CHAPTER III

BACKGROUND OF CHILD REARING PRACTICES

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Summary
CHAPTER III

BACKGROUND OF CHILD REARING PRACTICES

In this chapter, an attempt was made to examine the background of child rearing practices relating to setting, basic economy, daily routine, material culture, food habits, politics and social control, social organization, recreation, marriage, religion, disease and medical aid, formal education, death ceremonies, and folklore.

3.1 Setting

In the current study, nine villages from the Chandel District-New Wangparal, Old Wangparal, Bethel, Purum Khullen, Ziontlang Chandonpokpi, and Lungleh were studied. Out of the nine villages, two of them were from the Bishnupur District Lamlanghupi village and Lamlanghupi khunou. The characteristics of the nine villages under each District as per survey conducted for the purpose in 2009-10 are given below:
Table No. 4

Characteristics of villages under Bishnupur and Chandel District of Manipur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Name of Villages</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Lamlanghupi</td>
<td>Bishnupur</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Lamlanghupi</td>
<td>Bishnupur</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Khunou</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>New Wangparal</td>
<td>Chandel</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Old Wangparal</td>
<td>Chandel</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Bethel</td>
<td>Chandel</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Purum khullen</td>
<td>Chandel</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Ziontlang</td>
<td>Chandel</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Chandonpokpi</td>
<td>Chandel</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Lungleh</td>
<td>Chandel</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>771</td>
<td>774</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chandel District

The Chandel District came into being on May 13, 1974. It is the border district. Its neighbour is Myanmar. It is about 64 km. away from Imphal. The National Highway No. 39 passes through this district. It is inhabited by about 20 different tribes, prominent among them are – Chothe, Anal, Lamkang, Kuki, Moyon, Monsang, Thadou, Paite, Maring and Zou. There are also other communities like Meiteis, Muslims, Nepalis, Tamils, Bengalis, Punjabis and Biharis. It is a hill district with an area of 3,313 sq.km. As per Census 2011, the population of the district os 1,18,327 (Male 59,741 & Female 58,586) and the literacy rate is 56.2% (Male 64.3% & Female 48.0%). The density of population per sq.km. is 36.

Bishnupur District

The Bishnupur District came into existence on 25th of May, 1983. The total geographical area of Bishnupur District is 530 sq.km. It is bounded in the north by Imphal West District, in the south by Churachandpur District, in the east by Imphal and Thoubal Districts. The population of the Bishnupur District according to 2001 Census of India is 2,08,368 (Male 1,04,550 and Female 1,03,818) and the literacy rate is 67.6% (Male 79.6 % & Female 55.7%). The density of population per sq.km. is 420. (Source: Statistical Abstract of Manipur, 2005)
### Table No. 5
Number of sample family and its types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. no.</th>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>No. of sample family</th>
<th>Types of family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nuclear Joint</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Lamlanghupi</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>42 14</td>
</tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Lamlanghupi khunou</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>New Wangparel</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Old Wangparel</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bethel</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Parum khullen</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ziontlang</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>28 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Chandonpokpi</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Langleh</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Grand Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>147 103</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2 Basic Economy

Agriculture is the basic economy of the Chothe. Besides, preparation of country liquir is also one of the means of earning in some villages. Weaving and basket making are also an important occupation among womanfolk and manfolk respectively. The domestic animals play an important part in the economy of the villages. Pigs, fowls, etc., are widely reared by the villagers as these are used in a nuber of religious functions. Most of the villagers are working in the unorganized sector. The number of villagers working in organized sector was 12
in Purum Khulen (5 teacher and 7 policeman), 11 in Zontlang (6 teacher, 4 policeman, and 1 laboratory technician), 7 in Lungleh (5 policeman and 2 teacher), 7 in New Wangparal (3 army, 2 teacher, 2 paramilitary force), 13 in Chandorpokpi (1 Indian Navy, 2 army, 6 policeman, 3 teacher, 1 Chowkidar), 7 in Old Wangparal (4 policemen, 1 nurse, 2 army), 3 in Bethal (3 teacher), 10 in Lamlanghupi Khunou (5 teacher, 3 policemen, 2 paramilitary force), 29 in lamlanghupi (5 teacher, 2 P.W.D employee, 2 agricultural office, 3 lower division clerk, 1 UDC, 2 peon, 5 policeman, 2 medical employee, 1 veterinary employee, 1 sweeper, 3 attendant, 1 Chowkidar, 1 Indian Navy). Out of the 99 persons working in organized sector, most of them (36.36%) were in the teaching profession, 34.34 per cent in the police service, 7.07 per cent in the services, 4.04 percent in the paramilitary forces, and the rest 18.19 per cent on other government departments.

