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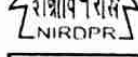
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## VOL.XXII NO.2 **January - June 2022**

### Para-Diplomacy and Constituent Diplomacy

*Abhishek Jain, Recipient of the Daksha Fellowship for Technology, Law and Policy, New Delhi*

The paper is an attempt to ascertain the differences between two types of diplomacy at play and to trace through their features, the different attributes, rationale and implications of diplomacy that the governments and sub-state actors resort to, namely Para-diplomacy and Constituent-diplomacy. The paper will start with a basic introduction to the concept of diplomacy and its significance in foreign policy making. It will move towards the substantive questions in order to aim for greater clarity of the topic. The paper will lay out the reasoning and delve into controversial yet politically and economically significant issues. Thereafter, nuanced arguments will be offered for nations practicing the two types of diplomacies and the interpretations of such diplomacy along with the conditions necessitating constituent or para-diplomacy to be in practice. The paper will analyse through certain case studies and examples from the United States, United Kingdom, Brazil, Germany, India and China to provide a comprehensive and comparative outlook of the two types of diplomacy opted by various countries and the results that have followed. The paper will also delve on the question as to whether the two types of diplomacies are relevant to countries beyond the western democracies and whether such types of diplomacy have a future.

### India-West Asia Relations

*Dr. Santhosh Mathew, Associate Professor, Centre for South Asian Studies, School of International Studies & Social Sciences, Pondicherry Central University, Puducherry.*

This article tries to understand and evaluate the importance of West Asia for India. It looks deeply at the various multifaceted reasons that make West Asia connected and vital to India. The West Asian countries have the closest ties with India regarding economic, political and cultural linkages. The change of attitudes and policies is also closely evaluated, along with observing the impact on the Indo-Pak strained relation. India-West Asia relation has been upscale in recent years after the turbulent few years. India is trying to give more importance to the extended neighbour. It tries to frame policies and tripartite foreign policy to maintain an excellent healthy relationship with every West Asia member. Multiple reasons are from the sizeable Indian diaspora in the gulf region, large per cent remittances to the high dependency on the GCC countries for oil and energy resources to the rising trade relations to the defence partner. All these factors force India to maintain a cordial relationship with West Asia.

### The Emerging Hegemony of China and its Impact on International Relations

**Dr. Jacob John, Retd. Professor of Biochemistry and Ph.D Fellow in School of International Relations & Politics, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, Kerala.**

The quest for competition, domination, expansionism and conflicts or confrontation has been existing from prehistoric period and the present global community is forced to conclude that the emergence of unipolarity with globalisation may be the zenithal point of human intellectualism. The current state of international politics indicate that the bipolarity may not take man again to a state of multipolarity but to one of permanent bipolarity with one possessing technological supremacy and the other one competing to dethrone the existing technological hegemony of US. That US could close the second world war with nuclear devices and that this is the best way to win a war several developed countries and the developing countries speeded up the attempts to fabricate the nuclear weapons. Thus UK, erstwhile USSR, France, China, Israel and India could succeed in making nuclear arms and missile systems fitted with nuclear war head. However, immediately after the second world war the process of decolonisation was speeded up and with this the spirit of nationalism was hastened. As more and more nations acquired sophisticated defence equipment the world was transformed into one of tripolarity with the first world framed upon the principles of capitalism, the second world carved out of the values of socialism and the third world moulded on the principles of idealism with an antifirst world and prosecond world approach. On account of the tripolarity tensions between nations sprang up leading to conflicts and military confrontations. However, UN contributed substantially to bring peace to the warring nations.

### Developmental Gap and Statehood Formation: Debatable Issues

**Prof. K. Vidyasagar Reddy, Department of Political Science, Central University of Mizoram, Aizawl.**

Debates over developmental notions assume significance when regional disparities exist in various states in India. Different regions of states cannot look alike, geographically and development wise, so similar pattern of development is unanticipated. Nor is it feasible. Based on the local resources and needs that the developmental strategies have to be formulated and implemented. Whenever the state and governments assume the responsibility of balancing the interests of different regions, both advanced and backward, then there cannot be scope for regional inequality. But in the name of democratic governance, usually the numerically dominant regions would seek better development than the others and even at the cost of the latter. Obviously, the interests of both regions would become conflicting at times. In a way, it is about developmental gap that leads to the rise of statehood movements as it happened in more than a dozen states in India. While four such movements got materialised into the formation of new states in the last two decades, many more are anxious about their fate. Of all the factors that contributed for the rise of statehood movements, development gap as part of intra-state differences had become the main bone of contention and that paved the way for organising the mass movements in some states. This paper is aimed at debating the issues both developmental and otherwise that had precipitated the statehood movements in the country. And, this paper is also about debating the developmental strategies that would help the new states to achieve the promised development, as was assured when statehood movements were underway.

### The Intersection of Identity and Politics: A Study of Refugees in India

**Monika Tiwari, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology & Political Science, Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra, Uttar Pradesh and Dr. Vinod Khobragade, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology & Political Science, Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra, Uttar Pradesh.**

