CHAPTER- II
CHAPTER–II

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MISSING COMMUNITY

2.1 An introduction:

The entire North-eastern region of India is well acknowledged for its rich biocultural diversity. It is the land of numerous indigenous communities having diverse ethnic and cultural background. Since time immemorial, numerous ethnic groups migrated to the eastern Himalayan region including the fertile valley Brahmaputra of Assam where they settled down permanently and many of them were influenced by the existing the culture of the region and adopted the same. They mainly consist of Indo-Austric (the Khasis), Dravidions (the kaibatras) and Mongoloid (the Bodokachoris, the Nagas, Chin-Kukis, the Mishings and the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh). It is said that tribes belonging to Mongoloid stock of Tibet and central china migrated towards North East India and Assam along the Brahmaputra and its tributaries (Gait, 1905, Narzi, 19966).

2.2 Origin of the Mishing:

In the official records and in the list of Assam scheduled Tribes (Plain) 1976, it is found the word "Miri" to mean for the Mishings. But originally, they called themselves as "Mishing". Ethnically they are the mongoloid and belong to the Tibeto-Burman of greater Tibetan group. The term "Mishing" is derived from a combination of word namely, "mi" and "Asi" the word "Mi" means "man" and "Asi" means
"water" that is the people in some way or other are constant touch with water, meaning a source of water. In the other words, the people appear to be a reverine one. It has been noticed that, in general the Mishings, as a whole tribal community is habituated to living by the banks of the Dibang, the Dihing and the Brahmaputra.

The term "Miri" is coined by the Assamese to refer the Mishings. It connotes a degree of inferiority, or rather simplicity in nature and temperament, in a comparative status between the Assamese and the Mishings. Actually, the Miri refers to the terms "Mi" and "Ri", which is, "Mi" means "Man" and "Ri" means "Hill" or "Pahar" in Assamese. That is the people that live in hills.

In this connection Gait (1963:373) is worth quoting his explanation concerning the term "Miri" as a people acting as go between". The explanation hardly has any convention. It is not know if the term, "Miri" conveys the meaning "Dichasia" as explained by Gait when he described the Mishings acting as transactions or interpreters of "Abor" dialect.

Waddle (1901) observes, "They have decidedly Mongoloid features, so much so as to remind me in many ways of Tibetans and lepchas. They are exceptionally sturdy and well developed physically although so many of them live in most malarial parts in Assam". Chatterjee (1974) maintains, "The Mishings come under the broad groups of indo-Mongoloid races referred to as "Kirato" in the epics "Mahabarata" and "Ramayana".

The Mishings have no any own written documents of their origin and migration they posses a rich oral chronicles the from of legend, myths folk-tales, and folk songs which have been transmitted down from generation to generation. A legend to in which human generations are allowed to play freely, may, however, conceal a kernel of historical truth.
The Mishings are one of the major scheduled tribes in Assam. In terms of population they are next to the Boods, who are largest tribe of the Brahmaputra, valley. They are concentrated mainly in the river in areas of Lakhimpur, Dhamaji, Dibrugarh, Sibasagar, Jorhat and Sonitpur, Sadyh, and good number of Arunachal Pradesh also. In the river course of the Brahmaputra, Simen, Burisuti, Tongani, Chiahol, Subansiri, Boginodi, Ranganodi, Dikrong and the river is land of majuli.

The total population of Mishing community of Assam is estimated at as per 2001 census. The total population of Lakhimpur district is 8,89,325 according to 2001 census. The total population of Dhemaji district is 5,71,944. Total S.T population in Lakhimpur 2,08,864, total S.T population in Dhemaji 270,496, according to 2001 census.

Mishing racially belongs to the Tribe to Burman languages speaking group of the great mongoloid. Linguistic research reveals that the mongoloids of India excluding only the "Lhasi" and jayantiya" speak Sino-Tibeto group of languages, and the Mishings who from a fraction of his race fall in the category of Tibeto-Barman speakings Sino-Tibetans groups (Chatterjee, S.K. 1947:20). Ethnically the Mishings are the same stock of the "Tanis" who are variously known to the other people as the Mishings, padmas, minyongs, Gallongs, Daflas, hill, miris, patanis, etc. the language, culture and tradition of these tribes are one and same.

According to Alexander Mackenzie, "The Mishing and the Abors coming no doubt originally form the same habitat are still so alike in all material aspects as to warrant us in calling them earlier and later migrant of the same tribe, the aborts as the last comers retaining more of their pristine savagery and hardihood, while the Miris have been to some extent influenced by free with the plains and settled habits of divination (191:33)".
The Mishings had their original abode in the hills of the present day Arunachal Pradesh. They migrated into two batches, the earlier inhabiting the plains and lower hills of the north bank of the Brahmaputra from the suban siri in the west to the Dihing in the east and the later inhabiting the hilly country between the Dihing and the Dibang rivers (Brunch 1985:74).

According to some sources the first batch of the Mishings migrated to the plain in the eleventh century. By the time chutiya kingdom was established in the present subdivision of saidiya and jonai of Assam, after the settlement of the Brahmapurta and Subansiri River. In course of time they spreaded upto the dhansiri river of Golaghat district now their population is concentrated mostly upper region of the Brahmaputra valley.

2.3 Population:

The great Muslim historian Md. Cazim and Mullah Derbish, who visited the upper Assam through the reverie belts in the later part of the seventeenth century, made a recommendation remark on upper Assam and wrote in poetic freer-

Its land is not like our land.
Its sky is not like our sky.
Its rivers are beyond limit and estimate like the mind of the wise.
On its ground the green grass sprouts up without from the soil.

The Mishings are concentrated mostly in the district of Golaghat, Jorhat, Sibsagar, Sonitpur, Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh and Tinsukia.

They have the tradition of living along the bank of river Subansiri and Brahmapurta and their respective tributaries. Hence the Mishing population is found mostly along the bank of the rivers for which they are called riverine tribe.
(B.N. Bordoli 1991:1999). They having living in the midst of other Assamese community for the last hundred years yet the Mishings have their own religions belief and practices which are animistic in nature, but not developed, suppressions till dominate their social politically they backward.

**Sonaram Panyang**, a Mishing interpreter, records a number of legends and myths of the origin of the Mishing and Adis. These myths throw some lighten the traditional origin of different sub-tribes of the Adis and the Mishing. According to the tradition pedong-Arie was prolific in procreation and gave birth too many songs. Some of them are Do:mi:Do:pang, Do: shing and Donga. From Do:mi came the Minyangs from Do: pang the pa:dam, from Donga the Galong and from Do: shing came the Mishings.

However, this tradition is also prevalent among the Adis. According to this tradition, in the beginning there was emptiness in this universe. There was no shape or from, it was dard, there was no day or night there was no land or water, not to speakers of life. This stage of first creation was known as Keycm.

Keyam is Nothingness (vacuum). Thought cosmic vibration from kyuum passed seven generations up to Se:di, (creator) in slow and steady succession as shown below.

1. Kyuum (Yumkang + Ke:or)
2. Ka:Si
3. Siyang (Siyan)
4. A:bo (Anbo)
5. Bo:muk
6. Mukesng
7. Se:di(+Me:lo)**
Se:di and Me:lo (Se:di + Me:lo) literally signify the "earth" and the "sky" but allegorically they are the creators of the universe; like Adam + Eva in Christianity and Prakriti of Vadantic philosophy.