3.3 Daily Routine

With the crying of birds at dawn, the busy Chotla women get up first and cleanse their teeth and then turn to their household tasks. They sweep the verandah and the interior of the living house. Utensils are cleaned. Preparation of foods is the basic function of the women, and they usually take their lunch at about 9 a.m. Fetching water and firewood during day time is one of the activities of the women. Dinner is prepared by the women at about 5 or 6 p.m. and taken it at about 8 nor 9 p.m and then go to bed.

Manfolk also rises early in the morning. During the agricultural season they go to the field early in the morning and come back at home at about 11 a.m
and then take their lunch. They may have a nap after lunch. In the afternoon, they go to the field again if there is any work there and return home just before sunset. Take dinner at about 8 or 9 p.m and then go to bed.

3.4 Material Culture

The Chothe use both traditional and modern materials. They use earthen pots, baskets made of bamboo splits, utensils available in the market and other modern amenities like LPG, television, radio, refrigerator, pressure cooker, etc. With regard to the dress of the Chothe, the impact of urbanization is very much pronounced. Manfolk has adopted western dresses consisting of trousers, shirts, coats, shoes, etc. The womanfolk, on the other hand, remain less impervious to urban influence. There is much resemblance between their dresses and the dresses of the Meitei woman. Dhoti in the Indian style is not worn by the menfolk in general. A local handloom cloth called ‘khudei’ is worn more or less in Dhoti style by old men while remaining at home. Pheisoi is the traditional dress of the women. Phanek (loin cloth) is worn by all the women. Boys and girls also wear modern dresses. There are also dresses to be worn on the occasions of marriage, mass prayer, funeral ceremony, etc.

3.5 Food Habits

All the villagers are non-vegetarians. They usually take their meals twice a day – one in the morning (lunch) at about 9 a.m. and the other after sunset (dinner) at about 8 or 9 p.m. Tea is also taken between meals. Children also do the same. Milk is hardly taken. Pan (betel) chewing is very common among adult
men and women and even among young boys and girls. Cigarette is also widely used by the menfolk and womenfolk. Rice beer is consumed on all important ceremonial occasions/ functions. They also take a variety of vegetables like brinjal, pulses, tomato, potato, mustard leaf, peas, cabbage, cauliflower, pumpkin, gourd, ginger, onion, garlic, etc., but they prefer beef, pork, meat and chicken to vegetables and fish. Various kinds of fruit, such as banana, guava, papaya, mango, orange, lemon, apple, pineapple, etc., available from time to time are also eaten by them.

3.6 Politics and Social Control:

The Chothe has a headman called Khullakpa who is appointed by three Lups (council) called Pakhang-lup, Ahal-lup, and Lai Shing-lup. This headman holds office of the headmanship as long as these three Lups satisfy him. All cases of dispute are settled by the headman in consultation with the three Lups and their decisions are final. The village has also a women’s organization called ‘Meira Paibi’ whose important role is to deal with any incident that occurs in the village.

Out of the nine villages under the present student, two are from the Bishnupur District. They are: Lamlanghupi and Lamlanghupi Khunou, and seven villages: New Wangparal, Old Wangparal, Bethel, Purum Khullen, Ziontlang, Chandonpokpi, and Lungleh- are from the Chandel District of Manipur. The maintenance of law and order is in the hands of the police.
3.7 Social Organization

In the Chothe society there are seven major clans, viz. (1) Yuhlung, (2) Makan, (3) Mareem, (4) Thao, (5) Khiyaang, (6) Rangsaï, and (7) Paarpa. There will be some sorts of competitions among these seven major clans, each represented by a single man. And a steering committee or group is also temporarily formed to oversee such competitions. And seven posts will be created to accommodate all these seven competitors representing their respective clans. And these posts are, in descending order, (1) Hulaak, (2) Luklaak, (3) Hancha, (4) Yupaal, (5) Keirung, (6) Shielruwing, and (7) Changru. Seven men are to accommodate in the seven posts and they form the governing body of the village called the Hloukal/Urintapa under the leadership of their new Hulaak (Chief). There is no definite tenure of office for any these posts. However, the posts are customarily and democratically transferred from one clan to another until the last person holding the post of Changru becomes the Hulaak, and automatically the person who had been Hullak will become the Changru. This democratic pattern of administration will be repeated in the future.

