

THE TAGINS



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N. SARKAR

THE TAGINS :

A Monographic Study

BY N. SARKAR

The Tagins are the inhabitants of the Upper Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh. They have an unique Culture, Customs and traditions which they manifested through various means.

The Author had conducted intensive field study among the people and prepared the book with elaborate description on every aspects of their life and culture and presented in the following five chapters.

Chapter - 1 - Introduction

Chapter - 2 - Domestic life,

Chapter - 3 - Social life,

Chapter - 4 - Political life,

Chapter - 5 - Religion.

The book being the first Anthropological study among them, is worth for general studies and reference for the Administrator and Academicians.

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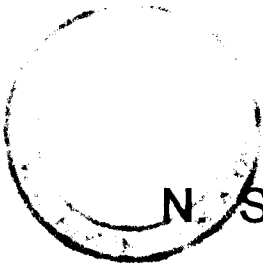
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THE TAGINS



N. Sarkar

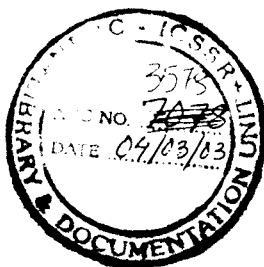
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THE TAGINS :

CHAPTER ONE :

INTRODUCTION

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE :

The Upper Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh is the home of the Tagins. Their main concentration is in the administrative circles of Giba, Taliha, Siyum, Nacho and Limeking. The Nas live to the north of the area inhabited by the Tagins, the Nishis to their west, the Gallongs to their south and the Ramos, Boris and Bokars to their east. The area is a rugged mountainous tract with fast flowing rivers and rivulets cutting through the hills and making deep gorges. The main river passing through the Tagin area is the Subansisiri from which the two districts of Upper Subansiri and Lower Subansiri take their names. The Tagins call it Sengit. The Tagin villages are located on the slopes of the hills on the banks of Subansiri and its many tributaries namely Sipi, Menge, Sichi, Silin, Sechin, Noh, Soh, Sirin, Sebor, Mide, Meni, Mane, Kobu, Kobit, Kojin, Kojok and Gehin. The lower slopes of the hills are covered with evergreen rain forests, the upper slopes are used by the Tagins for their habitation and cultivation and the hill-tops are again covered with forests. The monsoon is quite active in this area with the average monthly rainfall being as high as about 200 mm. The downpour is heaviest from June to September.

MIGRATION :

The Tagins believe that like the Boris, Bokars and Ramos, they migrated from the north to Mechuka area in West Siang District in search of cultivable land. They settled there and lived sometime at two places known to them as Gembu Kakaksiriu and Gine Gedunglingne. These places are believed to be somewhere in the present Bori area. They continued their migration South-

wards in search of better cultivable land. Some of them believe that ultimately they reached the southern plains. But their ancestors did not settle there. They changed the direction of their migration and came uphill by the banks of Subansiri till they reached their present habitant where their ancestors finally decided to settle. It is believed by some that these pioneers, who founded their first settlements in this region, were Ato Ramdu, Ato Pumbu, Ato Giumswing and others of their generation. Ato. (pronounced in some places as Atu) is the classificatory Kinship term for grandfather and all the male forbears above him. It is generally prefixed before the name of forbear when he is referred to. Ato Ramdu is an ancestor of the Moshu clan belonging to the sixteenth generation before the present generation in their genealogical chart. According to the genealogical chart of the Iru, Ibia and Ium clans, Ato Pumbu is their ancestor belonging to the eighteenth generation before the present generation. Similarly, Ato Giumshing is an ancestor of the Shingium, Shingdak, Shingnik and Singkom clans belonging to the eighteenth generation before the present generation. So it can be surmised that the first Tagin Settlements in this area came up about eighteen generations ago i.e. about 500 years ago considering the generation gap to be 25 to 30 years.