The above shows that in the Mishing mythology Ke:yum is mentioned as the first in the genealogical line of creation. From keyum to Se:di-Me:lo, the exact nature of the beings are very uncertain, but definite form took place from Se:di, hence they recognize Se:di-Me:lo as the creator. From Se:di five generations passed till Pedon Name the mother of Tain (man) appeared. Hence, they trace their origin from Pedong Nane.

2.4 Early Home and Migration:

According to legend of the Mishings, the ancestors of the Mishings first lived with his offspring at a place called Killing-kangey, some where in the upper course of the Siang River. After passing many years, they moved downwards to the lower valley. The Mishings, believed when they migrated from Killing-kangey they had to overcome a very rapid stream. Only after days of prayer, propitiations to the deities by the Mibu, they finally found two very strong creepers climbing over a gigantic tree holding it Mishings could cut the creepers and fell the tree across the banks of the
stream. Finally, with these creepers they were able to cross the stream. These creepers are referred now as Manying-Mankong creepers. Sometimes, the Mishings believed that they came down from Killing-Kangey, by two ladders called Ain Ko:bang(golden lader) and silver in colour. From Killing-kangey, the Mishings came over Regi-Regam, then at Karko-Simong, Pega Selek, Agcha Selek and finally at Pumi near present Sadi.

From Se:di to Tani first human being it also took five generalities. They believe that Se:di or the Se:di-Me:lo to be the creator God. Se:di-Me:lo, created things from a mass of mud; light emerged, land water and life came into being. Therefore, the Mishings and its allied groups proliferated to give birth to human beings (Tani or Do:ni) in the earth.

1. Se:di (+ Me:lo)
2. Di:lling
3. Li:tung
4. Tu:ye
5. Ye:pe
6. Pedong – Nane or pedong-ane (Perpetuating mother)

A: bangs are verses of hymn of praise, worship to gods and Goddesses, prayer to God for help protection and blessings.

A: bangs contains descriptions of social bindings and integration, origin of the living creatures, creation of Universe etc.

The A: bang are the earliest known verbal songs of the community. Hence, these songs can be called as historical songs or Poetical history of the community. These songs are transmitted from centauries past amongst the Mibus. The Mibus are considered as religious prophets of the community.*
From pedong-ane all living creatures believed to have perpetuated and in the last Tani(Do;ni),-the fist man was perpetuated and Tani is therefore consider as the ancestor of the Mishing and their allied groups. It is significant to note that count their genealogies not from him but from pedong-ane.

It has already been mentioned that pendog-nane was their progenitor. For example, pedong begot Dosing, Do:sing begot Mishing as shown below in a family tree.

Regarding the routes they followed during their migration it is believed that the different groups migrated at different times and took different routes. As per legends, Mili, Kumbang, Patir, etc. followed the old route of Adi Pase and Mebo of Regam hills; Tayung-Taye, taid and other took the Pangin-pasighat route of Bapi hills. Pati, pawo and others migrated along the routs of Torne Jaging hills. The Shayang clan came down from Pesha-Shayang near persent Dambuk area of Dibang Valley District. Bori, Regon and Charo are said to have came down much latter. The Pegu, Doley, Kutum, Kuli are supposed to be the fore-runners of the other Mishings, but the routes taken by them while migrating to the plains are not clear. However, the existence of a place called Pegu beyod Tayek-Piago in the upper region of Adi hilles, and a lake known as Pegu-Siyeng near karko till to day bear a palpable evidence that the Peges had been there and took a route which was taken later by the Padams also while migrating down from Tibet. They lived around Karko-Simong area for a considerable period before adventuring into the second wave of movement down along the Siang valley.

It should, however, be mentioned that the real cause of their migration cannot be ascertained at present. It must have been occasioned by some natural upheavals in
their homeland or larger scale racial movements set in motion by political happenings in those regions.

The migration gives us the ideas of the directions and stages of their migration. Moreover, the stories of Pa:dam, the oasis and Minyongs confirm the Mishing migration that was followed by them at different stages. For example Padma story of the migration mentioned that at Killing-Kangey, where they (Pa:dam) came across a group of people who identified themselves as pegu and Doley. Finding inconvenient in living as close neighbors with the Bomis (now called Pa:dam) the Pegus and Doleys vacated their land moved out by following the course of the river Siang thwarted the plains. According to the pasi story of migration, when they migrated they crossed the Siang river at Tayek-Piago. As already stated the existence of place called Pegu beyond Tayek-Piago in the upper region of Adi hills, and a pond known as pegu siyeng or pegu sirung near karko till today bear a palpable evidence that the pegus had been there and took a route which was taken later by the padmas also while migrating down to lower valley. It is observed that padmas, the Minyong and the pasis, all of them crossed the river at tayek piago before the Adis as they were the forerunners of the Adis. After crossing Siang River at tayek piago, perhaps, they had spread up unto damro and Dambuk area. It may be noted here that the shayang hills near Dambuk. Moreover, the Dambuk clan of Mishings have migrated to the plains of Assam relatively recently from Dambuk area.

Although at present it is difficult in many places mentioned in the early stages (i.e. the stages beyond the present Mishing area) of their migration but places mentioned in the later stages can easily be identified. From the stories of their migration it is observed that their migration occurred group by group at different times. The Pagro group of the Mishings, are the earliest migrations than the more
adventurous groups. From the stories of their migration it becomes clear that during their migration the Mishing had clashes accommodate them by moving further down and in doing so, those who set foot on the plains of Assam in search of fertile cultivable land, constitute the main bulk of the present Mishing tribe of the Brahmaputra valley. Therefore, only the small number of Mishing population is at present living along the foot hills belt of Siang, mostly in the East Siang District, adjoining the plains of Assam.

2.5 Different tribes and groups of Mishing community:

The Mishing comprise of several loosely knit apparently indistinguishable groups namely – Pag-or, Delu, Shyang, Danbuk, oyan, moying, camuguria, taram, and Somua, The pag-or from the large single group, the moying probably coming next to them. The onkual can be taken with tamors as they do not constitute a group by themselves, for their, very small in numbers. Shayengia, moyengia, oyengia, often mentioned by some writer sare no other them shayang moying and oyan group. The people called them so by adding a suffix "ciya" for their advantage.

2.6 Distribution:

Pan-Ro- The Pag-ro group occupies the northern bank of the Brahmaputra stretching from murkong selek to luguli near gamirin ghat of Sonitpur district in cluding a part of Majuli. A good number of Mishing are also seen in plain portion of the Subansiri River. Some pag-ro village are Galiramdhon-Dikori, Pegupaan (Tantari) Patiri chuk, Digholi chapari, Deori Gha, Namgharia keba – Ranggo, Mechaki-Tangani, Bormukoli, Janji, Matmora, Teketiputa, ganera, Rantanpur, Kumarbari, Jengrai pamua, Gugamukh, Malwal, Besamora, Michamora, Bhekelimukh,
Bormthari, Badati, Temera, Pichalamukh, Duhitmukh, Bhalikaguri, Kutumgaon, Namsari, Chirakhowa, Luguti, Tamulinear Gamiri ghat to name only a fuel.