The world is witnessing a wide range of wars, causing increase in displacements globally. Each year, the number of refugees is rising rapidly, making it a serious socio-political and humanitarian crisis. In this lieu of the events, India has been hosting refugees since independence. India, over the years, has faced more refugees than ever due to instability and socio-political persecutions in neighboring countries, such as; Bangladesh, Tibet, Afghanistan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka. Yet, India has not developed any national policy or law for dealing with the refugee influx. The absence of law has made stand of government more situational and political rather uniform and consistent, which has increased uncertainty over the refugee rights and refoulement under customary International law. The recent Citizenship Amendment Bill has also increased the fault lines in dealing with the refugee crisis. The paper is an attempt to assess the current situation of refugee influx in India and to analyze the stand of Indian government over the years towards the refugee crisis. It suggests for framing National Refugee policy to address the gravity of the matter. The world is sustained by humanity. At present, the world is going through humanistic catastrophe where governments and politics, are required to reassess their stands over the refugees' plight. In recent years, the issue of refugees have been used as a nationalist agenda on podiums but not taken on forums to have substantive discussions. India, being a neighbor of the two major displaced

countries i.e. Afghanistan and Myanmar, is affected by the regional disturbances. When India locates itself as major stakeholder in South Asian region and Asian politics at large, it is cardinal for India not to escape its responsibilities. Even if India does not sign the 1951 convention on Refugee safeguards, it is the need of India's foreign as well as the domestic policy makers to manage the refugee influx in its territory. The urgency of India's own refugee policy is underlined by the mounting refugee camps in India as temporary residence of refugees with uncertain future. Moreover, the refugee crises must not be dealt in accordance with the political taste of the state. It must be taken as an integral component of countries future and image in the world politics. It is an issue which requires much needed attention of the government, failing to which, it can put our national interest at stake.

### Changing Complexion of Indian Bureaucracy – An Empirical Study

*Dr. Ch. C. Prasad, Assistant Director (Retired), Dr.B.R.ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad, Telangana and T. Vijaya Gouri, Research Scholar, Department of English, Krishna University, Machilipatnam, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh.*

Bureaucracy in spite of its so many shortcomings plays a vital role in the policy process of governance. It is being a professional and skilled body of officials has a major roles such as suggestive, analytical and informative to implement policies. In the present paper an attempt has been made to analyse the role of bureaucracy in policy process in perspective at below the district level and suggests required skills and capabilities to cope up with dynamic internal and external environment in which it exist. For the purpose of study a brief survey was undertaken among the District Collector's of two Telugu speaking states viz. Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. It is observed that an emotionally indifferent or neutral bureaucracy will fail to deliver goods as policy process is a multi actor-centric. It is also noticed that partnerships between civil society organisations and government agencies have contributed to greater effectiveness in the implementation of welfare and development programmes at grass root level. It is highlighted that bureaucrats who possess technical, ethical and leadership competencies will be well served to citizens. Innovativeness and citizen-caring virtues must be needed to cope up with changing environment at the grass-root level. Further, it is highlighted that in the present scenario, bureaucrats and political representatives have to be played multifaceted roles to provide good governance at local level and to strengthen the grass-root democracy. In the present networking era of governance, bureaucrats approach must be shift from its conservative and stereotypical, traditional role to flexibility and openness approaches with accountability, responsiveness roles to service citizen better.

### Glimpses of Pre-school Education in Delhi: Reflections and Responses.

*Dr. Savita Kaushal, Associate Professor, Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE), Faculty of Education, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.*

Preschool education is widely recognized as a crucial component of a child's learning, leading to favorable outcomes in primary school. Children between the ages of three and six are in their formative years of development, learning to acclimatize to new environments away from home. Every early childhood education programme provides a loving, caring, and stimulating environment for children, allowing them to develop the required skills and competencies for studying the 3Rs (reading, writing, and arithmetic) in meaningful ways in formal institutions. Preschool education enhances school readiness by easing a child's transition from a more unstructured home environment to a more formal and structured school one. Preschool education is important for increasing primary school enrollment and retention, as well as supporting girls' education, particularly in terms of childcare, health, and nutrition. Various research studies have shown that the ECE programme has a good impact on children. These benefits have been observed in terms of enhanced health, personality development, learning new concepts, language acquisition, academic achievement, and a lowering of primary school dropout rate among children who have participated in an ECE programme. This article is based on field research conducted in selected government-run and private preschools in Delhi. According to the study, there is a strong necessity of major excellence on quality grounds in both the preschools belonging to private and public sectors.

### State Politics: BJP's Thumping Victory in Assam

*Dr. Phulmoni Das, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Government Model College, Deithor, Karbi Anglong, Assam and Robin Hazarika, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Kamargaon College, Golaghat, Assam.*

Electoral Politics of Assam has been witnessing different dimensions since its independence. It was the Congress which dominated the electoral politics of late British and the early post-independence period. Till 1996 the party had suffered defeat only in 1978 and 1985 assembly elections. But the electoral politics of the state since 1985 became a turning

to private and public sectors.

