lalthanhawla-led government in the early 1990s did what it 'must' to subvert the growth of sub-tribe movements. But the result, as far as the Hmar Mizos were concerned, proved counter-productive as it instills more anger among the victims of the coercive action.

Since the fall of the Congress government, economic development, the key to unlock

prosperity and unity, gradually replaced coercive action. Whether it is for political gimmick or not, the Mizo National Front government has realized the importance of keeping the interest of all at the fore. Its focus on providing alternative opportunities for the marginalized Mizo tribes healed many hearts though many more needs to be done. With the focus towards economic development of all in the State, the disgruntled ones are left with few reasons to go or remain in the jungles. Some insurgents have surrendered to the State government in the past few years. But, the question remains over whether there is genuine political ideology to support this strategy in the long run.

As Mizoram is good at aping western cultures, it should learn lessons from it especially with regards to inclusive nationalism to draw its political legitimacy so that Mizonisation does not leave out any Mizo tribes. So far, Mizoram politicians have spoken of a government that is friendly to those who use the 'one and only Mizo dialect'. Disgruntled smaller Mizo tribes' claims to economic, educational and political power have most often been pronounced as group's claim and given little importance. As such the process of Mizonisation while expanding does not have a solid political ideology.

The State leaders along with majority community leaders have shied away from the task

of presenting the larger scope of the word 'Mizo' to the smaller Mizo tribes. As such building a united Mizo society is shrouded in technical language. For instance, the usage of technical term 'Any Luhsai tribe' is highly intelligible as it does not reflect the contemporary social setup of the larger Mizo world. The term 'Mizo' was supposed to encompass all elements — Lushais, Hmars, Paites, Ralte, etc. As far as dealing with the smaller communities, structural issues are not confronted in the State policy or political debates held to address the growing widening gap within the Mizo society.

Chief Minister Lalthanawla so is yet to start any formal political debates on how to address the issue ever since coming back to power with a huge majority in the 2013 State Assembly election. The debate

on Mizo unity remains confined to the Mizo elites (majority who speak Duhlian dialect) leaning towards 'Oh, they' attitude on the one hand and the 'Mizo sub-tribes' often leaning towards 'cut off' fencing. Efforts to bring these two groups at a discussion table may result in formal decision taken to address the issue.

Giving development councils was once an attempt at ending militancy in the State. But in the rapidly sensitive political circle the space for more councils and districts was replaced by purely 'economic package', which is a narrow policy. Economic package will only work if matched with genuine and sustained administration that is close and dear to the people. Opportunities must be created for the most deprived to have their say in issues affecting them. Devolution of powers in the form of Panchayati Raj

system or District Council and initiating steps to change certain terms in the Indian Constitution as regards to 'Who is a Mizo?' would be a giant step towards building a harmonious Mizo society.

Thus, in the current context, if devolution of powers, efforts to re-define the term 'Mizo' and economic development provide the three pillars of building a peaceful and prosperous Mizoram there is a deficit on the first two. Directing resources towards economic development will only bear the desired result if and only when all the three are given equal importance in the scheme of things.

The writer is a journalist based in Bangalore and his views are personal and do not reflect the view of the organization he works for.

(<http://www.thesangaiexpress.com>)

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Manipur Merger Agreement Waiting for the State's...

actions the centre had taken regarding the above mentioned clause of the Merger Agreement.

I have fought back with 3 letters shooting to the CIC to take action against the erring home ministry officials. But no reply so far. This is Delhi and their attitude to this part of India. My tiresome to and fro journeys from Imphal to Delhi and back with more than 10 letters landing to CIC and subsequent engagement is being kept for a further write up.

It will be an interesting one-I promise. For the present, I don't know how long the state high court will take to give the final direction. For me, I visualise only 1 directive i.e. to implement the above clause in spite of delay spanning long years to smoothen Manipuri mindset. However, it is left to the wisdom and judgement of the Hon'ble High Court. In the event of an unlikely –ve pronouncement, the petitioner will have the liberty to go to the Supreme Court. This will also give the chance to open the controversial Merger Agreement.

So far, our media friends have not covered important cases in the high court to a wider extent. I hope they will do so in future.

The writer is ex-Director, Health Services, Govt of Manipur.

NB : This article may serve as an answer to those friends and foes alike, who asked me repeatedly the status of the PIL which was/is going on in the Supreme Court and our State High Court.

(<http://www.thesangaiexpress.com>)

The Crafty Crane and the Craftier Crab



A heron lived near a big lake, which was full of fishes and other water creatures.

The heron had grown so old, that he could not catch fishes from the lake anymore.