They are considerate to the first group of Mishing set foot on the Brahmaputra truly in search of better habitat much earlier than the other group.

2.6.1 DELU:

The Delus live around the confluence of the Dihing the Disang and Dikrong Rivers till recent past. They are called Delus as they came down alone the course of Delu (Lohit Brahmaputra) River. However may of their families have crossed to North in recent times as their homesteads have been subjected to the onslaught of the perennial erosion of the Brahmaputra River. They also go by the appellation of lason-gonya and Jon-gonya derived from the names of two leading persons called Lason and Jon respectively.

2.6.2 DAMBUK:

The Dambuk villages are very few. They are recent arrivals from Dumuk village of Arunachal. Dumbukial, Bebejia of lower Subansiri, Dambuk villages of lower Ranganadi, Dambuk Gaon of Sissi Paik mahl area are some of their villages. Saburu-sainaki along the bank of the Dibru River is also of Dambuk origin.

2.6.3 MOYING:

The Bank of the Buroi and Jiabharali River has been occupied exclusively by them. A good number of Moying village are found in the bank of lower Ranganadi in North Lakhimpur Sub-division.
2.6.4 SHAYANG:

The Shayang village are not many but widely distributed. Their village is seen in the lower Subansiri area Alimur-Bebejia, Baginadi in North Lakhimpur sub-division and Laika, Rigbi, Philobari in Tinsukia sub-division. One writer claimed that Shayang had migrated down from "Pesa-Shayang" somewhere in the Padam area of Arunachal. But there is another version about the origin of Shayang means upward movement in missing and they came upward after migration for down the valley. Tarun Pamegam had also this opinion.

2.6.5 OYAN:

The Oyan villages are not many, Oyang Gitung, a few miles down of Pachighat, Obhata Oyan, Ghunasuti of Miri Jiari fame, Batua Tapit, Oyan and bali Oyan (near Silapather) in Dhemaji District are few of their villages.

2.6.6 TAMAR:

The Tamars have also claimed to have their name originated from the settlement given by the Ahom kings under a "Temi" tree. But there are reasons to belief that the term Tamar or Temar derived from "Temak" a Missing name for "Sewa" trees. They now occupy a area east of the Dhansirimukh in the south bank within Golaghat district. They live compactly in 7 to 8 villages have sprung on the lower Dikrong area.
The Beeiyang live in three to four villages to the south of Dhansirimukh towards Bokakhat town. The Bankuals are very few in number and reside exclusively in a village called "Bankula Miri Gaon" situated near Gelabil four miles east of Dhansirimukh. A small lying adjacent to the Bankual Miri Gaon is occupied by Bebejia Miri consisting of 15 to 20 families of mix origin. They are sometimes called betkata Bebejia-meaning bebejia (employed in cutting cane). Bebejia means mixed.

The Yirangs are run way families from the hills and occupied the foot hills area of the Pasighat sub-division. A few Miring families found in Lohitmukh area should no way be confused with Yirang. The Mirangs in fact migrated down along the groups in distant past.

2.6.7 SAMUA:

The Samua inhabit a locality between Tezu and namsai well the Arunachal Pradesh. They are small in numbers, total population is 500. In all probabilities the name "Samua" was given by the Ahoms from the serviced they rendered. The Chamugurias, the tamaras and Bonkuuals are Missings who left Hills close to Hell of Pag-ro group but entered the Ahom Kingdom earlier and for various reasons lost their mother tongue Missing but retained the basic Tradition and the Kinship term of the Missing Vocabulary.

But the Beeiyangs (the name derived from Assamese Bihia or Bihdia) are believe to be of exogenous origin and are descendants of the Refugees who took
shelter in Missing villages when Abors drove them out. They do not speak Missing
language of the beeiyangs, Alexander Mackzie stated categorically in 1884 AD that
in the islands of Brahmaputra and along the lower course of its northern feeders were
numerous village of Hindu gold – washers and Fisherman called beech or Beeheeah
who had perhaps been driven from the Hills by the Abor Miri advance. In pursuit of
their avocation, these Beeheeah were wont to frequent the Dihong, Dibong and
tributaries of Brahmaputra.

Not only that recorded, history is abundant with incident that gives us an idea
of their where about. On 31st January 1858 AD, Kebang – Minyongs raided
Sengajan a Bihia village only 6 miles away from Dibrugarh where in 21 persons were
killed. In an earlier rate in 1848 AD, the Gallongs carried of rangmon a Bihia head
man. Yet in another raid later in 1861 AD, a bihia village called Bordhum Bhuyan 15
Miles away from Dibrugarh in the south bank was cut up to teach a lesson to Bihias.

2.6.8 CHAMUGURIA:

The Chamugurias occupied the Pahumora area in the bank of Ranganadi 4
miles west the North lakhimpur town. Bamun Doloni, Ujani Miri, Granto are some of
their villages. A few more villages have been seen in the lower Dikrong area 1 no.
Bangalmora, 2 no. Bongalmora, Panbari, Narayanpur Chamuguria etc. The
Chamugurias are so called as they were given settlement by the Ahom Kings in a place where abundant growth of "Sam trees" (Artocarpus Chaptasha) were found.

2.7 CLANS:

The word "Clans" is taken here to means a group of families having close blood relation with a common ancestry called Gumin. A close look at the body structure of the different groups like Pag-ro, delu etc. would reveal that the group formation had been the result of closer approximation of their habitat in the Hills and the same time period of migration to the plains of any closer blood relation or line age amongst them. Each group consists of several clans each bearing a particular surname are not group specify and could be found amongst the different groups in bizarre manners. For instance, the Morang, Mili cleans are found in Pag-ro, Delu, Oyang and Chamuguria group. But clans bearing the title Pegu, Doley, Kuli, Kutum and Patir were originally found in the Pag-ro group only.

On the other hand the surname or titles are clan specific identifying a particular "opin' within a group and such inherited. One can not adopt a surname as he likes to which he does not belong by birth and looked down upon who ever does so.
Over 51 clans have been identified so far and the followings are common clans name arranged alphabetically are:

- Basing
- Bori
- Chungkrang
- Chintey
- Darik
- Dang
- Dawo
- Doley
- Jime
- Kagyung
- Kumbang
- Kutum
- Kuli
- Koman
- Lagashu
- Loing
- Mili
- Misong
- Medok
- Mody
- Morang
- Mipan
- Mirang
- Ngate
- Pait
- Padum
- Pasung
- Patir
- Pegu
- Perme
- Panyang
- Payeng
- Pading
- Padi
- Pacoe
- Pame
- Pagag
- Polong
- Regon
- Saro
- Tawe
- Tayeng
- Tayung
- Tawo
- Takoe
- Tarak
- Yein
- Yirang

(The list of Mishing clan is consulted while issuing caste certificate for official purpose)

Some more titles occasionally heard amongst them are not "opin" (clan) name but sub-titles given to them by other from certain interesting episode. Though improper to do so many of them take pride in introducing themselves by sub-titles. e.g., Karhi, Jektum, Patiri, Gaoburaha, medhi are sub-titles given to them by other,
but all belong to pegu clan under common Gumin. So are cases of Gejara, Letum, of the Doley clan.

