CHAPTER IV

AURORA OF DONYIPOLOISM

The Adi is an animistic tribe composed of 15 sub-tribes including the Minyongs. They are polytheistic and worship a good number of natural objects and deities. Due to various factors gradually their religion becomes flaccid and many of them have adopted Christianity abandoning their pristine religion. Donyipolo is their high god. To prevent the flow of adoption of new religion, the thinkers of the Adi tribe and the people from other tribe who also believe in Donyipolo as the high god, reconstructed their traditional religion adding some new traits and abandoning some old elements.

4.1 Donyipoloism: An Appraisal

Religion developed among some sections of indigenous tribal populations including the Adis of Arunachal Pradesh of North East India in a form of traditional faith called Donyipoloism. It was developed to filled up the general values of external exigencies of life of its followers. Due to the climatic and geographical conditions, particularly due to the influences of the mountainous environment, the way of life of these people remain almost same. Only recently their life pattern has developed with the interaction of modernization.

According to Rikam (2005:119), ‘Before the existence of the universe and everything, the Adi believe that a supernatural power called Sedi, has emerged out of nothingness (keyum), which means infinite darkness. Another entity was
created called *Melo*, and out of the conjugal union of *Sedi* and *Melo*, and being on the earth and in the sky including the Donyi (the sun) and Polo (the moon) were born. But after having created the universe, the *Sedi - Melo* disappeared and never exist again. The sun and the moon were left to look after the animate and the inanimate objects including races in the earth’. Ering (1976:50) opines, ‘The mythology that waves a faith of doctrine starts from the pre - conceptual stage called ‘keyum’ which suggested that the earth itself was not there. Here *keyum* refers to the short of existence beyond the reach of human knowledge and imagination. *Keyum* as reflected through traditional treasure, that is myths, legends, rhapsodies, folk songs, etc., means nothingness, darkness of vacuum and is narrated in *abang* as ‘*Keyum kamange yayang ko, kero tatmange yayang ko*’, which means ‘unseen of the unseen and unknown of the unknown. The silence of the vacuum was shattered by divine vibration’. It deserves mention that *abang* is the traditional prayer found among the Adis to appease their gods and goddesses. It is the folk prayer transmitted through the socialization process from one generation to the next. However, now this long prayer is available in printed form, although the meaning of this prayer is not followed by a good number of Adis including the Minyongs, because it is written in a language very much different from their day to day language. It deserves mention that *Angun Bedang* is the extract of *abang* i.e., the core prayer to appease the deities by the Adis. The prayers from *Angun Bedang* is known as *gompi* (general language) and *lubai*
(sacred language). The meaning of which are not followed by the majority of the Minyongs.

With many stages with indescribable slowness, the divine or cosmic vibration underwent was counted as Keyum – Yumkang – Kasi – Siang – Abo – Bomuk – Muksang before the emergence of Sedi. In the cosmic vibration during these stages of development out of darkness, something emerged. Thus, in the first stage the divine vibration breaks the silence of keyum with a cracking sound echoing. This state of development is called Yumkang. Then from the darkness in the stage of the kasi, a flickering dim light sparked off. In the horizon, the watery substance emerged in the stage of Siang. Vapour evaporated in the wider and greater development from watery substance in the stage of Abo. The vapour evaporated from Abo turned to fog in the bomuk stage and filled the vacuum turning it cloudy. From Yumkang, the stage of development emanated and reached in Mukseng and all properties required for making the universe took its final shape. According to Chandran, ‘Out of the prolonged and steady waves and frictions of vibrations Komang Mone, the unknown and unseen believed to be a super women, appeared. Komang Mone while flying in the dingy mould Sedi (earth) out of mud, water and air and is referred in abang as Sedi repim repyom dodem (cited in Borang, 2008:63)’. Tamut (1993:31) states,‘To the supernatural conception prevailed among the Adis, there is nothing above Sedi - Melo. Sedi - Melo are husband and wife respectively. It is said that Sedi - Melo produced Heaven, Earth, Rain, the sun, the moon, etc’.
Sedi Melo, are regarded as the creator by the Minyongs. They are the creators of Donyipolo and shapes and form of different living and non living things are made by Sedi Melo. Sedi Melo are omnipresent and this universe is their reflection. Donyipolo is the protector from all kinds of sufferings, miseries, illness, dangers, etc. and He protects all living and non living objects. Donyipolo is ever vigilant and is a giver of all sorts of morals, ethical and spiritual knowledge. According to Borang (2008:64), ‘Donyipolo was the Supreme power or authority that caused the divine vibration and ultimately the appearance of Komang Mone who moulded the earth (Sedi) and sky (Melo). Everything that happened beyond the human knowledge is the work of Donyipolo, the supreme being. In the concept of Adi religion invisible Donyipolo is all in all’.

Pertin (1982:20) outlined the importance and continuity of the system of the Donyipolo faith by stating, ‘If we accept the ‘indigenous faith’ as our ‘religion’, we accept the truth in our mythology and abang. We do not know any mythology and abang which tell us Donyipolo stand for truth, light, wisdom, equality and peace..... The fundamental doctrine, philosophy and any logical outlook must be derived from mythological truth and abang of the tribes. Any deviation from the mythological truth and abang of the tribes means denial of the indigenous faith’. Pertin (ibid) further explained, to understand the concept of the physical Donyipolo we should peep into the order of creations as pronounced in the abang. In the scheme of causation, a compound individual (whose beginning and end are not known). We conceptualized as the supreme creators of all things
in the cosmic order. These ‘personalities’ are identify by the term - Sedi Melo (earth - sky gods). As the mythological training goes deeper, Sedi Melo is regarded as something existed before everything. The Adis uphold the supreme creator as Sedi Melo, and Sedismly can be broadly called as the indigenous religion. The Adis believe that all living beings and other objects have been created by the supernatural power and creator. So the Padam - Minyong called this power as Sedi.

Ering (1980) states that it is the Sedi who created a number of gods and goddesses who in turn gave birth to numerous invisible spirits and control various spheres of the nature. So, Sedi Melo is called by the Minyong as the creator of the universe and everything. The real life givers are the sun and the moon. Everything on the earth conceived these two as the mother and the father of the human race. For constituting the Adi religion i.e., Donyipoloism, all forms of the indigenous faiths, beliefs and practices have, mingled emphasis on the physical, spiritual, philosophical and ideological matrixs. The interpretation made by Rukbo about Donyipolo are as follows, ‘Donyipolo (god) spiritual concept, Donyipolo (sun and moon) physical concept, Donyipolo (faith) philosophical concept (cited in Koley, 1998:81)’. According to the spiritual concept, Donyipolo is worshiped as the supreme deity, who is benevolent, invisible and live far beyond. According to Ering, physical Donyipolo is, ‘The creator radiates through the Donyi and the Polo in the form of the rays and the light. His qualities, truth, peace, purity, love, simpartitionality, wisdom etc. are
focussed through the sun and the moon to enable man to realise Him abstract from (The Donyi – Polo cult) (cited in Osik, 1981:12)’. In the philosophical concept Donyipolo is an agency of social control to the Adi society.

According to Ering, ‘Donyi - Poloism is nothing but humanism. The term Donyi - Polo signifies truth, peace, purity, love, justice, equality and wisdom. It is a cult, a vibrating philosophy and living human faith cultivated by the people through centuries and generations for channelizing socio - cultural aspiration of the believers’ (cited in Koley, 1998:81). In the process of psychological and intellectual adjustment Donyipoioloism is associated with moral values, social ethics, and nobility of conduct are developed since the time immemorial. According to Chandran (1994:16), ‘The Donyipolo concept itself reflects the culmination of an evolutionary process in the growth of a religion. Thus, like any other religion of the world, Donyipolo concept has possessed a vast mythology of its won with all its mundane and supernatural elements’.

