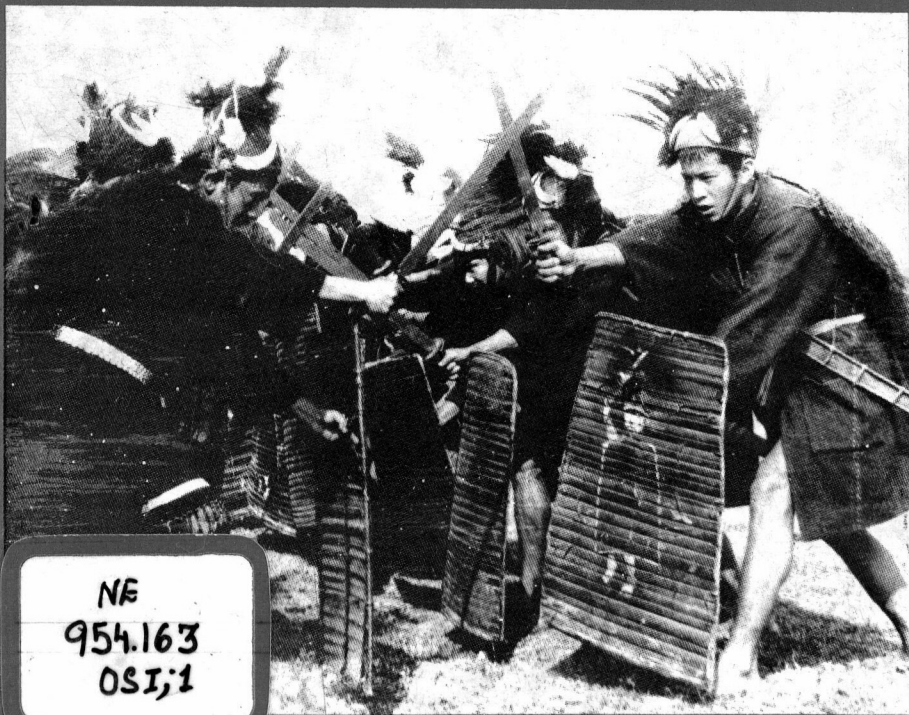


*A BRIEF HISTORY
OF
ARUNACHAL PRADESH*

N.N. OSIK



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ABOUT THE BOOK

Arunachal Pradesh, The land of rising sun is the fascinating home of 26 major tribes.

History of Arunachal Pradesh (From the earliest times to 1824 A.D.) is the first of its kind as no historian of India has ever attempted to write the history of the state. L.N. Chakravarty, has written a book namely, 'Early History of Arunachal Pradesh' but the book confines to a brief description of the tribes during the early British period only and hence, it does not provide any study materials of pre-British times.

Dr. N.N. Osik gives a detailed accounts of the land, people and their socio-cultural, economic and the political life in Arunachal Pradesh. He also provides an elaborate historical events of Arunachal Pradesh from the earliest times to 1824 A.D.

The book will be helpful to the students of Colleges, University and candidates appearing in the APCS Examination.

ISBN : 81-7117-152-4

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. N.N. Osik (b. 1961), The author of the book, 'British Relations with the Adis (1824-1947)' and many interesting articles to his credit is an APCS Grade — I Officer. Hailing from East Siang district, Dr. Osik did his graduation from St. Endmund's College, Shillong, the most reputed college in North-East India with History (Hons.) and took his post graduation from NEHU. He has obtained Ph. D. degree from Dibrugarh University under the supervision of Prof. M.L. Bose, a reputed historian and the author of five books on the history.

Dr. Osik, presently serving the Arunachal Government as Sub-Divisional Officer and attempting to write the History of Modern Arunachal Pradesh, History of Upper Assam, History of Siang Valley and the History of North East, inspite of his heavy loads of administrative burden.

**A Brief History
of
Arunachal Pradesh**

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A Brief History of Arunachal Pradesh

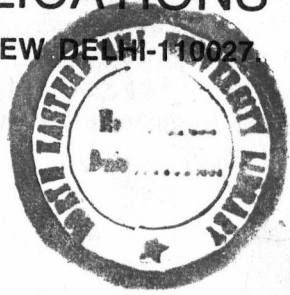
(From Earliest Times to 1823 A.D.)