Kathri are known such as they rendered military service to the Ahom Kings as Kathri Jektum are so called for one of their forefather not only killed a wild he buffalo single handed while ploughing his field but at up all the meat by his family members.

Patgiri is a title given by the Ahoms as one of them was appointed as revenue officer at Khagorijan area. Patgiri sub-title is given persons working as spokesman in negotiating social formalities in marriage etc. and such this sub-title is found in several clans. However no reasons have been found why what stage the Pe-gu were sub-division into Gudang and Gupit and hence the usage of this artificial division is undesirable and unwarranted as it may create an undesirable consequence in matrimony in future. For practical purpose, they should be taken as Pe-gu only.

The existence of these different groups and clans in the body structure of the Missing community should not be taken as of non-homogeneous ancestry and unlike Hindu social order, caste distinction has no place in the Missing society. To them, all the Missing are son and daughter of Sedi-mellow and brought up in the warm lam of Donyi and Polo (sun and Moon).

These traditional characters of universal fellow- felling give them an innate vigour and pleasant disposition event at the time adversity.
2.8 Culture and Socio-economic Background of Mishing Community:

The concept of culture is an exceedingly complex one. It is one of the most difficult concepts to define. Various disciplines like anthropology, philosophy, sociology and other social sciences many attempted to define culture. There is no common understanding of the concept; in fact its varied descriptions create more confusion lack of agreement.

According to Anthropologist E.B. Tyler, culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.

American anthropologist Clifford greets views that "culture denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embedded in symbols, a system of inherited which human expressed in symbolic forms by means of which human beings communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about attitudes towards life.

Clyde Kluckhohn and Alfred Kroaber, after having considered about 164 definitions of culture under a variety of titles such as descriptive, normative, psychological, structural, genetic etc. Come to the conclusion that they identify a common position in all of them.

Culture consists of patterns, explicit of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts, the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas and especially their attached valueless, culture system may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements of further action.
Mishing culture is different from other culture of Assam. Mishing have lived in the eastern region of Brahmaputra valley in Assam from the past many centuries, having habitation scattered now in eight districts of the state like Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Sibsagar, Jorhat, Golaghat and Sonitpur.

In Assam, Mishings have undergone process of acculturation, the culture and civilization of their Assamese speaking Lindu neighbors, both Aryan and non Aryan, have influenced their native culture pretty extensively over the decades and the centuries.

2.9 Food Habit:

Food generally means rice and their staple food consists of rice, leafy vegetables, edible roots, fish, and pork and chickens, numerous leafy vegetables like ‘pakkom’ ‘Takum’, ‘Tajik’, ‘Kukpiang’ ‘okolbirng’, ‘ombe’, ‘okang patag-owing’ grow abundantly in nature and have certain medicinal values when prepared with proper technique and in combination with fish or meat, they turn to delicious dish which are very popular. These vegetable are not known to other communities of the valley. But they find them handy to tide over lean period, of the edible roots, potatoes, sweet potatoes Topioca aloes of different kinds like kamrali, singkuik, ali mayong lodor, etc are their hot favorite. The preserved fish known as "Nagasan" is a great demand for entertaining guests. Formerly they did not take milk, dal mustard oil, and spices purchased from market, but now days, these items have entered the kitchen of the Mishings, particularly of the well to do section.
2.10 Dress:

Lakhimpur and Dhemaji's Mishing women are expert weavers and they weave clothes not only for themselves but for all members of the family. The dress of the womenfolk includes a "sumpa" worn around the waist extending down to the knee. Around the breasts they wrap a narrow strip of cloth called "galuk". A small piece of cloth "Hura" forms the headdress. The married women use a small piece of cloth round the hips distinguishing them from the unmarried ones. The male persons generally wear modern mill made dresses. But a traditional long narr old piece of cloth called kaping is used around the waist. On the special occasion man and women Mishing use various colorful dresses. In the modern youth used various colorful dresses as like non Mishing.

2.11 Kinship:

Socio-cultural ramification of a community could well be understood from its kinship system, kinship fact provides the entire community life binding the members into consanguine as well as official relationship. The bonds of kinship being all embracing subsist for a whole life and help pattern the community life on mutual co-operation. Under a kinship system a growing child has interpersonal relation with his father, mother, brother, sister and a host of other kith and kin. He behaves with these persons in a manner of love and affection, Co-operation, loyalty and solidarity and expects the same reciprocal behaviors from them.
The features and terminology of kinship system of the Mishing people of Lakhimpur and Dhemaji District have structure similarly with other Mishing people of Brahmaputra valley of Assam. Among these people of Lakhimpur and Dhemaji the intensity of remembrance of kinship bonds tend to disappear with the passing of time and with remoteness of actual relationship. A person is born in a family and thereby develops relationship with his or her own generation. This kinship relationship plays a pivotal role in the life of the person providing food shelter protection and education up to his or her maturity. The person is now ready for his or her official relationship from round about the age of fourteen to twenty years in case of family and eighteen to twenty five years in case of male. Generally kinship terms indicate certain categories of relationship from the point of value of moorage. The person is now ready for his or her official relationship from round about the age of fourteen to twenty years in case of female and eighteen to twenty five years in case of male. Generally kinship terms indicate certain categories of relationships from the point of view of marriage.

The kinship terms used by the Mishings are generally characterized by some classificatory terms. Such a term used by the people is “kakiu”, it is used to denote one's father younger sister's husband father's elder sister's husband, mother's younger brother, mother's elder brother and father of both husband and wife. Such a kinship terms is found in a system of marriage between a man and his father's sister's daughter that is cross-cousin marriage. Because in such a marriage the mother's brother and father's sister's husband occupy the position of a father both for the husband and the wife, being father's-in- law. In the same line, the kinship term, "magbo" is used to indicate elder sister's husband, husband's elder brother. However, in such case the age
of the sons referred to above is pre-supposed to be elder than the 'Yigo'. But in cost of younger sons term 'Yigo' is used.

The terms of relationship and mutual address used by the Mishings are as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Mishing</th>
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<td>Father</td>
<td>Abu or babo</td>
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<td>Mother</td>
<td>Ane or Nane</td>
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<td>Brother</td>
<td>Biro</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brother (elder)</td>
<td>Aabatta or Babatta</td>
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<td>Brother (younger)</td>
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<td>Daughter</td>
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<td>Father's Mother</td>
<td>Yaio</td>
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<td>Father's brother</td>
<td>Baboi</td>
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<td>Mother's father</td>
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<td>Yaio</td>
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<td>Father's sister</td>
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<td>Mother's brother</td>
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<td>Mother's sister</td>
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<td>Kaki</td>
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<td>Mother's brother's wife</td>
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<td>Relative</td>
<td>Mishing Kinship System</td>
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<td>Aao</td>
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<td>Father's brother's daughter</td>
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<td>Son's son</td>
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<td>Wife's father</td>
<td>Aato or Tato</td>
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<td>Wife's mother</td>
<td>Yayo</td>
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<td>Wife's brother (elder)</td>
<td>Magbo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wife's brother (younger)</td>
<td>Yigo</td>
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<td>Wife sister (elder)</td>
<td>Mamo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wife sister (younger)</td>
<td>Yiogane</td>
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<td>Son in low</td>
<td>Magbo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Son's wife</td>
<td>Yameng</td>
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The mishing kinship system has two terms for a single type of relationship: a term of reference and a term of address. For example, when Mishing address his father, they call him Babatta, but when he speaks of his father, he uses the term Aabatta.