Koley (1998) discusses Donyipoloism as a conception of a supreme being personifying eternal truth, ideas and beliefs among the Adis including the tribes of Tani group, viz, Apatani, Nishi, Hill Miri and Tagin. Rikam (2005:118) opines that, ‘It is based on this belief that Donyipolo (Sun and Moon) is the supreme God of the universe Tani group, called themselves and believe themselves to be the descendent of Abu Tani (a mythological ancestor)’. The unique entity of Donyipolo is found in its oneness of belief the ultimate truth, soul and god Donyipolo. The belief of oneness is witnessed by the claim that all the surviving
followers of the Donyipoloism located in various places proclaim as they are the progenies of the Abutani (Bayan, 1998). The people of some other parts of the Himalayan state have also faith in such concept. The major chunk of Arunachal Pradesh believe themselves to be the descendents of the common father Tani, and the Tani spread over an area from the East Kameng district to the present Dibang Valley district of Arunachal Pradesh. Lego (2007:6) reviewed, ‘The Tani comprised of Adi, Apatani, Bagin, Hill Miri, Nyshi, and Tagin of Arunachal Pradesh’. All these tribes call themselves as the progenies of the Donyipolo, and therefore, regarded Donyi as mother and Polo as father. Rukbo, writes ‘The Adi including all tribes of Tani group have a deep rooted faith on the supremacy of the universe whom they call Donyi - Polo in indirect manner’ (cited in Koley, 1998).

The traditional animistic religion of the Adis can also be called as Donyipolo religion. Innumerable myths, legends and superstitious beliefs shrouded in this origin. Choudhury (1971:11) writes that, ‘Religion of all denominations have their origin in the same kind of emotional upsurge and symbolic process of reasoning as underlie a common human approach to the problem of existence’. According to Dupak (1982:14), ‘The meaning of Donyipolo should not be confined with just tribal meaning of Donyi (the sun) and Polo (the moon). When these two words combine into one they form a synthesis of the two forces to mean completely two different things. The real meaning of the Donyipolo is the supreme power, which is almighty or
omnipotent, omnipresent, immortal and invisible. The word Donyipolo is equivalent to God, Bhagawan or Allah’. According to Mibang (1994), everything that exist in the universe is through Him (God) and He is Donyipolo. In the wider sense, Donyipolo is the common spiritual authority of the Adis.

According to Taipodia (2002:12), ‘It appears that the endeavour to translate or to project the meaning of Donyipolo (sun and moon) literally as an object of our worship is proving not only as blunt and crude, but also most uninspiring. Our Donyipolo is conceived as the perfectest human form like Vishnu - shining, glowed and blinding hollow of light. He (Donyipolo) is the creator, preserver, destroyer and dispensessor. After this form, he has many other subordinates over whom He rules supreme’. The Adis of Arunachal Pradesh strongly believe that Donyipolo is the supreme power in the universe. But when taken together, the word Donyipolo signifies something quite different, meaning the God, the Father creator, protector of the universe. He is invisible and resides somewhere above the sky in the Heaven. Everything is under His care and all the things in the world are created by Him (Pieggam, 1971).

Donyipolo is regarded as the highest divine figure by the Adis. He is the controller of the fate of men, authority and custodian of the universe, birds, animals and other objects. Like any other religion of the world, they also believe that, they have multitudes of gods and goddesses. The Minyongs believe Sedi Melo as the creator of the universe, Pedong Nane as goddess, who gives birth to all living beings, Gumin Soyin and Ekum are as preserver and uyu as the devil or
destructor. In addition to all these, there are some gods and goddesses who are the givers of peace, fortune, happiness, wealth, prosperity, etc. They are Kine Nane, Ute Poro, Agung Agam and many others. The gods and the spirits are believed in to be the creation of Sedi. The Adis believe in a host of gods and spirits with lesser poser and offer sacrifice to propitiate them. Some of them are malevolent and some others are benevolent. Between these two groups of deities man has to struggle constantly for his existence. To survive in this earth, man has to keep the benevolent and malevolent spirits in good relation. The Adis worship all these gods and goddesses by celebration of different festivals like Solung, Mopun, Etor, Aran, Dorung, etc. The evil deities are not worshipped by celebrating festivals, but appeased when they create troubles to individual, family or village. Thus, all forms of indigenous faith, beliefs and practices which are found among the Adis, constitute their religion.

Donyipolo tradition has a vast mythology with all its mundane and supernatural elements had mentioned earlier. The followers of Donyipoloism profess their faith with worship, prayer and various rituals. Donyipolo is remembered and offered prayer on certain occasions. At the time of hardship and difficulty in their daily life, the Adis including the Minyongs pray Donyipolo to rescue and give peace and happiness.

*Donyipolo no ngolum ayane*

*No aginpe ngolum*

*Tornam ganam bilanka*

*Nok angun lok ngolu lodipe giminpe.*

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The broad meaning of this prayer is: Donyipolo, you are the source of our life, give us strength and guide to follow the path of truth.

To solve a dispute between two persons and to get justice an ordeal (amsi) is performed. A day is fixed by the village council and all the villagers gather in that day in a particular place known as amkiteki mobiyang. According to the ordeal the place is decided. In front of the villagers the two persons involved in the disputes have to pray Donyipolo as follows:

Donyi mikmie serine
Polo migo serone
No lusi lunem
Riki songkit lo
Tagit molangka
No luo lunem
Rilok songko lo
Tapet molangka.

The broad meaning of this prayer is: Donyipolo, you are the omnipresent and omniscient, come and witness this ordeal. Give justice to the innocent and help to find the culprit.

According to the Minyongs, people get punishment for his sin in this world by having met unnatural death, incurable disease or other forms of misfortunes. One cannot hide his or her misdeeds from the searching eyes of the sun and the moon (Donyipolo). Donyipolo is omniscient and the symbol of justice, equality and fraternity. Through light Donyipolo keep on watching on everything on the earth equally and impartially.
Ering (1973:13) observed that, ‘The inquisitive and thoughtful mind of the Adis made them to raise several queries since traditional past. From where has the human beings come? What makes the physical man lively? Why man cries? Is there a power immaterial of our physical life? Is it due to the presence of an invisible substance that material life exists? These are some of the general and natural queries made by the Adis through the generations. As an answer to such quarries, the people of the tribe arrive at the concluding belief that an invisible substance called yalo or ayit is in existence and it makes the physically man lively or active. According to the traditional belief, the yalo comes from the eternity, sojourns in the material world and goes back to the external world of peace. It is of the arrival of the ayit that a human child is born. The presence of yalo makes the corporal human body lively and its departure renders the physical man lifeless or dead. The yalo is, therefore, immortal. This belief in the immortality of yalo has been handed down through the generations and, as such, it is deep - rooted in the mind of the Adis’. Ering (1973) opine that by Donyipolo to whom all material begin and surrender and therefore, this god is the supreme power. By Donyipolo, in the religious - cultural the Adis mean, the supreme power or the supreme truth, which pervades through all things, and they are not necessarily the physical sun and the moon.

Donyipolo is the giver of life and He (Donyi) is also the creator of earth, air, water, heat and light. In this way Donyipolo religion is considered as scientific religion (Dai, 2000). So, irrespective of the various religious groups, a
good number of people believe that life is the creation of God, and no life can exist without air, earth, heat, light and water. These are of the gifts of Donyipolo. Dai (ibid) further expressed that the physical Donyipolo is not considered as God, the physical Donyipolo is only a symbolic power....there is a power, a creative power similar to that of Donyipolo, which we human beings do not see, but feel deep in the hearts its presence. While attempting to established Donyipoloism as a scientific religion, Dai specified certain points very clearly, such as: Life is a gift of Donyipolo, if Donyipolo suddenly disappears from the universe, it is not possible to imagine the existence of man, animals and other creatures, trees, bushes, grasses, rivers and sea.