If the Hullak has to vacate his post, the Luklaak will take his place. And the vacant post of the said Luklaak will be filled by the Hancha, so on and so forth. Going on like this, the post of the Changru will become vacant. And this vacant post of changru will be handed over to the former Hulaak or to a man belonging to his same clan. This system of promoting or transferring of posts is done according to the wishes of the other villagers and the approval of another body called the Loumi which acts as an opposition body in the village council.
To oversee, the functions of the Hloukal (the governing body), the villagers will form another body called the Loumi. This body scrutinizes the function of the Hloukal and has the right to dismiss any member of the Hloukal but with the support from the public. Yet, it normally lends its support to the functioning of the Hloukal. And the posts of this Loumi are also transferred from one clan to another following the system of Hloukal. The post in the Loumi are, in descending order, (1) Hancha, (2) Hithaang, (3) Hunchal, (4) Yupaal, (5) Asuh-Arang, (6) Tlongthicloi-Ulin and (7) Tlongthicloi-Naopang. None of the post has definite tenure of office. Both the Hloukal and the Loumi used their veto on each other in the interest of the public. In any case, the rulings of the Hloukal is final and valid. In a Chothe village, the middle-aged men who are not included in the Hloukal or the Loumi will be addressed or recruited as Ruui. These Ruuis are the official workers under the Hloukal. They normally perform their duties according to the fulings directions of the Hloukal. A Chothe village has other distinguished personalities who are not under the direct authority of the Hloukal or Loumi. The important ones are: (1) Theempu (priest), (2) Thirsuh (blacksmith), (3) Tang-Ulin (senior bachelor), (4) Renchang, (5) Sapu, (6) Assei, etc. These last three posts specialized in ceremonial rituals. Again a Chothe village, constructed a Bachelors’ Dormitory called Kangshel Sang at the entrance (gate) of the village. The selected bachelors of the village would spend the night at the Kangshel Sang to protect the village from outsiders attack or burglaries, etc. The kangshel Sang is divided into two groups viz., Tang-Ulin (seniors) and Tang-Naopang (Juniors). These are some of the most important constituents in a Chothe village.
3.8 Recreation

The Chothe in the remote past spent most of their time hunting and merrymaking. But now-a-days, gossiping, watching television listening to radio, etc., are the ways of recreation of the Chothe. Some of the traditional games of the community through which they spent their time from to time may be examined as under:

Hranghraan Chawn

This play literally means ‘Mosquito Jump’. It is similar to the present form of high-jump and long-jump combined. It is a game where each player is tied with a short rope round his waist. And the rope will be torched at its tip and kept at the backside of the player. And the player will exhibit how high he can jump by jumping over a tall fence specially made for the purpose.

Rui-Kai

It is tug-of-war and one of the oldest sports with two groups pulling the rope showing their skills and strength. It is associated with the modern form of tug-of-war.

Tabun

It is the traditional form of wrestling where the two wrestlers would try to throw down each other.
Kaanglui

It is a indigenously built sledge. It is normally played by young children. The children will take their respective sledges upto a hill slope. And from there, with the help of a referee, they will slide down on it and complete to reach a particular point first.

Race

It is held in traditional festivals. And it has been played since ages back.

3.9 Marriage

In the Chothe society, marriage is of two types – arranged marriage and elopement. These two types of marriage are in vogue in the Chothe Society. There are seven clans in this society. These are: Mareem, Makan, Paarpa, Rangshei, Khiyang, Yuhlung, and Thao. A boy from Mareem clan can marry with a girl from Khiyaang, Thao, and Rangshei clans; Makan clan boy can marry Khiyaang, Mareem clan girl; Paarpa boy clan can marry Mareem, and Khiyaang clan girl; Rangshei clan boy can marry Makan, Paarpa, and Yuhlung clan girl; Khiyaang clan boy can marry Makan, Thao and Yuhlung clan girls; Yuhlung clan boy can marry Paarpa, Mareem and Thao clan girl; and Thao clan boy can marry Makan and Paarpa clan girl. Generally, a boy can marry with a girl from the mother’s clan. (Maipak Chothe, 2002).
Arranged Marriage

In such arranged marriage, a boy’s parents take initiative. Negotiation with girl’s parents usually takes place in the month of Fairen (February – March) in the house of the girl. In this case boy’s parents bring some wine to the girl’s parents. If the wine is accepted by the old men present in the negotiation, then the proposal made by the parents of the boy may be taken to have been accepted. Then the necessary arrangement for marriage has been made according to customary practices.

Elopement

In case of elopement, effort is made to ascertain whether the elopement is taken place in accordance with the consent of the girl or not. If it is with the consent of the girl, then a cock is brought by the boy’s parents and it is taken by all present there after proper cooking. Marriage ceremony may take place on an auspicious day as decided by both boy’s and girl’s parents.

3.10 Religion

The chothe worshipped their traditional gods and goddesses like Soraren, Pakhangba, Chungpathin, Thuipathin, Lungchungpa, Sanamahi and Angte-Angsuh, etc. Among them the Lungchungpa and the Sanamahi were the most important deities. The Lungchungpa is placed at a public place in the village, while the Sanamahi at a particular place inside each house. Festivals and rituals
were also occasionally performed to appease these deities. However, the present Chothes have embraced the Christianity as their only faith (Maipak Chothe, 2006).