Dr. N.N. OSIK



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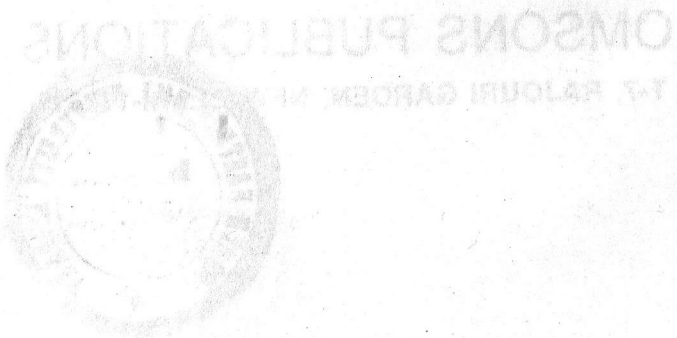
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Preface

"A tribe or a nation without history of its own have no identity". This saying had been continuously striking in my mind since schooling days. I started collecting the history and myths of the Adis from my grand-father, late Akep Osik who was a great oral historian. I wrote a collection of the Adi myths in Assamese, TANI TARO HADHU when I was a mere student of Class-V standard and let Shri S.N. Talukdar, Headmaster go through the manuscript. Then I handed over the same manuscript to Shri Talom Rukbo, the then special officer who wrote a note to the then Addl. D.C. Pasighat to forward the manuscript to the DIPR NEFA Administration, Shillong in 1971 for publishing in book form. Though I was optimistic, my book, TANI TARO HADHU was murdered and buried in the DIPR Office and as such, I published the English translation of my myths in Arunachal News/Review under various captions during my collegiate days.

I attempted for the second to get my book, History of Arunachal Pradesh (From the earliest times to 1824) published through government and wanted forewords in 1988 without result. In this state of momentum, I happened to meet Mr. Ramesh Kumar in Western Book Depot, Guwahati in 1991 and half-heartedly showed the manuscript of my third book, British Relation With The Adis (1824-1947). He had been so nice and had gone through the manuscript in a wink and expressed his readiness to publish my book. True to the words of R. Kumar and to my extreme joy, Omsons Publications, New Delhi published my book and 'British Relations With The Adis (1824-1947)' appeared in 1992 which has become my first ever published book. After the publication of 'British

Relations with the Adis (1824-1947)' I underestimated the importance of my book but to my utmost satisfaction, the book is gaining popularity in Arunachal Pradesh specially in East Siang district and even it has arrested the appreciation of the Secretary, U.S. Library of Congress who wrote to me personally.

Since my virgin dreams of publishing book through Government of Arunachal Pradesh have been raped, I once again met Mr. Ramesh Kumar on 8-10-94 expressing my willingness to publish History of Arunachal Pradesh (From the earliest times to 1824) by the same publishers, Omsons Publications, New Delhi. The enthusiasm and happiness of Mr. Ramesh Kumar had no limit when he told me that the History of Arunachal Pradesh is a subject in Arunachal University, without any systematic study materials and he directed his younger brother, Mr. S. Kumar to stop other works and to devote to the publishing of History of Arunachal Pradesh (From the earliest times to 1824) in the best interest of the student communities of Arunachal Pradesh.

Completion of the book would have been delayed due to my heavy loads of administrative burden if my brothers like Mr. Odang Osik and Torik Osik who are studying in J.N. College, Pasighat did not put much pressure on me for their notes on history of Arunachal Pradesh. My wife, Mrs. Ponung Osik had been a constant source of inspiration to me who always tried to keep me happy and in good humour so that I make writing mood. I did not encounter disturbances from my sons Mr. Gangkin Osik, Kadum Osik and first daughter, Miss. Mumtak (Pebika Osik) as they are staying in the missionary boarding schools. But my last daughter Miss Pinti Osik gave me much harassment who used to sit beside me snatching my pen and talking a lot whenever I was on writing table.