## State Politics: BJP's Thumping Victory in Assam

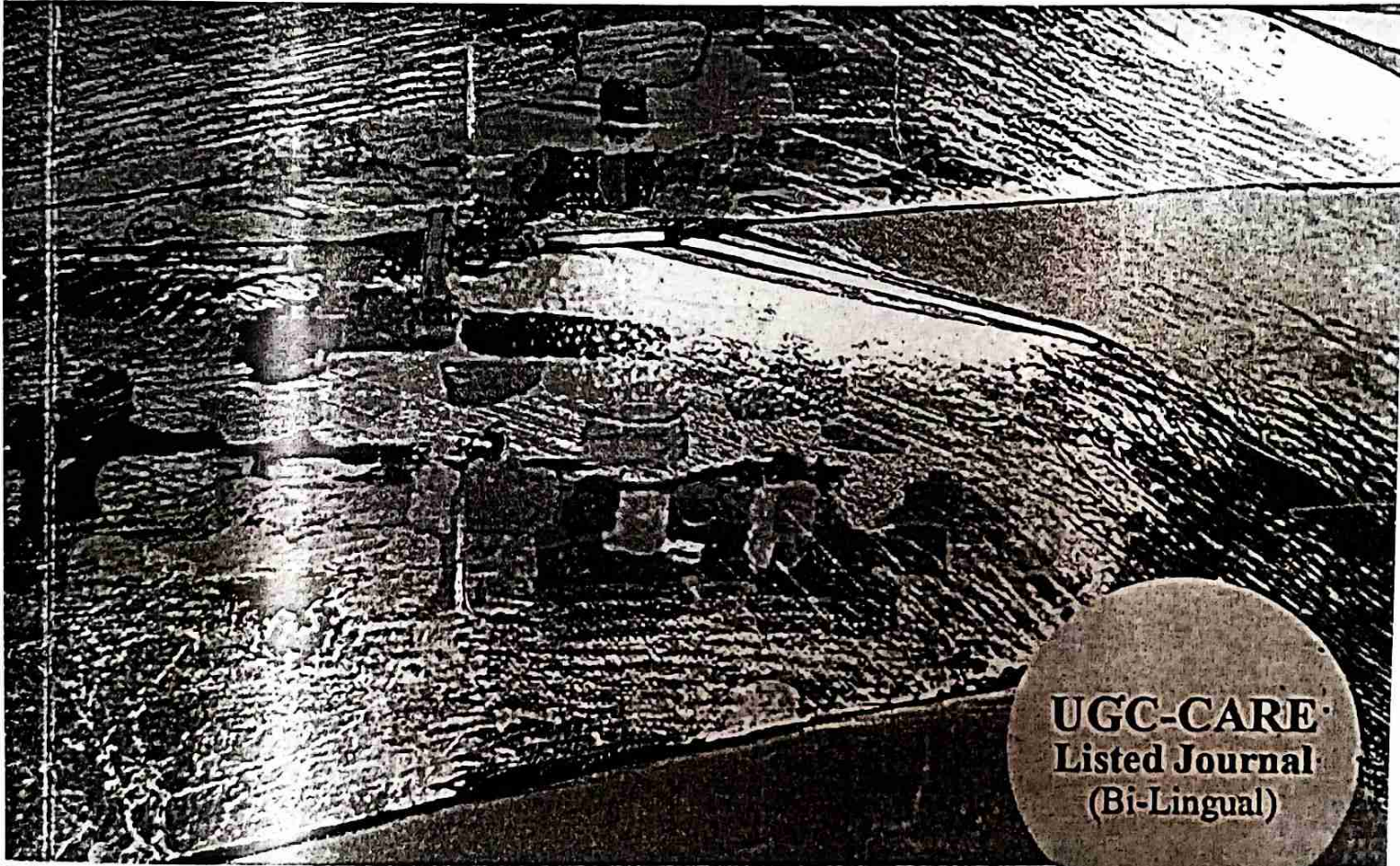
*Dr. Phulmoni Das, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Government Model College, Deithor, Karbi Anglong, Assam and Robin Hazarika, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Kamargaon College, Golaghat, Assam.*

Electoral Politics of Assam has been witnessing different dimensions since its independence. It was the Congress which dominated the electoral politics of late British and the early post-independence period. Till 1996 the party had suffered defeat only in 1978 and 1985 assembly elections. But the electoral politics of the state since 1985 became a turning point in Assam politics. It was the period which seen the debacle of congress and it also coincided with the emergence of community based smaller parties often called regional parties. The one party dominant system was giving way to a multi-party system in which political parties of various ethnic groups or smaller cultural communities began to play a significant role. This period also showed the emergence of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and which has also gradually playing a significant electoral force in the politics of the state. It is in this context the rise of BJP in the politics of the state can be contextualised. Therefore the present paper is an attempt to understand the BJP's return to power and the paper also tries to highlight the major grounds on which BJP's success in the

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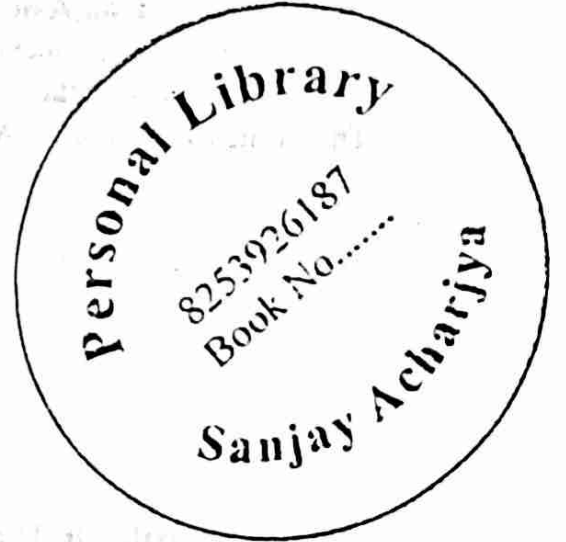
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সঞ্জয় আচাৰ্য

গৱেষক, অসমীয়া বিভাগ, নৰ্থ লখিমপুৰ কলেজ (স্বা.)