3.11 Diseases and medical aids:

Generally, in most cases home treatment is the first measure taken and second measure is to consult a doctor. In case of home treatment, Maiba (Local medicine man) is consulted and treatment is undergone as advised by the Maiba. There are various folk medicines used for different ailments like cough, fever, diarrhea, cold, constipation, etc. In case of hoping cough and fever a kind of plant called Oi Hudal and Takhao Yaikhu are use. In case of diarrhea and constipation, juice prepared from Aggar tree and master leaves are used respectively. Magico-religious measures are also taken in case of illness wherein people worship gods and goddesses or other supernatural beings by offering something to them for their appeasement.

Besides, all the people in the nine villages get the facilities of undergoing treatment in their respective District Hospitals.

3.12 Formal Education

According to a survey conducted for the purpose, there was altogether 1901 population in the nine villages. Of them, 771 were male, 774 female and 356 children in the age-group 0-6 years. Out of the 771 male population, 523
(67.83%) were literate and of the 774 female, 273 (35.27%) literate. Children in the age group 0 – 6 years were not counted in the calculation of literacy rate. The details of literacy rate in the nine villages are shown in the table given below:

Table No. 6

Distribution of Literacy rate male & Female in the villages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no</th>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Total popnl. Exclusion the age group 0-6</th>
<th>Total literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lamlanghipi</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lamlanghipi khunou</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>New Wangparel</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Old Wangparel</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bethel</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Parum khullen</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ziontlang</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Chandonpokpi</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Langleh</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grand Total:</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data indicated that the total literacy rate for the nine villages was only 51.52 per cent wherein the literacy rate among female population was very low. Among the villages, the Lamlanghupi Khunou had the highest literacy of 69.05 per cent and the lowest was the Bethel (35.34%). The results suggested that almost half of the total population were illiterate.

About schools, in the Lamlanghupi and Lamlanghupi Khunou village under Bishnupur District, there were two schools, namely, the Chothe Junior High School, having classes I – VIII, (Government), and a private school having classes I – X called the Loyala School. Old Wangparal and Chandonpokpi village were only having primary schools.

The details about the number of school-going and non-school going children in the villages are shown below:

**Table No. 7**

Number of school-going & Non-school going children in the age group 5-10 in the villages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. no.</th>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Children if school going</th>
<th>Children of non-school going</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lamlanghupi</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lamlanghupi Khunou</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>New Wangparel</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Old Wangparel</td>
<td>85</td>
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<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bethel</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Parum Khullen</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>29</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Zionlang</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Chandonpokpi</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Langaleh</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Grand Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>680</strong></td>
<td><strong>247</strong></td>
<td><strong>285</strong></td>
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</table>
Table No. 8
Number school-going & Non-school going children in the age group 10-15 in the villages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. no.</th>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Children if school going</th>
<th>Children of non-school going</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lamlanghupi</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lamlanghupi khanou</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>New Wangparel</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Old Wangparel</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bethel</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Parum khullen</td>
<td>114</td>
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<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Zionlang</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ChandonPokpi</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Langleh</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grand Total:</td>
<td>1073</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.13 Death

In the Chothe society, death is of three kinds: unnatural death, natural death, death cause by wild animals or war.

Unnatural Death

Home purification ceremony takes place on the 9th and 10th day after birth in the case of male and female child respectively. If a child is death before observance of home purification, then this is called ‘unnatural death’. In such
unnatural death, no religious ceremony was observed. The dead body is placed in an earthen pot and buried it in a ‘suitable’ place

**Natural Death**

To die of old age, illness or disease is called ‘natural death’. In such cases, the religious ceremony was observed. The death body was placed on a mat made of reeds inside the middle room of the living house with the head turning to the westward. One traditional basket called ‘sham’ and a roasted chicken were placed near the death body so that the soul would go to the ‘Land of Death’ with these offerings. Besides, a lump or cooked rice, boiled egg, etc., were also offered to the soul. The corpse was buried along with cloth, some eatables, a dog, a goat.

**Death caused by wild animals or war**

In case of death caused by wild animals or war, no religious ceremony was observed. Such death was considered to be ominous, therefore, the necessary rites and rituals were observed.

**3.14 Origin of the Chothe**

The Chothe believe that they came out of a huge cave which they called ‘HURPI – Thorangaa’. The mouth of the cave was covered with a large rock. And so, God commanded a monkey to open the cave by removing the
rock. (Maipak Chothe, 2006). The Chothe’s ancestral settlements in Manipur, as far as they can remember, include the Chothe Munpi (Churachandpur), kangwai (near Moirang), Oksongbung (near Moirang), Chainapung (western side of Ningthoukhong), Purum-khong (near Samumaanpi hillock of Bishenpur), etc. They have also settled near Khwairamband, and also in Sanakeithel, Kongba, Langmaiching and Sagolmang, Purum-Pan of eastern Kakching and the northern side of Pallel can also be mentioned. (Maipak Chothe, 2006).