The means of communication between the villages are the foot-tracks. When the track faces a steep climb or fall a log or bamboo with notches, made for foot-holds, is placed there to help in negotiating it. Small stream is bridged by felling a tree across it. Before the advent of the administration in this area, they used to cross the rivers in winter with the help of bamboo-rafts. Bamboo-rafts were of no avail in summer as then rivers would be full with the rains and the current would be too strong to be negotiated with it. So they used to cross the rivers in summer with the help of a type of cane suspension bridge which was a sort of ropeway. They would get a rope of one or more canes stretched from tree to tree across the river. Round this cable was a loop of cane having another smaller loop of cane tied with it. The traveller would place the cane loop round his chest with the smaller loop round his neck and raise himself in a horizontal suspended condition holding the cable with his hands and feet

and thus balancing his trunk and head he would pull himself, head first, to the other side by working with his hands and feet. Such a perilous crossing was too frightening for many particularly women, children and the aged and so they had a sort of sitting-platform suspended from the cable for their carriage. They cut a branch of a tree just below the joints from where it had bifurcated. The two smaller branches were also cut leaving about a metre intact. This cut portion of the branch was suspended at its joint from the cable. They securely tied a piece of wood, say 'A' for convenience of identification, with the free cut ends of the two smaller branches and thus making it the horizontal lower arm of a sort of triangular structure. They securely tied another piece of wood, say it 'B', from near the joints of the cut branch to the middle of 'A'. A long cane was tied with 'B' and its free end was taken to the other bank. The traveller would sit on 'A' holding 'B' firmly and someone from the other bank would haul him along with his sitting platform to the other bank pulling the cane tied to 'B'. Bamboo rafts are still in use in some places. The suspension bridges have now been replaced with better and more convenient suspension bridges constructed and maintained by the engineering department of the local administration. In some of these newer bridges only iron cables have been used while in others both iron cables and canes have been used. On the two banks are erected strongly built wooden ladders to get in and out of the bridges. On the lower two or three cables are lain wooden slivers to make the pathway. These bridges swing heavily while crossing making the travellers feel insecure as they find it difficult to keep erect due to the swing. So one or two cables are there on each side of the bridge for holding with the hands to keep balance. On the top of the bridge is again one or two cables and the whole structure is encompassed at intervals within huge cane rings to make it a compact structure. A paved road now connects the Tagin area first with Daporijo, the district Head quarter and then with Silapather in the Dhemaji district of Assam greatly facilitating the movement of goods and passengers by wheeled traffic.

POPALATION & ORIGIN :

According to the 1991 census total population of Arunachal

Pradesh is 864558 of which 550351 are Scheduled Tribes. The break-up of tribal population is not available according to the 1991 census. However, the work-out population of the Tagins is 28860.

There is almost no references about the Tagins in the old records pertaining to this area. The first reference about the possibility of existence of a tribe called Tagin is found in the following paragraph of the Assam Census report of 1881.

'The origin and meaning of the name Daphla are not known. As pronounced in Lakhimpur, it would be written Dompbila. They call themselves Neso or Nising. The Miris they call Bodo and the Abors Tagin, but the last word seems to be merely the name of a tribe common to the Abors and Daphlas.'

Some information on the cultural life of this tribe was made available for the first time by J.N. Choudhury in his book titled Arunachal Panorama (Shillong, 1973). More light on their cultural life was thrown in the District Gazetteers published later.

According to a Tagin legend, Tongni or Tani popular abbreviation of Abo-Taine, was their ancestor. Abo-Tani, like all the other members of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, had his origin from **Shiching** i.e. earth. As the earth gave birth to man, so when a Tagin dies, they bury the dead body in the earth. All the informants agree that between **Shiching** and Tongni few more generations passed but opinions differ on the exact number of generations between the two and also on the names of the ancestors at each of these generations. According to one version, Shiching gave birth to Chingcher, Chingcher to Chartung and Chartung to Tagni. Chingcher and Chartung were said to be endowed with poor intellect. Nobody knows anything about their wives. Tani was said to have faced difficulty in getting a wife as then the only women in this world was his sister named Yapi. So Tani took several plants and animals one after another as his wives. He also married Yanong, daughter of the Sun-god called Doini. He had two sons from her. But this marriage broke down. Yanong went back to her father's place and the sons turned into spirits. Tani at last put forward his marriage proposed to Yapi

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1. Choudhury, J.N., Arunachal through the Ages (Shillong 1982) P-127.
 2. Dutta Choudhury, s(Ed) Arunachal District Gazetteers, Subansisir District (Shillong, 1981)

which she turned down as one cannot marry his own brother. Tani approached the deity called Abang Doring and told him his predicament. Abang Doring advised him to take a test in which Yapi would sit with her legs stretched in front and he would place an egg below her lower abdomen. In case the egg burst with a bang, he could marry her but not otherwise. In the test the egg burst with a bang and so they married and the Tagins descended from this couple.