There has been tendency among various writers, both indigenous and the non–indigenous, to call the religion of the Adis as Donyipoloism or Donyipolo religion, a name which has been derived from the recognition of Donyipolo, the combined figure of Donyi (the sun) and Polo (the moon), as their popular God (Ering 1970; Dai 1977; Hazarika 1978; Rukbo 1985). The Adis worship them through the priests. The priests sing hymns and direct the procedures of worship and sacrifice. Some non - indigenous scholars also delved into the religion of Donyipolo and examined many other aspects of the religious principles. According to Nath (1986), the concept of Donyipolo is evolutionary. It is the culmination of an evolutionary process in the growth of a religion. The mythology that weaves a faith of the doctrine starts from even the pre-conceptual stage called keyum, which means infinite vacuum. Keyum suggests to
the stage when the earth itself was not there. Unlike in many other religions of the world in which God is the primordial law Himself being the cause and effect in Donyipoloism, the supreme God Himself is the culminating stage of evolution of the gods. According to Donyipoloism, the universe also comes into existence through an evolution. In this respect, Donyipoloism can be called a religion based on science.

Other intellectual’s also views that Donyipoloism is a scientific religion. Some elements on the earth like the air, water, earth, heat and the light are of great importance to all living beings. These elements are gifted by nature. So one cannot imagine how the living beings would stand in absent of these elements. Irrespective of various nature worship and practices, all religious groups in the world believe that life is the creation of God. To the Adis, it is the supernatural power of the Donyipolo, so Donyipolo is the supreme God.

Choudhury (1971), Nath (2014), Bhattacharjee (1982), Kumar (1979) and other non-indigenous scholars compared Adi concepts of religion with the Vedic form of religion. The Donyipoloism is based on the tribal concept of universality, democratic ideology, fraternity, love and justice. All forms of the indigenous faiths, beliefs and practices, are mingled up among the Adis for constituting the religion Donyipoloism, a genuine emphasis on the spiritual, physical, philosophical and ideological realities as natural outcome behind the life of everyday. The Donyipoloists believe that god is supreme, He is one and eternal. The unseen supreme power of the universe is the source of heavenly
objects like sun, moon, stars, earth, and its source of organic ingredients elements like air, water, heat, light. This omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent supreme being is called Donyipolo (God).

4.2 Donyipolo: The Nucleus of Minyong Religion

Religion and its components like beliefs, supernaturals, superstitions, etc., still play a dominant role in the Minyong society. Their religious outlook has been to a great extent coloured by their environment. Dalton (1876:25) wrote, ‘The religion of the Abors consists in a belief in this sylvan deities (epom) to each of whom some particular department in the destiny of the man is assigned’. The Minyong believe in the existence of invisible spirits called uyus, who are not favorable to man. Besides spiritism and animism, they also believe in a hierarchy of powerful deities responsible for the creation and sustenance of the moral order of the thing. Dunbar (1913:62) dealing with the religious beliefs of the Adis says, ‘His (Abor’s) untutored mind hits a demon everywhere, in the sun, and the thunder, the earth and the water. It is a spirit of evil that takes life from all things that have breath, that smites with sickness, that, in the questionable shape of a kinsman from some distance village, lures the unfortunate to his doom in the dark recesses of the forest’. Man always attempts psychological adjustments to his surroundings and thereby build up a body of beliefs, which in their turn form, shape and regulate his behaviour. These beliefs and the resultant behaviour go by the name of religion (Roy, 1960). In short it may be said that religion originated as a human requirement. According to Elwin, ‘There is a general belief in the
Supreme God, who is just benevolent and good. For example, Donyi - Polo, the Sun - Moon God of all the Adi groups, is regarded as the great witness in the sky, the up - holder of truth’ (cited in Nath, 2014:73 - 74). The God Donyipolo (sun and moon) is the nearest approximation of the supreme deity. They reign unchallenged in the heaven and are the ‘eyes of the world’. They watch everything and are the witness. They are endowed with light that illuminates the world and lifts the cover of darkness and are favoured with a position high above in the sky to overlook all (Choudhary 1971).

According to Rukbo (1985) Donyipoloism is the religion of the Adi, Apatani, Mishimi, Nishi and Tagin. It has a vast mythological pedestal with all its mundance and supernatural elements. Donyipolo is combination of two terms. ‘Donyi’ means ‘sun’ and ‘Polo’ means ‘moon’. These two physical and material objects are source of power and energy for living beings which cannot be denied scientifically and philosophically. Thus Donyipolo, the spiritual source and symbol, is believed to be supreme power governing the universe. In the other word Donyipolo is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient.

The religious aspects of the Minyongs characterize into two important factors, a complex system of faith in the spiritual world, and side by side, the concept of supreme being. They believe in both benevolent and malevolent spirits. The evil spirits are believed to be capable of causing disease, miseries and misfortunes to human beings who have the power to exert influence on man in both of his earthly life and after life. Propitiation of the evil spirits is an
important religious aspect of the Minyongs. Besides their literal meaning, the combined word Donyipolo refers to the divine force operating from heaven. According to *The Census of India* (1971:269), ‘The concept of Donyipolo, like Hindu mythology, is evolutionary, which carries the concept of the creation of the universe and human life on the earth. The conceptual structure of their universe is pyramidal with animatism at the base and super naturalism at the top. Beneath the mighty ruler Donyipolo, the Minyongs believe in a number of gods, goddesses and in a hierarchical order’. Accordingly the Adis called themselves as the progenies of the sun and the moon and descendent of Abutani. But the sun and the moon were never worshipped by any system until the present movement was started. The sun and the moon are the mother and father of the Adis, respectively. In every ritual and in all auspicious occasions they do not offering anything in the names of Donyipolo directly; but this supreme beings names are recalled to witness their offerings to different deities.

At present, the whole concept of Donyipolo is systematized by local intellectuals and Donyi Polo Yelam Kebang (the Donyi Polo Association) gave a new shape, law and norms as a religion and called it as Donyipolo religion or Donyipoloiism. There was no written text about Donyipolo, and from 1980 onwards the leaders of the Donyipolo Association and the interested local people, social workers, NGOs, etc., are trying to gather and textualized their beliefs in the form of written document. Donyipolo as a religious system emerged among the Tani group of tribes like the Adi, Apatani, Tagin, etc., of Arunachal Pradesh.
in 1960s. This is a cult of sun moon worship. The Minyongs, a sub tribe of the Adi, believe that the omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent God manifests itself in the Donyi (sun) and the Polo (moon). The Minyongs believed to be born out of the union of the sun and the moon. It is also believed that these two entities give everything for life and protect them from any kind of danger and difficulties.

4.3 Donyipolo as High God

In many societies of the world, both tribal and non – tribal, people believe in multiple supernaturals. However, in almost all such societies, they revere on a god as tutelary deity or high god. The great anthropologist Lowie (1960:122) opines, ‘The savages conceived their high gods as ‘undefined external beings’, to them the deity was ‘a maznified non – natural man’, - one, in other words, vastly superior to natural human beings, but not envisaged as resembling the human body, a conception that may have been of later origin’.

The Minyong believe in the existences of many spirits, benevolent as well as malevolent deities. They consider Donyipolo as the supreme god or high god. They do not offer any sacred food or sacrifice animals in the name of Donyipolo, but offer different items like pig, fowls, etc., to the spirits. A complex system of faith in the spiritual world and side by side the concept of supreme being are the two important factors, which characterized the Minyong religion. Besides the literal meaning, the combined word Donyipolo refers to a divine force operating from heaven. They believe that the high god known as Donyipolo is Almighty,
supreme and creator, and also strongly believe that Donyipolo has the capacity to give justice to all equally and He never gives undue favour. Therefore, Donyipolo is remembered all the times by the Adis and believed that He lives in the heart of every individual. The Minyongs, who also strongly believe in Donyipolo, did not create anthropomorphic form of Donyipolo. Osik (1982:14) writes, ‘We cannot present his exact physical form, but He must be looking like human being’. Sometimes Donyi is called as Donyi *ane* (*ane* means mother) and sometime Donyi *kaki* (*kaki* means uncle), here uncle means mother’s brother. In the Minyong society, while proving somebody’s innocence in the trial they address Donyi as *kaki*, so the Minyongs called him as male or female according to the suitability of sentences. According to Singh (1991:19), ‘Doni - Polo (sun and moon) god is the nearest approximation to the supreme deity. They reign unchallenged in the heavens and are the ‘eyes of the world’.