Chothe Festivals

In the Chothe society, some festivals are observed every year in honour of their gods or goddesses or just in the mood of merrymaking. Some of the festivals are – Innampei / Bambui Lin or Reen or Rin (A festival of daughter), Achui or Choltuk Lin (A festival of yeast), Urinthin rin (A new year festival).

Chothe Festivals

In the Chothe society, some festivals are observed every year in honour of their Gods or Goddesses or just in the mood of merrymaking. Some of the festivals are the following:

1. Innampei/ Bambui Rin or Lin or Reen (A Festival of daughters)
2. Achui or Choltuk Rin (A festival of yeast).
5. Yairitha Rin (A festival invoking dead spirits).
6. Taiten Lawh Rin (A harbinger of a particular festival).
8. Hungdoi Rin (A festival to commemorate a dead person).
9. Siroh Rin (An individual festival in the construction of a dwelling place).
10. Okloh Rin (A festival reserved by a few individuals or households).

In the Chothe dialect the word ‘Rin’ or ‘Lin’ or ‘Reen’ means festival. From amongst the festivals, two festivals, such as Innampei/Bambui Rin and Achui or Choltuk Rin, may be examined as under:

**Innampei/Bambui Rin**

The Innampei/Bambui Rin is a very popular festival celebrated for every year in honour of unmarried daughter or girls on Monday of the first half of the lunar month called Phairen (February – March). This festival lasts for eight days. The festival is divided into two – Innampei and Bambui. Innampei covers the 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 4\textsuperscript{th} day (Wednesday - Thursday) and Bambui covers the 5\textsuperscript{th} to 7\textsuperscript{th} day (Friday to Sunday).

**First Day (the Day of Yupan Thaba and Heiruk Kaba)**

Tang Nga Rinta is one of the three traditional councils which looks after the religious affair of the Chothes. The Lai – Paanaba, custodian of Tang Nga Rinta performs the ritual with the help of another person, Loy/ Lui. The items such as rice, egg, tobacco leaves, Langthrei (a kind of plant), a bunch of banana, sweets, fruits and flowers are offered to the deities such as Chothe Thangwai
Pakhangba, Leima and Potlungba. The Lai – Pannaba performs Kon Yai Hunba in which nine coins divided into three groups are thrown for each group and then after reading the position of the coins, he foretells the events to come. After Kon Yai Hunba ritual, Saroi khangba ritual is observed by way of warding off evil spirits. This ritual is performed at the northern and southern gates of the village.

**Second Day (Feast)**

In the morning, all the members of Tang Nga Rinta Bungkung gather in the house of Lai – Paanaba. Pakhanglakpa who is in-charge of the bachelors’ activities offer Juting (rice beer) to the deities and evil spirits. After having a feast, dance and song follow.

**Third Day (Jutui Thani)**

The unmarried males arranged for the filtration of rice beer from the pot to serve everybody during the festival. On this day, the village Phamnaibas (councilors) offer a feast with rice beer and country liquor.

**Fourth Day (Inku-Rin –Nei)**

In the evening, the village councillors visit their respective houses along with the village elders and the youths of the Nungak Luithet Bungkung (Loishang). They serve the rice beer and country liquor to the elders with Chatni (Singju) as offered by the host.
In the night, Saphei Yairikpa (stay at night) is performed in which boys and girls stay the whole night at the house of Lomthun or Bungkung teaching them the traditional norms and values.

**Fifth Day (Airingsam Inna)**

In the morning of this fifth day, girls prepare turmeric juice at the residence of Lomthun or Bongkung. Nungak Luithie Bungkung (Loishang) is a council to look after the affairs of unmarried males and females. The village chief called Khulakpa and all the elders attend the function. The village chief offers the turmeric juice to the mother earth. After this offering, just a little turmeric juice is drunk by the villagers in order to free them from stomach ailment. This is followed by dances called Chamtun Lam and Aire Kung Lam. In the evening, the dances, such as Lotuilam is performed by the boys and girls.

**Sixth Day (Meisei Huppa and Inku Rin Nei)**

In the early morning of this sixth day, Meisei Huppa is performed by the youths in which torches of dry weeds are prepared by the light it in the night.

In the evening every person visits the house of his pipa (piba) who is the head of lineage. Rice beer and country liquor are served to other members of the lineage. The Inku Rin Nei is also performed in all the pipa houses. The youths dance at the house of Khullapa (village chief) and Luplakpa (Assistant village chief) as a sign of their respect.
Seventh Day (Konchei Yaichei)

In the early morning, the Lai – Pannaba performs the ritual of divination with coins. He announces the reading of the divination at Thoubei. In the residence of the Nungak Luithel Bungkung (Loishang) all the villagers gather again as the last day of the festival. In the Bungkung the youth initiation rites are performed. The rites which signify that the boys have attained the age of adulthood. This is the common practice of the Chothes Luithel Maanna or Laibak Maanna (Pakhang Phan Kaba). After this he can join the duties of a bachelor such as war, hunting, and other duties and he can also get married. Then the villagers take their lunch together. After lunch, boys and girls enjoy Lotui Lam Dance.