In the Sipi valley, this legend has a slightly different version. When Tani did not have any human child from his various marriages with several plants and animals and also with the daughter of Doini, he became very dejected. The only prospects to have a human child was to marry a woman but the only woman in this world then was his own sister. So he went to Doring Chijing, as Abang Doring is known among the Tagins of Sipi Valley, to enquire whether in his peculiar predicament it would be permissible to marry his own sister. Doring Chijing said that when his sister would be asleep in the night, he should put an egg in the fire of the hearth in their house. The egg would burst with a bang. In case his sister would get frightened at that and rushed to his bed in panic, he could marry her. Tani did as instructed. His sister rushed to his bed in panic. So Tani married her and their descendants are the Tagins.

PHYSICAL FEATURES :

They have medium stature, light brown complexion, moderately built body, hair black and straight to slight wavy, round to oval face, flat nose, epicanthic fold slight among men and more pronounced among women, light eyebrows and scanty hair on body.

TRADE & BARTER SYSTEM :

Before the establishment of normal administration in the area inhabited by the Tagins, trade with the Nishis was very limited. The Tagins of Siyum area used to occasionally get mithun (*Bos frontalis*) from them by bartering articles of Tibetan manufacture like swords called rokse, woollen blankets and long coats, beads

3. The yeast-cake made from rice and used for fermentation in the preparation of beer.

and tongueless prayer-bells called **hiri**. The swords used to cost in rupee value from about Rs. 100/- to Rs. 300/- and woollen blankets and coats from about Rs. 100/- to Rs. 500/-. A full-grown mithun used to be priced in rupee value about Rs. 1700/- and so articles worth that amount were given in exchange.

The people of the lower Tagin area i.e. Taliha and Sipi areas used to barter pigs, goats, dogs and **opop**³ with the Gallongs for salt, Assamese **endi** silk, machete and beads known to them as **tamintaya**. The Gallongs used to get salt, **endi** silk, machete and beads from the plains of Assam. As the Gallongs did not allow them to cross their area on way to the plains of Assam, they had no option but to get these articles from them. One big pig or goat or two small pigs or goats used to fetch one piece of **endi** silk or one machete. They used to give one big dog for about eight kilograms of salt and a small one for half of it.

The people of the upper Tagin area i.e. Siyum, Nacho and Limeking areas used to get from the Nas of Taksing area, the Ramos, Boris and Bokars of Mechuka area and the people of some villages in the extreme southern region of Tibet such Tibetan goods as swords, woollen coats and blankets, salt, beads, butter, **dingshe**⁴, **koji**⁵, and **daching**⁶ by bartering musk, Assamese **endi** silk, dried skins, chilli, rice, maize, millet, cane, **tamen**⁷ and slaves. There was no fixed system of valuation of the above articles. The articles were sold the person who offered more articles in exchange. So the following exchange rates are more of an approximation.

Goods of Tibetan origin

Approximate value in kind or in terms of rupee.

4. Woman's waist belt studded with brass discs.

5. It is a metal wristlet with incised designs and kept as valuable heirloom. If necessity demands, these are bartered for one to three mithuns each according to quality. The possession of **Koji** adds to the economic status of the family and it may form part of the dowry of a rich man's daughter.

6. Metal saucepan with designs worked on its body. It is kept as a valuable heirloom and may be bartered for one to three mithuns according to quality. A rich man may give it as part of his daughter's dowry.