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### সংক্ষিপ্তসৰ

শিশুৰ মন কল্পনাপ্ৰিত। প্ৰাণচঞ্চল, কল্পনাৰ মায়াজালত আবদ্ধ থাকি শিশুসকলে ভাল পায়। সেয়ে তেওঁলোকক ওমলোৱা, খেলা ইত্যাদি কামত সততে অতিপ্ৰাকৃত উপাদানৰ প্ৰয়োজন বিদ্যমান। সাধাৰণতে শিশুৰ মন-মগজুক স্পৰ্শ কৰিব পৰাকৈ বিভিন্ন বিষয়সমূহ মনোমুগ্ধ আৰু বসন্তীৰ্ণ ভাষাত প্ৰকাশ কৰা সাহিত্যই হৈছে শিশু সাহিত্য। য'ত তেওঁলোকৰ মানসিক উৎকৰ্ষ সাধন, অনুসন্ধিৎসু ভাব ইত্যাদি জাগ্ৰত কৰাত গুৰুত্ব দিয়া হয়। অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ক্ষেত্ৰখনত শিশুক বিশেষভাৱে প্ৰাধান্য দি সাহিত্য চৰ্চা কৰা ব্যক্তিজন হৈছে গগণ চন্দ্ৰ অধিকাৰী। অধিকাৰীয়ে শিশু সাহিত্যত ব্যংগচেতনা, শিশু মনস্তত্ত্বক বিশেষভাৱে গুৰুত্ব দি সাহিত্য চৰ্চা কৰিছিল। এই শিশু মনস্তত্ত্ব অৰ্থাৎ শিশু মনোবিজ্ঞান হৈছে মনোবিজ্ঞানৰ এটা শাখা; যি প্ৰধানতঃ শিশুৰ মানসিক অৱস্থা আৰু আচৰণৰ সম্পৰ্কে বিশ্লেষণ আগবঢ়ায়। অধিকাৰীয়ে কবিতাৰ মাজেৰে অতি চাতুৰ্য আৰু মানোগ্ৰাহীৰূপত শিশুৰ মানসিক অৱস্থাৰ বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে। ঠিক একেদৰে তেওঁ ব্যংগ কবিতাৰ মাজেৰে শিশু সমাজৰ সমস্যাবোৰৰ সৈতে সাধাৰণভাৱে পৰিচয় কৰিবাত সিদ্ধহস্ত। তাকো হাতৰ প্ৰয়োগেৰে। সেয়ে আলোচ্য গৱেষণা প্ৰবন্ধটোত গগণ চন্দ্ৰ অধিকাৰীৰ শিশু সাহিত্যত প্ৰকাশিত ব্যংগ আৰু শিশু মনস্তত্ত্ব সম্পৰ্কে আলোচনা কৰা হৈছে।

সংলাপ : গগণ চন্দ্ৰ অধিকাৰী, শিশু সাহিত্য, ব্যংগ, শিশু মনস্তত্ত্ব।

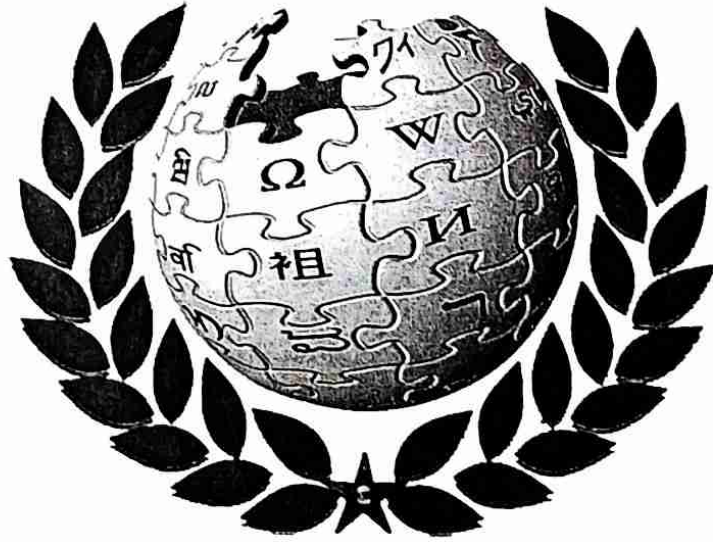
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# कला सरोवर

## KALA SAROVAR

( भारतीय कला एवं संस्कृती की विशिष्ट शोध पत्रिका )



## EXPLORING THE MISING CULTURE THROUGH FOLK SONGS

Dr. Ranju Morang

Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Kamargaon College

**ABSTRACT**

The Mising oral tradition seems to be particularly abundant in the domain of songs and folklore. This tribe of present day Assam particularly after their migration from the hills have shared relations with the people of the plains on various levels. The Misings inhabit from the same genealogy as the Adis or the Apatani and the hill Miris of Arunachal Pradesh. It is quite interesting that the tribe has efficiently nurtured their culture through the evergreen varied folk songs. The religious traditions to day to life of men and women can be discerned from the songs, sung in either festivals or even when fishing or ploughing. Through the folk songs, the socio-cultural life of the tribe can be deeply perceived.

**KEYWORDS:** Oral tradition, Assam, migration, culture, folk songs.

**INTRODUCTION**

The Misings, well known in earlier times as the 'Miri' and as declared as such in the constitution of India are the present contemporary Mising ethnic community. Ethnically, the Misings inhabit from the same genealogy as the Adis or the Apatani and the hill Miris of Arunachal Pradesh. They boldly call themselves the 'Tani' which in Mising language means a man bestowed with abundance from the Gods and the Goddesses. Both the tribes embrace semblance in their language, traditions and culture.

The origin of this tribe is in the mountain ridges situated amidst the Subansiri and the Siang districts of Arunachal Pradesh. The Mising Oral tradition evince that they migrated towards the plains of Assam in exploration of a peaceful and better economic life comparatively in early times. The traditional beliefs and the customs of the tribe are quite distinctive as in other parts of the world. The Donyi-Polo religion is followed by the tribe. Donyi is the Mother Sun and Polo is the Father Moon. Although in the 17th centuries and even after, the tribe has been influenced by the vaishnavite doctrines of Assam consequent to the practising of Vaishnava beliefs and practices, their indigenous beliefs, rituals and customs still predominate their social life. The Misings are mostly cultivators. Interestingly, there are ceremonies and festivals associated with agriculture such as 'Ali-A:ye-Ligang' and 'Po:rag'.