After sunset ‘Sikangla’ is sung together with the boys and girls. In the olden days this dance is performed in three different houses known as Tanglaichang, Tuishakchang and Tang Hung Chang group. But these days it is performed together in a Bungkung (Loishang) owing to less population in the village. So, three boys and three girls represent the leaders of each of the house (Bungkung) known as Hancha Mapi.

Eight Day (The Day of Hunting)

On the last day of the festival, all the men of the village go to the forest for hunting. This is one of the most exiting parts of the festival. But now-a-days, due to many statutory restrictions the hunting expedition is not very much charming. It is believed that the series of feasts and rice beer offerings serve the
function of the Innampei Lin festival as a symbol of love, unity, peace, joy, good health, and prosperity in this society.

Achui Lin Festival

Achui Lin is one of the most significant festivals celebrated by the Chothe tribe for seven days in the month of September (Langban Tha) every year in which rice beer and bread are offered to the Chothe Thanwai Pakhangba. On the first day of the festival, Tangarinta Bungkung (Laiyokpa Loishang) goes to the temple of Chothe Thangwai Pakhangba to perform rites and rituals. This is the beginning of the festival. The next second day is known as Chaktha Lani or Chaktha Bakni. On this very morning, the Urinta Bungkung and the village council members have a grand feast together at the residence of Lomthunpa (festival). Before meal, two members of Urinta Bungkung usually go to the Tangarinta Bungkung’s to get the drums known as “Kangla Yaipung” and get ready for the festival. Rice bread is prepared by the girls for the next day festival. The third day festival is known as Khakuiloh. In the evening of the fourth day, the whole village come together and have a grand feast. On the fifth day, Nungak Luithei Bungkung (Leisa Pakhang Phallup) is observed.

On the sixth day, they again go the temple of the Chothe Thangwai Pakhangba and perform the rituals. Then on the last seventh day the festival came to an end with Konchan Yaichanpa.
Urinthin Rin

This is the New Year festival observed only for one day. This is the traditional festival which is no longer observed by the Chothes.

Shahong Lin

Shahong Lin is a festival held in the month of Mera (September). This can be observed on any auspicious day fixed by the leaders of the village. This festival is also known as Fauna Kumhei (festival of paddy leaves). In the morning of the day of starting of the festival, the man called Shapuba (seed carrier) will sow seeds in his field. No other can sow seeds in his field before the Shapuba does this, Shapuba should belong to the Hiyang clan. This festival is performed at two steps.

Step 1: In the house of the Shapuba, seats are arranged for the members belonging to the Phalup. Then the village chief will perform a ritual called Yupan Thaba (offering wine). An animal or a fish is sacrificed in which a local physician called Athimnu examines the heart portion of the animal. From the colour of the heart, prediction is made whether the harvest would be good or bad.

Step 2: In this step, girls will go out in search of flowers for making garlands which are offered to the nobles by putting around their necks and dance program will follow.
The Chothe Folklore

Folklore is concerned with the traditional knowledge of the people which have been acquired and stored by the people in a group and transmitted from one generation to the next. In less progressive society, folklore plays a very important role in the preservation of traditional values. This section analyses some forms of folklore of the Chothe society, such as proverb, riddle, folk song, dance, under which a Chothe child is born and brought up to become a full – fledged member of his society. Some of the Chothe folk tales, proverbs, riddles are described below:

Proverb

The English ‘proverb’ is called ‘Paorou’ in the Chothe dialect. Here ‘Pao’ means statement and ‘rou’ means accept, i.e., ‘a statement that is acceptable:

“*A proverb represents, in its essential form, some homely truth expressed in a conciss and terse manner so as to recommend itself to a more or less extended circle ... The proverb strives for no high ideal, difficult or attainment, but merely voices the sum total of everyday experience which has become the common property of a social group and which is after all the basis of the group morality in a work- day world, no matter what high religious or ethical system may be preached from the pulpit on Sundays*” (Krappe, 1930).

Here, some of the popular proverbs which are used by the Chothe society are the following:
1. **Chikshille-Chu chek in shaia, lung dong heisukum mang honge.**
   (if you save much, you can build a house of bricks; if not, everything will disperse)
   This proverb imparts a lesson of thrift.