### 2.12 Kebang and Bane Kebang:-(Meeting and social organization)

The Mishing possess a social structure of democratic type in common with their next of kin, the Adis. The Kebang, which we may very aptly compare with the village panchayat, is supreme in all matters within a village. The elderly men of a village constitute the kebang. Complaints, when their social or religious are brought to the notice of the kebang, which delivers judgment and punishes the offenders. The gam or, of late, the gaonbura (Head of village) acts as the chairman. Punishment depending upon the nature of the offence ranges from imposition of finance in case or kind to bodily thrashing.
If controversy arises between two villages matter is brought to the notice of the bogger kebang or Banekebang where members of general villages assemble any take part in the kebang exacts on business, i.e. they may be taken in as witnesses or the accused.

2.13 Marriage:

The Mishings as a tribal community widely practice endogamy in respect of their tribal affiliation regarded less wide area. But the rule of endogamy is also found to be violated through marriage within outside the tribe marriage within a sub clan i.e. families of identical surname cannot be made affection even if the sun rises in the west. Similarly marriage cannot take place between allied groups of families such as pegu, patir etc.

Three forms of marriage are found in Mishing society. A marriage that is consummated with involvement of both the parents of either side is called Midang. The term Midang means marriage. It is socially a respectable and ideal type of marriage. Not every house hoed tares calibrate a Midang from of marriage on account of its expensiveness and lengthy processes.

A simpler and less elaborate form of marriage is bugla-lanam literally meaning a marriage by eloiment. Dugla means torun and lanam means to gain or receive, that is to gain a bride through her running away with the bride groom such a marriage is treated as inferior to the aforesaid one. It does not get much approbation
of the society at large; however, the parents of the boy generally and mostly become amenable to such a form of marriage resorted to by son of theirs. A series of negotiation with the parents of the run away bride follows before accepting the couple as marriage and settling the matter. Before the parents of the bride agree to a settlement a demand for exceptionally high bride price (Alig) is made on account of this demand for high bride price this unusual practice of Dugla-lanam is financial hardship, the boy stealthily and defiantly goes for Dugla-lanam. It invokes wrath on the part of the parents on other side. The boys restring to this unusual method sets off his nuptial house away from his parent’s village. However negotiations follow and the marital union is approved. Often a boy’s fascination for a particular girl is the cause of such a marriage. Before resorting it he places his demand for his fascinated girl to be his bride before his parents, whenever consent is not forth coming from the parents, the boy resorts to Dugla lanam, setting up his temporary abode far away from the easy reach of the parents. The love affairs that develop between a boy and a girl on their encumbers in the agricultural field or fishing meet or on festive or marriage. It is purely a matter of meeting of two loving hearts.

In other to, avoid the heavy expenditure to be incurred in case of holding the Midang marriage the less affluent section of the people parctise Kuma-soal laman. Kumna means to take blessings of the elders soul means to gain or receive, that is to gain a bride first by pulling on an unwilling girl by force and then marrying her with
the consents and blessings of the parents and elders of both sides. It is a simple system of marriage that is attended with less expensive marriage procedure. Often instant ceremonies at a day's notice are arranged.

Usually after the settlement of a Midang marriage a boy with some relatives such as maternal uncle's son visits the house of the house of the bride and stays there for a night or so. Such a stay offers to the boy and the girl a good opportunity to know each other. This customary system is called Magbo-duganam. magbo means son in low and dugnam means working in father's in laul house.

In case of a boy's marriage his parents pay bride price called align to the parents of the bride.

A woman once married cannot opt for remarriage without permission form the Kebang. Mutual separations by both the husband and wife are accepted in Mishing society with the consent of the Kebang. A couple having sufficient grounds as adiuger by the Kebang and having mutually agreed can decide for separation. When a husband dies his younger brother can claim by prescriptive norm to marry his widow. But if the younger brother dies the elder brother is prohibited from marrying the widow of the younger brother. Children born out of this levirate marriage belongs to the younger brother.
2.14 Religious Faith and Belief of Mishing Society:

Concept of Universe:

Like any other ethno-cultural groups the Mishings have also their own religious belief and practices, which have its sources in the very concepts of the universe, its creation, the sun and the moon and other supernatural powers. According to their belief the whole Universe was created out of nothingness. Prior to emergence of the universe, there was no air, no water, no light, no any objects both animate and inanimate in anywhere. There was absolutely nothing in the undefined and ultimate mass of darkness. Out of nothingness the creator "Sedi Babu" (father Sedi) created the animate and inanimate object. Father Sedi first created the mother "Melo" and out of their conjugal effort the animate and inanimate objects including the earth were born (Kakaty, P 1936 and pegu, N.C. 1956). Such types of myths and legend were also found by Roy, S. (1966) in his study about the Padam,- Minyongs who are the cognate tribe of the Mishing in the plains.

The Mishing believe that in the process of creation of the universe by "Sedi" and "Melo" Abo-Tani born and it was Abo-Tani who led to creation of human race.

From Abo-Tani Donyi and Polo (the sun and moon) were born which further gave birth to the Mishings. As such, the Mishins address the Sun and the Moon as the mother and father on the occasions of religious functions.

2.15 Concept of Soul:

The Mishing are belief in the existence of soul. According to their belief after the death of a man, the soul goes out of the body and remains in the surroundings of human habits. According to Pegu (1989) the Mishing believe that there is "yalo" in human body is called to duel existence of the soul. As such, the soul human body is
called "Wee-Yalo". After death "Wee-Yalo" goes to the abode of spirits, which they call "Wee-Among", the land of Spirit. The Mishing believe that even after the death the "Wee-Yalo" live with the same mundane, desires for food and drinks which man possesses during his life time. So, Mishing pay homage to these "Wee-Yalo" which is known as "Orom" sacrificing pig, owl and offering apong etc., in a year or so and if not, in every five years. It is also known that, the Mishing do not believe in rebirth of soul. After remaining in their surroundings the "Wee-Yalo" goes to the eternal abode of the deads.

2.16 Spiritism:

Mishing religion is originally based on spiritism. They have, like many other primitive people, have believed that there exist sub-human beings in this world. The forests, rivers, water ponds Hills and mountains – all are infested by evil spirits. The Mishings call the spirits "Wee". The Wee cause sickness of human beings, and their animals, destruction of crops, etc. whenever the spirit desire to have some offering from men. The desired offerings may be various item of food including meat and drinks. So, the Mishings offer these articles from time to time by propitiating the spirits not to harm them in any way.