Dr. Tamo Mibang, Reader and Head, Department of History, Arunachal University gave me much encouragement by providing a photostat copy of his article "Migration of the Adis" as he is aware of the fact that the only history book on Arunachal Pradesh is a small

book, by L.N. Chakravarty, Director (Retired) of Research Department, Arunachal Pradesh namely, Early History of Arunachal Pradesh, but the book does not provide any study materials on the ancient and medieval part of the history of Arunachal Pradesh.

Miss Miti Yirang, LDC of my Office have typed out the rough manuscript. Shri Toni Ratan, Chief Librarian, Shri Tarak Mize, District librarian and Shri Jotom Borang, District Librarian gave me moral boost as they assured me to purchase the bulk of my book for libraries in the state.

Dr. N.N. Osik APCS (I)
Sub-Divisional Officer, Ruksin.

Acknowledgment

I acknowledge my sincere gratefulness to Shri Tebom Bam (Commissioner), Prof. M.L. Bose, Sri S.C. Debnath (CO), Taram Darang, Jinkun Yirang, Taring Nyigang, B.L. Dey for the moral encouragement that I received from them.

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I

INTRODUCTION

THE erstwhile North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) which attained the status of an Union Territory on January 20, 1972 and was renamed Arunachal Pradesh achieved full-fledged Statehood on February 20, 1987 amidst much rejoicing. Its capital, Itanagar is located in Papum Pare district which was once a seat of historical importance and Ita Fort in Itanagar testify it.

THE LAND

Arunachal Pradesh, The land of rising sun situated in the north eastern part of India is nearly 84,000 sq.km in area and has a long international border with Bhutan to the west (160 KM) China to the north and north-east (1,030 KM) and Burma (Myanmar) to the east (1440 KM). It also stretches from snow-capped mountains in the north to the plains of Brahmaputra valley (Assam) in the south. Arunachal Pradesh is the largest state, areawise, in the north-east states of India, even larger than Assam which is the most populous.

It is a land of lush green forest, deep river valleys and beautiful plateaus. The land is mostly mountainous with Himalayan ranges along the northern borders criss-crossed with mountain ranges running north south. These divide the state into five river valleys namely, the Kameng, the Subansiri, the Siang, the Lohit and the Tirap. All these rivers are fed by snows from the Himalayas and countless rivers and rivulets. The other

important rivers are, Namjangchu, Tawangchu, Papum, Pare, Siyom, Simang, Tsering, Yamne, Sisar, and Dibang. The mightiest of these rivers is Siang, called Tsang-po in Tibet (China), which becomes Brahmaputra after it is joined by the Dibang and the Lohit in the plains of Assam.

GEOGRAPHY AND ITS INFLUENCE

✓ Arunachal Pradesh is full of high mountains and dense forests which have prevented the intermingling and inter-communication between the tribes living in different river valleys of the state. Isolation imposed by geography has led over twenty six major tribes with several dialects to live and flourish with their distinct identities and culture which find expression in faith, belief, song, dance and dress.

✓ Amidst the highly rugged terrain, there are green forests and plateaus. The Apatani plateau in Lower Subansiri district is the most beautiful one. Tawang is also becoming a tourist attraction with its scenic beauties. If the road communication of Arunachal Pradesh is properly developed and tourism department had taken proper care, Arunachal Pradesh can become the second Switzerland of the world.

✓ Arunachal Pradesh is also richly endowed with natural resources such as, dolomite, graphite, lime stone, marble, coal, oil, natural gases and hydro-electric potentialities. If the sleeping giant of natural resources of Arunachal Pradesh is awoken, properly explored and put into use it will certainly speedily the face of rapid development and economic prosperity of the state.

CLIMATE

The climate varies from hot and humid in the foot hills with heavy rainfall. It becomes progressively cold as one moves northward to higher altitude.

FLORA

Trees of great size, plentiful climbers and abundance of cane and bamboo make Arunachal Pradesh evergreen.