The Minyongs, refer to the God as Donyipolo, who is the supreme being, invisible, and powerful. In their day to day life as well as in distresses also they refer to their God as ‘*Donyipolo ayalinkaka*’, meaning ‘Donyipolo bless us’. If somebody commits wrong to other then the sufferer will say ‘*Donyipolo - e – kayi*’, which means ‘Donyipolo’s eyes will see him’. If a person goes to jungle then he will say ‘*Donyipolo a kaye nena*’, which means ‘Donyipolo will take care of us or look after us’. A man, who is a public figure with sense of justice, generosity and popularly known as ‘*Donyipolo amiko*’ (a man like Donyipolo). In different family matters also Donyipolo is refered. If a family is going through
a trouble for long time and cannot solve the problem then it is referred as ‘Si Donyipoloke iname, ngolu Tanie ati ikenmaye’, means ‘this is done by Donyipolo, so we human beings can not do anything’.

When the researcher asked to the villagers to described their god Donyipolo, most of them described him in the following manner: He is invisible, he is creator of all things (Runa Pina); supreme being, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient and powerful; He lives in the heart of man; He is the creator of all human beings and the deities. Donyipolo is sometimes referred as god and some other times as goddess by them. Most of the Minyongs, both literates and illiterates, are ignorant about the physical features, attire, abode and nature of Donyipolo. This research scholar asked about those to an illiterate lady, she was on the way to her jhum field. Her name is Mrs. Yaling Mibang Jamoh, aged 59 years, mother of 2 children, one daughter and one son. Her husband is also illiterate and maintains the family depending on jhuming. They are the inhabitants of Oyan village. This research scholar politely greeted the lady and started chatting. She was very happy. But when the research scholar asked her about the Donyipolo like how Donyipolo looks like, where He resides, what is his garment, etc., her small eyes become more smaller. A big question mark was conspicuous on her innocent face and as if she is about to tell the investigator. What a foolish girl you are? You do not know about Donyipolo? He is our great god. From our childhood we heard about Him. We fear and revere Donyipolo. He can see everything and do everything. Abode, dress, etc., are immaterial to
Donyipolo. He can reside anywhere and can wear any garb. Yes, she had describe many things about Donyipolo, but those have not helped the researcher to know in detail about the god. Probably it is due to the dearth of anthropomorphic form of the god or any traditional picture of him. Even there is no folksongs or prayers among them which describe meticulously the physical features and nature of the god. Probably due to such situation, most of the Minyongs do not have crystal clear idea about Donyipolo.

Miss Lolum Ering, aged 15 years, an inhabitant of Sile village, is a student of class XI in Sile Higher Secondary school of Sile area. In answering the questions on Donyipolo she told honestly that she know very less about Donyipolo. From her childhood she know that Donyipolo is their high god, who is very generous and cordial to the good people. She never heard about the physical features and attires of this god; but it is said by her parent, kith and kins, and the fellow villagers, that he is Almighty and lives somewhere above the sky. She has deep respect to Donyipolo, and before her examination and in any crisis, she respectfully remembers His name. The same case with Mr. Binam Talo, aged 17 years, a resident of Rani village, and a student of class XII of Pasighat Higher Secondary School of Pasighat area. He told that he has acute respect to Donyipolo. He has seen pictures of many Hindu gods and goddesses, and in many cinemas he has observed the physical features of those gods and goddesses. Due to his inquisitiveness he had asked many educated and religious Minyongs about the anthropomorphic form of their high god in his village, but none can
answer in a satisfactory manner. He added that most of his class mates, school mates and fellow villagers do not know much about Donyipolo, but all of them respect Him as a very powerful and considerate high god.

Mr. Tajum Tasung, aged 53 years, a contractor by profession, is an inhabitant of Boeing village. He is a graduate. He told this investigator that many Minyongs have adopted Christianity abandoning their pristine religion. But he has great faith in his traditional religion which gives him solace and encouragement at the time of needs. He does not know about the physical features and look of Donyipolo, but as an ardent believer of his forefather’s religion, he greatly revere Donyipolo, the nucleus of their religion. However, Mrs. Oyi Komut, aged 56 years, illiterate, mother of 7 children and permanent resident of Sika Todang village, nourishes some different ideas about Donyipolo. According to her Donyipolo can live anywhere, take any shape and wear any dress according to his desire. Although Donyipolo is invisible, sometimes she sees this god in her dreams, where he comes like a coy and gentle man like a Minyong grandfather. She does not think that Donyipolo should be propitiated with some objects or sacrifices, because he is the authority of all things present in the world, and it is not necessary that his objects should be given to him in the name of propitiation.

For Mr. Tagging Taki, aged 47 years, politician, who has read upto B. A. and an inhabitant of Pasighat. According to him Donyipolo may look like a healthy and handsome human being. When a Minyong dies, the villagers utter
'Donyipolo among' or 'Donyipolo amongtolo', which means ‘the man is proceeding towards the land of Donyipolo’. Therefore, Mr. Taging Taki believe that Donyipolo lives in another planet. Mr. Nangir Jamoh, aged 38 years, a pharmacist and a resident of Rani village, opines that Donyipolo is the binding factors and torch bearer not only among the Adi tribe, but also many others tribes. He is invisible, but a strong force, who has taught the human beings how to lead a proper life. He further believe that a proper believer of Donyipolo can not breach the taboos prevalent in the society and contributes towards the betterment of human life.

Mr. Tatai Tasing, aged 76 years, illiterate, an inhabitant of Todang village, is a well known priest of that area. He said that he is honest believer of Donyipolosim, where the centre is lord Donyipolo, in whose instructions air flows, flower blooms, trees bear fruits and human beings take birth, conduct different works and die. No rituals is directly related to Donyipolo, but in each ritual they have to remember His kindness, because he is just like the heart beats in a person. Another priest Mr. Kokope Tayeng, aged 50 years, illiterate, an inhabitant of Oyan village, who is also the miri (priest of Oyan Gangging), said that Donyipolo is invisible and nobody can touch him. According to Mr. Tayeng, Donyipolo is the epitome of love and affection. He added that Donyipolo sometimes comes in his dream in the form of a beautiful, middle aged, Minyong woman wearing the traditional attire of a Minyong girl. Donyipolo comes silently in his dream and also disappears silently; but the priest feels that Donyipolo
comes to shower his benediction to Him and through Him Donyipolo tries to elevate the human society.

From the foregoing cases it is conspicuous that the Minyongs have no concreate idea about the form, abode, and attire of Donyipolo. However, all the Minyongs, who have faith in their age old religion, believe that He is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. All of them believe that Donyipolo can live in any place, air, water, earth, sky, even under the earth. The common epithets given to Him are – benevolent, considerate, helpful, boon giver, who is the authority of universe. According to His instructions darkness end and light comes, plants grow, air flow, seasons come and go and human beings conduct different activities. He is appeased through traditional verses only, which were transmitted from ascending generation to descending generation through the process of enculturation. This prayer is known as abang, till to the few years back which is not available in printed form. Not only the Minyongs, the whole Adi tribes is proud to have abang. Donyipolo is remembered in every occasion of life – birth, marriage, death, crisis, and so on, but he is not appeased alone, although in every ritual certain prayers are conducted in the name of this high god. People also take oath, bless and curse in the name of Donyipolo.