Originally, the Mishings did not have any god or goddess. They had no idea about any super human like gods or goddess or demons and deities. These concepts emerged among them in the latter stage of their social development that is, after coming into contacts with the Hindus in the plains. They have, however, from the lore past a clear concept about the creator and creation of the universe, the lord of the eternal world of earth, water and forest; but what are the shapes and size of the deities were not in the conception of the Mishings. They simply call them "Wee" of the sky.
or earth or water or forest etc. A wee is a shapeless and invisible subhuman creation creature of the universe.

The Mishing believe that human habitants are surrounded by both Wee and super natural powers which caused the different happenings in the world. It is fact that there are several gods and goddess in Hindu religious faith and beliefs, which caused different happenings, such as, rains, draught, storm, flood, disease and death etc. Same types of facts are also found in the Mishings religious faiths and beliefs. According to their myth along with the creation of human, the creator also created different "wees" which lived in different places and they have different specific jurisdictions and abodes. The Mishings believe many sprits such as, sprit of forest, sprit of crops, sprit of river and strom, sprit of death and disease etc. Apart from these the Mishing also believe in the sprit of ancestors. These sprits are known as "Wee". There are numerous ways in the religious faiths of the Mishings. "Taleng", The spirit of thunder and lighting, "Among-Asi" sprit of earth of which cock, "Oran wee sprit of ancestors act. There is other also, which always tend to cause harm to human beings and their animals and crops.

2.17 Worshipings:

The Mishings have conception of different wees, such as the Talengwee (the lord sprit of upper world), Yumarrang wee (sprit of forests), Ais wee (sprit that live in water), Gumin Seyin (spirit that live in the house of a family.

Besides sprits the Mishings have the conceptions of human soul which they call ' Yaloo' and sprit of death called 'worom', and the enternal land of deads called he 'Koje patang'. The Mishing worship to propitiate these spirits, which are believed to cause both good and evils to human life. Some of their major worships are as follows.
2.17.1 Orom Wee:

This is a kind of worship which was believed that the departed souls of the assistors revisit the family from time to time which the desire of getting food and drink. The revisit is manifested in from of some unusual happenings in the families. Generally at an interval of five years, 'Orom wee' is performed by scarifying pigs and arranging a huge feast on this occasion and it continues generally for three days. On this occasion all the kiths and kinds of the family get together and participate in the function.

2.17.2 TALENG WEE: (worship to the lord of upper or eternal world).

The Mishings believe that is a wee that lives in the sky and controls event of storm, lightening, raining and draught day and night etc.

It is further believed that unnatural deaths of men, animals, destruction or poor cropping due to lightening or draught or storm or heavy raining are caused by the Taleng wee. Therefore, when such things happen to a family, it worships the Taleng wee prompting trouble the family and keeps it well. In a Taleng wee a couple of red fowl and a white chicken are sacrificed and food and drink (rice beer) are offered to the Taleng Wee. The whole ritual is performed by a number of elderly men and women who are supposed to be expert in such functions. Meat, rice and rice beer are served to participants in the worship. As it is expensive Taleng wee is generally held at the interval of every five years. It is a family worship and regularly held because it is believed that anything may happen to family and its crops and livestock's any time. Therefore, Taleng wee is prayed for keeping the family free any untoward happenings that may come from eternal world.
2.17.3 DOBUR WEE:

The Mishing have belief that some sprits, which live in forest around a Mishing village come to stay in the house of the families and caused various sickness, damage to crops, domestic birds and animals and cause other damages to the life and property. So, the Mishing worship the sprits, which they call Dobur wee, for peace and prosperity of the village. The venue of the worship to the Dobur wee is generally the outskirt of a village. During its performance traffic and business transactions with neighboring villages are withheld for the day nobody it allowed to come and go out of the village on the day of the main entry lane to the village chase away the evil spirits from the individual houses of the village. This is done by beating around the houses and its walls and demand subscription from every family, every household offers "apong" pig fowl, rice etc. for the worship. Generally, one female pig and a number of hens are sacrificed in these rituals.

According to Padum (1972) there are four types of "Dobur wee" and they are "Ma:Pon:Dobur", Ka:chan:Dobur", and Rabon : Ka: chan: Dobur. Aims and the time of performing this Doburs are different. Ma Pon: Dibur is kind of rituals where mother earth is worshipped paying for good harvests. It is performed on the eve of hunting in the forest by scarifying hen in name of the spirit of the forest. Sometimes, it is perform by individual family before any major social and religious functions. 'Buttra Dobur" is performed by the individual family whenever some of its member commits murder or other serious crime against person. In this type of Dobur village elder come to the particular family and chase away the evil spirits from the household by beating the platform and walls of the house. The family concerned also offers hens and Apong to the village elders. With these articles the village elder arranges a feast
offering prayer to the concerned wee. Another from of Dobur is "Robon: Ka: Chan" and it is performed for the welfare of common fellow people.

2.18 The Religious Beliefs And Practices:

The Mishing of Assam settled in the plains about eight centuries ago and has been living in the midst of non-Mishing Assamese people all the time. Cultural contracts with this next ethno-cultural groups and have made the Mishings a part and parcel of the Assamese society.

With the passage of time as the Mishings are beginning to other religious practices like Vaishnavism, the influence of animistic religious practices like Vaishnavism, the influence of animistic religious practices is going to lose is hold over them gradually. But, it is the animistic religious practices that preserved the distinct identity of the Mishing particularly among the Assamese people.

The religious beliefs and faith have change to a great extend in the some Mishing Gaon. At present the Mishing religion, can be called "Kewaliya" or "Kalasanghati" and in some cases Bhagawatiya, which is sect of Neo-Vaishnavism introduced by Sankardeva. With the establishment of "Namghar" (Vaishnavite Temple) the villages began to opt for Namkirton (chanting the holy names of Hari, the God) as a means of seeking relief in respect of some personal and familial illness as an alternative religious means. Since then the Vaishnavite religious practices began to invade the monopolistic sphere of animistic religious behaviors in the village. Nowadays the villagers mainly perform both animistic and Vaishnavite religious according to their elders choice.

The followers of two cults while performing their traditional and new rituals, they first pay homepage to Doney-Polo their legendary father and mother. Only
difference is observed in case of types of Bhakats (devotee) that is the Bhakats of Mahapurishiya vaishnavite is Kecha and Kalsanghati are Pacca. The “Kalsanghati” cult performs Borsewa or "Ratikhowa" under the cover of darkness very secretly, which is not performed by the mahapurushiy. But the neo-vaishnavite cult which is known as Bhagawatiya found to be not performing their traditional rituals and they only recites "Nam Kritan" (chanting the name of Bishnu, the God) and offer some uncooked but wet food items like gams, pulses, banana, coconut etc. (offered as oblation called Prasad) are placed at the central spot around which the people assemble to chant Nam Kritan. After the Nam Kritan the people take Prasad beings distributed by two or three Bhakats called Bilania (Distributor) when the partaking of the Prasad is over the members of the family or some other people whoever hold the ritual bow down before the assemble and one of the Bhakats bestows blessing chanting the names of God, Hari Bishnu. In the vaishnavite rituals no apong (rice beer) or meat of pig or fowl is used.

It is found that chanting attitude has been growing up in regard to religious beliefs and practices since their migration to the plain districts of Assam. As stated the main cause behind the "Kalsanghati" or "Kewaliya" cult is that, this cult does not debar to offer apong, meat, fish etc. in the rituals. So the Mishings are finding if similar to their traditional way of these things in rituals accepted by the Kalsanghati or Kewaliya cult in large scale.