Tropical rain forests are to be found in the foot hills and the hills in the east on the border with Myanmar. Northern most border is covered with alpine forests. In lower altitudes the common trees of economic interest are the holok (*Terminalia Myriocarp*), borpat (*Ailanthus grandis*), walnut (*Juglan Razia*), nahor (*Mesua Ferrea*), hulong (*Dipterocarpus macrocarpus*), gondhsori (*Cinnamomum Cecicodaphne*) etc. In the higher altitudes oak (*Quercus*) and chestnut (*Castanopsis*) grow abundantly.

FAUNA

The wild life of Arunachal Pradesh is equally rich and varied. Elephants and tigers are abundantly found in the foot hill areas. The leopards and jungle cats are quite common in the territory. The white brown gibbon in Tirap and Lohit districts while red pandas and musk deer in the higher altitude are found. The mithun (*Bos Frontails*) a semi-domesticated animal which costs from Rs. 8000/- (Rupees eight thousand) to Rs. 12,000/- (Rupees twelve thousand) only is the most precious possession of the people of Arunachal Pradesh. This animal has religious significance and intimate relation with the socio-economic life of the people. Traditionally, The mithun is a unit of wealth and allowed to move freely in the jungle till it is brought home either for meat on festival occasions and marriage or for sale or barter. Other animals found in Arunachal Pradesh are wild boar, monkey, langur, civet, wild goat, Himalayan black bear, bat, squirrel, porcupine and barking deer.

There are innumerable species of birds, butterflies and reptiles, and Arunachal Pradesh as a whole is a rich hunting ground for naturalist.

Amongst the birds are the green magpie, treepie, greytit and sultantit, parrot-bill, various laughing thrush, babbler, sipia, siva, rosefinch, green and imperial pheasant, bulbul, cuckoo, shrike, minivet, forktail, redstart, flycatcher, warbler, munia, finches, martin, swallow, wagtail, pippit, flower pecker, sunbird, pitla, broad-bill, wood-pecker, barbet, bee-eater, parakeet, trogon, oak, hawk, eagle, dove, pigeon, jungle fowl,

partridge, snipe, sand-piper and duck. Arunachal Pradesh is also the happy home of the great Indian Hornbill with an extra-ordinately large beak. The white winged wood duck, a rare endangered species, has been sheltered in Namdapha National Park.

Reptiles include various species of lizards and snakes. Snakes vary from harmless species to deadly vipers. Amongst the poisonous varieties are the cobra, King cobra, pit viper and krait.

THE PEOPLE

Arunachal Pradesh is the home of 26 major tribes such as the Monpas, Mijis, Akas, Sherdukpens, Sulungs, Bagnis, Nishis, Apatanis, Hill Miris, Tagins, Adis, Membas, Khambas, Mishings, Idus, Mijus, Taraons, Khamtis, Singphos, Lisus, Tangsas, Nocktes, Wanchus and Shyams. The population of Arunachal Pradesh is 8.65 lakhs according to Census, 1991 and is scattered over 12 towns and 3649 villages. Most of these tribes ethnically belong to same stock tracing their descent from a common ancestor "Abo Tani" and a same mother "Pedong Nane".

(i) *Their Language and the Race* : Linguistically, Arunachalese are the Tibeto-Burman speakers of upper Assam group. Racially, they belong to the Tibeto-Chinese family of Mongoloid Origin.¹

(ii) *Their Original Home* : Original home of the Tibeto-Chinese races is the north-western China between the upper courses of the Yang-tse and of the Hoang-ho river and from that point successive waves of immigrants entered north east India.² The early waves entered Arunachal Pradesh or north east India in about 2000 B.C.

(iii) *Their Migration* : The Arunachalese might have first migrated from their cradle land on the courses of the Yang-tse and Hoang-ho towards the headwaters of the Irrawady and of the Chin Wind.³ Here, the Akas, Shyams, Tangsas, Noktes and the Wanchus might have followed the course of Tirap river and entered Arunachal Pradesh, for the Akas claim their original home to Assam and trace their ancestry to Ban Raja of Sonitpur (Tezpur).⁴

The Tangsas regard a hill called Masoi Sinrapum, which is supposed to be somewhere in the east beyond Burma (Myanmar)⁵ as their original home. Then they migrated to various places where they live at present, crossing over difficult hills and valleys. As such, Myanmar is the original home of the Tangsas, Nocktes, Wanchus, Shyams and the Akas.