It has been already stated that the Minyongs address Donyipolo as a male deity or a female one according to the situations. Lord Siva, the Hindu god of destruction and reproduction, is also known by the names Ardha – nari (half woman) or Ardha - nariswara (half – woman - god). It is ‘a form in which Siva is
represented as half male and half female, typifying the male and female energies. There are several stories accounting for this form’ (Dowson, 1987: 21). Each pious Hindu desires to visit some of the sacred places related to the life and deeds of their gods and goddesses. Likewise the Buddhists, Christians, Jains, Muslims, Sikhs, etc., have sacred places integral to their religions. However, the Minyongs do not have any sacred place which are indispensably related to their religion. They utter the name of Donyipolo in different contexts of their life, but most of them do not know any prayer to propitiate Donyipolo. It has been already stated that abang is a special kind of prayer and to appease different deities, but most of the Minyongs do not remember this prayer for its tuff language, which is significantly different from their day to day language. Traditionally they do not assemble in household or village gatherings to conduct prayer for appeasing Donyipolo. At present due to the revivalistic movement village prayer houses are constructed in each village where the Minyongs adhering to the traditional religious faith are resided. Such a prayer house is known as gangging. In such prayer houses the Minyongs, who believed in Donyipolosim, gathered on Saturday/Sunday of each week and pray to their Almighty Donyipolo through abang, in which Donyipolo is glorified and gratitude is expressed by uttering His name for His generosity again and again. The abang is a folk prayer, which is now available in book form known as Angun Bedang. The Adi is a composite tribe and each of its sub – tribe has different language. Abang is written in Adi
language and in roman script, and therefore, the members of different sub-tribes find difficulty to read and memorize the very long prayer.

Apart from Donyipolo, there are some benevolent gods and goddesses who are nearer to Donyipolo according to their genealogy of creation and beliefs. Donyipolo occupies a place in the centre, while other gods and goddesses who are lower in hierarchy like Dadi Bote, Kane Nane, and Konki Komang, et al., occupy a place in the right side and the other lower deities in hierarchy like Doying Bote and Gumin Soyin, occupy a place in the left side of Donyipolo. The deities are placed on both the sides of Donyipolo according to their birth location. Doying Bote (god of wisdom and knowledge) is manifested for imparting knowledge, Kine Nane (goddess of grain) for good harvesting and prosperity, Dadi Bote (god of domestic animal) for the health and prosperity of animals, Gumin Soyin (god of household and protection) for keeping and protection of mankind and Kongki Komang (god who designs physical form of man) determine human status. They are very kind to human being but stop blessing when one deviates from the principle of Donyipolo and abstain from performing periodical offerings in the festivals like Aran, Droung, Etor, Solung, etc. Different evil spirits take advantage of this unresponsive period and cause all types of sufferings and misfortunes to human beings. Some malevolent gods also tuned to hostile spirits when people violet the rules of conduct. The man could get back their mercy and pardon only by atonement in the form of offering
acceptable to them (Choudhury, 1971). In various ways, they look after the welfare of men and actually they are the guardian family deities.

The priest plays a pivotal role in the society and carries out all the functions in performing religious rites and sacrifices. The priests are believed to have the knowledge of divination. Many authors, writers and ethnographers on the religion of the Adis have called the priest as *miri* and *mibu* but in the field study this investigator has found that the study people call him as *taabe*.

The Minyongs, faith in Donyipolo is very strong. Donyipolo is the supreme power for them. His eyes are so illiminous that nothing can hide from Him. Here are some case studies that show how the Minyongs have strong belief towards Donyipolo as their guiding factor in their daily life. Chaudhuri, (1979:149) writes, ‘It seems that earlier the Adis like Hindus turned to Him when they were in trouble, in all their sorrows and sufferings but never when prosperous’.

The faith of the Minyongs on Donyipolo is conspicuous through the following case studies:

- Mrs. Ayi Apang, aged 45 years, read up to class ix, is at present a resident of Oyan village. She is a Christian by birth and before her marriage she spend her life in the family of orientation at Pangin village, who professed Christianity. She was married to Mr. Otem Apang, aged 47 years, who read up to VIII, and cultivation is his main occupation. They have 5 children, the eldest daughter is married and the youngest son has attained only 14 years of age. She lives with her family
of procreation at her husband’s family of orientation. They have constructed a new Assam type house in her husband’s parental land, the kitchen of which is a traditional one, a pile dwelling in wooden posts, flattend bamboo floor and walls and the roof is made up of toko (*Livistona jenkinsiana* Griff.) leaves. Her husband’s family follows Donyipoloism, and although she does not have faith in Donyipolo, sometimes she attend the weekly prayer of that high god in the village prayer house only to please the members of her husband’s family. She had fixed a flag of Donyipolo also in front of their house.

One day Mrs. Apang with her husband went to Pangin, in Siang district, an adjacent village of her husband’s house, to attend a family function there. It was a bright sunny day, and her eldest daughter, who was 6 month pregnant, was there in her house along with her other children and in-laws. Suddenly fire caught in their kitchen and within a few minutes it covers the whole kitchen. Hue and cries arose there and the family members and the villagers tried their best to extinguish the fire, but in vain. The havoc of fire grabbed with panic the whole village. The villagers afraid that this fire may make ashes the entire village within a few seconds. The news of this mishap spreads like a jungle fire and hearing this alarming news Mrs. Apang trembles in agony. Unconsciously she utters the name of Donyipolo again and again and pray Him to save the innocents and their property.

Suddenly weather changed, black clouds cover the vast sky and incessant rain washes the mother earth. The heavy rain extinguished the
fire. Hurriedly Mrs. Apang came back to her residence, and she found that although a part of her kitchen is burnt, the rest of her house is standing without any harm, infront of which Donyipolo flag is flying gently. Till today it is believed by her that it is due to the mercy of Donyipolo their residencial unit with the entire village have been saved from the devastating fire.

Mrs. Partima Domang, aged 28 years, illiterate, mother of 3 children, is an inhabitant of Sile village. Her daughter Miss Oyi Domang, aged 10 years, a student of class IV of Sile Upper Primary School, is suffering from an unknown disease for around one and a half year. Mrs. Partima Domang is from a hand to mouth family, and both she and her husband work hard in jhum field to earn their livelihood. It is not possible for her to take the ailing daughter outside their locality, not to speak about the treatment of the daughter outside the state. She was very unhappy for her daughter’s ill health, but handicapped to treat her. She is an ardent believer of Donyipolo. Once on the day of the weekly prayer, she took her daughter to the village prayer house to appease Donyipolo. On her request the assembled people there along with the priest of the prayer house pray to Donyipolo requesting to bless the patient to recover from the unknown ailment. They all pray for the recovery of the innocent girl and the priest tied a holy creeper in her left wrist. After returning from the prayer house her daughter feels better and within a few days she becomes normal. Her health is improved and she developed interest in her study. Mrs. Domang
strongly believe that it is due to the mercy of Donyipolo, who is saviour of the people trapped in distress.

Mr. Tajum Tasung, aged 54 years, a businessman of Boeing village, Pasighat, and also the President of Central Gangging Committee, Pasighat, told the researcher that a person from Balek village die at night in a bike accident; when the deceased was coming back from market, then the bike from opposite side came in high speed and strucked him and he succumbed to death immediately. When the villagers got his dead body only then they guess that it may be a bike accident because the print of tyre of the bike was found in the mud in the spot. However, who had committed that accident was not known to the people. The family members of the deceased was in a havoc and prayed to Donyipolo in the central gangging of Pasighat praying to the Almighty that the culprit, who had killed an innocent man, should be punished. After a few months of this sad incident the people observed that a young boy and a damsel are quarrelling over some matter and the girl had said angrily that she will tell the people about the youth that he had killed an innocent man a few months back through his uncontrolled bike driving. Mr. President commented that nothing could be hid from the observation of their high god Donyipolo. Then the central gangging Committee punished the boy of Rs. 10,000 as a compensation to the beraved family and the culprit had to take a vow not to ride his bike in extreme speed which may caused harm to him and also to the pedestrians.
Mrs. Olung Tamut aged 60 years, an illiterate housewife of Rani village is an ardent followers of Donyipolo and actively involved in the Donyipolo organization she had suffer from migrane for more than a one year whose obstacles or her activety in day to day life. Her disease was treated in the medical centres of Arunachal Pradesh and also in Dibrugarh of Assam. Due to her intolerantable pain even she went to Chennai for the treatment of migrane, but unfortunately she was not recovered. One day at night she saw Donyipolo in her dream as a middle aged, coy looking and cordial gentleman who advice her to wash her hair thoroughly in the morning facing towards east and pray to Him in the Donyipolo community prayer house and wish to Almighty to get treat of the disease. In the next prayer day she went to the village prayer house and pray to Donyipolo to recover her disease. Superzingly, from that day onwards she slowly recovered from her ailment and at present she is not suffering from migrane. She had narrated about her miraculous recovery to every one and her faith towards Donyipolo becomes more acutu.