He became lean and weak with every passing day due to lack of food. Unable to bear the hunger anymore, he hit upon a plan.

As planned, he sat at the edge of the lake for everybody to see, and began crying.

On seeing this, a crab took pity on him and went near, "Uncle, What is the matter? Why are you crying instead to catching fishes?"

Continuing to pretend, the heron replied, "My child, I would not touch any fish anymore. I have decided to renounce all worldly matters, and vowed to undertake a fast unto death".

The crab asked, "If you have indeed renounced worldly matters, why is it that you cry?"

The heron explained, "My child, I have been in this lake from my birth. I have grown here. And it now that I have grown so old that I hear that this lake will dry up as there will be no rains for the next twelve years".

The crab was surprised to hear this, "Uncle, please tell me if it is true. Please tell me where you have heard such thing."

The heron replied, "I have heard the news from a wise astrologer that there will be no rains for the next twelve years. You see, there is already not much water in the lake. And very

soon, due to lack of rains, the lake will dry up completely very soon."

The crab was taken aback by the news of what is to befall on them, and went to tell this to the other water creatures. On hearing this piece of news, everybody started to panic.

They believed the heron, as he was not trying to catch any fish at all. So, they met the heron to seek advice, "Please guide us to save us from this disaster"

The heron said, "There is indeed a lake not far from here. It is full of water, and beautifully covered with lotus flowers. There is so much water in the lake, that it would not dry even if it did not rain for twenty four years. I can take you there, if you can ride on my back."

He had already gained their confidence. So, they gathered around him and requested to carry them one at a time to the other lake and save them.

The wicked heron had succeeded in his plan. Every day, he would carry on of them on his back pretending to take them to the other lake.

After flying a little away from the lake, he would smash them against a rock and eat them up. He would then return after some time to the lake and relate false messages how they are happy in the other lake.

This happened for many days, when the crab said to the heron, "Uncle, you take others to the lake but it is me who is your first friend. Please take me to the other lake to save my life."

The heron was happy to hear this. He thought to himself, "Having a fish everyday has become monotonous. It is good that I will get to eat a crab today, for a change."

Having thus decided, the heron started carrying the crab to the same rock. The crab looked down from above and saw the heap of bones and

skeletons. At once, the crab understood what the heron was up to.

He remained calm, and said to the heron, "Uncle, the lake seems far and I am quite heavy. You must be getting tired, let us stop for some rest".

The heron was confident that there was no way the crab can escape from him in the sky. The heron replied, "There is no lake for real. This trip is for my own meal. As I do every day, I will smash you against a rock and make a meal out of you."

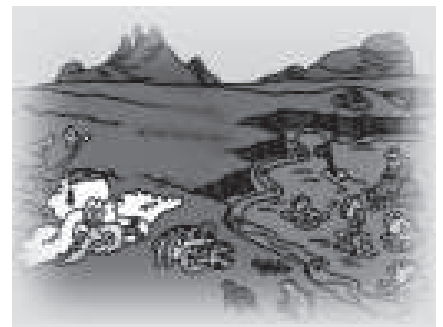
When the heron confessed the truth, the crab got hold of the heron's neck with its strong claws, and strangled him to death.

The crab laughed at himself that he had saved himself and the other water creatures from the trick played by the heron. He dragged the heron back to the lake.

The other water creatures in the lake were surprised to see him back. They became curious, and asked all sort of questions.

The crab laughed and replied, "We were being made fools! The heron was an imposter and what he told about the lake drying up was all false. He was taking one of us every day for his meal in a rock not far from here."