The other tribes followed Lohit and one of the tributaries of Salween and Irrawady towards Rima. Here, the Tاراons, Mijus, Digarus, and the Idus commonly known as the Mishimis must have followed the course of Lohit and Dibang rivers and spread over to the present habitats. The Idus claim their ancestry from Rukma one of the five sons of King Bhismak of Vidarbha (modern Roing area of Dibang valley) while the ancestry of Digarus, Tاراons, Mijus etc. is ascribed to prince Shisu Pal of Sedi (modern Tezu area).

The remaining cognant tribes pushed on from Rima and followed the course a river which the Adis remember as Nyalum Siang which is Zayul, one of the tributaries of Lohit river. Here they stayed for some time. This is the region where the DOKPUN (yellow beads) and PONGKU (blue and green beads) so highly prized by the Adis are reported to have manufactured in plenty.⁶

After Sojourn in Zayul valley they started on a track along the Chindruk river. The river led them to the high pass called Dasingla in China or Dajing Ego in Adi. They crossed it and came upon Po river which the Adis call Namgong Siang. This is a large tributary of the Tsang-po (Siang) which flows through the area known to the Adis as the country of the Taros. The Taro country may be taken the area around Showa monastery in North Eastern Tibet (China) where Tsang-po river girdles the Namche Barwa range.⁷

Here, Tani (ancestor of Tani group) and Taro (ancestor of the Taros in China) lived together for some time. The Adis call the Taros "The brothers" they descended from a common mother named Pedong Nane. In course of time, Nibo (Tani) and Robo (Taro) came into

conflict on issue of division of wealth and treasure. The Taros are no other than the Tibetans.

The Adi legend transmitted through Solung Aabang (an elaborate narration on history and evolution of mankind) tells us that Tani though physically weak was intelligent and clever. He also possessed magic power with which he could change himself into any form and could remain invisible. On the other hand, Robo Posa though physically tough and strong was a fool and dull-headed. The same Aabang narrates that Tani with his clever tricks, won over Robo in the struggle and became master of the treasure, wealth and the cultivable land of the world. The Aabang further tells us that Robo Pasa, the fool succeeded in long run in stealing the magic power from Nibo, became invisible and started harassing Tani. Eventually, the descendants of Tani viz. Adis, Apatanis, Bagnis, Idus, Khawas (Buguns), Mijis, Mishings, Monpas, Nishis, Sherdukpens and the Tagins had to leave Po valley or Kham Province of China to avoid the oppression of the Taros (the Tibetans).

Accordingly, the Buguns, Mijis, Monpas, Sherdukpens and the Sulungs followed the course of Kameng river and the Tawangchu rivers and came over to present habitats. The Monpas are said to have first migrated to Bhutan and then to Tawang and Upper Siang.

The Apatanis, Bagnis, Hill Miris, Nishis and the Tagins followed the course of Subansiri river and started frequenting over the present habitats.

The Adis and Mishings followed the course of Siang river and occupied Siang valley. The Mishings ultimately left Siang valley in preference to the plains of Assam to avoid the Adi brothers.

Dr. Tamo Mibang, a Reader in Arunachal University in his article "Migration of the Adis" published in Arunachal Review (July 1991-April 1992 issue) has furnished two probable causes of the migration of Adis. He says that the consolidation of Tibetan power under the Yarlung dynasty and secondly, the introduction of

Buddhism as state religion in seventh century A.D. caused uprising in the Central Tibet during the early part of 7th century A.D. Further, King Shrong-Tsan Gampo annexed Myang territory by means of conquest which is remembered by the Adis as Mihum-Miyang land and these two events hastened the movements of the Adis towards the southern direction.⁸

Verrier Elwin also has furnished one probable reason for the migration of the tribes. He reports that when the Mongol leader Chengis Khan's descendant Godam, who was Governor of Kansu region of China, invaded Tibet in 1239 A.D. looting and killing everything before him, some tribes of the Kham region of Tibet descended on the southern slopes of the Himalayan ranges.⁹

Since the emigration of the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh has already taken place in succession in early period of history, the versions of Dr. Tamo Mibang and Verrier Elwin are tenable and applicable to the later emigrants only.