4.4 Salient Features of Donyipolo

According to the Minyongs there is a place called Donyipolo among or Donyi among, where Donyipolo lives. Nath (2014:186) opines,‘Donyipolo among is a place where Donyipolo can be seen as we see another man standing in front of us. The picture of Donyipolo among description may not be similar to like that of the heaven or swarga, but the concept is same’. The Donyipolo among cannot be attained by everybody. One can achieve Donyipolo among by
his pious activities during his life span in the world. Those who do not conduct any good work on the earth, he cannot go there in spite of any amount of yearning.

According to Mr. Tajum Tasung, aged 55 years, resident of Boeing village, and president of the Donyipolo Central Gangging, said that the features and the attires of Donyipolo are not described clearly in abang. However, the attires of the some other gods and goddesses have been described in it. Such gods and goddesses wear Adi dress according to their gender. It is known from the abang that Donyipolo does not use any ornament. The followers of Donyipolo religion do not have any traditional shrine or sacred place to worship. The offerings and sacrifices made on various occasions for different deities were mostly offered in own house, and sometimes in forest, river banks, community places, etc.

The following lines of the abang describes some of the features of Donyipolo:

*Donyi mikme serine*
*Polo migo serone*
*Donyipolo takamem kanggabdung*
*Donyi nilung tuji bilaika*
*Polo orman pagee bilaika*
*Donyi alem leko bilaika*
*Polo alakem leko bilaika.*

From these lines of the abang it is known that Donyipolo has eyes, hands, and legs, but numbers of those organs are not described in the traditional
prayer. The Hindu god Vishnu (the protector and preserver) has two eyes, four hands, and two legs; goddess Durga (the saviour in distress) has three eyes, ten hands and two legs; lord Siva (the destroyer and reproducer) has three eyes, two hands and two legs. But the Minyongs do not certainly know about the number of these organs of Donyipolo. Before the arts of Hindu gods and goddesses by the great Indian artist Raja Ravi Verma in pre-Independent period of our country, the Hindus also know less about the physical features, attires, etc., about their gods and goddesses, although they have enormous store of scriptures where these features are meticulously described along with the sculptures of the deities in a good number of temples and sacred places not only in India, but also distributed all over the world. The Adis are devoid of such scriptures and sculptures, for which the Minyongs have only a faint idea about different anthropomorphic features of Donyipolo and their pristine gods and goddesses.

The Minyongs believe that Donyipolo has eyes to witness and to provoke. There is no place to hide from Donyipolo. Donyipolo is ever probing and witnessing. He is ever vigilant and knows about the past, present and future.

4.5 Appeasing Donyipolo

It has been already stated about the process of appeasement of Donyipolo in chapter IV. From that description it is clear that traditionally Donyipolo is not alone worshiped by the Adis including the Minyongs. They do not have any pristine temple, shrine, even a particular place to worship Donyipolo. The Minyongs also do not appease Donyipolo in jungle, river bank and field, nor they
offer sacrifice animals to Him. The traditional animistic religion of the Adis including the Minyongs undergone a reformation from 1986, and concept of Donyipoloism evolved with addition an omission in their eminent social leaders. The Adis try to bring their traditional faith in a systematic manner. They have added many alien elements in their traditional religion rejecting some old traits. The local intellectuals have developed an image of Donyipolo in a symbolic manner whom they can see and touch. Through the image they can concentrate in appeasing of Donyipolo. According to the Minyongs, Donyipolo is beyond their imagination and reach. Now the image of this god is kept in any corner of their residence and in prayer centres for the people for appeasement. The Minyongs practise worshipping of Donyipolo daily at home. However, it is not mandatory for the devotees to worship this high god every day. They can worship Donyipolo any time of the day and night according to their desire.

Though the Minyongs do not have community prayer house or temple earlier, after the reformation movement they have constructed it at in each Adi dominated village to assemble for praying Donyipolo once in a week. Such a prayer house is known as gangging. Saturday or Sunday is the day for worshipping Donyipolo. In some villages people assembled in Saturday while in some other they assemble in Sunday according to their convinience.

4.6 Organizations Integral to Donyipolo

In the last few decades, the people of Arunachal Pradesh have been witnessing many new problems. One of such problems as the tribal elites quite
often refer, are proselytisation of the Christian missionaries. It has caused worries to the people because there are many instances of imparting training to the local youths through, the new religion with evil motives and to create disturbances in the society. Considering such danger and threats, several social, cultural and religious organizations working for the people of Arunachal Pradesh came forward to unite themselves. In the mean time a number of awareness camps were organized at different prominent places of the state. The Donyipolo Trust Committee was organized to gear up the activities to remote indigenous faith and culture at first in the district level and then gradually in the whole state. It deserved to mentioned that the awareness camps concentrated chiefly to make the people aware of their own culture and identity. Then several other organizations related to indigenous faith came up.

The Donyi Polo Yelam Kebang (The Donyi Polo Association), popularly known as DYK, is the oldest community organizations that come up in the year 1986. The DYK has own library and local publications. There are over all 12 members, 10 executive members, 1 chief patron, 1 chief adviser and 5 advisor member in the DYK. They publish books and magazines and articles of the local writers integral to the improvement of the society. The Donyi Polo Yelam Kebang has its own building which is known as Engo Takar Dere at Pasighat of East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh. This is formed for developmental work related to the religious and social life of the Adis. This organization draft a code of conduct for Donyipolo religion. The main motive of this organization is to
protect own indigenous religion. It starts with the slogan ‘Loss of culture is loss of identity’. The traditional prayer to appease Donyipolo are preserved by them. This organization has also a women wing established in the year 1992. The Adi women gather in the village prayer house once in a year on Saturday or Sunday to make ridgin (holy rope) which is tied in the wrist of the devotees of Donyipolo. They represent the gangging in prayer songs (Gangging miri gognam) and cultural programme outside their villages and performing prayer songs and dance in Solung festival. Donyi Polo Yelam Kebang also have a Youth Wing, composed of both young boys and girls, which formed in the year 1990. Through this organization youths are provided social, cultural and religious training. Its main purpose is to create awareness among the youths to preserve local culture and religion. The trained youths go to the different villages and trained the folks to revive their own culture. The youth wing goes to different districts of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam for cultural exchange programmes.

4.7 The Gangging

Worshipping in a prayer house (gangging) is a new trait among the Minyong of Arunachal Pradesh. It has been already stated that traditionally they are animist and appeased a good number of deities in household and community rituals. In most of the Minyong villages the community had no fixed place to worship the supernaturals. According to Borang,‘Gangging is an Adi word which literally means a place of worship of the traditional faith and beliefs of the Adis. It is also a place to keep the images of Donyipolo and the other deities’ (cited in
According to Tayeng (2008: 22 - 24), ‘The practical ideas of systematic revival were bought by some members of the Donyi – Polo Mission who attended a meeting in the World Religious Conference and who sowed the seeds of the religious practice at Pasighat in December 1996. From then onward they gathered every Saturday regularly. Orientation courses to train youth were also conducted to spread the message of Donyi – Polo’.