7. A local creeper from which red dye is extracted.

Woollen Coat	Rs. 100/- to Rs. 500/- according to quality.
Woollen Blanket	Rs. 50/- to Rs. 300/- according to quality.
Sword	Rs. 50/-, Rs. 100/- Rs. 200/- & Rs. 300/- for four different types.
10 tampiri ⁸ salt	10 tampiri rice or 1 human-load of tamen.
Koji	1 human-load of tamen.
Dingshe	1 human-load of rice, maize or millet.
Daching	Rs. 1,000/-
1 bottle butter	Rs. 5/-
Bead	Rs. 2/- to Rs. 50/- for different varieties.
Goods sold by the Tagins	Approximate value in kind or in terms of rupee.
Endi silk of good quality	- Rs. 500/-
Endi silk of inferior quality	- Rs. 300/-
Musk of good quality	- Rs. 500/-
Musk of inferior quality	- Rs. 200/-
1 human-load of chilli	- 10 tampiri salt
1 human-load of rice, millet of maize	- 1 human-load of salt
1 human-load of cane	- 7 tampiri salt
1 human-load of tamen	- 10 tampiri salt
1 tiger skin	- Rs. 300/- to Rs. 500/- according to size.
1 bear skin	- 10 tampiri salt or Rs. 80/-.
1 deer skin	- 1 tampiri salt
1. Sher ⁹ skin	- 5 tampiri salt
1 Shibi ¹⁰ skin	- 3 tampiri salt
1 monkey skin of a red	

8. It is a wooden bowl, used by the Tibetans, which holds about one kilogram of salt.

9. A wild animal.

10. A wild animal

- species – 2 tampiri salt
- 1 monkey skin of a white species – 1 tampiri salt
- 1 adult slave (man or woman) – 20 woollen bankets of good quality.
- 1 aged or young slave (man or woman) – 10 Woollen blankets of good quality.

The people of lower Tagin area used to barter with those of upper Tagin area **endi** silk, machete, tamintaya beads, musk animal skins, **iup**¹¹ and agricultural products like rice and chilli for Tibetan goods like woollen coats and blankets, swords, salt,, beads, **dingshe**, **koji** and **jongrong** necklace.

Approximate barter rates between the upper and lower Tagins.

- 1 **dingshe** or sword of good quality – 1 musk-pod and one other skin
- 1 **dingshe** or sword of inferior quality – 1 other skin
- 1 woollen blanket of good quality – 1 musk-pod or 3 pieces of **endi** silk or one big other skin or 10 skins of a small sized deer species with reddish fur or 10 big or 20 small monkey skins or 2 human-loads of rice or 3 big or 6 small pigs or 10 human-loads of **tamen**.
- 10 Kilograms of salt – 1 human-load of **tamen** or 20 kilograms of rice.
- 2 Kilograms of salt – 4 kilograms of rice or 1 human-load of cane.
- 1 Jongrong necklace – 1 small pig

11..Young bamboo shoots are cut into minute pieces which are preserved to be taken later with cooked vegetables.

12. Tibetan beads are of four varieties namely **sengter**, **sengbop**, **sengkuk** and **sengmin**. **Sengter** is the best and costliest followed by **sengbop**, **sengkuk** and **sengmin** in that order.

1 sengter ¹²	- 1 big pig
1 Sengbop	- 1 small pig or 2 to 3 fowls
1 Sengkok	- 1 small big fowl
1 necklace of sengmin reaching the belly	- 1 big pig
1 necklace of sengmin reaching the chest	- 1 small pig

They purchase **among** or **namu** from the Ramos by paying in cash of about Rs. 150/- or in kind of 10 monkey skins, 2 human-loads of rice, maize or chilli, one big or two small pigs. It is a long rectangular garment woven from yak's hair by the womenflok of the Ramos. It covers the chest and the back with the head passing through a slit in the centre.