Similar to the other Indian family structure, the Misings tribe is a patriarchal system. Social village organisations such as the 'Murong' is the most significant and useful traditional socio-cultural institution of the Mising people. It is comparable with the dormitory system existing in other tribes and is one of the main elements of tribal life. The marriage system of the tribe is interesting as it consists of three types of marriage. First, *Daro Midang* which is arranged by the elders of the family members. Second is the *Dugla La:nam* in which the marriage is conducted by elopement with the consent of the parents of both of the groom and bride. The third is now not being practised, which is *Kumna sola la:nam* and it is without the consent of the family members. The traditional death rituals of the tribe's religion is the belief about the soul of the dead and human immortality. Their beliefs connote that the moment the soul leaves the body, death occurs to it according to their beliefs. A ritual called 'Urom Apin' is performed for the departed soul within a month and finally the last rites is as 'Dodgang' which can be performed whenever comfortable even after five years or so.

The folk songs have been evolving throughout the lives of the people which is the only way to experience the origin and the day-to-day lives of the tribe. This colourful tribe embraces innumerable folk songs reflecting their old culture and tradition whether it is *Le:ke Nitom* or *Anu Ni:tom*. *Le:ke Ni:tom* are the traditional songs which have been tracing its existence since the beginning of mankind. The *Anu Ni:tom* are the modern songs which mostly portray the linkage between rural and urban relations, sometimes love but more often disputes. The *Le:ke Ni:tom* are divided into few such as *A:bang* (Religious Songs), *Oi Ni:tom* (Songs of Love), *Kabaan* (Songs of Lamentation), *Ko:ni:naam* (Lullabies) and *Moman* (Rhymes). The *A:bang* folk songs are the religious poetical compositions of praise and worship to the Gods and the Goddesses which highlights the importance of the supernatural beings in the Mising community. The *Oi ni:toms* are popular among the non-Misings which are similar to the *Bihu* and *Bon geets* of Assam. The *Kabaans* are the songs of lamenting one's sadness for separation, death or any distancing from the partner. The *Ko:ni:naam* are the songs that are sung to lull the children to sleep. The *Moman* or rhymes are prevalent which are to build moral values among children.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Writings on the missing culture are not common. It's rare compare to writings on other cultures. Professor Tabu Ram Taid, a well-known linguist and an educationist of the Mising tribe has compiled a book titled, "Mising Folk Tales" (2016) under the broad area of Indian Literature in Oral Languages which he translated into English and is published by the Sahitya Academy.

Dr. J. J. Kuli, MBBS and well known writer for his huge contribution to the literature of the Mising community of Assam. The folk culture of the community is explained with detailed information in his book 'Folk literature of the Misings'.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

The present paper is based on exploring the Mising culture through their folk songs. Some of the major objectives are-

- I) To understand the meaning and the influence of folk songs in the Mising Culture.
- II) To analyse the presence of day to day lifestyle of the Mising tribe.
- III) To highlight the importance of the decaying culture are traditions in the Mising folk songs.

### METHODOLOGY

The research methodology culminates in the representation of culture in the folk songs of the Mising tribe of Assam. Its importance can be traced from the presence of cultural tradition since the ancient times in the same folk songs sung during festivals or even while fishing and ploughing. Data for the present paper has been taken from primary sources. Alongside, the analysis and interpretations of the researcher are evident to validate the researcher's standpoint.

### DISCUSSION

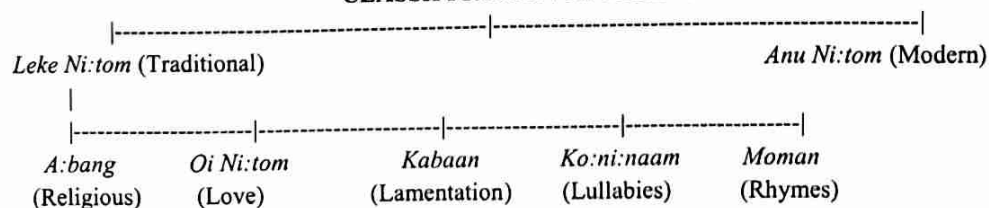
The Mising tribe of Assam also known as the Miris embodies a flake of the greater Mongoloid family inhabiting the hills of north-eastern India. Sir George Grierson has categorised these families into (a) primitive long headed, (b) less primitive short headed and (c) Tibeto-Mongoloids.

Interestingly, the Puranas and the Tantras formulated persistent references to the people having Mongoloid countenance. The literary works of the medieval period, evidently those of the period of the Vaishnavites and the Ahom 'Buranjis' or the records make persistent presence of the Misings in relations with the Vaishnava saints and the *Ahom Swargadeos*<sup>1</sup>. Apart from this, the contemporary Persian written accounts include sources to the regions of the northeastern regions, mentioning about the Misings, fragmently. It is remarkable how the British have collected and documented with detailed records of the tribes of the northeast. However, these have been the primary sources to construct the history of the tribe of recent times, although lacking in sources to form the frame of the early history of the Mising tribe of Assam.

It is quite evident that dance and music are an integral part of the tribe. The age-old traditions have been retained from one generation to the other. The dances are accompanied by appropriate songs and music. The tribe has some musical instruments made of bamboo in unique structures. The musical instruments include *dumdum*, *marbang*, *lc:nong*, *pempa*, *yoksa* and many more.

The folk songs are classified in two categories, such as

#### CLASSIFICATION OF MISING FOLK SONGS



<sup>1</sup> Etymologically means the Gods of Heaven. The Ahom kings are referred to as Swargadeo.

The Mising tribe comprise folk songs reflecting their old culture and tradition whether it is *Le:ke Nitom* or *Anu Ni:tom*. *Le:ke Ni:tom* are traditional songs that have existed since the beginning of mankind. The *Anu Ni:tom* are the new songs which mostly portray the linkage between rural and urban relations, sometimes love but more often disputes.