The latest emigrants into Arunachal Pradesh are the Khamtis and Singphos. The Khamtis began to migrate to Arunachal Pradesh from Khamti-long or Bor Khamti in the east of present Lohit district, and to the north of Burma (Myanmar), somewhere in the eighteenth century A.D.¹⁰ The Singphos followed them from north Burma (Myanmar) much later. During the decay of the Ahom Kingdom, the Singphos crossed the Patkai circa 1793, entered into Arunachal Pradesh, and capturing Assamese slaves settled down on the side of the Patkai range.¹¹ The Lisus are originally the Assamese slaves captured by the Singphos who once laboured for them.

RELIGION AND CULTURE

Arunachal Pradesh may be divided into three zones on the basis of socio-religious affinities. The Monpas and Sherdukpens of Tawang and Kameng districts follow the lamaistic tradition of Mahayana Buddhism. Noted for their religious fervours, the villages of these communities have richly decorated Bhuddhist temples, locally call

"Gompas" Though largely agriculturists practicing terrace cultivation, many of these people are also pastoral and breed herds of yak and mountain sheep. Culturally similar to them are the Membas and Khambas who live in the high mountains along the northern borders of Siang valley. The Khamtis and Singphos inhabiting the eastern part of the state are Buddhist of Hinayana sect.

The second group of the people are the Adis, Akas, Apatanis, Bagnis, Hill Miris, Mijis, Mishimis, Mishings, Nishis, Tagins and Tangsas, who worship the Sun and Moon God, namely *Donyi Polo*. Their religious rituals, largely coincide with the phases of agricultural cycles. They invoke natural deities and make animal sacrifices. They traditionally practice jhuming or shifting cultivation. The Adis and Apatanis extensively practice wet rice cultivation and have a considerable agricultural economy. The Apatanis are also famous for their paddy-cum-pisciculture. They are specialised over centuries in harvesting two crops of fish along with each crop of paddy.

The third group comprise the Nocktes and the Wanchus, adjoining Nagaland in Tirap district. These are hard working people known for their strictly structural village society in which the hereditary village chief still pays a vital role. The Nocktes also practice elementary form of Vaishnavism.

Art and Crafts : The people of Arunachal Pradesh have a tradition of artistic crafts-manship and sense of aesthetics manifested through a variety of crafts such as weaving, painting, pottery, smithy work, basket making, wood carving etc. The Monpas are known for their artistry in weaving carpet and making painted wood vessels, beautiful rugs are also woven in the Adi area. Vivid colour and exquisite patterns are the hall mark of their weaving. The Apatanis, Hill Miris and Adis make attractive articles in cane and bamboo. The Wanchus are famous for their wood carving and bamboo carved figurines. They also make intricate necklaces of colourful beads the width of which indicate the status of the person they adorn.

(ii) **Festivals** : The festivals are in essential part of the socio-cultural life of the people. The festivals having connection with agriculture and celebrated with ritualistic gaiety either to thank God for the providence or to pray for bumper harvest. Some of the important festivals are *Mopin* and *Solung* of the Adis, *Lossar* of Monpas and Sherdukpens, *Boori Boot* of Hill Miris, *Dree* of Apatanis, *Si-Donyi* of Tagins, *Nyokum* of Nishis, *Reh* of Idu Mishimis etc. Animal sacrifice is a common ritual in most festivals.

(iii) **Dances** : Dances forms a vital element in the zest and joy of living of the tribals. They vary from highly stylised religious dance dramas of the Buddhists to the material steps and colourful performances of the Nocktes and Wanchus. Among the Adis, dance and evolved almost into an art form mainly for entertainment and recreation. The 'Ponung' dance of Adis is performed by teams of young girls in perfect rhythmic union. Similar group dances in colourful costumes are performed by the Nishis and Tagins of Lower Subansiri and Upper Subansiri districts.