Trade was considered a good subsidiary vocation by which many industrious persons could improve their economic status. Each village jealously guarded its trade zons and routes and would not allow others to use it so that they could purchase from one community and sell the purchased goods at a good profit to the members of another community or even to fellow Tagins having no direct access to the producers. The trade routes to the Nas, Romos Boris, Bokars and to some villages in the extreme southern region of Tibet passed over high nountains and so were open only during summer as in winter these remained snow-bound. They used to go on the trading expeditions in batches as the law and order situation was bad due to internecine inter-clan feuds. There was no trading class as such. It is the rich people who mostly used to engage themselves in trade. They had the wherewithal to arrange the bridewealth for more than one wife. They could depend on their wives and slaves to look after the cultivation. So they were comparatively free from the agricultural activities and hence had more leisure to fruitfully engage their attention to trade. They also enjoyed better security in their trading expeditions through the institution of ceremonial friendship called **ajen**. Such friendships were established with the performance of appropriate ritual and animal sacrifices and exchange of valuable gifts between two persons of different villages and clans and sometimes even of different ethnic groups. The establishment of such friendship was a costly affair and hence only the rich could

effort to establish it. In the past when inter-clan feuds were so rampant it was always a risky affair to move out of one's safe confines i.e. clan-area. But this risk could be covered to a great extent through the network of ceremonial friendship as one could count on the protection of his ceremonial friend while visiting his area. So under the aegis of ceremonial friendship, those engaged in trade used to flourish.

With the stoppage of trans-border trade with Tibet, the import of goods of Tibetan origin has dwindled. Some of these articles are said to be occasionally imported from Kalimpong.

The trade links are now firmly established with the trading centres in the plains of Assam with the establishment of road connection between the Tagin area and the Assam plains via Daporijo, the district headquarters. Some Tagins have taken to trading as full-time occupation and set up shops at Daporijo and in other growing administrative centres in Tagin area as Taliha, siyum and Nacho. The shops are well stocked with rice, sugar, salt, tea leaves, mustard oil, soap, potato, onion, aluminium utensils shoes, mill-made cloth, lanterns, torch batteries, tinned food, cigarette, matches, biscuits, machete, beads etc., brought from the plains of Assam to meet the growing local demands of these articles. The co-operative shops are also playing a big role in supplying them with the various articles of their need. One has to make cash purchases in these trading establishments. Barter is still sometimes resorted to in the economic transactions in the villages. Cattle have assumed importance in their socio-economic transactions. Previously they did not rear cattle themselves. Recently some of them have started rearing cattle. They meet their demand of cattle by importing from the plains of Assam or from the Gallongs of the Daporijo area. If they have enough cash with them, they go down to Assam, purchase cattle and drive them up to the hills. But with small amounts it is not considered profitable to go down all the way to Assam but to purchase from the Gallongs at Daporijo area. The price of a cattle varies from about Rs. 70/- to Rs. 200/- according to size in Daporijo area.

Games & Recreation :

Pajuk is a dance performed in association with the wedding ceremony while **Romdu** is performed in the **nilak-romlajuka**

ceremony observed after killing an enemy or a tiger. With the stoppage of internecine feuds and the general restoration of peace due to the establishment of regular administration, the ceremony and the associated Romdu dance has ceased to be performed any more except for killing a tiger. According to their mythology man and tiger have descended from the common ancestor called Abotani. Abotani's son was Nibing who had two sons called Binge and Bingni. When the two brothers used to go on hunting, Binge would eat the meat raw. Bingni would admonish him for this act of his and would tell him that as human being they should not eat raw but cooked in fire. Binge said that as he liked to eat raw meat, he would better go and live in the jungle. He told Bingni that if his whereabouts were disclosed, he would be killed. He transformed himself into a tiger and left for the jungle. Bingni could not keep the news about the whereabouts of Binge a secret and disclosed it to others. So from that time tigers, descendants of Binge, started killing men, the descendants of Bingni.

The date on which the bride, accompanied by a party of her relatives and friends, is to arrive at her husband's place is intimated in advance to the groom's side. From the outskirts of the groom's village the party approaches the groom's house with its male members shouting in unison 'hoi! hoi!', brandishing their swords and machetes in the air and flexing the knees after each step. They move in no particular formation. The adult men of the groom's village form a group and advance towards the approaching bride's party shouting in unison 'hoi! hoi!', brandishing their swords and machetes in the air and flexing the knees after each step. When the two parties meet there takes place some jostling between the members of the two groups. The meeting generally takes place near the groom's house. Two persons, one from each party, perform a dance while others shout in unison, 'hoi! hoi!'. The two dancers are armed with sword or bow and arrow. It may also happen that one dancer is armed with a sword while the other with a bow and arrow. They utter no sound but dance with sharp flexing of knees followed by low leaps. One dancer advances with menacingly offensive movements while the other retreats, and then the roles are reversed. They dance like this for some time. In case they are armed with bow and arrow,

they may shoot arrow in the ground in front. After dancing like this for some time, both of them advance at the same time with offensive movements and jostle each other when others intervene and stop them jostling. Another pair, one from each party, may repeat the dance. The dance in group is called **Pajukhoipelajuka** and the dance in pair as **Pajukrilajoka**. The two together is called **Pajuk**.