### 1. *A:bang* (Religious songs)

These religious songs conquer an elevated portion in the lives of the tribe. It is a verse of hymn of praise and worship to the Gods and the Goddesses. These songs narrate not only the songs of the supernatural beings but also the different modes and ways of life of the tribe. These songs had been traditionally carried on by the *Mibus*<sup>2</sup>.

Without a *Mibu*, religious occasions are impossible. Some festivals like *Po:rag* can never be performed without a *Mibu*. During this festival, the *Mibu* with the presence of the young girls and boys, sings the *A:bangs* throughout the night to appeal to the Gods and Goddesses. It is believed that the *Mibu* gains supernatural powers from the supernatural beings. The origin of the Mising priest has no determinative tracing. These songs have been transmitted orally from the past centuries amongst the *Mibus*. The *A:bangs* have got a direct and positive relation with the *Mibus* in their origin and popularity. Thereafter, the *Mibus* are considered as the religious guide of the community and hence these *A:bangs* are called the religious songs.

One such *A:bang* to please and seek forgiveness to the Goddess of rain invoking to shower with rain whenever there is a drought. Here is an instance,

*Dclo Pcdong Na:nc*  
*Na:nc mumpongc rayi lendobong*  
*Kcyum yidum bottalang*  
*Kero pcdong na:nc lang*  
*Ginnyi dodicm simin sukai*

The people sing this song so the rain Goddess would eventually rain and remove the dry drought.

### 2. *Oi Ni:tom* (Love songs)

The *Oi ni:toms* are popular among the non-Misings which are similar to the *Bihu* and *Bon geets* of Assam. These songs are sung in all seasons. It is sung both when one is working alone in the paddy fields and also during collective feasts and festivals such as *Ali-aye-ligang* and *Po:rag*. Sometimes they even sing while fishing in the rivers or harvesting in the fields. It throws light on social life customs, domestic relations and occupations as well. In the festive occasions, the youths decorated themselves with their traditional woven clothes and danced following the tunes of the *Oi ni:toms* in accompaniment of the musical instruments.

*Bittognc asidcm billad oiya mola:mang*  
*Agom lu:man koncdcm Nowc lulap mola:mang*  
*Si:ri oiya siya:dc era li oi moyadc*  
*Agom luma: luma:pc ngokkc asin dodubong*

This exemplification of the *kabaan* reflects the cultural importance in the tribe. The inclusion of these folksongs is quite absorbing. Here, the man sings for his lady love to let the river of emotions and love gush out like a river as she is shy and innocent.

### 3. *Kabaan* (Songs of lamentation)

The *Kabaans* are the songs of lamenting one's sadness for separation, death or any distancing from the partner. They focus on the misfortune or the sorrowful events such as the separation or death of a loved one and so on. These songs are sung when alone in the fields harvesting or fishing in the river.

<sup>2</sup> Mising traditional priest

*Kinsng ya:mvo nokke asindcm*  
*Oi ngo scmmcpc singagoi ma:ya:pc*  
*Kinseg po:yamclo nokke mcnamdcm*  
*Oi ngo scmmcpc siango ma:ya:pc*  
*Mc:nam kalasin okopc sebikan*  
*Bvrdug ni:tomcm okkcmpe mobikan*  
*Si:ko Ka:ma:nc lambc bclampe*  
*Oi:ngom gvmo:dunng longc lo:tu:pc*

Through this *Kabaan*, like always the singer solitarily sings out her pain and agony all by herself, consoling herself to fade away the decaying and sweet memories in the field or beside the river, away from the rest of the people.

#### 4. *Ko:ni:naam* (Lullabies)

*Ko:ni:naam* are the songs that are sung to lull the children to sleep. The themes of the lullabies are varied.

Sometimes mothers make it a point to praise the forefathers to instil in the child an affection for such kith and kin particularly the maternal uncle with his ancestral wealth and influence. The babies are usually cheerfully comforted by singing lullabies. However, these lullabies embrace some significant characteristics. Agriculture is the mainstay of the Mising people which forces them to work hard in the field irrespective of gender and age during the season of agricultural production. The women of this tribe work both at home and in fields. When the mother leaves for work at the field the young tender aged girls are given charge to look after the little children. These young babysitters are called *Ncbvng* and they sing most of the lullabies.

The culture through one of the lullabies is as follows,

*Oiyawa kappo:yo: pkkauc dc:ma:da*  
*Dc:dv din pv:pvcma kablangka*

The above lullaby is a song for the crying baby who is stopped to cry stating that the little doves are sleeping and because of the baby's wail the mother dove will fly away leaving the babies alone.

#### 5. *Moman* (Rhymes)

The *Moman* or rhymes are also prevalent in the Mising society. A considerable number of rhymes are orally transmitted amongst the village children from centuries past. These songs are sung in groups. These songs reflect their happiness. Some songs are of competitive nature between two groups-boys and girls. These songs are sung and danced in open fields and sometimes in premises. Hence, these songs can also be called *Lotta Moman So:man*.

One such interesting Rhyme on 'Good Encouragement' has the same as the title. It goes on as,

*"Narc:n asi tv:langka,*  
*aro agom lulanga.*  
*Narc:n galug gclangka,*  
*Abvng agom tadlangka.*  
*Narc:p vrpv: sulangka,*  
*Ponam mcnggabbonamlangka."*

The Rhymes on good encouragement advises the children to drink clean water, always speak the truth, wear clean clothes, listen to the advice of the elders and bath and study everyday. When a child recites these Rhymes, he or she is definitely encouraged by the positive values and life skills.