2. **Aahang kale-chu famillen ongfaiye.**
   (Patience is the pillar of success)
   Here, the word ‘famillen’ is a place of honour meant for only the head of the male member of the family. To be able to sit on this seat is a ‘matter of prestige’ and also a ‘great achievement’. One cannot ‘sit’ on this without much efforts. The underlying idea is that one cannot achieve one’s goal without hard work, patience, courage, etc. This proverb inculcates a sense of facing or solving any problem without loosing heart.

3. **Sheipi nuntinga roshem khongpa.**
   (Turn a deaf ear to)
   When children neglect the advices of the adults or turn a deaf ear to what the adults are advising this proverb is used.

4. **Alui Lampike aak chenoo.**
   (Don’t defecate on the old road)
   This proverb is used when any person neglects or discards any object thinking that it will not have any future utility. It warns that any object, whether old or new, whether serviceable or unserviceable, will have its utility one day, therefore, it should not be discarded. In this way, we should not defecate on the old or untrodden way thinking that nobody would further go there, because on day one might go there.

5. **Ulinchangaakna be ongpa mine.**
   (a cracked earthern pot is mended with the faeces of adult)
This proverb implies that the advice or suggestion of the adults come true eventually. This proverb teaches one that anything which is not recommended by the adults should not be done. Even if one has to do it, she should do so after deep thinking.

   (a child is known from its swaddling-cloth)
   The equivalent English proverb is: “Morning shows the day”.

7. *Shwai meita punna humngainoye.*
   (Fire cannot be covered with cloth)
   This proverb indicates that any secrecy will come to light one day. I inculcate a sense of avoidance or secret acts.

8. *Abai theipachu linglouwa leiyê.*
   (Knowledge is power)
   Knowledge is considered as the rarest property, which will remain unperished for all time to come. This proverb advice that one should acquire as much knowledge as one can so that he or she may lead to a happy and prestigious life.

   (Saliva that was spat out cannot be returned to its gland)
   This proverb warns everyone to thing minutely before speaking or doing anything. The evil impact of any activity done without any thought is compared to the saliva that is gone out of the mouth.

10. *Thinglit yotpi tuire taowe.*
    (A nail floats on the water from being friends with wood)
    The proverb implies that association with good friends will bring prosperity and welfare and that one should keep good company.
11. *Ari ri theiri ri, atuk tuk thoituk tuk.*

(Man reaps the fruit of his own deed)
This proverb advises one to do good deeds so as to live happily and peacefully.

12. *Jaiyangtinga abai loppa.*

(to roast arum just before going to bed)
The proverb denotes that doing any activity untimely is not good. If a person gets married in his advanced age, he may not get the happiness of being a father, or enjoying the fruits of the labour of his sons. If he gets married late, he will be old when his sons are grown up. He may be dead long before his sons are able to work and earn. Although this proverb is usually referred to late marriage, it can be applied to different aspects of life. The proverb teaches everyone to do any activity in due time so that he can reap the fruit of his own labour.

13. *Ashahonga shumhuwo*

(Strike while it is hot)
The idea of this proverb is the same with that of the proverb among the Meitei of Manipur: “Thoubaldong chafu kainaba yeibra?” (is the earthen pot of Thoubaldong struck to be broken?).


(Money can be earned but not prestige)
This proverb gives a message to all that loss of prestige is irreparable, even worse than death. Once it is lost, it is lost forever. Hence, one should behave or do anything in such a way that he or she may not lose prestige.
15. *Chingmun akhake akei ani amngainoye.*

(Two tigers in the same den)

The proverb implies having two wives in one family. It discourages polygamy. In a polygamous family, there is always hance of quarrelling between the wives, therefore, it suggests one to avoid polygamy.

16. *Unga aakha jokhoupa akum shang shangfai aakhana anga tuipoi aakhana jokngaimoi.*

(A basketful of paddy of fish cannot make a child attain adulthood)

The proverb signifies that to bring up of a child to become a full-fledged member of the society is not an easy task; it needs time, energy, and money. This proverb is generally used by the parents when they are neglected by their sons and daughters by way of intimidating their children – how much trouble they took in bringing them up.

17. *Keina tong danglechu, menakum dangange.*

(If you lend your hand to someone, the person would also do the same to you)

This proverb inculcates a sense of give-and-take.

18. *Shang pure shang ding, chishai pure chishai ding.*

(Tit for tat)

**Riddle:**

Riddle in the words of Burne (1914):

“While the proverb states a fact or expresses a thought in vivid metaphor, the riddle describes a person or a thing in more obscure metaphor, calculated to exercise the intellectual skill of any who attempt to solve it. Thus making and
guessing riddles becomes a trial or wits, a dialectic combat: and riddles are in fact used by various peoples not only as a form of amusement, but as a means of education, a kind of “mental gymnastic”, and even as a serious test of intellectual ability”.