SOCIAL ORGANISATION

The tribes of Arunachal Pradesh have some common social features. The social organisation among them without any exception is patrilineal. The oldest male member is regarded as the guardian of the family. The marriage is usually negotiated and the groom has to pay a bride-price to the guardian of his wife. The members of the tribe marry within it, but members of a clan outside it. The polygamy is permitted but monogamy is the usual practice. The polyandry is restricted to only some Adi tribes and Monpa tribes and this is practically dying out. The women, in general, enjoy a good deal of respect in the society. The slavery existed till the British period. But the condition of the slaves was not so bad. Only the marriage between a slave and a free man was looked upon with disfavour. There is no casteism and racialism in any tribal community though social grades existed.

Every tribe has club houses or dormitories where youths are trained in civic duties. The tribal disputes are resolved in the meetings of the village elders. The youths

used to sleep in the dormitories in the night. The tribal dormitories served some other useful purposes as well. If the village was in danger and the youths were required to be mobilised to face the emergency, then the youths from the dormitories could be given instructions quickly. In Tirap and Siang districts, separate dormitories for girls existed. These dormitories served as meeting places for youths to select their marriage partners. These were the dormitories where the young girls were given training in songs and dances by the elder girls.

The position of women in Arunachal Pradesh is respectable but not very high. The system of polygamy, particularly among the Nishi and Mishimi tribes has lowered their position, and sometimes wives are forsaken without being divorced. In spite of laxity in sex relationship, prostitution is practically unknown in Arunachal Pradesh. Ordinarily, the women lead a busy life, helping the menfolk in all walks of life. They wake up early in the morning and prepare meals for the family. Taking their morning meal, they proceed to the fields carrying their midday meal and drinks. They work in the fields and return home in the evening. Again, they cook the meal for the night. Women take part in folk dance and the entertainment of the guests is their privilege.

POLITICAL ORGANISATION

The people of Arunachal Pradesh have highly ordered and organised system of functioning in their villages. Each tribe or clan or village has its own head styled as *Gam* or *Gaonbura*. All matters relating to the community as a whole are decided at the village level. But the management of the internal affairs of the village or clan and its neighbours is vested in the village council which consists of the elders of the village. In such a village council, all members have equal powers and each such council is independent of all external influences.

The most conspicuous of these village councils is the traditional village panchayat body of an *Adi* village locally known as *Kebang*. Its members, known as *Kebang Abus*, are chosen for their experience, ability and capacity to

present and decide cases according to the traditional customs and conventions of the tribe. The Kebang controls the entire village activities and punishes those who deviate from the right path. In settling disputes the view points of both the parties are taken into account after a careful hearing. Inter-village disputes are settled in the meetings of inter-village council known as *Banggos*. All the villages are divided into several groups for the purpose such as Bogong Banggo, Legong Banggo, Yapsing Banggo, Yabak Banggo etc. which we may call Block Council. The Banggos are composed of all the Gams of member villages and such other members as have distinguished themselves in kebang meetings and a secretary known as Banggo Seketeri. Money collected in Banggos as fines are spent for the welfare of the village under the Banggo. The inter-Banggo disputes are settled in the meeting of the institution known as Bogum Bohang (District Council) which is temporarily created for a particular case with members of all the Banggos and some distinguished persons who do not have any interest in the dispute and are impartial.

Thus, Adi kebang looks after the administration of justice in the society by settling all matters of dispute. Similar such self governing institutions exist among other tribes. They are variously called as *Jong* among the Sherdukpens, *Mel* among the Akas, *Bullang* among the Apatanis and so on.

ECONOMY

(i) **Agriculture** : Jhum cultivation known as 'slash and burn' is the traditional cultivation of the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Wet-rice cultivation and the terrace cultivation are also prevalent among some tribes. The Monpas, Khambas and the Membas practice terrace cultivation. The wet-rice cultivation is popular among the Adis, Apatanis, Khamtis, Singphos, Nocktes and the Tangsas. The Monpas, Membas and the Khambas plough their fields with yak or mithun and the tribes practicing wet-rice cultivation employ cattle for ploughing their fields like the people of the plains.