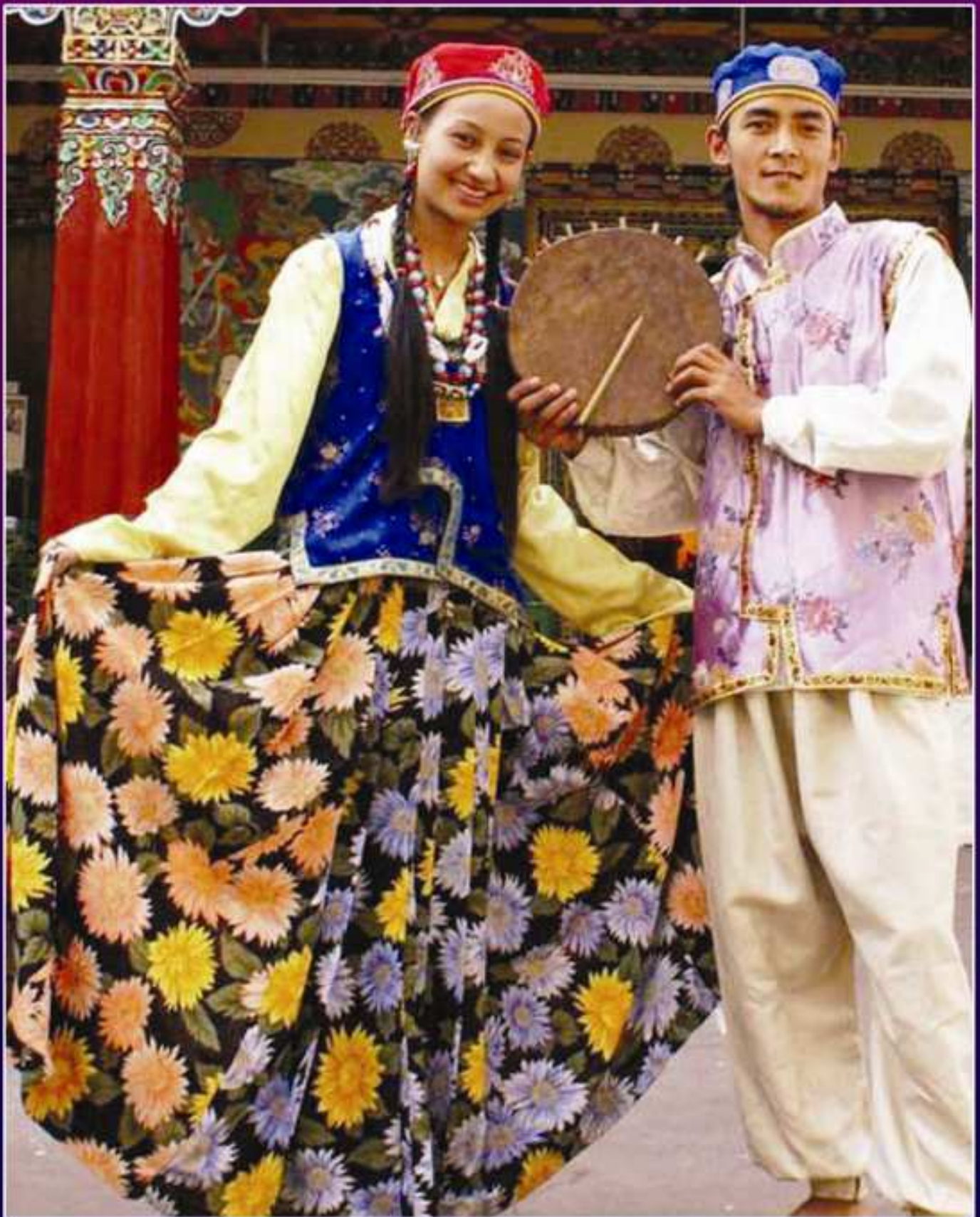
He proudly said, "I understood what he was up to, and have killed the trickster. There is no need to worry, for we are safe in this lake. It is not going to dry up at all."



The wise indeed say:

When things go wrong, use your wit to overcome the situation.

THE TAMANGS OF SIKKIM





Me and My Father

When I was 4 Yrs Old : My father is THE BEST

When I was 6 Yrs Old : My father seems to know everyone

When I was 10 Yrs Old : My father is excellent but he is short tempered

When I was 12 Yrs Old : My father was nice when I was little.

When I was 14 Yrs Old : My father started being too sensitive.

When I was 16 Yrs Old : My father can't keep up with modern time.

When I was 18 Yrs Old : My father is getting less tolerant as the days pass by

When I was 20 Yrs Old : It is too hard to forgive my father, how could my Mum stand him all these years

When I was 25 Yrs Old : My father seems to be objecting to everything I do

When I was 30 Yrs Old : It ' s very difficult to be in agreement with my father, I wonder if my Grandfather was troubled by my father when he was a youth

When I was 40 Yrs Old : My father brought me up with a lot of discipline, I must do the same

When I was 45 Yrs Old : I am puzzled, how did my father manage to raise all of us

When I was 50 Yrs Old : It ' s rather difficult to control my kids, how much did my father suffer for the sake of upbringing and protecting us

When I was 55 Yrs Old: My father was far looking and had Wide plans for us, he was gentle and outstanding.

When I became 60 Yrs Old: My father is THE BEST

Note that it took 56 Yrs to complete the cycle and return to the starting point 'My father is THE BEST'!

Let's be good to our parents before it ' s too late and pray to God that our own children will treat us even better than the way we treated our parents ...