Some Chothe riddles were collected during the course of the investigation and these are discussed as under:

1. **Atorit arana lokpa**
   (Disproportionate between stem and fruit) = Pumpkin

2. **Arei masi e-me**
   (Underground Chilli) = Ginger

3. **Apuna akhana ashinao atam lon-na**
   (Mother having many children) = Match box

4. **Tuiri jai ki-ya e-kha-chakk luingairokpa**
   (The pond which feels pain when falling even a particle of dust in it) = Eye

5. **Abanakhame aming-chu langa-ame**
   (Five names in a body) = Five fingers

6. **Chapi kung-nga adimkum kang-nga achikum kang-nga ahu kang-nga**
   (Everything – dry, wet, rotten, etc. – is burnt) = Fireplace

7. **Arei sung-nga ade-pa**
   (Underground gold) = Turmeric

8. **Apuna akhana ashinao atam lon-na kao-wa akan-na lu-oj kot chuhong nenoi**
   (A mother of many children who cannot open her door, but very busy in search of foods with her children) = Hen.
9. *Apuna akhana anchak kou-we buchu heinoi*

(The one who always remains cried with pain but continues to et uninterrupted) = Pig

**COMMON FOLK TALES:**

*Lontum mithanu (shakhenbi)*

*(Beautiful Longtum Mithanu)*

Once upon a time there was a Chothe Pakhang (bachelor) and a girl belonging to the Anal community. Both of them were beautiful ones. Although the girl was Anal, she very often did not offer seats to the Anal boys when they came to her house. On the contrary, when the Chothe Pakhang visited the house of the girl, she instantaneously offered seats to the Chothe Pakhang. Both of them felt in love in which the Anal boys were very angry with the Chothe Pakhang and the girl. Eventually, the Anal boys in connivance with each other killed the Chothe Pakhang and the girl. Thus, the story came to a tragic end.

*Yaong enbagi wari (Nungak-Loup)*

Once upon a time there was a very lethargic man who stayed in the house of his wife. One day, his mother-in-law gave him a sickle to harvest in the paddy field. The man went to the field but remained there without doing anything. He away the sickle and went back home. The mother-in-law enquired about the amount of work done in the field and also asked him to give the sickle. The man told his mother-in-law that he kept the sickle in the field so that it may harvest
the crop. On the next day, the mother-in-law fed the man with a fish curry and asked him whether it was tasty or not. The man replied ‘good’ and ‘tasty’. Again the mother-in-law asked how did you take meal. Then the man replied that he began to take meal from the outer portion of the cooked rice. After this, the mother-in-law advised him that cutting the paddy plants would start from the outer portion of the growing plants, not from its inner portion.

**Pidat padatpagi wari or hotnaba kanba**

Once upon a time, there was a very poor man who had no other property than a house. He had an elder sister who also got married. The man was a wise one. He had long hair of the head. His job was to catch rats from the granary. This poor man had supernatural powers and he came out successful when he did any task. But people neglected him because of two reasons. First, he had none to look after him and secondly he was a poor man. Since he not only possessed the supernatural but also diligent man, he became a very rich man and he lived happily.

**Summary**

For the purpose of the current study, nine villages were selected. Out of the nine villages, two were from Bishnupur district and seven from Chandel district. The total population of the nine villages was 1901 (male=771 and female= 774, children in the age group 0-6 = 356, as per survey conducted for the purpose of the study. Agriculture is the basic economy of the people and they follow simple
daily routine. About material culture, the Chothe people use both traditional and modern materials. They are non-vegetarians. About religion, almost all the Chothe people have now been converted into Christianity, although they still worship their traditional gods and goddesses. Gossiping, watching television, listening to radio, etc., are now some of the means of utilization of leisure time among the Chothes. There are seven major clans in the Chothe society and there are seven posts to be accommodated by the seven men of the respective clans to form a governing body of the village. Regarding marriage, both arranged marriage and elopement are still in vogue in the Chothe society. Unnatural death and death cause by wild animals or war are considered to be ominous. With regard to literacy, the total literacy rate is 51.52 per cent (male = 67.83 female = 35.27). A number of festivals are found to be observed by the Chothe, among them, Innampei/Bambui Rin and Achui or Choltuk Rin festivals are very popular festivals. Various forms of folklore, such as stories (myths, legends, and tales), proverb, riddle, nursery rhyme, folk song, dance, etc., are functioning in the Chothe society.
A young mother breast feed her baby

A mother is giving bath to her child
Children playing in the river

Children playing in the house
A grandpa with a child
A baby in a cradle

A grandmother holding their baby
A young father mother and a baby

A young father mother feed rice their baby
An old man using liquor (Rice Beer)
An old man smoking
Young girl dancing in a festival

Young men dancing in a festival
A young boy and girl using liquor (Rice-beer)

An old women cooking liquor (Rice-beer)
A variety store in a Chothe village

A researcher along with grandpa and a child