In the night when the guests take rest beside the hearth of the groom's house after taking their supper, the adult men of the groom's village stand around the hearth locking each other's arm at the elbow, shout in unison 'hoa! hoa!', take a step of the right foot to the right, bring the left foot beside the right one and flex the knees sharply. They dance repeating this sequence of movements. When the movement is brisk, the dancers seem to be taking short leaps to the right. This dance is called **Deppeshowlajuka** and is performed for merriment.

When an expeditionary party was successful in killing an enemy or a member of the expeditionary party was killed by persons of the attacked village, the slayer's party used to perform the **nilak-romlajuka** ceremony so that the spirit, into which the soul of the killed person had turned, could not do any harm to the slayer. When the expeditionary party reached the outskirts of their village, they slowly moved forward in no particular formation flexing the knees after each step, brandishing the sword in the air and shouting in unison long-drawn-out 'hum! hum!' and occasionally 'humho!' When they arrived near the house of the person, who killed the enemy and so the hero, they danced for some time with the same movement but standing. The hero entered his house by climbing a post and not the staircase as they believed that if he would use the staircase, the spirit of the slain enemy might follow him and enter the house and harm the members of the household. Other persons deposited their weapons at a place below the house of the hero and left for their houses. The priest performed the associated rite of the **nilak-romlajuka** ceremony on the following day inside the house of the hero when the adult men, arrayed in war-dress, performed the same dance as done the previous day beside the house of the hero. The war-dress consisted of a cane helmet with or without a back flap of

mithun hide or a hat of mithuns hide, a black fibre cloak on the back, a hide armour around the chest, a hide armlet on the right arm, long sword, spear and bow and arrow. The armed men, followed by the priest, went to the village stream dancing with the same movement as before. The hero made a hand like structure with **richie** creeper and placed in the bed of the stream securely covered with stone. The priest would recite incantation asking the spirit of the slain enemy to stay there permanently and not to try to come to the hero's house and harm him and his family members. They returned to the village dancing with the same movement.

When a tiger is killed, the same ceremony is performed by depositing the skull and bones of the tiger in the stream so that the spirit of the tiger could not harm the hunter. It is believed that if the hand-like structure representing the slain enemy or the skull and bones of the tiger are kept in the bed of a stream, the spirit of the slain enemy or tiger would be able to hear no other sound but that of the running water of the stream and so would remain there for ever.

By the time children reach the age of about seven they start helping their families in performing such household chores as fetching water, collecting firewood, feeding pigs, looking after their younger brother and sisters and so on. The boys pass their leisure by playing various games. In one game they imitate their elders in tethering a mithun and bring it to the village. One boy plays the mithun. The other boys tie him at one of his wrists with cane or bamboo strip and drag him from place to place. Occasionally the boy, playing the mithun, refuses to move when the other boys beat him though lightly on his back and drag him exactly as the elders do in real life.

In the spring i.e. March and April, they play war-game with a sort of a sporting toy gun. They hold a bamboo tube with the left hand, put the flower-bud of **inchi** plant in one opening of the tube and with the right hand thrust a stick inside when the flower-bud is shot from the other opening of the tube with a bang. They play shooting at each other.

Archery is very popular. The boys with bows and pointed bamboo arrows move about in groups and keep on shooting at

a target which is generally a tree. If they happen to see a bird, they stalk it and try to shoot it with an arrow.

They also play the game of mimic warfare. Two boys take part at a time. They hold the sword or machete with its blunt edge forward and play the game in which one takes the offensive while the other keeps on defending himself. They always keep a safe distance between them to avoid being really hurt. They may take sticks in lieu of swords.