After careful verification of different sources and from opinions it is found that the Mishing religion in the traditional period may be termed as mixture of animism, naturism and ancestors worship and offer Apong and sacrifice pig, hen to appease the deities and sprits. The Mishing had a priest known as "Miboo" and under his leadership the Mishing performed most of their rituals in the past.
Since their migration to the plain they have come into contact with indigenous Assamese Hindu population and their religion and the beliefs and practices. Moreover, since then, the Satras and Gosains have made efforts to make them their disciples and due to continuous contact with their non-mishing counterpart, they have developed interaction and relationship with other ethnic and caste groups of Assamese society who follow Hinduism and these ultimately leads the Mishing to adopt Hinduism as their religion, which contributed to the emergence of new priests like Bhakats, Sadhura, Satula and new premises like Namghar ritual procedures of performing rituals and change in traditional religious beliefs. Recently the Sankasangha is making continuous effort to pursue them to acceptance may be also explained as the forces of their religious beliefs and practices due to growing relationship between Mishing and non-Mishing Assamese Hindus.

2.19 Religious Leadership and Institutions:

It is said that in the traditional religious system "Miboo" was the only priest of the Mishings and there was no any particular place of worship. Religious functions whether of family or community were performed either in individual family or at a place chosen according to suitability for holding religious functions. Mahapurushi

But since the days when Mishings accepted ya Namdharma and Tantrik vaisvism known as Kalasanghati, they perform their most of the religious function headed by "Satual" a permanent premises called "Namghar" had emerged. Now-a-days it is Namghar where collective religious functions of the village are performed.

A new type of religious leadership and Institution has emerged in the Mishings religious system known as "Satual" and "Namghar" respectively. But at the same time it is evident that "Miboo" have not altogether disappeared from the Mishings.
2.20 **Funeral Rites And Functions:**

It is followed by pacification rituals performed after a few days. Now-a-days, the Mishings perform "Tilani", "Husi", and "Sardha" or "Dodgang" as funeral rites.

After three days from the day of death family concern has performed "Tiloni". On this occasion, all the village particularly those who participate in burial function receive food, apong and meat. In this particular day it also decided when the function of ritual purification i.e; Hoosi, shall be performed and the members of the family allowed to resuming their day to day activates but the food taboos are maintained till the date of "Hoosi".

Generally, "Hoosi" is performed at an interval of 10 to 15 days from the date of the death. On this occasion all the villages and kinsmen attend the function. The "Hoosi" is performed by reciting “Nam Kirtan". "Hoosi" is ended and the members of the deceased family are allowed by another function known as "Dodgang". Generally it is to perform after a month from the date of death. The notable change has been taking place of funeral rites and functions of the Mishings after their settlement in the valley. And it happens so, because of their and adoption of Vaisnaism and their religious contact with non Mishing Assamese Hindus

Recently more and more Mishing have been converting to Christianity, which was rather very rare, even during the British rule when many tribal groups like the Khasi, Garo, Naga, Mizo, etc. Embraced it is that in large number in Assam, particularly among the Mishings. But to day it is the Mishing who are converting to Christianity increasing. Thus, the Mishing people have been divided into number of religious and sets.
2.21 Festivals:

Mishing observe many festivals according to their own tradition and beliefs. Besides observe the three Assamese Bihus namely Bohag Bihu, Magh Bihu and Kati Bihu. The Mishings observe Ali-ai-ligang, Porag and Dobur. Among this festival, Ali-aye Ligang is the most important one. It is connection with agriculture. 'Ali' means - roots 'aye' means - fruits and Ligang means sowing. "Ahu" patty was the staple agricultural products of the people Ali-Aye Ligang, marks the advent of Ahu season.

The festival is held on the first Wednesday of the month of falgun which falls approximately in the month of February. Here the head of the family ceremonious broadcast a handful of patty in the season. If follows the invocation of Sedi-Melo, Donyi-Polo and Karshing-Kantag to the accompaniment of ritual songs praying to witness the sowing operation on the bosom of the mother earth, appealing to her to make the soil fertile for a luxuriant harvest. During this time the worshippers now that they would offer a share of the harvest to the priests and beggars.

Dancing and singing is the characteristic feature of this festival. The whole atmosphere is surcharged with music of "Dum dum", Pempa, Siphung and "gunngang" played with the rhythmic dances of the girls attired in their best "Ribigaseng" and "Ribiye" Poro Apong and dried fish is essential for the festival. This festival continues for five days and during these days dancing is held on the courtyard of the villagers, and in return the host entertains the "Gumrak" dancers. The festival is last day of the festival is called "Lilen".
2.21.1 Porag festival:

Porag is another important festival, which is held at the close of the Ahu cultivation. The celebration takes place, sometime in the months of August or September after a summer harvest or in the months of December at present.

Porag is generally held in a Murong, a dormitory or public hall. In some villages where no permanent house of Murong is available, a temporary house is built to perform the function. The main function of the Porag begins on any Wednesday after the harvest. The inauguration of the function starts with the proving of the first drop of water through the Pobor with chanting of Prayers, beating of drums and young men and women dancing around the Murong for five times. During this time the entire gathering of the people prays loudly in full voice. This mass prayer is called Rebatla-penam. After this the sacrificing of pigs starts. At first one full grown pig is scarified in the names of Sedi-melo, Donyi-polo, Koje-yango, Seukari and Daities pray to them to protect their field from diseases and to guide them during the whole year.

Recently some changed are taking place in the manners of holding this rite. In same places the ritual rigidity is relaxed and the Miboo is not invited to lead the prayer dance. Instead, of the people participating in the prayer dance perform and sing the Aabangs. In some other places, it is celebrated as a social festival giving more importance of the feast and merry making without laying stress on the religions side. In such cases the festival is called meimbir-yame donam in place porag.

Porag is one of the primitive rites bearing the animistic tradition and heritage of the Mishings. It is also one of the foundation stones of their socio-cultural entity.
2.22.2 Dobur ritual:

Another ritualistic festival called Dobur is a part of the community festival of the Mishing of Lakhimpur and Dhemaji district as well as Assam. Dobur is a kind of spirit called "uui" and it has different types namely Dolur, burte Dobur, Arrg or mopum Dobur and kason Dobur. Women are strictly prohibited from attending this function. If there is any menstruating woman or girl, she must be removed to another village. In the morning the youths of the village go from door to door demanding the dues Aieng for the puja. They collect Apong, fowl, pig and rice beer in a place on the outskirts of the village. Two idols resembling snakes swallowing an egg are prepared from some corn and split bamboo are placed in the altar, facing the sun.

The Communications and business transaction with the nearby areas and villages are also suspended till the end of the rite no outside is allowed to enter into the village. But if some body has to go out till the end of the ritual. It is believed that during the ritual time if some goes out of the village, the goodness of wealth and fertility, koje-yango also may go out of the village.

It is worth mentioning that the adolescents of Mishings are largely influenced at the cognitive development of the adolescents by these festivals in their individual lives. The rituals and such other ritualistic activities help in their cognitive development and also in their academics, further encourages molding their personalities in their course of life.