Gangging is a place which evolves wisdom and enlightenment. The word Gangging as described in abang represents a sacred place for keeping the idols of gods and goddesses for worshiping. It may also be conceived as a place where fight took place to denounce evil spirits’. Borang (2008: 62) writes, ‘In Abang, Donyi Gangging Siring or Polo Gangging Sirmg is mentioned as gathering place but never refers to community worship of Donyipolo’. It seems that earlier the Adis like Hindus turned to Him when they were in trouble, in all their sorrows and sufferings, but never when prosperous’. Traditionally the Adis do not have any temple or shrine for appeasement of any deity. The concept of gangging emerged along with the reform movement for Donyipoloism, which is basically popularized by Donyi Polo Yelam Kebang since 1986 under the leadership of late Talom Rukbo. Prior to that date, the Donyipolo religion didn't have place of worship. According to Rukbo, ‘The word Gangging is derived from gangging Siring, an imaginary land or spiritual tree that exists somewhere in between the spiritual and natural world from where every object of living and non - living came in to existence’ (cited in Chaudhuri, 2013:265). All of the ganggings
established in each of the villages of the Siang districts are centrally regulated by the Donyi Polo Yelam Kebang.

The first Donyipolo gangging among the Minyongs was built in Solung ground of Lamrung, of Pasighat area, in the year 1986. The gangging is built in the pattern of traditional house, principally with bamboo in a raised platform, with a roof cover with thatch. It is of a rectangular shaped house, surrounded by walls made of flattened bamboo. But due to limitation of bamboo and such houses have to be repaired in every three or four year, so now ganggings are built in Assam type the pattern of houses or in raised platform with cement, C. I. Sheet roofs and brick walls. There is one central gangging in the Siang district. This gangging is bigger and spacious than the village ganggings. Generally a gangging is constructed facing eastern direction. Most of the present gangging are simple Assam type houses constructed on rectangular pucca plinth divided into two principal parts – a small room (sanctum sanctorum), where the objects of revere are placed, and a spacious hall, where the devotees assemble for prayers.

It is pertinent to note here that traditionally the Adis are devoid of idols and images of their gods and goddesses including Donyipolo. However, due to the revivalistic movement images comes in their religion, and the image of Donyipolo and other gods and goddesses are kept in the small room of the gangging. Small space which is adjacent to the sacred room of the gangging, is used as store room. However, the research scholar has found that except a few
ganggings the other ganggings have not this space to keep objects integral to prayer house. During prayer sessions the devotees sit on bamboo mats on the floor of the hall of the gangging making conspicuous divisions of male and female groups. The sacred room has an elevated platform where the images of Donyipolo and other deities are kept. The other deities having place in a gangging are Dadi Bote, Kine Nane, Gumin Soying, Konki Komang, Doying Bote, et al. The revivalistic movement also innovated a religious flag, which is triangular in shape and white in colour, surmounted with red colour in the middle with a wheel, the Minyong religious symbol.

There is no specific location to build the gangging in the village. The gangging is built according to availability of a plot of land and any place adjacent to the village but the direction to build it is facing towards east. In front of the gangging Donyipolo flag is always hang and Banko (Solanum spirale Roxb.) plant is invariably planted because the leaves of this particular plant is used for praying. The gangging organizes prayer on Saturday and Sunday. Saturday was fixed by the Donyi Polo Yelam Kebang (The Donyi Polo Association) but due to some other reasons the devotees have adopted Sunday also as an auspicious day. The day for prayer are Saturday and Sunday, is decided by the people from a region. The rural people generally visit gangging on Saturday, while the people of urban centres visit it on Sunday for prayer. The branches of this organization are now established in all the villages in East Siang district.
The Adis use a book called *Angun Bedang* which is a printed text for prayer in Adi language which is prepared by Central Donyi Polo Yelam Kebang under the supervision of Late Talom Rukbo. The word ‘*Angun*’ mean ‘light’ and ‘*Bedang*’ mean ‘a way’. The *Angun Bedang* is a collection of prayer (*abang*). The *Angung Bedang* consists of 80 per cent of *abang* approximately and the rest are yet to be collected. The verses are written out by the priests of different regions of the Adi dominated Arunachal Pradesh. The *Angun Bedang* was first compiled in the year 1988 and published in 1991. In the first publication it consists of six prayers only. Each *gangging* has a priest to conduct the prayers. The duty for cleaning *gangging* is not assigned to any particular person. The priest cleaned the sacred part of the *gangging* alone and the followers together clean the rest part of the *gangging* once in a week on every Saturday or Sunday before the community prayer begins. Saturday or Sunday is known as *gangging* day, and in different *ganggings* have fixed the date of in the *gangging* according to their facility.

The *gangging* members have to follow certain rules which are newly framed: for example, the male members must sit on the left in row, and the female members on the right row with cross-legged. Within the temple there should not be any noise during prayer except the sound of the hymns. Both male and female visit the *gangging* should put off their shoes when they enter into the prayer hall. The devotees must come to *gangging* clean and in traditional attire. They allow the person of the other religions to enter into the *gangging*. Menstrual
period is a taboo for entering into the temple for the females. No political issues should be discussed there. Quarrels are strictly prohibited in the gangging, and men in intoxicated condition are also allowed to enter in this sacred house.

Before entering the gangging, and after entering they ring the bell of the gangging. The bell is undulating from the middle of the top frame of the front door of each gangging. Devotees bring Angun Bedang, the prayer book, with them. No musical instruments are played for prayer. Before starting and at the end of prayer all the devotees stand up with folded hands and utter loudly in the following way, ‘Bomyarung Donyipolo’ for three times, meaning of which is, ‘Donyipolo is Almighty and everything is under His control’. The closing hymn is rendered at standing position. The priest sits on the raised platform in the left side infront of the gathering, rings a small metal bell, which possesses a handle, chants spells in sacred dialect and welcomes Donyipolo with other gods and goddesses to the prayer house. All the devotees gathered in the gangging, offer flowers light candles, and burn incense sticks. Through the gangging, codified ritual and practices, images of Donyipolo and other subordinate gods and goddesses, have been introduced in the gangging. Inside the gangging, images of Donyipolo and other deities are kept on the raised platform. In each of the gangging, the Donyipolo image is placed on the middle. In the wall of every gangging the picture of one of a prominent leader, i.e., Rukbo’s photo is hang. Prayer starts with a meditation followed by the priest chants the hymns in sacred dialect to welcome the gods and goddesses. In between the prayer the priest
prepares the holy water in a bowl and sprinkles that water on the devotees. He also keeps a small bell in his hand and ring it while chanting. The holy water is considered to be sacred and powerful, which believed to have the capacity to heal sickness and provides mental peace to the people. The devotees drink the water and smear it in the face and head. While praying the devotees bow their heads and keep their hand fold with cross finger.

At the end of the prayer the priest utter thrice *Bomyarung Donyipolo* followed by the people and one by one the devotees proceed to the front door where the bell is hang. After ringing the bell one by one they dispersed.

Prayers are held in every Saturday or Sunday in the morning in each *gangging*. Generally the priest arrives early in the prayer day. The time for public gathering is from 9 to 10 a.m. and prayer time is from 10 to 11 a.m. Water (*asi*), candle, bell (*emul*), religious rope (*ridgin*) (*Pueraria thunbergiana* Benth.), incense sticks and money (*alms*), are accepted as ritual articles needed during the prayer in front of the image of Donyipolo. A small bell with handle is used only by the priest; the sacred ropes are tied on the wrists of the devotees by the priest or by any other devotee. Such ropes are tied on the right wrist of the males and married females and on left of the unmarried girls. The candles and incense sticks are placed in front of the image of the Donyipolo, which are latter burnt by the devotees. Each devotee donate money to the donation box of the *gangging* according their capacity. Before and after the offering of the said materials each
devotee shall ring the hanging bell. Tayeng (2008:33) utters a hymn related to
bell which is as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
Niinur & \ \text{tuuityinge lamping no} \\
Pasi & \ \text{tuyenge lumping no} \\
Looming & \ \text{atange meerang no} \\
Donyi & \ \text{yaloe pokna takamem} \\
Doonang & \ \text{jimange jiona takamem} \\
Yalo & \ \text{solongem sobi kune} \\
Silo, & \ \text{miilo siramnem} \\
Nyamne & \ \text{giiramnem} \\
Ayid & \ \text{kukuem kubilangkukae} \\
Yalo & \ \text{solongem sobi langkuka} \\
Mibo & \ \text{nudenge teena takaemem} \\
Uyu & \ \text{nekoe poona takame} \\
Lamping & \ \text{gooronge goobom dakla} \\
Mibo & \ \text{kiilingem dobit langka} \\
Uyu & \ \text{angkadem duat langka}.
\end{align*}
\]

The broad meaning of the prayer is: You are made by the great smith
Ninur Lomang as an implement to regain the lost soul of an ill man. Perform the
healing of this ill man and your dreadful sound will drive out all the evil spirits’.