All tribes grow paddy, maize, millet and vegetable of different varieties. The most popular and widely grown vegetable is gram which is grown in abundance all over the hills and is a common item of food of many people. The Aids and Mishimis grow tobacco, cotton; and some barley is also raised in some places. The Wanchus and Nocktes grow tapioca and cotton. The domestic animals are pig, cow and mithun. The Monpas, Membas and the Khambas keep horse and very fond of them. But the mithun is, by far the most important and valuable domestic animal and usually the yardstick of wealth of the rich.

There are three kinds of ownerships of land — personal land, clan land and village land. The land which is held in individual ownership and is inherited through the father is personal land. The land which is utilised by different villages of a particular clan for burial or grazing purposes is clan land and the land on the fringes of villages where there are forests providing the villagers with fire-wood, canes, roots, herbs and also for hunting or fishing is the village land or community land.

The Apatanis and Monpas who are scarced of land and practice permanent or terrace cultivation have strong attachment to personal lands. The individual's status in society is determined by his possession of land. The tribes who practice jhuming hold the agricultural land in common and village council allocates to each individual family a plot of land for its use in each clearing. The family enjoys private property till it moves away for a fresh site.

(ii) **Trade** : Almost all the tribes grow and produce all that are necessary for them and yet barter trade is quite familiar. The Mishimis and Khamtis are inveterate traders. The Akas and Monpas carry on extensive trade and act as middlemen for their neighbours. The Adis trade with their brethen living behind them. What the tribes do not produce and require to produce from outside is salt. A small quantity of clothes, utensils and agricultural implements and some ornamental beads

were other items that they purchased at the fairs. They also sale or purchase gold, yaktails, wool and woollen blankets, ponny, sheep, musk, ginger, mishimiteeta, wax, honey, chillies, spices, madder, walnuts, rock salt and oranges. Rubber and elephant tusk were at one time objects of a prosperous and lucrative trade. But the introduction of synthetic rubber and indiscriminated tapping of rubber trees brought rubber traffic to an end, and the government's policy of wild life preservation had stopped elephant catching.

(iii) **Industry** : The industry existed in small scale among the tribal people of Arunachal Pradesh. The cottage industry to produce the house hold requirements existed among all tribes. marketable surplus of cottage industry products consisted of wooden-musks and utensils, carpet and tribal dresses. In addition there were a little handmade paper from the Monpa tribe. The cotton blanket of artistic design call GADU (jim), the coats from the Mishimis and at one time artistic jewelry inlaid with stones from the Khamtis were in great demand. The Nishis produced fine hats from cane and bamboo but they did not have a market. The Adis manufactured earthern pots known as KEDE PEKING, daos and amulets.

(iv) **Fairs** : Inside the hills there were practically no daily or weekly bazars or hats where the tribal people could sell their products and purchase their requirements. The people went from house to house to sell or purchase things. During the medieval period the tribes of upper regions had barter trade with the Tibetans to great extent. The tribes inhabiting the foot hill areas had trade relations with the Ahoms. With the articles purchased from the Tibet and Assam, the tribal people made exchanges and the trade flourished. During the Ahom times Rangdoi market at the confluence of Siang, Dibang and Lohit rivers was famous where the tribal people used to come down for barter. Such similar market at Udalguri or Doimara in the Darang district of Assam was famous.

In the latter period, some trading shops were set up by tradesmen who, with official license, went for business

inside the inner line. In the foothills, outside the inner line, there were some weekly marts where people from outside the hills went from time to time for marketing purposes. But the best time and occasion for purchase among the tribal community were the fairs that were regularly held among the foothills either inside the inner line, as was the case with the Sadiya fair, or outside the inner line as at Udalguri or Doimara. It was at these fairs that the British Government also paid the posa or stipend payable to the tribes who with the money thus obtained or purchased their requirements from the fairs. Here at these fairs again the tribal people sold their surplus products and purchased their annual requirements.

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