#### CONCLUSION

The folk songs of the Mising 'tribe' are the representation of the community throughout the lives of the people which is the only way to witness the origin and the day-to-day lives of the tribe. The presence of the innumerable folk songs reflecting their old culture and tradition whether it is *Le:ke Nitom* or *Anu Ni:tom* are extremely cultural and

significant. Most significantly, these five types of folk songs are the most unique identity of the people of the Mising community. The varied folk songs exemplify various cultural and traditional structures. It is interesting to witness that it signifies the presence of religious beliefs in the lives of the tribe as well as the socio-cultural aspects and also the day to day lifestyle from childhood to old age.

Significantly, the people of the enriching Mising tribe hold a legacy of rich and varied folk songs with the orchestration of their flamboyant culture. It is evident in the Mising folk songs that the endorsements are about plants, birds, family, love, jealousy, cruelty and loneliness. Some contain a combination of myth and legends. Moreover, nature is the most elevated epitome of their imagination with the blend of their culture. Nonetheless the varied folk songs of religion, love, lamentation, lullabies and rhymes embody their tradition, religious beliefs and social customs.

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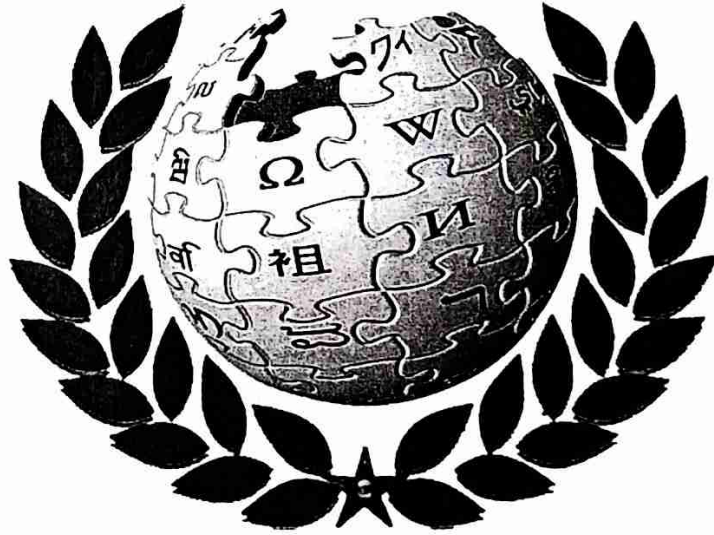
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**Kala Sarovar Quarterly Journal Approved by UGC Care List**

# कला सरोवर

## KALA SAROVAR

( भारतीय कला एवं संस्कृती की विशिष्ट शोध पत्रिका )



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**THE MISING WOMEN AND THEIR CULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP****Dr. Ranju Morang**

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**ABSTRACT**

The Misings, well known in earlier times as the 'Miri' and as declared as such in the constitution of India are the present contemporary Mising ethnic community of Assam. The Misings are originally and naturally a peace loving community of Assam and are inclined to abide by the laws for smooth running of the society. The origin and the lifestyle of the Mising tribe are being woven through the oral tradition. The Mising of Assam makes a substantial contribution to Assam's weaving culture, enhancing the artistic talent of the women's population in the village. The basic objective of this article is to present the cultural entrepreneurship of this tribe.

**KEYWORDS: Handloom, weaving, Mising, women, culture, entrepreneurs.**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Misings, well known in earlier times as the 'Miri' and as declared as such in the constitution of India are the present contemporary Mising ethnic community. Ethnically, the Misings inhabit from the same genealogy as the Adis or the Apatani and the hill Miris of Arunachal Pradesh. They boldly call themselves the 'Tani' which in Mising language means a man bestowed with abundance from the Gods and the Goddesses. Both the tribes embrace semblance in their language, traditions and culture.

The Misings are an ethnic group inhabiting the districts of Dhemaji, North Lakhimpur, Sonitpur, Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Sibsagar, Jorhat and Golaghat of Assam. The total population is more than 8 lakhs in Assam. They are one of the largest tribal groups in North east India. Interestingly, the women of this community are playing a significant role in socio-economic life by playing a vital role in the income and in the family management, by taking part in agriculture, fishing and also by weaving clothes, rearing cattle, preparing local rice beer, collecting firewood and many more. They are engaged in the small businesses although witnessing many challenges.

Cultural entrepreneurship promotes a country's heritage, resources and creative talents through products, services and experiences. It shapes the country's cultural economy, enables economic growth, innovation and sociocultural development. The Mising Women are continually growing and proving their success in cultural entrepreneurship development even though facing huge challenges. This paper draws attention to the importance of developing the cultural entrepreneurship of the indigenous Mising Women and their economic life.

**OBJECTIVES**

- (1) To analyse the role of the Mising Women in their economy based on their socio-economic lifestyle,
- (2) To discuss the causes and factors responsible for the role of their cultural entrepreneurship,
- (3) To highlight the challenges faced by the Mising Women in cultural Entrepreneurship

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research methodology culminates in the representation of Mising Women as cultural entrepreneurs amidst the growing challenges. This study is based on the primary sources of information which is collected from the villages of Golaghat and Dhemaji districts. Alongside, the analysis and interpretations of the researcher are evident to validate the researcher's standpoint.

**DISCUSSION**

The Mising tribe of Assam is composed of many small sub tribes, but there is no difference in their religious beliefs, customs and practices. The process of religious contact with the people of the plains, however, made the Misings a part of the regional culture of the plains of Assam as well as the great tradition of Hinduism. In the recent past, a considerable number of the Misings have been converted into the Bhagavatiya or Mahapurusha sects of Hinduism. Nevertheless, most of them would tactfully preserve their own ancient customs, religious traditions and credences as it is and have been continuing till today in the plain of Assam as it was practised earlier while inhabited in the Siang valley of the present Arunachal Pradesh. In fact, the present religion followed by the Misings can be safely described as a mixture of their traditional religious practices with Vaishnavism. More recently, Christianity has pervaded various Mising areas of Assam, particularly in the world famous Majuli island, giving a new dimension to their religious and socio economic life.