The *ridgin* i.e., the sacred rope, is tied to everybody’s wrist. It is believed
by the Adis that this sacred rope can perform as the protector from the evil
spirits. The following hymn referred by Tayeng describes the importance of the
sacred thread:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Sedi liane tandan kone} \\
\text{Melo omie beri kone}
\end{align*}
\]
The broad meaning of the hymn is: You (ridgin) are derived from the vital veins and limbs of Sedi and sanctified as life saviour by all the priests in younger days as medicine and as a strong weapon against all evil spirits. So you are tied in the wrist and neck to cure ailment and to give protection from evil eyes’ (cited in Chaudhuri, 2013:268). It should be noted here that making of ridgin is a feminine job, which are made from a wild creeper locally known as ridgin.

The worshiping starts in the gangging with a prayer song by all the devotees. The opening hymn is as follows:

*Kumdung Donyini Nom,*

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*Doorne ruange koodang telo*
*Neyi kope belunge garbuk kun*
*Pedong rindo kope amin biidungem*
*Puulen toku*
*Neyi akbe obang kone*
*Dooying yiirine rindo kope emto*
*Kiine diange yiirangpe maabong nem*
*Siking kiirin rindo kope emto*
*Dooying taabe takam bulu*
*Taabe dudunge tuutek gename*
*Milo siiram nem, nyamme giiram nem*
*Rindo lejinem jinlik langka*
*Rinya lakjinem jinlik langka emla*
*Taabe ormanem paabi namko*
*Rindo lejinem jinlik bidak*
*Rindo lakjinem jinlik bidak*
*Kinam rmnam takame ailingkuka.*
Kumdung Polo Nom,
Donyi Mikmi Serinom,
Polo Migo Sero Nom,
Donyi Kaki Nom,
Polo Yayo Nom,
Kumdung Donyi Nom,
Kumdung Polo Nom.... .

The broad meaning of the prayer is: We are praying to you Donyipolo; you are the guide and witness of our life. You are the omnipotent and omnipresent; we are praying to you Donyipolo.

Then the priest starts hymns. After this the community prayer will start, which is conducted by an experienced person who is conversant with the Adi mythology. From time to time, moral lessons and philosophy of Donyipolo is delivered by the experienced persons. While praying all the devotees sit cross legged on the floor in the systematic manner. The closing prayers are done in standing position. Not all the devotee attend the prayer regularly. Besides the followers of Donyipolo, some persons from other religions also attend prayers in the gangging. All the guests, who participated in the community prayer, ridgins are tied in their respective hand according to their sex and marital status. It has been observed that in rural areas, 10 to 15 persons attend such prayer regularly. Large number of devotees including children, old men, women, etc., come to the prayer house on the festival day of Donyipolo. Almost all the devotees attend the
gangging during the Donyipolo foundation day. After the prayer, sweets are distributed to the entire devotees present in the prayer house. Even though it is not compulsory, anyone who is willing to give can offer the sweets to the gangging. They use the sweets which are available in the local market. Every Saturday/Sunday candles are lighted inside the gangging and incense sticks are burnt while praying. Inside the gangging feast is not arranged.

Every year on 1st December, founder Late Talom Rukbo’s birthday is celebrated in the gangging. People gather in the gangging on that day and discuss about Talom Rukbo’s (popularly known as Golgibote)’s work, writing and life history. It deserves mention that word ‘Golgi’ means ‘immortal’ and ‘Bote’ means ‘intellectual and creative’. For his contribution in reviving Donyipoloism among the Tani group, the followers unanimously address Talom Rukbo as Golgibote. In the same manner 31st December is celebrated in a grand way throughout the inhabited areas of the Adis as Donyipolo foundation day. On 31st December the voluntary organization Donyi Polo Yelam Kebang (DYK) was established. So, every year in this day the followers of Donyipolo religion go for a rally in the whole village accompanied by the priest and other functionaries of a particular gangging. After the prayer and other religious performances are over, food and drink are shared by the people present on the occasion inside the prayer house. On this occasion, the followers of Donyipoloism sacrifice animals and they enjoy the day by singing and dancing inside the community hall by bringing local drinks and various type of food items from their respective house.
On 22nd August, Ridgin Day is observed by the followers of this new religion. The women folk gather in the gangging in the morning. The women bring creepers from jungle and prepare ridgin. Some of the ridgins are kept in the gangging while others are sending to gangging of different districts of Arunachal Pradesh. The gangging has a committee to look after its activities. This committee is called the Gangging Committee. The contributions from various households are collected by the secretary of the Gangging Managing Committee. There are a good number of members in this committee in different posts but from them only two of the members are chosen as the president and secretary, who are officially working for the gangging. Their decisions are obeyed by the other members. It is the duty of the president and the secretary to collect the dues and maintain regular accounts of income and expenditure of the gangging. Each committee is made up of adult members, both males and females, chosen unanimously by the people. All the matters relating to the gangging are the concern of the committee. The treasurer have to give the report of expenditure of the gangging time to time to the people.

The Central Gangging Committee has 5 members, and the Rural Gangging Committee has also 5 members. The age of the committee members varies between 25 to 70 years. A gangging committee once constituted carries the duty for 3 years. Every three years a new committee should be formed. The Minyong households associated with each of the gangging weekly contributed a donation to it. Donation is made compulsory for all the devotees on the prayer
day. The donation varies from 10 to 100 rupees depending on the economic condition of the households. However, the households are expected to contribute more during the festivals. During the festivals the ganggings are decorated with garlands made of wild leaves, candles, bamboo slices, etc. Mr. Tajum Tasung, a business man and contractor, is the president of the central gangging, Pasighat. He is 56 years old. He knows well about the Donyipolo rites, rituals and ceremonies. The ganggings are the nerve centres of socio-cultural life of the Minyongs. The peoples’ loyalty to their ganggings is very strong. They not only go merely to offer prayers in the gangging. It also provide them an ample opportunity to meet one another, exchange their views, discuss various matters relating to the development activities of the organization and so on. The gangging may be also considered to some extent as agencies of social control among the followers Donyipolo. Whenever the Minyongs assemble in the gangging, they generally chat with one another before and after prayers and discuss about their daily life and share their problems among the fellow devotees.

The norms laid down in the ‘Code of Conduct’ signify certain modifications in the practises of rituals and religious behaviour of the Adis. In fact, the establishment of prayer centre (gangging) and composition of prayer songs in the local dialect were the first motivating factors towards the foundation of organized move to the ideas of Donyipoloism.

After the prayer, the healing sacred rope (ridgin) is tied on the wrist of the devotees by the priest or by any devotee as the protecting article of Donyipolo. It
is compulsory for every follower of Donyipoloism to have *ridgin* in their hands irrespective of age and sex. Wearing of the Donyipolo locket is also a practice of the present day among the followers of Donyipolo. They believe that this locket will give courage and strength to a person in his/her life and Donyipolo will always take care of him/her. In front of all *ganggings* Donyipolo flags are present. Now a days in all the houses of the followers of Donyipoloism, the religious flag is found flying in front of the residential units. It indicates that the inhabitants of the house are the followers of Donyiploism. These flags are purchased from the prayer houses at Rs. 10. only.