The boys sometimes play imitating the fight between two bull-mithuns. Two boys take part at a time. They bend their body forward and push each other by the head and shoulders. They even occasionally make the sound 'Fohsh! Fohsh!' as the mithuns actually do at the time of fighting. The mithuns fight with the mouth facing down and the horns poised forward in fighting posture. They push each other by the forehead and horns. The mithun, whose head and horns are finally lifted from the fighting position by the manoeuvres of the other one, is the loser, while the other one is the winner. Similarly the boy, who could manage to lift the opponent's head, is the winner.

In wrestling two boys move in a circle watching for an opportune moment to catch hold of the opponent and throw him on the ground. The one, who can manage to pin his opponent down to the ground, is the winner.

They have another game called **bobo** which is rarely played now a days. The branches of big tree are cut and one end of a long cane is tied to the top of the trunk of this tree. The cane is drawn tight and its other end is secured to the base of another tree or a peg in the ground at some distance. The boys, one by one, hold the cane with both hands and working with the hands they try to reach the tree dangling from the cane. Those who succeed, do not return dangling from the cane but climb down the tree.

They also immensely enjoy the games called high jump and long jump. In the high jump they set up two wooden posts and a wooden or bamboo pole across the two posts and then engage themselves in this sport.

In another game two players engage themselves at a time. They keep their right leg raised by holding it with the right hand

and move in a circle hopping on the left leg and now and then rush at each other dashing bodily against each other. They go on moving in a circle and dashing against each other till one loses balance in one such dashing encounter and lets fall his right leg on the ground. The player who loses balance and lets fall his right leg on the ground is considered to have lost the game. Another pair takes up the game. This game is generally played by the boys. Girls also sometimes play it.

The game, popular with the girls, is the one in which they imitate the elderly women in husking paddy with mortar and pestle. As the elderly women stand around the mortar with the pestle in hand, two or three girls stand facing each other holding in their hands a bamboo or wooden stick which they use in the game as pestle. They imitate the sequence of action in husking paddy by striking, one by one, the stick in the ground in front.

Nowadays the games of cards carrom and volley ball have become very popular with the adolescents and adults. The carrom and volley ball have been introduced and encouraged by the administration through the schools as part of the sports activity.

MEASUREMENT OF TIME, DISTANCE AND WEIGHT:

They determine time by the position of sun in the sky. They have no device to measure distance, but they express it in terms of **liti** which roughly approximates about 3 kilometres. According to them, the distances between Daporijo, the headquarters of upper Subansiri District and Taliha, the headquarters of Taliha Circle and between Taliha and Siyum, the headquarters of Siyum circle are 16 **litis** and 8 **litis** respectively ; which distances are 47 kilometres and 22 kilometres according to the measurement of the Public Works Department.

They measure weight by one bamboo internode called **domtop**. But there is no standardised **domtop**. Somebody makes **domtop** from a big bamboo internode and some from a bit smaller internode. The buyers take into consideration whether the seller has a big or small **domtop**. The buyers avoid those having small **domtop** and partonise those having big **domtop**. A proper size of **domtop** measures about 1 kilo and 200 grams of rice. Such **domtop** for commercial transaction is called **nilap-domtop**. They have another called **niosung-domtop** used for measuring cereals

for consumption at home. This one is bigger and it measures about 2 kilos of rice. The only liquid substance they use, except water, is beer called **opo**. They used to prepare it only for consumption at home. If somebody needs beer for immediate use he may borrow or purchase it from another family having it ready. In case of borrowing same quantity of beer is returned later on. If purchased they pay for it in kind. The size of the **opom** i.e. ground-outershell container holding the beer was taken into consideration. A good-sized **opom** containing about 15 litres of beer used to fetch 10 **domtop** of rice or a big fowl. A smaller **opom** of beer used to fetch fewer **domtop** of rice or a smaller fowl. Now a days they use the big-size bottle for selling beer. One such bottle of beer costs ten rupee.

The divide the year into twelve lunar months. We start from the month of Date, which corresponds to the period from about the middle of January to about the middle of February. Date is followed by Limi, Leking, Lecher, Ilu, Talu, Sengyu, Sengte, Para, Libi, Rali and Domin.