2.23 Socio-economic status:

The socio-economic condition of the scheduled tribe community in Assam is the very important aspects in the present situation. Influence of Socio-economic status of Mishing Adolescent is also a significant task of the present study. After a long
period the S.T. community is not developed. From the time of Independence government has been trying to develop S.T. people through different welfare schemes and programs but no progress has been observed so far of their social status. The majority people of the community are living below poverty line. Most of the are uneducated.

Socio – economic indicators include (1) Social aspect and (2) Economic aspect

Social

**Social aspect** -

1. The Dwelling style.
2. Educational scenario.
3. Health.

**Economic Aspect** -

a) Occupational structure.
b) Land Holding pattern.
c) Income.
d) Saving and investment.
e) Borrowing.

**2.24 The Dwelling style:**

It has been seen that most of the Mishing villages are situated near the riparian tracts and embankments with long traditional house in haphazard manner.

**a) The House:**

The house is one of the basic needs of human life. Generally, housing conditions reflects the economic status and the living standard of people. Every
Mishing family possesses a traditional thatched house. Most of their house is of bamboo structure. As per traditional custom, they have platform type house. The platform is nearly 1.5 meters high from the ground leave. The shape of the house is rectangular and its length varies from 20 to 70 meters and 4 to 6 meters in breadth. The length mainly depends on the size of the family. A single house often accommodates a family of 5 to 55 persons living together.

The house is walled on all sides with rough matting of split bamboo. There are only doors – one is on the front and another is at the back with only one or two minor outlets in the sides. There is no separate accommodation for the pigs but a certain place is kept apart from them. The most important feature within a Mishing house is the fire place Merum which is looked upon with must respect. Besides cooking their daily meals, certain offerings are also performed in the fire place.

b) Educational Scenario:

All though education is the backbone of modern civilization, it has been seen that of S.T. people are yet to realize the paramount importance of education. Most of the school buildings are found to be in dilapidated required number of teachers in some school is also lacking.

The problem of poverty or low per capita income particularly in the Mishing society could be solved by adopting new technology in agriculture. Because, the rate at which food production increases does not depend solely plats a significant role. It is one of the most effective and for process. It must be connected with some handicrafts, Industries, factories and workshops. Thus proper education brings more income as well as prosperity to the humanity.
c. Health:

The world Health Organization (WHO) defines health as "A state of complete Physical, Mental and Social being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity". The Mishing People of Lakhimpur and Dhemaji district are not so conscious about the health and disease.

d. Beliefs and propitiation:

The majority Mishing people in the village believe that evil spirits and deities can cast disease to human beings. They strictly observe some pristine tables. The villages never seek the help of a physician medicines and village quack.

e. Disease and treatment:

The common diseases of S.T. people; in these villages are diarrhea, dysentery fever, headache, malaria, Pox, piles, vomiting act. Most of the villagers have no idea about the diseases. The villager generally uses the traditional herbal medicines.

2. Economic aspect:

Agriculture:

As regards to the relative contribution of various sources of the Mishing income, "Sali" partty, "Ahu, Paddy", and "Bau" paddy are the major corps of Mishings, in the both district. On the other hand, "Bau" paddy is produced in the deep place of the agriculture field. Besides, some Mishing people produce mustard seeds, other crops like potatoes, winter vegetable horticultural proudest act. The Mishing perform certain religious ceremonies connected with agriculture.
A festive religious ceremony called "Ali-ai-Ligang" is observed before sowing the seeds. Sarag Puja is performed in the middle spirits may protect the corps form pests and other natural calamities. Again "Dabar puja" is observed as a post harvesting socio religious festival. They worship "Kuber" whom they believe to be the goddess of wealth and agriculture.

**Service (employment):**

Service is the third source of income of Mishing. In order of its relative importance, the employment is the socio economic condition of a community.

**Business:**

The north-eastern region as a whole is grossly deficient in respect of enter premarital talents. The region inhabited by the tribal people suffers from lack of local entrepreneur which partly explain why they represent as the case of poverty.

The business of income for the Mishing society appears to be a less important source of income. The Mishings resort to business of various natures, like grocery, tea stall, contract, butcher, tailor, carpenter, mason act. Besides these an engaged themselves in selling rich bear and fish at the time of survey.

**Land holding pattern:**

The Mishing uses their land mainly for cultivation. But it has been observed that land is not property utilized. So there is a need for optimum land use planning and adopting suitable cropping pattern which is most urgent to day for improving their social, cultural and economic condition.
Income Pattern:

It is well known fact that the income of a community in general and of a tribal particular is greatly influenced by the growth of population, rate of literacy and food production. The classical exposition, that of consists in comparing possible rate of growth of population and food production and inquiring whether the latter may be able to keep pace with the former. However, it is said that growth rate of populating in most of the counters of the world is higher than that of the income rate. As a result per capita income goes down. With a high birth rate in Asia, poverty increases.

The rate at which food production increases does not depend solely on the bounty of nature but on the man's technical ability to exploit it. In this regard education plays a significant role. Karl Marx rightly understood education as undoubtedly one of the most effective and far-reaching preventive measure for low income. He maintained that education should be thought some handicraft and industry. Ruskin talks of training schools for boys to be connected with factories and workshop. Thus, properly planned educating brings more income as well prosperity to the humanity.

With the use of science for armaments so much as to neglect human welfare is nothing but wasteful and vicious. Science and technology must be harnessed to producing more food and material goods to meet human wants. Therefore, more investment should be made on production of food than for war.

Focusing attention on the income of the tribes of the North-East India in general and on the Mishing tribe in particular, it has been observed that their per capita income is low. This is mainly due to lack of proper management and properties and they are victims of floods, soil erosions and land. Now, it is necessary to explain the concept of income that is adopted in the present study. Gross income is the value
of the goods and services produced by the households before dedication of expresses incurred in the production of goods and services. Form the gross income of a particular occupation, net income has been derived by dedicating all relevant expenses in the generation of gross income. The total income of a household denotes the sum of net income from each of the occupations plus net capital gain realized by it during a given period.

In recent times the Mishing occupy a unique position in the state of Assam in the sense that they have posed scions of income cloud be understood well only when one observes the household's different sources of income.

2.25 Personality and Personality Pattern of Mishing Adolescent:

A trait has been described as an aspects or dimension of personality which consists of a group of related and consistent reactions characteristic of a person’s typical adjustment Mishing are generally endomorphic body type. The physical features of the Mishings resemblances almost with that of other Mongoloid races. An average Mishing is neither very tall, nor very short. His physical structure is well framed and stalwart. He has a big head and hair un leaning, His nose is short, cheek protuberant and the calf is big. They can be easily identified as Mishings from their physical structure.

Mishings are generally of calm nature; Tolerance is their racial characteristics. A high degree of co-relation is found in there temperament. The type of personality
that the Mishing hold, its effect on the Adolescents that means the personality affects by and large, on the Adolescents. It may mould the very character of the Adolescents.

The personality patterns of Mishing Adolescents and there social life despite tremendous challenges and have been able to maintain the own traditions, religious belief and practice, various socio-political trails and tribulations through the centuries.