Folklore of the Misings suggests that they were originally a hill tribe domiciled in the mountain ranges situated amidst the Subansiri and the Siang districts of Arunachal Pradesh. The Mising Oral tradition evince that they

migrated towards the plains of Assam in exploration of a peaceful and better economic life comparatively in early times. The traditional beliefs and the customs of the tribe are quite distinctive as in other parts of the world. The Donyi-Polo religion is followed by the tribe. Donyi is the Mother Sun and Polo is the Father Moon. Although in the 17th centuries and even after, the tribe has been influenced by the vaishnavite doctrines of Assam consequent to the practising of Vaishnava beliefs and practices, their indigenous beliefs, rituals and customs still predominate their social life. The Misings are mostly cultivators. Interestingly, there are ceremonies and festivals associated with agriculture such as 'Ali-A:ye-Ligang' and 'Po:rag'.

The women of the Mising community have been primarily contributing a vital role in the field of cultural entrepreneurship. For a long time, this community has been developing women entrepreneurs on a small scale. They have been indulging with the selling of traditional clothes, baskets, hats, even preparing rice beer, smoked pork and many more. The contribution and role of the Mising Women in the vast field of cultural entrepreneurship reflects in their socio-economic life and status in the society, few of them are as discussed below,

Firstly, the women in general entirely contribute to the income of the family by the rearing of poultry specially fowls and pigs. They sell these poultry products in the form of meat, egg or even as a whole product. However, these are sold at a very low price in the village level, very rarely in the town areas. The Animal Husbandry and Veterinary department has taken few major steps to enrich and strengthen this type of economic growth for the development of the community and the state.

Secondly, the women are mainly engaged in the agricultural works, however alongside they also participate in the household industries, some even work individually, such as weaving, sericulture, local forestry, organic farming and traditional handicrafts. It is very intriguing that the traditional textiles of Mising weaves through sericulture are very high at market value. Sericulture is a major cottage industry in Assam, comprising of both Mulberry and Non-Mulberry silk worm culture and production of its natural silk. Women themselves rear the silk cocoons, cut the threads and weave in their traditional looms. For the male, the women weave khadi jackets, eri scarfs, shirts and apparels in any desired forms. For Women, traditional 'ege', the lower garment and 'gasor' the upper garment, 'ribi', an upper garment specifically in red colour with green and black narrow stripes, 'gaseng' with the same design like ribi but with broader stripes. The 'gero', usually cream colour, worn around the chest to the knees is also woven. Another interesting Mising apparel is the 'gadu', a traditional Mising blanket. Nevertheless, the women also rear silkworms for primary and selling purpose. The silkworms are reared and made into yarns themselves. Then they produce muga and *paat* ege gasor for selling purpose. Cotton and eri are also reared with great care and enthusiasm.

Furthermore, they are also engaged in the selling of traditional food in small stalls to restaurants. The most common is the famous 'Apong', a type of rice beer locally made by women. Apong is produced by fermenting cooked rice with *Épob* or starter cakes, which in turn is prepared from a mixture of rice flour and many plant ingredients. Preparation of starter cakes and extraction of Apong is particularly prepared by women. This has a high demand as it is complimented by all that the Apong of the Mising community has a better taste than any other in Assam. Along with the beer, the smoked pork is also sold at a reasonable price. These small incomes add to the ascendancy of the Mising Women cultural entrepreneurship.

#### THE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY THE MISING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

It is unavoidable that the Mising Women Entrepreneurs have been growing in their income spheres through small businesses. However, it is observed that they will be able to achieve more if the natural challenges would not be isolating their possible talents and hardwork. Few of the challenges encountered by the Mising Women Entrepreneurs are as follows,

- (1) Economic barriers : The earning source of the women is comparatively very low to accomplish the needs of a joint family. The large family size decreases the value of the income. For instance, in a family of one woman, the members may consist of old parents and small children more than five. Although, the building of their home every year because of the devastations caused by the flood annually washes off their income and raises huge challenges.
- (2) Social barriers: The Mising community has different culture as compared to the communities in the town areas of Assam. They are shy and simple which stops them from moving out of their comfortable spaces, ultimately leading to the decrease in their entrepreneurship.
- (3) Regional barriers: The Mising villages are mostly situated on the banks and near the rivers. The travelling expenses and time shortens their business space. Also, the type of customers, the low and medium earners abide them from growing their income to a higher extent.

- (4) Educational barriers: Education is a great term for the Mising community. They are hardly educated especially in the interior areas. At times they are often cheated by the customers in the price values and the quality of their products. The lack of education also makes them more unadjustable and unsociable.
- (5) Communication barriers: The Misings mostly are learned to communicate only in their own Mising language. Their improper speaking of the Assamese language builds a barrier in communicating with the non Mising customers. Most of the time the Mising Women Entrepreneurs fail to justify their efforts to the non Mising customers which builds a bridge towards monotony among the customers.

### **CONCLUSION**

It is extremely unavoidable that there is a positive contribution of the sector for cultural entrepreneurship among the Mising Women. The determination and hard work of their traditional skills had been a great way to their tremendous success. The barriers related to economy, society, region, Education and communication If the present challenges are encountered and are inclined in overcoming them then there is a huge way in welcoming light in the field of cultural entrepreneurship among the Mising Women of Assam.

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